

Bodhi Stand

UPASIKA KUO KUEI

"It is because he wishes to serve and make offerings to absolutely all Buddhas without exception that he brings forth the Bodhi. It is because he wishes to adorn and purify absolutely all Buddhlands without exception that he brings forth the Bodhi resolve. It is because he wishes to protect and uphold the Proper Teaching of absolutely all Buddhas without exception that he brings forth the Bodhi resolve. It is because he wishes to perfect the vows of absolutely all Tathagatas without exception that he brings forth the Bodhi resolve."

"Entering the Dharma Realm" FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA



Kuo Kuei moves quietly but efficiently about Gold Wheel Temple in Los Angeles, making sure that affairs run smoothly as all around her the new Bodhimanda undergoes its final stages of renovation. Then she slips quickly back into her place in the hall to join in the recitation of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's name during the first intensive session held at the new Way-place. The happiness on the faces of all the Dharma protectors who come to join the week's session is one that issues from deep within their hearts and rises above verbal expression.

For Kuo Kuei, this joy is all the fuller for the pain she has known in her life. Her early years of being adopted into someone else's household, of being given in an arranged marriage counter to her wishes, and of trying to raise a family in the face of unreliable financial and moral support, forced Kuo Kuei to take a good long look at this world. What she saw and felt and heard was suffering. It spoke to her from peoples' faces, from their actions, and from her own heart.

At twenty-one years of age she had a daughter three years old and one seventeen months and her very day to day survival was a bitter struggle. It was then that she lit incense and made a vow into empty

space that in this life she would do the Buddha's work and help take living beings across this sea of suffering. "Money plays such an important role in this world," she comments. "If one doesn't have money, one longs for it. But once one has money, one finds it is of no use at all. There's no happiness in it. Reciting Sutras brings true bliss. Doing the Buddha's work is true happiness. Many people save their money to give to their children, but the problem with that is that it makes the children arrogant. The Venerable Abbot is the only one I know in this entire world who has a true heart to save all beings. So whatever I have, I want to give to the Abbot because I know that he will make the best possible use of it."

Kuo Kuei takes this commitment seriously and intends to ultimately dedicate her body and life to the Buddhadharma with the vow that she will leave the home-life. "Marriage leads people into bondage. Arguments ensue because of worries about money and other responsibilities. Children come and must be cared for. Living in the harmony of the Sangha community, one leaves this bondage behind and can devote one's energy to work which will benefit all beings. This is what I want to do with my life. I pray that in all future lives I can have the body of a man and vow that I will never marry again. I want to always devote my life to helping the Buddhas and Bodhisattva save living beings."