

“How is it possible for a day to go by without doing pujas?
It is so extremely important.”

— LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

Offerings for two days (so as to definitely cover the actual time of eclipse).

Kopan Monlam: For the first fifteen days of Losar an offering is made each day, as well as tea and lunch offered to all the monks and nuns participating in the annual Monlam festival (more than 2,000 monks and nuns).

Potawa Nunnery: Offering is made to the nuns to perform **sixteen nung nä retreats** over Saka Dawa.

Chenrezig Institute: every Saka Dawa, volunteers' lunch is sponsored and the material is sponsored for the **making of stupas** for one day.

A **full set of robes** is offered to all **FPMT Geshes and resident teachers**. In 2007, there were fifty-eight sets of robes offered.

Each year FPMT checks with one of Rinpoche's gurus to see if there are obstacles for **FPMT and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's health**, and then the pujas are accordingly preformed. For instance, in 2008, it was advised that 10,000 Tara recitations plus White Tara puja is to be done as well as 1,000 Trukchumas.

Throughout the year Rinpoche checks for specific projects, students, benefactors and other matters, and other pujas are accordingly arranged.

For more information on how to support the FPMT Puja Fund, go to www.fpmt.org/projects/puja/default.asp

Grateful thanks to Ven. Holly Ansett for compiling this information. ☸

THE MONKS at Nalanda Monastery in France

By Ven. Lobsang Jinpa

Performing pujas is a vital part of monastery life. The prayers and dedications of those keeping pure vows, especially monastic vows, are considerable, and so when a lay practitioner needs help when someone is dying, is sick, or has obstacles in their practice/daily life, the Sangha are very pleased to perform pujas to help.

The monks at Nalanda receive requests, mostly by email, to perform a puja for a specific person, family or animal. The person requesting usually offers a donation which is given to the monks performing the puja. The monks meet in the evening to recite the puja and offer strong dedications for the benefactor and their particular obstacle. Our website www.nalanda-monastery.eu lists the pujas we recommend for different circumstances, together with a brief explanation of the different types of pujas performed at the monastery.

As monks and nuns cannot always offer much in the way of material goods, performing pujas becomes an important method for the Sangha to directly help the lay community,

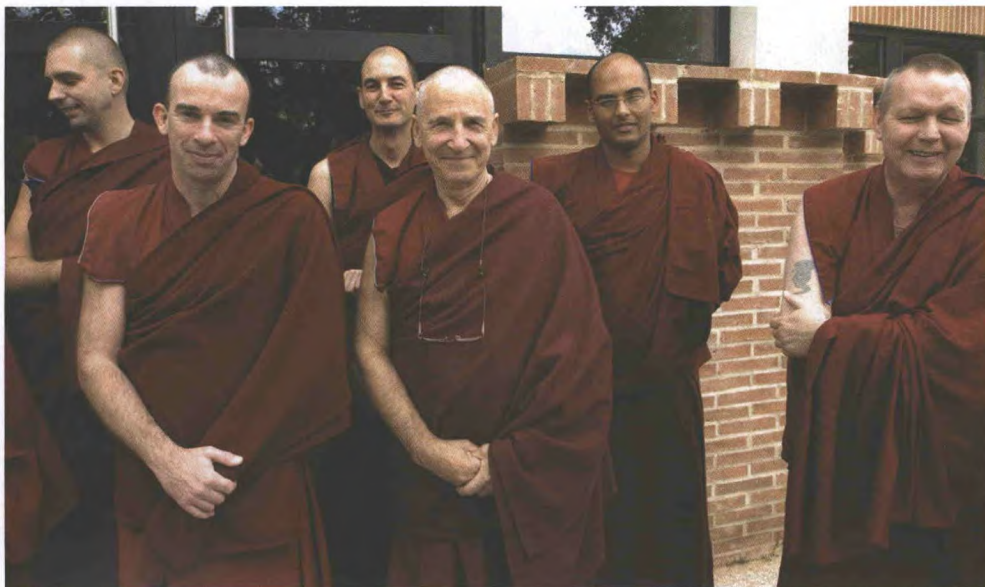
repay their kindness and to further the goals of our precious teachers. We're not saying lay people shouldn't do pujas themselves: as Sangha, we're here for added support. However, monks and nuns do remember how demanding a lay life can be, and are very happy to offer help when needed.

Ven. Losang Nyinje organizes the requests for pujas at Nalanda, so I asked him about his experiences:

Q. How many requests does Nalanda get in a week?

A. We have a box in our lobby where we receive about six or eight requests with money offerings. We also get regular emails from FPMT about those recently deceased and from others we receive about three or four sponsored puja requests by email a week.

Geshe Jamphel (Nalanda's Abbot) also suggests pujas for the monks. For example, we did a series of four Tara Pujas to help purchase some land next to the monastery. We also recently received a request from Lama Zopa Rinpoche for all the monks to read certain sutras for an FPMT student.



From left: Vens. Lobsang Gendun, Yonten, Lobsang, Tsultrim, Gelek, and Sherab. Nalanda monks are happy to help when needed.

Q. What are the most popular requests?

A. Tara, mostly, and then Medicine Buddha. Kalarupa is usually for bigger problems. Most requests are for family members who have passed away and for them to have a good rebirth. Our second biggest request is to remove obstacles to wealth.

Q. What are your experiences of the pujas at Nalanda?

A. I find it very inspiring now that we now have twenty-two monks. When we all concentrate in a puja together, I really feel we are helping others as a community. And we know that these pujas work. You don't see your energy go out and help, like we don't see Tara going to help that person directly, but we know puja finds the right objects because after a few weeks we get letters saying, "Thank you for the puja, my mother's health is much better," or "My son's problems are now gone."

We can't see what really happens but because we receive many letters we know that we have helped.

Sometimes people even want to know the specific time and date we are doing their puja, so they can connect with the monks wherever they are in the world. It gets a little complicated when they ask for the time zones differences so they can change their clocks! This is not something we can normally be so specific about, but we try our best.

Ven. Tenzin Lamten tells us what he likes about the pujas:

Since we don't do them every day they've become special occasions, so I really look forward to them. I'm quite familiar with the Guru Puja as I do it on my own every day, but I really enjoy the opportunity to do this as a community twice

a month with the tsog offering. When we do requested pujas, I enjoy them even more because there's even greater motivation for doing them.

When we all come together it is much more powerful, which is good for the community and also for the individual monks. ☸

The monks at Nalanda Monastery are members of the International Mahayana Institute (IMI), the community of monks and nuns of the FPMT. Your support of the Sangha through the Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund ensures that Buddha's teachings are available for future generations. For further information on the programs and activities of IMI please visit www.imisangha.org

100,000 Tsog Offerings

Lama Zopa Rinpoche was asked to organize, sponsor and participate in 100,000 Tsog Offerings to Guru Rinpoche at Boudhanath Stupa, Nepal in June. To do so, he cancelled his trip to Australia. The puja was also done last year and was attended by the same Kagyu and Nyingma high lamas, as well as Rinpoche, Khadro-la and Dagri Rinpoche. The purpose of doing this very significant puja was specifically for the current Tibet situation. It was also advised that it would be extremely beneficial for FPMT and all of Rinpoche's activities. The FPMT has been advised to do this puja to Guru Rinpoche at the same time each year.