Melody of Dharma

- **The Philosophy and Practice of Tantra**
  A Teaching by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin
- **Welcoming the New Baby Daughter**
  Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya
- **Remembering Great Masters**
  Pajapati - the First Buddhist Nun
  A Mother's Blessing – A Poem by Pajapati

No.7
2011 • SEP

A Publication of the Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
Dedicated to the Dharma Activities of
His Holiness the Sakya Trizin

CONTENTS

2 **Song from Gray Earth** – A Poem by Annie Bien

4 **From the Editors**

5 **Sakya Nunnery**

8 **Remembering Great Masters**
Pajapati - the First Buddhist Nun
A Mother's Blessing – A Poem by Pajapati

11 **The Philosophy and Practice of Tantra**
– A Teaching by H.H. the Sakya Trizin

16 **Maitreya's Semtsema**
– A Teaching by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche

22 **News from the Phodrang**
Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya

25 **Great Sakya Women**
- 25 • Great Khön Jetsunmas – by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin
- 28 • Her Eminence Jetsün Kushok Chimey Luding
- 29 • Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya

30 **Dharma Activities**
- 30 • Lamdre 2011
- 46 • H.H. the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche: North & South American Teaching Tour
- 51 • Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche: European Teaching Tour

Publisher: The Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
Executive Editor: Ani Jamyang Wangmo
Managing Editor: Patricia Donohue
Art Director/Designer: Chang Ming-Chuan
Photos: Cristina Vanza, Adam Boyer, Nancy Jo, Lotus Johnson, Marianna Orlova

Editing Team:
Mrs. Yang Dol Tsatultsang (Dagmo Kalden's mother); Rosemarie Heimscheidt, Terri Lee, Tess Abbott, Gennaro Serra
Cover Photo: Sakya Rinchen Chöling

TSECHEN KUNCHAB LING
WALDEN, NEW YORK – JUNE 2011

Song from Gray Earth, for His Holiness Sakya Trizin

In homage to His Holiness the Sakya Trizin on His 67th Birthday, we preface this issue with a eulogy that was offered to Him during the cultural activities held as part of the official inauguration of Tsechen Kunchab Ling in June 2011.

Manjushri, the sweet-voiced one,
bodhisattva of transcendent wisdom,
scanned the galaxies,
the book of knowledge resting on the lotus
in his left hand,
a page lifting in the evening breeze,
words floated toward ears
straining for knowledge.

His legs crossed, he sat in afternoon glow,
his smooth skin tinged in amber
darkening to orange when the sea
began to swallow the sun.
Day lay low slung yielding to night.
His mind scoured thought waves encircling the earth.

He raised a flaming sword
in his right hand: sunset caught a glint
of blade slicing downwards,
hewing ignorance from dull minds.
Manjushri would emanate where desire tore
at the senses.

Across the Roof of the World,
in Tibet, gray earth sloped up toward the skyline.
A sudden breeze then stillness stirred the atmosphere,
it was the movement of buddhas'
and bodhisattvas' robes.

Manjushri saw this would be the place
where he could return again and again
for eight hundred years,
embodied as a human being.
Wisdom sages would arrive and teach
generation after generation of living beings,
infusing those longing to know with crystal minds.
They would pour the water of knowledge in a stream,
from one vase to another.

The buddhas and bodhisattvas
surrounding Manjushri smiled in agreement—yes.
They pointed to the Khön family.
This one returning again and again
would be the holder of the Sakya throne,
the gray earth throne, rising upon the earth
as a monastery of learning.

Descended from a legendary race,
the Khöns are half celestial divinity, half man,
mixed with the strength of both.
This one is the forty-first throne holder.

He is His Holiness,
Sakya Trizin who brings the sacred syllables
painted on the rocks from the Land of Snows to descend
through the crowns of our heads, down into our hearts.

Attend closely now.
For you will find sitting before you,
the Buddha of Wisdom, Manjushri, as a man,
a teacher ready to impart his unfathomable wisdom.
Look at him, present before you.
He travels the globe.
He sits before us, serene in simplicity
not needing to announce himself.

Let loose those thoughts bursting through our eyes.
We, filled with modern woes behave the same as those
in olden timeswhose ancient woes were no less fearful
than our modern ones.
We pass through time carrying our actions with us.

He left when his country's borders were being pressed
into a new shape like an elastic band ready to snap;
the time of mutual respect being upturned
in upheaval as one country impinged another.
The emperors and empresses remained
only as museum pieces,
voices were lifted to the arrival of another power,
devoid of the spirit. For the spirit torments minds by
wanting meaning.

Forced to leave his homeland, he is not daunted.
Wherever he goes he is an eternal flame
lighting us when we are afraid of the dark.
He shows us our home is in our hearts.
With the gentle nudge of a mother,
he pushes us forward,
yet he stands ready to receive us if we fall.

He speaks our language
so that we will have no excuse
but ourselves, not to know.
His voice is Manjushri's name,
he speaks in glorious smooth song.
Thoughts flow from him into us,
a healing balm, delivered to us in a steady flow.
He smiles now. This smile comes from fifty years
of knowing us and teaching us,
his earring swings in the breeze.
Our faith grows from watching his unshakeable heart.

What kind of person does not need to be
acknowledged for all he gives us?
Who is most pleased to see us discover for ourselves?
Our kind-hearted teacher His Holiness Sakya Trizin.
He shifts the very air we breathe.
As hopeful children, no matter our age,
we long to be happy, wise, calm,
sweet-voiced, just as he.

Dare we walk past the periphery
of the universe where the night stars twinkle
with crickets strumming an evening song?
Thoughts in my mind dance like
the crackling fire before me.
Some impulse draws
my body forward through the flames.

A circle of diamond-encrusted thunderbolts radiate
through a ring of fire.
Will it scorch,
or is this just another illusion of the mind….
His Holiness the Throne holder smiles.

My feet pull me to the unknown. I step forward.
In the shadows I see him glowing as Manjushri.
He is our ever-prepared,
ever-present mother for the Dalai Lama,
for the Tibetan people,
now poised in our world bringing
Dharma to us in this time.

I hear his melody and harmony:
drawing us together, disturbing nothing,
embodying all the Khöns and great Sakya teachers
in effortless step into our lives.

May you stay with us and not leave us
May we recall your kindness,
May we sing your praise.

Sarva Mangalam!

by Annie Bien
with careful editing by Khenpo Pema Wangdak

From The Editors

First and foremost, the staff at Melody of Dharma would like to extend its warmest wishes to His Holiness the Sakya Trizin on His 67th Birthday. We make the wholehearted aspiration that these wishes may be renewed time and time again for many years to come. May His Holiness live long. Every issue of Melody of Dharma is an offering to His Holiness, but it is with redoubled devotion that we dedicate this present one to Him, and pray that He bless its pages.

We would, however, also like to pay tribute in this edition to the nuns of Sakya Nunnery, whose path of joy and generosity serves as a glowing example of service to the Dharma and as a source of inspiration for all practitioners.

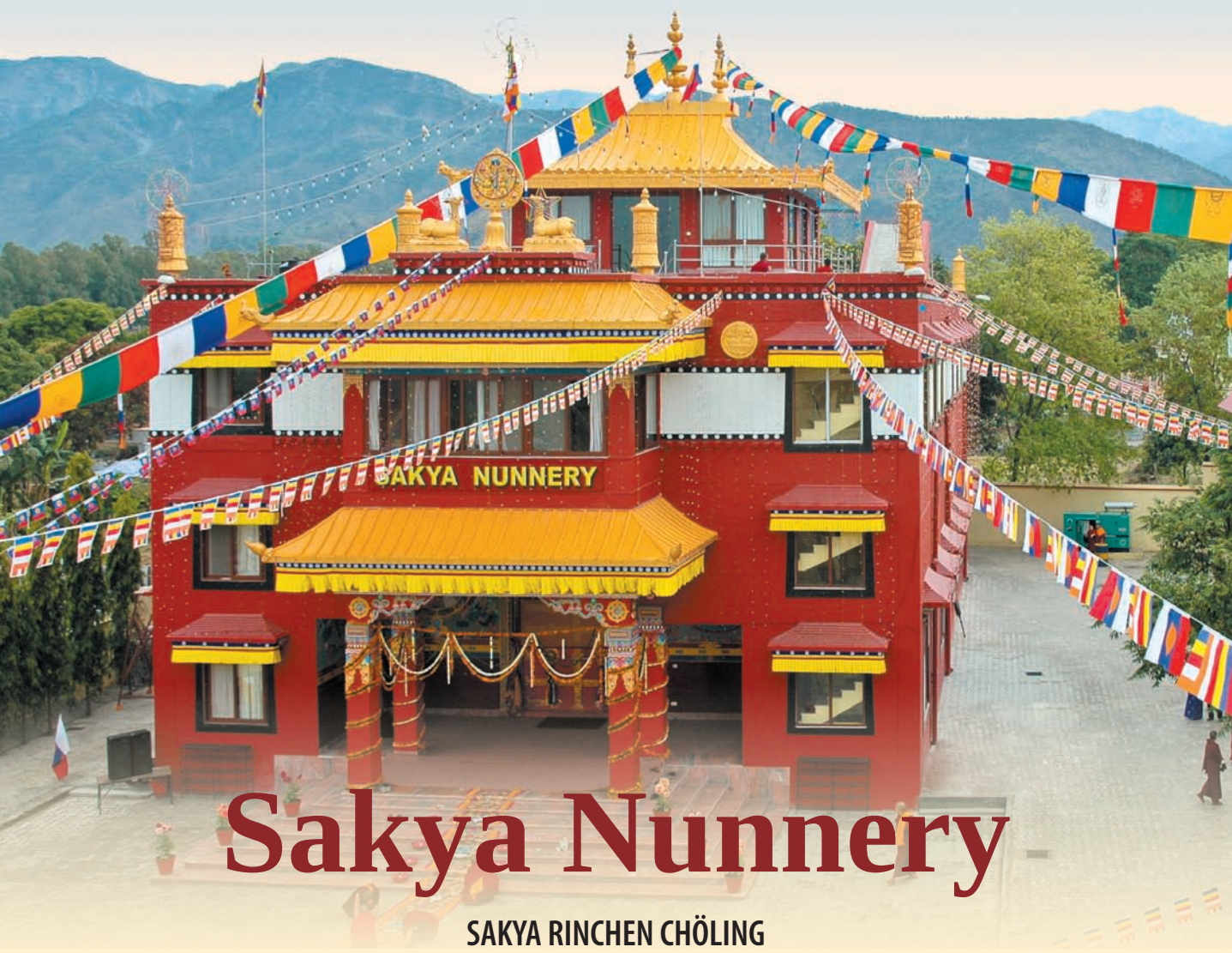
We would equally like to render homage to the great Sakya women who have graced the Khön lineage with their qualities throughout the centuries. This takes on particular significance with the birth on the 2nd of April of Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo, the newest member of the Sakya Dolma Phodrang. We also wish her a long and happy life.

We are, as always, pleased and grateful that we can offer to our readers the wisdom of our Gurus' teachings, and that we can share with them the Dharma activities that they have undertaken in these past months. The following pages will hopefully allow many students to revisit their days spent with His Holiness and the Dungseys in the course of their recent American and European teaching tours.

Some of the places that were recently graced with the presence of our holy Teachers currently find themselves in the wake of a natural disaster that subjected a vast number of people to an inexpressible amount of suffering. To them we offer our deepest feelings of solicitude, and pray that the blessings of His Holiness and the Dungseys lead them to a prompt and complete recovery.

We wish our readers a happy and fruitful read.

The Editing Team



Sakya Nunnery

SAKYA RINCHEN CHÖLING

Sakya Rinchen Chöling, the only Sakya nunnery outside Tibet, is located in the Tibetan colony of Dekyiling, a few minutes' drive from His Holiness the Sakya Trizin's Palace and the Sakya Centre in Rajpur. The Nunnery has over 200 nuns, ranging from ages 9 to 40. Its teaching and administrative staff numbers 15 in total.

Some of the nuns come from Nepal, Bhutan, and neighbouring Himalayan regions. Most of them, however, escaped from Tibet, thereby subjecting themselves to an arduous and dangerous journey on foot through the mountains, leaving behind family and friends. The Nunnery is their only home as, in most cases, it is impossible for them to return to their homeland, even for a visit.

A small group of nuns arrived in 1993 from Tibet and were housed near the Sakya Centre. This group soon grew, and the need for a permanent nunnery became a pressing issue. It had long been the wish of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin that a monastery be built for Sakyapa nuns, and so it was under His auspices that the Sakya Nunnery was officially established in 1998. It provides a welcoming and nurturing environment in which the nuns can study and practice the core Buddhist teachings.

Initially, the Nunnery functioned under the tutelage of the Sakya Centre, which managed it and took on all its expenses. It is currently registered as an autonomous non-profit society and although it does receive a small income from the pujas that its nuns perform for the community, its financial needs are met in their greater part by donations and sponsorships.

Participating in the building effort

A pervading sense of fun

In 2009, construction of the Nunnery's new temple and its beautiful shrine room was finished, and its inauguration by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin took place in March of that year. The nuns are not ones to shirk, and so they enthusiastically participated in the building effort, and were seen hard at work in every stage of the construction.

The shrine room has since then served as venue for special teachings by His Holiness, as well as for special ceremonies, often attracting large assemblies. Models of grace combined with hard work, the nuns have always hosted these events with the utmost generosity and efficiency.

Daily life for the nuns consists mainly of participating in daily rituals, which are held in the shine room. The nuns also perform pujas in response to special requests and, in addition to this, they perform 100,000 Green Tara pujas every year in order to avert obstacles and create favourable conditions for themselves and others.

A good part of their day is taken up by the upkeep of the Nunnery, which is no small task. Most nuns share in the cleaning, shopping and general maintenance, while a rota system is in place for kitchen duty. Administrative work is taken care of by senior nuns.

The nuns in their new shrine room

Nuns and lay disciples during the Vajrayogini blessing by His Holiness, 2011

The nuns performing a puja

The nuns light butter lamps on behalf of devotees

The nuns also attend daily classes, where they are taught Buddhist Scriptures, Tibetan, Hindi, English and Maths. Tuition is available at both primary and secondary levels.

The Nunnery is usually a beehive of activity, where enthusiasm and good humour seem to be the order of the day. It is to the credit of its residents that they have created an environment that is both sacred and cheerful, and that the Nunnery stands strong as an example of a thriving community of nuns.

Preparing pechas

Remembering Great Masters

PAJAPATI

The First Buddhist Nun

Maha Pajapati Gotami Theri was Gautama Buddha's aunt, stepmother, and first female disciple. She became a highly realised practitioner, and played a fundamental role in the history of Buddhism. It is thanks to her initiative and persistence that women gained the freedom to be ordained.

Born into the aristocracy of the Koliyan clan in India, she and her elder sister Maya were given in marriage to Suddhodana, King of the Sakyas. Maya was made queen and gave birth to a son, Siddharta Gautama, who was to become the Lord Buddha, but she sadly died only a week after He was born. And so it was up to Pajapati, herself already breast-feeding her infant son Nanda, to assume the role of queen and to foster her cherished sister's newborn. Queen Pajapati nursed Gautama and raised Him as if He were her own child.

When He was twenty-nine, Gautama came to realise the futility of His mundane life, and became resolute to discover the true meaning of existence and a conclusive solution to the suffering of beings.

And so, He left the comfort and luxury of His father's palace in Kapilavastu in order to pursue the life of a spiritual seeker. After He reached enlightenment six years later, the Buddha returned to Kapilavastu and began to teach the Truth that He had discovered in His meditative absorption. Many of His family members, including His father Suddodhana, His son Rahula and Pajapati's son Nanda became His disciples, as did numerous Sakya clan members. Their numbers grew to such an extent that an order of monks was created, wherein renunciates could support each other in their practice of the Buddha's doctrine.

The Buddha gave many teachings in those days, which anyone could attend, including women. Foremost among His female disciples was Pajapati, who was infallibly diligent in heeding the Buddha's instructions, and unswervingly espoused their wisdom. As her understanding of His view deepened and her own discernment grew, other women began to seek her advice, and Pajapati soon found herself with hundreds of female disciples.

The death of her husband King Suddhodana left Pajapati in mourning, but now released from social responsibilities, and free to renounce worldly life and dedicate herself entirely to spiritual pursuit. Although there had never been any objection to women attending the Buddha's teachings, the question of

their taking robes had never been brought up. It was unheard of. Pajapati, however, felt the burning desire to be a renunciate, and so she became determined to make it possible for herself and other women to take robes. She presented herself before the Buddha, requesting Him to ordain her and to allow her to create an order of nuns. The Buddha was unequivocal in his refusal, saying: "Don't set your heart on women being able to do this." Pajapati was dismayed and threw herself at His feet, supplicating Him to reconsider His answer. But the Buddha remained adamant in His decision.

Pajapati didn't give up. She and her followers shaved their hair, donned monastic robes and walked close to a hundred leagues to Vesali, where the Buddha was staying at the time. Once again Pajapati pleaded with Him, and once again the Buddha resisted. When asked by His disciple Ananda why He was so immovable in His decision, and whether it was because women were not capable of reaching realisation, the Buddha replied: "No, women are perfectly capable of becoming enlightened." Ananda felt much sympathy for the women's cause, and this acknowledgement by the Buddha made him determined to intercede in their favour. He set upon obtaining the Buddha's consent to Pajapati's plea, until the Master finally granted His permission.

So it was that an order of nuns was created, albeit subject to strict rules that, in their essence, stipulated that bikkshunis should always defer to bikkshus, whatever the circumstances. But Pajapati was satisfied, and gladly accepted the conditions. Along with her community of bikkshunis, she withdrew to a monastery, finally unencumbered by mundane activities and free to dedicate all her attention to religious pursuit.

Pajapati lived for well over a century, and eventually reached the highest degree of realisation. When she felt her time approaching, she went to the Buddha and sought His permission to leave her body. The Buddha consented and, in order to demonstrate to all the capacity of women to attain full realisation, He bade Pajapati display the supernatural powers that she had acquired as part of her spiritual attainment.

When they learned of the nearing of their revered teacher's passing, Pajapati's bikkshunis formed the aspiration not to remain on this earth deprived of her guidance, and they, in their turn, requested the Buddha's release. To them too, the Buddha granted His blessing. And so, Pajapati and her nuns withdrew to their monastery in order to enter their final jhanic absorption. Pajapati was the first to attain the final dissolution of the elements and then, one by one, her bikkshunis equally freed themselves from the fetters of conditioned existence.

Pajapati's cremation was accompanied by many miraculous signs, such as a profusion of flowers falling from the skies and exquisite perfumes filling the air. With the Buddha Himself leading the proceedings, a funeral cortege worthy of a universal empress accompanied the queen and her bikkshunis to the pyre.

Thanks to the merits accrued by Pajapati throughout her previous lives, Pajapati had been blessed with spending this last one with the Buddha, and had thus been able to reach the final attainment. Pajapati faced many difficulties throughout her life, but her impeccable character and formidable courage and tenacity always brought her victory over adversity.

Buddhists owe her an enormous debt of gratitude, not only for nurturing the Buddha when He was young, but also for the shining example that she set. Her passionate thirst for the Dharma serves as an inspiration not only to bikkshunis, but also to all practitioners intent on attaining ultimate liberation.

A Mother's Blessing – A Poem by Pajapati

Most of what we know about Pajapati comes from a Pali Canon scripture called the 'Therigata', or 'Verses of the Elder Nuns'. It is a collection of poems composed by the first Buddhist nuns, and it is believed to be one of the first collective works written by women.
Following is the first poem of the book, which was composed by Pajapati.

Buddha! Hero! Praise be to you!
You foremost among all beings!
You who have released me from pain,
And so many other beings too.

All suffering has been understood.
The source of craving has withered.
Cessation has been touched by me
On the noble eight-fold path.

I've been mother and son before;
And father, brother — grandmother too.
Not understanding what was real,
I flowed-on without finding [peace].

But now I've seen the Blessed One!
This is my last compounded form.
The on-flowing of birth has expired.
There's no more re-becoming now.

See the gathering of followers:
Putting forth effort, self controlled,
Always with strong resolution
—This is how to honor the Buddhas!

Surely for the good of so many
Did Maya give birth to Gotama,
Who bursts asunder the mass of pain
Of those stricken by sickness and death.

Translated from the Pali by Andrew Olendzki, Access to Insight, 4 April 2011

Teachings on Tantra (part1)

The Philosophy and Practice of Tantra

by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin

The Tantric path begins as the Buddhist path. There is no important philosophical difference between Tantric Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism - the difference is one of emphasis and method.

Let us first look at the practical beginning of the Tantric path. It is said that the Tantric path begins as the Buddhist path, so it is not surprising that the first step on the Tantric path is the taking of refuge. In

the Tibetan Tantric tradition, refuge is taken with a qualified Guru who represents a recognised spiritual lineage. In a sense, the act of taking refuge is an initiation. First and foremost, it represents an initiation into the Buddhist religion, and it is the first step that we take on the Buddhist path to liberation.

The reasons for taking refuge in the triple gem are three: fear, faith and compassion. Fear, in the sense that we take refuge in the Triple Gem out of fear of the suffering of samsara; faith, meaning that we believe that only the Triple Gem has the power to relieve us from the suffering of samsara; compassion, because, just as we fear the suffering of samsara, so do all other living beings, and so we take refuge in the Triple Gem for the sake of all living beings.

The next step on the Tantric path is the production of the enlightenment thought (bodhicitta). The creation of the enlightenment thought is closely connected to the vows of the Bodhisattva. In brief, the essence of the Bodhisattva's practice is the altruistic wish to benefit all living beings. Like the taking of refuge, the creation of the enlightenment thought is a necessary preliminary to the practice of the Tantric path.

The following step is to reflect on death, impermanence and the human condition. We should recognise that the happiness and favourable circumstances that we enjoy at the present moment are not permanent. These will all disappear at the time of death and, moreover, there is no certainty as to when death will occur. Reflecting on death and impermanence encourages us to practise the Dharma without delay.

Next, we should understand the law of karma – or the law of cause and effect, and its relation to our actions. We should come to realise that good actions such as generosity and compassion are the cause of happiness, while unwholesome actions like selfishness and hatred are the cause of suffering. As there is no way of avoiding the results – good or bad - of actions, we should strive to do only good actions and to avoid unwholesome ones.

There is no important philosophical difference between Tantric Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism - the difference is one of emphasis and method.

In the Tibetan Tantric tradition, certain preliminary practices are usually performed before entering the Tantric path proper. The preliminary practices comprise four parts. The first is the recitation of the refuge formula one hundred thousand times. The second part involves the recitation of the one-hundred-syllable Vajrasattva mantra one hundred thousand times. The third part consists of the recitation of a formula in praise of the Guru one hundred thousand times. The last part represents performing one hundred thousand mandala offerings. In this practice, one symbolically offers the universe for the sake of one's spiritual progress.

The first part of the preliminary practices serves to set us firmly on the Buddhist path. The second is meant to purify us of past and present negative tendencies. The third establishes a strong bond between ourselves and our Guru, while the last helps to rid us of selfish tendencies through the symbolic act of giving, while enabling us to accumulate the merit necessary to be successful on the path.

After completing all these preliminaries, we

may ask the Guru for initiation into the meditational practices associated with one of the Tantric tutelary deities – emanations of the Buddha. Initiation into these practices must be given by a qualified Guru who represents a recognised spiritual lineage. Tantric initiation enables us to visualise and identify ourselves with the purified universe of the tutelary deity – the symbolic representation of the enlightened experience.

Tantra is concerned with the means of achieving spiritual progress, not with philosophy.

The similarity that is seen to exist between Hindu and Buddhist Tantra has sometimes led some to assume that what distinguished Buddhist philosophy from its Hindu counterpart had been forsaken with the development of Tantra. This, however, is not true, because Tantra is concerned with the means of achieving spiritual progress, not with philosophy. So the similarity between Hindu and Buddhist Tantric practices is not an indication of Hindu and Buddhist philosophies merging. The fact, for example, that a number of terms and deities are shared by Hindu and Buddhist Tantra, does not mean that Tantric Buddhism has strayed from the essence of Buddhist thought.

For instance, although a number of terms like "svabhava" and "atma" that are commonly found in Hinduism also occur in Buddhist Tantric writings, they don't have the same meaning. The term "svabhava" which in Hinduism means the existence of an independent nature or essence, is used in Buddhist Tantra to emphasise the emptiness of all things. Thus it is said that the nature of all things is emptiness. Similarly, the term "atma", or self, is merely used to identify one with emptiness.

The fact that several deities are worshipped by both Hindus and Buddhists does not mean that Buddhist philosophy has lost its distinctive character. In the first place, the Hindu deities included in the Buddhist Tantric pantheon are deities of lesser importance. Secondly, since both Buddhism and Hinduism developed within the Indian cultural context, it is not surprising that a number of deities should be adopted by both traditions. Such deities are in themselves neither Buddhist nor Hindu, but belong to Indian culture.

In short, Tantra is concerned with methodology more than with philosophy. Not only Buddhist and Hindu, but Jain and even Islamic Tantric practices show many similarities. Despite the similarities between Buddhist and Hindu Tantric practices, Tantric Buddhism has always retained its critical philosophical attitude.

The focus on the importance of mind is the starting point of Tantric Buddhist philosophy.

It was mentioned above that there is no important philosophical difference between Tantric Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism contains two principal philosophical schools or standpoints – that of 'mind' and that of 'emptiness'.

These standpoints were explained at length by Asanga and Nagarjuna, who are recognised by the Tibetan Tantric tradition as the fathers of Buddhist Tantra as we know it. And hence, there are two chief elements in Buddhist Tantric philosophy – 'mind' and 'emptiness'.

The focus on the importance of mind is the starting point of Tantric Buddhist philosophy. Mind is the first step in the process of gaining freedom, not the last, because in order to gain freedom, one must also understand emptiness.

The process of gaining freedom is explained in the Tibetan Tantric tradition by means of four steps illustrated by examples. The first step expresses the idea that our situation is dependent upon our mind through a series of examples. When for instance someone has taken alcohol, he may feel that the ground is moving, or that he has great strength. Again, one who is suffering from jaundice perceives white objects as being yellow. These examples show that our perceptions are conditioned by the state of our mind.

The second stage is illustrated by the example of a magical illusion. The point here is that although perceptions depend upon mind, mind itself is illusory. Mind in fact is nothing in itself. It is neither within nor without, neither long nor short. Just as when a magical apparatus is assembled, the magical illusion appears, but when the apparatus is not assembled, the illusion does not appear, so all experience is like a magical illusion.

The third step is to understand all things as interdependently originated. This is also illustrated by means of examples. For instance, if a number of vessels filled with clear water are placed outside on a moonlit and cloudless night, the moon's reflection will appear in the vessels of water. If any of the conditions such as cloudlessness are missing, the moon's reflection will not appear. Just in the same way, all things appear as the result of a combination of conditions – that is, they are interdependently originated.

Finally, all things are understood to be inexpressible. This is shown by means of examples like the following one: although a sprout is produced from a seed, it cannot be said either that the sprout and the seed are identical or that they are different. So the relationship between the seed and the sprout is inexpressible. So it is that all things that are interdependently originated are inexpressible in the ultimate sense.

The four steps of Buddhist Tantric theory illustrated in the foregoing examples show how the ideas of mind and emptiness work together. The first step calls for seeing all things as dependent upon mind, while the next three steps call for seeing all things as similar to a magical illusion, interdependently originated and inexpressible – in other words, empty.

Mind is the key to changing our way of seeing things. Mind is responsible for the experience of samsara and nirvana. But mind is nothing in itself – it is empty.

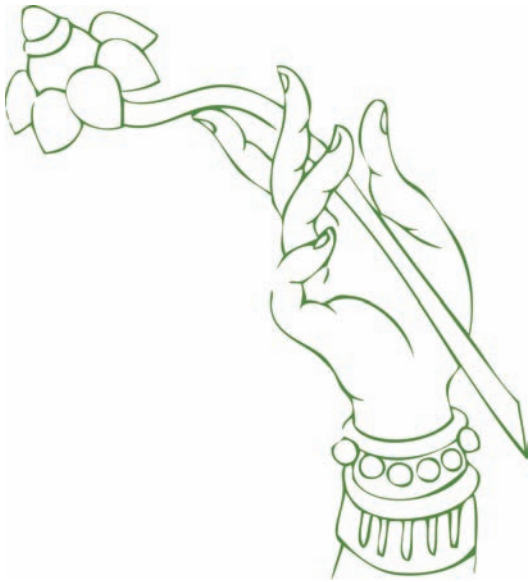
So here, mind is the key to changing our way of seeing things. Mind is responsible for the experience of samsara and nirvana. But mind is nothing in itself – it is empty. If mind had a nature of its own, it would always create either samsara or nirvana according to

its nature, but mind is like a crystal or a white cloth. If we place a crystal next to a blue or red object, the crystal will appear blue or red accordingly. If we dye a cloth red or blue, it will turn red or blue accordingly. So too with the mind. If it is conditioned by attachment, aversion and ignorance, it appears as samsara, but if it is conditioned by enlightenment, it appears as nirvana – the experience of a Buddha.

Tantra turns the energy of the defilements – desire and hatred – into the means of liberation. So Tantra is a kind of spiritual Judo in which the strength of one's enemy is used to gain victory over him.

It is said that the practice of Tantra can speed up the process of gaining liberation or enlightenment, but why should this be so? It is because Tantra provides more efficient means of changing ordinary experience into enlightened experience. The key to the accelerating effect of Tantric practices is the fact that Tantra employs a variety of powerful psycho-physical forces which it deliberately manipulates in order to achieve more rapid results. This enables one who practises Tantra to achieve quickly – even in a single lifetime - a level of spiritual maturity which it would otherwise take him many lifetimes to realise.

Whoever practises Tantra is concerned with the control and manipulation of psychological and physical energy. He or she seeks to direct that energy toward attaining the goal of enlightenment. The energy is in itself pure since it shares the nature of all things, which is emptiness. Quantitatively, the energy produced from powerful emotions like desire and anger far outweighs that produced from milder emotions. If properly used, these powerful forces may be transformed in such a way as to contribute to our progress toward the goal of attaining enlightenment. Tantra turns the energy of the defilements – desire and hatred – into the means of liberation. So Tantra is a kind of spiritual Judo in which the strength of one's enemy is used to gain victory over him.Although it is said that Tantra provides a means of achieving rapid spiritual progress, this does not mean that Tantra is an easy path. It requires strict adherence to the rules of good conduct and a sincere and dedicated approach to the practice of the spiritual path. If one brings these qualities to the practice of Tantra, then only is one's swift progress toward the goal of enlightenment assured.



Maitreya's Semtsema

A Teaching by The Most Venerable Khenchen Appey Rinpoche (part 3)

Meitreya's 'Semtsema' is one of the teachings by the great Bodhisattva Maitreya that were brought down to earth from Tushita Heaven and given to Arya Asanga.

It is one of the attributes of the Buddha that His qualities are infinite and so, as hard as one may try to describe them, one can never even come close to embracing them all.

We have already described the first set of the Buddha's qualities, which are referred to as 'the four immeasurables' - the Buddha's attributes of kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity. We have also seen that the Buddha has attained thorough liberation, which means that not only is He free from all obscurations, but also that He is able to help beings become free of their own defilements. He has

dominion over all phenomena, which serves to induce and inspire beings onto the path. His mind is liberated from the obscurations of knowledge and defilements. He has exhaustive meditative Samadhi, and can transmute all the ingredients that produce appearances. As He is omniscient and omnipresent, He embraces all knowable things with His knowledge, and exposure to His mind liberates beings. He has the capacity for spontaneous achievement, for achieving anything whatsoever, without any difficulty whatsoever. The Buddha is endowed with the supreme intelligence of distinctive awareness – He knows all phenomena, their nature, their base and definition, and He knows how to expound all of these.

As He is omniscient and omnipresent, He embraces all knowable things with His knowledge, and exposure to His mind liberates beings.

And so, the next set of qualities of the Buddha that are eulogised in these verses is that of the six supreme clairvoyances. The first among these is what is called the supreme knowledge of magical clairvoyance. According to this, the Buddha can actualise His clairvoyance by creating non-existing manifestations and dissolving existing ones. Such an ability is called the clairvoyance of creating magical manifestations.

The second clairvoyance is that of reading people's minds, their thoughts, their feelings and emotions, and their state of mind.

The third is the clairvoyance of divine ear. This refers to the visual and aural clairvoyance according to which He can see and hear all things without any difficulty, whether the object of His perception is gross or subtle, near or far.

The fourth is the clairvoyance of clearly recalling all past incarnations – not only His own, but also those of others – past lives, physical appearances, habits, experiences, activities.

The fifth is called the clairvoyance of divine eye – this is rather similar to the third one, except that this clairvoyance of divine eye means that the Enlightened One is able to see the future, everything that will happen in the future and in future incarnations. This means that the Buddha can predict and prophesy all future occurrences.

The sixth and last one is the clairvoyance of total exhaustion. This refers to the total elimination of contaminations. As beings progress along the path, they gradually purify themselves of their obscurations, and achieve certain stages of purification, such as the first bhumi. The Fully Enlightened Buddha has the clairvoyance of seeing the degree to which each being has eliminated his or her contaminations.

The author then goes on to describe the activities of these six clairvoyances. The Buddha performs three kinds of miraculous activities – those of body, speech and mind.

The Fully Enlightened Buddha has the clairvoyance of seeing the degree to which each being has eliminated his or her contaminations. He miraculously appears to those who are spiritually ripe, wherever they are, in order to train them.

The activity related to the first clairvoyance of creating miraculous manifestations, is that of the

Enlightened One miraculously appearing to those who are spiritually ripe, wherever they are, in order to train them. This is a miraculous activity of the body of the Buddha.

He performs this sort of activity in order to arouse faith in the minds of those potential trainees before whom He manifests. During the time when the Fully Enlightened One was in our world, it was quite common for Him to appear miraculously in certain places. If He needed to go somewhere that was too far for Him to walk, He would not only travel there miraculously, but He would also invite whoever shared the ability to travel miraculously to join Him, giving them a special piece of wood that they were to bring with them.

As an example of this, there was, at the time of the Buddha, a famous Dharma sponsor by the name of Anathapindika. He had a daughter called Mahā-Subhaddā, or Mahadabhadri, who was married to a king in a distant land where the Buddha's teachings were not heeded. The king and his subjects adhered to other religious practices, and paid obeisance to preceptors of other spiritual persuasions, often making great feast offerings in their honour. Since Mahadabhadri was a devout Buddhist, this caused her much grief. But one day, she managed to persuade her husband to invite the Buddha to his palace.

Mahadabhadri knew of the Buddha's omniscience and of his ability to read people's minds, and she was aware that He could miraculously appear wherever He wished. And so, after obtaining the consent of her in-laws, she asked the family to prepare a feast worthy of the Enlightened One and of His companions, and then, holding in her hands a bunch of incense sticks, she prayed fervently to all the Buddhas to come and partake of her feast offering, along with whoever would care to accompany Him. In His omniscience, the Buddha heard her prayer and immediately invited all those who also had the miraculous ability to travel, to come with him to Mahadabhadri's house. And so the Sravakas and Pratiekabuddhas all went, and were there to greet the Buddha when He arrived. This is an example of the miraculous omniscience of the Buddha, whereby He knows people's thoughts, and of His ability to physically appear instantly, as soon as His presence is needed, combining the first two supreme clairvoyances, one of the mind, and one of the body.

Many other people experienced this kind of event during the Buddha's lifetime. The Buddha's own father, Suddhodana once invited Him to Kapilavastu, and the bikkshu Charka was sent there early to make preparations for the Buddha's visit. As usual, the Sravakas and Pratiekabuddhas arrived and performed all kinds of airborne feats above the palace. Amazed, and convinced that this was the Buddha Himself, Suddhodana asked Charka who they were, and was astonished to learn that they were merely disciples of the Buddha, and that He Himself was yet to appear.

The Buddha has the absolute knowledge of what procedure is most effective for beings to attain the complete elimination of their contaminations and to reach ultimate liberation.

As for the miraculous activities of the speech of the Buddha, they reveal themselves in four different ways.

The omniscient divine ear, first among the four qualities of the Buddha's speech, empowers Him to know the language of each and every sentient being,

enabling Him to expound the teachings in whatever language a particular being understands.

By the power of recalling past incarnations, the Buddha knows how beings have become what they are. The activity related to the divine eye, is that the Buddha knows the future of beings, what they will be and experience.

These two forms of omniscience, that of knowing the past and that of knowing the future, transcend the two pitfalls of nihilism and eternalism, countering both false notions, the one that denies past and future incarnations, and the one that is attached to a permanent self.

The fourth of the speech activities of the Buddha is related to the clairvoyance of eliminating contaminations – it reveals itself in the absolute knowledge of what procedure is most effective for beings to attain the complete elimination of their contaminations and to reach ultimate liberation.

Of these three kinds of miraculous activities of the Buddha, those of body, speech and mind, the most beneficial and far-reaching is the miraculous activity of speech. This is because it is through His speech that the Buddha teaches, and this is what most effectively establishes beings on the path.

So far, the qualities of the Buddha that have been expounded have been those of the Dharmakaya or the true body.

The form body of the Buddha is incomparably attractive, and its beauty defies anyone's imagination. Each of these major and minor marks is the result of unique virtues derived from the practice of the ten perfections, in particular that of tolerance.

The following verse, on the other hand, is a eulogy to the qualities of the Rupakaya, the Buddha's form body, His physical manifestation. It reads: "When all embodied beings see You, they know You to be a great person." The Buddha appears as a sublime being, one endowed with unique physical characteristics– what we call 'lakshan' in Sanskrit and 'tzen' in Tibetan. These physical qualities are unequivocally the marks of an Enlightened One, and whoever sees these 'lakshans' are left with no doubt that their bearer is a great person or 'Mahapurusha'. Of these marks, there are 32 major ones, such as a protuberance on the crown, and 80 minor ones, including coppery red nails. They have the function of instilling faith in those who see Him, and even of making liberation possible by the mere beholding of this great being.

The form body of the Buddha is incomparably attractive, and its beauty defies anyone's imagination. Each of these major and minor marks is the result of unique virtues derived from the practice of the ten perfections, in particular that of tolerance.

Impatience and intolerance lead to a rebirth with an unattractive appearance, whereas the practice of patience and tolerance leads to a rebirth with a beautiful appearance, and eventually to the attainment of the perfect beauty of the Enlightened One. And so, by reflecting on these qualities, one comes to appreciate their value, and ones strives to attain them by practising virtue and avoiding negative behaviour. One does one's best to avoid negative emotions, particularly anger. Even a short-lived moment of anger can bring with it many miseries and difficulties and can destroy many virtuous qualities.

As Shantideva said, if someone causes us harm

and as a result we become angry, then we have been doubly wronged. If we have become agitated by someone's words or behaviour and our mind cannot settle, Shantideva advises us to do anything we can to ease the situation that is agitating us, and to do our very best not to fall prey to anger. He stresses that it is particularly important not to bear resentment toward anyone, whatever they have done to us, as this emotion is extremely harmful to us.

There's a famous story about resentment. Once, when the Tibetan translator Natso Lotsawa was working in Lhasa with Atisha, he accidentally spilled some ink, as was wont to happen with a translator whose tools were pen and ink. Atisha became quite agitated and, in no uncertain terms, asked Natso Lotsawa to leave. Natso Lotsawa felt dejected and complained: "You expelled me once in Ngari, and now you've done it a second time." And Atisha answered: "See, I can become agitated, but I don't hold a grudge. You're filled with resentment. You should know how to curtail that emotion."

The pure body of the Buddha has the characteristic of giving itself unconditionally and unlimitedly in response to the needs of sentient beings.

The author then goes on to eulogise the four purities of the Buddha, which empower Him to easily perform the four activities.

The first among these is the purity of the base, or form. It empowers the Buddha to assume whatever physical form is necessary at any given time. This base, or physical manifestation, has the capacity to remain as long as the Buddha deems it necessary. This body also has the characteristic of giving itself unconditionally and unlimitedly in response to the needs of sentient beings.

The second purity is the purity of objects. This means that the Enlightened One is able to transmute objects – to render existing things non-existent and to create things from non-existence. The Enlightened One also has the purity of knowing what objects to create and what objects to cause to vanish, in order to benefit beings.

The third purity is the purity of mind. This empowers the Enlightened One to remain in meditative concentration as long as is useful or necessary.

The fourth one is the purity of primordial wisdom. It is unique to the Fully Enlightened One, and it means that nothing whatsoever obstructs Him from recognising, knowing and understanding whatever needs to be recognised, known and understood.

The Buddha knows the aptitudes and predispositions of each and every sentient being. This determines the way in which He helps each being.

Next, the eulogy pays homage to the ten spiritual powers of the Buddha. This mainly refers to the invincible power of His mind.

The first among these is the power of knowledge, according to which the Enlightened One knows exactly the nature of things in relation to cause and effect. He knows the cause of existence as it is.

The second is the power of knowing the causes and effects of actions. A particular action creates this result. A particular action does not create that result.

The third is the power of knowing the result of a particular meditative concentration and what kind of liberation will derive from it.

The fourth is the power of knowing the aptitudes and predisposition of each and every sentient being. Among other things, the Enlightened One knows whether a person is of very sharp intelligence or of mediocre intelligence in relation to faith, diligence and wisdom.

The fifth one is more unique to the Enlightened One. It is the spiritual power of knowing the particular interests of all sentient beings. For instance, the Buddha will know whether a being is more inclined toward the higher vehicle or toward the lower one or, for instance, whether a being is more attracted by form or by sound, and so on. This will determine the way in which the Buddha will help this being.

The sixth is the power of knowing the basic elements of sentient beings, the seeds latent in their mindstreams. These refer to natural characteristics proper to each being – whether this be an innate talent or inclination, or a latent defilement, the Buddha will recognise these characteristics and dispense His teachings to each being accordingly.

The seventh is the spiritual power of knowing all the pathways that lead to the different realms, from the hell realms to the highest state of Enlightenment. The Buddha knows what predisposition in a being leads him or her to perform an action, whether this action leads to a higher or a lower rebirth, and knows what means to use to liberate this being and what path is most suited to each trainee.

The eighth, ninth and tenth spiritual powers have already been described in the previous set of qualities. The eighth one is that of recalling past incarnations, the ninth is the spiritual power of knowing future incarnations, and the tenth is the spiritual power of eliminating contaminations.

The eulogy then goes on to describe the activities derived from the ten spiritual powers. Generally speaking, the ten spiritual powers provide the ability to vanquish the four maras or the four evils.

Of these four evils, the first is the evil that deceives one into implementing the wrong method. It leads people to engage in wrong practices, such as slaughtering animals and sacrificing them to deities. The activity related to the first of the ten spiritual powers is that of discerning whether a particular practice is proper or improper.

The second is the evil that deceives one into finding refuge in the wrong object. By taking refuge in Ishvaras, or worldly gods, and by venerating them and seeking their favour by sacrificing animals to them, beings create causes that will produce negative results. The second spiritual power counters this, by fully knowing the causes and effects of each action, and avoiding all actions that bring about negative results.

The third is the evil that deceives one from knowing the correct purity. While some beings are deluded in thinking that bathing in rivers will wash away one's sins, or that certain ascetic practices will gain them liberation, the Enlightened One knows that only meditative concentration can ultimately cleanse one's karma.

The fourth is the evil that deceives one from finding the Mahayana path. If a person is fully ready to receive Mahayana teachings, but receives teachings from the lower teachings instead, this person is robbed of the opportunity to embark on the Mahayana path. Thanks to the seven last of the ten spiritual powers, according to which the Buddha knows the aptitudes, interests and elements of each being, He will recognise whether a being is ready to follow the Mahayana path, and if he or she is indeed ready, the Enlightened One will place this being on it, thus defeating the fourth evil.

Welcoming the New Baby Daughter

Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya

Jetsunma with her mother, Dagmo Sonam Palkyi

On Saturday the 2nd of April 2011, on Mahakala day of the first lunar month, H.E. Dagmo Sonam Palkyi, wife of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, gave birth to a baby girl in Wil, Switzerland. The newborn princess was named Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya, which means Goddess of Longevity and of Powerful Speech.

She is the first child of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and of his wife, Dagmo Kushok Sonam Palkyi, and is the newest addition to the Sakya Dolma Phodrang. Her arrival was greeted by members of both the Sakya and Khamritshang families, who were present in Switzerland for the occasion.

The birth went smoothly and was free of complications, with both daughter and mother looking happy and relaxed. Shortly afterwards, in the privacy of the hospital room, Dungsey Rinpoche performed traditional blessing rituals according to the Khön tradition.

One-day old Jetsunma with her fingers in the Vajra mudra

A memorable moment: His Holiness and the Dungseys with Jetsunma

Many auspicious signs announced the arrival of this precious child. These began when Dagmo Kushok Sonam travelled to Tibet last year along with other members of the Dolma Phodrang. While visiting the stupa of Drogon Chögyal Phakpa, Dagmo Kushok suddenly felt overwhelmed by emotion, and as goosebumps covered her body, tears of joy and devotion swelled in her throat. With great faith and yearning, she made her wishes, one of which was to have a child who would one day benefit all sentient beings. Dungsey Rinpoche also made prayers of aspiration, and then threw a khatak high onto the stupa, where it clung. Dagmo Kushok, who was standing farther back, touched her forehead with her khatak and then also threw it onto the stupa. Although the stupa was very tall, the khatak flew like a dragon, and landed next to Rinpoche's high on the stupa. Everyone present was amazed and taken by emotion by this wondrous occurrence, in particular Gyalyum Chenmo, who was so filled with joy that she found herself fighting back tears.

During Dagmo Kushok's pregnancy, auspicious signs appeared in His Holiness' dreams, as well as in her own.

A few hours before the birth, Dagmo Kushok went for a short walk near the hospital with Dungsey Rinpoche, Gyalyum Chenmo, Dagmo Kushok's parents and other family members. Suddenly a woman walked past the group, then turned around, and came towards them. She looked at Dagmo Kushok and, gently placing her hand on her belly, repeated many times: "May God bless it", and then uttered many propitious wishes. She gave Dagmo Kushok a small rabbit made of marzipan, and then disappeared. Everyone was baffled, until it dawned on them that Jetsunma would be born in the Year of the Rabbit.

When Jetsunma was born, joy, tears and laughter filled the room. The doctor and nurses were amazed at how aware and radiant she seemed, and said how they had felt a powerful blessing during the delivery. When the time came for the nurse to dress Jetsunma, it was interesting to see that, of all the colours available, she had chosen a red baby romper suit for her.

Moments before the birth, Rinpoche, a great fan of cricket, received a text message announcing that India had won the World Cup, and so it was auspicious that Jetsunma was born when all of India was dancing with joy.

On the day when Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and other family members went to take Jetsunma and Dagmo Sonam home from the hospital, the sun erupted through the clouds, resplendent, as a magnificent white-winged bird circled close around Jetsunma, who was lying in her mother's arms. The bird continued to fly around them and then flew higher and higher until it vanished in the sky. Later, Gyalyum Chenmo mentioned that this must have been "Sakya's Chökyong", one of the protectors of Sakya.

A little over a month after she was born, Jetsunma Tsejin Lhamo travelled to Germany with Dagmo Kushok and her parents. There, Jetsunma received a purification and long-life empowerment from her grandfather, His Holiness the Sakya Trizin. It was Jetsunma's first meeting with her grandfather and with her uncle Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche. Although she was barely one month into this life, she immediately broke into a smile when she saw them.

The issue of two blessed lineages, Jetsunma is a very calm and loving child. Not only is she a member of the holy Khön family from her father's side, but she also belongs, from her mother's side, to a noble Lama lineage family that includes such eminent masters as Dagmo Kushok's great-great grandfather Drubwang Shakya Shri, one of Tibet's greatest saints of the 20th century.

There was the occasion when, as he blessed the Swayambhu Stupa in Nepal from where he was in Tibet, a shower of grains was seen by all falling on the Stupa. He left a strong Dharma legacy in Nepal, with his sons and students rebuilding the Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu.

The family has also produced many other realised masters, including Shakya Shri's daughter's daughter, the highly accomplished yogini Sangyum Palden Tsomo, who was Dagmo Kushok's grandmother. And so Jetsunma is heir to a rich spiritual legacy, and

A beautiful, happy child

shows every sign of growing up to fulfill her unique destiny.

She is now slightly over four months old and has begun to try standing up by herself and to discover her world. Everyone who sees her is amazed at her happy disposition and awareness.

Dagmo Sonam has been away from the Phodrang since she began expecting Jetsunma, and so it is with great anticipation that everyone at the Palace awaits their return, planned for mid-September. A welcome ceremony will be held in celebration.

We truly rejoice in the birth of this blessed being.

Messages to the couple may be sent by post to:
Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and Dagmo Sonam Palkyi, Dolma Phodrang, 192 Rajpur Road, 248009 Dehradun U.K. India. OR email at: khondung@graffiti.net

Great Sakya Women

Great Khön Jetsunmas as told by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin

"There have been very great female Sakya practitioners ever since the very early days of the lineage. Jetsun Kunga Tenpey Nyingma, for example. She lived some 300 years ago. She's actually one of the Vajrayogini lineage gurus. She was an outstanding master, and was the guru of many masters – mostly Sakya, but from other schools as well. She was the teacher of many Khön Dungseys and of many great khenpos.

A little more recently, there was a very great female master called Damzhin Wangmo. She was extremely important, because not only was she very learned, but she was also a great practitioner. She travelled in Kham for some time. Because Kham is very far away from Sakya, it was very difficult and very rare for people there to come to Sakya and receive blessings of the Khön lineage. So when she went there, people felt very great devotion, especially the Sakyapas in Kham.

During her travels there, she went to Tri Hor, east of Derge. Nowadays, Tri Hor is in Sichuan. There was a local governor who was in charge of the area. He was not a good man, because he was a womaniser, always chasing beautiful women. And when he heard that Kanding Wangmo was attracting so many people, he decided that he wanted to meet her. She was very holy, but also very beautiful. And so Kanding Wangmo received a message that the governor wanted to meet her, and that she should set a time for him to come. Her attendant was alarmed and told Kanding Wangmo that they should leave, as he was a bad man and might harm her. But Jetsunma said: "No, it doesn't matter. You can make an appointment. He can come to see me. It's all right, there won't be any problem." And so they made an appointment.

On that day, he appeared and entered Jetsunma's room to offer her a khata. But he quickly offered it and rushed out of the room, shaking like a leaf. His attendant asked him: "Why did you do this? Why did you leave so quickly? Yesterday you were so eager to meet Jetsunma, and now you just left straight away. Why did you do this?" And the governor said: "Oh, she was so terrifying! She had a human body, but she had the face of a pig, with long tusks!" He was so scared that he ran out. This shows that she was a real Vajrayogini.

And another time, while she was travelling in the Kham area, her party came to a place where there were many bandits. Some of them stole all the horses and mules that carried their luggage. And so everyone in the party wanted to go and get the animals back. But she said: "No, no. This won't be necessary." And she did a Mahakala puja. And suddenly black dogs and black birds appeared from everywhere and surrounded the bandits' tents, threatening them and frightening them. They were so terrified that they immediately brought all the stolen horses and mules back to Jetsunma.

There's actually quite a lot of information regarding Kanding Wangmo in the Sakya lineage history – a full chapter. Because she was also a guru. She was my grandfather's main guru, his main guru, one of the most important gurus from whom he received Lamdre Lobshey and the Vajrayogini circle of teachings and the Vajramala circle of empowerments. He received all these from her. So my grandfather always used to refer to her as Vajrayogini in person.

And even more recently, there was Jetsunma Pema Trinley. She was my grandfather's sister. I know she was born in 1874. I remember the year, because when I checked it in my grandfather's biography, I noticed that it was exactly 100 years before my son Ratna Vajra's birth. She was also a very great practitioner.

She also went to Kham and travelled in the same area as Kanding Wangmo had. There were very powerful monasteries from other traditions in that area, and they ruled the region. Our Sakya monasteries were small and scattered.

And so, Jetsunma was giving initiations in one of the Sakya monastries. When the other monasteries heard about this, they were very critical, first of all because other traditions could not perform initiations without permission. Secondly, because they said that it was very inauspicious for a woman to give initiations. So they sent tob tobs to beat her (tob tobs were a sort of monk police - they were very big and very harsh!). And so the tob tobs came and she was giving an initiation in the temple. As they could not enter straight away, they peeked through the curtains, and Jetsunma saw them. Then she placed her vase in the space before her, arranged her zen, and then again took hold of the vase. They were so astonished that they went in, and instead of beating her, they did prostrations and received blessings from her. So I was told.

My sister remembers her very well. She told me many things about her, but I don't remember her. I vaguely remember her funeral – vaguely – like in a dream.

And then there was my aunt, Jetsun Kunga Tenpei Nyima. She wasn't a Khön, but she was my father's first wife. My father first married her, but she didn't bear him children, and so he had to remarry. He married her sister, my mother, but my mother passed away soon after my birth. So my aunt was like my mother. Although she didn't give birth to me, she was the one who brought my sister and myself up. She also was a very good practitioner. She didn't sleep at night – only one or two hours. She never lay down. She sat in a box. She was a very great practitioner – she did about 600,000 prostrations and she made about 1,000,000 mandala offerings. She also did 20,000,000 guru yoga. I'm not certain about the exact numbers, but it was around that. Plus, she prayed and did sadhanas day and night. She was very, very kind, just like a mother.

Of course, there were many more female Sakya practitioners. These three are only a few of them."

Jetsün Kushok Chimey Luding

Her Eminence Jetsün Kushok Chimey Luding is the elder sister of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, and one of the greatest female Buddhist masters alive today. She began her religious education when she was five, was ordained as a novice at seven, and did her first retreat when she was ten. When His Holiness the Sakya Trizin began his training, Jetsunma was at His side and together they received teachings and empowerments from the greatest teachers of the time, notably Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, Dampa Rinpoche and Dezhung Rinpoche, to name but a few. Considered to be an emanation of Vajrayogini, she is one of the three Sakya women to ever have transmitted the Holy Lamdre, which she did for the first time at the age of seventeen.

Throughout her life, Jetsunma has had to face many hardships, beginning with the loss of both parents and two siblings when she was still a young child. Exile to India as a nun without the support of a monastery was such a challenge that Jetsunma had no choice but to abandon her robes. When she was twenty-six, she married Rinchen Sey Kushok, brother to Luding Khenchen Rinpoche, head of the Ngor branch of the Sakya School. When they emigrated to Canada a few years later, they faced the challenge of providing for their young family, and saw themselves forced to work as manual labourers. But Jetsunma remained steadfast, acquitting herself of a strenuous job, raising her children, and spending entire nights doing her spiritual practice. She slept very little, and yet never felt tired.

Their son Luding Khen Rinpoche succeeded his uncle Luding Khenchen Rinpoche as 76th abbot of the Ngor Monastery in Manduwala, and as head of the Ngor Sakya lineage.

As her children grew, Jetsunma began to teach again, and took on the added responsibility of tending to the spiritual needs of her followers. In addition, Jetsunma saw herself founding several Dharma centres, which she visited regularly.

Jetsunma is loved and revered by her large numbers of followers worldwide, for whom her maternal yet powerful presence is a haven of strength and protection, and her example as an accomplished lay practitioner a beacon of inspiration.

Her Eminence Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya

Dharma Heir of the Great Lineage of the Khön Sakyapa

Her Eminence Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter was auspiciously born into this world on January 2, 2007, the first-born grandchild of His Holiness Sakya Trizin, and the first-born child of Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Her Eminence Dagmo Kalden Dunkyi.

Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter is heir to a long and glorious tradition of daughters of the Khön family who were highly trained and accomplished women masters. She received her name after two of His Holiness' aunts who were highly accomplished practitioners. One was Jetsun Kunga Tenpei Nyima, and the other Jetsun Pema Trinley.

From her earliest years, Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter has demonstrated her special good qualities and great potential. Naturally displaying the dignity and personality of a member of the noble Khön lineage, she has great compassion, intelligence, and a strong affinity to Dharma. She is ever respectful to her holy grandfather His Holiness Sakya Trizin, and of her holy father Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche. She naturally delights in Dharma activities such as pujas and offerings, and is dignified and comfortable in large Dharma gatherings. All who know Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter are delighted by her presence, and the knowledge that in the future, she will uphold the great lineage of the Khön Sakyapa throughout the world.

Jetsunma receiving a mandala offering from her grandmother, H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo

H.E. Dagmo Kalden Dunkyi speaks of her daughter:

"Since Jetsunma was born on the Parinirvana Anniversary of Sakya Pandita, four and a half years

ago, she has brought so much joy into the lives of so many people in so short a time. Most of all, she has brought love and joy into my life that I did not think possible.

As a baby she was quiet, contemplative and so, so observant. Today as a 4 ½ year old elder sister, those qualities have metamorphosed and created an extremely articulate, mature and thoughtful little girl.

Fond of books, little children and the Sangha, there is no doubt she was destined to be born in this family and lead the life of religious study and practice her future holds for her. This short article is not only about her but also about my aspirations for her—

that she grow to be a wise woman,

a kind and compassionate practitioner of the Dharma,

a fair and honest leader,

a responsible and thoughtful adult,

a Guru, a Guide and a Spiritual Friend to Buddhists everywhere,

and that she benefit sentient beings throughout her life.

Under the shining light of our Sakya Gurus, I believe she will grow to be all of these and more. I pray for her long life and that she bring happiness and light into all our lives at some point or another. I know she has brought immeasurable joy into mine."

See more photos of Jetsunma on Kalden D. Sakya's Facebook page.

Aspiration for My Daughter

By Dagmo Kalden Dunkyi Sakya

"We supplicate the long life of Jetsun Sakyapa,
Emanation of Rigsum Gonpo and possessor of learning, discipline and realization,
Who with her activity of skillful means makes all beings happy,
And grants glory so that the benefit and happiness of all in existence and nirvana may bloom.

May you live steadfastly for ocean like eons!
Adorned with the glory of the nine pure ways,
May your activity of benefiting others spread as vast as space and;
May auspiciousness come to the fulfillment of your great purpose for the dharma and all sentient beings!"

Extract from the Long Life Prayer for Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter, composed by His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin, and entitled "**Shower of Immortal Nectar**".

Dharma Activities

Lamdre 2011 – Walden, New York

On the 30th of May 2011, some 180 disciples of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin converged on the small town of Walden, New York. They had come from 24 American states and from 15 different countries to receive from their Guru the most precious of Sakya teachings: the Holy Lamdre. It was the 19th time that His Holiness was conferring the Lamdre and, on this occasion, He had chosen to teach the Lamdre Tsogshey.

The scene for this blessed occasion was Tsechen Kunchab Ling, or Temple of All-Encompassing Compassion, which was thus provided with a golden opportunity to celebrate its official inauguration as His Holiness' principal seat in the United States.

Tsechen Kunchab Ling

His Holiness was accompanied by His two sons Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, who assisted Him in the revision of the Lamdre teachings.

Also accompanying His Holiness were His wife H.E. Gyalyum Kushok, His Holiness' grandchildren Dungsey Akasha Rinpoche and H.E. Jetsunma Trinley Palter, their mother H.E. Dagmo Kushok Kalden, and Dagmo Kushok's mother Mrs. Yang Dol Tsadultsang.

Representatives from different American centres were at hand, notably Lama Kunga Rinpoche who had come from California, Ngalo Rinpoche from Oregon, Khenpo Migmar Tseten from Boston, and Khenpo Pema Wangdak from New York.

Guests arriving at the temple from different corners of the world were greeted by smiling faces, gracious hospitality and comforting efficiency, as they were ushered into the dining room for their first gathering, over a welcome dinner that was nothing short of a banquet.

Newcomers and Lamdre veterans mingled and

His Holiness and the Dungseys leave the Lama House for the temple

old dharma friends caught up with their respective news, as students paid their respects to the holy statues in the shrine and strolled in the spacious temple gardens, familiarising themselves with what would be the setting for the profound experience that awaited them.

Even the weather was welcoming. A heat wave that was precursor to a record-breaking summer, meant that the sun shone nearly every day of the month, only to give way to the occasional rainstorm featuring bellowing thunder and sky-splitting lightning. In one such instance, shortly before the morning teachings were to begin, the heavens suddenly burst open as students were sat in the hall waiting for His Holiness' arrival, and the sky went as dark as night for a few minutes, only to brighten up again just as His Holiness was setting off from His residence.

And on the morning of 1st June, a routine began that was going to be observed for the length of the month-long teachings, with a succession of cars and buses making their way into the temple car park, bringing their loads of students from their respective lodgings in nearby inns and rented accommodation. The students would then make their way to the temple and settle onto their cushions, until the strike of the gong would announce that His Holiness and the Dungseys were on their way. Every day, this sound would bring the morning chatter to a hush and, as the music of ritual trumpets grew louder, an eagerness set in that accompanied each one of the Teachers' steps to the temple, until a slight thrill ran through the hall as their silhouettes appeared in the sunlit frame of the temple door.

A representative of Tsechen Kunchab Ling gives an account of the month spent under the guidance of His Holiness:

His Holiness bestowing the Hevajra empowerment

"His Holiness Sakya Trizin blessed his North American disciples with the precious Lam Dre teaching at Tsechen Kunchab Ling Temple in Walden, New York, which is His Holiness' seat in North America. The Lam Dre teaching, also known as the Path Including the Result, was first taught by the great Mahasiddha Virupa, and is the most special and esoteric practice of the Sakya Tradition. His Holiness bestowed the teaching in response to repeated requests from Venerable Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen, Vice President of Tsechen Kunchab Ling, and many disciples in the United States and Canada.

This year, the chief disciples at the Lam Dre teaching were Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche. Dungsey Akasha Rinpoche, H.E. Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter, H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo, H.E. Dagmo Kushog Kalden and her mother Mayum Sadultsang also attended the initiations and portions of the teachings.

Also in attendance were H.E. Dungyud Tulku Rinpoche, Most Venerable Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche, Venerable Lama Kunga Thartse Rinpoche, and other tulkus and lamas. Fortunate disciples travelled from 18 different countries and 24 U.S. states to attend the teachings.

The Lam Dre teaching auspiciously began on June 1, 2011 with the initiation of the goddess Ushnishavijaya. A traditional offering of tea and sweet rice was made between chanting of prayers by the assembly. A mandala was offered to His Holiness Sakya Trizin by Venerable Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen and the members of Tsechen Kunchab Ling, together with the symbols of the enlightened body, voice and mind.

His Holiness began the main Lam Dre teaching with the explanation of the Three Visions written by the great abbot Panchen Ngawang Chodak. In the afternoons, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche blessed the assembled disciples by providing explanations and meditation sessions to illuminate the morning's teachings. On June 6, His Holiness bestowed the Bodhisattva Vows, which is a unique convergence of two lineages, and the entire assembly made elaborate offerings.

From June 7 - 10, His Holiness bestowed the preliminary and main rituals of the Hevajra cause initiation based upon a Hevajra mandala of colored sand, using a ritual text written by the great Lord of Dharma Mantradhara Kunga Rinchen.

His Holiness bestowed the Triple Tantra portion of the Lam Dre teaching from June 11 - 30, based upon the text written by the famous abbot Panchen Ngawang Chodak. In the afternoons, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche illuminated the morning's teachings with explanations and guided meditation.

His Holiness and Dungsey Ratna Vajra Rinpoche initiating the sand mandala

Following His Holiness' explanation of the external creation, for two days on June 20 and 21, he bestowed the profound path initiation, followed by a discourse on the internal creation based upon the vajra master's profound body mandala. Following that, His Holiness bestowed the external Virupa protection and profound guru yoga.

On June 30, the vast Lam Dre teaching cycle auspiciously concluded, and the fortunate disciples' aspirations were completely fulfilled. All offered khatas and tokens of appreciation and the teachings concluded with extensive benedictions, dedications, and aspirations. All rejoiced in the opportunity to receive these precious teachings from His Holiness Sakya Trizin."

The month-long teachings were punctuated by several highlights.

A day-long ritual was held on the 11th by His Holiness, Dungseys Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, tulkus and lamas for the consecration of the temple, a private ceremony which was only attended by Lamdre students.

On the 15th Saka Dawa Düchen took place, which celebrates the birth, enlightenment and parinirvana of the Buddha. Many disciples chose this auspicious day to present mandala offerings to His Holiness. Each of these was accompanied

Consecration ceremony

by the recitation of words of devotion to the Guru, contained in a text so rich in meaning that, throughout the entirety of the Lamdre, nearly everyone who presented a mandala to His Holiness chose it to be read as a dedication of their offering. The tenor of the text was enhanced by its expressive and meaningful rendition by Chodrung Jamyang Tharchen.

"TO YOUR HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN, OWNER OF ALL THE MANDALAS, MASTER OF ALL RACES OF DEITIES, AND EMBODIMENT OF ALL OBJECTS OF REFUGE; TO YOUR EMINENCES WHO ARE THE EMBODIMENT OF KINDNESS, COMPASSION, AND SPIRITUAL POWER; TO YOUR EMINENCES GYALYUM KUSHO AND DAGMO KUSHO; AND TO THE VENERABLE TULKUS, KHENPOS, MONKS, NUNS, AND THE ASSEMBLY OF NOBLE SANGHA:

With great devotion, your disciples request the blessing of Your Holiness, Your Eminences and the assembly so that:

The doctrine of Lord Buddha, the source of all benefit and happiness, and in particular the flawless teachings of the great Sakya tradition, such as the precious Lam Dre teaching, which is the intent of the mahasiddha Virupa, the quintessence of all the sutras and tantras, and the illuminator of all of Lord Buddha's doctrine, spread in every direction and flourish forever.

May the wishes of all past holy masters be fulfilled, may all the holy masters in the world today live long and enjoy excellent health, and may their excellent activities for the benefit of the Doctrine and beings be fully accomplished.

For the Sangha and members of Tsechen Kunchab Ling, and Dharma practitioners everywhere, may right study, contemplation, and meditation flourish.

May the land and people of this nation and all countries of the world be free of suffering, such as illness, hunger, strife, and war, and all types of disasters, and for them may prosperity, happiness, peace and right motivation and action ever increase. In particular, for them and their families, may all negative circumstances such as illness, hindrances, and untimely death be pacified. May all positive circumstances such as good health, success, longevity, wealth, renown, and virtue increase. May their Dharma activities be successful, and may they ultimately achieve unsurpassable perfect enlightenment, for the benefit of all beings.

With this sincere intent, they have arranged offerings for the shrine. To His Holiness Sakya Trizin and the Holy Family, they have made a mandala offering, and to the other tulkus, khenpos, lamas, monks and nuns, offered tokens of appreciation.

May these and all other beings' virtuous aspirations be swiftly accomplished."

On Saturday 18th June, a Tenshug ceremony was held for His Holiness' long life, which was attended by representatives of the Sakya Phuntsok Phodrang and several other dignitaries. This was followed, on the morning of Sunday 19th June, by the official inauguration of Tsechen Kunchab Ling as His Holiness' seat in America. In the afternoon, His Holiness bestowed a tsewang (Long-Life Buddha Initiation) on members of the Tibetan Community, who came in their thousands from different parts of the country to receive His Holiness' blessing.

His Holiness spent the following weekend in New York City where, at the behest of Sakya Chokhor Ling, He gave the Jambala Initiation on the Saturday morning in Queens, to an assembly of several hundred disciples, the majority of whom were members of the New York Chinese and Tibetan communities. In the afternoon, His Holiness conferred the Amitabha initiation on a small group of devotees gathered in

His Holiness teaching from the sanctuary of the Riverside Church

Thousands of Tibetan Buddhists fill the nave

Chinatown.

On the Sunday, thousands of Tibetan disciples flocked to the magnificent Riverside Church, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, to receive from His Holiness the Green Tara empowerment and the lung for the mantras of Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, Guru Rinpoche and the Amitabha powa.

In its mission statement, the Riverside Church says: "The Church commits itself to welcoming all persons, celebrating the diversity

found in a Congregation broadly inclusive of persons from different backgrounds of characteristics. […] Therefore, the Church pledges itself to education, reflection, and action for peace and justice and the realization of the vision of the heavenly banquet where all are loved and blessed."

The Riverside Church certainly lived up to its statement, as its pews filled with thousands of Buddhists who had come to receive teachings in Tibetan on love and compassion from a Holy Master wearing saffron robes. The scene was charged with symbolism as His Holiness sat on His throne in front of the altar, the chancel filled with high lamas, thangkas of the Buddha, Green Tara and The Founding Fathers hanging before stained glass windows depicting the life of Christ, and the silent church organ giving way to the music of Tibetan ritual instruments.

On Monday the 27th, Lamdre participants were invited to a luncheon held by Their Eminences Jetsunma Trinley Palter, Gyalyum Chenmo and Dagmo Kushok Kalden. This was a fund-raising effort in benefit of the Sakya College for Nuns, a newly established place of learning under the guidance of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, where nuns with superior capacities can receive the same level of training in Buddhist Philosophical studies as their male counterparts in the Sakya College in Dehradun and the Sakya Institute in Manduwala. Her Eminence Dagmo Kushok Kalden took the podium and, after making the case that Dagmos generally delegate to their husbands the responsibility of speaking in public, acquitted herself eloquently of the task of raising the awareness of her guests regarding the importance for the Sakya School and for the Dharma in general, of helping institutions like the College for Nuns to thrive.

The following day, at the conclusion of the morning teaching, His Holiness announced to the assembly that He was conferring the title of Chodrungma and Chodrungpa upon Venerable Ani Chodron and Jamyang Tharchen respectively.

His Holiness explained that these were ancient Tibetan titles that were given to monks and nuns who distinguished themselves in the performance of outstanding service to their monasteries. This greatest of honours came as a complete surprise to both conferees, who were left to make enquiries as to the meaning of their newly-acquired honorifics. His Holiness later described how, in the Sakya Monastery in Tibet, the abbot symbolised the Buddha and his two assistants symbolised Shariputra and Maudgalyāyana, while the sixteen monks who were responsible for each of the sixteen sectors of the monastery symbolised the Sixteen Arhats, and were called 'Chutrungpa'. The title 'Chutrungma' was given to the nuns who held the corresponding position in the Nunnery.

On Wednesday the 29th, a tsok ceremony was held, at the end of which students were lavished with a cornucopia of juice, fruit, biscuits, chocolates and crisps of all sorts, and left the hall tugging large bags filled with their share of blessed offerings. Tsok is a powerful Vajrayana ritual that is practiced on special days of the Tibetan lunar month in order to accumulate merit and wisdom, and to purify negativities. It entails what is referred to as 'The Four Gatherings'; the gathering of practitioners, who view themselves as pure dakas and dakinis, and the place as a heavenly realm; the gathering of offerings of food and drink, especially meat and alcohol, which must be offered generously and consumed as pure substances; the gathering of deities, which refers to the mandala of deities that the substances are being offered to; and the gathering of merit and wisdom which are attained as the result of offering pure substances, with a pure mind.

Another celebration took place later that day:

Her Eminence Dagmo Kushok Kalden's birthday. Everyone was delighted to share this special moment with her, and voices joined to sing "Happy Birthday, dear Your Eminence, Happy Birthday to You!", as Khenpo Kalsang presented her with a four-tiered cake and Family members offered their khatas and loving wishes.

But, impermanence, every good thing must come to an end. The following day, Thursday the 30th of June, was the last day of the 2011 Lamdre teachings. His Holiness' students felt desolate to leave what had been for them a heavenly realm over the past thirty days, but at the same time filled with His Holiness' grace.

Happy Birthday, Dagmo Kushok la!

Later that day, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche was driven to Newark Liberty Airport, from where he would fly to Frankfurt in order to resume his European teaching tour.

And the following day, His Holiness and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche were to leave by car to New York City, the first stop on the second leg of their North and South American teaching tour.

His Holiness with His Lamdre students

The Grand Inauguration of Tsechen Kunchab Ling

Temple of All-Encompassing Great Compassion
Seat of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin in the United States

On the weekend of 18th June two days of celebrations took place to mark the official inauguration of Tsechen Kunchab Ling, His Holiness the Sakya Trizin's seat in the U.S.A.

This memorable occasion is recorded below by a representative of the Temple of All-Encompassing Great Compassion:

"On a beautiful and auspicious day, June 19, 2011, His Holiness Sakya Trizin performed the opening ceremony for Tsechen Kunchab Ling, His Holiness' official seat in the United States. This joyous event was attended by many members of the noble Khön family from both Drolma Phodrang and Phuntsok Phodrang including Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, Dungsey Ani Rinpoche, Dungsey Akasha Rinpoche, H.E. Jetsun-ma Kunga Trinley Palter, H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo, H.E. Dagmo Kushog Kalden and her mother Mayum Sadultsang.

In addition, the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Lobsang Nyandak, and many tulkus, lamas, monks, nuns, dignitaries from the Village of Walden, and over 4,000 people came to celebrate the opening of the new temple building. Among those were 180 people who had traveled from 18 different countries and 24 U.S. states to attend the Lam Dre teachings.

In his remarks on the occasion, His Holiness told the assembly, "I am delighted to see the opening of this new temple, and appreciate the efforts of all those who worked together to make it come to pass. The number of people interested in Buddhism is growing every year. This temple will become an important place where people can seriously engage in Dharma study and meditation."

The opening ceremony was particularly meaningful because it represented the culmination of nearly a decade of diligent work by Venerable Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen and His Holiness' disciples to accomplish His Holiness' goal of establishing a traditional temple in the United States. At the end of the Lam Dre teachings in Vancouver in the year 2000, His Holiness encouraged the assembled disciples to establish a traditional temple as His seat in the United States in order to more firmly establish the Dharma in this new land, and in particular to encourage the growth of the monastic sangha. He designated Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen to undertake the task, assisted by Chodrungma Kunga Chodron and Chodrungpa Jamyang Tharchin.

As Venerable Khenpo Kalsang explained in his opening remarks, "I am delighted to have had the opportunity to serve Your Holiness for the past ten years in accomplishing your vision to build

this temple as Your Holiness' seat in the United States. Although Your Holiness' main seat is 1500 miles away, we are delighted that you have decided to extend your noble activities in this part of the world and given us the honor of serving you by helping to establish another seat here in the United States. It will be a truly great blessing for many sentient beings in this land for generations to come. All of Your Holiness' devoted students have dedicated their best efforts toward the goal of building Your Holiness' temple. Some offered money, some offered work, some offered encouragement; each offered the best that they could in order to bring Your Holiness' vision to reality."

The new temple building was built in traditional Tibetan architectural style using modern materials and techniques, under the close direction of His Holiness and Khenpo Kalsang by architect Larry Hibbard of Hibbard Architecture in Manson, Washington. The building contractor was Mark Annunciato of Liam Construction in Warwick, New York. The main worship hall is 9,000 square feet in size, with a bronze and gold image of the Buddha sculpted by a famous Nepali sculptor. It is also graced by 78 statues of the Lam Dre lineage lamas made by the Nepali sculptor Shidhra Ratna, large statues of the five founders of the Sakya Order, the Sixteen Arhats, and 21 Taras.

The opening ceremonies began with a flag raising ceremony by the Walden Veterans of Foreign Wars, followed by a procession for the arrival of His Holiness, and ribbon cutting. Following prayers and the Sixteen Arhat Ritual, speeches were offered by His Holiness Sakya Trizin, the Representative of His Holiness Dalai Lama the Honorable Lobsang Nyindrak, Venerable Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen, and the Honorable Brian Maher Mayor of Walden. Venerable Chodrungma Kunga Chodron served as Master of Ceremonies.

His Holiness at Tsechen Kunchab Ling with Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen

A delicious luncheon and dinner was sponsored by the Minneapolis Sakya Center Sakya Thupten Dhargye Ling, and by the Washington D.C. Sakya Center Sakya Phuntsok Ling, and was prepared by a team of Sherpa cooks led by Mr. Tashi. Food from local restaurants was also showcased at a "Taste of Walden" table. The afternoon program included the bestowing of a long-

life initiation by His Holiness Sakya Trizin, a cultural program of dances and songs from various Himalayan communities, and a play "How the Dharma Came to Tibet" by the Tsechen Kunchab Ling children's Dharma Class.

From June 15-18, for the three days immediately prior to the opening ceremony, a Tenzhug Ceremony was held to request the long life of His Holiness Sakya Trizin. The event was graced by the attendance of members of both Drolma Phodrang and Phuntsok Phodrang. The Tenzhug was organized by a Committee consisting of Her Eminence Jetsun Kushog-la, Khenpo Pema Wangdak, Khenpo Migmar Tseten, and many Himalayan associations in the New York area. The Tenzhug Committee was chaired by Venerable Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen, Chodrung Jamyang Tharchin, and Silvia Yueh.

The three days of Tenzhug prayers culminated in a grand offering ceremony to His Holiness on June 18, during which over 20 different temples and Dharma Centers and many Himalayan associations made traditional offerings and prayers for His Holiness' long life and the flourishing of his holy activities. After His Holiness formally accepted the assembly's request that He live long, everyone joined in a celebratory luncheon and traditional Himalayan songs and dances of rejoicing.

With these auspicious ceremonies, the consecration of the new temple in Walden is now complete. All are encouraged to come to attend events at the new temple, or to visit whenever they can. "

The Grand Inauguration of Tsechen Kunchab Ling Moments

The celebrations began with the arrival of His Holiness at the temple

The day began with a flag-raising ceremony, with fluttering banners of star spangles and Tibetan prayers intermingling, while a young girl from the local community sang 'America the Beautiful'.

Representatives of the Sakya Phuntsok Phodrang joined in the festivities

His Holiness climbed the stairs and made His way to the temple door; blessing it with flowers, He recited some prayers. And then He cut the ribbon: Tsechen Kunchab Ling was officially opened.

Dungsey Ratna Vajra Rinpoche makes a mandala offering to His Holiness

Dignitaries and sponsors also made offerings to His Holiness

Invited dignitaries included Lobsang Nyandak, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's representative in America, and Brian Maher, Mayor of Walden.

In a show of the best of American and Tibetan generosity and hospitality, lunch was offered to all who were there, as well over four thousand guests settled down to picnic on the temple grounds. Taste was not sacrificed to abundance.

In the afternoon, His Holiness conferred a *tsewang* on all who had come

Brian Maher, 26, now in his third year as Mayor of Walden, took the podium during the ceremony and, his voice at moments gripped with emotion, expressed not only his own deep appreciation of the temple, but that of his constituents, as he said: "This is a really special moment for me. I remember one of the first things I did when I was elected mayor was to come to the temple… This temple is a shining example of what Walden and its people are all about."

Friendly security officers kept things in order as eager followers awaited their turn to be blessed by His Holiness

Cultural performances enlivened both days of the celebration

Walden Mayor Brian Maher escorted His Holiness back to the temple after the cultural show was over

The celebration ended with the releasing of prayer balloons, a gesture that combined the American custom of freeing balloons and the Tibetan tradition of hanging prayer flags. Both involve inscribing them with the names of those whom we wish blessed.

In his Facebook page, John Cappello of Walden writes: *"The opening of the Temple is a culmination of an approximate 10-year process in creating the Village of Walden facilities. In that time, Lama Kalsang, Ani Kunga and all the Tsechen Kunchab Ling Temple members have become treasured friends of my family, as well as valued members of the village of Walden community. We are proud to have been part of this effort and we all join to happily and officially welcome the formal opening of this wonderful temple."*

VENERABLE CHODRUNG KUNGA CHODRON

Anyone who attended the Lamdre teachings in Walden last June could easily have been led to believe that Chodrung Kunga Chodron had several twin sisters. Her slight but dynamic figure, always crowned with a radiant smile, was simply everywhere at the same time. The epitome of patience and equanimity, Chodrung-ma was on hand every day from early morning until well into the evening, juggling managerial and social tasks, which ranged from organising the event and hosting the Holy Family, to catering to the varied and numerous needs of the participants and answering their many queries.

In a way, the occasion encapsulated the life and career of Venerable Kunga Chodron. While staunchly observing her vows as an ordained nun, and acquitting herself admirably of her extensive role in creating and administering His Holiness' Seat in America, Chodrung-ma has successfully managed to pursue an impressive academic career.

Also known as Dr. Lois Peak, Chodrung Kunga Chodron teaches Buddhist meditation at Vassar College. Prior to that, she was an assistant research professor at George Washington University, where she taught courses in Buddhism, Buddhist Philosophy, and Tibetan Buddhism in the Department of Religion. She also served for many years in senior research positions in the U.S. government.

Holder of both a Masters and a Doctoral degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Professor Ani Kunga has authored several books and articles on Buddhism and education in Asia. She is a core member of the working committee of the Buddhist Literary Heritage Project, which is undertaking the translation of the Tibetan Canon into English.

Chodrung Kunga has been a Buddhist nun for twenty-four years and has received many teachings from all the eminent Sakya lineage holders, including His Holiness the Sakya Trizin. In 2001, alongside Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen, Chodrung Kunga founded the Tsechen Kunchab Ling Temple in Walden, New York, the Seat of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin in the United States. She has since served as the Temple's Secretary and Treasurer.

It is no small wonder that, during the course of the Lamdre teachings in Walden, New York, His Holiness conferred upon her the title of 'Chodrung'. An ancient title that was awarded to Tibetan monks and nuns who distinguished themselves in the service of the Dharma, it has certainly found a worthy bearer in the person of Venerable Ani Kunga Chodron.

His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in North and South America

His Holiness and the Dungseys at the Tenzin Gyatso Institute in Berne, N.Y.

The 21st of May marked the beginning of a teaching tour that was to take His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and Gyalyum Chenmo to centres across the U.S.A., Canada and, for the first time, Latin America. They were accompanied on their journey by Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltsen, Vice-President of Tsechen Kunchab Ling, His Holiness' official seat in America.

His Holiness and His entourage visited close to thirty Dharma centres in a near four-month odyssey that swept them across the American continents, from the U.S. Eastern Seaboard, where they stopped for a month in upstate New York for the celebration of the Lamdre, through Mexico and Costa Rica, down to Brazil, and then back up the West Coast up to Jetsun Kushok's centre inVancouver.

It was His Holiness' first visit to America after an absence of 8 years (for some centres, as many as twenty!), and everyone was elated to be once more blessed with His presence and to receive His teachings and transmissions. Also, everywhere He went, His Holiness gave public talks, which attracted a large number of newcomers to the Dharma.

Beyond imparting these priceless teachings and empowerments, His Holiness' visit was dotted with special occasions that ranged from being the object of a special tribute on the 4th of July, American

Happy Birthday, Gyana Vajra Rinpoche!

Khenpo Pema Wangdak introducing His Holiness and Dungsey Rinpoche at the Palden Sakya Centre in New York

Independence Day, to bringing His message of love and peace to a strife-ridden neighbourhood in Brazil.

The 4th of July also marked another special occasion: Dungsey Gyana Vajra Rinpoche's 32nd Birthday was celebrated a day early, so as to coincide with this auspicious date.

While in New York, His Holiness granted an interview in which He was presented with ten questions relating to the American way of life. To these questions, ranging from the law of karma to the value of Botox, His Holiness' answers remained uniform. Only through developing the mind and practicing love and tolerance can any society attain peace and harmony. Asked if He had any American heroes, His Holiness chose Abraham Lincoln, explaining that it was because Lincoln had helped people and opposed slavery. As an epilogue to the interview, His Holiness expressed His appreciation of America as a great country in which people of different cultures and religions had found a way to live in amity with each other.

Everywhere His Holiness and Dungsey Rinpoche went, it was moving to see the hard work and devotion that disciples dedicated to their visit. One example of this is Minnesota, where every day the volunteers and coordinators transformed the halls at the Minneapolis Convention Center into a mandala with a newly built throne, thangkas, fresh flowers, and traditional Tibetan hangings and carpets.

A Minneapolis student recalls His Holiness' visit:

"His Holiness said that He was very happy to be back in Minnesota and to see the improvement both in its external beauty and in the inner spiritual growth of the Minnesota community since He visited in 2003. He stressed the importance of respecting different religious faiths and traditions, and He encouraged everyone to work together to make this century one of peace and harmony."

His Holiness, along with Dungsey Gyana Vajra

His Holiness on His exquisitely carved wooden throne in Minneapolis, built especially for the occasion of His visit

Minneapolis disciples make their offerings to His Holiness

Rinpoche and H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo, visited Mexico for the first time, invited by Lama Jampa Thaye's Sakya Dolma Ling. A centre representative writes:

"From Friday 15 July to Monday 18 July 2011 His Holiness Sakya Trizin spent three days in Mexico City at the invitation of Lama Jampa Thaye and his Sakya centre, Sakya Dolma Ling. This was His Holiness' first visit to Mexico and was one of the most significant dharma events in the country's history.

The first event of the visit was on the morning of Saturday 16 July when His Holiness taught 'Parting from the Four Attachments' to an audience of over 400 people. The teachings were held in Polanco, an area of great prestige in Mexico City. In the afternoon, His Holiness bestowed the initiation of Manjushri from the lineage of Bari Lotsawa to around 300 people.

Everyone was very happy to receive these teachings from His Holiness and His visit was of tremendous significance for the development of Buddhism and the Sakya tradition in Mexico."

His Holiness bestowing an empowerment at Sakya Thupten Chokhor Ling

His Holiness and His Family discovering Mexican cuisine with Lama Jampa Thaye

Sakya Thupten Chokhor Ling in Costa Rica

It is also significant that His Holiness' visit to Costa Rica, a small country in Central America, where His Holiness consecrated the new Thupten Chokhor Ling centre, also attracted a large number of students. The Dharma is relatively new to Latin America, but Buddhist temples are gradually taking their place alongside Christian churches, which have until recently been the mainstay of religion in a culture that is traditionally catholic.

Thupten Chokhor Ling was built expressly for His Holiness' visit, in a forest lying on a small mountain near the capital, San José. His visit was short, but the program very intensive. His Holiness expressed how pleased He was to be in Costa Rica, and how moved He was by the kindness and warmth of its people.

In Brazil, a deeply spiritual land, His Holiness' visit aroused elation among students for whom access

Dungsey Rinpoche bestows the Ngondro initiation in Cabreúva, Brazil

H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo in front of the famous "Christ the Redemptor" statue in Rio de Janeiro

to the Dharma is made difficult by the distances that separate their country from European and North American centres. Rogel Samuel, an ardent disciple of His Holiness, writes:

"July 21. What seemed impossible happened,

His Holiness receives a khata from a small girl from the "Coque" in Recife

His Holiness the Sakya Trizin arrived at dawn at the airport in Rio de Janeiro. He was very happy. All of us had khatas. It was a simple reception.

All His Holiness' and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche's teachings focused on two pillars: compassion and wisdom.

Those days were unforgettable."

His Holiness' message of peace and harmony found particularly fertile soil in Recife, in the impoverished Brazilian northeast, where Buddhism is virtually unknown, not to mention Tibetan Buddhism. His Holiness, Dungsey Rinpoche and Gyalyum Chenmo visited the "Coque", a neighbourhood in Recife cursed by gang violence, where they were given a fervent welcome by its residents, who lavished the Family with a cornucopia of flowers and khatas, while fireworks lit up the skies. Young girls, who had spent the previous five months preparing for the day, performed a traditional Brazilian dance for His Holiness to the sound of the Green Tara mantra.

His Holiness spoke to the assembled crowd, stressing that although we belong to different cultures, we are all human beings and need to cultivate peace, love and compassion, so that we can find happiness and share it with our loved ones, and then gradually spread it to others. His Holiness was presented with an image of St. Francis of Assisi, a catholic saint

Dungsey Rinpoche with H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Lama Jigme Rinpoche at the Padmasambhava Peace Institute in California

who advocated the coming together of all faiths. Significantly, His Holiness gave a talk that evening at the University of Pernambuco on "How to Eliminate Fear and Violence in the 21st century".

Emotion also ran high in Victoria, British Columbia, which His Holiness was visiting for the first time in twenty years. Terry Chantler, president of the Victoria Buddhist Dharma Society, recalls:

"His Holiness arrived in Victoria by Clipper ferry from Seattle on Tuesday August 16, with Her Eminence Gyalyum Chenmo and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche. His Holiness and His Eminence were greeted in the traditional manner at the dock with khatas and incense, by Ven. Lama Jampa Tenzin and members of the Victoria Buddhist Dharma Society which had sponsored their visit, and by the local Tibetan community. His Holiness gave a short on-the-spot interview for CBC radio news in which he was asked, "What do you think is the biggest problem facing our people?"

His Holiness' answer was: "I think that the most difficult problem is that people cannot control their mind, because their mind is ruled by negative emotions, and these need to be worked out. Then other problems become much easier to solve."

For that evening, we had rented Victoria's Music Conservatory, the Alix Goolden Hall, a gracious old stone-built building near downtown, whose proximity plus prior media publicity afforded a good audience of about 300. The stage looked magical, with thangkas, rich drapery, brocades and flowers venerating His Holiness' tradition. It was gratifying to see the whole of the first floor of that beautiful hall completely full with attentive people, many of whom were unknown to us. His Holiness clearly reached out to a whole new audience here, with a full introductory overview of the range of Buddhist teachings that many people were perhaps being exposed to directly for the first time.

His Holiness and Dungsey Gyana Vajra Rinpoche with Lama Jampa Tenzin and a centre representative (Photo: Lotus Johnson)

His Holiness and Family with Lama Kunga Rinpoche and sangha members

His address was titled "How Buddhism Applies to Daily Life" and was followed by many questions from the attentive audience. One question asked how His Holiness felt about the fact that ours will be the last generation that will not see minds introduced into robots; His Holiness made sure he understood correctly and then replied, "I don't think that will happen'. "

One of the last stops on His Holiness' trip was at His sister H.E. Jetsun Kushok Chimey Luding's centre in Vancouver, where His Holiness gave the Vajrakilaya empowerment and teaching. All those who were fortunate enough to attend had the enormous privilege of receiving this profound transmission in the presence of three great Khön masters.

The last visit of His Holiness' and Dungsey Rinpoche's Teaching Tour was in Toronto, from where they were to fly to Europe in order to officiate at the last rites of Khando Tsering Chödrön, alongside Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, Sogyal Rinpoche, Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche and Khenchen Sherab Amipa.

Dungsey Rinpoche enjoying his time with the Victoria sangha (Photo: Lotus Johnson)

His Holiness and Jetsun Kushok together in Vancouver

Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche 2011 European Teaching Tour

On the 10th of May 2011, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche boarded a plane from New Delhi to Frankfurt, the first of many flights that were to take him to Germany, France, Hungary, Italy, England and Spain, on a four-month long European teaching tour, punctuated by a one-month interval during which he joined his family for the celebration of the Lamdre in Walden, New York.

During his stay in Frankfurt, Dungsey Rinpoche met with members of His family for a very special reunion: H.E. Jetsunma Tsejin Lhamo was there with her parents, Dungsey Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and H.E. Dagmo Sonam Palkyi. She was to be introduced for the first time to her Grandfather, His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and to her uncle, Dungsey Ratna Vajra Rinpoche.

Devoted members of the Frankfurt sangha have built a house next to the centre, that not only serves as residence to the Khön Family when in Germany, but also as a *pied-à-terre* during their extended stays in Europe. And so the Family was able to enjoy their time together with Baby Jetsunma in the ease and comfort of a home away from home.

Marion von Gienanth, a centre member, fondly remembers Dungsey's visit:

"Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche came to our Center in May, when he generously gave us several initiations: Hevajra, Vajrayogini, Chenrezig in the King's Tradition and Manjushri Namasanghiti."

The moment Dungsey Rinpoche arrived with his entourage, the centre was bathing in a soft loving light, which is still glowing. We all felt his Presence to be a permanent blessing for all of us attending the initiations and teachings and for Sakya Kalden Ling.

As the teachings in July had not been foreseen, we were a small group. So we were able to invite each day two of the participants for dinner so that they had the chance to spend more time in the presence of Dungsey Rinpoche and his entourage. Being personally involved in this way gave them more of a feeling of being part of our centre, which helps our community to grow.

His Holiness and Dungseys Ratna Vajra and Gyana Vajra Rinpoches in Frankfurt

Dungsey Rinpoche with his Budapest students

Dungsey Rinpoche is a keen calligraphist; here he writes: 'HUM', and 'Khönrig Ratna Vajra Sakya'

"Every day, the new Tara Statue which has been offered to our Center and the beautiful garden at Sakya Kalden Ling become more and more radiant. We hope to have a Resident Lama there soon, and to build up the stupa in the back part of the garden and above all, we hope that His Holiness and His two sons come back very soon."

After his stay Frankfurt, Dungsey Rinpoche travelled to Stuttgart, where he spent several days with Lama Jampa Thaye at the latter's Sakya Dechen Ling centre.

The following week was taken up by visits to the Ngakpa Rangshar Ling centre in Lahr and the Dzongsar Ngari Dharma Mati Institute near Detmold. With this, Dungsey Rinpoche concluded the first leg of his European tour, and flew to New York, where he was to rejoin his family for a month-long celebration of the Holy Lamdre.

Once the Lamdre was over, Rinpoche flew back to Europe and resumed his teaching schedule, beginning with a teaching on 'Parting from the Four Attachments', which he gave to some one hundred students at the Rigpa Zentrum, Sogyal Rinpoche's impressive centre in Berlin. A brief visit to Kuttolsheim followed and, after a brief stopover in Frankfurt, Dungsey Rinpoche travelled to Budapest, where he gave a Vajrakilaya Initiation to some 200 students.

Rinpoche was happy to see the devotion of Hungarian students, and their hunger for the Dharma, of which they were deprived for many decades. A member describes Rinpoche's visit:

"Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche visited Hungary in July 2011 as part of his European Tour. This was a great pleasure for us.

Around the time of His Silver Jubilee, His Holiness the Sakya Trizin had asked Joseph Kovacs to establish a Hungarian Sakya centre called Sakya Tashi Choling in 1986. It was here that Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche gave the Vajrakilaya empowerment and teaching. About 170 people participated in the Vajrakilaya empowerment. The programme was at the weekend, so whoever was interested could easily attend it.

The organisers wanted to show the attractions to H.E. Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and his entourage. Sometimes they attracted more attention than the sights because of their monks' clothes. We do hope they left the capital of Hungary with nice memories.

H.E. Ratna Vajra Rinpoche emphasised the connection between the two nations and the example

Dungsey Rinpoche with attendant and Jessica in Florence

"Freedom and Enlightenment" in a converted jail in Florence

of Alexander Csoma de Koros (1784-1842), the Hungarian philologist and orientalist. Hoping that he would be able to trace the origin of the Hungarian group, he set out for the East in 1820, and after much hardship along the way, arrived in Ladakh. Under great privation there despite being aided by the British government, he devoted himself to the study of the Tibetan language. He made the first English-Tibetan dictionary while living at Zangla Monastery in Zanskar in 1823. The dictionary was published a year later in 1824. In 1831, he settled in Calcutta, where he compiled his Tibetan Grammar and Dictionary and catalogued the Tibetan works in the library of the Asiatic Society. He died in Darjeeling just as he was setting out for fresh discoveries. He is said to have been able to read in seventeen languages. Alexander Csoma de Koros is widely seen as the founder of Tibetology.

It was the bicentennial of the birth of Alexander Csoma de Koros when a teacher of the University of Science decided to issue a coin to commemorate him. As we know, these coins of limited numbers are unique, the only ones on which the mantra of Chenrezig, Om Mani Padme Hum can be read.

H.E. Ratna Vajra Rinpoche has promised that H.H. Sakya Trizin, his brother Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and himself will come to Hungary more often. Venerable Lama Kalsang and the members of the Sakya Tashi Choling will pray for it."

Rinpoche's following stop was in Florence, where he spent four days at the request of the Sakya Ngon Ga Ling centre, with as its premises a one thousand-year old house perched on a small hill. There, Rinpoche gave a day-long detailed explanation of the Green Tara practice.

On the first night of his visit, Rinpoche gave a conference on 'Freedom and Enlightenment'. Ironically, the venue for the event was a converted prison. Rinpoche pointed out that the law of karma was stricter and more accurate than criminal law, in the sense that one could get away with misdeeds without the law ever catching up with one, but one could never escape the law of cause and result.

Rinpoche's next stop was Biarritz, where he gave a teaching on Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen's 'Eight-Melody Experience of the Great Yogi'. The centre is near the sea, and so Rinpoche had the occasion to stroll on the beach and enjoy the sea air. On the last day, Rinpoche and his attendant monks held a Mahakala Serkyem

ceremony, an offering to the protector deities, on a nearby mountain. This was followed by a picnic shared with the sangha members.

On 1st August, Rinpoche travelled to the U.K., where his first stop was Reading. There is a substantial Nepali community there, which is strongly devoted to the Dharma. One of its leading members, C.S. Lama, has turned his home into a residence for visiting lamas, where past guests include H.H. the Dalai Lama. His Holiness the Sakya Trizin often stops there when He visits the U.K.

With the living room transformed into a shrine and the kitchen into a communal meeting place, the entire family and other devoted members of the Nepali Community were at hand to make the stay of Dungsey Rinpoche and his entourage as comfortable as could be. Disciples who had come to attend Rinpoche's teaching were whisked into the kitchen and regaled with heaps of Nepali delicacies and refreshments. Dungsey Rinpoche had come to give a detailed explanation of the Vajrayogini sadhana practice to a small group of avid students. Rinpoche also gave a public talk in the Town Hall to a larger audience, largely made up of Nepalis.

Rinpoche's next stop was Bristol, where he gave a two-day major Vajrakilaya empowerment to nearly 200 people, and a public talk on 'The Middle Way in Buddhism'. Rinpoche was there at the behest of Lama Jampa Thaye, who runs several centres in Europe and America, and now in Mexico. A centre member writes:

"Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, the elder son of His Holiness Sakya Trizin, visited Bristol's Sakya Centre (Sakya Thinley Rinchen Ling) and London's Sakya Centre (Sakya Dechen Ling) in August at the invitation of Lama Jampa Thaye.

Dungsey Rinpoche, Lama Jamyang Lekshey (manager of Sakya Centre in India) and entourage arrived in Bristol on the afternoon of Thursday, 4 August and were greeted at Sakya Thinley Rinchen Ling by Lama Jampa Thaye, his family and members of the local sangha.

On Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 August, Dungsey Rinpoche bestowed the major initiation of Vajrakilaya in Bristol.

Towards the end of the initiation Dungsey Rinpoche asked Lama Jampa Thaye to teach Sakya Pandita's famed commentary on the vows and pledges which attendees should guard having received such a high level initiation. Lama Jampa taught this text to the attendees, following which Rinpoche concluded the

Dungsey Rinpoche performing the Mahakala Serkyem ritual on a mountaintop top near Biarritz

Rinpoche with the Biarritz sangha

Dungsey Rinpoche giving the Vajrakilaya initiation in Bristol

Dungsey Rinpoche invited Lama Jampa Thaye to give an explanation of 'The Fourteen Root Downfalls'

Dungsey Rinpoche blessing a young disciple in London

initiation and led the assembly in dedicating the merit from the weekend to all sentient beings.

On 15 August, Dungsey Rinpoche, Lama Jamyang Lekshey and entourage arrived in London. That evening, Lama Jampa Thaye made the traditional offering of the Mandal Tensum to Dungsey Rinpoche in the shrine room at Sakya Dechen Ling.

The following day, 16 August, saw Rinpoche bestow the initiation of Orange Manjushri in London. This joyous occasion was marked by Lama Jampa Thaye's speech of gratitude to Rinpoche at the conclusion of the initiation. Lama Jampa Thaye noted the auspicious detail that His Holiness Sakya Trizin and His two sons (Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche) had now all bestowed the same initiation of Orange Manjushri on the fortunate sangha in England. Lama Jampa Thaye also commented on the mixture of sadness and happiness felt by all those present: sadness that Dungsey Rinpoche would shortly be departing to continue His European teaching tour and happiness at the wondrous teachings bestowed by Rinpoche during His visit to Bristol and London.

Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche departed on Thursday, 18 August for Spain to bestow dharma teachings at a number of Sakya Centres."

Between his Bristol and London visits, Dungsey Rinpoche spent a week in Bournemouth, where he bestowed the Hevajra Cause and Path empowerments at the Sakya Thubten Ling centre, accompanied by Lama Jamyang Lekshey, director of the centre.

Richard Sedgley, one of the centre trustees, fondly remembers Rinpoche's stay in Bournemouth:

"Following his visit to Bristol, Khöndung Ratna

Vajra Rinpoche visited Bournemouth from Monday 8th August for a week, where the members of Sakya Thubten Ling warmly welcomed him on this his third visit to the group and second since the group's acquisition of the centre on Shelbourne Road, Charminster. After a welcome ceremony at the centre on the Monday evening, Dungsey Rinpoche gave a public talk entitled "Meditation and the Buddhist View of Life" at the Haven Hotel in Sandbanks, Poole, the venue having kindly been made available by its owner. The following evening, Wednesday 10th August, Dungsey Rinpoche gave a wide-ranging talk to members at the centre. On Thursday, Dungsey visited the Deer sanctuary in the New Forest, after which he stopped at the Dorset Cricket Centre (venue for last year's Vajrayogini blessing by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin), where Rinpoche was requested to present the trophy to the winners of a boys' under-12 cricket competition.

The following three days were taken up with the bestowal by Dungsey Rinpoche of the Hevajra Cause and Path initiations at the STL centre. Dungsey Rinpoche's visit was characterized by the clarity of his teaching and the happy atmosphere that he engendered."

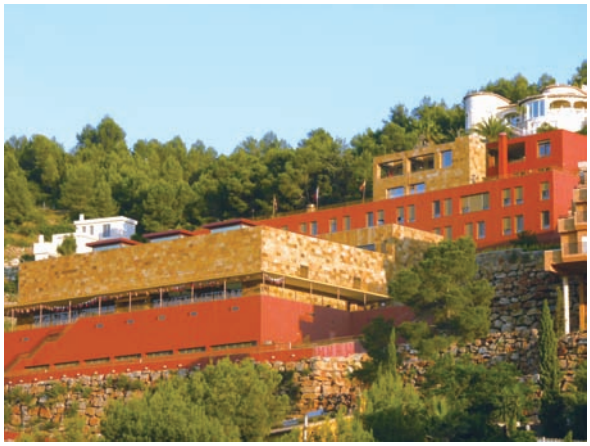
Dungsey Rinpoche performing the Hevajra initiation in Bournemouth

On August 18th, Dungsey Rinpoche travelled to Spain where his first stop was the Fundación Sakya Pedreguer. The Fundación is the largest Sakya centre in Europe. With a shrine hall that can accommodate up to 1000 people, and private accommodation for 35 people, it is an ideal place to host teachings by high masters, and to allow students to enter short or long retreats in order to incorporate these teachings in to their practice. It sits at the top of a hill, surrounded by trees, with a breathtaking view of a plain that extends to the sea.

There, Dungsey Rinpoche gave the Hevajra Cause and Path Empowerments as well as a teaching on mind training based on a text by Sakya Pandita called 'Flawless Light', and another teaching on the Sakya view of non-differentiation between samsara and nirvana.

The last stops on Dungsey Rinpoche's teaching tour were in Sakya Drogön Ling in Denia, Spain, where Rinpoche gave the empowerment and teaching of Chenrezig in the King's Tradition, and in Sakya Gephel Ling in Barcelona, where he gave the

Sakya Thubten Ling: a happy and grateful sangha



Fundación Pedreguer, Alicante

Fundación Pedreguer members

empowerment and teaching of Vajrakilaya. In both centres, Dungsey Rinpoche was given the warmest of welcome, and was entreated to return very soon.

Belén Martínez, who acted as translator for Dungsey Rinpoche, writes the following about his visit:

"In Denia, His Eminence showed His skills in teaching both Paramitayana and Vajrayana. He was so kind while bestowing the Chenrezig Empowerment according to Tsembupa's lineage. Rinpoche manifested the same kindness as the Yogi himself and his explanations in English were very practical and easy to put in practice.

After the Chenrezig teachings were over, we travelled together with Rinpoche to attend the Vajrakilaya Major Initiation and Sadhana commentary at Sakya Gephel Ling in Barcelona. Around 100 people attended. The atmosphere was harmonious, with Sakya brothers and sisters and other students coming together to receive this wonderful teaching, so closely connected to the Khön lineage. Rinpoche's explanations were very clear and direct, in spite of the difficulty of translating from the Tibetan text throughout. His closeness to everyone made it so easy that students are already praying for Rinpoche to come again soon. Pilar, President of the Sakya Gephel Ling centre, requested Rinpoche to return soon to benefit sentient beings through his presence and teachings, and so he accepted and wished to do so soon. This was Rinpoche's second visit to Spain, with the first one in 1998, and his fist visit to Sakya Gephel Ling.

View from the Fundación rooftop

Rinpoche showed so many signs of his father accomplishments with everything He taught. He taught in a way that everyone could feel how the practice can be applied easily to their lives. This inspires us, and gives us the hope that through harmony and guidance from Rinpoche, and the support of Lama Thubten and the , the Sakya lineage will have a sound basis to develop strength and to benefit the people of Spain."

Rinpoche performing the Chenrezig in the King's Tradition initiation at Sakya Drogon Ling, Denia

Dungsey Rinpoche strolling in the beautiful Sakya Drogon Ling gardens

On the 1st of September, Dungsey Rinpoche made his way to Lerab Ling, Sogyal Rinpoche's centre in the south of France, in order to join His Holiness and Dungsey Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in conducting the ritual rites of Khandro Tsering Chödrön, along with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, Sogyal Rinpoche, Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche and Khenchen Sherab Amipa.

Vajrakilaya empowerment at Sakya Gephel Ling, Barcelona

Annual Grand Pujas at the Sakya Centre (OCT-NOV-DEC)

- **Annual Grand Hevajra Puja:** 8th of the 9th lunar month for 8 days (Nov 3-12)
- **Dhamtsig Kangso:** 25th of the 10th lunar month for 8 days (Dec 20-28)

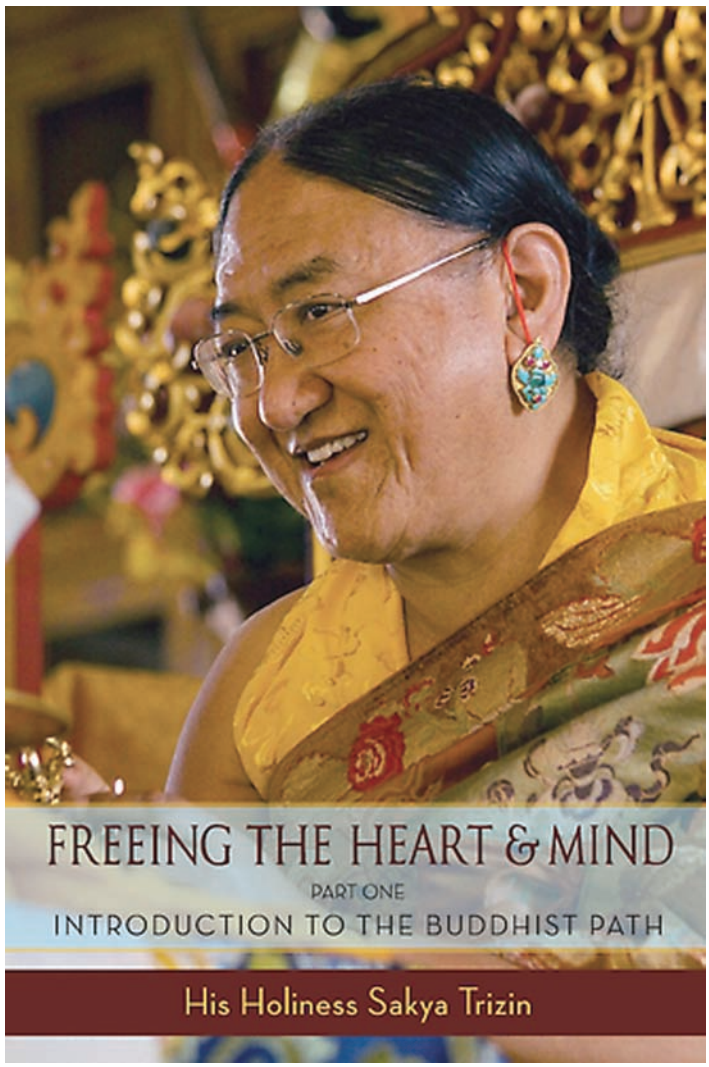
Great Festival

- **Lhabhab Düchen:** 22 of the 9th month (Nov 17)
- **Annual Sakya Monlam in Lumbini:** Dec 1st for 10 days

Important Dates

- **Nov 2nd : Western Birthday Jigdral Dagchen Rinpoche**
- **Nov 9th : Tibetan Birthday Luding Khenchen Rinpoche**
- **Nov 14th : Western Birthday Jetsun Kushok Chimey Luding**
- **Nov 16th : Parinirvana Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup**
- **Nov 19th : Western Birthday Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche**
- **Nov 29th : Tibetan Birthday Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche**
- **Dec 2nd : Parinirvana Munchen Konchok Gyaltsen Sempa Chempo**

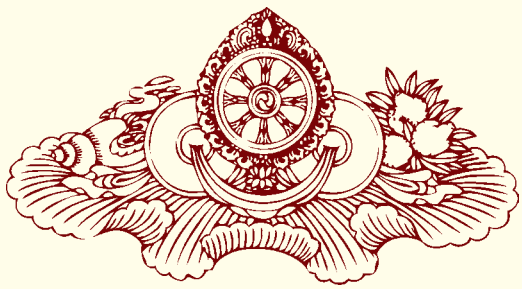
☸ **Lamp offerings for the monastery and food offerings for the lamas are welcome during all important pujas and ceremonies. Kindly contact the Sakya Centre in Rajpur if you wish to make an offering: sakyacentre@paldensakya.org.in**



"Freeing the Heart and Mind", by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, is the first volume in a series expounding the main features of Tibetan Buddhism, with a special focus on the Sakya tradition.

In this inspiring book, His Holiness offers a clear and revealing introduction to Tibetan Buddhism and, in addition, He presents a commentary on Mahasiddha Virupa's "Matchless Compassion", and a selection of commentaries on "Parting from the Four Attachments".

Available from most major online publishers



Become a sponsor of *Melody of Dharma*

Our deepest wish is to continue to offer teachings by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and other revered Sakya masters, and to keep our readers informed of their Dharma activities. But for this, we rely entirely on the generosity of sponsors.

If you would like to contribute to this effort, kindly contact us at: *melodyofdharma@gmail.com*

PAYPAL: **sakyasfbay@pacbell.net**
Ref: Melody of Dharma

Subscribe to *Melody of Dharma*

If you would like to subscribe to the magazine and receive its 4 yearly issues kindly contact us at:

melodyofdharma@gmail.com

PAYPAL: **sakyasfbay@pacbell.net**
Ref: Melody of Dharma

(One year's subscription costs: €23 / £20 / US$30 / AS$33)

Melody of Dharma
Representatives

INDIA AND NEPAL
Patricia Donohue
Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
192, Rajpur Road
P.O. Rajpur, 248009
Dehra Dun (U.K.) , India
Email: melodyofdharma@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA
Penny Moody
P.O. Box 217, Warrandy
Victoria 3113, Australia
Email: penny-moody@netspace.net.au

MALAYSIA
Datin Sri Loo Chooi Ting J.P.
Lot No. 2-3-09G, 3rd Fl., Wisma Rampai Jalan 34/26,
Taman Sri Rampai, 53300,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Email: norzin88@gmail.com

SINGAPORE
Sakya Tenphel Ling
Honorary Secretary
5 Pasir ris Drive 4
Singapore 519455
www.sakyatenphelling.org

FRANCE
Gabriela and Hans-Erich Frey
71, Boulevard d'Anvers
F-67000, Strasbourg, FRANCE
Email: gabriela.frey@free.fr
(Kindly make cheque out to 'Sakyadhita France')

GERMANY
Isabelle Fehler
Jetsun Sakya Foundation
Wilhelm-Leuschner Str.
76189 Karlsruhe, Germany
Email: fehler@sakya-foundation.de

SWITZERLAND
Anne Deriaz
Cité Villars, 10
1203 Geneva
Email: anne.deriaz@vtxnet.ch

U.K.
Richard and Sue Sedgley
c/o Sakya Thubten Ling
167 Shelbourne Road
Bournemouth BH8 8RD, U.K.
Email: richnsue51@btinternet.com

U.S.A.
Sakya Thupten Dargye Ling
Ms. Silvia M. Yueh
2735, Hemlock Lane N.
Plymouth MN 55441, USA
Email: mnsakya@mac.com

This Issue was Generously Sponsored by

Tsechen Kunchab Ling

Walden, New York

Please find below the contact details for the monasteries in India directly under the aegis of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin:

Sakya Dolma Phodrang

Address: 192 Rajpur Road,
P.O. Rajpur 248009
Dehradun, U.K. INDIA
Email: dolmaphodrang@paldensakya.org.in
Tel: 91-135-2734-081
Fax: 91-135-2734-883

Sakya College

Address: Mussoorie Road
P.O. Rajpur 248009
Dehradun, U.K. INDIA
Email: sakya_college@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-135-2734-308

Sakya Monastery Kalimpong

Address: 11th Mile, P.O. Topkhana,
Kalimpong 734301
Dist. Darjeeling, West Bengal, INDIA
Email: sakyacentrekpg@rediffmail.com
Tel: 91-355-2255-425
Mob: 91-933-3092-858

Sakya Centre

Address: 187 Rajpur Rd,PO Rajpur 248009,
Dehradun,Uttarakhand, INDIA
Email: shrisakya@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-135-2734-286
Fax: 91-135-2734-493

Sakya Thupten Namgyal Ling

Address: Puruwala
P.O. Gorkhuwala
173025 Dstt Sirmaur, H.P. INDIA
Email: sakyamagon@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-1704-238895

Sakya Nunnery

Address: Sahastradhara Road, P/O Kulhan 248001,
Dehradun,Uttarakhand, INDIA
Email: sakyanunnery_office@yahoo.com
Tel: 91-135-2607-560

Wandering for alms —weak,

leaning on a staff,

with trembling limbs —

I fell down right there on the ground.

Seeing the drawbacks of the body,

my mind was then

set free.

From the ‘Verses of the Elder Nuns’
Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu, Access to Insight, 8 August 2010

Melody of Dharma
Sakya Dolma Phodrang

192, Rajpur Road

P.O. Rajpur 248009

Dehradun, U.K. INDIA

Tel: 91-135-273-4081 Fax: 91-135-273-4883

Email: melodyofdharma@gmail.com