

FUKUSHIMA DESK NEWS

Sendai Diocese Support Center

No. 16 – July, 2015

Fukushima Summer



What are you reminded of when you hear the words “summer in Fukushima”? I am sure many of you will answer “those delicious peaches”! However, the influence of radioactivity due to the explosion at the Atomic Power Plant is still lingering. Each one of the peaches is examined carefully before shipping, but the wholesale price given in Tokyo is 69% of what it used to be before the

Earthquake. Cucumbers have better luck. They have overcome the crisis, and they sell at 98% of the former price.

From June 29 to July 1, the national meeting of Supporting Assembly for Sendai Diocese was held, during which 40 members visited Fukushima, and listened to the voice of the victims.

In this issue, we hope to introduce two hopeful topics of senior high schools in Fukushima. While journalists inform us of the worrisome influence of radioactivity on infants, there is also strong influence from the Earthquake on our youth, in varied ways.

Futaba Future High School Participate in Baseball Match

In April, 2015, Fukushima Prefecture the newly established *Futaba Future School* in Hirono Machi which had been badly hit by the accident of the First Fukushima Atomic Power Plant, was opened and accepted 152 first year boys and girls coming from both inside and outside the prefecture. At present, the Hirono Junior High building is used.

Before the Earthquake, there had been five senior high schools, where 1,500 students were studying. All these



young people were obliged to evacuate from their homes. Since then some of them went back to their former schools, and satellite style classes started irregularly. The total number of the students of the five high schools decreased to 337, so all the classes were closed definitively.

When people heard that the local government was planning a new senior high school in Futaba Gun, they doubted the success of recruitment. However, once they heard about the start of a new high school, many applicants responded. Grownups commented that the youngsters may have been too sensitive about their own responsibility for the reconstruction of their homeland.

Fukushima Prefecture, and particularly Futaba Gun area, has been jokingly called “the advanced area of all the problems” because of the declining birth rate, aging, depopulation, declining of industry and so on. All seemed to be at the “top level” in the country. Now, the new Futaba Future School, succeeding the history of the former five schools, is aiming at gradually changing the reality.

In Futaba Future Senior High, all the students are freshmen. It was decided that the



baseball club, although consisting of only eleven, would challenge the national match in Koshien in the summer. When the school started in April, there were only two members; but by the summer, eleven members in new uniforms were present. How well will they succeed?

Fukushima High School Super Science Department

In Search of Correct Information on Exposure to Radiation

“I want to know the truth about ourselves” was the motivation one student had during her trip abroad with her family in 2014. On one occasion, when someone knew that she had come from Fukushima, this non-Japanese man looked at her in an exaggerated attitude of pity and prayed with a sign of a cross. She was shocked by his attitude, and then wondered if he reacted with correct information on radiation. On her return to school, this student joined Super Science Club and organized a small group with her friends. The students’ role was to study and inform other people about the safety and/or risk of radioactivity.

In June, 2014, these six students of Fukushima High School joined a group of 210 teachers and students of twelve high schools in Japan, France, Poland and Belarus and participated in the joint study of measuring and comparing individual's radiation level. The device they used was D-shuttle, which was able to measure radiation level by the hour, enabling the result of radiation according to the individual's activity, his/her locations (inside or outside; school or home, etc.) and the difference of the nature of the soil. In this way they were able to compare the radiation level they were exposed to, and concluded that there was very little difference among the subjects, regardless of the difference of countries or environment.



In March, 2015, at the International Meeting of Radioprotection held in France, three



students who represented Fukushima High School read their paper. Those present were 120 students, teachers and researchers from France, Morocco, Germany, Moldova and Belarus. The two papers presented by the High School were: one was on comparison of individual radiation exposure of the students of Fukushima and of other

countries, and the other was on main difficulties faced by Fukushima people. The photo above shows the oral report to the whole group, and the one below is of the posters on the difficulties of Fukushima citizens.

(Taken from Fukushima High School Home page.)

