

Family Federation and UPF's 'Interfaith Peace Blessing Festival' in the Philippines hosts 150,000 Participants

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February 5, 2015



[Newsis] Family Federation and UPF's 'Interfaith Peace Blessing Festival' Held in the Philippines Among 150,000 Participants

150,000 people filled the grounds and stands of the General Sports Center. The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification and the Universal Peace Federation held the "Interfaith Peace Blessing Festival" at the Marikina Sports Complex in Manila, Philippines, on January 1st.



The event was attended by Former Prime Minister of Nepal Madhav Kumar, Former Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal Sujata Koirala, Former Philippine Speaker of the House of Representatives Jose de Venecia, Jr., Nepal House of Representatives Member Ek Nath Dhakal, UPF World President Thomas Walsh, American Clergy Leadership Conference Co-President Jesse Edwards, Family Federation American Pastor Kevin Thompson, Catholic Priest Eliseo Mercado, Sikh Guru Ji Gurpreet, Philippine Orthodox Church Bishop Monsignor Veloso and Islam Professor Narong Vongsumitr, among others. The attendants oversaw the Purity Vows, Holy Wine Ceremony, Interfaith Reconciliation Ceremony, Holy Water Ceremony, Declaration of Holy Marriage, Exchange of Rings and the Proclamation of Holy

Marriage. They resolved to build a world of peace through true pure families.

Twenty representatives of the world's religions poured their holy water in one bowl, symbol of oneness, in order to bless new couples. They then adopted the resolution to love their enemies, live for the sake of world peace, and put society before their families, their nation before their society, God before their nation and to proclaim all of humankind as one family under God.

“We are one family. If the family is strong, the Philippines will become strong, and our nation will be able to contribute toward world peace. The family is the most basic unit. A family that loves one another and is happy together is the key to world peace. I want to bestow my wishes for the greatest blessing to the brides and grooms who have made a new start as true families today,” said Marikina Mayor Del de Guzman.

“One of the things that UPF promotes is the strengthening of marriage and the family. Rev. and Dr. Moon spent their lives on the mission of spreading the international exchange marriage blessing ceremony. This is one example of the work that they have carried out in order to break down the walls of division of mankind. Rev. and Dr. Moon promote the exchange marriage blessing as a way to break down the walls created by humans,” said Family Federation Asian Continental Director Chung-Shik Yong.

“As a Korean, I was raised with the understanding that Korean people generally hated Japanese people. Because of the 40 terrible years that Korea spent under Japanese colonial rule, Japan became our enemy. Rev. Moon gave me a Japanese wife. The hatred between our countries disappeared when we were matched together in the Holy Wedding Ceremony. I married my enemy. I eat together with my enemy. I sleep together with my enemy. I love my Japanese wife and she loves her Korean husband. Thanks to our love, I can say that the world is a little more peaceful,” he confessed.



“The world has become more peaceful. Our children love the cultures of both of our nations and all of them can speak both Japanese and Korean. In their hearts, they cannot tell the difference between Japanese and Korean people. The interracial, interreligious marriage is very practical, very realistic and very effective in dissolving the long-held grudges between us. This is the way to create a genuine ‘One Family under God.’ The key to permanent peace and harmony lies solely in true love, a life lived for the sake of others that overcomes the culture of individualism and selfishness. There is no shortcut to peace. The only door to peace is that of true, unselfish love. Peace will only come about when humans overcome their selfishness and set aside their self-centered lifestyles. When we truly love God, all people and our nation, we can have no doubt that we can fulfill the loftiest and noblest dream: the dream of peace.”

UPF International Chairman Chang-Shik Yang emphasized the “principles of peace.” “The first principle is the principle of responsibility. Unlike animals, humans have the responsibility to become truly great people. We know that this will not happen automatically. The responsibility to nurture one’s character is inherent to humans. It is a gift from God. One must learn to have a public mind, and to live for the sake of others. The construction of peace begins from a person with outstanding character. Each of us is responsible for the construction of a peaceful world. Each person has the responsibility to become a person of amazing character, and it is from this principle that the family begins.”

“The second principle of peace is the principle of the male-female relationship. In the Bible, Genesis 1:27, God created man and woman in His image. He clearly created man and woman with a very particular purpose in mind. When we become couples and are united as one, we fulfill the image of God.

Man and woman cannot exist separately. A man of good character must marry a woman of good character. In this way, they can come to reflect the image of God.”



“Why does the world need these principles of peace?” asked Dr. Yang. “It is because a selfish person cannot bring about peace. Selfishness may beget suffering and conflict, but it can never bring about peace. Selfishness is always destructive. It destroys the relationships within the family and brings the nation and civilization to ruin.”

“Sexual relationships outside of marriage are dangerous, destructive and fatal. World peace cannot come about while free sex is the norm. A reckless sex life will lead to the collapse of the family, the society and even the nation,” he warned.

“Rev. and Dr. Moon have set the world record for the largest-scale wedding in all of human history. The weddings were so large that they filled an Olympic stadium to capacity with brides and grooms on multiple occasions. In addition, they even held wedding ceremonies in the UN Headquarters in New York. The motive is simple—world peace cannot be established without a love-filled marriage and a strong family,” said President Yang.



“The men in their red neckties and the women in their white wedding gowns look like noble angels. I feel as though we are in the Garden of Eden. We are in the garden of pure love and eternal happiness that God has tirelessly longed for,” said Family Federation International Headquarters Director-General Sun Jin Moon.

“The Blessing Ceremony has been successfully held in many countries in Asia, including Thailand, Nepal, Malaysia and Indonesia,” she continued. “Peace begins in the family. We can build a peaceful ideal society and nation when countless families from all denominations, races and religions come together in peace and love.”....