

Greetings to our respected monks and nuns.
Greetings to all of our guests and fellow Buddhists.

In the Diamond Sutra, we find this passage:

Those who see me in the body and think of me in sounds, their way of thinking is false, they do not see me at all.

This means, it is not through our eyes and ears that we perceive the Buddha. We followers of Mahayana Buddhism, who practice the Diamond Sutra, understand that we can only perceive the Buddha when our mind is in conformance with, in tune with the mind of the Buddha. If our mind is in chaos and disturbed, we will never be able to perceive the Buddha, whether that be the flesh and blood man of 2,600 years ago or a statue of the Buddha today.

Standing before the statue of the Jade Buddha today here at Co Lam Temple, I can say that we are truly fortunate to be able to admire this wonderful symbol of peace for humanity. But in order to truly absorb the meaning of and benefit from such admiration, please understand that we must clear our minds, stop our racing thoughts and ambitions, and put aside evil to do good, meditate, and keep a prayerful state of mind throughout the time that the Jade Buddha will be here with us. In this way we purify our karma and bring our minds into harmony with the mind of the Buddha: bright, intelligent, compassionate and liberated. And when our minds are peaceful, open and compassionate, only then can our world find peace. The Buddhist approach to peace starts with each individual. This is why in a Buddhist sutra we find the saying: A peaceful mind leads to a peaceful world.

I would like to thank our fellow Buddhist Mr. Ian Green, through whose hard work the Jade Buddha was created and exhibited worldwide in the hopes of advancing humanity's desire for world peace. The Jade Buddha by itself cannot bring about peace, but its presence can be the focal point for millions of hearts worldwide to meditate upon and welcome in a sense of serenity and peace, from there to spread it to the entire world.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Organizing Committee of the Jade Buddha Festival here at Co Lam Temple. Through their hard work, Buddhists from all over the region have the opportunity today to gather and pray before this wonderful statue.

Thank you.