

## *The Bodhi Mirror*



For more than ten years before she was introduced to the Proper Dharma, Heng Ran (恒然 Constant and Natural) spent most of her time as a volunteer worker in a popular Taoist temple in the heart of the city of Taipei. The temple was dedicated to Gwan Gung, or Chye Lan Bodhisattva as he is known in Buddhism. In 1981, she met the Venerable Master Hua when he visited Taiwan and gave a series of public lectures. On that occasion, Heng Ran and some co-workers from the Taoist temple took refuge with the Triple Jewel.

Heng Ran has been a filial person all her life. After she married, she tried her best to fulfill her duties as a good wife and mother. Her husband, (Dharma name Gwo Gwan) was the head chef of a famous Chinese restaurant. For years, Heng Ran tried to persuade him to change his profession. She knew that the karma from killing so many living creatures would be very heavy, she explained different passages of the Earth Store Sutra to her husband and her children, introducing principles of cause and effect to them through real-life stories. Her husband was finally convinced and took refuge with the Venerable Master Hua. He has been completely vegetarian for the past several years. Not only did her husband become a Buddhist, her entire family became Buddhist and also practiced vegetarianism.

Several years ago, Heng Ran's father-in-law, who was in his eighties, fell, broke his leg, and was confined to bed. No doctor could cure him. But Heng Ran was extremely sincere in seeking aid from Gwan Yin Bodhisattva and Chye Lan Bodhisattva. She prayed constantly, and, after some time, her father-in-law recovered from his illness. The elder gentleman then gave up his life-long habits of smoking and drinking, became vegetarian, and recited Amitabha's name with diligence. As a result, many especially auspicious signs marked his death two years ago.

Heng Ran's life has been full of spiritual responses. Her youngest child suffered from severe retardation and refused to eat anything except meat or fish. But now the child is a vegetarian. He has learned to recite the Great Compassion Mantra, and he can even help with the housework.

In 1986, Heng Ran came to the city of Ten Thousand Buddhas and was ordained in the Buddhist ministry. As an experienced wei no (cantor) in traditional Buddhist liturgy as it is practiced in Asia, she performs religious ceremonies and often leads large assemblies in chanting and other elaborate rituals. As an incense-and-lamp master, Heng Ran attends to the many details involved in running a large hall of worship. She also helps train younger members of the Buddhist clergy in the classical liturgy. In her own simple, lucid style, she lectures on the Buddhadharma (preaches Buddhist sermons) in both Mandarin and Fukienese.