

Thank You Regarding the 2018 Saga Dawa Retreats

Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche

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Thank you, everybody—I heard everybody was really trying to practice and focus during the recent Vajrasattva and Chimed Sok Tig practices, and that everyone was helping and supporting each other. From my heart, I really thank you for that, for what everybody did, so many pieces.

Actually, all the things you did belong to you—*your practice, your learning, your offering, your working, your teaching, your translating, your helping each other*. That is in *your pocket*, nothing to do with me.

What you did belongs to you, and it sounds like you did everything nicely! That means you have something nice to put in your own pocket. Nobody can take it away.

One way if I say, “Good, thank you!” it doesn’t benefit you beyond what you already got; and if I say, “You did bad things, terrible!” it doesn’t harm you or take away anything at all. You know what you did, good or bad. The result of that will be yours, good or bad. What is it to do with me? It belongs to you!

In the same way, the centers and practices belong to you, too. If you want to take care of them nicely, keep them carefully, that’s up to you. It’s in your hand, or on your head.

It looks like everyone is doing that, though—everyone is standing up and watching and taking care of everything. It looks like really you want to do that. It looks like really you accept that, into your hand, onto your head. It looks like, therefore, you are keeping the centers nicely and keeping the practices, finally waking up that it is really your own center and really your own practice, and for that I really say, “Thank you.” How long have I really had this hope!

My lamas sent me here so many years ago, and we have been struggling for so many years to build the centers and keep the centers and invite lamas and learn different things. Now everybody can do a retreat, everything perfectly, practicing nicely, working nicely, no problem. That is really the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Karmapa and Dudjom Rinpoche and other lineage lamas, and really I feel like we have followed their order. My lamas sent me here although I have no qualities, and they told me to teach and establish centers and try to spread the dharma a little bit. If they were to ask, “Did you do it?” I think we can say at least really we are trying continuously, and these days getting a little success. That is the way, if we want to keep the dharma not just for one second or one person or one lifetime but for generations and generations into the future.

So thank you, everybody—you all did it. You got your “thank you” merit and your “thank you” practice, so empty words from this funky old man mean nothing. But for myself I am so happy

to see the pictures and hear these things about everybody practicing together, finally harmoniously and really focusing, it sounds like.

If you ask me what I did? Nothing! Actually, I had the most important job—watching very important television! I don't even know what I'm watching—sometimes really nasty, ugly, strange things. Sometimes just all the ladies showing their butts. Sometimes hunters shooting the birds with arrows and guns. Every kind of phenomena, berserk, just like my own brain. Sometimes I get really stuck in there! This one naughty girl, she is very stubborn, tough cookie—she is everybody's boss, even John Wayne's! Whoa, she is heavy! Her mouth never quits, and she shoots the old man with the gun, and even though she is just tiny, she has everybody under her thumb! Anyway, that is my enjoyment—especially the naughty children, I never get tired of watching them. And then eating delicious food and sleeping twenty-four hours a day in this Half Moon Bay pure land, so beautiful! These days my body and everything is good, too, I can't complain about anything. That way, I was just hanging out here while you all were practicing. And then at the end I say, "Thank you." Embarrassing, isn't it? Really I am shameless! Just a funky, useless old man with a useless "thank you," too!

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral