

My Father, Professor Coughlin

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I am very honored to contribute a brief message to this volume celebrating Professor Coughlin's retirement from KIU, in appreciation of his dedication to our department and university for 19 years.

Looking over his long curriculum vitae, it was quite a surprise that "Kohurin sensei," as both students and faculty members have addressed him with love and respect, was born in the same year as my mother. Kohurin sensei and my mother, as elementary students in wartime, might have been led to be prejudiced towards each other because of the education or the social atmosphere at that time. However, I have been educated by a number of American professors raised during the war, including Kohurin sensei, and I am writing in appreciation to this respected professor who has devoted 36 years to educating Japanese university students. I feel like it is totally impossible for us to know what will happen in our long lives!

Another surprising fact is that Kohurin sensei was teaching English at the School of Literature at Waseda University, around the time when I was studying as an undergraduate student, one who often came late for class and never dreamed of becoming a college professor. We may have encountered each other somewhere on campus as a professor and a student. He must have said 'Hi' to this totally strange student, smilingly, as he always does, and I could not have responded to him appropriately because of my shyness at that

time. Since he came to Japan, he has said 'Hi' to such shy Japanese students a million times and tried to motivate us to speak out in English. I know that he is fully aware now, based upon his expertise, what makes it difficult for us to speak out in English, a foreign language, and how he can activate our students, but I can imagine how much difficulty he has had in motivating us to speak out since he came to Japan for the first time.

I am certain that many of the faculty members of our department were such shy students, who later became interested in foreign cultures and societies through the incessant encouragement provided by our 'gaijin' professors. Without such encouraging and generous professors as Kohurin sensei, we would not have been active in our fields as teachers and researchers. I believe that it is our mission to educate our students with such love and encouragement as our professors provided for us.

Personally I have addressed Kohurin sensei as "Father," not only because of his position as a priest in the Anglican church, but also due to my great love and respect to this father-like professor who was born in the same year as my mother. It is my sincere hope that Professor Coughlin will stay healthy, encouraging us even after his retirement from KIU.