

Parents Association of the Unification Church of Los Angeles' first workshop

Vicki Tatz

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Photo date and location unknown

The newly formed Parents Association of the Unification Church of Los Angeles hosted its first weekend workshop for around forty parents on November 15 and 16. This event was the result of several months' effort on the part of Parents' Association director Mr. Richard Esselstyn.

A Dominican retreat in the mountains provided an ideal setting and accommodations for the group of about seventy-five people. Clear blue skies and warm sunshine enhanced the daily schedule of combined indoor lecture and outdoor fellowship. Parents were free to wander the hillsides with their children to more intimately discuss the Divine Principle.

Meals planned and served with care to every detail provided a very special atmosphere for the exchange of warmth and love.

Upon arriving, the parents found fruit and flowers in their rooms. While at first apprehensive, they started to relax by lunchtime on the first day. On Saturday they heard the Principle of Creation and the Fall of Man. The day's highlight was a Korean dinner followed by international family entertainment.

Mr. Yasutake, father of Paul and Cliff, was inspired to share a Japanese song to everyone's delight. Family member Ed Conrad and his mother were joined in a spirited rendition of "America the Beautiful."

On Sunday morning the Los Angeles director and lecturer for the week and, Dr. William Bergman, shared his testimony. Dr. Bergman's unconditional commitment to the Unification Church was a most powerful witness to God's providence working in our lives. The parents appreciated that, if he wanted, he could have led a very comfortable life as a medical doctor but yet he put all of that aside to commit himself to our work.

On Saturday afternoon Dr. Bergman lectured on the mission of Jesus and historical parallels during the last 2,000 years. He also discussed the manner and timing of the Second Coming of the Messiah.

The parents were intensely interested in the five hours of lectures. The greatest experience for them was feeling involved with an international family. Some expressed and still others felt a desire to be thirty years younger. One grandmother said that she realized that she had wasted her life but we reassured her that the fruits of her love for her family had come to bear in her grandson. He left the next day to join the IOWC in New York; she was very happy about that.

All stayed throughout the entire weekend and were unquestionably pleased with their children. While they did not agree with everything that they heard, they saw the fruits.

At the end all parents were given a granarium and had a picture taken with their children. Many stayed for an hour and a half after the closing supper.

In our hearts we felt a great success. As we reflect on the weekend, we saw the interest in their children's wellbeing, the sensitive sharing of God's word by Dr. Bergman, and the love of our brothers and sisters created an atmosphere of a true family. As each guest left, it was with great reassurance and hope for the future.

Most want to learn more. Some will soon attend the seven-day workshop!