

Hualien Elementary School Prays and Donates for Japan

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Wednesday, 06 April 2011 09:47



The 85 students of a small elementary school in Hualien, east Taiwan are doing all they can to help the victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, through prayer and donations. They transform their love into action by donating pocket money for the relief effort.

The Jiamin Elementary School is located in Xiulin township, close to the [Jing Si Abode](#) that is the headquarters of the foundation. It has a red track surrounded by green grass; this attractive setting makes people fall in love with it when they walk past. Over half the students come from single-parent families or are raised by their grandparents. Despite their difficult backgrounds, the students devoutly pray to Jesus for the safety of the disaster victims in Japan. During the morning assembly on March 30, teachers and students gathered together to pray for the survivors of the Japan earthquake. They donated their limited pocket money into the [bamboo bank](#) to help children in Japan to face the future without fear and have a good learning environment.

When they saw the images of the disaster, many students felt terrified. They saw many of the victims live in shelters without water and electricity in the freezing weather and wanted to help. Teacher Hsiao Wen-Chien led the students in prayer: "Oh, dear Jesus, please wipe away their tears. No more death! No more fear! No more sorrow! Please protect their hearts. Please bring them hope in their despair. Please comfort the Japanese children yourself, let them have the strength to encourage each other and face the life in front of them. Lord, please hear our prayer. Amen!" During the prayers, some students wept. Then, one by one, they placed money in the bamboo bank and gave the bank to Tzu Chi to help the survivors.



More than a year ago, the school started to promote vegetarianism by having a meat-free day on Wednesdays and providing healthy vegetarian lunches. It is to encourage teachers and students to love the earth and eat healthy food. One student, Chen Chiu-hsiao, said: "today we had cauliflower, corn and tofu. They tasted really good and healthy."

Lin Pi-Hsia, the school principal, said: "our school is like a family. Everyone knows everyone." Every year, teachers design a series of courses based on a topic; this year it is environmental protection. "When we received the tsunami alert on March 11, we gathered all the students immediately and passed the information to them," said teacher Yang Hsiu-Hui. "It is important to teach them how global warming, nuclear disasters, earthquakes and tsunamis have a deep impact on our lives."