

Responding to True Mother's Prophetic Guidance About the Corona Virus

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April 2020



At 5 am on March 12, an incoming KakaoTalk message from Dr. Young-ho Yun [Yoon] in our international headquarters awakened me. We'd just concluded a special European seven-day workshop for 120 Japanese members in Istanbul. Fumiko and I were so full of excitement and appreciation for a really great workshop and for the hard work of the two lecturers sent by Rev. Eiji Tokuno from Japan, Rev. Moichiro Nakamura and Mr. Morio Obata. So before going to bed, I'd sent a quick report with some great photos to Korea, hoping they would inspire True Mother at her breakfast table.

I suppose I was hoping for a word of encouragement. But the message I read from True Mother in the early morning hours was very different. Rather than warm appreciation, it was a cool and serious warning: "You should be taking the coronavirus threat much more seriously than you are, and you absolutely must refrain from these kinds of large gatherings!"

To be honest, I was a little stung. For the past month, we had kept one step ahead of the coronavirus. Over a thousand people from Europe came to World Summit 2020 and the blessing ceremony in Seoul in February and no one got sick, surely a minor miracle. Then, the very next week, our subregional leaders held big Sunday services all over Europe to share about their Korea experience -- and again, nobody got sick. When the workshop started in Istanbul, there were no reported cases in Turkey at all. Again, nobody got sick. "Why is True Mother so worried?" I moaned to myself.

Looking back now, I can see that we had been lulled into a false sense of security. Indeed, I wasn't very worried myself, not at all. But when we get a direct communication from True Mother, we should take it seriously and act on it at once, even if we don't quite understand or agree with it.

Later that very same day, I had an urgent call from our Special Task Force youth director, Deborah Cali, and our Polish national leader, Martha Kral. They told me that the STF program was getting into difficulty in a few countries, unable to fundraise or go door to door. Deborah reported that the entire group was now gathering for a scheduled workshop in Poland. Was it OK to go ahead?

Normally, I would probably have said "Sure! Let's challenge ourselves!" but as we all reflected together on True Mother's direct guidance, we realized that if we took it seriously, we would not only have to cancel the workshop but also immediately send all these young people back home to their own countries. This was a drastic, expensive decision, but we made it. We made the same decisions with the young volunteers from the American Generation Peace Academy program, and the Universal Peace Academy and Sun Moon University missionaries as well. It was heartbreaking to have to send all these young people home, but what could we do?

We didn't know it then, but the very next day Europe suddenly went into lockdown. Poland and many other nations closed their borders. All flights were canceled. The permitted size of gatherings, which had been set at 500 changed to 100, then to 30, 10 and 2 in less than a week. If we hadn't taken prompt action, it would have been a complete disaster. But thanks to True Mother's urgent guidance, we made it just in time.

Since then, our whole region has been in lockdown, but we are doing well. Following Mother's direction, we moved all of our Sunday Services and other meetings online, using Zoom. The response has been very good. Our Wednesday evening prayer has gone from 150 to 450 families and our online Sunday services now reach thousands. Everyone is welcome!

One new European project that we are particularly proud of is our online Centenary and Diamond Wedding Exhibition, testifying to True Parents' lives and work. It is now available in multiple languages and we encourage True Peace readers to visit it at www.smm100DOTorg and to share it with all your friends and family.

Thank you again True Mother for your prophetic and timely guidance. You saved us time, money and grief, and I am sure you saved lives. I am humbled by God's mercy and again reminded that we should always pay close attention to and follow True Parents' words, not waiting until we understand everything perfectly!