

Sister Angela Mary Doyle Has Gift For Master Cheng Yen

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Wednesday, 04 April 2012 09:23



An Irish-born nun who ran the Mater Hospitals in Brisbane for 22 years has just paid her sixth visit to an old friend, Master Cheng Yen, and had a gift for her. Sister Angela Mary Doyle donated the copyright of the Chinese version of her autobiography to the Tzu Chi Foundation.

They met in the Jing Si Abode on April 1. They have much in common – both left their hometown at an early age to devote their life to humanity, especially the poor and the sick. One is Catholic and the other Buddhist but they share the same spirit. As Master Cheng Yen put it, “no matter whether the water is in a well, stream or river, it is always water. It is the same with religions, including Christianity, Buddhism and Catholicism. They all begin with love.”

Sister Angela is 86 this year. She has known Tzu Chi since 1990; this was her sixth meeting with the Master. They have been good friends with each other for 19 years. While they cannot communicate directly, they feel in the other the same love of mankind. Sister Angela arrived in Hualien on March 31, accompanied by Sister Nuala Doyle and Ji Ya-ying, chief executive of the Tzu Chi branch in Australia. They visited the Tzu Chi University and the foundation’s middle and elementary schools. The next day they met Master Cheng Yen.

Sister Angela was born in 1926, one of a large family growing up on a farm in Cranny, County Clare in Ireland. At the age of 21, she went to Australia to join the Brisbane Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. Her early work was in teaching; but, within one year of arrival, she started nursing at the Mater Hospitals in the city. In 1966, she was appointed administrator of the three Mater Hospitals in Brisbane, a post she held for 21 years. The Mater has grown from a small group of private and public hospitals into a major health care provider in Queensland. She retired from the post in 1987 but has remained very active since then in a variety of positions in the health care field. She has received many awards from the governments of Australia and Queensland.



Many immigrants from Taiwan, especially Tzu Chi volunteers, have supported the Mater Hospital in years. The Sister and hospital also has provided medical and other services to Taiwanese. Sister Angela also helped Tzu Chi volunteers to set up offices in Sydney and Melbourne, to provide service to those who are suffering. In recognition of the volunteers’ spirit of devotion, the Mater Hospital has since 1994 declared the first Sunday of every July as Tzu Chi Day. On November 16, 2000, the hospital set a Tzu Chi Room in a 120-year-old building; it includes Master Cheng Yen’s photo, Tzu Chi’s history and an image of the Buddha treating the sick. The building is a historic monument and protected by the government.

Sister Angela told Master Cheng Yen that, when she visited Tzu Chi University, she was

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impressed by the spirit of the silent mentors, who donated their body after they passed away and would rather the medical students made a thousand wrong incisions on them than one wrong cut on their future patients. She had been an administrator of the Mater Hospitals for many years. "I was deeply touched by their love of donating the body for medical students to practice on and the feeling it engendered among the students," she said.

At the end of February, Australia was devastated by floods. Sister Angela attended the distribution held by Tzu Chi volunteers many times. "I witnessed the spirit of Tzu Chi volunteers; they gave without asking anything in return and also expressed their gratitude. I decided to give the copyright of the Chinese versions of my memoirs to Tzu Chi and the Master, because she cares for the whole world," she said. The title of the book is: "Mercy, Mater & Me" Sister Angela Mary: A Memoir

In response, Master Cheng Yen said that natural and man-made disasters were happening around the world. "A single person's power is not enough to comfort the suffering. It needs the power of more humanitarian groups and bringing people together to help the suffering. I am very grateful for Sister Angela's long-term assistance in helping Tzu Chi volunteers promote charity work," she said. She thanked Sister Angela for donating the copyright to Tzu Chi. Both of them left their hometown and left behind the 'small love' in order to give 'great love' to society. She is touched by the Sister's heart and will share her story with many people so that others can learn. "She is a role model for everyone," she said.