

## This week in history, December 7 - 13

December 9, 2014

**December 7, 2002**

### **A National Blessing for Reconciliation**



*The Interreligious and International World Peace Blessing and Marriage Rededication Ceremony*

True Parents conducted an “Interreligious and International World Peace Blessing and Marriage Rededication Ceremony” on December 7, 2002. It was the fourth in a series of clergy and interreligious blessings conducted during that year. This Holy Marriage Blessing, also referred to as the “National Blessing for Reconciliation,” marked the 61st anniversary of the Japanese bombing raid on Pearl Harbor. It included some 300 Japanese leaders who expressed their wish for reconciliation among former enemy nations. More than 1,200 couples filled the Marriott Crystal Gateway in Arlington, Virginia, which was the main Blessing venue. The Rev. Dr. E.V. Hill, a nationally famous pastor and friend of presidents, participated and said in his public remarks, “God meant for me to be with you. All races and religions are here. I am meant to be with you and know you and become your brother.” There was a reconciliation ceremony for three representatives of the Abrahamic faiths and others for representatives of the communist and democratic worlds, white and black pastors, and for Native Americans. It was noteworthy that American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) pastors formed a highly effective outreach team in supporting the Holy Marriage Blessing.

**December 11, 1971**

### **True Parents Arrive in America**



*True Parents at the Los Angeles airport*

Accompanied by Mrs. Won Bok Choi, Rev. Young Hwi Kim (president, HSA-UWC Korea) and Mr. Mitsuharu Ishii (director, HSA-UWC Business Enterprises, Japan), True Parents arrived in Los Angeles, California, on December 11, 1971, to begin a new phase in their global ministry. However, things did not go smoothly: They were denied visas, ironically, because of alleged communist affiliations. As a consequence, the group flew to Toronto, Canada, the next day. This problem was straightened out over the following week, thanks to high-level contacts that U.S.

Unificationists had cultivated through the Freedom Leadership Foundation (FLF). Cleared to enter the United States, True Parents arrived in Washington, D.C., on December 18. It was there that True Father announced his plan to hold revival meetings in major U.S. cities. As the Unification Church in America to this point consisted of disparate missionary groups, it is appropriate to date the birth of the church in America from True Parents’ arrival. And since True Father had not spoken publicly either in Korea or Japan, the birth of the U.S. church coincided with the beginning of a new phase in his public ministry.

**December 11, 1985**

**True Father Returns to Korea after Danbury**



*True Father addresses the Citizens' Federation*

The “Danbury Course” was decisive in sparking widespread grassroots support for True Father across the United States from minority communities and those concerned about religious and civil liberties. In fact, a broad spectrum of 1,600 clergy and prominent laypeople welcomed True Father back from prison at a “God and Freedom” banquet held in his honor at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. A similar event occurred in Korea on December 11, 1985, when some 2,300 dignitaries from a diversity of fields, including a former prime minister of the Republic of Korea, attended a welcoming banquet at the Hilton Hotel Convention Center to pay tribute to the conclusion of True Father’s 40-year

ministry and to welcome him back to his homeland. Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone of Japan and five former presidents of Latin American countries presented gifts and plaques of appreciation. From this point, True Parents initiated activities in Korea through the Korean Root-Finding Association, the Citizens’ Federation for the Unification of the Fatherland, the *Segye Ilbo* newspaper, business investments and cultural work that would culminate in his meeting with North Korean President Kim Il Sung in 1991.