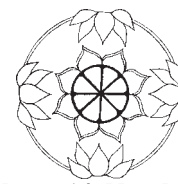


Spring 2004

Sākyadhītā

International Association
of
Buddhist Women



Volume 14, Number 1

8TH SAKYADHITA CONFERENCE UPDATE

Plans for the 8th Sakyadhita Conference, to be held in Seoul, Korea, from June 27 to July 2, 2004, are well under way. A roster of excellent speakers makes for a very exciting program and registrations are flowing in from countries around the world. This conference promises to bring together participants from almost 30 countries, as far flung as Sweden, Bangladesh, and Mexico.

June 27 Morning

Opening Ceremony

Drumming, Bell

- Kwangwu Sunim: Words of Welcome
- Anne Carolyn Klein: "Women and the Globalization of Buddhism"
- Paula Arai: "Healing Buddhist Women"

June 27 Afternoon

- Seoul City Tour
- Welcome Reception
Dinner and Cultural Program
(Korean Bhikkhuni Association)

June 28 Morning

Buddhist Women of Korea

- Gyehwan Sunim: "Activities of Korean Buddhist Nuns: An Historical Review"
- Lee-Chang Sook: "Activities of Korean Buddhist Laywomen: An Historical Review"
- Il Jin Sunim: "Basic Training for Korean Buddhist Nuns"
- Woon Wul Sunim: "Meditation Practice in Korean Seon Monasteries for Nuns"
- Sang Duck Sunim: "Social Welfare Activities of Korean Buddhist Laywomen"
- Daewon Sunim: "Media Resources for Teaching Buddhism to Children"
- Jinmyung Sunim: "Propagating Buddhism through the Mass Media in Korea"
- Gi Hong Sunim: "Korean Buddhist Nuns and Hospice Work"

June 28 Afternoon

Buddhist Women of the World

- Martine Batchelor: "Buddhist Women and a Compassionate Society"
- Peou Vanna: "Quiet Feminist Movement in Cambodia"



- Ranjani de Silva: "Bhikkhunis as Change Agents in Sri Lankan Society"
- Lu Hwei-syin: "Life Views of the Engaged Bodhisattva among Tsuchi Women in Taiwan"
- Tomomi Ito: "Ordained Women in Yellow Robes: Introduction to an Unfamiliar 'Tradition' in Contemporary Thailand"
- Tenzin Lhadron: "Buddhist Women of Zangskar"
- Ivette Vargas: "Dge slong ma Dpal mo: A Legend and her Ongoing Practice"
- Nhu Nguyet: "Education of the Vietnamese Bikkhuni Sangha in Modern Times"
- Karuna Dharma: "Buddhist Women's Contributions in the West"

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- ◆ 8th Sakyadhita Conference Update
- ◆ News Reports from Korea
 - ◆ Documenting Korean Buddhist Women's History
 - ◆ A Nun's Fasting Practice and a Salamander Lawsuit
 - ◆ Korea in Legend and History
 - ◆ Buddhists in North Korea Support the Revival of the Bhiksuni Sangha
- ◆ Life in a Japanese Zen Monastery

- ◆ Anita Mui: Death of a Buddhist Superstar
- ◆ Nuns and Society in Sri Lanka
- ◆ Swimming the Road to Morang
- ◆ New Peacebuilding Seminars in Dharamsala
- ◆ Five Questions: Minister Symbol of Future for Soto Zen
- ◆ International Buddhist Women Meet in Sri Lanka

June 29 Morning

Meditation Practices

- Il Jung An: "Samatha and Vipassana Meditation in the Theravada Tradition"
- Hwang Sookyung: "Non-Dual Practice of Loving Kindness and Compassion"
- Toong Herng Shih: "The Animitta Cetosamadhi: A Comparative Study Based on the Pali Nikayas and Chinese Agamas"
- Thea Mohr: "Is Karuna an Emotion? Comparing Asian and Western Approaches"

June 29 Afternoon

Dharma and Discipline

- Dong Anh: "The Education and Training of Laywomen and Nuns"
- Tenzin Palmo: "Practice of the Precepts: Lay and Monastic"
- Gioi Huong: "Buddhist Women and Discipline"
- Jampa Tsedroen: "Bhiksuni Ordination"

June 30 Morning

Buddhist Education

- Kim Jongmyung: "In Pursuit of New Buddhist Practices for Laywomen in Korea"
- Sukdham (Inyoung Chung): "Myoom Sunim's Buddhist Monastic Education"
- Stefania Travagnin: "Master Yinshun and Buddhist Women in Taiwan: Fayuan and Yitong Nunneries: Disciples of Guanyin in Northwest Taiwan"
- Eliana Morris: "Teaching Dharma to Children"
- Karma Lekshe Tsomo: "A Different Dharma? Teaching Buddhism in the United States"

June 30 Afternoon

Buddhist Monastic Training

- Varaporn Chamsanit: "Settling the Issue of Buddhist Women's Monasticism in Thailand: Why is It So Difficult?"
- Hyangsoon Yi: "Pomunjong and Hanmaum Sonwon: New Monastic Paths in Contemporary Korea"
- Kusuma Devendra: "Monastic Training for Nuns in Sri Lanka"
- Dhammananda: "Training Newly-Ordained Bhikkhunis in the Theravada Tradition: Case Study of Songdhammakalyani Temple Thailand 2003"

July 1 Morning

Everyday Practice

- Anne Mahoney: "Dhamma in Everyday Life"
- Lieu Phap: "Dhamma in Daily Life: How to Deal with Anger"
- Sabita Dhakwa Shakya: "Dhamma in Everyday Life"
- Shobha Rani Dash: "Food of Dharma: Rituals at Meals and in the Kitchen: A Case Study of Dongein Imperial Nunnery of Japan"
- Junya Pookayaporn: "Buddhist Nuns as Community Mentors"

July 1 Afternoon

Buddhist Practice and Women's Issues

- I-li Yang: "How Powerful are Women?"
- Nivedita Kumari Mishra: "Can Women Become Enlightened? How Do We Do It?"
- Sumon Tuladhar: "The Role of Buddhist Nuns in Social Change in Nepal: Implications for Gender Parity"
- Claudia Wenzel: "Nuns and Laywomen of the Chinese Teaching of the Three Levels: A Historical Perspective on Lay Status"
- Andrea Loseries_Leick: "Household and Cremation Ground Practices of Tantric Buddhist Women"

July 2 Morning

Engaged Buddhist Practice

- Monica Lindberg Falk: "A Silent Undercurrent: The Significance

of Nuns' Socially Engaged Buddhist Practice in Thailand"

- Insook Kim: "NGOs: Organizing for Social Change"
- Mi Kyung Lee: "Research on Buddhism Facilities for the Social Reinstatement of Juveniles Selling Sex"
- Trina Nahm-Mijo: "Engaged Buddhism and Community Action"
- Elise Anne DeVido: "Mapping the Trajectories of 'Engaged Buddhism' in Taiwan and Southeast Asia"

July 2 Afternoon

Buddhism Today

- Oksun An: "On Equality of Beings in Buddhist Ecology"
- Di Cousens: "The Publication of 'Buddhist Care for the Dying'"
- Yuchen Li: "The Path to Enlightenment: Autobiographies of Two Contemporary Taiwanese Bhiksunis"
- Jeong Hee Kim: "Buddhist Ethics and Bio-Feminism"
- Katarina Plank: "Women's Refuge in Sweden"
- Rita Gross: "Buddhist Women as Leaders and Teachers of Dharma"

Cultural Programs:

- Bumpae (traditional Korean hymns)
- Tibetan songs by Kelsang Chukie Tethong
- The Nirvana Philharmonic Orchestra
- Samsa (music by nuns of the Buddhist, Christian, and Won Buddhist traditions)
- Flute by Ngawang Khechog
- Jen Dance by Professor Sun Ok Lee
- Sumulnori (traditional Korean music)
- Chaneung Park: P'ansori
- Trina Nahm Mijo: "Two Minds, One Heart"
- A Million Voices One Peace

Exhibitions:

- Tea Ceremony
- Dyeing of the Indigo Plant
- Tongmun Gasaya (traditional Korean robes)
- Korean Papermaking
- Korean Woodcut Prints
- Photo Exhibit of Korean Temples & Nuns
- Photo Exhibit of Himalayan Women

Morning meditations led by noted teachers of the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Theravada, Tibetan, and Vietnamese traditions will be an opportunity to experience the diversity and similarity of the Buddhist traditions. Evening chanting from all these traditions will provide insight into the languages and liturgies of these traditions.

The deadline for conference registration is May 15, 2004. Conference information and the registration form are available online at: www.sakyadhita.org. Another terrific site, in Korean and English, is: <http://seoul-sakyadhita.org>. For further information, write: sakyadhita@mac.com. **Hope to see you at the conference!**



LIFE IN A JAPANESE ZEN MONASTERY

by Sensei Anne Seisen Saunders

I am writing this from Zuioji Monastery, located in Niihama City, Japan. Six Western Soto Zen teachers are here attending a conference (called Tokubetsu) as the guests of Soto Zen Headquarters in Japan. We are following the same practice schedule as the Zuioji monks, except that we attend talks while the monks do work practice.

Most of my Zen training was done at Zen Center of Los Angeles and Zen Mountain Center with Hakuyu Maezumi Roshi. It is amazing for me to practice in a Soto Zen monastery in Japan and directly experience the roots of the practice that Maezumi Roshi introduced to the United States. At this point, I am doing “Bearing Witness” practice – simply being the experience – so I don’t have many impressions about Japanese monastic practice. I would, however, like to give you a little idea of what life is like in a Japanese monastery.

I learned that Zuioji is considered one of the most traditional of the training centers here in Japan. In fact, I often feel like I’ve been transported back in time to medieval Japan. I am sharing a room with my Dharma sister Sensei Enkyo O’Hara from the Village Zendo in New York. We are the only women here, among over 40 practitioners.

The day starts at 3:30 am. Wake-up is actually later than 3:30, but Enkyo and I like to do morning yoga, which is not on the schedule. At 4:20, we sit one period of *zazen*, for about an hour, and then have a chanting service that lasts for about 40 minutes. *Zazen* is held in the *sodo* (*zendo*) where the monks also sleep. (Tokubetsu participants have our own housing.) There are no *zabutons*, so we sit with only a *zafu* on *tatami*, which gets harder and harder as the sitting period advances. During the chanting services, we kneel (*seiza*) on *tatami* without a cushion. This is a real killer for my legs, which are slowly learning how to be a chair.

Breakfast is taken in the *sodo*, in *oriyoki* style (with formal eating bowls). The food here is incredibly good, especially for people like me who are carb addicts. Sometimes we have three potato dishes in one meal or both noodles and rice with a potato dish and tempura. There is a lot of fruit and more green vegetables than I expected. Sensei and I asked to have our portions cut in half (the young monks eat voraciously) and still I’m sure I will be a larger person in more ways than spiritually by the time I return home.

After breakfast, we spend half an hour cleaning our housing. Then there is a formal tea ceremony with the abbot and a reading from Dogen Zenji. The tea ceremony is quite elaborate and beautiful. Each person receives a sweet cake and cup of tea. The tea ceremony involves another 30 minutes in *seiza* on the *tatami*. We have one or two talks a day, presented by speakers who have been brought in especially for us by the Soto school headquarters. The speakers are excellent and have helped us to put our experience in context, according to the teachings of the Soto school.

We are also learning some of the official duties in chanting services. The service hall is at least 20 times bigger than the small Buddha Hall back home, so it is a wonderful experience to participate on such a grand scale. I had no idea that it was possible to chant as much as the monks of Zuioji do every day. We chant the *Shobogenzo*, the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Lotus Sutra*, and many other texts. The chanting is all in Japanese, and I often wish that I could understand better what we are chanting.

During our work practice, we help set up lunch and dinner in a dining room off the kitchen. We also spend some time weeding the *daikon* (white radish) patch. The monks who live here are very kind to us. They are concerned that we like the food, are warm enough, and don’t get too tired. We are enjoying trying out our Japanese on them.

We have a bath every evening. Sensei and I are provided with a private bath. Every evening there is a talk or *zazen* and then bedtime

at 9 pm.

My main impression of Zuioji right now is how kind the abbot, senior teachers, and monks are to each other. There is a gentle caring that I was not expecting in a traditional monastery. There is less *zazen* and more chanting than in my experience of Western intensive practice. Still, I am experiencing the same kind of liberation and insight that comes from following a strictly regimented schedule.

The tightly regulated schedule is a great opportunity for spiritual awakening, because we can see the ideas and judgments that mask our true nature. A retreat like this brings up many questions. The question I have is how to balance intensive Zen practice with practices of expanding and relaxing into the world. It seems to me that opening the heart/mind involves both restriction and expansion.

There are also the questions that we have in the West – about monastic and lay practice, monastic and engaged practice, interfaith practice, and so on. I feel very fortunate to have this opportunity to experience traditional practice. I am sure that reflection on my time at Zuioji will help to clarify many of these issues.

Later, after I first submitted this article, we participated in a *rohatsu sesshin* (intensive retreat) at Zuioji monastery. *Rohatsu sesshin* commemorates the enlightenment of the Buddha and is traditionally one of the most rigorous practice times for Zen Buddhists. I went into *rohatsu* thinking, “Thank goodness now we will get to do a lot of crossed-legged *zazen* and get a break from all the *seiza*.” Half-way into *rohatsu*, I was looking forward to *seiza*. The schedule was intense. We woke up at 2:30am (to fit in yoga), then did *zazen* from 3:10am to 9pm in the evening. There was a half-hour work period to clean our housing and an hour break after lunch. Otherwise, we were sitting crossed-legged for hour-long periods, with just a short time for walking in-between. This was definitely the most intense time of *zazen* I have ever experienced.

Spending this amount of time in an extremely tight container took me into my personal wounds and barriers in a deeper way than I have ever experienced. I had a particularly intense experience of the way I separate myself from others through judgment and feelings of superiority. Living in such close contact with many people, coupled with the power of *zazen*, helped to expose even more deeply my issues of estrangement and separation. It is this false sense of separateness that keeps me from the experience of the Buddha, which is the oneness and interconnectedness of all things.

The practice was very difficult for this Westerner, accustomed as I am to 30-minute periods of *zazen* and 3 or 4 hours a day of non-*zazen* time. I kept waiting for the monks to do the harsh and mean things I expected in Japanese monasteries, but that never happened. At one point I was in such physical pain that I had completely left any semblance of *zazen* and just sort of curled up at my place – a little ball of misery. At that point, one of the young monks came up and tapped me on the shoulder. I thought, “This is it. This is where I get taken to a little room and beaten for hours since I can’t do *zazen*.” Instead, the monk said, “Please come now. We’ve prepared your bath early today.” So off Enkyo and I went, to have a hot bath and miss one hour of *zazen*.

I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to practice at Zuioji. I was especially touched by the kindness and openness of the monks and teachers who supported us. They completely opened their hearts and gave everything. I left with deeper insight into myself and a renewed appreciation for the roots of this wonderful practice that is seeding in the West.

Sensei Anne Seisen Saunders is the head teacher of Sweetwater Zen Center near San Diego (Website: www.swzc.org). She practiced for 20 years with Maezumi Roshi, founder of the White Plum lineage, and is a successor of Roshi Bernie Glassman, co-founder of the Peacemaker Order and Roshi Junyu Kuroda, Abbot of Kirigayaji Temple in Japan.

NEWS FROM KOREA

DOCUMENTING KOREAN BUDDHIST WOMEN'S HISTORY

The year 2003 was a monumental year for Korean *bhikkhunis* and laywomen. On August 15, a sourcebook on Korean *bhikkhunis* and laywomen was published in 12 volumes and about 40,000 pages. It contains numerous short articles and scholarly papers, and 2500 reports about Korean Buddhist nuns. It is a collection of materials on Korean nuns' practice, thought, writings, and socially engaged activities. It is also a collection of Korean laywomen's Buddhist feminist writings in modern times.

The six volumes, collectively titled *A Sourcebook of Korean Buddhist Nuns of Modern Times*, includes all news reports that have appeared in Buddhist newspapers from 1961 to 2000. The first part contains all reports related to nuns from Buddhist newspapers between 1896 and 1960. The second part contains all reports from the daily newspapers from 1995 to 2000. All the reports related to nuns are classified into five divisions and ten topics. The other six volumes, titled *Bhikkhunis and Laywomen in Buddhism*, consists of short articles and scholarly papers about Buddhist feminism. The short articles are classified into sections about Buddhist nuns, laywomen, and Korean Buddhist nuns. The scholarly articles are classified into Korean *bhikkhunis*, women in Buddhism, *bhikkhunis*, enlightenment for women, M.A theses, and PhD dissertations.

This publication was possible due to the extraordinary efforts of Bongak Sunim, the director of the Korean Bhikkhuni Studies Institute, and 58 young student nuns over the last five years. During that time, they worked in a small office without any holidays and encountered numerous difficulties. The Institute was not officially approved by the university and the researchers lacked funds for expenses. They visited temples all over the country, traveling through rough mountains, to conduct interviews. They did not hesitate to make a long, hard journey for even for a single interview. Even then, they sometimes returned empty-handed, because the nuns in the rough mountains did not want to be interviewed. Joyfully accepting all these difficulties, they finally gathered 300 tapes of interviews. They also had to visit libraries to copy materials, but finding and collecting these materials was not always easy. Rummaging through copious newspaper files, they called it "a lonely search for hidden treasures." All these hardships were happily undertaken, because they could meet senior nuns and learn about their great lives and practice as they worked. From the beginning to the end of the project, they considered it a special opportunity for learning and practice.

Although this monumental achievement was accomplished by the director of the Institute, Bongak Sunim, and her staff of young student nuns, the support given by Korean nuns throughout the nation cannot be overlooked. It can be said that this achievement was accomplished by all 7,000 Korean Buddhist nuns.

This is the first publication of its kind ever to appear in the world throughout Buddhist history, particularly Buddhist women's history. Koreans think that the publication will play an important role for scholars who are interested in Korean Buddhist feminism. It will also increase understanding about the unique tradition of Korean nuns. It will be particularly helpful for those who wish to learn more about Korean nuns' thinking, activities, and practice in modern times.

The head of the Institute, Bongak Sunim, and the young student nuns continue their work collecting records on Korean Buddhist nuns. After completing the present collection, they began collecting materials from the Korean classical texts written in the ancient times. Within three or four years, another sourcebook of these materials will be published. The 300 taped interviews will also soon be transcribed in order to publish books about the lives and teachings of great Korean Buddhist nuns. Bongak Sunim's goal is to publish them before the 2004 Sakyadhita Conference in Seoul.

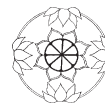
A NUN'S FASTING PRACTICE AND A SALAMANDER LAWSUIT

On November 27, a Korean Buddhist nun named Jiyul Sunim finished a 45-day fast aimed at protecting Mt. Chonsong, which is about to be destroyed to construct an express railway line. Mt. Chonsong has been a place for Buddhist practice and a habitat for many wild animals. Jiyul Sunim has been fighting for a long time to stop the destruction, ever since the government plans were revealed. Her 45-day fast was just one of her activities to save Mt. Chongong. She planned to continue her fast until the Korean government agreed to stop construction of the express railway.

Many people thought that Jiyul Sunim's life was in danger. Korean Buddhists, environmentalists, and other believers gathered and requested her to discontinue the fast. But she did not heed them and continues, without concern for life. Instead, she said that there is no difference between her life and the life of the wild animals on Mt. Chonsung, and her death is no different than theirs. She also said that her fast was a way to repent for her slothful practice and whatever life she may have destroyed. This, we know, is not true. Instead, she did it because modern people are in the habit of taking life every day and never even think about it.

Jiyul Sunim finally discontinued her fast when people prepared a lawsuit for salamanders living on Mt. Chonsung. A small movement began when Koreans began to sign their names to bring a lawsuit against the Korean government. In this campaign, people sign their names to protest the destruction of the salamanders' habitat and advocate for their lives. Already more than 175,000 people are participating in this movement. A legal case to protect the salamanders, called the Salamander Lawsuit, is presently underway in Korea.

Jiyul Sunim truly practices compassion toward all life.



KOREA IN LEGEND AND HISTORY

According to Korean legend, the first acknowledged kingdom in Korea emerged in 2333 BCE. Tan'gun Wang'gom, the first great ruler of Korea, established his capital at Asadal (now P'yong'yang). He called his kingdom Choson, which means "Land of the Morning Calm." Tangun was born to the god-king Hwanung, who arrived on earth with an entourage and magical powers, wishing to rule the human world. Upon meeting a bear and a tiger who both wished to become human, Hwanung promised that, if they could remain in a cave and eat only garlic and mugwort for 100 days, he would grant them their wish. The tiger failed, but the bear endured the task and was transformed into a woman. Hwanung and the bear-woman married and begot Tangun in 2333 BCE. Koreans celebrate the birth of Tangun as the birth of the Korean race. Each year, on October 3, Koreans celebrate National Foundation Day as a public holiday.

In 1910, at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese war, the Korean peninsula came under the domination of the Japanese. After Japan's defeat in World War II in 1947, Korea was divided along the 38th parallel, with the U.S.S.R. in control of the north and the United States in control of the south. Although this division was supposed to be temporary and the U.N. hoped to create a united, independent Korea, by 1948 two separate nations had emerged, dividing millions of families. Tensions between the north and south led to the Korean War in 1950 and created a military stalemate that has persisted until today. In recent years, efforts to ease tensions have united a number of families, chosen by lottery. Koreans on both sides continue to hope and pray for the unification of their country. In 2002, a delegation of Buddhist nuns visited North Korea for the first time.



BUDDHISTS IN NORTH KOREA SUPPORT THE REVIVAL OF THE BHIKSUNI SANGHA

by Nam Sooyoun

Ven. Sangdok, the director of Oksu Social Welfare Center in Seoul, attended National Foundation Day, the joint South-North anniversary of Korea in P'yongyang with four nuns from South Korea. North Korean Buddhists who saw nuns for the first time were keenly interested in women's renunciation of the lay life.

Ven. Sangdok had a meeting with high-ranking members of Choson Pulyodo Yongmaeng (Choson Union of North Korean Buddhists). They told her that there is no law that discriminates or prohibits a woman from becoming a Buddhist nun in North Korea, but so far no woman has wanted to become a nun. Thus, at present there are no Buddhist nuns in North Korea. Ven. Sangdok told them that if women in North Korea wish to become Buddhist nuns, members of the National Bhikkhuni Association of South Korea are eager to help them receive training, education, and ordination. The women showed a keen interest in Ven. Sangdok's suggestions.

Ven. Sangdok believes that the visit she made with four other nuns was a good opportunity for the North Korean Buddhist community to realize the important role of nuns. She hopes that more South Korean nuns will visit North Korea and thereby create an atmosphere for the revival of the Bhiksuni Sangha in North Korea.

Reprinted from Boeposinmun (Dharma Weekly Newspaper), October 15, 2003. Translated by Sukdham Sunim (Inyoung Chung).

ANITA MUI: DEATH OF A BUDDHIST SUPERSTAR by Karma Lekshe Tsomo

It may come as a surprise to learn that many of Hong Kong's most famous superstars are Buddhists. Entertainers and media stars exert a great influence on their fans these days and in Hong Kong this influence is very positive. The impact of the Hong Kong stars is felt in Chinese communities around the world, including Singapore, Taiwan, North America, Europe, and mainland China, especially among the youth. Perhaps the most well-loved star of all was Anita Mui.

Her death on December 30, 2003, at just 40 years old, shook the Hong Kong entertainment world. The beloved pop singer and actress learned that she had cancer two years before her death, but decided against surgery. In September, while in Malaysia, alongside Michelle Yeoh and Alan Tam, she announced that she had cervical cancer. Her fans were stunned when her condition suddenly worsened and she was rushed to the hospital in Hong Kong on Dec. 30. She slipped into a coma and later died later that day. A crowd of 20,000 mourners lined the streets of Hong Kong to offer wreaths, throw flowers, and pay their last respects as her body was taken for cremated at Cape Colison crematorium in Hong Kong on January 12, 2003.

Mui was not only Hong Kong's best-loved singer and actress, but was also a great philanthropist and democracy advocate. As a result of her talent and popularity, she was very rich and used her wealth to help children, AIDS research, and other charitable causes. She established the Anita Mui Charity Foundation in the early 1990s and donated US\$40 million to build a pool for rescuing fish. Last year she organized a benefit concert and donated all the proceeds to the SARS Foundation for research. A genuine humanist, she also demonstrated for women's rights.

She was also a Buddhist. Her rendition of the *Heart Sutra* became a popular recording in Hong Kong. As she lay dying, Tibetan lamas read the Tibetan Book of the Dead at her bedside. Chinese monks, including Ven. Jie Guang Jang Lao, a leading Buddhist master in Hong Kong, led mourners in



reciting prayers at the funeral. A grand vegetarian feast was served after her funeral.

Anita Mui's entertainment career began when she was still a little girl. She sang opera and pop songs in shows at an amusement park with her sister from the age of five. Her career advanced quickly when, as a teenager, she bested 3,000 contestants in the New Talent Singing Competition. Two years later, in 1984, her song "Homecoming" soared to the top of the charts and she was tagged the "Madonna of Asia." Over a period of 20 years, she released 40 albums, had a stream of hits, and received numerous awards. As an actress, she starred in over 45 films – action, romance, and comedy. Her outrageous wardrobe and flamboyant stage presence crossed all boundaries for Chinese female singers.

Fans in Chinese-speaking communities around the world mourned her death. Many of Hong Kong's most famous actors, singers, and TV celebrities stayed overnight at the hospital saying prayers for her until she breathed her last. The last day before she died, she told her followers not to cry or call her name when she died, because she was a Buddhist. Although mourning and loud wailing, calling the name of the dead is a widespread custom in Chinese society in general, Buddhists believe that crying and wailing only strengthens the dead's clinging to self and loved ones, which can impede liberation or a positive rebirth at the time of death. Of the three humans cravings – craving for pleasure, existence, and non-existence – craving for existence can cause one to be reborn again in *samsara* instead of achieving liberation from rebirth.

Mui's funeral was attended by government officials and all the Hong Kong stars. Wu'er Kaixi, a leader of the 1989 pro-democracy uprising in Beijing, for which Mui donated funds, was also among the mourners. The arrival of the casket and the funeral rites were televised. A host of celebrities could be seen bowing, offering incense, and offering their condolences. In accordance with traditional Chinese practices, they offered replicas of all the things Mui might need in the next life. A jumbo jet, boom box, piano, microphone, SUV, and a stadium were all offered to the flames as her body was cremated.

Mui co-starred with film legend Jackie Chan in "Legend of the Drunken Master" and "Rumble in the Bronx." She was awarded the Taiwanese Golden Horse for best actress for her role as a tormented ghost in the film "Rouge." Her co-star in this film was her close friend, the popular actor and singer Leslie Cheung, who tragically



committed suicide last year.

Chan and Michelle Yeoh, the star of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" were both at Anita's bedside when she died. Chan told reporters, "She went peacefully and beautifully. Her own last wish was that her fans and reporters could let her go quietly, not to cry and call out her name." Unfortunately, most of her fans were unable to control their tears. As an expression of mourning, Mui's songs were played on radio stations throughout the Chinese-speaking world.

Mui was not the only Hong Kong entertainer devoted Buddhism. Each year, many popular stars take Buddhist teachings and go to Nepal to do retreats with Sakya Rinpoche. These stars have made huge donations to various Buddhist monasteries in Nepal. This surge of interest by singers and actors has attracted many young people to Buddhism. Chinese speakers respect their stars and are also inclined to respect their religious practices.

Previously in Hong Kong, Buddhism was held at arm's length, associated with superstition and outmoded ways of thinking. Gamblers would cover their eye or even cross the street to avoid seeing monks and nuns, believing that it would bring them bad luck at the race track that day. Influenced by Buddhists in the entertainment industry, today many people in Hong Kong, young and old, embrace their once-neglected Buddhist heritage and take refuge in the Three Jewels, the traditional way of becoming a Buddhist.

The year 2003 was very unlucky for the Hong Kong entertainment world and Buddhist practices were more in evidence than ever. The deaths of three other popular stars – Leslie Cheung, Lok Man, and Jiao Hei, a lay disciple of Dharma Drum Buddhist Association in Taiwan – were all marked by very public Buddhist funeral rites.

Mui's fans admired her courage in the face of adversity as much as her unique talent. Although she lost her father when she was just a child and dropped out of school to support her family, she never caved in, despite the hardships. Many fans took inspiration from her life. At the memorial, fans wore black shirts inscribed: "Cherish the memory of Anita Mui forever." As the coffin arrived at the crematorium, fans threw flowers and some could be heard singing her most popular hits.

by Bhikkhuni Kusuma

The Bhikkhuni Sangha was established in Sri Lanka after Ven. Sanghamitta, daughter of King Asoka of India, arrived in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century BCE. Accompanied by 11 other *bhikkhunis*, she was very well received by King Devanam Piyatissa. Her brother, Mahathera Mahinda, had traveled to Sri Lanka earlier and prepared the ground. The wife of King Devanam's brother, Queen Anula, was the first woman to become a *bhikkhuni* in Sri Lanka.

In the year 434 CE, Chinese chronicles tell us that a group of Sinhalese *bhikkhunis* arrived in southern China via Vietnam. With their help, the *bhikkhuni* order was first established in China. From here, the *bhikkhuni* lineage spread to all parts of China and Korea, surviving in East Asia until the present time, despite all turbulences and wars. In this way, all *bhikkhunis* in these countries today are descendants of the Sri Lankan *bhikkhuni* order.

The *bhikkhuni* order was well accepted in Sri Lankan society and flourished for more than ten centuries. According to historical chronicles, the order was extinguished during the reign of King Mihindu II and the order of monks also disappeared around the 17th or 18th century. The order of monks was later restored via the Siamese and Ramannya lineages from Thailand and Burma. No similar effort was made to restore the *bhikkhuni* order at that time by inviting *bhikkhunis* from East Asia.

Restoring the Bhikkhuni Order

Inspired by the efforts of Sakyadhita, the International Association of Buddhist Women, who held an International Conference in Colombo in 1993 and promoted the re-establishment of the *bhikkhuni* order, a group of ten laywomen and *dasasilmata* (ten-precept nuns) from Sri Lanka requested full ordination. Progressive monks from Sri Lanka arranged for a full ordination of these Sinhalese women in 1996 in Sarnath, India, with the help of the Korean monks and nuns belonging to the Dharmagupta lineage. I had the good karma to lead the team of ten.

Two years later, in 1998, a second full ordination was given to Sinhalese women in Bodhagaya. This ordination ceremony was arranged by Chinese monks and nuns of the Dharmagupta lineage from Taiwan. I participated as an interpreter for the Sri Lanka nuns.

In 1998, after an interruption of more than 1000 years, a full ordination of Sinhalese women was conducted for the first time in Sri Lanka. A ceremony at Dambulla was conducted by Sri Lankan monks in the presence of Sri Lankan *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* of the Dharmagupta lineage. Today there are well over 400 *bhikkhunis* in Sri Lanka who are doing their best to study, practice, found communities, and find their place in Sri Lankan society. Sakyadhita: International Association of Buddhist Women was instrumental in re-establishing the *bhikkhuni* order in Sri Lanka. I was a founding member in 1987 and served for a long time as president of Sakyadhita Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Nuns Today

In contrast to the times when the *bhikkhuni* order was first established under the patronage of King Asoka of India and King Devanam Piyatissa of Sri Lanka, the recently re-established *bhikkhuni* order has not yet received patronage from the state or the monks. The lay society is unprepared or unable to support the *bhikkhuni* order to any great extent as long as the monks who hold the highest positions in the different *nikayas* (monastic orders) are not willing to accept the presence of *bhikkhunis*. The government authorities seem to welcome the *bhikkhunis*, but cannot provide any formal acceptance unless the various *nikayas* agree. Therefore, the newly ordained Bhikkhunis have to patiently forge ahead, win the

acceptance of society through their good practice, and establish good relationships with the people living near their communities.

In the beginning, the ordination of the first ten nuns in Sarnath in 1996 stirred up quite a controversy in the local Sri Lankan papers, with argument for and against the establishment of a *bhikkhuni* order. By now, the controversy has died down. The main objections come from monks who believe that the *bhikkhuni* ordination is a Mahayana ordination and therefore cannot be accepted in Theravada countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand, or Burma. But this view is not tenable, because the Buddha never instituted a Mahayana or Theravada *bhikkhuni* order. The Mahayana tradition is a later historical development. The *bhikkhuni* order that exists today cannot be called either Mahayana or Theravada. There is only one *bhikkhuni* tradition today and it is the same for all traditions worldwide. To become a Mahayana nun, one must receive the addition vows of a bodhisattva. Since the Sinhalese nuns do not receive the bodhisattva vows, the Sinhalese monks who oppose the full ordination of women cannot claim that the *bhikkhunis* are introducing a Mahayana order to a Theravada country.

I studied the Bhikkhuni Vinaya thoroughly before I became ordained and, in fact, submitted my PhD thesis on this topic. I found that the texts of the various Bhikkhuni Vinaya lineages are very similar. The ordination procedures are also similar. What the Sri Lanka *bhikkhunis* received was simply the unbroken lineage, which was actually our own lineage. We do not follow the Mahayana, but follow the Theravada way of wearing the ancient robes. The basis of our ordination is the Pali Vinaya, which requires the participation of ten monks to perform a valid ordination. There are enough progressive monks in Sri Lanka to help the nuns to become fully ordained. There is no need that every monk in the country agree. Recently, several nuns from Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam, and Nepal became fully ordained in Sri Lanka and then returned to their countries.

Unfortunately the Mahanayakas, the hierarchy of monks in Sri Lanka, do not accept this position, so the government is unable to recognize the *bhikkhuni* order formally – for the time being. Thus, the *bhikkhuni* order today does not receive the same sort of patronage as it did in the past. As a result, the nuns do not get the same recognition, facilities, or support for education, temples, and alms that the monks do. The nuns confronted with an uphill task to get the *bhikkhuni* order firmly established and accepted in Sri Lankan society.

So far the response of society on this issue remains non-committal. Unlike Burma and Thailand, Sri Lanka had a flourishing *bhikkhuni* order in the past. For the last 100 years, as in Burma and Thailand, women in Sri Lanka have opted for a religious life as *dasasilmatas* (ten-precept nuns) in Sri Lanka, *tila shin* in Burma, and *mae chee* in Thailand. *Dasasilmatas* dress similarly to *bhikkhunis* in Sri Lanka, though their robe is only a cloth and not the traditional robe. *Dasasilmatas* also do not keep the over 300 Vinaya rules of a *bhikkhuni*. Some consider them neither ordained nor lay. In the Buddha's dispensation there is no marginal category like this, but only the four categories of *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunis*, laymen, and laywomen.

Challenges and Successes

Bhikkhunis nowadays have both positive and negative experiences in relation to monks. Some monks are very supportive, but there are also cases of monks in neighbouring temples who prevent people from going to the nuns' temples. The nuns are asked not to conduct religious programs on full moon days for the public and are not allowed to use a loudspeaker. Some monks seem to be afraid that the laypeople may be more attracted to the nuns' temples and will abandon the monks' temples. The nuns are not allowed to speak over the mass media, on TV or the radio, but must keep a low

profile.

In general, however, women, especially in rural areas, find it easier to approach a *bhikkhuni* with their worldly problems. Women who have been battered by drunken husbands come to *bhikkhunis* and *dasasilmatas* for solace. Here I refer explicitly to the Sakyadhita Training and Meditation Center situated in Gorakana, south of Colombo. The Centre was recently established under the leadership of the current president of Sakyadhita Sri Lanka, Ranjani de Silva, with the help of the Heinrich Boell Foundation that stepped in with material support to finance the construction of buildings with the aim of empowering women. In this Centre, many programs are being conducted to train *bhikkhunis* as trainers in social development work. In addition to following their religious path, they are being trained as social workers, or agents of change in society, to work with the women in their communities. Another aspect of their work is to encourage and support nuns to continue their education at the university level. The stability of the revived *bhikkhuni* order depends on having highly educated teachers among the *bhikkhunis*. Nuns are invited to speak or chant for sick and dying people and to perform chanting and rituals, which are very popular in the villages. In the towns, however, people favor meditation and discourses conducted by *bhikkhunis*.

I personally find it difficult to teach the people who visit the meditation center where I stay, because the monks are in charge and they naturally get first preference. But many women's organizations, schools, hospitals and even the army have invited me to deliver sermons. So, due to the insistence of the lay community, I get the chance to speak. Still, when we visit high monks in their temples, we are not given a seat. We sit on the floor like laypeople, while even the most junior monks are given a chair. I find this situation quite awkward, because formerly as a laywoman and university lecturer, I have taught thousands of monks. But now as a *bhikkhuni*, I do not have the same status as monks. When I was a laywoman, I hosted radio and TV programs for nearly 18 years, but now as a *bhikkhuni* I no longer have access to the public media. A senior monk once remarked that in Taiwan the *bhikkhunis* have the upper hand, that there are fewer *bhikkhus* than *bhikkhunis*, and for this reason the monk's *sasana* (propagation of the teachings) is declining there. Therefore, he concluded, the *bhikkhunis* must not be supported!

Until and unless the government formally sanctions the *bhikkhuni* order, nuns will not get adequate support either from the monks or the laypeople. But, given these circumstances in Sri Lankan society, we *bhikkhunis* very much appreciate the support we already receive from progressive monks and many laypeople. This has given us the courage to go forward.

There is still a need to erect many more training and study centers for nuns in Sri Lanka, in addition to the ongoing operating expenses of the Sakyadhita Training and Meditation Center. I am also making an effort to start a meditation center for women in the center of Colombo, which will also have facilities for teaching nuns. It is necessary to situate this center in Colombo in order to have access to teachers, libraries, and universities. In addition, I have established the Ayya Khema Meditation Center in the countryside outside Colombo especially to meet the needs of Western women who visit Sri Lanka. This center received support from Buddha Haus in Germany and from friends in other Western countries I visited. I had the privilege to accompany Bhikkhuni Ayya Khema as her interpreter when she stayed and gave talks in Sri Lanka.

Bhikkhuni Kusuma delivered this talk at the annual meeting of the German Buddhist Union (Kongress der Deutschen Buddhistischen Union) in Wuppertal, held from October 24-2

INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST WOMEN MEET IN SRI

LANKA by Gabriele Küstermann

The close links of friendship developed at the Sakyadhita international conferences since 1987 continue to bear fruit for Buddhist women around the world. In January 2004, a group of ten Buddhist women renewed their friendships in Sri Lanka. Due to the initiative of Gabriele Küstermann from Germany and Ranjani de Silva from Sri Lanka, they met under the auspices of Sakyadhita Sri Lanka.

It was a special pleasure and blessing that Ven. Tenzin Palmo, the most senior Western *bhiksuni*, was able to join the group. Born in London and practicing Buddhism for 40 years now, Tenzin Palmo follows the Drukpa Kagyu lineage of the Tibetan tradition. She traveled to Sri Lanka for the first time with her sister *bhiksuni*, Tenzin Chime from the United States, for a pilgrimage tour to the sacred sites of Sri Lanka, including Dambulla, Polonaruwa, Anuradhapura, Kandy, Kataragama, and Kalutere Bodhi. Several Sri Lankan nunneries were included in the tour. It was also a pleasure to have Dr. Koko Kawanami from Lancaster University, an expert on Burmese Buddhism, join the tour with her two ten-precept nun friends from Burma and Joanne Holroyd, a teacher from U.K. It was a great experience for them to visit the sacred sites and meet with Sri Lankan nuns, especially the *dasasilmatas* (10-precept nuns). The Burmese nuns were greatly impressed to see how many children in Colombo attend Buddhist Sunday schools and returned to their country with the intention of initiating similar programs in their own country.

Additional participants joined the group from Germany. Dr. Katharina Poggendorf Kakar, a specialist in the comparative study of religions now living in Goa, is conducting a study of the first decade of the reestablishment of the *bhikkhuni* order in Sri Lanka. During her stay, she was able to interview many leading Sri Lankan *bhikkhunis*, *samanerikas*, and *dasasilmatas*, as well as high-ranking monks. Ingrid Norbu, a radio journalist from Berlin, is interested in women's issues and examples of the empowerment of women. She was also able to conduct many interviews with women living in former war zones in the aftermath of the 20-year civil conflict in Sri Lanka and was deeply moved by her experiences.

After the pilgrimage, the group stayed for ten days at the Sakyadhita Training and Meditation Center with resident Sri Lankan *bhikkhunis* and *samaneris*, and nuns from Germany, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Tenzin Palmo gave a well-received talk at the Sakyadhita Center and also addressed a group of laypeople at the invitation of Ms. Thelma Gunawardena, former director of the National Museum of Colombo. While in Sri Lanka, Tenzin Palmo took the opportunity to talk to high-ranking monks about the basis of the full ordinations for women they have been conducting in Sri Lanka since 1997 and was very pleased with the information she received.

As longtime Sakyadhita members, my dear friend Ranjani de Silva, President of Sakyadhita Sri Lanka, and I were delighted to see all the positive outcomes of our support for the revival of the *bhikkhuni* order in Sri Lanka. Ranjani did a wonderful job of organizing this gathering and was diligent in attending to all our interests and needs. We are all tremendously grateful to her and for her friends who gave us such a warm welcome!

SWIMMING THE ROAD TO MORANG
by Marianne Green

This is the story of an innovative fundraising event. The event evolved when I learned that Karma Lekshe Tsomo was seeking funds for an HIV/AIDS education project in India. To support this worthy cause, I decided to hold a sponsored "Swimathon" to raise money from my friends and family. In the end, the event netted \$1600 to fund this innovative education project in the Indian Himalayas.

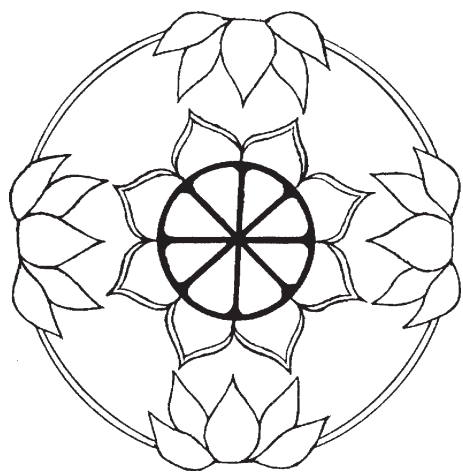
The Swimathon idea began with my pledge to swim the equivalent distance of the English channel. The English Channel is the body of water that separates England from France, a distance of 23 miles across at its narrowest point. This is equivalent to 1480 lengths of a standard 25 meter pool – no mean feat!

Normally only a professional athlete would be able to attempt such a distance in one go. I proposed doing it over a number of days, perhaps as a way to develop good effort and patient endurance, two of the six perfections! I pledged to swim this distance, but asked if anyone would help by doing some of the lengths for me. There was such an overwhelming response that, in the end, I didn't have to swim any lengths myself!

So the challenge had to be lengthened. We decided to swim an entire 100 miles, the equivalent of the distance from the town of Manali, in the Himalayan foothills, all the way to Morang, a mountain village in the heart of the secluded Spiti Valley. This distance symbolized the treacherous road that winds through the mountain passes – a road that can bring the threat of HIV to this remote mountain area.

The event, which we called "Swimming the Road to Morang," was completed by a team of 33 participants over the month of February 2003. It was heartening to know that, although some of the participants found swimming quite difficult, they nevertheless wanted to make a contribution. They swam the lengths with joy, a mark of their great generosity. Friends made financial contributions to the project, inspired by the swimmers' dedication.

Organizing this event was a great experience for me. It was heartwarming to see the outpouring of generosity from people who, out of compassion, want to prevent the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic to remote areas. Having witnessed how much support there was for this event, and how much fun it was, I hope to organize more novel charity events in the years to come!



NEW PEACEBUILDING SEMINARS IN DHARAMSALA
by Dr. Paula Green

Sister Dhammadinna, an American Buddhist nun, introduced representatives of the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding to members of the Tibetan Center for Conflict Resolution (TCCR), located in the Tibetan community of Dharamsala, India. Subsequently, the Karuna Center was invited to present seminars for education and training in peacebuilding and conflict management to the staff and associates of TCCR. The seminars explore the relationship between conflict resolution skills and the Buddhist teachings.

The first peacebuilding seminar was conducted in October 2003 near Dharamsala, at the library of the beautiful Norbulingka, a reconstruction of the original summer palace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama near Lhasa. Gathering each morning and afternoon under a photo of His Holiness, surrounded by the sacred texts of Tibetan Buddhism, we worked together diligently to express and define the steps of reconciliation in the Tibetan language. We listened to the struggles of the Tibetan living in Tibet and those living in exile in India. Tibetan participants explored how anger and hatred are managed in Tibetan Buddhism. We mourned the loss of so much precious wisdom in Tibet and cheered TCCR for their efforts and commitment to help fellow Tibetans in their struggle to survive and to preserve their culture.

Half the participants in the group were born as exiles in India, while the other half had been born in Chinese-occupied Tibet and had risked their lives in dramatic escapes across the Himalayas. Because of the very different perspectives of these two groups, we created a dialogue format. Members of each group shared deeply with the others their unique experiences and perceptions, exploring what it means to be Tibetan in each context. One participant kept a Chinese-English dictionary by her, which illustrates how those born under occupation have lost their Tibetan language. Like all Tibetans in exile, the Tibetan participants share an aching longing to return to a Tibet where they will be free to restore their cultural and religious traditions.

The Tibetan Government-in-Exile and organizations such as TCCR help and protect the exile Tibetan community that resides largely in India. The specific mandate of TCCR is "to promote the approaches and tools of non-violent conflict resolution and democratic processes in our Tibetan community in exile and elsewhere, thus strengthening our unity, which, in turn ensures the continuance of our non-violent struggle in the long run."

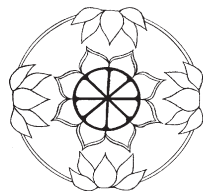
TCCR offers workshops in all the more than 50 Tibetan settlements in India. The organization teaches conflict transformation skills that can be applied both in the Tibetan community and with their Indian neighbors. Tibetans eagerly attend these seminars and find that the concepts, grounded in their own culture and religion, are important for their well-being. This year, TCCR will expand the number of trainers available to lead seminars. Those selected will be trained by Karuna Center staff members in the fall of 2004 and 2005.

Karuna Center for Peacebuilding is based in the United States and was founded in 1993 "in response to the growing global need to develop innovative, sustainable strategies to address ethnic, religious, and sectarian conflict." Its mission is "to promote dialogue, reconciliation, cooperative problem solving, and nonviolent solutions to conflict in troubled and war-torn regions."

Karuna Center has recently facilitated peacebuilding seminars in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia; Rwanda and Senegal; Sri Lanka and India; Israel and Palestine; and the Republic of Georgia. Karuna Center responds to invitations and develops multi-year partnerships

with non-government organizations, educational and religious institutions, and local governments. Karuna Center staff members believe that communities can rebuild trust in the aftermath of mass violence, and slowly shift from enmity and mistrust to coexistence and cooperation. We see that models developed in one region of the world may have resonance in other countries. Lessons learned are frequently adapted by other cultures, as together we build a global culture of peace.

Dr. Paula Green is the founder and director of Karuna Center for Peacebuilding. She has served on the Boards of Directors of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and Insight Meditation Society. Dr. Green is a professor at the School for International Training in Vermont, where she directs CONTACT, a summer peacebuilding institute. For further information, visit www.karunacenter.org and www.sit.edu/contact, or contact paula@karunacenter.org or tcroffice@yahoo.com.



**FIVE QUESTIONS:
MINISTER SYMBOL OF FUTURE FOR SOTO ZEN
by Mary Kaye Ritz**

Mary Beth Jiko Oshima_Nakade, 43, trained entirely in Hawai'i for her job as assistant minister at Daifukuji Soto Mission in Kona – a trend other major Buddhist sects watch with interest. The Soto Zen ministerial training program has been called a hope for the survival of the religion here, as members age and the face of traditional ethnic Buddhism changes.

Q. How did you come to be Hawai'i's first homegrown minister of a major sect?

A. I did do some training in Japan when I was 19, at a Soto Zen nunnery. I was a teenager wondering if I should go into the ministry or nursing. I went into nursing. (Laugh.)

Different things led me to this path. Since I was very little, I was always surrounded by good Buddhist sensei. I grew up going to the temple. I really feel I've been blessed by the whole community, and wanted to return something.... The formal decision came when my family returned to Kona in 1996. (She had been living in San Francisco.)

I became reconnected with the temple here. I started talking with the minister, who encouraged me. (I) began my training January 1, 1999, and did all my training here in Kona, under my sensei here, of whom I have become a disciple. In the Zen tradition, the discipleship is very important.

Q. Is being the bright new hope for Buddhism's survival in Hawai'i a heavy load to carry?

A. Yeah, it's a heavy load, with so many responsibilities involved. The training program is off to a good start, but at the same time, evolving. We have to revise the guidelines as we go along. I feel a great sense of responsibility. Our older members are aging, which is the large proportion of our members, but fortunately, in Kona we've had a number of new, non-Japanese families joining the membership. There are many families here who come to temple interested in Buddhist teaching. We even noticed that at our New Year's blessing service.

Q. You, however, were born and reared in your religion. How do



these new members differ? Do they expect a different kind of Buddhism?

A. Yes. They want to understand the content of their rituals, understand the sutra. People born and raised in the tradition appreciate things as they were and don't question so much. They accepted it and were grateful. The new people are really challenging me, because I have to really study and explain these ancient things in modern ways.

Q. What's it like being a woman in what's often perceived to be a man's job?

A. I really enjoy it. For the most part, at least among other ministers and members of my temple, I'm grateful I'm respected. I haven't had women ministers to learn from. I think I've been inspired by my mom, a nisei and capable community leader. She didn't tell me in words, but I saw in her that women are capable of being temple and community leaders. I've also been inspired by a Zen woman teacher in Pennsylvania. I know some members are probably a little skeptical. "Priests are men, priests come from Japan." Older members are wondering, "I wonder if she can do it?" I just have to work hard and earn their respect along the way.

Q. Your daughter is a junior in high school and your son is 11. How does this affect your kids?

A. You know, I tell them they don't have to be Buddhist. It's a danger when we inherit things from our parents. I'm really into interfaith. I want my children to appreciate other religions. My son, he doesn't know; my daughter says she's a Buddhist. They have to go out and find their own way in this life.

This newsletter was edited and produced by Becky Paxton and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Paintings on pages 1 and 4 by Gloria Staackman. Drawings on pages and by Carmen Anderson. Photos of Ven. Yinshun and the conference in Taiwan published in the last newsletter (pp. 6-7), mistakenly attributed to Sr. Malia Dominica Wong, were taken by Stefania Travagnin. We apologize for the error. *This article appeared in the Honolulu Advertiser on January 13, 2004. It is reprinted with permission from Mary Kaye Ritz, Religion & Ethics Writer.*