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On the Fourth Conference of Japanese and Korean Theologians

Mitsuharu Akudo

On Friday, November 7, 2014, Seigakuin University and Presbyterian College and Seminary of Korea held the Fourth Conference of Japanese and Korea Theologians at Seigakuin University.

Seigakuin University and its General Research Institute signed a formal Exchange Agreement with Presbyterian College and Seminary in September 2008. Presbyterian College and Seminary proposed at this time that the two institutions hold a series of Conferences of Japanese and Korean Theologians. The first conference was held on March 10, 2009 at the Presbyterian College and Seminary on the theme, “European and American Theology, and Asian Theology.” The second was held on November 2, 2012 at Seigakuin on the theme, “The Acceptance of Moltmann’s Theology.” The third was held at the Presbyterian College and Seminary on October 25, 2013 on the theme, “The Problem of Suffering in the Contemporary World: the Great Earthquake, Grief, and Death.”

The theme of this fourth conference was “Establishing the Dignity of Life.” Following a message by Presbyterian College and Seminary Professor of Theology Hyun, Yo-Han for the All Seigakuin Worship Service given in the chapel, the conference was held at Seigakuin’s Veritas Hall. In his opening greetings, Seigakuin President Kang, Sang-Jung touched on the relation between the earthquake disaster in Japan and the sinking of the Korean ferry Sewol, still fresh in the memory, and questioned whether life had dignity. Dignity meant to have the sense that each person is important. To have this sense requires capacity for sorrowing, suffering, and concern, and so touches on the existence of the spiritual dimension.

In the first section, Professor Kubotera, Toshiyuki spoke on “Spiritual Care

for the Wounded Soul.” This was followed by a response by Professor Youn, Chul-Ho of Presbyterian College and Seminary and a lively open discussion. The second section followed with Presbyterian College and Seminary Professor Park, Seoung-Gyu’s lecture, “Seeking a Theological Response in the Time of Crisis to Establish the Dignity of Life.” This was followed by comments from Kang, Sang-jung and Akudo, Mitsuharu and a time of discussion.

We hope that this academic dialogue will continue in the future and will contribute to peace in East Asia.