

## 40 Years Blessing Anniversary 1982-2022



Forty couples, together with family and friends, met in Vienna on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, for an extraordinary anniversary celebration. In 1982, a total of 8,000 couples responded to Rev. Moon's call to participate in an international marriage blessing ceremony under the motto: "World Peace through Ideal Families".

2,000 couples said "I do" for eternity on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1982 in Madison Garden, New York. 6000 couples were blessed in marriage by True Parents in Seoul, Korea on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 1982. The couples came from all over the world and many of them were introduced to each other only a short time before the ceremony, trusting in God and True Parents.

This trust in God and the dream of the Kingdom of God is also what accompanied the couples through their married and family life.

The 40 couples living in Austria met at a Vienna City ship station on the day of the planned anniversary. A 3½-hour boat trip around Vienna, including lunch, offered the opportunity to meet old friends again and exchange shared memories.

The boat tour led past an observatory through "green Vienna" with the forests of a vast park, the Prater. We went along the Danube Island to further north, where we marvelled at "modern Vienna", the Danube Tower, the Millennium Tower and the famous buildings of the United Nations. From the Nussdorf locks, the trip continued into the Danube Canal, through the "historic Vienna" and its interesting architecture, like the "Hundertwasser House", which was designed by and named after the famous artist Friedrich Hundertwasser.



In the afternoon, a restaurant on the banks of one of the Danube arms provided the appropriate ambience for the anniversary celebration, which was also attended by family members of the couples, children, grandchildren and friends. The programme of the celebration included short and touching testimonies and stories from jubilarians.

Mrs. Heidi Mayr, representing the Blessed Family Department, congratulated the couples to their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the "Rubin Anniversary" which indicates the preciousness of these blessings. She also mentioned that these blessings (July and October 1982) have been mottoed by True Parents in connection with the establishment of world peace, especially because many international couples emerged from these two blessings.



Two members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation who were the moderators of the programme, sang several moving songs which referred to the eternal character of true love and devotion.

One couple expressed the meaning of the blessing by saying,

"God has become a parent to me and True Parents are the roots of my lineage and family. The blessing is the opening into a world of infinity".

Very moving was the testimony of Jurai & Erika Lajda who had travelled from Slovakia to attend the program. They experienced their engagement and blessing at that time behind the Iron Curtain and in total isolation from the outside world, but in deep connection with God and True Parents. Kurt Sattlberger shared his experience of the Blessing with his wife Bernadette. After his wife went to the spiritual world three years ago, he is now becoming more and more deeply aware that the blessing is a promise for eternity. The cutting of the jubilee cake and a lively exchange among brothers and sisters created a familiar and heavenly atmosphere.





Josef & Lilly Gundacker, one of the jubilee couples, had prepared small gifts for all the couples: a potted plant and a brochure about the 40th anniversary of the blessing, which they gave to the couples as a farewell gift.



We can conclude that it was a successful jubilee celebration, which will surely be remembered by all and at which a deep gratitude for God's blessing was expressed.



Report by Josef Gundacker & Elisabeth Cook