

## Testimony of the 1975 Unification Church Missionary to Chile

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*Photo date and location unknown*

I was born in Germany, but I met the Church while I was studying medicine in Vienna, Austria. I joined on Children's Day 1969 and stayed in the Austrian Church Family until the end of 1970 when the leader Peter Koch assigned me as missionary to Belgium where I worked as a pioneer. Upon arrival in Belgium, I didn't speak the language, so when I invited people I met to come to the center, I asked them to read the Divine Principle in French to me. That was a win-win situation. The guests learned about the Principle, and I was on a fast track learning French.

In the beginning, I did many prayer conditions at the Holy Ground.

At one point, a missionary brother who had worked in Russia came to visit me for a while.

Together we set "prayer walk" conditions, visited many churches and established a number of friendships. One young lady was very intrigued by the new explanation of the Mission of Jesus, which inspired her to visit the center to study the Divine Principle with me. She became a member.

Later on, Peter Koch sent 2 sisters from Austria to help me in my mission. We did "street witnessing," invited potential members to the center and gave lectures. We brought our first members to workshops in France, so that they could experience a more established Church family/community and deepen their knowledge of the Principle.

Erika from Austria, missionary in Denmark, had met Renee Robinet, mother of 4 children, in an English class. I was invited to come and teach the family the Divine Principle in French. The entire family joined our Church. After they returned to Belgium, they moved into our center. We found a bigger center and continued our "street witnessing" in Brussels. We met many people from other European countries. At that time, a substantial number of young women worked in Belgium as "au pair's". We became a very international family.

In February 1975, I participated in the 1800 couples Blessing in Korea. I was blessed with Russell Walters from the USA. While in Korea, we had a deep experience: while praying, we saw a vision. In this vision the children of Chile came and asked us to come to them as missionaries. We approached Mrs. Choi with the request to let True Father know that we wanted to be sent as missionaries to Chile.

After the Blessing, the new couples went to Japan to support True Father's speech in Tokyo. Father told me in Japan that my husband should go first. I was ready to go to the airport to travel back to Belgium when President Salonen offered me a ticket for a flight to the USA. He suggested that we get married legally and meet Russell's family in Michigan. We did that. The family was happy to hear that Russ had

got married. So I received a warm welcome.

After that visit, we went to New York. The foreign missionaries went to a training workshop in Barrytown, N.Y. True Father told me to attend as well. After my husband went to Chile as a missionary, I went back to Belgium and worked there for another year. By the time I joined my husband in Chile, we had about 40 members in Belgium.

My husband had not received the telegram I had sent to let him know when I would be arriving in Santiago. With the help of a skilled taxi driver, I got to the center safely and surprised my husband. He had been in Chile for a year together with Wolf from Germany and Hiroshi from Japan. We made efforts to strengthen our unity through "prayer conditions" and frequent walks to the Holy Ground.

Russell was teaching English at the American Institute in Santiago. I got the chance to take Spanish classes at that Institute for free. I learned the language quickly, since we also spoke Spanish at the Church center.

At that time, Chile was ruled by a military government after the overthrow of communism which had been brought to the country by foreigners.

Before my husband joined the Unification Church, he had served in the Peace Corps in Chile. At that time, people were very friendly and open to foreigners. But then communism invaded the country. As a result, there was a lot of mistrust of foreigners. By the time we arrived in Chile as missionaries, communism had been overthrown. Nevertheless, people were still quite suspicious of foreigners. This created quite a challenge for us. We made great efforts to build friendships with people before introducing them to the Divine Principle. We continued with our prayer conditions and also did several 40-day "street preaching" conditions.

After starting our married life, I became pregnant and gave birth to our daughter Teresa on September 6, 1977. Teresa was born with "spina bifida". During this difficult time, the missionaries from Argentina came to assist us. Before she could be transported to the USA to receive adequate treatment, Teresa had to undergo surgery in Chile. Father explained that her condition was indemnity to prevent communism from returning to Chile and then spreading to South American countries. Father said that Teresa must survive at all costs. True Parents even went so far as to pay for Teresa's surgery. Because of this situation, we had to leave our beloved Chile and return to the United States.

Later Regis Hanna and his wife [Nancy] took over the mission work in Chile.

Today Chile is a democratic country, very developed and prosperous compared to other countries in South America.