

Early Days in America and Europe - Part 2

Elke van der Stok

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The six "first ones" in Rome with Miss Young Oon Kim on a European trip September (l. to r.) Christel Werner, Elke (Klawiter) v.d. Stok, Barbara (Koch) Vincenz, two Italian girls, Miss Young Oon Kim, Doris Orme, Marian Porter, Peter Koch, Johann v.d. Stok and Paul Werner.

Starting on December 3, 1963, twelve of us would go out to Union Square in San Francisco to street-preach. We made big signs like "Christ is now on earth" or "Korea is the Chosen Nation." Some people would look at us as if we came from the Moon, but most of them would for some reason not even see us standing there at Union Square, talking about the coming Kingdom of Heaven where all the animals would become tame, or lecturing about Jesus' life under a palm tree in the pouring rain. Sometimes Heavenly Father would surprise us by sending a person directly to the center. This happened to Jim Adams. He said: "I looked in the telephone book for a church to go to, and the Holy Spirit told me to go to the Holy Spirit Association at Masonic Avenue."

When we worked hard, many spiritual phenomena would happen. Sometimes Miss Kim would allow visitors or guests to tell of their revelations. One couple showed pictures from the spirit world which they had painted and gave presentations to us about the universe. Others who had special gifts testified to the greatness of the Divine Principle. Miss Kim also received letters from Korea telling of strange things happening to people who persecuted our members there; for example, their faces would become crooked, or they would lose their jobs. These letters from very early Korean members were a great testimony to us.

Just as many missionaries later had to face visa extension problems, so did Miss Kim. One time all of us were praying that she not be deported; she got appendicitis and had to stay in the hospital; so that on the critical date, they could not send her away and had to extend her stay. Later she had to go to Korea, to receive a special blessing. During the time she was gone Mary Fleming received many revelations which gave us direct day-by-day guidance. Heavenly Father was very concerned that we would stay on the right track while Miss Kim was in Korea. It reminds me somewhat of Moses' course, and I would like to tell a little more about the Flemings.

Mary Fleming and her husband joined the Baptist Church. She received visions about Jesus, sometimes every day, sometimes once a week. She thought that everyone received visions once they became a Christian. In those visions Jesus was preparing her. In one vision she saw Jesus crying and telling her that the end of the world had come and that she should not follow him anymore, but to follow this Eastern-looking man standing next to him. He introduced her in the vision to a young, handsome gentleman.

During that time, she and her husband came in contact with the Principle and when she heard the conclusion and saw Master's picture she exclaimed in astonishment, "It's the same picture as in my vision!" After that, she received messages on the practical aspect of the Principle, about the heart of God, or extended consciousness, or physical and spiritual growth, or about give and receive action. On church holy days she would receive special messages from God or Jesus. Some messages were even scolding us

when we were all trying to become the most popular person, reminding us of the fact that we should stay strong and active. After Miss Kim came back again these messages discontinued.



June 9, 1964, (l. to r., front) Paul Werner, Elke van der Stok, Peter Koch, (l. to r., back) Ursula Schumann, Christel Werner and Reiner Vincenz.

Germany - 1964

In March 1964, Paul, Christel and I got ready to go to Germany to support Peter and Barbara Vincenz Koch and Ursula Schumann who had gone earlier. We all had come to America from Germany, and God had shown all of us the way to San Francisco.

On April 1, 1964, I joined the Werners in Sacramento and we left by Volkswagen bus on the way to Germany. This trip met with many obstacles, from being stranded in the Rocky Mountains in the snow to being rejected by my family. We also visited the Pumphreys, who had established a center earlier in Colorado. Some days Paul would stop at as many as thirteen churches in different villages to make conditions by reading the Divine Principle aloud from the pulpit. We would sleep in motels costing five to six dollars a room. We travelled to Cleveland where we dedicated a new center with Pauline. Then we drove to Washington to Col. Bo Hi Pak's house. It was Sunday, and we could meet his early members. One time he had visited us in San Francisco, so we knew him and were especially surprised to see the beauty of his family and the serene harmony in his two small children.

Finally, on April 27 we left by boat for Germany. We arrived in Germany on May 7, and after visiting some of our relatives we arrived in Frankfurt the evening of May 11. It was wonderful to be welcomed by Peter Koch and to see Ursula and Barbara again. We had so many things to tell each other and talked until 2:30 am. The house was a garden house in back of tall row houses, very small but very protected.

The Werners first lived in Wiesbaden. After some months Paul started the mission in Austria. Through his strong determination and competition with Peter he very quickly found many members, and when he visited the Frankfurt center with so many beautiful members a year later, we could hardly believe it. We thought that he was kidding when he told us that he was coming with eight new members. I will never forget the beautiful reunion with all of us at the Holy Ground in Frankfurt, singing Austrian and German songs and praying.

Father comes - 1965

True Father had established this holy ground in 1965. He arrived in Frankfurt from Berlin with Mrs. Won Pok Choi, Miss Young Oon Kim and Mr. Nishikawa (Sang Ik Choi, the first missionary to Japan) on July 28, 1965. All thirteen of us went to the airport where we could meet the plane. True Father quickly came toward us, to meet us, followed by Miss Kim, Mrs. Choi and Mr. Nishikawa. We jumped up and down in sheer joy and excitement, trying to say "Anyong hashimnikka!!" True Father shook our hands one by one. It was a wonderful warm and firm handshake, and we all felt elated.

In the morning Father talked about the meaning of blessing the holy ground, and in the afternoon we all went to Groeneburg Park, and Father chose a place close to the spot where Barbara and I always had prayed before going to work.

Father stayed seven days at Hochstr. 48, on the top floor. The mornings were filled with traveling to different places - the Taunus Mountains, Goethe's house in Frankfurt, Rothenburg, Wurzburg, and Heidelberg. Father would sit in the back of the Volkswagen bus behind the driver's seat, and the lucky ones who could come along sat across from him or in the back. I never enjoyed praying so much as during these trips with Father. I felt I did not need to pray, but I wanted to with all my heart. Praying became so easy. The afternoons and evenings were filled with questions and answers, singing and learning songs or going to a movie, "The Glass of Water."

On the eighth day Father presented us with the Korean flag, talked about its meaning and gave each one a Korean present. Early the next morning Father went with us in two Volkswagen buses to Essen, the second German center. There, Father left for Koblenz.

These were precious memories. I will never forget the emptiness coming back to the center. Father was gone, and with tears I cleared up the table, leaving his water glass still there.

In 1968 Miss Kim visited us from America and invited six of us early members on a European trip. We saw the great Austrian family again and were overwhelmed by the heart of the Italian members, whom Doris Orme had already found.

Miss Kim wanted to show us Rome where one could see so much of the Christian tradition: the big St. Peter's Dome and the large pillars where the first Christians were martyred almost two thousand years ago. I believe Miss Kim felt such closeness with Jesus' disciples and such a big responsibility. I pray and wish that we may now inherit her love and sense of responsibility - which come from True Parents - and build a world called "peace."

Elke van der Stok and her husband Johann were blessed with the 43 Couples in 1969. The van der Stok family were one of the earliest three-generation Unificationist families in the West.