

**THE
LORD
IS
MY
SHEPHERD**

by
Paul D 'Amico

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Paul D' Amico
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PREFACE

The Lord has spared my life since the time of my infancy and for this I am most indebted to Him. Perhaps the most prominent period of time during which occurred His guidance, protection, and encouragement was while I was a member of the Armed Forces during World War II. Many times, I did not know which course to follow or how to proceed. Each time The Lord intervened in my behalf.

In gratitude for what He has done for me, I have written the following account of my earlier years. The experiences quoted are being offered not only to glorify The Hand of the Lord but are presented as a repertoire for other young people who may undergo similar circumstances in their life.

My entry into and time in The Gospel of Christ have been the most important things of my life. There is just nothing to compare with the wonderful life we experience in the Service of God.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

My name is Paul D' Amico. The son of the late Brother Ishmael and late Sister Julia D'Amico. I was born on June 26, 1923 in Detroit, Michigan, the youngest of six children. At the time of my birth, my parents and family resided at 5321 French Road, which was the home of the late Brother Ralph and late Sister Anna Frammolino and family. The late Brother Patsy DiBattista pronounced the Benediction upon me in The Church of Jesus Christ.

When I was only a few months old, I became seriously ill, even nigh unto death. During this illness, a Sister saw a vision. She saw a man dressed in white take me from my crib and, as He reached the door, He lifted His eyes toward Heaven in silent meditation; and He then returned me to my crib. The good Lord saw fit to heal me from this affliction, for which I praise His high and Holy name.

I attended the Hutchinson Elementary School in Detroit from September 1928 until February, 1934. On February 16, 1934, our family left Detroit and moved to Rochester, New York, where my father, an Apostle, had come to preach The Gospel of Jesus Christ. A mission of The Church had been started in Rochester when we arrived there.

I attended Number 20 School, Washington Junior High School, and eventually graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School in 1941.

During my second year of high school, I was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ on October 9, 1938. My oldest Brother, Sam, baptized me, and my father confirmed me.

A few days after my baptism, I composed the following poem:

*It was Sunday morning, the ninth of October
We were listening to the preaching of our Brother,
The Spirit spoke within me as though to say,
Today you'll be on The King's Highway.*

*There was a great blessing in the preaching of that morning,
And The Lord was showing me that it was I whom He was calling,
After the hymn was sung The Spirit bid me rise,
And in the name of Jesus Christ I wished to be baptized.*

*I sat down again and began to meditate,
Upon the great step I was taking that day,
And while I was thus meditating to The Lord,
I thanked Him for calling me on the narrow road.*

*I felt a bit discouraged that I was the only one,
Who was making a covenant that day to God's Blessed son
But as another Brother was preaching with great power,
The Lord moved mysteriously and began to call others.*

*My heart was filled with joy, my tongue cannot express,
And this brought to me a great happiness,
To think that five souls who had often heard His word,
Had decided to make their Covenants with The Lord.*

*This day to us shall be a great remembrance,
For it was He who gave us The Spirit of repentance,
It pleased Him to call us from this world of abomination,
And gave us a hope to receive our salvation.*

*So Brothers and Sisters let's pray for one another,
That we may prove faithful and finally meet together,
In the paradise of God, where all His Saints will meet,
To reign with Him and His Beloved Son for all eternity.*

In October 1941, I was ordained a Deacon in the Rochester Branch. I deemed it an honor to have this office and did all I could to fulfill my duties and responsibilities. I was determined at a very young age to serve God. In fact, I had never gone astray into the world, but was always near The Church and attended all meetings during my childhood and into the days of my youth, until that blessed day came when I made my covenant with The Lord. Blessed be the name of The Lord!

INDUCTED INTO ARMY

On January 26, 1943 I was inducted into the United States Army, taking oath that I would serve in the military service for the duration of the war plus six months. One week later, I left Rochester for the Reception Center. I shall never forget that day when we were together at the station until the call for my departure. It was a sorrowful separation, but we were comforted in the hopes of uniting again some glad day.

I arrived at Fort Niagara on the afternoon of February 2 and was immediately examined, interviewed, and given my uniform.

On the morning of February 5, three days after I had arrived, my name was called out at Reveille and I was ordered by the Platoon Sergeant to report to a certain Captain Ponds whose office was in the Headquarters Building of Fort Niagara. The Sergeant briefed me as to how I should report and how I should act during the conversation. This was the beginning of military discipline for me. On my way to headquarters I asked the Lord

to guide me and to assist me in whatsoever I was going to face. When I arrived at the appointed place, I knocked on the Captain's door and was told to come in. I saluted him in a military manner saying, *"Sir, Private Paul D'Amico reports as directed."* The conversation began. The Captain had my service record on his desk but desired more information. We had a lengthy conversation which lasted for more than one hour and many questions were put before me. All of these questions had bearing on The Scriptures and on my beliefs. The Captain had some knowledge of The Bible, but evidently had a very vague interpretation. Permit me to say, that for every question he asked, the Lord blessed me with a prompt and reliable answer.

The Captain was very well satisfied with what I had to say, and then finally he concluded the interrogation with this last question telling me to think hard before I answered. The question was, *"D'Amico, would you rather remain behind the combat zones without carrying a gun at the same time that others are going into battle to risk their lives that you might have freedom and security?"* A supernatural power took possession of me, and I arose saying these words: *"Captain, it is my faith and firm belief that neither the gun nor the sword shall be the defense of this nation, but the God of Heaven shall fight for us if we only trust in Him."* For a moment he was speechless, and then he arose; and, placing his hand on my shoulder, he said, *"D'Amico, you have convinced me that you are sincere in your belief, and upon your request, I shall recommend that you be put in non-combatant service."* He then added, *"There's one thing I want you to bear in mind. Don't tell anyone else concerning your personal beliefs."* After saying these words, he dismissed me. I left the room and thanked God for having been my defense and for having proven with evidence my faith in Him.

On February 10, I received my orders to report to Camp Grant, Illinois for basic training and arrived there the following day. I had been assigned to the Medical Corps.

Basic training in the Medical Corps was not very easy, though I realize it could have been worse in other branches of the service. Our training period lasted 11 weeks, six weeks of basic training and five weeks at the Camp Grant Army Clerk School. I graduated from Clerk School in April 1943.

FIRST WEEKEND PASS

One week after graduation, I obtained my first weekend pass. Detroit, Michigan was almost 400 miles from Camp Grant, thus making it a round trip distance of 800 miles. My pass was good for only 30 hours. I knew the journey would be tiresome, but I also knew that to be among the Saints and to be fed on The Word of God would surpass all the natural cares of life. I was able to spend 12 hours in Detroit on Sunday with my brother, Fred, his family and with the Saints. In Detroit, I attended Branch No. 1 in the morning and Branch No. 4 in the afternoon. The opportunity to bear my testimony in both meetings was granted, and, above all, I was happy to partake of The Lord's Supper.

During my period of basic training, I had to endure persecution because of my religious background and my choice to live The Gospel of Jesus Christ spotless and beyond any reproach of this world. Many of the other soldiers refused to associate with me because I was not of their type. They did all they could to change me. No doubt the devil was helping them, but I praise God that, with my prayer and with His help, I was able to endure it all and was able to shun their evil ways.

Perhaps one of the most unbearable persecutions was when the entire company nicknamed me "The Bund" and everyone always greeted me with the Nazi salute. One night, I asked The Lord to give me more strength because I was unable to endure it any longer. The following day we went on a long march. While we were walking, the men began their daily routine of mocking and repeating the aforementioned nickname. I silently petitioned The Lord. All of a sudden, we were halted by the Company Commander. He approached the center of the company and, with a stern look on his face, he asked: *"Are you men American soldiers or do you prefer the Nazi military ways?"* Then, pointing at me, he said, *"He has done nothing wrong to my knowledge to merit such a name. This nonsense will cease immediately, and should any man choose to carry on, I'll be sure to reward him with a court-martial."* The following day, a memorandum was put on the bulletin board to the same effect. It pleases me to say that from that time on I was not bothered again by the same group of men. Along with the poet, I feel to exclaim:

"Yes, Jesus took my burden I could no longer bear, Yes, Jesus took my burden in answer to my prayer, My anxious fears subsided, My spirit was made strong, For Jesus took my burden, And left me with a song."

On May 7, 1943, I received orders to report to Camp Ritchie, Maryland for duty. Train reservations were made, and, on May 8, I arrived at Camp Ritchie. My first impressions of Camp Ritchie were very discouraging, and I began to be very restless. My stay there was of a very short duration, thus convincing me that the feeling I had had come from God.

RECEIVED TWO EXPERIENCES

While at Camp Ritchie, I was neither interviewed nor assigned, but I did receive two experiences which will remain with me as long as I live. In my barracks was an old soldier who was waiting to be discharged from the army. One day he called me by his bedside to have a little chat. I introduced myself to him, but I can't recall as to whether or not he gave me his name. He said, *"I've been watching you for several days and it seems that you don't like this place and that you are undergoing a great trial of discouragement. Do you believe in God?"* I answered, *"Yes, I believe in God."* He went back to his barracks bag and took out The Bible. Then, holding it in his hand, he said, *"Do you believe in The Word of God?"* And again I replied, *"Yes, I believe in The Word of God."* He opened The Bible to the 23rd Psalm (The Lord Is My Shepherd) and asked me to read it to him. As I was reading the part where David says: *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of*

the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ... " He stopped me and, repeating these words, he continued his conversation saying, *"Camp Ritchie to you appears to be a valley of the shadow of death, but can't you feel the rod and staff of God nearby to comfort and strengthen you?"* I answered, *"Yes, indeed I can feel The Lord is near me."* He then replied, *"Why don't you try to forget your surroundings and make it a matter of prayer unto God? I'm sure He can help you."* His final words and those which impressed me most were, *"If this is not the place for you, I am certain that in a mysterious way you will be transferred to a better place."* Not many days thereafter, these words were fulfilled.

At Camp Ritchie I was given a two-day pass, and having received an experience from The Lord, I was directed to go to the home of my sister, Erma, in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. Without delay, I proceeded to her residence. Upon arriving she told me how glad she was that The Lord had answered her prayer. During the week in the midst of her discouragement, she had asked The Lord to permit her to see at least one of her brothers who were in the service. We both felt blessed in knowing that The Lord had fulfilled the desire of her heart. I enjoyed myself in Aliquippa on Sunday morning, and on my way back to Pittsburgh, I stopped for a few minutes in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania and greeted the Saints there. This trip increased my desire and determination to press forward and to continue enduring the small trials and obstacles which from time to time befall me.

The experience which led me to Erma's house was as follows: I left Camp on Friday Night with a barracks bag on my shoulder and walked three miles to the main highway in that part of the country. My intention was to hitch-hike part or all of the way to New Jersey; but, as I waited on the highway for a ride, a voice said to me, *"Do not go to New Jersey. Cross this Highway, and very shortly a bus will pass by. This bus is bound for Pittsburgh. Board this bus and go on to Aliquippa; your sister Erma wants to see you."* I obeyed the voice. It was midnight. Within five minutes or less, a bus did come by, and I proceeded to Aliquippa. The following day when I arrived at my Sister Erma's home, she and I both rejoiced when she related that she had asked The Lord to send me to her home. Blessed be the name of The Lord who is the inspirer and hearer of prayer.

TRANSFERRED TO MARYLAND

On May 19, I was transferred to Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland, and I was immediately assigned to an administrative station hospital position in the Registrar's Office. My duties included making various statistical reports (weekly and monthly) and of forwarding them to the Surgeon General's Office in Washington D.C. I also admitted patients to the hospital and directed them to their wards. Making the Surgeon's Daily Morning Report was another of my duties. As time went on, this work became very interesting.

One month after my arrival at Edgewood Arsenal, I was granted a two-day pass; and, for the first time, I was privileged to go home to behold the faces of those whom I had left. My brother, John, was home at this time on a convalescent furlough, because of an operation. My sister, Erma, and Brother W.H. Cadman were also there. On Sunday

Morning, a wonderful feeling prevailed in our service. With much regret, I had to leave immediately after the morning service. I was exceedingly glad, however, to have seen my family again.

Not very long after this trip I went through a period of spiritual weakness. During this time, I had been offered weekend passes but did not accept them. I refused all the opportunities which were given me. I knew that I was not too distant from the Saints of New Jersey and New York; but I hesitated to visit them. I have yet to explain for this. Finally, one Saturday night before retiring, I petitioned The Lord and made my weakness known, asking Him to show me where I had come short. I was unable to obtain rest that night and, at 5:00 a.m., I turned my mind unto God again. Suddenly a personage appeared by my bedside and said in a powerful voice, "*I brought you near the Saints of New Jersey and New York. Why do you refuse to go?*" He repeated these words twice, and then he disappeared. I immediately realized my mistake in having refused the previous opportunities and knelt down instantly to ask The Lord to forgive me. I also made a promise that from that day onward I would accept all passes and would endeavor to be among the Saints as often as possible. I must say that I did make many trips from that time on.

It is most fitting at this time to relate another experience which proves how mysteriously The Lord works. Before leaving Camp Grant, I received a letter from a Sister of The Church. She stated that her prayer was that God might send me somewhere within the vicinity and within reach of the Saints. When I read this, the spirit of doubting Thomas came upon me, and I said to myself, "*Who am I that The Lord is going to send somewhere close to the Saints, while all the other men are being sent out to distant places, even across the waters?*" I soon forgot all about this, but the time came when our Sister's prayer was answered; and The Lord did not hesitate in showing me where I had doubted. To be sure, my desire and determination to serve Him increased all the more.

FIRST PROMOTION

On July 28, 1943, I was promoted to Private First-Class, and I continued to work in the Registrar's Office. My senior officers and non-commissioned officers were very good to me, and, to show my appreciation, I made all efforts to do my work promptly and to the best of my ability.

My first furlough was granted on September 16, 1943, eight months after my Induction Into the service. My father, mother, and family were all glad to see me again. I cannot describe my feelings, for within me were a blessing and a joy which are hard to express. I was home for seven days, which passed quickly. That week I also visited my brother, Fred, and his family in Detroit, remaining there for only 24 hours, and upon my return, I stopped in Lockport for an evening, where the opportunity was given to me to see the faces of the Saints there and some of our Church friends (non-members) who were new

to me. When my furlough had ended, I had another bitter departure, bidding farewell to my family and the Saints there for the Wednesday night service, where I stopped in the Bronx N.Y. Branch for the Wednesday night service where I had another enjoyable time.

During the latter part of November, I was promoted from Private First-Class to Technician Fifth Grade. My classification was that of a Clerk-Typist.

In January 1944, I attended the conference at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, on a three day pass, staying with my sister, Erma, and family. I met many Brothers and Sisters at this conference. Also there were my dad, and my brother Fred, from Detroit. Many great blessings were received at that conference.

On my furlough in March 1944, all of the family were united at Rochester, with the exception of my brother John, who was somewhere in England.

Brother John Azzinaro and Brother Guy Karelli were stationed nearby at Ft. George G. Meade, and we visited one another often.

In June, 1944, I was on alert to be sent overseas, but illness forced my removal from the availability list. A few fays later, I went home on pass and once more spent an enjoyable time with my family and the Saints.

MADE A CORPORAL

During the month of June, I was made a Corporal. At that time, men of technician ratings from which I was promoted, when shipped elsewhere and relieved from assignment, were being reduced to the grade of Private. My Commanding Officer, not desiring this to happen to me, recommended this change of rank.

On July 31, 1944, my father left home for Palatine Bridge, New York, with intentions to proceed from there to New York City and New Jersey, visiting the Saints of the various Branches and Missions of The Church. I was granted a weekend pass, and, along with Brother Salvatore Azzinaro and Carmine Talarico (both of the Bronx), went to Palatine Bridge. On Sunday, we had the ordinance of feet washing and experienced many blessings of God.

In September, 1944, I went home on furlough again and was pleased to see my sister, Erma, and her baby from Aliquippa. She had come home to meet me and be with the family for a few days. I spent another day In Lockport on this occasion, and felt that The Lord had rewarded me for my desire to visit the Saints. Brother Chris Trovato (also from Rochester) was home during this time, and once more the two of us were able to meet and spend some time together.

In September, 1944, I was transferred from Edgewood Arsenal to Camp Barkeley, Texas. A five-day delay enroute was granted, and I returned home again, not knowing when another such opportunity would be granted me. I realized also that his move meant an end to my trips among the Saints. Nevertheless, I was grateful to God for having given me all the aforementioned privileges.

I was comforted in my loneliness because two other young Church Brothers were also stationed there. After a few days, I located Brother William DiFranco and his wife (who lived off camp with him) from Cleveland, Ohio, and Brother James Lombardo from Detroit. We met every weekend and whenever otherwise possible. We discussed many things relative to the faith of The Church and our experiences. At times, we sang hymns. Occasionally, we read The Word of God. In doing this, we were greatly blessed.

After seven weeks well spent together, Brother DiFranco was discharged from the Army. Our farewell meeting at his home will be long remembered. The blessings of God were showered upon us even more than our natural bodies could stand. While Brother Lombardo was praying, I heard a voice, saying the words for the hymn. *"Fear not, I am with thee, oh! be not dismayed, For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand, upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand."* When I related this experience, we felt the confirmation of God's presence.

Brother Lombardo and I were talking one day and the thought came to us, *"Wouldn't it be nice if we could see some Brother from The Church come out to Texas for Christmas?"* I made it a matter of prayer, and with all confidence I felt that The Lord would grant us this desire. Just before Christmas, Brother Anthony Brutz arrived at Camp Barkeley, having suddenly been transferred from New York City. He was then a member of Detroit Branch no. 2 and is now a member of The Ministry in Tucson, Arizona. We praised God for having answered our prayers. After Christmas, Brother Brutz received more orders transferring him to Camp Maxey, Texas into the infantry. Meanwhile, we were pleased to have another young Brother from Detroit, Frank Conti, come to Camp Barkeley for Basic Training. Within a few days, to our great surprise, Brother Brutz returned to Camp Barkeley, making a total of four of us Brothers. May I ask: *"Is there anyone who can deny that this was the mysterious workings of God?"* surely they cannot.

PROMOTED TO SERGEANT

In November, 1944, I was assigned to a Provisional Company. Upon activation, we were known as the 379th Station Hospital. I was promoted to the grade of Sergeant, with a Chief Clerk's classification.

On February 5, 1945, our unit moved to Camp Bowie, Texas for parallel training. It was indeed sorrowful to separate from the other three Brothers. I began corresponding with

them and within three weeks, I visited them two times on weekend passes. Camp Bowie was only one hundred miles from Camp Barkeley.

While at Camp Bowie, I was granted my POM (Prior to Overseas Movement) furlough. On the way to Rochester, I stopped in Detroit. My mother was there because of my sister-in-law Josephine's affliction. I remained in Detroit for two days with my family there, and I saw many of the Saints at the Friday Night M.B.A. meeting. My stay in Rochester was seven days. I spent a day in Lockport that week, accompanied by my father. We had a wonderful time. Dad held a service that evening in the home of Brother Perry Simone and many visitors attended. We sang many hymns, and then I was invited to bear my testimony to the truthfulness of The Gospel. I did so, both in English and Italian, and felt great liberty in telling of my experiences, especially to our friends who as yet had not accepted Christ as their own personal Saviour. Since then, a few have obeyed The Gospel. One week had passed away rapidly, and I was again on my way back to camp. My father and I left Rochester on Saturday night to spend the Sabbath with the Saints of Detroit. We spent an enjoyable day, attending Sunday School and morning worship at Branch no. 1 and the afternoon fellowship meeting at Branch No. 4. That night, much to my regret, I had to leave for Texas, not knowing when my next trip home would be. Yet, The Lord always comforted me, and His promises have followed me continuously.

I arrived at Camp Bowie on March 6, only to find that our unit was disbanding. This was a shock for me, but I was determined to face the future with my trust In The Lord.

On March 9, I obtained a three-day pass and once more went to Camp Barkeley to visit the three Brothers whom I had left behind. Brother Frank Conti had been transferred to Camp Crowder, Missouri already, but I did find Brothers Brutz and Lombardo still there.

Three days later, March 15, most of the men from our unit were shipped to Camp Crowder. I arrived there the following day and immediately contacted Brother Conti. The next day, Brother Lombardo arrived there. Once more, The Lord united the three of us.

On April 11, I received orders to report to Camp Beale, California four days later. Our separation was sorrowful indeed, but we had no alternative. I did not get a delay enroute, but I was very fortunate to have received a furlough six weeks before.

SENT OVERSEAS

Four and a half days after arriving, I was processed through Camp Beale and placed aboard ship for overseas. My 16 months of stateside duty and of being at least in close proximity to the Saints had come to an end.

Two days before leaving Camp Beale, I made three recordings of my voice, as sponsored by a commercial bottling company. I made one record for my brother, Fred, and his family in Detroit; one for my sister, Erma and her family in Aliquippa; and the third for my mother,

father, and family in Rochester. In the record to my parents, as I recall, I mentioned that the war would be over real soon and then we would all come home to stay. The aforementioned words were partly fulfilled four months later when the Japanese Government surrendered unconditionally to the Allies.

On April 20, I boarded the S.S. Howell Lykes at San Francisco. Four hours later, the ship began its journey, bound for New Guinea, but we were strictly forbidden to say so in our letters. The transport commander hinted that we would stop somewhere before New Guinea, and that if we would write letters, they would be mailed and sent to their destinations. I wrote my parents twice during the first four days of the voyage. On the fifth day, our ship stopped at Hilo, Hawaii to discharge two patients. Mail was taken off, and not very long thereafter, my folks received the two letters.

The day after leaving Hilo, I met a Mormon Chaplain named Fitzgerald, on board. He became very interested in me. knowing that I was a believer in the *Book of Mormon* and know that we, (the Bickertonites) were a separate organization having nothing whatsoever to do with the Salt Lake Mormon Church. Apparently, he had heard very little of our people. I had some knowledge of the Mormon beliefs, but my acquaintance with him increased my knowledge considerably. While I told him our beliefs, which are based on the written Word of God (the Bible and the Book of Mormon), he endeavored to point out the principles in the other two books which they sustain: *Doctrine and Covenants* and *The Pearl of Great Price*. We met as often as three times a week, and with the help of God, I enjoyed great liberty in presenting scripture and spiritual evidence of The Church of Jesus Christ under the leadership of William Bickerton in 1862. Also on the same ship were approximately 30 enlisted men of the Mormon faith, and through Chaplain Fitzgerald, I became acquainted with all of them. I found many interesting things by associating with these men and also was deeply impressed with the interest they displayed in the principles and fundamentals of their faith.

ARRIVED IN NEW GUINEA

We arrived at Fintchaven, New Guinea, and Chaplain Fitzgerald left the ship to join some unit at this location. That was the last I saw him. At Fintchaven, more mail was dropped off and once again my letters to the family went on their way.

We arrived at Hollandia, New Guinea where we joined a convoy destined for the Philippines. Our convoy started with approximately 45 ships and vessels and a number of destroyers. Gradually, we were joined by other small convoys increasing the total to 90 ships, all headed for the Philippines. It was interesting to watch; yet we had to be on the alert, for the waters had not been declared safe yet and it was possible to meet enemy resistance. Thank God, we had no trouble.

On May 21, our convoy arrived at Leyte, Southern Philippines for three weeks of processing. While there, I held the responsibilities of a squad leader. Squads are usually

small, but unfortunately this replacement Depot had no limit. My squad numbered 150 men, about half the size of an average company.

Before going any further, I would like to relate a dream I had aboard ship, a few days before arriving in New Guinea. I saw some Brothers and Sisters walking down the road going to visit a faithful and elderly Sister of The Church. When they arrived at her home, they found her dressed in a white garment which shined more brilliantly than the noon day sun. A spiritual conversation began in her home. While all present were enjoying a portion of The Spirit of God, a group of men and women who were not members of this Church came to this house. Upon arrival, they stated that their mission was to kill our Sister who was adorned in white, but it was evident that they were undecided on how to go about it. Finally, they secured a box and decided that they would put our Sister alive into this box and seal it. By so doing, she would smother to death. After sealing the box and without delay, they proceeded to the cemetery, assuming that by the time they would arrive our Sister would no longer be living. Meanwhile, the Brothers and Sisters of this Church followed this group to the cemetery with them because they were anxious to see what the outcome would be. Upon their arrival at the cemetery, they beheld that the box was being lowered into the grave. Before it reached the bottom, a loud noise was heard, and the top of the box was broken open; and our Sister arose and was being carried rapidly into the Heavens by some unseen power. While she was flying into the Heavens, she shouted with a voice which shook the earth "*Woe, Woe, unto those who fight against Zion.*"

INTERPRETATION GIVEN

When I awoke from this dream, I immediately petitioned The Lord for an interpretation. I finished my prayer but did not cease meditating on this experience. The interpretation which came to me is as follows: "*The Church of Jesus Christ and those of the world represent two distinctive peoples. The Power and Priesthood of this Church we know comes from God, and it has been revealed, in the past, this Church is accepted even as the Church of Alma.*" The world in this dream sought to destroy this Woman who represented the TRUTH, FULNESS AND VIRGINITY of this Church. The final words of this woman will stand as a testimony in the Judgment Day against all those who have willingly and knowing sought to destroy The True Church of God. This dream was recorded in the General Church Dream Book at the October 1945 Conference.

On June 10, I transferred by air to the Fifth Replacement Depot at Luzon near Manila, 360 miles from Leyte. After remaining at the Fifth Replacement Depot for ten days, I was transferred to Manila where I reported for duty the following morning. I was assigned to General Headquarters, Army Forces in the Pacific and was placed in the Military Intelligence Section. Our barracks were behind City Hall.

Three weeks after my arrival in Manila, I met Brother Alexander Robinson of St. John, Kansas. Brother Robinson and I had never met before, but through the April 1945 Edition of *The Gospel News*, he was able to locate me. Though it was our first meeting, it seemed

that we had known each other for years. We met quite often and had some wonderful times together. The Lord saw fit for us to be of comfort to each other, and our conversations were spent in things which build the soul. We will long remember these blessings. On several occasions, we climbed up the hills and walked through the fields, speaking and singing hymns of praise unto God. What greater privilege could two members of this Church have than this one? I say there is none. Once again, I felt how much I was indebted to The Lord. I never expected to meet Brothers on the other side of the ocean.

PREPARATION FOR OCCUPATION

Toward the end of August, 1945, Brother Alex was told he would be leaving. When the Japanese Government surrendered to the Allies, preparations immediately began for the occupation of Japan. Brother Robinson was chosen as one of the group which represented the advanced echelon into Japan, preparing for the arrival of General Douglas MacArthur, our Supreme Allied Commander. He left Manila, bidding me farewell and hoping that if we did not meet in Japan, we would meet some day in the near future back in our homes.

Shortly after Brother Robinson's departure, my sister-in law Carmella's brother, Tony Gallucci, located me. With him was his brother, Domenic, who was visiting on a three-day pass. Domenic was stationed about 180 miles from Manila. It was a joy to meet them because it had been a long time since we had seen each other. Domenic left when his pass was due, while Tony continued to be stationed on the out-skirts of Manila, about seven miles from City Hall.

The day after meeting my sister-in-law's brothers, I was favored with a visit from Brother Anthony Brutz (formerly stationed with me for three months at Camp Barkeley, Tx). He was stationed about 200 miles from Manila, attached to an Infantry Division on Northern Luzon. Having a four-day pass, he spent two days trying unsuccessfully to locate his brother who was nearby. He then proceeded to Manila to visit me for a day and a half. It was a surprise and a great joy to see him again.

During the last week of August, I was invited by the Colonel and several of the officers to take a sightseeing trip to Corregidor, 60 miles away. Part of this distance was covered on land, the remainder on water. We visited the Wainwright Tunnel, one of the strongest dugouts for the Japanese during their occupation. General Wainwright (Commander of the American Troops at Corregidor in 1942) was compelled to surrender with his men in this tunnel. The General and his men were taken prisoners by the Japanese and were not released until the final surrender of the Japanese in August 1945. After visiting the tunnel, we took a long hike up a hill which circled many times, totaling three miles. The remainder of the day we spent in observing the scenes of destruction which took place. Many wonderful buildings and homes had been destroyed. Worse of all, many lives were lost for which no money or treasure will ever compensate.

V-J DAY OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED

On September 2, 1945, V-J Day was officially announced, and I purchased a Souvenir Edition of the MANILA CHRONICLE which contained the timetable for the surrender commencing on August 9 and finally ending on September 2, when the terms of surrender were to be signed in Tokyo Bay. I was privileged to see the Japanese Delegates when they came to Manila to talk about the peace terms. Certainly, this historical event is one that the world will long remember.

In August 1945, when the Japanese Delegation came to Manila by orders of General MacArthur, I was walking on the same floor where they were holding their conference that morning. As I passed the Conference Room, I noticed an empty armchair. I continued to walk down the aisle but was wondering whose chair this belonged to. All of a sudden, I heard a voice say as follows: *"These men have assembled to bring peace to the world; but how can peace ever come, when The Prince of Peace is absent from their Conference?"*

When the war ended, everyone was anxious to know how soon we would get home. I was among the low-point men, having served 28 months in the states which entitled me to only 28 points. Fortunately, I arrived overseas at the right time just before the last campaigns were closed. For arriving at Leyte, Southern Philippines in May 1945, I was awarded a Battle Star. In June, I flew to Luzon and was awarded another Battle Star for the Luzon Campaign. The two stars increased my score by ten points. As of V-J Day, I had 46 points to my credit but still far short to qualify for discharge. I carried on in my work, and always with my trust in The Lord, I was hopeful of returning home in His due time.

On September 21, I was sent on temporary duty to the 29th Replacement Depot, 20 miles south of Manila. Our primary objective was to process and screen American liberated prisoners of war. I had the opportunity to interrogate and interview several hundred of these men, and it was indeed a pity to hear about their imprisonment. During this period of Temporary duty, I was promoted to the grade of Staff Sergeant.

REASSIGNED IN MANILA

On October 20, our section was disbanded. Five days later, I was reassigned to the Office of the Chief Surgeon in City Hall, General Headquarters, Manila. Most of the work was very familiar to me because most of my experience in the Army had been in the Medical Corps.

On Thanksgiving Day, Tony Gallucci and I took a trip to San Fernando, Philippine Islands, to visit his brother, Domenic. We had a wonderful and safe trip.

On December 29, I obtained a four-day pass and visited the city of Batangus and several other surrounding towns south of Manila. I had an enjoyable trip, viewing many interesting sights. Not quite as pleasant, however, were to see the ruins and sorrowful scenes of destruction, loss, and total darkness brought into the homes and towns of the natives. Once again, my mind turned to God in thanksgiving for having given us the blessed land of America, often referred to as the Promised Land. Above all, I was grateful in my thoughts for The Restored Gospel which was brought back to earth upon the soil of our own country. Not only have we benefited but it can be said today that the doors of the United States have been opened to feed and clothe hungry and poor people from far off countries.

My third Christmas and New Year in the Army were spent in Manila. When the church bells rang throughout the city on New Year's Eve, I stood in silence before the barracks, meditating on the things which had taken place during that year. One of the things I was most grateful for was that the war had ended, making me hopeful of being home soon. My first Christmas and New Year's Day were spent at Edgewood Arsenal, M O. in 1943. One year later, I found myself in Texas where I spent Christmas and New Year's Day. Yet, no matter where I was, The Lord was with me!

On January 5, 1946, I was visited by Efraim Tolentino. He and I had been corresponding for several months. Efraim is a Filipino, born in the Philippines, who had advanced himself at a very early age. As a young man, he was teaching in a primary school located on Northern Luzon. He became interested in The Church of Jesus Christ through Brother Anthony Brutz who was stationed near him. In his first letter to me, he requested more information about the faith and doctrine of The Church; and according to the inspiration which came from God, I endeavored to write him in brief concerning the great Plan of Salvation. I stressed the main events which led to The Restoration of The Gospel in 1827.

Before departing, I gave Efraim all the pamphlets of The Church, including the *Book of Mormon*. I also assured him that within a few days I would mail him one of our *Saints Hymnals*.

In October, 1945, while stationed in the city of Manila, Philippine Islands, I petitioned the Lord one evening regarding the future progress of The Church, desiring to know when and where The Gospel would spread. I made mention in particular the Philippine Islands, for I was among the Filipino people and could see how far they had drifted from the commandments of God.

Shortly afterward, I dreamed that I was back in the United States and was walking down a busy street in one of our large cities. As I was approaching a large building, the main door opened and approximately 100 Brethren of this Church marched out from the building in two columns. A Brother of the Priesthood was leading the march and had in his hands sheets of paper which were rolled up tightly. As they arrived at the corner, they came to a halt and remained silent for a few moments. Suddenly two more Brethren came out from the same building, each carrying a large box. These two Brethren took the boxes

to the Brother who was at the head, and then they took their place in line. Since everything was done in good order, without questioning or confusion, I concluded that they had had some meeting while in the building. As I stood watching, I saw the Brother in charge open these boxes and he then began to distribute the contents to the rest who had formed two columns at the corner. From a distance I could see that he was pairing them up two by two, and giving them a few small wires and a small set of tools. As he was issuing this equipment, he said to each pair of Brethren, *"You have been told your destination. Go and make the necessary connections."* When all had gone their way, this Brother remained alone. I then approached him and said, *"Brother, may I know what has been done?"* He said, *"Those Brothers have just left for various towns and cities in the United States in order to make connections. We are going to establish a base in the United States with a main switch board."* While he was speaking, I was still unaware as to what he was referring to. Suddenly he read my mind and said, *"I know what you are thinking, but I speak of greater things."* Quickly I grasped the sense of his conversation and was about to ask him, *"When will the Gospel go to the Philippines?"* when he again read my mind and said, *"After the main switch board is completed and after our base has been established in the United States, we will then make connections elsewhere."* He continued saying, *"I have in my hands a roll of plans which have bearing on the future. These plans are secret for the present, and I cannot reveal them."* He then began to unroll the papers and while doing so he said. *"But I can say this much: 'The time is going to come when connections will be made not only in the United States, but ... (At this point he covered the surface of the written plans and showed me only one little phrase which read) TO EVERY KINDRED, TONGUE, AND NATION."* The Brother then added, *"That's all for now; the complete details will be revealed in the future."* I then awoke from my dream.

MORALE LOWERED

Perhaps one of the worse things that could have happened in the Army to lower the morale of the men occurred on January 6, when the War Department announced its intentions to slow down the Demobilization Program. I will not attempt to describe the feelings and resentments of every unit throughout the Army, but I must say it resulted in mass demonstrations as thousands of soldiers voiced their opinions and protested against the War Department. Many began to write to congressmen and even to the President of the United States, requesting that action be taken to speed our return home. It was said that never in the history of the Army did men protest in such great numbers. Permit me to say that, while we, as Saints, do not encourage or favor protesting or taking part in such demonstrations, it was evident that some injustice was taking place. It appeared that we were being punished for a crime which we had not committed. My personal attitude was that, having served three years of honest and faithful service to my country and having acquired forty-six points under the point system as of V-J Day, I had reason to request some consideration. Yet, knowing that many of men's promises have proven to be false, I rested my case with God and petitioned Him if He saw fit to hasten

the day when I could meet with my loved ones and join in fellowship with the people of The Restored Gospel whom I cherish and hold dear to my heart.

The following poem was composed in Manila, Philippine Islands. It was printed in *Yank Magazine*, *The Manila Chronicle*, and *The Gospel News*.

MY ARMY CAREER

*I was once a proud civilian,
Proud as proud can be,
No need for any worrying,
Until the Army greeted me.*

*My first barracks bag was heavy,
And grievous to be borne,
My clothes were awful baggy,
And pitiful to be worn.*

*Then came my basic training,
To Camp Grant I was sent,
I'm not doing much complaining,
But I wish I had never went.*

*Later went to Edgewood Arsenal,
An ideal place to know,
Worked in a station hospital,
Where patients come and go.*

*Eighteen months were over,
I had spent some wonderful days,
But then I got my orders,
I would soon be on my way.*

*Deep in the heart of Texas,
I journeyed a good long ways,
And finally reached Camp Barkeley,
to spend a few more days.*

*The Major said: "More basic training,"
This did not please me so,
It created a terrible feeling,
Only God and I would know.*

*Not many days thereafter
I was sent to Company "P",*

*But to me it didn't matter,
I was looking for work you see.*

*This was a Provisional company,
Ready to go overseas,
In the process of activation,
A hospital we were to be.*

*We moved for parallel training,
To Camp Bowie, Texas we went,
But nobody was seriously planning,
How many days here we would spend.*

*'Twas here I got my furlough,
It was for home that I was bound,
I arrived safely in Rochester,
To me it was solid ground.*

*Dear loved ones I hated to leave you,
but there was nothing I could do,
Than to continue performing my duty,
That I might come back to you.*

*On reporting back for duty,
I was told the saddest tale,
Our unit was to be disbanded,
Said the War Department mail.*

*Another journey we started,
Not knowing what was our plight,
We arrived Camp Crowder, Missouri,
On that unforgettable night.*

*I worked in the company office
To help out during the day,
But soon my orders were published
And I again was on my way.*

*I arrived in California,
It was on a Sabbath Day,
Never was there a duller moment,
But I did not forget to pray.*

*On board the ship I took my stand,
To reach the shores of unknown lands,*

*Exciting but tiresome the journey was,
But who can deny the things God does.*

*Here I am in some strange land,
And dear God I can feel your hand,
You are so close I can plainly see,
The folks back home are praying for me.*

*Standing by you, I cannot fall,
Thou who hearest every call,
Pray let me see my loved ones again,
So altogether we can say, "Amen."*

On January 15, 1946, the War Department lowered the standard requirements for Demobilization, stating that within 90 days all men with 45 points as of V-J Day and all men having 30 months service as of April 30, 1945 were eligible to be sent home. This was good news for me, for I was included under both categories. Each day seemed an eternity. Finally on January 26, 1946, my orders were printed transferring me from Manila to the 29th Replacement Depot, about 20 miles south of Manila. I had been here to process American liberated prisoners of war just two months prior, and now I was entering this depot to be processed and sent home again. This was too good to be true!

On January 31, I boarded the S.S. Marine Serpent at the Manila Harbor. There were 3,000 of us happy soldiers, deeply grateful that we were soon going to be free men again. At the dawn of February 1, our ship set sail for America. At the same time, another ship at the next pier, all members of General Headquarters in Manila, set sail for Japan. The entire headquarters staff was being moved to Japan to perform duty by orders of General MacArthur. One could never imagine how happy I was to be on the Marine Serpent rather than on the other ship destined for Japan. Once again, I raised my voice in thanksgiving to God for His infinite mercy toward me.

I was detailed as Sergeant of the Guard for the entire voyage. Unfortunately, we encountered a stormy voyage home. Many of us became very ill. We were still happy, in fact overwhelmed with joy that this kind of life was not going to be ours for long. As we entered the Golden Gate on February 18, there was much excitement and noise. Words would not be able to paint the picture. What a wonderful feeling it was to reach the shores of the land of America, and the shores of the land which God promised above all other lands, inasmuch as we would obey His commandments.

DISCHARGED FROM SERVICE

From San Francisco, we were taken by ferry to Camp Stoneman to await transportation to the east coast. Within 36 hours, we were on a troop train headed for Fort Dix, New Jersey, a separation center, to be separated from the service. Leaving Camp Stoneman

on February 20, we arrived at Fort Dix five days later. Here I was about 450 miles away from home, and I still could not believe it. The exciting events that were taking place consecutively like a dream. After more processing at Fort Dix and a careful physical examination, I was given my discharge on the morning of February 27, 1946. At last, the day came for me to return home again and to be free from military oppression. Perhaps I may have used strong statements in this account showing my feelings toward the Army, but one can never understand these things unless he or she would have to undergo similar experiences.

From Fort Dix, I made my first stop in New Brunswick where I spent Wednesday evening with the New Brunswick Branch. I was sure glad to see the Saints there. It reminded us about the wonderful times we had together while I was stationed at Edgewood Arsenal. On Thursday evening, the Hopelawn Mission held a meeting, and I was privileged to be there. The blessings of God were manifested in our service. On Friday, I visited the Bronx Mission and stayed for the evening service which was held in the home of Brother Vincent Azzinaro. Once again, the Lord made His appearance. Immediately after the service, I boarded a train for home. That night was a long one for me. I could not wait for the moments when I would put my feet on the good old Rochester soil again. When I arrived in Rochester on the morning of March 2, my mother and brother, Sam, were waiting for me at the station. Great was our rejoicing in meeting again, and later I was overjoyed to see the rest of my family along with the Saints of Rochester. The thing which pleased me most was that I had come home for good.

My period of stay in the army was good experience for me in more than one way, but I would not choose to go through it again. Living with the world and learning what they term as "Good Times" have helped and taught me to shun their evil ways and cling closer to God. Traveling abroad and in this country has helped me to appreciate first and above all The Gospel of Jesus Christ which I have embraced and secondly, I appreciate to a greater extent this blessed country of ours which offers freedom to all.

One of our main objectives was to promote democracy in Japan and Germany after the war. In a democracy, one of the freedoms is the worship of God in the manner we choose.

In closing, I wish to say that each of us has a part to play in the great work which lies ahead for the people of The Restored Gospel. *"The world needs a friend like Jesus, And no other friend will do."* Another poet says: *"There's a call comes ringing o'er the restless wave; send the Light, send the Light. There are souls to rescue, there are souls to save; send the Light, send the Light."*

After being discharged from the army, I returned to work for the Manson News Agency in Rochester. I had worked there before entering the service.

In June, 1946 I was engaged to Grace Simone of Lockport, New York.

ORDINATIONS IN THE MINISTRY

In the July 1946 Conference, I was called to be ordained an Elder in The Church of Jesus Christ. Permit me to say that I felt very unworthy of this calling but was fully determined to do all I could to promulgate The Gospel of The Kingdom of Christ to all who would hear. I was ordained an Elder on July 14, 1946 at Rochester.

In April, 1947 my parents and I moved to Brooklyn, New York, where my father with other Brothers of The Church had remodeled the building on Clifton Place for meetings and for us to reside.

On September 6, 1947 Grace and I were united in marriage in the Lockport Church Building by Brother Patsy Marinetti and shortly afterward, we moved to Lockport and established permanent residence there. We were blessed with four children, namely, Gary, Sharon, William, and Richard.

In July, 1948 my Church congregation became an established Mission here at Lockport with eighteen dutiful members.

At the July 1949 Conference I was called to be an Evangelist of The Church and was ordained at Lockport in July, 1949.

Lockport was organized a Branch of The Church in October, 1950. Efforts were made to preach The Gospel on Indian Reservations surrounding the Lockport area. We also held meetings for many months in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and Toronto, Ontario, Canada. It is hoped that in God's due time, many may come to the knowledge of The Truth.

At the age of 29, I was called to be ordained an Apostle of The Church at the April, 1953 Conference, and I was ordained one month later. Words cannot possibly describe how humble and how unworthy I felt in this calling. Years have gone by, and we have had many experiences in which The Lord blessed us. We also have had our share of afflictions and sorrows, but The Lord has always been with us.

We have spent our entire life in the Service of God, and it is my faith and firm determination to continue on in The Gospel of Christ, so that someday, beyond this veil of tears, we may go to a far better place and exchange our cross for a crown.

God bless you all is my prayer.