



淨土

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Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago
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藕益大師法語
Quote from Patriarch Ouyi

念佛法門，雖該羅八教，圓收無量百千三昧，而下手之方，又最直捷痛快。
蓋凡念相好、念法門、念實相等，固先開真解，然後下手，萬無夾帶疑情之理。

只今持名一法，亦止薦直持去，不用三心兩意。
深信淨土可生，發願決定往生；以持名為正行，以六度為助行。
萬修萬去，斷斷可保任者。

若一點好勝之心，涉入參究，謂為向上，則腳跟不穩，禪淨兩失之矣！
智者不可不決定其所趨也。

The Buddha-name chanting method encompasses the teachings of all other Mahayana schools and perfectly embraces all other methods that one can practice to attain Samadhi; yet, it is the simplest and the most straight-forward to practice.

All other methods require that one understand a method completely and then practice it.

For the Buddha-name chanting method, one needs to be constantly mindful of the Buddha-name, practice solely this method, deeply believe that one can be reborn in the Pure Land and vow to do so.

By taking the Buddha-name chanting as the major practice, and the Six Prajna-Paramitas as the auxiliary practice, one is guaranteed to be reborn in the Pure Land.

If one is having a competing mind, wanting to be number one, and trying to learn a great deal, one may feel he or she is progressing when in reality one's foundation becomes unstable, and thus, one loses ground not only in Zen but in Pure Land as well!

A wise person must know and determine where he wants to be.

阿彌陀佛聖像結緣公告

(Announcement – Amitabha Buddha
Statues for Free Distribution)

- 本館編輯室 (Editor's Room)

本館於敬鑄地藏菩薩聖像結緣之後，應美國一些越南同修之請，與他們合作，繼續恭鑄阿彌陀佛聖像，與各地同修結緣。首批恭鑄的聖像預計將於三月底或四月初抵達美國。

此一阿彌陀佛聖像為金色接引立像，聖像連同底座，高約 19 英吋，底座直徑約為 5.65 英吋，每一尊佛像之重量約為 2.6 — 2.8 公斤。聖像法相莊嚴慈悲，



謹附照片以供參考。每尊佛像之製作成本為美金 27.00 元，運費估計平均每尊約為美金 13.00 元，因此，每尊之實際成本約為美金 40.00 元。歡迎世界各地學佛同修及寺院、道場以傳真 (630-428-9961) 或電郵 (library@amitabhalibrary.org) 直接向本館書目組王麗卿師姐及翁慧娟師姐申請。

Continuing the Ksitagarbha Bodhisattva statue donation program, in response to the requests by many Vietnamese American Buddhists, the library joined them in another project to make Amitabha Buddha statues for distribution. The first shipment of the statues is expected to arrive at the United States in late March or early April.

The statue is golden in color and is in a standing position in the form of coming to escort us to the Pure Land. Each statue weighs 2.6 — 2.8 Kg and is 19" tall with a base of 5.65" in diameter. The statue radiates beauty and compassion as shown in the picture. The cost of making each statue is US \$27.00, and shipping is about US \$13.00; the total cost is about US \$40.00 each. Interested Dharma friends, temples, and cultivation centers can contact the library via fax (630)-428-9961 or e-mail library@amitabhalibrary.org, with attention to Edith Wong or Hui-chuan Weng.

越南同修朋友前來本館走春禮佛 (Report – A Warm Welcome for Chinese New Year Visitors)

● 本館編輯室 (Editor's Room)

大約一百二十多位越南同修朋友，由位於芝加哥的越南寺院——光明寺住持釋明行法師及另外三位法師帶領，於一月三十一日 (大年初六) 至本館走春禮佛，一時之間，館內熱鬧非凡。



越南許多風俗習慣都和中國相似，越南朋友也過農曆年，而且，學佛同修習慣於春節時由法師帶領，至各寺院參訪，祈求新的一年能平安順利。

這些越南同修先至佛堂禮佛，再由本館林館長及譚副館長為他們介紹本館成立的緣起及平日修行與弘法等活動。這是光明寺



的四眾同修第二次至本館走春禮佛。因釋明行法師事先打過招呼，本館義工早有準備，備好大量之佛像、念珠、佛卡、念佛機

及經書等法寶，與這些同修結緣。結果，所有準備好之法寶全部結緣出去，可謂皆大歡喜。



About 120 Vietnamese friends led by Venerable, the Abbott of Minh Hanh temple, accompanied by other three venerables visited our library on January 31 (the sixth day of the Chinese New Year). All of a sudden, the Library became very lively!

Many Vietnamese customs are very similar to those of the Chinese. Vietnamese also celebrate Chinese New Year. The Buddhists are used to being led by the Abbott to visit temples during New Years to pray for and bless the New Year with peace.

When they arrived at the library, they entered the chanting room first and paid homage to the Buddha. Li-Su and Bert, the Director and Co-director, told them the background of the establishment of the library as well as the library's regular practice and Dharma activities. This was the second time the Dharma friends of the Quan Minh temple have visited us. Because Abbott Minh Hanh notified us well in advance, the library volunteers had prepared many Dharma items such as Buddha's pictures, chanting beads, bookmarks with Buddha's pictures, chanting machines, and Buddhist texts for them. All the prepared items were graciously accepted and everyone felt very happy with visit.

幫助受刑人(二)

Dharma Teaching for Inmates (2)

- 本館編輯室(Editor's Room)

在上一期的雙月刊中，曾經報導本圖書館將為伊利諾州警衛最森嚴的監獄之一的 Stateville Correctional Center 監獄受刑人提供基礎學佛課程，此課程終於于一月十七日正式開始。譚副館長於開始上課前約四十分鐘到達，經過登記、通關、搜身等安全程序後，由獄方神職人員陪同至上課地點，剛巧上課時間已到，鈴響後，幾位受刑人由獄方的工作人員帶入課堂。受刑人期待已久的學佛課程終於開始了！或許他們從未見過一位非本地人進入監獄開課，從他們的臉上可以看出，除了興奮之外，另有一種好奇的表情。

課程的第一主題為佛學概論，其中包括講解因果定律。每一位受刑人及獄方神職專司，Chaplain Peterson，都非常凝神的聆聽，有幾位還頻頻點頭，似頗有所得之感；Chaplain Peterson 亦不例外，並問了許多問題。本期雙月刊結稿前，譚副館長並收到長達兩頁的受刑人的感謝信。佛於證道時，嘆一切眾生，皆有如來智慧德相，但以妄想執著，不能證得；孟子說：『...其所以放其良心者，亦猶斧斤之於木也，旦旦而伐之，可為美乎？』。這些受刑人，總因其良心、佛性受惡環境、惡因緣旦旦而伐之而至泯滅，犯下大錯，如今有機會聽聞佛法，又豈不是他們過去生中所種的善根福德因緣逐漸成熟嗎？『佛氏門中，不捨一人』，我們又豈能不幫助他們呢？希望此課程能夠幫助他們自己鋪出一條自新之路。

由第一次上課的課堂反應，及譚副館長本人的感覺，此課程應會繼續下去並演進成定期的課程。

In the last issue of the newsletter, we reported that the library was going to offer basic Buddhism classes to the inmates of the Stateville Correctional Center, one of the maximum security facilities in Illinois. The class formally began on January 17, 2009. Co-Director Bert arrived at the center about forty minutes before the class and went through the

security procedures and was led to the classroom by the Chaplaincy department personnel. The bell rang and the inmates were guided to the classroom by the Correctional Center personnel—the long-awaited Buddhism class finally began! Perhaps, they had not seen an alien friend come to the center to offer classes for I could also see the curiosity from their eyes in addition to excitement.

The first topic of this lecture series is the basics which include explaining the law of causality as well as other subjects. The inmates and Chaplain Peterson listened to the lecture very attentively. Many inmates nodded often as they “got it.” Chaplain Peterson was no exception and asked many questions. Just before we began working on this issue of the newsletter, Bert received a two-page long thank-you letter from an inmate who wrote on behalf of the class.

At his moment of awakening, the Buddha sighed and said that every sentient being possesses the same wisdom and capacity as that of a Tathagata, but is not able to witness it simply because their wandering thoughts and improper attachments prevent them from doing so. Mencius said: “Losing one’s conscience is just like that a tree is being chopped by an axe everyday. Can the tree be beautiful after all this?” These inmates committed serious crimes because their consciences and Buddha nature were corroded by bad environments and conditions. Now, they have the opportunity to learn the Dharma, to be showered by the Dharma. Is this not because they had planted good seeds and meritorious deeds, and now the conditions are maturing? And since “the Buddha never gives up any one” (and we are all learning from the Buddha), how can we not offer helping hands? We sincerely hope that this class can provide the new students the tools to create a new path for their future.

Based on the classroom feedback and Bert’s own feeling about the class’s reaction, this trial class is likely to continue and become a regular program in the Stateville Correctional Center.

歡迎參訪團的那一天

The Day of the Visit

• Clara Nieto

One day before Super Bowl Sunday a large crowd gathered at Amitabha Buddhist Library/Temple in Chicago. There were two luxury tour buses with approximately 125 people.

It was an awesome experience to be able to welcome our guest. Holding the door open and greeting almost everyone with hands pressed together, a smile and an Amitufo greeting. It was wonderful to have so many people of faith come to Amitabha Buddhist Library/Temple of Chicago. We made it on their **temple tour list**. “**Ten temples in ten hours**”. They were in and out in less than 45 minutes.

After speaking with the daughter of the organizer I was able to gather that they had been up since 6:00am and had visited two Thai temples already. They organize about one month in advance for what seems to be a tour or better yet a pilgrimage to pay homage to the Buddhas of the Greater Chicago Land area.

The arrival was a bit earlier than expected however, that did not take away from the excitement of seeing so many people of faith walking through the doors of our temple. When they arrived they all went with purpose directly inside the chanting hall. Very quietly and respectfully they listened to their Venerable talk in Vietnamese. Then with one voice they all chanted Amitabha in Vietnamese and completed three full prostrations. Bert Tan gave a summary of how the Library/Temple came to be in existence. The youngest listener looked about three years old and the oldest looked about 73. People from all ages came to pay homage to Amitabha Buddha.

Amitabha Buddhist Library was able to give away many Dharma items. Even though we did not have too much in Vietnamese for their yearly pilgrimage, the people still found Dharma items that were useful. What a great day :)