

# Growing Branches



## Do Not Be Afraid

by Brianne Hansen, Executive Director

Think of a time when you felt afraid. Would it have helped if someone had gently said, *"Do not be afraid"*? I suppose those words would help if you were actually experiencing fear. For instance, at the hospital when a mother is delivering her child, it is comforting to hear the doctor say, *"Do not be afraid."* On the other hand, if I randomly said, *"Do not be afraid,"* to a mother at *New Beginnings* while she was eating dinner, she might wonder why she would need to be afraid. The words simply do not offer the same comfort when fear is not a factor. Unless you truly understand the reasons to be afraid, you cannot grasp the amazing joy of Easter.

*Do not be afraid.*

As you may recall, these words are spoken many times in the Bible. When the angels appeared to the shepherds in the field to announce the birth of the Savior, the angel said, *"Do not be afraid."* The angel goes on to say, *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people"* (Luke 2:10). Those words were spoken again when Jesus rose from the dead: *"The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.'"* (Matthew 28:5-6). And yet again, when Jesus appeared to the women: *"Suddenly Jesus met them.*

*'Greetings,' he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid.'"* (Matthew 28:9-10).

We can't blame the shepherds or the women for their fear; they were in the presence of holiness. In these moments, they were faced with the true reality of their sin. This is why death can be such an uncomfortable topic – our sinful nature gives us a reason to be afraid of being in the presence of our perfect Lord and Savior. But, there is good news of great joy! Easter changes everything. Jesus died and rose from the dead so that those sins that cause fear would be forgiven. Jesus paid for them.

What a blessing it is to know that we do not have to be afraid today, tomorrow, or ten years from now. We do not have to fear death because Jesus died and rose again, so that we also may live. This is an important reminder for all of us, and for the women at *New Beginnings*. It can be a temptation to get caught up in fear and forget the joyful blessing of Easter. At *New Beginnings*, we celebrated the reason why we do not need to fear death with a devotional and a meal. Many of our mothers never celebrated Easter during their childhood, so it was a blessing to be together and celebrate the joy that Easter gives us today and always! ♦





## Letters from Home

Sometimes I wonder how I came this far and how I manage with both my kids. To tell you the truth, sometimes it gets hard but I've learned that nothing is impossible, especially when it comes from God. With him, everything is possible! When I had my second baby, I didn't know how I was going to do this, but honestly it just came naturally for me to manage both of my kids. Coming to *New Beginnings* really changed everything and made me look at my situation so differently. Truthfully, it helped my faith grow more and more. It is just amazing how God did all this. Wow, God is really good! I thank him for bringing me here. I have learned, and I am still learning more and more day by day. I am not going to give up, because *New Beginnings* hasn't given up on me even when they should have.

I really do love the women at *New Beginnings*. They truly show what love and family are all about. They care, they're very supportive, and they teach you

more about God so your faith can grow more with Christ. When you need a shoulder or someone to talk to, they are here and they will cry with you. Amazing! These women care and the love and compassion they have shows that they definitely love their jobs, our kids, and us. God bless these women now and forever! ~ Jasmira

I moved to *New Beginnings* all the way from Florida! I am eight months pregnant and very happy to be at *New Beginnings*. I moved here in January and have been happy ever since. I enjoy that it is a Christian-based organization, which also gives you the platform to further your education, as well as a stable home to raise your child. The staff here is great, and extremely helpful. I thank God every day I am here because without him none of this would be possible. Thanks, *New Beginnings*, for giving me the opportunity to change my life and raise my son in a wonderful healthy environment. ~ Letisha

# 5 Years from Now

In preparation for Mother's Day, we asked the mothers at *New Beginnings* for their Mother's Day wish.

When asked to describe her child's life five years from now, Jasmira said, "My wish is that Caleb would be in school and happy, as well as starting to do things on his own. My children will know God and will continue to grow in their relationships." The advice that Jasmira would give to other mothers is to "stay strong and continue to keep your head up and have faith. Just know that all things are possible in God's eyes for those who trust and believe in him. If I can get through all my darkness in my life, you can too. God and myself believe in you! God bless."

In five years, Letisha hopes to "be finishing up school, raising my son, looking for a house, and planning my wedding." She hopes that her baby boy who is due in May will "be doing well in kindergarten and be healthy and happy." She wants other mothers to know that

you should "put your kids first and love them, teach them the right way to walk with God, and be patient."

Kim's wish for Axel is that in five years he will "know God, be active, and be able to make small decisions for himself." Her advice to other mothers is to know that "your dreams are limited only if you do not dream BIG. Dreaming evolves into greater things if you work hard."

In five years, Shaneka plans to "be living in Atlanta, GA and be working in a hospital as a nurse or CNA. I hope to be married and maybe have another child." She wants other mothers to know that you should "keep God first in you and your child's life. When it gets hard, do not give up. Always talk and play with your kids and remember to love them unconditionally."

Do you have a Mother's Day wish that you would like to share with our mothers? Send it to us in the mail or email us – they would love to hear from you! ♦

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*New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers* is a Christ-centered ministry for single mothers and their children operated by Christian Life Resources. The home has been serving residents since 1993. It is supported entirely by the generous support and prayers of those who are committed to sharing Christ and reflecting his sacrificial love.



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