

Tribal Messiah victory in the Philippines - Striving to reach 430 couples

Francis and AnnaLiza Lopez
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Foreground: Tribal messiahs Francis Gomez Lopez and AnnaLiza Cocos-Lopez blessed 430 couples, making them one of the first couples to achieve what True Parents have asked of us all

Based on the direction True Parents gave in 2010 and 2011 for all blessed families to fulfil their mission as new tribal messiahs, our regional president strongly emphasized that all blessed members do tribal messiah-related work. In 2011, my husband and I committed to fulfilling that mission without reservation. My husband was teaching at the International Peace Leadership College and I was doing a public mission in Antipolo City every weekend, as well as running a small alkaline water business. At that time, I was earning money, but I had to set aside my business so we could focus on fulfilling our tribal messiah mission. I became very active in the mobilization for the Interfaith Peace Blessing Festival that we held in Araneta Coliseum.

We have a small house in Antipolo City where my husband and I stay with our two daughters. When we saw that many blessed members are able to witness in Antipolo, we went to a location where few others wanted to go. With two couples from Marikina City, we formed a trinity. In the first team mobilization, we three tribal messiah couples were alone in our work. We had mobilized and were witnessing but lacked support until we were able to win the hearts of some local government officials and barangay captains in that area. (In the Philippines, a barangay is an administrative division of fifty to a hundred families.)

Every morning, our family did Hoon Dok Hae and prayer conditions in our home. We also raised funds for two hours daily so we could cover our transportation budget for commuting to our tribal area. Since our other tribal messiahs could not go every day to their areas, sometimes we went on their behalf and they supplied our transportation expense. My husband was working at the International Peace Leadership College then on weekends, so most of the time I was alone in our tribal area. I experienced many difficulties but the other tribal messiahs helped me. During weekends, my husband was with us and gave lectures.

Practical conditions

Most of the conditions we offered involved going out witnessing for two to three hours and doing house-to-house follow-up for the couples that had attended the Interfaith Peace Blessing Ceremonies in Smart Araneta Stadium in the city of Quezon and in Ynares Center in the city of Antipolo, east of Manila. Right after these Blessing Ceremonies, we did the ceremony to alleviate indemnity at the barangay hall or at the couples' houses. Since we did not have a center at that time, we sometimes slept at the houses of these recently blessed couples. In order to hold a heavenly Three-Day Ceremony, we found ways to clean these couples' houses, some of which were quite shabby, to make them spiritually more conducive for God's blessings through their ceremonial reunion as a blessed couple.

My husband and I never stopped doing outreach even if we experienced difficulties travelling every day to the tribal areas. Often our tribal area in Marikina City floods during typhoons and thunderstorms, so my husband and I and our team would always be there to help and to serve the families. Our determination never flagged and we received continuous inspiration from regional President Yong and from National Leader Malicdem.

Aside from the financial support from the headquarters, especially during mobilization, we also received financial support from another tribal messiah couple in our area, Stephen and Constance Gabb. Mr. and Mrs. Gabb were sources of added strength for us. Both of them were supportive spiritually and financially.

My husband usually is the one giving the lectures to groups; he went block by block doing so, while I served as the coordinator of the seminars. Our daughters oftentimes served as assistant coordinators (for multi-family Divine Principle presentations only).

Sometimes I could sense that the couples could not understand why they needed to do the Three-Day Ceremony. They may have done it only because of our constant prayer conditions, expressions of sincerity and efforts to serve them. Sometimes we helped clean their houses and bonded in a relationship with their families.

Because of our having developed these relationships, they could follow our instructions and guidance. Some couples did the Three-Day Ceremony after being inspired by other couples that had already done it after taking part in a Blessing Ceremony, having their indemnity stick experience and completing the forty-day separation.

As I was monitoring them in their forty-day purification, several of them were invaded in the middle of their condition and therefore their separation period was extended many times.

We followed up and even asked assistance from other couples who that finished Three-Day Ceremony and had became active in church activities. In fact, some of these newly blessed couples offered their houses as venues for the Three-Day Ceremony.

We conduct regular group Hoon Dok Hae in several areas in Marikina City and we participate in family occasions such as birthdays. We go house-to-house and offer prayers for families. We also encourage people to do Hoon Dok Hae. We give them photocopies of the One-Hour lecture Manual that is based on Exposition of Divine Principle. We also teach our traditions to the couples. To this day, we have an on-going educational custom with each family: We distributed copies of the Family Pledge. We translated the Family Pledge into Tagalog so that older couples can understand it better. During the forty-day separation, we formed a visitation team of the most dedicated blessed couples in our area and we held prayer conditions.

Most husbands are oftentimes away from their homes because of work, so I focused on the wives as an initial condition.

In each block, we have separate schedules for Hoon Dok Hae and every week we provide people we are witnessing to with copies of True Parent's messages or some Bible verses for them to study. Many cannot regularly do Hoon Dok Hae in their houses because their children go to school early in the morning. Most of the families do Hoon Dok Hae at night just before sleeping.

Some couples became negative because of persecution from neighbors but my husband and I received everything positively and we work together to give comfort to those now antagonistic couples. We scheduled visits also for their love ones in the cemetery and offered prayers for their relatives in the spiritual world in order to elicit their assistance. Once, as we were doing our weekly visit, we passed to the burial plot of our former national leader, Rev. Rolando Basuil, Jr. There, we also offered prayers to ask for his assistance in our mission.

We did our best to connect the couples every time we have a joint Sunday service in the headquarters or during major meetings. However, because transportation is costly, we also conduct Sunday service in the local areas sometimes in the barangay hall.

The more couples that fulfill their Three-Day Ceremony, the more activities we have in the area and the more people we have to take care of. We face greater responsibilities but having barangay leaders in the area who are supportive of our activities has been a great blessing. Some of these leaders sometimes even invite my husband and me to pray at Monday flag raising ceremonies and at other barangay events.

The importance of civic leader support

We established good relationships with barangay officials and youth leaders in our tribal areas. Surprisingly, through even a short period of education, many of the couples in our tribe accepted our True Parents as the Messiah though they still could not deeply understand True Parents' hearts. That is why we continue to provide more education to them. Couples need more education on the Divine Principle and we have been doing it gradually without ceasing until now. We never stop offering prayer conditions and our Hoon Dok reading condition. We also empower newly blessed couples by giving them responsibility to also witness.

To help them carry True Parents in their hearts and become tribal messiahs in the future for us is now our most important task.

Our tribal leaders in Marikina city have many future activities for the education of new couples, especially as we had just finished the home group workshop. We intend to form teams in the area from all the couples that went through the Blessing Ceremony in Araneta Coliseum in 2013 and in Ynares Center and Quezon City in 2014. We scheduled home visitations and Hoon Dok Hae. We also opened a Tribal Messiah Center in central Marikina in September. In this newly opened center, we began holding Sunday services for the new blessed couples and at least once a month hold one in the church headquarters.

Our family lives simply. We are renting a small house, but God blesses us with supportive tribal messiahs like the Gabbs who supported us so we could open a big center where we can give more lectures and educate more couples. Our other tribal messiahs are trying to help us in many ways. Now, our determination is to help tribal messiahs in our area to reach their 430- couple target too while gradually educating my own 430 couples.

Our motto in fulfilling the 430-couple goal was, "Every time we meet people, our only thought is to love, to uplift, to embrace, to invest and to educate them in the Divine Principle. As True Parents taught us, we have to become people that can attract others through our personality and character, who can transform and touch people's lives, and we need a revolution of heart in order to practice true love all the time."

Wife:

Anna-Liza Cocos-Lopez

Birthday: March 10, 1968

Spiritual Birthday: August 21, 1989

Position: Church Cluster Leader (Tribal Messiah), Marikina City

Spiritual Parent: Mirna Ifurung

Blessing: 2005

Background: Joined as a CARP member in Ilocos Norte, in the northeast corner of the island of Luzon
Church Leader in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte (2004–2005)

Husband:

Francis A. Lopez

Birthday: June 16, 1971

Spiritual Birthday: April 4, 1992

Position: Church Cluster Leader (Tribal Messiah), Marikina City

Spiritual Parent: Jung Hae Park (Julia Kim)

Blessing: 2005

Background: A member gave him a flyer about the International Highway Project and invited him to attend a Divine Principle Workshop