

A sister from Lebanon (6)

Marie Bond
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The Middle East Times

I continued working with the Middle East Times during my pregnancy dealing this time with taxpayers. I remember how hard was on me to visit their offices and everyone looking at my tummy. Also most of the buildings in Cairo didn't have an elevator including our newspaper office. So I use to go upstairs and downstairs around ten times a day. That's why I believe, Donald was born few weeks earlier than his due date.

But the most difficult part was to find, in my early pregnancy, that I have toxoplasmosis. It means the baby will be abnormal. I visited ten doctors and all of them recommended abortion. I remember taking a taxi and hearing the passengers talking about abnormal babies. Even turning on the TV and suddenly a program pop up about babies who have birth defects. It was like the whole Egyptian spirit world was attacking me. It was a nightmare. But the one, and the only, who stood up against them all and said I believe our son will be Okay, was Larry. He suggested to come to United States and check the doctors here. So this what we did. They found out that the toxoplasmosis was in my blood before the baby was conceived. Which means the baby is fine. If I had it while I was pregnant, the bacteria will attack the baby directly. This bacteria comes from either eating not well cooked meat or not well washed vegetables. Thanks God, the baby was fine. It was also my first meeting with Larry's parents who were very supportive and helpful.

We came back to Egypt and Donald was born on April 25, 1992, a healthy and handsome little boy. I believe he was the first boy who was born in Egypt from a blessed family.

My mom came from Lebanon to help me for a month. I kept going to work at the newspaper for another year as a part time as we decided to take turns, me and Larry, in taking care of Donald.

Meanwhile, a new missionary came to Egypt. Young Jin Kim with his wife and two daughters. He was the son in law of Reverend Kwak, blessed to his eldest daughter.

Also, as Women's Federation For World Peace was established in 1992, Japan sent it's first women's missionary to the Middle East and Africa. Suddenly we welcomed around 20 Japanese sisters in Cairo as many of them couldn't obtain visas to their mission country so they all came to Egypt. They needed a lot of help as they, of course, didn't speak Arabic and even barely spoke English.

Meanwhile, Larry left the Middle East Times and found a job at the American University of Cairo as assistant to Professor Menro who use to write a weekly column in our newspaper.

I became pregnant with my second child so I stopped working at the Middle East Times when my daughter Anne was born, June 12, 1993.

The Kim family rented an apartment beside ours as well did the Japanese sisters. We start having a Sunday service and doing outreach to women's groups. The Japanese sisters contacted public schools and offered teaching art classes. They also volunteered at hospitals and senior centers.

Toward the end of 1993, we received a call from the church headquarter. True Mother is coming to Egypt. WOW.

We welcomed first Mrs. Suguiyama, the president of Women's Federation, to prepare for True Mother's visit. Also Adel and Vera came to assist us as well Other members from different countries came to help including Taj Hamad who was originally from Sudan.

True Mother came by the end of December 1993 and around 1000 people attended her speech. It was a great success.

But there was a price.

The Egyptian authority starts questioning our presence and our activities. We were interviewed by the police couple of times asking us about our religion and what is the purpose of us living in Egypt. They start watching us and following our moves.

Meanwhile I became pregnant with my third child and I gave birth to my second son Paul in September 10, 1994

The Kim family changed mission and went back to United States.

Half of the Japanese sisters received their visas and went to their mission countries.

One morning, in the beginning of 1996, I received a phone call from the Middle East Times office. They wanted to see me urgently. I went there and I found out that the Egyptian authorities are after me personally. There was an ad or an announcement in the daily Egyptian Newspaper proclaiming that the foreign newspaper, the Middle East Times, had never paid taxes, therefore the person who managed the newspaper in those years, needs to be arrested and put in jail.

Thomas called me and asked me to leave the country. He said it has nothing to do with the newspaper, they just want to find excuses to kick us out the country.

So we packed up and left Egypt in March 1996 and went to Lebanon seeking refuge.

And a new beginning for me as a mother of three, in my own country who was coming out of 20 years of civil war.

To be continued