

## Director's Open Letter

The Spring of Maitreya is returning. Like a tonic, it brings everybody hope, love and confidence. Although surrounded by the forces of ignorance, we shall be able, under the light of loving kindness, compassion and rejoicing in Maitreya Buddha, to overcome animosity and bring about a life of peace and happiness to everybody.

**Maitreya Buddha** is the future Buddha of this world. Although residing in the Pure Land of Tushita, he often appears in our world to save sentient beings at the beginning of spring when there are calamities. His methods of salvation are none other than the four immeasurables: loving kindness, compassion, rejoicing and equanimity. The reason why we are suffering from our sorrowful collective karma is because we are moving further and further away from the qualities of loving kindness and compassion. We have no genuine love for other people or other nations. We nourish selfishness and therefore love our race and ourselves only. We are ready to rob others of their comforts in order to gain benefits for ourselves, which perpetuates ill will and results in unavoidable carnage. **Maitreya Buddha** teaches: *"if we work for the benefit of others in response to the harm they have done us, animosity will vanish. But if we follow the path of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, animosity will multiply endlessly."* If human beings practise loving kindness and compassion as taught in Buddhism, there will be no place for hostilities in the world.

Envy and grasping help to create the causes of war. We envy others because they are wealthier than we are and have more comforts than we do. So we have to compete with them, to rob them of their possessions, and in doing so we give ourselves over to antagonism and retribution. Stubbornly maintaining that our opinions are the only ones that are correct and supporting the view that justice is in the hands of those in power gives rise to class struggle. Compassion, rejoicing and equanimity seem to fade away. Ideals set forth in

sayings such as *"Love thy neighbours as thyself"* and *"Suppress vices, promote virtues"* are now more and more out of reach, rendering human conditions even gloomier. Maitreya Buddha teaches: *"We should behave impartially towards both friends and foes"*. If we have the same loving kindness, compassion, rejoicing and equanimity for all sentient beings, our world will definitely become a Buddha's pure land and we all shall be able to enjoy an endless spring in our hearts.

Faced with the ever-increasing influence of ignorance, we must spread the light of enlightenment to destroy the age-old darkness of evil.

Originating from the above perspective, **Huong Dao Magazine** (Magazine of Dharma scent) came into existence with three clear-cut purposes:

- Spreading the Buddha's message of loving kindness, rejoicing and equanimity to help people live peaceful and happy lives and to wipe the tears of suffering from the world.
- Promoting the traditional ethical culture of our people, reminding everybody of our origin.
- Providing Buddhists with the means to learn Buddha's teachings and to practise the path of loving kindness and compassion as well as sending news and reports of the Congregation to every family.

Like a swallow wishing to make a summer, we started the magazine empty-handed but with no lack of enthusiasm. We fervently call on our fellow Buddhists to make contributions, whether it be an opinion or a helping hand to enable Huong Dao Giac Ngo (Dhamma scent of enlightenment) to spread its scent, bringing everybody faith and a life lived according to the righteous path taught by the Buddha.

On the occasion of the Spring of Nham Ngo, we sincerely wish our readers a new year of peace, good health and prosperity.

Namo Maitreya Buddha