

My working with True Parents on the IOWC and the Global Team – Part 1

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As a young member in Munich. On that day Japanese Elders were visiting us

I joined the Unification Church 1973 in the city of Regensburg, where I was studying to become an elementary school teacher. Originally I come from a very small village in the north of Bavaria. My whole upbringing was very Catholic. 3 of my father's sisters were nuns and 3 of his cousins also served God, one as a monk (in the Jesuit order), one chose to be a priest and one of them was a Professor of Theology (Alois Grillmeier) at the Jesuit university of St. Georgen, near Frankfurt and was later appointed a Cardinal by Pope Johannes Paul II.

I still remember all the rituals we followed, the masses and all kind of prayer services we attended. I have good memories of my childhood and youth. Yet at the same time I was not happy as to how I perceived God. I didn't experience Him so much as a loving Father, I rather saw Him as a God of justice. There was this strong conviction that everything had to be

done right. God was a strict God for me. So I started to search. I was seeking liberation and release.

In August 1973 I met a girl from the Unification Church on the street. I joined the same month. Later on my parents and most of my brothers and sisters joined the church as well. I was not so euphoric in the beginning, but I knew I had to follow the Messiah, the returning Lord. After 4 months of street witnessing in several cities here in Germany, I set off on a journey with a group of brothers and sisters. The destination was America. We left from Frankfurt Airport for San Francisco. All of a sudden I found myself on the other side of the world.

At that time True Parents conducted a 21 City-tour all throughout the USA. Our group, newly arrived from Germany joined this crusade in San Francisco. Paul and Christel Werner and their team were responsible to prepare for a banquet and a speaking event, where Father would deliver his message.

As soon as we arrived, we joined in the preparations. Many of us went from door to door to invite people for the speech, titled "The Future of Christianity". I still remember the beautiful scenery: all these beautiful white houses, built on the hills of San Francisco with this fascinating view over the seaside.

All day long we climbed lots of stairs to inspire as many people as possible to come to the event. So in the evenings we were pretty tired. I remember at least one time falling asleep, while eating. I woke up from the bang of the fork, I just had dropped.

Then the day came, when Father was scheduled to speak. I still can feel the anticipation. I was about to meet the Messiah and his bride for the first time in my life.



True Parents greeting guests at one of the speaking tour event in USA

I remember having this awesome feeling, when he came on stage. I thought "Oh my God, this is the returning Lord". It was quite a solemn moment. After the speech Father and Mother invited us to McDonalds. I sat just about 3 tables away from True Parents and I couldn't believe, that we could be so close. Mother sang a song for us. She was a bit shy and she was so very beautiful (and still is to this day). She radiated humility and dignity at the same time.

This moment was also the first time I felt: we are not only True Parents' followers; we are their children. There is this closeness of heart!

The 21-city tour ended in Los Angeles. Then we all traveled to Washington.

The political climate was not the best at this time. America was in the middle of the “Watergate Crisis” and President Nixon was being heavily attacked. Father felt strongly that America should come together and repent. So along with many other brothers and sisters we took part in rallies, both large and small, with the theme: FORGIVE, LOVE and UNITE. I re-member one time, that President Nixon’s daughter mingled with us and thanked us deeply, that we were in support of her Father and the nation of America.

All the teams of the IOWC (International One World Crusade) had come to Washington and we found out that we would soon embark on our next adventure: a 32-city tour.

It was planned that I would stay with Paul Werner’s team. As the team gathered, Father suddenly came walking towards us and selected some of us to go to Mr. Sudo’s team. I wasn’t in the first row, but he reached to the very back and pulled at the sleeve of my jumper... an unforgettable moment! That was the first time I was literally hand-picked by Father.

Mr. Sudo wasn’t a very tall man, in fact he was rather short, but he had a big heart, a heart of gold.

Our first destination was Providence in Rhode Island. The team divided to fulfill certain responsibilities: mainly we were going door to door, inviting people for a banquet and a speech. A PR-team contacted VIPs. Others fundraised or prepared the house, where Father and Mother would stay during their visit.

We did not go to bed early and I remember the evenings, when Mr. Sudo would gather us around him, like a hen would gather her chicken. I always felt his deep love and concern.

Whenever he addressed guests he would make a joke about his height by assuring them that: I am standing. I still remember the big smile on his face, while he uttered these words. This created a loving and warm atmosphere immediately.

In Sioux Falls, South Dakota we faced a lot of persecution. The evening before the event, Mr. Sudo spoke to us. He was utterly serious. He conveyed to us, that it is the task of each team member to protect our True Parents. We sang the Holy Song “Tan Shim Ga” and we made this deep resolution in our hearts to protect our True Parents, no matter what. In the following speeches on this tour we mostly sat in the first or second row. We prayed and we really had this deep sense of being responsible for our True Parents. Sometimes there was a short eye contact with Father. We felt this deep bond of heart.

In Columbia, South Carolina we were eating breakfast one morning, when Father and his oldest son visited us suddenly. He had his arm around Hyo Jin Nim and he walked from table to table. Father was very interested in what we were having for breakfast and he had a big smile for each one of us. He cared so much about us.



Mr. Sudo’s team arriving in Honolulu, Hawaii

Some of the team were chosen to go to Hawaii to help with the campaign there. The moment we arrived in Honolulu airport, we smelt a fragrance of flowers and each of us was presented with a flower-necklace. What a nice surprise! It was like a holiday feeling being on this island. But we had serious work to do. True Parents would come soon and speak there. One morning we were really reprimanded by Rev. Sudo, because he felt we were not focused. So we pulled together and brought a victory for the events there. At the speech all the team members occupied the front rows again to support Father. As I sat there I could hear the loud voices of Christians protesting outside against Rev. Moon and his teachings.

At the end of the 32-city tour all the different teams which had worked all across America came together in Barry town, New York. Father had a great plan for a momentous event in Madison Square Garden, where he would deliver a speech titled "The New Future of Christianity".

After a long, long journey all across the country we finally arrived in Barry town and so did all the other teams. For the following week we had a preparation workshop. We heard incredible lectures by Rev. Sudo and we sang a lot. I remember especially singing "Higher Ground". It created such a powerful atmosphere. And then we left for New York. Most of us were busy witnessing to people in the streets. We distributed flyers with the title "September 18th Could Be Your Re-birthday".

Some teams were responsible for hanging up posters, which covered eventually the whole city by the end of the campaign. I think there was nobody left in New York, who was not made aware of Rev. Moon and this upcoming event. We also spent a lot of time in the evening re-contacting people by phone.

And September 18th came and the event was a great success. I still recall the moments, when the gates were opened and people came flooding in. And again, like all of us I felt an urgency, that Father had to be protected. There was a big glass wall behind him for security reasons. I stood up the whole time that Father spoke, to contribute even in a small way for the success of this big event.

At the victory party the next morning True Parents were very happy. Towards the end of this celebration, Father made us line up and personally chose each one of us for the next tour; once again he pulled me by the arm! I should have followed my thought to keep that jumper! Each one of us was hand-picked to join different teams for the 8-city tour. We toured the country one more time. I personally was on the team, led by Mr. and Mrs. Vincenz.



A street rally to announce the event in Madison Square Garden

I recall one special experience on this tour. It was in Chicago. When we were out in the streets, the weather was cold and an icy wind was blowing through the city. Immediately after the event, which was a great success, quite a few of us stayed out all night to take down the posters advertising this event. When we came back in the early hours of the morning, Father was already waiting for us and he started to talk to us. I nodded off many times during this speech, but Father seemed to graciously overlook that. I still remember the warm smile on his face.

When we arrived in Los Angeles preparations began for the big journey to Japan and Korea. The 1. Global Team was an enormous undertaking. Rev. and Mrs. Vincenz were chosen to guide us through this adventure. They did a tremendous job.

In Japan we were joined by Japanese brothers and sisters. East and West came together to make a large impact in Japan and later also in Korea. In this time, I witnessed often in the Tokyo stations Shibuya and Ikebukuro. But we also traveled all over the country for the Day of Hope-Tour. The largest event was at the renowned Budokan Hall, where Father spoke.



Victory celebration at Cheong Pyeong lake following the Day of Hope campaign in Korea

After this tour we traveled on to Korea by ship.

I will never forget the moment we approached the shores of Pusan, South-Korea. It was in the morning hours. Standing at the railing, we could already hear from a distance the song “Urie So Wonun Tongil” sung with so much passion by our Korean brothers and sisters. Leaving the ship, we found out that Father had come personally to welcome us. And the Korean members were so excited to see us all.

Father said the following about the IOWC (1. Global Team): “*At that time I brought a gift to Korea – not a material gift or a gift of money – but the most precious gift possible from the Western world: Western young people, members of the International One World Crusade.*” (February 23rd, 1977)