



SBM Newsletter

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March / April 2006

Kuan Yin Boddhistva

Adapted from "Popular Deities of Chinese Buddhism" by Kuan Ming

Three days a year devout Kuan Yin devotees celebrate the three festivals which are attributed to the life of Princess Miao Shan, the Chinese emanation of Kuan Yin. This legend of the sweet and virtuous Miao Shan has so captivated the hearts of the Chinese people that she is adored as the Goddess of Mercy and in all the other female Kuan Yin manifestations as described earlier.

On these days, devotees and those who have received favours from Kuan Yin flock to the various temples to make offerings, set birds and animals free, observe a full day vegetarian diet, perform all kinds of charitable acts, visit old folks homes or orphanages bearing gifts and good wishes, and observe the Five, Eight or Ten Precepts very seriously. Generally the Five Precepts are observed and they consist of:



- Not killing or harming living beings.
- Not taking what is not given.
- Not indulging in sexual activities.
- Not indulging in false speech.
- Not consuming intoxicants of any kind.

2nd Moon 19th Day

Which marks the Day She was Born.

6th Moon 19th Day

Which marks the Day She Entered the Nunnery.

9th Moon 19th Day

Which marks the Day She Attained Enlightenment.

The entire day is spent in quietude, contemplating on the Great Vows of Kuan Yin to save all sentient beings and to forsake the bliss of Nirvana, or on the great virtuous qualities of this great Mother of Mercy such as loving-kindness, compassion and wisdom. The more energetic ones may indulge in a full day's practice of prayer-recitation, Sutra-reading followed by meditation on the happiness of others and then transfer all merits accumulated to all sentient beings.

This does not mean that Kuan Yin followers practice virtuous deeds on these and other festive days only. To those who are well on the Kuan Yin Path, practice is a moment-to-moment affair from the day that they have accepted Kuan Yin into their hearts till the day enlightenment is won. However, beginners of the path are advised to practice as best as they can, aiming for gradual progress and refraining from over-commitment, to spiritual development unless they have experienced teachers to guide them. Devotion and faith in Kuan Yin cannot be acquired hurriedly but can be won over a period of time.

Description on Kuan Shih Yin P'usa can hardly be completed without the inclusion of the Heart Sutra and the Dharani of Great Compassion, both of which are daily recited by those who are committed to the Kuan Yin Path of Great Wisdom and Compassion.

EDITOR'S NOTE....

Dear Brothers and Sisters-in –the –Dhamma,

The world is changing and is changing fast. New discoveries lead to new inventions and as technology advances, it affects our life style, even our mind set too. There is no conflict between the discoveries of science, even in the modern technological world today, and the ancient teachings of the Buddha. A Buddhist does not ignore the facts that Science teaches about mankind and the universe, but that modern thinking often has ancient roots.

The Buddha's life and His Teachings inspire individuals who practice Buddhism to develop self reliance, moral responsibility, tolerance, compassion, wisdom and many other qualities that can enrich happiness and make life more meaningful in today's world. Each person must work out for himself the way to end his own sufferings and attain happiness. It is up to the person to realize that his own actions can determine his future. Understand and apply the Law of Karma –what you do affects what happens to you. If you always make trouble, the one thing you can be sure of is that you will always be in trouble. Along with these qualities, an understanding of the true nature of things will enable the Buddhist to live in harmony with a changing world and to enjoy the highest level of happiness.

Buddhism exists to help us break out of the prison of isolated selfhood. It also offers us a vision of what it means to be a human being that is very different from the one our society trains us to accept – a vision in which life is a struggle for fame and material gain. It is clear that there is a relationship between the way we live our daily lives and our realization of transpersonal depth.

Lastly, do join us in the activities planned at SBM to enrich your life spiritually. Do you know that it is wise to be in the company of people who practice the teachings of the Buddha? That was the Buddha's advice.

Be happy. Have right thoughts and see the true nature of things!

With lots of metta,

Khema

THE HEART SUTRA

(THE PRAJNA PARAMITA HRIDAYA SUTRA)

When the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was practising the profound Prajna Paramita, he illuminated the five aggregates, and saw in their own being to be empty.

“Sariputra, form is here emptiness, Emptiness is form; form is no other than emptiness, emptiness is no other than form. That which is form is emptiness that which is emptiness is form.

The same is true of feelings, perception, mental formations and consciousness. Sariputra, all things are marked with emptiness: they are not born or destroyed; they are not pure or impure, nor do they wax or wane.

Therefore, Sariputra, in emptiness, there is no form, no feeling, no perception, no mental formation, no consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind; no form, sound, smell, taste, touch, or objects; no eye-element, and so forth up to mind-consciousness element.

There is no knowledge, no ignorance, no extinction of knowledge, no extinction of ignorance and so forth up to no old age and death, no extinction of old age and death; there is no suffering, no cause, no end, no path; there is no knowledge, and no attainment. Therefore, Sariputra, because nothing is attained, the Bodhisattva who relies on Prajna Paramita has his mind free from obstacles. With the mind free from obstacles, He overcomes fear and goes beyond perverted views, and attains to Nirvana!

All the Buddhas of the three periods of time, through reliance on the Prajna Paramita, attain to the Perfect and Highest Enlightenment!

Therefore, one should know that Prajna Paramita as the great supernatural Mantra, the great bright, unsurpassed and unequalled Mantra which can truly and without fail wipe out all sufferings.

This Mantra is proclaimed in the Prajna Paramita. It runs thus:

“GATE, GATE, PARAGATE, PARASAMGATE, BODHI
SVAHA”

Thought for the month:

It's not what you don't know that hurts you – it's all those things that you DO know that are not so!

~ Anonymous ~

The Dharani of Great Compassion

It is stated in the Dharani Sutra that "those who recite and hold the Spiritual Mantra of Great Compassion will not suffer any kind of bad death and will obtain good rebirth." Here is the mantra in Chinese which is known to all Kuan Yin devotees as the 'Ta Pei Jou'. The efficacy of this Great Compassionate Mantra has been proven countless times. Ask anyone who has practiced this mantra and they will have lots to tell you about the wonders of this prayer. With some effort anyone can recite it for the sake of benefiting others. The Ta Pei Jou begins with one reciting three times, this opening verse of adoration:

*Na mo chien shou chien yen
Kuan shih yin p'usa
Kuan ta yen marn wu ai
Ta pei sin tor loh ni*

Followed by reciting of Kuan Yin's name thrice:

Namo ta pei kuan shih yin p'usa

After which the Dharani is recited

Buddhist Stories

The Worm

by Ajahn Bramavamso

There is a wonderful little story about two monks who lived together in a monastery for many years; they were great friends. Then they died within a few months of one another. One of them got reborn in the heaven realms, the other monk got reborn as a worm in a dung pile. The one up in the heaven realms was having a wonderful time, enjoying all the heavenly pleasures. But he started thinking about his friend, "I wonder where my old mate has gone?" So he scanned all of the heaven realms, but could not find a trace of his friend. Then he scanned the realm of human beings, but he could not see any trace of his friend there, so he looked in the realm of animals and then of insects. Finally he found him, reborn as a worm in a dung pile... Wow! He thought: "I am going to help my friend. I am going to go down there to that dung pile and take him up to the heavenly realm so he too can enjoy the heavenly pleasures and bliss of living in these wonderful realms."

So he went down to the dung pile and called his mate. And the little worm wriggled out and said: "Who are you?", "I am your friend. We used to be monks together in a past life, and I have come up

to take you to the heaven realms where life is wonderful and blissful." But the worm said: "Go away, get lost!" "But I am your friend, and I live in the heaven realms," and he described the heaven realms to him. But the worm said: "No thank you, I am quite happy here in my dung pile. Please go away." Then the heavenly being thought: "Well if I could only just grab hold of him and take him up to the heaven realms, he could see for himself." So he grabbed hold of the worm and started tugging at him; and the harder he tugged, the harder that worm clung to his pile of dung.

Do you get the moral of the story? How many of us are attached to our pile of dung?

The Lost Son

"A young widower, who loved his five year old son very much, was away on business when bandits came who burned down the whole village and took his son away. When the man returned, he saw the ruins and panicked. He took the burnt corpse of an infant to be his son and cried uncontrollably. He organised a cremation ceremony, collected the ashes and put them in a beautiful little bag which he always kept with him. Soon afterwards, his real son escaped from the bandits and found his way home. He arrived at his father's new cottage at midnight and knocked at the door. The father, still grieving asked: "Who is it?" The child answered, it is me papa, open the door!" But in his agitated state of mind, convinced his son was dead, the father thought that some young boy was making fun of him. He shouted: "Go away" and continued to cry. After some time, the child left.

Father and son never saw each other again." After this story, the Buddha said: "Sometime, somewhere, you take something to be the truth. If you cling to it so much, even when the truth comes in person and knocks on your door, you will not open it."

ACTIVITIES HELD

Buddhist Wedding at SBM

1st January 2006

It was a touching Buddhist wedding ceremony that was conducted at SBM for the marriage of Ms Leo Siu-Yin and Mr Woo Boon Loong with the blessings of the Triple Gem. The bride's father was non other than our Vice President, Bro Leo Ann Jwee.

On behalf of SBM Committee, we extend out congratulations and best wishes to the couple for a happily married life.



houses was as enjoyable as the last. Their parents were very hospitable, welcoming us with smiles and many delicious New Year goodies.

Though it was very tiring at the end of the day, there was good bonding within my group. We even took memorable family pictures at every household we visited.

As much as I had enjoyed the pineapple tarts in every house, it has been a great experience talking to the adults. I'm glad that through this house visiting, the parents had gained a better understanding of my organization, SBMY. We even had a visit by the 'God of Fortune' posed by Brother Ang Hwee.

~ Soo Ting Ting ~

Chinese New Year House Visiting 2006

4th February 2006

It was the 4th of February and to the Chinese this date is said to be 'ren ri', an auspicious and meaningful day in the Chinese calendar. SBM Youth members visited each other on this day. The youths gathered at Singapore Buddhist Mission in the morning for Puja before setting off. There were different routes planned for the various house visits.

Chinese New Year Celebrations

5th February 2006

Cai Shen Ye' or the Chinese God of Wealth visited SBM for the first time during the Chinese New Year festive period. Our president, Brother Richard Poon, in full Cai Shen Ye regalia, made a surprise entrance, much to the delight of everyone.

According to Chinese beliefs, he brings wealth and prosperity to those he visits. The celebration included a sing-along session and games jointly organized by the ladies and youth group. This was followed by a Loh Hei and a sumptuous meal. The highlight of the day was a game which required the men to identify their wives' feet and this brought much laughter as some men had problems recognizing their wives' feet!

We would like to thank each and everyone for making the occasion a huge success.

~ Sister May ~



Group photo during Chinese New Year visiting



My group, Kassapa, managed to visit 5 members throughout the day. Every trip to the different



Cai Shen Dao, The God of Wealth

UPCOMING EVENTS

Programmes for March and April 2006

March

Kuan Yin Bodhisattva Birthday – 17 March 2006, Friday, 8pm

April

Qing Ming Festival – 2nd April 2006, Sunday, 10am
Transference of Merits to the Departed

Ancestor worship is the adhesive that binds the family together. It is a belief that ancestors continue to live in another realm and that it is the duty of the living to meet their needs. In return, the ancestors will bless the family with peace and happiness.

Buddhist devotees believe in transferring merits so that wherever their beloved ones are, they will be able to receive the merits and so be able to lead a happier life.

Qing Ming Day is also like a family outing where members of the family gather to pay respects and “share the food with them”. The intention of this gathering is perhaps to inculcate the values of gratitude and respect.

The programme starts as follows:

10.00 am	Lighting of the Oil Lamps
10.15am	Buddha Puja & Pali Chanting
11.00 am	Dhamma Sermon
11.15 am	Transference of Merits
11.25am	Blessing Service
11.30am	Dana for the Venerables
11.35 am	Lunch for the Devotees

Devotees can make a donation of \$10 towards SBM's maintenance fund on this occasion.

May

Vesak Day Celebrations will be held at SBM from the 10th of May to the 12th of May.

Dhamma friends can participate in the various offerings as indicated below:

1. Offerings to Lord Buddha
2. Dana for members of the Sangha and devotees
3. Buddha Salutation to the 28 Buddhas:
 - Sponsor a Buddha image for veneration during Vesak
 - Puja Offerings to the 28 Buddhas
 - Offering of fruits, flowers and light
 - Oil lamp
4. Offering of Light (Vesak Lanterns Family Blessing)



Gongxi Fa Cai! Happy New Year!



Youth versus the seniors in a game

Sharing at Awareness Place

2nd March 2006



On the 2nd of March, Thursday, one of our youth group mentors, Brother Ang Hwee conducted a sharing

session about getting the most out of your busy life through the Dhamma. He spoke on how we can incorporate the Dhamma in our daily activities from the moment we wake up, to going to work or school, and to sleeping. The Dhamma can be found all around us, but most important of all, it must be found in our hearts. Another important point Ang Hwee also shared with us was on how to cultivate one's mindfulness at our work place. The session ended on a light hearted note, with Alvin Yong serenading us with two songs; “What a Wonderful World” and “I Can't Smile without You”, accompanied by our guitarist, youth group president Zeming.

~ Michelle Ang~

5. Offering of Lights (Lotus Candles)
6. Offering of Lights for Blessing (Candle Light Procession)
7. Offering of Lights (Oil Lamp) for transference of merits
8. Sponsors for
 - The renting of tent, tables and chairs
 - Mineral water* (to be blessed for distribution) to devotees on Vesak Day

Most importantly, we look forward to your contribution towards the success of the celebration in areas such as preparation work, cooking, cleaning etc.

We invite our members and devotees to offer Dana (Lunch) to our Resident Monk on this special occasion. We would appreciate if you could let us know the type of food you would be cooking so that we can plan a more varied menu.

Sponsorship for Tent, Tables and Chairs

You may want to take this opportunity to provide shelter to all who come on Vesak eve and Vesak day. We are looking for sponsors who can cover the cost of the tent, tables and chairs.

May all enjoy good health and gain much happiness by your generosity.

Please contact Ven Dhammika at 6299 7216

**A tribute to Mothers on Mothers' Day
13th May 2006**

Mother is half of the Father/Mother team,. She is the one who gave birth to you as a child. When she first held you in her arms, she loved you with all her heart, even though you didn't look good on the first day! She is the one that changed your diaper, fed you with milk, bathed and dressed you. She is the one who tended to you when you were sick, wishes she could have borne your pain, but unable to even share it with you. There is nobody like a Mother.

If you have children, then you know what it's like to be a Mother. It's a tough job, with naughty children, and much heartache before they are grown. Sometimes a Mother is lucky that she has well-disciplined children, but only because she has done her best in order for them to be well-adjusted teenagers and later adults. Mostly, Mother sits and worries that she hasn't done her best with her children, especially if they don't turn out the way she wanted them to despite all the training she had given them.

Mother is a human being so she can make mistakes. She is not perfect, just as none of us are perfect. But we always picture her as being perfect during our childhood. As we become older, we realize that Mothers are capable of right and wrong ways of doing things, missing the mark, just as much as the next person. But with all her faults she is still Mother. The thing that sets her apart is her everlasting love for her children and her wish that they will lead a normal, happy life.. But Mother was always there to encourage you when you made a mistake, dry your tears when you are upset although sometimes it's hard not to show disappointment {I am sure I've done that}. As we grow older and have our own children, we realize that Mother was a very strong person, and we begin to wonder whether we could be like her. No, we wear our 'own shoes'.....we can never do things the same as our Mother, although she has given us the training from which to build.

Mothers are special. Is your Mother living today? If so, try to make this Mother's Day the most wonderful day of her life! Show her that you care if only by telling her you love her. Take her out to eat, take her flowers, do chores for her but show up on Mother's Day, if possible. You will never know how much this helps Mother to realize her family still cares. Sometimes we get busy doing the usual things in life, and lose sight of the most important aspects - loving our family. And Mother happens to be where that 'family' began. Without Mother, there would never have been a family. You might also tell your papa that you are so happy that he chose Mother to be his wife. Make his eyes light up as well!!

To all Mothers, A Happy Mothers' Day!

**Camp Ehi-passiko 2006 – Prequel
29th May – 1st June 2006**



The 13th Camp Ehi-Passiko organized by the SBM Youth Group is back again! Participants will engage in activities which include interactive Dharma discussions and presentation, fun and meaningful games. We are limiting this fulfilling and enriching camp to 120 participants so please sign up now to avoid disappointment!

Venue : Camp Christine
 Date : 29th May -1st Jun 2006
 Theme : Love and Friendship
 Age Group : 13 – 21
 Member Fees : \$35/-
 Early Bird Fees : \$38/- (before 1st May 2006)
 Normal fees : \$45/-

For more information, please contact **Hongli 98480030**, **Shi xiong 97599802** or email us at sbm_youth@yahoo.com.

Sponsorship for Video Camera

SBM youth group has been organizing activities for ten years now. Today, we have a growing membership of 80 active devotees and a volunteer pool of 100 members. This June, we will be organizing our 13th camp!

After every camp, we would produce a video montage in the form of VCD or DVD to be given to the campers. This video will allow them to remember the Dharmic and spiritual link that was forged during the 4 days 3 nights duration. It will also enable us to publicise our activities for our future camps. Unfortunately, this year we are unable to borrow a video camera to develop our footages for publicity. We would like to request fellow SBM brothers and sisters for sponsorship in purchasing a video camera.

An IT team was formed to specialize in video editing and publicity work. The video camera will serve multiple purposes:

- 1) Capturing of SBM key events such as Vesak celebrations, public talks, SBM gala night as well as youth activities such as Camp Ehi-passiko, volunteer work.
- 2) Publicizing the multitude of activities at SBM during big occasions or external intra-temple activities.
- 3) Give the youth a great opportunity to learn relevant skills in video editing, which will be very useful in their later years.

We hope that as SBM progresses, we will be able to capture and remember the events that we have organized. It will contribute greatly in the propagation of the Dhamma.

For an average video camera, it will cost around \$1200 without accessories. We know it is not a small sum but your donation will mean a lot to us in enhancing the propagation of the Dharma to the youths in Singapore.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all the Brothers and Sisters in the Dharma in SBM who have so warmly helped us in our past successful camps.

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu!
 Zeming
 President (SBM Youth)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2006

6	Sat	8.00am	Youth Group Vesak @ Orchard Celebrations
9-11	Tues	8.00pm	Pre-Vesak Prayers Days
12	Fri	8.00am	Vesak Day Celebration
14	Sun	10.00am	Mother's Day
20-21	Sat	10.00am	25th Anniversary Outing
29-1	Mon	8.00am	Camp Ehi-passiko 2006 Prequel

JUN 2006

18	Sun	10.00am	Sis Prema Hsu 108 years Birthday celebration Father's Day
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WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Thurs	8.00pm	Buddha Puja, Pali Chanting & Meditation (Conducted by Ven Dhammika)
Fri	8.00pm	Buddha Puja & Pali Chanting (Every last Friday of the Month – Bodhi Puja)
Sat	3.30pm	Youth Group Meditation & Dhamma Discussion (Conducted by Bro Ang Hwee)
Sun	10.30am	Sun Puja & Pali Chanting / Dhamma Talk
		Buddhist Hymns Singing
		Blessing Service
	1.30pm	Dhamma Talks By Various Speakers

Every last Friday of the Month Bodhi Puja

For Official Use Only

Receipt No. _____ dated _____

To: The Hon Treasurer
 Singapore Buddhist Mission
 9 Ruby Lane
 Singapore 328284

I/We are pleased to enclose \$ _____ (*cash / cheque / money order no. _____) for the following purpose:

DONATION / S FOR		AMOUNT (\$)	
1	CHING MING FESTIVAL -OFFERING OF LIGHTS ON 3rd April 2006		
	1. Oil Lamps		
	2. Flowers		
	3. Dana		
2	DANA FUND		
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 per month (monthly)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 per month (monthly)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 per month (quarterly: \$60)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 per month (quarterly: \$90)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 per month (half-yearly: \$120)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 per month (half-yearly: \$180)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 per month (1 year: \$240)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 per month (1 year: \$360)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 per month (monthly)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 per month (monthly)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 per month (quarterly: \$120)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 per month (quarterly: \$150)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 per month (half-yearly: \$240)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 per month (half-yearly: \$300)
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 per month (1 year: \$480)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 per month (1 year: \$600)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Amount : \$ _____		
Dedications :			
3	SPONSORING OF DHAMMA TALKS BY GUEST SPEAKERS		
4	YOUTH GROUP DHAMMA PROPAGATION FUND		
5	PUBLICATION OF BUDDHIST BOOKS / NEWSLETTER		
6	MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION (\$10) for Year 2005 OR Conversion to Life M'ship (\$100)		
7	Others (pl specify) :		
TOTAL :			

Name : Mr/Mrs/Mdm/Dr/Miss/Ms _____

Address : _____

S

Tel No. _____ (R) _____ (O) _____ (Pgr/Hp)

e-mail Address : _____

Occupation : _____

Hobbies : _____

I would like to volunteer my service/s for : _____

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