

## A New Spirit of Freedom

Izilda Lima [Withers]

May 13, 1974



*May 1, 1974 celebration on Liberty Avenue, Lisbon*

We are growing, and many good things are happening here. After the coup d'état on April 25, the atmosphere changed, and people go about much more at ease and happier. On that day we all fasted so that no blood would be spilled. Everything happened in an orderly way, and there was no big disturbance. The soldiers were on the streets with red carnations on their guns. Even the Communist Party, which now thinks it can gain its ends, has another think coming. We are here to prevent its expansion and to give them a lesson.

They are revealing themselves, and people here can see that their teachings are not very wise. The Portuguese have had too much suffering to put up with the revolutionary attitudes of the few Communists. Now people want freedom to live and work. Our Heavenly Father is working and all will change for the better. Up to now, Portugal suffered forty years under the Salazar regime. Now God will work.

On May 1st, Labor Day and a traditional day of parades, everything went well, and everyone demonstrated without any violence. We also demonstrated with banners saying, "This is the Day of Hope," "Unification -- Sun Myung Moon," and "One World." We were televised, and many people saw us singing on TV as we marched down Liberty Avenue.



On May 13 we all went to Fatima, where Our Lady appeared to three children on May 13, 1917. So many good things happened. We were three cars full of brothers and sisters. We stayed there at a friend's house for three days, and taught the Principle. Also we distributed literature and sold a pamphlet on the life of Reverend Moon. Many spiritually open people were there, and we made many good contacts with priests and nuns. In fact, we met one priest from the northern part of Portugal (Porto) who invited us to stay at a seminary there when we go up in August to start a center. We had so much spiritual help that we even found a good house right by the Cathedral of Fatima, which we rented. It is very large and has lots of grounds around it. On the first of June, we will start a center in Fatima. On the 13th of every month from May through October people come by the thousands to pray at Fatima. The last of the three girls who saw

the visions, Lucy, is still locked up at the Pope's orders in a convent at Coimbra.

On May 12, at about midnight, thousands of people gathered around the cathedral (it is built like the Vatican), each with a lighted candle. It was a sea of candles and beautiful to behold. People sang and prayed. There was peace and order, and a spiritual warmth there. On May 13, we all marched around the cathedral with our banner, singing. After completing the circle, we entered inside through the main entrance, right through the middle of the crowd, who in surprise, opened the way for us to pass. In front of us was a statue of Jesus with open arms; we sensed his spirit welcoming us. Behind him was a statue of Mary, on the cathedral, also welcoming us. We really sensed the spirit world with us, and there is no doubt in my mind that Jesus and Mary were really there. The national TV station was there and caught us, and many people saw us on TV that night. Our banners read, "Portugal United with God," "New Hope for Portugal," and "Unification -- Sun Myung Moon."

We had another great experience on the way home. In the car I was in was a boy who had just heard Principle a few days past. We wrote a beautiful song, inspired from spirit world, and he had just finished making a condition of faith to leave everything and join the movement that very day. All of a sudden we strongly felt the presence of someone from spirit world with us. We all started crying without knowing why. The tears just rolled down my face. We knew it was Mary. The sensation we had is hard to describe. It was so pleasant and warm, and we had a sense of lightness and light around the car. Father and Mary were pleased and she came to let us know that.

The boy's name is Liberto, which means free, or liberated. He had studied in the seminary for ten years and had left because he didn't feel he had all the answers there. He is 29 years old. He gave everything to the center, and is so good and humble, and serves everyone in such a wonderful way. He plays organ, piano, guitar, and saxophone. Soon he will be able to teach, for he understands everything very quickly.

But we had to pay a price immediately. We stopped to buy some oranges on the side of the road. A sister in another car was crossing the street when a car came and hit her. She is still in the hospital, but has nothing broken, just some bruises.

However, the man who hit her is now very positive. He understands the reality of Satan, and is very open to learning about the Principle. He is a dentist, and we are now friends.

It happens that at the spot where the accident happened there have been many accidents, and on the side of the road was a road marker with the number 6. The girl hit had fasted that day and had walked barefoot all day to pay indemnity. But she will be a very strong member someday and will understand the cause of the accident.

When I was in America, I didn't understand the spirit world clearly. But here it's much easier, and we have many experiences all the time.