

2. The Origin of the Name of Kkottongnae

Where are the Flowers at Kkottongnae?

People who visit Kkottongnae sometimes would say in sport, "I thought they named the village Kkottongnae (Kkot means flowers; tongnae means village in Korean.) because there were many flowers here, but I can't see many. Where are the flowers?" *While the area certainly doesn't overflow with blossoms all throughout the year, it has its share of beauty that awes the beholder of the sight.* With spring comes, many forsythias, azaleas, royal azaleas, magnolias, and rhododendrons that bloom beautifully around Kkottongnae hills and fields, on the roadsides and embankments. When May comes with its strong fragrance of acacias, honey bees fly back-and-forth actively between their combs and flower trees as to finish up a year's harvest at once. Kkottongnae presents us with beautiful nature every season: spring with peach and apricot blossoms; summer with wooded verdure; autumn with colorfully tinted leaves; and winter with immaculate snow.

However, more beautiful than nature are the human flowers that bloom with forgiveness, reconciliation and love. We would see the Kkottongnae families, who had lived a miserable life until they got sick physically and

mentally and were forlorn, reconcile with the world which had deserted them, repent on their life, forgive their neighbors, and then blossom into a beautiful flower to bear the fruit of salvation. I think there would not be anything more beautiful than this.

The Most Beautiful Thing in the World, Flowers

The founder, Father Oh Woong-Jin, deliberated the name of Kkottongnae with Mr. Kim Jong-Ho, who was the governor of Chungbuk Province at that time. The word Kkot (which means flower in Korean) came to his mind when he was thinking about the representation of the ideal form of love. He thought that it is the most beautiful thing in the world to welcome the love-starved people with warm love, to take care of them, and help direct them towards God. So he suggested naming it Kkottongnae as it means a village filled with beautiful people and deeds just like a "flower village" filled with beautiful flowers. He added that the name is good since it is not a foreign name and friendly feeling is attached to the name. So this name, corresponding to the spirituality of Kkottongnae which wants to be one in love by even overcoming nationality,



A Bust of Fr. John Oh Gi-Seon which is in the sculpture garden at the Kkottongnae Love Training Center



An entrance of Kkottongnae. You can see a beautiful rainbow on the sky.

race, and age, was selected. The night before Fr. Oh Gi-Seon passed away on July 30, 1990, Fr. Oh Woong-Jin visited him in the hospital. Fr. Oh Gi-Seon informed him that the very same name, Kkottongnae, was the name of Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus Christ, where He grew up. The etymology of Nazareth shows the meaning of flower in it.

The Connection with Fr. Oh Gi-Seon

It goes back to the time of political chaos just after the April 19th Revolution in 1960 when the Kkottongnae founder Fr. Oh Woong-Jin's bond with Fr. Oh Gi-Seon began. At that time Fr. Oh Woong-Jin had a dream of becoming a politician to become capable of helping those who were dying on the streets. He used to correspond with a student leader, Kim Joo-Yeol as a pen-pal, but found that he had died from a teargas bomb. This made him give up his dream of becoming a politician making him skeptical of politics. After that, he happened to see Fr. Oh Gi-Seon being awarded by the president at Daejeon Public Stadium in recognition of his good conduct of taking care of about 3 thousand war orphans. Looking at this, he thought that he could take care of dying people on the streets if he would be a priest. So he decided to become one after visiting Daejeon Daeheungdong Church and joined an early morning mass by Fr. Oh Gi-Seon.

Fr. Oh went to a seminary with the money from timber trading and graduated from it, becoming a priest. After that, he visited Fr. Oh Gi-Seon to greet and consult him for advice on his future. Fr. Oh Gi-Seon asked just two things of him: "Be a priest who is crazy about whatever you do," and when you do anything

in the future, there may be some opponents. But don't face them with anger or frustration but endure them with forgiveness and love." As he requested, Fr. Oh Woong-Jin became a priest who has been crazy about the poor and who has prayed for those who persecute him. The priests who had received love and guidance from Fr. Oh Gi-Seon made a scholarship foundation—Oh Gi-Seon Joseph Scholarship Foundation—to help orphans in honor of his big footprint in the history of the Korean Catholic church. They offer a mass for the scholarship foundation members at 2:00p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at Daejeon Daeheungdong Church and on the last Saturday at Seoul Myeongdong Church, accumulating funds for educating young people.

The Origin of the Name of the Congregation, Kkottongnae Brothers/Sisters of Jesus

Jesus Christ has established and led Kkottongnae, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus who took pains and died on behalf of human beings is the spirit of the Kkottongnae Congregation's foundation. The sisters and brothers at Kkottongnae Congregation practice love, praying and asking God everyday to let them live for those who have no one to rely on and no strength to beg for food. Therefore, the guardian saint of Kkottongnae is the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The words of Jesus Christ, "Now I do not call you servants any longer, but, instead, I call you friends (John 15: 15)" mean that he would make all those who live for and practice His words his friends. When we live a life of prac-

ting love for those who have no one to rely on, we become His friends and will be called His sisters or brothers.

Servants do not know what their master is doing, but friends do know what the other is doing. Our Lord wants us to love our poor neighbors to bloom the spirituality of poverty, living in accordance with God's will in this world.

Kkottongnae of Jesus is a place full of vari-

ous kinds of flowers: flowers of salvation achieved through the forgiveness and reconciliation by the forlorn; flowers of love created through the devoted sacrifice of the volunteers and the religious; flowers of spirituality formed through living by the Holy Spirit's will and not by our worldly whims. Jesus lives in Kkottongnae of Jesus, and there live Kkottongnae Brothers/Sisters of Jesus who follow God's will as well.



Founder Fr. Oh Woong-Jin, family members of Kkottongnae, staffs, volunteers and religious