



Padma Mandala

NEWSLETTER OF THE PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTERS

Winter 2000 Vol. 8

Teaching Schedule of
Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche
and
Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

UNFOLDING LOTUS MANDALA PROJECT and PSL BUILDING UPDATE

Shortly after arriving at this summer's Dzogchen Retreat, I was auspiciously greeted by Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche, walking on the path from the Khenpos' residence. Khen Rinpoche looked across the vista of Padma Samye Ling encompassing the expanse of meadow and the consecrated site for the Stupa, the wooded hills in the West, the stand of upright prayer flags that flutter alongside the American and Tibetan flags just at the top of the driveway, the Sangha House basking in the warm afternoon July sunshine and finally the Gompa (Temple) shining like an incredible jewel. He smiled and told me, "Many changes this year. Everything is very beautiful."

Those of us who have been so fortunate as to come to Padma Samye Ling find it to be very beautiful, indeed. Buildings and gardens are now

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10,000 square foot Temple at Padma Samye Ling



PHOTO COURTESY OF TSOAGTAL DRELSA

ANNUAL DZOGCHEN RETREAT

An island of peace in a steamy ocean of samsara, the 1999 summer retreat at Padma Samye Ling focused on a uniquely powerful teaching. Building on last summer's teaching of the basic Vajrakilaya practice, Lamas Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche presented empowerment, transmission and detailed teachings on the profound intermediate practice. To a group of about 150 long-time students and enthusiastic newcomers, they described this as one of the most essential Buddhist teachings that would lead to enlightenment.

In preparation to receive this empowerment, the Khenpos called for us

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NEW YORK

November 6 & 7 New York City
21 Taras Practice/Kurukulle Initiation

December 4 & 5 New York City
Kuntuzangpo Bodhisattva/Samanjabhadri
Wealth Deity - Name Tsebrma Initiation

December 31, Jan 1 & 2 New York City
Vajrasattva Fire Puja/Vajrakilaya Practice

OTHER PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTERS

November 13-15 Tennessee

November 16-22 West Palm Beach
Avalokiteshvara Empowerment/Teachings
Opening Ceremony for New Center

November 23-29 Puerto Rico

January 15-22 West Palm Beach
Annual Dzogchen Winter Retreat
DOLA SERSHUN by MANJUSHRIMITRA
(Principal student of Garab Dorje, known as
one of the foremost masters of Dzogchen)

For more information please call or write to us at:
Padmasambhava Buddhist Center
Tibetan Nyingma Buddhist Meditation
& Study Center

P.O. Box 1533, Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10011

212/683.4958

OR PADMA SAMYE LING RETREAT CENTER
(UPSTATE NEW YORK)
607/865-8068

On the Web

<http://pbc.interliant.com/pbc/info.nsf>

ABOUT PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTER

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center spreads the teachings of Buddhism according to the Nyingma school lineage of Tibet. The Center was first established in New York in 1989, with the encouragement of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, by the Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab, Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, Rinpoche. Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, known informally as "the Khenpos," are the teachers and spiritual leaders of PBC. They also direct the activities of the New York Center, its many branches in the U.S.A., Puerto Rico and Russia, and its retreat center Padma Samye Ling in upstate New York. Their Sarnath Project in India has flourished with a traditional monastic institute and retreat center called Pema Cho Khorling; another monastic college and retreat center located in Shravasti, India called Padma Samye Jetvan is under construction.



Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche (l)
Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche (r)

Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche is one of the most qualified scholars and teachers of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. He entered Gochen Monastery at the age of six, where he began intensive training in all facets of Tibetan Buddhism. At age 12 he entered Riwoche Monastery, training to become a *khenpo*, or professor of Tibetan philosophy. In 1960 he had to flee to India. There, for over 15 years, he was in charge of the Nyingmapa Department at the Central Institute of Higher Studies in Varanasi, as well as being a founding member of that Institute. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche has received many honors for his scholarship from His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche and other Tibetan leaders. He is fully versed in many areas of Buddhist study and is the author of several learned works and Tibetan language books. He is also considered a master of *Dzogchen*, the highest tradition of meditation practice in Tibetan Buddhism.

Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche — born in eastern Tibet—was enthroned as a Nyingmapa Abbot by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, supreme head of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism. He studied extensively Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana, poetry, history, and Tibetan literature. Khenpo is the author of many books on poetry, historical perspectives of the great Nyingmapa masters and translators, as well as Buddhist philosophy and practice which he co-authored with his brother Ven. Khen Rinpoche. As holder of the complete Nyingmapa lineage: kama, terma, and *Dzogchen* teachings, Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche is the co-founder of PBC International whose activities include monastic institutes, Buddhist meditation, research, and study centers.

Recognized as a not-for-profit religious organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
All donations are tax deductible.

BECOMING A PART OF PBC

Because the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center is a member supported organization, your contribution is essential to the continuation of its efforts. You are invited to join and become a member of our "pema mandala"—our worldwide dharma family at PBC. We thank many of you who have supported PBC for so long and we appreciate your continued membership. If you have not re-newed your membership with us, please consider making a commitment today; your contribution will really help make a difference.

As a not-for-profit, membership-based organization, we depend on volunteers to help us with a variety of small and large projects. We welcome your volunteer assistance in many of Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers' activities.

Padma Samye Ling (*Inconceivable Lotus Land*) Retreat Center located in Delaware County, New York is modeled after the great Samye Monastery situated in Central Tibet—close to Lhasa, which was a preeminent center of religious practice and teaching, and also a creative source for Tibetan moral development, philosophy, culture and art. Padma Samye Ling (PSL) now has a Sangha House: central lodge with shrine room, kitchen, guest rooms/baths, and an office. A 10,000 sq. foot formal temple features a large shrine hall, museum, study room, meditation gardens and provision for long-term retreat.

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New York, NY 10011

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Pema Mandala #8

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Padmasambhava Buddhist Center Members receive substantial discounts to all PBC retreats and teachings throughout the world + Pema Mandala Newsletter which is published periodically.

Pema Mandala

The Newsletter of
The Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers
Nyingmapa Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism

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MESSAGE FROM KHENCHEN



Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters,

Please have great joy that you have obtained a precious human body at this time. However, our life is impermanent. Therefore, please use your precious life to do the practice of Dharma to benefit now and the future, trying to avoid the distractions.

What is Dharma? Dharma means to discipline and overpower one's own mind. Who is the discipliner? When you cultivate your own mind again and again and again with love, compassion, wisdom and devotion to the three jewels, you are the discipliner. Please train your mind again and again, always combining together your body, speech and mind with those above mentioned qualities. Do not scatter your thoughts, and do not follow your discursive thought. Maintain one single pointed concentration of the mind. What is mind? Who are you?

With Best Wishes,
Khenchen Palden Sherab

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Sangha Members,

The winds have subsided and the rains from hurricanes have receded back into the land. Birds are beginning to journey south to greet us for winter. Here in Florida we prepare for our "season" to begin, bustling with many activities.

The West Palm Beach Sangha, now practicing in their new wellness center in Lake Worth, is preparing to host the annual PBC Winter Retreat 2000 with the Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche offering teachings on the Dola Shershun by Manjushrimitra—one of the foremost Dzogchen masters and principal student of Garab Dorje. For more information about this retreat please see the attached flyer in this newsletter.

In this issue of Pema Mandala, the Khenpos present the second part of their teachings on The Seven Line Prayer (see page 6). As you remember from the last issue, they taught us from the view of the Relative level, here they offer insight to this seminal prayer from the Absolute level of reality according to Tibetan Buddhism.

Pema Mandala is the newsletter for all of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers around the world. It is now "on-line" and ready to move into the millennium smoothly and efficiently. Please e-mail your articles directly to me at the following address: akayogini@aol.com Already the letters

and stories (and a few jokes) are flowing in effortlessly, and we all appreciate the ease with which we can work together. You may still send your submissions to me typed, or on disk with a hard copy. Include a title and an illustrative photo (if possible) with a caption.

This summer during the retreat at PSL, (cover stories) the Khenpos held a meeting with all of the Coordinators of PBC which was very beneficial. Each one went home to share with sangha the wisdom words and vision of the Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche. In the spirit of this communication, we invite the Coordinators to send a little bit of Sangha News. The mandala exists: It is a context, a framework created for you by the Khenpos. Yet each one of us has to enter this mandala in our own inimitable way... so your stories and pictures really create each issue.

To be included on PBC's mailing list, or to make changes, please contact Barrie Hinman at 119 No. Grant Street, Barrington, Illinois 60010. Fax 847/382-8422, or e-mail her: bhinman@rainbowbridgeinc.com which is her preferred method for communication.

May all of your aspirations be achieved. Many thanks to all who contribute in so many ways. ♦

Yours in the Dharma,
Nancy Ash (Pema Tingdrön)
—West Palm Beach Sangha

Unfolding Lotus Mandala Project *from Cover Page*

springing up in complete harmony with the landscape as radiant as images in a Tibetan thangka of a Buddha Pureland.

In particular this year, a great deal of activity is centering on the "Unfolding Lotus Mandala," the name given to the extensive landscaping project which is envisioned as a physical meditation mandala. As one can see from this diagram, a long pathway will encompass the Gompa, a man-made lake to be called "Tso Pema" in honor of Yeshe Tsogyal, Mandarava and the Wisdom Dakinis, the Stupa and a small wooded area for fire pujas, and finally the Sangha House. In the sketch, the pathway appears to be a mala outstretched across the cleared meadowland, and the section of the path which encircles the Gompa looks like the Guru Bead at the top of that mala. Along the landscaped path will be meditation areas, ornamented with dharma images and plaques inscribed with scriptural stanzas and quotations from the great dharma masters. As in ancient Tibet, practitioners will be able to proceed in walking meditation and circumambulate the holy Gompa and Stupa.

Barrie Hinman and Ani Lorraine have been working on the gardens at PSL, both regarding current planting and developing long term landscaping plans. They review plants with the Khenpos and works closely with local nurseries and gardeners to choose species that will thrive in the cold winter-hot summer climate of this area of New York. The general intention is to keep the more outlying area of PSL as meadow and forest to support local wildlife and to enhance the inner grounds with gardens and plantings that will be more cultivated than the wildflowers which currently abound, yet still be relatively low maintenance. Grass seed has now been planted around the Gompa and grass will eventually extend down into the meadow toward the Stupa. During the retreat

this summer, Marka Boyer of Colorado and Edna deJesus of Puerto Rico expended great effort and energy in the design and cultivation of areas around the



Lamas' Residence. Many thanks to them and to so many other retreatants and ongoing students of the Khenpos who have worked diligently on these projects.

The Gompa is now in its last year of ongoing construction and decoration. The roofs on the three-story structure have been covered in copper of a brilliant red hue, mirroring the color of Zangdok Palri, the Copper Mountain realm of Guru Rinpoche. It will be further ornamented with large gold leaf covered brass representations of the Wheel of the Law flanked by two deer such as are seen atop the Potala in Lhasa, in honor of the Buddha's first public teaching given at the Deer Park in Sarnath.

Inside the Gompa, the lower third of the walls of the main floor shrine have been covered in Italian marble, the trim and accents of green and black and the main

surfaces a vivid, glowing reddish ochre. The floor has also been fashioned out of marble with a beautiful lotus flower mandala in its center. The murals on the surrounding walls as well as the painted borders for the vestibule and entryway are expected to be completed before next summer's retreat. The western wall mural which depicts Guru Padmasambhava and his eight great manifestations and his twenty-five major heart-disciples and many lineage lamas is drawing near completion. Under the direction of master painters, Mikel Dunham and Sergei, and many painters under their direction, work has begun on the eastern wall mural which will depict the twelve great activities of Buddha Shakyamuni.

The second floor is almost complete and soon will house a library of the Kangyur and Tengyur of the Buddhist Canon and many other sacred texts. Book shelves will surround the central room which already houses tables and chairs for students and researchers. A One-thousand Armed Chenresig (Avalokiteshvara) statue will also be installed on this level. The third floor will represent the Dharmakaya. Many other Buddhas will be painted on the ceiling in a mandala such as was represented in the original Samye Monastery. A great deal of gold leaf is continuously needed for the ornamentation of the frescoes; Mikel Dunham has suggested that those among us who can, might wish to contribute toward this ongoing expense. Gold is used because its preciousness makes it a substance that generates merit when used on sacred objects, so donation of gold leaf for this purpose is very auspicious.

Another building project which has proceeded at a rapid pace is the dormitory facility, soon accommodating 40+ retreatants. The Sangha House will be used for registration/office activities, featuring a dharma gift shop, dining hall, storage space, and living quarters for full-time staff members. A new well was dug with a very high capacity to supplement and upgrade the existing water and septic systems.

We learned of two pieces of immense good fortune, which enhanced

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News from PBC-San Francisco (PBC-SF)

On September 23rd, while the Khenpos were in the San Francisco Bay Area to teach the Aspiration Prayer "The Vajra Knot (Dorje Gyadaud)" of Mindrolling Terdak Lingpa, they graciously took time to consecrate the shrine room which is under construction at the San Francisco home of Venerable Govinda.

Govinda-la has most generously offered this shrine room for use by San Francisco Padmasambhava Buddhist Center students to meet and practice and, while it is under construction, is hosting regular meditation practice and pujas in the spacious living room of his beautiful Victorian home.

At present, the PBC-SF practice schedule includes The Blessing Treasure (Buddha Sadhana) of Mipham on New Moon and Full Moon dates, and Short Tsog Offerings on the 10th and 25th of the lunar month (Guru Rinpoche and Dakini days, respectively). Anyone interested in joining regular practice sessions or getting together with other Bay Area sangha members should contact Tsogyal (510.724.8845; or e-mail: bethniederst@hotmail.com) or Govinda-la (415.621.1657; or e-mail: VenGovinda@email.msn.com). ♦

Nyingmapa and Vajrayana Buddhism by promoting holistic healing through the precepts of love, compassion and (wisdom) mindfulness. In addition to the regular activities of the sangha, services offered at this time are traditional psychotherapy, counseling, massage therapy, cranio-sacral therapy, tai ji and hatha yoga classes. Most of the professionals renting offices are actually members of the sangha which fulfills the vision of the Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche. PBDC also features a dharma bookstore/gift shop, as well as a studio for bodywork classes called the Lotus Room, a kitchen, and an office for the staff. The 700 sq. ft. meditation room holds about eighty practitioners, and features a wooden shrine which is of the finest quality, handcrafted and donated by professional artisans of the Orlando Sangha.

Many thanks to Bill Hinman, Joe Scarpa, Janie Floren, The West Palm Beach Sangha, Christa Kramer, The Orlando Sangha, Chris and Jerry Rothman, Joanie Andras, Susan McDonald, Richard Stoltz, Shano, Mr. and Mrs. David McVirney, Mr. and Mrs. Jon Ash, Rudy Aliano, Ruth McMahon, Ron Poh, Kenny Dorcth, and so many others to numerous to mention here who contributed to create this wonderful center. For more information, please contact the Wellness Programs Director, Palm Beach Dharma Center, 1205 No. Federal Highway, Lake Worth, Florida 33401. Telephone 561/547-4711. (Please see the attached flyer for the upcoming annual winter retreat hosted by this sangha) ♦

NEWS FROM THE KALMYKIA SANGHA

by Maris Abelson and Marie Friquegnon

When the little jet landed at Elista, the capital of Kalmykia, the Kalmuk sangha was at the airport to welcome Ven. Khenchen Palden Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche in great style. We were whisked away to the bank where we were greeted with flowers and katas, and interviewed by Kalmuk television. We were presented with a lovely concert of traditional Kalmuk song and dance, very playful, delicate and spirited. This was followed with a banquet of about nine courses consisting of every variety of the local delicacies, including the caviar for which they are justly renowned. Then we went to a large auditorium where the Khenpos gave a beautiful teaching on loving kindness and compassion. Everyone loved it.

This auditorium was right at the place from where the Kalmuks had been deported by Stalin to Siberia. The Kalmuks had originally settled by the Caspian sea. The Kalmuks, Mongolians from western China, date their culture back at least 550 years to the writing of their famous epic poem, "Diangar". Becoming Buddhist in the days of Altan Khan, (1162-1227), a descendent of Kublai Khan, they migrated in the seventeenth century to the area by the Caspian sea now known as the Republic of Kalmykia (RK). Although Buddhist, they were fierce fighters, and aided Russia against Napoleon. Czar Alexander 1 granted them land, and they built temples and monastic schools which taught boys and girls. Some Kalmyks were even able to make pilgrimages to Lhasa.

All this came to a sad end when they became one of eleven ethnic groups in Russia deported by Stalin. Although Kalmykia has a mild climate and the people are unused to cold, they were sent in freezing box cars on December 27, 1943 to Siberia. One of the sangha, Dina, whose grandparents had been on one of the trains, said that of the 8000, 2000 had died on

"Wellness" DHARMA CENTER IN FLORIDA NOW OPEN (PBDC)

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center of West Palm Beach is happy to announce they have moved into a new facility with an excellent location in the adjacent quaint town of Lake Worth.

Named by the Khenpos, The Palm Beach Dharma Center is a holistic wellness center, the first of its kind affiliated with PBC. Originally a medical building in need of much work, the sangha completely refurbished the facility; it looks brand new. The mission statement of the center will perpetuate the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni and Guru Padmasambhava in the tradition of

(Continued on page 11)

Teachings on the Seven Line Prayer

(Part 2 - The Absolute Level)

by Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

Last issue we taught from the view of the relative level according to Tibetan Buddhism. We said that the Seven Line Prayer is a powerful and blissful prayer that is chanted to Guru Padmasambhava and other Buddhas as well. Because it has these qualities it is known as the Seven Indestructible Lines or the Seven Vajra Lines. It was not composed by anyone; It is the Self-Voice of True Nature, Dharmadhatu or Pure Wisdom. That is why it is called indestructible speech. Historically the prayer manifested when Guru Rinpoche appeared in the lotus. He was surrounded by many Wisdom dakinis who chanted or sang the prayer to him.

There are stories throughout history extolling the virtue and power of the Seven Line Prayer. While there are a number of teachings and practices of Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet, all of the great masters have had these teachings on the Seven Line Prayer. They remain intact without change over hundreds of years until today and many beings have become enlightened through this prayer and its practices.

Now we shall go to the Absolute Level of understanding....

Why do we think of the Seven Line Prayer on two levels? We are not trying to divide the prayer here, rather it is our obscurations that prevent us from seeing or understanding the prayer on its higher level. That is why Nagarjuna said that in order to understand the Absolute Truth, we must pass through the system of the Relative Truth. It is like the key or door to the Palace of the Absolute Truth. Passing through the explanation on the Relative and then learning about the meaning on the Absolute Level, we bring the prayer into a single state of understanding.

The meaning of HUM at the beginning of the prayer does not change. It is still our Self-Born Awareness, unobscured and free from any nations. It means that each thought we have is Primordial Awareness. This very Primordial Nature of the mind is The Absolute Guru Padmasambhava. And, as I said earlier, in order to have a Perfect understanding and view, we should maintain our minds in this Primordial Nature throughout the practice. In order to bring up or re-establish our minds with this view, the Prayer begins with the syllable HUM.

The first line begins with Orgyen which is the location that all of the secret teachings or mantras are radiating from. This location is known as Odiyana. Why are these teachings or mantras secret, you might ask? It is not that there is anything to hide. The level or capability of our understanding naturally keeps the Absolute as secret. Our ignorance prevents us from seeing the face of Reality Nature. This Perfect Nature is Buddha and the Absolute Guru Padmasambhava. Until the teachings, we are not aware of this Buddha Nature we possess, even though this nature is not separate from us for even a moment. This meaning of Odiyana as the source of secret mantras applies to one's own mind. One's own Primordial Awareness is the source of these secrets—these radiating Wisdom and Realizations: In this very moment, our minds are the radiating source.

Another meaning of Odiyana is to hover and fly. The beings that can fully understand this True Nature state can also fly and hover within the Dharmakaya realm, free from obstacles.

Moving along to the rest of the first line, what is the meaning of Northwest in the prayer? In Mahayana Buddhism, the North symbolizes Nirvana, where there is emptiness. The North is free from the movement of a rising or setting sun and moon. The West is a symbol of Samsara, of darkness, the setting sun. That is why Buddha walked seven steps to the West when he was born and said that this was his last birth in Samsara. Then he walked seven steps to the north and said, "In this life time I will open the door of Nirvana."

The last word, TSAM, means boundary. Guru Rinpoche was free from both the boundaries of Samsara and Nirvana. The word PEMA in the second line means free from obscurations: from attachment and grasping. It is void and luminous in this freedom. This is the Kadak state, pure from the beginning and totally open. GESAR is like the pistil of a flower. It is the clarity aspect of True Nature, the wisdom, loving kindness, compassion and skillful means reflecting from this True Nature. This display is known as Gesar. The third word, Dongpo means stalk. It unites the lotus and the pistil, Clarity and Emptiness. They function differently, but they are never separate. In this practice of the Absolute Truth upon Guru Padmasambhava, we are not searching externally; everything is contained within our own inner state, our Primordial Nature. This Primordial Nature has two aspects, the aspect of Clarity or Skillful Means and Wisdom. These two qualities are in union within ourselves.

This is the Great Blissfulness Practice of Mahamudra. It is free from all extremes, known as the Middle Path or Madyamika View. It is the source of every display, of all our activities. It is the display of the Perfect Five Wisdoms. In that view, this is known as the Great Dzogchen teachings. The third line applies to the inner Realization states. "How wonderful

to attain these Supreme Realizations", the prayer exclaims. This is strictly a view of the inner state. We are not looking outwardly at Buddhahood, Guru Padmasambhava, Vajrasattva or Samantabhadra. They are all within the nature of our minds; this Primordial Nature is all of these Buddhas. And therefore, the third line sings of how marvelous it is to recognize the Guru Padmasambhava within oneself, the very highest and most precious Awareness that we can achieve.

This is the highest Realization of any teachings. According to the Nyingma tradition there are three lineage Realizations. This is the Mind-to-Mind Transmission Lineage. As an example, Naropa asked Tilopa for teachings many, many times. Tilopa, however, refused to give even a single discourse. Instead, he gave Naropa 24 ascetic practices to follow. At one point in the practices he grabbed Naropa by the collar shouting, "What do you expect from me?" He struck him three times in the forehead with his sandal and,— when Naropa regained consciousness—he clearly saw his True Nature, his Mahamudra state. This type of teaching is known as Mind-to-Mind Transmission Lineage. Without words, the student comes to understand the truth in that moment. That is the nature of understanding the Absolute Truth—it is beyond words and conception.

The fourth line proclaims the name of Guru Rinpoche. Once you understand this Primordial state of Awareness, free from conceptions and duality thoughts, this Realization is known as Guru Padmasambhava. You discover Him within your own heart or state of mind.

The fifth line is about the Dakini or display of all accomplishing activities of Wisdom free from obscurations and duality thoughts. It is the perfect and pure understanding of Wisdom which means Yeshe or Kandroma. Once the Primordial Nature State is realized, it is surrounded by many Dakinis. Whatever one sees is the movement of Primordial Nature. Every activity radiates from that state and becomes the surrounding retinue, much like rays of light radiating from the sun. Therefore, in this instance the Dakini is the Wisdom emanation of one's own mind.

The sixth line proclaims to follow in the steps of the precious Guru. On the Absolute level, once Primordial Nature is recognized, one vows to follow that path and not separate from it. You are committed to follow in His steps because you do recognize Absolute Guru Padmasambhava, you are not following blindly. You will not separate yourself from the view of working to assist all sentient beings.

The seventh line implores the Guru to come with his blessings. On the inner level, once we recognize the Absolute Guru Padmasambhava, we seek his blessing, not for ourselves, but rather to transform all external phenomena into the one state of Guru Padmasambhava. There are many sentient beings suffering in ignorance, this has to be transmuted into the Primordial Wisdom which they also possess. We invoke the inner Absolute Guru Padmasambhava to remove the darkness of sentient beings and to bring up the Realizations that we all have. At the same time we want to transform the universe to its Pureland state. That is the Reality; we are not attempting to create something which doesn't exist here. We want to bring up that which already exists. This is our Absolute Bodhicitta Practice and commitment. Even though our obscurations prevent us from seeing clearly, in the Absolute level everything is pure. It is similar to a person with visual defects. Even though a man with an astigmatism may perceive that everything around him is blurred, there is nothing wrong with those objects. If we can correct the vision of the individual, the objects then look clear and normal to him. The same is true of our view of the Pureland.

This is our teaching on the inner practice of the Seven Line Prayer. Generally we practice externally first by doing the visualization of Guru Padmasambhava in front of us. Then we invoke his blessing and maintain our mind on the Absolute Padmasambhava. In this state we should accomplish our daily work for the benefit of all sentient beings. So we do the outer and then the inner practice. Generally, the inner practice will come spontaneously and without effort or force as devotion to Padmasambhava and faith increases. The meaning of the mantras GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM is similar to the rest of the prayer. It is also the Three Kayas and reaffirms the Absolute Guru Padmasambhava with the syllable letter HUM. ♦

— Transcribed by Pema Dam Choe Drön Ma from a talk given at the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center in West Palm Beach during the mid-1980's. Edited for newsletter format by Pema Tingdrön.

News From India: Our Young Sangha in Pema Samye Cho Khorling, Sarnath

Twenty-seven monks, ages 6 to 19, arrived in Sarnath last year from Dolpo—a remote area on the Nepalese-Tibetan border—and have completed their first year of monastic training. The monks are adjusting slowly to the dramatic change of climate, especially because of the predominantly hot year it was; many of them needed medical care during the summer.

They are studying Tibetan language, grammar and calligraphy, as well as Buddhist chants, prayers and rituals. In addition, they learn Hindi and English. Their daily schedule begins with morning prayers at 6:30, English and Tibetan at 7:30, breakfast is followed by prayers and memorization of verses. Some of the monks have memorized as many as 50 to 90 verses. Daily writing and calligraphy classes, as well as studying the text of the 37 Bodhisattva Vows, is part of their education at the monastic college. Under the tutelage of Lupon Pema Gyaltzen—resident khenpo and senior teacher—Nawang Sonam

(continued on page 8)

"Vajra Knot" Teachings in California

Recently, the San Francisco sangha was blessed by the second visit this year of the Venerable Khenpo brothers. On the evenings of September 22nd and 23rd, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche taught the beautiful aspiration prayer, "The Vajra Knot (Dorje Gyadud)" of Minling Terdak Lingpa in Oakland, CA at the Orgyen Dorje Den Buddhist Center where the Khenpos had bestowed the Guhyagarbha Tantra Empowerment in January. Orgyen Dorje Den is the Bay Area Yeshe Nyingpo Dharma Center, and is directed by Venerable Gyaltrul Rinpoche.

The author of the "Vajra Knot" was the great tertön Mindroling Terdak Lingpa, Rigdzin Gyurmed Dorje (1646-1714), who was a contemporary of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. He founded the famous Nyingma monastery known as Mindroling monastery in central Tibet with the assistance of his brother Lochen Dharmashri. Minling Terchen was an incarnation of Ananda, the disciple of Buddha Shakyamuni, as well as of the great translator Vairotsana who played a crucial role in the development of the Dharma in Tibet.

The "Vajra Knot" is divided into two sections, the dedication and the aspiration. Khenchen Palden Sherab explained, as Khenpo Tsewang translated, that there is a subtle difference between dedication, which refers to past and present deeds, and aspiration ("mönlam"), which refers to the future. Rinpoche emphasized the importance of reciting mönlams in our ongoing practice, as a way of aspiring to that realization we are currently unable to actualize. The early part of the text asks that we may dedicate all of our merit to the unsurpassed enlightenment of all beings and aspires that we have fervent devotion to our gurus along the path.

The heart of the "Vajra Knot" is a teaching on the meaning of the three inner tantras, the Mahayoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga. Specific lines of the text relate to each of these levels of practice, which ultimately are inseparable. Underlying all of them is the understanding of pure perception, that all phenomena are primordially free from conception and any trace of dualism. Body, speech and mind are intrinsically pure and none other than diety, mantra and pure awareness, the union of the three kayas. The aspiration arises to realize that all thoughts are naturally self-liberated, that "whatever arises (is) self-liberated in Samantabhadra's vast expanse".

The end of the prayer requests that, in realizing this practice, we may stir up the depths of samsara, freeing all beings from suffering and accomplishing all of our wishes. Most fittingly, in ending these profound teachings, the Khenpos led us in recitation of mantra and prayers to the Great Compassionate One, Avalokiteshvara, to help assuage the suffering of those affected by the recent calamities around the world, such as the earthquakes in Turkey and Taiwan and the bombings in Russia.

The PBC-SF sangha was extremely grateful to have the Khenpos visit us again, and would like to extend our thanks to Gyatrul Rinpoche and all the members of Orgyen Dorje Den and particularly to Scott Globus, Les Collins and Lindy Steele for their help and support. ♦

— David Ridnell, a member of the PBC-SF and a longtime student of the Khenpos, resides in Albany, California.

PSL UPDATE from page 4

the sense of how exceedingly blessed Padma Samye Ling is. First, the Khenpos received word that the town has officially changed the name of the road on which the PSL property lies from Bullock Hill Road to Buddha High Road! Khen Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche expressed their great joy at this development during the final session of the retreat. Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche explained that this news had come as a complete surprise to them and had been entirely initiated by the townspeople, evidence of the tremendous good will the local residents have.

Also, two large parcels of land have been donated to Padma Samye Ling, assuring seclusion and long-range development of individual cabins for private retreat under the Khenpos' auspices. Bill Hinman has made a bounteous gift of 187 acres which has a lovely stream running through it. Five members of the Puerto Rican sangha have pooled resources to make a donation of another 108 acres which brings the total size of PSL to 500 acres! Vast, heartfelt thanks from the Khenpos and the sangha at large have been expressed to these donors for their fathomless kindness and generosity.

As a final note, the Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche would like to thank all the many sangha members and friends, too many to name here individually, for their kindness, prayers, financial donations, unselfish and unstinting energy in helping—in both large and small ways—to bring to fruition the wonderful progress at PSL in this past year. There is no doubt that this merit, generated from bodhicitta motivation, will serve to benefit all beings! ♦

—Tsogyal Drolma, Tsogyal is a longtime student of the Khenpos and resides in Northern California.

NEWS FROM INDIA: Young Sangha in Sarnath from page 7

and Phuntsok Wandrak are also teachers both from Khenpos' region of Tibet. Another teacher, Tashi Palden, instructs in calligraphy and writing. Shri Ramesh, a graduate of the Tibetan Institute of Higher Studies, teaches the 37 Bodhisattva Vows.

Recently, the monks went on their first trip outside Sarnath on a

very special journey to the Ganges River. The entire group, along with Ani Lorraine, traveled via public transportation—covered scooters—through the crowded markets of Benares and rode in a traditional boat on the Mother Ganges. Afterwards, they all enjoyed dinner at a restaurant, a dana offering from

one of our New York Sangha members.

Another special event was a ceremony in which the monks received much needed supplies: blankets, comforters, sheets, new robes, shorts and malas.

The Khenpos wish to thank everyone who has generously supported our young Sangha in Sarnath, and

(Continued on page 11)

A Brief Story of Tsasum Lingpa

excerpted from

*A Dream Yoga Retreat
with The Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche*

at

Dema Gochen Ling of the West, 1996

transcribed by Michael White

"Would you tell us an example of a dream that some great master, maybe Tsasum Lingpa, had while he was practicing dream yoga?" Asked one of the students from the Tennessee Sangha. Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche thought for a minute and then he and Khenpo Rinpoche spoke back and forth in Tibetan.

Then Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche said, "I will tell one of Tsasum Lingpa's dreams:

This dream came when he was only about 16 years old. Even at that time he had become a very important person. There was a monastery known as Kardagon Gompa and in that monastery he was recognized and given some important responsibilities. During Tsasum Lingpa's time that monastery had been a Gelupa monastery. During his stay there he had a dream and it recurred many times; he saw Guru Padmasambhava and the wisdom dakini Yeshe Tsogyal who told him that he must leave that place and go on to fulfill his mission and his goal in life. Even though he had many indications that he should leave—he was staying. He was always thinking about leaving but somehow he stayed.

Then one night he had a dream and in the dream a very beautiful young woman appeared. He didn't recognize her, and he wondered...who she was? Then, in that moment, she grabbed him and said, 'what is the matter with you, you don't recognize your own mother! How terrible!' She held him like a small child and then placed him in a big bathtub, and pulled all his clothes off. Then she called some other women and there were a lot of beautiful women around, and they were all pouring water over his head. All night long he dreamed that he was taking a shower. After the shower she dressed him and told him that now he must leave this monastery. After she had given him these instructions, he woke up. When he looked out it was already morning, and the sun was shining in his room. Some of his friends had brought him tea and tsampa which was sitting there.

He felt very happy and excited, but still felt that he had to leave. He drank the tea and then started thinking about leaving. He knew he had seen Yeshe Tsogyal in his dream and that he had even seen his mother—he knew he had better take their advice. Since he had responsibilities and everyone was depending on him he was trying to figure out what was the best way to leave. Now Tsasum Lingpa is a crazy yogi, and he decided that he would leave by acting like he had gone crazy. Then, he thought, no one will think it is bad that I have left. He thought that if he acted crazy they would be glad that he was gone.

As he drank his tea and ate his tsampa, he decided that the best way to leave would be to dress like he had gone crazy. He knew that he had to leave this place which was near where he was born, and go south toward the area which we are from. In this direction is a very sacred mountain and he knew that in this mountain was the key to the termas. It was necessary for him to get this key before he could go on to reveal more termas. In order to get the key, the timing is very important. You cannot delay beyond a certain time if you want to get the key. He knew that to get the key he had to be there within three days.

So he dressed up. All the monks wore their robes at a certain length, just where they almost touch the ground. Instead, he wore his robes all the way up to his knees. Then he found this fox cap: Monks never wear fox caps. Then he got a long sword: Monks may have a very small knife that they carry but monks never carry swords. He also found a bow and arrow, which he wore across his back. He held the sword up over his head and started shouting.

When some of the other monks first saw him they thought maybe he was doing something as a joke—they all knew that he was eccentric. No one tried to grab him or anything, so he went on his way and never came back. He later came to the village where we were born and stayed there for a while. He made many prophecies about the area and went to where our monastery is located. Of course at that time, there was nothing there, it was simply the slope of Jowo Zegyal; there he built a little hut of stone. It was a very small hut, more like a dollhouse...however, that hut was the start of Gochen Monastery which later grew up right on that spot." ♦

PSL DZOGCHEN RETREAT *from Cover Page*

to strengthen our motivation: "Let us all come to the state of the primordial where no emotions are disturbing us," they said. "Samsara and nirvana are the same. One's perspective is the main difference." In the week that followed, the Khenpos gave a line-by-line explication of the teaching, including demonstration of a complex series of mudras which accompany the mantras at the end of each set of prayers. This teaching, the Khenpos explained, is part of the main body of the terma teachings. "This is the teaching to practice, to meditate. This teaching should and must be settled in the heart and mind so that we can be matured in the state of love and wisdom."

The Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche explained the need for both the outer and inner offerings "so that duality cannot spoil or dilute it." They emphasized that in making this offering to the Buddha Vajrakilaya, we are offering what Vajrakilaya already has in order to accumulate merit for ourselves, to cut through our grasping and clinging, removing the territory of ego, creating more power, more openness in our minds and in our hearts. Everything is connected at the world level, the Khenpos reminded us. Nature co-exists with what we see, hear and smell. The union of all appearance and emptiness is the essence of enlightenment. The Khenpos teachings were as delightfully fresh and lively as always, combining lightness and humor with profound wisdom. In explaining the necessity of the concept of the union of appearance and emptiness, Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche quipped, "Without two feet we never see anybody walking."

The ten days of the retreat passed in the familiar rituals of morning practice of the Buddha Shakyamuni Sadhana, Fire Puja in the meadow in the afternoon, and evening practice of the Prajnaparamita Sutra on the deck facing the rising moon. This year's retreat, held a week later than usual, was lit by an amazingly beautiful full moon that rose behind the hill over the temple. Its intensity almost made flashlights unnecessary, though it also made star-gazing a less popular past-time than at previous retreats. An intense heat-wave and drought brought misery to much of the country during that week, but at PSL, mornings and evenings were refreshingly cool. And much needed rain blessed the celebrants of the Fire Puja with a drenching downpour one afternoon, just as they had concluded the circumambulation. The much needed rain was followed by a remarkable quadruple rainbow arching over the hill behind the temple.

Venerable Lama Chimed—the Khenpos' father, other lamas and retreatants were able to do afternoon practice in the temple at mid-week. Everyone was amazed at the wonderful progress being made there. The beautiful paintings of the Buddhas and lineage masters are nearly complete, in readiness for the official blessing ceremony next summer.

The opportunity to catch up on old acquaintances and share meals and daily chores rounded out a week of joy, friendliness and harmony. ♦

— Rose Both

TIBETAN MONK SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

On behalf of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center, we wish to thank all of the many sponsors who have pledged to support the monks residing at Pema Samye Cho Khorling monastery in Sarnath, India. Your continued commitment will help them immeasurably to receive food, clothing, medical care, and an extraordinary education preparing them for a lifetime of service in the Dharma.

Your monthly pledge will bring many blessings and incalculable merit to you. All of these monks are from Tibet or it's border areas—arriving with little or no possessions except their enthusiasm; some are as young as six years old. They are being cared for and guided in the most compassionate way through the stewardship of Ven. Khenpo Pema Gyaltzen, who was personally appointed by the Khenpos to direct the Shedra.

May your continued support and generosity to these monks shine brightly as the sun. Please continue to send your donations to PBC with kind attention to Ani Lorraine O'Rourke – Monk Sponsorship Program.



Khenchen Palden Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche surrounded by the monks now living at the monastic college they established in the Holy city of Sarnath in India.

KALMYKIA SANGHA *from page 5*

the way. No preparations were made for their shelter and support in Siberia. Although some were taken in by kindly people, many died of the cold and pneumonia. Dina's grandparents lost two children. In 1957, under Khrushchev, the Kalmyks were allowed to return home, and the Kalmyk Autonomous region was established. But the people were still not allowed to practice Buddhism. Evdokia Tserenova, an elderly doctor who had been sent with her husband to Siberia at the age of twenty, said that she visited Buryatia, where some Buddhist practice was allowed, and when she returned to Kalmykia she practiced the dharma in secret.

Now the people are trying to re-establish their faith and customs. They have decorated Elista with lotuses and erected a statue of Buddha. When they realized that a statue of Lenin had its back to Buddha, they turned the statue of Lenin so that it faced the Buddha! Even the discotheque is called "Nirvana".

After the lecture was over, the president of the bank showed us the chess village where the 1998 chess olympiad had taken place. Consisting of 108 cottages, one for each nation that participated, and a large central building, it had been constructed in nine months. They finished it the night before the contest was to begin.

We spent the night in Elista, and then went to the retreat center which was quite a long distance away on the bank of a lake. The land there is completely flat and covered with sage, which has a lovely fragrance. There are horses, cows and pigs which seem to roam freely, at least in the daytime. The retreat itself was at an abandoned soviet children's camp which was beautifully decorated with scenes from fairy tales. Since it was a children's camp, the facilities were very simple. The ladies room, for example, was five holes in concrete with no dividers. This saved a lot of time and gave rise to a good deal of hilarity. One makes friends fast that way. The Khenpos gave marvelous teachings, especially on Vajra Kilaya. People were asking for

various empowerments and transmissions, and the Khenpos always tried to fulfill every wish. At night we would leave happily, filled with blessings to walk to our

*Thank you
to all who made
donations
and have contributed
in so many ways
to the
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*May your generosity
blossom
as summer flowers
for the sake of
all sentient beings.*

rooms under the brightly shining stars.

There was very little meat available, and some Kalmykians bought a live sheep for meat for the retreat. Naturally some mischievous Moscovites (or St. Petersburgians) sneaked out at night and let it go. The Khenpos were worried that the sheep would starve, so they told people to search for it and bring it back. It was Buddha's birthday, and the

Khenpos told the story of the custom in Tibet on this feast of ransoming an animal, consecrating it as a monk, and putting an earring in its ear to serve as a sign that it must never be killed, and should always be cared for. So this sheep was found and ordained "Lama Tseter" (Lama Treasure of life). It was a very nice sheep with golden eyes. It was brought to Astrakhan where there is a Nyingma temple and it could live with sangha.

After the retreat we all went to Ikkiboro (Big Hill—not very big by our standards but the only one in the area). There had been a beautiful temple there which had been destroyed by the Bolsheviki. The Khenpos did a very beautiful fire puja attended by people from all over the region. Then we returned to Elista for the night where we stayed with Evdokia and her family. The next day at the airport, we bid a teary farewell to our new friends. ♦

NEWS FROM INDIA: Young Sangha in Sarnath *from page 8*

encourage all who would like to contribute in any way to this wonderful blossoming mandala. Some items on the wish list include personal storage trunks, writing and study materials (an ongoing necessity!), additional robes, and warmer clothing such as sweaters for the winter.

*May all the temples and monasteries,
All the readings and recitations
(of dharma) flourish.
May the sangha always be in harmony,
And may their aspirations be achieved.*

Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers International

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Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche have established Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers to preserve in its entirety the authentic message of Buddha Shakyamuni and Guru Padmasambhava, and in particular to teach the tradition of Nyingmapa and Vajrayana Buddhism.

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BY MANJUSHRIMITRA
ONE OF THE FOREMOST
DZOGCHEN MASTERS AND PRINCIPAL
STUDENT OF GARAB DORJE

ACCORDING TO THE DZOGCHEN VIEW
BY

VENERABLE KHENCHEN
PALDEN SHERAB RINPOCHE
AND
VENERABLE KHENPO
TSEWANG DONGYAL RINPOCHE

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Winter 2000

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Padmasambhava Buddhist Center is very happy to announce the Annual Winter Retreat 2000

Dola Sershun by Manjushrimitra

According to the Dzogchen View with The Venerable Buddhist Scholars:

Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche
Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

January 15 - January 22

First Unitarian Church, 635 Prosperity Farms Rd, North Palm Beach, Florida
Evening Practices at Palm Beach Dharma Center 1205 No. Federal Highway, Lake Worth

A stone may look quite ordinary, yet deep within it contains precious gold. Like the stone, we appear to be ordinary beings, however, we all possess deep within us the innate Buddha nature. But how do we actually reveal or uncover this primordial wisdom, this precious "gold"?

The Venerable Khenpo brothers, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche, begin by conferring the empowerment of Guru Dorje Trollo, a wrathful



emanation of Guru Padmasambhava, and considered a Buddha of the new millennium, laying the foundation for a peaceful and harmonious future of an enlightened world. During the week long retreat, The Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche will give daily teachings according to the Dzogchen view on the Dola Sershun by Manjushrimitra, one of the foremost Dzogchen masters and principal student of Garab Dorje. These precious teachings and practices will help us to reveal our hidden gold—our own true nature.

Schedule	10 am Saturday, January 15, Opening ceremonies (A schedule of teachings and practices will be posted at the retreat) Closing ceremonies/ Tsog Saturday, January 22.
Registration	9:00 am - 10:00 am; 25% deposit is requested for planning purposes. Suggested Donation: \$295 PBC Members, \$40/day; \$395 Non-members, \$50/day.
What to bring	Sitting cushions and practice books. (Books will also be available for a small donation from the bookstore) Suitable clothing—nighttime temperatures may be cool; daytime may be very warm.
Interviews	Schedule for interviews with the Khenpos will be announced & shall be posted during the retreat.
Area Lodging	Area motels will be available at group rates. A list will be provided upon receipt of your registration. Sangha members may open their homes for out of town guests; please make arrangements with friends early.
Travel	Palm Beach International (PBI) is five minutes away; Fort Lauderdale Airport is 60 minutes south.
Note	NO Taping and no pets, please. No alcohol or drugs.

Mail this form below to: Palm Beach Dharma Center, 1205 No. Federal Highway, Lake Worth, Fl 33461
For further information, call Joe Scarpa (561) 368-5853, Nancy Ash (561) 432-0243, Joanie Andras (561) 276-3735

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Enclosed please find my deposit check in the amount of \$ _____