



An Encouraging
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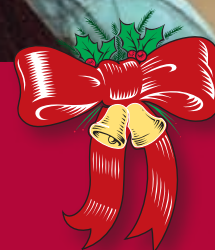
“I Lost
Everything”

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**Thanks to
you, Mary has
new reason
for joy this
Christmas
season.**

your mission messenger



WINTER ISSUE 2021

“I Was Really Resistant”

Mary didn't want to be here at first. But then your love broke through.

Mary absolutely did not want to come to the Kokomo Rescue Mission.

But she didn't have much of a choice. A judge sent her to the Mission after she'd served a two-year prison sentence for drug possession.

“At first, I was really mad about it,” she says. “I was hoping to go home, but the judge sent me here. I was really resistant. I was crying, and I felt like I couldn't do it.”

But that would soon change, thanks to your patient compassion . . .

Mary's journey to the Mission started a few years ago in the wake of a split with her husband. Her ex moved away, leaving Mary, then 24, as a single mother of two. She was overwhelmed by life's new challenges.

“I started hanging out with the wrong crowd and got into

drugs,” Mary says.

She had never used drugs before, but says drugs helped her to cope with the trauma of her split. She thought she was doing okay . . . till she got caught.

When Mary got into a minor auto accident while high on meth, police searched her car and found drugs in her purse. She was arrested, convicted and sentenced to two years. Her children ended up with her mother while Mary served her sentence.

Attitude change

Mary ended up at Open Arms — our shelter for women. She'd only been there a short time when she violated her probation by contacting a felon on her cellphone. She went back to jail for two weeks, and then was sent back to the Mission.

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An Encouraging Word from Van ...

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
— John 3:16

Christmas is a time when we continue to share God's gift of love through a tradition where we bless the community around us with an abundance of gifts — presents for the whole family, cleaning and hygiene items, and a gift card for a delicious holiday meal.

But the greatest gift of all is the gift of God's love and God's Son. While sharing that, we also want to make sure that no one feels alone during the holidays, which can be the most depressing time of year because of loneliness.

Thank you for your love and compassion for our guests. And Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones.

Your servant,

Van C. Taylor, Executive Director

We Want You To Be Connected!

You can receive urgent messages, quick updates and fun videos by texting INVOLVE to 56525. You will receive occasional updates on our ministry. Join the club!

"The Hands and Feet of Jesus"

Why this volunteer serves through our ministry

When Cindy was teaching in the nursing program at Ivy Tech, she often brought her students to Kokomo Rescue Mission.

She taught psychiatric and mental health nursing, and she knew that many people in homeless shelters struggled with mental illness. And she wanted her students to meet people with much different backgrounds than their own.



Cindy, a retired nurse, gives back by volunteering at the Mission.

"They kind of got their eyes opened to what the Mission did," says Cindy, a registered nurse for 40 years before retiring in 2018. "And I tried to recruit some students from that group to come back here and volunteer after they got their degrees."

Some of those students have come back. And Cindy keeps coming back too, as one of our most faithful volunteers.

She says that the Mission was so helpful with her students, she wanted to give back in her retirement. Plus, she's totally on board with the Mission's work.

"I like their philosophy and what they do in our community," she says. "They are literally the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. It's an amazing thing."

Cindy regularly works in the Mission's warehouse, preparing things for the thrift store. She sorts clothing and prices it, getting it ready for sale.

And every Friday during the winter months, Cindy drives around town on a "food rescue" run, collecting food that grocery stores, restaurants and hospitals are about to discard. It keeps the food from going to waste and provides a much-needed service to the Mission.

"There's always a need for food," Cindy says. "I can't imagine being hungry. And I don't want other people to go hungry either."

Would you like to join Cindy and others as a volunteer at the Kokomo Rescue Mission? See below.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are needed to wrap presents the first two weeks of December and to help deliver presents on our Red Ribbon Christmas delivery days.

Call **765-456-3838** or visit the events page of our website: kokomorescuemission.org/events for more information.

"I Lost Everything"

But thanks to you, Daniel's life is back on track

Daniel keeps using the same word to describe his life of drug addiction before coming to Kokomo Rescue Mission: *Lost*.

He lost his job. Lost what was left of his money. Lost his car. Lost his apartment. Lost his family. And, for a while, lost his freedom during a jail sentence.

"I lost everything," Daniel says. "I lost track of what I was doing, and all of that led me here."

"Here" being the Mission, which Daniel's grandmother suggested at a time when Daniel felt quite lost himself.

"If she's giving me that advice, I'm going to take it, because my grandma wouldn't steer me wrong," says Daniel, 39. "So I gave it a shot."

And he's taken advantage of that shot, diving headfirst into our recovery program and working hard to turn things around.

"It really helps," he says. "They care about me, there's good structure, and they hold me accountable. I'm sober and clear-headed now."

Now the manager at a local pizza joint, Daniel likes his life today.

"Without the Mission, I'd probably be either dead or in jail," he says. "Instead, now I have a better understanding of what's going on, and I have a desire to do good. All because of the Kokomo Rescue Mission."

Thank YOU for helping men like Daniel find sobriety and purpose!



Without the Mission, Daniel says he'd be dead or in jail.

Memorials and Tribute Gifts

Memorials and tribute gifts allow you to thoughtfully remember family members and friends who have been a vital part of your life. Gifts made at times such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year; at the birth of a child or grandchild; or on a birthday, wedding anniversary or other notable occasion can be gifts of love to show how special they are to you.

To remember and honor your loved one, please visit our website kokomorescuemission.org, select the Donate button at the top right corner of the page, enter your amount, designate it for a tribute, then enter your loved one's name in the comments. Or call us at 765-456-3838.

"I Was Really Resistant" *continued from cover*

"And that's when my attitude changed," she says. "When I first got out, I had taken my freedom for granted. But when I went back to jail, I saw how quickly it could be taken away."

"That's not the life I wanted anymore. I wanted to change, and I wanted to do what I needed to do. Because I didn't want my kids to see me in jail again. I didn't want to put them through that."

With that kind of motivation, Mary was now all-in with the Mission and our life-changing programs. She's opening up to the staff about her issues. "Because they're really good listeners. They've helped me realize that I can't, and I don't have to, do everything on my own," she says.

Mary says her faith has gotten a lot stronger at Open Arms, that she goes to church weekly, and that she plans to be baptized.

She is now reunited with her children, working toward her goal of saving up enough money to get her own place — and ready for her best Christmas ever.

"If it weren't for the Kokomo Rescue Mission, I definitely would not be where I am today," Mary says. "I'd probably be back in jail or, honestly, dead. But now I feel equipped to tackle life."

Mary is grateful for supporters like you who made it possible for her to turn her life around. And so are we!



Give the gift of abundant life this Christmas

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." — John 10:10 (ESV)

That's not a Bible verse you usually see at Christmas. More typically, you'd see verses about Joseph and Mary, the birth in a manger, the shepherds and the angels and the wise men.

But it all points to the same thing — or, more specifically, to the same one whose birth we celebrate at this time: Jesus. Which brings us to that verse from the book of John.

Jesus promises us not just life but to have life abundantly.

Living on the streets is not abundant life. Poverty is not abundant life. Hunger is not abundant life. Abuse is not abundant life. Addiction is not abundant life.

Kokomo Rescue Mission exists to bring abundant life to people who are experiencing such things — to every man, woman and child who comes through our doors. That's what we're all about.

And that means that your support of the Mission helps to deliver abundant life to people in our community who need it most.

There's no better gift this Christmas than the gift of life . . . of abundant life. Please remember the Mission with a special gift today. Thank you!

Your piggy bank can help change lives

We deeply appreciate everyone who supports Kokomo Rescue Mission with their prayers, their volunteer time, and their generous giving. That's why we want to be sure you know about a popular and fast-growing way to support the Mission and other causes you believe in: It's called a Donor Advised Fund (DAF).

A DAF is a special account holding money you set aside specifically for charitable giving. It's like a piggy bank that changes lives! You can make a donation from that fund at any time, or even pass the DAF along to your heirs as part of your legacy plan. Besides being easy to set up and manage, a DAF makes you eligible for a tax deduction every time you give a gift.

DAFs are a great way to put your money where your heart is. To find out more about DAFs and other planned-giving options, please contact our Development Team at **(765) 456-3838** or **missioninfo@rescuekokomo.org**. Thank you!



Save the Date

Walk a Mile in My Shoes

"Walk Where You Are"

Live Online February 1–March 5

At this annual event, walkers are given the opportunity to learn about the experiences of homeless people while also raising funds for the Mission. You'll form teams (of 2–20 people) and find sponsors for your 1-mile walk from the Mission headquarters to Open Arms, our ministry for women and children.

Keep checking Facebook and **kokomorescuemission.org** for updates.

Competition ends February 24. Winners will be announced to the public February 26. In-person walk TBA.



Red Ribbon Christmas Outreach

Each year, our Red Ribbon Christmas project assists 600–700 families in North Central Indiana. This Christmas, we need the following donations:

- Hats, scarves and mittens
- Bibles
- Mugs
- School supplies
- Backpacks
- Children's books
- Craft kits for girls
- Games for boys
- 900 bars of bath soap
- 900 bottles of liquid dish soap
- 1,800 packages of toilet paper
- 900 rolls of paper towels
- 900 bottles of shampoo
- 900 tubes of toothpaste
- Thousands of new and gently used toys, unwrapped

Give your holiday gift online
at **kokomorescuemission.org**

