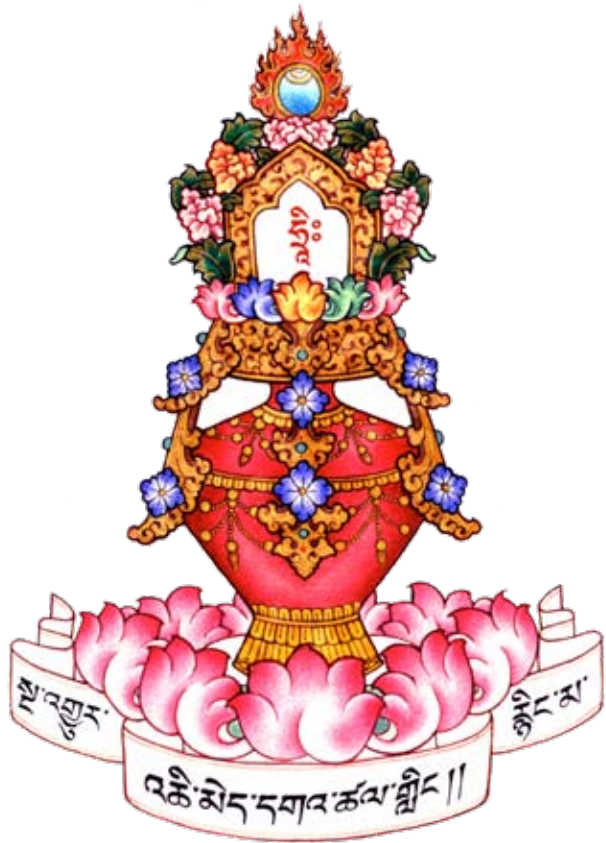




LHUNDRUB CHIME GATSAL LING
AUTUMN 2010



*'The cloister's rules are the jewelry
That benefits & becomes you.
Your relationship with your teacher is
Praised as the root of the path.
Your education will prove to be
The source of your excellence.
Wholeheartedly embrace these three
And happiness will be yours.'*
-Mipham Rinpoche



hello again

The lamas and monks of Lhundrub Chime Gatsal Ling have weathered the monsoon. More than weathered it in fact, they have positively thrived. We're now three quarters of the way through our second year of classes here at the new monastery in Sidhpur and things just continue to get better. Rinpoche has given several lengthy oral transmissions, the older monks have embraced their roles as role models and the youngest monks are no longer afraid to walk the dimly lit hall to reach the toilets at night!

Most significantly, fifteen of our monks (pictured above) took monastic vows from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Nine monks received *getsul*, or novice, vows while six received *gelong* vows, or vows of full ordination. Since we now have eight fully ordained monks, we can, to Rinpoche's great satisfaction, begin to observe the 'three foundations of the monastic life': the twice monthly rite of confession & purification, the rains retreat and the relaxing of restrictions at the end of the rains retreat. Keep reading to learn more about the past few months here.

With apologies for the delay in publishing this issue of the newsletter,
-The editor

*'The flowing melody of divine beings, mantra and wisdom,
At play echoes freely through my body, speech and mind,
Vibrating in the auspicious vase, my vocal chords,
May this melody pervade the spacious realm of the three worlds.'*
-The Fifth Dalai Lama

cham

Under the guidance of Lobpon Samten Gyatso, the monks have been learning how to perform *cham*. Lay Tibetans love these 'lama dances', with their elaborate brocade costumes and papier-mache masks, for their pageantry. But their entertainment value is secondary to their transformative power; they are intended to liberate those who see them.

The potency of *cham* is based in part on the events they depict, which range from key moments in the life of Guru Rinpoche to the wrathful liberation of malevolent spirits, but also on the actors' preparation. Prior to the dance, monks spend a week meditating and reciting mantras to reinforce their identification with the divine personas they adopt. Hence the monks perform the dances while absorbed in pure perception.

The monks of Lhundrub Chime Gatsal Ling will perform two *cham* over the next year. The first will be the 'Black Hat Dance', in early March before the Tibetan New Year, done to clean the slate for the year to come. Tulku Urygen will rehash his role as the vajra master, as shown in our winter issue. The second *cham*, in mid-August, will be the more elaborate 'Tenth Day Dance' based on Guru Chowang's *Lama Sangdu*. All are welcome to attend.









*'To the lords of sages,
I send billowing clouds of incense
Whose fragrance captivates the mind,
I give them too celestial delicacies
In a host of foods and drinks.'*
- Shantideva

education

The monks continue their studies under the supervision of our four teachers, Khenpo Thubten Tharchin, Khenpo Choying, Lobpon Samten Gyatso and Gen Tenzin Jampel. The older monks have two philosophy classes with Khenpo Thubten Tharchin and Khenpo Choying. After community prayers and breakfast, they receive a detailed explanation of Patrul Rinpoche's *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, which is a guide to the 'Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind to Dharma' and the preliminary practices, while the younger monks learn grammar from Gen Tenzin Jampel. Later in the day, while the younger monks learn the monastery liturgy, the older monks debate ontology using the dialectical framework they learned in *Logic and Reasoning*.

In the afternoon, after lunch and a short nap, the monks study tantric rituals with Lobpon Samten Gyatso. During these classes, the monks learn melodies for different rituals, how to play the ritual instruments and how to sculpt and decorate *tormas*. These 'offering cakes' can often be quite elaborate, as is evident in the pictures at left and above.



*'As forests still the mind and promote stability
They are perfect for abiding peacefully at ease
On the banks of a river attention is sharpened
And the desire to be free comes swift and new.'*
-Longchenpa

khamtrul rinpoche

Rinpoche has been very active these last few months. Between the steady stream of Tibetan and foreign visitors, Rinpoche taught *The Innermost Essence of Yuthok's Teachings*, an important text on the unity of medicine and spirituality, to a group of over fifty medical students from the Tibetan Medical & Astrological Institute (Men-Tsee-Khang). Rinpoche has also been busy passing on to the monks the oral transmissions for the prayers and pujas we do here.

In October, Rinpoche & family went on pilgrimage to Sarnath, Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Vulture's Peak and Nalanda. Along the way, they stopped in Varanasi to buy brocade for cham costumes.

In November and December, Rinpoche will again teach on *The Innermost Essence of Yuthok's Teachings*, this time in Taiwan. While there Rinpoche will also give the empowerments for Karma Lingpa's *Shitro Gongpa Rangdrol*, a terma revelation focused on the One Hundred Peaceful and Wrathful Deities of the intermediate state, at the request of Gyarawa Rinpoche, who is the reincarnation of Gyarawa Namkha Gyatso, the custodian of those teachings.

