

Join on the Bridge - 100th International Women's Day

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My dear brothers and sisters,

The official event on Facebook on the occasion of this year's International Women's Day is called "*Join me on the Bridge*", where it says, "*In March 2010, more than 20,000 people gathered on bridges across the globe to celebrate International Women's Day by saying no to war and yes to peace. This year we invite everyone to join us on bridges to celebrate the 100th Anniversary... For this special day there are already 210 events across 50 countries.*"

Other sources speak of thousands of events around the world which will mark this special anniversary. At the link <http://www.internationalwomensday.com/about.asp> you can see a very short film about this day to connect with its history and present importance.

We are well familiar with the "*Bridge of Peace Ceremonies*" where special sisterhood relationships were established among women from around the world, which included even Barbara Bush who participated in one of these events along with her husband. From this viewpoint we are the ones who have the deepest understanding of what it means to meet on a bridge...

Some may think that because this day was initiated by the "leftist movement" with Clara Zetkin (Leader of the 'Women's Office' for the Social Democratic Party in Germany) suggesting the idea of an International Women's Day, it may not be so meaningful for us as Unificationists. I am convinced that it is very well our task to join in this worldwide challenge of supporting women, that should have become a reality many centuries earlier but did not happen because Christian leaders did not take responsibility for this essential task.

Following the decision agreed at Copenhagen in 1911, International Women's Day was honored the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on 19 March. More than one million women and men attended IWD rallies campaigning for women's rights to work, vote, be trained, to hold public office and end discrimination.

1911 also saw women's "*Bread and Roses*" campaign, with the slogan appealing for both fair wages and dignified conditions. What would be even more important is a campaign centered on "*bread*" standing for the "*Word of God*" (see the temptation of Jesus to turn stones into bread) and "*Roses*" symbolizing "*The True Love of God*".

What women need to be empowered with more than anything else is the Motherly Heart of our Heavenly Parent and with His "*Logic of Love*" as True Mother called it in one of her speeches. This should be our primary concern as members of the Unification Movement in this Era of Women, which was inaugurated by True Parents in 1992 with the establishment of the International Women's Federation for World Peace.

In 1869 British MP John Stuart Mill was the first person in Parliament to call for women's right to vote. On 19 September 1893 New Zealand became the first country in the world to give women the right to vote. True Father spoke about the Kingdom of Heaven beginning in Oceania with New Zealand in a mother position.

As most of us are aware of, there have been two major earthquakes centered around Christchurch whereby at the first - even though it was very strong – not a single person got killed whereas at the second some 200 people have lost their lives and 100 are still missing.

One person living in New Zealand commented: *“Just as God intended us to live in a world of joy, happiness and fulfilment, very quickly it became a world of woe, suffering and alienation through the Fall. The commandment wasn’t kept, the blueprint wasn’t followed, the ability to hear from God was lost and mankind stumbled from one tragedy to another.*

Having said all that I remind myself of Sodom and Gomorrah and Nineveh where man’s intervention was called upon to avert disaster, successfully in Nineveh but not in Sodom and Gomorrah. In Nineveh the people repented and the calamity was averted. When Noah built the Ark it seems that the Flood was a fait accompli and the best that could happen was for the people to believe Noah and get in the ark as is now with the Ark of True Parents.

New Zealand is a mother (Eve) nation in the Mother (Eve) region of Oceania. This earthquake although centred in Christchurch (a city founded and established by the Anglican church from England to be a city of God) has affected the whole of New Zealand and Australia, 300 Australian police officers volunteered and came to Christchurch to help. Teams from the USA, Japan and many other countries have come to assist us. New Zealand has a role to play in establishing God’s Kingdom but we are asleep down here for many reasons and we are not fulfilling our providential role.

What I believe the earthquake has done is brought out the very best in people and in this country. The original nature and original mind got jumpstarted back into life and the spirit of generosity, helping others, selflessness has been pre-eminent. From the government down to the little people in our local communities.

A mother always sacrifices for her children and finds the way to love, protect and care for them. As Jesus said, “How many times would I gather you together as a hen her brood.”

New Zealand has a mother’s role to play in Oceania but first she needs to understand that. After a mother gives birth and during pregnancy as well, she receives much support from family and loved ones, but the time must come when she has to take responsibility and care for and love her children. Giving birth is like an earthquake. The labour pains and process of labour convulses the body and brings much suffering to the mother. However when it is over there is new life, a new beginning and renewed hope for the future.

Christchurch has been through its labour pains and birth pangs and from this, new life and a new understanding of life can begin. (I’m just reminded of the holy song(s) ‘Suffering and New Life’

Most importantly our movement needs to understand what it must do. It must embody the spirit of love. It must go beyond being a religion just worshipping God and its founder to actively loving people especially our own brothers and sisters. “He who does not love the brethren abides in death.” John

“Love one another as I have loved you” “People will know you are my disciples by your love for one another.” Jesus

“Have a love competition among yourselves. It doesn't matter whom Mother or I love most, but who is the king of loving brothers and sisters. Who loves me? I know your love is real, so now pledge to me that you will love your brothers and sisters more than you love me. That will please me more than your love for me.”

“Who says that they can only love me and love God? That is baloney; there is no substance to that love. Who says that they know the truth, and from now on they shall open the Kingdom of Heaven on earth? Amen! Father (Historical Children's Day 1981)

Just to finish with Fathers words from CSG p2261 LHS

“We are not saved as individuals. In our life course we are to love our children from the position of the second creator in the same way that God loved Adam and Eve. We are to love each other as siblings who can receive His love and as husband and wife who can practice his love. It all begins from, proceeds through and ends in love. Heaven is a place we enter having perfected ourselves in conformity with the textbook of love. We do not enter it as individuals but as complete families.”

Everything is interconnected, around the world brothers and sisters affect each other. We need to break through in establishing loving relationships. Just teaching DP won't do it. We need a working model of the Kingdom of Heaven, we must practice what Father taught us, following his model course to subjugate Satan, otherwise 'all is vanity'

Nikolaus, it's painful and suffocating and I believe you do this as Jesus said, 'pray for your enemies and those that persecute you.' With love and gratitude...”

I wanted to include this voice from the mother nation of New Zealand on this international Women's Day as it addresses essential problems in our movement – the lack of brotherly and sisterly love – which in turn has its root in Blessed mothers not fulfilling their responsibility of investing their love beyond their own family into their communities, etc.

For this reason it is my hope this 100th anniversary of the International Women's Day will be a day of redetermination especially on the side of our Blessed wives and mothers to invest themselves wholeheartedly into loving the children of families other than their own in line with our True Parents' teaching that we are supposed to love the sons and daughters of our enemies more than one's close family members in order to win their hearts.

Let us ask ourselves: What is my contribution to this year's international “Day of Women”? What are we offering in front of Heaven on this special day?

About how this special day is spent in my homeland Austria you can read at the link <http://internationalwomensday.org/austria> “In our country we will join the global celebration of women past, present, and future as part of the largest gathering of women in the history of the world. We'll participate with women worldwide ... on this day women will “Celebrate, Commit, and Connect.”

We'll celebrate like never before ~ connect as only women do ~ and commit (in our hearts) to improve in 3 areas of our lives:

- 1. Personal ~ improve our personal health and well-being, and our businesses...*
- 2. Family ~ help our families be healthier and prepare for the future now.*
- 3. Country ~ let our voices be heard and help make positive changes in our communities and nations.*

Like women in 176 countries, on March 8, 2011 we'll gather together as women helping women. We'll hear wonderful presentations about women's issues and how we can "Enlighten Women's Minds and Empower Women's Hearts for a Better World."

Aren't we supposed to be experts in this field of enlightening the mind of men and women, empowering people's hearts to contribute to the building of a better world? Yes, we are, and for this reason we should have a repentful heart in front of our Heavenly Parent that we did not invest more into this essential realm until now.

On this website it says: *"In our country we'll either have:*

- a small gathering of women in a home*
- a larger gathering of women in a Community Center, library, or public place*
- a much larger gathering of women at a hotel, university, or other public place*

The Women's Information Network (WIN) supports all "This Is Our Time"

International Women's Day events worldwide. www.theWINonline.com The WIN mission is "to strengthen women and families worldwide" and we invite all women, everywhere, to participate.

WOMEN, THIS IS OUR TIME. This is our time to...

- 1. BELIEVE in our gifts and talents, using them to create a better world.*
- 2. RELINQUISH negativity and build personal power.*
- 3. RADIATE joy and confidence, choosing to be a powerful force for good.*
- 4. STAND as receivers, keepers, and givers of love and compassion.*
- 5. HOLD FAST to truth and moral values, and teach children to stand strong.*
- 6. SEIZE opportunities for growth and leadership while living with passion and purpose.*
- 7. CONNECT with other women to advance worthy causes.*
- 8. SEEK opportunities for meaningful service, touching hearts and changing lives.*
- 9. REACH OUT to enlighten the minds and empower the hearts of women everywhere.*
- 10. DREAM big dreams and make those dreams our destiny.*

WOMEN, THIS IS OUR TIME."

It is surely Heaven's hope that we recognize that this is indeed our time, especially for the Blessed sisters and mothers in our movement who are in a crucial position to bring the Holy Spirit substantially into our communities by reaching out with an all-embracing motherly heart that is able to love any enemy and to sacrifice to move his heart to repentance so that every person who has lost the right way may find back to the Heavenly lifestyle...

This is of course not an easy task but the way is open and we have everything that is needed in order to succeed – to make a concrete change in this world – by investing all of our heart and soul and strength into loving God's children.

The call to do this has been there already 2000 years ago, but now we have the ideal of True Love manifested in our True Parents and each one of us can also become a true son or a true daughter of our Creator in this new era After the Coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, when the doors have been opened for all people to live under the direct dominion of God.

Let us therefore realize down to the bottom of our soul that now is indeed our time, not only as women but as men alike to substantiate what humankind has been dreaming of throughout the centuries.

In preparation for the concrete establishment of Cheon Il Guk we need to make sure that we are qualified to enter it – and we can do so much to help each other to get there where we should be internally at this advanced time in God’s providence.

May we all have the heart to respond to our Heavenly Parents’ calling, especially as Blessed sisters and wives, to represent the sisterly and motherly love of God substantially.

With my best wishes for all daughters, sisters and mothers on this Women’s Day.

Sincerely yours,

Nikolaus