



# Monthly Guide



International Buddhist Meditation Center

May 2010

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

213.384.0850

## IBMC Vesak Retreat May 7, 8, & 9th 2010

IBMC will be hold its annual Vesak retreat to mark the triple blessed day of Sakyamuni Buddha. His birth, enlightenment and death days all occurred on the full moon day of the 4 month of the lunar calendar, We will have a weekend retreat. One weekend is only a beginning to deepening the state of samadhi, or one-pointed concentration, this allows us to have insights into our true nature. The process of meditation is to watch, see, accept and let go. If we spend time in meditation every day, changes will occur in time. When three days are spent in meditation, the process will speed up.

The focus of this retreat will be on the practice of devotion to the guru or teacher. This practice will help us to deepen our connection to our teacher or help us to find a connection to the teacher we are meant to know.

The retreat will begin Friday at 7 PM and Saturday at 9:30 am with prostrations precepts, we end our day around 10 pm.

If you wish to attend please call IBMC by **May 1** to reserve your space. The suggested donation for this retreat is \$50.

You are encouraged to stay at the Center for the entire retreat. Space is limited so please reserve your space early. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a sleeping bag and pillow, and any other personal items you may need. Meals are vegetarian and will be served at the temple.

Although it is of most benefit to sit the entire retreat, you may drop in to a few sessions, if you make arrangement in advance.

## Mothers Day Celebration May 9th 2010

This year we are celebrating Mother's Day on Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Ven. Karuna will give a Dharma Talk. We will all wear flowers to honor our mothers: white for the mothers who have died and red for mothers who are still living.

We urge you to bring a photo of your mother or mother figure to place on the special altar. Also, this is the chance for you to share something special about your mother or mother figure. We encourage you to join us as we honor our mothers.

### HOW TO MEDITATE

"The most important thing is practice in daily life; then you can know gradually the true value of religion. Doctrine is not meant for mere knowledge, but for the improvement of our minds. In order to do that, it must be part of our life. If you put religious doctrine in a building and when you leave the building depart from the practices, you cannot gain its value."

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama, from 'A Policy of Kindness'*

## The Significance of Vesak - Buddha Day

The significance of Vesak lies with the Buddha and his universal peace message to mankind.

As we recall the Buddha and his Enlightenment, we are immediately reminded of the unique and most profound knowledge and insight which arose in him on the night of his Enlightenment. This coincided with three important events which took place, corresponding to the three watches or periods of the night.

During the first watch of the night, when his mind was calm, clear and purified, light arose in him, knowledge and insight arose. He saw his previous lives, at first one, then two, three up to five, then multiples of them . . . ten, twenty, thirty to fifty. Then 100, 1000 and so on.... As he went on with his practice, during the second watch of the night, he saw how beings die and are reborn, depending on their Karma, how they disappear and reappear from one form to another, from one plane of existence to another. Then during the final watch of the night, he saw the arising and cessation of all phenomena, mental and physical. He saw how things arose dependent on causes and conditions. This led him to perceive the arising and cessation of suffering and all forms of unsatisfactoriness paving the way for the eradication of all taints of cravings. With the complete cessation of craving, his mind was completely liberated. He attained to Full Enlightenment. The realization dawned in him together with all psychic powers.

This wisdom and light that flashed and radiated under the historic Bodhi Tree at Buddha Gaya in the district of Bihar in Northern India, more than 2500 years ago, is of great significance to human destiny. It illuminated the way by which mankind could cross, from a world of superstition, or hatred and fear, to a new world of light, of true love and happiness.

The heart of the Teachings of the Buddha is contained in the teachings of the Four Noble Truths, namely,

The Noble Truth of Dukkha or suffering

The Origin or Cause of suffering

The End or Cessation of suffering

the Path which leads to the cessation of all sufferings

The First Noble Truth is the Truth of Dukkha which has been generally translated as 'suffering'.

But the term Dukkha, which represents the Bud-

dha's view of life and the world, has a deeper philosophical meaning. Birth, old age, sickness and death are universal. All beings are subject to this unsatisfactoriness. Separation from beloved ones and pleasant conditions, association with unpleasant persons and conditions, and not getting what one desires - these are also sources of suffering and unsatisfactoriness. The Buddha summarizes Dukkha in what is known as the Five Grasping Aggregates.

Herein, lies the deeper philosophical meaning of Dukkha for it encompasses the whole state of being or existence. Our life or the whole process of living is seen as a flux of energy comprising of the Five aggregates, namely the Aggregate of Form or the Physical process, Feeling, Perception, Mental Formation, and Consciousness. These are usually classified as mental and physical processes, which are constantly in a state of flux or change.

When we train our minds to observe the functioning of mental and physical processes we will realize the true nature of our lives. We will see how it is subject to change and unsatisfactoriness. And as such, there is no real substance or entity or Self which we can cling to as 'I', 'my' or 'mine'.

When we become aware of the unsatisfactory nature of life, we would naturally want to get out from such a state. It is at this point that we begin to seriously question ourselves about the meaning and purpose of life. This will lead us to seek the Truth with regards to the true nature of existence and the knowledge to overcome unsatisfactoriness.

From the Buddhist point of view, therefore, the purpose of life is to put an end to suffering and all other forms of unsatisfactoriness - to realize peace and real happiness. Such is the significance of the understanding and the realization of the First Noble Truth.

The Second Noble Truth explains the Origin or Cause of suffering. Tanha or craving is the universal cause of suffering. It includes not only desire for sensual pleasures, wealth and power, but also attachment to ideas, views, opinions, concepts, and beliefs. It is the lust for flesh, the lust for continued existence (or externalism) in the sensual realms of existence, as well as the realms of form and the formless realms. And there is also the lust and craving for non-existence (or nihilism). These are all different Forms of selfishness, desiring things for oneself, even at the expense of others.

Not realizing the true nature of one's Self, one clings to things which are impermanent, changeable and perishable. The failure to satisfy one's desires through these things; causes disappointment and suffering.

Craving is a powerful mental force present in all of us. It is the root cause of our sufferings. It is this craving which binds us in Samsara - the repeated cycle of birth and`

death.

The Third Noble Truth points to the cessation of suffering. Where there is no craving, there is no becoming, no rebirth. Where there is no rebirth, there is no decay, no, old age, no death, hence no suffering. That is how suffering is ended, once and for all.

The Fourth Noble Truth explains the Path or the Way which leads to the cessation of suffering. It is called the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Noble Eightfold path avoids the extremes of self-indulgence on one hand and self-torture on the other. It consists of Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

These path factors may be summarized into 3 stages of training, involving morality, mental culture and wisdom. Morality or good conduct is the avoidance of evil or unwholesome actions -- actions which are tainted by greed, hatred and delusion; and the performance of the good or wholesome actions, - actions which are free from greed, hatred and delusion, but motivated by liberality, loving-kindness and wisdom.

The function of good conduct or moral restraint is to free one's mind from remorse (or guilty conscience).

The mind that is free from remorse (or guilt) is naturally calm and tranquil, and ready for concentration with awareness.

The concentrated and cultured mind is a contemplative and analytical mind. It is capable of seeing cause and effect, and the true nature of existence, thus paving the way for wisdom and insight.

Wisdom in the Buddhist context, is the realization of the fundamental truths of life, basically the Four Noble Truths. The understanding of the Four Noble Truths provide us with a proper sense of purpose and direction in life. They form the basis of problem-solving.

The message of the Buddha stands today as unaffected by time and the expansion of knowledge as when they were first enunciated.

No matter to what lengths increased scientific knowledge can extend man's mental horizon, there is room for the acceptance and assimilation for further discovery within -the framework of the teachings of the Buddha. The teaching of the Buddha is open to all to see and judge for themselves. The universality of the teachings of the Buddha has led one of the world's greatest scientists, Albert Einstein to declare that 'if there is any religion that could cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism'

The teaching of the Buddha became a great civilizing force wherever it went. It appeals to reason and freedom of thought, recognizing the dignity and potentiality of

the human mind. It calls for equality, fraternity and understanding, exhorting its followers to avoid evil, to do good and to purify their minds.

Realizing the transient nature of life and all worldly phenomena, the Buddha has advised us to work out our deliverance with heedfulness, as 'heedfulness is the path to the deathless'.

His clear and profound teachings on the cultivation of heedfulness otherwise known as Satipatthana or the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, is the path for the purification of beings - for the overcoming of sorrows and lamentation, for the destruction of all mental and physical sufferings, for the attainment of insight and knowledge and for the realization of Nibbana. This has been verified by his disciples. It is therefore a path, a technique which may be verified by all irrespective of caste, color or creed.

## How to Rely on a Guru

The role of a spiritual teacher or guru is often misunderstood in the West. For one thing, we lost the ancient system of studying under one teacher for many years to learn a craft like carpentry or masonry, and we are not used to this system anymore.

There is a lot of confusion about spiritual teachers; some people may believe that a guru will take over the entire responsibility of a disciple's life, leaving the pupil more like an obedient, mindless puppy.

"If you are only studying Dharma for the sake of study, sake of development of your understanding of Dharma, if you are only studying Dharma intellectually, just intellectually on intellectual level, then I don't think you need a guru-disciple relationship. Also you can study with all kinds of teachers. It's like going to university. You study with different teachers or professors, and you go on, you move on. But if you wish to commit yourself to the path, then A Guru is necessary, because one needs to know how to accomplish the realization, how to practice the Dharma."

*Zasep Tulku Rinpoche*

## May Events

10 AM - 108 Bows

10:30 AM - Meditation

11 AM - Sunday Dharma Talks

5/2 - Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

5/9 - Ven. Karuna Dharma

5/16 - Ven. Chung Do Sunim

5/23 - Ven. S'raddha Karuna

5/30 - Ven. Karuna Dharma

## Special Events

Mothers Day Celebration May 9, 2010

Vesak Retreat - May 7, 8, 9th 2010

## Meditation Times

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

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

## IBMC Classes

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

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

Sat 9 AM - Kundalini Yoga - Palmo Chöling Nunnery - Led by Dharamjeet Kaur

## IBMC eMail addresses

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

Ven. Shanti's eMail: hshanti1@yahoo.com

Rental office eMail: dougibmc@yahoo.com

IBMC temple eMail: ibmc09@yahoo.com

## IBMC Web Pages:

[www.ibmc.info](http://www.ibmc.info)

[www.karunadhharma.info](http://www.karunadhharma.info)

[www.urbandharma.org](http://www.urbandharma.org)

<http://palmoling.tripod.com>

<http://bsila.tripod.com>

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

## URGENT NOTICE:

To All Students please send IBMC your correct Name , ID Number, and please include you facility name, even if you have been receiving your guides.

Please send this information ASAP.

IBMC still is receiving over half of the Monthly Guides back from the prisons - if you have not been receiving your guides, or know someone who is not, please send us your correct address.

**Please Include Institution Name And Your Correct Prison And Bed Number.**

*Any Guides coming back will be removed from the mailing list.*

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Please begin send your writings, for inclusion in our new quarterly publication.

Submit any ideas you might like to see in the Guide, Send all letters to IBMC, 928 S. New Hampshire Ave., Los Angeles CA. 90006:Marked: **“Attn. Monthly Guide”**

If you have family or friends send anything through email, please remind them to mark the subject line as “Monthly Guide”

See You Along The Path...

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