



*Ajahn Sintorn praying at Jivaka altar, 2004. Photo © Bob Haddad*

## Sintorn Chaichakan, Director of the Shivagakomarpaj Traditional Medicine Hospital.

Sintorn Chaichakan, passed away in Chiang Mai from cancer on Oct 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Ajahn Sintorn was one of the most influential Thai massage teachers in recent history. Through his tireless work with the Shivagakomarpaj Traditional Medicine Hospital (Old Medicine Hospital), he played a major role in training many of the most accomplished practitioners and teachers in Thai massage today.

Sintorn trained at Wat Pho in the late 1950s and continued to work there for several years afterward. Prior to that time, Wat Pho did not teach traditional Thai massage, and at the personal request of King Rama IX, Sintorn was instrumental in starting a massage program that would complement the studies in herbal medicine that Wat Pho had offered for many years.

In 1962, he returned to Chiang Mai and began to practice medicine at several city temples. In 1973, Sintorn purchased land just outside of Chiang Mai center and established the current facility. By the 1990s, the program graduated an average of 60-70 Thai students per year in traditional medicine, and Western students of Thai massage numbered well into the hundreds.

Ajahn Sintorn remained the director of the Old Medicine Hospital until his death, though for the past several years, the daily operations of the Thai massage school have been managed by his sons, Wasan and Suthat.

*- adapted from information provided by Pierce Salguero.*