

America's Cheon Il Guk Missionaries Return from their Foreign Missions

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The Cheon Il Guk Youth Missionary (CIGYM) program was initiated by True Mother four years ago in order for second-generation missionaries, who have dedicated their heart and spirit to give new life to the youth of foreign countries, to serve and witness.

On January 14, Generation Peace Academy (GPA) Cheon Il Guk (CIG) missionaries were sent to five countries — Costa Rica, Scotland, Dominican Republic, Czech Republic and Peru — to rekindle the missionary spirit and passion for witnessing that drove the Unification movement forward decades ago. They have now returned to America after four months abroad.

Costa Rica



Three U.S. missionaries — S. Nakaza, E. Maddox, and J. Fujikake — went to Costa Rica where a CARP chapter was established four years ago. Due to Costa Rica's relaxed and carefree culture, the missionaries focused on building close relationships with guests through outings, lunch or coffee, service projects, and events. Through creating this foundation of genuine care and trust, they were able to form a deep love for the nine guests who were eager to learn the Divine Principle

The missionaries were blessed to work closely with second-generation Unificationists, CARP members and Korean CIG missionaries to do a variety of community service projects through CARP's sister organization called Heroes. Through Heroes, they witnessed to the larger community and inspired young

people to try to make a change in the world.

"The love that you invest is never wasted. Every bit of love plants a seed within the hearts of others," said S. Nakaza.

Peru



As K Ishii, F. Fujioka, Y. Ishiyama and S. Honda arrived in Peru, they immediately started their witnessing activities. They hit a record high of 55 participants with the help of a few GPA students who joined in the witnessing efforts. Out of all the guests who visited the CARP center, 10 have been consistent in participating in events and lectures and are interested in deepening their understanding of True Parents.

Kana Ishii, the Peru team leader, said, "The most impactful lecture to give is the one on the Second Coming, True Parents. I felt the intensity of how God and Satan are fighting with each other to claim the person I'm lecturing. This experience has made my relationship with God, True Parents and the Divine Principle even stronger and I am really grateful for this amazing opportunity that God has given me."

Before they left Peru, the missionaries made a list of their guests' names and information for the Peru CARP team to take over and follow up with them.

"As much as I've been witnessing to these people, God has been witnessing to me. God was desperate for me to be a Cheon Il Guk missionary," said Y. Ishiyama.

Scotland



The Scotland team — M. Granstrom, M. Orikasa, Y. Ono, and K. Ishiguro — arrived in a country with no recent witnessing foundation. The missionaries had to unite and work together to initiate activities suitable for college campuses.

They hosted events such as "Tribe Talks" at a Starbucks where they discussed words from True Parents' and studied the Divine Principle, met one-on-one with guests and invited them to dinners. They had a total of 212 guests attend their events, where 10 of those guests were interested in continuing their studies of the Divine Principle. Most said they wanted to attend the 14-day workshop in Austria while others offered to continue leading the "Tribe Talks" once the missionaries returned to America.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic team of four — H. Bond, M. Nakamura, D. Lee, and Y. Scharf — had the amazing opportunity to witness in the beautiful city of Prague. As the largest and most populated city in the Czech Republic, Prague has a history of religious conflict which has left many of its people wary of religion. However, the missionaries found out that many people have a strong bond with their family. College students regularly travel home on the weekends to be with their families. They may not like organized religion, but are open to a higher power or energy to direct their lives.

The Czech team was lucky to join the Korean Top Gun Youth missionaries and Special Task Force Europe in their witnessing efforts. During their stay, the missionaries learned how to work together to create events, take care of guests and create a culture of heart together.



Due of its central location in Europe as well as its low student fees, many international students travel to Prague for studies. Through this, the Czech team experienced how to cross national and cultural boundaries by striving for a greater purpose: to create God's home wherever they go.

Dominican Republic



While R. Yonetani, S. Iwasaki and H. Sawada had the honor to serve in the Dominican Republic for four months, they welcomed a fourth member, M. Yu, who joined from the Los Angeles Young Adult Ministry for the last month and a half. They worked closely with the CARP members in the Dominican Republic to host seminars, culture nights and sports days which drew in 125 participants total. Out of these 125 participants, eight signed up to be CARP members, some of whom have committed to living at the CARP center.

"When ending this mission, I was so inspired to contribute more for God and True Parents. I just realized how much God loves me while I was learning to love others. I believe witnessing is about sharing the love and blessings you receive and understanding what True Parents have done for us," R. Yonetani stated.



After about a week since returning to America, the CIG missionaries had the amazing opportunity to meet with Regional Chairman of Family Federation North America, Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, as well as President of Family Federation North America, Rev. Demian Dunkley, for a wonderful lunch. Each team leader was given the opportunity to offer a short testimony about their countries and how the experience helped them growth.

All of this years' missionaries have expressed a strong desire to continue witnessing whether by staying another year supporting the CIGYM program, joining CARP chapters across America, or at home. Through this experience, the missionaries really felt the importance and power of witnessing and now understand why True Mother has been focusing on witnessing so much.