

Pentecost Effect in Central Luzon - Hoon Dok Hae Rally (Cabanatuan)

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The affair was a real testimony of how much the Holy Spirit poured out her embracing heart that created an atmosphere of unity and acceptance from different Christian churches which were previously persecutors of our Movement.

The crowd that numbered to 326 heads came from all sectors of the society of the 3 provinces in Central Luzon namely Nueva Ecija, Pampanga and Tarlac. Amazingly 70 pastors and ministers were there together with more than 150 members of their own congregations. You could even see 10 Muslim leaders joining the Christians in a round table while reading True Parents speech. It was a beautiful gathering of INTERFAITH groups that were decorated by other guests representing VIPs from the academe, provincial & city government officials, teachers, principals, law enforcers, representatives from Regional DeptED, professionals, youth leaders, parents, and members.

The Miracle:

While we were in the midst of confusion of whom to invite for this rally, it was a miracle that we met the group of **Ecija for Peace Foundation (EPF)**, a group of 32 different denominations with groups of Christian (Born Again) Ministries around the province of Nueva Ecija. It was during the monthly meeting of their Board of Directors with Head Pastors of the different denominations that we tried to approach them about our activity.

Since it was my first time to conduct and head the interfaith projects I requested Mrs Genie Kagawa our Asia PR Coordinator and assistant to the Continental Director together with Professor Soria IRFWP coordinator to do the explanation of the activity

In our first encounter with them, while Professor Soria was introducing our group, a great resistance from the crowd came up as initiated by some Born Again Pastors who opened up the issue about our legal case regarding the Mail Order Bride law. Except for the Archbishop of the Iglesia Edificada (the President of the EPF) who remained calm and accommodating with our purpose, the rest were in commotion.

As the leader of the region I interfered to defend our case and explain the situation when all of a sudden one police-pastor recognized me as the lecturer on their Moral Values Seminars way back in 1994 that gave a little change in the atmosphere.

Whew! At last WE are not "aliens" anymore as OTHERS thought we were because NOBODY KNEW there is Unification Church existing in the community. All they know is "WE are just the bad guys around."

Heaven spoke thru an Angel-sent Man:

A more favorable ambiance (180 degrees turn around) had occurred when the name of Lt Col Atty Carlito Inton was mentioned as the one organizing all the seminars conducted for all the Law Enforcers & Officials of the Philippine National Police in the entire province of Nueva Ecija. Fortunately, Sir Inton (attorney at law and the District Superintendent of Nueva Ecija Provincial Police) , to my surprised, is the Vice President (External) of the said EPF which was organized and existing under the direct supervision of the Provincial Governor's office and National Police Provincial HQ .

We only found out too that Archbishop Norman Pascual VP for Internal secretly phoned Sir Inton to make sure if what I was saying was true or not when he suddenly stood up from his seat and said, "OK, Atty Inton said let them continue to introduce their project. He knew Winny and the Unification Movement" **Sir** Inton assured them of his trust on "US".

That was really a miracle and a heavenly power coming down like rainfall that changed everything from chaotic beginning to a favorable response and a great hope for the future.

To make it more natural and familial, we treated them (7 Board of Directors) for lunch with Sir Inton so that we could have a more intimate discussion about the rally and to start a new working relationship with this new level of people appropriate for the new providence.

Actually during that general meeting, we really thought we would be crucified, we thought it was already our end BUT right there at that moment God sent his spoke man!

2 John the Baptist did their part:

1. During lunchtime, Sir Inton dominated the atmosphere and headed the discussion and purposely opened up the issue about our legal case and even declared his involvement with it. He cited the instance about his intervention when the National Bureau of Investigation attempted to raid our center but was pacified by him; how he coached us about our rights, what to do and say during media interview. He told them that he even wrote a written testimonial affidavit on his involvement with us to be used for any legal proceeding during the persecution period.

He was my university professor for my 2 Major Law subjects on Geodetic Engineering. He knew me as a student before and after joining the CARP movement. My relationship with him became my confidence and strength too to overcome the devastating persecution in 1996 which my region of responsibility was one of the target focus since more than 300 Filipinas who applied for Han-Fil Blessing came from.

Without Sir Inton we really didn't know how to deal with those Pastors especially when the commotion came up. I believe he is really prepared by Heaven to work at this time were Religious leaders are now called for active participation to the New Providence.

2. Even though I was out of touch with our VIPs in the region for 2 years due to Korean mission, connecting the Unification community to the provincial and city government did not meet a problem because we have another "Great Man" in town in the person of Atty Rupert Sampoleo who started his involvement with us when I was still a CARP member way back 1986 when he was then the Vice President for Administration of my university. During that period of who are who to invite and who would be supporting our newest endeavor for peace building, he himself did the entire introduction as he accompanied us personally to the right people.

He is a genuine supporter of Unification Movement ever since until now thru thick or thin, better or worst scenario of our church situation. He was beside us too during persecution period and his unimaginable support surpasses others. He stood for us even at the risk of his reputation and always testifying the greatness of Unification Movement in his own capacity whenever and wherever it requires to.

Testimonies:

1. Atty. Carlito Inton

Not only during our meeting that he spoke about us BUT EVEN in the gathering of these more than 300 guests he repeated the same great testimony and have used the podium to speak about the movement, how he became part of it and even explaining how he was involved to ease our situation in Central Luzon during the persecution period in 1996. He even proclaimed that he is a member of UM since 1994. His testimony was really a call to action speech encouraging all sectors of the society to unite beyond doctrines, traditions and keep Rev. Moon's message as one of our strong guide to build a peaceful society.

2. Mr. Ariel Severino – City Youth Coordinator representing the Mayor of Cabanatuan City testified about Unification Church lifestyle that he saw from all the CARP members in Araullo University when he was then the President of the Student Council. He proclaimed that he is a CARP supporter ever since he became associated with us. He assured us of the City government's support especially if it is for our youth activities.

3. Dr. Edisteo B. Bernardez of Araullo University-Education Dept Dean and the President of the Knight of Columbus, Cabanatuan also testified about Unification Movement upon observing our group since our existence in city. He was greatly amazed and therefore congratulated Rev Moon for all the efforts our True Parents had contributed in the establishment of world peace.

4. Archbishop Herminio Cipriano, President of the Ecija for Peace Foundation and Head of the Iglesia Edificada ni Jesu Cristo -Central Luzon, gave a very heart touching short sermon espousing True Parents speech concerning the practice of Jesus teaching's of living for others and loving our enemies. The audience then was moved to deep realization of our True Parents message for all of us.

Because of the testimonies of the invited speakers, peoples' mind about Unification Church changed to a more embracing environment and an atmosphere of acceptance

from the different religious group including pastors from Wesleyan Methodist Church, Born Again ministers and other leaders who are negative with us before.

Actually it was the EPF who invited almost all the audience. During the program-rally itself some pastors and active members of their congregation who came got shocked when they saw it was a "Moonies" group. All along they responded to the invitation because they thought it was their EPF activity; however the testimonies of all the guest speakers pacified somehow their feelings. Equally important were the presence of several well know Dignitaries in the province who are connected with us gave an impact to the mind of both who **don't** know as well as to those who have negative impressions on Unification Movement.

Results:

1. The day after the rally, July 9, 2001, some pastors are calling our church centers expressing their desire to know us more and have a closer working relationship with us. They even confessed that through the introductory video-tape shown during the rally, they discovered the magnificent works of True Parents and were very sorry for being biased in the past due to ignorance.

2. After the Hoon Dok Hoe conference, the President of the Iglesia Edificada at the same time the President of the Ecija for Peace Foundation is constantly visiting our center for a closer working relationship and for a deeper understanding about our church. He is even doing witnessing and introducing us to other Christian churches. (Rev. Herminio Cipriano)

3. The Head Pastor of the International Baptist church of Nueva Ecija also is a regular visitor of our center and he is really interested to know more about the teachings of True Parents and the Course of Disciple of the Unification Church. He even boldly told us that he knew nothing about the movement except for all the negative issues which he considered now as heresy only right after he had attended the rally. (Bishop Roberto Prado)

3. The Chaplain of the Philippine Independent Catholic Church has made his schedule of regular visit despite the long distance travel coming to our center for more information about our church and teachings. (Bishop Norman Pascual)

Reflections:

I am leading the region since 1992 but had focused on developing student and youth organizations such as CARP TIMD YFWP as well as Professors and academician. I was very much involved with government groups too BUT never ever had experienced mingling with religious leaders in an interfaith community.

In February of 2001, I was just reinstated in the region after working as Vice President for Internal Affairs in the national HQ for 2 years and another 2 years working as counselor in Korean BFD to troubleshoot serious situations with Filipinas blessed with Korean that led to national persecution and legal case against the Philippine FFWPU.

My 2 years overseas mission drove me out of CABANATUAN circulations so I was caught in a situation that tested my limitation to lead since this RALLY was an extension of True Parents 50 States Speaking Tour in America where the focus were all religious leaders and their congregations whom I **didn't** have any connection with at all.

It couldn't be simple because our Continental Directors were scheduled to come representing our True Parents to be the Speaker. Therefore we need quality people (not just people from the barangays). At the same time we need money to move things in just less than 2 months preparation.

With these I have big dilemma because we really didn't have connection with any Christian groups. For a week I realized how much I failed to lay the bedrock foundations for our church in this region because it was evident, no institution in my region really accepted us seriously without hesitation and resistance. I could not even forgive myself about this as a Regional Leader.

I felt conscience-stricken every time I discovered that I am a woman of little faith. For 10-days I was repenting a lot about this faithlessness and trying to make myself develop the confidence on the power of God and the capacity of the Spirit world to create miracles like what had happened in USA50 States Speaking tour of True Parents.

It was Heaven's interventions that in the most desperate moment to fulfill God's Will that God had led us to meet the right people. It could only happen when we laid enough spiritual condition as a team together and prove to God that we have and has been practicing this what we called ABSOLUTE FAITH. Our members shared the same feelings and we all made strong determination within ourselves to dash forward TOGETHER within the religious community starting from Muslim Community and then we met the EPF.

After the rally, our regional church center is now open for their constant visitation and we even offered with them some of our facilities for their own religious activities. Surely it's not me and not even any members of our region who could claim such kind of favorable acceptance and response but definitely, this is the result of FAITH in the CAPACITY OF THE SPIRIT WORLD and GOD'S ABSOLUTE POWER.