

Your support has changed a young woman's life. Read Gina's heartwarming story of growth through crisis.

“ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD...”

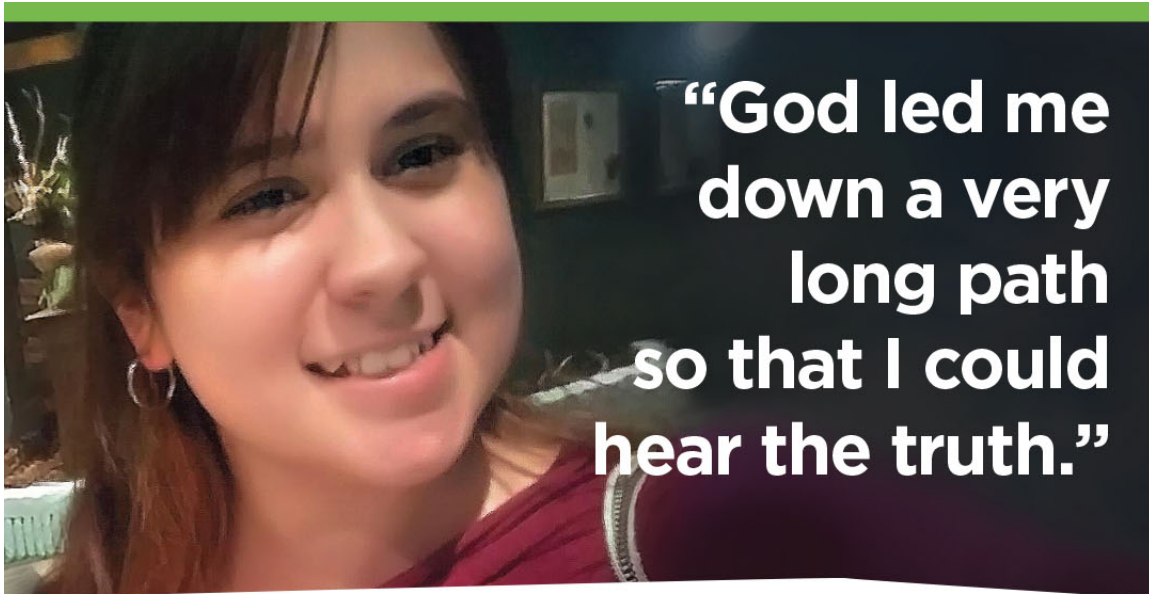
Broken by the unexpected consequences of homelessness, losing all recognizable permanence in life, many transient families with no place to go find themselves desperately grasping for some level of safety and stability. Lost in the shuffle of their circumstances, a place like Pacific Garden Mission represents more than just a roof to sleep under. We provide the assurance of hope, refuge from the streets, and the opportunity for new beginnings. It's often through the clarity found in the calm at the Mission—which you help to provide as a donor—that hearts and minds

begin to open to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Gina, who came to live at the Mission at the age of 14, accompanied by her mother, father, and 7-year-old sister, is one of those who found this spiritual clarity within the calm. God directed Gina's steps to the Mission, and He continues to do so now as she grows in her walk with Him.

GINA

“When we lost our home, I had no idea it was going to last so long. We moved from one place to another, staying with



different family members, and things were very unstable. Each move was harder, at least for me. I remember completely breaking down during our last couple of moves. When we got to Pacific Garden Mission, things were so hard. I remember doubting more than ever that things would ever end.

"The hardest thing in some way was knowing I had a little sister that looked up to me, and because of that, I had to grow up a lot faster than I wanted to. My little sister is honestly precious to me, and I wanted to be strong for her. I also had to step up a lot because at the time my dad was not around. That was something I was very bitter about for a while.

"I know the hardest thing for me was constantly having to leave one place and go to another. I would get used to the 'home' I was in, even if it wasn't my own, and then we would have to move again. It felt like one

loss after another, and after a while, it no longer seemed bearable . . . especially when you are lost without the Lord, and that's honestly what it felt like all the time.

"The first night at Pacific Garden Mission, I was very scared. I would try to run from the fact that I was homeless for so long because, in a way, it didn't feel that way when I lived with family in their homes, whether it was a good home or not. When I walked into PGM, I remember everything catching up to me and feeling truly homeless. I remember crying when I found out we were going to be living at the Mission. And when we got there, all I



A family united, and experiencing God's continual healing process.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” —Romans 8:28 (KJV)

could think about was, ‘How am I going to get to school tomorrow?’

“Looking back on my first day at PGM, I’ve had days when I wished I could go back to that day and explain to the younger version of myself how much love I’d have for PGM in the end.

“Pacific Garden Mission changed my perspective on so many things, and I didn’t realize it at the time. I was in the women and children’s section with my mom and my sister. My dad was going through the Bible program. One thing I will always remember is the children around me. They were all going through what I was going through. They were so young, and it broke my heart. But the more those kids grew on me, the more I found peace there. Not only that, but we started going to church. At the time, I didn’t realize what was so special about it, but I do know I enjoyed myself and wanted to go back.

“When we left PGM, I remember crying harder than I did when I came. I was going to miss it there. When we finally found our own place, I was happy . . . but I couldn’t understand why I was still broken in a sense. I had everything I never thought I’d have again, not even realizing the one thing I was missing was God. Then, I noticed my dad, who got saved at Pacific Garden Mission, encouraging us to go to the church (West Lawn) across the street. I went a couple times, and I remember the

message I heard right before I was saved.

The pastor was saying something about how everything happens for a reason, and that finally made sense to me. I honestly didn’t realize how much things changed for me at PGM until that day. I had a moment where I didn’t hear everything else my pastor said because in that moment, everything made sense. I remember thinking about how much I resented my dad because of what he put us through, but I realized I HAD to go through everything I went through. My outlook changed a lot because of my time at PGM, but I didn’t realize that until this day.

“I had to go through homelessness for so many reasons. If I had never gone to PGM, I never would have known that I love to be around kids. I truly do think that my time spent at PGM really helped me to see that side of myself. I learned what my



Gina is baptized soon after surrendering her heart to the Lord.



Gina and her family share the joy of her successful completion of high school.

the truth, and I thank Him for it every day. I accepted Jesus as my Savior that day. Not only that, but I accepted everything I had gone through.

During the four months Gina and her family lived at Pacific Garden Mission, the seeds of the Gospel were being planted. Now an active student at Providence Baptist College studying elementary education, Gina believes her time spent in Pacific Garden Mission's women and children's division was one of the places God used to open her heart to the children around her. After finding her calling, she has now dedicated her heart and mind to this pursuit. To consider the innumerable lives affected by the ministries of Pacific Garden Mission, one can only wonder how many souls we will meet in heaven that were helped through your partnership and God's grace. Thank you for making stories like Gina's possible.

purpose was. I also wouldn't have gotten to experience church either. Sure, I wasn't saved during my time at PGM, but it planted a huge seed in my life. Now I'm in school studying elementary education at a Bible college and learning a lot about working with children. I have great friends there and amazing memories so far and it is only my freshman year.

"Romans 8:28 says, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.' And it was no coincidence that the home we had after all of the struggles was right across the street from my church. God led me down a very long path so that I could hear



Forming new wholesome friendships at Bible college, Gina has begun a new chapter in life.



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

COMPASSION FOR MOTHERS

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” — Matthew 25:35-36

During the month of May, we celebrate our mothers. But when I look at the mothers and children at Pacific Garden Mission, I wonder what brought them here. So, I asked some, and here are the responses:

“I was homeless with my two younger kids because my mother kept kicking us out in the streets. PGM was a lifesaver.”

Another mother writes, “What brought me to Pacific Garden Mission was not having any other stable option of living. After being thrown out in the cold, I had no other option but to come to a shelter that would tend to my 3-year-old toddler’s needs. Now that I am here, I see that it is not what I expected—but so much better. I’m glad I came here to seek out the

programs and resources. It has been going well, and because of PGM’s help and my willingness to help myself, I look forward to the future.”

Another states, “I came to PGM homeless and pregnant, and I needed to find God to get my life together for my daughter and me. I want my daughter to have a bond with me. I never had a bond with my mother, and never knew my family or God at that time in my life. I don’t want that for my daughter. I want what is best for her, and I want both of us to get to know God.”

These stories are just a few of the many who walk through our doors—cold, afraid, alone, and with a child—looking for help. Thank you for your prayers and support as we continue to minister to this vulnerable population.

We are truly overwhelmed by your generosity and compassion. Thank you for your prayers and financial support which gives women like these a true sense of hope.

The homeless who come to PGM are treated as welcome guests, and receive food, shelter, and the Gospel.

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Learn more by visiting Pacific Garden Mission, where lost souls find hope, compassion, and purpose.



GODLY STEWARDSHIP

Stephen Welch,
Director of Development

Since 1877, Pacific Garden Mission has practiced Godly stewardship. We have a fiscal responsibility to God, who began and continues to sustain this ministry. We also have an obligation to those who make this ministry possible—our donors and beneficiaries.

We continue to pledge fiscal responsibility to our donors. We have no debt except for our building mortgage, which is now down to \$1,415,580. Thank

you for your faithful support.

We hope you see the fruit of your labor. You are a co-laborer in Christ at Pacific Garden Mission. We thank God for you and pray for you daily.

You know it all starts with love—the love of Christ and your love. Please take a minute to read the notes below, representing the hundreds that friends like you mailed in. We gave these notes to the dear friends who found themselves homeless in Chicago on Resurrection Sunday. As we preach the Word of God, Jesus will show them that their real home is in Heaven.

YOUR CARING WORDS OFFER HOPE TO MANY!

We would like to thank everyone for taking the time to fill out and mail back the encouraging messages of hope to our guests. These handwritten notes, passed out with the Easter dinners, were an extra light during this special time. Here are just a few of the ones we have received. *Thank you!*

