

Khánh Anh

October 2025 Bulletin · No. 146

Complete English Translation



Translation of all 40 pages of the original bulletin, including its photographs. The layout has been reset for easier reading, so page numbers differ from those of the scan. Page references within articles refer to the original bulletin. Where the same announcement appears in Vietnamese and French on one page, one complete version is provided in the target language. Names and amounts in the donor list are reproduced unchanged.

Reading edition · English

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Salt, Sugar, Money and the Buddha

Original p. 1-2



On September 28, 2025, the symbolic seal and brush are handed to the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of Canada, which accepts responsibility for organizing the 15th Patriarchs' Commemoration and Return to the Roots gathering. The event, scheduled for 2027, will be organized by Venerable Thích Huệ Minh of Cam Lộ Pagoda in Toronto, Canada.

People called her little Rót, then Miss Rót, Mrs. Rót and, eventually, old Rót. Her name was unlike anyone else's in the small fishing village, which lay isolated beside an inlet, surrounded by low hills. Clouds covered their summits throughout the year, concealing a small pagoda halfway up the hillside. It could only be seen around noon, when the sun shone brightly. Rót lived with her father. She did not know who her mother was. Unlike other children her age, she had never called anyone "Mother." She asked her father where her mother was.

He remained silent, stroked her head and looked at her lovingly. Yet she eventually learned something from the villagers' scolding whenever she played with their children. Without asking who was at fault, whenever their children cried, they blamed her for everything: "You motherless child! Someone abandoned you in your father's vehicle... He took you home to raise you. He said someone had dropped you in his truck, so he called you Rót. Without a mother to bring you up, you are wild and vicious. Whenever you play together, you find ways to hurt the little ones... That is what a motherless child is like!" Unable to bear these cruel words, she felt ashamed and often cried alone.

One day, her father found her crying at the water's edge. Waves battered her as though trying to carry her out to sea, and she let them push and drag her away. He pulled her out of the water. She screamed and resisted, not wanting him to bring her back to shore. He held her and cried with her. When he asked why she was crying, she repeated, through her distress, the insults the mothers had long hurled at her and had just repeated. He realized

he could no longer hide her story. Overcome by the sight of her letting the waves carry her away, he held her close and told her where she had come from.

Six years earlier, Vietnam was still at war. Nationalists and Communists were fighting one another. Her father had been a soldier in the South Vietnamese army, driving vehicles that carried troops and equipment. In 1975, a few months before the war ended, the fighting was especially fierce. People fleeing the war filled villages, roads and cities. Refugees had pressured him into driving displaced civilians to safety. When they reached their destination, people crowded out of the truck just as it came under fire from a distance. No one knew which side was shooting. Everyone ran in different directions. He drove away to escape the bullets and stopped somewhere safe.

Then he heard a child crying inside the truck and found her there. He abandoned the vehicle, picked her up and returned to the city where his family lived. When he arrived, their home had been destroyed by shelling, and all his relatives were dead. The war ended. The Communists won and reunified the country. As an ordinary soldier with no rank, he was not sent to a reeducation camp. He had never married. He was a strong swimmer and had even received an award in an interschool competition as a student. He enjoyed fishing and settled in this remote village. After telling her this, he smiled tenderly: "Someone left you behind in the truck while fleeing the gunfire... That is where your name, Rót, came from."

They lived in a house with a thatched roof and corrugated-metal walls. The village contained only a little more than ten families. People fished close to shore from small boats and lived in poverty. Her father had no boat: he fished from a round woven basket boat, and their life was harder still. None of the children attended school, because there was no school there. When he was not fishing, her father taught her. During these lessons, she often gazed dreamily at the pagoda appearing and disappearing on the hillside. Its curved roof fascinated her. She wanted to climb up and see how beautiful it was, and asked her father what was inside.

He said the Buddha was worshipped there. She asked what the Buddha looked like and who he was. After a moment's silence, he replied: "If you want to know what the pagoda is like and who the Buddha is, we will go up in a few days, on the full moon of the seventh month. We will bow before the Buddha and pay our respects to your grandfather's family, whose memorial tablets are kept there." He kept his promise. At the seventh-month full moon, he took her to the pagoda. After that, she sometimes went there alone while he paddled his basket boat out to fish.

Everyone at the pagoda loved her. She knew how to bow before the Buddha. She heard the sutras but understood none of them. She knew that the monks, nuns and young novices ate neither meat nor fish, because doing so involved taking life. Everyone was vegetarian. Vegetables grown around the pagoda fed its residents. The pagoda was as poor as the fishing families in her village.

Her father knew she went there secretly, but said nothing. Sometimes he placed his hand on her head and asked softly: "Now that my Rót visits the pagoda instead of playing with the village children, their mothers no longer have to take their side against you..." Then, raising his voice: "It is lovely at the pagoda, isn't it?" She nodded and smiled. The following

day, as he left with his fishing rod, he gave her one đồng: "This time, when you visit the pagoda, offer this to the old master. Tell him your father is making an offering to the Three Jewels."

She followed his instructions. When she met the master, she joined her palms in greeting, then presented the money with both hands: "My father offers this đồng to the Three Jewels." The master accepted it and joined his palms: "Homage to the Buddha! May the Three Jewels bestow blessings upon your family!" She did not understand the Three Jewels or blessings, but imagined that the master was praying for her family to live in peace, enjoy good health and escape poverty. One day, she overheard two female devotees talking on the veranda. One said: "I only come to bow before the Buddha. I have nothing to offer the Three Jewels like other people, and that makes me sad. Will I receive no blessings?" The other replied: "The Three Jewels do not demand offerings from the Buddha's followers. An offering comes from our sincerity. We seek the blessings ourselves: gold, silver, precious stones, a piece of sugar or a spoonful of salt are all the same."

Listening to this exchange, Rót understood that offerings to the Three Jewels came from the heart, and that blessings did not depend on the rarity of the objects given. Material possessions were merely the outward token of the ritual gesture. She too wanted to make an offering, but owned nothing. Then one day she discovered how she could obtain something to give.

After returning from fishing, the villagers hung their nets on bamboo fences along the beach. As the nets dried, salt crystallized on them, and no one collected it. Rót gently tapped the nets with a stick and caught the salt in a basin. After a few weeks, she had filled a rice bowl. She continued and soon had more than two bowls, which she took to the pagoda. She did not know that the full moon of the seventh month was only three days away. Her offering was accepted. She was told that the salt would be used in the food-offering ceremony for wandering spirits, bringing immeasurable merit. The pagoda had just run out of salt, and no one had yet gone to buy more at the district market. The nun who received it joined her palms before her: "Namo Amitabha! Immeasurable merit!"

That year, the weather changed unexpectedly. In the middle of a blazing summer, rain suddenly began to fall. Dark clouds covered the sky; thunder and lightning followed one another. Waves taller than a person swept away fishermen's houses built too close to the sea. After that storm, Rót's father never returned. She was ten. She grieved and missed him. No one in the village helped her. Hungry, she left to beg. Occasionally, she asked to spend the night at the pagoda. Knowing her circumstances, the old master offered to let her stay, but she did not want to. Believing that her karmic burden was still heavy, he found her work with a Buddhist family associated with the pagoda, who made cane sugar in the fields beyond the hill.

A few months later, Rót returned. She explained that there was so much work at the sugar workshop that she could no longer visit as often as when she had lived in the village. She brought a packet of sugar as an offering to the Three Jewels. The master asked how she had obtained it. She said: "After the cane juice has boiled into sugar, it is poured into molds to make blocks. My job is to clean the large cooking pan. Usually, water is poured in to dissolve the sugar stuck to it, and then the pan is washed. I thought it was a pity to throw

that sugar away with the washing water. So I scrape it off with a coconut shell, gather it together and bring it to the pagoda." The master nodded, joined his palms and invoked Amitabha: "The full moon of the seventh month is approaching... We will make a sweet dessert for the food offering to wandering spirits... Immeasurable merit... Immeasurable blessings!"

After three years of her work there, the workshop closed. She heard the owner complain to his wife: "Before there was any cooperative, we managed to make ends meet. Since we were made to join the cooperative three years ago, money goes out but none comes in. The workers keep comparing their duties with everyone else's, and what belongs to everybody belongs to nobody... We can only close down!" Rót set out again in search of food. She was now thirteen. People said she had blossomed into a pretty girl, an expression she did not understand. Many complimented her looks. In the mirror, she saw a high nose, large eyes, pink lips and fair skin, unlike girls her age whom she described as having crossed eyes, dark lips, flat noses and very dark skin.

Then she met a female devotee at the pagoda. The woman offered her work in her drinks shop in the district town. Rót did not know the business was a front. The owner had her drugged and sold her to customers for their pleasure. She became a young prostitute. She suffered because of her fate, though she could also see that her life had changed. She occasionally returned to the pagoda. No one called her "little Rót" anymore: she was now "Miss Rót." Her offerings were now money. The old master joined his palms: "Namo Amitabha... Immeasurable merit... Immeasurable blessings!"

A few years later, she married an official who collected market taxes. Every day, they went to the market together. They set the charges themselves, ignoring the tax office's official schedule. Traders who refused to pay what they demanded had their goods confiscated, received heavy fines and were sometimes forbidden to sell. The couple's abuses made the merchants cry out in despair. Complaints were sent to the central authorities, but nothing changed, perhaps because the couple had protection. People no longer called her "Miss Rót" or "Mrs. Rót," but "old Rót." She wore a gold necklace, gold earrings and a ring set with a sparkling diamond. She lived in a two-story house behind high walls in the center of the district.

One day at the market, she saw a man selling a fine bronze statue of the Buddha. She demanded tax from him. He protested: "Madam, my child is ill, and I cannot afford the medicine. This statue of the Buddha is the only valuable thing in our home. I am selling it to buy medicine. I do not normally trade. Why are you asking me for tax? Please have pity." She thought for a moment, muttered, then asked: "If I buy it, how much do you want?" The man opened his eyes wide and hesitated: "If you would kindly buy it, I ask twenty đồng... I would be so grateful... I could buy my child's medicine." She bargained: "Twenty đồng... minus five for tax... That leaves fifteen. Will you accept? If so, I will buy it. Otherwise, you must pay five đồng in tax." Then she stared at him. He feared having to pay tax without finding a buyer, while his child lay waiting for medicine. His eyes stinging with sorrow for his child, he nodded.

The next day, she brought the statue to the pagoda. The old master accepted it, lit three sticks of incense, struck the bell three times and joined his palms: "Please bow before the

Buddha.” Rót stood still. She had not bowed, and looked at him as though waiting for an answer to a question. Then she stammered, seemingly embarrassed: “Does the Buddha statue I offer today bring immeasurable merit? Why have I not heard you wish me immeasurable blessings? In the past, when I offered a bowl of salt, a measure of sugar or a few coins, I heard you wish me immeasurable merit and blessings...”

A smile blossomed on the master’s lips, fresh as a lotus bud just emerging from the water: “Namo Amitabha. You have been a faithful Buddhist visitor to this temple since childhood. The things you offered the Three Jewels then came from your own efforts. You forgot your deprivation, your suffering, your hunger and your humiliation, thinking only of the Three Jewels. What you offer today does not come from your own labor, but from the power you impose on the people. Out of fear, they accept their losses. You take their poverty and turn it into your wealth. The possessions you offer the Three Jewels today belong to those people. The immeasurable merit is theirs. The immeasurable blessings are theirs. Namo Amitabha.”

Rót lowered her head, turned away and left the main hall. After that, no one saw a woman of that name at the pagoda again. People said she had changed her name to Roi. Something that has been dropped can still be picked up; but this other kind of falling goes on and on, without end.

Nguyễn-đại-Thuật, August 24, 2025.

Translator’s note: the story plays on two similar Vietnamese words, Rót and Roi, both associated with falling. The ending contrasts something dropped, which can still be picked up, with a continuing moral fall. The Three Jewels are the Buddha, the Dharma (his teaching) and the Sangha (the community).

Padmasambhava: Practicing at Home in the Age of Dharma Decline

Original p. 3, then 2



A procession inviting the venerable monastics to conduct the closing ceremony of the 14th Patriarchs' Commemoration and Return to the Roots gathering, and the 35th anniversary of the founding of Báo Quang Pagoda in California, United States. Organized by Venerable Thích Thông Hải, the ceremony concluded on Sunday, September 28, 2025.

His answer gave hope to many laypeople: they did not need to abandon their present lives to follow the path to liberation.

More than thirteen hundred years ago, in the eighth century according to the Tibetan chronology, the famous Indian master Padmasambhava was invited to Tibet to teach the Dharma at the king's request. That day, wondrous clouds filled the sky over Lhasa, and his arrival inspired a powerful wave of spiritual practice throughout Tibet. In the days that followed, he taught at the Potala Palace. He not only explained Buddhism's profound mysteries, but also revealed a truth that surprised everyone: "The key to practice lies not in outward forms, but in one's inner attitude." He added: "True practice must take place in everyday life."

These words had a tremendous impact. Until then, people had believed that authentic practice meant leaving the world behind and living an ascetic life. Padmasambhava, however, considered ordinary life the best setting for practice. A merchant asked: "Master, we do business to earn a profit. Does that hinder our practice?" He replied: "When doing business, keep your heart pure and benefit others. That is practice." Practice does not stand in opposition to the world; it means discovering transcendence within the world itself. Gradually, his approach spread throughout Tibet. More and more people realized how natural and close to life spiritual practice could be.

One day, a young mother came to seek his advice: “I spend all day looking after my children and managing the household. How can I find time to practice?” Padmasambhava replied: “Caring for your children with compassion is practice. Doing housework wholeheartedly is also practice.” His answer gave hope to many laypeople. Without giving up their existing lives, they could still walk the path to liberation.

Padmasambhava stressed that, in the age of Dharma decline, this way of practicing at home was particularly suitable for beings. The dispositions of people in that age were less suited to strict methods. A simple practice within the household could shine and guide them toward awakening. The king of Tibet was also persuaded by this wisdom. Increasing numbers of laypeople followed the method. Far from neglecting their occupations, they achieved great success in their own fields.

Padmasambhava lived in Tibet for a long time. Tirelessly, he answered people’s questions and resolved the doubts that arose in their practice. Gradually, people noticed a distinctive quality in those practicing at home according to his teaching: they could handle ordinary responsibilities well while preserving inner peace. Others began to wonder how they achieved this.

As people continued to ask, Padmasambhava revealed the central secret of practicing at home: “mindfulness that never parts from awakening.” In every action and thought of daily life, maintain clear awareness of your conduct, speech and thinking.

He added that even beings living in the age of Dharma decline could practice if they understood this essential principle. Life itself is the place of practice; afflictions themselves are awakening; work itself is practice; the family itself is a Pure Land.

When you wake in the morning, remind yourself that the whole day offers opportunities to practice. As you wash your face, feel the water’s temperature. Understand that water nourishes and refreshes. Be aware that everything in the world is like water: impermanent, yet able to help living beings. Each action should be performed not mechanically, but with gratitude and compassion, as though you were helping wash away the karmic obstacles of suffering beings.

As you go out to work, look at the hurried people passing by and allow compassion to arise. Understand that everyone struggles to live and carries personal worries and suffering. When facing busy work and complicated relationships, do not allow anger and complaints to arise: every task is an opportunity to cultivate the mind. Each exchange with another person offers a chance to practice compassion and wisdom. If someone suspects you or makes things difficult, do not rush to argue. Become calm and examine your own shortcomings. Resolve the conflict with tolerance and wisdom. This is practicing at work, turning your occupation into a bodhisattva’s path.

When you return home to your family, maintain that awakened awareness. If your children cry, do not become angry: comfort them with love. Feel the responsibility and calling of parenthood, and understand the deep connections of causes and conditions between parents and children. Caring for children is a practice of compassion. When doing housework, every act of cleaning and tidying can be like clearing away the afflictions and distracting thoughts in your mind. Make your home clean and orderly as you cleanse your

mind. When sharing a family meal, savor every mouthful, thank nature for its gifts and be grateful for your family's presence. This is practice in everyday life.

The master continued: "In the age of Dharma decline, the world outside is unsettled and temptations abound. The minds of beings are easily stained by greed, anger and ignorance. Yet this method of practicing at home opens a path of purity and liberation within a troubled world. Practitioners need not leave their families or retreat to remote mountains and forests. They need only keep their minds steady in the smallest actions and maintain awakened awareness. Every circumstance in life, every moment, can then become an opportunity to realize awakening."

Everyone rejoiced to hear this and thanked Padmasambhava for opening a path of practice to them. From then on, throughout Tibet, countless laypeople followed his method. They practiced within life and lived within practice. Their families grew more harmonious, their work more successful and their hearts more peaceful. This secret, simple yet profound, is like stars shining through the course of history. It waits for those with favorable conditions to discover and practice it, guiding them toward the shore of liberation.

Based on Vision Times; Vietnamese adaptation by Thanh Ngọc. The Vietnamese title refers to Padmasambhava as "Liên Hoa Sinh."

Reflections on the European Buddhist Study and Practice Retreat

Original p. 4

Namo our fundamental teacher Śākyamuni Buddha.

First, we bow respectfully before the two Elder Most Venerables: the First President, Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt, and the Second President and abbot, Most Venerable Thích Như Điển, of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe. We respectfully greet the Most Venerables, senior monks, elder nuns, nuns, and all members of the monastic Sangha. We greet the Dharma teachers and retreat students from the different continents. We wish Your Reverences and the entire assembly good health. Dear everyone,

For the first time, I was fortunate to have all the favorable conditions to attend the 36th European Buddhist Study and Practice Retreat in 2025 at the secondary school in Neuss, Germany. After ten days of Buddhist study and practice here, we who came from the United States have these impressions:

1. Many children attend this European Buddhist retreat, representing many different ages and a rich diversity. Born and raised in Europe, almost all know at least three languages. They speak Vietnamese well and have pure, childlike, innocent, endearing hearts. They greatly enjoy studying and listening to the Dharma from teachers with many years of experience teaching Buddhism. This surely comes from their family upbringing: parents skillfully guiding them from childhood, the attentive guidance of Buddhist Youth leaders, the direction and protection of the monastic Sangha, and the enthusiastic support of the women and family elders.
2. The monks, nuns, and lay Buddhist students from many different countries share great warmth in a spirit of study and practice, mutual support, affection, and respect: the bond between teachers and students, spiritual siblings, the family of awakening, and fellow Dharma practitioners.
3. The Buddhists in the kitchen serve the assembly very promptly, joyfully, deliciously, and neatly, with sincere devotion to the Three Jewels. The retreat office staff work very systematically and clearly. The decoration team has made the surroundings beautiful and dignified. The cleaning, security, and transport teams work with joyful hearts, and so on.
4. The organizing committee provides projectors for the Dharma classes very effectively, meeting the needs of students and teachers of many different ages. However, despite the sound team's efforts, the microphones and amplifiers in a few classrooms are still not very clear.
5. In a spirit of shared Buddhist service to the European retreat, various temples and practice communities clearly divide their responsibilities and devote particular days wholeheartedly to offering the assembly food, drinks, monetary and material gifts, labor, and energy, with great enthusiasm, care, appreciation, and respect.

6. Finally, the Elder Most Venerables, senior monks, and the monastic Sangha work in a spirit of study and practice, harmony, solidarity, encouragement, warmth, mutual respect, and kindness. These are the bonds that bring Buddhists and non-Buddhists, near and far, closer together, making them friendlier, more supportive of the Dharma, deeper, and steadier as they jointly contribute to spreading the true Dharma in this world.

Indeed, on attending the 36th European Buddhist retreat in 2025 at the secondary school in Neuss, Germany, I composed these verses from a few simple, sincere reflections:

At this European Buddhist retreat,
 Blessed affinities bring us to our teachers.
 Everyone comes from across the world;
 Peace, joy, and happiness are right here.
 This year we hear such wonderful Dharma;
 We respectfully remember our teachers' kindness,
 Spreading the true Dharma overseas,
 In America, Europe, Asia, everywhere.
 Studying sūtras, hearing Dharma, and practicing it:
 The path of awakening is full of compassion.
 The Three Pure Trainings continually advance;
 Entering the scriptures, we break the net of doubt.

Vowing to bring the bell to foreign lands,
 Passing on the method of "breathing and smiling"
 To Vietnamese people and local inhabitants:
 Applying the Dharma brings fresh brightness.
 We should know the culture of the Dharma,
 Understand it to liberate beings in the Sahā world.
 Upholding the sūtras makes us wise;
 Wherever we go, we return to OURSELVES.

May Your Reverences enjoy long lives,
 Spreading the true Dharma deeply.
 May Vietnamese people around the world
 Carry Buddhism across the continents.
 May everyone throughout the world
 Quickly become steeped in the Dharma,
 Together supporting the Three Jewels,
 With wondrous peace of body and mind.
 The retreat closes today:
 Gratitude to the Buddhists here.
 Always keep the Three Jewels in your care;
 Do good, avoid evil, benefiting East and West.

I wish the Elder Most Venerables, senior monks, elder nuns and nuns, all members of the monastic Sangha, Dharma teachers, and Buddhist students boundless peace and joy and boundless auspicious fulfillment. I look forward to seeing you all at the next European

Buddhist retreat. See you all next year! With heartfelt gratitude to the whole assembly, I wish you abundant peace and joy.

The Dharma path is profoundly deep;
 Diligent practice brightens body and mind.
 How wonderful are compassion and wisdom,
 Bringing happiness and peace everywhere.
 How beautiful the path of spreading Dharma!
 Diligently apply the Dharma every day.
 Support the Three Jewels with joyful hearts;
 How lovely to bring joy to the world!
 Bring the bell to foreign lands,
 Spread the true Dharma in happiness and peace.
 Pray for all sentient beings,
 Looking to awakening's shore, witness to our joy.
 Here at this Buddhist retreat,
 Monastics and lay Buddhists dwell in peace.
 Practice together so wisdom may arise;
 Follow the Noble Eightfold Path in harmony all around.

Ten days of practice here:
 We remember the kindness of our teachers,
 Guiding us sincerely and with such care,
 Offering such a beautiful refuge.
 Indeed:
 One tree cannot make a mountain;
 Many trees together become a green forest.
 Let us hold a wholesome thought,
 Join hands to protect the Dharma: blessings will gather.
 The Sangha is steeped in beautiful humanity;
 Do good, plant merit, give one another smiles.
 The assembly quickly lends its strength;
 The Sangha stands firm, the mind wondrously peaceful.
 Gratitude for everyone's devoted care;
 We dedicate today's merit and blessings.

May the assembly abide in and receive the blessings of the World-Honored One's true Dharma. Namo the Buddha Jewel. Namo the Dharma Jewel. Namo the Sangha Jewel. —
 Thích Trùng Sỹ

A brief report on the European retreat in Neuss, Germany

Original p. 5



Welcoming the Venerable monastics to conduct the closing ceremony of the 14th Joint Commemoration of the Successive Patriarchs—Return to the Source—and the 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang Temple, California, USA. Organized by Most Venerable Thích Thông Hải, the ceremony concluded successfully on Sunday, September 28, 2025.

After five years, since Covid in 2019, and with family matters keeping me busy, I finally return to the European retreat, feeling like a child coming home to visit family after a long absence. With a heart brimming with happiness, I enter the retreat and meet old friends, monks, and nuns. We greet one another with joined palms, everyone smiling radiantly.

This is the 36th retreat, but the fourth in Neuss. Neuss is familiar to me: I attended all three previous retreats here. I meet many old friends and make many new ones. We eat vegetarian food and sleep on the floor, each with an air mattress, more than ten people sharing a classroom. But as children of the Buddha seeking the Way, we happily accept any arrangements, making understanding and closeness easier. At retreats in Australia or America, Buddhists sleep in hotel rooms with proper mattresses and blankets; chairs are provided for chanting and studying. They do not sit on the floor like European Buddhists. Every country and person has their share of blessings; there is nothing to complain about.

Yet in enduring the rigors of practice, Europeans may be more persevering. Beyond eating vegetarian food and sleeping on the floor for ten days, they overcome every hardship. At the opening, what struck me was how yellow robes and shaven heads now outnumbered gray robes. Many lay Buddhists have shaved their hair and ordained: monks and nuns now number 121, compared with only a few dozen before. This means many “students” in class 3 have “graduated” to class 4, for monastics.

The classes are arranged as follows: Oanh Vũ class, for children aged six to twelve, nicknamed “Oanh Vũ University” by Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm; class 1, for young people; class 2, for adults new to the retreat; class 3, for longtime students; and class 4, for monks and nuns. Thus the European retreat has trained many “students” all the way to class 4—have they attained... the true fruit?!

Oanh Vũ University and the youth class are a challenge in themselves, an arduous undertaking, because the children come from different European countries with different languages. Teachers need several foreign languages, chiefly English, which almost all the children study for use abroad. But at this retreat the children also practice more Vietnamese: this is their chance to return to their mother tongue.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Deputy Mayor and her husband, together with the deputy head of Culture and Education of Neuss-Düsseldorf. What matters here, however, is not their presence but the ideas in their speeches. Here is an extract from Neuss Deputy Mayor Susanne Benary’s speech, translated by Venerable Hạnh Giới:

“Over the next ten days, monks, nuns, and Buddhists from many countries will practice the Buddha’s teachings together and share and exchange their cultural experiences. This event will bring many opportunities for younger and older people to meet, and inspire the younger generation concerning Buddhism. With its rich history of transmission and profound teachings, Buddhism brings great wisdom to today’s world. Especially in these challenging times, its principles of compassion, mindfulness, and peace can guide us all. It is inspiring to witness the Vietnamese Buddhist community living and passing on these values.

On his 90th birthday, July 6 this year, His Holiness the Dalai Lama reminded us of the importance of inner peace and human responsibility toward nature, our fellow human beings, and future generations. Looking at what is happening around us today, these teachings become still more meaningful; may more people listen to them. Many people like quoting Buddhist wisdom, which sounds clear and simple. Yet if you reflect on and try to apply the often quoted saying, “Do not worry about the past, do not dream of the future, focus on the present,” you will realize that this is not easily achieved in daily life: only many years of meditation practice truly bring this awakened understanding...”

Ursula Platen, deputy head of Culture and Education, proudly shared that her daughter studies Buddhism at school. Through her daughter she learned about Buddhism, meditation, and yoga. She knows and understands much Buddhist teaching and has great sympathy for Buddhism: if this retreat encounters any difficulty, she is ready to help in every way. We can see how our Buddhism, with its compassion and wisdom, has entered deeply into local people’s hearts. Before believing, they study very deeply and carefully.

Buddhism upholds compassion and wisdom: “The sun of wisdom shines throughout the human world, returning to awakening’s shore; white clouds of compassion cover all beings, who cross beyond delusion’s river.” These are the elements that bring peace to humanity. The Dalai Lama once said: “Whatever else you lose, do not lose compassion.” Only love can resolve hatred and prevent war. Yet compassion requires wisdom to discern right and wrong; wisdom needs courage to act, as the Buddhist Youth motto says: Compassion,

Wisdom, Courage. This also means that words must be followed by action. Acting in a Buddhist spirit to serve beings is practicing the bodhisattva path.

Every year the retreat includes a ceremony to receive the bodhisattva precepts. Thirty candidates are required, and that number is always reached. But merely wearing a brown bodhisattva robe over a gray robe does not necessarily make one a bodhisattva! In his lecture, Abbot Most Venerable Thích Như Điển distinguished two kinds: bodhisattvas in name only—who receive precepts without keeping them, not even managing the five basic precepts, let alone ten major and forty-eight minor ones—and true bodhisattvas, who, besides strictly keeping the precepts... [continued on page 6]

European retreat report: continued and concluded

Original p. 6

[Continued from page 5] ...vow to serve sentient beings wholeheartedly. The Most Venerable taught from the Upāsaka Precepts Sūtra. Personally, I see another kind: anonymous bodhisattvas. They wear no brown robe and make no public vow, yet quietly live ethically and serve beings to the point of forgetting themselves. I quietly witnessed so many during this retreat! How else could a ten-day retreat accomplish so many difficult tasks across all its teams?

The kitchen team—to me the hardest pressed—cooks for more than 550 people, three meals a day, morning, noon, and evening, always precisely on time: an easy cause of stress! Fortunately this year's reform to buffet service lightens the work somewhat for cooks and meal servers, while diners get hot food, so everyone is happy. There are also the transport team collecting participants, the decoration and incense-and-lamp teams, the security team taking turns on watch day and night to prevent outsiders exploiting the retreat to steal—here in Neuss, thieves once removed the wheels of a participant's car!—the office team, and so on. In the end everything succeeded fully. These true and anonymous bodhisattvas carried out the work of the bodhisattva path arising from bodhicitta.

What is bodhicitta? It is the awakened aspiration arising from compassion: to seek liberation and Buddhahood in order to save beings. "Above, seek the Buddha's Way; below, transform sentient beings." Such people are on the Mahāyāna path. Mahā means great, and yāna means vehicle: a great vehicle to carry all sentient beings to nirvāṇa. To serve in this way, practitioners must receive and keep the precepts. Discipline gives rise to concentration; concentration gives rise to wisdom. Discipline, Concentration, Wisdom: the teachers always remind Buddhists to practice these.

Another joy after returning five years later: in Europe, young monastics, and some no longer quite young, who had never lectured publicly now take the teaching platform in numbers, speaking confidently, fluently, and compellingly. Everyone advances, teachers and students alike: students "graduate" from class 3 to class 4 to become monastics, while teachers steadily steer the boat of Prajñā, carrying Buddhists to awakening's shore.

Buddhists studied "Mahāyāna and the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna," "Bodhisattvas Expounding Sūtras," "The Essential Principle of the Amitābha Sūtra," "Exhortation to Generate Bodhicitta," "Treatise on Ten Doubts about the Pure Land," "Commentary on Bodhicitta," "The Four Preparatory Practices," and "The Ten Abodes."

I cannot recount everything in detail here; I only summarize what I personally gained. Of the three approaches—Pure Land, Zen meditation, and esoteric Buddhism—we are practicing Buddha-name recitation: an entire day, divided into four periods, was devoted alternately to recitation and walking meditation. This clearly affirms the Pure Land school and emphasizes bodhicitta. Bodhicitta belongs to Mahāyāna, in ordinary terms Great Vehicle Buddhism.

To realize bodhicitta correctly, practitioners must awaken to the emptiness of all phenomena. In the Avatamsaka Sūtra, the Buddha teaches that good deeds and generosity bring the blessings of wealth, beauty, and health; but without bodhicitta one will plunge into the five sensual desires and degenerate, following Māra's path. Only firm bodhicitta, through the Ten Abodes which Venerable Trùng Sỹ from America explained to the Buddhists, can lead us to awakening and Buddhahood.

The Ten Abodes are:

1. Abiding: here and now. A bodhisattva enters life like a flower opening, bringing peace and joy to life.
2. Abode of preparing the ground: practice morality, meditation, mindfulness, and awareness.
3. Abode of practice: have a place to practice; practice the perfection of giving, with giving the Dharma as supreme.
4. Abode of noble birth: practice in the noblest, steadiest place.
5. Abode of complete skillful means: skillfully and resourcefully guide others in practice.
6. Abode of the upright mind: the true Dharma permeates body and mind; the mind remains upright and understanding, appropriate for oneself and others.
7. Abode of non-retrogression: remain steadfast, never retreating from the environment of bodhisattva conduct and the bodhisattva path.
8. Abode of childlike purity: dwell together in an upright place.
9. Abode of the Dharma prince: be regarded as the heir to the true Dharma, a warrior for peace, able to help sentient and non-sentient beings attain Buddhahood together.
10. Abode of consecration: finally comes the anointing and consecration ceremony; the Buddha predicts the bodhisattva's Buddhahood.

Enough: learning and understanding even this little is enough to give us... a headache! Let us watch the end-of-retreat performance to relax. The Buddhist Youth children handle almost all the entertainment. Their traditional and modern dances are beautiful. Especially memorable are the musical sketches their leaders rehearsed with the Oanh Vũ children and teenagers—Lạc Long Quân and Âu Cơ—teaching national history while giving them practice speaking Vietnamese. Most speak very fluently with correct pronunciation; only a few still struggle.

The retreat ends the following day. As at the opening, all monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists gather in the main hall. After chanting and the elders' advice, the closing ceremony announces the results. Every year, thanks to the Buddhas' protection, the retreats succeed completely in both participation and finances. Also, while students study doctrine, the monks and nuns observe their summer retreat and chant volume three of the Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra. A Congregation meeting within the retreat reviews this year and prepares for 2026. There was also a 49th-day memorial for Most Venerable Thích Minh Giác, abbot of Vạn Hạnh Temple in the Netherlands. After that day, the elders also traveled to the Netherlands for the 49th-day memorial. Respectful greetings to you all. May this merit be dedicated to the ten categories of beings, that all may fully accomplish Buddhahood. — Trần Thị Nhật Hưng

Concluding address at the closing ceremony of the three-day Joint Commemoration of the Successive Patriarchs—14th Return to the Source. [Continued from page 37.] Besides the

three workshops, the conference discussed and established directions and plans for future Buddhist activities, aspiring to glorify the Dharma, nurture harmony in the Sangha, support the fourfold community in shared practice, and benefit all beings. On this occasion the entire assembly respectfully remembered the late Most Venerable Thích Quảng Thanh, who devoted nearly thirty-five years to building and developing Bảo Quang Temple into a respected center of cultural and spiritual activity for the overseas Buddhist community. The grand celebration at Bảo Quang Temple, California, USA, concluded perfectly in harmony and purity. May the Dharma flourish, the Sangha be harmonious, and the fourfold community practice together. May Your Reverences and the entire assembly enjoy peace and joy.

Activity program at Khánh Anh Temple, Évry:

October 17–18 (Friday–Saturday, 8 p.m.): transmission of the Eight Precepts.

October 19 (Sunday): incense offering at the Boat People Memorial; weekly prayers for the deceased; 12:30 p.m., vegetarian fundraising meal.

November 8 (Saturday, lunar 19/9, Ất Tỵ year, 9 a.m.): Pure Land practice; Mid-Autumn charitable offerings; recitation of the Universal Gate chapter (Phổ Môn).

November 19 (Wednesday, lunar 30/9, Ất Tỵ year, 8 p.m.): Medicine Buddha ceremony and Medicine Buddha Sūtra chanting.

November 22 (Saturday): commemoration of Patriarch Liễu Quán.

November 24 (Monday, lunar 5/10, Ất Tỵ year, 8 p.m.): death anniversary of Great Master Bodhidharma, patriarch of meditation.

November 28–29 (Friday–Saturday, 8 p.m.): transmission of the Eight Precepts.

November 30 (Sunday): weekly prayers for the deceased; death anniversary of Third Trúc Lâm Patriarch Huyền Quang and Elder Most Venerable Thích Trí Quang.

December 4 (Thursday, lunar 15/10, Ất Tỵ year, 8 p.m.): tenth lunar month full-moon ceremony.

December 13 (Saturday, 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.): Pure Land practice day.

December 26–27 (Friday–Saturday, 8 p.m.): transmission of the Eight Precepts.

December 8–17, 2025 (Monday–Wednesday): European Congregation monastic winter retreat.

December 9, 2025 (Tuesday, lunar 20/10; [additional wording illegible]): commemoration of the European Congregation's founding.

December 30 (Tuesday, lunar 11/11, Ất Tỵ year, 8 p.m.): commemoration of Emperor Trần Nhân Tông.

January 2–3, 2026 (Friday–Saturday, 8 p.m.): transmission of the Eight Precepts.

January 5, 2026 (Monday, lunar 17/11, Ất Tỵ year, 8 p.m.): Amitābha Buddha's birthday.

January 17 (Saturday, 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.): Pure Land practice day.

Address by Susanne Benary, Deputy Mayor of Neuss, at the opening of the 36th European Buddhist retreat

Original p. 7



Closing ceremony of the 14th Joint Commemoration of the Successive Patriarchs—Return to the Source—and the 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang Temple, California, USA, Sunday, September 28, 2025.

Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt, Most Venerable Thích Như Điển, Venerable monastics, dear Buddhists and friends of Vietnamese Buddhism,

I am delighted that the city of Neuss was invited to host the 36th European Buddhist Study and Practice Retreat, for the fourth time here. My sincere thanks to Nguyễn Gia Phước for his contribution to organizing this event. It is a special honor for us to host this international gathering of Vietnamese Buddhists. Thank you for attending. Welcome to all Venerable monks and nuns and Buddhists from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, and Europe.

Over the next ten days, monks, nuns, and Buddhists from many countries will practice the Buddha's teachings together and share and exchange their cultural experiences. This event will offer many opportunities for young and old to meet and inspire the younger generation concerning Buddhism. With its rich history of transmission and profound teachings, Buddhism brings much wisdom to today's world. Especially in these challenging times, its principles of compassion, mindfulness, and peace can guide us all. It is inspiring to see the Vietnamese Buddhist community living and transmitting these values.

On his 90th birthday, July 6 this year, His Holiness the Dalai Lama reminded us of the importance of inner peace and human responsibility toward nature, our fellow human

beings, and future generations. Looking at what is happening around us today, these teachings become still more meaningful; may more people listen to them.

Many people like quoting Buddhist wisdom, which sounds very clear and simple. But if you reflect on and try to apply the often quoted saying, “Do not worry about the past, do not dream of the future, focus on the present,” you will realize that this is not easily accomplished in daily life. Only many years of meditation practice truly bring this awakened understanding. I wish you a Buddhist retreat with lively exchanges and peaceful practice. I am very honored to be able to convey these greetings to you today.

A brief account of the opening of the 36th European Buddhist retreat in Neuss, Germany. July 22, 2025 marked the opening of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe’s 36th European Buddhist Study and Practice Retreat, held for the fourth time in Neuss-Düsseldorf, Germany.

There are 121 monks and nuns and 263 lay Buddhists, mostly from various European countries, but also from distant countries such as Vietnam and the United States. These numbers usually increase in the following days. The opening was notably attended by the Deputy Mayor and her husband and the deputy head of Culture and Schools of Düsseldorf-Neuss.

The Venerables’ speeches reminded Buddhists of the Buddha’s teachings: Discipline, Concentration, Wisdom, Compassion, Mindfulness, and love for one another. Keeping the mind peaceful makes the world peaceful. The teachers also recalled the 90th birthday of the 14th Dalai Lama, who urges everyone to take greater responsibility toward nature and humanity in Buddhism’s compassionate spirit: “Above, seek the Buddha’s Way; below, transform sentient beings.”

Among these addresses were speeches by Deputy Mayor Susanne Benary and Ursula Platen, deputy head of education of Düsseldorf-Neuss. Foreign residents in general are mostly Catholic or Protestant, but when they investigate Buddhist doctrine, they study it deeply and carefully. The Deputy Mayor’s highly eloquent speech particularly highlighted the Buddha’s teaching: “The past has passed, the future has not arrived; we should live in the present.” And the present is here in Neuss, at this European retreat recalling the Buddha’s teachings, which she knows has been held in this hall three times before.

The seriousness, dignity, careful organization, and unity of our Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation at today’s ceremony left the guests representing local government and schools with profound faith in the Buddha’s teaching. The deputy head of Culture and Schools proudly shared that her daughter studies Buddhism at school. Through her daughter she came to know Buddhism, meditation, and yoga. She knows and understands much about Buddhism and has great sympathy for it. On this retreat’s occasion she declared herself ready to support us in every way needed.

The ceremony ended with gifts presented to the invited guests and commemorative photographs to mark this important day of the 36th European Buddhist retreat, on the date given above. — Trần Thị Nhật Hưng

Whatever you do, first consider its consequences.

A school closely linked to the children of the Buddha in Europe

Original p. 8

I booked a flight from Zurich to Düsseldorf to attend the 36th European Buddhist Study and Practice Retreat, organized annually by the Executive Council of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe. This year the local branch, the Vietnamese Refugee Buddhist Association, and the Buddhist Youth families in Germany are the hosts. Traveling with us is lay Buddhist Diệu Như—writer Trần Thị Nhật Hưng—one of Viên Giác newspaper’s seven women writers.

After landing, as we wheeled our suitcases toward the exit, we saw Buddhists holding Buddhist flags, ready to joyfully welcome the Venerable monks, nuns, and participants from different countries. Just after we left the airport for the retreat site, rain suddenly began falling. Crossing a bridge, I looked down at the Rhine and remembered that its waters originate in Lake Tomasee in the Swiss Alps, in the country where we have lived since 2014.

The upper Rhine flows into Lake Constance, then heads north to the German-French border, passes Strasbourg, enters German territory at Karlsruhe, goes through Bonn, Cologne, Düsseldorf, and so on, then the Netherlands before reaching the North Sea. The Rhine is more than flowing water: it symbolizes connection and preservation, a current of European history, culture, and soul. “Every stream leads to the sea, just as every history draws on a common source: humanity’s desire to live and connect.”

This afternoon, July 21, 2025, after the evening meal, the Congregation meets to hear reports and review every preparation for tomorrow morning’s opening, July 22. The Congregation’s Second President asks Gia Phước to explain the school’s origins. The Congregation often chooses it for retreats whenever no better venue is available: it can accommodate about a thousand people and holds many deep memories for monastics and lay Buddhists. His sincere account helps us understand and feel deeper gratitude: all this is thanks to the late President Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm, who steered the boat through so many generations.

In peaceful Neuss, Germany, beside the poetic Rhine, a school thus has a special bond with Europe’s Vietnamese Buddhist community. In 2010, the late Congregation President devotedly searched for and rented this school, creating an ideal space for a Dharma retreat for expatriate Buddhists. His love was not just spiritual leadership: it took practical form, opening a spiritual refuge to which the Buddha’s children could return far from home in Europe. After that meaningful first gathering in 2010, the Neuss school became a familiar meeting place in the years that followed.

In 2015, the second retreat here drew many Buddhists from different European countries to study, cultivate themselves, and share Buddhist teachings. Those days rekindled our people’s spiritual and cultural traditions, awakened profound understanding, and helped everyone rediscover inner peace amid modern life’s bustle. Yet that retreat also carried a

note of deep sorrow: our Grand Master was no longer present. Only choked tears remained in the remembrance of the Venerable monastics and lay assembly.

In 2018, the third retreat revived beautiful memories and many affectionate emotions. The dignified atmosphere, warm spirit of the Dharma, and meaningful teachings inspired many Buddhists to walk firmly toward goodness, preserve the character of their homeland's Buddhism, and continue the late Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm's aspiration.

This year, 2025, the Neuss school joyfully welcomes the fourth retreat held here. This morning the addresses by the school administration's representative and the Deputy Mayor of Neuss spread a deep wave of affection through the fourfold community. They are local people; one might imagine Eastern Buddhist culture unfamiliar to them. Yet they not only know how to pay respect to the monastic Sangha, but deeply absorb scriptural teachings: "Do not grieve over the past, do not worry about the future; abide in mindfulness of the present, this sacred moment." They thanked the retreat for being here and offered any help needed during the ten days. The two Elder Most Venerables sincerely thanked them and urged the assembly to practice diligently for these ten days, both to transform their own minds and to pray for Germany: favorable winds and rain, economic and political strength, and continued open support for Vietnamese Buddhism.

Most Venerable Thích Như Điển always reminds students of an ancient encouragement to study: "Học hải vô nhai cần thị ngạn, thanh vân hữu lộ chí vi mê" — "The sea of learning has no shore; diligence is its bank. There is a path to the high clouds; determination is its ladder." People once said, "East is East and West is West." Today, East and West are no longer strangers.

After four gatherings nurtured by such devotion, this school in a foreign land has become a cradle for the spiritual lives of generations of Vietnamese Buddhists in Europe. More than a place to practice and study doctrine, it is a shared home, a bridge joining compatriots and continuing Vietnamese Buddhist cultural, ethical, and traditional values. Through these four retreats, the Neuss school has become a symbol of unity and perseverance in preserving the Dharma and Vietnamese ways abroad. The late Congregation President's presence and great aspiration remain deeply engraved in every Buddhist's heart, inspiring the flame of wisdom and compassion to spread to every horizon. — Thích Như Tú

Overview of the program of the Joint Commemoration of the Successive Patriarchs and the 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang Temple. [Continued from page 38.]

This year's Return to the Source is wonderful!
 We respectfully remember our teachers' kindness,
 Spreading the true Dharma overseas,
 In America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.
 Vowing to bring the bell to foreign lands,
 Passing on the method of "breathing and smiling"
 To Vietnamese people and local inhabitants,
 Applying the Dharma with fresh brightness.

May Your Reverences enjoy long lives,
 Spreading the true Dharma deeply.

May Vietnamese people across the world
Carry Buddhism across the continents.
May everyone throughout the world
Quickly become steeped in the Dharma,
Together supporting the Three Jewels,
With wondrous peace of body and mind.

Return to the Source closes today;
Gratitude to the Venerables here.
Always keep the Three Jewels in your care;
Do good, avoid evil, benefiting East and West.
Here at the commemoration of the patriarchs,
Monastics and lay Buddhists dwell in peace.
Practice together: wisdom will arise.
Follow the Noble Eightfold Path in harmony all around.
Namo the Buddha Jewel. Namo the Dharma Jewel. Namo the Sangha Jewel.

Announcement: Grand Vu Lan Festival of Filial Gratitude—Buddhist Era 2569 / 2025

Original p. 9



Monastics from different continents conducting the closing ceremony of the 14th Joint Commemoration of the Successive Patriarchs—Return to the Source—at Bảo Quang Temple, California, USA, Sunday, September 28, 2025.

The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe. Khánh Anh Temple Buddhist Association. Évry-Courcouronnes, July 12, 2025.

Namo our fundamental teacher Śākyamuni Buddha. Namó the great filial bodhisattva mahāsattva Maudgalyāyana. Venerable monks and nuns, dear compatriots and Buddhist men and women, dear everyone,

When drizzle mingles with desolate winds and gray clouds spread across a gloomy sky, nature forms a picture etched with sorrowful longing between the realms of life and death. This signals autumn's return, with yellow leaves flying in the wind. It is also the season reminding Vietnamese children of the Buddha of their gratitude to grandparents and parents for giving them life and raising them, and of remembrance for deceased loved ones. It is called the Vu Lan season of filial gratitude, or the season of "rescuing those hanging upside down."

Dear everyone, Buddhism is the way of compassion, of boundless love without borders, making no distinctions among species, gods or humans, animals, hungry ghosts, or hell beings. As long as they remain within birth and death, all suffer the torment of "hanging upside down." Looking at today's world, everywhere humanity is unsettled by natural disasters, epidemics, hunger, war, and unending calamities. Buddhism calls this "the suffering of suffering." Hence the ancient saying, "Misfortune never comes alone; good

fortune does not come twice.” Yet all the world’s suffering is a process extending from cause to effect. The great writer Nguyễn Du said: “Since you bear karma within yourself, do not blame heaven near or far.”

This results from beings’ deep attachment to self and what belongs to self. As for the Buddhas and bodhisattvas: “Because they know that persons and phenomena have no self, and see the afflictions and their two obstructions, ever pure and free from conceptualization, they arouse great compassion.” Thus they establish countless skillful means to rescue beings from suffering. The Vu Lan season is one such means: it frees beings from the suffering of lower realms and gradually from the painful dwelling of the three worlds, allowing them to attain the stillness and bliss of nirvāṇa.

Dear everyone, Europe and neighboring countries have endured years of war, struggles for interests and power, and territorial expansion, causing countless family tragedies: children losing fathers, wives losing husbands, parents and grandparents losing children and grandchildren. Homes that sheltered people from sun and rain vanished in smoke and flames, beneath cruel showers of human-made bombs. Elsewhere in the world, people die in nature’s fury: floods, earthquakes, and fires. Others perish in accidents caused by technical shortcomings: planes falling from the sky, ships sinking into the vast depths of the ocean, vehicles suddenly colliding at intersections... All bring endless pain to a family, to all kinds of sentient beings.

The Grand Vu Lan Festival is therefore a supremely favorable occasion for all of us, children of the Buddha, to cultivate every wholesome practice and dedicate the merits to deceased grandparents, parents, and relatives, that they may be reborn in peaceful realms. Let us also pray for increased blessings and longevity for living grandparents and parents, and that relatives, loved ones, and friends may always enjoy peaceful and auspicious lives.

The Buddha teaches that all beings are our kin, all are our grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters, and so forth, because all beings share one essence, one inherent nature, one suchness—also called one Buddha-nature. Because of this sameness, the Buddha teaches: love all beings as yourself; do not distinguish self from others; transcend ego-attachment, delusion, and ignorance; do not divide beings into self and others, low and high.

Thus Vu Lan is an exceptional opportunity for the Buddha’s children to express completely impartial compassion toward all beings. As this season of filial devotion arrives, may the heads of all monasteries and the fourfold community, monastic and lay, diligently practice wholesome deeds and the Three Pure Trainings, recite sūtras and prayers, make charitable donations and offerings, and dedicate the merits to the deceased: may they soon be reborn in peaceful human and celestial realms, or in the Buddhas’ Pure Lands. We pray for peaceful lives for the living, world peace, favorable winds and rain, flourishing crops, and humanity’s happiness.

On behalf of the Executive Council of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe, we wish the Venerable monks and nuns one more year of monastic seniority, perfection of the precepts, adornment with merit and wisdom, and fulfillment of their spiritual endeavors. We wish all compatriots and fellow Buddhists a Vu Lan season of

ever-increasing merit and virtue. Namo the great filial bodhisattva mahāsattva
Maudgalyāyana: may you bear witness to our sincerity.

On behalf of the Executive Council of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in
Europe. First President: Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiết. Second President: Most
Venerable Thích Như Điển. 8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France.
Tel.: +33.1.64.93.55.56; +33.7.70.07.33.99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr

Communiqué — Grand Ceremony for the 2025 Festival of Filial Piety

Original p. 10



Joint commemoration of the ancestral masters—the 14th Return to the Roots Day and the 35th anniversary of the founding of Bảo Quang Pagoda, California, USA, Sunday, 28 September 2025.

Évry-Courcouronnes, 12 July 2025.

Homage to Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher, the Buddha. Homage to Maudgalyayana, the Bodhisattva of Filial Piety. Respected Venerable monks and nuns of the Sangha! Dear compatriots and Buddhist devotees! Ladies and gentlemen!

Drizzle mingling with the gentle breeze and grey clouds filling the gloomy sky creates a natural scene sculpted by sorrow and nostalgia, between the two worlds of life and death. It heralds autumn's return, with yellow leaves fluttering in the wind. It is also the season that reminds Vietnamese Buddhists to express gratitude and thanks to their grandparents and parents—those who brought them into the world and raised them—and to their deceased loved ones. This is the season of Vu Lan Filial Piety, also called the season of 'Liberation of beings in extreme suffering'.

Dear all, Buddhism is founded on compassion and infinite love, without boundaries or distinctions between species: humans, celestial beings, animals, hungry ghosts or beings in hell. If we remain in samsara—the cycle of lives and deaths—we shall all undergo extreme suffering. Looking at the world today, we see insecurity all around us, threatening humanity through natural disasters, epidemics, famines, wars and other calamities. Buddhism calls this 'Khổ Khổ': a succession of sufferings, one after another. Hence the Patriarchs' saying: 'Misfortune can come many times and at any moment, whereas good fortune may come only once.' Yet all the world's suffering and pain arise from a long process, governed by the law

of cause and effect. Thus the great writer Nguyễn Du wrote: ‘As we generate our own karma according to the law of cause and effect (consequences), let us blame no one, near or far.’

All this is linked to people’s deep attachment to their ego and possessions. Contemplating the body with wisdom and compassion, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas saw that everything is intrinsically pure and undefiled (without form), without inherent nature (without ego); inwardly there is no subjective world (cause) producing afflictions, and outwardly no objective world (all things) creating obstacles to knowledge. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas therefore established countless means of saving suffering beings. The Vu Lan season of Filial Piety is one way of helping beings escape the suffering of the lower realms and gradually leading them beyond the three worlds of suffering—desire, form and formlessness—to attain nirvana or serenity.

Dear all, across Europe and in neighbouring countries, years of war have raged, driven by interests or an insistence on expanding territory, causing countless tragedies and bereavements. Children have lost fathers, wives their husbands, parents and grandparents their children and grandchildren. Family homes sheltering their occupants from sun and rain have been burned and destroyed under the cruel hail of human-made bombs and bullets. Throughout the world, people die from nature’s fury—floods, earthquakes and fires—and from accidents caused by failing technology: plane crashes, ships sinking into the ocean depths, vehicle pile-ups and so on. All this brings endless pain to families and to all beings.

The season of the great Vu Lan Filial Piety celebrations is therefore an ideal opportunity for all Buddhists: after performing good deeds, they can dedicate the merits to their deceased grandparents, parents and loved ones, so that they may be reborn in the Pure Land. They also pray for their living grandparents and parents to enjoy blessings and greater longevity, and for their relatives and friends to have peaceful, prosperous lives.

The Buddha taught that all beings are relatives—grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters and so forth—because all beings share the same essence, the same inherent nature, the same true nature, or Buddha-nature. Since we are ‘the same’, the Buddha taught: love all beings as yourself, without distinction, beyond ignorance, selfishness, physical appearance and education.

The Vu Lan season of Filial Piety is thus a wonderful opportunity for Buddhists to express complete compassion and impartiality towards all beings. From monasteries to homes, the Buddha’s disciples—monks, nuns and lay practitioners—diligently perform good deeds; practise the precepts, mindfulness and wisdom; recite sutras; give donations and offerings; and dedicate their merits to the deceased so that they may be reborn in peaceful celestial or human realms, or in the Pure Land of the Buddhas. Let us pray for the living to lead serene lives. Let us pray for world peace, favourable weather, good harvests and happiness for all.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe, we wish you, respected Venerable monks and nuns of the Sangha, a new year of meritorious practice, steadfast precepts, honourable wisdom and successful

accomplishments. We wish you, dear compatriots and Buddhist devotees, a beneficial and meritorious Vu Lan season of Filial Piety.

Homage to Maudgalyayana, the Bodhisattva of Filial Piety, our witness. For the Executive Committee of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe: First President, Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiết; Second President, Most Venerable Thích Như Điển.

2025 Heritage Days at Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, Essonne — 91: the programme

Original p. 11



Monks pose for a commemorative photograph at the joint commemoration of the ancestral masters—the 14th Return to the Roots Day and the 35th anniversary of the founding of Bảo Quang Pagoda, California, USA, Saturday, 27 September 2025.

By My, sortiraparis.com, 15 September 2025 at 12:08 p.m.

Khánh Anh Pagoda in Évry opens its doors for European Heritage Days on Saturday, 20 and Sunday, 21 September 2025. The programme includes performances, mandala ceremonies, teachings and vegetarian food stalls.

Looking for an original cultural experience for the 2025 Heritage Days? Visit Khánh Anh Pagoda in Évry-Courcouronnes, Essonne. It has prepared an exceptional programme to welcome you on 20 and 21 September. Europe's largest Buddhist temple, covering 3,300 m², invites us to discover the richness of Vietnamese culture over the weekend.

The pagoda stands out in the Paris suburbs with its ochre-yellow walls, visible from national road 7. With glazed tiles made in China, curved roofs and an 18-metre tower, it is a true architectural mirage. Inaugurated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2008, Khánh Anh Pagoda in Évry is the headquarters of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe.

The construction of this temple is a remarkable story. Although its foundation stone was laid in 1995, it took almost twenty years to complete this Vietnamese-style pagoda. Why? The entire complex was funded by offerings from monasteries, monks, nuns and Buddhist

devotees around the world. Volunteers still work daily to maintain and improve this exceptional place of meditation.

RER D trains departing from Gare de Lyon will bring you to this impressive pagoda with its distinctive architecture. Visitors must remove their shoes at the entrance before entering the main shrine hall. At the centre of the temple is a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha in meditation; five metres tall, majestic and gilded, it is surrounded by traditional offerings.

The programme. For European Heritage Days, the pagoda offers a rich programme for those curious about Asian spirituality and culture. Friday, 19 September is reserved for school groups, but the public can enjoy both weekend days with the following programme.

Saturday, 20 September 2025: 9:30-9:45 a.m., traditional performance; 10-11:30 a.m., ceremony and teaching by Venerable Thích Hạnh Tấn from Germany; support the vegetarian food stalls; 2-4 p.m., mandala ceremony and teaching by Tibetan monks.

Sunday, 21 September 2025: 9-9:45 a.m., traditional performance; 11 a.m., weekly prayers for the deceased and for the peace of the living; support the vegetarian food stalls; 2-3:30 p.m., mandala ceremony and teaching by Tibetan monks; 4:30-6:30 p.m., mandala dissolution ceremony and scattering of the sand in the Seine.

This programme offers visitors a unique experience of Buddhist spirituality. The mandala ceremony is a practice dating back thousands of years: monks create ephemeral works in coloured sand, a fascinating meditative spectacle. The ritual dissolution of the mandala on Sunday afternoon recalls impermanence, a fundamental Buddhist principle, in the exceptional setting of the banks of the Seine.

Besides its spiritual function, the pagoda is a true cultural centre, with meeting rooms, a museum, a library and a training centre. Belonging to the Great Vehicle (Mahayana) tradition and guided by Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, Khánh Anh Pagoda values openness to the world and hospitality.

The interior architecture is also worth visiting. A central staircase leads to the first floor and the cultural hall, which connects with the main shrine hall. Behind it, a room with a dark red floor is dedicated to remembering the deceased; at its centre is a portrait of the late Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm, the pagoda's founder.

Established in 1984, European Heritage Days offer an annual opportunity to raise public awareness of the richness of European heritage. Khánh Anh Pagoda's participation fits perfectly with this event, which encourages the discovery and appreciation of Europe's cultural diversity.

Address: 8 rue François Mauriac, Parc aux Lièvres, Évry-Courcouronnes (91000). By public transport, take RER D to Le Bras de Fer station, then walk 800 metres. Admission is free. Information: 01 64 93 55 56 or the pagoda's Facebook page.

Heritage Days (continued) — Address by Ms Susanne Benary, Deputy Mayor of Neuss

Original p. 12

Looking for an original cultural discovery for the 2025 Heritage Days? Head to Khánh-Anh Pagoda in Évry-Courcouronnes, Essonne, which offers an exceptional programme on 20 and 21 September. This Buddhist temple, Europe's largest at 3,300 m², invites us to immerse ourselves in the richness of Vietnamese culture for a weekend.

This pagoda, with its ochre-yellow walls, stands out in the Île-de-France landscape and is impossible to miss from national road 7. With its glazed tiles crafted in China, curved roofs and eighteen-metre tower, it is a true architectural mirage. Inaugurated by the Dalai Lama in 2008, it is the headquarters of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe.

The story of its construction is an extraordinary achievement. Although the foundation stone was laid in 1995, it took nearly twenty years to complete this Vietnamese-style temple. Why? The architectural complex was financed solely through donations from Buddhist devotees worldwide. Volunteers still come daily to maintain and improve this exceptional place of meditation.

Visible from trains departing Gare de Lyon or from RER D, the pagoda surprises visitors with its remarkable architecture. At the entrance, visitors must leave their shoes before entering the meditation hall. At the heart of the temple sits a giant five-metre statue of Shakyamuni Buddha deep in meditation, covered in gold leaf and surrounded by traditional offerings.

The programme. For these European Heritage Days, the pagoda offers a rich programme to delight those curious about Asian spirituality and culture. While Friday, 19 September remains reserved for school groups, the general public can enjoy the weekend with this programme.

Saturday, 20 September: 9–9:45 a.m., traditional musical performance; 10–11:30 a.m., ceremony and talk led by Venerable Thích Hạnh Tấn from Germany; sale of vegetarian dishes; 2–4 p.m., mandala ceremony and talk led by Tibetan Venerables.

Sunday, 21 September: 9–9:45 a.m., traditional musical performance; 11 a.m., weekly prayers for bliss and tranquillity; sale of vegetarian dishes; 2–3:30 p.m., mandala ceremony and talk led by Tibetan Venerables; 4:30–6:30 p.m., mandala destruction ceremony, followed by the scattering of the sand by the Seine.

These moments offer a unique immersion in Buddhist spirituality. The mandala ceremony, an ancient practice in which monks create ephemeral works with coloured sand, is a fascinating meditative spectacle. Its ritual destruction on Sunday evening recalls impermanence, a fundamental Buddhist principle, in an exceptional setting beside the Seine.

Beyond its spiritual functions, the pagoda houses a genuine cultural centre comprising meeting rooms, a museum, a library and a training centre. The Great Vehicle (Mahayana)

Buddhist branch to which the temple belongs favours openness to the world and hospitality, under the guidance of Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo.

The interior architecture is also worth a visit. A central staircase leads to the first-floor cultural hall, which connects to the prayer hall. At the rear, a room for reflection with a dark red floor commemorates deceased devotees; at its centre is a portrait of the Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm, the pagoda's founder.

Created in 1984, European Heritage Days raise public awareness each year of the richness of European heritage. Khánh-Anh Pagoda's participation fits perfectly into this process of cultural discovery and appreciation.

The address to remember: 8 rue François Mauriac, Parc aux Lièvres, Évry-Courcouronnes (91000). By public transport, take RER D to Le Bras de Fer station, then walk 800 metres. Admission is unrestricted and free throughout the weekend. Information: 01 64 93 55 56 or the pagoda's Facebook page.

Address by Ms Susanne Benary, Deputy Mayor of Neuss, at the opening of the 36th European Course of Buddhist Study and Practice.

My respectful greetings to the Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt and the Most Venerable Thích Như Điển. Venerables, Buddhist devotees and friends of Vietnamese Buddhism,

I am very pleased that the city of Neuss was invited to host the 36th European Course of Buddhist Study and Practice, for the fourth time here. My sincere thanks to Mr Nguyễn Gia Phước for his contribution to organising this event. It is a special honour for us to host this international gathering of Vietnamese Buddhists.

Thank you for attending. I welcome all the Venerables, monks, nuns and Buddhist devotees from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam and Europe.

Over the next ten days, monks, nuns and devotees from many countries will practise the Buddha's teachings together and share their cultural experiences. This event will offer many opportunities for exchanges between young and old, while also inspiring the younger generation about Buddhism.

Buddhism, with its rich history of transmission and profound teachings, brings great wisdom to today's world. Especially in these challenging times, the principles of compassion, mindfulness and peace it teaches can guide us all. It is inspiring to witness the Vietnamese Buddhist community living and passing on these values.

On his 90th birthday, on 6 July this year, His Holiness the Dalai Lama reminded us of the importance of inner peace and our human responsibility towards nature, other people and future generations.

When we look at what is happening around us today, these teachings become even more meaningful, and we wish that more people would listen to them.

Many people like to quote Buddhist wisdom, which sounds so clear and simple. But if you try to reflect on and apply the often-quoted saying, "Do not dwell on the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate on the present," you will realise that this is not easy to achieve in

daily life. Only many years of meditation practice can truly bring you this awakened understanding.

I wish you a course of Buddhist study and practice filled with lively exchanges and peaceful practice. I am very honoured to be able to offer you these greetings today.

Information notice — Ten-day winter retreat at Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda

Original p. 13



Saturday, 27 September 2025, at 10 a.m.: the second workshop, at which Most Venerable Thích Bồ Đạt presented the life journey and work of the late Elder, Most Venerable Thích Thắng Hoan, Chief of Staff, during the joint commemoration of the ancestral masters—the 14th Return to the Roots Day at Bảo Quang Pagoda, USA.

Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe — Khánh Anh Buddhist Association.
Évry-Courcouronnes, 18 September 2025.

Ten-day winter retreat at Khánh Anh Đại Tự Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, France,
2025—Buddhist year 2569. Homage to Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher, the Buddha.

To the respected Venerables of the Executive Committee of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe; to the respected Venerable monks and nuns of the Sangha. Dear all,

In the Discourse on the Journey (Du Hành), in the collection of long discourses, the Buddha teaches the bhikkhus: “When they meet regularly to discuss the true meaning, senior and junior members live in harmony and the true Dharma does not decline. When seniors and juniors are united, respectful and in concord, all live in harmony and the true Dharma does not decline.”

Following the Buddha’s teaching, and to offer the overseas Vietnamese Sangha in Europe an opportunity to live in a spirit of harmony, the Executive Committee of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe maintains a ten-day winter retreat every year.

This year, the retreat will take place at Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda in Évry-Courcouronnes, in the Paris area, France, from Monday, 8 to Wednesday, 17 December 2025.

We respectfully invite the Venerable monks and nuns to arrange their schedules and local Buddhist duties so that they may joyfully attend these ten days of winter retreat at Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda. Your presence will express the harmony that is the essence of the Sangha, in its mission to seek awakening and to help all beings.

Homage to the Great Bodhisattva of Constant Diligence, whom we call as witness. For the Executive Committee of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe: First President, Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt; Second President, Most Venerable Thích Như Điển.

Recipients: Council of the Clergy, for information; Executive Committee, for information; monasteries, monks and nuns, for implementation; archives. For further information, contact Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, abbot of Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda.

Address: 8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France. Telephone: +33 (0)1 64 93 55 56; mobile: +33 (0)7 70 07 33 99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr.

Making the right decisions in life is extremely important—some decisions affect the cycle of rebirth itself

Original p. 14

In the Buddha's time, a young girl lived in the house of a donor where Venerable Mahā-Moggallāna went on his alms round.

She had made a personal resolve: always to offer half her food to someone worthy of receiving it before eating. If no worthy recipient was nearby, she set that half aside and then ate the remainder. She also especially loved giving alms to beggars. Her mother therefore gave her an additional name: "Dāna-jāsā," one who always wishes to give.

When she grew up, she married a young man from Rājagaha. After marriage, she continued her practice of generosity. Moreover, having had a good heart since childhood, she maintained wholesome conduct in body, speech and mind in her married life.

She went to bed after her husband and rose before him. When sitting down, she sat after him and behaved in ways that pleased him. In speaking to him, she used no harsh words, choosing only affectionate ones. Before doing anything, she asked his opinion. She responded considerately to his expression and spoke truthfully.

Another admirable quality was that she treated her mother-in-law as her own parents, respectfully addressing her as "Mother, Mother." Yet mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law have always been prone to friction. However well the young woman lived, her mother-in-law remained dissatisfied and often saw only faults. Knowing this, the daughter-in-law cared for her even more than was necessary.

One day, Venerable Mahā-Moggallāna stood outside the house seeking alms. The daughter-in-law, who had known him since girlhood, invited him inside. Wishing to make an offering but having nothing ready, she looked around and saw a plate of her mother-in-law's fried cakes in the kitchen. Unable to find her mother-in-law, she thought, "I will tell her afterwards so that she can rejoice," and offered the cakes to the Venerable. He accepted, gave a teaching praising the act, and left.

Soon afterwards her mother-in-law returned. The young woman joyfully said, "Mother, I took your cakes to offer them to Venerable Mahā-Moggallāna. Please rejoice and say 'Sādhu.'" Her mother-in-law became furious: "What... what... You dared take my cakes and give them to an ascetic without asking permission?" She seized a rice pestle and struck her daughter-in-law hard on the shoulder. Taken by surprise, the young woman could not dodge it and was seriously injured.

During the next two or three days she suffered terrible pain. Remarkably, she felt no resentment towards her mother-in-law's harmful act, keeping in her heart only the joy of having made an offering to the Venerable. On the third day she died from the injury. At death, her mind turned towards the merit of that offering, so she was reborn as an

exceptionally beautiful celestial maiden named Uḷārā in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (Tāvātimsa).

One day, Venerable Mahā-Moggallāna visited the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and met Uḷārā. He asked, “Through what merit were you reborn as a celestial maiden?” Uḷārā recounted the story of her mother-in-law and said, “Because at death I directed my mind towards the merit of the offering I made to you, I was reborn in heaven, Venerable.”

The meaning of the story. During the three days before her death, two prominent objects appeared to her mind: being struck by her mother-in-law (an unwholesome object), and making an offering to the Venerable (a wholesome object). Both were very powerful and could easily draw the mind. But she knew how to direct her mind towards the wholesome object—the merit of the offering—instead of clinging to anger at her mother-in-law. The result was a fortunate rebirth.

If an ordinary person at death directs the mind towards hatred and wishes to “defeat my mother-in-law in the next life,” it is very easy to fall into an unhappy realm. The daughter-in-law remained clear-minded: she did not turn her mind towards her mother-in-law but focused on merit and goodness. This right decision brought her rebirth in a happy realm.

Lessons about decisions. Making the right decision in life is extremely important; some decisions affect the cycle of rebirth itself. Develop the habit of leaning towards the wholesome when making a decision, whatever the situation: over time, it becomes an ingrained tendency. When faced with a tangled situation, do not decide hastily while still confused. Wait until your heart is calm before deciding.

On mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Each often harbours conceit: “I am the senior mother-in-law,” “I am the junior daughter-in-law”... The problem arises from conceit. If one or both let go of it, there will be no problem. When conflict arises, live according to the Dharma: “Dhammo have rakkhati dhammacāriṃ—Whoever upholds the Dharma will be protected by the Dharma.”

Practising loving-kindness (mettā). If there is hostility between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, send loving-kindness: after pouring water as an offering to the Buddha, make this wish: “Like this cool stream of water, may my mother-in-law be cool and peaceful in body and mind, and may everything go smoothly for her.” Visualise your mother-in-law before you and send loving-kindness until you can smile.

If concentration in loving-kindness is strong, change will appear within a few days. If it is weak, things will still change within one or two months. The person sending loving-kindness must sincerely desire harmony; if that desire is absent from the heart, loving-kindness will have difficulty taking effect.

Thus, when a problem arises, live according to the Dharma and observe the precepts strictly. Whether circumstances are favourable or adverse is secondary; what matters is following the Dharma. In the end, everything lies in the mind: change the way the mind sees, and peace will come.

Examine yourself: are you at peace amid your present thoughts? If not, why continue nurturing those habits? Peace is the most precious thing in human life. Between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, the absence of loving-kindness brings discord; loving-kindness brings harmony. Try sending loving-kindness: before long, everyone will be surprised by the harmony. Blessings will follow as well. — Ashin Yashinda (Myanmar).

Dear Dharma friends. We sincerely thank you for the merit of your offerings, you who have sent money from afar each month to support the Three Jewels and maintain the monastery. If you are in France, elsewhere in Europe or outside Europe and wish to make offerings for ceremonies, support the pagoda's upkeep, print scriptures and so forth, the most convenient method is to visit your bank or local bank counter and transfer funds to Khánh Anh Pagoda's account below.

SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE — Association Bouddique KHANH ANH. Account no. 00037286040. IBAN: FR76 3000 3016 7900 0372 8604 07B. BIC / SWIFT address: SOGEFRPP.

Invitation to commemorate the second anniversary of Most Venerable Thích Tuệ Sỹ's passing and the anniversary of Most Venerable Thích Trí Quang's passing

Original p. 15



Saturday, 27 September 2025, at 4 p.m.: the third workshop, at which Most Venerable Thích Tâm Minh and Venerable Thích Chúc Đại presented the life journey and work of the late Elder, Most Venerable Thích Tâm Châu, during the joint commemoration of the ancestral masters—the 14th Return to the Roots Day at Bảo Quang Pagoda, USA.

Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe — Khánh Anh Buddhist Association.
Évry-Courcouronnes, 18 September 2025.

Homage to Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher, the Buddha. To the respected Elders, Most Venerables and Venerable monks, senior nuns and all monks and nuns. Dear Buddhist men and women, dear compatriots, Venerables, ladies and gentlemen,

On 24 November 2023 (the 22nd day of the 10th lunar month in Quý Mão, the Year of the Cat), Most Venerable Thích Tuệ Sỹ, following the law of impermanence, passed away at Phật Ân Pagoda, Long Thành district, Đồng Nai province, Vietnam. A scholar and translator with profound knowledge of Buddhism, he was also a senior dignitary of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation.

On Friday, 8 November 2019 (the 8th day of the 10th lunar month in Kỷ Hợi, the Year of the Pig), Most Venerable Thích Trí Quang passed away at Từ Đàm Pagoda in Huế, aged 97. During his 81 years of monastic life, he had completed 72 summer retreats.

In memory of these eminent learned monks, whose great merits helped build Vietnamese Buddhist culture, Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda in Évry-Courcouronnes will hold a ceremony for the second anniversary of Most Venerable Thích Tuệ Sỹ's passing, to express, however partially, its profound gratitude for his merits, together with a commemoration of the anniversary of Most Venerable Thích Trí Quang's passing.

The commemoration will take place at 11 a.m. on Sunday, 30 November 2025, the 11th day of the 10th lunar month in Ất Tỵ, the Year of the Snake.

On behalf of Khánh Anh Grand Pagoda, we sincerely and respectfully invite the Elders, Most Venerables and Venerable monks, senior nuns and all monks and nuns compassionately to honour our temple with their presence, bear witness and support the ceremony with their prayers.

We also invite compatriots and Buddhist devotees to spare some of their precious time to return to the pagoda and attend the second-anniversary commemoration in gratitude for the late Most Venerable Thích Tuệ Sỹ's beneficence and the anniversary of the late Most Venerable Thích Trí Quang's passing. The presence of the Venerables and all of you will bring solemnity and dignity to the commemoration and help bring it to complete fulfilment.

Homage to the Great Bodhisattva Hoan Hỷ Tạng, Treasury of Joy. Respectfully, Most Venerable Thích Như Điển, General Secretary of the Dharma Propagation Council. With our respects, Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo.

8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France. Telephone: 01 64 93 55 56 — 07 70 07 33 99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr.

Report on the Vu Lan weekend at Khánh Anh Great Pagoda

Original p. 16

As autumn comes to the Paris sky, icy gusts seem intent on stripping the leaves beginning to turn yellow and covering the deserted path around Khánh Anh Great Pagoda. Outside, dusk has fallen; the dark clouds in the night sky seem to compose a poem about the melancholy autumn scene in the Paris suburbs. Inside the main shrine hall, by contrast, a dreamlike arrangement of two moons and candles on the tiled floor creates a warm, wistful atmosphere. One moon is for our Parents, the other for our Teachers. Their gentle light evokes a mother's love for her young children and a teacher's love for disciples still bewildered by the journey against the current of worldly life.

At 8:30 p.m. on Friday, 12 September 2025, venerable monks, nuns and lay Buddhists gathered in the main shrine hall for a candlelight vigil marking twelve years since the passing of their benefactor and teacher, the late Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm. He had guided the development of Buddhism in Europe from fifty years ago to its present condition. Nearly seventy monastics sat facing one another, under the auspices of the Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt, abbot of Thiện Minh Pagoda in Lyon, and Thích Thông Hoà, abbot of Bảo Tịnh Pagoda in Bình Thuận. The late master's ordained disciples knelt in the middle, facing his portrait amid pure white flowers and flickering candlelight.

The ceremony lasted ninety minutes. Venerable Thích Chúc Từ, who conducted it gently and warmly, spoke movingly of parental love and the bonds between teacher and disciples, in worldly and religious life alike. Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, the late master's Dharma heir, offered sincere, heartfelt words on behalf of the fourfold community. Before the dedication of merit concluding the lantern ceremony, the Most Venerables took a flame from the master's altar and passed it to the monks, nuns and lay Buddhists.

At dawn on Saturday, 13 September 2025, following morning prayers, the ritual masters raised the ceremonial banner and invoked the Buddhas of the five directions and Tiêu Diện, guardian of spirits. At noon an offering was made to the spirit of the benefactor and teacher, Most Venerable Thích Minh Tâm. The ritual 'Chẩn Tế Cứu Bạt Thập Loại Hương Linh'—offerings to rescue and liberate the ten classes of spirits—was presided over by Most Venerable Thích Nguyên Từ, abbot of Đại Giác Pagoda in San José, USA, together with ritual masters from Bình Định. For five and a half hours, chanting blended with bells, oboes, two-string fiddles and drums, carrying the Buddhists gathered to pray for their ancestors' liberation into a mysterious, sacred atmosphere. Mudrās and mantras supported their prayers, giving the departed the clarity to hear the Dharma and resolve to escape the three painful realms. Dark clouds gathered as the officiant and ritual masters summoned the wandering spirits. Rain fell like karmic deeds falling away through repentance arising in the consciousness of the dead. As the ceremony drew to a close, golden rays of sunset entered the hall like the Buddhas' radiance, ready to guide the departed to the Pure Land.

At 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, 14 September 2025, the venerable monks and nuns gathered in the assembly room, ready to follow the pagoda's invitation to the main shrine hall for this year's

Vu Lan festival of filial gratitude. In the Mahāyāna spirit of gratitude toward one's parents in this life and in countless previous lives, more than eighty monastics from the Vietnamese, Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna traditions, together with several hundred lay Buddhists, offered earnest chanting. They reminded themselves and all beings to arouse great bodhicitta in order to attain lasting peace and liberation. This year's festival included a moment of remembrance for the Most Venerable who founded the two Khánh Anh pagodas in Paris. The master of ceremonies' sorrowful voice brought vividly to mind his simple yet dignified presence and his passionate dedication to developing Buddhism abroad. Remembrance, affection, regret and reverence mingled with silent tears running down careworn and youthful cheeks alike.

Buddhists from Europe, the Americas and Asia attended this solemn ceremony to offer wishes for the long life of the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, on his 90th birthday. His life is a succession of energetic days devoted to world peace through nonviolent struggle, with the modest wish to preserve the Buddhist culture of Tibet, a country of just over three million people. He also strives to bring the wisdom of the Dharma to everyone in the world to ease suffering in this life and many future lives. All humanity surely wishes him many more years so that everyone may benefit from his boundless compassion. On behalf of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe and Khánh Anh's fourfold community, Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiết, first president of the Executive Council and abbot of Thiện Minh in Lyon, and Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, head of the Department of Social and Charitable Affairs and abbot of Khánh Anh, offered ten thousand euros in celebration of his birthday.

The ceremony ended with offerings of fresh flowers to the Three Jewels, made with all the reverence and devotion of the lay Buddhists attending Vu Lan. The meal offering to the monastic community and the rites for departed spirits entrusted to the pagoda were performed with equal solemnity and care. A performance preserving Vietnamese arts and culture followed in the assembly hall. Songs and dances seemed to transport everyone across space to their beloved homeland, introducing French guests to the dreamlike images and sounds of the S-shaped land along the Pacific Ocean.

Vô Trước Tỳ Kheo. A French version of this report also begins on this page.

Report on the weekend of filial piety — continued

Original p. 17



The joint commemoration of patriarchs through the generations expresses gratitude and remembrance of their virtue. Fourteenth Day of Gratitude — joint commemoration of the patriarchs: Buddhist disciples drinking water must remember its source.

Thích Minh Tâm, the master who enabled Buddhism to develop in Europe fifty years ago and through to the present day. Nearly seventy monks and nuns sat facing one another under the blessings of Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt, head of Thiện Minh Pagoda in Lyon, and Thích Thông Hoà, head of Bảo Tịnh Pagoda in Bình Thuận, Vietnam. The late master's ordained disciples knelt in the middle, facing his portrait amid pure white flowers and flickering candlelight.

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two-string fiddles and drums, carrying the Buddhists gathered to pray for their ancestors' liberation into a mysterious, sacred atmosphere. Mudrās and mantras supported their prayers, giving the departed the clarity to hear the Dharma and resolve to escape the three painful realms. Dark clouds gathered as the officiant and ritual masters summoned the wandering spirits. Rain fell like karmic deeds falling away through repentance arising in the consciousness of the dead. As the ceremony drew to a close, golden rays of sunset entered the hall like the Buddhas' radiance, ready to guide the departed to the Pure Land.

At 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, 14 September 2025, the venerable monks and nuns gathered in the assembly room, ready to follow the pagoda's invitation to the main shrine hall for this year's Vu Lan festival of filial gratitude. In the Mahāyāna spirit of gratitude toward one's parents in this life and in countless previous lives, more than eighty monastics from the Vietnamese, Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna traditions, together with several hundred lay Buddhists, offered earnest chanting. They reminded themselves and all beings to arouse great bodhicitta in order to attain lasting peace and liberation. This year's festival included a moment of remembrance for the Most Venerable who founded the two Khánh Anh pagodas in Paris. The master of ceremonies' sorrowful voice brought vividly to mind his simple yet dignified presence and his passionate dedication to developing Buddhism abroad. Remembrance, affection, regret and reverence mingled with silent tears running down careworn and youthful cheeks alike.

Buddhists from Europe, the Americas and Asia attended this solemn ceremony to offer wishes for the long life of the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, on his 90th birthday. His life is a succession of energetic days devoted to world peace through nonviolent struggle, with the modest wish to preserve the Buddhist culture of Tibet, a country of just over three million people. He also strives to bring the wisdom of the Dharma to everyone in the world to ease suffering in this life and many future lives. All humanity surely wishes him many more years so that everyone may benefit from his boundless compassion. On behalf of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe and Khánh Anh's fourfold community, Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiệt, first president of the Executive Council and abbot of Thiện Minh in Lyon, and Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, head of the Department of Social and Charitable Affairs and abbot of Khánh Anh, offered ten thousand euros in celebration of his birthday.

The ceremony ended with offerings of fresh flowers to the Three Jewels, made with all the reverence and devotion of the lay Buddhists attending Vu Lan. The meal offering to the monastic community and the rites for departed spirits entrusted to the pagoda were performed with equal solemnity and care. A performance preserving Vietnamese arts and culture followed in the assembly hall. Songs and dances seemed to transport everyone across space to their beloved homeland, introducing French guests to the dreamlike images and sounds of the S-shaped land along the Pacific Ocean.

The ceremony ended with offerings of fresh flower petals to the Three Jewels—Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—with all the respect and devotion of those attending the Vu Lan festival of filial piety. The ceremony offering food to the venerable monks and nuns, and the ceremony for the blessed repose of the deceased, including those honoured at the pagoda, were... (continued on page 25).

Crowds at the funeral of the pagoda's Venerable master

Original p. 18

Le Parisien — 22 August 2013, 7 a.m.

Not a tear ran down the cheeks of the hundreds of Buddhists who gathered at dawn yesterday morning at the Évry pagoda for the official funeral ceremony of Grand Patriarch Thích Minh Tâm. “Crying could prevent the Venerable’s soul from departing in peace,” explained Anne, a Buddhist in her thirties.

The Venerable, who died on 8 August at the age of 75 while attending a seminar in Finland, was more than the spiritual leader of Europe’s largest pagoda. President of the Higher Council of Buddhist Clergy of France (CSRBF) and second-ranking leader of the World Buddhist Sangha Council, he personally laid the foundation stone of Évry’s Khánh Anh Pagoda in 1995.

The mayor’s support. “This is the most important day for all European Buddhists,” said Đặng Thăng Long, a 29-year-old IT executive. Having been with the Venerable in Finland, he was one of the last people to see Thích Minh Tâm alive. “We have just lost our great teacher; this is a day of great loss for us all,” he confided. “It is thanks to his work that Vietnamese Buddhists are united today.”

A few steps away, Chương Ngô, 65, had travelled especially from the Netherlands. “It was obvious that we had to be here; he did so much for our community.” Francis Chouat, Évry’s Socialist mayor, also attended the ceremony, which drew around a thousand people. In a brief speech he expressed his support for the Buddhist community and wished to “associate with his presence the support of Manuel Valls, absent because of the Council of Ministers meeting.”

Even animals do not want to hear insults

Once upon a time, in a small Indian village, a man made his living driving a cart. He kept two cows, “Joy” and “Good Flavour”. One spring each gave birth to a calf. As they grew, the calves looked quite different: Joy’s calf had long, large horns and looked powerful, while Good Flavour’s had no horns. Their owner therefore named them “Long-Horned Joy” and “Good Flavour”. Both were very strong and good at pulling, so he used them to draw his cart.

One day some village carters gathered beside the pond to graze their oxen and talk. Each insisted that his animal was the strongest. Their argument grew heated, with no one willing to give way. The owner of the two oxen joined in, declaring his animals the strongest. When the others disbelieved him, he offered a wager of 500 gold coins: his two oxen would pull a heavy cart up a steep hill. Everyone agreed. At the foot of the hill, before the crowd, he ordered, “Long-Horned Joy, pull hard! Bald Good Flavour, pull faster!”

Hearing his owner’s insults, especially the nickname “Bald Good Flavour”, the hornless ox grew angry and stood still, firmly refusing to pull. Furious, the man struck him hard with a

stick. The onlookers intervened: "Do you want to kill him? If he cannot pull, give up!" In the end he lost his 500 gold coins. Angrier than ever, he beat both oxen and tied them to a dead tree as punishment. Suddenly they spoke: "You used to care for us like your own children. Why are you beating us so cruelly now?"

"Because you made me lose 500 gold coins!" he replied angrily. The horned ox answered, "You lost because of your own improper words. Why blame us?" Surprised, the owner asked, "What was wrong with my words?" The hornless ox said, "Why did you insult me in front of everyone by calling me Bald? If you call us by pleasant names without insulting us, I will pull a load twice as heavy up the hill for you." He even told the man to wager 1,000 gold coins, promising victory.

At first the owner did not believe them, thinking they wanted him to lose still more. But they assured him, "Just refrain from insulting us in front of others and we will pull with all our strength." One day, while taking them to drink, he proposed another wager. The others teased him, "Do you want to lose again?" He replied, "If I lose, you lose nothing." They agreed to a wager of 1,000 gold coins. This time, at the foot of the hill, he spoke kindly: "Joy, Joy, pull hard! Good Flavour, Good Flavour, pull faster!" Delighted, both oxen put forth all their strength and easily hauled the heavy cart to the summit. Their owner won the 1,000 gold coins.

Through this story the Buddha taught his disciples: "Even animals may act against their owner's interests when they hear insulting words. How much more so human beings! Therefore never slander or insult anyone." From Sound of Hope; Vietnamese translation by Minh Nguyệt.

Vu Lan offerings, 2025

Original p. 19

The amounts shown are in euros.

Donor names and amounts — first column (faithfully reproduced).

Pt Huỳnh t.Xuân Đào 20, Pt Tăng Kim Quý 20, Pt Phạm Thanh Phương 100, Pt Phan t.Lê Bao 50, Pt David Hinh Như Lâm 100, Pt Bùi t.Duyên 100, Pt Phạm t.Hồng Nhung 20, Pt Ng t.Ngọc Phụng 50, Pt Hồ Mộng Hoảng 20, Pt Trương t.Long 20, Pt Ngô Thanh Loan 20, Pt Ng v.Tường 50, Pt Phan t.Thanh Nga 100, Pt Lưu t.Thanh Vân 10, Pt Huỳnh Anh Đào 10, Pt Phạm t.Bách Mai 10, Pt Ng Đăng Nghĩa 50, Pt Trương Quy Phi 40, Pt Lê t.Thiên Trang 50, Pt Phạm Tuyết Hoa 50, Pt Lâm Ngọc Trân 20, Pt Lam Felix 20, Pt Mỹ Nhung Trần 200, Pt Lê Đình Hoi 150, Pt Sơn t.Chín 50, Pt Chan Tha Vong 100, Pt Trần t.Tuyết Hoa 100, Pt Pages Bopha 180, Pt Phan Ngọc Bích 400, Pt Cols Mai 50, Pt Đăng t.Liêu 50, Pt Ng Phúc Lộc 150, Pt Lê Bá Miêng 20, Pt Ng Hữu Thoại Văn 80, Pt Sultan Halima 20, Pt Vương Quang Trung 15, Pt Guillemoir Estelle 100, Pt Hồng Gia Nghi 300, Pt Bùi t.Thanh 60, Pt Pierre Cornet 200, Pt Minh Công 30, Pt Trần t.Thanh Sophie 10, Pt Huỳnh Quang Minh 50, Pt Phạm t.Bách Tuyết 50, Pt Ng t.Xuân Hương 100, Pt Ng t.Muộn 100, Pt Hoàng Phú Hai 20, Pt Dương Sok 100, Pt Hoàng Phước Hải 20, Pt Lê t.Bích Khuê 200, Pt Nguyễn Thiệu Giang kenji 20, Pt Vu t.Thủy Linh 300, Pt Lê Xuân 50, Pt Phạm t.Hiến Sylvie 30, Pt Ng Minh Quê Anh 10, Pt Tôn Nữ Diệu Hỷ 200, Pt Trương t.Thanh Hương 50, Pt Ng t.Kiểu Loan 50, Pt Nguyễn Cao Minh 200, Pt Diệu Toàn 10, Pt Đặng Phương Mai 100, Pt Nguyễn Ai Thanh 20, Pt Chen Min Hua 20, Pt Nguyệt 30, Pt Đặng t.Mộng Hòa 30, Pt Phan t.Thanh Nga 100, Pt Ngô Tuấn Anh 5, Pt Lê t.Kiểu Nga 5, Pt Phương Thiên 10, Pt Ng t.Mỹ 30, Pt Trần t.Bách Nga 50, Pt Ng Thu Cúc 100, Pt Huỳnh Tuyết Trinh 20, Pt Ng Trần Vũ 100, Pt Nguyễn t.Thien Nga 100, Pt Huỳnh t.Nhân 100, Pt Trần t.Minh Nguyệt 100, Pt Lý Tú Hà 50, Pt Pancrassin Julie 100, Pt Huỳnh Hélène 100, Pt Ng t.Phương Hà 70, Pt Lưu t.Ảnh Vân 100, Pt Ngô t.Phụng 100, Pt Phan t.Minh Châu 500, Pt Hồ V. Xá 50, Pt Du t.Bách v.25, Pt Ng Alice

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Pt Delaby t.Hiền 50.

A generation gradually disappearing

One day a son asked his father, “Dad, I do not understand how you and everyone else used to live without the Internet, computers, television, air conditioning or mobile phones!” The question implied, “How could your generation survive without all those conveniences?” The father had not yet had time to think. Instead of answering directly, he read the following passage.

Dad’s generation and the generation before, born between 1945 and 1985, were very lucky: everyone went fearlessly to school alone, walking or cycling, from primary through secondary school; after school everyone could play until dark. No one spent hours glued to a television, phone or iPad. Everyone had real friends, rather than friends from the Internet. When thirsty, we drank water anywhere considered clean, rather than bottled water.

We seldom fell ill, although we shared food and drink, even chopsticks or the same water dipper. If we became ill, our grandparents treated us with inexpensive medicines bought at the pharmacy or made domestically, or with folk remedies. We were not obese, although every day we ate rice, soup, vegetables and anything edible. We made our own toys from clay, leaves, sticks and even pieces of broken bottles, and shared toys, books and comics.

In the past, most families were not wealthy. But parents gave their children their love, taught them to value spiritual rather than material things, and showed them true human values: honesty, loyalty, respect and a love of work. We could take care of ourselves from childhood, without relying on grandparents or adults. By ten we could do most household chores to help our parents and older siblings: cook rice, carry and cut grass for the buffalo, or gather greens in the fields to feed pigs...

We had never had mobile phones, DVD players, PlayStations or computers; we knew nothing of the Internet or online chat. Yet we had real friends: we visited each other without invitations and ate whatever was available in one another's homes. That generation's memories are only old black-and-white photographs, yet their light remains bright. Everyone treasured the family album with affection and respect; it always preserved portraits of grandparents, great-grandparents and children...

Our generation never threw books into the rubbish: we queued for hours to buy them and then read them day and night. We never displayed our private lives to the world for attention and knew how to keep family life private, unlike what now happens on Facebook and Instagram. Our generation may be the last whose children obeyed their parents; it may also be the first to know how to listen to its children. That is our generation: a "limited edition".

So, children, cherish the days with your parents, learn from them and treasure them. Spend less of your precious time on smartphones, iPads and computers, so you can have quality time with your parents... Before this generation disappears, remember! Phạm Việt Hải.

ANNOUNCEMENT — Vietnamese classes. At parents' request, the 2025–2026 school year will begin on 5 October 2025. Classes run on Sundays from 10:30 to 11:40 a.m. at Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes. Classes open for children aged 10 and over. Vietnamese teaching will continue, and the pagoda's teaching team will also be established. Contact: Cô Sông Mờ, 0652692708.

Invitation — fundraising meal and concert for renovation

Original p. 20

Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe. Khánh Anh Buddhist Association.
Évry-Courcouronnes, 18 September 2025. Invitation to a meal and concert on Sunday, 19 October 2025, supporting the renovation of Khánh Anh Great Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes.

Homage to Śākyamuni, our great teacher, the Buddha. Homage to Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva of loving-kindness and compassion. Respected venerable monks and nuns, dear compatriots and Buddhist devotees, ladies and gentlemen,

Maintaining Khánh Anh Great Pagoda is essential so that we can welcome you with dignity. Here the Three Jewels are honoured, the Buddha's teachings—the Dharma—are taught, and the altars of the founding master, patriarchs and departed are established. In this sacred, peaceful place, families receive support and gather to reflect after losing a loved one, to mourn, or to attend the many ceremonies, including those for the blessed repose of the deceased and the well-being of the living. By maintaining and developing this sanctuary of the Three Jewels, we hope to sustain the teaching of the Dharma for years to come and repay, in however small a measure, our debt to the Three Jewels and our late benefactor and teacher.

Each year Khánh Anh Great Pagoda holds a friendly fundraising meal and concert to help maintain the pagoda, expressing gratitude to the Three Jewels and the founding master. Please join us at noon on Sunday, 19 October 2025 (28/9 in the Ất Tỵ Year of the Snake). We respectfully invite venerable monks and nuns, compatriots, Buddhist devotees, ladies and gentlemen to enjoy the performance and help make the fundraising a complete success. Homage to the great Bodhisattva Forest of Merit. Yours sincerely, Bhikkhu Thích Quảng Đạo.

8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France. Tel.: 01.64.93.55.56 – 07.70.07.33.99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr.

Support form for the renovation of Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry

Mr, Mrs/Ms:

Address:

Tel.: Email:

Cheque: write “Soutien à la rénovation de la pagode Khánh Anh Évry” (Vietnamese wording: support for the meal and concert to renovate Khánh Anh Great Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes).

Amount: €

Donation delivered or sent to the pagoda, or transferred to its bank account. Amount: €

SOCIETE GENERALE. Association Bouddhique KHANH ANH. Account No. 00037286040.

IBAN: FR76 3000 3015 7900 0372 8604 078.

BIC/SWIFT: SOGEFRPP.

8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France. Tel.: 01.64.93.55.56 – 07.70.07.33.99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr.

Offering forms — October 2025

Original p. 21

10/2025 — Offering for Śākyamuni statues to be installed on both sides of the main shrine hall

Devotee: Dharma name:

Current address:

Tel.: Email:

I wish to make an offering of my choice: €

I wish to offer one statue for 250 €, with my name inscribed beneath it:

Dedication of the merit of this Dharma offering:

Prayers for the peace and well-being of:

or prayers for the liberation of the following deceased persons:

10/2025 — Offering for casting statues of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara to be installed in the Quán Âm tower

Devotee: Dharma name:

Current address:

Tel.: Email:

I wish to make an offering of my choice: €

I wish to offer one statue for 100 €, with my name inscribed beneath it:

Dedication of the merit of this Dharma offering:

Prayers for the peace and well-being of:

or prayers for the liberation of the following deceased persons:

10/2025 — Year-end charity meal, 19 October 2025

Support for the renovation of Khánh Anh Great Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes

Mr, Mrs/Ms, Miss:

Address:

Tel.: Email:

☐ You are warmly invited to Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, to support the year-end charity meal on 19 October 2025. Vegetarian food stalls will operate in the teaching hall from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

☐ Unfortunately I cannot attend at the pagoda, but I wish to support the charity meal on 19 October 2025 with a donation for the renovation of the Great Pagoda: €

Additional food stalls will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please come and support Khánh Anh Évry!

10/2025 — Offering for the Thanh Minh ceremony of prayers for the deceased, Sunday, 19 October 2025

Devotee: Dharma name:

Current address:

Tel.: Email:

I sincerely wish to make an offering for Thanh Minh on 19 October 2025: €

Prayers for the liberation of the following deceased persons:

.....

Opening Address

Original p. 22

Ceremony marking fulfillment of the vow to rebuild the main shrine hall. Twelfth death anniversary of our revered Teacher (2nd day of the 7th month of Quý Ty – 2nd day of the 7th month of Ất Ty). Grand Vu Lan festival of filial gratitude — Sunday, August 24, 2025, Buddhist Era 2569.

Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. Homage to the Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana of great filial devotion, through whom Vu Lan arose. Homage to the awakened spirit of our late benefactor and Teacher, Most Venerable Minh Tâm.

We respectfully bow before the two Most Venerable Elders bearing witness to this ceremony. We respectfully address the Most Venerables, Venerables, senior nuns, Reverend nuns, and all monks and nuns. Distinguished guests, compatriots and Buddhist followers from near and far. Venerables, dear participants,

With boundless joy and profound reverence, we gather today at Khánh Anh Ancestral Temple in Bagneux, France, a monastery that marks the history of Vietnamese Buddhism's presence in Paris and France, and more broadly in Europe and overseas. This temple is closely associated with our late Teacher, Most Venerable Minh Tâm, whom we, his disciples and followers, hold in endless reverence.

We are honored to welcome the venerable members of both monastic communities, who have come to bear witness, participate and offer prayers at three ceremonies coinciding on one day: fulfillment of the vow to rebuild the main hall after the fire, the twelfth death anniversary of our late Teacher, and the grand Vu Lan celebration of 2025, Buddhist Era 2569.

In solemnly holding these three ceremonies together, we wish to dedicate their merit to the complete fulfillment of our late Teacher's vows. Of him it was said: "His sandals tread Europe, the Teacher brings Vietnamese Buddhism to his people in exile; his bamboo staff travels the five continents, the Elder tirelessly builds the Way of the One Vehicle."

This reconstruction ceremony is also held with all our devotion. We, the fourfold community of Khánh Anh Ancestral Temple in Bagneux, first offer our respectful thanks and offerings to the Most Venerable Elders guiding Khánh Anh-Bagneux and the Great Khánh Anh Temple in Évry, and to the senior monastics of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Europe and on other continents, in France and abroad. Once again, after our Teacher's departure on August 8, 2013, the 2nd day of the 7th month of Quý Ty, they supported us when impermanence claimed Khánh Anh's main hall: a modest hall, yet one that held so many keepsakes and treasures of our Teacher in every corner. Everything, absolutely everything, returned to dust in nearly two hours beneath the fury of the flames.

What pain and turmoil, yet what comfort and happiness for us! As soon as he heard of the fire, Most Venerable Elder Tánh Thiết hurried onto a train from Thiện Minh Temple, over 460 kilometers from Paris, and came straight to the ancestral temple. Looking at the ruined main hall, he simply murmured: "Come, it is all right, my child; we shall gradually rebuild."

Those seemingly ordinary words became an entire universe of refuge for me at that moment.

Then the Most Venerable Abbot of Viên Giác Ancestral Monastery spoke the familiar words I had once heard over the telephone when I told him our Teacher had gone to the Buddha: “It is all right... you are not alone; your teachers are beside you.” Simple words, overflowing with care and protection.

Gradually we received widespread care and sympathy from venerable monks and nuns, temples and monasteries, Buddhist associations, organizations and followers everywhere, on every continent. With all their compassion they supported us both materially and spiritually.

I bow in gratitude to Most Venerable Trí Minh, Abbot of the monasteries in the Kingdom of Norway, and Venerable Thích Viên Ngộ, head of Liên Hoa Practice Center, who broadly appealed for financial and human assistance for this reconstruction, which was so difficult for me: even before the fire, I was already “exhausted in heart and strength.” Most Venerable Nhất Chân, my instructing master at ordination, also showed special concern, appealed for help, prayed and personally visited the ruined ancestral temple.

I am deeply moved by the care, prompt contact, and spiritual and material support of the senior monastics of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, as well as monasteries in the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe and our beloved homeland.

We gratefully remember the special concern of Venerable Thích Pháp Chơn, Abbot of Tâm Từ Temple in San José, United States, who deeply loved and respected our late Teacher. His very simple yet powerful words reached me by telephone, and he personally came to attend today’s three ceremonies.

I also wish to bow with special gratitude to the senior nuns heading Bảo Vân and Hòa Bình temples, Sùng Đức Ancestral Temple and Như Thị Temple in our homeland; the senior nuns heading Linh Thửu Temple and Lộc Uyển Monastery in Germany; the senior nun heading Quang Minh Temple in Denver, United States; the Reverend heading Viên Thông Temple in Houston; the Reverend heading Bảo Ân Temple in Sydney, Australia... and all the communities of nuns throughout Europe, the United States and Vietnam. They have shown particular concern, provided material and moral support, regularly followed our work, asked after us and encouraged us throughout reconstruction, the purchase of altar furnishings and all preparations for today’s ceremonies.

One monk had no direct contact with us during the fire and reconstruction. Yet from time to time a transfer for reconstruction would arrive with the note: “I am a disciple of Master An Chỉ.” I bow in gratitude to Most Venerable Thích An Chỉ, who has “quietly sent energy” and prayed for us.

More remarkable still, Venerables and dear participants, the main hall today contains three horizontal plaques inscribed in the Chinese “oracle-bone script,” jiǎgǔwén. This very ancient script is rarely mastered today; it is difficult to write, and teachers from whom to learn it are difficult to find. Yet through favorable conditions we received guidance in

keeping with our wish and met Venerable Thích Phước Nguyên. He wrote the characters engraved on the three plaques, adding dignity to the main hall. This is truly wonderful.

I bow in gratitude for the merit of two monks who stood beside me, supported me, offered much practical advice and encouraged me to complete the main hall's decoration: Most Venerable Thích Nguyên Lộc and Venerable Thích Phước Nguyên.

Those kindnesses and generous acts gave us the impetus to continue. Despite advancing years and weakening physical strength, we prayed day and night and devoted our entire hearts and efforts to reconstruction together with the followers connected to this undertaking.

The concern, reminders, sharing and encouragement of the Most Venerable Elders of both monastic communities embodied the compassionate spirit of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara's great vow.

The contributions of resolve and physical effort, made day and night, are so precious. Without the wholehearted, devoted care of the Reconstruction Committee, the main hall would not be as beautiful as it is today. I dedicate these merits before the Three Jewels, asking them to bear witness. Venerables,

Opening Address (continued); Whatever You Do, Consider Its Consequences!

Original p. 23



Ceremony marking fulfillment of the vow to rebuild the main hall; twelfth death anniversary of our Teacher; grand Vu Lan festival, Sunday, August 24, 2025, at Khánh Anh Ancestral Temple, Bagneux.

Ladies and gentlemen, this temple is certainly small beside the Great Khánh Anh Temple in Évry. Yet it was built with all the devotion of those early days, on foreign soil amid differences of language, customs, culture and religion. Our late Teacher first “set his sandals upon Europe” in the early 1970s. Small, yet rich in the history of establishing a sanctuary of the Three Jewels in a foreign country. Small, yet deeply imprinted with his presence and thought. Every wall and corner of the temple bears his spirit of dedication to serving the Three Jewels and the nation. Small as it is, therefore, it is by no means insignificant.

I was personally appointed by Most Venerable Tánh Thiệt, formerly chairman of the Khánh Anh Buddhist Association immediately after our late Teacher returned to the Buddha, with the agreement of the senior clergy of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Europe and the Overseas Liễu Quán lineage, to return and take responsibility as abbess of this ancestral temple. Before that, for almost twenty years, beginning while our late Teacher was still alive, I had overseen construction of the Great Khánh Anh Temple in Évry. Although my strength had worn thin, respectful obedience to the assignment took precedence. Once again I therefore earnestly sought the power of the Three Jewels to fulfill the Sangha’s charge at my appointment ceremony in 2015, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Great Khánh Anh Temple in Évry.

Venerables and dear participants, to repay the kindness of the Three Jewels, the teaching of our late Teacher and the blessings of the venerable members of both monastic

communities, we celebrate Vu Lan 2025, Buddhist Era 2569. It is also the 2nd day of the 7th lunar month, marking twelve years since our Teacher “turned his sandals toward the West,” and a historic date for Khánh Anh-Bagneux. At this very hour three years ago, on August 25, 2022, this beautiful main hall in which we stand was filled with the smell of smoke, flames, charred debris and water covering the floor. Its ceiling had burned away; standing inside, one could see the whole sky... What an unforgettable scene! This exceptional meeting of conditions and dates led us to celebrate three ceremonies together: fulfillment of the reconstruction vow, our Teacher’s death anniversary, and the grand Vu Lan festival.

Venerables and dear participants, we restore the temple and rebuild the main hall not only to have a new roof and beautiful walls, but also to restore the spiritual sanctuary in every individual, renew faith in the Three Jewels and rekindle our study and practice in their service. Khánh Anh-Bagneux can be built of material things, but the spiritual temple within each person must be built through faith and diligent practice of the true Dharma. Only then, we believe, can we repay even a small part of the blessings of the Three Jewels and the patient education bestowed upon us by our late Teacher and the venerable teachers.

Once again, all of us, the fourfold community and lay men and women of Khánh Anh-Bagneux, bow to you in gratitude, Venerables. Sparing no effort and setting aside Buddhist duties at your own temples, you have cared for us and come to this ancestral temple to bear witness and participate in today’s ceremonies.

We also sincerely thank all guests, compatriots and Buddhist followers from near and far, whether present today or unable to come because of other duties. Your support in every sphere has enabled the main hall’s reconstruction to be fully accomplished and helped us write a new chapter in Khánh Anh’s history together.

We pray that the venerable members of both monastic communities may be adorned with merit and wisdom and that their Buddhist work may be perfectly accomplished. We wish all guests, compatriots and followers boundless auspiciousness, always abiding in the radiance of the Three Jewels. We solemnly declare today’s three concurrent ceremonies open. Homage to the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva of the Joyful Assembly. Bhikṣuṇī Thích Nữ Diệu Trăm.

Whatever you do, consider its consequences! (See continuation on page 31.) The neighboring king then said: “If that king paid a thousand taels of gold for it, I shall lead my army there to seize it.”

The king had had no time to prepare and was caught defenseless. When the troops invaded the palace, he realized he could no longer respond and wished only to meet his enemy and ask the reason for the attack. The neighboring king entered the palace, sat on the golden throne and asked: “I hear you bought a lesson worth a thousand gold pieces for ruling your country. Show me that lesson.” The king handed him the paper he had bought earlier, bearing the words: “Whatever you do, consider its consequences.”

The neighboring king was very surprised that a single line had cost a thousand taels of gold. The king replied: “That is all I bought, so I thought I had been deceived. Yet this sentence led me to reflect on everything in life. Thanks to it, the country has changed and

its people are happy. But I am not yet strong enough to build a military force capable of resisting an enemy.”

Holding the paper, the neighboring king paced back and forth in thought... He thought for a very long time, looking at the paper and pacing again. After a while he seemed to realize something. He immediately ordered his troops to withdraw and returned the golden throne and palace to the king... Excerpt from Phật Giáo Việt Nam, by the late Most Venerable Thích Thiện Hoa.

Grateful Remembrance of Our Teacher

Original p. 24

Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. We respectfully bow before the awakened spirit of our benefactor and Teacher!

We know that all phenomena are impermanent and provisional. Yet we cannot avoid sorrow and emotion as we remember the long years without our Teacher, an immense loss to us, his monastic disciples and lay followers. On this twelfth anniversary of his death, we disciples turn toward Khánh Anh Ancestral Temple and this Great Khánh Anh Temple to remember his lofty kindness. May his awakened spirit compassionately bear witness to the sincerity of these few lines offered to him with all our reverence.

O awakened spirit of our Teacher! "You have lain down in the silence of a thousand autumns, / Yet your presence still hovers in the midst of space."

For twelve years the Teacher's physical body has rested in the stūpa of nirvāṇa without remainder, yet his teaching by example and the merits of his practice remain present in all our minds. In his seventy-five years of life he shone like a bright star; for more than forty years in magnificent Paris, at this sacred ancestral place, Khánh Anh, he established Vietnamese Buddhism in Europe. Heavenly flowers bloomed and the fragrance of his discipline and virtue spread far. Like a great tree, he was a firm refuge for us disciples at the ancestral temple and for Buddhist followers from near and far who relied on him in their practice. We thought he would remain longer to benefit living beings. Who could have imagined that he would follow impermanence and pass so peacefully yet so suddenly into stillness, leaving us bereft and unsteady amid life's storms?

O awakened spirit of the Teacher! "Even ten thousand words singing our heartfelt gratitude / Would be only a breeze passing the veranda. / How could we express all this deep affection? / Your presence was immense, like the shade of a gentle father."

The Teacher lived humbly and simply, spreading compassion everywhere. He illuminated countless hearts, not only ours but those of everyone fortunate enough to meet him. We remember when Khánh Anh's roof leaked: teacher and disciples huddled in a corner of the shrine for the departed, beneath heavy drops of rain; he tossed and turned all night, unable to sleep. Then construction of this Great Khánh Anh Temple began. On winter days, amid dark and stormy nights when a lamp flickered, he lit the lamp of wisdom for us younger students, lost in the darkness of ignorance and the five sensual desires.

His life of practice involved so much hardship and deprivation from the first days he set foot in this snowy land. He lived on vegetables and soy sauce, yet persevered through the years. Between temple affairs, spreading the Dharma and Church duties, he never had spare time. He left early and returned late, unafraid of snow, rain, mist or wind; neither distance nor obstacles deterred him. Yet, always joyful and gentle, he eagerly sowed seeds of wisdom; his compassion radiated outward and soothed our hearts.

Our youth holds so many affectionate memories of the Teacher. Sometimes our mistakes obliged him to scold us, but afterward he patiently taught us what was right to soothe our

hearts. He even gently reminded us: "Think of me simply as an older brother guiding his foolish younger brothers who have only just begun to walk the path." He was so close and affectionate that we felt infinitely warm and at ease. Time passed quickly: as we grew more mature, his health weakened. Amid life's dangerous waves he nevertheless kept a steady hand on the oar, sheltering, guiding and teaching us until we became fully formed human beings.

"How could I tell it all; how many words would suffice? / Your kindness is profound: I have not yet repaid it. / Life's ocean is filled with rapids and perilous shoals; / Sometimes I fear forgetting and losing my way."

O awakened spirit of the Teacher! I remember that whenever you returned from Buddhist work far away, you would walk around the temple to tend the ornamental trees and plants, collect litter and pull weeds. The temple was always spotless; incense, lamps, flowers and offerings to the Buddha were always neatly arranged. You practiced generosity and supported the restoration of the Three Jewels. Wherever you saw a dilapidated temple, you called on followers to give, each according to their means. You visited even distant temples throughout Europe to encourage and remind their communities. Some temples still had cramped main halls, without dignified shrines for the patriarchs and departed spirits. This pained you, and you hoped your fellow monastics could soon complete them; whenever construction began, you helped provide the conditions.

Where are those vows now? We are still amid the swirling current, yet you left so soon. We can only blame our scant merit and unfavorable conditions: separated from you too early, we are alone with no one to rely on. I shall always remember the final days of the European Dharma study retreat in Turku, Finland. Your health was already very weak. And yet!!! You came to preside and participate fully with the assembly, wholeheartedly devoted to the Dharma and living beings. Your saying, "Skill in eating is no match for gracious conduct," has remained engraved in my heart ever since. Seeing you happy then, I felt immeasurably relieved. But I never imagined these would be your final words, and that I would never be able to welcome you again.

O awakened spirit of the Teacher! You always taught us with loving care and urged us, your monastic brothers and sisters, to love one another, live harmoniously, respect seniors, yield to juniors and support one another on the path of becoming better people and learning the Buddha's teachings. Your words still echo in our hearts, your smile remains bright in your portrait, the two monasteries and your disciples are still here. But alas! You have left, and left forever.

"In winter the trees droop in sorrow; / We are bereft in the current, without refuge." Then spring comes and summer returns; no longer can we offer birthday wishes and hear your teaching. The surroundings remain, the old temple is still there, but you have vanished beyond mountains and streams. All that remains is the empty, silent meditation room, your faded portrait and a faint fragrance of sandalwood incense.

Teacher! Whenever we look up at your portrait, we cannot hold back our emotion. Why, when life is still so full of storms, did you leave so quickly, leaving us alone and lost in this world of suffering? In the poor, laborious early days, under a thatched roof and within

earthen walls, living on vegetables and soy sauce, how boundless was the affection between teacher and disciples! Today the ancestral temple has been made dignified, the Great Temple stands majestically in beautiful Paris, and your disciples have found their footing. Why did you leave forever, covering all space with longing and regret?

O awakened spirit of the Teacher! In this sacred moment we disciples prostrate before your portrait and sincerely repent the faults we once committed, unknowingly or deliberately. In youthful ignorance we pursued worldly karma and the five sensual desires, failing to practice diligently and causing you displeasure and sorrow. Even as your health declined, we remained occupied with our private affairs instead of attending you morning and evening. Now we wish to care for you, but the opportunity is gone. We earnestly repent these failings. May your awakened spirit compassionately and gladly forgive the unworthy mistakes of our deluded youth.

“Your physical body is no more, / Yet your fragrant name remains forever in the world. / Your Dharma body shines forever, wondrously, / Illuminating the Dharma realm with the radiance of suchness.”

Amid impermanence and the deathless, the body of four elements is gone. Yet the Teacher’s merits and his work for the Dharma in Europe and on other continents shine forever in our hearts and those of monks, nuns and Buddhist followers near and far. His vow to enrich the Dharma and beautify life within human society...

Remembrance of Our Teacher (continued); Great Khánh Anh Temple Letter of Thanks

Original p. 25



Fourteenth Return to the Source gathering — collective memorial for the patriarchs of successive generations.
“Harmony and purity are the luminous essence of the Sangha.”

...will shine forever through infinite space and endless time. Throughout his life, the Teacher devoted himself to the mission: “Be the Tathāgata’s messenger and carry out the Tathāgata’s work.” Even when Buddhist duties were many, he retained his joyful smile. We vow to follow his shining example and carry it with us on the path of practice.

O awakened spirit of the Teacher! We know that our virtue and abilities remain limited, while Buddhist duties are numerous and the spiritual needs of followers are so great. We ask your blessing so that we disciples may have sufficient strength of heart, intelligence and spiritual power on the path of practice. We respectfully vow forever to preserve and develop the spiritual legacy our Teacher left us. Wherever we are, we shall always turn toward the ancestral temple where you relinquished your karmic body, vowing to live in harmony and follow your shining example forever.

“Upon the throne of the Lotus Pool, unborn and undying, / Your Dharma body is present in every direction. / Within the precious stūpa, dignified and serene, / Your body of four elements has merged into the boundless universe.”

The golden traces you left will shine forever in the hearts of your Dharma companions, your people and your homeland. May your awakened spirit remember its great vow: return to this Sahā world, turn the Dharma wheel widely, make the true teaching shine and liberate the deluded multitudes. We respectfully light the lamp of remembrance, awakening the boundless wisdom passed from flame to flame by the Buddhas and Patriarchs, guiding

future generations to honor their ancestors forever and keep the living current of the Dharma flowing endlessly.

On this twelfth death anniversary of our Most Venerable Teacher, before the altar of his awakened spirit, we sincerely bow in gratitude to the Most Venerable First and Second Presidents of the Executive Council of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Europe. They have always cared for and guided us; when we strayed or became lax, they taught us and reminded us to attend to Buddhist work at this Great Temple. We also thank all the venerable monks and nuns across Europe who have constantly accompanied and cared for us. On this occasion we thank our compatriots and Buddhist followers near and far who support the Three Jewels, ensuring that the Great Khánh Anh Temple becomes ever more beautiful and firmly established, in accordance with our Grand Teacher's lifelong wish.

Respectfully offered to the awakened spirit of our Most Venerable Teacher, forty-fourth generation of the orthodox Lâm Tế lineage, Liễu Quán branch, founder of the two Khánh Anh temples, sacred name Nguyễn Cảnh, religious name Viên Dung, title Minh Tâm. May he compassionately bear witness.

GREAT KHÁNH ANH TEMPLE — LETTER OF THANKS. Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. Respectful greetings to the Most Venerables, Venerables, Reverends, monks and nuns. Dear lay Buddhist men and women from near and far.

The Great Khánh Anh Temple has just held three grand ceremonies over three days: September 12, 2025, a lantern ceremony remembering our Teacher and expressing gratitude to our parents for giving us birth and raising us; September 13, 2025, the twelfth anniversary of our Most Venerable Teacher's passing into nirvāṇa, an offering to the Sangha and prayers for the departed entrusted to the temple, and a grand universal rite for all classes of spirits and lonely souls; September 14, 2025, the grand Vu Lan festival of filial gratitude, Buddhist Era 2569 — 2025, and the ninetieth birthday celebration of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Venerable monks and nuns from near and far showed their care by coming to preside over these ceremonies. We especially thank the Most Venerable First President of the Executive Council of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Europe, Supreme Adviser to the Great Khánh Anh Temple, and the venerable monks and nuns throughout Europe who helped and worked for several days to give the grand ceremonies their solemn dignity. We pray that the blessings of the Three Jewels grant you physical well-being and the ever-shining lamp of wisdom.

We also thank the Buddhist followers from near and far who devoted their precious time to coming to the Great Khánh Anh Temple and contributed their work or resources to the successful completion of these three days. May the Buddhas protect you and your families, keeping your lives fortunate, peaceful and unhindered.

Venerables and dear participants, during the ceremonies we endeavored to prepare everything with dignity to welcome you. Some oversights nevertheless remain unavoidable; we ask you to view them with indulgence and kindness. Homage to the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva of the Joyful Assembly. Abbot of the Great Khánh Anh Temple, Bhikṣu THÍCH QUẢNG ĐẠO.

Account of the Filial Piety Festival weekend at Khánh Anh Temple, Évry-Courcouronnes (continued from page 17). "...took place with just as much solemnity and care before the traditional musical performance: songs and dances reflecting Vietnam's culture and art transported the audience, some to their beloved homeland, others, such as the French guests, into traditional musical scenes from that distant S-shaped land winding along the Pacific coast. Spontaneous testimonies from members of the Sangha." Venerable Võ Thúc.

"Make wisdom your essential undertaking."

Reflections for Vu Lan; Thanks at the Ullambana Filial Piety Festival

Original p. 26

REFLECTIONS FOR VU LAN. Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. Respectful greetings to the venerable teachers. Dear fathers and mothers present at today's ceremony.

"At the full moon of the seventh lunar month comes the Vu Lan festival; / On the shore of awakening, autumn's evening lights a thousand paths. / All who bear a deep debt of gratitude / Welcome Vu Lan with sincere hearts."

We bow before our parents, the two who gave us birth, our supreme benefactors. Each autumn, when yellow leaves fall, rain drifts lightly and cool winds brush our skin, a vague sadness, loneliness and quiet desolation arise within us. The deep, lingering temple bell resounds as if to awaken us and return us to the present life: to listen, understand and feel the noble, warm love our parents have given us.

Then time keeps flowing. Our parents' children grow and mature, and this is also when we gradually move away from them. Our father's back bends so our life can rise; our mother's shoulders grow thin and hardened so that we may live with warmth and enough to eat.

Today we have the good fortune to draw close to the Dharma. Maudgalyāyana's example of filial devotion illuminates the Buddhas' golden words. We vow to keep them forever in our hearts: "When born in an age without a Buddha, honoring and respecting one's parents is honoring and respecting the Buddha."

The emotion of these reflections will pass with time, but awareness of filial devotion will remain forever in our hearts. Even when we have grown up and left the arms of our gentle mother, she will remain the tree whose shade shelters our life. What happiness to set aside worries and calculations, leave worldly pleasures behind, return to our mother and live beside her! To hear her gentle loving words, feel her hand caressing us tenderly, rest our head in her lap to rediscover the warmth of old and become her little child once again.

This is our heartfelt offering, this fresh rose and gift of filial devotion that we respectfully present to our parents, with all our hearts and all our being, in this season of Vu Lan, filial gratitude.

We sincerely share the grief of all those who have lost their mothers. Yours is a sacred sorrow; it helps you step toward a wider horizon so as to be worthy of the love and trust your mother placed in you: "I do not weep when I wear the white flower, / For in that flower I see my mother smiling."

In this Vu Lan season, this season of filial gratitude, amid the boundless filial emotion of every child of the Buddha, we join our palms and pray that all wayward children recognize their parents' gift of giving them life, transform their hearts and become devoted, dutiful children. Homage to Venerable Maudgalyāyana of great filial devotion.

THANKS AT THE ULLAMBANA FILIAL PIETY FESTIVAL. Homage to Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher Buddha. Dear respected Venerable monks and nuns of the Sangha! Dear parents present at today's ceremony!

During the days of the Ullambana Filial Piety Festival, / During these autumn days, mindful of the festival's meaning, / All of us grateful for the blessings / Sincerely prepare for the Ullambana Filial Piety Festival.

We respectfully prostrate before our parents, who gave us birth, our supreme blessings. Each autumn, the leaves turn yellow and fall, raindrops float in the air, and the cold wind brushes our skin, stirring feelings of sadness, loneliness and desolation in our hearts. The deep, resonant sound of temple bells brings us back to reality, encouraging us to listen, understand and feel our parents' noble and warm love.

As time passes, we, your children, grow up; and the time comes when parents and children must part. Father, your back has bent so that your children may have a life beyond expectation; Mother, your frail shoulders have hardened so that your children may have a pleasant and fulfilled life.

Favorable conditions have led us to discover Buddhism. The example of filial devotion of the great disciple Maudgalyayana illustrates the Buddhas' precious teachings. We vow to keep engraved in our hearts: "When born in an age when the Buddha is not present, honoring and respecting one's parents is honoring and respecting the Buddha."

Over time, we cannot remember this message entirely and completely. But the meaning of filial piety will remain engraved in our hearts forever. One day we may be separated from our dear parents. Let us remember that our Mother, like the kindly shade of a tree, will protect us throughout our lives. What happiness to set aside our worries and negative thoughts and leave behind the illusions of this world to return to our parents' home; to live beside our mother and hear sweet, loving words again, feel her hand tenderly stroking our hair, be in her arms and sense again that unforgettable scent of childhood, and once more become the beloved little child at her side.

With all our grateful hearts, we respectfully offer you, our parents, this rose representing our filial devotion.

We sincerely share the pain of all who have lost their parents. This painful experience has positive effects. It offers you the opportunity to be courageous, surpass yourself and become someone who repays their parents' sacrifices and love, someone of whom their parents can be proud: "We wear the white flower of filial piety, but we do not weep, / For in this white flower we glimpse our Mother's smile."

In this Ullambana season of filial piety and celebrations of gratitude to parents, at this deeply emotional time for all Buddhist followers, we pray that all disobedient and unruly children may become aware of their parents' kindness, make the vow and become filial children. Homage to Maudgalyayana, the Bodhisattva of Filial Piety.

INSET — MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE AND THANKS TO PARENTS (continued from page 27). "...Is the luggage for all our journeys. / Overcoming life's obstacles for us, our Father is weakened, / Yet his support never fails."

Those whose parents are alive, let us vow to honor filial piety. Those whose parents are no longer in this world, let us dedicate to our parents the merits gained through studying and practicing the Buddhas' teachings and through our kind and compassionate actions; thus our parents will be peaceful and serene in the Pure Land.

Father, mother — the two most sacred words in a human being's entire life. Father, mother — the source of our eternal gratitude, which each of us must remember and give thanks for. Homage to Maudgalyayana, the Bodhisattva of Filial Piety.

Reflections on Our Parents' Kindness; Message of Gratitude and Thanks to Parents

Original p. 27

REFLECTIONS ON OUR PARENTS' KINDNESS. Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. Venerable monks and nuns, dear members of the entire assembly,

Today, in this solemn and peaceful setting, we bow our heads to offer a few reflections on our parents' kindness, the two who gave us a body, breath and an entire life.

Our parents are the source of our life. Every step, every laugh, every success today began in our father's thin, worn hands, in our mother's sweet milk, in years of quiet sacrifice without a single complaint.

Father — the one who gave me strength, who offered me firm protection in the early days when I stumbled into life. Mother — the one who gave me a gentle heart, who offered me an endless stream of love to nourish my soul.

Perhaps an entire lifetime would not suffice to recount our parents' kindness. For their love has no shore, no conditions and no limits. "Oh, how weighty is our debt to our father! / Our mother's love is as vast as the sky: nine months she carried us. / Even if we travel the whole world, / No one loves us like our mother and father."

Each morning I wake up and go to school, to work or joyfully out to play. Somewhere, meanwhile, my father silently bears his heavy burden and my mother works diligently at the cooking fire, so that I may have food and clothing and grow into a mature person.

"My mother grows old, with white hair and weathered skin, / A bent back, tired eyes, a withered smile. / My father braves the sun and is drenched in dew, / Life's toil and burden wear down and bend his back."

Time passes... I grow up. My hair grows darker while my parents' hair turns white. My steps become surer while their backs bend further. How many of us are mindful enough to realize this: each step a child takes forward is a step their parents take back, yielding their light and joy to the child.

"Travel the whole world: no one equals a mother. / Bear life's burden: no one suffers like a father. / A mother's love is boundless, like the rolling Pacific. / A father's devotion is silent, like majestic mountains."

You whose father and mother are still alive, cherish every present moment. While they are here, the house is a warm home, a place to return to. But when they are gone, that home is only a memory, an aching call within the heart.

Our parents are our first gateway to the Buddha. They teach us how to be human, to love, to be filial and to live worthily in return for their boundless sacrifice. If someone asks where filial piety begins, the answer is: in gratitude and respect toward our parents, who gave us this life.

Today, before the solemn Buddha altar, with all our sincere hearts we offer remembrance and gratitude to our parents. If they are still alive, we vow to live filially so that they may be happy and peaceful. If they have passed away, we pray that they may soon be reborn in a realm of peace, sheltered by the Buddhas' compassionate light.

"A lifetime's resources my mother gave me, / And they follow me on every road I take. / A lifetime my father braved the evening sun, / His thin, worn hands still hold so much love for me."

May all of us whose parents are still alive live wholeheartedly in filial devotion. Those who have lost their father and mother, dedicate the merits of your practice and good deeds to them so that they may be at ease and happy in peaceful realms.

"Father, mother" — the two most sacred calls in a human life. "Father, mother" — an inexhaustible source of kindness that each of us must engrave in our hearts and repay throughout life. Homage to Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Maudgalyāyana of great filial devotion.

MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE AND THANKS TO PARENTS. Homage to Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher Buddha. Dear respected Venerable monks and nuns of the Sangha! Dear compatriots and Buddhist followers! Ladies and gentlemen!

Today, in this solemn and peaceful place, we bow to express our gratitude and thanks to our parents, who gave us birth and their whole lives.

Our parents are the origin of our life. Every step, every laugh, every success is possible thanks to the labor of our Father's thin hands, thanks to the loving meals prepared by our Mother, through years of sacrifice in silence, without a single complaint.

Father — he is the one who gave us strength and unwavering protection from our birth into this world. Mother — she is the one who gave us, with a tender heart, love like an endless stream nourishing our soul.

An entire lifetime is not enough to recount and fully honor our parents' kindness. Indeed, parental love has no borders, no conditions and no limits.

"Our Father's kindness is too weighty to bear, / Our Mother's kindness is as vast as the sky; our Mother carried us for nine months. / Even if we travel the entire world, / We shall find no one who loves us as much as our Mother and Father."

Every morning after waking, we go to school or work; carefree and happy, we go about our activities. Yet our Father, needing to meet the family's financial needs, silently carries a heavy burden on his shoulders; our Mother, needing to provide for our daily needs, works diligently. Our parents strive tirelessly so that we may grow and become the people we are today.

"Our Mother now has white hair and wrinkled skin, / A bent back, a tired gaze, a less lively smile. / Our Father, braving the elements, / Bears the weight of a laborious life, heavy and exhausting."

Time passes... As we children grow up, our parents grow old. While we advance through life confidently, our parents walk ever more slowly with backs increasingly bent. How many of

us realize that every step we take forward is exchanged for a backward step by our parents; our parents give us their light and joy.

“Travel the whole earth: no one compares with our Mother. / Bearing life’s burden: no one can endure like our Father. / A Mother’s love is immense, cradling like the Pacific Ocean. / A Father’s support is silent yet majestic like the mountains.”

You whose parents are still alive, cherish them at every moment. When your parents are still here, the parental home is a cozy nest to which we can return to replenish ourselves. When our parents are no longer in this world, that cozy nest becomes only a memory; thinking of it leaves only a pang in our hearts.

Our parents give us the first teachings of the Buddhas. They teach us what a human being must know; they teach us to love, to be filial, to live worthily so as to deserve boundless sacrifices. If someone asks what filial piety is, let us reply: it is gratitude and respect toward our parents, who gave us life.

Today, before the solemn altar of the Buddhas, with all our hearts and all our thoughts dedicated to our parents, we affirm our gratitude and most sincere thanks to them. If they are still alive, we vow to live honoring filial devotion so that they may be serene and happy. If our parents are no longer in this world, we pray that they may be reborn in the Pure Land, under the protection of the Buddhas of infinite compassion.

“The wealth gathered through a lifetime, which our Mother bestows upon us...” (Continued on page 26.)

Tribute to the Master — continued; The seven conditions of non-decline

Original p. 28



After chanting the Śūraṅgama Sutra, monks and nuns pose for a commemorative photograph at Kiều Đàm Di practice centre.

The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe
Khánh Anh Pagoda and Buddhist Association
Évry-Courcouronnes, 12 July 2025

Namo to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha.

We respectfully address the venerable Most Venerables witnessing this ceremony, the Venerables and all the monks. Dear Dharma friends and Buddhist devotees present today.

What boundless happiness! At this moment, before this solemn flower-decked altar and the venerable members of both monastic communities, all of us, your disciples and Dharma heirs, are able to kneel and pay our respects: this alone is enough to make us feel blessed and sheltered by you. Our Master taught us that reverence is the foundation upon which every blessing is accomplished. Now, wholeheartedly respectful, without a single careless thought or the slightest negligence, we bring forth the three thousand dignified deportments and eighty thousand refined practices to bow before the venerable ones. On this twelfth anniversary of our late Master's passing, you have come from everywhere, remembering our Master and caring for us, his younger disciples, like clouds gathering around a mountain peak. Through our Master's immense merit, we can behold this pure, sublime and profoundly impressive sight.

Revered Master!

Twelve years now since the day you left, since you departed, gone forever.

Twelve years now, revered Master!

Last night we held a flower-lantern memorial ceremony. How we miss you! Holding a broom to sweep the courtyard, we remember you. Carrying water to tend the flowers, we remember you; sitting down to eat, we remember you; entering the shrine to chant the sutras, we remember you. We remember your comings and goings, your smile, your words, your scolding and your admonitions. Why, after twelve years, are we now so overwhelmed, bewildered and distraught, as though you were still in the abbot's quarters, still teaching the Dharma? It is not only us, your disciples: Buddhists near and far say the same. Alive, you were like a living Buddha; after departing, you manifested in every leaf and blade of grass, every moss-covered wall. I feel that you are still sitting there now, together with the venerable ones, blessing us.

Revered Master! Three years after the fire, we have spent three years restoring the first ancestral temple you built after arriving in Europe, so that the Buddha and your memory may be honoured in a more fitting setting. As we removed each brick, our hearts were heavy: which brick did not bear the touch of your hands? Which grain of sand was not steeped in your breath? We humbly ask your forgiveness and offer our repentance.

All the scriptures and methods of practice you taught us are the nourishment that helps us grow in the compassionate light of the Way.

On this twelfth anniversary of our venerable Master's passing, before his spiritual altar, we sincerely bow and express our gratitude to the First and Second Presidents of the Executive Council of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe and to all the venerable monks and nuns. You have always cared for and guided us; when we went astray or became lax, the Most Venerables corrected and instructed us in attending to Buddhist affairs at this great temple. We also thank all the venerable monks and nuns throughout Europe who have continually accompanied and cared for us.

On this occasion we also thank our compatriots and Buddhist devotees from near and far who have supported the Three Jewels, caring for the great Khánh Anh temple so that it becomes ever more dignified and enduring, as our Grandmaster wished during his lifetime. Before the solemn spiritual altar at the great Khánh Anh temple, we beseech our Master to bear compassionate witness. At this moment, all his disciples bow with heartfelt gratitude. May the Three Jewels protect the venerable ones and all Buddhists, that they may live peacefully in the radiance of the Buddhas.

In reverence to our venerable Master Minh Tâm Giác Linh, founder of the two Khánh Anh temples, forty-fourth generation of the orthodox Lâm Tế lineage, Liễu Quán Dharma branch, ordination name Nguyễn Cảnh, courtesy name Viên Dung: may you compassionately bear witness.

THE SEVEN CONDITIONS OF NON-DECLINE

According to the Northern tradition, taught by our Original Teacher Śākyamuni Buddha in the Discourse on the Journey, in the Long Āgamas.

1. Bhikṣus should meet frequently and in large numbers to discuss the true Dharma, ensuring harmony between senior and junior members.
2. Bhikṣus should assemble in harmony, disperse in harmony and conduct community affairs in a spirit of unity.
3. The community of bhikṣus should not enact unsuitable rules, rules that have not been established; nor should it abolish rules previously established; it should live in accordance with the provisions laid down by the monastic community.
4. Bhikṣus should always honour and serve the elders, those with long experience of practising the true Dharma and Discipline, and be ready to listen to their counsel.
5. Bhikṣus should live without being drawn into craving.
6. The residences of the community of bhikṣus should always be quiet, secluded places.
7. Bhikṣus should dwell in mindfulness and create a vital community, so that fellow practitioners from elsewhere who have not yet come wish to come, and those who have arrived wish to stay and practise together in peace.

Notice No. 1 — 37th European Dharma Study and Practice Retreat, 2026; Appeal for disaster relief after Typhoon Bualoi No. 10 in Vietnam

Original p. 29

The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe — Khánh Anh Pagoda and Buddhist Association

Évry-Courcouronnes, 27 September 2025

NOTICE No. 1

Re: 37th EUROPEAN DHARMA STUDY AND PRACTICE RETREAT — 2026

Namo to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha.

To the venerable monks and nuns, and all Buddhist laywomen and laymen. Dear all,

The season of the great Ullambana festival, Buddhist year 2569, civil year 2025, has passed according to the law of time. As time flows, the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe continues its Buddhist activities in 2025 without interruption. The most recent are short retreats held by the Congregation's affiliated monasteries, providing an excellent opportunity for local Buddhists to study and practise. The venerable members of the Executive Council therefore take turns visiting these monasteries to teach the Dharma and guide the devotees.

An important retreat is approaching: the ten-day winter monastic retreat for monks and nuns, from 8 to 17 December 2025. It will be followed by activities welcoming the spring of Bính Ngọ 2026 and celebrating our homeland's traditional Lunar New Year abroad, as well as short retreats at local monasteries. Next will come the great Buddha's Birthday celebration, Buddhist year 2570–2026. Following it is an important Buddhist activity whose tradition has been maintained for thirty-six years: the 37th EUROPEAN DHARMA STUDY AND PRACTICE RETREAT, held in midsummer and incorporating a ten-day summer monastic retreat for monks and nuns.

Dear all, the Executive Council of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe respectfully informs the venerable monks and nuns, Buddhist devotees and compatriots that the 37th retreat in 2026 will be held in a renowned and picturesque French city, with beautiful mountain and water scenery and mountain ranges surrounding the sea: Marseille, in southern France.

We inform the venerable ones and Buddhist compatriots so that they may arrange their schedules to attend the 37th EUROPEAN DHARMA STUDY AND PRACTICE RETREAT, from 21 to 30 July 2026. Full details will be provided more clearly and thoroughly in NOTICE II.

We wish the venerable monks and nuns lasting peace and fulfilment in all their Buddhist work. We wish Buddhist compatriots boundless peace and happiness, and every auspicious fulfilment of their wishes. Namó to the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva of Rejoicing in the Sangha.

The Organizing Committee of the European Dharma Study and Practice Retreat
 Most Venerable Thích Tánh Thiết, First President of the Executive Council of the Unified
 Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe
 Most Venerable Thích Như Điển, Second President of the Executive Council of the Unified
 Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe
 8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France
 Tel. +33.164935556; +33.770073399
 E-mail: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr

The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe — Khánh Anh Pagoda and
 Buddhist Association

Évry-Courcouronnes, 2 October 2025

NOTICE

Re: disaster relief for Typhoon Bualoi No. 10 and flooding in Vietnam

Namo to Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva of great loving-kindness and great compassion, who
 hears cries, relieves suffering and rescues those in distress.

Respectful greetings to the Most Venerables, Venerables, senior nuns and all monks and
 nuns. Dear compatriots and Buddhist devotees. Venerable ones, dear all,

Throughout the past week, Typhoon Bualoi No. 10 has devastated so many homes in central
 Vietnam's provinces, leaving many people homeless at this very moment.

Moved by solidarity with our compatriots—when blood is shed, the heart aches—we cannot
 help feeling deep sorrow for people at home left without shelter in the cold, wind and rain.
 The General Department of Charity and Social Affairs, on behalf of the Executive Council of
 the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe, sincerely appeals for support
 from monasteries, monks, nuns and Buddhist compatriots: many hands accomplish a shared
 task, and even a torn leaf can wrap a tattered one. According to the Ministry of Agriculture
 and Environment's rapid report, as of noon on 29 September 2025, the storm and
 subsequent flooding had caused 11 deaths, left 13 missing and 8 unreachable, and injured
 33 people.

We sincerely hope that monasteries, monks, nuns and Buddhist compatriots will gladly
 support the General Department of Charity and Social Affairs in fulfilling its mission of
 helping people in the country's provinces and cities devastated by Typhoon Bualoi No. 10,
 and possibly by the following Typhoon No. 11.

We pray for the compassionate protection of the Three Jewels, that storms and floods may
 soon pass and our compatriots and humanity may endure less suffering and fewer losses of
 property and life. Namó to the spiritually responsive Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, who hears
 cries, relieves suffering and rescues those in distress. Namó to the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva
 of Rejoicing in the Sangha.

Respectfully announced.

On behalf of the General Department of Charity and Social Affairs of the Unified
 Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe
 General Director

Bhikṣu Thích Quảng Đạo

8 rue François Mauriac, 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes, France

Tel. 01.64.93.55.56 – 07.70.07.33.99

E-mail: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr

RELIEF FORM FOR VICTIMS OF TYPHOON BUALOI No. 10 IN VIETNAM

Mr, Mrs, Miss:

Address:

.....

Tel.: E-mail:

— Send a cheque to Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, marked “Bualoi No. 10 relief”:

— Transfer to the charity account at SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE:

Account No. 00037286099; BIC: SOGEFRPP

IBAN: FR76 3000 3015 7900 0372 8609 995.

The life and work of Patriarch Thiện Hoa

Original p. 30



Venerable Thích Thiện Hoa

Deputy Director of the South Vietnamese Buddhist School — Ấn Quang Pagoda

Director of the Institute for Dharma Propagation, Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam

Namo to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha.

Respectful greetings to the venerable monks and nuns. Dear Buddhist devotees.

1. Introduction

Over its two-thousand-year history, Vietnamese Buddhism has brought forth and nurtured so many generations of ancestral masters, distinguished elders and virtuous patriarchs. These spiritual teachers helped build an ever more splendid and dignified home for Buddhism in our homeland. Thus Vietnamese Buddhism has always accompanied the nation while contributing to the propagation of the Dharma alongside Buddhism throughout the world.

In the recent history of Vietnamese Buddhism, over roughly the fifty years of our own era, we have seen with our own eyes the eminent elders, pilgrim staffs in hand, protecting Vietnamese Buddhism's home, negotiating rapids and waterfalls, passing through worldly regimes, in times of prosperity and in times of danger. They entered the world to safeguard the Dharma enduringly. There have been successive Supreme Patriarchs, the Most Venerables Thích Tịnh Khiết, Thích Giác Nhiên, Thích Đôn Hậu and others, as well as the elders of the monastic lineages: the Most Venerables Thích Trí Quang, Thích Thiện Hoa, Thích Mật Nguyên, Thích Mật Hiển, Thích Trí Thủ, Thích Thiện Siêu... gifted masters and exemplars in Vietnamese Buddhism's monasteries. Among educators, cultural figures and translators of the Tripiṭaka were the Most Venerables Thích Trí Tịnh, Thích Minh Châu, Thích Tuệ Hưng, Thích Trí Nghiêm, Thích Hành Trụ, Venerable Thích Tuệ Sỹ, senior nun

Thích Nữ Trí Hải... and so many more, our fathers and ancestors today. They are the pillars and great beams supporting the home of modern Vietnamese Buddhism.

This introduction leads us to the virtuous patriarch whom today's presentation will discuss: Patriarch Thiện Hoa, former Director of the Institute for Dharma Propagation of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam.

2. Life of the Most Venerable Thích Thiện Hoa

He was born on the seventh day of the eighth lunar month in the year Mậu Ngọ (1918), in Tân Qui village, Cầu Kè district, Trà Vinh province. He was the youngest of eight children, three of whose other siblings also entered the monastic life.

Having karmic affinities with the Dharma from the past, he aspired to leave the household life in childhood, in keeping with his family's tradition of devotion to the Three Jewels.

He retained his secular name, Trần Thiện Hoa, as his Dharma name. His refuge teacher was Patriarch Thiện of Phí Lai Pagoda on Mount Voi in Châu Đốc. At seven he asked his mother to let him enter Phước Hậu Pagoda in Đôn Hậu village, Trà Ôn district. He later went to Đông Phước Pagoda, Cái Vồn district, to study with Patriarch Khánh Anh, who gave him the religious name Hoàn Tuyên. He studied at Lưỡng Xuyên Buddhist School and received novice precepts in 1935, at seventeen.

In 1938 he went to Huế to study at Tây Thiên Buddhist School, then to Long Khánh in Quy Nhơn to study with Patriarch Phước Huệ of Thập Tháp Pagoda. He returned to Huế and studied for four years at Báo Quốc Buddhist School, then went to Linh Sơn Monastery. His travels to seek instruction lasted almost eight years, after which he returned to the South.

In 1945, together with Venerable Thích Trí Tịnh, he opened Phật Quang Buddhist School on Bằng Chang canal, Thiện Mỹ commune, Trà Ôn district, to teach student monks. At twenty-nine he received full ordination at Kim Huê Pagoda in Sa Đéc. Throughout this period he worked tirelessly in teaching and Dharma preaching. In 1953 the Vietnamese Sangha Church invited him to head the Departments of Education and Dharma Propagation and to serve as Director of Studies at the South Vietnamese Buddhist School, Ấn Quang Pagoda, Saigon.

During this period, bearing heavy responsibilities as an educator in applied Buddhism and a leader steadfastly devoted to the Way, he pursued Buddhist work without respite:

- Teaching Buddhism at Từ Nghiêm and Dược Sư nunneries' schools.
- Opening training courses for abbots, messengers of the Tathāgata, at Pháp Hội and Dược Sư pagodas.
- Establishing Buddhist schools throughout the western provinces.
- Personally teaching and training monks and nuns to become lecturers.
- Opening general Buddhist teaching classes at Ấn Quang, Phước Hòa, Xá Lợi, Giác Tâm and Dược Sư pagodas, among others.
- Serving as Dharma Propagation Commissioner of the General Buddhist Association of Vietnam.
- Collaborating with Venerable Thích Nhất Hạnh to publish the Vietnamese Buddhism monthly.
- Broadcasting a weekly Buddhist programme on Saigon radio.

- Establishing Hương Đạo Publishing House.
- Directing the General Buddhist Studies series.

In 1963, faced with the Ngô family regime's repression of Buddhism, he actively joined the struggle as Vice-Chairman of the Intersect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism.

In 1964, when the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam was established, he became First Deputy Director of its Institute for Dharma Propagation and abbot of Việt Nam Quốc Tự.

In 1966 he became Director of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam's Institute for Dharma Propagation.

In 1973, seriously ill, he passed away serenely on 20 December 1973 (the twenty-third day of the first lunar month in the year Nhâm Tý), aged fifty-five, with twenty-six years of monastic seniority. [The dates and lunar year are reproduced as printed.]

3. Conclusion

He cherished a dream that took more than twenty-five years to complete. While studying the Buddha's teachings and Eastern philosophy, he also devoted attention to Western teaching methods, in the spirit of Dr Lê Đình Thám. He thus formed this aspiration: "How can I one day create a ladder of Buddhist teachings—that is, the General Course in Buddhism?"

He passed through several stages:

- a) Motivation: Venerable Thích Minh Châu and Dr Lê Đình Thám provided the impetus.
 - b) Collecting material: reading scriptures and lectures and gathering Dr Lê's materials...
- [continued on page 31]

The life and work of Patriarch Thiện Hoa — continued; Whatever you do, consider its consequences!

Original p. 31

...Đình Thám, assembling a precious source of material (Virtuous and Educational Youth).

c) The apprenticeship period: he began working in education and Dharma propagation. He said: “To do great things, first do small things; to travel far, first begin nearby.”

d) Implementation: he said: “In 1952, my fellow practitioners, Master Thích Thiện Hòa, Director of the South Vietnamese Buddhist School; Master Thích Nhật Liên, General Secretary of the South Vietnamese Sangha Church; and Master Thích Quang Minh, Chairman of the South Vietnamese Buddhist Studies Association, worked with me on Buddhist affairs in Saigon. They said: the higher a lamp is hung, the farther its light can shine.”

At Ấn Quang Pagoda, the Venerable bore the two major responsibilities of education and Dharma propagation for ten long years. He said: “With Church affairs, ceremonies and organizing courses, I managed one way or another, but I went from the first course to the second, then the third, the fourth... From 1953 to 1965, thirteen years, I completed twelve rungs of the ladder of teachings; in other words, I organized twelve general Buddhist courses. Adding the five years I cherished this dream and eight years of apprenticeship makes a full twenty-five years.”

e) Content

The Venerable worked tirelessly to compile the General Course in Buddhism in twelve volumes, the Map of Buddhist Practice in ten volumes, and Consciousness-Only Studies in six volumes... as well as other works such as The Lesson Worth a Thousand Pieces of Gold... ten categories in all, covering every subject to meet the spirit of self-study among the Buddha’s four communities of disciples.

The conditions that enabled him to accomplish these tasks were ability, perseverance, health, enthusiasm, initiative, planning and organizational experience.

f) Dedication of merit

Whatever beneficial deeds I have accomplished, whatever merit there may be, I dedicate it all:

Above, to repay the four debts of gratitude;

Below, to rescue beings in the three realms of suffering.

I pray that:

The Buddha’s sun may shine more brightly,

The Dharma wheel may turn forever,

The whole world may be peaceful,

The people may live in happiness.

May I and all sentient beings
Be born in the Buddha's land.

Through this brief overview of Patriarch Thiện Hoa's life and work, we have all seen the image of a family with deep karmic affinities with the Dharma: its children, with unwavering faith in the Three Jewels, vowed to leave home and follow the Buddha, becoming accomplished monastics, strengthening the protection of the Dharma and enriching both life and the Way. In worldly terms, this is no easy task. He left later generations a shining example in which we should see our own need to learn, follow his conduct, protect the country and bring peace to people's minds, and carry on the lamp of Chan so that it shines forever without limit.

Throughout a lifetime devoted to education, culture and scholarship, he left many valuable works to help students of the Dharma understand, practise and realize it. We may say that we, later generations, should take Patriarch Thiện Hoa's life and work as a compass for study and practice.

Dear assembly, to take responsibility for presenting the immense work of a great being who transcended the world is something one ought not presume to do. Yet through the expedient means of language, we make a little of it understood and share it. May we cause no offence or disrespect, as later descendants, towards the venerable masters of all generations. We bow and ask the patriarchs to bear compassionate witness.

We wish the venerable Sangha the twin adornments of merit and wisdom and perfect accomplishment of the Way. We wish our guests and Buddhist devotees enduring happiness and the fulfilment of their wishes.

Santa Ana, 26 September 2025

Bảo Quang Pagoda

Thích Nguyên Siêu

WHATEVER YOU DO, CONSIDER ITS CONSEQUENCES!

I take this teaching from the late Venerable Thích Thiện Hoa's General Course in Buddhism, under the title "The Lesson Worth a Thousand Pieces of Gold."

The story, briefly, is this. A king happened to hear of a wanderer calling out: "I have a lesson worth a thousand pieces of gold." He would sell the teaching only to someone who paid a thousand taels of gold...

Some who heard him were curious; others mocked him. Whoever asked received no explanation: he would speak only after receiving a thousand taels of gold. Many said he was mad, thinking that no teaching could possibly be worth so much. Yet he kept calling out, day after day, month after month, until word reached the king.

The king was surprised and sent an investigator to watch him. He was told that the man resembled an immortal sage rather than a madman: his bearing was extraordinary, his life orderly and dignified, he spoke not a word too many, ate and rested with great ease, and showed the qualities of someone exceptional and detached from the world...

The king was greatly surprised. Disguising himself as an ordinary citizen, he went to meet the man and asked what lesson he could be selling for a thousand taels of gold. The old man replied that this lesson could free people from life's sufferings, help them overcome their errors and enable them to attain sainthood...

The king left, but the old man's story kept troubling him, so he decided to pay him a thousand taels of gold. He invited the old man to the palace and acknowledged that he was the person who had earlier questioned him about the secret worth a thousand pieces of gold. Today he accepted either being deceived and losing a thousand taels, or truly learning a valuable lesson.

The king ordered his soldiers to pile a thousand taels of gold before the old man. The old man then handed him a sheet of paper bearing only these words: "Whatever you do, consider its consequences."

The king thought he had been deceived. But a king's word is like a nail driven into a pillar: he could not withdraw it or take back the gold. The old man quietly packed the gold into his bag and left.

Afterwards the king remained haunted by the sentence "Whatever you do, consider its consequences" and by the thousand taels he had spent. Had he bought the saying for one tael, he would soon have forgotten it; but he had paid a thousand. Both angry and regretful, he absorbed the words into his heart, and whenever he did anything he reflected on them.

Everyone noticed that the king was changing day by day. He became calmer, wiser and more discerning in his decisions; sitting in his palace, he understood clearly what was happening on the frontiers... The country began to grow stronger and more prosperous.

The people in the capital were amazed, but the king himself did not realize it. He was simply haunted by the old wanderer's saying: "Whatever you do, consider its consequences." Thanks to this, his character changed. He was no longer an ordinary man fond of pleasure as before: whatever he did, he thought of his people and country, weighing each intended action very carefully.

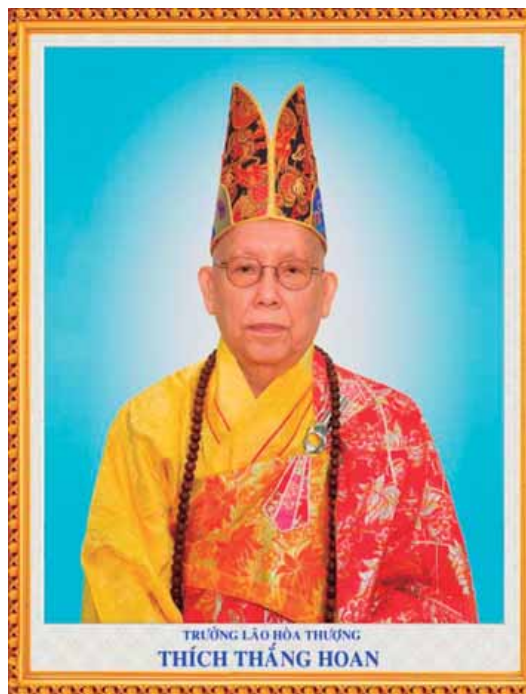
When a country becomes strong and prosperous, neighbouring countries begin to eye it covetously. One neighbouring country sent spies to investigate and learned that the king was now governing extremely well, that the country was developing daily, that its people lived comfortably and happily, and that their trust in the king was very strong. If his country became a great power, its neighbour would be threatened—politicians often fear others becoming stronger than themselves.

The neighbouring king ordered an inquiry: why had that formerly unremarkable country developed so much? What secret had it discovered? Three months later, the spy returned to report that an immortal sage had taught the king a secret of government, but that he told it to no one. The king there had paid a thousand taels of gold for it.

The king of the neighbouring country... (the original indicates continuation on page 23).

Biography of Venerable Thích Thắng Hoan; Poems

Original p. 32



Elder Most Venerable Thích Thắng Hoan

A brief introduction to the author, Venerable Thích Thắng Hoan.

- Secular name: Nguyễn Văn Đồng, born in the year Ất Tỵ (1928), in Cần Thơ city, southern Vietnam. [The cyclical year and civil year are reproduced as printed.]
- Entered monastic life at eight, at Hội Thắng Pagoda, Châu Điền village, Cầu Kè district, Vĩnh Bình province.
- In 1953, received full ordination at the South Vietnamese Buddhist School, Ấn Quang. In 1957, graduated from its intermediate programme.
- Late 1957: studied in the higher intermediate programme at the Central Vietnam Buddhist Institute in Nha Trang.
- In 1960, returned to the South Vietnamese Buddhist School, Ấn Quang. In 1962, graduated from its higher Buddhist studies programme.
- Alongside Buddhist studies, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Vạn Hạnh University in 1970.
- From early 1964 to 1975: lecturer at the Institute for Dharma Propagation in Saigon, General Director of the General Department of Finance of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam.
- In 1982: left Vietnam. In 1983: arrived in the United States, became Vice-President of Việt Nam Pagoda in Los Angeles and General Director of the Department of Dharma Propagation of the General Association of Vietnamese Buddhism in the United States.
- In 1988: established Consciousness-Only study groups in Santa Ana, San Jose, San Diego, Kim Son Monastery and elsewhere.

- In 1992: Vice-President of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in the United States, responsible for liaison with pagodas. Elevated to the rank of Most Venerable by the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Canada and its counterpart in the United States.
- From 1996 to 2000: President of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in Canada.
- From 2004 to the present: member of the Council of Elders of the Office of the Supreme Patriarch in Vietnam and Chief of Staff of the Council of Clergy of the Overseas Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam in the United States, Office II of the Institute for Dharma Propagation.

Original works and translations:

- The Heart Sutra of Prajñāpāramitā Seen through Consciousness-Only Studies.
- Verses on the Rules of the Eight Consciousnesses.
- An Introduction to the Characteristics of Consciousness-Only Studies.
- An Examination of Consciousness-Only Studies, 1.
- An Examination of Consciousness-Only Studies, 2.
- The Fifty Stages of the Bodhisattva (translation).
- The Characteristics of Buddhist Culture within Vietnamese Culture.
- Thăng Hoan's Collected Poems.
- The Conception of History in Consciousness-Only, by Dharma Master Pháp Phảng (translation).
- Worship and Prostrations.
- Buddhist Thought in the Poetry and Writings of Khuông Việt and Pháp Thuận.
- Building Family Happiness.
- The Essential Meaning of the Lotus Sutra, etc.

WITHIN THE BLUE-MIST HERMITAGE

Billowing masses of mist rise over the hill,
 A veil of fog conceals the old village's horizon.
 Twin pines stand still in the damp mist,
 Grass and trees tender with moisture, rich in springtime love.
 I listen as though life were setting out,
 Heaven and earth tremble; a source of love takes root.
 I listen as though the world were harmony,
 A meditation song, a wondrous thousand-year refrain.
 The dust of the world settles, washed clean,
 The mysterious Laṅkāvatāra bridges the way to paradise.
 Chan tea perfumes the morning dew,
 The fragrance of the wondrous Dharma is full of Suchness.
 The heart's lamp illuminates the written words;
 Beyond the porch, mist weaves the verses of Nirvāṇa.

AT THE THRESHOLD OF SUCHNESS

At Laṅkā, the bright moon shines beyond the porch,
 Illuminating the kōan at the threshold of Suchness.
 Nirvāṇa appears without remainder,
 Chan fragrance perfumes the wondrous verse.

The river of still water reaches the Way,
 Compassion permeates all living beings.
 The boat of Prajñā, clear and bright,
 Returns to awakening's shore by the gate of Emptiness.
 The Diamond presides on high above dark clouds;
 Dharma jewels harmonize in a wondrous, enduring song.
 Avataṃsaka's dependent arising opens the way,
 Joining true and illusory, opening wisdom's power.
 The vastness of the three-thousandfold world,
 Contained entire within a single spherical dewdrop.
 A smile loosens pain,
 The bell awakens from the dream,
 Washing away the dust of the world.
 A tranquil step upon the noble terrace,
 Across the moon-viewing bridge, singing
 The song without words.

PRACTISING IN ACCORD WITH CONDITIONS

My body is like a drifting sprig of duckweed,
 In life's currents and countercurrents, where will it stop?
 Wandering all the roads of this world,
 Where conditions bring me, I gladly go.
 Thorns and obstacles hold no fear for me,
 I hope to fulfil compassion's vow to deliver the world.
 In places I have passed through,
 Only trust remains, a gift to others.
 "Following conditions" is a practice of diligence,
 Shaping each jade measure to build a peaceful realm.
 Being and non-being: two merciless paths;
 Winning and losing: two paths of age-old humiliation.
 Whatever the world's rises and falls,
 Following conditions, the heart remains serene.
 Untroubled by upheaval,
 At ease I walk amid the endless depths.
 Dear friend! Have no fear;
 Compassion unfolds peace's form for a thousand autumns.

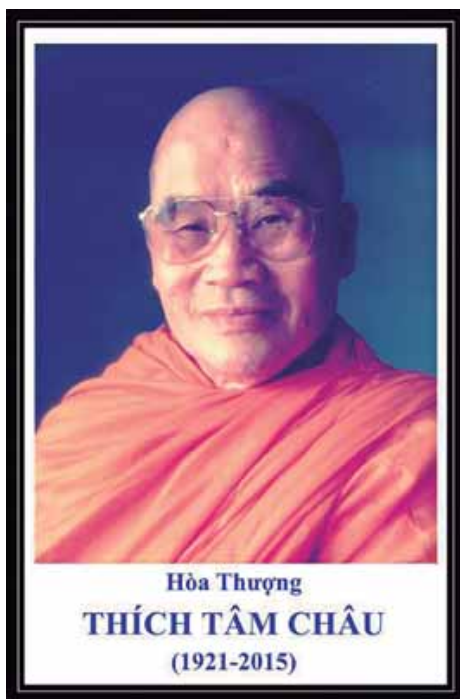
THE BELL

Each time the ringing bell is struck,
 So many deluded thoughts suddenly fall away.
 I return to the reality within me,
 A moment of mindfulness: heaven and earth grow still.
 The monastery gate opens to original nature,
 Freedom from sorrow bridges the way to Nirvāṇa.
 A bird sings a Chan tale along the journey,
 The stream joins the golden music of the Heart Sutra.

Chan fragrance perfumes each forward step,
Sandals leave a wondrous radiance in their tracks.
The sacred bell carries into distant ages,
Awakens one beside the dream and washes worldly dust away.
It distances hatred grown through the years;
Compassion's substance weaves the bonds of love.
The heart's lamp illuminates affliction;
Liberation's source forms a lotus dais.
All this mindfulness is distilled,
Revealed in the clear bell's harmonious rhythm.
Although the bell has ceased to ring,
Its echo lingers in the awakened one.

Conference paper: the life and contributions of Venerable Thích Tâm Châu to education, culture and Dharma propagation

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Venerable Thích Tâm Châu (1921-2015)

1. Introduction

The late Most Venerable Thích Tâm Châu was an eminent monk of accomplished virtue, a brilliantly shining torch of wisdom in modern Vietnamese Buddhism. His life vividly embodied tireless commitment and service to the Dharma and the nation. From his homeland to overseas, his teaching work left profound and lasting contributions.

In this paper, we shall focus on three outstanding areas of his life's work: education, culture and Dharma propagation. We shall also share a few reflections on his poetry and writings, a light guiding later generations on their path of practice and service.

This paper has five main parts: (1) Introduction; (2) Witness to history—a brief account of Venerable Thích Tâm Châu's life; (3) His contributions to education, culture and Dharma propagation; (4) Traces of his practice in his writings; (5) Conclusion.

2. Witness to history

The late Most Venerable Thích Tâm Châu was born in 1921 (Tân Dậu), in Ninh Bình, northern Vietnam. He entered the Way at eleven under Venerable Thích Thanh Kính, courtesy name Linh Quang, at Phụng Ban ancestral temple (Yên Liêu commune, Yên Khánh district, Ninh Bình). A diligent young novice, he was permitted by his teacher to receive novice precepts at Đồng Đắc ancestral temple (Kim Sơn), then bhikṣu precepts in 1941 at Bát Long Pagoda (Ninh Bình). He received Bodhisattva precepts from Venerable

Thích Đức Nhuận (Thích Thanh Thiệu), who later became Supreme Patriarch of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha.

With the aspiration of a great being who transcends worldly life, he sought instruction at many renowned ancestral temples of the time, including Đồng Đắc, Phúc Chính, Phù Lãng and Quán Sứ (Hanoi). Vowing to spread the true Dharma for the benefit of living beings, he committed himself to Buddhist organizations at home and overseas, becoming a witness to and an agent of modern Vietnamese Buddhist history.

His work was marked by leadership roles in many important organizations, demonstrating his engagement in historic events:

1951: founding member of the General Buddhist Association of Vietnam in Huế; Ceremonies Commissioner on its Administrative Council.

1952: participated in founding the National Vietnamese Sangha Church, with Venerable Tuệ Tạng as Supreme Head and Venerable Trí Hải as Administrative Chairman. He served as Deputy Administrative Chairman, while Venerable Tố Liên was General Secretary.

1953: founded the North Vietnamese Sangha Church in southern Vietnam.

1956: became Vice-President of the General Buddhist Association of Vietnam. The events of 1963 stirred the hearts of Śākyamuni's disciples: they could not stand idly by and watch Buddhism suffer devastation. Together with the venerable leaders of the time, he rose to demand religious equality and call on the Ngô Đình Diệm government to end the repression of Buddhism. He then served as Chairman of the Buddhist Intersect Committee opposing the film Sakya and Chairman of the Intersect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism, demanding religious equality under Ngô Đình Diệm's government in southern Vietnam.

After the Buddhist events of 1963, the venerable monks and nuns of the time saw the need to unify Buddhism. From December 1963 into 1964, he was therefore appointed Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the congress that established the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam. He became the first Director of its Institute for Dharma Propagation.

1966: founding member and Vice-President of the World Buddhist Sangha Council in Sri Lanka.

1969: organized in Saigon the second congress of the World Sangha Council and the World Buddhist Social Service Association. He was elected President of the World Buddhist Social Service Association.

1970: President of the World United Buddhist Association, in Seoul, South Korea.

1975: established the World Buddhist Social Service Association in France; spiritual leader of the Franco-Vietnamese Buddhist Association, Hồng Hiến Pagoda (Fréjus, France).

1976: spiritual leader and President of the Franco-Vietnamese Buddhist Association. From that year onwards, he frequently visited Canada and the United States, offering spiritual guidance to Vietnamese Buddhists abroad and encouraging them to build Buddhist centres and study and practise the Dharma.

1979: chaired the founding congress of the Overseas Vietnamese Sangha Church at Giác Hoàng Pagoda (Washington, D.C., United States) and assumed the position of Supreme Head of the Church. He provided spiritual leadership to the religious communities of Giác Hoàng Pagoda and Phật Quang Pagoda (Houston, Texas).

1981: spiritual leader and President of the religious communities of Giác Hoàng Pagoda (Washington) and Liên Hoa Pagoda (Canada).

1984: established the Vietnamese Buddhist Church Worldwide and assumed the position of its Supreme Head.

1989: First Member of the Council of Elders of the World Buddhist Sangha Council.

From the 1990s until 2015, the Venerable was invited to serve as spiritual witness and adviser to many major Buddhist associations in the United States, Canada and other continents.

In 2015 he passed away in the abbot's quarters at Từ Quang ancestral temple in Canada, aged ninety-five, with seventy-four summer retreats of monastic seniority.

These few outstanding milestones in his life show that his life and work vividly demonstrate the selfless commitment of a great being who transcended worldly life and always took service to the Dharma and the nation as his highest goal. His immense legacy of service and exemplary conduct continue to illuminate and encourage monastic and lay communities throughout the world.

3. Contributions to education, culture and Dharma propagation [continued on page 34]

Contributions of the Venerable Thích Tâm Châu — continued

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a. Contribution to education

Deeply aware of education's role in training gifted monastics and developing the Dharma, the Venerable Thích Tâm Châu, then director of the Dharma Propagation Institute, initiated the establishment of the Eastern University in 1974 within the grounds of Việt Nam Quốc Tự. Its founding had more than academic value: it laid the first foundations for institutionalizing university-level Buddhist education in South Vietnam. He also opened Buddhist institutes, supplementary schools and Dharma classes in Saigon. After crossing the sea in search of freedom abroad, he trained generations of monks, nuns and laypeople to carry on the lifeblood of Buddhism. He organized many doctrinal classes, trained Dharma lecturers and guided young Buddhists in preserving spiritual conduct and national culture.

In his educational guidance, he particularly emphasized that study and practice—learning the Dharma and putting it into practice—must go hand in hand. He regularly taught discipline, concentration and wisdom as the foundation for intellectual and ethical development.

b. Contribution to culture

Besides his focus on education, the Venerable Thích Tâm Châu was a devoted man of culture. He always regarded preserving and developing Buddhist cultural values as an indispensable part of his mission to spread the Dharma, both at home and overseas. He therefore paid close attention to writing and translating scriptures and works intended to guide practitioners and strengthen their faith in the Dharma. As author and translator of numerous works, he contributed richly fragrant blossoms to the garden of Buddhist culture.

Translated works:

- Sūtra of the Eight Awakenings of Great Beings (5/1956).
- Sūtra of Maitreya's Descent (12/1956).
- Sūtra of Maitreya's Ascent (12/1956).
- Sūtra of the Retribution of Faults and Merits (2/1957).
- Sūtra of the Ten Wholesome Actions (3/1957).
- Universal Gate Chapter (5/1957).
- Amitābha Sūtra (7/1957).
- Rosary Sūtra, also called the Soapberry Seed Sūtra (4/1957).
- Sūtra of Comparison, also called the Sūtra of the Merits of Counting Beads (4/1957).
- Diamond Peak, also called the Yoga Rosary Sūtra (4/1957).
- Sūtra on Observing the Fast (6/1957).
- Sūtra of Filial Piety, Ullambana Sūtra, Sūtra of the Retreat's Conclusion, Sūtra of Mind Wisdom, Sūtra of Receiving Monastic Age (7/1957).
- Sūtra of the Prediction concerning Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva (9/1957).
- Āgama Sūtra of Right Practice, Sūtra of Dependent Arising (11/1957).

- Sūtra of Taking Refuge in the Three Jewels, Sūtra of Arousing Bodhicitta, Mahāyāna Sūtra of the Summit of Mount Gayā (12/1957).
- Great Nirvāṇa Sūtra, Buddhist Fables (5/1958).
- Sūtra of Contemplation of the Mind Ground (12/1959).
- Precious Instructions of the Chan Monasteries (11/1972).
- Verses of the Treatise on the Heart of Causation (1/1996).
- Treatise on Bodhicitta Beyond Characteristics (6/1996).
- Sūtra of Mañjuśrī's Questions on Bodhi (10/1996).
- Sūtra of Cause and Effect in Three Lives (2/1997).
- Explanation of the Treatise on the Grounds of Yoga Masters (1/1999).
- Sūtra of the Five Hundred Names (8/2012).

Original works:

- An Example of Joyful Giving, poetry (5/1952).
- The Path to the Buddha's Gate (12/1952).
- Buddhism and the Human Being (8/1953).
- Essential Principles of Buddhist Studies (7/1955).
- First Steps in Buddhist Study (12/1958).
- Features of the Spirit, poetry (8/1967).
- Tịnh Minh's Collected Poems I, poems in Chinese characters (5/1969).
- Tịnh Minh's Collected Poems II, poems in Chinese characters (11/1969).
- The Mind's Flower, poetry (12/2001).
- Echoes of Time, volume I (11/2002).
- Awakening from Life's Dream, poetry (6/2004).
- The Flavor of the Dharma (11/2007).
- Echoes of Time 2 (2014).
- Reverberations from the Source of Love, poetry (2014).

c. Contribution to spreading the Dharma

His mission, "Make spreading the Dharma one's household duty and benefiting living beings one's vocation," was deeply rooted in his heart. Amid worldly turmoil, the nation's ups and downs or peaceful times, he always devoted himself fully to spreading the Dharma. From his earliest years in North Vietnam, he traveled everywhere to transmit the true teaching. When the country was divided, he joined those moving south and, on arriving in 1955, established Giác Minh Pagoda. He then founded Từ Quang Pagoda, the Quán Âm Phổ Chiếu Association and the Buddhist Association for Social Service. He established many more pagodas throughout the South, from Đà Nẵng onward. Their names began with "Từ": Từ Phước (Đà Nẵng), Từ An (Nha Trang), Từ Hưng (Ban Mê Thuột), Từ Thắng (Vũng Tàu), Từ Khánh (Saigon's District 4), Từ Tân (Tân Bình), Từ Thọ (Phú Thọ), Từ Định (Tân Định), Từ Minh (Phan Đình Phùng), Từ Long (Thủ Đức, now Thiên Minh Pagoda), Từ Quang (Vũng Tàu), and Quán Âm (Phú Nhuận). In 1964 he initiated Việt Nam Quốc Tự in Saigon.

One might have expected his itinerant work to continue in Vietnam, but circumstances changed. In 1975 he went abroad to practice and teach, first stopping in France. There he established Từ Quang Pagoda in Nice, served as spiritual leader of the Franco-Vietnamese

Buddhist Association at Hồng Hiên Pagoda in Fréjus, and founded the World Buddhist Association for Social Service.

In 1976 he was spiritual leader and president of the Franco-Vietnamese Buddhist Association, actively improving the grounds of Hồng Hiên Pagoda. From that year onward he frequently visited Canada and the United States, spiritually guiding Vietnamese Buddhists far from home and encouraging them to build Buddhist halls and study and practice the Dharma. With the aspiration to “raise the Dharma banner everywhere and dispel layer upon layer of doubt,” he continued establishing monasteries and welcoming monastic communities in various states and countries:

In 1977, together with several Buddhists, he built Liên Hoa Pagoda and Chân Như Buddha-recitation Hall in Ottawa, and guided Buddhists in establishing Phật Quang Pagoda in South Houston, Texas.

In 1978, he provided spiritual leadership to Liên Hoa Pagoda in Brossard and A Di Đà Pagoda in Toronto.

In 1979, he regularly traveled to give teachings, transmit the refuges and precepts, guide practice and encourage Buddhists to build worship halls such as Giác Quang Pagoda in Oklahoma, etc.

In 1982, he founded Từ Quang ancestral monastery in Montreal, Canada.

In 1984, he established the Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation Worldwide, serving as its Supreme Head, and established member communities: Từ Quang, Liên Hoa, Từ An, Di Đà, Chân Quang, etc., in Canada; Phật Quang and Phật Đà in Australia; Giác Hoàng, Phật Quang, Pháp Quang, Nam Quang, Quan Âm, Pháp Hoa, etc., in the United States; Hồng Hiên, Từ Quang, Quan Âm, etc., in France.

His work did not stop there. In 2008, although over eighty, mindful of the boundless kindness of the Three Jewels, he actively founded Viên Quang Monastery in South Carolina, United States. Aspiring to bring the Way into everyday life so that the flower of the Dharma would flourish daily, he established nearly thirty pagodas at home and overseas as places to spread the Dharma and liberate living beings. This demonstrates his enormous contribution to Dharma propagation and may be seen as the worldly activity of a bodhisattva traveling among humanity.

4. Traces of spiritual practice in his writings

The Venerable Thích Tâm Châu was not only a Buddhist leader but also a poet whose every word was imbued with a meditative spirit. His poems carry philosophy while also sounding a quiet Dharma voice that awakens spirituality amid a turbulent world. Following the idea that “literature carries the Way”—meaning that literature does more than express...

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Traces of spiritual practice in the writings — continued and conclusion

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...personal feelings: it is also a vehicle for spiritual truth, a gateway for transmitting the Way and transforming human hearts. For the Venerable Thích Tâm Châu—a practitioner, poet and spiritual leader—poetry and prose are more than personal inspiration: they are a Dharma method expressing the realization of truth, the spirit of meditation and the path to liberation.

1. Natural scenery and spiritual awakening

In his poems, nature appears intimately familiar: blue skies, white clouds, flowing water, hills... Yet beyond mere description, the scenery becomes a gateway for contemplating impermanence and perceiving the empty nature of all phenomena:

"The sky remains blue, the clouds still drift;
Flowers of sunlight hover and drift along the hills.
The breeze sways the branches, lulling the soul with music;
The brook murmurs, its water flowing onward."
(Things Just as They Are)

To an ordinary gaze, this is a peaceful picture. But in the meditator's awareness, every stream and drifting cloud reveals impermanence and becomes a means of contemplation. He writes:

"The original Dharma nature transcends being and nonbeing;
All things, just as they are, share the same essence.
Blossoming brilliance shines beyond distinctions;
Moon on water, clouds in the sky—all share one nature."
(Things Just as They Are)

Here the scenery no longer belongs to the opposition of subject and object, but to an integration into undivided suchness. To transcend the dualities of "being and nonbeing," "existence and nonexistence"—is this not the wisdom of the awakened and the practitioner's realization of the Way?

"For twenty-eight long years the heart remains at peace;
Impermanence and no-self—what is there to regret?
Being or nonbeing, neither stirs the mind;
At one with nature, at ease amid all scenes."

The spirit of "ordinary mind is the Way" is clear: the Way is not far away; it lies precisely in a peaceful mind free from delusive agitation.

2. Liberation in this very life

Unlike an extreme conception of withdrawal from the world, the Venerable makes clear that liberation is not outside life but within the world itself. Even while living in the Sahā world with its five defilements, a practitioner can keep the mind pure and enjoy the fruits of liberation:

“In Sahā, evil, defiled, suffering, sunk in transmigration,
Not a speck of worldly dust stains the body.
Mind and things, one in suchness, merge in the ocean of nature;
Still light abides forever, blossoming in everlasting spring.”
(Verse on Shaking Off Dust)

[The explanatory Vietnamese rendering is also printed:]

“In Sahā’s evil and defilement, one sinks into transmigration;
All dust swept away, the body remains unstained.
Mind and things unite within the ocean of nature;
Still light endures forever, forever spring.”

Even in the Sahā world—described as filled with defilement, evil and suffering—the practitioner keeps the mind pure, unstained by worldly dust. “Still light,” the light of quiescence, appears as a symbol of awakened wisdom. “Everlasting spring” means more than the season of earth and sky: it is the spring of the awakened mind, the eternal spring of one freed from the cycle of birth and death.

3. Engagement in the world: compassion and relief of suffering

A distinctive feature of his study and ministry is the spirit of engagement: “amid dust, yet unstained by dust.” As head of major Buddhist organizations, he did not choose seclusion, but entered worldly life, caring for Buddhists, the nation’s destiny and the suffering of exiled Vietnamese. In poetry he freely expressed love for his country, longing for home and complete determination to live for his homeland:

“May Vietnam’s mountains and rivers be restored;
This heart’s resolve for unity never fades.
So many plans now take shape;
The song of triumph fills our days with shared joy.”
(Awakening from Life’s Dream—Determination)

His spirit of the bodhisattva path appears in his use of poetry to support boat people, comfort exiles and vow to guide them back to refuge in the Three Jewels.

4. The spirit of letting go

A constant thread in his poetry is renunciation: remaining unattached to fame and gain, success and failure, praise and blame. He often contemplates life as a dream, an illusion:

Time quietly passes,
Honor, disgrace, success and failure—the dream dissolves.
Night sparkles with moon and stars;
Causes and conditions arise, abide, then return to emptiness.
Youth strives with all its strength;
Breath fading, suddenly awake! Fate runs out, O body!

Karmic conditions, the conditions of others and ourselves,
 Together, let us settle the affairs of life!
 Form and mind, one perfectly integrated essence,
 Together build virtuous deeds, escaping transmigration.
 Merging in the essence of eternal spring,
 Ordinary mind, the mind of the Way, the spirit serene.
 Serene, through how many realms does the moon journey!
 (Awakening from Life's Dream—Time Passes)

These analyses and examples show that poetry is more than a means of expressing the Venerable's inner feelings: it is inseparable from his study, realization and ministry. Through every inspired verse, he left later generations not only literature but also a spiritual inheritance and a guide to practice and action in a changing world.

5. Conclusion

On the basis of the materials and examples presented, this article offers several key conclusions, which are also the core values the author has learned from the life and spiritual bearing of the Venerable Thích Tâm Châu.

1. The Venerable Thích Tâm Châu is an outstanding figure in modern Vietnamese Buddhist history. More than a witness to turbulent times, he personally steered Buddhism's vessel through the age's trials. A symbol of engagement in the world, he combined the ideal of liberation with national responsibility and remains a great example for generations of monks, nuns and Buddhists.

2. He is a living embodiment of the bodhisattva ideal amid everyday life: study and practice, service, teaching, engagement and renunciation. His entire life unites compassion and wisdom, symbolizing tireless service and offering for the benefit of living beings. An exemplary teacher, educator and man of culture, he left a deep mark on monastic training, Dharma propagation and the building of modern Vietnamese Buddhism. His spiritual conduct and life remain a compass for later students serving the Dharma and the nation.

3. For him, poetry is not merely artistic expression: it is a practice method, a means of spreading the Dharma and a spiritual legacy of lasting, timeless value. He used poetry as a meditation lamp, illuminating awareness and leading people to the shores of peace and liberation. As he himself wrote:

"In the end, a life is simply this;
 Winning, losing, fame and gain—a drifting cloud.
 Desolation, a waning moon, a river building and eroding its banks;
 The mind's flower blossoms, its light shines bright."
 (The Mind's Flower)

4. His teaching is also the compass that awakens the author's aspiration to study Buddhism and serve:

"The struggle for the legitimate aspirations of Vietnamese Buddhism has encountered adversity, but that is not yet what is difficult. Conquering one's own body and mind and

directing everything toward unity in building the Dharma and serving living beings—that is truly difficult.”

For him, the bodhisattva spirit must not remain an ideal: it must be expressed in concrete actions amid life. The true Buddhist, he taught, must “listen to beating hearts, place a comforting hand upon humanity’s bleeding wounds,” bringing consolation through “the very blood of the Tathāgata—the blood of compassion and equality.” This is more than a teaching: it is the spirit of engagement, selflessness and unconditional service at the heart of awakened action in a turbulent age.

With respect, I thank the venerable monks and nuns and all of you for listening.
Venerable Thích Chúc Đại

A few words for the opening of the commemoration of the ancestral patriarchs—14th Return to the Source in Santa Ana, California, United States

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Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha.
Joint commemoration of the patriarchs—Bảo Quang Pagoda

Bảo Quang (1), a bright moon made manifest,
A fragrant cloud spreads the affection of ancient patriarchs.
Quảng Thanh (2) taught morning and noon,
Building the true Dharma, his heart never dimming.
Thông Hải (3) carries on their floral fragrance,
Preserving the Saṅgha's discipline, radiating compassion.
Today the disciples commemorate together,
Vowing to engrave the patriarchs' conduct forever.
The Three Jewels shine brilliantly,
The mind's lamp is passed on, illuminating the world.
May the Dharma realm be tenderly cared for,
May Bảo Quang stand firm and the Way's grace endure.

Today, September 26, 2025, marks the opening of the 14th Joint Commemoration of the Ancestral Patriarchs and Return to the Source, held at Bảo Quang Pagoda in Santa Ana, California. Elder and senior venerables from Australia, Europe, the Americas and Asia attend this opening ceremony.

From Australia: Elder Thích Bảo Lạc, head of Thiền Lâm Pháp Bảo Pagoda; Thích Bồn Điền, head of Huyền Quang Pagoda; Thích Tâm Minh, head of Trúc Lâm Pagoda and president of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of Australia and New Zealand; Thích Tâm Phương, head of Quảng Đức Monastery.

From Europe: Elder Thích Như Điển, second president of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of Europe and abbot of Viên Giác ancestral monastery, Hanover, Germany; Venerable Thích Quảng Đạo, head of the great Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, France; Thích Hạnh Tấn, director of Vô Lượng Thọ Monastery, Germany; Reverend Thích Trung Kiên, Germany; Nun Thích Nữ Nhật Nguyên of Thiện Minh Pagoda, Lyon, France; Sisters Thích Nữ Viên Đàm, Switzerland, and Thích Nữ Minh Nghiêm, Germany.

From Asia: Venerable Thích Nhuận Ân and Nun Thích Nữ Giới Bảo, Japan; from Vietnam, Venerable Thường Tín.

From Canada: Elder Thích Bồn Đạt of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of Canada; Thích Thường Nguyên, head of Tâm Không Hermitage; Thích Huệ Minh, head of Cam Lộ Vương Pagoda, etc.

From the United States: Elder Thích Phước Thuận, head of Trí Phước Pagoda, Santa Ana; Elder Thích Minh Tuyên, head of Minh Đăng Quang ancestral monastery, Santa Ana; Elder

Thích Nguyên Siêu, president of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of the United States, head of Phật Đà and Long Sơn Pagodas, San Diego; Thích Thiện Long, head of Phật Tổ Pagoda; Thích Minh Dung, head of Sơn Tùng Monastery; Thích Thông Đạt, head of Đại Nhật Như Lai Pagoda; Thích Đồng Trí, head of Viên Chiếu Pagoda, Sacramento; and especially Thích Thông Hải, chair of the organizing committee for this 14th commemoration at Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California, in 2025. About one hundred venerable monks and nuns from the region are also attending.

After today's opening ceremony, Elder Thích Nguyên Siêu will present "The Life and Dharma-Propagation Work of Patriarch Thiện Hoa in Modern Times." Brief biography of Patriarch Thiện Hoa (1918–1973):

1. Origins and entering monastic life

Thích Thiện Hoa (1918–1973), secular name Nguyễn Văn Xưởng, was born in Tân Hội village, Cai Lậy district, Mỹ Tho province, now Tiền Giang. From childhood he showed intelligence, love of learning and a deep spiritual aspiration. In 1932, aged fourteen, he obtained his parents' permission to enter Long An Pagoda in Sa Đéc. Venerable Khánh Hòa, a renowned leader of the Buddhist revival in Cochinchina, accepted him as a disciple, giving him the Dharma name Thiện Hoa and lineage name Hoàn Tuyên.

2. Studies and spiritual career

After basic training, he was sent to the Bảo Lộc and Lương Xuyền Buddhist schools to study Sūtras, Vinaya and treatises. His diligence and intelligence soon made him one of the outstanding young monks. Senior teachers entrusted him with many important responsibilities in the Buddhist Revival Movement of the 1930s and 1940s.

3. Spreading the Dharma and organizing education

Founding schools: in 1950, Patriarch Thiện Hoa, together with Venerable Thiện Hòa and other senior monks, founded the South Vietnam Buddhist School at Ấn Quang Pagoda, Saigon, training many generations of outstanding monks and nuns.

Disseminating doctrine: he excelled in clear, accessible Dharma teaching. General Buddhist Studies in twelve courses, An Outline of Buddhist Doctrine and Essentials of Buddhist Studies became basic texts for beginners and lay Buddhists. His Fifty Years of the Buddhist Revival also illuminates many generations of monastics. Some of his sayings remain valuable to posterity: "Whatever work one undertakes, one must consider its results."

The class of Tathāgata's messengers: his characteristic saying inspires the engagement of many generations: "Wherever Buddhist work needs us, we come; wherever the Dharma needs us, we go, disregarding hardship and refusing no difficulty."

Building institutions: he helped establish the Dharma Propagation Institute and the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation, developed Buddhist schools across the South, and attended to education and charity, laying firm foundations for modern Vietnamese Buddhism.

4. An example of conduct and vows

Throughout his life, he lived simply, strictly observed the precepts and took spreading the Dharma and benefiting living beings as his guiding purpose. He was especially concerned with bringing the Buddha's teachings to ordinary people and helping everyone understand and live the Way in daily life.

5. Passing and influence

On January 23, 1973, he passed away at fifty-five, with twenty-six monastic rains retreats. His greatest legacy is a generation of learned monks and nuns, a modern Buddhist educational system and an extensive body of writings that retains its full value today. In sum, he is one of the representative senior monks of modern Vietnamese Buddhism: a scholar, practitioner, educator and exemplary Dharma teacher who laid solid foundations for Buddhism's development in Vietnam and for monastic generations overseas. His life, conduct, merits and work profoundly influence monks, nuns and Buddhists to this day.

The opening ceremony concludes with chanting the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Heart Sūtra and the Four Great Vows. The assembly gathers, takes nourishment, discusses and concludes in a spirit of unity, harmony, mutual support, affection and respect.

Bảo Quang, a bright moon made manifest,
A fragrant cloud spreads the patriarchs' affection.
Quảng Thanh built the Dharma morning and noon,
Founding this temple, his merit vast as sky and sea.
All his life he kept a smile,
Guiding beings toward the precious Way.
Thông Hải gently carries on,
Abbot of the true Dharma, clearly compassionate.
Disciples from the four seas take refuge,
The commemoration engraves gratitude to their teacher.
May the whole Dharma realm be fulfilled,
The spirit bright, every day peaceful.

Finally, we wish the venerable monks, nuns and Buddhists complete success in this 14th Commemoration of the Ancestral Patriarchs and Return to the Source, held in 2025 at Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California. May you enjoy boundless peace and auspiciousness. Homage: may the joyful Saṅgha bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas bear witness.

Thích Quảng Đạo and Thích Trừng Sỹ

- (1) Bảo Quang is the name of the pagoda founded by the late Elder Thích Quảng Thanh.
- (2) Thích Quảng Thanh (1951–2019), founder of Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California.
- (3) Thích Thông Hải, current abbot of Bảo Quang Pagoda.

Intercontinental Coordination Office—Aspirations of the Saṅgha of the four continents

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Aspirations of the Saṅgha of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation on four continents

On the path of spreading the Dharma, the four groups of the Buddha's disciples make profound vows to repay the Buddhas' kindness and liberate living beings. Today the four Congregations work across countries and continents with immense territories and many barriers of distance and time. Every opportunity to meet, through various means or at national or continental Buddhist events such as today's 14th Return to the Source and commemoration of the patriarchs, is therefore precious. After meetings and discussions in a spirit of mutual respect, agreement, instruction and correction according to the Vinaya, the monastic communities of the four continents adopted the following aspirations.

First: harmony and purity are the Saṅgha's luminous essence; always cherish and preserve the monastic community's way of life.

Second: exchange Buddhist activities and, wherever possible, share them among the four Unified Congregations in accordance with truth, people's capacities, the time and the place. This is the wonderful value of the path that makes Dharma propagation one's household duty and benefiting living beings one's vocation.

Third: the Return to the Source and commemoration of the patriarchs are an exceptional opportunity to remember and repay the ancestral masters' kindness; to share the Dharma, ask after one another after two years apart, and rekindle brotherhood and affection within our lineage.

Fourth: the venerable founders are increasingly absent, having completed their work and returned to the Buddha. The succeeding generation—young monastics—must therefore be nurtured with trust and affection, awareness of service and steadfastness, so they may carry on the transmission in which the elders placed complete faith.

Fifth: the road of Dharma propagation ahead is long, with many obstacles and trials. With unwavering faith in the Three Jewels and awareness of the responsibility and ideal of monastic life, the monks of the four Unified Congregations vow wholehearted service according to their abilities, as an offering to the Buddhas and in repayment of the generosity of Buddhist donors.

Sixth: time is a condition for accomplishment, but also a force that can cover, erode and dim. The 14th Return to the Source and commemoration of the patriarchs, held at Bảo Quang Pagoda under the chairmanship of Thích Thông Hải, brought together all the senior witnessing venerables, the four presidents of the Unified Congregations of Australia and New Zealand, Europe, Canada and the United States, and more than 105 monks and nuns in a solemn atmosphere rich in the flavor of the Way. It marks an important stage in

Buddhist service. Continuing this spirit of gratitude, the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of the United States passes the sacred bowl to the Congregation of Canada: the 15th Return to the Source in 2027 will be held at Cam Lộ Vương Pagoda under the responsibility of Venerable Thích Huệ Minh.

Out of sight does not mean out of heart. Tomorrow, each monk and nun will return to their residence to attend to Buddhist work, but the image of meeting in harmony, discussing in unity and departing in joy remains an undying source of life, an eternally firm bond at the deepest level of today's great Saṅgha's spirit of service and steadfastness.

Through a solemn program commemorating the ancestral patriarchs, in the spirit of "When drinking water, remember its source," the entire assembly of the four Unified Congregations and the monastic community endorse these Six Aspirations and vow to practice them according to the teaching.

Santa Ana, California, September 28, 2025.

The monastic communities of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation on four continents jointly pledge to carry them out.

Closing reflection on the three days of commemoration of the ancestral patriarchs—14th Return to the Source

Homage to our Original Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha.

Homage: may the successive patriarchs of India, China, Vietnam and overseas compassionately witness this occasion.

Respectful greetings to the elder venerables, senior venerables, venerables and reverend monks and nuns.

Distinguished benefactors, intellectuals, guests, representatives of the press and media, leaders and members of the Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association at every level, and dear compatriots and Buddhists.

The "Great Commemoration of the Ancestral Patriarchs—14th Return to the Source" embodies the tradition of gratitude to the masters who devoted their whole lives to the Dharma and the nation. From September 26 to 28, 2025, monks and nuns from Europe, Australia, Asia, Canada and the United States gathered at Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California, united in aspiration and ceremony. Following the Blessed One's final instructions, the assembly of bhikṣus and bhikṣuṇīs met harmoniously in mutual respect, agreement, admonition and correction prescribed by the Vinaya, and on the basis of the seven factors of non-decline, for several important Buddhist seminars.

In the first seminar, Thích Nguyên Siêu outlined the life and work of Patriarch Thiện Hoa, emphasizing his stature as a towering figure of modern Vietnamese Buddhism. He founded the South Vietnam Buddhist School and compiled General Buddhist Studies, a work of spiritual education serving as a "ladder of doctrine" for monks, nuns and lay Buddhists to study and practice. He thus helped train gifted monastics and lay firm foundations for modern Buddhist education.

As director of the Dharma Propagation Institute, he devotedly undertook the mission of teaching, training gifted monastics and building the Congregation's educational and organizational foundations at a crucial moment in history. His life and work shine like the

North Star in Vietnamese Buddhism's sky, guiding later generations to continue the vow of serving the Dharma and the nation.

In the second seminar, Thích Bửu Đạt and Thích Thiện Long solemnly recalled the life and outstanding merits of Elder Thích Thắng Hoan, chief of the Office of the Council of Religious Dignitaries of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of the United States. A vessel of Mahāyāna Dharma, he devoted his whole life to teaching and liberating beings, embodying the bodhisattva vow and bringing the light of the true Dharma everywhere despite hardship. Not only a profound scholar but also an outstanding practitioner of the Consciousness-Only school, he deeply influenced Buddhist studies. He was a great tree of Buddhism in Vietnam and overseas.

In the third seminar, Thích Tâm Minh and Thích Chúc Đại portrayed the noble life of the late Most Senior Elder Thích Tâm Châu through three main dimensions: education, culture and Dharma propagation. He embodies tireless commitment to serving the Dharma and the nation. With penetrating vision and steadfast character, he is likened to a skilled captain who steered the Dharma's ship through the storms of history while laying foundations for Vietnamese Buddhism to integrate, advance and shine alongside world Buddhism.

These three seminars show that Patriarch Thiện Hoa, the late Elder Thích Thắng Hoan and the late Most Senior Elder Thích Tâm Châu are pillars of the monasteries, exemplary educators, shining lighthouses and firm refuges for the four groups of disciples. (Continued on page 6.)

Overview of the commemoration of the ancestral patriarchs—14th Return to the Source and 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California, United States

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Here the Return to the Source is held,
 We remember our teachers' kindness,
 Their sincere and attentive guidance,
 What a beautiful refuge they provide!
 Indeed,
 One tree alone cannot make a mountain;
 Many together form green forests and hills.
 With wholesome intentions,
 Let us join hands to protect the Dharma and multiply blessings.
 The Saṅgha enriches human affection,
 Doing good, sowing merit, sharing smiles.
 Let the assembly swiftly pool its strength,
 The Three Jewels grow firm, spiritually wondrous.
 Heartfelt thanks to all of you;
 Let us dedicate today's merits and blessings.

From September 26 to 28, 2025, the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of the United States organizes the 14th Return to the Source, commemorating the ancestral patriarchs, together with the 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang Pagoda in Santa Ana, California. The organizing committee chair, Thích Thông Hải, the pagoda's current abbot, is responsible for hosting and management.

Many monks and nuns come from Australia, Europe, Asia and the United States. Of different colors, ethnicities, skin tones and countries, they gather and participate in these great celebrations in a spirit of practice, Dharma propagation, mutual assistance, closeness, affection, instruction and respect.

September 26, 2025, 2:00 p.m.: at Bảo Quang, the solemn and majestic opening of the commemoration of the patriarchs and the 14th Return to the Source, in the presence of venerable monks and nuns from different continents.

Australia: Elder Thích Bảo Lạc, Thích Bốn Điền, Thích Tâm Minh and Thích Tâm Phương.
 Europe: Elder Thích Như Điển, Thích Quảng Đạo and Thích Hạnh Tấn.
 Canada: Thích Bốn Đạt, Thích Thường Nguyên and Thích Huệ Minh, who will chair the hosting committee for the 15th Return to the Source in 2027 at Cam Lộ Vương Pagoda, where he is abbot.

United States: Elder Thích Phước Thuận, Thích Nguyên Trí, Thích Nguyên Siêu, Thích Minh Tuyên, Thích Minh Dung, Thích Thông Hải, Thích Thông Đạt, Thích Đồng Trí, Thích Thiện Long and Senior Nun Thích Minh Phước.

Japan: Thích Nhuận Ân and Nun Thích Nữ Giới Bảo.

Vietnam: Thích Thường Tín, etc. Also attending are venerable monks and nuns, the Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association of the United States, radio and television broadcasters, journalists, photographers and videographers livestreaming on Facebook, YouTube, etc.

For the opening: coordination by Thích Hạnh Tuệ; Facebook livestream by photographer Võ Văn Tường; prayer and bell by Thích Thiện Long; opening address by Thích Thông Hải. Welcoming remarks by representatives: Thích Bảo Lạc for Australia, Thích Như Điển for Germany, Thích Bồn Đạt for Canada; Thích Nguyên Siêu, Thích Minh Tuyên and Thích Phước Thuận for the United States.

September 26, 2025, 4:00–5:30 p.m.: first seminar at Bảo Quang, “Patriarch Thiện Hoa’s Life of Study, Practice, Dharma Propagation and Engagement.” Speaker: Thích Nguyên Siêu. Chairs: Thích Như Điển and Thích Đồng Trí. Secretaries: Thích Thiện Long and Thích Chúc Đại. Witnessing elders: Thích Bảo Lạc, Thích Minh Tuyên and Thích Bồn Đạt.

September 26, 2025, 8:00–9:00 p.m.: at Bảo Quang, monastics from the different continents discuss the presidency for September 26, 2025–September 26, 2027; the monastery and country able to host the 15th Return to the Source and commemoration of the patriarchs; the late elders to be discussed in future seminars; discussion schedules; the meaning of “Return to the Source,” etc.

September 27, 2025, 10:00–11:30 a.m.: second seminar at Bảo Quang, “Elder Thích Thắng Hoan’s Life of Study, Practice, Dharma Propagation and Engagement in the World.” Speakers: Thích Bồn Đạt and Thích Thiện Long. Chairs: Thích Nguyên Siêu and Thích Tâm Minh. Secretaries: Thích Trừng Sỹ and Thích Nhuận Bình. Witnessing elders: Thích Bảo Lạc, Thích Minh Tuyên and Thích Như Điển.

September 27, 2025, 4:00–5:30 p.m.: third seminar at Bảo Quang, “Elder Thích Tâm Châu’s Life of Study, Practice, Dharma Propagation and Engagement.” Speakers: Thích Tâm Minh and Thích Chúc Đại. Chairs: Thích Bồn Đạt, Thích Bồn Điển and Thích Hạnh Tấn. Secretaries: Thích Pháp Uyển and Thích Đạo Tĩnh. Witnessing elders: Thích Bảo Lạc, Thích Minh Tuyên and Thích Như Điển.

September 27, 2025, 8:00–9:00 p.m.: at Bảo Quang, “A Philosophy of Life Based on the Four Great Debts of Gratitude,” a Dharma talk by Thích Nguyên Siêu, president of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of the United States and head of Phật Đà Pagoda, San Diego, California.

September 28, 2025, 9:00 a.m.–noon: the official commemoration of the patriarchs, 14th Return to the Source and 35th anniversary of Bảo Quang, majestic and solemn, witnessed by intercontinental elders: Thích Chơn Thành, United States; Thích Bảo Lạc, Australia; Thích Như Điển, Germany, Europe; and Thích Bồn Đạt, Canada.

About one thousand people attend the great closing ceremony: four hundred monks and nuns and six hundred laypeople. At its conclusion, representing the United States Congregation, Thích Thông Hải hands the rotating Bowl of Transmission to Thích Huệ

Minh, head of Cam Lộ Pagoda, who accepts responsibility for organizing the 15th Return to the Source in Canada in 2027, witnessed by elders from the continents in great joy and peace. The afternoon features offerings to wandering spirits and an arts celebration of Bảo Quang's thirty-fifth anniversary.

At the conclusion of the three-day commemoration at Bảo Quang Pagoda, Santa Ana, California, in 2025, monastics and laypeople alike experience joy and peace in the spirit of spreading the true Dharma overseas. Return to the Source offers a favorable occasion to learn and support one another in education, unity, harmony, affection, monastic fellowship and shared practice, and to share experiences of teaching and ministry in host countries, regardless of skin color, ethnicity or school.

It is also an opportunity for all the Buddha's children to meet and nurture friendliness and affection in the Dharma, whatever country they live in. Return to the Source means gathering and being present for one another, exchanging the practice experiences of past and present generations, and applying them in daily life in our countries of residence and ministry. It also means expressing gratitude to our predecessors.

When conditions allow us to sit together at Return to the Source, we confide, share, nurture and develop the path of Dharma propagation and benefit to living beings, for ourselves and others, here and now in the present life. May all of you abide peacefully and be deeply imbued with the Blessed One's true Dharma. (Continued on page 8.)

Three places—Three awakenings

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There are three places I believe everyone should visit at least once in life: a hospital, a prison and a cemetery. Not to become afraid, but to understand and live more clearly.

I remember my child once complaining: “Dad, why is my life always so difficult? Work is exhausting, and my love life is going nowhere...” I smiled and gently said: “When you have time, go and look around the Oncology Hospital or Chợ Rẫy.” I did not mean to frighten him. I only wanted him to see that being able to walk, breathe unaided, still have hair and still smile already makes us luckier than so many people.

In hospital I have seen tiny children, bald from chemotherapy, still smiling as they held their mothers’ hands. I have witnessed desperate eyes awaiting a result that would decide life or death. There I learned my first lesson: health is life’s first precious capital. As long as there is life, there is hope.

I once sat in a prison visiting room to see a friend. The sound of the iron gate closing behind me haunted me for years. Inside, everything is controlled. No choice, no freedom. Meals at fixed times, sleep in an assigned place; even the light is no longer yours to control. Outside, people easily say, “Do that and one day you’ll go to prison!” But only once inside do you truly understand: freedom is not a given. It must be preserved through morality and responsibility.

Then, on some afternoons near the year’s end, I visit the cemetery where my mother, grandfather and old friends rest. Among hundreds of silent headstones, some died before twenty; others lived almost a century. Yet all end alike: a handful of ashes, a patch of earth. No one takes money, titles, grand houses or cars. What remains is simply: “He was kind,” “She often smiled,” “She helped so much in life...” At the cemetery I am reminded once more: life is finite. Time is an asset you cannot buy more of.

Three places: three gentle slaps from life. Not to hurt us, but to awaken us from the dream of laziness, rivalry and meaninglessness. The hospital teaches me to cherish every breath. Prison teaches me to preserve freedom. The cemetery teaches me to slow down and live meaningfully. So each morning I take a deep breath, place my hand on my heart and whisper: “Thank you, life, for I am still alive. Still free. And I still have time to love.”
Nguyễn Tuấn Quỳnh (TKH VL)

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Contact details and announcements

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Recently, postage costs and the procedures for mailing wall calendars have caused difficulties. The pagoda has therefore decided to stop printing calendars.

If your address changes, please let us know the new address. If you have an email address, please provide it so you can receive information more quickly.

To help fund the renovation of the great Khánh Anh Pagoda in Évry-Courcouronnes, Buddhists, compatriots and friends in Paris and the surrounding area are warmly invited to attend in large numbers.

Year-end community meal for the renovation of the great Khánh Anh Pagoda in Évry
Sunday, October 19, 2025, 11:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m., in the lecture hall of Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes. Stalls will also offer items to enjoy on site or buy to take home in support of the project.

8 rue François Mauriac (Parc aux Lièvres), 91000 Évry-Courcouronnes. RER line D, Bras de Fer station.

Please note: on Sundays and public holidays, RER D trains to Bras de Fer depart only from Gare de Lyon.

With the voluntary participation of singers from Paris, France, offering an arts performance.

Singers: Ngọc Xuân, Ngọc Hoa, Phương Hạnh, Khánh Linh, Hồng Hạnh, Tú Anh and Thành Luân.

Traditional dances: Quảng Đức Buddhist Youth Association and Phổ Hiền Buddhist Youth Association.

Musicians: Pacific, Hữu Hoàn, Hoàng Guy. MC: Thanh Long.

Community-meal contribution: €30 per ticket; tables seat ten.

Information: Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes. Tel.: 01 64 93 55 56—07 70 07 33 99. Email: thichquangdao@khanhanh.fr.

Incense-offering ceremony at the memorial of the great Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes

Dear compatriots and friends, you are invited to offer a heartfelt stick of incense in remembrance of refugee boat people, soldiers and compatriots who died for the freedom of

the Vietnamese people, before the memorial at Khánh Anh Pagoda, Évry-Courcouronnes, on Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Announcement: Thanh Minh Festival 2025

This year, on Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., prayers for the liberation of the departed whose ashes are housed in the Địa Tạng Tower will be held together with the weekly prayers in the main sanctuary. Families whose relatives' ashes rest in the Địa Tạng Tower are respectfully invited to take some time to visit the pagoda and attend this Thanh Minh ceremony in France.

Announcement: winter retreat 2025

The 2025 winter retreat of the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation of Europe will be held at the great Khánh Anh Pagoda from Monday, December 8, 2025 (19th day of the 10th lunar month, Ất Tỵ year), to Wednesday, December 17, 2025 (28th day of the 10th lunar month, Ất Tỵ year).

Information: great Khánh Anh Pagoda, France. Telephone: 00 33 (0) 1 64 93 55 56—00 33 (0) 7 70 07 33 99.

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