

Bodhi Stand Presents

UPASIKA KUO T'UNG LAUGHTON

Kuo T'ung was born and raised in Austria shortly after the end of World War II and grew up surrounded by its devastated remains. Although she, herself, was raised in relative comfort, she was very much affected by the continual misery which was evident in Europe long after the war ended.

In 1962 Kuo T'ung came with her family to the United States. Immediately she perceived a marked contrast to the European environment. All around her in America she saw simultaneous abundance and tremendous waste occurring everywhere. Being different from her peers, she formed no close ties in her late teens and took to wandering which eventually brought her to San Francisco in 1968.

Early in 1969 she was able to meet the Venerable Abbot, who, at the Buddhist Lecture Hall in San Francisco's Chinatown, was explaining *THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA*. Kuo T'ung became fascinated with the philosophy of Buddhism. What especially interested her was that many of her childhood experiences--then unexplainable--had a very logical explanation offered by the tenets of Buddhism.

Gradually, Kuo T'ung's interest and commitment grew and in the summer of 1970 she participated in an intensive summer session. This gave her an opportunity to hear the Dharma daily--it was the *Dharma Flower Sutra* and the *Sixth Patriarch's Sutra*, and also to meditate and practice repentance and reform.

In 1973, Kuo T'ung selected the nursing profession because she felt it was important to pursue a career that would allow her to practice the principles which she had learned. Nursing offered the opportunity to cultivate compassion--the fundamental virtue of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and especially of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva.

Successful in her study of nursing, Kuo T'ung entered the field and worked for several years. She married Kuo T'ung Laughton (see VBS), and for a number of years was childless. She went to see several doctors and all of them told her more or less that she would not be able to bear children.

Consulting her teacher about this difficulty, she was advised to recite the name of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva. If she was sufficiently sincere, the situation could change, she was told.

I obtained the Buddhas' mind and was certified as having attained the ultimate end, and so I can make offerings of rare treasures to the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions and to living beings in the six paths throughout the Dharma Realm.

If living beings seek spouses, they can obtain spouses, if they seek children, they can have children.

-Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's account of obtaining Perfect Penetration

SHURANGAMA SUTRA, Vol V.

Kuo T'ung heeded her teacher's advise and recited the name of the Greatly Compassionate Bodhisattva as she went about her duties in the Labor and Delivery Department of a hospital. A doctor whom she worked with on a daily basis was one of the doctors who had told her that it was unlikely she could ever have children. So it was that when, for a period of several months, she made various complaints of feeling constantly tired, having no appetite, and feeling dizzy and faint, that the doctor's thought



was to send her for various tests for diseases of the blood. When all the results came back negative, Kuo T'ung called her teacher on the phone. He laughed and said, "Now you have a baby. Go back and tell the doctor." This she did and of course her teacher was correct.

Toward what was supposed to be the end of her pregnancy, she was healthy but very large and every week the doctor would say, "Not much longer," or "any day now," but the baby just grew and grew. It was her experience as a nurse that such extreme lateness in delivery could result in real danger to the child's survival. Once again Kuo T'ung called her teacher for reassurance, which she received. "Everything is okay, don't worry," Accordingly a few days later, her first son was born with no difficulty, despite his size.

Several years later, Kuo T'ung had another "inconceivable" response when their second son was born with the doctor proclaiming all along that these children were "impossible," since Kuo T'ung underlying physical difficulty remained unchanged throughout both pregnancies. Such is the power of the response which comes with sincere recitation of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's name.

In 1980, Kuo T'ung and her husband and sons moved to the Ukiah area so they could draw closer to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and join in study and practice of the Proper Dharma. Currently Kuo T'ung's elder son attends Instilling Virtue Boys' School and her husband teaches at the Buddhist Council for Refugee Rescue and Resettlement. Kuo T'ung pursues her nursing career in a small hospital north of Ukiah and comes regularly to offer support and protection at important Dharma Assemblies as well as to nurture her own good roots by joining the worship and study sessions conducted daily at the City.

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