

## Ven. Dhammavanna

Ven. Dhammavanna was born Vantanee Deewongse in 1976 in Bangkok into a Buddhist family. She was already interested in Dhamma when she was 8 years old. Her mother took her to practice meditation and chanting on Sunday at a center near her house which had a deep effect on her. At that young age, she could chant the invitation for the deva and ask for the triple gems. Her strong faith in Buddhism created a great foundation for her inner growth. When she was in the secondary school, she offered food to monks on their alms round in the morning on weekdays before she went to school.

As a young adult, she received her B.A. in Art and Communication from Siam University in Bangkok, and worked as a reporter for 3 years.

She was interested in writing and reading before her ordination. Later, as a laywoman, she was interested especially in religious books.

In 1958 while studying at the university, she went to attend Abhidhamma Foundation to practice insight meditation. While she was a reporter, she joined the Quan Yin Bodhisattva (Goddess of Mercy) Chanting Club to chant in Chinese language using Thai manuscripts for 3 years. She has a strong connection to the Goddess Bodhisattva who is the one who listens to all suffering sentient beings. At that time, with this understanding, she became a vegetarian.

She first met Ven. Dhammananda at Thammasat University where still as Assoc.Prof.Dr.Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, was teaching. Young Vantanee was very impressed with the precision and detail with which Dr.Chatsumarn taught history and from that moment, she wanted to be Ven Dhammananda's disciple. She was a fan of Dr.Chatsumarn's Dhamma programme on TV every weekend.

This is why when she encountered her life crisis, she remembered Ven. Dhammananda. Vantanee worked as a reporter only 3 years but with a lot of stress. She had office syndromes on her spine, her physical body did not allow her to work as hard as before and she knew that she needed to heal herself through the Dhamma and search for a teacher who could lift her up on the spiritual path. She knew that Ven. Dhammananda was the one.

She joined the monastery in February 2005 as an anagarika taking 8 precepts and as a samaneri in the same year and as a sikkhamana in 2009. She was ordained as a bhikkhuni by Ven. Mettananda Maha Thero, the abbot of Sathammakara vityayatana parivena Temple, Panadura, Sri

Lanka as her Upajjhaya and Ven. Bhikkhuni Sumitra was her Pavattini on June 24, 2011.

At the monastery she is mainly responsible for public relations to welcome both Thai and foreign visitors and lead the chanting. Her Dhamma practice is "be in the present in the here and now."