

Suddenly the Channels Opened Wide in Communist Hungary – Part 2

Elisabeth Cook

May 2, 2018

Unification Church Missionary to Hungary



True Parents with the three Hungarian missionaries, l to r Martin Putz, Elisabeth Cook, Ingrid Hauseder

Shortly before Peter ascended into spirit world in 1984, he handed this mission over to the world mission office, which took spiritual responsibility from that time onwards. An Austrian sister in Europe, Christa Segato, was our coordinator. She tried to bring the missionaries from the different countries together at least twice a year in order to strengthen our minds. Christa was convinced that strong relationships among ourselves would protect us in our mission, rather than staying completely separate and hiding from the Communist informers. Every summer we spent three weeks together, praying and relating our experiences to each other, studying the Principle and playing sport. On several of these occasions, the World Missions director visited us in order to learn for himself about our situations. Although we used to give written reports to him at least every six months, his visiting us in person gave us a lot of inspiration and strength.



Elisabeth Cook

Later, when I returned to Budapest, I realized how desperately I had needed a good experience to look back on because the time that lay ahead would be very hard.

Back in Hungary, my teacher, Laszlo, had left us. He had heard the conclusion and become very frightened. Despite such major setbacks, however, I found a new spiritual child, Brigitta, who was another student and so enthusiastic about the Principle that she decided to write it down in Hungarian word by word. I translated the 'Level Four' book verbally to her and she wrote it down. It took us an entire month by which time the summer holiday had arrived. This was always a critical time of year because the students went home and we missionaries also left the country in order to fundraise and to meet up with brothers and sisters. During those summer months, some of the contacts that we had made during the year invariably disappeared.

When I met Brigitta again in September, I immediately realized that something had changed. She wore different clothes, was using make-up and went out in the evenings. Finally, she told me that she had met a man whom she was going to marry. With those words, she moved out and left. There was nothing that could have made her stay. Once again, I was devastated.

Starting from zero all over again, I continued to teach the Principle but although I always had guests to teach and some of them already knew about the Second Coming, there was no major breakthrough. They would listen to the Principle with great interest but considered it to be just another philosophy that had no real connection to reality. When I told them that I was part of a worldwide religious movement and how my life had changed through the

Principle, they couldn't imagine anything like that Some had heard the Principle two or three times but there still seemed to be a wall there that just couldn't be broken through.



Seated left to right Elizabeth Cook, Christa Segato who coordinated the Butterfly mission under Peter Koch, and Gertrud Koch (wife of Peter Koch), plus one unidentified sister (standing)

The only way to continue in such a situation was to set more conditions. Whilst pioneering in Hungary I did several seven-day fasts, which although physically difficult, brought me closer to God. I once did a seven-day fast in the middle of winter and was fully prepared to freeze for the entire seven days. After the second day, however, I started to feel very hot. At first I thought that I must be ill with fever but as there appeared to be no other signs of sickness, I didn't worry about it. For the rest of that fast I was so hot that I slept with the window open (with freezing temperatures outside), took cold showers and drank cold water. I don't know what caused the phenomenon but I was so grateful to God that He took care of me in such an unusual way.

In order to support the guests whom I was teaching, I fasted one day a week for two years. Besides the good effect it had on my guests, the condition helped me very much to focus on my mission and to constantly purify myself. My other way of making conditions was to do prayer walks. Many times in the evenings, I would walk along the river bank from Margit Bridge to Elizabeth Bridge and back, which took me an hour and a half.



Handwritten Hungarian translation of Divine Principle 1983

In August 1987, we were invited over to the United States. On one of the final days of our visit, we were invited to East Garden to meet with True Parents. It was to be the first time that I'd ever met True Parents and on the one hand I was excited but on the other I felt worried. What would I answer if Father asked how many spiritual children I had restored? I had no visible results to show. To my relief, True Father didn't ask that question. His first words were, "Ah, you are the missionaries. I've read your reports many times." I was so surprised that I started to cry. It had never occurred to me that True Father was actually reading our reports! I assumed that, at best, the World Missions director would have looked them through and then given a summary to True Father. When Father spoke to us on that morning, his main message was "Be bold and strong!" I felt he really wanted to encourage us to continue our work and to break through.

After we had lunch with True Parents, they gave each of us \$1,000. (We used this to buy a TV and a video-recorder for the center in Hungary). Through that meeting with True Parents I could feel to some extent how much they had invested their hearts in the mission behind the Iron Curtain.

Even though I hadn't been able to meet True Parents until that time, I had built up a close relationship with them through spiritual experiences and dreams. In 1985 (the disastrous year, mentioned earlier), I dreamt that True Father was talking to me on the phone and that I could actually see him sitting in New York holding the telephone receiver in his hand. He asked me different questions about my daily life and how I was doing in my studies and so forth. Although we'd already had a lengthy conversation and had run out of topics still Father didn't want to put the receiver down. I could feel the flow of love through the telephone wire and it was so strong that neither Father nor I wanted to interrupt it. After some time of quietly sitting there, Mother came and asked Father to finish our silent conversation as it was going to be very expensive. When I woke up, I could still see Father sitting there and wanting to talk. The impression was so strong that it was more of a spiritual experience than a dream. It helped me to understand Father's concern and love for each of us, even showing interest in the smallest details of our lives.

Half a year later, when reading one of Father's speeches to members in America, in an issue of *Today's World*, I was surprised to read, "You don't know how much I would like to phone up the missionaries in the communist countries and talk to them, but I can't." I cried when I read that because I knew that it was one hundred percent true.

I had yet another significant dream connected to the mission situation in Hungary while living in a spacious apartment in the inner-city part of Budapest. The flat was too big for one person, but I lived there by myself. In the dream, it was crammed full of people and the guests were even sitting in the bathroom and in the storage room, listening to the Principle. I was very surprised when I woke up because such a vision could never have come from my own imagination at that time.

(Two or three years later, in 1991, when many German members were mobilized to Hungary, that vision became literally true because the flat became the witnessing center and was filled with guests almost every evening. I even remember that guests really were crouching in the bathroom, reading the Divine Principle! I thought back to my dream through which God had given me encouragement at that lonely time.)

