

The European 7 Day Divine Principle Workshop

Oliver Lane
September 10-16, 2012
Republic of San Marino



When we made our reservations for this workshop, few of us would have imagined the dramatic events of True Father's ascension and Seong Hwa. When the situation began to unfold, we thought that perhaps the workshop would be cancelled. We were glad that it went ahead.

Twenty-one participants including: Ambassadors for Peace, Prof. Dr. Lisen Bashkurti and his wife, Majlinda, from Albania; three new guests and a gathering of first and second generation came to study and experience the Divine Principle, pay tribute to True Father's life of sacrifice and deepen their own life of faith. Translation into Italian was handled admirably by Giorgio Gasperoni and Joshua Kerschbaummayr allowing us to have one of our three groups dedicated to Italian speakers.

Countries represented were Albania, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Japan, San Marino, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States. As the days went by, this truly varied group of people seemed to merge together in heart and understanding. Testimonies were shared, many holy songs were sung. We prayed together and alone, experienced insights and understandings of Our Heavenly Father's hopes, plans, broken and suffering heart and the paths to restoration and redemption as we studied the Exposition of the Divine Principle afresh. We discussed together in smaller groups, helping each other clarify points that the day's lectures had brought up. Each day something seemed to change internally and externally.

The first two days were warm, but as Saturday approached, the skies clouded over and we had two days of rain to highlight the sadness of the time. Saturday morning, at service, was moving and thought provoking, as we read from True Father's post Washington Monument speech,

"It is immaterial whether or not I can unify the world within my lifetime, for this work will go on and on, and I will continue to lead it, whether I am on earth or in the spirit world. This ideology, this philosophy, this tradition and this heart will inevitably unify the world. Even after my death, as a spirit man I will constantly appear and lead you in the same tradition, the same way of life, until we have achieved the complete kingdom of God here on earth. This is the principle under which I am operating. I do not expect this to happen in ten years or even in my lifetime, but in eternity."

Later, we visited the San Marino centre, where an altar of remembrance had been set up and where a book of condolence could be signed. We then visited the citadel of San Marino, with its spectacular views of the surrounding countryside. Saturday night was family night entertainment with laughter and singing and finally, the presentation of graduation certificates.

Departures on Sunday were fond farewells as we had truly merged as one. Special thanks to the Gasperoni family, lecturers Mr Timothy Miller and Dr. David Hanna, and to all who helped make this a truly unique and inspiring workshop.