

“I KNOW, I’VE BEEN THERE”

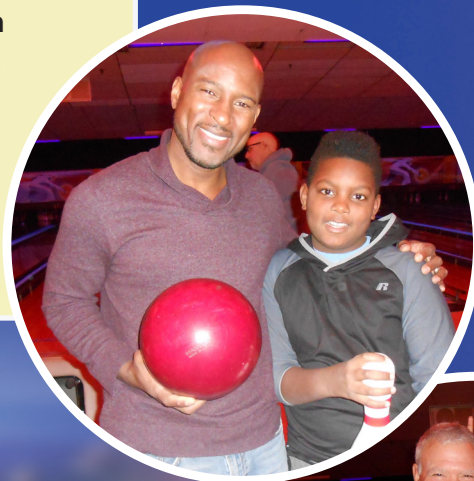
by Vince Eppolito

Jessica* lived with her single mom, and like most of our kids, her young life had already been a pain-filled tragedy. I matched her to a Christian woman named Catherine*.

Catherine and Jessica met every week and did really unremarkable things. One week they would go to the library and the next week to the park or the bowling alley. Other weeks they would just go for a walk and get lost laughing or in deep conversation. After a while they began to go to church together. At some point Jessica asked Jesus to be the Lord of her life and the change started to become evident to all. That was five years ago.

Right before Thanksgiving, 18-year-old Jessica and Catherine, her mentor, joined my wife, and me on a mission trip to minister to the homeless in New York City.

We were handing out backpacks with personal supplies as we shared God’s love with people who live on the streets. Jessica spotted a homeless woman lying under a blanket on a cardboard box. She grabbed a backpack and went over to speak with her. I was totally blown away when she said “I know you feel like you’re alone, but there’s a God who is real and He loves you. I know it doesn’t look like it now but I’ve been there”. Jessica then prayed with the woman, gave her a hug, and we went on our way.



* Names in stories have been changed to protect privacy. Photos are for illustration only and not connected with the stories.