

Create Your Own Story

Second generation International Workshop

Glanow, Poland, 27. December – 1. January 2017



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This workshop was the continuation of the tradition of seminars prepared by Polish family for the second generation during the holiday break between Christmas and New Year.

We invited participants aged 14-18. Finally, 42 representatives of the second generation have joined the seminar, both as participants and staff. In addition to Polish teenagers, there were representatives of Lithuania, Slovakia, Germany, England and Bulgaria. It is worth noting that for the

first time on our winter workshop in Glanów we had also the main lecturer from the second generation, Tobias.

The workshop motto, “Create Your Own Story”, emphasized the necessity for each person to discover his/her own unique path in life based on the Principle.

The workshop started on the evening of Dec.27th with dinner and general orientation meeting, where all the participants were divided into 5 teams that were led by older 2 generation. The basic schedule for next days consisted of educational session in the morning and different activities in the afternoon. We started every day with morning exercises followed by morning service/HDH prepared by one of either first or second generation staff members.

Educational sessions were usually hold in the morning and consisted of 2 lectures followed by group activities. Lectures presented by Tobias were dedicated to the application of the Principle in our life; special attention was given to the issues of spiritual growth and development of one’s character, understanding of one’s true value, development of a close

relationship with God and living a purpose-oriented life. Lectures were interesting and participants were very receptive to them. The fact that the lecturer was from the second generation really helped the participants to relate to the discussed topics, and the young people expressed their appreciation of the lectures in their reflections.

During group activities after lectures participants met in their teams for group discussions; they also made some art works, prepared performances or played games which helped to create team unity and get to know each other better. We also had several creative groups where participants could develop their talents: art, singing, baking. In addition to that, one of the creative groups concentrated on service projects, which included gathering and preparing the wood for the fire on New Year night, bringing the coal for the workshop needs, etc. There was also some time for sport sessions, both in Glanow and in the local swimming pool.

Afternoons and evenings were filled with different activities. Creative group meetings, sport activities, testimonies, prayer vigil were among them. Especially we’d like to note the brother/sister talk led by Tobias and his wife with no first generation in presence. Many important questions were raised by the participants and we have learned from the reflections that our teenagers have really benefited from these talks. Testimonies of 5





brothers and sisters from the second generation and prayer vigil with candles have been additional source of reflection and spiritual enrichment during the workshop. The matching/blessing testimony given by Tobias and his wife, proved to be one of the highlights of the seminar as some of the older participants as well as 2 Gen staff are already seriously thinking about their future (we had two young matched couples among the workshop staff). Testimonies of ShinJin Dynowski, Mary Brzyska and Ania Gałacka with their STF/DONE experiences were also very mature and moving.

One of the days had a different schedule. There was no educational session at the morning and postponed lunch has created an opportunity to conduct one of the favorite activities during our workshop – challenge day. The general theme of the Challenge Day was connected to the workshop motto – each team was supposed to create its own story fulfilling various tasks. Each workshop team had to find 6 stations located in different places of the training center, both inside and outside. Some of those tasks were physical challenges, others required cooperation, patience, development of

trust in each other. Many participants (and staff) were really challenged, but all the teams managed to complete the Challenge day and it proved to be an important, joyful and memorable experience

The last full day of the workshop was also the last day of the year 2016. After graduation ceremony participants spent some time writing their workshop reflections and then family evening could begin. Workshop teams have prepared some sketches that were presented in the lecture hall together with some personal performances of participants and staff members. The last hour of the year 2016 was dedicated to personal reflection over the passing year and the one to come.

We have started the new 2017 year with a midnight prayer on the Holy Ground followed by fireworks and campfire where we could burn our reflections/prayers and send them directly to our Heavenly Parent. Joyful celebrations continued till 3 am.

This seminar was an intense but good experience both for participants and staff. Many participants expressed their gratitude for this workshop, some have declared that it was a spiritual breakthrough for them. The success of this workshop truly resulted from a major team effort, from the spirit of unity between the first and second generations. And for us – parents – it was a specially gratifying experience to see our older 2 Gens taking more and more responsibility, investing their hearts into their younger brothers/sisters, becoming mature young adults who develop their own relationship with God, care for others and understand the Principle. As a result, all of us, participants and staff alike, could feel as part of one family brought together by God and our True

Parents are very much looking forward to the next opportunities to meet, learn and share together.

Here are some extracts from the reflections written by the participants:

“I really enjoyed the lectures. They were very clear and interesting. I wrote many notes, so I can use them in my real world.”

“After the Challenge day, I felt really close with my team.”

“During the girls’ talk I really had a great time! Questions and answers really helped me and I think, there should be more of them.”

“This was my first international workshop and I really enjoyed it. I learned very much, atmosphere was very nice and I think, I’ll remember this WS for the rest of my life.”

“For me the lectures were really inspiring. Before I came here I was confused, and had many questions. Now I can say with a smile that I’m ready for the New Year.”

“I feel so motivated now to change myself, to work harder on my character.”

“I could learn things that are important for my spiritual growth, I could challenge myself, I could help others and reunite with my friends plus make new ones. Here I could finish my year in a meaningful way, surrounded by loving people and a lot of wisdom.”

“The lectures were great. they made me really think about my life. After this workshop, I will really change, it’s like “New Year, new me”.”

“One day I went to the Holy Ground, I prayed and after few moments I felt my spiritual heart become really warm, and then I knew that it was God. This wouldn’t happen if there was no workshop, and it was very special for me.”

“It was a good growth experience to be a team leader and try to light a passionate fire in the hearts of my team members. I’m grateful to all the staff members that we together could create something beautiful for the participants.”

