

True Mother's Book Club UK Sisters 18+

(Start date: 2nd Feb 2021, End date: 13th April 2021)

We have successfully completed our 11 week condition as 18+ UK Sisters reading Mother's autobiography!

The idea for this book club came about from D. Pollit and S. Rai, D. being a young mother of three and S. a 19 year old student, as a way to facilitate meaningful discussion across these age groups. Also for the young women of the UK to connect more to Mother and her mission, and the female side of our Heavenly Parent. These were the points we prayed on in our seven minute prayer condition in the week preceding the start of the club. The club's dates also happened to coincide perfectly with the twelve week long devotional period leading to the Holy Days, we saw this club as a condition we could offer also to support Mother during this time. D. and S. therefore carried on this seven minute prayer condition throughout the 11 weeks, praying on these points as well as for the participants individually and for Heavenly Parent to be present within our discussions.

Overall, we had 25 registered participants, some could not come every week but we continued to pray for them and hope they could also gain positive experiences.

List of participants: Natasha Huish, K. Rennie, J. Cutts, K. Hoshiko, S. Read, A. Zubovskis, I. Mobeserjane, B. Rodrigues, A. Johnson, B. Dracup, E. Zamfir, M. Hanna, T. Chandler, Y. Marsh, D. Pollitt, S. Rai, A. Gardiner, C. Van Der Stock, C. Mould, S. Mould, C. Pollitt, Mitty Tohma, I. Baklanov, C. Seredenco, K. Fagcang

Coming from many communities across the UK, it was also a great opportunity to meet new people and create a sense of sisterhood across the nation. Within the group we had students, mothers, young first generation members and more, there was a real diversity of experience and thought which led to enriching discussions.

Participants would read the chapter individually throughout the week and D. and S. would also prepare discussion questions to help facilitate discussions (Shown below)

Schedule of the book club:

- 5 minutes opening prayer and welcome, sometimes we would show videos of the True Family during this time to help set the tone and bring further light to their life course, we believe this helped the participants to empathise more with Mother and the True Family in general.
- 30 minute breakout rooms with up to 4 people, the participants of each breakout room are assigned randomly each week.
- A final 10 minutes together to discuss any realisations or final thoughts
- Closing prayer

Upon finishing, every week people would stay to discuss further, sometimes for hours, sharing honestly and openly, we believe this alone was a really valuable experience for some.



Reflections:

Just coordinating this book club was a really positive experience, both D. and S. had meaningful dreams of Mother during this time, and even though we'd both read the book before, it felt like we could gain so much more when making the questions together and discussing with the group. We were also very happy to receive very positive feedback from the participants, here are some comments we received from our feedback form:

"I went into this wanting to connect more deeply to TM and her motivation for her mission, and through this experience it got me thinking about it more often, understanding a bit better where she is coming from in terms of life experience, etc, and just thinking overall a bit differently and more compassionately and gratefully towards TM."

"I've gained so much more gratitude for TP and lovely connections with other sisters with similar desires. I loved hearing their thoughts and seeing them grow as well."

"I am always open to a group that seeks to discuss important/deep topics and share in sisterhood - this was perfect!"

Closing words:

It is with humility and gratitude that we would like to offer this condition as UK sisters to our True Mother. Mother, we know that this book covers only a fraction of your story. At the age of 16 you became a Mother to all of humanity, if anything this book has made us realise how much of your course we will never understand. But please know that your daughters in the UK are striving to know and emulate your heart, and aim to be true mothers, daughters and sisters ourselves.

어머님 감사합니다! 사랑합니다!♥️

Following such positive feedback, we intend to carry on some kind of Hoon Dok Hae sessions weekly, our aim is to use the momentum from this condition to carry on more fruitful conversations with even more sisters. We will encourage participants to take turns picking content for us to study and discuss. We hope that through taking more responsibility for these sessions they will also be able to gain more and feel a stronger sense of community. Although being online has allowed us to have a wider reach, we also hope to meet in person when possible!

Discussion Questions:

Week 1:

First, discuss your own thoughts and feelings from the reading. If you need prompting, refer to the questions below:

1. In the preface (page XVIII) "Neither men nor women understood the feminine heart of Heavenly Mother and the perfect eternal love of Heavenly Parent." Do you feel you can connect easily to a God of both masculine and feminine aspects?
2. What do you think True Mother brings to this new era of the providence that is different?
3. True Mother's Grandmother Jo Won Mo, her mother Hong Soon Ae, True Mother, as well as Sunhak Peace Prize winner, Waris Dirie have demonstrated incredible willpower and have overcome many insurmountable obstacles. What message do you think this gives to women of today?
4. True Mother touches on the concept of filial piety when she discusses the traditional Korean period of devotion after the passing of a parent (Page 12). What is your understanding of filial piety?
5. What were your thoughts as True Mother describes True Father's last days, his ascension and her immense period of devotion after his passing?
6. "I would pray for everyone in the world to be as beautiful as wildflowers, to have minds as strong as pine trees and to always live prosperous lives as green as a summer lawn." (Page 11) Do you connect to the imagery used here?
7. What were your thoughts as you read about the Sunhak Peace Prize and its winners, "righteous people of action", who have served without recognition? (For reference: the ocean, refugees, hunger and FGM)

Week 2:

The title of this chapter is "I Came Into This World As The Only Begotten Daughter." Discuss.

God carefully prepared the Korean people and True Mother's lineage, but True Mother ultimately had to ACCEPT and CHOOSE to pursue her path as The Only Begotten Daughter. As members of Blessed Central Families, do you feel like you have accepted and chosen your identity?

3 generations of women (TM's grandmother, mother, and herself) had unwavering dedication, determination, and faith. What were your thoughts as you read through a little of the course that these women travelled for God?

The bombing of the Han River Bridge is a horrific reality. Mother describes how she was only 7 years of age when she witnessed the horror of war and the wretched life of a refugee. But she recalls how this experience made her become "so serious that war has to vanish forever from this world." What were your thoughts as you read about True Mother's year long course from North Korea to South Korea?

"God needed a man and a woman who could endure suffering and rejection while continuing to forgive and love all people, thus revealing God's heart of parental love. So too, God needed a nation capable of enduring suffering for the sake of all nations. God prepared the Korean people for this." (Page 26) Do you connect to our Heavenly Parent in the moments when you are suffering? How can we actively respond to suffering in a way that brings hope?

Week 3:

"To fulfill my mission as God's only begotten Daughter, I have a firm belief and unflinching will for the sake of every nation, every religion, every race. Going beyond all fallen world boundaries, I am called to reconcile nations and races with benevolence and love. I am called to be like the ocean that accepts and absorbs the water of all rivers, big and small alike. Embodying our God who is our Heavenly Mother as well as Heavenly Father, I am called to embrace all who are lost and have no one to receive them, with the heart of a parent." (Page 81) What are your thoughts on True Mother's role in the universe, which is so unique, and her mission, which is all-encompassing?

"What you sacrifice is important, but why you make that sacrifice is even more important." (Page 66) Discuss why the motivation behind a sacrifice is more important than the sacrifice itself? Do you feel you have experienced executing "a higher dimension of sacrifice"?

"I had come to understand God's will but was not going to say anything. To recognize the bride was Father Moon's mission and responsibility." (Page 74) True Mother recognised her role before True Father did. Did reading this surprise you at all?

“In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve talked with God directly and heard God’s words with their own ears. I had such direct conversations with God from a young age.” (Page 78) Have you ever had a moment in your life where you heard God speak directly to you?

“Going through struggle is, in fact, a most precious blessing... The fruit of perseverance will grow and ripen within you, and one day will become a source of your deepest pride.” Do you resonate with this statement?

Week 4:

This chapter focuses a lot on the role of missionaries (‘New Mind, New Village, New Love Movement’, Korean wives leaving behind their families for 3 years, ‘Mission Butterfly’ etc.). Mother says: “All blessed wives stand on this foundation and are carrying on this tradition.” (page 105) Did you have any feelings or reflections when reading what kind of things these missionaries did?

“Our Heavenly Parent knows the power of women. Our movement did not truly begin until our couple’s Holy Wedding, because we are a family movement and it takes a husband and wife to create a family. My husband is the world’s foremost champion of women as the moral leaders of the family and society.” (Page 103) On her speaking tour, introducing the WFWP, Mother explains that in the era of women, to realise our full potential we must be “fully co-creative and significant members of society” (Page 147). What do you think this means in our current day and age? Do you resonate with this personally?

True Mother spent more time away from her physical children than with them. She wrote postcards and letters to her children who were wishing she were at home, despite her busy schedule serving and sacrificing for her other ‘children’ around the world. She shares one such letter to her physical son, Hyo-Jin (Page 113). What are your thoughts about this particular letter? Did the letter bring up any emotions for you, especially if you are a parent?

“I am here to give my wedding ring to everyone” (Page 152) True Mother gave away her physical wedding ring to someone whom she doesn’t even remember the name of.

1) Giving and forgetting—does this come easily to you? Why or why not?

2) What do you think True Mother means when she says she is here to give her wedding ring to everyone?

Talking about Father’s imprisonment in Danbury, Mother says: “I had to fill the leadership vacuum, created by his absence.” (Page 138) We can imagine what a sudden shift this was for Mother, have you ever had to inherit some kind of leadership position suddenly? Could you respond well? How do you feel about Mother’s response?

Mother and Father spoke with conviction about the fall of communism: “They were amazed that we had the conviction to go against conventional wisdom and political correctness” (Page 144). How do you think this relates to our current situation and Mother proclaiming the reunification of Korea in 2021? True Mother is holding Rallies of Hope online, with even more amounts of people attending worldwide. What do you think you personally can do to support True Mother (and True Father in the spirit world) at this time for even greater victory?

Week 5:

“Culture is not a luxury, it is a life essential” (Page 155)

If you do not establish your own culture, it will be determined for you. What have you intentionally instilled into your culture? What falls into the remit of Heavenly culture?

“Instead of pursuing that dream on a personal level. I helped bring the exceptional beauty of Korean culture onto the world stage.” (Page 155)

True Mother looked past her personal desire to become an artist to shift her focus to the purpose of the whole, how do you feel you can shift your passions to serve the whole as well as the self?

“People often think that politics moves the world, but that is not the case. It is culture and art that move the world. It is affection, not reason, that touches people in their innermost being. When hearts become receptive, ideologies and political regimes can change.” (Page 160)

How do you think this relates to the political climate now and Mother’s approach?

“Heavenly Art Creating a World of Beauty”

This is the motto of the Universal Ballet founded by True Parents. What are your creative outlets? Do you share them with others? How do you think you can make your art heavenly?

“Our view is that because science and technology are revealed and given by God, they are the commonwealth of all humanity.” (Page 186) How do you think the world could benefit, especially at a time like this, from shared scientific advancements?

“We held fast to the creed that the news media must be the voice of conscience and of the truth.” How easy/difficult is it for you to discern, from media outlets, whether a “truth” is subjective or objective? How do you see Headwing Thought (Godism) manifesting in today’s political climate?

Week 6:

1. Said of the International Peace Highway: “Since the dawn of human history, there has been no greater engineering and social challenge. Yet I know that it is possible and that it represents the ultimate task that must be accomplished in our era—the harmonious cooperation of all peoples and governments.” (Page 191) What kind of challenges do you think such a bridge/tunnel will bring up? What kind of hope can it give to humanity?
2. Father proclaimed Mother’s equal role a few times in the words “Even if I am not here, it is fine as long as Mother is present.” and “Even when I am alone, I represent True Parents. And the same goes for Mother. When she is alone, she represents True Parents.” (Page 196) What is True Mother’s contribution to True Parents as a whole?
3. True Parents risked everything to go and meet with Kim Il Sung, the leader of communist nations and later reflected “If we had thought of him as only our enemy, we could not have forgiven him. Only in the position of his parents, only with the heart of his mother, could I forgive.” How can parental heart diffuse resentment?
4. “We were not responsible for the division of the Korean Peninsula, but we took responsibility for its peaceful reunification.” (Page 202) How can we convince this generation of Koreans, and those from other nations, to take responsibility for Korea? What is something that you can take responsibility for?
5. “The cross-cultural marriage Blessing is by far the best way to restore humanity to become the children of God.” (Pages 216-217) What do you feel is special about the Blessing?

Week 7:

1. “Especially in our younger years, we face countless temptations, endless concerns and unbounded desires. The only way to manage these is to have strong will, and this means having clearly defined objectives...We need to set good goals and know who to partner with to achieve them.” (Page 222) Do you have any goals, both short term and long term? What “clearly defined objectives” do you think TM meant in this passage?
2. “When we are young, we stand at a crossroads. We have to decide whether to take the road that satisfies selfish desires or the road toward a great dream....we should be beautiful young men and women ready to launch ourselves into the world with the courage that comes from having great dreams.” (Page 225) Have you had an experience where you felt you were at such a crossroad?
3. “I did not lecture or preach to them. I only offered the advice, ‘Go out to sea. On the sea, you will discover what God wants to teach you.’” (Page 226) Have you ever been out to sea? What was your experience? Is there another activity that makes you experience this kind of clarity?
4. “Love for God, Love for People, and Love for One’s Nation” is the founding philosophy of all of the schools that True Parents have created. Why do you think schools built with this motto in mind will stand the test of time?
5. “If we devote ourselves to the people around us with that heart that nothing we give for God’s purposes will go to waste, we will find true happiness. When we are not fixated on our personal happiness, God will come to us.” (Page 238) When was the last time that you felt God’s presence? Was it during a time when you were putting others' needs before your own?
6. True Mother explains that the purpose of educational programmes in the church such as STF or GPA is to “raise up exemplary, loving individuals and families that emphasise purity in love and service to others as an expression of their relationship to God.” How do you think this compares with the current education system here in the UK? How do you think this ties in to the conversations we’ve been having this week about sexual assault?

Week 8:

1. "Love between parents and children most resembles God's love. Love within the family is the model of the love that God desires us to practice in all spheres of life." We often hear that the family is the "school of love." What can we learn in the family to apply outside of the family? How was your own experience in your family?
2. In this chapter, we hear the testimony of Keiko Kobayashi who, through facing and overcoming limitations in her couple, manages to change her perspective on her position as a wife, and makes her way to achieving a happy blessed family. The title of this subsection is "a flower called sacrifice." How does this testimony relate to this title. Do you think beautiful things must come from sacrifice?
3. "Happiness does not come when we have everything. It comes mysteriously, when we have seemingly lost everything and yet we still feel gratitude." Page 234 - Do you relate with this statement? Was there a moment in your life you felt this way? What is the relationship between gratitude and happiness/contentment?
4. "It is time for women to rise above the popular trend of trying to improve their status by imitating men. This only casts the relationship between men and women as one of competition in a culture that ignores their God-given and God-incarnating uniqueness." Page 238 - What do you think God-centred feminism looks like in today's world?
5. "The world of the future can be a world of reconciliation and peace, but only if it is based on the maternal love and affection of women. This is the true power of womanhood. The time has come for the power of true womanhood to save the world." Page 239 - What can women offer that can help dissolve bitter sorrow and unite the world in peace?
6. "Neither daunted nor discouraged, I finished my speech. I knew that God had suffered over the Middle East for thousands of years, and I was experiencing a small taste of that pain." Page 247 - Despite half of the audience leaving during her speech, Mother spoke till the end with dignity and pride, knowing she was comforting God's heart. How do you reflect on True Mother's attitude at that time? Have you ever experienced something like this?

Week 9:

In this chapter, Mother speaks about the role of religion, the providence in Africa, some historical context of True Parents' early lives (the UN coming to support Korea during the war etc.) and the nature of true love and a filial heart.

1. Mother says that religious education is the most important to receive. In a society where religion is becoming less and less relevant, how do we make people believe this education is essential?
2. True Father saved the very prison guard that severely tortured him. True Mother says "the capacity to forgive your enemy and save his or her life does not appear overnight..This is only possible when you lead a selfless life." (Page 269) Is there someone in your own life that you consider an "enemy" or even someone that you dislike? If so, how do you plan to turn this into a good relationship? Do you already have a story of loving your enemy that you would like to share?
3. "The fallen world programs us to think that when we give something away, it is gone. In true love, however, the more we give, the more we receive." (Page 269) Why do you think that even when you want to give something, you tire yourself? What is missing?
4. "We must practice filial devotion while our parents are alive. After they are gone, no matter how much we want to sacrifice for them, it will be too late. We must know how precious this moment is and be proud of it." True Father is already in the spiritual world. Do you have any regrets about your own heart of filial devotion for him? How does this apply to your relationship with True Mother, who is still in this physical world?
5. "No matter how difficult our work, we need to complete the providence and reveal the truth. When we fulfill our responsibility, following God as sunflowers follow the sun, we will surely realize Heavenly Parent's dream and humanity's hope. The question is whether we will be able to achieve that while I am on earth. If we do, we will stand proud and tall in front of our descendants and all generations to come. There has never been such an opportunity. No matter how young or old you are, you are living in the same era as the only begotten Daughter. This is your golden age. Be grateful and do not miss this time." (Page 279) Do you witness to others? Would you like to but haven't yet? What is holding you back?

Week 10:

True Mother speaks about her visit to Goree island and liberating the victims of slavery in Africa. She also speaks about the pioneering members in Japan and the foundation they laid for today's Japanese movement, as well as the oppression that native South Americans had to endure and the potential of today's South American people, mentioning initiatives such as CAUSA and New Hope Farm. She then goes on to speak about IAPP (International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace), initially in Nepal and then in London. Lastly she speaks about the restoration of Sao Tome, Senegal and Albania.

1. "As The True Mother, it broke my heart to know that such atrocities were committed by many who prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. Knowing these things, I wanted to visit Gorée Island and liberate agony and heartbreak of all the Africans who suffered due to the scourge of slavery." (Page 292) Slavery was such a painful time in history. What other historical mistakes do you think pained God's heart the most and what atrocities still being committed do you think we should be addressing? How can we address them?
2. True Mother recounts her experience at the Door of No Return at Gorée Island in Senegal. What were your thoughts as you read about True Mother's sorrow and determination to liberate these spirit people? What can we learn from Mother about liberating these spirits?
3. "Japan is walking the path of sacrifice with the heart of a Mother for the sake of the world." (Page 299). Japan is in the position of the Eve nation. Do you have any first-hand experiences in feeling this motherly heart, either through direct travel to Japan or through some of our most dedicated Japanese members?
4. "Everything God created in the area (the Pantanal) has the appearance of the original creation. I am deeply impressed with the thought that this is what the Garden of Eden must have looked like." (page 304) Which place/s have you visited that made you feel the unobstructed beauty of God's creation?
5. "'In building an eternal world of peace' I said at the London meeting, 'each nation's political leaders must possess a moral character and follow ethical values and the voice of their conscience. The world will change when the world's parliamentarians unite and cooperate for the sake of peace.'" (Page 309) Our True Parents have set up so many avenues, one being IAPP, all with the same goal of reaching our Heavenly Parent. How important do you think it is to reach out to politicians and parliamentarians, people already in positions of respect, for the sake of world peace?
6. "Prophet Radebe invested himself and his entire foundation to welcome me and prepare for the Blessing Ceremony" (Page 303) One member had a dream of three golden keys symbolising key figures that would help to restore Africa. What do you think is the role of these influential people in the providence and how do you think we can apply the use of religious foundations here in the UK to spread the news of Mother and the Blessing?

Week 11:

In the final chapter of the book, Mother continues to talk about her journey of restoring seven nations in the seven years following Father's passing. She talks about visiting the Asia - Pacific countries as well as Muslim countries, and the trials and victories in South Africa. She then moves on to Oceania, talking about the significance of women in Palau's culture (why it was chosen as the location for the "First Ladies Summit" in 2019. This is followed by Latin America, where True Parents invested the most devoted effort. Lastly, she talks about proclaiming her identity as the only begotten Daughter to Christian ministers, her vision for the reunification of Korea and once more the value of the Blessing she brings.

1. "I blessed the past, present and future of Cambodia through the blessing ceremony so its young people of today can begin preparing for a hopeful future." (Page 316) True Mother expresses the vast impact of the blessing in the course of countries. Even though Cambodia has a relatively smaller Holy Community, Mother was able to restore and bless the nation. What do you think countries like the UK could learn from Asia - Pacific culture to improve our own approach to outreach?
2. Two Taiwanese siblings gave a beautiful testimony about their amazing experiences to help prepare for the Hyojeong True Love Blessing Festival in Taiwan. They handed out pamphlets, offered devotions and searched for Blessing candidates, ultimately bringing 27 couples to receive the Blessing. True Mother says that "the filial piety of the second and third generation for True Mother is akin to sunflowers following the sun's path across the skies." (Page 333) As a first, second or even third generation member, do you feel like the kind of sunflower that True Mother is talking about?
3. "For the first time in human history, we held a continental Blessing Ceremony, with Africa the first continent to receive the honor." (Page 344) Thinking back to when you first joined the movement or from when you were a child, did you ever think the day would come when a continent as a whole could have a Blessing Ceremony? What are your feelings about this?
4. "Compared with anywhere in the world, my husband and I offered our most devoted effort in Latin America." (Page 349) Are you surprised to hear True Mother say this?
5. "The Republic of Korea did not honor True Father at his Seongwha Ceremony. That is why I publicly committed to restore seven nations by 2020 and open the new Cheon Il Guk as a gift to True Father. With that accomplished, the providential opportunity has returned to Korea. The call of the Pacific Hyojeong culture of giving and giving again must take root and show visible fruit in this nation. This door will not remain open forever." (Page 360) What do you think you personally can be doing during the 2nd 7-year course to restore Canaan to support our True Parents so that another "plan B" situation can be avoided?
6. Do you feel hopeful about the future after having read this book? What are some of your thoughts now on True Mother, on the providence, and on this book? Has your perspective changed?

"At the end of the day, I reflected that I am now nearly 80 years old, and there is a limit to how long one can live on earth. However, since I am the only begotten Daughter and the Mother of the universe, anywhere I am wanted, I plan to go. Heavenly Parent, once again I offer you my deepest thanks."