



MONTHLY GUIDE



International Buddhist Meditation Center

August 2009

928 S. New Hampshire L.A. CA. 90006

213.384.0850

Ullumbana Ceremony for the Dead

Every year IBMC performs the ceremony of sending merit and best wishes to those who have died within the past three years, which is the traditional morning period for Mahayana Buddhists.

This day is known as Ullumbana. This year IBMC will perform the ceremony on Sunday, August 30th 2009 at 11 AM.

If you have family or friends that you would like to have remembered, please either send an email to ibmc09@yahoo.com or leave a message in the office at **213.384.0850**.

Give us **your name, the name of the person to be remembered, and if you can, their birth and death date.** We will also remember pets, so give us their names as well.

During the ceremony we also remember people who died more than three years ago and have already attained rebirth, by wishing them a happy life. We will also pray for all those who are wandering between births.

The Ullumbana Ceremony begins with a formal Dana Ceremony called Gua Du'o'ng in Vietnamese. This ceremony begins at 10:15 AM. Offerings of food and other forms of Dana are offered to the fully Ordained Monastics. It is traditional that everyone having someone remembered that day, should bring Dana Offerings for the Monks.

After the Dana Ceremony and the Ullumbana chanting, everyone will gather in the garden for lunch.

Please joins us for this very important day in the Mahayana calendar.



Ven. Karuna Wearing the Five Dhyanis Buddhas Hat. This Hat is worn only once a Year for the Ullumbana Ceremony.

August Ullumbana Retreats

During the Month of August IBMC will hold three retreats in honor of Ullumbana, on Saturday August 15th, 22nd, and 29th 2009. The retreat will include all day meditation sessions, led by one of the IBMC monks. Morning sessions will start at 9 AM and last one hour with a lunch break at 12 noon. Afternoon sessions will begin at 2 PM, the last session will begin at 4 PM. Registration is not required. No overnight is required. Attend all sessions or drop in at your convenience. Donations are gratefully accepted. The retreat will end on Ullumbana Day August 30th.

6 Month Fundraising Drive !

Keep the Dharma flowing from the halls of IBMC. You can help IBMC by becoming a monthly supporter. All pledges of a 6 month commitment will receive one of the Dharma gifts listed below, after the second donation. All donators will receive a lovely gift at years end!

\$150+ Monthly Donation...Buddha Statue

\$100 Monthly Donation.....Singing Bowl

\$50 Monthly Donation.....Gold Buddha Pendant

\$25 Monthly Donation..... Temple Hand Bell

Remember all donations are tax deductible.

The Three Yanas

For the next three issues of the Monthly Guide, we will share with you the history and teachings of the three schools of Buddhist thought. IBMC is unique in that we house teachers from all three schools of Buddhism. IBMC offers meditation, instruction and guidance from all three traditions, from westerners - from a western point of view - while also keeping the original traditions of all three schools alive in our hearts and minds. IBMC offers training in the Monastic path as well as in the path of the householder. Please join us each Sunday morning for our Dharma talks and during the week for classes in meditation, Sutra study, and group practice. All class and meditation times can be found on the back page of this Guide.

See You Along the Path....

Theravada Buddhism

Ven. Dr. W. Rabula

**[From: "Gems of Buddhist Wisdom",
Buddhist Missionary Society, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1996]**

The Buddha was born in the 6th Century B.C. After attaining Enlightenment at the age of 35, until his Mahaparinibbana [Death] at the age of 80, he spent his life preaching and teaching. He was certainly one of the most energetic men who ever lived. For forty-five years he taught and preached day and night, sleeping for only about 2 hours a day.

The Buddha spoke to all kinds of people: Kings and princes, Brahmins and farmers, beggars, learned men and ordinary people. His teachings were tailored to the experiences, levels of understanding and mental capacity of his audience. What he taught is called Buddha Vacana, or Sutras. There was nothing called Theravada at that time.

After establishing the Order of Monks, the

Buddha laid down certain disciplinary rules called the Vinaya for the guidance of the Order. The rest of his teachings were called the Dhamma, which included his discourses and sermons to monks and lay people.

The First Council

Three months after the Buddha's Mahaparinibbana, his immediate disciples convened a council at Rajagaha. Maha Kassapa, the most respected and elderly monk, presided at the Council. Two very important persons who specialized in the two different areas - the Dhamma and the Vinaya - were present. One was Ananda, the closest constant companion and disciple of the Buddha for 25 years. Endowed with a remarkable memory, Ananda was able to recite what the Buddha spoke. The other person was Upali who remembered all the Vinaya rules.

Only these two sections - the Dhamma and the Vinaya - were recited at the First Council. Though there were no differences of opinion on the Dhamma (no mention of the Abhidhamma) there was some discussion about the Vinaya rules. Before the Buddha's Parinibbana, he told Ananda that if the Sangha wished to amend or modify some minor rules, they could do so. But on that occasion Ananda was so overcome with grief because the Buddha was about to die that it did not occur to him to ask the Master what the minor rules were. As the members of the Council were unable to agree as to what constituted the minor rules, Maha Kassapa finally ruled that no disciplinary rule that was laid down by the Buddha should be changed, and no new ones should be introduced. No intrinsic reason was given. Maha Kassapa did say one thing, however: "If we changed the rules, people will say that Ven. Gotama's disciples changed the rules even before his funeral fire has ceased burning."

At the Council, the Dhamma was divided into various parts and each part was assigned to an Elder and his pupils to commit to memory. The Dhamma was then passed on from teacher to pupil orally. The Dhamma was recited daily by

groups of people who often cross - checked with each other to ensure that no omissions or additions were made. Historians agree that the oral tradition is more reliable than a report written by one person from his memory several years after the event.

The Second Council

One hundred years later, the Second Council was held to discuss some Vinaya rules. There had been no need to change the rules three months after the Parinibbana of the Buddha because little or no political, economic or social changes took place during that short interval. But 100 years later, some monks saw the need to change certain minor rules. The orthodox monks said that nothing should be changed while the others insisted on modifying some rules. Finally, a group of monks left the Council and formed the Mahasanghika - the Great Community. Even though it was called the Mahasanghika, it was not known as Mahayana. In the Second Council, only matters pertaining to the Vinaya were discussed, and no controversy about the Dhamma is reported

The Third Council

In the 3rd Century B.C. during the time of Emperor Asoka, the Third Council was held to discuss the differences of opinion among the Bhikkhus of different sects. At this Council the differences were not confined to the Vinaya but were also connected with the Dhamma. At the end of the Council, the council President, Moggaliputta Tissa, compiled a book called the Kathavatthu refuting the heretical, false views and theories held by some sects. The teaching approved and accepted by this Council came to be known as Theravada. The Abhidhamma Pitaka was included at this Council.

After the Third Council, Asoka's son, Ven. Mahinda, brought the Tripitaka to Sri Lanka, along with the commentaries that were recited at the Third Council. The texts brought to Sri Lanka have been preserved until today without losing a page. The texts were written in Pali,

which was based on the Magadhi language spoken by the Buddha.

These are the most important teachings of Buddhism

- Sakyamuni Buddha is the Teacher
- The Four Noble Truths
- The Eightfold Path
- The Dependent Arising
- Impermanence, Suffering, No Self, Moral Discipline, Concentration/ Meditation, Wisdom

Three Types of Buddhahood

Theravada Buddhists work for Arahant-ship. The Buddha was an Arahant. A Pacceka Buddha is an Arahant. A disciple can also become an Arahant. In the Theravada tradition, these three are called Bodhis.

Some people imagine that Theravada is selfish because it teaches that people should seek their own salvation. But how can Enlightenment be a selfish goal?

In Theravadan Buddhism there are three types of Buddhahood: the Samma Sambuddha who gains full Enlightenment by his own effort; the Pacceka Buddha or silent Buddha, who does not teach; and the Savaka Buddha who is an Arahant disciple. The attainment of Nibbana between the three types of Buddhahood is exactly the same. The only difference is that the Samma Sambuddha has many more qualities and capacities than the other two.

Some people think that emptiness or Sunyata that was discussed by Nagarjuna is purely a Mahayana teaching. It is based on the idea of Anatta or non-self, or the Paticcasamuppada, the Dependent Origination, found in the original Theravada Pali texts. When Ananda asked the Buddha, "People say the word Sunya. What is Sunya?" The Buddha replied, "Ananda, there is no self, nor anything pertaining to self in this world. Therefore, the world is empty." Nagarjuna took this idea when he wrote his remarkable book, "*Madhyamika Karika*."

August Events

Sunday Dharma Talks 11AM

8/2 - Rev. Matri Dasi

8/9 - Rev. Kusala Bhikshu

8/16- Rev. S'raddha Karuna

8/23-Ven. Havanpola Shanti

8/30 -Ven. Karuna Dharma

Special Events

Ullumbana Retreats

8/15 & 8/22 Led by Ani Kelsang
Chitta Karuna

8/29 - Led by Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

8/30 - Ullumbana Ceremony & Garden lunch

Meditation Times

Friday: 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

Sunday: 10:30 AM & 7:39 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

IBMC Classes

Mon. 7 PM Tibetan Buddhism - Palmo Ling Nunnery - Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Tue. 7 PM English Conversation - Palmo Ling Nunnery. Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Wed. 7:30 PM Everyday Buddhism - Zendo Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

Thur. 4 PM Vimalakirti Sutra, Ven. Karuna Dharma, Call IBMC Office to Enroll

Sat. 2 PM Math Tutoring - Palmo Ling Nunnery -Call IBMC for Details

Ven. Karuna's eMail: karunadh@ca.rr.com

Ven Shanti's eMail: hshanti1@yahoo.com

IBMC office eMail: dougibmc@yahoo.com

IBMC Web Pages:

www.ibmc.info

www.karunadhharma.info

www.urbandharma.org

http://palmoling.tripod.com

IBMC is Going Green!

IBMC now offers it's monthly newsletter online, delivered straight to your inbox, you can also read it in **PDF** form posted on our web site at www.ibmc.info If you would like to begin receiving our newsletter by email please go to our web site and click on the "newsletter" button at the bottom of the page. Our calendar and special events are also posted at www.ibmc.info

Prison Dharma, a column devoted IBMC's Prison Outreach Ministry.

Please remember to support the Prison Dharma Outreach program all monthly donations help us continue sending the dharma 'inside' and all donations are tax deductible. Make checks payable to IBMC and note in memo section 'Prison Dharma Ministry'

Dear Friends,

We hope this letter finds you well. We are men from the Buddhist community here at Pleasant Valley State Prison in Coalinga California. We have a nice group of sincere practitioners on D-Yard, with 18-20 regular attendees and 32-40 for special events. We have been practicing for almost two years.

As a Prison Sangha we are permitted two hours of meditation hall time a week, and often that varies according to staff availability. Chaplain Brian Phillips (Catholic Chaplain) oversees the Buddhist program and he has been very good to the Buddhists. Although Chaplain Phillips is a wonderful leader, he is not familiar with the Buddhist path. We are hoping to find a spiritual teacher who could come visit us on regular basis.

We realize that you specifically may not be able to help but that you may know of a group or a Sangha near us that would consider taking us into their lineage. We are sincere in this hope and will continue to practice regardless. We continue to dedicate any merits we may accumulate to finding a gifted teacher. We are sure Chaplain Phillips will be happy to help with any arrangements for spiritual teachers or lay persons to come and teach us. The presence of any visitor to our community would be a wonderful blessing. We know it takes a rare individual to come in to this place and all the more so to sit in the silence with us. We hope that someone from your community will be able to come to D-Yard and bless us with some teaching time. We would appreciate the blessing.

May your days be filled with Love and Compassion.

Sincerely,

The Buddhist Community at Pleasant Valley State Prison.

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