



Message from the Director



Greetings Partners in Ministry!

I came across a verse of Scripture that made me think of you:

Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.

– Matthew 13:16

Those words moved me because God has given you the empathy and insight to see and hear with your heart, so that you truly understand the many challenges the poor in the Deep South face every day.

He has also given you the spirit of generosity to respond to their needs. And, my friend, the difference you have made is profound. You and your fellow donors have empowered Edmundite Missions to weather this past, very difficult, year of inflation and COVID aftereffects.

You provided the resources and encouraged us to stretch ourselves and find innovative solutions to the formidable obstacles in front of us. And today I want to say “Thank You!” for all the things you made possible.

In this special issue of the *Newsletter*, I want to share with you 12 stories about people whose lives you changed in 2022. There is one story for each month, but each story was repeated, with different details, hundreds of times last year.

Lives were saved, families and individuals were inspired to believe in something better, and people who thought they had no hope were given another chance ... because of you. You have every reason to be proud of the miracles you made possible.

On the back page, I’ve also written about the dramatic changes our Bosco Nutrition Center has gone through as we survived and grew throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This is just what I meant when I said you encouraged us to stretch ourselves and find innovative solutions.

A friend said something to me the other day and I felt like I was hearing it from you. “Nothing is impossible,” she told me. “It’s right there in the word: “I’m possible!” It reminded me that, because you care so deeply about the poor, you have very high expectations of us and the work we do for them.

And the truth is that every one of us here feels a great responsibility to you. You give so generously of yourself to help others, and we feel responsible to honor your commitment to the Missions through every client encounter we have.

I pledge to you that we will continue to do everything we can to live up to the trust you place in us.

Please remember that I pray for you every day. I hope God will bless you and your loved ones throughout 2023!

In Christ, I remain

Chad McEachern, Missions Director

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Reminder: We always change the names of those we help to protect their privacy.



prematurely and with low birth weight. His mom, Toni, was frantic as he spent weeks in the NICU and for a while doctors weren't sure he would make it. Thankfully, he did, but the cost of the hospital and medications wiped out Toni's meager savings and put her behind in her bills. Because you were there, however, Toni got the help she needed and now Zeke is healthy and happy, and the family is back on its feet again!

January

The New Year got off to a terrifying start when the apartment that my friend Laura Jones lived in with her three sons erupted into flames. Thankfully, she and the boys were in the front yard and escaped unharmed. But that also meant they weren't aware of the fire until it was out of control. They lost everything, right in the middle of winter. I don't know what they would have done if you hadn't been there to help. Within a few weeks, we had helped them find a new place and today, they're all settled in and have managed to put the nightmare behind them.

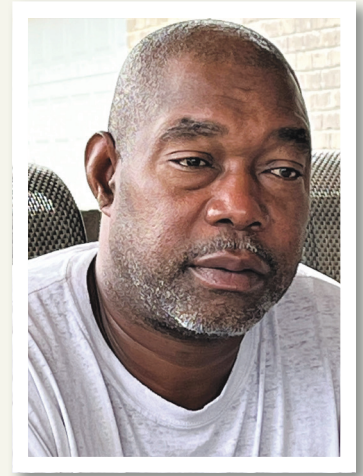


February

Beautiful little Zeke Samuels was born

March

As we began the Lenten Season, I wrote you about Hank Watson, a bricklayer I know. After decades of being an expert craftsman (he built his own family's home by hand!) he suffered congestive heart failure and had to stop working. As an entrepreneur, he had no insurance and no income when he couldn't work. You didn't hesitate to step up and, in the spirit of Lent, you went above and beyond to help him and his family get through their crisis. Thank you!



April

Last April, Andrea Robbins came home from work one rainy morning to find a roof leak had shorted out her electricity and almost destroyed her bathroom floor. For she and her two children this was a major disaster! Andrea earns meager wages working nights to care for an elderly woman so there was no way she could afford those repairs. Your heart went out



to Andrea. Thanks to your gift, we were able to get her power turned back on and fix the leak. The next time water overflowed in her house it was with tears of joy and gratitude for your loving help.

May

When Trinity Rogers' daughter, Anne, lost her job due to the pandemic, she and her two-year-old son had to move back into Trinity's little house in the country. Then Trinity had her hours cut at the gas station where she's worked for years. They were barely scraping by until the baby, Henry, got sick. The medical costs wiped them out, and they had to juggle bills each month. Soon, the electric company threatened to cut off their lights. That's when you stepped in and helped in two ways: First you helped us pay the past due power bill. Second, your support over time has helped create the *Food Market* at the Missions' Good Shepherd Community Center. There, they can



visit twice a month and select from a variety of fresh, healthy foods. Things are picking back up now, and Trinity is able to work more. Thank you for being there when they needed help most!



June

This happy family is smiling now, but only because you were there for them! Last June, Renee Thomas could not hold back the tears because she was in extreme physical pain. She had tripped over a cabinet someone had left in the wrong place at her job, and hit her neck and twisted her back. Doctors were keeping her out of work for several months. As soon as I told you what Renee was going through you reached out to help with the resources she needed to tide her family over. The big smiles in the photo above show how thankful the family is for the difference you made.

July

Thomas Crater served his country with honor. But 20 years ago he came home from the army severely disabled. Caring for him has been arduous and physically demanding and it finally caught up with his wife, Lindsay. She developed extensive arthritis in her spine and widespread infection throughout her body. Her recovery will take many months at best. And Thomas still needs daily care. As soon as I wrote you, you responded immediately to help. This loving couple is not out of the woods yet, but your caring support made a tremendous difference just when they were in the worst moments of their crisis. Thank you, my friend!



August

Kids love summer vacation. But for our children, summer also means a shortage of nutritious food. School is one of the few places they can get regular access to quality, healthy food. I'm so grateful your support lets us send them home each Friday with weekend *Breakfast Bags* containing healthy breakfast food to enjoy on Saturday and Sunday. We



launched the program again this year, and even increased the number of children we can send home with *Breakfast Bags*.

September

Walton Daniels left Selma as a young man to escape segregation and find a good job. He worked hard, lived a modest life, and sent money to his mother every month. He even saved enough to send his nephew to college. He moved back recently to help his dying mother ... then discovered he had cancer and a life-threatening heart condition. As you so often do, you saw the face of our Lord in Walton and gave generously to help with his medical bills and living expenses.



October

Isabella Anderson's son, Arthur, was killed in a tragic car wreck, and Isabella was left to raise her three granddaughters. Only a few months after she buried her son, a fire nearly destroyed her home. It took many weeks, and every dollar she had to repair it. Then, no sooner had the family moved back in than a hurricane roared through and wrecked their home all over again! After all the family's been through, your generosity represented much more than the clothes and supplies they urgently needed. It also gave them hope and the assurance that someone really cared. And that gift was truly priceless.



Fund that helped tide her over until she could get back on her feet. I'm thrilled to report that, thanks to you, Alice and her new son are doing fine now!

December

You may remember Jasmine Cole, the amazing mom who went to Community College twice: once to become a bricklayer so she could fix her home's sagging foundation, and then to become a Certified Nursing Assistant so she could provide for her family. But, between the



November

Driven to rise above the dire poverty she'd grown up in, Alice Hammond worked long hours at low paying jobs so she could go to cosmetology school. There, through talent and perseverance,



she got her degree, then her license, and was soon happy, and independent. But when she became pregnant, complications set in and the doctor ordered total bed rest. That cost her her job and put her behind in her bills. With just weeks to go before the child was due, you made a generous gift to the Missions' *Christmas*

pandemic and inflation, there was no work available for Jasmine. She was on the verge of having to explain to her younger children why Santa wasn't going to make it this year, when you stepped in. Thanks to you, Christmas did arrive at the Cole household and brought love and light to Jasmine's family just when they needed it most!

In a year of tremendous challenges, your concern for God's poorest people never faltered. You have been a blessing to many people who will never forget your kindness. May God bless and keep you throughout 2023 and beyond!

Everything Starts with Healthy Food!



Providing delicious, healthy food to the poor in the Deep South has always been at the core of our work. Feeding hungry people was the very first thing Fathers Frank Casey and Barney Paro did when they pulled into Selma to start the Missions in 1937.



There have always been challenges along the way, but few were as daunting as the hardships the pandemic created for our

hungry neighbors. Because of concerns about spreading infection we had to close our dining room for almost two years. But we were not about to let that stop us from providing food for those who were depending on us.

We modified our *Meals of Hope* delivery protocols to make home delivery safer, and set up a special window with protective barriers so we could serve to-go meals to anyone who showed up to ask.

But as you can imagine, in these circumstances, it was hard to have the same level of caring interaction our clients needed – and that we wanted to give.

Thankfully, after two long years, we reopened our dining room last May. Attendance has been growing steadily ever since. We've also been able to offer more services to encourage people to join us again for lunch and dinner, including:

- Continuing with safety protocols to protect staff and guests.
- Setting up family tables to encourage whole families to come to Bosco together.
- Arranging for our diners to choose from different entree options instead of simply accepting a premade dinner.

These and other improvements have already increased attendance, and the numbers are still growing! This has all been possible for one reason: you. Your continuing kindness and support is making sure more and more people can come to Bosco for food and fellowship in the love of Christ, and that not one of them will ever go away hungry.

