

CHRISTMAS IN PARIS

By Alison L. Randall

Christmas in Paris was incredible, and it was even better because I was spending it as a missionary—a representative of the One whose birth we were celebrating. My companion and I prepared a special Christmas message, certain that people would throw open their doors and welcome us in to talk of Christ.

Imagine our disappointment when in reality very few doors opened. And of those few people who opened their doors, not one could spare a minute to hear our message, though a few offered us chocolates. One woman even shouted through her still-closed door: “Jesus Christ? He’s dead!”

Those words hurt. And I longed to bear testimony to her—or anyone who would listen—that He lives still and loves us all. But listeners were hard to find.

Apparently ours wasn’t the only companionship struggling to find

opportunities to teach. Our zone leaders called one day with an interesting idea: since we couldn’t compete with the busyness of the season, we might as well join it. So two days before Christmas, about 20 missionaries gathered in downtown Paris to sing carols to the crowds bustling past.

We arranged ourselves on steps not far from one of the busiest metro hubs and shopping districts of the city, Châtelet-Les Halles. Once settled, we launched into song. I’m sure we startled a few people as we started out, but what we lacked in musical abilities we made up for in enthusiasm. Many people looked at us suspiciously, as if they were wondering what we were selling. But the longer we sang, the more the hurried shoppers seemed to accept and appreciate our presence.

I watched as people paused and listened to us, even if it was just for a moment. A few even tried to hand us money and seemed astounded when

we shook our heads in refusal. It was fun to see their reactions, but still, I wanted more. I wanted to testify.

Then a woman stopped abruptly like she’d run into a wall. She just stood there listening to us. As her eyes met mine, I put all the testimony I could into the words we sang. It was like a lightbulb flashed behind her eyes—as if she suddenly remembered something she’d forgotten—and the stress of the day drained from her face.

When the song ended, I smiled at her and she smiled back. Then she turned and moved on, her pace slower and her shoulders relaxed. For her, at least, we’d made a difference.

That experience was one of few opportunities I had to testify of Christ that Christmas season. But I’d learned an important truth: a testimony can be borne in more than one way. A song and a smile can be enough to touch a heart. **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.



ELDER
SISTER



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