

Carrying the Torch for Buddhism

把佛教的火炬傳下去

A Dharma talk given by Bhikshuni Heng Liang on February 10, 2019 During the Emperor of Liang Jeweled Repentance at Dharma Realm Buddhist Books Distribution Society (Taipei, Taiwan)

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比丘尼近經 中譯



Last year was the anniversary of Shang Ren's (Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's) hundredth birthday. Throughout all of our Way-places, we celebrated that Shang Ren was born into this world, that we were fortunate to be able to learn from him, and that all living beings and the world were blessed that he was here with us for his lifetime.

Last year was also a year of remembrance of the twenty-third year since Shr Fu entered Nirvana. This year would be the twenty-fourth; next year will mark 25 years. In the West, we say that "time flies" and true to this statement, we experience impermanence every day.

Since last year, there are new people in the world, and some people who were here last year are no longer with us. Shr Fu's once young disciples are now elderly. One day all of the Heng generation and Guo generation will no longer be here.

For many of us, he gave us responsibilities when

去年，是宣公上人一百歲的誕辰紀念，所以各分支道場都慶祝上人誕辰。我們非常地幸運，能夠從上人那兒學習；也很幸運的，上人在世的時候，能夠親近他。

去年，紀念上人涅槃二十三年；今年，是第二十四年；明年，就是二十五周年了。西方有一句話，叫作「時光飛逝」，我們每天都經歷無常。

從去年以來，有新的人誕生；去年在這兒的人，有些人今年已經不在了。當年上人那年輕的弟子，現在也都老了。有一天，所有的恒字輩跟果字輩都會不在。

對於我們許多人來說，當我們覺得還沒有準備好時，上人就給了我們責任；但是你不能跟上人說「不要」。現在，人們可以說「不要」；但是，當時是不可以說「不要」的，這就是上人住世時，訓練我們負起責任的方式。上人只說：「去作吧！」我們就得去作。當然我們會犯錯，但這就是我們學習的方式。上人要我們每一個人都開啟內在的智慧，不准依賴他，要我們有擇法眼！

我記得，在臺灣住了五年之後，

we did not feel we were ready. But, you could not say “no” to Shang Ren. Nowadays, people can say “no.” But in those days, people could not say “no.” This is how he trained us to take up our responsibilities while he was still in the world. He just said, “Go do it!” and we had to “go do it!” And, of course, we made mistakes. But that was how we learned. Shr Fu also demanded that each one of us develop our own inherent wisdom. He wouldn’t allow us to depend on him. He wanted us to have the vision to discriminate dharmas!

I remember that, after living five years in Taiwan, I went back to City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB). I had just returned and saw that the Sangha had grown by about ten times since I was last there. All of the nuns from Taiwan I recognized, but there were also Sangha members from Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, and the United States that I had never seen before. Almost as soon as I arrived, I was given the responsibility to lead the women’s management at CTTB. I was terrified, because I didn’t even know many of the Sangha members’ names and they all spoke Chinese. My Chinese was not good enough, but Shang Ren was still there, and he told me to do this, so I dared to do it.

I told my Shi Xiong (elder Dharma cultivator), “I really feel I’m not qualified to do this. I’m already fifty years old! I’m too old to learn new tricks!” Fifty is considered young now. But in those days, most Sanghans were middle-aged, around 35 to 45. But she told me, “Fifties are the best years! The fifties! Because when you are fifty, you are mature and have a little bit of experience, and you still have a little bit strength to do things.” Shang Ren also instructed me to “Take Care of Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU).”

Then, a year later, Shang Ren entered Nirvana. We were all shocked by his leaving. We couldn’t believe it. We all believed that he would not leave us. Even when he was in the hospital, we thought, “He will come back! He will return! He will get better!”

At that time, we all felt profound grief, because he was like our spiritual parents, our good and wise advisor, our protector, and our refuge. He always helped us not to make mistakes in cause & effect. Our grief was amplified, because we all realized that the world would suffer such a great loss by his leaving. We also felt a great weight of responsibility; Shang Ren is no longer going to be there to tell us what to do, or to scold us if we did something wrong. So we carried on, and the thing that sustained us was to try our best to pay back the Venerable Master’s kindness by carrying on his legacy. In making this effort, we all have had

回到萬佛聖城。當我回去時，僧團已經成長了十倍。從臺灣去的法師我認識，但是有許多來自馬來西亞、香港、中國大陸，甚至美國的法師，都是我沒見過的。當我一回到美國時，就被選派為帶領聖城尼眾僧團的責任。我很害怕，我甚至不知道許多僧人的名字，我的中文也不夠好。但是上人還在，他告訴我去作，所以我才敢作。

我跟師兄說：「我真的覺得我沒資格作。我已經五十歲了！太老了，無法學習新的東西！」現在五十歲被認為還是年輕的，而在那個時候，僧人大概是三十五歲到四十五歲左右。但是，師兄告訴我：「五十歲是最好的時光，五十歲！你已經成熟了，也有一些經驗了，也還有體力作事情。」上人也指示我「要照顧法界佛教大學」。

一年後，上人入涅槃了。對上人的離開，我們非常地震驚，無法相信這件事。我們都相信，上人不會離開我們；甚至上人已經住院了，我們還想著：上人會回來！他會康復，會好起來！

那時，我們深感悲痛，因為上人是我們的精神導師、我們的善知識、我們的保護者，也是我們的皈依處。上人總是幫助我們不要錯因果，所以這種悲傷就更加深沉，因為我們都意識到：上人的離去對世界將是一個巨大的損失。我們也覺得責任沉重，因為上人已經不在了，不會再告訴我們怎麼作，或者在我們作錯事的時候呵責我們。所以，我們就這樣堅持下去，而支撐我們的力量，是試圖繼承上人的遺志，來報答上人的恩澤。在過程中，我們都有上人仍在身邊的經驗。每當我們需要他時，他都會幫助我們。

去年，當我在這兒講法時，告訴過你們，我們有信心法界佛教大學（法大）會獲得認證，但那時我還不能肯定地說。一個月後，我們收到官方正式的信件，告知法大得到認證了，這天剛好是上人誕辰日；我們大家都非常高興，覺得這是我們

experiences that Shang Ren is still with us, and whenever we need him, he has helped us.

So last year, when I spoke, I told you that we were confident that DRBU would be accredited. But I couldn't say for sure, and then, one month later, we received our official letter saying that DRBU was accredited—in time for Shang Ren's hundredth birthday! We were all very happy because we felt that this was the best birthday present we could offer him. And once DRBU was accredited, we were able to apply to SEVIS to accept international students with F-1 visa. We were told that it usually takes 9 months to 1 year to be approved. We expected that would be right around now (February 2019) that we would be hearing from the government saying we could accept international students the following fall semester. But there was a little bit of a miracle. Within three months, not too long before Shang Ren's Entering Nirvana Day, during the Shurangama Sutra and Meditation Retreat done in honor of the Venerable Master's 100th Birthday, we received a letter and news on the very last day of that retreat, saying that the government had approved DRBU to accept international students. So now there are no excuses for our Dharma friends in Taiwan [and other countries]. If you are interested, apply!

And so, time marches on, and the next generation must prepare to carry on the torch of Buddhism. It's time to take up your responsibility. Like those of us who came before you, you will make mistakes; and you will learn from your mistakes. That way, day-by-day, you will grow in wisdom and experience. And take advantage while we older ones are still around, because we are still here to offer our advice and to support and encourage you. The worst "thief" is doubt; as soon as you start to doubt, you "freeze." Just remember that Shang Ren is always there to help us.

Day by day, the world is undergoing changes. The current generation undergoes sufferings that we older ones never had to endure, especially the suffering of not knowing what the future will bring. The world is more dangerous than it has ever been, and young people are responding to this by taking drugs, hurting themselves, and even committing suicide. It has become a world epidemic. So now, young people need Buddhism more than ever, because Buddhism can really give people hope. Shr Fu always says there are "no fixed Dharmas." It all depends on what we people do. Therefore, young people need to have the hope to try to save the world, and the Sangha needs to lead them. I guess that's all I have to say today. ☸

能送給上人的最好生日禮物。

一旦法大獲得認證，我們就可以申請SEVP，來接受F-1簽證的國際學生。我們被告知，通常這需要九個月到一年才能獲得批准。所以，我們預估大概是現在（2019年2月）會從政府那兒得到消息，說我們可以在下個秋季班接受國際學生。但是有個小小的奇蹟；三個月後，就在紀念上人涅槃日前，也就是為紀念上人而舉辦的楞嚴經講習及打坐班，在最後一天，我們收到一封信，提到政府已經批准法大接受國際學生了。所以現在臺灣的佛友們沒有藉口了，如果您有興趣，請申請！

那麼，時間在前進，下一代必須準備把佛教的火炬繼續傳下去，這也是你們該擔起責任的時候了。就像我們這些在你前面的人一樣，你也會犯錯，但是會從錯誤中學習。這樣子，每天在智慧與經驗中成長。趁我們這些老一輩還在的時候，你們要好好把握機會，因為我們還在這兒，給你們忠告、支持及鼓勵你們。最壞的「賊」就是懷疑，一旦你開始懷疑，整個人就會「凍結」。但請記得，上人總是在那兒幫助我們。

日復一日，世界不停地改變。現在這一代所受的苦，是我們老一輩從未受過的；特別是對自己的未來非常迷茫的這種苦。這個世界比以前更加危險，年輕人面對這些的方式，是吸毒、傷害自己，甚至自殺；這已經成為世界的瘟疫病。

所以現在，年輕人比以往任何時候都更需要佛法，因為佛法真的可以給人希望。上人常說「法無定法」，這全看我們怎麼作及人們怎麼作。因此，年輕人要有希望試圖拯救世界，而僧眾要引導他們。我想這就是我今天所要說的。☸