





PORTRAITS OF FAITH

In 1989, Markus, Karen, and their three-year-old son were granted permission to leave their home in East Germany to go on a holiday to Hungary. While they were there, Hungary opened its border to Austria, providing thousands of East German refugees a way to freedom. Markus and Karen recognized their unique opportunity. They could also leave.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Markus Tilgner *Saxony Anhalt, Germany*

I said, "Let's leave for Austria."

"Oh no, you can't," Karen said. "Your parents are left in Germany and my parents as well."

"They will understand," I replied.

"We've already started to build a house," Karen told me. "Let's finish that."

"No, let's start again," I said, "somewhere else, in western Germany."

Again I tried to tell her we should leave. She said, "No, because you have just been called as bishop and you said yes, you would serve."

This is why we did not leave Germany. Some weeks later the Berlin Wall was falling. We were blessed for staying. This was Heavenly Father's way for us.

For more photos of the Tilgners, go to lds.org/go/31739.

Learn more about the blessings of religious freedom and how to protect them at religionfreedom.lds.org.