

## number five

*Father Kevin Hunt OCSO, Saint Joseph's Abbey*

I can't tell you how grateful I am simply to be here. I always feel very much at home whenever I come down from Saint Joseph's Abbey to your monastery. I think there are several significant things about this Whole World is a Single Flower ceremony.

First, there is the number five. This is the fifth one. For us human beings, five is important. We've got five fingers on each hand. Five shows us a sense of progress and growth. We are on our way. This is no longer the beginning—we're on the way. For us in the west it is very significant that the fifth ceremony is taking place before what we call our second millennium. I find that quite significant in the sense of how your tradition is no longer simply limited to one small country; it has gone throughout the whole world. It is significant that we have people from so many nations here today. It is especially important for the coming millennium and our need to reach out to all people.

I come from a tradition that is not as old as Buddhism. My monastic tradition is only nine hundred years old. But I know that tradition has a way of carrying us, of bringing us to where we should be. At this ceremony, I think we are opening a new path. A path where the tradition of meditation, of single-mindedness, of don't-know, is going to not just simply "spread" but is going to make that whole world is a single flower a full reality for all humankind. Thank you.

