

# 萬佛聖城2024年彌陀誕、佛七側記

## 2024 Amitabha Buddha's Birthday Celebration, Amitabha Session at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

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### 阿彌陀佛聖誕大法會

2024年12月中旬，萬佛聖城所在的瑜伽山谷，連續下雨數日不止。令人欣喜的是，12月15日舉行阿彌陀佛聖誕大法會當天，開始放晴。清晨七時前展開的朝山，是在雨水一再清洗過的路面上舉行。從山門到佛殿的朝山路段，不見任何碎石、雜物，十分乾淨，令人內心也減少煩惱、妄念。「南無阿彌陀佛」的唱誦聲直上雲霄，朝山大眾三步一拜，法喜充滿。歡喜誦經的法師、居士，則在佛殿中，念誦《佛說阿彌陀經》。

萬佛聖城方丈恒律法師在午齋中開示指出，宣公上人經常提醒我們：念佛菩薩，應該為眾生念，而不是為自己念。極樂世界中的諸上善人，就

### Amitabha Buddha's Birthday Celebration

A few days before mid-December 2024, there was continuous rainfall in the Ukaih Valley, where the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) is located. To everyone's delight, the rain stopped on the day celebrating Amitabha Buddha's birthday, December 15. The pre-dawn pilgrimage began at 6:50 a.m. on roads that had been repeatedly washed by rain. The route from the mountain gate to the Buddha Hall was free of debris and stones, symbolizing the purification of the participants' minds from worries and delusions. The chant "Namo Amitabha Buddha" echoed through the clouds as the pilgrims bowed every three steps, filled with Dharma joy.

Meanwhile, the monastics and laypeople who enjoy sutra recitation recited the *Amitabha Sutra* in the Buddha Hall.

During the dharma talks at lunch, Dharma Master Heng Lyu, the abbot of CTTB, reminded everyone of Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's teaching: recite the Buddha's name for the sake of

是時時希望眾生安樂，時時幫助眾生安樂的人。我們若這樣幫助眾生，善根福德因緣必能增長，必能往生西方極樂世界。因此，當我們對別人說「阿彌陀佛」時，不僅是打招呼，而且是希望對方壽命無量、智慧光明無量的誠摯祝福。

恒律法師向大家拜早年，祝福大家在蛇年裏，具足「捨無量心」，以平常心面對一切，做個快樂的念佛人。

比丘近性法師表示，在念佛方面，宣公上人教導我們首先要專一，正如上人偈頌所說：

念佛能念無間斷，口念彌陀打成片  
雜念不生得三昧，往生淨土定有盼  
終日厭煩娑婆苦，纔將紅塵心念淡  
求生極樂意念重，放下染念歸淨念。

〈大勢至念佛圓通章〉也說：「都攝六根，淨念相繼」；觀世音菩薩耳根圓通的訣竅在於「反聞聞自性，性成無上道」。因此，成就聖道或墮於三途六道，端看我們一念心性。近性法師建議大家背誦〈淨土文〉，每天隨文入觀，深植八識田中，「這樣我們念佛、持佛名號，就有很大的力量。」

比丘尼恒頤法師引用宣公上人法語，勉勵大家說，極樂世界就是你我眾生本來的真心，一念迴光就是極樂世界。當我們在念「南無阿彌陀佛」，這就是每一個人造就自己的極樂世界。能夠將把染污心去了，私欲雜念斷盡，沒有妒忌心、障礙心、自私心、利己心、學菩薩利人，覺悟一切眾生，這就是極樂世界現前了。所以極樂在吾邊，不須向外去找。讓我們精進前進，把佛號念到充滿三千大千世界。各個成就自己的極樂世界！

all beings, not just for oneself. The noble beings in the Pure Land continually wish for the happiness of all beings who they help to achieve peace and joy. If we assist others in this way, our roots of goodness and blessings will grow, and we will surely be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Therefore, when we say “Amitabha Buddha” to others, it is not just a greeting but a sincere wish for their long life and bright wisdom.

Dharma Master Heng Lyu wished everyone an early Happy New Year, urging them to cultivate the boundless mind, face everything with equanimity, and become happy practitioners of Buddha recitation.

Bhikshu Jin Xing expressed that in terms of Buddha recitation, Venerable Master Hsuan Hua taught us to focus single-mindedly. His verse says:

*If in reciting the Buddha's name you can recite without a break,  
While your mouth is reciting "Amitabha," you'll become one with  
him.*

*When confused thoughts do not arise, one attains samadhi,  
And will certainly have hopes to be reborn in the Pure Land.  
All day long you should grow weary of Saha's pain,  
And lessen your desires for the red dust.*

*Instead, strengthen your intent to seek rebirth in the Pure Land.  
Put down defiled thoughts: just that is pure thought.*

Great Strength Bodhisattva's method of Buddha recitation in the “Perfect Penetration of Pure Contemplation” also says, “Collect all six faculties, and pure thoughts will continuously follow.” Guanyin Bodhisattva's “Perfect Penetration of the Ear” teaches: “Turn the hearing inward to listen to the self-nature, and nature will become the supreme path.” Therefore, whether we achieve the holy paths or fall into the three evil paths and six realms depends on our single thought. Bhikshu Jin Xing suggested memorizing the “Pure Land Text,” contemplating its meaning daily to plant it deeply in the eighth consciousness. “In this way, our Buddha recitation will have great power.”

Bhikshuni Heng Yi encouraged everyone with Venerable Master Hua's words: “The Pure Land is your original true mind; one thought turning inward is the Pure Land. When we recite ‘Namo Amitabha Buddha,’ we create our own Pure Land. If we remove polluted thoughts, cut off selfish desires and scattered thoughts, eliminate jealousy and obstacles, and practice the Bodhisattva way of benefiting others, we will see the Pure Land

阿彌陀佛聖誕法會當天下午舉行三皈五戒，參加的二十餘人來自世界各地。從美國密西根州前來的姜天煜，原本看到機票價格是去年同期的三倍，就想放棄這次的佛七。但這次彌陀誕法會安排了三皈五戒，她想來想去，最終決定把握機會。不僅趕上三皈五戒，還在當天清晨受了八關齋戒，其中的要求之一是「不可一日一夜起世俗想」，雖然不易做到，但認真受戒後，她體會到攝心正念的力量，深感不虛此行。

### 佛七（2024年12月15日-21日）

舉行三皈五戒的同時，萬佛殿也展開佛七。大眾同誦《阿彌陀經》，並持誦佛號。今年參加佛七的大眾，分別來自亞洲、北美、歐洲等地。其中數十人是透過法界佛教大學推廣部報名參加。

波蘭裔比丘近威法師十六年前還是在家人時，第一次到萬佛聖城參加打七，就是彌陀七。當時在中文念誦《阿彌陀經》時，他頂多只能跟著念三行；而且心中還有「怪物」出現，讓他很吃不消。十多年來，他不但已跟得上中文念誦，還和近傳法師一起，在萬佛聖城的觀音七中，帶領大眾以中文念誦〈普門品〉。近威法師由衷表示，感恩在上人法脈下出家，也對所有成就這次的佛七的人，表示感恩。

正在新澤西州攻讀氣候科學與政策博士學位的呂北辰，是第一次參加佛七。佛七期間的寒冬，讓他想起洞山禪師答覆人家詢問如何避寒暑時所說的「熱時熱煞閻黎、寒時寒煞閻黎」，呂北辰忽然明白言下之意就是「日日是好日」，而這個「好日」是在每個念頭中。

旅居洛杉磯的韓裔李貞姬則說，疫情期間，萬佛聖城曾封城三年，讓她深深感受親近三寶的重要。今年佛七，她曾找人同行。有些佛友表示，上網參加佛七更方便。但李貞姬舉例說，如果你的

manifest before us. Thus, the Pure Land is within us and not to be sought outside. Let us strive diligently to fill the three thousand great thousand worlds with the Buddha's name. Each of us will realize our Pure Land!"

In the afternoon, the Three Refuges and Five Precepts ceremony was held, attended by more than twenty people from around the world. Tianyu Jiang from Michigan, USA, initially hesitated to attend the Amitabha Session due to the tripling of airfare compared to the previous year. However, the arrangement of the Three Refuges and Five Precepts ceremony changed her mind, and she decided to come. She not only received the Three Refuges and Five Precepts but also took the Eight Precepts at dawn, which include the requirement to avoid worldly thoughts for a day and night. Although challenging, she felt the power of focused mindfulness after sincerely taking the precepts and found the trip worthwhile.

### Amitabha Session (Dec 15-21, 2024)

The Amitabha Session also commenced at the Hall of Ten Thousand Buddhas. The participants recited the *Amitabha Sutra* together and chanted the Buddha's name. This year's participants came from Asia, North America, and Europe. Several dozen people signed up through the Dharma Realm Buddhist University's Extension Division.

Bhikshu Jin Wei, originally from Poland, first attended a session at CTTB sixteen years ago as a layperson, and it was an Amitabha Session. At that time, he could only follow three lines when reciting the *Amitabha Sutra* in Chinese, and then he got lost. He was also overwhelmed by the "beasts" that appeared in his mind. Over the years, not only has he been able to keep up with the Chinese recitation, but he has also led the recitation of the "Universal Door Chapter" in Chinese during the Guanyin Session at CTTB together with Bhikshu Jin Chuan. Bhikshu Jin Wei expressed his deep gratitude for being able to ordain under the Dharma lineage of Venerable Master Hua and thanked everyone who contributed to this Amitabha Session.

Lu Beichen, who is pursuing a PhD in Climate Science and Policy in New Jersey, participated in the Amitabha Session for the first time. The cold winter during the session reminded him of Chan Master Dongshan's reply to a question about how to avoid cold and heat: "When it's hot, just let it burn;

父母在國外，而你用手機打電話問候，或者你親自去看他們，看看他們需要什麼。這兩種方式，或許關懷的心意是相同的，但感受可不一樣。李貞姬認為，在道場中參加佛七，比上網參加更法喜。

來自中國的王親誠，以前對「念佛法門」完全沒概念，只念誦過《地藏經》。來到萬佛聖城參加彌陀七，讓她明白念誦「阿彌陀佛」聖號，阿彌陀佛就會來到我們身邊，而阿彌陀佛其實就是我們的自性。參加佛七，她感覺平日散亂的心收斂不少。她在不知不覺中，已經能背誦80%的經文。

來自北歐挪威的桑親智，曾於2023年，應邀參加挪威一座越南廟的念佛法會。那是他生平第一次念佛，念得十分法喜，別人都是輪班念誦，只有他念佛一整夜也不覺得累。這回在萬佛聖城參加佛七，連著七天都和大眾一同誦經、持誦佛號，實在是太美好了。桑親智特別寫了一首詩，最後一段如下：

佛光輝煌無上莊嚴，  
 全身彌陀遍灑甘露，  
 熄滅一切世俗欲求。  
 今得經冠本師恩德，  
 生死不見解脫世間。  
 一切束縛善者能破，  
 淨土之道導向西方。

☞待續

when it's cold, just let it freeze.” Lu Beichen suddenly realized that the underlying meaning was “every day is a good day,” and this “good day” is in every single thought.

Lee Zenzi, of Korean descent living in Los Angeles, mentioned that during the pandemic, CTTB was closed for three years, making her deeply appreciate the importance of being close to the Triple Jewel. This year, she tried to find companions to join her for the Amitabha Session. Some Buddhist friends said it was more convenient to participate online, but Lee Zenzi gave an example: If your parents are abroad, and you call them on the phone to ask how they are, or you visit them in person to see what they need, the intention might be the same, but the experience is different. Lee Zenzi believes that participating in Amitabha Session at the monastery brings more Dharma joy than participating online.

Wang Qincheng from China had no previous concept of the “Buddha Recitation Method” and had only recited the *Earth Store Sutra*. Participating in the Amitabha Session at CTTB made her realize that when reciting “Amitabha Buddha,” Amitabha comes to our side, and Amitabha is actually our true nature. Through the Amitabha Session, she felt her normally scattered mind becoming more focused. She unexpectedly found herself able to recite 80% of the sutra by heart.

Adrian Samuelsberg from Norway had his first experience of Buddha recitation in 2023 when he was invited to attend an Amitabha recitation event at a Vietnamese temple in Norway. He found great Dharma joy in reciting the Buddha's name, while others took turns to chant, he recited all night without feeling tired. Participating in the Amitabha Session at CTTB, reciting *Amitabha Sutra*, and chanting the Buddha's name with everyone for seven consecutive days was truly wonderful. He wrote a poem, and the last stanza goes thus:

*Supreme of all spiritual glories  
 The golden body of Amitayus  
 He showers the world with oceans of ambrosia  
 And quenches the fires of all earthly passion  
 Now we have been crowned with this infinite sutra  
 By our fundamental teacher Shakyamuni  
 All death touches here; see us no longer  
 All that is gone; hold us no more  
 And bonds and chains of this world may break  
 For a good man or woman whom this sutra adorns.*

☞To be continued

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