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January – March 2016

# TENDREL

Make Life Good

Introducing our FIRST issue of TENDREL January-March 2016, ABC's newsletter in a new package—12 pages of Dharma information, event highlights and announcements—coming to you every quarter in a choice of print copies and full-colour e-format. Our tradition of providing news and updates about ABC continues.

Quarterly News from  
Amitabha Buddhist Centre



Amitabha  
Buddhist Centre

阿彌陀佛佛教中心

# LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE 2016 IN SINGAPORE

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## 27 FEBRUARY TO 13 MARCH

*"There are so many people who met Buddhadharma because of Amitabha Buddhist Centre. So many people were able to meet Buddhadharma and practise it, whatever they could."*

– Lama Zopa Rinpoche at ABC's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration 2014

*With great delight, we look forward to welcoming Rinpoche back to Amitabha Buddhist Centre and to having the company of our members, students and friends from near and far for a meaningful and event-packed programme of precious teachings, prayers and initiations.*



### Refuge and Five Precepts Ceremony

27 February, Saturday, 3 pm

A precious opportunity for beginners to receive the Buddhist lay vow from a fully qualified master and for older students to renew their vow. As Rinpoche is expected to give a teaching before the actual refuge ceremony, all are welcome to attend regardless of whether they intend to take refuge or not.

Refuge means to have faith and conviction in the Three Jewels—

Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—and to fully rely on their guidance. On the basis of taking refuge, there is the option to take any or all five of the precepts for life. The Five Precepts are: to abstain for life from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and taking alcohol.

### Puja of 1,000 Offerings to Maitreya Buddha

28 February, Sunday, 3 pm

Rinpoche will preside over this grand puja and is expected to give teachings throughout. We encourage all of

Rinpoche's students in Singapore to participate in the prayers, which will be recited together with Rinpoche in English. This is a precious opportunity to make strong prayers in the presence of the guru and to dedicate the merits for all of Rinpoche's wishes to be swiftly fulfilled, including the success of the FPMT and especially Rinpoche's heart project, the Maitreya Project.

### Contributions to 1,000 Offerings

Donations towards the 1,000 offerings can be made online at [www.fpmtabc.org/donate\\_main.php](http://www.fpmtabc.org/donate_main.php) or dropped off at ABC's office.

### About the Maitreya Project

Originally inspired by a visit that Lama Yeshe had made back to Tibet in 1982, there are two Maitreya Projects—in Bodhgaya and more recently, in Kushinagar, India. Besides the plan to construct magnificent Maitreya statues at these holy sites, Rinpoche envisions building smaller-sized statues around the world for a total of 1,000 Maitreya statues. The Maitreya Projects will also provide important social services such as education and healthcare to the local communities.

It is predicted that Maitreya Buddha, who will be the fifth Buddha after Shakyamuni Buddha, will be born in Kushinagar. Building statues of Maitreya Buddha creates the particular cause to be born at the time when Maitreya Buddha descends into our world. Turn to page 7 for Lama Zopa Rinpoche's explanation of "How the Maitreya Project Will Benefit Others".

### Long Life Puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche

13 March, Sunday, 9.30 am

The long life puja, where elaborate traditional offerings, prayers and requests are made to the kind spiritual master to supplicate for their continued life and health, is an opportunity to purify the relationship between guru and disciple, to create the merit for the guru, from whom all realisations arise, to remain among us.



All are invited to join us on this auspicious occasion to offer our prayers to Rinpoche, to dedicate for his very long life and perfect health, for all his holy wishes to be spontaneously fulfilled, and to strengthen our bond with our most precious guru.

### Dress Code:

For this formal ceremony, please refrain from wearing any revealing or overly casual attire. Long trousers and skirts are recommended.

### Solitary Hero Yamantaka Great Initiation

2 – 4 March,

Wednesday to Friday, 7.30 pm

5 & 6 March,

Saturday & Sunday, 4 pm

Yamantaka is the extremely wrathful manifestation of Manjushri, the embodiment of all the buddhas' wisdom. The practice of Yamantaka is very powerful for eliminating obstacles on the path to enlightenment and for developing the different types of wisdom. Those who commit to taking the Solitary Hero Yamantaka Great Initiation must attend ALL sessions from 2 to 6 March.

### Vajrayogini Initiation (Naropa Tradition)

9 – 11 March,

Wednesday to Friday, 7.30 pm

The practice of Vajrayogini is the essence of the root tantra of Heruka Chakrasamvara, a mother tantra that emphasises the development of the extremely subtle mind of clear light realising the ultimate nature of all phenomena. Of the three major traditions of Vajrayogini, Lama Zopa Rinpoche will confer the initiation according to the tradition of the great Indian master Naropa. Participants must attend ALL sessions in order to receive the initiation.

### Pre-requisites

The requirements for taking the initiation(s) are to have faith and respect for the guru, have faith in Buddhist tantra, have received Dharma teachings, and be familiar

## HIGHEST YOGA TANTRA INITIATIONS

Those wishing to receive these highest yoga tantra initiations should read and understand the requirements as explained.

with the stages of the path (*lam-rim*) teachings. These initiations may NOT be taken as a blessing.

### Additional Pre-requisite for Vajrayogini Initiation:

Those taking this initiation for the FIRST time must have already received a great initiation of highest yoga tantra, such as Heruka Chakrasamvara, Guhyasamaja or Yamantaka.

### Practice Commitments

The lifetime commitments for taking the initiation(s) are to keep the bodhisattva and tantric vows and to do the daily practice of the Six-Session Guru Yoga.

### Additional Commitments:

- **For Solitary Hero Yamantaka:** Do the short practice (*sadbhava*) of Solitary Hero Yamantaka every day OR complete one approximation retreat of the deity within this life
- **For Vajrayogini:** Recite the Vajrayogini mantra daily OR complete the approximation retreat of the deity (with the accumulation of 400,000 mantras) within this life

### Registration

Registration is COMPULSORY for both initiations.

### Singapore Residents:

Please register IN PERSON at our office starting from 9 January 2016. Registering by phone or electronic messaging in any form will not be accepted.

### Non-resident Visitors:

Send e-mail to [centre@fpmtabc.org](mailto:centre@fpmtabc.org) with the subject title "Register for Initiation" and state:

- Your name
- Nationality
- Association with an FPMT centre or project (if any)
- Your interest in taking the initiation(s)
- We will then forward you a Registration Form to complete and submit.

**All applicants will receive an e-mail reply from ABC concerning the status of their registration.**

### More Information:

Those who are receiving teachings from Lama Zopa Rinpoche for the first time should read "Introduction to Lama Zopa Rinpoche's Teachings" and "Refuge and the Five Lay Precepts" at [www.fpmtabc.org/2015/event/lzrvisit.php](http://www.fpmtabc.org/2015/event/lzrvisit.php)

# IN OUR CIRCLE

## MUSICAL CHEER FROM MUDITA



The wards at Ren Ci Nursing Home resonated with the chorus of prayers on 26<sup>th</sup> September when our Mudita choir brought musical cheer to its 200 residents during the Mid-Autumn Festival last year.

That Saturday visit by Mudita and an accompanying group of ABC volunteers and friends was warmly received at the nursing home with calls from Ren Ci staff for the group to return for future performances. One of the ABC volunteers said: “We should make it a regular visit to Ren Ci.”

The Mudita group visited all seven wards and soothed the elderly residents with their rendition of the long dharani of Chenresig, the Refuge prayer, and in Chinese, the Heart Sutra and “Amitabha in Our Heart”.

Here is how one Mudita member described their first community visit:

“Before the event, there were many worries. Worries that the haze was getting worse—many of us were coughing due to the haze, and were worried that the visit might be cancelled if the haze got

worse as the day before the PSI was well over 200. And worries that we might not be able to sustain to sing all the songs [28 times] at all the seven wards.

But I guess when we do things with

the intention to help others, buddhas and bodhisattvas will always be there to help. So with the gurus, buddhas and bodhisattvas’ blessings, Saturday was a haze-free day! And we delivered all the songs [sung 28 times] in perfect pitch and melody—no voice cracking, et cetera. In fact, the group felt really energised to sing despite some discomfort of the throat, because we saw the response from the residents:

Some tapped their fingers while listening to us, even though their backs were towards us or had their eyes closed. Some waved their hands as if conducting the choir. Some had tears, some smiled, some simply relaxed and listened.

We hope to be able to continue to bring some peace and joy to whoever we can, and with the chanting of prayers and mantra in nice melodious tunes, we can help plant good imprints in whoever’s ears it falls on.”

## PRAYERS BEFORE TEACHING TOUR

ABC organised a teaching tour for 70 of our members and students to attend teachings given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Bylakuppe in south India. The teachings, held from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2015 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, included the inauguration of the monastery’s new prayer hall, the continuation of the Jangchup Lamrim teachings, an initiation, and a long life puja for His Holiness. The group stayed at the hostel of Tsawa Khangtsen in Sera Je Monastery nearby and were ferried to and from the teaching venue in tour buses.

In preparation for the two-week journey,

a number of sessions were held at the centre from October to December for the group to recite prayers to pacify obstacles ahead of their departure for India. The tour’s organisers had to rearrange their travel dates several times after unexpected changes were announced in His Holiness’s teaching schedule.

With concerns arising over further disruptions, advice was requested of Khen Rinpoche on what prayers to do. As advised by Khen Rinpoche, the group recited the sutra of the “Noble Stack of Auspiciousness” and “Praises to the 21 Tara’s” to pave the way for smooth and blessed travels.



There is a vision of a life-sized Arya Avalokiteshvara standing upon a lotus and moon disc, eleven heads perfectly placed, his thousand arms fanned out in a pristine arch, shining amidst a golden aura.

By the time this newsletter is midway through its cycle, by the time we usher in the Lunar New Year, that vision should be a spectacular reality in ABC’s main prayer hall.

In the last two issues of the TASHI DELEK newsletter, we carried news on the arrival of our Thousand-Arm Chenresig statue. Visitors to the centre these past few months might have sensed the work in progress: our Level 2 altar turned into an unrecognisable workshop, the statues stowed away, the fumes of paint in the air. It is the first time at the centre that we have had a statue of this scale assembled on-site, the first time that some of us have had the opportunity to witness and even



## MAKING OUR CHENRESIG STATUE: A LABOUR OF LOVE

by Ven. Tenzin Tsaltrim

participate in the making of such a statue.

Our president Tan Hup Cheng asked me to record the construction of the statue, which, as pointed out in TASHI DELEK Sep/Oct 2015, is the culmination of eight years of research and planning. Artist Peter Griffin, who has been stationed at ABC to oversee the project, cautioned me that people might be shocked to see the stages of construction, with all the parts and disarray. However, as I follow the making of the statue, I find this the opportunity for people to understand and appreciate the thousands of man-hours, the oceans of patience, and the labour of love that has been dedicated to its creation. When anyone sees the statue, they may see an exquisite artwork, a compelling image of the Buddha of compassion, or an object of inspiration. They will not see what went into its production. As the year draws to an end, this is what has unfolded or will soon occur, to bring the

Chenresig statue into a glorious whole:

**September 2015:** On 14<sup>th</sup> September, Peter Griffin and two large crates of statue parts arrived from the United Kingdom while Huang Chun-Roo flew in from Taiwan. Denise Griffin remained in the UK to complete the sculpting of the main trunk.

Peter had brought over the lotus base, the aura, all the arms, moulds for the auspicious symbols, and the top two heads, and lost no time settling into work. Rooms on the fifth and sixth floors of ABC were turned overnight into workshop spaces. Chun-Roo gathered materials and a team for the task of gilding the aura and the ornaments on all one thousand arms. Before gilding could begin, each bracelet first had to be painted gold. Hup Cheng roped in one of our members, Jeremy Chu, to assist with painting the ornaments and even some of the eyes on the hands.



**October 2015:** To speed up the painting of eyes and ornaments on all 960 tiny arms, a decision was made to send them over to artists in Nepal to accomplish this detail. They were packed into a suitcase and in early October, were transported by Ven. Drachom to Kathmandu and placed under the care of Nepali artists. The arms returned to Singapore a few weeks later, adorned with beautiful bright eyes.

By mid-October, all the holy objects on the Level 2 altar were removed so that on-site work could begin.

**November 2015:** The aura, measuring over three metres, was spray-painted, secured on the altar, and painted in gold. Then for one week, four women, including Chun-Roo painstakingly applied gold leaf, inch by inch, to the entire aura. These amazing ladies, including one who flew in from Taiwan to help, had previously worked with Chun-Roo in gilding another statue. After long hours spent perched on scaffolding, they successfully covered the aura in shining 24-carat gold.

Throughout November and into December, work on the numerous arms continued, up to the stage where Swarovski crystals were inserted onto the bracelets for added sparkle.

Peter described the arm-making process: "All the arms and hands were cast in our workshop in the UK, from the original masters made by Denise. They were hand-finished here, sent to a specialist spray factory to have the final white colour and a protective topcoat applied. These were then hand-finished by Jeremy and myself. Then the bracelets were gilded in 24-carat gold leaf. We are currently doing the final touches and



will be inserting crystal jewels into the bracelet housing."

On 28<sup>th</sup> November, the precious cargo bearing the body and heads of the statue arrived at ABC.

**December 2015:** On the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> December, the main body (with three of the heads) was borne up onto the altar at last, in a tricky and strenuous two-hour operation that involved eight strong men. In the coming weeks, all the hands—960 small, 32 medium and eight large—will be glued onto two symmetrical wooden frames, flanking both sides of the body. Peter said: "The small hands will be arranged on the board first, in a symmetrical pattern, the



larger ones after that."

Denise will arrive on 10<sup>th</sup> December to oversee the final assembly. Thubten Gelek, another of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's students, will paint the main sections of the statue, illuminating Chenresig's skirt, scarves and crown ornaments, and the lotus base in a rainbow of colours.

**January 2016:** Early in the New Year, two monks from Kopan will fill the statue with thousands of mantra rolls and other precious substances, and prepare the statue for consecration.

I can't wait for this grand vision of Chenresig to appear, can you?

# HOW THE MAITREYA PROJECT WILL BENEFIT OTHERS

*What is the ultimate purpose of the Maitreya Project? Here is an explanation by Lama Zopa Rinpoche about the inconceivable benefits that will result from building the large Maitreya statues in the holy sites of Bodhgaya and Kushinagar in India.*



**W**e generally are concerned about the many people starving on the earth—I understand that. Of course, if we have the capacity, we should help both [the Maitreya Project and the starving people]. However, my point is that merely giving food to starving people will not change their attitude; it will not transform their mind into Dharma. It will not help them to abandon ignorance, anger and attachment, and develop a good heart, bodhicitta and so forth, so that all their actions can then become the cause of happiness—temporal happiness and success as well as the higher happiness of liberation and full enlightenment.

Even if we gave a million dollars to each of these starving people, it would probably cause them more problems in a different way. A poor person has problems, but so also does a wealthy person. Wealth can cause a lot of problems—for example, causing more harm to others due to increased material power. We can see that wealth has many shortcomings.

In reality simply giving money or

food doesn't solve the problems of starving people, because that alone doesn't change their mind or their actions, and doesn't stop them creating negative karma again. As their mind continuously follows ignorance, anger and attachment, they continuously create the cause of poverty. And as they do not attempt to meet Dharma, they have no opportunity to practice virtue.

## Problems Come from Karma

Problems in life are caused by the ten non-virtuous actions. *Lam-rim* teachings explain that poverty, drought and so forth are the possessed, or environmental, result of stealing. In places where there has been a lot of stealing, cheating, lying and so forth, we usually hear that there is history of much drought and crop failures. Being in a place where medicine has no potency and food has little protein (or the food can't be digested and becomes the cause of disease) are the possessed result of killing. Being in a dangerous place where there are many threats to the life from harmful people and insects, such as mosquitoes and so forth, as well as many contagious diseases, is the possessed result of ill will.

Also, the possessed result of covetousness is a scarcity of enjoyments; for example, the yield from crops becomes less and less. Not finding satisfaction, even though one has wealth, is experiencing the result similar to the cause of covetousness. The possessed result of

heresy is that precious substances such as gold, diamonds, oil and so forth can no longer be found. The inability to find a place to live is also the possessed result of heresy, as is the inability to find guidance or refuge.

Being born in a place such as a poor African country is the result of the ten non-virtuous actions. This is very clear. If we look at the subject of karma in the sutras and condensed *lam-rim* teachings, we can see very clearly the cause of world problems. The real solution to problems has to come from the side of the individual. In order to stop the cause of problems, each person has to change their own mind, which means their attitude, and their own actions. With a positive mind and positive actions, they will then achieve success.

By reading and meditating on karma as explained by the Buddha, you can see that, by abandoning the ten non-virtuous actions and living in the vows of abstaining from each of them, you achieve all the four results. With each complete virtuous action you achieve four results of happiness. For example, one of the happy results of living in morality is that you achieve rebirth in the body of a happy migratory being, as a deva or human. There are different fortunate results according to the different virtuous actions. For example, with the morality of abstaining from killing, you experience the result similar to the cause when, born as a human being, you have a long, healthy life. Also, you again have the opportunity to live in morality, and that again becomes the cause for the four fortunate results in future lives—in many hundreds of thousands of future lives.

Why do you experience the result in so many lifetimes? Because karma is expandable, much more so than ordinary phenomena. One tiny seed can grow into a huge tree with many branches, leaves, flowers and fruit, but karma is much more expandable than this. The inner evolution of good results from one good karma is much more

extensive than any external example. And the same applies to non-virtues.

Teachings on the benefits of eight Mahayana precepts explain that in the past Dharma kings made the rule that, on full moon and special days, everyone in their country should take these precepts. When people observed this rule, because of the unbelievable merit accumulated through the eight Mahayana precepts, the good karma was increased and this completely changed the country's economy. Rain came at the right time, when the crops needed it; the crops grew well, with increased protein, and the economy flourished.

### Importance of Holy Objects

The teachings say that the happiness of sentient beings depends on the teachings and the existence of the teachings depends on holy objects. Why is this? Because the presence of holy objects, such as statues, stupas, scriptures and so forth, gives sentient beings the opportunity to make offerings to them and thus create merit, or good karma. Through this merit, they are then able to understand the teachings of the path and actualise their meaning.

Even temporal happiness has to come from good karma. One way to accumulate merit is to make offerings to holy objects; another way is to practice loving kindness, compassion, charity and so forth in relation to sentient beings. But even to accumulate extensive merit in relation to sentient beings—for example, by actualising loving kindness, great compassion, bodhicitta—again you need to accumulate a lot of merit. To be able to help other sentient beings you also need a lot of merit. In order to create extensive merit in relation to sentient beings, you need a good heart—and a good heart has to come, again, from merit.

By making offerings to the Triple Gem, you can create good karma very easily and without depending on whether

your motivation is virtuous or non-virtuous. This is a special case due to the power of the object. Every single action, such as a prostration or offering, performed in relation to the holy object of the Buddha becomes a cause of enlightenment, which is the greatest success, the highest happiness. This means that every single offering to the Triple Gem enables you to lead every sentient being to enlightenment. We are not talking about just being able to feed sentient beings by giving them food or money. We are talking about leading everyone to highest enlightenment, with cessation of all the mistakes of the mind and completion of all realisations.

Even if you give something to sentient beings, in order for that charity to become the cause of enlightenment and enable you to become a perfect guide and lead everyone else to the highest happiness of full enlightenment, you have to have the virtuous motivation of bodhicitta. Only with that motivation does your action of helping others become the cause of enlightenment. Therefore, you really have to put a lot of effort into generating a pure motivation. By giving food to a person or an animal, you may help them to survive, but it doesn't mean that your own action becomes good karma, the cause of happiness. For example, through stealing other people's possessions, you may be able to live in luxury. The stolen wealth solves some of your difficulties and makes your life easier at the time. Stealing could become the condition for that comfort, but it doesn't mean that stealing is the cause of this happiness.

Another point is that because we don't have the karma to see the Buddha, statues are manifestations of the Buddha that allow sentient beings to accumulate merit. Just as we think such-and-such a lama is the reincarnation of a particular enlightened being, these statues are the nirmanakaya and sambhogakaya manifestations of the Buddha. Some people are also able to see these aspects. It is a question of different forms appearing according to individual karma. Since we cannot actually see the

Buddha, he manifests as these statues, which we have the karma to see.

The presence of holy objects that we have the karma to see makes it easy for us to create merit. In this way we are able to understand the teachings and actualise the meaning of the path. This is how we sentient beings can achieve temporary success, which means not having problems of poverty, disease and so forth. However, by completely ceasing karma and delusions, we can achieve not just temporary but ultimate success and happiness. We can achieve a state where we never have to experience suffering and, even higher than that, we can achieve enlightenment.

There is no way to have realisations without accumulating merit in relation to holy objects. If there is no good karma, meditating on the words of Dharma alone cannot change the mind. It is like planting a seed in dry soil and wishing it to grow without the necessary water and minerals—nothing much happens. The Dharma you learn simply stays in your head; it doesn't enter your heart.

The sutras say that even looking with anger at a drawing of a Buddha on a wall enables us to eventually see ten million buddhas. Seeing a drawing of a Buddha enables such incredible purification of obscurations and negative karma that it causes us to meet, sooner or later, many buddhas; to be with and receive teachings from them, and finally to become enlightened.

The benefits of holy objects are infinite. The benefit each sentient being receives is infinite. Since, as I have just mentioned, there is incredible benefit even to those who look at a statue of the Buddha out of anger or heresy, there is no question about the benefit to those who circumambulate and pray to Buddha statues. Therefore, when you make one more holy object of the Buddha, one more stupa, statue or painting—when sentient beings think of all the holy objects on this earth and make offerings or prostrate to them, at that time you have caused each of these

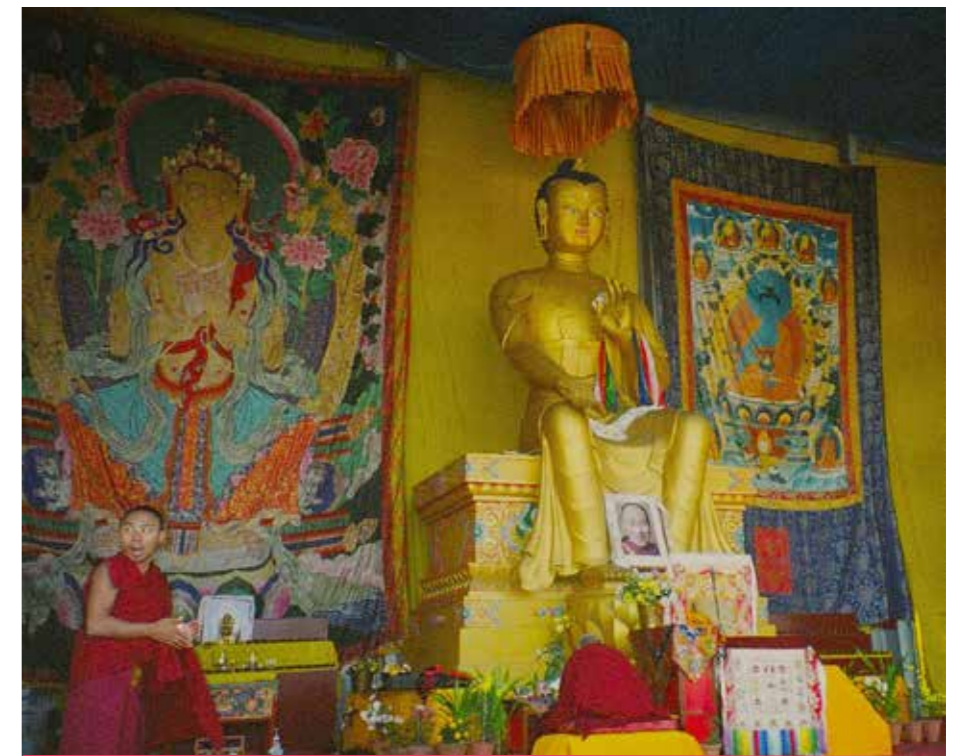
sentient beings to create additional cause to achieve enlightenment. You have caused each of them to accumulate additional, inconceivable merit. Besides the merit you create yourself, you have caused all those other sentient beings to create more good karma. The more holy objects you make, the more good karma you cause them to create. This is how you lead them to the end of all suffering and its causes, the obscurations from where all hunger, thirst, poverty and so forth come. By making more holy objects and leading others to create good karma, you then lead them also to highest enlightenment.

The larger the statue the more people and animals can see it—more birds, more monkeys, more dogs, more “*inchi's*” [Tibetan for Westerners]! If you wanted to build such a statue in a poor African country, I'm sure the people there wouldn't be happy, and might reject the idea. It needs to be built in a suitable place, where many sentient beings will come every day to see it. In this way, even in one day, you cause so many sentient beings to accumulate merit, and lead them to happiness in thousands of lifetimes. You lead them not only to temporary happiness but ultimate enlightenment.

Even though there is no direct benefit to the starving people in Africa in terms of solving their immediate problems, you are still helping the many sentient beings who come to see the statue every day. You are helping those people to open their minds by allowing them to come to see the statue and make offerings. Even while they are in samsara, for thousands of lifetimes they won't have to experience poverty, because they are making offerings to and circumambulating holy objects. These actions become the cause of success and happiness for inconceivable numbers of lifetimes, as well as enlightenment.

### Why Build the Maitreya Statue?

Why build such a huge statue of Maitreya Buddha? That's because I think Lama probably saw the Maitreya Buddha



Lama Zopa Rinpoche (back to camera) doing prayers at the Maitreya Project land in Bodhgaya – December 2005

statue at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet. That is my guess. Lama had this in mind and told me many times, on and on, all the time with a smile. He said that I am responsible for building a Maitreya Buddha statue the same size as the stupa. He told me this many times.

I'm following Lama's advice because of my connection with Lama and also because of our organisation's connection with Lama. That's the specific reason for this project. It's mainly to fulfil whatever Lama wishes. His wish is only to benefit sentient beings and the world, so whatever he thinks will bring extensive benefit, it fulfils that.

There is a story about a Tibetan lama who went to spread the Dharma in one country but for years he was unable to spread the Dharma, nothing happened. He returned home and went to see his Guru, who asked him to build a Maitreya Buddha statue. After making a large statue of Maitreya Buddha, the lama was able to spread the Dharma and benefit many people. So having the Maitreya Buddha statue benefits the world and helps that country to be able to spread Dharma.

Many of the monasteries in Tibet, for example, Drepung and Sera, have a very big Maitreya Buddha statue. Also many monasteries in India have a large Maitreya Buddha statue. All those Maitreya Buddhas are in sambhogakaya aspect. There are five qualities of sambhogakaya and one of these is to continuously turn the Dharma wheel, to continuously turn the Mahayana teachings. Therefore, according to Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, it helps. I asked Rinpoche why there are Maitreya Buddha statues in many monasteries and he said the sambhogakaya aspect is especially to help spread the Mahayana teachings and for the teachings to last a long time. So it has this benefit.

If we pray to Maitreya Buddha, make offerings and study his teachings, we are accumulating merit and creating the karma to be able to meet Maitreya Buddha and become his disciple when he appears. It is predicted that we will be able to hear Maitreya's teachings and become enlightened, thus there are also those benefits.

*Excerpts taken from a talk by Lama Zopa Rinpoche given in Katoomba, Australia, September 1991, courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive at lamayeshe.com*

Amitabha Buddhist Centre is a centre for the study and practice of Mahayana Buddhism in the tradition of the Tibetan master Lama Tsong Khapa, originating from the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), a non-profit international organisation founded by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche.

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### Opening Hours

Tuesdays – Saturdays: 10:30 am – 6 pm

Sundays: 10 am – 6 pm

The office is open till 7.30 pm when evening events are scheduled

Closed on Mondays

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<i>Resident Teacher</i>	Khen Rinpoche Geshe Thubten Chonyi
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# WHAT'S NEXT

## JANUARY

**iCare Workshop:** A new run of this self-care programme is coming up on 16, 17 and 23 January, taught by Ven. Tenzin Tsultrim (registration closes on 8 January).

**Spring Cleaning Day:** Our annual spring cleaning exercise will be carried out on Sunday, 24 January. The centre will be closed to visitors for the day.

## FEBRUARY

**Basic Program:** Teachings on Shantideva's "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds" continue, with Chapter 8 – "Meditation" from 16 February, every Tuesday and Thursday, 7.30 pm. This topic does not merely focus on meditative stabilisation, but delves into the profound bodhicitta practice of exchanging self and others. Registration is required ONLY for students who are not already registered in the Second Basic Program.

**Chinese Lam-rim:** A new series of classes starts on Sunday, 21 February at 1.30 pm. Besides Chinese-speaking students, anyone who wishes to learn basic *lam-rim* can attend as the classes are taught in English and translated into Mandarin.

**Dharma for Seniors:** This monthly class resumes on 14 February, 10.30 am. Although the class caters to seniors, everyone is welcome to attend to receive the benefit of oral transmissions and foundational teachings. The class is taught in English with Mandarin translation provided.

Basic Program, Chinese Lam-rim and Dharma for Seniors are taught by our resident teacher, Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi.

## MARCH

The bi-annual **JINPA for Our Community** will not be held this March/April as we host Lama Zopa Rinpoche's visit. News about the next JINPA event will be posted in the fourth quarter of 2016.

### PRAYER SESSIONS JAN-MAR 2016

#### Animal Liberation:

10 January / 14 February / 13 March – 10 am

#### Confession & Purification Practice:

17 January – 4 pm

#### Guru Puja:

4, 19 January / 3, 17 February / 18 March – 7.30 pm

#### Medicine Buddha Puja:

3 January / 14 February / 20 March – 4 pm

#### Tara Puja:

10, 31 January / 21 February / 27 March – 4 pm

For our full calendar visit [www.fpmtabc.org](http://www.fpmtabc.org)

# WELCOME THE LUNAR NEW YEAR WITH US!

## Chinese New Year Blessing

Monday, 8 February, 10 am – 12 pm

On the first day of Chinese New Year, welcome the Year of the Fire Monkey with auspicious prayers and blessings! Bring your family along to make offerings to the Three Jewels and receive blessings in person from Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi.



We will be open from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm. All are welcome to visit

## Palden Lhamo Puja

Tuesday, 9 February, 4.15 am

Following the Tibetan monastic tradition, we will welcome the first day of Losar with the Palden Lhamo puja for an auspicious and rousing start to a new year. All are welcome to attend the prayers, which will be performed by Khen Rinpoche and ABC's sangha.

The centre will be open to visitors from 4 – 8 am at Levels 1 and 2 only.

us, celebrate with light offerings at Level 1 and greet and receive a New Year blessing from Khen Rinpoche.

## Celebrate Losar

15 Days of Miracles, 9 – 22 February

**Losar** marks the New Year according to the Tibetan calendar. The first 15 days of the Tibetan New Year is celebrated as the "Days of Miracles", coinciding with the time when Shakyamuni Buddha performed 15 days of miracles in response to a challenge from six *tirthikas* [non-Buddhist adepts]. That triumphant display culminated on the 15<sup>th</sup> day, on the full moon. Just by witnessing the Buddha's feats at that time, many people and beings of the god realms gained faith in the teachings and attained liberation.

Due to the Buddha's deeds, this is a



merit-multiplying period where all virtuous actions are magnified 100 million times as cited in the Vinaya text, "Treasure of Quotations and Logic", and even up to 1 billion times according to some sutras.

## Chötrul Duchen

Monday, 22 February

On the 15<sup>th</sup> day—**Chötrul Duchen**—join us in venerating the Buddha with meaningful practice and prayers, and strongly dedicating the vast oceans of merit for all our holy and ordinary wishes to be fulfilled:

**Golden Light Sutra Recitation** – 1.30 pm

## Shakyamuni Buddha Puja with 1,000 Offerings – 7.30 pm

Contribute to extensive offerings for the Shakyamuni Buddha puja: Cash donations can be made at our office. Collection opens a fortnight before the event.

*Note: Amitabha Buddhist Centre will be closed for the festive season from 7 to 10 February except during the events listed on this page.*

# MY VIEW

Care to share good thoughts or helpful ideas from your Dharma experience? Send your views, in 150 words or less, by e-mail to **TENDREL** at [centre@fpmtabc.org](mailto:centre@fpmtabc.org) and your message might be selected for print in the next issue. Note: It is our policy to edit any material for language and content before publishing.

Let me open this column by wishing everyone a New Year rich with the promise of peace and the hope for much happiness.

With life always busy, another year will vanish in a flash. How much time will you put aside just for you and your practice? Last October, I spent a month in solitary retreat at Root Institute in Bodhgaya.

I highly recommend doing solitary retreats. Whether for a few days, a week or longer, it is the best way to get up close with your own mind. No distractions from family, friends, work, social media or the television. You simply switch off your gadgets, stay in silence, do the practice and watch your own mind. The main goal in retreat as Lama Zopa Rinpoche has taught is “making sure that your retreat time becomes Dharma”. Whether it becomes Dharma is the very thing that awaits discovery.

The Editor

# WORDS OF TRUTH

*“How can an intelligent person  
Not comprehend that this path  
Of dependent origination is  
The essential point of your teaching?”*

*This being so, who will find,  
O Saviour,  
A more wonderful way to praise you  
Than [to praise you] for having taught  
This origination through dependence?”*

– *Lama Tsong Khapa, “In Praise of  
Dependent Origination”, Verses 3-4*  
(English translation by Thupten Jinpa)

*Dependent origination is ‘ten-drel’ in  
Tibetan. The new name of our newsletter,  
TENDREL, pays tribute to the Buddha  
who taught dependent origination and to  
Lama Tsong Khapa who elucidated the  
profound teachings.*

## ONE SHOT

**P**eter Griffin at work on the aura of the Thousand-Arm Chenresig statue soon after it was mounted on the wall of the Level 2 altar in November 2015. In this image, Peter, who is over six feet tall, is seen against a backdrop of ladders and scaffolding, a perspective of the scale and height of the statue at the pre-installation stage. Photography: Tan Seow Kheng

