

An Invisible Hand at Work: How True Parents made me Mayor of Sakété, Benin

Nestor Idohou
August 2023



My name is Nestor Idohou. I was born in 1986 in Sakété, Benin, one of the five communes of the Plateau department in south-east Benin. Benin, which has a population of around 11.5 million, is divided into 12 departments, which in turn are divided into 77 communes.

Today, I am the mayor of Sakete, a city of 114,000 residents, which constitutes about one percent of Benin's population. How did a simple Unificationist like me ascend to this position in 2020? It was truly the grace of God, guided by a CheonBo couple.

My journey began in 2009 when I met our movement through my spiritual father, Gaëtan Dandjesso, currently the president of IAYSP-Benin. At the time, I was a student at the national university of Abomey-Calavi, where CARP was very active. After attending a two-day workshop, I took part in a seven-day workshop in September 2009. Soon after, a Blessing ceremony was about to be held in 2010, and I was eligible to apply. I was matched with Wousane BADJOUA from Chad, who was then 22. After our Blessing, we started our family life in 2010 and have since been blessed with the birth of three daughters.

My journey to the mayor's office began with the liberation of my ancestors. I didn't plan this path; it was entirely the work of divine providence. In 2012, while completing my university studies, I took up a position as a temporary high school teacher. The income from this job allowed me to purchase a plot of land. Then I started to work more to buy a motorbike, but couldn't, so I dropped the idea. I subsequently sold the land to be able to pay for and attend a workshop for the liberation of ancestors up to 210 generations in 2014 at the Azalai Hotel of Benin. So, I no longer had a land plot. But curiously, after the ancestors' liberation, there was an in-kind exchange between my father and the person who paid for it and that land came back to our family and my father became its owner.

The sacrifices I made and the unexpected blessings I received in this period underscored my understanding of the workings of the Spirit World.



A pivotal moment arrived when I took part in a competitive examination to become a public official.

Miraculously, I was accepted and, to my surprise, I was the only candidate given a motorbike. Once again, the power of ancestor liberation was demonstrated as the land I sold returned to my family, and the motorbike I gave up was waiting for me and given to me for free.

After experiencing these benefits, I donated money and submitted a wish paper during another ancestor liberation event. I asked God for a higher position where I could serve Him more effectively. At the time, I envisioned a director's role within my administration.

After this wish paper, days passed. I had begun my mission as Tribal Messiah, but I didn't have enough time to make any progress. However, in 2020, when the municipal elections were held in Benin, my life took a surprising turn. A brother called me and asked if I would be willing to stand as a candidate.



Initially, I declined as I had never considered entering politics. I refused and a few days later he called me again. He said: "If you agree to be on the list, that'll give us some weight! We can win." So, after repeated requests and some persuasion, I eventually agreed to have my name on the candidacy list, but I didn't think much of it. The list was submitted as-is, and someone's file was turned down because their candidate file wasn't particularly well prepared. At that point, the party decided that they needed two files, including one in reserve, to stand a chance of qualifying let alone winning. So they came back and asked me to prepare my portfolio. I was pleased to prepare a "reserve" application. Everything was organized in a day, and it was placed among the "reserves". When the applications were sent out, my name was not even on the list. The requirement was for four main applicants and four alternates, and I was not one of them. However, there was an issue with another application, and that's when they had to resort to my reserve application.

On the electoral list, amid a whirlwind of unexpected events, I found myself third on the list with a good chance of being elected. Now, it was time to run the election campaign; we started the campaign. To be sure of securing three seats, we had to win. I threw myself into the campaign. The thought of being mayor had never crossed my mind, yet the party members saw potential in me and urged me to accept the position. Thus, I found myself unexpectedly appointed as the mayor of Sakete.

Looking back, it seems my life was being steered by a powerful yet unseen hand. I see now the significance of liberating ancestors and submitting wish papers, even at great personal expense. When I expressed my desire to shoulder greater responsibilities for His will, God responded, exceeding my expectations.

Being a mayor grants me a position of authority, where I can directly influence our city's operations and direction. This responsibility is a leap beyond what I had initially envisioned, but I now understand it was by divine design that I find myself here.

My primary objective as mayor of Sakete, is to serve God to the best of my abilities, restoring and improving the lives of our residents.

My focus is now firmly set on guiding my couples and aiming to become a CheonBo. My journey has been significantly aided by support from various families and individuals like my spiritual father Gaëtan Dandjesso and Serge Guéli, who mobilized many volunteers in Sakete. I am deeply grateful for their support.

As I forge ahead, I feel it is crucial to establish a community that resonates with the teachings of the True Parents. This way, we can ensure our youth and citizens align with their vision.

Building a community with these values is a long-term task, requiring patience, dedication, and a commitment to living out our faith. As mayor, I feel the weight of this responsibility. However, I am also aware of the vast potential it holds. Each stride we make toward creating a community that upholds True Parents' vision not only improves our city but also contributes to the global Unification movement.

In Sakete, we have a unique opportunity. As a Unificationist and now a city leader, I have the power to weave our faith into the fabric of our society, fostering a city environment that lives and breathes the principles we hold dear. It will not be an easy task, but I am both prepared and determined to undertake it.

Ultimately, I perceive my role as mayor not as a political appointment but as a spiritual mission. Every decision I make, every policy I institute, is an extension of my service to God and a reflection of the spiritual values I uphold.

In conclusion, I am immensely grateful for the support I have received on this unexpected journey.

Without the guidance of my spiritual father, Gaëtan Dandjesso, the help of countless individuals like Serge Guéli, and the blessings showered upon me by God and my ancestors, I could not have reached this milestone.

Now, the real work begins. The path ahead is filled with challenges and obstacles, but I approach it with optimism. With the power of faith and the strength of our community, we will shape Sakete into a city that reflects the principles of our faith, serving as an inspiration for other cities and communities around the world.