

慶祝觀世音菩薩成道法會

CELEBRATION OF GWAN YIN BODHISATTVA'S ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE WAY



萬佛聖城慶祝觀音菩薩成道

Celebrating the Anniversary of Guanyin Bodhisattva's Realizing the Way

編輯部 文 / 比丘近巖 英譯

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萬佛聖城於7月29日慶祝觀音菩薩成道，並舉行2018年暑期觀音七，至8月4日圓滿。法界佛教大學的姐妹校之一，臺灣華梵大學十位師生專程前來打觀音七，同時參加法界佛教大學課程。此次觀音七之前，恰逢加州各地發生多起山火。觀音七圓滿後不久，較靠近萬佛聖城的「河川大火（River Fire）」火勢很快就百分之百控制住了。

萬佛聖城方丈恒律法師在觀音菩薩成道法會中開示，慶祝觀音菩薩成道就是鼓勵我們修道，將來也會成道。律法師說佛弟子修行離苦得樂之道，要以成佛為目標，在日常生活中落實觀世音菩薩大慈大悲的精神。誠心稱念觀世音菩薩聖號，將功德迴向一切眾生離苦得樂，

On July 29, 2018, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) hosted the celebration of Guanyin Bodhisattva's realizing the Way, and also hosted the 2018 summer Guanyin Session, which was completed on August 4. Joining us in this session were more than ten students and teachers from Huafan University in Taiwan, one of Dharma Realm Buddhist University's sister schools. Before this Guanyin Session started, wildfires began to run rampantly all over California. With the continuous fire control efforts, the fire gradually subsided; and soon after the Guanyin Session ended, CTTB's nearest wildfire, the River Fire, was 100% contained.

Dharma Master Heng Lyu, the abbot of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, gave Dharma instructions on the day of the celebration. He taught us that the purpose of celebrating Guanyin Bodhisattva's realizing the Way is to encourage us to cultivate the Way, and so that in the future, we shall also realize the Way. He said that, as Buddhist disciples who cultivate to transcend suffering and to attain bliss, we should aim for Buddhahood. In our daily lives, we should live and embody Guanyin Bodhisattva's spirit of great loving-kindness and great compassion. We should sincerely recite the holy name of Guanyin Bodhisattva and dedicate the merit of recitation to all beings so that they can transcend suffering and attain bliss. By doing this, we are walking on the bright and great path towards Buddhahood.

Bhikshu Jin Chan gave a Dharma talk on the day of celebration. He quoted a verse from the *Universal Door Chapter* which says "Guanyin Bodhisattva can help free beings when they are bound in chains, shackles, stocks, or bound by ropes." This confinement refers to not only to chains, ropes, shackles, or stocks, but also our fame, gain, wealth, families, relatives, retinues, as well as our attachments to the self. All of these factors chain and bind us, making us unable to transcend the Three Realms. Dharma Master

這樣就是走在成佛的光明大道。

比丘近懺法師則為《普門品》裡的經句重新詮釋，例如「杻械枷鎖」，除了字面意思之外，也指名譽、面子、財富、利益、六親眷屬、我執等等，將我們鎖住跳不出三界。近懺法師又談到觀音七之前開始的加州山火，他說：「觀音菩薩有沒有能力滅這場大火？當然有，觀音菩薩是千處祈求千處應。」繼而引用蕩益大師名言：「佛度生，生受化，其中難易淺深，總在於緣。」以此說明天雨雖大，不潤無根之草；佛法雖廣，不度無緣之人。

比丘尼恒居法師說，眾生之所以會有淫欲、瞋、癡都是由「貪」而來；即使修行，也是貪法、貪感應、貪功德，眾生的貪像無底洞似的，永遠填不滿。如果能真正念自性的觀世音菩薩，才是真正的感應，真正的消災免難。

華梵大學外文系副教授智善法師，帶領九名學生來參加觀音七。她覺得萬佛聖城打七日程緊湊，十分珍惜時間；唱誦觀世音菩薩聖號在句尾轉折時，音調提高，很能提起大家的精神。除了念誦觀世音菩薩聖號之外，早晚課繞念時間比她在其他道場經歷過的繞念要長，頗能攝心。每天下午和晚間參加法界佛教大學的課程，有深度又活潑，因此她已邀請講課的包果勒居士抽空赴華梵大學開講。



Jin Chan then referred to the ongoing wildfire that erupted before the Guanyin Session (starting from July 28, 2018). He said, “Does Guanyin Bodhisattva have the power to put out the great fire? Of course, he has. As it is said, prayers depart a thousand hearts; in a thousand hearts he answers.” Bhikshu Jin Chan then quoted from Great Master Ouyi’s famous sayings: “Buddhas take beings across; beings receive the Buddhas’ teachings. Sometimes the Dharma is very simple and easy, sometimes very profound and difficult — all of these teachings are determined by their conditions or affinities.” This means that although rain may be vast and profuse, grass without roots will not be able to gain the benefit of being moistened; although the Buddhadharma is vast and abundant, beings without affinities cannot be taken across.

Bhikshuni Heng Ju said that living beings have lust, anger, and delusion due to their greed. Even in cultivation, beings may be greedy for the Dharma, for wish-fulfilling responses, and for merit and virtue. A being’s greed is comparable to a bottomless hole which can never be filled. Thus, in our cultivation, we should proceed sequentially and progress step by step while refraining from greed. In this way, we will realize our goal of becoming Buddhas. In whatever we do, we do our best. If we can truly recite the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva within our inherent nature, we will receive the true response and be truly free from any calamity or disaster.

Dharma Master Zhishan, Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages at Huafan University, led nine students to join the Guanyin Session. She felt that the schedule of the seven-day session at CTTB was tight and that all participants valued and cherished the time of the schedule. When reciting the name of Guanyin Bodhisattva, the assembly alternated the phrases in two different tones (of Pinyin), giving a useful twist that could really lift up people’s spirit. In addition to the recitation of Guanyin Bodhisattva’s name, during Morning Recitation and Evening Recitation we also have longer circumambulating time than other monasteries. This helps a lot in focusing and disciplining people’s minds. They took some time to

參加觀音七的居士陳親昇表示，這是他第一次全程參加觀音七。第一晚睡前，聽到屋外的鳥或是昆蟲在念「阿彌陀佛、阿彌陀佛、阿彌陀佛」，心想原來萬佛聖城的動物真會念佛，但為什麼是念阿彌陀佛？現在是觀音七啊！

觀音七圓滿時，終於解了他的疑惑。每天唱誦的「觀音大士十二大願」，其中之一就是「南無無量壽佛境界，觀音如來彌陀授記願」，原來觀世音菩薩和無量壽佛（阿彌陀佛）是同境界，所以念阿彌陀佛和觀世音菩薩是沒有分別的。

來自中國的王颺從觀音七第四天開始，感覺漸入佳境。坐念和止靜時，妄念越來越少，輕安的感覺越來越多，有幾次心裡只有觀音菩薩的聖號在迴響。儘管時間不長，但是這個體驗讓他相信宣公上人開示的一心稱念觀音聖號，念到連自己也沒有，一切都在觀音菩薩的聖號和光明之中，這個境界是真實不虛的。於是他在佛前發願，將來要持續不斷地練習，利己利人。

這次觀音七之前，加州已有多起山火肆虐，其中曼都仙諾複合山火演變成加州史上規模最大的山火。火勢雖未波及萬佛聖城，但遠處飄來的煙霧影響空氣品質，聖城甚至接到撤離警訊。所幸大家誠心念誦〈普門品〉和觀音菩薩聖號，因此風向由西往東，朝萬佛聖城反方向吹。

觀音七圓滿後，聖城住眾自8月5日至10日，每天上午8時至10時，以及下午2時至3時，在萬佛殿持誦〈大悲咒〉，功德迴向曼都仙諾複合山火早日熄滅。對聖城較具威脅的河川大火，於此〈大悲咒〉法會圓滿後第三天全面獲得控制。之後萬佛聖城每天仍持續迴向山火早日熄滅。

遠自猶他州德雷坡市前來曼都仙諾縣救火的消防隊長麥修·波切特，不幸於救火時罹難殉職。萬佛聖城特別為他設立往生牌位，以佛教徒的方式表達對他的追悼，並祝願他離苦得樂。曼都仙諾縣警長湯瑪斯·歐曼，與瑜伽山谷退休的消防隊長

join the afternoon and evening lectures provided by the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, and these classes were both lively and profound. This led her to invite Doug Powers to go, when convenient, to teach a class at Huaan University.

One of the participants, Layman Chen Qinseng, commented that this was his first time participating in the Guanyin Session. On the first night before he went to bed, he heard birds or insects outside his window chanting “Amitabha Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, Amitabha Buddha...” He thought: “The animals at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas really know how to recite the Buddha’s name, but why are they reciting ‘Amitabha Buddha’? It is the Guanyin Session now!”

After the Guanyin Session was completed, he finally resolved his doubts. During the Guanyin Session, we chant the twelve vows of Guanyin Bodhisattva, and one of the twelve vows is “Namo Tathagata Guanyin, who has realized the states of Amitayus Buddha (Amitabha Buddha), and vows to bestow, just like Amitayus Buddha, the prediction of Buddhahood to living beings.” Layman Chen realized that Guanyin Bodhisattva and Amitabha Buddha have realized the same states, so reciting Guanyin Bodhisattva is no different from reciting Amitabha Buddha’s name.

Layman Wang Biao, who came from China to join the session, gradually felt tranquillity starting from the fourth day. During the sitting-recitation and silent meditation periods, he had fewer and fewer false thoughts, and more and more feelings of peace and tranquility. A few times, only Guanyin Bodhisattva’s holy name kept ringing in his mind. Although fleeting, this experience made him believe that Venerable Master Hua’s teaching: When one recites Guanyin Bodhisattva single-mindedly, one will reach the state where the notion of self vanishes and nothing remains except the holy name and the great radiance of Guanyin Bodhisattva — such a state experienced by a practitioner is genuine and not the least bit false. Because of this experience, Layman Wang made the vow in front of the Buddha to constantly practice the Dharma to benefit himself as well as others.

Before this Guanyin Session, several wildfires had already spread and ravaged California; among these fires, Mendocino Complex Fire was the one that escalated into the biggest wildfire in the history of California. Although the fire had not reached CTTB, the air quality was greatly affected by the approaching smoke that built up [when the wind subsided]. CTTB residents even received evacuation warnings. Fortunately, by the merit of people’s sincere recitation of the *Universal Door Chapter* and the sacred name of Guanyin Bodhisattva, [the fire did not spread to CTTB] because the wind kept blowing eastwardly — farther and farther away from CTTB.

At the completion of the Guanyin Session, CTTB residents continued everyday the *Great Compassion Mantra* recitation from 8 AM - 10 AM, and from 2 PM - 3 PM in the Buddha Hall. They dedicated the

皮特·布許比，於9月7日特地前來萬佛聖城，向麥修·波切特的牌位致意；並索取一份同樣的牌位，將由歐曼警長代轉給麥特·波切特的家屬，讓他們在猶他州的家中，也能在牌位前上香追念。歐曼警長和法師們談話時表示，來到聖城他感受到十分寧靜祥和的氣氛。他指出：「你們（萬佛聖城）非常重要。你們的存在，使曼都仙諾縣成為更好的社區。」

曼都仙諾複合山火雖未延燒到萬佛聖城，但「三界不安，猶如火宅」、「世間無常，國土危脆」的景象已然呈現，正是提醒大家應當「覺生死苦，捨離五欲，修心聖道」，方為當務之急。✽



merit of recitation towards the earlier extinguishment of the Mendocino Complex Wildfire. Three days after the completion of *Great Compassion Mantra* recitation, the River Fire which was more threatening to CTTB than others became fully contained. CTTB continues to dedicate the merit of recitation on a daily basis towards the extinguishment of the Mendocino Complex Wildfire.

Unfortunately, Matthew Burchett, Draper City Battalion Chief from Utah, perished in the line of duty. He and his crew came a long way to Mendocino to help fight the fires. CTTB set up a rebirth plaque for him, and the residents of CTTB expressed their mourning in the Buddhist way, wishing him to leave suffering and attain bliss. Mendocino County Sheriff Thomas Allman and retired Fire Chief of Ukiah Valley Pete Bushby made a special trip to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas on September 7 to pay respects to Matt Burchett's rebirth plaque. They asked for an identical rebirth plaque for Burchett's family. Sheriff Allman will give it to the family so that they can burn incense in front of Matthew's

rebirth plaque in memory of him. When talking with Dharma Masters, Sheriff Allman said he felt the serene and peaceful atmosphere at CTTB and pointed out that "You (CTTB) are very important. Your presence makes Mendocino County a better community."

Although Mendocino Complex fire did not spread to CTTB, its hellish scene that suddenly came vividly alive in front of our eyes is a timely reminder for us that: "the Three Realms are as dangerous as a burning house ... the world is impermanent, and the land is fragile." Thus, every one of us should be aware of the suffering of samsara, renounce the five desires, and settle our minds on cultivating the Way of the sages — the most urgent matter for us. ✽



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