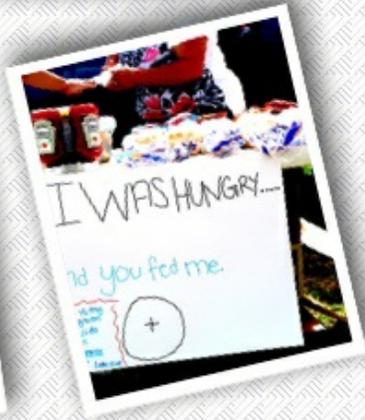
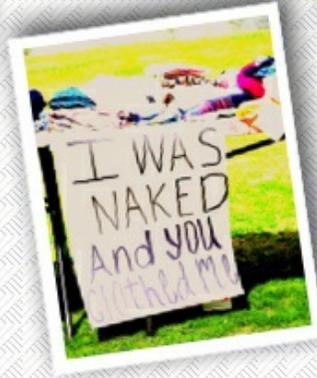
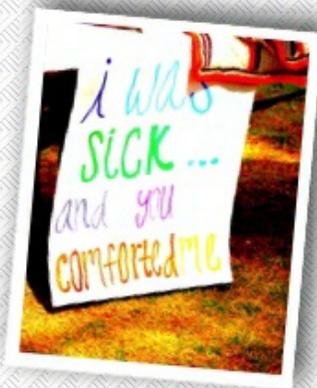
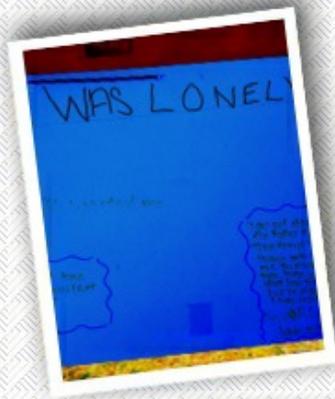


ACTS Sister Mindy Yarbrough begins

RESTORING HOPE

An organization aimed at Helping the Homeless



In the words of Mindy

Hello. My name is Mindy Yarbrough, and I am the President and co-founder of Restoring Hope, formerly known as Taking it to the Streets-Lubbock. We are a homeless ministry that began with three women who share a passion for serving the poor. My personal source of inspiration leading me to serve in this ministry is first and foremost, God and then Mother Teresa. God calls us all to serve and to love one another, and I like to think it brings God joy to see us carrying out his mission here on earth for Him. As for Mother Teresa, I think she says it best when she says, "Let us touch the dying, the poor, the

lonely, and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work." If not for these two figures in my life, I would not be writing this today.

How it all started

We began this ministry by making the commitment to serve a meal for 60 residents every Saturday at Tent City, which is located on 13th & Ave A in the east side of Lubbock. Within weeks of starting, we saw that the need was greater, so we had the idea of taking on the entire weekend. For months to come, we would go out and serve breakfast and dinner on Saturdays and Sundays. This was hard because the three of us would single-handedly absorb the costs involved. Eventually through a form of social media, like Facebook, we began reaching out for help. Many times this help would come in the form of food donations from my ACTS Family, parish fundraisers at Saint John Neumann, or our friends and families.

Sometimes we would have leftovers at Tent City, so we began taking them across the street and under the bridge where people who were not Tent City residents resided. Yes, they lived on the streets! This is when we took our name at the time literally, and we began actually "Taking it to the Streets." When this happened, our ministry as well as our inner selves began to take on a transformation. As we went out to the streets, sometimes 4-5 times a week, we began to form real relationships with the homeless, many of which we now know on a first-name basis. We found that while they have a need for the basic necessities like food and clothing, their greatest need and what they will take before ANYTHING ELSE is LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP. If people only knew what a simple conversation does for them, we would all stop at the sight of a homeless person, but society as we know it does not do that. Many times we would go out armed in the winter with hot drinks and blankets, finding our friends in dumpsters or anywhere they might keep warm. Other times we would take nothing but our hearts and ears. If you simply stop and acknowledge them, you will see that they have lots to say

The ministry begins to grow

As we began to share our stories via Facebook and draw in the media, we began to capture the attention of many. "Serving" became CONTAGIOUS! So much so that we eventually had to hold orientations with as many as 50 volunteers at a time to train the citizens of Lubbock how to safely serve in the streets with us. Up to this point, God had been so good to us. We hardly ever had money in our account, yet we always had what we needed to serve because even if at the last moment, God always sent us the people and donations we needed.

Restoring Hope - Feeding the body and the soul

In January of 2015, we went through our first major bump in the road when our President

resigned from Taking it to the Streets. We remained faithful and committed, and it was at that time that I, Mindy Yarbrough, was unanimously elected as President. I renamed the ministry to Restoring Hope-Lubbock, with a goal of establishing our very own 501c3 non-profit organization. We continued serving in the streets, but we felt like we needed to not only feed the homeless physically, but to feed them spiritually as well. With permission from Glen Robertson, Mayor of Lubbock who has supported us tremendously in this ministry, we began holding a breakfast/preaching event at Mackenzie Park on Saturday mornings. These are now being held at St. Benedict's as well. Our homeless community is thirsty for God. I cannot tell you how beautiful it is to watch them dance and praise the Lord with such joyful hearts. One of our board members, Chris Carter, is a former youth director and he has developed such a rapport with the homeless community. He is often the one to do the preaching and our ACTS Community are often the ones who do our praise and worship. I always say that helping us is a perfect way for our ACTS Community to live out the C-Community and the S-Service in ACTS.

Divine Mercy in Action

Fast forward to April 12, 2015. On this day Jenna Chang, youth director at St. John Neumann, and I hosted the event, "Divine Mercy in Action." It is exactly what it reads. We wanted to do something new at our parish, so we grabbed the youth group and anyone who would agree to volunteer to help us. Low and behold there was a ton of our ACTS Community. With the direction of the Holy Spirit, we put on an amazing event. The day was centered on the Corporal Acts of Spiritual Mercy. There are seven of them. It was very much a Jamaica-type set up, and we had a different act of mercy being carried out at each booth.

You had to be there to witness such an outpour of Christ from one human being to another. My words cannot possibly give it justice, but maybe the video accompanying this article will. Our ACTS Sister, Sylvia Bermea, took all the photographs of each station with the most popular one being, "I was lonely...and you counseled me." At this station we had priests hearing confessions and talking to the homeless individuals who wanted to talk. Much of the feedback from my homeless friends that day was, "The priest talked to me as if I was a real person. He didn't see the ugly or the homeless in me." Once again, this shows you how serving the homeless is very much "relational." All they want is that one-on-one communication and love from another human being. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so I hope the ones from this day tell you a story of Divine Mercy at its best. We definitely plan to do this again next year, and we hope to have other parishes join us.

New Opportunities for Restoring Hope

Currently our ministry is in the process of a huge change, and we are humbly asking for your prayers and your support. As a result of the "Divine Mercy in Action" event as well as

some others, Restoring Hope has been invited to join the church and fall under the umbrella of St. John Neumann. This is an affirmation for us that Gods hand continues to be upon us. Doors we haven't even knocked on continue to open, and all we can do is praise God for the many blessings he has given us. As a team we are excited and ready to embrace the change upon us. Becoming a ministry within the church presents an opportunity for more growth and a way we can better serve those in need. It is my hope that God will continue to guide us, use us, mold us, and LEAD US so that together with St. John Neumann, we can begin to change the way society views the homeless.

I would like to offer a huge thanks to ACTS for all the support and love you have shown us. If you would like to become involved or want further information please contact me, Mindy Yarbrough, via email at rios2000us@yahoo.com.

"Acts of Mercy" Carried out on Divine Mercy in Action Day

1. I was hungry...and you fed me. - we gave out a meal consisting of hamburgers, hotdogs and chips.
2. I was thirsty...and you gave me drink - volunteers gave out drinks.
3. I was naked...and you clothed me - volunteers distributed a set of clothing to each homeless person.
4. I was lonely..and you counseled me - priests were available to hear confessions or to be there if anyone wanted to talk. **This was the most popular booth because the homeless people said that the priests saw them for them.
5. I was in prison...and you wrote to me - the youth wrote messages or drew pictures for Deacon Pete Paniagua to take to the individuals incarcerated in the Lynn County Jail as a part of prison ministry.
6. I was homeless and you sheltered me - we raffled off 10 hotel rooms for one night. **One young man was offered a job at the hotel where he won his stay!*
7. I was absent and you remembered me - red streamers were hung from a cross honoring names of loved ones passed or missing from our lives.
8. I suffer from afflictions or addictions...and you heal me - several Deacons and their wives performed the laying of hands.

ACTS sister Teresa Masionette brought in the students from [Vista Cosmetology College](#) to donate their time and talents to help give free haircuts to the homeless. Their generosity was greatly appreciated.

Please Watch the "Divine Mercy in Action" Video Below



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET INVOLVED WITH RESTORING HOPE CLICK HERE TO EMAIL MINDY YARBROUGH

RESTORING HOPE FACEBOOK PAGE

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[Click for data showing South Plains Homeless Point in Time Table](#)

[Click here for Pocket Pal Homeless Agencies that Help with Phone numbers listed](#)

[South Plains Homeless Consortium Website](#)



David Kauffman is a prolific artist, whose works touch and inspire people worldwide. He is the founder and creative director of Good For The Soul Music, based in San Antonio, Texas. Kauffman is a songwriter and recording artist, screenwriter and movie producer, and husband and father whose creations are described as "good for the soul." Growing up with liturgical music in one ear and pop music in the other, Kauffman has spent three decades on a faith journey that has grown from a personal pursuit to a full-blown mission to create music that touches hearts, feeds souls and influences lives.

[Click Here to Visit Good For The Soul Music Website](#)



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