

Facing the New Age with Mature Faith

Michael Balcomb

May 2018



Hyojeong Cheonwon is a truly lovely place to be in spring. Azaleas blossom in beautiful colors of white, pink, purple and red, and everywhere you look, there are signs of new life. Other parts of Gapyeong County have azaleas too, but here at Chung Pyung it is evident that the glory of nature is also the result of a lot of hard work and planting in years gone by.

In her words to us at the Azalea Festival, True Mother emphasized the importance of planting in the right season, and that season of course is right now. "These are the golden years of your life," she said, "when you are here with me. Everything you do now will be fruits to harvest in the months and years to come. On the other hand, if you don't plant now, the future will not be so bright."

I have been reflecting on these words as a metaphor for the time of preparation that led to the great harvest that we've just experienced in Europe with the victory of the Peace Starts with Me rally in Vienna. The seeds of victory were planted a year ago when True Mother met with the European and Russian leadership and told everyone, "You have to wake up, a time of great blessing is coming and it may pass you by." We seriously took these words to heart and we did our best to prepare the right foundation for the message of life and hope that she delivered so beautifully last April 29.

Of course, there were external challenges, not least of which was filling the Wiener Stadthalle and its ten thousand seats, but the real challenges are always internal. We first had to have the belief that we could do bigger things than we'd ever done before.

We also wanted to make sure that True Mother's visit helped us to move forward with the many other projects that we are entrusted with. The time is long past when we could be satisfied with having a big event and then going back to life as usual.

At breakfast one morning True Mother asked us how we were doing, and the thought came to me spontaneously that by her visit we might've advanced the providence in Europe by ten or twenty years over the period of just one week. The external factors of that week were indeed impressive. We were able to launch Youth and Students for Peace and True Mother approved six young regional presidents of the new organization all in their twenties. They're motivated and passionate and really want to make change.

The IAPD was no less impressive with more than two hundred and fifty top religious scholars coming together and making a real commitment. To meet people who want to be owners of God's providence and not just participants or spectators is so inspiring.

Planning for the future is important, but we were reminded of how important it is to clean up the past. So we went to Mauthausen, the infamous concentration camp, where over a hundred thousand people died, citizens of over forty European nations. The inspiration to conduct a liberation ceremony there came to us after observing the impact of True Mother's liberation prayer on Gorée Island in Senegal. Europe also has ghosts of the past that need to be liberated and free.

As we gathered at the base of the so-called staircase of death at the camp, a sister from Milan had a striking vision. She saw on the stairway thousands of naked men, carrying huge blocks of stone just as it happened during the Nazi era. But as Rev. Lee Gi Seong continued his prayer, she saw those spirits throw off their stones one by one. Descending the stairs, they were suddenly clothed in white robes, and they joined our earthly assembly in prayer.

True Parents have the authority to liberate heaven and earth. The only thing that is holding God's providence back is the degree of our faith, commitment and determination. I think that is why True Mother is always asking us, "Why are you afraid? Keep moving forward!"

Once again, I am reminded that the great accomplishments in God's providence cannot be done by human power alone. The Old Testament prophet Zachariah probably said it best: "Not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord." (Zachariah 4:6) Aju!