

## The Philippine Blessed Missionaries in Korea (PBMK) is helps Filipino Unificationist

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*The day FFWPU-Korea President Lu spoke to members of PBMK; Mrs. Paranas is to Rev. Lu's right*

The Philippine Blessed Missionaries in Korea (PBMK) is an assistance group for the Unificationist Filipino community, mainly those married to Koreans. PBMK helps our church by giving support, assistance and guidance to blessed Filipinos here. Record keeping, conducting tours to disseminate Divine Principle and information on Vision 2020, providing counseling and internal guidance to active members, witnessing to inactive Filipino members, and guiding newly-blessed members in their family lives are among the services PBMK provides to its members. All our activities are church-centered and officially coordinated with FFWPU Korea.

### Organization



We have twenty-two regions in Korea, each with its own regional coordinator and other officers. Local churches also have PBMK officers. Each region creates their own activities, such as witnessing, English speaking contests, Divine Principle lectures or promoting Hoon Dok Hae at home. We also have six national officers including a vice-president, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer and an auditor. Additionally, we have heads of our Departments of Education, Cultural Affairs, and Assistance to Widows. We also distribute a free monthly newsletter to our members, Cheon Il Guk Times with the full financial support of the Korean headquarters. In concert with our Education Department, we try to create means through which our sisters can connect to the meaning of the present providence and to what we are accountable for as blessed

members. Starting in March, our Education Department coordinator and other members of the national staff toured some regions to meet our sisters and give presentations on the Significance of Vision 2020 and Our Responsibilities. We used the lectures to awaken and revive our members. Sampaguita Mothers serves Filipina widows in Korea, of which we have more than a hundred. Sampaguita is the national flower of the Philippines. At present, we try to help them and their children by recommending them to organizations that provide financial assistance, especially for their children's school expenses.

### Cultural groups

We have our cultural groups, mostly based in the local churches. They perform to enhance church activities and at multicultural events in their respective communities. Some of these groups have performed at major events of our national church held at Cheon Jeong Gung or the Cheongshim World Peace Center.

## **Mutual aid fund**

We created a mutual aid fund, the Chamsarang Sangjohoi (literally, true love credit union) pooling our financial resources to help those in need, especially when deaths, accidents or major health problems occur in a family. The executive director and members of our Board of Directors give a larger amount than the ordinary members, who contribute ₩5,000 monthly. Through the Sangjohoi fund, we feel a stronger responsibility and commitment toward helping our needy members.

## **Major meetings**

We hold quarterly meetings attended by the national and regional officers, usually at the national church headquarters, but we make sure that once a year, we hold it in one of the regions. We have general assemblies for our members too, most recently on February 7, in Seoul. FFWPU-Korea President Kyeong Seuk Lu was the guest speaker. He admitted to being a bit nervous but was very happy to see PBMK moving forward with its own initiative and resources. The choral presentation by the PBMK leaders singing "Hand in Hand" also inspired him. Almost three hundred members nationwide attended and Rev. Lu gave a very challenging message for everyone to reflect and act on. We always make spiritual conditions when we hold a big event. That is our secret! For example, we offer forty bows a day for forty days and pray for the regions. I also give each region a certain number of members to bring during the meetings and to keep in touch with for follow-ups. Of course, nearer regions should bring more people. In our General Assembly, we solicited from generous members and held a raffle through which ninety-five members won gifts, Lunar New Year presents.



*A PBMK mother-child workshop for members in Korea*

## **Mother-child support**

We held a mother-child workshop, to which each mother could bring one child in either middle or high school. A total twenty-two pairs attended. As mothers, we live with our fourteen-to-sixteen-year-old child but we may not fully understand his or her inner heart. Sometimes children in this age range behave in ways that make us worry. Our main goal is to help mothers who have difficulties with their adolescent children by guiding them through a professional counselor to build a closer mother-child relationship. PBMK invited the director of the Korean headquarters Counseling Department to conduct the workshop, with assistance from the Blessed Family Department of our Northern Gyeonggi Province (FFWPU) Region, who explained the importance of the blessing to our second-generation members. One of the highlights of this activity was for the mother and child to write a letter to each other. An outpouring of sentiments and deep feelings occurred. It was an evening of tears but with a happy ending! The Korean headquarters' Multicultural General Welfare Center was the major sponsor. We held this in a holiday guesthouse in the countryside near Gapyeong in April last year. We plan to hold the same workshop again sometime this autumn.

## **Outreach to non-members**

Each region holds Christmas parties every year for its members as well as for other people from the Philippines that are living in Korea, whom we also invite to our lectures, workshops and English Sunday services. This is a great help in witnessing. This year, in the church in Ulsan, three single Filipina non-members were blessed, one to a Japanese and two to Koreans. Married Filipino couples and married Filipino-Korean couples have also taken part in Blessing Ceremonies. The Philippine Embassy in Seoul knows PBMK well and is aware that we are from the Unification Church. We do not hide our identity as

Unificationists. We organized UFILKOR (United Filipinos in Korea) as our external working group with the Filipino community in various areas, with other multicultural groups, with government agencies and with NGOs in Korea. In some UFILKOR activities, the Philippine ambassador and his staff members have joined us. PBMK, in its humble way and with its humble means, is deeply committed to the realization and success of our church's Vision 2020.

*Margie Paranas is a "samo nim"; that is, a pastor's wife, as well as the head of PBMK.*