

MILESTONES

Recovery happens in relationships.

SEPTEMBER 2021

The End That Became a Beginning

"When I came to the Mission, all my private possessions and everything were in one handheld Tupperware container, one of those clear and blue ones." —Rick

BAM! The judge's gavel hit the bench. Six months of court-mandated sober living. Rick hung his head. He knew he needed it but being in his forties and having battled addiction for over thirty years, Rick knew it wasn't enough.

"I'm one of those that started smoking marijuana and drinking and things at the ripe old age of nine," he says. "I could stop for periods of time. There were points in time where I could stay sober and clean for five months, six months. I just couldn't stay stopped."

When the 6-month verdict came, Rick begged for more time. The judge thought he was crazy, but Rick said he wanted to go to Santa Barbara Rescue Mission for our 12-Month Residential Recovery Program.

He knew it was his last chance.

"I was at the age where either this would work for me or I'd be done," he says. "This was pretty much the end for me."

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"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible,'

The End That Became a Beginning

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Rick called the Mission every day until he could get into the program.

"I came in with ripped up shoes. My Vans had holes in them. I had long hair. My t-shirt had holes. I wasn't expected to pull through, but I knew that if I stuck with it, that things would change and that's what I was looking for. I needed that change."

But even when he started the Recovery Program, people weren't sure he'd make it.

"I was not expected to graduate, and I was not expected to stay sober throughout my program," he says.

Rick Proved Everyone Wrong

But Rick did graduate – 8 years ago, in 2013. While he was at the Mission, he got a job at a gas station, and since then has worked his way up to manager.

"I now manage this store, and it's my store, my shop. It's a multi-million-dollar gas station."

Rick has stayed sober all these years and has found a whole new life – one that he never thought was possible. And to be honest, some of us at the Mission didn't think would be possible either. But God and friends like you made the impossible, possible.

Rick is not only sober with a great job, but he volunteers here at the Mission with our new residents, giving them hope that if he could experience this kind of transformation, they can too.

On top of it all, Rick knows the healing he's experienced would truly have been impossible without the support of people like you.

"Thank you for everything you do, because without your donations, none of this could be possible," he says.



"Being a graduate of the Mission has been the highlight of my life." – Rick



I RECENTLY DID SOMETHING that some people might think of as impossible.

I completed the 100-mile endurance paddleboard race, California River Quest. Some of my friends and family thought I was crazy for even trying it, but I needed the challenge. I needed to see if I could do it. I needed to see if it was possible. And it was.

And while an endurance race isn't anywhere near the depth of challenges that Rick and Luke have overcome, it still gave me a different perspective of just how hard the men and women in the Recovery Program have to work.

Overcoming the trauma of homelessness and addiction is grueling and painful, and it can't be done alone.

I would have never been able to finish the 100-mile race without support. I wouldn't have made it without God giving me strength, people praying for me, and people cheering me on, supplying me with food and hydration along the way.

Rick and Luke would have never gotten to the places they are at today alone. They would never be living in freedom if they didn't have the right tools, access to a proven program, financial support, and the prayers of people like you.

You helped make their transformation possible. And together, I know we can keep doing it for more of the men and women in our community who are in desperate need.

Rolf Geyling
President

“ . . . Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

Hebrews 12:1-2



Even though he wanted to, Luke never thought he'd be able to have the holes in his ears repaired. But his church community saw his desire to get a fresh start physically, so they came around him to help him get corrective surgery to make him look like the new man he is!



A NEW MAN, INSIDE AND OUT

“I never thought anyone could help me.” – Luke

Luke's dad was a drug addict. So is his brother. And so was he.

“It's just super sad,” he says. “We go through so much trauma that that's the only way we know how to deal with things. If I wasn't here, I would be in prison right now.”

Not only would Luke likely be in prison, but he also wouldn't look like he does today at all. For years he had ear-spacing earrings (gauges), that made holes in his earlobes that stretched to 3 inches.

“I've always wanted to get them fixed,” he says. But he never thought it would be possible. But while he's been at the Mission, his new church family has come alongside him to help him get reconstructive surgery – you can see what he looks like now in his after photo.

As important as the physical change is for getting jobs and doing things in the community without living

under a sea of judgmental stares, for Luke, his internal transformation is what's more important.

“I was so broken; I just didn't want to live anymore. I've tried suicide more than once; it never worked,” he says.

Imagine that. Thinking that a good life is so impossible your only option is to end it all.

Thankfully, Luke survived all those attempts. **And thankfully he found out about the Mission and here he began a relationship with Jesus.**

“I'm getting over so much fear. That's one thing I never thought was possible, but with God, everything's possible, and He's good all the time,” he says.

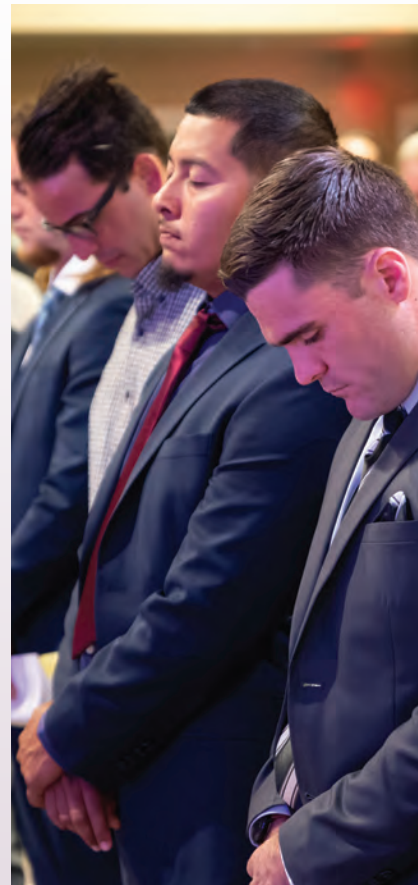
Luke just started phase 4 of the Recovery Program and is set to graduate in November. Will you pray for him as he continues living the beautifully “impossible” life he now has?



4th of July BBQ and Raffle Report

This year's 4th of July BBQ still looked a little different than it has in the past, but it was much closer to normal than last year. Without as many restrictions, we were able to have more activities, including a pie eating contest, a modified "dunk" tank, delicious BBQ, plus the Women's Auxiliary provided plenty of wonderful fun raffle prizes for the guests to win.

It was fun for all of us, but our homeless guests felt especially blessed.



It was so wonderful to get to host our 4th of July BBQ without some of the restrictions we dealt with last year. Joy was evident on all the faces of our guests!

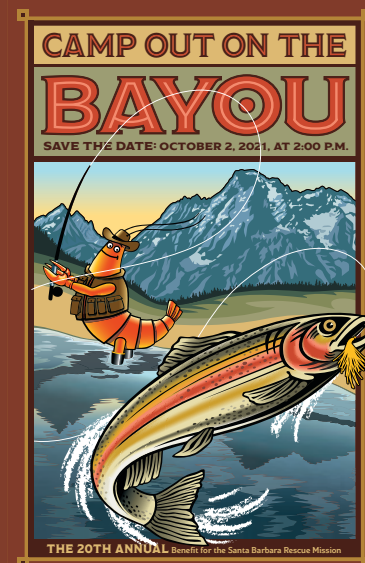
Please Pray

- Please pray for continued protection for our residents and guests from COVID-19.
- Pray for the health of all our residents and guests, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- Pray for Rick and Luke as they continue to live out their new lives.
- Pray for wisdom that strengthens the unity of our staff.
- Pray for continued transformation as God uses you to make the impossible, possible!



LESS THAN ONE
MONTH AWAY:

**Saturday,
October 2nd**



We're back at the historic Rancho Dos Pueblos in person for our 20th annual benefit, Camp out on the Bayou.

This year we're honoring Gerd Jordano with the Léni Fé Bland Award, there will be a silent auction with gifts and getaways, music by the Idiomatiques, and a campsite dinner! This year, we plan to have both online and in-person options as community guidelines allow.

To find out more visit:
sbrm.org/bayou

Help Make the Impossible, Possible

When you're trapped in the cycle of decades of addiction and years of living on the street, it can feel like there's no way to ever have a healthy, meaningful life.

But you know that's not true. You know that with God, anything is possible. And now, thanks to friends like you, Rick and Luke know it, too.

They know that anyone can experience transformation because they've experienced it.

Right now, there are others who are trapped in the despair and trauma of a painful, heartbreaking life. They need help to see that there is hope. They need help to see that new life is possible, even for them.

You can help by sending a gift today.

Each \$70 you give will make sure that someone in desperate need doesn't have to worry where they'll sleep tonight or where their next meal is coming from. Even more important, your gift will offer new life by also sharing God's love and providing counseling, job- and life-skills training, addiction recovery, and more for one person in our Recovery Program.

Your gift will help someone discover that even the "impossible" is possible with God and the support of caring people like you.



To give now, you can
securely go online to: sbrm.org/hope

**Please give generously.
So many of our neighbors are hopeless
and in desperate need of help!**

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