

Buddhism expands....

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Venerable Bhikkuni Kusuma, MA, PhD, is a fully ordained Buddhist nun from Sri Lanka who has pioneered the re-establishment of the Theravada Female Buddhist Order in Sri Lanka. She is the first woman in Sri Lanka to take to the robes of a Bhikkuni after a lapse of the Bhikkuni Order for nearly 1,000 years. She holds a BA (1974) and a MA (1982) in Theravada Buddhism. She received her PhD (1999) from the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka.

Her doctoral dissertation on Bhikkuni Vinaya (rules of discipline for ordained Buddhist Nuns) is regarded as a handbook for Buddhist Nuns in Sri Lanka. She is a well published scholar and has participated in several international conferences.

Having being a daughter, a wife and a mother, Bhikkuni Kusuma became a teacher, scholar and then a Bhikkuni. She was ordained at Saranath where the Buddha preached his first sermon, Dhammachakkapavattana Sutta. She devoted herself in re-establishing the order of Bhikkunis in Sri Lanka.



Having attained Enlightenment, the Buddha continued to ensure that Buddhism would be expanded to more and further horizons. He initiated the path for his disciples, the Bhikkus which made them to travel widely to many different parts and spread the Buddha Dhamma. The Dhamma was meant for Bhikkus, Bhikkunis, Upasakas and Upasikas.

This magnificent and noble task is being carried out by Bhikkuni Kusuma in her eighties visiting many countries such as U.S.A., Germany, Australia, India and Malaysia. She has accomplished this task during a period of over a decade.

Now in her eighties, she continues to be active in bringing the higher ordination of Buddhism to women in Sri Lanka as well as abroad.

Bhikkuni Kusuma lives in Sri Lanka in a meditation retreat centre, AyyaKhema International Buddhist Meditation Centre in Olaboduwa, off Gonapala, Horana, whilst travelling periodically overseas to teach meditation.

Recently, she visited Australia for the third time. On this occasion, she resided in the Sanghamittaramaya, a monastery for female nuns in East Bentleigh, Victoria, Australia and visited the Buddhist temples both in Melbourne and Sydney giving Dhamma discourses to devotees, participating in Dhamma discussions and conducting meditation retreats and classes. They were organised by the Buddhist temples. They are Dhamma Sarana Vihara in Keysborough, Dhammadeepa Meditation Centre in Dandenong, the Buddhist Vihara of the Buddhist Society of Victoria. She also conducted successful Atasil programmes for devotees and Sunday school children as well, in Melbourne.

During her stay here, she won the hearts of many as a friend, a counselor and a special spiritual teacher, mentor and a trainer. There are many followers of Bhikkuni Kusuma who say that after following her Dhamma discussions and meditation classes, they were able to gain an insight in order to understand the Dhamma. The devotees were always ready to rally round her since she had the ability to provide simple and easily understood explanations for complex Dhamma talks, with her method of lucid teaching and the wholesome nature of

presentation.

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