

HJ Youth Academy Europe and the Middle East: How did True Parents celebrate their Birthday in 2024? (Part 2)

Bogdan Pammer
February 16, 2024



True Parents are the world champions in introducing partners to each other and blessing them in marriage. On many occasions, they have expressed that they deeply love blessed couples and will take responsibility for them eternally. The Bible tells us that God's first words to human beings were words of blessing. Like God, True Parents want to bless, bless, bless.

So, what better way is there to celebrate True Parents' Birthday than blessing young couples in marriage? Not really. That's why True Mother celebrated her and True Father's birthday this year by blessing 70 couples.

Click [here](#) to re-watch the whole event.



Light and Sound

The first part of the program consisted of a theatrical drama concert. It brought together a live orchestra, traditional Korean songs, dance choreography, animation, and a light show. It blended with historical footage of True Parents singing, with a pretty narrator tying everything together. It was an exciting 90-minute program and a good step towards a more enjoyable and authentic way to tell God's story.

True Mother has a big heart for the arts. The arts nourish the soul and grant us profound cathartic moments. It addresses our spiritual needs often better than religion and philosophy do. True Mother, although 81 years old and feeling a strong sense of urgency to accomplish many things in her lifetime, still does not hesitate to invest her time and money to encourage and enjoy artistic endeavors.



What does this tell us about the space we could and should give music, literature, movies, theater, animation, etc., in our lives? And yeah, I am not necessarily talking here about Netflix...



International Kids with True Mother

Also, a nice touch was that members of the first, second, and third generations offered baskets of flowers to True Parents for their birthday.

Brides and Grooms

It is a tried and tested tradition in our movement that brides hardly sleep the night before the Blessing. Grooms usually get a couple of hours of sleep more than their partners. Is this necessary? I don't know, but it's somehow part of an exciting and precious experience. Despite these circumstances, the 70 couples were beautiful, beaming with an inner light.

Each of them had a unique story, and I only know a few of them, and those only partly. Of course, only God can weave together this magnificent fabric of love, life, and lineage. However, talking to and observing the couples, experiencing these small moments of joy, awkwardness, excitement, gratitude, and occasional despair, made me feel I want to get to know them more... and I encourage you to do the same.



Marea and Francesca from the Blessed Family Department were with the nine couples from our Europe and Middle East region. They have just completed or are committed to starting one or two years of public mission. That is the 'Top Gun' part in the '2024 Heavenly Top Gun Special Blessing Ceremony'. True Mother invites these young couples to stand with her, investing the start of their life together for our communities, especially witnessing.

The pre-show entertainment featured a choreography with dancers dressed as brides and grooms. At one point, the groom kneels before the bride, only for the bride to pull him up. Later, the bride kneels, and the

groom helps her up so they can stand upright together. I don't know what it is, but this moment always gets me. I guess that is just how married life is.



The ceremony itself proceeded as usual. After the entrance of the attendants, True Parents, the officiator entered. The Holy Water Ceremony was followed by the Blessing Vows, the Blessing Prayer, the Exchange of Rings, and finally, the Proclamation of the Blessing.

The real-life couple [Nam Hyun-joon](#) and [Park Ae-ri](#) offered congratulatory songs. The husband, a [poppin' dancer](#) and rapper, and the wife, a traditional Korean [gugak singer](#), not only married each other but also their styles with adorable results. But listen for yourself [here](#). At the luncheon, Dr. Balcomb asked True Mother whether she enjoyed this modern rendition of [Gomapsso](#) (Eng. 'Thank You,' one of Mother's favorite songs) or preferred the more traditional one by Jo Hang-jo. Mother replied that while the conventional is better for singing along, she did enjoy the modern take.



Traditional and contemporary styles harmonizing

The couples, in their own words

"After the blessing, my wife and I are thrilled that we are starting our life together now under Heavenly Parents and True Parents realm. We want to take this spirit to our mission country."

"Seeing you [True Mother] today at the blessing ceremony was very moving; we were both in tears. But tears and words don't do anything; we felt deeply that the only way to really love you is to work harder. Thank Wang Omma, we deeply love you".

"A special moment for us was the incredible opportunity to be a representative couple and receive Blessing rings directly from True Parents. Seeing the True Parents so close, we could not even think about this. We thank Heavenly Parent and True Parents for the opportunity to receive the Blessing. In the future, we will put even more effort into realizing True Mother's vision through offline and online witnessing. As a couple. We want to embody the ideal of the Heavenly Parent by building an exemplary blessed family that spreads a culture of heart."

[How did True Parents celebrate their Birthday in 2024? \(Part 1\)](#)