

CARP New Jersey's Miraculous Easter Fundraising Drive for their Trip to Japan

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Atsushi Takino rose nervously on Saturday morning. It was March 31st, the day before Easter, and he had a big weekend ahead of him. While other people would be painting eggs and baking cinnamon rolls, Atsushi and his friends would be selling flowers near his church in Clifton. They hoped to raise at least \$1000 for an upcoming trip to Japan. The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), a campus outreach program, hopes to send over 360 college students to Japan and Korea this summer. Their program is part of a yearly cultural exchange between the American, Japanese, and Korean CARP chapters. Last year, 120 American students made the trip.

Atsushi was hopeful as the weekend began. But as the hours passed and the flower buckets stayed full, it became harder and harder to persevere. “By 5:00PM on Easter Sunday, we still had many flowers left,” he explained. Hoping to try their luck elsewhere, Atsushi and his friends moved to a different spot and called on local families for support. It paid off.

“I couldn’t imagine what happened at the end,” he continued. “We were able to sell the majority of the remaining flowers with the support of many Blessed families.” While there, they also befriended a woman who was selling her own Easter goods nearby. The woman was so moved by the group that she wanted to buy Atsushi’s copy of the Chambumo Gyeong, a book of True Father’s words, right then and there. “As long as we don’t give up, God will send a supporter,” said Atsushi. The CARP students plan to meet up with the woman again on Mother’s Day, so that they can once again sell their goods together.