

Fukushima News

福島便り

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— Ana English Conversation class, Farewell Party

Ana Sophia from Mexico, who had been volunteering at Caritas Minamisoma in Fukushima Prefecture since February, returned to Tokyo on October 16. The various activities in Minamisoma have given her more wonderful experiences than she could have imagined, and she has grown to love Minamisoma. I would like to thank the staff and sisters of Caritas Minamisoma, the people she met during her volunteer activities, and the people she met in Sendai for their kindness and support. Her Japanese has improved so much that she would like to come back to Japan in two years to study Japanese again.



— Sayuri Kindergarten Sweet Potato Harvest

The children dug sweet potatoes, an annual event. The sweet potatoes planted by the kids in the garden of the Sacred Heart sisters house in Minamimachi grew very well. 20 children worked hard and harvested a lot of sweet potatoes.



— Visit of the Superior General of Mary Auxiliatrice.

Natalie, the Superior General of the congregation, Margaret, General Council, and Sister Ogawa visited Minamisoma. Sr. Hatanaka gave a guided tour of the disaster area. We had dinner together at Caritas Minamisoma. Nathalie is from Cameroon, and Margaret is from Ireland. Sr. Ogawa was a translator for both French and English. We had a wonderful time with them. During the tour, they felt sad to see many houses that are still uninhabitable, but at the same time, they were impressed by the joyful atmosphere of the Odaka Fall Festival, where many families, young and old, gathered.



—Cosmos field, Urajiri shell mound

The cosmos garden in Namie was started by Fukushima Gakuin University and Namie City. The cosmos were almost at the end of their season, but the cosmos blooming under the beautiful clear autumn sky were beautiful. I felt the heart of local people who were working hard to rebuild a lovely city.

On the way back, we stopped by a shell mound in Urajiri, Odaka, where people used to live near the sea about 5,000 years ago and where there were many fish and animals. The shell mound was carefully protected.



—Futaba Shokudo restaurant closed

Futaba Shokudo (ramen restaurant), which was located in Odaka before the earthquake, opened a restaurant in Soma City after the disaster. The restaurant was well-liked by many people. When they were able to come back to Odaka, they reopened the restaurant in Odaka. It was the only place where people engaged in reconstruction work could enjoy delicious ramen, and it was always overflowing with people. Now, several restaurants are opened in Odaka, the sign of the restaurant has finally been taken down.



—Grapes at Koyagi Farm

A person who used to raise cattle before the disaster was unable to continue his farm due to the disaster, and after his father passed away, his son started a vineyard. His dream is to start his own winery. They are growing several varieties of grapes for wine. Caritas Minamisoma has been helping him with harvesting, sorting, and selecting grapes.



—Odaka Autumn Festival

We were blessed with a beautiful autumn. Many families, young and old, really enjoyed the Autumn Festival, which we had not been able to have due to Covid 19. It may have been more crowded before the earthquake, but I was impressed to see the local people moving around energetically, setting up various stalls. Ana also participated in the "giant snake roll," a 15-meter-long nori roll. (Masako Egawa)

