



The Tzu Chi Foundation

The Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation is a non-profit organization that was established in 1966 by Dharma Master Cheng Yen in Hualien, Taiwan. For over thirty years, the organization has been devoted to social work, medical construction, educational development and cultural improvement in Taiwan.

The four Tzu Chi missions are charity, medicine, education and culture. In recent years, Tzu Chi has expanded its activities to include bone marrow donation, international relief, environmental protection and community volunteerism. Tzu Chi volunteers diligently carry out these activities, and together with the four missions they are called the Eight Footprints.

Tzu Chi receives its funds solely from the public, and its various charity works are all carried out by volunteers. This structure has ensured that funds are properly used, which has won the trust and support of people all over the world.

In 1985, overseas volunteers of Tzu Chi began to extend their helping hands to their local communities. Combining their efforts with local resources, they have helped bring relief to the poor and provided emergency assistance. Today, Tzu Chi has branches and liaison offices in 28

countries around the globe.

Emergency assistance to typhoon-stricken Bangladesh in 1991 marked the beginning of the foundation's international relief efforts. As of March 2000, over forty countries in five continents have been helped.

Tzu Chi's disaster relief work is carried out in the spirit of humanitarianism, based on respect for life and belief in the innate goodness of humanity. Transcending political, ethnical, religious and geographical boundaries, volunteers strive to help victims wherever disasters arise with the objective of bringing hope to all suffering people.

From the icy Arctic Circle to the sweltering tropics, Tzu Chi volunteers have left their footprints in many faraway lands, risking their lives in epidemics or wars. Their belief in "making the impossible possible" has supported them in accomplishing many arduous tasks. In addition to material assistance, the foundation has also encouraged mutual help among victims and helped local people to become independent by involving them in rebuilding their own communities. The ultimate goal is to inspire disaster victims to contribute to others in turn when they have the ability to do so, thus creating a global village of Great Love.