

TZU CHI USA JOURNAL

Tzu Chi in Haiti: Hope Rises from the Rubble

**Dedication Held for St. Anne Schools
White House & NVOAD Honor Tzu Chi
Dharma as Water: Great Repentance**

COLLÈGE MARIE-ANNE
Dirigé par les Soeurs de Sainte-Anne





DHARMA MASTER CHENG YEN
FOUNDER OF
TZU CHI FOUNDATION

CONTEMPLATIVE WISDOM

thoughts for meditation, contemplation, and reflection from Master Cheng Yen

Kindle the Light in our Hearts

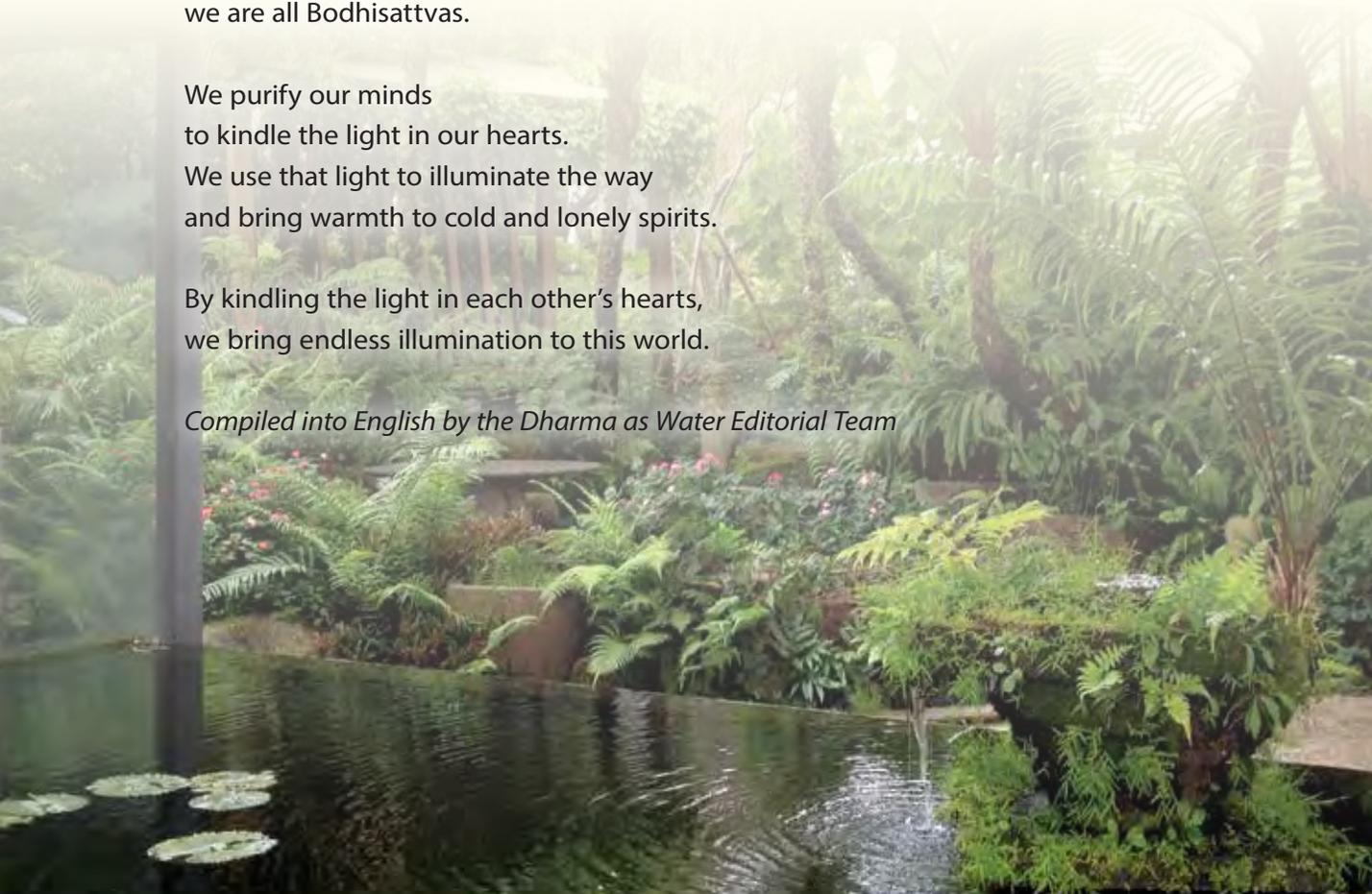
The value of life lies in
making the most of our potential
and becoming a benefactor to others.

When we make great aspirations and vows,
we are all Bodhisattvas.

We purify our minds
to kindle the light in our hearts.
We use that light to illuminate the way
and bring warmth to cold and lonely spirits.

By kindling the light in each other's hearts,
we bring endless illumination to this world.

Compiled into English by the Dharma as Water Editorial Team



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The Bodhisattva Practice of Patient Endurance

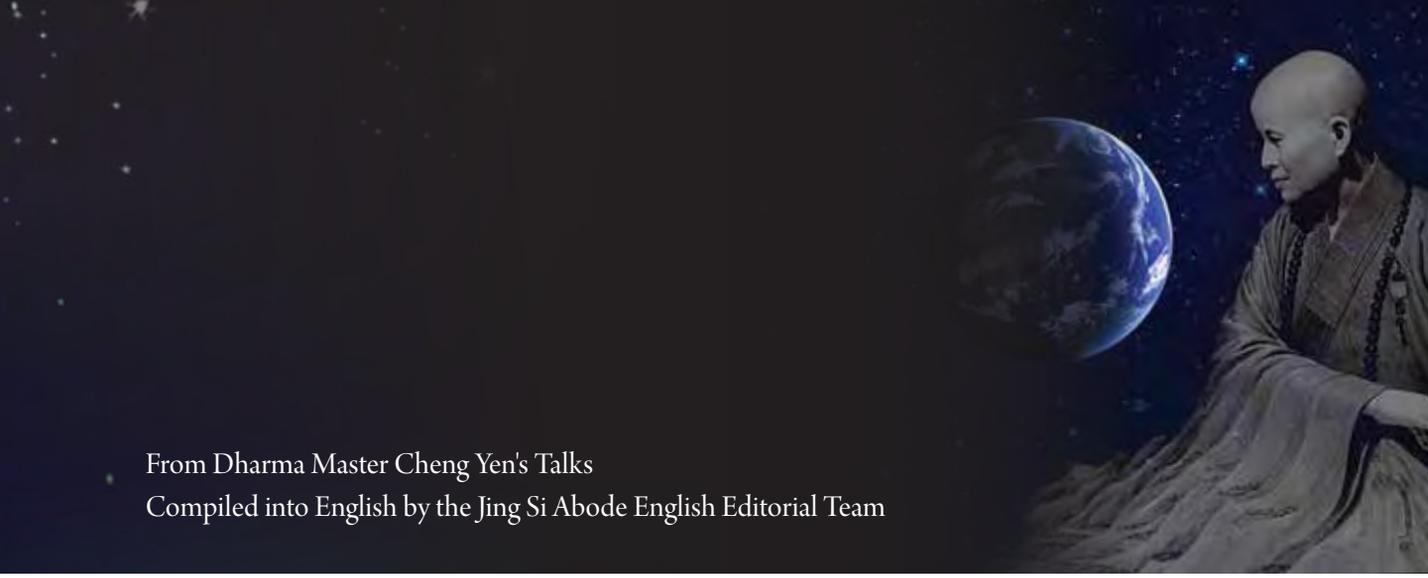
Practicing the Bodhisattva way, one of the most important qualities we need to nurture is patient endurance—the capacity to bear with unpleasant and trying circumstances. Patient endurance gives us the power to rise above difficult situations and overcome our inner afflictions rather than be overcome by them. Our world is filled with many different kinds of people; when trying to carry out a good cause, we will encounter both those who support us and those who give us a hard time. If our patient endurance is not strong enough, we will not be able to move forward on our path, be it that of charitable work or spiritual cultivation. In our cultivation, the Buddha has given us the Six Paramitas to practice—giving, moral discipline, patient endurance, diligence, meditative concentration, and wisdom—and they are tools that will enable us to safely ride over the tumultuous waves of our afflictions. But if we have not developed patient endurance, it will actually be hard to practice the other paramitas. To truly practice giving and moral discipline, we will need the capacity to endure challenging conditions. To be diligent and have meditative concentration and wisdom, we will also need the stabilizing force that patient endurance provides us.

There is a very good example of this from our Tzu Chi relief effort for the Turkey earthquake in 1999. When we heard news that an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale had struck Turkey, we promptly sent a relief mission to Turkey and began soliciting donations on the streets for the relief project. At the time, there were some among the public who felt strongly that Tzu Chi

should concentrate its charitable work on the local needy and not divert its attention to disasters in other countries. When Tzu Chi volunteers went on the streets to solicit donations, they frequently met with verbal abuse.

There were people who angrily pounded on the donation box our volunteers were holding or lunged to grab the signs out of their hands. How did our volunteers face such people? They skillfully took a step back and made a respectful bow, just as if the people had dropped a donation in the box rather than hurling hateful words at them. The volunteers treated them with the same cordial and respectful attitude with which they treated others. Still with kind smiles on their faces, they bowed to the angry people in a warm, gentle manner and said, "Thank you." Their sincere and humble ways did not miraculously dissolve the people's anger, but it did help to defuse the volatile situation.

When our volunteers solicited funds on the streets, there were times when store owners came out and demanded that they go find someplace else to stand. The volunteers quickly apologized and moved elsewhere, their manner understanding and sincere. On one occasion, their ways moved a store owner who had witnessed this type of interaction, and he quickly invited the group involved to come and stand outside his store, even setting up a beach umbrella so the volunteers could stay out of the sun. In this world, there are both generous people and people who will make things difficult for us.



From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks

Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team

When I heard about what our volunteers encountered, I said to them, "I'm so sorry you had to endure so much in order to help me solicit donations." They told me, "Don't worry, Master. It is a wonderful chance for us to practice the Bodhisattva spirit." I asked them, "You're not mad that you were treated so terribly?" They replied, "No, not at all. It's no big deal." They were able to face it lightheartedly because they saw it as just a matter of course when trying to do a good deed. They know that in this world not everyone will agree with what you are doing. Some will support you; some will oppose you.

Indeed, to help others we cannot be bogged down by the obstacles and difficulties we encounter; no matter how mean people are to us, we need to keep going. Otherwise, what will happen to the people who need our aid? If we think of what they are suffering, we will not have the heart to let them continue suffering. We can then put up with all kinds of bad treatment during the course of bringing aid. Keeping our mind on our goal, we will not be affected by how people treat us or be provoked into an altercation. We will become tolerant and understanding, able to face the people with a warm, humble, and respectful heart.

Is this not what our volunteers have done? They did not become angry or react in a negative way when people threw verbal abuse their way. They were still able to be genuinely respectful, understanding, and courteous, and they did not have to consciously tell themselves to be forbearing.

It was all very natural and easy for them to be so tolerant. This is patient endurance at its truest.

By being so tolerant, they simultaneously lived out the other five paramitas also. Giving—they continued to give of themselves to raise funds for the disaster relief. Moral discipline—they did not lose their kind, courteous, and respectful manner to retort with angry words. Diligence—they still stood on the street for hours in the rain or beating sun to solicit donations. Meditative concentration—they were unperturbed in the face of provocation; their minds remained steady, calm, and peacefully composed. Wisdom—their minds were not disturbed by their encounter because of their insight into human behavior, and they were able to deal with the situation skillfully.

In this way, developing the capacity to bear with unpleasant, trying situations is essential in our practice of the Bodhisattva way. Though it is not easy, especially to be so patient that we do not even feel that we are exercising tolerance, it can be done, as Tzu Chi volunteers have shown us. We can all learn to practice as they do. In our everyday life and especially in the course of Tzu Chi's activities, we have ample opportunities to train ourselves in patient endurance. If we are earnest in our sincerity to practice the Bodhisattva spirit, we can take everything as training and face all with a humble, respectful, and expansive heart. Then we can endure anything and everything, and with this strength we will be able to do good for the world. 🌱

TZU CHI'S BAMBOO BANK SPIRIT

When Dharma Master Cheng Yen founded Tzu Chi in 1966, she fashioned coin banks from bamboo and asked her lay followers—thirty housewives—to save NT\$0.50 (about US\$0.02) from their grocery money every day to help the poor.

One follower asked, “Can’t I just donate NT\$15 each month?” But Master refused. She explained that though the amount was the same, it was important to give rise to a kind thought each and every day.

From these humble beginnings forty-seven years ago, Tzu Chi has grown into a global NGO with ten million volunteers and donors in over fifty countries, because it collects not only donations, but also kind hearts.



Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

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CEO'S NOTE

Building Hope for Haiti's Future

After a major earthquake struck Haiti in January 2010, large groups of Tzu Chi volunteers rushed to the country one after another. Throughout the first few months of immediate relief, there were always volunteers down in Haiti doing whatever we could to help the people recover.

As outsiders, we often relied on churches to connect us with local communities, so we found ourselves frequently collaborating with Catholic priests. Dharma Master Cheng Yen noticed this in our daily video conferences; since she has had a special affinity with Catholic nuns since even before she founded Tzu Chi, she encouraged us to also find nuns in need of our assistance.

We searched and searched, with little success at first. But when we were introduced to the Sisters of St. Anne, I was immediately impressed. The nuns were small in stature, but great in spirit. Whenever someone mentioned education, I could see their eyes just light up. It was clear that education was their calling, but they had met a major setback—all three of their schools in Port-au-Prince had been destroyed by the earthquake.

Even before we met the Sisters of St. Anne, we were already looking for opportunities to help rebuild Haiti. Tzu Chi has carried out numerous construction projects around the world—schools, homes, even villages—but Haiti, with its murky land ownership issues, was proving a special challenge. That the Sisters of St. Anne had clear ownership of their schools' land removed this major obstacle, but it was just one of the many reasons we decided to work together.

Foremost was Haiti's dire need of quality education, which Dharma Master Cheng Yen has always regarded as the foundation of hope. In the course of our relief distributions, we

encountered quite a few care recipients unable even to write their own names. We knew that for the next generation to have a chance to prosper, education was the top priority.

We already knew that the St. Anne schools offered top-quality education. Many graduates of Christ the King Secretarial School, for example, go on to work for the United Nations, InterAction, and other respected international organizations. A visit to their temporary school in May 2010 also left a deep impression. Even in the far-from-ideal conditions of temporary classrooms, we saw spaces that were clean and organized, students who were well-behaved and hard-working. It was clear that the Sisters of St. Anne were not only educating but training these children for life.

We knew then, as we know now, that Tzu Chi had made a wise decision in choosing to work together with the Sisters of St. Anne to rebuild Collège Marie-Anne and Christ the King. The school buildings are an investment in Haiti's future; they will be used to provide children with knowledge, wisdom, and morals, and will support the Sisters' educational mission in even more impoverished areas of Haiti.

As we reach this important milestone of the schools' reopening, I would like to thank all of the volunteers who have participated in immediate, mid-term, and long-term relief projects in Haiti. It is only through everyone's hard work and dedication that these three schools have been reborn, and I deeply believe that these buildings, built to the highest safety standards, will continue to stand strong for many years to come as they help spur a revival of education and inspire a cycle of goodness that will reverberate throughout the country. 🌱

Han Huang

Tzu Chi in Haiti:

Hope Rises from the Rubble



Photo: Peter Chu

Merci
Thank You



TAIWAN 台灣
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Teach a Man to Plant

Colin Legerton

Supporting young students through Happy Campus is an investment in Haiti's future. Photo: Bornain Chiu

Donald arrived at nine in the morning to pick us up. It was my first full day in Port-au-Prince, and I was about to experience my first ride on a tap-tap, Haiti's ubiquitous mode of transportation. A complete novice to Haiti, I was traveling with a group of seasoned veterans. Bornain was on his third trip, Kathy her sixth. Patrick led the team on visit number eight. All told, we were officially part of Tzu Chi's twenty-fourth post-earthquake relief team. In just two-and-a-half years since the earthquake, twenty-three volunteer teams had been to Haiti. Others had visited in 2009 after a series of hurricanes, and more are certain to follow.

Before I climbed into the tap-tap, I noticed the single word pasted on the windshield: "BLESSING." I would soon learn that it is a tap-tap tradition to adorn the windshield with a message, often a spiritual one, and in this regard Donald's was no different. The crowded streets of Port-au-Prince brimmed with all manner of tap-tap—from beautifully adorned buses that seated dozens of passengers within vibrant mosaics spanning all the colors of the rainbow to unadorned pickups like Donald's with covered benches welded into their beds—so there was a never-ending variety of messages

to be read. The messages varied in language—French, Creole, English—and also in spirit, from "HUMILITY" and "RESPECT" to "DON'T TRUST NO ONE." Many referenced Bible verses. Though their messages may have been there for years, whenever I saw something like "PROVERBS 27:1" (Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring) or "PSALMS 117:18" (The Lord chastising hath chastised me: but he hath not delivered me over to death), I always thought about the earthquake.



Garishly decorated tap-taps fill the streets of Port-au-Prince. Photo: Colin Legerton

In fact, it was difficult to think about Haiti at all without considering that devastating day. It seemed impossible to move past those few seconds that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. But I slowly learned that Haiti's problems lie much deeper and began much earlier than January 12, 2010. Even a natural disaster is not entirely natural, and the one that devastated Haiti was as much a product of the two centuries of history that preceded it as it was of the movement of the earth on that fateful afternoon.

Help must be given wisely.

A DIFFICULT HISTORY

It was in modern Haiti that the New World colonial project began in 1492, when Christopher Columbus established the colony of La Navidad along the northern coast and began a painful period of oppression and annihilation. Haiti became a center of the global slave trade, and its indigenous population was almost entirely exterminated.

But Haiti was also the first country south of the United States to throw off the colonial yoke. Under the leadership of former slaves, the Haitian people defeated Napoleon's army and declared independence from France in 1804. This successful slave rebellion—the only one in world history—is a historic moment of glory that Haitians still recall fondly two centuries later.

With its independence, Haiti became the Western Hemisphere's second oldest republic. Its first leader, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, became the region's first black head-of-state a mere fifteen years after George Washington's inauguration, six decades before the U.S. finally freed its slaves.

But the silver cloud of independence had its own dark lining. Already separated from its neighbors linguistically as an enclave of French surrounded by Spanish and English speakers, Haiti now became a pariah as the slave-owning powers strove to ensure that their colonial subjects would not follow Haiti's example.

As a result, most foreign powers refused to

recognize Haiti as a sovereign nation and kept it in a state of constant embargo. Cut off from vital international trade and commerce, Haiti's leaders agreed to a humiliating treaty

with France in order to earn the recognition of the former colonial master. The 1825 treaty included an indemnity equivalent to thirteen billion dollars today, accounting for inflation. Throughout history, defeated parties have paid reparations after war, but in this case alone, victorious Haiti was bullied into paying inconceivably large reparations to the defeated France. The tremendous debt was not fully paid until 1947, well over a century later. At times, as much as eighty percent of Haiti's national revenue was being handed over to France. Though Haiti was the second New World colony to unchain itself from colonial shackles, this crippling debt, combined with political instability and linguistic, political, and geographic isolation, left Haiti forever lagging behind its neighbors.

In the two centuries that followed, Haiti suffered through a never-ending cycle of political instability. The president's chair saw eleven different heads of state from 1900-1915 alone, and even two "emperors" and one "king" in the century prior. Since then, the Haitian people have suffered countless military coups, two decades of U.S. occupation, and the Duvalier dictatorship of 1957 to 1986. Even when the 1990s brought democratic elections, the difficulties continued: Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected twice and each time driven into exile.

Internal instability, foreign debt, and international embargoes contributed to devastating poverty, poor infrastructure, and rampant deforestation. These problems, in turn, were frequently exploited by nature: first by the annual hurricanes that flood cities, send mudslides crashing down deforested hills, devastate crops, and spread infectious diseases, and then by the historic earthquake of January 12, 2010.

As the earth shook on that fateful day, it brought to the surface all the underlying problems that plagued the country. Hastily



In a different country, the 2010 earthquake would not have claimed so many lives. Poverty, poor infrastructure, and a multitude of historical factors piled tragedy on top of tragedy. Photo: Curtis Hsing

constructed buildings without steel reinforcements quickly tumbled, leaving underfunded local hospitals unable to keep up with the urgent need for treatment of injuries and illnesses. Though medical volunteers rushed in from around the world, they too were limited by inadequate supplies and unpredictable electricity.

With no money, no homes, and nowhere to turn, countless people congregated in makeshift tent villages that sprung up wherever there was space. With too many people tightly packed in unsanitary conditions, these areas became havens of disease, including the nation's first ever cholera outbreak, an ongoing epidemic that had killed nearly eight thousand and infected six percent of the country's population by the end of 2012.

Now, more than two years after the quake in this place where there had been so much pain and so much death, BLESSING was Donald's constant reminder to appreciate that he was still alive. BLESSING also gave him a way to serve his community by running errands and chauffeuring for Mountain Top Ministries in Pétienville. When Lesly Pierre, Donald's old college classmate and close friend, came looking for a driver for Tzu Chi, Donald happily made the two-hour commute to help.

As the crow flies, Pétienville is only ten miles or so from the Overseas Engineering and Construction Co. (OECC), Tzu Chi's base of operations in Port-au-Prince, but distances

in Haiti can be deceiving. The best roads are dotted with potholes; the worst are rutted dirt paths, obstacle courses of festering puddles. As a tap-tap passenger on these byways, shock absorbers are a heady dream. Combined with heavy traffic, the state of the roads makes travel a slow and torturous affair.

But there were places to go, so Donald drove two hours down the hill to take us northward into the countryside. We climbed into the covered bed at the back of BLESSING, and started on our trek to the Moringa farm in Pierre Payen.

A PROFOUND AFFINITY

Tzu Chi's continuous engagement with Haiti began after the quake, but the affinity was first formed twelve years earlier. In the wake of 1998's Hurricane Georges—a disaster that left more than 150,000 homeless as it devastated the nation's agriculture—volunteers at Tzu Chi Global Headquarters in Hualien sent four shipping containers full of clothing to storm survivors. In the decade that followed, Tzu Chi volunteers in the Dominican Republic kept a compassionate eye on their neighbors to the west, holding relief distributions as necessary, such as in 2004, when Hurricane Jeanne killed more than three thousand.

In 2008, Tzu Chi grew even closer to Haiti after the island nation was battered by four storms in quick succession—Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike. The barrage caused more than eight hundred deaths and exacerbated an ongoing food crisis. Sensing a desperate need, Tzu Chi Executive Director of Global Volunteers Stephen Huang led a volunteer team to Haiti and was warmly received by then-President René Préval.

Following this November 2008 visit, forty-two Tzu Chi volunteers traveled to Haiti in January 2009 to distribute food and relief goods to more than three thousand families. Their relief mission was significant not only for its immediate results, but also for the strong connections that were forged with the United Nations Stabilization Mission, OECC, and Food For The Poor, partnerships that would prove invaluable just a year later.

On the afternoon of January 12, 2010, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck just twenty-five miles west of densely populated Port-au-Prince. Between the initial quake and the fifty major aftershocks that followed in the next two weeks, three hundred thousand were killed, 1.5 million were left homeless, and a full three million—one third of the entire population—were affected in some way.

Emphasizing timeliness—one of Tzu Chi's five disaster relief principles—volunteers wasted no time in offering their assistance. An emergency coordination center was immediately set up at Tzu Chi USA Headquarters and volunteers across the country started street fundraising the very next weekend. After ensuring the situation in Port-au-Prince was sufficiently safe, then-CEO William Keh led a group of volunteers into Haiti on January 21, just nine days after the quake. As the airport in Port-au-Prince was overloaded with incoming relief supplies, this first of many volunteer groups traveled overland from neighboring Dominican Republic.

During the immediate relief period, generous donors in 36 countries contributed funds while 262 volunteers paid their own way to Port-au-Prince to hold 84 distributions that benefited 196,411 people with more than 110 tons of instant corn powder, nearly 80 tons of instant rice, and nearly 6,000 tents and 40,000 tarps, among other goods. In addition to material relief, medical volunteers held a series of free clinics, in which 73 volunteer doctors treated more than 15,000 Haitians with both general and alternative medical treatments, as well as dental and chiropractic care.

Tzu Chi's international disaster relief motto is "first to arrive, last to leave." Even when immediate relief ended in May 2010, volunteers remained committed to the work still to be done. Understanding that Haiti's deep-rooted difficulties call for thorough and lasting solutions, Tzu Chi volunteers slowly transitioned to a long-term focus on sowing seeds of goodness by encouraging locals to take on projects with a volunteer spirit while supporting them with food, funding, and administrative support.

One of the early forms of this long-term support was the series of Food for Work projects held between February and April 2010, through which nearly four thousand local Haitians received hot meals in exchange for cleaning their own neighborhoods.

Beginning in March 2010, Tzu Chi provided guidance, funding, and food for a temporary school initiated by local volunteer Jean Denis Petit Pha that took 120 students out from the rubble and put them back into classrooms. After local schools reopened that fall, the temporary school grew into the Happy Campus Program, an ongoing project through which Tzu Chi now supports more than two hundred students at three primary schools by paying tuition, providing tutoring and nutritious vegetarian meals, and visiting students' families to stress the importance of education and address individual needs.

Building on relationships forged in the aftermath of the quake, Tzu Chi and the Montreal-based Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne broke ground on Christ the King Secretarial School and Collège Marie-Anne primary and secondary schools on January 21, 2012, and celebrated their reopening on May 17, 2013. Newly rebuilt, these schools will continue to serve hundreds of Haiti's best and brightest young students. On October 26, 2012, Tzu Chi and the National Association of Guides in Haiti jointly broke ground on Centre Préscolaire Carmen René Durocher. When completed in late 2013, it will again serve as a beacon of hope for its local community.

Since 2011, local Tzu Chi volunteers have also tended an orchard outside Port-au-Prince where they grow, distribute, and promote moringa—an exceptionally nutritious and drought-resistant tree that offers solutions to the plagues of malnutrition and deforestation. Like the Happy Campus Program, the orchard is entirely operated by local Haitian volunteers. They also exchange knowledge and expertise on moringa with others, such as the Cité Soleil community organization SAKALA and local philanthropist Michaëlle Saint-Natus, in order to reach more communities with this valuable resource.

Happy Campus afterschool tutoring students receive an outdoor education at SAKALA's moringa farm. Photo: Georges Devis Jr.



Inspired by the examples set by Tzu Chi volunteers from abroad, many local volunteers in Port-au-Prince are now taking the initiative to implement community aid programs. Among these, they carry out home visits to care recipients and hold medical outreaches, including a pre-Christmas event in 2012 that provided medical treatment, hygiene kits, hot meals, clean clothes, showers, and haircuts to several dozens of the poorest members of the community. The example that these volunteers have set in Port-au-Prince has even inspired the birth of a new group of volunteers in Cap-Haïtien, six hours to the north, which held relief distributions for flood survivors in late 2012.

While Tzu Chi USA continues to provide funding and guidance for volunteers in Haiti, it has left no permanent representatives and is slowly scaling back on international relief trips. More and more, the spirit of Tzu Chi in Haiti is found in the hands and hearts of local Haitian volunteers.

CHAINS IN THE MIND

As Donald continued to drive us toward Pierre Payen on more rural roads, we encountered fewer and fewer colorful tap-taps. But it was impossible not to notice the visual array of offices and tent communities strewn along both sides of the road: Haiti Foundation of Hope, China Red Cross, Samaritan's Purse, USAID, and on and on.

Many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have spent decades in Haiti helping the country in a variety of ways. While these largely represent the best intentions of countless

employees, volunteers, and donors all around the world, a number of encounters along this journey led me to understand that best intentions are not always enough.

Through decades of NGO involvement in Haiti, easy handouts have become the norm and a "culture of entitlement" has become deeply ingrained. Father Columbano of St. Alexandre Church invoked this phenomenon to explain why Haiti remains so poor and underdeveloped, while Erik Graham, an independent NGO consultant, described the issue as "chains in the mind." Though the Haitian people threw off their physical shackles in the revolution, he explained, their minds have never truly been unchained. Over the years, many have become slaves to handouts as strangers deliver food, water, and clothing for nothing. Erik argued that Haiti will never progress until more people start working for themselves instead of always expecting others to do it.

Next door to the OECC, I visited the Haiti office of Food For The Poor (FFP), a Florida-based Christian relief organization that aims to connect the resources of the First World with the needs of the Third World. Similar to Tzu Chi, "Food For The Poor follows the principle that education and self-help must fortify charity work so recipients learn to break the cycle of poverty."

Here, Director of Projects Beth Carroll told me about FFP's work in Haiti. While the organization started with food distribution, FFP now also builds houses and delivers prison ministries and other services throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean. In Haiti,



*Seeds of love have spread as far as Cap-Haïtien, six hours to the north.
Photo: Wen Ren*

FFP not only serves food to a thousand families each morning but has also built thousands of sturdy concrete houses, schools, and community centers, and has installed water purification systems for numerous communities.

In general, FFP's model of operation is quite different from Tzu Chi. Whereas Tzu Chi's contributions to the community are often in the form of intangible services and relief goods, FFP's focus is more often on infrastructure, homes, and water purification systems. But in a more fundamental sense, the two are doing the same: providing opportunities. FFP identifies strong local community leaders with "the effort and the intention" to make a difference and then works as a liaison to connect them with the financial means to see their goals achieved.

In the FFP office, Beth shared the inspiring example of a farming community in rural

Artibonite. Impressed by the local community organization, FFP decided to build houses for the community's three hundred families, upgrading their homes from straw to concrete. The houses, however, were just the first step.

As Beth explained, "Our objective isn't just to provide that physical house, but to really change their lives." And with the new homes, that is exactly what happened. Grateful for their new homes, many took care to decorate and maintain them. Not wanting to be outdone, their neighbors did the same. Building on this new spirit, the community leader gathered everyone together to discuss how they could improve their community. They started engaging in cleanup projects and began wisely apportioning any gifts that came in: if they were given some trees, they would distribute them first to the families that worked hardest at the most recent cleanup project.

Soon this community was thinking even bigger. They wrote a letter to the government introducing themselves as a community that was trying to improve the lives of its members but which needed better roads to succeed. There happened to be some foreign funding waiting for such a project, so they soon had newly paved roads connecting them to the outside. With the dusty dirt roads now paved, even the air quality was improved. Later, when cholera first appeared in Artibonite in October 2010, the community with the new roads was a logical place for cholera prevention training sessions to be held, so the community received vital health education, which also created some local jobs, at least temporarily.



With programs like Food for Work, Tzu Chi aims to inspire as well as assist. Photo: Patrick Chou

Ultimately, through construction of some houses and a lot of local ingenuity and initiative, this community also had new roads, new jobs, better health education, and confidence in what they could achieve together. The reason a project like this worked is that the outside assistance was not an impersonal one-time handout, but rather one part of a long-term plan aimed at improving the community: a plan initiated and carried out by locals.

The houses that Food For The Poor built were significant in themselves, but their value grew exponentially by the confidence, teamwork, and potential they inspired in their recipients. As the locals had a voice in establishing goals and a hand in seeing projects through, each person had a real stake in their ultimate success or failure. When the community is at the center, the culture of entitlement can be overcome and progress can be achieved.

TEACH A MAN TO PLANT

As Donald drove us well past the city and the tarps of so many names, we finally reached the Pierre Payen moringa farm—a farm established by Michaëlle Saint-Natus and adjacent to a community built by Food For The Poor. We toured the nursery where moringa trees quickly grow from seedlings into trees, then visited the building where moringa leaves are ground into powder as a convenient nutritional supplement for the malnourished and a job for the unemployed.

We filled the sweltering bed of BLESSING with a miniature forest of young saplings to be presented to guests of the Buddha Bathing Ceremony at St. Alexandre Church: gifts that would provide guests with a plant to nourish and which would ultimately nourish them in return.

As we sat within a moringa forest, trying to keep boxes full of saplings from flying out the back at any unexpected pothole, I struck up a conversation with Lesly Pierre, one of Tzu Chi's first seeds of hope in Haiti. Across the country in his hometown of Cap-Haïtien when the earthquake struck, Lesly's compassionate heart led him immediately to Port-au-Prince to offer whatever help he could. When he found Tzu

Chi, he found an organization whose principles matched his own; he has been a part of Tzu Chi ever since.

Like Beth, Erik, and Fr. Columbano, Lesly lamented the culture of entitlement that has become ingrained in the Haitian people—his people. By only giving, many NGOs have conditioned the people to wait for handouts instead of figuring out how to achieve for themselves. They have killed Haitian creativity.

Lesly explained that this kind of aid was unsustainable and ultimately detrimental. Instead, he suggested that NGOs should involve more Haitians in their planning process so that they can find solutions that truly fit Haiti instead of simply trying to import their own. Mostly, he stressed that there is no easy and quick solution, that real problems cannot be solved overnight. The country needs a long process of rebuilding—“maybe even fifty or a hundred years”—so patience is vital, as are education and training.

Following his meaning, I chimed in with an old proverb: “Give a man a fish, feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, feed him for a lifetime.”

When Lesly started laughing, I assumed he had not understood. English was his third language, after all.

“No, I understand what you mean,” he answered. “But I don't eat fish. I'm a vegetarian.”

Clearly, Lesly had already taken Master Cheng Yen's teachings to heart. And with the need in Haiti just as great in 2013 as it was in 2010, the message he shared is something that should also be taken to heart: help must be given wisely. After all, if you give a man a vegetable, you feed him for a meal, but if you teach a man to plant . . . 



#69, 78-80, 99

Those who sow the seeds of blessings
shall harvest plentiful blessings.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

A Beautiful Dream Come True

Shirley Tseng & Peter Chu
Translated by Colin Legerton

On January 12, 2010, at 4:53 PM—the moment that no Haitian will ever forget—Christ the King Secretarial School student Gracieuse Willande Mars had just stepped outside the campus gate. She watched her school collapse to the ground right before her eyes.

When Gracieuse returned to the site three years later as a Christ the King alumnus, she was struck by the beautiful and sturdy building that stood where there had been only rubble—the one built around a steady steel frame to ensure that it never collapses. “It’s a miracle.”

RISING FROM THE RUBBLE

A major milestone was celebrated on May 17, 2013. It was a historic moment for Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne, for education in Haiti, and for Haiti’s post-quake reconstruction. At 10 AM, five hundred guests filled the front atrium of Collège Marie-Anne secondary school as hundreds of students watched from the second and third floor balconies. Dignitaries were in abundance, including Port-au-Prince Auxiliary Bishop Quesnel Alphonse, Senate President Simon Desras, Canadian Ambassador Henri-Paul Normandin, and Port-au-Prince Mayor Marie René, among others. All told, roughly a thousand people witnessed this bright moment of history together.

When then-Tzu Chi CEO William Keh led the first group of Tzu Chi volunteers into Haiti just days after the earthquake, he led them into a Port-au-Prince that had just suffered complete devastation. Attending this joyous celebration just three years later, he was deeply moved: “These buildings are an accumulation of the love of Tzu Chi volunteers from all around the world, like pagodas rising from the rubble.”

Senate President Desras opened the ceremony by asking for God’s blessings, and the Buddha’s as well. He expressed his hope that Tzu Chi will remain in Haiti, for Haiti still has a long journey ahead.

Mayor Marie René is an alumnus of Collège Marie-Anne. After the quake, she had passed by her alma mater to look at the pile of rubble and wonder about its future. She had not expected lofty buildings to reemerge. She expressed her hope that the students will study hard and prosper so that they can do justice to the beautiful buildings. She called Tzu Chi a model for all nongovernmental organizations that want to help Haiti.

The event’s emcees, providing commentary in both English and French, invited two of the men responsible for the joyous day—Overseas Engineering and Construction Co. (OECC) Deputy General Manager David Chang and Tzu Chi volunteer James Chen, who made thirty-five trips to Port-au-Prince in the past three years—up to the stage for recognition. They were both greeted with a rousing standing ovation.

Stephen Huang, Tzu Chi’s Executive Director of Global Volunteers, expressed gratitude on behalf of Dharma Master Cheng Yen and all Tzu Chi volunteers. He especially thanked the peacekeeping forces from Jordan, Brazil, United States, China, and elsewhere for all their assistance after the earthquake, which had made it possible for Tzu Chi to hold relief distributions for quake survivors. He also thanked Dharma Master Cheng Yen for leading worldwide fundraising that raised millions of dollars to help Haiti and rebuild these schools.

Huang told attendees that on this visit to Haiti he had been given three tasks by Dharma Master Cheng Yen. First, he was asked to see if OECC had done a good job building the schools. (He asked, “Were the schools built well?” Everyone applauded as they yelled, “Yes!”) Second, he was to ask Sister Rita Larivée, General Superior of the Sisters of St. Anne, whether she would accept the three schools. (Sister Rita answered, “We accept the schools!”) Third, he was to find out whether Haiti still needed Tzu Chi even after the schools were rebuilt. (All the attendees shouted, “Yes!”)

When a student representative of Christ the King Secretarial School rose to speak,





she thanked Dharma Master Cheng Yen and Tzu Chi for rebuilding her school. She said, "Words cannot express our gratitude, so we will dedicate a song to Tzu Chi volunteers instead. Tzu Chi volunteers go all over the world to help others, and they are always full of joy. So, we hope that God will protect Tzu Chi volunteers and let them complete their mission."

Student representatives of Collège Marie-Anne made a special presentation of a commemorative plaque to Tzu Chi. It was joyfully received by Stephen Huang, James Chen, Tzu Chi CEO Han Huang, former CEOs William Keh and Austin Tsao, and Tzu Chi Education Foundation CEO Paulina Luan.

A DEEPER FOUNDATION

Sister Rita Larivée traveled from Canada to attend the grand opening and was the last to speak during the ceremony. On behalf of all the Sisters of St. Anne around the world she thanked Tzu Chi for the wonderful gift, then continued with a moving message:

"Without you, the Tzu Chi Foundation, we would never have been able to rebuild what we lost during the earthquake of January 2010. Your commitment to those in need in the world will make a major difference in the lives of many Haitian children and young adults. Your gift, however, is much more than these buildings; it is a gift of hope in a country where hope was sometimes difficult to find following the earthquake. . . .

"We come from different religious traditions, this is true. We are Catholic and you are Buddhist. Yet we feel that we are among friends and family members when we are with you. Truly, our spirits are united as we respond to the suffering of others in the world. . . .

"Following the earthquake, many people came to Haiti to help. And many people made many promises and said they would come back. But as the months passed, many people did not return and many promises were broken. But you came back and you did what you said you would do. You kept your promise. This was worth more than the buildings. You gave hope. You gave commitment. You gave friendship.

And you gave love.

"The project, under the guidance of Mr. Chen, was not easy. There were many challenges to solve. But you always found a way to solve the problem. And you did this with great kindness and great patience. This, too, was a wonderful gift. You taught us that hope and compassion can overcome many obstacles. You taught us that strong values and respect for the human person is the first priority, that this is the foundation for all projects.

"You cannot see the foundations of these new buildings, but they are not made of cement and steel. The real foundation is much deeper than the cement and steel. The real foundation is the courage you have given us that nothing is impossible. The real foundation is the strength you showed us that when people work together, dreams can come true. The real foundation for these schools is that compassion does work miracles.

"You have been our teachers and we are grateful. And these buildings will remind all the students, for many, many generations, that they, too, must do the same. They must show compassion and caring to the world. And they must believe that nothing is impossible and that they can create a better world."

Many in the audience were visibly moved by Sister Rita's speech, especially the words: "You gave hope. You gave commitment. You gave friendship. And you gave love."

With Sister's Rita's words the ceremony was complete, and all attendees reconvened at the school's main gate to dedicate the five-story building whose wall plainly reads, "Donated by Tzu Chi Foundation." For all generations to follow, these words and these buildings will bear witness to Great Love: the love that transcends religion, race, and nationality.



#97

Unite for good causes, work together harmoniously, love and support each other, and cooperate to move forward.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



Building a Beautiful Dream

Shirley Tseng & Fay Chou | Translated by Colin Legerton

This is an incredible building, it will become a landmark in Haiti,” mused Overseas Engineering and Construction Co. (OECC) Deputy General Manager David Chang as he gazed at the five-story building standing tall atop the hillside on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince—one of the buildings that Tzu Chi rebuilt for the Sisters of St. Anne, part of an educational complex built to withstand 8.0-magnitude earthquakes. With a total area of 91,924 square feet, the complex of steel-framed buildings is Haiti’s largest in total area.

In the earthquake of January 12, 2010, more than three hundred thousand were killed and as many buildings were destroyed. As Tzu Chi volunteers quickly set out to provide immediate relief, they also sought opportunities for long-term rebuilding projects. Volunteer James Chen was one of those tasked with the search, so he set out bright and early each morning to visit schools and clinics all around the Port-au-Prince area, seeking ones that Tzu Chi could rebuild.

William Keh, then-CEO of Tzu Chi, had led the first volunteer team into Haiti just nine

days after the earthquake. “So many schools collapsed in Haiti. Too many public schools were in need of help, and St. Anne’s schools are private. At first, we were struggling to decide which schools to rebuild. But we really hoped that the schools we would rebuild could nurture talented people. If we had chosen to rebuild a public school, we would have no way of knowing whether the school would make the best use of the structure we would provide. Canada Tzu Chi volunteers went to visit St. Anne’s headquarters in Montreal so that we could know more about them, and these volunteers came to understand that the Sisters of St. Anne attach great importance to education in all the places where they operate schools, including Canada, Haiti, and Africa. After careful consideration, we finally decided to rebuild St. Anne’s schools.”

Because Collège Marie-Anne is such a valued school in Haiti, the government provided temporary classrooms after the earthquake so that the school’s fifteen hundred students could continue to learn. When Tzu Chi volunteers first expressed their intent to rebuild Collège Marie-



Photo: Michelle Chen

Anne and Christ the King Secretarial School, Sister Rita Larivée, St. Anne's General Superior, asked only for a pair of shipping containers connected by a tent, so that students could have a place to learn. She even had someone draw out the plan.

At that time, Dharma Master Cheng Yen was participating in daily video conferences with the disaster relief team in Haiti. As soon as she heard this plan, she immediately refused. What she wanted to build for these students were buildings that would be top-quality and long-lasting: a project of hope that

would thrive for a thousand years.

Tzu Chi chose OECC to take on this major project because of its rich experience and top-quality construction methods. Structures like Sylvio Cator football stadium and University City, which had been designed by architect George S. Tseng and built by OECC, survived the earthquake with only a few minor cracks. When Tzu Chi carried out its first major distributions in Haiti in 2009, OECC had not only hosted Tzu Chi volunteers in their office complex but also mobilized manpower to help package relief supplies.

Once the team had been chosen and construction was about to begin, there was a new challenge to overcome. After the earthquake, about five dozen families had moved onto the school campus and established a small tent community, but the kindhearted nuns did not know how to ask them to leave. James Chen went to speak with a community representative and explained that Tzu Chi would like to give each family a new tent to protect them from the elements in exchange for their relocation.

All sixty families agreed, but they asked for a month to seek another place to settle. After that month, each family received their Tzu Chi tent and peacefully left the property. On January 21, 2012, two years after the first Tzu Chi relief team entered Haiti, ground was finally broken on the schools. But many new challenges still awaited.

George Tseng drew the plans for the school based on the topographical and geological surveys, but as he lives in Miami, he was unable to oversee the project personally, so he entrusted the necessary engineering tasks to OECC. The St. Anne schools are built on a hillside where the ground level varies by up to ten feet, so OECC had to build a retaining wall beside the primary school, which occupies the lowest part of the property. After starting to dig in preparation, workers discovered that a great deal of trash was buried underground. If they did not clear it out, the foundation would be unstable and the building may tilt or collapse. The workers continued to dig and eventually got more than three feet deep before finally clearing out all the garbage. Then they refilled the void with dirt and built a six-foot retaining wall. This unexpected project turned out to be costly, but OECC absorbed the extra cost.

With a dearth of quality building materials in Haiti, Tzu Chi and OECC had to import more than seventy cargo containers full of materials. While even getting these containers into the port could sometimes be difficult, more issues often surfaced after the containers arrived. As James Chen explained, "In Haiti, there are many things that cannot be controlled. Even things that you are one hundred percent certain of can turn out to be a problem. So you always have to have a Plan B. For example," he continued, "the local freight company's trucks often did not appear on time, so OECC would have to use their own trucks to move things. But they would still have to pay the freight company. Or sometimes we would receive a phone call while the materials were en route to the construction site and learn that they had been detained by the police. Then David Chang would have to rush over there to take care of it."

David Chang has both an MBA and a degree in civil engineering, but those skills were rarely the ones he needed in Haiti. "What I do every





*In September 2012, a steady steel frame rises where once there was rubble.
Photo: Michelle Chen*

day in Haiti is ‘crisis management.’” One time, because of a work strike in the Panama Canal, a shipping container full of building materials—including steel beams and columns—kept getting delayed time after time, ultimately pushing construction back two months. It was a delay Chang had never considered even in his wildest dreams. Chang explained with a smile, “Every day is an exciting day.”

According to James Chen, what truly pleased him was the progress he saw over the course of the construction project and the knowledge that the local Haitian workers had acquired new skills. He pointed to the installation of anchor bolts and the stuccoing of walls as processes that were incredibly slow at first, but which became quicker as the workers gained experience. He was happy to know that these workers obtained new knowledge and skills to apply to future projects.

Over the three years after the earthquake, James Chen traveled between Los Angeles and Port-au-Prince thirty-five times, accumulating roughly 240,000 frequent flyer miles along the way. “Sometimes I would receive an email just after I landed back in Los Angeles. Something had come up and I would have to head back to Haiti in another three days.” Late 2010 to 2011 was one of his busiest travel times, with Haiti visits, via Miami, at least once a month. This period coincided with political unrest in Haiti, so flights were frequently delayed or cancelled, and he was frequently stuck spending the night in the Miami airport. Once, he was stuck there for two full days waiting for a flight, until he finally gave up and returned to Los Angeles.

Once all the setbacks were finally overcome, the three schools were finally ready for the students. During the dedication ceremony, David Chang observed, “I’ve already handled more than fifty projects in Haiti during the past twelve years. This is one of the best projects that I shall keep in my memories, in my life, forever.” James Chen, finally able to set aside his great responsibility, added, “For Master and for Tzu Chi volunteers around the world, I’ve done everything I can.” Now, James Chen is ready for a new journey—not back to Haiti, but to Tzu Chi’s spiritual home in Hualien to express his gratitude to Dharma Master Cheng Yen for the opportunity to serve. 🌿



#40, 63, 79



Photo: Luca Ye

Exclude the word “difficult” from the dictionary of life. When facing challenges, be confident and steadfast to overcome them.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

BIENVENUE WELCOME 歡迎

Love Turns Despair into Hope

Joseph Makhandal Champagne, Jr.

On January 12, 2010, a massive earthquake in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, caused widespread death and destruction. A thick cloud of despair fell over Haiti. Grieving families were inconsolable. Properties that once served as refuge crumbled into gruesome burial grounds. Teachers and students who also lost their classrooms found themselves disoriented. Their hopes were dashed, dreams deferred. The need to turn despair into hope through compassion became urgent. The stage for service was set. Those Tzu Chi volunteers, also known as the “blue angels,” came to perform an act of love.

Ever since the earthquake, Tzu Chi’s committed service has helped to steadily remove this cloud of despair. Tzu Chi volunteers began by providing immediate disaster relief to survivors in Port-au-Prince, then quickly switched gears to long-term support programs. Among those programs, Tzu Chi has focused on rebuilding dreams through education. This is why, on Friday, May 17, 2013, Tzu Chi commemorated in Bourdon, Port-au-Prince, the opening of three newly reconstructed schools of the once-destroyed Collège Marie-Anne. From the upper floors, students gazed with glee at the opening ceremony held in the front atrium. They could see countless special guests and dignitaries who came from around the world to witness the revival of hope and return of dreams in Haiti.

The ambiance of sheer joy and gratitude was evident. The beauty of the performers, their costumes, their bright eyes, their shining smiles, and their rhythmic harmony with Haiti’s melodious, festive, and cultural songs

brightened the ceremony like Fourth of July fireworks. Nuns, teachers, students, and officials took the stage in succession. Speaker after speaker, each resonated a common theme of gratitude and earnest thanks to God for Master Cheng Yen and Tzu Chi volunteers’ love and care for Haiti.

One shining example of that love and care is in the person of Tzu Chi volunteer James Chen. Mr. Chen faithfully made thirty-five roundtrips in the past three years to oversee the progress of the reconstruction of those three schools. With a heart filled with the desire to remove the post-earthquake cloud of despair, Mr. Chen’s commitment has helped to turn despair into hope.

At every turn, that sense of hope was noticeable. As schoolchildren celebrated the day together with elation and gaiety, I had a rare opportunity to interact with some. They communicated their most cherished dreams of becoming doctors, architects, engineers, teachers, diplomats, and so forth. I, in turn, offered them words of encouragement and inspiration. I shared with them that I was born and raised in Haiti with hopes and dreams like theirs. Through education, I have become a mayor, lawyer, teacher, motivational speaker, television commentator, artist, father, husband, and Tzu Chi volunteer. At that very moment, I exemplified that through education their hopes and dreams are also reachable.

With Tzu Chi’s reconstruction of these three schools, those eager hearts now have the tools to fulfill their dreams and materialize their hopes for a better Haiti. 🌱

Photo: Luca Ye

Tzu Chi in Haiti: Since the Quake



1/12/2010 7.0-magnitude quake devastates Port-au-Prince
Photo: Willy Chang



10/20/2010 Happy Campus Program sends 99 students back to school
Photo: Phanny Yang



3/22/2010 Temporary school begins near St. Alexandre for 120 students
Photo: Shirley Tseng



2/6/2010 Tzu Chi begins medical outreach events that aid 15,264 patients
Photo: Joemei Tung

2011

4/2011 First bamboo bank charity case: computer training for Jonite, a girl born without arms
Photo: Jean Denis Petit Pha



2/16/2010 Food for Work project initiated: 3,770 help clean the streets
Photo: Patrick Chou



2010

1/29/2010 Tzu Chi holds first of 84 distributions that benefit 196,411 Haitians
Photo: Chiali Tsai



5/22/2010 First Buddha Bathing in Haiti held at St. Alexandre Church
Photo: Lesly Pierre





6/2011
Volunteers build 50 temporary homes in Route Neuve
Photo: Tina Lee



10/26/2012
Groundbreaking ceremony held for Centre Précolaire Carmen René Durocher
Photo: Felicia Hsu



1/21/2012
Ground broken on Collège Marie-Anne and Christ the King Secretarial School
Photo: Hugo Liu



3/9/2013
Tzu Chi holds first major free clinic for 600 patients in Port-au-Prince
Photo: Michelle Chen

2012

2013

3/22/2012
Daily hot meal program launched for Happy Campus tutoring students
Photo: Bornain Chiu



11/26/2012
Volunteers in Cap-Haitien hold first distribution for flood survivors
Photo provided by Haiti volunteers

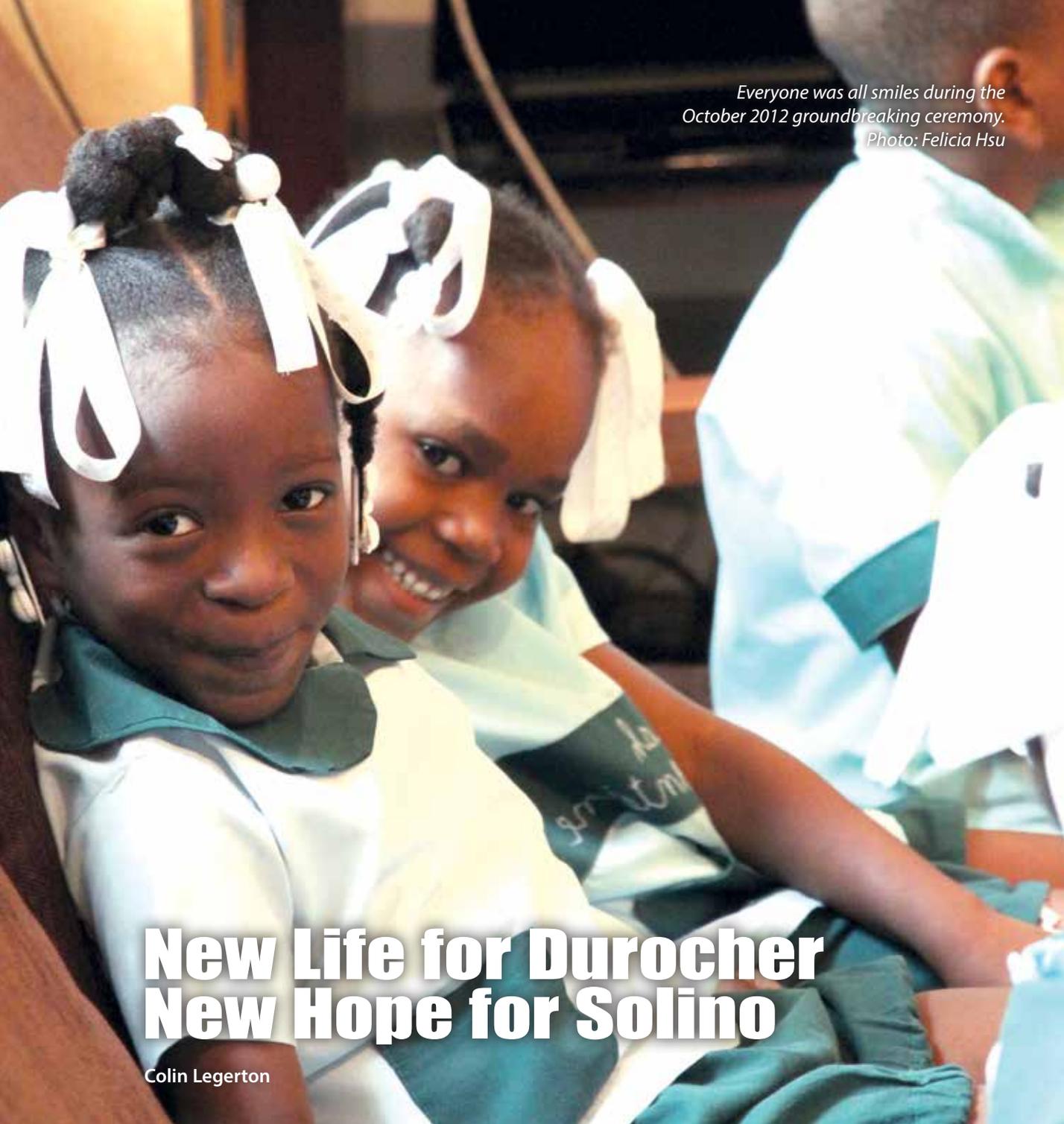


12/24/2011
Tzu Chi Great Love Moringa Farm goes into operation
Photo: Georges Devis Jr.



5/17/2013
Tzu Chi and Sisters of St. Anne dedicate three rebuilt schools
Photo: Peter Chu





*Everyone was all smiles during the
October 2012 groundbreaking ceremony.
Photo: Felicia Hsu*

New Life for Durocher New Hope for Solino

Colin Legerton

The neighborhood of Solino, one of the poorest in Haiti, is home to just one preschool and kindergarten: Centre Précolaire Carmen René Durocher. When the earthquake struck on January 12, 2010, it toppled the school's walls and nearly deprived the neighborhood's children of their best opportunity for a bright future.

But there was a silver lining in the rubble that day. The horrific earthquake sowed the seeds of a connection between Tzu Chi and National Association of Guides in Haiti (ANGH) and set the stage for the Durocher school to be rebuilt, bigger and better than ever before.

BEFORE THE QUAKE

In 1982, a local factory owner in Solino grew concerned because the female workers at his factory would quit their jobs as soon as they had children. In order to stop losing workers, he decided to establish a nursery to watch the children as their mothers worked. With no interest in running a nursery himself, he handed the nursery and land to a friend who was then president of ANGH. As the babies in the nursery grew, their parents soon asked ANGH to turn the nursery into a school, which has been serving the community ever since.

According to ANGH veteran Anne-Kary Cantave, the school's journey has not been a smooth path. After years of decline and near-dormancy, ANGH was just getting reassembled in 1982, and its members feared they could not sustain the school even through the first year. But each member pitched in a little time, a little money, and a lot of perseverance. That first year they cared for twenty babies; by the time the earthquake struck, the school was teaching over a hundred students. The school has steadily grown over three decades of dedicated stewardship by the women of ANGH, and many of its students go on to attend the best primary schools in the city.

ANGH was founded by Carmen René Durocher, the school's namesake, in 1942. In its early years, ANGH grew and spread across the country by providing a rare positive opportunity for young girls in a male-dominated society. But in the repressive years of the 1960s and 1970s, the organization largely disappeared. Girls who had grown up in the organization were too busy with families and careers to continue on as leaders, and many parents were too concerned about safety to allow their daughters to participate.

In the 1980s, things began to change. Some of the women who had grown up in the organization—including Anne-Kary Cantave and Marie Ange "Mireille" Colinet—sought to rekindle the flame of the guides. For them, it was important to give girls of the next generation the same opportunities for growth that they had enjoyed. Anne-Kary had followed her three aunts into ANGH at a very early age and grown

up in the organization. This involvement helped guide her future. "I am who I am thanks to ANGH, because it gave me the opportunity to touch a lot of different things, and to know how to coordinate things, and to be a leader," she explained. "It's really an organization that can change someone's life, because that's the way you grow, by experience."

Like Tzu Chi, ANGH grew from a small group of women who donated little by little to make a difference. They persevered, and now their programs and activities provide opportunities for countless girls across the country. Through their stewardship of the Durocher school, they also give hope for a brighter future to hundreds of children in the poor Solino neighborhood. Taught from an early age by licensed teachers, nurtured in a positive environment, and guided to work together in harmony, these students go on to attend the best primary schools in town. Durocher broadens their horizons and gives them an opportunity to rise out of poverty.

MIREILLE BUILDS A BRIDGE

Not long after the 2010 earthquake destroyed the Durocher school, seeds for its reconstruction began to sprout at the St. Alexandre Church, where Tzu Chi was conducting Food for Work projects and where Mireille was a valued member of the congregation.

Mireille grew up near the church, in what she remembers as a quiet community where everyone knew their neighbors. She recalls her childhood as a time when it was safe to go out in the streets wearing jewelry and possible to spend a day of leisure at the cinema or the beach—a time when rice cost less than one-hundredth what it does today and clean water was delivered to every home.

Things began to change in 1986, in the turmoil that followed the overthrow of the Duvaliers. Thirty years under the Duvalier regime had been brutal and often violent, but what followed was chaos: decades defined by political instability. One regime overthrew another in the coup of June 1988, only to be overthrown itself in September of the same year. More coups followed in 1991 and 2004,

and the chaos at the top trickled down to every facet of society.

Whatever the difficulties in society or her own life, Mireille always found an outlet in serving others. When she joined ANGH at a young age, the seeds of love were planted early, and they continued to grow as she became a first aid and traffic safety volunteer with the Red Cross, president of ANGH, and secretary for St. Alexandre Church. When the earthquake struck, she discovered a new way to help her community and a new outlet for her giving spirit: Tzu Chi.

When Father Columbano invited Tzu Chi to hold a relief distribution at St. Alexandre, he called on Mireille, an active member of the church and trusted member of the community, for assistance. She was immediately struck by Tzu Chi's philosophy of giving, which closely matched her own: "When Tzu Chi came to Haiti, you could see that they were volunteers, true volunteers, who gave of themselves without asking for anything in return." It was the same spirit she had carried through her decades of volunteer work with St. Alexandre, ANGH, and the Red Cross, and she felt an immediate connection.

Despite this affinity, Mireille did not join Tzu Chi right away. As a Catholic, she hesitated to join a Buddhist organization. Eventually, however, her mind was changed. During a visit to the United States, she met a local Tzu Chi volunteer who learned of her hesitation. He

explained to her that since Tzu Chi respects other religions, there was no contradiction in being a Catholic Tzu Chi volunteer. To prove he was genuine, he even showed her a card he carried in his wallet that read, "I am a Catholic. In the event of an emergency, please call a Catholic priest." Mireille carried the same card. With her worries put to rest, Mireille became an active Tzu Chi volunteer and a mentor to the other volunteers in Haiti.

“Men anpil, chay pa lou.
Many hands lighten the load.”

When a group of Tzu Chi volunteers visited from the United States in August 2010, Mireille introduced them to ANGH and led them on their first visit to the Durocher school. Seeing how important the school was to the local community, Tzu Chi determined to help ANGH rebuild it.

When Mireille connected the two organizations, ANGH members were excited by the potential, but also apprehensive. They had heard many promises before, promises of help that never came. But Tzu Chi and ANGH steadily pushed forward together to plan a new school building that would not only replace the old one but also make great improvements.

When construction is complete, the old three-room schoolhouse will be replaced by a nine-room building, which will provide space to educate even more students while also leaving extra room for administration and other functions. The new building will be built according to stringent safety requirements to ensure that, even if another earthquake strikes, the school will remain standing.

At the same time, the school construction project is giving Tzu Chi an opportunity to make an immediate impact by employing local workers and introducing Tzu Chi culture to the local community. After interviewing several experienced local contractors recommended by ANGH and Food For The Poor, Tzu Chi chose Richard Cineas, a Haitian architect trained in Florida, to lead the project. Richard was tasked with hiring local workers, introducing a culture of enhanced safety precautions on the worksite, and collaborating closely with



In October 2010, local volunteers provided tarps to cover Durocher's toppled walls. Photo provided by Tzu Chi Haiti volunteers

the local community throughout the process to ensure that the school's support system remains always engaged and involved.

EDUCATION BRINGS HOPE

On October 26, 2012, Tzu Chi and ANGH gathered together for a festive groundbreaking ceremony to commemorate a new era for the children of Solino. Unfortunately, heavy rain



Durocher students attend class under a cover of tarp in May 2012. Photo: Bornain Chiu

from Hurricane Sandy turned the Durocher construction site into an enormous pool of mud—a ceremonial shovel would not have broken the ground so much as simply sunk into it—so the groundbreaking ceremony was moved to the Overseas Engineering and Construction Co. (OECC) office across town.

The storm was strong enough to shutter schools and government offices that Friday morning, but the mood remained joyful as students, parents, teachers, Tzu Chi volunteers, ANGH leaders, and even an ambassador joined together to recognize the school's three decades of service to the community and celebrate the many more to come.

More than a dozen parents and neighbors displayed their deep care and commitment to Durocher that day, packing so tightly into the back of a single pickup truck that its back bumper nearly scraped the ground as it scratched along the half-hour drive from Durocher to OECC. As

project contractor Richard Cineas observed, "They will be protecting that school for the rest of their lives."

As so many joined together to commemorate the joyous occasion, attendees heard from ANGH, Tzu Chi, parents, and even young students, who all shared what the school and its rebuilding mean to them. In the middle of the ceremony, local volunteer Jean Denis Petit Pha read in French the words of blessing from Dharma Master Cheng Yen:

"Today is a wonderful day because two years after the earthquake, when many other relief organizations have left Haiti, we are still here among friends with the same goal and prospects for Haiti and, most importantly, with the same strong will to help Haiti stand up again. Education is an important step toward a better future, because only through quality learning can the children of Haiti excel on the global stage. . . . Today, with the groundbreaking of Centre Préscolaire Carmen René Durocher, we celebrate the love and blessings from all over the world, as every brick, pillar, and corner of the school is made possible through donations from the international community. I sincerely hope that as Great Love takes root in the hearts of Haitian children, the future will be bright and full of opportunities for all of Haiti."

As the ceremony drew to a close, the father of a young student stood and addressed the gathering. One of the many who had piled onto the pickup truck to ride across town in the pouring rain, he reflected Master Cheng Yen's message by observing that rebuilding Durocher is "a good thing for this area: not only for this area, but also for the whole country." Speaking to all those who had gathered together to work in harmony for these children—the future of Haiti—he closed with a simple message in Haitian Creole: *men anpil, chay pa lou*. Many hands lighten the load. 



Never lose courage. Never lose faith.
Nothing in this world is impossible
when you are determined.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Thank You, Master Cheng Yen

Clotaire Saint-Natus

Translated from the French by Clotaire & Michaëlle Saint-Natus

Master,

*I entered the ecstasy of your words, flashes of thoughts,
Triumph of virtue, lights of the mind, visions of purity.*

Light, light, light,

More light, always light.

And I kneeled at your hands of light.

*You entered the apex of the heart into the mystery of poetry,
As one enters life.*

And you climbed vertically, in high levitation,

As I never cease to glorify God

Who made me into flesh and blood,

And who brings me wine and bread in the hymns of the pure air.

You are wise, oh Master,

Your heart is a source of goodness in the fresh morning.

It sings melodies of happiness,

Songs we are to learn, love, and spread.

*So thank you, Master, for showing us the life of the soul
On the scale of the infinite.*

*Thank you for allowing us to make new windows into your temple
Below the chimes, over there.*

Those windows will be accessible to the doves

And we shall see a flight of birds rising in the morning sun.

You and we stand at the edge of a new era, an era enhanced with your spirit of charity

Where your thoughts become flowers to harvest at dawn.

Oh Master Cheng Yen,

Resulting of forces of good,

Your infinite heart of goodness and mercy

Shines under the moon and dispels the darkness.

*Thank you, pilgrim, ascetic in the blazing time
That destroys and rebuilds.*

Thank you for giving a poet the colors of your dreams

So that the sun can rise over the sea,

So that the power of your ideas

Can fill us with good intentions, like a lily

Emerging each day refreshed by dew and absolution.



*Oh woman steeped in fruit blossoms,
Whose love for others soaks in happy contemplation,
You are now on the threshold of a day that does not end
For your endless good spirit overpowers all selfishness and despair.*

*Oh Master, heir of sun and light,
Continue on your lofty journey, flying in the pure and unsoiled air,
While my island yells and swells
And your positive thoughts water our soil.
While your palm trees whistle like a conch shell
In our ears at night when it is warm and calm.
Your heart beats like fluttering wings
And the more altitude we gain,
The closer we draw to all beings, all things.
Your contribution to the wellbeing of mankind
Flows and multiplies around us,
Bringing progress and peace to all and to me.*

*Thank you, Master, thank you, oh soul that probes the depths.
Thank you for allowing us to reside at the foot of your hills,
At the foot of your thoughts through the fountain of my pen,
Close to your aphorisms
Which help us correct our mistakes
Rather than praise our own egos.
A new reality and maturity have come to us through you.*

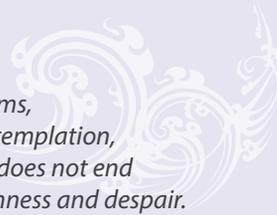
*Thank you for making us rise to new levels and heights.
Now the vocation of mankind is no other
Than the rise to ever-higher steps on the ladder of values
Which brings us from night to day in mornings of lily-white.*

*All the stars in the garden of the blue sky have gathered
And, in you, a woman was born from their light.
And I love, oh Master, that impulse of yours that looks to reach the firmament.
My thirst hangs on your pure visions
Leading us to Jerusalem
Where the sheep dream of eternal lily fields;
And there I see you dressed in petals,
And I come to place a tiara on your head
So that, woman and light, dew and mirror,
You may wear this special dress made of all the flowers that adorn the hills.
And now, the sun, your sun, our sun has arisen at the horizon.*

Haiti, February 2011

Clotaire Saint-Natus writes poetry in both French and Haitian Creole. He and his wife, Michaëlle Saint-Natus, have been friends of Tzu Chi since the 2010 earthquake.

Photo: Curtis Hsing



Restoring the Luster of the Pearl of the Antilles

Fay Chou | Translated by John Ueng



Haiti's trash problem is far from solved, but things are moving in the right direction. Photo: Fay Chou

On a summer afternoon in Haiti, the sun is hot and blinding. On the roadside of a major thoroughfare, a crude food stand sits under a tree a dozen steps from a bus stop.



Collecting recyclables is hard work, but it is a chance to make a living. Photo: Fay Chou

Silver-haired Genelia Sanon-Loulouse quietly watches every move of every person in sight. This section is her turf, where she makes her living. The moment someone finishes drinking from a plastic bottle, she walks over to collect it and place it into a large plastic bag. Nearby, she has safely stashed a dozen large bags full of empty plastic bottles.

Down the hill on the other side of the thoroughfare is a dried-up riverbed. Layers of discarded plastic bottles fill a small open area amid dusty shrubs and abandoned cars. Her small figure bent under the scorching sun with her bare feet buried calf-deep, Laurette Joassin rummages through the bottles. One after another, she tosses recyclables into a large plastic bag. When the bag is full, she ties it up tightly, hoists it over her head with some effort, then slowly walks up the hill back to the street.



Recycling for a living is backbreaking work, but it is still an opportunity to make a living: one which did not even exist before 2011.

When Tzu Chi volunteers visited Haiti in 2008, a decade after their first relief trip, they described the scene in the streets: “The dusty dirt roads are now paved in asphalt, but unchanged still are the women balancing things on top of their heads, the buses overfilled with passengers, and the food stands lining the streets. But new are the burnt-out tires used to fuel the rage during riots, the piles of garbage filling the ditches that attract foraging pigs and goats, and the occasional stench and thick smoke from the garbage piles

that spontaneously combust. All along the streets are makeshift sheet metal dwellings that only intensify the heat and cold of the seasons. Smoke from people cooking on the streets combined with billowing dust and exhaust fumes from the vehicles is just overwhelming. Not only that, there are bullet holes on walls everywhere, left from the violence during civil unrest. Poverty, filth, and disorder are evident all over; there seems to be no sign of hope anywhere.”

After the earthquake in 2010, public services were completely paralyzed. Lacking basic health education, many families simply dumped their trash outside to keep the inside of their homes clean. With public trash collection halted for many months, the streets and streams of Port-au-Prince were polluted by mountains of garbage. When the trash became too excessive,

people simply set it ablaze, further polluting the air. With these serious sanitation issues were added to malnutrition and poor healthcare, outbreaks of disease were inevitable.

For many poor people in Haiti, charcoal is the main source of fuel for the home, and its use has led to massive amounts of trees being cut down. As the supply of trees steadily dwindled, people started cutting down ever-younger trees to make charcoal, so the pieces of charcoal sold on the streets of Port-au-Prince became thinner and thinner. The support posts used to hold up tents after the earthquake were also thin logs from young trees, since larger logs were nowhere to be found. These are clear indications of the country’s deforestation crisis.

Ever since the earthquake, Tzu Chi volunteers have unceasingly sought sustainable self-reliant solutions for people in Haiti. After extensive searching, Tzu Chi volunteer Patrick Chou came to the conclusion that moringa—a tree that thrives in hot tropical climates and possesses an extremely high nutritional content—could be the ideal solution. He has actively worked to promote the tree as a solution to Haiti’s problems of poverty, malnutrition, and deforestation by setting up moringa farms in Haiti and guiding many people to grow the tree in the hopes of making it an industrial crop. He has also actively promoted moringa leaves as a nutritional supplement and taught locals how to grind the leaves into powder.



Moringa offers an opportunity to ease poverty, malnutrition, and deforestation.

Photo: Neuwendal Admettre

In the wake of the cholera outbreak that began in late 2010, the Haitian government has turned its eye to environmental issues and begun to offer free courses to women on turning used candy wrappers and packing containers into handicrafts, which has the twofold benefit of reducing garbage and providing a trade to



*Wrappers are transformed into slippers and purses.
Photo: Austin Tsao*

the impoverished. Some Haitian entrepreneurs have also stepped forward to do their part in helping their country. Edouard Carrie of ECSSA is one such person.

Environmental Cleaning Solutions S.A. (ECSSA) was established in 2010. It is the first recycling company in Haiti and the largest collector of plastic recyclables. Its founder and CEO, twenty-six-year-old Edouard Carrie, was born and raised in Haiti and graduated from the University of Tampa in Florida. When Edouard visited the Philippines as a young child, he wondered why other countries were so clean when his own country of Haiti was so dirty and polluted. He vowed to one day clean up the environment in his country. He chose plastics as the main collection item for ECSSA because they release poisonous fumes when burnt and they never biodegrade. Plastic bottles are one of the most serious pollutants in Haiti, the culprits that clog up rivers and canals.

ECSSA provides free pick-up service for anyone with recyclables to sell, including businesses, schools, and hotels. When ECSSA began, the company only had one small pickup truck. But the volume of recyclables collected grew quickly, so now, only one and a half years later, the company has ten large trucks that cover a wide and growing area. Each day, the trucks make three or four roundtrips over dusty roads littered with potholes. If road conditions were better and the traffic not so jammed with pedestrians and other vehicles, they could likely make five or six trips.

ECSSA has set up collection stations all across Haiti. The collection station in Port-au-Prince alone sees more than four hundred people selling their recyclables each day. One of them is an old grandma who comes almost

every other week. One day, she brought in eleven huge sacks of recyclables. They sold for roughly sixty-four dollars, enough for an entire week of groceries for her family of four.

Currently, Haiti has seven to eight thousand people who rely on collecting recyclables for a living. Before recycling, many of them had no income at all. "An opportunity which never even existed is now available," explained Edouard. "People are beginning to see hope." Seeing it as his duty to take care of these people, Edouard said that even if ECSSA does not make money, he will never close down the company.

In Tzu Chi's recycling mission, funds earned from recycling go to help people in need. Thus the motto, "Turn trash into gold and gold into love." ECSSA has a similar slogan, "Convert Trash into Cash." ECSSA encourages people to collect discarded recyclables in exchange for cash to buy food and daily necessities. Posted on the wall of ECSSA's office is another slogan that shows ECSSA's greater mission, "Saving a nation through recycling." Edouard hopes that the recycling movement can eventually turn his beloved country of Haiti back into the "Pearl of the Antilles."

In the summer of 2013, three years after the earthquake, the streets of Port-au-Prince still look mostly the same as volunteers had described them in the summer of 2008. The streets are still full of women balancing things on top of their heads, buses overfilled with passengers, and food stands lining the streets. But what many women balance on their heads today are no longer articles of daily use, but rather cash-generating recyclables. Though the streets are still engulfed in clouds of dust and exhaust fumes from cars, and pigs and goats still forage through piles of garbage in the ditches, the plastic bottles are becoming ever fewer and the streets and ditches are beginning to look cleaner. 🌱



A person who litters discards a blessing; a person who picks up litter gains a blessing.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



White House Honors Tzu Chi for Sandy Relief

Tzu Chi Foundation

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation Executive Vice President Debra Boudreaux accepts the recognition on behalf of Tzu Chi. Photo provided by Greater Washington DC Regional Office

On April 24, 2013, the White House honored Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation as a Hurricane Sandy Champion of Change in an event recognizing individuals, businesses, and organizations directly involved in response and recovery efforts following Hurricane Sandy.

After the hurricane, more than four thousand Tzu Chi volunteers distributed hot meals, blankets, and emergency cash cards worth nearly ten million dollars to eighteen thousand households, helping more than sixty thousand people across New York and New Jersey. More recently, in April and May 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers have again helped disaster

survivors by providing cash cards to those affected by the fertilizer plant explosion and tornadoes in Texas and Oklahoma.

Tzu Chi came to the attention of the White House thanks to Dr. Jannah Scott, Deputy Director of the Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Homeland Security. Scott has visited Tzu Chi several times and has seen its medical service firsthand. After learning of the relief work which volunteers undertook after Hurricane Sandy, she proposed that the White House recognize Tzu Chi.

Champions of Change is an ongoing program, initiated in April 2011, that recognizes individuals, businesses, and organizations who are doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire their communities. Alongside Tzu Chi, sixteen others were recognized on April 24 for their innovative and compassionate actions to assist hurricane survivors in the aftermath of Sandy.

Six volunteers from New Jersey, New York, Washington, DC, and California represented Tzu Chi at the White House to share Dharma Master Cheng Yen's spirit of boundless compassion with the other Champions of Change honorees. Debra Boudreaux, Executive Vice President of Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, participated in the recognition ceremony on behalf of all Tzu Chi volunteers. "This relief operation was extremely difficult to carry out and was a test of our wisdom. From the start of Hurricane Sandy, people did not understand Tzu Chi. I took part in many activities and the work of the Foundation was not mentioned. Today we are here in the White House. It is the result of the unconditional love of Tzu Chi members around the world."

When asked about the recognition, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation CEO Han Huang said, "Tzu Chi volunteers in the U.S. want to express their sincere thanks to Master Cheng Yen. We will work harder to do what we should and spread goodness. If it's right, just do it!"

While the Champions of Change event was a significant recognition of Tzu Chi volunteers' service to Hurricane Sandy survivors, it was



Tzu Chi Northeast Regional Director George Chang introduces Tzu Chi to the New York State Senate. Photo: Peter Lin

not the only such recognition Tzu Chi received. One day earlier, on April 23, Tzu Chi volunteers were also invited to Albany, New York, so that Northeast Regional Director George Chang could introduce Tzu Chi to the New York State Senate. Afterwards, volunteers displayed "Great Love in Action—Tzu Chi Foundation Sandy Relief Photo Journal," an exhibition of photographs taken during Hurricane Sandy disaster relief, and were recognized by New York State Senator Rubén Díaz with a Certificate of Merit acknowledging the love and care that Tzu Chi volunteers delivered to New York residents affected by Hurricane Sandy.

The storm has passed, but wounds still run deep for many victims. Tzu Chi volunteers will continue to serve communities across New York and New Jersey to help those in need and inspire recipients to pay forward the love that they receive. 🌱

For more on Tzu Chi's Hurricane Sandy relief effort, please see Issue 36 (Summer 2013).



Visitors explore the Tzu Chi photo exhibition at the New York State Senate. Photo: Peter Lin

An Open Letter to Dharma Master Cheng Yen



John Reyes

From the moment I left the New York City Chinatown Tzu Chi office where I received assistance during a Tzu Chi Foundation distribution, I knew I was experiencing an epiphany of what unconditional love during an act of charity truly meant. As a result, a few days later I volunteered to be part of Tzu Chi Foundation's mission of service to those in need.

Lately, I have been overwhelmed by wave after wave of an abundance of happiness and fulfillment by helping others in need as a new Tzu Chi volunteer.

Exposure to such wonderful people as Vict, George, Austin, Jenny, Teacher Lu, Amy, Anny, and Joanne, just to name a few of the Tzu Chi Foundation staff and volunteers, has infused me with hope.

These emissaries of your love, Master Cheng Yen, have helped me navigate through all the adverse effects Hurricane Sandy has had on me. Astonishingly, they have imparted this assistance to me by way of example. The way they help those in great need of help has inspired me even more. Their outreach is teeming with true compassion, respect, and love, and has made an indelible mark on my soul.

What you have created almost half a century ago has left an exemplary footprint worldwide on how to administer charity and service. It has become abundantly clear to



With love, pain can be turned into strength.
Photo: Peter Chu

many professional charities that the Tzu Chi Foundation's methods, coalesced with your volunteers' ability to give such caring service, are the blueprint for assisting victims of disasters anywhere in the world.

In my community in Brooklyn, New York, and in many, many neighborhoods throughout New York City ravaged by Sandy, victims are working together in a tumultuous struggle to rebuild. In no small part due to Tzu Chi, acquaintances have become friends, friends have become brothers and sisters, and unfamiliar neighbors have become each other's keepers.

The non-esoteric approach of Tzu Chi's message of love, compassion, empathy, and respect has had a definite effect. Interlaced with true love, Tzu Chi's genuine concern for those needing help has inspired local residents to build a better neighborhood.

Where bigotry, bias, apathy, and selfishness once ruled, now the "seeds" of comradeship, loyalty, sharing, love, and respect for our fellow man have been planted and are starting to flourish.

Some miracles that I have read about happen in a time frame of minutes or hours. The miracle you have created through God's will has taken decades, but is a miracle nonetheless. It is what this world needs in order to survive the next century, if not the next few decades. 🌱



Photo: Peter Lin

TZU CHI **Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation**
www.us.tzuchi.org **佛教慈濟基金會**
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Tzu Chi Named NVOAD Member of the Year

Tzu Chi Foundation | Photos: Norman Yang



On May 14, 2013, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation was named “Member of the Year” at the 21st Annual National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) Conference in Portland, Oregon. Tzu Chi volunteers were recognized “for their unfailing devotion to [the] principles of charity, compassion, and service.”

NVOAD is a national network of organizations that provide disaster relief in the United States. Its more than one hundred member organizations represent the best of American volunteer organizations. Tzu Chi, which officially became a member in October 2006, is the only Buddhist organization in the network.

The Member of the Year Award is given to one organization each year. In 2013, Tzu Chi was nominated by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In the nomination, FEMA pointed out that in their disaster relief efforts in 2012, Tzu Chi inspired a culture of gratitude, respect, and love in both relief efforts and good deeds. Tzu Chi volunteers also promoted environmental protection to disaster survivors as a way to care for Earth and their own communities.

On May 14, the award ceremony was held during the NVOAD Conference in Portland, Oregon. As the emcee announced Tzu Chi as the recipient of the award, a photograph of Master Cheng Yen was shown on the screen, followed by pictures showing ten thousand people participating in the Buddha Bathing Ceremony at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei and the heartwarming scene of Tzu Chi volunteers serving hot meals after Hurricane Sandy. These images moved the 450-plus disaster relief organization representatives in attendance, who then showed their support and admiration for Tzu Chi.

NVOAD plays an important role in connecting the federal government, nonprofit agencies, religious organizations, companies, and academia, and has a significant impact on establishing and promoting education for disaster response planning. In accepting the award on behalf of all Tzu Chi volunteers, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation Executive Vice President Debra Boudreaux thanked Dharma Master Cheng Yen for her guidance and the other member organizations of NVOAD for providing “the opportunity for us to learn.” 🌱



US TZU CHI 360°

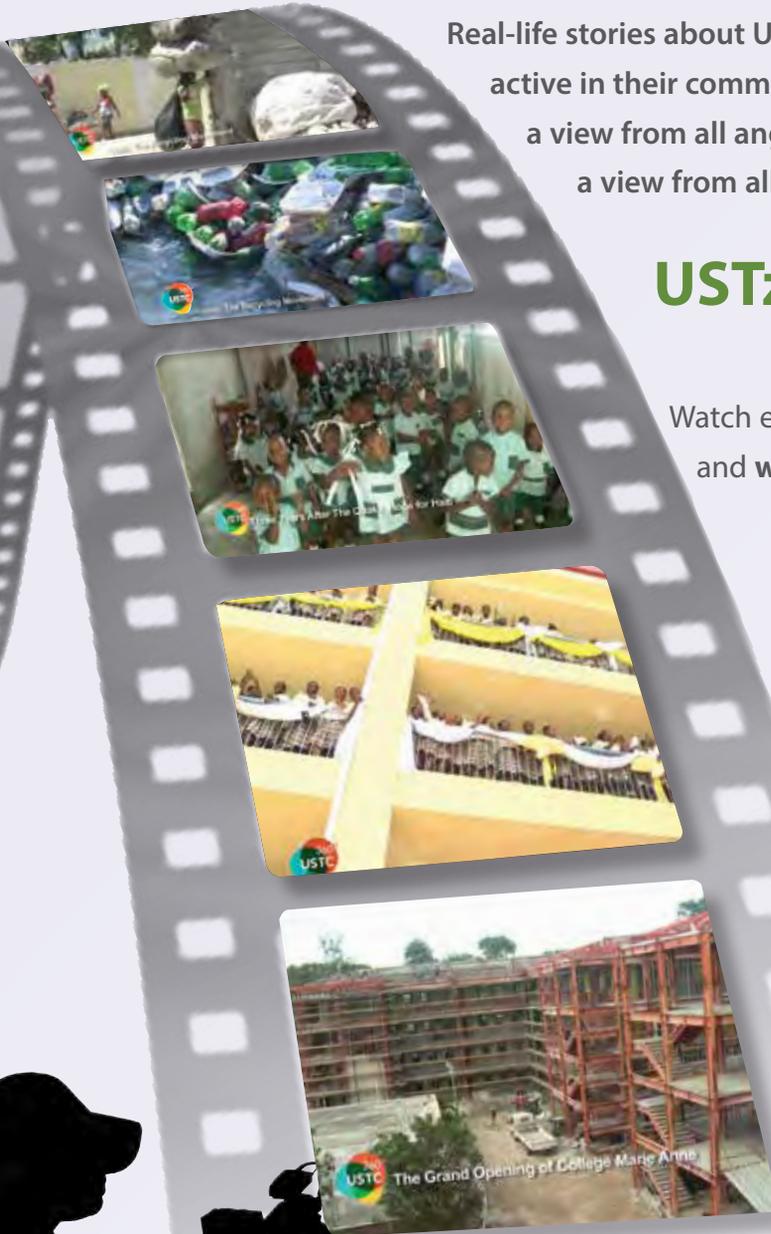
New Episodes Every Sunday

Real-life stories about US Tzu Chi volunteers
active in their communities and around the world:
a view from all angles,
a view from all perspectives:

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and www.youtube.com/user/ustc360.

Winner of the WOO Films
2013 "Inspiration Award"
for the short film
"Great Love in Action:
Sandy's Disaster Relief"





▲ The chaos of Syria's continuing civil war has propelled a massive influx of refugees into neighboring Jordan. On February 13, 2013, Tzu Chi Jordan volunteers delivered compassionate care and comfort to refugees who suffered war injuries. Photo: Qihua Chen



On April 1, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers visited the Cornerstone Day Centre in Manchester, England, to care for the physical and emotional wellbeing of local homeless and vulnerable adults. Volunteers served hot meals, provided haircuts, and offered health consultations. Tzu Chi Collegiate Youth volunteers led activities to offer cheer and encouragement. Photo: Zhenxiang Tan

► In early January, a series of floods and mudslides triggered by torrential rains displaced thousands in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. On March 3, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers distributed basic necessities in the hard-hit Xerém neighborhood to offer warm support to affected residents. Photo: Chunfei Lin



► On February 3, 2013, a Tzu Chi Great Love Village was opened in Medan, Indonesia, to replace many buildings destroyed in a fire one year earlier. Photo: Amir Tan





On April 26, 2013, Tzu Chi and Lo vuole il Cuore—the Vatican's charity foundation—met to exchange ideas and sign an agreement to work together to help the needy. Here, Tzu Chi Executive Director of Global Volunteers Stephen Huang speaks with Lo vuole il Cuore founder Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio. Photo: Mingzhu Wang



In the Netherlands, the town of Capelle aan den IJssel held a flea market to celebrate Queen's Day on April 30, 2013. Tzu Chi volunteers set up a booth in the town square where they promoted Tzu Chi's charity work and sold secondhand goods to raise funds for earthquake relief in Sichuan, China. Here, young volunteer Yueyi Zhou plays his violin to raise funds for the relief effort. Photo: Shuping Zheng



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Paraguay held an opening ceremony for new classrooms in Karanda'y village, outside Ciudad del Este, on April 14, 2013. Volunteers even took the time to paint each chair by hand. Photo: Zhenguang Cai



▲ On April 28, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers in Thailand organized a medical outreach to serve residents of Ko Koet, Ayutthaya. Alongside medical relief, volunteers delivered sincere warm care. Photo: Ruilian Sang

▶ Responding to a call for support by students of McMath Secondary School, Tzu Chi Canada volunteers and Richmond Tzu Chi Academy parents donated used clothing that was collected and sorted on March 9, 2013. Including clothing and daily necessities, nearly thirty boxes of goods were donated to aid over one thousand homeless youths at the Covenant House shelter in Vancouver.
Photo: Yarong Huang



▶ On April 17, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers conducted home visits in Maseru, Lesotho, to deliver aid supplies and tender loving kindness to care recipients. Here, volunteer Maria Maqutu patiently explains to a care recipient how to use a medical mask.
Photo: Meijuan Chen



▲ On February 23, 2013, Counties Manukau Police hosted the Everyday Heroes event in Auckland, New Zealand, to celebrate organizations that routinely contribute to public service. Tzu Chi volunteers were invited to promote Tzu Chi's humanistic culture and environmental initiatives, including the eco-friendly products of Da Ai Technology. Photo: Jianzhong Li



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Selangor, Malaysia, began work on the annual New Shoots Scholarship program. From March 20 through April 30, 2013, volunteers conducted home visits to gain a thorough understanding of each applicant's living conditions and needs. Photo: Pingfu Tan



Dharma as Water: Great Repentance

Deeply concerned about the state of our world today—a world facing the crises of climate change, environmental degradation, instability and unrest, and eroding of moral values—Dharma Master Cheng Yen has appealed to her followers to engage in the practice of repentance.

Though the collective problems of today's world seem beyond the control of ordinary individuals, the Master tells us that each of us in fact contributes to the problem in many different ways; that is why each of us needs to return to his or her own heart and mind and deeply reflect.

Making Vows after Repenting: Part VI of the Repentance Series

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks

Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team

Previously, we spoke of repenting for our many unwholesome thoughts and afflictions. But repentance is not only about recognizing our errors and being sorry for them. It is also about beginning anew and doing things differently. This change begins with our heart, beginning with our five spiritual illnesses. So, after repenting, we should make new vows and aspirations:

Overcoming Desire

Desire is like a sea that can drown us.
We vow to tame our desire and greed,
being mindful when they arise
in our heart and mind
and taking care not to let them grow.
We vow to overcome our stinginess
by nurturing a heart of love for others
and helping people in need.

Dissolving Anger

The anger and hatred in us
fill our heart with tinder.
With the slightest spark,
a fire will burn wildly in our heart.
When something displeases us,
we unleash our anger on people.
Blinded by our anger,
we are full of ignorance and wrong thinking,
and we burn down all our merits
and all the good that we have done.
We vow to work on our temper
so there is no tinder left in our heart.

Dispelling Ignorance

Ignorance is like a thick cloud
that darkens the sky,
blocking the bright light of our inner wisdom.
We vow to clear away our ignorance and delusion
to recover our Buddha nature
by learning the Buddha's teachings
and carrying them out in our daily lives.
Listening often to the teachings
and immersing ourselves in the Dharma,
we are reminded to watch out for wrongs

and become more aware of ourselves.
We vow to furthermore apply the teachings
by helping people in suffering,
so we can learn about suffering personally
and connect the Dharma to our experience.
Realizing how blessed we are,
and with deep compassion
for people in suffering,
we vow not only to listen to the Dharma,
but to live it out in all our actions.

Eliminating Arrogance

We have so much pride and arrogance in us.
When we know more than others,
we feel better and above them.
With our inflated ego, we become
so big and cumbersome that we are an eyesore.
We vow to cultivate humility
by practicing the precepts of right conduct,
being tolerant towards others,
and respecting others.
We vow to be humble and "shrink" ourselves.
Then we can become so small
that we can even enter others' hearts
and reside there.
This is the way of a Bodhisattva.

Eradicating Doubt

In our heart, there is doubt
and it is deeply rooted.
Because of this,
we cannot believe in true principles
and cannot awaken.
We vow to believe in the correct Dharma,
understand the law of karma,

and develop a true, non-misguided faith so we can learn the Buddha's teachings and awaken to truths of life.

Transcending Jealousy

Jealousy makes our heart small.
Seeing others' success or talent,
we are envious
and cannot feel happy for people.
Learning the Bodhisattva way,
we vow to open our heart wide
to embrace others with a pure heart,
praising their success and good qualities.
Instead of being envious,
we vow to learn from them
and emulate their good
so we may become better people ourselves.

Eschewing Wrong Views

Wrong views are like a net that traps us,
making it difficult for us to pull away from
unwholesome patterns of behavior.
Having given rise to a correct thought,
we vow to hold onto it firmly
and keep our mind from
falling once again into wrong views.
We vow to practice
by putting our good thoughts in action,
keeping ourselves on the path of doing good,
and developing a heart of
loving-kindness, compassion,
joy, and equanimity,
so that misguided notions
will have no opportunity
to enter our mind and influence us.

Doing Good

Realizing how impermanent life is,
we vow not to get caught up in petty things
such as jealousy and unhappiness with others.
We vow to focus our precious time and energies

on doing good for others
and cultivating our heart and mind,
seizing the opportunities before us
to create something good for others.

Practicing the Thirty-seven Aids to Awakening¹

Aspiring to the Buddha's awakening,
we vow to diligently practice
the Thirty-seven Aids to Awakening
which are the foundation for Buddhist practice.
Practicing these thirty-seven
methods of cultivation,
we can purify our heart and mind,
and remain untainted by
unwholesome influences in the external world.
We vow to mindfully practice
the Thirty-seven Aids to Awakening,
always keeping to the right path,
with our hearts on the Dharma.

Cultivating Compassion and the Bodhi-mind

Knowing that many people in this world
are living in suffering,
we vow to bring forth our compassion
to help relieve people's suffering,
be their suffering from disasters,
war, poverty, or illness,
or from inner pain and unhappiness.
We vow to cultivate wisdom
and develop the bodhi-mind
(the awakened mind)
so that we may be better able to
help all living beings.
Every day, we will hold these vows
in our heart. 🌱

¹The four subjects of reflection, four proper lines of exertion, four steps towards transcendent powers, five roots, five strengths, seven elements to awakening, and the noble eightfold path.

Once Caught, Learning to Release

Chunshan Chen | Translated by Mei-li Hamilton

After Dharma Master Cheng Yen began her series of teachings on the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance text in March 2011, volunteers all over the world gathered in groups on a weekly basis to discuss the teachings and share their own stories in an effort to better understand the true meaning of the teachings and how they can be applied in our daily lives.

In Northern California, a fishing reference in the text led Yueyun Wang to share her own story one day. She told a story from more than fifty years ago, because she understood that we should repent for every mistake, including the unintentional ones, and that there is no statute of limitations on karma.

When Wang was young, her father and brothers had to fish every day all year round just to feed the family. Even though Wang was little, she still needed to help them. She said, "My father and my older brothers used fishing nets to block the river. Then they would tighten the nets to prevent fish from escaping, and they would have me move all the fish from the net to a big bucket." She regrets that she helped kill countless fish. Fortunately, she was too young to catch every fish, so some escaped with their lives.

Her father and brothers had to cultivate nearly seventeen acres of farmland, so they always started before dawn and returned after dark. She remembers that her brothers would



Yueyun Wang shares her story with other Tzu Chi volunteers. Photo: Ping Yao Lee

spray buckets of pesticides over the fields as they walked in their bare feet. Both of her brothers died of liver cancer at a young age, perhaps because they had inadequate protection from the pesticides.

Out of deep concern for her followers, Dharma Master Cheng Yen began teaching Water Repentance in 2011 to give people the chance to rid themselves of bad karma from the past and gain good karma for the future. Wang regrets that her father and

brothers did not have the opportunity to hear the Master's lessons because they left the world too soon, but she took advantage of the opportunity by making a sincere vow to become a vegetarian and help protect all life in the hopes that her good works may also help her deceased family members.

Losing family members one after the other in a short period of time is one of the most painful things that can happen in life. Yueyun Wang's husband was an orthopedic doctor at Mackay Memorial Hospital in Taipei. One day in 1985, he went to the hospital's Tamshui Branch to visit patients. Just as he was about to arrive at the hospital, he was hit by a fourteen-year-old boy who was riding a motorcycle too fast. Despite a month of intensive treatment, he ultimately died from his injuries.

The boy who hit Wang's husband had grown up in abject poverty; his parents were

both deaf and mute. Once Wang learned about this family's situation, she could not ask for compensation. Although it would be twenty-seven years before she would fully understand the concept of karma—that this life's script was written by our behavior in previous lives—she immediately forgave the boy. Now that she has studied Water Repentance, she understands that forgiveness is how we can release ourselves when we become caught in our anger, just like releasing a fish caught in a net.

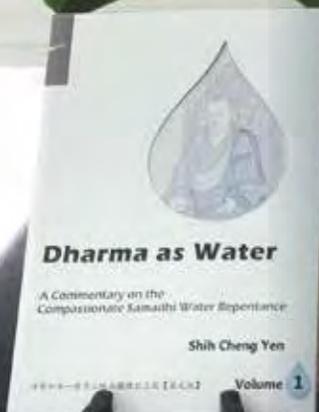
Years later, Wang decided to move to the United States, so she gave up her position as a professor and worked at assembling computer circuit boards in a factory for over a decade. One day, a friend took her to Tzu Chi's office in

San Jose, where she borrowed a set of cassette tapes of Master Cheng Yen's teachings.

"After listening to the stories told on the cassettes, I finally understood that I am more fortunate than many people. I realized that the pain I endured in the past led to the rich life I enjoy today. Finally, I understood why Master tells us to understand hardships as supplements for our life."

Wang had never understood before that this life's misfortunes arise from the sins of previous lives. But once she studied the Water Repentance, she learned to forgive, put aside her troubles, and remain more balanced. She is grateful to Tzu Chi for helping her write a better script for her next life.

Dharma as Water (Vol. 1)



While this is the final installment of "Dharma as Water: Great Repentance," the first volume of Dharma Master Cheng Yen's full commentary on the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance is now available from Jing Si Publications. For more information, please visit jingsi.us.tzuchi.org or your local Jing Si Books & Café location (pp. 64-66).

Repent the Obstruction of Affliction: Correct the Past and Cultivate the Future

懺 悔 煩 惱 障： 改 往 並 修 來
chàn huǐ fán nǎo zhàng: gǎi wǎng bìng xiū lái

Lyrics: Sixi Wang 作詞：王思熙

Music: Shouquan Li 作曲：李壽全

Arrangement: Zhiyuan Chen 編曲：陳志遠

Translated into English by the Dharma as Water Editorial Team

Changing my mind, I change my life

改 往 修 來 存 一 念
gǎi wǎng xiū lái cún yí niàn

I vow to rid myself of greed and desires

願 竭 貪 婪 欲 望 水
yuàn jié tān lán yù wàng shuǐ

I vow to eliminate anger and impatience

願 消 瞋 恚 躁 動 火
yuàn xiāo chēn huì zào dòng huǒ

I vow to destroy ignorance and delusions

願 破 愚 癡 諸 迷 闇
yuàn pò yú chī zhū mí àn

I vow to break with pride and arrogance

願 折 貢 高 驕 慢 幢
yuàn shé gòng gāo jiāo màn chuáng

Today I repent and make these vows

我 今 懺 悔 並 發 願
wǒ jīn chàn huǐ bìng fā yuàn

And sow seeds of goodness to eliminate stinginess

善 布 種 子 去 慳 貪
shàn bù zhǒng zǐ qù qiān tān

And nourish the world with love

愛 潤 大 地 灑 人 間
ài rùn dà dì sǎ rén jiān

Always listen to Right Dharma, and do good deeds

多 聞 正 法 行 眾 善
duō wén zhèng fǎ xíng zhòng shàn

And uphold precepts, forbear, and be humble

持 戒 忍 辱 恭 自 謙
chí jiè rěn rǔ gōng zì qiān

A musical interpretation of the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance was composed in order to express its teachings through music, sign language, and theatrical performance. The music video for this song is #11 in the "Water Repentance Series" section of www.us.tzuchi.org.

I vow to uproot my doubt and disbelief

願 拔 猜 疑 不 信 根
yuàn bá cāi yí bú xìn gēn

I vow to remove evil views and knowledge

願 斷 邪 知 邪 見 網
yuàn duàn xié zhī xié jiàn wǎng

I vow to eliminate narrow-mindedness and jealousy

願 除 量 小 嫉 妒 心
yuàn chú liàng xiǎo jí dù xīn

I vow to understand that life is impermanent

願 了 人 生 本 無 常
yuàn liǎo rén shēng běn wú cháng

I vow to cultivate the 37 Practices of Enlightenment

願 耕 三 十 七 品 田
yuàn gēng sān shí qī pǐn tián

I vow to develop compassion and Bodhicitta

願 發 慈 悲 菩 提 心
yuàn fā cí bēi pú tí xīn

And have faith in the Law of Cause and Effect

堅 信 因 果 不 欺 人
jiān xìn yīn guǒ bù qī rén

Cultivate loving-kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity

勤 修 慈 悲 喜 捨 心
qín xiū cí bēi xǐ shě xīn

To align my mind with sages to sow good seeds

見 賢 思 齊 種 善 因
jiàn xián sī qí zhòng shàn yīn

Then bravely and diligently live each second

勇 猛 精 進 分 秒 間
yǒng měng jīng jìn fēn miǎo jiān

And purify my mind and practice Right Mindfulness

自 淨 其 意 修 正 念
zì jìng qí yì xiū zhèng niàn

And perfect compassion and wisdom to help all beings

成 就 悲 智 濟 蒼 生
chéng jiù bēi zhì jì cāng shēng

New Books by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Several new books of Dharma Master Cheng Yen's teachings are now available in English from Jing Si Publications.

From Austerity to Prosperity

The Power of the Heart

Life Economics

Dharma as Water (Volume 1)

More titles coming soon

Find these and more at jingsi.us.tzuchi.org or your local **Jing Si Books & Café** location (pp. 64-66).





Tzu Chi Americas in Action



◀ Hurricane Sandy caused serious damage to Keansburg, New Jersey, and its fire department. On May 12, 2013, Tzu Chi Mid-Atlantic Region donated thirty-four pairs of fireproof gloves, a gas detector, two sets of oxygen equipment, and two sets of heat-sensing video cameras to help replace what had been lost. Photo: Renjie Li



▲ On March 16, 2013, elementary school students in Northern California helped sort recyclables at Super Micro Computer, Inc., in San Jose, California. These young volunteers happily contributed their time for the environment. Photo: Zhizhen Jiang



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers visited Widows Home of Dayton, Ohio, on February 23, 2013, to share their warm company and spend an enjoyable afternoon together with the elderly residents. Photo: Yunzhong Lin



After more than a dozen tornadoes swept through Texas on May 15, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers distributed cash cards and eco-friendly blankets in hard-hit Granbury on the morning of May 18. After tornadoes struck Oklahoma a couple days later, volunteers immediately coordinated with disaster relief organizations in Oklahoma to conduct relief distributions there as well. Photo provided by Tzu Chi Central Region

On May 11, 2013, over three thousand people participated in the Buddha Bathing Ceremony at Tzu Chi USA Headquarters in San Dimas, California, to celebrate Buddha Day, Mother's Day, and Global Tzu Chi Day. Tzu Chi offices across the country held similar celebrations to pay respect and show gratitude to the Buddha, parents, and all living beings. Photo: Qinghong Wang



On March 16 and 17, 2013, Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation held the first annual "Healthy Fresno" free clinic in Fresno, California, for the migrant farmers of California's Central Valley. Many low-income families and people without health insurance received free medical treatment and consultation in medical, dental, and vision care. Photo: Nancy Ku



On April 13, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers joined forces with the city to clean up Shoal Creek in the Allandale neighborhood of Austin, Texas. By removing garbage, the volunteers hoped to call attention to the importance of maintaining the health and beauty of the environment we all share. Photo: Shawn Su

In Indianapolis, Indiana, forty Tzu Chi volunteers helped pack weekend food bags for kindergartners at Gleaners Food Bank on April 13, 2013. They were joined by five young volunteers as well as thirteen Burmese students who are recipients of Tzu Chi's weekly tutoring assistance. Photo: Tienai Lin





Tzu Chi Americas in Action



◀ On March 9, 2013, Northern California Tzu Chi volunteers prepared and served hot meals in a homeless shelter in Sunnyvale, California, to warm hearts and fill stomachs.

Photo: Shaoping Huang



◀ On March 12, 2013, Tzu Chi volunteers held a book donation ceremony at the University Medical Center of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas. Copies of Master Cheng Yen's *Jing Si Aphorisms* were donated in the hope that patients may find guidance through her words of wisdom.

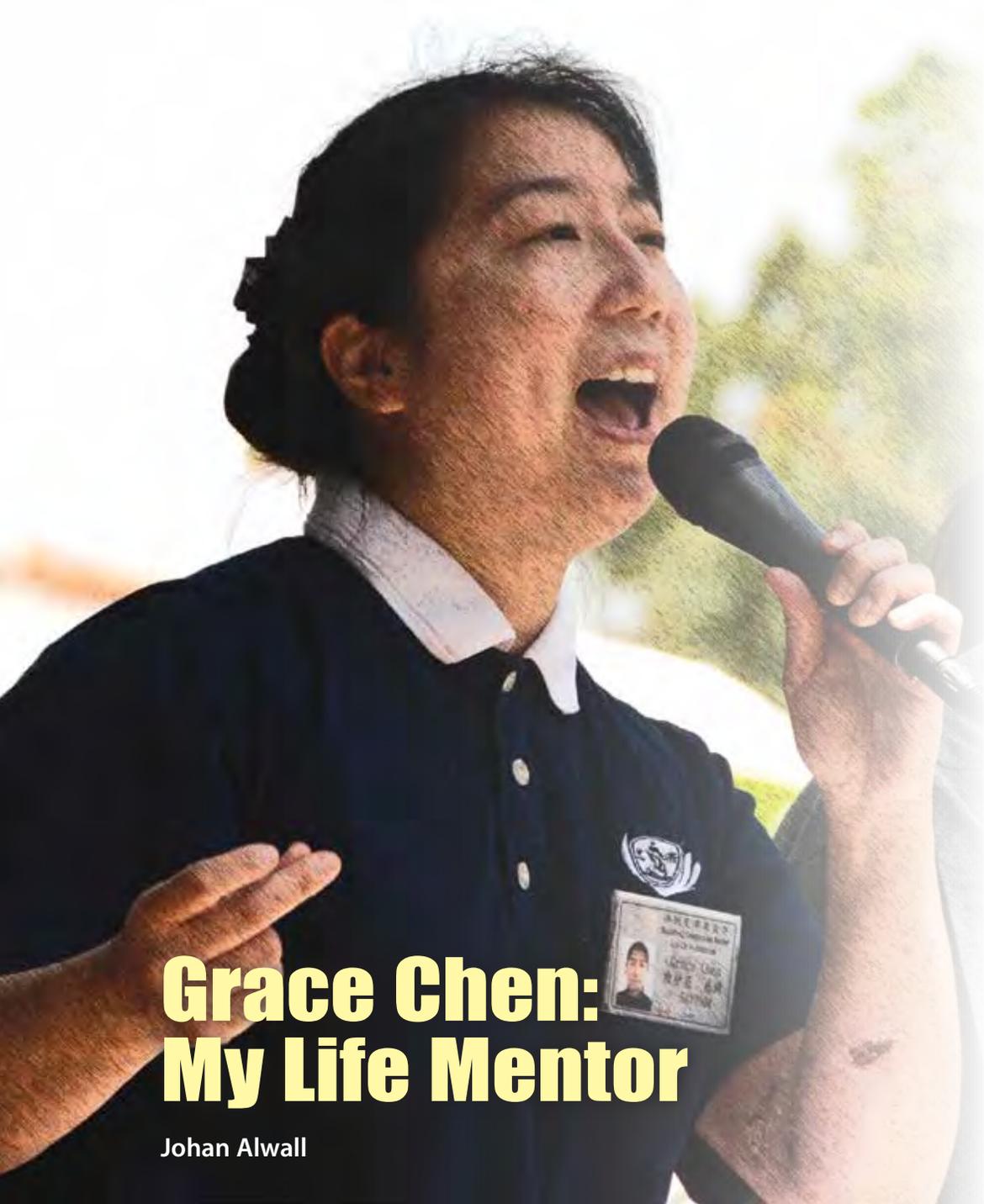
Photo: Audrey Cheng



▲ A fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas, on the evening of April 17, 2013, killed fifteen people, wounded more than 160, and destroyed dozens of homes. Tzu Chi volunteers conducted relief distributions of cash cards and eco-friendly blankets from April 20 to 22, delivering warm care and practical assistance to those affected. Photo provided by Tzu Chi Central Region



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Atlanta, Georgia, visited the residents of the Grace Healthcare nursing home on March 17, 2013, and entertained them with traditional Chinese music. Photo: Sue Lin



Grace Chen: My Life Mentor

Johan Alwall

The first time I met Grace, I was immediately blown away. She had an energy and an openness that was truly special and she talked to me as if we had known each other forever. Our hearts connected right away.

We had a wonderful time together that first year, playing music, traveling, meeting with friends, and going to plenty of restaurants together for delicious food. Grace introduced me to vegetarian food, and I realized that meat

is not necessary to survive or enjoy life. We went to concerts at the Hollywood Bowl, musicals in New York, and shows in Las Vegas. We traveled to China, Japan, and Sweden.

Grace loved life, and she loved everything that is good in life: travel, music, food (vegetarian of course). Even more, she loved her family and friends. With her open personality, I believe that every person who ever met her, no matter how briefly, felt like she was a true and close friend.

But above all, Grace loved helping people.

Soon after we first met each other, Grace started telling me about the charity organization she was involved with: Tzu Chi. I was suspicious at first. In Sweden, “charity” has a negative ring to it; it is seen as something that rich people do to soothe their conscience and that often does more harm than good by turning people into passive recipients instead of inspiring them to do something for themselves. But Grace patiently explained to me that Tzu Chi was different and that volunteers always followed up with recipients and encouraged them to become self-reliant.

Before long, Grace brought me along on a nursing home visit with the Tzu Chi choir she had started. After we sang for the residents, Grace and the others started chatting with them, holding their hands, hugging them as if she were their own grandchild. You could see how happy all the grandmas and grandpas were to have us there, and I began to see the impact that Tzu Chi could have on people: not only recipients, but volunteers as well.

Apart from leading the choir, Grace was in charge of translating articles for Tzu Chi’s website. She had assembled a number of volunteers to translate and edit articles. She did all the final editing herself and always provided useful feedback to the translators and editors. She also served as host for numerous Tzu Chi events and participated in disaster relief distributions whenever she had a chance. It was only much later that I realized that there was a common denominator to these various projects: Grace always aimed to inspire kindness and goodness in others by using different means to suit different people.

In February 2009, Grace discovered a small lump under her ear. After a few doctor’s visits, it was found to be parotid gland cancer, so she



underwent several surgeries and radiation in Hualien.

Throughout treatment, Grace was full of optimism. She saw cancer as an opportunity to learn more about life and suffering, a chance to acquire experiences to share with others who were going through difficulties. She was grateful that her tumor was slow-growing and not aggressive and that she was treated by such skilled surgeons.

Even as Grace went through radiation therapy, she never sat still. As she rested at home, she started sending updates about Tzu Chi’s Typhoon Morakot relief efforts to CNN iReport so that people around the world would know what was happening. It was successful—CNN broadcast several of her reports and even interviewed her over the phone about Tzu Chi.

Around the same time, Grace started a monthly e-newsletter, which now has almost fifteen thousand subscribers. She compiled all



Grace participates in a relief visit to Mexico in 2006. Photo: Joemei Tung



*Grace and Johan after chemotherapy in July 2011.
Photo provided by Johan Alwall*

the contents herself and wrote an editorial in every issue to inspire and illuminate readers.

Even while working to benefit suffering people, Grace did not neglect to guide me along my Tzu Chi path. When a major earthquake hit Haiti in January 2010, she persuaded me to join the relief team so that I could offer my French language skills. That trip was truly a life-changing experience for me: I witnessed suffering at a scale far beyond what I had ever seen before, but I also saw the incredible strength and perseverance of the people. I learned that it is possible for a human being to actually make a difference and that when we pool together the contributions of many, great things can be accomplished.

In fall 2010, after Grace underwent a fourth surgery to remove a recurrence of the malignant cancer, we finally got the go-ahead to move back to the States. Once we were back, Grace's efforts for Tzu Chi doubled: she intensified contacts with the press and other organizations, organized outreach activities and gave lectures about Tzu Chi, initiated The Power of 5 campaign, arranged the first English-language Tzu Chi volunteer training in Los Angeles, and started a mentor program to help non-Chinese-speaking volunteers feel more at home in Tzu Chi.

In June 2011, I was on my third relief trip to Haiti when I got a message from Los Angeles:

Grace was in the hospital with leukemia. I flew home as quickly as I could.

When I got to the hospital, Grace had already started chemotherapy, but I was amazed to see that she was still her usual self: a bit more tired, but as optimistic, content, and curious as always. She told me that she was grateful for the chance to learn about chemotherapy, which she had not needed for the previous cancer. I felt that she had already learned enough, that she deserved a break, but Grace's body had other plans, and she accepted it all without complaint. When her hair started falling out in piles all over the hospital floor, she joked that she was glad she did not care about her looks since she would look ugly for quite a while. She was wrong: even without hair, she was always beautiful.

During this time, we had amazing support from Grace's parents, who flew all the way from Taipei to spend the next several months taking care of her, and her many friends in the area. One of her friends started a Facebook group called "Support Grace for Quick Recovery" and over six hundred people joined immediately. I would help Grace post updates so that she could share her thoughts, hopes, and feelings, and her friends posted hundreds of encouraging words, pictures, jokes, and "likes." It was only then that I realized just how many people Grace had touched during her life. Some of her friends even set up a website to promote bone marrow donation so that they could help her find a match while also raising awareness to help others in need of bone marrow transplants.

Grace's body reacted well to the treatment. After the first round of chemo, it seemed that the leukemia was already under control. The process was not without discomfort—mouth sores, fatigue, nausea, dizziness—but she never complained, and she was always optimistic.

After completing two rounds of chemo in California, Grace decided to go to Hualien for her bone marrow transplant so that she could



Even after chemotherapy, Grace continued to express her love of music. Provided by Johan Alwall

be close to her family and Master Cheng Yen. Her case was very special—it is extremely unusual for someone to have two unrelated types of cancer in such a short period of time—so she also wanted to provide a learning experience for Tzu Chi's doctors.

Since bone marrow transplant patients must have their immune systems completely wiped out for their new bone marrow to take root, they must stay in a special ward in an extremely clean environment where only nurses and doctors can enter and only after donning a full set of protective gear, including disinfected clothes, isolation gowns, face masks, gloves, caps, and foot covers. It is not usually possible for family members to accompany patients in isolation, but I was allowed to stay with her as a test case. I slept on a foldable bed next to hers, wearing the full set of protective equipment. Spending five minutes to take off and put on the gear each time I needed to use the bathroom or have a bite to eat was a nuisance, but it was a small price to pay to be there with Grace.

Again, the power of Grace's spirit and amazing strength of her body triumphed: the bone marrow transplant succeeded and the new stem cells found their way to the bone marrow to start producing new blood cells.

The first year after the transplant is crucial for the new immune system to build up a strong defense for the body, so during this time, Grace had to rest a lot and could not be near crowded places. Yet, despite discomfort and all the problems that accompany the transplant, she continued to do whatever volunteer work she could manage, especially translating and editing.

In early November 2012, our worst fears were realized when Grace's leukemia recurred. She immediately received treatment in the hospital, her doctors got the number of leukemia cells in her blood back under control, and everything seemed to be improving. One day during her hospital stay, she even received a phone call in the hospital from a Tzu Chi volunteer who was helping a young man struggling with depression. Grace chatted with the young man for a long time. She told him about her own situation, counseled him, and reminded him how lucky he was to have a strong and healthy body that allowed him to go out and help people. That was the last time I saw Grace truly happy. She was doing what she loved most: helping a person in need.

A few days later, Grace came down with a fever. She started coughing and had difficulty breathing. While her immune system was weakened by the leukemia treatment, her lungs had become infected. Assisted by doctors and nurses, Grace's body fought a heroic battle for nearly four months, but it was not enough. On the morning of March 30, 2013, Grace left us.

I was only given five short years to spend with Grace, but I will always be grateful for the time we had together. I am grateful for everything she did for so many people, grateful that she showed me a life that I would never have discovered without her, and grateful for the opportunity to spend time with her, to love her, and to be loved by her. Grace's time on Earth was short, but her spirit will always live on in the hearts of all the people she touched and inspired. 🌿

For Grace Chen's sharing from just before the leukemia diagnosis, please see Issue 30 (Fall 2011).

We cannot control the length of our life, but we can strive to extend its depth and scope.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Making Good Connections Enables the Bodhisattva Path

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Compiled into English by the Dharma as Water Editorial Team

When we have a positive karmic connection with someone, every word they speak is Dharma.

When we have a negative karmic connection with them, every word they speak creates conflict.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

During the Buddha's time, there was a very poor woman who would turn and take another route whenever she saw the Buddha near. He was revered by everyone—kings, ministers, and elders—but this poor woman detested Him. So, many people thought this was odd. "The Buddha is the teacher of heavenly beings and humans," they said. "Why can't this woman be transformed by Him?" It was obvious to all that this woman did not like the Buddha.

"This woman does not have a positive karmic connection with me," the Buddha explained, "but she does have a positive karmic connection with Ananda."

Everyone was skeptical. "The woman will not even listen to the Buddha. Why would she listen to Ananda?"

So, the Buddha instructed Ananda to find the woman, befriend her, and then bring her back to Him.

"Will I really be able to do this?" Ananda was incredulous.

"All you need to do is find her, and she will naturally follow you," the Buddha said.

Ananda did not dare question the Buddha, so he reluctantly went to find her. He knew the path she took to beg for food each day, so he waited there for her. As soon as the woman saw him, she joyfully prostrated and asked Ananda to teach her the Dharma.

Ananda was astonished. "Why are you asking me for teachings?" he asked her. "Why do you not listen to the Buddha's teachings? It is clear that you have great faith."

"Every time I see the Buddha, I feel irritated and unhappy," the woman said. "I don't know why. But when I see you, I feel joy and want to follow you. Please teach me!"

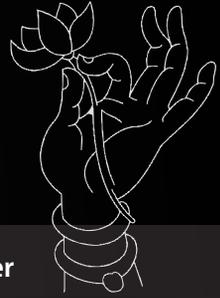
"I need to bring you to the Buddha," Ananda replied. "It is not right that you feel disdain toward Him. If you want me to help you find the Dharma, you must first repent to Him."

Now it was the woman who felt reluctant, but she nevertheless obeyed and followed Ananda to see the Buddha. When they arrived, she knelt and repented before the Buddha. People were amazed. They wanted to know what causes and conditions had brought this about.

The Buddha began to explain the karmic laws of cause and effect. "As are the causes and conditions, so are the results and retributions," said the Buddha, and He began to tell this story.

In a previous lifetime many eons ago, there were two spiritual practitioners studying with the same teacher. One day, the two went out to beg for alms on the street. They walked one in front of the other, and when they came upon a woman crying, the monk in front asked, "Why are you crying so?"

The woman confided in him and shared that her husband had died many years ago and her



Storytelling by the Master

son had recently been killed in an accident. "Now I am alone," she cried, "with no one to depend on." The woman's obvious grief showed her great despair.

"Ah, but this is the natural course of life—an endless cycle of birth, aging, illness, and death. All life is impermanent. There is no point in crying." With that, the first monk walked on.

Seeing the woman crying even harder, the second monk then asked, "Why do you now cry even more?"

When the woman repeated what the first monk told her, the second monk expressed deep sympathy. "Your story is heartbreaking," he said. "When a husband and wife marry, they hope to grow old together. Your husband died and, to make matters worse, your son also passed away. Your situation truly deserves sympathy. However, you have to be courageous and strong. Death is a natural part of existence. Our time with others may be long or short; these things are not in our control. Your time with your husband was short, and with your son even shorter. There is nothing anyone can do to change this now. Please take care of yourself."

The second monk took out his handkerchief and gave it to the woman. "Wipe your tears. In courage, there is hope."

The woman dried her eyes. "He understands," she thought. "He knows my pain and suffering." With that realization, she was filled with genuine

gratitude toward him.

At this point of the story, the Buddha told the assembly, "The woman suffering was this poor woman many lifetimes ago. The monk who walked in front was I, Sakyamuni Buddha. I was too rational and stern. The practitioner behind me was Ananda, who was more sensitive and empathetic."

The Buddha's current inability to connect with this woman was caused by a seed of indifference planted in an earlier lifetime. Ananda, on the other hand, had planted seeds of understanding and affection. His seeds of empathy and compassion from a previous lifetime now brought spontaneous joy in this woman's heart whenever she saw him.

We should always keep this story in mind so we will remember to create joyous connections with all sentient beings. A joyous connection with someone is one of empathy and understanding. When people respond to us with indifference, or even aversion, it is important to remind ourselves of this story, to understand that perhaps seeds of indifference planted in a previous life have now produced adverse conditions. If we remember this, we will not expect people to always respond to us as we wish. We should also be mindful of how we treat the people around us right now. Practicing understanding and compassion will produce joyous connections in the immediate future and for a long time to come. 🌿



Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
www.us.tzuchi.org



The 80/20 Lifestyle

Be healthy: Reduce your meal portions to 80%

Be generous: Use your 20% savings to help the poor

Improve your health by reducing meal portions to 80% of your normal consumption. With the 20% you save on food, you can help the needy.



Legim: A Haiti Happy Campus Recipe*

Provided by Jean Denis Petit Pha & Immacula Cadet
Portions translated from the French by Nils Aucante

Vegetables

3 Eggplants
2 Chayote Squash
2 Medium Carrots
1/2 Head Cabbage
10 oz Bag Spinach
1 Bunch of Watercress
Moringa Powder or Leaves**

Seasoning

3-4 Garlic Cloves, minced
4 Scallions, chopped
1 Green Bell Pepper, diced
1 Habanero Pepper, diced
1 Onion, diced
1 tsp Clove, ground
1 Bouillon Cube
Spoonful Tomato Paste

Directions

1. Remove ends and peel eggplant, chayote, and carrot. Core chayote. Chop cabbage and watercress.
2. Heat some cooking oil in a deep pot. Add garlic, scallions, bell pepper, hot pepper, clove, and onion. Cook for 1-2 minutes.
3. Add 2 cups water, bouillon cube, and vegetables (eggplants, chayote, and carrots first). Cover and cook for 20-30 minutes.
4. Remove vegetables and broth from pot. Place eggplants and chayote in a separate container.
5. Mash eggplant and chayote with a pestle until mushy.
6. Heat some cooking oil in the pot, then add spoonful of tomato paste. Return broth to pot and cook for 2-3 minutes.
7. Return mashed vegetables to pot and cook for 10-20 minutes.
8. Add moringa leaves or powder.**
9. Serve with rice and beans, steamed rice, corn, or bread.

* Before each Happy Campus tutoring session at St. Alexandre Church, volunteers prepare a delicious, nutritious vegetarian meal for the students. For more on Haiti's Happy Campus Program, please see Issue 34 (Winter 2012).

** Moringa provides an additional nutritional boost, if available.

A wholesome life begins with
vegetarianism.

*Jing Si Aphorism
by Dharma Master Cheng Yen*



The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Collective Behavior: Reflections on the 2013 Midwest Tzu Chi Training

Tsung-Lin Hsieh, Marco Tjioe, Li Huey Tan, and Shao Shen Ng



Tzu Chi collegiate volunteers utilize spring break for extra learning. Photo: Kai-Liang Nyoj

As a hard-working student, I spent my spring break on a field investigation of one of the most remarkable global-scale dynamical systems: Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

Macroscopic structures can emerge in systems having localized interactions. For instance, the flocking of birds can be simulated if each bird follows three rules: fly with the same velocity as its neighbors, stay close to its neighbors, and avoid collisions.[1]

This is reminiscent of Tzu Chi, an international humanitarian organization that has done a statistically significant amount of large-scale, long-term charitable and

educational projects. While the volunteers in Tzu Chi are generally understood to be helpful and disciplined, it is the connection between individual development and collective power that will be analyzed in this work.

EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES

The equipment used in this study included reusable bowls and chopsticks, which participants provided themselves. The first step of the investigation, as far as the author remembers, was to fill my stomach with great vegetarian food. Over fifty students from four universities (Ohio State University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, and Michigan State University) attended the training retreat in Columbus, Ohio. It consisted of talks, show and tell, volunteer sharing, and question-and-answer sessions interwoven with networking time.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Tzu Chi is widely recognized by its disaster relief projects, and the story of Hurricane Sandy relief sets a great example. In October 2012, the storm left the East Coast with countless victims and severe damage, but Tzu Chi volunteers managed to distribute food and living necessities to well over ten thousand households despite shortages of electricity and resources. Tzu Chi's cooperation and efficiency made a profound positive impression on local communities, as volunteers followed Master Cheng Yen's calling to help others without asking for anything in return. This type of giving requires determination and organization, which is what we are learning in the Tzu Chi Collegiate Association (TCCA).



Tzu Chi helps us become more mature people. The OSU TCCA members (Tzu Chings) presented a performance about filial piety and shared their experience of the preparation. The touching performance resonated with a lot of us. Sometimes it may be hard to maintain a good relationship with parents, especially when studying abroad. Our parents want to know how we are doing, but occasionally they cannot reach us because of our busy college lives. The performance reminded us of the simple but easily forgotten great love of parents and encouraged us to treasure the opportunities we have to talk to our families on the phone. TCCA teaches us to always be grateful, and it was amazing to hear how this mindset has helped some students fix their relationships with their families. In addition to volunteering and fundraising, we grow through study groups and performances in TCCA.

DISCUSSION

I joined TCCA because I want to help people. However, volunteering turned out not to be as simple as I expected. It requires careful planning and appropriate communication to utilize resources efficiently. It takes courage to face others' miseries and training to know how to truly help them. During the training, I was inspired by the stories of Tzu Chi's charity work and my mind was enriched by Tzu Chi wisdom.

The collective power of Tzu Chi volunteers has been observed, and it stems from the Tzu Chi spirit in each individual. Other emergent structures and the optimal rules of local interactions will be studied in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank the Tzu Chi advisors and OSU Tzu Chings for organizing the training and for generously hosting all participants. Marco and Li Huey's contributions to the success of UIUC TCCA are greatly appreciated, and Edward is acknowledged for his engaging talk and helpful discussion. 🌿

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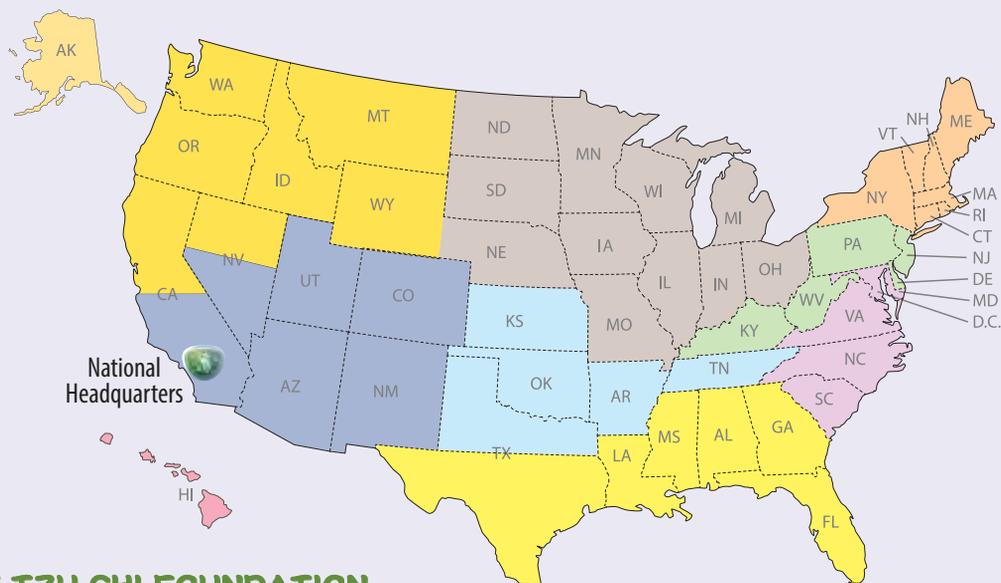


Through activities and discussions, participants gain greater understanding. Photo: Alex Xu



Collegiate volunteers from across the Midwest gather together to learn from one another. Photo: Bornain Chiu

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A BRIEF HISTORY...

On April 14, 1966, Dharma Master Cheng Yen founded the Tzu Chi Merits Society in Hualien with the support of thirty housewives who each put aside a couple cents of their grocery money every day to establish a charity fund. During the first five years, they helped a total of thirty-one elderly, ill, and poor people from fifteen families. As word spread, more people participated and the program gathered strength. It spread beyond Hualien: across the island and around the world.

Today, Tzu Chi is a nonprofit charitable organization with ten million volunteers and donors in more than fifty countries worldwide. Over the past forty-seven years, Tzu Chi's four missions—Charity, Medicine, Education, and Humanistic Culture—have grown from the seeds of gratitude, respect, and love, and Tzu Chi's activities have expanded to include international disaster relief, bone marrow donation, community volunteerism, and environmental conservation.

In the United States, Tzu Chi operates nine regional service areas with more than eighty offices nationwide. Volunteers give back to their local communities through family services, emergency disaster services, homeless services, school support programs, college scholarships, income tax reporting assistance, relief distributions, holiday care packs, free and low-cost medical clinics and outreaches, preventive health education, cancer support groups, character education curricula, community education classes, and production of positive, inspiring media.

Whenever disaster strikes at home or abroad, Tzu Chi volunteers deliver cash aid, hot meals, and emergency relief supplies directly into the hands of disaster survivors. Over the years, US Tzu Chi volunteers have actively provided relief after such major disasters as 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, and Hurricane Sandy.

In recent years, Tzu Chi volunteers' charitable work has been increasingly recognized by the global community. In 2010, Tzu Chi was granted special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. In 2011, Dharma Master Cheng Yen was recognized with the Roosevelt Institute's FDR Distinguished Public Service Award and named to the 2011 TIME 100 list of the world's most influential people. In 2013, Tzu Chi was honored by the White House for its Hurricane Sandy disaster relief efforts.

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Great strength comes
from unity of minds
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