



MONTHLY GUIDE



International Buddhist Meditation Center

April 2010

928 S. New Hampshire L.A. CA. 90006

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Venerable Karuna Dharma's '70th Big Birthday Bash'

Please Join IBMC for a Weekend Birthday celebration as we honor the 70th birthday of our Venerable Abbess, Dr. Karuna Dharma.

The weekend begins with a 'Big Birthday Bash' on **Saturday April 24th** from 1 PM - 5 PM. Please bring your favorite dish or drink to share. There will be offerings of food, music, games, a birthday raffle, talent show, and more!

On **Sunday April 25th** we will have a garden tea party! With cake cookies and of course tea! So please join us for a full weekend of celebrating of the life and dedicated work of our Venerable Karuna Dharma. We hope to see you there!

Kundalini Yoga Classes

"The kundalini experience does not mean you have gone into a deep breathless trance and are beyond this world. ... It integrates you more fully with reality and gives you a broader vision and sensitivity so that you can act more efficiently." ~ Yogi Bhajan

Kundalini Yoga classes are now being held on **Saturdays at 9 AM** in the **Palmo Choling Nunnery Gompa, Thien - An House - 939 S. New Hampshire.**

Classes are led by Dharamjeet Kaur a student of the Yogi Bajan school of Yoga & trained by Gurmukh of Golden Bridge Yoga Spiritual Village - Los Angeles All classes are offered on a donations basis.

"As we receive and give with the universe so too do our blessings flow."

The Buddhas Birthday 2010

On Sunday, April 11, IBMC will celebrate the Buddha's birthday Japanese style! Our weekly service will be followed by a potluck luncheon in the garden. Please join us in bathing the baby Buddha, and bring a vegetarian dish or drinks to share.

As Ven. Dr. Thich Thien-An, the founder of our Center, often said, the Buddha's birthday is everyone's birthday! *Happy Birthday To Everyone!*

Hanamatsuri

The historical Buddha was born 2650 years ago in a garden at Lumbini in the Himalaya mountains, as Queen Maya was attempting to travel from Kapilavastu to her parents' home in Devadaha. As she held onto the branches of a fragrant sala tree she gave birth to the prince. Legend says he was bathed by the gods with sweet water and flowers falling from the heavens. He then took seven steps as lotus flowers bloomed under each footfall, and raising his right hand towards the heavens and his left to the ground, declared, "Under heaven and above the earth, I am the Tathagata. This is my last birth. I will put an end to the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death."

While the traditional day observed, differs from school to school, IBMC will observe the Japanese date of the

Flower Festival Hanamatsuri. The Hanamatsuri ceremony will end with everyone having the opportunity of bathing the newborn prince



The Six Mahayana Paramitas (Perfections)

Excerpts from a talk given by
Ven. K'santi Karuna

The Sanskrit word Paramita means to cross over to the other shore. Paramita may also be translated as perfection, perfect realization, or reaching beyond limitation. Through the practice of these six Paramitas, we cross over the sea of suffering (samsara) to the shore of happiness and awakening (Nirvana); we cross over from ignorance and delusion to enlightenment. Each of the six Paramitas is an enlightened quality of the heart, a glorious virtue or attribute - the innate seed of perfect realization within us. The Paramitas are the very essence of our true nature. However, since these enlightened qualities of the heart have become obscured by delusion, selfishness, and other karmic tendencies, we must develop these potential qualities and bring them into expression. In this way, the six Paramitas are an inner cultivation, a daily practice for wise, compassionate, loving, and enlightened living. The Paramitas are the six kinds of virtuous practice required for skillfully serving the welfare of others and for the attainment of enlightenment. We must understand that bringing these virtuous qualities of our true nature into expression requires discipline, practice, and sincere cultivation. This is the path of the Bodhisattva - one who is dedicated to serving the highest welfare of all living beings with the awakened heart of unconditional love, skillful wisdom, and all-embracing compassion.

The Perfection of Joyous Effort / Enthusiastic Perseverance (Virya)

This Paramita is the enlightened quality of energy, vigor, vitality, endurance, diligence, enthusiasm, and continuous persistent effort. In order to practice the first three Paramitas

of generosity, virtuous conduct, and patience in the face of difficulties, we need the Paramita of joyous effort and perseverance. Joyous effort makes the previous Paramitas increase and become even more powerful influences in our life. The essence of this Paramita of joyous effort is the courage, energy, and endurance to continuously practice the Dharma and pursue the supreme goal of enlightenment for the highest good of all beings. From a feeling of deep compassion for the suffering of all sentient beings, we are urged to unfailing, persistent, and joyous effort. We use our body, speech, and mind to work ceaselessly and untiringly for the benefit of others, with no expectations for personal recognition or reward. We are always ready to serve others to the best of our ability. With joyous effort, devoted energy, and the power of sustained application, we practice the Dharma without getting sidetracked by anything or falling under the influence of laziness. Without developing Virya Paramita, we can become easily disillusioned and drop our practice when we meet with adverse conditions. The word Virya means persistence and perseverance in the face of disillusionment, energetically striving to attain the supreme goal of enlightenment. When we cultivate this type of diligence and perseverance we have a strong and healthy mind. We practice with persistent effort and enthusiasm because we realize the tremendous value and benefit of our Dharma practice. Firmly establishing ourselves in this Paramita, we also develop self-reliance, and this becomes one of our most prominent characteristics. With joyous effort and enthusiastic perseverance, we regard failure as simply another step toward success, danger as an inspiration for courage, and affliction as another opportunity to practice wisdom and compassion. To develop strength of character, self-reliance, and the next Paramita of concentration, is not an easy achievement, thus we need enthusiastic perseverance on the path.

How and why we practice the Paramitas.

We should learn to develop Bodhichitta in a twofold way: through our aspirations and through our actions. Aspiring Bodhichitta is our initial wish for all sentient beings to be liberated from the vast ocean of samsara's suffering. Action Bodhichitta requires that we first generate Aspiring Bodhichitta, and practice the Six Paramitas as a method to establish the two benefits of **1)** attaining Buddhahood for oneself and **2)** to be of ultimate benefit to others.

The way to practice aspiring Bodhichitta is to practice the Four Immeasurables. The way to practice action Bodhichitta is to practice the Paramitas.

Below is a short interpretation of the remaining of the six Mahayana Paramitas.

The Perfection of Generosity (Dana)

This paramita is the enlightened quality of generosity, charity, giving, and offering. The essence of this paramita is unconditional love, a boundless openness of heart and mind, a selfless generosity and giving which is completely free from attachment and expectation. From the very depths of our heart, we practice generously offering our love, compassion, time, energy, and resources to serve the highest welfare of all beings.

The Perfection of Ethics (Sila)

This paramita is the enlightened quality of virtuous and ethical behavior, morality, self-discipline, impeccability, personal integrity, honor, and harmlessness. The essence of this paramita is that through our love and compassion we do not harm others; we are virtuous and harmless in our thoughts, speech, and actions. This practice of ethical conduct is the very foundation for progressing in any practice of meditation and for attaining all higher realizations on the path. Our practice of generosity must always be supported by our practice of ethics; this ensures the lasting results of our generosity. We should perfect our conduct by eliminating harmful behavior and following the Bodhisattva precepts. We abstain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, gossip, greed, malice, and wrong views. Following these precepts or guidelines is not meant to be a burden or a restriction of our freedom. We follow these precepts so we can enjoy greater freedom, happiness, and security in our lives, because through our virtuous behavior we are no longer creating suffering for ourselves and others.

The Perfection of Patience (K'shanti)

This paramita is the enlightened quality of patience, tolerance, forbearance, and acceptance. The essence of this paramita of patience is the strength of mind and heart that enables us to face the challenges and difficulties of life without losing our composure and inner tranquility. We embrace and forbear adversity, insult, distress, and the wrongs of others with patience and tolerance, free of resentment, irritation, emotional reactivity, or retaliation. We cultivate the ability to be loving and compassionate in the face of criticism, misunderstanding, or aggression.

The Perfection of Concentration (Dhyana)

This paramita is the enlightened quality of concentration, meditation, contemplation, samadhi, mindfulness, and mental stability. Our minds have the tendency to be very distracted and restless, always moving from one thought or feeling to another. Because of this, our awareness stays fixated in the ego, in the surface layers of the mind and emotions, and we just keep engaging in the same habitual patterns of behavior. The perfection of concentration means training our mind so that it does what we want it to. We stabilize our mind and emotions by practicing meditation, by being mindful and aware in everything we do.

The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna)

This paramita is the enlightened quality of transcendental wisdom, insight, and the perfection of understanding. The essence of this paramita is the supreme wisdom, the highest understanding that living beings can attain—beyond words and completely free from the limitation of mere ideas, concepts, or intellectual knowledge. Beyond the limited confines of intellectual and conceptual states of mind, we experience the awakened heart-mind of wisdom and compassion - prajna paramita. Prajna paramita is the supreme wisdom (prajna) that knows emptiness and the interconnectedness of all things.

New Items have arrived in the IBMC
Dharma Shop!!

Check out the New items from
Viet Nam and Thailand!!

*** Spring Clearance Sale !! ***

Many items 75% off !!

limited time only!!

April Events

10 AM - 108 Bows

10:30 AM - Meditation

11 AM - Sunday Dharma Talks

4/4 - Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

4/11 - Ven. Havanpola Shanti

4/18 - Ven. S'raddha Karuna

4/25 - Ven. Karuna Dharma

Special Events

4/11 - Hanamatsuri

SATURDAY 4/24 - Ven. Karunas'

70th 'Big Birthday Bash' 1-5 PM

SUNDAY 4/25 - 12 PM Sunday Garden Tea Party

Meditation Times

Friday: 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

Sunday: 10:30 AM & 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

IBMC Classes

Mon. 7 PM - Tibetan Buddhism - Palmo Chöling Nunnery - Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Wed. 7:30 PM - Everyday Buddhism - Zendo Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

Sat. 9 AM - Kundalini Yoga - Palmo Chöling Nunnery - Led by Dharamjeet Kaur

IBMC eMail addresses

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IBMC Web Pages:

www.ibmc.info

www.karunadhharma.info

www.urbandharma.org

<http://palmoling.tripod.com>

<http://bsila.tripod.com>

Prison Dharma, a column devoted IBMC's Prison Outreach Ministry.

URGENT NOTICE: Prison Mail List Update

To All Students please send a post card or letter to IBMC with your CORRECT NAME, ID NUMBER, and please include your FACILITY NAME, even if you HAVE been receiving your guides Please send this information ASAP.

IBMC is receiving over half of the Monthly Guides back from the prisons - if you have not been receiving your guides, or know someone who is not, please send us your correct address. **Please Include Institution Name And Your Correct Prison And Bed Number.** Any Guides coming back will be removed from the mailing list.

Please begin send your writings, for inclusion in our new quarterly publication.

Submit any ideas you might like to see in The Guide, Send all letters to IBMC, 928 S. New Hampshire Ave., Los Angeles CA. 90006:Marked: **"Attn. Monthly Guide"**

If you have family or friends send anything through email, please remind them to mark the subject line as "Monthly Guide"

See You Along The Path...

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