

# In her words

## Project Gabriel Mom shares her “GEMS Journey”

Project Gabriel helped me when I was at my lowest. They gave me two wonderful angels that became part of my family. Joining the program changed my life because they helped me deal with my pregnancy; they gave me hope. The ladies there taught me how to stay optimistic and stop beating myself up, how to forgive myself, and how to deepen my faith.

I was born Catholic just like my mother and grandparents. It had been six months since I had gone to church. When I became pregnant, I didn't know what to do or where to go. My mother had agreed to help me, but I didn't have a clue what to do. My father finally forced me to have an abortion. I think it wasn't a coincidence that I chose the one next to the Project Gabriel office where I met Ingrid.

I was all alone in my apartment; my father had deserted me, and my mother was in the Congo. At that moment, God became my best friend. I would talk to Him every day, and He would answer in his own way. For example, I would wake up some days not knowing if I would have a decent meal. God never gave up on me.



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Going to GEMS classes and listening about how God loves me and my baby was the highlight of my life. It gave me hope that, by keeping my baby, I was doing the right thing. One of the classes that really touched me was the one about forgiveness. In Matthew 6:14 it is written “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly father will also forgive you.”

The priest that came that day showed us that forgiving people and ourselves is for our own good. You have to forgive people in order to free yourself. I also learned to forgive myself and move on. I cannot start a new chapter in my life if I am stuck on what I did in the past. I should learn from my past mistakes.

We also talked about self-respect. Making a mistake does not define who I am and does not give other people the right to humiliate me or walk all over me. God loves everybody especially the ones who redeem themselves. I know he forgave me and that he loves me.

On October 20, 2015, I gave birth to a healthy baby boy I named Gabriel. I named him like the angel because he is my little angel, the blessing that came out of all these hard times. I got to spend three amazing months taking care of him before he went to live in the Congo with my mother and grandparents while I finish school. That baby is my whole world; there is nothing that I wouldn't do for him.

Sometimes I just want to give everything up, pack up my bags and go back home, but then my mother reminds me of Gabriel. I want to finish school as fast as I can so that Gabriel can finally live with me. I am missing so much right now, like his first words, first steps or even his first birthday. I miss him so much, and I cannot wait to have him with me again. Everything that I do, every hardship that I endure is for my little man. I will forever be thankful to Project Gabriel. Through the program, I am working very hard in order to have a steady job and bring Gabriel here with me.