

Forty Days of Inheritance of Forty Years of Providence in Africa

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Forty days were invested into passing on what leaders had learned in international workshops and into sowing seeds of a brighter future for our movement in West Africa

2015 was filled with many significant commemorative anniversaries in the worldwide movement. In early 2015, True Mother acknowledged the forty years of missionary work by many elder members, including those who pioneered the providence in Africa. After being blessed by the third anniversary of True Father's Seonghwa, it was time to inherit all these blessings through a special regional forty-day workshop. From November 8 to December 19, the Africa West Regional Headquarters gathered forty-three leaders and other members and held a commemorative workshop in the Peace Embassy in Cotonou, Benin.

It was the First Special Forty-Day Regional Leadership Seminar in the Era of Cheon Il Guk for Inheritance of True Parents' Victorious Course. How could the workshop participants truly inherit True Parents' victorious course? At the beginning, there were of course much hope and expectations from Dr. Dong Ho Cho, our regional president, as well as from the organizing committee and workshop participants.



At the time when communism was spreading around the world, particularly in Africa, True Parents sent the first missionaries to this continent in 1975. Rev. Michel Futila, former national leader of the Democratic Republic of Congo, now leader of the Central Africa sub-region gave some understanding to participants on the theory of Victory Over Communism (VOC) and how early members had to challenge and overcome materialism's attractiveness in their minds. Rev. Pierre Amoussouvi, Benin's first national leader, spoke about witnessing in the pioneer period, in the days when the country was under communist rule. As one of the first members in Benin and in Africa, he spoke about the sad circumstances the church was born into and explained how members could overcome outside persecution with the presence of God and also the heart to win over accusations and insults from inside.

Yesterday and today, True Parents' words remain the key to being victorious. Through the presentation on hoondok meditation by Rev. Paterne Zinsou, regional director of the Blessed Family Department and

coordinator of this regional workshop, participants could make a great discovery on how to develop one's spirituality, become closer to God and True Parents and increase their ability to receive clear directions from Heavenly Parent when solving any issue. Workshop participant Issa Traore from Burkina Faso testified, "During the Original Divine Principle session, how to resemble God was the key sentence that attracted my mind. After thirty-seven years in the church, how have I been able to resemble God? I realized that the Family Pledge was the central word that would enable us to re-create ourselves in order to resemble the Heavenly Parent. Thanks to hoondok meditation, we receive directed on how to develop communication with Heavenly Parent's heart, that original shimjung. It is through meditating on True Parents' words of life that we can better understand the Principle that they have discovered. I therefore resolved to make Hoon Dok Hae become very special occasions for meeting with Heavenly Parent. I am very grateful to Heavenly Parent and True Parents, who have made me realized that. In fact, before that workshop, I was thinking that as I was quite an old member in the church, it was now time for me to look for external wealth before anything else. However, I have come to realized that I have been missing the point."



Forty-day workshop graduates showing off diplomas

This commemorative regional workshop was to be recorded with substantial results as a means to express gratitude to True Parents and early missionaries for their great pioneer path in Africa. Therefore, in accordance with the objectives defined by the Regional President Cho to cover all nations of Africa West Region and to strengthen the existing basis in some nations, new missions were officially launched and will actually start in January 2016 in Mauritania, Gambia, Cape Verde and Guinea. Like the early missionaries who came forty years ago to Africa, a Burkinabe, Issa Traore; will go to Guinea-Conakry; Joseph Liba, also from Burkina Faso; will go to Cape Verde; Yovo Kokou from Togo will go to Gambia and Assane

N'Diaye will go to Mauritania. They will start over or strengthen foundations that have already been laid in those African nations. They will in turn try to make history in also being victorious like True Parents. With True Parents' precious words in hand and in heart, we are wishing them all the best in their new mission fields.

Inheriting True Parents' victorious course after forty years of the providence in Africa is ultimately being victorious as Heavenly Tribal Messiahs. Through the Book 9 of Cheon Seong Gyeong on "Home church and Tribal Messiah," the core of the current providence, which is the responsibility of blessed family for the Vision 2020 and Cheon IL Guk's establishment was clearly revealed throughout the workshop. Thus, all presentations focused on this key topic of the current providence. This workshop helped explore conditions, strategies and methodology for the success of Heavenly Tribal Messiah activities. Therefore, in the end, many participants decided to start their Tribal Messiahship activities in their respective countries by providing a script of their plans. We look forward to share their results and experience with our worldwide community.



Cotonou, Benin Peace Embassy where the forty-day workshop took place