

# A BUDDHIST SERVICE



**RIME BUDDHIST CENTER**  
**ACHIEVING PEACE THROUGH**  
**COMPASSION**



**Lama Matthew Rice**  
**Lobpon Palden Gocha**  
**Spiritual Director**

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## **Shrine Room Etiquette and Protocols**

These guidelines are simply a matter of courtesy. Courtesy that springs from the heart, a result of respect, has, since ancient times, formed a part of spiritual disciplines. To be courteous, respectful, and polite is not superficial, but can be a great practice of mindfulness and a way to develop bodhisattva actions. It is with this attitude that one may approach the particular kind of attention to detail that showing respect involves, be it to a lama, in a shrine room, or in ordinary daily interactions.

- Shoes should be removed and left at the door.
- Hats should never be worn in the shrine room.
- Short skirts or revealing garments are not appropriate attire. If a street length skirt is necessary for some reason, it is wise to bring a shawl to drape over the legs while sitting.
- Do not sit with legs outstretched in front of you if you are facing the shrine or the teacher. This is considered a sign of disrespect, and of course, lying down shows great discourtesy. If you must stretch your legs out in front of you, be sure they are pointing away from the teacher or shrine.
- Dharma books and puja texts should never be placed directly on the floor, out of respect for the truth that they contain, but should be placed on a table or cushion. Texts should never be stepped over, stepped on or sat on.
- When entering the shrine room, a Buddhist practitioner may do three prostrations facing the shrine, or make a short bow with hands folded.

## **Rime Center Services**

This service/practice is an attempt to combine both Eastern and Western elements into a complete service while maintaining the integrity of the Tibetan tradition. The service contains supplications and prayers to the Buddha and other bodhisattvas and Dharma protectors in Tibetan Buddhism, along with short periods of meditation and mantras. Prayers in Buddhism are not aimed at some higher being, but rather to the innate qualities of enlightenment we all have that are temporarily obscured by our negative emotions. Prayer is better understood as aspirational in nature.

There are many bodhisattvas (yidams or deities) in Tibetan Buddhism. This service includes a short practice of the bodhisattva of purification, Vajrasattva. There is also a short prayer to Palden Lhamo who is the Dharma protector of the Rime Center, whose role is to protect the teachings and practitioners. The service concludes with a Dharma talk and the dedication of the merit generated by the practice.

The Rime Center provides weekly classes and Dharma teachings are offered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings along with a regular Sunday service. Meditation instruction is offered on Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. The Center also sponsors weekend meditation retreats and hosts special programs related to the practice of Buddhism in everyday life.

## **Vision Statement**

The Rime Buddhist Center is a non-sectarian center dedicated to the cultivation of wisdom and compassion. The Center is a refuge for the nurturing of inner peace, kindness, community understanding and world peace.

The Center's primary objective is to provide a qualified program of Buddhist studies and Tibetan culture taught by monks, lamas and other Tibetan teachers, and to promote a harmonious relationship of understanding between Tibetans and Westerners.

## **Mission Statement**

The Center has two major purposes:

- To provide a center for the study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism.
- To help preserve the endangered Tibetan culture by offering classes in Tibetan language, arts and religion for Western students and scholars, and to have these resources available to the Midwest.

## **Spiritual Guidance and Meditation Instruction**

Lama Matt Rice is available to meet one-on-one to discuss your spiritual questions. To make an appointment, call him at 816-471-7073 or e-mail him at [spiritual.director@rimecenter.org](mailto:spiritual.director@rimecenter.org).

## **Donations**

The Rime Buddhist Center and Tibetan Institute of Studies is a non-profit 501(c)(3) religious and educational organization. We are proud of the fact that our staff is composed entirely of volunteers. Please help us continue our work by making a donation.

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# A BUDDHIST SERVICE

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## Service Begins

At sound of bells everyone rises.

Three preceptors enter.

Center preceptor lights candles and incense on shrine.

As center preceptor bows in respect to the Buddha; everyone also bows.

Preceptors sit down; all sit down.

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Short Stabilizing Meditation Session

(2-3 minutes)

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## Refuge Vows (Everyone 3 times)

In the Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha,

I go for refuge until enlightenment is reached.

May my generosity and accumulations of merit

Bring benefit to all beings, and may beings actualize perfect Buddhahood.

## Four Immeasurables (Everyone 3 times)

May all beings be endowed with happiness;

May all beings be free from suffering;

May all beings never be separated from happiness;

And may all beings abide in equanimity,

undisturbed by the eight worldly concerns.

(then say once:)

For as long as space endures,

and for as long as living beings remain,

until then may we, too, abide to dispel the misery of the world.

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## Meditation Session (10 minutes)

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## An Explanation of the Service

### Preliminaries

Preceptors enter and perform prostrations (a show of respect), open the shrine and make an offering of incense.

### Taking Refuge and Engendering Bodhichitta

We recite the Refuge Vow to renew our vow. Bodhichitta is translated as “awakened heart” or “awakened mind.” This is considered the most important motivation to one’s practice in Tibetan Buddhism. Bodhichitta is the desire to alleviate another’s suffering. In this supplication we are stating our wish to generate bodhichitta for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche said, “In the Buddhist tradition, the purpose of taking refuge is to awaken from confusion and associate oneself with wakefulness. Taking refuge is a matter of commitment and acceptance and, at the same time, of openness and freedom. By taking the refuge vow we commit ourselves to freedom.”

The last sentence is a verse from Shantideva’s Bodhicaryavatara [A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life] and embodies the Bodhisattva Vow, the heart of the Mahayana.

## Supplication to Buddha (Everyone, once)

To the Blessed One,  
The One Gone Beyond,  
The Fully Awakened One,  
The Great Physician,  
The Supreme Teacher.

You came to this earth  
And through your own efforts  
You obtained the Awakened state,  
Overcoming all suffering and distress.

Through your great compassion  
You showed us the path to liberation.  
You taught us the merit of compassion, wisdom and equanimity.  
To you, the Glorious Teacher, I prostrate.

Do not commit any non-virtuous actions.  
Perform only perfect virtuous actions.  
Subdue your mind thoroughly —  
This is the teaching of the Blessed One.

Through the merits of these thoughts, words and actions  
May we dedicate this for the benefit of all sentient beings. And  
like you, O Blessed One,  
May we and every being  
Attain your supreme awakened state,  
Free from the ocean of suffering.

Lord of the Dharma,  
I prostrate to your omniscient being.

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## Seven Limbed Prayer (Everyone, once)

Reverently, I prostrate with my body, speech and mind  
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and mentally  
transformed.

I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time  
And rejoice in the merits of all holy and ordinary beings.  
Please remain until samsara ends  
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.  
I dedicate the merit created by myself and others to the great enlightenment.

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## Supplication to Buddha

Visualization: Visualize Buddha slightly above your line of vision. Picture him sitting on a sun and moon discs and an open lotus. He is gold in color. In his heart center the seed syllable HUM is circled by his mantra, radiating light rays. These light rays radiate to you and enter the crown of your head. Then let Buddha dissolve into luminous light and dissolve into you so that you become inseparable with Buddha.



## Seven Limbed Prayer

This supplication relates directly to the seven offering bowls of water on the shrine. The seven limbs of the supplication are prostrating: offering, confession, rejoicing in the good qualities of oneself and others, requesting the Buddhas to remain in this world, beseeching them to teach others and dedicating the merit.



## **Mandala Offering** (Everyone, once)

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers,  
Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon –  
I imagine this as a Buddha field and offer it.  
May all living beings enjoy this pure land!  
The objects of my attachment, aversion and ignorance –  
Friends, enemies, strangers, and my body, wealth, and enjoyments –  
Without any sense of loss, I offer this collection.  
Please accept it with pleasure and bless me with freedom from the three poisons.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIYATAYAMI  
(E-Dum Guru Ratna Men-Da-Lakum Neeya-Taya-Mee)

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## **Supplication to Palden Lhamo** (Everyone, once)

Sole Mother, Lady Victorious Over the Three Worlds,  
please pay attention here and now!  
You overpower the whole apparent world, samsara and nirvana.  
By heroically guarding the Dharma and Dharma-holders,  
with the four types of actions, flashing like lightning.  
You soar up openly, like the full moon,  
In the midst of a garland of powerful Dharma Protectors.  
Powerful Dakini Protector, I prostrate to your omniscient being.

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## **Short Praise of the Buddha's Deeds**

(Preceptors read *italics*, Everyone read normal font)

(Left Preceptor) *Through skillful compassion born in the Shakya clan,  
Unconquered One, subduer of Mara's horde,  
Your body shining like a pile of gold,*

To you, O wise one, I pay homage!

(Right Preceptor) *When, ten months completed, you were born  
Shakya Prince, in fortunate Lumbini Grove,  
Supreme marks honored by the gods confirmed your bodhi-lineage.*

To the victorious 'god among gods', I pay homage!

(Center Preceptor) *Among the Shakya youths,  
vaunting their athletic physique,  
You excelled in your prowess in the sixty four crafts;  
All conceded victory and your renown filled the eyes and ears of all.*

To you who are unequaled in the three worlds, I pay homage!

## **Mandala Offering**

This is an offering to the entire lineage. It includes all of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas who dwell in the ten directions (four directions of the compass, plus up and down) and the three times (past, present and future), as well as to all Buddhist teachers, lamas, yidams (deities) and all enlightened beings everywhere. Mount Meru is considered the center of the universe. Below it are the hell realms and hungry ghost realms, above are the realms of pure forms and Buddha fields.

## **Palden Lhamo**

Palden Lhamo is one of the main Dharma protectors of Tibetan Buddhism and of Tibet. Within the Gelugpa order, she is strongly associated with the Dalai Lama Incarnation Line and with the Panchen Lama Incarnation Line. She is the main Dharma Protector of the Rime Buddhist Center.

## **The Twelve Deeds of the Buddha**

This is a short praise on the twelve deeds of Buddha Shakyamuni. Buddha Shakyamuni manifested the twelve deeds, as do all Buddhas, as an implicit teachings for the beings of our world system, in addition to the explicit teachings he gave during his life. Ven. George Churinoff said, "Through the various deeds he showed that that we too, born from a mother's womb as the Buddha seemed to be, can attain enlightenment. The Buddha's deeds of leaving his family and palace and his passing away into parinirvana are obvious teachings to his disciples about renunciation and impermanence, for example."



## Calling the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (Everyone, once)

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us.

Behold us from the place of great bliss on the crown of our head

Bring us to meet the very face of the dharmakaya,

the awareness of our true nature,

And in this very life, bring us to complete enlightenment.

Alas, sentient beings like ourselves, who have committed negative actions,

Wander in samsara from beginningless time.

Still experiencing endless suffering.

We do not feel even an instant of repentance.

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us, behold us swiftly with compassion.

Bless us that renunciation arise from the depth of our heart.

We conceal within ourselves a mountain of faults;

Yet, we put down others and broadcast their shortcomings,

though they be minute as a sesame seed.

Though we have not the slightest good qualities,

we boast saying how great we are

We have the label of Dharma practitioners, but practice only non-Dharma.

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us, behold us swiftly with compassion.

Bless us that we lose our pride and self-centeredness

We conceal within the demon of ego-clinging that always brings us to ruin.

All of our thoughts cause kleshas to increase

All of our actions have non-virtuous results.

We have not even turned towards the path of liberation

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us, behold us swiftly with compassion

Bless us that grasping onto a self be uprooted.

A little praise makes us happy; a little blame makes us sad.

With a few harsh words, we lose the armor of our patience.

Even if we see those who are destitute, no compassion arises.

When there is an opportunity to be generous, we are tied in knots by greed.

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us, behold us swiftly with compassion.

Bless us that our mind be one with the Dharma.

Although we have taken refuge, engendered bodhichitta and made prayers,

Devotion and compassion have not arisen in the depths of our being.

Dharma activity and the practice of virtue have turned into hollow words;

Our empty achievements are many but none have moved our mind

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, think of us, behold us swiftly with compassion.

Bless us that whatever we do is in harmony with the Dharma.

Bless us that repentance arise from deep within.

Bless us that our path become free of obstacles.

Bless us that we are able to exert ourselves in practice.

Bless us that we bring difficult situations onto the path.

Bless us that we see the very face of the mind's true nature.

Bless us that we achieve enlightenment in one lifetime.

## Calling the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

This is a heartfelt request to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for beings like ourselves to realize all the stages of the path to enlightenment. The key points for invoking this prayer is to inspire us to become disenchanted with our negative emotions and samsara as a whole. This invokes renunciation, not as mere platitude but from the core of your heart.

These verses point to the following

- Understanding how our negative actions effect others.
- Confronting our self-centeredness
- Recognizing that it is our ego clinging that causes negative emotions to arise.
- Understanding that we are easily swayed by the Eight Worldly Concerns.
- Recognizing that we must not just understand the Dharma, but we must apply it to our minds.

These types of devotional prayer to the Buddha and bodhisattvas are also an effective way of invigorating the mind, of lifting it up from the states of listlessness, tension, fatigue, and frustration, which occur during meditation as well as in ordinary life.

The Buddha himself advised, "If in the strenuous practice of meditation, for instance in contemplation of the body, bodily agitation, including sense desires, or mental lassitude or distraction should arise, then the meditator should turn their mind to a gladdening, elevating subject". When those hindrances to concentration vanish under its influence, the meditator will be able to return to their original meditation subject.



## **Vajrasattva Mantra** (Everyone, 3 times)

Om Benzar Sato Samaya Manu Palaya  
Benzar Sato Dino Pa-tee-tra Dre-do May Bawa  
Suto Ky-yo May Bawa Supo Kha-yo May Bawa  
Ah-nu Rock-to May Bawa Sarwa Siddhi May Ba Yatza  
Sarwa Karma Su-tsa-may Si Tam Shri-yam Ku-ru-hum  
Ha Ha Ha Ha Ho Ba-ga-won  
Sarwa Ta-tha-ga-ta Benzar Ma May Moon-za  
Ben-zee Bawa Maha Samaya Sato Ah Hum Phet

## **Short Vajrasattva Mantra** (Everyone, 108 times)

OM VAJRASATTVA HUM

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## **Guided Meditation Session** (10 minutes)

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## **Dharma Talk and Announcements**

### **Long Life Supplication for H.H. Dalai Lama** (Everyone, once)

In the land encircled by snow mountains,  
You are the source of all happiness and good, All powerful  
Chenrezig, Tenzin Gyatso,  
Please remain until samsara ends.

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### **Dedication of Merit** (everyone 3 times)

By this merit, may all obtain omniscience,  
May it defeat the enemy wrongdoing.  
From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness and death,  
From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings.

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### **Engendering Bodhichitta** (Everyone once)

Bodhichitta is precious,  
May it arise for whom it has not arisen,  
Once arisen, may it not diminish,  
But ever grow and flourish.

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### **Prayer to Spread the Dharma** (Everyone once)

All difficulties without exception being pacified,  
With harmonious situations like the treasure of the sky,  
May the teachings and practice of the Rime tradition  
Live long and shine brightly!

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## **Vajrasattva Mantra**

Both the long and short mantras of Vajrasattva, the bodhisattva of purification, are recited in the original Sanskrit. Vajrasattva embodies the capacity to eliminate spiritual impurities of all kinds. Specifically, by reciting his mantra, it is believed one purifies negativities of body, speech and mind.

The meaning of this mantra is: “O great being whose holy mind is in the indestructible nature of all the Buddhas, having destroyed every obscuration, attained all realizations and passed beyond all suffering, the one gone to the realization of things just as they are, do not forsake me. Please make me closer to your vajra holy mind, and grant me the ability to realize the ultimate nature of phenomena. Please help me to realize great bliss. Lead me to your state, and grant me all powerful attainments. Please bestow upon me all virtuous actions and glorious qualities.”

Visualization: *Visualize a white OM at your head (representing body); a red AH at your throat (representing speech); and a blue HUM at your heart (representing mind). As you recite the mantras, imagine that you are purifying body, speech and mind.*

### **Long Life Supplication for H.H. Dalai Lama**

Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, is the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet. He is believed to be a manifestation of Chenrezig, the bodhisattva of compassion.

His Holiness’ name is translated as “ocean of wisdom.” However, Tibetans normally refer to him as Yeshe Norbu (the Wish-Fulfilling Gem) or Kundun (the Presence).

### **Dedication of Merit**

Buddhist practices always close with the dedication of merit. The purpose of this supplication is to dedicate any merit or benefit that was gained from the practice or meditation for the benefit of all sentient beings.