

Father in Danbury - An Interview with Peter Kim - Part 2

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East Garden



Father's bunk (top) and his personal lockers.

Father is especially proud of Jeung Jin Nim. She comes to the prison and everybody loves her there because she's such a bright, young, cute little girl. Jeung Jin Nim sits with Father and Mother, and sometimes she smiles and sings. That makes Father and Mother's meetings more natural, like a family gathering, instead of Father's meeting with people all the time with big piles of papers and newspapers and photo albums and all. When Jeung Jin Nim comes the atmosphere totally changes. She's such a sweetie! The visiting room is very large. She goes around and shakes hands with people, even with the visiting-room officer. When Jeung Jin Nim goes to him and says, "I like you," he can't say anything, he just smiles. Officers usually don't accept anything, even a cold drink, from the inmates or the people who come. But when Jeung Jin Nim brings some kind of soft drink like this they accept it because she is so sweet.

In the beginning, before the prison authorities and the inmates met Father, they had all kinds of imaginative ideas about what Father would be like - he must just sit down like a meditating guru 24 hours a day or something. But then when they actually met Father and started dealing with him they found that Father was really humble. He is a sportsman, reads books, talks and smiles - so by now they regard him as an excellent person, someone they respect.

There is one prison officer who works as the chef in the kitchen. This officer came to like Father and is supporting Father in many ways. One time Mr. Kamiyama and this man were talking about our Blessing and our marriages. The chef happens to be a single person even though he's in his mid-30s and he said: "Reverend, you know I have to wait; Reverend Moon has to pick my bride." He trusts Father completely. He says he doesn't have any confidence in choosing his own bride. Of course, he doesn't know Principle yet.

We heard that Father and Mr. Kamiyama pray in the prison chapel early on Sunday mornings. Does anybody else pray with them?

Of course they pray there and do pledge service on Sundays. Quite a few inmates want to come to that service. Mr. Kamiyama told them, "Well, I appreciate that but we are speaking foreign tongues there, Japanese and Korean, so you won't have the foggiest idea what's going on. So don't come at this time. Some other time you can attend, but not Sunday morning prayer services." So that's why they don't come, but many expressed their desire to attend.

Also in the prison now there is a lot of debate and discussion going on over Bible scripture, especially between Catholics and Protestants, and Baptists and Methodists. People debate often there because they have a lot of free time. They read many books and sit around and talk about their faith and about the Bible.

One day Mr. Kamiyama and Father were sitting a little bit apart from the others. Mr. Kamiyama was reading Father's speech to Father, as he often does. Father is the one who is reading his speeches the most at this time, I think. He's reading his speeches at least a few hours a day. Anyway, Father and Mr. Kamiyama were sitting a little apart from this group. Father said to Mr. Kamiyama, "Go and debate with them. You know Bible stories, and you know the straight line that runs through the Bible stories, even though they are all branched out, so you go and talk with them." Mr. Kamiyama went to them. He brought his Japanese Bible of course, and sat there. "May I join you?"

They answered, "OK." They call Mr. Kamiyama "Kami," not in a bad way, but as a nickname. They call Father "Full Moon" and Mr. Kamiyama "Half Moon." That's another term they call him, but not to tease him or anything like that. Sometimes they call among themselves, "Half Moon is coming." So Mr. Kamiyama said, "May I join you?" And they said "Okay Kami, come on."

He listened to their arguments. Later on he came up with the Principle point of view of how to interpret this particular Bible story and this biblical person's mission. They all were shocked. "You? The Unification Church believes in the Bible?" They didn't know Unification Church doctrine was based on the Bible. So Mr. Kamiyama realized we have to study the Bible more and deal more with ministers. He always carries a thick Bible and talks with people. In one particular debate they had, they were arguing between Catholics and Protestants. Then Mr. Kamiyama came in later and gave the Principle point of view, and both sides agreed that it is the best answer. So Mr. Kamiyama is really happy and eager to do that. He's continuing every day.

Is there a chance that Father can be released on weekends?

Possibilities for short furloughs do exist but Father hasn't been at Danbury long enough yet to be eligible.

How does Father look?

He looks really healthy. One thing I noticed is that he hasn't been dyeing his hair. His hair is not totally grey, but a lot of grey streaks show. He looks basically very healthy. He's a little bit slimmer now. One of the inmates said he will help Father to lose some weight. He, Father and Mr. Kamiyama have been walking about two miles a day for many weeks. Mr. Kamiyama and Father don't jog like young people, but they walk fast.

We must not forget our responsibility in this time in history and Father's suffering. Remember Father is always concerned about our physical and spiritual well-being. Let's do our best in fulfilling our mission while Father is praying for our success.