

MY JOURNEY TO CHRIST

By Roseanne Brathwaite



I started attending an all girls secondary school in 2007. Everything was going well. I loved going to school. I was such a good girl. This was up until Year 9, which wasn't so great. I was influenced a lot by my friends, I used to copy what they did just to fit in. I never really wanted to participate in lessons like P.E. I hated sports, hated being watched and judged. All my friends were loud. I was always the quiet one.

I was bullied from girls in the year below - name calling and so on. Things started going downhill. My grades were always low and I believed I was a failure. I didn't feel like attending school; I would wake up everyday and stare at the ceiling with tears rolling down my face.

For some reason I always ended up being around the wrong crowds. Things started to feel like they were getting better in school as the years went on. My attendance and punctuality were very good and I was chosen to be School Prefect and School Officer out of my whole class. That day I was really happy.

It was around this time I started having feelings of anxiety, but I didn't speak out to friends or family - I didn't feel they would understand.

In 2012 I started college. I really loved doing hair so I studied hairdressing. It was exciting starting college, but I also felt anxious about meeting new people. It was going well for a while, but sadly I was bullied again by other girls for no reason. I kept thinking why me? But this time I spoke out to my tutor about it. This didn't really help and I just always felt left out amongst my friends.

Feeling left out made me feel very insecure, and I think because of this, when I met someone at college who I got on well with, it was a wonderful feeling, which looking back now, I mistook for love. But sometimes you can get caught up in believing everything about a person, to the point that you'd do anything for them. I saw the red flags from the start but I was too "in love" to take note. I realise now that this was not a choice that would have pleased God.

It was about this time that my feelings of depression and generalised anxiety started to kick in. I decided to drop out of college. I lost myself. I started attending counselling sessions for a while, but didn't find them helpful.

I felt unwell both mentally and physically and was rushed to hospital at one point, but I thank God I was ok.

In 2014 I started a new career working with children. I love children and I would always treat the children I worked with as if they were my own.

It was during the time I was working in a nursery that I found out I was pregnant. I was 3 months pregnant when I found out, which was very shocking for me as I didn't expect to be a mother yet. Despite being put under a lot of pressure not to, I made the decision to continue with the pregnancy. I made the right decision and gave birth to my son Cavarlli on 11th October 2017.



Becoming a mother, things got quite difficult as it was only me playing a part without any help from his dad at all. But my mum, dad and my twin sister supported me all the way and I'm thankful. I don't know what I would have done without them.

Sometimes even now, I can't believe I'm a mum. Hearing all the negative comments from family members made me believe I wouldn't be a good mother.

I started to feel even worse during and after my pregnancy. My anxiety and depression took over my life. I just didn't feel loved, I was on edge, I was so nervous all the time and had low self esteem. I kept thinking I'll never be good enough.

I started to have sleepless nights, loss of appetite and felt empty, worthless and shaky. I was very tearful all the time and even began to self-harm. But no one really knew because I'm good at hiding how I really feel. If people ask how I am I always say I'm fine, and as you know I always have a smile on my face!

Suicidal thoughts were always on my mind. There were times when I would tell myself that my son and I shouldn't be here. I felt like I'd let my mum and dad down and my thoughts were I wanted to kill myself! I really wanted to die. Panic attacks would creep in. I didn't want to live anymore, I would look up suicide in my google search, on ways to end my life.

I lost a lot of interest in things I used to love doing. I lost myself and confidence, not knowing how to love myself, caring so much about what people thought and said about me and my body image. Social anxiety also played a big role in my life. I avoided being around people and struggled to make conversations with others.

My heart would race in panic when I went outside or on public transport. Everything was such a task to me. I felt drained everyday. I would stay indoors and isolate myself for weeks/months. I pushed everyone away but I was lonely and didn't feel I had any friends. Explaining myself over and over to people didn't make things better. It was hard telling my family or anybody what I was feeling inside, it was difficult to express.

I remember my dad always telling me that I should come to Church with him, but I was never convinced as I didn't have a good experience at another church, which put me off. I thought nothing would help.

When I first came to Church in April 2019, it was a very panicky time for me. I always wanted company or someone to speak to. I felt lonely even though I was in a room full of people. I also felt that I didn't have much understanding about Church at that time.

I had all these thoughts going on in my mind, I just want to be happy, when will I get better? I would always question myself and others as to whether I'm I a good mum.

But being able to hear the word of God, I started having different thoughts about these things. Also, before coming to Church I hadn't seen my dad's side of the family in years. Now we have reunited which is such a blessing.

During the Lockdown I had a lot of time to think. One day I thought to myself it is only God who can help me through this. I must have faith and trust in the Lord because God is always able.

Some scriptures that I have found very encouraging are:

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:13

I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears. Psalm 34:4

Cast all your care upon him; for He careth for you. 1 Peter 5:7

On Friday 1st May 2020 I made my decision to be baptized. I wanted to overcome my fears and become a better person and I knew God wanted me to be a part of His Kingdom and that He wanted to heal me and make me become a stronger person. I knew in my mind that I wanted to be a part of the Kingdom of God. I give God the glory for picking me up again.

On Saturday May 2nd 2020 I was Baptized in the name of Jesus! It was a wonderful day! I was very nervous. I believed in the gospel and I wanted to be born again. I gave my life to the Lord and it was my time to rise again with Christ. I was grateful for His mercy and His grace towards me.

Cavarlli was also blessed on the same day that I was baptized. It was such a blessing and I want to bring up my son the right way through Christ. Despite all my struggles, having my son has changed me in so many ways. It has made me see the brighter side of life. My son is so precious to me and I thank God for his life.

I believe that God is able to work mightily in my life. He has still not finished with me. Because God is my protector, I know no devil has access to me, Praise God!

I believed in baptism..... I am now sister Roseanne!