



September 2007

## President's Message

### Grace Ng Listkowski of Toronto Chapter

Almost a year has gone by, the scent of Autumn seems to be in the air, I see the glory of colors that life has to offer, the magnificent effect of the change of seasons, the change which symbolizes a sense of continuity and the interconnectedness of all things in life, such a sense of hopefulness and joy. It reminds me of that cool, beautiful evening...

In early November 2006, on the last evening of HeShang's 3-day lecture on "Aspirations of Patriarch Bodhidharma" at the Mississauga Campus of the University of Toronto, at the end of the lecture, I found myself overcome with such a deep sense of spiritual renewal and gratitude that my eyes welled up with tears and I could not help but want to go over to thank HeShang. I went over to thank him and he just looked at me and smiled softly. When I turned around and started to walk away from the lecture hall, Scarlette approached me and asked me if I would consider becoming the president of the Huayen Buddhist Community of Ontario.

I came to learn about Huayen teachings in 2002 when HeShang visited Toronto to give a 21-day lecture and meditation based on the "Avatamsaka Sutra (Huayen)". In the subsequent years, I have had the opportunity to get to know more about the group and its members and I have participated in a few more lecture sessions by HeShang. During this time, I have seen such a display of dedication, commitment and trust of the spiritual path that each member of the group has chosen. I have been moved by their determination to continue on that path despite all the challenges and difficulties they have encountered and overcome along the way.

Now the Huayen Buddhist Community is ready to move on. I take pleasure in sharing with you a couple of exciting initiatives and developments our community is taking on. Our Ontario group is in the process of being registered as a charitable organization and has also started to look at the possibility of finding a permanent home, where we will have a place for all of us to come together and host activities of interest.

As the Huayen Buddhist Community moves forward and builds on its existing resources and strengths, it is hoped that with your continued participation and support we will, together, start to build a beautiful world around us.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Olivia, Scarlette, Gerald, Betty, Stanley, Michell, Tammy, Ching, Simon and Rebecca who have been my inspiration. I have much to learn from you in our walk to make this world a Huayen world.