

2025 TRAINING FOR ORDINATION RETREATS

Jan 17-19

'Sangharakshita the Wandering Monk' Online Weekend 1

'Against the background of bright sunshine, jewel-like glittering raindrops, and hills of the freshest and most vivid green, this plethora of delicate seven-hued bows seemed like the epiphany of another world.'
The Rainbow Road

This year would have been Sangharakshita's 100th birthday, and to celebrate, we will be running three weekend retreats devoted to different aspects of his life and practice. This first weekend will be on the theme of Sangharakshita as the wandering monk. We will be exploring his 'going forth' into homelessness, meeting friends and teachers, and following the instruction of his teacher, settling in the foothills of the Himalayas. What can Bhante's life teach us in our own, very different, lives? How can we be wanderers, inspired and receptive, as he was?

Feb 7-16

Going for Refuge

'Going for Refuge represents your positive emotional response - in fact your total response - to the spiritual ideal when that ideal is revealed to your spiritual vision. Such is its appeal that you cannot but give yourself to it.'
Going for Refuge

The central act of the Buddhist life is Going for Refuge to the Three Jewels of Buddhism. It is more than recitation of an old formula, there is a turning about of one's whole being, a revelation, a love that outshines all lesser loves. This retreat will breathe life into your understanding and feeling for what Going for Refuge really means. We will see how our Going for Refuge has expressed itself, and will express itself, in all its dimensions.

Mar 14-28

Mythic Context

'We are in the realm of the spiritually positive, a world glowing with colour and flashing with light.'
A Survey of Buddhism

A more meditative retreat than our usual retreats, this retreat delves deeply into the myth and symbolism of the Refuge Tree of the Buddha Shakyamuni. What is myth? What is imagination? How can we be more receptive to Reality? In silence, meditation, puja and most of all, the Going for Refuge and Prostration Practice of the Buddha Shakyamuni, we will enter the world of colour, myth, magic and imagination to move closer to the heart of the Refuge Tree. For those who have already done a retreat at Tiratanaloka.

Apr 11-25

Transcendental Principle

'The quest for holiness, which the study of the Dharma subserves, is a quest for spiritual wholeness, for complete integration of the 'personality' not with any subjective principle merely, but with Reality.'
A Survey of Buddhism

On the Transcendental Principle we study the first chapter of the poetic, philosophic, mythic, mind expanding text 'A Survey of Buddhism' by Sangharakshita. An alchemical, intensive study retreat, it requires preparation and careful thinking alongside a good dictionary! In the intense heat of the fire of Dharma study, you will emerge a different being. For those who have already done a retreat at Tiratanaloka.

Apr 25 -
May 9

Ethics to Insight

'Morality is, as it were, the words of that most perfect of all poems, the holy life, the language which makes intelligent the secrets of spirituality. Meditation and Wisdom... are its rhythm and its imagery.'

A Survey of Buddhism

How can we become a force for goodness in the world? How can we make our actions of body, speech and mind more in line with the way things are? What behaviour is expected of me as an Order Member? On this retreat we will draw on the principles set out in Sangharakshita's paper 'The Ten Pillars of Buddhism' to see what we can do with our own lives to live more aligned with beauty, good and truth, and to move closer to Buddhahood.

May 9-11

'Sangharakshita as Mystic & Poet' Online Weekend 2

'Experiences on subsequent days included visions of 'flowers' made as though of flame, and of jewels of intense light, sensations as of a light trying to break through, as well as of vastness and emptiness, and an awareness of the importance and meaning of the White Lotus Sutra.' *The Rainbow Road*

This year would have been Sangharakshita's 100th birthday, and to celebrate, we will be running three weekend retreats devoted to different aspects of his life and practice. This second weekend will be on the theme of Sangharakshita as the 'Mystic and Poet'. We will be glimpsing into Bhante's inner life: his meditations, dreams and visions, and the poetry he wrote to express it. Perhaps it will spark something in ourselves, a sense of our own inner life. How can we cultivate what is secret and beautiful in ourselves and communicate it in a way that is authentic and helpful?

Jun 6-13

Ethics (Carers retreat)

'Beauty does give you some clue to the nature of reality. There is also an ethical element, in as much as your whole being is tuned in to that experience of the beautiful through your imagination, you yourself are transformed, at least you are refined and sensitised.' *Seminar on the Kalama Sutta*

In the midst of a demanding life, balancing looking after my children, my family, my friends, and myself, how can I become a force for goodness in the world? How can I make my actions of body, speech and mind more in line with the way things are? What behaviour is expected of me as an Order Member? On this retreat we will draw on the principles set out in Sangharakshita's paper 'The Ten Pillars of Buddhism' to look at what we can do with our own lives to live more aligned with beauty, good and truth, and to move closer to Buddhahood. This retreat is specifically aimed at those with young children and caring responsibilities that can't come on longer retreats.

Jun 13-27

Going for Refuge (bilingual English/German)

'Going for Refuge represents your positive emotional response - in fact your total response - to the spiritual ideal when that ideal is revealed to your spiritual vision. Such is its appeal that you cannot but give yourself to it.' *Going for Refuge*

The central act of the Buddhist life is Going for Refuge to the Three Jewels of Buddhism. It is more than recitation of an old formula, there is a turning about of one's whole being, a revelation, a love that outshines all lesser loves. This retreat will breathe life into your understanding and feeling for what Going for Refuge really means. We will see how our Going for Refuge has expressed itself, and will express itself, in all its dimensions. This retreat will be bilingual in English and German and will have a German speaking group.

Jul 4-13

The Eight Guidelines @ Adhithana

‘Regardless of differences, all Order Members are united by a common commitment to the Three Jewels. Thus it is no longer possible to call [the Triratna Buddhist Order] a lay order, any more than it can be called a monastic order. Perhaps it represents a new kind of development, one more in line with the original spirit of the Dharma.’ *The Nucleus of a New Society*

A retreat that’s particularly suitable for those who have recently requested ordination into the Triratna Buddhist Order, and is also relevant to those with more experience. We’ll be studying ‘The Eight Guidelines’, which offer a map of the principles behind ordination, and give us a glimpse of the profound and mysterious commitment that ordination represents.

Jul 11-20

The System of Dharma Life (bilingual English/Spanish)

‘Paradoxically, inspiration and spontaneity are the product of discipline and regular practice. There is a gradual build-up of energy which gains momentum until finally we break free of all habits whatsoever, whether negative and unconscious, or positive and disciplined.’ *Know Your Mind*

Over time, Sangharakshita developed a systemisation of the path of the Dharma life based on an early Buddhist model of ‘The Five Paths’, providing ‘an illuminating breakdown of what Buddhists are trying to do with their lives’. The five paths can be understood as stages on a journey, or aspects of a life lived in the light of the Three Jewels: integration, positive emotion, receptivity, spiritual death and spiritual rebirth. On this retreat, we will see how the five paths can make sense of our lives and help us to take the next step into the great mystery: no path, no journey, no one to make it. This retreat will be bilingual in English and Spanish and will have a Spanish speaking group.

Jul 25 –
Aug 8

Bodhisattva Path

‘Ultimately, of course, the distinction between the two ideals falls to the ground. You cannot really gain Enlightenment for the benefit of others unless you are a person of considerable spiritual development yourself, and you cannot develop spiritually yourself unless you are at the same time mindful of the needs of other people. In the long run spiritual individualism and spiritual altruism coincide.’ *Going for Refuge*

The sublime ideal of the Bodhisattva, on the path to Bodhi for the sake of all beings, may seem like a lofty ideal: beautiful, perfect, but out of reach. However, we are sowing the seeds of the Bodhicitta all the time. On this retreat, we will explore where the Bodhisattva path is emerging in our lives: in our sincere aspiration towards Buddhahood, in our friendships, and in our community.

Aug 8-17

What is the Order?

‘But what was this [Triratna] Buddhist Order that after a year or more of preliminary work had suddenly blossomed lotus-like from the mud of the metropolis? Essentially it was a body of people who had gone for Refuge to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha and who, by virtue of that common spiritual commitment, now constituted a spiritual community – a spiritual community that symbolized on the mundane level, the same transcendental spiritual community or Sangha which was the third of those same Three Jewels to which they had gone for Refuge.’ *The History of my Going for Refuge*

Why join an Order? Why not simply be a Buddhist practitioner? What do I have to do to join our Order? We will be exploring the principles behind the Order as the emergence of a deeper principle – the possibility of a community of people working together on the basis of love and wisdom, karuna and prajna. This is an important retreat to do for anyone who wishes to join the Triratna Buddhist Order: whether at the beginning of their journey, or if they have asked a long time ago.

Sep 19 -
Oct 3

Transcendental Principle

'Resolved fearlessly to pursue, frankly to examine and faithfully to accept and follow, whatever the truth about Buddhism might turn out to be, such an ideal student could be said to be fairly well equipped for the study of Buddhism.' A Survey of Buddhism

On the Transcendental Principle we study the first chapter of the poetic, philosophic, mythic, mind expanding text 'A Survey of Buddhism' by Sangharakshita. An alchemical, intensive study retreat, it requires preparation and careful thinking alongside a good dictionary! In the intense heat of the fire of Dharma study, you will emerge a different being. For those who have already done a retreat at Tiratanaoka.

Oct 24 -
Nov 2

What is the Order?

'But there is something about the movement, the Order and even about me that is not easily definable. There is a touch of something that cannot be buttoned down, something that cannot in the end be defined. Even the desire to button it down or define it is a mistake – that was the mistake that the Theravada made in connection with its Vinaya. Everyone will need to take care of that rather mysterious, indefinable spirit that gives the movement life and energy.' What is the Western Buddhist Order?

Why join an Order? Why not simply be a Buddhist practitioner? What do I have to do to join our Order? We will be exploring the principles behind the Order as the emergence of a deeper principle - the possibility of a community of people working together on the basis of love and wisdom, karuna and prajna. This is an important retreat to do for anyone who wishes to join the Triratna Buddhist Order: whether at the beginning of their journey, or if they have asked a long time ago.

Nov 7-9

'Sangharakshita as Translator & Teacher' Online Weekend 3

'One brings what one has experienced on the mountain top down into the valley... or one brings what one has experienced in the depths up to the surface, from darkness into light. It is in bringing down, or bringing up, of what one has experienced on the heights, or in the depths, of one's own being, and giving it concrete form... that the essence of creativity consists' St Jerome Revisited

Sangharakshita came back from India in 1964, bringing all that he had learnt and understood to a totally new environment. On this retreat we will hear about that journey and how he translated Buddhism to a new culture. How can we as potential members of the Order he founded carry on that legacy in our own lives and for the benefit of others?

Nov 14-28

Ethics to Insight

'Love grows continuously like a ceaseless melody. Love projects itself as open ended, with no set nature. With no limited focus and being non-conceptual in its being, it exhibits the purity of body, speech and mind. Thus love is transformed into compassion.' Padmasambhava

How can we become a force for goodness in the world? How can we make our actions of body, speech and mind more in line with the way things are? What behaviour is expected of me as an Order Member? On this retreat we will draw on the principles set out in Sangharakshita's paper 'The Ten Pillars of Buddhism' to see what we can do with our own lives to live more aligned with beauty, good and truth, and to move closer to Buddhahood.

Dec 19 -
Jan 2

Mythic Context

'We are in the realm of the spiritually positive, a world glowing with colour and flashing with light.'

A Survey of Buddhism

A more meditative retreat than our usual retreats, this retreat delves deeply into the myth and symbolism of the Refuge Tree of the Buddha Shakyamuni. What is myth? What is imagination? How can we be more receptive to Reality? In silence, meditation, puja and most of all, the Going for Refuge and Prostration Practice of the Buddha Shakyamuni, we will enter the world of colour, myth, magic and imagination to move closer to the heart of the Refuge Tree. For those who have already done a retreat at Tiratanaloka.