

Life as a Blessed Mom

Maneerat Kobayashi
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When a popular Thai television program, Mom Club, invited Family Federation member and mother of eight children Maneerat Kobayashi to be on their program, it was a boost for family values and the ideal of large happy families. In a nation with a declining birthrate, the Kobayashis have gone against the tide in Thai society that leads most people to decide against having more than one or two children. On a list of 224 countries, from highest birthrate to lowest, Thailand is at 175, while Japan, Dr. Kobayashi's country is at 222.

The on air live interview took place on December 12, 2014. Maneerat, who is Thai, was blessed with her Japanese husband among the 360,000- couple blessing group. They live in Bangkok, where Maneerat is on the Family Federation headquarters staff. Two of her eight children accompanied her on the program, and together they took the opportunity to share insights into their family life.

During the program, the presenters asked Maneerat a number of questions.

Question: Are you working?

Yes, my job is translator for the Universal Peace Federation and Family Federation for World Peace and Unification Foundation.

Question: As you and your husband both are office workers, how do you raise your children and share that responsibility, for example sending them to school every day?

Of course having many children makes us so busy, but what really helps a lot is we discuss a lot, about how each child has been doing that day, before we go to sleep. We try to cooperate with each other to take care of our children as best we can, so that they can grow up well and be good people. Regarding sending them to school we share the task: two are taken by my husband because their school is on his way

to work. And the rest I take because their school is near my place of work.

Question: (To Kana, the only daughter among eight): How do you feel in a big family where most of your siblings are boys and only you are a girl?

I used to want a younger sister. However, when my mom gave birth to my seventh and youngest brother, since he is so adorable and I feel so much in love with him, from now either boy or girl for me is just fine.

Maneerat gave the following personal account: My children enjoyed the experience quite a lot. It was exciting for them. For all of us, it was a very good learning experience because during this time I could teach my children that there are many families having a hard time raising even a small number of children. What we shared during the program could be a great inspiration to others because we have eight children but still aim to have a happy family life.

My husband is in real estate sales, but mainly in charge of leases. Since this program is a program mainly focused on mothers, they do not emphasize the father's role much. However, when the TV program came to our house to make a video record of our kids' activities at home with me, for the last take, they asked my husband to join in, and he did so happily.

Finally we gave copies of *As a Peace-Keeping Global Citizen* to the TV program presenters and they both received the gift with much appreciation and a happy heart. I felt grateful to God, True Parents and the spirit world that is working so mysteriously for the restoration of our nation.