



Most Venerable Bhikkhuni Shi Rurui

Symposium Session 1:
Education and Global Citizenship:
A Buddhist Perspective
Speaker

Brief Bio-data

Most Venerable Bhikkhuni Rurui, Vice President of the Buddhist Association of China (B.A.C.)

Most Ven. Bhiksuni Rurui is the Vice President of the Buddhist Association of China, Vice President of Shanxi Provincial Buddhist Association, President of Wutaishan Buddhist Academy for Bhikksuni and Abbot of Pushou Monastery in Wutaishan of Shanxi, China.

Most Ven. Bhikkuni Rurui was born in Taiyuan, Shanxi in 1959. She studied and received B.A. in Taiyuan Normal College in 1980 and later studied for further education in School of Chinese Language and Literature Beijing Normal University. When she was young, she once met with Most Ven. Bhikkuni Tong Yuan, former Vice President of both Shanxi Provincial Buddhist Association and Wutaishan Buddhist Association. Enlightened by Master Tong Yuan, she was resolved to dedicate to Buddhism and help all sentient beings be free from suffering.

In December, 1981, she became a novice and the disciple of Most Ven. Zhi Tong in Fahai Monastery of Shanxi, and then followed Most Ven. Bhikkuni Long Lian in Ai Daotang Monastery of Chengdu, Sichuan. In August, 1984, she went to Shang Huanyan Monastery in Datong, Shanxi, and took Bhikkhuni ordination in the Sangha group organized by Bhikhu and Bhikkhuni.



Adhering to the cultivation principle followed by Most Ven. Bhikkuni Tong Yuan that is Avatamsaka being the sect, Vinaya being the code of conduct and pure land being the destination, she reestablished Wutaishan Bhikkuni Academy for the unfulfilled wishes of the late Most Ven. Bhikkuni Tong Yuan in 1991.

For the past thirty years, Most Ven. Bhikkuni Rurui has been preaching Vinaya uninterruptedly and has set a good example by upholding precepts. In whatever favorable or unfavorable circumstances, she has been making offerings to the Triple Gem with sincerity and dedicating to sentient beings with compassion. Moreover, being self-disciplined with humility, she has kept up following Buddha's example in behavior.

In response to the development of Buddhism in China, she founded "Three Plus One" Sangha Education Project of Pushou Monastery with her rich experience in Sangha education and dharma propagation in 2006. The project aims to guide sentient beings in awakening to life and harmonizing the world. To this end, Buddhist cultivation is considered the root of Sangha education with education as an assurance, and charity as the skillful means. In this project, "Three" refers to three organizations: Pushou Monastery in Mt. Wutai, the center for cultivation; Dacheng Monastery, the institute for education; Bodhi Compassion Association (BCA), a charitable organization. "One" represents Qingtai Nursing Home, the charity undertaken by BCA. Thus Wutaishan Bhikkuni Academy, led by Most Ven. Bhikkuni Rurui, has started a new journey of Sangha education and dharma propagation.



Education and Global Citizenship: A Buddhist Perspective **I**deas and Practices on Sangha Education of **W**utaishan Bhiksuni Academy of China

*Most Venerable Bhikkhuni Shi Rurui
Vice President, the Buddhist Association of China
President, Wutaishan Bhiksuni Academy of China*

Most Venerables, Venerables and distinguished participants

It's my great honor to attend the 10th Anniversary of the celebrations on the United Nations' Day of Vesak by MCU in Bangkok, Thailand, and recall the merits and virtues of our fundamental teacher Sakyamuni Buddha together with you. My topic today is Education and Global Citizenship: A Buddhist Perspective. I'd like to share the ideas on Sangha Education of Wutaishan Bhiksuni Academy (WBA) with you. Please oblige me with your valuable comments.

As we all know, Buddha dharma is the best teachings preached by the Buddha to all sentient beings. It is like the sun enlightening every corner of the earth equally, regardless of the nation, race, religion, rich and poor. In order to help sentient beings get free from suffering and enjoy happiness, the great Sakyamuni Buddha chose to be a monastic after giving up both wealth and authority. After testifying the truth and eradicating the affliction, the Buddha preached dharma for 49 years so as to show sentient beings the way leading to true and eternal happiness.



After the Nirvana of Buddha, Sangha, one of the Triple Gems undertakes the mission of fulfilling the truth and awakening both self and others. Once leaving home, home was everywhere; once leaving families, all sentient beings were families. Being called the guest beyond secular world, the monastic is namely a veritable global citizen. Led by the aim of attaining Buddhahood and converting sentient beings, Sangha improve themselves with dharma and help sentient beings at the same time.

Following Buddha's footsteps with 20 years' practices, WBA has established the ideas on Sangha Education for the dream of world peace and sentient beings' blessings. This does meet the requirement of the times as well. The ideas aim to guide sentient beings in awakening to life and harmonizing the world. To this end, Buddhist cultivation is the root of Sangha education with education as an assurance, and charity as the skillful means.

First of all, Buddhist cultivation is the root of Sangha education. It means that the monastic ought to focus on practicing the holy path and entering into Nirvana. <<Sutras on the Buddha's Bequeathed Teaching >> says: "Pratimoksha is the root of proper freedom; By relying on these precepts, you will give rise to pure dhyana concentrations and reach the wisdom of the cessation of suffering". Also, <<Path of Purification>>, one of the main works in Theravada Tradition, highly praises of the benefits of Vinaya as followings: Vinaya is the root of all good qualities. Can such another stair be found that climbs, as Vinaya does, to heaven? or yet another gate to the City of Nirvana? Neither Ganges nor other rivers are able to wash out the stain in things that breathe here in the world, for only the water of Vinaya can wash out the stain of living beings.

In view of the teachings preached by Buddha and the venerable masters, WBA, in where Vinaya is preached every day, is always regarding Vinaya as a teacher and establishing a pure Sangha since 1991. Also, the academy especially attaches importance to the application of Vinaya in daily life. Following the precepts, one thousand members live together with Six Harmony. With preaching Vinaya half a month, taking summer retreat and pravara in every year, they dignify the image of monastic by learning good etiquettes, and put bad habits right to attain Buddhahood early. In addition, based on Vinaya, the novice should take sikkhamana ordination at first, and then take Bhikkuni ordination in the Sangha group organized by Bhikhu and Bhikkuni in succession, along with studying Vinaya for six years. In more than 20 years, following the cultivation guideline, Avatamsaka is the sect, Vinaya is the code of conduct and the pure land is the destination, WBA has enrolled the Bhikkuni coming from ten directions widely.

Secondly, education is the assurance of Sangha education. The Eight Great Awakenings Sutra says: Stupidity and ignorance are the causes of death and rebirth. Bodhisattvas apply themselves to study and erudition, constantly striving to increase their wisdom and refine their eloquence. Thus they are able to teach all sentient beings and bring them true and eternal happiness.



In order to propagate dharma and benefit sentient beings, we established the wide study department, and encourage the monastics to read every illuminating sutra as well as endeavor in Buddhist's missions. With Vinaya as the fundamental and required course in teaching, the elective courses are Mahayana Tradition, Tibetan Tradition, Theravada Tradition in Buddhism along with English, computer and so on. The department aims to cultivate the talents who have a good manner, and lay stress on both study and practice in dharma propagation, monastic management, academic research etc.

Thirdly, charity is the skillful means of Sangha education. Being global citizens, it is our obligation to create a pure land and offer love to sentient beings. We founded the Qing Tai Nursing Home with the help of many good affinities, so that more elderly people can fulfill their ideal of seniors being supported, seniors being taught, seniors being contributive, Patients being cured and Pure Land being found. The home aims to help and care for seniors, orphans, widows and the disadvantaged, fulfill filial duty on behalf of their families as well as share the government's burden. Owing to the monastic's care and preaching, the aged gained new insight into life. With lessening the fear of age, illness and death, they vow to be reborn in the Pure Land of Amitabha, the place of utmost bliss.

The sutra says that Buddha dharma dwells in the secular world, and ought to be testified in living. WBA has always attached importance to the dharma propagation for years. By means of Buddhist lecture, training for the layman, Buddhist series books and dharma propagation on the internet and so on, more and more people have established a healthy and dedicating outlook to life.

The ideas on Sangha education of WBA is the guidance on Bhiksuni's conduct, in terms of repaying the grace of parents, teachers, homeland and all sentient beings. It embodies the wisdom and compassion of Buddha, and takes the mission of the monastic. It goes that April showers bring May flowers. We ought to know about and repay the favor. Praying that WBA will offer more wisdom and compassion for the world peace and sentient beings' blessings, with the aiding of the Triple Gem and the support from all Buddhists.

At the end of my speech, let's pray for the world together.

May all sentient beings own the wisdom of Buddha,

Let the wisdom bring the world harmony.

May all sentient beings own the compassion of Buddha,

Let the compassion bring the world peace and blessings.

