



【紀念宣公上人傳法西方60週年】

【Commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Venerable Master Hua's Bringing the Dharma to the West】

# What is the Dharma?

## 佛法是什麼？

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**The Dharma is beautiful in the beginning, middle, and end. — The *Wonderful Dharma Lotus Sutra***

「…法，初善，中善，後善。」——《法華經·序品》

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I grew up in the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB). My parents moved there as lay volunteers when I was young, so I lived in the City from the ages of two to eighteen. At that time, my father had been working in Washington, D.C. Upon meeting Master Hua, he felt a spiritual call to volunteer at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. Not long after, our family of three moved across the country to come to CTTB.

From early childhood until I left for college, I was surrounded by Buddhist monks and nuns. I attended Instilling Goodness Elementary School and Developing Virtue Secondary School. My memories growing up are of weekends with nuns in the kitchen and community garden, listening to and translating talks on sutras and dharma teachings, and attending daily ceremonies in the Buddha Hall. It was an unusual upbringing; one that was formative to me on many levels and has remained a profound influence on my life and career.

After college, I came back to teach at the Developing Virtue Girls School for one year, fulfilling one of my high school wishes. Then I went on to attend Harvard Divinity School to study Buddhism for a master's degree, where I became involved in the Harvard Buddhist Community and interned at the Center for the Study of World Religions. A few years later, I trained as a hospital chaplain for a year at UCSF Medical Center, where I learned how to provide spiritual care to hospital patients in need of support.

我在萬佛城長大。我很小的時候，父母就搬到那裡做義工，所以我從兩歲到十八歲，都住在萬佛城裡。我父親原本在華府工作，拜見宣公上人後，他感到一種精神上的呼喚：到萬佛城做義工。不久之後，我們一家三口就橫越全美，來到萬佛聖城。

從孩提時代到上大學之前，我周圍都是佛教僧尼。我就讀於城裡的育良小學和培德中學。我成長的記憶是：周末和女法師在廚房和菜園工作；聆聽、翻譯（上人講解的）佛經和佛法開示；以及參加佛殿功課。這是一種不尋常的成長經歷，在很多方面形塑了現在的我，並且對我的生活和工作產生了深遠的影響。

大學畢業後，我回到培德中學任教一年，圓滿了高中時的心願之一。接著進入哈佛宗教學院攻讀佛教碩士學位，並加入哈佛大學的佛教社團，也在哈佛宗教學院的世界宗教研究中心實習。幾年後，我在舊金山加州大學附設的醫院接受了一年的醫院宗教輔導師培訓。在那裡，我學會了如何為需要支持的住院病人提供心靈關懷。

Last year, I worked as an associate editor at *Lion's Roar*, a Buddhist magazine in North America, where my work was to highlight the voices of Buddhists of color. Now I am in Taiwan, doing research for my PhD in Buddhist Studies at Stanford. My research focuses on how Buddhist nuns in Taiwan deal with physical pain with greater resilience through practices of overcoming attachment to the body.

I was invited to offer my reflections on the Dharma today. How can we help Buddhism speak to the modern world? How can we share the Dharma in a way that best benefits the people of this time?

For me, the question is: what makes the Dharma alive to me? What is it that makes my heart sing? What moves me toward virtue? What inspires me to greater benevolence and selflessness? For me, it is compassion in any form, regardless of language, culture, and religion.

The Dharma does not discriminate. But religions and people often do. And therefore, I trust the Dharma that is alive, that is formless, that enhances my wisdom and humanity and kindness regardless of where I find it and what form it takes. The Dharma can be found anytime, anywhere. We have only to know how to look.

Let me follow up with a second question: what does it mean to take refuge in the Dharma? When we understand the boundlessness of the Dharma, that means we find the Buddha (our teacher) in all places (maybe not each place, but each place in potential). That is what it means to take all living beings as our teacher.

To take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in this broader sense is to:

- To take refuge in the Buddha (awakening): to take all beings as our teacher, which means we find the highest wisdom everywhere.
- To take refuge in the Dharma: to learn from that wisdom in all times and places in order to elevate our humanity and kindness.
- To take refuge in the Sangha: to recognize what we have in common with all living beings, that we in fact inter-are, and to treat all beings as our equals. ☸

去年，我在北美的佛教雜誌《獅子吼》擔任副主編，工作內容是為少數族裔佛教徒發聲。目前我在台灣，為我的史丹福大學佛學博士學位進行研究。研究重點是「台灣的尼眾如何通過克服對色身的執著，以更大的韌性來面對身體疼痛」。

今天應邀談談我對佛法的反思。我們如何幫助佛教與現代世界對話？我們如何以最有益於當代人的方式分享佛法？

對我來說，問題是：是什麼讓佛法對我來說是鮮活的？是什麼讓我的心在歌唱？是什麼促使我走向美德？是什麼啟發我更加仁慈和無私？對我來說，無論語言、文化和宗教為何，答案都是：以各種形式出現的慈悲。

佛法不起分別心；但是宗教和人類經常起分別心。因此，不論我在哪裡找到佛法，也不論佛法以什麼樣的形式呈現出來，我相信活生生的、無形的佛法，必定會增長我的智慧、仁慈和善良。佛法，是隨時隨地都能找到的。我們只需要知道如何去找。

下面我接著提出第二個問題：皈依法的意義是什麼？當我們了解到了佛法的無邊時，這就意味著我們在所有的地方（或許不是每個地方，而是每個有可能的地方）都可能找到我們的導師——佛陀。這也就是說，以一切眾生為師的意思。

在廣義上皈依佛、法、僧是：

- 皈依佛（覺醒）：以一切眾生為師，也就是說，處處皆可找到無上智慧。
- 皈依法：隨時隨地學習（無上）智慧，以提升我們的仁慈和善良。
- 皈依僧：認知我們與一切眾生的共同性，實際上我們與一切眾生是一體的，並平等地對待所有眾生。☸