



My Gratitude on Thanksgiving Day

感恩節談感恩

A Talk Given by Terri Nicholson at 10,000 Buddhas Hall on November 21, 2015

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Since it will soon be Thanksgiving, I have chosen gratitude as my topic tonight. Specifically, my gratitude for the opportunity to draw near to the Venerable Master, hear his teachings and live and work in this community that he founded.

The Venerable Master encouraged all of us to expand the measure of our hearts and minds. He encouraged us to leave our small, narrow viewpoints and expand our consciousness to include the entire world. For example, when we started the schools, it would have been much easier to found a school for the children of Buddhists, and have a Buddhist school, but the Master wanted to have a school for children of all religions. It would have been easier if we could have followed either Chinese or American style, but the Venerable Master believed we should use the best of all traditions in our schools. So we

感恩節就快到了，因此今晚我就以感恩作為主題。說得更詳細一點，我很感恩有機會親近上人，聆聽他的教導，並且在上人所建立的萬佛聖城裏生活和工作。

上人鼓勵我們要把心量打開，跳脫狹窄的自我觀點，把眼光放大到整個世界。就拿創辦學校來說，辦一所專門給佛教徒小孩唸的學校，或者一所佛教學校會輕鬆許多；但是，上人希望我們的學校是給所有來自不同宗教的學生。如果我們的學校只採用中式或者美式教育風格，那也會好辦許多；但是，上人相信我們的學校應該繼承各種文化的優良傳統。因此，天主教徒、猶太教徒、佛教徒和回教徒，都能夠在我們的學校一起學習。為此，我很感恩。

早年有一個巴勒斯坦家庭，在聖城山門的右邊經營一間小商店，他們是非常虔誠的回教徒，但卻把他們的五個女兒都送來我們的學校。上人知道她們每個人的名字，並且關心她們的學習狀況。上人鼓勵我們要尊重他們的宗教、他們的祈禱方式，如此一來，他們也會尊重我們的信仰。我們互相分享彼此的文化傳統，

have had Christians, Jews, Buddhists and Moslems studying together at our school. For this I am grateful.

In the early days, a Palestinian family owned the small store right outside the gates of The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. They were devout Moslems and they sent their five daughters to our school. The Master knew them by name and would ask them how they were doing. He encouraged us to respect their religion and their practices and they in turn respected ours. They shared their traditions and we shared ours. It was a wonderful beginning for our schools here at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. We often had children from several different religions and as many countries all in one class. I am grateful that all of the students were able to have this experience.

Most monasteries and convents are only for monks and nuns and perhaps a few serious lay cultivators, certainly only for Buddhists. Here at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, we have always welcomed those of many religious traditions. Not only that, we have families, students and monastics living here together in one place. It isn't always easy, but I believe we all better human beings because of it. My husband and I are grateful to have had the opportunity to raise our children in this special international community.

I'd like to share a couple stories about when our son was little and benefitted from this wonderful environment. Among the people who were living here when our son was little was a man named Bob Wonnacott. He was not a Buddhist. He was a war veteran and a logger who came originally to cut wood for us. He was in his seventies and, when it turned out he had nowhere to live, we took him in. He lived in the Firehouse, did odd jobs and whatever work he could.

One day I had gone to lecture and my husband, Alan, stayed home to watch the children who were playing outside. Our son, had a habit of just taking off, since he felt that the whole City of Ten Thousand Buddhas was his home. He was riding one of those toys you can pushing with your feet; he was too young still to ride a bicycle. Alan got to talking with a neighbor and, before he knew it, Alex was riding right out the front gate.

Just at that moment a police car drove up and when the policemen saw this blond haired little boy

這對聖城的學校來說，是一個非常好的開始。在我們學校，一個班級裏有來自不同宗教信仰和不同國家的學生是常有的事。能夠讓來到聖城的孩子們有這種特別的體驗，我非常地感恩。

大部份的寺廟，裏面住的都是出家人或者還有一些修行嚴謹的在家人，因為是讓佛教徒修行的地方。但是在聖城，所有的宗教信仰與傳統都是受到歡迎的；不僅如此，出家人、有家庭的在家人、學校的學生，大家都一起在城內工作、生活。這其實並不容易，但也因為如此，才能訓練我們成為更好的人。我的孩子能成長於這麼具有特色的國際化社區裏，我和我的先生都非常地感恩。

這裏分享幾個我們兒子小時候的故事，說明這個好地方對他的幫助。當他還很小的時候，聖城住著一位名叫鮑伯的人。他是一位退伍軍人，以前當過伐木工，所以他到聖城來是幫忙砍木頭的，但他不是一個佛教徒。當時他七十多歲，後來無家可歸，因此聖城收留了他。他住在消防屋裏，總是儘可能地打打零工，能幫上忙的都儘量去做。

某天我出門去教書，先生就留在家裏看著在屋外玩耍的孩子。我們的兒子艾力克斯有個習慣，總是一溜煙就不見人，因為他始終認為整個聖城都是他家。那時候他正在騎那種可以用腳滑的玩具車，因為他還太小不會騎腳踏車。我先生當時正在跟鄰居聊天，在他發現之前，艾力克斯早已騎出山門了。

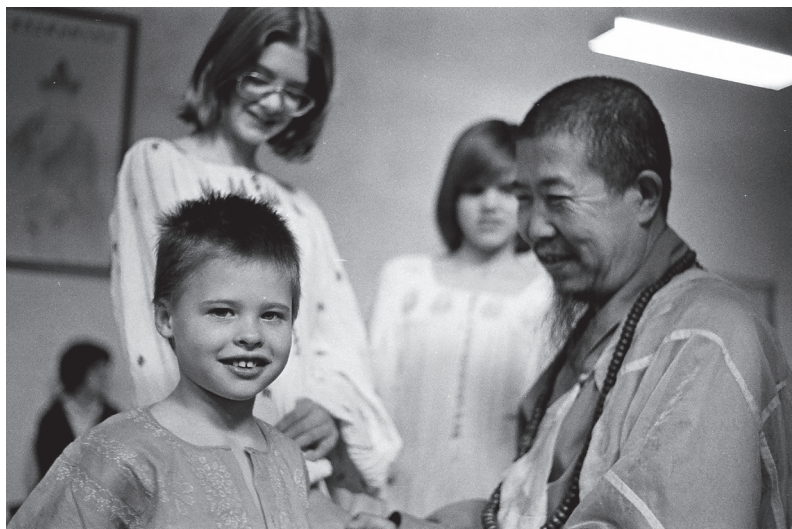
就在那個時候，一輛警車剛好經過。當警察看到一位金髮小男孩騎玩具車騎出聖城山門，他們直覺的想法就是：這個小男孩不是這個地方的人，他可能走丟了。於是就把艾力克斯帶上警車。幸運的是，鮑伯當時正好在附近目睹所有經過。他上前叫住警察，並且告訴他們：「等一下，這個小男孩住在這裏。」所以，艾力克斯被送回到我們屋裏。之後有好幾天，只要我們說：「不要亂跑，不然警察會來把你帶走。」艾力克斯就會乖乖待在家裏。

還有一次，艾力克斯稍微大一點，他在大殿附近騎腳踏車摔斷了手腕。但是他就自己爬起來，然後走進大殿呼救，有人發現了他，於是打電話通知我們接他回家。這就是聖城特別的地方，任何孩子走進來，只要說聲：「我需要幫忙。」就會有人照顧他。

現在國內出現一個很大的爭議，就是是否要收容敘利亞難民。這個國家正陷入戰爭，人民的生命也岌岌可危。這讓我想起越戰當時，上人要我們打開心量，敞開大門收容難民。

1970年代末期，美國從越南撤兵，當時有非常非常多的難民。上人協助我們建立佛教難民救濟中心，聖城因此敞開大門收容來自越南、寮國、柬埔寨和其他國家的難民。這並不是一件容易的事情，譬如讓兩個正在交戰的國家難民，同時住在一個屋簷下。但是，這些問題都沒有阻礙上人。我們的學校歡迎這些難民的孩子就讀，並且為成人設立學習英語和新技能的

riding out the front gate of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas they thought he didn't belong there, so they put him in their car. Luckily, Bob Wonnacott just happened to be nearby and saw what was happening. He stopped the policemen and said, "Wait, wait. This little boy lives here." So, they brought him to our house and for at least a couple of days we could say, "Now don't run off or the police will come and get you," and he would stay home.



Another time, when he was a little older, he was riding his bicycle near the Buddha Hall and fell off and broke his wrist. But this is such a wonderful place that he picked himself and walked into the Buddha Hall and said, "Help!" Someone found him, called us and we came and got him. It's a pretty special place where a child can walk into a building and just say, "help" and someone will take care of him.

Right now there is a great deal of controversy over whether to accept Syrian refugees into this county. Their country is at war and their lives are in danger. I am reminded of another war when the Master encouraged us to open our hearts and our doors to refugees.

After the United States withdrew its troops from Vietnam in the late nineteen seventies there were many, many any refugees. The Master helped us establish the Buddhist Council for Refugee Rescue and Resettlement. We opened our doors here



課程，甚至幫助他們尋找住所跟工作。很多人後來都成為法總及這個國家的棟樑。

在我小的時候，我的父親喜歡引用詩人魯德雅德·吉普林的詩集裏的一句話：

「東是東，西是西，彼此永不相遇。」我很感恩上人證明這句話是不正確的。在萬佛城，東西方不只彼此相遇，而且還和平地生活在一起，我很感恩自己是其中的一份子。事實上，後來當我有機會讀到這首詩，我發現吉普林的意思跟第一行所暗示的有很大的出入。其實他要表達的是，在造物主的面前（吉普林是基督徒），所有的人都是平等的。

啊

東終是東，西終是西，
是故兩者不相逢；
除非末日審判時，
天地兩造才對簿公堂；
縱使兩雄



at The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas to refugees from Viet-Nam, Lao, Cambodia and several other countries. It was not an easy undertaking. Among other things, we had refugees from countries that were at war with each other all living in the same building. That didn't stop the Master, though. We welcomed their children in our schools, held classes for the adults so that they could learn English, new skills and eventually helped them find homes and jobs. Now, many of these people are an important part of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association and our country as well.

When I was a child my father was fond of quoting a line from a famous poet named Rudyard Kipling: "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." I am grateful that Shifu has proved that this is not true. Here at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas we have not only met, but we live together in peace, and I am very grateful to be a part of it. Actually, when I finally read the poem, I found that Kipling's meaning is quite the opposite of what the first line implies. It says that eventually, when we come stand before our Maker (he was a Christian) we are all pretty much the same.

*Oh, East is East and West is West,
and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
though they come from the ends of the earth!*

It is very easy to get caught up in our differences, east and west, different cultures, Buddhist and Christian, monastics and laypeople, men and women, children and adults, scholar and laborer. We human beings make endless distinctions and, what is more painful still, we create endless suffering because of them. I am grateful for the teaching of the Buddha, that we all share the same bright, true nature.

Of course we don't always agree. In fact, sometimes we disagree quite passionately. But that is just human nature. I assure you that in the early days, when it was mostly westerners living at The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas we still found plenty to disagree about. Still, those of us lucky enough to be part of this community agree on the most important things. We agree to do no harm, we try our best to benefit others, and to rely upon the teachings of those with wisdom in how we live our daily lives. Finally, we work fervently for peace for this world. And I am very grateful to be able to be part of that community. ❀



各霸一方 各據一端
當對面而立 便
無復 東西
無復 畛域
無復 身世
無復 種族血性

要找出彼此的不同點非常容易，東方與西方、不同的文化、佛教徒和天主教徒、出家人和在家人、男人和女人、小孩和大人、讀書的和做工的。人類不停地區別分化，更令人難過的是，人類因此承受無止盡的痛苦。我很感恩佛陀的教導，那就是一切眾生皆有光明真實的自性。

當然我們的看法不會總是一致，事實上有時更熱衷於反對。但，那就是人性。我向你們保證，即使是早期很多西方人住在萬佛城的時候，也經常有不同的聲音。雖然如此，很幸運的就是大家都同意一件非常重要的事：那就是不傷害別人，大家都盡可能地幫助別人，並且在日常生活中跟有智慧的人學習。最後，我們也為世界和平努力。我非常感恩自己能夠成為這個大家庭的一份子。❀