

# Practices Recommended by Lama Zopa Rinpoche for Retreats in FPMT Centers

We are happy to provide this general list of practices and retreat structure for retreats held in FPMT centers. These guidelines are based on the general structure of retreats as led by Lama Zopa Rinpoche to accumulate the most merit and purify the most negativities.

These practices are available as separate booklets from the FPMT Foundation Store as well as in our Essential Buddhist Prayers series. They are now also available all in one booklet, the *FPMT Retreat Prayer Book*, which makes providing materials for a retreat and doing the recommended practices very simple.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche bases retreats on the practice of Lama Chöpa Jorchö, although they may also be based on the Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga.

## Checklist for Structuring Your Retreat:

1. Set motivation for the retreat and the day.
2. Do the Preliminary Prayers section of *Essential Buddhist Prayers, Vol. 1*, including the Practice of Prostrations to the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas. Taking the Eight Mahayana Precepts is optional.
3. Begin with Lama Chöpa Jorchö, with a meditation on guru devotion.

Rinpoche recommends Lama Chöpa Jorchö for the first session of the retreat, but it may also be done in sections throughout the day.

Retreat sadhana or ngöndro practice for other sessions (set your motivation at the beginning of each session, and refresh it before the mantra recitation or ngöndro practice). At the beginning of each session, do a glance meditation on the lam-rim, with deep reflection on one particular topic. Work your way through the entire lam-rim – session after session – and then start again at the beginning. Be sure to dedicate the merit at the end of the session.

4. *Optional*: include Vajrasattva practice in the last session.
5. End with multiplying mantras and dedication prayers (such as the King of Prayers), and optional protector prayers.

For more information on ngöndro practices and retreats, we recommend reading commentary by Rinpoche in *Heart Advice for Retreat, Gaden Lha Gyema* and the various preliminary practice booklets made available by FPMT Foundation Store: [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop). Please also check with FPMT Education Services to make sure you have the most up-to-date practice materials and advice from Rinpoche. [education@fpmt.org](mailto:education@fpmt.org).