

A heartfelt thank-you to you, dear friends of the EIAB!

2023 with all its personal and social challenges has come to an end, sometimes threatening to leave our positive experiences languishing in the background of our minds. For this reason, we would like to invite you to come back to yourself and feel the unbreakable bond that offers joy and vitality in the face of all forms of adversity. Let us look deeply in a way that fills our hearts with gratitude, allows us to master our own lives in peace in the here and now and creates the conditions for a happy future.

In 2023, you have offered your generous support in so many different ways. You have attended courses and retreats organised by monastic sisters and brothers, and numerous lay teachers; you have helped us to master the many tasks required to run the Institute with your work, and you have supported us financially with your donations. For all this we would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Together we can follow the bodhisattva path, generate understanding, compassion, joy and peace for ourselves and help these qualities manifest in the world.

In the past year, we organised 135 retreats and seminars at the EIAB and several retreats outside the EIAB, in Germany and across Europe, e.g. in the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Italy, Denmark and Sweden.

In January of this year, 2024, we, the International Plum Village Community, held a ceremony in all centres, two years after Thay's going, to mark the end of the mourning period and Thay's transformation into an ancestor, namely as the fifth patriarch of his root temple, Từ Hiếu (Hue, Vietnam) and as the founder of the International Plum Village Sangha.

In Vietnam, we organised 3 retreats for monastic sisters and brothers and lay people from all over the world as well as for Vietnamese lay people. In total, more than 3,000 lay people and more than 420 monks and nuns from Plum Village participated in these 3 retreats.

At the EIAB, we also offered a retreat, organised by monastics and lay members of the Order of Interbeing, to commemorate Thay. The impressive and vibrant diversity of this retreat allowed us to experience the many wholesome seeds Thay has sowed and which are now bearing fruit in over 55 countries around the world, from the Galapagos islands all the way to Papua-New Guinea. And in the spirit of Engaged Buddhism founded by Thay and his spiritual companions, our spiritual practice is also home to responses to the many challenges posed by the social realities of the world we live in: peace activism, environmental protection, Wake Up work with young people, Earthholder-Sangha/climate change and activism, mindful economics, animal rights, local Sangha practice – currently taking place at more than 110 locations in German-speaking countries -, anti-racism, and the inclusivity of the colourful rainbow family

In 2024, we will be working intensively on building the long-awaited meditation hall and fulfilling an important condition for sharing the healing energy of the Buddha's teachings and those of our venerable teacher Thich Nhat Hanh with even greater intensity. Now, our new meditation hall will be called Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh Great Hall of Peace. This name also serves as a reminder for us to continue Thich Nhat Hanh's work as a peace activist in a world still full of suffering from war. Our heartfelt wish is to reach out to more and more people to sow the seeds of insight and understanding throughout the world.

We will continue to do this with all our strength and would like to ask you, from the bottom of our hearts, for your continued support in the future.

May we make 2024 a year of peace in ourselves and in the world.

With a lotus blossom from our hearts

In deep gratitude

Thay Phap An and the sisters and brothers of the EIAB

"Wenn wir friedlich und glücklich sind, werden wir kein Leid in anderen schaffen. Wenn wir daran arbeiten, das Leiden in anderen zu lindern, fühlen wir uns friedlich und glücklich. Praxis ist nicht nur für uns selbst, sondern für andere und die gesamte Gesellschaft."

Thich Nhat Hanh

