



GADEN FOR THE WEST

Interpreting and Integrating Gelug Tibetan Buddhism
Spiritual Director - Zasep Tulku Rinpoche

25th Anniversary Present for Zasep Rinpoche

But first a real-life story...

Dear Dharma brothers and sisters,

Nearly twenty-five years ago, in 1980, Venerable Zasep Rinpoche arrived in Nelson BC. As you know, Rinpoche was born and lived his early years in Tibet. After spending so much of the intervening time in India and Australia, the majestic mountains of Nelson must have been sheer magic for Rinpoche.

In fact, Rinpoche says he had a feeling, an intuition when he arrived in Nelson. He thought,

“This is the place I am going to be for a long, long time.”

Rinpoche was excited as he began exploring the land around Nelson. So much so that he established his very first Buddhist Centre there – Tashi Choling.

Throughout the eighties, Rinpoche kept coming back to that good feeling, that intuition, those first days in Nelson. In 1991, he bought his own property just outside of Nelson and began setting down roots there. His dream of being there a “long, long time” was becoming reality.

And the vision grew bigger, even more defined. Rinpoche dreamt of a nearby retreat centre where his students could do ongoing retreats. He wanted this to be a special place, a healing and contemplative place. A place of natural beauty; where practitioners could *feel* the transformative power of nature.

Rinpoche also wanted the retreat centre to be a place that, as he grew older, he could use as his base to teach and to lead retreats. So he could slow down a little, and not travel so much.

Please read on

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Gaden for the West is a registered, non-profit, charitable organization.

In 2001, his heart's wish came true when Rinpoche established the Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat Centre in Nelson. When asked "Why a retreat centre in Nelson, Rinpoche," he said,

"For me, there are only two places I want to be when I grow old. Nelson or Tashi Lhapug Monastery, Tibet." He says that Nelson is his, "outside Tibet home." How fortunate for us!

Clearly Venerable Zasep Rinpoche loves Nelson and Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat Centre. He says that the retreat centre has "*Sa chid*," the Tibetan version of *feng shui*. When Rinpoche talks about the centre's *sa chid*, his words reflect his deeply felt feelings about its seven acres of land.

He says it has just the right characteristics for a temple: land located between two beautiful creeks...a wonderful waterfall and cave ("If I were a Zen priest, I would buy it for the waterfall alone!")...beautiful old growth cedars. "It even has a view of Copper Mountain." Copper Mountain, as some of you may know, is Magik Labdron's holy place. It's also where Padmasambhava went after he visited Tibet...to Copper Mountain.

Like all of his students, you probably love and admire Zasep Rinpoche very much. And you know that he gives so generously of himself to us, to our communities, and to all sentient beings. He doesn't complain when he's tired or sick; he just keeps on doing. All too often Rinpoche has very little private time for himself, for his own retreats and practices.

Let's honour our precious teacher and spiritual friend by doing something truly special for him.

Let's give him a gift that will provide respite later on in his older years. A gift that honours his generosity to all sentient beings, and that commemorates his wish for an "outside Tibet home."

Here's where the 25th anniversary gift comes in!

2005 marks 25 years since Rinpoche arrived in Canada and in Nelson. Let's make 2005 another magical year for him. But we need to start now on what would be the perfect gift.

Let's provide the funds needed to complete the renovations required to ensure Gaden Choling Retreat Centre meets all official building codes.

Summer is the best time to do these renovations so that the Gompa

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will be complete by next year – 2005. So that we can offer this as our special gift for Rinpoche's 25th anniversary.

You may be wondering what kind of renovations are needed. The work is needed to bring the retreat centre, formerly a single family dwelling, up to the building code for religious use.

The kitchen must be rebuilt, fireproof gyprock installed over the whole house, the roofing updated... building permits paid for, a water filter installed, insulation added... and the existing space must be expanded to include an office, a larger meditation hall, a library, and a caretaker's space.

The Gaden board is committed to making sure things are done right. They've hired a trusted contractor to handle the renovations because of the extensive nature. All told, \$200,000 is urgently required to complete Rinpoche's vision for his home outside Tibet.

It sounds like a lot. (It is!) But when you think of how many of us there are – and all the ways we can contribute – it suddenly becomes realistic!

- Make an outright gift of \$20, \$50, \$75...or even \$2,000 if you can afford it.
- Make a monthly gift...this allows many of us to give with greater ease by spreading our gifts over time. (You can write a number of post-dated cheques made out to Gaden for the West.)
- Give a long-term interest-free loan.
- Loan the money and get its value back over time in teachings and retreats.

Other ideas:

- Hold a garage sale and donate the proceeds to making Rinpoche's dream come true.
- Do something you love to do, like a long bike ride or walk or hike. Ask your friends to sponsor you by the mile.
- Hold a dinner party at your home, invite your friends and ask them to bring a donation of \$10 or more for the charity of the evening (Gaden for the West) instead of a "host or hostess gift".

There are lots of ways we can give. I know that you will give whatever you can. Please know that all donations are gratefully received and will make a difference.

See over

To make it easy for you I've enclosed a stamped and addressed return envelope.

I hope you will join me and Rinpoche's other devoted students right across Canada (and as far away as Australia) to help make Rinpoche's dream of his "home outside Tibet" come true. And come true in this special commemorative year – 2005 – 25 years in Canada!

Thanks for reading my letter. Please consider making a gift. We will use it wisely and gratefully.

Yours in the Dharma,

Sharon Gretzinger
President, Gaden for the West

P.S. Remember, there are lots of ways for you to give, at whatever level you can afford. Each gift will be truly instrumental in helping to complete the building code renovations needed at Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat Centre – and to make Rinpoche's 25th anniversary a truly magical event! Thanks again.