

Kuie-ting Ma

This short-term mission trip to Brazil was indeed a journey of abundant grace. Ever since this past January, I was connected to the trip after a conversation with Mrs. Christine Pi. Why Brazil? The reason is simple. It was because of her invitation! My single-mindedness went like this: if Rev. Pi was willing to offer up his whole life and all I need to offer was just a little time for the Chinese in Brazil, it's a no-brainer!

When the time drew nearer, all the training, visa application process, and prep work became more tedious. On top of that, I was invited by the Children Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior in Taiwan to speak in June. I couldn't even catch my breath. I asked God, "Do I have to go?" Then I also asked Christine if it was necessary for me to go? However, I could find no legitimate excuse to honestly say, "I am not able to go!" I asked God to give me His word and when I turned to the Bible, He said, "*Do not be afraid!*" So I decided to depend on His words and continue to march on.

After we arrived in Brazil, we realized it was not what we could offer but what we could partner with God on this amazing journey. Whether it was discussing with the local youth on the topic of friendship; with parents from the church about parent-child relationship; with the teachers from Happy Kids Ministry on how to nurture their students; it was more of a sharing and exchange of experiences than workshops. I knew well the limits of language and that only by the Holy Spirit can the hearts of others be moved and their lives be transformed. It is indeed a question of "living" and "learning." After the workshops, those youth, parents, and teachers have developed a friendship in Christ. Even now, their faces often pop up in my mind. The current difficulties they faced and the uncertain future they will have to face are now ingrained in my heart. Every time when I think about this, I bring them all to God in prayers. I believe that even though we are now apart, we are connected in the Spirit through our Heavenly Father.

Passing out gospel tracts and visiting dumpling shops and \$1.99 stores in Mogi das Cruzes also left me with deep memories. Everyone was warm, simple, and pure. Due to other responsibilities, Judy and I were not able to attend the evangelistic meeting on Sunday and yet my heart was with those at the shops and stores. I give thanks to God that there were more than one hundred people attend the gathering. This showed that people still have a thirst for the gospel and are willing to seek it.

After my return, I was still thinking why did God want me to go? I think it was because He wants me to know that I do not need to be afraid. As long as I can lay down myself and give it all to Him, He will lead me step by step and show me the way. Afterwards, I can look back and offer my thanks and praise. Oh Lord, how much you love me that you will choose me to participate in this grace-filled and abundant journey to Brazil.