

BASIC PROGRAM HOMESTUDY TEACHERS



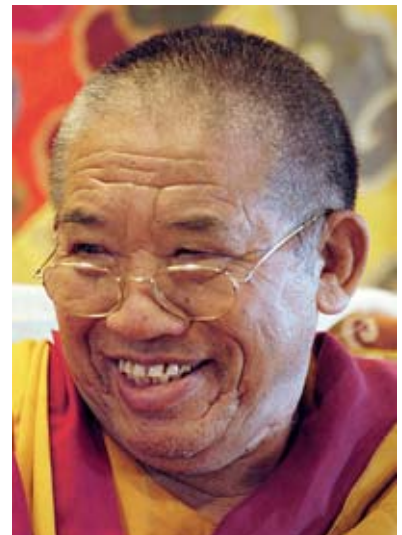
Photo Credit: Bob Cayton
Lama Zopa Rinpoche

The curriculum of the Basic Program has been carefully designed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, with input from FPMT geshees during several Geshe Meetings. The program is taught by highly qualified Tibetan Geshees and senior Western teachers in our centers around the world. Basic Program teachings by the following teachers have been selected for this first English language Basic Program Homestudy series:

Geshe Jampa Gyatso

Lama Tzong Khapa Institute, Pomaia, Italy
stages of the path: middle lamrim

Geshe Jampa Gyatso has been resident teacher at Lama Tzong Khapa Institute since 1980. He is holder of the Lharam Geshe degree from Sera Je Monastery, the Ngagram Geshe degree from Gyu Me Tantric College, and the Acharya degree from the Sanskrit University of Varanasi. He was a classmate and close friend of Lama Yeshe. In addition to teaching numerous short and long courses both at the Institute and in other Dharma centers in Italy, Spain, and England, and acting as abbot of Nalanda Monastery in France and Takden Shedrup Targye Ling Monastery and Shenphen Samten Ling Nunnery at Lama Tzong Khapa Institute, Geshe-la has acted as the principal tutor of the forerunner of the Masters Program held at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa from 1983 to 1997 and the seven-year Masters Program 1998 - 2004. As well as being a formidable scholar, he is highly regarded by his students for his practical advice, his warm humor, and his boundless concern for their well-being. Geshe Jampa Gyatso has taught the Basic Program at the Institute from 2005-2007, and has given an introductory talk on the program subjects explaining the benefits of study which is included with each Basic Program homestudy package as a DVD. Geshe-la's teachings on the Middle Lamrim are included in the homestudy series.



Geshe Ngawang Drakpa

Tse Chen Ling, San Francisco
the heart sutra

Born in Nagchu, Central Tibet, a village at an altitude of 14,000 feet with year round ice and snow, Geshe-la spent his earliest years with his nomadic family. At the age of ten he entered Orbak Monastery, where he learned to read and write. He was ordained as a novice monk at 13 and memorized sutras, prayers and pujas, and learned how to construct mandalas and play ritual instruments. He also studied Tibetan grammar, poetry and astrology. In 1953, he traveled to Lhasa and entered Sera Je, one of the three great monastic universities in Tibet, and home to 7,200 monks. Lama Yeshe, founder of the FPMT, was among his contemporaries at Sera. He was granted full ordination by the Junior Tutor of the Dalai Lama, Trijang Rinpoche. In 1959 Chinese troops shelled Sera. Geshe La's life hung by a thread for days. When he learned that the Dalai Lama had fled, he decided to follow suit and escaped to India. He continued his studies at the Sanskrit University in Varanasi, where he earned an M.A. with honors. Invited by the Queen of Sikkim to teach Tibetan at the University of Sikkim, he ended up staying for 20 years before returning to the re-established Sera Je monastery in South India to gain his Geshe degree. Graduating at the top of his class, Geshe-la became a master in Dharma, astrology, Tibetan education, grammar and poetry. Before coming to San Francisco he was resident teacher at the FPMT center in Taipei, Taiwan.



Geshe Chonyi

Amitabha Buddhist Centre, Singapore
engaging in the bodhisattva deeds



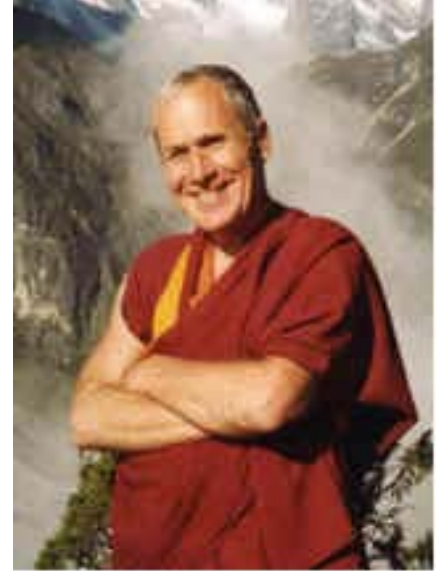
Geshe Chonyi holds a Geshe Lharampa degree, the highest Tibetan Buddhist doctorate from Sera Je Monastery, India. After completing his geshe degree, he spent a year at Gyu Me Tantric College to complete his studies. In 1999, Geshe-la arrived in Singapore directly from Kopan Monastery, where he had been teaching Buddhist Philosophy. With the encouragement and support of Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Lhundrup, Geshe Chonyi started teaching a five-year Basic Program at Amitabha Buddhist Centre in August 2003 for students seeking to deepen their knowledge of the Buddhadharma and enrich their daily practice. Geshe-la is not only well qualified to teach such a study program, he is also renowned for his skills in fostering students' development through questioning, debate, and written assignments. As Lama Lhundrup told centre members during his 2001 visit to Singapore, "You are very lucky to have Geshe Chonyi as your teacher. He has great knowledge, he is very humble, and he's a learned Geshe!" The students feel most fortunate to have such a wonderful guide in Singapore to direct them on the path.

Ven George Churinoff (Gelong Thubten Tsultrim)

Land of Medicine Buddha, Soquel, California

mind and cognition & mahayana mind training

A physics graduate from MIT, George also has a Masters degree in Buddhist studies from Delhi University, India. He took ordination in 1975 and after more than four years at Kopan Monastery in Nepal studied the Geshe Studies Program at Manjushri Institute in England, where he also served as Spiritual Program Coordinator. Venerable George was instrumental in founding the Masters Program at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Italy where he was also Program Coordinator, studying and teaching for 8 years with an additional three year tenure at Tushita Delhi during that period. Then followed 3 years as Lama Osel Rinpoche's English curriculum tutor at Sera Je Monastery in South India. George has done many retreats in the Sutra and Tantra traditions and taught extensively in America, Europe, India and Nepal, Russia, Mongolia, Singapore, Australia and, most recently, New Zealand, where he taught several Basic Program subjects. Following Lama Zopa Rinpoche's advice, he became the resident Basic Program teacher at Land of Medicine Buddha in 2003.



Geshe Tenzin Tenphel

Lama Tzong Khapa Institute, Pomaia, Italy

the tathagata essence & ornament of clear realizations



Geshe-la is holder of the Lharam Geshe degree from Sera Je Monastery and studied at Gyu To Tantric College. Residing at Lama Tzong Khapa Institute since 1998, in addition to assisting with the teaching of supplementary subjects during the 1998-2004 Masters Program, Geshe Tenzin Tenphel has been teaching at the other FPMT centers in Italy. Geshe Tenphel is particularly appreciated for his clear explanations, his keen interest in debate, and his sense of humor, qualities that have endeared him to many Western disciples. For the 2005-2007 Basic Program at the Institute Geshe-la has been teaching the philosophical subjects, a constant source of enthusiasm for his sharp analytical mind. From among these his teachings on the Tathagata Essence and on the Ornament are included in the BP homestudy series.

Geshe Tsulga

Kurukulla Center, Boston, USA
tenets



Geshe-la was born in Kham province, in eastern Tibet. When he was sixteen, Geshe Jampa Khedup told him that he should go to Lhasa for teachings. Shortly later he joined Sera Je and his long training to become a Geshe began in earnest. In 1990 Geshe-la first met Lama Zopa at Sera Monastery, who asked him if he was interested in giving teachings in the West. At first doubtful, Geshe-la told Rinpoche that he had no experience giving teachings to western students, and didn't know if he could really benefit them. Lama Zopa thought for a while and said he thought Geshe-la could be of benefit, but still doubting, he asked Rinpoche to do a divination. When after two days Rinpoche came back and told him that the divination came out positive, he finally accepted. It took a few months for Geshe-la to develop confidence that the students were understanding his teachings, but he finds westerners to be intelligent and hopes he is "putting some imprints in the minds of western people who can benefit." Since his

arrival in America in 1992, he has initially been dividing his teaching time between three of the FPMT's east coast centers: Kurukulla Center, Kadampa Center and Milarepa Center. From 1996 onward he has been the resident teacher at Kurukulla Center, teaching the Basic Program since 2002. Geshe-la's teachings on Tenets are included in the homestudy series.

Yangsi Rinpoche

Land of Medicine Buddha, Soquel, California
seventy topics

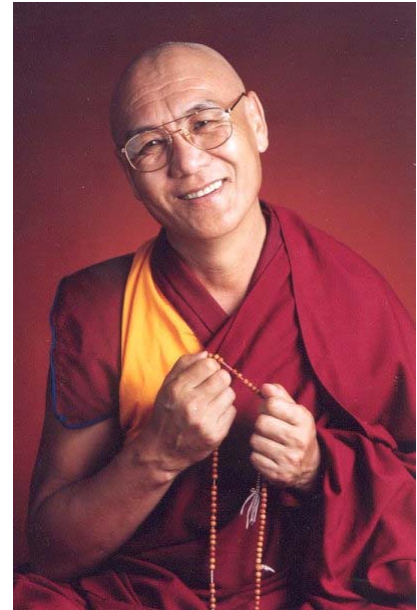
At the age of six Yangsi Rinpoche was recognized as the reincarnation of Geshe Ngawang Gendun, a renowned scholar and practitioner from Western Tibet. He graduated in 1995 with the highest degree of Geshe Lharampa from Sera Je Monastery in South India. Rinpoche then completed his studies at Gyu Me Tantric College, and came to the West in 1998 to teach and travel throughout America and Europe, having the particular wish to benefit Western students of the Buddhistdharma. He was a resident teacher at Deer Park Buddhist Center in Madison, Wisconsin for five years, and is the Spiritual Director of Ganden Shedrup Ling Buddhist Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico. With the support of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Yangsi Rinpoche designed



Maitripa Institute's lamrim based 4-year master-level program that will serve as the foundation for the eventual establishment of a Buddhist University. He is the author of *Practicing the Path: A Commentary on the Lamrim Chenmo*, published in 2003 by Wisdom Publications. Rinpoche teaches in English, and is admired for his unique presentation of the Dharma. Rinpoche teaches parts of the Basic Program at Institute Vajra Yogini in France and at Land of Medicine Buddha; his teachings on Seventy Topics for Land of Medicine Buddha's Basic Program are included in the homestudy series.

Geshe Tashi Tsering, Chenrezig Institute, Queensland, Australia

Geshe Tashi Tsering was born in the Karze area of east Tibet in 1937, and became a monk at the age of seven. At Sera Je he began his Geshe degree and was appointed lead debater and examinee of his class. After the Chinese overran Tibet in 1959, Geshe-la fled Tibet. It took him a month to cross the Himalayas. Like many other Tibetan Refugees, he first settled in the Indian town of Buxor, where he finished his studies. After practicing and studying for ten years in Buxor he moved to the newly established Sera Monastery near Mysore where he continued studying for a further twenty years. After forty years of study, Geshe-la excelled in all the grades of the Geshe examinations. Following this, Geshe-la went to Gyu Me tantric Monastery. At the repeated request of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Geshe-la took up the position of resident teacher at Chenrezig Institute in 1990, where he continues to communicate to his many students his great wisdom through both his words and actions. Geshe Tashi Tsering is currently teaching the Basic Program subjects as part of Chenrezig Institute's Buddhist Studies Programme, and we hope to be able to prepare one of Geshe-la's teachings for the homestudy series.



Geshe Pema Tsering, Buddha House, Adelaide, Australia



Geshe-la was born in 1941 in a small village in Dhargye in eastern Tibet. He entered his first monastery, Dhargye Monastery, as a young boy and some years later went to Sera Je Monastery in Lhasa. Geshe Pema Tsering fled Tibet in 1959. After many hardships of the kind experienced by all newly-arrived exiles in a foreign land, he made his way to Southern India and Sera Je Monastery, where he helped in the rebuilding and re-establishment of this great Monastic University. He completed his Geshe Lharampa degree followed by his Tantric degree, after which he taught at Kopan Monastery and a nunnery before returning to Sera, where he has many students. Currently teaching the Basic Program subjects at Buddha House, we hope Geshe-la will consent to one of his teachings being included in the homestudy series.

Geshe Gelek Chodak, Kadampa Center, Raleigh, USA

Geshe Gelek Chodak was born in Gnathang in eastern Sikkim, 400 kilometers from Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. At the age of seven he was admitted to Sera Je Tibetan Mahayana Buddhist University in south India. He graduated in 1998 with the highest degree of Geshe Lharampa. After another year of intensive study and practice at Gyu Me Tantric College, Geshe Gelek traveled in Europe to teach on death and dying. In June 2000, Lama Zopa Rinpoche invited Geshe-la to become resident teacher at Kadampa Center in Raleigh, North Carolina. He now teaches primarily in English, using humor, examples from everyday American life and stories from Tibetan culture to help students understand the Dharma, its practical applications and its deeper meaning. He has also conducted several lectures at the University of North Carolina, at the University of Virginia, and at Menla Mountain Retreat Center in Woodstock NY at the invitation of Robert Thurman. Geshe Gelek has been teaching the Basic Program in Kadampa Center since 2006, and we hope to provide a program subject in DVD format for the homestudy series.

