

Tara Institute

News

May 2026



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or find the link on our website



Saka Dawa GURU PUJA

Sunday 31 May, 10am to noon

Celebrating the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and parinivarna

Saka Dawa is a special month in the Buddhist calendar, and in 2026, runs from 16 May to 15 June. During this month, we celebrate the anniversary of Shakyamuni Buddha's birth, enlightenment and parinirvana, which falls on this 15th day of the fourth lunar calendar month. Please join us on this special day.

See page 3 to register or find out more.

To register for all TI events, please use our new **humanitix** events booking system - just click on the event link (or phone the Office on 9596 8900 for assistance)

White Tara Empowerment

Sunday 17 May, 10am

We can rejoice in the good fortune of having had His Holiness the Dalai Lama provide advice to Tara Institute students to do the practice of White Tara for the long life and good health of His Holiness and Venerable Geshe Doga.

This year, Geshe Doga has encouraged students to complete a White Tara home retreat in June (see page 4) and has kindly offered to confer the White Tara empowerment on May 17 to support those wishing to undertake this retreat.

2026 TI Members' AGM

Saturday 9 May, 2pm

Tara Institute's Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 9 May 2026, 2pm, in Landcox Hall.

All current TI Members are encouraged to come along and find out how the Centre has fared over the past year and what exciting developments are being planned for the future.

It's a great opportunity for Members to listen, learn about Centre people and activities, ask questions, offer ideas and feedback, and contribute to the success of the Centre.

May Events (with active links in blue underline)

- **Regular weekly teaching program dates** – see page 2
- **TI Members' Annual General Meeting** – Saturday 9 May, 2pm
- **[21 Taras Thangka @ Melbourne Town Hall](#)** – Saturday 16 May, 10am to 4pm
- **[Monthly Guru pujas](#)** – Tuesday 12 & 26 May, 6pm
- **[Monthly Tara puja](#)** – Sunday 24 May, 6pm
- **[White Tara Empowerment](#)** – Sunday 17 May, 10am
- **[Online Meditation on the 21 Taras](#)** – Friday 22 May 5pm
- **[Nyung Nye Retreat Weekend](#)** – Friday 22 May, 8pm to Monday 25 May, 7am
- **[Saka Dawa Puja and Special Practice Day](#)** – Sunday 31 May

MONDAYS ~ 8pm
4, 11, 18 & 25 May
**Introduction to
Buddhist Meditation**



with **John Wright**

We live in a culture that wants to hide or deny death, rather than developing death awareness and preparing for it. We largely remain unaware and distracted and do little to prepare for death.

If we are well prepared, however, our impending mortality will not be a surprise or a shock and can even be a joyful experience.

How can we be motivated to develop this awareness and which contemplations can help us develop such an understanding? Once aware that we are subject to death, what practices can we do to prepare during this life, and at the time of death itself, to ensure that we have a good death?

These informal sessions include guided meditations, a talk and discussion. A facility fee of \$5 or \$10 (for those able to contribute more) goes towards the running of the Centre. All welcome – no need to book.

TUESDAYS ~ 7.45pm
5, 12, 19 & 26 May
Study Group



Middle Length Lamrim
by *Lama Tsong Khapa*
with **Venerable Geshe Doga**

'True meditation involves being constantly mindful of our thoughts and actions. Meditation is about knowing one's own mind, and through knowing the mind, knowing oneself...

'Through meditation, we are able to recognise that certain mental states – whether they arise in our own minds or in the minds of others – have the same effect: they create confusion, destroy our inner peace, and make us feel unsettled and disturbed.

'On the other hand, when more virtuous or positive states of mind arise within ourselves or others, they bring about a sense of peace and happiness.'

(Ven. Geshe Doga, 24 February 2026)

Sessions begin promptly at 7.45pm. Please email spc@tarainstitute.org.au with any queries about attending Study Group or about the Spiritual Program in general.

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8pm
6, 13, 20 & 27 May
**Guide to the
Bodhisattva's Way of Life**



with **Venerable
Geshe Lobsang Dorjee**

Geshe Lobsang continues teaching from Chapter 6: Patience in Shantideva's text, *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

'Chapter 6 of the text we are studying...is primarily concerned with how to overcome anger, jealousy, and so forth, because these mental afflictions are the source of the suffering we experience.

'We can counteract or remedy anger using different antidotes. It's important to know about the different antidotes because, if we had to rely on just one, we'd find it difficult to counteract anger. This is because the anger within us is intense, habitual and very strong. So, knowing how to overcome anger through applying different means or remedies is beneficial.'

(Ven. Geshe Lobsang, 5 February, 2026)

Morning Meditations

WEDNESDAYS ~ 11am: 6, 13, 20 & 27 May
with **Allys Andrews**

These half-hour sessions are suitable for those new to meditation and for those who have more experience. People may attend the whole 12-week program or drop in for single sessions. The atmosphere is open and relaxed. Please come a little before 11am to settle and find a comfortable seat. *(Donations of \$5-\$10 are appreciated to contribute to the running of the Centre and its programs.)*

Healing Group

THURSDAYS (fortnightly) ~ 11am: 14 & 28 May
with **Kathi Melnic, William Liew and Kerry Whitlock**

Life's challenges can exert a toll on our physical and mental well-being, often contributing, over time, to chronic or other serious illness. Healing begins with the mind. It's not a quick fix but an evolving process of awareness, compassion and integration. Our program, which draws on a range of healing traditions and the practice of meditation, is accessible to all. *(Donations of \$5-\$10 are appreciated to contribute to the running of the Centre and its programs.)*

Auspicious Days in May

Auspicious days are calculated according to the lunar calendar. On these days, the benefits of action are greatly multiplied, so are especially good for spiritual practice.

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|-------------|------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Friday 1 | Tibetan 15 | Full Moon | Precepts/Sojong |
| Tuesday 12 | Tibetan 25 | Guru Puja | Tsog |
| Saturday 16 | Tibetan 30 | New Moon | Precepts |
| Sunday 24 | Tibetan 8 | Tara Puja | Precepts |
| Tuesday 26 | Tibetan 10 | Guru Puja | Tsog |
| Sunday 31 | Tibetan 15 | Full Moon | Precepts/Merit-multiplying Day |

Saka Dawa Guru Puja

Sunday 31 May, 10am to noon

Everyone is welcome to come to this special Guru Puja – an offering ceremony to celebrate the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and paranirvana.

Because of the great multiplying power of these significant events in the Buddha's life, spiritual practice is encouraged on this auspicious day, especially the actions of not harming others and helping them as much as possible.

You can also take this opportunity to accumulate extensive merit by contributing to the puja in ways like: making offerings of food and flowers, making offerings to the sangha, and helping set up the gomba and cleaning up afterwards.

Register using our new **humanitix booking system** – just click on the link below. If you encounter any problems, feel free to call the TI Office on 03 9596 8900 or email admin@tarainstitute.org.au

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Nyung Nye Retreat

Fasting and purification practice based on Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion

Friday 22 May, 8pm to Monday 25 May, 7am

Nyung nye means 'abiding in the retreat' – retreating from negative karmas of body, speech and mind. The emphasis of the practice is on developing compassion. The eight Mahayana precepts are taken on both days, and on the second day, vows of not drinking fluids, eating or talking are observed. The benefits of engaging in this practice are said to be inestimable.



Cost: Non-residential \$120 non-Members; \$100 Members (inc. Saturday lunch and Monday breakfast). Residential: additional \$40 per night, \$120 for three nights. Limited accommodation available, so please register early to avoid disappointment. Any queries, please call 03 9596 8900 or email spc@tarainstitute.org.au

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Special Merit-multiplying Practice Day

Sunday 31 May, 6am to 7.30pm



Join us for a full day of precepts, meditation, prayers, prostrations, and the Saka Dawa Guru Puja. As this is a merit-multiplying day, participants have an opportunity to accumulate merit and purify negativities more powerfully than on other days. We're encouraged to take the Eight Mahayana Precepts at 6am; however, taking precepts is not compulsory for attending any of the sessions.

Please join us on this meaningful day to create powerful causes for peace, wisdom, and compassion. Cost for the full day \$40 Members and \$50 non-Members (half cost if lunch is not required). All welcome.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

21 Taras Thankga Event @ Melbourne Town Hall

Saturday 16 May, 10am to 4pm

Come and see this colossal painting of the 21 Taras, who are waiting to release a rain of blessings upon you! This one-day-only display is part of Victoria's UN Day of Vesak celebrations, which also include a Buddhist relics exhibition from the Great Stupa, and a procession of sangha from different Buddhist traditions starting at Parliament Gardens and proceeding down Collins Street to the Melbourne Town Hall at 1pm.

Study Group Recitation Day: Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

Sunday 7 June, 9am to 12 noon

During the month of Saka Dawa, you are most welcome to join a group recitation of Shantideva's pivotal text, *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* – one of Study Group's annual commitments for participants. Please bring the text (Stephen Batchelor's version) if you have one, otherwise gomba copies can be provided for the reading. To register or to find out more, visit the TI website.

Week 1

MONDAY 4

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 5

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 6

11am - Morning Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 7

6pm - [Tibetan Art Workshop](#)

SATURDAY 9

2pm - Annual General Meeting for TI Members

Week 2

MONDAY 11

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 12

6pm - Guru Puja

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 13

11am - Morning Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 14

11am - Healing Group

6pm - Tibetan Art Workshop

SATURDAY 16

10am to 4pm - [21 Taras Thankga, Melbourne Town Hall](#)

SUNDAY 17

10am - [White Tara Jenang](#)

Week 3

MONDAY 18

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 19

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 20

11am - Morning Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 21

6pm - Tibetan Art Workshop

FRIDAY 22

5pm - [Online 21 Taras Event](#)

8pm - [Nyung Nye Retreat starts](#)

SATURDAY 23

6pm - Tara Puja

Week 4

MONDAY 25

7am - [Nyung Nye Retreat ends](#)

8pm - Intro to Buddhist Meditation

TUESDAY 26

7.45pm - Study Group

WEDNESDAY 27

11am - Morning Meditation

8pm - Bodhisattva's Way of Life

THURSDAY 28

11am - Healing Group

6pm - Tibetan Art Workshop

Week 5

SUNDAY 31 May

10am - [Saka Dawa Puja](#)

6am to 7.30pm - [Special Practice Day \(Merit-multiplying Day\)](#)

MAY 2026

White Tara Retreat

10 to 24 June (in-home)

Students are warmly invited to participate in a White Tara home retreat, with the aim of each student accumulating 100,000 White Tara mantras. Venerable Geshe Lobsang has suggested that students may begin the retreat earlier in preparation for this commitment.

We rejoice in our great good fortune to have such a precious opportunity to dedicate White Tara practice to the long and healthy life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Venerable Geshe Doga.

Those who have received White Tara Empowerment are eligible to participate. The retreat is an opportunity to accumulate merit and create conducive conditions for the long life and good health of Venerable Geshe Doga and His Holiness, as well ourselves and others.

The collected mantra recitations will contribute to our commitment to meet the 10 million mantras goal we have committed to for Geshe Doga's long and healthy life.

[REGISTER HERE @ humanitix](#)

...or email spc@tarainstitute.org.au if you have any further questions.

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One-Day Course: Compassion & Emptiness

Sunday 28 June, 9am to 5pm
Venerable Geshe Lobsang Dorjee

Compassion allows our mind to expand and embrace others. However, compassion alone is not enough. Combined with the wisdom of emptiness, our compassion will be deepened, and this will make our interactions with others more beneficial and effective, making our practice of compassion truly meaningful.

Meditating on emptiness helps us to understand and tame the emotions arising from our conceptual thinking, and bring our mind to a virtuous or at least a neutral state.

This commentary by Geshe Lobsang is an opportunity to learn how the wisdom of emptiness can help us become more skilful in our everyday activities.

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NOTE

You may have noticed this newsletter doesn't include a teaching from our geshe. This is in response to requests to include more information about upcoming events. We're also pleased to offer teaching transcripts by subscription – \$40 for Study Group or Wednesday teachings, or \$70 for both. **Please contact the Office for more details.**

Trivia Night, Fundraiser Dinner & Silent Auction

Sat 27 June, 6pm, Landcox Hall

Looking for a fun night out?! Join us for our trivia night in an evening packed with delicious food, plenty of laughs, and a little friendly competition. Whether you're a trivia buff or just love a good night out, this event promises something for everyone.

Bring along friends and family, get dressed up a little and have a great time! In between rounds, enjoy a vegetarian dinner, and browse our silent auction, featuring a variety of fantastic items and experiences just waiting to be snapped up.

Tickets: \$40 per person. As space is limited, please purchase in advance from humanitix (phone 03 9596 8900 if you have any problems). Walk-ins only accommodated if seats are still available.

If you know anyone who would like to donate a product or service for our silent auction, please contact Cynthia at cynthia@netspace.net.au

[BOOK TICKETS HERE @ humanitix](#)

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Generosity at Saka Dawa: Sacred Heart Mission Collection

This year, once again, Tara Institute will collect donations of non-perishable food items and money for the Sacred Heart Mission in St Kilda.

The Mission feeds up to 200 people a night, 365 days a year and is run by volunteers. Nobody is turned away. It's a wonderful organisation!

Please be generous. You will find collection points for financial donations and non-perishable food items outside the main TI gomba in the week or so prior to the puja.

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School Building Fund Tax- Deductible Donations

Our beautiful and historic building at 3 Mavis Avenue comes with big responsibilities. As the building ages, maintenance and repair costs are rising. Donations to the School Building Fund contribute to the acquisition, construction, and maintenance of buildings used by Tara Institute to provide instruction. Any donation of \$2 or more to the School Building Fund is tax-deductible. Please note, tax-deductibility applies **only** to School Building Fund donations, and not to general donations to the Centre.

[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE](#)

Thank-you

Tara Institute offers heartfelt thanks to all who have generously sponsored projects at the Centre in the last couple of months.

Financial offerings and material support are expressions of kindness, faith, and a deep commitment to the flourishing of Dharma in our community.

Through the generosity of donors, teachings continue, spaces are maintained and improved, and students and practitioners are supported in their study, reflection, and meditation.

Because of this, the Centre remains a place of refuge, learning, and spiritual growth for so many.

Rejoice in some recent examples:

- 19 students sponsored \$22,290 for the geshe pilgrimage to Sera
- 3 Members donated \$6,000 for a new kitchen in the sangha area (School Building Fund donation)
- 1 member \$2,000 donated for the pergola in the courtyard (School Building Fund)
- 1 person kindly donated time and materials to a new garden watering system
- 2 members donated shelving for the toolshed
- 2 geshe, 2 residents and 2 others painted the pergola
- 1 member donated the large Tibetan rug in the gomba
- 1 member donated the *shimbu* that is being installed in the gomba (yellow ceiling banner)
- 1 student donated 3 thangkas that are now in the gomba

We sincerely rejoice in the merit created through this generosity. In a spirit of deep gratitude and appreciation, we honour the compassion that inspires such giving and the meaningful impact these contributions create – both visible and unseen.

May the virtue generated through this support bring happiness, peace, and the fulfilment of the highest aspirations for all involved.

With deep appreciation, thank you to everyone for sustaining and strengthening the heart of our community.

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Golden Light Sutra

Join us on Fridays @ 7pm to recite this powerful sutra for world peace and the long life of our gurus and teachers. To find out more email spc@tarainstitute.org.au You can also join a group commitment to ongoing daily (and manageable!) sutra recitation at home: email the coordinator at gls@tarainstitute.org.au

Acknowledgment of Country

Tara Institute acknowledges the sovereign Bunurong/Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our Centre stands.