



TI-SARANA BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

Ti-Sarana

NEWS

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Vesak Message from Bhante:

Actions Speak Louder than Words

Since Vesak is around the corner, it is worthwhile to focus our attention on its significance, particularly to Buddhists all over the world. While celebrating Vesak of 2554 on the Full Moon day of 28th of May 2010, we pay our veneration as well as devotion to the Buddha, the Greatest Teacher, who illuminated the world nearly twenty-six centuries ago. Over a period of forty-five years, he committed himself to address people from all walks of life and showed them the Path of Happiness for this life and the next. He exemplified his life and deeds stressing the fact that he was acting in accordance with what he spoke and he was speaking in accordance with what he did (*Yathāvādi tatthākāri; tathākāri yathāvādi*). Since this requirement was considered as one of the prerequisites of character building, the canonical scriptures recorded several instances, where the Buddha has referred to it as an essential quality of one's personality. When we say that the Buddha is possessed of "Knowledge and Conduct" (*vijācarana sampanno*), we illustrate this inherent quality of the Buddha's magnanimous character. In other words, the Buddha is an embodiment of "Great Wisdom" (*mahāpaññā*) and "Great Compassion" (*mahākarunā*). It was because of his great compassion, which was characterized by his unique empathy that directed him to understand and remedy the humiliating experiences of humanity. He dedicated his life to serve them even in trying circumstances.

Great Compassion: Skilful Means

Certainly, the great compassion was the Skilful Means (*upāya kosalla*), the motivating force that propelled him to work for the well being and the good of the world. The Buddha was a teacher, who strongly believed that one's actions, either good or evil, would speak louder than words. It is evident that the Buddha expected the same upright conduct from his followers as well. The keynote of his address was to take oneself as one's example. In order to create a peaceful and harmonious world for all of us to live in, what is objectively perceived has to be transformed to be a subjective experience. As illustrated in the **Veludvāra Sutta**, comparing and contrasting oneself with the miserable situation of another, one becomes sensitive to the sorrowful plight of that person. This follows the admonition of the Buddha to do as you would be done by.

Social Work cum Volunteerism

If we consider that humanism is concerned with human welfare, dignity and the power of the human reason, it is to be emphasized that the Buddha's every teaching is tinged with humanism. His teaching extends not only over philosophy, psychology,

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ethics and the like, but also over a wide variety of subjects. One of the important facets of his teaching is social work or volunteerism or rendering one's service for the sake of others (*veyyavacca*). A volunteer dedicates himself to serve the needy, expecting no favour or compliment or remuneration from the beneficiary. When a volunteer engages in social work, he is to be without attachment or ulterior motive. Admonishing the monks, the Buddha has described it in the **Sanyuttānikaya** in a different context in relation to monks when approaching families. This is also relevant to our discussion.

The Buddha waved his hand in the space and said that just as his hand did not get caught in space or held fast by it or bound by it, even so, the monk should approach the families as if new comers, without impudence towards them. He then drew two more parables; one is the parable of the moon, the other is the parable of a man looking down an old well or a precipice or a steep riverbank. The moon that shines in the sky does not make an intimate relationship with anybody, yet it remains agreeable to everyone. Just as the moon dispels darkness by emitting light, so, those who approach the families should illuminate the lives of those families. A man looking down an old well or a precipice or a steep riverbank draws back his body and mind and peers into it carefully, so, should be the behaviour of the one, who visits families. Since the volunteer's conduct will reflect on society, it will echo or speak louder than words. The Buddha said:

*"Better not to have done what was done wrongly,
because the wrong doer will have to grieve afterwards.
What was done, better to have done correctly because,
by doing correctly one does not grieve afterwards."* - **Dhammapada 314**

(Akataṃ dukkataṃ seyyo – pacchā tapati dukkataṃ
Kataṃ cā akataṃ seyyo – yaṃ katvā nā'nutappati)

HAPPY VESAK TO ALL!

Ven. Dr. P. Gnanarama Mahāthera

Management Committee for the term 2010/2012

At the 33rd Annual General Meeting ("AGM") held on 21st March 2010, the following members were elected for a term of two years:

Hon. President	- Bro. Khemaka Chew
Hon. Vice President	- Bro. Lee Kwok Lim
Hon. Secretary	- Sis. Patricia Wong
Asst Hon. Secretary	- Bro. Vipula Chow
Asst Hon. Secretary	- Bro. Asoka Song
Hon. Treasurer	- Bro. Upali Tay
Asst Hon. Treasurer	- Sis. Bhadda Lim
Asst Hon. Treasurer	- Sis. Khema Tay
Hon. Librarian	- Bro. Lau Kim Koon
Hon. Social & Recreational Supervisor	- Bro. Andrew Gan
Hon. Welfare Sub-Committee Chairman	- Bro. Hemanta Yeo
Ordinary Committee Members	- Bro. Ivan Tan, Sis. Amy Ong, - Sis. Helen Mei, Bro. Senaka Tan - Bro. Bandhu Wong, Sis. Susila Loo

The new Management Committee wishes to thank all the members who attended the recent AGM. It looks forward to all members'/devotees' continued support and participation in Ti-Sarana's Dhamma activities, social outings and welfare programmes.

Activities of the Sunday Dhamma Classes

Preparing Dana for Bhantes

On 14th March, led by their teachers, Sis Metta Lim and Sis Fun, children from the Sunday Dhamma Classes learnt the proper way of offering Dāna (food) to our Bhantes. The excited children, assisted by their parents had a hands-on experience in preparing dessert for our Bhantes. What a fun and happy day!



Preparing Dāna

On another Sunday the children were busy rehearsing their songs to be sung at Bright Hill Evergreen Home. The visit to the Home was to inculcate the values of Mettā (Loving-Kindness) and Dāna (Generosity) to the children from young.

Colouring, art and craft with Buddhist Themes are also some of the activities that the children enjoyed.



All ready to serve Dāna

Come to Ti-Sarana on Sundays with your children and friends and have a meaningful morning with us. Sunday Classes for Children aged 4 to 12 years start at 10.15 am. Vegetarian lunch is provided at 12.30 pm.



Serving Dāna to Bhantes

Adults and children from age 13 onwards are encouraged to attend the structured Young Men's Buddhist Association ("YMBA") Dhamma Classes starting at 9am. Registration is now open for the new YMBA class commencing in July 2010. Please sign up at the Ti-Sarana office.



Rehearsing their songs



Art & Craft for the kids



Learning the Dhamma



Class in session

Observance of 8 Precepts

On 2nd April, teachers and students of the Sunday Dhamma Classes spent their Good Friday holiday at Ti-Sarana observing the Eight Precepts administered by Bhante Dr. Gnanarama.

They practised Mettā Bhavana, chanted Suttas and later listened to Bhante Dr. Chandawimala's explanations of some Suttas. Sis Sylvia Bay held a Dhamma discussion with the participants while Dr. Ng Yuen Yen gave them a talk on mindfulness and its benefits.



Guidance from Bhante

The day ended with Bhante Dr. Gnanarama reading selected verses from the Dhammapada. All 11 participants left Ti-Sarana that evening with a clearer, deeper and wider understanding of the Teachings of the Buddha.



*Discussion with
Sis Sylvia*

Welfare Activities

Visit to Bright Hill Evergreen Home on 28th March 2010

I feel that this visit to the old age home is very meaningful as we helped to bring cheer and joy into the lives of the elderly. We, the children first sang a song to liven up the old folks but their response was a bit weak. We sang the next song even louder. We never gave up trying to cheer them up and continued singing karaoke songs.



Singing to the Elderly

But there was an old lady who was enjoying herself. She even sang some songs solo. She seemed to be very, very happy and I feel that she is the only one who has been sharing her joy with us. I think what we did today was not enough. I hope we can do better at our next visit. I feel that it is very sad for the old people to stay in this home with no family or relatives around them to pass the last stage of their lives.



Listening to the songs

Jamie Lew

Aged 13, Sunday Dhamma Class Student



Here's a gift for you



Supplies for the Home



A donation to the Home



A warm handshake

Mettā Youth Centre (“MYC”)

On a typical day, the 61 children living at MYC, Matara, Sri Lanka go to schools in the vicinity of the Centre. In the afternoon, the girls do their school homework in the canteen while the boys study in the multi purpose hall.

For children who are sitting for their “O” level examination, they attend tuition classes (Mathematics and English) that are arranged for them. On Saturdays the children attend music and computer classes according to their age group. Of course like any other children they look forward to “play time” in the early evening.

Generous donations from Ti-Sarana members and devotees help to defray the running costs of MYC. Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu to all donors!



Studying in the canteen



Doing homework



Computer class



Play time!

Sunday Dhamma Talk/Discussion

On Sundays, Buddha Pūjā starts at 11am followed by Dāna (offering of food) to our Bhantes and vegetarian lunch for members and devotees. At 12.30pm Dhamma Talks/Discussions are held where our Bhantes/invited speakers will share their knowledge of the Teachings of the Buddha in an informal setting. Members and devotees are able to learn and deepen their understanding of the Dhamma and its relevance in their daily lives.

The following are the scheduled Dhamma Talks/Discussions for May/June 2010:

- 2nd May 2010 - Meditation in Practice by Ms Sylvia Bay
- 9th May 2010 - Foundations of Mindfulness by Ms Sylvia Bay
- 16th May 2010 - “Dealing with the Emotion” - recorded talk (by Ajahn Brahm)
- 23rd May 2010 - No Dhamma Talk (Vesak Preparations)
- 30th May 2010 - No Dhamma Talk (Cleaning up after Vesak Celebrations)

- 6th Jun 2010 - “Why chant the Mangala Sutta and Atthavisati Paritta?” by Bhante Dr.Chandawimala.
- 13th Jun 2010 - “Rational Faith in the Buddha” by Bro Anānda Ang
- 20th Jun 2010 - “Loneliness” - recorded talk (by Ajahn Brahm)
- 27th Jun 2010 - Dhamma discussion on “The Buddhist Attitude to Wealth” led by Bhante Anānda

Vesak Preparation and Celebration

We welcome members and devotees who wish to volunteer their time to assist in the pre-Vesak preparations and on Vesak Day. To volunteer, please complete the attached form and submit to the Ti-Sarana office.

Blessing of bottled water for distribution on Vesak Day will be held on **26th May 2010 (Wed.)**. Our Bhantes, together with invited Venerables from other Buddhist organizations will recite Suttas and Parittas, to bless the bottled water which will be distributed on Vesak Day. All are welcome to participate in the Blessing Service.

Vesak Day celebrations on **28th May 2010 (Fri.)** will commence with the hoisting of the National and Buddhist Flags at 7am. The Sacred Buddha Relics will be unveiled for veneration from 8am to 6pm. Members and devotees are invited to pay homage to the Buddha Relics which are unveiled only once a year on Vesak Day.

In the evening, the Buddha Relic Candlelight procession will start at 6.15pm followed by Buddha Pūjā and performances by the students of the Sunday Dhamma Classes. Do come and rejoice with us.

Donations received for Vesak are used to provide for the welfare of our Bhantes, the activities of Sunday Dhamma Classes, maintenance of the premises and Sangha Abode (monks' residence) and welfare activities. To donate, please fill up the enclosed form and mail it with your donation to the Honorary Treasurer.

Last year many of our members and devotees wrote their aspirations on pieces of paper. We will have this practice again for those who wish to write their Vesak aspirations/resolutions for this year. Starting on 6th June, members and devotees can participate in our Sunday Special Service at 1.30 pm, after our Dhamma Talk to recite Suttas to help them achieve their aspirations.

Blessing of Bottled Water (26th May 2010, Wed.)

7.30 pm	Evening Buddha Pūjā
8.00 pm	Gilanapaccaya for Venerables
8.05 pm	Light Refreshment for Members and Devotees
8.20 pm	Invitation of Sacred Buddha Relics to Shrine Hall
8.30 pm	Recitation of Suttas and Parittas by Venerables
10.00 pm	Blessings by Venerables

Vesak Programme (28th May 2010, Fri.)

Morning

7.00 am	Hoisting of the National and the Buddhist Flags
7.05 am	Buddha Pūjā
7.15 am	Breakfast for the Maha Sangha
8.00 am	Unveiling of the Sacred Buddha Relics
8.30 am	Blessing for Vesak Helpers
10.45 am	Buddha Pūjā
11.30 am	Dāna for the Mahā Sangha
11.35 am	Vegetarian Lunch for Members and Devotees

Evening

6.15 pm	Assemble for the Buddha Relics Candlelight Procession
6.30 pm	Invitation of the Buddha Relics for Candlelight Procession
6.45 pm	Buddha Relics Candlelight Procession
7.45 pm	Buddha Pūjā
8.30 pm	Dhamma Talk
8.45 pm	Performance by students of the Sunday Dhamma Classes
9.00 pm	Gilanapaccaya for Venerables
9.05 pm	Light Refreshment for Members and Devotees

All members and devotees are welcome to pay homage to the Buddha Relics and receive blessings by the Venerables throughout Vesak day.

Special Blessing Service (starting 6th Jun 2010, Sun.)

Every Sunday (from 6th June till 25th July) after the Dhamma Talk/Discussion at 1.30pm all members and devotees are invited to participate in the recitation of the following suttas to invoke the blessings of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha for the fulfillment of their aspirations/resolutions made during Vesak:

1. The Mangala Sutta (The Discourse on Blessings)
2. The Atthavisati Paritta (The Protective Chant of The Twenty Eight Buddhas)

The Management Committee and our Bhantes wish all members and devotees a Very Happy and Blessed Vesak!