

VISION 2020

'The family is the base of happiness and world peace' Victory in Niigata 450-Couple Blessing is a milestone in UC Japan



On November 9th, amidst beautiful autumn colors of mountains, the Niigata Parish conducted 'Cosmic Blessing Ceremony 2015 by True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind for previously-married couples'. It was officiated by Rev. Yong Cheon Song, chairman of National Federation of Blessed Couples Association, and his wife Mrs. Hae Ok Lee.

The ceremony was attended by a total of 450 newly-blessed couples including 70 previously-married couples and 380 pairs of single members, who were witnessed by their families, friends and acquaintances. It became the largest Blessing ceremony so far held on a parish level.

On the following day, November 10th, a dedication ceremony of the Niigata Church Sanctuary was held with Chairman and Mrs. Song as well as Rev. and Mrs. Eiji Tokuno, President of the Unification Church of Japan, in attendance. The Niigata Parish thus was filled with double joy from the Blessing and Dedication ceremonies.

'Cosmic Blessing Ceremony 2015 by True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind for previously-married couples' in November was the second in Niigata Parish from the 127-couples Blessing in April this year.

Led by the Niigata Parish director, Rev. Dae seop Shin, 7 churches (Niigata, Shibata, Nishi, Higashi, Nagaoka, Ken'oh and Jouetsu churches) in turn carried out various programs, large and small, for the past 6 months to promote Blessing and witnessing activities, such as Couples' Seminars, Revivals with Divine Principle and Panel Exhibitions on Blessing.

Central in the witnessing programs, particularly for husbands, were Prayer Rituals for Returning to Origin (Kangen Kigan-reishiki) and Couples' Seminars, for which door-to-door visits were paid. Besides, to enable a wife to convey to her husband what would be difficult through direct conversations, efforts were made to write her feelings. In many cases, such writings opened their hearts, enabling them to have deeper communications.

On November 9th from early morning, quite a few participants from Niigata prefecture arrived in the venue of 'Cosmic Blessing Ceremony 2015 by True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind for previously-married couples'. The bridegrooms were dressed neatly in dark suits, while their brides in beautiful white wedding dresses.



'450-couple Blessing is a monumental victory in Japan's Unification Church'

Renewed commitment for Tribal Messiah achievement

About 600 people including their guests waited on their seats for the opening performance, which began at 11:00 am. 30-member Pure Heart Chorus, comprising youngsters from the parish, heightened mood of the occasion with their opening songs.

The ceremony's emcee, Pastor Koichiro Wada of Niigata East Church, declared the opening, then solemn invocations were offered by representatives of Shinto, Islam and Christianity.

Representing Shinto, the master of religious ceremonies of Shoushu Mure, the chief priest of TAKAMITAMA Shrine prayed: "Under the witness of Heavenly Parent and True Parents, I humbly report that all shall further their pledge as true husbands and wives, support each other and become families of Blessing, who will build and strengthen true families. May you achieve world peace and tread the path of true couples!"

This was followed by prayers of a Muslim couple and a Christian couple respectively, filling the hall with inspiration.

As the officiator, Rev. Song emphasized the significance and value of Blessing as follows:

"This is the most precious and holiest day in your life, as Heavenly Parent (God) blesses your marriage this day. I firmly believe your decision [of taking part in today's Blessing Marriage] will bring tremendous grace to you. The family is the foundation of happiness and world peace. Rev. Sun Myung Moon taught us that we should welcome God in our midst and receive the Blessing Marriage."

Following the Holy Water and the recitation of the Blessing Pledge, the officiator offered the following prayer:

"We are grateful that you have granted this occasion of cleansing our past sins. We are grateful that you have given joys to our ancestors and ourselves, who have pioneered the way for our descendants, granting us with love, life and lineage of the Heavenly Parent. I pray that you help us become people whom Heavenly Parent can eternally take pride in, that we become ancestors who are respected and righteous, and that Heavenly Parent will allow the eternal blessing of these 450 couples. I offer thanks to the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind who have guided us."

Following the exchange of gifts of thanks (wedding rings), Declaration of Holy Marriage and flower presentation to the officiators, a city council member gave a congratulatory message: "I have been active as an Ambassador for Peace since ten years before. In my career as a city council member, I have experienced an election loss, as well. Yet, my wife always supported me. I wish to thank her again." Another city council member said, "Happiness is not something far away, but it starts from the family, so close by. This is happiness!"

Next, a university professor and Ambassador for Peace gave his message: "Having watched spas' vapor dancing like a waterfall and cranes in the paddies, I felt that today is a blessed day and this place to be recorded in history. May you all be blessed!"

After reading of congratulatory cables from the National Diet members, Mrs. Hae-ok Lee also gave words of congratulations as follows:

"While I was in Europe, I had a chance to meet with Mrs.



- ① Flowers presented to Rev. and Mrs. Song at Blessing
- ② Brides and grooms cheer with Eok Mansei at Blessing
- ③ Rev. and Mrs. Song offered a prayer at the Blessing Ceremony
- ④ The choir "Pure Heart" performed at Opening
- ⑤ Tape-cutting by representatives
- ⑥ The new building of Niigata Church
- ⑦ Dedication ceremony of new Niigata Church

1,000-capacity Niigata Church dedicated

Complements by Chairman Song and President Tokuno

Margaret Thatcher of Britain for the first time. As she put it, Rev. Sun Myung Moon had taught her that true human happiness lied in the family. She was sorry she came to know this idea in her late years. She also suggested me to call her if we would need her assistance. Consequently thanks to her supports, there are over 80 Ambassadors for Peace who are active in the British Parliament. I hope everyone believes that this place is a grace through which this country will find happiness."

After four cheers of Eok-mansei, Rev. and Mrs. Song presented gifts to four representative couples. The ceremony's venue was filled with joy, laughter and conversations among friends and acquaintances here and there. People congratulated each other and enjoyed commemorative photo-taking.

[Reflections of participants]

"In retrospect, I wonder how much I have really thought about my family. This becomes a special occasion when I could realize that it was my wife that has always supported someone like me. I shall always remember the warmth of her hands." (Jouetsu City)

"My husband and I were able to attend this Blessing in our Golden Wedding year. What a memorable opportunity! I would like to remember the scenes of this ceremony at home together with my husband, over a cup of tea, perhaps." (Ambassador for Peace, Niigata City)

On November 10th, approximately 500 church members attended the dedication ceremony of the Niigata Church, which was built on 192-tsubo (1 tsubo= 3.3 sq. m) space to accommodate 1,000 service attendees. Its third-floor space is dedicated exclusively to youth education, complete with Wi-Fi, audiovisual and lighting equipment. The deserves to bring victory in Vision2020.

Rev. Tokuno commended to the members:

"The victory of yesterday's Blessing marks a milestone achievement in the history of Japanese Unification Church. 'November 9th' is the historical day when the Berlin Wall came down. It feels that Satan's walls in Japan begin to crumble, as well. Niigata Parish has become the champion of Blessing!" Mrs. Hae-ok Lee comforted the members, saying, "When I ponder about your devotion up to this day, my heart is filled with emotion. A proverb says, 'Hardship is the beginning of happiness.' Such words are for our members of Niigata!"

In his closing remarks, Chairman Song encouraged the members:

"With one heart, you opened a new page in the joyful history of the Unification Church of Japan, giving hope and great victory. May the 450 Couples Blessing of Niigata Parish become the hope that can help the nation of Japan!" Members who had long awaited the completion of the sanctuary also expressed hope in the beautiful and spacious church, making a new resolve to bring victory in Tribal Messiah activities.



① True Mother emphasized the Heavenly Tribal Messiah's mission
 ② Presentation of flowers to True Mother
 ③ Special Meeting to accomplish the Heavenly Tribal Messiah's mission (Nov.12, at Cheon Jeong Palace)

"One-hundred day dedication will achieve anything!"

True Mother at Special Gathering for Heavenly Tribal Messiahs

On November 12th, Korea's national messiahs and former pastors were invited to a Special Gathering to fulfill the mission as Heavenly Tribal Messiahs, held at the second-floor banquet hall of the Cheon Jong Palace Museum. After True Parents entered the hall, a bow and floral bouquets were offered and the program proceeded with the singing of the Cheon Il Guk national anthem, a representative report prayer, a video documenting families in the Philippines and Thailand who were successful in their tribal messiah activities, reports, and testimony by a Korean elder.

Then, True Mother spoke. The gathering turned out to be very important as True Mother encouraged all the senior pastors and retired national messiahs in an occasion prepared with much love, emphasizing fulfilment of Heavenly Tribal Messiah mission. Here are some excerpts:

Having heard your reports, I received much grace. I am sure you must have undergone many hardships until today. When we talk about November, we call it the season of fruition and harvest, but I don't think those who are sitting here today are in the springtime of your lives. Is it autumn, or is it the winter of your lives?

How much assets do you have? Our assets are our brothers and sisters. (with tears) Isn't that why Father told us 'to fulfill our responsibilities as heavenly tribal messiahs'? Literally we have heard this truly many times. However, we've said it's difficult because of this or that reason, and spoke of many circumstances. Yet, if you believed that this time is the end of my life, if you knew that you would never see another spring again in your lives, as people who know the eternal world, and especially as people who have pioneered and worked with True Parents while they were on the earth... you have a responsibility. Adam and Eve fell because they were not serious in addressing this issue.



"Brothers and Sisters are our treasures!" "Be a citizen of Cheongil Guk through Tribal Messiah victory!"

Today, you saw on the screen the life of a monarch butterfly. This butterfly is only about three to four centimeters in length, and the size of its brain is about the tip of a needle. Yet, this butterfly flies far to a place it's never been before, lays eggs there, and dies. And the new butterflies that are born from the eggs fly back to where the parent butterflies came from. Isn't this really intriguing and mysterious? The monarch butterfly with its tiny brain, how does it find a good environment where it multiplies its descendants.

When we observe things like this, it's true that we are embarrassed beings before the Nature. Is that true or not? Yet, you are people whom Father remembered when he was alive. You are people he kept in his heart. Father said that he would place you in the position of Cheon Il Guk owners.

But, please think about this. There is no king without his people. When you fulfill your mission as national messiahs or heavenly tribal messiahs, you must raise your people. They have to become the citizens of the heavenly kingdom. You have to witness to others. Only then can you fulfill your given responsibilities. You could say, 'A person who

fails to carry out his responsibilities is without a future.' Do you want to live in that way and exit without leaving behind a name or legacy? It should not be that way!

The reason why I called you here today is because I love you. I called you because I love you all. I called you today, because I want you to go forward together with me. (Aju.) If we had already come to this realization and made effort, we would not have sent off True Father at his Seonghwa in this kind of an environment, but we would have been able to send him off on the basis of a national foundation. When you think about this, I hope you will understand how blessed you are that I am alive on this earth with you.

Please do not put this off. Dr. Lek and the couple who was victorious in the Philippines both started where there was nothing. They started alone. Please feel that it can be done if you try. Why haven't you been able to? You have been following True Parents for forty or fifty years, with the titles of national messiahs and tribal messiahs. Yet, the point is whether you have fulfilled your responsibility that corresponds to the titles.

As Secretary General Man-ho Kim reported earlier, there is no reason why Korea cannot be the home for the



①② True Mother spoke at the Special Meeting
 ③ True Mother gave word of encouragement to participants
 ④ True Mother (center) made a toast at the luncheon banquet

"One with True Parents, you overcome any hurdle!"

fifth office of the United Nations. It can be, but if not, that would be because we could not fulfill our responsibility until today. Imagine if our foundation had been larger. That is why we must have a greater sense of responsibility. Do not leave your mission behind to your children and descendants! I have said that I will end this era of 6,000 years of accumulated indemnity in my generation.

My children also have their own portions of responsibility. Why would you not have it, too? I gave you a chance, so the conclusion is that you should no longer postpone fulfilling your responsibility. Don't delay this! I hope you will make this resolve and please rise to the occasion!

Please try to offer devotion for one hundred days. Nothing is impossible if you offer devotion for one-hundred days. If you can unite in heart, body, mind and harmony with True Parents and live each day in such a way, nothing can be an obstruction to us. The environment will change, and the spirit world will work with us so that we can overcome any obstacles. You are living in a time where you can actually feel these things happening. I

feel impatient if you don't understand this spiritually and cannot feel this.

Should you be inferior to a monarch butterfly? I personally enjoy watching nature documentaries. In one program I watched the other day, there was a certain bird that lived in Alaska called a longbill. In preparing for the winter, the longbill flies non-stop, without eating for ten days to Australia, and then it goes back to Alaska again. Nature puts us to shame. Have we ever made strenuous effort like this bird, going for ten days without eating or sleeping, to restore our tribe, our neighbors or our nation?

Even this bird which cannot speak exerts itself in this way to multiply its own species. Can we, human beings who were created as the lords of creation, who are the masterpiece among beings created by Heavenly Parent (God), be inferior to that butterfly or that bird? You should feel embarrassed!

True Parents have taught us everything until now - how we should live and how to close our lives with triumph - so that we can live together with them in the eternal world. Don't worry that you've become old! I'm also in my 70s.

"Become a historic figure of righteousness, a pride of your descendants!"

And I'm making effort to become healthier. I have been telling you to take good care of your health and to exercise. Don't you want to become younger? You should first have a younger mind!

In the early years of the church, when you first encountered God's Word, you were all excited and felt as if you could restore the nation and resolved to win the world. The task depends on you.

The Puritans crossed the Atlantic Ocean in search of freedom of religion, migrating to America. They risked their lives to cross the sea! Even if someone became ill on board or they had little food, they kept enough of the grain that they had brought to sow seeds in the coming year. They were thinking about their future generations, and saved the seeds even at the cost of their lives. This is what we have to learn from them, the spirit of the Puritans!

The rite to thank God for the first crops that were harvested from the seeds they had saved with their lives, after the Puritans moved to America, became the origin of Thanksgiving Day. Each year, at the time of Thanksgiving, they enjoy having a turkey with their families, thinking

about their ancestors. So today, I will treat you to a turkey meal!

With gratitude for Heavenly Parent, thinking about our descendants, we should overcome all difficulties and become victors.

In 1620, the Puritans arrived at Plymouth Rock, and if you go there today, there is a monument built for them. I wish that you will become victors of Heaven, whom your descendants, thousands of generations from now can attend and remember. You should become such ancestors. Not just in words, but this is a time to act and practice, by moving your bodies. Will you do that?

I believe in you with a pure and loving heart, and that is why I've invited you, shouting again to ask you to become victorious heavenly tribal messiahs. I hope you will not disappoint True Parents any more. Those who can pledge this, please all rise and let's give our victory applause together!

You are all righteous people in history! The heroes of history! That is why I'd like to put on all of you the armor of Heavenly Parent's power.



Proud presentations by Bearers of loyalty and filial piety

1,300 attended 18th Chuwa Culture Festival of West Japan

On November 16th, about 1,300 Seiwa students, youth and their families gathered for the 18th West Japan Chuwa Culture Festival under the motto: 'Let's become flag-bearers of the tradition of loyalty and filial piety! Seiwa students!' The hall was filled with joy and energy of presenting fruits of their daily devotion, before Mrs. Yeon-ah Moon, wife of Hyo-jin Moon, as the representative of True Family. It became a very inspiring day.

The Chuwa Culture Festival is the largest annual event that the Seiwa students' divisions nationwide organize as a festival of the culture of heart (shimjung culture). Representatives who won in the regional preliminaries which were held from September through November, came to present their performances in four areas, that is; Divine Principle Chart Lecture, Speech, and Divine Principle Lecture in the individual section, and Entertainment in the group section.

The Divine Principle Chart Lectures by middle-school students are aimed at enhancing the Seiwa students' understanding of DP, and at enabling them to convey the Principles to their peers in a way that is easy to understand. The contestants presented the lectures with enthusiasm in 7 minutes, using creative PowerPoint slides including their family photos or adding illustrative stories and explanations.

The Speech section is aimed at enabling the second generation to put into practice the Divine Principle and True Parents' words, as proud youth who can testify to Heavenly Parent and True Parents, sharing their experiences in their life environment including home, church and school. The contestants gave powerful presentations on how they had overcome various challenges and difficulties, or how they were striving to move forward to attain their dreams.

In the Divine Principle Lecture section, speakers choose one part from the entire Divine Principle to lecture. This is aimed at the contestants themselves becoming an embodiment of the Principle, an owner who builds the culture of heart. Speakers gave the lectures with confidence and heart, and their devotion in studying well to understand and convey the Principle and practicing to lecture could be felt.

The Entertainment section is perhaps most popular as its attraction brings many people to the Chuwa Culture Festival. Bearing the same theme as last year, namely; Loyalty and Filial Piety, it is aimed at testifying to how youth love and take pride in Heavenly Parent and True Parents, and how they can influence people around them. Every district that had prepared presentations demonstrated their creativity through wonderful performances of stage plays, dances, traditional performing arts, expressive dance, chorus etc. As



① Presenters of the speech contest ② Prof. Yeon Ah Moon gave an invigorating speech
③ Presenters of the speech contest ④ A play by East Hiroshima Region's Seonghwa Students Department, "True Mother's 7-Year Course" ⑤ Dance performance by Kagoshima Region's Seonghwa Students Department "Path of Loyalty and Filial Piety – True Parents' Word and My Mission" ⑥ A presenter giving a powerful DP lecture ⑦ A junior high-school student giving a DP chart lecture ⑧ Traditional art performed by Tokushima Region's Seonghwa Students Department, "Promise of Loyalty and Filial Piety – We Will Make You Proud –"

Yeon-ah nim: Inspired by everyone's progress

the same theme of Loyalty and Filial Piety was taken up, their understanding seemed more enhanced and many satisfying presentations were made.

The Nationwide Chuwa Culture Festival was started as an offering to True Family. As with last year, Mrs. Yeon-ah Moon was invited to the West Japan event, representing True Family. In the opening ceremony, a student representative from Nara District which had won in the Entertainment section last year presented a bouquet of flowers to Mrs. Yeon-ah Moon on behalf of all the Seiwa students.

Yeon-ah Nim, who viewed presentations in the three sections of Speech, Divine Principle Lecture, and Entertainment, encouraged all in the closing ceremony, introducing a speech by True Parents entitled, 'The Way of the True Filial Child' originally given on November 11th 1992 in Uruguay, South America.

She said, "As with last year, I was moved and shed many tears this year. We can see here that the Seiwa students have grown and developed more. May all of you take pride in True Parents, be proud that you are children of True Parents, inherit their tradition of true love, of living for the sake of others, and become the hope of the future. Next year, I will come again to join the Chuwa Culture Festival!"

As we move towards 2020, the 100th anniversary of True Father's birthday as well as the Tokyo Olympics, the Seiwa students who are the flag-bearers of the next generation of the Unification Movement sent out a firm message of the culture of heart, not only to the realm of the second generation, but to their schools and society through this Chuwa Culture Festival.

Evaluation Results

◆ Divine Principle Chart Lecture Section

- 1st Place: Nao Takahashi (8th grade) of North Aichi District, Region 8, on The Root of Sin
- 2nd Place: Maria Nagao (9th grade) of Kagawa District, Region 10, on The Purpose of Creation
- 3rd Place: Mizuki Sakamoto (7th grade) of Fukuoka District, Region 12, on The Reason God Did Not Intervene in the Fall of the First Human Ancestors

◆ Speech Section

- 1st Place: Yumi Egashira (10th grade) of Saga District, Region 12, on My Church History
- 2nd Place: Koudai Nakai (12th grade) of West Hiroshima District, Region 11, on A Call From God
- 3rd Place: Hiroko Higashi (11th grade) of Kagoshima District, Region 13, on From the Human Heart to Heaven's Heart

◆ Divine Principle Lecture Section

- 1st Place: Alisa Takezawa (10th grade) of Kagoshima District, Region 13 on: The Power of Love, the Power of the Principle and God's Commandment
- 2nd Place: Yuwa Yamakawa (10th grade) of Okayama District, Region 16 on: The Providence of Restoration in Abraham's Family
- 3rd Place: Naohide Hashimoto (12th grade) of Tokushima District, Region 10 on: The Providence of Restoration in Adam's Family

◆ Entertainment Section

- 1st Place: Okayama District, Region 16, performance title: Way of Loyalty and Filial Piety~True Parents are Our Starting Point (stage play/performance)
- 2nd Place: Saga District, Region 12, performance title: From Father to Son (stage play)
- 3rd Place: Nara District, Region 15, performance title: Heavenly Flame of Love~ We Will Keep True Parents 'Flame of Loyalty and Filial Piety (stage play)



① The forum held on security of East Asia
 ② Dr. Eekelen gave a lecture
 ③ Regional Chair of UPF-Japan, Rev. Yeon Cheon Song
 ④ Chairman of UPF-Japan, Rev. Eiji Tokuno
 ⑤ Press conference in Tokyo (Nov.18th)

Towards Asia's Community for Peace by studying EU's model 'Never Again War!' - a system of peace overcame hostilities

Dr. Eekelen, who directed Western European Union, spoke in Japan on East Asia's security and prospects for Japan-Europe collaboration

Mutual understanding can forge consensus and cooperation

Suggestions on the post-war arrangements

Japan-Europe Special Lecture was held in Tokyo on November 18th with Dr. Willem Frederic van Eekelen, former defense minister of the Netherlands and the secretary general of the Western European Union. He spoke on the title: 'East Asia's security and prospects for Japan-Europe cooperation' under the auspices of the UPF-Japan etc. About one hundred leading figures including diplomats, scholars, religious leaders and journalists listened to Dr. Eekelen's keynote address in Tokyo.

The forum was opened with remarks by Mr. Masahisa Hayashi, professor emeritus of the Waseda University and director of the Institute for Peace Policies as well as Dr. Eiji Tokuno, president of the UPF-Japan, both representing the organizers.

Stressing the international status of the Netherlands, Director Hayashi mentioned, "Holland was actively involved in the reconstruction of Europe", as it was one of the five founding nations of Europe's Coal and Iron Alliance which was the harbinger of the European Union. It was also one of the five original member-states of the Western European Union established in 1948.

President Tokuno said: "Dr. Eekelen's address will be

interesting for us to hear the example of the EU which received the Noble Peace Prize with a view to applying it in East Asia. While Dr. Song Yeon Cheon, now chairman of the UPF's Japan Region, was engaged as the chairman of the UPF Europe, Dr. Eekelen helped UPF organize many symposium on peace in several European countries". "Thanks to their friendship, Dr. Eekelen accepted his visit to Japan this time", Dr. Tokuno said.

In his welcome remark, Dr. Song referred to Dr. Eekelen's previous visit to Japan four years ago in order to appeal 'freedom of faith and human rights'. "The East Asian region faces variety of geopolitical challenges such as China's hegemony-seeking expansion, North Korea's nuclear adventurism and frictions over Japan's history." Dr. Song explained significance of the forum as saying, "The European continent underwent many upheavals including two World Wars, the Cold War and the trials and errors involving ethnicity, race and religion. Dr. Eekelen will offer precious advices to Japanese leaders."

In his keynote address, Dr. Eekelen first explained the meaning and process of the EU's establishment. "Based on the past experiences up to the World War Two, Europe was determined never to go to another war. Leaders of the time attempted to set up a system, though not quite perfect, which would prevent a war by overcoming hostilities, giving strong impacts upon Europe."

"Germany has become one of the most democratic nations in Europe. My country, Holland, was occupied by Germany during the war, but our people have empathy with the contemporary Germany", Dr. Eekelen said. He even mentioned an episode of a Polish foreign minister by the name of Sikorsky who paid a visit to Berlin several years before. Mr. Sikorsky said, "In the past we used to be annoyed by Germany's assertive behaviors, but at present we are annoyed by Germany's inaction."

Incidentally, during the period of Dr. Eekelen's Japan trip, his wife separately attended a ceremony of reconciliation between Japan and Holland under the auspices of Japan's Foreign Ministry in Nagasaki city, west of Tokyo. She was one of the 14 invited relatives of Dutch people who had been encamped in Indonesia by the Japanese army during World War Two.

Dr. Eekelen introduced her positive impression about a new, democratized Japan. Mindful of Japan's difficult relations with South Korea, Dr. Eekelen suggested, "Why doesn't Japan apply a similar program with South Korea?"

Finally, Dr. Eekelen pointed out: "As conducted internationally by the UPF, if we can understand why your counterparts in China or South Korea act this way or that way, the mutual understanding could bring about agreement and cooperation with them. That was what Europe has done right."

Similar lecture programs were held in Nagoya (Nov. 15th)

and Fukuoka (Nov. 16th) as well as a dinner lecture (Nov.17th) in Tokyo.

"Freedom without responsibility is useless!" Major media reporters interviewed Dr. Eekelen

Prior to the forum in Tokyo, Dr. Eekelen had a press conference with reporters of major media organs on November 18th at the Japan National Press Club in Tokyo.

Dr. Eekelen expressed his conviction: "For security considerations, one of the most vital elements is to understand circumstances of your adversaries." Also he said, "One of the most significant international projects conducted by the UPF is the Middle East Peace Initiative which promotes reconciliation between Israel and Palestine", stressing the importance of reconciliation among peoples in conflicts.

He also said, "Freedom without responsibility is useless", "Democracy is a superb system because it respects the minority, as well", "A rule of law could be abused when a government applies it with rulers' whims". He warned about social prejudices indulging in superficial slogans of freedom, democracy or rule of law.

Later, some questions were raised regarding the issue between Russia and Ukraine. Dr. Eekelen criticized the approaches of Russia's President Putin who, he said, had violated the principle of maintaining the existing national boundaries. (end)



- ① Blessing Ceremony held in South Aichi Region
- ② Blessing Ceremony held in North Aichi Region
- ③ Rev. and Mrs. Song affirmed Blessing vows at Blessing Ceremony in South Aichi Region
- ④ Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno affirmed Blessing vows at Blessing Ceremony in the North Aichi Region (Nov. 2nd)
- ⑤ A bride and groom join Blessing prayer (North Aichi Region)
- ⑥ Choir of 2nd Gen elementary school students at Celebration Party (South Aichi Region)

Blessing Ceremonies Held in Many Parts of Japan

North Aichi / South Aichi / Fukuoka / Tottori / South Tokyo

In the first half of 2014, a total of 3,300 previously-married couples were blessed in Blessing Ceremonies held separately in 150 places throughout Japan. In the second half of the year, Blessing Ceremonies have been held across Japan. In this issue, we will cover the series of Blessing Ceremonies in South Aichi Region, North Aichi Region, Fukuoka Region, Tottori Region and South Tokyo Region, introducing some comments given by the participants.

[North Aichi Region] "Blessing is a Passport to Heaven!"

On September 10th by the Heavenly Calendar (November 2nd by the Solar Calendar), a Blessing Ceremony was held by the North Aichi Region in a hotel in Nagoya City in a light drizzle. Rev. Eiji Tokuno and Mrs. Hisae Tokuno acted as the officiators of the ceremony for a total of 102 families consisting of 20 previously-married couples and 82 spirit and physical world blessed couples attended.

In the ceremony, Rev. Tokuno gave clear definitions on "birth, marriage and death – the three times in life when one becomes the central character of his/her life", "passport to Heaven" and "three crimes one must never commit" with an occasional touch of humor. He officiated the ceremony in a relaxed atmosphere by sometimes asking the participants to clap their hands if they agreed with him. Rev. Tokuno's message was so concise and clear that many brides and grooms, especially those in the front seats, nodded as they listened closely.

A Faithful Son who Served His Mother Made His Father's Heart Melt (Tono Church, North Aichi Region, 77 year-old female member)

In mid-September, my son asked me to attend the Blessing Ceremony to be held on November 2nd. I wanted to attend but since my husband had a strong sense that the Unification Church had taken away our son, and since he did not like a religion, I thought it was impossible for me to attend with him.

As expected, when our son told his father about the Blessing,

he refused by saying, "I'm a busy man. I have no time to take part in such an irrational religious festival!"

My husband and I are full-time farmers, working day and night. Our son used to drop by our house and gave me massages on a regular basis. He would apply fingertip pressure to my muddy and sweaty feet.

One day, when we were working on the farm, my husband suddenly mumbled, "I don't think I could massage my mother's dirty feet with my bare hands even if she were alive. My son is quite a guy!!" I was very surprised because my husband had never praised our son before.

"Perhaps I can attend the Blessing with him", a ray of hope came to me. On another day, when I was thinking back of my son's childhood, I remembered vividly an event which took place about 35 years before.

One early morning when my son was in 4th or 5th grade, I saw an old man like a hsien with long white beard standing next to my pillow. He saw me surprised and said, "Your son will become a worthy man, so you must raise him well." In

astonishment, I questioned him, "When will he become worthy?", but he was gone.

Since then, I perceived my son special, harboring great expectation of him. But nothing seemed going right for him, and I gradually forgot what that old man said. Belatedly, I am reminded of the old man, who must be trying to tell me that our son would take us to heaven.

After that, I faithfully served my husband with firm belief that we can attend the Blessing Ceremony together.

In the evening of October 27th, when our son came by to give me a massage as usual, my husband suddenly said to him, "I don't mind letting you take the credit this time!" At first, my son and I did not understand what he meant and blinked in confusion. When I timidly asked back, "Do you mean to say that you will attend the Blessing Ceremony?" he answered, "Yes!" I felt like I was in heaven!

On the day of the Blessing, I was thrilled by the great grace of being chosen as the representative couple. After the Blessing, I started asking myself who that old man was and finally I came to realize that it was God! It inspired me to know that God had always looked over me through our son.

I am grateful to God and True Parents for giving me and my husband the passport to Heaven! I would like to work even harder to build a happy family.

[South Aichi Region] "The Blessing Marked a New Start in My Life"

On November 3rd, under the blue clear sky, a Blessing Ceremony was held in the South Aichi Region with Rev. Yong Cheon Song, Chairman of National Federation of Blessed Couples' Associations, and his wife, Mrs. Hae Ok Lee, officiated the ceremony for 70 couples with 430 guests and congratulators.

Rev. Song preached the value of the family and the existence of the spirit world in lay terms as he shared his experience of seeing his wife in his dream three days before the Blessing.

Mrs. Song gave a message at the celebration party where 200 peoples gathered. She spoke intelligibly and said, "In this society with fallen sexual morals and family breakdown, Blessing is the only alternative of solving these problems. Blessing is not a religious ceremony of the Unification Church but the way for all humanity." Some were moved to tears as they listened.

Some comments given by the participants:
"Blessing marked a new start in my life. I was very happy to receive words of congratulation from many people."
"Somehow I could not stop crying, as if my late husband was rejoicing in the spirit world. I became happy, too."



① Blessing Ceremony held in Fukuoka Region
 ② A group AVANTI performed elegantly at South Tokyo Blessing ③ Blessing Ceremony held in South Tokyo Region
 ④ Blessing Ceremony held in Tottori Region
 ⑤ Fukuoka SunHak choir attracted audience with their angelic voices ⑥ Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno and representative couples cut the cake (Fukuoka Region)

[Fukuoka Region] Guiding New Members from 'Shosha' Witnessing to Blessing

On November 3rd, the Fukuoka Region held a Blessing Ceremony in a hotel of Fukuoka City with Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno as its officiators.

Since March 2013, members of the Fukuoka Region have carried out missionary activities centering on shosha (Japanese word for scripture transcription). Street witnessing in front of train stations with invitation to Shosha has been well established. Many people have transcribed words from True Father's autobiography, reaching their number to 24 thousand in October.

Furthermore, the Fukuoka Region achieved the target of 1,000 courses for newcomers by setting up a Shosha Hall inside the educational center, inviting them from Standing Shosha to Divine Principle study sessions, and by strengthening Family Shosha Groups, as well as enhancing educational programs for its leaders (Special Workshop for Shosha Group Leaders).

Along with such a method, members have devised their approaches for Blessing. This July, Shosha Festival Blessing Ceremony was held with 75 couples attending as the first attempt to collaborate the Shosha dedication and Blessing.

On November 3rd, the Fukuoka Region conducted Blessing in the form of a dinner party, where a total of 350 people participated. They included 130 couples consisting of 26 previously-married

couples, 104 spiritual and physical worlds' Blessing pairs and guests. Among them were members and families who had encountered the Unification Church through the shosha practices.

At the Blessing Ceremony, Rev. Tokuno preached the value of Blessing, explaining about the lifestyle or attitude after Blessing. "Blessing is a passport to heaven all right, but you must also have a visa in order to live in a foreign country", said Rev. Tokuno. He emphasized: "(1) Don't commit sins of love, (2) Live with sincerity and don't abuse other people's hearts, (3) Avoid anything that feels guilty concerning money.

If you can avoid these three sins, you may obtain a permanent residence visa to heaven." Rev. Tokuno fascinated the participants by presenting the essence of True Parents' words within a short amount of time, yet in clearly understandable terms.

Two representative couples who stood on the platform were parents of Rev. and Mrs. Takaaki Kawashima, minister of the Fukuoka Higashi Church. Many members were impressed to see their pastor and his wife taking initiative in Tribal Messiah activity. (Rev. Kawashima's testimony is on page 17-18)

● Participants' Testimonies (Mrs. Susoe Shinbaru, Fukuoka Higashi Church, Fukuoka Region)

My husband is a compassionate man, but he is also a bit stubborn. Since he used to say "I don't like religions", I was unable to decide when to tell him about Blessing. Meanwhile, when I suggested him to do shosha, he agreed right away. In fact, he became fond of it than I was, to my gratitude for God's guidance, as I saw him neatly

copying True Parents' words.

As for Blessing, I took a risk of showing its brochure. He took a careful look at it without much resistance, not making any indication of his decision, though. Since I could not express my intention in words, I decided to write him a letter.

In my letter I expressed my gratitude, which I had seldom mentioned, as well as my reflection. I wrote, "Would you mind coming with me to the Blessing Ceremony on November 3rd for the sake of our family, you, myself and our children?" I was very happy to hear him say 'Yes!'.

On the day of Blessing, I was a bit nervous but relieved as we attended the ceremony without any trouble. I will show more respect to my husband, aspiring for a happy family.

[Tottori Region] Partners improved communication with "Thank you!", "I am grateful!", "I love you!"

On November 14th, under the late autumn's beautiful blue sky, the Tottori Region conducted a Blessing Ceremony at the Chapel Hall in Tottori Church. Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno officiated the ceremony for a total of 72 families consisting of 11 previously married couples and 61 spiritual-physical worlds' pairs. The Tottori Region had carried out another Blessing Ceremony for 102 couples on July 20th. This was, therefore, the second Blessing Ceremony organized by the region this year.

In the ceremony, Rev. Tokuno said, "You must have a visa in order

to reside in heaven. You can go to heaven by following the three requirements of heaven." The participants listened actively to his clear explanation on the way to enter heaven and the meaning of the Blessing.

At the luncheon banquet, as the participants commented on their impressions, Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno shared their experiences with humor, referring to three points of nurturing conjugal love. They emphasized the importance of communication, urging them to utter words like "Thank you!", "I am grateful!" and "I love you!".

● Participants' Testimonies (Mr. and Mrs. M)

Our daughter got married through the Marriage Blessing and now lives in England. She asked us to take part in Blessing, which we had refused for 30 years. But we were touched by the church members who paid many visits to us, especially for the past 10 days passionately encouraging us to receive Blessing. Our daughter has 5 children growing so well and building happy families. So we knew the grace of Blessing at the back of our minds.

We wish to become a happy couple who can enter heaven by following the three requirements of heaven which Rev. Tokuno mentioned.

[South Tokyo Region] An Ambassador for Peace Testifies Greatness of Marriage Blessing and Unification Movement

On November 16th, under the clear autumn sky, the South Tokyo Region held a Blessing Ceremony at a hotel in Tokyo with the participation of a total of 39 couples including 7 previously-married couples and 32 spiritual-physical worlds' pairs. Among them was a 3-generation family attending altogether. The hall was packed with nearly 250 people in excitement.

Its officiator, Rev. Eiji Tokuno, described essence of faith in the Unification Church, the value of Blessing and the lifestyle one must have after Blessing in a limited amount of time. His message left deep impressions on the participants, as one female participant commented: "The barrier dominating my husband's heart has been removed!"

In the celebratory banquet, an Ambassador for Peace (retired university professor), who was scheduled to give a 5-minute speech, delivered an impassionate address for 25 minutes: "By receiving Blessing, your family will become better. The greatness of the Unification Movement is in its massive scale."

One of the participants (82-year-old, spiritual-physical worlds' pair) left the following comment: "I never heard of a marriage centering on God. I used to believe that death brings the end of everything. But, having learned about the existence of the spirit world through Divine Principle, my heart was warmed up. No other religion can teach you about God and the spirit world in such details."



① Rev. Kawashima's parents stood among representative couples (L-R: Kawashima's parents, Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno, Kawashima's in-laws)
② Rev. Takaaki Kawashima (far left) and his family

A Couple guided Parents and In-laws to Blessing “I wanted to take responsibility for their eternal life!”

Grace of True Mother in Top-Gun Workshop

Minister of Fukuoka Higashi Church, Fukuoka Region Rev. **Takaaki Kawashima**

My parents and in-laws took part in the Cosmic Blessing Ceremony 2014 by the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind held by the Fukuoka Region on November 3rd. I believe this was a result of love and heavenly fortune given by True Mother on the solid foundation of jeongseong I offered during the Top-Gun Workshop (October 10th – 30th). This is a testimony of how we could guide my parents and in-laws to Blessing.

In December 2012, my in-laws who had lived in Fukushima relocated to live with us. On the transition, my in-laws promised each other not to join the Unification Church. Back then, I was a director and my wife was Church Mother of the Youth Department of the Fukuoka Region.

After living together for about a year, my mother in-law started to think she should know what my wife and I were doing, since we both worked as church staff members. She started Shosha (transcription of True Parents words) with my wife's encouragement, and in doing so every day, she grew internally by reflecting her own words and deeds.

My mother in-law had kept bitter sorrow of not being understood by her husband. After she started to transcript True Parents' words, however, her heart became calm. Until then, she

used to argue back to her husband with refusal to give in, but she started arguing much less.

Along with Shosha, my wife and I showed to her the Bible-related movies, encouraging her to read books on the spirit world. Then, we connected her to the education center of the Fukuoka Church to listen to a series of Divine Principle lectures. Although there were difficult times, she somehow managed to continue learning.

In March this year, when I was appointed as the minister of the Fukuoka Higashi Church, she also changed her learning place to our church. The church staff's devotion dispelled her distrust in the Unification Church. She then participated in the One-Day Seminar two times. She changed dramatically as she accepted the existence of God and the words of True Parents, starting to harbor hopes of taking part in Blessing along with her husband.

Moreover, my wife and I offered jeongseong for my in-law's Blessing during the special jeongseong period for the UC-Japan 50th Anniversary. Backed by the words of Rev. Eiji Tokuno and Rev. Dong Su Chung, we decided to encourage my in-laws to take part in Blessing for previously-married couples.

When we brought it up to my mother in-law, she wanted to receive Blessing partially in order to thank us for

accommodating them. Then, she sounded out with her husband, who rather surprised us by readily agreeing with the suggestion. My mother in-law said it must be the fruit of her efforts for him. This year marked the 21st year of my wife joining the Unification Church, as well as the 40th wedding anniversary of my in-laws.

On the other hand, my own parents had strongly opposed to the Unification Church. Back when I was in college, they found out that I had joined the Unification Church, putting me under house arrest. It is now 8 years since my wife and I started our family, but my father and my father in-law have not met with each other.

This March when I was appointed as a church minister, my father collapsed from cerebral infarction. He had to go through rehabilitation, recovering enough to drive a car with some aftereffects remaining.

Meanwhile, I attended the Top-Gun Workshop from October 10th. A few days before the workshop began, I wrote a long letter to my parents, urging them to participate in the Blessing Ceremony on November 3rd.

When I phoned my mother in Miyazaki during the workshop, my father said, “I don't mind going to Fukuoka to see our grandchildren, but unwilling to join Blessing.” My mother who

had visited Kumamoto several times to see my twin brother who was also a church member, had positive impressions toward the church members she met there. “Since Takaaki is now a minister...,” she thought and decided to take part in Blessing. She prepared my father's suits and shoes in secret and came with him to Fukuoka on November 1st.

That night, after my father went to bed, my mother, mother in-law, my wife and I consulted on how to bring father to the Blessing ceremony. Both mothers said they wanted to participate in Blessing because their son has become a church minister. After confirming this, we decided to bring this topic up to my father during dinner next day, which was one day before the Blessing Ceremony.

Next evening, I raised the topic with my father. Thanks to mother's support, he agreed to attend Blessing without much trouble. Later, our mothers admitted they shook hands tight behind the door! When my 1st-grader daughter whispered to father's ears; “We are going to the Blessing Ceremony tomorrow”, he said “Okay! Okay!”, making a thumbs-up.

On the day of the Blessing Ceremony, my brother and his family rushed from Kumamoto to the venue, where my parents received Blessing without a hassle. They returned home happily in Miyazaki. Through this event, my parents and in-laws got closer to each other.

I am convinced that a miracle has occurred on the foundation of heavenly fortune brought to us by the Regional Blessing Ceremony officiated by Rev. and Mrs. Tokuno. I felt the spirit world at work from the moment when I wrote a letter to my parents after a series of sincere prayers at the advice of Director of Family Department.

As I prayed, a thought that my father could go to the spirit world any day made me serious. I told myself that I must let him attend the Blessing Ceremony this time. I wanted to take responsibility for my parents' eternal life, and this became the motivation of my devotion.

My brother and his wife often paid visits to our parents in Miyazaki, helping them plant and harvest rice. I think jeongseong we offered along with my brother and his wife to restore our families and relatives brought forth fruit.

Besides, I would like to thank Rev. Dong Su Chung, Regional Director of Fukuoka, for advising me to bring our parents and in-laws to Blessing, as well as the staff and members of the Fukuoka Church and Fukuoka Higashi Church for devoting themselves for our parents and in-laws.

Above all, I firmly believe that the greatest cause of the victory was True Mother's love and heavenly fortune which I received as a result of the Top-Gun Workshop, where I could concentrate on jeongseong with Hoon Dok Hae of Divine Principles, True Parents' Life Course and Cheon Seong Gyeong. Thank you very much.



① Supporters gathered in front of the court
 ② Interview at the judicial press club
 ③ Supporters gathered in front of the Tokyo High Court

A landmark ruling in 150-month confinement case

Tokyo High Court granted 22-million-yen for the victim

In the civil appeal case of attempted conversion to Mr. Toru Goto (now 51 years old) by means of kidnapping and confinement over a period of 12 years and 5 months, the Tokyo High Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff on November 13th, confirming the earlier judgment in the Tokyo District Court.

Goto had charged his relatives for a total amount of 200 million yen in compensation to his damages. The amount of compensation granted in the latest decision was approximately five times the earlier ruling. Also this decision found liability of some Christian ministers in his case, while they were not held liable in the earlier decision, making it a landmark ruling.

Chief Justice of the Tokyo High Court, Noriaki Sudo, accepted most of Goto's charges relevant to the acts of kidnapping and confinement, recognizing that Goto had been in "a state of confinement" for 12 years and 5 months. The Chief Justice ordered a total of 22 million yen payable by three defendants in the case.

Goto's elder brother and wife as well as Goto's younger sister are to pay 11 million yen for the damages caused by a professional faith-breaker, Mr. Takashi Miyamura, who was also a defendant in the first trial. A payment of 4.4 million yen was ordered to Pastor Yasutomo Matsunaga of the Niitsu Evangelical Christian Church, Niigata City.

In the ruling of the first trial given this January, the Tokyo District Court ordered the three relatives to pay a total of 4.83 million yen, while Mr. Miyamura was ordered to pay 960,000 yen for the above damages jointly and severally. However, charges against Pastor Matsunaga and the Japan Alliance Christ Church to which he belongs were dismissed.

In the appeal's case this time, the Tokyo High Court recognized 'a confinement' or 'an illegal constraint of freedom of movement' over a period of approximately 12 years and 5 months from the time Mr. Goto was kidnapped from his home in Tokyo in September 1995, pushed into a van and confined in an apartment in Niigata City, until he was released from an apartment in Ogikubo, Tokyo, in February of 2008.

Moreover, the Court decided that Pastor Matsunaga not only 'overlooked' and 'encouraged' the unlawful actions by Goto's family members but also 'he aided and abetted in the persuasion against Mr. Goto, constraining his freedom.' In addition, the ruling concluded that both Matsunaga and Miyamura had demanded Goto to renounce his faith in the Unification Church, thus 'should bear liability for the joint unlawful act.'

With regards to Goto's elder brother and his wife, who were charged as carrying out 'meal sanctions', in which they provided such meager foods that Mr. Goto had gone on a hunger strike three times, the Court found that their 'management and consideration of his physical conditions were not sufficient, making their behaviors highly illegal in nature.'

The Tokyo District Court had partially adopted the defendants' claims that the facts were twisted, thus making its finding and decision in favor of the defendants. But the Tokyo High Court has made its finding and decision that are fair and reasonable, excepting the amount of compensation. It condemns the kidnapping, confinement and faith-breaking practices. It should be highly appraised from the perspective of freedom of faith.

Previously there have been court rulings which appreciated certain justifications for kidnapping, confinement and faith-breaking practices carried out against members of the Unification Church, such as 'a consultation between parents and child' in an effort to diminish illegality. After the current decision, however, it will become difficult to adopt such justification arguments.

In view of the appeal court decision, Mr. Goto gave the following comment:

"From the age of 31 to 44, over 12 years and 5 months, I spent my days looking at the same ceiling and walls every day. In the beginning, people would not believe that such a case could actually occur in modern-day Japan. But following the decision of the first trial, this time we've been able to get a ruling that is a greater step forward. These crimes have been taking place for nearly 50 years, and about 4,300 members have been their victims.

There was a case of a woman who was driven to suicide, or a man who fell down from the sixth floor of an apartment in his escape attempt and nearly faced a fatal injury. Through my trial, hopefully, this kind of reality will be known to as many people as possible."

Another Case of abduction, confinement and forced conversion

A couple filed criminal charges against a pastor in Kobe City Their two children, taken away, but now released by police

A couple, living in Hiroshima City and members of the Unification Church, submitted a criminal charge to the West Hiroshima Police Station against a pastor and others of Kobe City. They claimed to have been abducted, then confined for 6 days between July 26 and 31, 2014, in an apartment room in Osaka City, and were subjected to forcible conversion.

According to their charges, on July 26th the husband (age 43) was forced to ride in a van by his family members, who said they would visit a relative at a hospital. The van was driven by a man unknown to him, and he was taken to a room in an apartment

located in Yodogawa Ward, Osaka City, and confined there.

Then, his wife (age 40), daughter (age 8) and son (age 3) were invited to her parents' home in Hiroshima City, where her family members suddenly grabbed her, bound her arms and feet, and pushed her into a sleeping bag. They bound around the sleeping bag with rope, put her in a van. Separated from their two children, the wife was locked up in a room in the apartment where her husband was also confined.

From the following day, Pastor Mamoru Takazawa and others of the Christian Kobe Truth Church visited the couple in the apartment every day, slandering the Unification Church and urging the couple to leave the Church. The couple went through painful experiences beyond words, while being separated from their two young children.

Around 1:00 am of July 31, the wife was able to use a mobile phone belonging to one of those confining them to call the police. Subsequently, the couple was freed by a police officer who hurried to the scene.

As this incident of abduction, confinement and forcible conversion was apparently instigated by Pastor Takazawa and his group, the couple hoped to drop the charges against their own relatives, if only they would promise never to kidnap or confine the couple in future and agree to settle the case out of court. But the relatives refused the deal, obliging the couple to press ahead with the criminal charges even against their relatives.

Pastor Takazawa was involved in hundreds of cases of forcible conversion in the past. While two more criminal charges were filed against him, both cases were dropped due to suspension of prosecution. However, Pastor Takazawa has lost two civil lawsuits. We truly hope that, through appropriate and swift handling, the judicial branch of the government will lead to the elimination of serious violations of human rights like the kidnapping, confinement and forcible conversion as mentioned above.