



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO A GROUP OF BUDDHIST LEADERS
FROM THAILAND***

Monday, 5 June 1972

It is with great cordiality and esteem that we greet so distinguished a group of Buddhist leaders from Thailand.

In your country Buddhist thought has long devoted itself with seriousness and concentration to the search for an adequate understanding of the deepest mysteries that surround human existence. These mysteries stir the heart of man and, even when he cannot precisely formulate them, they confront him with questions whose solution is ultimately of greater value than would be any advance in knowledge about lesser things. "Who knows what is good for man in his lifetime, in those few days he lives so vainly, days that like a shadow he spends?" (*Ecccl. 6, 12*). These words of the Hebrew sage express a question that men pose today as yesterday. Buddhist teaching acknowledges that this shifting world is radically insufficient, and it sets out to show how men can be liberated from suffering by following a path of lofty asceticism.

We have a profound regard for the spiritual, moral and socio-cultural treasures that have been bestowed on you through your precious traditions. We recognize the values of which you are the custodians, and we share the desire that they should be preserved and fostered. We hope that there will be increasingly friendly dialogue and close collaboration between the traditions that you represent and the Catholic Church. Such contacts can be the means to a mutual enrichment, and assist in advancing the cause of justice and peace in a world that needs united effort by as many people as possible, if it is to overcome the grave problems which face it.

We therefore welcome you most warmly. We hope that your talks with our Secretariat will prove very profitable. And we invoke upon you and all your country abundant blessings from on high.

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