

**The original article appeared in :
Kobe College Bulletin, No. 158 [2010.3.16] Pp. 1-2.
By Kobe Jogakuin Bulletin Editorial Board**

**Dr. Matsuzawa expresses gratitude on completing
eight years as Chancellor, with God leading the way.**

*As I go down the road,
Though I know not the way,
Lord give me strength.
Prepare for me the way, oh Lord,
And I will follow straight and true.
Hymn 463*

On April 1st, 2002, just after 8:00 in the morning, I entered the chancellor's office with this hymn running through my heart. I felt wrapped in uneasiness and apprehension. Starting at 9:00 would be the ceremony to welcome the new faculty, followed by the new faculty orientation. It was also my first day as chancellor and my heart was troubled. At that time Chaplain Ii came into my office and offered up a prayer with me. That prayer strengthened me, and I renewed my resolve to undertake the responsibilities of this new position, which had been entrusted to me by God. That afternoon I, along with the other new faculty, participated in a prayer service before the grave of Eliza Talcott, co-founder of Kobe College.

It will soon have been eight years since that day. As of the last day of March, I will retire having completed two full terms as chancellor. In my speech on investment in office I said, "I accept this position believing that the Lord provides whatever help is necessary to those who serve him, no matter how insignificant they may be. I believe that God will use me to my fullest potential, and I will do my best to carry out His will, dedicating my whole self to the college." And the Lord did indeed give me countless helpers and strong guidance along my way.

I resolved to rise to the challenge of these difficult and exacting times by pressing forward with the

development of the College. However, I couldn't advance without the understanding, support and cooperation of the faculty and staff, who were essential in carrying out my various plans, and also in helping me make decisions on important problems.

I also had most valuable guidance and support from the Board of Trustees. A further source of encouragement was the words and prayers from my fellow alumnae of the Megumi-kai, who were a tremendous spiritual support to me. I am also thankful for the unflagging cooperation of the students and their parents in supporting the educational activities of Kobe Jogakuin. In particular, images come to mind of the students energetically working at the annual bazaar. Mere words are inadequate in expressing my deep gratitude for everyone's wholehearted participation and support. Thank you all so much for these past eight years!

These past eight years were a period of cooperative struggle to ensure the survival of our institution. At the time I took office, Japan was in a period of economic recession and financial uncertainty. The bank failures were a serious problem, and a decision was made that beginning in 2003 we must begin the "pay-off". My most pressing task was to ensure the safe-guarding of the precious tuition from the parents of college and KCHS students, as well as the supplementary funding from the Government. These funds together with our endowments had to be put to good use. I had to also focus on creating rules and procedures for managing these funds, and keeping a careful eye on the rating of the banks. I believe that this year was the first time that the National Personnel Authority recommended pay cuts. As I had no experience in the running of an educational institution, I relied on the guidance of the Board of Trustees who had thorough knowledge of finance, and I was up late every night with my nose buried in the previous years' statements of accounts. Although times were tough, I still look back on those days with fondness.

As the 21st century dawned, there was a sense of crisis. Due to the decrease in the number of eighteen year olds, it

was predicted that colleges and universities would not have enough applicants to reach their enrollment goals. However, the decrease in numbers of eighteen year olds by itself alone does not mean that everyone will be admitted to universities and colleges. Because, in 1990 16% of women continued on to college, a figure which had risen to 36% in 2000, and by 2008 was at 38%. Thus, the popularization of college education began.

In addition, the number of two year women's colleges has shrunk, from 504 in 1997 (a total student population of about 404,000) to 378 schools in 2009 (about 151,000 students) (*statistic from the Ministry of Education*). It can be speculated that the drop in women applying to two year colleges is due to the fact that they are choosing four year colleges instead.

We at Kobe College were aware that a new age was upon us, and we were forced to respond to the changes while still unable to grasp the overall situation. In particular, while large universities with good standing and tradition were making structural changes to the programs to their undergraduate and graduate schools and/or adding new academic departments, which increased their enrollment capacity significantly, as a small women's college we were hard-pressed to face this crisis.

Yet precisely because of the sociological condition of fierce competition to attract students, I thought that it was essential for Kobe College to return to the original spirit in which the college was founded, and to make it clear the college's mission and its 'reason d'etre' that is based on the fundamental essence of scholarship and education.

The first task was to reconfirm that Kobe College is a Christian institution committed to providing a liberal arts education which is the basis of all scholarships and education. That being established, the changing times demanded that we develop and expand our curriculum. We expanded our graduate school English major by adding a translation course; in the music department, we established a dance major, and the human sciences division was reconstructed to be composed of two departments: psychology and behavioral sciences and environment and bioscience. We also put much energy into applying for the grants put out by the Ministry of Education under the Koizumi Administration, such as the Program to Support the needs of Contemporary Education and the Program to support College Educational Initiatives of Distinction. As reported in previous *Kobe College Bulletins*, many of our departments have secured grants for a variety of programs.

I am also very thankful for the promotional activities of the faculty and staff, whose efforts enabled us to welcome large numbers of high school graduates applying to enter our college in this intensely competitive era. One challenge remaining to us is to fully integrate the new grant-funded curriculum into our liberal arts based education, and to determine how best to restructure or combine the liberal arts basis with the new need to be assessed.

In addition, as university education becomes more and more available to the masses, we need to keep an eye on guaranteeing our high quality of education. In particular, the faculty must be able to draw out the desire for learning in a new generation of students. Even at Kobe College, which prides itself on small class size, the student population has grown. Nevertheless, compared to mid- and large-scale universities, we have maintained a much smaller and more intimate learning environment. I believe it is the wish of all of our faculty that each student be exposed to new ways of scholarly thinking, and graduate having attained a confidence in their own abilities.

Regarding our six-year continuous program at the middle school and high school, we have preserved the traditional Kobe College education, but here, as well, we could not avoid responding to the demands of modern times. Starting in 2004, the middle school was increased to four classes, thus avoiding the irregularity of increasing the student body by one class once every six years. We are very appreciative of the increased efforts of the teachers, who have had to deal with an increase of three classes. Regarding the school building itself, although the building of a new facility is still in the planning stage, we were able to proceed with repairs and improvements to classrooms, restrooms, and the gymnasium, including better protection from earthquakes. All this was possible only with the support and cooperation of the entire faculty and staff. In addition, through the students' active participation in out of class activities, we were able to receive numerous prizes and awards, and we shared in the students' joy. This, too, was made possible by the support of the faculty, staff and parents of students.

Although I am but a small and insignificant vessel, the Lord entrusted me with a great task. All I did was to do my best, believing in the love and mercy of the Lord, while battling with my own weakness along the way. Through the support and cooperation of countless people, I have managed to successfully complete my tenure as chancellor. I feel a deep joy that I can now retire from this position with a

feeling of profound gratitude in my heart. In the future I will be praying for the successful development of my mother school— as one of her alumna