

people can have toward insects and the perceived threat of what they might do to you. In the book there was a suggestion to offer the mosquito a meal, as a gesture of friendship, since all beings need nourishment. Surely it's not that much blood one gives up in this process. There was the answer!

I tried it, which totally changed my perspective toward them. When I developed the resolve to do this, one came, buzzing around my head while I was reading, which I hate. I stopped and put out my hand and mentally invited her to come, which she did. She flew right to where I had mentally suggested and calmly and slowly plunged the probe into my hand, got really full and slowly withdrew it and happily flew off. I carefully watched the whole process with great curiosity and studied every moment of my own apprehension, which mostly had to do with fear of the unknown. When I've done this with the mosquitoes, I've felt a sense of gratitude from them. I've also felt an increased sense of well-being in myself after helping break down a barrier to loving kindness and compassion.

May any merit gained from sharing these experiences this evening be transferred to all living beings. Amitofo.

程不會讓一個人失去太多血液。這就是答案了！

我也嘗試做過，這完全改變我對蚊子的看法。我發願要這樣做時，有一隻蚊子飛來，當我閱讀時在我腦袋上「嗡嗡」地盤旋，這是最討厭的事。我停止閱讀，伸出我的手掌，內心誠摯邀請牠來，牠也停在我手上。牠飛到我在內心希望她去的地方，然後沉靜緩慢的將口針插入我的手，飽吸血液後緩慢抽回口針，然後快樂地飛走。我以極大的好奇心，仔細地觀察整個過程，研究每一個時刻我所領悟的——主要是對無知的恐懼。我做完這件事後，非常感激這些眾生；並且在牠們幫助我打破對慈悲關懷的障礙後，增加了對自己福祉的感受。

願今晚與各位分享此經驗的功德迴向給眾生。阿彌陀佛！

My Trip to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (continued)

心靈饗宴聖城行 (續)



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From a distance the Dining Hall looked immense. Dharma Masters wore monastic robes and the laypeople wore black ceremonial robes—which reminded us of the ancient customs. We followed the great assembly into the Dining Hall. The Dharma Masters sat in the front rows, the laymen behind them, and the laywomen in the back rows. After everyone was seated, the great assembly recited in unison the Meal Offering Chant and the Three Recollections and Five Contemplations—the moment was

齋堂亦甚是宏大，法師居士或著僧衣，或著海青，舉手投足，頗有古風。余等亦尾隨大眾，進入齋堂。法師坐前列，男居士次之，女居士殿後。大眾坐定，念臨齋儀及正思維，同出一聲，斷無綺笑閒談。有信眾為眾法師備好食物，但與居士所食無異。法師有中土人士，亦有西方面孔。見有一身材高大者，不知是否為上恆下實法師，未敢搭訕。據言，上人西方弟子，非是今生方得與上人初識，過去生中早已為上人弟子。因上人之弘願，弟子遂投生美國，為報師恩，助師弘法西方故。

再說居士依次列隊前往自助餐檯，各取所需，按聖城規定，食物既取，勿得遺棄，故不應貪多，以致浪費。大殿正中，亦有上人畫像，和巨幅觀世音菩薩四十二手眼圖，足有二三層樓高。眾人用齋期間皆靜默，絕無大聲喧嘩。齋堂亦播放上人開示及答弟子問，不令眾人之心有所放逸。食物有米麵蔬果等，皆全素，然味甚美，末學與友人讚嘆不已。用齋完畢後，又蒙法師慈悲，委託聖城義工王師兄，餐後帶領余等參觀聖城。王師兄慨然應允。

王師兄持中美頂級大學學位，於佛法信心深厚，捨棄都市繁華，安家於聖城邊。其人和顏悅色，談鋒甚健。余等同乘一車，環繞萬佛城徐行，王師兄沿途講解。城中建築甚多，有比丘，比丘尼，在家男居士，在家女居士等住處，亦有育良小學、培德中學、法界大學、圖書館等教育場所。有一名勝之處，不得不提一段傳奇故事。

萬佛聖城原是一醫院和農場，因水源枯竭，難以為繼，政府不得已而將其出售。上人偕弟子購得此地後，後山開得山泉，水質甘淨，源源不絕。王師兄帶領我等參觀未來大殿所選處所，風水絕佳，然因緣未俱，尚未動工。遠遠見得一驢，紋絲不動立於遠處，王師兄告知此乃有人放生於萬佛聖城，最初有二，皆皈依上人，其一已往生，今唯一。

余等又參觀培德小學，與美國學堂無異，但對於佛教及儒家傳統，多有側重。學生未滿十二歲，須有家長陪同。如滿十二歲，則可寄宿。末學亦盼上人及佛菩薩

solemn with no casual talking or laughing. Some laywomen prepared the food for the Dharma Masters—their food was the same as that of the laypeople. The Dharma Masters were both Asian and Western. One was a tall Dharma Master—perhaps Rev. Heng Sure. I did not dare to greet him. I heard that Master Hua's Western disciples knew him not only in this life, but also had been his disciples for many lives in the past. Because of the vows of Ven. Master Hua, they chose to be reborn as Americans to help him propagate the Dharma in the West to repay his kindness.

In the Dining Hall, laypeople lined up to serve themselves, each taking his fill according to his need. According to CTTB rules, the food that one has taken should not be thrown away. We should not be greedy and take more than we can eat. An oil painting of Ven. Master Hua and a huge painting of Guanyin Bodhisattva with 42 hands and eyes, as tall as the height of a two or three-story building, were in the hall. Everyone observed the rule of silence during the meal—no one caused any kind of disturbance. While eating, recordings of Dharma talks and questions and answers with Ven. Master Hua were played for people's instruction. The food was vegetarian: rice, noodles, fruit, vegetables and so on. We praised the delicious food. After the meal, the Dharma host asked volunteer Layman Wang to lead us on a tour of CTTB. He graciously agreed.

Layman Wang holds two degrees from prestigious Chinese and American universities. He has a profound faith in the Dharma and gave up his cosmopolitan life to settle down near CTTB. He is a kind and outgoing person who gave us detailed information as we drove around the City. CTTB has many buildings—some are for Bhikshus, some for Bhikshunis, some for laymen, and others for laywomen. CTTB also has schools—Instilling Goodness Elementary School and Developing Virtue Secondary School, Dharma Realm Buddhist University (as well as its library), and other educational institutions. I'd like to mention an inconceivable story about a famous spot—the well.

CTTB was originally a state mental hospital surrounded by agricultural land. Due to an extreme water shortage, the government was forced to sell the facility. After Ven. Master Hua and his disciples purchased the property, a water source was miraculously discovered by Ven. Master Hua, which had a plentiful supply





加持，未來可以讓幼子稚女到此學習，長大後能為佛法及世界做一點有益之事。

如是參觀已，余等稍作休息，早早入大殿，以求一席之地可隨大眾拜午後第一支香。大殿果然不同凡響，牆壁皆有無數佛龕，中有佛像安坐其中，其數約有千及萬，不可詳盡。然佛像似乎眼皆未睜，一副赤子純真之相。末學心中暗自思維，此乃過去佛耶，現在佛耶，未來佛耶？大殿正中即是千手千眼觀音菩薩像，約有數人高，雕刻精美，恩威畢具。在末學左側，是一少年，頭髮挑染為黃色，然拜佛時 姿勢熟捻，如一老修行，想必父母必定使其早熏佛法。末學右側是一西方人士，褐髮碧眼，然一稱一拜之間，甚有章法，十分嚴謹。聽其發音，清楚準確，似乎熟悉中文。末學隨大眾拜念一支香，依舊是腰酸腿痛不提。

拜畢，末學與友人驅車恭送法師前往舊金山國際機場。法師應南亞一佛教組織之邀，前往亞洲宣講《華嚴經》兩月。其後，余等又由舊金山機場返回沙加緬度市，一路風馳電掣，天色漸暗，待至旅館，已十點矣。於旅館及歸途中草就此文，以為紀念。

of good quality water—sweet and pure. Layman Wang then led us to visit the site for the future Buddha Hall, which is located in an ideal geomantic area. But the causes and conditions have not ripened, so the construction has not yet begun. From a distance, we could see a donkey standing in the field. Layman Wang told us that someone set it free during a Life Liberation Ceremony at CTTB. Originally, there were two donkeys, which were said to have been disciples of Ven. Master Hua in their past lives. However, one had passed away with this one still surviving.

We also visited Instilling Goodness Elementary School, which is just the same as the American schools outside. However, the schools here emphasize the moral teachings from both Buddhism and Confucian traditions. If students are under twelve years old, they must be accompanied by their parents or guardians. After they reach twelve years old, then they can become boarding students. I hoped to be blessed by Ven. Master Hua, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas, so that my son and daughter, who are still young, can come to study in the CTTB schools in the future. Then, when they grow up, they will be able to benefit Buddhism and the world.

After taking a rest following our tour, we entered the Buddha Hall prior to the bowing session, so we could find a small space to bow with the assembly during the first bowing period in the afternoon. The Buddha Hall was extraordinary—with numerous statues of Buddhas (approximately 11,000) around every wall. They sat there meditatively with their eyes half open, with a pure facial expression resembling that of a newborn baby. I pondered: Are these the past Buddhas, the present Buddhas, or the future Buddhas? In the center of the Buddha Hall stands a statue of the thousand-hand and thousand-eye Guanyin Bodhisattva, which is approximately the height of two people. The statue was finely carved, the look both awe-inspiring and auspicious.

On my left side stood a young man who had dyed his hair yellow. He resembled an old cultivator when he bowed because the way he bowed demonstrated that he knew this prostration method very well. I thought it must be the case that his parents had sent him to study Buddhism when he was young. On my right side was a westerner who had blond hair and blue eyes. He was extremely vigorous when he chanted the Buddhas' names and bowed to the Buddhas. His pronunciation was clear and accurate. He seemed to be familiar with Chinese. I followed the assembly and bowed that period, with the same problem of leg and back pain—which is needless to mention here.

When we finished the bowing session, my friends and I drove the Dharma Master to San Francisco International Airport. He was going to Southern Asia to lecture on the *Flower Adornment Sutra* for two months. Then we returned to Sacramento from the San Francisco Airport. We drove fast on the way back since the sky was getting dark. It was 10 p.m. by the time we parked at a hotel. In between the trip on the road and my stay at the hotel, I roughly wrote this article as a memoir of our visit to CTTB.