

NSKK NEWSLETTER

日本聖公会管区事務所だより

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St. Mary's Church in Los Angeles

Revd Laurence Yutaka Minabe
General Secretary

In June, for the first time, I participated in a journey to Okinawa, which inspired me to intensify my prayers for peace. "All the teachers in Okinawa must perform a task eternally — taking their students to the battlefields." These were the words of the former governor of Okinawa, if I remember them correctly. I added to my knowledge while I was there, and came to understand the appeals for peace emanating from Okinawa. I wonder if policymakers were aware of the tremendous sacrifices that would have to be made when they started the war. Did they give any thought to civilians and their small happiness?

When I went to Los Angeles to attend an EAM (Episcopal Asiamerica Ministry) consultation at the end of June, I had the opportunity to visit St. Mary's Church. I noticed a plaque there on which "Sei Ko Kai" was written in kanji (Chinese characters). The church has a long history, which has connections to the NSKK Holy Cross Mission in Matsumoto, Nagano Prefecture.

This year St. Mary's is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The history of the church is also the history of the hardships endured by Japanese immigrants. Most of the immigrants were very poor people whose only hope for the future was to go abroad. In the early stages of their lives here in the USA, they were not allowed to become government employees, physicians, lawyers or teachers. The only occupations available to them were gardening (for others), fishing, selling flowers or farming. They could not own land, so they were hired as farm laborers. I learned that the work was exhausting, and that they were practically slaves. But through those hardships, those immigrants gradually established a footing on American soil.

But their suffering proved to be in vain after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. According to a presidential order issued on February 19th, 1942, "all people whose roots are in Japan" were confined to internment camps in remote areas, whether or not they were American citizens. Approximately 110,000 people lost everything, permitted to take only small bags containing their daily necessities to the camps. As American citizens, they were blameless, hard-working people. The novel "Two Homelands" describes the fates of many Japanese immigrants during that era. I read the book once again and learned that it is based on true stories.

St. Mary's Church became a collection center for possessions left behind in the houses of the Japanese Americans which they had been forced to vacate. The Rev. Yamazaki, Rector of St. Mary's at the time, said in his sermon on Easter 1942, "Soon the time will come for us to leave our beloved houses and towns where we have lived for a long time. We will go through hardships like the Israelites endured when they departed from Egypt, as written in Exodus. But I believe that there will be a time of resurrection, when we emerge from a dark A few weeks later the Yamazaki family was interned in a stable at a racetrack in the city. The space given to each family was previously occupied by one horse. I can't go into detail here, but all their efforts had come to nothing. To prove they were upstanding American citizens, about 150 young adults from St. Mary's congregation enlisted in the U.S. Army. They were sent to Germany as members of Regiment 442. When they returned to the U.S. for rest and relaxation, "home" was an interment camp.

Here I'd like you to consider whether the political leaders of that era thought about these sacrifices. Will they

protect our small happiness? We, not the politicians, are the peacekeepers, each one of us and us in our solidarity.

The United States government and the American people have admitted that the internment of Japanese Americans during the war was wrong. Apologies were offered and some compensation was paid. We Japanese are being asked whether we have atoned sufficiently for past misdeeds. We are blessed with abundant lives today, because our country, once reduced to ashes, has risen again. We must think about our responsibility — the legacy of our parents' generation.

After Okinawa Week, we turn another page of the calendar to August, the month when we commemorate Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the end of World War II. I'd like us to think about our responsibilities as peacemakers.

“Mother of Kusatsu” – Unveiling Ceremony of Miss Cornwall-Legh’s Bust — Great Work done by Miss M. H. Cornwall-Legh —

Rev. Raphael Hitoshi Miyazaki

On 20th of May 1857, Miss Mary Helena Cornwall-Legh was born of a distinguished family in Cambridge, England. Her father died when she was young, and she was brought up by her mother and a brother, who also died in his youth.

In her teens, Miss Cornwall-Legh attended a church, where she was greatly influenced by the rector. From then, she earnestly desired to consecrate herself to those suffering and in distress. After her mother's death, she resolved to be a missionary, evangelizing Christian teaching to people in Japan, which she had once visited with her mother. In 1907, at the age of 50 years old, Miss Cornwall-Legh finally came to Japan as a self-supporting missionary.

Immediately after her arrival in Japan, she learnt and mastered Japanese. She helped various Anglican churches in Chiba Prefecture, Kanagawa Prefecture and Tokyo. In 1915, at the request of some Anglican priests, she inspected Kusatsu-machi, Gunma Prefecture. At that time, Yunosawa Area of Kusatsu was known as a sanatorium for patients with leprosy. There were some Christians who voluntarily helped those patients, but they had no one to lead them. And what they really needed was a vigorous leader.

One year after her first visit to Kusatsu, when Miss Cornwall-Legh was 59 years old, she moved to Kusatsu to consecrate her life to those who had suffered from leprosy. At that time, no medical treatment had been given to those patients who came to Yunosawa; some of them had run through all their money and properties, just hoping to be cured.

When they realized that there was no hope for a cure, their hearts and minds were seriously traumatized. It has been reported that in the Sanatorium, when patients with leprosy died, nobody wanted to clean the deceased and they were immediately buried in the earth. In such a situation, Miss Cornwall-Legh took close care of the deceased, she took off the ragged clothes from their bodies, thoroughly cleaned them, put clean dresses on them, and buried them sincerely and with dignity. Miss Cornwall-Legh's conduct brought a radical change of mind to the people of Yunosawa, and their attitude towards the deceased was changed dramatically.

Miss Cornwall-Legh offered all of her properties to those who were under medical treatment for leprosy at the Sanatorium. She asked for donations from the U.K. and the U.S.A. and with these contributions, 37 institutions were established, including homes for the patients, hospitals and schools.

Miss Cornwall-Legh purchased a hotel in the Kusatsu hot-spring spa (Kusatsu is famous for its hot spring),

which was used as a hospice for the female patients, and was named “St. Mary’s Home”. This was the first step after the “St. Barnabas’ Home” in Yunosawa. After the St. Mary’s Home, homes for male patients, married couples, and families, respectively, were built. Furthermore, “St. Margaret’s Home” was established for uninfected children to protect them from infection and bring them up with tender care. While administrating these homes, Miss Cornwall-Legh devoted herself to giving guidance both in body and mind, helping Mr. Shukutani, a Japanese missionary, with Sunday services, giving Bible teaching to the Christians in the Sanatorium, visiting the patients, teaching at the Sunday School and nursery home. These activities were the fundamentals of the “Barnabas’ Mission”. She was adored by all who knew her, and called “a Mother of Kusatsu”.

Later on, National Sanatorium Kuryu Rakusen-En was established by the government, and most of her work was taken on by the National Sanatorium. Now, only the Church and St. Margaret’s Home remain, but Miss Cornwall-Legh’s dedication and great work have never been forgotten and have been handed down to this day.

2007 was the 150th anniversary of her birth, and the 100th anniversary of her coming to Japan. For this occasion, “Miss Cornwall-Legh’s Manifestation Association in Kusatsu” erected a bust in honour of Miss Cornwall-Legh who consecrated her life to those who suffered from leprosy, and on 10th of October 2007, the ceremony of unveiling took place in Kusatsu, attended by Sir Graham Holbrook Fry, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Japan, Mr. Masaki Ohsawa, Mayor of Gunma Prefecture, and the Rt. Rev. Katsuichi Hirota, Bishop of Kita-Kanto Diocese.

Prior to the unveiling ceremony, the Kita-Kanto Diocese of the NSKK held a memorial eucharist at the Church of Our Savior (Sei-Sukuinushi) located in the National Sanatorium of Kuryu Rakusen-En in Kusatsu, commemorating her activities, life and Christian faith.

At the Unveiling Ceremony held in the afternoon, children from the Kusatsu First Nursery, which evolved from the St. Barnabas’ Kindergarten, unveil the bust. This was a really heart-warming scene.

In order to pass on her works to future generations, Kita-Kanto Diocese is planning to establish a house in which various articles left by Miss Cornwall-Legh are to be maintained and exhibited. This project has already been started.

(St. Andrew’s Church, Hamamatsu, Yokohama Diocese of NSKK)

Sri Lanka visit

Shinya Samuel Yawata
Secretary in charge of PIM, NSKK

Overview

In June 2007 I went to visit Sri Lanka with members of the ARI visiting team with two purposes in mind: 1) to visit and evaluate the activity of graduates of the ARI (Asia Rural Institution: training institution for leaders in rural areas of Asia and Africa through agriculture) in Sri Lanka, 2) to evaluate reconstruction activities for the tsunami affected people.

Team members are two people of ARI staffs of which one is a native of Sri Lanka, two volunteers from the USA at the ARI, two local volunteers at ARI and myself, a total of 7 people.

The ARI is an interdenominational institution located in Tochigi Prefecture and supported accordingly. The NSKK Provincial Office, many dioceses, churches and individuals are among its supporters.

The duration of the visit was June 12 through June 23 for 11 nights and 12 days. We visited many NGO’s and local villages where the ARI graduates were very important members of the organizations and communities.

Very briefly I surveyed an area affected by the tsunami of December 2004 to observe recovery and reconstruction. There were many places still without any buildings.

Country and culture

Compared to other Asian countries such as the Philippines, Pakistan, Myanmar, etc the economical level of Sri

Lanka seems higher. Education is very important for Sri Lankans. The educational system according to the people I talked to is as follows:

A child starts grammar school at the age of 5, and compulsory education continues for 14 years. Most schools are public and free of charge. The literacy rate is claimed to be 97%. I believe this to be true in the big cities.

People are very friendly towards the Japanese. Economical aid from Japan is a significant and large portion of their total economic foreign aid, but this is not generally known by local people.

Places we visited

8 NGOs were visited and a total of 18 locations to observe where activities are taking place. In general, NGOs are widely accepted in Sri Lanka society and there are many very active NGOs. For many of them their mission is to promote enhancement of people's life and empower people to make their life better. Therefore, many NGOs are working for economically depressed people and/or areas left alone without government assistance. They do not encourage monetary giving.

One common practice run by NGOs is micro finance. For many family owned stores and small factories funding is an issue. First they teach local people how to manage financing; to start saving a small amount first and gradually increase the amount. Then once people feel comfortable managing their money, the NGO will lend seed money with a very well defined pay back plan. Once the NGO has verified that its loan has been paid off, then they may give business owners an additional loan. They go through a repetition of this until the businesses are fully capable and self-funding.

Of course NGOs teach specific skills needed to succeed in their own field, such as organic farming which is specifically taught at ARI. The strength the ARI graduates have in common is their experience of living at the ARI with people of different cultures, religions and leadership skills, because trainees at ARI are from different countries in Asia and Africa.

The experience which I will never forget is a visit to a family of tea pluckers in a small village. As is well known, Sri Lanka is one of the large tea producing countries. The tea producing industry is monopolized by large corporations, and pluckers are employed by them. They are paid according to what they pluck in a season and their pay seems very minimal, barely enough to support their large families. Typically pluckers are female.

Some NGOs are trying to teach them home gardening, i.e. first enough to feed their own family and then if there is any surplus they can sell it at market for additional cash. This is one of the ways to make life better financially. The challenge is to secure a field to grow vegetables. First they have to lease land from a land-owner, which is a tea manufacturing corporation. Initially land is not fit to grow vegetables, so they have to cultivate it and maintain its condition.

Impression of this visit

In the last 30 years or so there have been over 70 ARI graduates from Sri Lanka. Some of them have gone to the ARI straight after finishing their education in Sri Lanka without any work experience. Some of them had good work experience before coming to ARI. Either way, most of the ARI graduates are contributing well to society in Sri Lanka after returning. In Sri Lanka I witnessed the value of the ARI graduates, and I am sure it is the same in other countries such as the Philippines, Myanmar, etc. which have sent many trainees to the ARI.

I believe many developing countries in Asia and Africa will need skillful leaders for their countries to prosper. I truly believe that the ARI will be able to give people from these countries great opportunities by continuing its leadership training.

I briefly surveyed the area affected by the tsunami of 2004. I witnessed some progress but much more work is needed.

Members of the English Version of NSKK Newsletter, Winter 2007 are: as follows:

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