



One Humanity, Many Faiths

An Interfaith Summit for
Peace and Harmony in Australia and the Asia-Pacific Region

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Brisbane City Hall, Queensland, Australia

www.interfaith-harmony.org



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One Humanity, Many Faiths

The Vision

Venerable Master Chin Kung established the Pure Land Learning College to serve two purposes. The first was to provide a good learning environment for students to learn and practice Pure Land Buddhism and the teachings of the sages. The second was to train Dharma propagators and protectors.

Underlying these objectives is the awareness that they cannot be accomplished in a world torn apart by selfishness and anger. Understanding this, it is our hope that “One Humanity, Many Faiths” will help foster the seeds for a harmonious world where all beings live together peacefully with one another and the environment. Such a world is similar to one described in the *Infinite Life Sutra*:

The land and people will be enveloped in peace.

The sun and moon will shine clear and bright.

Wind and rain will appear accordingly and there will be no disasters.

Nations will be prosperous and there will be no need for soldiers or weapons.

People will abide by morality and accord with laws.

They will be courteous and humble and everyone will be content, without injustices.

There will be no thefts or violence.

The strong will not dominate the weak and everyone will get their fair share.

It is with such a peaceful place in mind, that the regional summit “One Humanity, Many Faiths” was conceived. It is hoped that the summit will accomplish two objectives:

- (1) The publication of a book of teachings from religious scriptures, compiled by scholars of diverse faiths. The teachings will represent values that are shared by faiths and ethical teachings. It is hoped that on seeing the commonality of the values, readers, teachers and students, and those in positions of leadership will use the book to not just teach others of the shared values but also to use those shared values to help nurture mutual understanding in their communities and among nations in the region.
- (2) A sharing of successful experiences by members of diverse faiths and ethical teachings, whether these successes incorporated more than one faith or not. It is envisaged that there will be an increased cooperation in the building of peaceful communities and nations in the region, cooperation that cuts across standard boundaries of all sorts. Such cooperation could occur in multiple areas or arenas, such as social, economic, political, cultural, and spiritual.

By ourselves, it may seem like that there is so much to do. We feel overwhelmed when we see that we are only one in a sea of billions. But all the great movements in history were begun by an idea in one mind and the dedication of a small group of people. The great faiths and ethical teachings of the world are prime examples.

Working in isolation, we can easily forget that others also wish for peace and happiness. Individually, it is impossible to bring about the changes all of us wish for. But at this summit and back home in our communities and nations, we are no longer just individuals. As history shows us, one dedicated person can make a difference when enough other people are equally committed to the same cause. And with that commitment, a world of justice, integrity, and harmony will become a reality. Our shared reality.



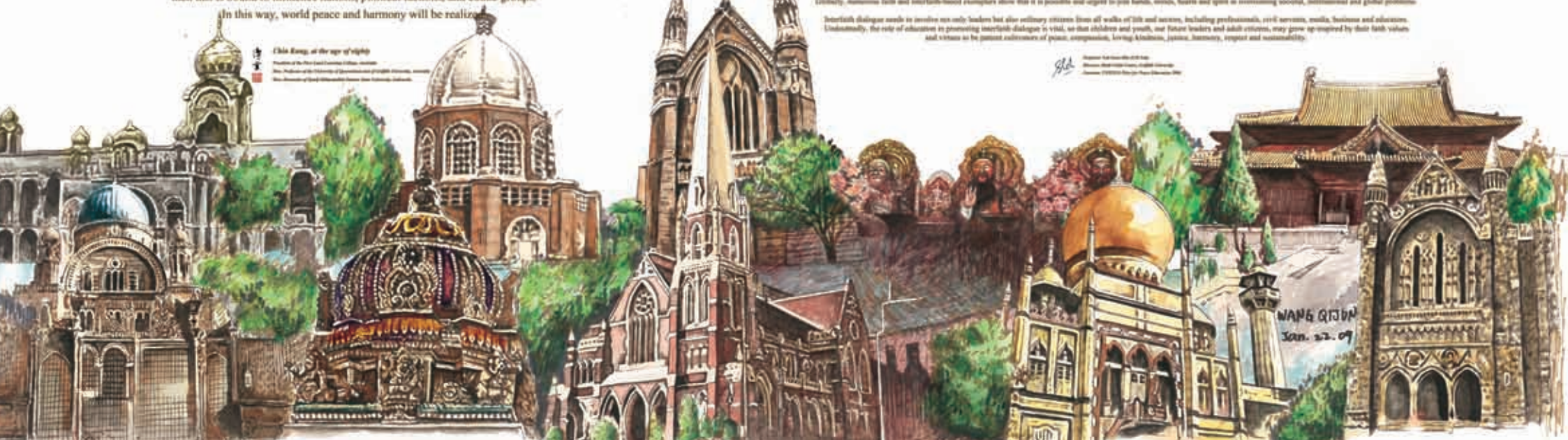


Why do Religions Need to Cooperate with One Another?

In order to achieve social stability and world peace, there must be impartiality and harmonious living among nations, among political factions, among ethnic groups, and among religions.

It is not easy to accomplish this. In fact, it is extremely difficult. But when we begin by focusing on religious cooperation it will be easier.

If religions can come together and cooperate with one another, then this is bound to influence nations, political factions, and ethnic groups. In this way, world peace and harmony will be realized.



Seeds of Interfaith Dialogue, Fruits of Harmony and Peace

Worldwide, pervasive conflicts at local, national, international and global levels continue to inflict suffering on billions of people. Wars, armed conflicts, hunger, diseases, hijacking, human rights violations, discrimination and environmental destruction all pose major challenges to enhancing the well-being of humanity and our planet.

One serious conflict area involves different faiths and cultures, causing hatred and tragic bloodshed. Religious extremism has also facilitated terrorism and even violence while some leaders have manipulated religion for narrow political ends. The complex social, economic and political issues of interfaith and intra-religious conflicts clearly need to be addressed.

However, there are increasing signs of hope as ordinary people, communities, institutions, organizations and movements seek to resolve these conflicts through peaceful and nonviolent strategies.

Increasingly, an influential actor in fostering peace and harmony has been the interfaith dialogue movement, which seeks to promote understanding, respect and reconciliation among diverse faiths within and across nations. Interfaith dialogue deepens mutual understanding, harmony and an openness to learning from the wisdom of others.

While acknowledging differences in beliefs or doctrines, interfaith dialogue reveals that faiths uphold many common values and principles.

This common ground of values in turn provides a strong foundation and motivation for personal and social action towards building a more peaceful world for all humanity. Globally, numerous faiths and interfaith-based exemplars show that it is possible and urgent to join hands, minds, hearts and spirit in overcoming societal, international and global problems.

Interfaith dialogue needs to involve not only leaders but also ordinary citizens from all walks of life and sectors, including professionals, civil servants, media, business and education. Undoubtedly, the role of education in promoting interfaith dialogue is vital, so that children and youth, our future leaders and adult citizens, may grow up inspired by their faith values and virtues to be peace ambassadors of peace, compassion, loving-kindness, justice, harmony, respect and sustainability.

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Chin Kung, at the age of eighty

President of the Pure Land Learning College, Australia

Hon. Professor of the University of Queensland and of Griffith University, Australia

Hon. Doctorate of Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic State University, Indonesia

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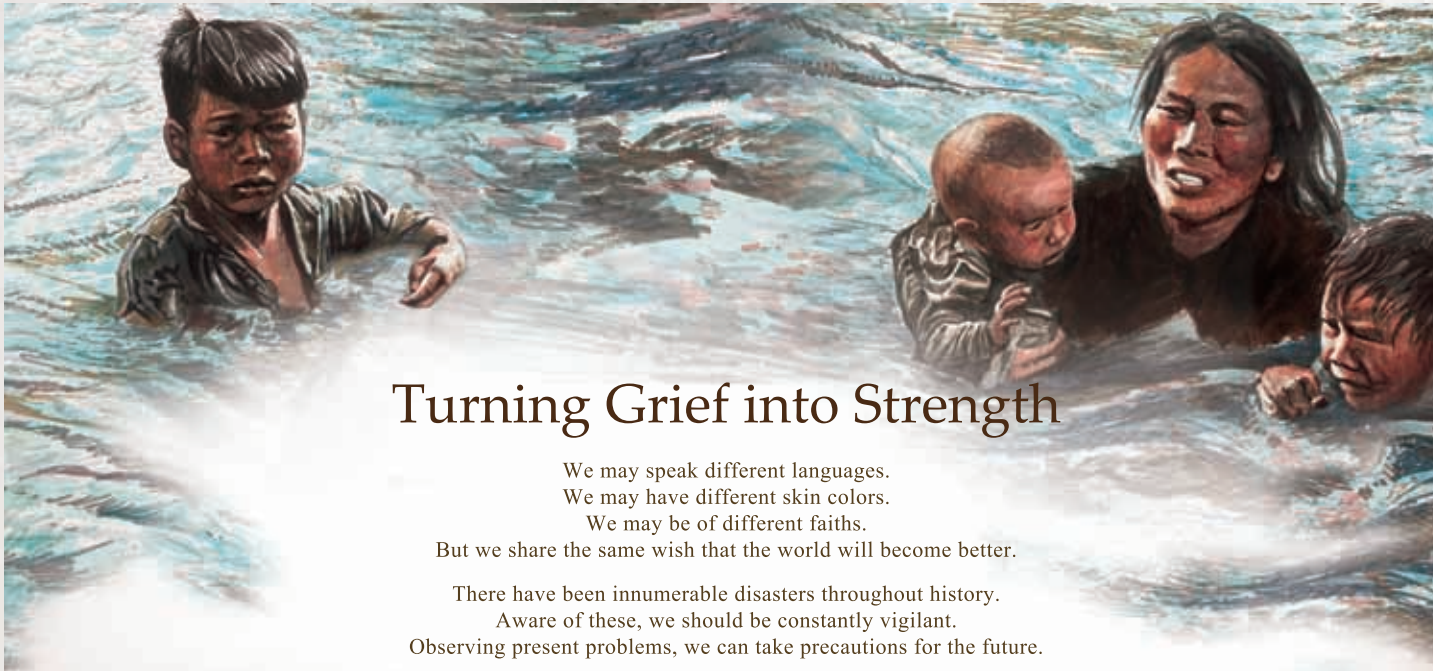
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*Professor Toh Swee-Hin (S.H.Toh)
Director, Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University
Laureate, UNESCO Prize for Peace Education 2000*





Turning Grief into Strength

We may speak different languages.

We may have different skin colors.

We may be of different faiths.

But we share the same wish that the world will become better.

There have been innumerable disasters throughout history.

Aware of these, we should be constantly vigilant.

Observing present problems, we can take precautions for the future.

Looking forward, as citizens of this world
everyone can propagate the teachings of love,
replace sorrow with friendship, and transform grief into action.

Editor's note:

1. The events are listed chronologically. As it is impossible to list or describe in detail every natural disaster and man-made calamity occurred in history, only those that incurred heavy casualties or affected a wide area are chosen as examples.
2. The death tolls may not be accurate and are for reference only. Those that cannot be estimated are not listed.



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Infectious Diseases

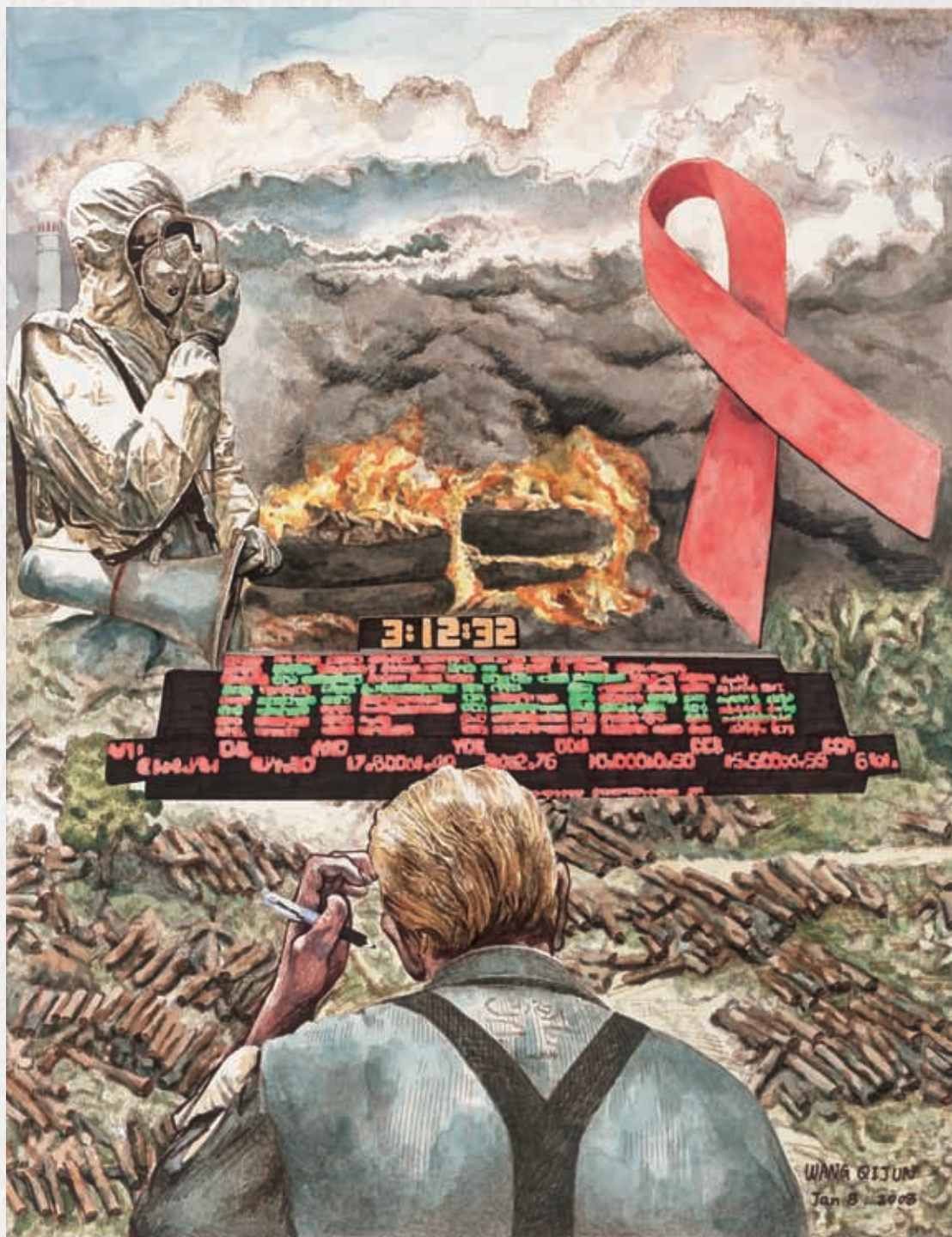
Date		Events	Brief Description
1	165 ~ 180	Antonine Plague, Roman Empire	An epidemic that spread throughout the Roman Empire. The disease, possibly smallpox, was carried back by soldiers who had fought in the Near East. It is believed the mortality rate ranged as high as 15 percent.
2	542	Justinian Plague	The first plague pandemic raced through the Eastern Mediterranean. In the four months it raged in Constantinople, thousands died daily. The plague remained endemic, recurring through the middle of the 8 th century.
3	1300s	Black Death	The second plague pandemic was one of the deadliest in history. Coming from Asia, it spread through most of Europe where at least 25 million people, one third of the population, died. In some areas as much as two-thirds to three-fourths of the population fell victim to plague. It remained endemic, resurfacing through the 18 th century.
4	1519 ~ 1979	Smallpox, The Americas	Believed by many to have been transmitted to the Americas in 1519. While population numbers and mortality rates are unknown, it is known that a combination of smallpox, pneumonia, and famine can result in mortality rates as high as 95 percent. Over the centuries, millions of native Americans succumbed to the terrible disease.
5	1600 ~ Present	Malaria	The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that an estimated 247 million cases led to nearly 881 thousand deaths in 2006. Although malaria is preventable and curable, even today a child dies of malaria every 30 seconds. The majority of those who die are infants, young children, and pregnant women.
6	1618 ~ 1648	Typhus, Europe	As typhus, plague, and starvation raged, an estimated 10 million people died. Although improved treatment and sanitation has greatly lessened the incidences of typhus, it still occurs today in South America, Africa, and Asia.
7	1789 ~ 1890	Smallpox, Australia	In 1788, smallpox was introduced into the indigenous population with the first arrival of Europeans. It is estimated that from 50 to 90 percent of Sydney Cove's indigenous population died in the epidemic. From Sydney, smallpox spread throughout Australia's indigenous population, which was estimated to be from 600 to 800 thousand.
8	1817 ~ 1821	First Cholera Pandemic, Asia	The first Cholera pandemic occurred in Asia where it had been festering for centuries and quickly spread to the Near East. There have been six more declared cholera pandemics. It is believed we are in the eighth, which began in 1991 in Peru and which by 2005 had been reported in 120 countries.
9	1855 ~ 1922	Bubonic Plague, China and India	The third, and last, plague pandemic occurred in Asia where previous smaller outbreaks had occurred. Worldwide, it resulted in more than 10 million deaths. The cause was found to be infected rats. Today, with modern medicine and pest management, it is estimated that deaths from Bubonic plague have been reduced to about 200 a year.
10	1896 ~ 1906	First Sleeping Sickness Epidemic, Sub-Saharan Africa	After the ten-year epidemic, there were two more major epidemics in 1920 and 1970. Transmitted by the tsetse fly, sleeping sickness is endemic in an area covering about 36 countries where it is believed that about 50 to 70 thousand people are infected.

11	1918 ~ 1919	Spanish Flu	Considered the most devastating pandemic in recorded history. In just a matter of months, one-quarter of the United States and one-fifth of the world were infected. It is believed that 25 million people died worldwide during the pandemic. There is still no cure for influenza.
12	1957 ~ 1958	Asian Flu	Caused by the same virus that had caused the Spanish flu. After the Asian flu disappeared in 1968, cases of the Hong Kong flu began to be reported. In 1997, avian influenza occurred in poultry in Hong Kong and isolated cases have occurred since. Avian flu and human flu viruses can join and rapidly mutate into new sub-types.
13	1976 ~ Present	Eboli Hemorrhagic Fever, Africa	Mortality rates for the two strains in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo range from 25 to 90 percent. Since the Ebola virus was discovered in 1976, there have been about 1850 cases with over 1200 deaths. No approved vaccine or treatment is yet available.
14	1980	Eradication of Smallpox	After beginning an aggressive worldwide vaccination program in 1967, the WHO certified in 1980 that smallpox had been eradicated.
15	1981 ~ Present	HIV-AIDS	UNAIDS and the WHO estimate that there are now 40 million people living with HIV. An estimated 25 million people have died since the diagnosis of the first case in 1981. There is no known vaccine or cure for HIV-AIDS.

Human-made Devastation

Date		Events	Brief Description
1	1939 ~ 1972	DDT	As insects became resistant to DDT, it quickly lost its effectiveness. Also, as DDT remained in the insect's bodies, which were eaten by animals, the poison worked its way up the food chain. DDT is now even being found in the Antarctic's penguins. In 1972, due to public outcry, the United States severely restricted DDT use.
2	1958 ~ 1962	Thalidomide	Thalidomide was prescribed to pregnant women in over 40 countries to combat morning sickness. Soon found to cause malformations in fetuses, it was taken off the market in 1962. An estimated 5 to 10 thousand infants were born with deformities. Similar deformities are now appearing in second generation babies.
3	1932 ~ 1968	Minamata Disease, Japan	In 1908 Chisso Corporation opened a chemical plant in Minamata. In 1956, eight young girls were diagnosed with an unknown neurological syndrome later called Minamata Disease. It was caused by mercury poisoning. Since 1932, the mercury had been discharged into the bay in which seaweed had long since stopped growing and dead fish were seen floating. In 1968, Chisso ceased dumping mercury. As of 2001, 1784 of the 2,265 victims had died.
4	1957	Kyshtym Disaster, Russia	A failure in a storage tank at the Mayak Chemical Combine, which produced plutonium for nuclear weapons, exploded and spewed radioactive waste over a 15 thousand square kilometer area. As a result 217 villages were annihilated and 270 thousand people, their children, and grandchildren became nuclear victims.

5	1958	Great Sparrow Campaign, China	To eliminate sparrows that were thought to eat grain, the Chinese were instructed to kill all the sparrows. Too late, the scientists discovered the sparrows' primary food was harmful insects. With 4 million sparrows gone, the locust population exploded. With this and other factors combined, the country experienced the Great Chinese Famine of 1959 to 1961 in which from 20 to 38 million Chinese died of starvation.
6	1984	Bhopal Disaster, India	A toxic gas leak at an insecticide plant owned by the Indian subsidiary of Union Carbide caused a deadly cloud of 45 tons of lethal gas to float over Bhopal, home to almost a million people. Even as tens of thousands of people tried to flee the city, thousands died instantly from the gas. It is now estimated that from 15 to 20 thousand people died in Bhopal and half a million survivors suffered ongoing problems from the toxic gas.
7	1986	Sandoz Chemical Spill Basel, Switzerland	A fire in the Sandoz chemical plant resulted in 30 tons of chemicals being discharged into the Rhine, the most important waterway in western Europe. Within one week, an estimated half a million fish died. Public outcry led to the passage of the Rhine Action Programme of 1987.
8	1997	Southeast Asian haze	Fires in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Malaysia caused the haze. Over 200 thousand people were hospitalized, and more than 70 million were affected. An estimated 12.4 million acres were burned. One of the world's most biologically diverse ecosystems lost hundreds of species and thousands more remain at risk.
9	2008	Sanlu Infant Formula Scandal, China	Four babies died and approximately 290 thousand were diagnosed with symptoms including kidney stones, rare acute renal shutdown, enlarged kidneys, and vomiting. The babies had been given milk powder to which melamine had been added to artificially boost protein levels.
10	Ongoing	Destruction of the Amazon Rainforests	The Amazon Rainforest, the largest humid tropical forest in the world, is being destroyed by logging and fires. Fewer trees means less carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere. To compound that, more carbon dioxide is released from the fires that destroy trees and biomass. Additionally, the two-thirds of the Earth's species who live only in the Amazon are at increasing risk of extinction.
11	Ongoing	The Disappearing Aral Sea, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan	What was the world's fourth largest lake 40 years ago is disappearing. As rivers replenishing the sea were diverted for agriculture, it began to dry up. Airborne salt from exposed sea beds and agricultural chemicals are now reducing air quality. The throat cancer rate is 9 times the world average and respiratory illnesses are increasing. The fishing and canning industries are gone. Of the 97 species that lived in or around the Aral, few remain.
12	Ongoing	Global warming	Rising temperatures have led to accelerated melting of ice caps, a rise in sea levels, and an increase in climate anomalies that are even now causing further damage to the environment.
13	Ongoing	Salinity, Australia	Due to the use of European agricultural techniques, the balance among soil, salt, and water has been seriously disrupted. Salinity has been called the biggest environmental threat to Australia in the 21st century.
14	Ongoing	Global financial crisis	After the United States subprime mortgage crisis in 2007, several financial crises occurred in succession around the world in 2008. With credit tightening, corporate bankruptcies, and even large corporations laying off employees, people around the world are impacted financially.
15	Ongoing	Food insecurity	Due to food shortages caused by floods, droughts, the use of crops for biofuels, global supplies at 25-year lows, and speculation, 2008 saw food shortages around the world and food riots in 37 countries.



Climatic Disasters

Date		Events	Brief Description
1	1845 ~ 1849	Great Potato Famine, Ireland	A blight caused by an airborne fungus infected potatoes, which were the one crop that sustained the poverty-stricken Irish. As famine swept across the country, an estimated one million people died from famine and related illnesses. As many as one and a half million are believed to have fled the country.
2	1895 ~ Present	Heat waves, Australia	Records going back to 1895 report that a total of 2177 people have died as a result of heat waves. The one that occurred in 1895-1896 in southern Australia in which 437 people died, was one of the ten worst heat waves in recorded history.
3	1984 ~ 1985	Famine, Ethiopia	Two famines, one in the north and the other in the south, occurred simultaneously. Drought, global dimming, and civil unrest contributed to the famine in which the death toll was estimated to be over 1 million.
4	1991	Bangladesh Cyclone	A cyclone with a wind speed of 240 km (150 miles) per hour caused a 5 meter high storm surge and widespread flooding. An estimated 140,000 people were killed, and as many as 10 million became homeless.
5	2000	Mozambique Flood	The flooding was caused by heavy rainfall followed by a cyclone. Approximately 800 people were killed, 2 million were affected, and 250 thousand were homeless. About 90 per cent of the country's functioning irrigation infrastructure was damaged. It was Mozambique's worst flood in 50 years.
6	2002 ~ Present	Drought, Australia	In 2002, Australia experienced its lowest March to November rainfall in over 50 years as well as record maximum daytime temperatures. While drought in Australia has long been associated with El Nino weather patterns, the 20 year pattern of rising temperatures is being attributed to global warming.
7	2003	Heat Wave, Europe	An anticyclone over Europe caused record high temperatures that were 20-30 percent above normal. The heat wave persisted for two months and was estimated to have caused 30 thousand deaths. Crops died, glaciers in Switzerland shrank causing rock slides, and fires raged across Europe.
8	2005	Hurricane Katrina, Southeastern USA	With winds over 270 km (170 miles) per hour, Katrina slammed into Louisiana. About 1800 people died and 1 million people were displaced. At New Orleans, a 26 feet high storm surge broke through the levees flooding 80 percent of the city. Katrina was the most expensive natural disaster in U.S. history.

9	2006	Dust Storms, Northern China	Through the 20 th century, northwestern China experienced dust storms on average every 30 years. After 1990 there was one a year. On the night of April 16 th , during the eighth dust storm of the year and the second in one week, an estimated 336 thousand tons of dust fell on Beijing. The dust storm moved east over Japan and in a matter of days crossed over North America.
10	2007	South Asia Floods	It is believed that climate change had caused the monsoon season to begin earlier than usual. Heavy rainfall, flooding, and mudslides affected an estimated 10 million families in India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. UNICEF called it “the worst flooding in living memory.”
11	2008	Snowstorm, Afghanistan	The UN reported that the snowstorm, avalanches, and bitterly cold temperatures resulted in the death of 800 people. More than 170 thousand people were treated for pneumonia, and 730 houses were destroyed in the worst snowstorm in 2 decades.
12	2008	Blizzards and Ice Storms, Southern China	Seventeen provinces were hit by the worst winter storms in 50 years. Utilities and transportation networks were paralyzed during the peak travel period of the year. Over 200 thousand homes were destroyed and an estimated 67 million people were affected.
13	2008	Cyclone Nargis, Myanmar	It has been estimated by relief agencies that somewhere between 100-300 thousand people may have died, and more than 2 million left homeless as the densely populated Irrawaddy Delta, the area’s largest rice producer, was flooded with the storm surge.
14	2008	Floods, Kenya	In December, Kenya Red Cross estimated that persistent rains and mudslides had killed at least 114 people and affected more than 700 thousand others in a six-week period that began in October. With the flooding of sanitation facilities, health officials are warning of likely typhus and cholera outbreaks.

Geological Disasters

Date		Events	Brief Description
1	1202	Earthquake, Middle East	The shock was felt from Lesser Armenia to Egypt and from Sicily to Iraq. The ensuing tsunami and aftershocks caused extensive damage in Syria and to a lesser extent in Cyprus, with great loss of life.

2	1556	Shaanxi Great Earthquake, China	This magnitude 8 earthquake is estimated to have resulted in 830 thousand deaths making it the most destructive in terms of lives lost.
3	1755	Lisbon Earthquake, Portugal	Thousands rushed out of their homes where they were trapped by fires or to the seacoast where they drowned in the tsunami which came in three successive waves. Buildings that withstood the earthquake were destroyed by the fires and tsunami. There were 60 thousand deaths. Lisbon was destroyed.
4	1815	Eruption of Mount Tambora, Indonesia	The biggest eruption in recorded history. As the volcanic column rose 40 km high, it then fell back burying Sumbawa Island. Of the 12,000 residents, 26 survived. Ashes fell as far as 1300 km away. The following year was called “The year with no summer.” As millions of tons of sulfur dioxide entered the stratosphere, a brief period of global cooling took place. Daytime temperatures were close to normal, but frost appeared at night. Drought and famine killed thousands worldwide.
5	1923	Great Kanto Earthquake, Japan	One of the world’s most destructive earthquakes, it struck Tokyo and Yokohama in the Kanto region and caused fires, a tsunami, and mudslides. About 100 thousand people died, and at least 47 thousand were injured.
6	1970	Chimbote Earthquake, Peru	The magnitude 7.9 earthquake and the avalanches that followed it struck the western coast of Peru. It was estimated that at least 70 thousand were dead or missing. Tsunami waves were observed as far away as Japan.
7	1976	Moro Gulf Tsunami, Philippines	As a result of the earthquake and tsunami, over 8 thousand persons were killed or missing and presumed dead, 10 thousand were injured, and 90 thousand were left homeless.
8	1988	Spitak Earthquake, Armenia	Spitak, a town with a population of 30 thousand, was “erased from the face of the earth,” in the words of one Soviet television commentator. Almost half a million families were left homeless in the midst of winter.
9	1995	Great Hanshin Earthquake, Japan	More than 5,500 people were killed, over 26 thousand were injured, and about 300 thousand people were evacuated to shelters. Over 200 thousand buildings were damaged or destroyed.
10	2003	Bam Earthquake, Iran	As a result of the magnitude 6.6 earthquake, about 30 thousand people were killed, 30 thousand injured, and 85 percent of buildings were damaged or destroyed.
11	2004	Sumatra-Andaman Islands Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami	A total 227,898 people were killed or missing and presumed dead. Almost 2 million people were displaced in fourteen countries in South Asia and East Africa. The tsunami caused more casualties than any other in recorded history.
12	2008	Sichuan Earthquake, China	The earthquake’s magnitude was 7.9. Over 70 thousand people died, 18 thousand were missing and presumed dead, and over 370 thousand people were injured. More than 45 million people were affected. Over 5 million buildings collapsed, and another 21 million buildings were damaged.



Numbers tell a Story

We must learn to trust and love one another

It is estimated that approximately 85 percent of the world's population, over 5.8 billion people, are religious adherents.

There are over 5000 ethnic groups in the world. The numbers of people in each group can vary greatly. Some groups are comprised of over 100 million people while others are comprised of only a few dozen people.

At the end of 2006, Earth's total human population was almost 6.6 billion. It is estimated that by 2012, the population will exceed 7 billion.

Humanity can prevent disasters from occurring

The "World report on road traffic injury prevention" published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2004, reported that "in 2002, an estimated 1.18 million people died from road traffic crashes: an average of 3242 deaths per day. Road traffic injuries accounted for 2.1% of all global deaths, making them the eleventh leading cause of global deaths.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported in "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008" that "FAO's most recent estimates put the number of hungry people at 923 million in 2007, an increase of more than 80 million since the 1990-92 base period."

The "World report on child injury prevention," published jointly by the WHO and UNICEF reported that "In 2004, approximately 950,000 children under the age of 18 years died of an injury. The majority of these child injuries were the result of road traffic collisions, drowning, burns (fire or scalds), falls or poisoning. These five categories, classified as unintentional injuries, make up 60 percent of all child injury deaths."

It is estimated that in the 20th century, 167 to 188 million people (military and civilians) died due to war and oppression.

The “WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2008,” estimated that tobacco “is a risk factor for six of the eight leading causes of deaths in the world. 100 million deaths were caused by tobacco in the 20th century. Tobacco use kills 5.4 million people a year - an average of one person every six seconds - and accounts for one in 10 adult deaths worldwide. Tobacco kills a third to half of all people who use it, on average 15 years prematurely.”

The International Labour Organization (ILO), a UN agency, estimated in 2004 that conservatively “more than 2 million people die from work-related causes every year...Of these occupational deaths, almost 350,000 occur during work accidents while the rest are due to work-related illnesses...[A]n estimated 22,000 children of school age die at work every year.”

The “World Drug Report 2008,” published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), estimates that “Some 208 million people, or 4.9% of the global population age 15-64, have consumed illicit drugs at least once in the last 12 months...[I]llicit drugs [kill] around 200,000 persons a year worldwide.” In its 2005 report, the UNODC estimated the retail value of the drug trade at US\$321bn.

According to “Compiling and Comparing International Crime Statistics,” a report by the UN released in 2001, Denmark had a crime rate of 8848.01, per 100 thousand people, Belgium 8597.66, Canada 8572.50, Germany 7736, France 6941, USA 4161, and Japan 2200.

In 2008, the WHO reported that “Air pollution is a major environmental risk to health and is estimated to cause approximately 2 million premature deaths worldwide per year. More than half of the burden from air pollution on human health is borne by people in developing countries.”



Will there never be an end to war?

Whether waging war near or far,
in ancient times with spears
or now when the threat of nuclear annihilation is very real,
the causes of war are complicated.

They range from racial conflict and religious disharmony
to struggles for the throne, colonization, and peasant revolts.

The flame of war has been undying,
rising and falling, here and there, for thousands of years.

From ethnic conflict,
which has resulted in the tragic death of millions,
to world wars,
which resulted in the devastation of tens of millions of families.
Regardless of who is declared the victor and who the loser,
hasn't everyone lost?

When will we see the end of war?

.....

If there is one more person seeking peace,
then there will be one less person perpetuating war,
and war will end through love.

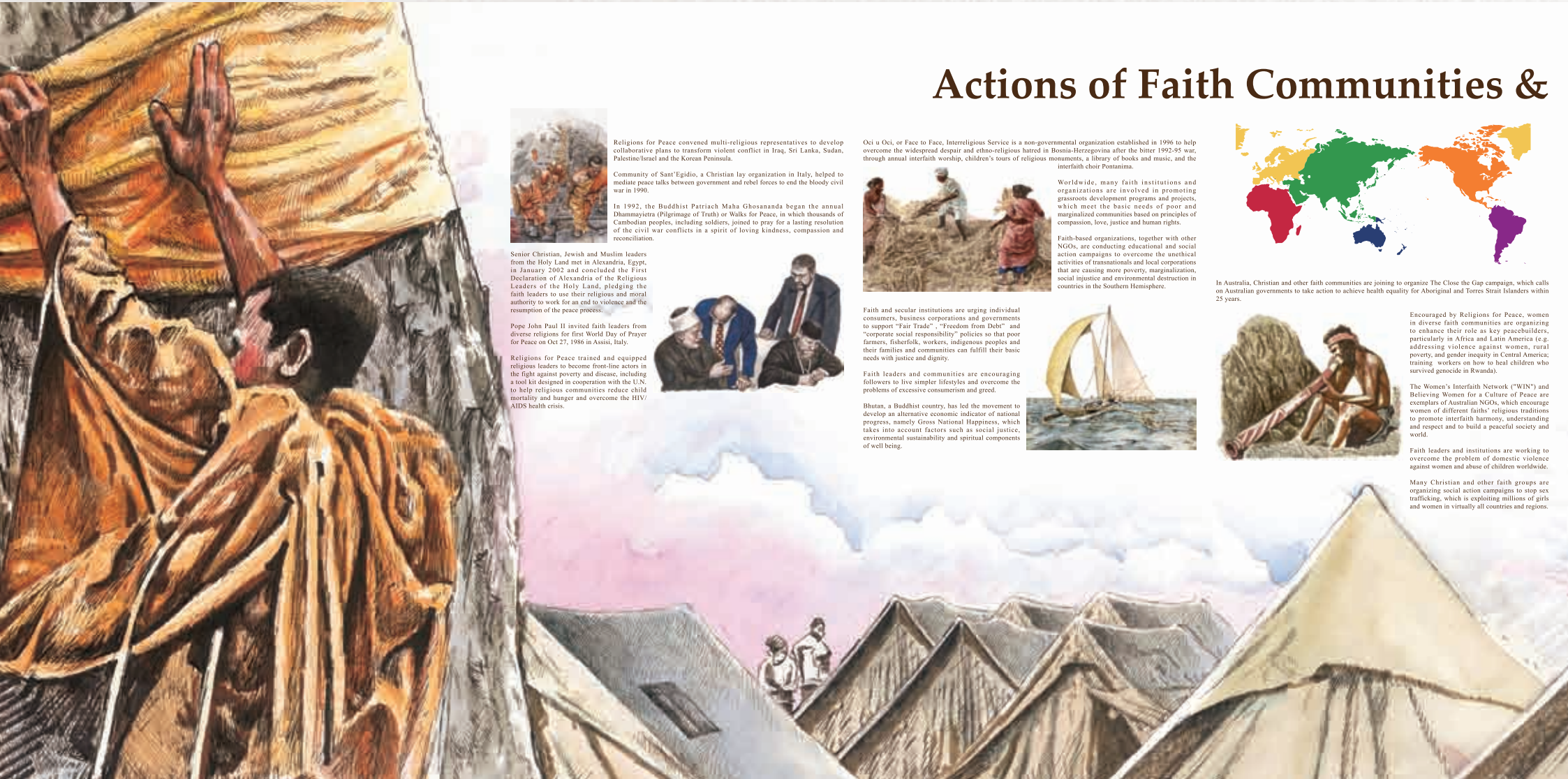
Will there never be an end to war?

Whether waging war near or far,
in ancient times with spears
or now when the threat of nuclear annihilation is very real,
the causes of war are complicated.
They range from racial conflict and religious disharmony
to struggles for the throne, colonization, and peasant revolts.
The flame of war has been undying,
rising and falling, here and there, for thousands of years.
From ethnic conflict,
which has resulted in the tragic death of millions,
to world wars,
which resulted in the devastation of tens of millions of families.
Regardless of who is declared the victor and who the loser,
hasn't everyone lost?

When will we see the end of war?

.....

If there is one more person seeking peace,
then there will be one less person perpetuating war,
and war will end through love.



Actions of Faith Communities &



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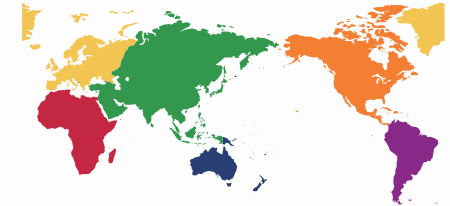
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Promoting Interfaith Dialogue toward a Culture of Peace



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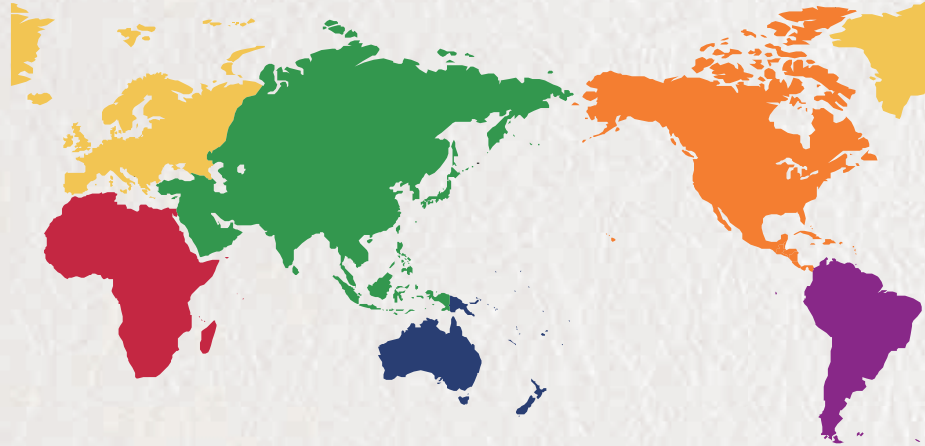
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Living in a Grateful World

Be grateful to those who have denounced you, for they have increased your wisdom and concentration.

Be grateful to those who have made you stumble, for they have strengthened your ability.

Be grateful to those who have abandoned you, for they have taught you to be independent.

Be grateful to those who have hit you, for they have reduced your karmic obstacles.

Be grateful to those who have deceived you, for they have deepened your insight.

Be grateful to those who have hurt or harmed you, for they have reinforced your determination.

Be grateful to all who have made you firm & resolute and helped in your achievement.



Causality and Condition: A Natural, Universal Law

Cause and effect is a natural, universal law;

as natural as a leaf floating down from a tree, as universal as night following day.

Since causality is a natural law, there is no judge or ruling body that determines our consequences.

Simply put, we reap what we sow.

The seeds we sowed with our past thoughts, speech, and actions determined our lives today.

And likewise, what we think, say, and do today will shape our tomorrows.

By choosing to suppress our bad seeds as we nurture those that are good,
we will create the future we wish for.



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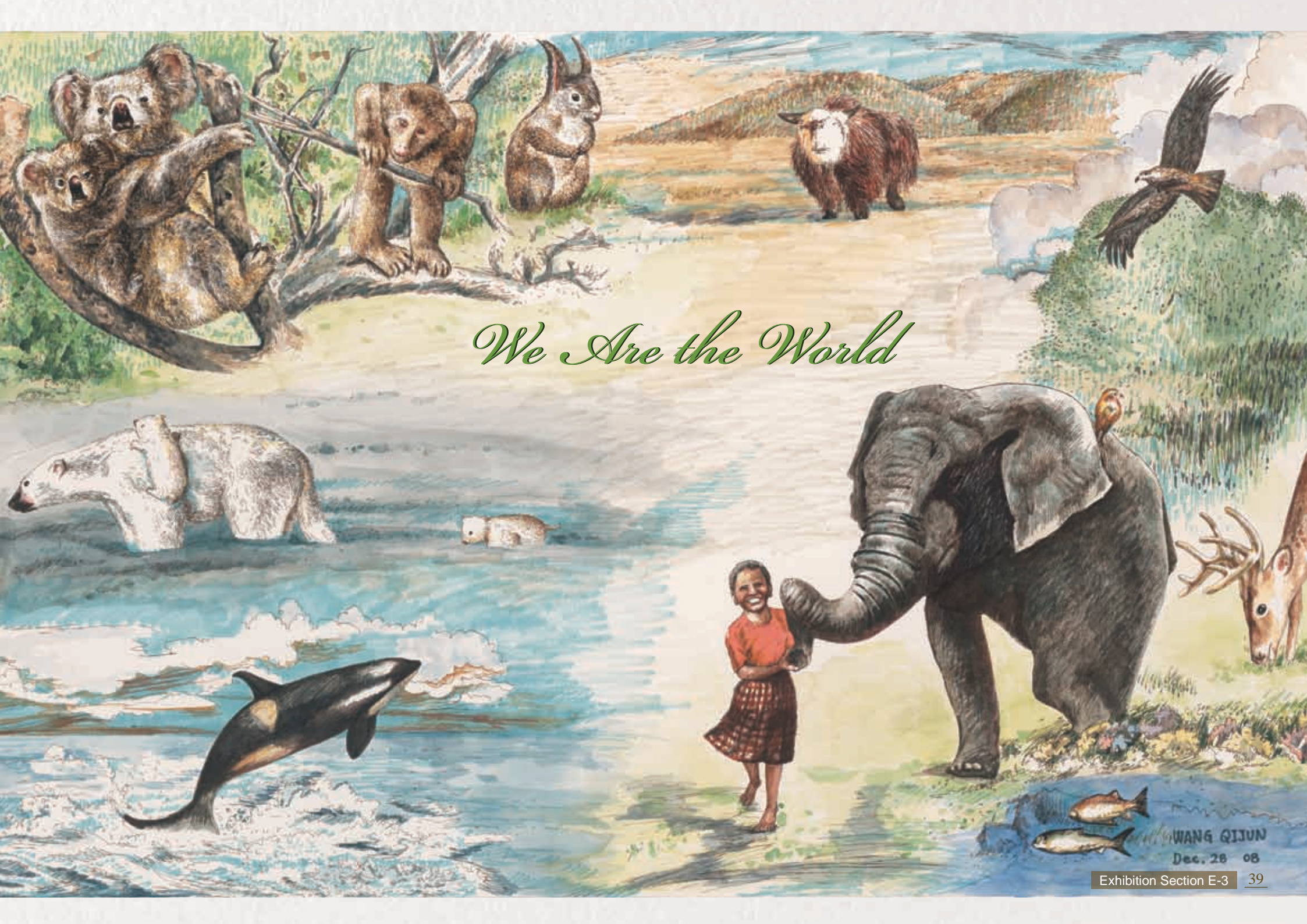
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We Are the World

WANG QIJUN

Dec. 28 08

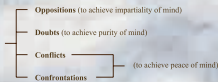
Offering another our thumb represents our trust and our wish to offer our heart. Holding the thumb of another person in our palm represents our seeing the best in others. This form of contact is becoming an international symbol of friendship and cooperation.

A Harmonious World Begins With The Mind

When the mind is pure, the land will be pure.
When the mind is at peace, all beings will be at peace.
When the mind is impartial, the world will enjoy equality.

STARTING FROM MYSELF

In my own mind I must resolve all



STARTING FROM MY FAMILY

STARTING FROM MY COMMUNITY

STARTING FROM MY CITY

STARTING FROM MY COUNTRY



Turn foes into friends

- by speaking fairly whether in anger or in joy.
- by helping those who have severed ties with me.
- by looking after those who are ungrateful to me.
- by forgiving those who have mistreated me.

Let go of

- selfishness, and always think about benefiting all beings.
- the pursuit of personal gain, and do not be misled by illusions.
- craving wealth, sensuous pleasures, fame, food, and sleep, and do not be ensnared by temptations.
- greed, anger, ignorance, and arrogance so that afflictions and bad habits will not arise.

When one excels in using

one's mind for the benefit of all beings,
all tasks become possible and everything that is done will be timely and appropriate.
Each of us can accomplish this by following one religion's teaching of neutrality.

WANG @33UN
Dec. 99. 08

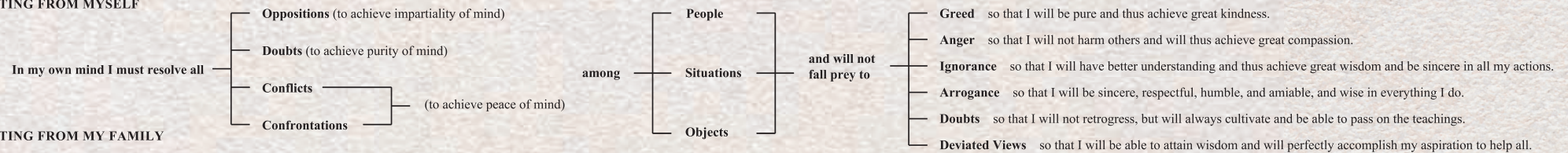
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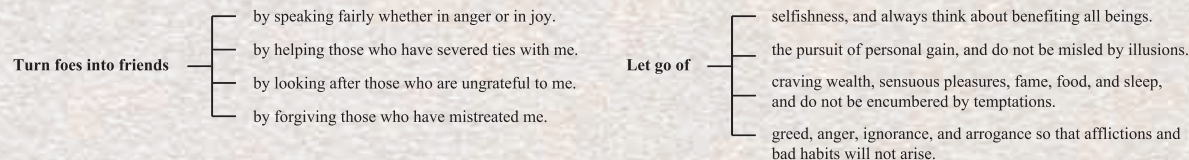
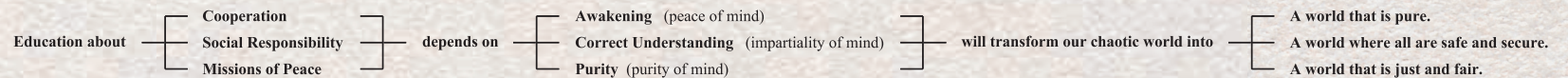


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孝養父母奉事師長不作國賊
不謗國主不漏國稅不犯國制

佛教 觀無量壽經 梵網經 釋淨空

Be filial and care for parents, be respectful to and serve teachers.
(V) Do not commit deeds harmful to the country. Do not slander the leader of the country.
(BN) Do not evade paying taxes. Do not violate the law. (UP)

-- Visualization Sutra(V), Brahma Net Sutra(BN), Upasaka Precepts Sutra(UP)

江海所以能為百谷王者以其
善下之故能為百谷王是以聖
人欲上民以其言下之欲先民
以其身後之

道教 道德經六十六 釋淨空

Therefore, desiring to rule over the people, One must in one's words humble oneself before them; And, desiring to lead the people, One must, in one's person, follow behind them.

-- Tao Te Ching, Chapter 66 (Transl. by D.C. Lau, Penguin, 1963)




不要以惡報惡

基督教 羅馬書 釋淨空



Do not repay anyone
evil for evil.

-- The Bible, Romans 12:17
(New International Version, 1984)



愛是含忍慈祥不嫉妒不誇張
不自大不動怒忍耐凡事包容

天主教 格林多前書 釋淨空



Love is always patient; love is
always kind; love is never envious
or arrogant with pride...or ever
gets annoyed...She bears up under
everything...there is no limit to
her hope.

-- 1 Corinthians 13:4~7, The Bible
(International Standard Version, 2008)

至仁主的僕人是在大地上謙
遜而行的當愚人以惡言傷害
他們的時候他們說祝你們平
安

伊斯蘭教 古蘭經二五：六三 釋淨室

And the servants of Allah
are those who walk on the
earth in humility, and when
the ignorant address them,
they say "Peace".

-- Qur'an 25:63

智慧強過人間任何一種財富

祇教 智慧之靈雜說 釋淨室

Wisdom is better than the
wealth of every kind
which is in the world.

-- Mēnog-ī Khirad 47:6 (Transl. by
E. W. West, from Sacred Books of
the East, volume 24, Oxford
University Press, 1880)

他們要將刀打成犁頭把槍打
成鐮刀這國不舉刀攻擊那國
他們也不再學習戰事

猶太教 以賽亞書 弥迦書 耕淨室

They will beat their swords into
plowshares and their spears into
pruning hooks. Nation will not
take up sword against nation, nor
will they train for war anymore.

-- Isaiah 2:4 & Micah 4:3
(New International Version, 1984)

寬恕必能制怒

興都教 摩訶婆羅多 耕淨室

Anger must be conquered
by forgiveness.

-- The Mahābhārata 5.39:73

稍有一些就要心滿意足要擺
脫一切過度的欲望

巴哈伊教 巴哈安拉作品集粹 釋淨室

He should be content with
little, and be free from all
inordinate desire.

-- Gleanings From the Writings
of Bahá'u'lláh CXXV (US
Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1990
pocket-size edition)

以智慧為母以知足為父以真
誠為兄弟他們都是你的好親
人

錫克教 錫克聖典 釋淨室

Make wisdom thy mother,
contentment thy father, and
truthfulness thy brother. These
are thine good relations.

-- Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 151 (Gems
of Thoughts from Guru Nanak, by
Harbhajan Singh, Principal of the Shahid
Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar; cited
by Sardar V. Harcharan Singh, Deputy
President Khalsa Diwan Malaysia)



虛空法界
一切衆生
本是一體

All sentient
beings in the
universe are
one entity.



至誠禮敬
Sincere respect.



至誠感通
Utmost sincerity
can invoke Holy
beings.



觀法如化
三昧常寂

Perceive that the
true reality of life
and the universe
is impermanent
and illusory to
have contented
and serene
minds to enjoy
true happiness.



衆神歡喜
Holy beings
are happy.



神愛世人
God loves
all people.

愛

Love



真誠愛心
True sincere
loving heart.



心包太虛
量周沙界
The broadminded
care for all beings
can encompass the
whole universe.

The journey of one water drop



What has trapped the water drop?

A pure water drop that can mirror the reflection of true nature

Landing on a reality of dust and sand

and souls of barren deserts

Lost in search of the way home...



What is the value of existence for one water drop?

Piles of sand,

Layers of barren deserts,

*Dampen not the water drop's will to purify souls and arouse the goodness
that is intrinsic in everyone's true nature.*

Can one water drop change the odds?

Can it inspire like-minded beings to join its journey?



How can a water drop not dry up?

Someone once asked a Zen master, "How can a water drop not dry up?"

The master replied, "A water drop in the ocean."

Living or drained, is determined by the will of the water.

One water drop is one vast ocean; one vast ocean is one water drop!"



Uniting Religions and Propagating Moral Education Reconciling Conflict and Promoting World Harmony and Stability

By Ven. Prof. Chin Kung AM

“Forum on World Religions and the Search for Peaceful Coexistence”

National University of Singapore, January 2, 2007

Guest of Honour, Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Wong Kan Seng
Respected Deputy Director, University Scholars Programme,
Associate Professor Kang Hway Chuan,
Honourable Syed Hassan,
Distinguished religious representatives and guests,
Good day!

It is my honour and pleasure to participate in the “Forum on World Religions and the Search for Peaceful Coexistence.” Thank you for the kind invitation. Religious cooperation, conflict reconciliation, and world peace promotion are the shared wish of all people, and particularly meaningful to Singapore. The harmonious relationship among religions in Singapore has been recognised as a good role model for the entire world over the past years. Singapore’s accomplishments received respect and admiration from ambassadors and friends of various countries at UNESCO Headquarters in October, 2006.

Over the years, I have visited President Bush of the United States, former Indonesian Presidents Honourable Wahid and Ms. Megawatti, former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir, and other country leaders.

I have also attended nine international peace conferences. All my talks recommended reconciling conflict and promoting world harmony and stability to country leaders, experts, and scholars. In my view, reconciling all conflicts and contradictions in today’s world should start with uniting religions, which in turn will enhance the harmony and cooperation among countries, political parties, and ethnic groups, and thus reconcile conflict. These country leaders and scholars all agreed to my humble view. A particular case was Honourable Mahathir. On the very next day after our meeting, he invited me to participate in and give a keynote speech to the Perdana Global Peace Forum. This was held in Kuala Lumpur in October, 2005.

In previous world peace conferences, participants agreed to my proposed idea of promoting moral education, reconciling conflict, and promoting world harmony and stability through teaching but they believed this was an impractical ideal. In order to build the confidence of these international friends, we must show proof through experiments. Therefore, in November, 2005, we started a Cultural Education Centre in the township of Tangchi in Lujiang, Anhui Province, China, to train teachers and to promote moral education to

local residents. We had hoped to see positive results in three years. However, within half a year of teaching, the centre achieved the result of awakening people's conscience and innate goodness. The results were beyond our expectations as good social values were restored significantly. This experiment was so surprisingly successful that it exceeded our hopes and strengthened our confidence.

In July, 2006, I had the privilege of being invited by Dr. Preeyanuch Jariyavidyanont, Vice Ambassador of Thailand to UNESCO, to attend the grand celebration of the 2550th birth anniversary of the Buddha under the co-sponsorship of UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. I had two goals in mind when attending this activity. The first goal was to report to UNESCO that religions could work together and help each other. The best example of inter-religious harmony and mutual cooperation for world religions are the ten religions in Singapore. The second goal was to propose that to reconcile conflict and restore stability and peace, we must use the method used by Sakyamuni Buddha and Confucius and many other saints and sages—teaching.

Thus, in preparing for Paris conference, we overcame various difficulties and managed to invite the representatives from the ten religions in Singapore to conduct a joint prayer for world peace on stage during the opening ceremony. At the same time, we introduced the achievement of the people in Tangchi, China, in their learning of Chinese traditional moral teaching—*The Standards for Being a Good Student and*

Child. All religious representatives and participants listened carefully and responded well. We sincerely demonstrated to our international friends that religions can be united, and that people can be taught to be good! If we can begin with these two goals and strive to promote and practise them widely, I believe that they will be of great help to reconciling all conflicts and promoting social stability and world peace.

I had a dinner with the Vice Ambassador of Thailand after the conference. She and her peers were very pleased with this conference and praised the excellent program, saying that the orderly and harmonious atmosphere of the conference was unprecedented. It is worth noting that the harmonious relationship, mutual respect, and cooperation of the ten religions from Singapore gave all participants a fresh, new impression of multi-faith cooperation.



I was invited to visit the University of London and Cambridge University (both of which I had visited last year) after the Paris conference. I was very glad to give a one-hour talk at the Institute of Chinese Studies at each university and to have a discussion with professors and postgraduate students.

I deeply felt that, that although European scholars are enthusiastic about Chinese studies today, they only get as far as academic discussion and have not received true benefit. Thus, I emphasized in my lecture that the concept of “studies of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism” and the concept of “learning from Confucius, the Buddha, and Tao” are completely different. Only when we learn from Confucius, the Buddha, and Tao in daily life are we able to alleviate afflictions, gain wisdom, and attain the ultimate happiness of life—Dharma bliss.

In other words, the benevolence and compassion of the sages must be manifested and carried forward by the learners through their own speech, behaviour, and thoughts when they interact with others and engage in tasks. The sages’ teachings teach us to begin with changing ourselves. (For example, Confucius taught the four abandonments: abandoning wandering thoughts, abandoning discriminations, abandoning attachments, and abandoning selfishness.) If one aspires to become a sage, one must begin with resolving the confrontation and conflict

with others and the external environment from one’s heart. This way, one will be able to understand the true meaning of the Confucian saying “To learn, and to practise what is learned is nothing but a pleasure.”

A Chinese proverb says, “Education is essential in building a country and in guiding its people.” In order for religious cooperation to last for a long time, it must be based on learning each other’s teachings. The objective of the teachings of all sages, in every country throughout time, is “compassion, loving-kindness, sincerity, respectfulness, humility, and harmony.” Looking around the world today, we see that many religious followers are not truly studying and practising their religious tenets. Instead, they are used by people with evil purposes and instigated to cause conflicts and confrontations as well as social turmoil. This is quite sad. People generally not only



▲In 2006, praying for world peace at "The Celebration of the 2550th Birth Anniversary of the Buddha" held at UNESCO's Paris headquarters.

have misunderstandings about religions, but they also disdain ethics and morality. As a consequence, the whole world is in disorder, with accelerating rates of crimes and suicides committed by younger and younger people. These phenomena have caused deep concerns and distress.

Therefore, if we wish to unite religions, we must first pay special attention to the study of religious texts, in order to deeply understand their meanings and to propagate them widely. Religious followers should pay attention to practising the sacred teachings in daily life and not just go through formalities. Moreover, each religion should learn from and understand other religions, while seeking common ground and putting aside differences. By doing this, religions can get along harmoniously, and exist and flourish side by side.

I have been learning the sages' teachings for fifty-six years. I deeply feel that if one wishes to look for a place to live peacefully in this era, one must study the sages' texts everyday without slacking off. From my learning, I have come to understand that the core of the teaching of all sages, in this world and beyond, is sincere loving-kindness. Through the teaching of ethics, morality, the law of cause and effect, wisdom, and science, the sages aim to uncover the virtues of purity and pure virtuousness innate in all sentient beings. This way, these virtues will manifest in these beings' interacting with others and engaging in daily tasks.

Hinduism states "Resolve anger with compassion, and counter evil with virtuousness." The Qu'ran emphasises "Allah is indeed loving." The Bible proclaims "God loves all people." Confucius promotes loving-kindness, and Mencius advocates righteousness. Judaism says "The most wonderful thing one can do is to forgive others' faults."

Buddhism teaches "Compassion is the essence, and expediency is the means." All of the sages teach us to maintain a good heart, do good deeds, say good words, and be a good person.

Going a step further, we expand our sincere loving-kindness to encompass everything in the universe so that we can get along in harmony, and with mutual respect and love, with all sentient beings in different dimensional spaces. In doing this, we can truly achieve the ideal of human happiness and a harmonious society.

In the 1970s, the English historian philosopher Professor Arnold Toynbee once said that to solve the social problems of the 21st century, one must rely on the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius, and on Mahayana Buddhism." As a matter of fact, the morality that the sages taught is the eternal truth, which surpasses time and space. It is not worthless and old-fashioned as considered by some shallow-minded people. When we look at the leaders in every country throughout time, we discover that if a leader skilfully uses religious teaching and the teaching of morality to purify people's minds and improve social moral standards, then the country will enjoy an honest government, a harmonious society, and ever-lasting peace and stability.

An ancient Chinese said, "In a village of one hundred families, if ten people abide by the Five Precepts, we will have ten kind, honest, and cautious people. In a city of one thousand families, if one hundred people abide by the Ten Virtuous Conducts, we will have one hundred people who can get along harmoniously with others. If we can promote this teaching to the entire country of one hundred million households, we will have a million virtuous people. When a person practises one good act, that person is not committing a bad act. One bad act not committed means one less punishment to be administered.



▲Harmony in the universe begins with sincere loving-kindness.

If a punishment does not need to be administered to a family, then ten thousand punishments do not need to be administered nationwide. Yes, indeed, you can just sit and enjoy a peaceful country.” Therefore, uniting religions, realising religious teaching, and promoting moral education to all people are unignorable, important forces for conflict reconciliation and world harmony.

Take China, a country with five thousand years of history, as an example. The three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have

melded together and are deeply ingrained in people. At a very young age, children learned to do housework and interact with people, which is education in life. This laid the foundation for their moral integrity. The classics they studied in school and the art performances they attended after they entered society all taught the intrinsic values of filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, trustworthiness, courtesy, justice, honesty, honour, kindness, love, harmony, and fairness. This way, people would be pure in mind and honourable. This is the reason why China has enjoyed ever-lasting peace and stability for five thousand years.

Fundamental to the traditional culture are Confucianism’s *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, Buddhism’s *Ten*

Virtuous Deeds Sutra, and Taoism’s *Accounts of Request and Response*. These were required courses in the past and are still very practical today. They explain profound principles in simple language, making them easy to practise. These books deserve diligent learning and wide propagation.

Essential to education are teachers. In teacher training, teaching by setting a good example with behaviour is more effective than teaching by words. Educators should know that only through diligent practice of the sages’ teachings and of ethical and moral standards can they truly influence others. From the experiment to significantly restore good social values in Tangchi, Lujiang, within one year, we thoroughly understand that one of the reasons for such remarkable improvement is that teachers at the centre truly practised the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and set good examples with their own behaviours.

Today, chaos occurs globally. Only education can save the world. We strongly believe that the sages’ teaching of morality can, both for the time being and permanently, effectively and efficiently reconcile all conflicts and contradictions, and restore world stability and peace. The ancient Chinese said, “We should pass on the teachings of ancient sages and achieve peace for future generations.” They also said “Continue the wisdom-life of the Buddha and propagate the Dharma to benefits all sentient beings.” Now is the time for every one of us sitting in this hall! It is imperative to train high-levelled propagators of various religions and master teachers of ethics and morality. We hope that the sages’ teachings will spread widely and will be passed on forever. This is the very root of human happiness and world stability!

As to implementation, I suggested at UNESCO Headquarters

conference in Paris last October that, as religious cooperation has been realised in Singapore, the next step was to establish a religious university. First, we should start by setting up an institute of religions to train teachers, and then we should establish a university of religions or a multicultural university. Courses in ethics, morality, religious texts, the law of cause and effect, science, and so on, should be run to train high-level propagators. Each religion should establish its college. Each college should have both common courses and specialist courses. In addition to specialising in the texts of his or her religion, a student can also study the teachings of other religions.



▲Picture on the left is the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong at the Interfaith New Year Dinner 2007.

After being assessed and endorsed by the government as being truly beneficial to social harmony and stability, lectures can be broadcast to religious followers throughout the entire country and even around the world through the Internet and satellite television. I sincerely hope that the Singapore government and leaders of various religious groups will work together

to promote the sages' teachings and moral education to all people. In this way, the good teachings will prevail, and evil teachings will naturally disappear. People all over the world will be led towards

happiness, and social stability and world harmony will be achieved! I present my humble view to Your Excellency Mr. Deputy Prime Minister and the religious representatives. Any comments will be greatly appreciated.

I wish you all good health and happiness! Thank you.

*Ven. Prof. Shi Chin Kung AM, Hon. PhD
President of Pure Land Learning College, Australia
Honorary Professor of University of Queensland, Australia
Honorary Professor of Griffith University, Australia*



▲This diagram symbolizes that peace and harmony are the central teachings of all nine religions in Singapore. They are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrian, Taoism, Judaism, Baha'i and Buddhism.

How to Live and Flourish Side by Side in a Multicultural Society

Many people consider modern society a multicultural one. Australia, in particular, has been stressing the importance of harmony among different cultures in recent years.

This is because in recent decades, the Australian government adopted an open door policy that welcomes immigration. New immigrants hail from different countries and thus are of different races. They have different religious beliefs and different cultural backgrounds, as well as different living styles. Now they live in the same society. It becomes important to meld all these differences so that society can coexist harmoniously.

Only when there is harmony can a society be prosperous. We hope that Australians and new immigrants can respect, love, care for, and cooperate with one another so as to live a happy life and establish a wonderful society.

In this modern age, every country has some people born elsewhere. With this diversity, every society is a multicultural society. To achieve the goal of harmony, Australians officially raised this issue for public discussion. In fact, all wise government leaders have noticed and paid attention to this matter.



▲The “Peace Gong,” a symbol of praying for world peace.

What is Multiculturalism?

Everyone is exploring how to achieve harmony and what method is effective in achieving it.

We see a few very wise and capable leaders throughout time and the world who were able to reconcile differences and unite their groups so that these groups were able to be successful. A group as small as a family was able to become prosperous; and a group as large as a country was able to become wealthy and powerful. Therefore, those who have the ability to bring harmony among their people play a very important role in the achievements of their groups. Why were these leaders able to



▲ Chairman Jia Qinglin of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) held a welcome banquet at the West Hall of The Great Hall, Mr. Jia was having a close and cordial conversation with Master Chin Kung.

reconcile differences and unite their groups or countries? Because they treated others with sincerity and compassion. One who is truly sincere can move others. If one cannot do so, it is because one is not sincere enough. One who has utmost sincerity can move all beings. One can even move a person who has numerous afflictions and bad habits so that this person would at the least somewhat restrain his or her behavior. This contributes to social stability, world peace, and the wellbeing of all people. This action is very positive and constructive.

Because of the difficulties of traveling long distances in the past, people used to live within a small area. Indeed, there were people who, in the entire lifetime, never went to another village, even one



▲ The gathering of Master Chin Kung and the president of the International Confucian Association, Mr. Ye XuanPing, both share the same consensus about the importance of traditional moral and ethics education in attaining world peace and harmony.



▲In 2004, Venerable Master Chin Kung was invited as honorary consultant of the Indonesian religious leaders delegation formed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia for their visit to Egypt, Italy, and the Vatican to further facilitate communication and understanding.

that was only a few miles away. It is no longer the case now. With the development of technology, an incident occurring anywhere on earth will be broadcasted all over the world within a very short time. It was very difficult to travel from China to Australia in the past. Given an opportunity, one would have been afraid of taking this trip for it would take several months by sea. Now traveling is easy, and it takes only a

few hours. The world has become smaller. It is like a village.

Going on tours has become a part of our lives. Therefore, our contact with the world becomes more frequent. We will have many opportunities to interact with people who are of different race and nationality, and who have different religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and living styles. This is multiculturalism. Thus, we must break down all barriers and have the mindset of benefiting all beings.

Tolerance, Respect, Love, Concern, and Care

I have met people who are of different religion, race, and nationality. They all sincerely wish for a stable society and a peaceful life. In Singapore and Australia, we have been diligently engaged in multicultural undertakings, which bring different religious groups and different

ethnic groups together to resolve misunderstanding and conflict. We hope that everyone will do his or her best to contribute to social stability and world peace. We reached a consensus there. The goal and guidelines that I proposed are simple, so it is easy for us to remember and to apply in our lives. The guideline is to treat others equally and to live in harmony with them. We hope that we can do this regardless of

their religion, ethnic group, nationality, cultural background, or social position.

How do we apply this guideline in our lives? The key words are tolerance, respect, love, concern, and care. We must broaden our minds and tolerate one another. Without tolerance, conflict and opposition cannot be resolved. We must respect and love one another. We must also be concerned about and take care of one another. To summarize, we should help and work with one another—we are family. I travel all over the world, and wherever I go, I urge people to practice those key words. We ourselves should practice first, then we urge our families and eventually others to practice. If we and our families cannot practice them, how can we ask others to do so?

What is the problem that people have? They do not know the concept of oneness. They have preference—they discriminate. Take the body as an example. Say Buddhism is the eye, Christianity is the ear, and Islam is the nose. If we say that Buddhism is the most important, Christianity is the second-most important, and Islam is the third-most important, it is equivalent to saying that the eyes are healthiest, the ears are not so healthy, and the nose is the

least healthy. In this case, this person is surely ill. If the health problem is serious, then it can be fatal.

What then is a healthy person? All are number one. Buddhism is number one. Christianity is number one. Islam is number one. Every religion is number one. Only in this way can a body be healthy. Every country is number one. Every race is number one. Every culture is number one. The world is then healthy. Only when we know the concept of oneness can everyone be number one, and everything be number one. No one and no thing is secondary to another. This is equality. Only then can everybody live and flourish side by side in a multicultural society and have a happy life, society be stable, and the world be at peace.



▲ Visiting Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja at Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (BCI), Jakarta, Indonesia.



▲ In 2004, Master Chin Kung met with the president of Todaiji Temple of the Flower Adornment School in Nara, Japan.

The Promotion of Ethical and Moral Teachings

Confucianism says “All people are innately good.” Buddhism teaches “Every being has Buddha nature.” This nature consists of “inherent virtues, which are possessed by everyone.” What are natural virtues? Love is a natural virtue. Having love, benevolence, virtuousness, and compassion, we will follow our natural virtues. By following these virtues, we will generate loving kindness. Thinking carefully, we will realize that those who follow their innate virtues will love others and treat them with benevolence, virtuousness, and compassion. How could this person harm others!



▲ Confucius was born in 551 BC around the same time as Shakyamuni Buddha. He was the first person in Chinese history to advocate free public education for all. People call him *the most accomplished and the most sacred teacher*.

Fighting for personal gain will definitely result in others losing. This kind of mindset will be reason enough for conflicts between human beings. Therefore, the approach to reconcile all conflicts and to promote social stability and world peace does not lie in the use of military force. Then what can we do to change? Ancient saints and sages, Confucius, and Sakyamuni Buddha all reached this objective by teaching. Thus, the only way for us to prevent conflict and promote

social stability and world peace is to let go of all struggles for personal recognition and gain. We need to actively promote the enlightened teachings of benevolence, virtuousness, and compassion. This teaching of love in religion is the only method to end conflict and achieve peace.

The implementation of the teaching of love is found in three teachings: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The basic elements are Confucianism’s *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, Taoism’s *Accounts of Request and Response*, and Buddhism’s *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*.



▲ Learning of *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* by all regardless of age and gender.

In 1998 in Singapore, Venerable Master Chin Kung advocated *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* for the teaching of ethics and morality. As a result, Gengxin School began to hold classes on *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. At the same time, Master Chin Kung taught the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra* and *Accounts of Request and Response*.

In 2001, the Pure Land Learning College Association Inc. was established in Australia. *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra* formed the foundation for classes on morality, and teachers were invited to lecture on *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and “The Story of Morals.”

Inspired by Master Chin Kung, students in China launched a series to introduce and explain *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* on the “Visiting the Classics” program on China National Radio. The broadcast was enthusiastically received and listeners benefited greatly. Following this, some other students toured Haikou City in Hainan Province and Shantou City in Guangdong Province to lecture on *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*.

Later, under the patronage of Master Chin Kung, the Haikou Preliminary Chinese Classics Center on Piety and Integrity was established to nurture teachers. In Beijing, the Da Fang Guang Public Welfare Website was set up to promote the teachings of traditional morals and ethics. Then arrangements were made for students to tour Hong Kong, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the United States to lecture on *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. The purpose was to help more people understand without doubt that learning and practicing the teachings of traditional morals and ethics



▲ One can be inspired to be a better person.



▲“I am a brick. Take me wherever I am needed.” This is the motto of the teachers.

will bring well-being, happiness, and stability to this chaotic society and uncertain world.

In 2005, The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre was established in the hometown of Master Chin Kung, Tangchi Town, Lujiang County, Anhui Province, China. The ancient oriental system of classical teaching was applied as an experiment. Because a teacher should educate himself first, the requirement of the center was that every teacher was to fulfill the cultivation of *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. Within only two months, all the teachers at the centre had met the criteria of the 113 points in *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. They then went to the countryside to extensively teach and encourage the villagers—young and old, men and women, regardless of occupation—to learn together.

After just three months, the results were obvious. There were no more confrontations, no quarrels between husbands and wives. Mothers and daughters-in-law got along harmoniously. Disagreements were resolved. While previously there were many disputes between neighbors over trivial matters, now there were none. The residents co-existed courteously and modestly. Children knew how to be dutiful and were respectful to their parents. The character of the local residents improved greatly. Social behavior was likewise improved. While previously there were many thefts in the shops, after just two months of teachings, a taxi driver returned the money he found in his taxi. This is the harvest of teaching.

This six-month teaching experience at Tangchi Town firmly strengthened everyone’s confidence in reconciling conflicts and promoting social stability and world peace. Indeed “People can be taught to be better,” “All people are innately good,” and “Every being



▲ If people are not taught, their nature will change for the worse.

has Buddha nature.” Originally, every person was a good person. Every person’s innate nature is good.

If everyone was good, then why are people different now? It is because nobody taught them right from wrong. As a Chinese idiom says, “One who mixes with vermilion will turn red; one who touches a black ink stick will be stained black.” That is the reason. As long as there is proper teaching—the teaching that follows the innate virtues—every person will love to learn. Nobody wants to be a wicked person. Every person wants to be good. This is the indisputable evidence that was witnessed in the six months in Tangchi.

After *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* had been propagated in Hainan Province for several years; in 2006, Haikou Prison conducted an experiment by holding traditional culture classes



▲ All human beings are innately good.

at two jails. The content of their teaching mainly focused on the traditional classic *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* together with *Filial Piety Classic*, *Analects*, and *Chinese Code of Success: Zhuzi’s Maxims on the Family*.

The general rules in Chinese tradition, such as being affectionately dutiful to parents, kindheartedness, a sense of honor, and integrity, were used to educate the prisoners. The guards perceived the obvious changes after the prisoners attended the classes. The prisoner’s negative emotions and passive attitudes towards life were lessened. Because of the exceptional results, the Justice Department of Hainan Province implemented full-scale teachings on traditional Chinese culture throughout the province’s jails. *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* was applied as the core of this education, with an emphasis on filial piety.

Standards for Being a Good Student and Child is also being taught in companies. Mr. Hu Xiaolin, the president of Huitong Huili Co. in Beijing, took three years to learn *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. He himself not only practices it, but also encourages and rewards his employees for learning it as well. *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* has become the standard for his business.

Now there is no drinking at social activities and dishonesty is not allowed. To everyone's surprise, the company's sales increased.

In Mr. Hu's report, "Traditional Chinese Culture Promotes Positive Economic Development," he described traditional Chinese culture by saying "The earlier we learn, the earlier we will have loving kindness.

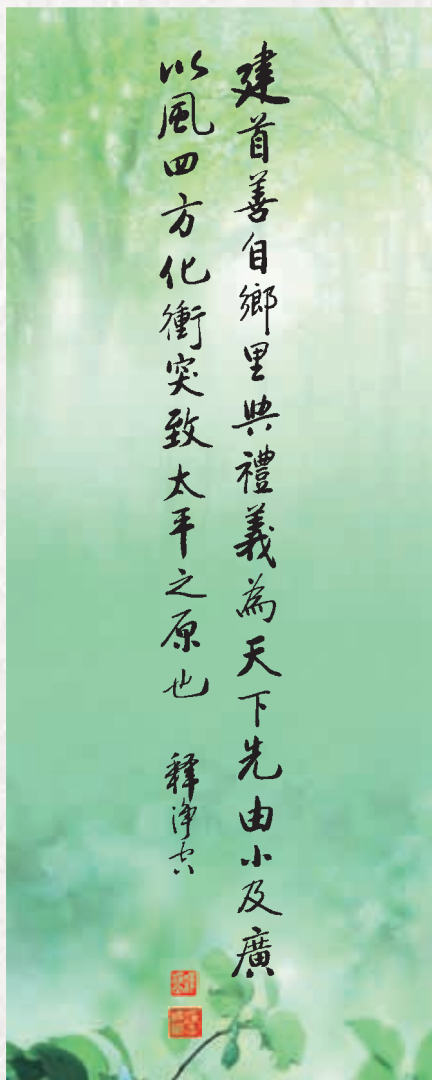
The more we learn, the more loving kindness we will have. What will this loving kindness bring us? A happy life and a happy employer."

Mr. Li Musong, the president of Phoenix Contact in Nanking not only personally visited The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre, but also encouraged his staff to learn at Lujiang and applied *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* as his company's management system. It increased the feeling of solidarity throughout the company. The employees became more willing to help around the workplace and were more considerate.

In Guangdong, a large career exhibition was held in Dongwan City. One media company advertised for the position of General Manager and offered an annual salary of RMB\$180,000. On their recruiting poster, the first requirement for the candidates was "to memorize *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*."



▲With the first rays of the morning sun, children are reading *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* aloud.



▲ Build up virtuousness and promote propriety and justice first in a neighborhood or a village. Then spread these from this small area to broader areas and eventually the whole world. These are the principles to resolve conflict and achieve peace.



▲ To achieve peace in a country and harmony in a family, education must be the first priority and take precedence over all other matters. Everyone, from the ruler to the common person, must regard cultivation of oneself as the most essential.

After studying at The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre, the teachers went back to their own schools to promote *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and were amazed by the results. In China, increasing numbers of kindergarten and elementary school teachers help students to learn *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. Some schools, such as Dacheng School of Confucius College at Guilin City, and Peizhi School and Peixin Elementary School at Dadong district in Northeast China, have even promoted the teachings throughout the school.

Some dedicated Chinese young people and teachers from Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan went to Lujiang to learn. Currently in Taiwan, several places are holding *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* Seminars. There are even some mayors and county magistrates who are willing to promote the ethics and moral teaching, especially *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, to the entire city and county.

In Malaysia, people have taken an even more active role in promoting learning by inviting the teachers from The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre to set up many *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* Seminars. In 2008, more than 1700 Chinese headmasters and teachers attended a “*Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* Traditional Culture Learning Seminar” at which Master Chin Kung gave an inspiring keynote address to the participants. The Education Minister of Malaysia, Mr. Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein also attended the meeting and spoke highly of the traditional culture teachings.

Tan Sri Kim Yew Lee [a well-known Malaysian businessman] expressed his enthusiasm to continue to fully support the propagation



▲2005 Dizigui Class held in a non-profit Buddhist organization.

of the teaching of traditional Chinese culture in Malaysia. He said that Malaysia supported this education and hoped that the staff from The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre could move to Malaysia. Due to the extraordinary achievements of promoting *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* traditional moral education, students became more devoted to parents and were more courteous. This is why virtually all Malaysian's Chinese schools now strongly encourage the teachings of *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*.

Due to the excellent results from the teaching of *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, increasing numbers of people now learn, practice, and promote this traditional culture, in schools, corporations, and even in cities and many places around the country. When teaching only one book can bring so much benefit, just imagine

how much the teaching of all three books could accomplish!

With the support of the local government and the assistance of kind-hearted people, Qingyun Academy will be established at Qingyun County, Shandong Province, China. The goals of this academy are to contribute to the development of ethical and moral teachings, to foster harmony in society, to take up the responsibility of propagating traditional Chinese culture, to nurture teachers of morality, to respond to the call of county government for “the development of harmony in society,” and to actively accord with the county government in its goal to build Qingyun County into a Model Township of Harmony.

With *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra* as the fundamentals for teaching and the guidelines for practice, as well as the support of the public and the endeavors of the faculty members to enthusiastically implement these books, we believe this academy will yield even more positive influence than The Lujiang Chinese Culture Education Centre.

Hopefully everyone will encourage one another, exert themselves in learning, and put into practice and promote the saints' and sages' teachings of ethics and morality, especially *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*. If everyone practices the teachings in these three books, then the vision of world peace can be achieved.



▲ “2008 Standards for Being a Good Student and Child Traditional Culture Study Workshop”, held at University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. Over 1700 school principals and teachers attended the workshop.

An Introduction to the Pure Land Learning College



▲ Ven. Master Chin Kung

The Establishment and Objectives of the Pure Land Learning College

In January 2001, Venerable Master Chin Kung, an eminent Buddhist master who has been teaching the Dharma for over fifty years, established the Pure Land Learning College Association, Inc. in Toowoomba, “The Garden City” of Australia. The largest inland city, with its twenty-three private schools, technical college, and university, Toowoomba provided an ideal location for the college.

Master Chin Kung, feeling deeply that Buddhism had declined due to a lack of Dharma practitioners, propagators, and protectors, hopes the college will serve two purposes. The first is to provide a good learning environment for the students who aspired to learn and practice Pure Land Buddhism and the teachings of the sages. The second is to train Dharma propagators and protectors.

Venerable Master Chin Kung

Sakyamuni Buddha was a voluntary teacher who engaged in multicultural social education. With this same spirit of dedication, Master Chin Kung himself learns daily and teaches extensively. As he often says, learning Buddhism is the ultimate enjoyment of life. To enable more people to enjoy the benefits of the Buddha’s teachings, the

master has taught Buddhism for five decades. Whether at an assembly of thousands of people, in the recording studio, or at a practitioner's home, in the East or the West, he has maintained a schedule of teaching daily.

Now lecturing on the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, his talks are broadcasted around the world via the Internet and satellite television for long-distance learning. The master is also dedicated to and involved in building interfaith harmony and travels extensively to further this goal.



The Curriculum

It is hoped that the students at the college will succeed in their learning and practice in nine years. For the first two years, they will focus on basic moral education, learning and practicing *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, the *Precepts for Novice Monks*, and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*. In this way, students will learn morality and virtues, the law of cause and effect, the basic precepts, and the Pure Land teachings.



▲Pure Land Learning College in Toowoomba, Australia.



▲The venue of the Celebration of the 2550th Anniversary of the Buddha.

Next, students will spend three years learning the five Pure Land sutras and one treatise. For the final four years, they will choose one text from the Pure Land sutras and treatise, and concentrate on learning and practicing it. For the rest of their lives, they will delve deeply into this text and focus on practicing and propagating it.

At the college, the study year is divided into quarters with each session being seventy days. Six days a week, the students spend at least six hours listening to lectures and four hours chanting the *Infinite Life Sutra* and the Buddha-name. In this way, both understanding and practice are emphasized.

On Sundays, residents participate in the Thrice Yearning Ceremony to chant for world peace, avert human-made and natural disasters, and repay the kindness of ancestors and teachers. Every March, the college holds a kindness-repaying seminar and a memorial ceremony for teachers and Dharma-protectors. Many Pure Land practitioners, lay and monastic, from around the world attend these activities.

To follow Master Chin Kung's lead in pioneering the use of the Internet to reach students around the world, the college currently conducts distance and e-Learning classes. The weekly classes are held in Chinese, English, and Vietnamese.

In addition to their teaching at the college, the monastics are regularly invited to give lectures at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, the University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba, and the University of Sydney as well as at elementary schools in Toowoomba. Throughout the year, the college welcomes visiting teachers and their students from elementary schools and middle schools in Toowoomba.

The College

The Pure Land Learning College Chinese library has an extensive collection including the *Complete Library of the Four Branches of Literature*, *Selections from the Four Branches of Literature*, and more than ten versions of the Buddhist Canon. In addition, there are hundreds of CDs and DVDs for study. The library is also where lectures are given. The English and Vietnamese libraries are housed in the Classroom Building.

The Recording Studio is used by Master Chin Kung to broadcast live lectures not only to various locations around the college grounds, but around the world via a live Internet hookup. The lectures are then edited, produced, and released for free public distribution. The IT Building houses the Internet and Audio-visual Departments.

The Ancestral Memorial Hall of Ten Thousand Surnames was opened in 2003. As Master Chin Kung has said, “Buddhism is a teaching based on the principle of honoring teachers and revering their teachings, and this teaching must be based on filial piety. Without filial piety, there is neither the principle of honoring teachers and revering their teachings nor Buddhism.” Thus the Memorial Hall serves as the



▲In his keynote address, Venerable Master Chin Kung emphasized that “religions can be united, and people can be educated for the better.”

college's cultivation hall, combining the teachings of respect with the primary Pure Land practice of Buddha-name chanting.

In recent years, the college has also participated in several international conferences. In 2005, the Pure Land Learning College, Griffith University, and UNESCO jointly hosted the international symposium with the theme "Cultivating Wisdom and Harvesting Peace." In 2006, at the invitation of UNESCO, the master led the residents of the college to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and co-hosted the "Celebration of the 2550th Birth Anniversary of the Buddha."

Holding to the practice of not charging for teachings or Dharma materials, the college does not charge for tuition or room and board. It does however require that students have good characters and be accomplished in their studies, understand as well as practice the teachings, and cultivate virtues.

Community Involvement

In Toowoomba, many of the residents hold education-related jobs. There are also many retired senior citizens. After observing the local residents and the environment, Master Chin Kung happily said, "This is an ideal place for us to put into practice filial piety and respect for teachers. The world is in turmoil and people are at a loss as to what to do because the moral teaching of the sages and the teaching of the law of cause and effect have been neglected. If one wishes to propagate the teaching of the sages and awaken people to the importance of morality and virtues, it is more important to teach by setting good examples than through words."

Therefore, since 2002, the college has held Saturday Get-together

Dinners so residents and neighbors can enjoy dinner together. At the request of the neighbors, a forum is held after the dinner. Residents and guests take turns to share ideas and accounts on virtues as well as on cause and effect. Special banquets are held every year at Christmas and Chinese New Year. In addition to the vegetarian dishes that represent many cuisines, there are also performances from diverse cultures.

To show its appreciation to the community and to Australia for all the kindnesses shown, the college has donated funds to Toowoomba Hospital; Toowoomba Hospice; the University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, for the establishment of scholarships; the University of Queensland, Brisbane toward the founding of the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies; Griffith University, Brisbane; and the University of Sydney toward the founding of its Buddhist department.

Vision for the Future

Master Chin Kung often says "Education is essential in building a country and in guiding its people," and "Cultivation of oneself is the foundation and teaching is the first priority."

"To achieve world harmony, we must start with ourselves, with our families, and with this city. Let us be patient with one another, respect, show concern, and care for one another, and work together. Let us treat the seniors in the city like our own parents and the children like our own children. Let us care for them like our own families. In this way, this city will truly enjoy stability, peace, and prosperity and set a good example. From this city, we extend to the country and the world. World harmony will eventually be achieved."



▲ Hwazan Satellite Television



▲ The website for Pure Land full text searching

- ◎ Full text searching and downloading of lecture text files
- ◎ Searching and downloading of Master Chin Kung's calligraphy and seal carving



▲ The database with an extensive selection of video and text files

- ◎ The website of the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung



▲ The learning website for Chinese and non-Chinese, Old and Young

- ◎ The English Website of the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung
- ◎ Standards for Being a Good Student and Child Classes for Children
- ◎ Classes for Seniors



▲ Year-round Internet-based teaching

- ◎ Pure Land Learning College website
- ◎ Pure Land e-Learning College



▲ Live broadcast on the Internet

- ◎ The HiTV Station for the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung
- ◎ Live broadcast from the Pure Land Learning College

Through the Internet and latest technology, the website of the Pure Land Learning College and other related websites are all linked to the database of the text and video files of the lectures of Master Chin Kung and other Dharma masters. Viewers of all these websites can use the same database according to their needs. This is as stated in Buddhism, "One is all, and all is one."



Equality, Harmony, Tolerance,
Respect, Love, Concern, Care,
Assistance, and Cooperation
We are one family.

Shi Chin Kung