



Tuao Mission Trip 08

This is the journal of our 10 days in the Philippines. Some journals were short, some were long but all were written from their heart to express their thoughts for each day of the trip. Enjoy reading the daily journals and feel the spirit of God in each one of their sharing.



Day 1 - Toh Li Jun

27 Nov 2008, Thursday

We met at Changi Airport Budget Terminal at 1400hrs, to change into our Tuao mission tees and to have our lunch before we fly off in around another 2 hours time. There were parents and also adults from church and some youths to encourage the team before we leave for Tuao.

It is very encouraging for the team as some of us will be going for mission trip for the first time and the support from church was the first thing I learnt from the trip.



The checking-in took quite some time as before that we weighed the weight of the groups that will be checking-in together. Finally, we board the plane. During the flight, I was somehow looking forward to see the people in Tuao. However, another feeling I felt was that I did not look forward to the trip because there will definitely be a problem which is the language barrier that will hinder us from sharing the Gospel with the people in Tuao.



Some of the girls are busy finishing their devotions that we were supposed to do as part of the trip's preparation. Joanne started asking me about the topics that I did for my devotions so I decided to take it out and showed it to her. In the end, I decided to do devotion because it may not be applicable to that particular household that I am going to share my devotion to.

Finally, we reached Manila-Clark. After most of us managed to clear the immigration in Philippines, Angelin was stuck at the counter because her 15th birthday was not over. She was so called 'underage' and her parents were not with her. They almost sent her back to Singapore but in the end, she paid a fine.



When we were done, we saw the brethren that fetched us to the nearby fast food outlet 'Jollibee' to have our dinner. It was quite nice to our surprise just that the cheese tasted different from the cheese that fast food outlet back in Singapore have.

After dinner, we made our way to the Angeles City Church of Christ to stay over for the night. They are very kind to host us for the night and we presented to them some of the songs we had prepared before the trip.

This marks the end of our day 1 in Philippines. From here, I learnt how the Filipinos are willing to give us their best. They gave us their beds and they did not mind that we arrived so late and they stayed up and wait for our arrival.



Day 2 - Nicholas Siew

28 Nov 2008, Friday

1st full day of the trip. Woke up at 5am. Had pandesal for breakfast, Phillipines number 1 bread.

We were going to travel for 10 hours all the way to Cassily. Pack our stuff and moved up the bus. Had group photo with the members of Angeles City Church of Christ and sang a song for them. Bid farewell and left. Passed by a huge inactive volcano and lots of rice plantation on the way. Did quiet time on the bus. Then we had our prayer sit, something like prayer walk, but the difference is that we sat down instead of walk. During the journey, I memorized my lines for the skits, rehearsed some songs with the team, played cards and bonded and rested. Along the way, we saw an overturned truck. Then we journeyed through the mountains, it was a bumpy ride and there were many turns. We had



lunch at Santiago. After that we had prayer sit in the bus again. Joseph and gang had to relieve themselves in the bushes along the way. The driver was lost and we reached our destination a bit later than expected.

Brother Jhun Ma, Sister Babes and Brother Oscar were all there to welcome us. Sister Babes had prepared dinner for us. Her cooking is really wonderful! We all had a good meal. After dinner, we visited the Congressman at his house. We sang 2 songs for him and then the adults chatted with him. The youths were all chatting among themselves. After that, we went back and we had a devotion and game. For the game, we were supposed to say something about ourselves that others do not know. Those who had another family member in the trip found it difficult to say something that the other does not know. There was a cow nearby which kept mooing during sharing which were funny, this made it even funnier. That was about the whole day. Nothing much as we spent the whole day travelling.



Day 3 - Jacqueline Leow

29 Nov 2008, Saturday



but uncle Edward unfortunately could not get through to her at that time so we sang to her through an overseas phone call at night (:

One of the most eventful day during the whole trip would definitely have to be today. In the morning, we wanted to surprise uncle Ting Chew with our 4-parts 'happy birthday' song but uncle Edward spoiled the surprise and reminded us to sing him the birthday song. So we sang. And we were supposed to sing for auntie Rosalind too

So back to the morning. Yes, we had our first official ride on the jeepney to the Tuao Church of Christ. I had heard many stories about how thrilling it is to ride on top of the jeepney but unfortunately we could not do so that morning as we did not know how bumpy and dangerous the road would be. I was somewhat disappointed at first but riding inside the jeepney proved to be quite enjoyable after all. We sang songs and some of us marveled at the magnificent scenery (like padi fields and mountains) that we had just seen for the very first time.

When we reached, I saw that the church turned out quite different from that of my imagination. It was a small humble building quite unlike our church here in Singapore but it was perhaps one of the bigger churches in the village already. After unloading our bags and giving thanks, we had our scrumptious breakfast, which was so

kindly prepared by sister Babes. Although I cannot remember what we ate, I know that we enjoyed breakfast and in fact all our meals in the church. That's why mealtimes were perhaps one of our favourite moments every day. (:

When we finished with our breakfast, some of us started taking a walk along the main road of the village and we started waving and saying 'hello' to whoever we saw on the street. At first there were only a few of us girls but we were later joined by the rest and we visited the old Church of Christ to take a look and present a song. After which, we walked to the house of the village chief where we said a prayer and sang a song. Surprisingly, we were invited back for dinner that night to celebrate the village chief's daughter's belated birthday and we sang her our 4-parts birthday song and had a wonderful dinner at his house.



Our main purpose that day was to paint the exterior walls of the church. So following our short visit around the village, we went back to church and started our 'project'. We decided to paint the church blue like its interior and the guys started mixing the paint and giving out the brushes etc. Armed with paint brushes in hand, we started our painting task and had great fun out of it. Initially there were many villagers who gathered around the church to witness us painting but later on it started raining and many of them left. Despite the weather, we were not deterred and managed to finish the job in 2hrs plus which was quite efficient according to the adults. By then, many of us were splattered with paint(most of which

were man-made) on our clothes, hands, feet and even hair and for some of us, there was still paint on our hair after 1 week! Overall, it was a really enjoyable experience working as a team for the first time in Tuao to finish up the painting job and we were all more than happy to have been of service to the Tuao Church of Christ.



We haphazardly washed up and had yet another delicious meal prepared by sister Babes. It was then rest time, which we were free to do anything we liked. Some of us took the time to rest while others played with the children in the church compound. Angelin, Lijun and I on the other hand stayed indoors and saw Auntie Rosie and Uncle Boo Chye at work. It was heartwarming to see them treating the villagers and even though there was a language barrier, they overcame it by getting sister Babes to translate for them so that they can know the condition of their patients better.

In the late afternoon, the guys got up from their naps and with their energy recharged, we split into groups and left for our very first home bible study. Our group had the opportunity to visit sister Judy which happened to be Chen Ting's home stay host last year. So she warmed up to us quite easily and welcomed us into her house. We started off the home bible study with a prayer and a few songs. There were many children in the house and although the boys were running around the house and shouting, Petras seemed oblivious to the distractions and gave a good, easy to understand devotion. After the serious part was over, we stayed back a bit to get to know the family better and enjoy the tidbits and drinks that sister Judy had prepared for us. While snacking, we also learnt some interesting phrases and words (like pig/cow/pretty/ugly) in the local dialect and we had a really fruitful conversation with the family.



We took a group shot with the family and headed back to the church. When we arrived at church, I was surprised at the number of children that turned up. They were all crowding around the church and so we started mingling and playing 'one-point' with them. When all the groups came back, we went in for dinner and had the gospel meeting that night which was done by Irvin and translated by brother Jhunma. It was quite a success considering that it was the first night and I thought that Irvin did a



commendable job of using simpler words and speaking slower. The turn out was good too such that there were barely enough seats for everyone and some of the guys had to give up their seats for the incoming people.

The gospel meeting ended with a prayer and a song performed by us. Most of the children stayed behind to talk and take photographs with us and some of them even followed us to the village chief's house for dinner, which I mentioned earlier. After which we walked back to church and took the jeepney back to Cassily where we had our sharing and a devotion by Uncle Edward.



On this day I had the very first experience of being in a village where it's totally different from Singapore. No roads, no cars, no internet, it really made me feel how fortunate we are in urban Singapore yet we still complain about how we need more. Everything about this place just makes me feel closer to God, be it the willingness of the people to give of their all, or the breathtaking natural beauty of the place. It is here that I stand in awe of God, for his wonderful creation and the blessings he's given in our lives.

Day 4 - Alistair Chong

30 Nov 2008, Sunday

Well, it sure has been quite a day! Woke up the rest in my room from my sleep talking this morning, well that's team bonding! Learning about each others itty bitty distasteful personalities. I am really happy with the

way the team has bonded, each person trying to get to know the others to an equal extent. God has really worked in bonding this team. When the trip first started I was a bit worried as the team seemed to have quite a hard time getting to know each other. But guess I did not put enough trust in God, as by the time the trip started, we were joking, laughing, sharing and singing together very happily.

Anyway, today was the Lord's Day. Had a mad rush in the morning to try and get to church on time. Still I had enough time to do my own quiet time in the morning. Here it is really easy to feel God presence unlike in Singapore with all the hustle and bustle. Just looking at the beauty of nature from the "resort" can make you truly understand the power of God and the peace he give. No vehicles, no people shouting, just peace and quiet, God and I. Sigh, will definitely be missing it.



So we still got to church on time and had breakfast by sister Babes. In case the journalists from the previous days have yet to mention it, Sister Babes is an excellent cook; each meal is a new sensation of happiness XD.

When the service supposedly started at 8am, we were a bit disheartened as there were only a few children and about five adults present. But when we waited for a while longer the people began to stream in. Maybe it was due to the wet weather, I don't know. However, this made me realize that the schedules here are very flexible and is mostly controlled by the weather. This in turn made me realize how blessed we are that in Singapore, despite rain or shine our Sunday schedule remains unchanged.

The service went very well; Petras's song leading went smoothly despite the fact that the Tuao church sang most songs at different tempo, beat and stuff. Nicholas did a good job in leading the communion and Johnston's sermon, even though it was similar to his last one, still made me laugh at the jokes and be touch by the message on contentment.

At the end of the sermon, all the kids in the church lined up and prepared to sing for us. And THEY ARE SO CUTE!!! It just made me realize the purity and innocence of God original creation and how if anyone is to enter the kingdom of heaven he or she must be fault-

less like a small child. Having another delicious lunch, we had our rest time, where either slept, chatted with each other, went out to play with the kids, or, like me, stoned. These rest times, though we could not tell then, played a very important role in pacing ourselves throughout the trip as we realized by the time we



reached the last few days, which allowed us to do God's work more efficiently throughout the trip.

After resting ourselves, we headed back to Cassily for four baptisms at the pool there, the people that were baptized where a mother and her two teenage kids and the grandmother.



Sitting in the Jeepney, I enjoyed the scenery and stood in awe of all of God's creation, the blue skies, the mountains, the fields, everything. The song "Blue Skies and Rainbows" just means so much here. The journeys on the Jeepney are so amazing, reminded me that in life, though the destination, heaven is important, God wants us to make full use of life's journey to do his will. Just a random thought.

Most of the church members followed us there and bonded outside Cassily, singing songs and chatting about common interest, which is quite amazing considering we come from such diverse cultural and social backgrounds. Really saw how the love of Jesus could unite those from "every tribe and tongue." Ha ha, ok fine, we were all speaking English.

We also got to RIDE A MOTORBIKE, which belonged to the church and was really cool. Most of us could not get the bike further than one meter before it would shutdown due to releasing the clutch too quickly. But I was the complete opposite. I was so focused on releasing the clutch slowly that I jammed down the acceleration and the bike just charged forward and nearly crashed into the fence surrounding Cassily. Then Brother Oscar quickly got on and helped me steer for a while before (what I perceived as reluctantly) giving me back the controls. Well it was quite a fun experience considering it's going to be another two

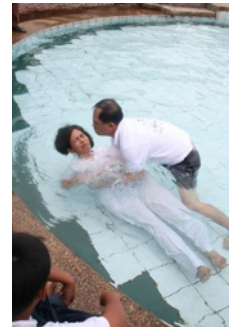
years before I get to touch a bike here in Singapore.

The bike riding experience reminded me of what happen when we try to do things on our own without God. We either don't get anywhere in our live or our lives swerve out of control and gets into one big ugly mess. Just another of my random thoughts...

Following the biking, we had the baptism at the pool. During that time, the poolside was very chilly and windy. But the cold did little to snuff out the happiness we felt when we sang, "I have decided to follow Jesus" and "Happy birthday" after the baptism, though we did cringe a bit when Uncle Edward and the four family members entered the freezing

water. Here baptisms are really a cause for a celebration. They were jumping into the pool, sing and just being so jubilant. It just shows us the joyous mood that we should adopt whenever a soul is added to the kingdom. God is just so real in this place, he just has so much significance in everything that happens here. I would never imagine in the past that I would say this but I would not mind living here. No internet, no toilet seats, lots of dirt, who cares? It's so easy to simply focus your mind on God and feel the urge to do his will without complications.

After the baptism, the Tuao youth told us that they had planned some games for us. So when we saw the swimming pool, we were like "Oh No! Wet game! We are going to die!" Of course then we realized that it was dry game and we relaxed a bit.



The games were good fellowship and we bonded really well with the Tuao youth through the ice-breakers and had fun together during the games. This made it a lot easier to bond with them during the next few days. Again after the games we went outside the chalets to chitchat and sing again. After all that all the people left and they were saying things like "Will miss you!" and "See you next year!" So I had to run after their Jeepney to tell them we would still be seeing each other tomorrow. Maybe I should have just not told them to give them a pleasant surprise the next day, ah well...



Brother Jhun Ma, Sister Babes and Brother Oscar stayed behind to eat with us the (yes, delicious) dinner they brought for us. Following that they went back to the village, we had our debrief which consisted of good sharing and a devotion by Uncle Ting Chew.

Return to our room took a cold shower and went to sleep after some, no, a lot of toilet drama that conclude a rather eventful day.



Day 5 - Hannah Gn

1 Dec 2008, Monday

Its rice planting day! This day is probably one of the highlights of this trip. God blessed us with good weather again to rice plant. It was sunny yet cooling. Definitely the perfect weather to rice plant.

At the start of the journey to the padi field, we were walking at a slow pace as we were trying very hard to avoid the mud. But of course, we couldn't avoid it. In the end all of us took out our shoes and just walked barefooted in the mud plus some carabau's dung. Thank God for the villagers there! They have been a great help in supporting us whenever we felt like falling and guiding us through the whole course. It was a long walk to the designated field for us. Most of us agreed that the getting there is more tiring than rice planting. We had to walk around half an hour just to get there. Soon I was able to experience a villager's day in a padi field. We were given bunches of rice stalks. I followed 1 of the villager, Odessa, steps in planting. She is a professional in planting!! She plants really fast and every group of stalks she planted was the same thickness and the same height. Following her steps, me too planted really quickly. After, I finished my bunch of rice stalks, I expected a nice straight line but it turned out to be a curve. I guess it takes a lot of practice to reach Odessa's stage. The villagers there are really humble. Although they have little but they are willing to give everything that they have to us, total strangers. This is something that we Singaporeans have to learn. We have so much yet we are discontented. I saw

this humbleness from a 10 year old boy, Ronaldo, he asked me for my mud-coated slippers and washed it thoroughly till there is no trace of mud. This sight really reminds me of the scene in the bible when Jesus washed his disciples' feet. It was really an eye-opener and he did it not only for me but also for my other team mates. I would not even help my friend clean her slippers what more a pair of mud-coated slippers.



The going back was much faster as we do not care much about the mud anymore and just walked back. After rice-planting everyone was really drained but all of agreed it is definitely worth the experience. Furthermore we had sister's babes delicious food to energize us back.

This day was fantastic besides the fact that I cleaned myself in the carabau river.

Day 6 - Johnston Seah

2 Dec 2008, Tuesday



to start the day, we boarded the jeepney to church. Today was also the first day we sat on top of the jeepney. It was rather uncomfortable, as we had to sit on weirdly spaced out metal bars. However, fun overtook discomfort and danger, and most of the team ended up climbing to the top. No one died. I guess that's what's most important.

The bus trip to church was full with conversation about Petras' toilet crime. Just to make a permanent note here, Nicholas and Alistair were the victims, Irvin, Joseph and I were the witnesses. Obviously, Petras was the perpetrator. After a wonderful breakfast prepared by Sister Babes, which happens to be a great start to any morning, we set off for Culong High School. We performed



the "Sin Chair" mime and the "Jericho" VBS in front of a very receptive audience. Shawn and Co. made a splendid show of a really aggressive Wall of Jericho. I totally reckon that he should be in Hollywood. It was most pleasing that the students did not just get the jokes, but also the important messages behind both performances. I saw them nodding their heads with comprehension whenever the lessons-to-be-learned popped out. We also played the "Four Tribes" game and the kids had great fun. Of course, as in every school, there were some really "cool" guys posing at the back, refusing to perform the embarrassing actions every participant had to carry out. But in the end, I saw them doing slight gestures as they too, were carried away by the general excitement.



Slightly, tired as we were, we returned to church once more to be rejuvenated by Sister Babes' lunch. Pumped up and ready to strike once more, we proceeded to the Taribubu Elementary School. The kids were small, and had they been any smaller, I would have probably stepped on them. Most humans would have called them cute. Fortunately for them, so did I. This time, we displayed the "Sin Chair" mime, in which Alistair delighted his young audience, and the "Creation" VBS. After that, we spilt up to the classrooms and helped the kids with their Art and Craft for the "Creation". It was quite a headache. The "Creation" VBS was catered specially for the little kids. The message was simple, God created the world in seven days. We had to dress up in really wacky costumes, like trees and flowers, and the sun and the

moon. As a side note, some members of the team expressed their concerns when Sister Intellect got carried away and started to think that she was Sailor Moon.

As another first for the day, we tried to overload a tricycle as we journeyed back to the church. Brother Oscar on the bike, Lijun in the passenger seat, my sister (Joanne) and Joseph on the right, Irvin on the left and me seating on some fragile tray hanging off the back. We did fine, until the kids decided to attempt to climb on. They grabbed on to the back and hopped up and down. I knew, cause I was facing them directly. I vividly remember their gleeful faces even as the tricycle started to topple backwards. As a result, my sister hurt her arm, Li Jun hurt her leg, and I simply got crushed when the tricycle flipped backwards. The day ended with Shawn delivering an excellent message to a sizable crowd. It was really well done, and we pray that it touched the locals.

Day 7 - Geraldine Lim

3 Dec 2008, Wednesday

I've seen how God has worked miraculously for the past few days, with regards to the weather. Before we came here, we heard from the villagers and the people from the church that it had been raining for the past three weeks. There were floods, and water levels were up to knee level. That was how bad the rainy season was causing the crops to be damaged. The rice were wet, and the villagers had to sun them in order to get them dry, and during the process, the rice gets degraded and they would have to sell them at a lower price.

Similarly for today, when we left, the skies were dark and I thought to myself, "It's going to rain." It was drizzling and it started to rain a little heavier while we were having breakfast in the church. The weather did a 360 degree change, and the sun was shining so brightly.

We left for Saint Juan Elementary School after breakfast. VBS about creation was conducted with the skits and songs. The day before, we had met with some problems about the art and craft sessions that we had with the students. But we managed to sort things out during our night debrief, rearranging the manpower needed for the lower elementary students and organizing what has to be done before passing out the equipments to the students. This time, Nicholas and I took the grade 4 class (We took a lower elementary class yesterday), and we managed to finish the art and craft session with them. From the art and craft sessions, we talked and asked them some questions and we could see that they understood the skit that we performed and the songs of which the lyrics depict the creation story.



The teachers were kind enough to prepare delicious local delicacies for us to enjoy after the VBS session. After which we went back to church for lunch and rest. Tonight we



will be staying with assigned villagers for home stay, and I was feeling both nervous and excited. Firstly, I didn't know the people there well enough to stay at their house and we didn't know if we would be able to sleep well in a new environment. Brother Jhun Ma briefed us and gave us a little background about the families that we would be staying with. Angelin, Eunice and I would be staying with the Bordejo family.

After the break and short briefing, we left for bible study using the hours left before dinner to visit two families. I was told to share a devotion for the first family we were going to visit, and I was feeling a bit nervous as it was my first time sharing a devotion to strangers who did not speak the same language. We said a little prayer as a group, asking God to be the focus of the home visits and that He would work through us as we share the devotion and get to know the family.

The first family we visited was a couple, whose kids were too shy to join us in our bible study sessions. They could understand simple English, but could not converse to us in English. Sister Mildred helped us in interpreting what we wanted to share and it was encouraging to know that the head of the household, Williamo had been waiting for us since yesterday as he thought we would go over for house visit. He told us that he was ready to commit himself to the Lord, and we were really glad that God had worked through his wife, sister Lydia to bring the gospel to him. I shared on Christ the solid rock, and Li Jun shared on Christian living in the modern world to the second family – Sister Latti and her son and daughter in law.

We went back for dinner and to prepare for the last Gospel Meeting. That night, Joseph rounded up what had been taught for the past three nights and also about the three most important relationships in our lives, using visual aids, real life examples and skits to illustrate the points that wanted to be put across. This caught everyone's attention and though there might be a language barrier and the noise that the dogs were making outside the church, God worked through the illustrations and they understood what was taught. The message that was shared not only directed to the people there, but also to us as Christians.

During our usual night debrief session many of us indicated that the events that we went through today stirred our hearts. Some sharing and affirmations were made in the team and it was encouraging to see how we helped each other and spoke in love through God's words during this session. It was interesting to note that prayers were made with regards to the day's weather and the dog's barking during the Gospel Meeting. God's power was evident, just like when Jesus calmed the storm and everything became still, no human hands or wisdom could have done that.

The debrief session ended at about 10.30pm, which was really late for the villagers as the children normally sleep at 7pm and wake up at 4am to go to school the next morning. Though they were tired, sister Marylu and Rowena waited for Angelin, Eunice and I to pack our stuffs and brought us to their house. We had their beds and mosquito nets with blankets nicely placed for us, while the family of four had to squeeze in the other room. We brushed our teeth in the open outside where their pig was, and we were just looking around to familiarize ourselves with the surroundings when suddenly we saw something that I will never forget. Numerous stars were shining so brightly over



the spread of skies. I have never seen so many stars in my life. The VBS creation skit that we did and the lyrics of the creation song "Day 4, Day 4, sun and moon and stars galore" became very real to me. While we were marveling at the beautiful scene of stars, I wondered to myself, "How can anyone say that God did not create all these? Who else has the power, but God?" Angelin wanted to take a picture of the stars using her camera, but the picture could not be taken. This reminded me of the last mission trip I went at Puchong where we went to see fireflies. Similarly, we also wanted to take pictures of the beautiful sight but even with a good camera, the picture could not be taken.

We probably looked very amazed by the stars in the sky that sister Marylu asked if we had stars in Singapore. It somehow dawned to me that at every part of the world God is there just like the stars. In Singapore, stars are not very visible because it was too cloudy and also because we have too many lights lit up. And sometimes, it's just because we do not take the time to look at the skies. These are the very things that distract us from seeing God, from knowing that there is a God. These are the fears that many in the team are afraid of as well; going back to Singapore and falling back into the trap of not being silent to listen to what God has to say to us, and commit-

ting sins that put Jesus on the cross again. Hopefully through this trip, we can learn to rely on God for strength as we identify the problems that we face in our daily lives, that we can live a life that is for Him.

Today I realized the power of prayer, the beauty of God's creation and I can only feel excited and anticipate on what is to come in the rest of the days that we will spend in Tuao, under the plan of God.



Day 8 - Petras Ching

4 Dec 2008, Thursday

Arrived at Tuao Church of Christ at the usual 7.30 to have breakfast made by sister Babes before leaving for the mountains. Each of us had a packet of biscuit and a bottle of water packed in a bag. Lunch was also prepared and packed to be brought to the mountains as we would be spending the entire afternoon there.

We took the jeepney (however it is spelt) to the foot of the mountain before our attempt to trek it. The jeepney ride was particularly bumpy because of the uneven road surface. The walk to the mountain was ok as we were quite used to the ground after the long walk we had on Monday to the padi fields.

Hiking up the mountain along the river stream was really fun. The water looked clean and it was rather cooling. Along the way up, a few of us were searching for sticks which would help give us support during the hike and uncle Edward pulled out one which was planted there by the locals (opps!). At first, the slope was not very steep and we managed

pretty well without many people slipping along the river. At about 12 noon, we reached a checkpoint and took a break while uncle Boon Chye gave a devotion. After devotion was lunch. As the checkpoint hut was pretty small, a number of us climbed up higher to have lunch on the slope. That particular meal was exceptionally tasty. The view from the checkpoint was beautiful.



After lunch we continued our hike up the mountain, following the river once again. This time, we were going to catch some small soft shell crabs for dinner. A number of us learnt how to catch the crab without breaking its legs or shell while others were desperately trying to keep their balance.

Another hour or so passed and with a can filled with crabs, we headed back to the checkpoint. Next comes thealang challenge. With a stick in hand, we marched on to the summit. Many pictures were taken along the way and some guys even tried to scare the girls by attempting to take a short cut and hide among thealang. The hike down took another 2 hours or so and when we finally reached the bottom, we were so glad. Jeepney came and we took it back to the church but along the way, the jeepney got stuck in a squish spot and muscular PP guys had to push the jeepney to get it out. Not forgetting that angelin dropped her spectacles during the bumpy ride and thankfully, Lester found it in the grass.

Arrived at Tuao Church of Christ at around 4pm and we had a massive washing up session followed by yet another tasty meal. This time, we had COKE! It was so long since we last drank soft drinks.

Next up was appreciation night. Everyone had a chance to go up and offer our many thanks to the villagers for their continual support, care and concern for us. They have indeed shown us love in many different ways. Home stay followed immediately after appreciation night and I guess many of us had a great night's rest.

Day 9 - Eunice Ong

5 Dec 2008, Friday

I clearly remembered that the bed prepared for us (Geraldine, Angeline and I) was so comfy that I didn't want to wake up in the morning.

The kind Bordejos family (Sister Mari-lou, Rowanna, Brother Ruben and the little boy Junior Ruben) had to squeeze into a room in order to lend us one room for the home-stay. Their usual time to wake up should have been 6 a.m. or so but since we had to be at church by six, the hosting families woke up earlier to send us off. I really cannot describe how terribly good hosts the people at Tuao were and it is up to you to experience in Tuao what the Lord meant by ...love thy neighbour as thyself.



That day was our last morning in Tuao so there are many details to talk about but I shall just focus on three main points of the day which I saw was meaningful to note. After all the hugs, photo-taking, good-byes and a last prayer at Tuao Church of Christ, majority of the us sat on the jeepney since it's seats were packed with our luggage. It was indeed a blessed day with good weather. We



were all feeling so joyful and shouting 'baalam' and 'good-bye' to the hardworking villagers and even their carabaos (buffalos) along the road or in the padi-field. I looked across the big spread of lush green fields followed after by line of mountains as the background. As the nice breeze blew our hair in all directions, I realised the beauty which God created yet we do not get to see in Singapore. We do not see such vast blue skies due to the tall buildings around here. I was feeling really happy yet tears stun my eyes. I am really touched by the wonders of God's creation; thankful to Him who showed me what God's love truly is through the people, during our stay in Tuao.

We alighted at Cassily and boarded a bus to head towards Clark. After about 15 minutes to half an hour of recollection of the place or resting, Irvin suggested our 'prayer sit' again on the journey back. The main aim was being thankful. The first prayer would be thanking Lord for His guidance and strength He has given us during our VBS, Gospel Meetings and also on Sunday. This was great because it really help us reflect what we had been doing in Tuao and also help us see God working through us in order to reach out to the community there. Our next prayer was after

lunch where we give thanks and pray for the helpers in church, church members, home-stay families and non-believers. This second 'prayer sit' was also important to remind us of the care we had been given during our stay there. Praying for them made me realise that there are actually so much to be done and prayed for! We usually pray for our friends, families and people within our community but this made me understand that there are so many more souls beyond the people I know in Singapore. Please, constantly pray for the Tuao community.

After the long journey of rest plus games and fellowship on the bus, we arrived at Fontana in the night. Back in the city, I had already started to miss the village. Although the resort was really comfortable and nice, I guess the feeling is just different. After a really long wait outside the resort for the key to the door, we finally managed to move all our luggage and tired bodies into the rooms. There were two resort rooms, one for the guys and one for the ladies. After dividing the 3 rooms amongst ourselves, some of us plopped onto the sofa. Though there was a television, the first impression I got was, 'After not watching television for 9 days, I don't even feel like doing so anymore'. Mission trip really brought to my attention what is really important in our lives. It is not the television programs, computer games or work. Those are just enjoyment or part of living in this world. What truly matters is carrying the cross and being disciples for Christ! So, if you still do not know what you want in life, I recommend going for mission trip. Get out of our daily routines (comfort zone) and step in to do God's work and He will truly show you the way or give you the answers to your questions. May the Lord be with Tuao community and you!

Day 10 - Angelin Koo

6 Dec 2008, Saturday

After a night rest at Fontana Resort, we woke up early and continued the affirmation session. We did not complete it in the end because we had to check out. After checking out, we took the bus to SM mall and had lunch, then one and a half hours for shopping. And, continued the affirmation outside near the shopping mall.



Around evening, we end the affirmation without completing it again because we have to leave for the airport. Upon reaching Clark airport, we checked in and had out dinner at the Pre-departure area. After 4 hours of flying, we reached Singapore safe and sound. Thank God for that. After prayer and Group photos we were dismissed.

It's really amazing how much we see in this 10 days Tuao mission trip. How God works in people's life and how powerful prayer can be. I believe this trip had strengthened each and everyone's faith and pray that the experience will be brought back to Singapore.
