



Reflections

Samaritan Women - Community AfterCARE Resources
Assisting women coming out of jail and prison to live godly lives

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Nancy Notes ...

by Nancy Dixon

Like Hurricane Katrina, the storms of life can come upon us and turn our world upside down leaving nothing but rubble. The women who come to Samaritan Women have experienced torn up lives, often losing everything they held dear. Many even lose their children. Their children have their own lives turned upside down as part of the domino affect from circumstances and choices their moms have made in the past. Now they are all in the process of rebuilding their lives. It takes a lot of time and hard work to build on a strong foundation. What they use to place a top value on will determine the strength and quality of life they have for their future.

I always loved the story of the three little pigs when I was a child and as a mom I read it often to my children. The point of the story is to work hard and build a strong house, being careful what you use to build it. The first two pigs were eager to play and not so concerned about what they used to build it with nor were they careful to look out for danger. It cost them dearly. Some of the women I know might say that in the past they were like those little pigs. Now our successful women, like the third little pig, see the importance of working hard consistently at building their lives, realizing there are no shortcuts that really work in the long run. The third little pig was focused on what was important. That is also very important for our women as they have that goal of a godly productive life they are building. They have learned that having God

as their foundation has brought peace and strength to see them through the storms of life now and in the future. They have a bright future. *Matt 7:24-27 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."* It is not always their first choice. If they fail by taking shortcuts, they will often come back ready to be guided and will listen better this time to other women who have been successful, staff or the advice of their mentor. It is hard not to get discouraged when the road has many roadblocks such as affordable

housing or people willing to hire someone with a record. Having someone to walk through these hard times helping them stay focused makes a big difference in the success of staying the course. We need some of you to come be a part in this effort. Just as for those suffering in the wake of Katrina, it takes many coming alongside our women in various ways such as teachers, mentors, office help, building into the children's lives or a host of other opportunities to make a difference offering your friendship and skill. Perhaps God wants to use you here at Samaritan Women bringing in the harvest of purposeful lives. *John 4:35-38 "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true."*

Samaritan Women's

6th Annual

Fall Dessert & Silent Auction

Thursday, October 20, 2005

6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

(Details Inside)

Great Fellowship...Great Desserts...Great Fun!!!



My Story...

By Nellie Cervantes

Hello, my name is Nellie. I had a good life. I was raised with a mother and father in the home. I lived in one home all my life. At the age of 17, I got married. I was married to a very good husband for 18 years. I have two children and eight grandchildren. I was raised as Catholic and knew about God. My life was pretty good!

In 1987, my husband and I had grown apart and we decided to get divorced. For the next 11 years, I was on my own and also had began to care for my grandson who was two at the time.

At the age of 48, I was introduced to drugs by a friend, drugs that would give me energy. At this time, I was working full-time, was caring for my grandson and was having some problems with my daughter and needed the extra energy to get through. I began using these drugs in 1998. Then in 1999, I realized I was addicted to the methamphetamine. From there on, my life started to go downhill. I lost my home; I lost my car; I lost my grandson who I was taking care of; and I lost my family's respect.

In 1999, I also got arrested for the first time in my life and found myself in Fresno County Jail. From 1999 to 2004, I was in and out of jail and in and out of programs. I relapsed about eight times during those years. Everything went from bad to worse. I had no home, had no home. I had nothing!

Then in January of 2004, I was arrested and taken to jail and sentenced to six months. While incarcerated at the Fresno County Jail, I was attending Keys To Success

Classes, which was part of the CCP Program through the Sheriff's Department. Then in May of 2004, Bill Glass came and that's when I was introduced to Jesus and decided to give my heart and life to Him.

Later in the month of May, while attending the Keys To Success Classes, I was introduced to Samaritan Women. I heard about the program and needed housing and began the process of getting connected to receive services from Samaritan Women. I was interviewed to go to the TLC Home. In June of 2004, I was released from the jail to Samaritan Women to be a part of the Home.

I lived in the TLC Home for one year. During this time, I learned more about the Lord, became closer to Him. Samaritan Women is where I learned what Jesus Christ is all about. I also learned about life skills and setting boundaries. I graduated from the TLC Home in June of 2005, and received "The Blessing" from Samaritan Women.

My life has truly changed in the past year and one-half. I now have God's love, peace and hope. Most recently, I was hired by Samaritan Women to be the Relief House Manager for the TLC Home. I really enjoy this. I feel that God sent me there for a reason because that's God's plan for my life. I truly feel blessed by God!

Psalms 57:2-3, "I cried out to God most high. I cried out to God and He carried out His plans for me. He answered from heaven and saved me. He put to shame those who chased me. He showed me His love and His truth."



Nana's Box...

Children's Enrichment Manager...

A common question was asked recently. Should we "force" our children, our teens, to go to church with us? I believe that a different course of parenting is more readily understood today where "force" does not play a part.

The research now indicates that much more needs to happen during the preschool years than was previously thought. These early years are foundational to the development of a receptive spirit in a child, increasing his/her readiness to respond to the truth of the gospel. The child who has had plenty of loving attention (conversational interaction with his parents, adults who play with him, entering his world) is much more likely to respond cooperatively with his parents who have made church a regular part of their own spiritual de-



velopment. If you have done the early work right, you are more likely to be given the "privilege" of leading your adolescent into making better choices, including the spiritual ones. Force does not have to be a part of the parenting experience. For those parents who discover this a little late, it is never too late to change, to connect with your children in meaningful ways that make it easier for your child to make his own better choices.

For the ex-inmate, the need to support the mom and child together is really crucial. These moms need us to give them permission to not only enjoy their children, but they often need specific help being the adult in their child's life. That is where you, the volunteer, can make a significant difference. Come, be a part of the growing community that facilitates interactive change at **Samaritan Women**.

BULLETIN BOARD

Dessert & Silent Auction - October 20, 2005

Building a new life is a real accomplishment and something to be celebrated. Even though life is a continual work in progress, we see the growth and fruit along the way. We invite you to celebrate with us and meet some of the women who have been working hard and shine with hope and purpose. Come join us for our 6th Annual Fall Event which is an Auction and Dessert Fundraiser.

Hosted by H. Spees, Pastor at Northwest Church

'Bring A Friend, Come See For Yourself & Hear Great Success Stories'

Community Bible Church (northeast corner Maple/Nees)

Tickets: \$15/each

Table of 8: \$100

Call the Center at 227-2190 to reserve your tickets today!

Sponsors of the 6th Annual Fall Dessert and Silent Auction.



*Fresno Sheriff's Foundation
Silver Sponsor*

Luftenburg's Bridal - Silver Sponsor

Danny & Joanie Herwaldt - Silver Sponsor

Volunteers are needed at the Center!

There is an opening to help out at our reception desk for several mornings or afternoons (9-1 or 1-4) and for our children's area to assist in loving and assisting our kids (usually 2-3 hours per week.)



Mentor Match Meeting in August 2005

MENTOR TRAINING (TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER)

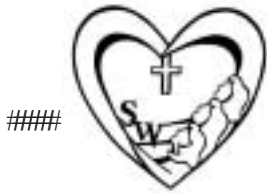
(Call to sign up, 227-2190.)

Our Women are wanting a special friend to come alongside and encourage them along the way. You can be someone that will make a difference by offering a listening ear and love to one of our women. An average of 1 to 2 hours together weekly is needed to better build relationships. For more information regarding training class, please call 227-2190.

Samaritan Women

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Current Needs

**** Fall Fundraiser:** We need ten 8x10 black picture frames with 3 or 4 inch matting inserts. There's still time to donate auction items for our auction. Call Liz at the Center, 227-2190.

****Bus Tokens:** To help our women with transportation, to attend classes and case management. Bus Tokens cost: 5 pk/\$4.25 or 10 pk/\$8.50. Or a bus pass is \$35.

****Microwaveable Meals** like macaroni & cheese or Healthy Snacks like granola bars. We often have women and children who are hungry and haven't eaten all day.

****For the new TLC Residents:** Note cards, small stationery packs, shampoo & conditioner, new slippers, umbrellas, personal hygiene items.

****Binder Paper and Folders** for women taking classes.

****Postage Stamps**, \$37 per roll. (We sent a lot of cards to our women.)

****Birthday Cards and Christmas Cards** (we send to ex-inmates and those in prison)

Thank you for helping meet the big and small needs of our women and children. This really helps!!!

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Richard Dixon, Executive Vice President
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