

Margarethe Sparing-Chavez

(October 10, 1936 – September 6, 2006)

My name is Margaret. I am a WWII survivor. I lost my Dad when I was 4 years old and got a light case of Polio when I was 6. Those were chaotic years.

After High School, I worked as a tour guide, taking groups mainly to Greece and Turkey. I loved the Greek islands and finally decided to find a job in Athens. Whenever I had time, I also continued working as a tour guide.

I needed what has become my favorite Scripture verse, in Isaiah 30:15: “In Quietness and Confidence shall be my Strength”.

I immigrated to Canada in 1957. In Toronto I worked for a company renting apartments. One day the government discovered an ex-Nazi and there were signs everywhere saying that Germans were not welcome in restaurants, beauty salons, etc. So, I avoided going there. Then I met a lady in the elevator who spoke Yiddish to me and I confessed that I could understand her, but only answered her in German. Then she said: “But you are Jewish, I can tell by your nose.” She was correct. From my Dad’s side I am Jewish. From then on I went everywhere. In 1958 I immigrated to the US.

Later on I returned to Germany and continued working as a tour guide, taking people on 3-week tours all over Europe. Often when I awoke at night, I thought: “If I don’t wake up in the morning, where will I go, to Heaven or Hell?” That frightened me. Then I met some people who invited me to church and I was baptized and tried to live a good life.

However, it was not until several years later when, back in the U.S., I was introduced to a German guest preacher in a church I was attending in Long Island, through whom I experienced a real change in my life. When I was introduced to him, he told me that he was from Wilhelmshaven, a city in North Germany, just a few miles from where I was born. Then he looked me straight in the eyes and asked me: “And how is it with

