

News Letter No. 6

Issued January 1, 2012

Issuer: Bishop Hiromichi Kato Director-general
Editor: The Revd. Jun Nakamura, Office Director



Let Us Walk Together Project

NSKK Support for Victims of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake

“Mayudama”

(cocoon-shaped decorations made of silk)

Crafted by “**Madoka Arahama**,” located in Sendai City, Miyagi.

Madoka Arahama is part of the social welfare corporation Madoka.



Introducing facilities with which we “walk together”



Cookies baked by “Himawari”

of Kesennuma City, Miyagi,
a workshop
run by the
social welfare
corporation
Himawari.

Our ties with the mentally challenged

Let Us Walk Together! Project Staffer
Nozomi Matsumura (Holy Saviour's Church, Nagano)

We have ties with two workshops – facilities that support those who are mentally challenged so that they may become socially and economically independent. They are Madoka Arahama in the city of Sendai and Himawari in Kesennuma City. Both of these workshops suffered major damages, and even now the clients and staff are in difficult straits.

At present, the project has been buying up products based on cocoon-shaped decorations made from silk (“mayudama”) from Madoka Arahama, and cookies from Himawari, and then delivering them to those people both in inside and outside Japan who have a concern for eastern Japan’s disaster aid. The purchase of workshop products creates work, which allows clients to be paid for the cost of their labor. These labor charges are an income source that helps to support livelihoods. At present, there are many orders coming in from various churches and church-linked groups, and the clients have a high level of motivation as they go about their work.



Madoka Arahama right after the disaster

This project offers the occasion for these workshops to increase the number of their fans, and if such ties continue, this will lead to self-reliance in the future. That is the ultimate objective of this program. As we pray and hope for the daily life of these clients, that they may feel their work is worthwhile and can have hope for the future, we are here to support the quickest possible recovery for them, a stable working environment with ongoing employment – that’s our plan for how to Walk Together!

Our Encounter with Himawari

Himawari is a workshop of the Senshinkai, a social welfare corporation in Kesennuma. Here, clients with low-level mental disabilities were earning salaries (small though they were) through making bread and processing marine products. The clients got a great deal of joy out of buying just what they wanted out of their salaries. It had been determined just before the earthquake to move to a convenient site near the ocean, but just before the scheduled opening date on April 1, the building to which they were to move vanished without a trace. Fortunately, on the day of the quake, the clients were at the existing facility, on the mountainous side of the city. The current facility immediately became a refuge shelter, where the clients, families and staff were to spend one month. What tied Himawari to us of the project was Postulant Takase (Diocese of Tokyo) of the Takinogawa School, a facility for the handicapped in Tokyo. From April, Mr. Takase entered the Kesennuma area as part of a joint effort with other facilities, so as to support this facility for the mentally challenged. When Mr. Takase came visiting the Sendai Office, we let him know that support for those who have special challenges was an important focus for this project, as per our mission statement. Based on a proposal by Mr. Takase, the staff of Himawari came to visit the Sendai Office, where they told us about the damage in Kesennuma, of how the clients were very ill at ease, and how the families of clients were also suffering. We also confirmed that if we could enable Himawari, just as much as is possible, to operate as before, that would offer a great deal of comfort. We came to understand that this would encourage not only the clients, but also their families. The means we intend to offer for support will be just as with Madoka Arahama, using sales receipts to provide wages for the clients through buying up the items they have produced. Himawari had been putting its main efforts into the production of cookies, so we decided to buy up these cookies and distribute them among you all. At present, staff goes by there once or twice a week, working together with the clients. In addition, we have begun to offer transportation to and from work for the clients and efforts to support their families which are in temporary housing.

Heart-warming ties

Junko Itoh, Staffer of the Himawari Workshop

In this town where the damage from this disaster had been so heavy, making it impossible even to pay for the labor of clients whose aim is to be gainfully employed, with the rubble all around us -- at a point when we were not even sure of the way forward, I still cannot forget the words the priest offered us: "what can we do to help you?" He took on the cry for help that was there in our hearts in his heart-warming resolve to build up ties with us. And so the joy of being at work was given to the supporters of the project and clients, and peace of mind to the staff. We see how all of you in the Let Us Walk Together! Project have been coming alongside us to respond to our multiple needs, looking at our situation together with us, and how those of you from the NSKK have been purchasing the treats that we make as you try to develop something like face-to-face support, and we see you now as companions who have developed a tie to us; we are thankful to have encountered you. Handicaps produce harm through creating walls, but that harm is removed by the power in our hearts and by our words, and through acts of support. We respectfully ask for your continued support and cooperation, so that there may be hope for tomorrow, so that splendid, sunny smiles that are here may not have to turn overcast.



Support for Himawari Cookies

Keiko Murai, Chair of NSKK Women's Network

The NSKK Women's Network has distributed "Himawari Cookies" since September, 2011, being spurred into action after hearing that the facilities in Kesenuma, newly built at a convenient location, had not been used at all after the tsunami and the resulting fire. The NSKK Women's Network passed on requests for help to Diocesan and Church Women's Societies, were soon rewarded with a positive response and were delighted to connect churches to support through the Cookies. There was a certain pressure with the 250 bags of Cookies to distribute every week, with a sell by date of one month. We were unsure that one Church would be able to sell these amounts and so worked with other Churches to divide the Cookies allotted and getting the word out through Bazaars. The feedback was then so good ("they taste great", "is there anymore in stock"), that requests flooded in, but we managed to meet demand by direct orders. We received photos of the people at work and messages of thanks from the Himawari workers and will continue our support until August 2012. Thank you all so much for your help and prayers.

Encounter with Madoka Arahama

The "encounter with Madoka Arahama" started with a phone call from a member of St Andrew's Church in Yokohama asking us to help a facility for those with disabilities that had been damaged by the Tsunami.

We had been looking for a way to support those with disabilities, and so I visited Madoka Arahama with the congregation member. I learnt from the Manager of the facility that it was vital to restart activities at the facility in order to help those with learning difficulties to get back to their normal routine. I also learnt that the facility was run on the money obtained from the sales arising from the work



that was done at the facility which in turn paid the wages of its workers. Before the earthquake, Madoka Arahama had produced Japanese sweets and paper, but that had stopped after the facility had been washed away. We struggled trying to produce other goods with a Japanese style cocoon-shaped goods and dolls for our distributor. We therefore suggested that the facility made Christmas and Easter goods instead to be taken and distributed by the NSKK directly mainly to other Anglican organizations overseas from September. We hope that the people who buy these goods will continue to pray for and support those affected by the disaster. We also visited Madoka Arahama to help with volunteer work. We hope to get to know as much as possible the people at the facility and share our experience with as many people as possible. After we finish our support at Madoka Arahama, the facility's work will continue. The facility has decided to rebuild on new borrowed land in Sendai City and we hope that the goods produced by Madoka Arahama will lead to support for the facility for long time.

Thank you message from Masatoshi Nakamura, Staff Member, Madoka Arahama

46 members of the Madoka Arahama facility for people with learning difficulties made Japanese sweets and paper. The building and machines were completely destroyed by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11th, 2011. Fortunately all members were safely evacuated to a nearby school, 3.5km apart, and no one was injured. We are currently producing Japanese-style ornamental Easter eggs in borrowed facilities 16 kilometers from our old facility in Sendai. Thanks to the distribution line provided by the NSKK's Let's Walk Together Project, our sales have increased. Any surplus funds are returned to the members as wages. Our heartfelt thanks to the Let's Walk Together Project for their support and encouragement!



Still Walking Together

**Let Us Walk Together! Project Staffer Makiko Fukuzawa
(Resident in the US)**



As I have begun working as a staffer on the "Let Us Walk Together!" Project, I have been given the opportunity to serve "Madoka Arahama," a facility to help the mentally challenged. The facility's clients suffered a great deal from the devastating earthquake and have been living with tremendous hardships ever since. I have been told that two things that would encourage them greatly are to be continuing in productive work, and for their products to keep selling.

So, I worked together with the staff of Madoka Arahama in product planning and establishing distribution routes. Though the current temporary workshop is limited both in space and equipment, the staff has given careful attention to the little details, preparing many handmade tools. In the workshop, the clients are now making "mayudama" (the cocoon-shaped decorations), and the scenes of the staff encouraging and helping them are imprinted in my memory. In November, I put up posters for the "Let Us Walk Together!" Project at the International Crafts Fair which was convened in Berkley, California, and exhibited some "daruma" dolls carrying prayers for Tohoku's recovery as well as some mayudama decorations from Madoka Arahama. In December, Berkley's St. Mark's Episcopal Church will be setting up a desk to sell mayudama products. This same church will be hosting a forum in January to present NSKK's quake relief activities. I am now searching for words to adequately describe the current situation of the people of Madoka Arahama. Though there is still interest in what has happened, nine months have now passed since the disaster, and my task is to figure

out what to say about these impacted areas, and in what way, to people who have not come in contact with any further concrete information.

What the “Let Us Walk Together!” Project is all about

The “Let Us Walk Together!” Project is the first framework for disaster relief efforts to be launched within the NSKK on the provincial level. The Project is an expression of the NSKK’s determination to “walk together” with the areas which were hard-hit, together with the efforts of all the parishes, Dioceses, and related organizations. Initially, the Project was proposed in a meeting of staffers from each diocese in charge of disaster response for the Great East Japan Earthquake, and then approved by the provincial board, with further determinations to be made by a “Steering Committee” appointed by the provincial board to carry out the actual work of the Project. Also, to carry out this work, the Project has an office in Sendai and bases elsewhere to execute the programs, with full-time staff members stationed at these locations that run the Project’s programs. At the Steering Committee meeting of October 2011, the Project’s regulations and organization were set up, and then approved by the provincial board. This Project, with Primate Uematsu as the representative head, has up to ten Steering Committee members that decide on its direction. They need to obtain approval of the provincial board for crucial issues. Decisions made by the Steering Committee are implemented by the Board of Directors, which consists of: Bishop Kato of the Tohoku Diocese, who heads the Board, Fr. Jun Nakamura, who has been sent in from the Provincial Office to serve as General Director, Fr. Kiyozumi Hasegawa of Tohoku Diocese, who is the Program Director, and Mr. Yutaka Muramatsu of Tokyo Diocese, the Secretary General. There are various staff members under the Board of Directors who carry on the programs. These staff members are stationed at the bases to carry out programs focused on some region or category of activities. The Kamaishi Base with help from the Diocese of Hokkaido is now working under the name of “Kamaishi Center for Aid to Victims,” while the Onahama Base is active as the “Onahama St. Timothy Volunteer Center,” thanks to support from three Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe Dioceses. Other activities are under the supervision of the Sendai Area Base management and go out to their local sites of action from Sendai.

All the activities of the Project are financed by donations, from within and beyond Japan. There are cases where accounting treatment can be handled by a diocese, but in the majority of cases, all elements from receipt of donations to settlements are conducted by the Provincial Office; ultimately, after all this information is gathered together by the Provincial Office and then audited, it undergoes final settlement. Also, the Project has regulations regarding running and maintenance expenses for the (Sendai) office and the Project Bases and concerning the running of programs, etc. At each level where expenses are handled, there is someone to take care of settlements. Needless to say, all this accounting treatments will be made public and published at the appropriate time. The staff carrying out the Project’s work includes lay people and clergy from the NSKK Dioceses, and staff members of each Diocesan Office, and the Provincial Office can be considered staff for this project in a wider sense. Those who are actually engaged in its programs are not the only ones who give the support for this project, so I would also ask you, our readers, to keep this important fact in mind.



“Let Us Walk Together!” Project Office

(Open) Mon – Fri 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM (Closed) Sat/Sun/Holidays
2nd Fl. Kreis Bldg., 3-4-5 Kokubun-cho, Aoba-ku, Sendai, Miyagi Pref.
980-0803

Phone: (in Japan) +81-22-265-5221 Fax: (in Japan) +81-22-748-5321 (from overseas)