

Earthquake in Yogyakarta

Colleagues,

Marie and I have dear friends in earthquake-devasted Yogyakarta, Java, friends from our earlier Mission Volunteer days in Indonesia. The folks we know there are with the ACAA, the Asian Christian Art Association—Judo Poerwowidagdo (ACAA president), his wife Timur, and Marthen Tahun, prime-mover for producing IMAGE, the association's quarterly journal. We've been members almost from the ACAA's founding 27 years ago, but we can no longer remember how that all came about. Marie continues to be in regular contact with ACAA office in "Yogya," as she edits the English language articles that accompany the art works pictured in each issue of IMAGE. In cyber-space it's a piece of cake. Marthen ships over to her the copy after he's finished with the layout. Marie brushes up the sometimes "interesting" English, posts it back to him, and before long an airmail hardcopy is in our St. Louis mailbox. The most recent issue was number #106. Except for 4 issues that we somehow somewhere lost, we have all the rest from #1 to 106. They constitute an astounding chronicle of Asian Christian Art. Works from a number of the ACAA members who are "real artists" are in our home. If you're ever in St. Louis, stop by and we'll show and tell.

But enough of that. Here is Marthen's e-mail from May 29.

Even in these days of tectonic terror—yes, especially in these days—Christ's Peace & Joy!

Ed Schroeder

Dear Friends, As you may have noticed that an earthquake in 5.9

RS (some scholar says 6.2 RS) was happened in Yogyakarta at the early morning of Saturday, May 27, 2006. It was big shock for us. The book shelves at the ACAA office was falling and the wall is cracking. However we are – Dr. Judo Poerwowidagdo, Dyah Merduwati, myself and our relatives are all right. The electricity and telephone networks was off but then reinstalled hours after that so we could inform relatives and friends outside the city who may have worried about us due to this tragedy. Thanks for all your support and prayer for us in Yogyakarta.

A great shaking only happened in a short time, but has created a great devastation in some places in Yogyakarta and the districts nearby. It took more than 5000 people's lives. Thousand and thousand more have lost their houses and their relatives as well. Hospitals in Yogyakarta are now full of wounded people while many more still at their villages waiting for the aid. A positive response to help the victims comes from many NGO, religion-affiliated organizations, groups of humanitarian workers and also from the people in town.

This tectonic earthquake with the epicentrum at the South Yogyakarta was unexpected tragedy, since all our attention were focused on the eruption of Merapi vulcano at the North of Yogyakarta. The aid priorities and perhaps people's attention now shift from those at the refugee camps close to the Merapi volcano to the devastation areas caused by the earthquake at the South and the East of Yogyakarta. Now people are not as panic as the first two days, however the rumor about the sequel earthquake, the uncertainty and unpredictable greater eruption of the Merapi volcano still in the concern of many people.

This tragedy comes when we are at the mid of the ascencion and pentecostal celebration. It is yet a challenge for Christian, to find the image of God and His presence in the midst of those

who suffer – the God that live in solidarity with those who may have lost their hope to sustain their life, the God that extends his love through us in order to show his mercy for others who are in need.

*Good Wishes,
Marthen Tahun
ACAA Staff*

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[PS from ES. Although Marthen doesn't mention it, the ACAA needs help. Should this be your concern, say so and we'll connect you with New Zealander Ron O'Grady, the ACAA person you should talk to.]

PS #2 Here is the text we sent in for the 25th anniversary issue of IMAGE, #100. September 2004:

IMAGE –this word is a weighty Biblical term, both in the Old and the New Testaments. It is not so easy to render in modern languages. In Scripture's creation story humans are created "in God's image." Our favorite interpretation of this is that we are made to "mirror" God, to be "God-reflectors" to the whole world. But sadly, in this broken world, it is no longer true of us. We are fractured reflectors. Only Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, reflects God's image perfectly – and wonder of wonders, he restores us broken mirrors to be God-reflectors as well. As St. Paul says, we are "reformed into Christ's own image."

Christian artists, as restored images, mirror God especially in his mercy to the world again. Now for 100 issues our own IMAGE magazine has sought to show us the work of their hands in the

Asian context. Images of Christ, images of our broken world, and images of that world restored, speak to us through these pages. We thank God for the faithful work of both artists and editors, and hope for a lively continuation of the project as the Lord gives life and vision. [p.3, IMAGE 100]