

13. Help Others Just Like You Help for Yourself

Kkottongnae will be celebrating its 30th anniversary on the 8th of September, 2006.

Over the last 30 years, the community has been providing warm care and love to more than 13,000 people who have been abandoned by their families. This care has been accompanied by realization that the cause of the many being abandoned is a deficiency of love. In order to fill up this deficiency in love, Kkottongne, with the spirit of helping others just like you were doing it for yourself, has totally devoted everything to the abandoned, unconditionally providing the needs of shelter, food, medical and funeral services. Through the lives of many dedicated brothers, sisters and volunteers in the community who have lived their lives for the abandoned, with the spirit of helping others just like helping for themselves, Kkottongnae has been able to grow and expand into what it is today.

Everyday, a hoary-headed old man picks up cigarette butts in a university campus. One day there was a big ceremony held in the campus. Many students attending the ceremony were shocked to see the old man sitting in a chair of the chancellor of the university. Feeling ashamed of the fact that many of them threw

away a lot of cigarette butts around the campus, they began to admire their chancellor of the university from that moment. On being asked why he does not assign the job of picking up cigarette butts to cleaners instead of doing it himself, the chancellor's answer was just simple and straightforward. He said, "Picking up cigarette butts as the chancellor gives me a sense of happiness and joy. First, this is because I am grateful to the fact that the chancellor has enough time to spare for picking up cigarette butts, for the university is in a state of stability. Second, it is a duteous and an act of atonement for a chancellor to do since the chancellor has failed to properly influence the moral consciousness of the students."

There are many types of people living in this world. For instance, the type of person, who throw away cigarette butts..., and the kind of person who picks up them without any strings attached.... Fr. Oh Woong Jin, the founder of Kkottongnae, asserts that all the people can be categorized into three different types: selfish, individualistic and altruistic types of people.

Selfish people are those who are willing to use foul means to meet their needs and accord-

ingly live only for themselves. Since they do not even help themselves, they live their lives in the vain of pursuing pleasure, money and prestige and, as a result, always become a heavy burden for other people. This kind of person abandons even their own parents without any hesitations when they become too old and sick to be taken care of.

An old lady abandoned from her family living in our community cried out for her son everyday in the midst of a severe asthma attack. She would not open her mouth whenever we asked her anything about her son such as his occupation, address or contact number. But she never hesitated to open her mouth to tell us that her own son could not come to see her right now because he might have his urgent agenda, as we insinuated that people do not come to see their parents living in the community are really bad. Seeing this old lady, who tries to stand up for her own son who abandoned his mother with intrinsically deep sense of maternal love, was very pathetic and touching indeed. As her illness got aggravated, her own son finally turned up to see his dying mother. To our surprise, her son was an incumbent professor at a university.

The sad and deplorable fact that many people are abandoned is caused definitely not by a deficiency of either bread or knowledge but by a lack of love that is needed for the abandoned.

Second is the individualistic person who is the one who thinks 'it is not my business to help others or ask others for helps' and is only interested in their own concerns.

So they have absolutely no interest of their neighbors in pain and the world in which they

live, but regard a happy life of their own as the best value that they want to grasp in their lives. Only by pursuing the extreme freedom of pleasure as the best thing to achieve but disregarding a true value of sacrifice and devotion for the neighbors, they are inevitably under the illusion that they have automatically gained all the knowledge, richness and health from their own efforts. This kind of people will be very unfortunate when they lose what they think they have.

On the contrast, altruistic types of people are those who are always concerned with not only themselves but also many other people around them. They are the people who are willing to please the neighbors in need and to help others just like helping for themselves. It is because of invaluable contributions made by this kind of many people that there is still a hope lingering on in this world, which seems to be almost perished soon.

Sadly, a lot of people are being abandoned even at this very moment. Kkottongne has been putting the one of catchphrases of our community; "Help others just like you help for yourself" which is inspired by our founder of the community into practice over the last 30 years. We did not sit and wait for the abandoned but did actively search for the people who desperately needed help, by driving an ambulance purchased by a donation from cleaners' savings to every corner of the country. A few days ago, we actually brought a sick person who had lain nearby the train station of Youngdengpo and it turned out by using a CT scan that he was suffering from a cerebral hemorrhage. Although many people who