

Matsuo Machida Meets Press at Indiana State Capitol

Matsuo Machida
September 1, 2015



Matsuo Machida, a taxi driver from Nagano, Japan, is walking across America from coast to coast to express his love for God and for America, where he did missionary work from 1976 to 1990.

On September 1, 2015, Matsuo Machida had a second opportunity to tell the press about his cross-country walk for peace at the Indiana State Capitol in the heart of Indianapolis. In an interview with ABC affiliate reporter, Jade Hindmon, he expressed himself and his purpose well, as he did a couple of weeks ago in St. Joseph, Missouri.

“Rev. Moon is innocent,” reads the message on Mr. Machida’s backpack, which references True Father’s imprisonment in the mid-1980s for tax evasion, a conviction protested by the Unification Church along with more than 40 other nonprofits in the United States.



In attendance at his Indianapolis press meeting were Mr. Machida's driving assistant, Mark Hernandez, nine local Unificationists from Indiana, and clergy member of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), Pastor Scott. They received Mr. Machida at the Capitol steps and congratulated him on his journey thus far.



Mr. Machida's walk is a marathon trek with of 35 to 40 miles a day, seven days a week for 86 days – more than 2,900 miles. He walks entirely alone but has had various assistants driving the course with him and supporting his needs for food and shelter.

At age 65, he started his trek across the country on June 25 from San Francisco and plans to walk to the Washington Monument on September 18, the anniversary of the Washington Monument Rally. This is the latest of several ambitious protest marches in his life. In 2004 he received a calling from heaven to walk from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to protest True Father's imprisonment in Danbury Connecticut from 1984 to 1985. Friends and fellow Unificationists in Japan gave donations to support his march.

In 1977 he was incensed by reading about the Japanese atrocities in Korea during World War II and heard an inner voice urging him to walk as an act of penance. He started walking along a railroad track in Red Hook, New York, and four and a half days later he was in mid-town New York City. As Machida tells it, "I had read an account of the terrible persecution Japanese authorities had caused Korean Christians in Korea.

"I recalled that my own father had been a military policeman in Seoul during WW II, and I just started walking in tears and prayer. Four days later

I was at Penn Station in New York City. I don't remember eating anything along the way," he says. In 1998 he walked the length of the Japanese archipelago.



In order to make his self-determined deadline, Machida has to be on his course 14 hours a day with no days off. He rises at about 4:00 a.m. and starts walking by 5:00 a.m. and keeps walking with occasional

rest breaks until 8 or 9 p.m. He carries a light sleeping bag and two bottles of water.

“Loneliness is very hard,” he says. “I pray, chant and sing along the way.” “The Star Spangled Banner,” is one of his favorites, according to Hiroshi Suzuki, his road assistant for two weeks in August. On August 15, 2015 the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, he prayed for reconciliation between Japan, Korea and the United States.

Mr. Machida is walking through small towns most of the way. However, the ABC and Fox affiliates in St. Joseph, MO covered Machida as he walked into St. Joseph August 18th, stopping along the way to meet Mayor Bill Falkner at the Gothic Tea House and Eatery. Deputy Mayor Pat Jones welcomed him to City Hall and gave him the coin of the city.

Machida says he is available for interviews if reporters want to stroll along with him. “I’ve got a lot of ground to cover,” he explains.