

## Simultaneous demonstration parade for Human Rights and Freedom of Religion throughout Japan, Friday, Dec 3, 2010

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I live in Niigata City, northwest coast of Honshu. What I am sharing here are the things that happened in Niigata rally, not of the whole country of Japan.

On Wednesday at noon I received a call from my group leader informing and requesting me to join the rally on Friday. It was a short notice and I wondered if there would be a lot of people who could join it since it's also a working day. It's a very important event and joining it would mean fighting Satan in the front line. Considering the situation and thinking of brothers and sisters I thought I had to join and support them no matter what. I was ready, but I was a little worried about the weather. Coming from a tropical country (the Philippines), cold windy day is one thing I don't like when I came to Japan and Niigata has lots of it.



As predicted the weather on Friday morning was not very good, it was windy and raining. However, at around 11:30 am the clouds had cleared up a little bit and the sun came out. I was very happy and hoped it would stay as it was through out the day. I left my house at 11:40 am, when I was at the bus stop my group leader called me again asking where I was. I found out that the rally would start at 12 noon, not at 12:30 as I thought I heard it was. Well, Japanese is quite a hard language to master, I still have a long way to go.

I was fifteen minutes late, the group had walked a mile when I joined. Brothers and sisters were so happy to see me joining them. In Japan, UC persecution is so intense. Joining this rally meant exposing ourselves as UC members and had risked of becoming the target of persecution by the people who would recognize us. Blessed families in Japan had suffered greatly internally and physically due to the persecution, so everyone was always anxious and careful. I am sure most of us who were there were concerned and worried. So showing our unity and support to each other especially on this occasion was really important, it was our shield and protection. I know that God and the good Spirit World would be there too, but our portion of responsibility was very important. This I thought so I determined and kept my promise to come to the event.



The two banners in front read: *A criminal act that outraged the world. Disallow kidnapping. Appalling human rights violations against the Unification Church. Disallow kidnapping and coercion.*

More than two hundred people participated in the demonstration in Niigata City. The group was led by a police car and several policemen were around to protect and to serve as the traffic enforcer. I thought it was ironic because these policemen had to serve us, the brothers and sisters of those who were abducted and whom the police had turned a blind eye. I am sure these policemen knew about the kidnapping and who we are. Niigata is the home of the number one and most skilled deprogrammer in Japan and it's one of the places where most of our kidnapped brothers and sisters had been kept for a period of time.



The demonstration started out from a small park near the Niigata Station. It circled the business district of Bandai and back to the small park again where it ended. The rally lasted for fifty minutes. Church leaders were in the front line and the unity of the group had shown to the public our determination. Bold placards and banners and the youth members' energetic and incredible power in leading the cheering of our disapproval and denouncement of the abduction attracted attention. Curious, interested, surprised is how I would described people's faces. Youth members who actively and happily distributed leaflets had also received positive encouragement from observers.



I have heard about UC brothers and sisters being abducted and deprogrammed after the blessing in 1992. Being matched and blessed to a Japanese brother I couldn't help to worry. However, it was only when I came to Japan that I could really feel and realize how terrible it is and why our church is so helpless and can't do anything about it. Now that the whole world has joined to stop this unjust and cruel violation of human rights and freedom of religion in Japan, I think God's side has started to rise. At the moment we are pounding a huge thick wall of Satan, but we will surely knock it down for goodness will always prevail. I would like to encourage everyone to keep supporting. Thank you very much.

Photos courtesy of Mori sensei