



The ten days **Youth Mission Exposure** trip to Tuao was really a misnomer because it was actually a Mission Immersion trip. Conditions were not easy and each one was stretched physically, mentally and spiritually. We were not buffeted by the typhoon, but had to endure four days of continual rain and power outages. As a result, conditions were muddy, damp and uncomfortable. Home visits for bible study were always an adventure - if nothing else for the rudimentary shacks called Home.

Each of our youth shared the gospel powerfully and we baptised one lady into the Lord on our penultimate day there - in a stream atop a mountain. Many hearts were turned towards God as they realised only God's love could explain why a bunch of city-based youth would come to their forsaken village. All the preparatory work truly paid off. The bible came alive for us as we were transported back in time to appreciate the parables Jesus spoke about. Come for this Sunday's evening service to hear more about it as we give glory and thanks to God.

God was in total control of the trip, and even the mis-adventure with Boo Chye's stolen medical equipment became one where God was glorified. We had a team which was faithful and enthusiastic for the Lord, and He responded with overflowing blessings. Thank you for all your prayers. Every single one was answered!

Deacon Winston Chong



**Tuao Youth Mission Trip 2006
Daily Journal**

Day 1 – December 7th, 2006 - Prepared by Alistair Chong



4.30am Woke up and washed up
5.00am Left for Airport
5.30am Arrived at airport and checked in

6.00am Sang a few songs at the airport and said good bye
7.00am Board plane, read book for 1.5 hours
8.30am Walked round plane
9.00am Tried to sleep but could not
10.00am Read book again
10.30am Walked around plane and talked
11.30am Arrived at Clark Airport
12.00pm Long boring check out
12:45pm Collected bags
1.00pm Waited for buses (vans)
1.15pm Two buses came and we were forced to squeeze in
1:45pm Got out at shopping mall (SM Mall), similar to Singapore shopping malls. Ate lunch. One more bus came.
3.00pm Left mall – did not do any shopping ?
3.15pm Began a really really long trip
4.00pm Van with Uncle Edward and the girls in it, broke down. Had to stay back. Somewhere (Victoria, Tarlac) to repair it. The rest went ahead to San Jose.
5.00pm Arrived at a mini stall, went to buy snacks and a meal because we knew we would be late. Waited for Uncle Edward's van to turn up.
6.30pm No sign of van, given the signal to go ahead first. Occupied our time with games and lame jokes in the van.
9.30pm Arrived at Ramon CoC, had dinner.
10.15pm Uncle Edward's and the girls' van arrives. They eat and we leave for Country Farm Resort. Our original plan was to stay in the church, but the water supply got cut off somehow.
11.00pm Arrived at Country Farm Resort. Nice place. Got into bed and wrote this down.



Note: The sunrise and sunset is weird here. It is as bright as 8am when it is 5am, so around 7pm it is like 9pm.

Day 2 – December 8th, 2006 - Prepared by Chen Yi

We woke up early today at the Country Farm Resort and went to Ramon COC to present some songs, introduce ourselves, and to hear Uncle Winston share a heartfelt devotion on Psalm 23. Even from the short stay with the brethren at Ramon we were touched by their warm hearts and genuine hospitality, which made the good food taste even better.

Following that we embarked on a four-hour journey to Tuao. We checked into the Cassily Resort at about 2pm, and left for the Tuao COC.



We made our journey there in todos, motorcycles with a one-wheel carriage attached to its side. When journeying down the bumpy road and taking in the wonderful views of the padi fields, one can only stand in awe of God's creation. The ride in the todos was also a once in a lifetime experience, with its one of a kind suspension system. Many a time the engine would stall and we would have to get out and push the todo out of the mud, but we all took it in good fun. One also realises the skill with which the drivers here drive with, as the ground was uneven and careful judgement was needed to find the best way to clear a bump.

We had lunch at Tuao COC and had some activities with those present. Just before dinner we made visit to the family of Julie, a lady widowed by her husband who committed suicide. We pray that our visit to her and our sharing of a few songs have lifted their spirits in the household slightly. Brother Jhun Ma also gave us a those present a timely reminder that even though the family had lost their father, they, and all of us have our father in heaven. 'Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you', matt 7:7 was another verse he shared.

Following that, we returned to the church where we had another presentation of songs, and an introduction of ourselves. The Filipino brethren also responded by singing a couple of songs for us, and also introducing the youths who attended the church. After dinner we journeyed back to Cassily (in a truck this time) where we had a devotion by Shawn.



Day 3 - 9th December, 2006 - Prepared by Shawn Li

Just the 3rd day and its looking like the trip of a lifetime already. We woke up early, all eager to experience something new, planting rice seeds. We had a heavy breakfast before heading to our mini expedition to the paddy fields. We arrived there not planning to get too dirty; however it was a different story once we were there. We had to walk in mud to our paddy field, not just mud that covered our foot but mud that reached to our knees. I know that in Singapore, the first thing on his/her mind would be, " EEW, no way I'm gonna step in MUD!"

I guess everyone made mission impossible to possible. When we made the first step into the mud, it was unforgettable after that. Nothing can exactly express how we all felt because like the saying goes, "you'll only know it once you've experienced it" It was a long walk to our paddy field, but it was through this walk that all of us drew closer to God. I think the beautiful scenery of the mountains (looks exactly like New Zealand or some of us would say, Jurassic Park) made this possible because back at home, all you see is buildings and cars and it distracts you away from God and His awesome creations.

Planting rice seeds was a humbling experience for all of us. We all live such comfortable lives back in Singapore and we often take for granted the food that we eat, even the simplest form of food; rice. Rice is not just something you buy, cook and eat; it is something that takes lot of effort from the farmer to eventually sell it to the supplier. We all learned how to plant rice seedlings and everyone was just so willing to go through the hardship the farmers go through day in and out. The amazing thing was that even though the process of growing rice is very long and tiring and there is no guarantee that the harvest would be good, the farmers were still happy and contented with life. I guess we all learned that life is really more than being successful in the world, it is about living it to the fullest and trusting God in His promises and will for us.

We then took the 'Jeepney' (a van that can not only carry passengers on board but also ON TOP ?) back to the church where we had lunch. We started on our next project after a few hours of rest. The project was to build a shelter outside the church with the help of the villagers. We made new friends and bonded closer with everyone, which was such a pleasant sight.

After a long day, we were all physically tired but our spirits were too high and excited to give in to our bodies. After dinner, we received GOOD NEWS that two youths were getting baptized and we headed back to Cassily to have the baptism. What a joyous night it was and a great day in all.

Day 4 – December 10th, 2006 - Prepared by Louis Lim

We left for Tuao COC at 7.15am. Upon our arrival, the PA systems had already been set up, and the banner and curtains had already been hung on the walls outside the church building. It was very interesting to hold the worship underneath the canopy which was built the day before. We sang some songs while we waited for the chairs to be filled up and for the villagers to settle down. Just when the worship service started, the rain started to pour, and several people seated at the back frantically laid out their umbrellas on top of the canopy to provide themselves more shelter. What interests me at that moment is the way these villagers used all available resources to make the worship service pleasing and comfortable to attend, such as building the canopy and using additional umbrellas to provide shelter, and using traditional wooden furniture and curtains to decorate



the place. This is the simplistic lifestyle that these villagers are leading.

We as youths took charge of the entire worship service. Joseph was the songleader, Irvin did the bible study which is a portion of the Tuao worship, and I preached to the congregation. Brother Edward, Nehemiah and Kelvin were the ushers for the day. We were delighted that the worship was a success and God had indeed spoken to the congregation through us in one way or another. We hoped that they might be inspired or have learnt something from the service with renewed minds and faiths.

In the afternoon (tanghali ?), we had house bible studies with four families. They were the Agaya family, the Lim family, the Pascua family and the Raguidim family. We were split into four groups, and each one was assigned to visit a family to interact with them and share the gospel. Our purpose was to plant the seed by giving them insights about the gospel, and then let God handle the rest. I visited the Lim family, whose head of the household is Louie Lim. Oh! He has almost the same name as mine! What a coincidence to find somebody having a similar name to mine on the other side of the world. It was amazing to discover and experience how they can adapt to live in simple wooden houses built on extremely muddy fields. When I asked Brother Louie for the washroom, it took me some time to find it because there is no washroom! It is merely an area on the field covered with cloth for privacy, with a container used for big business. Haha, I don't think I can live in a place like this for the rest of my life. We had an enjoyable time of fellowship with the families as we learned more about their lifestyles and customs while sharing the gospel to them. We could see that they are keen in God's Word.

We visited the Salvador family in the evening. The walking journey there was terrible, as we had to walk through thick and slippery mud and come in contact with thousands of sandflies that refused to give way to us. The field was so slippery and muddy due to the ceaseless downpour since morning which drowned all the poor grass in water. The rain persisted throughout because of the typhoon in Bicol. This reminded me of our spiritual walk to God whereby the journey would inevitably be similarly challenging. Those who wore flip-flop slippers frequently had their footwear stuck in the mud, and we could hear squishy sounds of disgusting mud every step we took. Ewww... Luckily, none of us tripped and got ourselves fully dirty, phew... Moreover, the evening was pitch dark, so we had to painstakingly find our way through with torchlights. Eventually, we reached the house of the Salvador family. Over there, we sang songs, making the house lively with joyous singers of praise to God. Then a devotion was shared. I felt that the moments we had today were tiring but very fruitful. ?



Day 5 – December 11th, 2006 - Prepared by Charmaine Tan

Its already the 5th day of the mission trip ? and there's 5 more days to go, so we're almost halfway through the trip, but I feel like as though I've known the Filipinos for the longest time, because there are really warm people. Today we left Cassily at about 7 a.m. and headed for the church building. There, Sister Babes had already prepared breakfast for us (which were a great meal, as usual). It was raining cats and dogs, and we were headed to Taribubu Elementary School to teach and interact with them. Initially we had planned a schedule of 3 ½ hours but it turned out that the school was trying to finish its curriculum, so we only had an hour with the children. But some time with the children is better than none! Before we met with the children, we sang "Here I Am" for the vice-principal, and it was clear that she was visibly moved. I think that nothing feels better than knowing that you have touched someone's life while doing God's work. We had a lot of fun with the children teaching them how to sing "With Christ in the Vessel". Even though their command of the English

language may not be that good, they still tried their best to sing along, and those who couldn't remember the words enthusiastically did the actions. After singing, we told them to story of Joseph and I think many of them enjoyed it.

Filipino children are very enthusiastic about everything that you teach them, so far I've taught some of them to count from 1 to 5 in Mandarin and French ? And in turn they have taught me to count from 1 to 10 in Tagalog.

Isa Delawa Tatlo Apat Lima
Anim Pito Walo Siyam Sampo

Later in the afternoon, we had to do house visitations again like on Sunday, because it was raining and we were unable to help build the new church building. Chen Yi, Valmond and I visited the Julian (pronounced as Hulian) family together with Sharon. Chen Yi shared about facing trials and problems in our Christian walk with God. Many Christians feel that receiving salvation and the grace of God means that our lives will be smooth-sailing and that we will not face any difficulties.



A verse that really stuck me was Matthew 6:34 - "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Many times we have problems, regardless of whether we are Singaporeans or Filipinos, and we tend to worry too much. For the Filipinos, their worries are mainly financial, on whether they will be able to harvest enough crops, or if there's a typhoon coming that will ruin their harvest. For the past few days that we've been here, it has been raining all day long for almost everyday, and their crops and harvest have already been affected. I realised that being a farmer requires great faith in God, because there are many things that are not under your control. All they can do is to plant to seeds and transplant the seedlings carefully, the amounts of rain and sun is not for them to determine. When the verse tells us "not to worry about tomorrow", it does not mean that we stop planning for the future. But if our worries become too burdensome and affects us negatively, then we are definitely thinking too much, and the only thing that we can do is to give up our problems to God, entrusting them to Him. What we want for ourselves may not be what God has planned for us. - 1 John 4:16 "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us."



Later at about 8p.m, we had bible study in Church, we sang some songs and presented the skits that we had prepared, and Irvin shared about sin. All in all it has been a very fulfilling day ? and I'm looking forward to the rest of the days that we'll be spending here in Tuao!



Day 6 – December 12th, 2006 - Prepared by Cheryl Soh

Hello! It is my turn to journal on this sixth night. It is amazing how fast time passes when you are enjoying yourself. It actually saddens me to know that I will only be spending two more nights in Tuao. This morning was a little more special as we had breakfast brought to us by the brethren from the Tuao church and thus got to sleep a little later. The food was delicious as usual and the sky was clear.

After breakfast, we took the jeepney to Culung High School. Sitting on the top of the vehicle really allows you to see the padi fields and while the plants in some are growing healthily, those in others were ravaged by the prolonged rain. Even though it is upsetting to know that their lives would be impacted, it is such a joy to know that God has made a way out for them in the past and this time is no exception. The pupils at the high school were mostly of age 12 to 15 and they were very enthusiastic about us being there and all. We acted out two skits, sang some songs for them and taught them how to sing a few songs after that (including "With Christ In The Vessel"). They picked them up quite fast. However, the highlight of the whole thing was the lesson which was on humility and servanthood. We tried to bring the message across by washing the feet of a few volunteers just like how Christ washed the feet of his disciples. This has, I guess, also really helped us to experience what it was like for Christ with the ground then and now being extremely muddy. At the same time, this really left an impact on the Filipinos as this was not something commonly seen.

Proceeded to Mayor William Mamba's residence for lunch as it was his birthday and we had been invited. Something interesting: they didn't even serve a single dish of vegetables. The place was filled with people we didn't know. Performed the songs "happy birthday to you" and "I know that my Redeemer lives" in Tugalog.

After the lunch, we were on our way back to Cassily for a change of clothes before setting out for Church. It started to rain as we piled back up on the jeepney to return to Cassily and the roads became muddy again ? Haha I guess what was really shocking is that we returned to church finding out that there has been a brown-out(black-out).

By the time we got back to the church building, the rain had stopped and we could carry out project work for the afternoon. We are supposed to complete flooring by Thursday for the campfire that night. Olivia and I had our first taste of shovelling gravel. Interesting but tiring experience. However it was worth it since we got to burn a lot of energy of which we have consumed too much over the past six days.

We returned to the church building when it started to rain again and it got dark soon after. We hence sat there in the dark with candles and all. And despite the power failure, they still tried their very best to serve us dinner which I think is really a spirit that Singaporeans have to learn as our first reaction would be to complain. And due to the miraculous work of God the power resumed a short while before we had our bible study at night! ?



Valmond was in charge of devotion tonight and he shared a meaningful lesson on baptism. Why it was important for us not to just believe but to be baptised. I guess a lot of the villagers there believe in the Gospel but are still hesitant to get baptised thus it was fitting.

Day 7 – December 13th, 2006 - Prepared by Nehemiah Tan

I had a really good rest at Brother Louie and Sister Jodie's house! The night before, Brother Louie and I were sharing interesting army stories till around 11++ p.m. The mosquito nets did a good job and the weather was very cool! Today was the first time I was eating breakfast prepared by them and it was a spread!! Even though we were supposed to have breakfast at church, I think it would not hurt just to eat some. :D

After reaching Tuao Church of Christ and after having breakfast, we went to San Juan Elementary School to teach the children. During the night before, the youth team had decided to go ahead with the "full blown" VBS curriculum. The VBS curriculum includes teaching them songs, doing a skit, story telling and activities.

After 45 minutes on the Jeepney, we reached San Juan Elementary School! The school was swarming with excited children! We proceeded to one of the Grade 1 classes and performed a few songs for the teachers and students. I could see that they really enjoyed our singing! :D

The teachers there were told to gather the children at the flag lowering area so that we could teach them in a big group (100 + children) before breaking them into classes to do the activities. After all the children had assembled, Valmond led the children in songs. He taught them how to sing "Welcome all of you" & "If you are happy and you know it" and also taught them the actions. Both Valmond and the children were very spontaneous and the singing was excellent! The children sang their own version of "If you are happy and you know it" in Tagalog which was so funny ?

When the singing was over, we proceeded to perform a skit which told the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-38 when Joseph's brothers was jealous of him and sold him to the merchants. I could see the children were enjoying the skit; they kept on laughing when Shawn and I were irritating the girls (who acted as sheep in the skit). We continued the story of Joseph through story telling and the person who told it was... guess who? It was Joseph himself! While he was telling the story (Genesis 39-40, on how Joseph was put in jail, how he interpreted dreams with God's help), Olivia and I were holding A3 sized pictures of the story to enhance their understanding of the story. Joseph indeed did a great job in explaining the story with tone variations, so that important points were emphasized!

After the story telling session ended, and the school children were split into their 6 different grades (Grade 1-6). While the children were settling in their classes, I was busy giving out logistics needed to conduct the activities we had prepared for the children. The activities we had prepared for the children were Joseph's Colourful Coat (Art and Craft) and Lessons (worksheets). The logistics included 19 packets of stationery which included 1 pair of scissors, a glue stick, a box of pencils & a set of markers, worksheets, and art & craft templates. I must really thank Uncle Beng and Aunty Annie for buying and collating the logistical stuff. Because the children were divided into 6 groups instead of the usual 4, so we had a shortage of logistics. But we just made do with whatever we had. After the logistics were settled, the youth proceeded to their respective classes. Glenn and I were in charge of Grade six, the oldest lot in the school. Glenn did a great job of getting the children involved by asking them simple questions and teaching them a few English words. After that I explained to the children on how they were supposed to go about doing Joseph's Colourful Coat and the meaning behind the coat, like the brighter colours represents the happy times of your life and the darker colours represents the bad times of your life. The whole coat of Joseph when completed tells us that God will always be with us when we go through good times and bad times.



The children were very enthusiastic while doing the craft work. I was observing them and I realised how good they can colour (no white spots at all) and cut (smooth edges) pieces of Joseph's coat. It was really a joy to see the children chatting and doing work at the same time, it made me miss school. Well, it seems that time flies when you are enjoying yourself. Kelvin came into my classroom and told me to wrap up in half an hour's time. But the children were only half way done with their craft work, hence I told the teacher that the children could pause for a while then Glenn and I could teach them the "Christ in the Vessel" song. The children sang quite softly (shy?) even though I wrote the lyrics on the chalkboard. But they liven up after a few rounds of singing. The children were quite blur when we started to take words out of the song and kept singing those words ?



After the singing, Glenn and I took a group photo with the class and gave out gifts to them for being well-behaved and studious. We gave the stationery we brought to Philippines to the class and I could see that they were grateful for that. We sang a couple of songs for the teachers to encourage them. All the youth did an amazing job and so that ends the VBS for the Tuao, Philippines.



We travelled back to Tuao Church of Christ for lunch and a much need rest for about an hour. After that, we had to start work on the new church building as for the past few days, it has been raining heavily and nothing much has been done. When we reached the new church building, our main job there was to pave the ground in the new church building with gravel. We organized ourselves, so some of us will fill up the containers with gravel while others will carry it into the building and some will level the ground by stomping on it. I felt that everyone did their part even though there were many obstacles like red ants climbing out of the pile of gravel and a lot of mosquitoes. We worked till 4p.m then returned to the old church building for dinner and rest.

After dinner, all of us prepared for Chen Yi's devotion! The turnout was great, more than any of the other days! After the wonderful bible study (sorry Chen Yi, I could not remember much of your devotion as at that time, I felt that I was on the aeroplane, if you know what I mean), Glenn and I went back to our host's house, Brother Louie and Sister Jodie.

I would really want to commend the Lims (Brother Louie and Sister Jodie) for their hospitality. I have never seen such hospitable host in my whole entire life!!!! They just gave their best food, accommodation etc without asking anything in return. If Singaporeans can have 50% of their hospitality, I would be very glad. This shows to the extent of how hospitable they are.

So after Glenn and I washed up, I shared a devotion with the Lim family. Since Kelvin told me that Sister Jodie was prepared to be baptized the following day at the mountains, I wanted to make sure that she understood that there are certain steps or things to know before making a decision. So I shared a devotion about the steps to salvation and what baptism does do to your life. I shared like before baptism, you need to have faith in Jesus Christ that he died for all of our sins that through Him we will gain eternal life. We must repent of our past sins make a confession of our faith before being immersed into the water to cleanse the person of their sins. Then I also told her about what baptism will do to her life, like there will be salvation, no condemnation, redemption and forgiveness of our sins, you will be a new creature and you will have spiritual blessings from God. Throughout the whole devotion, I could see that both Brother Louie & Sister Jodie nodding their heads and affirming to what I have said. I was really glad when they thanked me for my devotion and told me that they understood what I have said. To a first timer like me (as in telling people about God), this was a really fulfilling experience.

After the devotion, I was really tired and I fell asleep after my head touched the pillow. It was a tiring but fulfilling day! Can't wait to hike up the mountain! ?



Day 8 – December 14th, 2006 - Prepared by Olivia Leow

It's been really an eventful day. But before I start on that, last night was also very interesting. Andrea, Shawn and I were hosted by Brother Ernesto. Andrea and I took our baths in open air for the first time in our lives. We pumped well water into buckets, lugged them to an enclosed area and squatted as we showered (the shower area was covered up to the height of our tummies). Truly unforgettable. The 3 of us along with Valmond and Chen Yi also had the good fortune of having home cooked chicken porridge for supper, prepared by Valmond's and Chen Yi's home-stay family. Andrea and I slept very

well that night. That is until the roosters started crowing in the morning. Haha...

So now about today, Andrea, Shawn and I woke up at 6am so could get to Tuao COC, which was about 20 minutes away on foot, at 7am. We were still running late however, as we only left Brother Ernesto's place at 6:45 am. Luckily we managed to hitch a ride with a Brother-in-Christ on his tricycle (is that what it's called?).

We had a good breakfast prepared by the ladies in church before setting off at 7:30am for the mountains. I sometimes wonder how early they have to wake up to cook for us so we'll have food to eat by the time we arrive in church.

It was an hour long ride on the jeepney. I was horrified to see that Uncle Edward and some of the Filipino brethren, who set off on foot, had arrived before us. I was just amused that they took a short cut.



The trek up the mountain was probably the most challenging one I've ever been on. We waded through mud and rivers and even climbed waterfalls. The Filipino kids were really good at it. They guided me up by hand all the way. Sweet children.

After arriving at the near top of the mountain, we had a picnic lunch, again prepared by the ladies of the church. After which there was a baptism at one of the water fall. We then began our descent, through tall thorny grass and narrow paths. My shoes were so caked in earth, I was standing 2 inches taller and 2kg heavier.

On the way back. The jeepney got stuck in a 'squish spot' and the guys had to go down and push it forward. Back at Taribubu, we went back to our host's homes to take our baths before making our way back to church for dinner before the campfire.

Dinner was excellent as usual. For the camp fire, we perform a couple of songs and two of our skits. Shawn shared a devotion on salvation. After all of that, the youth stayed behind to mingle with the Filipino brethren for a bit, played some guitar, sang some songs. That concludes our night and we returned to our host's homes for rest.



Day 9 – December 15th, 2006 - Prepared by Irvin Wan

Today was an interesting day despite 4/5 of it being spent on travelling. We were supposed leave our respective homestays and reach the Church building at 6:30am. Louis (my buddy) and I went extra early to wash up because there was no toilet at my homestay.

By 620am everyone was there already. In my opinion there were so many people sending us off it looked like there was going to be a Church service or something :P It was a very emotional moment as the thought of never meeting the new friends we've made again was difficult to bear. I believe it was hardest for the 4 girls because since the first day they've been some sort of a mother figure to the kids at Tarribubu. The kids really liked them a lot and followed them everywhere. You see, most of these kids' mothers are working overseas as house helpers and that leaves them without a maternal figure. So saying goodbye was painful for both sides because in the short time we had, the 4 girls had become part of these kids' lives. I especially remember one kid, Elgin, crying very hard. The sight of him and the rest of the Church crying was quite heart-wrenching. But at the same time, I could put on a smile because I knew that in order for them to react in the way they were reacting, our team must have done something right. Praise God for that!

At about 720 we left for Cassily Resort by the rented jeepney. The 1 hour journey was a very quiet one. I guess everyone was reflecting

on the 8 days we spent at Tarribubu. I think none of us expected it to end this fast. Just when we were getting used to things, it was time to go. As the jeepney rolled on, I thought to myself that I would most certainly miss the village. The experience of living in a village was so different. It was just one straight road with houses on every side. And everyone in the village knows everyone. I remember Joseph telling me how he would take an evening stroll down the street and talk to random strangers (all of whom were friendly). Can't get that in Singapore. I'll miss the Church compound. The building which is totally made of wood, the wooden floor and staircase, the toilet (which is unlike any I've ever seen), and mostly-organic shelter/canopy they made for us on Saturday, drawing water from the water pump, carrying buckets of water back and forth, chasing ducklings and chicks, singing and talking with so many different people. I'll miss the ever-friendly villagers, they smile at you even if they don't know you. I'll miss the even-more-friendly kids who learn things so quick. As we approached Cassily Resort, I thought to myself, one of the things I'll miss most is the never ending view of



rice fields, tall grass, mountains, as well as walking in the mud and even getting stuck in what Joseph calls 'Squish Spots' :P

We reached Cassily at about 830 and left around 9. The girls were in the hired van, whose air con broke down (again). One can't help but wonder that there must be a secret conspiracy of some sort. 2 vans and 1 todo (motorcycle with an extra carriage) broke down in our trip and 2 girls were on all 3 vehicles. HmmMmMm... approach me for specific details (: Stopped for gas and after that for lunch at Jollibee (a cross between Macdonalds and KFC). Reached Holiday Inn Resort at Clark at around 8pm, having stopped for a short while to chat with Glenn's relatives because we were passing through their town.

THE HOLIDAY INN RESORT AT CLARK IS LIKE PARADISE! It is just too luxurious to be true! After days of mud, bathing in cold water drawn from wells, experiencing major black-outs, it was just strange going back to the 'Uptown World' :P We washed up while Uncle Edward and Brother Efren went to get dinner. Dinner was REALLY interesting. They bought rice and a lot of chicken. Apparently they cleared two stalls to get that much chicken. There was some unidentified pie and some instant noodles. There were no utensils or plates so we ate with our hands while crowding round the table.

From about 1030pm to 230am we had half a de-brief. We went in a round, each one had to share reflections on the trip and complete the sentence 'I have been blessed by this trip because...' as a follow-up to the sentence we had to complete before the trip which was 'I am looking forward to this trip because...'. After each person shared, we took turns to affirm the person. We did this for half the team (9 people) only and would continue tomorrow morning.



Day 10 – December 16th, 2006 - Prepared by Andrea Lee

Come to think of it, this entry starts from the middle of our debrief at the villa where we stayed for one night. By the time we finished our sharing, it was already 3am and everyone was falling asleep already. We shared our thoughts on the trip and I thought it was a good follow up from our sharing session back in Singapore. I believe many of us were touched by the people there and I'm really grateful for all the wonderful people who so openly welcomed us into their homes and their lives.

At 9am, we had breakfast in the villa and continued with our sharing session after that. The other half of the group shared again and we finished this session at 12:30pm. After which, we had to get our stuff, put them into the two vans we were traveling in, and squeezed everyone into them. We then headed to the SHOPPING MALL to have our quick lunch and shopping stop. We had 20 minutes to eat, shop and go. For a moment in the shopping mall, I felt as though I was in Singapore. Where everything goes so fast and where time is always a concern of ours. In Tuao, the only form of time to us was, breakfast, lunch and dinner and from that, I've learnt how to just let God take control of each day.

We managed to get back to the van on time and leave for Clark Airbase where we took off. We took our bags, got off the vans and said our last goodbyes to Brother Shem, Brother Efren and Sister Sharon who were going to head off to Baguio after dropping us off. The immigration took awhile to get through, but we still got on the 3:30pm flight on time. On the plane, I saw the tall and big mountain for the last time and as I saw this, flashbacks of what we did in Tuao went through my mind. God has been wonderful to us ever since the beginning of our preparations for this trip, and I'm thankful for every single moment He has brought us through.

We had a long three hour and a half flight back to Singapore, but it was worth it all. Not a single one of us really wanted to go back to Singapore.

Some of us were even saying, "It's too fast, I don't want to go back home now...". As much as we missed our loved ones back home, we didn't regret coming on this trip. It was definitely a wonderful experience as a whole. When we reached Singapore at about 8:05pm, Singapore time, we were welcomed back by our loved ones, our friends and church members. We came back changed with the realisation that we are truly blessed back in Singapore with the amount of things we are given each day. From the clothes we wear, to the variety of foods we are served on our tables each day. So, once again, I thank God for bringing us through this trip and for allowing us to meet new people we never knew much about and that we will continue doing God's work, even as we carry on lives.

This was a heartwarming, enlightening and impactful experience and I encourage the next bunch of youths going for this trip to allow God to touch your lives and allow you to touch people's lives too.

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." 1Tim 4:12

