

Tzu Chi Holds Prayer Meeting for Victims of TransAsia Air Crash

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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On the morning of July 27, the Tzu Chi Foundation held a prayer meeting of love and blessings for the families of those who lost their loved ones in a plane crash four days earlier in Penghu island, Taiwan. It was also held for the 10 people injured in the tragedy and those whose homes were damaged when the plane fell to earth. Tzu Chi volunteers gave each family a letter of condolence from Master Cheng Yen and a sum of money to help them through their grief. They will continue to support every family with love and concern during their recovery.

On July 23, Flight GE222 of TransAsia Airways left Kaohsiung for Makung in the Penghu islands. While it was attempting a second emergency landing during bad weather, it crashed into a dozen residential buildings. Of the 58 people on board, 48 died and 10 were injured. Immediately after the crash, volunteers in Penghu went to help and comfort the injured and the families of those who had died. They also mobilized volunteers in Kaohsiung to come to Penghu to help. The foundation set up a service center at the funeral home where the bodies were kept, to be with the grieving families. The volunteers also showed their concern for the soldiers, police, marine officers and other rescue workers by providing them with hot meals. The volunteers worked for five days in a row.

Also suffering are the residents of Xixi village where the plane exploded. They felt anxious and insecure. One villager said: "we truly needed the blessings which the Tzu Chi members brought together to our village. On July 26, through the village office's radio, the Tzu Chi brothers and sisters invited everyone in the village to attend a prayer service of love and blessings for those who had passed away and to bless our village. When they heard the broadcast, the villagers were very moved."

From 8.00 a.m., the residents began to arrive at the Xixi village activities center to take part in the service. It started with a reading of the letter of condolence by Master Cheng Yen. In this, she said that she hopes that everyone will turn fear and anxiety into blessing and hurt and injury into great love. She asked that everyone work together and support each other. After many days of stress, the residents felt a sense of relief during the service; when they thought of those who had passed away, they felt a sense of fear and uncertainty and many of them wept. The letter of Master Cheng Yen brought a sense of comfort after the tragedy. Then the volunteers gave each resident whose house had been damaged an envelope with a sum of money, as consolation.

Master Cheng Yen wrote three letters -- for those whose houses were damaged, for the wounded and for the families of those who died in the crash. They were delivered in person by the Penghu volunteers, in the hope that this gathering of good and of sincere prayers will help the wounded recover as quickly as possible and comfort those who are grieving.

The Foundation said that, in future, its volunteers will continue to accompany the grieving families and give them the greatest love, help and comfort. It hopes that, with the support and

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blessing of everyone's love, they can quickly rebuild their homes and resume the happy and peaceful life they had before.