

## WFWP Event – Japan, its people and culture

Hugo Veracx - March 6, 2012



In Brussels, on Saturday March 3, marking International Women's Day and the one year anniversary of the tsunami, Belgian Women's Federation for World Peace in co-operation with UPF held a cultural event 'Japan, its Culture and its People' with more than fifty five persons in attendance including a group from Lille and a representative from Luxembourg as well. The president of WFWP from France honoured us with her presence too

Great prior efforts had been made by everyone in beautifully preparing the event and the programme kicked off with warm welcoming remarks from the Belgian Women's Federation President after which she also publicly read the words of Ban Ki Moon concerning the theme of International Women's Day 2012 and the issue of gender inequality.



After this, a very moving short film and series of slides on the tsunami were shown illustrating the terrible circumstances of a year ago. Apart from displaying a flood of expressions of the immense thankfulness of Japan toward the international community, it also positively stressed the great spirit of the Japanese people who with many of its international friends diligently faced up to this horrendous catastrophe in an effort to come to grips with making a new start.

WFWP felt some extra significance in this event for the fact that it coincided exactly with the beginning of True Mother's visit to Japan. It also felt special that one of the Japanese guests present happens to be from the Fukushima-Sendai area. She was so happy to be at our event with her Italian husband and young daughter. At one point she expressed that this was the first time she and her husband had been invited to an event on Japan since coming to Belgium. A representative of Japanese /Belgian couples present shared in a light hearted way about his experience of being married to a Japanese spouse. Afterward, with the help of a screen size picture of many special dolls, Mrs Akiko Veracx drew everyone's attention to the fact that March 3 also happened to be "Girls Day" a special day of celebration in Japan called 'Hina Matsuri' wishing a bright future of good health, fortune and goodness for all young girls throughout the whole of Japan.



After all the opening words, video etc., we moved on to several Japanese cultural activities set up in various rooms which afforded an opportunity for everyone to try out an array of traditional disciplines such as calligraphy writing, origami, sushi making and shiatsu. Mrs Yoko Jacques and Mrs Akiko Veracx headed the calligraphy writing tables as they gracefully encouraged each participant to create beautiful works. Just beside, Mr Hugo Veracx shared in friendly conversation at the tea table covered with a special blanket 'kotatsu' reaching to the floor thus keeping the visitor's feet warm. Mrs Fumiyo Vanalderwelt oversaw the origami tables giving several good tips to the first timers. The much experienced and professional Mr Keizo Yamaguchi guided the shiatsu sessions and indeed gave many valuable health insights as well as several hands on demonstrations for different individuals. Finally, the sushi making sessions headed by Mrs Bénédicte Suzuki proved to be both a hit and a lot of fun for young and old alike culminating with everyone sharing and enjoying the delicious taste of their own freshly made sushi.





It was beautiful that everyone had both the time and the chance to experience all of the activities on offer and a deep spirit of joy and peace could be felt by all. The afternoon programme eventually came to a close with several Japanese songs and story spontaneously offered by our Japanese participants. All in all, it was a good reminder of the beauty, depth and importance of Japan, Heavenly Father's precious Eve nation whose role it is to support the Adam nation of Korea in the providence to restore mankind.

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