



Lily's Second Chance

Priscilla Center Reaches the Down-and-Out in Northeast India

*This is the fifth in a series of monthly articles as part of the **WorldCrafts**™ Set1Free campaign. This campaign highlights **WorldCrafts** artisan groups working to end sexual exploitation and human trafficking among the world's poor.*



For Lily, life was grim. Married for four brief years to an alcoholic, she too became ensnared by alcoholism and drug abuse. Following her husband's early death, she even became an occasional sex worker. And at one point, she was shot in the thigh by a militant as punishment for her immoral activities.

Desperate, she responded to an invitation to a women's camp organized by Priscilla Center (PC). There she dedicated her life to the Lord. She joined

PC in 2002 as a trainee, wanting to be properly nurtured spiritually as well as to receive vocational training.

Priscilla Center has been radically changing women's lives in remote Northeast India since 1997 and has partnered with **WorldCrafts** since 2008. PC collaborates with churches and communities to create holistic training centers for impoverished women. The partnerships last for three years, at which time the churches or communities should be self-sufficient to continue the program. Women receive one year of free, holistic vocational training (stitching and embroidery initially) at the centers.

In addition to the skills training, the participants receive Bible instruction, counseling, and other personal development tasks during their year. They also must participate in a savings program, so that by the time they graduate they can purchase their own sewing machines. This enables them to utilize their new skills and become microentrepreneurs.

After Lily completed her training at PC, she did well for about a year. Then she slid back into drugs until attending a church camp in late 2005. Once again she recommitted her life to God, deciding to start afresh. She knew she couldn't face life's challenges alone again, so she reconnected with PC. Staff knew she was a talented weaver, so they hired her. Diagnosed with HIV, she also lived in PC's transitional home for a time. Lily healed spiritually as she earned her income by knitting doormats from jute thread.

In 2007, Lily married the man of her dreams. Lily and her husband, also HIV-positive, lived together for one year until he died in January 2009. Presently, Lily stays with her father and works with a local Christian organization as a powerful witness to God's transforming power.

"Had it not been for God and Priscilla Center, I would not be living to see all these things. Praise be to His name," she says.

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