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Play in Nature, an Encounter With Nature

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Play in Nature, an Encounter With Nature

Eun Joo Jung

The reason I gave the title “Play in Nature, an Encounter With Nature” is that children play in nature every day and there are opportunities to naturally meet and experience nature in play. I hope to share the importance of nature and its preciousness in daily life.

The Surrounding Environment of the Notre Dame Kindergarten in Osan, South Korea

The Kindergarten has a huge lawn garden. The name is Marcelino Gardens. Children are free to run around in the spacious Marcelino Gardens, observing trees, flowers and small insects.



They can spend time playing with ropes, playing with objects and pulling carts. Even if it rains, they can take an umbrella and go for a walk.

In the front yard of the kindergarten, there is a large vacant lot, a vegetable garden and a flower garden. Children plant, water and grow plants here. There are many vegetables, such as corn and lettuce as well as flowers, and of course, they can eat the vegetables when they are ready. Another play space is a sand playground where they play with bare feet.

Notre Dame Kindergarten puts environmentally conscious activities at the centre. The first picture is the tap. No soap is used here and the water for washing the hands automatically flows to the ground for the lawn. The second picture is a large field where children can plant, cultivate and harvest seasonal crops themselves. Potatoes, sweet potatoes and Chinese cabbage for kimchi as well as peanuts grow here. Finally, the toilet in the Marcelino gardens collects rainwater which is used for flushing. All children are learning to protect nature.



The Project of the Three Themes: Trees, Flowers and Potatoes

First Theme: Trees

There are fruit trees around our kindergarten. Various fruits such as Korean Plums, apricots, plums, peaches, chestnuts, etc. can be harvested in each season. Among them, Korean plums and apricots were harvested in June. Harvested Korean plums and apricots are made into tea and all the children take it home. Children also pick apricots and eat them while they play. One day, during a conversation with the children, they said, “the trees give us delicious fruits. But what do we give to the tree?”. So they decided to give a present to the trees. You can see what the present is in the QR code.

Tree, Tree

Children in Notre Dame Kindergarten



Sr. Caritas Maria

나	무	아	나	무	아	개	곳	한	공	기	고	마	워
Tree	-		Tree	-		Thanks	-		for	clean	air	-	
나	무	아	나	무	아	나	쁜		공	기	미	안	해
Tree	-		Tree	-		So	-	rry	a	-	bout	the	bad
나	무	아	나	무	아	내	가	너	를		지켜	출	깨
Tree	-		Tree	-		We	will	pro	-	tect	you	-	

Second Theme: Flowers

Children plant and water flowers at the beginning of the year. One day, the children saw wild flowers that they had not planted while playing and brought them to me to smell the scent. After observing these flowers, they put them in an ice mold and made ice flowers to keep them cool, because the weather was very hot.

They tried to express the observed flowers in this way with the scarfs and they performed a song called “It’s All flowers”, which is famous in Korea. You can watch it on video in QR code.

모두가 꽃이야 It's All flowers.

Hyeong Sun Ryu
arr. Sr.Caritas Maria

Piano	산	에	피	어	도	꽃	이	고	들	에	피	어	도	꽃	이	고
Xylophon																
Triangel																
Piano	길	가	에	피	어	도	꽃	이	고	모	두	가	꽃	이	아	
Xylophon																
Triangel																

*Text: It's All flowers, whether they bloom on mountains, in fields, or by the roadside.
Wherever they bloom, it's All flowers.*

Third theme: Potatoes

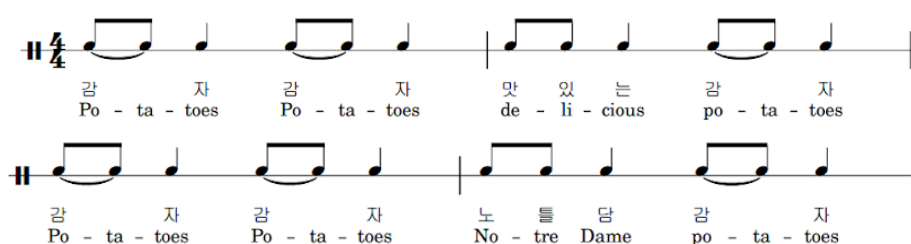
Potatoes were also planted in March by the children themselves and harvested in June. Through digging they learn to appreciate the gifts of the land. The children invited their parents to their potato market to sell these harvested potatoes. They sold the potatoes to their parents and the parents freely donated the money. Various activities were prepared at the potato market, such as steamed potatoes cooked in a traditional way, baked potatoes, peeling potatoes and taking pictures with potato figures. Donations from the parents and sales of potatoes were used to help children in Ukraine and Myanmar.

The children formed a PR team to sell their crop: to sing potato rhymes and potato songs to advertise the potatoes. You can also watch the video in QR code.



Potato rhythm

Children in Notre Dame Kindergarten



시장잔치

Market feast

Sung Gyun Kim
arr. Sr. Caritas Maria



*Text: There are potatoes. There are delicious potatoes. You can't buy them tomorrow.
Go buy them quickly. Otherwise, they are sold out.*

Reflection

In this way, in Kindergarten, I tried various activities by connecting the ideas that came to mind in the children's play, to the Orff class. It seems that it was a time to receive, eat, and share the gifts of nature that are freely given in the environment and to have a grateful heart. Although I couldn't go into more depth because I was only active for a short time in June. We look forward to the celebrations with nature that will be held here at the Notre Dame Kindergarten in Osan in the future.

Resources

- Kim, Sung Gyun (1999) *시장잔치 (Market feast)*. In: *김성균 동요집 제1권* (Kim Sung Gyun's Childsongbook No.1), kookminbooks, p. 74.
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Eun Joo Jung (Sr. Caritas Maria) is a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame with a major in Early Childhood Education. She holds a Master in *Elementare Musik- und Bewegungspädagogik* from the Orff-Institut Salzburg and is a member of the Korean Orff-Schulwerk Association. She is an EMTP teacher at Notre Dame Kindergarten in Osan, South Korea.