

# 24+ Matching and Blessing Preparation Workshop

Neumühle Training Centre, Bad Camberg, Germany, 8. – 11. December 2016



By David Hanna

From the 8-11 December we held a “24+ Matching and Blessing Preparation Workshop” in our European Seminar Centre, Camberg, Germany. This was a joint venture between the European Second Generation Department and the European Blessed Family Department, led by the ESGD.

One hundred parents and children over twenty-four years old, supported by twenty staff, met to focus on matching and blessing. Many different situations were represented: those who are just coming to consider matching; some who have tried a number of matches but have not found ‘the one’ yet; and others who have had the painful experience of a blessing that has not worked out.

This was the second such workshop for older children and their parents, and this time we again held some joint sessions but also some sessions for children and parents separately. As a new feature we could offer personal appointments with someone from the team of matching supporters that has been developing over the last two

years, and many took advantage of this. As a result, when it came to the final ‘Question and Answer’ session, where it is usual that questions are submitted to a panel of core staff members, there were not enough questions to require that approach, and they could easily be dealt with by the workshop directors.

Of great help were several very honest responses to questions that had been submitted by people who had gone quite a difficult path to find the right partner, but who are now very happily married and enjoying blessed family life.

There were lectures on the meaning and values of the blessing from William Haines and David Hanna, and a morning of lectures from Geros Kunkel on the development of the Cheon Il Guk standard by True Parents, and the role of ‘heart’ in our relationships. Jane Toresen and Orlande Schenk between them explained the parents’ matching process and gave tips on using the website and how to prepare one’s forms and photos.

We will hold the next such workshop in June with a Parents’ Matching Convocation scheduled for late May.

At the end of the workshop we invited everyone to give us some feedback and answer several questions – either in paper form or online. We had many responses and these will prove very useful for planning subsequent meetings.

Here are just a couple of appreciative comments:

*“I had a very good experience. I could experience the Heavenly Parent in a more peaceful and natural way, and this didn’t happen to me in while. This was the best Blessing workshop I have attended so far. I have always loved Camberg’s Holy Ground. There was a very good atmosphere and a supportive environment and sometimes I felt we were connected to Cheong Pyeong Holy Ground. It is truly a Cheon Il Guk culture forming. I felt hope for the future, much more than before coming. Many lectures and testimonies touched my heart and I had lot of time to converse with God too. Many things I could have done better and I noticed I could have opened myself a bit more sincerely and have had more talks with people. I noticed some points I should*

*work on. Overall I felt much more determination and hope.”*

*“My reflection about the blessing workshop is, that this workshop was a really special one. I felt really cared from the staff and I am thankful for the elder 2nd gen. that are still so involved in workshops and really caring about us younger people; I felt much support. The atmosphere was special and just so much guided from God. For me this workshop had the feeling that there*

*were many conditions (behind it). I just could gain so much. I could solve my own problems and struggles with this workshop and God’s help. I really could confront some of my fears and was impressed how many amazing people we still have in our church. I came to the realisation again that God is always there - we just have to invest and start forgetting the past and what we could not reach. Instead we should work on what good we can do.*

*In my daily life it’s just so easy to forget my value or what it is I am actually living for, and when it’s important to say what we have to say in this world. I can say that this workshop motivated me to be more myself and always to check if I am honest with myself and with God - to tell God when something is not okay, and not to suppress the real feelings we have in our self.”*