

Happy Birthday to His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Sakya  
By David Spiekerman

Birthdays come once a year for all of us. His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Sakya has enjoyed over 80 birthdays in service to the Holy Dharma, and today we celebrate this accomplishment. What birthday presents are truly fitting for Dagchen Rinpoche that return and reciprocate his many gifts to us?

I have two suggestions for birthday presents for Dagchen Rinpoche that all of us can give him not just today but everyday. These two birthday gifts happily give as much to the giver as to the recipient.

The first birthday gift for Dagchen Rinpoche is please continue to develop and maintain your faith in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Dagchen Rinpoche wants all of you to experience ultimate enlightenment as soon as possible. By continuing to pray, recite mantras, contemplate the teachings, and meditate, you are following the pure example of Dagchen Rinpoche and the path of the Buddhas, and that pleases all of the advanced and realized spiritual beings. The maturation of the Six Perfections and the Four Immeasurables in your mind stream is within your grasp following Dagchen Rinpoche's clear example. Your steadfast commitment to practicing, not just talking, the Holy Dharma brings immediate and future rewards to you and all sentient beings suffering in Samsara.

The second birthday gift for Dagchen Rinpoche is please continue to support Sakya Monastery, its physical form, its cultural and spiritual activities, and its resident lamas and caretakers. Your support can take the forms of attending the numerous and varied Dharma activities sponsored by Sakya Monastery, volunteering your time and mindfulness to clean, beautify, maintain, and administer the monastery, and finally donating money to cover our expenses.

Sakya Monastery serves as a motivating agent that gives us energy and inspiration to practice the Holy Dharma for the benefit of all sentient beings. Fortunately, Sakya Monastery provides all of us a safe and enriching space to disarm our crazy ego and to empower our loving kindness, compassion, and wisdom.

Sakya Monastery is really a universal, spiritual bank. This monastery provides spiritual currency in the form of prayers, mantra recitations, meditations, teachings, and empowerments. This spiritual currency is backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Sakya Monastery, acting like a spiritual bank, lends out this holy currency charging no interest. In fact if you put

this spiritual currency to work in wholesome activities with mindfulness, your karmic debt will be erased. What other bank is this generous?

Sakya Monastery, founded and developed under the leadership and vision of Dagchen Rinpoche to maintain and preserve the rich Buddhist heritage of the Sakya lineage, represents Dagchen Rinpoche's enduring gift to us and to future generations. Let us take grateful advantage of this wish fulfilling gift by continuing to support Sakya Monastery.

True to his supreme discriminating insight, Dagchen Rinpoche on his birthday gives us an opportunity to see again the mutually beneficial value of his gifts to us that he has lovingly and selflessly bestowed over his long life in service to the Holy Dharma.