

ASEACCU 2018 in Hiroshima, Japan

Shiori Kikama

I participated in the ASEACCU Students Conference from August 21 to August 26. It was held at Elisabeth Music University in Hiroshima. This year's theme was "Catholic Education and Peace Initiatives". Many students from Indonesia, Australia, South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Philippines and Japan gathered. We had eight lectures and visited places in Hiroshima City. We learned about the war and the atomic bomb, and discussed what the peace is.

It was my first trip to Hiroshima and I was glad to go there because it has historical significance in Japan. At the conference, I was not only able to engage in international exchange, but also to learn about Japan's sad experiences in war as well as beautiful aspects of culture such as Shinto theatrical dance known as kagura. On a personal level, but I met a girl who came from a university in Taiwan. Her school is my high school's sister school, so I was happy to feel a small international connection.

We had some fieldwork to do and divided into groups of six. Our group had three Japanese, two Filipinos and one Taiwanese. All of us like taking pictures so much that we took a long time to do our fieldwork. It was rather difficult to get the group together so we were always last, assembling just in time. Nevertheless, we I think we enjoyed ourselves the most of all the groups and we became good friends. I will never forget them. On the last day, we discussed the theme and what we thought about during the week, then gave a presentation. We thought about the peace from the three points of view of politics, the environment, and Catholicism.

One of the reasons why I applied to participate in this conference was to try out my English ability, but I realized that it is not good enough to understand English lectures and to express what I thought. In addition, I felt that it is important to have my own opinions. People my age from various countries had their own thoughts and could express them, which impressed me. I felt frustrated because I couldn't really explain what I thought. In our daily life, we have few chances to exchange opinions though. I would like to develop an interest in global issues and have my own opinions on them. This conference was an excellent experience for me to come in contact with various thoughts and cultures. I would like to participate in other events like this if I have the opportunity.