

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

November/December 1993

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Thank God for His Saints

November 1 has for many centuries been observed by Christians as All Saints Day, which follows Hallowe'en (which means "the evening preceding All-hallows"). Hallows are saints. Isn't it awesome to remember that *we*, you and I, are called to be saints (see Rom 1:7, 1 Cor 1:2, etc.)? We can thank God for, and follow the example of those who have responded to His call by giving themselves without reservation for His disposal. They overcame the Adversary "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" (Rv 12:11, NIV). To live holy lives in this world calls for "patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints" (Rv 13:10, NIV). I feel sure that the direction our country is taking will surely call for more and more of that endurance and that faithfulness. Be encouraged by this hymn (and wouldn't it be a good one to teach your children?):

Beautiful in Its Time

One autumn day, when all the leaves had fallen and the trees were skeletons, I came upon a barberry bush, bare of leaves, but hung with thousands of tiny red footballs, trembling and shining in the sun. Its beauty, amid all the bare brown of its surroundings, almost stopped my heart. There came at once to mind the words, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time" (Eccl 3:11, KJV). The time was autumn, and the beauty was the kind that belongs to autumn. Ought we not to praise God for the beauty that belongs to *life's* autumn as well? It is not the beauty of spring or summer, but oh, it *is* beautiful—don't you think?

(And if the face that looks back at us from the mirror happens to be an old face, shouldn't it comfort us to accept the fact that now is the time—God's *appointed* "autumn"—for us to wear that particular sort of beauty?)

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

GRAND ISLE
With vigor

JOHN HENRY HOPKINS, 1940



1 I sing a song of the saints of God Pa-tient and brave and true,
2 They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, And his love made them strong;
3 They lived not on-ly in a-ges past, There are hun-dreds of thou-sands still,



Who toiled and fought and lived and died For the Lord they loved and
And they fol-lowed the right, for Je-sus' sake, The whole of their good lives
The world is bright with the joy-ous saints Who love to do Je-sus'



knew. And one was a doc-tor, and one was a queen, And
long. And one was a sol-dier, and one was a priest, And
will. You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, In



one was a shep-herd-ess on the green: They were all of them
one was slain by a fierce wild beast: And there's not a-ny
church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea, For the saints of . .



saints of God—and I mean, God help-ing, to be one too.
rea-son—no, not the least—Why I shouldn't be one too.
God are just folk like me, And I mean to be one too.

Words by Lesbia Scott. Used by permission of Morehouse Publishing.

Norwegian Journal

My husband Lars Gren (yes, I'm Mrs. Lars Gren—EE is only my pen name) grew up in Norway, but he had never seen the North Cape. Last May we saw it. Seven days on a bus from Oslo took a delightful group of Norwegians, the Voases from Mississippi, Lars and me up to the top of that elongated rock pile which is Norway, through Mojsa, beautiful farm country with lovely old houses kept in perfect repair, very green pastures with sheep and newborn lambs, along the River Glomma. Everything neat, trim, ordered, peaceful, somehow speaking of strength and stability.

Then deep ravines, rushing streams, high, barren, rock-topped and rounded mountains with patches of old snow, coverings of new snow. As we go north, barns are larger to house the animals with all their feed year round. Fir forests give way to stunted evergreens, then to birches with sun shining through their delicate new leaves. Suddenly, right close to the road, two *reindeer*, so much smaller than I had imagined, with velvet antlers. This, we are told, is the country of the Lapps, who are properly called Sami. They own the reindeer and follow their annual migrations to Finland and Sweden.

At the Arctic Circle on Day Three great sloping fields of snow, ten feet deep, black rocks, more mountains, lowering clouds and blue sky. Half-an-hour's drive takes us down to green forests, a rushing river, and a graveyard where several thousand Russian and Yugoslavian prisoners of World War II are buried—a lonely, quiet place. Sunshine. Birdsong.

Fjord after fjord, surrounded by spectacularly steep mountains. Seventeen tunnels, one 4 1/2 kilometers long. Cheerful little brooks tumble down toward the road, spindly birches grow not more than eight or ten feet tall. We see the midnight sun, red and low on the horizon at Tysfjorden. Strange to have no darkness in twenty-four hours—but there are four months of the year there where there is little but darkness. A magnificent moose strides speedily along in the snow, unperturbed by the bus stopping.

Near Alta we come upon herds of reindeer—rather thin and scruffy. The herds have gotten too large for the food supply, but the Lapps do not want to kill their prized status symbols. At last we reach the very top of Norway, the North Cape—vast moors, black shale-like rocks, snow, brown moss, heavy overcast, rain, sleet, snow. No chance of seeing the midnight sun. It is dark and cold. We stand in the Arctic wind on a tremendous promontory. The waves thunder on the rocks far below.

Next day, Day Seven, we are in Kirkenes, a town

which was completely leveled by the Nazis. In the cemetery we find many gravestones dated August or September, 1944. I think of God's promise, "All things... for good." *All*—to those who love Him. And I remember the sweepingly powerful name, "Blessed Controller of All Things" (1 Tm 6:15, J.B. Phillips).

We board the coastal steamer *Narvik* at ten, to begin our cruise down the west coast. A comfortable and immaculate little stateroom (things in Norway are almost without exception *immaculate*). When I wake in the morning I see from my bed sharper, more rugged mountains racing past the porthole, in place of the enormous flat-topped bluffs of the North Cape. In Hammerfest, the northernmost town in the world, we visit the churchyard. One stone holds the photograph of a teenage boy, "beloved son, shot by the Germans in 1944." Another poignant tribute: "You were a good mother." Reindeer droppings in the streets. Snow fences high above the town to prevent avalanches from burying it.

Buffet breakfasts and lunches include the always-wonderful homemade breads, and cheeses, meats, sea gull eggs (slightly grayish, large as duck eggs, delicious as hen eggs); for dinner, reindeer stroganoff, salmon steaks. A lady tells what they ate during the war: cabbage, fish, potatoes. Sometimes just fish. (Lars, who grew up in Norway during the Occupation, remembers his grandmother sending him to the store to buy the rationed one-half-cup of milk. He and his cousin Bjørg had a little business going—picking up cigarette butts, emptying the tobacco into a can, and selling it. When he took a drag on a cigarette once his grandfather took him out to the woodshed and laid on the birch branch. It cured him.)

We sail into a fjord so narrow we nearly touch both sides. Deep, clear, black water, turquoise close to the rock. A thin, delicate veil of water falls over the face of the nearly perpendicular cliff.

"Are we going east or west?" a man asks. "West," says his wife, "there's the sun." "The sun means *nothing* in this country," says he, "it just goes round and round."

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I would love to expatiate on each scene—the beautiful Lofoten with its islands, turquoise water, white beaches (the Gulf Stream keeps Norway’s coast open year-round), rich green fields and pastures, flowers, racks of thousands of fish being dried; Drivdalen, the quiet valley where my friend Kristin Lavransdatter lived, fictional heroine of Sigrid Undset’s Nobel prizewinning trilogy (READ it!). The distant tinkle of sheep bells, the fragrance of fir and hay, flowers newly planted on the graves of “The Green Howards,” British soldiers killed in 1940, still remembered by the locals. And then our three days after the tour ended with Lars’s beloved cousin Bjørg and her husband Sigurd, but you’ve had enough, haven’t you? More than enough? Forgive me! It was our first real vacation in nearly sixteen years of marriage and we can’t help wanting to share it.

A Child Is a Gift

Sarah Abigail is the most recent gift, heritage and blessing to enrich the Shepard household, born August 17th, bringing my daughter Valerie’s family to five girls and three boys. “Every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights” (Jas. 1:17, NKJV). We thank Him with all our hearts.

Now Here’s Lars

Since E. got on to this Norway thing let me bore you with a few items from the past. I was in Norway a total of ten years with Far and Mor (my grandparents). I was separated from my parents when the war broke out and it was ‘46 before I could rejoin my family. Wonderful is an inadequate word for Mor and Far. They were servants to all. Far is the only man I know who literally offered his other cheek to an angry man who hit him. He loved the Lord and was the watchman for the church next door for some forty years. Along with that job he worked at a sawmill and often took charge of deliveries with horse and wagon. I recall the day we had to put a horse down. How sad for Far, a lover of working horses. In the summer he would work on the log jam in the river or at times haying on a farm. I can see him swinging a scythe. What pleasure I had to be a part of his life. He would sit at home and read to Mor and me. At times he would play the piano and sing hymns. His voice was good. There was Bible reading, prayer, and church whenever the doors were opened. Well, he opened them. He

set the early course of my life. How much less painful my life would have been had I heeded his instructions. Some would say he was too stern but not so. Yes was yes and no was no and he lived the word. One was secure with Far.

Everyone loved Mor—black dress, white collar or the crisp apron. Always concerned with others. She and Far both had a sense of humor. How cozy to be around her. No church picnic or outing to an island could be undertaken without Mor. For who could make hot chocolate like her? Somehow we managed hot chocolate at times during the Occupation. She cleaned, cooked, re-patched patches and made the house a home for Far and me.

Other than the tobacco business, what are some memories? In disobedience to Far, going skiing for the first time and breaking my leg. Brought home on a sleigh by a woman who was a German sympathizer. Far never said I told you so. Then the time I was sitting on a railing, waiting for a friend, when I lost my balance, fell straight down the stairwell, three stories. My head came in contact with the cement floor causing a slight concussion. I walked home between Far and Mor, it was just around the corner from our house. Another time: blood streaming down my face from contact with a rock which had been thrown over a wall as my friend Bjarne and I were trying to get away from a town bully. Trying to get from the shoulders of my friend on to the roof next door and falling. Yes, it was the old head in the street again. My second job, selling papers on the street corner. Most memorable of all: the invasion, early air raids, evacuation of the town (until the capitulation), proud German troops marching in under banners with music corps, the goose step, the feared black uniforms of the Nazis. The German officers wanting to see the church facilities. Mor and I only showed them the wood cellar. It didn’t suit their needs. Going to the country with Bjørg and asking farmers if they would give us an egg. We did pretty well. Mor’s bread that I ate out from under the small piece of meat, to put it on the next piece of bread and so to eat all the meat in one bite after the bread. Leaflets dropped from Allied planes, announcing peace; the flags at war’s end, prisoners coming out. The pitiful lot of German soldiers straggling to the pier boarding ships for the journey home which some had wanted long before. Seeing my first banana and wondering what the taste must be like. Looking back I would not exchange those years for anything. There were different experiences and blessings when I rejoined my family in the States but I am grateful to God that in His plan I had those years with Mor and Far. It set the course for my life. “Home” to me will always mean Norway.

Now I want to thank all who have so generously contributed to the newsletter this year. We do want to avoid the "heavy-type underlined distress calls for help." Your response to our renewal offer (a book you could have bought for less) and the contributions enabled us to send the letter to many for free and overseas to 68 countries. ALL BILLS ARE PAID. Once in the past I said if any are helped by giving end-of-year gifts for tax purposes, the newsletter will "volunteer" to be a recipient!

Suggestion for Christmas?

Last year the folks who manage my broadcast, *Gateway to Joy*, produced a flip calendar with quotations which they selected from my talks and writing, along with appropriate Scriptures. It's a perpetual calendar, selections for each day, but not limited to any one year. DO NOT ORDER FROM THE NEWSLETTER. Order from *Gateway to Joy*, Box 82500, Lincoln, NE, 68501 1-800-759-4JOY; \$7.95 (U.S.) or Box 10, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2G2, 1-800-663-2425; \$9.95 (Can.).

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? Don't forget to send us your change of address. The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

Travel Schedule November 1993–March 1994

November 5-7 Grosse Pointe, MI; Christ Church, (313) 885-4841.

November 11-12 Charleston, SC; College of Charleston, Ellenor Mahon, (803) 792-5640.

November 13 Spartanburg, SC; Westgate Family Physicians Training Center, Donald Dunlap, (803) 574-0070.

November 20 New York City; Hephzibah House, Fall Retreat, Ruby Hay, (212) 568-6123 or 787-6150.

December 3-4 Asheboro, NC; First Baptist Church, (919) 629-9191.

January 13–14 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

January 15 San Fernando Valley, CA; Patti Thompson, (818) 341-8484.

January 27 Brownsville, TX; Baptist Student Union, Mrs. Malcolm Brown, (210) 543-0317.

January 27–30 Brownsville, TX; KBNR Radio, Mrs. Malcolm Brown, (210) 543-0317.

February 6 South Hamilton, MA; Gordon Conwell Seminary, World Christian Fellowship, Elizabeth Evans, (508) 468-5030.

February 19–March 7 Tour in England, auspices of Saltmine Trust, 0902-881080.

March 19 Akron, OH; Moody Seminar, Mrs. Jo' McCarthy, (312) 329-4000.

March 26 South Hamilton, MA; Gordon Conwell Seminary, Robert Freeman, (508) 468-7111.

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