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Dear Sakyadhita Canada Members,

**Welcome to Sakyadhita Canada's  
September Full Moon newsletter.**

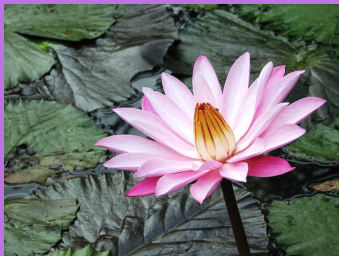


**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POYA  
(FULL MOON DAYS)**

Before the birth of Buddhism, Asian ascetics - in the ancient times before there were calendars - made it a practice on full moon days to cease worldly pursuits and take time for reflection and religious activities. The Buddha adopted this practice and it continues today.

The Buddhist calendar is a lunar one and most festivals are celebrated on the full moon day.

This is a day when individuals can take some time to be quiet and reflect.



Celebrating Binara Poya (Bhikkhuni Day) 2013/2596 2596th Anniversary of the Bhikkhuni Sangha & of the Buddha's Fourfold Assembly  
Once a year, on the full moon in the month of September, Theravada Buddhists honor and pay respect to Mahaprajapati Gotami - the first nun ordained by the Buddha. As history tells us, Mahaprajapati, the Buddha's step-mother and aunt, became the first Buddhist bhikkhuni, and we can, at this time, specifically celebrate the legacy she has passed on to us today.

Sakyadhita Canada invites you to join in the Binara Poya Day celebrations. This is a time when we can pay respect to the Bhikkhuni Sangha and acknowledge its essential role

**Maha Pajapati (Gotami) Theri: A Mother's Blessing**

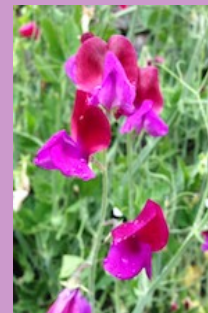
Buddha! Hero! Praise be to you!  
You foremost among all beings!

You who have released me from pain,  
And so many other beings too.

All suffering has been understood.  
The source of craving has withered.  
Cessation has been touched by me  
On the noble eight-fold path.

I've been mother and son before;  
And father, brother - grandmother too.

Not understanding what was real,  
I flowed-on without finding [peace].  
But now I've seen the Blessed One!  
This is my last compounded form.  
The on-flowing of birth has expired.  
There's no more re-becoming now.



See the gathering of followers:  
Putting forth effort, self-controlled,

in preserving the Dhamma.

We remember prominent bhikkhunis and their unique achievements. We honor all of our women teachers and spiritual ancestor, including our mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, mentors and friends. We express gratitude to the Fourfold Assembly and share the goodness of our wholesome actions with all beings everywhere.

We can make this a time of giving and receiving, of listening and sharing. You may want to retreat alone (for an hour or for the day), or to support the tradition of Buddhist monastic life by offering dana, or by gathering with friends in the sharing of a meal, or to sit together in meditation or listen to a Dhamma talk. Or..... be creative and come up with your own way joining together for this special day!



Meditate, Live purely,  
Be quiet  
Do your work  
with mastery  
Like the moon, come out  
from behind the clouds  
Shine!  
Buddha



Always with strong resolution  
-This is how to honor the Buddhas!

Surely for the good of so many  
Did Maya give birth to Gotama,



Who bursts asunder the mass of pain  
Of those stricken by sickness and death  
Thig 6.6

Recently, having revisited the writings of the early enlightened female monks, I was stuck by the one quality that rang so clearly throughout all of their poetry --- joy. This brought to mind the States of Consciousness Sutta (Dig.9), where the Buddha explained the misconception that many have regarding awakening. He says, "I teach the Dhamma for the abandoning of acquisitions of self in order that you, who put the teaching into practice, defiling qualities may be abandoned and cleansing qualities may be increased, and that you may, by realization yourselves, here and now with direct knowledge, enter upon and abide in the fullness of understanding perfection ..... It is thought that to do so is painful abiding, that is not so; on the contrary, by doing that there is gladness, happiness, tranquillity, mindfulness, full awareness and a pleasant abiding." The truth of this statement is deeply reflected in all of the poetry of the early enlightened Bhikkhunis. These women from many different circumstances followed the path to completion; monks and lay women; rich and poor women; beautiful and homely women; mothers with living children and mothers with dead children; married and unmarried women; widows and divorcees. Regardless of where they had started, they all arrived at the same place --- joy --- and were able and willing to express that joy. If we keep this in mind when it seems difficult, or even impossible - to stay on the path; when the effort needed seems too great - let it inspire us to just keep going, then we, like Pajapati, may be able to say, "But now I have seen the Blessed One" with the same gratitude and joy.  
Sarani



The Alliance for Bhikkhunis has published Women at the Forefront - an interview with Venerable Ayya Medhanandi, the Abbess of Sati Saraniya Hermitage in Ontario,. It is called "PIONEERING & THE DHAMMA OF PERSERVANCE" and can be read at: <http://www.bhikkhuni.net/>

## Autumnal/Fall Equinox September 22nd, 2013

Northern Hemisphere: (Canada, USA, Central America, Europe, Asia, northern Africa)  
Equinoxes are opposite on either side of the equator, so the autumnal (fall) equinox in the northern hemisphere is the spring (vernal) equinox in the southern hemisphere and vice versa. On the two



equinoxes, every year the sun shines directly on the equator and the day and night are approximately equal in length. For many of us in the northern hemisphere, the autumnal equinox marks the first day of fall (autumn), as the cooler days of autumn are a preparations for the upcoming winter months. Many cultures and religions celebrate or observe holidays and festivals around the September equinox.

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