

**The Christmas in August,
The Exhibition to Save the Earth by Sr. Jo Kyu-hee (Elizabeth)**



In the world where everything seems to have stopped due to COVID-19, a global pandemic that swept the world, Sr. Elizabeth's (Seoul Province) hands had moved busily. It was to prepare an exhibition to give peace and comfort to those who are depressed by the limited activities and a bad economy caused by COVID-19.



The Gallery 1898 of the Archdiocese of Seoul was shining because of “The Christmas in August”. Sr. Elizabeth, a craftsman, had created her work inspired by the story of Christmas with materials obtained from nature. Santa Claus beside a big Christmas tree filled with gifts and a golden star on it ; the snowman wearing a red coat and hat like Santa Claus reminded the viewers of December when the infant Jesus was born. The image of the baby Jesus quietly sleeping in the arms of the Virgin Mary is peaceful. These works were made by Sr. Elizabeth through using boudoir craft in Korea and natural dyeing. Sr. Elisabeth completed her works by gathering thrown away pieces of cloth (silk, cottonwood, and hemp) from a Hanbok Store, dyeing with vegetable dyes such as arrowroot and mugwort, then painting and sewing them.

The only reason Sr. Elizabeth works with materials that can be found or obtained in everyday life, such as cork, cloth, and wood, is to convey the meaning of taking small steps from herself to cope with climate change. Sr. Elizabeth has been making works with ecological spirituality by recycling materials and waste products obtained from nature for over 10 years. Sr. Elizabeth was in charge of the apostolate of helping the poor and needy in social welfare facilities in Seoul and Incheon, and at the age of over sixty, she discovered her talent and set out on her path as a boudoir craftsman.

Sr. Elizabeth was recognized for her skills by winning awards in various art competitions, including a special selection at the 6th Korean pictorial art of painting biennale in 2015. She won a special selection at the 38th Korea Creative Art Exhibition. She produced the installation art 'The Light of Unity (2017)', a yellow flower symbolizing the students of the Sewol ferry, recycling eye drop containers.



Sr. Elisabeth won the silver prize in the crafts section from the 40th International Contemporary Art Exhibition.' The theme of her work is 'Saving the Earth', which she made of discarded gym balls and cork. The reason Sr. Elizabeth has chosen this theme was to urge the world that they should join " *Laudato Si*", Pope Francis' encyclical letter, to save the planet.

Nowadays, as more and more people complain of helplessness and depression due to the re-proliferation of COVID-19, Sr. Elizabeth hoped that a little joy would spread through her work.

Sr. Elisabeth's fifth personal exhibition was held in Exhibition Hall 1, Seoul Myeongdong Gallery 1898 until September 1st.

Sr. Jo Kyu-hee (Elizabeth)'s words; "People are stressed and mentally depressed by

COVID-19. I use a lot of pastel tones in my work. I would like people to feel comfortable looking at my work. I also set my mind while sewing each stitch. I worked while praying for the peace and joy that God gives to those who appreciate and purchase my work.