

Request to Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche on the Occasion of
the End of the One Hundred Million Manis Retreat, Institut
Vajrayogini, 4 June 2009

Dear Mum,

Well, here I am in the south of France staying at a lovely
chateau. The weather's great and the food's great, and
there are lots of friends here and I'm averaging four hours
sleep a night and I've done 47,000 prostrations and...

How would we lay people tell our friends about this last
month? How would we explain the sleep deprivation, the
fifteen hour's sitting a day, the pain, the discomfort, the
purification, the precepts, the whole works? How would we
explain our south of France holiday that had no alcohol,
clubs, swimming pools, no sex? How would we explain all
this?

In a word... Rinpoche.

Who else could put us through all this?
Who else could help us understand and endure it?
Who else could give us the chance to do 100 million manis
for His Holiness?
Who else could give us a month face to face with our self-
cherishing?
Who else could help us open our hearts to others?
Who else could introduce us to our minds and give us the
tools to deal with it?
Who else could inspire and energize us so we can actually
enjoy it?
Who else could create this pure land we are living in?

In four words... Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche.

You are patience, but maybe when teaching us you still have
to use the mantra you gave us to increase patience. Many of
us who have sat before you for decades still haven't got it
but You never give up on us. You never give up on anyone.
Rinpoche, never ever give up on us no matter how long it
takes.

With the way You live, You are our ultimate role model,
showing us by example how it is possible to live in
complete purity.

You combine wisdom and compassion in a way that is the perfect antidote for all of us "illusioned" students. Knowing our minds, You have the skill to crack even the thickest of the thick-skulled ones amongst us. You take us from tears of unbearable compassion to tears of laughter, laughing at Yourself, playing with words, even sometimes manifesting forgetfulness to make the old ones amongst us feel better.

The breadth of the methods You use on us is amazing. Amazing! No matter how deluded we might be, You have a means to bring us benefit. You teach us to trust You, and You teach us to take responsibility for our own lives.

You present us the broadest picture and the finest detail, from how to play the cymbals to the meaning of one word in a prayer. You play with our minds, creating conditions where we are confronted with our delusions and with our true (yet not truly existing) potential.

While we sleep our blissful four hours a day, You work, endless projects manifesting and growing like the offerings You ask us to make. It's impossible to conceive the breadth of Your vision, the scope of Your projects. Manifesting in human form for us, surely in reality You must have a thousand arms and a thousand eyes just to be able to do a thousandth of the work You do for sentient beings.

Unexcelled master at explaining wisdom, even turning the dedications into a teaching on emptiness! From the most profound, to the most practical, effective methods we can use in our everyday life, for all the sentient beings who aren't even there. At all. In the way we perceive them.

Above all, You are compassion. Unimaginable and vast compassion for all beings, from the wounded pigeon to the plane crash victims, to all of us wandering the six realms, full of delusions and suffering. Your incredible kindness to all us students!

When our self-cherishing reacts to the hours and the practice, You are our compassionate torturer.
When our minds are drunk with lethargy, You are our wake-up call.
When our self is crying "me me", You are our bath of compassion.

When the child within cries enough, You lead us from delusion to awaken our potential.
When our hearts are open, You are our mother and father, all-loving.

You are always in our hearts, but...
What a joy! What a joy! To have You here with us for a full month! To be part of Your mandala and experience the family feeling of the FPMT. Like the mandala offering splitting into atoms, we'll carry this inspiration back with us all over the world.

With our dull minds we can't see a millionth of Your great qualities, a billionth, a zillionth, and yet, in our own deluded way, we can see some of what You do for us.

While we thrash about in samsara, eating, sleeping, working, making mistakes, You remain there immutable, the heart of our hearts.

Wow! You started the retreat by saying we should do for liberation what people do for football. People cheer when their country wins the European Cup. (Cheers! Cheers!) But here, at the end of this amazing - AMAZING! - retreat, we have just won a million European Cups full of merit (Cheers! Cheers!), a billion European Cups full of merit (Cheers! Cheers!), a zillion European Cups full of merit (Cheers! Cheers!), skies full of European Cups full of merit! (Cheers! Cheers!)

And that's another thing. You've taught us how to rejoice.

So, Rinpoche, please please please have a long long life. Please please please remain to guide us forever through all our future lives. Please be the unerring guide to all mother sentient beings and lead us all to enlightenment, (which is empty from its own side) without even a second's delay, but Yourself alone!

Precious Rinpoche, please please please live long!

composed by Kay Cooper, Montserrat Llobet, and Gordon McDougall, at Institut Vajrayogini, June 2009.