

# STF Graduation Ceremony

Schmitten, Germany, 11. August 2013

Written by Deborah Cali (STF staff)



Dear families, on the 11th of August another year of STF came to an end. We all had the chance to celebrate together in a hall nearby Schmitten, as it is usual at the end of every STF year.

Many people came on the stage to share their hearts and feelings about the past year. First of all Mrs An shared few words, and after that Dale Rose (director of STF) and S. Choi (future director of STF) expressed words of hope and gratitude. David Perry and Seija Kuenzig as valid support for parents and STF members during the year, were welcome to share few words about their experience. The atmosphere was really warm, and I felt we were like a big family.

Many times Dale Rose was welcoming people on the stage to get appreciation from everyone in the hall, to recognize their efforts and achievements. Mathias Kersting also was called on the stage to share few words. He has been a great support for STF during the year.

The most touching moments were during the testimonies given by the STF members. As boy representative from the 1<sup>st</sup> years, chosen by his mates, Yuri Cordelino started off with a really moving testimony about his change of perspective on himself and on his parents. That opened the way for the others who shared after to really be sincere and open so that it got to the point that most of us were in tears..

The girl representative for the 1<sup>st</sup> years was Rika Jones, a sister who thanks to STF had the chance to discover a lot more about herself, God and True Parents, determined to change her lifestyle once back home. Her testimony was so deep and sincere.

As representatives for the 2<sup>nd</sup> years came up Francesca Cirelli and Soon Hee Lall , who shared the experience of this year of STF from a team leader's point of view. Their testimonies showed how difficult this year was for those who committed to do a 2<sup>nd</sup> year, but at the same time they were able to demonstrate how much they have grown and learned.

At the end we closed with a prayer and then we had the chance to eat together and share experiences with parents and friends.

## **TESTIMONIES**

"For me, the graduation workshop was a really good opportunity to meet with everybody, to hear my brothers and sisters' testimonies and to spend a few last days all together. I felt quite sad to have to say goodbye to everyone but at the same time really happy and grateful for this past year of challenges, joy and growth"

*Shigenori Suzuki*

"The graduation workshop and the graduation was a fitting end to this amazing and unforgettable year.

Will's and Dale's lecture on how and what we should do once we go home, especially how "STF is the beginning, not the end" was very helpful. The whole time, I was just thinking more realistically about what I

would do when I go back home, but Dale's lecture on how we should still strive for the ideal, using what we learned on STF to be the example was something really inspiring for me.

The graduation ceremony itself was long at times (hard to stay awake), but what I found most valuable were the testimonies from Dale and S. and especially the first years. Yuri and Rika's testimonies were really moving and I feel that God chose them because of their deep experiences. How they felt throughout the year, and how much they grew, it represented all of us on STF this year. Throughout the whole ceremony, I just felt the happy atmosphere, the excitement when we were being called up to receive our certificates and shirts, and after it had ended, the joy spending the last few moments with the friends we had made on STF.

Thank you for all the investment made into the ceremony, it was perfect!"

*Seunghyun Yang*

"I felt an amazing family atmosphere during the whole time. It was really different from last year: it was a less formal and more emotional ceremony. We all knew each other very well and I think that's why the testimonies really touched me. I am really grateful for all the effort that all the staff made this year to make it happen. It was a real miracle"

*Deborah Cali*



*Francesca Cirelli – Rika Jones – Seija Künzig - Mathias Kersting*



*Mrs. An (fourth from the left) with the Italian group*





*Dale Rose on the far left and S. C. on the far right with some of the STF graduates*

