





# Catalina Chapa (nee Oropeza)



50th wedding anniversary with 4 children, their spouses and 18 grandchildren. circa 2012.

# *Catalina Chapa*

Catalina Oropeza Chapa was born on April 30th 1938 in Pleasanton, Tx on a farm to Maceilno and Fransica Oropeza. She grew up with a total of 16 brothers and sisters (This including her half brothers she would find out about later in life.) She grew up in Charlottee, Tx and worked on her family's farm picking cotton. When she was 23 she met Roman Chapa and get married to him at 24 on August 11, 1962. They moved to San Antonio, Tx 2 years later in 64'. They had 4 kids, Ruben (1963), Oscar (1965), Maricella (1967) and Orlando (1972). She started attending Bethel in 1985 where she is now viewed and respected as an elder of the church and has served there ever since. She runs a prayer meeting at her house every Tuesday morning and once a month she leads a prayer group every 4th Wednesday of the month. She also has a total of 18 grandchildren including myself.

a Pleasanton, Tx on a farm to  
all of 16 brothers and sisters  
at later in life.) She grew up in  
cotton. When she was 23 she  
just 11. 1962. They moved to  
Ben (1963), Oscar (1965),  
King (1966) in 1965 where  
church and has served there  
every Tuesday morning and  
Wednesday of the month. She



Catalina, her brother and cousins  
circa 1943.

*Where were you born? How  
were your living conditions?*

"Daaaaaad (my grandfather) come and help me  
recording? (Laughter) I was born in Pleasanton,  
with uh... what do you call that woman? Not do  
back. (Gets up to talk to my grandfather) A midw  
mother wasn't a midwife but she had one and the  
said I was so beautiful with the blonde hair and (

*Growing up what work did you  
do? Did you ever go to school?*

"Working, when I grow? I did everything in the fields  
school that's why I don't speak very good english. (C  
school whatever, when I started to work I was 8 year  
was a little kid. My brother said if you go into work n  
was going to buy me a white dress and I believe him  
(Laughs) But I started to work at 7 or 8. in the fields  
sometimes it was hot, sometimes it was cold, and w  
house we were 12 and very poor."



Prezi

# *Where were you born? How were the living conditions?*

"Daaaaaaaad (my grandfather) come and help me! Are you recording? (Laughter) I was born in Pleasington, Texas. In a farm with uh... what do you call that womans? Not doctor.... I'll be right back. (Gets up to talk to my grandfather) A midwife! No mint. My mother wasn't a midwife but she had one and then she saw me and said I was so beautiful with the blonde hair and (laughter)"

# *Growing up what work did you do? Did you ever go to school?*

"Working, when I grow? I did everything in the fields. I never went to school that's why I don't speak very good English. (Chuckles) No school whatever, when I started to work I was 8 years old, 7 or 8. I was a little kid. My brother said if you go into work my brother said he was going to buy me a white dress and I believe him He buy it. (Laughs) But I started to work at 7 or 8. in the fields it was hot, sometimes it was hot, sometimes it was cold, and we live in a small house we were 12 and very poor."

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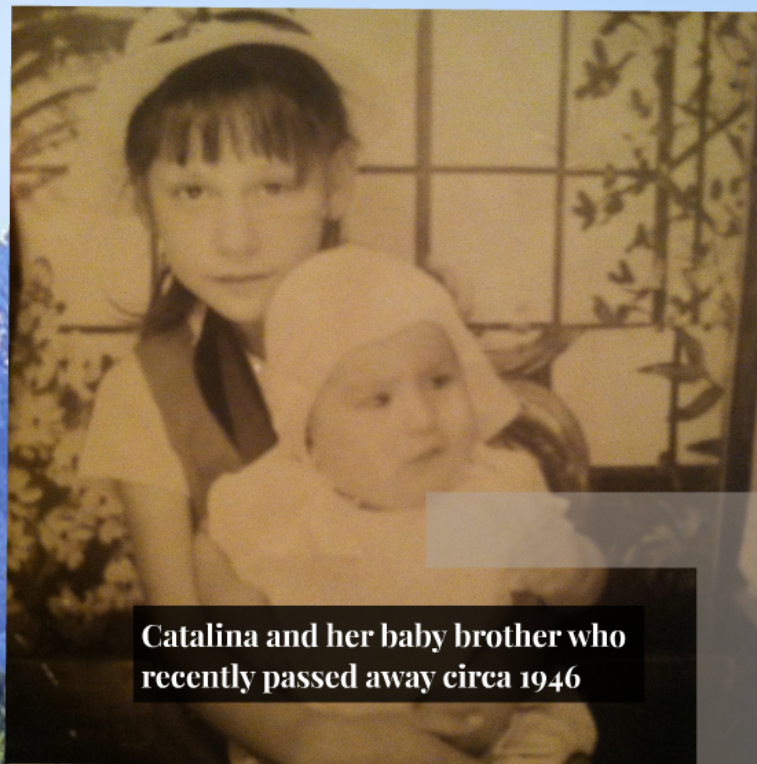
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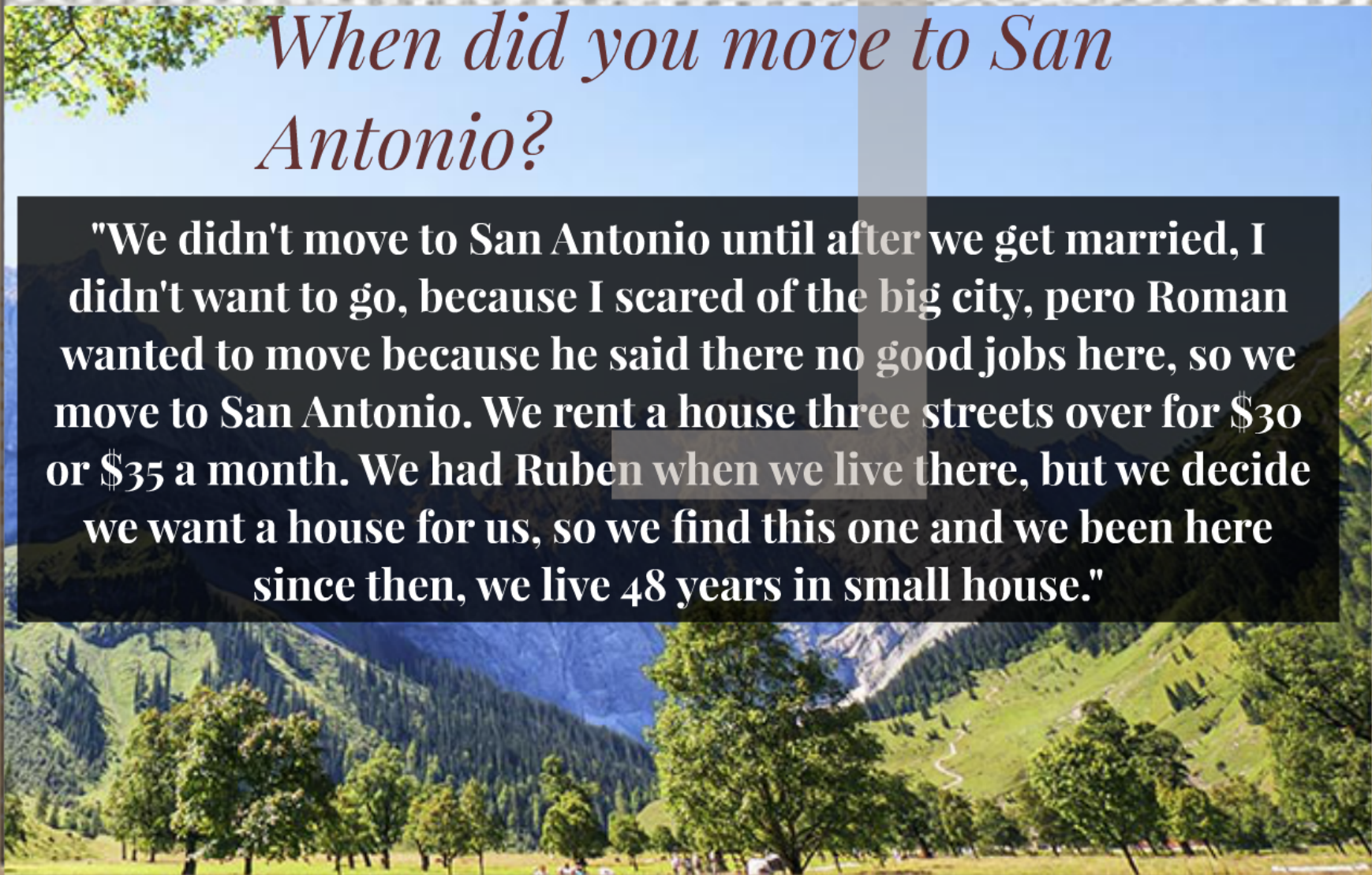
Catalina, her brother and sister  
circa 1955



Catalina and her baby brother who  
recently passed away circa 1946

When did

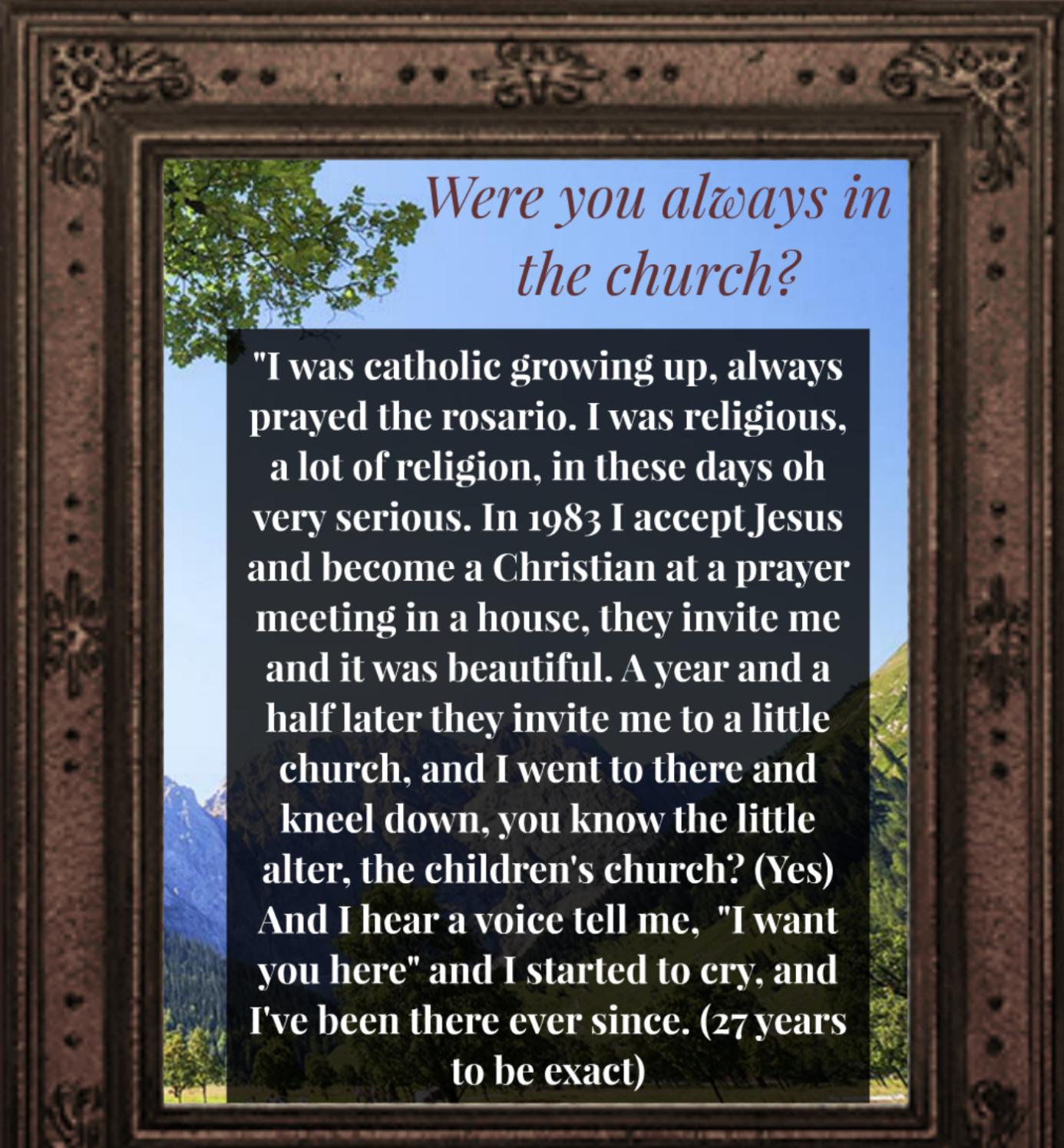
"Oh! We live in the  
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## *When did you move to San Antonio?*

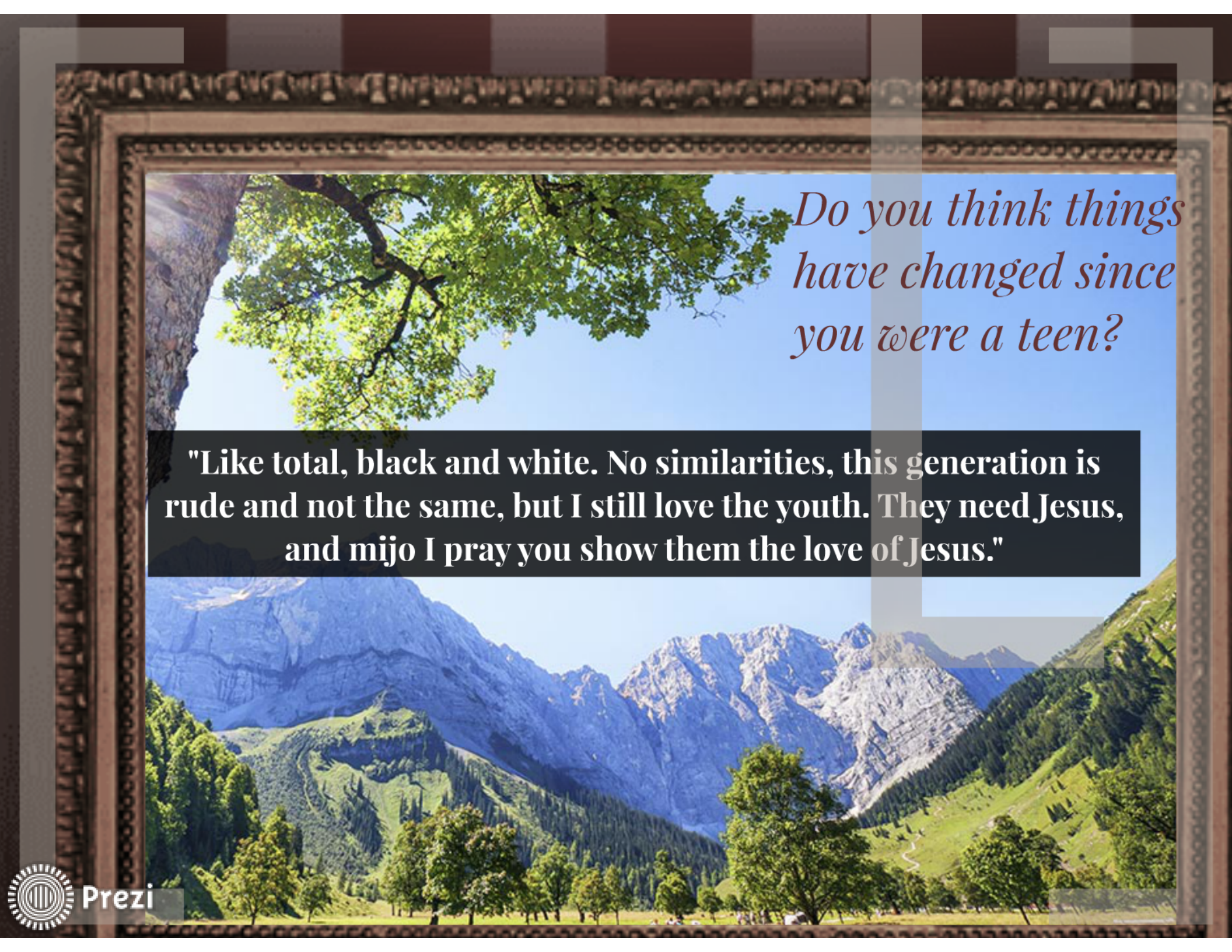
"We didn't move to San Antonio until after we get married, I didn't want to go, because I scared of the big city, pero Roman wanted to move because he said there no good jobs here, so we move to San Antonio. We rent a house three streets over for \$30 or \$35 a month. We had Ruben when we live there, but we decide we want a house for us, so we find this one and we been here since then, we live 48 years in small house."






*Were you always in  
the church?*

**"I was catholic growing up, always prayed the rosario. I was religious, a lot of religion, in these days oh very serious. In 1983 I accept Jesus and become a Christian at a prayer meeting in a house, they invite me and it was beautiful. A year and a half later they invite me to a little church, and I went to there and kneel down, you know the little alter, the children's church? (Yes) And I hear a voice tell me, "I want you here" and I started to cry, and I've been there ever since. (27 years to be exact)**



*Do you think things  
have changed since  
you were a teen?*

**"Like total, black and white. No similarities, this generation is rude and not the same, but I still love the youth. They need Jesus, and mijo I pray you show them the love of Jesus."**



*Did you ever smoke  
cigarettes? How old  
were you when you  
had your first one?*

**"Yes, I was addicted. When I was 19-20 my dad, farmer, they  
could make the plataforma and sell things, sodas, cigarettes and  
would steal them if they didn't sell. My aunt gave me the little  
d when I was about 8 years. I didn't start then, not until I was  
20s."**



## *How have things changed cost wise?*

"I was telling Roman today that uhm, the matireal to make dresses was 20 cents for yard, the milk was maybe 40 or 50 cent but yeah everything was real cheap.

## *Who were some of your favorite presidents?*

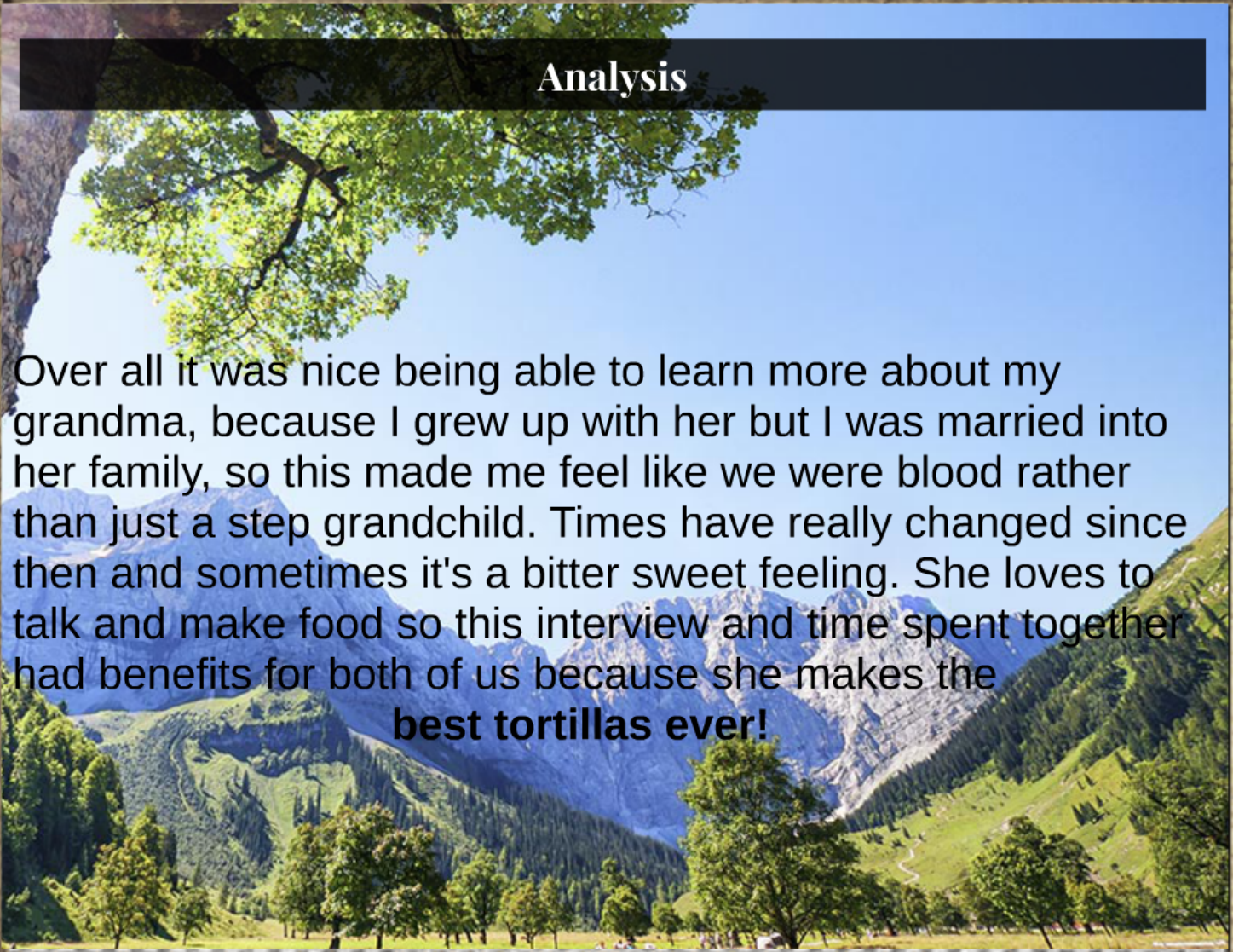
"Kennedy because my dad like him, and I like him too. And then Regan, and uh that's it I like no more. They see people more compassion, they want to be president not for themselves, I know they not perfect, but they talk alot of things and do them."

## *When did you meet grandpa?*

"Oh! We live in the same little town pero I lived in the south, he live in the north but we never know each other. So he left to the army and I know his brother and sister but I know nothing of hi,. So we went to the north to pick up cotton to work over there and Roman went he come from (looks at my grandpa) He come from where he was to see the parents and there I know him. There was a little dance and that there was a lot of workers there and I see him he look at me and I look at him like this (makes hand gesture) and we went to the dance and he dance with me and he was shy really shy he was dancing with me and he said what was my name and I said Cata, Catalina. We dance again and he asked you wanna be my girlfriend but in espanol, quieres en mi novia? And I said yes and he had to go back. I met him that day and be his girlfriend and he said I see you tomorrow at the movies and my brother was very jealous and no let me go, so his sister gave me his address to write him. He come back in March from over there and he asked you wanna marry me and in August we got married."



**Over 50 years (Left Roman and Catalina at their wedding circa 1962, right 2012)**



## Analysis

Over all it was nice being able to learn more about my grandma, because I grew up with her but I was married into her family, so this made me feel like we were blood rather than just a step grandchild. Times have really changed since then and sometimes it's a bitter sweet feeling. She loves to talk and make food so this interview and time spent together had benefits for both of us because she makes the **best tortillas ever!**



## **Catalina Oropeza Chapa Timeline:**

**April 30th, 1938 Catalina is born.**

**1961 meets Roman Chapa**

**August 11, 1962 gets married to  
Roman Chapa**

**1964 moves to San Antonio**

**1963 Ruben Chapa is Born**

**1965 Oscar Chapa is Born**

**1967 Maricella Chapa is Born**

**1972 Orland Chapa is Born**

**1982 begins attending Bethel. (The  
blue church on the other side of  
Villeret across from our campus)**





# Catalina Chapa (nee Oropeza)