



Minnesota Buddhist

Minnesota Buddhist Vihara
3401 N. 4th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55412
Tel: 612-522-1811
mnbvusa@yahoo.com
www.mnbv.org

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W. Seewalie Thera

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Vesak Day Message from the Abbot of MNBV

Dear Friends in the Dhamma,

I am so glad to present this special message on this utmost significant day of all Buddhists in the world. We, Buddhists, throughout the world commemorate the Birth, Enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha on this very special day of Vesak. Today we all commemorate 2632 birth day of the Buddha.

According to the teaching of the Buddha, on this 'Trice blessed day' we all should understand and practice as the Buddha has taught us. The Buddha never taught us a religion. As the greatest man ever born on this earth he has taught us how to live peacefully and harmoniously in society supporting each other. This is how Buddhists could practice Metta (loving kindness) and Karuna (compassion) towards each other. These two are very important factors in the teaching of the Buddha. Let us first of all understand the significance of practicing these two concepts in the teaching of the Buddha so that we all can see each other amicably.

As most of us know, Buddhism is not a religion but a way of life. As it is a way of life we all should be able to put it into practice in our daily life. When we apply it in our daily life we all can practice the major three steps in Buddhism namely; generosity, morality and meditation. When we think of these three, all of them are equally important. Therefore, let us understand the significance of practicing them all together.

When practice generosity, let us first understand how to share things with others. We can share many things with our friends, relatives and also with different spirits and animal beings around us. We, as humans undoubtedly, can share many things with others. The Buddha has taught us in many ways to share with others by sharing, giving and offering. If we are mindful enough we can share even our skills and merit etc.

As Vesak is a special Full moon day for Buddhists all over the world, we all can observe precepts on this very special day wherever we live and abide by them throughout the day. For lay persons five precepts are the daily precepts and the special day like the full moon day, they observe eight precepts, nine precepts or ten precepts. That is how they all purify their minds. One cannot develop one's mind without morality. Therefore, one should establish in morality first.

Practicing meditation is the third stage which is really important for all of us in this fast moving society. The Buddha recommended meditation as a way to calm our mind and also to see through which means to understand things as they really are. When one see things as they really are one sees the three characteristics of existence, namely; impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness. As we are aware these two methods are called calm and insight (Samatha- Vipassana). When one practices this method of meditation one can live happily and peacefully in society and finally one can attain the Supreme Bliss of Nibbana. Therefore, on this very special day, 2632 birth day of the Buddha let us all practice generosity, morality and meditation as a means of reducing and controlling our emotions and also strive to understand and realize the real peace, real happiness of Nibbana.

May all beings be well happy and peaceful!

With Metta,
Witiyala Seewalie Thera

The Buddha, His Birth, Enlightenment and the Passing away

By Bhikkhu T. Seelananda

A unique being, an extra Ordinary man, a noble Prince who was destined to be the greatest religious Teacher of the world, was born on the Full Moon Day of May (Vesak), in the year 623 B.C. in the Lumbini Park at Kapilavatthu, in India. His Mother was Mahamaya and the Father was King Siddhodana of the aristocratic Sakyan clan.

While the people were rejoicing over the birth of this illustrious prince the great ascetic of high spiritual attainments, named Asita, the tutor of the King, was also pleased to hear this happy news. On hearing this, he visited the palace of the King to see this child. The King carried the child up to the ascetic in order to make the child pay him due reverence. But to the surprise of all, the child's legs turned and rested on the matted locks of the ascetic. Instantly, foreseeing with his supernormal vision the child's future greatness, he saluted the child with clasped hands. The King also did likewise. It was this prince who eventually became the supremely Enlightened One at the age of 35 on a Full Moon Day of Vesak like today.

The Vesak commemorates mainly the three events of the life of the Buddha namely, his birth, Enlightenment and passing away into Parinibbana. The Buddhists all over the world celebrate this blessed and sacred religious day by offering flowers, lamps, incense and various kinds of foods and juice etc in the name of the Buddha. They go to temples and venerate the Buddha devotedly. Especially in Sri Lanka, as a mark of veneration people erect pandals depicting the life of the Buddha or a story of his previous life. On the day or perhaps from days ahead, they start giving alms for the monks and the ordinary people. They observe precepts and practice the Dhamma. To the Buddhists throughout the world, this is the utmost significant day of the year. That was why as a request by Buddhists of all over the world, recently it was declared as the International Holiday for Buddhists.

The Buddhas are not born everywhere and every day. They are very rare in the world. Once he himself said that it was hard to encounter the arising of the Buddhas (kiccho Buddhanam uppado-Dh.182). The Buddha Sakyamuni Gautama is venerated as the greatest religious Teacher by billions of people in the world today. He, as an energetic young prince who was brought up in the lap of luxury, married his beautiful cousin princes

Yashodhara who was then at the age of sixteen. They led a happy married life. With the march of time, princess Yasodhara delivered a baby, a son. On the same day, the birth day of the son, this uninspired and unparalleled prince Siddhartha Gautama renounced his worldly life with the intention of seeking what is Truth. He went from home to homelessness.

As a penniless wanderer, living on what little the charitably-minded gave of their own accord, he went forth. He had no permanent abode. A shady tree or a lonely cave sheltered him by day or night. Bare-footed and bare-headed, he walked in the scorching sun and in the piercing cold. With no possessions to call his own, but a bowl to collect his food, and robes just sufficient to cover the body. He concentrated all his energies on the quest of truth. Searching for the unsurpassed peace, he approached the Teachers like Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. He practiced under them and gained complete mastery of his mind, but his ultimate goal was far ahead. As he was dissatisfied with their teachings, politely he took his leave from them. Finally, he realized that there was none capable enough to teach him what he yearned for-the highest truth. He also realized that the highest truth is to be found and realized within oneself and ceased to seek external aid. Disappointed but not discouraged, the ascetic Siddhartha Gautama wandered through the district of Magadha and one day arrived the market town of Senani at Uruvela. There he saw a lovely spot of ground, a charming forest grove, a flowing river with pleasant sandy fords, and hard by was a village where he could obtain his food. Then he thought thus: "Suitable in deed this place for spiritual exertion for those noble scions who desire to strive" So as the place was congenial for his meditation he resolved to settle down here to achieve his desired object. Seeing the Bodhi tree on the bank of the river Neranjara he went up to the foot of the tree and under the cooling shade of the tree he sat with a firm determination in the eve of the pre-Vesak day and strived and developed his mind. Finally at the dawn of the following day, the Full Moon Day of Vesak, by realizing the Truth he became the Supremely Enlightened One in the world.

Immediately after the attainment of the Buddha-hood, as an uplift, he said : **"Through many a birth in samsara have I wandered in vain, seeking the builder of this house (of life). Repeated birth is indeed suffering !. O house-builder, you are seen ! You will not build this house again.**

Continued from page 2

For your rafters are broken and your ridgepole shattered. My mind has reached the Unconditioned; I have attained the destruction of craving. (Dh. 153-154)

He mainly realized the Four Noble Truths, The dependent Origination and the Three Characteristics of existence. Referring to the Dhamma (Truth) he realized he said: "O monks those Dhamma which I have discovered and proclaimed should be thoroughly learnt by you, practiced, developed and cultivated, so that this holy life may endure for a long time, that it may be for the benefit and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of devas and humans" (Maha Parinibbana Sutta). What are those Dhammas:

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

The Four Kinds of Right Endeavour

The Four Means of Accomplishment

The Five Faculties

The Five Powers

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

The Eightfold Path (Those are the factors to be developed by oneself for the attainment of Enlightenment. There are 37 factors).

After his Enlightenment, the Buddha delivered his first sermon on the Full Moon Day of Esala and thereafter little by little his beneficent and successful ministry which lasted for forty five years was established. At the age of 80, addressing the Bhikkhus he said:

"Twenty-nine years of age I was - When I went forth to seek the Good. Now over fifty years have passed - Since the day that I went forth. To roam the realm of wisdom's law - Outside of which no ascetic is (First, second, third or fourth degree) - Other schools of such are bare, But if here monks live perfectly, The world won't lack for Arahants"

Before his passing away the Buddha gave certain utmost significant admonitions to the monks which are still vogue and immortal. Once addressing Ven. Ananda He said: "Ananda, after the passing away of the Tathagata, it may be that you will think: "The Teacher's instruction has ceased, now we have no teacher" It should not be seen like this, Ananda, for what I have taught and explained to you as Dhamma and discipline will be your teacher". (This is very important even today for the seeker of the Dhamma. As we understand, many followers of Buddhism go from Master to Master and finally they cling to them and they then end with

them without seeking the Dhamma. Do not forget the word of the Buddha. "The Dhamma is your Master"). These are some other glittering gems like utterances of the Enlightened One, just before his passing away into Parinibbana:

1. "Monks, a monk should be mindful and clearly aware; this is our charge to you!
2. How is a monk mindful? Here, a monk abides contemplating the body as body, earnestly, clearly aware, mindful and having put away all hankering and fretting for the world, and likewise with regard to feeling, mind and Dhammas. That is how a monk is mindful".
3. "Ananda, what does the order of monks expect of me?. I have taught the Dhamma, Ananda, making no "teacher's fist" in respect of doctrines".
4. "Ananda, you should live as Islands unto yourselves, being your own refuge, with no one else as your refuge, with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as your refuge, with no other refuge".
5. "Ripe I am in years. My life-span determined. Now I go from you, having made myself my refuge. Monks, be untiring, mindful, disciplined, guarding your minds with well-collected thought. He who, tireless, keeps to law and discipline, leaving birth behind will put an end to woe".
6. "Ananda whatever monk, nun, male or female lay-follower dwells practicing the Dhamma properly, and perfectly fulfills the Dhamma-way, he or she honors the Tathagata, reveres and esteems hi and pays him the supreme homage".
7. "Do not worry yourselves about the funeral arrangements, Ananda. You should strive for the highest goal, devote yourselves to the highest goal, and dwell with your minds tirelessly, zealously devoted to the highest goal".
8. "O Monks if you have doubts or uncertainty about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha or about the Path or the practice. Ask monks!. Do not afterwards feel remorse. Perhaps, monks, you do not ask out of respect for the teacher. Then monks let one friend tell it to another, but... All monks were silent.... "

"Now monks, I declare to you: all conditioned things are of a nature of decay. Strive on untiringly". These were the Buddha's last words. With these words the Buddha passed away into Parinibbana. At least from this great significant day of Vesak, let us strive to follow and practice the above teachings of the Buddha. Impermanent are compounded things in the world. Let us realize this truth in the world through the word of the Buddha. Let us be mindful and wise to understand things as they are.

May all beings be well, happy and peaceful !

www.mettanet.lk

Two Faces of the Dhamma

By Bhikkhu Bodhi

On first encounter Buddhism confronts us as a paradox. Intellectually, it appears a freethinker's delight: sober, realistic, undogmatic, almost scientific in its outlook and method. But if we come into contact with the living Dhamma from within, we soon discover that it has another side which seems the antithesis of all our rationalistic presuppositions. We still don't meet rigid creeds or random speculation, but we do come upon religious ideals of renunciation, contemplation and devotion; a body of doctrines dealing with matters transcending sense perception and thought; and -- perhaps most disconcerting -- a program of training in which faith figures as a cardinal virtue, doubt as a hindrance, barrier and fetter.

When we try to determine our own relationship with the Dhamma, eventually we find ourselves challenged to make sense out of its two seemingly irreconcilable faces: the empiricist face turned to the world, telling us to investigate and verify things for ourselves, and the religious face turned to the Beyond, advising us to dispel our doubts and place trust in the Teacher and his Teaching.

One way we can resolve this dilemma is by accepting only one face of the Dhamma as authentic and rejecting the other as spurious or superfluous. Thus, with traditional Buddhist pietism, we can embrace the religious side of faith and devotion, but shy off from the hard-headed world-view and the task of critical inquiry; or, with modern Buddhist apologetics, we can extol the Dhamma's empiricism and resemblance to science, but stumble embarrassingly over the religious side. Yet reflection on what a genuine Buddhist spirituality truly requires, makes it clear that both faces of the Dhamma are equally authentic and that both must be taken into account. If we fail to do so, not only do we risk adopting a lopsided view of the teaching, but our own involvement with the Dhamma is likely to be hampered by partiality and conflicting attitudes.

The problem remains, however, of bringing together the two faces of the Dhamma without sidling into self-contradiction. The key, we suggest, to achieving

this reconciliation, and thus to securing the internal consistency of our own perspective and practice, lies in considering two fundamental points: first, the guiding purpose of the Dhamma; and second, the strategy it employs to achieve that purpose. The purpose is the attainment of deliverance from suffering. The Dhamma does not aim at providing us with factual information about the world, and thus, despite a compatibility with science, its goals and concerns are necessarily different from those of the latter. Primarily and essentially, the Dhamma is a path to spiritual emancipation, to liberation from the round of repeated birth, death and suffering. Offered to us as the irreplaceable means of deliverance, the Dhamma does not seek mere intellectual assent, but commands a response that is bound to be fully religious. It addresses us at the bedrock of our being, and there it awakens the faith, devotion and commitment appropriate when the final goal of our existence is at stake.

But for Buddhism faith and devotion are only spurs which impel us to enter and persevere along the path; by themselves they cannot ensure deliverance. The primary cause of bondage and suffering, the Buddha teaches, is ignorance regarding the true nature of existence; hence in the Buddhist strategy of liberation the primary instrument must be wisdom, the knowledge and vision of things as they really are. Investigation and critical inquiry, cool and uncommitted, constitute the first step towards wisdom, enabling us to resolve our doubts and gain a conceptual grasp of the truths upon which our deliverance depends. But doubt and questioning cannot continue indefinitely. Once we have decided that the Dhamma is to be our vehicle to spiritual freedom, we have to step on board: we must leave our hesitancy behind and enter the course of training which will lead us from faith to liberating vision.

For those who approach the Dhamma in quest of intellectual or emotional gratification, inevitably it will show two faces, and one will always remain a puzzle. But if we are prepared to approach the Dhamma on its own terms, as the way to release from suffering, there will not be two faces at all. Instead we will see what was there from the start: the single face of Dhamma which, like any other face, presents two complementary sides.

www.vipassana.com

Bringing the Benefits of Meditation in Daily Life

By Bhante Gunaratana

Slowing down is a way to nourish the roots of mindfulness. We can do this wherever we are, in a monastery, but also at home and in the workplace. We talk about creating world peace, but people must also be concerned with creating mental peace—making their minds healthy and calm. And a healthy mind comes from mindfulness.

When you're at work or when you are unable to sit for a longer period in a quiet place, you can also enjoy a few moments of mindfulness. I recommend that everyone take one minute every hour during the day to do this. Work hard for 59 minutes, then take a one-minute break, and totally focus your mind on your breathing. Close your eyes, if you can. Or if you're at your desk in a busy office, keep your eyes open at a point in front of you. Quietly, peacefully, count out 15 breaths—that's about a minute. Don't think about the future, don't think about anything during that one minute. Just keep your mind totally free from all those things. When that minute is over, you have added some clarity to your mind. You have added some strength to continue on for the other 59 minutes in the hour. Then, vow to yourself that when another hour has passed you'll give yourself another one-minute mindfulness break.

You can do this at your kitchen table or office desk. You can do this after you've parked your car and turned off the engine. You can do this during a restroom break. If you do this kind of one-minute meditation the whole day, at the end of an eight-hour work period you'll have spent eight minutes in meditation. You'll be less nervous, less tense and less exhausted at the end of the day. Plus, you'll have a more productive and healthier day, both psychologically and physically.

It is up to each person to take charge of their own mind. Each one of us must learn how to slow down. You know, -mindful people are always in the majority. You can easily lead yourself down that same path if you let yourself. Don't get caught in this trap! Wherever you are—at home, at a retreat center, in your car, or in line at the grocery store—mindfulness can rescue us from stressful, painful mental states. I like to call mindfulness one's "emergency kit." It's like when you cut or burn or yourself—you immediately reach for a first-aid kit to treat the wound. The same is true for the mind. When the mind is pained, when it is agitated and distracted, when you suffering mentally, you really need some first-aid to come back to mental health.

But if you don't take care of painful mental states, they can grow worse—just like a wound. At their worst, we slip into a depression or nervous breakdown. And our mental suffering can manifest itself in all kinds of illnesses, from stomach problems to heart disease. So many things are going on in your mind! Only when something triggers a breakdown or serious illness do you begin to look back at all the time you've spent making your life chaotic. So, you must bring yourself back to mindfulness wherever you are, all the time. So along with your regular meditation practice, add into your daily life practices like this one-minute meditation. Train yourself in this way—as soon as some psychic irritation arises, stop and take care of it before you proceed on with other activities in your day.

***I like to call
mindfulness one's
"emergency kit."***

Pāli Quotation: Māvamaññetha puññassa-na mañtaṃ āga-
missati. Udabindu nipātena - udakumbho pi pūrati pūrati
dhīro punnassa - thoka thokampi acinam. (Dh. 122)

Translation: Think not highly of good, saying "It will come to me." Drop by drop is the water pot filled. Likewise, the wise man, gathering little by little, fills himself with good.

www.bhavanasociety.org

MIND
By Bhikkhuni Satima

“The Mind is the forerunner of all states, mind is chief; Mind made are they.....” (Dhp.)

The mind plays a very important role in Buddhism, as all human actions whether wholesome or unwholesome, are preceded by the mind. It is a dynamic process which flows continuously like a river and is the most important one of all the six senses.

This psycho-physical organism, we call a human being is made up of mind and matter. They are co-dependent and mutually supportive. The matter or the form body cannot exist without the mind. All thoughts, feelings, sensations or intentions are preceded by the mind. Without the mind the body is useless.

In Buddhism, mind is defined as a non-physical phenomenon which perceives, thinks, recognizes, experiences and reacts to the environment. It is the source of all suffering as well as the wellspring of all joy. It is the Mind that defies or purifies one. The Mind can be our worst enemy or our greatest friend. It can make life a living hell or a peaceful heaven. ‘Whatever (harm) a foe may do to a foe, or a hater to a hater, an ill directed mind can do far more greater harm.’ ‘What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relative can do, a well directed mind does, and there by elevates one.’ (Dhp. 42&43)

“What is mind? No Matter ! - What is matter? Never Mind!”

Mind is not matter; it has no form, no shape, no color, no sound, no smell, no taste, and no touch. It is bright and clear, vast and spacious, open, taintless, ungraspable, and unfathomable, immeasurable and timeless, but like a mirror, can clearly reflect objects. And the essence of the mind is bright and empty. There are two main aspects to the mind; clarity and knowing. This means that the mind is clear, formless and allows objects to arise in it, and also that the mind is knowing, an awareness, a consciousness which can engage with objects.

The Mind also has two parts, the passive knower and the active doer. It is the knowing mind that which sees, observes, and knows, and the doing mind that is

so busy all the time doing things. It is too busy doing that it has no time to stop and know what is really happening.

The untrained mind of an ordinary person is wild; it never rests for even a fraction of a second. It jumps from one object to another. It wonders all over running after thoughts of anxiety, fear, happiness, sorrow, worry, doubts, pleasures, frustrations and all the other thousand and one thoughts that can possibly arise. This is because our mind is almost always hidden by our human defilements and colored by our emotions. For example, when we are happy, our whole world is happy as our whole world is in our mind, and we look through the lens of happiness. So everything is wonderful! If someone dents our car, it would not bother us; if someone scolds us even that would not bother us! Suppose we meet our enemy when we are in this great happy mood, then, that too would not bother us. We will think that the enemy is good after all!

When a thought arises almost always delusion arises and obscures the mind. Delusion is not inherent in the mind. The mind is free of delusion, but delusion covers it like a cloud that hides the sun. Every time delusion arises there is grasping that takes place. It is this grasping that causes stress and suffering. But every mind moment where mindfulness is present, there is no delusion, so there is no attachment, no grasping and no stress and suffering. It is a moment free of suffering – happiness.

In Pali, there is only one word for heart-mind. [CITTA] But in English we have to differentiate between the two to make the meaning clear. When we talk of MIND it means the thinking process and the intellectual understanding that derives from knowledge, and the ability to retain knowledge and make use of it. When we speak of HEART we think of feelings and emotions and our ability to respond to these. We have the mistaken idea that our lives are lead by our thinking process, but this is not the case. If we examine closely we will find that we are leading our lives according to our feelings and our thinking is dependent on our feelings. This emotional aspect of ours is of such great importance that for a peaceful and harmonious living it needs to be purified. So that is why meditation is very important as it is during meditation that we can see the working of the mind and thus purify it.

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As we train the mind through the practice of meditation, we begin to understand what the mind does, what the mind is, and what it is doing all the time. We first see the 'monkey mind'; the mind that jumps from object to object, never still for a moment, unruly, untamed, and wild, and also wanting to control. This is the first step in meditation, seeing the doer and the controller understanding how this mind acts.

Then we begin to discipline the mind. We try to let the mind rest on a single object without letting it run wild, jumping from object to object by letting go of the doer and the controller. With patience and practice the mind will become still, peaceful, and clear then we begin to see things as they really are. It is like when the clouds drift away and the sky is clear, the bright, shiny sun is visible. The Buddha said;

“ Though one should conquer a million men in battlefield, yet he, indeed, is the noblest victor who has conquered his mind.”

Poya (Uposatha, Sil) Full Moon Observance

Third Saturdays of the month

7:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

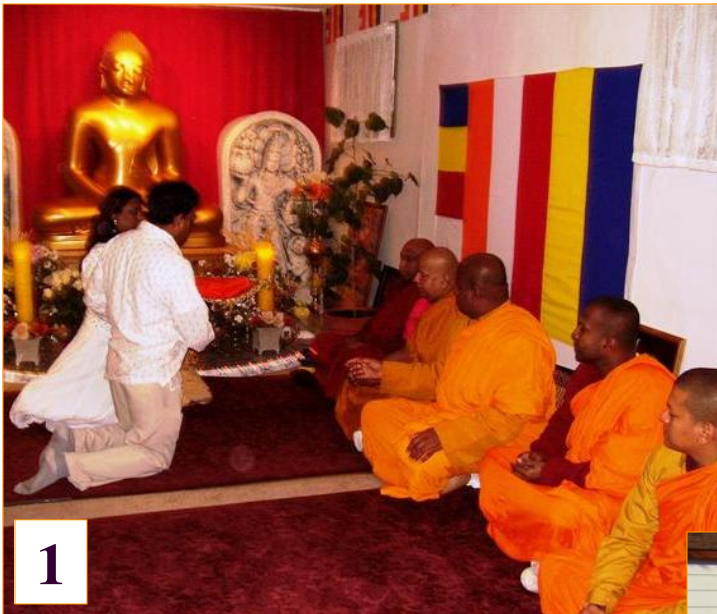
On full moon day lay practitioners have the opportunity to observe the eight precepts and to participate in the poya observance and acquire merits by performing Dana, Sila and Bhavana. And also to participate in the Sutta Discussion which provides an opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the Buddhist teachings. Other lay practitioners who are not taking the eight precepts are also invited to come to the Vihara and participate in the services.

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MBV Major Events from November 2007 to May 2008

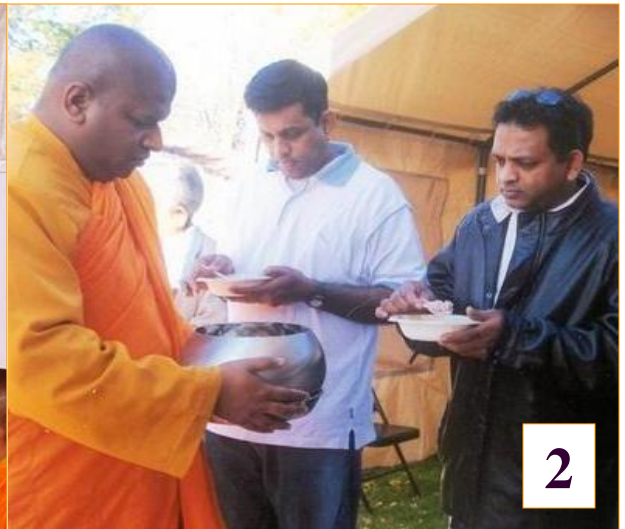
Jan. 1, 2008	New Year Blessings
Jan. 20, 2008	Pali Class Started
Feb. 2, 2008	Sri Lankan Independence Day Celebration
Mar.16, 2008	Artist Sunil Edirisinghe's visit to MN Buddhist Vihara
Mar. 22, 2008	Memorial Service on passing away of Kirti Jyoti Maha Thera, the teacher of Podi Hamuduruwo
Mar. 28, 2008	Venerable Dedunupitiye Upananda Thera delivered a Buddhist talk at St. Cloud State University
Mar. 29, 2008	Full Day Meditation Retreat at MRC - conducted by Ven. Dedunupitiye Upananda Thera
Apr. 20, 2008	Sri Lankan Ambassador in US H.E. Bernard Goonetilake visited MN Buddhist Vihara
Apr. 26, 2008	Sri Lankan New Year Celebration
Apr. 27, 2008	Abhidhamma Class started
May 3, 2008	Community Garden
May 11, 2008	All monks attended the Buddha's Birthday Celebration at Vietnamese Temple
May 17, 2008	Vesak Celebration & Special memorial service to disaster victims in Myanmar & China
May 18, 2008	Meditation Retreat at MRC - conducted by Venerable Bhikkhu T. Seelananda, Edmonton, Canada
May 19, 2008	Meditation and Dhamma Discussion in North Dakota State University

Kathina Ceremony -2007



1

1. Offerings Kathina Robe to the monks on the Kathina Ceremony Day by Viranga & Jayantha Atukorala

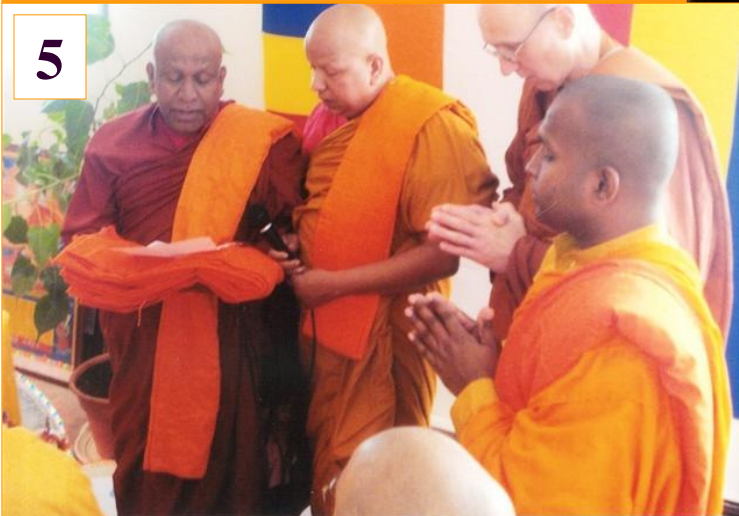


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2. Pindapatha - Witiyala Seewalie Thera



3



5

3. Pindapatha - Bhikkhuni Satima

4. Gathering in Buddha Hall

5. Ven. P. Chandasiri, Ven. P. Pannananda, Ven. Dhammaratana & Ven. R. Nandawimala



4

Bak Maha Ulela - 2008



1



2



3

1. Welcome Speech by Jim Bunnell
 2. Bulath Deema - From Malka Abeyratne to Ven. W. Seewalie Thera



4



5

3. New Year Dance - Amodhya, Malka & Navodhya
 4. Raban Geseema - Chris, Susantha, Upali & Wije
 5. New Year Princess - Amodhya, Malka, Alexis, Yasangi, Anaka & Navodhya

Dhamma School Kids' Articles

Kind Words

Sometimes I shout at my sister. I try to tell myself that shouting won't get me anywhere and I try to cool my temper. Later on I went to Dhamma School where I learned about the Buddha. He was a very calm and generous person who only used his soft words to sooth people down. His kind words actually helped people learn that no one likes to be shouted or yelled at and that it taught them they had to be nicer to their elders and siblings. The story I'm about to tell next is about a bull named Nandiwisala. This bull was one of Buddha's previous lives.

This is a story about a farmer and his bull, Nandiwisala. The two had a tight relationship but soon nearly broke away when they enter a competition. One day the farmer had a run – in with another farmer. The other farmer thought that his bull was stronger than Nandiwisala. So they decided on a date to when they would compete. On competition day, each bull was supposed to pull an equal amount of weight of logs. When the referee shouted go, the race had begun and things started to get complicated. First of all the other bull started to gain speed and then the farmer did the most stupid thing. He started to call his bull names like 'Move stupid bull, pick up the pace'. Nandiwisala immediately stopped and the other farmer won. There was a bet to be settled and the farmer paid his fair share. Later the farmer and Nandiwisala had a talk. The farmer asked why Nandiwisala didn't win the race for him. The bull said that in order for Nandiwisala to go the farmer needed to learn to speak kind words. The next the farmer asked for a rematch and used the advice Nandiwisala gave and then the farmer won. The opponent stood agape wondering how a bull could learn in one night.

This story proves that using kind words can make things better and that no one likes to be shouted or scolded at.

Kalana Kasun Ranatunga
Age 12

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Dhamma School

We go to dhamma school every other Saturday . In dhamma school we worship Buddha, dhamma and Sangha. We meditate. We learn dhamma and Sinhala. We learn the five precepts: do not kill, do not steal, do not do wrong things, do not lie and do not take alcohol . We learn how to write Sinhala letters and now I know how to write all of them!

Janani Ranatunga
Age 7

Contributions

The objective of MN Buddhist Vihara provides Spiritual, Cultural, Scientific, and Educational activities of the Community.

The Minnesota Buddhist Vihara is a 501 C (3) charity registered with the State of Minnesota since 30, 2004.

Development of the Vihara and its activities depend solely on your support. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

All your donations are Federal and State tax deductible. The MN Buddhist Vihara will issue receipts for all your donations at the end of year.

You can join to our:

- *Dhamma School*
- *Diploma in Buddhism*
- *Abhidhamma, Pali & Dhammapada class*
- *Weekly mediation group*
- *Monthly Sil Observance*
- *Volunteer activities*