

Wednesday, August 23, 2017

**Talking about the spirit of voluntarism:
Think that we are the transformation body of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva**

Page | 1

Good morning, everyone. Today is Wednesday, a day in the middle of the week is a happy day. It is also a happy day for me as I will meet with the Imam of the Muslim *Ahmadiyya Muslim Community*. Imam is like the equivalent of a teacher in Buddhism. Also like a pastor. He can be married and have children, but dedicates his life to people in the Islam religion (faith).

Our concept of giving is a very good Buddhist concept. Buddhism tells us that when we give, we should try to lead receivers to the other shore. So we have to define what kind of people are our receivers and what kind of attitude we need to get them to the other shore. For example, how and what can we give to help others end their suffering, to help them become enlightened, to give them happiness, and to help them change their viewpoints.

Paramita (to the other shore) in Giving Paramita is a very special word. Sometimes we give because we want to get merit, to build up good luck and good credits for our future life. Sometimes we give in hope of having people pay us back later on, or getting good karma. With such expectations, we cannot give wholeheartedly.

Volunteerism is also an act of giving. During my last visit to Taiwan, they gave me a list of changes in the admin staff beginning in December. After I read the list of names, one person told me she's very happy because her service term is ending, and there will be no more stress for her. I smile and told her, "That thinking is wrong. It's not that we only work hard when our name is on the list, or when we're assigned a job. We should think that we still work hard, even harder, without an assigned responsibility because volunteer service is an act of Giving Paramita. Giving out something is easy, but giving or sacrificing our life is giving our ego, our energy, and our life force. We should give in such a way that we can reach the other shore, the shore of selflessness. That is the highest form of giving paramita".

When I met tens of thousands of Muslims in London, I saw that they dedicate their whole life to propagate their religion, without expecting any reward, gratitude, or payback.

When we do volunteer work, we should not complain, be bossy, haughty, or finger pointing, but should do whatever and whenever we are needed. We should think that we cultivate to become the transformation body of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva. Then everything will turn out fine. We will volunteer eagerly, unconcerned about our own benefits, or challenges. We will smile at all difficulties, negative comments, or gossips,

knowing these things are very common among human beings but we are a transformation body of Kuan Yin. In the Bodhisattva Path, the conduct of sacrificing oneself comes after the conduct of being there in person for someone. If we always expect something in return, always want to be safe and secure, search for an environment where no one will know your weakness and dark side, we can never commit to any sacrificial service.

We should change our way of thinking about ourselves and our volunteer services, then we will make all our days happy.

Wishing you all a happy day!

(Translated from Vietnamese by HT & Pam)