

# UNIVERSAL NEWS



SCAN ME

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## SHATTERED FAMILY

*Sounds familiar?*

**Absent father/mother, abuse, addiction, domestic violence**



*"I hated everyone, especially my mother."*  
(Read full story on page 7)



Page 2

**Bishop Edir Macedo**

**Look up to heaven**

**HEALING SUPPER**  
EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 AM

Read more on page 3

Margretta's belly is now normal

Picture of her belly before

**"Kings, the Series" at 9 PM ET on LFN**



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**NOT TO BE SOLD**



## | IN THIS EDITION |

### Shattered Families

The family unit was intended to consist of people who live together, support and love each other unconditionally, and typically would spend the rest of their lives together and be there for one another through thick and thin. This unit plays a pivotal role in society.

However, in today's world, we often see the exact opposite happening in families: parents who feel as though they have lost control over their children, couples who are like strangers who can't seem to come into an agreement or see eye to eye, siblings who constantly fight and harbor a grudge against each other, family members stuck in a life of addictions, and the list goes on. These internal conflicts within families can easily shatter the dreams of having a happy home.

Nevertheless, no matter your family's situation, it can change for the better. Your family can be restored and protected from further suffering, separation, and fighting. Your home can experience harmony, happiness, and unity, but this is only possible with God's help and protection. You hold the power to place your family in God's hands so that He can take care of them, deliver them, and protect them from the turmoil of this world. He is the only one who can watch over them 24/7, wherever they go. He is the only one who can change their hearts and minds for the better. Why not surrender them into God's hands? Prayer is often underestimated, but a sincere prayer for your family can ease tension, bring lasting happiness and peace, and protect our homes.

We warmly invite you to bring the names or a picture of your family to the Universal Church near you on Sundays for the Prayer for the family. There's no more secure place to be than under the shelter of God.

## | BEATING DEPRESSION |

Depression is a sadness felt in the deepest part of one's soul. It causes a great sense of hopelessness and exhaustion, such that a person loses the motivation to do anything, and some lose the desire to live at all. It is an illness of the soul. But who can heal the soul? No other than the Savior of Souls, the Lord Jesus, can heal a sick soul.

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 beat depression once and for all.

There are thousands of testimonials worldwide that prove a Chain of Prayer works. You won't regret it. You, too, CAN defeat depression!



**Bishop Edir Macedo**



### Look up to Heaven



**Miracles do not depend on where you are or the circumstances you are in, but...**

**R**egarding God, the place He chose to meet someone's needs made no difference. The Lord Jesus met the needs of a multitude in the wilderness: the need for healing, deliverance, and even the need to satisfy the hunger of thousands of people.

One occasion, one of his disciples said: This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away so they can go into the villages and buy food.

In the disciple's opinion, that place was not conducive for a miracle of that magnitude because there were no resources. After all, feeding thousands of people in the desert is a challenging task.

But Jesus said: **THEY DO NOT NEED TO GO AWAY.**

In other words, miracles do not depend on where you are or your circumstances but on the presence of the Lord Jesus.

He then said: "You give them something to eat." The disciples doubted and said: "We have only five loaves and two fish here."

But Jesus said: "Bring them here to Me... And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave to the multitudes. Matthew 14.15-19

When they placed the loaves and fish in Jesus' hands, He looked up to heaven and did not look at the amount, nor did He say, "That's it?" No! Our Lord looked up to heaven; it should also be our faith. Our eyes should never look at what is in our hands or the circumstances around us. Instead, our eyes must be looking up to heaven.

When we do anything with our eyes looking up to heaven, it means we are looking to God, and indeed God is also looking at us. Therefore, anything is possible! Are your eyes looking up to heaven or at what is before you?



### Broken marriage restored

last say. I often shouted at him for no reason because of my anger. I used to accuse him of cheating and would call him useless. I felt good after fighting with him. But because I was constantly nagging him, my husband was never at home.

I did not realize what I was doing wrong until I started attending services in the Universal Church. In the church, I realized that my behavior was terrible. In one service, I remember the Pastor saying that for a person to change within truly, they needed to receive the Holy Spirit.

When I married, I did not respect my husband and often fought with him. I always had to have the

daily. I prayed and asked God for strength because I knew I could not do it alone. I attended the Wednesday and Sunday services for my spiritual growth, and gradually, my behavior started changing.

Today, I have an amazing life. I am a changed woman. I am no longer grumpy or angry. I am not selfish anymore. I no longer fight with my husband or call him names. I have inner peace, and my marriage has been restored. My husband no longer avoids being around me, and we enjoy each other's company. I have a relationship with God. My life today serves as a testimony that God can transform a person's life and their family," said Tholakele.



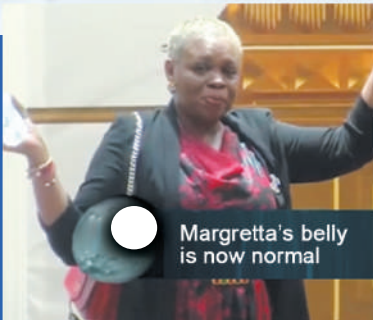
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For more information  
SEE PAGE 12 FOR LOCATIONS



# Healing Supper

**“So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.”**

*Exodus 23:25*



**“She was sick, and her belly appeared as swollen.”**

Within a week, I noticed my stomach had become distended and remained so. It resembled a pregnant belly, yet I wasn't expecting. Experiencing intense pain, I began expelling strange fluids from my mouth. It was then that I received the diagnosis of stage four ovarian cancer, accompanied by the doctor's grim prognosis: a mere 10% chance of survival.



**Picture of her belly before**

Through the power of faith, I stand healed today. Implementing the teachings of this ministry, I have reclaimed my normal belly and conquered cancer.”

-Margetta

**BRING A BREAD AND YOU WILL RECEIVE THE WATER THIS SUNDAY**

at your nearest  
Universal Church



**“The back pain is gone.”**

After lifting something heavy, I began experiencing discomfort in my back. I turned to God and the Blessed Water by drinking it and applying it to my back. Gradually, the pain started to diminish. Now, I am entirely free from pain!



**“Healed from Arthritis”**

Six years ago, I received a diagnosis of arthritis, and the doctor informed me that I would require medication for the rest of my life.

Upon finding solace in this ministry, I began drinking the Blessed Water daily and relying on my faith. Today, I am overjoyed to report that the pain and swelling in my body have disappeared entirely, and I am no longer reliant on arthritis medication. -Henry



**"My daughter is healed from a stomach illness."**

My daughter suffered from a stomach problem, and doctors couldn't determine the cause. I had to rush her to the hospital countless times. Witnessing her distress was heartbreaking, and I felt powerless to help. She lost 48 pounds due to this illness.

However, through the power of my faith, my daughter has been completely healed. -Florence





| MESSAGE |

Bishop Joshua

**CLOSE YOUR MOUTH**

It was the best way I could say it, trying not to offend anyone. Why would someone suggest that you close your mouth and not speak? Some people are mean and will tell you straight out cold, 'Close your mouth!' Others try to help you by saying, 'Close your mouth,' knowing that what you would say could cause more problems than solutions.



An old-time saying goes that you have two ears and one mouth because you need to listen more and talk less. There is a time for everything; even the Bible says it. There is time to speak and a time to keep quiet. What would you do in a situation like this?

**He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. (Isaiah 53:7-9)**

Are you oppressed or afflicted?

Do the same; don't open your mouth to confess defeat! What good changes will you see if you complain to others about the oppression or the affliction you are going through? Will the complaints solve the problems? Certainly not!

How often do you have a slight headache, and as soon as you comment to someone, the headache becomes a migraine? It shows that glorifying problems only makes matters worse.

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying you should suffer in silence, but rather cry out to the only One who can solve your problems—the Lord Jesus Christ! There will be no busy signal or thirty minutes on hold. He is just a call away. Call out to Him in your dark moments, and He will answer you!

May the God of the Bible bless you!

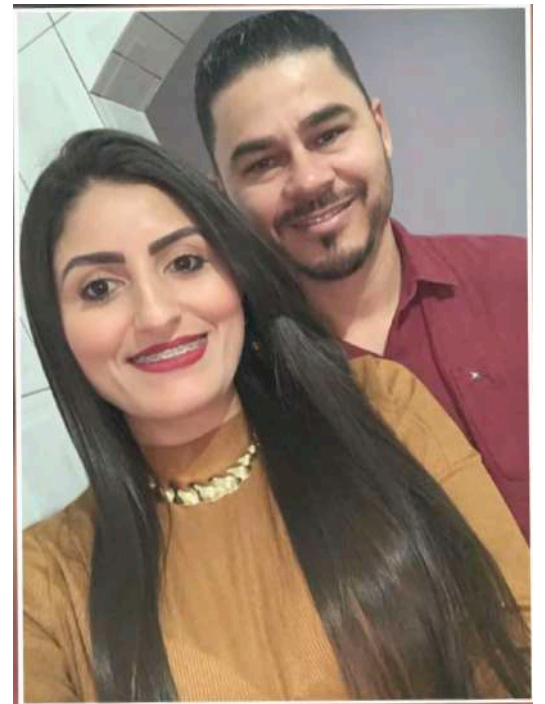
*April 2024 Bible Reading*

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Acts 1 ✓	2 Acts 2 ✓	3 Acts 3 ✓	4 Acts 4 ✓	5 Acts 5 ✓	6 Acts 6 ✓
7 Acts 7 ✓	8 Acts 8 ✓	9 Acts 9 ✓	10 Acts 10 ✓	11 Acts 11 ✓	12 Acts 12	13 Acts 13
14 Acts 14	15 Acts 15	16 Acts 16	17 Acts 17	18 Acts 18	19 Acts 19	20 Acts 20
21 Acts 21	22 Acts 22	23 Acts 23	24 Acts 24	25 Acts 25	26 Acts 26	27 Acts 27
28 Acts 28	29 Haggai 1	30 Haggai 2				

❤️

## I WAS LIVING IN ABSOLUTE HELL

Ever since I was 4, I was diagnosed with sickle cell anemia; the doctor told my mother that this disease had no cure and that I would have to live with this disease and take medication for the rest of my life, but that I wouldn't live for long. I was always in the hospital; a month would not pass without having to be admitted to the hospital. I would have pain crises, and when this happened, the pain was so intense that it felt like knives pierced into my body. They would give morphine, but it could not help with the pain. I always asked myself why I had to suffer with this pain.



I could not make him stop using the drugs, I decided to join him, so both of us were using drugs, drinking, partying, and still fighting a lot.

I used to watch the Series of Jesus from the Universal Church on TV, and seeing the miracles that our Lord Jesus did, I decided to attend the Universal Church. When I arrived, I spoke to the pastor, who encouraged me to make a Chain of Prayer for my relationship and healing. I asked God to help me let go of the jealousy and addictions and start a new life with Him.

As I continued to come and put into practice what I was learning, the first change that happened was inside of me. I received peace within, and I no longer needed to drink or use drugs

***When I saw that I could not change him, I joined him, and our lives became hell...***

At the age of 15, to try to escape the reality of this sickness, I started to drink, go out to parties, and get involved in various relationships. That's how I met Anderson, and we soon moved in together. When I moved in with him, I discovered that he was using drugs, and soon after, what I thought would be an escape from my pains made things worse. We started to fight a lot, and this was our daily life. The fights were so bad that I felt like I was living in absolute hell. Everyone knew about our lives because the fights were inside the house and even on the streets. When I saw that

to deal with the pain. I also got healed from sickle cell anemia to the point that I didn't need to take medication anymore.

My partner saw the change in me, which motivated him to come with me to the church, and the same miracle also happened to him. Today, we are happy together; we do not fight anymore and do not party, drink, or use drugs; we both have the peace of God inside, which we transmit on the outside. We now have a blessed relationship and serve God, filled with His Holy Spirit. Denise and Anderson



# What's happening at the Universal Church

## Reuniting my broken family



Lídia: 'Leave, get out! I can't take this anymore.' These were my last words to my husband. My words had inflicted more pain than anything I had ever done. He got up, took his things, and left. As he closed the door, I broke down in tears, regretting every word I said, but it was too late. The truth was that he had never done anything wrong; in fact, he was caring, loving, and did all he could to support me, and I was the one with the issues.'

John: 'I couldn't believe my wife had just kicked me out of the house. I knew we were not sweethearts, but reaching this point was troubling. Sometime after I left, I began seeing various women, but I was never really at peace.'

Lídia: 'To deal with the break-up, I began demanding attention from my so-called friends, but things only got worse because our friendship was based on lies. At home, I felt guilty because I couldn't bear seeing my children miss their father – it felt like a stab in my heart. When would this pain ever end?'

Lídia and John didn't believe they would ever get back together. Still, they didn't know that their eldest daughter, Dirce, was attending meetings at the Universal Church – including the Sunday services where she prayed for her family. As each month went by, Dirce began to learn the power of faith, and consequently, she became more confident that her

family would be restored.

Dirce: 'I really believed that my family could change after hearing a story similar to mine where the family managed to come back together. I told myself that the same could happen with my family. I started to reach out to my family, and I began to use my faith by attending the Family meetings on Thursdays. My goal was to see my parents back together one day.'

John: 'I remember my daughter inviting me to the Universal Church. I was happy to hear that she still thought of me. That day, I attended the church and saw my wife; from then on, a small spark kindled inside me. Later, my daughter told me that her mother would like to speak to me, so I went to her house, and we opened up. I left and took some time to think about what was said, and after around one month, we decided to get back together. Since then, we've never stopped attending the church and investing in our relationship. Today, our family has become a strong unit. We are forever grateful to the Universal Church because it has taught us the true meaning of family.'

Dirce: 'Everything has changed; today, we are connected to the right source of power: God. Now, I can proudly say that I have a united and happy family.'

John, Lidia and Dirce Cassnadra

At the Universal Church, there are countless stories of people who have experienced transformation within their families through the power of faith. You can be the next! Join us on Sunday at 10 am for the Prayer for the Families at a branch near you.

## Tragedy marked my family



'My nightmare began around the age of 12. I was living in Zimbabwe with my family when one of my older sisters had a sudden illness, a simple cold that swiftly transformed into Pneumonia, claiming her life. Disaster struck again when my younger sister was taken by Measles, which snatched her away in a matter of weeks. The pain of losing loved ones seemed endless. It was like my family was marked by tragedy. One relative after another would develop sudden, unexplainable illnesses and die.'

The string of misfortunes worsened with our financial struggles. My parents worked hard, but we still wouldn't have enough. My siblings and I would work to pay off the boarding school fees. Seeing all the other kids going home while we had to work was unbearable. The school eventually became a place of heartache; I would receive news of more family members dying from what I was now convinced was a curse. It seemed that death was lurking around every corner, waiting to strike. I couldn't help but think that I'd be next.

When my father died of Cancer, that hit me extremely hard as I was a daddy's girl. I was bombarded by suicidal thoughts, saying, 'Why don't you kill yourself? You will die anyway.' I wanted to give up on life altogether, but I didn't dare to go through with it.

In desperation, I turned to witch doctors. I clung to these practices for years, hoping they would break the streak of bad luck, but they didn't. I felt hopeless.

One day on my way home, I saw a leaflet

on the ground with the words: 'Stop Suffering.' It immediately caught my attention. It resonated with me so much that I immediately searched for the Universal Church. The service had already started, so I sat at the back. I left without speaking to anyone. However, the first thing I noticed was that I felt different – I wasn't as afraid as before. This change made me return the following day and every day after!

For two months, I came, sat at the back, and left right after service. I felt good in the church, but it was still the same on the outside. But something the Pastor said in one of the services struck a chord and prompted me to finally decide to stop wasting time and do something about my situation. He said: "You need to be serious with God. Otherwise, you are wasting your time."

Instead of wishing and willing for things to change, I plucked up the courage to stop living in fear. I didn't realize how much the choices I made in life were affected by the curse. It was always at the back of my mind whenever I went to do or try anything new in life.

I threw myself into the Chain of Prayer. I wanted God to set me free. I refused to let the fear of the curse define my life anymore. Every week I attended, I felt confident about myself, my life, and my newfound faith. I felt strong inside, like I could achieve anything!

Today, the curse of death in my family has been broken. My mom and uncle stand as living testimonies of this. I'm also happily married to my husband, Araya. I was blessed with a beautiful daughter, a loving home, and happiness in my career. Breaking free from the curse was not just a personal victory. It showed me that even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges, through faith, I could rewrite my story. There is a way out even in the bleakest moments of life."

Jestina Yohannes



## A Challenge of Faith reunited my family



"My parents separated when I was only three years old, and this affected me greatly. I didn't feel loved at home. My upbringing was tough, so I began to hate my parents. I was sent to boarding school, where I stayed for five years. I

would only go home twice a year, and our relationship was icy when I moved back home.

Growing up, I thought that leaving my home country would change everything. When I saw an advert in the newspaper about a job in the UK, I saw it as the perfect opportunity to leave everything behind. So, I left Portugal for work but my mother and I didn't part on good terms. The rift was so bad that I cut all communication with her; I neither spoke to her nor traveled back home to visit her.

I later came to find out about the Universal Church, and it was there for the first

time that I understood that the grudge I held towards my mom was only hurting me. Although it hurt to let go of it because my heart did not want to forgive, I understood that I needed to set myself free—how long would I accept carrying hate inside me? Deep down, I wanted us to have a good mother-son relationship. Forgiving wasn't easy, but what spurred me to do it was a Challenge of Faith; it was one of the things I chose to sacrifice to improve myself.

Initially, my mother didn't accept my apologies, but I persevered, and with time, she accepted, and we made peace. We worked on our relationship little by

little, and today, our relationship is entirely different. My mother and I speak almost every day, and from time to time, I go back home to visit her.

As I continued to attend the meetings at the Universal Church, I began to have an inner peace that I had never had before; there was a difference made in me from the inside out. But it didn't stop there—I am also happily married today. My wife completes me, and I am truly happy!"

Blimath Da Silva







## SHATTERED FAMILIES

A happy and structured family has been just a dream for many people living with the negative impacts of societal problems. For example, conversations, fights, and aggression do not solve a problem inside a person. This is because, while human strength is limited, God's power is supernatural and can transform lost cases into stories of success.

"The family has the function of providing emotional support to the child. So, the father and mother must give attention and love, converse, act respectfully, and establish limits; in other words, they provide a secure bond. And with this structure, this child will probably be an emotionally healthy adult", explains psychologist Camila Galhego.

Without this support network, the consequences are negative. "When we are missing a home, we see adults becoming ill because of a sick childhood. This adult is more likely to have depression, personality disorders, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. All of these disorders have a dysfunctional family environment behind them," she points out.

Recently, the news has been filled with announcements of famous people's divorces. Unfortunately, this type of breakup affects the way people think about relationships. Many come to believe that they weren't made to last. In practice, attacking the institution of "marriage" is imploding the family, as it is through this union that the family bond is born.

"People are discredited in the family; they are more individualistic, more selfish, and, unfortunately, they pay a high price for this too. They do not have the structure to deal with

problems within the home itself. Thus, we see domestic and sexual violence, suicide, homicide."

The list of situations that can negatively affect a family is immense, and, in addition to all the examples mentioned above, there is still betrayal, addictions, illnesses, controversial ideologies and values, and distortion of the family created by God, among other factors. Therefore, those who love their home must take a stand to protect it.

However did you know that you can reclaim your family and finally have unity among your loved ones?

Every Sunday at a Universal Church nearest you, we dedicate a moment to pray for you and your family to be united and happy again!

Just like Abraham fought to take back his nephew in biblical times, we must also fight to take back what we have lost. Abraham did not sit back and allow the situation to prevail; instead he fought back against the problem and persevered until the end.

If you see that you have problems in your family, or you simply want to maintain the harmony in your home, this chain of prayer will be your opportunity to use your faith and take back your family. Bring your family members' photos with you.

If you want to see a complete transformation in your family, this chain of prayer for the family is for you!

**"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15**

Some families start as dysfunctional, as it happened with Wagner and Cintia. When they met, Cintia had already discovered drugs and was pregnant from a previous relationship she had had with a guy. At the same time, Wagner was known in the neighborhood where he lived for selling drugs. "Even as a minor, I was already involved in crime. I went to a juvenile detention center a few times and hated everyone and everything. After I became an adult, nothing changed, and I was arrested for drug trafficking and armed robbery", details Wagner.

The two, who already came from destroyed homes, decided to unite, resulting in a long period of suffering. "She suffered a lot from me. To visit me in jail, she went through all that humiliation and was still forced to do things I asked her to do, like taking drugs and weapons to certain places," says Wagner.

His mother already knew about the Universal Church. She always told him about the possibility of changing his life, but he never listened to her. However, tired of the suffering, Cintia decided to accept the invitation. "I started going to church, and people treated me well, gave me support to change, and I became aware that everything I did could harm my children," she recalls. Thus, Cintia stopped getting involved in crime and

started focusing on the things of God. "I wanted to know this God who transforms lives, so I decided not to do anything wrong again. In fact, in prison, I told him that if he left and didn't change, we wouldn't stay together."

Even though Wagner was entirely against that decision, Cintia

**After I became an adult, nothing changed, and I was arrested for drug trafficking and armed robbery...**

expressed her faith. "Before visiting him, I went to church, anointed the food, and then took it to him. And he started to see the change in my behavior and my reactions," she says. Little by little, Wagner awakened to the faith and began to follow the church's programs on TV and read Universal News. Soon, he got out of prison. "There, I saw that God had blessed me, but even so, I continued in crime, and she continued in the church, which generated conflicts. One day, we went to present our third son at the Altar, and the pastor's prayer made me see my true



condition. I started attending church and asked God for a way to support my family in a dignified way."

Wagner's sincerity led him to know God, abandon crime, and change his path. "I finished my studies, took courses to enter the job market, and things started to happen. From one vow to another, I persevered and was baptized with the Holy Spirit. Today, I can give the best to my family in every way", he guarantees.

The family's transformation did not happen overnight. It began and depended on the perseverance of one member of the family.

**"Today, our lives are in God's Hands, and He protects us. And, if any situation arises that is not good, we know that God allowed it, and we maintain peace", concludes Wagner.**



# I HATED EVERYONE!

Deuzimar discovered the Universal Church while her children were still young, and they grew up learning about the importance of the Presence of God. However, as a teenager, Flávia, started to listen more to her friends. "Until she was 15, she was a young girl like others, until she started smoking cigarettes. The next thing I knew, she was already using marijuana, hookah, ecstasy, and alcohol," says her mother.

Coming across the presence of drugs in the house was like seeing the dream of a united family go down the drain. "My world came crashing down. Flávia, who was homely and well-behaved, became distant and spent more time outside than inside. She disobeyed me and left me worried", says Deuzimar.

These were the triggers needed to start a series of fights. "When she went out and came back home drunk or under the influence of drugs, we were afraid because she was very aggressive and made a series of threats. We locked our bedroom door while we slept," comments Edvaldo, Deuzimar's husband and Flávia's stepfather, who was also responsible for seeking his stepdaughter's transformation.

Flávia remembers her feelings: "I hated everyone, especially my mother, and I didn't want to be close to her. So much so that at the time, I left home. I was away for three years and didn't talk to them

because I wanted to distance myself from my family."

In addition to her addictions, Flávia discovered that she had lupus – a chronic inflammatory disease of autoimmune origin (which happens when the body itself attacks organs and tissues). Her mother tells how this period was: "The disease affected both kidneys, and she had to undergo hemodialysis. But, because of her addiction, she did not receive the treatment

**When she went out and came back home drunk or under the influence of drugs, we were afraid because she was very aggressive...**

properly, nor did she take the medication, reaching the point where she lost the functionality of her organs and was on the transplant queue."

In human eyes, Flávia's change was impossible; after all, not even the risk to her life made her abandon her addictions. Even so, Deuzimar placed all her trust in the Altar. On the other hand, she also needed to change. "I didn't understand that there was a spirit behind all our suffering, but when I had this understanding, I stopped fighting Flávia and



started fighting the spirit of addiction and helping her."

It was seven years of perseverance in God's promises until Flávia understood that she had no other way. "I started participating in meetings and was freed from addictions, from all the bad feelings, from nervousness, and from everything I was doing wrong," says Flavia. Her mother confirmed her change today: "Before, we couldn't be together, and today we work together. She has a completely different behavior, and in addition to being cured of her addictions, she is cured of lupus, her kidneys are working again, and she is healthy. God made everything complete."

The family, which previously lived in fear and destruction, now has peace.

**"When I understood that the problem was spiritual, I saw it was a matter of life and death. So I fought with all my strength, put God above everything, and trusted Him", says Deuzimar.**

## MAKE A CHAIN OF PRAYER IT WORKS!

A Chain of Prayer is when you attend a prayer meeting for a certain number of weeks without interruption in order to see a breakthrough in your life. Whether it is healing, a financial breakthrough or spiritual deliverance that you need, a Chain of Prayer helps you develop the faith and determination to overcome.

Monday - Strong Nation  
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm



Learn the secrets to overcome financially. Receive direction to grow and become a successful person.

Tuesday - Prayer for healing  
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm



Receive prayers for your physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Wednesday - Night of Salvation  
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm



A meeting will be held for those who want to invest in a genuine relationship with God.

Thursday - Family & Love Therapy  
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm



The goal of the family meeting is to bring families together. No family is perfect, but they can be free from any hate, separation and other underlying issues.

Friday - Deliverance  
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm



There is a root to every problem. No issue can be dealt with permanently without removing its root. Every Friday, strong prayers is provided for anyone who is facing a problem that is influenced by negativity.

Saturday - Impossible Cases  
8am & 12pm



Have you ever looked at a problem or situation and thought, 'this is impossible, there is no solution to this?' If you want to see the 'impossible become possible', join us every Saturday.

Sunday - Gathering of Faith & Miracles  
7am, 10am, 3pm & 6pm



These meetings aim to help people connect with God, to empower people and teach them how to use their faith to achieve what they want in their lives.





## UNIVERSAL BEYOND BARS

*You are Not Alone!*

# 18 Years of Suffering!

**M**y name is Marcos; I am 45 years old. I started in a life of crime after my father abandoned my mother with me and three other siblings. At the age of nine, I was a part of my first armed assault; by the age of 15, I joined a gang and would oversee the hood I was in. I made pacts and offered blood sacrifices, but none satisfied me.



TATTOOS MARCUS GOT IN HIS PAST

Each day, I used more drugs, I became a person more violent, and I attempted to take the lives of my siblings. I remember when I turned 18, I was invited to a party for someone who was 15 years old. This party was filled with drugs and alcohol, and I consumed myself with them also; by about four in the morning, I drank a lot of alcohol and used a lot of cocaine.

Then, there was an altercation between some people at the party and my friends. They had assaulted me, and I became angry; I went and grabbed my knife and stabbed one of them so hard that I had to put my hand in his chest to remove the knife to stab someone else. That day was full of assaults; it was nonstop.

The following day, we robbed a bank, and not long after that, I was arrested and went to prison. Inside the prison, there were many fights. I even almost killed other inmates; I burned one of the inmates, and after two years and four months in this prison, I was transferred to a maximum-security prison.

«

**DURING THIS TIME, THE CRIMES I HAD COMMITTED CHANGED MY NAME; MY NAME WAS NO LONGER "MARCUS," I BECAME "MARCUS, THE PSYCHOPATH." WHEREVER I WENT, THEY CALLED ME A PSYCHOPATH.**

I arrived in the prison-like this; I had also been stabbed whilst incarcerated. I witnessed men dying in front of me multiple times; it was normal for me to see people dying, using drugs, fights breaking out, etc.

But I continued in my ways, in my crime, using drugs. I remember one day, a volunteer came to us; he was a volunteer of the Universal Church; he invited us to pray with the Pastor; they had a baptism in water, the Holy Communion, and without hesitation, I accepted the invitation and went to participate in the service. The Pastor started the service, speaking of salvation and change, and that same Wednesday, I had an encounter with God, I had my encounter with God. In that meeting, I asked God to forgive me; I also decided immediately to get baptized in the waters.

I went back to my cell and told my friends, all of those who were a part of criminality with me, assaulted me, used drugs with me, etc. I told them I was leaving this life behind to serve God, and they said to me, "Are you crazy? This Pastor did something to your mind." I told them, "No. I have never been more clear in my life; for 18 years of addictions, crime, evil, taking and attempting to take people's lives, after 27 attempts of homicide, after two homicides, when I went to that service, my life started to transform." Days later, the Pastor came and held another meeting. He separated some of us and said, "Look, you need to seek the baptism with the Holy Spirit; you need to prioritize the Holy Spirit, and this entered me; I understood. I made that my priority. One

afternoon, the UBB returned, it was a Wednesday, and we sought the Holy Spirit. Just a few minutes later, I received the Holy Spirit during that moment of the seeking.

I had a joy that overtook my heart; I had the absolute certainty that I was baptized with the Holy Spirit; everything changed because Marcus, who was depressed, had anxiety, that Marcus was constantly agitated, with anger, and grudge against my own family, my father, that day the "Marcus psychopath" died. Crime changed my name, but the Holy Spirit transformed my life completely. I was still in prison; there was a lot of confusion, fights, etc., But inside of me, I had peace amidst the chaos. I still had joy, and with the Holy Spirit, I was secure. After ten years of going to seventeen prisons and fifteen rebellions, after all these wrong things, I left prison with the Holy Spirit, that through my communion with God, I will overcome everything. So, after these ten years, I went, and the Holy Spirit gave me direction; I was able to open my business, I got married, I can provide for my children, my health is perfect, my marriage is blessed, my children respect me, they see me as a father.

Today, the places where I used to use drugs and commit crime, where I did wrong, now I got there and share a word of faith. Today, I am a part of the UBB team, and I also go into the prisons to give to the inmates what I received one day; I have the absolute certainty as God changed my life, He can change your life too if you listen to the voice of God, and seek the Holy Spirit. I am confident that as today I am an overcomer, you also will be an overcomer.



*"I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord." Psalms 77:1-2*

*Speak out, I am all ears! If you want to be added to my E-Message list, send me a letter with the correct info to: 7075 SW. Fwy. Houston, TX 77074.*

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# Don't be a Victim to the Problems you Face!



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Some people are known for the problems they have or misfortunes that have happened to them. The curve balls life throws at us are inevitable.

There are things we can't control, and trying to find a reason or someone to blame for our miseries is just a waste of time.

A better approach is to decide not to be a victim.

Unfortunately, most people who suffer significant blows in life default to the why-me/poor-me attitude.

They feel entitled to pity and special treatment from everyone around them because they have been victims of nasty things.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying we shouldn't show compassion or be incredibly kind to people who suffer.

If those people use it as a crutch (and it's so easy to do), then these pleasant feelings will become a trap for them.

When you decide you won't

be a victim, you take your life and destiny into your own hands. You are determined to use every resource you can tap into to fight back instead of lying back.

God is one of these resources. He said:

**I LIVE IN THE HIGH AND HOLY PLACES, BUT ALSO WITH THE LOW-SPIRITED, THE SPIRIT-CRUSHED, AND I PUT A NEW SPIRIT IN THEM, GET THEM UP AND ON THEIR FEET AGAIN. ISAIAH 57.15**

In case you didn't notice, He was talking about you. He promised to keep company with people who were broken and badly hit.

But not being there to cry with them — instead, to lift them and revive them again. That's a promise.

And what you do when you have a promise from God is

you call on Him to perform it. Understand that you are especially positioned to receive that promise. Don't waste that, right?

Don't be a victim. Use all your resources to fight back. Don't forget God is your most significant resource — but must ask Him to help you; it's not automatic.

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**FIGHTING THE UNSEEN ENEMY**  
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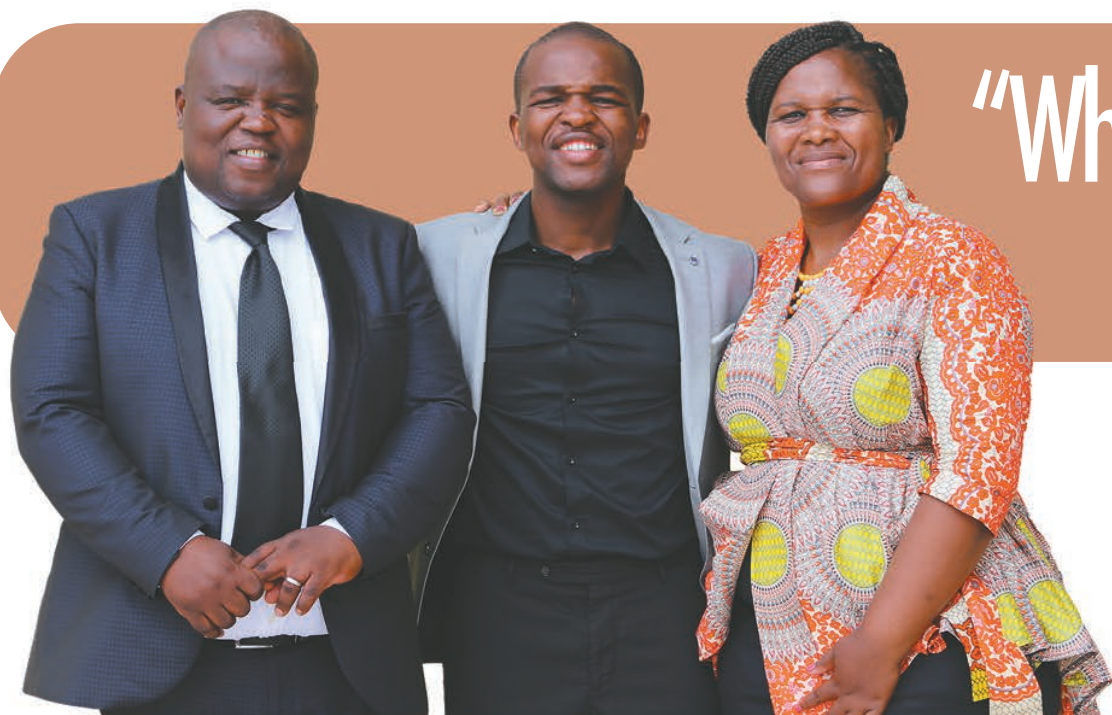


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“When life gives you lemons,  
make lemonade!”

**C**hippa Mpengesi is an example of how it is possible to reverse even impossible situations through faith. However, praying or going to church every Sunday is not enough. You need to put action to your faith. Difficulties marked Chippa's childhood and adolescence. “I went to school, but our resources were limited. I didn't know how to speak English properly. I arrived at The Universal Church when I was 22 and lived in a small, hot, muggy zinc shack. I read the Bible, went to church, prayed every day, but I didn't see any change in my life,” he recalls.

#### EVERYTHING OR NOTHING -

As a security guard, he grappled with the daily struggle to provide for his family. After four years of dedicated faith at The Universal Church, he decided to take a bold step: “One day, I was overcome with a sense of urgency. I thought to myself, ‘If God is truly God, His presence must be evident in my life. I resolved to capture God's attention’. He had participated in numerous church activities before, but this time, he was determined to commit himself to God fully. “I decided to go all in. I prayed less and acted more. I gave everything I had as a sacrifice,” he reflects.

When he fulfilled his vow at the Altar, he remembered something different had happened. “The fire of God entered my head and changed my understanding. I started having a new vision of life and realized God's

greatness. The lack of an education was no longer an obstacle for me. I knew I would be a great businessman,” he says.

He then opened a private security company. At the time, he was 25 years old. In a short time, Chippa and his wife managed to leave the slums and rent a house. They also bought a car. The security company had 200 employees, but he realized he could do more. He then opened a waste removal and management company and

acquired properties in South Africa. His security company worked at the Football World Cup in South Africa in 2010. That's when a new idea emerged: having a football team. “I bought a third-division team and invested in it until it became an elite team. There was a year when the team was about to be relegated. I ran to the Altar of God and made another vow with God, and He turned the situation around; the team has been in the first division for five years”, he celebrates.

Chippa and his wife have three children: a 20-year-old and two children, one aged 11 and one aged 7. The family's wealth is valued at over 1 billion rands (South African currency), equivalent to almost \$53 million. “We were blessed with 14 mansions, six private cars, three hotels, 50 trucks and another 50 commercial cars, three shopping malls, and



several companies in the areas of security, training, waste management, civil construction, clothing, agriculture, concrete factory, among others”, he lists. Despite all his material goods, Chippa does not doubt what matters most to him: “My greatest wealth is the Holy Spirit, salvation, and my family today,” he highlights.



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