

Teaching African Youth to Adopt Filial Piety

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The first international twenty-one-day seminar for CARP in the West Africa region started on July 27 and ended on August 16. Our members in Abidjan, the capital city of Cote d'Ivoire, held the workshop, initiated by the FFWPU West Africa headquarters under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Dongho Cho, the regional president. Fifty-seven students in high school or university have joined, coming from six countries (Burkina Faso; 21, Benin; 9, Cote d'Ivoire: 18, Liberia: 5, Mali: 3, Niger:

1) Opening a way for second-generation members to deepen their understanding of True Parents' teachings and life courses and to get to know one another.

As the West Africa CARP director, I supervised the workshop with the support of Hiroki Matsuoka, our youth special envoy. The core of the seminar was to help young Unificationists to "become dutiful children who will accomplish vision 2020" as stated on our banner. In difficult environments, the children studied diligently and shared good brotherly times. For the first time, they came to know one another and spent time and made unforgettable memories, as some mentioned after spending the first ten or so days together.



Dongho Cho with participants from Côte d'Ivoire

On July 27, at 3:00 pm, we held the opening ceremony as the special envoy, the FFWPU Cote d'Ivoire staff, the education department's director and the secretary general and I look on. After the prayer, the FFWPU president delivered welcoming remarks to attendees expressing how lucky they are to be in our second generation and to have come together to learn True Parents words and deeds. I then explained the motivation of the workshop, and how it was of a great concern for FFWPU West Africa president, Dr. Cho Dong ho. Members from each country introduced themselves and the ceremony ended with a commemorative photograph.

After the official opening ceremony, an orientation session took place. It was an occasion to establish teams, decide team leaders and start to know each other. Mr. Matsuoka led ice-breaking activities to help

create sense a brotherhood among all. Seven teams were created with meaningful names, Shim Jeong, Unity, Moon-light, Peace Soldiers, True Love, New Hope and the Winners.

The next day, lectures started with a presentation on the Family Pledge by Mr. Matsuoka, translated by Dr. Furukawa, a Japanese woman blessed to an Ivorian man in 1992. From July 29 to August 5, lecturers presented Divine Principle material to the students. Every morning, all participants attended Hoon Dok Hae. The Hoon Dok Hae material came from As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen. The thirty minute reading was followed by discussions within each of the seven teams. When young people speak to each other they are more open and less shy; expressing freely and without any complex or reservation.



After Hoon Dok Hae, they participated in a special exercise bringing everyone to develop a sense of teamwork and living for the sake of others. Every night, all teams gathered to discuss the material taught during the lectures and to practice Divine Principle lectures.

After arriving from a tour in central Africa, Dr. Cho came on fifth morning to meet workshop participants from 9:00 am to 10:30 am. He spoke briefly about True Parents courses and the status of unification church members in the current providence. On Saturday August 8, he came once again to share his heart to CARP members. He then posed in pictures with participants from each country and presented scholarships to beneficiaries who attended the seminar. Dr. Cho explained to them how concerned our True Mother is for our students and how important it is for them to be the best in their classes, to earn scholarship and have the opportunity to study in Korea, True Parents' homeland.



Dongho Cho with participants from Mali

August 6 was reserved for sport and entertainment preparation for the coming national Sunday service to be held on August 9. On that Sunday, all participants introduced themselves and offered some songs. To look at and listen to an improvised choir singing so beautifully was amazing.

It was noticeable that after a week of living together, relationships among the students were so good despite occasional quarrels that never lasted long.

True Parents life courses over two days led students to appreciate their victorious lives and to be more concerned about them, realizing how True Father and True Mother were so faithful to God in spite of all their difficulties.

The internal guidance based on lectures from Korea brought them to understand the model

lifestyle that they have to live as children born from True Parents' lineage. On August 10, seminarians received training on how to conduct services and on project planning and implementation.

From August 11 to 13, they raised funds. It was the first time for many of them to experience that. They were invited to collect money for a project concerning a social issue, early pregnancies among primary school and secondary school students. The total goal set was US \$1,000 in those three days. The amount

was divided as a goal for each team. All the teams had to strive to reach their goal and help other teams when they could not reach theirs. As some mentioned when they came back, they could understand the path followed by their parents in the church and come close to feeling God's Heart. During the three days, they went out, even if they were tired, from 8 am to 6 pm.

On the last day of raising funds, many were exhausted but proud of having participated to this challenging program. On the morning of August 14, the West Africa CARP Assembly 2015 took place, leading each delegate to present his activities and an action plan for the following four months.

In the afternoon, a special lecture was given by the sub-regional director, Dr. Zinsou Paterne, on the impacts of the new media culture on young people. He advised them about dangers coming from the internet and android phones, so pervasive today, and that have become vehicles of pornography and junk music.

Friday August 15 provided an opportunity for all participants to go on a tour of Abidjan. They could visit almost forty sites and have seven stops including the Administrative Area, with its skyscrapers, the Saint Paulus Cathedral, the Harbour, the Airport, the Third bridge, the National University and the five-stars Hotel Ivoire.

On the night of the same day, the closing ceremony took place. The regional president, Dr. Cho Dongho, education department director, Dr. Zinsou Paterne, the president's assistant, Mrs. Brou, and I were on hand as participants expressed their gratitude to Heavenly Parent and True Parents for this unprecedented gathering, pledging to become owners of the providence and to contribute in their respective countries to witnessing to True Parents' greatness.