

## Testimonies from the Cosmic Blessing 2014

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The Cosmic Blessing 2014 was taking place on the 1st Anniversary of Foundation Day - so it was an occasion at the heart of our movement and what it is working for. As a European group we were part of the Western 1st and 2nd Generation group at the Hanwha resort - a huge holiday accommodation in the countryside not far from Chung Pyung. Through this, we joined with participants from all over the world - from North and South America, Africa, Oceania, the Middle East, the North-East Region, and South East Asia. However, as we also had spouses joining from the Japanese and Korean groups - rather than calling it the 'Western Group', a better name might be the 'Global Group'. Within the room, we could experience the fruits of True Parents, and our Parents - and the combined efforts of many candidates who each had their own personal story with challenges they had overcome. We enjoyed the precious and unique time together - some free time and some relevant education, and could receive the Blessing from True Parents with friends and family in attendance at the Peace World Centre. We appreciate the huge efforts from Korean Staff to support our group e.g. the smooth travel from different locations, and also the creative 'photo zones' with instant print-outs for couples and families. Please read some reflections from newly blessed couples to catch something more of what was experienced at such a significant milestone in their lives. We look forward to seeing some more of you in 2015!

### Phil (UK)

“The media often like to portray the Blessing as a big faceless event, where thousands of people commit to stand together in a stadium to look terribly insane; some people fall asleep, others cry and at the end everyone throws their hands into the air. However, it neglects to see that every person standing there has a story, every couple has a story, and at the end of it everyone has another great story to tell, but it is each their own and personal to them, much like the Blessing was to me. Although, now I think of it, did we do a mansei at the end?”

Truthfully many of the practical elements have blurred or shifted in my memory, as they often do during moments of great emotional intensity – when did we hear that person speak – but what remain are the feelings, sensitivities and realisations that took place over those few days, that now feel like a couple of months. The predominant feeling or realisation that took place was coming to terms with the reality that 'this was it', this very event was the culmination of so much history. My own history, and my blessed contemporaries' histories; of our lives of singular living, the dedication to purity and the consequences of those decisions. The history of our movement and our True Parents. But most important was God's own history, and while there have been Blessings before, and there will be Blessings in the future, it is God's history that must take the centre stage. Ours was another celebration of His culmination, the actualisation of the original intention for humanity. All of our histories combined at that moment to share in something that had been long planned and wished for us. The enormity of that realisation was weighty, but my

overriding feeling was that my own tiny portion of sacrifice had been completely worth it and in fact I was very lucky to take part in it.

The day itself was not without its complications, it's expected and I anticipated that, but no misstep could possibly take away the wonder and excitement of it all. Sharing the day with people I knew and cared for was, surprisingly, one of its shining features, and melting that with the inherent spirituality that darted around the air gave new life and electricity to every mistranslated word, every insensitivity to the western audience and every unfortunate casual mention of the indemnity stick. The day felt unique to us in that sense, with it's own mixture of anomalies creating something new and distinctive that we could share.

However, and of course, most important for me was that it was shared with God and with my (now) spouse. Both of whom I am very pleased to have gotten to know and I intend to spend the rest of my life doing more of; the very option of doing so would not have been possible without the Blessing.“



### **Carmen (Italy)**

“Going to the Blessing was a real blessing!

It's been my first time in Korea! And I was amazed!! Korea is such a country where tradition and modernity are mixed in a unique way; it's a country where I could experience also the kindness and care of the people. Together with Simon and his dad we had the amazing opportunity to come couple of days before the whole Blessing program and we decided to stay in Cheong Pyeong! I think that Cheong Pyeong is a very special place, it feels like living in a bubble sometimes, but it's a place that gave me lots of peace and hope; because if True Father managed to create such a huge and beautiful place I believe that we all can create, in our very original way, something just as beautiful and important.

On our way to Chung Pyung we met an amazing girl, a blessed child, who with her kindness and amazing sweet heart made our time there unforgettable! Thank you Joan! You made our blessing even more beautiful I will never forget your warm and amazing smile!

She made me think about love, in all its different shades. She made me realize how much we, as Unificationist, are really a big family and how much we long to live in a world in peace.

I got blessed to an amazing guy from Germany, Simon, and I feel super happy about it! The simple fact of knowing that we can share not only the love we always wanted to share, but the love that can give joy also to God fills my heart with peace and joy. The Blessing is a huge step and part of the path. It's like a huge gate: you prepare all your life to cross this gate, but the way to this gate is not easy, its full of dark forest and scary roads; but at one point, kind of near to the gate you realize “hey someone is walking this path with me” and when its about time to cross that gate, you're hand in hand with this person and you will never let this hand go.

I'm very happy to walk this path hand in hand with Simon!

Love to all!”

**Simon (Germany)**



“First of all I really enjoyed the time I had in Korea. Of course now if somebody asks me, I would tell them "I went to the Blessing", but it's also the days leading up to the Blessing and the days after, that made the whole experience special for me! My beautiful spouse Carmen and I had the opportunity to stay in Chung Pyung for 2 days before the Blessing, which was a good preparation, considering the fact that I still had uni-lectures some days before our flight to Korea. So participating at the 40-day workshop, which was going on at the time, helped us to change to a more spiritual mindset.

After our initial two days in Korea, we headed to the Hanwha resort and met up with other western couples. It was wonderful to see many familiar faces and to have the opportunity to share with other couples, give advice and get advice. It was very valuable cause when the Blessing day finally came, it felt a lot more like going to your wedding with friends, who happen to get married at the very same day. Sharing this moment with so many couples from all over the world also made me realize, that we really are creating one family under God!

On the Blessing day we headed to the Cheongshim Peace World Center very early in the morning, had some time to take pictures and then could enjoy some beautiful performances before the actual Blessing ceremony. To be honest, the Blessing is an event I've been imagining and thinking about for most of my life, as it is an incredibly important event for a Unificationist, and at times it was quite a scary thought.

So I'm very grateful and happy that I could attend the Blessing ceremony with an awesome friend and amazing girl, which happens to be my spouse J. Putting a ring on someone's finger doesn't sound or look very romantic (at least not to me), but if you see it from the viewpoint of commitment, it becomes a beautiful and romantic action. And with that in mind I couldn't have been more calm and sure of what I'm doing when standing opposite of her while putting a ring on her finger (and letting her put a ring my finger). I'm very happy and blessed to have had this experience and I want to say thanks to all the people who helped to make this year's Blessing a success!”