

## TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL SANGHA DAY

JULY 31 2014

Wheel Turning Day: Choe Khor Due Chen - The First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma

**Let's celebrate the Sangha on FPMT's Twelfth International Sangha Day**

- **Show respect for and appreciation of Sangha**
- **Generate deeper awareness of the Sangha jewel**
- **Donate to the Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund**

From the early days of the FPMT, monks and nuns have served tirelessly to help bring the benefit of the Buddha's teachings to the far corners of this planet. Today, the FPMT International Mahayana Institute (IMI) community has approximately 280 monks and nuns who continue to serve throughout the FPMT in many capacities: as registered teachers, directors, spiritual program coordinators, editors and more.

The Sangha, by taking vows of renunciation, living in morality and having the space to focus on the Dharma are an integral part of maintaining the existence of the Buddha's teachings. It is for this reason that FPMT International Sangha Day is set to fall on the First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma Day (as decided at CPMT 2004). This year, International Sangha Day is July 31st (though your center may prefer to celebrate it on a day more suited to your community's needs).

**IMI director, Ven Chantal Carrerot, says:**

"International Sangha Day provides an opportunity for the lay and monastic communities to come together in recognition of our interdependence and acknowledge the ways in which we rely on each other for our practice of the Dharma.

The IMI exists to take care of its monks and nuns materially, educationally, and by fostering a sense of belonging within our worldwide community. We are presently in consultation with the international monastic community to establish how we can better serve them, so that they in turn can be better qualified to serve the larger community.

We do our best to support those without resources to pursue studies of FPMT programs, such as the Basic Program and Masters Program, and to become FPMT registered teachers. We also offer pre ordination training and financial support for our members wishing to do retreat, both in group settings with Lama Zopa Rinpoche and individually.

Your support of the Sangha through the Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund allows us to continue this work and ensures that Buddha's teachings are available for future generations."

### **How to Celebrate International Sangha Day:**

You can honor and recognize the special relationship between Sangha and centers, projects and services by organizing a Sangha event for your local community.

Ideas from successful events held by centers on previous International Sangha Days include:

- Requesting a talk from an IMI senior Sangha member on appreciation of living in the vows.
- Inviting Sangha to share their story with the community.
- Taking a Sangha member to lunch or planning a Sangha Tea in order to offer students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of monasticism.
- Inviting lay members of the community to share their experience of the value of Sangha as part of their practice.
- Featuring local Sangha and/or the IMI in your newsletter to raise awareness of IMI monks and nuns in service around the world.
- Provide the opportunity for the lay community to make offerings to the local Sangha.

These activities provide a precious opportunity to strengthen the understanding and the bond between students and Sangha, which leads to tremendous benefit for the whole community.

Center Services has collected the ideas and experience of centers celebrating International Sangha Day, so please feel free to contact me with any questions on how to organize this event.

[Please let me know](#) what you organize this year and how it goes!

### **Annual Donation to the Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund:**

One of the responsibilities of FPMT centers, projects and services is to make an annual contribution of US\$240 to the [Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund](#) (LYSF). International Sangha Day is a perfect day to make your donation for 2014.

The LYSF was established to offer financial support to the Sangha of the FPMT who have no other means of financial support and wish to engage in study, retreat or service. By contributing to the fund you will be enabling more monks and nuns of our organization to be of benefit to others. You can make your annual donation by going to the secure [annual donations page](#) in the FPMT Members' Area. Australian

centers are requested to make their annual donations to the LYSF through FPMT National Office Australia.

As one of the four main Buddhist special days, Wheel Turning Day is a day where the karmic effects of actions performed are multiplied one hundred million times. So this day is a very auspicious occasion to celebrate and donate to the Sangha jewel.

IMI Sangha will be offering prayers to express gratitude for the continued support of FPMT centers, projects and services. Individual Sangha members are encouraged to reflect on the kindness of their local communities and the larger FPMT family in general, remembering how that generosity helps to create conditions conducive to maintaining monastic vows.

You can refer to the *Sangha* chapter in the [FPMT Handbook](#) for more information about International Sangha Day and about the relationship between centers and Sangha.

Thanks so much.

Warmly,  
Claire  
Center Services Director