

Hiding from Paraguay's Guarani, Who Searched for Me While Robing My Home

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This photograph was taken 7 years after the events described by our early missionary. Within that time, due to Heaven's protection and guidance, the mission had greatly expanded, even to the point of holding CAUSA seminars for young people.

By our Unification Church German Missionary in Paraguay in the 1970s

This testimony was written more than 30 years ago about events that happened more than 40 years ago. It is about spiritual protection in situations of personal danger. For reasons understandable at that time, our missionary decided to withhold her name from this content.

There was a period when I was arriving home late each night. I was living alone at the time, and one particular night I sensed danger and consequently felt quite fearful. I prayed in each of the rooms of our center, but I couldn't calm my feelings of apprehension. Finally, I packed a small bag and tried to jump over the wall in our yard, but I could not climb over it. Then suddenly, I heard some people breaking in to our center. Since I could not jump over the wall, I looked for a hiding place. I hid under the sink in which we did our laundry. I pulled a chair in front of me and draped a towel over the chair.



Paraguay's Guarani Indians

My hiding place was extremely small and cramped; I can't imagine how I fit in! People came and searched the whole house. I counted eight men. They spoke mainly in Guarani, the native language of the country, but through the few words of Spanish they used, I understood that they were looking for me. I was praying like crazy -- I was really afraid. While I was doing this, one of them passed by with a flashlight looking everywhere for me. I only prayed that the spirit world would protect me and make me "invisible" so they would not find me. I constantly saw their shadows on the wall. I could hardly breathe; I knew I had to breathe softly. After about four hours had passed, I felt very clearly that nothing would happen to me, but the men were still in the house. They tore up everything; they were looking for money but they did not find any.

They stayed a total of six hours. I felt very protected spiritually. Because at one point I had the sensation that nothing would happen to me, I even fell asleep for a short time. Finally, they started to leave. When I was sure that all of them had gone, I tried to get out of my hole, but I could not move any of my limbs, as I had stayed curled up in that position for the whole time. It took more than one hour before the numbness wore off, but spiritually the incident stayed with me a long, long time. Yet it brought me to the awareness of how much God can guide and protect us, even in life-threatening situations. I felt so spiritually protected by Heavenly Father. I felt as if He had stood right in front of me, spreading His arms so that no one could see me.

In 1977, I went to the countryside with two members to visit their parents. The Paraguayan authorities were prosecuting terrorists, and at that time they happened to be looking for three women terrorists. And we were three women traveling together. There were no roads and we had to travel about 10 kilometers on horseback. We had stopped for the night in the middle of nowhere.

At about 2:00 a.m. I felt something on my shoulder. I woke up and saw a gun pointed at me. A policeman spoke gruffly, telling me to get up, and he pulled me up with one hand. Luckily, I was dressed. He grabbed my arm and then pulled me out to the road. One soldier put a gun to my back and four other soldiers straddled us and pointed their guns at me as we walked. I did not know what was going on. Of course I started praying. I heard the others screaming. There were many stories of women being raped by policemen in this country. The police held them at gunpoint, and they were taken away but not interrogated.

But I was interrogated. Four soldiers pointed their guns at me and they shone a flashlight in my eyes as they started asking questions. My knees were shaking, but thankfully I could speak normally. I was really afraid!

After about forty minutes they brought the other two members, and all our luggage and loaded us on a truck. We saw that the house was completely surrounded by soldiers with guns. There were 14 soldiers and four policemen, as well as the head of investigation. They brought us to the village about 30 kilometers away and there they interrogated all of us.

Finally, all our papers were taken away and they put one bed in the police yard and allowed us to rest. But we were so scared, we all got an attack of diarrhea simultaneously. I was interrogated twice more during this night. I pictured very clearly Father's own time in prison. This was a very miserable police station, and we heard people crying out from being tortured. Yet, as I thought about Father, I felt very close to him and I felt everything was going to be fine. There was no visible reason why I should feel this way, but I just knew everything would be all right.

We met a little boy about nine years old who had burn marks from electric shock. He had been tortured so much that he had forgotten his own name. The two other sisters were scared, especially after hearing his story, but somehow I felt at peace. I felt as if Father were with us.

I tried to talk Guarani, but we couldn't communicate. The policeman couldn't understand much Spanish, so the situation was so difficult. About 8:00 a.m. we were brought to the governor's office. The policeman who had given us the worst treatment whispered something to us as we left: "Make the same declaration, and don't have different stories." I was so surprised by his help.

Once at the governor's office we explained that our arrest was a mistake, that they had been looking for three women terrorists but that we were not terrorists. They had asked the embassy if they knew me, and once they were satisfied that we were telling the truth, they released us.

We were so happy. It was pouring with rain, yet we almost danced down the dirt roads. We returned to the police station to pick up all our things and the policemen who had earlier been nasty to us asked us in a very concerned way what had happened. We told him that we had been freed and then he told us, "I prayed for you." I was so moved. And I knew that our protection was real and directed by the hand of God!