



**Buddhist Council of NSW**  
Working for the Buddhist Community

9 September 2020

## **Announcing Australia's first full-time Buddhist chaplain**

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Daniel Troyak as Australia's first full-time Buddhist chaplain. Daniel has been offering sessional Buddhist chaplaincy at Long Bay Correctional Complex in Sydney since 2016. With the award of a subsidy from Corrections NSW the Buddhist Council is able to engage Daniel on a full-time basis to work as part of an interfaith team providing spiritual care to inmates.

Daniel's initial training was through the Buddhist Council of NSW Introductory Unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, and this year he graduated from the inaugural 400-hour unit of CPE for Buddhist chaplains. In addition to his chaplaincy study, Daniel has trained under Buddhist teachers from the Tibetan tradition and was authorised by H.E. Avikrita Vajra Rinpoche to give the traditional refuge ceremony in Australian prisons. His role at Long Bay is to support inmates as well as staff with contemplative care, Dharma presentations, one-on-one counselling, life coaching, meditation and the traditional refuge ceremony.

Daniel offered some background on the importance of offering Buddhist chaplaincy in the prison setting:

*In NSW the number of adult prisoners diagnosed with a mental illness is as high as 63% so Dharma and meditation is vital to promote wellbeing. Some would argue the Buddha was an incredible cognitive therapist. Therefore Dharma is vital in discovering and unravelling the mind. There are so many amazing teachings the Buddha presented that can help those incarcerated, such as teachings on interdependence, impermanence and compassion.*

*The hours can be long with many obstacles in the way, but once I'm with an inmate my focus is only them. With a heartfelt wish to help alleviate suffering, I'm invited into someone's life to hear their story and support them on their path. How incredibly sacred and special!*

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*As a chaplain I have a tremendous amount of responsibility to support without bias, being witness to one's vulnerability and then presenting only true and authentic Dharma as skillfully as I possibly can.*

*I've rejoiced witnessing inmates walk out of prison at the end of their sentence and never come back. Dharma is that great!*

*Long Bay is a tough prison with a formidable history. It requires a lot of patience, loving kindness, compassion and all the Dharma you can remember to get through the day, but I wouldn't be anywhere else.*

You can keep in touch with Daniel and his prison work on Facebook [@TheBuddhistChaplain](#)

The Buddhist Council trains and appoints chaplains for hospitals and prisons where they work as part of a multi-faith team. Buddhist chaplains offer emotional and spiritual support, loving-kindness and compassion. They bring a caring presence and willingness to listen, especially during times of difficulty. Chaplains may be ordained monastics (monks and nuns) or lay people.

The Buddhist Council is a religious member organisation of the [Civil Chaplaincies Advisory Committee](#) (CCAC), an interfaith group responsible for endorsing chaplains to work in the Departments of Corrective Services, Health and Juvenile Justice. We have agreements with Corrective Services and Health to appoint chaplains.

We provide accredited training for chaplains through the NSW College of Clinical Pastoral Education. The Introductory Unit of CPE, which takes place over five days, teaches participants how to express their Buddhist beliefs in their offering of care to individuals in life transitions from birth to death and dying. This course is run under the auspices of the Mental Health CPE Centre with Reverend Doctor Alan Galt. We have a strong commitment to developing Buddhist chaplaincy and contemplative care and in 2019 we launched the first 400-hour unit of CPE for Buddhist chaplains under the supervision of Thay Thong Phap.

For further information on the Buddhist Council of NSW and our chaplaincy program contact <mailto:chaplaincy@buddhistcouncil.org>