

Prince of Jordan Visits Tzu Chi Recycling Centre

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The Prince of Jordan paid an hour-long visit to a Tzu Chi recycling centre in a suburb of Taipei and praised the spirits of the volunteers which he wants to take back to his homeland.

Prince Mir'ed Bin Ra'ad Al-Hussein visited the centre near Da Hu Park in Neihu district. Each year it receives more than 300 domestic and foreign groups of guest who come to see at first hand the recycling work of the volunteers and the spirit that drives them. It is also an opportunity to meet those who work there and see how they contribute to society. It was on the afternoon of June 22 that, accompanied by volunteer Chen Chiu-hua, the Prince came to the centre. Despite the scorching heat, he talked with warmth and sincerity to each volunteer and listened carefully to their replies, asking questions and taking note of them.

“I greatly respect the compassion and philosophy of Master Cheng Yen,” he said. “I would like to take the Tzu Chi model of recycling back with me to Jordan.” He asked several times where did the volunteers get the strength to continue the recycling work and remain at their posts in all kinds of weather. “How can the branches continue to recruit such living Buddhas? What are the foundation’s plans for the future? How can you spread the concept of recycling and implement it?” he asked.



Chen and the other volunteers explained to him the foundation’s four missions and eight ‘footprints’. In international aid, its principles are ‘first to arrive and last to leave’ and ‘to help the poor and educate the rich’. As to the recruitment of new volunteers, the foundation operates on a community basis, with regular visits to the single, the elderly and the poor; it also organizes book clubs and courses at its branches; and each year, on important festivals, it organizes large-scale charity events to show people the results of its work.

The volunteers explained to the Prince that they had to spend a great deal of effort on education and the humanism of Tzu Chi. The establishment of each recycling centre has a long-term significance, to enable every visitor to understand that each person can develop in him or herself a sense of love and responsibility toward the earth. During these conversations, the Prince observed how the volunteers continued their work despite the scorching weather and in a dirty setting; he realized their pure heart and deep attachment to protecting the planet.



The visit was originally scheduled to last 30 minutes. But such was the Prince’s interest and the

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sincerity of the volunteers that it lasted an hour. They also explained to him the pioneering work of the Da Ai Technology; they turn PET bottles into blankets used for international relief aid. When the Prince saw how the principles of the foundation were being translated into action, he bought many of the company's items, to take back as presents for his family. "During this brief visit of only one hour, I have not only learnt a great deal but I also hope that the seeds of Great Love can be quickly planted in Jordan. With the help of Tzu Chi volunteers, we can spread the activities of charity and environmental education in my country," he said.

In the 1970s, Chen was a combat instructor in the Taiwan Marines with a seventh-degree black belt in Taekwondo; he was sent by the Ministry of National Defense to Jordan in 1974 to serve as head coach for the Royal Guard. He has remained in Jordan ever since, becoming a close friend of the royal family and training the national taekwondo team to a bronze medal at the Seoul Olympics in 1988, the country's first at the games. Since 1998, he and his brother have been volunteers of Tzu Chi in Jordan.