

Tzu Chi Holds Training Class in Spanish for 88 volunteers

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Monday, 03 March 2014 12:19



On February 23, the Tzu Chi Foundation held a training class in Spanish for 88 volunteers from four countries in Central America. It was the first time that the members from the region had come together for such a class.

It was 1998 that destiny brought the foundation's volunteers to the region. They went to help victims of two disasters, Hurricane Georges and Hurricane Mitch. In the 16 years since then, the seeds laid in Central America have borne fruit, with branches in four countries – Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Dominican Republic – assisted by members from the United States.

The class was held on February 23, 2014 in Guatemala. It was a long journey for many of the participants. The 30 volunteers who came from Honduras took a bus ride of 19 hours; they had to cross two national boundaries, of El Salvador and Guatemala, to reach their destination. There were 36 volunteers from Guatemala and 13 from El Salvador; of the 88, the vast majority were local people. In addition, there were two commissioners from the Dominican Republic and seven Tzu Cheng and commissioners from the New Jersey branch in the United States.

The class was held in Spanish, to enable the participants to understand directly the spiritual ideas of Tzu Chi. It was designed by commissioners from the Dominican Republic and Guatemala, to explain how the foundation evolved from its beginning to the four missions and Tzu Chi's ten precepts and the dignity and manners of Tzu Chi people: they also described the spirit of Bodhisattvas, vegetarianism and environmental protection. The subject matter was very rich, enabling the local volunteers to have a deeper understanding of Tzu Chi's culture and encourage them to recruit more Bodhisattvas.

The participants saw a video of how environmental volunteers in Taiwan turn plastic bottles into blankets – 'making rubbish into gold, gold into clear water and clear water circling the whole world'. It was an introduction to DA.AI Technology. At the same time, the participants saw how recycling begins with their own efforts; everyone used re-useable cups, a way to implement their love for the earth.

All these classes were conducted in Spanish. The spiritual ideas were explained to volunteers from different countries. Volunteer Zhu Yao-lin, a volunteer from the Dominican Republic, speaks fluent Spanish; she shoulders many responsibilities in her countries and is excellent at sharing her experience. Another important lecturer at the class was Zhang Ling-fang; she prepared the content of her lectures with great care.

Lin Lu-rong, chief executive of the New Jersey branch, said: "this is a very good connection, enabling so many volunteers to come together and to use Spanish to give the lessons. I hope that, in the future, the members in central America can have more connections and develop more seeds who will become volunteers."

Tzu Chi Holds Training Class in Spanish for 88 volunteers

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Monday, 03 March 2014 12:19

Ge Ji-jue of the U.S. branch encouraged everyone to learn carefully the content of the classes and share the Tzu Chi spirit with more people after they return home. In this way, a single seed can grow into innumerable trees.



It was no easy matter for the volunteers to take part. The 13 from El Salvador made a five-hour journey by car to reach Guatemala city. They were very satisfied with the outcome. Miguel, who comes from a Great Love Village, listened carefully to Master Cheng Yen's explanation of the need for a vegetarian diet. After hearing this, he made a promise to follow such a diet. One of his colleagues from El Salvador, Rafael, was also moved: "It's really important for us to participate in this training because it is a way for us to learn from our brothers and take this knowledge back with us to El Salvador to share it with others and spread it."

The 30 volunteers from Honduras were led by Zhang Hong-cai. Their journey took them 19 hours, across national frontiers, and included a burst tire. They overcome all these difficulties and reached their destination. Among them was a local volunteer, Ivonne, who had the opportunity to visit Taiwan and meet Master Cheng Yen. She is a teacher and fervently hopes that the mission in Honduras can spread from charity into education; she believes that children at primary school can be brought up with the ideals of vegetarianism and becoming a good person. Cynthia, also from Honduras, said: "I learnt a great deal from today's classes. I hope to study the spirit of 'The Spirit of Great Love*' of the Master. I felt more deeply how Tzu Chi's four missions bring the hope of developing mankind, the hope of life, the hope of society and the hope of the spirit."

Jenny, another volunteer from Honduras, said: "We were singing the song (One Family). Every time I sing it, it touches my heart. When you learn it by heart, no matter if it's in Spanish, English or Mandarin, there is always this emotion, that makes you feel part of this family, and that's an emotion you want to share with many."

Rosa Linda, a volunteer from Guatemala, said: "It was sensational, fabulous. In the past, each group stayed in its country; now we truly realize that we have brothers and sisters from other countries and we can share our experiences with them."

It was the first such meeting of volunteers from the four countries of Central America. It was a chance for everyone to meet and learn from each other. They plan to meet again on the 15th anniversary of the foundation of the branch in the Dominican Republic.

*The Spirit of Great Love: There is no one in the world that I don't love. There is no one in the world that I don't trust. There is no one in the world that I can't forgive.