



# 有緣在聖城

——介紹汪瑞燕居士

## Affinities at the City

——Introducing Upasika Linda Chen

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我從喬治亞州亞特蘭大來的，今天我來談談自己的學佛因緣與到萬佛聖城常住之因緣。

我與外子在1982年移民來美，我們一直住在亞特蘭大，那邊的氣候很像臺灣，風景優美，四季分明，沒有地震、龍捲風，也沒有水災。自我結婚之後，一直跟公婆住在一起，當公婆知道外子想移民來美，我們在臺灣等綠卡時，他們老人家就先來美國等我們。外子是老么，我們又沒有小孩，照顧兩位老人家可以全心全意，所以他們喜歡跟我們住在一起。

剛開始我不贊成來美國，因為換了新環境，沒有朋友，也沒有工作，語言和交通都有問題，一切都得從頭開始。我學佛的因緣是在亞特蘭大開始的，今天我能學佛及碰到正信佛教，有親近善知識的因緣，那要感謝外子帶我來美國，成全我護持三寶，供養三寶，才有因緣在萬佛聖城常住。像我的同事想盡辦法想來美國都拿不到簽證，而我不想來，卻輕而易舉移民來美，現在我不後悔移民，也誠心祝福他也走上這條菩提道路至佛國。

1987年第一次回臺灣是家母往生，回台奔喪。1988年我再度回臺灣時，鄰居朋友請我吃素，就開始對我轉法輪，「來來！看這裡的餐廳有什麼書跟妳結緣？是《地藏菩薩本願經》，妳跟地藏菩薩有緣。」「怎麼會

I am from Atlanta, Georgia. Today I would like to talk about how I came to study the Buddhadharmā and how I decided to move to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB).

In 1982 my husband and I immigrated to the United States and lived in Atlanta. The environment there is very similar to Taiwan. The scenery is beautiful. The four seasons are clear. There are no earthquakes, tornados, or floods. Ever since I married, I have lived with my father and mother-in-law. When they found out we were coming to America and were waiting for green cards, they came here first to wait for us. Since my husband and I have no children, we devote ourselves to looking after our parents. That's why they like living with us.

At first I didn't want to come because I had no friends and no job, and even language and transportation were a problem. I had to start from the beginning. I began studying Buddhism in Atlanta. Since then, I have met faithful Buddhists and drawn near to good advisors. I am indebted to my husband for bringing me to America and allowing me to support and make offerings to the Triple Jewel. That was how I developed affinities for coming to live at CTTB. My co-worker thought of endless ways to come to America but couldn't get a passport; I didn't want to come but very easily immigrated to America. Now, I have no regrets and sincerely hope that my coworker will also be able to walk the Bodhi path.

In 1987 I went back to Taiwan to attend my mother's funeral. In 1988 I went back again. My friend convinced me to eat vegetarian food and introduced me to the Dharma. She said, "Come! Let's see what book in this restaurant you have affinities with. It's the Earth Treasury Sutra. You have affinities with Earth Treasury Bodhisattva." "How can that be?" I asked. "Why should I have affinities with Earth Treasury Bodhisattva? I should have affinities with Guanyin Bodhisattva." She told me that it was best to be strictly vegetarian when I was reciting the *Earth Treasury Sutra*. I took her advice. When I came back to America, I began reciting the *Earth Treasury Sutra* for seven days each month. I rarely went out during those times because it was difficult to remain a pure vegetarian outside.

啦！我怎麼會跟地藏菩薩有緣？我應該跟觀世音菩薩有緣才對。」她教我誦《地藏經》時，最好吃素。我很聽話，返美之後，每個月裏一連七天，每天誦一部《地藏經》，這時也儘量不出去，因為出去吃素不方便。

1988年公公過世，1991年地藏菩薩聖誕，得知「亞城佛學社」法師領眾慶祝法會的消息，我跟外子說：「這一天是地藏菩薩聖誕，你一定要送我去佛學社。」這是我第一次進入亞城佛學社。

1992年婆婆過世後，我即皈依並受五戒，一直到現在每天誦一部《地藏經》是我的功課。

同年10月份萬佛聖城來了六位法師，男、女各三位，弘法唱誦皆是頂呱呱！當天法師們帶領大眾繞佛或拜《大悲懺》，在繞念〈大悲咒〉時，我一直淚流滿面。法師們雖然都這麼年輕，卻能攝受我，令我感動萬分。

年底我們佛學社有六個人來萬佛聖城參加精進佛七。其中有一位受不了寒冷的侵襲，參加了一天一夜就開溜！剩下五位。當時規定每天在休息空檔時還要禮佛一千拜，起初他們達不到這個數目，沒想到後面幾天，有的人還可以再補拜前幾天不足的數目。他們回去後報告參加精進佛七的心得，有一位男眾佛友說：「他開始禮佛數天都沒辦法走路，得扶著牆壁走。」大家聽了都捧腹大笑！這五位佛友入寶山，都大有收穫。讓我這剛開始學佛的，內心大動，也想來嘗試。

所以93年3月，我們一行三人來聖城參加觀音菩薩聖誕的觀音七法會，一連數天在繞佛念聖號時，就淚流滿面無法停止。有人告訴我們：「法會結束，上人會在金山寺。」所以法會結束就直奔金山寺用午齋，下午在拜《慈悲三昧水懺》時，法師告訴我們，想見師父，晚上去機場可見到師父，終這裡？我們上樓聽經等上人時，講經快結束時，我

In 1988 my father-in-law passed away. In 1991, on Earth Treasury Bodhisattva's birthday I learned that the Atlanta Buddhist Association (ABA) was going to hold a ceremony led by Dharma Masters. I told my husband, "Today is Earth Treasury Bodhisattva's birthday. You'd better drive me to the Buddhist Association." That was the first time I joined the ABA.

In 1992 my mother-in-law passed away. That year, I took the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts. Ever since, I have recited the Earth Treasury Sutra daily.

In October 1992, six Dharma Masters, three monks and three nuns, came from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas to share the Dharma and host Dharma activities; their chanting was excellent. When we circumambulated the Buddhas or recited the Great Compassion Mantra, my tears kept streaming down. Although the Dharma Masters were all so young, they could gather me in and I felt grateful a thousand times over.

At the end of that year six people from the ABA came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas to attend the intensive Guanyin Session. One person couldn't stand the bitter cold and left after one day, but the other five stayed. At that time, everyone was required to complete a thousand bows during break time each day. At first, the five couldn't meet the required number. But towards the end of the session, some were able to make up the bows they missed during the first few days. When they came back, they reported their experiences. One man recalled, "When I started bowing, I couldn't walk the first few days. I had to hold on to the wall to support myself." Everyone thought this was very funny. These five Dharma friends had entered a treasure mountain and came back with valuables. They inspired a beginner like me to want to come and try it out.

So in March, 1993, two other people and I came to CTTB to attend a Guanyin Session. For a couple of days, my tears kept falling whenever we circumambulated reciting Guanyin Bodhisattva's holy name. Someone told us that the Master would be at Gold Mountain Monastery by the end of the session. So after the session we rushed to Gold Mountain for lunch. In the afternoon, during the bowing of the Water Samadhi Repentance, a Dharma Master told us that we could go to the airport if we wanted to meet the Master. Finally we could meet him! We looked at each other with tears in our eyes. I had also prepared a red envelope for him. That evening we followed the Dharma Masters to the International Translation Institute (ITI). We thought to ourselves, "Aren't we going to the airport?" We went upstairs to listen to the lecture and wait for the Master. Towards the end, I felt very fidgety and kept thinking that we wouldn't be able to see the Ven. Master. After the lecture, we went downstairs and asked the Dharma Master at the front desk about the Ven. Master. She said that something important had come up at CTTB and the Ven. Master had rushed there to deal with it. When the Ven. Master went to Atlanta to propagate the Dharma, I had not learned Buddhism yet. Now, I had gone from CTTB



坐立不安，心裡感覺見不到師父了，等我們聽完經下樓時，這位師姊去問櫃台內的法師，法師回答：「萬佛聖城有重要的事，師父趕回去處理。」師父到亞城弘法時，我還沒有學佛，如今我從聖城到金山寺，又追到譯經院，來了聖城兩次也沒見到，只嘆我沒有福報，我也不強求，就把供養師父的紅包袋留做回憶。

94年10月第二次來聖城參加觀音菩薩出家的觀音七法會。95年6月社長打電話告訴我：「宣公上人走了！」當時真不敢相信我的耳朵，不可能！不可能！絕對不可能！老和尚曾經說過：「活到一百歲時，要焚身供佛。」怎麼可能入涅槃呢？他老人家真的放下一切就這樣走了嗎？

7月與外子一行五人趕來聖城參加老和尚的茶毗，由各國各地趕來參加老和尚的茶毗典禮將近二千人左右。茶毗典禮當天，當法師最後高舉火炬大喊一聲「燒」，點燃棺木下的木材，木材迅速地燃起，在場很多信眾哭得傷心欲絕。我深深體會到世間的無常，山河大地都會變色，何況人呢？縱然我們喊破喉嚨，哭腫了雙眼也喚不回這位愛護我們至深的大善知識。第二天晚上，我們瞻仰了老和尚部份舍利子，隔天早上由法師捧著上人的骨灰盒，乘坐熱氣球升上半空中，謹遵老和尚的遺願，把骨灰灑在虛空！這又是一堂印象至深的課，至今還在我腦海縈繞！

95年有二個星期的佛七，心想真太好了，知道聖城冬天很冷，帶了很保暖的衣帽，全副武裝到聖城。晚上蓋了四床被，鼻子還冰冰的，可見初來時我多不能適應。當年法會期間，我最喜歡的是大迴向，看到對面的法師們，平常非常的嚴肅，此時露出知足常樂、法相莊嚴的笑容，一尊一尊的像觀世音菩薩的吸引著我，這不就是西方極樂世界的景像嗎？太美了！太棒了！

(下接第47頁)

to Gold Mountain, from Gold Mountain to ITI, and have been to CTTB twice, and still, I had not met the Ven. Master. I sighed thinking that I did not have the blessings to see him. But I couldn't force it and just kept the red envelope I had prepared for the Master as a souvenir.

In October, 1994, I came to CTTB for the second time to attend the Guanyin Session. In June the next year, I received a phone call from the Association telling me that Master Hsuan Hua had departed. I couldn't believe my ears – it couldn't be true! He once said, "When I live to be a hundred, I will burn my body in offering to the Buddhas." How can he have entered Nirvana? Did he really go and leave everything behind?

In July, my husband and I and three others came to CTTB to attend the Master's cremation. There were about two thousand people from all over the world. Towards the end of the cremation ceremony, Dharma Master Ming Yang lifted a burning torch high and shouted, "Burn!" As he set the coffin on fire, many disciples cried hard. I couldn't help but believe in the impermanence of the world – it is ever changing: mountains, rivers, the earth, and everything, how much the more is this the case with human beings? We may cry till our voices turn hoarse and our eyes grow puffy, but we cannot call this loving good knowing advisor back. The next night we respectfully gazed upon the Master's *sharira*. The following morning, several Dharma Masters ascended into the sky with the *sharira* in a hot air balloon following the Master's wishes, and scattered his ashes into space. This is another event of my life that I will never forget!

The 1995 Amitabha Session was two weeks long. I told myself, "wonderful!" I had brought a lot of clothing because I knew that it would be very cold in the winter at CTTB. At night I covered myself with four blankets but my nose still felt icy. You can see how unaccustomed I was to this place in the early days. The event I enjoyed most during the sessions that year was the Great Transference. The Dharma Masters who usually appear very serious and solemn, during these moments looked happy with adorned smiles. Each attracted me like images of Guanyin Bodhisattva. Isn't this what the Western Pure Land looks like? How beautiful! How wonderful!

(Continued on page 47)

