

USA Cheon Il Guk Missionaries: Dominican Republic - First Week

Roland Platt
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(From left to right) Jake Lavina, R. Yonetani, H. Sawada, S. Iwasaki, Roland Platt (Director of the gap-year program, Generation Peace Academy)

Hello, this is Dominican Republic here with an overview of the past week!

The spirit of Dominican Republic is very bright, welcoming and respectful. Already within the first hour of arrival at the airport, we were greeted by Jake Lavina, leader of the CARP organization (Collegiate Association of Research of Principles) here in Dominican Republic.



Right after our arrival, we visited the Family Federation of Dominican Republic," and introduced ourselves to Señor Bernardo, the National Leader of the organization there. Afterwards, we met up with the current group of CARP members.

Currently, our main focus has been to adjust to the culture, as well as our schedule here since the campus we will be witnessing on is still in summer break. On Friday, we were able to go out witnessing for an hour and invite a few people to come attend lectures we hold at the CARP center.

On the second day, Jake Lavina and the American missionaries went to Santiago to meet the leaders there. We were accompanied by a Japanese missionary named Homare, who will be joining our missionary group, and witnessing alongside us during our time here in Dominican Republic!



During the evening, we created a witnessing system and plan for both old and new CARP members alike with the leaders and Jake Lavina. We also made plans on what we will be doing when the sister program, Generation Peace Academy comes to visit near the end of February for their yearly overseas service project. We felt so blessed for this opportunity to meet with these hardworking leaders! At the meeting, the leaders expressed their care and hope in us missionaries - how often do they receive the opportunity to see the youth in this generation have a sincere, passionate heart to invest towards the Will of God?

On the third day, we went sightseeing in Santiago, and visited a tower there. Towards the evening, we were back in Santo Domingo, and visited the downtown area, stopping by various places there, such as the Cathedral of the Americas, Christopher Columbus' home, and a chapel that honored the founding fathers of the Dominican Republic.



The official distribution of responsibilities and witnessing begins this upcoming Tuesday, and the few days leading up to this weekend was filled with reflection and intention-setting, as well as some planning towards achieving our goals as missionaries during these next 120+ days.

As missionaries, one of our main goals is to intentionally work towards our relationship with God. We are so grateful to the founders of CARP- Rev./Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han Moon. Otherwise, we would never have had this opportunity to be on this mission in such a beautiful country as Dominican Republic!