

OPENING OF GOLD WHEEL MONASTERY

The Three-Day Grand Opening of Gold Wheel Monastery centered around Amitabha Buddha. Standing serene in the eye of Southern California unrest, the Monastery is a bright and auspicious place of refuge for those who wish to know and follow the truth. Grateful disciples from many parts of California as well as Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Canada gathered to pay respects and be bathed in the light of the joyous celebration.

On January 2, 1983, Opening morning, bowing began at 7:30 AM and the entire day was filled with meaningful worship, wholesome food and fellowship, and many opportunities to give and receive the gift of Dharma. During the course of the day's events, some eight hundred people came to share in the various activities.

Midmorning, Dharma Master Heng Lai, Director of Buildings and Grounds at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and Dharma Realm Buddhist University, and Upasaka Chen Ai Kuang from Canada performed the ritual of cutting the ribbon at the triple archways which frame the adorned front entrance to the Monastery. Family, friends, and guests of the four-fold assembly of disciples all joined in singing "The Gold Wheel Song," composed by Bhikshu Heng Ch'i and Upasaka Kuo Chou Rounds in dedication to the occasion.

Attended by Bhikshus from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, all resplendent in red and gold, the Venerable Abbot led the assembly in reciting a portion of the Shurangama Mantra as the light was opened. The Venerable Abbot spoke verses in praise of Amitabha Buddha prior to performing the awesome and efficacious ritual of opening the light on the magnificent standing figure of the Buddha which adorns the two-story Buddhahall at the heart of the Monastery.

*Amitabha Buddha, of limitless lifespan,
Welcomes living beings to the Land of Eternal Stillness and Light.
Say his name once; transcend the Triple Realm.
His holy title of ten thousand virtues transforms the ten directions.*

Members of the Sangha gave luncheon and afternoon Dharma talks and the Venerable Abbot discoursed on the chapter of "Universal Worthy Bodhisattva's Conduct and Vows," in the evening. An opportunity to take refuge with the Triple Jewel and to join in the joy of liberating the living rounded out the afternoon's events. Four hundred turtles were ransomed from slaughter, given the Triple Refuge, and set free in the L.A. River to live out their lifespans.

The Dharma Wheel is always turning at Gold Wheel Monastery. Every evening at 6:30 PM the Avatamsaka Assembly commences and on weekends lectures are also held at 12:30 PM.