

Lotus



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Approach to Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)

Part I (Sila= Morality)

Before going to Myanmar for about two months just recently Dr. Ottaranyana gave me the monumental task of going through the entire Visuddhimagga, line by line and compiling from it three files: one made up of the stories contained there, one of its similes and, [the biggest challenge of all]: a file composed of the Abhidhamma Doctrines contained in Visuddhimagga. I have only a superficial knowledge of Abhidhamma. As a Theravadin Buddhist I was familiar with most of the Doctrines in Visuddhimagga. I just wasn't sure if they were actually from the Abhidhamma or from the Suttas. So it meant I also had to go through the Abhidhammattha Sangaha [the only Abhidhamma book I am familiar with because we use it in Bhante's class], to find out what doctrines it contains that are also in Visuddhimagga.

I had known for a long time Visuddhimagga was something I should read, as it is a compendium of Buddhism, as well as a detailed description of meditation subjects and techniques. Just like the Noble Eightfold Path, Visuddhimagga can be divided into three parts; Morality, Meditation and Wisdom. The first two chapters deal with Morality. There are many very moving and inspiring stories about the heroic virtue of the monks. Here are some examples of that. Keeping the Patimokkha restraint (The Monk's Disciplinary Code) by faith in Lord Buddha is the point this first story is illustrating.

'Having therefore undertaken through faith the training precepts without exception as announced, one should completely perfect them without regard for life'.

'And the story of the Elders bound by robbers in the forest should be understood in this sense (because the Patimokkha forbids the Monks to destroy vegetation)'.

'It seems that robbers in the Mahavattani Forest bound an Elder with black creepers and made him lie down. While he lay there for seven days he augmented his insight, and after reaching the fruition of Non-return, he died there and was reborn in the Brahma World.

Also they bound another Elder in Tambapanni Island (Ceylon) with string creepers and made him lie down. When a forest fire came and the creepers were not cut, he established insight and attained nibbana simultaneously with his death. When the Elder Abhaya, a preacher of the Digha Nikaya, passed by with five hundred bhikkhus, he saw [what had happened] and he had the Elder's body cremated and a shrine built. Therefore let other clansmen also Maintain the Rules of Conduct pure, Renouncing life if there be need, Rather than break virtue's restraint By the World's Saviour decreed'.

Visuddhimagga Pages 36-37 Chapter I §98-99

'And as Patimokkha restraint is undertaken out of faith, so restraint of the sense faculties should be undertaken with mindfulness'.

Restraint of the sense faculties by mindfulness (in this case undertaken by guarding the eye-door) is the point the next story is illustrating.

'The Elder Maha-Mitta's mother was sick with a poisoned tumour. She told her daughter, who as a bhikkhuni had also gone forth, 'Lady, go to your brother. Tell him my trouble and bring back some medicine'. She went and told him. The Elder said 'I do not know how to gather root medicines and such things and concoct a medicine from them. But rather I will tell you a medicine: since I went forth I have not broken [my virtue of restraint of] the sense faculties by looking at the bodily form of the opposite sex with a lustful mind. By this declaration of truth may my mother get well. Go and tell the lay devotee and rub her body'.

She went and told her what had happened and then did as she had been instructed. At that very moment the lay devotee's tumour vanished, shrinking away like a lump of froth. She got up and uttered a cry of joy: 'If the Fully Enlightened One were still alive, why should he not stroke with his net-adorned hand the head of a bhikkhu like my son?' So:

Let another noble clansman
Gone forth in the Dispensation
Keep, as did the Elder Mitta,
Perfect faculty restraint.

Visuddhimagga Chapter I Page 37 §100 + Page 40 §109-110

Part II Samadhi= Concentration

The second section of Visuddhimagga deals with concentration. The Kammatthana, the forty (*samatha*) meditation subjects are described, together with whether they lead to the jhanas and which of the six temperaments they are suitable for. These are: the ten Kasinas, The ten kinds of foulness (of corpses), the ten Recollections of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, one's own morality, one's own generosity, the Devas, peace, death, the thirty-two repulsive parts of the body, and mindfulness of the breathing (anapana-sati). Then there are the Illimitables; (The Four Brahma-Viharas), The One Perception (Of the Loathsomeness of Food), The One Analysis, (of all matter into the four elements), and the four Immaterial states.

The following story is actually mentioned as a simile in the context of Kasina meditation (Chapter III §110-111 + Note 28 Page 114-115), but it's a lovely illustration of the benefits of the Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha:

The full story, which occurs at MA iii 382-3 and elsewhere, is this: 'It seems that when the Karavika bird has pecked a sweet flavoured mango with its beak and savoured the dripping juice, and, flapping its wings, begins to sing, then quadrupeds caper as if mad. Quadrupeds grazing in their pastures drop the grass in their mouths and listen to the sound. Beasts of prey hunting small animals pause with one foot raised. Hunted animals lose their fear of death and halt in their tracks. Birds flying in the air stay with wings outstretched. Fishes in the water keep still, not moving their fins. All listen to the sound; so beautiful is the Karavika's song. Dhammasoka's queen Asandhimitta asked the Community "Venerable sirs, is there anything that sounds like the Buddha?" —"The Karavika bird does." — "Where are those birds, venerable sirs?" —"In the Himalaya." She told the king "Sire, I wish to hear a Karavika bird". The king despatched a gold cage with the order "Let a Karavika bird come and sit in this cage." The cage travelled and halted in front of a Karavika. Thinking "The cage has come at the king's command; it is impossible not to go", the bird got in. The cage returned and stopped before the king. They could not get the Karavika to utter a sound. When the king asked: "When do they utter a sound?" they replied, "On seeing their kin". Then the king had it surrounded with looking glasses. Seeing its own reflection and imagining that its relatives had come, it flapped its wings and cried out with an exquisite voice as if sounding a crystal trumpet. All the people in the city rushed about as if mad. Asandhimitta thought "If the sound of this creature is so fine, what indeed can the sound of the Blessed One have been like since he had reached the glory of omniscient knowledge?" and arousing a happiness that she never again relinquished, she became established in the fruition of Stream Entry'.

Visuddhimagga Chapter III Note 28 Pages 114-115

According to Visuddhimagga, the first six recollections (of the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, Virtue Generosity and the Devas) can usually only be successfully practiced by Noble Persons:

'These six recollections succeed only in noble disciples. For the special qualities of the Enlightened One, the Law, and the Community, are evident to them; and they possess the virtue with the special qualities of untornness etc., the generosity that is free from avarice, and the special qualities of faith, etc., similar to those of the deities.'

Visuddhimagga Chapter VII §121 Page 245

'Still, though this is so, they can be brought to mind by an ordinary man too, if he possesses the special qualities of purified virtue, and the rest. [228] For when he is recollecting the special qualities of the Buddha, etc., even only according to hearsay, his

consciousness settles down, in virtue of which the hindrances are suppressed. In his supreme gladness he initiates insight, and he even attains to Arahantship, like the Elder Phussadeva who dwelt at Katakandhakara’.

‘That venerable one, it seems, saw a figure of the Enlightened One created by Mara. He thought 'How good this appears despite its having greed, hate and delusion! What can the Blessed One's goodness have been like? For he was quite without greed, hate and delusion!' He acquired happiness with the Blessed One as object, and by augmenting his insight he reached Arahantship’.

Visuddhimagga Chapter VII §127-128 Page 246

Part III (Panna= wisdom)

All these stories illustrate that to become noble persons or get on the path to enlightenment it is necessary to switch from samatha meditation to insight. The third part of Visuddhimagga deals with insight or vipassana meditation as wisdom (or understanding as it is referred to here).

‘What is this act of understanding? It is knowing in a particular mode separate from the modes of perceiving and cognising. For though the state of knowing is equally present in perception, in consciousness, and in understanding, nevertheless perception is only the mere perceiving of an object as, say, 'blue' or 'yellow'; it cannot bring about the penetration of its characteristics as impermanent, painful, and not-self. Consciousness knows the object as blue or yellow, and it brings about the penetration of its characteristics, but it cannot bring about, by endeavouring, the manifestation of the [supramundane] path. Understanding knows the object in the way already stated, it brings about the penetration of the characteristics and it brings about, by endeavouring, the manifestation of the path’.

Visuddhimagga Ch. XIV §3 page 480

So all of this section on wisdom is about applying the Three characteristics of Impermanence, Suffering and Not self to the five aggregates of body, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness in order to gain insight knowledge.

‘After defining mentality-materiality thus according to its true nature, then in order to abandon this worldly designation of 'a being' and 'a person' more thoroughly, to surmount confusion about beings and to establish his mind on the plane of non-confusion, he makes sure that the meaning defined, namely, 'This is mere mentality-materiality, there is no being, no person' is confirmed by a number of Suttas. For this has been said: 'As with the assembly of parts the word "chariot" is countenanced, so, when the aggregates are present, a being" is said in common usage' (S.i, 135).

‘So in many hundred suttas it is only mentality-materiality that is illustrated, not a being, not a person. Therefore, just as when the component parts such as axles, wheels, frame poles etc., are arranged in a certain way, there comes to be the mere term of common usage 'chariot', yet in the ultimate sense when each part is examined, there is no chariot –so too, when there are the five aggregates [as objects] of clinging, there comes to be the mere term of common usage, a being', 'a person', yet in the ultimate sense, when each component is examined, there is no being as a basis for the assumption 'I am' or 'I'; in the ultimate sense there is only mentality-materiality. The vision of one who sees in this way is called correct vision’.

Visuddhimagga Ch. XVIII §25, 28 pages 687-688

All this confirms my confidence in my Buddhist faith, which is strongly influenced by Ledi Sayadaw. In his book Bodhipakkhiya-Dipani he said; ‘Even though one’s journey through samsara be infinitely long, if one does not encounter a Buddha’s Teaching, no opportunity of getting rid of these two class of unwholesome Kamma [arisen and unarisen] can arise. This is because the business of getting rid of them is identical with the business of destroying the *anasuya* plane of Personality Belief (*sakkaya-ditthi*) i.e. the latent disposition for such a wrong view. And the destruction of that *anusaya* plane is the work of *anatta-bhavana* i.e. the meditation on Not-self, which only appears at the time when a Buddha Sasana appears.’ [The Manuals of Buddhism page 326]

I've been told that there is a saying in Myanmar, that when a monk reads Visuddhimagga he either wants to give up being a monk or else go to the forest and practise rigorously. For me going through Visuddhimagga in detail hasn't been an intellectual experience. I couldn't give a talk about it or even pass an exam on it. Rather it has been a spiritual experience, which has radically changed me. So I would advise you to sell your TV and buy a copy of Visuddhimagga. But be warned! Nothing may ever be quite the same again!

Pamela Hirsch



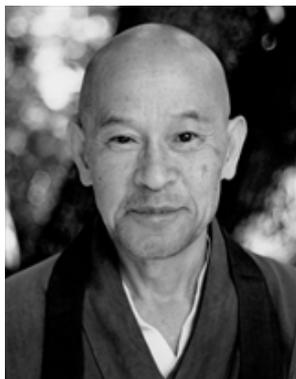
Letter from Guernsey

I recently read a book on Zen Buddhism called *Opening the hand of thought*, by the priest Kosho Uchiyama. It's turned up a couple of good nuggets of wisdom recently, and I thought I'd use them for my letter.

p.80 "while the reality of the life of the self exists beyond the thoughts of the individual, it is at the same time the very power actually functioning as this small individual" [my italics] It's pretty easy to think that absolute reality, or the higher self, is something only existing above or before thought, but this quote brings you back down to earth and reminds you that ordinary, delusion-riddled consciousness is also part of that reality. Another quote on a similar tack was very helpful indeed to me:

p.106 "the feeling that something is lacking is no more than our petty thoughts of being unfulfilled. Sawaki Roshi used to say, "There is no reason to expect the reality of immeasurable and unbounded life to satisfy your puny little thoughts.""

Often as spiritual seekers we expect the Buddha-nature, or enlightenment (or whatever you might call it) to be spectacular, intensely beautiful, and somehow exotic - something better than and removed from our ordinary consciousness. Something which will save *us* from *this*. However, by maintaining this habit we're limiting that which cannot be limited. Sawaki humbly reminds us not to have the conceit to glamorize spiritual states we want to 'achieve' and not to devalue what is right in front of us. Zen teachers often talk about how we pattern what we *think* is the Buddha-nature with our human, relative values and expectations. But, they insist, you cannot judge what you might find on the spiritual path - or even advanced Zen teachers themselves - by these values.



Our opinions of how our life or mind or our spiritual life *should be* are inevitably coloured by worldly, I-centred thoughts, and as ever, the subtler these delusions get the tougher it is to identify them, and the harder that 'I' want to hold on to them.

My favourite quote at the time of writing, and perhaps one of the hardest yet most wondrous Buddhist sentiments to be able to live up to is from **Shunryu Suzuki Roshi** [pictured], who said that **"life is its own magic"**. Short and simple, but who truly lives by it? The person who fully does so is a great person, I would say.

Duncan Rathband

Duncan first learned meditation in 2000 at the Vihara's beginner's meditation classes, led by Bill Strongman. A familiar face at the Vihara since then, he moved to Guernsey in 2007 where he still resides with his wife and daughter. <http://duncanrathband.wordpress.com/>



Buddhist Precepts and lay Dhamma Teaching in the West

The name of Jacquetta Gomes has been included in Burkes Landed Gentry Volume III, England's North West including Contemporary People of Distinction, in Burke's Peerage and Gentry, 'as a Contemporary Person of Distinction'. In this connection, Burke's Peerage and Gentry had written, stating that ' . " this book focuses primarily on successful Northwest [of England]

people ... to truly represent the Northwest today ... in recognition of your place in Northwest life you have been chosen as one of over 3,000 Northwest entrants whose names will appear alphabetically in the new reference work'. Jacquetta's name has been included in recognition of her work in spreading the teachings of the Buddha in this country, by establishing the Buddhist Group of Kendal (Theravada) which serves as a vehicle for propagating Buddhist teachings and Buddhist meditation. Many people were pleased that the inclusion of her name in this prestigious publication illustrated that the importance of the Buddha Dhamma in the west was being recognised. Councillor Gwen Murfin, Mayor of Kendal (2007 -2008), requested that a celebration Pali Blessing Ceremony be conducted in the Mayor's Parlour in Kendal Town Hall.

Jacquetta Gomes, in conjunction with two colleagues, set up the Buddhist Group of Kendal (Theravada) in 1991. She was authorised to teach by two eminent Buddhist scholar-monks: in 1983, by Venerable Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Mahanayaka Thera Agga Maha Pandita (1896-1998); and in 1984 by Venerable Hammalawa Saddhatissa Maha Thera (1914-1990), who at the time was Chief Sangha Nayaka of the UK, and the Abbot of the London Buddhist Vihara. Venerable Medagama Vajiragnana Maha Thera, Chief Sangha Nayaka of the UK (1928-2006) authorised her, in conjunction with the resident monks of the Vihara, to conduct weekly meditation classes and monthly meditation retreats at the London Buddhist Vihara.

While she was in Sri Lanka in 1975 she was officially given the Buddhist name Jayasili: by the late Venerable Narada Maha Thera (1898-1983), well-known author of many books on Buddhism. She also received the Bodhicari Precepts from Venerable Ananda Maitreya in 1994 at the London Buddhist Vihara. The Bodhicari Precepts are an expansion of the better known Ajivatthamaka Sila (Eight Precepts with Right Livelihood as the Eighth). Bodhicaris can be defined as practitioners of the Buddha Dhamma who have attainment of enlightenment as their goal. In Pali, the feminine form is Bodhicarini. The Bodhicari Precepts were explained in the summer 1993 issue of Sakyadhita Newsletter (www.sakyadhita.org) as follows:

'Just two years ago, on Vesak in 1991, a new ministerial ordination was developed by Dharma Vijaya Buddhist Vihara in Los Angeles ... the ministerial ordination of "Bodhicari" ... as a paradigm to be used by other temple congregations in America and abroad. So far monks, nuns, laypeople, and scholars around the world have expressed great interest in this new ordination. The general response has been overwhelmingly positive.'

Further explanations of these Precepts were given by Paul David Numrich, who had attended a Vesak ceremony in 1991 when the first Bodhicaris took their twelve Bodhicari Precepts: "The twelve Bodhicari Precepts include the nine Dhammacari Precepts plus two borrowed Pali phrases and one Precept composed by Venerable Piyanda himself. The borrowed Pali, with translation and sources according to Venerable Piyanda, are (1) Sabba sattesu metta sahagatena cetasa viharana sikkhapadam sahadhiyami 'I understand the Precept to live every moment with loving-kindness to all living beings' (from Nava Uposatha Sila [the Nine Uposatha Sila with loving-kindness as the Ninth]); and (2) Karunopaya kosalla pariggahitanam dasaparaminam paripurana sikkhapadam samadhiyami, 'I undertake the Precept to practise the Ten Perfections with compassion and skill' (from Buddhagosa's commentary on the Jataka). Venerable Piyanda's original Precept was; Yavajivam aham ratanattayam na niggahissami tatheva tarn samadarena garukaram karissamiti sikkhapadam samadhiyami, I undertake the Precept not to revile the Three Treasures [the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha] but to cherish and uphold them'. (Numrich, 1996 page 130)

Numrich further comments:

"With the institution of the ... Bodhicari, Dharma Vijaya has sought to fill the "gap" in the Western transmission of Theravada Buddhism created by the dearth of monks. "A Bodhicari is a Buddhist lay minister..." whose responsibilities and authorities ... include ... holding chaplainships, conducting weddings and funerals, [and] initiating Upasaka ... The temple has ordained a total of four Bodhicaris ... ' (Prebish, 1998, page 160)

Jacquetta Gomes taught the Introducing Buddhism course at the Buddhist Society in London; and co-authored, with Venerable Ananda Maitreya, the booklet Introducing Buddhism which accompanied the course. This booklet was later published in Sri Lanka by the Buddhist Cultural Centre and in Taiwan by the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation. In Malaysia it was published by Inward Path Publishers under the title Buddhism: A Quick Introduction. Her other publications include:

"The development and use of the Eight Precepts for lay practitioners, Upasakas and Upasikas

in Theravada Buddhism in the West", Contemporary Buddhism, Volume 5(1) (May, 2004) 47-63 (ISSN 1463-9947) (available online at www.journalsonlinetandf.co.uk).

"Navanga Uposatha - The Nine Uposatha Precepts", Lotus: the Lay Review and Newsletter of the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, Issue 24 (Autumn, 2007).

At the 2006 Vesak Celebrations at Ketumati Buddhist Vihara, Manchester, the Abbot, Venerable Piyatissa presented 'Sangha Authorized Dhamma Teacher' badges to four lay teachers, including Jacquetta Games. Cream sashes were presented to Upasakas Sumedha, Mahinda and Punna who undertook the Ajivatthamaka Sila for Life with the Abbot himself as Preceptor; and to Bodhicarini Upasika Jayasili. These sashes are to be worn when they administer the Panca Sila (Five Precepts) should a Bhikkhu (monk) or Ayya (nun) not be available. (In June 2007 Upasika Panna received the Eight Lifetime Precepts (an expansion of the Ajivatthamaka Sila) from Bhante Henepola Gunaratana Maha Thera at Gaia House Devon, and a cream sash from Venerable Piyatissa.) The 2006 Vesak Celebration included distribution of the booklet: Requirements and Ceremonies for the Five Precepts (Panca Sila), The Eight Precepts with Right Livelihood as the Eighth (Ajivatthamaka Sila), Dhamma Teachers Certificate, written by Jacquetta in association with Ketumati Buddhist Vihara. This was subsequently published for world-wide distribution by the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taiwan, as part of the 2007 edition of Introducing Buddhism.

Suggestions for Further Reading:

Balangoda Ananda Maitreya, Venerable, and Jayasil (Jacquetta Gomes), Introducing Buddhism (Taipei, Taiwan, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational foundation, 2007) (Book code EN074) (www.budaedu.org)

Henepola Gunaratana, Bhante. 2001. Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness: Walking the Path of the Buddha. (Boston, Wisdom Publications) (0-86171-176-9)

Hammalawa Saddhatissa, Venerable. 1977. (3rd edition) Buddhist Ethics. (Boston, Wisdom Publications) (0-86171-124-6)

Hammalawa . Saddhatissa, Venerable, and Pesala, Venerable. 1990. (2nd edition) A Buddhist's Manual. (London, British Mahabodhi Society)

Ledi Sayadaw, Venerable. 1971. Thy Requisites of Enlightenment: Bodhipakkiya Dlpani, Wheel Publication 171-4. (Kandy Sri Lanka, BPS Buddhist Publication Society)

Numrich, Paul David. 1996. Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples. (Knoxville, Tennessee, The University of Tennessee Press) (0-87049-905-X)

Prebish, Charles S and Tanaka Kenneth, K. 1998. The Faces of Buddhism in America. (Berkeley, University of California Press) (0-520-20460-3)

Rewata Dhamma, Maha Thera. 1996. Maha Paritta: The Discourses of the Great Protection (With the Threefold Refuges, Precepts, Salutations to the Triple Gem, Dependent Origination and Metta Bhavana). (Birmingham, Dhamma-Talaka Publications)

Yasodhara, Vol 25/1 (No97) Oct-Dec 2008



Vihara News

Vihara Activities

At 7pm on 3rd October over 50 people came together at the pagoda to celebrate Abhidhamma & Pavarana Day (Lighting ceremony). Four days later on 4th October the pagoda was again filled with people enjoying together the Kathina celebrations. Following the requesting of five Precepts the chanting was led by U Visuta, London Buddhist Vihara. After the offering of Kathina robes to the Sangha Dhamma talks were given by Ven. K. Dhamma Ratana and Ven. Dr Ottara Nyana.

On 1st November 2009 a group ordination,



organised by bhante Bodhidhamma, was held in the Sima Hall of the Dhammatalaka Pagoda under the preceptorship of Bhaddanta Dr. Ottara Nyana when the following people received Higher Ordination:

Mr Ron Tonkin -	U Panyasami	Mr Clive Morley -	U Abhinyana
Mr Arthur Clendinning -	U Khantipala	Mr Trevor Meyhew -	U Mettavihari
Also in attendance were:	Anusasaka -	U Ghosaka	
	Kammavacacariya -	U Bodhidhamma	
		U Ratthapala	
		U Nagasena	

We would like to thank Dr Kyaw Myint Oo & Daw Than Than Ywe for their very generous donation towards the recent costs incurred in the re-gilding of our pagoda.

Finally, several people now receive their Lotus magazine by email, if you would also prefer to receive it this way please email your name and address to paduma8-lotus@yahoo.co.uk and mark your email e-Lotus.

Family Gatherings

Dhamma Class Graduation Day took place at the pagoda on 20th December 2009. The day was very full starting at 10am with Puja Homage to Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. After dana lunch two Dhamma stories were performed before the Certificates of Achievement were presented to the students by U Ghosaka. Those receiving their certificates were: Vijay Mahay, Rahul Mahay & Aneesha Mahay and Ashok Mahay, Sanjay Mahay & Nikita Mahay. Finally, the day came to an end with the sharing of merits and blessing with all beings.



Drs. So Pye & Kaythi Saw and family members provided a dana lunch for the vihara's resident monks and 70 invited guests on 27 December 2009.

On 7th February 2010 Drs Myat Soe Aung & Thi Thi Oo celebrated Dr Thi Thi Oo's birthday with a dana lunch at the vihara for all the resident monks and over 50 guests, including 15 children. After lunch Dr Ottara Nyana presented 2 books to each child, Buddhism for Children and the 38 Blessings. Afterwards the children were able to watch The Life of the Buddha on DVD whilst bhante discussed with their parents how to teach Buddhism to children in their homes.

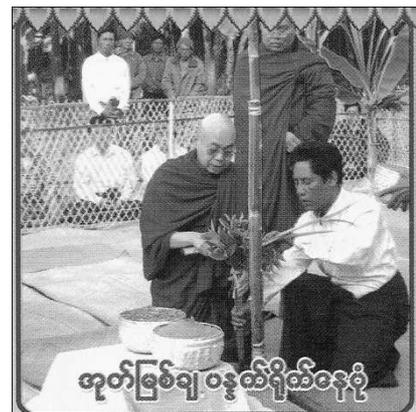
The Faith Leaders group met at the vihara on 20th January 2010 and were honoured with the presence of Birmingham's Lord Mayor at the meeting.

On 30th January 2010 the WMBC held their meeting at the vihara during which their topic for discussion was "What is the Buddhist faith and how should it be presented in schools?"

Dr Ottara Nyana's Activities in Myanmar Dec 2009 – Jan 2010

Bhante's first obligation was the laying of the foundation stone on 2nd December for the Vicitra Ramsi Cetiya in memory of a great teacher, Ven. Vicitta Thera, who passed away on 8th February 2009. Then on 10th January he led the relics' installation ceremony. The cetiya opening ceremony will take place on the coming Buddha day, 29th April 2010. The total estimated cost is K 15m (\$15,000).

On 12th December the Samangon Secondary School Anniversary was celebrated with the awarding of various bursaries. Dr Mar Mar Lwin presented K. 1,000,000 to final medical student Maung Htet Aung. A High School student who passed their exams with distinction was awarded K 50,000.



Students from Primary to Class Eight received the following bursaries from Karuna Bodhi and Dr Rewata Dhamma's memorial fund: 9 First Year students each received K 8,000; 9 Second Year students each received K 7,000; 9 Third Year students each received K 6,000 and 9 Fourth Year students each received K 5,000. Finally For school pathways two grants were made of K 500,000 and for school funds K400,000.

Bhante presented K 500,000 from the Nagit fund to the Nagit Orphanage School, Mingalagun Yangon, which was founded by Dr Dhamma Piya.

Bhante donated two gold plates (K 1,100,000) to Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, in memory of his great teacher Ven. Vicitta Thera.

During December he was invited to give a series of lectures at ITBMU.

Also during his visit to Myanmar bhante was able to visit various holy and historical places including Anva, Panya, Sagaing, Amarapura and Mandalay's Kyaikhtiyo pagoda.



Future Activities in 2010

2nd March: Buddhsit Chaplaincy event.

28th March: Graduation Day for students of Buddhist scripture classes, Dr Ottara Nyana's birthday.

24th April: Buddha Day celebration at 12:45pm at the BM&AG.

25th April: Buddha Day (Visakha) at 10:30am in the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda

25th July: Dhammacakka Day & Pagoda Anniversary at 10:30am.

From 2nd to 18th April Dr Ottara Nyana will visit Belgium to lead a meditation retreat and teach the Abhidhamma which will include a one-day children's class.

If you would like to share a story or article with other readers please e-mail it to paduma8-lotus@yahoo.co.uk or post it to the editor at the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

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