



GOD'S SHELTER OF LOVE

MAY 2017

SERVING DECATUR SINCE 1991



## Meet Rosa...

I was born in Puerto Rico on February 19, 1973, the youngest daughter of Ismael and Nieves ("Snow") Davila. My father's family owned a large farm in the mountains next to a beautiful river, but my father was a very bad alcoholic who died when I was eight years old. When I was 12, my mother's brother babysat for us and something horrible happened to me, so I went to live with my father's brother on the farm. I started drinking alcohol at that time and became an alcoholic myself.

When I was 18, I moved to Taylorville, IL with my husband and 3-year-old daughter.

My husband abused me and we divorced. I had a tubal pregnancy and a hysterectomy in 2001, which caused me to spend 118 days on the psychiatric floor of St. Mary's Hospital. Between 2006 and 2013, I was also addicted to cocaine. I was in prison for one year.

In 1995, when I was 22 years old, I was adopted by a wonderful woman I called "Mom" in Taylorville. Mom told me to always keep your promises and I always try to do that. It is because of her talking to me about God that I believe in him. Mom was a smoker and never could quit herself, but on July 4, 2016, I made a promise to her that I would quit drinking and smoking cigarettes and I have not used any since that date. I took care of her until she died from colon cancer and COPD in October 2016. Even though I had been legally adopted, her biological son, who had never come to see her during her illness, got a lawyer to say I had no inheritance from her.

When Mom died, I was so sad that I was afraid I would go back to alcohol and drugs, but I kept my promise to Mom. I moved in with my younger brother, Jesús, in Decatur, which was very difficult because he drinks a lot of alcohol. Next I moved into the basement of a nice man who came from Cuba, but his wife would not let me stay there, so I came to God's Shelter of Love on March 6, 2017.

I like to help the house supervisors with cooking and cleaning and I have reorganized the food pantry and the basement. Keeping busy is what keeps me from thinking too much and wanting to drink again. I am also job-seeking, attending Ed Bacon's Jobs for Life class, and volunteering at Blessingdales. I have been going to church every Sunday since I came to the shelter. I read the Bible and the little book *Jesus Calling* every night. Thank you to the people who support GSOL. I love being here and I will continue to do good and to learn how to be a Christian.

*Rosa*



**God's Shelter of Love Board Members**

Executive Director: Ed Bacon, LPC  
Board President: Harold Batthauer

Ty Batthauer · Decatur, IL  
Larry Hughes · Warrensburg, IL  
\*Brenda Pride · Decatur, IL  
Michael Reynolds · Decatur, IL  
Greg Taylor · Clinton, IL  
\*Dan Watkins · Decatur, IL  
*\*Welcome our newest Board Members!*



I hope you like the new format of our newsletter! Our Blessingdales manager, Cassie Bauer, has offered to design and publish it for us, and as you can see, she has given it a fresh new look. Thank you, Cassie!

Our Jobs for Life and Retail Training Institute classes began April 11th at Grace United Methodist Church with six students. We're very excited about this program, which equips the homeless, unemployed and underemployed with essential jobs skills needed to find meaningful employment. The focus of God's Shelter of Love's mission continues to be about sharing God's wonderful love with the homeless and providing them with the tools needed to become self-sufficient, contributing members of our community. Thanks to your gifts and prayers, and God's faithfulness, we are making progress!

On a similar note, I was recently invited to join the Macon County Continuum of Care to participate in conversations with local social service agencies and other inner-city Christian ministries about how we can work collaboratively to put an end to homelessness in Decatur and Macon County. After attending my first meeting, I'm very hopeful about what we can accomplish collectively - working together toward similar goals. I've been very encouraged by these partners, many of whom are brothers and sisters in Christ, who share the same passion for ministry to the homeless as I do.

Now that Spring has sprung, I want to invite you to help out with some outdoor projects at our shelter. We're looking for an individual or group to paint our picnic shelter, and we need to install a door and window at one of our transitional shelters on Marietta St. Would you or one of your church or service groups be interested in giving us a hand? Please give me a call at **217-422-2790** or send an e-mail to [godsshelteroflove@gmail.com](mailto:godsshelteroflove@gmail.com) if you can help.

I continue to be very grateful for your support of God's Shelter of Love. It's a great blessing to witness your love, generosity and support toward those who are less fortunate. As Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." May the Lord pour out his blessings on you for showing care and concern for our residents! You make it possible to continue our ministry!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Bacon".

Ed Bacon, Director

## *A Thread from the Thrift Shop...*

Thank you all so much for your generous donations to Blessingdales! We've made many changes and so far everyone is loving them. An article was published online recently named "11 incredible thrift stores in Illinois where you'll find all kinds of treasures." Blessingdales was on that list...and we were named as #1! ♥ We have no idea how we made it on the list but we are so excited and thankful! All of our "treasures" are donated by wonderful people like you! You can check out the article here:

[www.OnlyInYourState.com/Illinois/Thrift-Stores-IL/](http://www.OnlyInYourState.com/Illinois/Thrift-Stores-IL/)

With spring comes garage sale season! We are trying something new this year. When you have a garage sale, there are usually quite a few items left over when the sale is finished. Instead of pulling it all back into storage, call Cassie at **217-294-1451** to schedule a pick up and we will take the remaining items to Blessingdales. As an added bonus for your donation, it's a tax write-off. We will be scheduling garage sale pick-ups on Monday's and Tuesday's for Decatur residents, so call us ahead of time to get on the pick-up list for the following week. Please tell your friends too! Every little bit counts and it is all going to a great cause, supporting God's Shelter of Love.

*Cassie*

Cassie Bauer, Blessingdales Store Manager

### **Special Thanks to...**

The mother of a second grader at Mt. Zion Grade School for a gift celebrating the birthday of teacher Mrs. Allison Perry.

***Happy Birthday, Mrs. Perry!***

### **Special Thanks to...**

Gideon Outzen and Boy Scout troop 91 for doing yard work during the Easter weekend.

***Thank you so much!***

*Thank  
You*

wish list

**Needs of the Shelter:** Ground beef, chicken, bacon, powdered or liquid laundry detergent, tall kitchen garbage bags, off-white window blinds (26½" wide, standard length).

**Needs of Blessingdales:** Volunteers, packing tape, patio table, drinks, and of course any items you'd like to donate to the store. All of Blessingdales proceeds support God's Shelter of Love.





*Some see a weed...  
We see a wish.*

*God's Shelter of Love • Heartbeat*

GOD'S SHELTER OF LOVE  
929 NORTH UNION STREET  
DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62522  
(217) 422-2790/2791

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #252  
DECATUR, ILLINOIS

\*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



217-358-6124 • [Blessingdales@hotmail.com](mailto:Blessingdales@hotmail.com)  
345 West Eldorado St. Decatur, IL 62522

  
**Blessingdales**  
Thrift Shop



**Donation & Store Hours:**  
**Monday through Saturday**  
**9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Sign up to receive Blessingdales Thrift Shop's monthly newsletter at  
[www.BlessingdalesThriftShop.com](http://www.BlessingdalesThriftShop.com)