



My Mom Gave Her Life To Save Me

As a blazing fire raged through their family trailer, Seth Ryan Marco Massella's pregnant mother threw her body over 13-month-old Seth to shield him from the inferno. Her actions saved his life. Unfortunately, the fire took her life, the life of her unborn baby, and Seth's father. It was the beginning of a very long journey for this little child.

After this horrific tragedy, Seth's aunt Monica Duncan stepped in to raise him. For the next fifteen years, Seth experienced more than fifty operations at the Shriners Hospital. The procedures consisted of skin grafts, the realignment of broken bones, implants to stretch his skin, and wearing full body suits so his scars wouldn't bulge. You may even recall seeing him on television as the poster child for the Shriner's Hospital.

Since they moved often – Monica was in the military – Seth didn't have much of an opportunity to socialize and make new friends. That, along with the medical procedures, kept him away from school for extended periods of time. When he returned to school, it was as if he were the "new kid". The teasing and name calling – because of his scars – built up a lot of issues within him, although he always felt that he was no different than anyone else. He knew that it is what's in your heart that counts, and he was a good kid and serious about getting good grades.

It wasn't until high school that he began making bad decisions. Highly involved in graffiti that led to gang activity, Seth's involvement with drugs began – first to make money and eventually leading him to become a user and an addict. By the time he was 20, Seth was in a relationship and became

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Addressing Childhood Trauma

Seth's feature story leads to a question that I am often asked: "How does someone fall into addiction?" There are many reasons, but early childhood trauma is generally a root cause. So, a fair question is, "How does Gospel Center address childhood trauma?" The answer is an inside look at our New Life Program's key curriculum, **ACE Overcomers**. ACE is an abbreviation of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs come in many forms. From physical and mental abuse, to neglect and household dysfunction. In 1998 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente published a groundbreaking study that investigated the impact of ACEs on physical and mental health problems. During the study, adults were given a survey asking about ACEs they experienced prior to the age of 18. The study showed a direct correlation between ACEs and future health complications, homelessness, addictions and health-risk behaviors.

Here is the ten question ACEs survey which our New Life Program students (NLPs) take early on in their program. As a child:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? Did they act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you, or hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
3. Did an adult or person at least five years older than you ever touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way; or have – or attempt to have – oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
4. Did you often or very often feel that no one in your family loved you, or thought you were important or special, or that your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
5. Did you often or very often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you, or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
7. Was your mother or stepmother often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? Or sometimes, or often, kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Were they ever repeatedly hit for more than a few minutes, or threatened with a gun or knife?
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or attempt suicide?
10. Did a household member go to prison?

This survey gives the GCRM counselors and Treatment Team the tools to collectively work towards the best program and counseling for the student - identifying their hurts that need to be addressed. The Treatment Team is comprised of Gospel Center counselors and staff that are directly involved in the daily lives of students. The ACE survey and the ACE Overcomers curriculum not only pulls back the curtain to reveal the source of physical and emotional problems, it teaches sound biblical principles that retrain the brain and reset the nervous system. It also gives the Treatment Team ample time – the full length of the student's stay at The Mission, to address the hurts. The ACE program has been studied by University of California Merced and demonstrates evidence-based effectiveness. We are blessed to have a core curriculum that is scientifically solid and scripturally sound.

So how can you help our students' work through their ACEs? Foremost, pray for our New Life Program students like Seth. Also, consider financially supporting the Treatment Team and our ACE curriculum. In addition, your participation in funding one or more scholarships gives you an opportunity to mentor and encourage our students. Your involvement in their lives is cherished. For more information about funding, go to our website at gcrms.org/give/funding-opportunities.

Wayne G. Richardson

GCRM HAPPENINGS



We were honored to receive a visit to our Campus from Fritz and Phyllis Grupe. They were greeted by our staff, students and friends of the Mission, who shared with them the important work we are doing. In addition to a campus tour, they received a report on the projects that were completed in 2021, as well as the many upcoming projects that will greatly serve the needs of our students, and community for many years to come. Thank you Fritz and Phyllis for taking time to tour our campus. Pictured with Fritz and Phyllis are the students they are mentoring through scholarships.



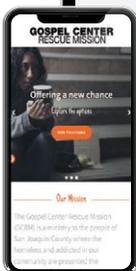
Such a joyful time for our students, staff and Mission Kids! The annual Christmas party included a delicious luncheon served up by our amazing kitchen staff and volunteers, along with lots of terrific presents and holiday cheer.

Thank You!

We thank each company, family, and individual who generously gave to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission during the Holiday Season. The tremendous outpouring of food, gifts, cash, gift cards, and clothing continues to bless our students and overnight guests. We are beyond grateful, and we thank you!

Our New Website!

If you have not checked out the new GCRM Website (gcrms.org) please take some time to view it! You will find a freshly designed site that will share our statement of faith, the many programs for our students, as well as opportunities for you to pray, volunteer, and give.



SAVE THE DATE!

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE UNDER THE CROSS!

On Sunday, April 17th at 6 am, The Mission will be holding an Easter Sunrise Service under the cross on the Sonora Street side of the William R. "Bill" Brown Building. More details to come!

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

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Please Pray For Homeless Regeneration.

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a father. His continued drug use and gang affiliation led to his son's mom leaving, which also left him with no home or income.

As a deep depression set in, Seth was determined to get clean from his addiction. He reached out to his older brother who provided him with a job. Seth stayed clean for about six months, and then the cycle of drug abuse returned. He lost his job, his brother forced him out of the house and he was now living on the streets of Stockton. His Aunt Monica – who Seth now calls mom – also tired of enabling him. She asked Seth, 'when will I have my baby boy back?' It was that question that led him to be done with drugs and seek help to stop. Seth asked his aunt to help him find a rehab program, which led them to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission.

The first two weeks at The Mission were rough – going through withdrawals – yet determined to enter the New Life Program and deal with his issues. As you can imagine, most issues were associated with his childhood trauma and the loss of his parents.

Seth entered GCRM in April 2021 where he completed Phase I of the New Life Program, and works in Recuperative Care at The Mission. He now possesses goals of getting a good job in HVAC and have his own apartment. The Gospel Center is where he was introduced to Jesus, began praying, and was baptized at First Baptist Church of Stockton.

When asked about the Mission Seth shared, "I give thanks to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission staff for helping me find a new life in Jesus. I am happy and can connect with reality. I can live a real life instead of a life I had in my drug filled mind."

Going through the New Life Program has helped him deal with his anger issues, define boundaries, rekindle his relationships with his family, and allows him to focus on his relationship with Jesus to help him deal with his struggles.

Reflecting on his life today, Seth said, "When my mom covered me during that horrible fire, she gave *her* life to save me. The Mission has taught me that Jesus also gave *His* life to save me. He covered all my sins and set me free. I am so very thankful."

Donations Needed

Hygiene Products Needed!

Our students are in need of

Shampoo • Conditioner • Toothbrushes
Toothpaste • Hand Soap • Body Wash
Disposable Razors

We thank you for any donations.

For donation drop-off, call (209) 320-2310.