



# Morning Calm

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## NEW BROTHERHOOD IN KOREA



*Outside Seoul Cathedral, 9 June 1994, after the inauguration of the Korean Franciscan Brotherhood.  
Centre: The Most Reverend Simon Kim, Primate & Bishop of Seoul; far left: Brother Christopher John, S.S.F.; far right Mother Catherine, S.H.C.; left and right of the Primate: Brothers Francis, Wycliffe & Paul.*

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# New Brotherhood in Korea

When people return from an overseas trip they usually want to show everyone their photographs. I am no exception and, having returned from six weeks in Korea, would like to share with you something of that experience. I cannot show you all the photos so instead I will give you a descriptions of them.

The first photo (which is printed!) is of the new community of Anglican Franciscan brothers, along with Bishop Kim (Seoul Diocese) and Mother Catherine (Society of the Holy Cross). Some of you will remember Mother Catherine from her preaching tour and speaking engagements with Mothers' Union groups in Australia a few years ago. The three Brothers you can see are in the same sort of habit I am wearing. They are not formally part of the Society of St Francis (SSF) but belong to a community called the Korean Franciscan Brotherhood which is associated with SSF. These three Brothers are the founding members of this new community. They are supported in that by SSF as well as SHC and Bishop Kim. They are aged between 32 and 37 and have all been students recently at the Sungkonghoe (Anglican) Theological College.

The next (imaginary) photo is of me with the three brothers eating lunch in their house in Incheon. Every meal was Korean style with bowls of soup, rice and a variety of tasty side dishes. I learnt that it is very rude not to slurp when eating soup, so I had much fun slurping and even managed the occasional burp. I enjoyed the food and thrived very healthily on it.

Another photo (again imaginary). This is of me with two students I met one day in the park around one of the palaces. They asked me to take their photo together (this happened often) and then we got talking. They were pleased to have someone to practice their English with as both of them want to work in areas requiring good English. We went sightseeing several times and sampled also one of the local drinks, soju. For them it was a new experience to be able to talk about some of the issues of life with someone ten years older. Korean society is very age conscious and people of different ages cannot usually talk together so easily. The foreigner, through not 'fitting in', is in a different position which can open many doors.

This next photo is of me with 600,000 commuters. (I'm a bit hard to see in the crowd!) We were stranded when the subway line out to the Brothers' house in Incheon was closed for 24 hours by a freight train derailment. I was travelling by myself and realised how inadequate my Korean was when something out of the ordinary happened. I started to walk the rather long way home but some passing students helped me out with great friendliness and together we had a hair-raising trip in the cab of a truck and then a lot more travelling in some buses. I was finally pleased to recognise the familiar landmarks and arrive back many hours later.

Now here I am with the Brothers on a lightning sightseeing trip in the mountains towards the east. We are being driven very fast and we are visiting a large number of historical and famous sites such as temples, beaches and mountains. The scenery reminds me of New Zealand and the South Island mountains.

On the same trip here's a photo of the brothers eating raw fish with great delight. They had selected the live fish from buckets awash with freshly pumped sea water. Five minutes later the fish were neatly sliced and served up with copious chilli paste and lettuce leaves. I settled for a lettuce leaf. This is when I was given my nickname, San Dokki (mountain rabbit)!

Another photo here is in very different surroundings. The Brothers and I, along with Mother Catherine and Sister Martha, were invited to an orchestral concert and beforehand taken to dinner at the Plaza Hotel. The son of our hostess owns the hotel (along with a vast number of other businesses) and so we dined out in style in a private dining room on the top floor before the chauffeur-driven Mercedes took us to the concert. I do not very often get treated to such lavish hospitality! It was a delight, though, to be cared for so well.

A contrast to the next photo. I am with **Brother Francis** visiting some poor families in the slums of Incheon. He co-ordinates a programme which links volunteers and poor or handicapped people. Although the surroundings are very different from the previous scene, the quality of hospitality is no less. I stumble with my few Korean phrases and they all listen and follow with great patience.

This time I am with **Brother Wycliffe**. We are with the Anglican seminarians and he is taking part in a Bible study with some of them. I am looking perhaps a bit puzzled here but also greatly relieved that one of the students who has excellent English is whispering a translation in my ear. Groups work in a different way in Korea. The style of participative action/reflection study I am familiar with in a 'Western' setting is not natural in a Korean environment.

Here's another photo. This time I'm with **Brother Paul** in the markets in Incheon. He is trying to teach me the names of different foods. I am learning to say "how much is it?" and "expensive!". The bargaining is beyond me. The smallness of the shops and market stalls and the food arranged on the street tables is a contrast to the sterile supermarkets we are accustomed to in Australia.

The last photo is in the Anglican Cathedral in Seoul. About three hundred supporters have come along to witness the inauguration of this new community, Korean Franciscan Brotherhood. I am preaching and through Mother Catherine's interpretation am explaining that this new community and its three founding members are like a seed sown on the ground. They are not a mature tree so will need much care and the avoiding of unrealistic expectations of what they can do. They need support and guidance to help them establish their own life and that is the subject of decisions within SSF at the moment.

Please pray for these Brothers and for those who are aspiring to join them.

*Christopher John SSF*

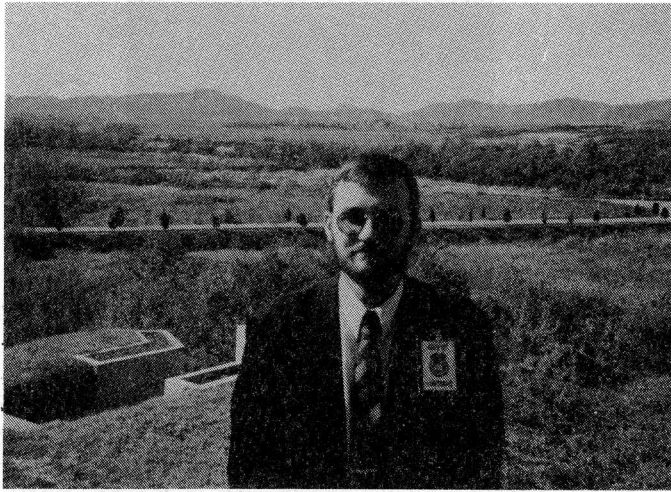
*With acknowledgement to Anglican World*

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# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A GREAT GREAT AUNT

*"LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU":  
JOHN 15 v.12 (NEB)*

The Motto of the Society of the Holy Cross.



*Panmunjom Demilitarised Zone, overlooking North Korea, 24th October 1994.  
William Say*

"The greatest movements in history were started by small groups of people working together." These words, by the Great British explorer, Dame Freya Stark, were in my mind when I went to south Korea last October in the footsteps of my Great Great Aunt - Sister Helen Constance - a missionary nun in Korea in the 1920's. It was an exhilarating, humbling and life-changing experience.

In 1919 Sister Helen Constance agreed to go to Korea as Sister Superior in charge of the Mission House at St. Peter's Community in Seoul. It consisted of a small number of dedicated English Sisters and Korean Sisters in training. Born in 1858, Constance Wildy was Assistant Secretary of the Korean Mission before being professed at St. Peter's Community, Kilburn, on November 18, 1899, aged 41. On November 8, 1919 she departed for Korea by ship, arriving after two months at sea - a journey which took me seventeen hours, seventy-five years later.

The Korea she encountered was very different from the one I saw: Then under the cruel yolk of the Japanese who were intent on destroying every vestige of Korean culture, life was basic, hard and physically punishing for most. Wooden buildings predominated and according to a letter she wrote to the Sisters at Kilburn: "Women have less rights and are less valued than animals as they can be replaced more easily."

From my own researches and from talking to octogenarian Sisters Tabitha and Maria in Korea, who knew her - Sister Helen Constance was a lively and dynamic woman, with a deep Christian Faith. By the time she left Korea on February 4, 1930 (aged 72), due to ill health, she spoke fluent Korean. (One of my most cherished possessions is a tiny New Testament, over 150 years old, which she always carried with her throughout her time in Korea. I used her nun's black cloth bag while I was at Junior School, to carry sports clothes, without realising its significance).

Very much a Victorian at heart, with a real sense of purpose and mission in life, (according to my father, Bishop David Say), she believed in maintaining principles and standards. My Aunts, Rosemary and Joan, neé Say, remember Aunt Nell Wildy as a kind and impressive person - both in stature and size - who sent them beautiful Korean toys each Christmas. She was also very musical and loved singing. There is little doubt that she made a considerable contribution towards the establishment of the Anglican Church in Korea and the Korean Order of the Sisters of the Holy Cross which developed out of the missionary work of the English Sisters. For example, she helped to train the first Korean Reverend Mother of the Society of the Holy Cross - Mother Phoebe - who was appointed in 1940. It was deeply moving for me to learn at first hand that Sister Helen Constance is still held in high regard and with real affection by the present Sisters of the Society of the Holy Cross.

Going to Korea in the footsteps of my Great Great Aunt was an experience I shall never ever forget. I was welcomed with open arms by Reverend Mother Catherine and the Sisters of the Holy Cross with whom I stayed for the majority of my ten day visit. I was overwhelmed by their hospitality and the holiness and goodness they all exude. Ranging in age from early 20's to late 80's, the Sisters were all extremely friendly to me which touched me greatly, especially as Korea is superficially a strange and alien country to most westerners. Reverend Mother Catherine, a devout and godly woman, symbolises in her own life the hopes and suffering of her country. (She was brought up during the Korean War in St. Peter's Orphanage at Suwon). To be shown by her around the old buildings of the Convent where my relative lived in the 1920's was a very emotional experience for me. Although they are divided by culture, language and geography, the link between the Community of St. Peter at Woking and the Sisters in Korea is still a very real one - united together in love and faith in one Lord and Saviour.

*William Say  
to be continued*

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## MISSIONS TO SEAMEN: PUSAN

When I arrived in Pusan on 31st October 1994, I received a very warm welcome at the airport from the Bishop, Abraham Kim one of the clergy, and Monica Park, my assistant. Everyone in the Diocese and those who are working in sister maritime societies, have been very friendly and supportive.

The port of Pusan is situated in a fine natural harbour. There are nine major piers, each able to take several ships and another port area in the next bay to the west. This is a very busy port and claims to be the sixth largest container port in the world. As well as handling cargo for Korea, we act as a transit port for mid and north China. The Chinese ports are not deep enough to take the big container ships. In addition to the container traffic there is a lot of general cargo ships as well as a fishing port with huge freezing plants. The Missions to Seamen Centre is located at the gate of the newest of

