



'The Wisdom Age'

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

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HAPPY HOLIDAY WISHES & A VERY HAPPY 2017!!!



End of Year Message from Khenpo la

"Now we are approaching the end of 2016, soon to be 2017. Time is running fast like a steep waterfall, so while we have this precious human life, the best thing we can do is to make this mind as healthy as possible. At the same time we also can make our life more useful by helping as many other beings as we can. Living in this 21st Century, in terms of material gain, we may be very successful, however each and every year we are improving tremendously, but in the end it is up to the individual mind.

The mind is very challenging, with uncertainty and lots of stress. The one thing that really helps the mind is the Buddha who taught the precious Buddhadharma. I strongly encourage everyone to learn the precious Buddhadharma as much as you can, according to your time and your energy. Then whatever you learn, even if you have a little bit of time to implement that, at the end of the day it is the most helpful to your mind, to your body and towards your life as well as your family.

So I strongly recommend to not waste this precious life, make this life as meaningful as you can".

Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe

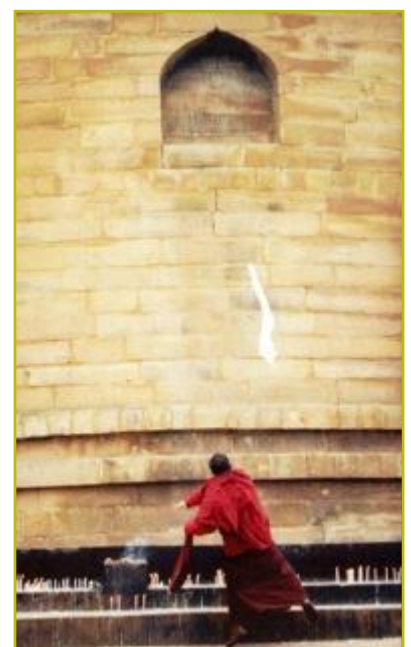
PILGRIMAGE FEBRUARY 2017



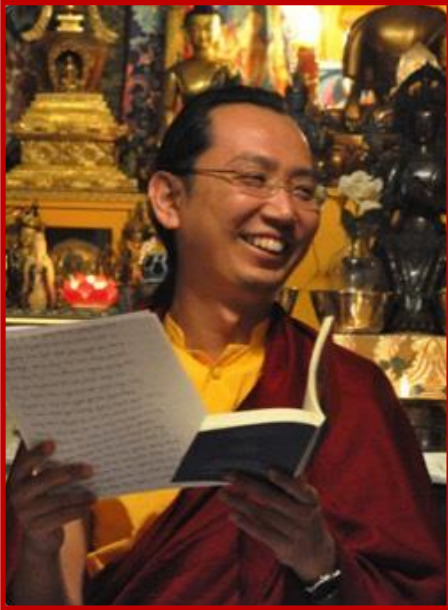
There are a few places left for the 2017 Pilgrimage to India with Khenpo la visiting Bodhgaya, Varanasi, Tsol Pema and Dharamsala before arriving in Dehra Dun. This is a wonderful experience, a once in a lifetime opportunity to visit these holy sites in India with an experienced guide such as Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe.

It is very auspicious that the pilgrimage includes the Enthronement Ceremony of His Eminence Ratna Vajra Rinpoche as the 42nd Sakya Trizin. Please visit our website for the travel itinerary. For further information and bookings please contact Suzi (Pilgrimage Director): suziwalker2245@gmail.com

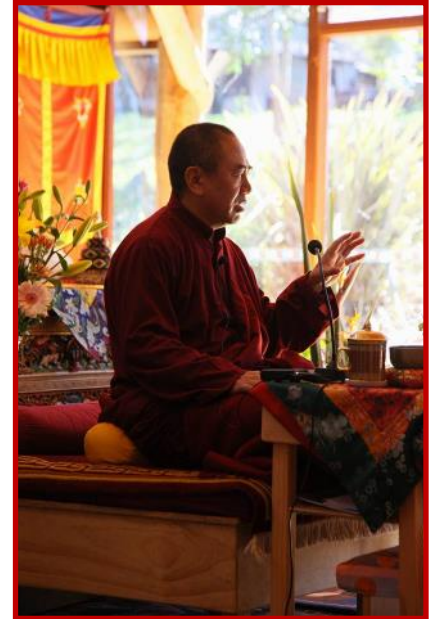
To read of students experiences on pilgrimage from 2013, visit our website www.drogmi.org and read through **Issue 14 of 'The Wisdom Age'**.



**THE COMPLETE PATH:
A Systematic Training from Sutra to Tantra
2017 - 2023**



His Eminence Ratna Vajra Rinpoche



Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe

The International Buddhist Academy (IBA) in Kathmandu Nepal, is launching an International seven year training program that encompasses the Tibetan Buddhist path in its entirety. This unique course has been designed for Dharma practitioners of all levels to study and experience systematic and graduated training on the theory and practice of the Mahayana and Vajrayana path as transmitted by the founding masters of the Sakya school of Tibetan Buddhism.

His Eminence Ratna Vajra Rinpoche will be teaching the full seven year program at IBA in Kathmandu, Nepal. His Eminence is the eldest son of His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin and will assume leadership and be enthroned as the 42nd Sakya Trizin in March 2017. IBA is also establishing partnerships with selected Dharma centres in different countries to deliver the first three years of the program from qualified Lamas and guest teachers. Australia and Spain have been selected as the first two countries to deliver the first three years of the international training program.

Drogmi Buddhist Institute (DBI) is very fortunate to be the Australian partner Dharma Centre offering the first three years of this program. The study program will be taught by Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe. Khenpo has studied and taught these profound philosophical texts at the highest level, including the prestigious Sakya College in Dehra Dun India, where he studied with and taught many of the modern day lineage holders.

The three year study program will be conducted at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre (KTBC) at Tilba, NSW. The centre nestles beneath the magnificent Gulaga, a mountain of great significance to the local Aboriginal Yuin people. The property has a long association with Dharma activities and is surrounded by outstanding natural environment to study, contemplation and meditation. After completing the three year study program at KTBC, interested students will have the opportunity to study the remaining four years at IBA in Nepal.

The first year of the study program in May 2017 will be open to everyone. Participation from the second year (2018) onwards will

require completion of the previous levels, including the first year. At the end of each year, participants will receive a certification attesting to their qualification to continue the study program. This will help students gain an authentic understanding of the entire Tibetan Buddhist path. A special certificate will be awarded to participants for completion of the full seven year program from IBA.

COURSE CONTENT & DATES for 2017 - 2019 at KTBC

The program for 2017: two 8 day study retreats and 3 online lectures: 20 - 27 May & 16 - 23 September, 3x Online lectures on the first Wednesday of each month:

- ⇒ 7 June
 - ⇒ 5 July
 - ⇒ 2 August
- (All 3 online lectures are from 7:30pm - 9:30pm)*

Subject Matter:

- ◆ **2017:** 'Clarifying the Sage's Intent' by the Great Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltzen.
- ◆ **2018:** 'The Beautiful Ornament of the Three Visions'. **Dates to be confirmed.**
- ◆ **2019:** 'Hevajra Cause Empowerment & Preliminaries - Teaching & Practice'. **Dates to be Confirmed.**

Bookings: www.drogmi.org or call 0403 779 099.



The Great Sakya Pandita

UPCOMING

HEALING & PURIFICATION RETREAT



THE FIRST SAKYA ANI LA'S TO VISIT AUSTRALIA



beautifully with the children.



27 DECEMBER 2016 - 1 JANUARY 2017

This will be the 2nd Annual Healing & Purification Retreat at KTBC. A great way to be prepared for a healthy and refreshed 2017! Away from everything, in amongst the most beautiful, peaceful and perfect environment for rejuvenation.

Khenpo la will bestow the Medicine Buddha & Vajrasattva Transmissions, and will then commence teachings on both of those Practices. Khenpo la strongly suggests to hear these teachings over and over again, to help deepen our understanding.

Bookings Essential:

www.drogmi.org / 0403 779 099

MINDFULNESS RETREAT

18 - 25 MARCH 2017



The centre had the great pleasure of hosting two Ani la's from Dehra Dun in India, Ani Ngawang Deden and Ani Ngawang Tsetso. Both are attendants to Her Eminence Jetsun Kushok la and were on a two week visit to Australia. Ani Deden is a senior nun at Sakya Nunnery and Ani Tsetso is a senior student at Sakya Women's College. This was their first visit to this part of the world. During their visit, the Ani la's were hosted by various host families, visiting Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Canberra and Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre at Tilba. Their visit was remarkable as they are the first Tibetan Buddhist Sakya Ani la's to visit Australia. They showed a great sense of warmth and fun, with an intense interest in everything they saw and experienced. Whilst visiting Canberra, they were keen to see Parliament and particularly the Australian War Memorial. They later remarked that visiting such a sad place was



We thank all those who hosted and were involved in organising the visit. Thank you Vanessa for coordinating the local program and Jack for working on the visas.

We particularly thank Her Eminence and Her Office, for providing us all with this great opportunity to spend this wonderful time with Ani Deden and Ani Tsetso.

(A special thank you to Kalsang la, Jennifer A and Annie R for most beautiful photos shared of the Ani la's visit and to Joe for the south coast ocean image).

This retreat offers participants the opportunity for training the heart and mind through mindfulness. The heart to develop loving kindness, and the mind to develop calmness and wisdom. Recognising old patterns that are problematic can lead to true realisations and positive changes to our lives.

Mindfulness is the process of bringing our attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present.

A traditional silent retreat format, allowing for a rare opportunity to explore deeply into ourselves whilst in a caring and supportive environment. Time for discussions with the experienced instructors, gentle exercise, rest and self reflection. *Bookings Essential:*

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good for them to be reminded of the real nature of suffering, so that they could further their Dharma practice and help others. Their love for others and commitment to the Dharma was a great inspiration to all. During their stay at KTBC, they assisted Khenpo la in conducting Green Tara and Medicine Buddha Pujas and reciting Mahakala Mantras for two days, with many people making offerings and dedications.

They also were wonderful participants in the first Family Retreat at the centre, engaging



THE FIRST FAMILY RETREAT at KTBC

Our Milton Manjushri Buddhist Centre Rigpe Yeshe Group were delighted to run their bi-annual family retreat at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre.

A heartfelt thanks to Khenpo for opening his home and heart to personally show us how to truly be within the context of a family. With so many highlights it is hard to encapsulate the amazing experience and environment that held the 16 adults and 19 children. Khenpo was so generous with his time and presence to the little and big kids alike- just witnessing his open, relaxed, joyful, playful manner with the kids whilst on the beach, in the gumpa over meals and in play was the most precious of "take home" parenting tools imaginable. I think in this time poor generation we too often forget the law of impermanence and take our parenting role for granted getting lost in the laborious nature of work and chores forgetting to have fun with our children.



With this sacred teacher on this sacred ground, time slowed, sangha supported, mist settled, sun shone, trees towered, children skipped and laughed, parents exhaled and smiled, and top it all off as we drove home a beautiful rainbow appeared over Milton.



On reflection it brings tears of gratitude for the opportunity to come together and remember how precious this human birth truly is.

Thanks beyond words to Khenpo, Kalsang and the two visiting Ani la's for the most wonderful of gatherings.

Much Love, *Karynne and family*



It is difficult to put into words just what a phenomenal retreat this was, but one word really stands out that expresses our experience...JOY.

On the auspicious weekend of Buddha's descent from heaven, six families from the Milton area brought tents, sleeping bags and a few boxes of food to the pristine environment known as Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre.



Khenpo explained the retreat boundaries... reduce the negative mind that harms you and expand the positive mind as vast as possible. Joy comes from closeness to one another, Khenpo explained, and as the children ran free yet safely amongst the property, the parents relaxed into a wonderful sense of community.

Kids and adults would meet together in the gumpa and receive the most wonderful and relevant Dharma instructions from Khenpo la who sat with us as a true spiritual friend; *The kids will be future leaders in the world so we need to plant good seeds... the best present you can give your children is simply to spend time with them and find joy in what you do together... through ones own experience of parenting recognise how much our own dear parents gave to us... if you want to be happy you need to ensure the happiness of those around you...* On the auspicious Sunday morning, Khenpo la, Kalsang, and the two Ani la's performed the Sixteen Arhat Puja, the atmosphere was other worldly.

A huge thank you to Lael and Joe and all those who made this retreat possible. May all beings live in harmony, joy, peace and love... **Ben A.**

(All of these beautiful images are from Dad, Dean).



OPEN DAY FAIR A HUGE SUCCESS

The 2nd Open Day Fair at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre in early October was a wonderful success. Khenpo la gave several short talks and meditation sessions for adults and children. A very delicious luncheon of Tibetan cuisine was served, and chai flowed all day, thanks to Al for his great generosity.

The children had lots of activities, and the raffle draw was a great hit and raised valuable funds for the centre. It was a day the centre invited the community onto the land and enjoy all it has to offer. Thank you to all who came, and all who volunteered on the day to make this another great event at KTBC.



KTBC CELEBRATES IT'S FIRST BIRTHDAY!

It was a wonderful 1st Birthday Celebration at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre over the first weekend in December. We celebrated all the centre achievements at the great guidance of our most precious teacher Khenpo la. We started with the AGM which affirmed Khenpo la and all members commitment to creating a Dharma centre to benefit countless beings. Then the celebratory dinner, which was a tremendous amount of fun and very festive, with people travelling long distances to attend, as well as our local friends. Everyone enjoyed the night immensely. Light rain fell at the beginning of the dinner, which Khenpo la remarked was most auspicious. We awoke to a lovely fresh day on Sunday, when Khenpo la lead Green Tara Puja and Shamatha Practice.



A great completion to a very special weekend.

Thank you to everyone who contributed and attended.



WEDNESDAY SHAMATHA PRACTICE CONTINUES EACH WEEK

There will be a short 2 week break in our regular Shamatha Meditation practice at KTBC. Our last session for the year will be on 21 December and resume on 11 January. We so look forward to seeing you then in 2017!

SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER

The General Committee wanted to share with you this great work at the centre with the makeover of the Pizza Hut. The space is now something very special, and practical for when we run events. Thank you to all who contributed so generously financially and physically, well done all!



MAITRIPA RETREAT CENTRE MELBOURNE, VIC



It was a cold, wet weekend but there was plenty of warmth generated by Khenpo. He knew the Maitripa Retreat Centre well having been present there in 1997 when His Holiness the Sakya Trizin blessed it.

We were all inspired by Khenpo's erudite and uplifting teachings and returned to ordinary life with renewed determination and energy for our practice! Thank you a million Khenpo la. **Penny**

My weekend retreat with Khenpo was a welcome relief from the busy world. His teachings, full of words that truly reached us, together with his humble disposition and loving kindness, leaves us knowing we are fortunate indeed to have had this opportunity to receive the teachings from him. **Roslyn**

Last Friday September 16th, a stalwart band of meditators arrived at the Maitripa Retreat Centre in Healesville, Victoria, to receive teachings on the practice of Shamata meditation from Khenpo Ngawang Damchoe.

Organised by Melbourne Sakya, the request to Khenpo la had been to cover the topic with less-experienced meditators in mind. This of course means all of us, though sometimes our deluded minds may not think that is the case! Thirteen people attended for the entire three days, with three others attending for a day - a great success in that alone for the hard work of Melbourne Sakya.

I am saving the best till last, and hardly know how to express my gratitude for such insightful, clear, direct, all-inclusive, gentle



and firm teachings on Shamata from dear Khenpo-la. He gave us so much invaluable information, delivered through his words of wisdom and his example and practice. There was much for all of us to learn, whether a practitioner of the dharma for twenty years or twenty days, to carry with us and deepen our commitment to the dharma. Thank you so, so much, Khenpo la. We all hope to see you again when you visit, hopefully at Maitripa in 2017.

Geraldine

DUBBO, NSW



Khenpo la visited Dubbo giving a teaching on "How to Create a Powerful Mind". It is always a complete pleasure and honour having Khenpo la coming to our part of the world each year.

Thank you Khenpo la. **Juleen**



SEPTEMBER WORKING BEE



Images from the last working bee at Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre. Mark working on grading the road, with Kalsang la assisting.



OCTOBER WORKING BEE



The October Working Bee at KTBC was an absolutely stunning day of warm spring weather, a lovely group of 12 helpers and good food. Jobs got done including tractor maintenance, grading the road (a huge task, yet slowly slowly getting done thanks to Mark M and Mark R). Cleaning of the dormitories, scrubbing all of the dining room chairs for hours, digging and burying of a pipe on the road near the gompa, gompa cleaning / vacuuming and dharma shop re-organising / shifting. Loads of vacuuming and just plain fun to do all of this together as a community and dharma family.

Thank you so very much to Mark M for organising the day and for your dahl... and to Kalsang la for all of your delicious cooking and help in overseeing that we stayed on track in a very gentle and beautiful way. Look forward to the next one!!!



Thank you to all of the very hard working bees who took time out to help the centre to flourish.



SHAMATHA RETREAT OCTOBER 2016



Mandala Offerings were made for the Birthday of His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin during the Annual Shamatha Retreat 2016

I would just like to say thank you for a wonderful Shamatha Retreat. Upon arrival to the most beautiful environment, that is Kamalashila Tibetan Buddhist Centre, my daughter and myself were made to feel so very welcome. The teachings were very clear, insightful and totally inspiring, which I am sure was of benefit to all who attended. Khenpo la has a lovely gentle manner and exudes such wisdom. At the conclusion of the retreat, I felt invigorated and motivated to put what I had learnt into practice. I am extremely grateful to have the opportunity to hear such inspiring teachings from such a respected Master. AND did I mention that the food during this retreat was fantastic too!!! Thank you once again. **Carol**



It was such a joy to be with Khenpo and the sangha in beautiful Tilba. Khenpo la so generously and earnestly explained why meditation is so important for us all that it's not just ABCD, we have to understand how our mind works and how we create samsara ourselves.

Mind just 'is' yet I create a story to fit with my reaction, emotion, habit through ignorance. I cling to myself as being solid and permanent entity hence the story. Meditation is the doorway that allows a reality check on what actually is happening right now. I need to investigate my mind, see how it works, become familiar with the fears and fantasies I create, the games I play. To see emptiness of the constantly changing display; that nothing is permanent or fixed, including me.

Khenpo explained the importance of meditation so clearly and carefully, now I know that I need to relax and gently watch my mind, become familiar with its changing weather patterns - just as the warmth and wisdom of the sun is always shining even behind the clouds of delusion. **Lynne**



FORSTER / TUNCURRY NSW

