

Visiting Buddha's Relics at Quan The Am Pagoda: A Spiritual Journey of Central Vietnamese People with Buddha

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ABSTRACT: Buddha relics are sacred symbols, showing respect for Buddha. Quan The Am Pagoda is an important spiritual destination in Central Vietnam, attracting a large number of followers and tourists every year. The display of relics is not only a religious event but also a spiritual journey, helping people connect deeply with Buddhist teachings. The article evaluates the significance of Buddha relics in spiritual life. Analyzes the preparation and organization of the display event at Quan The Am Pagoda. At the same time, collects feelings from followers, local residents, volunteers, etc. through interviews. Thereby presenting the impact of the event on Buddhism and spiritual culture of the Central region.

KEYWORDS: Buddha religion, worship relics, Quan The Am pagoda.

INTRODUCTION

Preparations for the procession to worship relics at Quan The Am Pagoda

In the context of religious activities being increasingly organized in a methodical, legal manner and in accordance with the spiritual needs of the masses, the Grand Procession of Buddha's Relics at Quan The Am Pagoda, Da Nang City, is a typical demonstration of the thoughtful, solemn and thorough preparation of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Da Nang City.

The Executive Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in the city has proactively made a detailed plan and submitted it to the authorities in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Belief and Religion. On May 28, 2025, the Committee for Religion and Ethnic Minorities - People's Committee of Da Nang City signed to confirm the plan to organize the procession, enshrinement and worship of Buddha's relics. The confirmation document clearly states that the dossier fully meets the legal requirements, creating a solid foundation for the implementation of these important Buddhist activities. The content of the plan to organize the ceremony clearly demonstrates solemnity and science:

The procession of Buddha's relics was solemnly organized, with a clear itinerary, with the participation of Venerable monks and nuns, Buddhists and the community in a pure and solemn atmosphere.

The worship - contemplation - prayer program took place at Quan The Am Pagoda for many days, creating conditions for a large number of believers and people to participate.

The work of ensuring security, order, traffic safety, health and environmental sanitation is specifically developed, in coordination with functional agencies such as the Police, Health, Culture - Information and local authorities.

Communication and guidance for Buddhists are closely organized to raise awareness, preserve dignity, and spread the compassionate and wise values of Buddhism to the community.

The grand procession to worship relics at Quan The Am Pagoda is an event that gathers thousands of Buddhists, so the organization is carried out extremely methodically with the contribution of volunteers divided into 9 specialized committees. Each committee is responsible for a separate task, coordinating smoothly towards complete success and maintaining a solemn, thoughtful but still warm and humane atmosphere:

The culinary committee is responsible for preparing ingredients, processing each pure vegetarian dish, and is always vigilant in preserving food hygiene, ensuring that everyone has a safe, nutritious meal with heartfelt care. The water distribution committee is always proactive in checking, preparing, and distributing water to each worshiping point, ensuring that the flow of people is not interrupted in the harsh sunlight or at night. In terms of safety, the Security Committee regularly patrols, controls, and maintains order throughout the entire campus from the gate to every corner. The worshiping guidance and direction committee are the ones who show the way, support the distribution and collection of fans, creating convenience and smoothness among the large flow of people. In addition, the Environmental Sanitation Committee works day and night, checking every corner, picking up and sorting trash, and supporting other committees to maintain cleanliness and solemnity. The rhythm of the whole system is also thanks to the

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Supervisory and Coordination Committee, who quietly monitor progress, adjust assignments, and flexibly respond to any unexpected situations. The medical team is always present to support health, first aid, and remind people how to take care of themselves in crowded and high-intensity work environments. The personal belongings management team helps guide, remind and manage the personal belongings of volunteers safely. Finally, the transfer team connects mobility, bringing monks, nuns and volunteers conveniently from the gate to each important area, giving priority to the elderly or those in special circumstances.

Spiritual journey of Buddhists and people in the Central region when worshipping Buddha's relics Buddhists and people's thoughts when worshipping Buddha's relics at Quan The Am pagoda

The arrival of the Buddha's relics in Vietnam is a great spiritual event, especially for the Buddhist community in Da Nang when Quan The Am Pagoda becomes an important stop. This is not only a rare occasion to worship the sacred relic, but also an opportunity to gather the faith, hope and goodwill of the community. Thousands of people came very early to await this historic moment, in a solemn, expectant and especially emotional atmosphere. The event was carefully prepared with traditional rituals, the presence of representatives at all levels, monks and a large number of Buddhists. Before the Buddha's relics arrived in Da Nang, the news of the relics appearing in Saigon or Hanoi stirred the emotions of many believers across the country. However, not everyone has the conditions to travel far, making the desire to see them with their own eyes even deeper when knowing that the relics will be closer to them. Personal impressions recorded through interviews will illustrate the feelings, thoughts and expectations of local people towards this meaningful event:

Sharing from Mr. Nguyen Thanh Son (Da Nang resident) "The first time I heard that the Buddha's relics were coming to Vietnam in Saigon, I was really happy and excited and just wanted to go and worship there. However, economic conditions, work and time did not allow me to go to Saigon or Hanoi. When I heard that the relics would come to Da Nang, I was extremely happy, just thinking that I had to try to arrange my time so as not to miss this opportunity." Mr. Son continued to share about the moments of direct worship: "I was present at Quan The Am Pagoda at 3:00 a.m. on June 1, 2025. Although it was early in the morning, many people lined up solemnly and respectfully. When I was able to see the Buddha's relics with my own eyes, the feeling of emotion and respect made me speechless. For me, this is an honor for the pagoda as well as for the Buddhist community of Da Nang. I hope Quan The Am Pagoda will continue to organize many meaningful events like this to increase the faith of the community."

Like Mr. Son, Ms. Thuong (a resident of Da Nang) shared: "When I heard that the Buddha's relics were coming to Vietnam, I was moved and really wanted to pay homage. However, because of family matters, I had to miss my appointment in Saigon as well as the pagodas in the North. However, when I heard that the relics would be brought to Quan The Am, my joy was doubled. I myself took the opportunity to go to the pagoda at 8:00 p.m. on the occasion of the relics being brought. Although I had to wait for about an hour in the long line of people, I felt that it was truly a fate and great luck for me." She further emphasized: "This event helps Buddhists share the joy, everyone feels great fortune when they are able to pay homage to the Buddha's relics. I hope that thanks to this, everyone will live a more virtuous life, love and be more connected in the community."

Ms. Le Thi Luan (58 years old, resident of Ngu Hanh Son district, Da Nang) emphasized the aspect of patience and joy: "As a Buddhist, I was very moved when I was honored to pay homage to the Buddha's relics. Even though we had to wait for many hours to have a few minutes to pay homage to the Buddha's relics, everyone was happy."

From a well-prepared perspective, Ms. Mai Thu Huong (52 years old, living in Hai Chau district, Da Nang) shared: "It's the first time in my life that I've been able to worship the relics, so I arranged my work and took the opportunity to line up. I'm very happy and moved that the Buddha's relics are enshrined in Da Nang so that people can worship and express their respect to Buddha."

The feelings of young people are also very sincere, like Nguyen Cong Hau (Da Nang, born in 2004): "I didn't study well so I went to work. I work during the day so I can only go to worship at night. I don't know if I will have a second time in my life, so I have to go. I'm so happy!"

Not only people living in Da Nang, many Buddhists from far away also came to attend the ceremony. Ms. Dung in Nam Dong, a mountainous district of Thua Thien Hue, emotionally said: "This is the second day I have been able to pay homage, my child. Yesterday I left in the afternoon, but at that time the procession had not yet begun for people to pay homage, at 8pm there was a long line, I was afraid that if it was night before my turn, I would not be able to return home in time. My house is far away, so I returned. Today I came again, it is almost my turn. I am so happy, my child, so honored."

Ms. Nguyen Thi Chin, from Hue city, could not hide her emotion: "My family has been waiting for this moment for the past week. Today, we arrived in Da Nang and were also the first Buddhists to receive and worship the relics of Buddha Shakyamuni. This year, Quan The Am pagoda has the opportunity to invite and organize the worship of Buddha's relics, this is a great honor for Buddhists and my family."

More profound are the feelings of Ms. Vo Thi Thanh Man (71 years old, Hoi An City, Quang Nam): "Visiting Buddha's relics is an honor for me and all Buddhists. Not everyone is fortunate enough to visit the relics. This may be the only time in my life. Therefore, I am very excited. Being here makes me feel at peace and comfortable. It's okay to wait in line for a long time."

Through the above sharing, it can be seen that Buddhists and people from different localities and ages all share the same emotions, respect and pride. However, each person expressed their own expectations and personal circumstances: some emphasized collective honor, others cherished their personal opportunities, some patiently overcame the long journey, others took advantage of

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every precious moment to arrive on time for the worship. Each experience, each concern, and each small joy have come together to form a profound spiritual flow, reflecting the solidarity of the good community in the heart of modern Da Nang city. From the common context and individual feelings, it can be seen that the event of welcoming the Buddha's relics is not only a sacred occasion, but also opens up a space for convergence, sharing, and nurturing faith, cultural and spiritual pride in the heart of a constantly changing society.

Volunteer Emotions: The Silent Sounds Behind the Ceremony

The event of bringing Buddha relics to Quan The Am Pagoda, Da Nang is not only a special spiritual event but also a social phenomenon that attracts strong attention from the community, especially young volunteers. From a social science perspective, the practical experience of volunteers clearly reflects the existential value, the level of community cohesion and intrinsic motivation in major religious events in contemporary Vietnam.

According to Yen Nhi, a student at Duy Tan University and one of the members of the delegation welcoming the Buddha's relics, balancing between studying and serving in the context of the exam period was a real challenge: "The event took place close to the final exam, but I still arranged my time between studying and participating in the welcoming ceremony. Although there were many people coming to pay homage and worship, everyone was happy. Because this was the first time in history that the Buddha's relics were invited to Vietnam, thanks to the close coordination between the Vietnamese Government, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the Indian Government and international Buddhist organizations, I did not find it too difficult, except for the excitement and anticipation.

Yen Nhi emphasized her pride in being in the only group that had the honor of welcoming and seeing off the relics from the airport to the pagoda, an experience that raised her sense of responsibility and gratitude: "My welcoming group was the only group that was able to welcome and see off the relics to the airport, so I felt very proud and grateful for this great opportunity. Because I was in the welcoming group, my only task was to concentrate and move between Da Nang airport and the pagoda to carry out the welcoming of the relics, so apart from joy and pride, I did not feel tired". Nhi also mentioned the special feeling when Vietnam was the fourth country in the world that India allowed to welcome the Buddha's relics, creating a solemn and orderly atmosphere despite the large number of worshipers: "The atmosphere at the ceremony was extremely solemn, although the number of people coming to worship was very large, there was no jostling or cutting in line..."

From another organizational perspective, Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao, a student at Duy Tan University, in charge of directing the pilgrimage, shared about the stress and level of commitment of the volunteers: "There are many people who stay up 2-3 nights in a row because of the lack of volunteers but the number of pilgrimages is too large. I stayed up 3 nights in a row to serve. I feel happy and extremely grateful for having the opportunity to serve and help the elderly go on pilgrimage." Phuong Thao emphasized the historical significance of the event when after more than 2,600 years, Buddhists in Vietnam have the opportunity to worship the Buddha's relics, while affirming the lasting value of Buddhism from a personal perspective: "Through this, it also shows that Buddhism is a presence that has happened and I will continue to learn and practice what the Buddha taught."

The most outstanding highlight is also shown through the practical experience of volunteer Tran Duc Manh, who directly participated in the Flow Committee and supported many important areas: "I registered online via the link. The main job is to support people to visit the relics, maintain order, control security, handle incidents and share food, drinks and fans with visitors. Although the shifts are long, sometimes we have to stand all day, change areas, endure the sun and rain, and listen to scolding, but we all take the spirit of 'Serving sentient beings is making offerings to Buddhas' as motivation. Even when people complain and demand, we still try to keep smiling, because we understand that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many people to see the relics of the Buddha with their own eyes."

Tran Duc Manh recalls: "On the first day of the festival, the crowd was terrible. We had to set up fences and guard the security area for hours under the sun, standing close to the temple gate to prevent jostling. We had to repeat encouraging words like 'Yes, our family has been waiting for so long, just a little more and we will arrive' or 'Let's check online first and then come to the ceremony' so that everyone would feel secure waiting. Some people scolded us, sometimes we had to give up the last piece of cake to the guests, but we were all happy, seeing the blessings that were hard to measure. Seeing an old man over 70 years old say with emotion, 'Only then can I worship the relics, my child!' made me understand more and more the value of every moment of service, and know that I am luckier than many people."

You confided: "On the first day it rained, without a raincoat, I still had to cross the crowd, carry water, and give cakes to customers. Even though I was soaked and exhausted from the long shift, there were days when I had to take an exam and return to the temple, and work overtime at night, leaving the temple at 1am, I still did not give up. Because just seeing everyone happy, all the happy smiles when they were able to worship the relics was enough to warm my heart. That is an incomparable blessing."

Another perspective from Nguyen Trieu Vy (medical student, Duy Tan University) continues to add depth to the psychological picture: "It's hard. Because I study medicine, studying for exams and volunteering like this makes me exhausted, not to mention the distance. But honestly, when I received the notice to participate in this activity, I felt so lucky and happy... I feel happier when I can both pay homage and serve the people and "His Excellency". When I hadn't participated, what I feared most was the hustle and bustle of people like in many other places, jostling and pushing each other. But fortunately, in Da Nang, whether it was a hot noon

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or a tiring late night, people always lined up in an orderly manner to pay homage... Some cried, some collapsed with happiness, all emotions expressed their respect." This experience directly depicts the personal sacrifice, emotional intensity and flexible adaptability of modern young volunteers.

As for Nguyen Thi Hong Lan, the feeling of joy and pride kept surging when she was immersed in the magical atmosphere of the ceremony: "For me, as a Buddhist who serves and worships the relics, I am very happy and think that not only me but all the volunteers and people are joyful and happy. Watching each line of people lining up from afar under the hot sun, until late at night, they still had bright smiles, each hand clasped in boundless admiration. It was even more impressive when asking an elderly woman after a 4-hour journey to the ceremony, she still did not feel tired, she just felt like this was a rare opportunity in her life".

Nguyen Thi Minh Anh, a member of the Security Committee, shared: "Because each committee will have clearly assigned tasks, the volunteers flexibly register for shifts and support each other, so I don't feel tired. I am very lucky to have enough good fortune to contribute a small part to the Great Ceremony". That special atmosphere is also enhanced by the strong support of the ladies in the culinary committee who always carefully prepare each meal and each bottle of cool water.

At the end of the festival, the memories of each day of service, no matter how hard, sweaty or tearful, become a sacred source of motivation, connecting volunteers together, creating a proud service identity at Quan The Am Pagoda. The experiences and sacrifices of volunteers such as Tran Duc Manh, Minh Anh or Hong Lan, ... will always be spread and continued, inspiring the next festival seasons, bringing humanistic colors and sustainable community values to the great procession to worship the relics. The fact that young people are willing to sacrifice their time, health, and even overcome personal challenges to serve the community is a vivid proof of the ideal motivation and sense of social responsibility, which are key factors in forming the strength of community cohesion in modern society.

The impact of the Buddha relic worship event at Quan The Am pagoda on Buddhism and spiritual culture of the Central region.

The event of displaying Buddha relics at Quan The Am Pagoda is not only a religious ceremony but also has profound spiritual, cultural and social significance. The worship of relics helps people connect directly with Buddhist teachings, not only through the form of worship but also through spiritual practice in life. When facing Buddha relics, believers have the opportunity to contemplate impermanence and cause and effect, thereby directing their minds towards enlightenment and practicing good deeds. At the same time, this is also an opportunity for the Buddhist community to meet, exchange practice experiences, creating cohesion and solidarity in society.

In addition, the event contributes significantly to the propagation of Buddhism, helping to spread the spirit of Buddhism to many classes of people. In the context of integration, the display of Buddha's relics also helps to consolidate the position of Buddhism in modern life, bringing Buddhist teachings closer to the community. The event also has a great impact on spiritual tourism, contributing to the preservation of Buddhist cultural values. Quan The Am Pagoda is an important spiritual destination in the Central region, the display of relics attracts a large number of visitors from all over the country, thereby helping to promote the development of spiritual tourism. This activity not only preserves traditional values but also encourages the younger generation to learn about Buddhism, raising awareness of religious cultural heritage. At the same time, through sacred rituals, the event helps to arouse people's reverence, creating motivation to practice ethical and humanistic values, towards building a peaceful society. Ultimately, for participants, this event helps them to be diligent in their practice, to grow in their faith, and to strengthen their belief in the Buddhist teachings. Especially for those who are new to Buddhism, this experience can become the first step for them to continue their long-term practice, nurturing compassion and wisdom on the path to enlightenment.

CONCLUSION

The display of Buddha relics at Quan The Am Pagoda clearly demonstrates the value of the intersection between spirituality, culture and society. The event not only contributes to connecting the Buddhist community with the teachings of Buddhism, but also contributes to preserving heritage, promoting the humanistic spirit and spreading positive influences to the community. Despite the difficulties, the event still creates positive impacts on the Buddhist community, promoting Dharma propagation activities and raising awareness of Buddhism in modern life. The event not only gives participants the opportunity to experience profound spirituality but also contributes to the development of spiritual tourism and the preservation of religious cultural values.

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APPENDIX: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

1. Buddhists and people come to worship relics

STT	Full name	Year old	Address
1	Vo Thi Thanh Man	71	Hoi An City, Quang Nam
2	Nguyen Thanh Son	44	Son Tra District, Da Nang
3	Ms. Thuong	37	Hai Chau District, Da Nang
4	Mrs. Le Thi Luan	58	Ngu Hanh Son District, Da Nang
5	Mai Thu Huong	52	Hai Chau District, Da Nang
6	Nguyen Cong Hau	21	Ngu Hanh Son District, Da Nang
7	Ms. Dung	--	Nam Dong District, Thua Thien Hue
8	Mrs. Nguyen Thi Chin	--	Hue City

2. Volunteer

STT	Full name	Course	Field of study	School
1	Tran Thi Yen Nhi	K28	QTH4 PSU	Duy Tan University
2	Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao	K29	VTD6	Duy Tan University
3	Tran Duc Manh	K29	DLK4	Duy Tan University
4	Nguyen Trieu Vy	Y	--	Duy Tan University
5	Nguyen Thi Hong Lan	K30	QTH3	Duy Tan University
6	Nguyen Thi Minh Anh	K28	DLL PSU	Duy Tan University



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