

COMPASSION & RELIEF

TZU CHI USA JOURNAL

FLOOD RELIEF IN CENTRAL AMERICA

- ◆ DHARMA AS WATER
- ◆ NEW SCHOOLS FOR HAITI
- ◆ ROAD TO ZERO WASTE



ISSUE 32 | SUMMER 2012



DHARMA MASTER CHENG YEN,
FOUNDER OF
TZU CHI FOUNDATION

CONTEMPLATIVE WISDOM

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

Create a Pure Land on Earth through Repentance

If we cannot untie the knots in our minds
and instead constantly cling to afflictions,
we suffer tremendously.

If we bathe in the water of Dharma
to purify ourselves and help transform others,
we realize the supreme joy.

Through the practice of discipline, concentration, and wisdom,
we guard our body, spirit, and mind from impurities.

Through the practice of great repentance,
we cleanse away greed, anger, and ignorance.

Let the water of Dharma cleanse us completely.
Let us repent from the very depth of our hearts and minds
and eliminate all afflictions and ignorance.
In doing so, we can realize the Dharma-joy,
the ultimate state of peace and freedom.

When many hearts are purified and connected,
this world becomes the Pure Land on Earth.

Compiled into English by the Dharma as Water Editorial Team



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active in their communities and around the world:
a view from all angles,
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Several stories in this issue
are also featured on
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PUTTING LOVE INTO ACTION

William Keh

Tzu Chi's ties to Central America were forged over a decade ago, as Tzu Chi volunteers from around the world provided disaster relief in the wake of devastating hurricanes in 1998 and earthquakes in 2001.

These early relief efforts inspired many local residents to take up the Tzu Chi path and continue to help their neighbors in need. Over the years, volunteers in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala have cared for their local region and fostered the Tzu Chi spirit of compassion and relief.

When major storms flooded several Central American countries in fall 2011, local volunteers sprung to the aid of their neighbors. Finding themselves short of resources, they also called on Tzu Chi USA to assist. We quickly mobilized and sent relief teams to each of the three countries in need.

This flooding in Central America closed out a year full of disasters. The frequency and magnitude of natural disasters in 2011 seemed worse than ever before: signs that the world is impermanent and that we all must do more to prepare for the worst.

In the United States, we were very fortunate. Despite a rash of devastating tornadoes, we were not hit as hard as many other countries. Instead, the disasters served as reminders to remain vigilant for the future: to plan for disasters, adopt a vegetarian diet, live a simple life, and foster our compassion. At the same time, they offered an opportunity to reach out and help those in great need.

While volunteers in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador proved that Tzu Chi is always among the first to arrive, our volunteers in Haiti still strive to be the last to leave.

For more than two years now since the January 2010 earthquake, Tzu Chi has remained active in Haiti by supporting local volunteers, providing educational scholarships, and promoting the cultivation of Moringa trees for both reforestation and nutrition. On January 21, 2012, the second anniversary of Tzu Chi volunteers' arrival into Haiti, we broke ground on a major project to rebuild three schools in Port-au-Prince.

These three schools, among many in Haiti destroyed by the earthquake, struck a special chord with Tzu Chi volunteers, who were impressed by the well-behaved, respectful children taught by the Catholic nuns of the Sisters of Saint Anne. Working together, Tzu Chi and the Sisters of Saint Anne have drawn up plans for the schools that will be completed by spring 2013.


In addition to bringing a better educational environment to students who need it, this project also carries several deeper meanings for the future of Haiti and the world.

1) Compassion into Action: Rebuilding schools goes beyond simple talk about education and helping the needy: it provides an active example of doing both.

2) Solidarity: This Buddhist-Catholic joint project – bringing together different religions and cultures – can serve as an example for other people and organizations.

3) World Peace: There is hope for peace if we work together. Even though Tzu Chi and the Sisters of Saint Anne have different beliefs, together we can accomplish our common goals.

4) Hope: Children are our hope for a brighter future. Hope is worth the investment.

With this project and more, Tzu Chi will continue to take root in Haiti and work toward an era of greater hope and greater love. 



CLEANING OUR INNER HEARTS

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks

Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team

In life, we often make mistakes. But when we do, we are reluctant to admit them, afraid that people will think negatively of us when they find out. We try to cover up our mistakes, and may even lie about them.

Sometimes, our mistakes affect other people, and we end up hurting them. But we often respond by not admitting it and denying our involvement or mistake. People therefore become angry with us. A knot of resentment forms in their hearts. But in our hearts too, a knot also forms. If we do not do anything to untie this knot, such as by apologizing or making amends, this knot will always remain in our hearts. At the end of this lifetime, we even bring it with us into our next life.

This inner knot brings us afflictions and suffering. But even more so, by not untying these knots and not being honest about our mistakes, we continue to act in the same way – repeating our mistakes, reinforcing our unwholesome tendencies, and accumulating ever more impurities in our hearts.

Our hearts are like a glass bottle containing dirty water. To clean a bottle,

we have to pour out the dirty water first. To cleanse our hearts, we need to repent the wrongs we have done, internally and through action. We can do this by expressing sincere remorse to the people we have hurt. This helps to untie the knots in both their hearts and ours. Once we truly repent in such a way, the impurity is gone. We will also be less likely to make the same mistake again.

A glass bottle, once cleaned, can be used to store pure water. In the same way, after repenting and cleansing, our hearts can now take in the Dharma. By replacing the impurities inside with Dharma, we become better people.

There is a story about Shakyamuni Buddha teaching this to his disciple, Rahula. Rahula was the Buddha's son, whom the Buddha had brought to the monastic community to become a novice. One of the Buddha's foremost disciples, Shariputra, was given the charge of teaching the young boy.

Little Rahula lived with the monks and learned the Buddha's teachings, but he was very naughty. When people came to the monastery to see the Buddha and asked



him if the Buddha was available, he would give them the wrong answer. When the Buddha was at the monastery, he would tell people that the Buddha was away. When the Buddha was away, he would tell them they could find the Buddha in the monastery. It amused him to see people going to the monastery, only to find out the Buddha was not there. He had no real malicious intentions. He was just being naughty and thought it all great fun.

As the other monks learned about this, they tried to tell Rahula what he was doing was wrong. They asked him to stop, but being naughty, Rahula continued nonetheless. The other monks cared about him and were concerned that if he continued this habit of lying to people, it would become very problematic when he grew up. So, they told the Buddha.

Learning of this, the Buddha called Rahula to him. At the time, the Buddha had just returned to the monastery, so he told Rahula to bring him a basin of water to wash his feet. After washing his feet in the basin, the Buddha asked him, "Rahula, is the water in the basin drinkable?" Rahula replied, "No,

this water is dirty and isn't drinkable." The Buddha then told Rahula to pour out the dirty water and bring him the empty basin. When Rahula did so, the Buddha suddenly kicked the basin, overturning it. Startled, Rahula became scared that he had done something wrong. The Buddha then told the boy to pour water into the basin. "But the basin is overturned. I cannot pour water in unless I turn it over," he said.

"You, Rahula, are like this overturned basin," said the Buddha. "You started out with a pure and clean heart, like the clean water in the basin. But why do you like to lie to people? When you tell lies, your heart becomes tainted and dirty, like the dirty water. For the basin to hold clean water again, you have to turn it over and clean it. You need to deeply repent, Rahula. Do you understand?" Hearing this, Rahula lowered his head and reflected upon his behavior. He realized how wrongly he had acted and from then on changed his ways.

In spiritual cultivation, we need to do the same. When we open our hearts to repent and change, we can clean out the impurities in our hearts and become better people. 🌿



FLOOD RELIEF IN **CENTRAL** **AMERICA**

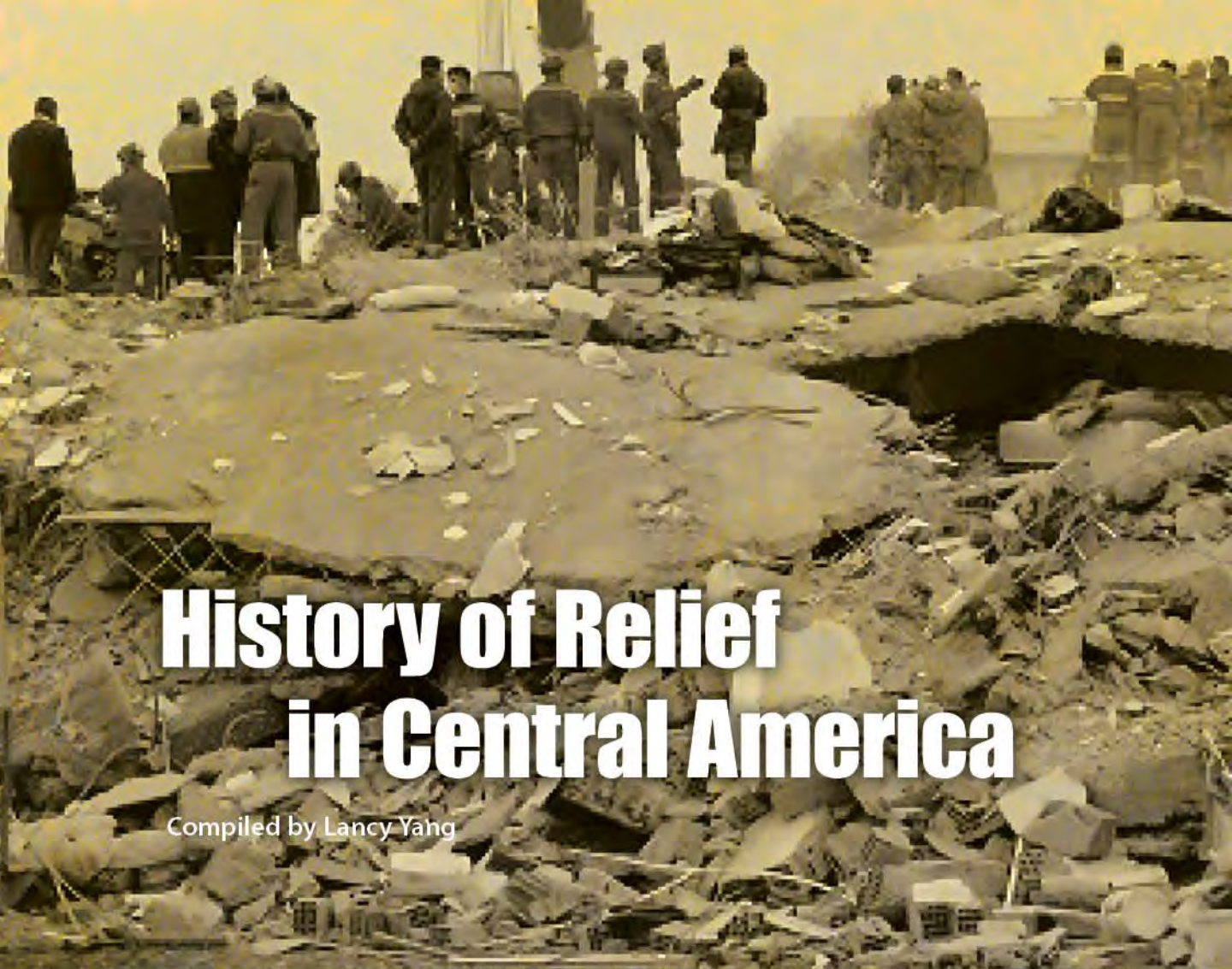
Photo: Michael Chiu



From September 2011 to January 2012, Tzu Chi volunteers held seventeen relief distributions in Central America. Volunteers distributed more than three hundred tons of various food supplies and met the flood survivors' material needs by providing such daily necessities as blankets, clothing, toilet paper, plastic buckets, and even temporary shelters. A small selection of the distributed goods is highlighted in the chart below:

	Temporary Shelters	Blankets	Corn (lbs.)	Corn Flour (lbs.)	Rice (lbs.)	Red & Black Beans (lbs.)	Sugar (lbs.)
Guatemala			145,315		5,750	119,035	28,315
Honduras	60	2,000		160,308	38,750	59,000	34,000
El Salvador	66	280		596	495	357	595
Total	126	2280	145,315	160,904	44,995	178,392	62,910

Source: Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation Charity Department



History of Relief in Central America

Compiled by Lancy Yang

In 2011, floods in Central America devastated the countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. In all three countries, Tzu Chi volunteers responded immediately to the needs of their local communities. This quick and effective response was possible thanks to a Tzu Chi presence that has grown through thirteen years of thoughtful actions and mindful persistence.

Tzu Chi's involvement in Central America began in 1998, in the immediate aftermath of Hurricanes Georges and Mitch. A Tzu Chi volunteer team traveled to the disaster-stricken region, which included Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and several islands in the West Indies. Their investigations revealed the greatest needs to be in areas where other relief work had been delayed: such as the Dominican

Republic regions of Polo and La Romana, and Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Thus, Tzu Chi's work was concentrated first in these areas.

Coordinating with the International Red Cross, Organización Panamericana de la Salud, and other charity organizations posted in the region, Tzu Chi set up medical clinics and distribution sites for food and sanitation supplies in order to bring relief to areas where government relief had been delayed.



To better understand the plight of the local disaster victims, the Tzu Chi volunteers inspected the food and shelter of the locals, as well as the condition of the local sanitation systems. Cold, hunger, and lack of proper medical care already affected the area before the storms, and these conditions worsened considerably after the hurricanes. The volunteers' in-depth assessment of the lives of those affected helped them understand the harshness of local living conditions that predated the storms. While immediate relief work was essential, volunteers clearly saw that long-term

rebuilding efforts were equally important to ensure continued quality of life.

After the inspection tours, Tzu Chi organized and carried out relief distributions to help the victims directly. Free medical clinics were organized for the most destitute of the population: some had been subsisting on garbage and all were exposed to a variety of illnesses. Relief supplies were collected, purchased, packaged, and transported to the stricken regions. Care recipients were grateful to receive the supplies and learn about the foreign organization with the volunteers in blue shirts and white trousers. Local government officials expressed surprise that there were people willing to travel internationally to help them.

Volunteer and recipient make a strong connection during a post-earthquake relief distribution: El Salvador, February 2001. Photo: Michael Siu



On December 8, 2000, two years after the hurricanes, Salvadoran President Francisco Flores and First Lady Lourdes Rodríguez de Flores visited Dharma Master Cheng Yen at Tzu Chi Dalin Hospital to express their gratitude to Tzu Chi. President Flores expressed his admiration for the kindness and willingness of the volunteers to help the less fortunate, and asked for help in the event of future disasters.

Unfortunately, that help was needed much sooner than anyone could have expected. Just five weeks later, on January 13, 2001, a 7.6 magnitude earthquake struck El Salvador. A month after that, another major earthquake hit. All told, these quakes and their aftershocks left more than twelve hundred dead and nine thousand injured.

Tzu Chi Foundation responded immediately after the first earthquake to survey the damage and plan rescue measures. Volunteers brought medical provisions and daily necessities, treated four thousand patients at five free clinics in the disaster zone, and provided twenty thousand survivors with





Tzu Chi volunteers distribute relief goods: Honduras, May 2000. Photo: Crystal Mai



A warm hug displays a grateful heart: El Salvador, February 2001. Photo provided by William Keh

enough food to last for one month. Looking to the future, Tzu Chi decided to build more than one thousand permanent homes for survivors with funds raised in the United States.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the two Great Love Villages in El Salvador was held on March 17, 2001. The first group of homes was completed in January 2002. In August, schools, medical clinics, a community center, an activity center, and a soccer field were completed, giving the new residents a stronger sense of community. By October 2003, both villages were completed, with new homes for approximately twelve hundred families.

The immediate relief efforts and long-term care shown by Tzu Chi volunteers sowed the seeds of compassion in these regions, inspiring

the people to take up the Tzu Chi missions. Over the past decade, Tzu Chi volunteers throughout Central America have continued to respond in times of need. Not only have they provided free medical clinics in remote areas, Tzu Chi volunteers have also responded to hurricanes, droughts, and other disasters with much-needed relief distributions.

Seeds of love planted since 1998 have grown into trees of strength. Now, local communities have the strength and ability to help themselves when disaster strikes. In recognition of Tzu Chi volunteers' long-term commitment and selfless dedication to the region, Dharma Master Cheng Yen was presented with the "Friend of El Salvador" award in November 2011. 🌿

“ *Seeds of love planted since 1998 have grown into trees of strength.* ”

Those who sow the seeds of blessings shall harvest plentiful blessings
Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



In January 2005, children smile and wave Tzu Chi flags during the opening ceremony of a career training center in the Great Love Village in Chanmico, La Libertad, El Salvador.





Volunteers help set up before the distribution.
Photo: James Huang

Joining Hands

Emily Chen

Guatemala City sits perched at the top of a country of lush, green hillsides. A crystal blue sky stretches above while the hills fall away below. Short buildings crawl up the hillsides to form their own irregular skyscrapers: founded in nature's strange constructions and scraping the clear blue sky.

In Guatemala, it seems that wealth is almost directly proportional to elevation. When Tropical Depression Twelve-E hurled an unprecedented amount of rain down Guatemala's hillsides, the wealthy areas on top were little affected. But those living down on the floodplains, eking out a living by farming

or fishing, were devastated. Even those in the more affluent tourist locations found themselves in difficult times, as flood levels of two meters and higher blocked off roads and chased away foreign visitors.

Volunteers from Tzu Chi Guatemala immediately traveled to disaster areas to assess the situation, evaluating the level of damage and asking local residents what they needed most. While Guatemala is often hit by floods, this time the flood waters had risen higher, spread farther, and receded more slowly than in previous years. The mud left behind was tacky, polluted, and smelly: the result of water rising in areas where sanitation has always been poor. Near Taxisco, several families who fish for a living mentioned that the fish had disappeared after the flood, and they supposed it was due to the pollution in the water.



Volunteers help recipients carry relief goods out to the road. The sign behind them reads "Thank you, Tzu Chi Foundation, for your works of love in Palencia." Photo: James Huang



Volunteers load onto boats to inspect the flood damage. Photo: Emily Chen

As water continued to pool around homes and roads, people began to be concerned by the potential for disease: bacterial infections from wading through unsanitary water, and Dengue fever and other illnesses carried by bugs and mosquitoes.

Despite these medical concerns and the severe poverty of the flood victims, most care recipients humbly requested just food, not goods. They asked for simple food supplies for their families to survive long enough to get back on their own feet.

Tzu Chi Guatemala volunteers answered their call. Aided by local businesses and their local communities, these volunteers held a series of relief distributions, the largest of which took place on October 30, 2011, in Chiquimulilla. At this distribution alone, more than two thousand households were served by local Tzu Chi volunteers.

The distribution in Chiquimulilla was held in the same manner as all disaster relief distributions undertaken by Tzu Chi. Before the event, volunteers personally handed distribution vouchers to many households in

need during preliminary assessment visits, while additional vouchers were left with leaders of twenty-one villages in especially dire need, to be distributed to local households.

On the day of the distribution, the voucher holders were invited into a secure location. A ceremony was held, words of kindness and hope were shared, a letter of condolence from Dharma Master Cheng Yen was read, prayers were spoken, and thanks were given to those who helped supply the goods, secure the location, and transport the goods. In Chiquimulilla, an especially gracious vendor had sold the corn and beans at a twenty-percent discount and offered free bagging and transport.

“ I don't have much, but I can put in my effort. It's what I can give. ”

Following the ceremony, relief goods were hand-delivered to each recipient with a kind smile and a bow. As locals received fifty-pound bags of corn and twenty-five-pound bags of beans, volunteers were on hand to help



*Each household receives bags of corn and beans along with a bucket of smaller goods such as sugar, instant noodles, and oil.
Photo: Emily Chen*

them carry heavier goods to the street where they could find motorized transportation back home.

The distribution began at nine in the morning and ended shortly after noon. Thanks to the combined efforts of all the volunteers, the event was completed four hours ahead of schedule. In addition to the local Tzu Chi volunteers and the many residents of the

villages being helped, students from a local college came to aid in the effort. Their faces were wreathed with smiles even as they passed along the heavy bags of corn and beans. Some older local volunteers also helped out, though they were poor themselves. One such volunteer explained, "I don't have much, but I can put in my effort. It's what I can give."

During the opening ceremony, the origin of Tzu Chi was explained: how it started with thirty simple housewives in the small town of Hualien saving pennies each day so that those in even greater need might not suffer. This is known as Tzu Chi's Bamboo Piggy Bank Era, because the pennies were kept in bamboo piggy banks. After the story, Tzu Chi volunteers walked down the rows offering piggy banks to those who might care to donate. The volunteers passed along this story of empowerment and this opportunity to help others even while in the midst of one's own difficulties. The response was overwhelming, as volunteers were forced to empty out the brimming banks several times each. On occasion, a village representative



On October 30, 2011, the site of the relief distribution is filled to the brim. Photo: Emily Chen

would run up to the front with a handful of coins or small bills to pass on the love of an entire village.

One of Tzu Chi's underlying goals is to spread the idea that communities can help each other and individuals can help according to their own abilities. This is the idea that the inclination and the ability to help others - an inner Bodhisattva or an inner angel - lies within each of us and that being able to help others is in some ways just as much a human

need as food, water, love, and respect. This is the knowledge that each of us can make a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters.

That day, as more than two thousand people flooded peacefully and orderly into the warehouse, many with their children or loved ones, there was a palpable sense that each of us has the power to make a difference when our hands are joined together. When we all support each other, no one is helpless. 🌱



Giving is not the privilege of the rich; it is the privilege of the sincere.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Kevin arrived a day before the Chiquimulilla distribution to begin preparing his report for TGW 107.3FM, "The Voice of Guatemala." Volunteers were busy bringing enormous bags of corn and beans into place, but they took time to introduce him to the Tzu Chi spirit and showed him the banners depicting earlier Tzu Chi efforts around the country. Touched, Kevin decided he would not just report: he would also participate.

On the morning of the distribution, Kevin donned a yellow Tzu Chi vest and joined the army of volunteers assigned to help carry heavy bags of food supplies from the distribution warehouse to the cross street where care recipients could arrange transportation back to their homes.

Hour by hour, Kevin's eyes began to light up more and more. At times, he borrowed the unused microphone on stage to share about Tzu Chi or about picking up trash, or to lead attendees in a cheer for the organization. His enthusiasm was infectious.

As the story of Tzu Chi's bamboo piggy banks was shared, Tzu Chi volunteers moved through the crowds with piggy banks to allow care recipients to contribute. As a volunteer approached him, Kevin was focused on speaking into his recorder, clearly taking notes for his report. Without hesitation, he reached into his pocket and removed a large roll of bills. The volunteer waited for Kevin to peel some smaller bills from the outside but, to her surprise, Kevin stuffed the entire roll into her little bamboo bank.

The look on Kevin's face was one of pure gratitude, as though he were the one receiving aid instead of giving it. But perhaps, indeed, he was. 🌱



Photo: James Huang



Bodhisattvas Arise

Poh Joo Tan | Translated by Mei-li Hamilton

Extreme weather caused by global warming continues to result in frequent natural disasters. Near the end of a year filled with disasters across the world, a major tropical depression struck Guatemala and several other Central American countries in October 2011.



every three days. Severe flooding had made a difficult life even more difficult.

Tzu Chi volunteers from the United States and Guatemala determined

that Chiquimulilla was in immediate need of relief supplies, so a relief distribution was scheduled for October 30. The day before, Tzu Chi volunteers went to the site to manage the logistics, plan the distribution flow and inventory control, communicate with local leaders and business people, and invite locals to the event.

A report from Chiquimulilla, Guatemala, revealed that forty villages were flooded and had sustained severe damage. Remembering the excellent work done by Tzu Chi in the past, the local government asked Tzu Chi to help once again. Within three days, several volunteers from Tzu Chi's Guatemala branch office set out to assess the flooded areas where eighteen hundred families had been affected.

Gildaberto, a local businessman who provided supplies for the distribution, had already worked with Tzu Chi for five years. He was especially touched by the commitment of Tzu Chi volunteers who came from far away to help care for disaster victims by distributing food and supplies. With a heart filled with compassion, Gildaberto provided the needed supplies at a twenty-percent discount, donated five hundred corn tamales, and even brought members of his staff to help organize the site and transport goods.

The volunteers discovered that twelve days of rain, along with rising sea tides, had caused Canal Chiquimulilla to overflow, flooding the villagers' homes and farms and polluting their water wells. Road conditions in the area were so bad that Tzu Chi volunteers had to travel by boat.

Many others also came to help, including Cecilio, a victim of the floods and a village representative. Like many other villagers,

Several Tzu Chi volunteers from the United States then joined the local volunteers to evaluate the damage in four remote areas in Taxisco, a municipality several miles from Chiquimulilla. Along the way, these volunteers encountered a man who had been living in a small boat in front of his flooded home for over two weeks. The rest of his family had been sent to a shelter, but he stayed behind to watch the house. This area was already poor and without electricity. Children studied by candlelight, and water was supplied from the outside once



he had been living in his car for more than a week before he was transferred to a shelter. Also like the others, he prayed every day that the future might be a bit brighter.

“ We all have the same blood flowing through our bodies; we should not have different hearts. It doesn't matter what color our skin is or what our race is. ”

everything. She prayed for God to bless the Tzu Chi volunteers and take them safely home.

Manuel Orlando Bolaños, a well-known professor at San Carlos University, served

as master of ceremonies that day. He was touched by Dharma Master Cheng Yen's spirit and praised her excellent leadership. He told his students that Tzu Chi needed additional volunteers to carry out the distribution, so forty-eight of them volunteered to help.

In addition to the fifty-five Tzu Chi Guatemala volunteers and forty-eight university students, a large group of local volunteers also participated, including local Chinese residents, embassy staff members, merchants and their staffs, and more than one hundred residents of the affected villages. Nearly three hundred and fifty volunteers participated, forming a strong support group and accelerating the distribution process. Four local news outlets reported on the distribution, and all were impressed by how well-organized and orderly it was.

On October 30, the day of the distribution, volunteers left by car at 4:30 in the morning and traveled two and a half hours over rough flood-damaged roads to the distribution site. When they arrived, they found people already waiting outside the city hall. Normally, the city hall auditorium, where the distribution was held, can only accommodate five hundred people, but that day, with guidance from the volunteers, more than two thousand families received help in an orderly and peaceful manner.

José, a local farmer of corn and black beans, saw his farm completely ruined by the flood. This farm had been the sole means of support for his family of seven. For people like José, Tzu Chi's distribution was vital. After the flood, he put on a Tzu Chi volunteer vest and helped his relatives and neighbors. Beyond the material relief he received, the ability to help brought him happiness and an indescribable peace in his heart.

Adela, one of the flood victims, was in tears several times during the ceremony. Though she and her eight-month-old baby had survived the flood, her cows had all been swept away. The material distributed by Tzu Chi was essential to her family, which had lost

everything. She prayed for God to bless the Tzu Chi volunteers and take them safely home.



*Tzu Chi volunteers take small boats to assess the extent of the damage to Guatemala's flooded villages.
Photo: James Huang*



*A relief distribution brings people together.
Photo: James Huang*

On November 20, Tzu Chi volunteers returned to Guatemala. They distributed supplies to eighteen hundred families in Taxisco and trained new local volunteers. Between October and November, two distributions and three small relief efforts were held. Together, these provided food and clothing to more than five thousand families.

The evening after my return from the journey to Guatemala, I watched a video of Dharma Master Cheng Yen talking about a separate disaster relief effort in Pakistan. She explained, "We know that every person has worries, and everyone's worries are different. We use various methods to bring each person back to wholeness. If we look at every person equally, we treat every person the same, and once we treat every person the same, our differences disappear."

Editor's Note: Moved by his experiences in Guatemala, the author wrote a melody to accompany words from Dharma Master Cheng Yen's discourse. Playing an acoustic guitar and singing a duet with his eight-year-old daughter, he recorded a music video with images of relief in Guatemala. You can watch this video online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOwQopyGBKg>.



On this visit to Guatemala, I saw the devastation that flooding had caused and the suffering that the poor people of this country were forced to endure. But, I also saw these same poor people moved by Tzu Chi's spirit to help their fellow villagers with compassion and equanimity. One man told me something that seemed to fit right in with the Tzu Chi philosophy: "We all have the same blood flowing through our bodies: we should not have different hearts. It doesn't matter what color our skin is or what our race is."

Every cold night since I returned from Guatemala, I have been grateful that I have hot water to shower. It saddens me to think that the people in Guatemala have no hot water or electricity, that they only get clean water every three days and have to study by candlelight.

"Bodhisattvas arise due to the needs of suffering people." Disasters will cease when the Buddha appears to meet the needs of suffering people. The more compassionate people there are around the world, the more peaceful those areas will become. This is Buddha's ultimate wish, which is the cycle of love. 🌱

*Waiting for the relief distribution to begin, two young girls hold a sign to thank Tzu Chi volunteers.
Photo: James Huang*



Tender loving care is found in all corners of the world. Everyone can be a Bodhisattva to help those in need.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



Tzu Chi's relief distribution in November 2011 brings a smile of joy. Photo: James Huang

Offering Comfort

Emily Chen

A devastating 7.6 magnitude earthquake struck El Salvador at noon on January 13, 2001. As El Salvador is the most densely populated country in Central America, this earthquake, while not as strong as several calamities of the past couple years, was absolutely devastating. The January earthquake and its aftershocks left twelve hundred dead, nine thousand injured, and more than one and a half million – a quarter of the nation's population – without homes. Even before the earthquake, many victims had already been living in makeshift shelters for many years since a 1986 earthquake destroyed a significant number of permanent homes. Further natural disasters, such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, caused continued damage and construction delays.

On January 16, 2001, a Tzu Chi disaster inspection team and Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) volunteers arrived

to provide immediate, midterm, and long-term relief. Tzu Chi USA chapters had fundraised for the effort so that 27,300 people could receive a month's worth of food supplies and nearly four thousand could receive free medical help. For long-term reconstruction, Tzu Chi built two Great Love Villages in the Sacacoyo and Chanmico townships. Both housed schools, parks, community centers, and places of worship. Upon completion, these villages were given over to the stewardship of Tzu Chi El Salvador.

A decade later, a Tzu Chi USA disaster assessment team returned to El Salvador in November 2011 to assess the condition of the Great Love Villages, and the country in general, in the wake of flooding caused by Tropical Depression Twelve-E that affected up to 800,000 people across Central America. Not only was the flooding severe, it also came at a very sensitive time: many crops were



only seedlings, at a delicate stage of growth. With much of the rural population depending on farming to make a living, and considering the El Salvador government had recently spent significant funding in the agricultural sector to achieve higher yields, the flooding was not only a matter of ruined homes but also a cause of concern for the following year's food supplies.



Families from these homes downstream took shelter in Sacacoyo's community center. Even a month after the flooding, they could still be found there. Many salvaged nothing but a few plastic containers and pots from their homes. Several cried when they displayed these scant possessions to the visiting Tzu Chi volunteers.

Returning to the two villages, completed in 2002 and 2003, Tzu Chi volunteers were excited to see that the buildings stood up to the tests of time, rain, and flooding. In both villages, the approaching blue-and-white Tzu Chi uniforms were immediately recognized and welcomed with open arms and friendly greetings. The Chanmico village was mostly unharmed, except for a backed-up sewer, and though the Great Love Village in Sacacoyo was bordered by a river, the earth levees that bulwarked the bordering street stood strong. While floodwaters did flow over the school's field and affected perhaps one-third of the village beyond that, the waters rose only to calf-height and were easily cleared.

In El Salvador, many houses downriver were still standing, giving the impression that the damage had been contained. But the refugees in the community center and camps told stories of the mud that kept them away.

Local volunteers told of how the waters rushed down the river in a great torrent that exceeded the capacity of the river in just thirty minutes, as giant rocks from upriver crashed through bridge supports and sixty-foot trees. One such tree was so large that when it fell, the river widened and split into two, pushing the water even further into residential areas downstream.

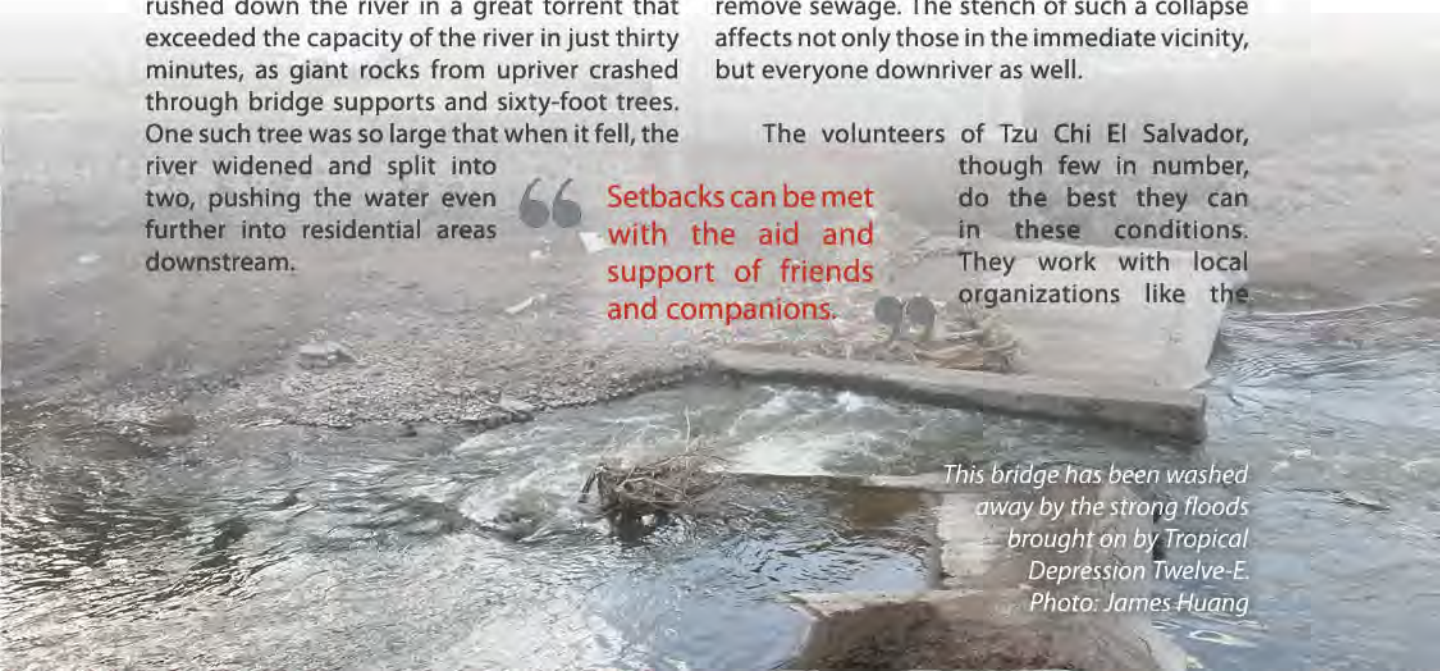
"My family cannot return [home]. Because our house, when the flood came, it filled up," explained Mercy, living temporarily in a tent downriver from Sacacoyo Great Love Village. "It filled up with mud and is very sticky and smelly. Our family cannot return to the house. It ruined everything, everything."

The smell of the mud comes as no surprise when one learns that water and sewage pipes run along the bottom of every bridge. Even partial collapses of bridge supports can be ruinous, breaking the lines that bring water and remove sewage. The stench of such a collapse affects not only those in the immediate vicinity, but everyone downriver as well.

The volunteers of Tzu Chi El Salvador, though few in number, do the best they can in these conditions. They work with local organizations like the

“Setbacks can be met with the aid and support of friends and companions.”

This bridge has been washed away by the strong floods brought on by Tropical Depression Twelve-E.
Photo: James Huang





With respect and gratitude, volunteers hand relief goods to local flood survivors. Photo: James Huang

Committee on Social Projects and with former Tzu Chi aid recipients who have now become active volunteers. José, who has volunteered for various distributions and free clinics that Tzu Chi has held since the flooding started, said, "I took ten days off work to come help with Tzu Chi, and I feel like I've been paid more by [what I've experienced while] volunteering than by working." Impressed by the dedication of these local volunteers, some of whom have even worked with Tzu Chi since the 2001 earthquake, Tzu Chi USA issued official volunteer badges in 2011 to recognize their efforts.

In a region beset by natural calamities, recovery is a path with many setbacks, like life itself. But these setbacks can be met with the aid and support of friends and companions. By forging close ties with local organizations and seeding community activism into local townships and villages, Tzu Chi El Salvador's heavy load in bringing long-term and sustained relief to those in need is lightened because it is shared. In 2011, Tzu Chi USA volunteers vowed to help carry this load in the years ahead. 🌿



When the storm flung torrents of water at the people of El Salvador, the affluent were left largely untouched, but for Teresa, everything she'd worked for was swept away in a single evening.

"This box is all that I've saved from my home. Water completely ruined my house; I don't know where I can live in the future." She holds a single cardboard box, not even half full. She pulls out plastic cups, a small metal saucepan, and a couple containers. As she looks at them, tears fall from her eyes. She brushes away the tears but they continue to fall.

For nearly a month, Teresa's family has taken refuge in the Sacacoyo Great Love Village community center. Many others have shared this

space, but now only a dozen families remain. Their flooded homes remain unable to support them for even a night. While the community center is stable, dry, and relatively clean, it was designed as an auditorium. The smooth concrete does not make a comfortable home.

Even so, Teresa does not ask for much. "I only have one hope, and that's my child, because children are our hope for the future. For them, we all need to work hard." She is asked what help she needs most from Tzu Chi: "The only thing I'd request is food for my baby; I would just like food for her. She's been sick since the rains."

It is through tragedy that we see human resilience and faith. In Teresa's eyes you see her love and her hopes for her daughter: in her daughter she sees a brighter future. 🌿



Pure Compassion

Fang Yuan Chou

The sky was still dark at four o'clock on the morning of November 9, 2011. I put on my blue-and-white Tzu Chi volunteer uniform, picked up my small carry-on bag, and left my house. I took a taxi to LaGuardia airport and boarded a flight to Honduras to participate in a relief distribution for those affected by the mid-October flood: my first international relief trip. Along the way, I was torn between a curious excitement and apprehension about the hard work that lay ahead.

I quickly learned that international relief is tough, especially in developing countries like Honduras. During our five-day relief visit, we spent two nights in Marcovia: a small town with just one hotel. The hotel facilities were very basic. Only a thin stream of cold water drizzled out from the shower nozzle. Paint flaked from the walls as tiny worms climbed toward the ceiling. I tried hard not to touch anything in the room, for fear of contracting a

disease. Thankfully, the hard work completely exhausted me every day, so I was able to sleep at night; otherwise, it would have been impossible for me to stay in a place like that.

Although this was my first time experiencing these kinds of hardships, they never took root in my mind. Instead, the pure sincerity and loving compassion of the local people there deeply touched me.

Before we carried out the first distribution in Marcovia, one of the local Tzu Chi volunteers, Jorge Chang, stepped out into the waiting crowd and identified the senior citizens waiting their turn in the hot tropical sun. He greeted

“ I am thankful to God first, and then to all of you. God will surely reward you for all you have done for us. ”



Jorge Chang Jr. carries an old care recipient too weak to walk.
Photo: Ting Fan



"Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation: Thank you for your support." Photo: Gina Shih

them personally and invited them to come inside first. He did the same during the second distribution in Choluteca, another disaster area that was deeply affected by the flood. It was just a simple act to help the elderly in need, but I found it very moving.

As we carried out the second distribution in Choluteca, a very old, shrunken lady entered the distribution area. She trembled terribly. As soon as he saw her, Jorge Chang loudly called his son, Jorge Junior. The young man immediately ran towards the lady from across the warehouse. He held her up and patiently sat her down in a chair. I could not hold back my tears when I saw this scene. Young Jorge's abundant compassion deeply touched me.

After watching this compassionate act, two of my team members and I decided to interview the old lady. We asked Jorge Junior to provide translation, since we could not speak Spanish. We asked our first question and awaited Jorge's translation of the old

lady's answer. But he did not speak. Instead, he lowered his head and pulled his cap over his face to hide his tears. Without knowing why he was crying, we too were driven to tears by Jorge's reaction. Even the old lady choked back sobs as she held our hands. We were all touched by the tears of Jorge even though we had no idea what the lady had said.

Finally, we learned that the lady had said, "I am thankful to God first, and then to all of you. God will surely reward you for all you have done for us." I was so surprised that the old lady's simple words of appreciation would drive this young man to tears. Only someone with truly pure compassion could have such a soft heart.

After the interview, I saw the elder Jorge and told him that his son had cried. I expected him to tease the boy, but he too began to tear up. "He has a very soft heart," he told me.

Several Spanish-speaking locals volunteered to help us throughout the distributions. Three of them had already been volunteering for Tzu Chi for several years. These ladies did not know what a big international organization Tzu Chi is, nor what an honor it is to work under Tzu Chi's name. They knew little about Tzu Chi's Four Missions and Eight Footprints, Jing Si Publications, Da Ai Technology, and Da Ai Television. They did not know that Tzu Chi has received special consultative status at the United Nations. These volunteers had never even put on the blue-and-white Tzu Chi uniforms. Still, they spent so much time and effort to participate in the distribution. They devoted themselves to helping others with pure sincerity.

I was curious why these local volunteers were so diligent with their Tzu Chi work. The most senior of the volunteers, Maribel, answered my question, "We just want to help our own people. Besides, Jorge's true kindness deeply touched us and provides a lot of motivation."



Care recipients line up to receive relief goods. Photo: Ting Fan



Local volunteers help carry heavy bags of goods out to the street. Photo: James Huang



A volunteer carries out his work with compassion and love. Photo: James Huang

After I joined Tzu Chi, I have seen many Tzu Chi volunteers devote themselves to helping others. For some, it is hard to completely clear away the desire to be recognized for their work. However, in Honduras, I found many volunteers who do good deeds without any self-serving intentions. They are motivated only by love and pure kindness. What I experienced in these five days in Honduras has erased any doubt in my mind of the power of human compassion.

Editor's Note: On January 13, 2012, Globo TV broadcast a one-hour special report on "Tzu Chi in Honduras." Several minutes were dedicated to a brief documentary showing the beginnings of Tzu Chi in Hualien and images of Tzu Chi's footprints in Honduras, including the story of young Jorge and the old lady. Even before the feature ended, many viewers had called the station to ask how to join Tzu Chi. One thoughtful viewer even sent a text message to the host: "Tell Jorge not to cry. He has done so much for Honduras already." 🌿



Gazing into the distance, Jorge Chang recalls how he first connected with Tzu Chi: "In college, I joined the Tzu Chi youth group. I visited orphanages and cared for the orphans." These helpless, lonely children sparked the compassion in Jorge's heart and gave him a lifelong passion. "My focus in doing Tzu Chi is to help the young and the old."

After college, Jorge's job sent him to Honduras. In 1998, Tzu Chi's relief distributions after Hurricane Mitch reinvigorated Jorge's desire to help others and gave him an opportunity to give back to his new home. He recalls that the country was in chaos, but Tzu Chi volunteers did their best to get disaster survivors everything they needed. He realized, "it really feels great to help people!"

Thirteen years later, Jorge Chang remains dedicated to promoting the Tzu Chi spirit among the locals in Honduras. It is suggested that walking the Tzu Chi path alone in a foreign land is a difficult task, but Jorge brushes the thought away: "Difficult? Where there's a will, there's a way. If you want to do it, there is no difficulty!" 🌿



Photo: Ting Fan

To willingly undergo hardship for the sake of helping others is compassion.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

These Children Are Not for Sale

Emily Chen

On Christmas Eve, the thermometer tops out at a brisk eighty-eight degrees: chilly by Haiti's balmy standards. To celebrate the holiday, Tzu Chi volunteers travel up the bumpy road to surprise the children at "Family of God," an orphanage that Tzu Chi has been in contact with since the earthquake of 2010. Volunteers carry toys, shoes, and clothes to be distributed to the forty-four orphaned children who live there: Christmas gifts for God's children.

Even outside the door, the sound of the children's chatter is clear, and the clang of the opening gate inspires many curious eyes to turn and see who has arrived. Though brimming with curiosity, they remain seated in small plastic chairs around small wooden tables, waiting to see what might happen. Behind the children, a handwritten French sign hangs on

the wall: "These Children Are Not for Sale, Only for Adoption."

The founder of the orphanage, Judith Jean Baptiste, greets the volunteers warmly and with a look of surprise: "This is a wonderful gift; I didn't expect this." In Haiti, Christmas Eve is even more important than Christmas Day, and the arrival of guests with gifts is an unexpected treat. "I didn't expect that you would be available today for Christmas. This is a gift that cannot be bought. You can see how excited they are to have you here with them. Tzu Chi means a lot to me and to the kids."

The volunteers circle the children into games of soccer, Simon Says, word games, and musical chairs. The sound of happy laughter rises into the air, and smiles sparkling like



*Volunteers and children bond in March 2010.
Photo: Judy Huang*

Christmas lights brighten the small courtyard. Some smiles are quick and passing, others slow and unsure. These children have lived through much already. Some have lost their parents in natural disasters or crimes; others have been rescued from slavery or rape. Some have developed learning disabilities in their trials; others were born with them. They have all taken shelter under Judith's roof.

"Every child is special; every child is a universe. If I were to write a book, each child would have to be a chapter."

Jovany, bright-eyed and full of joy, would be the subject of one of these chapters. In Haiti, Judith says, some parents place their unwanted newborns in front of pigs, so that they may be eaten. Jovany was one of these unwanted children, rescued after several days alone and brought to the orphanage, surviving when it seemed impossible. During the earthquake, too, Jovany survived despite incredible odds: he was trapped under rubble for more than two hours, but came out sound. "He almost died twice. But if you see Jovany... Oh I'm so proud of him. He's so bright, so cute. He has some of the best [grades] of his age. Jovany is a testimony of life, of the power of God, of the positive force of nature."

Before starting her orphanage, Judith was once a television anchor. "I was a superstar in this country. I had a very big career very young, and I thought I was almost god, I was so powerful. But I lost my job and everything." Rather than making her angry, the rapid shift in fortunes led her to dedicate her life to serving others, and she established the orphanage in 2004. "I decided to serve people. I was twenty-five when I decided to help these wonderful kids,



"These Children Are Not for Sale, Only for Adoption" Photo: Emily Chen

these wonderful angels that I have."

Such a path is not without its difficulties here in Haiti, where survival and day-to-day living are constant struggles. Stress lines cross Judy's brows as she recalls the 2010 disaster. "After the earthquake, Tzu Chi was the first group I saw and Tzu Chi is the group that came the most often after the quake, almost three times a week. And they gave blankets, food for the morning, food for the afternoon, food for the evening." Given the scarcity of resources, having only one meal a day is not uncommon in Haiti, but Tzu Chi provided three. "Tzu Chi took care of everything," Judy says with a great sigh of relief, "The kids saw the Tzu Chi members coming here all the time. Tzu Chi means a lot to us, and we appreciate it."

The orphanage runs as a school in the daytime; 144 children are educated by "Family of God" in partnership with Tzu Chi, and some of the residents in higher grade levels are taught at schools outside. Only four teachers teach here at the orphanage, but the students outnumber the chairs and frequently have to sit on the floor, so Tzu Chi volunteers have brought wicker chairs and blackboards to aid the children's education.

"The most important thing," Judy says, "is to fight to do our best to give education to the people, because the real problem of Haiti



Local volunteer Jean Denis reads with the children in January 2012. Photo: Lesly Pierre



The children enjoy a lively game of musical chairs. Photo: Michael Chiu

is the problem of education. Whatever you do, whatever the help from other countries, if you don't educate the people, you're not doing anything."

Watching Judy watch the children, it is not difficult to see the care she has for them, but her

“ The most important thing is to fight to do our best to give education to the people. ”

care seems darkened by lines of deep worry and concern. Yet, this weight appears to be one she carries gladly.

In this way, Judy carries some resemblance to Dharma Master Cheng Yen. "I respect her work, her mission. I understand people devoting their life to serving people. Not everyone understands what you do when you devote your life to serving people. I understand her [sacrifices] because I'm doing the same very thing. I hope that Tzu Chi keeps doing these wonderful missions in every country. Thank you for everything you're doing in my country and thank you for this very special Christmas today."



Tzu Chi volunteers teach sign language to the orphans in February 2010. Photo: Judy Huang

If we don't do something meaningful, our life will pass by in vain. But if we work unceasingly for the betterment of mankind, ours will be a beautiful life.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



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A group of children are sitting on the ground, eating a meal. In the foreground, a young girl in a red floral dress and a blue and white checkered hat is eating. Other children are visible in the background, some also eating. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a community meal.

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Tzu Chi Breaks Ground on New Schools

Ting Fan & Wen Ren | Translated by John Ueng

As the excitement of the New Year slowly faded away, another celebration took its place in Haiti on January 21, 2012, as Tzu Chi broke ground on three new schools for the island nation.

Exactly two years prior – on January 21, 2010 – Tzu Chi volunteers arrived in Haiti to provide relief to a country overrun with despair and devastated by the January 12 earthquake. Since that day two years ago, volunteers from Tzu Chi Foundation have always remained committed to the long-term health of the country.

On the second anniversary of the relief effort, Tzu Chi broke ground on three schools run by the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Anne. Just two years removed from the unbearable devastation of the earthquake, breaking ground on these three schools is a particularly poignant reminder of the countless challenges that locals and volunteers have had to overcome in a very short time.



Dr. William Keh and Sister Rita Larivée show an artist's rendition of the completed schools. Photo: Margaret Yeh

A Milestone in Hope and Love without Borders

On the morning of January 21, the groundbreaking ceremony opened with a simple greeting from Tzu Chi volunteer Lori Chen: "Thank you all for coming. This is truly a milestone in Haiti's recovery."

The ceremony was both a new beginning and the culmination of two years of tireless efforts

by Tzu Chi volunteers. Volunteer James Chen has traveled to Haiti seventeen times since the earthquake to help coordinate the school rebuilding project. He emotionally expressed, "Leaving was never an option for us. We all worked hard together, but none more than our founder Master Cheng Yen, whose heart went out to the people of Haiti. So no matter what obstacle we encountered, there was only one option: to overcome it."

Overseas Engineering & Construction Corp. (OECC) has lent its full support to Tzu Chi and will undertake the entire construction project.

Executive Vice President David Chang said, "For us, this wasn't about winning some major project for revenue, but rather doing charity work, so we volunteer our service and help to build [the schools] well."

OECC's America Regional President Peter Jan added that rebuilding the schools is a form of corporate social responsibility: "We are very moved by Tzu Chi volunteers' compassionate commitment. We are also very honored to have this opportunity to participate."

Interfaith Unity in Education, Hope, and Great Love

Sister Rita Larivée, General Superior of the Sisters of Saint Anne, made a special trip from the congregation's headquarters in Montreal, Canada, for the groundbreaking ceremony. Sister Rita mused, "Haiti, Montreal, [Hualien]. Buddhist, Catholic. It's a phenomenal undertaking to see cultures so different – whether because of our nationalities or because of our religions – able to focus on one thing in common, and this is to unlock the freedom for children, as we must give them education."



Sister Marthe-Marjorie Février, Director of Collège Marie-Anne, speaks to the audience. Photo provided by Tzu Chi Foundation

A symbolic scattering of soil christened the construction process that continues the long-term dedication of Tzu Chi volunteers to Haiti. Feeling the significance of the occasion, Tzu Chi volunteer James Chen explained, "This was Master Cheng Yen's wish; we just did what we could to make it happen. Now that the contract is in place and construction is underway, all will be on track from now on."

Dr. William Keh, CEO of Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, has long been committed to relief efforts in Haiti and was also on hand for the ceremony. "The future of these children is truly our common goal. To rebuild hope in Haiti, education for the children is of utmost importance."

Construction on all three schools is expected to be completed in fourteen months. While January 21, 2012, marks a new beginning for the local Haitian people, there will never be an end to the care and companionship given by Tzu Chi volunteers. 🌱

Great Love knows no boundaries of race, religion, or nationality.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



Together, leaders of Tzu Chi, Sisters of Saint Anne, OECC, and Collège Marie-Anne break ground on the new schools. Photo: Hugo Liu



The Cambodian lowlands were severely flooded by heavy downpours in August and September 2011. On December 4, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers from Singapore and Malaysia conducted a major distribution of daily necessities in Phnom Penh's Chroy Changvar area. Photo: Changsheng Cai



▲ A forest fire on November 23, 2011, destroyed dozens of homes in Margaret River, Western Australia, causing thousands of people to evacuate. On November 29, Tzu Chi volunteers in Australia went to assess the situation and conduct disaster relief. Photo: Bangmao Chen



▲ On January 8, 2012, Tzu Chi Malaysia volunteers visited a hospital for lepers in Sungai Buloh, in the state of Selangor. The volunteers performed a lion dance to bring good luck and well wishes to the patients. Photo: Daofang Xu

On January 21, 2012, Tzu Chi Academy in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada, held a Chinese New Year celebration, introducing traditional Chinese culture to the children through vegetarian food tasting, Chinese paper cuts, and other arts and crafts. Photo: Ruizhi Zheng





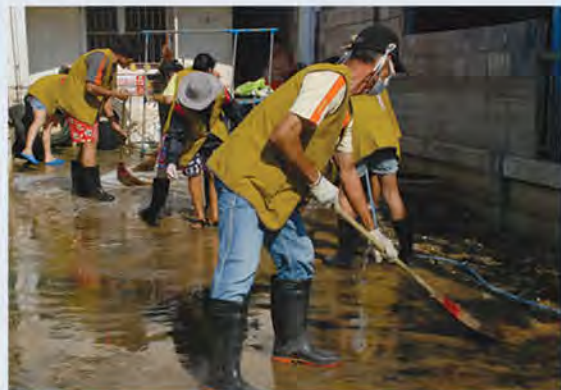
◀ To commemorate the beginning of a new school year, Tzu Chi Guatemala volunteers presented stationery, satchels, and uniforms to students from low-income families at Tzu Chi Elementary School in Palencia, Guatemala, on January 29, 2012. Photo: Wulizhu Ye



▲ In Pingtung County on the island of Formosa, Tzu Chi recently completed construction of homes for fifty-eight aboriginal families who were displaced by typhoons in 2009 and 2010. On January 15, 2012, just days before the Chinese New Year, Tzu Chi volunteers held a festive house-warming ceremony for the new residents. Photo: Daiyuan Li



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Vancouver held a winter relief distribution at the local Salvation Army headquarters on December 9, 2011. Volunteers provided hot meals and winter clothing for the homeless and low-income families. Photo: Jiahui Han



▲ As Thailand's flood waters began to recede, Tzu Chi initiated the "Cash for Work" Program, encouraging local people to clean up their own communities for monetary compensation. On December 18, 2011, residents of Rai Khing Village in Nakhon Pathom Province worked together to clean up their neighborhood. Photo: Lek



▲ On November 28, 2011, Tzu Chi South Africa volunteers from Ladysmith traveled to Skalun, KwaZulu-Natal Province, to encourage locals to recycle and protect the environment. Photo: Kaiping Fang



On December 22, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers in Indonesia traveled to the small island of Sumba and distributed rice to the impoverished villagers of Waingapu. Photo: Anand Yahya

On November 20, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers in Brazil traveled to Francisco Morato in the outskirts of Sao Paulo to provide a free clinic for the locals. Photo: Shuhua Chen



▲ On December 2, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers in Jordan distributed relief goods and hot meals in the Wadi Abdoun valley of Amman. Many village children sat on the ground to eat their food right then and there. Photo provided by Tzu Chi Jordan Regional Office



The Hsiao family adds seeds to the front of the Donate Life float. Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

A Legacy of Love – *Chih Chien's Gift*

Fay Chou

Darice Hsiao watched anxiously down the street as the Shriners Hospital float passed her by. She knew that her twin brother Chih Chien was on the next one, and she could not wait to see him. The air was soon filled with the music of a marching band from Puerto Rico; and as the band passed, she could finally begin to make out the float as it slowly drifted into view: the tower, the cogs, the clocks.

As the float approached, everyone on the bleachers stood together at attention. The cheering all-around was loud, but she could also hear the sniffles. She locked eyes with her brother as the float passed. The faint flicker in his stare and the hint of a smile in his lips seemed to say, "I'm happy. Please don't cry." But, like her mother and father, she could not hold back the tears. These were tears of joy, but also of sadness. Even from the distance, Chih Chien's eyes were just as Darice remembered them, except for one minor difference. These eyes were made from seeds and flowers. The eyes that she once knew were now giving sight to someone else.

The Accident

Darice and Chih Chien grew up together in a loving household with their parents and an older brother. Mr. Hsiao was successful enough in business that his wife retired as a kindergarten teacher after their wedding and never worked again. Instead, she devoted herself to caring full-time for her three children. She even drove the twins to and from school each and every day, from kindergarten all the way through high school. Only when the twins set off to separate colleges did Mrs. Hsiao finally let them take care of their own transportation. This decision still haunts her.

On the early morning of November 26, 2005, just two months after starting college, Chih Chien crashed his motorcycle on the way to school. The open road was not treacherous, the hill was not steep, and the ground he landed on was just dirt: there were no sharp objects or hard concrete. He was still wearing his helmet. But he never regained consciousness. He looked like he had escaped with only minor injuries –

just a broken leg and some abrasions on his chin – but he would never recover.

Mrs. Hsiao rushed straight to the hospital as soon as she received the call, but she was kept in the dark for the next twenty hours, never knowing how serious her son's condition was. She could only sit and wait outside the intensive care unit, standing up to talk to his lifeless body whenever the doors opened briefly as someone stepped in or out. Finally, after nearly a full day of waiting, a sympathetic doctor let her in to see her son. Reviewing his chart, the doctor announced that Chih Chien was brain-dead. Even if he lived, he would always be a vegetable.

"If he's lucky, he'll have two to three days. Otherwise, he may die in a few hours," the doctor told her. "You should be prepared. Give it some thought now: When the time comes and the machines can no longer sustain his life, do you want emergency rescue procedures to be done on him?"

"Are you sure there is no hope?"

"None. Most likely he will die."

"Then, no. The shocks of defibrillation will just be additional pain to him. I will have to think

about whether or not to donate his organs."

Her consideration of organ donation was noble, but unfortunately the doctor mentioned it to Chih Chien's primary physician a little too quickly, and the primary physician told the hospital's social worker even quicker. The social worker immediately came over to tell Mrs. Hsiao about the monetary benefits of donation: "I hear you're considering organ donation. The hospital expenses here will all be free, and there are all kinds of subsidies."

Mrs. Hsiao was repulsed. She blurted out, "I have money! I am not selling my son!"

Feeling that this hospital was no longer interested in saving her son, but only harvesting his organs, Mrs. Hsiao asked to transfer him to another hospital. But no other hospital they contacted would accept a patient in his condition. Meanwhile, Chih Chien's grandmother was praying hard for her grandson and received spiritual guidance: "help lies in the southwest." Soon, the Hsiao family learned that a new Tzu Chi Hospital had just opened a few months prior, in the southwest.

Mrs. Hsiao was able to contact Dharma Master Cheng Yen, whose words gave her



On January 2, 2012, the Donate Life float travels along Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, California. Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

www.us.tzuchi.org

tremendous warmth and confidence. The Master told her not to think about organ donation. She promised that Tzu Chi Hospital would form the best team they could to try to save this young and vibrant life.

Arriving at the emergency room of Tzu Chi Hospital late that night, Mrs. Hsiao saw rows of doctors and nurses lined up to receive them. She was thankful and greatly relieved. "You are saved, my son!" she whispered. Urged to go home and take a badly needed rest, she did so with high hopes and a light heart.

The team at Tzu Chi Hospital did all they could, but the original doctor's prognosis proved correct. A few days later, Chih Chien's life ended and his parents decided to donate his organs. Mr. Hsiao remembers his son as a positive, sunny, lovable person who was always thinking of others, so he feels that organ donation was the proper way to carry this spirit forward even after death. Right through his final moments, Chih Chien stayed strong to help others. A doctor recalls that "his heart was still beating strong, as if he wanted to maintain his life so his organs could be in their best condition." The whole team of doctors was grateful and deeply moved by his gift.

Finding Her Son Again

After Chih Chien's death, Mrs. Hsiao blamed herself for the accident. If she had continued to drive him to school every morning, as she had done his entire life, she knew he never would have crashed. For the next year, she drove to his college early each morning, always hoping to find him in the crowd, hoping that his death was just a dream.

Eighteen months later, Mrs. Hsiao was still having trouble sleeping. Kept awake by insomnia, she turned on the television late one night in April 2006. Flipping through the late-night programming, Mrs. Hsiao encountered a rerun of a program about organ donation

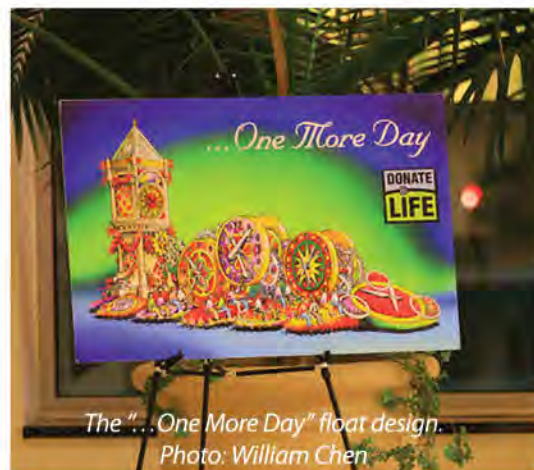
on Da Ai TV, Tzu Chi's television station. In the program, a man talked about receiving a liver transplant from a young man in December 2005 at Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital.

"The doctor said I had only two or three months to live. But thanks to this young man, I now have a second chance. My children don't have to grow up with just one parent."

As Mrs. Hsiao watched this stranger express his gratitude to the donor's family, tears began to stream down her face.

"Thank you for your great love. I will take care of this body and strive to do my best, for him." As she heard him speak, Mrs. Hsiao felt that her son had found a way to communicate with her. She stared at the television and said, "My son, I know it's you. You're telling me you're fine."

Not long after, Tzu Chi held an Appreciation Memorial Concert to honor organ donors. The Hsiao family had far to travel and arrived late to the event. As they arrived, Mrs. Hsiao was crushed to find out that the video about her son had already been shown. She broke down and cried loudly; she had not traveled that far only to miss her son's story. Realizing what had happened, the event organizers asked everyone for their patience and consideration, then replayed the video to honor the Hsiao family.



The "... One More Day" float design.
Photo: William Chen



The Hsiao family compares Chih Chien's photograph and portrait. Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

After the video, Mrs. Hsiao was called onto the stage along with representatives from other donor families. There, she recognized the man she saw from the television. She kept staring at him, and he at her. As she walked toward him, the medical team lined up anxiously beside them, not knowing what to expect.

Finally, she told the man, "I would like to touch my son."

The man lifted his shirt on the right side, and said simply, "He's here."

Mrs. Hsiao lightly touched his scar, and truly felt the spirit of her son living on. Before they parted that day, she asked of the man three requests: "First, take good care of yourself – each day you're around, my son is around. Remember that the day my son died is the day you were reborn, so please chant some sutras that day on his behalf. Finally, please let me see you at least once a year."

Mrs. Hsiao reports that as the years have passed, the man looks younger and younger at each subsequent meeting. "What do you expect? He is a forty-eight-year-old man with an eighteen-year-old liver!" Seeing the impact of her son's gift, Mrs. Hsiao was able to move on.

Just Imagine... One More Day

Over time, Mr. and Mrs. Hsiao joined Tzu Chi and began to become more and more involved with volunteering. Mrs. Hsiao estimates that she has shared her story more than 150 times to different groups at various events. She has made a lot of progress over the years, but still



Chih Chien's mother and sister add the finishing touches to his portrait. Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

cannot keep from crying when she recounts her son's final hours. For several years now, she has fought through the tears to convey the importance of organ donation to audiences all around her home country. In 2012, the Hsiao family was able to take Chih Chien's story abroad for the first time, by participating in the 123rd Rose Parade.

OneLegacy, the world's largest organ and tissue recovery organization, has long partnered with Tzu Chi to promote the benefits of organ donation to the public. In 2004, OneLegacy began annually entering a float into the Rose Parade to raise awareness for organ donation. The idea was proposed by a grateful lung recipient who realized that celebrating life was the best way to thank his donor. Celebrating life led him to thinking about celebrating the New Year, and thus the Donate Life float was born.

Tzu Chi volunteers began decorating and supporting the Donate Life float several years ago, and in 2011, OneLegacy decided that the following year's float would feature a non-American donor for the first time: Chih Chien Hsiao. Chih Chien's father, mother, sister, and grandfather all traveled to Pasadena, California, in December 2011 to participate in float decoration. When they met organ recipients and other donor families at the decorating location, they felt a strong bond immediately. Though different languages hindered their communication, love and a shared experience connected them.

The theme of the 2012 Rose Parade was "Just Imagine..." Donate Life completed the thought with "...One More Day." Imagine how

much each of the families would love to spend one more day with their loved ones. To honor the departed, six clocks on the floats featured twelve donor portraits each: one at each hour. A total of seventy-two donors were thus honored: seventy-two people who extended their lives by donating their organs and other body parts so that others could live. Their portraits were modeled after photographs and composed of ground seeds and dried flowers; the making of the portraits was an honor reserved for the organ donors' families.

Though the Hsiao spent a full day crafting Chih Chien's portrait they were never quite satisfied with the rendition: in Chih Chien's photo, his lips held a faint but clear smile, but in seeds they seemed slightly upset. Sensing their disappointment and frustration, Sabrina Ho, Media Relations Specialist of OneLegacy, brought in an artist to help, until finally the whole family was pleased with the extreme likeness.

Chih Chien's face looked out at the audience from three o'clock on the large middle clock. These clocks carried special meanings. The hands on one spun quickly to remind everyone that life moves quickly and should be cherished. On another, they turned backwards: going back to let donor families imagine just one more day with their loved ones. During the judging session before the parade, the judges lingered at Donate Life, studying each photograph and learning each donor's story. They awarded Donate Life with the Judges' Special Trophy for outstanding showmanship and dramatic impact.

One day before the Rose Parade, the decorated floats were put on display for the public. Two little girls stopped in front of the Donate Life Float and curiously asked their mother, "Who are these people in the pictures?"

"These are brave organ donors, the mother explained. "They gave away their bodies when they died so that other people could live. They are heroes." 🌿

Those who give love to others will be loved by countless others.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



Chih Chien's family poses with the float. His portrait is at 3:00 on the middle clock. Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

A Note from Chih Chien's Sister

Six years ago, my twin brother had an accident on his way to school. My mother made a wise decision for him: she signed an agreement to donate his organs and tissue. Although I lost a brother that day, I also gained many new brothers.

When we saw my brother's portrait hanging on the float, my parents and I were so excited. We knew that it was a stage to let everybody see him and also to let everyone learn a little bit about organ donation.

In the twenty-first century, people have to change their way of thinking. Donating organs can help a lot of people. It is not creepy, but a holy behavior. The future is unpredictable: if an accident happens, we should not be afraid of making the same decision as my brother.

I am truly grateful for this chance to attend the Rose Parade with OneLegacy and Tzu Chi. It was an unforgettable journey in my life.

- Darice Hsiao



Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin

Organ Donation: A Legacy of Love

When Chih Chien Hsiao's organs were donated, a tragedy turned into a blessing for more than sixty patients and their families. His legacy of love continues to live on in all the recipients who were made whole with donated organs.

Chih Chien's major organs saved the lives of six people directly, and his skin and tissue were transplanted to sixty others. These sixty are just those who were physically touched. There are others who have heard or read his story and decided to become organ donors themselves. The ripple effect has already begun.

For many years, Tzu Chi Medical Foundation has been working together with OneLegacy, a non-profit organ and tissue recovery organization, to serve recipients and donor families in the United States. In March 2011, Tzu Chi signed an agreement with the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO) to jointly promote and educate people around the country about organ donation.

You too can impact the lives of people in need of organ and tissue transplants. For more information on organ donation or to register as an organ donor, please visit register.donatelifecalifornia.org/TzuChiFoundation.



We do not have ownership of our life, only the privilege of using it.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



Dharma as Water: Great Repentance

Drawing upon Buddhist wisdom, Dharma Master Cheng Yen has asked her followers to deepen their practice of Buddhist principles in daily life through reflection and repentance. She has stressed that the Buddhist teachings are not abstract theories, but concrete and applicable principles that are medicine for our times.

To Tzu Chi volunteers engaged in humanitarian works, she has emphasized that while they are doing good for the community, the inner work of purifying their hearts and minds is even more vital, for everything begins from the heart and mind. Our thoughts determine our actions, and our actions create the world we live in.

Our World, Our Heart, and Our Buddha-Nature:

Introducing the Repentance Practice

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks

Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team

Looking around our world, we see so much chaos, unrest, misery, and suffering. Why? The Buddha, with his enlightened wisdom, tells us that it is because living beings' hearts are full of impurities such as greed, hatred, and delusion. Yet the Buddha also says that all living beings have the Buddha-nature—the capacity for the same enlightened understanding, wisdom, and insight as a Buddha.

In the stillness of a dark starry night, just before the breaking of dawn, Shakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment under a bodhi tree – penetrating all the laws governing the universe. But the great truth that the Buddha awakened to is that all living beings possess this same capacity for

enlightenment. In fact, such awakening is living beings' true nature. It is our truest, most natural, and original state.

Yet, why is it that we remain our mundane selves and cannot have the Buddha's wisdom and enlightened understanding? It is because since beginningless time we have accumulated many impurities. Our mind is like a mirror, the impurities like dust covering over the mirror. Under this layer of dust, the mirror can no longer reflect objects clearly. Our inner mirror, due to the impurities clouding it, can no longer show us life's true principles. As a result, we confuse right and wrong and do improper things, creating negative karma.

Each action we take has its impact on our community, our society, and our world, and this impact is cumulative. Together, the actions of every one of us have collective impact and bring about collective consequences – this is "collective karma." Our damage to the environment is an example of this – our activities have already brought about climate change which has upset Nature's balance and is causing many disasters. Meanwhile, moral values and ethics in society at large are also becoming eroded. It is not just one individual; the values of our entire society are changing, disintegrating. Looking mindfully, we can see the reality of this. Collectively, we have already built up a lot of negative collective karma.


What can we do to reverse this? We need to return to the source of what is causing it – our hearts – and carefully reflect on our behavior. We need to wake up and change what we are doing. This is what I mean when I call on everyone to repent. Repenting is to recognize our errors and vow to do differently. Repentance cleanses our hearts and minds, cleaning that inner mirror so that it can become clear and bright. Repenting and starting anew is the only way that we can turn around our current pattern of creating negative karma.

I often say that **the Dharma is like water that can clean our hearts of impurities**; practicing repentance is to use this water to clean our hearts and minds. This starts with learning the Dharma. Then, we must reflect on ourselves and work on our unwholesome habits and tendencies. Just saying "I repent"

is not enough—truly repenting and living the practice means changing our ways. When we truly repent, we open our hearts towards others and approach situations with greater love, understanding, tolerance, and forgiveness.

If we do not work on our unwholesome habits, we will continue to make mistakes and accumulate more impurities in our hearts, making it more and more difficult for us to awaken and return to our true enlightened nature, our Buddha-nature.

In daily life, we should take care not to let the mirror of our minds accumulate any more dust. We need to realize the ways we create negative karma through our actions, our words, and our thoughts, and take better care of the actions of our body, speech, and mind. If we can practice in this way, reflecting on ourselves and living out the principles of the Dharma, we will experience a great sense of spiritual joy, peace, and inner freedom. As the Buddha told us, the Buddha-nature – the nature of awakening – is our true nature. We can begin to recover this true nature through practicing repentance.

It is my heartfelt wish that all people can begin practicing repentance. As we start to transform ourselves, we can begin to transform our world. With the planetary emergency we face, it is most urgent that we practice. Though humankind has already built up a lot of negative collective karma, if we can understand the law of karma and truly practice repentance to purify our hearts and minds, we can begin to turn things around. 

Taking up the Practice of Repentance

Han Huang

In April 2003, Dharma Master Cheng Yen began a lecture series called "Dharma as Water." Over the course of 535 episodes, Master Cheng Yen expounded on the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra to offer us all an opportunity to use the water of Dharma to wash away the defilements accumulated in our hearts and minds. After the series ended in 2008, Master Cheng Yen moved on to lessons from another sutra. But she soon realized that the lessons of repentance taught through "Dharma as Water" were still urgently needed. On March 9, 2011, two days before a devastating earthquake struck Japan, she began the series anew.

What Dharma Master Cheng Yen expects from everyone is that through Great Repentance, we can take on vegetarianism, enter into the Buddha's teachings, cleanse the defilements from our hearts, and eliminate our bad habits. When we first started promoting Great Repentance among volunteers in the United States, people often asked, "What is there to repent for?" What a question! This is the problem with our time: we cannot tell right from wrong. When so many people are doing

wrong things, it is very difficult to know what is right.

In the past few years, the extent of climate change and the frequency and intensity of natural disasters are truly beyond belief. In my memory, most earthquakes in the past were fairly minor tremors. But in the news today, we see major quakes striking one after another – 6.0, 7.0, even 8.8 and 9.0! We hear of floods that seem to start at the first drops of rain. We see wildfires and tornadoes raging all around. Greenhouse gases constantly warm the earth, and climate change causes great calamities. Compounded by our never-ending development, natural disasters are truly without end. Humanity thirsts for convenience and enjoyment: what we want exceeds what we need, so our habits and desires bring about catastrophes.

Most people are essentially good, but even a good person's life is not completely without wrongs. For example, everyone knows that if we carry our own reusable bags when we go grocery shopping, we can reduce pollution and damage to the earth by not using plastic



Volunteers in San Dimas, California, sing and perform sign language for a song based on the Dharma as Water Teachings in November 2011. Photo: Audrey Cheng

bags. But how many people actually do it? I ask this question whenever I speak to a group, and usually only five to ten percent tell me that they carry their own shopping bags.

Similarly, almost everyone knows the many health and environmental advantages of eating a vegetarian diet. But how many people really do it? How many lives have to be extinguished because we cannot put aside our temporary pleasures? How much grain needs to be given to animals that we will eat, instead of being given to people who need to eat? How much warmer does the earth need to become because of emissions from the cattle industry? Since most people will not take on the responsibility to put these things into practice, poor Mother Earth must silently bear the consequences of our actions while the next generation is left helpless.

When we look at it this way, it becomes clear that there are many things in our lives that are in need of repentance. Like dust accumulated over years of neglect, our bad habits are hard to clear away. When our clothes become dirty, we wash them. But when our hearts become polluted, we remain indifferent or even unaware. The karmic law of cause and effect is infallible, so Dharma Master Cheng Yen continually reminds us that in times of great change, we must clearly recognize right and wrong.

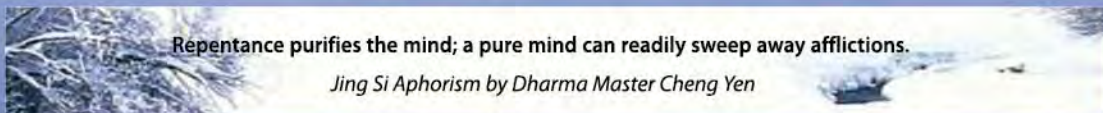
So, how can we turn around our bad habits? We can do it through repentance. Starting from deep within our hearts, we must focus our determination and correct our actions. Not only can this eliminate evil causes and reduce evil effects, it can also increase beneficial causes and launch a cycle of goodness. Habits are built not in a day but over a lifetime, so they are hard to eliminate. But with the strength of a group – with everyone working together and

giving each other guidance – it can become a little easier.

In the past few months, many Tzu Chi volunteers have been looking deeply into themselves and even openly repenting. They have been bravely and diligently correcting the past and cultivating the future. Through study groups on the Master's teachings, many have been supporting each other and reminding each other of their goals. Many have then committed to become vegetarian for the rest of their lives: a highly commendable act. There are many examples. One couple turned vegetarian on their thirtieth wedding anniversary. A considerate daughter has vowed to call her father every day to remind him to eat vegetarian. I know that when some people feel they can no longer withstand the temptation of meat, others are there by their sides to support and cheer them on.

The spirit of these volunteers is admirable, for they are not only studying the teachings in the sutras; they are also living out these teachings in their daily lives. Master Cheng Yen often reminds us, "Sutras point to the Way, and the Way is a Path to be walked on." Just understanding the teachings is not enough, it is more important to put them into action. As one of Master Cheng Yen's Jing Si Aphorisms tells us, "Blessing is experiencing joy through action. Wisdom is gaining spiritual freedom through understanding."

I thank the many volunteers from all around the United States who have taken these teachings to heart by participating in study groups and putting the lessons into action in their daily lives. I hope that you too will consider Master Cheng Yen's Dharma as Water teachings on Great Repentance and work toward a better life and a better world. 🌱



Repentance purifies the mind; a pure mind can readily sweep away afflictions.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Reflect on the Past, Repent for the Future

Wilson Hsing

Master Cheng Yen teaches us that we should always remember our past mistakes, understand them through reflection, and fix them through repentance.

One day in fall 2009, I went to McFarland, California, for a medical outreach event. McFarland is a small rural town outside Bakersfield, about three hours driving distance from Buddhist Tzu Chi Free Clinic in Alhambra. Typically, volunteers set off from the clinic at around seven in the morning and arrive at the venue by ten. The event ends at three in the afternoon, so that we can return home before seven.

On that particular day, I was assigned to be a dental assistant. My main job was assembling the mobile dental units that the dentists used to treat their patients. At the end of the day, I also assisted in cleaning and disassembling all the mobile dental units before they were shipped back to the clinic.

We planned to close the clinic at three. Since treatment requests had already started to slow down by half past two, we dental assistant volunteers decided to start the clean-up process early. Just after I finished packing up the last mobile unit, a Hispanic lady in her seventies came to us and requested treatment. As we had already finished cleaning, I asked her to come back for treatment during our next visit in three months.

Right next to me stood Dr. Helen. Ignoring my careless response, she asked the patient to open her mouth. After a brief examination, Dr. Helen told me that the patient had a badly

If we can learn from our faults through reflection and repentance, we will not make the same mistakes again.

decayed tooth. Based on the patient's age and the severity of the decay, if her tooth was not extracted immediately, she might not make it to our next outreach visit.

Begrudgingly, I unpacked a service unit and prepared all the equipment necessary for the extraction. Since the lady had not come with proper registration, I also proceeded to fill out her registration information. Following the extraction, I took her to the pharmacy to receive her prescription drugs. I returned to clean and pack the equipment, and soon was approached again by the old lady. Though she was clearly not very comfortable with English, she looked me right in the eye and said, "Thank you very much."

At that moment, I was overwhelmed with regret. When she first came to me, I should have efficiently coordinated her treatment. Why should I just send her away? As Dr. Helen



The author teaches good dental hygiene habits to students at Tzu Chi Academy, Irvine, in January 2009. Photo: Yijuan Lo



Volunteers unpack supplies during a medical outreach in February 2010. Photo: Shengping Liu



The author assists a dental patient during an outreach event in Rosamond, California, in December 2008. Photo: Liliane Yong

discovered, with the infection in her tooth, she might not survive another three months. If not for Dr. Helen's care, my improper action could have cost this woman her life.

This experience has weighed on me ever since. After that incident, I have often relived scenes from that day in my mind. Now, it brings to mind a story in the Water Repentance Sutra. The author of the sutra, Master Wu-Da, was a disciplined scholar for ten generations, and success in his current life brought him fame and wealth. But when he became arrogant for just a moment, his karma caused a human-faced tumor to appear on his leg. The only way he could be cured was through cleansing with Dharma-water: through reflection and repentance.

Life is like a crossroad: choosing a different path or making a different decision will always

land us at a very different outcome. Throughout our lives, we pass through many crossroads. We will not always choose the correct path, but all of our decisions bring us karma. If we can learn from our faults through reflection and repentance, we will not make the same mistakes again.

In late 2011, I returned to the same venue for another medical outreach. At nearly three o'clock, after I had already finished most of the packing, a Hispanic couple came to us requesting dental treatment. The husband told us that his wife needed a tooth extraction. After reviewing her dental records, I discovered that it had already been six months since a doctor first recommended the extraction. Without any hesitation, I unpacked the dental equipment and asked around for a dentist to remove her teeth. My memory of the old lady in 2009 kept me from making the same mistake again. 🌿

Cleanse the mind with repentance by washing away past mistakes and bad karma. Constantly be vigilant and self-reflect. Do not forego good deeds because they are small. Do not commit evils because they are small.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma-Master Cheng Yen



The Story of Master Wu-Da and the Water Repentance Sutra

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Compiled into English by the Dharma as Water Editorial Team

Why do virtuous people sometimes encounter great misfortune? The reason is that our actions in this lifetime bear fruit in future lifetimes, and “bad luck” in this life is just residual karma from previous lives. This is the law of cause and effect. The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra, written by Dharma Master Wu-Da,¹ explains it this way:

During the Tang Dynasty, a monk named Zhixuan was traveling from temple to temple when he met another monk whose whole body was riddled with festering sores. This monk had been very ill for a long time, and most people dared not go near him.

Zhixuan could not bear to see this monk suffer. So he stayed with the monk and washed him and cared for him. After the monk recovered, he said, “I am very grateful. I want to repay you. If you ever encounter difficulties, please come to Jiulong Mountain. You will find me by two pine trees.”

Young Zhixuan thought, “I only wanted to ease your suffering. How could I ask for anything in return?” But he merely said, “If I ever need help, I will come to Jiulong Mountain.”

Time passed and Zhixuan remained diligent in his spiritual practice. He mastered the teachings of the Buddhist canon and meticulously upheld the precepts. Word of his virtue reached Emperor Yizong, who invited him to expound the Dharma. After hearing Zhixuan, the emperor gave him the title “Imperial Dharma Master Wu-Da.”

To express his supreme respect for Imperial Dharma Master Wu-Da, the emperor presented

him with a sandalwood Dharma-throne to sit upon while lecturing. When Master Wu-Da saw this throne, a trace of arrogance arose in his heart. As he joyfully approached the throne, he struck his knee on the chair. A bruise appeared. Then the bruise became inflamed. Then the inflammation became a boil shaped like a human face, with a nose and mouth. The emperor summoned famous physicians to treat Wu-Da to no avail.

Wu-Da suffered tremendously, and he reflected on his predicament. He knew that it was karma, but how could he eliminate this karma? As he pondered, he remembered the sick monk. Suddenly the monk’s parting words took on a profound meaning. And so he set off on a journey to Jiulong Mountain.

When Master Wu-Da arrived, he dismissed his attendants and walked up the mountain. Between two pine trees he saw a towering, dignified temple and the monk, standing there radiantly, waiting to receive him.

After they greeted each other, Master Wu-Da explained that he was suffering from a human-faced boil. “Don’t worry,” the monk said. “It is late. Tomorrow you can wash, and you will be fine.”

Early the next morning, a young novice brought Wu-Da to the foot of the mountain. There was a pond of exceptionally clear water with which the novice instructed him to wash.

Master Wu-Da quickly bent down to fetch water when all of a sudden he heard a voice. It seemed to be the human-faced boil speaking.

1. The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra (慈悲三昧水懺) was written by Dharma Master Wu-Da (悟達國師) in the

ninth century, during the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 AD). “Samadhi” is the Buddhist concept of mental concentration.

Storytelling by the Master



"Wait. Listen to me first. You are a well-read scholar. You must know the story of how Yuan Ang had Chao Cuo executed?"²

"Yes, I know the story. It happened a long time ago."

"Did you know that you were Yuan Ang and I was Chao Cuo? Do you remember that you had me killed in the East City?"

Master Wu-Da remembered the record from the ancient books of how Yuan Ang had deceived Chao Cuo. As Wu-Da stood there lost in thought, an image flashed before his mind: as the executioner's blade came down, Chao Cuo opened his mouth to curse, but his body had already fallen to the floor. A rock landed in his mouth and was crushed to pieces by the force of his resentment.

The human-faced boil said, "At that moment, we formed a karmic connection of great hatred. I vowed revenge. But right afterwards you dedicated yourself to spiritual practice, and for the next ten lifetimes you upheld the precepts with such precision that I had no chance. Then, when the emperor presented you with the Dharma-throne, a hint of arrogance crept into you. The gate of karma opened and I seized this opportunity. I have followed you for the last ten lifetimes. I myself could not be free of this entanglement. I have suffered unspeakably. But now, Venerable Kanaka has taught you to use the Samadhi-water to wash yourself, and it has loosened the knots in my heart. From this day on, the hatred between us will be eliminated completely."

To Master Wu-Da, this all felt like a dream. Collecting himself, he quickly washed himself with the water. As he did so, the pain was so excruciating that he fainted. When he awoke, the human-faced boil had disappeared. Filled with gratitude, he went to thank the monk. But when he returned to the temple, neither the monk nor the temple was there.

The sick monk was actually a manifestation of the Venerable Kanaka, one of Buddha's great disciples who, foreseeing that Zhixuan would face this karmic retribution, appeared as a sick monk to test Zhixuan's compassion and so resolve his karma.

The teachings of Venerable Kanaka were like pure water. Not only did they heal his wound, they also cleansed his accumulated karma. From then on, Master Wu-Da stayed at Jiulong Mountain, where he built an abode and engaged in peaceful spiritual practice. With utmost reverence, he created the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra, which teaches us how to purify our hearts.

All thoughts and actions of sentient beings become karma. We often hear people say, "I understand; I will change." But if they only change their behavior and not their minds, their karma cannot be eliminated. If a highly-accomplished monk of ten lifetimes still had to be wary of karmic retribution, how much more cautious must we ordinary people be? The teachings tell us that when we face our karmic retributions, they will be exhausted. Therefore we should joyfully accept suffering in life. 🌿

2. Yuan Ang and Chao Cuo were rival advisors to an early emperor of the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD). They lived approximately one thousand years before Dharma Master Wu-Da.

Overture to Dharma as Water: Perfect and Radiant Buddha-Nature

法譬如水序曲：一性圓明自然
fǎ pì rú shuǐ xù qǔ: yī xìng yuán míng zì rán



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

In the dark night, the stars glitter

夜 闌 長 空 燦 爛
yè lán cháng kōng càn làn

The Milky Way is filled with light

銀 河 繁 星 點 點
yín hé fán xīng diǎn diǎn

The four seasons, day and night revolve

四 時 晝 夜 循 環
sì shí zhòu yè xún huán

Dharma-nature pervades the vast universe

法 性 天 地 人 間
fǎ xìng tiān dì rén jiān

Living beings are many and varied

蠢 動 含 靈 多 樣
chǔn dòng hán líng duō yàng

Living, breathing, and resting as one

同 生 同 息 同 眠
tóng shēng tóng xī tóng mián

Conditions arise and cease; everything is impermanent

緣 起 緣 滅 無 常
yuán qǐ yuán miè wú cháng

Evil causes, conditions, and retributions

惡 因 惡 報 惡 緣
è yīn è bào è yuán

No matter how subtle, must be clearly recognized

必 須 纖 毫 明 鑑
bì xū xiān háo míng jiàn

The Law of Karma is infallible

因 果 歷 歷 不 爽
yīn guǒ lì lì bú shuǎng

For the karma we have created, we must repent

造 業 豈 能 不 懺
zào yè qǐ néng bú chǎn

When there is no wind, no wave arises

風 平 不 起 波 瀾
fēng píng bú qǐ bō lán

In the absolute stillness of this Dharma-realm

靜 寂 法 界 充 滿
jìng jì fǎ jiè chōng mǎn

The perfect and radiant Buddha-nature pervades all

一 性 圓 明 自 然
yī xìng yuán míng zì rán



Six tornados swept 150 mile-per-hour winds through central Alabama on January 23, 2012, causing two deaths and damaging fifteen hundred homes. On January 27, Tzu Chi volunteers from Atlanta traveled two hundred miles to assess the situation for future relief work. Photo: Youzhu Liao

On November 30, 2011, a violent windstorm in Southern California uprooted trees and toppled power lines, causing road closures, power outages, and shutting of schools. On December 15, Tzu Chi volunteers in Arcadia started a Disaster Preparedness & Neighborhood Watch, inviting their neighbors to learn how to prepare for disasters. Photo: Luca Ye



▲ On December 25, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers conducted a winter relief distribution at the CityTeam shelter in Oakland, California. They cooked and served hot meals and distributed warm clothing to help local homeless brace for the cold winter. Photo: Zherong Xu



▲ Each year, Tzu Chi offers free vaccinations to the public at its free clinics. On December 18, 2011, Tzu Chi Free Clinic in Honolulu, Hawaii, provided flu vaccinations to people of low-income and those without medical insurance. Photo: Edgar Wu



The holiday season can be a lonely time for many senior citizens at the Golden Living Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On December 4, 2011, students and parents from Tzu Chi Academy visited the residents, bringing smiles to their faces with cheerful songs, games, and gifts. Photo: Lǔxiào Chen



▲ On November 20, 2011, during a regular care visit to The Salvation Army Shelter in Cleveland, Ohio, Tzu Chi volunteers cooked three hundred hot meals for residents. A first-time volunteer observed that when you put aside your ego to serve with both hands, you grow from the experience. Photo: Mingxun Hong



▲ On November 19, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers in Long Island, New York, held their annual winter clothing drive for low-income families and the homeless at St. Anne's Church. Volunteers also visit the church once a month to provide two hundred hot vegetarian meals for those in need. Photo: Jiaxin Zhang

Due to a shortage of flu vaccinations, the Asian Chamber of Commerce applied for one hundred doses from the Nevada Health Department so that Tzu Chi could give out free flu shots in Las Vegas. The department not only granted the request, but also dispatched a nurse to administer the shots. With this support, Tzu Chi's Las Vegas Branch Office offered free flu shots and hepatitis B screenings to local residents on November 30, 2011. Photo: Huiyi Cen





▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Dallas, Texas, teamed up with Qiaoguan Supermarket on December 10-11, 2011, to raise funds for flood victims in Thailand and Central America. Stationed near the supermarket entrance, volunteers sold a variety of popular homemade Chinese snacks made with ingredients donated by Qiaoguan Supermarket. Photo: Pengfei Wu



▲ On December 10, 2011, Northern California Tzu Chi volunteers held their fourth annual relief distribution at the Day Worker Center of Mountain View. In addition to clothing, shoes, toys, and blankets, volunteers also distributed pocket Spanish-English dictionaries to fifty-three families of farm workers from Mexico. Photo: Zhenrong Sun



◀ Before dawn on November 10, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers and the United Way canvassed the streets of downtown Atlanta, Georgia, distributing eco-friendly blankets and encouraging homeless people to move into city shelters. Further assistance will also be provided to help these people stay off the streets. Photo: Peter Yeh



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Missouri distributed 120 eco-friendly blankets to international refugees at the International Institute of St. Louis on November 19, 2011. Over the past sixteen years, volunteers have helped more than two thousand refugee families from Asia, Europe, and Africa through winter distributions. Photo: Shengyen Xu

The Road to Zero Waste

Justin Scott



Kim Alexander looks over piles of trash left by campers over three days at the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival. Photo: Jeff Chen

Late at night in Last Chance, Colorado, I found myself lying on the floor of a church sanctuary, resting on worn mustard-colored pew cushions spread across the carpet as a makeshift bed. Worn down by an exhausting day of filming, I stretched my legs to force a kink out of my wobbly knees. Wen Ren, one of the directors of the US Tzu Chi 360 television program, and I had arrived in Last Chance the day before to record the inspirational travels of Pick Up America, a group of young volunteers traveling across America picking up trash. Our first tiring day was now in the books.

Pick Up America was founded in 2009 by Jeff Chen and Davey Rogner, classmates and

friends at the University of Maryland. It is the brainchild of Jeff Chen, who conceived the idea to walk across the country picking up litter during a trip to Yosemite National Park. As he





*The Pick Up America crew begins their journey on March 20, 2010, at Assateague Island, Maryland.
Photo: Amy Dewan*



hiked a steep trail, he noticed litter all along the path. If it were possible to find trash even in our national parks, he mused, how much would you find on an American highway? On the way back down the trail, he picked up every single piece of litter he saw, and the Pick Up America movement began to form in his mind. Shortly after returning home to Maryland, he contacted Davey and explained his vision for the project. Davey, an outspoken environmentalist and activist himself, agreed to join Jeff on his journey. Pick Up America was born.

After a year spent establishing their non-profit organization, drawing out plans, and inspiring others to join in the journey, Jeff, Davey,

and several other inspired "Pick-Up Artists" hit the road in March 2010, starting from Maryland's Atlantic coast and walking due west. Since then, Pick Up America has traversed 2,053 miles across nine states while picking up 145,390 pounds – more than seventy tons – of garbage from the side of the road. Despite the enormous amount of trash gathered already, their trek is not yet complete. After a brief hiatus, the Pick-Up Artists will continue on to reach the San Francisco Bay by November 2012.

Along their journey, Jeff and Davey are joined by volunteers, both young and old, who have been inspired by their vision for a cleaner, sustainable America. Despite the seriousness of the task ahead, Jeff is the first to joke that the very act of traveling thousands of miles while picking up trash is an exercise that can be both monotonous and pointless. Each day, they pick up hundreds of pounds of the same plastic straws, aluminum cans, plastic bags, blown-out tires, Styrofoam plates, and plastic bottles: seventy tons worth so far, all of it along a single path, cutting through only nine states. But their actions, and the copious amounts of waste they find along the way, serve as a vehicle to raise awareness for the burgeoning environmentalist movement known as "zero waste." The simple question they hope to plant in people's minds is "why do we even have trash?"



During a lunch break in Ashland, Kentucky, Jeff Chen inspects a plastic graveyard on the Ohio River. Photo: Amy Dewan

2,053 miles walked across nine states so far

145,390 pounds of litter removed from the roadways of America

Along the way, people in the towns and cities they pass through have been inspired by their message. Many offer their homes, and more often their churches, to accommodate the crew as they travel through and clean local roads. This is how I wound up on a sanctuary floor trying to recuperate from a tiring day of filming. I adjusted my position on the old pew cushion and peered out across the sanctuary to find Jeff casually thumbing through a novel, apparently immune to the physical consequences of walking for miles while picking up trash along the frigid, wind-swept highways of rural Colorado in the oppressive November cold. After a single day of joining Jeff and his

In Pick Up America, I see my peers making changes to shape our world while inspiring people, both young and old, along the way.

loyal crew, I was about ready to collapse. But Jeff had walked the littered roadways of America for more than two years and two thousand miles, and I could not detect in him even the slightest hint of fatigue. He caught my eye and waved amiably from across the sanctuary, then flipped to the next page of his novel.

Jeff's dedication to the environment began early, inspired partly by his parents who are dedicated Tzu Chi volunteers in their Maryland community. Jeff recalls growing up in a frugal family, where every effort was made to reduce, reuse, and recycle the materials used in their home. Jeff's parents have undoubtedly played a major role in shaping his character and inspiring



*"Due West": Pick Up America's home on the road.
Photo: Wen Ren*



his efforts toward a zero-waste society, and Jeff's creation of Pick Up America has served to inspire his parents in turn. Jeff's father, Frank Chen, habitually wears his Pick Up America t-shirt whenever he goes traveling, and passes on their message to the people he encounters along the way. He has even encountered some who recognize his shirt and profess their fondness for the movement.

To Jeff, Davey, and the rest of the Pick-Up Artists, the very notion of trash is an outdated concept. In such an advanced and technologically proficient world, they ask, why must we make things like Styrofoam plates and plastic straws that are used for only a few minutes, but pollute our land and water forever? Why not use our resources in such a way that they can all continue to serve us? These are not just the visions of a young idealist, but a roadmap for a more efficient and sustainable society. Today, America stands alone as the most wasteful country on the planet. The litter along our roads is not just discarded material, but also a symbol of our disposable culture and excess consumption.

Wen and I spent over a week with the Pick-Up Artists, documenting practically every minute of their lives on the road. Although our task was to objectively document their actions, it was impossible to separate ourselves from

the experience itself and the fervor and excitement of working with six bright, opinionated minds. After eating, traveling, and living with the group for eight days while witnessing the fruits of their labor and the people they impacted along the way, I believe I speak for both Wen and myself when I write that our journey was truly a transformative experience. So often my generation is accused of apathy and malaise. In Pick Up America, I see my peers making changes to shape our world while inspiring people, both young and old, along the way.

Pick Up America reached the two-thousandth mile of their journey in Last Chance, Colorado. On a grassy hill by the side of Highway 35, they opened a bottle of champagne to celebrate the milestone and sprayed the foamy liquid all around while basking in the warm light of the setting Colorado sun. I glanced over at Jeff and saw that same expression from the church sanctuary—nonchalant, yet still tranquil and content. He seemed to look longingly at the serpentine highway slithering off into the distance and out of sight. I realized that for Pick Up America and its silent leader, the mission was not one that could be calculated in miles—and there is still a long road ahead. 🌿



#28-30

For more about Pick Up America and a zero-waste life, please visit www.pickupamerica.org



The Pick-Up Artists stand by bags of trash collected at an illegal roadside dumpsite in the Appalachian Mountains. Photo: Paul Zink

CareNow LA

Phuongmai Tran

CareNow LA, a four-day event put together by sponsors and volunteers, transformed the LA Sports Arena into clinics providing medical, dental, and vision care to thousands of uninsured and underserved Americans. I volunteered at the event alongside several other UCLA Tzu Ching members. I was a translator for a Vietnamese patient. I spent the day translating what the doctors said and taking the patient from one station to another: beginning with a checkup, then vision, mammogram, and finally the pharmacy to pick up her medicine.

Speaking to the patient as we waited for doctors, I got to know more about her. She and her family immigrated to the United States from Vietnam recently, and they are on their own with no family support. Her husband knows only broken English and she knows none. Her husband has a job at a grocery store and is the sole bread winner. He not only supports the family, but also has to send money back to Vietnam where their children attend school.

Severe diabetes coupled with high blood-pressure and vision problems have prevented the patient from working, and the couple has never had a checkup since they immigrated. Only after the patient was rushed to a hospital for extremely high blood-pressure did they hear that CareNow LA would be offering free checkups.

At the end of the day, it warmed my heart as the patient's husband expressed how thankful he was to have his teeth checked and cleaned. I was touched to see the patient tear up as she received a new pair of glasses to improve her eyesight and as she learned how to better control her diabetes and hypertension.

She told me that she does not know what they would do if their health deteriorated, since they cannot afford any expensive treatments. This made me realize how lucky I am to be able to see my doctor for monthly checkups. I used to think of these as a waste of time, but I now understand how fortunate I am. It was truly a privilege to be able to assist this couple, to learn more about their story, and to witness firsthand how important CareNow LA was for uninsured and underserved people. 🌿



While working, learn. While learning,
awaken to the many truths of life.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

From October 20 to 23, 2011, Tzu Chi Medical Foundation and other major health organizations participated in CareNow LA, the largest free healthcare clinic in the United States. Over the four-day event held at the Los Angeles Sports Arena, approximately 3,700 patients received more than 6,600 medical procedures from volunteer doctors.

Tzu Chi volunteers were involved throughout the four-day event, offering a variety of free medical, dental, and vision care services to uninsured,

underinsured, and unemployed individuals and families unable to afford the care they need. Three of Tzu Chi's mobile dental vans were driven in especially for CareNow.

Debra Boudreaux, CEO of the Tzu Chi Medical Foundation, stated, "We are thrilled to be able to serve children and families who are long overdue for checkups. Although this is not a long-term solution to their healthcare needs, it is definitely making a positive impact right here, right now."



Tzu Chi volunteer dentist Dr. Richard Chang treats a patient at CareNow.
Photo: Mei-hsueh Lin



VEGGIE Sushi Rolls

Recipe provided by Chin Li Wann

Photo by Jack Yang

Ingredients:

5 cups Japanese rice
4 1/2 cups water
1 cup seasoned rice vinegar
10 sheets of nori (toasted seaweed)
Lemon juice
Carrot (boiled)
Radish (salted)

Asparagus (blanched)
Tamago (egg omelet)
Avocado
Alfalfa sprouts
Black sesame seeds

Directions:

1. Rinse rice in water until the water runs clear, then soak the rice for 30-60 minutes. Drain rice, then cook in a rice cooker with water. After the rice is cooked, slowly add 1 cup sushi vinegar and mix well. This will be the sushi rice.
2. Place a sheet of nori horizontally on a bamboo mat, smooth-side down.
3. Dampen your hands with lemon juice. Take some sushi rice in your hands and press hard to make it stick together.
4. With damp hands, press the rice flat on top of the nori, leaving 1 1/2 inch edges on the top and bottom, but pressing all the way to the sides. Make sure the rice is pressed even and smooth.
5. Cut ingredients into strips and place on the sushi rice – arrange them artfully across the center of the rice.
6. Use the mat to roll up the sushi, squeezing and tightening the mat to shape the roll.
7. To serve, slice off the ends with a very sharp and clean knife, and slice each roll into 8 equal pieces.
8. Repeat the process until all ingredients are used up.

A vegetarian diet is not only good for our health,
but also good for the Earth.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen





◀ Tzu Chi Canada volunteers visited Sheridan Villa in Mississauga, Ontario, on January 27, 2012. Through song and dance, they shared the joy of celebrating Chinese New Year with the resident senior citizens. Photo: Lijian Jia



▲ On January 8, 2012, Tzu Chi volunteers in China conducted a winter relief in Shuyang County, Jiangsu Province. Sensing the genuine warmth and caring of these volunteers, a local woman was moved to tears. Photo: Jun Lu



▲ After Typhoon Washi carried severe floods and mudslides to the southern Philippines, local Tzu Chi volunteers held a relief distribution in Cagayan de Oro on January 7, 2012. Inspired by Tzu Chi's Bamboo Bank Era, relief recipients donated what they could, using empty water bottles as bamboo banks. Photo: Bi-an Na



Tzu Chi's Singapore Branch Office held a year-end celebration at Kallang Theatre on January 7-8, 2012, to thank volunteers and the community for their continued support and assistance. Jing Si food products, eco-friendly utensils, and inspirational books were very popular at the event. Photo: Futian Li



Tzu Chi volunteers in Penang, Malaysia, held a Chinese New Year celebration and relief distribution on January 15, 2012. Care recipient families and the volunteers all enjoyed a delicious meal together. Photo: Sixian Li



▲ On January 3, 2012, Tzu Chi Hong Kong volunteers visited homeless residents of Yau Tsim Mong District on the Kowloon Peninsula and presented eco-friendly blankets to keep them warm. Photo: Jianwei Liao



▲ On December 16, 2011, teachers and students from SMA Trinitas High School in Bandung, Indonesia, visited Tzu Chi Da Ai (Great Love) School in Jakarta's Tzu Chi Da Ai First Village, to observe and learn how to do recycling on campus. Photo: Galvan

A gas explosion on January 16, 2012, resulted in a fire that destroyed more than one hundred homes in the Rawa Bebek community of Jakarta, Indonesia. On January 21, Tzu Chi volunteers went to assess the situation and plan a relief distribution. Photo: Lo Wahyuni





▲ On December 10, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers visited villagers in Maseru, Lesotho, bringing warm care and daily necessities to families in need. Photo: Meijuan Chen



▲ Tzu Chi volunteers in Thailand continue to distribute relief goods to villagers plagued by months of flooding. On January 21, 2012, volunteers went to Prome Swan Samakkee village in Bangkok and passed out straw mats and blankets. Photo: Ruilian Sang

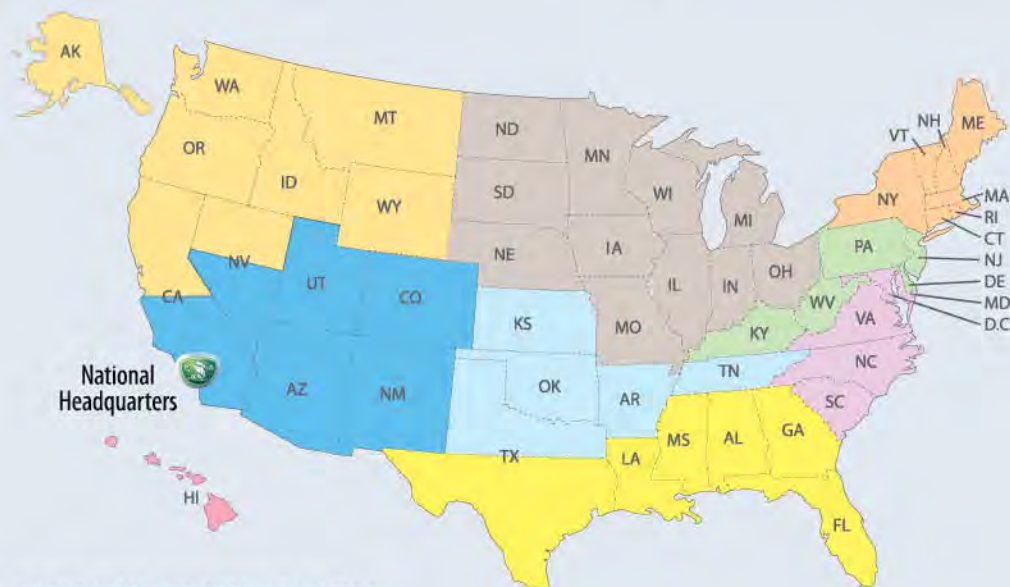


◀ On December 18, 2011, Tzu Chi volunteers in Vietnam distributed subsidies to the low-income families they regularly visit in Ho Chi Minh City. They also checked the homework of the families' students. Photo: Suyi Chen












▲ Tzu Chi New Zealand volunteers regularly visit several nursing homes. On November 21, 2011, volunteers invited senior citizens from all these locations to the branch office for an early holiday celebration. Photo: Jianzhong Li

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TZU CHI

A BRIEF HISTORY...

SPREAD THE SEEDS OF LOVE

On April 14, 1966, Venerable Master Cheng Yen founded the Tzu Chi Merits Society in Hualien with the support of 30 housewives who each put aside 50 NT cents (about two US cents) of their grocery money every day to establish a charity fund. Their objective was to provide assistance for the poor.

During the first five years, they helped a total of 31 elderly, ill, or poor people from 15 families. As word spread, more people participated and the program gathered strength. It spread beyond Hualien across the island.

Today, Tzu Chi Foundation is a non-profit organization with nearly 10 million members worldwide. The international headquarters remains in Hualien. The United States headquarters in San Dimas, California, oversees nine Tzu Chi regional chapters with more than 80 offices across the country. In keeping with its goal of inspiring volunteers to heal the world, foundation members and a network of medical providers can be found assisting in relief work all over the world, providing assistance to victims of both man-made and natural calamities.

The foundation hopes to instill in each of its members a heart filled with kindness, compassion, joy, and unconditional giving. For 45 years, Tzu Chi has concentrated on its missions of charity, medicine, education, and humanistic culture. Over the decades, the foundation has also expanded its activities to include international disaster relief, bone marrow donation, community volunteerism, and environmental conservation.



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Name : First _____ Last _____

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If you would like to become involved with Tzu Chi, please contact the local Tzu Chi office in your community.

Please refer to pages 64-66 for contact information, or visit us at www.us.tzuchi.org.

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A compassionate
heart should be as
wide as the sky and
as bright as the sun
and moon.

*Jing Si Aphorism by
Dharma Master
Cheng Yen*

Photo: Ting Fan