

The Impact of the Coronavirus on our Region, Europe and the Middle East

Umberto and Marilyn Angelucci
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Vision 2020 was our mandate and prayer for years. Every member was working for this year and eagerly longing to see what form the kingdom would take on its arrival in 2020. True Mother made exceptional efforts to tour the world and meet heads of state and other leaders and deliver her message. She prepared seven nations and one continent as Shin or Cheon Il Guk nations. On True Mother's foundation, we all worked diligently to bring as many prominent leaders as possible to World Summit 2020. From Europe and the Middle East (EUME), we brought over a thousand people to Korea. We felt victorious. True Mother told us that she was very happy and mentioned "All goes well." We were on cloud nine and made great plans for the remainder of the year. We had no idea what was in store for us when we returned home.

The first inkling we had that something was seriously wrong was when True Mother told us in EUME that we should refrain from all large gatherings. We started canceling all our training programs involving large numbers, STF, CARP, workshops, and festivals. Our governments started putting restrictions on us. Stay Home, Stay Safe became our new motto.

At first, we were shocked and wondered how to fulfill our great 2020 goals within these restrictions. Some of us felt happy that maybe now we could have a break to do the things we had put on the back burner for so long. Many mixed feelings arose; we didn't know where to turn. But True Mother had told us that "All goes well," and the new direction now was to increase our Jeong Seong. We started to look inwardly and take this new direction seriously. We had time to spend with our families, so many of us dealt with issues we had neglected. We found ourselves conversing with our Heavenly Parent to find answers and taking time to work things out. Being with our families every day, we saw problems up close but also had time to face them. Based on our prayers and devotion, things improved, our love deepened, our appreciation increased.

As our time in prayer and devotion developed, so did creative concepts for new programs to help in our development. In EUME, we have held a number of excellent programs online to help develop our skills as leaders, improve our marriages and improve ourselves. The first was a ten-day Pastors' Training that Rev. Kevin Thompson gave and UK Pastor Matthew Huish organized. This assisted many of the existing pastors and inspired a whole new breed of young pastors now in the making. We have established a Pastor's Association centered on Franklin and Cecilia Fortune and will meet regularly to create more support and relationships between the pastors in our region.

The Blessed Family Department developed other programs to help families, especially couples. One is the MMM, Make the Most of Marriage webinars, which are held periodically with topics such as Safe Conversation, Creating a Vision for your Couple, and the Ride of your Life. This gave all of us a chance to examine our relationships and gain some insights to help us improve. In a few days it will be Eid here in the Muslim world, the days that end the month of fasting, Ramadan. Usually this would be a time to celebrate and to gather as families and even tribes. This year will be different. Turkey will have a complete lockdown during Eid for the safety of the people, who seem to accept this and realize it is for a greater good. To give up this holiday willingly and submit to the mandate of the government with a willing heart is a great step of trust and maturity.

Without our True Mother's wise advice and guidance, I don't know if we as a community would have gotten through this time with the right attitude. But because she reminded us that this is in Heavenly Parent's hands, when she said, "All goes well," we trusted something good would come. She encouraged us to increase our Jeong Seong and we did. So, we were guided to find Heavenly Parent's viewpoint and found the way to change our approach and bring great results. We still need to prepare for the time when the limitations are lifted, to make sure we keep the same level of devotion and don't get overwhelmed with our activities and external responsibilities but keep our focus on Heavenly Parent and on creating heavenly relationships as we expand our Heavenly Parent's Holy Community. We are so grateful that True Mother has encouraged us to launch the Heavenly Parent's Holy Community. With our launch in EUME, we had ten thousand participants, and on that foundation, next Sunday we will launch the HPHC in the Middle East. With this we can feel the Holy Spirit moving in the Middle East and have great hope that the spirit of God can claim this land back again.