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"People are very grateful even for simple things"

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My name is Kim Su Min. I was born in Korea and currently I am in high school at Miriam College (Quezon City, Philippines). The school asked us to render a fixed number of hours for social service in a community.

From my friend, I learned about the outreach programs of Daniw Study Center, which I decided to join. For the First School Term, I signed up for the Park 7 Tutorials program, to teach Math and English to children in a poor community named Park 7.

I was nervous and a bit apprehensive at the start, thinking, “Would the kids be able to understand me?” and “Would I be able to deliver and teach something clearly?” I don’t speak Filipino. On the first day, however, I realized that my worries were unfounded. The kids were so nice, friendly, and understanding.

I helped in the tutoring program every week and here I realized how blessed I am! The less fortunate in Park 7 and I are equally human beings, the only difference being that I was born to a happy family in Korea and they were born in less fortunate circumstances. Neither the

people at Park 7 nor I chose the environments in which we were born. It is therefore my responsibility, being the more fortunate one, to help them. I went to tutor and teach them but to be honest, I was the one who learned more and gained more. I am not sure what this feeling of pity and grateful admiration that I have towards the kids is. But I would dare to call it love for neighbor and community, as Jesus taught.

In the Second School Term, I signed up for visits to the sick organized by the group in Daniw called Salted Caramel. We visited patients and their guardians at a government hospital, Quirino Memorial Medical Center, sharing snacks, accompanying and interacting with them, and praying with them the prayer for Saint Josemaria's intercession. Before the visits, I would assist in preparing the things

to bring, such as the food items and toys. After every visit, I joined the processing discussions.

I learned many things from these visits. The thing that struck me most was the fact that people are very grateful even for the simple things that we had to offer, like listening to their stories, cheering them up, and praying together. One old lady who was watching over a little girl with appendicitis ended up crying, thanking my partner and me for reminding her about the existence of God and the importance of prayer.

These experiences made me realize that God is using me as an instrument to fulfill his work in everyday life, even if I do not intend or realize it at the moment. In addition, I learned how to approach new people and how to appreciate small acts of kindness offered to me by the others in the Center.

I completed the required number of hours for service work, but I plan to regularly help in the outreach programs of Daniw. I give thanks to the kids and to the community of Park 7, all the people of the Center who treat me like part of the family, and God for this wonderful experience.

I can definitely say that the activities I joined in Daniw Study Center helped me to deepen in my Christian faith. I learned how to help and love my neighbor, as Jesus taught us and set us an example. Little by little, I want to get rid of the selfishness and greed within me and fill myself with kindness, compassion, and love.

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