

## Generation Peace Academy Day 3: Arriving in Asuncion, Paraguay

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After many flights and layovers, the GPA team finally landed at their final destination, the beautiful capital of Paraguay, Asunción. There we were welcomed by Sano san, one of the first people called to build the Leda project in Paraguay, at the airport. He surprised us with a mariachi band that gave a lively serenade to welcome us officially.

After leaving the airport, we excitedly hopped on the bus and took our first look at the country while traveling to our hotel. The bright green landscape, palm trees, cats, dogs, and cows greeted us while the rising sun painted the city orange.



In the afternoon, we went out to explore a little bit. We walked down Asunción's narrow streets as people looked at us. It kind of felt like we were the tourist attraction. Seeing the street vendors, enjoying the hot weather, and refreshing ice cream made the experience complete.

The next day we faced another long journey, a six-hour bus ride to Loma Plata. Chatter, laughter, and a cappella music filled the hotel lobby as we waited for the ride. Our spirits were high whether we were sightseeing or passing the time for our next journey. During the trip, we got to know each other's goals, intentions, and feelings toward this Paraguay trip. Learning more about one another was great as we traveled through the beautiful scenery.



We had an early start on Friday as there were many things to do. We spent the day hopping on and off our bus, and our first stop was a company named Frigo Chorti. We took a tour to see how this business processes meat from living cows to packaged, portioned beef, and we were lucky enough to see the production. Some of us were a bit nervous before the experience, but we looked forward to seeing something new. The experience helped us feel more gratitude for the food we had. "It made me more grateful for God's creation. God created all these cows for us to eat," shared Winona Vue, a 1st-year participant.

Next, we continued to two other museums, which told the story of the town Loma Plata and how the Mennonites came to Paraguay. The group enjoyed exploring the museum, observing and trying out old historical objects, and learning.



Our journey continued towards the border of Paraguay, the Pantanal! As we glanced to the other side of the river, we were immediately caught up in the beautiful nature of Brazil. Soon after loading up our boat, we had the chance to have a delicious BBQ dinner with members of our church. Peter Paolo, a boat captain who worked closely with Rev. Sun Myung Moon while he frequently visited Paraguay over seven years, shared a short testimony and advice for this trip which we were deeply grateful for. Pantanal is the place to connect to God. We can admire the beauty of nature and connect to it physically, but we should open our hearts to connect spiritually as we travel on the river.

We are currently on our 20-hour boat ride toward Leda. Stay tuned for our Leda experience!