

# MORNINGSTAR

CHRONICLE

*Good News About Changing Lives!*

Summer Issue 2016



An Encouraging Word from Marilyn . . .  
Pg. 2



I might be homeless . . .  
Pg. 3



MorningStar — Mission: Possible 5K Run/Walk!  
Pg. 3

## For me, the casino was the devil’s workshop . . . *but that’s now a thing of the past*

**M**y name is Robert. For too many years of my life I was a compulsive gambler. I would go to the casino, play poker and slots and just stay there, sometimes for up to 22 hours. But in the end, I would always lose. On the rare occasion when I *was* on a winning streak, I was on top of the world. When I lose, I am depressed. It’s been a pattern ever since I can remember — that is, until I came to MorningStar Mission. Here I’m learning there’s another way to live. I never thought I would be able to beat my addiction, but with God and the help of my mentor I’m making progress. Not long ago, my mentor took me to a casino where we parked at valet. Together, we prayed I would never go into a casino again. To this day, that prayer is being answered.

volunteers even brought us some homemade cupcakes. That may seem like a small thing, but to me it was huge. So whether you give cupcakes, donations of money, or just share your influence in the community, I want to say thank you. For me, the casino was the devil’s workshop. Today, my goal is to serve Jesus in all I do and say. I know I have a ways to go, but thanks to God, a donor like you, and to this Mission I know I will make it.

Robert

### **“Today, my goal is to serve Jesus in all that I do and say.”**

Here at the Mission I am also learning to give back. I work in the laundry, but I’ll do any job the staff asks me to do. It feels good to be trusted — and to think of someone besides myself for a change. I’m also aware how much your donations mean to someone like me. You work hard for your money, and you give it so freely to help people in need. The other day, one of the



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MISSION MINISTRIES

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## Violence and Victimization Among Homeless Women

Approximately 21% of homeless families and 25% of single homeless women are homeless due to domestic violence. One national American survey found that domestic violence was the second most frequently stated reason for homelessness for families.

— **New York's Voices for Women**

A recent study found that 92 percent of homeless women had experienced severe physical or sexual assault at some point in their life, 63 percent had been victims of violence by an intimate partner, and 32 percent had been assaulted by their current or most recent partner.

— **National Association to End Homelessness**



## An Encouraging Word from Marilyn . . .

Dear Friend of MorningStar Mission,

**A**s you read the testimonies of Robert and Keisha, may I suggest you do two things? One, please pray that our friends will continue to follow in the steps of Jesus. And two, I want you to remember it's your donations and involvement in the Mission that make these stories — and hundreds more — possible. MorningStar Mission is all about changed lives — and you are a critical part of that change, whether it's during the harsh days of winter or the hot summer months.

Nothing breaks my heart more than seeing a homeless mother with her baby in a stroller crossing a street in a driving rain in the summer, only to be baked by a blistering, unforgiving sun a few minutes later. Often with no food for her child, no access to medical attention, and carrying only a backpack, it is a sight none of us wants to see. Actually, it's because of seeing situations such as this that God moved me to work with my colleagues to establish our Family Center. Now, mothers with children in need have a place of refuge to which they can come for healing — *a place where they are loved and cherished.*

### Homelessness is not seasonal

But whether they are men, single mothers, or families, MorningStar Mission is here to meet their physical and spiritual needs. And while most of our income comes during the holiday months, the work of the Mission continues year-round. Even as I write this, I see scores of hungry people, weary of the oppressive heat and humidity coming through our doors. As they do, we are able to touch them with Christ's love. Thank you for helping us expose so many to the practical love of God. May God continue to bless you richly for standing with us during these critical summer months.

Your servant,

*Marilyn Farmer*

Marilyn Farmer  
Executive Director



**"It's my prayer that God blesses you richly."**

## Those who have been lost are finally finding

**I**t's summertime and the living's not easy for the men and women who are coming through our doors. They are hungry, weary, and homeless, with many struggling with addictions that have short-circuited their hopes and dreams: dreams of a career, education, retirement, and healthy relationships with family. For too many, these longed-for dreams have become living nightmares. Many have tried programs designed to help them get their lives back on track. Some of these programs have been effective; many have not. And now, often as a last resort, they find their way to the Mission.

# I might be homeless . . . *but I know God has a plan for my life*

**M**y name is Keisha. When I walked through the doors of the Women and Family Recovery Center here at MorningStar Mission, I was amazed. I asked myself, *what did I do to deserve this wonderful place?* It didn't take me long to realize this was where God wanted me to be. I came in homeless with a six-year-old child. I had been living with my mom, but when that situation didn't work out I had no place to go. For many weeks I went from one hotel to another. But that was anything but satisfying. The thing I wanted most was a safe place for my son and me. We have found this safety here at the Mission.

## **I now know I have a future after all**

Even though my parents separated when I was young, I had a good childhood for the most part. I had a great mother and father. My dad was a world-class drummer — so good, in fact, that he played backup for the musical group *The Temptations*. So as I look back on my life I have a lot to be thankful for. But most of all, I'm grateful God still performs miracles. I am proof of that because I know I have a future after all. Before long, I plan to get into surgical tech work and make this my career. I've always liked the medical field,

**“ . . . most of all, I'm grateful God still performs miracles.”**

and I know with God's help I will do well in this endeavor. One thing's for sure: whatever I do, and wherever I am in the days ahead, I will always be grateful to this Mission and to you who provide so much for people like me. God bless you for giving me a fresh start at this time of my life.

*Keisha*



## **their way home . . . *thanks to your generosity***

### **Good news . . .**

The good news is this: if our friends are able to discover even the thinnest thread of hope, it's possible for them to have a future after all. That's because the Gospel changes lives and gives people the opportunity to become the men and women God designed them to be. To continue to reach out to so many who are looking for miracles in their lives, we urge you to give a generous summertime gift at this time. Whether your gift is large or small, it immediately goes to work to help those who are lost and who are looking for a way home. To send your donation now, please use the remit slip enclosed, or make your donation online at [www.morningstarmission.org](http://www.morningstarmission.org). God bless you for your generosity.

**“For too many, these longed-for dreams have become living nightmares.”**



## *In Memory of*

**Jack Cox** Doris Ross, George Redman, Loretta & Tom Crawley, Phyllis Snure • **Linda Mathers-Epperson** Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce, Anthony & Debra Ann Presciano, Kurtz & Reva Hersch, Lloyd & Carol Rose • **Conrad Roman** Richard & Margaret Schmitz, Carol Roman, Russell & Sharon Ash • **Benjamin Cassidy** Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Herzog • **Ethel Fernlund** Mr. & Mrs. Dave Harnishfeger • **Carrie & Daniel Demski** Billy & Shirley Harris

## *In Honor of*

Marc & Angela Gomora Lynne Lichtenaurer & Lorin Lynch



### **MorningStar – Mission: Possible 5K Run/Walk!**

Join us for the Mission's first 5K Run/Walk Saturday, July 30, 2016. Early-bird registration between now and May 31 is \$30; June 1 to race day, \$35. The race will begin and end at the Mission. There will be awards for all age groups, and all participants will receive a finishing medal. We will be collecting soles for homeless souls.

For more information or to register:  
Call **815-722-5780** or signup online at [www.morningstarmission.org](http://www.morningstarmission.org).



## *My Summertime Donation*

RM\_46-0603\_H01JO

**YES, Marilyn,**  
You can rely on my continued support of this ministry of rescue.

### **Here's my donation of:**

- \$20.50** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
- \$30.75** to provide **15** meals and other assistance
- \$61.50** to provide **30** meals and other assistance
- \$\_\_\_\_\_** to provide as many meals and as much care as possible
- Please bill my credit card:  VISA  MC  DISCOVER

ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

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▶ Please mail this completed form and return it with your generous summertime donation, or donate online at [www.morningstarmission.org](http://www.morningstarmission.org). Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.