

Intensive retreat with Elias Capriles in Bologna

Date : June 9, 2022

At the Hermitage of Ronzano, Bologna, Italy



The retreat with Elias Capriles (translator Alessandra Policreti), organized by [Gelegling](#), took place in an enchanting setting from 14th to 21st of May 2022.

In order to best describe the experience of the retreat, we collected contributions from participants who wanted to express their impressions.

The Hermitage of Ronzano, surrounded by nature rich in firs, oaks, acacias and cypresses, is an oasis of peace and silence. It stands on a hill to the west of the city of Bologna, offering an enchanting view of the city and the nearby Basilica of San Luca. It was founded (as early as 1140) with the purpose of welcoming vocations to prayer and contemplation and at the same time offering hospitality, a loving hospitality that can still be felt today.

An intense, eight-day retreat with Elias Capriles, where the days passed joyfully and in harmony punctuated by teachings, walking meditations, individual practices and Respira Method sessions (the latter offered by the talented Alessandra Policreti). Kind, joyful, humble, generous are the first

adjectives that come to my mind when I think of Elias. His wealth of knowledge and culture is immensely vast, just like his skills as a teacher.

I am grateful to Elias, who is always ready to give space and attention to every participant, and to Gelegling, who wanted and organised this valuable event with meticulous care. I would also like to extend my thanks to Alessandra, tireless and versatile translator, and to all, but really all, of the wonderful vajra brothers and sisters who participated in the retreat.

Francesca Geminiani

As pointed out by Rinpoche, it is important to consider the circumstances, and sometimes these are favourable ...

The calm and peace of the Hermitage of Ronzano and the loving care of the staff gave us a week of serenity (and coolness) in which to relax and cultivate presence. Thanks to the gakyil of Bologna for this opportunity and to Elias Capriles for leading us by the hand on this journey.

Trying to do our best, "slowly" letting go of tensions, we found a little corner of peace within ourselves too, and the fullness of the sangha.

Paola Zamparo

“When I have woken
from the dazzle of promiscuities
in a stunned sphere of clarity
When my own weight becomes light
Allow me Lord to be shipwrecked
at the first cry of that new day.

Giuseppe Ungaretti, "Prayer"

The Retreat with Professor Elias Capriles took place in a picturesque place, which evokes a state of moving and joyful participation. A place full of charm.

The impermanence of the earthly condition that we share, but also the need to distance ourselves from daily frenzy and dispersion in order to turn to the Mystery of Life in its transcendental dialectic with the post vitae phenomenon, rhetorically called Death, require us to know how to manage the metamorphosis that will take place within us, and the role of a guide capable of educating us and leading us towards the discovery of our true condition is indispensable.

Prof. E. Capriles presented a multi-faceted programme, full of insights, availability and experience. A person who inspires such admiration and enthusiasm.

Many thanks to translator Alessandra Policreti, also in her capacity as Respira Method instructor. Special recognition for the work done by the organisers and administrators of Gelegling in Bologna who made this meeting possible.

A heartfelt greeting to all, who shared the Light of a Sun in many flashes of candles lit within their eyes, who broadened their peace of mind and united their voices in a single Dedication that transforms the captions of Time into an absence of Time.

Olesya Nikityuk.



Thanks to Paolo Roberti of Sarsina for his commitment and organisation that made it possible for the retreat to take place in the wonderful setting of the Hermitage, to Elias Capriles who guided us with his experience, to Alessandra Policreti for her helpfulness, and to the kind and loving hosts of the Ronzano Hermitage. Thanks to the vajra sisters and brothers. A special connection was created in the group that still accompanies us. A week that remains in our hearts.
Guruyoga 100%

Massimo Piraccini

This retreat was enlightening in many ways to say the least.
At various times I felt the 'blessings' of Prof. Elias Capriles who gave me further confirmation of

the incredible power and concreteness of the teaching. Both in the moments when Elias expounded the introduction through the voice of the Semde, as well as in the symbolic introduction of the mirror according to the Longde and in the Mannangde with the explanation and practice of the 21 Semdzin and the Rushen, various connections and experiences arose to clarify the understanding of the teaching and our true nature. Not to mention Tregchöd, the practice of which made me experience and understand Rinpoche's oft-read words, namely, "Only after experiencing the deep relaxation of Tregchöd do you really know what it means to relax..."

Well, although my practice is still a long way from being stable, I can now say that I have had an experiential understanding of these words, illuminating with clarity what I previously thought was Dzogchen.

I am looking for the right words to pay tribute to what I have received but it is not easy and rereading them fails to express the immense gratitude to both Prof. Elias Capriles, Paolo Roberti and the entire Gelegling organisation in Bologna and to the translator and instructor of the Respira method, Alessandra. It was a truly enlightening retreat, a milestone for finding again the direction of the teaching, which we sometimes forget because of life's circumstances. May our practice become stable so that we can bring the immense benefit of the teaching into the world and try to help other beings who are suffering in this world that is in worse condition than ever.

An immense THANK YOU and a sincere embrace

David Busin

The teaching retreat led by Professor Elias Capriles was a very rich source of inspiration and learning for me.

I sincerely thank Professor Elias Capriles, who was always available, who enlightened me on many topics and helped me to improve my understanding and application of the practice in a concrete way.

This retreat also highlighted the close, subtle and deep bond that unites the members of the community, beyond our cultural and linguistic differences.

My heartfelt thanks also go to Paolo Roberti of Sarsina without whom this retreat could not have taken place, on the one hand for his always very sharp and clear insights into breathing techniques and for his learned and enriching comments, and on the other hand for his benevolent and efficient organisation in the magnificent setting full of serenity and light of the Hermitage of Ronzano.

Thanks also to the kind and helpful Alessandra Policreti who allowed me to progress in my yantra yoga practice and for always translating the teacher's words into English very clearly, always adapting to the circumstances.

Finally, thank you to all the participants whom I have not mentioned for our exchanges, their benevolence and kindness.

See you all soon... I hope.

Eric Allouche

Unique retreat on a sacred site. From 14th to 21st May a dozen students of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu met together in an old Monastery from the 13th century on a hill southwest from Bologna. We practiced Tregchöd according to Rinpoche's teaching (see Longsal Commentaries vol.5), accompanied by other 2 practices like methods of breathing and walking meditation in the cloister or in the meadows surrounding the monastery buildings, offered by Paolo di Sarsina together with Alessandra Policreti.

Elias Capriles presented the teachings in a deeply dedicated and detailed way and offered enough space to ask questions concerning the practice . He was capable to open a much deeper understanding for me than i had before. Alessandra helped also vey much to understand everything through her translations.

it was such a wonderful gift to me to have the opportunity to come together with Vajrasiblings and practice this precious essential Upadesha teaching , taking place on a sacred spiritual site , where hundreds of practitioners – Dominican nuns – had been practicing their christian teachings.

It did not feel like being restricted in a monastery – a renunciation from the world. In a way it was a renunciation from the bustling city and everyday busy life – yet the practice was also an opening door to indefinite freedom of mind and wellbeing which is indescribable.

This experience triumphed over the challenging schedule of starting at 6.00 o'clock in the morning to receive the teachings . At the end of the week , after getting accustomed to this early rising, i was grateful to feel as fresh and clear as the morning outside , hearing birds singing and soft breezes of wind in the trees and then receive the words of the teaching for an hour and the going out into nature to practice it.

I hope we can meet again next year at this wonderful place, which is open to the outer world because there are no more nuns or monks officially. Thanks to the very good organization of Gelegling and let us unite again in deep devotion to our master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Angelika Pottkaemper
