



'The Wisdom Age'

Newsletter of Drogmi Buddhist Institute
A Tibetan Buddhist Centre in the Sakya Tradition

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His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin Kyabgon Gongma Trizin Rinpoche

The Enthronement at Sakya Magon Thubten Namgyal Ling, PURUWALA

All is Auspicious
11 March 2017



On pilgrimage we were most fortunate to attend this historic event of the Enthronement of His Holiness as the 42nd Sakya Trizin. This was the first time the Enthronement has taken place outside Tibet. As His Holiness explained in His very moving speech during the ceremony, this event brings the heart of the Dharma back to India. The full three day event was an extraordinary display from the Gurus of great acts of generosity and kindness. We thank, with our hands at our hearts, our precious Gurus for their loving kindness and compassion in sharing this historic time with so many. This was an



extraordinary event, with phenomenal organisational work. Each day over 5000 guests from different countries participated in the ceremony, were given delicious meals, gifts and entertainment.

Every single person was welcome with absolutely no exceptions!!!



In the western calendar Vesak commences this year on Wednesday 10 May on the Full Moon Day. An important day for confession prayers and practices. The Birth of the Buddha falls on Thursday 1 June, and Saga Dawa Duchon which falls on the next Full Moon Day marks His enlightenment at the age of thirty-five in Bodhgaya also marking the Buddha's parinirvana. On this day the effects of positive or negative actions are said to be multiplied ten million times... With the Buddha's last breath dying in a forest grove surrounded by 500 of his disciples, He said... ***It is in the nature of all things that take form to dissolve again. Strive with your whole being to attain perfection.***

THE PRECIOUS CURRENT AND FUTURE LINEAGE HOLDERS OF THE SAKYA TRIZIN, AS WELL AS MANY GREAT MASTERS OF THIS AGE, March 2017.



**ANNOUNCEMENT at KAMALASHILA TIBETAN BUDDHIST CENTRE
TUESDAY 16 MAY 11:30am:**

**Khenpo Returns from Overseas.
Please join us in a Traditional Tea Offering in honour of His return.**

UPCOMING STUDY PROGRAM



THE COMPLETE PATH

The first residential study program will commence on 20 May.

This unique program is being run in partnership with the International Buddhist Academy (IBA) and is the first International Buddhist course of its kind to be conducted in Australia. Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe will be teaching the first three years of the course at KTBC, which will consist of two blocks of study per year for three years (2017, 2018 & 2019) in the form of two residential study retreats held in May and September each year, and three online teachings by Khenpo la during the year. Please check the website for further information on this course, and registration details. This first retreat is compulsory to continue on the full Path.

UPCOMING RETREATS

**Mindfulness & Compassion Retreat
9 - 12 June
(Queen's Birthday Long Weekend)**

At this three day retreat Khenpo la will give detailed instructions on Mindfulness & Compassion, and their application in meditation and everyday life.

**Annual Shamatha Retreat
29 September - 7 October**

At this annual retreat, you will learn the practice of single pointed meditation in a naturally peaceful environment from a master who has been practising these techniques for over 40 years.

Bookings are essential for all retreats, for further information and to secure your place please go to www.drogmi.org or call 0403 779 099.



UPCOMING COURSES



At Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre

**WEEKLY SHAMATHA PRACTICE HAS NOW BEEN CHANGED TO TUESDAYS.
10 - 11am.**

**MIND TRAINING SIX WEEK COURSE
with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe**

On Tuesdays, following weekly Shamatha Practice, Khenpo la will introduce attendees to the techniques of how to train our minds from negative to the positive, incorporating how to use our emotions to effect change.

Dates: 20, 27 June, 4, 18, 25 July & 1 August.

11:30am - 12:30pm



Thank you Alison from the recent silent Mindfulness Retreat for your beautiful photos of the centre grounds.

**Buddhist Philosophy Course
3/20 Murray Street Croydon
SYDNEY**

From 1 June to 23 November

Text: Precious Garland Teaching

In the Precious Garland, Nagarjuna offers advice on how to conduct our lives. The advice for personal happiness is concerned first with improving our condition over the course of lifetimes and then with release from all kinds of suffering, culminating in Buddhahood, the qualities of the Buddhas. In His advice on social and government policy, Nagarjuna emphasises education and compassionate care for all living beings, and states his opposition to the death penalty, and appeals for charity for the homeless.

These teachings are suitable for everyone.

APRIL WORKING BEE



The Easter Four Day working bee at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre was a wonderful time of great teamwork. A huge thank you to everyone who helped out with plenty of hard and skilful work, from the preparation work to the hard labour, including great cooking and all round harmony.

Thank you to Lynne and Sherry from Forster for the very kind donation of the sideboard and for Katarina, Warren and Mark for transporting it down to KTBC.



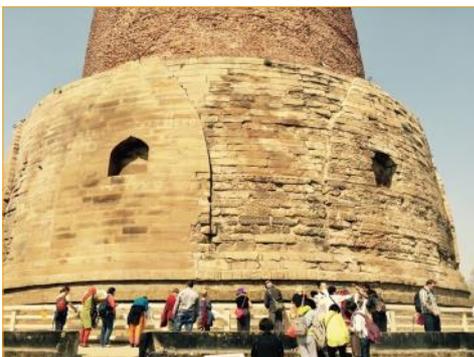
PILGRIMAGE 2017



What a delight to take part in the pilgrimage to "Incredible India" this year, with Khenpo la and the Dharma Brothers and Sisters from Drogmi Buddhist Institute. So many wonderful moments and experiences. There were also a couple of scary moments as well. Driving through narrow winding mountain back-roads, and Suzi's and Karma's, encounter with a raging bull in the streets of McCloud Gange... I'm sure we were also blessed by Tara on our travels as we sang her praises starting out on our adventures each day. Our seasoned group of pilgrims quickly took to looking after each other in a very caring way. The care and attention to detail that Khenpo la, Karma, Dolma, and Sonam extended to us was exemplary, and in no time at all, it felt like you were travelling in a large family.

One of my favourite Dharma experiences, was receiving profound teachings at Deer Park, Sarnath with Khenpo la. As we slowly made our way through what was left of an ancient Gompa, which had been quite modest in size, you could feel the soil under foot. When reflecting on the early devotees who had been there in the past, it brought a deep feeling of personal peace and reflection.

We then moved toward the Stupa and sat down in the open area, where Khenpo la gave a short and profound teaching that opened the mind and encouraged us to see the ramifications of all the Buddha's unlimited activities.



It was like peaking through a timeless window where this amazing being; in Buddha, who had walked, talked and shared his Universal Dharma. Vast, Intimate and "Nectar-Like" and somehow we had become a tiny part of that.

Thanking you Khenpo la, and my fellow pilgrims. May you all become Buddhas for the benefit of many soon. **Tsultim**



Trying to describe a 24 day pilgrimage, with around 18 participants (give or take) plus Khenpo and three of his family members, travelling to five Buddhist sites in northern India, including both historical pilgrimage sites and places where great teachers reside, is very hard to do. Where to start and what to write about? India, as a country, is an extraordinary experience in itself - the colour, the people, the merchants, the beggars, the dogs, the buffaloes, the dust, the sheer in-your-face vividness of life in all its beauty and grittiness... PLUS visiting and practicing at Buddhist sites, in a group situation with the quirks, dynamics and tensions that exist within groups, probably needs the length of a Quarterly Essay or two to give it justice. I'm also very aware that a pilgrimage is a uniquely personal experience and what each person takes away from the experience is particular to each of us, our

dispositions and most importantly, what we need, whether we like it or not. Many of us were sick throughout the pilgrimage at various times (thank you Nurse Kelly and Doctor Lucas for your extraordinary care and hard-core drugs), charged by bulls (Suzi), wrestling bulls (Karma) and harassed by beggars (all of us) but all-in-all, it was an extraordinary pilgrimage and an experience that will continue to influence me for weeks, months and years to come in numerous ways.

I will attempt to write a brief vignette about the five main sites we visited but I am acutely (and consciously) aware that this is my individual perspective. My particular mindset is just that, it is one perspective and coloured by my biography and particularities. Please note, there are many places I don't mention that were incredible including Vultures Peak, Nalanda University, Venerable Jestun Tenzin Palmo's nunnery (which was awe-inspiring for me as a female practitioner) and Sakya College ...



Firstly, Bodhgaya and the Mahabodhi Temple. This is where the historical Buddha gained enlightenment (and where all future Buddhas will too), and we spent one week meditating, kora rounds, saying mantras, prostrations and listening to the Dharma each morning, afternoon and evening from Khenpo. I loved Bodhgaya as the place is infused with an energy that can be felt, it is visceral and envelops you, makes your mind clearer and heart more open. As Khenpo stated, the most important aspect of the Mahabodhi temple is the earth because the Buddha and all the great teachers meditated and practiced AT. THIS. VERY. SPOT...
Continued page 5.





Ganges with our 10 year old captain, in favour of bedrest.



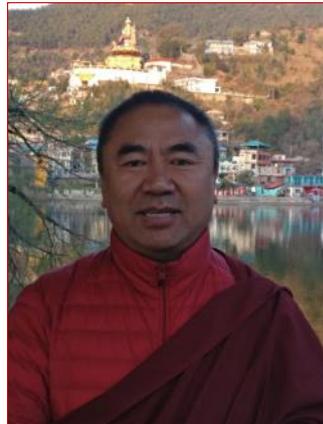
first times he had developed a deeper appreciation and connection to Padmasambhava (and Mandarvara). I whole-heartedly agree and I'm starting to form a smidgen of an idea about Padmasambhava representing the power of the Buddhas. Khenpo gave the transmission of Padmasambhava's mantra at Tso Pema and said saying the mantra during the degenerative age (which we're in) was beneficial for practitioners to strengthen the clarity of their meditation.

Spending a week in Bodhgaya was an incredible opportunity to cleanse and purify the mind and heart, and I still take my mind back and visualize performing kora around the temple. Particular thanks to Vanessa and Chris respectively for encouraging me to go the temple at daybreak (exquisite!) and showing me how to perform prostrations for the first time on a board (extraordinary!). For those that haven't been, jump on a plane and go. And for those that are planning to go, stay there for as long as you can. IT. WILL. CHANGE. YOUR. LIFE.

I am deeply attracted to Saranath as it is the place where the historical Buddha gave his first teaching on the 'Four Noble Truths'. This teaching is very significant for me as I try and reflect upon it often, especially when I am butting my head against and resisting whatever suffering my mind is experiencing. Khenpo taught on the *Four Noble Truths* at Saranath and one of the take-away messages for me was that if we meditate for one second, one minute, one hour on wishing others happiness and freedom from suffering, it stops the self-cherishing mind and creates a joyful mind. The root of all suffering is self-cherishing and we need to trick our minds into the habit of being compassionate towards others.



Second stop—Varanasi and Saranath. I got a bit crook here so I opted out of a few activities, including the river cruise on the

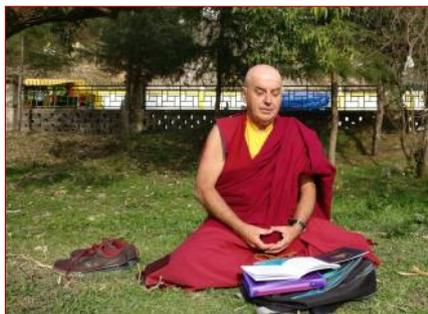


Fourth stop—Dharamsala, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the running of the bull. Ok, this was epic. All I will say is that it involved a bull, Suzi and Karma because it's not my story to tell. But I will say that whilst we couldn't see His Holiness as He was in retreat we had a great time at His temple, visited the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives and Men-Tsee-Khang Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute where traditional medicines and blessing pills



Thirdly—Tso Pema. All hail to Padmasambhava and Mandarava! Tso Pema is the location where Padmasambhava and Mandarava became spiritual partners, and Padmasambhava converted her father the King to Dharma after they tried (but failed) to burn him to death. Ven. Tsultim described his experience perfectly when he said visiting and practicing at Tso Pema was one of the

Continued page 6.



The local shopping was great. I love all the handmade textiles and handicrafts and I enjoyed performing kora around the Dalai Lama's compound and temple.



Sue (from Bhutan) said it most eloquently when she stated it was incredible to think that the sunset she was seeing over the Himalayan mountains was the very same one the Dalai Lama was looking at out His window less than a kilometre away. And it was.



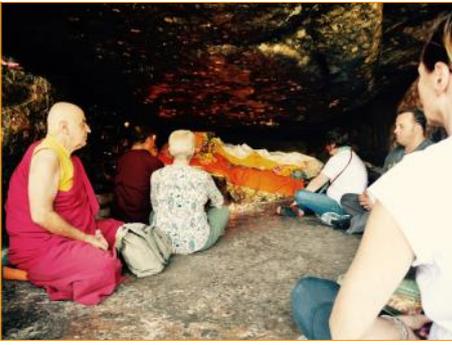
And finally, Puruwala and the enthronement of the 42nd Sakya Trizin. This historic event was extraordinary and the who's who of the Sakya lineage from around the globe were there to witness, participate and pay their respects to the great teachers of the lineage and the incredible change the 41st Sakya Trizin has instituted to keep the Sakya lineage robust and relevant to the 21st century. We had private audiences WITH EVERYONE, demonstrates the high esteem in which Khenpo is held by all the lineage holders, participated in mandala offerings to both the 41st and 42nd Sakya Trizin, cultural programs, speeches, an evening theatre production in the pouring rain, a chance encounter with a interesting fellow and many other great, novel and unique experiences.

At our farewell dinner in Delhi—in the vibrant Tibetan refugee settlement of Majnuka Tilla, located on a sliver of land bursting with economic and social activity—Khenpo spoke eloquently and from the heart about his experience of the pilgrimage. Poignantly and with profundity, he said the pilgrimage had just commenced because as Buddhist practitioners, each and every one of us has the potential to reach enlightenment and turn the Wheel of Dharma. This is our future. The seed has been planted in our hearts by visiting the various holy sites and it was up to us to nurture and grow this seed. My heartfelt thanks to Khenpo, Khenpo's family (Karma, Tsundu and Sonam) and my fellow pilgrims for making the pilgrimage an extraordinary experience. Messy fallible human heart love to each and every one of you.

Giovanna



STUNNING IMAGES SHARED BY PILGRIMS



Kindness has so many meanings. The nature of one's Guru is unmatched kindness. The Guru is the one who helps free us from obscurations and leads us to Buddhahood...

Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe from New Year Retreat 2016.

A FAMILY DAY AT KTBC

My girls and I had the most precious time at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre! We are truly blessed to have such a great connection with Khenpo la. He is an amazing teacher and extraordinary human being. I felt an amazing stream of light pouring over my forehead as I was receiving a blessing from Khenpo la, such a special moment. **Anna**



I especially liked hearing about Khenpo la's brave family escaping from Tibet... that was really interesting. I enjoyed the feeling of peacefulness in the Gomba. You could tell that all of the children were really interested in what Khenpo la was saying while we were sitting together in the Gomba. Everyone was really listening! It was really fun playing soccer with Khenpo la... you wouldn't think it but he's actually really good at sport! I also like that we got to make collages with the other children and it was great having all those old magazine images of the Buddha's and Buddhist monks to add to them as well as drawing our own pictures...

Jonahki 11 yrs old.

I liked playing soccer with Khenpo la and being on his team. Khenpo told us there was a prize for a man of the match but I think he was the man of the match. It was good that we all had lots of cold drinks together afterwards. It was interesting learning about Khenpo la's childhood in India. I think it was a great day! **Tom 9 yrs old.**



NYIMA TASHI TIBETAN BUDDHIST CENTRE AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND

Khenpo taught four sessions on 'How to Gain Peace from Meditation'. He elaborated on



what, and how meditation brings peace of mind. Meditation provides people with the opportunity to choose changing their habitual thought patterns and in doing so, allowing space to transform the mind. This in turn naturally impacts the mind bringing growing peace and calm. He informed us that ongoing meditation practise is measured by a decrease in defilements which was a very useful measure for the attendees.

Six defilements were discussed in depth with explanations provided concisely and clearly as to their arising and the various aspects they represent. He requested students to consider what they spend time focusing their minds on, and talked about difference choices offered through application of antidotes / medicinal-mind applications. Everything was covered in great detail and depth, providing a concise and very clear understanding for the attendees. The advice on practical applications was very well received. Khenpo is very skilful in communicating teachings in a way that people can clearly understand. Not only is he a very warm person, but his immense depth of knowledge clearly comes through and was much appreciated by all who attended his teachings. Nyima Tashi always enjoy hosting Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe and benefit greatly from his teachings from his great depth of knowledge. **Ali**

We were delighted to have Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe with us once again, this time for our Annual Buddhist Summer School. Khenpo la taught on how to gain peace from meditation, in which he covered the purpose of meditation practice and the three types of mind especially in relation to the secondary mind and the defilements. His teachings were very clear and helpful with practical advice on how to ensure we have awareness and clarity of what we are actually doing when we meditate. We are very grateful that Khenpo la took time to share his vast knowledge and wisdom with us, and to provide us with both, a better understanding of the mind in relation to meditation and the tools with which to improve our practice.



Thank you... **Fay**

LOSAR at KTBC & FEBRUARY WORKING BEE

Whilst many of the centre's members, friends and committee were travelling to Varanasi, India on pilgrimage with Khenpo la, an intimate group at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre joined together for a six hour working bee, cleaning the gomba till it glowed, cleaning the dormitories, kitchen and the grounds, followed by a beautiful traditional Tibetan dinner of Guntok, a delicious soup made with an auspicious amount of nine ingredients of any sort, from vegetables, to nuts and other goodies. Thank you Kalsang la and Ani la for preparing such a meal and was thoroughly enjoyed by us all, with a beautiful mist of rain outside, followed by a special Chenrezig practice together carried out in the candlelit gomba, praying for the happiness of all sentient beings and to be free from all suffering. The next morning, we gathered together to carry out the Green Tara puja to help remove any obstacles for the beginning of the Tibetan New Year for all mother sentient beings. Happy Losar to all, Tashi Delek. **Lael**



BERMAGUI MARKETS

We had a nice and sunny day at the Annual Bermagui Markets By the Sea. Not as many people as last year but a lovely environment. Our Dharma Shop was a great success. *Thank you to Kalsang la, Jennifer and Amandine.*



MARCH SILENT MEDITATION RETREAT

Reflections from Attendees

Definitely a time of rest and reflection. A safe and tranquil setting, the support and nurturing from the bush environment, from the group and individuals too. So grateful with the guidance and prompting from the leaders, enabling new skills to be learnt. The information and knowledge now to be taken into everyday life as a new practice. **Wendy**

A beautiful week of learning and quietude held with much grace and integrity... Sweet medicine for the soul. **Hume**

Last week I participated in the Mindfulness Retreat with Ann and Lael. This was a time of meditation and reflection, supported also by some video teachings from Khenpo, which was of great benefit, being in silence. Thank you both for providing this opportunity and your kindness for facilitating this retreat. **Kate T.**

I developed a solid foundation of meditation practices. After completing the retreat I have slowed down in my everyday life and realised I need to take more time out to look after myself. I learnt a lot about Buddhism and the Tibetan way of life and really enjoyed the experience. I would come to another retreat in the future. **Alison**



exploring your inner environment. While I was only there for the first two days, the retreat still helped me deepen my understanding of my own mind, and peel away another layer of the onion. **Helen**



Both gorgeous drawings have been done by retreatant Wendy. Below left of her stay in the little blue caravan and above is her vision of the meditation instructions on the Seven Point Vairocana Posture, in regards to the body being their own mountain.

Upon commencement of the retreat, I was immediately struck by the gentle and supportive environment that Ann and Lael were creating. This nurturing environment invited you to be kind to yourself. This, combined with the magical misty rain on Mt Gulaga and the peace and serenity of the shrine room, drew you inside, inviting you to start

I got a lot out of the seven day Mindfulness Retreat. I particularly enjoyed the teachings and the reflection time. I found the meditation practice a challenge, both physically and mentally, having never really meditated before. However, this made me more determined to master it. I will continue to practice on my return home. I feel I still have much to learn. The facilitators were supportive and helpful and both very knowledgeable. Being at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre has increased my interest in Buddhism and I am now keen to learn more. Thank you for having me in this beautiful and tranquil place. **Maryanne**



Hume enjoying a morning cuppa

