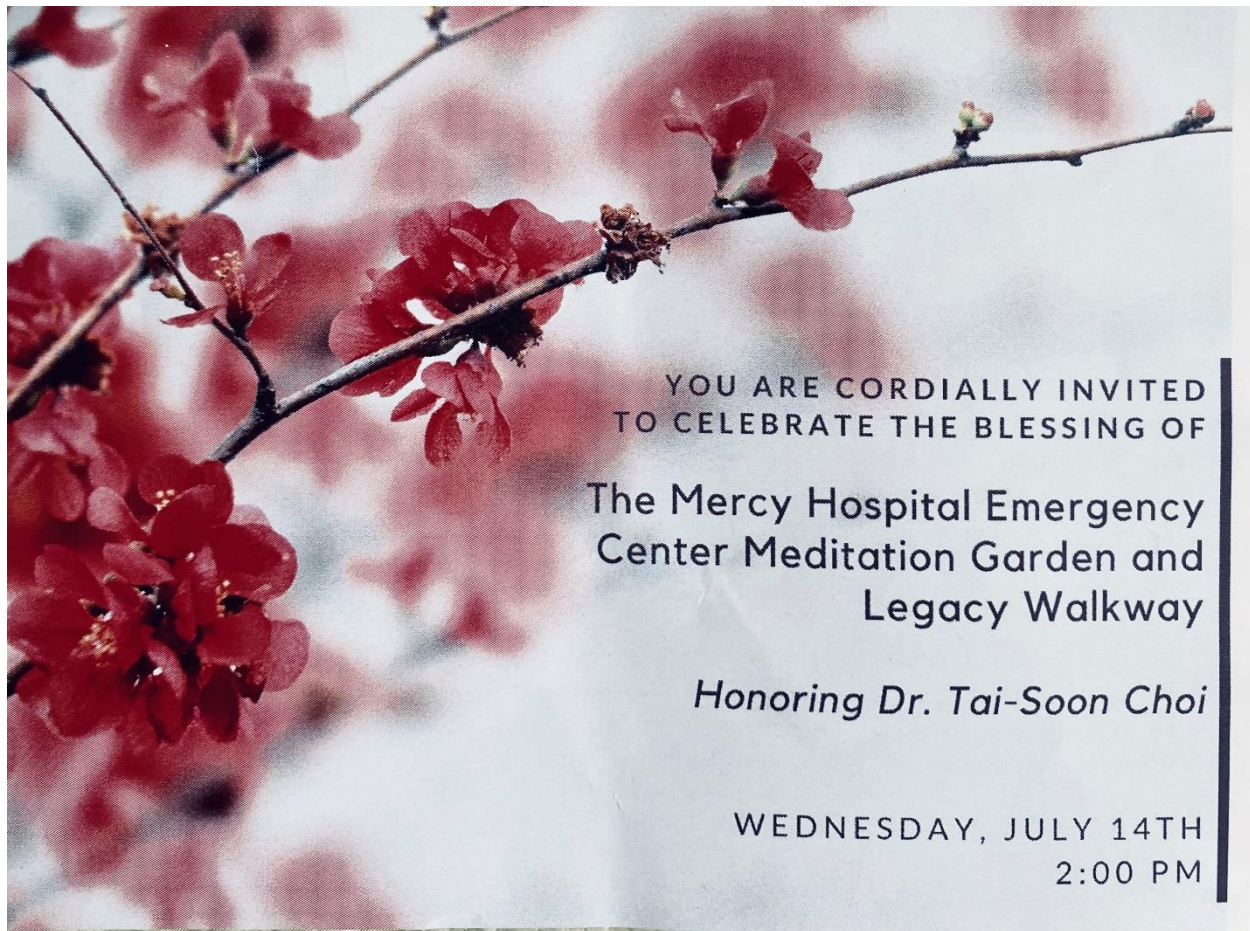


Dedication Ceremony honoring Dr. Tai-Soon Choi (61)



Dr. Tai-Soon Choi passed away on January 18, 2021 in Murrysville, PA, a suburb of Pittsburgh. In the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, due to a restriction of crossing the State line, I was not able to attend the funeral mass in person. I was, however, fortunate to observe the rites via Zoom. It was a small family gathering but was filled with love and moving tributes befitting his sacred life, which was marked with extraordinary dedication for saving very small and very vulnerable babies. He was also a man of Catholic faith in the deepest and purest sense. While he was still working at the Mercy Hospital, on March 19th 1999, the hospital's neonatology unit was dedicated to his honor, naming it "Tai-Soon Choi, M.D. Intensive Care Nursery." Upon his passing, the hospital wanted another dedication in his name. The following is from my observation of the event.



On July 14th, 2021, there was a dedication ceremony for Dr. Tai-soon Choi who passed away earlier this year. It was at Mercy Hospital located in South Buffalo. This is of course the hospital where he devoted his entire professional life as pediatrician and neonatologist. Before the ceremony, at 1:00PM there was a Christian Mass in memory of Tais-soon at the hospital chapel. In attendance were his wife, Yong-ui, their two daughters, one son and four of his 6 grandchildren Presiding priest regretted that he did not have a chance to meet Dr. Choi personally because he had heard so many incredible stories from so many people about Tai-soon. He said from what he heard, Dr. Tai-soon Choi was "a saint and a disciple of Jesus."

After the mass, a guide took us to "Dr. Tai-soon Choi Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery" where Tai-soon spent countless days and nights taking care of newborn babies in need of critical care. His love for children and selfless dedication for them is legendary and remains as folklore.

On this day, the dedication was at Mercy Hospital Emergency Center Meditation Garden and Legacy Walkway. In this quiet and beautiful setting, with background music, a "path stone" bearing his name was laid in the front part of the walkway. The dedication ceremony started at 2:00PM led by Executive Director, Mercy Hospital Foundation. Some seventy people were gathered, among them were some old nurses who had actually worked with him alongside. They reminisced about the time they spent with Tai-soon in the middle of snow storms and in the middle of the nights to save those critically sick babies. At the podium, Sylvia, Tai-soon's younger daughter, a pediatrician at the University in Pittsburgh, spoke about her father whose time they had to share with babies of Mercy hospital. Tai-soon was an incredibly loving man to his family and to all the people in the world. But he stood out the most for his absolute selfless dedication in caring for his sick and helpless small patients. During numerous gatherings (including local SNU Alumni meetings) we had in Buffalo, seldom was he able to stay through the entire time because he was literally on call day and night all his life. He never was able to join any cruise because he could not think of leaving his neonatal ICU any length of time.

It was an honor of a lifetime to have known him as a friend. I am so glad he would be forever remembered by the hospital for his incredible story of love and dedication. I am attaching here some pictures from the event.

Park, Seung-Kyoon and his class



