INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of the ongoing project directed by the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation (VNPF) to digitize the Thắng Nghiêm Temple (Chùa Thắng Nghiêm 勝嚴寺) together with its manuscripts, epigraphy, visual heritage, and active ritual life. Such a comprehensive project is the first of its kind in the world and will result in searchable online database of all materials from the Temple. The Thắng Nghiêm Temple project will also result in an educational website, to be completed in late Spring 2014, on a Vietnamese Buddhist temple and its religious life. This project will in turn serve as a pilot program for other Buddhist sites in Vietnam. The Thắng Nghiêm Temple project specifically targets UN Millennium Development Goals by developing educational resources through information and communication technologies that

(*) Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation and Royal Asiatic Society China
will further secondary and post-secondary education.\textsuperscript{1} Additionally, as a globally accessible website, it fosters an understanding of Buddhist culture and Vietnamese heritage on an international level, a desiratum fundamental to UN Millennium Development Goals.

**BRIEF HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THẮNG NGHIỆM TEMPLE**

Thắng Nghiêm Temple\textsuperscript{2} is of great historical significance not only in the Vietnamese Buddhist tradition but also in the development of Asian Buddhism as a whole and in Vietnamese history. The Temple dates from the reign of King Lý Thái Tô 李太祖 (1009 to 1028) and sits on a riverbank just outside Hanoi along an ancient trade route (see Figures 1 and 2). Built by imperial order, it is the only remaining temple from a network of eight temples constructed during the ninth and tenth centuries modeling the eight sacred sites of Śākyamuni’s life. Like those in India, these temples were central to the definition of sacred space in Vietnam and provided pilgrimage centers for the pious.\textsuperscript{3}

\footnotesize

\textsuperscript{1} The Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation’s digitization of Thắng Nghiêm Temple addresses two UN Millennium Goals. First, funded by private donations as well as the Chino Cienega Foundation (Palm Springs, California), the International Music and Arts Foundation (Liechtenstein), North Carolina State University, and the U.S. Embassy, Hanoi, Vietnam, VNPF’s project serves as a model of international cooperation for cross-cultural understanding (UN Millennium Development Goal 8F: “develop global partnerships for development… by making available benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.”). Second, by providing educational resources online to all levels of students worldwide, the project assists in achieving UN Millennium Development Goal 2 of accessible universal primary education inclusive of educational materials and resources.

\textsuperscript{2} For the Temple website, see http://www.thangnghiem.vn/. The Temple is located at 20.929852, 105.795330 / +20° 55′ 47.47″, +105° 47′ 43.19″ (See Figure 1).

\textsuperscript{3} These are typically known as the Eight Great Numinous Stūpas (Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya 八大靈塔): “The eight great “spirit”, or sacred stūpas erected at (1) Kapilavastu, Buddha’s birthplace; (2) Magadha, where he was first enlightened; (3) the deer-park Benares, where he first preached; (4) Jetavana, where he revealed his supernatural powers; (5) Kanyākubja, where he descended from Indra’s heavens; (6) Rājagṛha, where Devadatta was destroyed and the Saṅgha purified; (7) Vaiśāli, where he announced his speedy nirvana; (8) Kuśinagara, where he entered nirvāṇa” (after Soothill and Hodous).
The Temple also played a major role in Vietnam’s history and struggle for independence. From the founding of the Lý dynasty (1009) in Hanoi until the Nguyễn dynasty was established in Huế (1802), every Vietnamese king and national general initiated his reign or deployment with a pilgrimage to the temple. Also underscoring the temple’s historical significance is its relation to Trần Hưng Đạo (1228–1300), who was raised at the temple and who later became a national hero by defeating the invading Mongol army (see APPENDIX 1). Over the centuries, several temple buildings were constructed within the Thắng Nghiêm precincts, including a royal temple and a temple for literati. Almost all of these structures were destroyed in various wars over the centuries. The site’s final destruction came with French bombing in their battles with the Viet Minh. Now only an entrance gate remains (Figure 3) together with the remnants of former buildings, a number of which have invaluable inscriptions in chữ Nôm.
and Hán. The Temple is currently being renovated making permanent changes to the site and buildings, and the VNPF also seeks to record these alterations in the record of the Temple (for a plan of the future Temple grounds, see Figure 4).

This crucial placement of the Thăng Nghiêm Temple at the intersection of Vietnamese history and Vietnamese Buddhism made it a natural location for The Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation to begin its investigation of how the indigenous chữ Nôm script has been maintained into the 21st century and where its future prospects lie both in relationship to Buddhism and the Vietnamese people. The Temple Project’s investigation begins with the recording of the chữ Nôm script in the Buddhist complex and detailing its contexts of use in the rich semantic economy of additional forms of Buddhist texts, epigraphy, and iconography in an active ritual setting.

**VIETNAMESE Nôm PRESERVATION FOUNDATION’S TEMPLE**
PROJECT

Introduction to Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation and chữ Nôm

The Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation (Hội Bảo Tồn Di Sản Chữ Nôm, 会保存遺產喃) was founded in 1999 as a public charity devoted to preserving 1000 years of writing in chữ Nôm, the Chinese-like script that Vietnamese used to record their own language and its vast cultural heritage. Chữ Nôm and its literary culture are on the verge of extinction; out of 90 million Vietnamese, only a few hundred scholars worldwide can read chữ Nôm.

From the 10th century until the early 20th century, educated Vietnamese used this indigenous vernacular script based on Chinese characters to record materials as diverse as poetry, government memoranda, and indigenous Buddhist scholarship. The general term for “national language,” quốc Nôm, refers specifically to the chữ Nôm script, and thus highlights the importance of these documents as repositories for Vietnam’s cultural heritage. Banned by the French in official communications in the early 20th century, this system of writing and its documents are now nearly lost, physically due to the destruction and deterioration of texts themselves and culturally due to the inability of Vietnamese to read them.

Since its founding in 1999, the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation has created basic tools for the digital preservation of ancient writing in Vietnam. Its mission is to increase access to the endangered, 1000-year cultural heritage in the chữ Nôm and Hán-Nôm scripts by developing computer tools for the digitization, printing, study, bibliographic identification, preservation, and internet exchange of works of literature, history, philosophy, royal decrees, medicine, and the arts. A first step in this process was the translation and publication of the poems of Hồ Xuân Hương 胡春香 (1772–1822) by Professor John Balaban,

4. VNPF is registered as a U.S. 501c3 public charity (EIN: 58-2493125); in Vietnam, it is a registered NGO.
5. The following works provide an overview of chữ Nôm: Overviews of the script and its history
6. The VNPF website is http://nomfoundation.org/.
entitled Spring Essence: The Poetry of Hồ Xuân Hương. The translation from Vietnamese written in Nôm script necessitated the creation for the first time of True Type Fonts to allow the printing of Nôm, which had previously only been printed by block print. The creation of True type Fonts greatly facilitated the digitization of the script resulting in the completion of a series of projects by the Foundation (See APPENDIX 2 for a full list with links).

OVERVIEW OF TEMPLE PROJECT

Thắng Nghiêm Temple illustrates the crucial intersection of Vietnamese history, Vietnamese Buddhism, and Hán-Nôm. The evolution and use of chữ Nôm supported interests both in Vietnamese national politics and in Buddhism. Early epigraphy (see illustration below: “sporadic epigraphy”) represents two these two fundamental areas where chữ Nôm was used on Buddhist stele and in texts from the Lý Dynasty at the 12th and the 13th centuries, namely of Emperor Lý Càn Đức 李乾德 (1113, 1121, 1125) and Lý Long Cán 李龍翰 (1210). The earliest extant Buddhist texts using chữ Nôm are the Sutra of the Buddhist’s Teachings on the Profound Grace of Parents 佛說大報父母恩重經 (Phật thuyết đại báo phụ mẫu ăn trọng kinh) and the Sayings of the Native Practices of the Cloud-Dharma Buddha of Cổ Châu 古州法雲佛本行語錄 (Cổ Châu pháp vần phát bản hành ngữ lục). 

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In subsequent centuries, Buddhism continued to play a leading role in the development of chữ Nôm:

[...the rise of the Lê [dynasty]]^{11} led a class of educated Buddhists, dispossessed of their place in the increasingly Confucianized court, to reorient themselves toward a more plebian audience. In this forced negotiation of Literary Sinitic writing with the vernacularized world of non-elite Vietnam, the hyperglossic distance between Literary Sinitic and Vietnamese speech came into focus. As a result, educated Buddhists of the 16th century increasingly cultivated the vernacular mode (in the form of chữ Nôm), in order to fill the vacuum of a diglossic partner for Vietnamese speech. This allowed the dissemination of Buddhist literary materials in the Vietnamese voice...^{12}

Thus, not only does Buddhism in Vietnam remain one of the very last refuges of actively engaged chữ Nôm script, but the religion, together with imperial epigraphy, were at the very origins of the development of chữ Nôm in Vietnam. This central role played by Buddhism in the development of this indigenous writing system and in its ongoing use make Tháng Nghiêm Temple the ideal circumstances in which to research and preserve in its entirety through digitization this rare living context of chữ Nôm.

**Digitization of Tháng Nghiêm Temple Resources**

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11. Lê黎Dynasty (1428-1778).
The VNPF’s Temple project builds on the Foundations previous digitization experience and databases for two fundamental purposes: 1) to expand digitized chữ Nôm resources to include both texts in the script and the resources of its larger ritual context, and 2) to make those resources available to the Vietnamese people and world. Equally important is recording the process of how a Buddhist temple adapts to the rapid changes unfolding in Vietnamese society and culture as the country modernizes under the economic reforms of the Đổi Mới (Renovation) period. Thắng Nghiêm Temple fundamental goal is to record core resources at the Temple for universal access. These resources are divided into four sections:

**Documents in chữ Nôm and Hán inclusive of paintings:**

A photographic overview of the architectural space and iconographical programs

A yearly record of Buddhist ritual life according to the yearly calendar of events

Videos capturing daily religious life throughout the year

**I. DOCUMENTS IN CHỮ NÔM AND HÁN INCLUSIVE OF PAINTINGS:**

These items include all Buddhist manuscripts & printed texts from the Temple library, as well as epigraphy and paintings found in the Temple precincts (click on links for access to primary sources; *Nota bene, items from the large collection of materials are still in the process of being catalogued and added to the online database as of early 2014*):

Thư Viện Chùa / Entire Temple Library (117 items)
Văn Bia / Inscriptions on Stone (6)
Bích Họa / Murals (11)
Câu đối / Parallel Couplets (20)

Cuốn thư / Wooden Scrolled Placards (4)
Hoành Phi / Wooden Placards (12)
Phù đồ / Stupas for Monks (5)

What follows are some samples of digitized items from Thắng Nghiêm
Temple according to the above categories under the first rubric of project resources, “Documents in chữ Nôm and Hán inclusive of paintings.”

1. Thư Viện Chùa / Entire Temple Library

Items of interest from the Temple library include a variety of sutras and liturgical texts in chữ Nôm and Hán. The critical sutra in Nôm Studies mentioned above, the *Sutra on the Profound Grace of Parents*, Đại báo phụ mẫu ân trọng kinh, is found in the Thắng Nghiêm Temple collection, as is the *Prescriptive Names for the Holy Mother*, Thánh mẫu phương danh, a text notable for its extensive use of the vernacular (see Figures 5 and 6 respectively).

2. Văn Bia / Inscriptions on Stone

*Văn Bia* 文碑, are inscriptions on stone that include the stele in Figure

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Figure 5. *Sutra on the Profound Grace of Parents*, Đại báo phụ mẫu ân trọng kinh 大報父母恩重經 (TN.039 • TNVNPF-005-01)

Figure 6. *Prescriptive Names for the Holy Mother*, Thánh mẫu phương danh 聖母方名 (TN.118 • TNVNPF-043)
7, which was incorporated into a temple wall and that details the donations and reconstruction of the temple (then known as Phúc Đống Temple 福棟寺) in 1901 when the site was in dire need of renovation. Stele typically provide a wealth of data on the temple’s religious and economic history together with information on the local community and social relations preserved only in stone given the remarkable loss of documentation over the years. Regrettably, the French bombing of the temple in their battles with the Viet Minh destroyed most remaining such documents.

3. Bích Họa / Murals

Murals bích họa 壁畫 at Thắng Nghiêm Temple cover a variety of formats and styles. Perhaps most striking is the inclusion of a wide variety of Tibetan style paintings depicting tantric deities and bodhisattvas (Figure 8). Previously unknown in such Chan/Zen or Pure Land Vietnamese temples, these mural are testament to the internationalization of Buddhism both in Vietnam and worldwide and to openness of the country under Đổi Mới (Renovation).

4. Câu Đối / Parallel Couplets

An indispensible feature of East Asian temples (Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, and kin), parallel couplets Đôi liên對聯 are typically counterpoint in structure and hung on either side of doors or gates (Figure
9). Their structure of having parallel meanings between the two lines in terms of lexical categories and rhyme makes them invaluable for understanding the use and conceptualization of chữ Nôm terminology and its relation to Buddhist concepts and philosophy.

5. Cuốn thư / Wooden Scrolled Placards

Rarely recorded in descriptions of temple paraphernalia, wooden scroll placards (cuốn thư卷書, Ch. 書卷) are a vital iconographical feature of temple buildings. They typically contain dedicatory vers
or quotes from well-known scriptures and so define the sacred space they
dominate in relation to those quotes (Figure 10).

6. Hoành Phi / Wooden Placards

_Hoành Phi_ 橫扉 (literally “horizontal leaf,” also Đài tự 大字 “big
characters”) are wooden placards that label a votive niche _khám_龕 with a
summary four character expression _chengyu_ 成語, the lexeme is typically

derived from Buddhist scriptures and define the space in terms of that
rhetorical phrase and its associations. Each niche at Thắng Nghiêm
Temple bears such a placard. The placard in Figure 11 is placed in the
ancestral teachers hall _tổ đường_, where mortuary portraits and spirit
tablets of ‘ancestral teachers’ (祖師tổ sư) in the Thiền/Chan/Zen lineage
are typically enshrined and given regular offerings 供養cúng dường.

7. Phù dò / Stūpas for Monks

_Phù dò_浮屠 is a Vietnamese transliteration of the Pāli term _thūpa_ (Skt
stūpa; also tháp塔). A number of these structures exist at Thắng Nghiêm
Figure 11. Hoàn Phì 橫扉, i.e., a wooden placard stating “Unceasing Brilliance” (TNVNPF-HP-009).
Temple (Figure 12). In East Asia, stūpas (also known as pagodas), are dedicated to both the Buddha and to eminent monks, including those in ancestral lineages of teachers in specific traditions such as Thiền/Chan/ Zen. Standard practice entails that the veneration of the Buddha and/or eminent monks at a stūpa is regarded as a good deed that produces merit công đức for the adherent.

II. A PHOTOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE ARCHITECTURAL
SPACE AND ICONOGRAPHICAL PROGRAMS

The architectural space of the temple is laid out according to the ideological and philosophical function of sacred space in relation to the polity of the Vietnamese king and his legitimacy. The core element of this space is the reproduction of the Garden of Lumbini (Lam tỳ ni嵐毘尼, Figures 13 and 14), the park where Māyā gave birth to Śākyamuni, that functions as the centerpiece of Thắng Nghiêm Temple. It is this feature that defines the temple’s pride of place among the Eight Sacred Sites bát đại linh tháp (Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya 八大靈塔) erected in medieval Vietnam as replications of the same sites in India. Remarkably, Thắng Nghiêm Temple is the last remaining shrine in this complex of pilgrimage sites in Vietnam. Crucially, it is the recreated garden of Lumbini and its symbolism that defines the very centrality of Thắng Nghiêm Temple in establishing the sacrality of the ruling monarch in Vietnamese history. As stated above, from the founding of the Lý dynasty (1009) in Hanoi until the Nguyễn dynasty was established in Huế (1802), every Vietnamese king and national general initiated his reign or deployment with a pilgrimage to the temple.

What was enacted was the replication of Śākyamuni’s birth into the world in the garden of Lumbini where he took seven steps and then proclaimed himself the Universal or Wheel-turning Monarch (cakravartin, chuyên luân thành vương 轉輪聖王). The temple thus establishes the legitimacy of each subsequent ruler, calqued on Śākyamuni’s own experience, for nearly 800 years of Vietnamese history.

III. A RECORD OF BUDDHIST RITUAL LIFE ACCORDING TO THE YEARLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation’s project to digitize the Thắng Nghiêm Temple is not limited to static images and photographs but also embraces the vitality of day-to-day religious life in forms of ritual activities and community events. To this end, the Foundation has kept an ongoing video record of religious phenomena for 2013 (see APPENDIX 3 for the calendar) as they unfolded across the year through video recordings. These recordings (a raw example here) will be reedited according to the yearly festival calendar and placed on the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation’s Thắng Nghiêm Temple project website.
SUMMARY

Over the past two years, the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation has been digitizing the Thắng Nghiêm Temple (Chùa Thắng Nghiêm 勝厳寺) in conjunction with its manuscripts, epigraphy, visual heritage, and active ritual life. This project is unique in its comprehensiveness of approach, most notably as it will produce the first searchable online database of all materials from the Temple. This educational website will go online in late Spring 2014 and will provide an invaluable resource for examining the rich historical and Buddhist resources available at Thắng Nghiêm Temple. The project will also serve as a pilot program for other Buddhist sites in Vietnam. In keeping with the UN Millennium Development Goals, it will develop these educational resources through information and communication technologies with the expectations of supplementing secondary and post-secondary educational resources, and thereby bringing to bear religious and cultural materials through free access to students worldwide. In doing so it will aid in the understanding of both Buddhist and Vietnamese culture, namely the comprehension of the complex, intimate, and unique relationship between the indigenous Vietnamese chữ Nôm script, Buddhism, and the country’s rich national heritage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1: TRẦN QUỐC TUẤN 陳國峻

Trần Quốc Tuấn 陳國峻, often known by his honorific title of the Hùng Đạo 興道 Prince, was the son of the An Sinh 安生 Prince Trần Liễu 陳柳 (1211-1251) and nephew of the first ruler of the Trần dynasty, Trần Cảnh 陳煚 (r. 1226-1258) or Trần Thái Tông. He was born in modern day Nam Định province at the southern end of the Hồng River delta. Quốc Tuấn never was in line for the throne, but he would serve as a military commander for Thái Tông, Quốc Tuấn’s half brother Trần Hoàng 陳晃 or Trần Thánh Tông (1240-1290), and his nephew Trần Khâm 陳昑 or Trần Nhân Tông (r. 1258-1308) during a period that witnessed three invasions from Mongol led armies in 1257, 1284, and 1287. Quốc Tuấn’s personal residence was located at Vạn Kiếp 萬劫, which was the site of fierce fighting during the Mongol attacks. In late 1284 Trần Quốc Tuấn assembled his supporters outside Thăng Long, modern day Hà Nội, to prepare for the capital’s defense. At this time Quốc Tuấn issued his now famous proclamation “Dispatch to All My Officers (Dụ chư tỳ tướng hịch văn諭諸裨將檄文)” calling for the absolute loyalty of his men and their full commitment to the defence of the Đại Việt kingdom. The Đại Việt troops succeeded to driving back the Mongol forces, but Vietnam faced a third invasion attempt three years later. After a series of attacks and counterattacks in the spring of 1287, the Mongols were confronted by Trần defenders at the Bạch Đằng River where Trần Quốc Tuấn famously

14. Dr. James Anderson, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
used a defense of submerged iron tipped stakes to disable the Mongol navy and throw the attackers into disarray. The Yuan forces were thwarted for a third time, and no more largescale attacks on the Đại Việt were attempted. Quốc Tuấn continued to serve the court until his death at the age of 74, after which the Kiếp Bạc Temple in modern day Hải Dương was established in his honor.

APPENDIX 2: VIETNAMESE NÔM PRESERVATION SOCIETY & ACHIEVEMENTS

• An internet Nôm Ideogram Look-Up Tool, & an online Nôm dictionary.
• A knowledge base of some 20,000 Nôm ideograms unique to Vietnamese, and encoding some 30,000 ideograms in its Nom Na Tong Light Font Set http://nomfoundation.org/nom-tools/Nom-Font).
• Support for the facsimile publication of the very first attempt of a Nôm dictionary, the Taberd Dictionarium Anamitico-Latinum (南越洋合字彙) of 1838.
• Book publication, with the Viện Nghiên Cứu Hán Nôm (Hán-Nôm Institute), of Kho Chữ Hán Nôm Mã Hóa and the Nôm Coded Character Set.
• On its website http://nomfoundation.org posting five, fully searchable early Nôm versions of the classic Tale of Kiều, as well as a 1697 version the Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư (History of Greater Vietnam).
• Since 2007, in co-operation with the National Library of Vietnam, the Foundation has created a digital library of its ancient script collection of some 4000 items. This will be the first such digital library in Vietnam and an alpha version can be seen at http://lib.nomfoundation.org.
• At the same time, through a grant from the North Carolina State
University Libraries, and under the guidance of Dr. John F. Dean of Cornell University, the VNPF has engaged in the physical preservation of the Hán-Nôm collection at the National Library.


- Organization of two international conferences (Hanoi, 2004; Hue, 2006) and two book publications of the papers presented at these conferences.

- Nôm Study Scholarships for American scholars and for Vietnamese students, and annual awards to senior and junior scholars working with Hán-Nôm literatures.
# APPENDIX 3: RITUAL YEAR AT THÁNG NGHIÊM TEMPLE

<p>| Festival Title                        | Date       | Organization                                                                 | Purpose                                               |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|                                                      |
| 1. The First (&amp; Fifteenth) of a Lunar Month Celebration 朔望節 | Lunar: 07/01/2013 Solar: 16/02/2013 | Bestowing to The Buddha of Medicine                                      | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |
| 2. Fifteenth of the First Lunar Month Celebration Nguyên) (Tiêu元宵節   | Lunar: 15/01/2013 Solar: 24/02/2013 | Making offerings to • Buddha Buddhist monks and disciples chanting the sutra and recite the Buddha’s name | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |
| 3. Grave-visiting Celebration Thanh) ( Minh清明節  | Lunar: 03/03/2013 Solar: 12/04/2013 | Making offerings to • Buddha and chanting the Sutra                       | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |
| 4. Summer Retreat 入夏節       | Lunar: 01/04/2013 Solar: 10/05/2013 | Making offerings to • Buddha Buddhist monks and disciples chant the sutra and recite the Buddha’s name | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |
| 5. Dismissing of Summer Retreat 出夏節 | Lunar: 05/05/2013 Solar: 12/06/2013 | Making offerings to • Buddha Buddhist monks and disciples chanting the sutra and recite the Buddha’s name | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |
| 6. Fifth of the Fifth Lunar Month Celebration (also Khuất nguyên’s death anniversary端午節（屈原節) | Lunar: 05/05/2013 Solar:12/06/2013 | Making offerings to • Buddha                                                | To pray for Peace of the Country &amp; Its People         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vesak/The Buddha’s Birthday Celebration</td>
<td>08-15/4/2013</td>
<td>Cleaning Buddha statues • Cleaning Buddha statues</td>
<td>To pay respect and pay a debt of gratitude for Buddha’s presence and his Teachings which help Buddhists with thorough understanding and zealous progress in the good and elimination of the evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Soul’s Day Celebration</td>
<td>7/14-15</td>
<td>Opening remarks, the • meaning of the All Soul’s Day, A Rose for Buddhists expressing their gratitude to parents</td>
<td>To help everyone understand and practice Buddha’s teachings and pay a debt of gratitude to their parents for giving birth and bringing them up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestor Worshipping Day Celebration</td>
<td>14/2/13 19/4/13 16/9/13</td>
<td>Making offerings to • Buddha, Ancestors &amp; chanting the Sutra, making offerings to forsaken spirits</td>
<td>To pay respect to the patriarch through many generations for their efforts to establish the monasteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Festival (Combined with Ancestor Worshipping Day on the 13th-15th Day of Feb)</td>
<td>13-15/02</td>
<td>Making offerings to • Buddha, Ancestors Rituals regarding chanting the Sutra and reciting the Buddha’s name Rituals regarding staging a procession for Saint of The Most Venerable Monk, Thánh tổ Linh Thượng Đại Vương (if any) from the village communal house to the pagoda, then to the village altar after that All visitors are invited • to a vegetarian meal at the pagoda All visitors are invited • to a regular meal (with meat/fish) at the village communal house Cultural, religious, entertaining, fun activities</td>
<td>To bring into play the nation’s cultural traditions &amp; pay a debt of gratitude to Thánh tổ Linh Thượng Đại Vương (if any) from the village communal house to the pagoda, then to the village altar after that All visitors are invited • to a vegetarian meal at the pagoda All visitors are invited • to a regular meal (with meat/fish) at the village communal house Cultural, religious, entertaining, fun activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Action</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Day to Make Offerings to the Stars to Relieve (someone) of His Run of Bad Luck 祭祀供星解厄 (held between the 7th and 15th of Jan)</td>
<td>/07-15 01/13 - 16-24/02/13</td>
<td>Making offerings to • Buddha and chanting the Sutra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Day to Make Offerings to The Kitchen God before he Goes up to The Heaven 祭灶</td>
<td>12/13/23 - 23/01/14</td>
<td>Making offerings to • Buddha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>End-of-the-Year Celebration (Trừ tịch)畢年節 (除夕)</td>
<td>13/30/12 - 30/01/14</td>
<td>Making offerings to • Buddha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mass for Peace of Someone’s Soul at a Pagoda 祭亡入寺</td>
<td>Held monthly depending on people’s needs</td>
<td>Rituals of making offerings to Buddha, Ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Spiritual Support 邦助心靈的工作</td>
<td>Held weekly depending on people’s needs</td>
<td>Helping sick people • recover by regaining balance in life, psychologically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Release Living Creatures as a Work of Merit 放生節日</td>
<td>Held on the 14th day of each month</td>
<td>Rituals regarding making offerings to Buddha, release of living creatures such as birds, crabs, fish, eels, river snails, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>