Welcome to

METTA KARUNA

REFLECTION CENTRE

JESUIT SERVICE CAMBODIA (JRS/JS)
PHUM KASIKAM
SIEM REAP
CAMBODIA
THE METTA KARUNA REFLECTION CENTER SIEM REAP

is an interfaith centre where Cambodians and foreigners are welcomed to spend time seeing the challenges of Cambodia through the eyes of the poor. Very quickly it is apparent that the challenges facing Cambodia, as its people struggle to achieve a quality of life that benefits all, are also the challenges facing the world. We see through Christians and Buddhist lenses as we view the world from the underside of history. WELCOME

Symbols dot the landscape calling us to reflect on:

1. WOMAN AT THE WELL-LIVING WATER: DEVELOPMENT THAT ENRICHES ALL
2. EARTHEN VESSELS-UNIQUE DIGNITY and POTENTIAL. EDUCATION FOR ALL
3. THE RED TREE AND THE BODDHI TREE. ENVIRONMENT.
4. PEACE and RECONCILIATION-THE DHAMMAYIETRA PEACE AFTER GENOCIDE
5. REFUGEES-DISPLACEMENT IN OUR HEARTS DISPLACEMENT
6. PRIZE OF PEACE-WEAPONS OF WAR DISARMAMENT
7. JAYAVARMAN VII AND INTRADEVI ETHICAL GOVERNANCE/HEALTH
8. CHAPEL-THE SPIRIT IN EVERYTHING. THE TRANSCENDENT IN OUR LIVES

THE REFLECTION POND, THE LABYRINTH, THE WHEELCHAIR SHOP, AND THE SCULPTURE “I HAVE NO FOOT TO WASH” BECKON FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

You are invited to spend as much as time you like reflecting, praying, reading, and discussing at each of the symbols. The Chapel is a special place where Christians, Buddhists, Muslims and people with a desire to seek deeper meaning in their lives may stay and “rest a while”. We also have some books and articles you may read here or borrow, and people who can guide you.

The Buildings are designed by architect Joaquin Salord S.J. and built by Chan Rithy and team. The houses are named after the Bayon’s four faces. The Chovea (The curving pointed form found on traditional Khmer Buildings) represents the dragon, a symbol of protection. The lions bid us spread the good news of the place.

Metta (Mercy)
Karuna(Loving Kindness)
Upika (Equanimity)
Mudita (Rejoicing in the others’ good)
MEET THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

The **well** gives the water of life. You are invited to draw water with the traditional bucket. As the water trickles bless one another with it and know that the water of the world is meant to be shared with everybody. We do not want wars about oil to become wars about water.

**This woman** stands for all women of the world who long for fullness of life for everybody.

**Water** is very important in the life of rural Cambodia as life revolves around the seasons. With the wet season comes the time to plant rice, the food of life for this country.

In Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, blessing with water is rich with meaning. We can ponder on what we use water for, whom we share it with, how we can ensure future generations have access to it and to dignified development?

Reflect on the layers of meaning in the Water of Life.

Read  John 4. and  Isaiah. 62
DIGNITY AND HUMAN POTENTIAL OF EACH PERSON

We are all made from the same human fabric and when we die we all become dust. Basically we are all the same: persons of dignity and unique potential. Different environment, different education, different cultures and religions, different food and quantity of material possessions shape us. We are born to be free and happy.

At this station you are invited to choose the pot that most resembles you at this point of your life journey. Why did you choose this pot? Reflect on your life. Is your pot full, empty, broken?

THINK ABOUT CAMBODIA

Think about the children you know. Apply the pot symbol to their education. How full is their education pot? What can be done to increase the opportunities for Cambodia children, other children you know?

“We are treasures not made of gold but in earthen vessels wealth untold”
As you begin the circle of peace, designed by Rob Allsop, pause by the red blood flower tree and remember the terrible years of genocide and suffering that Cambodia endured from 1975-1979. Two million people were killed or died from starvation. The Khmer Rouge Trial is taking place outside Phnom Penh since 2009.

The **Boddhi Tree** is called the great tree of life because all that is needed for lasting peace can be found in its roots, trunk, branches and fruits. The Buddha sat under the Boddhi Tree for many weeks in quiet contemplation and gained enlightenment. (Step by Step Maha Ghosananda)

Near The Boddhi Tree in our garden is an original Khmer carving done by a young Siem Reap artist. He wanted to depict the **Apsara** of the environment, dancing to celebrate the beauty of creation, and calling for care of the earth and the universe and for action to avoid the bad effects of climate change. Think of the islands sinking in the Pacific.

We are invited to reflect on the environment of Cambodia. Its rivers bled with slaughter of the Pol Pot area; many of its forests have now been ravaged by greedy wood hunters from other nations, and greedy sellers who do not think of the impact on the earth and on the future.

Beautiful Cambodia, land of sugar palms, fruit, flowers, fish, stars, sunrise, sunset and pure blue sky calls us all to reverence our universe.
The mural, carved by Siem Reap artist Channa, depicts the Dhamma wheel being pushed by Buddhist monks, peace loving men and women, including people in wheelchairs, farmers, Catholic priests, nuns and soldiers as they walk to promote non-violence, peace and reconciliation. It is the adapted logo of the Dhammayietra.

Years ago in the refugee camps, JRS reflected on how best to end the war and exile in Cambodia and promote peace. One of the decisions was to work with the Buddhist monks to promote reconciliation. Along with Maha Ghosananda, a revered senior Buddhist monk shining with happiness and holiness, Bob Maat and Liz Bernstein, friends of peace, began to organise the Dhammayietra (Peace Walk). The first was in 1992. The 1993 walk lead up to the first elections after the Pol Pot genocide era. Thousands walked across the country into Phnom Penh and the next day 95% of the population turned out to vote in peace. The Dhammayietra has been held every year since then. Sadly, in one march, some monks were killed and other peace lovers held by the Khmer Rouge.

Prayer of Maha Ghosananda

The Suffering of Cambodia has been deep
From this suffering comes Great Compassion
Great Compassion makes a Peaceful Heart
A Peaceful Heart makes a Peaceful Person
A Peaceful Person makes a Peaceful Family
A Peaceful Family makes a Peaceful Community
A Peaceful Community makes a Peaceful Nation
A Peaceful Nation makes a Peaceful World
A Peaceful World makes a Peaceful Universe

Here, you are invited to reflect on reconciliation and peace in your own heart and family, in your country and in the world. What do you do to promote peace? How do you solve quarrels? How can countries solve conflicts peacefully?

For more, read Maha Ghosananda’s ‘The Buddha of the Battlefield’ and ‘Step by Step’

“I will do one thing every day to make peace grow like a flower.”
“Spend five minutes every day reflecting peacefully.”

Song Kosal, ICBL Youth Ambassador
Here we reflect on

- displacement in Cambodia
- world refugees and asylum seekers
- evictions
- displacement of the heart

From 1975 to 1979, displacement was the experience of all Cambodians as they were forcibly relocated from their homes. Even before that there were more than a million displaced crowded into Phnom Penh. From 1979 to 1992, hundreds of thousands existed in refugee camps or fled overseas.

In this century, thousands more are being evicted from their land to make way for “socio-economic development”, big landowners and beautification. Villagers complain the compensation, if any, is woefully inadequate. Migrant workers cross border daily to Thailand, seeking subsistence for their families.

As you pass here, remember the deported Uighurs, the Burmese, the Montagnards, the boy from Sudan who spent months in an underground pit, the ones safely settled in welcoming countries.

Our own hearts get displaced sometimes, too.

- How have you welcomed a refugee?
- Where would you seek asylum?
- What displaces your heart?

In our world at the end of 2009, there were 15.2 million refugees and 27.1 million internally displaced persons. Forced migration challenges the conscience of the world. In Cambodia, people from China, Vietnam, Sudan, Burma, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka seek asylum. Most refugees in the world come from Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Main source countries of refugees, end-2009 (Source: UNHCR)
Cambodian survivors were very active in the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Cluster Munition Coalition. In 1997, civil society and 122 states together won the Ottawa Treaty to ban landmines. The ICBL with its co-ordinator Jody Williams received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997.

In December 2008, 94 countries signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Oslo. On 1 August 2010, it became international law, and Laos hosts the first meeting of States Parties in November 2010.

The aim of the treaties is

- to ban the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of anti-personnel landmines and of cluster munitions
- to clear all contaminated land
- to help survivors.

Cambodia, along with Afghanistan, Iraq, Columbia, and Burma, are severely affected by landmines. Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Lebanon, and Afghanistan have serious cluster bomb problems. Throughout Cambodia you can see many people and families affected by these horrible weapons of suffering. Under the Peace Table, there are examples of mines and clusters.

Reflect on what you can do. Use your intelligence and creativity to promote peace and not build weapons of war!

SIGN THE PEOPLE'S TREATY!
Jayavarman VII (1125-1215) ruled the Khmer Empire from 1181 from Siem Reap. He married Jayarajadevi and then, after her death, Indradevi, her sister. He is portrayed in sculpture as a devout Buddhist (Mahayana). He was renowned for his compassion, looking to all four directions of his empire as he cared for the poor, for building 'hospitals' and welcome centres for strangers, for good governance and strategic military strength. The title Leper King is sometimes given to him as one king of the period contracted leprosy as he served the sick.

Indradevi influenced the King, particularly in his devotion to Buddhism and the way of compassion and wisdom. She was the head professor in a Buddhist monastery and encouraged the education of women. Indradevi was a famous poet, and one long poem, written in Sanskrit, is at Phimeankas Temple. She was deemed wiser than the philosophers and very compassionate to the poor.

Together, Jayavarman and Indradevi invite us to reflect on governance that is concerned for all, including the poorest, mutual support in marriage, wisdom, and compassion. Both drew strength from meditation. These sculptures invite all rulers and citizens to meditate.

Furthermore, education and health are two areas in Cambodia that require constant attention so that both are accessible to all, and of increasingly better quality. This king and queen can also remind us of this call.

Sculptor: Chay Saron
Fotos: Thomas Rigl
FINDING THE SPIRIT IN ALL THINGS

Love one another as I have loved you. (Jesus)

This chapel welcomes people of all faiths, Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, all who seek the meaning of life, agnostics, and searchers to spend time here in peace. Inside the chapel the symbols from outside are there again, sometimes in different form. Quietly find the woman at the well, the refugees, the pots, the peace prayer, “I have no foot to wash”, the labyrinth, the handicapped cross, “Whatever you did to the least, you did it to me”.

All Yahweh asks of you is

to act justly,

love tenderly,

Hatred never ceases by hatred,

but by love alone is healed.

My spirit rejoices in God, who has done great things for me.

God puts down the mighty from their thrones and exalts the lowly.
We leave with many words echoing in our hearts

You are my friends  Wisdom and Compassion
To love and to serve  Which one is Jesus?
Tears of God.

WALK OUR LABYRINTH BEHIND THE WHEELCHAIR SHOP

The path winds one way and becomes a mirror for where we are in our lives; it touches our sorrow and releases our joys. There are three stages of the walk:

First: You journey from the edge of the labyrinth until you reach the centre shedding, releasing, and letting go of the cares and sins of your life.
Second: When you reach the centre stay there as long as you like. It is a place of meditation and prayer. Receive what is there for you to receive.
Third: As you leave, following the same path out of the centre, you bless the world and commit to love and serve one another as you help build a world of justice and peace.
METTA KARUNA REFLECTION CENTRE

- Live in seminars
- Camps for children
- Workshops for adults/teachers
- Retreats
- Individual reflection
- Exposure experiences
- Simple, dormitory accommodation (up to 72)
- Meeting space, TV, Speakers, Wireless Internet
- Dining room for 100
- Kitchen facilities (do your own or negotiate)
- Chapel
- Peaceful gardens

For information and prices contact the Centre off National Road 6 Phum Kasikam Siem Reap.
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