

BASIC INFORMATION FOR LAY PRACTITIONERS

ĀRĀMA KARUṆĀ SEVENA

was founded as a **monastic dwelling and a refuge for bhikkhunī Visuddhi**. The ārāma Karuṇā Sevena runs in line with the Buddha's teaching and a firmly set discipline (*dhamma-vinaya*). The ārāma Karuṇā Sevena is a place of contemplation, meditation and training for living in seclusion. It is a space free of the hustle and bustle of everyday life. It is a suitable environment for those who seek refuge in the Triple Gem and a space for one's spiritual practice for anyone who wants to spend some time developing tranquility and meditation within a protected environment.

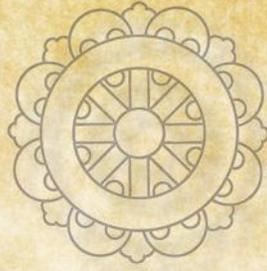


SAṄGHA

The Buddha established the saṅgha, an order of bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs (monks and nuns) in order to provide the optimal conditions for the development of the noble eightfold path and the realisation of nibbāna, and **to keep the dhamma-vinaya** alive for the benefit of the future generations. Up to this day, the saṅgha has been passing the teaching on to generations of monks and nuns as well as lay followers. The fact that venerable bhikkhunī Visuddhi resides and practices in Czech Republic, in the heart of Europe, gives us an extraordinary and rare opportunity to come into contact with the Buddha's teaching as embodied by the practice of an experienced member of the Saṅgha.

UPĀSIKĀ/UPĀSAKA

Some monasteries enable lay practitioners to become female and male novices (*sāmaṇerī/sāmaṇera*) for a short period of time. In our ārāma, visitors cultivate themselves to be **lay practitioners** (*upāsikā/upāsaka*). Thanks to staying in this environment, everyone can



have a taste of disciplined and orderly lifestyle trying out the way of the life led by the monks and nuns for centuries, at least for a short period of time. This presents an opportunity to change our old unwholesome habits and tendencies for the better and to learn how to live in a skillful way.

KALYĀṆA-MITTA

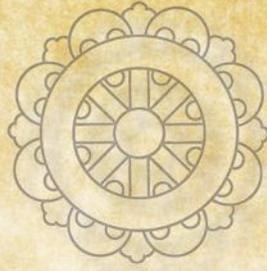
Cultivation of noble relationships and friendship forms an integral part of our spiritual practice. A life in a community sets a good example and provides favorable conditions; this is yet another benefit that a stay in the ārāma can offer. People often come to monasteries broken-hearted from dysfunctional relationships, seeking a place of refuge and support. A taste of monastic life may help lay practitioners to realise the drawbacks and the unsatisfactoriness of relationships in general and at the same time to understand what the foundations of a well-functioning relationship are.

BHĀVANĀ

The venerable bhikkhunī Visuddhi focuses mainly on the **meditation practice of mettā and satipaṭṭhāna**, thus the running and structure of the monastery also serve the purpose to facilitate the practice, as a complement to the formal instruction she provides. For this reason while being at the ārāma it is not suitable to combine different practices, do yoga or other exercises, or consider the stay at the ārāma a vacation or therapy time. Everybody who wishes to stay here for meditation and seclusion should think this over, to be clear on what her/his intention is, and to take the opportunity for practice that the ārāma offers very seriously. Most of us are used to meditation retreats where group meditation and fixed timetable are common. Venerable Visuddhi prefers an individualised approach to each practitioner and offers her/him an opportunity for a dedicated practice according to the person's needs and inclinations. This is very rare. Everybody can arrange a meeting during his stay and ask the venerable for an interview, especially those who are new to meditation and need guidance.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Following a disciplined and orderly lifestyle is an essential part of a spiritual practice not only for monks and nuns but also for us, lay practitioners. During your stay, we expect your natural involvement in the way the ārāma runs. **The daily schedule is basically similar in all Theravāda Buddhist monasteries.** Mornings begin with a group meditation, then the mid-morning activities include shared cleaning activities, cooking, washing the dishes and



doing smaller household chores cultivating a feeling of lightness and being joyful. The rest of the day is dedicated to contemplation, studies and meditation practice.

DĀNA

is voluntary, it covers basic necessities of life of the Saṅgha. Inevitable part of our practice is **taking care of the bhikkhunī and occasional visiting saṅgha members and providing for their basic needs**. If you want to make an offering to bhikkhunī Visuddhi (or other members of the saṅgha residing in the ārāma) of particular items, we advise you to make an appointment with bhikkhunī Visuddhi and consult with her or the committee members of the Karuṇā Sevena Trust Society first.

OVERHEAD EXPENSES

Meditation retreats are accessible to lay practitioners thanks to the generosity of the previous donors. In the same way, your generosity will enable other practitioners to practice here. These **overhead expenses are a suggested price** that comprises all ārāma costs, both in summer and winter season, various equipments for the ārāma, energy, floor heating, air conditioning and water use. The amount of the contribution stated is a recommendation, it is up to every person what she/he can afford and offer.

Lay practitioners visit the **monastery solely for the purpose of getting to know and practice the Buddha's teaching, study, meditation practice and a spiritual progress**. Venerable bhikkhunī Visuddhi observes the Rains Retreat (*vassa*) and the ārāma is closed to the public during this period. Please send your requests and inquiries after the retreat is over, i.e., the end of October. Thank you.

MEDITATION SECLUSION DATES AND OTHER EVENTS

You can **NOW** register for your **meditation and seclusion period**. Please contact us via email: karuna.sevena.cz@gmail.com. Information about the daily schedule and terms of stay at the ārāma Karuṇā Sevena will be sent to you on request.

We wish you a good stay. It is an extraordinary and rare opportunity to practice in the ārāma Karuṇā Sevena. This place is indeed beautiful and pure and meets all the conditions for a good practice. Places like this are rare in the world. We wish you to attain nibbāna soon.

May all beings be happy and well

Karuṇā Sevena