

# Buddhist Classes: Middle Course

Philippine Palyul Chang Chub Dargyeling Dharma Center  
(Philippine Buddhist Palyul Temple)

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Center Opening Times: Monday to Sunday 8am - 6pm

*To meditate persistently on impermanence is to make offerings to all the Buddhas.*

*To meditate persistently on impermanence is to be rescued from suffering by all the Buddhas.*

*To meditate persistently on impermanence is to be guided by all the Buddhas.*

*To meditate persistently on impermanence is to be blessed by all the Buddhas.*

- *Buddha Shakyamuni, Words of My Perfect Teacher*

*Think about death and impermanence for a long time. Once you are certain that you are going to die, you will no longer find it hard to put aside harmful actions, nor difficult to do what is right.*

- *Geshe Potowa*

## Middle Course

We are strengthening our basic foundation with two other “very basic” topics - Buddhist Refuge and the Triple Gems.

The “simple” topic of Refuge is very vast: traditionally, the *theory* of Buddhist Refuge should be discussed within 5-6 years. Only after that can the *practice* of Taking Refuge begin.

The *essence* of the “highest” teachings (such as Ati Yoga and Dzogchen in the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism) is Refuge.

Meanwhile, the Triple Gems possess qualities that cannot be quantified or measured. These qualities will also be discussed.

Through these classes, we are building Confident Faith - logical knowing why Taking Refuge and the Triple Gems are important.

**Objective: We are considered successful if we think, “Taking Refuge and the Triple Gems are too vast”.**

### Unit 1 | The Benefits of Liberation

“Buddhist Liberation”? It is to find freedom from this ocean of suffering called Samsara, and to attain perfect Buddhahood. The two causes of Liberation is the common and the uncommon methods. In this class, everything about Liberation will be explained.

### Unit 2 | The Qualities of a Spiritual Friend or Teacher

The qualified teacher is still needed. The perfect and excellent Dharma cannot penetrate our minds however much we self-study and self-practice.

The qualities of a qualified teacher and how to investigate the teacher will be taught here.

### Unit 3 | Three Kinds of Faith

Refuge is the door to enter Buddhism. Faith is the key to open that door. There are three kinds of faith in Buddhism - vivid faith, eager faith and confident faith. These three will be taught, emphasizing on logical faith or confident faith.

### Unit 4 | Refuge: The Door to the Whole of Buddhism

Refuge means to seek protection from something. These are the endless dangers and sufferings of Samsaric existence.

When we come to the temple, we are taking refuge in a supreme object such as the Three Jewels.

Thus, the Three Jewels, their purpose and their qualities will be briefly introduced. Then we also discuss the three kinds of motivation for taking refuge. We will focus on the benefits of the third type of motivation.

### Unit 5 | The Object of Refuge: Three Jewels

Why is Refuge likened to a door? When we enter a house, just by standing on the doorway, we are able to scan the whole house - all of its rooms and activities. However, if the door is closed, we can never see any part of the house. Likewise, Buddhist refuge encompasses the lowest to the highest of all of Buddhism.

The Three Jewels and each of their qualities will be introduced in greater detail.

#### **Unit 6 | What are the Buddha's Qualities?**

The Buddha's qualities are great and vast in meaning. It is helpful to categorize them according to the forms of the Buddha. Here, we first focus on the Tulku form of the Buddha. Tulku means the Buddha's mind taking a physical form, such as a human being, to be around us.

In this class, we introduce the 32 physical marks of the Supreme Tulku. How these physical marks came about will be explained, using the Great Liberation Sutra.

#### **Unit 7 | Buddha's Qualities: 4 Fearlessness and 10 Strengths**

The Four Fearlessness and the ten strengths of the Buddha will be introduced and explained.

#### **Unit 8 | Buddha's Qualities: 18 Non-Mixing Qualities of the Buddha**

These are called "non-mixing" because only a Buddha has these qualities. They are not seen in or possessed by other ordinary sentient beings. They are categorized into three groups.

#### **Unit 9 | Buddha's Qualities: 80 Secondary Qualities**

The 80 Secondary Qualities are extension of the 32 Physical Marks of the Supreme Tulku.

#### **Unit 10 | Buddha's Qualities: Buddha's Speech**

The 60 Melodious Qualities of the Buddha's Speech will be discussed.

#### **Unit 11 | The Dharma's Qualities**

The Qualities of the Dharma, the teachings of the Buddha, will be introduced using the Mindfulness of the Dharma Sutra.

#### **Unit 12 | The Sangha's Qualities**

The Qualities of the Sangha, the exalted followers of the Buddhist path, will be introduced using the Mindfulness of the Sangha Sutra.