

More Than 100 Volunteers Attend Training Course in Haiti

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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More than 100 Haitians attended a training course held by visiting volunteers, to plant the seeds of Tzu Chi in the country and prepare for the day when the visitors return home. They hope that the foundation can take root there, just as it has done in South Africa, home to more than 4,000 volunteers.

Among the trainees were people from different walks of life, including drivers, bodyguards, organizers of the tent city in the national soccer stadium and residents of a church district. All had been touched by seeing the foundation in action after the earthquake and wanted to learn how they could follow suit and make their contribution to society.

Volunteer Zeng Yongli explained how the foundation had started its charitable work more than 40 years ago in Taiwan, then a poor country, with 30 housewives contributing [NT\\$0.5 a day](#), and now had grown into a global organization with millions of members.

She cited the example of southern California, where the members visit orphanages and families who have suffered a misfortune. “You can do what you think fit. Perhaps one day you will not only be able to help your own community and your own country but also go to other countries to deliver aid. As long as we combine the strength of everyone and create blessings every day, Haiti has a bright future.”

Volunteer Huang Hankui also addressed the trainees, explaining how to be a Bodhisattva. “To become a Bodhisattva is very simple. You start in your daily life. Each day, as you are walking along the street and see a piece of rubbish, you pick it up. Then you are a Bodhisattva. Who would like to be a Bodhisattva? Please raise your hand.” The majority of the audience raised their hand. “So next time you are walking on the street and see a piece of waste, what will you do?” he said. “I would like to thank [Master Cheng Yen](#) for bringing us to Haiti. Although we come from different religions and cultural backgrounds, we have a common ‘Buddhist spirit’. This is the spirit of Great Love.”

Blue and White



One member of the audience, an artist named Camille Sanon, presented the volunteers with an oil painting, of a large Buddha against a background of blue sky and white clouds. In the painting, there are two monks, who resemble Tzu Chi members, offering a chrysanthemum to the Buddha. Sanon said that this was not a gift from him alone but from all the people of his district, to thank Tzu Chi for its help to their community. “Why did I do this? I know that, if I do

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good things, God or Buddha will give me an opportunity. Buddha does not distinguish between race and nation but regards everyone as equal. The spirit of Buddha is to help people. The Tzu Chi volunteers have done much good work, helping many in our community, including wives and children. Through this painting, we want you to know how important you are to our community.”

Of the 109 seeds sown today, how many will grow into mature plants? If Haiti establishes a liaison office in the future and produces volunteers as devout as those in South Africa, this training session will be an important historical milestone. Out of a tragedy, something wonderful may grow.