

For the final time from Santo Domingo:



Hey everyone! Barring any crazy happenings during our flights tomorrow (please pray), we have made it! We made it through a few stomach aches, a handful of headaches, a couple of sunburns from the beach today, and a whole lot of fatigue! I have to say it feels

great to expend this much energy to serve God in such a tangible way! I'm exhausted from the physical labor. I'm exhausted emotionally from making relationships with people and having to say goodbye to them. I'm exhausted spiritually as I have witnessed God work in our team, work in the hearts of the children and people of the El Almirante community, and work in my heart. Staying up late to assist students process this experience and the emotions it brings is very tiring...but I would not change it at all. It is fantastic to give this much...and I mean our whole team...giving!!!



I have had my proudest moments as a youth pastor this week. I have seen students from both churches grow. I have seen them show amazing compassion for those we have served in the community and serve each other. It's pretty amazing how well you can get to know someone in just 1 week. Everyone has felt that way and in a sense they really don't want it to end! I have heard comments like, "Can we just combine our youth groups into one big group?" and "Will we do more things together now that we all know one another?" I like hearing that because as believers and followers of Christ, we are the church. We aren't High Point and Crossroads. We are a part of His Kingdom. We all follow HIM!!!



We had a blast today at the market, Colonial City, and the beach. It was a day to unwind and decompress by just having fun together. We had to say our goodbyes to Martires's family and his team! We did that by sharing, singing some worship and favorite VBS songs, and praying for one another.

It was clear that God had put Pastor Derick and I together. We had a chemistry that worked very well to lead this team. However, the chaperones

(Vicki, Beth, Sara, Heidi, and Grayson) made it so easy for us as they served selflessly and were just as tired as us. The students made it equally as easy. I anticipated complaints, whining, and irritation....I saw almost none! Praise God for this experience! Praise God for what He is doing here in La Republica Dominicana! Praise Him for people like Martires, his family and his team that serve here day in and day out!

Pastor Ryan

