

The Mountain Hermitage



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*Rejoicing, he/she distributes gifts,
And proclaims, 'Give, give.'
- The Buddha*

Dear Friend in the Dharma,

Rejoice in giving! That powerful mandate has been the beating heart of *The Mountain Hermitage* since its inception in 2002. It is the mandate that guides the unique *Scholarship Program* that has been the gateway to a rich and resonant *Mountain Hermitage* retreat experience for some 124 grateful Dharma students out of the more than 400 total who have attended our retreats. And it is the mandate that undergirds all we are able to do.

You too reap the joyful rewards of giving through your generous support of *The Mountain Hermitage*. So I know you will find an extra measure of joy in knowing that Venerable Dhammadinna, a Buddhist nun for 30 years, first came to the *Hermitage* as a monastic recipient of scholarship aid – and then went on to serve by offering her *Four Noble Truths Study Retreat* to a full-house of grateful *Hermitage* retreatants.

We need your help again as we move into 2012, and I hope that Dhammadinna's story will move you to add an extra measure of generosity to your year-end gift. Our funding is always lean. Our commitment to *rejoice in giving* by sharing the Dharma with as many seekers as possible is unshakable --

-- and our trust in you and the many giving members of our *Mountain Hermitage* family is unwavering.

We will need \$25,000 in charitable donations to continue our scholarship aid through 2012 at the current levels – *scholarship aid that makes the retreat experience possible for so many who would otherwise not be able to attend* --- and to support modest expenses for general operations.

On behalf of the lay Dharma students and monastics we will serve in the year ahead, I strongly encourage you to support *The Mountain Hermitage* with a generous, tax-deductible, year-end donation of \$1,000, \$500, \$250, \$100 – or whatever amount you feel you can share.

We are deeply grateful for your help, without which we could not offer four enriching retreats in the year ahead, and in so doing, share the gift of the Dharma with so many who come to us with open, caring hearts.

And as we rejoice in letters like these from grateful attending practitioners, we share that joy with you. A physically challenged Dharma student wrote:

"I did my first month-long retreat at San Geronimo Lodge in April 2011 which went a long way in helping me cope with my MS in Buddhist terms. The Mountain Hermitage provided a personal yogi, recorded Dharma talks to listen to since I cannot sit for long periods, the only truly handicapped bathroom I have ever experienced, and a truly loving Dharma community that at the end of the retreat told me my presence had enriched their practice. I hope they know how much they enriched mine."

And another offered these thankful words:

"Because of this rare opportunity to sustain practice in a supportive environment, my practice was rejuvenated. I feel inspired by a deeper understanding of some of the truths of the Buddha, both because I was able to hear something new in the Dharma talks, and to actively and experientially sense these truths during the course of my practice."

Please choose one of the suggested donation amounts on the enclosed *Mountain Hermitage Donor Reply* -- or another amount -- inspired by the knowledge that each dollar you give will bring us closer to meeting the challenges of our eighth *Mountain Hermitage* year.

Then return the *Donor Reply* with your check or money order in the envelope provided. If you choose to give by credit card, please go to our website at www.mountainhermitage.org and click on the *How You Can Help* menu item.

You will be able to offer a gift through your credit card via *The Network for Good*, which offers options for supporting our scholarship fund, teacher fund, and general operating costs on a one time or monthly giving basis.

As your life unfolds through the rest of this year and next, keep in mind that the whole of your life is your practice. Let the innate qualities of love, compassion and wisdom naturally emerge, grow and flourish, and recognize and nurture this natural process as you would a small and delicate seedling.

In the spirit of the Buddha, you will surely nurture those qualities for yourself and others through your generous year-end gift to *The Mountain Hermitage* -- a gift that may well help to transform our troubled world. *Will you send that gift just as soon as you can?*

Thank you for all you do, and may the joys of giving be returned to you many times over in the unfolding New Year.

With metta,



Marcia Rose

Guiding Teacher, *The Mountain Hermitage*

P.S. The verse from the Buddha continues, *"For that is his/her thundering/Like the sky when it rains. That shower of merit, so vast/Will pour down on the giver."*

Please enjoy our *Mountain Hermitage 2011 Review and News* at www.mountainhermitage.org. The *Review and News* is yet another way we are able, with your help, to offer the gift of the Dharma to so many searching for truth in these challenging times.