

International Peace Education Center (IPEC) Opens in Las Vegas, NV USA

Michael Balcomb
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FFWPU USA: On Thursday, May 28, 2015, the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) had its Grand Opening and Sanctification as a new beacon of hope on the horizon of God's providence. Leaders from Korea, Japan and America, Unificationists who donated considerable amounts to IPEC, members of the Generation Peace Academy and Universal Peace Academy, 7-day Divine Principle Workshop participants, several news teams from around the world and Unificationists from throughout the states welcomed True Mother, True Parents and members of True Parents' family for the sanctification ceremony for IPEC. Upon arrival, the 7-day Divine Principle Workshop participants, some of whom are guests and saw True Mother for the first time, witnessed a crowd of eager Unificationists all bright-faced and desirous to express their love to True Parents.



True Mother gave a tearful prayer, asking our Heavenly Parent for forgiveness for not being able to do

more and do it faster. Following the prayer, there was a ribbon-cutting, and everyone entered the peace center with True Mother. Her demeanor was of complete seriousness over the occasion. As she went from room to room to bless the center, the crowd gathered in the main entrance hall to prepare the space for the ceremonial cake cutting and congratulatory song. Congressman Dan Burton and his wife were front and center. Sun Jin Moon, International President of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), In Sup Park, FFWPU International Vice President, Kwon Jin Moon and his wife Hwa Yun moon, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon, and her children were all in attendance.



Many of the leaders and donors gathered today have travelled long distances for the events to follow with several events planned for this afternoon.

After cheering for True Mother as she exited, everyone was invited to explore the peace center at their leisure. Refreshments were provided and people took to busying themselves exploring the main hall on the second level.



Large screens were set up on walls and free standing in the main entrance hall with looping Thank You's

in all languages and images of the Holy Scriptures, which were available for purchase on the main level.



An entire stretch of wall displayed the names of donors from Japan in Japanese, and a lounge set off to the left served iced tea, coffee, water and a variety of hot teas. The energy was high, the atmosphere relaxed, with everyone excited to be there. Friends and groups spread out and took group photos inside and outside of the building. Everyone was happy to be able to say, “I attended True Parents on this important occasion.”



In the afternoon, IPEC’s first official program after its sanctification was held in the main hall. Divine Principle workshop participants were joined by 50 donors, lifetime service awardees and leaders. Donors from America who contributed \$5000 or more to the building of IPEC arrived on May 27 to participate in current IPEC activities. With them were couples chosen by True Mother to receive a lifetime service to True Parents in America award this upcoming Saturday. The donors, awardees, leaders and 7-Day Divine Principle Workshop participants gathered in the main hall of IPEC for a presentation on True Father’s life, given by FFWPU USA President, Dr. Michael Balcomb, who later made his way to the Mt. Charleston Resort to continue his presentation with workshop participants.



Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Chair of FFWPU North America, also gave a message, expressing True Mother's thanks for the Divine Principle Workshop participants. "She said it was a good condition and a great start for the sake of reawakening this country," Dr. Kim shared. He went on to explain that the peace center "is for you, for all of us." Earlier that day, Dr. Kim spoke to 300 Japanese Unificationists, telling the story of why True Father came to America, and why he chose to work for peace in Las Vegas—to reawaken America to lead the world toward God. He encouraged everyone to read the Holy Scriptures and study True Parents' work in America.

Dr. Balcomb shared his personal insights into the life legacy and vision of True Father with a presentation called "Global Citizen of Peace: the Life of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon", starting with the reading of an excerpt from True Father's autobiography:



"My encounter with Jesus changed my life completely. His sorrowful expression was etched into my heart as if it had been branded there, and I could not think of anything else. From that day on, I immersed myself completely in the Word of God. At times, I was surrounded by endless darkness and filled with

such pain that it was difficult to breathe. At other times, my heart was filled with joy, as though I were watching the morning sun rise above the horizon. I experienced a series of days like these that led me into a deeper and deeper world of prayer. I embraced new words of truth that Jesus was giving me directly and let myself be completely captivated by God. I began to live an entirely different life.”



This is the defining moment in True Father’s life when God called him to serve. Everyone read this section in pairs as Dr. Balcomb read it aloud to start. “This is my favorite part of the book,” he said.



He discussed True Father’s family in Korea and his experience growing up, until he met Jesus. Jesus asked True Father to unite all Christianity and other religions, heal the divided human family and comfort the grieving the heart of God. This was eye opening for True Father, as he learned that God is not some king on a throne who is in charge, and that encountering Jesus was actually very scary. Jesus was not meek and mild; he was troubled and very serious. “My encounter with Jesus completely changed my heart,” said True Father.

From then on, he spoke strongly and clearly about God’s will. A man of great determination, True Father

didn't give up in moments when others would. It is with this spirit that the national ministry team and Unification family members, alongside True Parents, hope to fill the new International Peace Education Center.



