

# 陀佛

## 慈悲的不同面觀

### *Different Aspects of Kindness and Compassion*

我本身是西方人，在西方，佛教是新來的，很多人已經有自己的宗教信仰，所以用什麼方法來介紹佛法呢？我在萬佛城，每天依照出家人的生活做早晚課等廟上的活動之外，我還是大學的教授，教授的課程是「佛教和基督教的對話」，在對話當中用什麼方法來介紹佛法？對話目的並不是要大家都變成一道，完全相同了，這是不可能的。你看龍泉寺高山風景非常的幽美，山上樹林不是一種，還有柏樹、松樹、槐樹、橡樹等等，都是相互搭配而欣欣向榮。宗教應該是這樣子的！我們如果能做好的鄰居，互相交流、互相尊重，那就算是達到目的，世界和平可望有進步了。

我本來是基督徒，在一個基督教的家庭長大。很多人問我，藍眼睛的西方人，怎麼會認識佛法呢？我是從中國話的漢字入門的。我13歲時，我的阿姨在華盛頓做記者，她是我母親的大姐。她的工作是看華盛頓地區有什麼亞洲方面的表演會、展覽會，她就參加，然後寫文章。有一次，中國的一位畫家到華盛頓開展覽，博物館出了一本圖錄，內容是他所有的畫，一張一張的，又用毛筆寫字。阿姨把這些圖錄當生日禮物寄到俄亥俄州我家。我打開這些目錄，看到這些漢字，心中就動了，奇怪，好像認識。

13歲，每天看電視、打棒球、唱唱歌，沒有機會接觸中國文化；可是當時看到這些漢字，一下子就被吸引了！看

恒實法師2009年12月11日講於龍泉寺  
A Dharma talk by Dharma Master Heng Sure at Longquan Monastery  
in China on December 11, 2009  
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I am a Westerner. In the West, Buddhism is new. Most people already have a religion with a different set of beliefs. So the question is, "How do you introduce Buddhism to Westerners?" I live in a branch monastery near the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. In addition to doing the morning and evening recitations and other activities in the temple everyday like all monks do, I am also a university professor. I teach a course called Buddhist Christian Dialogue. How can Buddhism be introduced through inter-religious dialogue? First, the goal of the dialogue cannot be to convert everybody to identical beliefs. Making everybody believe completely the same thing is impossible. Look at the serene and beautiful scenery on the mountain of Longquan Monastery. On the mountain, the trees are not of one kind. There are morning cypresses, pine trees, Chinese scholar trees, oak trees and so on. They grow prosperously because they mix and match. Religions are the same way. If we can be friendly neighbors – if we can communicate well and share a mutual respect – then we've achieved our goal. This is part of the progress toward world peace.

I was originally a Christian and I grew up in a Christian family. Many people have asked me how a Westerner with blue eyes came to know about Buddhism. I started to learn Chinese by studying the basic characters. When I was 13 years old, my aunt was a journalist in Washington, D.C. She is my mother's oldest sister. Her work was to get involved with all the Asian performances and expositions in the Washington area and afterward write an article about her experience. At one point a Chinese painter held an exhibition in Washington. The museum printed a catalog of all his paintings and included his inscriptions written with a Chinese writing brush. My aunt sent the catalog to me in Ohio as a birthday gift. When I opened the catalog and saw the Chinese characters, my heart was captivated, fascinated. Surprisingly, the characters seemed familiar to me.

As a 13-year-old, I watched television every day, played baseball and sang along with the songs on the radio. I had not had the opportunity

不懂，就知道這些筆劃都有意思，橫著看、豎著看也看不懂，但還想看；所以那時候，就覺得這是我應該明白的。於是去附近公立圖書館，圖書館裏有亞洲宗教的書，有老子的《道德經》，《六祖法寶壇經》，都是中英對照的。我打開了，哎呀，好高興！這邊是中文，另一邊是英文，我可以對照。這個就是「人」、person，那個就是「一」、one。這樣子很好，我真的愉快！我讀的當然是英文，一個字一個字對照中文，可是當我看《六祖法寶壇經》時，就覺得好像六祖大師是我熟悉的一個人，也是奇妙的，怎麼會這樣？因為根本不知道有佛教。六祖大師和《六祖壇經》好像聽過的，奇怪！言猶在耳，感覺好像剛剛和他通電話似的。所以我覺得那是值得去研究的，非常吸引年輕人的，就這樣子慢慢地開始學中文。

到了加州州立大學讀碩士班，研究佛教的中文，那個時候才認識上人，開始學習佛法。1972年，一走進金山寺的大門，看到有西方人已經出了家。我覺得木魚的聲音、香的味道非常熟悉，雖然地方是由一個很破爛的工廠改過來的，不像龍泉寺一千年的歷史，是遼代的大寺廟；金山寺一點也不像個佛寺，可是聽到打磬、誦經的聲音，我覺得好像回到家了。所以就在1973年皈依三寶，1974年參加暑假佛學班，1975年剃度，1976年就受具足戒，到今年(2009)已經三十三年了。

上人是每天晚上講經，我們那時候星期六、星期天講兩次經，所以一個禮拜有機會聽到九次講經。上人講的時候，一定要翻譯成英語，像龍泉寺也是注重翻譯的。所以在上人的法座下聽他東北口音的中文，就這樣子在美國學習中文。有人說：「奇怪，法師你的中文怎麼有東北的口音？忽中忽西的，南腔北調的。」話說回來，在那時候，我才認識觀世音菩薩。

今天就談談西方的宗教和東方的宗教都會是慈悲的，有不同的面貌。就這麼一個題目。

to experience any Chinese culture. But when I saw these characters, I felt strangely attracted to the language. Though I did not fully understand, I knew different strokes had different meanings. I looked horizontally and vertically. I did not understand, but I still wanted to look. I told myself I ought to learn about them.

I went to the public library close to my house. The library had books on Asian religion. It had Laozi's *Daodejing* and *The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*. The books were in Chinese with English translations. When I opened them, I felt suddenly happy. One side was Chinese and on the other side was the English translation, so I could compare the two languages. There was the character 人 for 'person', there was the character 一 for 'one'. It was great! I felt thrilled. Of course I would read the words in English and then compare them with the Chinese. When I read *The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, I felt as though the Sixth Patriarch was someone I had known. It was marvelous. How could it be real? I simply had never heard about Buddhism. Why did I feel like I'd known the Sixth Patriarch? Why did the sutra feel so familiar? It was an unbelievable feeling. I felt like I had just had a conversation over the telephone. In any case, I felt the sutra and Chinese were worth studying. And I started studying from that point forward.

I got to know Master Hua and began studying under him while I was working on a Master's degree in Chinese and Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. I first visited Gold Mountain Monastery in 1972, and there I met Westerners who were already ordained. The sound of the wooden fish and the smell of incense felt familiar to me. Gold Mountain had been reconstructed from an old broken-down factory. It was not like Longquan Monastery with its big Liao Dynasty temple and its thousand-year history.

Gold Mountain didn't really resemble a Buddhist temple, but when I heard the bells ringing and the monks and nuns chanting, it felt like home. So I took the Three Refuges in 1973. Then I participated in Buddhist summer courses in 1974. I shaved my head in 1975 and was ordained in 1976. It has already been 33 years.

Master Hua gave Dharma talks every night. On Saturdays and Sundays, he lectured twice. So you could listen to his talks nine times a week. All the talks had to be translated into English because there are many English speakers here. So I studied Chinese in America by listening to his Manchurian accent. Someone asked me once, "Dharma Master Sure, it's unbelievable! Why do you have a Manchurian accent when you speak Chinese? Sometimes you sound Eastern, sometimes you sound Western; you have a mixture of accents." Anyway, that was when I first got to know Guanyin Bodhisattva.

Today I'll talk about how religions in the West and religions in the East are all kind and compassionate in different ways.

Take a look at who is in this photo. Is that Guanyin Bodhisattva? Does that child look like Sudhana? You might say they look a little bit alike and they look different. Who are they? That's Jesus and that's the Virgin Mary. Take a look at Mary's right hand. Do those look like prayer beads? Yes, very

你們看看這張像裏是什麼人？是觀世音菩薩嗎？那個小孩像不像是善財童子？你說有一點像，有一點不像。他們是誰呢？這個是耶穌，那個是瑪利亞。你看看瑪利亞右手拿的，是不是像如意珠？很像很像的。你看這個小孩子手上拿的，也像一個如意珠。你看她的相貌非常的慈祥。

這是一個有1,300年歷史的天主教堂，專門為了滿人的願。如果親戚有病，你不能親自去的，或者你住在遠地，你就寄一封信，請主持的人為你點一支蠟燭。教堂裏天天點蠟燭，一年上山去祈禱的人約有一百萬。以前如果誰在海外，可以用寄信的。若住在海島，就用瓶子把你的願寫在紙上，放入瓶子裏；再把瓶子放到海裏，希望海水流到這裏來。現在用什麼方式？e-mail，每一天都很多e-mail的。點蠟燭祈禱，你知道那氣氛有多麼慈悲、隆重、莊嚴！我到那邊去，覺得觀音菩薩的心和瑪利亞一樣的。

是不是他們奪我們的神呢？還是我們偷他們的神呢？不是這麼講。因為人的心需要慈悲。聖母瑪利亞是觀音菩薩大慈大悲的體現，無論你用什麼名字，我們心裏邊都有求慈悲、求懷抱的一種需要、一種理念，所以我們不需要分得太清楚。

觀世音菩薩，在過去是正法明如來，雖然已經證得究竟解脫，還是不捨眾生受苦，所以發慈悲心，以菩薩的身，乘願再來，尋聲救苦。觀世音菩薩知道現一個佛的身體，三十二相好、八十種隨形好的大丈夫相，人們不容易接近；所以她現菩薩身，現這麼一個像慈母似的化身來救度眾生。所以觀世音就像我們的朋友。

觀世音菩薩的名字很多，你們知道不知道？梵文是什麼？藏語呢？越南話？有沒有會韓語的？我會，我學習了。粵語呢？臺灣話呢？日語呢？我們的英語呢？多數是“Guanyin”（觀音），比較好。觀音菩薩還有其他名字：觀世音菩薩、觀音娘娘、觀音佛母、觀音媽、西方三聖阿彌陀佛的大弟子、千手千眼觀世音菩薩。還有，送子觀音；可能在座的有多少人父母向觀音菩薩求了才來的，有沒有？你們不要忘了這個恩人。還有觀自在菩薩、魚藍觀音，施無畏菩薩……那麼多名字。

☞待續

similar. What does the child have in his hand? It looks like another set of prayer beads. Mary appears to be very benevolent.

The Catholic Church in the photo has a history of fulfilling people's wishes for the past 1,300 years. If your relatives are sick, you can light a candle for them here. If you live far away from the church and you can't go yourself, you can send a letter and ask the priest to light a candle for you. Candles are lit in the church every day of the year. Around one million people go to pray in this church each year. You can send a letter even if you are overseas. Or if you're stranded on an island, you can write your wish on a piece of paper, put it into a bottle, and throw the bottle into the sea. You have the hope the bottle will flow to the church. And what's the latest method? E-mail. The church receives a large amount of e-mails every day. When people are lighting the candles and praying inside the church, the atmosphere is filled with compassion, awe and hope for mercy. When I was in there, I felt that Guanyin Bodhisattva and the Virgin Mary possessed the same compassionate heart.

So are they going to steal our Bodhisattva, or are we going to claim their Saint? We can't approach it like that. The point is every person's heart has a need for kindness and compassion. Mother Mary, the Holy Blessed Virgin, is a reflection of kindness and compassion, as is Guanyin Bodhisattva. Know who we are, our hearts are seeking the same thing--compassion and the feeling of connection, or empathy. We don't need to nit-pick and dispute over the minor details.

Guanyin Bodhisattva was called 'Thus Come One Light of Proper Dharma' in the past. Although he had already attained Buddhahood, he actually did not want living beings to suffer, so he appeared as a Bodhisattva and returned to this world with his past vows. He rescues those who suffer when he hears their sounds. Guanyin Bodhisattva, while still a Buddha, knows if he appeared as a Buddha with thirty-two major physical characteristics and eighty minor characteristics, then people could not approach him easily. So he shows up as a Bodhisattva who resembles a loving and kind mother to save all living things. Therefore, Guanyin Bodhisattva is like our friend.

Do you know there are many names of Guanyin Bodhisattva? What is the name in Sanskrit? In Tibetan? In Vietnamese? Does anyone know in Korean? How about Vietnamese? I can almost say the Vietnamese correctly because I practice. In Cantonese? In Taiwanese? In Japanese? Or in English? Most of the names are "Guanyin," which is easy to pronounce in English. Guanyin Bodhisattva has other names: the Bodhisattva Who Observes the Sounds of the World, Goddess of Mercy, Goddess of Mercy Buddha, Mother Goddess, Amitabha Buddha's Foremost Disciple among the Western Three Sages, Guanyin Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes, and also, Guanyin Bodhisattva with the Power to Bestow Children. How many of you were sent by Guanyin Bodhisattva? Yes, right! Do not forget to be thankful to the one who brought you to this world. Other names are: Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, Fish-Basket Guanyin and Giver of Courage Bodhisattva – many, many names.

☞To be continued