

International Day of Families Observed in Venezuela

Jesús A. Navarro

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Caracas, Venezuela—On May 16, 2015, UPF-Venezuela and its partner organizations, Venezuela Incorruptible Possible Foundation (CARP-Venezuela) and Funda-Bolívar (Relatives and Friends of Simón Bolívar), gathered to celebrate the UN International Day of Families at the Eurobuilding Hotel in Caracas.

Secretary general of CARP-Venezuela, Derwin Morillo, gave a presentation on "Family as a School of Universal Values and Peace". Through his presentation, he made it clear that the health of the nation depends on the harmony within the family.

Next, Ambassador for Peace Dr. Ricardo Meneses, one of the few descendants of a sister of Simon Bolívar, appointed Ms. Fatiha Imsil as a Humanitarian Ambassador for Peace for Morocco, and appointed H.E. Amb. Celso Dias, president of the World Parliament for Security and Peace, as honorary president of Funda-Bolívar.

Rev. Jesus Navarro, president of UPF-Venezuela, then presented UPF's principles of peace as an approach to support the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals through education on universal values, strengthening marriage and parenting skills, character education for leadership and governance, and training to develop relationship skills.

After Rev. Navarro's presentation, Prof. Dr. Gregth Hernandez and Ms. Valeska Toro were appointed as new Ambassadors for Peace, and pledged to serve and live for the benefit of others through their academic endeavors and service projects.

The highlight of the celebration was the recognition of nine couples married for over 20 years. Each was awarded with the "Medal of Peace in the Family" and a diploma. The wonderful couples shared their "secret" to being together for so many years. Many agreed that love, tolerance, patience, communication, empathy, fidelity and respect were among the most important values in creating a lasting marriage and happy family—but what was even more important was to be aware of our origin, God, and that we are His children.

The couples that were honored were Dr. Luis Guillermo and Mrs. Magdalena Pilonieta (53 years of marriage); Dr. and Mrs. Miguel and Olivia García Mackle (53 years of marriage);

Mr. and Mrs. Edalfo and Gladys Lanfranchi (50 years of marriage, Ms Lafranchi is currently President of Rotary Caracas); Mr. and Mrs. Pietro and Magally Catanese (43 years of marriage);

Mr. and Mrs. Cesáreo and Antonieta Espinal (42 years of marriage); Mr. Gonzalo and Legna Pilonieta (40 years of marriage); Mr. and Mrs. Zareth and Amelia Zarikian (38 years of marriage);

Mr. and Mrs. José Luis and Jacqueline Páez (28 years of marriage); and Mr. and Mrs. Abisaid and Yamilet Ferreira (26 years of marriage).

At the close of the celebration, everyone enjoyed beautiful Venezuelan music with the llanera harp, which was performed by Prof. Ricardo Yopez and Ms. Chieko Akashi Navarro.