



## The nuns who don't want Ferraris

**A**t first glance, it is hard to make out that they are actually women, not robed monks but robed nuns, shorn of tresses, ornamentation, attitude and even desires. And they have remained transparent like water, these mountain women, on the path to selflessness.

Jigme Tenzian Lhamo, 24, decided to become a Buddhist nun when she was in Class XII. "His Holiness had come to our village in Keylong. I heard his teaching and wanted to join his monastery. So I asked my mother and father. They did not say no," she says in soft, faltering Hindi. Today, Lhamo runs the office at the Drupka monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Jigme Tenjing Zangmo, also in her 20s, is from Ladakh, like her other friends – Jigme Jamyang (29)

and Jigme Youdoi (24). None can speak Hindi.

All four are shy and, like all young women, blush constantly. But they are evolved, stone-willed and enchantingly spiritual.

Don't they miss home? "We go home on a 10-day holiday but soon we get bored! We miss the monastery life," laughs Lhamo.

There is no differentiation between a monk and a nun, they say. "All are equal."

Yet, for this 'padyatra', more nuns came forward than monks, says the 12th Gyalwang Drukpa. "This shows the strength in their minds. I believe women will lead in helping others. The monks have been slow. But they will follow the women," he laughs. There are over 400 nuns in the Drupka Lineage.

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