

# The Dharma Teacher Order Newsletter

Vol. Four Issue Four June 2018

## Craig Hannah (CT Sangha) Reports on the Annual Dharma Teacher Order Retreat

Craig Hannah, of the CT Sangha, with his own initiative, wrote up a comprehensive summary of our Annual Retreat at Mariandale. It is available to read by going to the link below. We deeply appreciate all the time and effort Craig put into this work. I do believe that this is the first time we have ever had a report on a retreat. We get so caught up in the activities of a retreat that it is sometimes difficult to remember everything that was discussed. This document will be so helpful for future reference. Please access the link below and you will see for yourself what a masterful job Craig did. Right click on <http://forum.dharmateacherorder.org/showthread.php?tid=32>.

Thank you, Craig, for spearheading all our communication innovations and for your teaching about MailChimp.



Michelle of CT and Sondra of TX  
were ordained as priests



Representatives from every sangha are seen in this  
group photograph.

Readers, please check out our wonderful website. Our webmaster is constantly making improvements to it and adding more information and photographs to keep it current. Also, all the Dharma Teacher Order newsletters are also posted on our website.

Right click to open hyperlink: [dharmateacherorder.org](http://dharmateacherorder.org)

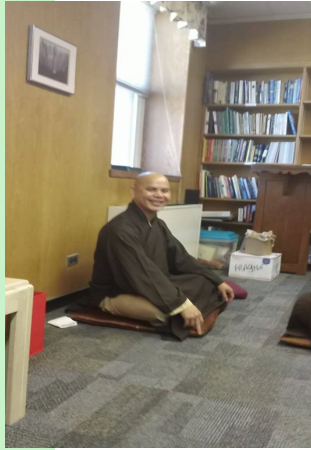
## Poetry Inspired by the Retreat

*From Thay Thanh of  
the Virginia Beach  
Sangha:*

"Contemplating  
Walking is stopping  
I am moving.  
Sitting is stopping  
I am standing.  
And between the two  
I am nothing."

And another...

"Enjoying this fragile life  
Those of us now alive  
Must not waste any time  
Waiting to die  
And then being born again;  
Instead hold tight  
This fragile life,  
And enjoy a walk or rest  
Just being still  
Life can be fun."



Below—Thay ordaining Fay  
and Jon as Dharma Teachers



# Teo Castellanos' Dharma Talk on Compassion



The following link is just a short video clip from the April Retreat which was recorded spontaneously but it will give you an idea of Teo's wonderfully inspiring dharma talk. Please see Craig's report on the retreat for more details on this talk.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ATMYMwhK2I>

## Buddhist-Christian Dialogue Teaching—June 16 at Mariandale By Dr. Rev. Fernando Camacho

Buddhist-Christian Dialogue - This yearly series explores the many similarities between these two traditions. We will review many of the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha and discuss the way of the Saint and the way of the Bodhisattva. All Dharma Teacher Order members and friends are invited to attend.

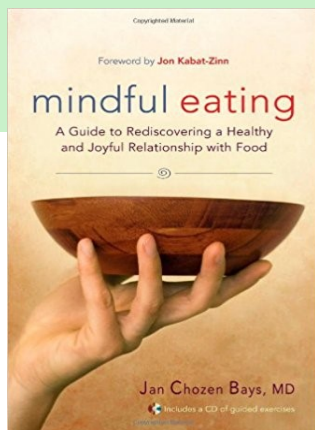


Some photos of the Retreat  
from Brother Noble Silence



**Mindful Eating...** At our retreat, we practice “noble silence” during our meals. Have you ever thought deeply about silent eating? Maybe you will find this book relevant and very inspiring. Jan Chozen Bays is very helpful in understanding the spiritual and health benefits of mindful eating. Jan Chozen Bays, M.D. is a pediatrician and a Zen teacher who has taught mindful eating in a variety of contexts for nearly thirty years.

She is co-abbot of the Great Vow Zen Monastery in Clatskanie (near Portland), Oregon, and teaches her Art of Mindful Eating workshops for individuals as well as health care professionals.



“Right now we are in need of a fresh approach to our eating problems because the conventional approaches aren’t working.”

## Poetry...to be or not to be?

The Dharma Teacher Order Newsletter Editor has brought up the subject of publishing poetry from time to time, a poem related to one’s practice or a poem with a spiritual inclination, a piece that will foster insight and better understanding of oneself. Seeing our work in print helps to do that. The June Edition is the ideal time as we do not have much sangha news. Thay Thanh responded and sent two poems, and so gave me the impetus to be brave and publish one of my own, a poem which I have never showed anyone until now.

We will be going into summer soon, the season for mulberries, so the subject of the poem seems apropos. It is a vignette from my childhood, an authentic depiction and a harbinger of future spiritual leanings although that concept would have been unknown to me at that age. There is a spiritual message, which is natural, subtle and, frankly, coincidental. How is it that we know things instinctively in childhood and then settle into forgetfulness in adulthood through conditioning and conformity?



### The Mulberry Tree

I was eight when I sat on a limb of the mulberry tree,  
With the purple carpet of crushed mulberries beneath,  
And my legs swinging in rhythm  
To a contentment I could not contain.  
I daintily picked off each nubby berry  
And felt its gratifying softness and its  
Anticipated succulence on its way to my mouth,  
Its sweetness, familiar, yet always new.  
Its jeweled-tone juice dripped through my fingers.  
My hands were messy and sticky,  
But my thoughts were tidy and clear.  
In this simple act of eating mulberries  
There was no confusion or doubt.  
Could it have been the stirring of wisdom then~  
While so young and from so simple an act?  
Somehow I knew that eating mulberries  
Perched on a limb on a hot summer day  
With the warm wind caressing my young form  
Was the most important thing in the world.

Janet Reale  
Composed May 19, 1996

**Please Notice This**



You can subscribe to Tricycle's "Daily Dharma" for inspiring daily teachings sent to your inbox. <https://tricycle.org/dailydharma> (interesting article "The Buddhist Guide to Exploring New York")

Another Tricycle link is "dharma talks" found here:

[https://tricycle.org/dharmataalks/?utm\\_source=ga&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIvrOm9KqP2wIV1VmGCh0hMQtmEAAYASAAEgKJwD BwE](https://tricycle.org/dharmataalks/?utm_source=ga&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIvrOm9KqP2wIV1VmGCh0hMQtmEAAYASAAEgKJwD BwE)

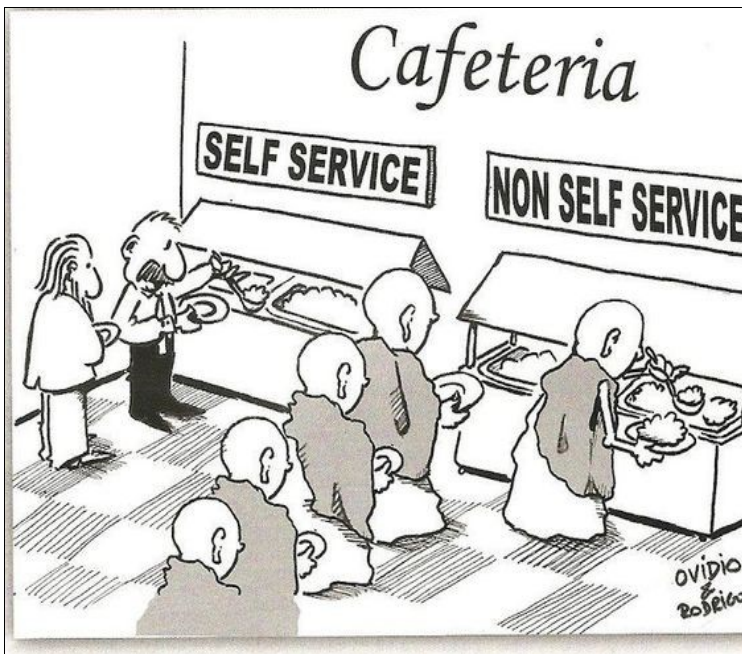
With all links, simply right-click for pull-up menu, scroll down for "open hyperlink":

**Exciting News—The Dharma Teacher Order has a channel on YouTube!**

It has more lots of photos of the retreat and some video clips.

Once again, thanks to Craig Hannah for facilitating this.

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCDgWN9WmRSa5Ha3V-Ty amQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDgWN9WmRSa5Ha3V-Ty amQ)



Touching the Earth—one of the most beautiful Buddhist teachings and practices.

# Vesak at Dharma Spring

## Celebrating Vesak at Dharma Spring

On May 20, Dharma Spring Temple in Pearland celebrated the holy day of Vesak, affectionately known as the Buddha's Birthday. It celebrates an important event in the life of the historical Buddha, while at the same time it speaks to us deeply in many ways.

The service was very beautiful. The altar was decorated with special care, and front and center, the baby Buddha stood in a basin of water, smiling, with arms outstretched.

One of the most touching parts of the ceremony was when the children, dressed in colorful outfits, processed to the altar, two by two, to offer gifts to the baby Buddha. The six gifts represent the six paramitas: candles for wisdom, incense for the precepts, flowers for patience, fruit for effort, tea for meditation, and food for generosity.

As we watched the innocent children offer these symbolic gifts, we too offered them to the Buddha, within our own hearts.

After chanting in Vietnamese and in English, we were treated to a special Dharma talk by Thay and our lay priest, Sondra Kaighen. We then participated in the ceremony to transmit the Three Refuges and the Five Wonderful Precepts to a member of our congregation. This gave everyone present the opportunity to reflect upon and renew their own vows on this special day.

The Vesak ceremony ended with a music offering and a ritual known as 'Bathing the baby Buddha.' Thay performed a blessing ceremony and then the congregation approached the altar, two by two, to pour the blessed water over the baby Buddha. This symbolizes the purification of all our defilements so that the baby Buddha, our own Buddha nature, can be born within us. So, you see, the Buddha's birthday is our birthday too! (See photos in the hyperlink below.)

[https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipMwIVZmZB3CuII04Vgh9Z0dXsRnVHQBHBun1K2ClkwK7CZ8H-aQB30u\\_cvp4abqmQ?key=NkpFcHJiMWl2aDFxZkZxYTVCYk41dEVOM1ZiNXdR](https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipMwIVZmZB3CuII04Vgh9Z0dXsRnVHQBHBun1K2ClkwK7CZ8H-aQB30u_cvp4abqmQ?key=NkpFcHJiMWl2aDFxZkZxYTVCYk41dEVOM1ZiNXdR)



Thay doing the Buddhist blessing in front of the Baby Buddha

*Editor's Note: I always think that the June Edition will be scanty, not so with this June 2018 Edition. I know there are a lot of hyperlinks but I didn't want you to miss anything !*

*Enjoy the photos in the hyperlink from Dharma Spring's Vesak Celebration. Thank you to Sister Cathy Hill for the article and the photos.*

Nothing is more precious  
than being in the  
present moment.  
Fully alive,  
fully aware.

— Thich Nhat Hanh

