



## Lifesaving in Matters of Seconds

Life is unpredictable. A moment of impermanence can permanently scar one's memory. On the night of February 6, 2018, the earthquake in Hualien, which paralleled that of the 921 earthquake in magnitude and in frequency, exhibited an intensity unmatched by anything I have felt in decades. It worried me.

I was immediately on phone with Supt. Lin Shinn-Zong. "I have run to the ER, and so has everyone else," he replied. I was so touched by the rapid response of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. Although the aftershocks were ongoing, our medical staff had already rushed into the hospital, preparing to save lives. I prayed in my heart for the injuries to be minimal, and for everyone to be safe.

Our medical mission played a vital role on that night. Over 100 patients rushed into our hospital in a very short time period. We began triage, comfort, and treatment without delay. A trauma patient was transported to our hospital, and one of our doctors even jumped onto the stretcher and began treatment right away, not a second was wasted. Looking at those images, all I can think of is gratitude.

It is often said that patients are our teachers. This emergency is also an opportunity for learning. Coping appropriately in the face of life struggle at the time of crises is extremely important.



In those key moments of life, our medical staff could be there for them and fully optimize their worth in life, it was moving. Experiences like these should never be forgotten.

Our charity system also mobilized on a large scale. Many of our volunteers had their homes damaged, or furniture fallen, in the earthquake. Fortunately they were all safe. Our volunteers ran to where the disasters were, staying with the survivors all night long. Because of the cold weather, Jing Si Abode prepared some ginger soups and snacks for the survivors to ward off the cold and hunger, and provided blankets and Jing-Si foldable beds. These are timely contributions of love and care.

The earthquake had shocked many people, but it also triggered waves of emerging love. Now that the earthquake is in the past, we must be considerate, understanding, and be grateful for our safety. We must pray with all our hearts, and embrace each and every day with brightness in our hearts.



**Right after the midnight earthquake on Feb 6, 2018, Tzu Chi mobilized for disaster relief including praying for the victims, cooking hot food for the victims and rescue workers, preparing shelters for nearby Hualien citizens in shock.**