



淨土

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Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago

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印光大師法語—念佛：敦倫盡分，閑邪存誠

Quote from Great Master Yinguang — Mindfulness of Buddha: Fulfill One's Responsibilities and Bear Sincerity

念佛最要緊，是敦倫盡分，閑邪存誠，諸惡莫作，眾善奉行。

存好心，說好話，行好事。

力能為者，認真為之。不能為者，亦當發此善心，或勸有力者為之。

或見人為，發歡喜心，出讚歎語，亦屬心口功德。

若自不能為，見他人為，則生妒忌，便成奸惡小人心行，決定折福折壽，不得好結果也，宜痛戒之。切不可做假招子，沽名釣譽。此種心行，實為天地鬼神所共惡。

有則改之，無則加勉。

What are the most important for mindfulness of Buddha are: fulfill one's responsibilities, eradicate incorrect thoughts and always be sincere, refrain from all that is evil, and practice all virtuous conducts. Keep a good heart, say good words, and do good deeds. One who has the ability should dedicate themselves to these practices; one who cannot do so should give rise to good intentions, or encourage those who can to practice these good deeds. One who sees others doing so should joyfully praise them. By doing so, one is also building up one's verbal deeds.

If one does not have the ability to do good deeds and becomes jealous when seeing others do them, one is behaving disingenuously, will take a toll on one's lifespan and good fortune, and will not yield any good results. One shall stop one's disingenuous behavior and never be a hypocrite. Disingenuity and hypocrisy are abhorred by all devas and nagas. If one has such a mind, one must correct it; if one does not, one must be aware of this and never give rise to such a mind.

九週年館慶法會預告

Ninth Anniversary Celebration—an Advance Notice

● 本館編輯室 (Editor's Room)

為了配合悟道法師弘法團前來美加地區弘法之行程，本館九週年館慶預訂於六月二十九日至七月三日舉行。大致日程如下：

6/29/2012 (星期五 Friday)	
下午 Afternoon	法師及各地嘉賓抵達 (請儘可能於早上十點至下午四點之間抵達) Check-in, venerable and participants Please arrive between 10:00am and 4:00pm if at all possible
晚間 Evening	歡迎晚宴及 悟道法師開示 Welcome and brief speech by Venerable Wu Dao
6/30/2012 (星期六 Saturday)	一日念佛 One-day chanting
晚間 Evening	佈置三時繫念會場 Setup for Thrice Yearning Ceremony
7/1 & 7/2/2012 (星期日、一 Sunday & Monday)	三時繫念 Thrice Yearning Ceremony
7/03 (星期二 Tuesday)	近郊半日遊，及恭送法師與各地嘉賓 (註) Half-day tour and transportation to airport (Note)

(註：由於法師們弘法行程緊促，必須於7月3日離開，因此只能安排半日遊。)
(Note: Due to venerables' busy travel schedule, they must leave in the afternoon on July 3. Therefore, we can only arrange a half-day tour.)

詳細日程將於下一期淨土通訊 (暫訂於四月三十日前出刊) 中公告。敬邀各地同修大德前來參加，共霑法益。

To coordinate with Venerable Wu Dao's Dharma Propagation Tour schedule, the library's ninth anniversary celebration will be held on June 29 (Friday) through July 3 (Tuesday), 2012. The tentative agenda is as above.

Details will be announced in the next issue of the Pure Land Newsletter, which is tentatively scheduled for publication on or before April 30, 2012. We cordially invite all friends to participate in this retreat.

三皈依典禮報導

Report—the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges

● 本館編輯室 (Editor's Room)

本館最近之一次三皈依傳授已於一月二十九日圓滿完成，此次共有大小同修十五位 (包括六位小菩薩) 接受三皈依，正式成為佛弟子。

皈依典禮由悟琳法師以中、英文雙語主持。同修們看到悟琳法師以中文讀出皈依誓詞，無不大為感動。請參閱後附三位皈依同修之心得報告。

The library's most recent Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges completed perfectly on January 29, 2012. Fifteen Dharma friends participated in the ceremony, including nine adults and six little Bodhisattvas [that is, children], and formally became students of the Buddha.

The ceremony was hosted by Venerable Wuling in both Chinese and English. The participants were deeply moved when they heard Venerable Wuling lead them in reading the oath in Chinese. We invite you to read the articles at the end of the newsletter, which are by three participants who describe their feelings after completing the ceremony.

活動報導 — 越南法師及同修前來本館走春禮佛

Report — a Warm Welcome for Vietnamese-American Friends' Chinese New Year Visit

● 本館編輯室 (Editor's Room)

行之數年的越南朋友新年走春，依往年慣例，已於今年一月二十八日星期六舉行，共有三輛巴士，一百二十多位越南朋友，由光明寺住持釋明行法師帶領，前來本館參訪。當天恰逢農曆大年初六，陽光明媚，是芝加哥冬天少有的好天氣。

林館長在致歡迎詞時表示，近年來各地災難不斷，但芝加哥一帶過去一年一切平安，實屬難得的福地，期勉同修繼續精進修行，利己利人。

這一次越南朋友的新年走春，恰逢悟琳法師前來本館主持三皈依儀式，林館長亦邀請悟琳法師為越南朋友做一簡單開示。

這一次的走春活動，本館有多位義工朋友幫忙接待。其中一位義工黃英師姐於活動後真誠的表示，當她幫一位越南女眾朋友拿東西時，那位越南朋友雙手合十，對她用越南話說了一段話，態度誠懇。儘管她連一個字也聽不懂，但是猜出這位越南朋友大概是在用佛語致謝，她也立即合十。黃英師姐表示，那時候，她覺得這樣語言不通的交流也是很美好的。

The Vietnamese friends Spring Festival temple visit to the library, which has taken place for several years now, occurred this year on January 28, 2012. Venerable Minh Hanh, the Abbott of Quan Minh temple, led more than one hundred and twenty Vietnamese friends in three buses on this visit. January 28, 2012 was the sixth day of the Chinese New Year; the sun was shinny, which was unusual in winter in Chicago.

In the welcome speech, Director Lin said that disasters continued to occur in many places in the world, but fortunately the Chicago area had been safe and peaceful in 2011. This is very special. She encourages all Dharma friends continue to practice diligently to benefit ourselves as well as all others.

As Venerable Wuling had come to the library to host the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges, Director Lin invited her to also provide a brief speech to the Vietnamese group.

Many library volunteers helped welcome the visitors. Among them Sister Ying Huang sincerely reflected afterward that when she helped a Vietnamese friend to pick up some items, this friend put her palms together and sincerely said a few words to her. Although Sister Huang was not able to understand what the friend said, she thought it must be an expression of appreciation. Sister Huang immediately put her palms together in return. Sister Huang said, at that moment, she felt wonderful even though they conversed in different languages.



釋明行法師與林館長帶領越南朋友禮佛。
Venerable Minh Hanh and Director Lin led the group to prostrate to the Buddha.

讀者投書—九華山印象

From the Reader—JiuHua Snapshot

● 陳居士 (Layperson Chen)



Wandering freely in green mountains, I never
get that close to nature,
I could have been such a simple and joyful
creature.

When I reach JiuHua Mountain top, time
seems to stop.

Sitting on a rock and I am waiting for my
serendipity or miracle.

There is your robe of lilac violate cloud, with
rainbows for tassels and lingering sunset for
jewelry.

There is your serene face! from a land of ultimate bliss.
Endless mountains and streams merge
Into the chest of your dharma body like one thin hair.
While bells in temple's evening prayer are resonating the empty valley,
Your dharma message is resonating my empty mind.
For one still moment on the top of JiuHua cliff,
All by myself,
I got a hint of what you mean,
Pure Land is just a built-in mode of purest within.
Your love is fluttering around like a butterfly.
Peering up I see an old giant pine tree standing steady high,
its leaves touching a topaz blue sky,
Peering down a thousand foot cliff,
Miles and miles of misty valleys and hills extend into a place,
Where my eyesight cannot reach.

讀者投書—皈依我佛

From the Reader—Returning to My Buddha

● 李萍 (Ping Li)

● 譚祖德翻譯 (Translated by Bert Tan)

每個人的一生中，總會有些特別的日子值得銘記。2012年1月29日是農曆大年初六，對我而言是個非常特別的日子。這一天，我和共修的幾位師兄姐接受了三皈依儀式。

儀式在華藏淨宗圖書館的念佛堂舉行，由遠從印州而來的悟琳法師主持儀規。圖書館的林師姐體恤到我們這一眾都是初學佛不久，她先詳細介紹了儀式的各步驟。整個過程簡單而隆

重。由林師姐引禮，我們一眾師兄姐，齊跪在佛前，跟隨悟琳法師恭頌，誓言從此依教奉行，做佛的弟子。那一刻，我心無旁念，唯法喜充滿。

儀式結束後，我看著手中的皈依證，想起這些年在佛門前兜兜轉轉的過程。少時我跟隨家人偶入佛寺，看到寺廟中種種莊嚴的佛像，心中頓生敬畏。雖也見佛即拜，卻不知意義為何，更多是將佛像當神明崇拜，祈求自福，此階段是迷信。

成年獨立後的我，一個人在大城市工作生活，多少會遇到一些不如意事。那時的我常去寺廟拜佛禮佛，總能在佛門的莊嚴肅穆中找到心靈的寧靜。因為對這種清淨心的向往，我漸漸有意了解一些佛教常識。然我根性愚鈍，亦無緣遇到善知識，面對浩瀚的佛門，常感到無從入手，無法入門。就好像明明看到美景就在前方，卻找不到通到那裏的路。這一階段，是我求入無門的徬徨期。

來美前夕，家母將幾盤淨空法師講經的光碟給我。現在想來，是家母給我找來了一位大善知識。看了老法師講經的光碟後，我感嘆，原來博大精深的佛法可以解釋得如此通俗易懂，可以在每日簡單的生活中落實修行。我既因著此機緣聽聞淨宗大德講經，並心生歡喜，來美後，我便於網絡上查詢居家附近是否有淨宗道場。佛度有緣人，我很幸運地找到了芝加哥華藏淨宗圖書館，從此跟隨林館長及眾師兄姐開始學習佛法。

經過這幾年的耳濡目染，我明白皈依僅是一個形式，重要的是從皈依之日起，時時事事提醒自己按佛陀的教誨生活與修行。以後的日子，我願與眾師兄姐互勉，精進修行。願正法常駐，度化更多有情眾生。

In one's lifetime, there are always some memorable days. January 29, 2012, which was the sixth day of the Chinese New Year, was a very special day to me. That day, I, together with several other Dharma friends completed the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges.

The ceremony was held in the chanting room of Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago and witnessed by Venerable Wuling who traveled here from Indiana to host this event. Sister Lin knew that we were all beginners; she first explained to us the entire procedure. The process was simple yet serious. Sister Lin served as the Master of Ceremony. We all knelt in front of the Buddha statues and repeated the oath after Venerable Wuling. We vowed to follow the Buddha's teaching and to be students of the Buddha. At that moment, nothing but Dharma joy was in my mind.

While I looked at the Certificate of Taking the Three Refuges after the Ceremony, I thought of the experiences in recent years that I circled around in front of the Dharma gate. When I was young, I often went to temples with family members. When I saw many solemnly beautiful Buddha statues, I was filled with awe. I prostrated to every Buddha statue whenever seeing one, but I never knew why. I guess I was more praying for their blessing by taking them as gods. At that stage, I did it solely for superstition.

When I grew up and worked in cities by myself, I ran into unpleasant situations occasionally. I went to temples, too, to prostrate to the Buddhas. By doing that, I was able to find a peaceful mind from the solemnly beauty of the temple. Because of the longing for the pure and clear mind, I began to develop some knowledge of the Dharma. But, I had a slow faculty, and did not have the affinity to meet a good mentor. Facing the boundless Dharma, I neither knew where to start, nor did I know the

method to use. That was just like that beautiful scenery in the near front I could see but not find the route to it. This was the stage of loss because I was unable to find the entrance to the Dharma.

Before I came to the United States, my mother gave to me a few copies of Venerable Master Chin Kung's lecture DVDs. Thinking back now, my mother found me a great mentor. I sighed deeply after watching these DVDs. The profound Dharma could be explained in such way that it was so easy to understand. Moreover, it could be realized in simple daily affairs. Since I had the opportunity to listen to the lectures by a great Venerable Master of the Pure Land School and like it very much, I surfed the internet for a Pure Land center nearby my home. Buddhas help those who have affinities with them. Luckily, I found the Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago. I have been learning the Dharma from Director Lin and other Dharma friends since then.

After these many years immersing my eyes and ears in the Dharma, I understand that taking the Three Refuges is merely a formality. More importantly going forward is to remind myself to always live and practice by following the Buddha's teaching. From now on, I would like to encourage mutually the brothers and sisters to practice diligently. I hope the real Dharma will be long lasting and help more sentient beings.

讀者投書—皈依心得

From the Reader—After Taking the Three Refuges

● 黃英 (Chloe Huang)

● 譚祖德翻譯 (Translated by Bert Tan)

1 月 29 日早課之後，我和幾位同修及數位小菩薩在悟琳法師主持下做了皈依，因緣殊勝，場景難忘，猶如發生在昨天。應林師姐之邀請，略記心得。我 N 年不寫作文了，請大家包涵。

其實我兩年前就有機會皈依，但那時對佛法所知甚少，心裏沒有生出皈依之意。回想那時連修行二字之意都不明了，現在看來那時於我來說時機的確沒有成熟。

從一年多前偶爾聽到林師姐講經，到現在每周日幾乎不缺席早課，雖不敢說我在修行上有多大的進步，但是和佛法的緣分與日俱增，因為當林師姐宣布悟琳法師會在今年一月底主持做皈依時，心裏立即生出了皈依之意。

之前沒有見過悟琳法師，不知道她是個不說中文的洋比丘尼，也不知道和所有皈依的同修們共用一個法號—妙音。但是經歷後，這兩件事情讓我覺得我們 1 月 29 日的皈依非常殊勝。

用中文皈依的皈依眾穿海青禮佛三拜後，長跪於地，在悟琳法師的帶領下念皈依誓詞三邊。悟琳法師前一日剛從林師姐、譚師兄那裏學來的中文皈依誓詞聽來清楚無礙，讓人敬佩她肯把這些我們念起來都不是特別自如的古詞句硬記下來的精神。敬佩是其一，珍惜是其二。聽到她一個字一個字努力念著中文皈依詞，體會到佛法從古印度文到中文再到世界其他語言，也曾被佛教徒們同樣努力的傳播。我們真是應該珍惜今天可以讀經聽經的緣分，當然最重要的是依法修行。

然後悟琳法師再用英文帶領幾位小菩薩做了皈依。所以我們共聽了兩遍皈依誓詞。中文的那遍莊嚴，英文的那遍樸實親切，而且誓詞的意思讓我了解得更加清楚。所以托悟琳法師和小菩薩們的福，我們的皈依真是很特別。

關於大家的法號都是妙音這樁事情，正如林師姐所言，名字只是一個符號，不要執著。我現在覺得沒有法號都沒有什麼關係。

總之，這個皈依完成得很圓滿。希望我們好好修行。



悟琳法師帶領皈依同修朗讀中文三皈依誓詞。Venerable Wuling lead the participants to read the Oath.

On January 29 after the morning practice, together with several Dharma friends and a few little bodhisattvas [that is, children], I took the Three Refuges witnessed by Venerable Wuling. It was a sacred condition and memorable, just as if it had happened yesterday. Invited by Director Lin, I briefly note my feeling. Since I have not written for many years, please excuse me if I do not write well.

Actually, I had the opportunity to take the Three Refuges two years ago. But, I knew little about Buddhism; therefore, I did not consider it. At that time, I did not even know what practice means. Thinking back now, the conditions for me to take the Three Refuges must not have matured.

About a year ago, I accidentally listened to a lecture by Sister Lin. Since then, I have rarely missed a Sunday's lecture—what a progress! Although I dare not say that I have made much progress in my practice, I believe my affinity with the Dharma has grown stronger because as soon as I heard Sister Lin's announcement that Venerable Wuling would come to host the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges at the end of January, the thought of taking the Three Refuges immediately arose in my mind.

I had never seen Venerable Wuling before and did not know that she was an American nun. Neither did I know that all those who have taken the Three Refuges use the same Dharma name—Miaoyin. Having gone through the process, I felt that the ceremony on January 29 was very special because of these two characteristics.

Those who took part in the ceremony in Chinese wore chanting gown, prostrated to the Buddha statues three times, kept in a high kneeling position, and repeated the oath after Venerable Wuling. Venerable Wuling, who had just learned the Chinese version of the oath reading from Sister Lin and Brother Tan, read the oath very clearly. We admired her greatly for her effort to memorize the oath for us when we could not even read it fluently. In addition to admiration is deep appreciation of her spirit to help us. Listening to her reading, with much effort, character by character the Chinese version of the oath, we can imagine when the Dharma came to China from ancient India and then spread to other parts of the world in different languages, those Buddhists had undertaken the same effort. We should truly appreciate the affinity that enables us to easily listen to sutra lectures and recite sutras now. Of course, practice by following the teaching is the most important.

Then, Venerable Wuling led the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges for a few little Bodhisattvas in English. So, we listened to the oath twice. Once was in Chinese which was solemn and once in

English which was simple and warm. The latter made me understand better the meaning of the oath. Shielded by the good fortunes of Venerable Wuling and of those little bodhisattvas, our ceremony was truly special.

Regarding the Dharma name Miaoyin which is shared by everybody, just like what Sister Lin said, name is merely a label and we should not attach to it. Now, I feel that it does not matter whether I have a Dharma name.

To conclude, this ceremony was completed perfectly. I hope we can all practice the Dharma well.

讀者投書—皈依心得

From the Reader—After Taking the Three Refuges

● 雷群 (Qun Lei)

● 譚祖德翻譯 (Translated by Bert Tan)

2012 年 1 月 29 日，芝加哥華藏淨宗圖書館，此時此地，是我人生中最值得銘記的，在我困惑之年終於等待到這一莊嚴的時刻——在悟琳法師的主持之下，我與學會同修 14 人圓滿完成了皈依典禮，我現在可以正式稱自己為佛弟子——妙音居士了！

這次皈依是我非常期待而且因緣具足的。2001 年我與先生在芝加哥時，偶然結緣了淨空老法師的《認識佛教》，當時為他老人家倡導的“佛教就是佛陀的教育；佛陀教育就是智覺宇宙人生的教育，這是佛教的真正面目”而深深震撼，從此我們就一直跟隨老法師修習佛法，結緣了大量的老法師的講經光盤和法寶，當時法喜充滿，身心清淨，開始吃長素，並已經萌生皈依之心。但當時在美國寺廟很少，而且我們一心想皈依淨空法師（由淨空法師做見證阿闍黎），淨宗學會就更少了；帶著心願，2004 初年我和先生相繼回國工作，一直尋覓著一個正法道場，希望能皈依。但隨後的幾年，由於工作和生活環境的改變，雖然自己還總是自稱信佛，但身心已被五欲六塵嚴重汙染，不再看經典、遠離聖賢教育，隨之而來的是工作和生活上都遭遇到嚴重的危機... 皈依之願更是沈入大海。

2009 年底，我因為女兒的教育問題，隻身帶她來美國讀高中。過去由於我“一心放在工作”上，女兒從小學一年級直到我們離開國內一直住校，我很少關心過她的生活和學習；這次毅然決然地放下工作而帶她來美上學，也是做還債想，決定陪她一直到進大學，我就徹底解脫了。我們先在北卡夏洛特 (Charlotte, NC)，頭一年，我完全不適應“做母親”，處於嚴重的焦慮之中，母女關係非常對立，我每天“煩滿胸中”，天天對女兒暴躁呵斥，對在國內的先生怨氣沖天，痛苦不堪，我不知道這年該怎麼度過... 那時的我，已經完全將佛法拋之于腦後。

2010 年 2 月，正好是一年前，我帶女兒來芝加哥面試一所私立寄宿高中（我當時就想把她“丟”在美國，自己趕緊回國，因為我們簡直無法相處了），回夏洛特的飛機兩個多小時，一路無聊，剛過 14 歲的女兒突然問起『色不異空、空不異色』是什麼意思。我很吃驚，雖然《心經》是我讀誦和背誦的第一部經典，早已倒背如流，但從來沒有跟女兒提起過，除了學習也從來沒跟她提起過佛法。其實她並不知道此句出於何處，是她偶爾聽到的，就感覺特別地喜歡。

當我告訴她是出自《般若波羅蜜多心經》時，她開始問我一些佛法的問題。我很慚愧，丟棄修學已經七、八年了，但還是憑著我當時在芝加哥修學的那點兒基礎，努力回憶著，勉強跟她講了兩個小時。與我從來沒有共同話題、而且青春叛逆的女兒能突然跟我談佛法，我當時真是有些不知所措；但畢竟我們有了正常交流。

為了讓我們的交流能延續下去，到家之後，開始重新研讀佛法，還是從淨空老法師的法寶開始(慚愧，已經有七、八年沒有看老法師的講經了)!我非常幸運，遇到了《和諧拯救危機》兩個系列，我連續看了不下三十遍，被深深的震撼!我終於明白了我們這個自稱為佛化家庭(先生和我都一直信佛)為什麼還有深刻的危機，因為我們都不知道如何將佛法落實到生活中，或者說沒有打好做人的根基。

中國傳統文化的聖賢教育能夠幫助我們打好做人的基礎；我們不能怪女兒的叛逆，因為她身上所反射的正是我們父母的習氣。『行有不得，反求諸己』，也是佛法裏的”內求”法；對於女兒，我眼睛不再“長”在她的身上，而是我開始檢討和修正自己的行為，就從弟子規開始做起，用我的言行身教來感化女兒。



悟琳法師、林館長及譚副館長與皈依同修合影。
Venerable Wuling, Director Lin, and Co-director Tan
photo with the participants.

很短的時間，我們母女關係就有了巨大的改善，因為我不再與她對立，她也就沒有”反作用力”；雖然我們溝通的時間還是不多，但我每天利用吃晚飯的時間、開車的時間，跟她聊佛法、談因果，這也督促我精進學習。在此，我真要感謝我的女兒，她是一個大善知識，讓我重新回到學佛的道路上來。

2011年夏天我們決定搬到了芝加哥，在安排定居事宜的過程中，有一個意外的驚喜——我網上查到“芝加哥華藏淨宗圖書館”，而且離我的家很近。我從來沒有參加過共修，在國內因為無法分辨正法道場不敢輕易進入，但我一直嚮往著能在淨空老法師創辦的淨宗學

會中修學，特別是重新修學佛法以來，非常希望能加入一個和合的共修團體而精進修學，現在終於有機緣了。

在道場參加共修近半年了，這裏沒有是非人我，沒有家長裏短，我感到身心清淨，法喜充滿，佛法修學上又有了很大的提升，並影響著周圍的朋友，家庭也日漸和諧美滿。感恩林館長為我們提供一個莊嚴、舒適、祥和的修學環境，感恩同修們鼓勵和對道場的義務奉獻。當林館長宣布為我們請到悟琳法師代表淨空老法師做三皈依見證時，我非常激動，能夠有機緣從一開始就追隨淨空老法師修學已經是非常幸運，今天又能皈依他老人家是我多世的福報啊。

我非常感恩淨空老法師智慧與慈悲，他老人家現在倡導的中國傳統文化聖賢教育，真是契合於當下世人的病根，拯救了如我一家的千千萬萬的家庭。現在世風日下，災難危機深重，很

多人不滿現狀，但只是在抱怨，怨天尤人；我過去也是這樣，而現在我天天看老法師的講經開示，天天讀聖賢經典，知道了佛弟子首先也是能做到的是和諧身心、和諧家庭，這樣社會就能和諧！

皈依之後，我將更加努力的修學，時刻修正檢點自己的行為，將佛法落實到生活中去，勤修戒定慧，息滅貪嗔癡。

最後再次感恩淨空老法師，感恩悟琳法師，感恩芝加哥華藏淨宗圖書館，感恩林館長，感恩學會同修！

祈願：

天下和順，日月清明，風雨以時，災厲不起，
國富民安，兵戈無用，崇德興仁，務修禮讓，
國無盜賊，無有冤枉，強不凌弱，各得其所。
正法久住，眾生安樂，同生淨土，同成佛道！

南無阿彌陀佛！

The time and the place—January 28, 2012 in the Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago—will be the most memorable in my life. The solemn moment I had waited for finally came to me at my age with no confusion [that is, 40]—witnessed by Venerable Wuling, I, together with fourteen other friends, completed the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges. Now, I can formally call myself a student of the Buddha—layperson Miaoyin.

Taking the Three Refuges at this time was what I expected very much and it came naturally. Back in 2001, when my husband and I were in Chicago, we accidentally ran across the lecture “Introduction to Buddhism” by Venerable Master Chin Kung. He explained in the lecture that “Buddhism is the education from the Buddha; it is the education for wisdom and enlightenment about the universe and our life. This is the true face of Buddhism.” Having heard his explanation, we were deeply shocked. Since then, we have been learning the Dharma from Venerable Master Chin Kung, and collected many of his lecture CDs and other items. We were full of Dharma joy and felt pure and clear internally. We also became vegetarian and developed the thought to take the Three Refuges. But there were few temples in the United States. Furthermore, we really wanted to have the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges witnessed by Venerable Master Chin Kung, and there were even fewer Pure Land associations. My husband and I returned to China to work in 2004, carrying the wish to take the Three Refuges back with us. We continued to look for a real Dharma teaching center and wished we could take the Three Refuges at that center. In the years that followed, we were busy adapting to the changes at work and in our living environment. Although we still claimed that we believed in the Buddha’s teaching, we were seriously polluted by the worldly afflictions physically and mentally. We did not read sutras and were away from the teachings by sages. Severe crises occurred in our works and life. The wish to take the Three Refuges sank into the sea.

At the end of 2009, for my daughter’s education, I, alone, brought her back to the United States to attend senior high school. All I thought about was my work while my daughter attended boarding school since the first grade. I rarely took care of her living and learning. But in 2009, I decided to resign from work and took my daughter to the United States for schooling. I took this as a repayment of a debt. I decided to accompany her until she entered a university. Then I would be totally free. The first year, we were in Charlotte, NC. I was not able to fit well into a “mother’s” role and was very

anxious. Our mother-daughter relationship was very hostile, and I was very upset and shouted at my daughter everyday. I also complained a lot about my husband who stayed in China. The time was very painful for me and I did not know how I could get through that year. In that situation, I completely forgot the Dharma.

In February 2010, exactly one year ago, I took my daughter back in Chicago area for an interview with a high school that provided boarding (I thought to “leave” her in the United States and then go home to China because we were could barely live together). The two-hour flight back to Charlotte was boring. My daughter, who had recently turned fourteen, suddenly asked me a question: “What is meant by ‘form does not differ from emptiness and emptiness does not differ from form?’” I was very surprised. Although the *Heart Sutra* was the first sutra I recited and memorized, and my fluency could even allow me to recite it backward, I never mentioned it to her. Nor did I mention any Dharma ideas to her. In fact, she did not know where the above text was from. She accidentally heard it and liked it.

When I told her that the text was from *Heart Sutra*, she began to ask me questions about the Dharma. I felt ashamed as I had stopped practicing and learning the Dharma for seven or eight years. Nevertheless, relying on the foundation I built when I was in Chicago, I tried very hard to remember and just managed to talk to her on this topic for two hours. She and I had never had a common topic to chat about, but now at this difficult age, suddenly we talked about the Dharma. I did not know how to correctly react to this. Finally, though, we began to have a normal conversation.

To enable the conversation to continue, I resumed learning the Dharma after I returned home. I began by listening to Venerable Master Chin Kung’s lectures. (I felt very ashamed! I had not listened to his lectures for seven or eight years). I was very lucky! I picked up the two series of *Harmony Saves Crises*. I listened to the lectures for more than thirty times and was deeply awakened! I finally realized why our so called “Buddhist family” (my husband and I have always been Buddhists) still had had so many crises. It was because we never realized the Buddha’s teaching in our life. In other words, we did not establish the foundation to be good people.

The sages’ teaching in Chinese traditional culture could also have helped us establish the foundation to be good people. We should not have blamed our daughter for her rebellious behaviors because she reflected exactly how we had behaved. “When things are going against one’s expectation, one should first reflect on oneself.” This is also the internal reflection in Dharma teaching. Instead of examining my daughter, I began to self-reflect on and correct my own behavior. I began to practice *Di Zi Gui*. I used my behaviors to encourage changes on her.

Very soon, our mother-daughter relationship significantly improved. Because I no longer opposed her, she no longer resisted. Although we still did not communicate very much, we would talk about the Dharma and the law of causality at the dining table or in the car. This also encouraged me to learn more diligently. Therefore, I am very thankful to my daughter for she brought me back to the path of learning and practicing Buddhism.

In the summer of 2011, we decided to move to Chicago. During the process of moving and settling down, I had a joyful surprise—I found the Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago while surfing the internet. The library is very close to my home. I had never participated in group practice because when I was in China I was not able to tell whether a center was a real Dharma teaching center. Thus, I had never entered one. I had always wished that I could practice in a Pure Land association which follows Venerable Master Ching Kung’s teaching. Having resumed learning the Dharma, I expected very much to be able to join a harmonious practice group and diligently practice Buddhism. Finally, I had the opportunity.

I have attended practice at the Amitabha Buddhist Library for almost half a year. There is no gossip there. I have felt pure and clear physically and mentally, and have been full of Dharma joy. In addition, my practice has been elevated considerably. I have influenced friends surrounding me and my family atmosphere has become harmonious. I am thankful to Director Lin who provides us with a beautiful, comfortable, and harmonious learning environment. I am also thankful to the Dharma friends for their encouragement and dedication to serve the library voluntarily. When Director Lin told us that she invited Venerable Wuling to host the Ceremony of Taking the Three Refuges on behalf of Venerable Master Chin Kung, I was very excited. Having had the opportunity and affinity to begin learning the Dharma from Venerable Master Chin Kung was lucky enough, now I could even be witnessed by him to take the Three Refuges. This must be my good fortune accumulated over many lives.

I am very thankful and appreciate the wisdom and compassion of Venerable Master Chin Kung. The value from the Chinese traditional culture he has been promoting treats the root cause of the ill behaviors and mindsets of people in today's society. It can save thousands of families such as mine. Moral levels are declining and disasters and crises are becoming increasingly severe. Many people are not content with the situation, but all they do is complain, like I did in the past. Now, I listen to Venerable Master Chin Kung's lectures and recite sutras daily. I learned that a Buddhist must first attain a harmonious mind, body, and family. Then, society will become harmonious, too.

Now I have taken the Three Refuges. I will learn the Dharma and practice more diligently, reflect and correct my behaviors often, and realize the Dharma in my daily life. I will practice diligently the precepts, the dhyana, and the prajna wisdom, and eradicate greed, anger, and ignorance from my mind.

Finally, I want to once again express my thanks to Venerable Master Chin Kung, to Venerable Wuling, to the Amitabha Buddhist Library in Chicago, to Director Lin, and to all the Dharma friends of the center.

I sincerely wish:

The world will be enveloped in peace, and the sun and moon will shine clear and bright.

The weather will be seasonal, and there will be no disaster.

Nations will be prosperous, and there will be no need for soldiers or weapons.

People will abide by morality, accord with laws, and be kind, courteous, and humble.

There will be no theft or violence, and everyone will be treated justly.

The strong will not dominate the weak, and everyone will be well suited.

The real Dharma will be long-lasting and everyone will live in peace and happiness.

We all will be reborn in the Pure Land, and attain Buddhahood together.

Namo Amitufo!