

CLEMENTE NEWSLETTER

June 2011

David's Discussions

"Papa, Papa. The waitress in this restaurant is a Filipina!" Carmen ushers me inside the air conditioned room. She wants me to meet her. We are in Kenting for our weekend family get-away. We decided to check out this Chinese restaurant across the street from McDonald's. Carmen meets me at the front entrance as I walk in from parking the car. She beckons me to come inside and meet Karen, the Filipino restaurant helper. Karen is from Iloilo, a province in the western part of the Philippines. She has been working in Taiwan the past six months. I listen to Karen's story, very typical of the many Asian migrant workers who come to Taiwan to find some sort of hope and purpose while working as caregivers, helpers, or factory workers. While she is talking, I keep asking myself, "How can I help her? We are only here for three days. Our vacation time is too short, and she will be busy working in the restaurant this whole weekend." (I will bless you so that you can be a blessing to others. Genesis 12:2.)

There are two other workers in the restaurant, both from Vietnam. "I studied English in college. I was working in a bank before I came to Taiwan." One of the Vietnamese ladies proudly introduces herself. We switch our conversation from Chinese to English. I watch her as she shifts her attention to Sarah. She really wants to practice her English. As I listen, I cannot help but think of the many ways we can be a blessing to her, and to other Vietnamese workers here in Taiwan, if only we can speak their language. "How can I bless her? Does she hear our words of blessing when we use the English language?" (You will be a blessing to the cultures of this world. Genesis 12:3.)

"Some mornings I go out on the streets to talk to the other Filipino workers in the area. It is the only time we can go out. We are not allowed any time-off, you know," Karen laments of the harsh working conditions common to many restaurant and house helpers working in Taiwan. "By the way, *Kuya* [older brother], the Filipino lady working across the

street, beside McDonald's, is from Butuan City," Karen tells me excitedly, as Sarah has already told her that I am from Butuan City. We talk some more. The lady from across the street is Susan, married to a Taiwanese family. As we continue the exchange, my mind is racing in many different directions. I want to be a source of blessing to Karen, Susan, and the many other Asian workers here. But, how can I do that when I live so far away. Kenting is about two hours south from where my family lives. And besides, my work is with Holy Light seminary. I cannot just leave my teaching job and become a pastor for the many Asians working here in Kenting. Or, could I? (Go from wherever you are and bless the other person. Genesis 12:1.)

Carmen's Corner

Hi Everybody!

Do you know where my family and I went on vacation for three days? Kenting!

On Thursday, June 23, we arrived at a Kenting Missionary Hotel. I think it's called Oasis. We went there last year, so I was used to it. Our room was the South Africa room. Then, after a long nice nap, we got up jumping up and down ready to swim!! Is it the bathtub or the swimming pool? No . . . it's the ocean!! Um . . . beach. The waves were really BIG! So it was a lot of fun!

On Friday, we went on a hike in the Shedding Nature Park. There were scary caves, steep trails, and . . . a lot of crabs. When we came back, we were hoping that we can go to the beach again. But when we tried a beach, it was closed. All the beaches were closed because the waves were too big and dangerous. So we ended up in ANOTHER hike. Uhhh . . . my feet were REALLY tired after that.

On Saturday, I got to meet the Oasis owners' little boys. One is in first grade and one is in preschool, I think. They were both cute. We tried to find another beach in the afternoon, but they were still closed. We sobbed and cried until . . . wait a minute! We just received

news that one beach is still open! Hurry up, before it closes again! Yay, we finally get to play on our last beach! Yes!

Oh no! It was Sunday, so that means we had to go home. I'll never forget them (and the hotel.)

From, Carmen

Sarah's Sentiments

Graduation. The months of May and June are filled with these special ceremonies that celebrate the completion of a period of study and signify a rite of passage for students of all ages.

I was so thankful for the opportunity to attend this year's graduation ceremony for Holy Light Theological Seminary. Thirty-five students were awarded their degrees after years of studying while, at the same time, interning in a local church. This formal service of thanksgiving and commissioning ended with lots of smiles and laughter and, of course, picture-taking. It reminded me of my own graduation from Asbury Theological Seminary years ago. I remembered having the feeling of excitement and fear all rolled up into one, and wondered if any of these graduates felt the same way. I found myself praying for them as they continue to follow Christ and "go and make disciples of all nations".

I must say I felt a special admiration for the students for whom ministry is a second career. Most of these students have spouses and children, and going back to school is a big sacrifice for everyone. As they shared their stories here at the end of their academic journey, I could hear relief and a deep sense of gratitude that they had made it through. I cannot identify with and can hardly imagine that feeling. I was a single student at Asbury; I didn't have to worry about anyone except myself. Even when David went on to pursue his doctorate, most of the work was completed by the time Carmen came along. I found myself praying a special prayer for these graduates and their families, that God would continue to strengthen them and see them through every circumstance as they serve Him in ministry together -- just as He has our family.

“. . . the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forever more.” -

Psalms 121:8

Jacob's Journey

Do you know Super Mario 63? I play that game. You just press the arrow keys to jump up and down, and also Z, X, and C. Level Two is the pyramids, but it's so hard. Do you know National Geographic's Animal Jam? My favorite game is Pest Control. There's also Nick Jr. and a game called Sushi Cat. I like to play lots and lots of games on the computer.

One day at Carmen's school, there was a big party with lots of people. Mama and Papa were looking all over for me for a long, long time. They even made an announcement over the microphone. Finally they found me. I was in the library showing my new friends how to play Sushi Cat. I didn't understand what the big deal was. Why were they searching for me? Didn't they know I had to be in my Father's house . . . I mean, the computer game room?

David & Sarah Clemente
P. O. Box 450
Kaohsiung 800
TAIWAN

Prayers and Petitions

***** On July 8, David will fly to Rochester, NY for the General Conference 2011. Pray that he will meet many Free Methodists who have the Lord's vision for Asia. He will be stationed frequently at the Asia and Holy Light Theological Seminary booths in the missions exhibit area. If you happen to be attending the conference, feel free to stop by and visit with him! David returns to Taiwan on July 20.

***** Please pray for Sarah, Carmen and Jacob as they remain in Taiwan during General Conference. Pray for safety and good health, as well as peace and grace while David is away.

***** We can hardly believe that Jacob will be graduating from St. Paul's Kindergarten on Saturday, July 16. Pray for a wonderful day of fun and celebration! Praise God for the teachers and staff members who have loved and nurtured Jacob for the past three years.

***** Pray for the many Holy Light Theological Seminary students who are participating in various mission trips with their local churches over the summer.

***** Pray as David prepares to visit Osaka Theological Seminary in Osaka, Japan from August 31-September 7, 2011. This time he will be going by himself to meet with seminary students and to explore the possibilities of partnership between Taiwan and Japan.