

Buddha's Day. Mother's Day. Tzu Chi Day

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation, Malaysia
Saturday, 16 May 2009 00:00



Let's show our gratitude to Sakyamuni Buddha, and constantly rid our minds of afflictions. We should treat everyone with gratitude and respect; and together, let's join hands to shower the world with great love, and portray a new image for Buddhism everywhere in the world.

The second Sunday of May is a very special day set aside by various Tzu Chi Chapters in Malaysia and globally, to celebrate Mother's Day, Global Tzu Chi Day and Buddha's Day (designated by Taiwanese Government) together.

It is the sincere hope of the global Tzu Chi volunteers to portray a new image for Buddhism and promote it worldwide. To Tzu Chi volunteers, the act of bathing the patients or the lonely elderly has the same meaning as bathing the Buddha. Tzu Chi volunteers have actually put the philosophy into practical act of kindness.

More than 2,500 years ago, Sakyamuni Buddha was born into this world with the purpose of helping the sentient beings to understand the truth of life and to be enlightened. Therefore, we must be grateful to the Buddha by commemorating his birth with a special ceremony.

Buddha is also known as "the teacher of three worlds" and "father of sentient beings born through four methods". It is also most appropriate to thank the Buddha and bring up the spirit of filial piety on Mother's Day.

Tzu Chi holds the Buddha Bathing Ceremony on Buddha's Day to show our gratitude to Sakyamuni Buddha for his teachings. It is also an opportunity to constantly remind ourselves to be rid of afflictions, to treat everyone with respect and gratitude, and to shower the world with great love together.

Tzu Chi's Buddha Bathing Ceremony is different from the traditional ceremony. We expressed our reverence towards Buddha by bowing and dipping our fingers in the water (as if to touch the Buddha's feet), receiving the flower and then holding our palms together. The fragrance of the flower, symbolizing the redolence of Buddha's virtue remains with us, just as we wish that it may abide in our hearts. We also hoped that people of different religions could feel the captivating power of this solemn ceremony and experience a spiritual cleansing effect.

This year, Tzu Chi Kuala Lumpur held the Buddha Bathing Ceremony at the Putra Indoor Stadium of Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex. The event attracted more than 10,000 visitors, and with their collective kind thoughts, they prayed for a world free from disasters.

Besides the Buddha Bathing Ceremony, there were also "Seize the Moment" photographic exhibition, Exhibition on Tzu Chi Missions, Jing-Si Books' promotion counter, Continuing Education's promotion counter, Da Ai TV viewing corner, recruitment of new volunteers, online vegetarianism pledge, Bamboo Bank promotion corner, and so on.

Visually impaired at the ceremony

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Eight visually-impaired participants entered the hall where the Buddha Bathing Ceremony was held, one after another, with their hands on each other's shoulder. Although they could not see with their eyes, they could sense the atmosphere of solemnity and grandness of the Ceremony.



Tang Yong Shun, who lost his eyesight at a very young age, said that this was his first Buddha Bathing Ceremony. He could feel the inner peace and sense the Buddha's compassion while performing the ceremony.

Another visually-impaired participant, Song Guo Yao, who has been joining Tzu Chi's recycling activity almost every month, said, "We should not ask what others can give us but look at what we still have!"

Friends from Bukit Darah

A total of 63 Indian residents from Bukit Darah, Selangor, got up early to dress up for the Buddha Bathing Ceremony in Kuala Lumpur. They were invited by Tzu Chi volunteers who met them last year through the study grant scheme. Rukumany, parent of a grant recipient, led the group and interpreted for her friends.

Shanbagavalli, another grant recipient's parent, was so moved by the story of Bamboo Bank Era of Tzu Chi that she and her family took home a bamboo piggy bank. She also expressed her intention to start up recycling in her community after being briefed on the importance of environmental protection.

We are family

Tzu Chi care-recipient, Hazlina, took the opportunity to bring her children to join the Buddha Bathing Ceremony held at Tzu Chi Melaka. She thought it would be good for her children to broaden their views on the various cultures practised by other Malaysians and to celebrate the special occasion together. Her son's Hazman, who suffers from congenital muscular dystrophy, was so touched by the peaceful atmosphere that he asked his mother to advance his pocket money so that he could donate for the needy.

Another Tzu Chi care-recipient, Krishnan, who has a tumour on his neck, came with his wife. Tzu Chi has been helping his family for over a year. He is very grateful to Tzu Chi volunteers because they have gone through the most difficult times with him and his family. Krishnan made a wish to join as a volunteer when he recovers and also signed up as a monthly donor.



Seven Burmese workers came with their employer, Wang Yao Hui, who is a Tzu Chi volunteer, to control the traffic. Although the Buddha Bathing Ceremony was held in Mandarin, they managed to follow the instructions well. Kyaw Zay Ya felt extremely peaceful after the

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ceremony. He also indicated that he reads the Buddhist scriptures and prays for world peace every night.

At the Exhibition Corner on Tzu Chi's Missions, they were captivated by the posters documenting the relief mission to Myanmar. Through explanations by the volunteer on duty, they learned what Tzu Chi has done for their homeland.

Kyaw Zay Ya said, "I admire the way Tzu Chi carries out their missions. I am most grateful I can help out today!"

Vow to walk the Bodhisattva Path

Volunteer Lin You Cai, who came in a wheelchair with her daughter and grandson, chose to walk to the basement of the stadium where the Buddha Bathing Ceremony was held.

Grandma Lin suffers from brain tumour, and at one time was unable to walk and swallow food. With sheer determination, she is now able to walk with crutches after physiotherapy, and is able to talk and swallow her food. She prayed to the Buddha for a speedy recovery because she wants to go back and work in Tzu Chi.

Grandma Lin held her palms together in front of Master Cheng Yen's photo at the "Seize the Moment" photographic exhibition. Like a lost child, she kept saying, "Master, I am back!"

Bring Buddha to your home

On May 6, Tzu Chi volunteers held a mini Buddha Bathing Ceremony at Huang Jing Jing's house for her 64-year old mother, Lin Rui Fang, who is suffering from acute thyroid tumour. Rui Fang, who came to Malaysia from Indonesia for treatment, would not be able to attend the actual Grand Buddha Bathing Ceremony because it was held on the day after her admission into the hospital.

Jing Jing knelt in front of the Buddha statue and prayed for her mother to recover soon so that she could continue to repay her mother's kindness.

Bring the Sutra onto the stage

On May 9, 73 Tzu Chi volunteers from Muar presented the musical drama of "The Thirty-seven Principles of Enlightenment" after three months of practice and rehearsals.

Yan Li Yun and her 7 year-old son, Li Jun Yan, performed together. She gained special understanding of the first of "four Sutra's considerations" which says "consider the body as impure". "Life is short and why should we be petty over little things..." Stressed with the demand of her career and family before this, she has now learned to view the challenges positively.

Through participating in the drama, Sister Zheng Jing Yi learned to be more humble and considerate of the feelings of others. As such, her relationship with her children has improved.

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