**三坪祖師公**

漳州平和三平寺「三平祖師公」敬稱:「三坪祖師公」。六月初六日聖誕

 義中禪師(三坪祖師公)為禪宗高僧，祖籍高陵(今陝西高陵)，俗姓楊名義中，因父福建為官，唐建中二年(781年)生於福唐(今福建省福清市)。自幼聰明過人,勤奮好學，博覽群書，遍覽詩文，輒過目不忘，十四歲拜宋州律宗大師玄用，剃度入門，廿七歲受具足戒，肩扛錫仗，行遊天下訪師修證，先後師從懷暉禪師、智藏禪師、懷海禪師、石鞏慧藏禪師與大顛寶通禪師等。

 因唐武宗廢佛汰僧, 義中禪師率衆僧尼，徒步艱辛爬山涉水，暫避佛難，開基於平和三平寺，廣授山民農技，開荒辟田，興建水利，起造村舍，深山刀耕火種蠻荒景象為之巨變，自此男耕女織，自給自足，樂業安居。

 後以繼達摩正統，傳南宗衣缽之高僧,主持重建漳州開元寺,完成修繕大業，唐宣宗皇帝敕封為「廣濟大師」。唐咸通十三年(872)十一月初六日義中禪師在三平寺坐化。為紀念義中禪師，門人弟子把草堂改建為塔式殿宇，將其遺骨安放在塔內地穴。並雕塑大師金身一尊，置於地穴之上，尊奉為「三坪祖師公」。

**Sanping Zushihgong (Master Sanping)**

Jhangjhou (Zhangzhou) Pinghe Sanping Temple’s “Sanping Zushihgong” (“Master Sanping”) is also respectfully called “Sanping Zushihgong” [the character for “ping” differs]. His birthday is celebrated on the sixth day of the sixth lunar month.

Master Yijhong (Yizhong) (Sanping Zushihgong) was a senior Zen Buddhist monk. His ancestral hometown was Gaoling (now Gaoling District, Sian (Xian), Shansi (Shaanxi) Province). His lay name was Yang Yi-jhong (Yang Yizhong). As his father was an official in Fujian Province, he was born in Futang (now Fucing (Fuqing) City, Fujian Province) in the second year of the Jianjhong (Jianzhong) era of Tang Dynasty Emperor Dezong (781). He was an intelligent and outstanding boy, as well as a diligent and studious student. He read extensively, including poetry and literature works, and had a highly retentive memory. When he was 14, he paid homage to vinaya Master Syuanyong (Xuanyong), and took the tonsure. When he was 27, he received full ordainment and began carrying the khakkhara and traveling around to visit masters for cultivation and realization. He successively studied under Master Huaihuei (Huaihui), Master Jhihzang (Zhizang), Master Huaihai, Master Shihgong Hueizang (Shigong Huizang), and Master Dadian Baotong.

After Emperor Wuzong of Tang initiated an anti-Buddhist persecution and eliminated the monkhood, Master Yijhong (Yizhong) led a group of monks and nuns on a long and arduous journey to flee the persecution. He established Sanping Temple in Pinghe County. He taught local people how to farm, opened up land for agriculture, constructed irrigation channels, and built cottages. The uncivilized mountainous area that used slash and burn methods underwent a dramatic transformation. Men were responsible for farming and women were responsible for weaving, and a peaceful, self-sufficient society emerged.

To continue promoting orthodox dharma and spread the teachings of Southern Chan Buddhism, he presided over the reconstruction of Jhangjhou (Zhangzhou) Kaiyuan Temple and completed the important renovation project. Emperor Syuanzong (Xuanzong) of Tang conferred the title “Guangji Dashih” (“Guangji Dashi”) upon him. Master Yijhong (Yizhong) passed away while meditating at Sanping Temple on the sixth day of the 11th lunar month of the 13th year of the Siantong (Xiantong) era of Tang Dynasty Emperor Yizong (872). To commemorate Master Yijhong (Yizhong), his disciples transformed the straw room into a pagoda-style hall. His remains were interred inside the pagoda crypt, and a golden statue of him was placed above the crypt. He was venerated as “Sanping Zushihgong” (“Master Sanping”).