

Rev Dr Kao Chun Ming – an appreciation

The news of Dr Kao's passing brings with it a deep sadness which spans the time zones together with a profound sense of gratitude for the privilege which was ours to have encountered Dr Kao and his wife Ruth during the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of PCT some four years ago. He was a man who was a fine Christian with a deep faith expressed in a life of charismatic humility, projecting a deep sense of serenity and that tranquillity which comes from one who has faced all that life brings: joys and sorrows; times of hope and times of despair.

It was in October 2010, with my wife Annette, I had the privilege of visiting Taiwan during my year as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. There, I encountered Dr Kao – but not in person. During our visit to the PCT Office in Taipei I'd noticed a poem hanging on the wall. We have a photograph of the words in our album for the year.

'God's way'

I asked the Lord for a bunch of fresh flowers
But instead he gave me an ugly cactus
With many thorns

I asked the Lord for some beautiful butterflies
But instead he gave me many ugly
And dreadful worms.

I was threatened,
I was disappointed
I mourned.

But after many days,
Suddenly.

I saw the cactus bloom
With many beautiful flowers.
And those worms
Became beautiful butterflies
Flying in the Spring wind.

God's way is the best way.

I did not know then that, some five years later, I would have the privilege and pleasure of meeting Dr Kao and his wife Ruth. It was in 2015. Annette and I had been invited to Tainan for the Dedication of Dr Elizabeth Ferguson Christie, Memorial Chapel at Sin Lau Hospital before attending the 150th Anniversary Celebrations in Kaohsiung.

We met at a Banquet and we were photographed with Dr Kao and Ruth. 'Having a meal together', Dr Kao is recorded as saying, 'is much more than just eating and drinking. The meal is a celebration of life. It is a celebration of the gifts of life with people we share and cherish. It is one of the most intimate and sacred of all human pastimes.'

Dr Kao was a man of deep faith, great courage, gifted with insight, wisdom and vision, underpinned with the humility of the Christ he served so well.

May I conclude with these words

Jesus said *'Peace I leave with you my peace I give to you, not as the world gives, give I to you, do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be anxious'*

Gaelic Prayer

Deep peace of the running waves to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

Our prayers and thoughts are with you all

Shalom

Very Rev John C Christie

16 February 2019