

The First Years of Our British Church - Part 3

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Patricia serving True Parents (Mother is seated to Father's right) during one of their earlier visits to the UK

Each person is so precious

Witnessing continued with great vigor. I remember that we all felt quite ashamed of ourselves if less than 20 people were taught Divine Principle per week. It took me a year to find my first spiritual child. One day Ian and I attended a service at St. Martins-in-the-Fields Church near Trafalgar Square. After the service, we joined a procession of people who took a petition concerning human rights to No. 10 Downing Street. When the document had been officially handed over, I really felt a burning desire to witness to someone. The people seemed to be so good. I just prayed strongly inwardly, "Father who shall I speak to?"

I looked at the crowd and then felt a tremendous pull towards two young girls. From where I was standing I could only see the backs of their heads. They started to leave and I just said to Ian, "Come". We literally ran down the street and, with a voice out of breath, I stopped them and excitedly told them about our Family and how we were teaching new ideas about life. Immediately I got the Cain-Abel reaction from the two girls. Barbara (Cottle) Zaccarelli responded so naturally and was obviously interested. Her friend, on the other hand, was skeptical, so I had to work hard to win her heart and trust. Barbara started to listen to Divine Principle lectures. After she had heard about the "The Fall of Man", I warned her that Satan would try to do everything to stop her from coming to hear more, because this truth was exposing his crime. The next time she was due to hear Chapter 3, she arrived one hour late. She told me how a bus had driven past her as she waited for it at the bus stop and then, how the subway had stopped in a tunnel for a long time, and so on. She had almost given up trying to get to the center, but then she had remembered my warning. You can imagine how happy I was to see her again.

Marion taught Barbara the conclusion of the Divine Principle on the day on which we moved to the Streatham center. They found a quiet room amidst all of the hustle and bustle of footsteps continually going to and fro with boxes and suitcases. Barbara accepted our True Parents immediately and moved into the center about a month later. She was training at the time to become a school teacher.

We spoke regularly at the famous "Speakers Corner" in London. For a year we made a condition to speak there every Sunday come wind, rain, snow or sunshine. It was good experience for all of us and we learned to overcome our shyness and inhibitions by standing in front of a lot of people and also having to deal with atheistic and communistic hecklers. One brother who joined us in the summer of 1968, Neil Winterbottom, was very good at sorting out anyone who tried to disrupt the speaker. It was highly amusing to see this tall, slim brother pulling himself up another couple of centimeters and saying slowly and deliberately with a perfect Oxford English accent, "As for you sir, I will deal with you later." This always had a magical effect and quickly silenced the hecklers. Neil came from an "I Ching" group who

were concerned about the development of mind and body. Later he helped Dr. Young Oon Kim with her book in Washington, DC.

Four people joined the Unified Family in the four months from August to November 1968. Ian met a young man, Nicholas Hillman, who was an organ tuner. Nick was good at everything he put his hands to and soon became the Family "fix-it" man. Nothing short of perfection was good enough for Nick. He was very talented. The last person to join us in that memorial year of 1968 was Hazel (Ifill) Barlow, from the West Indies. Hazel and her mother, Pearl, had been listening to the Divine Principle regularly at a house in Surrey where a middle-aged couple had opened their doors for the Divine Principle to be taught in their home. Hazel was an infant teacher and was also very clever with her hands. When I think of the early members, I can see that we really were a mixture of heart, intellect and will!



Father speaking directly to Eddie and Patricia at the Family Education Center in Jardim, Brazil

Meeting True Parents

In August 1968, June [Darby] went over to Holland to support the members there. A few days later Neil [Winterbottom] went to the USA to help Miss Kim with her book. In October, Eve went to Holland and Marion went to Ireland to pioneer Belfast. In January 1969, Doris [Walder / Orme] sent me to Italy to support Martin Porter.

After only two months we returned to London to meet our True Parents. For most of us, it was our first time to meet them. The British, Italian, and Dutch families that gathered in London numbered about 40 people. Many of us went to the airport to meet our True Parents. When Father and Mother finally came through the gate, we were so happy and amazed to see their smiling faces. Father shook hands with everyone in turn. I can remember feeling afraid before our True Parents absolute standard of love and goodness, as I felt that they could see my fallen nature, but as Father shook my hand firmly, the fear completely left me. I felt so strongly that he really was my True Father. True Parents had not come to judge us, but to love and encourage us.

On the first evening our True Parents were in London, Doris had invited some spiritualists to meet them and to hear Father speak. There was even an Indian guru among the guests. When Father came into the room he said to the guests, "I have two eyes, two ears, a nose and a mouth and then grinned at us from ear to ear. Everyone laughed and immediately the rather tense atmosphere became more relaxed. Father is the expert in making people feel at home. He spoke until late into the night in his usual dynamic way.

On the following evening he spoke to the Family in depth, and on the third evening Father, Mother, Mrs. Choi, President Eu, Miss Kim and Mr. [Osami] Kuboki sang to us and then we sang individually and also by nation for them. It was such a beautiful time together that we hoped would never end.

Mother was pregnant with Hyun Jin Nim, their third son, at the time and it was wonderful to watch Father whispering tenderly in her ear from time to time. Something else that struck my heart very deeply was Father's continual awareness and concern for each person. President [Hyo Won] Eu was responsible for recording True Parent's whole trip in 1969. President Eu was always in such pain because of a severe

problem with his hip. One time Father was speaking to us and, as Mrs. Choi interpreted, Father turned and looked at President Eu with such an expression of concern and compassion on his face. One second before this, President Eu had moved in his chair and for a fleeting moment his face had creased up with pain and Father had noticed. Everything happened so quickly, but the depth of heart Father expressed in that moment could only have come from God's true son.

A love that binds us together

During those three precious days when our True Parents were with us, Father interviewed several people who were candidates for the forthcoming Blessing. A few days later 8 European couples were blessed in Essen, Germany. They are part of the 43-couple Blessing. Dennis and Doris Orme were the only candidates from Britain to be blessed at that time. Out of the first 15 members who have been mentioned here, only 3 are not with us today. Everyone else was blessed by our True Parents in the Blessing Ceremonies held between 1969 and 1982, and have around 30 children between them ranging in age from 1 to 20 years old.

During those early days, we felt such love for the people and such a burning desire to bring them home to God's heart. Our center was our home and we were a family. We fought sometimes, but we loved each other and still do. Above all, we respected each other because we felt that God had handpicked each person who joined because of the indemnity paid through their respective lineages. When people came to hear the Divine Principle at our center, they really felt God's presence there. Even now when we meet another original member, there is automatically such a strong bond of love between us, as in a real family.

Now we have advanced from the individual level to the family and national level in God's dispensation. Whether we live in centers, our own home or in a small flat, let's continue to give God's love and truth to everyone who can receive it. Let's love each other as a real family. People are always drawn to where there is love, especially God's love.



Eddie and Patricia Hartley (seated at center) surrounded by their expanding family

Patricia and her husband Eddie were blessed with the 118 Couples Blessing in London in 1978. They live as close as they can to their many grandchildren and devote time to developing the UK chapter of IRFF.