



Greetings on the Occasion of Vesak 2019

Our dearest Buddhist Brothers and Sisters in every place,

May Peace be with you!

On this light-filled celebration of Vesak, we who are your lesser brothers share in your commemoration of the birth, full awakening, and passing of Siddharta Gautama, Shakyamuni Buddha.

Gautama Buddha taught the way of wisdom, compassion and freedom from suffering. With respect and gratitude, we remember all that Bodhisattvas, Buddhist leaders and practitioners have done through the ages to uplift humanity and to seek the benefit all beings.

We rejoice with you in the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations and international Buddhist conference on the theme of '*Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies*' that was held in Hà Nam Province, Vietnam, from May 12 to May 14, 2019.

In our age, there has been immeasurable violence in our environment, in public places, in sacred spaces, in homes and in the hearts of people. We affirm the Buddhist path of non-violence, by facing the many challenges to harmony and peaceful co-existence through upholding the principles of mindful compassion and human dignity.

As followers of Jesus Christ, the Exemplar of Love, and as brothers of St Francis of Assisi, the Herald of Peace, we too uphold in these shared values of humanity. Pope Francis encourages us to promote tender mercy, to uphold the dignity of every person, and to care for our common home.

In our world, many beings remain in the shadow of suffering, ignorance, and fear. As the lotus rises above the muddy waters, we, your Franciscan brothers, are united with you in a shared aspiration that all may learn to live in the pure Light of Compassion, Wisdom, and Love.

With a deep bow of fraternal affection, we wish you Peace and all Good.

**The OFM Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dialogue
*on behalf of the Franciscan Friars (Order of Friars Minor)***