



# LUANGPU WAT PAKNAM



PHRAMONGKOLTHEPMUNI

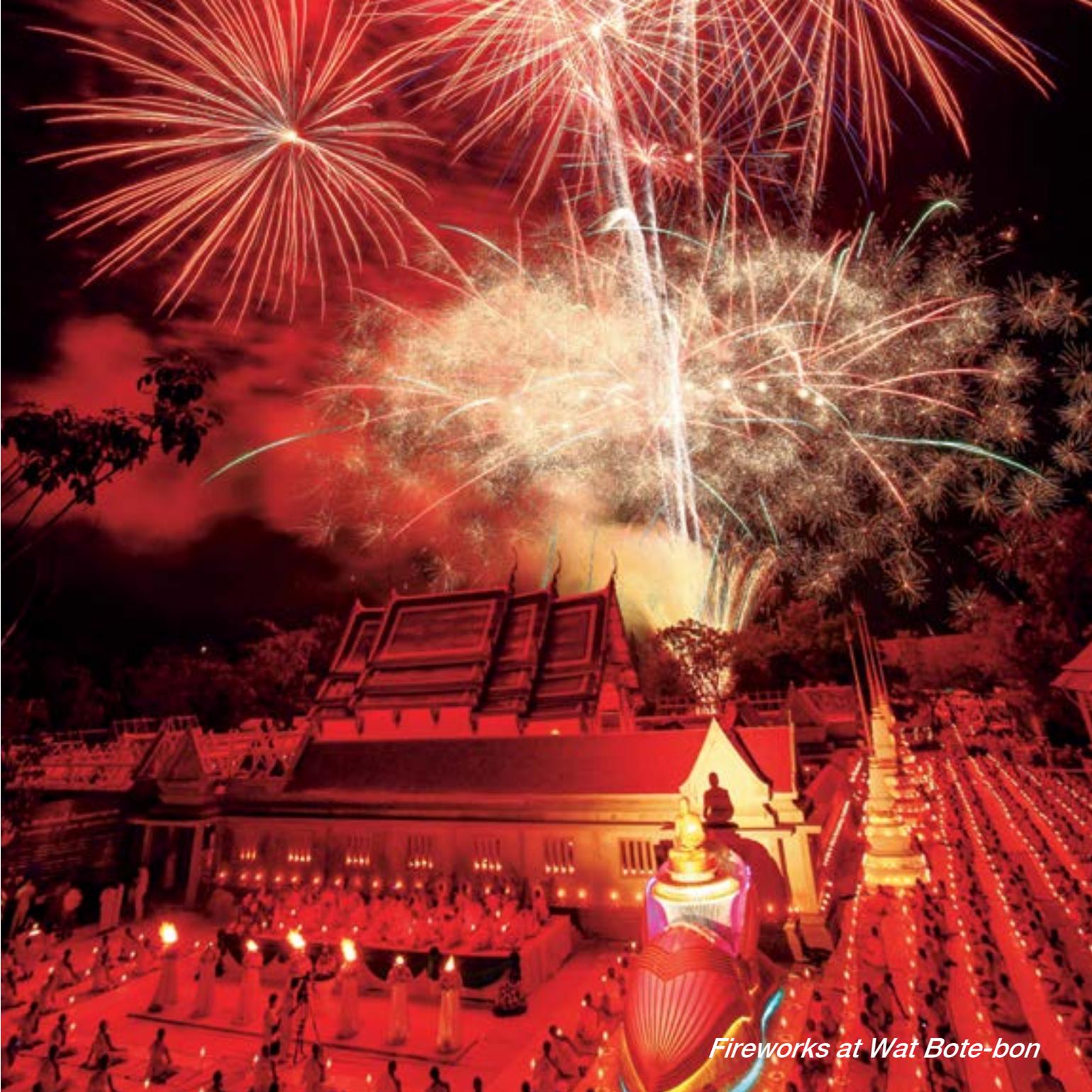


*Celebrating Luangpu's birthplace*

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*Fireworks at Wat Bote-bon*

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**1884**

Luangpu was born Sodh Mikaewnoi on October 10, 1884, to the family of Ngeun and Sutjai Mikaewnoi, a rice merchant in Songpinong, Suphanburi, 60 miles west of Bangkok.



*Sutjai Mikaewnoi, Luangpu's mother.*

Sodh was the second born of five siblings with an older sister, Dha, and three younger brothers, Sai, Phook and Samruam in order of birth.



*Aerial shot of Songpinong area.*

The land where Luangpu's house was located (at center) resembles the shape of two lotus buds joined together, thus the name 'Lotus Land' which it is now called.



**1893**

At age nine, Sodh began formal education with his uncle, a monk at Wat Songpinong. In those days, before the establishment of state schools, monks were the only teachers, and Buddhist temples functioned as schools for people in the community.



**1898**

Sodh was fourteen when his father passed away. He took over his father's rice trading business and worked hard to grow it. Boats were the principle means of transportation in Siam during those days.



**1903**

On one trading trip Sodh sold all his rice in Bangkok and headed home. Avoiding the treacherous waters of the main river, Sodh took a detour through Klong Bang-Eetan, a waterway infested with pirates and bandits. Although he passed through the waterway without incident, the episode left him with a deep sorrow for his fellow men. This was the turning point in his life. He made a resolution to become a monk.



**1906**  
Sodh was ordained at Wat Songpinong at the age of twenty-two. His monastic name was 'Candasaro Bhikkhu', which means "the One with a Bright Radiance like the Moon".



**1907**  
Candasaro left Wat Songpinong to further his scriptural studies at Wat Phra Chetuphon (also known as Wat Pho) in Bangkok, one of the largest and oldest temples in Thailand, where he took residence for many years.



**1907**  
Aside from studying at Wat Phra Chetuphon, his home temple, Candasaro had to travel to several other temples to attend classes. Every morning after breakfast he would cross the Chao Phraya River to study at Wat Arun (picture). Other temples that Candasaro went to attend classes were Wat Mahathat, Wat Suthat, and Wat Sampleum.



**1917**  
After eleven years of meditation practice with some of the best Thailand had to offer, Candasaro proceeded to pursue meditation on his own. On the 15th day of the 10th waxing moon of the year 1917, Candasaro finally attained Dhammakaya, a supramundane level of meditative attainment, at the main shrine hall of Wat Bote-bon, Bangkuvieng, Nonthaburi.



**1917**  
After attaining Dhammakaya, Candasaro moved to Wat Bang-pla to teach meditation. Four months later, three monks and four lay people attained Dhammakaya following his footsteps.



**1917**  
Among the three monks who attained Dhammakaya at Wat Bang-pla was one Venerable Sangvarn who followed Candasaro to Wat Paknam where he became abbot. Venerable Sangvarn subsequently taught Dhammakaya meditation at Wat Bang-lane and later founded Wat Phasukkaram in Nakorn Pathom where he was the abbot.



**1918**

Candasaro assumed the position of Abbot at Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen. The temple was half-deserted and in dissolute shape when Candasaro took over as abbot. Resident monks were lax in monastic discipline and meditation practice. Gangs of rowdy children ran wild in the temple, loitering its surrounding and causing troubles. Neighbors were also causing problems.



Under Candasaro's leadership, Wat Paknam grew from a wildly disordered temple to becoming one of the most well-organized, well-disciplined, well-respected temples in Thailand. The number of monks and novices grew from the original thirteen to one thousand. Wat Paknam became one of the most recognized Buddhist institutions in the nation. Candasaro became well-known as Luangpor Wat Paknam.



**1935**

Established advanced Dhammakaya meditation workshop reserved for skilled meditators. Meditation was performed continuously in shifts, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, non-stop.



**1937**

Chand Khonnokyoong became Luangpu's disciple. After Luangpu passed away she taught meditation at Wat Paknam. Chand dedicated her life to carrying on Luangpu's mission. In 1970, she founded Wat Phra Dhammakaya which later evolved to become one of the largest Buddhist temples in the world.



**1944**

Chaiyaboon Suddhipol, current Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, was born. Chaiyaboon met Khun Yai Chand in 1963 and studied meditation with her. After his graduation from Kasetsart University in 1969 Chaiyaboon became ordained at Wat Paknam. His monastic name was "Dhammajayo Bhikkhu". His followers call him Luangpor Dhammajayo.



**1950**

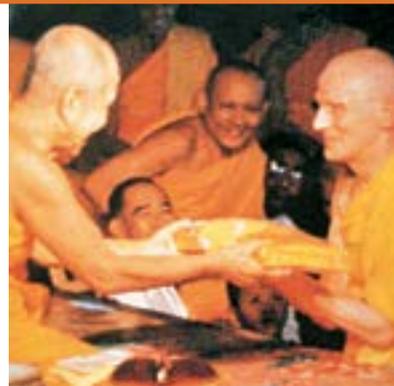
Luangpu produced the first batch of amulets, numbering 84,000, to raise funds for the construction of a new building for scriptural studies. Words of miracles associated with these amulets spread across the country. The amulets became very popular. In 1951 and again in 1956, a second and third batch, numbering 84,000 each, were produced.



**1950**  
A new building was constructed for the Academy for Scriptural Studies at Wat Paknam. The building was eventually used by one thousand monks and novices. It became the nation's biggest school for scriptural studies.



**1953**  
Luangpu sent a monk from Wat Paknam, Thitavedo Bhikkhu, to propagate Buddhism in England — first Thai monk ever to do so in Europe. He was introduced by the Buddhist Society of London to a teacher from London University, Professor William Purfurst, who was interested in ordaining to become a Buddhist monk.



**1954**  
Prof. William Purfurst came to study meditation with Luangpu. He later became ordained at Wat Paknam — first European ever to ordain in Thailand. Luangpu sent him back to England to preach. He later set the foundations for the English Sangha Trust to support the work of the monastic community in England. Two years later he brought three Europeans to be ordained at Wat Paknam.



**1957**  
Luangpu earned the monastic rank of Phramongkolthepmuni.



**1959**  
Luangpu passed away on February 3, 1959 at the age of seventy-five, ending a monastic life of fifty-three years. His embalmed body was placed in a gold coffin donated by the Royal Palace and remains at Wat Paknam to this day. Every year thousands of people come to visit Wat Paknam and pay homage to Luangpu.



**1994**  
On Magha Puja Day, March 5, 1994, the first solid gold statue of Luangpu, one and a half times his actual size and weighing one ton, was cast at Wat Phra Dhammakaya to honor Luangpu. The statue is enshrined inside the Memorial Hall of Phramongkolthepmuni located at Wat Phra Dhammakaya. By December 2014, six more solid gold statues of Luangpu have been cast.

## SIAM DURING THE TIME OF LUANGPU

Siam<sup>1</sup> before the turn of the century was a green and luxuriant land, a land of paddy fields with sparkling waterways heaving with river barges laden with rice destined for the royal capital. Society was at peace. The people were gentle, forgiving and deep-rooted in the Buddhist heritage that had been a pillar of Siamese society since the thirteenth century.

At that time Siam was materially poor. People dressed modestly, even trousers being considered an extravagance. The material simplicity prevented the basic virtues of life from being obscured. The social order was based on the home, with the bonds of filial warmth and duty between father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, closer than any colleague or friend. The home was the hub of society. In other countries people were born with rights, but in Siamese society people were born with duties to fulfil. A boy was not a boy but rather a son to his father, a pupil to his teacher, a brother to his siblings.

The temple was the center of community activities and the place of education for people when state schools still did not exist. The monks were the most literate, usually being able to read Khom<sup>2</sup> and Thai script, and able to translate sermons to the general public. The teaching was performed by the monks, and moral fiber was woven into the web of knowledge inculcated in all children. Temples were maintained as a sanctuary for wildlife. Subsistence hunting and fishing which was an implicit part of Siamese culture was prohibited on the temple precinct.

The times of Luangpu<sup>3</sup> Wat<sup>4</sup> Paknam were times of great trial for the monastic community. In many places, monks ordained only temporarily and did not uphold the faith and confidence of householders. Daily almsgiving to monks, a traditional practice of generosity by the faithful was lacking in many places, especially in big cities. In the cities the monks devoted all of their energy to the study of Buddhist texts but failed to recognize the importance of meditation, a vital part of Buddhist practice.

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<sup>1</sup> *Siam*: former name of Thailand

<sup>2</sup> *Khom*: language of the Khmer people (present day Cambodia), highly influenced by Sanskrit and Pali

<sup>3</sup> *Luangpu*: a Thai word for venerable grandfather

<sup>4</sup> *Wat*: a Thai word for Buddhist temple

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The tradition of meditation in Thailand is as old as Buddhism in Thailand itself. There were several ancient texts of meditation written in Thai along with contemporary masters who could explicate them. However, all of the meditation techniques available at the time had their shortfalls, deviating in search of the miraculous rather than leading to the wisdom realized by the Buddha. When Luangpu took on the saffron robe to become a Buddhist monk he resolved to dedicate his life to meditation and the revival of Buddhism in Thailand.

The most important contribution of Luangpu to the world was the rediscovery of the Dhammakaya Knowledge<sup>5</sup> (*Vijja Dhammakaya*), a profound knowledge that deals with the ‘Five Aspects of Natural Law’<sup>6</sup>, the Law that governs all things. This knowledge leads to the right practice and eventually helps to overcome defilements and free one from the cycle of rebirths. Luangpu dedicated his entire life to the study and practice of this Knowledge.

The word Dhammakaya means “Truth Body” or “Body of Enlightenment”. Dhammakaya Knowledge teaches that all sentient beings possess the Buddha-Nature, the inner potential for attaining Buddhahood, common to all people. It also teaches that the nature of mind is luminous, blissful, perfect, complete, and full of wonderful qualities. It is only through meditation practice, and resultant attainment, that this true nature is revealed. This is known as “attainment of Dhammakaya.”

Also, by understanding the essence of the Buddhist religion, Luangpu was able to teach the public the proper ways in giving, in keeping the Precepts<sup>7</sup> and in performing mental cultivation. He perfected the Dhammakaya meditation method, a simple yet profound method of meditation that allows practitioners to reach meditative attainment at the very profound level. Today, millions of people around the world practice the Dhammakaya meditation method taught by Luangpu. Thousands have reached the Dhammakaya level of attainment.

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<sup>5</sup> *Dhammakaya Knowledge*: see page 62

<sup>6</sup> *Five Aspects of Natural Law*: see page 62

<sup>7</sup> *Precepts (sila)*: codes of moral conduct observed by Buddhists; moral principles that form the framework of Buddhist ethical conduct and the baseline of one’s virtue

# THE GREAT MASTER



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*On the full moon day of each month,  
Buddhists throughout the world reflect upon the great  
compassion of the Lord Buddha in discovering and  
teaching Dhamma for the benefit of all beings.*

*However, about 500 years after the passing of the Lord Buddha,  
the practical part of his Teachings, which allowed others to become  
enlightened in his footsteps, disappeared from the world.*

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*It was only 2,000 years later that a great monk in Thailand  
by the name of Phramongkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) ,  
popularly known as Luangpu Wat Paknam,  
rediscovered this lost Knowledge.*

*Just as the moon disperses the darkness of the night by its light,  
giving safety to night travelers, the light of the teachings  
of Luangpu offers safety to all those who must navigate  
the cycle of existence towards perfection in life.*

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*Luangpu's family house*

## **EARLY LIFE**

Famously known as Luangpu Wat Paknam, one of the most venerated Buddhist monks in the history of Thailand, Phramongkolthepmuni was born as Sodh Mikaewnoi on October 10, 1884 to the family of Ngeun and Sutjai Mikaewnoi, a rice merchant in the village of Songpinong, Suphanburi, a province 60 miles west of Bangkok, Thailand. Sodh was the second born of five siblings with an older sister, Dha, and three younger brothers, Sai, Phook and Samruam in order of birth.

The family house was in the north of the Songpinong commune. The house was located on a peculiar piece of land resembling the shape of two lotus buds joined together, surrounded by water on all sides. It was positioned to the south of Wat Songpinong, a village temple on the opposite side of the canal. The family had two river barges and several crew members. They shipped rice between Songpinong and Bangkok, and sometimes Nakorn Chaisri, a district of Nakorn Pathom, two or three times a month.

Sodh was an intelligent child with strong willpower. In whatever he set out to do he would always persevere until it was done and done well. When he was little he used to help his mother tend the oxen, and regardless of his young age he would plunge fearlessly into a neighbor's herd in order to retrieve missing oxen, no matter where they might have strayed or how late into the night it might have been. He would never return empty-handed.

Sodh showed the signs of compassion even when he was very young. While helping his parents plough the rice fields each morning, as it neared midday, he would gaze up to check the position of the sun to note what time it was. His sister thought he was lazy, waiting for the time to take a break, but in fact he was watching for the appropriate time to relieve his ox. If he saw that the oxen had been overworked and had become tired, he would lead them off

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for a bath then let them loose to graze.

Sodh helped his parents with their work until he was nine when he began his formal education with his uncle, a monk at Wat Songpinong.

In those days, before the establishment of state schools, monks were the only teachers, and Buddhist temples functioned as schools for people in the community. It was customary for a monk not to take residence in one place for too long. Thus, after only a few months, his uncle moved to another temple and Sodh followed. Subsequently, his uncle moved to a temple in Thonburi, across the river from Bangkok, sixty miles away from his native village. Because of the distance, Sodh did not follow his uncle but went on to continue his study at Wat Bangpla, a temple in Nakorn Pathom Province, the home town of his father's side of the family. There, he studied Thai and Khom under the tutelage of Venerable Sab until he was able to read and write both languages fluently.

Sodh was fourteen when his father passed away. As the eldest son, the burden of running the family business and supporting his mother and siblings fell on his young shoulders. He took over his father's rice trading business and worked hard to grow the business. Sodh's earnestness, hard work and intelligence soon won the love and respect of his crew as well as his relatives. His business prospered and the family became well established.

Sodh was always keen on developing himself, never content with his own level of development. He would emulate the success of others and incorporate their good qualities onto himself.

A turning point in his life came when, in one trading trip to Bangkok in 1903, he sold all the rice in his boat and headed home with the empty barge and a large sum of money. The main river routes that he traveled were extremely treacherous so he took a detour through a

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remote waterway known as Klong<sup>8</sup> Bang-Eetan. This was a narrow stretch of canal dreaded by boatmen because it was infested with pirates and bandits. Only a few lucky boats would manage to pass Bang-Eetan without being robbed or killed. Usually they would travel in a convoy for security.

That day, Sodh's boat was the only one in sight. Upon reaching this narrow stretch, the fear of death struck him. Sodh knew the strategy of the pirates: they would aim to attack the captain or the helmsman first to gain control of the boat. The person at the front of the boat would be in a safer position, as he could fight or escape. Sodh's survival instinct told him that he should switch his position from the helm to the front of the boat to avoid danger, so he ordered his crewman at the front to take his place at the helm.

Sodh had a rifle. He grabbed it and strode towards the bow as the boat gradually glided into a remote part of the canal.

Then a guilty conscience struck him.

He thought:

*“All the crew gets from me for looking after this wretched barge is eleven or twelve Baht a month (equivalence of 50-60 cents in those days). As for me, I am the owner of the boat and I have all the money. If I hand down death to my less-than-fortunate workers I would be taking advantage of a fellow man. This is the wrong thing to do. The money is mine; the boat is mine; if someone should die it should be me. Let the workers escape so they can live to take care of their families.”*

He was ashamed for having made such a selfish move. He called the crewmen back to the oars and sat himself at the tiller with the rifle in his lap. Although he finally managed to pass

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<sup>8</sup> *Klong*: a Thai word for canal

through the crisis in safety, the whole episode left him with a deep sorrow for his fellow men.

It was an awakening for him:

*“Making a living is such a hard thing indeed, to go through such an ordeal just to avail oneself of a day’s wage. Material wealth is so ingrained in a man’s values that he loses touch with the reality and true purpose of life. Does society so despise the un-made man to ostracize him until he can earn himself riches? In the end everyone must die. My father has died. My relatives have died. And when they died they could take nothing with them. What is the point of having all these possessions when you can’t take them with you to your grave? Everyone must die. One day, I, too, must die. Haven’t I learned from those who are dead?”*

He pondered what he should do with his life. After much reflection he came to the conclusion that there was nothing more worthwhile for him to do than pursuing a life of purity by becoming a monk. Having made up his mind, he lit three sticks of incense, placed them between his palms, and made the following wish:

*“Please don’t let me die before I have a chance to ordain. Once I ordain it will be for life.”*

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## BECOMING A BUDDHIST MONK

After that incident the thought of ordaining as a Buddhist monk never left Sodh's mind. He knew he could not shrug off the responsibilities to take care of his mother and the family. He needed to leave them enough savings to support themselves in his absence. So he set out to work with fervor in order to accumulate sufficient wealth for them to live on. After three years he finally made enough money to take care of his family's future.

In May 1906, Sodh loaded sacks of rice onto his barges for the last time. He told the crew to make the trip to Bangkok on his behalf and gave his most trusted man the authority to manage the rice deal. After that he left the wharf, feeling like a free man.

Sodh entered Wat Songpinong as a postulant, or '*nag*', an applicant/trainee for ordination. Venerable Palad ('Yang'), the abbot, taught him verses of ordination and abbreviated versions of the Monastic Discipline (*Vinaya*). He received his ordination at Wat Songpinong in July 1906 along with seven others. He was then 22 years old. Sodh was given the monastic name, Candasaro Bhikkhu<sup>9</sup>, a Pali<sup>10</sup> name which means "the One with a Bright Radiance like the Moon".

The preceptor who ordained him was Venerable Dee, the abbot of Wat Pratusarn, Suphanburi; the senior and junior ordination-teachers were Venerable Vinyanuyok and Venerable Noeng Indasuvanno, respectively.

During his first rains retreat<sup>11</sup> at Wat Songpinong, he was able to memorize the Patimokkha<sup>12</sup> by heart. He studied the scriptures and practiced meditation alongside. At one point in his scriptural study he came across a Pali word, '*avijjapaccaya*'<sup>13</sup>, and was curious as to what

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<sup>9</sup> *Bhikkhu*: a Buddhist monk

<sup>10</sup> *Pali*: the ancient language of India used to record the Scriptures of the Theravada Buddhist school

<sup>11</sup> *Rains retreat (Vassa)*: the period of three months during the monsoon season when monks traditionally limit travel outside the temple and focus instead on meditation and scriptural studies

<sup>12</sup> *Patimokkha*: the summary of the Monastic Precepts and rules in the Vinaya, recited twice a month in every monastery

<sup>13</sup> *Avijjapaccaya*: Ignorance as a Requisite Condition. The word is explained in Paticcasamuppada Sutta (Discourse of Dependent Origination) as "*avijja paccaya sankhara*" meaning "With Ignorance as a requisite condition, arise Mental Formations"



*Wat Songpinong*

this word meant. He asked the monks at the temple, and to his surprise, none of them knew the meaning. One monk told him, “Brother, we don’t translate the Scriptures here. We just recite them. If you want to know more you will have to go to Bangkok to study.”

He was perplexed by the monk’s lack of textual scholarship. After seven months he decided to go to the capital to further his scriptural studies. He put away a bundle of the Mahasati-patthana<sup>14</sup> Sutta<sup>15</sup> in a safe place at Wat Songpinong, thinking as soon as he had learned enough Pali to be able to translate this bundle fluently that he would return to do so.

Candasaro left Wat Songpinong to further his Dhamma study at Wat Chetuphon<sup>16</sup>. His younger brother, Phook, accompanied him to study there.

One night, in his fourth year as a bhikkhu, Candasaro had a dream. In his dream, a shadowy man appeared and offered him a bowl of sand. He took a pinch of it. When his brother was offered some, the boy took two handfuls. A few days later both of them fell ill with smallpox. Candasaro recovered, but his brother did not. The boy died later at their home in Songpinong. He was only 18. After his brother’s cremation Candasaro returned alone to Wat Chetuphon.

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<sup>14</sup> *Mahasatipatthana Sutta*: The Great Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness

<sup>15</sup> *Sutta (Skt. Sutra)*: discourse attributed to the Buddha or one of his close disciples

<sup>16</sup> *Wat Phra Chetuphon*: also called Wat Pho and the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, one of the largest and oldest temples in Thailand

## **“MAY STARVATION NEVER AGAIN CROSS MY PATH”**

Life at Wat Phra Chetuphon was not easy. Food was scarce. The first day he went for alms round he came back with an empty bowl. The second day was no different.

It made him wonder: *“Even when a man has sacrificed all worldly pleasures to uphold the Precepts and to perpetuate Buddhism, should he deserve to starve for his cause? If I starve to death through the mean-heartedness of these city folks, maybe my death would stir enough of their pity to not let any more monks die of starvation in the future.”*

On the third day he received a scoopful of rice and a banana. Weak and weary from two days on an empty stomach, Candasaro scuttled his way back to his room and sat down on the doorway to eat his meal just as a mangy dog meandered into view. The poor dog was so skinny that its bones seemed to show through its skin, looking like it was ready to die of hunger right in front of his eyes. With great pity Candasaro passed the remainder of his food to the dog.

He made this solemn wish:

*“Through the power of this generosity in the face of such adversity, may starvation never again cross my path.”*

Although the dog had probably eaten nothing for days, it took only the rice and left the banana alone. Somewhat dismayed at this, Candasaro thought of retrieving the banana, but reminded himself that a bhikkhu does not take back anything which he has already given away unless someone were to re-offer it.

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From that day forth, however, maybe due to the power of his virtue of generosity, Candasaro never returned from his alms round with an empty bowl again. In fact, he always had more than enough food to share with his fellow monks.

Reflecting on the hardship that he himself and his fellow monks had endured through the lack of food, Candasaro made a pledge upon himself:

*“One day, when I receive sufficient support from benefactors, I will build a kitchen to feed the monastic community so that the monks can put all their energies into scriptural study and meditation and never again have to worry about where their next meal will come from.”*

It would take a decade before this aspiration of Candasaro’s became a reality.

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*Wat Phra Chetuphon where Luangpu took residence for many years*



*Luangpu ferried across the river to study scriptures at Wat Arun every morning*

## MASTERING SCRIPTURAL STUDIES

During those days, the education of monks and novices began with memorizing the Buddhist texts in their original Pali language and the Pali root forms (*mulakaccayana*). Only then would the monks be allowed to begin the study of the Scriptures. Candasarō pursued his Scriptural studies in the same way. He memorized the foundation materials and started studying his first scripture, the Dhammapada, a collection of sayings of the Buddha. He went on to study two other texts popular among contemporary monks: the Mangaladipani and Sarasangaha, essential texts about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Precepts, generosity, dhutanga practice, etc., until he became so well versed that he was able to teach others.

In those days, the Scriptures were not in book form, but etched on palm leaves using Khom script. Because palm-leaf scriptures were in loose-leaf forms, students did not study the Scriptures in consecutive order from page one onward but picked chapters at random. Some students studying the Dhammapada started with earlier chapters while others with later ones. As a result, the more students attending a class, the more bundles of scriptures had to be carried to class. If a student studied privately with a teacher, he needed only to bring his own bundles of chosen texts. If a student wanted to learn what other students were learning as well, he would have to bring not only his own scripture bundles but also those chosen by other classmates. Candasarō wanted to gain as much knowledge as he could, so he carried not only his own scripture bundles but also those chosen by others as well. It was quite a heavy load to carry each day.

Academic life was by no means easy. Students had to seek out their teacher. Lessons were not held in classrooms but in the teacher's quarters. If a teacher happened to reside in a

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remote temple, it was the duty of the students to tread the weary miles each day to go to that temple. After breakfast Candasaro would cross the Chao Phraya River<sup>17</sup> from Wat Phra Chetuphon to Wat Arun<sup>18</sup>. At eleven he would return to Wat Phra Chetuphon for the midday meal. In the afternoon, he would attend a class at Wat Mahathat<sup>19</sup>. For his evening class, sometimes he would have to travel to Wat Suthat<sup>20</sup>, sometimes to Wat Sampleum. By night, he had to attend the last class of the day at his home temple, Wat Phra Chetuphon. However, it was not every day of the week that he had such a busy schedule.

No matter how far away the lessons were, how heavy the bundles of scriptures he had to carry, or how tired he felt, Candasaro was never absent from his classes. With heavy bundles of scriptures on his shoulder, he was a frequent passenger on the Chao Phraya River ferry between Peacock Gate Jetty and Wat Arun. The jetty-keeper became acquainted with him and was duly impressed with his industriousness. His perseverance also stirred many of the regular passengers to faith. Many invited him to receive their alms each morning. Others offered to pay his living expenses. The most faithful of his sponsors was a food peddler named “Nuam<sup>21</sup>” who undertook to provide him with breakfast and lunch daily.

For years Candasaro travelled to many schools to study the Scriptures. More and more people were inspired by his diligence and tried to find ways to help him. So strong was their support that he was able to establish a private Pali school at Wat Phra Chetuphon using his own quarters as a classroom. He invited Phramahapee Vasuttamo, a talented monk of Pali Grade V, to be a permanent lecturer. Candasaro catered for as many as ten students and teachers in the school at his own expense. His school taught Pali up to Grade V.

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<sup>17</sup> *Chao Phraya River*: a major river in Thailand which flows through Bangkok and into the Gulf of Thailand

<sup>18</sup> *Wat Arun*: also called the Temple of Dawn, one of Thailand’s best known landmarks. The temple has existed since the seventeenth century.

<sup>19</sup> *Wat Mahathat*: one of the ten royal temples of the highest class, home of Mahachulalongkorn University, Thailand’s oldest higher education institute for Buddhist monks

<sup>20</sup> *Wat Suthat*: one of the ten royal temples of the highest class

<sup>21</sup> Years later, when Nuam became sick and had no one to turn to, Luangpu gave her living quarters at Wat Paknam and had the nuns look after her until the day she passed away.

Times, however, were changing in the world of Thai monastic education. The Council of Elders issued a policy directive to base Pali study on grammar rather than free translation from the root meaning. Wat Phra Chetuphon was left with no choice but to merge its various private colleges into one. Accordingly, Candasaro's Pali school ceased to exist. Candasaro was unperturbed however by the curriculum changes. Even though Pali examinations changed from oral to written, he persevered to adapt to the change.

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## PURSUING MEDITATION

From the time Candasaro was ordained as a Buddhist monk, he never ceased to pursue meditation study and practice. Regardless of how demanding his study routines were he never failed to make time for meditation each day. He followed the techniques taught by his ordination chaplain, Venerable Noeng, when he first began his practice. Later, he would travel to various temples renowned for their meditation masters and practiced with these masters. The following were some of the famous meditation masters he studied with:

Venerable Master Phrasangavarauwongse (Eam) of Wat Rajasiddharam, Bangkok  
Venerable Master Nyanavirat (Po) of Wat Chetuphon, Bangkok  
Venerable Master Singh of Wat Lakornthaam, Thonburi  
Venerable Master Phramonkolthepmuni (Muy), Abbot of Wat Chakrawat, Bangkok  
Venerable Master Pleum of Wat Kao Yai, Kanchanaburi

During the practice with Venerable Master Singh of Wat Lakornthaam, he managed to arrive at the state of calmness that his mind became perfectly still. Whereupon a bright sphere the size of an egg yolk appeared at the center of his body. His teacher assured him that this was an important benchmark in meditation that he had reached.

Candasaro's meditation skill progressed steadily. He completed training with these masters within a remarkably short time. Often, his teachers would tell him he had learned everything they knew and there was nothing more they could teach him. Some of them even persuaded him to teach alongside them. But Candasaro did not feel that his skill was advanced enough to teach others.

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He left his old teachers to travel alone searching for more knowledge, going anywhere in Thailand where there was a reputable master. For several years he journeyed through many forests and mountains searching for the best meditation masters to apprentice with.

Eventually his travels took him back to Wat Songpinong, the temple where he was ordained in 1906. In those days the elder monks at this temple hardly put any attention to scriptural study. Without any help from the elders, the younger monks who were interested in scriptural study had nowhere to go. Usually, those interested in studying would be sent to Bangkok. When Candasaro went to take residence at Wat Songpinong in his eleventh year of monkhood he had already acquired the skill of the Pali language. He became the prime mover in establishing a school for scriptural studies at the temple. In spite of many obstacles, the school was eventually established. This school still exists today at Wat Songpinong.

Candasaro recalled the bundle of Mahasatipatthana, the Great Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness, he had tucked away many years ago at Wat Songpinong in hopes of being able to interpret it one day. He had made a vow to himself that as soon as he was able to translate this Discourse fluently, he would channel all his attention to meditation practice. He was now able to translate that bundle fluently, and in accordance with his original intention, would discontinue his Pali studies and turn to the task of studying meditation with all his might.

It was only in retrospect that Candasaro realized that if he had continued to study and attained a high degree of scholarship, the Sangha authorities would surely have recruited him to work in an academic capacity to the detriment of his meditation practice.

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## DHUTANGA ADVENTURES

From that time onwards Candasaro devoted himself entirely to the study of meditation. Leaving the comforts of a fixed abode behind, he became a wandering bhikkhu and undertook '*dhutanga*', a practice of austerity and self-purification to develop detachment with material things and to deepen the practice of meditation. Dhutanga was a practice embraced by forest monks who wished to live the holy life. These monks would spend weeks or months, or even years, in the forests or remote provinces, with nothing more than an umbrella doubled as a tent and a few other necessary requisites.

When his older sister knew of his intention to undertake dhutanga, she had a dhutanga umbrella<sup>22</sup> (*klod*) made for him. Candasaro left for the provinces, returned after a short period, and gave away the umbrella to another bhikkhu. Later he made a second dhutanga trip, and again received an umbrella from his aunt. (Giving a dhutanga umbrella to a dhutanga monk is considered a great merit. Candasaro wanted his aunt to have this merit.)

Candasaro came upon many interesting encounters during his dhutanga adventures. He met many monks who had taken dwellings in the forest. Some of them possessed great insight and wisdom. Others possessed supernatural powers. While trekking in a forest in Sukhothai, he met a forest monk who applied the mantra "*samma arahang*" in his meditation practice. This was the first time Candasaro heard these words. They were to play an important part in the meditation technique that he later perfected.

Once, during his second dhutanga excursion, he arrived at a semi-deserted temple, Wat Phrasrirattanamahathat, in Suphanburi. The atmosphere there seemed peaceful and conducive to meditation. He decided to camp there. As he was getting ready to set up his umbrella some children drove a herd of oxen into the area.

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<sup>22</sup> *Dhutanga umbrella (klod)*: an umbrella doubled as a tent under which a dhutanga monk uses as a shelter to practice meditation and to sleep

“Don’t let the cows come any further, or you may incur bad kamma for yourselves,” he cautioned them. The children paid no attention to him and made an impolite remark, thinking this monk wanted to have the whole area for himself.

Pointing to a specific spot on the ground Candasaro said to them, “There are Buddha images under the ground here. If you don’t believe me, try digging here and see for yourselves.”

The children were curious. They dug at that spot. After a few strokes of the shovel they found several Buddha images buried underneath. The children were awestruck. They paid respect to Candasaro and apologized to him for their impolite behavior. News of Candasaro’s psychic power traveled.

The half-deserted temple was in bad shape. There were over a hundred Buddha images, large and small, left in ruins. Many were vandalized. Some with heads cut off or arms missing. Candasaro felt something should be done to return the temple to a useful state. He organized a meditation class and invited the locals to participate. Many attended. Candasaro took the occasion to explain to the locals the benefits associated with the restoration of a temple. He sought their help with the repair work. Many agreed to help. The number of people gradually grew to a large size.

It was an uncommon occurrence in rural Suphanburi at that time that a large number of good-hearted people would join together and extend their helping hands to restore a ruined temple. Progress began to take shape. Unfortunately, the large congregation attracted the prying eyes of the Suphanburi authorities. They were fearful that the large gathering might lead to a civil unrest or an uprising. The authorities went to see Somdej<sup>23</sup> Phra Wanarat (Pearn Tissadatto) of Wat Phra Chetuphon, who was the monastic governor of the area at that time, and urged him to summon Candasaro to leave the area. To show respect for the authorities, Candasaro complied.

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<sup>23</sup> *Somdej*: a high-ranking monastic title

He then moved on to Wat Songpinong. While at Wat Songpinong he established a school for Dhamma scholars and also spearheaded the formation of a foundation to provide funds for education. Later, he moved back to Wat Phra Chetuphon.

While at Wat Phra Chetuphon he became acquainted with Venerable Nok, Abbot of Wat Bote-bon, Bangkuvieng District, Nonthaburi. He made frequent visits to Wat Bote-bon to see Luangpor Nok, who often invited him to deliver sermons on his behalf.

Wat Bote-bon was situated in a forest environment with many trees on the temple grounds. The environment was peaceful and conducive to meditation. During Candasaro's days of scriptural study, its previous abbot, Venerable Choom, had provided him with many Buddhist texts. As a way to repay his kindness, Candasaro was desirous of moving to Wat Bote-bon to teach the monks, novice monks, and laypeople there. He went to pay respect to Somdej Phrabuddhajahn, then the Abbot of Wat Phra Chetuphon, and left to spend his rains retreat at Wat Bote-bon, Bangkuvieng. This was in 1917.

After eleven years of practice with some of the best Thailand had to offer Candasaro still felt he had not yet attained the ultimate knowledge realized by the Buddha. He studied Visuddhimagga, the Path of Purity, a scriptural text on meditation practice, and proceeded to pursue meditation on his own.

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## MEDITATIVE ATTAINMENT

One morning as he was about to enter the rains retreat at Wat Bote-bon, he reflected on the fact that he had been ordained for eleven long years but still had yet to taste the ultimate Dhamma realized by the Lord Buddha. He determined to put forth all his energy to meditation that day until he attained even a small portion of the Truth. After completing his alms round and finishing his daily duties that morning he proceeded to the main chapel to meditate. He made up his mind to sit unmoved in his meditation until the midday drum sounded.

It was about eight in the morning on the full moon day of the tenth lunar month of the year 1917 when he sat down to meditate. Sitting in the half lotus position in front of the Buddha statue at the shrine hall, he closed his eyes and recited the mantra '*samma arahang, samma arahang*', quietly in his mind. Before long, pain began to develop throughout his body. Time passed awfully slowly. The pain became so excruciating that he felt as if every bone in his body was about to explode.

He was agitated.

*"I have never felt such pain before. Why, now that I have sworn to sit unmoved in this position, is the pain so much more intense than I had ever felt? How much longer must I endure this suffering before the eleven o'clock drum sounds?"*

He wanted to give up many times, but his fighting-spirit told him to persevere. He knew that an agitated mind was a hindrance to meditation, and he did his best to ignore the pain. After a couple of hours, right before the midday drum sounded, his mind finally began to settle. As his mind became more and more still, a bright sphere the size of an egg yolk appeared at the center of his body. It was so beautiful and soothing like nothing he had ever seen before.

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The pain mysteriously disappeared. And his agitation went away. Instead, he experienced a wonderful feeling of tranquility and bliss. He knew then that he was reaching the beginning state of spiritual attainment.

Then he heard the eleven o'clock drum, signaling time for the midday meal.

Even as he was taking his meal the bright sphere continued to appear at the center of his body. It gave him a nice feeling of security and satisfaction. That day, even the midday meal tasted extraordinarily delicious. The tranquility and bliss that he felt reminded him of the Buddha's remark, "*Natthi santi param sukham*" (*There is no higher happiness than peace itself*). He was so overjoyed with the experience that a smile appeared on his face. The smile on Candasaro's face did not escape the notice of his fellow monks. They asked him why he was so cheerful. To which he replied, "I'm so touched by the wisdom of our Lord that I couldn't help but smile."

That afternoon, after finishing the Patimokkha chanting along with other monks, Candasaro proceeded to the main chapel to meditate. Sitting in front of the Buddha statue, he declared:

*"Upon this sitting, if I cannot attain even a small part of the ultimate Dhamma realized by the Lord Buddha, then I shall sit unmoved in this spot ... or die in the attempt."*

He pleaded to the Buddha:

*"May the Most Exalted One show me compassion and grant me the least and easiest of thy Enlightened Knowledge. Should my attainment of thy Enlightened Knowledge bring harm to Buddhism, don't grant it to me; but if it can benefit Buddhism, then, O Lord, please grant it to me. I shall be thy champion to uphold the greatness of thy Teachings until the last day of my life."*

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*Main shrine hall at Wat Bote-bon where Luangpu attained Dhammakaya in 1917*

Sitting in a half lotus position he began his deep meditation. It started to rain heavily. The atmosphere in the temple became damp. He saw a line of ants escaping from a crack in the floor. For a moment he thought that the ants might come and disturb his meditation, so he dipped his finger into a kerosene bottle nearby and began to draw a circle around himself to prevent the ants from entering. But then he realized that he had just made a vow, willing to give up his life in pursuit of the Dhamma. Why then should he be afraid of these little ants? In self-disgust, he put the kerosene bottle away and set forth to meditate unprotected.

His mind began to settle as he meditated into the night. The bright, clear sphere that he saw earlier that morning reappeared and became even clearer and more radiant. As he meditated, the clarity of the sphere increased until it was as lucid as a flawless sphere of crystal. The brightness grew more intense until it outshined the midday sun. He contemplated on this sphere for hours, from early in the evening until well after midnight, not knowing how to progress to the next level. (In all of his past meditation training there had been no master who had reached this level of experience, and therefore none of them would have been able to guide their students on how to deal with such a phenomenon.)

Candasaro focused his attention at the center of the bright sphere. Then, coming from the silence at the center of the sphere, there arose the gentle sound of the ancient words, '*majjhima-patipada*', a term from the ancient Pali meaning 'Middle Way'.

He thought to himself: "Ah ... the 'Middle Way'! From my Scriptural study, we define this as 'a way of life which steers between the two extremes of asceticism and sensual indulgence'."

But now this sound came directly from the center of his body. The center of the sphere was becoming inordinately bright as if it were the source of all the brightness in his body: bright, intense, cool and soothing. The illumination blazed so that the brightness increased enormously and deep in the brightness of the sphere he knew there existed something else. Then

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he started to realize that there must be a hidden meaning to the term ‘Middle Way’. That tiny spot at the center of his body might, in fact, be the doorway to hidden inner dimensions.

He wondered:

*“Could this in fact be the Middle Way? The tiny bright spot is right at the middle.”*

He then tried an experiment: contemplating deeper and deeper at the center of the bright spot. It started to expand until it reached the size of an egg yolk. Meanwhile, the former sphere also gained in size until it became so huge that it reached the horizons and then faded away. When he contemplated deeper at the center of the new sphere, another one appeared at its center. He continued this experiment, concentrating deeper at the center of each successive sphere. More and more spheres appeared—thousands of them, each one replacing the last as if shooting from a water fountain. As he meditated deeper, each new sphere was brighter and clearer than the last.

Going yet deeper he could see the transcendental nature of himself—the so-called “transcendental body”—a crystal clear inner body that resides within every human being. As his mind continued to be perfectly calm and still, several transcendental bodies appeared, one after another, each new one bigger, brighter, and more beautiful than the previous one. Until, finally, a supremely bright and pure image resembling that of the Buddha appeared. It is of the form of the Buddha sitting deep in meditation, the crest of his crown shaped like a lotus bud, an image brighter, clearer, more beautiful, and more marvelous than any Buddha image in the world.

This was ‘Dhammakaya’ — Body of Enlightenment.

Arriving at this stage of experience in meditation is called “attaining Dhammakaya”.

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Through this marvelous experience, Candasaro discovered that at the innermost part of every human being, there exists the seed of Enlightenment, the Buddha-nature—the potential to become a Buddha.

As he contemplated further, with a mind as bright and clear as a mirror, a voice echoed from the center of the Dhammakaya with these words: *“This is right!”*

Feeling elated, Candasaro muttered to himself:

*“Ah, it is so hard like this ... how could anybody perceive it? It is beyond perception, memory, thought, cognition. One would not attain it through these. Perception, memory, thought, cognition ... all these things must come to a standstill and be united at one single point. Once the mind “stops”, these things cease to be. Once they cease to be, attainment can be realized. This is the real thing. This is where the link is. Everything must come to the right point of balance before attainment can happen.”*

*(Explanation: Once the mind stops wandering and comes to a standstill state, the hindrances which obstruct attainment will disappear. Once that happens attainment is possible. Later on, he came up with the maxim “‘Stop’ is the key to success”.)*

As Candasaro continued to refine his inner experience for the next thirty minutes, an image of a familiar-looking temple appeared in his vision. He recognized it to be Wat Bang-pla, the temple he went to study at when he was eleven. He felt as if he was actually inside that temple. It appeared to him this could be a revelation that Wat Bang-pla was the first place his new-found Dhammakaya Knowledge was to be propagated, and there would be individuals there to attain Dhammakaya following his footsteps.

From that day forward, Candasaro took the opportunity to go to Wat Bang-pla, accepting

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teaching engagements and supporting the ceremonies there until the end of the rains retreat. In the meantime he dedicated himself to refining and improving his newfound method of meditation—the Dhammakaya Meditation Method.

After the end of the rains retreat, he bade farewell to the abbot of Wat Bote-bon and moved to Wat Bang-pla permanently to teach meditation and the Dhamma. After four months, three monks (Venerable Sangvarn, Venerable Baen and Venerable Oam) and four laypeople attained Dhammakaya.

In his thirteenth rains retreat, Candasaro took with him all the monks who had attained Dhammakaya to Wat Songpinong, where they were to stay during the rains retreat, and teach Dhamma and meditation to monks and laypeople. By the end of the rains retreat, one more monk attained Dhammakaya.

Soon after, Candasaro travelled to Wat Pratusarn, Suphanburi, where his preceptor, the (now) late Venerable Dee had once resided. He stayed there for four months to teach meditation and the Dhamma before returning to Wat Phra Chetuphon.

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## **ABBOT OF WAT PAKNAM**

Classified as a royal temple of the third tier, Wat Paknam is an older temple commissioned for construction by the monarch during the middle Ayutthaya period (1488–1629). Historic chronicles and artifacts found at the temple, especially the architectural style and arts like the Tipitaka Hall and the pavilion-shaped cabinet housing the Tipitaka, are works of royal craftsmen from the era of King Narai; even the main chapel is representative of the style from that period.

Wat Paknam is located on flat delta plains of Bangkok, surrounded by Chao Phraya River and Bangkok-Yai Canal. It lies at the mouth of the main Bang-Luang Canal and is named “Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen” for the district it is in. The name Wat Paknam appeared in many ancient annals, but in early maps of Bangkok from 1910 and 1931 the temple was known as “Wat Samuttaram”. However, this name was not preferred by the people and the name Wat Paknam (which means “Temple at the Mouth of the Water”) stood to this day.

During the reign of King Rama IV, the Bhasicharoen Canal was dug on the west side of the temple, giving it three bodies of water. The smaller canal on the southern end demarcates the temple’s boundary during that period.

In 1918, the position of abbot at Wat Paknam was vacant. Somdej Phra Wanarat, Abbot of Wat Phra Chetuphon, who was then the monastic governor for Bhasicharoen District, offered Candasaro the position of Acting Abbot. Candasaro initially declined to accept the position because his primary goal was meditation not temple management. But after a great deal of persuasion from the Somdej he finally accepted. Eventually his position was made permanent.

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*Candasaro Bhikkhu*

On the day of his appointment the Department of Religious Affairs provided a motorboat for his passage to Wat Paknam. Somdej Phra Wanarat, together with several senior monks, came along to send him off to his new temple. Four monks from Wat Phra Chetuphon accompanied him to live at Wat Paknam. On the other side of the river, monks, laymen and laywomen came out to greet the party in large numbers.

During that time Wat Paknam was almost half-deserted. Because the temple was built centuries ago, most of its buildings were old and worn out. The temple hall was in bad shape, the kitchen too small, and the monks' cottages (*kutis*<sup>24</sup>) were so tiny that each could only accommodate one monk. Also, these cottages were placed far apart from one another, making each cottage seem isolated. Due to lack of supervision, the resident monks, numbering thirteen, were lax in monastic discipline as well as meditation practice.

Candasaro did not expect to run into this kind of situation when he accepted the position of abbot. But he was not about to give in. He was determined to restore the temple back to a respectable condition.

He said, "Renovating a place is not difficult, all it takes is money. But reforming a human being is. The key to restoring this place is to fix the people first."

His first job was to clamp down on the misbehavior of monks and novices under his supervision as well as those affecting the state of his temple. He called a general meeting of monks and novices and gave them the following sermon:

*"I have been sent by the monastic governor of this district to take charge of this temple and to manage its residents using the Monastic Discipline as my guide. If the temple is to prosper we must depend on your unity, understanding and cooperation. All of us are strangers to this place. To be sent here is like being cast away to a deserted island"*

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<sup>24</sup> *Kuti*: monk's living quarters, usually a cottage or a small shelter

*with no one to turn to for guidance. But I feel certain, by virtue of the Dhamma that we practice righteously, that peace and prosperity can be ours. Good will overcome evil.*

*Many of you have been ordained for many years. Each one of you knows for yourself how well you have kept up with the Monastic Discipline, and what level of meditation you have achieved. If you have followed the Monastic Discipline well, you are to be praised; but if you have not, then it is a sad thing, and you have only yourself to blame.*

*I have met monks who have been ordained for tens of years, yet they possess no ability to teach others. They came to lean on the religion and have done nothing of use for themselves and for others. These monks have sullied our religion. Being ordained like this is like being a hermit crab (relying on the shell of others for shelter). In such a case what is the use of being ordained or coming to live in the temple?*

*As Abbot of your temple, I intend to perform my duties according to the Monastic Discipline. It is up to you old-timers whether to join me or not to join me. I will not interfere with your action, for I am sure all of you know by your own conscience what is right and what is wrong. If you choose not to join me, then do not stand in my way. I will not stand in your way either. Each will live his own separate way. But being a bhikkhu of this temple you must abide by our monastic rules. What was done in the past belongs in the past, for it was not yet my responsibility. But now, I have a duty to fulfill.”*

After Candasaro Bhikkhu made his position known to everyone he instituted temple rules in accordance with Monastic Discipline for everyone to abide by and he enforced these rules strictly. He began teaching Dhamma and meditation to the residents of the temple as well as the general public on a regular basis. Soon, the condition of the temple began to improve. More monks and novices joined his temple. Many more people came to his meditation classes and Dhamma training. As the temple gained popularity and followers, donations and funding for its activities began to flow.

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*Wat Paknam today*

Candasaro's leadership and hard work paid off. Not only was he able to restore the temple to a fully functional Buddhist institution, but he also raised its status to one of the most sought after teaching institutes for scriptural studies and meditation training in the country. Candasaro himself earned a reputation as a capable abbot and a spiritual leader who possessed extraordinary mental powers and healing ability. His name became synonymous with Wat Paknam, and the name "Luangpor Wat Paknam", as he was later called, became a household name.

*Note: Henceforth in this book we will refer to Luangpor Wat Paknam as "Luangpu", a Thai word which means "Venerable Grandfather".*

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## DISCOVERING DHAMMAKAYA

Not long after the Buddha passed away the number of enlightened beings gradually decreased. Those who were able to reach the Dhammakaya level of attainment also dwindled. Eventually, the Dhammakaya Knowledge disappeared from the world altogether. Any remnants of information related to Dhammakaya that remained in the Buddhist scriptures were too scant to shed enough light to people of future generations. This led to the general misconception that “Dhammakaya” was nothing more than another name to call the Buddha.

Through a lifetime of meditation study and practice, Luangpu had reached a supramundane level of meditative attainment. This gave rise to his ability to penetrate the “inner” Truth that led to the rediscovery of the Dhammakaya Knowledge. Thereafter, Luangpu dedicated his entire life to perfect this Knowledge, using the “divine eye” of the Dhammakaya as his guide. He compared his meditative experience with various scriptural texts and the Tipitaka to confirm the validity of his discovery. He found that his discovery was consistent with what was mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures.

He explained:

*“Dhammakaya is the eternal Buddha, the seed of enlightenment that exists within every human being. It is not something that was newly created. It has been there since the beginning of time. Everyone can attain the Dhammakaya if he or she practices the Right Meditation<sup>25</sup>. The form of the Dhammakaya resembles that of the Buddha, complete with thirty-two attributes of the Great Man<sup>26</sup>. The top of his crown is shaped like a lotus bud. His body is luminous and clear as a crystal.”*

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<sup>25</sup> **Right Meditation (samma-samadhi):** Also called “Right Concentration”, the eighth element of the Noble Eightfold Path, the practice of which enables one to attain the Dhammakaya

<sup>26</sup> **The Great Man (mahapurusa):** A Buddha or a universal monarch (cakravartin king); Buddhas and universal monarchs are traditionally regarded as having the Thirty-two Characteristics of a Great Man

The name “Dhammakaya” was not invented by Luangpu. This name appeared in the Tipitaka and Buddhist texts of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions.

In the Theravada Buddhist Scripts the word “Dhammakaya” can be found in many places: four times in the primary scriptures, twenty eight times in the secondary scriptures, and seven times in the tertiary scriptures. The word is found in two places in the Buddhist manual of meditation, the Path of Purity (*Visuddhimagga*), three times in the commentary on the Path of Purity, once in the ancient version of the Path of Purity, once in the Pathamasambodhigatha, once in the ancient book *Samatha-Vipassana*, and three times in the Buddhist engravings.

There are four mentions of the word “Dhammakaya” in Agganna Sutta, Dighanikaya; Paccekabuddhapadana, Khuddakanikaya; Atthasandasakatherapadana, Khuddakanikaya; and Mahapachabodigotamitheri, Khuddhakanikaya, in the Thai script of Pali Scriptures of 1982 (Mahamongut edition).

In the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, there are countless mentions of the word “Dhammakaya”—many more times than in the Theravada.

The Dhammakaya method of meditation had been practiced since the ancient times. This method was mentioned in the book *Buddharangsi-tissadeeyan* (“Buddharangsi-Theory of Jhana<sup>27</sup>”) which spoke about Samatha-Vipassana meditation methods practiced during four historical periods of the past, namely, Vientiane Period of Laos, Ayutthaya Period of Siam, Thonburi Period of King Taksin the Great, and Rattanakosin Period of Bangkok.

A manuscript from Wat Pradurongdhamma, Ayutthaya, spoke of a meditation method called “Meditation Through the Virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha (translation)”. This method was recorded in AD 29 by fifty-six Tissapamoke<sup>28</sup> masters. These writings substantiate the fact that Dhammakaya meditation method was not something invented by

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<sup>27</sup> *Jhana*: meditative absorption; bliss state; a state of serene contemplation attained by meditation; state of trance; a state of meditation where the mind is free from the Five Hindrances (craving, aversion, sloth, agitation and doubt)

<sup>28</sup> *Tissapamoke*: a famous academic institution in ancient India

Luangpu but has been in existence for many centuries.

The Dhammakaya Knowledge disappeared from the world around 43 B.C. For more than two thousand years no one knew of its existence. The Dhammakaya Knowledge rediscovered by Luangpu is the testament to the Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha. Luangpu brought forth to the world the practical side of the knowledge taught by the Buddha.

The meditation method taught by Luangpu had enabled tens of thousands of people to attain Dhammakaya during his lifetime. Many more people continue to attain Dhammakaya to this day.

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## THE DHAMMAKAYA KNOWLEDGE

The Dhammakaya Knowledge (*Vijja*<sup>29</sup> *Dhammakaya*) is a profound knowledge that deals with the ‘Five Aspects of Natural Law’, the Law that governs all things (*Five Niyamas*<sup>30</sup>). They include Biological Law (*Bija Niyama*), which governs all living things; Chemical and Physical Law (*Utu Niyama*), which governs all chemical and physical matters; Psychic Law (*Citta Niyama*), which governs the functions of the mind; Karmic Law (*Kamma Niyama*), which governs the law of action; and Nature of Existence Law (*Dhamma Niyama*), which governs the manifestation of existence or reality. Knowing how the Five Aspects of Natural Law came into existence reveals the knowledge of how to abolish samsara, the cycle of rebirth. This knowledge leads us to the right practice and eventually helps us overcome defilements and attain Nibbana, thus freeing ourselves from the cycle of rebirth.

The Dhammakaya Knowledge is equipped with the ‘Threefold Knowledge’ (*Te-Vijja*), ‘Eightfold Supra-normal Knowledge’ (*Attha-Vijja*), and ‘Sixfold Super Knowledge’ (*Chalabhinna*)—the higher knowledge known to the Buddha.

Threefold Knowledge comprises of the knowledge of one’s previous existences, the knowledge of the passing away and arising of beings, and the knowledge of the destruction of all mental intoxicants.

Eightfold Supra-normal Knowledge consists of insight-knowledge, mental powers, miraculous powers, supra-normal hearing (divine ear), knowing the minds of others, ability to recall former existences, seeing the arising and passing away of other beings according to their kamma (divine eye), and knowledge of an end of defilements.

Sixfold Super Knowledge consists of the ability to perform magical powers, having supra-

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<sup>29</sup> *Vijja*: Clear knowledge; genuine awareness; science (specifically, the cognitive powers developed through the practice of concentration and discernment); knowledge gained from the “eye of Dhamma”; it is the Knowledge that enables one to rid oneself of ignorance

<sup>30</sup> *Five Niyamas*: According to Buddhism, there are five orders or processes (*niyamas*) which operate in the physical and mental realms: Utu Niyama, physical inorganic order; Bija Niyama, order of germs and seeds (physical organic order); Kamma Niyama, order of action and result; Dhamma Niyama, order of the norm; and Citta Niyama, order of mind or psychic law

normal hearing (divine ear), ability to penetrate the minds of others, ability to remember former existences, having divine eye, and knowledge of the exhaustion of all mental intoxicants.

Luangpu dedicated his entire life to the study of the Dhammakaya Knowledge by means of the profound Dhammakaya meditation method he had rediscovered. He assigned a team of highly accomplished meditators to conduct meditation research for the subject. The outcome of their collective research revealed the facts that samsara had originated from the three-fold division of consciousness: wholesome states (*Kusala Dhamma*), unwholesome states (*Akusala Dhamma*), and neither-wholesome-nor-unwholesome states (*Avyakata Dhamma*).

Wholesome states represent the faction of virtue (the “white force”) responsible for giving rise to the creation of the “physical form” of humans. Unwholesome states represent the negative element, or the faction of Evil (the “black force”) responsible for contaminating humans with defilements, illnesses, and negative kamma, causing them to end up in unhappy realms. Neither-wholesome-nor-unwholesome states represent the karmically neutral element (the “grey force”).

The Dhammakaya Knowledge constitutes the transcendental, blissful, eternal, and pure Self of the Buddha. Dhammakaya doctrines can be found in the scriptures of all major Buddhist schools including Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana (Tibetan Buddhism).

The word “Dhammakaya” means “Truth Body”, “Body of Reality”, or “Body of Enlightenment”. Dhammakaya Knowledge teaches that all sentient beings possess the Buddha-Nature, the inner potential for attaining Buddhahood, common to all people. It also teaches that the nature of mind is luminous, blissful, perfect, complete, and full of wonderful qualities, but due to temporarily being obscured by defilements we do not recognize it. It is only through Right Meditation practice and spiritual attainment that this true nature is revealed. This is known as “attainment of Dhammakaya.”

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Once we attain Dhammakaya, we will have the clear-seeing ability to perceive the ultimate Truth—the knowledge of who we are, why we were born, what our true purpose in life is, and how we can free ourselves from the realm of suffering. Thus, attainment of Dhammakaya is something that everyone should aspire to achieve.

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## **DHAMMAKAYA MEDITATION**

The goal of Dhammakaya Meditation is to eradicate the roots of all evil and achieve spiritual attainment leading to Nibbana.

Luangpu explained the process of meditation as bringing “seeing, remembering, thinking, and knowing” into a single-point, at the center of the body.

The identifying feature of Dhammakaya Meditation is the meditator’s attention towards the center of the body, the natural home of the mind. The center of the body is the central point of our stream of consciousness, and also the inner source of happiness and wisdom. It is located two finger-widths above the navel in the middle of the abdomen. This is known as the “Seventh Base” of the mind (see page 224).

Every object in nature has its center of gravity, the point where it keeps its balance. For example, the center of gravity for a cup is at the center point of the cup; the center of gravity for a stick is at the middle point of the stick, etc. If we place a cup or a stick sideways or off the center of gravity, it will fall because it is out of balance. The center of gravity of all material objects is always located at the center location.

The goal of a meditator is to “tune” or adjust the mind through a single-point of concentration and to arrive at the point of balance at the center of the body. When the mind reaches its perfect point of balance, it will have a clear-seeing quality that enables it to penetrate into a higher form of knowledge, insight, and wisdom. Think of the mind as the lens of a camera or the dial of a radio receiver. You can adjust the focus of the lens of the camera to capture the clearest picture; you can tune the dial of the radio to find the right wave-length in order to reach a desired station. The same principle applies to the mind: when the “focus” or “wave-

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length” of the mind is adjusted to the right point, it becomes the most powerful.

Luangpu first taught the Dhammakaya meditation technique to the monks and laypeople at Wat Bang-pla, Nakorn Pathom, in 1915. From 1916 onwards, after Luangpu became Abbot of Wat Paknam, he taught Dhammakaya Meditation consistently at Wat Paknam throughout his life. Dhammakaya Meditation became closely associated with Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen.

Luangpu devoted the rest of his life teaching Dhammakaya Meditation to anyone who was interested. From 1935 to 1959, he ran a meditation workshop reserved for super-advanced meditators—those who had reached the supramundane level of absorptions. These gifted meditators meditated as a team in shifts, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. Since 1959, Luangpu’s disciples had been teaching the Dhammakaya method of meditation to several temples in Thailand, including Wat Paknam, Wat Phra Dhammakaya, Wat Rajorasaram, and Wat Luangpor Sod Dhammakayarama (Ratchaburi). Today Dhammakaya Meditation is being taught throughout the world by Wat Phra Dhammakaya, thanks to Luangpu’s top disciple, Khun Yai Chand Khonnokyoong, founder of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, and her leading students, Luangpor Dhammajayo and Luangpor Dattajeevo, Abbot and Vice Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya respectively.

## Samatha Level

Dhammakaya Meditation has both *samatha*<sup>31</sup> and *vipassana*<sup>32</sup> stages. The goal of Dhammakaya Meditation at the samatha level is to overcome the Five Hindrances (consisting of sensual desire, ill will, inertia, doubt, agitation). When the mind becomes peaceful and stable as the result of successful practice for tranquility, the mind will overcome the Five Hindrances and reach a state of one-pointedness (*samadhi*<sup>33</sup>), known as the ‘standstill of the mind’—a state where it is free of thought. The indication of reaching this stage is that a bright clear sphere will arise spontaneously at the center of the body. The mind should then be directed

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<sup>31</sup> *Samatha*: tranquility meditation; perfect concentration; the ability to maintain the focus of attention one-pointedly

<sup>32</sup> *Vipassana*: insight meditation aims to discipline the mind while fostering a profound clarity about the nature of reality. Enlightenment can only be attained through vipassana.

<sup>33</sup> *Samadhi*: one-pointedness of mind; meditative practice leading to one-pointed concentration; a state of complete concentration

continuously at the center of this sphere, helping to transport the mind towards the inner path that leads to eventual attainment.

There are several ways of focusing the attention at the center of the body, namely:

Following down through the seven bases of the mind: the nostril, the inner corner of the eye, the center of the head, the roof of the mouth, the center of the throat, the middle of the stomach, and a point two finger breadths above the navel.

Visualizing a mental image at the center of the body: characteristically, a crystal ball or a crystal-clear Buddha image and repetition of the mantra '*samma-arahang*'<sup>34</sup> (a Pali word which means 'the Buddha who has properly attained Enlightenment').

Those who have difficulty visualizing can also do it without visualization, by simply placing their attention at the center of the body, calmly and relaxingly.

When one visualizes the mental object continuously, the mental object will gradually change in nature in accordance with the increasing subtlety of the mind in the following sequence:

*Preparatory Image:* the meditator perceives a vague, partial or undetailed version of the image they have imagined. Such a mental object indicates that the mind is in a state of preparatory concentration where it is still only momentarily.

*Acquired Image:* this is where the meditator is able to perceive the image they have imagined with 100% of the clarity and vividness of the external image it is based on.

*Counter Image:* once the mind comes even closer to a standstill, so that it is no longer distracted by external things or thoughts but is captivated by the image at the center of

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<sup>34</sup> *samma-arahang*: See page 72

the body, the image will change to be one which the meditator can expand or contract at will. The image will change from an image that is colored to one which is transparent. The Acquired Image and the Counter Image, both indicate a state of mind on the threshold of the first absorption (*jhana*). This threshold state indicates that the mind has become unified or one-pointed.

Although the meditator may start out with as many as forty different paths of practice, once the hindrances are overcome, all methods converge into a single path of mental progress, which leads into meditation at the Vipassana level.

### Vipassana Level

Dhammakaya Meditation embarks on the Vipassana level at a higher stage than some other meditation schools. In Dhammakaya Meditation, insight relies on purity of ‘seeing and knowing’ – penetrative insight into the reality of life and the world. Such insight will allow the meditator to have a deep, penetrative knowledge of the Five Aggregates<sup>35</sup> (*khanda*), the Twelve Sense Spheres<sup>36</sup> (*ayatana*), the Eighteen Elements<sup>37</sup> (*dhatu*), the Twenty-Two Faculties<sup>38</sup> (*indriya*), the Four Noble Truths<sup>39</sup>, and Dependent Origination<sup>40</sup>.

Through insight knowledge gained from deep meditation, the meditator sees and knows clearly that all things exhibit the Three Marks of Existence<sup>41</sup>, and for the meditator, there arises dispassion and detachment and accomplishes sequential shedding of the defilements until an end to defilements can be reached. The meditator sees and knows with the divine eyes that the Buddha himself attained.

The process of purification corresponds with that described in the *Dhammacakkapavattana*

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<sup>35</sup> **Five Aggregates:** consisting of form, sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. Luangpu simplifies these as “perception, memory, thought, and cognition”, which are the four functional faculties of minds.

<sup>36</sup> **Twelve Sense Spheres:** consisting of six internal-external (organ-object) pairs of sense bases, i.e., eye and visible objects, ear and sound, nose and odor, tongue and taste, body and touch, mind and mental objects

<sup>37</sup> **Eighteen Elements:** consisting of six sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind), six sense objects (visible forms, sound, smell, taste, touch, mental object), and six sense consciousness

<sup>38</sup> **Twenty-Two Faculties:** multiple intra-psyche processes known as “faculties”, “spiritual faculties”, or “phenomenological faculties”

<sup>39</sup> **Four Noble Truths:** consisting of the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering, the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering

*Sutta*<sup>42</sup> where the arising of brightness is accompanied by the divine eye, the knowing, the wisdom and the knowledge. The meditator will see the nature of the Dhamma in the forms of inner mental phenomena. Thus, in Dhammakaya Meditation, the Buddha's words are taken literally as seeing one's inner body of enlightenment which is in the form of a Buddha sitting in meditation. The level of attainment is usually explained in terms of equivalent inner bodies which start with the physical human body and the transcendental body, and which go in successively deeper layers until reaching the Body of Enlightenment known as Dhammakaya—the number of bodies totaling eighteen.

### Inner Bodies

It is interesting to note that Luangpu's discovery of "inner bodies" was not out of the scope of the Buddha's discovery, known as "the Dhamma", in his Enlightenment. In a research paper compiled by Dr. James Santucci<sup>43</sup>, Chair and Professor of Comparative Religion at California State University, Fullerton, he mentioned the transformation of Buddhist meditation practice, producing inner body—"mind-made body or psychic body". Through his understanding, it is possible that all supernatural abilities, such as the 'Threefold Knowledge', 'Eightfold Supra-normal Knowledge', and 'Sixfold Super Knowledge' are developed from this mind-made body.

In '*Samannaphala Sutta*', 'Discourse on The Fruits of Homeless Life', the Buddha described the steps of transformation leading to liberation. Here the Buddha spoke of the "mind-made body or psychic body" as the product of the concentrated mind. See excerpt below:

"Having forsaken covetousness in the world, the monk dwells with a mind free of covetousness, and so he abandons all the five hindrances: worldly desires, ill-will and

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<sup>40</sup> **Dependent Origination:** one of the central concepts in the Buddhist tradition that all things arise in dependence upon multiple causes and conditions

<sup>41</sup> **Three Marks of Existence:** consisting of impermanence, suffering, and non-self

<sup>42</sup> **Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta:** Discourse on the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Dhamma, the first teaching given by the Buddha after he attained enlightenment

<sup>43</sup> "Educational Concepts and Practices in Early Southern Buddhism", Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism, CA, Hsi Lai University. Dr. James Santucci taught Sanskrit at Hsi Lai University, which is now University of the West, in Rosemead, California. He is also familiar with the Pali language.

hatred, sloth and torpor, worry and anxiety, and doubt. Once achieved, delight arises, followed by joy, which brings tranquility of the body. From tranquility of the body comes an ease that leads to focused thought. The mind, once focused or concentrated and detached from sensuality, unwholesome mental states, he enters the first Jhana or meditative state. He then progresses to the second, third, and fourth meditative states, the latter a state beyond mental ease and dejectedness.

The mind concentrated, purified, free of impurities is then directed to knowing and seeing, understands the body as material and consciousness, bound to it. With concentrated mind, he produces a mind-made or psychic body (*mano-mayam kayam*) and draws that body out of this body. Just as one were to remove a reed from the grass sheath, so too from the mind-made body is extracted a perfected mind-made body.

With concentrated mind (and perhaps due to the perfected mind-made or psychic body) comes the ability to demonstrate the various psychic powers (*iddhi*) such as becoming many, walking on water, and flying cross-legged. Other powers are developed, such as clairaudience (*dibba-sota*), mindreading (*cetopariyanana*), knowledge of one's previous existences (*pubbenivasanussati-nana*), the knowledge of the passing away and arising of beings with the "divine eye" (*dibba-cakkhu*), and most importantly, the gaining of the knowledge of the destruction of the intoxicants (*asava-kkhaya-nana*) of sense-desire (*kama*), of becoming (*bhava*), and of ignorance (*avijja*), which is another way of stating that the monk has gained liberation (*vimutta*)."

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Although the process explained in this chapter may seem highly technical and complex, the actual meditation practice itself is easy and simple.

Anyone practicing the right way of meditation following the Noble Eightfold Path can attain the supramundane level of absorption—the meditative experience of the Dhammakaya—and gain the higher knowledge described above, regardless of gender, nationality or religion.

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## SAMMA ARAHANG

In the Dhammakaya meditation tradition the mantra ‘*samma arahang*’ is used to help meditators calm their mind and bring it to a stand-still state. This is one form of mindfulness meditation known as ‘*Buddhanussati*’—contemplation on the virtues of the Buddha.

The term ‘*samma arahang*’ are made up of two Pali words, each with its own meanings. ‘*Samma*’ means right, virtuous, righteous, noble, good, blameless. ‘*Arahang*’ means noble, holy, worthy, free from defilements, enlightened. Together, ‘*samma arahang*’ means ‘the Buddha who is properly enlightened’.

Understanding the meaning of each individual Pali syllable (*sam - ma - a - ra - hang*) which makes up these two words enables one to perceive a deeper and more profound meaning of these words. These separate syllables, when combined with other Pali words as appeared in various Buddhist verses, give a broad spectrum of meanings. The following are examples of meanings derived from various Buddhist verses:

‘*sam*’: Dhamma that benefits all beings, that defeats the cycle of rebirth; the Buddha who is self-enlightened. The stanza where this word appears, when recited, is said to have power to protect one from enemy.

‘*ma*’: Power to weaken the tenacious, the stubborn; power to overcome ego; the Buddha who is revered by all heavenly beings. The stanza where this word appears, when recited, is said to have power to subdue hardheaded people.

‘*a*’: Power to turn an idle person into an industrious one; to be endowed with virtues; the Buddha who has reached the end of suffering. The stanza where this word appears, when

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recited, is said to have power to protect one from dangerous animals.

'*ra*': To be joyous in Dhamma; to relieve beings from suffering; the Buddha who brings Nibbana to mankind. The stanza where this word appears, when recited, is said to have power to protect one from black magic or evil spirits.

'*hang*': To defeat evil; to delight in the means to defeat evil; the Buddha who has defeated all evil. The stanza where this word appears, when recited, is said to have power to protect one from weapons (as in war).

'*Samma arahang*' are sacred words believed to have power to protect the person who recites them. It was a common practice by people of the past to tell their dying relatives to recite these words before they passed away. This was a means to steer their minds towards a virtuous path. It is believed that the dying person whose mind is immersed with good thoughts has a better chance of reaching a happy destination after his or her death. Adversely, it is believed that a person whose mind at the dying moment is preoccupied with negative thoughts is bound to be heading for an unhappy realm.

In meditation practice, the mantra '*samma arahang*' is an effective tool to help calm the mind. Visualization along with recitation of a mantra is an important component in the Dhammakaya method of meditation. Luangpu Wat Paknam encouraged his students to recite the mantra '*samma arahang*' on a regular basis, not only during meditation. The goal is to cultivate mindfulness through using '*Buddhanussati*' method to help the practitioner steer away from defilements and any form of wrongdoings.

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*Luangpu showing the seven bases of the mind*

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## TEACHING MEDITATION

On Sundays, quarter-moon days and Thursday afternoons Luangpu would teach meditation at the main hall at Wat Paknam. His students consisted of monks, novices, nuns, temple residents, and the public at large. A cumulative total of forty-thousand people have come to study meditation with him over the course of the first fifteen years. Only during the Second World War did he shift the venue for meditation teaching to the house of a student, close to the temple. But teaching returned to the main hall at Wat Paknam again after the War.

Luangpu would commence his teaching by enquiring whether those in the congregation considered themselves upholders of the Buddhist faith or not. If so, they had the twofold duty of scriptural learning and meditation. Of the two, meditation was the most important.

After preaching thus to the gathering, Luangpu would order the candles and incense in front of the shrine to be lit. He would then lead the congregation together in worship, reciting '*Namo-tassa...*' three times in homage to the Buddhas of the past, present, and future. The chanting continued with a request for forgiveness of transgressions committed by body, speech and mind against the Triple Gem. Finally, there would be the request to all the Buddhas, Dhamma, and Sangha, to establish themselves within the mind of each of the congregation.

He would then tell everyone to adopt a comfortable posture for meditation. Pointing to a figure drawn on a blackboard, he would explain where and how to concentrate the mind. There were two aids involved in concentration: visualizing the object of meditation (a crystal ball or a sphere), and reciting the mantra, "samma-arahang".

(For full instruction on basic meditation, refer to page 222)

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After teaching the meditation technique at length, Luangpu would tell the gathering to proceed on their own, and he would continue to speak in low tones, aiding them, until eventually his voice faded away into silence.

The meditation would last for about half an hour.

Then Luangpu's voice would rise anew, ending the session, and palms together, he intoned aloud in Pali calling on the Grace of the Triple Gem to protect and bless the congregation.

Luangpu said that the depth of insight in the Dhammakaya technique was so vast that meditating for twelve hours a day for a lifetime would still be insufficient to exhaust its extent, and the bliss of meditation was so great that one could meditate for seven days and seven nights straight without getting up from his seat.

He said:

*"The happiness of meditation is like tasting delicacies in the different levels of a tiffin set. You taste the food in the topmost caddy and it is delicious; the next dish down is more delicious than the first; the third is tastier still. Each successive dish becomes progressively more delicious."*

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## MEDITATION WORKSHOP

To perfect the skill and experience of his most accomplished meditators Luangpu felt the need to create a special environment and training ground for these meditators. This led to the creation of the so-called 'meditation workshop' in 1935.

The first meditation workshop was built in a special enclosure halfway between the main chapel and the monastery. It was a small, two-story, wooden building. The upper and lower stories were connected by a duct only large enough to allow Luangpu's voice from the upper level to be audible to those below. On the lower floor there were two rows of six platforms with an aisle to walk in between. The floor was bare earth.

By day the nuns would sit in meditation on the platforms. By night, mosquito nets would be draped over them to allow the nuns to continue with their meditation unbitten. The same arrangements were also made on the upper floor, but only Luangpu, monks and novices were allowed there. There were no stairs between the upper and lower floors and the entrances to the two floors were separate so that the male and female meditators had no chance of seeing each other, let alone come into contact.

The second workshop was a single-story square building composed of two twin rooms laid side-by-side and separated by a thin partition. Each room was large enough to hold forty meditators. The room on the right side contained laymen (*upasaka*) and monks. The room on the left side contained nuns and laywomen (*upasika*). Luangpu had a place at the front of the building on the right-hand side next to the partition. Luangpu gave instructions for the meditation group through a small opening in the wall, allowing the nuns and upasika to hear his words without being able to see his face. Again, the entrances to the two sides of the room were separate.

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Luangpu designated that this hall be used by meditators twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, non-stop. The abbot selected only the most gifted of the meditators. Their mission was to carry out the investigation of the spiritual world that lies beyond the path to Dhammakaya. The workshop meditators gave up everything, even their own free time. They had almost no time to sleep.

During the War, Luangpu divided his gifted meditators into two shifts. They would take alternate turns sitting for twelve hours of meditation each day, six hours at a time, from midnight to 6.00 a.m., 6.00 a.m. to noon, noon to 6.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to midnight. After the War, Luangpu began to use three teams in six shifts, each one in four hours duration. Each shift had its own highly accomplished leader chosen by Luangpu. When changing shifts, the incoming one would arrive a half hour early to “warm up” their minds and benefit from the spiritual energy generated by the outgoing shift. The perpetual meditation schedule was unprecedented in that it allowed the wisdom of Dhammakaya to be verified again and again.

In the meditation workshop, the Dhammakaya Knowledge was the main focus. This meant an understanding of the super knowledge known to Lord Buddha, i.e., the Threefold Knowledge, Eightfold Supra-normal Knowledge and the Sixfold Superknowledge. Once adept in these forms of knowledge they would apply that knowledge to overcome the dark forces that control the fate of all beings and free them from Samsara, the cycle of rebirth.

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## LUANGPU'S TOP DISCIPLE

In 1937, a highly accomplished female meditator named Chand Khonnokyoong<sup>44</sup> was introduced to Luangpu by his adept disciple, Tongasuk Samdangpun. Luangpu recognized in Chand an innate aptitude for meditation and greeted her with these words, “What kept you so long?”, as if he had been waiting for her all this time. Without having to pass the usual examinations of prowess in meditation practice, Luangpu sent her straight into the meditation workshop. Once she had familiarized herself with the unfamiliar language and protocol inside the workshop, Luangpu elected her as head of the night shift.

Chand turned out to be the most adept of all the meditators. Whenever Luangpu asked her a difficult question on meditation, or requested her to do something extraordinary that required superior mental power, she could fulfil his request without fail. If she were asked to look for the afterlife destinations of the deceased, she could do so. If she were asked to look into the future or into the past, she could do it. Nothing Luangpu told her to do was beyond her ability to accomplish.

One day when Luangpu was returning from lunch, he spotted two pigeons on the temple roof cooing at each other. Luangpu challenged Chand to find out the conversation which had taken place between them. He said that the two pigeons had been perched together on the temple roof. One pigeon had turned its head to face away from the other, and then the two pigeons had flown off together in the same direction.

Chand went away to meditate upon the Dhammakaya. Through her meditative insight she was able to understand the communication between the two pigeons. She returned to Luangpu with the answer. The pair of pigeons had been husband and wife, she told Luangpu. The male had asked the female about the route to their destination so that they would not

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<sup>44</sup>*Chand Khonnokyoong* (1909-2000): founder of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, one of the largest Buddhist temples in the world

get lost on the way. The female had turned her head away to recollect the route before they both set off together in the agreed direction. Luangpu was pleased with her answer.

Chand Khonnokyoong carried on Luangpu's legacy after he passed away in 1959. She began teaching Dhammakaya method of meditation to her students at her residence located inside Wat Paknam. Years later she moved on to build Wat Phra Dhammakaya (The Dhammakaya Temple), which later evolved to become one of the biggest Buddhist temples in the world, where thousands of Buddhist monks live a virtuous life and preach goodness to all of mankind.

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*Khun Yai Chand Khonnokyoong*

## OBSTACLES AT WAT PAKNAM

Luangpu faced many obstacles during his early tenure as Abbot of Wat Paknam. The resident monks and laypeople there were so accustomed to their unruly ways that they resisted all attempts to establish order. Monks and novice monks did not live by the monastic rules of discipline. Many of them had developed undesirable behaviors. The new rules and changes that Luangpu put in effect not only upset the monks and novices under his charge but also the locals who were long used to illicit dealings through the temple. They turned against him and spread mud-slinging gossip to discredit him. Some even tried to harm him physically.

One night eight men came along with the intention of disposing of Luangpu. One of the monks on watch tried to stop them. Hearing the commotion, Luangpu went out to see what was going on. Upon seeing what happened he said to the monk, “We bhikkhus must not fight nor run away. Only in this way will we prevail.” The compelling presence of Luangpu must have caught the men off guard. They backed off into the darkness.

On another night, at about 8 p.m., as Luangpu was leaving the sermon hall to return to his living quarter, an assassin fired two shots at him. The bullets ripped through Luangpu’s robe and hit the face of a lay supporter by the name of Prom who was walking behind Luangpu and fatally wounded him.

Luangpu’s robe had two large bullet holes in it, but Luangpu himself was unscathed. Usually, monks’ robes are worn tightly against the body. The fact that two bullets went through Luangpu’s robe but did not even touch his skin was nothing short of a miracle. Did Luangpu possess supernatural power? Was it due to the virtue of the Dhammakaya that gave him this power? Or was it because of merit power from the good deeds that he practiced which pro-

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tected him from harm? Regardless of what it was, the incident made Luangpu famous. The police soon arrived on the scene. They took away the tatters of Luangpu's robe as evidence and later caught the culprit, a local villain named "Rod". Later Luangpu was called to testify in court. He attended the trial without carrying any animosity toward his attacker. He even appealed to the magistrate to lighten the sentence of the accused. His kindness was felt by all.

Luangpu's problems were not only confined within the temple grounds. When Luangpu newly accepted the position of Abbot at Wat Paknam, the monastic head of Bhasicharoen sub-district prohibited him to display extraordinary mental powers for fear of offending abbots of other temples in the area. Luangpu took no notice of this directive. He expressed his view: *"Asking one to sit idle, not doing something useful for oneself and others, is asking one to let his life be barren."*

Luangpu's vocation was not without hindrances. The impact of the Dhammakaya meditation was widespread, causing a stir among those used to other Buddhist practices. References to Dhammakaya in the Theravada Buddhist Canon were scant, not enough to give light to unfamiliar people. Luangpu found himself confronted by many people who believed that his meditation method was alien to Buddhism. Some monks thought that he had meditated too much and as a result was teaching something that was not in keeping with Buddhism.

At first sight Luangpu's teachings didn't seem to correspond with those recorded in the Pali Canon. But, in truth, the depth of insight that he had gained through inner wisdom made his Buddhist teachings very precise. Ironically, he received a continuous stream of complaints from a public long used to vague generalizations on Buddhism. Luangpu, like any pioneer, had to treat these prejudices as just another obstacle to overcome. It was only much later that his teachings would be embraced by the public.

As for the Dhammakaya Knowledge that he propagated, early on, people accused him of

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inventing the name “Dhammakaya”. Some accused him of self-proclaiming supernatural powers. Some even went so far as saying, “Those who want to become demons go to Wat Paknam to practice Dhammakaya.”

Luangpu responded with these words:

*“It is pitiful. These people speak out of ignorance. How could one dream up a name like this without the knowledge of its origin? Pay no attention to this kind of shallow thinking. Dhammakaya is the real thing. This real thing will propel Wat Paknam to great heights. Just wait and see.”*

On one occasion Luangpu discussed with Somdej Phra Wanarat of Wat Phra Chetuphon<sup>45</sup> the allegations which so many people had levelled against him. He said:

*“A person like me is not one who lacks wisdom, knowing not what is right, what is wrong. Why should I destroy myself by indecent aspiration? They accuse me because they have no knowledge about Dhammakaya. They know neither the place where Dhammakaya exists, nor the meaning of the word itself. This ignorance caused them to jump into wrong conclusion and blame someone who is forthright. No ignorance can wipe away Truth. Good will always overcome evil. The Dhammakaya of Buddhism is the real thing. It is not fake or artificial. Eventually, the light from the jewel of Buddhism will brighten their eyes, enabling them to see the Truth for themselves. The results of the truth are derived from the meditator’s own experience, not from doctrinal study. I am not upset by all this controversy because Dhammakaya is the truth of Buddhism. It is real. Dhammakaya will appear to all those who attain to that level of consciousness. My conviction in the veracity of Buddhism is unshakeable.”*

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<sup>45</sup> *Somdej Phra Wanarat* of Wat Phra Chetuphon later became the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand

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*“At Wat Paknam, the monks in my care, even when eating and sleeping, do nothing in their lives but practice meditation. We talk together about what we have achieved and we are tireless in encouraging others to do good. We do not advertise ourselves in newspapers. Our fame relies solely on our good reputation. But even in spite of the virtue of our temple, people still come to slander.”*

He quoted the Buddha’s Teaching to his disciple Vakkali<sup>46</sup>:

*“Yo kho Vakkali Dhammam passati so mam passati”*  
*“Vakkali, whoever sees Dhamma, sees me”.*

And another one to the novice Vasettha:

*“Tathagatassa h’etam Vasetthadhi-vacanam Dhammakayo iti pi ...”*  
*“O Vasetthas! The word of Dhammakaya is indeed the name of the Tathagata<sup>47</sup>”.*

Like many great men and pioneers of the world whose wisdoms and visions were beyond the grasps of other fellowmen, Luangpu had to swim upstream in order to overcome the lack of understanding and awareness of his fellowmen. But in the long run he prevailed. Wat Paknam under his guidance evolved to become the most accomplished and venerated Buddhist temple in Thailand. Today, Dhammakaya Meditation is one of the most popular meditation techniques in Thailand.

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<sup>46</sup> **Vakkali:** one of the arahants who had obtained enlightenment through faith and love for the Buddha

<sup>47</sup> **Tathagata:** the Accomplished One, the supreme man, the superlative man, referring to the Buddha. The exact meaning of this Pali word is “He who has reached or become what is really so, the True”, the term the Buddha used to refer to himself after the Awakening.

## GROWING THE TEMPLE

Under the leadership of Luangpu, Wat Paknam grew from a desolate, disheveled, disorderly temple to becoming one of the most well-organized, well-disciplined, well-respected temples in Thailand. The number of monks and novices in the temple grew from the original thirteen to one thousand—then the largest number in Thailand. It also produced the greatest number of Buddhist scholars and meditation masters in the country.

Luangpu always valued the importance of education. He said:

*“Education can change the life of a person for the better. One who is well-educated has access to better things in life than one who is not. One who possesses knowledge possesses the king’s treasure, never to run out.”*

Training for monks, novices, laymen and laywomen were conducted by Luangpu every evening. He trained monks to deliver sermons and teach meditation. Proper monastic conduct in the temple started to become the norm. The radiance of goodness was everywhere.

But all was not well at the temple.

There were no schools near Wat Paknam during those days. Children of families who lived around the temple had no place to go for their education unless they were willing to travel far away. Because formal education was not yet made mandatory in Thailand, coupled with the lack of practical means of transportation, parents of these children did not send their children to school. As a result, these children spent most of their time doing nothing or simply making trouble.

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Rowdy children ran wild in the temple compound and were disturbing the life of the monks. Gangs of children congregated in the temple and loitered its surrounding. They shot birds and fished in the water around the temple—an outrage in a Buddhist temple. The children would not listen to reason and would refuse even forcible means to remove them from the compound. Dealing with these children left the monks with almost no spare time to attend to their regular duties. The monks had to be wary of escalating the conflict because the children's parents were those same neighbors who were unwilling to cooperate with Luangpu's reforms.

Luangpu was concerned for the future of these children. He said, *“These uneducated children are littering up the country and wrecking this temple in their spare time. If I don't help them they will grow up to become hooligans.”*

The way to help them was to give them education, Luangpu decided. He set up a private school free of charge to the public and garnered enough financial support to hire teachers. Initially ten families signed up for their children. Later on, as the families began to see the benefit, more and more families signed on. The number soon grew to three hundred. With some education the behaviors of the children started to change. Their parents were pleased with the progress of their children. Many of the conspiring neighbors realized what Luangpu was doing for them and started to accept him. The scruffiness of Wat Paknam gradually receded.

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*Academy for Scriptural Studies at Wat Paknam*

## Becoming Centers for Education

During that time, Siam underwent country-wide modernization programs initiated by King Chulalongkorn (Rama V). Immense government and social reforms were instituted. Education up to primary level was made mandatory. Government-sponsored primary educational programs throughout the kingdom were implemented. Because the policy of the Ministry of Public Instruction was underfinanced and slow to implement, the government utilized the monasteries throughout the kingdom as places to jumpstart the school program and for the introduction of new texts and teaching techniques.

When the abbot of neighboring Wat Koonjan passed away, Luangpu was designated acting abbot. That temple also had a school and Luangpu gradually moved his teaching activities there. Later, when the government was able to organize more schools to handle the load, Luangpu handed over this operation to the government.

In Wat Paknam he developed the old primary school to be used for teaching Pali and Dhamma for the temple's monks and novices. Previously, the monks of Wat Paknam who studied Pali had to travel to other temples such as Wat Anong, Wat Kalyanamitr, Wat Phrayurawong, Wat Mahathat and Wat Chetuphon to receive their education. In those days the only way to travel was by canal boat. Thonburi, for instance, had no roads. The main bridge that crossed between Bangkok and Thonburi had not yet been built. Those studying had to face the same sort of hardships that Luangpu himself had faced in his early years.

Luangpu made sure every monk and novice studied the Scriptures so they could conduct their monastic lifestyle the right way and to have the knowledge to teach others. Scriptural study and meditational study went hand-in-hand. Luangpu said "*Scriptural study is a balm; meditation is a pill.*"

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Whoever had special aptitude for the study of Pali emphasized academic studies. Whoever had special aptitude for the study of meditation emphasized Dhamma practice. If anyone lacked either the aptitude to study or meditate, there was always the choice of helping with the administration of the temple. Everyone had to be active. No one was allowed to sit idle.

The temple was soon established as a seat of learning. It occupied a newly built, three-storied edifice, 59 meters long and 11 meters wide, and cost about 2.6 million baht (a great sum of money at that time). The Pali Institute was on the lower two floors. The top floor was for meditation teaching to the public. The building was eventually used by one thousand monks and novices—not only the resident monks and novices of Wat Paknam, but also those from other temples. It became the nation's biggest school for scriptural studies. Monks from other temples in the Bhasicharoen area changed their place of examination to Wat Paknam and were able to take their midday meals in the temple's refectory, which was able to cater up to six hundred monks and novices.

The school for scriptural studies that Luangpu established developed into a first-class educational institute which has consistently produced the highest number of Level-Nine Pali graduates (the highest degree in Buddhist academy) in the educational history of Thailand.

To this day, Wat Paknam is one of the most recognized Buddhist institutions in the nation.

### **Housing for Monks, Novices and Nuns**

During those days, accommodation for monks was very limited. Newly arrived monks had to take responsibility for building their own kutis. As the number of monks increased, a sort of shanty town grew up in every available empty space in the temple. The monks knew that without accommodations Luangpu would not allow them to stay. So they took whatever building material, including scraps of wood from broken coffins discarded by the neighboring

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undertakers, and built macabre kutis looking more like rabbit hutches or bird-houses than accommodation fit for a monk! The huts were built on stilts over stagnant, putrid water. None of the huts had even so much as a bench or a chair. Most monks had nothing more than a thermos container of drinking water.

Luangpu proceeded to construct several permanent buildings to accommodate the increasing number of monks, novices and nuns, using modern facilities available at that time. The housing facilities that he built were able to accommodate as many as six hundred monks, novices and nuns.

Luangpu created a segregated, fenced area in the temple for nuns. Each dormitory was occupied by many nuns. No nun was allowed to sleep alone. Luangpu prohibited contact between monks and nuns without his permission. If a visit between the opposite parties was necessary a third person must be present. Although the number of nuns in the temple grew steadily over the years, there were never any scandals caused by the mixing of monks and nuns. Luangpu took close responsibility for everything that took place in the temple, both in public and behind closed doors.

### **Feeding a Thousand Mouths**

Luangpu had more immediate worries on his mind. The lack of food for monks and novices was a regular occurrence. He himself had personally encountered hunger during his early days at Wat Phra Chetuphon. He had made a pledge to himself that as soon as he was in a position to do so he would build a kitchen big enough to cater to all the monks, novices and nuns so they could concentrate their energy on monastic training and meditation and not have to worry about having enough food to survive. Through the growing support of his benefactors, over time, he finally was able to fulfill this aspiration.

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A refectory large enough to cater to one-thousand strong community of monks, novices, nuns and laypeople was finally built—the first of its kind in Thailand. In addition, with the help of a capable monk, he devised a water delivery system to deliver clean drinking water from artesian wells to the temple. With this in place, the temple always had plenty of drinking water.

The nuns were assigned to run the kitchen. In the beginning rice had to be shipped from his family farm in Songpinong. Later, help came from local lay folk and this tradition continues down to the present day. Luangpu took upon himself the responsibility to provide for all the monks and novices in the temple. He began this effort in 1916 and continued to do so for another forty-three years. By the time of his death, the number of monks, novices, nuns and laypeople that he managed to feed daily grew to twelve hundred. Many called him the “Miracle Monk” for what he was able to achieve.

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## MANAGEMENT STYLE

Although Luangpu had never undergone any training in management, his management skills were second to none. He used the Dhamma of the Buddha as his guide in managing people. And he practiced what he preached.

Luangpu's management style was one of a father to his children. He applied *Brahmavihara*—the “Four Divine States of Mind”—consisting of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity in managing his temple residents. He gave everyone genuine love and equal treatment as if they were his own sons and daughters. He worked hard for their welfare, making sure all of them were well provided for. He shared everything he had with them so that they could live happily just like they were still living at home with their parents. He gave them plenty of love and care, but when it came to discipline and behavior he was quite strict.

One of the most challenging aspects in temple management is to make sure that every temple resident follows his or her appropriate Precepts. Precepts are codes of moral conduct practiced by all Buddhists. Buddhist Precepts are divided into two groups: one for householders and one for monastics.

The aim for monastic practice is to overcome the weaknesses in one's character and to eradicate defilements. The lifestyle of an ordained monk is one that requires intense discipline, will-power, and perseverance in order to achieve the ultimate goal of deliverance. The purposes of monastic discipline are to establish good moral foundation for ordained monks, provide harmony and happiness for the monastic community, gain faith and confidence of the public, and preserve the longevity of Buddhism.

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*Monks and novices trained by Luangpu at Wat Paknam*

The core practice for all Buddhist householders' moral conduct is the Five Precepts<sup>48</sup>. For some Buddhists who wish to intensify self-purification, they practice the Eight Precepts<sup>49</sup>, the expansion of the Five Precepts. The goal is for cleansing the defiled mind resulting in inner calm and joy. Nuns and resident laypeople follow the Eight Precepts. A novice monk practices the Ten Precepts<sup>50</sup>. A fully ordained Buddhist monk follows an intensive set of discipline known as the 227 Precepts, which are to be kept on a daily basis.

Buddhist monks are expected to lead a life of perfect purity, setting good examples for all Buddhists. A monk's behavior is a reflection of his temple and the religion. Luangpu made sure that all the monks at his temple follow the monastic disciplines rigorously and all temple residents live by the temple rules. This was no easy task as the number of temple residents grew bigger by the day.

He divided management responsibilities into three areas: one for academic studies; one for the welfare of monks, novice monks, temple attendants; and one for the welfare of nuns.

He saw that the most important virtue needed in the monastic community was unity and orderliness. He emphasized adherence to a daily routine as the basis of harmony in the temple community, whether it was daily chanting, listening to sermons or sitting in meditation. He taught that community spirit brings happiness and prevents infighting, disharmony and serious problems in the community. Every fortnight, Luangpu made sure that the head-shaving of the monks, novice monks and nuns was performed all on the same day. He told them, *"If the heads cannot be in unity, how can the minds?"*

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<sup>48</sup> **The Five Precepts** consist of: not killing living beings; not stealing; not committing sexual misconduct; not lying; not consuming alcohol or other intoxicating substances

<sup>49</sup> **The Eight Precepts** consist of: not killing living beings; not stealing; not engaging in any sexual activities; not lying; not consuming alcohol or other intoxicating substances; not taking meals between midday and dawn; not indulging in entertainment or shows that impede the quality of mind and not to be immodest in the way of dress or behavior; not indulging in indolent sleeping habits that may lead to sensuality or laziness (such as sleeping on high, soft, luxurious beds). The purposes of the last three rules are to deter any sexual inclination which may impede one's ability to purify the mind.

<sup>50</sup> **The Ten Precepts** consist of: not killing living beings; not stealing; not engaging in unchaste activities; not lying; not consuming alcohol and any intoxicating substances; not taking meals between midday and dawn; refraining from singing, dancing, playing music, or attending entertainment performances; refraining from wearing perfume, cosmetics and decorative accessories; refraining from indolent sitting and sleeping habits (i.e., sitting on highly cushioned chairs, or sleeping on luxurious, soft beds); and refraining from accepting and dealing with money

Even though Luangpu devoted the majority of his time to teaching and spreading the Dhammakaya Knowledge, he still took his responsibilities for governing the monastic community very seriously. He would walk around the temple every night, checking on the behavior and wellbeing of the community. Intruders were often found on the temple grounds, especially during rainy nights. He said there were only two sorts of people who like this kind of weather at night: thieves and adulterers. He would go out to check on the behavior of the monks, novices, nuns and others in his care to see if anyone had gone out on midnight escapades, or, conversely, if anyone had been particularly diligent in their Pali studies. Luangpu would check all the dormitories where the monks and novices stayed.

If he saw light coming from a room and heard the sound of scripture repeated aloud, he would be immensely pleased. He would call that monk to meet him and would inquire about his wellbeing and give him special support in his studies. Some years when an especially large number of students succeeded in their studies, he would organize a ceremony of congratulations, present the monks with new robes and announce the names of the successful monks in front of the congregation so that the temple supporters could share in the congratulations.

If he saw light coming from a room accompanied by the sound of conversation, he would knock on the door and warn the monk to turn off his light. Everyone knew that Luangpu was meticulous about the saving of electricity and water in the temple. He would turn off the master switch during daylight hours so that no one wasted electricity unnecessarily.

Luangpu continually found new ways of checking the temple at night so that no one could predict his routine. Some nights Luangpu would go for his rounds wearing nothing more than his *angsa* (inner-robe) and would stand on watch in the shadows with a lighted stick of incense, the glowing end of which looked like a cigarette. No one would pay this monk any attention, for they knew that Luangpu would be fully robed whenever outside his kuti and he

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never smoked.

At one point there was a group of novices who regularly left the temple at night to go watch a movie. The leader of this group also smoked cigarettes. One night he forgot his lighter as he and his group were leaving the temple. He saw a glowing light in the dark and thought a monk was there to sneak a cigarette. So he went toward the glow to light his cigarette. There, he came face to face with Luangpu who was carrying a cane in one hand. The novice turned white. Luangpu told him to fetch all his friends to confront him. He told the novices he would not punish them if they would confess their misbehaviors and promise not to do it again and to study hard. They all promised. From that night on the leader of the group was a transformed youth. He practiced meditation so diligently that he was finally able to attain Dhammakaya.

Once he caught a novice smearing himself with white powder and asked him why he did so. The novice monk answered that he applied the powder in order to treat his acne. Luangpu told the novice never to use cosmetics in the manner of a householder again as this was in violation of the monastic rules for novice monks—the Ten Precepts.

For other slackers, the distant scent of incense from upwind at night was enough to tell them that their laxity had been discovered by Luangpu on his rounds.

Another night Luangpu passed the nuns' dormitory. One of the nuns had invited a friend to stay overnight in her room to study the Precepts. Luangpu saw that it was already late, but the light in the nun's room was still on. Luangpu looked through the window and saw the nun trying on her friend's blouse in front of the mirror and laughing. Luangpu picked up a rock and threw it through the window, followed by two more. The nun trying on the blouse came running out of the building but could not see anyone, so she shouted, "You can't get away with throwing things at me when I've done nothing wrong! Just you wait till I tell Luangpu!"

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The next morning the nun went to tell Luangpu. Luangpu asked casually what the nun was doing at the time and why she hadn't put off the light and gone to bed. The nun beat around the bush. Luangpu continued with his questioning and eventually disclosed that he had thrown the rocks himself! He taught her that she should never behave like a householder because sensuality would cause the mind to wander and her meditation would suffer. He taught all his disciples who had renounced the home life to be careful of slipping back into their old habits or their vows would have been in vain.

He said:

*"The world is full of undesirable things. If Dhamma is traded for worldly concern, nothing will be left but eating, sleeping and partying."*

If any quarrels arose in the community, he would find out which monks were at the heart of the quarrel and would summon them. He would never ask what the quarrel was about, but simply the question: "Can both of you forgive each other?" If both of them could get over the quarrel and forgive one another, they would be allowed to stay. If not, they would be asked to leave.

He taught his disciples to be content with whatever they owned, to avoid attachment to food, clothing, shelter and medicine donated for their use.

Luangpu was widely admired for his strictness about the handling of money, even those funds that had been donated to him for personal use. Every last money was turned over to his trusted attendant. Although he had elegant and expansive buildings constructed for the Pali Institute and for meditation, he never built anything extravagant for his personal use. His own kuti was a simple wooden construction. Even this, he shared with another monk. Someone once asked him why he never built anything for himself. He replied: *"I am already happy with what I have, why not give happiness to others as well?"*

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## **MIRACLES AND SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA**

Luangpu was famous for his meditative power and the miracles associated with the Dhammakaya Knowledge. Anybody who has had the chance to study the nature of miracles will realize that they are just an ordinary byproduct of high-level meditation practice. Luangpu never intended that his disciples give much importance to miracles. His aim was to use the Dhammakaya Knowledge to reach an end of all defilements and to bring all beings to the sanctuary of Nibbana. He did, however, allow his disciples to apply their Dhammakaya Knowledge to help relieve human suffering.

There were many accounts of miracles related to Luangpu. If we were to mention all of Luangpu's supernormal activities and miracles it would fill up several large volumes. For the purpose of this book we will mention only a few examples.

### **Miracle of a Mango Seed**

On one occasion, Luangpu brought a mango seed into the meditation workshop for an experiment on the mental power of meditation. Since the workshop floor was bare earth, he planted and watered the seed there. Without any warning the seed sprouted and grew to be a mango tree of full height within half an hour. It bore fruit which was golden in hue, exactly like the magical fruits of the Himavanta Forest described in Buddhist scriptures. Luangpu divided the mangoes so that everyone in the workshop had some. The taste of the mangoes was so delicious that it was "out of this world"!

### **Wrestling with an Otherworldly Crystal Ball**

On three occasions Luangpu employed the spiritual power of those in the meditation team to

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The second time the ball appeared was in the 1940's when Luangpu ordered his super-advanced meditation team to dig for it again. This time they sent a nun who had already attained the Dhammakaya down into the hole alone while the rest of the team meditated above. Again the crystal ball's green radiance gleamed from inside the hole. She managed to capture it in a white cloth. Luangpu picked up the crystal ball and enshrined it in the main chapel. The crystal ball, the size of a large durian fruit, was incredibly clear but gnarled. The crystal ball remained within the chapel for six days and then on the seventh night an unseasonal storm whipped up around the temple. A tremendous flash of lightning struck the chapel and the crystal ball was gone leaving behind only the white cloth.

Luangpu mused: "Our Perfections<sup>51</sup> are still weak. We have still not conquered the dark side. Our hardship must continue because we are still riddled with defilements. Our wisdom is still imprecise. For this reason the crystal ball has slipped from our grasp."

There was a third time Luangpu detected a crystal ball beneath the temple. Again the team dug as close as it could. Every time they came close it would sink deeper into the bowels of the earth with a tremendous groan as it moved unstopably through the bedrock. As they came closer, the crystal ball disappeared and all that was left was a nest of cobras which attacked the nuns, biting them mercilessly. The crystal ball was gone for good. Luangpu used his meditation power to cure the nuns from their cobra bites.

### **A Nun's Psychic Power**

Among the workshop meditators was a thin and clever nun called "Naag the Nun". Naag was one of the most gifted meditators. She had purified her mind to a high degree, so much so that she had the power to cause tremors. Her knowledge of the future was impeccable. Whenever she made a prophecy, it was bound to come true. Thus, on the day when Naag said that she herself would be bitten simultaneously by three cobras before 7.00 p.m., the

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<sup>51</sup> *Perfections*: perfected virtues; virtues cultivated as a way of purification in order to reach the goal of enlightenment

News of Luangpu's ability to cure the incurable went far and wide. People from all over the country came to seek his help. Each day, particularly on Thursdays, hundreds of the faithful came to Luangpu for spiritual help. Those whose conditions seemed hopeless would be brought to Luangpu by their relatives. Luangpu's most advanced meditators would ascertain through meditation the cause of their illness. If the patient was approaching the end of his or her life, his disciples would tell them so. If the reason for the illness was the ripening of the effects of past evil deeds, they would heal the illness by having the patient perform an act of major merit to escape the clutches of his or her past evil kamma. If the reason for the illness was physical, they would use the power of meditation to adjust the patient's internal functioning along with the administration of herbal medicine.

Luangpu always maintained that he did not heal the patients from their illness through meditation but simply removed the illness from their bodies. Luangpu advised that the people most amenable to recovery were those already well-versed in meditation. In such cases, the mental energies of the healer and the patient would be in synchrony and the results would manifest themselves more quickly.

Luangpu had the reputation for being able to cure hopeless cases, irrespective of race or creed. On one occasion a Muslim family brought in a daughter whose neck erupted in septic boils, resistant to medical treatment, whether conventional, homeopathic, herbal, or black magic. The boils continued to spread uncontrollably, causing her extreme distress. The patient, a strict adherent of the Islam religion, was taken by her mother to several doctors, until finally she was advised to visit Luangpu Wat Paknam. The mother took her to pay respect to Luangpu and asked him for help. Luangpu observed the patient and, after a while, said to the family: "These are the sort of boils they call 'boils of mercy'. There is no need to visit a doctor." He told the patient, "All you need to do is meditate and recite the mantra '*sam-ma-arahang*' and imagine a crystal ball inside your body. In seven or eight days, you'll reach 'mercy'. Just carry on with this meditation exercise." He gave the family quick instructions on

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would be plagued with this illness; from now on she would make her way towards Nibbana because she had already attained Dhammakaya.

The younger sister was inspired by Buddhism. She practiced meditation regularly from that day on and within a month was also able to attain Dhammakaya. Her mother followed suit and changed her religion to Buddhism, while culturally remaining within the Islamic community.

Luangpu was called upon to heal lay folk so often that in later years he made it known that the sick no longer had to come for audience in person. All they had to do was to send him a letter or leave a note in a request box located in the front of his kuti, stating their name, time and date of birth, and the nature of the illness. That was all that was needed. Long distance healing by the power of the mind continued to yield miraculous results in the case of the terminally ill. Even when Luangpu was advanced in age, he would still give great importance to providing for the guests to his temple, saying, "If I don't help them, then who will? They expect me to be their refuge."

While inundated by guests, Luangpu still had the compassion to ask after the health and prosperity of members of his congregation in their absence, taking responsibility for all of his disciples however lowly, like a shepherd tending to his flock. Luangpu always advised those meditators who helped heal others that they should always make sure that they themselves stay virtuous and pure.

### **A Lucky Number**

It was a popular practice for laypeople in need of money to consult monks of repute before choosing their lucky numbers for the national lottery. When coming to Wat Paknam such people would be disappointed because they would be told: "Wat Paknam has no holy water,"

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The man nearly had a heart attack! He was upset and angry at Luangpu. If Luangpu was not going to help with the lottery, why not just say so? Why did he have to insult me too? Next he felt regret that he had not sold the envelope when all those people had offered to buy it. However, the peace of mind from having just completed his meditation still pervaded his being and he started to think, "If Luangpu has gone to such lengths just to teach me a lesson, it means I must be better off to do away with this lottery habit."

From that day on he lost all interest in the lottery. One by one, all his old lottery friends who used to be wealthier than he gradually went into financial ruin. Some never won the lottery. Others won but the lottery operators refused to pay. Some died in the ensuing violence. The man continued with the task of earning an honest living and saving his money. Having put his life in order, he eventually became well off. At last, he realized that Luangpu had not tricked him with promises of fortune but wanted him to gain wealth intelligently and in the rightful way.

## **Prophecies**

Luangpu was famed for the accuracy of his prophecies. Unlike many others, he had the courage to make his prophecies public, whether they were matters concerning himself, his disciples, the temple, the nation, or even the world. He knew that his prophecies were reliable and would make them known so that those around him could prepare themselves. Some criticized him for risking his credibility by making prophecies in public but he maintained: "We know that what the Buddha taught is the truth. The Dhammakaya of the Buddha would never mislead anyone."

Luangpu knew what was going on in the minds of others. Audiences in his lecture hall often felt like his teachings were catered directly to them. He also knew how mature or seasoned his disciples were in the perfection of good deeds, or when they were due for attaining

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He continued: “In the future, in your own lifetime, there will be mansions for all seasons (air-conditioned condominiums), canals will turn into roads (almost all canals in Bangkok were later replaced by roads), roads will intertwine like noodles (spaghetti junctions on expressways), and roads will pass through rice paddies and forests linking one city to the next across the country (cross-country highways).”

Somjit must have thought Luangpu was going crazy. But these things that he predicted, which sounded farfetched and incredible at the time, have all come true!

Right before World War II came to an end, he predicted that the war would finish in seven days. Indeed, seven days later the war ended.

In 1954, Luangpu called a meeting of all his disciples—both within the temple and outside—and declared to them that in five years’ time he would pass away. He urged them to carry on his missions: to propagate the Dhammakaya Knowledge and to teach Dhammakaya Meditation to the world.

### **Man from India**

One afternoon, a dark-skinned man from India called “Bung” came to visit Luangpu after having heard of Luangpu’s reputation. He bowed down to Luangpu and asked him if someone like him were to try meditation would he have any chance of attaining Dhammakaya. Luangpu said that he had a good chance because he had performed enough virtues in his past to have met up with Luangpu. Bung asked, “So how many days will it take me to attain Dhammakaya?”

Luangpu sat in meditation for a moment and answered, “If you sit in meditation for an hour a day it will take only a few months.” Bung was disappointed, “Does it have to take months?”

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Three to four months later, Bung came back to visit Luangpu again bearing a neatly wrapped gift. He paid obeisance to Luangpu and announced, "I've been to India and brought a present for you. Why not guess what it is?"

Luangpu laughed and said, "An apple; just what I wanted." Indeed it was an apple. A wave of excitement passed through the onlookers.

Bung asked, "How come the day I left Don Muang International Airport you were standing at the foot of the stairs at the airplane, but when I raised my hands in respect you disappeared from sight? And when I arrived in India, you were there to meet me!"

Luangpu responded, "Only my astral body went to send you off. The real me was here in the temple all the time."

Some people wondered why Bung attained Dhammakaya after only a single session of meditation. Bung shared his secret: "I saw how much older than I Luangpu was, yet he had the power to endure. And so I thought: soldiers know they may have to die in battle, yet they are willing to go to war; all I had to do was fight against physical discomfort, and if in such workaday conditions if I wasn't prepared to put up a fight, then it's better that I die!"

Someone once asked Luangpu what he should do if he wanted to attain Dhammakaya within three days. Luangpu told him: "All you have to do is to keep your mind still no matter what happens, even if you feel like you're dying. As long as you're not ill, you cannot die."

### **Amulet Powers**

Although Luangpu Wat Paknam was famous for his meditation skill and healing power, to the people of Thailand he was most well-known for the miracles associated with the amulets that

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Luangpu distributed each of the amulets himself. Only those who made donations at the temple were allowed to receive an amulet. As the word spread, even those from distant provinces came in huge groups to visit the temple. Some chartered passenger barges. If people came at the wrong time, they would have to wait until the next day before receiving their amulets. The temple started to receive an average of 1,500 people per day coming to collect Luangpu's amulets.

Whether a person made a donation of 25 baht (about \$1) or of 10,000 baht, they would receive only one amulet. When Luangpu was asked why, he said it was not about the money; he wanted to treat everyone equally by their faith not by the amount of money they donated. He said the holiness of the amulet was beyond monetary value; a thousand baht or ten-thousand baht were nothing compared to the transcendental value of these amulets.

The first set of 84,000 amulets was exhausted in less than a year. Luangpu produced a second set to satisfy the supporters coming to the temple. Even when Luangpu was seriously ill, he still ordered more amulets to be produced. It was believed that the amulet was not so sacred unless collected in person from the hands of Luangpu himself. In spite of his old age and faltering health, he distributed the amulets in person. This was an exhaustive task, as it took a great deal of energy and time to give personal attention to each recipient. Only when his health was at its weakest did he delegate the task of distributing the amulets to his principle disciple monk, Venerable Samanatham-samathan (Luangpu Lek, Thira Dhammadharo), who had attained Dhammakaya since the time he was a novice, who could heal others through meditation and could teach meditation to Luangpu's satisfaction. The amulets continued to enjoy popularity even when Luangpu could no longer distribute them himself.

Luangpu did not like people to be inspired simply by miracles or sacred objects. He saw his own amulets as something higher, made special by the purity of those in the temple. He would never fail to remind those who received these amulets that the Buddha could do noth-

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## TEMPLE IN WARTIME

During World War II, Bangkok was occupied by soldiers of the Axis—more than a million in all. The Allies bombed Bangkok ceaselessly. In spite of the city being under attack, Luangpu did not evacuate the temple. On the contrary, he intensified his activities owing it to the increased number of people who came to take refuge at the temple.

At the outbreak of World War II, Luangpu showed a keen interest in the news. Even though he knew through his insight which side would win the war, he told Chand, his number one disciple, to check through meditation what the outcome of the war would be. Chand meditated and returned to report to Luangpu that the Germans had no chance of winning because of the atrocities they had committed and the bad kamma they had brought upon themselves.

During the war there was a shortage of food throughout the country. But Luangpu felt that it was not safe for the monks of Wat Paknam to go on alms rounds. In addition, wartime martial law prohibited the transport of strategic materials—including rice. Luangpu would instruct Chand to have the meditators in the temple invoke the virtues of the Dhammakaya to provide sufficient food for the temple community each day.

Once, the rice in the temple storeroom was nearly depleted and there was no prospect of a fresh supply for the next day. Even if one were to buy a cargo of rice, there was no guarantee that one would receive it. The nun in charge of the storeroom was at her wit's end and went to inform Luangpu. Luangpu told her, "Do not fear. The rice is on its way."

It turned out that martial law did not deter the generosity of temple goers who were determined to support the monks. They used a motorboat to tow a barge from faraway provinces and plied from one side of the canal to the other collecting donations of food from

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1941, many of the Bangkok newspapers gave the front-page coverage to the manifestation of miracles at Wat Paknam, seeing bombs being intercepted by miraculous hands to fall in the water or in uninhabited areas of the forest. Apart from bombs missing their targets because of interception, another reason why bombs fell harmlessly in unpopulated areas was because bomb-aimers could not find targets located in the city. Interviewed later in a documentary, one bomb-aimer reported: “When close to the target, Bangkok from the air would miraculously appear looking like a forest or farmland,” and the mirage would persist until the bombers gave up their mission and turned homeward.

In 1945, Luangpu envisioned through meditative insight a horrendously devastating new weapon of mass destruction—a horrific bomb. The weapon had been built by the Allies to bring the war in Asia to an end. They were planning to test this new weapon by dropping it on Bangkok. Bangkok was the most obvious target because so many soldiers from the Axis occupied the city. “What would happen to us if we were hit by this weapon?” Luangpu asked the meditators. Chand informed him that the whole city would be razed to the ground; the land would be “flattened like the surface of a drum”, and the whole population annihilated.

Upon hearing this Luangpu ordered Prayoon, a senior member of his congregation, to take all of the temple assets and leave the city, going as far away as he could. Luangpu told him, if his efforts were to be successful Prayoon should know within seven days whether he would be able to return to the temple in safety. Luangpu locked the doors of the meditation workshop from the inside, allowing no one to enter or leave. Food and drink would be sent in via the supply box. The workshop group sat in perpetual meditation behind closed doors for seven days and nights, invoking their meditative powers to save the country. For a reason known only to Luangpu and his meditators, the bomber and the bomb never arrived in Bangkok. The Allies had for some reason changed their minds.

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## TEACHINGS

*“Who am I? Why was I born? What is the purpose of my life?”*

These were the questions Luangpu wanted everyone to ask of themselves. He said:

*“This earth is not our permanent abode. It is only a temporary place that we stop by to accumulate merits and perfect our virtues.”*

Luangpu inspired his followers to cultivate transcendental virtues consisting of generosity, self-discipline, renunciation, wisdom, patience, perseverance, truthfulness, resolution, loving-kindness, and equanimity. These are known as the ‘Ten Perfections’ (*‘Parami’* in Pali). They are the virtues that every Bodhisatta<sup>52</sup> has to cultivate to perfection before he can become a Buddha.

An informed Buddhist knows that the principle teachings of Buddhism can be summarized into three main practices: to do good, to avoid bad, and to cultivate the mind. Luangpu taught his disciples to practice generosity as a way to do good, to uphold moral precepts as a way to avoid bad, and to meditate as a way to cultivate the mind.

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<sup>52</sup> **Bodhisatta**: a Buddha-to-be; one destined to become a Buddha

cline. You don't know when your last day may come. So, stop being reckless and strive to do good deeds. Free yourselves from worldly attachments. Don't be susceptible to sense pleasure. Practice meditation until you are able to attain Dhammakaya.

### ***Cultivate wisdom***

Buddhism values wisdom more than anything else. Wisdom is the force behind every success. Study Dhamma to gain wisdom. Practice it. Surround yourself with wise companions. If you are a monk, seek monks who are wise to be your companions. If you are a novice, seek novices who are wise to be your companions; if you are a nun, seek nuns who are wise to be your companions; and if you are a layperson, seek laypeople who are wise to be your companions. The more wise people you surround yourself with, the more wisdom you will acquire.

### ***Keep up with Dhamma practice***

Dhamma brings happiness to those who practice it. Listen to Dhamma regularly. Dhamma gives you protection and prevents you from falling into unfortunate realms. Give up bad habits and anything that hinders you from your practice. Strive to attain Dhammakaya.

### ***Observe your precepts strictly***

Those who live a holy life must observe the precepts according to their status. Monks must adhere to the Two Hundred and Twenty-Seven Precepts; novices to the Ten Precepts; and nuns to the Eight Precepts. Laypeople who give up a householder lifestyle must observe the Eight Precepts. Keep your precepts pure, never deviating from them.

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***Cultivate patience***

Patience is a vehicle that takes you to Nibbana. Without the virtue of patience you cannot reach your goal of liberation. Greed, anger, hatred, vengefulness, ignorance, wrong views, temptations, and other destructive emotions, can all be overcome by patience. A true monk must be peaceful and be of no danger to anyone. Peace is not possible without patience.

***Respect unity***

Unity is the virtue that brings harmony and happiness to the community. Perform tasks in unison, whether it is daily chanting, listening to sermons, sitting in meditation, or shaving of heads. Unity fosters orderliness and prevents conflict. A community that is not united will never prosper.

***Be gentle and courteous***

Be easy to get along with. Unlike a hard-nosed, arrogant person, a nice and gentle person is easy to teach and easy to develop. People feel at ease around him and want to give help. Cooperation and support will come to him in abundance. Teachers and trainers favor this kind of person.

***Be peaceful in composure***

Be mindful of your bodily movements. A monk must be elegant and peaceful in the way he carries himself, not to appear restless, jittery, nervous, or inquisitive. Avoid being a chatter-box, talking non-stop. Some people can't control their fidgety personality. The way to overcome this is to be constantly conscious of the monastic disciplines and practice them.

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***Avoid extravagance***

Monks and novices should be easy to support. Laypeople should have a standard of living befitting their status. Make the best use of what you have. Anyone who fails to realize the benefit of thrift will never manage to set himself up in life.

***Practice restraint of the senses***

A monk is one who is peaceful in body, speech and mind, not vulnerable to unwholesome emotions. Practice restraint of the senses. Learn how to overcome temptations brought about by the six sense doors: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and thought. Develop self-discipline to overcome laziness. Monks who lack restraint of the senses will not survive monkhood.

***Don't get attached to benefactors***

A monk should treat all benefactors impartially, not to be overly intimate or attached to specific laypeople, or it may bring about gossip, jealousy, and conflict.

***Avoid going to inappropriate places***

Any place or situation that brings a bad name to monks should be avoided. Examples of such places or situations are bars, clubs, entertainment places, places that sell liquor, political gatherings, visiting with the opposite sex (unless invited for religious activities), or engaging in buddy-to-buddy conversation with laypeople.

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## TEACHING LAYPEOPLE

The following are some of Luangpu's teachings addressed to laypeople:

### ***Acquire Dhamma***

*"To be born human is very difficult indeed. To be born human and come upon Buddhism is even more difficult. This is great blessing! Don't let this blessing go to waste. Acquire the knowledge of Dhamma. Practice it. Use it to benefit yourself and others. This will make you wise and complete."*

### ***Don't be reckless in life***

*"Impermanent are all created things. Strive on with awareness."  
These are the final words of the Lord Buddha.*

Be mindful of the impermanent nature of being. Where there is growth there is decline. Everything that exists must expire. Our bodies are in a constant state of deterioration. No one can escape aging, sickness and death. Death can come upon us any time, without warning. Remind yourself of this truth so you won't be reckless with your life. Time and tide wait for no one. Make every minute count. Strive to study hard. Work hard. Do good deeds. Establish yourself in the proper way. Accomplish meaningful things for your life.

### ***Embrace 'Virtues of a Civilized Man' (Kusalakammapatha)***

Preserve the qualities that make you human. Observe the 'Tenfold Wholesome Course of Action', otherwise known as 'Virtues of a Civilized Man'. They are the Dhamma of

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# PHOTO GALLERY



*Candle light ceremony by 1,128 monks at Buddhamonthon, Nakorn Pathom*



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Luangpu's Birth Place  
*Memorial Hall of Phramongkolthepmuni  
Lotus Land, Suphanburi*



Place of Ordination  
*Wat Songpinong, Suphanburi*





Dhammakaya Attainment Site

*Wat Bote-bon, Bangkueing, Nonthaburi*





*Main shrine hall where Luangpu attained Dhammakaya*

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## First Dhammakaya Propagation Site

*Wat Bang-pla, Nakorn Pathom*





*Wat Bang-pla*





*Luangpu's embalmed body in golden coffin at Wat Paknam*

World Center for Dhammakaya Propagation

*Wat Phra Dhammakaya, Pathumthani*





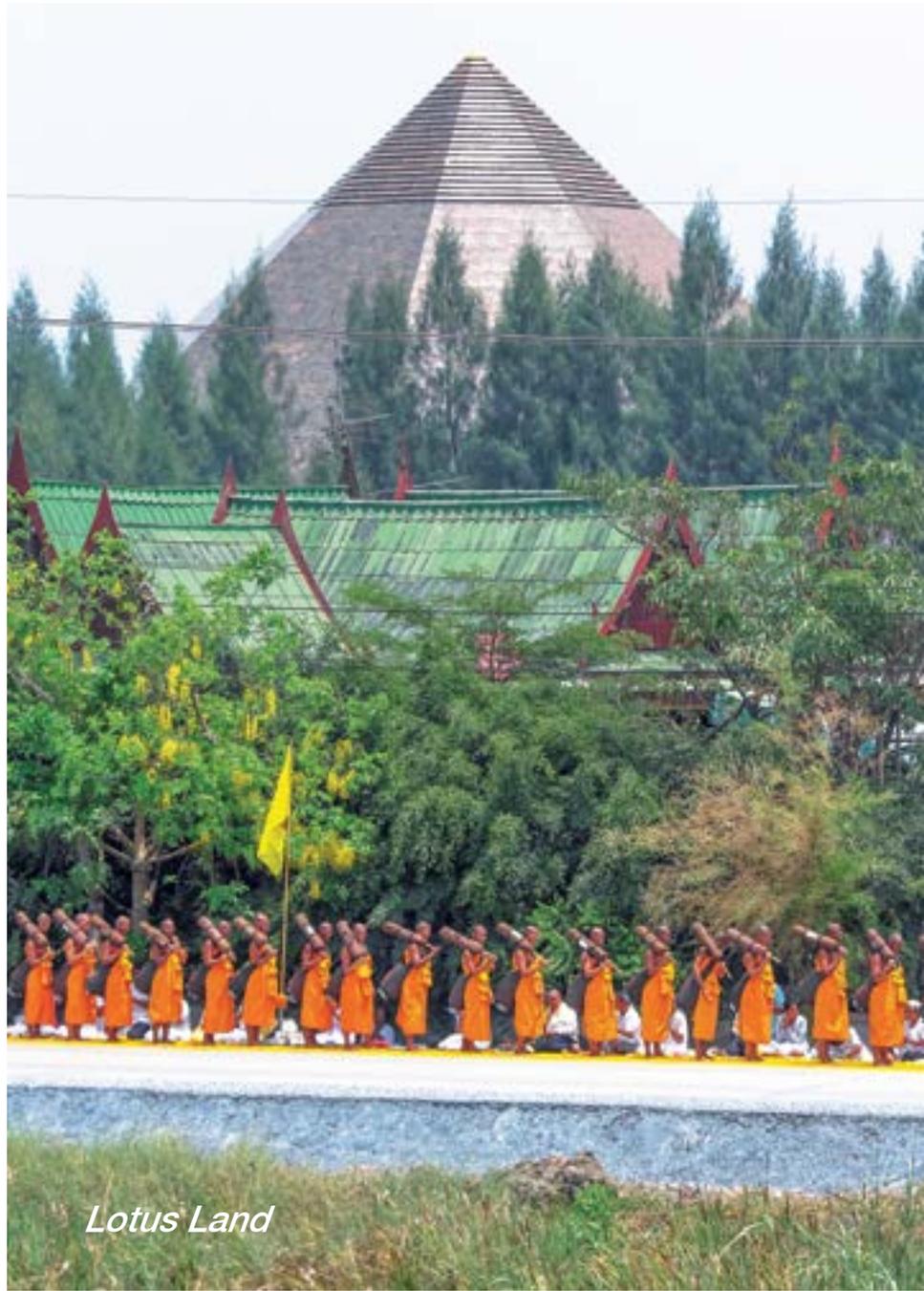
*Candle light ceremony at the Dhammakaya Cetiya in honor of Luangpu*



*Dhutanga Walk*



*Luangpu's gold statue leading the procession*



*Lotus Land*



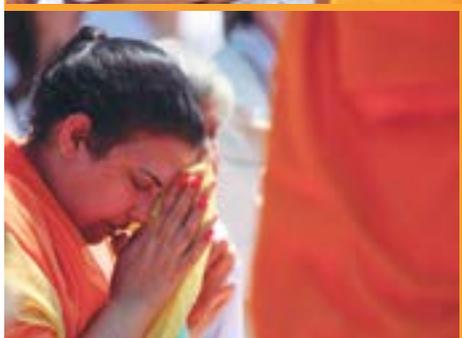
*Crossing the bridge to Wat Songpinong*



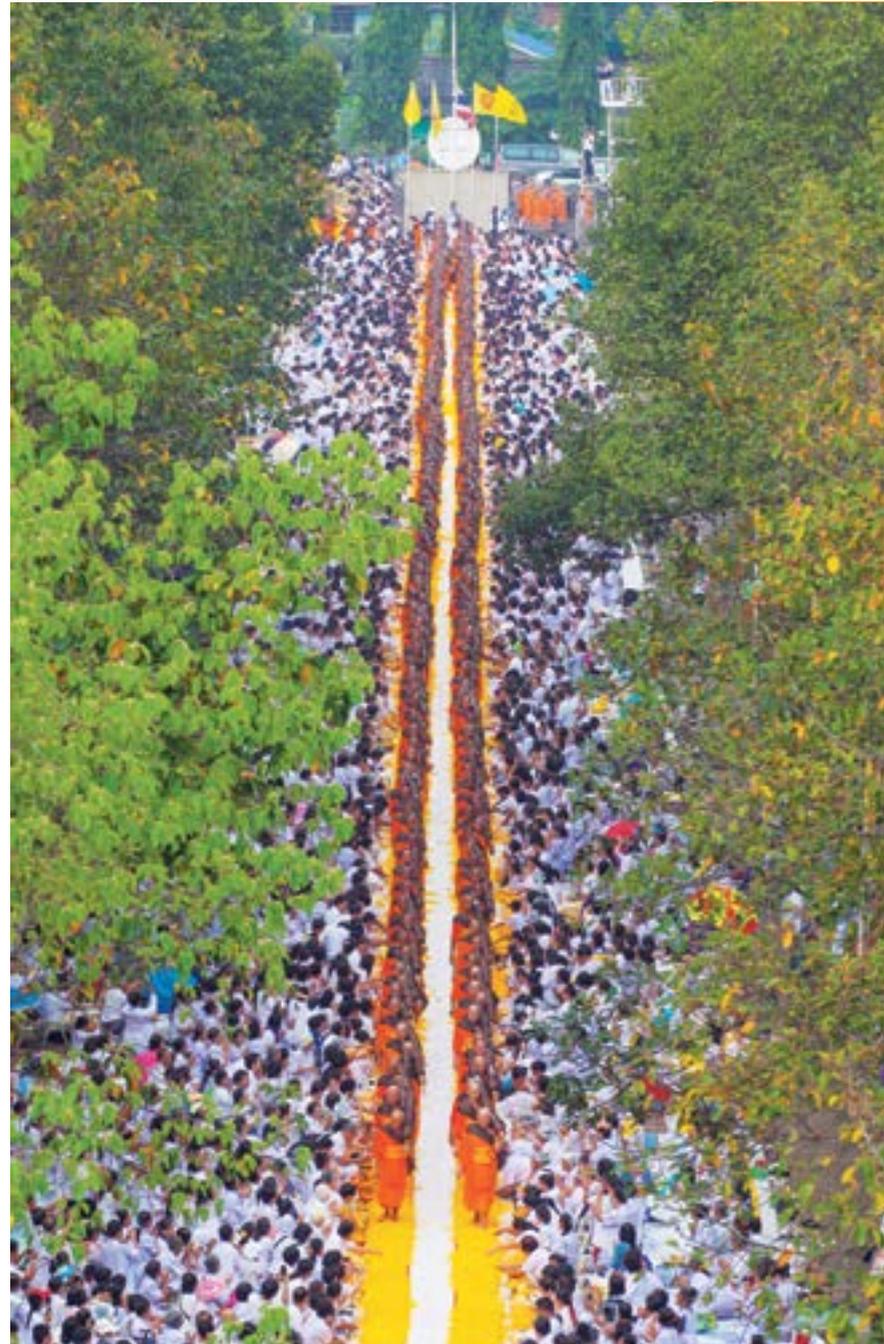
1. *Songpinong Bridge*
2. *Rice fields near Wat Bang-pla*
3. *Arriving at Wat Bote-bon*
4. *Resting point at Wat Amphawan, Suphanburi*



*Resting point at Wat Klongkuang, Nonthaburi*

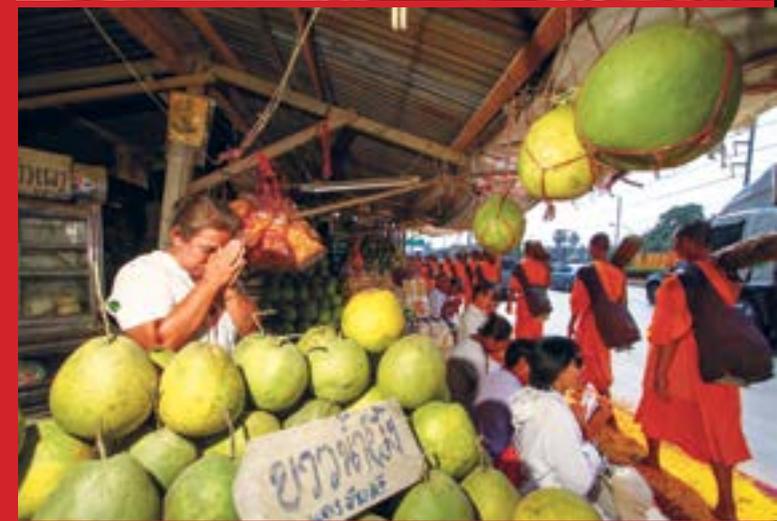


*The sight of true monks uplifting the spirit*



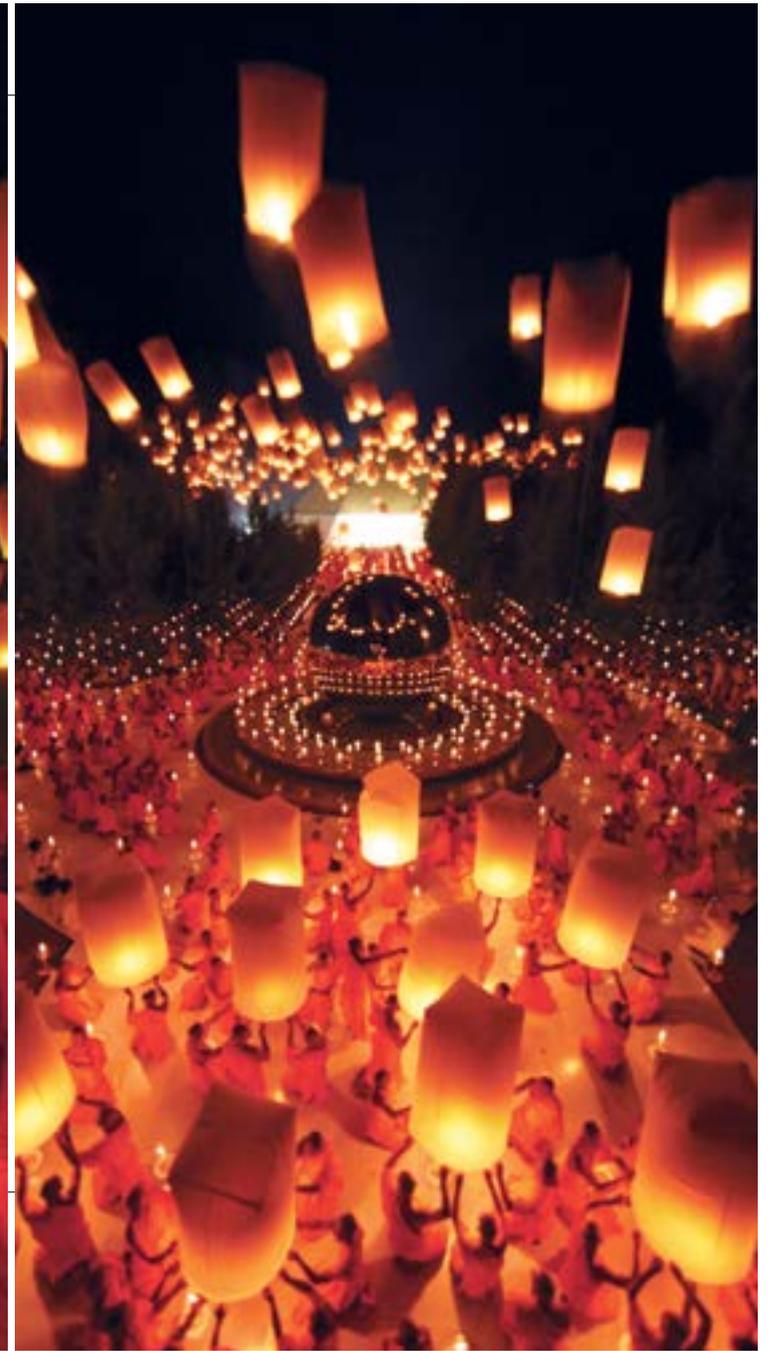


*An auspicious event for the working class*





*Spreading flower petals  
for the monks to walk on*



*Floating sky lanterns in honor of Luangpu*



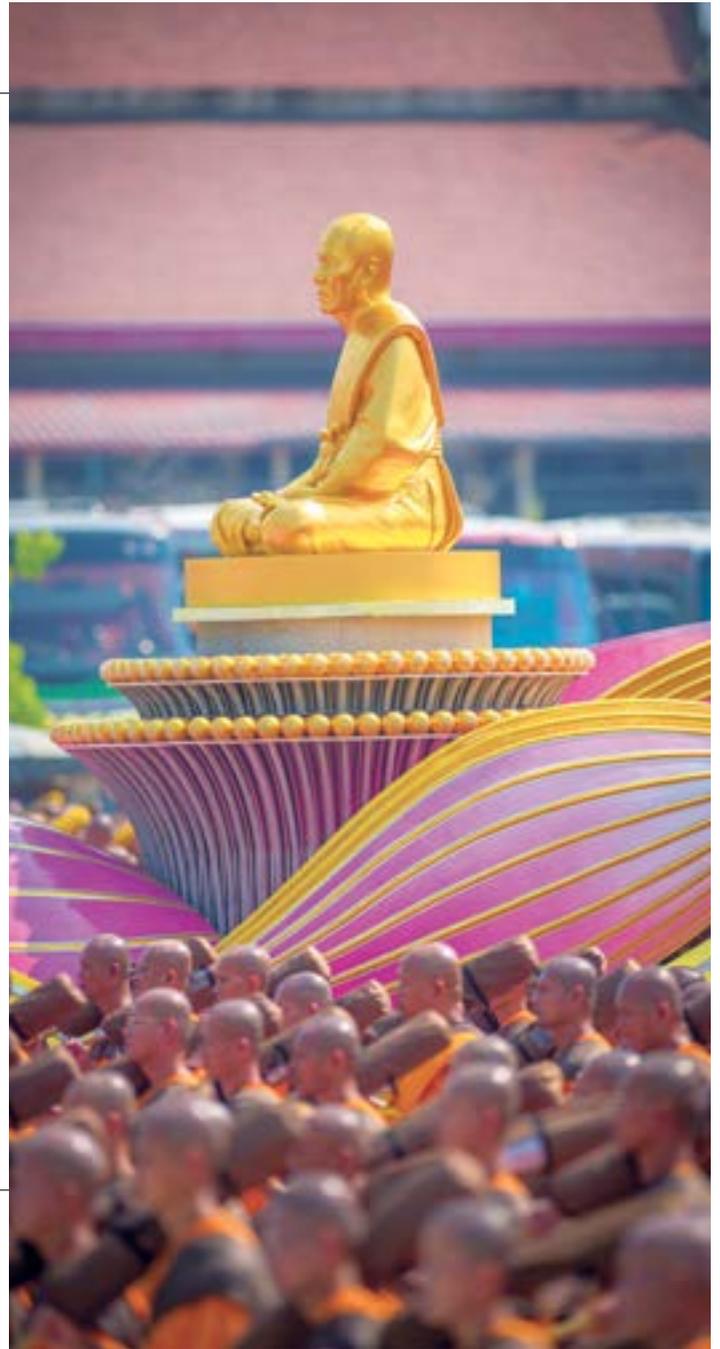
*Sky lanterns at Wat Songpinong*



*Candle light ceremony at Buddhamonthon, Nakorn Pathom*



*What a beautiful day to make merit*



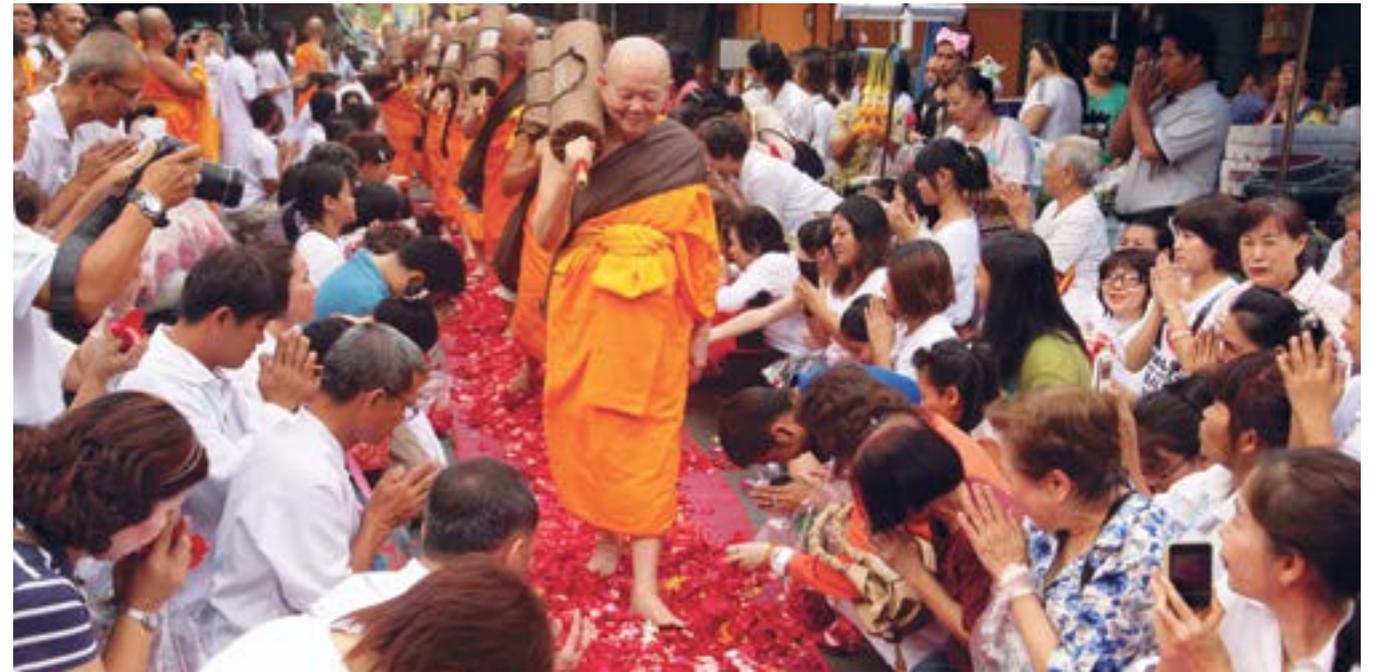
*Dhutanga tents*



*Fireworks at Wat Bang-pla*



*Arriving at Wat Paknam*





# HOW TO MEDITATE

## DHAMMAKAYA MEDITATION

The Dhammakaya meditation method was initiated in Thailand almost 100 years ago by the Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni, famously known as Luangpor Wat Paknam. It is one of the most popular meditation techniques practiced by Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world. The method is simple, easy, and effective. Everyone can learn how to do it and can achieve inner peace and happiness that you may never know existed.

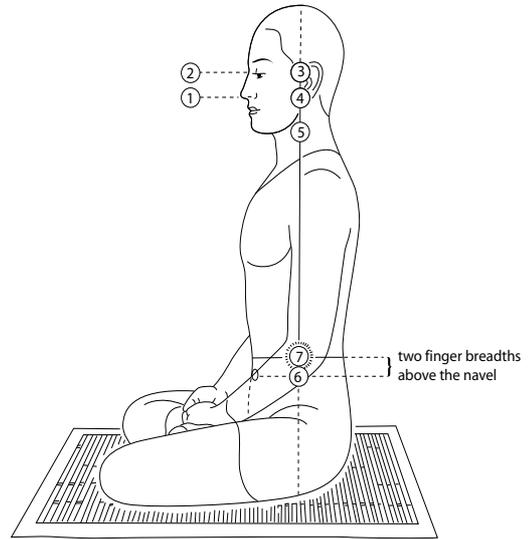
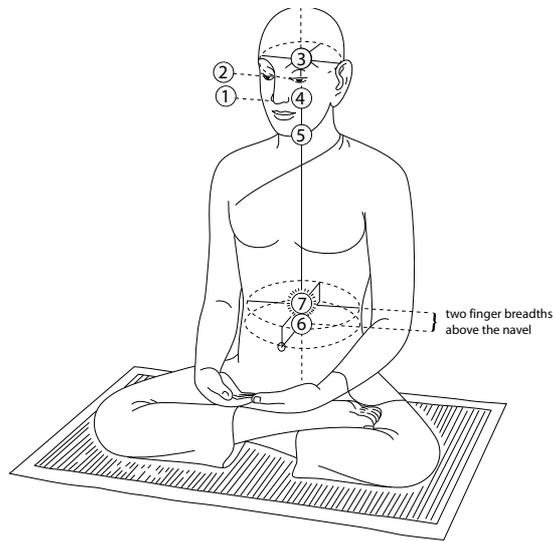
“Dhammakaya” is a Pali word which means “Body of Enlightenment”. The term appears in many places in the Buddhist scriptures of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana (Tibetan) schools. The uniqueness of the Dhammakaya meditation is that it teaches about the center of the body as the natural home of the human mind as well as the inner gateway to enlightenment. The stiller the mind is at its natural home, the deeper the happiness one experiences.

Dhammakaya meditation also has a moral impact on the mind. A person who meditates regularly will become gentler, kinder, and more peaceful.

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## **STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTION**

1. The sitting posture, which has been found to be the most conducive for meditation, is the half-lotus position. Sit upright with your back straight, cross-legged with your right leg over the left one. You can sit on a cushion or pillow to make your position more comfortable. Nothing should impede your breathing or circulation. Your hands should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. Feel as if you were one with the ground on which you sit. Feel that you could sit happily for as long as you like.
  2. Softly close your eyes as if you were falling asleep. Relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles in your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.
  3. Close your eyes gently but not completely. Stop thinking about any worldly things. Feel as if you were sitting alone; around you is nothing and no one. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind.
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Before starting, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with the various resting points or bases of the mind inside the body.

- The first base is at the rim of the nostril, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.
  - The second base is at the inner corner of the eye, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.
  - The third base is at the center of the head.
  - The fourth base is at the roof of the mouth.
  - The fifth base is at the upper center of the throat.
  - The sixth base is at a point in the middle of your abdomen, the meeting point of an imaginary line between the navel through the back and the line between the two sides.
  - The seventh base of the mind is two finger breadths above the navel. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the very center of the body and the point where the mind can come to a standstill.
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4. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near the seventh base of the mind at the center of the body. Whatever experience arises in the mind, simply observe without attempting to interfere with it. This way, your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold.
  5. If you find that you cannot dissuade the mind from wandering, then your mind needs an inner object as a focus of attention. Gently imagine that a bright, clear, crystal sphere, about the size of the tip of your little finger, is located inside at the center of the body. Maybe, you cannot imagine anything, but later, you'll be able to see a crystal ball with increasing clarity. Allow your mind to come to rest at the center of the crystal ball. Use the subtlest of effort and you'll find that the crystal ball becomes brighter and clearer.
  6. If you find that your mind still wanders from the crystal ball, you can bring the mind back to a standstill by repeating the mantra, "Samma-arahang" silently, as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of the crystal ball. Repeat the mantra over and over again without counting.
  7. Don't entertain thoughts in your mind. Don't analyze what's going on in the meditation. Allow the mind to come to a standstill. That is all that you need to do. If you find that you cannot imagine anything, repeat the mantra "Samma-arahang", silently and continuously in the mind. If you are not sure about the location of the center of the body, just know that anywhere in the area of your abdomen will do. Don't be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners. Make effort continuously, keep your mind bright, clear and pure, and in the end, you will achieve success.
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8. Keep repeating the mantra. Eventually the sound of the mantra will fade away. At that point a new bright, clear, crystal sphere will arise of its own accord. This stage is called "*pathama magga*" (primary path). At this stage the shining crystal sphere is connected firmly to the mind and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience a great happiness that you have never known before. With a perfectly still mind focused at the center of the crystal sphere, it will give way to a succession of increasingly purer transcendental inner bodies, until it reaches the "Body of Enlightenment" known as "Dhammakaya". This is the highest meditative attainment which enables the practitioner to achieve super knowledge and supreme happiness.
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# GLOSSARY



*Wat Pairongwua, Suphanburi*

**Arahant:** one who has purified himself of all defilements, and who, on the death of the physical body, will attain Nibbana. He has escaped samsara and will not be reborn.

**Attaining Dhamma:** a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge, knowing and seeing according to the truths.

**Attainment of Dhammakaya:** a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge, having penetrative insight into the reality of life and the world; seeing and becoming one with one's own inner Body of Enlightenment.

**Avijjapaccaya:** Ignorance as a Requisite Condition. The word is explained in Paticcasamuppada Sutta (Discourse of Dependent Origination) as "avijja paccaya sankhara" meaning "With Ignorance as a requisite condition, arise Mental Formations."

**Bhikkhu:** Buddhist monk.

**Bodhisatta:** a Buddha-to-be; one destined to become a Buddha.

**Buddha:** 'Awakened One', one who is fully enlightened and who has realized Nibbana without the benefit of a Buddha's teaching in the lifetime in which he attains it. Those who attained enlightenment by following the Buddha's teachings are called Arahants or Arahats. The name Buddha is a title, not a proper name, meaning 'awakened', thus 'enlightened'. Buddhas appear at vast intervals of time. There are countless numbers of past, present and future Buddhas.

**Cetiya:** Pali word for pagoda.

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**Chand Khonnokyoong:** (1909-2000), founder of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, one of the world's largest Buddhist temples.

**Chao Phraya River:** a major river in Thailand which flows through Bangkok and into the Gulf of Thailand.

**Defilements (*kilesa*):** mental impurities consisting of greed, hatred, and ignorance; hindrances or contaminants that cause beings to perform undesirable deeds.

**Dependent Origination:** one of the central concepts in the Buddhist tradition that all things arise in dependence upon multiple causes and conditions, in reliance upon causes and conditions, through the force of causes and conditions.

**Dhamma (*Skt. Dharma*):** the truth; the natural condition of things or beings; the law of their existence; the ethical code of righteousness; the whole body of religious doctrines as a system; the Teachings of the Buddha; the eternal truth that the Buddha realized, his verbal expression of that truth, and the phenomena or elements that comprise reality.

**Dhamma Sphere:** A bright clear sphere, the size of an egg yolk, that exists within every human being. It appears at the center of one's body during an advanced stage of meditative absorption.

**Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta:** Discourse on the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Dhamma, a Buddhist text considered to be a record of the first teaching given by the Buddha after he attained enlightenment.

**Dhammakaya:** Buddha Nature, Body of Enlightenment; Body of Truth.

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**Dhammakaya meditation:** a profound meditation technique taught by the Great Master Luangpu Wat Paknam.

**Dhammakaya Tradition (*vijja Dhammakaya*):** also referred to as Dhammakaya Knowledge, is a method of meditation taught by the Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni, former Abbot of Wat Paknam. According to Dhammakaya Tradition, it has been established that each individual person possesses eighteen transcendental inner bodies, which can be reached through advanced stages of meditative absorption. Once a person reaches the Dhammakaya, the purest of all transcendental bodies, the person achieves the outset of the insight, the knowledge not available through ordinary means, but only through the Dhammakaya.

**Dhutanga:** Austerity practice to overcome attachment to comfort and luxury. It is aimed at training oneself to live a simple life, free from attachments.

**Dhutanga umbrella (*klood*):** an umbrella doubled as a tent under which a dhutanga monk uses as a shelter to practice meditation and to sleep.

**Eightfold Supranormal Knowledge:** the mental power of one pure of defilements comprising 1) insight-knowledge; 2) mind-made magical power; 3) supranormal powers; 4) divine ear; 5) reading the minds of others; 6) recollection of past lives; 7) divine eye; 8) the knowledge of an end of defilements.

**Eighteen Elements:** consisting of six sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind), six sense objects (visible forms, sound, smell, taste, touch, mental object), and six sense consciousness.

**Eight Precepts:** codes of moral conduct practiced by Buddhist nuns and devout lay Buddhists, consisting of: not killing living beings; not stealing; not engaging in any sexual ac-

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tivities; not lying; not consuming alcohol and any intoxicating substances; not taking meals between midday and dawn; not indulging in entertainment or shows that impede the quality of mind and not to be immodest in the way of dress or behavior; not indulging in indolent sleeping habits that may lead to sensuality or laziness (such as sleeping on high, soft, luxurious beds). The purposes of the last three rules are to deter any sexual inclination which may impede one's ability to purify the mind.

**Equanimity (*upekkha*):** neutral state of mind; learning to accept loss and gain, praise and censure, sorrow and happiness with detachment.

**Five Aggregates:** consisting of form, sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. Luangpu simplifies these as “perception, memory, thought, and cognition”, which are the four functional faculties of minds.

**Five Precepts:** basic codes of moral conduct practiced by lay Buddhists, consisting of: not killing living beings, not stealing, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying, not consuming alcohol and any intoxicating substances.

**Five Aspects of Natural Law:** the Law that governs all things (Five Niyamas). They include Biological Law (Bija Niyama), which governs all living things; Chemical and Physical Law (Utu Niyama), which governs all chemical and physical matters; Psychic Law (Citta Niyama), which governs the functions of the mind; Karmic Law (Kamma Niyama), which governs the law of action; and Nature of Existence Law (Dhamma Niyama), which governs the manifestation of existence or reality. Knowing how the Five Aspects of Natural Law came into existence reveals the knowledge of how to abolish samsara, the cycle of rebirths. This knowledge leads us to the right practice and eventually helps us overcome defilements and attain Nibbana, thus freeing ourselves from the cycle of rebirths.

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**Five Hindrances:** negative mental states that impede success with meditation and lead away from enlightenment. They consist of sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness, and doubt.

**Five Niyamas:** According to Buddhism, there are five orders or processes (niyamas) which operate in the physical and mental realms: Utu Niyama, physical inorganic order; Bija Niyama, order of germs and seeds (physical organic order); Kamma Niyama, order of act and result; Dhamma Niyama, order of the norm; and Citta Niyama, order of mind or psychic law.

**Four Noble Truths:** the Buddha's first and most important teaching. It explains the reality and nature of suffering, the origin of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path to freedom from suffering.

**Great Man, the (*mahapuruta*):** A Buddha or a universal monarch (cakkavatti king); Buddhas and universal monarchs are traditionally regarded as having the Thirty-two Characteristics of the Great Man.

**Jhana:** meditative absorption; bliss state; a state of serene contemplation attained by meditation; state of trance; a state of meditation where the mind is free from the Five Hindrances (craving, aversion, sloth, agitation and doubt).

**Kamma (*Skt, Karma*):** action or deed of body, speech and mind. Every willed action brings future consequences, including future rebirths; the consequences of past deeds largely determine one's general life situation. Under the Law of Kamma, by which all creatures must live, a person bears the consequences of his own actions. Bad actions cause bad consequences and good actions bear good consequences.

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**Khom:** language of the Khmer people (present day Cambodia), highly influenced by Sanskrit and Pali.

**Khun Yai:** a Thai word for grandmother.

**Klong:** also spelled “Khlung”, a Thai word for canal.

**Kuti:** the hut or cottage a monk uses for his accommodation.

**Luangpor:** a Thai word which means Venerable Father, an informal way of addressing a senior monk.

**Luangpu:** a Thai word which means Venerable Grandfather, an informal way of addressing an elderly senior monk; referring to the Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro), founder of Dhammakaya Meditation.

**Luangpu Wat Paknam:** Phramongkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro), founder of Dhammakaya Meditation.

**Mahsatipatthana Sutta:** The Great Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness.

**Mahayana Buddhism:** a school of Buddhism practiced in China, Taiwan, Japan, S. Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore.

**Mantra:** a word or formula repeated silently during meditation to assist concentration of the mind.

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**Mara:** evil, both as a concept and as a personification. In Buddhist cosmology, Mara is a supra-natural being responsible for hindering people from performing meritorious deeds. Mara can also mean obstacles for doing good deeds.

**Merit:** result of good deeds; a positive energy, or good kamma that is created whenever a good deed is performed. Merit is generated in three major ways: charitable giving, observance of moral precepts, and meditation.

**Merit Sphere:** a transcendental sphere representing merit, that lies within each person; the more merit accumulated, the larger the merit sphere.

**Monastic Discipline (*Vinaya*):** the 227 rules of conduct that govern the daily life of a monk as described in the Buddhist book of Discipline.

**Mundane merit:** merit gained through performance of ordinary good deeds, such as sweeping the temple, helping the poor, making charitable contributions.

**Nibbana (*Skt, Nirvana*):** the state of ultimate happiness, the happy condition of enlightenment, the highest spiritual attainment. This is not the sense-based happiness of everyday life; nor is it the concept of happiness as interpreted by Western culture. It is an enduring, transcendental happiness integral to the calmness attained through enlightenment. Once a person has attained Nibbana, he has reached the end of the cycle of rebirths—the final and total release from cyclic existence—never again to be subject to rebirth. Nibbana is a supra-mundane state that cannot be expressed by words and is beyond space and time. This is the state of perfect enlightenment realized by Buddhas and Arahants. Those who have gained this realization no longer accumulate karmic consequences and will no longer be reborn into samsara, the cycle of existence, when they die.

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**Noble Eightfold Path:** the Path to end suffering, consisting of Right View, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

**Pacceka Buddha:** a Buddha who has attained Enlightenment by himself but does not teach others or lead others to Enlightenment; a private Buddha.

**Pali:** an ancient language used in India, now no longer an active language. The original Buddhist scriptures were written in Pali. Pali texts are used by the Theravada school of Buddhism.

**Parami:** a Pali word meaning transcendental virtues, perfected virtues, or Perfections. Parami is a spiritual perfection achieved by a Bodhisatta (Buddha-to-be) on his path to Buddhahood, or by those who are determined to attain enlightenment. Virtues are practices which must be fulfilled by all aspirants who wish to free themselves from suffering. What distinguishes the Bodhisatta from other aspirants are the degree to which virtues must be cultivated and the length of time they must be pursued.

**Patimokkha:** the summary of the Monastic Precepts and rules in the Vinaya, recited twice a month in every Buddhist monastery.

**Perfections (*Parami*):** perfected virtues; transcendental virtues; spiritual perfection. Transcendental virtues cultivated as a way of purification, purifying kamma and helping the aspirant to live an unobstructed life, while reaching the goal of enlightenment.

**Precepts (*sila*):** codes of moral conduct observed by Buddhists; moral principles that form the framework of Buddhist ethical conduct and the baseline of one's virtue.

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**Primary Path:** beginning stage of meditative attainment leading to more advanced stages of absorption.

**Rains retreat (*Vassa*):** the period of three months during the monsoon season when monks traditionally limit travel outside the temple and focus instead on meditation and scriptural studies.

**Requisites, monastic:** a monk's eight basic possessions: three robes, a belt, a bowl, a razor, a needle and a water filter.

**Right Meditation:** The eighth element of the Noble Eightfold Path, the practice of which enables one to attain the Dhammakaya.

**Right View:** view and wisdom in accordance with the Truths, consisting of the following beliefs: generosity is virtuous; it is necessary to honor those worthy of honor; it is good to be hospitable; actions produce consequences (Law of Kamma); a child has debt of gratitude to his parents; this world and the next exist; there will be afterlife and rebirths; there are heavenly and hell beings; monastics are able to purify themselves of all defilements (to become enlightened).

**Samadhi:** one-pointedness of mind; meditative practice leading to one-pointed concentration; a state of complete concentration.

**Samanera:** a Buddhist novice, usually under the age of twenty, who holds Ten Precepts.

**Samatha:** tranquility meditation; the ability to maintain the focus of attention one-pointedly; the initial practice of meditation that leads the mind to come to a standstill.

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**Samma arahang:** Pali words which mean “The Noble One who has properly attained enlightenment”, or “Pure state of mind achieved in a proper way”.

**Samsara:** the cycle of constant rebirth in which all beings are trapped as a result of their intentional deeds (kamma); ocean of birth and death; eternal wandering; the wheel of cyclic existence.

**Sangha:** the Buddhist monastic community or Order.

**Sanskrit:** another ancient language used in India; Buddhist scriptures in Sanskrit are translated from the Pali language; Sanskrit texts are used by the Mahayana school of Buddhism.

**Seventh Base of the mind:** natural home of the mind, located two finger-widths above the navel in the middle of the abdomen.

**Siam:** former name of Thailand.

**Sixfold Superknowledge:** the mental powers of one pure of defilements, comprising: 1) supernormal powers; 2) divine ear 3) reading the minds of others 4) recollection of past lives; 5) divine eye; 6) the knowledge of an end of defilements.

**Somdej:** a high-ranking monastic title.

**Sphere of Primary Path:** the beginning path to liberation which emerged in the form of a sphere as experienced during meditation.

**‘Stop’:** stop in this sense means stopping the mind from wandering, or stop doing bad deeds. The key to success in meditation is to still the mind and stop it from wandering.

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**Sutta** (*Skt. Sutra*): discourse attributed to the Buddha or one of his close disciples.

**Sympathetic joy**: joy in the accomplishments of others.

**Tathagata**: the Accomplished One, the supreme man, the superlative man, referring to the Buddha. The exact meaning of this Pali word is “He who has reached or become what is really so, the True”, the term the Buddha used to refer to himself after the Awakening.

**Ten Precepts**: codes of moral conduct practiced by novice monks, consisting of: not killing living beings; not stealing; not engaging in unchaste activities; not lying; not consuming alcohol and any intoxicating substances; not taking meals between midday and dawn; refraining from singing, dancing, playing music, or attending entertainment performances; refraining from wearing perfume, cosmetics and decorative accessories; refraining from indolent sitting and sleeping habits (i.e., sitting on highly cushioned chairs, or sleeping on luxurious, soft beds); and refraining from accepting and dealing with money.

**Ten Recollections**: ten different ways of relaxing one’s minds using the recollection method, namely, the Recollection of the Buddha, Recollection of the Dhamma, Recollection of the Sangha, Recollection of Morality, Recollection of Liberality, Recollection of Deities, Contemplation on Death, Contemplation on Body, Contemplation on Breathing, Contemplation on the Virtue of Nibbana.

**Theravada**: the oldest form of Buddhism; orthodox school of Buddhism found in Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka which is based on Scriptures written in Pali.

**Three Marks of Existence**: consisting of impermanence, suffering, and non-self.

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**Threefold Knowledge:** the mental powers of one pure of defilements comprising: 1) recollection of past lives; 2) knowledge of the decease and rebirth of beings; 3) the knowledge of an end of defilements.

**Vajrayana:** also known as Tibetan Buddhism, the body of Buddhist religious doctrine and institutions characteristic of Tibet, Mongolia, Tuva, Bhutan, Kalmykia and certain regions of the Himalayas, including northern Nepal, and India.

**Tipitaka (*Skt, Tripitaka*):** Buddhist scripture. Tipitaka means the “Three Baskets”. They consist of the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Pitaka) – rules and regulations of the Order of monks and nuns; the Basket of Discourses (Sutta Pitaka) – discourses concerning social, moral, philosophical and spiritual significance; and the Basket of Ultimate Things (Abhidhamma Pitaka) – dealing with psychological and philosophical aspects of the Doctrine, the four ultimate things, i.e., mind (citta), mental properties (cetasika), matter (rupa) and Nibbana.

**Transcendental merit:** merit acquired through mental cultivation and the practice of meditation, considered to be more potent than mundane merit.

**Triple Gem:** the highest refuge of Buddhists consisting of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha.

**Twelve Sense Spheres:** consisting of six internal-external (organ-object) pairs of sense bases, i.e., eye and visible objects, ear and sound, nose and odor, tongue and taste, body and touch, mind and mental objects.

**Twenty-Two Faculties:** multiple intra-psycho processes known as ‘faculties’, ‘spiritual faculties’, or ‘phenomenological faculties’.

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**Vakkali:** one of the arahants who had obtained enlightenment through faith and love for the Buddha.

**Vijja:** Knowledge gained from the “Eye of Dhamma”; it is the Knowledge that enables one to rid oneself of ignorance.

**Vijja Dhammakaya:** the Dhammakaya Knowledge; can be equated with Threefold Knowledge, Sixfold Superknowledge and Eightfold Supranormal Knowledge.

**Vipassana:** insight meditation aimed to discipline the mind while fostering a profound clarity about the nature of reality; the practice of meditation beyond attainment of the still mind that leads the mind to insight. Enlightenment can only be attained through vipassana.

**Visuttimagga:** Path of Purification.

**Wat:** a Thai word for Buddhist temple.

**Wat Arun:** also called the Temple of Dawn, one of Thailand’s best known landmarks. The temple has existed since the seventeenth century.

**Wat Phra Chetuphon:** also called Wat Pho and the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, one of the largest and oldest temples in Thailand.

**Wat Mahathat:** one of the ten royal temples of the highest class, home of Mahachulalongkorn University, Thailand’s oldest higher education institute for Buddhist monks.

**Wat Paknam:** one of the most famous Buddhist temples in Thailand where the Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni used to be the Abbot.

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**Wat Suthat:** one of the ten royal temples of the highest class.

**Wise (*pundita*):** A wise is someone who has wisdom. Being wise is not the same as being educated. A wise can be a person who is highly educated or one with no formal education at all. He or she is righteous and ethical by nature. A wise is someone who possesses the Right View and the ability to separate right from wrong, good from bad. A wise is the complete opposite of a fool.

**Wrong View:** view that is in contrast with the Truths, for example, having the notion that generosity is not good, parents are not worthy of gratitude, the Law of Kamma does not exist, there is no afterlife and rebirth, heavens and hells do not exist, etc.

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*Beginning point of a beautiful journey*

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 คุณโคตรศรีไสว การะเกตุ  
 คุณจรัสพร พฤษากร, ณัฐชมกร วัชรนาวิก  
 คุณจันทรา โนนทิง  
 คุณจันทร์ทิพย์ เวฬุรีย์  
 คุณจิตติพร กรอบเพชร, ประดิษฐา-หฤษฎ์ ชุนเปีย  
 คุณจิตติ-อรประภัทร สัมภิตตะกุล  
 คุณจิรพร สิ้นสง  
 คุณจรินทร์ อธิปธัญพงษ์  
 คุณจุฑามาศ ทองเชื้อบุญมา และครอบครัว  
 คุณจุไรรัตน์ หุยากรณ์  
 คุณเจน-บุญเกิด ธรรมพิพัฒน์กุล  
 คุณฉลวย ศรีวิชัย และครอบครัว  
 คุณเฉลิมพล ทองทรัพย์  
 คุณชนิตา ทิพารดี-วิษยุตม์ เทพสุระ  
 คุณชยานิษฐ์ พิษยเดชากุลวัฒน์  
 คุณชัชวาลย์ คำนำลาก, ไพรัช-วรภัทรกิจกุล  
 คุณชัยกาญจน์ ทองปลุก  
 คุณชัยชนะ-สุชาดา-ปวีณา ชาวเพียรพานิชย์, ปรียา กฤษฎาธิวัชร  
 คุณชัยยะ-สุวาท ใจดี  
 คุณชิมลิว ตัง เอ็งยิว เล้า และครอบครัวดำรงสินศักดิ์  
 คุณชูเดช ดวงดอกไม้, กุลธารินทร์ สุปัญญา  
 คุณเชาววิทย์ พุจิตรกานนท์, ปณตพร บุญเปี่ยมศักดิ์  
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 คุณณชนัน-เมทาวี-ธนกฤต-ชัยญานุช-ปราณี ธนอมรัตน์-จารีส กุจิรพันธ์  
 คุณณัฐากัญญา นารทวิชญ์กร  
 คุณณัฐภาภิญญา ดันธนาสุวัฒน์  
 คุณดวงกมล สุริยวงษ์  
 คุณดวงดาว สีใส  
 คุณดาราวรรณ ห่านศรีสุข  
 คุณดีวัน สุประดิษฐาภรณ์  
 คุณแดนเนยล-มาริน-เอฟเวอลิน เวชเตอร์  
 คุณตรีณภา กมลรัตน์  
 คุณเตี้ยอำนาจ-แม่บุญลือ-ไกรสร-จิตาภา-วงศกานต์-วีระกร อินทพิบูลย์  
 คุณทรงศรี-กรรมมา วรคุปต์

คุณทองอยู่-เพ็ญศรี วิภัยกุล และครอบครัวเจริญสงค์  
 คุณทิพย์วิภา เจริญสงค์ และครอบครัว  
 คุณเทียบ-ลัดดา แต่งตรง  
 คุณทวีลาภ ศรีโกลม  
 คุณธนกฤต จุฑะกาญจน์  
 คุณธนมาญ กุจิรพันธ์ สุรดา ภัทรีตจารินทร์ พรรดา สุวีชรานนท์  
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 คุณธวัลหทัย เรือนสอน-เยาวรัตน์ ไมเซนชมิตท์  
 คุณนงเยาว์ บอยส์ และครอบครัว  
 คุณนฐมน ธราพร  
 คุณนฤวรรณ อัมพันธ์ และครอบครัว  
 คุณนวปภูล ปรีเลียม-คณะญาติมิตร บุพการี ผู้มีอุปการคุณ  
 คุณนพวัฒน์ กัญจนสิริเพชร และครอบครัวธนวัตอัสว  
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 คุณนิตยา เลิศศิริวงษ์ และญาติ  
 คุณนิยม-สมใจ-กฤษฏา-นิจกานต์ เสงษ์บำรุง  
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 คุณปกสร เดชาสิทธิรักษ์  
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คุณปราณี เทพธรรมาคุณ  
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 คุณป้าอนุสา แจ่มแสง และบุตรธิดา  
 คุณปิยนุช-กิตติ-ปนัดดา-เขาวลัักษณ์-โสภณ อังศุภัทร์  
 คุณปิยมาน แซ่ลิ้ม และญาติมิตร  
 คุณปิยะดา อุทะโชค  
 คุณปิยาภรณ์, Makus Krah  
 คุณปุณณดา วงศ์วิวัฒน์ไชย  
 คุณปุณยอนุช ธัญยาภัทร์  
 คุณพรพชร มลสิริเรืองเดช  
 คุณพรชพร-มนตรี-ศิริพร-ปิ่นณวิชญ์ สุขสว่าง  
 คุณพ่อเจียง-แม่เพียร กาญจนศิริ, ทิพวัลย์ เจริญศักดิ์  
 คุณพ่อชิน-คุณแม่เกษร-คุณกนกพรรณ พูนรัมย์, คุณจักรพรรดิ-ต.ญ.ทิพาวรรณ วิริยะโพธิการ  
 คุณพ่อชู่ไช้-แม่วิลาวัลย์-อร่ามศรี ฉัตรแก้วมรกต และครอบครัว  
 คุณพ่อเชียะกิม-คุณแม่เชียง และครอบครัวธนะสมานโชค  
 คุณพ่อเชียะกู่ย แซ่เตียว คณะสปาร์คไอดี และคณะนวดไทยบ้านภูแก้ว  
 คุณพ่อดวงแก้ว-แม่อิง ธิติ  
 คุณพ่อเป็งกวาง-สุภารัตน์ แซ่ตั้ง, คุณแม่ฮ้อฮวย แซ่ฮ้อ  
 คุณพ่อล้อย-คุณแม่วรรณ-จ.อ.เอนก ศรีสุข  
 คุณพันธิ์ชื่น พงศ์สมัย-พรทิพา แสงพิทักษ์  
 คุณพานี มีธนาถาวร  
 คุณพินทุสร สุทธิพนไพศาล  
 คุณเพ็ญพรรณ เขยชม  
 คุณเพ็ญสินี เตรีจ  
 คุณเพ็ญศิริ สุธรรมโน  
 คุณไพศาล-จินตนา-ปฤษฎางค์-จิรานูวัฒน์-สุภัททรา-ฉัตรชัย วรเลิศ  
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 คุณภัทรศรีณีย์พร ทิมภรณ์ และครอบครัวชุตินา สารีผล  
 คุณภาณินันท์ เรื่องฤทธิ์ และครอบครัว  
 คุณภารณ์-เพทาย-ธนภูมิ-ณัชพล สุขสว่าง  
 คุณภิญโญ มหาดไทย  
 คุณภูมิพัฒน์ ถิ่นลำปาง และครอบครัว  
 คุณมณี-อุไร วิสุทธิใจ  
 คุณมยุรา และครอบครัว  
 คุณเมธาวี ขนสยอง  
 คุณมาลี-คุณชลอ-คุณอัคชัย-คุณอรศิริ-ต.ช.จิรพัชร ขวนะพงศ์  
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 คุณแม่บุญ-พ่อมนต์ศักดิ์ พันธุ์วิริยรัตน์, หัวหน้าชั้น-บรรณบาลฝันในฝันวิทยาทั่วโลก  
 คุณแม่บุญยก เปรมจิตต์

คุณยรรยง-รุ่งระวี-ภูรี-ธนิภ ลิ้มเลิศวาที  
คุณยุ่นจิน-ยองกวาง จอง  
คุณระวีวรรณ มูลสินธุ์  
คุณเรณู-สิทธาพร-ทัศนีย์ เอกแสงทอง  
คุณรุ่งนรัตจรัสรวี สังข์นครัตนะ  
คุณลงยา-นิมนวล ใช้สมบุญ  
คุณลลิตา ชื่นงเหลื่อม พร้อมครอบครัว  
คุณลัญจนา ตระกูลอุไรพร  
คุณไวท์ดีกจอยจูน ธรรมปริพัตรา  
คุณวราวุฒิ-แสงนวล-กายแก้ว-แก้วกานต์ ศรีรัตนซ์ชวัล  
คุณวรรณัน ชูจิตร์  
คุณวันวิสา-คณากร คำชู  
คุณวิชัย-พัชรา-พัชรพีไล-พบธรรม กาลินพิลา  
คุณวิฑูรย์ ไทยลา  
คุณวิทวัส-นิภา-วิภาวี-ภาวิธ เหลืองตั้งโรดม  
คุณวิภาดา ประสานสันติกุล  
คุณวีณา เพิ่มพานิช  
คุณวีระ วงษ์เสาวศุก  
คุณวีระยุทธ บุณรอด  
คุณศรียาห์-กัมมัตศิณี-ธิดาพัทธ์ รังสิพราหมณกุล  
คุณศศนันท์ กมลรัตน์  
คุณศันสนีย์ กองไชย  
คุณศิริภาณี จันทร์แจ่มใส  
คุณศิรดา พันธุ์ฤกษ์ และครอบครัว  
คุณศุภลักษณ์-สุขจิตร์ อุดมโชคสกุล, อำพัน-สมศักดิ์-ปุณยรัตน์ ฉิมอุทัยพร  
คุณสมจิตร์ สุธีราภินันท์ เบนเน็ท  
คุณสมใจ สีบุญเรือง  
คุณสมชัย-นวลรัตน์ ศรีรัฐติวงศ์ และครอบครัว  
คุณสมถวิล บุญนาค  
คุณสมบูรณิ์ ชินชะลิ  
คุณสมศักดิ์-รัตนนา-พิชญาภา ซึ่งหทัยพร  
คุณสมศักดิ์-สำเภา อารยะถาวร และหมู่ญาติ  
คุณสมิธิ สำเริง และครอบครัว  
คุณสายัน-ปติ-วรภรณ์ ประทุมสิทธิ์ และญาติมิตร  
คุณสุกัญญา-วิษณะ-วศิษฐ์ รุ่ง ชลอำนาจ  
คุณสุขุมาล ไทยประเสริฐ  
คุณสุชาติ ตังเลิศผลานนท์  
คุณสุนิสา สุวารัตนพันธ์ และบุตร  
คุณสุดารัตน์ ม่วงงาม  
คุณสุทธิพงษ์ สุทธิภักย์ และครอบครัว

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คุณอุษณีย์ ทินกร ณ อยุธยา และลูกหลาน  
คุณเอกลักษณ์ ลิ้มปวีณอักษร และครอบครัว  
คุณเอี่ยม-ทองคำ อ่อนสุวรรณ และครอบครัว  
ด.ช. อัฐไชยรัชย์ อำนภมณี  
กลุ่มธรรมประภัสสร  
กลุ่มเพื่อนอิเล็กทรอนิกส์นนท์  
กองบุญแก้วสมบัติจักรพรรดิ  
กองบุญแก้วสารพัดนึก  
วัดภาวนาป่าลัมบิซ  
รัฐคงสถานล้านนา  
สมาชิกอาศรมอุบาสก  
ลูกพระธัมฯ สวิตเซอร์แลนด์

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ลูกพระธัมมา สโกเน่ สวีเดน  
คณะสงฆ์เจ้าหน้าที่วัดพระธรรมกาย NewJersey  
พระอาจารย์ เจ้าหน้าที่ และผู้นำบุญ ภาคนครหลวง 8  
ชมรมพุทธศาสนมหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีพระจอมเกล้าพระนครเหนือ  
สำนักงานบัญชี บจก.พีทีอาร์ กรุ๊ป  
บริษัท เจทีเค พรินท์ส จำกัด  
Add-Seng Chan-Tyler-Billy-Danny-Jimmy Charousapha  
Amporn Kotchavong  
Amara Bunchonsiri  
Annchalee Injarusorn  
Beyer Family  
Boonsak-Panchit Pokpongkiat  
Chadawee Chaipooripat  
Chaiyawut Lertvichaivoravit  
Chan Poi Koun & Family  
Chayada Kusay (Chicago)  
Chomsy-Paul-Michelle Philavong  
Chow Wai Kee  
Chui Tan, Roger & Melvin Yang  
Cluver Family  
Dhammakaya Meditation of New Jersey  
Douangta-Bounthaly-Vicky-Valina Samingvongsa & Family  
Dr. Keehwee Chutimawee & Family  
Faengsrikum Family  
Frost Family  
Gordon Garcia  
Ittipol-Wilaiwan Simasingh  
Janet, David, Annie Chenaphun  
Jennifer-Annie Jenarewong & Family  
Jiraporn Tankunakorn  
Karraker Family  
Katcharin Kaewsith  
Lim Choon Koon  
Manee-Richard Prutz  
Manivanh-Viroot-Julie-Regis Pongsavath  
Montatip-Keamchart Chumnanrob  
Monteerat Maneerit  
Niels-Anyavee Family & Friends  
Nina Lovicha  
Panoat Chuchaisri

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Phenpuck Anukul  
Phommahasay Family  
Phra Suchart Sujitto  
Phramaha Jirapan Volaket  
Piamsook Chumnarob  
Quinine Tao & Family  
Richard-Seepat Hadden  
Roger-Thawanrat Owen  
Saiseubyat Family  
Saratch Tassanamethee  
Sing-Bounma-Malisa-Jordan-Emily Xaysongkham  
Somporn Monkcolcharearn  
Stephen Hayes  
Stafford Family  
Sukum-Samon Boonjindasup  
Surin, Napa, Krisiny, Davis Jung  
Suzann Hollis Jirasa Chonhasoonthorn  
Tavang Patcharasophon & Family  
Teerayakorn-Sirichan Ruanglek  
Thonghot-Vasana-Cindy-Julina Khamvongsa  
Tody, Melanie, Adam & Tiffany Young  
Tony-Cindy-Justin-Dania Charernnam  
Tyler Hanwinyoo  
Varunee Racho  
Vatisha Tivakorn  
Viengkeo-Souchinda Borihanh  
Vivi Du, Min Du & Family  
Wannakorn Corry  
Yanisa Cheeney  
Yingyos Faengsrikum-Mana Yordming  
Young Family

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*Wat Amphawan, Suphanburi*

