

From the editor

From June 6th to 14th, the mission team was sent to the Netherlands and Spain, and all the leaders in Europe gathered together as one in the Netherlands and prayed for the peace of the world.

For this issue, we would like to share with you a message "Father, If You Are Willing" by Eri Kamata, with a testimony "Team Divine Comedy -Praise and Prayer for Peace on the Europe's Last Battlefield-" by a house church leader in Germany.

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## Father, If You Are Willing

Europe Regional Worship in Texel Island on June 9, 2024

Eri Kamata

I had been sick since childhood due to abnormal kidneys. Many times, I was so closed to death with serious infections.

I don't know if that was the reason, but ever since I was little, I felt there was a bottomless dark pit inside me. I was scared and felt fear of death.

I thought that Christianity might save me, so I got baptized when I was 25 years old. But the fear didn't go away.

Then I thought I could be saved if I became a better Christian. So, I diligently followed the pastor's teachings and focused on what I should do and shouldn't do as a good Christian.

However, the more I tried, the more burdened I felt. I didn't understand the cross of Jesus was for me at that time.

When I was 37 years old, my husband was transferred to the Netherlands, and I had lived there for 6 years. One day, I was hospitalized due to a high fever. But no matter how much I prayed, my fear didn't go away. I started thinking that even if God exists, He wouldn't pay attention to me. I was hopeless.

In those days, I had a chance to borrow a monthly booklet called "The Vine" issued by Kohitsuji no Mure Christian Church. When I was reading it, the scripture came to me as if it were living. I instantly knew that here I would be able to find what I had sought.

Then I found that there would be a Kohitsuji no Mure retreat in New York. From the Netherlands, I went to the New York retreat, thinking this would be my last chance to seek Christ.

During the last service of the retreat, as we were singing "The Lord's Prayer," a clear image came to me. I felt as if Jesus had come down from the cross and walked toward me who was sitting in the back corner.

At the moment I felt Him standing right next to me, something hot flowed from the top of my head. The presence of the Lord embraced me. The scales fell from my eyes, and I found that I had already been saved by the cross of Jesus.

I was so happy to find that Jesus was alive now and living with me.

Even after returning to the Netherlands, I continued praising as if I was dating the Lord. My heart was filled with joy. I was so happy. Then, I noticed my kidneys were healed, and my fears of the hole and the bottomless dark pit I had inside me were gone.

I was so happy that I started Kohitsuji no Mure house church gathering at my place in the Netherlands.

When I read the Bible scriptures which sounded like laws, they became new living words. They didn't blame me anymore, and I felt God's love in them. And Jesus's prayer in agony in the garden of Gethsemane became so close and new to me.

It is a prayer that Jesus prayed on the day before He was crucified. He prayed all alone saying, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death, (Matthew 26:38 NKJ)" and sweat blood in agony.

Let me read the scripture.

"Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."

And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground. (Luke 22:42, 44 NAS)

In fact when I was feeling fear, I became so tense that my fear broke blood capillaries and made purple bruises on my face and all over my body. However, I thought, no one would understand my fear like this.

However, reading this, I thought Jesus was the only One who understood my fear.

The Bible says, "His sweat became like drops of blood," which is not a figure of speech. I have heard that when people experience the extreme fear, their blood capillaries break and their sweat mix with blood. I have also heard that death-row convicts in prison sweat blood before the death penalty.

How frightening it must have been to be crucified on the cross as the sacrifice for the punishment of sin for all mankind!

Even Jesus cried out, "Father, if it is Your will, please

take this cup away from me.” I thought that He was so afraid of the cross as His sweat of blood fell on the ground.

Christ, though God, became a man and experienced all human fear. I think no human could face such fear.

The hole I was seeing must have been the hole Jesus fell in order to save us all. Maybe I was horrified just seeing a glimpse of it.

However, the Lord took the cup of the cross instead of running away from the fear. It was for me and for you.

The new praise, “Prayer of Gethsemane” is given to us from heaven for this European mission. The lyrics are from the word of the Lord’s fierce prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. But if you listen, you’ll find the resounding of this praise conveys no agony of Jesus.

Jesus experienced the ultimate fear and loneliness of the deepest hell. Yet, hearing the praise, I felt Jesus rejoicing and willing to suffer the despair of the cross for the sake of our happiness.

*♪ Father, if it is Your will,  
Please take this cup away from Me.  
Yet, not My will, but Yours.  
Your will must be done.*

(Father, If It Is Your Will)

*♪ Father, if You are willing,  
Remove this cup from Me.  
Yet not My will, but Yours be done.*

(Father, If You Are Willing)

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.  
(1 John 4:18)

The perfect love of His cross casts away my fear. I was afraid of the hole inside me, because I did not see the love of the Lord.

Knowing the love of the Lord is the same as knowing I am forgiven. When my fear was gone, I could believe that I was completely forgiven. Now I can say that Jesus loves all of me, even my sins.

I am still a coward, yet now I can say to myself. “It is alright to be scared. For Jesus is with me.”

This fear of the hole may exist inside everyone. For some people, it may be a hole of loneliness, fear of illness, life-threatening wars, terrorism, or anxiety about the future.

Even though we have fears, the perfect love was completely done by the cross of the Lord. So we can give thanks to the Lord.

Let us have a Holy Communion.

*♪ Father, If You Are Willing*

Now we would like to praise “Credo.” Credo means “to believe” in Latin. This praise was given to us during our mission trip to Europe in 2009.

In this mission, the Lord said to us;

*I love Europe so much  
that I am going crazy.*

The resounding of “Credo” must be the Lord’s faith in heaven coming down to us. He believed us before we believed Him. The lyrics are based on the words of the

Apostles' Creed, which the saints for generations have proclaimed, "I believe in Christ," for hundreds of years. We'd like to praise with our gratitude to the Lord together with all the saints in heaven.

♪ *Credo, credo, credo*  
*in unum Deum*  
*Patrem omnipotentem*  
*Credo in unum Deum*

(I believe in the only God the Father Almighty.)

People insist on their righteousness and end up fighting wars again and again. We cannot give up their assertion. However, the Lord has given up His righteousness and loved us to the end.

Now, the praises from heaven are overflowing. We believe this worship, which is based on the love of the Lord, resonating with those who have returned to heaven, will bring healing to all.

Let us pray that the Lord's love would cover the entire earth.

May His peace be done in Europe and all the nations.

June 9, 2024

# Team Divine Comedy

## Part 1

“Praise and Prayer for Peace on the Europe’s Last Battlefield”

A house church leader in Germany.

I heard the European missionary team left Japan, being blessed as “Divine Comedy.” Needless to say, the missionary journey turned out to be a spectacular Divine Comedy joined by local comedians (four house church leaders and one regional staff worker) from Holland, Spain and Germany.

The tour was well organized, yet we had full of surprises and unexpected incidents that the Lord worked out in His unique way. We were thrilled every time, yet we were also able to enjoy the presence of God. In this respect, the journey was truly a divine comedy and the list of the incidents goes on and on. However, this report concentrates on Dutch mission first.

The Europe Regional Worship was held on the island of Texel, the hometown of Rob Kleinhuis, the house church leader in Amsterdam on the mainland.

The island of Texel was occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II and is called “Europe’s Last Battlefield.”

The battle was triggered by Georgian soldiers who had been taken there as war prisoners to fight as the German army.

On April 5 1945, Georgian rebelled against their commanders. The Georgians managed to seize control of most of Texel, however the Germans launched a

counteroffensive with reinforcements, resulting in intense and brutal combat. The battle lasted even after the unconditional surrender of Germany.



“Lighthouse in Texel”

The Georgian cemetery is therefore the place where is the closest in time to World War II. When we praised and prayed for healing and peace in Europe and the world, the cloudy sky cleared and the sun shone. As a great wind blew, grass, flowers, birds, and other creatures began to make sounds and even a large flock of geese flew above us. We were all astonished by the phenomenon. The endlessly blooming little red roses swayed in the fresh breeze and they looked like soldiers as if they were worshipping and praising God.

We began our Joint Worship for the peace of the world at the last battlefield in Europe, which was something only God could do.

In the awe of God, I give thanks to the Lord.

June 16, 2024

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