

DRBA's Leaving Home Ceremony at Sudhana Center in Ukiah, CA 法總於善財參學中心舉行剃度典禮

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On July 24, 2021, DRBA ordained three new novice monastics (Shramanerikas) at Sudhana Center in Ukiah, CA. Held under Covid-safe protocols, the ordination is the first monastic precept transmission ceremony since the Covid-19 lockdowns began in March 2020, and the first one in DRBA history to be conducted entirely in English. Dharma Master Heng Lai drove all the way from Snow Mountain Monastery in Index, Washington, near Seattle, to be the Precept Master and Dharma Master Jin Yong was the Teaching Acharya, transmitting the ten novice precepts to the preceptees.

Three bhikshunis were in attendance, Dharma Masters Heng Liang, Heng Yin, and Heng Jiao, who spent years overseeing the training and studies of these three candidates so they would be ready to join the Sangha as novices on this day. They shaved the heads of the preceptees during the ceremony and helped them put on their robes. The preceptees started out as volunteers at City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) and then enrolled in the Sangha & Laity Training Program (a four-year program) before being approved to leave the home-life. Below are summaries of the Shramanerikas' talks on becoming monastics and leaving the home life given on July 25, 2021:

Shramanerika Jin Huan: Born and raised in a Buddhist family in Vietnam, Shramanerika Jin Huan started to recite the *Lotus Sutra* at a young age as instructed by her mother. Her family moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where she

2021年7月24日，法界佛教總會在加州瑜伽市的善財參學中心為三位沙彌尼舉行剃度儀式。這是自2020年3月新冠疫情封鎖以來，根據疫情安全規範所舉辦的第一個剃度傳戒儀式。恒來法師擔任得戒和尚，他遠從西雅圖雪山寺駕車前來；近永法師作為教授阿闍梨，傳授沙彌十戒。

比丘尼恒良法師和恒音法師，投入數年心血教導和訓練這些新屆沙彌尼，幫助她們做好準備，並為她們剃度、搭上袈裟。這些戒子先在萬佛聖城擔任義工，接著參加為期四年的僧伽居士訓練班，而後接受為兩年以上的沙彌尼先修班的訓練，最後獲得批准才能出家。以下為剃度儀式後，這幾位沙彌尼2021年7月25日的講話摘要：

沙彌尼近煥：近煥師生長在越南的一個佛教家庭，幼年即在母親的引導下讀誦《妙法蓮華經》。後來她們舉家遷移美國，在喬治亞州的亞特蘭大居住二十多年。成功的事業和婚姻曾經是她的理想，但2011年到萬佛城參加彌陀七後，她的想法轉變。「到聖城越多次，想出家的念頭就越強烈。」近煥師看著日漸年邁的雙親，意識到生命的脆弱。

近煥師說：「今天我們活著，

lived for twenty years before she came to CTTB in 2017. She used to wish only for a successful career and good marriage, but in 2011, she attended an Amitabha Session at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. Since then, her thoughts began to change. “The more I came to [CTTB], the more my thought of leaving home became stronger and stronger.” She watched her mother die at an early age from illness, and then cared for her father as he too recently passed away from a terminal illness. Watching both of her parents as they were ill and being with them when they passed away, she realized that life is fragile.

“Today we live, but tomorrow, we don’t know, and we have a lot of suffering,” she said. “That’s one of my reasons for leaving home because only when you learn Buddhадharma can you become free from suffering.” Another reason, she gave was to repay her parents’ kindness, “I see that all of their lives, they worked very hard and sacrificed their lives for myself and my siblings.” Seeing her parents passing away and the suffering they endured, she realized the only way to repay them was to leave home. “I can liberate myself from suffering and help all living beings as well... I like to serve people.”

Shramanerika Jin Tao: Born and raised in Malaysia, Shramanerika Jin Tao lived in Canada for ten years before coming to CTTB, where she attended Avatamsaka Monastery in Calgary. When told that making offerings of flowers to the Buddhas would result in a beautiful body in her next life, she answered that she only wished to be reborn in Amitabha’s Pureland. Ever since coming to CTTB, Shramanerika Jin Tao says that she has always felt the great care and support of the monastic Sangha and the volunteer community, “They say it takes a community to raise a child. I felt it’s the same to be able to leave home.”

The reason she left the home life is to end birth and death: “Ending birth and death, I won’t have any more suffering. I have a lot of bad habits as well as karmic obstacles, so being able to leave home and live in this Sangha community and have this environment that can nurture and help with this cultivation will really help in the Way.”

Shramanerika Jin Chyan: When Shramanerika Jin Chyan, born and raised in Vietnam, then spent her early adult years in Virginia, and then moved to Texas, before coming to CTTB, first began studying the Buddhадharma, she recited the *Dharma Flower Sutra*, which says the Buddha had already awakened and that we can too. “It lit something in me,” she said. The more she learned about meditation and read the sutras, “the more I felt the compassion of the Buddhas so much. That helped me realize how much I owe my parents.”

The best way to give back the kindness of the Buddhas, the Patriarchs, and her parents, she said, is to leave home. “[It] gives me the conditions to help a lot more living beings than just being a lay [person]... Being able to leave the home life at CTTB is really my great blessing.” ❀

但明天呢？人生有很多痛苦，這是我出家的原因之一；唯有學習佛法，才能從痛苦中解脫。另一個原因，是為了報父母恩。我看到父母一輩子努力工作，為了我和兄弟姐妹們犧牲奉獻。」看到雙親辭世，以及他們所承受的痛苦，她意識到唯一能報答父母的辦法就是出家。「我可以讓自己從痛苦中解脫，也可以幫助所有的眾生。我喜歡為人服務。」

沙彌尼近韜：在馬來西亞出生成長的沙彌尼近韜師，在加拿大生活了十年，並在加拿大卡加利的華嚴聖寺受訓。當別人告訴她，向佛菩薩供花，來生感得莊嚴身。她回答道，她只想在阿彌陀佛的極樂世界重生。來到萬佛城後，近韜師感受到來自僧團和義工們的關心與支持。她說：「有句話說，培育一個孩子需要整個社區的幫忙，我認為出家也是如此。」

近韜師出家的原因是為了生死，她說「了生脫死，我將不再有任何痛苦。我有很多不好的習氣毛病和業障，能夠出家，住在僧團，有這樣的環境來幫助自己修行，對道業相當有幫助。」

沙彌尼近謙：沙彌尼近謙師在越南出生，在美國維吉尼亞州長大。開始學習佛法時，她讀誦《妙法蓮華經》，經中說我們也能像佛一樣自覺。近謙師說：「這句話照亮了我的心。隨著打坐和閱讀更多的經典，我更能感受佛陀的慈悲。這些幫助我了解對父母的虧欠有多大。」

「報答佛菩薩、祖師和父母恩德的最好方式就是出家。比起在家居士，出家讓我有更好的因緣去幫助更多眾生……能夠在萬佛城出家是我最大的福報。」 ❀