



Life

Everlasting

Finding true fulfilment
through The Apostles' Creed







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Patricia

St. John

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Introduction



Most of my childhood was spent on the compound of the British Hospital in Tangier where my parents were missionaries with the North Africa Mission (today's Arab World Ministries). My father worked as a radiographer in the hospital and also pastored the English-speaking church on the compound while my mother ran a junior school.

Patricia St. John was a major figure in my life during those years when she both worked as a nurse in the hospital and also did clinics in the remote Riff Mountains town of Chauen about eighty





miles away. It is Chauen, a holy place of pilgrimage for Muslims, its buildings all whitewashed, that is referred to constantly in the pages of this book.

Today, adults would label Patricia as ‘a loose cannon’ since she was not under the mission’s authority and was free to go anywhere and do anything she felt God was indicating. As children, we adored her, hung on her every word, and crowded round her knowing she would always give in and tell us stories that held us spellbound.



From those far-off days in the 1950s and 60s came her children’s classics *Treasures of the Snow*, *Tanglewoods Secrets*, *Star of Light* and more. Since then, these books have never lost their power to entrance and hold the rapt attention of successive generations of youngsters.

I am glad that this book is being reprinted because it keeps us in touch with one of the 20th century’s most fascinating and able missionary saints. It is not going too far to say that Patricia St. John was to many of us a living example of Christ himself for she loved us all, but especially her Moroccan friends, with a love so transparently like his.



The poem on the following pages is one by Patricia St. John that has not been previously published. It was written for me as an encouragement when I left Tangier to start nurse training at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, where Patricia herself trained. I had told her one of my favourite Bible verses was Psalm 16:11 and she handed me the poem as a farewell gift.

Yvonne Fyles

Hilton of Cadboll

Ross-shire





Enter thou into the joy of the Lord,

For I am the door!

Why do you sit in the gloom of the prison?

The sun o'er the ramparts is newly arisen

And fountains well up from their rock-hidden sources

Till the streams, merry silver, are flooding their courses,

And the fair path of life lies unshadowed before you

And I am the door.



I am the door to all sunshine and laughter,

All love and delight!

Yet how strong is the foe that is waiting to rout us,

The small jealous terrors that weave chains about us;

No daylight can enter self's fortified city

Or pierce through those windowless walls of self-pity,

And deep are our dungeons of pride and resentment

Yet I am the door



By my Cross and my tomb I passed through the prison

And opened the door.

My pierced hands can loosen the grave-clothes

that bind you,

Step over the threshold and leave them

behind you!

How fearful you cringe in the darkness you cherish,

But my life is your freedom, come forth ere you perish,

The light that you dread shall but gladden

and guide you

And Christ is the door.

Patrica St. John

