

# A Letter to Dharma Protectors and Friends in 2022



Dear Dharma protectors and friends,  
Auspicious greetings!

May each and every day be filled with peace. May our year be blessed with a new spring. In the Year of Tiger, I, Hsin Bau, on behalf of the Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors and worldwide Fo Guang Shan Sangha, hereby send forth the 2022 Chinese New Year Greetings from Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the founder of Fo Guang Shan to you all: "Faith will be the strength needed to free us from fear and encourage all to coexist in peace. This is the true path to happiness and peace. May All Beings Live Without Fear and Coexist in Peace!"

As the COVID-19 Delta variant rampaged through the globe last year, the fight against the pandemic remains the goal of humanity as a whole. In the midst of this pandemic, Fo Guang Shan and Buddha's Light members have upheld Venerable Master Hsing Yun's philosophy of "Coexistence as One," and continued to help relieve people from suffering and distress around the world regardless of background, religion or nationality. In May, when the pandemic in India took a turn for the worse and received international attention, Fo Guang Shan Malaysia responded quickly and initiated the "Bring Oxygen to India" campaign. Over 200 oxygen concentrators and ventilators were fundraised and sent to India, providing relief to those living in poverty and remote villages.

When the pandemic in Taiwan took a turn from stable containment to rapid spread, BLIA Chunghua immediately launched the "Buddha's Light Pandemic Prevention and Rescue Program" and provided 102,510 N95 masks, 77,020 hazmat suits, 23,578 protective goggles, and 18,180 protective masks to police units, firefighters, and medical institutions in over 20 counties and municipalities with thanks to the generous contributions of devotees across the world. 100 oxygen concentrators and ventilators, 30 thermometers and disinfection channels benefited 20 county and municipal governments, as well as 197 departments throughout Taiwan. Simultaneously, the mapping of vegetarian restaurants was established as part of a charity play to promote vegetarianism through *The Merit Times* newspaper. A total of 5,300 restaurants and 600 vegetarian enterprises participated in the project, donating more than 200,000 meals to those in need.

In July, the Kaohsiung City Government Department of Health approved the Fo Guang United Clinic of Fo Guang Shan Monastery to provide Covid-19 vaccination services, which is another pivotal step for Fo Guang Shan in pandemic prevention work.

As the Venerable Master says, "Faith is the treasure within." It is with the power of faith that minds and bodies can be calm and settled. Fo Guang Shan and the Buddha's Light International Association came together in praying for a speedy ending of the pandemic through online activities such as "Global Mindfulness: Simultaneous Transcription" and "Chan and Pure Land Prayer Service." Additionally, more than 4 million people recited the *Heart Sutra* during the Buddha's Birthday, and the "Fo Guang Shan Virtual Bathing of the Buddha" had attracted more than 6 million participants in total.

March 31<sup>st</sup> was Avalokitesvara's Birthday, during which the "2021 Fo Guang Shan Global Online Taking Refuge in the Triple Gem Ceremony" was held inside Fo Guang Shan's Main Shrine and live streamed to 19 countries and regions worldwide, including the United States, Canada, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, India, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Chile. Simultaneous interpretation in 6 languages was also provided: Chinese, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Cantonese. Close to 3,500 participants from five continents, including 66 from Africa's Democratic Republic of the Congo who became Buddhists. Additionally, 1,600 participants attended the ceremony from Fo Guang Shan's branch temples—Taipei Vihara, Bao Hua Temple, and Feng Shan Temple—fulfilling their wishes and making vows in the Triple Gem.

The Venerable Master has dedicated his life to promoting the "Triple Gem Festivals" so that the world can get to know Buddhism as a faith of joy and happiness. Last year, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison also made a special video appearance to congratulate the Buddha's Day and Multicultural Festival held at

Federation Square in Melbourne.

Thanks to the global efforts of Humanistic Buddhism translators, both monastics and devotees, Venerable Master Hsing Yun's works were published in various foreign languages last year: *I Am Not a Monk "Sponging Off" Buddhism* in English, French, and Korean; *Buddha-Dharma: Pure and Simple* in English, French and Swedish; *The Rabbit's Horn: A Commentary on the Platform Sutra* in French; *365 Days for Travelers: Wisdom from Chinese Literary and Buddhist Classics* in Spanish; and the *Path to Happiness*—a selection of *Hsing Yun's Dharma Words* in Vietnamese. The Thai-Chinese Buddhist Texts Translation Center was granted a certificate of incorporation in February, so Thai translations will be forthcoming.

It is worth mentioning that the version in Simplified Chinese of *This Shore and the Other Shore—Book Review of the Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, compiled by the Master Hsing Yun Cultural and Educational Foundation and published by New Star Press in Beijing, was officially released on November 16 under the supervision of Secretary-General Zhang Jingzhi.

Many readers now prefer to listen to audio books. *The Buddha-Dharma: Pure and Simple* is available in Cantonese on *Master Hsing Yun's Audio Book* APP. Aside from that, the English versions of *Buddha-Dharma: Pure and Simple* and *Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Buddhist Stories* are also available on YouTube and WeChat. *Hsing Yun's Audible* by iBLTV APP is now available in Swedish.

Under the Venerable Master's visions of media communications, *The Merit Times* has once again received wide acclaim. In June, it became the first Chinese language media partner of Media Carrier, an international digital media company. As a result, this Buddhist newspaper can be read in 1,200 hotels, 20 airlines, and cruise passengers worldwide via its reading platform. In early September, *The Merit Times* was made available for download in more than 120 countries on PressReader, the world's largest newspaper and magazine platform.

On May 16, in celebrating the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Fo Guang Shan and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Buddha Museum, the Buddha Museum presented the "Buddhist Maritime Silk Road—New Media Art Exhibition," which is the world's first complete presentation of the Buddhist Maritime Silk Road. On International Museum Day on May 18, the National Museum of History collaborated to curate the "The Earthly Pond: Artwork of Lotus by Chang Dai-Chien and Other Artists" exhibition, displaying more than 70 paintings of lotuses by famous artists over the past century. The two treasures "Ink Lotus" and "Lotus" were on display, which were given to Venerable Master Hsing Yun by Chang Dai-Chien, and such is a witness to the friendship between them.

To promote the Venerable Master's concept of cultural exchange, the Buddha Museum has renewed its friendship with the National Museum of History and established a cooperative relationship with the National Museum of Prehistory and Culture in Taiwan for the first time; at the end of the year, the five-year plan with the Chinese Cultural Relics Exchange Association in mainland China will relaunch the important exhibition "Long Roads Together: The Human History of the Ancient Tea Horse Road."

In November, the Buddha Museum held the "Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum International Book Fair: Never Stop Caring," donating 18,000 books to schools in rural areas throughout Taiwan, also giving 300 sets of the *Encyclopedia of Buddhist Arts* to major libraries for their collections. At the same time, a Mobile Library was donated to the offshore island of Lienchiang County.

The nurturing of monastic talents had begun from as early as Fo Guang Shan's founding. In 2021, the FGS Tsung-lin University held its first-ever online joint graduation ceremony in its 57-year history. Hundreds of monastic and lay graduates from Buddhist colleges in Malaysia, India, and Hong Kong set out on the path of propagating Humanistic Buddhism with the blessing of 3,000 witnesses.

In addition, an Online Buddhist College program was specially designed for overseas youths who share the interest of studying and learning the Dharma. The program enrolled more than 220 students from 15 countries and

regions in just two semesters, including over 90 master's degrees and Ph.D. holders. A trend has emerged in which knowledgeable young people study Buddhism.

In May, Fo Guang Shan Malaysia Dong Zen Institute of Buddhist Studies offered an Indonesian-language online Buddhism course for the first time in a cross-national and cross-regional context, with over 250 young Indonesian students participating in two batches. Hopefully, Indonesia will have more talented people to propagate Humanistic Buddhism while also taking on the mission of developing Indonesian Buddhism.

In October, Fo Guang Shan held the 2021 Fo Guang Shan Ten-thousand Buddha Sramanera Precepts Ceremony, in which 41 youths from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mainland China, Malaysia, Japan, and New Zealand became tonsured under Venerable Master Hsing Yun. With the addition of new eminent and virtuous ones under the seat of the Dharma King, all buddhas, bodhisattvas, and heavenly and human beings alike rejoiced!

"The establishment of universities is not just for Buddhism but for the whole of humanity. This is our responsibility to the world." The compassionate heart and vows of the Venerable Master are thus revealed to their full extent. In keeping with Venerable Master's philosophy of building universities, Fo Guang Shan Five-in-One International University Consortium, under the leadership of President Yang Chaur-shin, has undertaken the mission of benefiting society.

Nanhua University, under the leadership of President Lin Tsung-ming, has been listed in the *Times Higher Education's* "University Impact Ranking" and ranked fifth in the "2021 Top Buddhist Universities" by UniRank, Australia. In the 2021 UI GreenMetric World University Ranking, Nanhua University ranked 64<sup>th</sup>, the best record in the past six years.

FGU has launched the "Selecting Courses Instead of Departments" policy for the whole campus. Its Department of Health and Creative Vegetarian Science, the only one of its kind worldwide, has also received much attention. In August, Jow-Fei Ho took over as president and organized a series of lectures on the Olympic spirit, inviting Olympic athletes to share their experiences.

Starting in June, Denise Kirkpatrick, the new President of Nan Tien Institute in Australia, has co-hosted the Buddhism in the Sea of Islands Webinar series with Deakin University in Melbourne and Western Sydney University, exploring the history of the development of Buddhism in Oceania.

In November, a ceremony was held at the University of the West in the United States to transplant a bodhi tree from the Buddha's place of enlightenment. Walpola Piyananda, abbot of Dharma Vijaya Buddhist Vihara, and Dr. Minh-Hoa Ta, president of the University, witnessed this historical moment.

Guang Ming College in the Philippines has added a men's basketball team and a sports science department, which has invited Bo Perasol, championship-winning coach of the 2019 BLIA Cup International University Basketball Tournament, to join the faculty. National artist Alice Reyes also serves as the advisor of the College's art department. The Three Acts of Goodness Hall at the Guang Ming College construction site in Tagaytay is nearing completion, and the public is overjoyed.

The Centre for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, jointly established by the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, Universiti Malaya, and Fo Guang Shan, respectively held the online "Certificate Program in Management Culture of Humanistic Buddhism" and organized a series of activities on the study of Humanistic Buddhism.

The Ten Lectures on Humanistic Buddhism designed by the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism have also initiated dialogues between scholars and monastics since March. The 8<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism moved to Nan Tien Institute in Australia for the first time, where 23 scholars and experts from 6 countries participated in an online English forum on the theme "Humanistic Buddhist Response to Modern Crises."

As a lifelong sports advocate, the Venerable Master has set up the Three Acts of Goodness Sports Association supporting Fo Guang Shan's sports teams. He says, "I hope Buddhism is involved in sports. It will honor

Buddhism." In terms of sports performance last year, the FGU women's basketball team finished in third place for two consecutive years in the UBA college league; two players were chosen for the national training team for U19 Women's Basketball World Cup. Among the baseball teams at Pumen High School and Nanhua University, nearly 20 players emerged in the CPBL's (Chinese Professional Baseball League) draft. Likewise, the soccer team at Nanhua University won the first runner-up place in the open division of the University Futsal Championship, the best in the team's history.

To provide systematic online learning for the Fo Guang Shan members, temples in North America have started FGS North America Humanistic Buddhism Courses. South America has launched the "South America Lecture Courses." Nan Hua Temple in Africa has also held "Cultivating the Mind's Field" cloud lectures, whereas Nan Tien Temple in Australia has organized "Nan Tien Cloud Classes." These courses have realized the Venerable Master's philosophy that "a monastery is a school and its abbot, the principal."

In September, the Buddha's Light International Association conducted its first Global Online Buddhist Examination in 58 countries and regions. Nearly 40,000 people took the exam in eight languages. Temples were actively engaged in pre-test study courses.

The Venerable Master often says, "A temple is life's gas station." In October, good news came to us that San Bao Temple in San Francisco has successfully passed the public hearing on its reconstruction, which will expand its services for the public in the future.

Buddhism values the presence of youth. Venerable Master once said, "Youth is the hope of Buddhism!" In the past 11 years, nearly 2 million students from over 1,000 schools have benefited from the Three Acts of Goodness School Award supported by The Venerable Master Hsing Yun Public Education Trust Fund. The Seeds of Hope talent fostering project, established six years ago, has provided a way for underprivileged students from remote areas to acquire an education and thereby transform lives.

In March, the Buddha's Light International Association (BLIA) established the Seeds of Hope Schools based at branch temples. In April, Fo Guang Shan Singapore hosted the "13<sup>th</sup> Weide Zhihai Pen Calligraphy Competition" with nearly 8,000 student entries. In May, Fo Guang Shan North Island New Zealand launched the "3G4G Cultural Sharing Festival" with nearly 8,000 teachers, students and parents participating in interactive teaching. The 516 BLIA Scouts Brazil was invited to the Spiritual Council of Union of Brazilian Scouts-Buddhist Team to jointly develop a Buddhist curriculum, marking a milestone of Humanistic Buddhism propagation in Brazil. In June, the first "Fo Guang Shan Youth Summit" was held, with nearly 1,000 young Buddhists from 24 countries and regions discussing the theme of "Faith and Legacy." In August, the Dharma Hall of the Sutra Repository organized the Online Dharma Lecture Series for Youth, inviting professional young lecturers to share their entrepreneurial experiences. In October, the Volunteer Association launched the Online Dharma Lecture Series for Youth to enhance the quality of Buddhist education, and also organized an online volunteer training series to improve the quality of volunteers.

Last year marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the BLIA Chunghua Headquarters. The BLIA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Music Feast was held in February at the National Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall in Taipei, commemorating the life-long Dharma propagation of the Venerable Master through songs and music. The 2021 BLIA World Headquarters General Conference, postponed to October due to the pandemic, was held online with over 20,000 participants. The conference theme of "Wisdom & Innovation" serves as a driving force and guideline for growth and development of the association. The event took place on the second floor of Fo Guang Shan's Cloud Dwelling Building, with twelve large monitors displaying the meeting of BLIA members from five continents. The conference was supported by over 100 IT engineers at home and abroad; as well as 50 members providing simultaneous interpretation services in eight languages, namely Chinese, English, Japanese, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, and Cantonese.

In view of the extreme climate changes and its impact on the environment, Fo Guang Shan established the iPure Green Foundation in March. To raise public awareness in environmental issues, the Foundation organized the global VEGRUN event. Moreover, it co-organized the T-Earth Tree Planting Project and the Vege Plan A Project with BLIA. Jens Niesen, President of the World Climate Foundation, was invited to participate in the 26<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in October, saying that the Buddhist concept of "coexistence and equality" is a topic that should be taken seriously worldwide.

Last year, the Cardinal Shan Foundation and Fo Guang Shan co-organized the "Live Out Love, It's Good to Have You!" interfaith online blessing event, as well as the The Way of Liv'in Love walk to pray for the early eradication of the pandemic.

Mr. Chin-Ping Wang, the founding president of the Chunghua Federation of Traditional Religious Associations, organized "When Buddha Meets the Gods" event for six consecutive years during his term, creating a world record. In October, he was appointed the Honorary President at the General Conference cum Director Election. Succeeding as the third president, I will continue to work with our members to promote religious harmony and world peace.

To foster interfaith exchanges in the region, Fo Guang Shan Malaysia was appointed by the Ministry of National Unity as a member of the first Interfaith Commission of Malaysia in March. In response to the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week, Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple of New York was invited to host an online forum with representatives of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism from 11 countries and regions. At the General Conference of the European Buddhist Union (EBU), Fo Guang Shan Europe was unanimously approved as a member of the EBU to jointly promote various Buddhist projects of the European Union.

In March, the "United Association of Humanistic Buddhism, Chunghua" accredited 34 monasteries as service offices of the Association to work together in promoting humanistic Buddhism. In December, it co-organized the 2021 Humanistic Buddhism Development Online Seminar with the Buddhist Association with China for the first time, where over 500 monastics discussed "New Trends in Dharma Propagation in the Post-Pandemic Era," demonstrating the unity of the Buddhist communities across the Strait.

The Venerable Master received the Global Chinese 15<sup>th</sup> Compassion Award for his lifetime propagation of Humanistic Buddhism. "A Prayer for World Peace" recited by him was played during the ceremony, which was broadcasted on television networks in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Taipei, including Phoenix TV. On May 20, the Venerable Master Hsing Yun Public Education Trust Fund, in partnership with the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China, organized a "Barrier-Free Love" flash mob event at Beijing Daxing Airport in honor of the Global Accessibility Awareness Day. This event was filmed simultaneously in 10 cities around the world to express our care to the disadvantaged people around the world. Venerable Master once said, "One can have nothing, but one cannot be without compassion." Fo Guang members should uphold compassion and loving kindness to spread Humanistic Buddhism in five continents.

In the upcoming new year, on behalf of the monastery, I would like to express our gratitude once again to our global Dharma protectors and friends for your continued support and participation in various Fo Guang Shan Dharma propagations. As the pandemic continues, may we all practice the Three Acts of Goodness advocated by Venerable Master—Do Good Deeds, Speak Good Words, and Think Good Thoughts. Together, may we grow in faith, overcome challenges, and create happiness and peace as one. Blessings to you all!

Hsin Bau  
Head Abbot

Chairperson, Fo Guang Board of Directors  
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(Translated by the FGS Institute of Humanistic Buddhism, Center of International Affairs)