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**Tuyết Sơn Thiền Tự
Mt Adams Zen Buddhist Temple
雪山禪寺
and Plum Mountain Buddhist Community**

March 2016 Newsletter



Dear Dharma friends,

On July 15th we will have a ceremony to fully ordain Thay Z (Sa Di Minh Thien). He was actually fully ordained in China by Abbot MingChan at Jia Shan temple during a visit there 2 years ago. However, he agreed to live as a novice to complete more training. We are very happy at this wonderful ordination event. Thay Z is a man of great teaching skills and will help bring the Dharma to many.

We need 10 monks to witness the ordination, If you would like to sponsor a monk to attend as a witness (the sponsorship costs are travel expenses and an honorarium), please call Thay Kozen (Thich Minh Tinh).

May we all live in Peace, Thay Kozen

Will you join us on a trip to Taiwan to celebrate the Buddha's teaching?

We will be making a religious pilgrimage to Taiwan in October 2016. While we are there we hope to see Ven. Kuang Hsin, Chan and Pureland temples and the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Ksitigarbha Society. We will be in Taiwan for around 2 weeks. Details will be in the May newsletter.

"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle,
and the life of the candle will not be shortened.
Happiness never decreases by being shared".
Gautama Buddha

PACKING BOOKS FOR PRISONS



Part of the Surangama retreat week was spent packaging books for prisons in Oregon, Washington, and Arizona. Donations from several groups helped us send out more books than in previous years. In photo to right Tu, Twe, Master Heng Chuan, Master Kozen, Kahn, and Larry sort books for shipping.



"Change is never painful. Only resistance to change is painful."
Gautama Buddha

Sa Di Minh Thien ("Thay Z")'s monthly column

OUR PRISONS



Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in a prison ministry that is regularly conducted by a dear friend in Tucson, Arizona. What made it even more wonderful was that my Teacher, Kozen, was also there. This was the second time I was able to participate. The first time was almost two years earlier. I remember from that first visit how I felt as I walked through the prison gates, hearing the click of the lock behind me as we were escorted to the location where we met with the men who are relegated to spend their time behind bars.

This time, the visit brought to mind the overall experience of prison and what it means. Of course, all the men who participated in this meditation time had made some choices previously that resulted in their freedom being withdrawn from society and which now limits the choices that many of us take for granted. For some of these men, this restricted life will last for years. For others, it may be a lifetime.

Prisons however are not just about the buildings, the barbed-wired exteriors, and the guards who monitor and direct daily life. We all create our personal prisons around choices we made somewhere along the journey of life. The men and women in prison represents societies' approach to reparation for their poor life choices, as well as an attempt to remove persons who are deemed dangerous to the general population. Our prison system, however, does not do much for each individual to work through their own sincere repentance over what sentenced them as well as the sufferings in their lives.

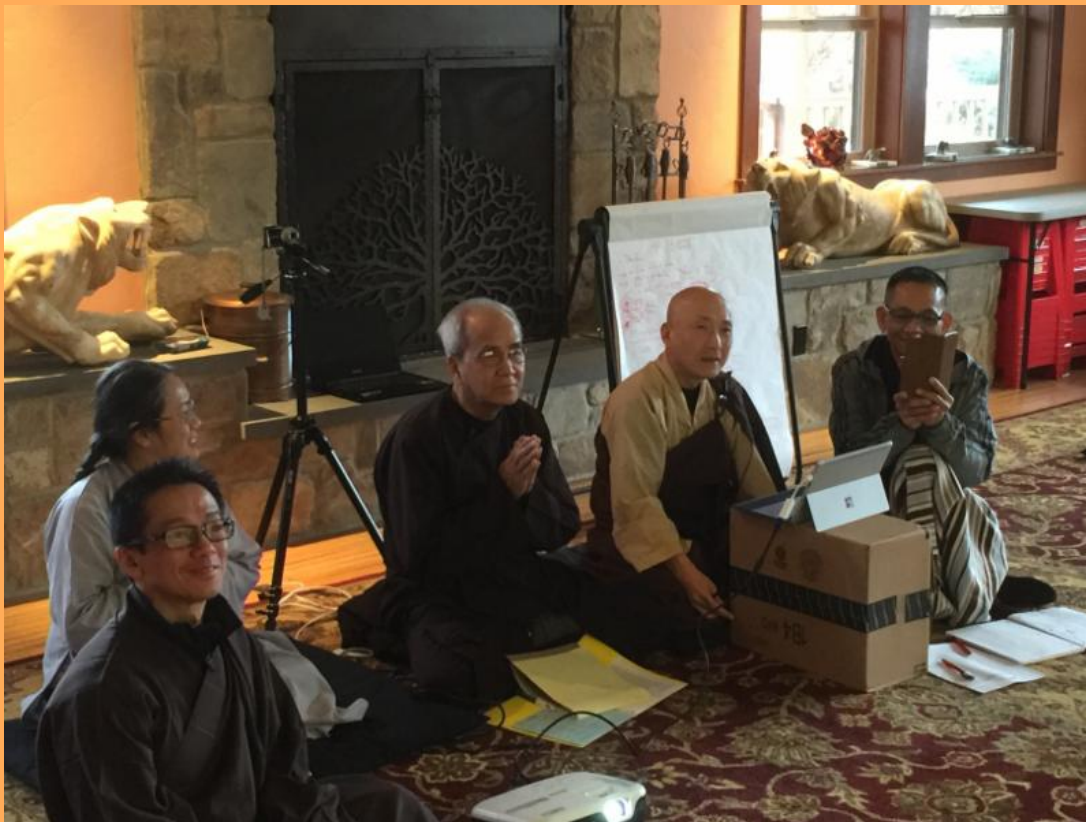
We all have our prisons. They are usually not the kind made of brick and mortar with barbed-wire exteriors. They can however, be as limiting for each of us as any penitentiary. Our personal prisons are many times the result of our past actions that create guilt and regret for things we have done or for things we failed to do. The attachment to our own guilt, grief, and regret restricts our living a mindful life and creates the suffering that the Buddha's teachings tells us about. Relief from these sufferings are available in each moment by the choices we make now. If we have anger towards our parents and how we may have been treated, we can choose now to recognize that they may have been doing the best they knew how to do and forgive them and all who have hurt or disappointed us. If we have regret over how we have treated others in the past, we can recognize that and make better choices now. If we have guilt about any of our past actions or lack of actions, we can resolve from this moment forward to make amends if possible and live with compassion and loving kindness for all things in all ways. The Dharma of the Buddha teaches us in many stories and sutras how the most important moment is right now and that through the choices we make in each moment, we can tear down the prison walls of guilt, fear and regret, reducing our own suffering, and thus the overall suffering in the world. Repentance is available to all of us by letting go of our fears, guilt, and regret. We chanted this Repentance Verse with the men in the prison during a repentance ceremony and it may be helpful for each of us to recite it from time to time:

All my ancient twisted karma
From beginningless greed, hate, and delusion
Born through my body, speech, and mind
I now fully avow

May this merit pervade all existence
May we and all beings achieve liberation
Veneration to all Awakened ones of past and present
The World-Honored One, Great Bodhisattvas
Great Heart of Wisdom
Namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa

"Just as treasures are uncovered from the earth, so virtue appears from good deeds, and wisdom appears from a pure and peaceful mind. To walk safely through the maze of human life, one needs the light of wisdom and the guidance of virtue".
Gautama Buddha

Surangama Sutra Retreat



Master Heng Chuan leads students through the great wisdom in the Surangama Sutra. Students spent 4 days studying and meditating. Master Heng is from the City of 10,000 Buddhas in California.

We are a small Thien (Zen) Buddhist Temple practicing "laughing farmer zen" - living our practice, sitting zazen, being here - right now!

A lovely Vietnamese food lunch was provided after the retreat.

Services & Meditation

Spring Schedule

Morning Meditation 6:30AM
Monday - Saturday

Evening Meditation

6:30 PM

Friday

Morning Services

9AM

Saturday

Resuming in May

1st Sunday of the month at Buu-hung Buddhist Monastery 17808 NE 18th St, Vancouver, WA

Tel: (360) 718-6158 3:00pm - 4:30 pm



The Five Remembrances

"I am of the nature to grow old.
There is no way to escape growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill health.
There is no way to escape ill health.

I am of the nature to die.
There is no way to escape death.

All that is dear to me and everyone I love are
of the nature to change. There is no way to
escape being separated from them.

My actions are my only true belongings. I
cannot escape the consequences of my actions.
My actions are the ground upon which I stand."
Gautama Buddha

Are you or your group part of the Northwest Dharma Association?

If not, it is time to join! If you
are a solitary practitioner or a
sangha you can donate dana
(money). They are a clearing house
for Buddhist Activity in the
Northwest and need our support.
read more about the NWDA at
<http://www.northwestdharma.org/>



Can you help us by Offering Merit?

We are asking our friends to chant the name of Shakyamuni Buddha or Amithaba Buddha 20 times a day for 20 days and offer the merit of that chanting to our plan to build a new temple.

Merit is that which accumulates as a result of good deeds, acts, or thoughts and which carries over throughout the life or the subsequent incarnations. Such merit contributes to a person's growth towards spiritual liberation. Merit can be gained in a number of ways; one of the sutras that reflect this teaching is the

Sutra on the Ten Wholesome Ways of Actions (which tells us ways in which merit-making can occur).

Read more at (<http://www.gdptvn->

[hoaky.com/images/Ban_NghienCuuHuanLuyen/Huynh_Truong/Bac_Tri/7_ThapThien_Anh.pdf](http://www.gdptvn-hoaky.com/images/Ban_NghienCuuHuanLuyen/Huynh_Truong/Bac_Tri/7_ThapThien_Anh.pdf))

Quý Phật Tử có thể giúp Thầy

hồi hướng công đức được không?

Thầy kêu gọi quý Phật Tử hãy niệm danh hiệu của **Đức Bổn Sư Thích Ca Mâu Ni Phật**, và danh hiệu của **Đức A Di Đà Phật**, 20 lần mỗi ngày, và liên tục trong 20 ngày như vậy. *Nguyện Tam Bảo mười phương gia hộ để Thầy sớm hoàn thiện ngôi Chánh Điện mới.*

Công đức được tích tụ bởi những việc làm thiện, hoặc những suy nghĩ tích cực. Công đức đó sẽ đi cùng suốt cả cuộc đời quý vị và những kiếp sau. Sự tích công lũy đức như thế sẽ hỗ trợ cho hành giả trên con đường giải thoát. Công đức đó có thể được tích góp bằng nhiều cách khác nhau. Một trong những bộ kinh mà Đức Phật đã giảng giải về cách thức tu tạo công đức, đó là **Kinh Thập Thiện**.

"You will not be punished for your anger, you will be punished by your anger".
Gautama Buddha

The Surangama Sutra

For over a thousand years, the Surangama Sutra - the "Sutra of the Indestructible"- has been held in great esteem in the Mahayana Buddhist countries of East and Southeast Asia. In China, the Sutra has generally been considered as important, and has been as popular as the Lotus Sutra, the Avatamsaka Sutra, the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Heart Sutra, and the Diamond Sutra.

The appeal of the Surangama Sutra lies in the broad scope of its teachings and in the



depth and clarity of its prescriptions for contemplative practice. Its wealth of theoretical and practical instruction in the spiritual life often made it the first major text to be studied by newly ordained monks, particularly in the Chan (Thien) School. Many enlightened masters and illustrious monastic scholars have written exegetical commentaries on it.

To this day, for both clergy and laity in the Chinese Buddhist tradition, the Surangama Sutra continues to be the object of devout study, recitation, and memorization.

More specifically, the Surangama Sutra has traditionally been regarded as a complete and practical manual for spiritual practice that will eventually lead to enlightenment. It gives instruction in the correct understanding of the Buddha-nature, which is the potential within all beings for becoming a Buddha. The Sutra explains how and why this true nature is hidden within our ordinary experience of ourselves and of the world, and it shows how we can uncover this nature and recognize that it is our own true mind.

There is some uncertainty about the origins of this Sutra. It may be a composite of Indian writings compiled in China. Whatever the source, it remains a bright and cherished part of Mahayana Buddhism.

2016 TEMPLE CALENDAR

MARCH

4-6 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

12 Metta Retreat - *Please Register +*

19 Spring Equinox - *Druid Event*

APRIL

2-3 Precepts Retreat with Buu Hung Monastery - *Please Register +*

3-11 Temple closed - Kozen on Retreat at Desert Zen Center, Lucern Valley California

8-10 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

11 Temple closed - Buddha's Birthday - no service - Kozen on Retreat

15-17 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

22-23 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

23 Earth Day Service - 9AM *Please Register +*

30 Beltane - *Druid Event*

MAY

6-8 Yoga Retreat - *Please Register +*

7 Retreat - Buddha's Birthday - 7am - 4 pm Service at 9am - *Please Register +*

13-14 Laurie Vab Cott Yoga Retreat - *Private*

14 - Kozen at CRCC Retreat, Connell WA - Prison Buddha Day

20-22 NCNM Retreat Taiji - *Private*

JUNE

1-July 31 Thay Vinh Minh, Thầy Thích Nhuận Ân, Sư Cô Thích Nữ Giới Bửu in residence

3 Sufi Retreat

4-5 Retreat - 2 day - Metta *Please Register +*

18 Summer Solstice - Druid Event

26-30 Qigong Retreat - Pam Tindall - *Private*

JULY

1-5 Zikr Dances of Universal Peace - *Private*

7-10 Druid retreat

15 Thich Minh Thien Ordination *Please Register +*

16-17 Precepts retreat with Buu Hung Monastery *Please Register+*

30 Lughnasadh - Druid Event

AUGUST

6 Ulambana Service 9am +

20 retreat - Ksitigarbha Retreat - Death and Dying - *Please Register +*

SEPTEMBER

10 Retreat - one day Meditation - *Please Register +*

24 Autumn Equinox - Druid Event

30-Oct 2 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

OCTOBER

7-9 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

TBA China and Taiwan Pilgrimage - *Please Register +*

14-16 NCNM Qigong Retreat - *Private*

21-23 Fall Retreat - *Please Register +*

29 Samhain - Druid Event

NOVEMBER

18-20 Meditation Hut Retreat (live like a monk) *Please Register +*

DECEMBER

8 Bodhi Day - meditation 12/7 at 11:30pm to 12:30am 12/8 *Please Register +*

17 Winter Solstice - Druid Event

30 Midnight Meditation - 12/30 at 11:30pm to 12:30am 1/1 *Please Register +*

*I saw this poster and it caused me to think of our values.
May all beings find peace.*

"If you think fertilized eggs are people but
refugee kids aren't, you're going to have to stop
pretending your concerns are religious."

via @LOLGOP



TUYÉT SƠN THIÊN TỰ + MT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE + 雪山禅寺

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