



COMMUNAUTE BOUDDHIQUE ZEN VILLAGE DES PRUNIERIS

Official Announcement

Plum Village
February 19, 2015

To all Plum Village Practice Centers,
To all Practice Centers and Sanghas worldwide,
To our Dear Beloved Friends,

Dear Beloved Community,

As we enter the Lunar New Year, and our practice centers conclude our annual 90-day Winter Retreat, we are very happy to report that our dear Teacher continues to steadily make extraordinary progress.

Thay has now moved to a specialist stroke rehabilitation clinic, where he is receiving the best possible professional care. The team of monastic attendants work closely with doctors, nurses and professional therapists, and accompany Thay twenty-four hours a day, offering massage, acupuncture and comfort care, and helping Thay with his physical training.

Thay is steadily recovering his strength and rebuilding his muscles day by day. We have been struck by Thay's great determination, motivation, courage and concentration as he sets his own program to train himself to learn anew how to sit upright, stand, and move his limbs.

The medical team is also helping Thay learn to swallow again, and last week Thay was able to drink his first cup of tea since November. The attendants prepared Thay's favorite tea in his cup, and Thay even signalled to invite everyone to drink a cup of tea with him. Contemplating the tea, Thay smiled, put his hand on his heart, and looked up. All could clearly see that Thay was reminding everyone to bring our mind back to our body and to look deeply into the tea, really enjoying the tea and the presence of those around us.

During the last full moon of the lunar year, Thay enjoyed watching the moon rise from his bed, and invited the attendants to enjoy it silently with him. In the peace and joy with which he enjoyed the moon, we can see Thay's love for the wonders of life and his generosity in teaching us to cherish these wonders at every moment.

With each week that passes Thay is becoming increasingly alert and engaged. Although Thay is not yet able to speak, he has begun to vocalize, and is developing a means of communicating silently with his attendants and physicians. Thay's path of healing is still long, yet we know that every moment can be a moment to deeply touch the wonders and miracles of life.

We are very grateful for the great compassion and support that Thay has received from his global Sangha Body, creating wonderful conditions for his recovery and healing. We are thankful for your practice of mindfulness and prayers sending positive energy to Thay, and for your letters, donations, and the many beautiful children's drawings.

Here in France the cold winter is beginning to give way to beautiful blossoms, in time to decorate the hamlets for the Lunar New Year, Thay's favorite festival. Last week the community prepared hundreds of traditional "Earth Cakes", and stayed up all night with music and song to cook them over open fires. Each New Year Thay offers us a compact "parallel verse," to guide our practice in the year to come. For this New Year of the Goat the Plum Village elders have chosen an excerpt of a poem written by Thay, which hangs at the altar of the Still Water Meditation Hall in Upper Hamlet:

*Look deeply to understand clearly
Listen deeply to truly love*

These phrases have been written in calligraphy and prepared in "diamonds" that can be printed and posted around your home or workplace, as gentle reminders to practice.

Wishing you health, happiness and many fruits of the practice,

The Monks and Nuns of Plum Village



Future reports on Thay health and recovery will be posted officially at plumvillage.org, langmai.org, villagedespruniers.org, and www.facebook.com/thichnhathanh.