

Mindfulness Transpires During Cleanup Activity

Written by Camille Nepomuceno
Wednesday, 15 August 2012 16:59



In early August, the Philippines suffered severe flooding from torrential rains, with Marikina City the worst hit. With the continuous efforts to bring back normalcy in the lives of the Marikeños, Tzu Chi Foundation, Philippines continues its cash-for-work program cum cleanup activity in the said community.

On August 13, 450 cash-for-work participants pooled their manpower to clean Barangay Nangka. Same activity also took place at barangays Malanday and Tumana.

With the cleanup activity starting last August 10, Nangka is slowly regaining the cleanliness and normalcy that was temporarily snatched from the residents after a continuous torrential rains brought by a southwest monsoon ravaged the area.

Torrential rains started on the eve of August 7. With the Marikina River overflowing, the three said barangays were among the severely battered. The flood not only left water marks on its aftermath but mud and garbage.



Knowing that their efforts is needed by their fellowmen, Filipino volunteer Rosalina Arojado during the surge of the raging floods still collected the plastic bags and bottles swimming with the flood. "It is just but right to collect the plastics then as it would lessen the threat of the flood to reach higher level."

While during the cleanup activity, she mindfully sorts the recyclables from the garbage and mud they had gathered, "We can still sell this (and the sales will be used to fund Tzu Chi's missions) this could help more people."

Such case is that of 16-year-old Jester Dia. Due to the weather disturbance and floods, his father who works as a security guard was not able to work, leaving them with no source of income for almost a week.

"I was the one who told them (parents) that I will participate in Tzu Chi's cash-for-work because we can't buy our needs like rice. And as we are all (5 children) still studying, we don't even have money for our fares," Jester related.



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With the help extended to the cash-for-work participants like Jester, they could now be sure that they could provide their needs for the coming days, "I am happy because I am helping our community (through the cleanup) and helping my family, too."

Jester is among the nearly 450 Marikina educational assistance beneficiaries of Tzu Chi Foundation, the reason why he knows the charitable missions of the foundation.

The lad will attend his classes on the following day at the Institute of Creative Computer Technology in San Mateo, Rizal where he is a freshman under the course of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology.

On the other hand, Mildred Lozada's motherly instinct dominated her as she joined the cash-for-work program because she does not want children in their area to get sick, "I joined because with the garbage that were left by the flood, there is a risk for diseases to spread. Also, dengue fever is quite rampant here, so by joining in this cleanup activity, I am not only earning an income but helping the community too."

Earlier, Tzu Chi volunteer Kalam Chan said that, "Master Cheng Yen is worried about your condition, she is hoping for the immediate recovery of each of you."

"We hope that our connection (Tzu Chi and cash-for work participants) will continue even without any disasters happening and even without money being paid to you. No one wanted disasters to happen, all we could do is to help one another for your immediate recovery."

A total of 1,005 cash-for-work participants were deployed in the three barangays. The activity took place from 8am to 6pm.

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