



UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE

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UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE MAKES HISTORIC ORDINATION OF FOUR WOMEN AS BUDDHIST NUNS



The Uganda Buddhist Centre has today ordained four women as Buddhist nuns. The ordained women are Mirembe Anita (Metta), Nazziwa Shadia (Santi), Damali Bakanasa (Karuna), and Nakiganda Harriet (Mudita). This marks a special moment for the centre, as this is the first-time women have been ordained as nuns since 2008 when Bhante Buddharakkhita ordained his mother.

Anita joined the Uganda Buddhist Centre in 2018 as one of the women participating in the women empowerment program. She later was employed to cook at the compassion care center, our orphan feeding program. Nakiganda is one of the people who help in the cleaning of our compound, she also helps in taking care of the orphans.

Shadia and Damalie come from the surrounding village who have been occasionally participating in our events.

Before the ordination, Bhante Buddharakkhita shared insights with the women, emphasizing the profound commitment they were making. The ceremony, which involves taking precepts, signifies a commitment to abstain from actions that cause harm, such as killing and stealing, and to cultivate virtues like generosity and truthfulness.

Bhante also explained the significance of each precept, highlighting the connection between faith (Saddha) and wisdom (Panna). He emphasized the importance of aligning one's beliefs with wisdom, ensuring a harmonious and compassionate journey in their new roles as nuns.

The ordination ceremony also included a discus-

sion on leading a simple life, refraining from excessive beautification, and focusing on meditation and self-discipline. The new novices were encouraged to embrace a lifestyle that supports their spiritual journey and contributes to the well-being of others.



The newly ordained nuns





BUDDHIST PEACE SCHOOL PREPARES FOUR STUDENTS FOR NATIONAL PRIMARY LEAVING EXAMINATIONS

In November 2023, the Buddhist Peace School reported the preparation of these four exceptional students for their first-ever participation in the national examinations. This January, the results have not only met but exceeded expectations. Two of the students passed with first grades, achieving outstanding total aggregates of 7 and 10, while the other two students secured second grades with aggregates of 13 and 14. This achievement is particularly noteworthy as it marks the first time pupils from the Buddhist Peace School participate in such national academic assessments. Out of the four pupils, three are novice monks and one is a girl from the neighborhood.

The success of these four pupils in the PLE is a demonstration to the holistic educational philosophy embraced by the Buddhist Peace School. Beyond academic excellence, the school prioritizes the holistic development of each student, nurturing their intellectual curiosity, moral integrity, and emotional resilience.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, there is a profound sense of pride and gratitude for the collective effort that has contributed to this success. From our dedicated teachers who guide and inspire their students to the supportive parents who entrust their children's education to the school, every member of the Buddhist Peace School community has played a vital role in shaping the future of these young scholars.

Looking ahead, the Buddhist Peace School remains steadfast in its mission of bringing forth knowledge and wisdom by way of training the heart, hands, head and promoting health and happiness. The School reaffirms its commitment to fostering not only academic excellence but also holistic development, preparing young minds to navigate the complexities of the world with compassion, wisdom, and integrity.



EMBODYING COMPASSION IN OUR EVERYDAY LIFE



As a student of the Dhamma and a participant in the Uganda Buddhist Centre's Dhamma Study program, I have had the privilege of exploring into the core teachings of Buddhism as presented by the Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi. His eloquent discourse on the interplay of theory (*pariyatti*) and practice (*patipatti*) within the path of Dhamma has been enlightening, particularly his emphasis on the experiential wisdom (*bhavana mayam panna*) that the Buddha encouraged.

The exposition on the qualities of the Buddha offered a profound perspective. The qualities of the Buddha, as explained by Bhikkhu Bodhi, present a dual perspective of a Buddha's role. The first is the functional aspect: a Buddha, through immense effort and without guidance, rediscovers the noble eightfold path, moving from the throes of *dukkha*, suffering, to *Nibbana*, deliverance. This humanization of the Buddha's journey makes the path relatable and attainable. The second perspective is the Bud-

dha's state of being, having eradicated all kilesas—defilements—and embodying great compassion (*mahakaruna*) and wisdom.

Of all, compassion or *karuna* in the Pali language, resonates deeply with my own life experiences. Compassion is more than a mere feeling; it's the empathetic vibration of the heart when confronted with the suffering of others, prompting the will to relieve it. We can witness this in the tender care of a mother for her child, the selfless aid extended by strangers in times of disaster, and in the everyday acts of kindness that knit the fabric of community. Compassion is the gentle hand that soothes pain, the understanding gaze that acknowledges struggle, and the support that upholds humanity.

The Buddha's embodiment of compassion was inconceivable. Born as Prince Siddhartha, he was moved by the inevitable suffering of life—old age, sickness, and death. His consequent

quest for enlightenment was driven by the urge to find a cure not just for his own existential questions but for the suffering of all sentient beings. His teachings on the four divine states of mind—loving-kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), appreciative joy (muditha), and equanimity (upekkha)—offer a blueprint for harmonious living. The Buddha's life stories abound with instances of his compassion, from his discourse with the anguished serial killer Angulimala, whom he transformed with compassion, to his extension of the Dhamma to all, regardless of caste, creed, or status.

In today's fragmented world, the call for compassion is more relevant and urgent than ever. It's an invitation to each of us to kindle the flame of karuna, to look beyond

our differences and see the shared vulnerability that make us human. We are all interconnected.

I implore everyone to let compassion be your compass and nurture the seed of kindness in every encounter of your life. It could be as simple as listening to a friend in distress, offering our seat to someone in need, or volunteering for a cause that relieves suffering. Let our actions echo the Buddha's infinite compassion, with the understanding that every act of kindness, no matter how small, reverberates through the cosmos. This way, you are growing your own parami of compassion.

May you cultivate and embody compassion for the wellbeing of all sentient beings!

Article by Andrew Bakaki



SUPPORTING UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE

UBC activities are made possible by many supporters from around the world. Therefore, we are eternally grateful Buddhist Global Relief of USA, Huong Tu Lovingkindness Foundation USA, Buddhist Fellowship of Singapore, Tan Teo Charitable Foundation, and all our beloved donors from around the world.

UBC still needs your support:

To maintain resident teachers/monastics

To maintain the Temple

To build monks accommodation facilities

To construct and operation of Buddhist Secondary School

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3. Please take a photocopy of the check and send it via email:

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