

2019 Amitabha Session of City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

2019年萬佛聖城彌陀法會

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2019年萬佛聖城慶祝阿彌陀佛聖誕法會，於12月8日舉行，12月14日圓滿。12月8日清晨五時傳授八關齋戒，7時15分舉行剃度儀式。

新出家者釋果華為培德中學1990年代畢業的校友，也是萬佛聖城年紀最長的比丘尼恒謹法師的外孫。2018年一月起，他在男校擔任義務教師。因此觀禮者除了親友團、以及參加法會的數百位善信之外，還有男校許多師生。住校男生更是全體總動員，到爆滿的萬佛殿見證學長兼老師，在慶祝阿彌陀佛聖誕這個特殊的日子裡，發心落髮成為沙彌。

剃度儀式後，法會正式開始。大眾同誦《佛說阿彌陀經》和阿彌陀佛聖號，接著普佛，至誠頂禮佛菩薩。2019年萬佛聖城慶

The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas celebrated Amitabha Buddha Birthday with a recitation session from December 8-14, 2019. On the first day of the session, in the early morning hours, the Dharma Masters transmitted the Eight Precepts, and this was then followed by a leaving-home ceremony at 7:15 AM.

The new preceptee, Guo Hua Shi, who recently left the home-life is

an alumnus from the Boys' Division of Developing Virtue Secondary School (DVS). He is also a grandson of Dharma Master Heng Jin who is the oldest Bhikushni at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. He served as a volunteer teacher at the Boys' School since January 2018. Along with his relatives, friends, and hundreds of faithful lay people, many DVS students attended the ceremony on their own initiative. They flocked to the already packed Buddha Hall to witness their "teacher and alumnus" have his head shaved on the special day of Amitabha's Birthday.

After the leaving-home ceremony, the assembly recited the *Amitabha Sutra* and the sacred name of Amitabha Buddha, which was then followed by universal bowing. At lunch, during the celebration of Amitabha Buddha's birthday, five monastic disciples of the Venerable Master spoke the Dharma, making it a delicious and abundant Dharma feast for the assembly. Dharma Master Jin Gong — one of the five disciples — pointed out that the nourishment from food is only temporary, while the nourishment from Dharma is long-lasting, and endures life-after-life. He also stressed that in this Dharma-Ending Age, living beings have the ingrained habit of fighting and contention; as for Amitabha Buddha, he does not take sides with any particular person; rather, he stands beside everyone.

Dharma Master Jin Chuan recalled in his talk that, not long ago, a terminally ill cancer patient from a hospice care unit made a call to

祝彌陀聖誕法會午齋中，由宣公上人的五位出家弟子為大眾講法，法筵豐盛。比丘近恭（果遜）法師指出，食物的滋養只是一時，法的滋養則不僅長存，而且延續到生生世世。他又強調，末法時期眾生鬥爭堅固，但阿彌陀佛不站在任何一邊，而是在每個人的那一邊。

比丘近傳法師回憶不久前，有位已入安寧病房的癌末病人，打電話到柏克萊佛寺，請求法師們為他祈福。來自波蘭的近威法師在出家前，曾於醫院擔任照護義工數年，了解患者面臨死亡的感受，因此帶上念佛機，送到這位患者的病床前，為他開示並教他念佛。法師們抵達時，這位患者正在看電視；離開時，這位患者已經戴上耳機專心聽佛號，嘴裡輕聲跟著念誦，面露喜悅。近傳法師感嘆道：「有些人平日雖然念佛，但臨終時業障現前，反而不願念佛。這位病人在生命末期有機緣聽佛號，念阿彌陀佛，真是很有善根！」

方丈恒律法師表示，稱念阿彌陀佛聖號，在生的時候可以活得清淨自在，往生時可以去到極樂世界。因此多多念誦阿彌陀佛聖號，對今生和來生，都有很重大的意義，也會有不可思議的感應。宣公上人曾說，他最歡喜的事情就是稱念「南無阿彌陀佛」，上人時時都在念佛，包含在他的夢中。我們身為上人弟子，也應時時念佛。律法師並向大家拜早年，祝大家「念佛人都成眷屬——成阿彌陀佛的法眷屬」。

萬佛聖城2019年彌陀聖誕法會當天，共有22位善信參加三皈五戒，其中多人表示，希望學習上人的法。也有數位居士明確指出希望成就佛道。幫助眾生成就佛道，正是法藏比丘成為阿彌陀佛，建立極樂世界的重要目標；也是宣公上人將正法帶到西方的終極目標。❀

Berkeley Buddhist Monastery (BBM) requesting the monastics to pray for him. Dharma Master Jin Wei, originally from Poland, used to be a volunteer caregiver at a hospital for several years before he became a monastic. He understood how patients felt about death, and strongly encouraged Dharma Master Jin Chuan to go with him to visit the patient in person as a way to fulfill a dying man's last wish. They brought a Buddha-recitation machine and placed it next to the patient's bed. The Dharma Masters explained the Dharma to him while teaching him how to recite the Buddha's name. When they arrived, the patient was watching TV; by the time they took their leave, the patient had already put on earphones and was single-mindedly reciting the Buddha's name, with an expression full of joy. Dharma Master Jin Chuan sighed, "Some people recite the Buddha's name on a daily basis, but, when they are about to pass away, they are unwilling to recite the Buddha's name due to karmic obstacles that have (caught up with them and) manifested. Fortunately, this patient had the chance to listen to the Buddha's name at the end of his life and was able to recite along with the player; he truly had roots of goodness!"

Dharma Master Heng Lyu, Abbot of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, expressed that, while alive, reciting Amitabha Buddha's name can lead one to living a pure and free life, and then upon passing away, one can be reborn in the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Because of this, one should recite Amitabha Buddha's name more often. Doing so brings about many significant benefits for this and future lives; by reciting, one will attain inconceivable responses. The Venerable Master once remarked that one of the things he likes doing the most is to recite "Namo Amitabha Buddha." The Venerable Master recited the Buddha's name at all times, even in his dreams, and so should we as his disciples. Dharma Master Lyu wished everybody an early Happy Chinese New Year, "May all who recite the Buddha's name become members of his retinue — Amitabha Buddha's Dharma retinue."

On the actual day of Amitabha Buddha's birthday, Sangha members at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas transmitted the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts to twenty-two lay people. Among them, many expressed that they wanted to learn Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's teachings. Also, a couple of lay people expressed their clear aspiration to become Buddhas. To help living beings become Buddhas is just one of the important objectives of Bhikshu Dharmakara (Fazang) who became Amitabha Buddha and realized the Land of Ultimate Bliss. This is also the ultimate goal of Venerable Master Hsuan Hua in bringing the Proper Dharma to the West. ❀