

**Letter from Rector of Suratthani Rajabhat University
Assistant Professor Dr. Narong Buddhichiwin
on the 8th Conference of the United Nations Day of Vesak**

Although our modern world has made a great deal of progress over the thousands of years up to these present days, the society still remains very chaotic with suffering, distress, infliction of harm and war. We can say that human civilization has presented us all sorts of problems: economic disparity, poverty, drug addiction, social crimes, climatic changes and global warming. This worn-out world is in urgent need of peace.

Buddhism holds the key; the Lord Buddha found ways to peace on Visākhapujā Day. The supreme goal of Buddhism is for a peaceful and blissful life which is free from all suffering. In this regard, Buddhism is a system of teaching quite specialized in ridding life's ultimate problem of mental suffering. These innumerable Dhamma treasures are perpetuated by the late Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, Slave of the Buddha, who created Mokkhabalārāma, the Grove of the Power of Liberation, in Chaiya Suratthani in 2475 B.E.

The Most Venerable Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu worked painstakingly to establish and explain the correct and essential principles of original Buddhism. He researched the Pali texts extensively, especially the Buddha's Discourses, followed by intensive individual experiment and practice with these teachings. His work, books and talks, spread over the years worldwide so that now they are described as one of the most influential events of Buddhist history in Thailand.

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu devoted himself to all intents and purposes to help people from suffering. His purpose was to fulfil his three life resolutions: to help people realize the heart of their own religion, to create a mutual understanding among all religions and to free humanity from the constraints of materialism.

Let's enlarge a little bit; first, realization of the heart of Buddhism means that people gain insight into the ultimate truth: knowing that nothing should be grasped at or clung to. All things are merely a composition of the six natural elements. All conditions are impermanent, in flux, and therefore, inherently unable to satisfy people's desires. Second, creation of a mutual understanding among all religions means that people try to provide the right understanding between all religions in order to enable harmonious co-existence in this world and to help create peace in the context of a cooperation of religions for a joint effort in implementing our duty to help the world. Third, try to haul people out of their adoring comforts, worship of sensuality, searching for pleasure without adequate self control; people should be enlightened by following The Noble Eightfold Path.

Luckily for us, Suratthani Rajabhat University is in southern Thailand, just close to the famous forest monastery. We lean on Buddhadāsa Bhikkhus' teachings, while Mokkhabalārāma serves as a holy and spiritual classroom for students and personnel endlessly.