

Special Devotion for the 10th Anniversary of the Holy Ascension of Sun Myung Moon

Europe and Middle East regionwide ZOOM call, Wednesday, July 6, 2022, 20:00 CET

Dr. Michael Balcomb

Good evening, everyone! Some of you may be surprised to know that True Mother hosted a special Sunday service in Busan and that you were not invited to be there. Normally our whole European region has the opportunity to watch the live broadcast on PeaceLink TV. But this time only a few key leaders from Europe were invited. However, the good news is that the entire programme was recorded, and I encourage you to watch it as soon as possible.

The theme of the service, of True Mother's message, and of the coming 40-day period of devotion is "Let's go meet True Father!" As we all know, it was in Busan that True Father began his ministry again after surviving the Heungnam prison and escaping to the South as a refugee. With nothing but his absolute determination and faith in God, he wrote the first edition of the Principle, the *Wolli Wonbon*, and began to witness. Early disciples recall that he sat on the Rock of Tears and prayed for the day when the world would come to Korea to learn the ways of peace. A few years later, he moved to Seoul, and in 1960 the Marriage Supper of the Lamb took place and the long-awaited True Parents appeared on earth.

Busan holds a very special memory for me too. Five years ago, while still leading the American church and just before being assigned to Europe, I was invited, along with other leaders, to join True Mother for the reopening of the Busan Church. It is a beautiful new facility built on the site of the former church. At that time True Mother spoke passionately of her determination to fulfil the global vision Father had when he began his ministry and to see the world actually coming to Korea to meet True Parents and Heavenly Parent.

She hasn't forgotten that pledge. During her speech last Sunday, she said how excited she was that the Cheon Won Gung, the holy sanctuary of God, will open next May and will be a place where everyone can come to meet Heavenly Parent and learn about the life of True Parents.

If you watch the full 3½-hour video of Sunday's event, you also will hear Dr Yun Young-ho report about some of the recent developments in Africa. We are very happy to see that all of the leaders that True Mother has invested in over the past few years are still moving forward with the providence. One interesting point noted by Dr. Yun is that one of the Sunhak Peace Prize winners is now the president of the African Union, and another Sunhak Peace Prize winner is the president of ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations]. So, blessings are coming to people who follow True Parents! That is something we always want to keep in mind.

We also have prepared a 21-minute video so that you can study True Mother's speech for yourself. I would like to give you this as our homework for this week. We also will watch it together at the end of this service, since today is exactly 40 days before the 10th Anniversary of True Father's Holy Ascension. There's also a transcript which is available to read and to study in more depth.

During the coming 40 days, we will be looking at some of the most important speeches by True Parents about the coming of Cheon Il Guk, God's Kingdom on Earth. This week, it is True Mother's kick-off speech. Next

week, it will be True Father's last words and guidance to us from 2012. Let's take time together, over these 40 days, to take a deeper look into True Parents' words.

But as well as study and prayer, we need action. I do want to remind you that every region, every nation, every community and every family should make a clear plan of how *you* are going to celebrate Father's Seonghwa anniversary. It should be a public celebration that friends, family, members of other faiths, city mayors and others can come to. Over the next 40 days, we have to use our creativity to think about how we are actually going to mark this important anniversary. Of course, internally we're going to do it with our devotion and prayer. But every family, every community needs to think: How are we going to do it? Keep that in your mind.

So let's all start these 40 days by watching True Mother's special message together.

God bless you all!