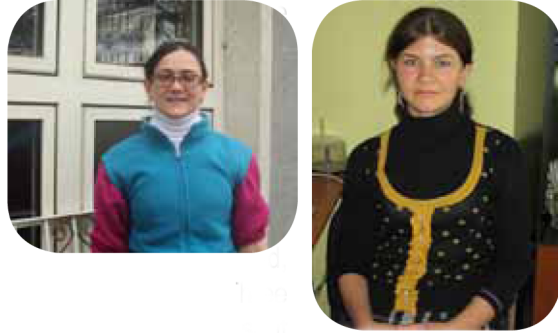


## My Name is Sister

**Irina:** (right) When I was nine years old, my father became ill and died. During this time, my older brother also died. My mother could barely stand the pain and began to drink. I went to school for only three years. No one had taken care of my school life and I could not do it alone. When I was 19 years old I moved in with my boy friend. Three years later he was arrested and sent to jail. My sister Anna and I were forced to earn our livelihood by prostitution.



**Anna :** (left) Irina is my oldest sister. I have a mother and a brother. I was seven years old when my father died. Life was very hard for us. Since my mother was not working, we were very poor. She began to collect bottles and sell them in order to buy more alcohol. My brother hung around in landfills. I had never learned to read and write. I was only 14 years old when I began living with a boy. When I was 15, I gave birth to my first child. For seven years I lived with this boy and we were not married. One day he was caught stealing and was sent to prison. So my son and I were on our own.

**Irina:** Anna and I were basically illiterate. I am so thankful to God that we met a Christian man who took us to a congregation of God's people. They helped us and taught us a lot about taking care for ourselves. Today I can read God's Word without problems. For me this is a real miracle. Anna and I have been attending church services for one year. Already, I have converted, asked God for forgiveness for all my sins and have been baptized.

**Anna:** This man invited us to a worship service. We often went there, and people helped us read and understand the Bible. Every Saturday we met for Bible study. They suggested Irina and I study at the Independent Correspondence Bible School. I am glad that I have this opportunity and that people from the church support me in my studies, because I sometimes find it a bit difficult. I ask ladies from the congregation to read the lessons of the Bible School to me and then I do exams with their help. At home there is little space, it's loud and so I have difficulty studying there. I often go into the house of prayer and study there.

**Irina:** I too have decided to study at the Bible School to better understand the Word of God and to grow closer to God. Currently I am studying the textbook "Genesis." With the help of the sisters in the church, I can already read and write independently. The studies at the Bible School are a great blessing for me. Now I can write the exam without assistance. Anything I do not understand, I ask my instructor, and she explains the biblical truths with great patience.

## **NEW LIFE**

**Anna:** I go to church services and tell my former friends about my faith in God. I got a job in room service in a house led by Christians. Today I am a happy person and earn my living with my own hands. I like to work and am happy to be in a place where people pray and where I can serve God.

Our family of five all live in one room. I pray for our mother who is disabled. Her health has improved so much so that she can at least crawl across the floor. Irina and I take care of her as best we can. I also pray for our brother who is not a believer. He is an alcoholic and is making dangerous choices.

I love my son and want him to grow up differently than me. I tell him about Jesus. Unfortunately, he is often sick, and I pray that I can buy medicine for him. At home I try to be a light for Jesus. I pray before the meals, which is something very new for our family.

**Irina:** I regularly attend the worship service and tell my friends and acquaintances of forgiveness through Jesus Christ and how God has changed my life. I have invited my friends in the community. Two friends have also been converted.

In the prayer meetings I always ask to pray for my mother and my brother that they may trust their lives to God. Since I can read aloud, all my family at home listens as I do my homework for the Bible School.

I got a job! From morning to evening I take care of an 89 year old woman.

On weekends I go to a rehabilitation center in the city. Women from prison and homeless women live there. In this center, I try to listen to the women's problems and pray for them. I read to them from the Bible and tell everything I've learned about God and Jesus Christ, and what I experience with Him daily. Two women have decided to study at the Bible School, also. I have a great desire to tell others about God. I never want to return to my old life. I pray that I remain faithful to Him.