

The Emille Bell

Once upon a time, there was an ancient temple bell famous for its beautiful tone. It had been commissioned by a king as a way of showing the people's devotion to Buddha.

The king's advisors had told him that making a huge temple bell in honor of the Buddha would secure the nation from foreign invasion. So the king approached the greatest bell maker in the realm. The man worked hard and produced many bells, but none that was extraordinary, none that had a special tone.

Finally, the bell maker went to the king and told him that the only way to get the kind of bell he wanted was to sacrifice a young maiden. Soldiers were sent forth to find and fetch a young girl.

Coming upon a poor mother in a farm village with her small daughter, they took the child away. As they did, the mother cried out piteously, "Emille! Emille!" And the daughter's response was "Mother, O Mother!"

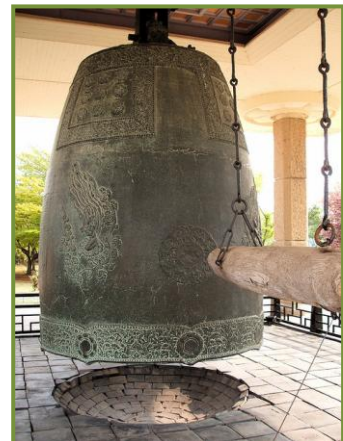
When the molten metals were prepared, the little girl was thrown in. At last, the bell maker thought, he had succeeded. The bell was finally cast in 771 AD, and it is the largest extant bell in Korea.

The bell, called the Emille Bell, made a sound more beautiful than any other. When it rang, most people praised the art that had produced such a beautiful sound.

But whenever the mother whose child had been sacrificed heard it, her heart broke anew. Her neighbors, who knew of her sacrifice and pain, could not hear the beautiful tone without pain either.

Only those who understand the sacrifice can feel the pain.

Today, the Emille Bell is stored in the National Museum of Gyeongju, and it is designated as the 29th national treasure of Korea. It weighs 18.9 tons. When rung, it is said to have been heard from 40 miles away on a clear day.



In the work we are called to do, our caregivers sacrifice much – their time, their talents, some interaction with their personal families, even financial resources in many cases, and sometimes working through physical pain.

The beauty arises from the quality of their service, in the good outcomes they achieve for our residents.

And it is noticed and appreciated by their Maker.

– Beecher Hunter