

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

**MESSAGE TO BUDDHISTS
FOR THE FEAST OF VESAKH/HANAMATSURI 2012 A.D./2555 B.E.**

***Christians and Buddhists: Sharing Responsibility
for Educating the Young Generation on Justice & Peace
through Interreligious Dialogue***

Vatican City

Dear Buddhists Friends,

1. On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, I am happy to offer again, this year, heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of *Vesakh/Hanamatsuri*. It is my wish that this annual feast may bring joy and serenity to the hearts of all of you throughout the world.
2. Today, more and more in classrooms all over the world, students belonging to various religions and beliefs sit side-by-side, learning with one another and from one another. This diversity gives rise to challenges and sparks deeper reflection on the need to educate young people to respect and understand the religious beliefs and practices of others, to grow in knowledge of their own, to advance together as responsible human beings and to be ready to join hands with those of other religions to resolve conflicts and to promote friendship, justice, peace and authentic human development.
3. With His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, we acknowledge that true education can support an openness to the transcendent as well as to those around us. Where education is a reality there is an opportunity for dialogue, for inter-relatedness and for receptive listening to the other. In such an atmosphere, young people sense that they are appreciated for who they are and for what they are able to contribute; they learn how to grow in appreciation of their brothers and sisters whose beliefs and practices are different from their own. When that happens there will be joy in being persons of solidarity and compassion called to build a just and fraternal society giving thus hope for the future (*Cf. Message of World of Peace, 1st January 2012*).
4. As Buddhists you pass on to young people the wisdom regarding the need to refrain from harming others and to live lives of generosity and compassion, a practice to be esteemed and recognized as a precious gift to society. This is one concrete way in which religion contributes to educating the young generation, sharing the responsibility and cooperating with others.
5. As a matter of fact, young people are an asset for all societies. By their genuineness, they encourage us to find an answer to the most fundamental questions about life and death, justice and peace, the meaning of suffering, and the reasons for hope. Thus they help us to progress in our pilgrimage towards Truth. By their dynamism, as builders of the future, they put pressure on us to destroy all the walls which unfortunately still separate us. By their questioning they nurture the dialogue between religions and cultures.

6. Dear friends, we join our hearts to yours and pray that together we will be able to guide the young people by our example and teaching to become instruments of justice and peace. Let us share the common responsibility we have towards the present and future generations, nurturing them to be peaceful and to be peace makers.

Happy Vesakh/Hanamatsuri.

Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran
President

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