

The Bodhi Stand



Petite Cheng Deng, who has been coming to Gold Buddha Monastery ever since the doors opened in Vancouver's Chinatown, is a regular supporter of the Monastery. She lives just across the street and up the way, but the walk is not easy for her each day. At seventy-two, she has an asthmatic condition and must sit down as soon as she gets inside the door and rest for a while before climbing the stairs to the Buddhahall. Nonetheless, she attends faithfully. "As long as there is a place where I can bow to the Buddha, I will come to bow," she says emphatically.

Cheng Deng took refuge with the Triple Jewel in Hong Kong nearly twenty years ago. She also received the Five Precepts for lay people there. After coming to Gold Buddha Monastery, she asked to bow to the Venerable Elder Abbot as her teacher, and in 1985 joined the bus pilgrimage to the Sagely City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

During the 1986 Ten Thousand Buddhas Repentance Ceremony, which was being held for the first time at Gold Buddha Monastery, Cheng Deng came almost every day, even though her legs swelled considerably from the daily bowing. She absolutely refused to rest, determined to bow to the end of the three-week-long repentance session. Her faith in the Buddhadharma is firm, and she can read the Sutras. Gwan Yin Bodhisattva's Universal Door Chapter and the *Amitabha Sutra* are her daily recitations, and she often recites the *vajra Sutra* and the *Medicine Master Sutra* as well.

Cheng Deng is very clear about the principle of suffering, for she has experienced a great deal of it during her life. She knows that we come to pay back debts, however, and she does not harbor resentment. In fact, her personality is harmonious and gentle. "I know that the answer does not lie in fighting or trying to get even with other people. I just keep reciting the Great Compassion Mantra as much as possible."

