

Reflections on my Time at the Myra House-

Robert Vincent, director of Quaker & Bolivia Link

The deepest feeling from my time at Myra House was the sense of community that I felt when I lived there. This sense of community was expressed through shared devotional times, shared meals and shared work. Our devotional times included our concerns and blessings that we experienced throughout the day. By eating together, we were able to share our experiences throughout the day and talk about matters that were important to us. We shared responsibilities for cooking and cleaning up, which created a sense of mutual dependency and gratitude. The sense of community encouraged me to express my feelings and concerns to other people that I would normally keep to myself.

Myra House also set a rhythm of life that the residents were to follow. While it was difficult for me to follow this pattern, I appreciated the effort and felt that it was an important help to me during that part of my life.

I also appreciated how Myra House sought to include ecological concerns into its mission. I feel that I have been able to implement more of this discipline into my life than the other experiences at Myra House. For example, I try to eat home-grown produce, I purchase environmentally friendly products and I try to limit my consumption and waste. I saw examples of how people can implement changes in their daily life to have less impact on the environment.

Finally, I learned that it is difficult to live in community. It is difficult because it requires adjustment to a rhythm that is almost foreign to our lifestyle today. I felt that I could not support the Myra House sufficiently because of my lack of time. Community requires us to give up some of our own desires for the good of the community. I had to give up many of my personal liberties. Perhaps under a different occasion I might have been able to do better, but because I was dependent upon two different jobs and I also studied. It was difficult to also carry out my responsibilities. Community also requires that one have a more stable lifestyle. It was difficult for me because of the many changes that I experienced at that time.



The Sanctuary

A Newsletter for Friends of Myra House

“Holistic Living Today
for a
Sustainable Tomorrow”



MYRA HOUSE
Holistic Living Center

Number 5

Winter 05-06

3643 N. Mills Ave., Claremont, California 91711
(909) 624-4648 • Fax (909) 624-4755
www.myrahouse.com

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EIN 95-4870354

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Holistic Living Center

MYRA HOUSE



Projecting a new direction at Myra House...

- Sung Sohn

your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best.

Philippians 1:9

One morning prayer just before the Advent season was the most heartfelt moment for our community in 2005. Seven residents sat around a dozen ceramic chalice and worshiped together with them. Bright colors of flesh pink, tan, and reddish brown filled the worship space with their shining light.

Each communion cup was splendid by reflecting its own tone of glazing as if it knew that it was especially chosen for Holy Communion. The pottery cups were making a distinctive sound “czing, czirung” in order to adjust to the room temperatures of our worship space from the kiln temperature where they had been overnight. The morning prayer was the rare moment of joy and wonder since those communion cups worshiped together with us sincerely as if they were living creatures who breathed.

Pottery making has been on a wish list in our community for more than two years. We have hoped that all members of this community, through a handiwork experience of pottery art, could not only explore their artistic creativity but also enhance their own spiritual sensibility just as other monastic communities have developed their spiritual custom through pottery making, generation after generation. Finally, a studio was completed and a 4-cubic foot electric kiln was installed in the beginning of November. We were so grateful for the free instruction from Mrs. Ho Soon Ahn, well known pottery artist in Korea and Japan for her own technique of “Bunchong porcelain” during her month-long residency at Myra House.

This special occasion has been a learning opportunity for us to investigate what the communion vessels have meant and why they have taken the shape they have today. Especially it has been an eye opening event in that our vocational discernment has been sharpened as we have discovered from the tradition what the Chalice signifies for the community. The bowl’s round-circle and inwardly curved shape, open above, suggests that the community ought to strive for their spiritual life in their thirst for a new spirit and wisdom.

The knob’s curved shape that both hands can hold instructs us that the community ought to seek for guidance with two hands, one from Jesus in humility and faithfulness, the other from the Holy Spirit in wisdom and peace. The foot’s round circle-shaped bottom reminds us that the community ought to live not for their own profit but for the gain of the whole creation on earth.

In essence, Christian communities are chosen to be agents for a transformed world

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Myra House Gifts from Soul & Earth

Myra House Ministry is supported by the purchases of the following items:



*Candle- 4” diameter, 6” high: \$15
“Let your light shine...”(Matthew 5:16)*



*Communion Cup & Plate, Jar
\$100/Cup, \$50/Plate, \$100/Jar,
Total set \$240*



*Plant in ceramic pottery - 4” x 5”:
1 gallon waterlilly \$15
“May you... be like plants full grown...”(Psalm 144:12)*



*Genesis: 7 Stages Wall Hangings -
ceramic 8” x 5”: \$30 painted
\$200 total set
6 other images also available.
“God created human in God’s own image”
(Genesis 1:27)*



*Bearing Cross 5” x 9”: \$45
“I will keep on bearing you...
and will deliver you...”(Isaiah 46: 4)*

Upcoming items: Chalice & plate pottery, Natural dyed silk scarf, Natural dyed silk bed spreads & pillow shams

Thank You

You may take each item of the symbolical gifts based on suggested Contribution. Item can be ordered through the website:

**Thanks to 2005 Overnight Guests
Group Retreats
Continuing Supporters**

Overnight Guests

Jinsu Baik, CST Student
Sarah Brueggemann, Irvine, CA
Eunah Chang, North Hollywood
Rev. Jung Shik Chung, Hawaii
Seth Clayton, California
Jean Michelle Morot Gaudry, Laguna Beach, CA
Kerri Hotchkiss, Connecticut
Seong Soo Hwang, CST Student,
Helena (Juhye) Kim, USC Student
Ho Shin Kim, Incheon, Korea
Tae Shin Kim, New Jersey
Woong Shin Kim, Oregon
Seong Tae Lee, Korea
John Mayfield, Austin, Texas
Mia Meyers, Claremont
Mr. and Mrs. Shin, Korea
Guadalupe Tiznado, Phoenix, AZ
Robert Vincent, Claremont, CA
Erik Wakefield, Bakersfield, CA
Marcy Watts, Hamilton, OH

Retreat Groups

Bell Memorial UMC, Valley Korean Collage UMC,
Doo Rae Community Board Members, Glendale
UMC Single Group
Riverside District UMW Leaders, Grace UMC,
UMC Love Tres Dias Board Members
JNS & Associates, Inc.

Commuter Residents

Philip Clayton, CGU/CST Professor
Paul Mitchell, CST Student
Deborah Woodford, CST Student
Judi Horgan, CST Student

Permanent Residents

Jennifer Brueggemann, Resident Director
John Hearn – Harvey Mudd Student
Katie Hotchkiss, Scripps Student
Silvia Tiznado, CST Student
Amy Arnold, Hospice Chaplain
Sung Jin Song, Korean Methodist Seminary
James Richardson, Claremont
Stephen Kim, CST Professor

Special Contribution

Mrs. Ho Soon Ahn, Ms. Nancy Sue Carlisle, Mr. & Mrs. Chris & Candice Cho, Mr. Tea H. Cho,
Holliston UMC Myra House Saem Teo Group, Mr. John Suh, Mr. Jung Jin & Hae Jung Kim,
Rev. Kun Kap & Mrs. Haesun Cho, Mrs. Cathy Osman, Mr. Richard Rim,
Mrs. Hyun Sook Yoo, Mary F. Zambrano

Upcoming Events

- Weekly Communal Dinner - Wednesday, 6:00 pm
- Monthly Communal Gardening Day - last Saturday of each month.
- **March 24th, 2006 - 10:00 am - 12:00 pm - Ad hoc Board Meeting**

where genuine love, goodness and justice are abounding just as Jesus had used a shared cup for the new covenant and eternal salvation for the Lord's Supper. However, Christian communities are different from one another, just as many communion cups are not identical. Each community is different as it has been called in a specific context. We experienced that a dozen ceramic chalice did not look alike even if they had been molded by the same artist's hands and fired in the same kiln. Each condition—the artist's mood of the moment, the mixed ratio of water and clay, the glazing's quality and density—has created a unique cup just as faith communities are different in their vocational context even if each community believes that it is called to be an agent for the world.

The Myra House community has searched our own vocation as we discern God's call in responding to the specific condition of our context. Since the Myra House was established through the major renovation of an abandoned property in North Claremont in October 2001, this earth-friendly facility has become a home for numerous fulltime and weekly residents by providing an alternative life style of daily prayer, weekly communal dinner and monthly gardening. The facility also provides educational resources for residents and retreatants on how to become more environmentally friendly. This includes the facility's practice of using solar generated electricity, solar heated water, recycled water and a composting system. Along with its educational resources, the facility occasionally hosts seasonal arts/crafts and spiritual formation workshops at our pottery studio, carpentry studio and labyrinth garden.

Four years of living at the Myra House with young adults and adults from various cultures and traditions has taught me that intentional living faith communities are not only possible but crucial in today's world. As we strive to be the "body of Christ" and follow the "way of Jesus' faithfulness" at the Myra House, we learn about what it means to live in community, love others, and understand ourselves deeper. For this reason, our hope is that the Myra House will serve as a home in addition to its role as a relevant faith community for young adults, thereby generating a type of residential institute program. This way, young adults would not only learn about the issues that they would learn in a typical church setting but they would also grow in the practice of community living and reconciliation on a day-to-day basis. Thus, we dream our new direction as follows:

1. Myra House will form an intentional living institute for young adults (max-12 people including full/part-time staff)
2. The institute will be a holistic living context for multi-ethnic young adults' new life, in which they will live together, serve the local community and grow in their Christian faith through personal solitude, bible studies, classes, mentorship, art and gardening and community projects.
3. The institute's program aims to nurture young adults to be agents of peace, love and transformation as they conform to Jesus' faithfulness by engaging in service projects in the local community and exploring the possibility to participate in issues on a global community scale.
4. The target group will be individuals between the ages of 18 and 28. These individuals are generally in times of transition and looking for opportunities to travel and be a part of transient programs; i.e., those who are in between the stages of college and grad school, school and work, etc. The target group will be recruited through Sung Sohn's recruitment presentations, mailings, word of mouth, and various other connections that the Myra House has developed.
5. The institute will create a name, recruitment/informational brochures and a website, which will attract


young adults and financial support.

6. The website can be accessed through the general web of the Myra House, possibly to the official websites of Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate School.

7. The institute will take part in various fundraising efforts such as events, mailings, visitations, and personal connections to assist in its foundation, establishment and ongoing expansion.

8. The institute will strive to be a model of a basic Christian community for young adults where authentic identity, faithful leadership and vocational discernment will be cultivated. Included in the community will be a space where other individuals may come for short term and longer term retreats. This will enable the institute's students to meet other groups of people and practice hospitality.

The proposed institute, as a model of the beloved disciple community, hopes to impact the local and global community by inviting young believers from other states and countries who strive to emulate Jesus' faithfulness while they are in transition; whether it is between the academy and a career, college and grad-school, or single life and marriage. Although the community is only 10-12 people, it seeks to be more of a comprehensive holistic context and an ecologically literate community aiming to be agents of peace, love and transformation by developing authentic identity, fostering faithful leadership and exploring vocational discernment through personal solitude, bible studies, mentorship, gardening and community service projects, and creative arts, while they engage in a new cultural setting and an ecologically sustainable environment.


Keeping the above dream as a new path for the year of 2006 at Myra House, our board will be restructured and a further brainstorming process will continue. All our friends and supporters will be in our prayers as Paul exhorted in his prayer for the Philippians: your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best. ---Philippians 1:9. 

Highlights of Participated Events of 2005

Teaching opportunity: *Church Centered Education and Earth Centered Education* at RE 301, The Educational Ministry of the Church, Fall 2005.

Paper and Seminar Presentation: *A CALL TO NEW LEADERSHIP FOR THE CHURCH: PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUNGADULTS* to the Leadership UMSCE Conference, July 30-Aug 3, Jekyll Island, GA.

SPACE FOLLOWS SPIRIT: Quest for "Holiness" in Worship Space at Multimedia Seminar, Cal-Pac Korean UMC April, 12, Glendale UMC.

Hosting a Field Trip: *The Pilgrimage to Taizé-L'abri-Bruderhof* under the goal in: (1)Sharing Life Story---participants were recharged by joys and concerns in life stories and fellowship with people from different countries, (2) Searching Beauty---participants explored the beauty in witnessing authentic worship and prayers and reunite with the risen Jesus Christ, (3) Shaping Discipleship---participants discovered gifts and graces for restoring a peaceful and loving earth community, May 18 to 28, France and England 

Stepping out of a comfort zone

The Pilgrimage to Taizé-L'abri-Bruderhof

Sunyoung Park, CST Student

Since I returned from the pilgrim trip to spiritual communities in France and England, I came to have a new treasure. Every time I sit down to study, I lift up my eyes to the board that are posted in the wall of my desk to see a wide picture that was taken at Taize last summer. I visited three spiritual communities with the group, but I would like to share how I have been transformed by worshipping at Taize.

I can see a ton of young people sitting closely next to each other holding a lit-candle in their hands on the picture. Although this is a picture, I still feel such a heart warming joy and love that I felt at the first night when I had arrived there. It was very tough journey for our group to get to Taize, flying from LA international airport to France and kept transferring from train to the subway, also from the subway to the bus, it was literally tiring journey. Despite the physical tiredness, my spirit wanted to be rejuvenated by seeing how the worship service looked like. It might be mere curiosity to expose myself to the internationally well-known Taize worship service, however, when I actually stepped into the gigantic sanctuary, it was a lot more than I could imagine it would be. I was truly overwhelmed by the great number of people who filled with the humongous hall. I could feel such a deep piety and spiritual intensity of the people who gathered there. I could also see a thousand of young people who sat in a hall to experience God's overwhelming love. Where do this thousand of young people come from? Didn't people say that the young people in Europe do not come to the church? Didn't people say that the spirituality in European countries die because of their material comfort?

What I was witnessing in the worship hall was totally different from what I kept hearing from people. I saw the deep seated desire of young people who were craving for meeting God and their strongly rooted trust in God that God meets those who desire to receive the love of God. Immediately, I was deeply moved by being surrounded the depth of God's love that has been unwavering, unconditional, and also indescribable to my life. Tears welled up in my heart and burst into my eyes. Why did God invite me to be here to experience this overwhelming love that I do not think that I deserve to receive. Why did God keep holding me in His arms this warm yet this strong? From the moment that I had walked into the Taize hall, I have realized that God invited me to see how universal spiritual hunger was. I learned that God has created all in the same love regardless of race and culture, however that did not seem to come down to my heart. Now I accept that teaching from the bottom of my heart that we are one body in the love of Christ who was sent by God to help us know how big our God is.

This realization that we all are spiritually connected with one another regardless of our race, ethnicity and culture has helped me step out of my comfort zone and led me to do my local church internship at English speaking church. Although I believed God was greater than my own spiritual tradition, I was still afraid of crossing the line to walk into the unknown area. Witnessing the universal love of God, however, was a wake-up call to me that I should not be hesitant any more to accept God's urgent calling to a new spiritual adventure. The trip to Taize has breathed courage into me. The courage is grounded in God's mighty love so that I have nothing to be afraid of.

