



MY TESTIMONY

ISHMAEL D' AMICO

I hope that all who read this testimony will enjoy it.

The happiness that I have received in the Church of Jesus Christ, the joy within my heart, are beyond the description of mere words.

We are more than living bodies - we are souls. If we but pause a moment and heed His Divine Call, our joy will be eternal, and our salvation secure. Amen.

Recorded by: Santina M. Maisano.
Compiled by: Frances J. Capone.

Printed at Rochester, N. Y., U.S.A.
1946
Reprinted at A. J. Laux & Co., Inc.
1961

My name is Ishmael D'Amico. I was born on June 11th, 1890, in Roccacinquemiglia, Province of Aquila, Abruzzi, Italy. My father's name was Anzelmo D'Amico; my mother's name was Angela Circone. My parents were also born in Abruzzi, Italy. We were Catholics.

During my boyhood I worked in the fields and watched sheep. At regular intervals I would leave home to help people in neighboring towns and I would be away for months at a time; then I would return home. We were a poor family.

My father came to the United States in 1894 and died here in August 1896. He had come here to obtain work, but death interfered, and his plans came to a sudden end.

Three years later, my mother remarried and moved to a town twelve miles from my birthplace. This town was called Roccapia.

At the age of 17 (April 1907), I came to the United States. Now I shall write a sketch of my boyhood and I shall also tell a few experiences that definitely show that the Lord's Hand has been upon me since my birth.

The town in which I lived was built on rocky hills. From 50 feet to 100 feet below these steep hills, the people had gardens which were enclosed within stone fences. On top of these fences were thorny bushes, which were there as a protection against thieves. From several high places one could look below the hill where we lived and see a precipice.

When I was four years old, I was playing with some little boys in the vicinity when we found ourselves at the highest point on this hill. Directly below us was a precipice. I remember that a very strong wind was blowing that day and whether it was the wind or one of my playmates who pushed me, I do not recall, but I found myself near the edge of this precipice and then I fell about 100 feet below. I landed on a thorny fence. I was scratched, cut and bleeding. I could not see from my left eye for I had pierced it. There I lay for a while. I cannot understand how I lived after that fall. A neighboring woman found me. She washed me and took me to a hospital where the doctor told my mother that I would lose my eye. Before I went to the hospital, my mother had been severely reprimanded for not taking better care of me. The poor soul had been out working in a neighbor's field, trying to earn a few pennies that we might have the bare necessities of life. I weep when I think of the drudgery that was her life. O poor mother, America was not for you!

At the hospital, several doctors examined me and all the doctors, with the exception of one, said that I had lost the sight of my eye. I remember clearly that one doctor said: "How pitiful it is that this child will grow to be half a man, for he shall have but one eye. I shall do all in my power to save his eye." Upon examining me, he found that my eyeball had been turned inside out and it was the work of a few minutes for him to restore my sight. This doctor's name was Benedetto, which means "blessed" in English. This was a great

experience to me. I understood in later years that it was the Hand of God that rested upon my brow.

While I was still confined to the hospital, I went for a walk which took me to a large well that supplied water for the entire hospital. I was playing with the pail which was attached to the chain when I suddenly felt it loosen and it caught me up with the pail and down into the well, I went. This well was very deep.

Before the pail reached the water, it stopped. I yelled at the top of my lungs for help and soon everyone in the hospital began running here and there to find from whence all this crying and screaming came. They found me clinging to that chain for dear life and I can still hear the doctors saying as they pulled me out, "Here we've been trying to save this boy and satan is surely trying to destroy him."

One day while I was climbing a very tall tree, the branch to which I was holding broke. I fell 25 feet to the ground. I thought that surely my bones were broken. I lay there for about two hours, then I arose, looked around and walked away. There was not a scratch on me! Again, the Lord had come to my rescue.

At the age of ten, I had an experience which I shall never forget. I was going to look over a piece of land which was about two miles from town, so I took my mule with me. As we rode along, we came to a steep hill. We had traveled about one mile when I prodded the mule to go faster. The mule became stubborn and started to kick his hind legs into the air. When he did this, he knocked me off. My saddle, too, came flying into the air. I was soon rolling down the hill over rocky ground. I tumbled a long distance and when I rolled, I could see the mule and much to my surprise, that mule was laughing. I was all bruised when I arose and made my way slowly up the hill to the mule. It took me half a day to get hold of him but when I did, I tied him and muzzled him.

I then took a branch from a young tree and used it as a whip. I whipped him and I whipped him until I could see the sweat rolling from his hide. As I beat him, I saw tears rolling from his eyes and to my amazement, he walked over to me and knelt before me. When I saw this, I had compassion upon him, and I untied him. Then we continued on our way. I always remember this experience, because it was a strange one. ... a very strange one.

At the age of eleven, I had a job watching goats for a man. This man showed me how to take care of them and he told me that I must not allow the goats to get into his garden. I watched the goats, but unfortunately, they did get into his garden. When the man returned and found that they had been in the garden, he became so angry that he hurled me to the ground and stepped on me with both his feet. He was strong, robust, and tall and you can well imagine how I felt when he trod upon me. While he was stamping on me, I turned my heart to God for help because I thought that my end had surely come. His beastly anger somewhat calmed; he left me and walked away swearing and muttering to himself. Again, I thanked God for saving me from danger.

At the age of seventeen, I entered the United States at New York and from there I went to Pittsburgh, Pa. where my uncles lived. Shortly after, I began to work on the railroad near Homestead, Pa. I did this work for one year. Then I moved to a nearby town and from there I moved to a place called Barking, Pa., and there, too, I worked on the Pennsylvania Railroad. From there I went to Illinois, where I worked for one month. From there I went to Montana where I worked for the North Pacific Railroad Co. for six or seven months.

After working in Montana, I left for Seattle, Washington, where I had several friends. I spent the winter there and in April 1910, I left with my uncle and a few friends of mine for Alaska. We arrived at a place called Cordova on April 27th, 1910, at midnight. A twenty-foot snowfall greeted us.

My friends and I were unable to find work in Cordova. The place was beset with labor troubles. I spent two months there. In this time, I became quite ill and I was unable to eat a bit of food. I felt that I would surely die. I spent approximately \$400.00 while I was looking for work and unfortunately, I had to be ill. It had been my intention to earn about \$1,000 and then return to Italy. Now my funds were gone. I had \$20.00. Discouraged, heartsick, and with spirits at lowest ebb, I took my \$20.00 and made my way to a nearby saloon. I was not a drinking man, but sickness and misfortune do strange things to a man. There I drank myself into insensibility. Four men had to take me home. Strangely enough, twenty minutes after I had been home, I arose and felt that I was in perfect health. My appetite shortly returned, and I was a new man. There is no connection, between my drunken spree and my healing, but the fact remains that when I felt that all was hopeless, the Lord was merciful, and He reached forth His Mighty Hand and lifted me from desperation. "The Lord moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." How true this is!

I began to look for work again but bad luck dogged my footsteps. It was impossible to find a job of any kind. In the meantime, my uncle had found work on a railroad which was being built and had written to me to come to work with him at Camp 101. This camp was 101 miles from Cordova. I started travelling with a few friends and encountered quite a bit of difficulty in making transportation connections. The station master refused to sell us tickets; nevertheless, we managed to get on the train. While we were travelling, the conductor asked for our tickets and since we had none to show he questioned us. We explained that the station master had refused to sell us tickets. He asked where we were going, and we gave him the name of a camp called Camp 49. He asked if we wanted to go to Camp 55, which was on the opposite side of the river. We said that was where we wanted to go; therefore, I paid my fare up to that point.

There were many camps along the way. These camps were miles apart from each other. There was Camp 49, Camp 55, etc. The numbers indicated the distance from the city or points from whence the train had started. At the time we boarded the train, we did not know that the railroad line went beyond Camp 49, since Camp 49 came just before the

river. In the meantime, a bridge had been built across the river from Camp 49 to Camp 55 and the railroad line continued from that camp to Camp 101.

When the train got to Camp 49, the conductor asked us if we wanted to go to the other side of the river to Camp 55. We said that we would go, since it would take us closer to our destination, but when we got to Camp 85, we found that the railroad line did not end at this camp, but that it went as far as Camp 101. The conductor, thinking that we would get off at Camp 55, called us at that stop, but after knowing that the train went beyond that point, we decided to go through, so we ignored his several callings. When he saw that we did not get off at Camp 55, he became very angry. We had paid our fare up to this point only. When we saw that he was trying to throw us out, we all jumped off the train. We had no alternative, since we did not have enough money to pay the fare to go any farther than Camp 55. I had \$5.00 left and my friends had even less.

We put our baggage on our backs and began to walk along the track; there was no road to follow. We had walked about half a day when the pangs of hunger began to assail us. I had a little bread and meat with me, so I shared it with my friends.

We began to walk again and arrived at a camp where we tried to get food, but those in charge of the camp refused to feed us or to even give us a night's lodging. However, we did find a tent on the outskirts of the camp and we slept there for the night. Early in the morning, we began to walk again. We had walked for about ten hours when we came upon a small camp. I asked the cook at this camp if he had anything to eat and he gave us a large plate of macaroni, which had been cooked several days before. It was hard and unpalatable, but we were so hungry that it didn't matter to us. We ate every bit of it. He then gave us bread and coffee. We paid one dollar for this delightful repast. Our hunger was appeased; so, we continued on our way.

We walked for several hours. We came upon another camp. We were hungry. We asked if we could get a meal, but they refused to feed us; however, for that night we slept in a tent and in the morning, we started on our way. We reached another camp at noon and there we asked for food. They, too, refused to feed us. At this point I felt very discouraged. Now we had not had any food for several days. A train had stopped at this camp, so my two friends and I boarded it. We had decided to go as far as possible without paying fare and in that way, we hoped to get to another camp and get some food. The conductor soon discovered that we had no money and he notified us that as soon as the train would come to its next stop, we would have to leave. When the train stopped, we stepped off as fast as we could.

Again, we began walking and at midnight we arrived at Camp 96. We saw no one; we went into one of the tents to rest for the night, but we were so hungry that sleep was an impossibility. In the morning we continued our search for food, but we were doomed to disappointment. The cook told me that I had to have a ticket in order to get a meal. I had no money with which to buy a ticket (which was a lie) but a man in the camp was kind enough to give me one dollar for a ticket. I purchased a meal ticket and quickly returned

to the cook. He refused to give me a meal. He said that I would have to wait until noon. I was famished. I could stand it no longer. He told me to go to Camp 101. I then returned the dollar to the man who had given it to me and as weak as we felt, we found ourselves on the road once again. We walked until we reached Camp 101. Unfortunately, my uncle had left camp a few hours before our arrival. One of the men told me that if I would walk fast enough, I would reach my uncle. I decided to follow him. I left my friends at Camp 101 to wait for me. How I ever walked six more miles until I reached Camp 107 is still a mystery to me, but when I arrived there, I felt so weak that I could go no farther. It was dark. At last a good meal awaited me at this camp. The food was plentiful and excellent. I would have gladly given to him my last \$6.00. When I had eaten heartily, I asked what the price of the meal was, and the cook said that it was 50c. I was very thankful for this because I knew that the meal, I had eaten was worth more. I gave him the money and, I took some extra food for my friends; I then departed for Camp 101. Camp 101 was one of the main camps of the railroad lines. We remained at this camp for two days looking for work, but again we had no luck. I decided that in the morning I would put on my working clothes and slip in with the rest of the laborers in the camp. I did this and no one took notice. I also managed to get a meal check, which was usable at all meals. With this same check, my friends also received their meals. After I had returned from my first day's work, my friends and several other men who had been looking for work were curious to know how I had obtained my job. I told them; and when morning came, they did just as I had done. The next day every one of us was caught and sent away. Had I been alone, I probably would have escaped detection but there was such a large group of men who tried the same stunt the following day that the supervisor wondered from whence all the extra help had come. Upon investigating, they found all the men whom they had not hired. There were about fifty of us who were thrown out of camp. However, I continued to stay at the camp for two more days and was fortunate enough to get my meals.

I then began to search for my uncle, who was about 32 miles from Camp 101. I left my friends and set out alone. I saw that the way would be difficult because there were many mountains and rocks. As I walked, I came to a river. Across the river was a tree that was used as a bridge. On my right was the river and on my left were the rocks, so I had to walk across the river over the tree in order to reach my destination. I had a big pack on my shoulders, and it was difficult walking over the tree. Halfway across I could feel the tree sinking beneath my feet. I lost my balance and fell into the water. Grasping the tree, I looked about me. There was not a soul to be seen. One of my legs clutched the tree; the other dangled in the water; and I still held my baggage with one arm. I raised my eyes toward heaven and offered a prayer to God. I said, "Lord, if you really exist, now is the hour to save me from death." All at once, I felt a supernatural power seize me and before I knew it, I found myself on my feet with the baggage upon my back. Gradually I crossed to the opposite side of the river. Reaching another camp, I left some of my clothes there. I felt unable to carry a big load. I kept walking until I reached Camp 130.

In order to get to Camp 131 it was necessary to cross a river. This river was very deep. I was fortunate in finding a man with a rowboat who offered to take me across. As we were crossing, the boat careened and was about to turn over. I immediately petitioned God. He

answered my prayer and we reached the opposite side safely. I then had to walk two miles to reach my uncle, who was in Camp 132. When I did find him, I inquired about a job, but as bad luck had consistently dogged my footsteps, there was no work for me. My spirits were at very low ebb when I walked back to Camp 131 where there was relief in sight. A job awaited me there on the night shift. There was a new road to be built and I worked there three weeks. One morning while I lay in my tent, a large stone came flying through the top of the tent and barely missed my face. It had come from the explosives which the men on the day shift used to dig up the ground. Again, God had come to my rescue. The three weeks passed rapidly, and I was soon without work again. I decided to return to Seattle, Wash.

On the road back, I met a very ugly Eskimo woman. I took one glance at her and my limbs shook as if palsied. I have yet to see anyone as horrible. If she resembled anyone, it must have been satan. A group of Eskimos followed her. When they saw me, they looked at me curiously. When I had walked a few miles, I saw several Eskimos coming from a cave. They surrounded me and their intentions were obviously evil ones. I must say that I was frightened. It felt more like a nightmare than reality. The air was heavy as they pressed close to me. They asked me if I had any clothes to sell. I opened my baggage and showed them my clothes. They saw my clothes and seemed to like them but none of them had a cent. I closed my baggage and surprisingly they allowed me to continue on my way. I returned to Camp 101 and from there took a train to Cordova.

At Cordova, I bought my steamship ticket to Seattle, Wash. I took the boat there (July 7th, 1910) and on the way encountered more trouble. After two days on that boat, one of the kitchen assistants tried to sell us sandwiches for 25c each. I refused to buy any since all my expenses were supposed to be paid. At noon the following day I looked around for a table but the lunchroom was completely occupied. I then saw a little room which had a table for three. Two people were sitting there. At first, I was told to stay out; then they called me in to eat with them. Here I saw the kitchen assistant who tried to charge me 25 cents for my meal. I asked him why he had tried to charge me for sandwiches, especially since my expenses were supposed to be paid from Cordova to Seattle. This man became so angry when I asked him this question that he doubled his fist and punched me in the face. I did not resist him but let him go. I walked out and went to my room to lie down. I was so discouraged that I felt I would burst into tears. The troubles I had endured in the past were not sufficient, but everywhere I turned, misfortune dogged my heels. Some of the passengers then came to me and told me to report the case to the captain of the ship, but I told them to forget the whole incident. The passengers insisted on going to the captain. He came to my bed and asked to tell him exactly what had happened. I did not want to talk about it but the captain insisted. I could not speak very good English, but I told him as well as I could. In the meantime, the kitchen assistant had hidden himself. They discovered him at the top of the ship in the guardhouse and two men were sent to get him down. They chained his hands and made him walk all the way through the ship so the passengers could see him. They brought him to the ship's courthouse and there he was tried. He denied many charges. He was judged according to his misdeeds and after that, I saw him no more.

On July 13th, 1910, I arrived in Seattle. I stayed there almost two months. I found a job there and worked long enough to pay my debts and earn some money for fare to return to Pennsylvania.

On Sept. 5th, I took the train for Pittsburgh, Pa. From there, I went to New Kensington, Pa. where I had some relatives. I got a job on the Pennsylvania railroad and worked there for six months.

On March 9th, I left to return to Italy. I stepped on Italy's shore the 28th of March and once again I met my mother and stepfather. At this time, I commenced giving serious thought to marriage. I knew a nice girl from my hometown whose name was Julia Lecce. I had been home for two months when Julia and I were married. We continued to stay in the same town for almost a year and on March 11th, 1912, I left for America. I left Julia in Italy. I wanted to make a home for us in the United States, and as much as I hated leaving her alone, it was by far a better plan than permitting her to suffer the uncertainties and deprivations that I had suffered on my first trip here.

I went to Glassport, Pa. to live and there I got a job on the railroad. After four months I sent for my wife.

We stayed in Glassport for nine years and in that time, five children were born to us: Ansel, Alfred, Lauretta, John and Erma. In 1917, I was working in the coke ovens in Glassport, Pa. and there I met a man called Joseph Corrado. We used to walk home together. One evening while we were on our way home, I felt a strong desire to talk about religious matters, about God, and my faith which was the Catholic faith. I spoke to him about the Saints and Christ and God. He told me that there were no such things as Saints, Christ and God. I said to him, "Who do you think controls the sun, the moon, the stars; who controls the plants of the earth, the rain, etc?" He told me that all came from nature and that it was ridiculous to believe in such things. He made me very angry and I began to dislike him very much. I soon found out that he was an anarchist. I was glad when this man quit his job because his presence had become too disturbing.

While visiting a friend of mine a year later, I was surprised to see this same Joseph Corrado at his home. When he saw me, he said, "Ishmael, I know that you are a man who desires to serve God. If you will come to believe in this living God, it will be salvation for your soul. I have found a Living God and I am going to tell you about Him - not the dead God that you were telling me about last year." The expression "the living God" puzzled me, since I had never heard of such a thing. Then he told me that if I wanted to know this living God I would have to be born again. I then asked him the same questions that Nicodemus asked Christ. He explained the baptism of Christ to me. It was hard to believe what he told me. He told me about the Gospel, but I could not understand. He talked at length and then he said: "If you do not believe my testimony, go in prayer to God and he will reveal your heart's desire to you." I laughed at him and thought it impossible for God to reveal anything to me. In all my 28 years I had never known that

God could reveal Himself to people. I was a strict Catholic, but, nevertheless, I decided to petition God for my soul's sake. I asked God to show me the true church, His church. I kept praying. One night I had a dream, and, in this dream, I saw a large building. I walked into this building. In one of the rooms to the left I saw a fire with many babies in it. They looked like dolls. This fire kept burning steadily, but it did not burn any of the babies. From the fire came sounds of weeping and loud lamentations. A very thin, old woman with gray, stringy hair sat by the fire. She made me shiver. I didn't want to get near her. Suddenly on my right in another room I saw a beautiful young woman about twenty years of age, dressed like a gorgeous bride. Her beauty was dazzling. After I had this dream, I understood that God had shown me the difference between the Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ. My prayer had been answered. Not long after I had this dream, I related it to some of the people of the Church of Jesus Christ and they gave me the same interpretation - that the old woman, who sat by the fire which seemed to consume these babies, represented the souls of the people. This was typical of the Catholic Church. The beautiful woman in white represented the purity of the Church of Jesus Christ. However, even after they had explained all of this to me, I still doubted. For ten months, the brethren of the Church (Brothers Domenic Dentino, Joseph Corrado, and Vincent Gennaro) came quite often and talked to me so much of the church that I became annoyed. All this talk confused me. With each visit they disgusted me more. They, knowing that I desired to serve God, continued to tell me all about this wonderful church. One brother, Domenic Dentino, came more often than the others and he was particularly irritating. The more disgusted I got, the more often he came. He would talk, talk, talk, and would never give me the opportunity to speak one word. He had the audacity to tell me that the devil was in my pocket.

In 1918 my son Alfred was stricken with spinal meningitis. I tried to do as much as I could for him, but all seemed in vain. He was so terribly ill that he could not see, hear, or speak. His skin began to peel. Two months later, while my son Alfred was still sick, the whole family came down with influenza - during the terrible "flu" epidemic that raged the country at that time. One night I gathered all the medicine that I had bought and put in a bushel basket. I went out and dumped it all into a nearby creek. Medicines here and medicines there -- medicines of every kind and description and none able to do us an ounce of good. Who could help us at this time? Who would alleviate our sufferings? My heart turned to God, the Omnipotent One, in whose Hands lies the power of life and death. My heart was broken as I beseeched Him to help us. I cried like a baby. I asked him to have mercy upon my family and to heal my son Alfred from his affliction. I did not understand the visitation of the spirit of God. Two hours after that prayer, I heard my son speak and ask for his mother. I walked to his bed. He opened his eyes. His hearing came back. The rest of my family was also healed. In the midst of all this affliction, my son John was born. I was the only one who could take care of everything and I was far from well (Our home had been quarantined.)

In the meantime (July 18th, 1919) a man had come to board in my home. This man was ill. One day he went to Pittsburgh to see a doctor. When I came home from work, I found him packing his clothes. I asked him why he was moving, and he told me that the doctor

had told him that if he wanted to get well, he would have to leave my home and move to another place. I told him that the house where he was going to move was a damp place and hardly good for a sick man. He then confessed to me that he had not gone to a doctor - but that he had gone to a divine healer. The divine healer had told him that as long as he would live in my home, he could not heal him. (This divine healer had tried to come to my home several times but somehow could never enter.) He moved. However, I realized that God had been constantly protecting my house from all evils and dangers . . . spiritually and otherwise. The desire to draw closer to God became stronger within me.

At the end of July 1919, Brothers Cesare Talamonti and Domenic Dentino visited me. It was the first time that Brother Talamonti had come to my home. When I saw them, I felt as if they were heavenly messengers. We spent an evening speaking about the wonderful things of God. All that they spoke that evening held a new significance for me. Their words were as soothing balm. My heart filled with renewed hope. The evening passed quickly. The brothers started to leave but when they reached the door they returned and seated themselves again. (I later heard that a voice had spoken to Brother Talamonti and had said: "Return; your work is not finished.") After speaking at length, they arose and walked to the door. Then they returned and were again seated. (The same voice had issued the same command.) We again pursued the subject of the Gospel. They walked to the door a third time. (A repetition of the same thing took place.) The Brother then returned to offer prayer. We all kneeled. As long as I live, I shall never forget the prayer that Brother Talamonti offered that evening. This was the beginning of my understanding of the Church of Jesus Christ. I was so deeply moved that I could not hold back the tears. I felt as though I were listening to God himself. The words that flowed from his mouth were beautiful beyond description. After the prayer, the brothers left for home. This experience gave me a greater desire to draw nearer unto God.

In the beginning of August 1919, a friend of mine gave me a Bible. He said, "I know you like these crazy church people, so here is a Bible to make you crazy, too." I must say that I was anxious to read it. I went into the house with every good intention of reading and investigating the Holy Book. I wanted to discover by reading just how far from God I was. I had barely opened the book when my wife interrupted me and asked me to put the baby to sleep. I was annoyed, but I thought it better to obey. I put the baby to sleep and returned to my Bible. Then my wife asked me to make a fire in the stove. Her interruptions were really a nuisance. It was a hot August day and she wanted a fire! However, I did not want to start an argument, so I dutifully built a fire. I made a good hot fire and returned to my Bible reading. I was very nicely settled when my wife asked me to go to the store for groceries. I knew that we had plenty of food in the house. When she asked me to do this, I was tempted beyond endurance. I was really angry now and, was about to refuse to go when a voice called to me, "If you want to be near me, you must obey." I controlled myself and went to the store. On my way I seemed to hear two voices within me. One said: "The right things are hard to do," and the other voice said: "Are you going to listen to that woman all your life and have her treat you like a child?" Then the other voice spoke again saying: "If you want to serve God, you must begin to obey those little things first." I laid the Bible down for that day and decided on the following day to go to the top

of a nearby mountain and read to my heart's content. That evening my wife had no tasks for me and she seemed happy to see that I was not reading the Bible. That night seemed like a thousand years to me. I was so anxious to start reading the Bible. At daybreak, I walked out of the house with the Bible under my arm. My wife asked me where I was going, and I told her that I was going for a breath of fresh air. I spotted a tree on the mountain that I thought would make a comfortable reading place. When I sat under the tree, I saw a small bird flew above me. I opened the Bible, and something seemed to speak within me saying: "Why don't you pray to God to guide you to find what your heart desires?" I kneeled and began to pray. While I was praying, I heard a terrific noise in the tree. It seemed as though the branches of the tree were breaking. I was frightened. Then I heard a voice say "Pray, pray, pray." I hesitated in my prayer, but I knew that God would be with me if I continued to pray. I felt encouraged in this thought and I continued to pray. In my prayer I said, "Dear God, for 29 years I have served satan, but from this moment and henceforth I shall serve you." "While I prayed, this bird made noises in the branches. When I had finished my prayer, he flew away. Finally, I felt free to read the Bible. I read the Bible to my heart's content that day and I found that I was far from God.

Before sundown, I went home. Dinner was ready and after dinner I continued with my Bible reading. My wife did not annoy me. I felt at peace. I prayed sincerely that the Lord would make his ways plainer and clearer for I was anxious to serve Him with all my heart and soul.

The following night when everyone had retired for the night, I knelt in prayer and I asked God in all sincerity whether or not this Gospel had really been restored. I saw my sins before me, and I felt such a sorrow that I started to weep. My heart seemed broken with grief. After praying, I turned off the light. As I did so, I saw a light come into my room ... a light which was as bright as the noonday sun. I heard a voice saying, "My Gospel is light; it's up to you if you want to obey." My whole body seemed lifted by this experience. I got into bed and then I heard a chorus of voices singing a beautiful hymn and while the singing was going on, I felt myself being carried into heaven. I said, "These are the hymns that are sung in the Church of Jesus Christ." I prayed all that night, for the spirit of repentance had come upon me.

I began to visit the Church of Jesus Christ. I said to my wife, "I shall go to this church; if I find that it is genuine, I shall be baptized, but you must do as your heart desires because we are two separate souls. If you want to continue in the Catholic faith, you are free to do so, but I shall go to the Church of Jesus Christ.

In my first visit to the church, I understood very little English. Just seeing the faces of the brothers and sisters was like seeing the faces of angels. I said to myself, "This is a people who belong to God because the love of God is in their hearts. I do not deserve to be in their midst." I went twice unaccompanied. When I went to the third meeting, my wife came with me. I told her to stay home but she said, "If this church is good enough for you, it's good enough for me. Where you die, that's where I want to die." She dressed our four children and followed me to church.

Two weeks afterward (August 24th, 1919) I asked for my baptism. It was a happy day for me when my wife also arose and asked for her baptism. We were baptized by Brother Fred Smith. I was not a healthy man. I was afflicted and no doctor could help me. When I came to the Church, I prayed for my soul's salvation and not for any bodily healing. After my baptism, my afflictions disappeared and I became a new man, naturally and spiritually. After I obeyed the Gospel, satan did not like it and on Sunday mornings, I felt a spirit upon me that made me tremble. I wondered if this was the spirit of God since I was young in the Gospel. This power became stronger upon me. While I would sit in the chair, this spirit would work on me to a point where I could not control myself. It controlled half of my body and I was unable to bear it any longer. I arose and asked for prayer. Seven ministers anointed me and lay their hands upon my head. This spirit was so violent that these ministers had to hold me down. The chair walked away from me. The brothers tried to rebuke this spirit. This spirit got possession of my legs and I could not see my feet any more for I was kicking violently. When this spirit finally left, I was drenched with perspiration. After this terrible experience, the Lord visited me with wonderful visions, and I was greatly encouraged. Nevertheless, I was tempted for 40 days by evil spirits. In October 1919, we had a conference in Dravosburg, Pa. Everyone enjoyed the blessing of God. I was still afflicted by evil spirits and felt weak. I prayed: "O Lord, you have called me and now I am weak and weary. You, alone, can save me." While I was praying, I saw the heavens open and I saw an arc descending from heaven, I found myself in the arc. This arc was beautiful beyond description. I was in this arc for about ten minutes. In this time, the evil spirits left me, and I was free. My mind and heart were left in peace and I gained much good in the conference. I thanked God for freeing me from this evil tribulation.

One night, on Nov. 27th, 1919, while I prayed, I asked God to watch over me. I felt a hand patting me on the shoulder and throughout my prayer, this hand kept patting me. It felt so wonderful. Then I heard a voice say, "Ask God what this visitation means." I felt spiritually uplifted as I went to bed. I had hardly touched my bed when I was translated in the spirit. It was midnight but it seemed as though it were afternoon. I had a vision. I saw a narrow street with bushes on either side and trees which were straight and high. I cannot say how long I stood looking at this street. This street seemed to run from the East to the West. I was anxious to see where this street ended, but as soon as I tried to find out, my vision ended. I fell asleep and, in the morning, it seemed as though I had had an important dream, but I couldn't remember it. I asked God if this dream was an important one to me. I prayed for this three times but I received no answer. I went to work and two blocks before I got to the factory, I was stopped in the middle of the street. I could not go any farther. No one was around. I was suddenly translated in the spirit and it seemed as though I were going over a small hill. Around me were fresh green grass and trees. I saw Brothers Cesare Talamonti and Vincent Gennaro. I was happy to see them both and we began to walk on the hill. It seemed as though we had to go to a meeting. When we arrived at the meeting place, we found three old white-bearded men. I noticed that one of them was older than the rest. These old men were standing near a tree stump on which rested a large book. The eldest of the trio gave me a book; then he opened this large

book on the tree stump, pointed his finger at me, and said, "O thou, Ishmael, you must become a new Ishmael, the same as Ishmael of old." His words moved my entire person. I then found myself in the street again and the power of God was upon me to such an extent that I could hardly control myself from shouting. When I went to work, that blessing remained with me all that day.

One cold, dark wintry day (Dec. 1919.) a strong desire came upon me to go to the M.B.A. meeting which was being held in the home of Brother Charles Ashton, who lived in Coal Valley. At that time, the M.B.A. meetings were held at different homes. I asked several of the brethren that lived near me if they wanted to go with me, but they didn't want to go because the weather was nasty. There was a lot of snow. Nevertheless, I decided to go. I had no idea of where this brother lived, but I did feel that the Lord would guide me there. I felt as though a sweet voice were saying to me: "Keep going because I will be with you. Look to the heavens." I did as I was told and looked to the heavens. There in the midst of a dark sky I saw a bright star. The voice told me to follow that star until I would be directly under it. When I would be under it, that would be the brother's home. I followed the star; I even crossed the Monongahela River. At last I saw that I was directly under the star. Before me I saw a house. This was Brother Ashton's home. When the brother opened the door he exclaimed, "How is it that you, a stranger in these parts, found your way to my home?" I told him that the Lord had brought me there. He said that the Lord surely must have guided me because this part of Pennsylvania was entirely new to me. There were very few people at the meeting that night, but the blessings of God were poured upon us abundantly.

On the Saturday morning before the meeting of the April conference of 1920, I had a dream that all the Apostles of this church were encircling me. They wanted to take me with them and said, "Come with us; there is great work for you to do."

I had intentions of going to the conference to help in the kitchen. After I had arrived there, I began working in the kitchen. In the afternoon of the same day, I was called by the Apostles of the church. When I was with the quorum of twelve, I was chosen to be a minister of the church. After this, I knew that my dream had been a dream with a spiritual significance. I knew that it was God himself who had called me into the ministry.

After I became a member of this church, I began to do a lot of visiting. I did this continually. After I had been ordained a minister the desire to visit people became stronger than ever and I prayed that God would give me an opportunity to do evangelical work.

I had been baptized three months when the Lord gave me the gift of tongues. At first there was no interpretation to my tongues; everyone began to doubt, and the ministers told me to watch the spirit more. When I saw their doubt, I became very discouraged, so I prayed to God that He would give an interpretation of my tongues to someone or to take the gift from me. One day while I was feeling particularly discouraged about these tongues, I felt moved to speak the tongues. I decided to keep my mouth closed so tight that I would not be able to speak a sound. I felt my whole body swell to the extent that I felt my eyes

protruding. I was choking to death. A voice said. "Who are you to stop my power?" When I heard this voice, my mouth opened and the words poured forth, like the shot of a cannon. I trembled and asked God's forgiveness for what I had done. After this experience, the Lord began to give out the interpretations of my tongues. Not long after this, Brother Joe Dulisse prayed to God, (since he, too, had doubted the tongues I spoke) that if I truly spoke with the spirit of God, that after the meeting when I would shake hands with him, he, too, should feel a portion of that spirit upon him. At the end of the meeting I spoke the tongues. This brother walked towards me, and when his hand almost touched mine, he was suddenly shaken, and he jumped up as though he had received an electric shock and the very power of God twisted him all around. He immediately cried out, "Brothers and Sisters, do not doubt Brother Ishmael's tongues any more for the gift comes from God".

I continued on in the church doing my best, but I always had a great desire to spread the word of God; I fasted and prayed often. One Wednesday night in March (1921) we had a testimony meeting in church, and many testified that they were spiritually weak. Ministers testified the same things. My heart was so pained at hearing all these testimonies of weakness that I went home very saddened. I prayed to God that He would remove this spirit of weakness from our midst and that He would give us strength. I also asked God to lead the way that His word might be expanded. I was guided to take the Bible and to read so that my heart would be comforted. While my eyes were closed as though I were sleeping, I heard a voice, but I did not understand what it said. I, believing that it was someone of my family calling me, went to see, but my family was asleep. I returned to my room and started to read again, and the voice called again saying, "Awake." When this voice said "awake," a flame came upon me and went through my entire body. The second time the voice spoke, that flame entered my body and it seemed to burn me. It happened four times, but I did not understand the meaning of these things. I went to bed and that night my body seemed filled with a supreme power. The following day, when I met brother Charles Ashton, I told him about my experience of the previous night. I waited for him to give me an interpretation, but he said that it was a good sign for me but that he could not understand what it meant.

The third day after my strange experience, a letter from Detroit, Michigan, was received saying that there were persons in Detroit who wanted to be baptized in this church. Brother Patsy DiBattiste had already given his testimony of the church to his relatives in Detroit. Sister Frammolino, at the same time that I was visited with the fire and the voice of God, was praying that the light of the Gospel would come to Detroit. Then when I read this letter, I was filled with the spirit of God and a voice spoke saying, "This is your calling." This letter was brought to the home of Brother Fred Smith and while he read it, he turned to me and said, "Brother D'Amico, do you want to go Detroit and take charge of this work?" I said, "If this is the will of God, I will do it." Brother Ashton then came by and Brother Fred Smith showed him the letter. When he read the letter, he asked me the same question that Brother Fred Smith had asked me. They knew that it would be very difficult for me because I had a large family to keep. I was ready to go to Detroit, Michigan, to do the Lord's will to plant the Gospel and establish His Church. I knew that He would take care

of my family. I continued to pray to God as to whether it was truly my place to go to Detroit. After two nights, I had a dream where I found myself walking. I came upon a great building and in this building. I met a man who looked like Satan. He did not want me to leave the building. He did all he could to prevent my leaving, but I arose in great power. I held an iron bar in my hand, and I said, "I have the authority of Jesus Christ and with this iron I will smite thee." The ground suddenly opened, and he disappeared. Then the doors of the building opened up and I saw a large field of wheat. I saw houses, trees, and streets.

I continued to pray to see if it really was my place to go to Detroit because I was not satisfied with this experience. I had another dream in which I saw the President of the Church, Brother William Cadman. He gave me a beautiful white suitcase that I knew was not made with human hands. He opened it up and put in some kind of material on the left side and material on the right side. He closed it and gave it to me saying, "Go to your destination." I took the suitcase and put it on my shoulder. It seemed as though I walked with it all night and the road on which I walked led to a city, but I did not know the name of the city. I awakened. I then realized that God wanted me to go to Detroit to do missionary work.

The week after I had had this experience, the Rock Run Branch had a meeting to see whose place it was to go to Detroit, and the majority had the spirit that it was my place to go. I had prayed that the Lord would reveal His will to the other brethren. Several of the brethren had revelations that I was to go. Brother Joseph Dulisse decided to go with me.

We left Glassport, Pa. on April 19th, 1921. When we reached Detroit, we went to the home of Brother Ralph Frammolino. We pronounced peace on that home.

Detroit was like a wilderness as far as the Gospel was concerned. The first night at the home of Brother Frammolino, my prayers were that God would lead the way for the planting of the Gospel. All night I could not sleep. I was translated in the spirit and I saw a street around a small hill and on this hill was a telegraph pole. Over this pole was a pigeon that was as large as a person. This pigeon spoke and it said: "Peace, peace, peace." Then I saw two men carrying this pigeon in their arms and they went to each home with this pigeon. Into each home that they would enter, the pigeon would say, "Peace". Then I saw a splendid wedding. I saw a room prepared for this great wedding. After my vision, I was filled with such joy that on the following day (April 20th, 1921), which was Wednesday, (the day of our first meeting) I can testify that the glory of God was in that meeting. Brother Frammolino got up saying, "I hear a bell ringing in my room." He also heard beautiful violin music and the spirit of God confirmed our revelation that His Church was about to be established in Detroit.

On April 24th, 1921, the first five members were baptized. They were Anna Frammolino, Ralph Frammolino and their daughter Louise, and Mary and Joseph Giansanti. It was a glorious day. There was a blessing on that day that no one will ever forget. Sister Frammolino was the first to be baptized in the waters of regeneration. In June 1921, I had a dream in which I saw Brother Charles Ashton giving me a license with the word

"Evangelist" written on it. At conference time in July 1921, Brother Charles Ashton voiced his feelings in regards to my being an Evangelist. Since I had been called to do the work in Detroit, everyone agreed that I should be ordained an Evangelist of this Church.

After three month's work in Detroit, we returned to Pennsylvania and the Church decided to send me to Detroit for further missionary work. Brother Joseph Dulisse remained in Pennsylvania.

After five discouraging months, the Lord began to call more people into His Gospel. In the summer of 1921, I had a dream that I thought I had much work to do. I began to walk on a street in an open field. While I walked fast to do my work, I saw Brothers William Cadman and Charles Ashton, but I did not go near them because I was too busy. They saw that I was very busy and left me alone. As I walked, I came to a small village where a big dog wanted to devour me. When he was a few feet away, he closed his mouth, walked around me, and returned to the village. I continued walking and arrived at a larger village. This time a larger dog came towards me, closed his mouth, and returned to the village. I kept walking and came to an even larger village. Again, a more vicious dog came to devour me. When he was almost near me, he closed his mouth, walked about me, and walked away. I came upon a yet greater village and met a dog more vicious than the others. He did as the other dogs had done. I cannot number the villages I saw ... the larger the village the larger the dog. After passing all these villages and these dogs, I arrived at a place where there were thousands upon thousands of people. When I arrived at this place, I was seized and put on a cross. Brother Joseph Dulisse was there preaching and was saying, "Watch this man; his flesh is all cut; yet, his body shall become new again."

On the 13th of August 1921, Sister Frammolino, one of her daughters, and I went to Cleveland, Ohio. I had taken one of the brethren's addresses, but somehow, I lost it; therefore, when Sister Frammolino inquired whether or not I had the address of someone in Cleveland, I told her that the Lord would provide. We arrived in Cleveland at 2:00 P. M. We had no sense of direction. Then I saw a policeman and asked him which streetcar would take us to our destination. He did not understand me and said, "Only God can take you where you want to go, because I don't know where to direct you." I could not tell him the exact name of the street. Then I turned my heart to God, saying, "O God, you have so many messengers; you can direct us to our destination to meet the brethren." Suddenly a man appeared to me. I don't know where he came from; he came so fast. He was middle aged. He greeted me and asked where I was going. Then he said, "I know that you came from Detroit and I know the place of your destination. I am going there, too!" When I heard those words, I thought that he was a brother from Cleveland and I was going to kiss him, but somehow, I could not do it. He then said, "If you want to go directly to the place for which you are looking, you will have to take the next streetcar." I then replied, "I shall get on the same streetcar as you do." We all boarded the streetcar together. He then began to talk about the prophecies of old; he said, "We have arrived in the days of the beginning of sorrows, where wars, rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, etc. are coming upon the earth." He also spoke of other things that would come to pass

and when I heard this man speak such wonderful words, I was filled with joy. A few stops before we were to leave, he told the conductor where to let us off. The conductor said, "The car does not stop there." Then this man looked at the conductor and he said, "Won't you please?" Then the face of the conductor changed completely, and he said, "Yes, I shall do as you request, and I shall stop the car at that point." He returned to us and told us that we would be getting off soon. He told us to get ready and gave us the directions we were to follow. We were to walk two blocks to the right, until we got to a streetcar line; then walk two blocks to the left. We did this and we saw a streetcar stop. Three brothers got off, Brothers Joseph Corrado, Peter Garofalo and Vincent Tomassi. They were surprised to see us and when I explained how we had arrived there, Brother Joseph Corrado said, "Brother Ishmael, that was not a man who guided you here, but it was a messenger of God."

When we returned to Detroit and related this experience, everyone was blessed immensely. It was then that Brother Frammolino related an experience ... a vision where he had seen a man descending from a cloud in heaven and stopping by my side. After the streetcar left us off, the same cloud took this man up into heaven.

This is one experience that I can never forget. God surely came to our aid in the moment when we thought we were lost. On August 31st, 1921, while I was in Detroit, I had another experience. While I was out walking after dinner, I heard a voice saying, "Your son Alfred is dead." When I heard this voice, my whole body was touched. I prayed, saying, "O Lord, I am in this city to do Thy Will and to preach Thy Word. I have left my family in Thine Hands in Pennsylvania. Now you know what has happened to my son. If he is dead, Thy Will be done but if he is near death, extend Thine Hand so that he may be watched from all dangers." While I prayed, I had a vision that my son had died, and he was covered so that I could not see him. A brother was collecting money for a funeral. The vision then left me and I was left in much pain over my son.

I waited for letters from my wife to give me some news from home, but she never wrote anything and neither did anyone else. I thought then, that I had been deceived so that I would come short in my labors in Detroit. In October, at conference time, I returned home. The first thing I did was to look at my son Alfred. I did not recognize him. My wife said, "Don't you know him? That is your son." I thought of my experience. I asked my wife to tell what had happened to the boy on August 31st after dinner. She told me that nothing had happened, but I said, "Tell me the truth, because the boy was dead at that hour." She cried forth and then said, "Truly, truly, truly, the boy was dead at that hour. While I was washing, a tubful of hot soapy water fell upon him. I took cold water and threw it on him and then I called a sister. She put some blessed oil on the burnt parts. The ministers were called to anoint him. Three or four days after the prayer, the boy was healed entirely." When I heard all this, I thanked God for all that He had done for my son.

At the end of October 1921, my family came to Detroit. On November 6th, 1921, I started working as a laborer on a new car barn that was being built on St. Jean Street. It was a four-story building and I was working on a scaffold on the third floor. I suddenly felt the

board crack and I knew that it was about to fall. It broke all at once. I called upon the Lord to save me and as soon as that board broke beneath my feet, I felt a powerful hand grasp me and lift me to the scaffold on the fourth floor. One of the men who was working on the ground witnessed this scene and when he saw me on the scaffold above, he could hardly believe his eyes. I told him that the Lord had saved me ... and indeed He had.

In the spring of 1922, I had another experience. I had a job at the Hupmobile Motor Car Co. in the shipping room. One day a punch press machine was being delivered into we plant and there were not enough men to carry it. A few of us in the shipping room were called upon to help. We were supposed to push this machine into the factory. I had a premonition that something was going to happen. I started to push the machine. It had to be pushed over a wooden platform which was used for weighing steel and other products. When the whole machine was on the platform, the whole platform broke in half and the car with these large iron wheels which carried this machine fell through this big hole. The machine then fell back and landed on my foot. This machine must have weighed about five or six tons and as soon as I felt it fall on my foot, I cried out, "Lord, save me." My foot was caught under the machine. The moment I mentioned the Lord's name, I felt as though my foot were on a soft cushion and I drew my foot from the machine. There was not a scratch on my shoe or foot. Everyone who saw this miracle marveled because my foot had not been crushed.

At the same time that the accident had happened, Brother Carmen Campitelli who worked on the floor above us had had a vision that a man on the first floor had hurt his leg. Then he saw a man dressed in white put some oil on this man's leg and the man was immediately healed. When I saw Brother Campitelli at lunch time, he told me his experience and we were so blessed that neither of us could eat his lunch.

One night, in 1922, while my family, Brother and Sister Frammolino, and I were conversing about the Lord, two men who belonged to the black hand gang came into the house. They had been ordered by their leader to harm me for having started this mission. They insulted me and threatened to kill me. One of these men took out his knife and was about to stab me in the chest. "I cried out, "O Lord, if my hour has come, take up my spirit." When I uttered these words, the blade bent, and he struck me with the handle of the knife. When he saw this, he regained himself and tried to punch Brother Frammolino. He missed and instead punched the wall and broke it. (All this disturbance took place because they wanted to put a stop to the preaching of the Gospel.) This same man came two more times to kill me. Once when he was two blocks from the house, he met an old man who asked him where he was going. He told him that he was going to my home. This old man told him, "Don't go to that home because that place belongs to me. A servant of God abides there and if you molest him, you will be destroyed." This man became frightened and he immediately went on his way. At another time when this man was sent to kill me, he met the same old man who again asked him where he was going. He told him that he was going to my home. Once more the old man repeated, "Did I not tell you to stay away? Do not touch that home, or you surely will be destroyed." This man became so frightened that he could not accomplish the task which he was sent to do. His

gang mocked him when he returned, and he told them to try the job themselves. Therefore, two other men of the same gang came to try to kill me. When they were a short distance from my home, the same old man appeared to them and repeated the same words which he had said twice before. These men became frightened too and had to return. They had been ordered by a Catholic priest to kill me and they were to be awarded \$600.00. These men returned to the priest and the priest had to double the amount he was going to pay them because the men threatened him, saying, "If you don't double the amount of money, we will kill you instead of this man, whom we have been unable to harm.

That year was a year of terrible persecutions to the Church. The neighbors nearby reported that we were disturbing the peace and I cannot remember how many times the police came while we were in our meeting. The neighbors had even written up a petition to remove us from the neighborhood. Finally, the day came when we rented a little storeroom to hold our meetings. This place was located at Cadillac and Forest.

In 1922 or 1923 we had a meeting on French Rd. in Detroit. An Indian attended the meeting with his wife. This Indian worked at Hudson Motor Company. There had been an explosion at the factory which had left him blind. His wife had to lead him by the hand, and she brought him to church on this Wednesday night. During the meeting, his wife arose and asked us to pray for her husband because he had lost his sight at the factory. Then he arose and asked us to pray for him also. While he was standing, I spoke with the gift of tongues and I also had the interpretation which was, "If you have any faith in God, tonight you will receive your eyesight. In answer to this, the Indian answered that his faith was in the Lord. I called him forward and anointed him saying, "Lord, if this man is one of the seed of Joseph, let him understand that you have given the power of the Gospel to the Gentiles. In the name of Jesus Christ restore his sight!" 'He immediately received his sight and sang hymns with us from the book that same evening.

One day in 1922, a man, who later became a brother, came to me asking me to pray over him. He had had an issue of blood from his mouth for twelve years. I asked him if he had faith in God and if he believed that this was the Church of Jesus Christ which had been restored in these the last days. He said, "Yes." As soon as I prayed over him, he was immediately healed.

A sister one day heard about the Gospel through a boarder of hers. She liked his words very much and so she prayed to God that if this was His Church, that He should send a minister of His to her home. I was working at Ford's and when I left work that day, I heard a voice telling me that I was not to go home but that I should go to a certain address because I was wanted there. It was this sister's address. I did not know her, nor did I know where she lived at the time. When I got to her door, she opened it and I asked her what she wanted. When she saw me, she began to cry and cry and upon asking her why she was crying, she related her prayer: how she had prayed for God to send a minister to her home without sending for him. I stayed there and I talked to her about the Gospel. She had many boarders at her home at that time and many of them laughed and mocked me,

but I did not care. Finally, the sister asked for a prayer. She had been sick for a long time. She told me that if God was able to send a minister of His as she had prayed, she felt that He could heal her of the illness from which she had suffered for thirteen years. After I had prayed upon her, she jumped to her feet glorifying the Lord for He had healed her. She was baptized not long after this experience. (This sister's name was Caroline Mazzella.) Her family was doubtful of the church. While I was on my way home from work one night, I received the same order from God to go to their home and this time the sister's husband was sick. Her husband related several experiences that he had received. He asked for a prayer and then I asked him if he believed that this was the church with the true authority and that God was able to heal him. He answered "Yes." I prayed over him and under the prayer he, too, was healed. He was supposed to go to the hospital the following day for an operation but upon being healed he called his son saying, "Son, call the doctor and tell him that I am not going for the operation because I have found a better physician."

In 1923, the mission work at the Oakland Branch was begun when a son of Brother and Sister George Castelli was healed from an illness. They were not in the church at the time. This was the beginning of my work in that section. After I had prayed upon this child, Brother and Sister Castelli obeyed the Gospel. A few months after, the mother of another sister was completely healed upon her deathbed and through this, twelve others living in the vicinity of the Oakland Branch obeyed the Gospel. However, in time the spiritual work died down and only a few remained.

In 1923, I had an affliction which was so painful that I could not lie down, stand up, or do anything. It seemed as though I had no arms. While I was ill, Brother Joseph Corrado came to my home for a visit and I had no strength to ask him for a prayer. On the third day of suffering from this illness, I complained about the pain. I prayed on my knees and as I cried to God, I saw Christ before my eyes on the cross, saying, "You complain about your pain but look upon me." He showed me how He was hung on the cross. When I saw this, I shouted, "O, Lord, my pain is nothing." After this prayer, I felt much lighter, though I still suffered. Not long after this experience, I was sitting in church when I was visited with the power of God to the extent that I felt as though there was no blood in my veins and that my feet were no longer on the floor. I arose and spoke the tongues for fifteen minutes and when I sat down, I was completely healed. Brother Joseph Corrado received the interpretation that I had spoken on one of the Psalms of David.

In 1923, while working at Ford's, the Spirit of God told me to go home because I had some work to perform. When I heard this, I thought I would go home at night when I'd be through work. The spirit spoke to me again telling me to go home. Again, I thought I would rather work until the end of the day and then go home. When I thought this the third time, I suddenly felt a terrible nausea. I then asked for a pass and I went home. When I got home, I found no one there. I felt so bad that I went to bed. I hadn't been in bed very long when a man, who later became a brother, (Anthony Pietrangelo) came to my home crying. I forgot my troubles and I asked him to tell me his. He said he wanted to be baptized. His wife came about four minutes later. My sickness departed from me then and I heard the

spirit saying, "This is your work." While this brother was at work, he had heard a voice saying to him: "Today is the day you can obey my command. Go home, so my servant can baptize you." He left for home immediately and both husband and wife were baptized that day.

My son Paul was born on June 26, 1923 in Detroit and at birth was a very delicate child. When he was 3 months old, he became very sick and for three days had to be watched very closely. I thought surely, he would die. At this point I had a vision in which I saw my son Paul in a casket. I could see his spirit resurrecting. A man dressed in white then appeared, took the child in his arms and looked up to heaven after which he bowed his head as though in prayer. Having done this, he returned the child to its bed. After this experience, my son Paul got well and strong. How merciful God was toward me.

One night in the year 1923 while I was meditating about the wonderful things that God had done, I was translated in the spirit and I was brought under the very heavens. I was so close to the stars that they looked as large as two acres of land. I saw the stars being drawn up and, in their places, remained a big hole. These stars were all in line. There were twelve of them. Suddenly I saw a large star which was more beautiful and brighter than the rest. I felt as though I had never lived in this world. After this, I found myself in my room again.

In the same year, at a July conference (1923), my name was mentioned to be an Apostle to fill a vacancy. In Sept. 1923, I was ordained an Apostle. There had been many experiences about my calling.

In 1923, I was doing missionary work in Toledo, Ohio, and I baptized two souls from there in Detroit. I went there almost every Sunday and occasionally, I would take some brothers and sisters with me. These people would invite their friends and many times, there would be about twenty there. One Sunday, when I went there, this brother had all of his chickens stolen from the chicken coop. He was very angry and was ready to kill the one who had robbed him. I told him not to worry about the chickens because the Lord could provide everything. He thought that some family he knew had seen them. In the afternoon, I did not see this brother and I asked his wife about him. She told me that he had probably gone to look for the person who had stolen the chickens. When I heard this, my heart was broken. I prayed to God that he should cause the brother's car to stop. At the very same moment, the brother's motor exploded, and his truck could not move. He didn't know what to do and suddenly he heard a voice saying, "Return; I sent my servant from Detroit to feed you with my word and you go about." When he heard this voice, he started the car and the motor began without further trouble. That noon when the brother returned, I saw that his face was ashen, and he testified how the motor had exploded and how he had heard the voice for him to return. This brother was not very firm in the Gospel. He associated with bad company. When I would go to his home, he was never there. I went there at midnight one time and found him going to bed. When he saw me, he tried to hide himself. Before my arrival, he had had an experience where he saw me coming to his home and he had tried to run away. When he tried to go out the door, I was there with

my arms akimbo. He tried the windows and the back door. Each time he would find me there with my arms blocking his escape. When I came that night, he related this experience. Not long after this, he was sent to jail for some wrong he had committed. After thirty months, he was released, and I went there to tell him to repent but he said he had to take vengeance on those who were the cause of his trouble. He insisted on doing this. I told him that if he did not repent, he would be killed because he could not take the place of God. He did not repent and two weeks after, he was killed.

In 1924, I had another experience. I received a telegram from a man in E. St. Louis, Ill. who did not belong to our church. He wanted some blessed oil from our church to give to his dying father. This man had been at some of our meetings and had seen the spirit of God work upon the sick. He had seen healings take place. He had faith in the church; so, he had wired asking for some blessed oil. At first, I did not know what to do because we had never used the oil on those not belonging to the church. I asked one of the ministers for advice and he could not advise me. I decided to go to God in prayer and ask Him whether or not it was His Will for me to send the blessed oil. God answered my prayer immediately because I heard a powerful voice saying, "Send the oil quickly for this is my Will." When I went into the next room, I found a sister weeping. She told me that she had had an experience; she had looked at my home and had seen golden rain falling on the roof of the room in which I had been praying. I was sure then that it was the will of God to send this oil to St. Louis. When this man received the oil, he gave it to his father and as soon as he drank it, he arose from his bed and sat at dinner with the rest of his family. He wrote later and praised the people of the Church of Jesus Christ for their faith in God. *[Editor's note: sending oil is no longer the practice of The Church. A handkerchief (Acts 19:12) is anointed and sent to those who live too far away for a minister to visit.]*

In the month of August 1924, we began to build a regular church building at Devine and Hall Streets. I was entrusted with seeing that a lot and building material were bought. I had to quit my job at Ford's for six months. Since there were few men in the Church, the work could not be done very fast. I can truly say that God did much to help us build the church. There were times when we did not know how to do certain jobs and the Lord would reveal it to us. For instance, we had difficulty putting in the windows, and the hinges that went on these windows were of a strange type to us. We finally had to give up in despair. I felt discouraged and so I decided to go to God in prayer to show us how to put these things on the windows. I went into another room and I earnestly implored God's help. When I was through praying, I looked up and saw a white arm with a hinge in its hand. It demonstrated several times how the hinges should be placed. It then disappeared. I returned to the brethren and showed them how to put the hinges on the windows and as the arm had demonstrated, likewise did we and we had no difficulty. This experience proved to us that no matter what kind of trouble we are having, God is always there to help us ... if we but take the time to call upon Him.

It was a blessing to know that God was with us in the building of our church.

In December, this building was finished, and we had our first meeting on Dec. 28th, 1924. We started to church that day from our homes, and we all walked in line. There were about 43 of us. We walked into the church and formed a large circle, with an elder in each corner and one in the pulpit. Each elder offered prayer and it was a wonderful day for all of us. This church was called the Devine Branch, because it is located at Devine and Hall Streets.

The Devine Branch had a Ladies' Circle which gathered once a week to study the Bible and they were told that if they would have a question which they could not understand, they should take it to the ministers. One day a question was brought up before us. The sisters wanted me to explain more in detail about the time St. Peter denied Christ. When I received the question, a voice spoke within me saying, "It was impossible for Peter to deny Christ." The spirit kept repeating this for three days. Shortly after on my way home from work, I was sitting in the streetcar when I suddenly found myself in the street. How I got there, I do not know. I don't know if I walked out of the door, the window, from the top or the bottom of the car - that's how fast it happened. I was standing there wondering about it when I heard a voice saying: "Are you persuaded now? You thought the streetcar would take you home but now you are in the middle of the street without knowing how you got there. St. Peter was in the same position when he denied Christ. After he had denied him, then he realized what he had done."

In 1927, five or six brothers and sisters went to Flint to give their testimony. They spoke to several families. One of the sisters had her father at Flint and she spoke to him about the Gospel. Most of these people accepted the Gospel. When they returned, they said that I should go there and preach because they were converted. The spirit of God revealed to me that these people in Flint had not really accepted the Gospel. I had no desire to go there. I inquired about the Gospel work in Flint. I dreamed that we were to build a new road. We brought a lot of equipment to start making this road and when we had brought this equipment there, the superintendent called us and said, "This work will not be started yet; it will be started when I call upon you." Nevertheless, I went to Flint and went to see the father of this sister. It seemed as though he knew a lot. I asked him then if he understood the testimony of his daughter. He said that he had accepted it just to please her. He could not be bothered with anything like that. He was too busy with his store business. His wife claimed that St. Joseph was her patron saint and she could not leave him for any Gospel. Everyone had some excuse. That night I stayed at this sister's father's home and when I retired. I had an experience. I was trying to connect two wires and every time I would try to connect them, they would burn up. This kept up all night and I saw that I could not connect these wires. The following day I went to another family and they, too, were not interested. I then went to another home and the same thing happened. There was no interest.

In the meantime, I had prayed that God would not let me leave Flint without their not having some experience. When I was through speaking with one woman, I gave her a Bible. The moment I handed her that Bible, she had to confess something and then she told me how that very morning when she had opened her eyes, she had seen a priest

come towards her with the same Bible. He had given it to her and said, "Understand; understand; understand what you are reading." I felt a wonderful blessing with this experience for I knew the Lord had answered my prayer.

Once when I was unable to attend the conference in Ohio in 1927, I had a wonderful experience. I desired so much to be there but because of circumstances, I was unable to attend. While starting the Sunday morning service, I prayed that I had desired to go to this conference. Suddenly, I saw the Lord before me in a vision saying, "I know your heart's desire to be at this conference, but these conferences come and go. Watch and don't miss the general conference on the morning of the first resurrection. I want all my children to be there."

Now that a church had been established on the east side, I desired greatly that the church of Jesus Christ would be established on the west side of Detroit. I prayed for this matter continually.

One day, a dry goods salesman who lived on the west side of Detroit came to visit me and asked me to go to his home to preach the Gospel. He had been coming to meetings at Devine. A few days later I started out from my home with Brother John Romano. It was a February morning in 1927 and it was very cold. We were not acquainted with that part of town and we had much trouble in finding his home. I prayed to the Lord and I said, "Lord, I shall not return home until I find this man's house." We found his house about 6:00 P. M. I spoke about the Gospel, but this family did not seem very anxious to hear the glad tidings, but they told us about a family on the next street who might be interested in our talk. The spirit of God within me said, "That's the family that you want to see." I asked the man to take us down to that house, but he did not want to go at this particular time. I said to him, "If you do not take us to this man's home tonight, tomorrow you will have to come to the east side to get me that I may speak to him." The following day I was at home alone when I was called to pay a visit to this other man's family. This man and his wife were Pentecostal people. I brought forth my testimony and shortly afterwards, he, his wife and daughter were baptized. (Their name was Cerame.)

Three months after they were baptized, they decided to go back to Colorado, where they had a home. They had belonged to the Pentecostal church there but now they were anxious to return so that they could give their testimony to their friends. Before they left Detroit, they wrote to their minister in Colorado and told him about the church. When their minister heard all these wonderful things, he was anxious to belong to the same church. He wanted to be baptized. This family moved to Colorado in the fall of 1927; they corresponded with me regularly; they also wrote that their minister friend desired to be baptized. I wrote to them and asked them to have this man correspond with me.

In the fall of 1927, Brother Cerame and his wife Anna were baptized at the East Side Church in Detroit. This brother and sister had some friends in a town called Ecourse. One night this brother and sister wanted to drive me there. This place was about ten or twelve miles away. Going along Shaefer Road and passing Fort Road, we came to South Electric

Road. It was here I heard a voice from heaven which said, "You desire a place in which to preach the Gospel. See how large this field is?" Actually, I desired that the Gospel would be preached on the west side and through this experience I realized that there was much work to be done there. It seemed as though this was an answer to my prayers. When I heard this voice, I received a great blessing.

We went to Ecourse and visited this family. We held a meeting outside. It was a warm night and a good group of people had assembled there. I felt great liberty in preaching that night. In November of 1927, when I had prayed that God manifest His Will about the spiritual work in Colorado, I had an experience. I saw the place in Colorado where I would preach. I also saw many people who were saying, "Our preacher has come; our preacher has come." I asked them what they meant, and they said that they had been waiting for me to preach them a sermon. Two of their ministers were waiting also. I then saw two men sitting in the pulpit. When I heard this, I became nervous and asked God to enlighten my mind. I was uneducated and I felt unable to preach a sermon. At this point I heard a voice saying, "These are the words that you shall preach: 'And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, preaching the everlasting Gospel to all nations, kindred, tongue and people, etc.'" (Rev. 14:6-7)

Evidently there was work to do in Colorado; I petitioned God to make known His Will. At conference on January 1928, when the question was brought up as to who would go to Colorado to perform this work the lot fell upon me.

In January 1928, I again prayed that the Lord make known His will in the Colorado work and I had another experience. I dreamed that I was far away. As I walked, I came to a place where there was a red light. A policeman stood here, and he stopped me; he said, "You cannot pass; look at the light." I asked him to let me pass because I had to go to an important place and could not stop, but he said, "If you have a key that can open this switch to turn the light green, then you may pass. I put my hand in my pocket and I found a bunch of keys. One key was larger than the rest. I showed the keys to the policeman and he took the large key and put it in the switch. Immediately, the light turned green and he said, "This key has been made especially for this switch, and returning the key, he said, "You are free: go." I then awakened.

During the last week in January, I was walking on a Detroit street when I heard a voice saying to me, "Are you not going to do this spiritual work in Colorado? If you do not go, you will be punished severely." When this voice spoke to me, my whole body trembled. I felt like kneeling in the middle of the street, but I refrained. I asked God's forgiveness for not going to Colorado sooner and I went home praying that God would reveal this to the other brethren. The next day was Friday. We were in Church that evening. I arose and said to everyone in the meeting, "Brethren, I am ready to go to Colorado to do missionary work. God commands me to go or be punished. I am leaving you with other officers who will take care of you and I will go where God bids me go." After I had spoken these words, everyone became excited. The members did not want me to go; then Brother Mathew Miller arose and said, "Why do you stop the brother from going on his way? You are

stopping the work of God. Last night I saw Brother D' Amico in a dream. He was dressed in white and he said the same words that he said tonight." The congregation then became calm because the confirmation of the spirit of God had been felt and everyone knew that it was my lot to go.

On January 28th, 1928, I left for Colorado, and on the 31st day of January, I arrived at Sopris, Colorado. The brethren and Brother Paul Costa, who was a Pentecostal minister, met me. All that day we spoke about the Gospel and I stayed at the home of Brother and, Sister Cerame. That night I went out and prayed under a big rock because I could not sleep. I prayed all night, saying, "Lord, You have sent me so far and of myself I can do nothing. Now I await your power. Let your banner be established here."

While I prayed, Brother Cerame came out of the house and saw a white banner over the rock under which I was praying. He thought he was seeing things and rubbed his eyes, but he continued to see it. The next evening when the brother came home from work, he called me, saying, "Brother D' Amico, I had an experience this morning about 3.00 a. m. a very unusual one. He related about the white banner he had seen. When I heard this experience, I felt very encouraged because I knew that God had placed His Banner in that place even as I had prayed.

The next evening, we had our first meeting in Colorado. Paul Costa, the minister, brought me to the meeting and while he was sitting in the pulpit, he said to the people, "From this day on, it will not be my place to preach to you. This man is a man of God and he will preach to us." After he had said this, he sat down and told me to take his place.

In the month of February, Paul Costa and his daughter were baptized in the Purgatory River and the blessings of that day were indeed great. Brother Paul Costa was the first one to be baptized in Colorado.

One day in February, another daughter of Brother Cerame, who was a widow, confronted me with the question as to where I had received my authority to preach the Gospel and perform spiritual work. She asked me in a mocking way. I told her that if she would be faithful to God and prayerful, that God would reveal many things to her. She said that she would do this. I fasted and prayed that the Lord would reveal to her the authority which this church possesses. The following day this woman came to me crying, saying that she wanted to be baptized in the church. I said to her that I did not have the authority to baptize her and she said, "The authority you have is from God and not from man." I insisted that I had no authority to do this, in order to see if she had received anything. Then she related the experience she had received when she had asked about the authority which the church possessed. She had a vision in which she was walking to the city of the New Jerusalem. In order to reach this city, she had to go over a bridge. While she was about to take her first step on the bridge, a man dressed in white stopped her and asked her where she was going. She told him that she was going to the city of the New Jerusalem. Then he said to her, "You cannot pass here," and he told her to return. She insisted upon going there and he said, "Look under the bridge." There she saw a river and thousands

upon thousands of people who were getting baptized. The man asked her, "Do you know that man in the river?" She answered "Yes, I know that man." Then she was asked, "What is that man doing?" She answered that he was baptizing all the people. The man then said, "You, too, must go to that man and be baptized. After you are baptized, you may go over this bridge and go to the city of the New Jerusalem." She was very touched by this experience. She again prayed to God saying, "O Lord, I was in the Catholic church, which was not right and the Pentecost church, which was not right. Now please show me the genuine church." Then she looked up into the heavens and saw a large golden inscription reading: "THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST." She continued to pray, O Lord, my husband was a Pentecostal minister; now show me about the way my husband preached." She then saw two streets, one to the left and the other to the right. There was a man who said, "Choose where you want to go. The street on the left is the road your husband took, and it leads to the judgment day; but the one on the right leads you to the resurrection of the just."

After these varied experiences, she repented of all her sins and came to me requesting baptism. On the same day that she was baptized, an illness which she had had for six months disappeared. She was completely healed.

On March 9th, 1928, I had a vision in which I found myself on a hill. There I saw several mules that were encircled by a fence. They were kicking. When I saw them, they impressed me peculiarly. I then heard a voice say, "Watch." All day long this word kept going through my mind. That night during the meeting, we were prepared to read scriptures, when all at once, we saw a truckload of Pentecostal people, a minister with his entire congregation. They all came into the church and we were then quite a mass of people. I could not speak any English, so I became confused. Instead of reading scripture, I preached on Revelations 14:6-7, according to the guidance of the spirit of God. After I had spoken, I sat down and this Pentecostal minister arose and said that he was saved. His whole congregation started to shout. Others arose and gave their testimony. Brother Paul Costa then gave his testimony and all the testimonies our church gave were seasoned with the spirit of God. The Pentecostal people were very unruly. Brother Paul Costa thought I would tell them to leave but I felt humble. My mind was on the Lord. I felt guided to give these people an opportunity to testify. When everyone had spoken, I felt a power upon me, and I spoke two words. These two words were like thunder itself. The whole congregation shook, and I sat down. Then the Pentecostal minister arose from his seat and asked forgiveness for himself and for his people for their doings and sayings against the church. Many of his people arose and also asked forgiveness. I arose and said: "If you would have had the Holy Ghost, you would have understood the virtue of this church. Now if you really want to receive the Holy Ghost, come to this place and YOU will learn the true doctrine which will lead you to salvation." At the end of the meeting they all shook hands and left in good order.

After baptizing a few people in Colorado, the Lord revealed that Brother Paul Costa should be ordained a minister. I wrote to the General Church at the April conference about

this and they accepted my recommendation. I received orders to ordain him. Brother Paul Costa was to take charge of that mission.

While I was in Colorado there was very little work to be found except work in the coal mines. I was afraid to do this kind of work because I had never done it before, but Brother Paul Costa encouraged me, saying, "God is in all places to watch his faithful." Work was hard to get but since I was a minister, the company gave me a job and Brother Paul Costa offered his help to teach me how to do the work. We worked together; he taught me to dig coal and I taught him the faith of the church; and when we felt like praying, we would stop working and kneel down before God in the coal mine. One day we were warned by the spirit of God that we should move to another room in the mine. A few minutes later, both of these rooms in which we had been working caved in. We surely thanked God for having saved our lives. Therefore, the words of Brother Paul Costa were fulfilled when he said that God was everywhere.

While I was in Colorado, I went to a place called Pueblo where I had been requested to visit a family who wanted to meet me. I stayed at that home for three days and the Lord blessed me. There were two sick people there who asked to be anointed. I prayed and they were both healed. I then returned to Sopris, Colorado.

After Brother Paul Costa had been ordained a minister, I received a revelation to return to Detroit. When I announced this to the mission at Colorado, they all felt bad because they wanted me to stay, but I said, "Be comforted, for this is the Will of God for as He has sent me here, so must I return to do other work in Detroit. Pray to God that He will let you know His Will upon me." They did just that and the Lord revealed that as he had sent me as His servant to them, so must I return east. The mission was then satisfied, and they thanked God for showing them that it was His Will for me to return.

On my way home, I had a desire to stop in Chicago for a few days to introduce the Gospel. This was according to an experience I had received in Colorado: I thought I was in the outskirts of a great city and there I saw a large garden. There was a wall around this garden as in ancient times. On one side of the garden there was a large rock. I saw water coming forth from this rock. I was placed here as a guardian so that I could give this water to those who looked for it. Suddenly I saw people come from all nations; they were dressed in their native clothing. They were all coming for water. I saw a woman with a child in her arms. She was asking for water because she was thirsty. I took the child and said to the woman, "Have you no water in your country?" She said that the water lines were broken and that the waters had become polluted. She begged me for water. I said, "Drink all you want; there is enough of this water for everyone who wants it." People continued to come from all nations. After I had this experience, I thought that perhaps it referred to the city of Chicago. I had known a man in Chicago who belonged to a Protestant church. He was waiting for me there. I bought a ticket for Chicago and while I was on the train, I prayed to God whether or not there was any work for me to do in Chicago. I prayed with my whole heart. As I was praying, I saw a vision. In the train there was a man who was very tall. He was dressed in ancient clothing. He came towards me

saying in English: "There is much work to do in this city but not now." His words pierced my heart and I felt like crying out. He disappeared but the blessing he left remained with me until I reached the depot. I remained two days in Chicago at the home of this friend. He told me that he doubted the Book of Mormon and that as soon as he would have a clearer understanding on this matter, he would call me from Detroit. From Chicago, I returned to Detroit on the 16th day of May. On the 17th of May I began to look for work and while I was thus engaged, a voice said to me, "Don't go searching for work. Go to Ford Rouge on Monday morning and a job will be ready for you." I thanked God and obeyed. On Monday morning there were so many people ahead of me that I waited in line half a day. Those who were skilled in some trade were the ones being hired. The others were being rejected. I thought, "Lord, I am just a common laborer." Then a voice said, "I am the one who has prepared this work for you." When I reached the office door, a man took my arm and led me into the office. I was examined and put to work. I thanked God for His Goodness.

Working at Ford's gave me an opportunity to start spiritual work also on the west side of Detroit. I prayed continually in this behalf until finally the church was planted on the west side. The first member to be baptized was a woman named Anna Carlini. In the beginning, meetings were held near the Ford factory at the home of a friend, but later we held meetings at Sister Carlini's home. Soon after, others were baptized, and the church was established on the west side. I was in charge of the west side mission for three years.

When I returned from my trip to Colorado in 1928, I started my mission work on the west side of Detroit. I shall always remember the blessing I received at S. Electric and Shaefer Road. Some brothers were looking for a lot on which to build the church. I told them my experience and about the great blessing I had received at that spot. They purchased the lot at this place and the church was built there.

The work at McDougall Branch began when I went to the home of Brother and Sister Madonia, who readily accepted the Gospel. Just before I gave my testimony to Brother and Sister Madonia, I had an experience. (I had hoped that the Gospel would be established in the center of Detroit.) I thought that I had gone to talk about the Gospel in a home in the vicinity of McDougall Street. While I was speaking, I could see that the people of this household did not want to accept the Gospel. The wife then accepted the Gospel and she asked me to stay for dinner. I accepted her invitation. This woman's husband was disturbed and said he would call someone to destroy me. I did not worry about his threats because I was happy that his wife had accepted the Gospel. She prepared the dinner and it seemed that I was eating outside by myself. While I was eating, the man of the house brought a group of cut throats with him. He said to them, "There's the man we shall kill. We'll wait until he is through eating and then we will kill him and stop all this nonsense." When I heard these words, I felt that it would be a great honor to be killed for the Gospel of Christ. I was about to eat my last mouthful when these men pounced upon me, but suddenly a very tall policeman made his appearance. His badge gleamed as brightly as the noonday sun. He said, "Who is looking for trouble?" The

woman told him that it was her husband. The policemen then took the group of men and squeezed them in his hand until they were no longer there. After this, he disappeared, and the woman and I remained glorifying the Lord. This was the end of my experience.

After this experience, Brother and Sister Madonia received the Gospel and were baptized on March 4th, 1928. A mission was formed at McDougall. In time it grew, and a regular branch was established. In this work, the Lord had shown me that regardless of the trouble we would encounter, the church would still be established in that vicinity. (In May 1938, the McDougall mission became a branch.)

After doing three years of mission work at the West Side Branch, the work of the Lord began in Rochester, New York, when Brother Frank Rosati went there and gave his testimony to his relations. When he did this, he called for me. Before his letter came, I had an experience which showed that it was my place to go. I saw a woman dressed in white with the Sacrament cloth in her hand. She handed it to me, saying, "This mission work be longs to you: take care of it." Then I saw Brother Frank Rosati as though he had a message to convey to me.

The day after this experience, I received Brother Frank Rosati's letter asking me to go to Rochester. He had given his testimony and now waited for me to preach the Gospel to his relations. I felt prompted to go to Rochester and on Nov. 5th, 1931, I left Detroit for Rochester.

Two days after I had preached the Gospel in Rochester, I looked around to find a place where I could baptize the converts. The city was new to me. When I got to the streets called South Avenue and Court, I heard a voice saying, "Watch, watch, is not this the place I brought you to five years ago? Is not this the river? Is not this the street? Is not this the railroad?" As I looked about me, I saw the same scenery that I had seen in an experience which I had received in Detroit five years before. I thanked the Lord for what He had done for me. When I returned home, I also thanked Him for the work which He had given to me to do in this city.

The first home I went to was the home of Brother Sam Castronova. When I had gone to several places preaching the Gospel, four people were baptized. As the church began to grow, I reported the progress of this work at conference; I then returned to Rochester.

I stayed in Rochester for two years and three months; I then sent for my family. Just before I sent for my family, adversities came. I became discouraged and I was about to leave the work which had been started. I was encouraged to stay on when I received an experience which showed me that the brother who would remain would not be able to take charge. A fear came upon me after this experience and I remained in Rochester. I did not want to disobey the Lord.

When I had first come to Rochester, I had prayed that God would encourage me in doing His missionary work. When I went to bed that night, a strong power came upon me and I

found the bed moving all over the room. My mind went to the Lord and I found myself walking on a street. This street reached a place which looked like Hill Cumorah. There was a path which led to this hill. I wondered whether I should continue walking on the road or take this path going up the hill. The spirit of God guided me to go up the path. When I had walked a short distance, I met a child of about ten years of age. He greeted me and said, "Go up this hill because there is a treasure there; take this treasure; it is to be found on the opposite side of the hill." I answered that I would go and as he walked away, I wondered whether this boy was Joseph Smith or Mormon. I continued up the hill and when I reached the top of the mountain, I saw that it was made of scaly rocks. In order to go to the other side of the mountain, I had to go over these rocks. They quickly separated and I saw an opening. When I went through, I came upon a road which had not been used for years. I had walked a few steps when I saw a tall person in a cloud. He told me that if I wanted to find the treasure, I would have to walk back. I did so. He showed me where the treasure was. It was on top of the hill near the rocks. I saw a hole about three feet wide and four feet long. The inside was all plastered with cement. The cover was about two feet square and four inches thick and it was made of cement. I put my hand in this opening to pull out the treasure and I pulled out some straw which appeared to be hundreds of years old. The second time I put my hand in, I found a dark cloth which was very old but still in good condition. The next time I put my hand in, I found a pile of golden sheets about ten inches high, six inches wide and eight inches long. These golden sheets were sealed. The next pile I brought forth was smaller and it also was sealed. I tried to get more out but some power stopped me. I was anxious to see what these sheets contained but a voice told me that they were sealed and that they were the secrets of God. When I heard that, I was so happy that I left everything and ran to the city shouting that I had found a golden treasure. I was asked where I found it and the only thing I could say was 31 to 35. Everyone was happy to hear this news. My experience then ended.

In 1933, I left for the July conference and after the conference, I decided to go to Detroit to visit my family. One of the Detroit brothers had left a place in his car to take me to Detroit from Pennsylvania. I had told him that I was leaving by train, since the spirit of God had guided me to do that. He begged me to go with him. I finally went with him. He drove his car very fast and I asked him to slow up. When we arrived near Salem, Ohio, one of the brothers said that we would arrive in Detroit at 11 :00 p.m. As soon as he said that, I said, "Brother, don't say that, because only God knows when we will get there." These words were no sooner out of my mouth when one of the tires got flat and he was driving so fast, that he lost control of the car. It turned over several times and then fell into a ditch. I found myself in the road. When the brothers saw that I was not in the car, they called out, "Brother Ishmael!" I answered. When they saw that I was on the highway, they were relieved. I got up then, opened the door of the car and took them out one by one. The car was demolished. When all got out, we found that three of us had been hurt and two were not hurt. One of the brothers who had not been hurt asked for prayer; he was so frightened. I told him, "Brother, our prayers have been answered because we have been saved from a terrible accident." The brother insisted that his soul was ready to leave his body but I told him that his soul was far from leaving his mortal frame. Fortunately, a

car came by and drove us to town where they were taken care of by a doctor. This same man drove us all to Youngstown, Ohio where the brothers remained for the night. I took a train home, and I said nothing about the accident until the other brothers came back.

In 1933 I had a revelation that I would have to go to Syracuse, N. Y. I had no money to go because I was not working. I prayed to God to see if it really was His Will for me to go there. While I was praying, a brother in Detroit heard a voice saying, "Now is the time for you to help Brother Ishmael for he is in need." He then put \$10.00 in an envelope and mailed it with a note saying that he was sending me money and that the Lord had guided him to do so. I kneeled down and thanked God for His provision. I left for Syracuse. On my first night there, I prayed to God that He would reveal His Will to me in that city. I had an experience in which I saw a wide pipeline. Inside this pipeline was a lot of cables which reached Syracuse. I took one of the wires and took it into the city in a house. (It seemed as though I was an electrician.) The light worked in this home. My experience then ended.

I performed one baptism in this place; at another home I was refused altogether. I stayed in Syracuse for ten days. I then went to Utica, N. Y. for three days to preach the Gospel. The people I preached to there had many wonderful experiences. One woman had an experience in which she saw a man who seemed to be Moses. He told her that we were living in the last days. He gave her a book and showed her the prophecies which would come to pass in the last days regarding the destruction. Then he said to her, "Read, for this is the destruction which shall come to pass upon the earth. If you do not repent, when the world is judged, you will be judged, also."

When this woman had welcomed me to her home, I had prayed that God would reveal something to them. Nevertheless, no one was baptized there, and I returned to Rochester once more.

In the spring of 1936, we all gathered together to see what could be done about getting a larger place. Times were hard and we were poor. Nevertheless, everyone sacrificed, and we collected about \$200.00. We wanted to buy about 200 used chairs. We could not find any chairs at all in the city or in the neighboring towns. I then went in prayer to God saying, "Thou knowest we are all poor and we have gathered this money to buy these chairs; provide for our needs." While I prayed, I saw a vision in which I received five letters from Detroit. The return address on one of these letters read: "O Ishmael, Man of God." I could not understand what this meant and asked God for its meaning. I heard a voice saying, "Your prayer has been put on the list with all other prayers that the prophets of old have offered, for they prayed in the same manner. In one or two weeks, you shall receive an answer." After one week, I received a letter from Buffalo saying that 200 chairs for which we were looking were ready for us. When I received this letter, I went to look at these chairs and they looked new. They were just what we wanted.

We held our meetings on N. Clinton Avenue for six years. The Lord then provided the building in which we are meeting at present, 416 Wilder Street. About in 1938, I had a

great desire to pray for the children of the saints. I prayed with all my heart. I prayed that these children would obey their parents and not disturb them in any way from serving Him. I got into bed and then I heard a voice telling me to offer another prayer for my own children. I answered that I had offered a prayer for everyone's children, but again the voice told me to pray for my own. My prayer was directed to my son Alfred and while I prayed for him, I felt a flame going through me and a voice spoke saying, "Your prayer has been answered." I continued to pray and my other son, John, came into my mind. This same night I dreamed that the spirit of God answered me saying that my prayer was answered and that he would call this son at a later date. I received an experience in a large building in which we were having a meeting. While they were preaching the word of God, I saw my son Alfred in Detroit rise up saying that he wanted to be baptized and when he said these words, I was filled with the blessings of God. All that Sunday, which was the following day, I awaited a telegram or news from him. On Monday I received a letter saying that my son Alfred had been baptized.

The early part of 1941, I dreamed that I saw a man come to my home and this man brought an instrument which he played for about half an hour. I had never heard that kind of music before. When he had finished, he said, "In 1941 there shall be a great change," and went on his way. Here my dream ended. I thought it might mean a change in the church. Later, I found what the change meant for *me*. I had gone to visit the church in the east, at New Jersey. On Sunday evening, Feb. 17th, a meeting was held at the home of Sister Elsie Miller. (During the day, I distinctly remember preaching upon the patience of Job.) After this meeting, we were served cake and coffee. I did not desire any, but I accepted. I ate a piece of cake and drank a little water. The next morning, I felt sick. The following days I felt worse. I had no strength left and I could hardly stand on my feet. I could not do any visiting. I stayed at the home of a brother for two weeks and one night I prayed, "O Lord, I have no more strength to pray; reveal my plight to others so that they may pray for me." I returned home in March. I kept getting worse each day and in two months I had lost fifty pounds. Everyone prayed and I went to see a doctor, but nothing seemed to help. I became so ill that I could not eat, sleep or even stand clothing on me. The slightest noise would upset me. I was examined at the hospital and still the doctors could not find anything wrong with me. I went to another hospital and it was the same thing. I kept getting worse and I could not sleep any more. My body felt as though it were on fire. I got so discouraged that I felt sure I would not live long. At the same time, I was also bothered by evil spirits. One night I felt so discouraged that I prayed that God would take my life for I was doing no good in my condition. Everyone in my household was suffering.

One night I had an experience in which I was carried to the seashore where I saw a man come from a cloud. He was walking on the sea. He came towards me. When he was near, I asked him who he was and from whence he came. When I asked him that, he disappeared. I was left disappointed to think that he would not answer me. All at once I heard a voice from heaven saying, "The Prophet Isaiah." This was repeated thrice. When I heard this I suddenly thought of Isaiah, Chapter 38, where the Prophet Isaiah went to Hezekiah and told him to put his house in order because he was about to die. This king

cried praying to God to spare his life; he had walked in the ways of God and tried to serve Him. The Lord revealed Himself to Isaiah and told him to tell the king that his life would be lengthened fifteen years. When this scripture came to my mind, I knew that God was going to prolong my life like that of Hezekiah. I would suffer but I would not die.

However, I did not get any better and then I began to complain to God because I felt that He had closed His doors and that satan was there instead. I arose from my bed and I went into the back yard feeling sorrowful that God had forgotten me. I then heard a voice saying, "If you do not make the best of your illness, I will double it." Immediately, I felt something come upon me. I felt worse than ever, but I had to grit my teeth and bear it.

About the end of June, I had another experience in which the Lord showed me that another sister had been healed from the same sickness which I had. After the July conference, many brethren fasted and prayed in my behalf and I started to improve day by day and though I am not entirely well, I still have sufficient strength to do the work of God for which I am happy and grateful.

Missionary work at Palatine Bridge, N. Y. began July 1942. Before I went to this place to perform mission work, I had a dream that I was supposed to be a soldier and I felt that I was not able to be one. The next day after this experience, my son Paul told me he had had an experience in which he had seen two men of the law try to take me to be a soldier and he told these men to please leave his father behind and either he or his brother would go in his place. Three days after this experience, I received a letter from some people at Palatine Bridge who wanted to obey the Gospel and asked me to go there. I went to God in prayer and I had an experience in which I was in an open field where there was a market. There I bought a gallon of olive oil and some cheese. While I was buying these things, I saw a sister and she said to me, "When are you going to that place from where the letter came for you to go to work?"

On July 17th, 1942, I went to Palatine Bridge to preach the Gospel and two were baptized. One year later, seven more were baptized within one month.

This brief account shows what took place in my life before and after I obeyed the Gospel. It also shows how the devil tried to destroy me and that God has been with me all the time. I still have the good desire to continue in this path of righteousness to do the will of God. My heart desires to go on and preach this Gospel to all kindred, tongues, and nations so that in the end when my work is done, I shall surely receive my reward in the Kingdom of Heaven - A CROWN OF EVERLASTING LIFE -