

Simple and Sufficient  
Statement of Understanding and Commitment  
Gethsemani III, May 2008



Spread with garlands of vines,  
Places delighting the mind,  
Resounding with elephants,  
Appealing:  
Those rocky crags  
Refresh me.  
Theragatha 18: Mahakassapa

The wolf and the lamb shall graze alike  
And the lion shall eat hay like the ox.  
None shall hurt or destroy  
On all my holy mountain, says the Lord  
Isaiah 65:25

We live in a time of environmental crisis and calamity, but also in a time when more and more people are coming together to respond to the suffering of the world. Our monastic interreligious dialogue has brought us to a new awareness of the social and spiritual relevance of ancient monastic traditions that have been sustained for millennia by Buddhist and Catholic communities.

Together we celebrate our common monastic values of reverence for the sacredness of all things,

contemplation, humility, simplicity, compassion and generosity. These virtues contribute to a life of nonviolence, balance, and contentment with sufficiency.

We recognize greed and apathy as the poisons at the heart of ecological damage and unbridled materialism. Throughout the centuries, monastic life has inspired generous personal, social and spiritual effort for the good of others. We give and receive in the spirit of gratitude.

We acknowledge our complicity in damaging the environment and will make a sincere and sustained effort to reduce our negative impact on the planet. We are committed to take more mindful, universal responsibility for the way we use and manage the earth's resources. We resolve to develop our hearts and minds in ways that will contribute to a sustainable and hopeful future for our planet. We renew our commitment to the sacredness of the earth, relating to it as a community, not a commodity.

May our love for all beings and this world sustain our efforts and may our earth be revitalized. This is our prayer and commitment.