

Gehlek Rimpoche Speaks About the Individual, Peace

By Leslie Rott

"Peace begins at home," Gehlek Rimpoche told an almost packed audience at Ste. Anne's Church on Sunday, July 3. The first speaker in a series of four lectures on peace, named Illumination 2005, stressed that the individual is the first step toward peace in the world.

Mr. Rimpoche said people's attention is drawn to hate, war, and strife around the world, when people don't even have peace within themselves. Until people come to peace with themselves, he said, peace will not exist anywhere else.

"You will see the solution within yourself," he urged the audience. "Only you can help yourself."

Mr. Rimpoche stressed personal responsibility and suggested that the negative emotions that people harbor leave them without peace.

He suggested that the individual is the catalyst for peace and once the individual has obtained true peace within himself or herself, peace will then spread throughout the hierarchies, from the family, to the city, the state, the nation, and then eventually, to the world.

"Society is nothing more than a collection of individuals," he said.

Mr. Rimpoche said that people's "addiction" to anger, fear, obsession, and other negative emotions robs the individual of internal peace. He suggested that to have individual inner peace, people must see the faults of negative emotions and change the way they act by ridding themselves of those negative emotions. He added that there is no one way to do that and the individual must decide the best way to let go of negativity.

"We have a tremendous amount of pain and suffering in the world," he said. "We all share that pain together." And although that pain is shared, he added, the individual is the first step in relieving that shared pain. "Whatever you do, that will make a difference.

"Truth, peace, and joy will definitely prevail in the world," he said optimistically and with fervor.

Mr. Rimpoche was born in Lhasa, Tibet, in 1939. He was recognized as an incarnate lama at the age of four and he was one of the last lamas to be educated in the Drepung monastery. Principle teachers of Mr. Rimpoche were Junior



Daniel David (left), organizer of the Illumination Series and Gehlek Rimpoche, Tibetan Buddhist master, at Ste. Anne's Church Sunday, July 3, following Mr. Rimpoche's talk on peace and enlightenment.

and Senior teachers to His Holiness the Dali Lama.

He gave up monastic life at 25 and worked as an editor for the Tibetan Works and Archives in Delhi and as the head of the Tibetan Service Department for All India Radio.

He is the founder of The Jewel Heart Center in Ann Arbor, which has branches all over the United States, and also in Malaysia, Singapore, and the Netherlands.

Mr. Rimpoche's first book, "Good Life, Good Death," was released in October 2001. He is an American citizen, currently living in Ypsilanti.

Daniel David of Dearborn and St. Ignace is the organizer of Illumination 2005. He said he "was concerned about the war fervor that was taking over our country" and that prompted him to start the Illumination Series.

"The ultimate goal for all

people should be peace," he said, adding that the shared goal of peace was another reason why he started the series and he invited the speakers for the series to share with audiences the "peace tradition" in their religions.

Mr. David hopes to continue the Illumination Series as long as there is war in the world.

He has been a professional musician for almost 30 years. He started working in bands when he was 14 years old and has had the opportunity to play almost every type of music.

He is a jazz pianist and singer and is appearing this summer at The Island House. In the winter, he is completing a master's degree in music theory.

Along with being a musician, Mr. David describes himself as a political historian, writer, and social activist.

Vintage Style Baseball Sat.

The Fort Mackinac Never Sweats are preparing for another game against their greatest competitors, the Rochester Grangers. But first they have another event on their docket: a game against new rivals, The Midland Mighty River Hogs.

The two teams will engage in a vintage base ball game, complete with old-fashioned uniforms and gentleman's rules, Saturday, July 9, at 2 p.m. behind Fort Mackinac. Although all players from the Never Sweats will not be able to attend the first game, they assure all that the rivalry for this first game of the season will be fierce.

Meanwhile, the big match of the season will be against the Grangers, slated for Saturday, July 23. The game will begin at 7 p.m.

Sunday's lecture began and ended with the musical stylings of Tourism Bureau director and musician Mary Slevin.

Mrs. Slevin played six songs related to peace, including "Mother Nature's Son," by the Beatles.

The Second Annual Illumination Series is sponsored by the Center for Peace and Idealism (CPI), an organization started by Mr. David, which is dedicated to world peace.

For additional information, visit www.peaceandidealism.org.

Other speakers in the series will include; Prasanna Vengadam speaking about Hinduism July 17, Wissam Charafeddine speaking about Islam August 7, and Mr. David, who will speak about Christianity August 21.

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