

## A sister from Lebanon (15)

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In 2006 I start working at the city of Sunnyvale as a preschool teacher. My father died in 2007 but I couldn't attend his funeral so I went back to Lebanon in 2008 to pay respect in his one-year anniversary.

What is interesting that in spring of 2009, Larry and myself took the whole family to visit Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. After we took a tour and checked the Air Force One and so on, we went to the library's cafeteria to get something to eat. As we sat on the table I heard the people who were sitting behind me speaking my language. I turned around and I introduced myself. I found out that they are Lebanese as well. One of them, an old man, starts asking me about my background. From where you come, he asked? Who is your father? What's your family's name?

And when I told him my father's name is Elias Michael and that he was working as an accountant in a weekly magazine, he opened his eyes wildly and said: Elie is your father?

When he said Elie, I turned to my children and said Oh my gosh, he knows my father. Only his close friends use to call my father Elie. I never thought I will meet someone here in America who knew my father.

It was a rendezvous made in heaven.

As time passed by, Vera stayed in Korea teaching English and raising up three children, two of them were born there. Being in Korea was very hard on her and on her husband as they struggled financially and they didn't receive any help or support.

It was as well very hard on my brother Ibrahim to take care of my mother and my other brother who was unstable and dependent.

I couldn't help them much as I had a big family to take care and I couldn't visit often as we lived very far and the flight to Lebanon was very expensive.

My mother was getting older and weaker so after five years of my last visit, I went back to Lebanon in April 2013 to see her for the last time.

The biggest sacrifice of my life was leaving my mom behind. We were very connected and very united. In fact when she passed away on February 2014, I was waiting to see her in my dream. I was almost sure that she will come to say goodbye and she did.

The dream was very significant. I was hugging her and walking together as one. We were in a very beautiful place with a lot of waterfalls. I was telling her, look mom how beautiful the mountains around us covered by the snow and how beautiful are the waterfalls.

When I woke up I felt how much the dream was true. Me and my mom were absolutely one, in heart and in spirit.

And when my mom passed away, I received an e-mail from Rev. [Kevin] Thompson saying:

"Please tell Marie that when I heard about her mother passing to the spirit world, I was sitting in front of True Mother while attending a conference in Korea. So I prayed for Marie's mom to unite with True Parents and help them in the spirit world"

And that was my prayers too as I always felt that it wasn't me who was the first Lebanese sister who followed True Parents, it was my mom.

To be continued