

Czech HARP Winter Workshop

Southern Bohemia, 27. December – 1. January 2015



Nineteen second generation and staff gathered in the Southern Bohemian town of Tabor to culminate the year with an exciting and educational workshop. The theme of our workshop was centred around the topic of the Spirit World, which was selected due to the increasing requests of our HARP members. This is not always an easy topic to share about due to its subjective nature, however we were lucky to have three excellent lecturers.

Our first day of lectures was given by our workshop Father figure and seasoned educator, Petr Leba, who shared about concepts of the spirit world based on the Divine Principle. To accompany this, HARPies took part in an activity in which one member of each team was blindfolded and guided by members of their team representing 'good spirits', whilst distracted by others representing 'evil spirits'. This activity aimed to give participants a metaphorical experience of the often

confusing influence of the spirit world and emphasize the importance of developing a clear understanding and distinction between good and evil forces within yourself. Our second day of lectures was given by our older sister and former CARP leader, Petra Blažková-Poledníková, who offered testimonies and practical insights into the works of Cheong Pyeong and also led us through a guided meditation. On the last day we were happy to welcome Uncle Ashley Crosthwaite from the UK, who shared many words of guidance and also inspired many of our HARP members with testimonies of his work with WAIT in Uganda. In addition to lectures, we explored the theme of the Spirit World by reading the works of Dr Sang Hun Lee as morning inspiration, taking part in a Prayer evening, listening to a testimony from our workshop Mother, Betka Leba, and watching the film *What Dreams May Come*.

We were very fortunate to be holding our Spirit World themed workshop in Tabor, a town steeped in religious history having been founded by the Hussite Christian movement. Our accommodation was situated just opposite the beautiful monastery church of Klokoty, which promptly woke everyone up in the morning with the ringing of its bells. Such beautiful and tranquil surroundings were only made more so with the arrival of a thick blanket of snow – which also contributed to a very memorable snow ball fight! We were able to make excellent use of our surroundings enjoying energetic games in the historical town centre and in the neighbouring fields. When the cold was too bitter (as low as -7°C) we enjoyed each other's company with countless board games, indoor activities and a very competitive and lively quiz.

It has been four years since HARP was reinitiated in the Czech Republic to cater for the growing numbers of second generation. Amidst our group all ages from 12 to 17 were represented and we were happy to welcome our current oldest member, Antony Maser, to our staff team. Growing up in a relatively small HARP community has its benefits as was made

apparent on New Year's Eve, when every member of the workshop, participants and staff, were able to openly and honestly share their reflections on the last year and hopes for the year ahead. As staff, we were proud and touched to see our younger brothers and sisters demonstrate such freedom, trust and support for one another – we hope such feelings grow exponentially for them in the years ahead.

We would like to thank everybody who contributed to this workshop: our guest lecturers Petra Blažková-Poledníková and Ashley Crosthwaite, for taking the time and effort to support us; Antony Masner, for his general support and setting an example to his younger brothers and sisters by taking responsibility; Elisa Brann, for her preparation of games; Betka Leba, for her role as workshop Mother and her delicious food (the highlight for many participants); Petr Leba, for his support as workshop Father and excellent lecturing; and lastly Andy Uhnak, for his overall coordination, organisation and role as workshop director.

From all of us here in the Czech Republic 'šťastný Nový Rok' ('Happy New Year')!