

visiting afflicted area Tohoku report



1 St. John, the Apostle church in Kannari, wehre reminded

2、3 St. John the Apostle church in Ishinomaki, where was suffered by tsunami. The lay leader (in green jumber) worked as a leader at the shelter and walked around the town to find parishioners.



Eight of Nagoya parish members visited churches in Tohoku, suffered by earthquake and tsunami in March this year. We debated whether we should go or not, as people are still in difficulties. We were afraid to raise extra work. But recalling the words at All Japan Council, Fr. Mark(Koike) and the lay leaders, asking to visit and see by our own eyes.

We visited seven churches and chapels in south Tohoku. Among seven, three were severely suffered by tsunami; Ishinomaki, Sakari and Kesennuma. Thanks God, church buildings were safe but 11 members died and many lost their houses and job.

Rubbles were almost cleaned up. But there still were ships and concrete poles on vast vacant land.

Members gathered at church and welcome us. One by one, they told their terrible experience. An old lady was prisoned in crashed house for three days, a man escaped from a car sinking, an old man who lost his memory for three days. Their story were more than imagination. But they looked filled with gratitude and warmness, " My strength is made perfect in weakness (2Co 12:9)."

Bishop Seraphim and priests have visited suffered places many times, to comfort members, celebrating service for reposed and tried to restore church as a center of the community.

Regrettably, time did not allow us to attend, next day, a big cross was settled on the ruined ground of the Annunciation chapel in Yamada, where was burnt out by tsunami fire The picture of the cross is as if Christ stands there.

We know that we cannot do anything but to pray. But prayer is powerful. God works We know the importance of mutual prayer. When we struggled with many difficulties to build this church, not only us but also brothers and sisters in Japan,





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through out the world prayed for us. So we will pray more fervently. We keep our family in Tohoku in our prayer. Our Lord has a name, Emmanuel, "God is with us."
(Maria Matsushima)

We saw terrible scenery, which we had seen through TV. We can turn off TV and leave, but the people here not. I think we must remember; consider together and support continually. (Elena)



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We are grateful the fathers and parishioners who received us warmly. It was so short time, I am so happy and impressed. Continual prayer is most important and only thing that we can do. (Anastasia)

Looking at the area disappeared by tsunami and its fire, there were mountains of broken cars and plenty of wreckages. But I was so impressed to see church is full of light of life. (Nina)

We were encouraged so much. We thank God to give a chance to visit. Looking directly is so far from through TV. We will support our brothers and sisters in Tohoku, through donation project and Bazaar etc. With love in Christ. (Alexandra)

Symeon Masuda Ichiro, Alexandra Masuda Masako, Anastasia Hasegawa Kazuyo, Nikifor Hiroishi Kazuro, Elena, Hiroishi Yoshiko, Irina Kondo Mie, Nina Handa Sachiko, Maria Matsushima Junko



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- 4. The ruin of Holy Annunciation chapel in Yamada. Dec.7, a cross was settled by Fr. Mark Koike, Fr. Michael Tainaka and parishioners.
- 5 Vacant area, where had been center of the town. Due to depression of land, the administrators can not make restoration plan yet.
- 6、 7 Chapel in Kessennuma, tsunami approached in one meter but miraculously saved. But parishioners lost their houses. This family lost their house.
- 8、 9 Holy Ascension church in Sakari, Ofunato saved miraculously, too.
- 10 Holy Annunciation Cathedral. We prayed "Memory Eternal" with Bishop Seraphim.
- 11 Holy Ascension church in Ichinoseki.
- 12 St. Isaiah Church in Wakuya.



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