

## Blessing of Notre Dame Eco Spirituality Center, Province of Regina Pacis, Incheon



The Notre Dame Eco Spirituality Center was built in 2008 on Gang-Hwa Island with the name Achimgari Eco-Farm. Beginning with the words “Women prophets of this time” from the 2004 general chapter, attention and discernment were sown like seeds. The subsequent chapters of 2010 and 2016 illuminated JPIC as urgently needed in our lives and provided even more lively motivation to our community.

In 2008, launching the center’s construction with soil as the main material, we also began farming, with concrete plans and dreams for the future. At the time, we were adapting ourselves to the region while staying in one of farmer’s houses there. After moving into the newly built home in 2011, at last we could unfold our plans. In particular, since 2013 when experienced sisters in the educational field became the part of the community, suitable programs for its characteristics have been developed and operated. The program called “Earth, I will protect you” which was elaborated at the time and revised and complemented

several times afterwards, is now run as a continuous offering. Programs warrant frequent adjustment to reflect the needs of the times. For this purpose we have to be constantly aware of the signs of the times and try to respond to them.

Many parish priests and sisters showed their interest in our programs, and more than four hundred elementary, middle, and high school students annually participated in our summer camps. During the spring and autumn programs, kindergarten children are invited to plant seeds and harvest. In fact, while more children and youth from parish communities and institutes wanted to take part, the small size of our original house of red soil couldn't accommodate all the programs and people. After discernment by members of the Incheon Province, we constructed an additional wing in 2019, which was blessed on Mar. 1, 2020. The Novel Coronavirus crisis kept many people from attending the ceremony. Only eleven were present including Bishop John the Baptist Chung of Incheon and Sister Marie Julia Seon, the Provincial Superior, but it was a time to experience the power of prayers of many sisters and friends. This humble ceremony rather befitted our community.

Revitalizing the soil is our primary goal. We strive in particular to relate this goal to our congregational identity and to raise suitable awareness. Although the piece of land we care for is not huge, we can contribute to one of the most urgent needs of our time by caring for the earth so that it supports life to the full.

The Prophet Joel proclaims the passion God has for his own land: "The Lord grew jealous for his land and took pity on his people" (Joel 2:18). God urges us to incarnate his Word so that his passion and mercy may continue for our time, too. The members involved in this ministry view the Eco Spiritual Center as the most marginalized zone and draw strength from the prayers of all sisters.

Several sisters have already ministered in Notre Dame Eco Spiritual Center. Our hope is to be able to open the ministry to the sisters of other nationalities for wider engagement. We thank God for allowing us the new wing expressing his passion for the land and as a means of renewing that passion every day. With deep gratitude to all who were present through prayers and concern, we ask for continuous support.