



## *Mother's Day and Father's Day ... Through the Eyes of our Clients*

This 'Reflections' comes sandwiched between Mother's Day and Father's Day. These occasions can be a very different experience for women and men who find

themselves catapulted into parenthood because of an unexpected pregnancy. Let me introduce you to some of those we have walked beside this year, as they've become mothers and fathers. When you hear their stories, you'll realize how much they need your prayers and deserve your respect.

### **Harda**

When, at age 26, Harda came to Canada she had no family or friends, and had left the children she was single parenting back home while she started a new life. She became involved in a relationship that quickly became abusive. Just as quickly, she found herself pregnant. Harda came to Jewels For Jesus very confused and looking for help. She spent a great deal of time with her support worker who helped her sort through

what she could and should do. Harda is letting go of her child and placing her for adoption, but not without a great deal of grief. Her one request for this Mother's Day was to have a visit with her baby.

### **Ester**

At age 33 Ester had her first child – alone. When long term health problems occurred, she found herself struggling and discouraged, and came to Jewels For Jesus wondering if she should give up and place her child for adoption. We provided a listening ear and some thoughtful support while Ester decided what to do. The practical help Ester received empowered her, and she began to embrace the formal and informal community supports available to her. She also began to see the church support already around her. When we last spoke with Ester she was optimistic, proactive and standing on her own. Ester faced this Mother's Day with a renewed hope and vision for the future of her little family of two.

### **Sarah**

Sarah, age 18, tried so hard to parent her daughter when she was first born but, as much as she loves her, the 24 hour, 7 day a week, parenting was a hard go. After her daughter was removed

to the care of CAS, Sarah spent months trying to prove to her network of professionals that she could make it on her own. Finally, she came to Jewels For Jesus asking us if we could find a good, Christian family for her baby; one that would let her be part of their lives as well. For Sarah, being a good mom meant choosing to give up her position as mom and just becoming a friend to her daughter so that her daughter can have a permanent family.

## Zoe and Kyle

Zoe and Kyle, ages 16 and 18, found out they had a baby on the way just weeks before their daughter's arrival. They spent the weeks leading up to the birth overwhelmed by their own emotions and the very strong, and differing, opinions coming from all kinds of people in both of their families. Zoe, especially, found a calm and neutral sounding board in their Jewels support person. They're parenting their child – to the joy of some family members and the horror of others. Their support worker has done what she can to

help them get started. Zoe and Kyle are experiencing their first Mother's Day and Father's Day with many hopes and fears about the road ahead. They need your prayers.

## Mark

19 year old Mark was blown out of the water when he found out his girlfriend was pregnant. He didn't know what to do or feel and, because of this, his reaction was all over the map. First he wanted to help parent, then he decided adoption was best and then he pretended the baby wasn't his. By the time the baby was born he was nowhere to be found. Months later he came back to Jewels For Jesus and said he knew the baby was placed for adoption and he wanted to sign the papers so everything would go smoothly for his child. Mark deserves our admiration this Father's Day. He proved himself to be a good dad by finding the courage to come back and make sure his child's future was secure.

## Prayer Corner

Pray for our birth parents who have placed their children for adoption in recent months. Mother's Day and Father's Day can be very painful reminders of the loss they have undergone in letting go of their child.

Pray for our birth parents who are parenting their children. They want to be good parents and provide good homes but the obstacles can be enormous.

Pray for our prospective adoptive parents who are walking through another Mother's Day and Father's Day without a child of their own. Mother's Day and Father's Day are painful reminders of the yet unfulfilled longing for a family.



### Board Members

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# Mississauga Breath of Life Spring Home Tour



On April 28th Jewels For Jesus hosted the Mississauga Spring Home Tour. We were delighted to have 4 homeowners open their hearts and doors for this event. I give them my heartfelt thanks for their hospitality. A huge thanks as well to Anne-Marie May and Eileen Zeglan, for their help with the planning, and to the many volunteers who gave of their time on the day of the tour. Many businesses and decorators also caught the vision and gave their support, and we thank them for sharing their talents with us. They are:

- Creative Walls Decorative Painting
- Euro Flowers
- Home Outfitters – The Queensway
- Interiors by Hanna
- Kane Interiors
- Kitchens By Design
- Monarch Florists
- Red Mango Interior Solutions
- Room For Style
- TLC's Therapeutic Massage and Beauty Spa
- The Kuris Family
- The McLellan Family
- The Steinke Family
- The Stewart Family
- Welcome Aboard Photography Studio

Karen Kamphuis  
Promotions & Outreach Director

## Volunteers

**Care cupboard client services** We are looking for 1 or 2 volunteers from the Mississauga area who are gifted in encouragement and care ministries, and would be able to maintain our care cupboard and minister to our care cupboard clients one day a week. Give us a call or drop us an email if you would like to talk more about this opportunity.

**Prayer team** We are looking for a team of 2 or more volunteers with the gift of intercessory prayer to commit to praying together weekly for the staff, clients and needs of Jewels For Jesus Mission and Adoption Agency. This could be onsite or by conference call. Let us know if you would like to talk more about this much needed ministry.

**60th anniversary planning committee** 2008 is Jewels For Jesus 60th anniversary and we are looking for creative people to help plan our anniversary celebrations. We're anxious to get started, so let us know if you'd like to help.

**URGENT  
NEEDS**

- powdered formula
- size 4, 5 & 6 diapers

## Margo's Thoughts



### God's Instructions for Healthy Families

"Parents provide for their children."  
2 Corinthians 12:14

"Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do." Ephesians 6:1

"Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged." Colossians 3:21

"Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord." Colossians 3:19

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." Ephesians 6:4

For almost 60 years Jewels For Jesus Mission has been about building strong, Godly families. Families used to bring to mind a standard image of two parents – a mom and a dad – and a number of children happily playing at their feet. Families can look very different today. 'Broken', 'single', 'blended' have all become common prefixes to help describe the type of family we are talking about in any given situation.

But originally, when God created the first family, it included two parents and their children. And when Jewels For Jesus began ministering to families this was still the norm. Things are more complicated in the family-building realm these days. It's accepted and expected that families will look very different than the structure presented in Genesis. One thing I wrestle with is, "How do we help clients see the importance of family in a climate that minimizes its contribution to the health and well-being of children?" Even more than this, how do we encourage families to invite eternal values and God-honouring morals into their homes and parenting, when these values and morals are not being recognized in greater society?

When a child is placed for adoption, they enter a home equipped and ready to parent. All the government checks and balances that are part of the assessment and education adoptive families are exposed to build into these families everything they need for success. And we praise God for each of these families. Not just for the joy God brings to them but the future they're giving their new child.

But, as you can see from our stories this month, parenting that comes too soon and too unexpectedly produces huge challenges for those who are hurtled into the role. Yet they are parents nonetheless and we know from experience that they want to do a good job of caring for their children. Often they're starting with huge handicaps. Not only are they in life situations that are radically different from God's original plan for family, they often have little support from family and friends and little or no parenting know-how. Added to this is the growing body of research showing the significant benefits of a two parent family and the notably increased stresses that are frequently a part of the lives of young, single parents.

These parents and their children need your prayers as they try to build stable, healthy homes. The staff at Jewels For Jesus also needs your prayers for wisdom and compassion while we support struggling parents and help them develop good plans for their children's future.

As we walk through the annual celebrations of Mother's Day and Father's Day remember to pray for the Jewels For Jesus families that have been formed this year; whether through adoption or unexpected pregnancies, they need your support.

Margo Semple  
Executive Director