



Toowoomba Buddhist Centre

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2017

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<https://thebuddhistcentre.com/toowoomba>

Dear Friends,

The first of a set of reflections, coming from the Tibetan Buddhism tradition [the Preliminary Practices or Four Reminders], is a reflection on the preciousness and rarity of human life. The preciousness of our human birth lies in our freedom from being born in other realms or states of being, where we would not have the capacity or opportunity to lead a spiritual life. Here, today, we are living in a time and place where the Dharma is accessible to be freely practised. However, there are many people, whose conditions and circumstances prevent their encountering or being able to practise the Dharma. (On a personal note, if Urygen Sangharakshita had not established the Triratna Buddhist Community in April 1967 - then called the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order - this Dharma farer's encounter with the Dharma may have been limited to, and have ended with, a TV program on Thailand in the 1980s). There is much to be grateful for.

The Buddha began it over 2,500 years ago. Following his Enlightenment, he turned to the Dharma to revere and express his gratitude. We too can be grateful that the Buddha decided to teach, that whole lineages of teaching the Dharma came into existence and that Buddhism eventually found its way into Western society. We can be grateful for Sangharakshita's contribution to our being able to easily access the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, through his many writings and the formation of the Triratna Buddhist Community fifty years ago. We can express our gratitude for the people and conditions, which have brought the Toowoomba Buddhist Centre into existence and for the conditions which enable a continuation and a deepening of our spiritual lives. All are welcome to help us celebrate *50 Years of Triratna* on this coming Friends Night, April 6th. [Viriyaja]

APRIL 2017 CALENDAR

(Friends Nights: 7pm - 9pm)

Thu 6th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; <i>celebrating 50 Years of Triratna</i> [V]
Sat 8th	Annual General Meeting of the Toowoomba Buddhist Centre Inc. at 11am	
Thu 13th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; <i>celebrating 50 Years of Triratna</i> Part 2 [V]
Thu 20th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT</u>	Meditation; 'Pot Luck' topic for reflection and discussion [R]
Thu 27th	<u>FRIENDS NIGHT:</u>	Meditation; <i>Sevenfold Puja</i> [K]

FRIENDS NIGHT PROGRAM*[amended]

So far this year in the study program, we have looked at 'Encounters With Enlightenment', stories from the Pali Canon and at teachings from the 'inspired utterances of the Buddha', the *Udāna*. This month's Friends Night program commences with a celebration of the 50th birthday of the Triratna Buddhist Community,

which began, as the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, on April 6th, 1967. It has been necessary to postpone Peter's sessions till June and so we'll continue with the 50th birthday of Triratna on April 13th. Then, Roger will lead a 'pot luck' topic session the following week and the month ends with a Sevenfold Puja.

The program for **May** will include Buddha Day, the most important day in the Buddhist calendar, and an exploration of the Heart Sutra. The program for later months is still being planned.

***FRIENDS NIGHTS, on Thursdays, 7-9pm, are open to everyone, whether a beginner or more experienced, a regular or a first time visitor.** They are an opportunity for people to come together to meditate, engage in Buddhist practices, learn more about the Buddha's teachings, the Dharma, but most importantly to engage in these activities in friendship with other like-minded people. The evening's program always includes meditation and a social aspect; each month one or two devotional practices take place and other evenings have a Dharma study/activity component. There is no charge but a donation is very much appreciated.

URGENT NEED FOR RETREAT VENUES

Regrettably, as of May 31st, St. Ursula's College will no longer own Le Grezze, because of a change in Diocesan policy, and therefore can no longer rent it to us for retreats. At this stage we have retreats planned for July 14-16 and November 24-26, 2017. **If anyone knows of any suitable venues for weekend residential retreats in the region could you please let us know a.s.a.p.** To date we have run these with a maximum of 13 people.

A CALL FOR HELP WITH KEEPING THE CENTRE CLEAN AND ATTRACTIVE TO VISIT!

There are some maintenance and improvement projects going on at the moment, such as windows repair and reconditioning of security screens and awnings. However, **regular help is needed with general cleaning**, such as vacuuming, washing floors, in the kitchen, dusting, sweeping the deck and cleaning the toilet area. Some of these jobs need to be done weekly but others could be done less frequently. And if you have a bent for gardening, you may like to 'develop' the plantings already there. **If you are in a position to help with any of these, please let us [Roger, Karen or Viryajaj] know.**

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:

**To be reverent and humble,
content and grateful,
to hear the Dharma at the right time,
this is a blessing supreme.**

From the *Mangala Sutta*, trans. Gunaratana Mahathera

