Fulfilling Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s Vast Visions
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Some years ago, our most precious guru, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, mapped out his Vast Vision for FPMT. These Vast Visions were presented at the recent international CPMT meeting held at the Great Stupa in Bendigo, Australia, in September 2014. How has ABC fared in fulfilling these vast visions? It is a pleasant surprise to find that as far as we are able, our efforts measure up in the right direction.

1. Offering Service to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

“I am just expressing here a general plan for FPMT. There is no limit of time when to complete. I also don’t mean for the centres to do this. I don’t mean to be giving a burden to the centres. We need to have an organiser for each project. We should set this up so it is professional.” – Lama Zopa Rinpoche

In May 2007, Lama Zopa Rinpoche was in retreat at Kadampa Dechen Ling in Northern California. During one morning session, Rinpoche began jotting down some of his ideas and wishes for the future of the FPMT organisation onto a stack of small, coloured Post-it notes. During the afternoon, Rinpoche explained these ideas to Ven. Roger Kunsang, Rinpoche’s assistant and CEO of FPMT, and Ven. Holly Ansett, assistant to Ven. Roger. These visions from Rinpoche are in addition to what FPMT is already accomplishing due to the work of FPMT’s most precious founder, Lama Yeshe.

“The Post-it notes and Rinpoche’s subsequent commentary came to be collectively regarded as the framework for Rinpoche’s long-term ‘Vast Vision’ for FPMT.’

Rinpoche’s Vast Visions fall into four general categories:

1. Offering Service to His Holiness the Dalai Lama
2. Holy Objects for World Peace
3. Supporting Practice and Realisations
4. Social Services

Supporting His Holiness’ Projects

Lama Zopa Rinpoche stressed that he wanted “the organisation to support His Holiness, offer service to His Holiness. This is the quickest and most vast way of benefiting sentient beings.”

“We are supporting His Holiness by helping the monasteries, by offering food and all the service to the monasteries, where they do most extensive learning of Buddhism. So this becomes service to His Holiness and to the Tibetan people. The monasteries help to preserve the extensive depth of the Buddhist philosophy on the path to enlightenment. This is a very important service, anything

Supporting His Holiness’ Projects

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that helps to spread the Buddha's teachings so it can exist for a long time. This is also what all the centres do, by educating and practising Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism. This is promoting Tibetan Buddhism, this is service to His Holiness. So anyone who is working in the centres are actually offering service to His Holiness.”

Also in Rinpoche’s vision:
• Sponsoring Public Talks
• Interfaith Dialogues

2. Holy Objects for World Peace

“My wish is for FPMT to build many holy objects everywhere, as many as possible. Making it is easy for sentient beings to purify their heavy negative karma and making is so easy for sentient beings to create extensive merit. Which makes it so easy to achieve the realisations of the path and so easy to achieve liberation and enlightenment.” – Lama Zopa Rinpoche

100,000 Stupas Around World

“Since there is unbelievable benefit, such as liberating sentient beings, and enlightenment.” – Lama Zopa Rinpoche

“Especially, to build in countries where there are no holy objects and in countries where people have no opportunity to see holy objects. Just by seeing holy objects it purifies the mind and one collects extensive merit. Each stupa must have, as many as possible, the four Dharmakaya relic mantras, also 100,000 Stainless Pinnacle mantras as well as the Namgyalma mantra. To date, 49 stupas have been completed, or are in progress, at FPMT centres and by FPMT students toward this goal of 100,000 stupas around the world.

At ABC: Although ABC has yet to build an actual large-scale stupa, we have a stupa island in our Level 1 foyer stacked with countless holy objects. These include small statues of 1,000-armed Chenrezig, Medicine Buddha, Maitreya Buddha, many miniature stupas, and staggering volumes of sutras. There are also micro-stamages copies that contain hundreds of sets of the Kangyur (the entire collection of the Buddha’s teachings) and the collected works of Lama Töng Khapa. How much merit one receives just by simply circumambulating the stupa island or making offerings of lights or flowers!

100,000 Prayer Wheels Around the World

“It would like for the whole organisation to build 100,000 prayer wheels in different parts of the world, [including prayer wheels under the ocean], a minimum height of six feet,” Rinpoche suggested. “Prayer wheels are a great blessing for each country.”

To date, approximately 12 prayer wheels have been completed in accordance with Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s advice.

At ABC: Our large gilded prayer wheel on Level 1 is filled with 156 billion mantras of Om Mani Padme Hum. It was completed in 2011 and consecrated by the ex-abbot of Kopan Monastery, the late Khenur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup.

1,000 Maitreya Statues

Rinpoche also wanted the FPMT organisation “to build 1,000 Maitreya statues (the minimum size should be six feet).”

“What is it that one becomes a direct disciple of Maitreya Buddha, and the result is that it makes a connection with Maitreya Buddha, and the result is that one becomes a direct disciple of Maitreya Buddha when Maitreya returns to manifest enlightenment as Shakyamuni Buddha did.”

The Maitreya Projects were established to build two magnificent Maitreya statues in Bodhgaya and Kushinagar, India. The Maitreya Project also built two 24-foot Maitreya statues. One is now at Land of Medicine Buddha in California and one is on Maitreya Project land in Bodhgaya. Additionally approximately 100 life-sized Maitreya statues were created, of which Lama Zopa Rinpoche sponsored and offered 26 to FPMT centres.

At ABC: Following Rinpoche’s advice, we built a 20-foot tall Maitreya statue as the centrepiece of our Vesak celebration in 2009. Made from lightweight material, the statue could be easily dismantled and reassembled for display during our Vesak celebrations. It contained thousands of the Four Dharmakaya relic mantras.

Large Thankgas Around the World

“My wish is for the big centres in FPMT to have these large thankgas,” Rinpoche explained. “This is a way to leave imprints for all these people [who see them], for enlightenment.”

Many FPMT centres have commissioned large thankgas and are now hosting festival days where these holy objects can be enjoyed.

At ABC: Our gigantic thankga of Amitabha Buddha in His Pure Land resulted from following Rinpoche’s advice. The spectacular 50-foot high tapestry was unveiled for the first time at our Vesak celebration 2014 and viewed by thousands. We can look forward to its next display at this year’s Vesak Celebration.

Supporting Monasteries and Nunneries

“Our gigantic thangka of Shakyamuni Buddha did.”

Rinpoche explained. “This is a way to give away the merit of the Maitreya Project. This is also what all the centres do, by educating and practising Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism. This is promoting Tibetan Buddhism, this is service to His Holiness. So anyone who is working in the centres are actually offering service to His Holiness.”

Also in Rinpoche’s vision:
• Padmasambhava Statues for Peace

3. Supporting Practice and Realisations

“Another special thing about contributing to Maitreya, whether it be money or time or energy, is that it makes a connection with Maitreya Buddha, and the result is that one becomes a direct disciple of Maitreya Buddha when Maitreya returns to manifest enlightenment as Shakyamuni Buddha did.”

At ABC: Our CARE Group came into being on 1st September 2004, an initiative advised by the late Khenur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup to look after the welfare of older members who had supported the centre in the past. Khenur Rinpoche had stressed the need to care for those who were ill and who lacked support from their own families. CARE stands for Community of Assistance for Recuperative Effort. The group launched a new programme last year to encourage more volunteers to join in supporting fellow members in times of need.

Supporting Monasteries and Nunneries

Lama Zopa Rinpoche commented, “It would like the organisation to continue” establishing good quality monasteries and nunneries, with good quality Sangha in order to
preserve the Dharma by having people practicing Vinaya. [I would like the organisation] to provide support to the FPMT Sangha and the monasteries and nunneries.  

13 of FPMT’s centres have established monastic communities including the organisation’s first, Kopan Monastery. 

Supporting Sangha is a high priority for FPMT and for over 40 years the organisation has been offering support to monasteries in Nepal, India, Mongolia and the West. For example the Sera Je Food Fund, which is one of Rinpoche’s heart projects.

At ABC: We support the Sera Je Food Fund, which is one of Rinpoche’s heart projects.

Recitation of the Golden Light Sutra for World Peace

Lama Zopa Rinpoche advised that “the most beneficial thing to bring peace. Everyone should try to do this, no matter how busy they are, even to recite one or two pages, even a few lines. It is extremely powerful and fulfills all one’s wishes, as well as brings peace and happiness for all sentient beings, up to enlightenment.”

At ABC: We organise recitations of the Golden Light Sutra on the four merits-multiplying festival days of the year: on Losar 15th, Saka Dewa 15th, Wheel Turning Day, and Lhabab Duchen (Buddha’s Descent from the Heavens of 33). Turn to our special feature on “The Immeasurable Benefits of the Golden Light Sutra” on page 9. ABC also regularly publishes copies of the Golden Light Sutra for free distribution.

Education Programmes and Scholarships

“I would like the organisation to provide scholarships for students to study,” Lama Zopa Rinpoche exhorted. “Buddhist philosophy based on the lam-rim and lojong academic studies with practice experience. We need teachers who are not just teaching from texts, but teaching from some experience, then there is so much more benefit. By teaching from one’s experience it brings deeper benefit. Then there is change and transformation of the mind.”

At ABC: We introduced the FPMT Basic Program in August 2003, offering our members and many new students the opportunity to engage in a structured study programme on Buddhist treatises with Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi as expert teacher and mentor. Today, the 2nd Basic Program is more than halfway through its five-year run. The Basic Program as well as all our Buddhist classes are taught free of charge so that the Dharma is easily accessible to people from all walks of life.

Rinpoche’s vision also includes:  

- One Hundred Thousand 100 Million Mani Retreats Around the World  
- 1,000 Nyung Nä Retreats  
- Retreat Centres to Develop Actualisations on the Path to Enlightenment

4. Social Services

“It is good for FPMT to benefit extensively other sentient beings by offering various social services, such as those that bring loving kindness and peace to youth using Universal Education methods, religious interfasting activities which bring peace and happiness and extensively benefit others by spreading Dharma.” – Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Universal Education Programmes: Continue and Expand

“I would like for the organisation to develop Universal Education, more similar programmes in order to develop better human beings, to have more beneficial lives, to bring peace and happiness in the world, to not become harmful to oneself and others,” Rinpoche shared.

At ABC: Since 1997, we run a nursery cum kindergarten that provides childcare and pre-school education to children aged 18 months to six years. abc children’s place in Tampines emphasises a secular education that imparts the universal values of compassion and wisdom to its young charges. The kids also learn to appreciate a meat-free diet at an early age, as the meals served at school are all vegetarian.

Projects to Help Young People

 “[FPMT should] help young people through meditation and consultation, and also help them offer volunteer service as part of their practice.” Rinpoche said. “This brings immediate benefit, so we don’t have to wait for many years, something immediate that you can offer to others.”

At ABC: Beside having a youth club, ABC Youths, our biannual food distribution project, JINPA...
for Our Community, has attracted active participation from younger people, including young families with children in tow. As the JINPA project is co-organised with the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), it has a broad non-sectarian appeal for people who may not be Buddhists, but who are happy to chip in to do their part for charity, delivering food supplies to the needy. Find out more about our next JINPA food drive on page 13.

Parenting Programmes

“I would like to have” a programme to educate the parents so they can have a good plan on how to bring up children,” Rinpoche added. “We can make a guidebook for parents and also organise and give lectures for parents. Also, I think this is a means for world peace: as His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, the future world depends on young children now – so if you have children with good qualities, with basic education in being a good human being, if parents bring up children with these qualities, then the future world would have more peace.”

At ABC: Rinpoche has given extensive advice on parenting and helping children on many occasions. Our Free Publications team is in the midst of compiling Rinpoche’s parenting advice into a book. Look out for its release in the coming months.

Provide Social Service for the Elderly

“Then, [I would like FPMT to offer] social services to help the elderly.”

At ABC: Five years ago, Khen Rinpoche introduced a class catering specially to senior citizens, so that the elderly and retired would also receive the benefit of listening to the teachings and have the opportunity to learn basic Buddhist practices. Khen Rinpoche continues to teach our monthly Dharma for Seniors class, giving the Dharma to a group of regular participants.

Centres Hosting Interfaith Events

“If I would like” for the organisation to arrange talks with many religious leaders in the world,” Rinpoche asked. “I think the plan is to have this as a recurring event. So this is the big way. Then to do this in a small way, for the centres to do this with religious leaders in their local community. The more that other religious people come to know about His Holiness and understand more and more, it is so effective and in this way it can help for world peace. In this way the organisation becomes a tool for world peace.”

At ABC: In multi-cultural Singapore, where religious harmony is greatly valued we have welcomed the opportunity to include other religious communities in our major events. We invited representatives of the nine religious traditions in Singapore to the grand opening of our Jade Buddha exhibition in 2012. Each representative was also invited to say prayers for world peace according to their religion. In May last year, ABC took part in an inter-religious seminar organised by Geylang Serai Community Centre to promote interfaith understanding in our neighbourhood. Besides setting up an information booth at the public exhibition, we also contributed a chapter about our history in a commemorative book for the event, “Heritage in Harmony”.

Benefiting Animals

“Taking care of all sentient beings, including insects and animals, is a high priority for Lama Zopa Rinpoche and as such FPMT has a number of animal projects including the Animal Liberation Fund, Animal Liberation Sanctuary and MAITRI Charitable Trust. Many centres host regular animal blessings in parks and public places.

At ABC: As an offering to Rinpoche during his visit last November for our 25th anniversary celebration, we completed the liberation of 200 million lives! Our Animal Liberation efforts have chugged along steadily for 15 years, with Ven. Tenzin Drachom at the helm. Millions of sea creatures have been returned safely to the ocean and countless dedications made, particularly for the long and healthy lives of our gurus.

In addition:

- Substance Abuse Treatment Programme

Excerpts drawn from “Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s Vast Visions for FPMT” at www.fpmt.org

The Immeasurable Benefits of the Golden Light Sutra

Lama Zopa Rinpoche frequently emphasises the importance of reciting or listening to the Golden Light Sutra and has very kindly given the oral transmission on several occasions, most recently inside the Great Stupa in Australia. Here is a compilation of Rinpoche’s explanation of the sutra’s inconceivable benefits.

“The Golden Light Sutra is the car that will take you to enlightenment.” – Lama Zopa Rinpoche

“This teaching of the Golden Light Sutra is the secret teaching of all the buddhas. Those who listen to this teaching, who make others hear this teaching, who rejoice in this teaching, who make offering to this teaching, all those [holy] beings, they protect and make offerings to you. Sentient beings who have no merit, when they hear this teaching, rejoice in this teaching, they collect heaps of merits.”

“Anyone can read this text, Buddhists and even non-Buddhists who desire world peace. This also protects individuals and the country from what are labelled natural disasters of the wind element, fire element, earth element, and water element, such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, fires, tornadoes, et cetera. They are not natural because they come from causes and conditions that make dangers happen. They come from past inner negative thoughts and actions of people, and from external conditions. The benefits of reading this sutra are immeasurable. Reciting just a few lines of the Golden Light Sutra creates more merit than making immeasurable offerings to the Buddha. Reciting this sutra directs one’s life towards enlightenment. There is so much merit: one’s life becomes so easy, whatever one wishes for one receives. There is unbelievable purification. One liberates countless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and brings them to enlightenment.”

“Must dedicate for the world, listening to the Golden Light Sutra. In particular dedicate for the world to pacify war, hatred and anger— all this selfish mind. The anger, attachment, ignorance, you can’t see with the eyes, no shape, nothing, but they can destroy the world. It can harm yourself, it can harm the world, dangers of fire, water, air, earth, tsunamis, all the global problems. All that can be pacified and everyone can enjoy perfect peace and happiness, as well as ultimate good heart, love and compassion, and bodhichitta. Everybody becomes fortunate to actualise the lam-rim, bodhichitta.”

For the Country and the World

“The country, king, whatever is the leader of the country, those who run the country, when they listen to the Golden Light Sutra and make offerings, how much benefit for the country, enjoyment, so much peace. Everybody loves each other and also enemies will not attack the country. The enemy, by your not harming them, what it does is that they destroy themselves without the need to harm them back. Talking about the benefits, inconceivable happiness, becomes so powerful, so glorified, then protection for the whole country by the Four Guardian Kings, then no enemy.”

“In addition to that, the person who dedicates the merit does the merit. The benefits of the Golden Light Sutra are so extensive that the merit is innumerable and inconceivable. Those beings who dedicate the merit of listening to the Golden Light Sutra, they have such unbelievably great merits. At the same time, the person who dedicates the wealth also has such great merits.”

“For the benefit of the country and the world, make offerings from the heart, from your whole life. The country, the people, the people of the country, the world, the world, all the country’s citizens and the world’s citizens, and also the world’s enemies will all benefit from hearing this teaching. All the things that are not good for the world, all the things that harm the world, all the things that destroy the world, all the things that cause war, all the things that cause suffering, they all will be pacified. The people of the country, the people of the world, all will benefit.”

“By the time we have finished our dedication, we will have made a great contribution to the country and the world, to the Dharma, and to the religious community. By our dedications, we will have created a great benefit for the country, benefit for the entire world. We will be so happy, so powerful, so fortunate, and so fortunate that nobody will be able to harm us ever.”

“Every time we recite or listen to this sutra, we create a great merit. This is a teaching of all the buddhas. Every time we recite or listen to this sutra, all the Buddhas will are very happy and rejoice in this teaching. They create a great merit. All the buddhas are very happy when we recite or listen to this sutra. They create a great merit. The buddhas are so happy when we recite or listen to this sutra. They create a great merit. The buddhas are so happy when we recite or listen to this sutra. They create a great merit.”

“Those who hear this sutra, Those who cause others to hear it, Those who rejoice upon bearing it And make offerings to it, For tens of millions of eons Shall be venerated by gods and nagas, Humans and kinnaras, Asuras and yakshas.”
Just by reading [the Golden Light Sutra], helps so much for the area to develop, become extremely glorified or shining, much colour, much complexion, the essence is developed, all the enjoyments are extremely developed. Then the sentient beings have more and more happiness, wealth, great enjoyment. Sentient beings become more willing to make charity and have so much faith in the Triple Gem.”

“The protectors, the guardians, will definitely provide protection. Whenever they are needed, they will arrive. Acts of terrorism will be averted. Acts of violence will stop. Natural catastrophes will be avoided. Crops will be successful. The environment will be clean. People will be safe. If there is war, it will end and there will be peace.”

To Fulfil Your Own Wishes

“If you recite the Golden Light Sutra, you will have good health, energy, and power. All material needs will be satisfied. One will be listened to and respected by others. Whenever a question arises, the Guru will answer. One will purify eons of negative karma, meet perfect teachers, develop realisations, and definitely benefit others.”

“Even one verse from the stanzas, or even one word, or one bodhisattva’s name from the Golden Light Sutra, maybe if somebody can hear, I heard, if you think of the name Golden Light Sutra, just the name, Golden Light Sutra, the sickness goes away.”

People who cannot find a job for months and years, they should read the Golden Light Sutra, they should read Arya Sanghata Sutra, they should read Diamond Cutter Sutra. They need merit.

“Anyone who keeps, memorises or contributes to this text exceeds the eight worldly beings and all their wishes get fulfilled. Buddha told the Four Guardians to make offerings and serve this text, and always protect the people who memorise or even just read it. The Four Guardians acknowledged they would protect those who read it and would help and fulfil all their wishes.

Memorising or making offerings to this text is like making inconceivable offerings to Buddha. Enlightenment will never be reversed within anyone in whose ear these holy words are spoken; the life will always be directed toward enlightenment and one will never fall back.”

Compiled from articles at www.fpmt.org with additional transcribing by Ven. Tenzin Tsultrim during Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s teachings at the Great Stupa in Bendigo, Australia, October 2014.
For the 3rd year running, join us as we head out once more on a generous food give-away to families in need all over Singapore.

Saturday, 4 April 2015, from 9.30 am

Amitabha Buddhist Centre partners up again with the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC) to distribute groceries to over 200 low-income households in the heartlands, island-wide.

Thanks to the great kindness and generosity of our members, friends and sponsors, JINPA for Our Community has been a great success since it was first launched in April 2013.

250 households benefited from the generous donations received in the most recent JINPA food drive held on 1 November 2014. Let’s continue to provide for their basic welfare.

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Support our 5th JINPA for Our Community:

• Contribute to the food fund: Each household will receive $80 worth of food donations. Any cash contributions are welcome and will go towards our pooled funds for the purchase of essential groceries.

• Drive and deliver: Calling out for volunteer drivers and despatch crews to bring our door-to-door deliveries to over 200 homes. Invite your family and friends to come on board. With your help, we look forward to making our FIFTH round of generous giving another great success!

• Sign up: Be a part of JINPA for Our Community, our gift of generosity to the less fortunate. To make a donation or register as a volunteer, visit our office or our website – www.fpmtabc.org

Volunteer registration: open till Sunday, 22 March 2015

Cash donations: open till 9.30 am on 4 April 2015

Receive special gifts* when you renew / upgrade your membership OR sign up as a NEW member in 2015!

Enjoy Unique Membership Privileges

• Be included in on-going dedications in our regular prayers and pujas at ABC throughout the year, including monthly Tara pujas and 16 Arhats pujas performed at Kopan Monastery, Nepal

• 10% discount for purchases at our Tashi Dek retail Store

• Priority booking and discounted rates for overseas trips and retreats organised by ABC

• Discounts at participating restaurants and shops … and much more!

Whether you’re new or renewing, visit our office to pick up a Membership Application Form or to request more information.

*While stocks last

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**New Saturday Classes Coming Up!**

**Merit, Purification and Blessing**

Through the seven-branched worship, you will gain an in-depth understanding of the special means to create merit, purify obsessions, and receive infinite blessings. Conducted over ten sessions, learn the importance of making extensive offerings, as well as how to perform daily practices such as the mandala offering, confession and purification.

Dates: 21 March – 23 May 2015, 10.45 am
Teacher: Vam Tenzin Gyatso

**Meditation for Beginners**

In five sessions, learn basic meditation techniques that will help you to understand the workings of your mind, better enabling you to develop a more positive outlook and empowering you to find peace and balance in the midst of daily life.

Dates: 28 April – 23 May 2015, 2.30 pm
Teacher: Wee Geok Hua

**Write us:** 48 Cupple St, #03-03, 069792, Singapore 249204 **Call us:** 6745 8547 **E-mail:** info@rpmtabc.org **Website:** www.rpmtabc.org
Take part in a ritual of compassionate giving to the 12 types of guests and dedicate the merits accumulated to your ancestors and deceased family members. Your prayers and dedications for those who are connected by blood ties will sweep away their negative karma and lead them towards favourable rebirths.

The 100 Torma Offering Ritual
Generating the vast compassionate qualities of Chenresig [Guan Yin], two kinds of offerings are made to the transcendental and worldly deities: first, water is blessed and offered to the wealth deities White and Yellow Dzambhala. The blessed water is also offered to the hungry ghosts, intermediate state beings and the nagas.

With a bodhicitta motivation, specially prepared dough balls are then offered to the 12 types of guests, transformed into oceans of nectar that satisfies them:
- Transcendental guests—lineage lamas, meditational deities, the Three Jewels, Dharma protectors, sages and wealth deities
- Worldly beings—local deities, landlords, yakshas, interferers and spirits
- Sentient beings of the six realms
- Hungry ghosts
- Spirits to whom we owe karmic debts from our past acts of killing, beating and stealing
- Intermediate state beings
- Remaining guests, the most pitifully weak among the hungry ghosts

Offering to the transcendental guests invokes their blessings. Offering to the worldly beings dispels harms and clears karmic debts. Through this 100 Torma Offering Ritual [Tibetan: torma gyatsa] we accumulate the merit of having pleased the respective guests by our generosity.

Confession Practice to the 35 Buddhas
You can personally take part in the purification practice of Confession to the 35 Buddhas during the puja on behalf of your ancestors to purify their karmic obscurations.
- Dedications can be made for the benefit of all persons, living or deceased
- Donations are voluntary — any amount is welcome
- Dedications / donations can be made at our office from early March* up to 5 April
- All who are present get to sip the water blessed by the Dzambhala wealth deities

All are welcome!

*Exact dates to be announced via our e-mail update

Qing Ming with 100 Torma Offerings
Sunday 5 April, 2 – 4:30 pm

Honour your ancestors and departed loved ones with a ritual to clear their karmic debts

Performed by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi and ABC Sangha