

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama UC San Diego June 2017 Commencement Speaker

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. But to the world he is a renowned peace advocate, a beacon of hope for humanity, sharing inspirational messages with international audiences that range from young students to world leaders.

His Holiness has dedicated his life to serving humanity via three main commitments: The promotion of human values, the promotion of inter-religious harmony, and the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist Culture.

The Dalai Lama's message, centered on caring for others with kindness and compassion, emphasizes that education, scientific inquiry and global responsibility are essential means to create a more peaceful world. These are the ideals we aim to convey and instill in our students at UC San Diego. His special address, "The Value of Education, Ethics, and Compassion for the Well-Being of Self and Others," can guide graduates as they enter the next stage in their lives.

His Holiness was born July 6, 1935, to a farming family in a hamlet located in Taktser, Amdo, in northeastern Tibet. At the very young age of two, the child was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso. The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet. Bodhisattvas are believed to be enlightened beings who have postponed their own nirvana and chosen to accept rebirth in order to serve humanity.

In addition to being the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, His Holiness has dedicated his life to offering contemplative dialogues on the subject matters of science and Buddhism, education and secular ethics, kindness, compassion and universal responsibility, as well as ethics in the fields of environmental sustainability, global warming and leadership. In 1989, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He also became the first Nobel laureate to be recognized for his concern for global environmental issues.

His Holiness has received 72 honorary Doctorate Degrees for His contributions to the fields of Neuroscience, Humanities, Buddhist Science, Humane Arts & Letters, Oriental Studies, Theology, Divinity, Diplomatic Science, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Law and Philosophy. He is also a prolific writer, having authored 80 books, with over 200 publications, translated into 63 languages. To date, His Holiness has spoken at 146 Universities worldwide.