

HOLY BIBLE

## Young Man Finds Jesus and a Mother

by Danielle deJonge

“Momma going to Hell, but I don’t want any of you to follow me,” Eddie’s mother said with liquor on her breath. Shortly after, her nine children walked out the door for Sunday Mass, leaving the intoxicated woman behind.

Eddie, currently a CBI student, describes a life of pain after pain after pain. He says, “With this heritage, whatever possessed God to come after me as He did is incomprehensible to me.”

At five years old, Eddie’s dad literally set him on fire. When he was transferred to a foster home because of his dad’s abuse, his foster mother “sought to use any means necessary to destroy the child, Eddie.”

“All physical abuse was accompanied by

a litany of unending degradation,” he says. “She left me with night-terrors that haunted me well into adulthood. Always, she stalked my dreams—butcher knife in hand, coming to complete her promise of killing me.”

When he went back home, his biological father was gone, but his mother was deep in alcoholism. As a result of multiple marriages, his mother had nine children in all, of which Eddie was the oldest; making him the caretaker while his mother continually drank. This is when he remembers her as a washed-out Catholic urging her children to do what she could not: believe in a higher power.

One day, 16-year-old Eddie came home to find two Bible-carrying Baptists talking to his mother, while his brothers and sisters sat quietly on the floor. He saw his mother crying yet completely sober, confessing every wrong from her life.

Eddie says his response was, "I'm Roman Catholic; my grandparents are Catholic. I don't care whatever my Mom has done—just leave me alone."

Eddie started coming home to an actual mother, a sudden change that was too difficult to take in. "She was clean, clothes tidy, hair done up," says Eddie. "Once, as I sought to pass her, she reached out and hugged me, kissed my cheek and said, 'I love you Eddie.' It nearly killed me!" Eddie continues, "God was in our home, fight as I might—He would not leave!"

Months wore on and Eddie's mom continued church attendance without ever owning a Bible. Eddie says his mom and siblings always talked about a "red Scofield Study Bible." In fact, the preacher of his mother's Baptist chapel challenged members to bring their families to church, and whoever brought the most would be rewarded with a Scofield Study Bible.

Eddie kept avoiding his mom's pleas to attend church, preferring a local gang to his reformed family. But one day his mom begged him to attend a service. Eddie gave in and was taken to church with his family in a friend's red, two-door Ford Galaxy 500. He says, "God knew what He was doing, for had that been a four-door car I would have ran at any one of those stoplights."

Eddie says that as he sat slumped in a pew, "I could not distract myself from the word-pictures the preacher was painting. Tears ran down my face for the first time in years." He tried covering his face with his long hair, as if to form some sort of barrier. But the words broke through, until he finally said, "I will have this God if He will have me."

**"I will have this God if He will have me."**

Today, Eddie writes about his conversion from behind prison walls, prison walls that came after he says he became a Christian. He writes, "I am in prison, but not because God or Jesus failed. The past had left land mines, if you will, in my life; dark things that one day exploded on me. But God knew all along and has since forgiven me. I strive to get hold of Him as He has a hold on me."

Eddie's concept of Jesus' unconditional love comes from doing Crossroad studies. "Your Bible study has been and is a great blessing in the darkness of this place," he says.

Not only that, but Eddie is spreading the news of Christ. Jeffrey, a student referred to CBI from Eddie, actually sent us one of Eddie's essays and explained, "The following attachment was written by a very beautiful man of God, my brother and very close friend." What is the essay about? How Eddie's prison cell has transformed, with God's help, from a cage to a sanctuary: an all too reflective summary of Eddie's journey from a "litany of unending degradation" to communion with Christ.



*Danielle deJonge serves as an Assistant Editor in The Center for Advanced Studies at Crossroad Bible Institute*



## DID YOU KNOW

### Congress has extended the IRA Charitable Rollover gift opportunity for 2009?

What this means for you or someone you know who is age 70-1/2 or older is that you can make charitable gifts directly from your IRA (Individual Retirement Account) to Crossroad Bible Institute tax-free.

The conditions for an IRA Charitable Gift are:

- Gifts are tax-free up to \$100,000 per year
- IRA holder must be age 70-1/2 or older
- This opportunity applies to 2008 and 2009 only
- Gifts will qualify for all or part of required minimum distributions
- Gifts must be made directly to a charity (non-profit)
- Gifts may only be made from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs

If you have questions or would like to receive a fact sheet prepared by the Barnabas Foundation about this opportunity, please call 1.800.668.2450 or e-mail [mail@crossroadbible.org](mailto:mail@crossroadbible.org). You may contact Barnabas Foundation directly at 1.888.448.3040.

Your commitment to support CBI through your prayers and financial gifts is greatly appreciated. Because of this commitment, we are permitted to continue in our mission of reaching God's people in prison.

# Mexican Seminary Students Put Learning into Practice

by Cynthia Williams

Students at the Seminario Todas las Naciones or All Nations Seminary in Juárez, México, are putting what they have learned about ministry into practice by reaching out with Christ's love and discipleship to those behind bars.

Classroom knowledge becomes practical outreach for the 27 students who as CBI Instructors gather around the school's dining room tables every Thursday evening to correct lessons and write letters of encouragement to CBI Spanish students. They bring not only their shared language and cultural background, but often personal experiences which allow them to connect with their students on a heart level.

Instructor Adan wrote the following to a Spanish student, "I know it is hard to be in prison. My father was in prison for 10 years and I know a little bit about what it is like to be there." A few of these Instructors have also been personally impacted by the unstable and often dangerous situation in Juárez as the government attempts to control the drug traffickers.

Working with the seminary students, CRWM missionaries Dan and Jeananne Kuiper sensed



the potential impact of involvement with the CBI program, not only for the inmates, but also for the students themselves. They contacted CBI in December of 2007, and soon had the first group of students

trained as Instructors. Since then, the students have participated enthusiastically, and they know that their ministry often touches the lives of those from their own country that are in prison in the US.

Dr. David Schuringa, the President of Crossroad Bible Institute who has 15 years of experience teaching at the

seminary level says, "Every seminary student should become a Crossroad Instructor for a least one semester during their program in order to escape the ivory tower for a few minutes and get a taste of helping people in need!" Seminary student Jaime shared, "By participating in the Crossroad program I am learning to serve the Lord better. Sometimes we really do not realize the amount of impact that we can have on other people's lives."



Cynthia Williams serves in the Spanish and International Programs at Crossroad Bible Institute

## The Center for Advanced Studies Continuing Education Seminars

### JULY

**Ministering to Those in Prison**  
Mr. and Mrs. Terry and Christine West  
The Presbyterian Church of Dubbo  
Dubbo, NSW, Australia  
9:30 am – 2:00 pm  
Date: Saturday, July 11, 2009  
Registration Deadline: July 3, 2009  
*\*Morning Tea and Lunch Provided*

### SEPTEMBER

**Spreading Hope: The First Step to Recovery**  
Mrs. Carolyn Geertsema  
Crossroad Bible Institute, Grandville, MI  
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm  
Date: Tuesday, September 1, 2009  
Registration Deadline: August 25, 2009  
*\*Lunch Provided*

### Instructor Rally

Dr. David Schuringa  
Orland Park Christian Reformed Church  
Orland Park, IL  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
Date: Friday, September 18, 2009  
Registration Deadline: September 11, 2009

### OCTOBER

**Using Restorative Justice Practices in Ministering to Inmates**  
Rev. John Lamsma  
Crossroad Bible Institute, Grandville, MI  
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm  
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2009  
Registration Deadline: September 29, 2009  
*\*Lunch Provided*

### Encouraging Students by Letter

Mrs. Alida Sewell  
Faith Christian Reformed Church  
Sioux Center, IA  
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm  
Date: Sunday, October 25, 2009  
Registration Deadline: October 19, 2009

### NOVEMBER

**Instructor Rally**  
Dr. David Schuringa  
Crossroad Bible Institute, Grandville, MI  
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm  
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009  
Registration Deadline: November 10, 2009  
*\*Lunch Provided*



All seminars are **free** of charge, but advanced registration is requested. Please register by calling CBI at (800) 668-2450 or going online to [www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org](http://www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org).



# "You Are Making A Lasting Difference"

by H. David Schuringa

Long before I entered prison ministry, I pastored a couple churches. A few weeks ago, Mary and I visited the first church where we served. It is a church filled with celebrated memories. Following the service, a number of people thanked us for our ministry there, now over 25 years ago.

One couple came up to us, who was about our age with grown up kids and grandchildren arriving on the scene as well. Bob (we'll call him) said to me that his kids have often asked him over the years why he raised them so differently than other dads they knew, even his own brothers.

He said he tells them that the only thing he can think of is a class he took with Rev. Schuringa and some other young men of the church. They studied together *The Effective Father*, a book by Gordon McDonald. "That class," he said, "totally changed me and my approach to being a dad. I was never the same after that. Thank you!"

His thank you detailed a memory that I had forgotten. Now I remember well sharing with a group of young men, technically my peers, a book that had changed *my* approach to being a dad a few years before that. Now, 25 years later, I learn that that class actually made a lasting difference on someone.

The reason I tell you this story is to encourage you as Instructors and supporters of Crossroad Bible Institute. As you correct the Bible studies of God's people in prison, you are planting seeds that will make a lasting difference in the lives of men and women for *years* to come. In fact, you will never know how great a difference you are making in the transformation of so many lives.

I hope that someday, perhaps in Heaven, you'll experience what we experienced that Sunday at our first church: a former student will come up to you and say something like, "You know those lessons you corrected and those wonderful letters you sent? They totally changed my life. I was never the same after that. Thank you!"

*Dr. Schuringa serves as the President of Crossroad Bible Institute*

## Installation Service for Ghana Distribution Center Director, Reverend David Ofosehene



You are cordially invited to Rev. David Ofosehene's Installation Service which will be held in the CBI Conference Room at 10:30 am on June 19.

Seating is limited, so event registration is required. To register call the CBI Headquarters at 616-530-1300 or e-mail [meghan@crossroadbible.org](mailto:meghan@crossroadbible.org).

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Host: Dr. David Schuringa

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