

## KATHINA ROBE OFFERING CEREMONY

In remembrance of and with respect to our grandparents, parents and teachers

Dr Kyaw Htun Aye and Dr Htet Nwe Win

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022



# Why Is Halloween Bad According To Theravada Buddhism?

<https://americanmonk.org/why-is-halloween-bad-according-to-theravada-buddhism/>

*American Buddhist Monk: Bhante Subhūti*



## **Introduction:**

While I'm sure most religions do not particularly like the tradition of Halloween, I thought it would be good to explain why Halloween is not good according to Theravāda Buddhism.

Celebrating Halloween in modern times, regardless of the reasons why it was started in the first place, consists of dressing up in costumes. In celebration, you either dress up or you praise other people's costumes. It is mostly bad karma for the one dressing up and if you praise that, it is not good either. It is not always bad, but usually eventually it turns out that way. I will explain.

## **It is like Acting:**

Acting as a career, generally is not so wholesome. If there is any movie or play that is considered "good" by literature and Hollywood standards, there is going to be one or more of the five precepts broken. The content might consist as the list below:

- Killing , Stealing, Sexual misconduct (sex without the protector's permission), Lying, Taking Intoxicants

The five [Buddhist precepts](#) are to restrain from doing these Hollywood acts. It is dangerous to be an actor because no matter how wholesome the role will be, eventually one of the roles will be where one "acts out and embodies" someone doing the 5 types of wrong action as listed above.

This is not good. If one is really a great actor, he or she will fully embody such actions while acting them out. Furthermore, this inspires regular real people to imitate such acts in real life. Even though Hollywood tricks you into thinking they are real, for the actor, he must believe and act it out as if it were real. So even though he is not killing in real life, he is creating potential intentional and

unintentional "wishes" to become a killer in a future life. At that point, really bad kamma will occur. If you ever meet anyone who has completed [Dependent Origination](#) with knowledge of past lives, they will tell you this in summation:

"Be careful what you wish for because you might just get it."

## **Acting In Halloween:**

On Halloween, one is like an actor. One dresses up in full costume. While there are jokes and laughs, one of the goals is making it "believable" and "realistic". Suppose you want to put scars on your face with a black eye and blood dripping down your face while holding a knife. Do you really want that to happen in your future life? When you praise such costumes and put lots of thought and effort into the makeup, do you really want to have this happen to yourself or to that person who is dressed up?

Try to think of all the costumes, especially the best ones. Usually the more wicked and gory "the better" according to Halloween standards. Unless of course you are an abstract artist who dresses up as a can of soda or something. In that case, I'm just not sure how to judge this :). You could dress up as something wholesome, like a good fairy or a philanthropist throwing fake money around as if it were really fake money. That might be okay, but what will you do next year? Just like the actor, eventually she will land a part where bad karma is committed.

## **Results of Acting:**

When one acts, one is making a conscious or unconscious wish to have that come true. There is a famous sutta where an ascetic acted in every way as a dog. He would eat from the floor and walk on all fours. Everything he did was dog-like. He believed that this was the pathway to salvation. It was his religion. When he asked the Buddha what his future would be, the Buddha refused to answer. When he asked again, the Buddha told him:

**Alaṃ, puṇṇa, tiṭṭhatetaṃ; mā maṃ etaṃ pucchīti;**  
'Enough, Puṇṇa, let it be. Don't ask me that.'

**api ca tyāhaṃ byākarissāmi.**  
Nevertheless, I will answer you.

**Idha, puṇṇa, ekacco kukkuravataṃ bhāveti  
paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkurasīlaṃ bhāveti  
paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkuracittaṃ bhāveti  
paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkurākappaṃ bhāveti**

### **paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ.**

Take someone who develops the dog observance fully and uninterruptedly. They develop a dog's ethics, a dog's mentality, and a dog's behavior fully and uninterruptedly.

**So kukkuravatāṃ bhāvetvā paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkurasīlaṃ bhāvetvā paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkuracittaṃ bhāvetvā paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ, kukkurākappaṃ bhāvetvā paripuṇṇaṃ abbokiṇṇaṃ kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā kukkurānaṃ saḥabyataṃ upapajjati.**

When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of dogs.

**Sace kho paṇassa evaṃdiṭṭhi hoti: 'imināhaṃ sīlena vā vatena vā tapena vā brahmacariyena vā devo vā bhaviṣṣāmi devaṇṇatara vā'ti, sāssa hoti micchādiṭṭhi.**

But if they have such a view: 'By this precept or observance or mortification or spiritual life, may I become one of the gods!' This is their wrong view.

**Micchādiṭṭhissa kho ahaṃ, puṇṇa, dvinnaṃ gaṭīnaṃ aṇṇataraṃ gatiṃ vadāmi—nirayaṃ vā tiracchānayaṇiṃ vā.**

An individual with wrong view is reborn in one of two places, I say: hell or the animal realm.

**Iti kho, puṇṇa, sampajjamānaṃ kukkuravatāṃ kukkurānaṃ saḥabyataṃ upaneti, vipajjamānaṃ nirayaṃ'ti.**

So if the dog observance succeeds it leads to rebirth in the company of dogs, but if it fails it leads to hell."

MAJJHIMANIKĀYO, MAJJHIMAPANṆĀSAPĀLI,  
KUKKURAVATIKASUTTA

### **Never Dress Up As a Monk:**

As wholesome as it might appear to be at first glance, *one should never dress up as a bhikkhu or bhikkhuni*. This is one such heavy kamma that makes it forbidden to ordain. It is called, "theft of sangha". This is where one pretends to be a monk and gets gains from this "praise or candy". So please do not do this. It is very bad to do. It is probably a good idea to respect other religions as well in the same way.

**"Theyyasamvāsako, bhikkhave, anupasampanno na upasampādetabbo, upasampanno nāsetabboti.** "Anyone living in the community by theft should not be given the full ordination. If it has been given, they should be expelled.

MAHĀVAGGAPĀLI  
THEYYASAMVĀSAKAVATTHU

### **Live Out The Good In Real Life:**

The best thing for one to do, is to embody and live out a real character that is wholesome and that you admire. I totally recommend this. It was my dream to become a monk for a long time until I finally made the plunge. It was not an easy choice, but I finally did it with some [arm-bending from the universe](#) (kamma). Today, I no longer need to wish for this to happen because everyday I am blessed with my real robes that I get to wear every real day. I even [changed my legal name](#) to match my identity. The difficult part is to really really be the best and ideal monk. I'm still working on that. But for now, I am what I am. Bhante Bhikkhu Subhūti. May you act out and become the real wholesome character in real life, everyday

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## **Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 30<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Dear Dhamma Friends,

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda was officially opened in 1998 and will be celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2023. All Dhamma friends are welcome to join this special celebration at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2023. This will be a whole day event with lots of interesting activities including dhamma talks by Buddhist scholars. Biography of Dr Rewata Dhamma (founder of the Peace Pagoda) will be published in remembrance of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Pagoda renovation project will also start in early January 2023 in readiness for this big celebration.

I hope all of you can participate in this special event and perform good deeds together. Thanks to all the supporters throughout the 25 years. Without your support, we would not have been able to reach this silver Anniversary. Please kindly share your good memories of Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda. Birmingham Vihara Trust would love to hear from you. Please send your memories about the pagoda to Theingi Thant ([theingithant26@gmail.com](mailto:theingithant26@gmail.com)).

# Vihara Repair and Renovation Projects

1. The Trust bought two computers. One was a HP 14S-DQ2512SA laptop (£499), DELL Insaio 15” Desktop DELL (£799), Microsoft Family 365 Software (£79.99), and McAfee antivirus as part of the programme to upgrade the computer system in the Vihara. (From Windows 8.0)
2. On 17th October 2021, Jon Royse Electrical of 60 Heath Street, Chesterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire upgraded the plastic fuse boxes in the Sangharama Vihara and the Rewata Dhamma Hall to metal boards with RCDs to comply with the upgraded electrical safety guidelines. The cost for the upgrade with an electrical safety certificate came to £950,00. The fuse box in the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda was upgraded three years ago. These fuse metal boards will need reviewing in ten years’ time.
3. On 2nd November 2022, Firecheck Services (UK) Ltd., of Great Barr, Birmingham reinspected all the fire extinguishers in all three buildings as their annual fire-safety check and issued a fire safety certificate. Invoice for £223.02 was settled by BACS internet banking. Banking mandate was changed and upgraded as part of the programme towards paperless bookkeeping.
4. On 12th September 2022, Matt Faber and Charlotte Arnold, two architects from Oliver Architecture performed the second survey of the Dhamma Talaka Pagoda via a cherry picker. Oliver Architecture was commissioned earlier this year after the first company commissioned failed to provide us with a written report. This is for the water ingress in the lower reaches of the Pagoda (we think) with a big moisture patch showing inside the dome. This problem had existed in one form or another from the time the pagoda was built. The fact that it was built like a layered cake in three sections together with the inclement British weather has never helped with the integrity of the cement system used.  
But this time round we hope to remedy the problem once and for all.  
Due to the nature of the works and awkward access (high level access), the project needs to comply with the HSE Construction, Design & Management Regulations. A “Principal Designer” needs to be appointed, the role Oliver Architecture will assume and will act as Architect and Principal Designer for which they will charge a percentage-based fee of 13.5% of the contract value.  
The company would be appointed based on the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Concise Professional Services Contract 2020 Conservation Architectural Services. The fees would be in two parts in line with the industry standard RIBA Plan of work.

RIBA Stages 0-4 (up to tender), 60% of 13.5% plus VAT

Survey work, Schedule of works, drawings, and tender (preferably three)

RIBA Stages 5-7 (contract administration) 40% of 13.5% plus VAT

To complete the works on site and administer the contract between Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust and the building contractor.

After the survey it was noted that the scaffolding cost would be approximately £21,000 as the flat roof covered with foam insulation with an incline overlaid with GRP (glass reinforced polyester membrane) is not strong enough to hold the weight of the scaffolding. It would need to be built from ground upwards. The estimated cost has gone up closer to £65,000.

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust has a duty to maintain the upkeep of the Dhamma Talaka Pagoda. It pledges to fulfill its commitments. It is intended for work to start early next year 2023, and should take 8 -12 weeks from start to finish.

*Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust are grateful for the generous donations made by the devotees.*

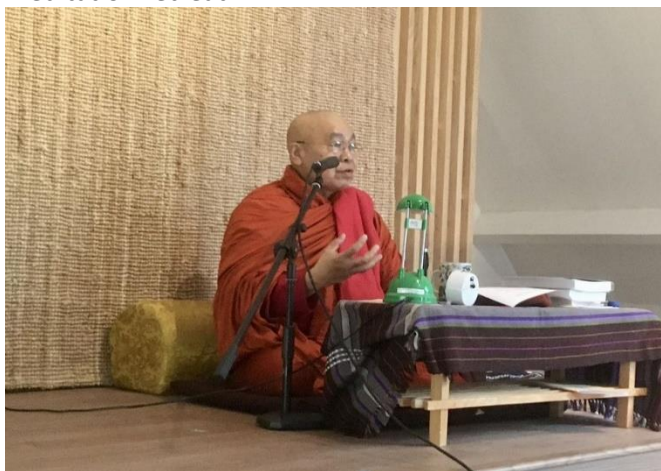
*All the above would not have been possible without all your donations.*

*Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu for your generous donations towards the renovations.*

## Dr Ottarana Nyana's Activities

### Vipassana Retreat (21st October to 30th October)

Dr Ottara Nyana led a ten days Vipassana retreat at Dhammaramsi in Belgium during Oct-22. Abhidhamma (Four Paramatthas) and Maha Dukkakkhandha Sutta were taught from a practical point of view during the meditation retreat.



### Sangha Day Celebration & Pre Tazaung Dyin

Dr Ottara Nyana celebrated Sangha Day & Pre Tazaung Dying in Dhammaramsi, Belgium on 29/10/22 .



### Future Activities

- Dr Ottara Nyana will be leading Metta Retreat at Italian Meditation Center Pian dei Ciliegi during 1st week of July 2023.

## Dr Nagaseana's Activities

Bhante celebrated his birthday in October 2022 and he would like to pass on his appreciation and thanks to those who donated on his birthday charity appeal and who donated for the Lotus Children Food Bank.



### Kathina Robe Offering – 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Bhante attended the Kathina robe offering ceremony at Lumbini Buddhist Vihara, East London on 24th October 2022 sponsored by Bangladeshi Buddhist Association, UK. Ceremony was culturally half Sri Lanka and half Bangladesh. This was a whole day program from morning to evening!



### Europe Dhamma Trip November 2022

Dr Nagaseana had a few memorable activities during his Dhamma trip to Europe. Bhante's main mission is to spread and promote a genuine non-violence message of a great being with morality, restraint, love, respect, compassion and wisdom for everyone! Dhammarama Dhamma Group donated £500 to Dr Rewata Dhamma's village school through Dr Nagaseana during his visit.



# Vihara News

## Spiritual Director Dr.Ottaranyana

### Abhidhamma & Pavarana Day (9<sup>th</sup> October 2022)

Over 40 people attended Pavarana day this year. This is the Day Buddhist monks end their three months retreat. Retreat starts on Dhamma Day, which is the full moon day of July and ends on Abhidhamma day, the full moon day of October every year. Devotees and Sangha lit candle lights around the Pagoda and chanted the Pathana section of Abhidhamma and shared it with all beings! May the world be free from suffering!



### Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony

Our Kathina ceremony for the year 2022 was held, successfully and happily, on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022 with the attendance of approximately 150 participants from different backgrounds and communities! Kathina Dana was sponsored by Dr Kyaw Htun Aye and Dr Htet Nwe Win from Swanssea! The ceremony went very well, full of joy and happiness for all the participants with the sun shining the whole day as a blessing for the auspicious day! May the sponsors and their parents and relatives be free from all forms of suffering. Thank you to all devotees for your donations for Kathina robe offering.



### Funeral Ceremony

Funeral ceremony of Mrs. Raksa Devi Lal, the wife of Mr Lal, who was one of the founder trustees of Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, was completed on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022 with the attendance of her children, grandchildren and relatives. About 100 people attended the ceremony. Two monks from the Sri Lankan temple and three monks from Birmingham Buddhist Vihara attended the funeral ceremony held at Perry Barr Crematorium after which all relatives and guests joined for blessing at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara. **May Mrs Raksa Devi Lal be free from all forms of suffering and may all beings share their merits: Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu!**



### Annual General Meeting of the Birmingham Council of Faith

At the AGM of the Birmingham Council of Faith held at the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara on 12<sup>th</sup> September, a tribute was paid to our beloved Queen Elizabeth II as follows:

“Throughout your longest seventy years’ reign, you have consistently shown remarkable talent, loving-kindness and above all else compassion in all appropriate situations, not only in the UK but across the globe. May the Queen rest in peace and may her legacy remain as a role model for us all! *Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust.*”



## Wedding Ceremony

On the 23rd October, Dr. Arkar Min and Dr. Khin Lei Ye Win offered lunch dana, robe and Nava Khamma to Birmingham Sangha in celebration of their wedding. The wedding ceremony was blessed by Ashin Rahtapala.



## Birmingham Buddhist Vihara - Birmingham Heritage Week

10th September 2022 - 18th September 2022



Birmingham Heritage Week 2022 opened from 9th to 18th September with varied events, from exhibitions and displays to talks, walks and open days to heritage sites all over the city of Birmingham. It was organised and funded by Birmingham City Council and supported by Birmingham Museums Trust.

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara took part in the event, as we did for the last two years. But we were only open to the public from 12 noon till 5 pm from 10th - 18th September 2022. We had a good nine days of Birmingham Heritage Week with Ven. Nagasena, Dr. Mar Mar Lwin and Dr. M.M. Kyi looking after the visitors. A total of 297 visitors came over the period with the most visits made over the weekends. Three professional photographers also visited us with the two contributing

their photos on our Birmingham Buddhist Vihara social-media pages.

Yann's guide to the Dhamma Talaka Pagoda was popular. We are planning to print it in a booklet form for future use at the Vihara.

## Ordination

Ko Khun Oo Lwin, Ma Thandar Lwin and family from Bromley, Kent offered lunch dana to the Sanghas at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara for Ko Khun Oo Lwin's ordination held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022.



## Network of Buddhist Organisations (NBO) Annual General Meeting

The NBO AGM was held at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The main discussion topic was "Awakening: Collective or Individual?" Vegetarian food was sponsored by the NBO chair. Sayadaw Dr. Ottara Nyana gave a short talk and blessings to the group in the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda. The meeting then continued with several break out sessions and fruitful group discussions. The meeting was a success. Thanks to all attendees and volunteers 🙏🙏🙏



# 2566 BE/2023 EVENTS CALENDAR

BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST VIHARA - DHAMMATALAKA PEACE PAGODA- BIRMINGHAM  
BUDDHIST ACADEMY

## FESTIVALS

### Buddha Day (Visaka)

Sunday 7th May 10:30am

### Dhammacakka Day & Pagoda Anniversary

Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> July 10:30am

### Abhidhamma & Pavarana Day

Friday 29th Oct. 7:00pm

### Kathina

Sunday, 5th November 10:30am

## FULL MOON

Chanting in the Pagoda at 7:30pm except on festival days.

5<sup>th</sup> Jan, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb, 5<sup>th</sup> Mar, 4<sup>th</sup> Apr, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jun, (2<sup>nd</sup> Jul / 1<sup>st</sup> Aug), 29<sup>th</sup> Sep, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct, 27<sup>th</sup> Nov, 27<sup>th</sup> Dec

## RETREATS

### Easter Retreat

Friday 7th April – Monday 10th April 2023

Led by Dr Ottara Nyana

### 10-DAY Insight Retreat

Friday 18th Aug – Sunday 27th Aug

(experienced)

Led by Dr Ottara Nyana

Designed to enable meditators to experience the characteristic of impermanence and nature of non-selfhood as part of the process of insight meditation.

## SCHOOL VISIT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thirty-two schools visited the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda for religious education during school term last year. The visits continue to provide students with invaluable experience to hear about the Buddha and his teachings and to meet Buddhist monks. This is also part of the community work that Birmingham Buddhist Vihara does. For a school visit please contact:

Contact : Dr Nagasana

Email : [uk.suriya@gmail.com](mailto:uk.suriya@gmail.com)

Dr Max Kyi Email: [Maxkyi@gmail.com](mailto:Maxkyi@gmail.com)

## CHILDREN'S SUNDAY CLASSES

from 2pm-3:30pm

14<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023

Suitable for 5 + years, but all welcome with or without children.

For details please contact Dr Nagasana:

[uk.suriya@gmail.com](mailto:uk.suriya@gmail.com)

## SUMMER COURSE FOR CHILDREN (8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023)

Please bring your children to the Vihara to stay here and learn about Buddhism. During this five-day course children can learn meditation, chanting, prayer plus key cultural and philosophical points of Buddha's teachings. Accommodation will be available in our Vihara and we look forward to our children's course. If you want to train your children with novice ordination, you are welcome to book with us during these children days.

For details please contact Dr Nagasana:

[uk.suriya@gmail.com](mailto:uk.suriya@gmail.com)

## MEDITATION CLASSES

**Beginners:** Thurs. 7:30pm

**Advanced:** Mon. 7:30pm

**Zen Group :** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>

week of Friday 7pm

## PAGODA OPENING

12pm – 6pm

The Pagoda is open most days but to avoid disappointment **please call or e-mail first** to ensure there will be someone available to welcome you and show you around.

Phone: 0121 454 6591 or

email: [venuttaranyana@gmail.com](mailto:venuttaranyana@gmail.com)

## New Year Patthana Chanting

5pm – 7pm 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023

Everyone is welcome to join New Year's Day Patthana Chanting at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.