

# 娑婆中的淨土——雙週佛七心得報告

## Pure Land in Samsara— Excerpts from the Amitabha Session

吳親歛、胥妙成講於2011年12月24日萬佛城大殿  
Talks given by Chin-Lian Wu and Miao-Cheng Xu  
on December 24, 2011 at Buddha Hall, CTTB

有人說聖城一年的法會裏頭，氣氛最不一樣的是年底的彌陀佛七。參加者一心念佛的共同信念與專一無雜的佛號聲，猶如一塊吸鐵石般地，令人捨不得離開佛殿。這股攝受力今年似乎特別明顯。

這次佛七在號稱「災難年」的二〇一二年逼近之際，法緣顯得更為殊勝可貴。不僅時間延長至兩週，而且人數亦較往年增加許多。大眾和諧平緩的念佛聲，讓人彷彿置身於極樂世界的蓮池海會；經中「諸大善人聚會一處」的景象，亦儼然在前。

本期摘錄佛七圓滿日兩位參加者的心得分享，使當時會下的大眾能藉此重溫記憶，繼續精進；無緣錯過者，也能同霑法喜，把握當下，一心念佛，為二〇一二年更添一份光明。

### ◎ 吳親歛

諸佛菩薩、師父上人、諸位法師、同參道友，弟子的法名叫親歛，從中國大陸來，現在在美國上學。這是我第一次來萬佛城，也是第一次參加佛七，很高興能夠漫談我這幾天的心得。

Some say that of all the Dharma assemblies that take place at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, the one that carries a special energy is the Amitabha session occurring at the end of the year. It's because all the participants who come have the same belief; that is being mindful in reciting the Buddha's name. Without distraction, everyone is very focused in the recitation, and the concentration fills the Buddha Hall at CTTB with so strong a magnetism that people do not want to leave. This energy was particularly obvious this year.

Approaching the year 2012 where disasters are predicted to be inevitable in the course of the year, the collective sense of commitment in cultivating together under these circumstances make the Amitabha recitation all the more inconceivable and precious. Not only is the session's length increased to two weeks, but also the number of participants increased this year compared to previous years. The assembly recited so harmoniously that it appeared as if one was already in the Sea Vast Lotus Pool Assembly of the Pure Land. The line in the sutra describes the "great virtuous ones gathering in one place"; this image was solemnly laid out.

In this issue, we have selected a few Dharma talks given at the end of the session for your enjoyment. Hopefully they can refresh the memories of those who were present, reminding them to be vigorous. Those who were unable to attend could also share the Dharma joy and make good use of their time in reciting the Buddha's name. Together, let's make 2012 brighter.

### ◎ Chin-Lian Wu

Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, the Venerable Master, the Dharma Masters, and all good advisors; my name is Qin Jian. I come from China and am currently enrolled in school here in the United States. This is my first time visiting CTTB and also my first time taking part in the Amitabha session. I am therefore very pleased to be here and to share my inspirations with all of you tonight.

上山之前就聽很多人說這裏如何冷，但是上來之後發現不是太冷，卻能夠刺激正念，因為溫暖容易使人安逸，不容易精進。我來了這裏以後第二天皈依受五戒，海青縵衣披上身，就感覺它們給身心加上了一層欄杆，使自己不容易放逸。每天密集的法會也使得自己每天要比以前早得多起床，然後一直到很晚才結束，中間也沒有太多的間隔。再加上用齋前後的偈頌，都能讓我們長時間保持正念。這些條件，讓萬佛城成為修行的好地方。

萬佛城，估計是整個美國最奇特的地方，因為在這裏可以看到中國人、美國人、越南人等等，都虔誠地聚在道場裏。我很欣慰看到很多西方人來參加佛七，而且都會念「南無阿彌陀佛」這六個中文字組成的聖號。在別的地方，美國人對佛教的瞭解可能只聽說過打坐、參禪、業力、開悟這幾個名詞，而到這裏的卻對淨土法門這個大乘宗派有所瞭解，有些人還瞭解得更多，而且還虔誠地信仰。

有一次午齋過後，我看到一隊小女孩從女校走出來，嘴裏還唱著「南無阿彌陀佛」的聖號，聲音無憂無慮，就像小天使一般。她們當中大多是金髮和棕髮的小女孩。這種情形估計全世界僅此一家，所以值得提一提。

一住進聖城，就感到一股精進的氣息，因為周圍的人無時無刻不讓你覺得在這裏不精進修行，是融不進這個團體的。到這裏來之後，我覺得用散心說一句跟修行不相關的閒話，就是罪過。這股精進的氣氛，連號稱美國最辛苦的大學——加州理工學院，都沒有辦法相比的，畢竟了生脫死和做學術是不一樣的。

佛七期間感觸最深的，就是坐念和止靜。平常在家裏坐一個小時也不是特別難，但是在佛堂裏坐的時候只能用很薄

Despite the news about how chilly the City can be at this time of the year, I did not feel cold when I arrived. Instead I found that the temperature was just right to stimulate the right intention. Sometimes, comfortable temperatures may not be ideal and could work against vigor in cultivating.

On the second day, I took refuge and began observing the five precepts. This commitment required me to put on a robe and a sash. Once dressed, I felt this double layer surrounding me like a fence, guarding me from distractions and holding me focused. In order to keep up with the busy schedule of the assembly, my day started at pre-dawn and went until after dark. The City's daily program, including the mid-day meal chanting, is fully packed with planned ritual performances allowing very little break between activities. This tight schedule works hand-in-hand with the practice of the right intention, keeping the momentum of the latter uninterrupted and continuous throughout the day. And it is these strict conditions that earned CTTB the reputation as being the best place for cultivation.

CTTB is indeed the most extraordinary place in the entire United States. In addition to the diversity of the congregation bringing in people of various backgrounds such as Chinese, American, Vietnamese, etc... I am especially humbled by the dedication of the many westerners who participated in the Amitabha session, and their ability to flawlessly recite the six holy syllables of 'Namo Amitofo.' These Americans who came to the City exhibited a very solid understanding of Buddhism in general, and the subject of Pure Land tradition, in particular. Among them, some engaged in serious practice of the religion itself. The Americans here contrast sharply with the rest of the Americans whose overall understanding of Buddhism has only reached some basic concepts of meditation, karma, and awakening.

One day after lunch, I saw a group of young girls were leaving school, repeatedly reciting Namo Amitofo; the clear voice reflected their innocence and carefree state of mind, giving me the impression that they were adorable angels. These young girls are mostly Caucasian, and this angelic landscape is probably the most unique scene on earth and thus worth noticing.

One cannot help but feel strongly motivated upon entering CTTB. The ethical lifestyle of the people in the City constantly reminds each of us to cultivate with vigor, to feel part of the community. Engaging in careless or irrelevant conversation is viewed as inappropriate and can lead to karmic consequences. Speaking of vigorous environments, CTTB indeed has no parallel; even the toughest school, the California Institute of Technology, comes in a distant second. Ultimately, seeking liberation from suffering and seeking excellence in academia are two separate and distinct matters.

My most memorable moment of the Amitabha session was one involving the practice of sitting meditation and stillness. Sitting for an hour at home demands minimum physical effort, but the difference is poles apart when one has to sit on a thinly padded cushion in the City; the legs and torso are first victims of pain. Therefore, a sit long enough to burn 3 ½ incense sticks becomes a true test of my muscle/lower back endurance, and the ever worsening pain also caused an increase in heartbeat rate and produced boiling heat in my head. The aftermath of

的墊子，腿和腰很快就開始痛得很厲害。於是每天在佛堂的這三支半香，就成了打磨筋骨的時間。每次都要忍腿痛、屁股痛或腰痛，而且幾乎每次心都跳得特別快，頭很熱，讓我感覺就像進了熔爐去易筋鍛骨一般。所以，在這裏我的身心都得到了很多鍛煉。

最後要感謝諸位法師提供的這次機會，感謝宣公上人建立這個道場，感謝同來參加法會大眾的指點和激勵。阿彌陀佛！

### ◎ 胥妙成

諸佛菩薩、宣公上人、各位法師、各位善知識，弟子妙成向大家彙報一下體會。我來自中國大陸，現在愛荷華大學做訪問教授。非常感恩佛菩薩，使我有緣來到萬佛聖城參加佛七及將要舉行的禪七。

來萬佛聖城參加法會的機會，對於我們身在中國大陸的佛子來說，是非常非常的稀有難得！我知道在國內有很多同修，對宣公上人有著無比的敬仰和信心。很多師兄，正在等我回去後講一下這裏的見聞和感受。可以說，我是帶著他們的期望，帶著大家對上人的崇敬，也帶著自己的慚愧，邁進佛子夢中的家——萬佛聖城。

我學佛沒有多久，從正式皈依到現在才一年多。但是很早以前我就知道宣公上人了。自己三十多年來迷惑顛倒，舉心動念，唯長貪瞋癡、嫉妒和貢高我慢，性識無定，罪障深重。對比上人一生的大悲示現，自己非常非常的慚愧。不知有多少次，當聽到或者想到上人的事蹟時，我因慚愧感動而潸然淚下。

這次打佛七，是我平生第一次參加大型法會。在此之前，自己對慈父阿彌陀佛只有很膚淺的認識，也沒有多少信心，甚至心底還有些輕視念佛法門。剛開始頭兩天，自己既管不住眼，更拴不住心，往往嘴上念佛，心早就被眼裏看到的，耳朵聽到的勾跑了。讀了上人關於老實念佛的開示，才略微知道應該如何念佛。

this painful process was totally unprecedented; I felt as if I was being immersed in a melting furnace for a muscle and tendon straightening exercise. In any case, the experience was very worthwhile. Only at CTTB do I get this good of an exercise to train myself both physically and mentally.

As an endnote, I would like to express my gratitude to the many Dharma Masters for such an opportunity. I would also like to thank the Venerable Master for this wonderful monastery, and finally I want to show my appreciation to all of you Dharma friends for your guidance and many encouragements. Amitabha.

### ◎ Miao-Cheng Xu

Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Venerable Master, Dharma Masters, and all good knowing advisors, I am Miao Cheng and would like to share my thoughts on the Amitabha recitation session. I come from China and presently serve as a visiting professor at the University of Iowa. My gratitude goes to the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas for allowing me the chance to participate in both the Amitabha session and the upcoming winter Chan session.

Rare is the opportunity to come and partake in the Dharma assemblies organized by CTTB. For many followers like us, who still reside in Mainland China, these opportunities are very, very hard to come by. There are many devoted Buddhist followers back home. They all express an utmost respect and confidence in the Venerable Master and await my return to the country to share with them my experiences here at CTTB. Taking with me their expectations and their reverence for the Venerable Master, along with my own sense of shame, I am stepping into the dreamland, CTTB.

I have not been studying Buddhism for long, only a little over a year since the time I took refuge, but the Venerable Master has been a well-known figure in Buddhism for as long as I can remember. Over the last 30 years, I have lived in delusion and alienation, carrying out each act and thought with greed, hatred, and ignorance. Adding to the list are jealousy, arrogance, and my inconsistent behaviors; I am a person filled with heavy karma and offenses. When I look at the Venerable Master's lifetime compassionate achievements, I feel great shame. Many times, as I hear mention of the Venerable Master's legacy, hot tears of shame start slowly rolling down my cheek.

This occasion of the Amitabha session marked my first time joining a large scale Dharma assembly. In the days prior, I had very little knowledge of Amitabha Buddha; I often discredited him. At times, I even ignored the Pure Land practice altogether. In the beginning of this Amitabha session, I mumbled the Buddha's name; technically speaking, I was following and synchronizing with the crowd but in fact, my eyes wandered and my thoughts were distracted so much that concentration and focus, very crucial in a recitation, were nowhere to be found. After reading the Venerable Master's Dharma talk stressing the benefits of wholeheartedly reciting Amitabha, I gradually began to have some vague ideas and grasped the basic meaning of the holy name recitation.

In his talk of last Tuesday evening, the Venerable Master clarified a passage of the *Shurangama Sutra* on the topic of confidence, he said: "If you have faith in

週二晚上聽到上人講《楞嚴經》，談到信心那段的開示。上人說，如果對師父有信心，即使講錯了，你也會覺得有道理。上人的開示很風趣，聽的時候忍不住笑了，但是卻突然增強了對上人的信心，和對念佛法門的信念。後來才儘量專注念，耳朵用心傾聽自己的念佛聲，默默地朝向「老實念佛」努力。

記起佛陀在《僧伽吒經》中說過，若不曾見過九十億恆河沙諸如來者，不會聽聞到僧伽吒法門。佛像慈母一樣，九十億次的呼喚，都不曾令我這個流浪生死的孩子回頭；這次遇到念佛法門，不能再錯過了。

短短數天，震撼心靈的事情還有很多，如早上的拜願，和每天「問自己是不是不爭、不貪、不求、不自私」等。上人的開示既幽默又智慧，而且非常對機，就像明明了了知道眾生心中的想法。每次聽錄音都有所觸動，每次晚上的開示，往往還沒聽夠就到時間了。一次聽法時，說法者提到在弘法因緣成熟前，上人在美國一等就是六年，我又一如既往地感動，留下了兩行淚水。

在這裏，真的就像回到了家一樣。每天早上三點多起床，早課、念佛、晚課，過著平時嚮往卻從來沒有過的生活。念佛，越念越清淨，越念越歡喜。但我明白自己還差得很遠很遠。願我能夠早日真正地老實念佛，脫離所有心所證者的我相，無我、無人、無眾生、無壽者。願和諸同修及所有眾生在極樂世界團聚，然後迴入娑婆，像宣公上人一樣宣揚佛法，救度眾生。

your Master, even if he misspeaks, you still feel that it makes sense.” Venerable Master’s talk is very entertaining; his dry sense of humor can definitely get a smile or two out of you. With that talk, I suddenly felt a connection with the Master and my confidence towards the Pure Land practice increased. Next, I found myself tuned in to listen to my own voice chanting Amitabha. Slowly I was able to apply a genuine effort to single-mindedly recite the Buddha’s name.

In a chapter of the *Arya Sanghata Sutra*, the Buddha said that had one not encountered Tathagathas as numerous as the grains of sand in ninety billion Ganges rivers, one would have been unable to hear of the Sanghata Dharma door. The connection here is, the Buddha is just as compassionate as a mother who relentlessly called ninety billion times upon her child, a wandering vagabond such as myself, to strive on my spiritual path, but I have let each of the attempts go in vain. This time, on the rare occasion of encountering the Pure Land practice, I no longer can afford to let the chance slip by.

In just a few short days, I have run into plenty of heart-wrenching and remarkable events. The morning bowing and the interrogation into oneself (‘Ask yourself: Am I selfish? Ask yourself: Am I greedy, etc...’) are just two of the many examples. The Venerable Master’s Dharma talk is usually mixed with humor, full of wisdom, and plenty accurate as if he could read the minds of many living beings. I lived this sentiment every evening, and time usually ran out before I had enough of his talk. One day, a guest speaker recounted that sometime ago, the conditions were still premature for the Venerable Master to propagate the Dharma. Before anyone realized, he just waited six years in the United States for the conditions to become ready. This incident was so moving that tears once again instantly fell from my eyes.

Staying at the City really gives me a feeling of home. The daily experience of waking up at dawn, following the morning chanting, then the Buddha’s name reciting, and ending with the evening prayer gives me a chance to live in an ideal world that I have never experienced before. In the end, my technique in reciting the Buddha’s name has improved; the more I recite, the calmer I become. But I am conscious and well aware that the journey has just started and to reach an inch farther, much hard work and diligence still are needed on my part. I hope that the day will come when I can master the skill of mindfully reciting the Buddha’s name and contemplate life in total detachment of the view of self, the view of others, the view of living beings, and the view of life span. May all of us find ourselves at the destination—the Land of Ultimate Bliss, simply to reconvene and to reenter the Saha world, just like the Venerable Master, to preach the timeless Dharma and to save living beings.