



# GOOD NEWS

THE SALVATION ARMY DFW METROPLEX COMMAND | HOLIDAY 2017

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## A LIFE TRANSFORMED AT THE RED KETTLE

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Before 2013, Jason was a severe drug addict and alcoholic for more than 20 years. After he lost his job of eight years, life became complicated.

“I was at such a low in my life, I was about to lose everything – a place to live and even my mind,” Jason said.

But all that began to change when he found a seasonal job as a Salvation

Army bell ringer in November 2013.

“I came to work on the first day under the influence, but no one really noticed it, and I came each day after that with withdrawals,” Jason recalled. “People would be telling me, ‘God bless you sir, thank you for what you’re doing.’ Strangers were buying me lunch and hot cups of coffee because it was really cold back in 2013.

One day a lady even bought me a hat. I just couldn’t believe it.”

Through the love and kindness shown to him by total strangers, Jason began to feel his life and his time at the red kettle had a purpose.

“What I didn’t know at the time was that I was being introduced to Jesus at the Red Kettle,” he said.

One day, he opened up to a staff member at The Salvation Army about the transformation he felt was coming over him. The staff member told Jason about The Salvation Army’s church services in Garland and invited him to attend. Jason said it was “a life-changing experience.”

Since working in the seasonal position, Jason volunteered as a bell ringer in Garland three years in a row.

“I like to ring the bell each year as a thank you to God for transforming me at the kettle,” Jason said. “I believe in the work of The Salvation Army, and it’s my goal and desire to give back to the community.”



## THREE CHILDREN ON THE ANGEL TREE



Diana's husband is a construction worker who does not bring home enough income to support all the family's needs. Sometimes the weather prevents him from working at all. When he doesn't work, he doesn't get paid.

Last Christmas, the family's financial situation made it difficult for Diana and her husband to buy Christmas presents for their three daughters, ages 1, 9, and 11. As a result, Diana applied for assistance through our Angel Tree program.

She was happy The Salvation Army provided her and her husband the opportunity to receive donated gifts for their children.

"Every kid wants something for Christmas," Diana said. "It's not only my family; there's a lot of families that have been in my same situation."

When she came to our Christmas Center in Dallas to pick up the donated gifts last year, she knew the assistance would make her children's Christmas bright.

"They're going to be very excited and very happy to receive gifts this Christmas," Diana said.

## HOMELESS ON THANKSGIVING

Last Thanksgiving, Josh was homeless for the first time in his life. Thanksgiving night would be his third night in our Dallas shelter.

Josh had moved to Dallas from Oklahoma to be with his girlfriend. Then shortly before Thanksgiving, he was admitted to Parkland Hospital with a heart condition. While he was in the intensive care unit, his girlfriend broke up with him. He had no place to go when it was time to be discharged. Parkland staff referred him to The Salvation Army, so he walked next

door and checked in for the night.

"I had to find somewhere to go when I got out of the hospital," Josh said. "They signed me right up and gave me a bed."

Josh never dreamed he would be in a homeless shelter on Thanksgiving. He was accustomed to always having Thanksgiving dinner at home. But, even so, he did affirm he received a delicious meal.

"One of the best ones I've had, even home cooked," Josh said.



## FROM BAGS FLY FREE TO ANGEL TREE



Bill Baracani is a baggage handler with Southwest Airlines. In 2001, a coworker invited him to put his baggage-handling skills to work as a volunteer at our Christmas Assistance Center loading and unloading Angel Tree gifts so they would be ready to distribute to parents who had applied for assistance.

Since that time, Bill has come back every holiday season. Each year, he takes off the entire month of December and donates his services to help with Angel Tree.

"It makes me appreciate what I have a lot more," Bill said. "It helps a lot of people that, if it weren't for this program, Christmas would be pretty depressing."

Bill never dreamed when he first started volunteering he would still be doing it 15 years later.

"They always make me feel welcome and they appreciate what I do for them," Bill said. "It's something I look forward to throughout the year."

## 2016 ANGEL TREE



15,445 FAMILIES ASSISTED



49,259 INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED



262,058 CHRISTMAS GIFTS DISTRIBUTED

## BACK FOR THANKSGIVING DINNER AFTER 20 YEARS

Last year on Thanksgiving, Luis and his wife Ana would have celebrated alone. One of their children passed away two months earlier and their other child died a year and eight months before.



Since they would be alone and because of the financial strain, they decided not to cook at home. Instead, they went to church that morning and then came to The Salvation Army to enjoy Thanksgiving dinner with other people.

"It's not just a place to come and eat; it's something like a family together," Luis said of The Salvation Army. "It's a wonderful place. They always help people – if people don't have a place to stay or they don't have food."

It had been 20 years since Luis and his family had come to The Salvation Army for Thanksgiving dinner. The kids were young then.

"It was like no time passed," Luis said that day. "It tastes great."



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## SPONSOR A BELL RINGER

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You can help give unemployed men and women an opportunity to work during the holidays by sponsoring them as Salvation Army bell ringers. This will help guarantee we cover our best red kettle locations at times when volunteers are not available and still raise more money than it costs.

We encourage you to sponsor a red kettle worker's wages, whether for a day, a week, or for the entire holiday season.

It takes about \$80 to cover a bell ringer's wages for a day. To sponsor a bell ringer's job for a week, we request a donation of \$480. A donation of \$2,080 will cover having a bell ringer at a site for the entire holiday season.

If you or your company would like to sponsor the wages for red kettle workers, please contact Justin Eatherly at 214-637-8214.

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## A WORK INJURY CREATED A CRISIS

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Sylvester sat quietly at the lunch table for a long time gazing at the food in front of him until one of the servers touched him gently on his shoulder and asked if he was OK. He nodded his head yes and started eating slowly. He was joined by other needy individuals at our social services center in Fort Worth.

Sylvester lived a modest and happy life with his wife and son until six years ago when an on-the-job injury to his leg dramatically changed the course of his life. He didn't have health insurance and couldn't get proper medical treatment causing his injury to eventually become infected. He also developed blood clots that led to emergency heart surgery.



"I tried very hard to get some help from my employer, but I did not succeed," Sylvester said.

Now he is partially disabled and struggling to take care of his family. His wife

suffers from Alzheimer's, and their 13-year-old son was diagnosed with a brain tumor. A few months ago he started receiving disability benefits, and his son was able to get on Medicaid, but he still cannot make ends meet.

"It's just too much for me," Sylvester said. "But I still need to provide food and pay our bills. Sometimes I go to churches and charities to seek for help."

A friend told Sylvester about the meal service at The Salvation Army.

"I managed to come and eat something so that my wife and son will have the little food that we have at home. I'm really grateful for this opportunity," he said.

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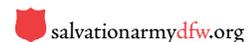
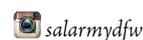
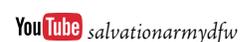
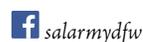
### THANK YOU TO OUR SIGNATURE PARTNERS



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### CONNECT WITH US ONLINE

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To donate to The Salvation Army DFW Metroplex Command, visit [SalvationArmyDFWGive.org](http://SalvationArmyDFWGive.org).

To donate gently used furniture, clothing, household goods, or vehicles, call 1-800-SA-TRUCK or go to [satruck.org](http://satruck.org).