

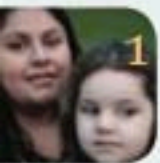
THE MISSION

let's end homelessness in LA

Saved From the Streets

With no job, no money, no home, and a 2-year-old daughter, Vanessa's choices seemed grim. Where would she go now?

IN THIS ISSUE



1

Saved
From the Streets



2-3

Finding Safety
and a New Start
In a Garden of Hope



4

Notes from Andy
New Hope for
Families

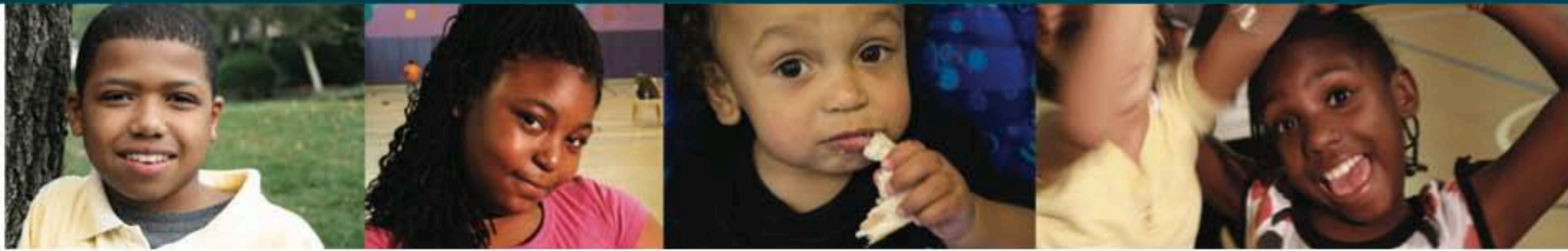
Vanessa picked up her 2-year-old daughter, Christina, and shut the door to her motel room for the last time. Out of work, out of money, and with no friends or family to turn to, Vanessa had nowhere to call home. She reached bottom — her only alternatives were the streets or a homeless shelter on Skid Row.

By October 2008, Vanessa and Christina had already experienced homelessness for almost two months. The stress and fear overwhelmed them both.

"It was really hard on my daughter," Vanessa recalls. "I felt so helpless and scared. I didn't know how I could keep her fed. But whenever I would cry, Christina would cry with me and ask, 'What's wrong, Mom?' Then she would always tell me that everything was going to be okay. She was such a comfort to me."

"It was really hard on my daughter.... whenever I would cry, Christina would cry with me and ask, 'What's wrong, Mom?'"

CONTINUED ON PAGES 2-3



NO CHILD OR FAMILY SHOULD EVER BE EVICTED TO THE STREETS — EVER!

**YOU
are THE
MISSION™**
URM.ORG

In a city as prosperous as ours, no child should ever have to go through the trauma of seeing his or her family evicted to the streets. That's why it's so crucial to offer families a safe place where they can go and get back on their feet.

Our Hope Gardens Family Center is that kind of place, but it currently has room for only 130 women and children approximately. We must do more. That's why **Step 3 of You Are the Mission** — our 10-step plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles — focuses on providing structured, transitional housing programs for families in desperate need.

Working together with friends and partners throughout Los Angeles, our vision is to end homelessness in Los Angeles within 10 years. Our short-term goals include cutting the number of people living on Skid Row 90% by 2012; and cutting the number of people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County 50% by 2016.

Your support is vital. To learn more about **You Are the Mission** and **Step 3**, please visit www.youarethemiision.org

A 10-STEP PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

STEP 3: STOP EVICTING PEOPLE TO THE STREETS

Mother's Day is May 9th Help Honor Heroic Moms

All mothers are heroes. And it's no less true for mothers experiencing homelessness or living on Skid Row. Which is why on Mother's Day, May 9th, we will honor more than 300 women living at Union Rescue Mission and Hope Gardens.

With your help, we plan to make Mother's Day special for all the beautiful moms living with us. We'll bless them with gift baskets and gift cards, a special breakfast, makeovers, silk pajamas, and even a fancy lunch in our chapel, which we'll decorate to look like a four-star restaurant, complete with volunteer servers!

Thank you for all you do to help these heroic moms put their lives back on track with God's help!



SAVED FROM THE STREETS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

After living at another homeless shelter in downtown Los Angeles for several months, God led Vanessa to Union Rescue Mission in May 2009.

And four months later, Christina and Vanessa moved to URM's Hope Gardens Family Center.

"No one should ever have to spend a single night on the streets of Los Angeles, especially women and children," says Andy Bales, CEO of Union Rescue Mission. "That's why we started Hope Gardens."

Hope Gardens has helped women and children like Vanessa and Christina find sanctuary from homelessness. Through the Mission's comprehensive program, mothers like Vanessa progress from homelessness to independent living.

"As soon as we got here, Christina was smiling and chatting again, just like she used to," Vanessa says.

"When she saw how happy I was, she was more at peace."

Throughout her life, Vanessa had experienced a lot of abuse, leaving her with a crippling lack of self-confidence. "But all the classes, teachers, counselors, and chaplains here helped me grow and see that I can do whatever I want to do in life," Vanessa says. "So this summer, I'm going to start college and pursue a career in sociology so I can work with youth or maybe in drug rehabilitation."

"Hope Gardens is so important to mothers like me, but even more important for our kids. Our children are going to be the future. I'm so grateful, because I know my daughter will now have a chance to do something with her life."

"If anyone is poor among your people ... do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need.... There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward those of your people who are poor and needy in your land."

— Deuteronomy 15:7-8,11



Sending Kids to Camp

Children who have experienced homelessness often feel abandoned, frightened, and forgotten. That's why this summer, we hope to send more than 100 children at Union Rescue Mission and Hope Gardens to beautiful Camp Oaks in the Lake Hughes wilderness.

For one week, your support will enable kids ages 8 - 18 to experience the joy of climbing rocks, canoeing, making campfires, and best of all — learning how much God loves and cares for them. It's a week that can help shape their whole lives!

Hope Gardens Family Center is a transitional living and permanent supportive housing facility where 100 women and children currently find sanctuary from the dangerous streets of Skid Row. We are currently renovating more buildings on our grounds, which will enable us to house at least 75 more mothers and children.

Let's Keep LA's Families Off the Streets!

Right now in Los Angeles, as many as 10,000 families — mothers, fathers, children — struggle with homelessness. For many, the wounds will last a lifetime.

And many of these children will end up on the streets themselves as adults, perpetuating the cycle of homelessness.

No one should ever be evicted to the streets. Yet, thanks to caring people like you, we are helping 90 families at a time — over 400 per year — rebuild their lives at Union Rescue Mission and Hope Gardens Family Center.



Help Provide Safe Shelter, New Hope, and a Fresh Start

Every day, more homeless families with children are coming to Union Rescue Mission. Helping these precious families often starts with a hot meal and a warm bed. Your generous gift of \$25, \$35, or more will help provide food, shelter, and a fresh start at life.

So please send the most generous gift you can today. Thank you!

For more information or to put your gift to work even faster, go to www.urm.org/donate

URM_40-0410_NL

Our Mission

We embrace people experiencing homelessness with the compassion of Christ — giving hope and healing for a changed life — helping them find their way home.



545 S. San Pedro Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013
1-888-77-THE WAY HOME (888-778-4392)
www.urm.org



Notes from Andy

New Hope for Families

Since December 2007, as our economy tanked, the City of Los Angeles witnessed an over 50% increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness. That means there are currently between 8,000 and 10,000 families living in cars, motels, garages, or with friends and relatives in the greater Los Angeles area.

That's intolerable. No child should ever have to grow up without a home. The worst that should happen to a family is to land at a place like Union Rescue Mission's Hope Gardens Family Center, where they can rebuild their lives.

Hope Gardens is a transitional housing program that provides families with safe shelter, parenting and financial training, psychological counseling, job skills, and the spiritual nurturing mothers need to build a new, solid foundation.

By this summer, Hope Gardens will be home to almost 60 families. Yet throughout Los Angeles, I only know of three transitional housing programs like ours — and more than 8,000 families who need programs like them.

I pray for the day when we live in a society that does not tolerate a single precious human being, made in the image of God, living on the streets. And I thank God every day for all the generous people like you, because you are the answer to my prayer.

Blessings, Andy