

## A Tribute to Nicholas J. Teele

Juliet W. CARPENTER

Nicholas Teele joined the Faculty of Liberal Arts of Doshisha Women's College two years after me, in 1988, the year of the historic move to Kyotanabe Campus. He was chair of the English Department from 2003-2005. In 2007 he joined the newly formed Department of International Studies, and from 2007-2010 he was president of our college. Through the past quarter of a century Nick has been a respected and cherished colleague and friend, someone always willing to go the extra mile. I'm honored to have a chance to express my appreciation in these pages.

Nick is the son of Protestant missionaries to China, and as he mentioned in his splendid "final lecture" at the Kyotanabe campus last year, a pivotal experience in his life came in China when he was a small boy of about four. As I remember the story, he got separated from his family one time, wandering off by himself into the woods. When they realized he was missing, they fanned out in search of him. He was found sitting with his feet dangling over the edge of a high cliff, communing with nature, engrossed in his surroundings and blissfully unaware of any danger. It's quite a story, and it tells us something about him. He has roots in Asia and grew up steeped in spirituality ; he has a spirit of adventure and deep sensitivity to nature ; and he follows his own path.

Like me, Nick has three children, and over the years we would trade stories and hints about parenting. When I was searching for a school for my son in the United States, he offered me advice based on his experience. Nick is also a teacher par excellence, one who always liked to challenge his students and

watch them grow. He championed the idea of an accelerated program to push students to high levels, which became our two-year AES program. He is a scholar who combines sweeping knowledge with careful attention to fine points of phrasing and nuance. He loves poetry, and particularly has made a study of the *Hyakunin isshu* and its various translations into English. I remember that when I was working on my translation of *Salad Anniversary* many years ago, he kindly took time to go over each tanka, comparing my versions with the originals and offering helpful suggestions. It is a pleasure to know that we will continue working together on the committee of the SEITO Hyakunin Isshu contest as judges for English tanka by high school students.

Above all, anyone who knows Nick knows that he is a man of high ideals and a champion of human rights. He respects all religious traditions and has in recent years found solace in the Greek Orthodox church.

Recently, thanks to the Spielberg film, it has struck me that Nick could even be described as Lincolnesque. When I saw the film, I was surprised to find something familiar about Daniel Day-Lewis's interpretation of the sixteenth president. The mild tone of voice, the sly, tension-easing humor and love of a good story, the fine intelligence and deep understanding of conflicting points of view, the uncompromising moral vision tempered by a realistic grasp of what needs to get done: these are some of the qualities that remind me of Nick. It has been a privilege to know him and work with him.