

WFWP Philippines Celebrates WFWP International's 30th Anniversary

Almera Grace Mayo
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In addition, a few significant people from the Universal Peace Federation were also in attendance during the celebration. They were Dr. Julius B. Malicdem, UPF Sub-regional Director of South East Asia, Dr. Leo Angelo T. Halog, UPF Philippines President, Archbishop Elias Soria, ACLC/IAPD President, together with some leaders from the International Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) namely, Mr. Ronnie Sodusta, IAYSP Asia Pacific 2 President, Mr. Richel Jalipa, IAYSP International lecturer. The couple of Rev. and Mrs. Jaime Vergara from the True Family Movement Asia Pacific also joined the celebration.



The celebration kicked off with a prayer and was followed by the Philippine National anthem. A video introduction of WFWPI was shown then came next was the warm welcoming remarks given by the WFWP Philippines President, Mrs. Almera Grace Mayo. In her speech, she emphasized the significantly powerful and valuable role of women in today's society as they are responsible for rebuilding our societies and nations by properly guiding men who have led disorderly and chaotic lives. She encouraged everyone to share, to the whole world, a model movement of the realization of true love where women embrace their husbands and raise their children to be good citizens of the world. Doing so should establish a movement that can ignite true peace and love in the communities. And that this should all

begin in the home. She added that women must take a leading role in politics, economics, culture, and each area of society to realize world peace.

Up next was the cutting of the cake which was participated by the officers of Women's Fed and guest speakers while everyone stood up and sang together as they witnessed the cake cutting.

Next was the awarding of the WFWPI Volunteer Excellence Award given to Prof. Angeles Lorenzana, the current Vice-President of WFWP Philippines for her 30 years of unwavering service and dedication to WFWP since its founding. A certificate of appreciation was also given to the former officers in grateful appreciation and as a token for their contribution during their time as officers.



Warm congratulatory remarks were given by Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltazar and Mrs. Theresia Kittel. Ms. Baltazar congratulated the founders of WFWP for the great leadership and guidance to the organization and wished WFWP 30 more progressive and successful years and beyond to implement more projects and programs. She, as well testified that she is a personally avid supporter. She encouraged WFWP to continue as helpers, paving the way for peace-building in the country, to remain committed regardless of whatever challenges faced along the way. Mrs. Kittel, on the other hand, shared her journey of being part of the WFWP since its inception and recalled some of the activities they conducted back then. She also expressed her happiness and gratitude to be part of the momentous occasion and to be in the Philippines participating in the activities of WFWP. She encouraged all women to continuously contribute and concluded by congratulating all of the awardees.

A powerful song rendition was offered by a Thai woman leader, Mrs. Weeranut Sirimusika Sodusta to congratulate WFWP. Then, heartfelt addresses from WFWPI President, Dr. Julia Moon, WFWPI Senior Vice President, Dr. Sun Jin Moon and WFWP IVP Asia Pacific 2 Mrs. Anne Bellavance were shown. Special remarks were given by Hon. Maria Eleanor Juan, 6th district Councilor, Chairperson, Committee on Women, Family Relations and Gender Equality and Mrs. Minerva De Leon, WFWP Philippines President (1996-2009). Hon. Juan congratulated WFWP for the commitment and service toward the inclusion and empowerment of Filipinas and Filipino youth. She declared that women affect change and that women should be activated as peacemakers and the youth to find their voice and place in society. She expressed her hope that WFWP Philippines will continue to work together toward shared goals of progress through inclusion and to continue to become a partner in women and youth empowerment. On the other hand, Mrs. De Leon extended her congratulations on WFWP's feat and expressed her gratitude and joy to serve WFWP Philippines as a president for 12 years. She thank Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for the care and guidance she received during her reign as the president.

Mrs. Annie Andanar, UPF Ambassador for Peace and a former legislative specialist at the House of Representatives with rich experience in many women's groups, delivered the Keynote Address. Mrs. Andanar shared her personal journey which is a crossroad of war and peace from arm struggle to freedom fighter to peace advocacy - peacebuilding, peace networking and working in peace movement. She expressed her sincere gratitude to Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

August 6 was a festive and remarkable day for WFWP Philippines as past and current officers, members and invited guests celebrated the 30th founding anniversary of WFWPI at Luxent Hotel, Quezon City, Philippines. The event was graced by 86 people including the esteemed invited speakers, namely, Ms.

Maria Lourdes Baltazar, Malacañan Palace Consultant and Mrs. Theresia Kittel, Senior Adviser for WFWP Asia Pacific, who gave the Congratulatory remarks, Hon. Maria Eleanor Juan, 6th district Councilor and Chairperson of the Committee on Women, Family Relations and Gender Equality, who represented the City Mayor of Quezon City, Hon. Josefina "Joy" Belmonte and gave the special remarks together with the former President of WFWP Philippines (1996-2009) Mrs. Minerva De Leon who sent her recorded message, and Mrs. Annie Andanar, UPF Ambassador for Peace, who delivered the Keynote Address. The atmosphere was filled with immense joy, gratitude and pride for the feat that the WFWP has achieved for the last 30 years.



In her speech, she highlighted that women are not anti-men, women complement their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons and that women also parent their husbands. She believed that women do not compete with one another. It takes different strokes for different folks as women acknowledge their frailties, strengths and capacities. She boldly underlined that women can really really bring about change in the international arena, sports, politics, governance but most importantly, in the home.

According to her, no amount of success outside of the home can compensate for our failure in raising our children, and in providing a peaceful environment for our families. So women must graduate from just being women and women leaders to family advocates and strengthening and empowering families, especially young people as the nation's future. Women must be the embodiment of love, caring, compassion and peace. She encouraged everyone to pay tribute to the mothers, to the women leaders who have come before everyone, and to those who will come after by being instruments of change and instruments of peace. She ended her speech by saying, "Peace begins with me, with all of us. I'd like us to hold hands and unite because if we unite, we can make a world of true peace because we have unity and love for one another." She appealed that may all women organizations work together for a shared goal - women empowerment.

The event was concluded by a closing remark from the WFWP Philippines Vice-President and the Volunteer Excellence Awardee Prof. Angeles Lorenzana. Prof. Lorenzana shared how women leaders sacrificed for the federation to be where it is right now celebrating its pearl anniversary. She thanked the founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for their efforts and their teaching on family values which personally influenced their relationship as husband and wife. She expressed her determination that whether or not she is needed, she will always be there for WFWP.

It was indeed a milestone for WFWP and all its chapters. WFWP Philippines is sincerely grateful to the founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for their unparalleled parental leadership and guidance. It is a great privilege and honor for WFWP Philippines to celebrate and share this achievement and we hope to do more for women's empowerment and for the younger generation. WFWP Philippines is determined to go an extra mile further and substantialize the advocacies of WFWP.