

## 2,500 Attend Buddha Day Ceremony in South Africa

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Monday, 17 May 2010 09:25

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On May 9, 2,500 people attended a ceremony to mark Buddha Day in the South African city of Ladysmith. The foundation has built seven schools and a day care centre in the city, which lies in the west of Kwa-Zulu province and has a population of 225,000.

The ceremony was led by the local Tzu Chi director, Shi Hongqi, and 30 outstanding students from the schools. All the boys and girls at the schools know the importance of Buddha Day and saw it as an opportunity to show their appreciation for the help they receive from the foundation. Also attending were toddlers from the day care centre. They were guided by adults but still made mistakes; they were dedicated and quick to correct their mistakes. They might not know all the procedures – but their sincerity was the best offering they could make.



Another ceremony was held in the east coast city of Durban, where Tzu Chi has also been very active. Leading the congregation were eight elderly volunteers, one of them in a wheelchair. Dressed in grey, white and navy blue, they followed respectfully every movement in the service that honored the birth of the Buddha. For some participants, it was a challenge to come; they arrived with canes or walkers.

Most of those attending the ceremonies believe in Christianity, the majority religion in South Africa and, for many, it was a first experience of Buddha Day. Whatever their religion, everyone took the opportunity to cleanse and purify their minds and dedicate themselves to spiritual improvement.