

## JEMS Nichigobu Coordinator Prayer Letter - Minako Fujimoto

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matthew 9: 37-38

I appreciate everyone for your prayers and support of the Nichigo Ministry and during my visit to Japan from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 20<sup>th</sup>. I visited the missionaries and pastors, who are supporting the victims in the northeast area (Tohoku) of the earthquake disaster.

During the last week of December, 2012, JEMS will be attending the Inter-Varsity Mission Conference called URBANA in St. Louis, Michigan. They will convey to the conferees the work needed in Japan and recruit short-term and long-term missionaries for Japan. The following paragraphs describe the current conditions of different areas after the earthquake disaster.

Miyagi-ken, Minami Sanriku-Chou Sizugawa Community Hall. There are still some buildings left from the damage. The grass indicates the second summer after the earthquake disaster has already passed. Temporary shops are built in this city and we can see the reconstruction of the city, but there are still many living in temporary housing in solitude and having anxiety or uneasiness.

Miyagi-ken, Minami Sanriku-cho Heisei no Mori I visited JEMS short-term Creative Arts team that held a Gospel hula Art workshop in this area where people were living in the parking lot "temporary housing." After the workshop ended, there were some who did not want to go home because they would once again be alone and have no one to talk to at home. I also wanted them to continue dancing.

Shizu Gawa Numatachi-ku. Shizu Gawa Seihin, the leather products manufacturing place is supported by the Rifu Oasis Chapel. Once a week everyone gathers to review the quality of the leather products. One woman shared about her experience when she went after her grandchild from the elementary school and saw the tsunami coming. She tells us that even now she cannot forget about the horror of the view she saw. As a souvenir, they gave us homemade cucumber tsukemono (pickles). I felt the warmth of all of them through this gift. Access the website for information about Shizu Gawa Seihin at [oasislifecare.org](http://oasislifecare.org)

Near Sendai Airport. The fields were damage by the tsunami, but because they sprayed EM (Effective Micro-organisms) and were able to remove the salt. MSR+, a Christian group, started the EM treatment and that rice crop will be ready to harvest in the autumn. The picture to the right are the blocks used to make stands to sell the farm products that were harvested by the farmers. The blocks were purchased by the JEMS's donation.

Miyako, Yamada, Ootsuchi, Kamaishi, Oofunado. These areas are in the supporting area of the Iwate network in Morioka. The access to these areas were limited even before the earthquake occurred, therefore the missionary work has not been spread outside of these areas. The volunteers who came to these areas told the network pastor that "It's not that

they don't believe in God, it's just that they haven't heard the Gospel yet. They need a church that will continue spreading the Gospel." Jesus is feeling compassion for these areas and I feel that God is giving us this opportunity.

Yamada-chiku. In this area there is a café called, "Ippo Ippo", which was built in an area where everything disappeared with the tsunami. The café offers 1 cup of coffee or tea for 100 yen (approximately \$1.28). In the café they place Bibles, Christian related books, and play worship songs. There is conversation between the customers while they have a little coffee or tea. While I visited the café, I spoke to one of the local people who was with his grandchildren. He stated that he could no longer fish due to the aftermath of the earthquake.

During my visit to the above areas and meeting many local people, I was given an idea for a future mission. From now on, the stricken area support will need long-term. Many who are carrying stress, and living in solitude need to know that Jesus is walking with them. They can create a relationship with Jesus through places like Ippo Ippo and learn that Jesus is the only person who is able to provide love, happiness, and hope. Each time I spoke with those who worked in Christian and volunteer centers, I always quoted Matthew 9:37-38, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." I pray that there will be more missionaries given the opportunity to go to Japan.

Jesus has opened up the path to spread the Gospel in Japan where the people do not know Jesus. I pray that the Gospel will be spread throughout these areas and that Jesus' love will continue to be spread throughout Japan.