



Brother Phap De was ordained a Zen monk at the age of 68, on July 3, 2003. He was ordained in the Plum Village Tradition by Thich Nhat Hanh (Thay) and given the name "young brother;" because he used to be called "Father Adrian Stier." Adrian Stier (Phap De) resigned as a Roman Catholic priest in November 1969 for a number of reasons, such as the abuse of clerical power, lack of brotherhood, excessive conservative hierarchical control, conservative retrenchment on Vatican II, and mandatory celibacy for secular priests etc. etc....

His first marriage gave him a daughter, who became an actress and is now a healthcare professional. Experiencing his marriages and careers as; *"This isn't it for me,"* in 1997 his new fiancé led him to the Plum Village in France for a retreat with Thich Nhat Hanh (Thay). In 2000, they created a residential Mindfulness practice center in Santa Barbara. Now, in his 12th year as a monk, he joyfully celebrates; *"This is it for me."*

In addition to the regular Mindfulness Practice and conducting retreats at Deer Park Monastery, Young Brother helps Westerners in Double Belonging, i.e., learning the Mindfulness Practice and discovering the life-giving teaching of Jesus which is what Phap De will do for us tonight.

Buddhists do not worship any gods or God. People outside of Buddhism often think that Buddhists worship the Buddha. However, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) never claimed to be divine, but rather he is viewed by Buddhists as having attained what they are also striving to attain, which is spiritual enlightenment and, with it, freedom from the continuous cycle of life and death.



Buddhists follow a list of religious principles and are dedicated to meditation called "practices". When a Buddhist meditates it is not the same as praying or focusing on a god, it is a self-discipline. Through practiced meditation a person may reach Nirvana -- "the blowing out" of the flame of desire.

Buddhism provides something that is true of most major religions: disciplines, values and directives that a person may want to live by. There are about 360 million Buddhists in the world.



Deer Park Monastery - Living Mindfully¹

Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment in life. It is the continuous practice of touching life deeply in every moment. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present and at one with those around you and with what you are doing. We harmonize our bodies and mind while we wash dishes, drink our cups of tea, or work in the garden.

At the 400 acre Monastery located in North Escondido Monks and visitors do the same things they would do at home: walking, sitting, working, eating except now they learn to do them with mindfulness and concentration.

Moral conduct for Buddhists differs according to whether it applies to the laity or to the Sangha or clergy. A lay Buddhist should cultivate good conduct by training in what are known as the "Five Precepts". The five precepts are training rules, which, if one were to break any of them, one should be aware of the breach and examine how such a breach may be avoided in the future. The result of an action (often referred to as Karma) depends on the intention more than the action itself. It entails less feelings of guilt than its Judeo-Christian counterpart. The 5 precepts are:

- 1) To undertake the training to avoid taking the life of beings. This precept applies to all living beings not just humans.
- 2) To undertake the training to avoid taking things not given. One should avoid taking anything unless one can be sure that it is for you.
- 3) To undertake the training to avoid sensual misconduct. This precept is often mistranslated or misinterpreted as relating only to sexual misconduct but it covers any overindulgence in any sensual pleasure such as gluttony as well as misconduct of a sexual nature.
- 4) To undertake the training to refrain from false speech. As well as avoiding lying and deceiving.
- 5) To undertake the training to abstain from substances which cause intoxication and heedlessness. This precept is in a special category as it does not infer any intrinsic evil in, say, alcohol itself but indulgence in such a substance could be the cause of breaking the other four precepts.

¹ From Brochure for Deer Park Monastery