

Hence, she began to extend the time of her morning and evening recitations. In July 1994, her health worsened, and her physical strength gradually drained away. However, she still had a strong mind. She often told us: "All of my organs are decayed, except for my mouth, which is left intact for the purpose of reciting Buddha Amitabha's name". At that time, she stopped receiving all medical treatments, and totally relied on the power of Buddha Amitabha. After September, she could not get up but had to lie on the bed everyday. During this period, the pain caused by her cancer made her recite Buddha Amitabha's name more diligently in the hope of being reborn into the Pure Land sooner. She had difficulty eating and excreting wastes, so her physical condition was very weak. However, it was hard to tell that she had a severe illness from her face, for she appeared quite spirited due to her recitation practice. Many Lotus Companions (*Lien-yu*: members of Lotus Society) came to give her spiritual support and comfort after she became ill. She listened to their encouragement carefully and even put it into practice. She once told my brother that her brain was full of the name of Buddha Amitabha even in her dreams. She also claimed to have witnessed the revelation of the Holy Triad of the Western Pure Land, i.e. Buddha Amitabha and the Bodhisattvas Kuan-yin and Ta-shi-chih. Two weeks before her death, she dreamt of Buddha Amitabha, who told her that Bodhisattva Ta-shi-chih would bring a lotus to her.

One day in August 1994, I had a dream, in which my mother told me she would pass away after New Year. I was not sure whether she referred to the lunar calendar or solar calendar in my dream. A few days ago before the winter solstice, my mother told my father that our family will have 2 death anniversaries: one following the other. My father pondered over her words, suspecting that my mother would pass away on the fifth or the seventh day of the twelfth month on the lunar calendar, for my grandfather's death anniversary was on the sixth day of the twelfth month on the lunar calendar.

On January 2, 1995, my mother suddenly went into a coma and groaned with pain after lunch. We immediately recited the name of Buddha Amitabha as soon as this happened. Around 22:00, she finally re-

gained her consciousness, and her pulse and breathing became normal. Although she was unable to open her eyes, she constantly followed my brother's voice to recite the name of Buddha Amitabha. Around 23:00, two old members of the Ta-ch'ien Buddhist Society arrived at my home. My mother opened her eyes to talk with them and then recited the name of Buddha Amitabha loudly. On January 3rd and 4th, more members of the Green Lotus Buddha Recitation Association came, guiding my mother to recite Buddha Amitabha's name and comforting her. My mother looked attentive and kept nodding while carefully listening to them.

On January 4th, when I returned to Taichung in the afternoon, my sister-in-law cried beside my mother's bed. My mother comforted her, saying: "Don't cry. So many people came to see me. I understand what they told me. I am determined to gain rebirth into the Pure Land. Otherwise, I will make everyone disappointed". At around 23:00 that night, my mother told my father that she would be leaving at 06:00 tomorrow. At 02:30 of the second day, she reminded my father again, saying: "I will be going at 06:00 this morning", and asked my father to do the assisting recitation for her. She followed my father's voice to recite. At 04:00, she suddenly asked to go to the bathroom. She had had difficulty with excretion before, but this time she did it easily. After going to the bathroom, my mother was exhausted. My father then rushed to carry her to her bed, placed her arms on the 2 sides of her body, and beat the hand-bell, a Buddhist instrument, to help her do the recitation. At 05:30, my mother began to exhale continually. At 05:55, she raised her right hand (an action which is believed to be a gesture of giving her hand to Buddha Amitabha)²⁸ and peacefully exhaled her last breath. This day was January 5, 1995, which was also the fifth day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. She enjoyed a lifespan of 66 years.

After my mother passed away, my father phoned the family as he continued to beat the hand-bell to assist the recitation. After a while, some Lotus Companions came to take turns in assisting with the recitation for 8 h. Then the family continued to recite for 16 more hours to make the entire recitation last for 24 h. As we uncovered the dharani blanket on her body, we