

UNIVERSAL NEWS



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NEW YEAR, A BRAND NEW LIFE

2024

“Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19

Join us. Sunday, Dec. 31 at 10 PM

“No one believed I could achieve anything in life...”

(Read full story on page 6)

▪ SPECIAL



Page 2
Bishop Edir Macedo

The end of another year



“I had a bleeding problem.”

Page 3

Medication Cynthia used



DEFEAT DEPRESSION

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NOT TO BE SOLD

| IN THIS EDITION |

The New Year

What is something new?

Oxford's English dictionary says that the word "new" is something that hasn't happened yet. It seems obvious, but for many, it's not. Many enter the new year with the same old habits and repeat the same relapses they had in previous years. They make each following year a 'reissue' of the last year except worse. However, the Holy Spirit guides us to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6:4), and there is no better time to remember this than the New Year.

Everyone is talking about "New." New year, new life, new everything. However, it only happens when we leave behind the trash of the previous year and begin with our renewed faith in the expectation that what has not happened will happen soon. And, restored by the Spirit of Newness of Life, we will have reactions that we had not yet had, we will have ideas that we had not yet had, and, consequently, we will see results that we have not yet seen. The 'New' is full of possibilities. It is full of opportunities and achievements. Not trusting in luck or attempts, but trusting in the Word that tells us that God keeps his promises.

One of the best things has been spending the last days of the year in the Daniel Fast, meditating on the things of God and strengthening our relationship with Him. Thinking about new things, I do not doubt that starting the year in the presence of God will be the most remarkable difference in our way of looking at things in the months to come.

May this year 2024 be new; May blessings happen that have not happened yet; May answers arrive that have not yet arrived; May God give you the inspiration that He had not yet given; May salvation come to where it has not reached before; May the Church grow and develop in a way it has not yet grown and developed; May we see the power of our God, His mercy, His love and guidance as we have not seen before; May He surprise us and may we know how to respond to His call.

"Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing. Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:18,19
God bless you all!

| BEATING DEPRESSION |

Depression is a sadness felt in the deepest part of one's soul. It causes a sense of hopelessness and exhaustion so great that a person loses the motivation to do anything and some to live at all. It is a sickness of the soul. But who can heal the soul other than the Savior of Souls, the Lord Jesus?

On Fridays, at every Universal Church, we have a service for Deliverance from Depression. Visit a branch near you today. Make a Chain of Prayer by attending a prayer meeting near you for seven consecutive weeks. You will receive practical steps, counseling, and spiritual help through prayers to overcome. You won't regret it.

There are thousands of testimonials worldwide that prove a Chain of Prayer works. You, too, CAN defeat depression!



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Bishop Edir Macedo



The End of Another Year

The end of another year is coming, and for some, it is a time of parties, joy (temporary), plenty on the table, family reunions, seeing friends, traveling, etc. For others, it's a time to remember those who passed, sadness, loneliness, misery, etc.

As it is the end of the new year, it should be synonymous with the end of many things, such as the end of problems. However, this has only been the case for some.

However, this is the time when most people remember losses and disappointments. Usually, when we think about the past, about the things that hurt us, it only brings sadness, anguish, and the desire to cry and isolate ourselves from the world (depression).

It's the same every year: While some rejoice, others cry.

So, if you want to stop crying, erase the sadness of the past, make this year that is ending, in fact, an old year, and end it differently, yes, that is possible. I have a message from God for your life:



"Do not remember the former things, nor consider the former things. Behold, I am doing a new thing, now it will come to light;" Isaiah 43:18-19

God doesn't want to see you suffering, so He asks you to leave behind, in the old (past) year, the things that made you cry. God promises to do something new in your life, to give light to those in darkness.

WHO BELIEVES? So, take the opportunity to participate in the New Year's Eve Vigil on December 31st, at 10 pm, at the Universal Church near you, and believe that a new life will begin for you in 2024.



Family disagreements can trigger many problems in the lives of those affected, directly and indirectly. It was the case of Rosana, her dysfunctional family base consequently led her to a life of addiction, and the drugs that initially were a refuge became a prison.

"I was a sad and very empty person. I had many problems in my family and had such a great hatred towards my stepfather that I desired to kill him.

Moved by curiosity and also bad friendships, I got introduced to drugs. I used marijuana and other synthetic substances, cig-

I WAS A SLAVE TO MY ADDICTIONS

arettes, and alcohol. For many years, I was a slave to my addictions. To find joy and relief, I would attend parties and be constantly surrounded by people, but nothing made me complete.



There was a curse on my family. My brother was already a drug user, and then I became a drug user. As the years passed, my ruin only became more significant. I would constantly have bouts of panic attacks and was always nervous. I lived a life of appearances and, for a long time, sought happiness in the false pleasures of life.

When I found the Universal Church, my life was utterly destroyed. I got invited to attend a meeting. As I came, I began to put the teachings of God's word into practice, and my life began to change. I got freed from the addictions, which, in my eyes, I didn't think was possible because I was dependent on my addictions for many years.

Today, I don't need drugs or alcohol to have peace. I have received the Holy Spirit, and He is all I need. I am a new woman; I have joy and confidence. The Lord Jesus has completely transformed me. I am free of all the weight of the past, and my family has also been restored.

In the Lord Jesus, I found the solution to change my life. He's the most valuable treasure I have."

- Rosana



DIVINE WATER



“His skin is restored”

My son had an allergy which resulted in his skin having many sores and to worsen the matter, he was diagnosed with chickenpox.

He spent 7 days in isolation due to this. Nevertheless, today he is healed completely, his skin is restored.

-Adriana



“The bleeding problem lasted ten years.”

For the past ten years, I struggled with a bleeding problem that not even the doctors could find out what was happening after many tests to see whether it was a fibroid.

It caused me a lot of pain and discomfort. I drank the Blessed Water and even bathed with it by faith. Today I am healed, the bleeding stopped, and the doctor confirmed nothing is wrong with my body. -*Vilma*



Medication
Cynthia
used

“I had a bleeding problem.”

I was sick with bleeding issues. My life was a mess. I suffered from insomnia and spinal problems.

Upon coming to this ministry and drinking the Blessed Water by faith, the first blessing I received was that the bleeding problem stopped. Today I am also free from insomnia and I have been healed from the spinal problem. -*Cynthia Williams*



“I was living in pain due to a slipped disc in my neck.”

When I was 13 years old, I was diagnosed with Scoliosis, which affected my spine. I tried to lift a heavy box and had a slipped disc. I was in so much pain that I couldn't walk for about three months.



I had a slipped disc in my neck and couldn't turn my head to the left; I would have to turn my whole body, which was painful.

My neck was in that condition for two years. I've been attending the church and using the Blessed Water. Now I can walk fast, turn my head, and all my pain is gone! -*Kathy*

Learn to apply your faith in order to face your challenges!

GET YOUR DIVINE WATER
EVERY SUNDAY
at your nearest Universal Church



|Message|

BISHOP JOSHUA

THE PRESENT THAT DOESN'T DISAPPOINT

Think about the best gift that you've ever received. How well it fit, how nicely it complemented you, how you wished for it for so long. Do you remember? Now think about the worst gifts ever received. The one that you never hinted you wanted. The one you had to return to the store and exchange for the right size, the one you hoped someone would trade with you. How disappointing it is to receive something that we know a person put no thought into.

Nevertheless, we put a smile on our faces and say thank you because at least we got something. It's always lovely to receive gifts, even if it isn't what we want. If only we could precisely have what we need right now. Maybe for you, it isn't a new shirt, a new piece of jewelry, or the latest phone. Perhaps for you, your most excellent gift would be your healing, for your family to be at peace not just during the holidays but all the time, for you to finally get and keep the job that

you have always wanted, maybe your greatest gift would be a good night's sleep or moment of peace, free to be free from this depression and anxiety that you carried with you this entire year. That would indeed be a fantastic gift, wouldn't it?



You can receive this gift; you don't have to hint at or unwrap it. You have to ask for it. Whatever we ask according to God's will, He will do. It says so in His word. He isn't a human being, so

He doesn't disappoint, and whatever He gives is always at the right time and done to perfection.

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

1 John 5:14

His gifts never disappoint because they don't break, get lost, or stop working unexpectedly. No matter what it is that you need right now, ask God. Don't be afraid to ask. You are not asking for too much. Yes, it is His will to see you happy and whole.

CAMPAIGN OF REVIVAL						
MOUNT SINAI						
DEC 2023 BIBLE READING						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Exodus 31 ✓	2 Exodus 32 ✓
3 Exodus 33 ✓	4 Exodus 34 ✓	5 Exodus 35 ✓	6 Exodus 36 ✓	7 Exodus 37 ✓	8 Exodus 38 ✓	9 Exodus 39 ✓
10 Exodus 40 ✓	11 Esther 1 ✓	12 Esther 2 ✓	13 Esther 3 ✓	14 Esther 4 ✓	15 Esther 5 ✓	16 Esther 6 ✓
17 Esther 7 ✓	18 Esther 8 ✓	19 Esther 9 ✓	20 Esther 10 ✓	21 Ecclesiastes 1 ✓	22 Ecclesiastes 2 ✓	23 Ecclesiastes 3 ✓
24 Ecclesiastes 4 ✓	25 Ecclesiastes 5 ✓	26 Ecclesiastes 6 ✓	27 Ecclesiastes 7 ✓	28 Ecclesiastes 8 ✓	29 Ecclesiastes 9 ✓	30 Ecclesiastes 10 ✓
31 Ecclesiastes 11&12 ✓						



My life was a living hell. I was empty inside, and I always felt deep sadness. Even though I was married, I didn't have my husband's attention; his attention was only to friends and parties, making me even more sad. I was insecure and jealous, constantly nagging him to get his attention. Because of the emptiness inside of me, I thought that having my husband's attention would fill that void. Still, since I could not get his attention, I turned to alcohol. I was addicted to alcohol because that was the only way I knew to feel happy. For me to smile or feel better, I had to drink.



Whenever the year ended, I looked forward to drinking and parties with family and friends. We would organize parties and get new clothes, and I would always wear white with the expectation that I would have a peaceful year. Still, the happiness only lasted for a few hours at that party, and my husband and I would leave that party arguing, and that was our story for the whole year. We would have beautiful pictures for the New Year parties that showed happiness, but the smiles were only in the pictures; our reality was completely different.



I was a person who depended on people to be happy, and my husband and I were always fighting. As much as I wanted a new life, it seemed impossible to have one. I was told to go to the beach on New Year's Eve and jump into the water seven times to bring me luck for the new year. I did it because I was willing to do everything for peace, but nothing changed. I started having suicidal thoughts because I didn't see a meaning to life until one day when someone invited me to the New Year's Night Vigil at the Universal Church.

I told myself I had nothing to lose, so I went for the Night Vigil, and this was the best decision I had made with my life. After the prayers, I felt different, and I decided to continue going to God's house to seek a new life from Him. I started making a chain of prayers for my deliverance, and I was delivered from the addiction to alcohol. I learned to prioritize God and surrender my family in His hands as I continued coming. I did that, repented of all my sins, and got baptized in the water. I was so happy to surrender my life to Him. I continued seeking baptism in the Holy Spirit to receive a new life, and God baptized me with His Spirit. Today, I am a new person. My husband and I renewed our vows at the altar of the Universal Church, and our marriage is a blessing.



I have my whole family under the shadow of the Almighty; it is our pleasure to serve God together, and we no longer fight. God removed the emptiness inside of me and filled me with His Spirit. For someone who was empty and had nothing to offer, today, I give what God has given to me to others who are suffering as I did. My joy is complete; it is no longer momentous, and I don't need alcohol to smile or be happy because the Joy of God is inside me.



Adriana Costa

What's happening at the Universal Church...

"The doctors said my husband wouldn't make it out of the hospital alive."



Raiana de Souza had to fight for the life of her husband, Marcelo, who was suddenly diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver and spent months in the hospital.

"My husband was a healthy man until one day he got very sick, and we didn't know what was wrong. He started feeling ill while at home and became very weak, so we decided to take him to the hospital.

BAD NEWS

"At the hospital, the doctors did several tests and said that my husband's condition was severe. He was diagnosed with cirrhosis. The liver was in poor condition, and the kidneys were badly damaged. Doctors told him he could die at any moment as His heartbeat was slow, and advised me to prepare for his death," says Raiana.



DROP OF MIRACLE

The news was not the best, but even in the face of this impossible situation, Raiana, already attending the Universal Church, persevered in faith, believing in God for her husband's healing. Marcelo was hospital-

ized for more than three months, undergoing treatments and hemodialysis.

"I used my faith on his behalf; I made a chain of prayer every Sunday and would bring him the blessed water to drink while in the hospital. I would pray for my husband every day at dawn. I was sure that God would heal him," says Raiana.

Even though she was not against medical treatment, Raiana did not accept the doctors' words. She decided to resort to faith and rely on the word of God.



THE REWARD

"... he that cometh unto God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him." (Hebrews 11:6). Rewarder means one who rewards; that is, the Lord rewards those who call upon Him in faith.

"The miracle happened; the doctors said that my husband would not leave the hospital alive, and today he is at home. Today, my husband is well, and it is a testimony. We both remain united in the same faith, making the chains of prayer in the Church and serving our God. We are grateful for all He has done and will do in our lives."

- Raiana de Souza

There are countless stories of people today who have witnessed miracles in their lives through the power of faith. And you can be the next! Visit a branch near you to learn how you can experience a miracle through the power of faith, too.

"The doctors told my mother that only a miracle would save me."



Andressa Carmo, a 23-year-old administrative assistant, discovered a serious health problem at the age of 18. She realized something was wrong when she began to have fainting spells and stomach pains. Her belly also began to grow, and it wasn't long before she started losing her appetite. "I couldn't eat anything and would just throw up," she says.

When she went to the hospital, the doctor told her that the problem was intestinal gas. Still, her mother, Cicera Erinete, was unsatisfied with the diagnosis and asked the doctor to do more tests.

"I was hospitalized. The doctors did a series of tests, and soon came the discovery of the disease," says Andressa. She had a malignant neoplasm in her intestine, that is, cancer. "The doctors told my mother that only a miracle would save my life, and my mom replied that they would see the miracle happen. I spent my 18th birthday in the ICU. It was horrible, the worst birthday of my life, even more so with this discovery," she recalls.

Andressa's mother accompanied her throughout the stages of the treatment. Cicera was far from the Universal Church but knew that only God could perform this miracle. So, she turned to Faith to fight for her daughter.

Andressa remembers that she received a visit from three assistants of the Church's Youth Group (YPG), who helped her with prayers and words of comfort. "I was terrified and in a lot of pain. When I tried to sleep, I'd have bad dreams. I feared that I would die and not go to heaven because, at that time, I was also far from God," she

says.

During the treatment, Andressa lost her hair, developed low immunity, and her veins became challenging to access to re-



ceive the medications. "I was weak and couldn't eat. It was around this time that I almost went to the ICU again. But I started asking for prayers, and I didn't have to go to the ICU. That's when I started to feel that God was with me, even though I didn't deserve it," she says.

The young woman's mother and the youth assistants who visited her interceded for her. They would always bring the blessed water for Andressa to drink. "My treatment had three cycles of chemotherapy, but before finishing the last cycle, the doctor ordered tests to see if the tumors in my intestine had grown or shrunk. It was a great surprise when the result came: I got healed and never had to return to that hospital," she reveals.

It took six months from the discovery of the disease to the end of the treatment, which ended earlier than expected, thanks to the satisfactory diagnosis she received.

Andressa has had a follow-up once a year to ensure her health is still in excellent condition and says that the doctors are still surprised by her cure. "The Lord Jesus healed me and gave me another chance," she explains. She reports that it was through the Universal Church that she found this God who healed her. Andressa adds that she thought she would never be able to get married. "It left a huge scar on my belly, but since God doesn't do anything incomplete, today I am married, and my marriage is blessed. I have the Holy Spirit, my most precious possession, and my Salvation. I am a miracle, and I thank God every day," she concludes.



After a traumatic childhood, today, Magdalene's life is a true miracle!

"I grew up in a school run by nuns because my mother couldn't raise me or my sister. Over the years, whenever we went home to visit, we always ended up staying with relatives. It was on one of

these visits that I began to be molested by two of these relatives when I was only six years old. I, who had always been a cheerful child, began to manifest a rebellious nature. Because I wanted to externalize this revolt, when I was about 13 years old, I got involved with the world of the night. I felt that this was where I belonged and was where I would be happy."

Given over to Addictions

However, it was from that moment that Magdalene was introduced to the world of drugs. "I started with tobacco, moved on to hashish cigarettes, ecstasy, cocaine, heroin... And so it was for many

years. I saw myself only as a body, for I had already dried up inside. I didn't love anyone. My mother later got to know the work of the Universal Church and began to intercede for me. But it seemed the more she interceded, the worse I got. I often came home drunk in the arms of friends."

Ascend from the pit

"However, my mother did not give up on using her Faith, following the advice of the pastor, who told her to visualize me as she wanted to see me. I had already been to the Universal Church a few times, but I never stayed because what I heard was against my will. However, at

the age of 18, I hit rock bottom. I was severely depressed and spent the early hours awake. I stopped working and instead would go out every night. My life was a disgrace, even on a sentimental level. So, I decided to give God a chance. I began to go to meetings at the Church and put the Word into practice. I was freed from the depression, from the addictions, and from the pain of my past. Today, I am married and have opened my own business, where I have started to thrive. I have peace. However, the Holy Spirit truly transformed my inner self and my family!"

- Magdalene Philip

Faith sees the future we desire

"PEOPLE IGNORED ME COMPLETELY, AND NO ONE BELIEVED I COULD ACHIEVE ANYTHING IN LIFE..."

John had a life marked by difficulties. "We had a difficult childhood; my father survived from the farm, and there were periods when we harvested from the plantations and others when we went hungry. Sometimes, we didn't even have rice and beans, and we picked fruit from the bush to survive."

So, at the age of 23, John moved to the city in an attempt to have a better life. "I came to work as a bricklayer's assistant and, as I didn't have money to pay the rent, I asked to live in the building where cement bags were stored. I made an improvised bed with pieces of wood and placed a mattress on top. The construction staff brought me lunch, and at dinner, I drank half a liter of alcohol. I was in this condition for about two years," he details.

Because he dreamed of getting married, John bought a shed. He then formalized the union

with his fiancée, Maria. "We got married, and when we were going to have the first night of our honeymoon, there was nothing in that shack because thieves had stolen everything. I went to my sister's house, which was also a shack. We spent the night in a room that didn't have a door," he says. He remembers that this year was the worst of his life: "My wife just cried and said that if she

"No one believed in me..."

had to go back to that shack, she would leave. I ended up selling it, but I didn't receive the amount, and, with difficulty, I managed to rent a space with a bedroom,

kitchen, and bathroom in a backyard." In this situation, John discovered the Universal Church when he accepted his sister's invitation.

The word "new" means something that replaces what is old or something that brings something that did not exist into existence. Still, despite hearing this word as soon as the new year began, John never had good expectations.

"People ignored me completely, and no one believed that a bricklayer's assistant could achieve and do anything in life. I drank a lot, I didn't finish school – I only completed the fourth grade of elementary school – and I didn't know how to do anything. I didn't have the slightest expectations with or without New Year's Eve. I felt like a horrible person," he shares. However, this story changed when John received the Holy Spirit: "As soon as I arrived at the church, the pastor spoke about water baptism and the importance

of having the Holy Spirit.

He explained that the person who has Him is truly happy. So I embraced that word, and within about a year, I received Him," he recalls.

A new life began from that moment on. "When I received the Holy Spirit, an immense joy happened. It was unexpected that my wife asked what was happening to me – at that time, she was not yet attending church. I, who still worked as a bricklayer's assistant, wanted to do something different. I met a guy who worked at a cosmetics company, and I was hired there as a salesman. People thought I didn't have the capacity and

that I wouldn't even pay my rent. I insisted God gave me direction, and today, I have my own company selling kitchenware."

He reports that God transformed everything, which only Him could make possible.

"My life is complete in everything. We have locations and assets. I have three children, two of whom are doctors. I was a person who was unable to study, and today I lack nothing. God made it all possible," he concludes.



Maria understood that for God to transform her life, she had to put Him above everything. Maria lived her childhood in a destabilized home. With separated parents and an alcoholic mother, she grew up surrounded by suffering.

Given the absence of her parents, Maria felt responsible for her younger brother. She was always dedicated and strived to get the best grades

I WAS DEPRESSED FOR EIGHT YEARS...

at school. She diligently took courses to ensure better living conditions, but nothing worked for her. On top of that, her love life was not satisfactory.

One day, a co-worker invited her to go to the Universal Church, as she knew she was suffering greatly. Maria started attending deliverance meetings and understood that she could change her life. She stopped attending church when she started a new job, as she could not balance her work hours with meeting days.

During this period, she got married and had a son.

Everything was fine, but Maria received news that destabilized her. "When I found out that my brother was using drugs, it broke me. It sent me into a deep depression," she recalled.

Her brother, whom she cared

When I found out that my brother was using drugs, it broke me. It sent me into a deep depression.

for so devotedly, was suffering from the same problem that her mother had faced. Maria lost the energy to live and began taking strong medications for depression. "I had to have someone in my house to do things because I couldn't react. I couldn't care for my son, who was months old."

Maria started having anxiety attacks and panic syndrome. She was taken off work and was always on medications. With no perspective on life, she began to have a desire to commit suicide. "In total, I lived this way for eight years. The marriage was already bad, and everything seemed

to fall apart."

One day, Maria remembered that she could seek help at Universal. So, she returned to the deliverance meetings and regained the courage she needed to take care of herself. "I started to have more energy and joy. I started to see my son and my husband as important people to me," she recalls. Her husband began to accompany her to meetings.

Today, Maria is aware that change occurred when she put God first.

NEW YEAR = BRAND NEW LIFE

NEW YEAR'S EVE NIGHT VIGIL | DECEMBER 31ST AT 10PM

How many plans did you complete this year, and how many did you leave halfway? The year is ending, and although constant self-evaluation is advisable, this period makes it possible to see better what went right in the last few months, what went wrong, and what needs improvement. So find a place where there will be no interruptions and take time to evaluate yourself. Don't give yourself excuses to put off the task. If necessary, sleep later or wake up earlier.

Assessing yourself is a powerful tool for achieving personal growth. Use a notebook and write preferably by hand, paying attention to what you are writing and your thoughts. Be honest with yourself. Divide the analysis into the following

themes:

– Love life: Consider its current state and progress or setbacks throughout the year. Identify achievements and areas that require attention. Do you and your partner have an alliance, or do the fights disrupt your lives? What is the cause of the arguments? What do you miss in this relationship, and what can you improve on? Don't shy away from writing down everything that crosses your mind. Singles should also evaluate their love life;

– Professional life: Analyze goals, achievements, and missed opportunities. Record successes and failures, why they happened, and what you could have done differently. Make clear plans to improve your career in the next

year;

– Health: Consider eating habits, exercise, and preventive care. Identify areas that need improvement and set realistic goals to improve your physical and mental well-being. Remember to have routine check-ups and exams because without health, improving other areas of your life becomes more difficult;

– Academic life: If you study, how has your performance been? Are you just procrastinating or learning what you are taught? And, if you are not studying, ask yourself why. It is possible to improve professionally by participating in courses with low financial investment and even at home. Set educational goals for next year with a step-by-step

guide to ensure success in this area. Seek to explore activities that provide you with pleasure and contribute to your personal and professional development;

– Family life: Analyze the quality of your relationships and the time you have dedicated to your family. Identify opportunities to strengthen family ties and set goals for a more harmonious coexistence. Set aside moments for simple and pleasant activities with the family, such as walks and conversations.

The most important Finally, seriously evaluate your spiritual life. Does God occupy the first place in your life? How many commitments to Him have you neglected in favor of another activity? How many times have you ignored His guidance to indulge in

worldly pleasures? Do you live in Christianity, or do you follow a religious agenda and lead your spiritual life on "autopilot"?

It is always possible – and necessary – to improve this area. Establish commitments that strengthen your spirit, such as daily reading the Bible and participating in meetings at the House of God. Don't wait for 2024 to start to put everything into practice.

Get to work

After evaluating yourself, take care of what has been written: Keep this document close by to consult it and use it as a compass to guide your path in the constant search to become a better person.

“Behold, I Make All Things New.”

In this Bible verse (Revelation 21:5), God states that He will make all things NEW; what does this look like to you?

Is it a new job, habits, or approach to your relationship? No matter what this newness may be for you, you can achieve it! With God at your side, the future will always be better than your past.

Start setting your new year goals, ambitions, and targets, and allow God to guide you. He is the One that can help lead you to your goals in the most effective way possible.

That's why we invite you to attend the New Year's Night Vigil, where you will have this opportunity to start anew in God's presence. He will protect, equip, and strengthen you to reach your goals and so much more.

Our yearly New Year's Night Vigil will take place on December 31st at 10 pm at your local Universal Church; you are welcome to invite your family and friends to this special occasion so that they, too, can start on the right foot. See the back page for locations.



Write your New Year's Resolution below



I was addicted to smoking cigarettes, weed and had a problem with cursing. I tried to quit but I couldn't. I started the New Year's with God and today I don't curse and I don't smoke anything anymore.

Before attending the New Year with God, I was depressed and suicidal. I used to cut myself with people who I thought were my friends. I began the New Year with God and today I am happy and no longer depressed!





UNIVERSAL BEYOND BARS

You are not Alone!

I had an encounter with God behind bars

My name is Jorge; I am 45 years old. I received a 23-year prison sentence and served 11 years out of the 23. The start of my downfall was when my father was killed, and when this happened, you can say I lost my mind; at this point, I found some people to hang out with. I would leave during the night and start drinking with them, then use marijuana and cocaine. One day, a friend came to me and told me that a boy had called her, saying he wanted to have a date with her and do things above what she thought. I wouldn't say I liked the situation, he said, so we plotted something; she called up the boy. I was there with another friend, and he came to meet her and ambushed him. When he arrived, we got into his car. We left in the vehicle and went to a hidden location, and there I took the life of this boy.

I was in desperation. What would I do with my life? We fled from everything we knew, and for three years, I was on the run. At the time, my son was eight, and my daughter was ten years old. My children had to grow up without my presence, and I didn't have the education to teach them as a father should, like my father had taught me. I did not have peace at this time; I could not sleep when I would close my eyes, I would see the boy in my dreams; it was a period of my life when whenever I heard any loud noise, I thought it was the police coming to look for me, I was hearing voices during this time, and I suffered from insomnia afterward, when I would try to sleep but couldn't.

I started to fill myself with cocaine, cigarettes, and marijuana. These three years began to pass, and I started to think I would not get arrested anymore; I thought I was "free," but this was my downfall. One day after lunch, I took my motorcycle down the street. At that moment, a car approached me, asking for my ID. I gave it to him; it appeared in the system I was on the run. The authorities had been looking for me; they took me at that moment, and it was like the ground was removed from under my feet.

The despair increased. I sat in the corner, lowered my head, and started thinking about getting out. Getting out of the inside of that prison physically was one thing. Still, the problem was being stuck

inside of me spiritually. Then, the thought came of wanting to take my own life.

My wife Sandra had already sought a Universal Church for me during this period. She passed a word of faith that I should surrender my life to the Lord Jesus. During this time, the UBB was working in the prison; the pastors and the volunteers of the UBB came and gave the newspapers, books of the Church, and Bibles.



I remember one word of an assistant that he preached:

**“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
John 8:32**

When I received this word, I went down on my knees with this word and asked that the Lord Jesus forgive me, that forgiveness was everything. Afterward, I had a supernatural peace that I never expected. I saw in the newspaper a message from Bishop Macedo that a person without the Holy Spirit was nothing; it was as if they were a dry leaf.

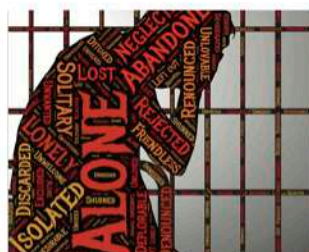
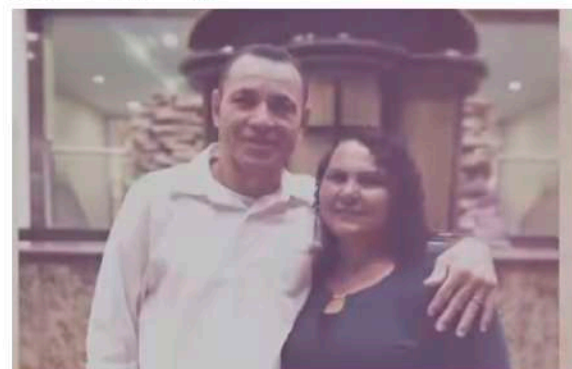
The word caught my attention, and I became

revolted; during this time was the Campaign of Israel, and when my wife came to visit, we sat down and talked about this Campaign of faith. I needed to receive the Holy Spirit. I told my wife to take everything I had in the account and put it on the altar. I was sure it had nothing to do with value, but to give up what was inside my heart was a complete surrender of body, soul, and spirit 100% without reservation.

I most wanted the Holy Spirit inside me, and that's where I started praying and fasting. That night, I spent 12 hours listening to the Universal radio inside the cell around 7:00 AM. I went on my knees and sought the Holy Spirit, asking the Lord Jesus to pour His Spirit into me because I would be nothing. With all my strength, I gave myself to the Lord and received power and joy from the Holy Spirit. I don't know if I cried or laughed that day or what to do, but one thing I saw that day: God gave me a peace that I never imagined.

I let go of all the agony, and now I speak the word of God about what He has done in my life; I received the Holy Spirit in 2012. I was already 11 years inside the prison serving God, without anything to hold me back. At this point, physically speaking, I was free of all the handcuffs. The worst prison is not physical incarceration but the people who are "in the free world" and imprisoned in themselves.

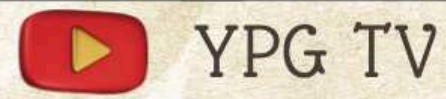
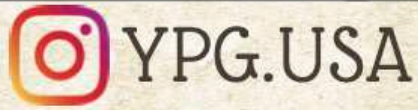
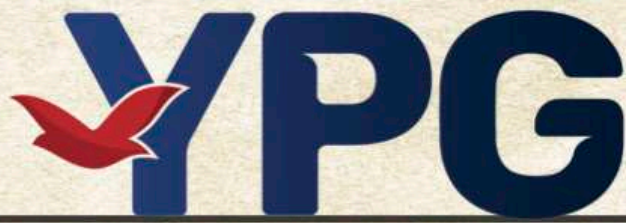
Today, I have a blessed life and the Holy Spirit. Today, my wife and I are happy; my children are all fortunate. I am inside the prison today, and Jesus opens a door of opportunity. Today, the tractor working a year and four months is not missing anything for me because the Holy Spirit is over everything.



“I never knew, things would get this far. If I did, I would've stopped doing this mess when I had the chance.”

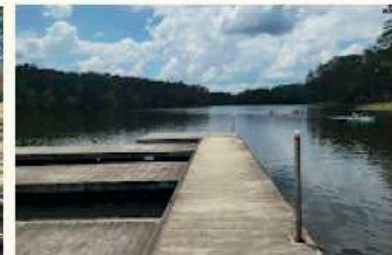
Has this been in your thoughts? You have regrets, night and day. You know you messed up, but sometimes it's hard to face it.

Send your letter or an E-Message to Bishop Joshua. He will personally read, and reply to you. You don't need to walk alone. Mail your letter to: 7075 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074, and you can ask to be added to our E-Message list. Include: First/Last Name, Inmate Number, Facility, City/State, & the Zip Code.



FUN FACT

GEORGIA IS HOME TO THE OLDEST STATE PARK IN THE NATION.



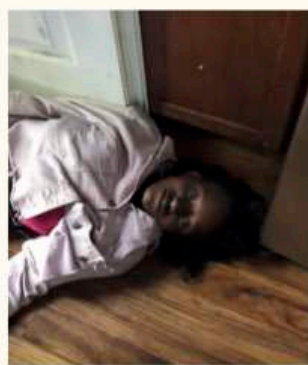
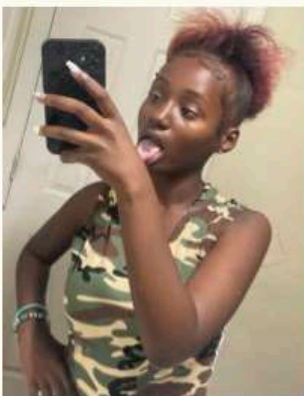
WELCOME TO THE FAMILY



YPG FUNNIEST MOMENTS:

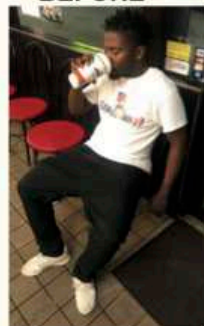


YPG SAVED ME



YPG CHANGED ME

BEFORE



AFTER



I was lost without purpose. Everything became an idol to me; I partied, smoked, and more. My girlfriend and her friends were constantly inviting me to the YPG, and I never wanted to come. After we moved to another state, we went to the church again, and the distance from home to church was too far, so I ended up staying while my girlfriend stayed for YPG. While waiting, the youth pastor asked me to join in on the activities, and I did.

Ypg has helped me grow my faith in God and taught me things I didn't learn from past churches. It helped me change some bad habits I had. It also allowed me to mentor other youths when I got appointed captain, which was always a passion of mine. The best part of everything is that I received the Holy Spirit.

CALVIN

I used to be depressed, felt alone, and didn't have any hope in life; I was suicidal and thought the only way out was just ending my life; I was fornicating a lot because when I was raped, that was my way of getting over the traumatizing experience. I was leaving the house and didn't come back for days. I was a heavy drinker, and it was my way out of everything. I got to the point where I would get so drunk that I would black out and didn't know what was going on. I smoked and hung out with bad influencers and bad friends. I also had a habit of stealing. I was very proud of everything I did. I was just a teenager who was lost and just needed a way to let all the pain and suffering off my shoulders.

AFTER



YPG has helped me a lot. Honestly, I can't thank the youth leaders and the positive friend group enough. They helped me a lot with opening up and mostly just being myself. They helped me see hope and that God can change someone despite their mistakes and bad decisions. They help me know the difference between them and how the outside world is. They helped me a lot! I mostly thank them for helping me move towards good things in life, and most importantly, I thank them for letting me see how good God is.

QUANTERIA



STAY ENCOURAGED WITH DAILY PROGRAMS

Genesis follows the lives of Adam and Eve, Noah and his family, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob (who God renamed as Israel), to Joseph, who was taken from slavery to become ruler of Egypt. (9pm ET)



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SHOWDOWN OF FAITH | 7am
 with Bishop Joshua

THE AM SHOW | 9am

STOP SUFFERING | 12pm
 with Pastor Diego

OVERCOMING DEPRESSION
 2pm with Pastor Edwin

BREAKING THE SILENCE | 3pm

FIGHTING THE UNSEEN ENEMY
 4pm with Bishop David

MOSES & THE TEN
COMMANDMENTS | 7pm

GENESIS | 9pm

THE RICH AND LAZARUS | 11pm

LET THERE BE LIGHT
 12am with Pastor Samuel



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The essential ingredient for prosperity

Luis Almeida always wanted to open a business and become a prosperous entrepreneur. “I started as a salesperson in a clothing and footwear store. I worked in this area for eight years and learned a lot, but there was still something lacking in my life,” he says.

Luis’ involvement with sales even led him to meet his wife. “I met my wife in a retail store. She was a customer. I became interested in her, and one of the first invitations she gave me was to attend a service at The Universal Church. I didn’t know the church, but I accepted. Initially, I went to the Love Therapy meeting. I started attending the Sunday and Wednesday meetings until I discovered the Monday meeting,” he says, referring to “The Strong Nation” meeting.

This meeting, which takes place on Mondays at The Universal Church, is aimed at those who want to learn how to use their faith to prosper with God. “I learned from men of God that I had to do my best in everything I did. There, I understood that if I were a good employee, I would also be a good businessman,” he says.

In this way, Luis’ vision changed, and the dream of entrepreneurship strengthened him. “As I participated in the meetings, I was filled with faith, courage, determination, and the certainty that God was with me. All these things made me stronger until I took action. I made an agreement with the company I worked for, left my regular job, and went to open my own business,” he says.

“I decided to invest in what I was good at, the clothing department.” But you are mistaken if you

think I started this journey with a huge store full of merchandise. “We started small, very small indeed, and, of course, initially it was not easy, as in practice we had to multiply little by little, and that’s where perseverance and Faith come in,” he emphasizes. During that period, the union between Luis and his wife, Sandra Regina Roberto de Almeida, was fundamental: “She gave up her job and started taking care of the administrative and financial part of our company.”

The couple put God’s teachings into practice by seeking direction from above, and little by little, the company stabilized. “Some time passed, and we decided to open the second store. It was the same difficulty, the same struggle. Still, we were sure it would work, not only because of our capacity but because our lives were on the Altar, being faithful to God and honoring the vows we made to Him, from faith to faith,” he declares.

The challenges never stopped, nor has the desire to keep growing. Over a 15-year career, Luis opened six stores, the last of which was opened in July this year. “Over this time, we have understood the importance of staying up to date and with an open vision for new business,” details Luis.

Understandably, people will dedicate more time to their professional lives as their activities and assets increase. Still, Luis says that the balance between all areas of his life is the secret for him to continue growing.

“Over time, we focused on keeping our feet on the ground; balance is essential for that. The Holy Spirit gives us this discernment by understanding what is good and what is not. There is no point in growing financially and losing in other areas. For example, the services held at The Universal church are a priority in my life. I have been participating in them for 23 years.



Overcoming problems

Even with God’s blessing, we are all faced with difficulties along the way, which also happened to Luis and his family: “The COVID-19 pandemic, certainly, was the most difficult period we faced. Despite this, we managed to honor our commitments and pay our employees. And, even with difficult situations, we remain faithful to God.”

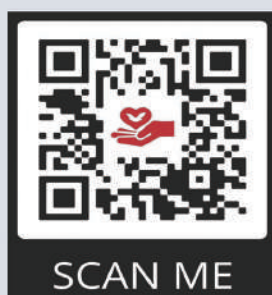
“We thank Universal for introducing us to God and teaching us the path of obedience because, through our Faith, vows, and campaigns, we continue to fight and always achieve positive results,” he concludes.

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