

the missionary

MARCH 2026

You gave Juan more than a bag of groceries. . .

You gave him community

Ten years ago, Juan stepped through the Mission's doors. Not for shelter. Not for food.

Not for any services at all.

In opening the door for someone else to find help at the Mission, he opened the door for himself.

Juan used to be a taxi driver in DC. "I picked up a lady, and she came here. That's how it started," he says. "God works in many different ways."

When he dropped the woman off at the Mission's doors, Juan came inside to help her translate. He had no idea one act of kindness would lead him to community and new hope.

"I just came to translate. It's been nothing but a blessing."

Juan and his wife are retired. They're thankful to have never fallen into homelessness, but living on a fixed income makes poverty feel a little

Continued inside ►



Lift someone out of poverty this Easter! Every \$3.21 m

YOU gave Juan a place to rebuild! (Continued from pg. 1)

too close for comfort. “Especially for the elderly, or people with disabilities, the Mission is a blessing,” says Juan. “Because sometimes, you have to go and find another job.

“Sometimes, the amount of money you live off of is not enough. When you have a house, when you have a car payment, when you have grandkids, the extra help makes a difference.”

Juan and his wife have been coming regularly to the Comprehensive Family Resource Center (CFRC). They pick up bags full of groceries, including oranges, chicken, vegetables, pastries and canned goods. Without the Mission’s help, they’d be unable to make ends meet.

But what keeps them coming back is not just the food support. It’s the fellowship.

“It’s given us the opportunity to meet different

people,” says Juan. “There’s a community here. We celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. We pray together. Everybody has a wonderful personality. There’s no discrimination of age.”

Because you give, Juan and his wife receive the physical, emotional and spiritual support they need to thrive. From free health checks to senior breakfasts to a clothing closet, you’ve given them a sense of dignity that’s often missing for people living on limited incomes.

“What we receive here is helping not just us, but our grandkids in the family,” says Juan. “Without the CFRC, I wouldn’t be able to support my house. Every little bit that we receive is helping us economically, which gives us the chance to give a hand to the younger generation. From the time that I came here to right now, it’s been a blessing.”

“What we receive here is helping not just us, but our grandkids in the family.”

—Juan



Meal is the first step to life-change!

FROM THE PRESIDENT



What happens *after* a meal at the Mission?

Before someone steps into a job-skills class, meets with a case manager or starts rebuilding their faith, something simple happens first: ***They eat.***

At Central Union Mission, your gift of Easter meals does far more than ease hunger. Each plate of food, served with dignity, opens a door to lasting life-change.

MEALS LEAD TO STABILITY. For men in our Restoration & Transformation Program, that first meal marks the end of struggling to survive. **They find structure, counseling and a Christ-centered community that helps them heal from addiction and homelessness.**

MEALS STRENGTHEN FAMILIES. At the Comprehensive Family Resource Center, parents come for groceries. But they stay for job training, parenting classes and prayer. Seniors find community over breakfast. Children see faith and generosity in action.

What starts as food on the table grows into dignity and stability for generations.

MEALS BUILD COMMUNITY. Across the river, at Mission: NOVA, you help provide legal aid, ESL classes, after-school programs, health care, housing referrals and more. **You make one-stop support accessible for families navigating crises!**



Real hope, real love, real change



JOE METTIMANO
President & CEO

I often tell people, “Until Jesus returns, the Mission will continue serving the least and the lost.”

We live in a broken world. But that darkness doesn’t compete with the resurrection power of Christ. That’s why, together, we’ll stay present in the DC area to alleviate the suffering of men, women and children.

Some people are facing hunger for the first time. Others are exhausted from a years-long battle with homelessness or addiction. The answer for their pain? Jesus.

More than a meal, more than shelter, more than services. . . it’s always been Jesus.

This is the message of Easter, delivered through the practical, proven care you make possible every day at the Mission.

As you flip through this newsletter, I pray you’ll experience the perfect love of our Savior. Your generosity is changing lives across the DMV in undeniable ways. For that, I’m so grateful and so hopeful.



LAST CHANCE: Provide Easter meals. . . just \$3.21 each

Your Easter gift does so much more than fill a plate.

It brings a man facing homelessness into safe shelter and recovery. It offers relief to families trying to stretch their budgets. It shares the love of Christ with someone who hasn't felt it in a long time.

Right now, we're preparing to serve 75,000 meals across the Mission's locations. Every \$3.21 you send will bring food and faith to someone who desperately needs both.

This is your last chance to give before Easter Sunday. Please send your gift today so someone facing poverty in DC can find stability and resurrection hope.

What's your legacy?



The gift that keeps on blooming

Every spring, millions gather for the National Cherry Blossom Festival. There's a rich history behind this annual event, marked by **three values that span generations**:

GENEROSITY. It all started in 1912. Tokyo donated 3,020 cherry blossom trees to Washington, DC, to honor the relationship between the United States and Japan. *What causes are important to you?*

RELATIONSHIPS. Friendship motivated this first gift of cherry trees. And since then, the trees have stood as symbols of goodwill. *What relationships have shaped who you are?*

RECONCILIATION. After World War II, the National Park Service sent buds from the original trees back to Japan to restore cherry trees in Tokyo. Japan gifted the U.S. a stone lantern in return. Now, the lighting of that lantern opens the festival every year. *How has Christ's reconciliation changed your life?*

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "The Gift That Keeps on Blooming" by contacting Megan Schmoll at (202) 745-7118 ext. 219 or mschmoll@missiondc.org.

Give now to share meals and restorative care with people in need this Easter!

3 EASY WAYS TO CHANGE A LIFE WITH A MEAL

1 GIVE BY MAIL by sending your gift and reply form in the enclosed envelope.

2 GIVE ONLINE by visiting missiondc.org/MarchNewsletter26

3 SCAN HERE with your mobile device.

