

Volunteering in a Soup Kitchen



We, the members of the SND Eco Spirituality Center are still busy even in the agricultural off-season of winter with the preparation for the next farming. Many people are passing through difficult times due to Covid-19. Since it is not easy to give a helping hand the isolation becomes more intense. In such conditions, a couple of choices to do what is right lie before us: Do we stay at home for each other's safety or go out to help the less fortunate in spite of the risks? Having discussed that the marginalized more easily fall victim to further isolation, loneliness and hardship, we have been looking for opportunities to share what we have with them as well as the best way to do it. Soon we heard that the homeless people around Seoul central train station were having difficulties because the soup kitchen for them diminished. We decided and planned to help them even with just one meal. Then a priest happened to visit us and donated some money hoping to assist our action. As another young priest of our diocese stepped forward, we asked him to be our driver. We had only made the decision when everything was smoothly arranged as if all had already been prepared for us.

On Jan. 7, we headed to Namdaemun Gate with 100 portions of spicy meat stew that we cooked. At the entrance of Namdaemun imports stores, five sisters who all members of Congregations belonging to the Association of Major Superiors of Religious in Korea were waiting for us to help us out. Each of them belongs to a different Congregation and happily ran to us on our request for help.

We made the homeless very happy with a bowl of hot meat stew but felt sorry too because the food became colder so quickly by the wintery air. They were also really delighted when treated with the corn on the cob we had harvested and stored for the retreatant sisters. We kept the best and tastiest ones for the end as Our Lord kept the best for last at the Wedding Feast at Cana. In every direction we moved, hungry hands were stretched out to us, some of which were offered the steamed corn instead of the stew when the stew ran out.

We heard the Lord saying, "collect the scraps of bread in baskets" and witnessed twelve baskets full of leftover bread as in the Bible story. Each of our hearts was filled with abundant bread of life, the bread which becomes more abundant as it is shared.

Pope Frances says in 「Let us dream」, "In crisis we have to act. Then a new door opens."

In this time of crisis, we feel it is the time to take actions. This is the opportunity to change the crisis into blessings.