

Oceania Regional Workshop 2016 in Parua Bay, New Zealand

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By FFWPU New Zealand: It is said that the time of youth is the most memorable time of one's life. Regardless of where our paths lead us to, the time when we begin to grow together is often an unforgettable one. This year's Oceania Regional Workshop was a platform for such precious moments, and it took place in Parua Bay, New Zealand where about 60 participants and staffs gathered from 6-16 January 2016.



It was made possible thanks to the workshop organizers led by Mr Takashi Sawada, along with New Zealand Blessed Children (BCs), full-time staffs, 1st Generation leaders and contributors, and Ms Jana

Lajdova, UPA Graduate based in Australia. We had the privilege of welcoming experienced lecturer from England, Mr William Haines and Blessed Couple speakers, Mr Patrick and Mrs Yebuny Hanna from the same country of origin; along with our brothers and sisters from Australia. One of our own Ambassador For Peace, Mr Virin Gomber, also contributed to the spirit of the workshop as he made a special effort to visit the campsite in order to share his knowledge and experience as a professional life coach. The unity displayed, as well as the success we had, truly represented the theme of the workshop, “Empowered by the Will of Many.” Together, we were able to manifest the values inherited from our True Parents, of what being a Blessed Children is all about; and reconnected everyone’s desires to live a principled life which will empower our surroundings in return eventually.

The first three days of the workshop was held for 12 young leaders for the main workshop that followed right after. Ms Un Hee Minett organized the schedule and various activities to ensure that every leaders and participants could benefit from the workshop fully. The workshop itself was hosted by Ms Jana Lajdova, as she led everyone through the programme as the MC. It always starts with both physical and spiritual exercises through morning sports and morning services respectively; the latter of which were in the form of testimonials or sharing by BCs for BCs, coordinated by Youth Pastor Johannes Junior Anae. Joyful singing of holy songs, hymns and community songs were often held, thanks to the efforts of Mr Geoffrey Prentice and his music team, while physical nourishment was never an issue because of the heartfelt sacrifice and dedication of Mr Kazunori and Mrs Susan Hosokawa, along with FFWPU Missionaries from the Philippines: Ms Rosalea Samillano and Ms Aimie Odal. These served as an immovable foundation for a blissful environment that enabled all internal and external activities to take place flawlessly.

Externally, the workshop manifested its theme through the famous Lord of the Rings. Units, chants and various activities revolved around it, emphasizing the importance of combining our efforts together in order to achieve unity and accomplish as many good results as possible. From outdoor sports and games to brain-teaser quizzes and puzzles, the workshop utilized as many different arenas of learning as possible through this fun, external theme orientation.



The heart of the workshop, however, lies on the internal side of things. We were fortunate to have received precious gems of wisdom from our lecturers and speakers, along with the wholehearted sharing by our fellow youths and BCs. It’s something that everyone needs and would be empowered with as an individual. The Principle was expressed in the most relatable way possible, while our older 2nd Generation BCs gave life-changing testimonies through their relevant experiences. We also benefited immensely from internally-driven activities such as the “Power Shuffle”, “If You Really Knew Me” and “Touch Someone” activities. They opened up the hearts of participants toward one another, in a sympathetic way that pierced through our inner consciences. It is not an exaggeration to say that we found plenty of meaningful realizations that enable us to project a positive life ahead based on the Principle, through what we gained internally during this workshop.

Towards the end of the workshop, we had a day out to Mt Manaia and Ocean Beach nearby the campsite as a mean to spend precious time of fellowship with one another. The beautiful and bountiful nature of

New Zealand did not fail to envelop us with an environment that's conducive for a healthy interaction with one another. We are truly grateful for the organizers' efforts to provide us with an all-encompassing program for all-round developments.



On the last night of the workshop, we had a graduation ceremony which included reflections by the participants, team skits and impromptu performances by those who were present. It was a time for sharing, thanksgiving, and emotional outpouring from the heart of the participants; concluding unanimously that the workshop was one that had inevitably brightened our lives; thanks to the warm, genuine light of love that we were able to express to one another.

Although the fallen world outside often pose an undeniable challenge to the way we would want to live our lives, we are blessed to have the opportunity to gather, participate and contribute to a workshop as enriching as this; because of the pure and life-giving environment that it provides endlessly. As we ended the workshop successfully, we realize the spirit of the workshop is not one we should allow to fade away, but one we need to carry with us internally as a foundation of goodness that we hope will expand to the environment around us; and together we will create a better world truly Empowered by the Will of Many.

