



歡喜敬禮做佛事

Joyfully Worship to Do the Buddha's Work

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今年一月華嚴精舍搬遷之前，建築師看到他的一位工人把沒吃完的飯丟在工地上，他揀了起來，灑在停車場地上餵鳥。正在餵時，一尊高大的觀音菩薩突然現在眼前！這個瑞相，令信眾擁護的心更堅固、更踴躍。

華嚴精舍從波托馬克的住宅區搬到靠近首都華盛頓大都會區的貝賽斯特，在2003年6月15日舉行安座法會，當時約有三百人參加這項把佛與菩薩法像供奉在佛寺中的儀式。恆實法師在主持儀式中，不厭其煩地向新來居士、大學生及來自吠陀的佛友簡單地介紹每位佛菩薩的故事。

6月15日上午傳授八關齋戒，下午傳三皈五戒。有二十人皈依三寶和十三位接受五戒，接著在6月16日舉行梁皇寶懺。

恆實法師和近梵法師在6月14日與15日兩晚講法，給大家在為期一星期的寶懺法會前打氣。梁皇寶懺法會由恆契師、恆出師與近慧師三位比丘尼領眾拜懺。拜懺期間，二十幾人每天通勤、二十四人（包括七位男士住在停在廟上的拖車裏）住宿，每天認真地做早晚課，晚間聽比丘尼講法開示。

在法會結束後，居士做心得報告。有位男居士說他很高興能參加法會，他幾乎要哭出來。有位女居士說這是她第一次深入拜懺，她很感激佛菩薩與祖師所流傳的教化，也很感激宣公上人

Before the Avatamsaka Vihara relocated in January, the building architect saw that one of his workers had throw away his unfinished rice on the building site. He picked up the rice and spread it around the parking lot for the birds. While he was doing that, suddenly he saw a very tall Guanyin Bodhisattva appear before him! This auspicious sign caused the faithful to be even more steadfast and vigorous in supporting the Way-place.

The Avatamsaka Vihara moved from a residential neighborhood in Potomac to Bethesda, a metropolitan area near Washington D. C. On June 15, 2003, an inaugural ceremony was held to consecrate the Buddhas' and Bodhisattvas' images at the monastery. It was followed by an Emperor of Liang Repentance Ceremony from June 16th to 22nd. The consecration ceremony, attended by about 300 people, was hosted by Dharma Master Heng Sure, who took extra time during the ceremony to briefly introduce each Buddha and Bodhisattva for those who were new, including some university students and Vedanta Center members. The Eight Precepts were transmitted on the morning of June 15th, and the Three Refuges and Five Precepts were transmitted in the afternoon. Twenty people took refuge with the Triple Jewel and thirteen took the Five Precepts.

Dharma talks given by the two Bhikshus, Dharma Masters Heng Sure and Jin Fan, on the nights of June 14th and 15th gave people a spiritual uplift before the weeklong repentance ceremony. Bhikshuni Heng Jhuang, Bhikshuni Heng Chu, and Bhikshuni Jin Hui led the Emperor of Liang Repentance. Twenty-some people commuted everyday, and twenty-four people, including seven men (who stayed in a trailer parked on the temple ground), registered to stay full-time at the monastery during the repentance ceremony. Those who stayed at the monastery diligently attended the daily morning and evening ceremonies and listened to Dharma talks given by the nuns at night.

Laypeople shared their experiences after the repentance ceremony was over. One layman said he was so happy about being able to participate in the ceremony that he felt like crying. A laywoman said this was the first time she had repented at such a profound level. She was grateful for the teachings passed down by the Buddha and the Patriarchs, and grateful to Venerable Master Hua. When she read the text in the repentance about

。雖然生於佛入涅槃後--八難之一，她很欣慰自己今生能聽聞佛法。讀了寶懺上所記載的果報，她明白因果的道理，今後做人做事不會再任性了；她也學著對眾生要心懷慈悲，她拜懺時不只是為自己懺悔，也為一切眾生懺悔。



有一個人提到在梁皇寶懺開始前，他在家裏洗車，有隻烏龜爬過來看著他，所以他就把這隻烏龜帶到廟裡來了。這一星期的法會烏龜就留在廟裏，等著和鯰魚一起被放生。

22日拜懺圓滿，到公園舉行放生儀式。大家先找比較適當的地方來舉行儀式與釋放鯰魚和小烏龜。從卡車上把裝了魚的水桶提下來後，儀式就開始了。

剛開始的時候，魚兒跳躍不已，可是聽到誦經及接受大悲甘露水灑淨後，牠們就安靜下來。儀式結束後，大家儘速把裝魚的水桶送到河岸。

小孩與幾位老人家也加入放生。岸邊的人不停地誦念阿彌陀佛。總共2500磅的鯰魚釋放入河中！放生儀式在美國並不尋常。事實上，半年前，獵人還被授權在波托馬克河附近的大公園裏獵殺繁殖過盛的野鹿。

the retribution for offenses, she realized the truth of the cause and effect. Even though we live in the age after the Buddha's nirvana—one of the eight difficulties—she was very thankful for having the blessings to meet the Buddhadharmā. She learned to be more compassionate for all living beings. She realized that she was not doing this repentance for her own sake, but for all living beings. Somebody else mentioned that before the Emperor of Liang Repentance ceremony began, while a layman was washing his car at his home, a small turtle came up to him and was looking up at him, so he brought it to the temple. The turtle was kept at the temple during the weeklong repentance; it was then taken along with the catfish for the Liberating Life ceremony.

At the end of the repentance ceremony on the 22nd, we conducted a Liberating Life ceremony in a park. When we got there, we found a less crowded and quieter spot for the catfish and the little turtle. Then we unloaded the water buckets with the fish from the truck and began the ceremony. At first, the fish kept jumping, but as the chanting proceeded and as they received the sprinkles of the Great Compassion sweet dew, they became calmer.

When the ceremony was over, people quickly carried the buckets to the banks of the Potomac River. Children and a few seniors also joined this activity of liberating the animals! As people on the banks continuously recited the name of Amitabha Buddha, 2,500 pounds of catfish were released into the Potomac River!

The ceremony and the act of liberating animals is not a common practice in America. In fact, half a year ago, hunters were authorized to kill off the deer that overpopulated a big park near Potomac.