

Brushstrokes of Strength: Iryna’s Story

Iryna is a mother of four—a remarkably strong, gifted woman whose devotion to her children is unwavering. Despite incredibly difficult life circumstances, she finds the strength each day to care for her children, supporting them both emotionally and materially, and seeking healing through her creativity - painting.

Iryna has a God-given talent: she paints. She never studied art, yet her paintings are filled with soul. Her favourite subjects are the sky, clouds, and the sun. To her, the sun symbolizes hope, her children, and her faith in God—faith that gives her the strength to keep going, even in the darkest times.

Before she ever picks up a brush, Iryna begins with prayer. Her art is a quiet dialogue between her heart and Heaven. Painting is more than a hobby—it is her refuge, especially during seasons of turmoil with her husband.

Her greatest inspiration is her children. They are the reason she gets up each morning—to work, to dream, and to live.



Iryna once believed in the promise of a happy family. But life took a painful turn. Her first husband abandoned her and their child, offering no support. Determined to rebuild, she married again and had three more children. But instead of love, she found contempt, humiliation, and fear. Her second husband would disappear on drinking binges for months, returning angry and violent. Iryna endured it all because she had nowhere to go with her children.

Evenings were filled with fear. When their father returned from work, the children would hide and pretend to sleep, knowing that a fight was coming. He forced Iryna to drink with him. When she refused, he beat her. Then he would turn his anger on her eldest son—the child from her first marriage. The boy often ran away to his grandmother, unable to bear it. Today, he no longer lives with them. Child protective services have forbidden his stepfather from approaching the family.

Now that he is gone, the family is left with deep emotional wounds and exhaustion. But Iryna continues to persevere. She is now the sole provider for her four children. They live in a small, old house owned by relatives on the outskirts of the village, surrounded by open fields. The house has only two tiny rooms and a kitchen. There is no running water—they carry it from a well. The house is heated by a stove, the toilet is outside, and there is no bathroom. The children are often sick, but there is no money for medicine.

Still, Iryna does not give up. She works hard every day, tending the garden with her children. The harvest helps them survive. Neighbours, aware of their situation, sometimes bring them clothing or old furniture. Iryna receives every gift with tears of gratitude.

She is especially thankful to the sponsors and the HART’s Child Sponsor program, whose monthly support and food deliveries have become a true miracle and answer to prayer. Despite all the hardships, Iryna has created a warm, nurturing home. Her children support her, help with the chores, and work side by side with her in the garden. They are a team—stronger together.

When the world begins to fall apart, where do you find the strength to keep going? For Iryna, the answer is in her art. In her darkest moments, she picks up a brush. Painting has become her silent prayer—a way to stay grounded, to stay strong.

Every painting is more than just colours on canvas. It is a confession. It is the quiet voice of a woman determined to hold her family together. Her pain becomes beauty, and her faith becomes colour. Through it all, she believes that each person has their own sun. And even if you cannot see it now, it will one day shine through the clouds.

The support Iryna receives through the child sponsorship program has become that sun—bringing light and hope into her family’s life.

At our recent fundraiser, two of Iryna’s paintings were auctioned for CA\$2,000. But in a beautiful act of generosity, the buyer chose to give her even more than the auction amount.

It was a powerful reminder that God sees Iryna and her family—and is showing His love for them in tangible, unexpected ways.



[Learn more about child sponsorship](#)