

## The Magdalene Project

Every Saturday evening an RV travels the streets of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, New York, searching for people in need. It moves up and down drug infested areas of the inner city seeking men, women, and children whose lives have been abused by drugs, alcohol, domestic abuse, and prostitution. The RV carries prepared food, bags of toiletries, clothing, blankets, kids's toys, and other things, to meet people's needs where they're at in life.

This is "The Magdalene Project";

The mission of the Magdalene Project is to seek out people who have lost hope; the purpose of the project is to share the love of Jesus with them. At the heart of the Magdalene Project is Joanne Lorenzo, who got the idea for the ministry while driving around Niagara Falls, praying one Thursday night years ago.

"I saw a girl walking down Eighteenth Street and it was quite obvious that she was working the streets. She had her face set like flint so I knew in my heart she was putting on a false front for a broken heart," says Lorenzo. "My heart went out to her and I decided to talk to her. I opened my window and said, 'I'm praying for you.' Amazingly, she started to cry, and she said, 'thank you,' and walked away in tears. Her name was Karen."

Since that day The Magdalene Project has spoken to many "Karen's" on the streets of various cities. Lorenzo says they need to know they are loved and accepted by Jesus Christ and He is the way out of the bondage of prostitution and drugs.

"We distribute roses to women and pray for them," she says. "Many have broken down in tears, told us their whole life story, and many dream of a better life. We tell them there a better life with Jesus and then pray they give Him a chance."

The inner city streets of Buffalo and Niagara Falls are often considered two things: poor and dangerous. People who live on the streets are generally there because of a drug habit—alcohol, crack, heroin, crystal meth, etc. When a woman becomes a drug addict, she often neglects her children, who, if they're lucky, are raised by their grandmothers while mommy is on the street. In some cases, though, moms use their kids as drug runners, paying them to do the legwork. Kids get the drugs for their moms, who don't want to be caught by the police. It is a sad and utterly depressing lifestyle these women lead, and they need someone to reach out to them and show them there's hope that cannot be found in a bottle, through a pill, or a needle.

The Magdalene Project involves more than just the RV. There's a monthly dinner, a back-to-school barbeque, and Christmas gift bags which get brought to people in area prisons. There's also a coffeehouse featuring Gospel music and prayer, for hurting women, the second Saturday of each month, 6pm-8:30pm. It is held at 1910 Falls St. in Niagara Falls. On May 10th, a discipleship program for women starts, and will continue every Monday after that.

If you would like to get involved with The Magdalene Project in some way, please call 716-282-0908 or visit [www.themagdaleneproject.net](http://www.themagdaleneproject.net). Mention that you read about the ministry on [BuffaloChristian.com](http://BuffaloChristian.com).