



KALU RINPOCHE
THE HEAD OF PALDEN SHANGPA

November 7, 2017

*Buddha's teaching shows the authentic path
The source of true happiness and genuine success.
Master, learned and realized in the path of enlightenment,
Unmatched in the past, the present and the future,
Prodigious Incarnation of the Five Deities,
Khyungpo Neljor, I bow to your feet.*

I hope you are in good health and I send you all my Tashi Delegs!

This letter is to announce the powerful program we are initiating for the 2018 summer.

As you know, the Mönlam are vast wishes for the good of sentient beings and for the development of Dharma. When practiced as a ritual in retreat, they benefit from the strength of a repeated practice, from the power of group practice and from the spiritual energy of the great masters of the past who composed the prayers we recite.

The Mönlam are a perfect example of the activity of Kalu Rinpoche. In his great kindness, he made it his daily practice for the good of all sentient beings. Later, he regularly practiced them together with his sangha. Finally, in 1983, he established the practice of holding the Shangpa Mönlam in Bodhgaya every year.

Later, Dordje Chang Bokar Rinpoche thought that this beautiful practice should be continued after the departure of Kalu Rinpoche for the pure lands. Myself, having accomplished the three years retreat and travelled in the West and in Asia, I thought in the same way, that it should be continued. It is an excellent practice for the good of sentient beings. It allows us to accumulate positive spiritual energy in the direct footsteps of the enlightened activity of the previous Kalu Rinpoche. For us, it is the opportunity to meet again and practice together as within a short-term retreat.

Thus in 2014, a Mönlam session was held in France in La Boulaye and many representatives of Kalu Rinpoche centers in Europe, Asia and America were able to attend this great event. The meeting had the flavor a happy family gathering. It strengthened ties between many practitioners of our lineage who are usually separated by long distances. The intensity of the practice we experienced was close to that of a group retreat.

In 2016, we combined the Mönlam with an intensive Six Arm Mahakala practice, twenty-four hours a day for seven days. The temple hall had been adorned with a flower canopy on its full width. A group of practitioners recited the mantra day and night while other participants performed the puja with the Lamas. The Six Arm Mahakala empowerments were completely and perfectly conferred. Again, we experienced an intense summer retreat.

For 2018, I invite you for eight days of intensive practice together. I foresee that our gathering will be very auspicious for our community and for each of us. We will practice the Mönlam as well as the Tara and Six Arm Mahakala rituals.

Let me share a few words about Tara and the puja during which we shall accumulate reciting mantras and the praise to the 21 aspects of Tara. It used to be a regular practice of Kalu Rinpoche in Sonada. Once as Bokar Rinpoche was about to leave to travel and give teachings around the world, Kalu Rinpoche invited him to participate in this ritual. At the end, he advised him to perform this practice regularly, thus directing him to make Tara his main practice deity. Dordje Chang Bokar Rinpoche followed the word of his Guru and built a specific Tara shrine in his monastery in Mirik. Ounce a year, the monastery held this puja and I remember when I was a child in Mirik, seeing Bokar Rinpoche carefully inspecting the mandala, the statue of Tara at the top, the flowers and other varied offerings arranged on different levels of the mandala. He would then place crystal, white and red malas to gracefully hang from the top level.

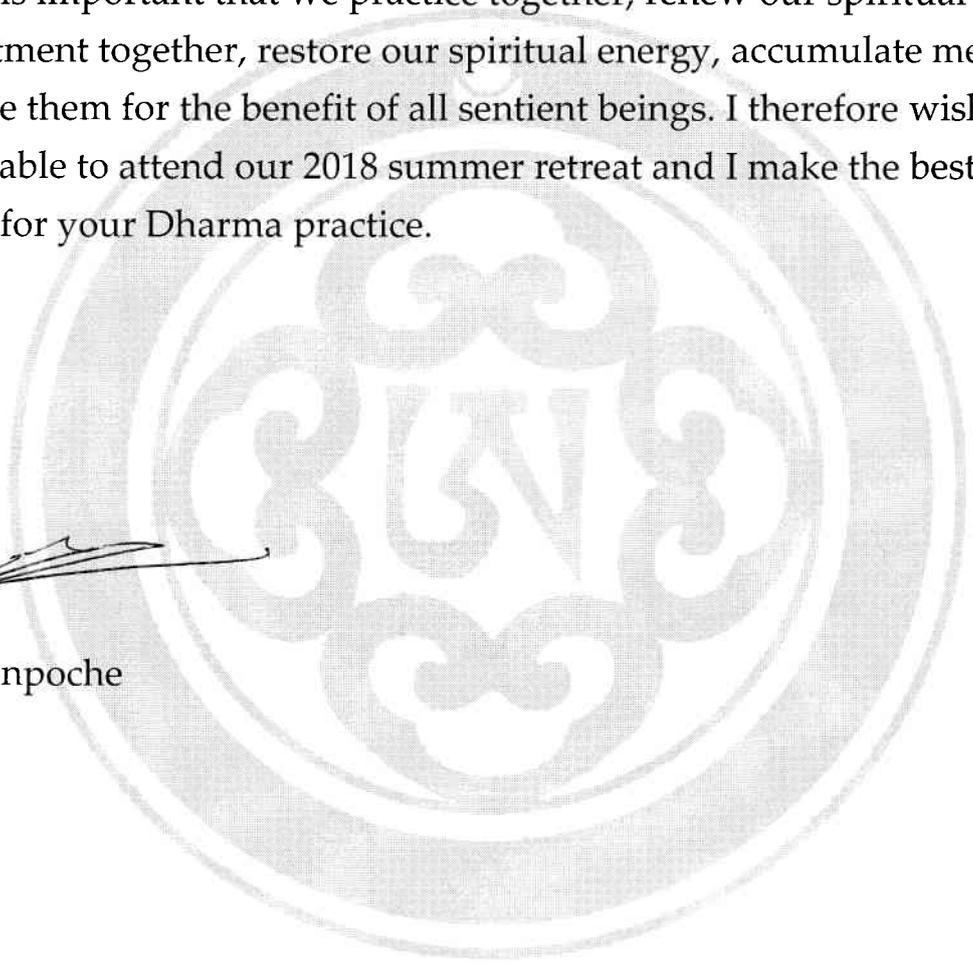
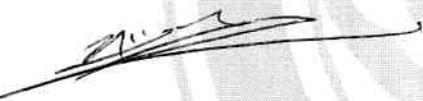
We will practice this very Tara puja and set up such a mandala in France, in La Boulaye. You will be able to make offerings to the mandala, especially precious stones which will be glued to the sides of the bronze mandala rings to remain there as offerings for many years. We will practice Tara for three days from Sunday, August 12 to Tuesday the 14th and finish early on Wednesday, August 15. The trilogy of necessary elements for a vajrayana practice, i.e. empowerment, oral transmission and explanations, will be given as an introduction on Saturday 11th. The practice will be intense with 21 Tara pujas being performed every day. The mantras and praises accumulated during the day will be counted in the evening.

With all the spiritual energy coming from the practice of Tara, we will practice the Shangpa Mönlam on Wednesday, August 15. The intensive Six Arm Mahakala practice will start in the evening. Thereafter we will practice three daily sessions – morning, afternoon and evening – up to

Saturday morning, August 18. This will be an accumulation of tsok offerings, in Tibetan *tsok boom*, i.e. 100,000 tsok offering prayers. Again, we will count the number of accumulated tsoks in the evening. We may, perhaps, achieve the 100,000 number, even if spiritual energy is not to be measured in this way...

The following Saturday and Sunday, August 18 and 19, will be devoted to a powerful Shangpa Mönlam for the benefit of all sentient beings.

I feel it is important that we practice together, renew our spiritual commitment together, restore our spiritual energy, accumulate merit and dedicate them for the benefit of all sentient beings. I therefore wish you will be able to attend our 2018 summer retreat and I make the best wishes for your Dharma practice.



Kalu Rinpoche