

Visakha's Birthday Celebration

This year, Visakha's birthday was celebrated with two auspicious and joyous events.

On Monday, September 14, Lily and Nimal visited Ven. Nanda's hermitage in Wattapathana near Kandy. Ven. Nanda recently built a small stupa, and the enshrining ceremony was that day. We sent small votive images from Vesali and a gold-painted Buddha pin to be sealed in the stupa. Lily had prepared some nutritious food for dana. A large number of devotees from the local village held a perahera to attend the solemn, but happy, ceremony. Sadhu! Sadhu!! Sadhu!!!

For Tuesday, September 15, we scheduled a visit to Tikiri Sevana, a government-run orphanage in Bowalawatte, on a hill overlooking Kandy. We spent the morning making child-friendly tea sandwiches—shredded carrots, shredded beets, and cheese spread with shredded cucumber. Surangi made her delicious semolina balls, and Ken cooked his semi-sweet oatmeal-peanut butter-chocolate squares. During the previous week, we had collected about thirty stuffed toys—dogs, elephants, fish, turtles, a monkey, and balls—all handloom cotton, hand-made in Sri Lanka, and colorful, (with no plastic buttons to come off and be swallowed!)—from two handicraft shops in Kandy, as well as picture books and wooden toys and puzzles. Judith, who happens to live very near the orphanage joined us and brought diapers and infant formula. Deanne was not able to come, but she sent 10 kilos of rice and some toys. Also joining in the celebration were Lily, Surangi, Shehan, Vinod and his friend Murali, Ashoka, and Mike and Rushma. Ashley, who is teaching dance therapy at the University of Peradeniya, came and led the children and staff in a delightful dance session.

The party began with six of the children sitting on tiny chairs around little tables in the courtyard and the others in sturdy playpens in the dormitory. The staff made up a little plates, but some of the children were so small that they had to be fed by hand. Watching them politely eating the sandwiches and sweets was wonderful. We think that they had never experienced anything like the chocolate and semolina balls, for a few of them were not sure how to attack them, but they all thoroughly enjoyed the food.

After everyone had finished eating and drinking their milk, the staff wiped all the little faces and swept up all the crumbs. Then we emptied the box of stuffed toys on the floor against the wall. Without any prompting, several of the children ran up and picked one out. One little girl immediately chose the monkey and would not let it go. Another girl chose one of the balls and, after examining it for a few minutes, offered it to Visakha. Understanding that the toys were, indeed, for them, the other children also chose toys. Soon, every child had at least one, and they were all playing happily. There was no competition or jealousy. We had never seen such a joyful group of children. We had taken magic markers to write each child's name on the toy he had chosen, but it appeared that they were not so possessive. It seemed that most of them wanted to share the animals. It was a joy to see the children feeling the toys, throwing them to each other, and laughing so happily. We are sure that none of them had ever had the chance to play so freely with so many soft toys.

The orphanage had given us a list of the food they used for the children's meals and the supplies they needed regularly. We were able to fill the entire list:

Biscuits	Potatoes	Infant formula	Anti-bacterial soap
Milk powder	Onions	Disposable diapers	Laundry detergent
Sugar	Dahl	Baby soap	Pine-oil household
Tea	Spice	Baby lotion	cleaner
Vegetables	Canned fish	Baby oil	Mops
		Children's paracetamol	Squeegees
		liquid	LED light bulbs
			Bedsheets

All of this was possible through incredibly generous gifts from many donors. Sadhu! Sadhu!! Sadhu!! To all of you! Now that we know the place and have seen the children, we look forward to visiting again. Of course we won't go empty-handed!

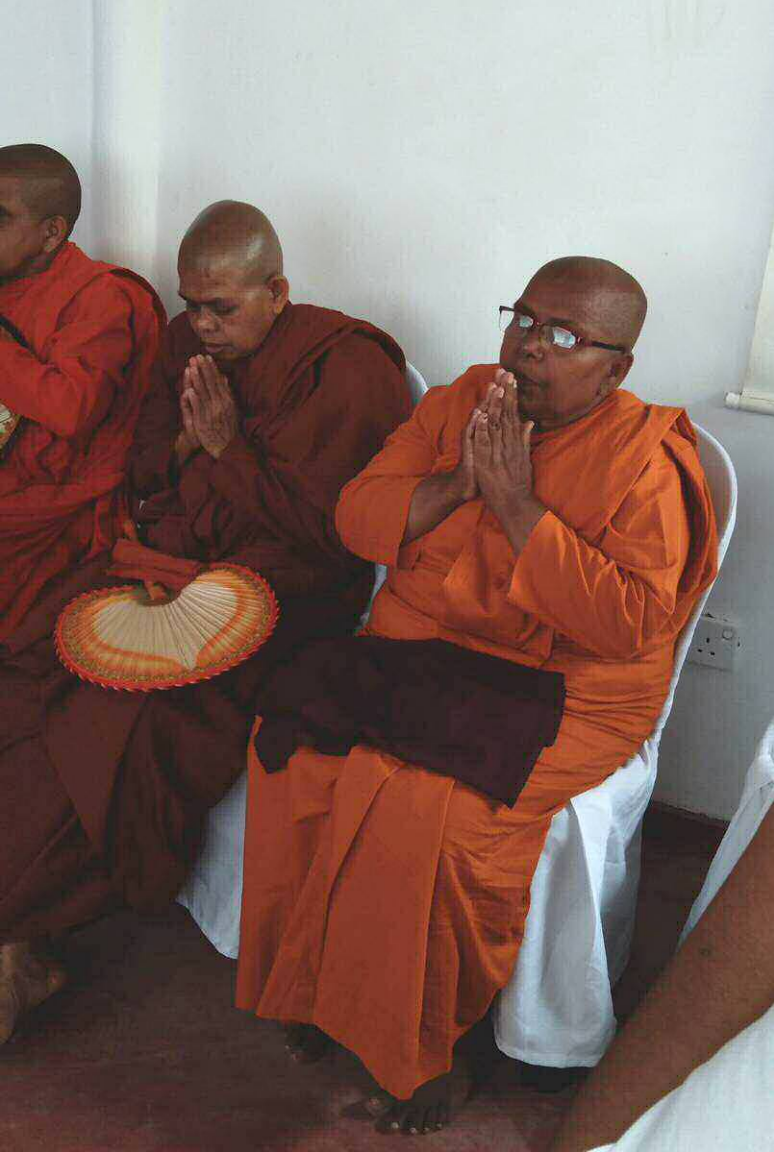
We had specified "No gifts, please," but Mike baked us one of his famous Key lime pies, and it was delicious! Thank you!



























Invitation to join in
the celebration of
Visakha's birthday
September 15, 2020



Tikiri Sewana Children's Home
Bowalawatta, Kandy

20 children up to five years old

Donations will include:

Tasty snack - Dry rations

Food for an evening meal

Cleaning supplies - Baby products.

Stuffed animals - Toys - Puzzles

Children's books - Coloring books

Crayons - Colored pencils - Bedding

No personal gifts please, but
donations are welcome. A photo
report will be sent to all who share in
this happy occasion.

Donations may be made via PayPal to
Buddhist Relief Mission, <buddhist@brelief.org>

In Sri Lanka, Commercial Bank

Ken Kawasaki, A/C 8254001210

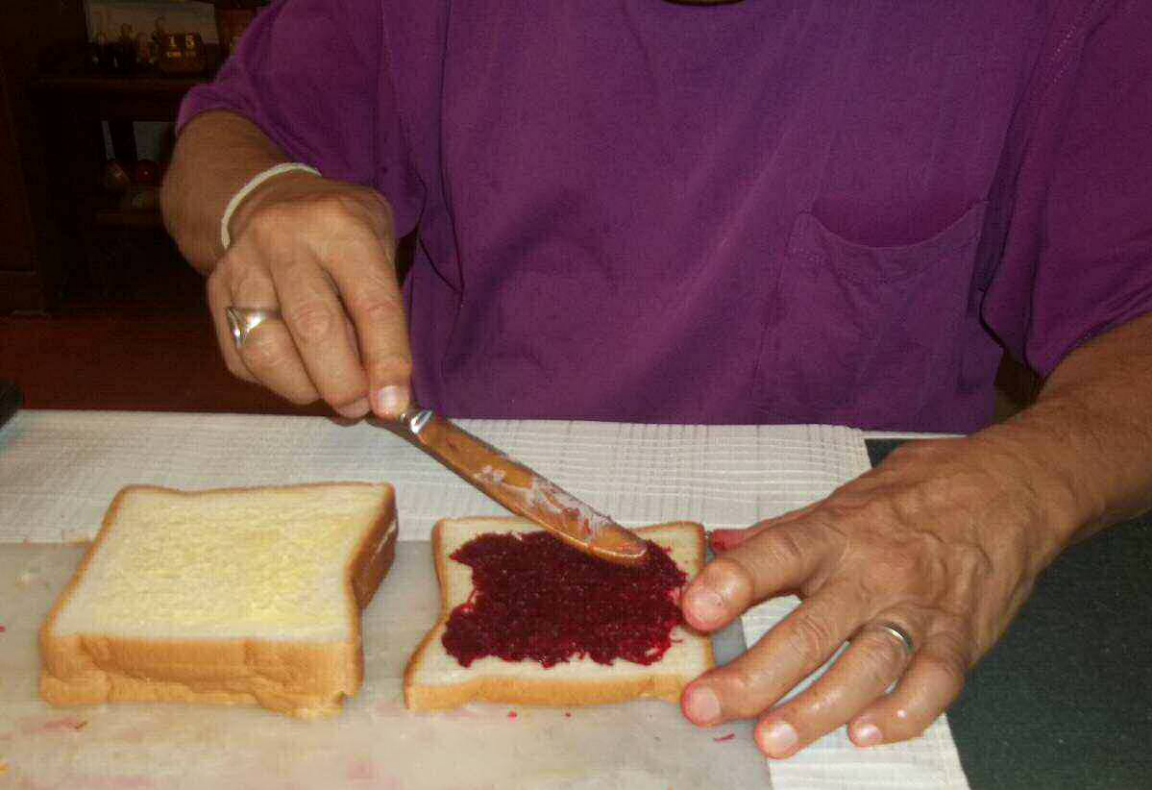
In the United States, PNC Bank

Buddhist Relief Mission, A/C 4804658412

In the case of bank deposit, please email your name and
amount of donation to <buddhist@brelief.org>







































The next morning, a
beautiful butterfly flew
into our courtyard!

