

Family Festival and Marriage Blessing in Stuttgart, Germany

Dieter Schmidt
February 4, 2018



We had known for a long time that there was to be a Blessing in Stuttgart on 4 February; what we did not know was how we would find the guests! Even just 4 weeks before the date, the only thing that was certain was that the choir "Heimatmelodie" ('homeland melody'), from the association of Russian Germans, would be there.

Guided by the principle that "the Blessing is a first step in the direction of the will of God", we were able to rekindle our motivation and find a way to invite guests based on the concept of a family festival.

Our members were motivated to attend the festival, even those without a guest to bring, and thus 22 came from Munich, and 16 from Nuremberg as well as 50 from the Stuttgart community.

The room was filled with 150 people, of whom 88 were members and 62 were guests. 40 of the guests were new; the remaining 22 had already participated in a Blessing.

The program was opened by a musical contribution from the choir which was followed by a presentation by Christian Hausmann, in which he reminded us of the importance of marriage and the family.

Three couples were honored with a certificate for many successful years in an international and interreligious marriage and for their involvement in community work.

Then followed a partner game offering the couples the opportunity to prove how well they knew their partner, and 2 peaceful songs accompanied on the guitar by Isaak May.

The main part of the event was introduced by a power-point presentation showing Blessing events being held simultaneously all over the world, which raised our awareness of how much this ceremony goes beyond the barriers of culture and religion. Representatives of all religions may participate; the whole world becomes one.

All participants happily received beautiful scarves and the ceremony began. First came the engagement ceremony, where one could silently apologise to one's partner. Then came the drinking of Holy Wine and the enthusiastic sprinkling of Holy Water by Dieter and Ana Schmidt. Marriage vows were made and the ceremony was sealed with a prayer from Dieter.

The choir "Heimatmelodie" sang some more songs through which we could experience the joyful heart of Russia.

This successful festival of love was rounded off and brought to a close with coffee and a fantastic selection of cakes.

This success cannot be taken for granted; we can be reminded that no investment is worthless when we connect our actions to God. The numerous prayers, the studying in the center, the sometimes unsuccessful hours of street witnessing, the hard work of our friends and acquaintances – everything made sense when we saw the fruits in this wonderful festival.

Reflections

One couple called Christian on Monday to ask where they could get photos, because they wanted to post them right away on facebook.

Another couple reported that on returning home they had thought the whole evening about the incredible ceremony in which they had participated and which offered a wonderful new start for their marriage.

One person was moved to tears by the ceremony.

Someone who has known us for a long time and who has been seriously ill and wheelchair-bound for many years, was deeply moved that she could finally receive the Blessing with her husband, who is in the spiritual world.

The choir leader thanked Christian for a wonderful speech, and the whole choir was enthusiastic and happy. They took the shawls home in remembrance of a beautiful afternoon.

And surely there were many more experiences to show us that the Blessing must be passed on, and that the time to do so is ripe. Already 21 years ago, 3 months after the establishment of the Family Federation for World Peace in August 1996, True Father said: the time will come when we will see a happy destiny. I am telling you, the time will come when families all over the world will come to us and ask to receive the Blessing.