

Charity - Foundation of Tzu Chi

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In 1966, Master Cheng Yen started the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Merit Society to help the poor people in Taiwan. The seeds of love gradually spread from Hualien to the whole of Taiwan within the first decade of Tzu Chi's foundation.

In 1979, Master Cheng Yen decided to build a hospital because through her years of doing charity work, she found that disease is the root cause of suffering and the origin of poverty. On Tzu Chi's 20th Anniversary in 1986, the first Tzu Chi General Hospital was inaugurated in Hualien. This heralded the Mission of Medicine in the second decade.

In the third decade, the Mission of Education was established. Master Cheng Yen also decided to build a nursing college and a medical school. Her rationale was to ensure that the hospital will be staffed with personnel who will provide medical care with love and the nursing college will also provide opportunities to the young girls in eastern Taiwan to further their study and have a better future.

The fourth decade saw the gradual development of the Mission of Culture/Humanity from the publication of monthly journals to radio broadcasting, and finally the set-up of Da Ai TV Station, all of which are aimed at spreading Buddhism and the virtues of humanity globally.

Although the four missions were established one decade after another, they actually took form simultaneously. Now, Tzu Chi volunteers have to expand the Charity Mission internationally, improve the accessibility of medical service, provide complete and holistic education and enhance the culture of humanity.

In 2007, on the 41st Anniversary of Tzu Chi, Master Cheng Yen stressed that it was the beginning of a new era of Tzu Chi missions. Everyone must go back to the root of Tzu Chi - the Charity Mission - to open the 'door of benevolence' wider and create opportunities for both the wealthy and the poor to cultivate merits.