

## An Encounter with Absolutely Faithful Early Pioneers

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Special Emissary to Eastern Europe



I remember a speech True Father gave at an early morning meeting in the 1980s at the former headquarters church in Cheongpa-dong, Seoul. He said, "Even now, we must remember the underground missionaries who crossed the Iron Curtain to convey God's word in nations under communist rule in Eastern Europe. Armed with a sense of mission, they are True Parents' secret envoys who are ready to die as they go about spreading God's word while evading surveillance." To this day, I cannot forget the sight of True Father in tears as he spoke about this.

In June this year, I was appointed the special emissary to Eastern Europe, and in response to True Mother's New Providence, I headed for Europe. As her representative, I embraced with love our leaders and blessed families that were working hard in the providential field. I encouraged them and shared with them the fervent wishes and the heart of our True Mother, who after True Father's Seonghwa took the helm in the providence and proclaimed that we would continue to advance without ceasing. As this is the mission of a special emissary, I was delighted and felt honored to be able to meet the pioneers from the early days of our church and elder blessed families in Europe. Vienna was like the tactical base for our missions in Eastern Europe when the nations there were under communism.

After arriving there, I invited to a Korean restaurant the early missionaries that were part of "Mission Butterfly" -- engaging in underground missionary work in communist nations. There, I conveyed True Mother's words of encouragement and appreciation. When I went to the Czech Republic, I met a missionary that had joined in a communist country after having received heaven's message. Although this person had barely heard the Divine Principle, he had accepted True Parents as the returning lord and messiah. He went through all sorts of tribulations during his mission; he spent several years in prison. I also heard about Marie Zivna who at a young age died a martyr in prison.

I was deeply moved to see how heaven's providence had unfolded in the early years of the missions on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

What was more remarkable is that the members who had joined at that time had nurtured their lives of faith by receiving and reading True Parents' guidance on slips of paper that were conveyed through secret channels across national borders, something one would expect in a secret spy operation. Only after more than twenty years were they finally able to meet True Parents in the flesh. These displays of absolute faith moved me. Looking back on my own life, I survived life-or-death situations when my family was fleeing after the January 4 Retreat in 1951, during the Korean War. My mother went through hardships after I lost my father on the way. I remember how happy she looked and how filled with hope when she had heard the Divine Principle and met True Father, exclaiming that she had met the Lord. Soon after, however, we faced intense persecution and had to fight against poverty as we continued on this path. Thus, I could truly relate and empathize with the stories of these early missionaries. During the past couple of months, I visited several Eastern European nations. In each place I went, I was amazed to see how the sacrifice of the early pioneers, who had put their lives on the line, took root in that country, whereupon the church could grow and expand its foundation, including the foundations for ambassadors for peace and the Women's Federation for World Peace. I saw all kinds of activities being carried out every day and was reminded once again of the greatness of our True Parents who had laid the groundwork for this. How could this have been possible without Heaven's assistance?

In each corner of the world, many couples that had joined and been blessed in the early years were carrying out various home church activities in their mission areas. Having seen the children of these couples growing rapidly, I am convinced that heaven's domain will continue to expand through them. These second-generation members will, as True Mother had said, become heaven's advance guard -- pure water that shall continue to flow as a current in order to fulfill the mission of heavenly tribal messiahs. If they can do this, I am convinced that we will soon see the day when a tsunami will cover the entire earth in this time of building Cheon Il Guk.