



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Public Awareness *see page 4*

“I cannot believe HUM exists, what they are doing for us.”

Today Jose’s life is different, God has shown him the way.



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Jose, age 50, was raised in Quakertown, Pennsylvania before moving to Philadelphia when he was 6. “We moved into the Erie section of north Philadelphia,” Jose recalled. “A bad incident happened between my father and mom, and he just disappeared – he went back to Puerto Rico and divorced my mother. I was raised in a church going family with decent values, I just went off the deep end as a teenager.”

“I remember going to the ballpark with my grandfather. I was close to him. One time he took me camping and was teaching me how to clean a fish. He looked at me, swung the fish, and it smacked me across the face! He laughed so hard that he peed his pants! That moment was a highlight of my life.”

“We moved into a not-so-nice section of Philadelphia, and I was told to change schools. The school was in a predominantly white section and there was a lot of racial tension. It was a challenge, especially being jumped twice and chased out of their neighborhood. Kids

were just not nice and that is when I dropped out of school following 5th grade.”

“I took to the streets. We did not have a rec center or playgrounds that were safe. But the streets made me tougher. I learned how to hustle. I always had to prove myself, and I was fighting constantly. To get good clothes or a decent pair of sneakers, I took to selling drugs and made fast money. I started smoking cigarettes, then marijuana and drinking alcohol. But when crack cocaine hit the scene, it was something new for everybody. And it was socially acceptable to use it!”

“I met a girl who put me on a different path. I was dealing drugs in front of her house, and she said, ‘you’re better than this.’ We fell for each other hard. I would have done anything to be accepted by her parents and one day I was knocking on their front door to speak to them, and her father pulled out a .38 revolver and just starts shooting at me! He could have hit me, but he wanted to scare



NOW IT’S UP TO US

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NOW IT'S UP TO US Bob's Monthly Update

Dear friends,

We have so many reasons to celebrate, including the first women moving into our new Center for Women & Children on March 10th and 11th! As I write to you today, the hallways are active with women who are taking steps toward their new life by going to counseling, meals, classes, and work therapy. As I have shared with you in past letters, this is the answer to many prayers— my own, yours, and countless friends near and far. Thank you again for all your support to bring this to life!

I am also thrilled to share that we have launched a new Public Outreach Campaign with the support of the state of Maryland's Opioid Operational Command Center. The Public Outreach Campaign is an advertising campaign targeting high-risk populations to let them know about the services we provide at HUM. In research we conducted last fall with our community of need, we found that nearly 90% of both men and women indicated that the greatest barriers to getting needed services were that they did not know about them.

We believe that none of our friends, neighbors and family members should die from substance abuse without knowing that help is available.

In order to help people in their hour of greatest need, we created a 24-Hour Hotline staffed by Peer Recovery Coaches to provide help and hope when needed most. Since launching in March, we have already had more than 450 calls to the Hotline—resulting in multiple intakes into our Spiritual Recovery Program! Examples of our bus shelter ads can be seen on page 4. We are also employing radio and online advertising—and we are even wrapping our HUM vans with the Hotline number. Be on the lookout for those as you go around town.

Many people are on the streets are desperate for help, just like Jose featured in our cover profile. They will learn about the help available to them, and when they are ready for a new way of living, our doors will be open to them.

As we celebrate Easter this month, remembering Jesus' resurrection helps us to renew the hope every day that we can have victory over sin and death. His sacrifice gives us the potential for rebirth, and together, we can work to bring that message to those suffering right in our communities.

May the spirit of Easter fill your heart throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Bob

PS. If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction or homelessness, call our 24-hour hotline now: 410-929-6999.

Happy Easter!

A New Phase

Spring is here! The birds are chirping, flowers are blooming, and the trees are turning green. The phase of life emerging through rebirth. As we celebrate Easter and the resurrection of our Lord, we also celebrate the rebirth of the men and women that we serve.

Our new Center for Women & Children is now open and serving women breaking the chains from poverty, homelessness, and addiction. Like their male counterparts, the members of the Women's Spiritual Recovery Program will progress through the stages of recovery toward life-transformation.

It is with great honor that we celebrate the first phase up of the new Center. Congratulations Roletta!

We also celebrated a Men's program milestone this month! Our 2000th graduate of the Men's Spiritual Recovery Program! These stories of rebirth would not be possible without the generosity and compassion of people like you! Happy Easter!



me! She told me that if I wanted to be accepted by her parents, I needed to do things differently."

"I left town for Harrisburg and when I came back at age 20, I had a decent job, but her parents moved her to California. When I could not find her, I went off the deep end. I got deep into hard drugs. For a year, I was so depressed that I was trying to kill myself. So, I sought help for my addiction for the first time."

"Around age 36, I met Pastors Dwight and Tony from Greater Grace Church and started going to their church in Philadelphia. And they brought me to Helping Up Mission (HUM) for the first time, in 2008. I had my first epiphany there. I was in the old rec room memorizing Bible verses and looking for Matthew 4:19. Something tapped me on the shoulder, but nobody was there. I felt a warm hug, started crying, and prayed. I found Matthew 4:19 and it said, 'come follow me.' That is where my spiritual journey began."

"My second epiphany happened years later. I was packing up to leave my house and I reached for my 2008 seed certificate, and it fell to the ground but landed upright on the frame! I looked at it and said, 'I am going back to HUM!'"

"My son was murdered four days after I came back. I became depressed but I decided to continue my recovery. HUM is where I feel the most fulfillment. For a long time, I wanted to be a contractor. Today, my number one priority is to go to Bible college, to continue in the ministry that I started with Haven City Church in Fells Point. I happened to arrive at the church when they needed help. Being bilingual, I was able to step right in and help. Now, I am driving their truck and have keys to the center! And soon I will oversee the food ministry."

"There have been tough times at HUM. Particularly the death of my son, his mother, and my other children being homeless. I prayed hard for my other children and a family member from

Chicago stepped up and provided a house for them!

"Today, my life is different. God has shown me the way. I enrolled into Metro Baltimore Seminary. I stay in service helping others. I cannot believe HUM exists, what they are doing for us. HUM helped get my taxes done. Traffic legal issues have been taken care of. Workforce development helped me with my student debt. My credit score is looking good. And the Latino program that is growing here! "

"I hiked the Appalachian Trail. The campfire was awesome. It was special to reconnect with my grandfather, who I had camped with so many years ago. God created this blessing of nature."

"Thank you (donors) from the bottom of my heart. Without your generosity, a lot of people would not get the help they deserve!"

To read more of Jose's story, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/jose

Focus on Recovery – Mike Rallo – Director of Spiritual Life



Take a look at Jose's Feature Story this month and notice the insane ups and downs in his life.

We talk a lot about the pictures inside of you here at Helping Up Mission (HUM). And all the pictures, good, bad, and ugly, get stuck in our hearts and minds. And for some reason, we allow those "pictures" to dictate how we go through life.

"I remember," said Jose, "about a wonderful fishing trip with my grandfather and laughing so hard he peed his pants."

Then - "I remember kids not being so nice after I dropped out of school after the 5th grade."

Then - "I remember selling drugs, making fast money, and then meeting a girl and I wanted so badly to get her approval by doing things differently. And then she was gone, so I went "off the deep end."

Then - Jose had a Spiritual awakening - "I remember feeling a warm hug (from God), prayed, and He said, 'come follow Me'."

Then - "I remember my son was murdered, became depressed, but continued my recovery at HUM."

Then - "I remember hiking the Appalachian trail with HUM brothers. God created this blessing for me."

"He was there in the good, and the bad, and the ugly," says Jose. "All of those pictures have made me who I am."

And Jose knows that all those pictures have led him to give back by using all of his pain to help others in pain. And now, ultimately the freedom to know that God replaces the old pictures with redeemed ones. Pictures of hope! And for Jose, those pictures present a wonderful slide show inside his heart to see how it all has led him to the One who makes all things new.

Happy Easter!

Easter will be here soon. And we are hoping we can count on you to help provide meals and much-needed hope for vulnerable people struggling with homelessness and addiction.

These are men and women who desperately need the power of the resurrection in their lives. Hurting folks who need to know of Jesus' personal sacrifice for them and the unending hope He offers.

That's why we pray you will continue your strong support of Helping Up Mission today, during Holy Week, with a special Easter gift.

Every \$2.05 you give will provide a delicious meal and help "set the table" for our guests to discover new life in Christ through our Spiritual Recovery Program.

\$38.95 will feed and care for
19 hurting people.

\$77.90 will feed and care for
38 hurting people.

\$155.80 will feed and care for
76 hurting people.

The men and women in our care are searching for real change. They need to know that "if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV).

Please visit: helpingupmission.org/easter to help lead them to the foot of the cross, that they might break free of the chains of homelessness and addiction. Thank you!

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Public Outreach Campaign



Next time you are driving around Baltimore be on the lookout for Helping Up Mission ads on bus shelters! These advertisements have been placed throughout the community with hopes that a person experiencing homelessness or addiction can find the HELP they need.

Our new 24-hour hotline number 410-929-6999

is prominently featured and waiting to be answered by a trained peer recovery counselor. Letting a struggling individual know that if they are ready to change their life, they can take the Next Step Now!

All it takes to begin their recovery journey is a phone call. We will schedule a time for them to talk with a staff member who understands the challenges they are facing and is ready to help them find hope and healing.

Together with your support, these individuals will know that they are not alone, they are not invisible, and they have POTENTIAL! So, the next time that you see one of these displays, feel the warmth of what you help make possible for our most vulnerable neighbors.



Our Mission

Helping Up Mission provides hope to people experiencing homelessness, poverty or addiction by meeting their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.

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