

NSKK NEWSLETTER

日本聖公会管区事務所だより

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

News of big earthquakes has reached us in rapid succession; in El Salvador, western India, and the US West coast. Seismologists have warned that the frequent small earthquakes around Mt. Fuji, the symbol of our nation, may possibly indicate activity in the magma. We hope that this series of earthquakes on a worldwide scale will not lead to global disasters. Japan is one of the countries most subject to earthquakes. In the early morning of Jan. 17th 1995, a severe earthquake shook the Hanshin Awaji area and 6,432 people lost their lives while 250,000 houses were completely or partially destroyed. Six years later, even though the towns and the streets have been restored, the wounded hearts of the people who lost their loved ones are still unhealed. On Jan. 17th this year, several memorial services and meetings were held in various places to mourn the victims. We will never forget your warm support from all over the world at that time. We always try to keep in mind the need to act to relieve sufferings from both natural and man-made disasters.

Stepping forward into the new century, each diocese in the NSKK held special services. One of these was the Tokyo diocesan "MILLENNIUM NOVENA ." From Dec. 26th to 6th Jan. 2001, prayers and meditations seeking for peace and justice were offered on a total of nine days, moving the location from one church to a different one each day. The theme of the prayers ranged over the crucial issues that the NSKK faces; human rights including discrimination against disabled people, AIDs, as well as the issues of education, mission work, and the Korea-Japan church exchange program. It was an impressive event, and we are grateful that more than one thousand people are estimated to have participated.

One more blessing experienced by the NSKK at the beginning of the new century was the completion of the Bishop's residence and the diocesan center of Okinawa. The new, three-story building has a multi-purpose theater type hall that can seat 130 people, along with a chapel, the bishop's office, and the diocesan office. The hall is named after Dr. Bettelheim who was an English missionary sent to Okinawa in 1846 by the Lo Choo Naval Mission. I myself looked up to see the brand new white building shining in harmony with the Southern blue sky of Okinawa.

E.Hajime Suzuki

Experiment of Diocesan Theological School

Diocese Kita-Kanto

The Screening Committee of Kita-Kanto Diocese has, for some time, had talks and interviews with those who are voluntarily intending to devote themselves to the church, including the postulants. In the course of these talks/interviews, we met a layperson who would like to be a minister in the future. However, because of his current job as well as his responsibility to adopt his family, it would not be possible for him to become a minister in the immediate future but he would really like to be ordained. We have further found that there are several laypersons who would like to involve in the mission work in the church when the circumstance allows them to do so. Confirming their sense of ordination, the Screening Committee has designed a long-term training/education programme in order to meet their requirements, preparing for the time when they will be able to enter into the way to become ministers. On the basis of the above background, The Kita-Kanto Diocesan (Private) Theological School has instituted two years ago.

At present, there are three students who are studying theology. As each of the students is working at different companies or settings during the day and; they live in different areas, they can only get together every two weeks. One curriculum is available in a year with a special programme during the summer time. We have now entered into the third curriculum. In addition to the regular students, irregular students are also attending the class, studying doctrine and the scriptures.

Recently, one of the students is accepted as a postulant. He is at present teaching at a university, but he has recognized himself as being ordained as a permanent deacon. While studying at the Diocesan Theological School, he has now entered into the diaconal examination over the next six months.

One of the features of this Diocesan Theological School is that, while doing academic work, the School is searching for potential ministerial work from-time-to-time dialogues between the teaching staff and the students. There are of course certain conditions for admission, but the School provides extensive opportunities to those who are to be ordained with considerable flexibility.

We are expecting a second postulant shortly. The Diocesan Theological School is about to end the second year course, resulting in a common recognition within the Diocese. We are grateful that a theological students supporters' group has been organized, which has supported us greatly both spiritually and financially.

Although there are several issues to be resolved, the objectives of this School are as follows:

To give an adequate theological education and training which are considered to be necessary, and to give preparatory opportunity to those laypersons who would like to be ordained in the future, or who are unable to find a chance to learn regular theological education, despite of his/her will to be so.

Rev. Zerubbabel Katsuichi Hirota
Urawa All Saints' Church

NSKK Ikuno Center—its Work with the Community —

In Osaka, the second largest city in Japan, there is a special area called "Korean Town", which is located in a corner of Ikuno Ward. Ikuno Ward has a population of 150,000, of which the Koreans account for 25%. They are so called the "Korean Minority". They are not the immigrants: When Japan had governed the Korean Peninsula as a colony, these Koreans were forced to be taken to Japan for forced labour. The Town is consisted by these Koreans and their descendants.

Deeply reflecting on the Japan's responsibility for the past dark period, which still remains in the lengthy Japanese-Korean history as a negative heritage, NSKK has made a decision to reconstruct St. Gabriel Church in the area of Ikuno Ward in Osaka, as a symbol of reconciliation between Japanese and the Korean minority in Japan. St. Gabriel Church had originally built by a Korean priest, Rev. Chang Sum Sang in 1925 for the purpose of mission work for the Korean residents in Japan, but was forced to be locked up under the Japanese military pressure during the World War II.

NSKK has entrusted the church with a mission that the Church is to be a core of the community, and established "Ikuno Community Center" in the site of the church. The Centre has initiated their activities in 1992 with the following major projects:

- 1) Community activity based on the Christianity – "Kobitsuji (Lamb) Nursery School", built next to the St. Gabriel Church, where infants and little children from both Japanese and Korean families get together and are nursed.
- 2) "Korean Language Class" – The Course divided into four, Beginners, Intermediate and the Advanced, and both Japanese and Korean residents of all ages are learning Korean conversation together. This is one of the few Korean Language Classes which have Advanced course.
- 3) "Painting Class" – One of the remarkable characteristics of this class is that some mentally-handicapped persons join the class and paint together with healthy students.
- 4) "Counselling and support of those who need help" – The Centre actively provides with help and support to those aged Korean residents who live alone in this area. For example, to make close liaison with the local public health center; to intercede with medical doctors for those who need medical care; and to arrange home visits by volunteers or meal service.
- 5) "Human Right activity" – To give help to those women who are suffering from domestic violence – Contacts with Social Welfare setting; intercedes with the public social workers for their financial support; gives advice on the procedure for application for the special allowance for single-mother families; or introduces lawyers for divorce procedures, etc.
- 6) "Support mentally-handicapped persons" – To give advice and help in order for them to get on their own feet in the society. This includes setting up a place where they will be able to secure their living; arranges meetings to nurture their joint-and-several sense to the society, participates in the administration and operation of their workshop.

It is worth noticing that NSKK Ikuno Community Center, which primarily started with the community-based activity in the Ikuno area, has now been developing extensively to the civil activities, making full use of network (i.e. Rights of Immigrants Network in Kansai, etc).

On March 1st, 1919, Korea declared independence from the Japan's rule. In order to commemorate the Independence of Korea, and at the same time to participate in the Ikuno Centre activity, NSKK has decided that on Sunday proximal to 1 March every year, Anglican churches all over Japan should remember the Independence of Korea (Three-One Movement), pray for the activity of the Ikuno Community Centre and provide with the offerings to the Centre. On Sunday, the 4th of March 2001, all the Anglican Churches in Japan remembered them in prayers and contributed the offerings to the Centre.

We would like to express our thanks to Mr. Oh Kwang Hyun, Director of Ikuno Community Center and Mr. Keiichi Suzuki, Vice-Director for their cooperation in providing us with useful information when we visited the Ikuno Community Centre.

Bishops of Korea and Japan met after ten years

House of Bishops of Anglican Church of Korea and Nippon Sei Ko Kai had joint sessions on February 12th and 13th. The last meeting took place in 1992. This rather long interval was due to the agreement of the last meeting that the exchange among grass roots should be activated. However, within this decade, membership in both of the House of Bishops has been changed and so to the social situation, the joint meeting was proposed during the occasion of C C E A (Council of Churches in East Asia) met in Hong Kong, 2000.

Bishops shared own experiences and concerns frankly, and many questions were raised from Japanese bishops to understand fully about, for example, the works of "House of Sharing"(urban mission work) in Korea. They agreed to have joint meeting continuously, and next meeting is scheduled in October 2002 in Korea.

Emergent Relief Fund is in full operation

Although it is too bad to hear about natural and human made disasters, unfortunately, those have taken place one after another, especially since last September. NSKK has been very keen on the painful situation of Palestinians and sent some symbolical amount from the Emergent Relief Fund. In the beginning of this millenium, two big earthquakes attacked El Salvador and western part of India. Japan is known as the country of earth quake, and Japanese people are especially sympathetic to wards the victims of earthquakes. Thus, the people of NSKK usually ask the Provincial Office to give detailed information on the earthquake and whether the Office would facilitate the campaign for raising relief or not. For this kind of emergency, NSKK set up the Emergent Relief Fund and specified amount of money is ready to be sent. We have known that the money does not solve disasters and the amount we can donate is far less the real necessity. However, we believe that the money we send may bring our compassion and prayer for the victims.

NEWS

Primate. The Rt. Rev. **Jon Jun'iciro Furumoto** attended the Primate Meeting met between March 2nd and 9th at Kanuga Conference Center, North Carolina, USA.

Diocese of Tokyo. The Rt. Rev. **Peter Jintaro Ueda**, was installed as the 8th Bishop of the Diocese on Saturday, March 31st, 2001. Attending and participating in the service were 2 bishops from the Anglican Church in Korea, 1 bishop from the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, 1 bishop with a group of people from the Diocese of Maryland, its companion diocese.

General Secreaty. The Rev. **Samuel I. Koshiishi** visited People's Republic of China as a member of mission of Japan Commission of World Conference of Religion and Peace to visit Chinese Conference of Religion and Peace (The Rt. Rev. Ting is the President) between March 24th to 28th.