

WFP Australia: Interfaith World Peace Marriage Blessing in Sydney, Australia

Silvana Daly
April 22, 2017



Background

At the beginning of February, a few regular meetings took place to plan the event and to decide what kind of education our candidates should receive. It was clear to everyone involved that the candidates should be properly educated prior to the blessing (through a series of presentations), and that in order to be considered blessed couples, they should all complete '5 steps,' namely the Holy Wine Ceremony, the Blessing Ceremony, the Chastening Ceremony (indemnity stick ceremony), the 40-day separation and the 3 Day Ceremony.

A spreadsheet was created with all possible candidates' names, to keep track of where everyone was at in terms of their education and preparation and to serve as prayer list. A lot of efforts went into contacting our potential candidates and finding the way to educate them. This was a joint effort that brought together brothers and sisters from other states too, particularly Tasmania, Queensland and Victoria.



As the date of the Blessing came close, it became clear that most of the candidates needed more time to prepare for it. However, with one couple confirmed to participate, it was decided to go ahead with the Ceremony. The day before the Blessing, we were still educating and continuing the incredible effort to

bring someone to the ceremony. And so it happened that during these visits, two more couples were able to resolve whatever issue was stopping them, and decided to participate. A true miracle!



The Ceremony

The Blessing Ceremony was held at the Peace Embassy, main hall, at 2 pm on Saturday April 22nd 2017, at Oceania Peace Embassy in Sydney.

Brothers and sisters, including many young second generation came together to decorate and prepare the hall and to support the event. The team work was spectacular! By midmorning it seemed that we would not have time to get everything ready on time, but by 2 pm the hall was beautifully decorated, the banner was up, chairs, tables and refreshments ready, and the process of the ceremony had been rehearsed by the Officiators and MC.

At 2pm, the 3 couples arrived, all dressed in their traditional clothing, and the ceremony began. A beautiful Power-Point presentation and music was prepared by the Japanese missionaries, to create the background and explanation of the program.

Mica was a very bright MC, the Blessing address was given by Silvana, as Jynene had a family emergency on the day. Rev. and Mrs. Stone officiated the Holy Wine ceremony and Rev. and Mrs. Lim the Blessing. It was very moving to see that all three couples were totally serious and absorbed in the process. There were two musical presentations offered by the Yoo's girls representing Sydney Youth and 4 Japanese sisters, from the Sydney Church choir.

The Chastening ceremony took place as part of the program. The couples hit each other as per our tradition, only this time it was done purely symbolically, very lightly. This ceremony brought smiles to everyone. 3 cheers of Mansei by Daniel Meadows were a fitting end to this very uplifting ceremony.

The cutting of the cake, group photos and refreshment followed. The atmosphere remained joyous throughout the evening. At one point, the Rev. Lim asked Dr. Chit Swe what his feelings were. He reflected for a few seconds and then replied: "I am not lonely anymore, I feel as if now I belong to a big family" and pointed out to all brothers and sisters.

I personally want to thank Rev. and Mrs. Lim and Rev. and Mrs. Stone for their singlemindedness in pursuing the candidates until the very last minute, as well as running the whole witnessing, preparation and main part of the ceremony, Mica who accepted her role and showed a good amount of flexibility when the program had to be changed at the last minute, all brothers and sisters that made the efforts to approach their contacts and lay the foundation for future blessing ceremonies, Brenda Muraoka who organised prayer meetings and all brothers and sisters who offered devotions, Jynene who helped the layout of the program, Catrine who took responsibility for the hospitality and helped on stage during the ceremony, Koari who prepared the sound system and music, Mayumi, Tomomi, Takae, Yukie (program PPT), Rev. Hanson and Peter for helping all round.

Finally, thank you to our Heavenly Parent and True Parents for making the event a success and the base to build upon.