

Celebrations of the Family Held in Buenos Aires and Córdoba, Argentina

Carlos Varga
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Buenos Aires, Argentina -- The Argentina chapters of UPF, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) and the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) organized three celebrations of the family that included a marriage rededication and Blessing ceremony (1). The first two events took place in Club Español in Buenos Aires, and the third one in Córdoba, all under the theme, "Families United for a Happy Life."

The events were a great opportunity to celebrate and highlight "family capital," a natural network that allows children to grow healthy, acquire values and be part of society. Families are considered a divine institution by various spiritual traditions, and the family is the foundation for peace and sustainable development (2).

Celebrations in Buenos Aires

The first event in Buenos Aires was held on November 22, 2018. Fifteen couples, who are Ambassadors for Peace and guests who were recognized for 25 years of marriage at the 2018 International Day of Families celebration and attended other events and activities organized by the chapter, participated.

A group sang "[Hasta mi final](#)," by Il Divo (3), and "[Tu](#)," by Carlos Varga (4).

Afterwards, Mr. Varga, president of FFWPU-Argentina, spoke on the "Sanctity of Marriage and the Importance of Families."

Later, the couples renewed their marriage vows and interfaith prayers were offered by Alba Rosa Contardo, pastor of Ministerio Cumbre Mundial de los Milagros; Faiza Yahia, from the Islamic community; Julio Nardini and Rosa Holgado, intercession ministers from the Movement of the Word of God of the Catholic Church; and Sergio Castellón, representing FFWPU-Argentina (5).

The couples embraced each other and even danced the waltz. They also signed a declaration of commitment to marriage and family values (6) and received saplings from Mrs. Elizabeth Fogwill, director of Recreación Ambiental, an initiative of the group ECO that is part of the "Let's Plant Trees: Let's Sow the Seeds of Peace" campaign, co-organized by UPF-Argentina and the environmental literacy program, "Y volverán a ser Árboles."

Then, the Young Ambassadors for Peace Ms. Mijo Obi, Ms. Motomi Hirai, Ms. Nichika Kabakino, Ms. Mizuna Shinozaki, and Ms. Satsuki Muto sang "Ito" (Thread) in Japanese; and "[El latido de mi corazón](#)," from the soundtrack of Coco, in Spanish (7). Mrs. Marta Olga Palacio, who participated in the renewal of marriage vows, read one of her poems, Amarnos (8).

The event concluded with a toast for the family, and Ambassador for Peace María Irene Giurlani gave congratulatory remarks. Then, the cake was cut and everyone enjoyed it together.

The second event took place on December 11, the anniversary of the founding of UPF-Argentina, in the same venue. Eight couples renewed their marriage vows. Pastor Juan Climenti from the ministry Jesús para las Naciones, offered a prayer during the interfaith prayers. Mrs. María Amalia Caballero, director of the magazine Sembrar Valores en Familia, gave remarks; Mrs. Angie García read her poem, "Nuestras voces;" and journalist and new Ambassador for Peace Mr. Federico Binnes Erbach gave a few remarks during the toast.



Celebration in Córdoba

The celebration in Córdoba took place on December 9, and was coordinated by Mr. Jorge Pereyra, a representative of UPF in Córdoba, and the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), an affiliated organization.

Mr. Rubén Varga of FFWPU, gave remarks, and different groups of young people offered music performances. The couples who participated in the renewal of marriage vows received a certificate, and some of them shared their experiences. The event concluded with cutting of the cake and everyone enjoyed the cake together.

(1) One of UPF's lines of action is a functional family, the school of love and foundation of peace, where children can learn their first values and coexistence rules. Parents and marriage should be the backbone, the sacred entity, through which people experience love and create life. Thus, UPF promotes activities that strengthen this natural network, its values and the sacred institution of the family.

(2) Quotes about the family:

"A society and a family are like a pile of stones. If you remove one stone, the pile will collapse."
– Talmud

"What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family." -- Mother Teresa

"When individual families have learned kindness, then the whole nation has learned kindness." – Confucius

"For a non-violent person the whole world is one family." – Mahatma Gandhi

"Through inner peace, genuine world peace can be achieved. In this the importance of individual responsibility is quite clear; an atmosphere of peace must first be created within ourselves, then gradually expanded to include our families, our communities, and ultimately the whole planet." – Dalai Lama

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." – Jesus (Matthew 19:4-6)

"A peaceful family is the cornerstone of Heaven." – Sun Myung Moon

"Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community." – Convention on the Rights of the Child – Preamble

"The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State." – Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), Article 16

Confucianism connected individual growth with world peace. According to scholars from the Song dynasty (960 – 1279), the first lesson children should learn at school should include this passage from Confucius's teachings:

"The ancient people who desired to have a clear moral harmony in the world would first order their national life; those who desired to order their national life would first regulate their home life; those who desired to regulate their home life would first cultivate their personal lives; those who desired to cultivate their personal lives would first set their hearts right; those who desired to set their hearts right would first make their wills sincere; those who desired to make their wills sincere would first arrive at understanding; understanding comes from the exploration of knowledge of things. When the knowledge of things is gained, then understanding is reached, when understanding is reached, then the will is sincere; when the will is sincere, then the heart is set right; when the heart is set right, then the personal life is cultivated; when the personal life is cultivated, then the home life is regulated; when the home life is regulated, then the national life is orderly; and when the national life is orderly, then the world is at peace. From the Emperor down to the common man, the cultivation of the personal life is the foundation for all. It is impossible that when the foundation is disorderly, the superstructure can be orderly. There has never been a tree whose trunk is slender and whose top branches are heavy and strong. There is a cause and a sequence in things, and a beginning and end in human affairs. To know the order of precedence is to have the beginning of wisdom."

(3) "Hasta mi final," by Il Divo: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y94ZKLBTxPc.

(4) "Tu," by Carlos Varga: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5d0R-QuINs.

(5) Interfaith prayers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAy_JfQ9e0k.

(6) Declaration: "We commit to the sacred value of marriage, uphold the importance of fidelity, and commit to the divine plan of the Blessing for our sons and daughters. We consider families the place to nurture the healthy growth of our children; the fundamental, natural network for community life; and the foundation for achieving common good -- integrity, solidarity, sustainability, and peace -- in a nation."

(7) "El latido de mi corazón": www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eZ20Qvq11Y

(8) Amarnos

Con mis brazos abiertos
y la integridad de mi alma
te ofrezco un sinfín de palabras
con mucha esperanza.

Que no subsistan problemas
ni tampoco añoranzas
que no peregrinen traiciones
ni tampoco nostalgias.

Amarnos de frente
amarnos a la espalda
sinceros y honestos
para que no existan faltas.

Estar seguros de nosotros mismos
sin causarnos daño
amarnos y respetarnos uno al otro
para no ser extraños.

Amarnos limpiamente
sin trucos ni fantasmas
amarnos simplemente
amarnos, con toda el alma.

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