

“Smiling with our back without any words”

Preaching Script: The 2nd Chiba Disaster Volunteer Report (September 27 ~ October 1, 2019)

October 20, 2019

Kobe International Christ Church

Pastor Yoshio Iwamura

Theme Scripture: Luke Chapter 10 Verse 35

“The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’”

<Introduction>

I had a reunion with Mr. and Mrs. Kanda and also met new people at the Ryushima coast in Kyonan Town, Minamiboso Chiba Prefecture. I also met with Mr. Toshinori Kikuma, the chief of the Chiba Prefectural Education Section.

Continuing on, we entered Iwaibukuro area. The walls and roofs of almost of all houses had traces of clashed and scooped-out, and most of things in the house were blown away. Flying materials of tiles and slate of roofs became like a deadly weapon and gave damages houses, cars and fences.

Following the last week, we visited the Mera area where we entered as the first volunteer. A general area leader Mr. Masao Shimada and area chief of Hongo Mr. Toru Aoki requested us to visit Mrs. Toshie Kotani (77 years old), who lives alone, and give her encouragement.

If you were dispatched to the field where there is no administration, traders, or other volunteer, how would you behave?

(1) Marginal village

a. Despair in fishery industry

Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, which was the city of fisheries, received great damages by the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami in 2011. We have been seeing the sadness of the fishery industry for 8 years that haven't been restored.

This is not only a matter of reduction in the marine product processing industry due to the earthquake, but also it is a common issue throughout Japan. The data of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries says that the amount of catch quantity in Japan was 12 million tons in 1988. The amount of catch quantity was increasing every year, and it was the peak period. On the other hand, The catch quantity (landing amount, natural + aquaculture) in the world was only over 100 million tons. About 30 years later, Japan's catch quantity fell to one third, about 4 million tons. Meanwhile, the world's catch quantity increased as a double.¹

¹ Comparing the landing tendency between the world and Japan. Date of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.



“Changes in landing amount in the world and Japan”

There are opinions that those are caused by such as global warming, over fishing and anadromous fishery of foreign boats around Japan. However, the amount of catch quantity of Japanese sardine has increased significantly after the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, and it reached 500,000 tons in 2017. The real cause is a change in the Japanese eating habits. Originally, Japan was one of the world’s most fish-eating countries, but nowadays a tendency to prefer eating meat is growing.² The fishery industry in Tomisaki (Mera, Aihama) is also dying due to changes in the Japanese eating habits. The number of fishermen, who make living with fishery, at Mera port has been reduced to five people. The reality that there is no successor cannot be ignored. Mr. Hirotaka Okiura (65 years old), the ship owner of Yayoimaru, is also facing to red light for continuing his fishery business, because his ship was destroyed by the Typhoon No.15. He said, “I can’t manage to buy a new ship”.

b. Tiles and slates that turned into a deadly weapon

The Iwaibukuro area, which was built around the Shinshū Ōtani-ha Fukuzouji Temple, also became an isolated island on that area. Most of houses look terrible because of the Typhoon No.15 that was like a tornado. Tiles and slates of roof turned into a deadly weapon and damages newly-built houses, strong walls and roads.



Iwaibukuro. September 28, 2019.

² 2013 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 2013 Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications “Family budget survey” (Nationwide, households of 2 or more people, item classification).

I met with a woman named Mrs. Watanabe who was trying to start farming at a small bush. Her family was used to engage in the fishery, but their ship was damaged by a barge. She only knew about fishing, but she was trying to live in self-sufficiency by cultivating a small bush, as if she crawls on the ground to live. She said about her house has been “destroyed” by the Typhoon No.15 with unconcerned voice. Her husband next to her is quite old and has no enough ability to work. Although we could see him a little from the entrance of the heavy bush, he did not talk



with us. Mrs. Watanabe was full of energy to support their living by her. There are wrinkles on her face that because of fishing in the sea for many years and there are deep wrinkles between eyebrows. The height is about 145 cm, and it may be an influence that she has been experiencing many hardness of her life, so her body becomes a little bit bent-forward posture. However, she kept smiling entire time we spoke. The energy was as powerful as a teenage girl, and she has an innocent and attractive charm. We were rather frightened about her brightness, and she encouraged us to live with hope. Her age is probably in 70s, as I guess. Beyond her age, gender and the growing up environments, we received refreshment despite our first-met talking. She showed as an example for what volunteers should do toward the victims of the disaster when we meet for the first time. We didn't ask for her full name or address, but 3 members of us who became presences at that moment had the joy of meeting with a person who we couldn't forget.

c. Single living person, whose second floor of house had blown away.

The ceiling on the first floor is also terrible condition. Mrs.Kotani lives alone. Her husband passed away suddenly in April of this year. When we reached there, the second floor part of the two-story house was blown away, and all of furniture, furnishing goods, cloth and everything had gone, and it was empty like a newly-built house. However, every single room was covered by mud. Electricity and gas supply has been stopped. Since she has no place to escape, she had no choice but try to manage for making a room barely to live at the 1st floor. We worked to wash and clean windows, ceiling and floors.

We went to a home-center (hardware store) together to buy necessary daily goods, such as gas cylinder and camping lamp. She had “*Jyenryoku* (受縁力= ability to accept support)”³, so we as volunteers also felt that we are saved. Because, most of Japanese refrain from other's offer and tend to not to accept it.

³ 2018. The Christ Weekly. July 21.



Memorial photo with Mt. Fuji seen from the sea of Minamiboso.

Photo. Executive Director Hiroataka Murakami, Ms. Tosie Kotani, Miss Miwa Sasaki (Committee member), Mrs. Hirano.



If there is no Mr. Sanari, who accompanied to our the 1st Chiba Disaster Volunteer⁴, the repair of the house of Ms. Kotani had no way but just lead them up a blind alley. Since we engaged in covering roof by using blue tarp at our 1st volunteer, local people give appreciations to us. At the 2nd volunteer, people became at least to be able to live. Of course, everything is not as it was before the disaster. It was precious that the feelings of the volunteer members and the feelings of local people were united. At the end, each one of us hugged Ms. Kotani and we were reluctant to leave there.

Just before our leaving, we met with Pastor Kenichi Yamao, Pastor Kiyoki Miyazaki and Mr. Tadagazu Yokoyama from a volunteer organization, Blessing.⁵ They did not wear a helmet and quickly went upstairs and fixed the window in the next house. The information from Pastor Tadanabu Uchiyama⁶ was very useful for our organization too.

(2) People who grew up from the climate of Chiba Prefecture

a. Eye-opening of Kanzo Uchimura

In Nura, there was an educator named Kichiemon Kanda [1834 -1806]. When the cholera epidemic had happened in 1879, he contributed to the village through volunteer work such as nursing and sterilization. Moreover, he launched an abalone fishery, and established a co-op system

⁴ 2019. Christian Press. September 24. <https://www.christianpress.jp/chiba-minamiboso-volunteer-report-iwamura-yoshio/>

⁵ Operation Blessing Japan

⁶ Immanuel Kure Church

to distribute profits equally to 329 village households. Not only he lead the catch quantity of long line fishery of tuna to the highest in Japan, but also started an insurance system, the distress relief reserve fund system, because there were many ship distresses.⁷

In 1890, Kanzo Uchimura [1861 – 1930 (Showa 5)] accompanied the practice of fishery as a teacher under Kanda, who was a Christian. Kanda was teaching to Uchimura, who was younger more than 30 years, that “No matter how much try to increase procreation of abalone, no matter how much improve the fishing materials, and no matter how much contrive ways to create a novel catching net tool, you can’t save fishermen. First of all, you have to improve the fishermen themselves who just live for the moment.” Uchimura, who was listening, decided to change his carrier to be a religious person from a fisherman. Uchimura proved that this encounter with Kanda became an awakening to the religion with saying “The reason that I came to engage in Bible studies”.⁸ Mera area was a soil where bring outstanding Christians.

A copy of correspondence letter between Kanda and Uchimura is displayed at “Uminosachi” Memorial Hall of Shigeru Aoki.

b. Supporting relationship with Mr. Haruo Miki

When Kobe International Sustaining Organization talked to Chairman of Miyoshi Soap Corporation, Mr. Haruo Miki that we will start to do volunteer at Chiba disaster area on September 10, he told us to stop at the head office of his company before going to Chiba. Mr. Miki is also a benefactor of our organization. He lives in Ichikawa City, Chiba Prefecture. When I said that seven people were ready from Kobe, he told us that he would enter the disaster affected area in Chiba together. He was born on July 15, 1939, so he is 80 years old. I first met with him 30 years ago in Tokyo. At that time, Mr. Miki was full of spirit as if a Billhook was walking. The power was releasing from his whole body that seems like to slash you into two with his sword if you approach and ask “Please give us donation”. I still remember an impression that he is very strict person toward religious people who ask donation as “All pastors are bad. They are just a donation-please pastors”. He says that the net profit is less than 10 yen per soap, and we collected profits a little by little, so don’t even just ask donation. However, he is an economist who has been generously donated to the society, as long as if it makes sense and contributes to the society. He is just like a father who willingly supports us when our organization continuously visit the disaster affected area in Chiba. He always entrust us giving donation, breakfast and lunch meals. We are able to go to the site by his generous heart of donation, and it is just like that Macedonians were in suffer in the 1st Century, “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously”. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

⁷ 2014. Tateyama Marugoto Hakubutsukan. NPO Aki Bunka Isan Forum. 35.

⁸ 1967. Meiji Bungaku Zenshu. 39. Uchimura Kanzo Shyu. Chikuma Shobo. 343.



HIACE (Donated by Mr. Haruo Miki)

c. Miss 城田すず子(pseudonym) Comfort women

She is Japanese and grew up with tender care and affection in a wealthy family, but her mother died when she was in the 2nd year at junior high school, and she had to work as nanny at a geisha business house because of family debts. At there, the owner did “*Mizuage* (水揚げ hoisting from water = give virginity)” to her and she got a disease, and she was sold to *Yūkaku* (遊廓) due to her father’s debts. Moreover, at her age of 17, she was sold to the comfort station in Taiwan, and she had to company with military soldiers overnight continuously, so both of her heart and body was tattered. After her moving around various battle fields was over and returned to Japan, she started working to sell herself in the night industry. She traveled around Japan and she was called “*Pang Pang* = a woman especially who has sex with the occupation army” while she was companying with occupation soldiers. She was told that her older sister committed suicide because her sister suffered about her little sister’s reality. She was shocked and when she was hoping to be strong, she came to know about Japan Christian Women's Organization in a magazine. She entered to “*Jiairyō* (慈愛寮. Rehabilitation facility)”, which is just like a last refuge place, that was operated by Japan Christian Women's Organization, and she got a baptism at Holiness Church. After that, she prayed for the construction of “Kanita Fujinno Mura” in Mera, and she wished to establish the “Memorial Tower: Comfort Woman”.⁹

The attitude of listening to the pain, suffering, anger, and regret of the comfort women is also spark of the “listening volunteer” spirit.

(3) The *Volunteer-dō* (The principle way of volunteer)

a. Skills required for the *Volunteer-dō*

Kobe International Sustaining Organization aims to do “*Kyosei* (共生: Live together), *Kyoku* (共苦: Share sufferings), *Ku-en* (苦縁: Relationship to share sufferings) at the disaster affected site. Therefore, it is not a part of professional volunteering, special volunteering and evangelism work. To be a friend of disaster affected people, we serve in everything. It is not a medical treatment or cure, but we devote taking and giving care to people. Not as a professional technician of restoration, reconstruction and rebuilding, but we serve as a coordinator. Not as a politician, administrator or planner of rebuilding of community life, but we become local people’s voices, ears, hands and fots. Immediately after the Typhoon No.15 (September 8, 2019), elderly people at marginal

⁹ 2015. M, Amaha. Sengo 70nen, Shougen / Chosakirokushyu. Sanchoni tatsu. Aa, Jyuguniyanfuno hi. 54-77.

villages desperately asked us to cover blue tarps over their house roofs. If there are no contractors, administration or volunteers at the site, we would like to cooperate with the wishes of the local people, even though we are an amateur, inexperienced, or have no skills. However, there are no ladders, blue tarps or sandbags. We run in a 20 minutes by car and purchased materials at home center called Komeri Power. Since people live alone and lost everything, so our organization covers every cost. Indeed, we do not ask for a return. As it is written in the Bible, “The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have’”, there will be a case to cover every cost. (Luke 10:35) Volunteers provide temporary first aid even without hammers, nails, timbers and so on. So, we will do our best in an amateur way. Since we don’t have any perfect skills, so it’s just a temporary repair. For example, even you are taking care of someone who is injured, if you perform injections, surgery or medical treatments, you will violate medical law. Therefore, the *Volunteer-dō* is equivalent to a temporary emergency procedure until the official unit arrives.

b. Blue tarp on the roof

A general area leader Mr.Masao Shimada, who leads Kobe International Sustaining Organization from the beginning, encouraged us to go to the most troubled people, so we did. Mr. Toru Aoki, the area chief of where Ms. Kotani lives, was also with us. Because the 2nd floor was blown away by the Typhoon No.15, the ceiling of the 1st floor becomes really terrible. We borrowed a ladder and covered roofs with blue tarps. Fortunately, at the 1st Chiba Disaster Volunteer, there was Mr. Kazuro Sanari, who was running a renovation store, so we could have done our work as the professional contractor did. At that time also, there was no saws, electric drills, or blueprints. It is the same situation that to take care of people according to demands of the house without having surgical knives, injections and anesthetics. As long as we put our empathy, we help people as much as possible. None of the four of us had safety belts, safety shoes or helmets. We don’t work according to the doctrinarianism rules that if an accident happens, it becomes a secondary disaster, and on the contrary, we give troubles to other people. We covered the roof with blue tarps based on the mental attitude of neighbors, relatives and friends. In fact, the act to cover the wounded hearts of the disaster affected people can be said as volunteer. It’s just like giving a blanket to a sleeping child in the cold winter. Even we can’t perform as people’s expectation, we make our every effort.

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購読料
一月 三、二〇〇円
三月 九、〇〇〇円
半年 一八、〇〇〇円
一年 三三、〇〇〇円



館山市布良地区の被災家屋で屋根修復の応急処置に取り組み岩村牧師

青年僧ら支援

寺は避難住民を受け入れ、各派の青年僧らも支援に動き始めた。
(記事は17日正午現在)

長野市の真言宗豊山派 福徳寺は、千曲川が氾濫して境内が約1割浸水した。伽藍や本尊の流失は免れたが、本堂は水浸しになった。戸谷隆典住職は救助用のボートで避難して無事だった。

浸水寺院で片づけ 豊山派

16日、支援に駆け付け、弘前住職が復旧活動に取り掛かっていた。同派仏教育青年会はSNS(会員制交流サイト)等で有志を募り、16日から同寺などで復旧活動に取り組み、足元がぬかるむ中、堂内の仏具や家財を撤出し、畳上げなどに汗を流した。



福徳寺で



総持寺に住民、

曹洞宗大本山總持寺の受け入れを始め、氾濫した。岩村牧師は「食事をする暇もなく、屋根には体力も限界になった」と話した。地は「巨人の足で踏みつぶされたような状況」だが、尼僧は「地域の復旧活動に地元の方々と協力して取り組むことで、寺が地域に溶け込むチャンスになる。ピンチをチャンスに変えたい」と気丈に話していたという。

千葉で活動「限界も」

神戸国際支援機構

宗教者や市民でつくる神戸国際支援機構(神戸市垂水区)は13、16日、岩村義雄理事長、神戸国際キリスト教牧師ら4人が千葉県館山市などで復旧支援活動を行った。岩村牧師は9月の台風15号の通過後、19号で大きな被害を受けた館山市の布良地区でも度々大雨が降り、14日は電巻の被害があった。

Chugai Nippoh
(October 18, 2019)

c. Style of the Volunteer-dō

Three days after the March 11, 2011, we started to prepare and when we entered to disaster affected area in Tohoku region on March 20, the place looked another world. Like the field hospital, the inpatients at Saito Hospital were waiting for their turn in front of the temporary toilet outside while enduring the freezing cold weather. The Ishinomaki City Hall had a strange smell because the tsunami reached and covered the second floor. Many cars were piled up on the road side like toys. At the beginning, we were fully equipped with boots, helmets and gloves.

At that time, we might have had a lofty attitude of “We will do it for you”. However, we eventually came to notice that we were trying to act like a kind of unfriendly push-to-selling with friendly face for those who were mourning because of losing their family, property and friends. Volunteer is not meant to give what we can do for victims, but to notice what they actually desire

the most to receive. Then, we have been experiencing that throwing away the appearance of “I am a volunteer” and think, feel and talk on the same level as local people is easier for to communicate with them. While we are walking on the street, lining up at the cash register for shopping and driving a car, we came to notice that it is easier to integrate smoothly into local people. Just like “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law”, in order to “receive” trust from disaster affected people, we took off our armors that look like a volunteer. (1 Corinthians 9:20) If a boy scout behaves differently when he wears daily clothes not his uniform, it will be insincerity.

However, there is a traffic rule to put on a helmet when running on a single road that got pavement destruction. Therefore, leaders of volunteer groups must also pay attention to safety. If a participant could prevent an accident with wearing a helmet, in that case, if other participants were not wearing helmets, you will be asked your responsibility. As the Bible says, “When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof”, the thoughtfulness to prepare “parapet” is written. (Deuteronomy 22:8)

Just same as the lives of the disaster affected people, the lives of the people who are cooperating beside us should be treated as important.

<Conclusion>

This time volunteer activities in Chiba, we engaged as a volunteer to set up a tent for the rain so that people can live alone in a room without a roof. I think they are able to manage to live even under night dew, until the ceiling is fixed. Our *Volunteer-dō* act like a guerrilla at the site where no contractors, administrations or other volunteers have yet reached. When we have finished our work that equivalent to emergency treatment, we send our slogan of “smiling with our back without any words”. We keep the words “But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” very deeply in our heart. (Matthew 6:3) So we don’t serve for receiving commendations or medals, and we don’t earn any money by publishing books one after another.

In Japan, a disaster-prone country, by a private volunteer center¹⁰, which everyone can participate, you are able to “suffer together (スムパスコー <<スン ‘together’ + パスコー ‘receive suffering, experience hardness’>>)”.¹¹

Mera in Chiba Prefecture is the marginal village. I hope that local leaders can establish a bottom-up community. The year of 2019 suggests that to be the turning point year of compartmentalization between the volunteer and administrative social welfare council (volunteer center) through both Saga Chiba Flood Disasters. This is because that administration is far superior in the restoration, reconstruction and rebuilding of lifelines such as water outages. It is better for the private sector to arrange transportation expenses to the affected areas. The administration has emphasized the

¹⁰ 2019. Mainichi Shimbun. September 18.

¹¹ 2017. Ishinomaki Kahoku. November 7.

principle of application and has put importance on the fairness of not giving priority to specific individuals. They have discussed, announced and implemented the rescue system according to their detailed manual. What we call, they have been managed the disaster affected people. However, something like that, in case of like Saga and Chiba Prefecture and a wide range of natural disasters in the future, it will be impossible to provide the best services to victims, who are not able to apply, make action and know. The administration would not be asked any responsibilities even they don't take care of a suffering disaster affected person who is in front of them. They cannot be helped for their irresponsible attitude. It is too late to make action after being accused on TV and mass medias. For physically challenged people, foreigners in Japan and elderly people who are unable to apply for relief, ordinal volunteers can go out and hear their wishes directly. In order to reach everyone, we should stop managing volunteers and change to support private volunteer centers. It is that do not manage private volunteers. Instead of managing from the top of the pyramid, like the reversed pyramid, need to change into a flow of watching in order to bottom up from the base point. For Japan, as a disaster-prone country, it is the time of change in a values to prepare for the Nankai Trough Earthquakes and the earthquake centered directly under the capital.

Administrative director of Kobe International Sustaining Organization, Mr. Michiya Murata revised my sermon manuscript on the next week. I do appreciate for his support. I also would like to thank our office member, Miss Yumi Tokudome (translator) and Miss Miwa Sasaki for improving the unclear sentences.