

Difficulties in Fukushima – Nuclear Issues Column

Nankodai Christ Church - Kasamatsu Kinuko

Stroking the brows and eyelashes of my sweet children breathing softly as they sleep. I did not birth them to be exposed to radiation.

What is hard in Fukushima. Today, my child had a nosebleed. It was probably because it was dry. It was probably because it was hot. It was because he was touching his nose. Oh, I remember. It was because he hit his nose. I will continue to tell my self these things and continue to give excuses.

This is a poem (translated to English) written by a mother who fears her child's exposure to radiation. I met her while working in disaster relief. Many that spend their days thinking, "I want to protect me children's life and future," relate to this poem.

Due to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, Fukushima prefecture, Miyagi prefecture, Iwate prefecture, and areas in Kanto have been polluted with radiation. Even the south of Miyagi prefecture, 60km from the power plant, was so polluted that it had to be set as a radiation control area. It is a land with beautiful nature. A land of rice filled with the treasures of the mountain. However the children were stolen of their freedom to play outside in the nature, and the families spend their days worrying about the lives and health of their children. The people live lives that are barely unimaginable.

Though the radiation level in the air has dropped, the effect of low radiation exposure and the effects of radiation to children, who are more receptive to radiation exposure, are being feared.

Meanwhile the media has stopped talking about radiation and it is as if the world has forgotten that it ever happened. In an environment where it seems almost taboo to talk about radiation, the struggle for the parents, especially the mothers, is increasing. The reality is that those that are in the disaster have to each make their own judgments. They are continually burdened with having to make heavy judgments. In the disaster areas, there is more and more need for aid that works to "live" beside the people there. Please continue to remember and pray.

*In order to share about the radiation crisis to people, the Nuclear Issues group, through its work in measuring the radiation level in partner with the NPO group in Sendai, was able to ask Miss Kasamatsu to write an article.

The map on the left shows the evacuation areas of Fukushima prefecture. It was created by the "Fukushima reconstruction Station".

- Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant Number 1 and Number 2.
- Areas that are difficult to return to due to high levels of radiation.
- Areas where return is possible in the future, and decontamination efforts are taking place for basic infrastructure.
- Are where evacuation orders have been withdrawn and efforts are being made to ready the environment.



What I feel four and a half years after the disaster (the Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident)

Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Christ Church

Over four and a half years have passed since the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant accident. Living in Fukushima and working in the temporary housing estates, there are many things I hear and see on SNS and on the net, that are misunderstandings and are statements with no basis. There is still a lot of discrimination, and when I see this it makes me question whether the writer is in a sound state of mind. At times I find myself at awe at what is being said. However once I take a step back, I start to wonder whether there aren't those that suffered hardships and was never cared for or paid attention to. When I think that perhaps these people are people who have suffered without my knowing, I feel very conflicted.

The level of need vary by person within the disaster areas. There are those that can see their future, but on the other there are those that suffer, not knowing what is going to happen in the future. There are those that lost their homes and there are those that lost their friends and family. It is perhaps impossible to imagine just how painful this must be for those at loss. However, when looking at places outside of the disaster areas, I think that even there, there are those that suffer because of unsteady employment, a difficult work environment, poverty, sickness, and discrimination. Through living in the disaster areas and taking part in aid work here, I constantly wonder if I am being able to look at the people here that are suffering.

With these sorts of things in mind, I took part in the Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Church "Development Project of Evacuated Children" funded by the disaster fund, and went to Korean barbeque and hot springs with the children. This was planned so that the church members and especially the children could raise their immune system by strengthening their bodies (muscles?) and by refreshing their bodies and minds. There were children who were picky with their food, so we were a little worried, but all the children ate a lot. It was a happy sight to see the children joyfully eating the food. Everyone had a wonderful time.

It has been over four and a half years since the disaster, but the reality is that we still worry about the disaster and the nuclear power plant accident. We are very thankful for those that remember us and those living in the disaster areas and continue to pray and support us.



Visiting the Temporary Housing Estates

Kanagawa Convention Disaster Strategy Committee

President Yukio Nezuka (Yokosuka Nagasawa Christ Church)

I visited Fukushima late October. Last year Kanagawa convention visited twice, thanks to the Men's Committee, Women's Committee, and the Kanagawa Convention Disaster Strategy Committee. This year we wanted to continue this and decided to carry out the visitation. From 8 churches, approximately 10 people took part. The applications for participation came one at a time, one application coming in a few days after the other. It truly felt as though God had called each person. I was very moved.

On the 24th of October, I was able to visit the temporary housing estates with Pastor Kaneko of the Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Church. I was astounded to hear that the Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Church has continued to visit once every month since 2011. I truly felt that it is difficult to understand the reality of Fukushima without personally paying a visit. I also realized the importance of continuing to pray for those in the temporary housings and for those in Fukushima. I also deeply humbled by those in Koriyama Kosumosu Dori Church who, though being victims themselves, work for their neighbors. I believe that many times it is difficult to take your own time, or your family's time while also serving the church. I pray that God will protect and sooth those at the church and their families. If there is anything that Kanagawa Convention can do, please let us know.



Please help us with Fund Raising

2015 Goal for Funds : 14,000,000yen (Domestic and International)

Current donations; Nov 2015 – 55,200,00yen

2015 October Donations - 39 donations were made. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Ai_no_sono Nursery, Otaru, Nakano, Kansai Reimei, National Sunday School Gathering, Nakano, Kasuimigaoka, Fukuma, Ichikawa Yawata, Osaka, Sendai Ward Baptist Ministry Association, Singapore International Japanese Church, Takasu, Kagoshima, Koga, Takasu, Hitachi, Oita, Jiyugaoka, Kikuchi Zion, Chofu, Miyahara, Toyohashi, Fukuoka South, Chohu, Nakano, Kubo Yuko, Asahikawa Toko, Matsumoto Arigasaki, Seinan Gakuin, Omura Kogashima, Akita, Miyazaki, Ota, Ainoura Hikari, Sendai Church 60th Anniversary Reconstruction Concert, Kagoshima, Yamamoto Aiko, Chugokum Nishi/Shikoku Block Convention Retreat .