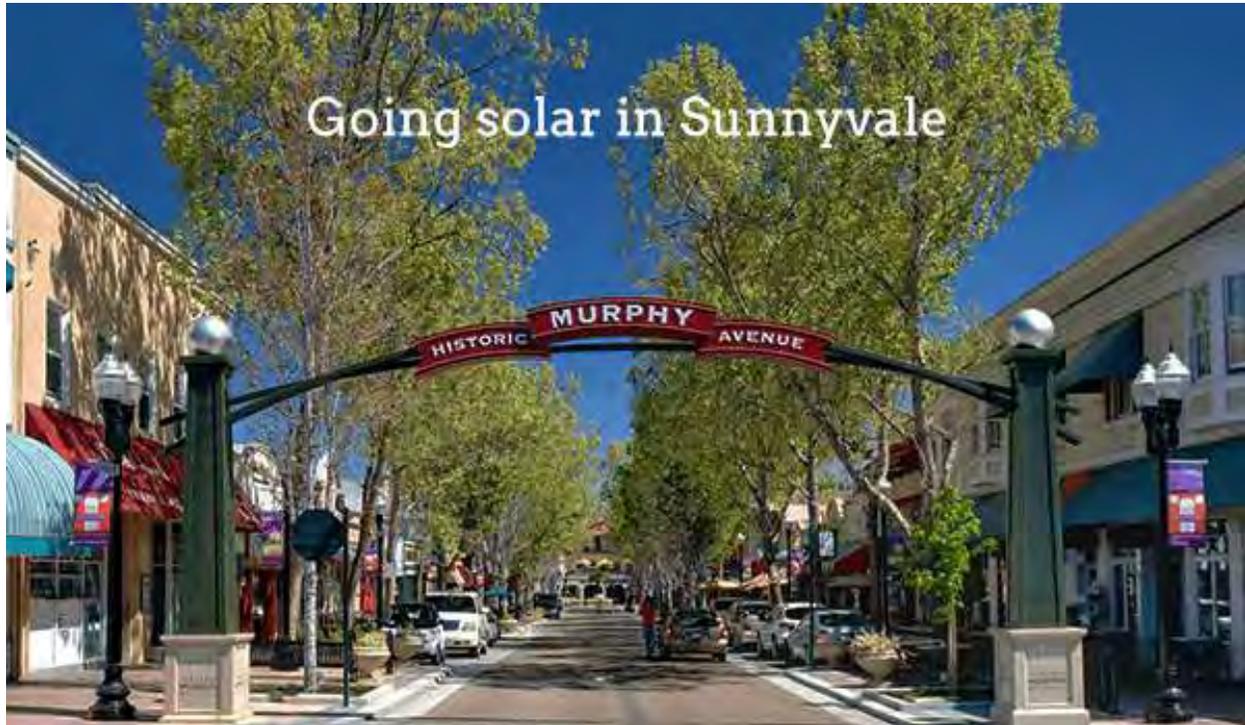


A sister from Lebanon (12)

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Living in Sunnyvale, Silicon Valley, wasn't an easy place to be specially as a family of seven. Life was very expensive and Larry's income was very limited so I needed to step up. First I needed to learn driving. It was challenging as my mind wasn't free and I wasn't young anymore. Although I did it, I couldn't overcome the fear of driving on highways.

And as the children start going to school one after the other, I tried to find a part time job so I can be home when they come back.

In the beginning I worked all kind of jobs from being a sales person at Michael's hallmark store and One Dollar city store to babysit kids all ages. I also worked as a translator from Arabic to English for a six months project. And for the last 12 years, I was a preschool teacher for a program provided by the city of Sunnyvale to prepare kids for Kindergarten.

Most of the jobs were simple yet very demanding. Still I didn't seek something different as my priority was to be a mom and to be home when the children come back from school.

The hardest part was to live far from our church and our spiritual community. We tried as much as we can to stay connected and to bring second generation children to stay in our house for the weekends. We also enrolled our kids to every workshop and church camps so they can receive spiritual nourishment and grow in learning Divine Principle.

In the same time, we tried to serve our community by attending my in-laws Methodist Church. Larry joined his mother in singing in the choir weekly and I tried to give Sunday school once a while.

Also I was interested in cultural events that our city provided. So once a year I joined an international street fair where I displayed pictures and books about Lebanon. I felt the need to represent my country and my culture in my city. In fact, I was asked several times after 9/11 to give a talk about Lebanon and the Middle Eastern culture.

The biggest sacrifice of my life was leaving my mom behind. She was my best friend. She never complained about me leaving her for good. I was her only daughter and she loved me so much. She and my dad were truly prepared by heaven to support me to join the church in Lebanon and let me go. I never was able to help them when they needed help or serve them in their old age. That was my agony.

There was another person that I owed him a lot, my brother Ibrahim. During the civil war in Lebanon, a lot of young people left the country to work overseas. Ibrahim was only 21 years old when he left home to work at Saudi Arabia. He stayed there for 13 years and because of him, my parents could survive the harsh economy and the inflation in Lebanon. He also helped me to travel and when I was in Egypt, he supported me when I started having children. When he came back to Lebanon, he took care of my aging parents as well my other brother who was unstable in his work.

Time flies specially when you live in a difficult place and you need to take care of everybody so Ibrahim never was able to get married as he was stuck with the harsh reality of his parents and his country. And that was my parents agony that none of my two brothers were married.

In 2006, I received a phone call from my brother Ibrahim telling me that my mom went to urgent care as she had pneumonia. Although she recovered and went back home I decided that I should go and visit. My parents are getting old and you never know when will see them again. I called the central figure in Lebanon, Thomas Schellen, and I told him about my intention to visit Lebanon in that time. He was very surprised by the coincidence that in the same time True Mother is coming to visit Lebanon for the first time. WOW. I will be seeing both my mother and True Mother. It was a rendezvous arranged by heaven.

To be continued