

A Letter to Dharma Protectors and Friends in 2018



Dear Dharma Protectors and Friends,

Auspicious greetings!

Spring flowers, autumn moon, winter goes, and spring arrives once again. As the seasons follow their order of time, we welcome 2018. Venerable Master Hsing Yun gives his blessings and encouragement to all through his spring couplet, "A Family of Loyalty and Honor." Loyalty and honor are most important in life. We must remain loyal and righteous towards people. We must stay loyal in our relationships, responsibilities, friendships, and towards our leaders. We must show sensibility towards human relationships, remain righteous towards the world, have benevolence for society, and sense our connection with the whole universe. It is essential to understand, be grateful for, realize, and keep as family legacy the spirits of loyalty and honor.

We are thankful to all our devotees, Dharma friends, and the general public for your loyalty and honor in supporting Fo Guang Shan's propagation of Humanistic Buddhism. I would like to report to you all on what we have accomplished this past year through the collaboration of both monastics and laity. Firstly, good news: the *Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun* has been published! On May 16, the last day of Fo Guang Shan's 50th anniversary, we launched the *Complete Works* at FGS Sutra Repository. The *Complete Works*, an embodiment of Venerable Master's lifelong principles and actualization of Humanistic Buddhism, is an encyclopedia of Humanistic Buddhism and an invaluable guide for living.

The publication is a compilation of Venerable Master's major works, consisting of 365 volumes, twelve categories, more than 30,000,000 characters, and over 50,000 entries. In October, a book donation ceremony was held at the Taiwan National Central Library where 100 sets of the *Complete Works* were donated by Fo Guang Shan's benefactors to renowned universities and libraries worldwide, such as Taiwan National University and Jiao Tong University. Furthermore, the documentary *Humanistic Buddhism: Initial Resolve*, produced under the leadership of Prof. Charles H.C. Kao, CEO of Commonwealth Corporation, premiered alongside the opening of an exhibition on Venerable Master's collected writings at the National Central Library.

In May, Phoenix Television CEO Liu Changle, for many years a devoted friend of Venerable Master, was conferred an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Management Science from Nanhua University, Taiwan. Concurrently, Vice Chancellor Joseph Sung of the Chinese University of Hong Kong specially came to Fo Guang Shan to bestow on Venerable Master an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Social Science. In September, Most Venerable Xuecheng, President of the Chinese Buddhist Association, accepted an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Management Science from Nanhua University at Fo Guang Shan. The ceremony coincided with the annual FGS Monastic Seminar, and Most Venerable Xuecheng was invited to speak to the assembly of monastics. Always caring for his disciples, Venerable Master spoke on several occasions to the gathering of over a thousand disciples from around the world, encouraging everyone to strive for Buddhism.

To nurture Buddhist talents, we initiated the Fo Guang Shan Seeds of Hope Project at Fo Guang Shan's Ancestral Temple, Dajue Temple in Yixing, to provide monastic disciples opportunities to engage in academic research on Humanistic Buddhism. Moreover, Fo Guang Shan Cultural and Educational Foundation implemented a project that fosters the talents of worthy students from disadvantaged families. The first batch of students are currently enrolled in Pu-Men High School, while the second batch of young talents has been recruited.

In promoting academic research on Buddhism, the Venerable Master Hsing Yun Public Education Trust Fund presented the 2016 Humanistic Buddhism Writing Scholarships at Dajue Temple in January. 22 outstanding graduate scholars from Beijing University, Renmin University, and Minzu University were recognized. In October, the 4th Humanistic Buddhism Youth Forum was held at FGS Singapore; and the Academic Conference on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Theory and Practice of Humanistic Buddhism, jointly organized by the FGS Institute of Humanistic Buddhism and Shanghai University, was held at the Hsing Yun Cultural and Educational Center in Shanghai. In November, Wuhan

University College of Chinese Language and Literature, and Wuhan University Institute for Chinese Religious Literature and Scriptures jointly conducted a seminar on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's philosophy on Humanistic Buddhism from literature to theory.

The Centre for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, jointly founded by FGS Cultural and Education Foundation and Chinese University of Hong Kong, received university accreditation to offer research programs on Buddhism, becoming the only master's degree program in Buddhist Studies in Hong Kong. Under the guidance of Venerable Tzu Hui, the FGS International University Consortium again held the University Presidents Forum. Presidents and scholars of over 40 colleges from 16 countries in Europe, America, Australia, and Asia came together for exchanges on their educational endeavors, building a platform for interactions and enhancing the academic status of Buddhist universities.

Furthermore, under the leadership of FGS International University Consortium President and Fo Guang University President Dr. Yung Chaur-Shin, Nanhua University President Lin Tsong-Ming, University of the West President Stephen Morgan, Nan Tien Institute President Bill Lovegrove, and Guang Ming College President Helen Correa, much has been accomplished. Nanhua University was recognized as most influential in five categories of academic research in Taiwan and received support from the Ministry of Education in establishing a Life Education Center in India. Fo Guang University was honored by the Ministry of Education for its outstanding academic planning program. Nan Tien Institute in Australia received accreditation from the country's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) as well as the recognition of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. A memorandum was signed with the New South Wales University Business School, a milestone furthering the development of Nan Tien Institute. Venerable Master donated proceeds from his One-Stroke Calligraphy works to establish the Nan Tien Institute Scholarship, and the Hsing Yun Education Foundation (Australia) was founded in Sydney for the institute's sustainable development. Guang Ming College in the Philippines already conducted its foundation stone laying ceremony for its campus in hopes of providing Filipino students an exceptional educational environment.

In September, Zu Lai Temple in Brazil again selected six "Sons of Zu Lai" to study at Nanhua University. BLIA Scouts Troops were established at Zu Lai Temple in Brazil and the FGS Cultural and Educational Center New Delhi, India. The latter consists of sramaneras becoming the first sramanera scouts troop. In the Southern Hemisphere, the Australia New Zealand Buddhist Youth Conference entered its 20th year. FGS Lian Hua Temple in Las Vegas, USA established its BLIA YAD subdivision, the first Buddhist youth group in the state of Nevada. It is indeed worthy of recognition when a group of 15 to 30 year-old youths is able to carry the torch of Buddhism in a city full of temptations. Moreover, after Venerable Master founded Yunhu Academy at Dajue Temple in Yixing, the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism also sanctioned the concept of *shuyuan* ("academy") in certifying 100 academies worldwide last September, sowing the seeds in Buddhism for young adults.

Additionally, Fo Guang Shan's Dharma propagation through sports has turned a new page. In March, Pu-Men High School Girls Basketball Team won the championship for HBL Class A. Its baseball team, formed just four years ago, was champion of the Aluminum Bat Division. The Three Acts of Goodness Sports Association conducted the 1st Nanhua Cup High School Baseball Tournament and the Cross-Strait Youth Baseball Tournament. Chiayi Open University established the FGS Chiayi Yuan Fu Temple Seniors Baseball Team. On its first participation, Nanhua University's soccer team won the Collegiate Five-Player Soccer Tournament. In November, led by Three Acts of Goodness Sports Association President Lai Wei-cheng as well as Master Hsing Yun Cultural and Educational Foundation (Mainland China) Secretary General Zhang Jing-zhi, the Fo Guang University Women's Basketball Team played against Normal University and Tsinghua University in Beijing, Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, and Nanjing University in Zhejiang. It was heart-warming to witness students holding Cross-Strait sport

exchanges.

In terms of cultural publishings, Venerable Man Chien, Venerable Ru Chang, Venerable Miao Shiang, and Dr. Yang Wei led a delegation from Fo Guang Shan and the Buddha Museum in donating the *Fo Guang Buddhist Canon*, Chinese and English editions of the *Encyclopedia of Buddhist Art*, and the *Fo Guang Buddhist Dictionary* to the Great British Library, holder of the world's second largest collection of books. The event opened new opportunities for bilateral cooperation, initiating cultural exchanges between the East and the West. It is a major step for the research and popularization of Buddhist scriptures and writings, introducing Fo Guang Shan publications into significant international venues of academia and arts.

In August, Venerable Chueh Pei participated in the memorialization of the 70th anniversary of Master Taixu's passing at Mt. Xuedou in Zhejiang. She presented an analysis on Humanistic Buddhism based on the academic publications by Venerable Master such as *Humanistic Buddhism: Holding True to the Original Intents of Buddha*, and the *Series on Humanistic Buddhism Philosophy*. The volumes were key exhibits at the event, receiving recognition from participating scholars.

Furthermore, BLTV's "I Love Happiness" animated series, based on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's *Humanistic Buddhism Series* and filled with Three Acts of Goodness stories, won the 52nd Golden Bell Award for Animation Program. Venerable Chueh Nien accepted the award on behalf of Fo Guang Shan. The production also won the Accolade at the Global Film Competition 2017 Awards of Excellence and 2017 Best of Show at the Depth of Field International Film Festival Competition in the US.

Last year, FGS Buddha Museum participated in the ICOM (International Council of Museums) conference in Milan, held once every three years. In March, the Museum was accepted as a member of the American Alliance of Museum (AAM). In April, the Museum participated in a joint exhibition with Shanghai Museum, Nanjing Museum, Zhejiang Museum, and Suzhou Museum at the Creative & Design Cultural Industry Expo in Suzhou. It also signed an alliance to be sister museums with Taiwan's Kinmin History and Folk Museum in August and Henan Museum in November, promoting Taiwan on an international level.

During the annual International Book Fair and Vegetarian Expo, the Buddha Museum, for the first time, organized a series of activities such as sutra sunning, sutra copying, tea and chan, and sutra reading, with over a thousand participants each. Jianzhen Library in Yangzhou and the Yangzhou Willow Silk Art Troupe jointly held the "Cloud of the Hometown: Music Concert," a Sound of the Human World presentation of Venerable Master's lifelong Dharma propagation in diverse art forms such as symphony music, songs, comic dialogue, drama, and musicals. The presentation was held at Chi Te Hall in Kaohsiung and the Buddha Museum, attended by over 3,000 people. The Yangzhou Forum, established by Venerable Master for conducting public cultural talks, entered its 10th anniversary. It invited around 200 speakers from various fields to present at the forum, truly worthy of the renown presented in the popular Chinese saying, "Baijia Forum in the north, Yangzhou Forum in the south."

The 2017 Reunion of Religious Associations enriched religious harmony with delegations from Judaism in France, Islam in the UK, Catholicism in Brazil, as well as Christian, Confucian, Daoist, and I-Kuan Tao followers in Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan. They came together to sing hymns, recite poems, and chant at the Love and Peace Prayer Concert. Notable first-time participants were Wong Tai Sin Temple from Hong Kong, a region where the three traditional Chinese religions are practiced in harmony, and Mt. Wudang Daoist Association from China. Over 700 temples and organizations from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau participated in the event, including about fifteen Mazu temples and sects. Because compassion and music are without borders, religions come together at the Buddha Museum for fellowship and exchange to make the world a better place.

FGS Chung Mei Temple in Houston collaborated with Stafford City to organize the Youth Represents the World Concert to spread the words of Humanistic Buddhism through song and lecture. In March, BLIA Melbourne held the Sounds of the Human World

singing competition. In May, the Vienna Fo Guang Youth Symphony Orchestra performed Buddhist music, songs from Sounds of the Human World, European music as well as famous songs from China and Taiwan at the Musikverein, one of five world-renowned concert halls. In June, at Fo Guang Shan's Ancestral Monastery, Dajue Temple in Yixing, Venerable Miao Shi joined the Yixing Dancers Association in holding the Humble Table, Wise Fare music competition. In August, the International Youth Seminar of Life and Ch'an entered its eighth year, attracting close to a thousand students from Harvard, Cambridge, Beijing, Fudan, and Taiwan National universities to learn at Fo Guang Shan. In September, Fo Guang Yuan Main Art Gallery conducted the Joint Exhibition of Monastic Artworks, a display of 229 pieces of artistic creations in photography, painting, calligraphy, and ceramics by 104 monastic disciples, including Venerable Hui Chao and Venerable Dao Pu. Awards were given for outstanding works as encouragement for spreading the Dharma through cultural endeavors.

FGS Thaihua Temple, through the efforts of Most Venerable Hsin Ting, held the inauguration of its Auspicious Gold Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva statue in April, the first temple in Thailand featuring Chinese architecture. On the same day, Mahachulalongkorn University and Fo Guang Shan Monastery signed a memorandum of collaboration, a testimony to Southern and Northern traditions joining together to propagate the Dharma.

Fo Guang Shan Hsingma Temple in Johor Bahru, Malaysia (so named by Venerable Master to signify "joint ownership by Singapore and Malaysia") was inaugurated in October after twenty years of support and through the vows of devotees in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Brunei. The jade mural in its Main Shrine, *The Spread of Humanistic Buddhism Teachings*, depicts scenes of Venerable Master leading the four divisions of disciples in propagating Humanistic Buddhism worldwide. The 2017 BLIA World Headquarters Board of Directors Meeting was held at the temple and Malaysia's first Chan and Pure Land Prayer Ceremony was also conducted.

Construction of FGS Housuiji Temple was made possible through many years of planning by Venerable Tzu Jung and Venerable Man Run. The jade buddha statue inside its main shrine was inaugurated in October and becoming the largest of its kind in Japan. The newly installed "Ikaho Onsen FGS Housuiji Temple" bus stop provides transportation services from Narita Airport to FGS Housuiji Temple, helping to bring more people to the Ikaho Onsen region. In Taiwan, Chao Chou Temple conducted its opening ceremony in January and the New Hui Chung Temple held its foundation stone laying ceremony in September.

The central Taiwan alms-round along the coast has been held for twenty-four years. Local Daoist temples such as Longching Tianshang Shengmu Laosima Temple and Wuchi Chenwugong Hsuantien Deity Temple also offered to participate in the event. The alms rounds offered blessings for the local communities, providing the opportunity for more people to join in supporting the Million-Member Fundraising Campaign for the universities. The FGS Buddha Museum held the first "Bringing Home the Fo Guang Big Buddha" Dharma service with more than 3,000 people welcoming 500 statues of the Fo Guang Big Buddha into their homes around the world for enshrinement. In celebration of Dharma Day, the Buddha's enlightenment, Fo Guang Shan Headquarters and FGS branch temples worldwide cooked *laba* porridge for the public to enjoy. Over two million bowls of *laba* porridge were distributed, and the activities were broadcast live by Phoenix Television.

At the 2017 Sangha Day celebration, overseas temples donated priceless Buddhist canons. Venerable Sim San, Venerable Master's friend for almost 40 years and honorary professor at Dongguk University in Korea, as well as Mr. Wickramapala Liyanarachchige from Purwarama Temple in Sri Lanka, presented the *Korean Buddhism Volumes*, *Sanghaloka Canon*, and the *Tibetan Buddhist Canon*, all housed at the Fo Guang Shan Sutra Repository.

In the 1960s, Venerable Master Hsing Yun went to Malaysia to spread the Dharma, and he visited Jin Ye Temple in Muar. In May, Venerable Chueh Cheng and I went to offer our congratulations to its third Abbot, Most Venerable Chan Liang at his installation ceremony,

enhancing the Dharma connection of Venerable Master in Malaysia and Singapore. In November, Tainan's Ta Hsien Temple held an inauguration ceremony for its newly constructed Main Shrine and Buddha statues. On behalf of FGS, I was present at the event. In November, Famen Temple in Shanxi celebrated the 30th anniversary of the rediscovery of the Buddha's finger bone relic and also for the temple alliance signing ceremony. When the Buddha's finger relic was first discovered, Elder Zhao Puchu offered a verse in praise: "Shadow bone is not one and not different, clear as the moon reflecting in three rivers." Venerable Master also wrote a piece of One-Stroke Calligraphy marking the special occasion to offer his blessings, "A thousand moons reflected in a thousand rivers, ten-thousand miles of cloudlessness are ten-thousand miles of sky."

Venerable Chueh Cheng was invited by the Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia to three seminars on "How to Recognize Cults Claiming to be Buddhist" in Eastern Malaysia. She also joined 13 Malaysian Buddhist organizations in Kuala Lumpur for a "Clean Stream Forum," as well as jointly conducting a "Media Forum" with the country's five major Chinese newspapers for enhancing harmony between different ethnic groups and religions.

Venerable Hui Chuan was invited to Wuhan, Hubei, for the Taiwan and Hubei Buddhist Cultural Exchange and Cross-Strait Harmonious Development Forum. He explained the concepts behind Venerable Master Hsing Yun's words, "In the revival of Chinese culture, Buddhism cannot be absent, especially now when the whole world is placing significant importance on Chinese culture." For past two and a half years, Venerable Man Shin of FGS New Zealand - North Island, has tirelessly distributed over 20,000 copies of *366 Days with Wisdom* by Venerable Master to hotels across the country. She has successfully made connections with various government agencies and religious organizations such as the New Zealand Human Rights Commission and Auckland City Interfaith Project, allowing more people to know about Humanistic Buddhism and Chinese culture.

The United Association of Humanistic Buddhism, Chunghua, organized the Delegation for Buddhist Development to Myanmar and Thailand, consisting of a new generation of leaders from Xiamen Buddhist Association, Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (BAROC), Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order, Bliss and Wisdom Sangha, and Ling Jiou Mountain Buddhist Society to promote dialogue between Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. It was the association's first visit to Myanmar and Thailand, fostering initial exchanges for Cross-Strait Buddhists between Northern and Southern traditions.

Zu Lai Temple in Brazil held a religious fellowship meeting with Roman Catholics. It welcomed Our Lady of Aparecida to Zu Lai Temple, and together with Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, accepted prayers and homage from the public. "A Pledge for World Peace" was jointly signed by FGS South America Chief Abbess Venerable Miao Yuan, on behalf of Venerable Master, Sao Paulo Cardinal Odilo and Bishop Dom Bosco, a historic affirmation of religious exchanges between Humanistic Buddhism and Catholics in Brazil.

Certainly, there are many more Dharma propagation reports, but there is too much to relate and too little time. We are thankful to the Buddha for his compassionate blessings, Venerable Master for his leadership, as well as devotees worldwide, the general public, and those with affinities with the Dharma for their devotion and support. In the new year, we, both monastics and laity, resolve to uphold the spirit of Venerable Master's "A Family of Loyalty and Honor." Together, we shall embrace the honor, righteousness, and benevolence of bodhisattva volunteers, following the footsteps of Venerable Master in propagating Humanistic Buddhism through endeavors in education, culture, sports, arts, and music in spreading the Dharma, sowing Bodhi seeds in this world.

My best wishes for you all to thrive and be fulfilled in merits and wisdom!

Hsin Bao
Head Abbot

Chairperson, Fo Guang Board of Directors
New Year's Day, 2018