



April 2007/2550

Dear Friends

I don't know about you but this semester is getting right away from me ... almost half over. Sunday afternoon meditation has been humming along with good attendances and new faces. This year so far has been one of making connections for me while the Religious Centre has become a busier place with people passing through for conversation and a cup of tea. People are also coming to use the foyer as a quiet place to sit and read or eat lunch while the meditation room is just the place for an afternoon nap.

Two things I have enjoyed a lot have been my increased connection with FUIIE (Flinders University Institute of International Education) on the Sturt campus, my *alma mater*. There have been a group of ESL teachers from Hong Kong visiting and they have been particularly friendly. As well the presentations by various postgraduate students and lecturers have been very interesting.

Secondly I have been auditing two Philosophy courses on the Central campus and I have enjoyed the added contact with staff and students as well as the intellectual stimulation these courses have offered. I can't help but think how fortunate we all are to have a time in our lives set aside for learning and mixing with one another. Luxury.

Good Wishes
Thầy Thông Pháp

THE BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY (VESAK DAY)

We will celebrate the Festival of Vesak at Flinders on **Saturday May 12th**.

This is a good opportunity to remember the amazing fact that we humans can overcome the fear, the hatred, the greed and the self-centredness that causes all of our suffering. We can also remember with gratitude that the Path to this freedom was discovered by Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian Prince who was so motivated by the suffering he saw around him that he gave his life over to discovering the way out of the human dilemma and teaching it to others, including us.

If you would like to be involved in the planning for this event please contact me on thon0012@flinders.edu.au. I need help with dressing the altar, advertising, organizing the lunch and preparing music.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN IN AND BRING
FRIENDS AND FAMILY**

SILENT MIND, HOLY MIND

Silent Mind, Holy Mind is the title given to a book written by Lama Yeshe, a co-founder of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, a Tibetan Buddhist institute. It is about Christmas and how its real purpose is to be found in the calm mind. It is a great theme to contemplate especially in a world where a silent, spacious mind is less possible due to the mental busyness we experience. There is so much to agitate the mind in our worlds: TV, computers, the demands made upon us to read and think, to take in so much information.

Giving the mind a rest and allowing the clouds, which cover up its luminescence, time to disperse is considered weird and time wasting. Not giving the mind a rest and never abiding with the mind in its true nature actually means that we live pseudo lives, imagining that the distractions are realities.

The following are two poems I have come across lately which are calls to silence and resting in the mind in its natural state. The first is by a Quaker called Clive Sansom who wrote it over twenty years ago. The second was written recently by a 94 year old woman called Jean Armstrong who began her career as a poet six months ago and lives in Brighton.

THE TIMELESS HOUR

Let action go; and with it all the thought
Of action. Even when the world is racked,
It may be worthier to refrain to refrain from action
Than it is to act.

Forget the world one hour; when you return
Its beauty will be there, its tragedy;
And though the past and future shake their chains,
The now is free.

Think yourself out of thinking; exorcise
Even that ghost of thought, the echoing word –
Till in the haunted chamber of the brain
No sound is heard.

Then, when its windows open on a world
Beyond the world, when all its walls are dumb,
Into the silent room, the wordless mind,
The Word may come.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

The busy world, the frantic pace
Traps time.
It masks the face of the divine

The chattering world
Suffocates silence.
The still small voice
Cannot be heard.

The world's a challenge
To find oases
Wherein discover
The essence of Being

FLINDERS ON-LINE BUDDHIST DISCUSSION FORUM

I would like to inform you of a new initiative at Flinders University developed by Mr. David Baker, a member of Flinders University Buddhist Society and Ms Debra Hackett, the web mistress of the Flinders University Religious Centre. It is an on-line forum for Dharma discussion.

This On-line Forum came out of the difficulty busy students had gathering together to discuss the Dharma last year. This forum will give students and staff of the University the opportunity to engage in discussion with each other in their own time and from the convenience of the computer they have access to. Please feel free to join in the discussion.

<http://flinbuddhism.proboards61.com/>

May this forum bring great benefit to all who use it.
May it bring great benefit to all living beings.

TAKE THIS QUIZ

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Brown low medal winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Wimbledon Cup.
4. Name the last half a dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
5. Name ten people who have won the Nobel Prize.
6. Name the first five Australian Prime Ministers.

How did you do? The point is none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies,

awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten and accolades are buried with those who have achieved them.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel loved and appreciated.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.
6. Name five heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Easier? The Lesson? The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They are the ones who care.

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY BUDDHIST SOCIETY GET TOGETHER

A get together in the Religious Centre is planned for Tuesday, May 1st.
Thay Thong Phap will provide rice and vegetable curries. Please bring
salad/ dessert and a drink to share.

The topic for discussion is Flinders University Buddhist, post-Voluntary
Student Unionism: where to now?

RSVP: thon0012@flinders.edu.au by Thursday, April 26th.

MEDITATION TIMETABLE IN THE RELIGIOUS CENTRE

Mondays: 8 – 9 am, 2.30 – 3.30 pm.

Tuesdays: 8 – 9 am; 12 noon – 1 pm.

Wednesdays: 8 – 9 am, 3.00 – 4.00 pm.

Thursdays: 8 – 9 am, PM on the Sturt campus (To be arranged.)

Sundays: 2.30 pm – 4.00 pm, Religious Centre Prayer/Meditation Room

Please keep an eye on the website for any changes and remember you do not have to be an experienced meditator to participate as instruction is available to new people.

BUDDHIST INSIGHT MEDITATION RETREAT

with Patrick Kearney

Woodhouse Centre, Adelaide Hills

29th June - 8th July, 2007

The practice of Insight Meditation develops an intimacy with each moment.

Insight (Vipassana) meditation fosters inner calm, clarity of mind and the development of compassion and wisdom. This 10-day, silent retreat is suitable for both beginning and experienced practitioners. The retreat is supported through establishing silence and minimizing distraction. It includes daily instruction on meditation technique along with talks on Buddhism and its relevance to daily life. Individual consultations with the teacher will be available. Nourishing vegetarian meals are provided.

The teacher

Patrick Kearney has had 30 years of experience in Zen and Theravadin traditions of Buddhism. He was ordained by Ovadacariya Sayadaw, U Pandita Bhivamsa in Burma where he trained in the lineage of Mahasi Sayadaw. He spent two years as a monk in Burma and Thailand, and he subsequently practiced Zen Buddhism for 5 years in Hawaii under Robert Aitken Roshi, whom he was instrumental in bringing to Australia. Patrick was resident teacher at Blue Mountains Insight Meditation Centre for 3 years, and he now teaches retreats, seminars and classes throughout Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

Cost

\$580 (\$540 concession) for the venue.

Early Bird option. A reduction on the cost applies if full money is received before 18th May. (\$530/\$500) This does not include *Dana* (donation) to the teacher, which can be offered separately. In accordance with Buddhist tradition Patrick's teaching is his gift to his students, which is returned through their *Dana* for him.

Times

Arrive Friday, 29 June, from 5.00pm for a 7.00 pm start. The retreat ends at 1.00 pm on Sunday, 8 July.

Information & Reservations

Contact Anna on (08) 8555 2588, or at ammarkey@yahoo.com.au

