

因華

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華嚴經法要新解

專
題
研
討

前

言

天因法師

古人說：「不讀華嚴，不知佛富貴」。現世一般研究修學華嚴的人都採用唐武則天時代翻譯出來的八十卷三十九品的版本，根據華嚴四祖澄觀清涼國師造疏（大方廣佛華嚴經疏）及鈔（大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔），並造表解（攝大經七處九會三十九品為四分五周因果表）加以解釋。都是懷有一個目標，就是要把華嚴經的深奧意廣的義理，作詳盡的解釋以方便後代人之研讀。

每每要解釋華嚴經之前，有學者先從歷史入手介紹此經的出處及傳譯的經過，有學者根據七處九會表解中的內容對此經加以剖析，更有學者依其經疏及演義鈔對經題作詳盡的解釋，有關這方面的文獻資料書籍等，在坊間流通相當普遍。

《華嚴經法要新解》對於上述的解釋，不再贅述，試著以多篇文

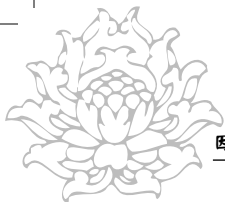
章組合，分別刊登在每期的「因華」上。而文章的次序，將會順著依據華嚴經第一「世主妙嚴品」開始至第三十九「入法界品」，以提綱挈領的方式帶領讀者研讀有關的內容，並提供讀者研讀華嚴經的方法，遇到文中重複的語句及繁瑣的長行，將會於以表解方式分析經文內容，故讀者可依據經文而對照表解，或依表解而找回經文。總之，務求讀者有機會全面性了解華嚴經，也有能力依據表解一目了然地洞悉經文的義理。

無論是「華嚴經」本身或是依此經而立的「華嚴宗」，法嗣相傳至今已至第三十九代。縱觀歷來有人或依此經而作畢生修行的藍本，有又人或依此宗而作終身探究的對象，筆者試從這個方法去探討這部有「經中之王」美譽見稱的華嚴大經，並希望獲得大眾的回響，給予後學寶貴的意見。☸

工作人員

出版者：美國華嚴蓮社
顧問：賢度法師
發行人：天因法師
社長：天融法師

編輯：天寧法師
天能法師
印刷：快答廣告印刷



重建舊殿 實況報導

籌備了多年的舊樓重建工程，終於在2008年1月19日簽訂合約，為了使工程能順利及如期完工；在蓮社住持、監院領導下，全體住眾及義工菩薩們發揮高度的團隊精神，在十天之內，把兩層房子的傢具、雜物搬離舊樓。

在30日早上七時正，由住持天因法師帶領下，在交出房子前，舉行了一次洒淨儀式。八時正，舊樓正式交給營造場展開重建工作。

營造場接管了房子之後，一連串的工程隨即展開，由清拆牆壁、廁所，廚房挖坑，房間隔間，地下水管，重設電線與水管，打通廚房等工程，一項接一項。為了監察工程進度，住持法師密切地與工程師等聯絡，以確保工程能進行順利。

工程進行到二月中旬，發覺空調電路在設計上，與實際操作出現問題。一連串的緊密會議隨即展開；由住持天因法師、監院天融法師聯同建築師STEVE楊良淵先生、工程師DENNIS張志禹先生、工程總監STONE石龍生先生、空調電路設計師DANIEL YU及蓮社兩位護法DAVID賀玉章居士、空調專家陳滄澤居士合共八人，日夜接連舉行了多次會議，反覆研究，最後達成共識，加設手動開關的路線，使日後可選擇內裝設定。

舊殿已有二十年的歷史，因此在整修的工程中，一直不斷發現很多破爛不堪的地方。三月七日，建築結構測量師在住持、監院的接待下進行外圍柱子結構測量。由於年久失修，外圍柱子多處腐爛，白蟻蛀蝕，已經影響整幢大樓的安全，政府規定必須作出修補或更換。二樓欄杆也多處破舊，欄杆距離亦已不合乎政府的標準，必須翻新。

由於出現額外的整修，與營造場原來簽訂合約有所不同，必須作出增補，因此維修費用亦大為增加。現祈十方信眾，修建佛寺，把握布施因緣，廣結善緣。希望大眾支持與贊助！
☸

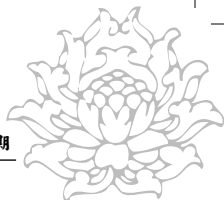


簽訂重建合約



柱子腐爛，白蟻蛀蝕





因緣起

美國華嚴蓮社在加州成立已經有二十多年的歷史，它是一個專以弘揚華嚴為主的一個佛教道場，本社向以效法文殊菩薩的智慧，實踐普賢菩薩行願為從事弘法利生工作的指標。除了舉辦各種活動，以不同的形式，把佛法散播人間外；目前更以電子網路及平面刊物來傳達佛法訊息；「因華」便是在這種因緣下應運而生的。我們一直不停的散播佛法的種子，希望能夠在這塊土地上落地生根，長久的流傳下去。

「因華」的出版，正處於萌芽的階段，目前嘗試以小型報章的形式，以每四月為一期，內容以中英文報導本社的各項活動；目的希望能加強與蓮友的交流，讓信眾對蓮社有更多的認識。同時，希望透過文字，使更多人能夠得到

佛法的滋潤。內容以中英文對照的方式刊載發行，藉此以帶動下一代的青年能夠經由閱讀學習佛法，進而培養佛教正知、正見與正信。

以「因華」為名，其意有二：一、華嚴的華就是花，用花代表因以喻菩薩修行，以十度萬行為因華，來莊嚴佛果菩提。二、台北華嚴蓮社出版了「萬行」雜誌多年；因此美國華嚴蓮社就以「因華」來承續轉法輪的使命。

「因華」由籌備到出版，花了接近一年的時間。因此讓我們體會到，要讓「因華」茁壯成長，我們必須要招募更多義工人才，來協助從事翻譯、寫作等工作；另外，「華嚴園苑」園地是公開的，希望藉此鼓勵讀者寫作，以文字來弘揚佛法。把佛教教義，學佛心得，與大眾分享。佛說：「諸供養中，法供養最。」我們誠意邀請你加入我們的行列，共同成就這份功德，與大眾廣結善緣。並且希望十方大德信施，不吝批評和指教。☸

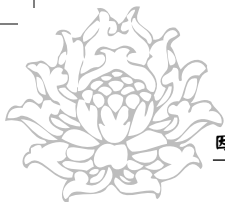


因華 求 才

「因華」徵求義務工作人員，凡有興趣於中、英文撰稿、翻譯、資料搜集等工作，請與本刊編輯部聯絡。
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請註明因華義工。





經 論 講 座 研 討 會 生 動 活 潑

本社在4月5日舉辦的『2008年經論講座研討會』，特別邀請兩位遠從台灣來的教授舉行兩場專題講座，分別是劉公浦(聖功居士)與楊永慶教授。

是日上午十時假大雄寶殿舉行，由劉公浦教授以『佛陀教育與生命之圓滿』為主題，內容以佛陀之應化、八相成道、說法四十九年、修五百世忍辱，百劫修相好。剖析佛境界有自受用功德和他受用功德，是究竟圓滿之生命。教授更有次第地為我們提出實用的法門，及在生活中如何實踐的方法。劉教授更將他在監獄弘法輔導的心得、方法與感受，與大眾分享。講座在一片熱烈的討論中結束。



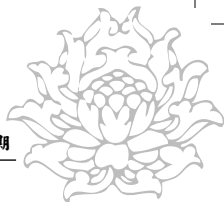
第二場是由楊永慶教授主講。主題是以『超越身心障礙，走向自在人生』，在人生道路上，要怎麼走才會自在？教授以輕鬆幽默的方法，又非常誠懇地以自己在人生道上的實際經驗，在困境中如何突破，再配合般若心經的內容為大家分析解說。教授說法活潑生動，妙語如珠，不時引來滿堂笑聲。而講座最後在一片笑聲中圓滿落幕。

住持法師代表蓮社頒發感謝狀給楊教授及劉教授，並感謝兩位不遠千里來到美國華嚴蓮社，為我們作這兩場佛法的講演。



上圖：住持 頒發
感謝狀給劉教授

左圖：楊永慶教授



歡送台北駐三藩市 經文處處長廖偉平回台 暨 參與本社浴佛法會

5月4日本社住持天因法師聯同天寧、天能法師及護法居士一共十人，出席金山灣區全僑歡送台北駐美國經濟文化辦事處處長廖偉平榮調回台的惜別晚會。除了本社外，加州參議員余胤良、庫柏蒂諾市議員黃少雄與胡宜蘭、聖荷西市副市長DAVID D. CORTESE、SARATOGA市市議員劉嘉琳等灣區各界人士及數百華人前來參加歡送會，筵開40席，參與者眾，氣氛熱鬧。除了歌舞助慶外，大會更特別安排廖處長的兩位女兒上台致詞，場面溫馨感人。另外，出席代表亦紛紛致送紀念品與處長。由於廖處長禮佛虔誠，是以席間，更親自邀請本社住持天因法

師上台合照，晚會在愉快之氣氛下結束。而處長將會在5月15日返回台灣。

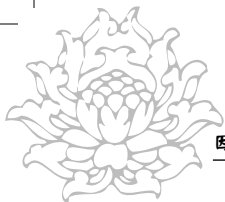
5月11日早上11:00廖處長蒞臨參加本社舉辦之浴佛法會。浴佛之後又與大家分享他認識成一長老的一段因緣。及後，本社住持致送成一長老的《彌勒淨土法門集》等著作及賢度法師的《華嚴經講錄》及DVD等法寶作為紀念。

為了歡送處長回台，信眾代表唱出兩首歌來代表大家的心聲，更配合幻燈片播放處長與蓮社共聚的歷史照片。處長最後在大眾的一片祝福聲之下離開。



住持致送紀念品後合照





特別報導

四川地震 災情嚴重 蓮社籌款 誦經迴向

中國四川省在當地時間5月12日下午二時多，發生8級強烈大地震，到目前為止，死亡人數已接近七萬人。

一場天災，導致許有家庭破碎，許多人流離失所，一剎那間，哀鴻遍野，生死相隔，骨肉分離；各種傳媒不斷報導災區的情況，實在令人不忍聽聞。

本社即時為此次災難者，設置七七超薦牌位及祈福消災，又於五月十八

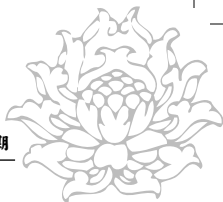
日下午二時，啟建法會虔誦《地藏菩薩本願經》，籌募善款。並以此功德迴向往生者能早生淨土、離苦得樂。災難中生還者，身心自在、福壽綿長。

是日出席參與者接近120人，大眾在住持天因法師帶領下，以至誠心為亡者、為健在者誦念。整個法會在一片莊嚴而又祥和的氣氛之下，於下午四時半結束。法會圓滿後，法師更提醒大家，要珍惜目前的一切，好好用功。又此次籌募所得的款項，除當天的救濟金收入外，再加上星期日（5月12日）浴佛紅包，合共\$11,618.00將悉數交與慈濟功德會統一處理。及後，仍不斷有信眾以各種方式送來救濟金。真所謂救災救人，不分種族，不分國界，功德無量。☸



本社為地震受害者誦經迴向





趙廷箴居士追思會



住持天因法師及天融法師出席追思會

本社住持天因法師及監院天融法師，奉成公董事長之令，詣美國德州休斯頓佛光山中美寺參加趙廷箴居士追思會。

在七十年代，台灣華嚴蓮社計劃舉辦大專學生佛學論文徵文，鼓勵大專青年學佛；而趙廷箴居士及其夫人為了紀念其父母，參與捐贈獎學金計劃及命名為：華嚴蓮社(趙氏慈孝)大專學生佛學獎學金，直至現在仍在進行著。

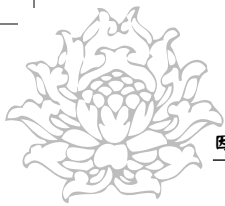
追思會是在4月26日上午十時開始，當法師抵達中美寺門外就與亡者的遺孀朱懷芳女士(WEI FONG CHAO)及其家屬遇上，當時大殿已雲集了工商業界多名與亡者生前經營生意時的老夥伴，他們分別來自中國、台灣、香

港、新加坡及美國多個州。

大會安排了多位商界鉅子致辭及讀誦追思頌詞，家屬並以投影機播放了亡者生前的經歷，作為對其一生之回顧，緬懷之情流露於各人的臉上。最後恭請佛光山西來寺住持慧濟法師宣讀由佛光山開山宗長星雲大師撰寫的祭文，散會前各人以一朵白色慧蘭花悼念亡者，整個追思會在既隆重又莊嚴，而不失其清雅與平靜，參加者不下八百人。

在這三十年間趙老居士仍不斷為佛教、為社會作出貢獻，作育英才，嘉惠無數學子，在全球作出無數利益眾生的事業，他的發心，無私的奉獻，值得我們學習又作為後人的榜樣。☸





春 季 祭 祖 會 梁 皇 法 勝 功 德 殊 勝

本社於4月6日至13日啓建的『春季祭祖梁皇法會』，由住持天因法師領眾共修。除了常住諸位法師外，又有來自洛杉磯的惟正法師、台灣華嚴專宗研究所的印彬及會極法師。

法會期間，為配合十卷懺文，本社更備有十種供品：香、花、燈、塗、果、茶、食、寶、珠、衣以供佛及供眾。

每天法會在九時開始禮拜《梁皇寶懺》，分兩支香進行、中午接佛前大供；下午有二支香，而最後一支香又加誦《地藏經》一卷後接蒙山晚課。

中餐以過堂方式進行，在法師帶領下繞念『南無消災延壽藥師佛』名號，繞佛一匝之後便領取便當。然後由住持帶領大眾供養。用餐時監院又為大眾報導蓮社一連串的活動。

在12日的晚課後舉辦幽冥皈依。禮請住持法師為三皈本師；更為功德主之祖先眷屬及冤親債主開示、帶領亡靈懺悔、發願、正受皈依。

圓滿(13日)上午延生普佛一堂後，住持法師深知信眾們對導師成公長老、副董事長賢度法師、退居副住持轉度法師的近況非常關心，故此特

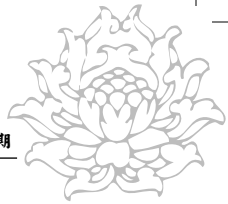
別籍此機會為大家報導諸位長老的近況，蓮友們無不歡喜的聆聽。住持又將長老們的法寶與大眾結緣。法寶分別有：成一長老開示彌勒淨土法門(VCD)，《彌勒淨土法門集續編》、賢度法師的《DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUA-YEN SCHOOL DURING THE TANG DYNASTY》、《華嚴經講錄》、賢度法師華嚴經講座(DVD)、《因華季刊·第一期》

下午二時施放《三時繫念佛事》一堂。恭請天因、天融及印彬法師各主持一時繫念佛事。仰仗十方諸佛菩薩及龍天護法之加持法師們白文清晰攝眾，帶領亡者懺悔發願，道場肅穆莊嚴。法會於晚上七時圓滿結束。

住持法師更祝福大家，福慧雙修，先亡離苦，家庭和樂。☸



第一時主法 住持天因法師



長市 處西 處荷 文聖 經及副 蒞浴 佛臨 法參 會加

五月十一日早上，大殿早已雲集前來參與浴佛的蓮友們。

從前兩天開始，蓮社從上至下無不忙著籌備此活動。監院天融法師在9日星期五與義工師姐們就到市場採購



聖荷西市副市長浴佛



處長與蓮友分享認識成公長老的因緣

鮮花及生果，及不斷張羅著零碎的必需品：如浴佛亭、插花器、剪刀、花泥等等雜物。大家從早上一直忙到晚上九時，終於將浴佛亭莊嚴起來了。而在星期六另一些義工，就幫忙整理首次推出的水蓮燈，準備浴佛湯與大家結緣。再一次發揮群策群力的精神。

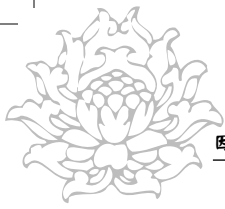
是日早上，適逢母親節；又得悉有兩位特別嘉賓將會到來，因此大家特別興奮、氣氛倍感熱鬧。八時正，法會依時開始；先由本社住持領眾虔誦《普賢行願品》一卷；稍事休息之後，再帶領大眾禮拜《釋迦牟尼佛》一堂。隨即展開浴佛的活動。

十時三十分，第一位嘉賓：聖荷西市的副市長：MR. DAVID CORTESE 與他的家人前來參與浴佛，副市長更表示希望將來能多參與本社舉辦的活動。後由住持天因法師送上紀念品一份。副市長稍作停留之後便離開。

十一時正另一位嘉賓：台北駐舊金山經濟文化事務處處長廖偉平蒞臨。而廖處長將會在15號就榮調回台，結束了六年在舊金山的職務，此次可以說是最後一次以官式的身份到訪蓮社。處長簡單扼要地與大家分享如何認識導師成一長老的經過；又欣賞了本社為處長特別準備了兩首歌，以幻燈片配合播放之後，就與大家話別。

一如往常，中午供佛、過堂用齋。當大眾用齋時，住持法師便將特別為母親節所準備的康乃馨，送給在場的所有母親，場面既溫馨又熱鬧。而法會就在一片歡樂中圓滿。☸





大 年 初 一 喜 氣 洋 洋

二月七日(星期四) 大年初一上午舉行共修會，虔誦彌勒三經，分四支香進行。上午第一支香後由住持天因法師帶領大眾向佛菩薩拜年；並為信眾開示講解如何向不同身份的人拜年，如師父、居士、長輩及晚輩等，聽後信眾反應熱烈。中午午供特別熱鬧，前來拜齋的人很多，雖然在美國過中國年，一般人都要上班，但由於應節，上班族尤其是中國人都認為大年初一要持素，所以紛紛利用午飯時間到就近的寺廟拜菩薩，用素齋，祈求來年順風順水，

吉祥如意，當天來的人潮都是附近灣區及FREMONT的上班族。在蓮社舊樓重修的期間，沒有廚房可用之際，承蒙十方信眾發心發願護寺護僧，輪流供養法會午齋，當天是一條龍餐廳老闆供養大眾麵食及芝麻大餅。願佛菩薩加被新春頭一天開始，人人能依止三寶地，享用三寶飯；以資養色身，更長養法身。☸



中午拜齋人多

新 春 禮 拜 三 千 佛 懺

本社新春舉辦三千佛洪名寶懺法會，於週日舉行。由住持法師領眾共修，於2月17日揭開序幕，至三月三十日圓滿勝會。

早上三支香，下午兩支香接晚課，每次禮拜五百佛。

對信徒來說，拜懺是很吸引的一個法會。因此出席人數不少。

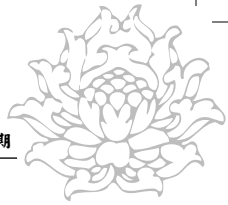
特別是在新春時間，又是一年才一次的三千佛懺；而拜懺主要的目的

是藉著禮佛，來懺悔我們過去所造的惡業。所謂：「禮佛一拜，罪滅河沙」。

每次法會的每一支香，法師們均以不同的音韻來稱讚洪名，配合生動的法器節奏，往往將拜懺的氣氛，帶至高峯。

住持法師每次在法會後，都會勉勵大家要把握因緣，祈願大家都能圓滿三千佛號。☸





一年一度 供佛齋天

二月十日由本社住持天因法師領眾舉辦齋天法會。是日法會於上午九時假大雄寶殿舉行，總計供華嚴海會佛菩薩設有十五席，另有護法諸天為二十四席，並以十種素齋供養，法會莊嚴，氣氛祥和喜悅。

第一支香供佛及諸天，先由監院講解各種儀軌程序，後由諸位法師帶領信眾祈福，第二支香由住持天因法師散灑香花，並以供天有關之主題作介紹，為信眾解說佛教中之護法神，法師更勉勵大家在新的一年里：一、要去除五欲（財、色、名、食、睡），二、應常

親近三寶。三、同時更應廣修福慧、廣結善緣。

第三支香是佛前大供、延生供、往生供，並以素齋供眾結緣。因為住眾師父事前周詳的準備，四眾弟子通力合作，發揮了高度的團隊精神，法會在愉快的氣氛中結束，與會大眾非常珍惜此次的法會，更有信眾為了擔心錯過明年的齋天，已經決定要參加明年的供佛齋天，紛紛地詢問能否現在就報名。保守估計今年的齋天有二百人次的參與，法會結束後仍有信眾約二十多位來寺禮佛。道場興隆由此可見，更可貴的是信眾對蓮社由信心從而產生歸屬感。當天除常見的義工大德外，還有來參加供天的信眾也參與了恢復場地的工作行列，所以在很短的時間內即恢復了壇場的莊嚴，效率極佳。

法會剪影

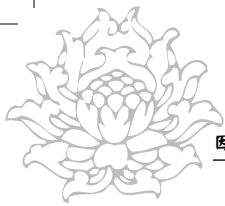


左上：參加者眾，義工忙於分便當

左下：忙了一天 終於用餐了

右上：壇場一景





慶祝觀世音菩薩 誕辰法會

本社在3月23日慶祝觀世音菩薩的聖誕，是日早上九點信眾、義工們都陸續抵達。而佛桌上早已擺滿了壽桃、大悲咒水、鮮花、供果等。



九時由住持法師領眾普佛一堂後開示，法師利用多媒體以觀世音菩薩普門品為例，為信眾宣講經典立名的方法、種類又舉例說明。法師開示深入淺出，條理分明，信眾獲益良多。接著佛前大供與午齋，本社更備有壽桃、喜糕等與大家結緣。

下午虔誦普門品、大悲咒，由於法會人數遠超預計之內，蓮社準備的大悲咒水供不應求。在法師們的帶領下，眾人專注的誠心唸誦21遍大悲咒後接晚課。法會在三時圓滿。超過一百五十餘人參與法會，這麼多人來參與，可以說是觀音菩薩的慈悲願力，信眾的信心，諸多的因緣，成就了此次殊勝的法會。希望大家能學習觀音菩薩的精神，發大菩提心，自利利他，成就佛道。

左圖：大眾虔誦大悲咒

慶祝釋迦文佛成道 紀念法會

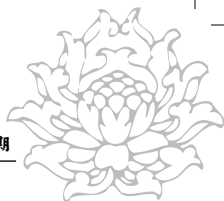


一月十三日 本社為慶祝教主釋迦牟尼佛成道，舉辦釋迦普佛一堂，由本社住持天因法師主法，領眾共修，信眾踴躍參與。蓮社亦準備了臘八粥供佛供眾。

當天並播放了一套有關佛陀一生及解釋三皈五戒的影片。後住持法師又為大眾開示，解釋為甚麼要皈依三寶，成為佛弟子之後應該如何修學。參聽者聆聽法益，無不法喜充滿。

中午佛前大供後，又備有喜糕供佛供眾。下午誦華嚴經普賢行願品接晚課；法會於下午三時圓滿結束。





皈依受戒 功德殊勝

本社為有意並發心皈依或求戒者，定期舉辦有關儀式，以成就發心者道心堅固、持戒清淨、深入經藏、護寺

護法；有關個別皈依求戒者，在全年五個佛誕，其中三個觀音誕分別於農曆二月、六月及九月，還有農曆十二月的佛陀成道日及農曆四月的浴佛節；而幽冥皈依於每月第二個週日禮拜慈悲三昧水懺法會後，及全年三個超度大法會，包括國曆四月清明、八月孟蘭及十二月年終期間。☸

活動素描



皈依信眾與法師合影

禮拜藥師懺 壽星消災延壽

本社於每月的最後一個週日，禮拜《藥師寶懺》；並為該月的壽星舉辦慶生會。每次都準備喜糕及精美禮物為壽星祝壽。

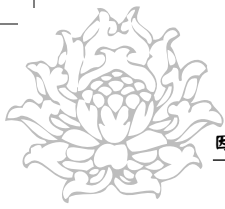
每次午供完畢後，住持法師都會帶領大眾高唱『南無彌勒尊佛』與及中、英文版的『生日快樂』來為壽星祝福。

在許願之後，便齊切生日蛋糕，與眾共享。☸



二月份壽星：何麗婷、
蕭錦嫻 (Monita Lo)、
林承恩 (Ian Lam)、
朱培瑩 (Jessica Ju)





承建舊樓工程 老闆賢伉儷 來寺參加法會 觀摩與祈福

本社舊址承包商Mr.Kambiz Ansari 做心臟手術，現已復原出院，並主動來到蓮社祈福禮佛。住持天因法師於三月三十日法會午供時，帶領大眾為KAMBIZ ANSARI夫婦祈福，法師以英文宣讀祈福疏文：ABLS is very appreciated you to handle and manage the remodeling project of our old building. We are welcome you to join our today's dharma assembly. Buddha and budhisattva bless you to have good business and good health for both you and your family. And wish you to get rid of the heart problem. Please bow to the

buddha and buddhisattva 3 times.

Kambiz Ansari於佛前上香禮拜祈求三寶加被身體健康、而夫婦倆常與蓮社互動，並對佛教的儀禮、教義、佛像感到很有興趣。後來更參與過堂用齋，午齋後仍留在蓮社到處參觀，流連許久，在住持法師與工程總監石龍生的引導下，為他們解答了很多問題，並拍照留念。在此印證了在與有情接觸的每個因緣，都是接引眾生的機會，相信他們對佛教必定有美好的印象。☸



工程總監石龍生與
Kambiz Ansari夫婦

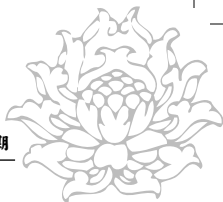
智光老和尚 圓寂44週年 紀念

3月25日 適逢觀音菩薩的誕辰，本社住持領眾於佛前上供；後為祖師智光老和尚作圓寂44週年紀念讚供，當天除了供菜外更備有鮮花、生果、及蛋糕等。

智光老和尚十三歲時，隨玉成老和尚出家後，一直肩負作育僧才，致力興辦學堂之悲願。且精進不懈，追隨月霞長老長期研習華嚴，亦曾集資獎學金，以濟清貧。

導師成公長老一直以來，對歷代祖師均非常尊崇，且常提醒我們要尊敬祖師，要飲水思源；因為沒有祖師就沒有我們。所以每逢祖師圓寂週年、冥誕；本社必定於祖師堂舉行上供，就是要提醒我們學習古來大德的精神，用功辦道。☸





週六佛學班 住持法師續講 「華嚴道次第與生活」

2008年第二期的週六佛學班於5月3日至7月19日，時間是晚上七至八時三十分。這期共12課，假本社大雄寶殿內舉行，由住持天因法師繼續宣講「華嚴道次第與生活」。

今次除了原有的學員之外，又有新的學員加入，合共三十多人，法師先回顧上一期的課程內容綱要後，即開示

大眾苦的真相及告訴學員如何可避免墮落三惡道，以此展開本期之課程。

法師預算本期的課程內容有：三塗苦、業果、懺悔與對治、思惟苦集二諦、十二因緣、入大乘門、因果教誡、我愛及愛他執、菩薩學處及十度波羅蜜。法師對於上述的題目，將作詳細解釋再配合華嚴經的義理，帶動學員找出經文所在，並引導如何運用在生活上。

課堂上法師又以投影機播放講義給學員，使大家能一目了然。遇到學員提出問題，法師先帶動大家以研討的方式來發表意見，然後作總結，最終目的是希望大眾能發菩提心，精進學習到課程圓滿。☸

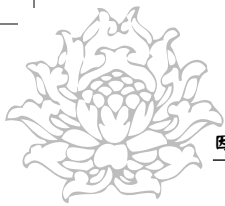
義工制服 展現新形象

本社為了表示對四月份之經論講座及清明大法會之重視，特別推出義工新制服。從活動第一天開始，凡蓮社義工大德的制服以全新面貌出現。制服一律採用棉質帆布卡其色外摺以黑邊，以配合加州的天氣，不會因太薄而著涼；左前襟配有一個蓮社彩色綉花草，顏色鮮明奪目，制服分有外套是辦公室義工用，背心則是一般義工，而行堂組用背心型的圍裙，還有長袖的圍兜兜是專門為香積組而設計的。不同款式的制服穿在不同部門的義工身

上，除了令他們有充分的參與跟榮譽感外，也能發揮到制服的功用，且能提高工作效率。

這次推出的制服是來自2007年的一個因緣，因住持天因法師回香港弘法時，巧遇一位成衣出口公司老闆蕭敏琪居士帶動其員工發心製造，連買布、綉花、裁剪、縫紉乃至連運費、報關費等，全部悉數供養，功德無量。☸





公民入籍班

美國華嚴蓮社於2008年5月3日開辦公民班，每逢星期六下午二時至四時，為期三個月，假大雄寶殿舉行。此班是繼SAT班後，胡心圓居士又為蓮社發心開講公民入籍班，目的是給予持有綠卡人士，又希望考取公民資格的人提供資訊，以期順利考試，成為正式又合法的公民。

在課堂上胡老師指導學員填寫申請表格、一般可能性會問的問題、並用生動有趣的故事以輔助加強學員的印象，並蒐集了非常齊全的資料，有條不紊地講解。老師本著即使您目前條件不具足入籍公民者，或未打算入籍的

人士都可以參加，因為她用了許多時間準備，希望學員透過課程，可以瞭解美國的歷史、發展經過、社會制度與文化。據胡老師透露，稍後會以英文為學員模擬考試，三位常住師父也在學員之列，無論是老師或學員，都非常用心的聽講，互動效果甚佳，預祝這個課程能成功圓滿。☺

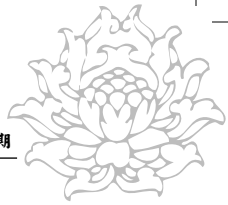


住持天因法師 召開常住會議 暨續頒聘書與 天能及天寧法師

本社住持天因法師於四月三十日晚間六時三十分，召開常住會議，有職事的師父均出席，各人報告前幾個月的工作情況，另於大雄寶殿續頒聘書與天能法師及天寧法師；天能法師擔任知客、香燈兼文書工作，天寧法師擔任

館藏、典座兼庶務，時間自零八年四月一日至零九年四月一日止，任期一年。住持稱讚二位師父在任內為常住服務期間，盡職負責任，處處為常住著想，並鼓勵她們繼續承擔責任，為常住效力、為自己與信眾的法身慧命一齊努力，務求人人道業增上、佛種不退。並合影以作記錄。☺





清明法會的心絮

美國華嚴蓮社二00八年的清明祭祖大法會於當地時間四月六日起舉辦，至四月十三日止為期八日，是屬於年度的盛事。台北華嚴蓮社依然本著弘法利生的願心，從台灣邀請了兩位教授前來做會前的專題演講，以期讓好樂佛法的信眾們能廣納法海百味，多方聽聞，增長善根。我和印彬法師也一同隨行支援法務，雖然已經不是第一次，但仍然覺得相當興奮，因為每一段的緣起，其中都將充滿新鮮的期望，和不可預知的互動，那都是培養生命經驗的激素，對一個修學佛法的人來說，時時處處皆是道場，點點滴滴盡是佛事，起心、用心，無不是遊於法海之中，總是那麼令人神怡。

我們到了美國之後，才知道法會的內容是禮拜「梁皇寶懺」，「拜懺」一向是超薦佛事中最引人入勝的一環，不但可以隨文發露懺悔，洗淨愆尤；又可以高聲讚頌洪名，歡喜禮佛，冥陽兩利，功德自是非常殊勝。尤其若是發至誠心，能夠沒有缺席的拜完整部，這樣的因緣，通常都會得到感應道交，法喜不可言喻，這也是一般大眾喜愛拜懺的原因。

我們幾位法師分別來自不同的地方，有各別不同的學習經驗。初次配合佛號的唱頌，在全然沒有預知唱韻的情況下，彼此是需要有高度的默契，才能呈現出莊嚴的攝受力，因此，對我們來說，每一陣佛號都是全新的體會。

從這個地方，突然讓我領會到「法的平等性」。有「難易」「高下」之分的原來是我們的心，對「法」而言，它一向平等，不動不搖。因為你懂，所以認為簡單；如果不懂，就覺得困難。所以你的簡單，對別人而言，未必就簡單；你的容易，對別人而言，就不可直斷也是容易的事。「理所當然」的錯覺，其實一直潛存在我們的心裡，常常影響到我們人與人之間的和諧共事。因為我們總是不自覺的套用自己認知的公式在別人身上，當發現不適用的時候，也就是彼此產生煩惱的時候了，不論是夫妻之間、親子之間、或是朋友、同事之間都是如此！

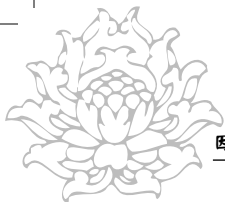
所以，在生活中，常起思惟觀照是一件很有趣的事，這也是令我們智慧能夠增長的契機，所謂「不經一事，不長一智。」希望藉著這次法會的成功，也讓大家都如願以求，法喜充滿，並且深入佛智，如果下次來聆聽佛法講座的人數有像法會圓滿日的人數那麼多的話，那才真是叫「龍天歡喜」呢！畢竟讓大家都能夠「福慧雙修，早成佛道」才是蓮社舉辦法會共修的目的，也是所有義工辛勤護持的動力，其所成就的因緣是不可思議，我們都應該深自珍惜聞法的殊勝，共同為莊嚴無上菩提而努力！與大家共勉之！

文：會極



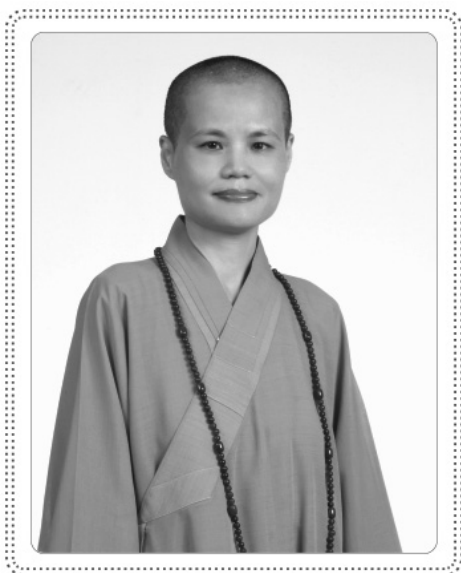
歡迎投稿 • 華嚴園苑





飛躍未來

上賢下度法師華嚴經佛學講座



本社副董事長上賢下度法師將於本年孟蘭盆法會期間為大眾開示，《華嚴經十行品》，歡迎蓮友踴躍參加，聆聽法益，同霑甘露。

日期：
2008年8月4、6、8日

時間：
7:00PM-8:30PM

地點：
本社一樓大雄寶殿

鳴謝啓事

特別感謝參予本期之中、英文撰稿、翻譯、潤筆、校對、設計等義務工作人員：

傳智法師、法詮法師、胡心圓居士、江常生居士、劉心學居士、朱心訪居士、姜悟定居士、李坤樺、張志禹居士

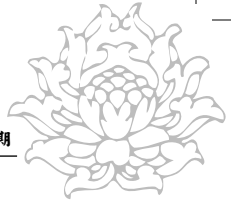
編輯部謹啟

歡迎投稿

「華嚴園苑」歡迎大家投稿，分享心路歷程，學佛心得，抒發感受，來稿可以中英文撰寫，字數不超過五百字為限。可用以下電子郵箱或郵寄到本社；E-mail: ling.abls@gmail.com 請連同姓名、電話，以便聯絡。

請註明：華嚴園苑





活動預告

1. 孟蘭盆法會誦八十華嚴經

日期: 8月3日至8月10日 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

2. 週六佛學講座

日期: 8月23日至 10月25 日 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

3. 觀音菩薩出家法會

日期: 10月12 日 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM

4. 年終法會禮拜梁皇寶懺

日期 : 12月21日- 28 日 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

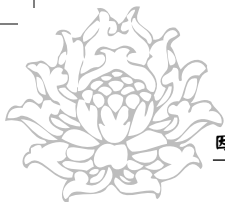
5. 年終加行功課誦地藏菩薩本願經

日期: 12 月1 日 - 20 日 3:00 PM - 5:45 PM

助印功德芳名

助印金額	助印芳名
\$200	天因法師、朱曼
\$100	天寧法師、華維祺、郭俊果、Junnan Kuo & Wen Peen Chen
\$50	天融法師、天能法師、楊陳秀明闔家、Irene Wong、Sophie A. Cogdell、Cindy Giang
\$20	廖心見、故 黃勇強





特別活動

1) 八關齋戒

八關齋戒是佛陀為了使在家信眾有機會學習出家生活，藉以長養出世善根，種植出世正因，而特別開設的方便法門。所以，八關齋戒其實就是讓在家信徒學習出家生活的戒律。而受戒的人，必須最少一天一夜離開家庭，到僧團去居住，學習出家人的生活。詳情請留意本社通告。

2) 傳授三皈五戒

定期性舉辦皈依受戒儀式，由本社住持天因法師為三皈本師，發心皈依受戒者請與本社查詢。

日期：10月12日 下午1:30

3) 幽冥皈依

幽冥皈依對象是已經往生之先人，由親屬帶領代為皈依，使往者能不墮三惡道，來生不失人身。

日期：8月9日及12月27日 下午4:00

9月14日及11月9日 下午1:30

4) 盂蘭盆及供僧法會

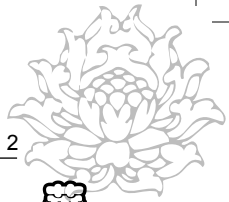
盂蘭盆乃昔日佛陀指示目蓮尊者救度母親，脫離餓鬼道之方法。於當天設盂蘭盆供，以百味飲食安盂蘭盆中，供養十方僧眾。願使現在父母，壽命百年無病；乃至七世父母，離餓鬼苦。是以作盂蘭盆供佛及僧，可以報父母長養慈愛之恩。

日期：8月10日上午9:00

每月定期共修會

活動項目	日期
虔誦華嚴經	每月第一個星期日
慈悲三昧水懺	每月第二個星期日
華嚴佛一	每月第三個星期日
禮拜藥師寶懺	每月第四個星期日
八關齋戒	每月第五個星期日





歡 迎 助 印

華嚴蓮社為一非牟利團體，出版期刊是希望能
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AVATAMSAKA BUDDHIST LOTUS SOCIETY

50 SOUTH MAIN ST.

MILPITAS, CA 95035

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THANK YOU
謝謝您的支持





The Path of Huayen

PREFACE

Ven. Tien Inn

The Flower Ornament Scripture originally named Avatamsaka in Sanskrit and Hua-yen in Chinese, is one of the major texts of all Buddhism. It is perhaps the richest of all Buddhist scriptures and held in high esteem by all schools of Buddhism that are concerned with universal liberation.

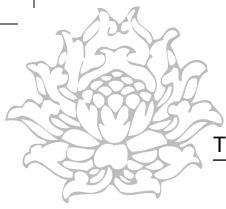
There are many books written about the scripture on its history, the founder, the transmission. However, most academic research and study of Hua-yen are based on the edition of Hua-yen Eighty Volumes Thirty-nine Chapter, which was translated at T'ang Dynasty and patronized by Empress Wu.

The Fourth Huayen Patriarch, Ch'eng Kuan, (華嚴四祖澄觀清涼國師) for example, wrote a "Comprehensive Commentary" (論疏) and a "Sub-Commentary" (疏抄). He also created a chart devoted to the elaboration on the formation and structure of this Eighty Volume Hua-yen Scripture. According to the chart, the thirty-nine chapters were classified into "Nine Assemblies and Seven Places". The contents of these chapters were further analyzed to have "Four Functions" and "Five areas of Cause and Effect". All these attempted to systematize and analyze the scripture for the convenience of later researchers and practitioners alike.

I intend to present articles which will be published in each issue of "The Avatamsa." These articles will be published according to the contents of The Flower Ornaments Scripture, starting from chapter one "The Wonderful Adornments of the Leaders of the Worlds" (世主妙嚴品) to chapter thirty-nine "Entry into the Realm of Reality" (入法界品) respectively. The emphasis is not only to highlight the essence but also to provide a methodological of how one should study this vast scripture.

The School of Huayen took its name from the scripture which served as the basis for its own special concern. This School of Buddhism arose and flourishes in China in the T'ang Dynasty. This Huayen tradition has since then been passed down from generations to generations. Some honor the scripture as their lifetime spiritual guidance, while some others devote their research or study on the Huayen School. Nevertheless, through discussing this supreme scripture, I sincerely hope that more people will be inspired to learn and practice Hua-yen Buddhism. Hereby, I wish everyone progress in all spiritual endeavors.

Last but not least, any contributions or suggestions to this educational activity are most welcome.



STATUS REPORT ON THE REMODELING OF THE OLD BUILDING

After many years of planning and preparation, the contract for the remodeling of the old temple building was finally signed on January 19, 2008. In order for the construction to progress smoothly and timely, it is necessary to move all the furniture and miscellaneous objects out of the old 2-story building before construction. Under the supervision of Abbess Ven. Tien Inn, Resident Venerables and volunteers worked together with high degree of cooperative team spirit to complete the move in 10 days.

On January 30, 2008 at 7:00 a.m. Abbess led a "Cleansing Ceremony" with all Resident Venerables before handing over the building to the contractor at 8:00 a.m. for construction.

The Contractor began his work immediately. Many work tasks are underway concurrently as planned, such as clearing / removing of walls, bathroom remodeling, building of new kitchen, partition walls of bedroom, fixing of underground water lines, electric lines, etc. The Abbess communicates closely with project engineering team to assure smooth progress of the project.

In mid-February, it was discovered that the HVAC control system design has issues that would affect future operation. ABLs held a series of emergency meetings chaired by Abbess Ven. Tien

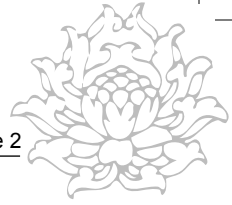
Inn, and attended by Ven. Tien Yung, Architect Steve Yang, Engineer Dennis Jang, Project Manager Stone Shih, HVAC Engineer Daniel Yu, along with two volunteers of ABLs David He and Chan Chun Zier. The 8-person met to discuss on the issues, evaluate alternatives, and to arrive on a joint agreement and decisions. The revised design will incorporate manual switch controls that will accommodate the operational needs in the future.

The old temple building was built 20 years ago. The remodeled construction exposed many areas where structures have been severely deteriorated. On March 7, 2008, under the supervision of the Abbess, the Structure Engineer inspected the exterior columns and found extensive damages due to water and termite attack. These damaged columns will affect the safety of the building and therefore need to be repaired or replaced. In addition, it is found that the guard on the second floor exterior hallway has deteriorated badly and the spacing of the vertical wood



Renovation Meeting in progress.





bars does not meet the current code requirements. Thus, it is determined that the guard on the second floor needs to be replaced.

As a result of the above, the contract with the contractor has to be amended to include the additional work and cost. The increase in cost is rather substantial. ABLs sincerely seek your continues generous support to be part of this rare opportunity to contribute towards the completion of this remodeling project. Your kind support will in turn help provide a more conducive environment for all devotees coming to the temple. We look forward. We look forward to your generous support.



Cleansing Ceremony.

FOUNTAINHEAD OF ABLS NEWSLETTER *"The Avatamsa"*

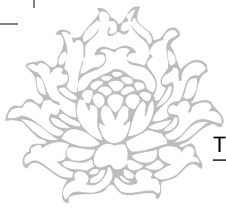
The Avatamsaka Buddhist Lotus Society has been providing Buddhist education in California for more than twenty years. The education direction is set with guidance from The Flower Ornament Scripture in which we learn and follow the Manjusri Bodhisattva who has supreme wisdom and the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva who is a perfect practitioner. The Venerables from ABLs created various ways to accommodate and nourish the Buddhist followers with the hope that the Dharma will continue for an infinite time.

Our activities and related information can be found on our website, www.huayenusa.org.

Also "The Avatamsa" is a communication channel to inform people of the activities that has taken place in our society. This Newsletter is distributed both in Chinese and English once in four months. We hope that the articles will let readers to be more familiar with our activities, and learn to follow the right teaching from the Buddha.

"The Avatamsa" exposed the readers on the Bodhisattvas way of cultivation and the six Paramitas practice to become fully enlightened. We hope that the newsletter will encourage and interest the readers enough to come to the ABLs so that we all can share the merits together. In order to improve ourselves, we also request the reader to provide feedback about our newsletter.





2008 HUAYEN SYMPOSIUM

The annual Huayen Symposium was conducted on April 5. Two professors from Taiwan flew 6500 miles the night before. Professor Gong-Pu Liu presented “Education based on Buddha’s principles and life in full circle”. He demonstrated how we can apply principles of Buddhism in real life. Professor Yong-Ching Yang presented “Overcome obstacles of body and mind, aim for a free and meaningful life”

These two professors shared their personal experiences in practicing Buddhism. Unlike formal lectures, their humorous presentations brought laughter on serious topics. It was such a delight to learn and benefit greatly in a fun environment!

Professor Liu was serving in military in Taiwan, and he came to US to receive his PhD in Political Science/International Relations. He didn’t practice Buddhism until the age of 47. He was fascinated by the wisdom of Diamond Sutra (金剛經) and decided to further study on other sutras. At the age of 50, he retired from military and thus began his soul searching in Buddhism. Aside from his dedicated study, he has been sharing the philosophy of Buddhism on cause and effect at several prisons in Taiwan. His goal is to rehabilitate these inmates and hope they will re-start their life after they leave prison. He emphasizes the cause and effect in life to these inmates, and his selfless teaching

to these inmates has been over 12 years and still counting. He also gave real examples of why we need to chant 7-week and dedicate the merit to a recently deceased person.

Professor Yang is one of the faculty member of Huayen Buddhist College

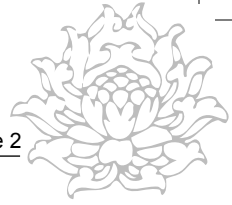


Abess awarding a testimonial Professor Yong-Ching Yang

in Taipei for many years. Abess Ven. Tien Inn was one of his best students. He revealed a lighter side of him, shared a few family secrets to demonstrate his points on overcoming obstacles of body and mind so that you can live a free and meaningful life. He was also a visiting scholar in the US years ago.

Several attendees wished both professors would stay longer and offer more lectures. Their presentations were by far most interesting and educational. This symposium successfully concluded at 4pm, and many have requested both professors to return next year.





FAREWELL WITH ECO

Abess Ven. Tien Inn, Ven. Tien Ling and Ven. Tien Neng attended the farewell party of Mr. Mark WP Liao, (廖偉平) Director General of the Taipei Economic and Culture Office in San Francisco on May 4, 2008.

Senator of California, Leland Yee; Cupertino Mayor, Kris Wang; Saratoga City Council, Aileen Kuo, and Vice Mayor of San Jose, David D. Cortese also attended this successful party and nearly 400 people from the local communities were present.

Special guests were Mr. Liao's two daughters. It was a touching moment when she gave a heart-to-heart talk about her father's life as Director General in the bay area. He is rarely home to be with his family as he is always so busy attending events in local communities. Many representatives of groups presented parting gifts to Mr. Liao and posed for group photos afterwards.

Mr. Liao, who is a Buddhist, specially invited the Abess to have a group photo to be taken with representative members of the local communities. The party ended at 10:30pm.

On May 11, 2008, Mr. Liao joined the Ceremonial Bathing of the statue of baby Prince Siddhartha at ABLs. After the Bathing ceremony, he gave a talk to our devotees on his personal encounter with our Elder Chief Master Cheng Yi, Abess Ven. Tien Inn presented him with a gift of books written by Elder



Mr. Liao listening attentively to the songs

Chief Master Cheng Yi.

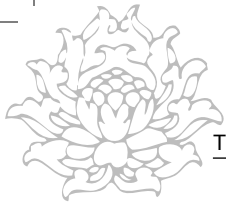
In addition, we gathered pictures taken with Mr. Liao from all his past ABLs visits and the farewell party a few days before. We presented the pictures using an animated powerpoint with two beautiful songs playing in the background.

We wish Mr. Liao all the best in all his future endeavors after he returns to Taiwan. May he be blessed with good luck and good health always.



Abess on stage for group photo taking





MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS IN SICHUAN, CHINA

On the afternoon of May 12, 2008, an earthquake measuring 8 on the Richter scale hit Sichuan Province, a mountainous region in Western China. By the next day, the death toll stood at 12,000, with another 18,000 still missing. Over 15 million people live in the affected area, including almost 4 million in the city of Chengdu. Nearly 2,000 of the dead were students and teachers caught in schools that collapsed.

With the spirit of Bodhisattva exemplifying Buddhist compassion, Abbess Ven. Tien Inn appeal to devotees and to devote to relief in Sichuan for the first time and begun to raise fund for those affected by this tragedy.

On May 18, 2008 2:00pm, ABLs held a memorial service to chant "The

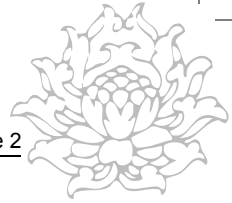
Sutra of the Past Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva" (地藏菩薩本願經) for the victims, more than 120 people participated. The Service ended at 4:30PM. In a few days, altogether, we managed to raise a total of \$11,618.00 and was transferred to Tze Chi Foundation.

Abbess Ven. Tien Inn conducted a memorial service. At the end of the service, Abbess indicated that all things are impermanent and constantly in suffering. ABLs will conduct additional memorial service in the next 6 weeks to complete the 7-week dedication to the deceased. The merits were dedicated to the victims to help them relieve their sufferings and to rebuild their homes. The purpose of the 7-week chanting sessions is to free deceased victims from suffering so that they can soon be reborn in pure land.



Devotees gathered at ABLs to chant for the victims





COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY OF MR. T.T. CHAO

Abess Ven. Tien Inn and Ven. Tien Yung, on behalf of Director, Elder Chief Master ChengYi representatives of Huayen Lotus Society, Taiwan and Avatamsaka Buddhist Lotus Society, California to attend Fo Guang Shan Chung Mei Temple, Houston, Texas held the Commemorative Ceremony Honoring the life of Mr. Ting Tsung Chao, who is the founder of Westlake Chemical Corporation and Titan Chemicals Corp. Bhd.,

In the 70's, Huayen Lotus Society, Taiwan plan to set up a Buddhist studies scholarship foundation. The aim is to encourage the students to learn Buddhism. Mr. Ting Tsung Chao was invited by Huayen Lotus Society in Taiwan to join the program. In memory of his parents, Mr. T.T. Chao set up a scholarship foundation which is still on going to this day.

On April 26, 10:00 AM at the main hall, more than 800 people around the world participated, including

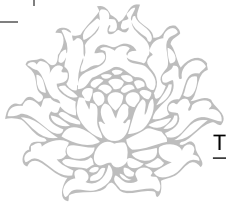
representatives of Taiwan Plastics Industry Association, Taita Chemical Company, Chang Chun Plastics, Jade Buddha Temple, Rice University and University of Houston. Some of them came from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, China and other states of America.

The service began with Welcome and Introductory Remarks followed by Tributes to Mr. T.T. Chao. There was a pictorial presentation of Mr. T.T. Chao's Life Journey. The last one was reading of prayer for Mr.T.T. Chao written by Master Hsin Yun, Fo Guang Shan Founder and read by Ven. Abbot Hui Chi of Hsi Lai Temple. Each guest was invited to present an orchid blossom in commemoration of the life of Mr. T.T Chao.



趙廷箴居士
追思會





LIANG HUANG REPENTANCE SERVICE FOR CHING MING FESTIVAL

The Liang Huang Repentance was chanted daily from April 6 to 13 during the Ching Ming Festival. This service was presided by Abbess Ven. Tien Inn, Ven. Wai Ching from Los Angeles, Ven. Yin Bin and Ven. Hui Ji from Taiwan. They were cordially invited to lead the chanting service together with Resident Venerables, whereby about 250 people participated.

The service started at 9:00am daily with the assembly of lay followers bowing as each Buddha's name in the Liang Huang Repentance were chanted. This is followed by Offerings to the Buddhas at 11:00am. After that, they were first instructed to chant the Bhaisajyaguru (Medicine Buddha) name repeatedly before being seated. Then vegetarian lunch boxes were distributed to all participants. Next, each will put their palms together to recite the Meal Offering Verse before eating.

The Repentance Service resumed at 1:30pm, followed by chanting of a volume from "The Past Vows of Ksitigarbha (Earth Store) Bodhisattva Sutra" and finally ending with a short offering service for the hungry ghosts.

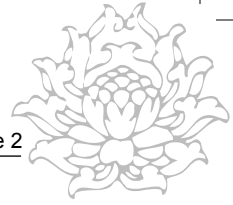
On April 12, a Refuge Taking Ceremony for the Deceased was conducted at 4:00pm. This requires a family

representative to repeat the Threefold Refuge Verse on behalf of their deceased family member. Whereby, the deceased will more likely to have favourable conditions for attaining Enlightenment through the guidance and inspiration of the Triple Gem in a future life.

The last day April 13 started off with Homage to the 88 Buddhas assembly followed by Offerings to the Buddhas ceremony. Apart from the usual offerings, a set of ten specially prepared Offerings consisting of incense, flowers, light, water, fruit, tea, food, jewel, robe and sutra were also presented. Afterthat, a simple ceremonial send off for the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

At 2:00pm after lunch, the Amitabha Triple Contemplation Service was held and was presided by Abbess Ven. Tien Inn, Ven. Tien Yung and Ven. Yin Bin. This service include chanting of the Amitabha Sutra three times, Dharma propagation of rebirth in the Amitabha's Western Pureland and Offerings, all mainly to benefit the deceased and sentient beings from the Hungry Ghost Realm. The entire service ended at 7:00pm with the dedication of merits to all in our spiritual endeavors.





OFFERING TO THE BUDDHAS & DEVAS

ABLS held the 2008 Offering Ceremony for Buddhas and Devas on February 10. The ceremony started at 9:00 a.m. in the Grand Hall which had been set up nicely the day before. Flowers, incense, light, drinks, fruits, tea, food, jewels, Sutra and robe (Ten Offerings), were offered on the main center shrine as well as the specially arranged offering tables where the thirty-nine benefactors were each assigned a position to chant and bow. Images of the Buddhas and Celestial Guardians were also on display. Following is Ven. Tien Yung's brief explanation of the procedures, advising all participants on how to pray for blessing while making wishes for the year. First session was mainly a ceremony of inviting and welcoming all the thirty nine Buddhas and Devas to enjoy our sincere offering. Pleasant chanting music filled the Grand Hall with joy and peace.

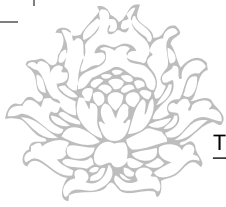
In the second session, Abbess Ven. Tien Inn first sprinkled flowers toward all attending devotees and then introduced the meaning of the offerings, also pointing out the fifteen extra offerings in addition to the traditional twenty-four offerings in our ceremony (a total of thirty nine offerings). We offered to the fifteen Huayen Buddhas and Devas, as illustrated in Avatamsaka (Huayen) Sutra, plus the twenty-four Buddhas and Devas from the Suvama (Golden Light) Sutra (金光明經), Abbess Ven. Tien Inn further encouraged lay buddhists to follow Buddha's teaching by continuously practicing virtue and attaining wisdom.

The third session before noon was the Offerings to the Buddhas, blessing the present ones and offerings to the deceased. The half day ceremony ended after distribution of vegetarian lunch boxes to attendants. Volunteers stayed to help to clean up and rearrange tables back to the original arrangement.



Left: Abbess Ven. Tien Inn preaches during New Year

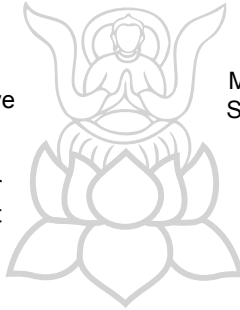




BATHING OF THE BUDDHA (PRINCE SIDDHARTHA) CELEBRATION

The morning sun was ready for a very special day. It stretched his rays across the horizon and embraced the earth, sneaking its way between window blinds to awaken the sleeping. It was May 11th, a warm Sunday welcome to a festive celebration.

Prior to Sunday, our volunteers and Resident Venerables of ABLs busied themselves in preparation for the upcoming activities, paying heed to every little detail, as perfection is always an endeavor. All of Friday was dedicated to purchasing supplies and groceries ranging from flowers to decorations to fruits. The following day was well utilized in set-up

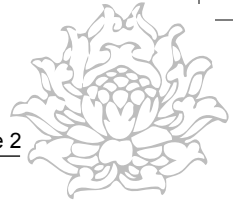


and event coordination. Among preparation tasks, glass vases were filled with water and flowers, symbolizing the blessing of each person or family who donated to ABLs.

Come day of "Bathing of the Buddha," the ABLs main assembly room opened its doors shortly before 8AM. Soon after, the temple was submerged in a sea of lively Buddhists, generating a strong aura of good spirits and energy. Two special guests were amongst the assembly of eager worshippers: Vice-Mayor Mr. David Cortese of San Jose and his family, and Mr. Mark WP Liao, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Culture Office in San Francisco.

Everybody came to honor and commemorate the birth of the Buddha, and in doing so, bathed a tiny statue with ladles of water, signifying the purgation of our defilements and negative influences. The focus of the room was the small golden statue of baby Prince Siddhartha





placed in a bowl of blessed water, the centerpiece encircled by garlands of floral arrangements. In the backdrop, carnations lined the alters and gracefully blended its soft yet contrasting colors in the bright foreground.

With an uplifting atmosphere, service began promptly at 8AM with chanting, followed by the Bathing of the Buddha two and a half hours later. At 11, Abbess Ven. Tien Inn offered our guests gifts, as it was Mr. Liao's last day participating in ABLs events, due to a job transfer to Taiwan. In honor, we sang two songs to send him off with. Service then resumed with the usual routine, topped off with cake served alongside with an appetizing lunch. As

Mother's Day coincided with the ceremony, carnations and balloons were gifts to the mothers and grandmothers amongst the jovial crowd.

As always, Buddhists bring in good spirits to the temple, and on that Sunday each of us left with a stronger spirit. It was the kind of spirit nurtured and encouraged by the positive energy people shared with one another. By performing this ceremonial Bathing of baby Prince Siddhartha statue, we were all blessed with the opportunity to cleanse ourselves of self-defilements and sufferings; which will in turn help us achieve inner peace and happiness.



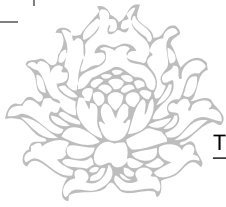
浴佛法會



Upper: Vice-Major of San Jose bathing the Buddha (Prince Siddhartha)

Right: Abbess ignite the Water Lotus Candle





CELEBRATION OF CHINESE NEW YEAR ON FEBRUARY 2008

This crisp February morning, the sun shined brightly- its breath of life reunited once again with the earth. As usual, the Buddhists of ABLS were welcomed in with the uplifting atmosphere of vibrant colors adorning every wall and corner of the temple. Each table had gifts of tangerines delicately

they wished one another a healthy, happy new year. Volunteers busily shuffled about, lending helping hands. Miraculously, even with so much going on, everything turned out to be in an organized fashion.

The temple service began at nine o'clock with group chanting from Maitreya Bodhisattva Triple Sutras(彌勒三經). The Abbess lit several large candles while volunteers helped to light the remaining ones. Each heart-shaped candle was contained in stained-glass cups. Every candle carried the name



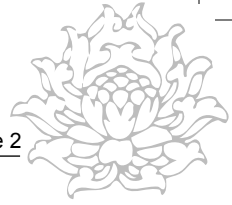
Left: Abbess ignite the light for wisdom

placed in intervals, awaiting the arriving guests. But today was no ordinary day. Today was the toast to the beginning of yet another new year. Flowers, blessed red envelopes and mountains of offerings and food were additions to every shrine. Somehow, one could sense the glowing energy and good spirits pouring in from every person. And it was beautiful.

Every direction one turned was greeted with smiling faces, bowing as

of a donating Buddhist. The lighting symbolizes blessing for a bright and safe coming year. As our honorable Abbess and Resident Venerables led the ceremony with an enlightening energy we all yearn to learn from. Many voices blended simultaneously as one as we chanted, we kneeled and bowed; the hearts in chanting safely brought in Buddhists travelling to the temple. They trickled in and gracefully joined the expanding number of followers.





The first part of service came to rest within an hour and resumed at 10:30 a.m. as the Abbess gave a heartfelt lecture about the meaning of New Year, laughed along with the listeners



Above: Devotees waiting for Noon Offering

as she told amusing stories, and taught us about some Buddhist philosophy. She carefully selected several passages from the sutra and explained the significance of each one.

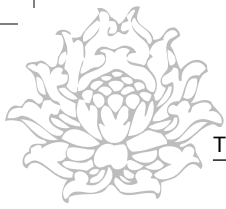
Our normal chanting service continued after eleven, with an outstanding turnout of guests. We proceeded to chant from the Morning and Evening Prayer Book. During the ceremony, the Abbess kneeled and offered incense to each Buddha seated upon their garnished shrine. The ceremony ended with people from each side of the room turned to bow to each other.

Following the ceremony, our guests were quickly seated. The pleasant aroma that had spread throughout the room revealed a plethora of vegetarian food prepared by donors. Our kind volunteers and Ven. Tien Ling efficiently served everybody and ensured that

each person received a hearty amount of New Year's lunch. Vegetables, potato soup, noodles, Chinese pancakes, tofu and red bean soup were amongst the variety of exceptionally appetizing dishes. As to carry on the tradition, the Abbess and Resident Venerable concluded the morning by distributing red envelopes that had been blessed prior to the ceremonies.

Indeed, today was a special, eventful day. Not only was it special because it was the first day of New Year, but it was extraordinary because it is a reminder of the goodness people bring when they congregate. For the individual, it is a day to be a part of everybody's lives and to experience all the positive energy emitted from the friends all around us. Truly, each person left with wealth, which was the finding of a little more of the Buddha within themselves and the gaining the beauty of sharing with others.





THREE THOUSAND BUDDHAS REPENTANCE SERVICE

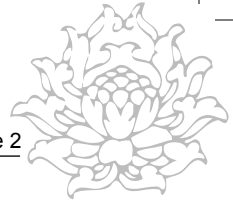
The Three Thousand Buddhas Repentance Service, is a regular annual service performed after the Chinese Lunar New Year. It is by far one of the most important series of ceremonies in the year because it focuses on a few central ideas of Buddhism. At the same time, Three Thousand Buddhas Repentance gives Buddhists the opportunity to re-experience a certain cleansing of the mind and to be reminded of their Buddha-nature, the teachings of Buddha, and why we are here.

This Repentance services was organized over a six week period, symbolically divided to represent with individual emphasis on the past, present and future Buddhas. One of the key ideas of assembly revolves around the Buddhist conception of "karma." By general definition, karma explains that in the duration of one's life, the effects of all the deeds and actions one has committed in the past, present or future makes one responsible for the path of their own lives and what impacts they can bring to the lives of others. Therefore, we find that the significance of participating in these services is that we can improve our lives in the present. This is achieved by opening ourselves before the Buddha and removing ourselves of all the offenses and obstructions of bad karma in the past. Bad karma consists of the evils in one's history- be it greed,

hatred, or wrong-doing by speech, body, and mind. Thus, through the act of repent, these evils are removed by pledging to The Ten Vows of the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva (普賢十大願). Such vows advocate ideas of:

1. Paying respect to all Buddhas (禮敬諸佛)
2. Praising the Enlightened Ones (稱讚如來)
3. Practicing the act of offerings (廣修供養)
4. Avoiding from negative forces and reducing karmic hindrances (懺悔業障)
5. Accumulating good merit and cultivating good virtue (隨喜功德)
6. Asking for the dharma wheel to be turned (請轉法輪)
7. Requesting the presence of Buddha in our world (請佛住世)
8. Following the Buddha's teachings (常隨佛學)
9. Being in harmony with all living beings (恆順眾生)
10. Teaching and passing on good to all beings (普皆回向)





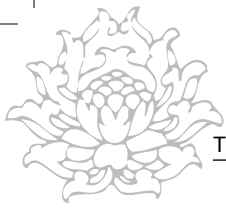
During each assembly of karma purification, participants in the Dharma Hall are divided into 2 subsections before the Buddha image; one on the left and one on the right, leaving a walkway in the middle . Each section will bow simultaneously to every Buddha's name chanted. As a humble act of respect and repentance, bowing requires five bodily parts touching the

ground: forehead, palms and knees. This physical expression is also said to be a sort of meditation in movement. It reinforces our intentions of repent and reform while it also allows individuals to pledge acts of goodness and virtue in the present and future.



Scenes taken during Three Thousand Buddhas Repentance Service





CELEBRATION OF AVALOKITESVARA BODHISATVA'S BIRTHDAY

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, who is otherwise known as Guan Yin or the Goddess of Mercy. She is the protective enlightened deity and is the embodiment of kindness, compassion and love for all beings.

At ABLs, our Resident Venerables and devotees commemorated the birthday of our Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva on March 23, 2008, which is the second moon of the Lunar New Year. We recited a series of Mantras, one of which included the well-known, Great Compassion Mantra (大悲咒). Devotees of ABLs were blessed as their names and names of their loved ones were lit by candles. In the process of chanting and bowing, the ingestion of holy water represented the idea of allowing wholesome energy and Buddha's compassion

into our minds.

Conveniently coinciding with the Three Thousand Buddhas Repentance Service, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Birthday was a reinforcement of paying respect to the Buddha, learning more about compassion, and pledging acts of good will. Submerged in positive energy, everybody returned home with Buddha's protection and blessings.



Ignite the candles for light offering

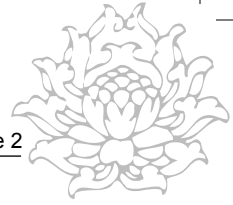


Abess preaches on the Chapter of Universal Gate



Devotees reciting the Great Compassion Mantra





SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA'S ENLIGHTENMENT

In order to commemorate Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment, ABLS held a Dharma Assembly on Jan 13, 2008. Abbess Ven.Tien Inn presided over the service where more than 150 devotees attended. For this special event, ABLS prepared the Laba Porridge and birthday cake for lunch.

Abbess Ven. Tien Inn gave a dharma speech on why we need to have a Triple Gem Refuge and showed us a film to introduce the life of Buddha.

TRIPLE GEM REFUGE AND FIVE PRECEPTS SERVICE

Taking "Triple Gem Refuge" means that a person is willing to take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Thus he/she is formally registered as a Buddhist. A Buddhist would also undertake to observe the Five Precepts, which provide the basic guidelines for Good Conduct.

ABLS provides these services every commemoration days of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. This year it falls on March, August and October. Two other

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

ABLS holds monthly birthday celebration for members of the society on the last Sundays of each month, following the Medicine Buddha Repentance Service. ABLS usually has a cake and some presents ready for members sharing birthdays each month.

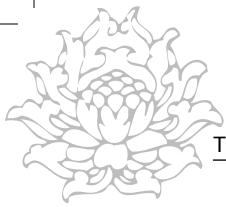
After the Noon Offering, Abbess Ven. Tien Inn would sing the birthday song along with all members in attendance. Then birthday people will then make a wish and share the cake with everybody. We are blessed with good wishes and good health!

occasions are on "Bathing of the Buddha" and Commemoration of Buddha's Enlightenment Celebration.

Taking refuge for the deceased is also available on the second Sunday of each month.

Those interested, please contact the office for details.





THE 44TH MEMORIAL ANNIVERSARY OF LATE VEN. MASTER CHIH-KWANG

Abess Ven. Tien Inn presided the service for late Venerable Master Chih-kwang 44th Death anniversary on March 25, 2008. This day ABLs also celebrated Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva's Birthday in advance.

We have a Noon Offering at the Grand Hall and then at the Patriarch Hall. Vegetarian food were served with fruit, flower and cake.

The late Venerable Master Chih-kwang left his home at age of 13 and went under the teachings of Venerable Master Yu Chen (玉成). His life mission was to provide education for fellow monks and to build study halls. His study emphasis was Huayen Sutra which he studied for several years with Venerable Master Yue Hsia (月霞). He also pooled money for funding of scholarship for students in need.

Elder Chief Master Cheng Yi stated the importance to remember all anniversary of our Venerable Masters. They reminded us to follow our foremasters' foot steps of promoting Buddhist education.

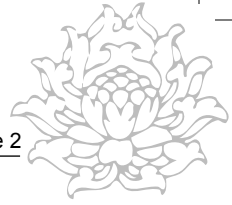
CONTRACTOR MR. KAMBIZ ANSARI PRAYS FOR BLESSING

Mr. Kambiz Ansari is the constructor of the old building of ABLs and has had a heart surgery before. He and his wife came to join our Dharma Service on March 30, 2008. Abess Ven. Tien Inn hosted a special blessing service for them during the offerings to the Buddhas assembly. And the prayer read as follow:

ABLs is deeply grateful toward you for handling and managing the remodeling project of our old building. Today we welcome you to join our Dharma Assembly. May the Buddha and Bodhisattva bless you and your family to have good business and good health. Also they bless you to be get rid of your heart problem. Please bow to the Buddha and Bodhisattvas 3 times.

Mr. Ansari and wife paid respect to the Buddha and found themselves very interested in our activities, programs, Buddhist doctrine, and images of the Buddha. After having lunch, Abess Ven. Tien Inn and Mr. Stone Shih, our chief engineer provided a tour and answered questions from Mr. Ansari and wife. We do hope this visit has created a starting point for them to learn Buddhism.





SATURDAY DHARMA CLASS BY ABBESS "THE FLOWER ORNAMENT SCRIPTURE AND LIFE"

Every Saturday from May 3 to July 19 at 7:00-8:30 pm, ABLs hosts a Dharma Class for 12 consecutive weeks. The presenter is Abbess Ven. Tien Inn and the topic is "The Flower Ornament Scripture and Life."

There are total of 30 students, some are from previous sessions and some new.

Usually, Abbess reviews the last course and elucidates the teachings on the facts of suffering and how to prevent falling into the three evil realms.

This Class will cover the contents of: Sufferings of the Three Evil Realms, the Fruit of karma, Repentance, Doctrine of Suffering and Accumulation. Twelve Links of Dependent Origination etc., Abbess usually introduces the above topics and encourages interactive session with students. She then provides a summary of each lesson learned. The purpose of Abbess Ven. Tien Inn is to help students maximize their learning potential in "The Flower Ornament Scripture".

MEETING MINUTES FROM AVATAMSAKA BUDDHIST LOTUS SOCIETY

Abbess Ven. Tien Inn held a meeting on April 30th, 2008 at 6:30 PM, All Resident Venerables attended this meeting and reported on the last four months. After the meeting

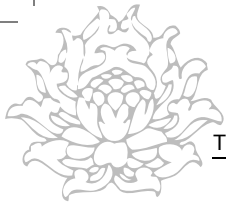
After the meeting, Abbess Ven. Tien Inn awarded both Ven. Tien Neng and Ven. Tien Ling a letter of appointment of one-year term, to show appreciation their commitments and to encourage them to continue to provide guidance and support in ABLs and all

the Dharma Activities.

The appointment for Ven. Tien Neng is: Reception (知客), Service for Grand Hall, Secretarial.

The appointment for Ven. Tien Ling is: Librarian (館藏), Kitchen Master (典座) and, General Affairs.





CITIZENSHIP CLASS ON SATURDAY

Beginning May 3, 2008, for 3 months, ABLS is having a tutoring class for U.S. citizenship exam every Saturday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at the Grand Hall. Our long-time volunteer team member Anne Hu, who previously host the SAT classes offered by ABLS for high school students, once again kindly helps to be the tutor to provide information and training for those who are currently green card holder and about to take the citizenship exam with hope that they will pass the exam and become US citizen smoothly.

During the class time, Anne instructs attendants how to fill out

registration forms, practices over the exam questions and helps the students to memorize answers with interesting stories. She is all prepared with complete information and puts them in good order into her teaching. Anyone who is interested is welcomed to attend the class, since the material covers US history, government systems, social development, and culture variety. Actually it's not only merely to pass the exam as we also learn and understand a lot more about USA.

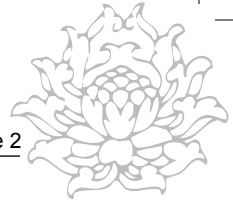
Anne plans to do the interview with attendants in English for a real practice later on. Our 3 Resident Venerables will also be attending the class. Both the tutor and students are very attentive and enjoys the lesson greatly.

NEW VOLUNTEER UNIFORMS BRINGS NEW IMAGES

Effective after April Festivities of the Huayen Symposium and Ching Ming Festival, all ABLS volunteers will be issued new uniforms. These uniforms will represent a more organized and formal method of distinguishing roles within the volunteer circle; and as a result, volunteers can also work more efficiently. All uniforms will be a soft shade of light chocolate brown with black hemming, each embellished with a beautiful embroidered emblem.

Office volunteers will be required to wear a jacket, kitchen volunteers will sport aprons, and other volunteers will be clad in vests. Thanks to Abbess Ven. Tien Inn who travelled to Hong Kong in late 2007, our uniforms is designed by Andie Siu, who kind-heartedly spend her time and effort on this new project.





IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

1) Eight Precepts Retreat

The Eight Precepts consist of the Five Precepts: To refrain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants; and three others, namely: 1) to refrain from taking food after midday; 2) to abstain from indulging in musical entertainments as well as the use of ornaments, perfumes and cosmetics; 3) to refrain from using a high or luxurious seat or bed. It is a voluntary attempt for those who wish to experience the disciplined life of renunciation lived by members of the Sangha for a day. As lay people are often too pre-occupied with their daily mundane commitments, therefore the Buddha established the Eight Precepts Retreat with the purpose to enable lay Buddhist to detach themselves from all the distractions of normal activity in order to gain a better understanding of the real nature of life.

2) Triple Gem Refuge and Five Precepts Ceremony

When a person wishes to become a Buddhist, the first step he takes is to go to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for refuge. Since Buddha's time, taking this Threefold Refuge has identified a person as a Buddhist. The Buddha, Dharma and Sangha also known as the Triple Gem represent qualities which are excellent and precious like a gem. Once a person recognises these unique qualities after careful consideration and is confident that the Triple Gem can help lead him towards happiness and Enlightenment, he or she takes refuge. It is, therefore, not out of mere

faith but with an open-minded attitude and enquiring spirit that he begins to practise the Buddha's Teachings.
Date : October 12, 2008. 1:30PM

3) Refuge Taking Ceremony for the Deceased

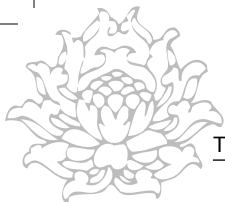
A family representative will attend a Threefold Refuge ceremony on behalf of his/her deceased family member. Taking refuge is the first step on the path to Enlightenment. Even if Enlightenment is not achieved in this life, by taking refuge in the Triple Gem, the deceased Buddhist is more likely to have favourable conditions for attaining Enlightenment in a future life.

Date : August 9, 2008. 4:00PM
December 27, 2008. 4:00PM
September 14, 2008. 1:30PM
November 9, 2008. 1:30PM

4) Ullambana and Sangha Day Celebration

The observance of Ullambana is based on the story of Maudgalyayana and his mother. Maudgalyayana discovered through his meditative powers that his mother has been reborn in one of the realms of misery. Distressed over the tormented state of his mother, he approached the Buddha for help. Buddha advised Maudgalyayana to make offerings to the Sangha Community. The merit of making this offering would help to relieve the suffering not only of his mother, but also that of other beings in the realms of misery. As a result of this incident, the act of making offerings to relieve the suffering of departed parents as well as other beings in the realms of misery, became a popular communal observance.





CURRENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

1) Ullambana Festival and Sangha Day Celebration

Date: August 3 to August 10, 2008
Time: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

2) Saturday Evening Dharma Class

Date: August 23 – October 25, 2008
Time: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

3) Commemoration of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (Guan-Yin) Renunciation

Date: October 12, 2008
Time: 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM

4) Year-End Service Liang Huang (Liang Emperor) Repentance

Date: December 21-28, 2008
Time: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

5) The Past Vows of Ksitigarbha (Earth Store) Bodhisattva Sutra

Date : December 1-20
Time: (Monday to Saturday 3:00 PM – 5:45 PM)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES: (8AM – 1:30PM)

EVENTS	TIME
Avatamsaka (Hua-yen) Sutra	Every First Sunday
Samadhi Water Repentance	Every Second Sunday
1-day Avatamsaka (Hua-yen) Retreat	Every Third Sunday
Bhaisajyaguru (Medicine Buddha) Repentance	Every Fourth Sunday
Eight Precepts Retreat	Every Fifth Sunday

SPECIAL EVENTS

Monthly Birthday Blessings

On the last Sunday of each month, there will be chanting of the Bhaisajyaguru (Medicine Buddha) Repentance and Offerings to the Buddhas. For those whose birthdate fall within that month, you can participate by joining in this chanting assembly and receive special blessings of good health and fortune. For more details, please contact our office.

Light Offering to Avalokitesvara (Guan Yin) Bodhisattva

October 12, 2008 is a day to commemorate the renunciation of Avalokitesvara (Guan Yin) Bodhisattva. There will be light offerings on that day. We cordially invite you to join us on this blissful occasion. Those interested, please register at our office.





♥ TO SUPPORT
The Avatamsa

Please fill in the following information to make monetary donation to support the ABLS Newsletter.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

phone: _____

Email: _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____

Please mail this donation form along with a check payable to : ABLS
We will mail your receipt back to the address you provided above.
All donations are tax deductible.

Avatamsaka Buddhist Lotus Society
50 South Main St.
Milpitas, CA 95035

The offering of the Dharma excel all other offerings

