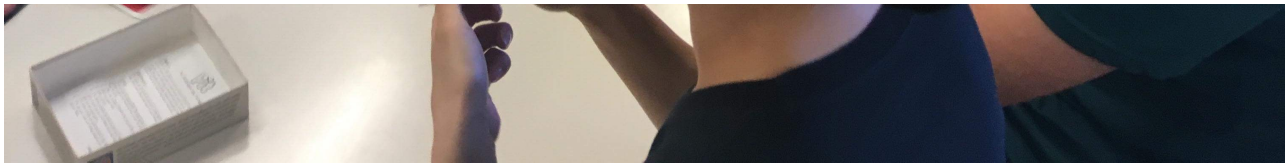


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Kanto Gakuin University





SANDRA DORSAINVIL

Be a Man and Serve the World.

Chapel presentation January 11, 2019 respectfully submitted by Nita Bryan

Scripture text: Matthew 20:28

28just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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When I first saw the motto of Kanto Gakuin University, I admit I was very surprised. Be a man and serve the world. "Wow, I guess they don't know they should include women too," I thought. According to this motto, what should women do, just be here on earth for decoration? What an old fashioned idea, so I thought.

Very soon I realized I had fundamentally mistaken the meaning. Be a Man and Serve the World..Hito ni nare houshi seyo. It's really just a funny thing in the translation. Of course hito means person, male or female. But Be a person doesn't work well in English, so the word man must be the substitute. Really, it's a shortcoming of my own language, not the motto itself. I accept this humbling realization as graciously as I can.

Let's talk about serving the world, and what it means. Can you think of any historical leader who was truly a servant? I can think of very few. I can think of even fewer who act as servants in these modern times. If we're honest, most people seek to serve themselves - after all, it is human nature. We all usually seek our own pleasure first, and it takes great effort to act against that instinct.

Let's talk about the word maturity. We might be able to say Be mature and serve the world. It makes sense to me in English, at least. So, who among us is mature? Those who can look outward from themselves and see the world around and what is required to reach out to others. Children aren't mature, are they? What do they do when they are uncomfortable? They cry. Whose way do they want, all the time? Their own. By their nature, children are bound by their selfish perspective. Maturity comes when we outgrow that, and lift our eyes towards others and the needs that we can help them meet. You might ask, by what age should that be? There is no clear answer. I think we all know young people who are quite mature, and old people who are sadly still terribly immature.

Lastly, let's talk about the word "world." What does that mean, all of planet earth? A whole country? A multi-national company? An entire university? Maybe just an office space and the eight or ten people working there. Maybe a small household and the few people living there. In this life, we are all called into different settings, different worlds. Your particular world is where you find yourself, your place to serve.

Be mature and serve your world. Can you imagine what a wonderful situation we would find ourselves in if everyone followed this motto? No more greed, no more anger, no more selfishness, no more crime, no more punishment, no more pain or ugliness at all. Only perfect, unselfish service of others. Wow, that is quite beautiful to imagine.

Last question - who should be our role model for following this motto? Who set the perfect example of Being a Man and Serving the World? A great king or president? A military leader? My friends, there can be only one. The one Man whose world is the whole entire universe. The only perfect Man who ever lived, the beautiful, righteous, holy Son of God. And how did he live? Did he demand that others serve him, as he very well deserved? No, he did not. He devoted his life to the simple service of others. He spent his time talking with lowly people, feeding hungry people, forgiving contrite people, healing sick people and teaching all of those wise enough to listen to him speak. He rode in fishing boats and on a donkey. His was a life of unflinching service and sacrifice.

I'll close by leaving you with this question: Who do you serve? Do you serve yourself, or do you serve others, and what is your motivation? For myself, I know there are many opportunities to be more mature, more of a hito, if you will. I have joined you all in the effort the university motto describes. Let's all try to Be a Man, and Serve the World hito ni nare hoshi seyo.

