

母以子榮——一位比丘母親的心裏話

Taking Pride in My Son—A Bhikshu's Mother's Heartfelt Words

米特可芙夫人 二〇〇四年在教會的講詞 A TALK GIVEN BY MRS. DEBORAH METCALF AT HER CHURCH IN 2004

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我兒克里斯多夫·克勞里拜學中文之賜，有緣成爲一名佛教徒。德維比斯高中畢業的他，在順利拿到奧克蘭大學學士學位後，成爲柏克萊加州大學的「丹佛人」（丹佛獎學金得主）。在柏克萊，他以翻譯佛經來作他的碩士論文；他一直在找尋一種信仰，答案竟然在他的翻譯中找到了。

那時在加州，他遇見了宣化上人，上人從中國北方來，迢迢來美弘揚大乘佛教。這些就讀哈佛、哥倫比亞、柏克萊大學的研究生都願親近上人。時值越戰方酣，這批聰穎的青年男女，有許多問題在他們的信仰中無法得到解答，極欲另尋安身立命之道。

上人和弟子們先在舊金山米遜區買下一棟老舊的工廠建築物，改建成「金山聖寺」——成爲往後洛杉磯、卡加利(加拿大)、亞伯達(加拿大)、馬來西亞、澳洲、台灣等爲數二十多所道場的發軔。

我在1985年才對佛教有了較多的認識，那時是上人邀請我來「萬佛聖城」和恆實一起慶祝我61歲生日。

恆實受了具足戒之後，偕同另一位師兄弟，爲了促進世界和平，一起沿著加州海岸公路，從洛杉磯「三步一拜——每走三步，伏地一拜」，到舊金山以北的萬佛聖城，歷時兩年九個月，全程八百多英里。那段時間，加上往後三年，恆實都發願禁語，唯有講經說法才開口；以至我有五年沒收過他的信，因爲他的禁語亦包括了信函聯絡。

懷著很大的期待，我從俄亥俄飛往加州一遊；有一義工居士開車來舊金山機場接我，一路將我載到聖城。

雷根主政加州之前，這片佔地廣達488英畝，有75棟建物散置其中的園區，本是一所州立療養



My son, Christopher Clowery [Editor's note: Dharma Master Heng Sure's lay name], became a Buddhist after studying Chinese, first at DeVilbiss High School, then at Oakland University where he earned his Bachelor's degree and at the University of California at Berkeley where he was a Danforth Fellow. He translated the Buddhist scripture for his Master's thesis at Berkeley and found that it gave him answers to his search for a faith.

At this time, he met a Buddhist Monk, Ven. Master Hsuan Hua, who came to California from Northern China to make Mahayana Buddhism an active religion in this country. He gathered around him graduates from Harvard, Columbia and Berkeley Universities. The Vietnam war was in progress and all these bright men and women were looking for answers to spiritual questions which their religious teachings had not satisfied.

The Abbot and his followers purchased an old factory building in the mission district of San Francisco and established Gold Mountain Monastery — the first of more than twenty monasteries or Way Places, which now flourish from Los Angeles to Calgary, Alberta and in Malaysia, Australia and Taiwan.



院。之後新法頒布，明令禁止病人藉躬耕自食、自己維修器材來調養身心，結果，他們因被逼回原有的小房間而病情加劇，致使治療加倍。由於醫院需要雇用更多人手來料理院務，這變成州政府一個沉重經濟負擔，導致它關門大吉。與此同時，州政府開始進行一項「在家看護」計畫，即病人必須還歸家中護理；計畫實施的結果，使得許多病人流浪街頭，成為無家可歸者，產生了許多嚴重的社會問題。

後來佛教徒買下這個園區，著手將它分闢成一座寺院、一所可以容納從幼稚園到12年級的學校、一個老人安養之家、一所學院以及翻譯中心。追隨老和尚的弟子，有一項首要任務：翻譯佛教經典。這些梵文寫就的佛經，早在佛教盛行之初，就已被翻譯成中文；如今，這批有的甚至已得到梵文博士學位的僧尼，正努力和其他譯經中心聯手，將這些中文佛經再轉譯成14種語文。

雖然我本人是忠實的基督教衛理公會教徒，可是我也渴望儘量去了解那吸引我兒子全付身心興趣，使他願意為之奉獻生命的宗教。恆實也曾是葉普渥斯城（愛荷華州）一名活躍的衛理公會教徒呢！

當汽車駛入翹著飛簷的萬佛城山門時，我感覺自己好像正在走向一個陌生的國度；我知道我沒法兒了解這兒所說和所做的，也不清楚人家會對我有什麼樣的期待。進了大門，車沿山丘上行，我可以看到高聳的屋頂下有一尊銅鑄大佛，旁邊置有一口大銅鐘。

我希望能再見到頭一次來見到的那些僧尼。這些聰慧而且受過良好教育的尼師，也跟和尚一樣誓願獨身；她們同樣身著棕色衣袍，剃光頭髮。此時正是北加州的11月，天候已然轉冷，尼師雖然罩上深藍色帽子，可是依然柔化不了她們臉上嚴肅的表情。起初，我對於女子竟可完全拋棄她的女性特質這一點，頗不以為然；可是當我開始理解她們之後，我已能超越樸實無華的外在，去理解這些肩負著使命，不再在意世俗表相的婦女。

我的女接待果悟，是一位越南籍的老菩薩，幫我「適應那兒的水土」。她領我去一間客寮安頓，以前是醫院職員的居住區，現在改作客寮。每年皆有許多亞洲人來萬佛聖城潛居靜修，年長者英則是專程來學佛的。

每天上午11點，果悟居士帶我上萬佛殿；殿中僧

I learned more about Buddhism in 1985 when the Venerable Abbot (Venerable Master Hua is referred to as the “Abbot” throughout this article) invited me to celebrate my sixty-first birthday with Heng Sure at the City of 10,000 Buddhas.

After Heng Sure’s ordination, he and a fellow monk made an 800 mile “Three Steps, One Bow” pilgrimage up the California coastal highway, from Los Angeles to City of 10,000 Buddhas, north of San Francisco to promote world peace. They made a full prostration to the ground every three steps. This spiritual journey took two years and nine months to complete. For those years and three more Heng Sure kept a vow of silence, speaking only the Buddhist Dharma, or scripture. I had not received any letters from him for five years because his vow of silence also included correspondence by mail.

With a great deal of anticipation, I flew from Ohio to California for this visit. A lay volunteer at the monastery met me at the San Francisco Airport and drove me to the City of 10,000 Buddhas.

The campus of 75 buildings on a 488-acre area had been a state hospital until Reagan became the governor of California. New laws controlling patients’ rights forbade the patients to take care of themselves by growing their own food and maintaining the facility. As a result, they were fastened back in their rooms where they suffered from more mental problems and required more treatment. Additional staff had to be hired to care for everything, and the whole system became such a financial burden to the state that it had to be closed down. The state began a new program of Home Care, which meant the patients were released to their families. Many of them wound up on the streets, creating the enormous problem of homeless people.

When the Buddhists purchased the campus, they established a monastery, a school for children, kindergarten through 12th grade, a home for Senior Citizens, a college and also a translation center. One of the chief activities of the Abbot’s followers in the United States is the translation of the Buddhist sutras, or scriptures. They were last translated from Sanskrit into Chinese in the early centuries of Buddhism. The monks and nuns, some of whom have their doctorates in Sanskrit, have expanded their efforts now into fourteen languages, with many other translation centers.

I am a life-long Methodist, but I was eager to learn all I could about the religion that had captured my son’s interest so completely that he had dedicated his life to it. Heng Sure had been an active Methodist at Epworth too.

As we drove through the impressive pagoda-roofed Mountain-gate of the City of 10,000 Buddhas, I felt as if I was approach-

尼分東西二序站列，在進日中一食之前，須先上供。賓客如有需要，亦可到齋堂另進早晚餐。

果悟給我一冊內有中英文音譯的課誦本，讓我照著唸。當我們禮拜諸佛、從此佛名轉到彼佛名時，法師都會敲一下磬。如果我在唸誦時沒跟上，常有人輕柔地為我指出來。他們默默中給予的關照，令人好窩心。我發覺身為一名三步一拜行者的母親，我受到的是一種出乎意料之外的禮遇。

20分鐘的課誦完畢，我們尾隨比丘們一路邊誦佛號，一路朝齋堂走去。齋堂前方，上人端坐於正中平台，男女眾分列兩側，左邊約25位僧，和等數男賓，右邊50位尼師，及女賓亦約50人。上人體形結實，著一襲黃色僧袍；他的相貌，截然不同於我所見過的任何人，他的表情流露著一種毫無矯飾，卻充滿睿智的慈悲。介紹認識之後，我閃過一種奇怪而悚然的感覺：他知道我在想什麼！居士先供養上人，比丘和男眾則列隊到自助餐臺取食，女眾在後。

第一次用晚齋，我只認識一小部分菜餚，還有一些白菜、米飯，以及幾盤用替代牛肉、雞肉和其他肉類的豆腐製品所炒的一些我不認識的蔬菜。佛教的戒律禁止殺生，不止人，動物也包括其中，所以這些僧尼都是嚴格的素食者。果悟跟我解說每道菜的成分，還幫我篩選適合西方人口味的菜餚。對我胃口者取，不對者去；喜歡哪道菜，那道菜就有人幫我多上。我無菜不嘗，免不了在盤子裡留下些剩菜。我本來還不知道這麼做不對，直到跟果悟排隊來到兩個用來洗碗盤的水壺前，一個盛著浸泡餐具的清潔劑水，另一個裝著用來沖洗的清水。我按部就班前，有人得來幫我清理我盤中的殘餚；那當兒我明白了，顯然，佛教徒不浪費食物的。

我們在靜默中用餐，這使我發現：它能令我集中心思在食物上。佛教徒不僅食而品其味，更念及食物「粒粒皆辛苦」。他們省思：自己何德何能，得以享用這些食物，以及貪欲如何毒害心靈；他們視食物為療飢的藥石，他們受此食以助修道，來利益眾生。

ing a foreign country; I knew I wouldn't understand everything that was said or done, and I didn't know what was expected of me. Up the hill from the gate I could see a large bronze sculpture of a Buddha under a high roof and beside it, an enormous bronze bell.

I looked forward to seeing again the nuns and monks I had met on my first visit. The nuns are bright, well-educated women who have taken vows of celibacy, as the monks have. They wear the same brown robes as the monks and their heads are also shaved. It was November and in the cool climate of Northern California, they wore Navy watch caps, but the caps didn't soften their severe look. At first, I found it a problem that a woman could reject her femininity so completely. Then as I began to know them, I saw past the plainness, to women who had such a mission in life, nothing superficial mattered anymore.

Gwo Wu, an older Vietnamese layperson, who helped me acclimate to the new environment, attended to me as my hostess. She settled me down at one of the cottages, which previously housed the staff and now are used as guest-houses. Each year many Asian visitors come to CTIB for retreats and elder hostellers come there to learn about Buddhism.

Every day at 11 a.m. Gwo Wu took me to the Hall of 10,000 Buddhas where monks gathered on one side, nuns on the other, to recite prayers before their single meal of the day. Guests could go to the dining hall for breakfast and dinner if they liked.

My hostess gave me a book of the prayers to follow along in phonetic Mandarin Chinese and English. When they changed from one deity to another in their worship, the leader beat a gong as well. If I lost my place, someone always gently pointed it out to me. Their quiet awareness of others was touching. I found as mother of the one who had done Three Steps, One Bow or San Bu Yi Bai, I was shown a deference that was totally unexpected.

At the end of the twenty minute service, we filed out in a line following the monks, chanting as we walked to the dining hall down the hill. In the dining hall, the Abbot sat on a raised platform in the center of one wall with about twenty five monks and as many male guests to his left and about fifty nuns and female guests to the right. The Abbot was a stocky man in a gold-colored robe. His face was unlike anyone I had ever met. His expression was one of compassion that was guileless, yet wise. After getting acquainted with him, I had the eerie feeling he knew what I was thinking. Lay people served the Abbot first, then the monks and male visitors went through a cafeteria line. The nuns and female guests followed.

At the first dinner, I recognized little on the buffet but some bok-choy, rice and tofu prepared to resemble veal, chicken and other



有一天齋畢，上人開始用中文開示，一位尼師英譯。上人說：「恆實的母親來這裡跟大家一起慶祝她的生日。」一尼師當即為我端來一個素糕；沒想到上人也留意到我們西方的習俗了，我更肯定他會入境隨俗地接受美國風俗。

往後的開示，使我深受感動。一名美國尼師、一名亞洲賓客和我三個人應邀各自談談我們的兒子。尼師出家前有個兒子，我和那位馬來西亞來的母親，則同樣有個出家為僧的兒子；儘管我們的年齡和文化背景有別，但我們那份愛兒之心和失落之感卻無二致。

馬來籍母親和我都擔心：這個帶走我們兒子的宗教，可會澆熄他們年輕人的滿腔熱忱？我雖然一點不懷疑恆實的誠心，可是在那樣一個外道充斥的時代，我們做母親的難免會質疑上人的出發點在於利他。如今，住在佛寺的這幾天，使我發覺：我對法界佛教總會的種種不信任和疑慮，其實都是自己惹出來的，都與實際不符。認識上人後，我更知道自己錯估了他的用心，以及恆實的見識。我同意尼師那句話：「現在啊，該換你跟兒子學習了！」

當上人問我有什麼要對大家說的時候，我藉機替所有僧尼的母親囑咐他們：「當你們義無反顧地去追求你們的新生活時，別忘了你們在家的父母，他們也想分享你們的經驗，一如他們曾分享你們生命中的每個階段那樣！」我希望我那「寫信給媽媽」的叮嚀，能入其耳、貫其心。

當上人結束今天的說話時，午齋也就隨之結束了。我們再度排班回到大殿三皈迴向。我們行頭手接足禮，拜佛多次。飽餐之後，能夠運動運動，還真不錯！

一位基督教牧師請宣化上人解說拜佛的好處，他這麼回答：「拜佛有如宣誓效忠國旗。國旗是…一塊布片，而代表國家。身為公民，你用宣誓效忠，表達尊敬及認同你的公民身分。」

「在佛龕上的這尊佛像絕對不是神，也不是聖人。這只是一種表法，用一種藝術化的形象，來顯示過去某位已經證得無上智慧的人；佛因為修習自性，而達到覺悟的境界。這尊像，是象

meats in several dishes of unfamiliar vegetables. The Buddhist precept that prohibits killing applies to killing animals as well as humans, so the monks and nuns are strict vegetarians. With each dish of Chinese food, my hostess explained the contents, urging me to take some dishes and rejecting others as too strange for my Western tastes. If I indicated I liked something, someone brought me more of it. I tried everything, but I still had some food left on my plate at the end of the meal. I didn't realize this was a faux pas until I followed my hostess in a line that led to two large dishwashing kettles. We were to dip our plate first in the soapy water, then the clear water. Someone had to clear mine before I could follow the routine. Obviously Buddhists waste no food.

We ate our meal in silence. I discovered it allowed me to concentrate on the food in a way conversation prohibits. Buddhists not only savor each nuance of flavor, they contemplate the work it took to bring the food to the table. They consider whether their conduct merits receiving it, and how greed is a poison to the mind. They think of food as medicine to cure the illness of hunger. They take the food to help them cultivate the Way to benefit all sentient beings.

One day when we had finished the meal, the Abbot began speaking in Mandarin Chinese as one of the nuns translated into English. He announced, "Heng Sure's Mama is with us to celebrate her birthday." It was the signal for one of the nuns to bring out a cake for us to enjoy. I had not expected the Abbot to observe our Western tradition. It reassured me that he was ready to adopt American customs.

The exchange afterward touched me on a deeper level. One of the American nuns, an Asian guest and I were asked to talk about our sons. In her earlier life, the American nun had a son. The Malaysian mother and I both had sons who had left home to become monks. We were of different ages and had come from different cultures but we had the common bond of a mother's love for her child and we shared the same sense of loss.

The Malaysian mother also had my concern for our sons being swept up in beliefs we felt might exploit their youthful zeal. I never doubted Heng Sure's sincerity, but it was the era of cults and both the other mother and I had been skeptical that the Abbot's motives were altruistic. My stay at the monastery convinced me that my mistrust and doubt about the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association were of my own making, rather than being based on reality. I realized, after getting to know the Abbot, I had misjudged his purpose and Heng Sure's judgment. I agree with the nun who said, "Now it is time for you to learn from your son."

When the Abbot asked if I had something to say to the assembly, it was my opportunity to give the monks and nuns a message from

徵他已充分發掘人性的潛能，及他對至善與大悲的追求。當你禮佛時，象徵性地，你是在禮拜你自己本來具足大智慧之潛能。再說，禮佛也是一種很好的運動，絕非迷信或消極的偶像崇拜；拜佛是一種對真理的修持，是積極而主動的。」

爲示慶生，及我的來訪，一天，出家眾們安排了一個放生儀式。信徒們先在舊金山買下一些將入餐館油鍋沸湯的生龜，裝入木箱，運回聖城，擺在大殿待放。佛像前，木箱裡的烏龜瘋也似地不停抓呀爬呀；可是當磬聲一起，大眾開始唱誦，烏龜就變得安靜下來了，好像這些聲音能夠撫慰牠們似的。大眾誦放生儀規迴向給它們，因爲佛教徒相信放歸生路，這些烏龜能繼續修到一種比較高等的生命，而免於無止盡的生死循環。

儀式完畢，果悟駕車帶我來到附近的湖準備放生。以前我經手的烏龜，沒有一個大過一塊錢銀幣的，可是現在的每只都有餐盤那麼大，都說好每人各放一只。我挑了一隻看起來還算溫馴的，一抓起它身軀的中段，它那小小的四肢就變成了四個旋轉不已的轉軸，我得當心別讓它勾住我的衣褲。它太渴望就水了，所以我必須快快將它放下。當我把它一放入水中，見它立刻消失在混濁的湖水時，我以爲放生已經結束了。

果悟說：「看哪，它們在謝我們呢！」

我原以爲她在開玩笑，但就在離岸約模50呎遠的湖中，冒出了一些小頭，是烏龜在轉頭回望我們，然後，再度消失。

果悟說：「繼續看啊！」

一兩分鐘之後，烏龜的頭又浮現在湖面更遠處，轉過頭，回顧我們。我真不敢相信。

果悟說：「它們會謝三次。」確實如此。

這些事我無法解釋，但知道事情確實這麼發生過。往後，只要我一看到菜單上寫著「烏龜湯」，就會想起那次稱心的善行。

到聖城住了三天，我訝異地察覺到：自己對往日穿戴的服飾，不再那麼感興趣了。我的確喜歡色彩與式樣，但在這樣寧靜的地方，它們已

all their mothers. I said, "While you are enthusiastic and zealous in your pursuit of your new way of life, remember that your parents at home want to share your experience, just as they have shared every other phase of your lives." I hoped my "write to your mother" message reached their hearts as well as their ears.

After the Abbot's message for the day, the meal ended and we once again walked in single file to the Buddha Hall to say another group of prayers. We bowed in full prostration, hands and forehead to the floor, many times. I found this was an ideal exercise after eating a large meal.

A Christian missionary asked Master Hsuan Hua to tell him the benefit of bowing. The Abbot explained, "Bowing is like pledging allegiance to the flag. The flag is ... a piece of cloth that symbolizes the nation. As a citizen, you demonstrate your respect and acknowledge your citizenship by pledging allegiance."

"The image of the Buddha on the altar is clearly not a divinity or a Sage. It is a representation, an artistic image ... that points back to a human who realized the highest wisdom. The Buddha cultivated his nature to an awakened state. The image symbolizes his realization of humanity's potential and aspiration for the highest goodness and compassion. When you bow, symbolically you honor your own potential for great wisdom. Furthermore, bowing is good exercise. It is not idol worship, which is superstitious and passive. Bowing to the Buddha is a practice of a principle; it is dynamic and active."

One day the monks arranged for a liberating life ceremony, planned in honor of my visit. Buddhists in San Francisco purchased turtles destined for the city's restaurants and brought them in crates to the monastery. They were carried into the Buddha Hall and laid in front of the altar where they scabbled and clawed the wooden crates frantically. When the gong sounded for the prayers and the chanting began, the turtles became very quiet, almost as if they were soothed by the sound. The prayers were for their well-being because the Buddhists believe that by not ending their lives, the turtles can continue to strive toward a higher form, rather than having to start over again in the endless cycle of birth and death.

After the ceremony, my hostess drove me to a nearby lake where the turtles were to be released. I had never held a turtle larger than a silver dollar, and these were the size of dinner plates, but each person there was expected to pick one up and carry it to the water. I chose one that looked docile, but as I took hold of him "midships", his little feet became four rotors that I had to keep from clawing my shirt and slacks. He was as anxious to gain the water as I was to put him down, so it was a quick trip. When I eased him into the water, he disappeared beneath the muddy water immediately and I thought the ceremony was finished.



沒像以前那麼重要了。這是頭一回，我對棕色樸素的僧袍有了好感。歸去前，再度與上人透過翻譯一談，也多了一層對佛教的了解。

他告訴我：「你們的上帝是個有嫉妒心的上帝，他說：『除了我，你們不能再有其他的上帝。』佛說你可以一面信你的上帝，一面也信佛。你的上帝於你有如家長，你是他的孩子；如果你犯錯，得要他原諒你。佛和你，就像大人對大人式的對等關係；你做啥壞事，你得自己負責。」

佛教徒的慈悲和善深深烙在我的腦海中，他們過著一種令我敬慕的宗教生活方式。

恆實已經找到一種既充實又有益的生活方式。去年，他獲得加大柏克萊分校的佛學博士學位，目前正掌理柏克萊佛寺，並在世界宗教研究中心任教。他是「開創宗教聯合會」的理事之一；也是佛教書刊的作者，並在柏克萊「神學研究院」講授孔子學說和佛教教義。他到美國和亞洲國家四處演講。

我知道他絕不會結婚而讓我抱孫子了，這點雖然令人遺憾；可是他所影響的孩子，遠比他當上一個父親所能影響的孩子，要多得多。這使他比我所認識的任何人都快樂！說句心裏話，我為我兒子是一位佛教徒而自豪。

Gwo Wu said, "Watch. They will thank us."

I thought she was joking, but out in the lake about fifty feet, little heads began to pop up. The turtles turned, looked at us, and disappeared again.

Gwo Wu said, "Keep watching."

In a minute or two, farther out in the lake, turtle heads appeared again, turned, and looked back. I couldn't believe it.

Gwo Wu said, "They will thank us three times", and they did.

I can't explain it; I just know it happened, and it was a very satisfying act of kindness that I enjoy remembering when I see turtle soup on a menu.

During my three-day visit at the monastery, I was surprised to realize I was not as interested in the clothes or jewelry I usually wear. I love color and pattern, but it did not hold the same importance for me in that serene setting. For the first time the brown, plain robes of the Buddhists were logical. Before I returned home, the Abbot and I had a conversation through an interpreter. It gives you one more aspect of his religion.

He told me, "Your God is a jealous god who says, 'You shall have no other gods before me.' The Buddha says you can believe in your God and Buddha too. Your God is like a parent to you, his child. If you do something bad, he forgives you. Buddha has an adult-to-adult relationship with you. If you do something bad, you are accountable for your actions."

The many kindnesses of the Buddhists made an impression that has stayed with me. They live their religion in a way that I admire.

Heng Sure has found a way of life that is both productive and rewarding. Last year he received his Doctorate in Buddhism at the University of California. He is now the Director of the Berkeley Buddhist Monastery and he teaches at the Institute for World Religions. He is a director of the United Religions Initiative; he is a published author of books and articles on Buddhism and he has taught courses on Confucian and Buddhist Ethics at the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley. He lectures in the United States and in Asian countries.

I know he will never marry or give me grandchildren, which is disappointing, but he is influencing many more children than he ever would as a father. It makes him happier than anyone I know, and I can honestly say I am proud that my son is a Buddhist.