



At that time, Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the

sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!" (Luke 1:39-45)

"As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy." Women who conceive a child are one with the child from the moment they are pregnant. Our bodies are sensitive to small changes, and our reaction can be dramatic when a new life is forming within our bodies.

When we become accustomed to being insensitive to things around us, we need to remember what Jesus said:

Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. (Luke 21:34)

He also said:

Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man. (Luke 21:36)

Being awake and always on the watch, or being sensitive to our surrounding, is something we are capable of even before we are born. The baby in Elizabeth's womb sensed the sound of Mary's voice and leaped.

Are we awake in this Christmas season? Are we sensitive to our surroundings and the changes to them? Are we able to accept those changes? I reflect on myself with these questions.

Christmas is made in me. It means that Lord resides in me and I can see the World anew through our Lord's eyes.

When this happens, Christmas is completed in me and in us.

In 2015 Diakonia Sisterhood had in Korea had a big change. We moved our mother house from Cheonan(Central Part of Korea) to Mu-an(Southern part of Korea) in late June. We had lived in Cheonan for 17 years and now we are back to the place where Sisterhood first started to begin a new phase of our growth. The new building still needs more work both inside and outside. The yard has been completed by the mid-December and we look forward to finishing preparation of the garden in the coming year.





Abbess Sister Ree Youngsook and Sister Ahn Kyusook attended the 42nd General Assembly of the Kaiserswerth General Conference, which was held in the Ev. Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen, in Austria, between 24th and 27th September. The main theme of the conference was 'Diakonia : A Strong Brand!- Between Values and Commerce'. The Kaiserswerth General Conference reached the 154 anniversary.

It was started in Germany and currently has 15 member countries including Korea. The General Assembly is held every 3 years. This year, about 400 members came to participate in lectures, bible studies, and group discussions.

They shared their own stories with each other in their own fields.

In addition, they encouraged each other and shared a feeling of solidarity through a time of festival and friendship. Our sisters also had chance to visit several communities in Germany before they return to Korea.



Continuing from the Secular Diakonia meeting, which started 5 years ago, another spiritual prayer meeting has started in January

2015 with three families, who had been attending Sunday service in Cheonan. Every month, they share their experience with Jesus and share topics for prayer to continue to support each other every day at a specified time. A spiritual prayer meeting is a group of families living with a diakonia spirit in life, so as to discern the will of God and to follow God's voice in daily lives.

The Danbi Diakonia Family Community in Cheonan offered a worship on the 19th December and thanked God for the completion of Dorandoran Seniors Welfare Center, which is built in the premise of Danbi Church in cooperating with Danbi Church and local community members as a social cooperative. A space for the elderly and the members of the community has been established by the virtue of continued prayers and efforts of Danbi family community. Seven students from the village played a huge role in running a vibrant Danbi School programme again this year.



Jupyong Diakonia Family Community farming in the mountain of Jeonbuk Jinan welcomes guests who come to escape the city and provides them with a new energy. In addition, through prayers and meditation, they transformed a corner of the earth into a zone full of the atmosphere of the heaven. They also made Kimchi with cabbage which they had grown themselves and shared it among ten families with the disabled.

The Korean Council for Christian community church, which dreams of reforming churches and recovering the essence of church in Korea, gave a fest at the Korea Theological Seminary in Cheonan last August 10-12 with a theme: 'Communities of the Kingdom of God, Why and How? - Their History and Hope'. Around 50 communities standing for the Kingdom of God in South Korea gathered. Abbess Sister Ree Youngsook participated in a community fair program and explained the activities of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea. She facilitated a morning prayer and had a fellowship with community members of participants.

In Diakonia Elderly Nursing Home, three sisters and around thirty-eight staff members continue to take care of more than 60 elders.



In domiciliary care services, we listen to the difficulties of grandparent-grandchild families, single-parent families, defectors from North Korea and multicultural families, in cooperation with various partner organizations and volunteers. We supported living costs and medical expenses. During the last Thanksgiving holiday, we visited 51 families and gave them many gifts such as rice and daily necessities. In particular, children's toys, shoes and 20 blankets were distributed to the North Korean defectors who needed these items desperately.



In Diakonia Scholarship program we help the children of a low-income group, defectors from North Korea and multicultural families so that they can be self-reliant and continue to study in school. Scholarships were given to 29 students every quarter this year. We were glad that they didn't give up their studies halfway but continued to finish.

We offered the members of chronic patients' house a variety of services and programs to support them psychologically and emotionally so that they can carry on living in comfortable and healthy conditions. Through various works, we also encourage them to find joy and meaning of life. Wherever they touch gets cleaned; trees and flowers thrive under their hands; and they provide great joy and encouragement to anyone who visits them.



We wish you a Christmas full of sensitiveness towards Jesus who is born among us and we wish this awareness will bring hope and light in the New Year.

Farewell to 2015

Yours sincerely,
Sr. Ree Young-Sook,
Abbess of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea