



## THE NATURAL FOREST MONASTERY in RANDERS

### Description of the basis of faith

The Congregation "The Natural Forest Monastery in Randers is a not-for-profit organisation. Any income derived from running the Congregation/Association will be used to maintain the Association and its assets and to help charitable projects in the community.

The purpose of the congregation is: To establish an independent Faith Society for the spread of "Theravada" Buddhism in Denmark and run a vegetarian Buddhist temple for this purpose.

- To carry out the teachings of Buddhism and to teach how to learn to live according to the teachings and wisdom of the Buddha and the "4 noble truths" as well as the "8 fold noble path" and to become a better and more tolerant human being and thereby achieve better karma in the afterlife.
- To hold daily morning prayer meetings/services, where as part of the service, monks are offered food no later than 11a.m.
- To hold evening prayer meetings, perhaps followed by meditation.
- To hold and keep "Buddha days", to feed the monk and receive blessings as well as forgiveness from the deceased.
- To facilitate Thai integration into Danish society and the preservation of Thai cultural values. To promote insight into Thai culture among Danes and other nationalities. To demonstrate meditation and Buddhist lifestyle and the philosophy of Buddhism.

To teach children with a Thai parent, as well as the spouse:

- the teachings and wisdom of the Buddha
- How to live by the rules laid out by the Buddha
- How to honor the Buddha and the monk as well as other people, by living by these rules.
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The general purpose of the congregation is to ensure a gathering place for Buddhists and interested guests at a Temple run by "Theravada" Buddhists in Denmark.

In addition the congregation helps to facilitate the Thais' integration into Danish society and the preservation of Thai cultural values.

## Description of the Buddhism Faith and the Four Noble truths & the Eight Fold Path

- Buddhism goes beyond religion, it is also a philosophy and a way of life, as the "loving wisdom", the Buddhist way is to :
  - Live a moral life.
  - Be mindful and aware of thoughts and action.
  - Develop wisdom and understanding. Buddhists should not worship idols nor to pray for services, but to show respect for the Buddha and his "image".

A statue of Buddha with his hands gently in his lap, and a compassionate smile, reminds us to strive to develop ourselves with peace and love for others.

To bow to the Buddha statue or monk is an expression of gratitude for the teachings of the Buddha. Buddha teaches us many things, but the basic concepts of Buddhism can be summed up by the four noble truths and the noble eightfold path.

### The First Truth

The first truth is, the sufferings of life, viz. life includes pain getting old, illness and eventually death. We also endure psychological suffering, such as loneliness frustration, fear, embarrassment, disappointment, and anger. This is an indisputable fact that cannot be denied. It is realistic rather than pessimistic because pessimism is to expect things to go bad. Instead, Buddhism explains how suffering can be avoided and how we can be / become truly happy.

### The Second Truth

The second truth is that suffering is caused by urge and reluctance. We will suffer if we expect other people to hurt us, or if we want others to like us, if we do not get something we want, and so on. In other words, getting what we want does not guarantee happiness. Rather than constantly struggling to get what we want, try to change our desires. Wishes deprive us of satisfaction and happiness. A lifetime of desire and especially the desire to continue to exist creates a powerful energy that causes the individual to be born. So urge leads to physical suffering because it causes us to be reborn.

### The Third Truth

The third truth is that suffering can be overcome and happiness can be achieved; the true happiness and contentment are possible. If we give up the unyielding urge and learn to live every day, one day at a time (not dwelling on the past or an imagined future) then we can be happy and free. We then have more time and energy to help others. This is Nirvana.

### The fourth noble truth!

The fourth truth is that the noble eightfold path is the path that leads to the end of suffering.

## The noble 8-fold path!

In summary, the noble eightfold path is moral (through what we say, what we do and our livelihood) and focuses the mind on being fully aware of our thoughts and actions and developing wisdom by understanding the four noble truths and by developing compassion for others. .

- To operate and have a temple available for Theravada monks who come to Denmark, to follow the rituals and actions of Buddhism, and teach us to live by the rules and ethics of the Buddha.
- To hold Buddhist feasts and Buddha days.
- To establish an independent religious community / congregation, for the spread of Theravada Buddhism in Denmark
- To function as a centre for teaching as well as meditation on Theravada Buddhism for all interested.
- To spread and expand the understanding of Theravada Buddhism nationally and Internationally.
- To ensure a meeting point for Buddhists and interested guests, and to facilitate the Thais' integration into Danish society and the preservation of Thai cultural values and not least the basic ethical rules of Buddhism.
- To be able to give blessing to bridal couples in the temple, before or after a wedding. Tradition that the monk makes "holy water", which the guests then pour over the bride and groom's hands and wish them a happy and rich marriage. One thing that many Thais demand, but which can not be practiced in e.g. the church or the town hall. (due to time)
- To bless the homes of the members.
- To bless a person's family.
- To give thanks for sacrificial offerings.
- Praying prayers, many different prayers adapted to different situations and holidays.
- To pray from our local prayer book, with Thai text, and English text, but also with audio language on the Thai text, so that everyone can participate in the prayers, even if they do not know Thai or know the prayers.