

A Letter from a Student to Lama Zopa

May 2007

Dearest Root Lama,

At the feet of the most highly-respected Lama, the source of all happiness and guide for suffering sentient beings, I bow down with my body, speech and mind.

I am so fortunate to have met you in 1992. Before meeting you, all my actions of body, speech and mind were only causes for more suffering in future lives. After meeting you, I am like a wild animal that has found rest and is cared for by a great savior.

In 2000, when Geshe Lama Konchog was diagnosed with cancer, I made a promise to you in Kuala Lumpur to liberate one million lives for Geshe-la's quick recovery. Since then till today, for almost eight years, members of the Amitabha Buddhist Centre (ABC) in Singapore and myself have had the good karma and condition to liberate about 80 million animals.

I have reflected that if were not for the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Lama Yeshe, and your kindness in starting a center in Singapore, all this would not have happened. I would like to request on behalf of all the animals, and members of ABC, that you must live long.

This practice of animal liberation is my heart practice, and is also something I have promised Ribur Rinpoche to continue doing. It makes my life most meaningful, to be of service to these animals. I would like now to inform you that I would like to continue to liberate one billion lives for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life and your long life. Please accept this. If I am able to do it I will then pray to liberate one trillion lives and then all lives, till every one is liberated. Please pray for me.



Fred Cheong with Lama Zopa Rinpoche

I will pledge to do this till my last breath, and should I not able to complete it, please forgive me.

Please live long and continue to guide pitiful beings like us ...

Your deluded disciple

Fred Cheong

[Fred later reported that the animals liberated by ABC members are usually marine creatures, local delights that are served in sea-food restaurants. The species include crabs, mussels, a variety of clams, fish, top shell and cockles. "We usually buy them from the wholesale market early in the morning before they are sold off to be served as food," Fred said. "They are transported to the center, where we recite the animal liberation prayers as in FPMT Prayer Book 1. The animals also circumambulate many holy objects. They are then brought to the ferry terminal, where they are transported by boat to be liberated in their natural habitat – in the sea or mangrove swamp, depending on the types of species."

By late January 2008, 94 million animals had been liberated. By mid-year, the ABC members expect the figure to be 100 million.] ❁