

## Bringing Love and Care to a Refugee Center

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Friday, 02 October 2015 13:46

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"I study hard in learning German. I hope I can be fluent in the language and then can finish medical school." Hassan, a medical student in Syria, expressed his earnest hope. He had traveled a long way to settle in a refugee center in Germany. He would like to finish his medical education and bring his family to the country.

To escape the conflicts and poverty of Africa and the Middle East, many people have taken great risks to flee to other countries and seek asylum. Germany is one of the countries willing to accept asylum applications. In this refugee center in Grassau in the southern state of Bavaria, there are over 200 residents. They come from Syria, North Africa, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries; most are waiting for a permit of permanent residency from the government.



Tzu Chi volunteers began by surveying the needs of those in the center and then started their relief work. Despite the language barrier, they have continued to provide love and care; after months of effort, the residents have felt this love and become closer to the volunteers. As the weather is getting colder, the volunteers found that there was a need for warm clothing. They collected boxes of second-hand clothes and purchased winter coats and socks for children. They handed over the items to the residents themselves.

### Father and son reunited in Germany

Hassan, 21, and his father Mohammed are two of the few residents who can speak fluent English in the center. In their home town, Mohammed was an engineer and Hassan in his second year of medical school. Due to the civil war in Syria, they had no choice but to leave their native country.

Father and son traveled by foot and car to Turkey, and then took a dangerous boat ride to an island in Greece. Then they decided to take different routes. After a month-long journey, they finally met again in Germany; they have stayed in the Grassau refugee center for three months.

At home, Hassan finished two years of college studies; he earnestly hopes that he can soon receive the permit for permanent residency which would allow him to continue his education. However, due to the flood of asylum-seekers in the country, there is a long waiting list. Hassan and his father hope one day to bring the rest of their family to settle in Germany.



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In the center, the Tzu Chi volunteers also brought care and goods to Muhammad and his roommate who come from Afghanistan. "I wish there were a teacher to instruct us German, so we can work to support our families," Muhammad said. "Then we would not need to depend solely on the government."

Maximilan Landenberg is a local volunteer who has joined the relief work. He said that, in the past, he did not know anything about the life of refugees. Now he sees the pain and helplessness in their eyes. This experience has taught him to be grateful in life while helping others in need.

The Tzu Chi volunteers in Germany continue to care for the people in the refugee center. They are not only providing warm clothes to protect them against the cold but also caring for them with love. Most importantly, the volunteers hope that, through this constant care, the residents will be able to help others one day.

Article by Tzu Chi Foundation