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K DHARMA
KINDERGARTEN
Teaching Guide

**Buddhist Churches of America
1986 Ministerial Association
Dharma School Committee
Department of Buddhist Education**

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In Gassho,

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PREFACE

The Dharma School Division of the Buddhist Churches of America Ministerial Association published JISHIN KYO NINSHIN, a guide for Ministers and Dharma School teachers. Also published is the Pre-School Teacher's Guide and Student Workbook. To be published now is the Kindergarten Teacher's Guide and Workbook under the guidance of the Department of Buddhist Education Committee.

Some aims of the Grade Level Lesson plan books are to:

1. help students discover their true selves
2. help students realize Amida's wisdom and compassion
3. help students to acquire knowledge of Buddhism generally and Jodo-Shinshu in particular
4. help students develop character
5. help students feel gratitude in the nembutsu
6. help students apply Buddhism to the needs of daily life
7. help students to make decisions and develop critical thinking skills
8. help students to be confident as Buddhists in a Christian society
9. help students to work with family, friends, temple and community
10. help students develop awareness of and sympathy for the entire world and universe in which they live.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching Kindergarten Children

Knowing the Children

Listening to them, caring for them, feeling with them: Each child's questions, comments and conversation reveal his/her ideas and attitudes and for the careful observer, listen and help the child with his/her religious growth. Facial expressions, actions and reactions are very important indicators.

During the Kindergarten years it is our responsibility that we plant a seed towards understanding our religion.

Being able to think children's thoughts is important but also important is to feel what they feel. The child's attitude toward the church as well as what his/her feeling about what he/she learns there, may be conditioned by his/her feeling—response to the many aspects of the learning situation in the room. If it is a happy and pleasant experience there will be positive feelings and reaction to the learning situations.

Can you understand the child's feelings in the following situations?

How does it feel to:

sit on a chair when your feet won't touch the floor?

try to see a picture the teacher is holding up in front of the class?

have to work at a table that is as high as your shoulders?

be hurried off to Temple to be with a lot of people when you are still sleepy?

To help the kindergarten child at the Temple you can

alternate physically quiet times with active ones

offer encouragement

be patient

present idea through the child's interests

To schedule your time in class at Temple

First, the informal time. During this time the children arrive to class, take their coats off, pick-up their favorite books, toys or games, greet friends, and look at new things in the room.

Second, together time. The group gathers in the game area and the teacher includes, for participation and consideration, materials that have been planned ahead of time:

Gassho

Nembutsu

Burn Incense

Review the Articles of the Obutsudan

Place – Fresh Flowers

Review the Sensei's Sermon

Third, creative activities

Express in words, drama, music and art some of the thoughts and feelings which have been initiated or strengthened through their experience in this session (See Pre-School book).

Activities:

Experience in Worship
Interest Groups
Conversations
Dramatic Play
Music
Storytime
Games

Knowing and Using Curriculum Materials

The children who come into kindergarten on Sunday mornings have a wider knowledge of people, events, and facts than the kindergarten school child a generation ago. Thus, the teacher must make the materials live and captivate the children's interest. Preparation is a must for a successful lesson.

1. Secure a complete set of materials used at your Temple.
2. Take time to become familiar with the material.
3. Know the stories, songs, and the purpose of each lesson.
4. Prepare for a unit
 - read the lesson
 - become familiar with the songs, stories, poems to be used in the lesson
 - check to be sure you have all of the necessary materials
 - be prepared to use the children's ideas
 - be able to summarize the lesson and if necessary, carry to the next Sunday
5. Evaluation
 - always review a session as soon as it is over
 - how can it be improved?
 - was there enough time?
 - do I need more preparation?
 - make written notes on suggestions for next Sunday
6. Working together as a team
 - work with your minister
 - work with parents
 - prepare materials for parents
 - have a parent's bulletin board
 - visit the homes

**PLEASE REFER TO THE PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**

CHAPTER I

The Kindergarten Child

Kindergarten

BUDDHIST TEACHINGS Buddhist Observances Activities

Learn to respect the Temple
Continue to reinforce lessons
in Preschool
Learn to sing the Gathas
Learn about Amida Buddha
Learn about Buddhism and
Jodo Shinshu through listening
to stories, sermons and from
each other.

An important aspect of a kindergarten child is the emotions of the child.

For 3 or 4 years of their life, they are at home most of the time, eating, sleeping, playing, going places with Mommy or Daddy, and may be attending for limited hours a Nursery School or Day Care Center. One day, when the child is 4 1/2 years of age, he or she is taken to kindergarten with strange people and stays there for several hours at a time each day of the week for months in a row. About 3 out of 10 children will have the “Why can’t I stay home?” syndrome. The other 7 children will have already experienced schools—nursery schools—and are therefore more reluctant about regular school and Dharma School.

In order to keep these children interested and enthused about coming to the Temple, we must and should develop activities that a child will enjoy and learn from at the same time. We must also create a warm atmosphere so that the child feels secure and important.

Teachers of the kindergarten class should show or make an effort to show certain qualities: a warm and caring personality, patience, ability to lavish praise, attention to their needs and curiosities, a degree of firmness that won’t fill the child with terror, and creative talents that will keep the child interested and content.

One way to improve enrollment:

Have each parent or student think of one other person (a relative or friend), write his/her name, address, and phone number and give the name to the Dharma School teacher. Either the teacher, Reverend, or the person attending now contacts the prospective member and encourage him/her to come to the Temple. Many people wait for an invitation or need persuasion to start coming to the Temple.

Reminders for the Kindergarten Teacher

When the kindergarten class starts its new term (in September), it may be well for the teacher to review for several Sundays what the children have learned in pre-school. The teacher should keep in mind the fact that some children may not have had pre-school religious training. For these children, the teacher should send a little extra time to help them along.

Introduce yourself to the children the first time you meet. (It is a startling fact that many Buddhist Sunday school teachers do not do this—many children say, “I don’t know” when asked, “What is your teacher’s name?”) Also, introduce the children to their Minister if they have not been introduced to him in the pre-school class. Continually try to foster a good relationship between the minister and the children.

Just as the children should become acquainted with the minister and the teacher, the teacher should become acquainted with the students as quickly as possible. Cute little name tags pinned on their clothing may help.

Show the children around the room to get them acquainted with their new surroundings. Have nice pictures appropriate for Sunday school on the wall. As you take the children around the room, pause in front of the pictures to talk about them with the children. A visit to the shrine by the class may also be arranged. In short, do everything you can to make the children eager to attend Sunday school and learn about *Buddhism*.

The skill of listening and listening *critically* is the most important single factor in learning. A child must listen to do the following:

1. understand directions
2. detect likeness and differences
3. answer questions
4. follow a sequence of ideas
5. understand relationships
6. detect the main idea of a paragraph
7. recognize supporting details
8. enjoy and interpret literature
9. predict an outcome
10. detect emotion-laden words, react to voices, emphasis and imagery

Kindergarten Inventory

Personal Information

1. What is your name?
2. Where do you live?
3. What is your telephone number?
4. How old are you?
5. When is your birthday? Month? Day?
6. Who lives in your home with you?

LETTER TO THE PARENTS

The following is a sample letter informing parents of the new theme to be studied by the kindergarten class. Although this is the only letter written as a sample to be included in this Kindergarten Lesson Book, it would be well for the teacher to send home with the children several short notes throughout school year to keep the parents interested and informed about the school program.

Dear Parents

Your child is enrolled in the kindergarten class at _____ Temple. We are looking forward to an exciting year. We hope that Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion will become more and more meaningful to your child and being Buddhist will be accepted as a natural part of their lives.

In hopes of widening the horizons of their understanding, we are going to begin to identify and learn Temple Etiquette and The Teachings of the Buddha. Through stories, music and projects for the kindergarten child we hope to learn all we can.

We hope you will join us in study and share the enthusiasm of the children to learn about our religion and begin to make it a part of our daily life.

In Gassho,

Classroom Procedure

Opening Class (Example:)

1. Recite the “Kokun”
2. Nembutsu, gassho

Roll Call

Review the Sermon

(Explain in simpler words)

Lesson Plan

Closing Meditation

1. Recite the “Promise”
2. Nembutsu, Gassho

How Children Learn

1. Through senses (which become skills, ideas and knowledge)
 - a. looking at things
 - b. touching
 - c. handling
 - d. thinking about them
2. Through play—forming attitudes
3. Through the exploration of curiosity and imagination
4. Activities
Conversation, storytelling, dramatization, songs and poems, looking at pictures and books

Selecting and Using Special Materials

1. Songs—choose those which help carry out purpose for the day.
 - a. Must be within understanding of a child.
 - b. Learn five new ones and become familiar with many others.
 - c. Use new songs over and over in various ways.
 - d. Music should be suitable to the words.
 - e. Music should be worshipful or lead to worship.
2. Stores and Poem.
 - a. Within child’s experience and interest.
 - b. Simple and short.
 - c. Plenty of activity, repetition and direct discourse.
 - d. Contribute to religious life.
 - e. Be able to tell story.
 - f. Know why you use it—adapt it to situation.
 - g. Good literature—dramatization.
 - h. May be worshipful or lead to worship.

3. Pictures.

- a. To be looked at and handled.
- b. Good color—on eye level.
- c. Not too much detail.
- d. Contain action.
- e. Use—for atmosphere, create worship, stimulate thoughts, guide conduct, recalling songs, stories, scripture words.

4. Conversation.

- a. Should help the teacher to know children.
- b. Should be purposeful and kindly.
- c. Should be helpful in getting pupil participation—give and take.
- d. Should lead to worship.

5. Worship.

- a. Should be spontaneous, resulting from any activities of the session.
- b. Should occur many times during morning, such as, “Let us say Namu Amida Butsu for the Buddha in thankfulness for His love and teaching.”
- c. Worship through offering.
- d. Worship through meditation.
- e. Worship through offering of flowers and burning of incense.

6. Home Cooperation.

- a. Through calling.
- b. Mothers’ and parents’ group.
- c. Special days.
- d. Parties given by children for parents.
- e. Letters sent home.

Suggested Art Experience for Kindergarten

Drawing and Painting

Project

Pictures
Easel Painting
Cards
Invitations
(Buddhist Holidays)
Program Covers
Booklets
Mats

Process

Painting
with brushes
Sponges
Drawing

Media

Tempera
Fingerpaints
Crayons
Markers
Paper

Printing

Project

Finger, string
Sticks, sponge
Spools, vegetables
Woodblocks
Rubbings

Process

Printing
Cutting
Tearing
Rubbing

Media

Tempera
Paint on a variety
of paper

Ideas for Teachers for Activities

A. Holiday Observances

Diorama (3-dimensional relief using a shoe box)

1. Hana Matsuri (trees, flowers, Baby Buddha, even animals). Cut-outs, paste, stand-ups.
2. Obon (dancers, vegetables, fruits, offering)
3. Butsudan for Home

B. Religious Pictures

Pictures (used as flashcards)

Paste a picture on a large card, i.e., Buddha, Hanamido, Ojuzu, etc. Have questions behind the picture, i.e., Who is this?, What do his hands signify?, What does he signify?, etc.

C. Spelling and Writing

Spelling and Writing: i.e., the word Buddha, Caring (compassion), Ojuzu, etc. *Short stories*—they can write about or talk about a little animal, of siblings, of the day, etc.

D. Manners

Manners: Include your friendly responses, i.e., hi, hello, good morning, thank you, etc., to the teacher, to the Buddha, to everyone; also include the welcoming of new students, good sportmanship, friendship, etc.

E. Sing Gathas, recite golden chain, etc.

F. Group Activities: Games, going to parks, zoos, museums, visiting another church, to amusement centers, etc. Vigorous games to use up stored energy.

G. Growing things. (compassion)

1. From seeds
2. Caring and watching the growth of a plant.

H. Cooking

Have children bring in special recipes and have parents assist with the food project, i.e.—

- Rice – in the “Obutsudan”
 - in the shrine
 - use of rice
 - taste

Fruit

I. Drama

Act out a play or Gatha

J. Games

Sensory testing game, utilizing the five senses.

1. Use different flower smells.
2. Use different fruit smells.
3. Use different spice smells.
4. Have common small things, i.e., safety pin, penny, paperclip, marble, eraser, etc. and cover their eyes and they feel and tell what it is.

Activities Just for Fun

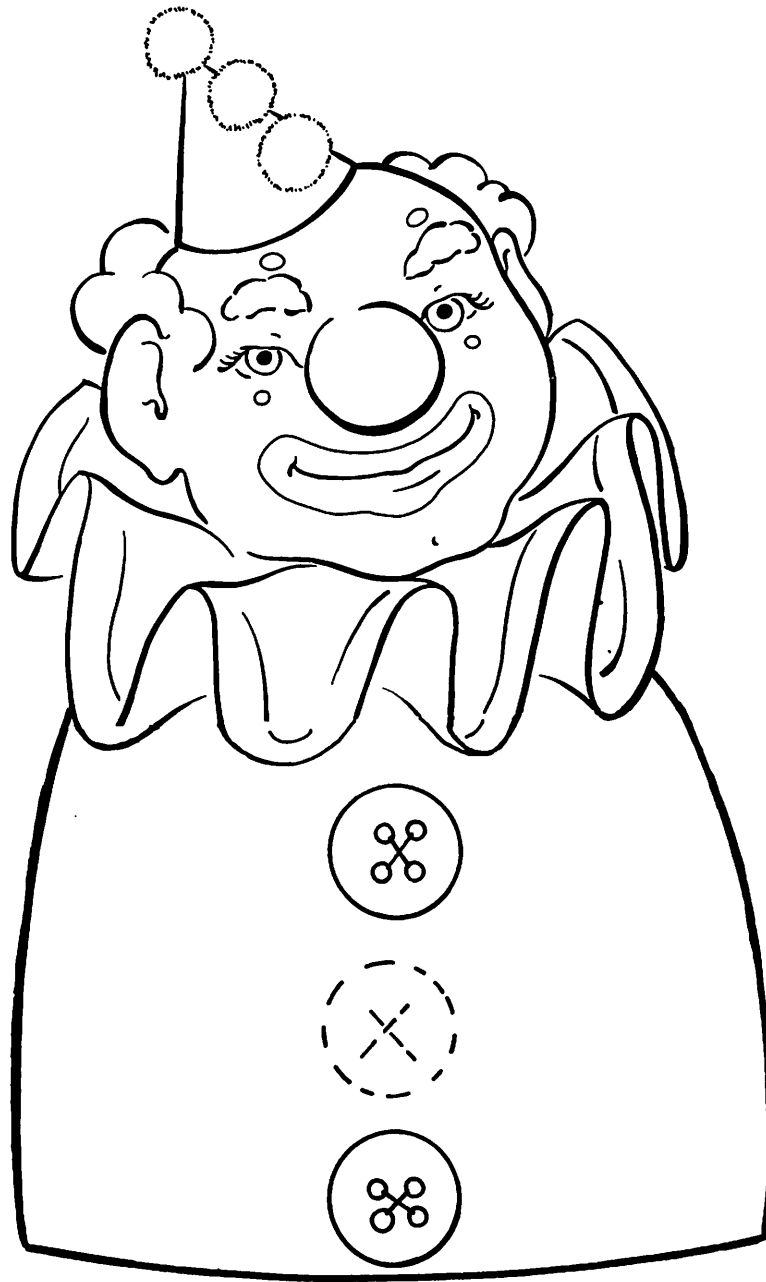
A. Learning to Follow Directions

Simple Simon: No equipment needed. Ask the group to stand facing you. Tell them that you are two people—Simple Simon and yourself. Explain that when Simple Simon tells them to do something, they must do it. However, if *you* tell them to do something, they must not do it. Practice a few times with such commands as “Simple Simon says, put your hands on your head.” As you say this, perform the action yourself. Watch the group to be sure that they all do it. Continue with such directions as “Simple Simon says, clap your hands” (you clap your hands), or “Simple Simon says, touch your toes” (touch your toes). When you see that the group is following you, try “Put your hands behind your back. Pause to tell any child who does this that he should not have. Simple Simon didn’t say to do it. Announce that from this point on, any player who does something that Simple Simon does not say to do is out. The players who do not follow commands preceded by “Simple Simon says” are also out. The last player to remain in the game is the winner.

B. Bean Bag Game—Large Motor Skills

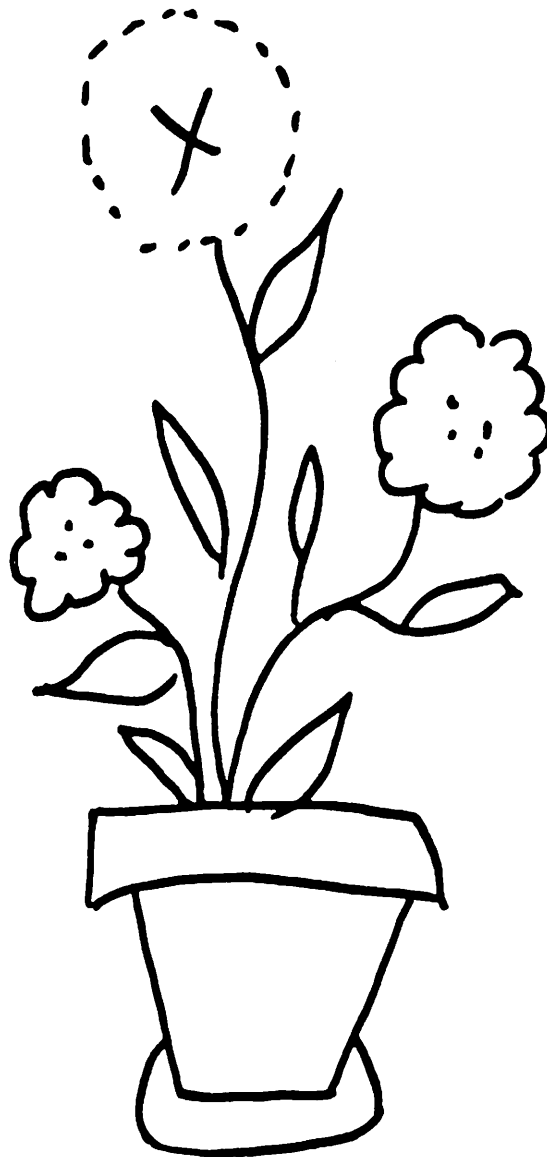
Beast, Bird, Fish: Beanbag is needed. Children sit in a circle with leader with bag in the center. Call out either Beast, Bird, or Fish. At the same time toss the beanbag or ball to one player and begin counting “One, two, three, four, five.” This player must name correctly an animal from the category you have called out by the time you reach “five”. Otherwise he must change places with you and become it. If his answer is satisfactory, he tosses the beanbag or ball back to you, and the game continues. You cannot leave the center of the circle until someone responds incorrectly to your call of Beast, Bird, or Fish. Continue playing in a lively manner for about ten minutes.

- C. Pin the Button on the Clown:** Draw a large clown on construction paper using the clown shown as a guide. Draw in two of his three buttons. Mark an X where the third button should be. Cut the buttons from different colored construction paper. (Have the students assist you.)



D. Pin the Flower in the Flower Pot: Draw a large red flowerpot on construction paper. Add several simple flower shapes, using the drawing as a guide. Mark an X for the missing flower. Cut the flowers out of different colored construction paper. (Have the students assist you.)

PRESENTATION: Set up a starting line about 6 feet away from the flower. Distribute the objects to be “pinned” among the children. Blindfold the child who is to go first. Turn him/her around three times and guide him/her toward the flower. Note: It is not necessary to blindfold the children. This often frightens them, especially for the younger child. Merely instruct the children to close their eyes and to keep them closed until you say to open them. There is remarkably little peeking, especially if you yourself sound convinced that everyone will keep his eyes closed! Keep talking as the children approach the flower. The first place on the picture that the child touches is where you must “pin” the object. Traditionally, we say “pin” the tail on the donkey, but scotch tape is much easier and less dangerous for children to use. Measure to see who came the closest to the area marked X.



MAKE ROOM for TOYS

Toys are happy companions to tide over critical periods, to relieve boredom or to suggest imaginative activity instead of mischief. They hold magic for the child who plays alone and they stimulate shared activities between two or more children to foster social skills. They invite participation and companionship of grown-ups which children enjoy.

Provide an open toy shelf for the children. The joy of the open shelves lies in making readily accessible the old, dearly loved toys, together with new toys in gay array.

Every toy has a place and each child is taught to return it to its "house" in readiness for play another time. This training in care of toys is part of the child's development, for few children are born with an innate sense of order as an adult thinks of it. They can, however, acquire it if convenient and logical space and a fair measure of guidance is provided. And since toys are a natural part of living for a child, they need a place the same as clothing, or books or umbrellas.

In general, in purchasing or selecting toys, toys that are most readily accepted and used for the longest time are simple, require little effort, suggest play activity and can be used in various ways.

* * * * *

Teach children to put away toys through a flannel-board story.

1. Make drawing of an open shelf.
2. Cut out picture of toys from an old toy catalog. (Have students assist you.)
3. Place toys neatly on the shelf. Pretend that you are a child selecting a toy. Choose a toy to play with and show how you return the toy back to the shelf after you are through with it.
4. Place toys all over the shelf and show the children how terrible it looks.
5. Tell the children that one way they can help their mothers is by keeping their toys neatly in place. By putting away their toys, children help to keep their Sunday School room and their home clean.

Although too much stress should not be put on playing games in the Sunday School, there are occasions for playing games every now and then. The following games are especially selected for FOUR and FIVE-YEAR-OLDS.

This is the year that you start the perennial Pin-the Tail-on-the Donkey game. Buy a good one—it will have to last a long time and stand a lot of hard usage. A blindfolder child pins the tail where he thinks it ought to be—this charms the four-year-olds completely.

London Bridge—Two children facing each other clasp hands to form a bridge. The others line up to pass under, all singing. Each prisoner in turn chooses one side or other of the bridge and a gentle tug of war ends the game.

Finger Game—Jack in the Box, (Hands closed with thumb inside)
Sits so still,
Won't you come out?
Yes! I will. (Thumb jumps out)

Playing Train—Choose a child to be the engine. Tie the center of a fifteen-foot light rope around his waist; line the other children up behind him as passengers inside the rope, and have the last child hold the rope ends. He is the caboose. Another is the conductor who marches beside the engine and calls the station stops. The train then moves around the room, with the engine saying “chug-chug”, to a sign that says “Station”. At each station the rope is dropped and the passengers get off. Everyone, of course, must have a turn as engine, conductor and caboose. It is even more fun for the conductor to wear a special paper hat and collect paper money fares. The stations may be named for the streets where the children live.

Animal Chase—Pig (a bean bag) is passed around a circle of children seated on the floor. The pig is closely pursued by a wolf in the form of a block. Both can be passed either way and the children try to keep the wolf from catching the pig.

Charlie Over the Water—Charlie over the water
Charlie over the sea
Charlie can't catch a blackbird
And he can't catch me!

The players form a circle with one of their number as Charlie in the center of the ring. The circle moves to the left, chanting the song. As the last word is said, all players squat. Charlie must try to tag one before he is fully down. If successfully tagged, that child becomes Charlie in turn.

Heel and Toe Race—Make a starting line and goal line. Players start off with the right foot and must place the left heel in front of the right toe, touching it, then the right foot in front of the left in the same manner, and so on until one reaches the goal line.

Bean Bag Race—Again your starting line and goal marks are used. But this time bean bags are placed on the contestants' heads. If, while the child is moving at a fast walk, the bag falls off, he must return to the starting line and start again. No steadying hands allowed, of course.

CLASSROOM CONTROL

1. Misbehavior is frequently energy misplaced.
2. The teacher who plans his/her work and works his/her plan will not have the same degree of difficulty with discipline as the optimistic but unprepared teacher.
3. Teacher-pupil planning and class development of group standards and goals are helpful devices.
4. The teacher who is familiar with the background of each child in a class will have fewer difficulties than the teacher who does not know the out-of-class status of her pupils.
5. A teacher cannot expect students to exercise self-control if he does not control his own emotions. Children don't do what we tell them to do, they do as we do.
6. Reduce to routine as many activities as possible.
7. Sarcasm, with its bitterness and lopsided humor, is impolite, unfair, and ultimately ineffective.
8. No matter what happens, try not to become angry.
9. Help children to feel important and necessary to you.
10. Avoid creating situations where pupils think it is necessary to lie to "save face" for themselves or for their friends.
11. Be alert and active.
12. Quickly get to know as much as possible about each child in your room.
13. Exhibit enthusiasm as you teach.
14. Be courteous.
15. Give clear, concise directions.
16. Learn to use your voice to control a class.
17. Do what your common sense tells you is the appropriate thing to do when you are at a loss for an answer in a given situation.
18. Appear to be happy to be teaching in this classroom at this particular time.
19. Make your room an interesting place for children to work and live in.
20. Avoid scolding a class.
21. Develop and use your sense of humor in working with a class.
22. Work at building your self-confidence.
23. When a pupil causes you difficulty, try to find out why.
24. Avoid across-the-room comments to individual pupils.
25. If you have made a mistake, if you are in error, admit it.
26. Maintain a certain degree of adult formality and reserve.
27. When assigned to a new class, learn the "atmosphere" of the situation just as soon as possible.

CHAPTER II

Happy Times At Dharma School

Welcome children to Dharma School. Introduce yourself. Have the children practice saying your name.

Explain to the children about taking roll call. Tell them that roll call is taken to check attendance to see who is here and who is not here; therefore, they are to listen carefully and answer clearly "Here" when their names are called.

(take roll call)

Today's lesson will be on how to burn incense. (Children who are new to the Dharma School and do not have the ojuzu may receive their ojuzu at this time.)

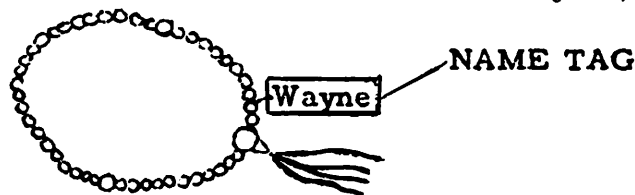
Lead each child to the obutsudan and show him/her how to burn incense.

For the teacher

Incense is burned to symbolize the act of purification before worship.

"The burning of incense is an act to purify our mind and body and free us from the passions which bind us to the cycle of birth and death. 'In the world of Buddhism,' said Rennyō Shōnin, 'the ego should not be thought of.' Incense offering represents the burning away of our selfish aims."

After each child has burned incense and received his/her ojuzu, tape name tags onto the ojuzu.



Let each child know that this is his/her very own ojuzu to take home. Tell the child to take good care of the ojuzu and to bring it with him/her every Sunday. The ojuzu should be on the left hand or in the pocket when not in use and should not be used as a plaything.

Explain to the children about the following:

1. what they are to do if they arrive to Dharma School
2. how to enter the Temple
3. where to give their offering
4. how to sit down quietly until the service begins

As the teacher, make sure that children gassho before entering the church and show them where to place their offering. Tell them that they are to sit quietly and wait until the service begins.

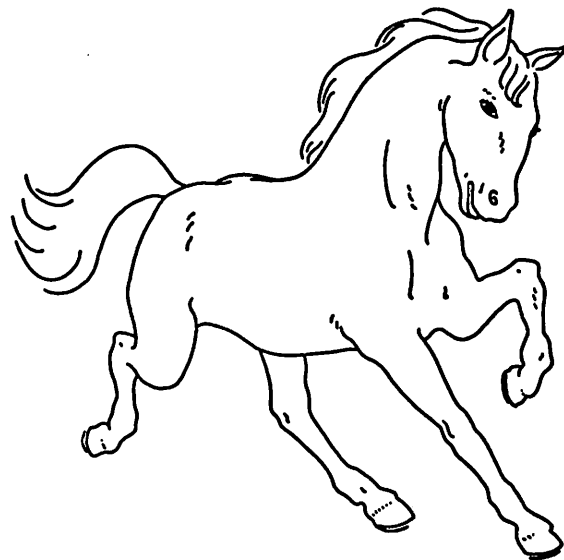
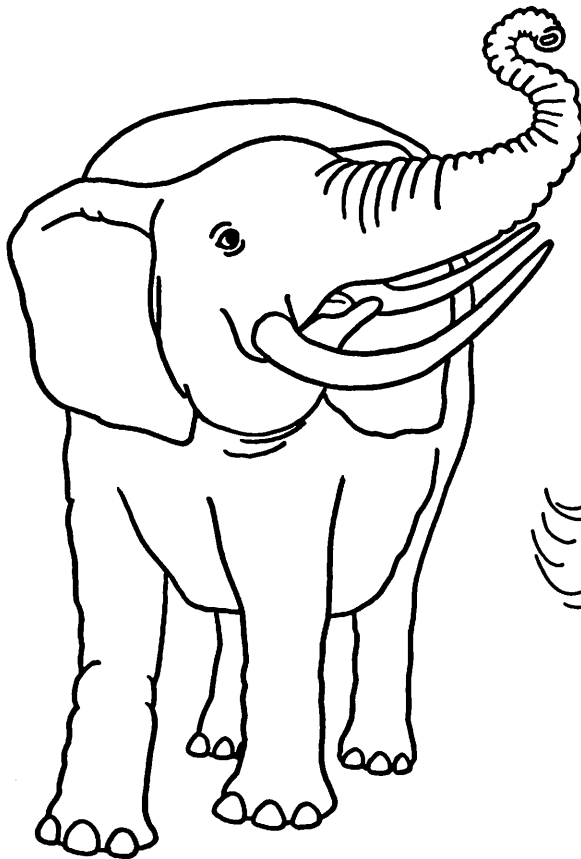
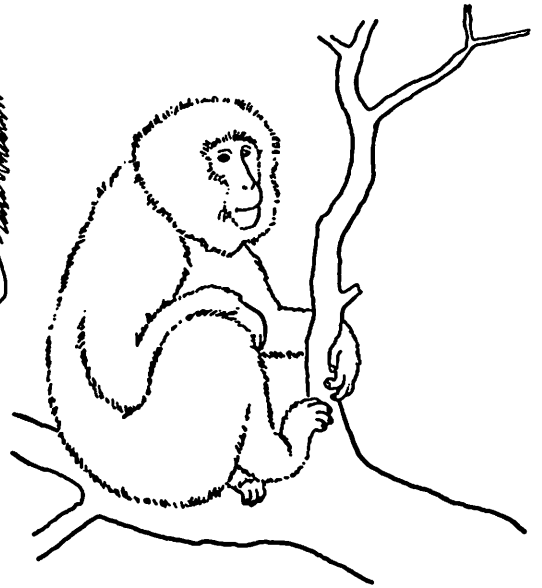
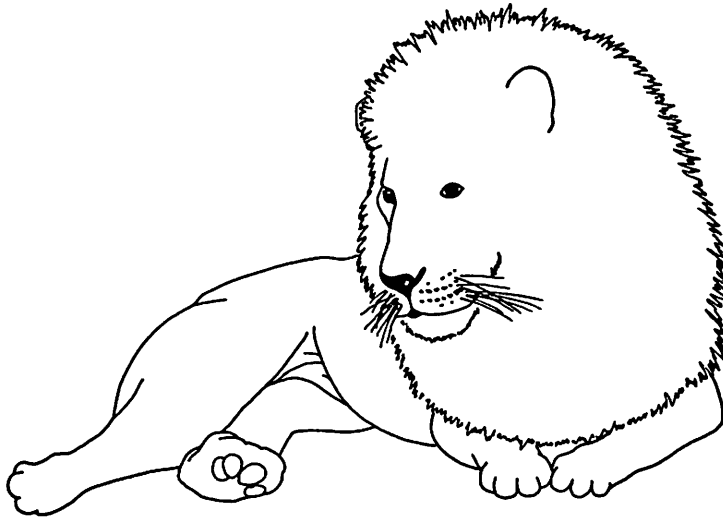
For additional practice, take the children outside and go over the procedure step by step.

Introduce the children to the minister.

The name of our Minister is _____ .

Our Temple is _____ .

Name Tag Samples



Lessons

Lesson #1

Aims:

1. Get acquainted with the other children, teacher, classroom.
2. Become familiar with Dharma School schedule, create a pleasant and inviting atmosphere.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Set up room: pictures, charts, place for supplies and belongings, etc.
2. Have name tags ready.
3. Know schedule well.
4. Know story, gathas.

Schedule for the day

1. Roll call. Pin name tag on each child. (This helps to make the child feel as though he/she belongs to the group.)
2. Meditation and Nembutsu.
3. Matching name tag game. Each child has a name tag. Teacher has matching tags. Teacher holds up a tag and asks, "Who has the same kind of name tag as this?" Then the child with the matching tag will have his turn to speak.
 - a. Each child will have a turn to speak.
 - b. Explain that there is no need for all to talk at the same time. We can hear and talk more easily by waiting for our turn.
 - c. Some of the possible questions to guide the children in their conversation:
 - Tell us your name.
 - With whom did you come to Dharma School today?
 - How did you come?
 - Why did you come?
4. Tour room. Discuss procedure first
 - a. We will walk around the room quietly to see:
 1. the picture on the bulletin board;
 2. where to put our jackets, sweaters, jusu, etc. to keep them out of our way;
 3. where crayons, scissors, paste, paper, etc. are kept and should be put back after use;
 4. the calendar or attendance chart (if one is to be used).
 - b. Why do we need to walk quietly, instead of noisily?
5. Explain and discuss the Reverend's sermon.
6. Sing simple gathas or songs.
 - a. Perhaps the children could choose familiar songs to sing.
 - b. The teacher might teach a new song.
7. Talk about coming back to Dharma School next Sunday at the same time, same room. Other kindergarten children may come with you.
8. Dismissal.

Lesson #2

Aims:

1. To understand why we come to Dharma School: To learn to work harmoniously with others in following Amida Buddha's Teachings.

Teacher Preparation

1. Know the game to be played.
2. Have coloring supplies ready.

Schedule for the Day

1. Roll call. (Use attendance chart if desired. Roll call may be left until just before dismissal time. Name tags may be passed out.)
2. Meditation and Nembutsu. Discuss Reverend's sermon.
3. Conversation time (talking time). (Purpose: orientation to future discussions and evaluations). Each child will have a turn to speak, one at a time.
 - a. Evaluation of last Sunday's class:
 1. What different things did we do last Sunday?
 2. What did you like to do best?
 3. What did you not like to do?
 - b. Why do we come to Dharma School?
 1. To have a nice time with friends and teacher.
 2. To learn more about Buddha, our Temple, about ourselves and what things are good to do.
 3. We can learn and have fun at the same time by doing things in the Buddhist way. We must try to be friendly, kind, willing to take turns, to share. Then, we will have time for stories, coloring, cutting and pasting, etc.
4. Play naming game.
 - a. A child will name the two persons sitting next to him/her. If he/she is able to, then he/she may choose someone else to do the same. If he/she is unable to, another child is chosen by the teacher or the one person he/she has already named.

OR

 - b. A child naming another child and tapping him on the shoulder. The child who is tapped then names another, tapping his shoulder as he does so.

OR

 - c. A child going around the circle of children, naming and tapping all those whom he could name, then he chooses another to do the same. Game may be continued until several children have had a turn. Restlessness might result if continued too long.
5. If time allows, color picture. (See Pre-school Book for samples.)
 - a. Talk about the picture first.
 - b. Talk about getting the crayons quietly from the shelf and putting them back after using them.
6. Sing "Sayonara".
7. Dismissal. (Remind children to come back again next Sunday.)

Lesson #3

Aims:

1. To learn about the care, use and significance of ojuzu.

Teacher Preparation

1. Have ojuzu to show to the class.
2. Have prepared material for cut-and-paste ojuzu activity.
3. Know about the significance of ojuzu, etc.

Schedule of the Day

1. Roll call (this may be left until just before dismissal time).
2. Meditation and Nembutsu. Discuss Reverend's sermon.
3. Conversation time.
 - a. Hold up ojuzu and ask: "How many of you have one like this?"
"Who knows what this is called?"
 - b. How do we use the ojuzu? (Show a picture of someone using one.)
Let's all do it together.
 - c. Why do we use the ojuzu? (To remind us that we are children of Buddha.)
 - d. How should we take care of it? Throw it around? Play with it?
 1. When we are not using it, we should hold it in the left hand.
 2. At home, keep it in the Obutsudan or nice, clean place.
4. Cut-and-paste activity. (Have materials ready.)
 - a. Talk about how to do the pasting.
 - b. Talk about how to put things away after finishing the activity.
 1. Have enough colored paper circles for each child.
 2. Have paper with an outline of a large circle with a string-tassel pasted on the bottom.
 3. Let children paste on colored paper circles on the outline.
5. Talk about the finished products. (If children are not through with the activity when it's clean-up time, they might take home to finish.)
6. Sing "Sayonara".
7. Dismissal.

MY OJUZU
(For Reference: See Pre-School Guide)

Children paste on colored pieces. (Blue or brown for boys and red or pink for girls.) The tassel may also be pasted on.

This picture of the ojuzu may also be colored.



Tassel

String

NAME _____

DATE _____

Lesson #4

Aims:

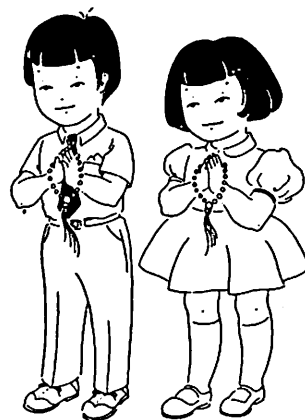
1. Understanding of Nembutsu—How, when, why we say it.
2. Appreciation of Amida Buddha's love.

Teacher Preparation

1. Know about Nembutsu and its significance.
2. Know story well.
3. Know song and how children might dramatize it.

Schedule of the Day

1. Roll call (this might be left until just before dismissal time).
2. Meditation and Nembutsu. Discuss Reverend's sermon.
3. Conversation Time: Discuss Nembutsu.
 - a. Why do we say the Nembutsu? (Namu Amida Butsu is the same as Nembutsu.)
 1. Because we are Amida's children.
 2. We like to remember that Amida Buddha is always with us and watching over us.
 - b. What do we mean by Nembutsu?
 1. It means we are thinking about Amida Buddha and calling His Name in thankfulness.
 - c. What is the correct way of saying it?
 1. We do the gassho and say Namu Amida Butsu clearly.
 - d. When do we say the Nembutsu?
 1. At any time; the more you say it, the better.
 2. When you are worshipping the Buddha.
 3. When you are grateful, happy, or even when you are sad or lonely.
 4. Because we love Amida Buddha.
4. Read "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein.
5. Sing "Buddha Loves You".
6. Nembutsu in gassho with ojuzu recite
Thank you for the world so sweet,
Thank you for the food we eat,
Thank you, Amida Buddha, for everything.
7. Dismissal.



In gassho we meditate.

We close our eyes and
keep our mind on Amida Buddha.

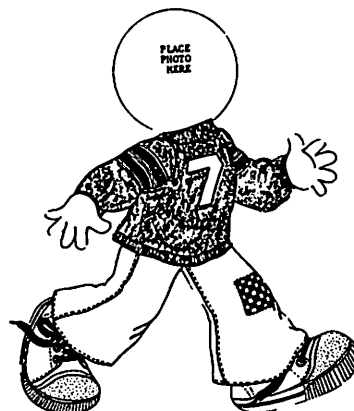
MY GOLD STAR RECORD CHART

This chart is about you and the things you do. Here's how to use it—

Everytime you do one of the things listed, you can stick a gold star on the special chart.

I ATTEND TEMPLE REGULARLY												
I BRING MY OJUZU TO TEMPLE EVERY SUNDAY												
I AM "AMIDA BUDDHA'S CHILD" BECAUSE I SIT UP STRAIGHT AND FACE THE SHRINE. I RECITE THE NAMU AMIDA BUTSU.												
I LISTEN VERY QUIETLY WHEN THE SENSEI IS SPEAKING												
I DO NOT TALK OR PLAY WITH MY FRIENDS IN THE TEMPLE												
I DO NOT CHEW GUM OR EAT CANDY IN THE TEMPLE												
I LISTEN VERY QUIETLY WHEN THE TEACHER IS SPEAKING												
WHEN CLASS IS OVER, I PICK UP ALL MY TOYS AND PUT THEM IN THEIR PLACE												

MY NAME IS _____



BRING A FRIEND TO THE TEMPLE DHARMA SCHOOL SERVICE

Dear _____ ,

My name is _____. I would like you to come visit our Dharma School. I am four years old and like to play in the sand. I have two brothers and a dog named _____.
(or whatever the child might want to state).

I will show you around our church and sit by you during the service.

We will have popcorn and punch for you and also play "pin the tail on the donkey."

Please come. It will be fun!

Love,

CHAPTER III

The Family and Home and Temple

A family is a place where a mind lives with other minds. If these minds love each other the home will be as beautiful as a flower garden.

A disciple should see to it that his family observe the teachings of Buddha. Especially should they cherish respect and consideration for their Buddhist teacher. They should treat him with courtesy, attend to and observe his instructions, and always have an offering for him. Then the teacher of Buddha's Dharma should rightly understand the teaching, rejecting wrong interpretations, emphasizing the right, and should seek to lead believers along a smooth path. If a family follows this course, keeping the true teaching for its center, it will thrive happily.

Our Buddhist Family

1. Our family centers its life around Amida Buddha.
2. Our family worships daily before the family shrine.
3. Our family attends temple regularly and gives full support.
4. Our family builds a home that is physically and spiritually clean.
5. Our family loves the young and respects the elders.
6. Our family cherishes peace and harmony.
7. Our family upholds the dignity of work.
8. Our family values learning.
9. Our family extends a helping hand of compassion to all people.

UNIT ON HOME AND FAMILY LIFE

PURPOSE:

To bring about awareness of the family life of each child so that he can realize the responsibilities involved in family living.

OBJECTIVES:

Understandings

1. To develop an understanding of the family unit.
2. To help children understand the importance of the various family roles.
3. To help children become aware of their place in the family.
4. To develop an awareness that the family is part of the church.
5. To develop an awareness that all families have the same basic needs.

Attitudes

1. To realize the importance of working together within a family group.
2. To respect the various occupations in the family.

Skill Development

1. To increase skill ability in communication through oral speaking, drawings, reading, and sharing experiences.
2. To involve the students in creative activities such as dramatic play, arts and crafts, industrial arts, music and rhythmic activities.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

1. A better orientation of the immediate area surrounding the home and Temple.
2. Stimulate interest in investigating family and church.
3. More consideration and cooperation in group participation.
4. A realization of responsibilities at the Temple as well as those at home.
5. More creative expression.

ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT IN HABITS AND SKILLS:

1. Ability to find material.
2. Work toward a definite goal.
3. Development of Buddhist vocabulary.
4. Getting to know your minister and your Temple and the importance of the shrine.

SCOPE

I. The Family Group

A. What is a family? How do they differ?

1. Families may differ in view.
2. The arrival of a new baby sister or brother.
3. Families can be made up in many different ways.

B. What is the role of the mother?

1. In the home.
2. At work.

C. What is the role of the father?

1. Fathers work at all kinds of jobs.
2. Fathers work at home also.

D. What are the roles of the children in the family group?

1. Help their parents by working around the house, running errands, caring for brothers and sisters and caring for pets.
2. Taking care of own toys.

II. Family Fun and Recreation

A. Family fun at home with games, video, television, parties and guests.

B. Family fun away from home on trips, sports, picnics, movies, community and school activities.

III. The Family Home and the Temple

A. Why do we all need home and the Temple?

1. Basic needs for keeping the family together and going to the Temple.
2. Homes may vary but they fulfill the basic needs of the family.
3. Why is it important to go to the Temple as a family?

UNIT ON FAMILY

Lesson #1

Aims:

1. Recognition of Buddhist home life being centered around Amida Buddha.
2. Understanding of Amida Buddha's compassion by associating with those who believe in him.
3. To help foster the habit of family worship.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Be prepared as to how to lead the discussion.
2. Be familiar with the game to be played.
3. Have coloring supplies and materials ready.
4. Know the songs to be sung.

Meditation and Nembutsu

Singing: Gatha used in the service

Discussion:

1. Why do we come to Dharma School and to the Temple?
(To worship together with our friends and to learn more about Amida Buddha from our Dharma School teachers and minister.)
2. What kind of family worship do you have at home?
(Family morning service, etc.)
3. When do you have your family worship?
(We should have our family worship every morning and night and say our Nembutsu.)
4. Why do we worship at home?
(Because Amida Buddha loves us, watches us and protects us. Amida wants us to be happy and to be good boys and girls. So in the Nembutsu we say, "Thank you, Amida Buddha, for all you do for us. I will try to be a good child.")

Activity:

1. Play a game ("Family Game")
Divide the class into 4 groups: mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers. Mothers and fathers sit alternately on chairs in a circle. Sisters and brothers stand alternately in a circle outside the chair-circle. The teacher calls out:
Mothers and sisters change places.
Fathers and brothers change places.
Mothers and brothers change places.
Fathers and sisters change places.
The object of the game is to see how fast they react to the teacher's calls and change places when it's their turn to move. The children must listen carefully so that they change places only when their own group is called. Learning to listen.
2. If time permits, children may color pictures of family worship or activity, or draw their own picture with crayons on a clean sheet of drawing paper.

Preparation for Next Sunday:

1. Bring old magazines or pictures of family life to cut out for a scrapbook or for a cut-and-paste mural.
2. Next Sunday we will talk about how many sisters and brothers you have in your family and about what kind of work each member does as part of the family.

Roll Call. Dismissal.

Lesson #2

Aims: Appreciation of the other members of the family.

Teacher's Preparation:

1. Have magazines for children to cut out.
2. Have paper (for booklet), scissors and paste ready.
3. Know a story and a song.

Meditation and Nembutsu

Singing: "Happy Little Children"

Discussion:

1. How many sisters and brothers do you have in your family?
2. What kind of work does your father do? Why?
3. What does mother do? Why?
4. What do you do?
5. Why are we happy and thankful for our family? (We all love each other as Amida Buddha loves us.)

Activity:

Collect pictures of family life from magazines, cut them out and paste them in a scrapbook or booklet, or paste them on a large sheet of butcher paper as a cut-and-paste mural.

Story:

"Happy Mealtimes"

Preparation for Next Sunday:

1. Please bring a cardboard or carton box with overlapping flap covers. We will make a house with the box.
2. Next time, we will talk about what things you like to do together with your family, so be sure to think about all the things you do together and enjoy.

Roll Call**Dismissal**

HAPPY MEALTIME

(For the story, replace name with a child's name in the classroom)

Betty stood at the window watching and waiting. All at once she ran out the door and down the walk. Bang, went the gate. Clatter, clatter when her little feet.

"Daddy, Daddy," said Betty, "I saw you first, I saw you first!"

"You sure did," said Daddy, as he took hold of her hand.

Together they walked into the kitchen. Both of them gave Mommy a big kiss.

Mommy laughed and said, "Dinner's almost ready." So Daddy and Betty washed their hands together, and went to the table.

Before starting to eat, Mommy, Daddy, and Betty bowed their heads and said,

“I-ta-da-ki-ma-su”

Then they began to eat. Sometimes Daddy talked with Mommy and Betty listened. Sometimes Mommy talked while Daddy and Betty listened. Sometimes Betty talked while Daddy and Mommy listened. It was lots of fun taking turns talking. Daddy told about his day at work. Mother talked about her day at home. Betty told them about her play.

Before long their plates were empty. “That’s a fine dinner, Mother,” said Daddy, “See, our plates are almost clean.”

Mommy said, “I like to fix a good dinner because I know you will eat all of it.”

Now they bowed their heads again and said,

“Go-chi-so-sa-ma”

It was a happy mealtime.

Lesson #3

Aims: Recognition of love and harmony as the foundation of family life.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Flannel graph cut-outs
2. Be prepared as to how to help children dramatize last Sunday’s story.
3. Have boxes, paint, brushes, scissors, masking tape for the house project.
4. Know the finger play.

Meditation and Nembutsu

Poem:

The House So Good

This is the roof of the house so good,
Those are the walls that are made of wood,
This is the door that shuts so tight,
This is the window that lets in the light,
This is the chimney so straight and tall,
Oh, what a good house for one and all!

Discussion:

1. What does your family do together?
(Picnics, family celebrations, trips, work in the garden, play games, go to the Temple.)
2. Why are we sad when someone in our family is hurt or sick?
(Because we are one big family.)
3. Why does mommy and daddy work so hard to make us happy?
(Because we love one another, we want every member to be healthy and happy. Amida Buddha is part of our family too.)
Flannelgraph pictures may be used during the discussion. Pictures might include: family life, someone sick or hurt, mommy or daddy working hard, etc.)
4. Amida Buddha will be happy to see us working, playing and living together nicely.

Dramatization of last week's story: "Happy Mealtime"

1. Tell story again, if necessary.
2. Discuss and review the main sequence of the story.
3. Decide who the main characters of the story will be and the setting of the story.
4. Encourage a free and permissive atmosphere so that the children will not be shy or silly.
5. Performers might act out the story while the teacher narrates or they might do the play on their own with occasional promptings and guidance of the teacher.

Activity:

Make houses with cardboard or carton boxes. Paint with poster paint (or rubberized paint). When dry, either paint windows and doors with different colors or cut and paste doors and windows with colored construction paper. To make the house, let the flap covers of the box lean on each other and tape the top with masking (drafting) tape. Then, cut the end flaps to fit the point of the roof and tape them. If desired a door may be partly cut out. The house will then be ready for painting.

Preparation for Next Sunday:

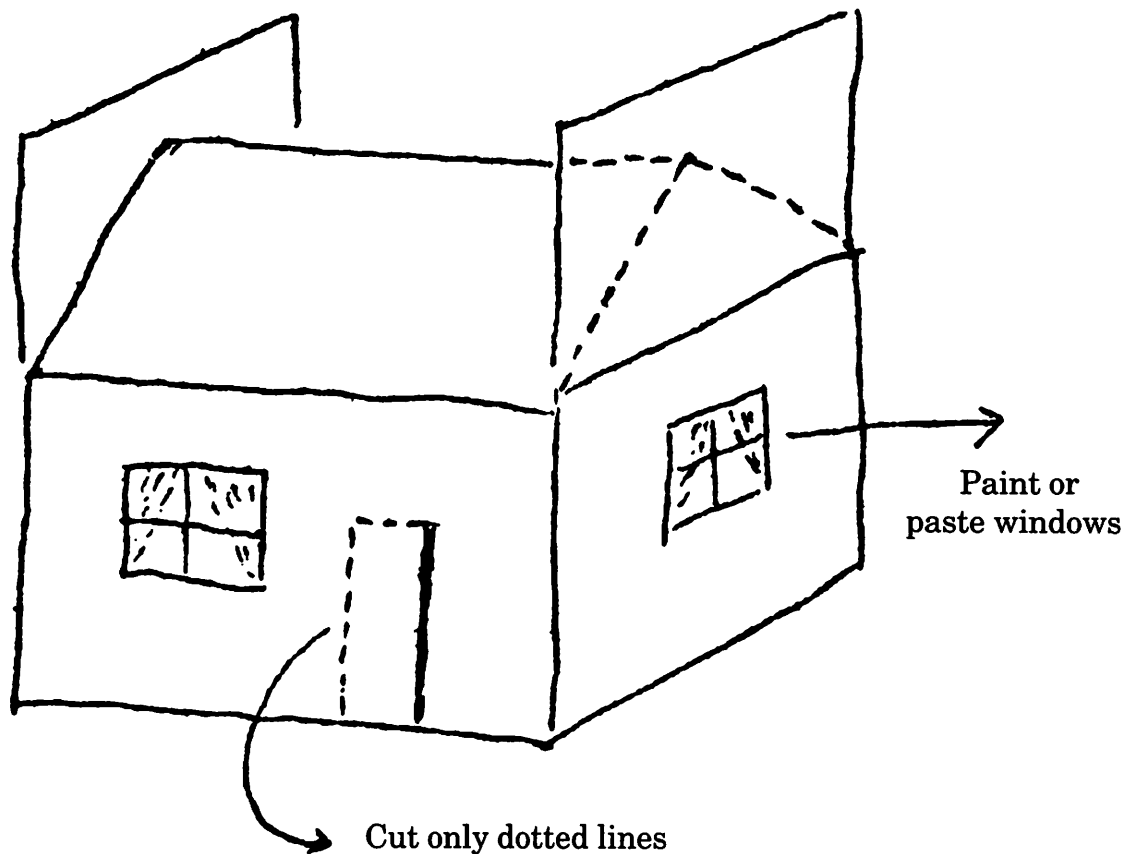
1. Please bring a big piece of cardboard and magazine pictures of a family or member of a family, so that we can make a puzzle with it.
2. We will talk about how we can help to make others happy at home the next time.

Roll Call

Dismissal

Our House

Lean flaps & tape top



Drawing Lesson

Here is an easy way to draw houses.

Take a sheet of paper and try to draw a house like this one.



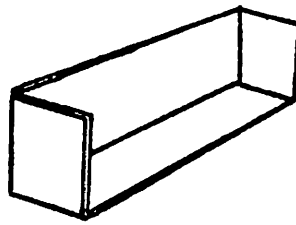
Additional Activity:

At this time you can introduce the Baby Buddha (Buddha's family).

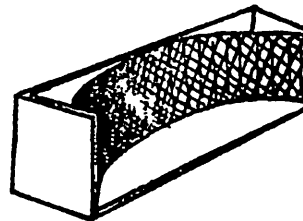
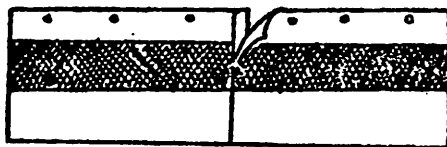
DIORAMA

A diorama is a three-dimensional scene in a box. It usually tells a simple story.

To make your diorama, trim off the top and one side of a small box. Or, cut off a long panel of a shoe box. For an attractive art project, paint or cover the box with colored paper.

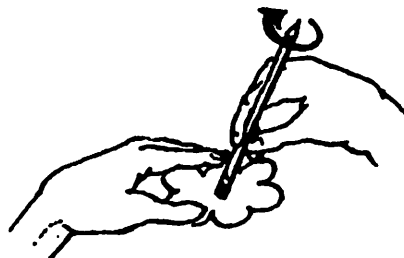


Join the background illustrations then paint or color them. Measure the height of the box and trim your background and scene to fit. Attach your finished panel by curving it inside the box. Remember to glue the paper only in areas which will come into contact with the box.



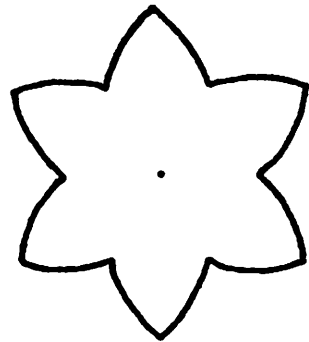
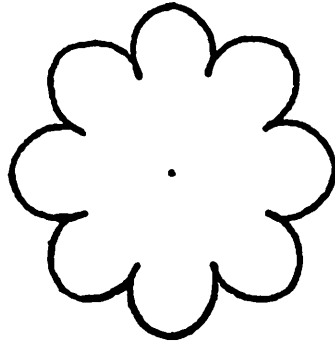
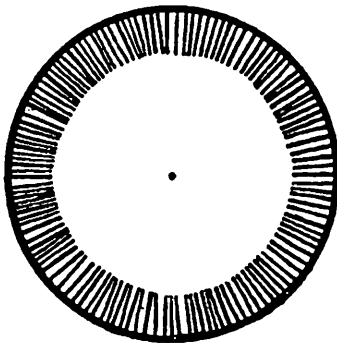
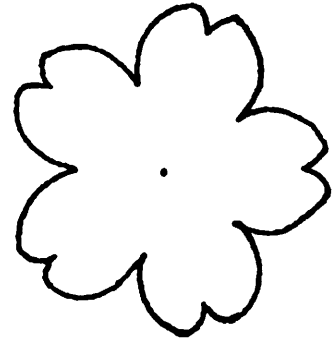
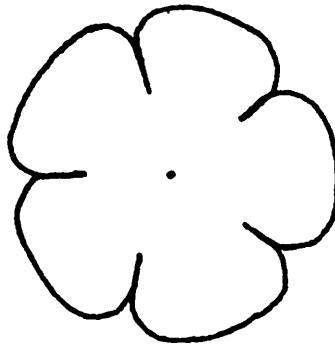
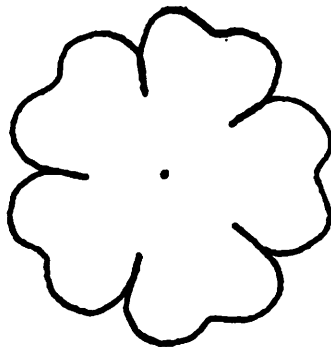
Color and cut out the Baby Buddha. Fold the base along the dotted line. Paste the figure in the center of the diorama.

Decorate Lumbini Garden by creating your own paper flowers and plants. A simple yet ornamental flower can be made with colored tissue paper. Cut several flowers.



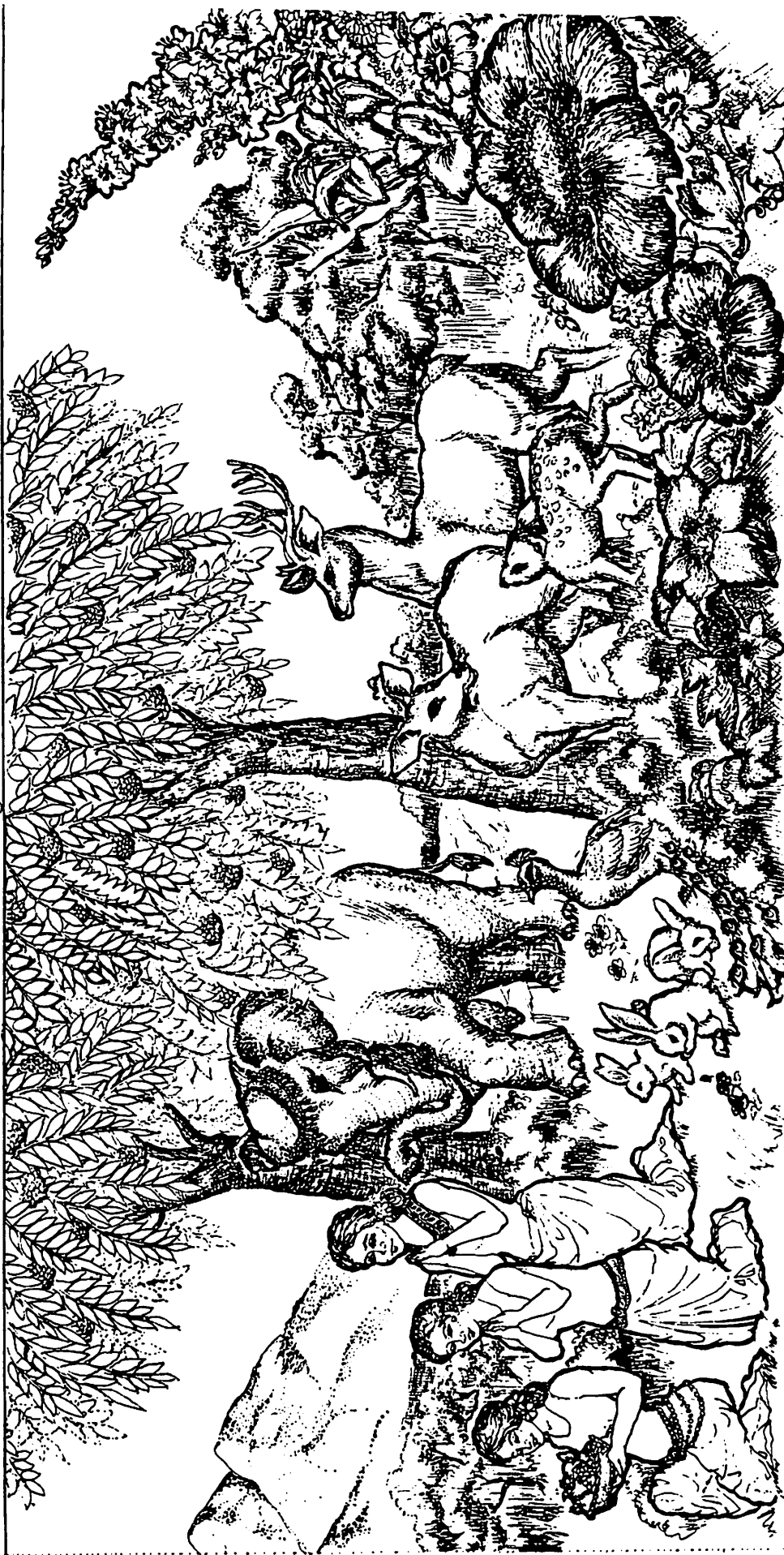
Press the petals of the flower very gently on the table and twist the eraser end of a pencil in the center. These flowers will add a new dimension to your diorama. Beautify the garden by creating as many flowers as you can. Add pebbles and additional figures as finishing touches.

Try making another diorama of your own.





cutting line



cutting line

Lesson #4

Aims:

1. Awakening the sense of gratitude for the family.
2. Fostering consideration for others.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Know the story and have the story book: *Story about Ping*. (Get it from the public library.)
2. Have cardboards, in case some children forgot to bring their own.
3. Have some suitable, simple pictures from magazines for puzzles. Pictures of family life would be preferable.
4. Be familiar with the process of making a jigsaw puzzle with these pictures.

Meditation and Nembutsu:

Singing: Gatha sung in the service.

Discussion:

1. What do you like best about your home and family?
2. How would you feel about going away from home, never to come back again?
3. How can we help to make others at home happy? (By helping as much as we can and to think of the others' feelings and needs.)

Activity:

1. Finish the house project which was started the previous Sunday.
2. Those who are finished with the house may make jigsaw puzzles with the magazine pictures they brought. To make the puzzle, paste the picture on a piece of cardboard and cut it into pieces of various shapes and sizes. (A simple picture will be more suitable than a complicated, detailed picture for a puzzle of this type. See next page for sample.)

Story: Select one or have children select one.

Preparation for Next Sunday:

1. Next Sunday we will talk about how we can help Mommy and Daddy at home.
2. We will make some stick puppets or flannelgraph cut-outs.

Roll Call

Dismissal

A Jigsaw Puzzle (Sample)

Trace this picture of the youthful Shinran and then color it and glue it to a piece of cardboard. When glue is dry, cut the picture along the lines and you will have a jigsaw puzzle.



Lesson #5

Aims:

1. Ability to take responsibility in the family.
2. To foster cheerful cooperation at home.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Know story and song. Use any story of your choice.
2. Be prepared as to how to use flannelgraph and stick puppets for a simple program by the children after activity period. The children's finished flannelgraph cut-outs and stick puppets may be used, but the teacher should have some samples which the children might also use.
3. Have mimeographed pictures for the cut-outs and stick puppets.

Meditation and Nembutsu

1. What happens if mother doesn't do her work, e.g., cooking, washing, ironing, cleaning the house, etc.?
2. What will happen if daddy did not go to work to earn money for the family?
3. How can we help our mommies and daddies?
(There are many ways in which we can help—at home, in school, at the Temple, at play.)
4. Why do we want to help?
(To make things easier for the whole family.
So that we can have a happier family life.
So that we will have more time to do things together for enjoyment.
Because we love each other.
Because Amida Buddha is helping us too.)

Activity:

Let the children color and cut out mimeographed pictures about helping at home. These cut-outs may be pasted or taped on the sticks, or sandpaper pieces may be pasted in the back, depending on whether stick puppets or flannelgraph cut-outs are desired.

Story:

1. *Helping Mother*
2. Using children's finished projects, have either a flannelgraph story or a stick puppet show accompanied by a simple story. For the story to accompany the flannelgraph or stick puppet show, let the children use their own imagination and experiences to tell about their pictures in their own words. If time does not permit this, discuss the possibilities for such a program for next Sunday.

Preparation for Next Sunday:

Next Sunday, we will talk about what we have been doing these past weeks. You can tell us what you enjoyed doing most for activity period.

Roll Call

Dismissal

Lesson #6

Aims:

1. Conclude study on family.
2. Review and evaluate the unit study.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Have games songs and finger plays to suggest if the children should not be responsive in suggesting and choosing their own.
2. Be prepared to guide children in their presentations of simple stick puppet or flannelgraph show.
3. Be prepared with leading questions for the review and evaluation discussion.

Meditation and Nembutsu

Singing: Let the children choose songs.

Discussion:

1. Who can tell us what we have been talking about at Dharma School these past weeks?
2. What is a family?
3. Why are we thankful for our family?
4. How can we help to make our home a happier place to live?
5. What did you enjoy doing during our activity work time at Dharma School?

Activity: Let the children decide on what game to play . . . something they've learned in Dharma School.

Story:

Using the theme of "Helping at Home", let the children use their stick puppets, or flannelgraph cut-outs on a flannel-board to tell their own story. Encourage the children by asking leading questions if they are shy. ("What is your puppet doing to help her mother?" or "Tell us about your mother's helper . . . what is he doing? What is he saying to his sister?" Such questions might be helpful.)

Roll Call

Dismissal

JIMMY'S FIRST DAY AT DHARMA SCHOOL

(Sample story. Use children's names from the class)

For some of you this is the first time you ever came to Dharma School. But everyone seems happy. I can see nice smiling faces all around me. I am very sure that we will have lots of wonderful times together. We will sing many nice new songs, we will listen to many wonderful stories about Amida Buddha.

I am wondering now if any one of you felt as Jimmy did, when he came to Dharma School for the first time. You see, Jimmy was five years old. One evening his mother asked him, "Jimmy, how would you like to go to Dharma School next Sunday?" Jimmy knew his older friends in his neighborhood were going to Dharma School and for a long time, he had wanted to go with them, but his mother had told him that he was too young and had to wait a little more. So when his mother asked him now, he was really happy. He jumped up like a cowboy shouting, "Yiipee!" His mother laughed and said, "I am glad you are happy to go to Dharma School. And I'm sure Daddy would be happy; Grandpa and Grandma would be happy too." Then Jimmy said proudly "And my uncle would be happy to know this too." His little eyes sparkled with joy and happiness.

"Jimmy, there is another special person who would be very happy to see you going to Dharma School. Do you know who he is?" asked his mother.

Jimmy named all the people he knew all over again, but his mother just smiled and said, "Still there is one more person." Jimmy couldn't think of any more names. When he begged his mother, "Tell me, who is this special person?", his mother whispered in his ear with a twinkle in her eyes, "You will find out when you go to Dharma School." Jimmy wanted to know right away, but his mother didn't tell him. So he waited patiently every day. Every night before going to bed he asked his mother, "Am I going to Dharma School tomorrow?" But his mother said, "No, Jimmy, tomorrow is only Wednesday." But finally the night came when he asked the same question his mother said, "Yes, tomorrow you are going to Dharma School." Again Jimmy jumped up in happiness just like a cowboy on TV shouting, "Yiipii." His father stopped reading his papers and asked, "What is the commotion about?" Jimmy told him excitedly about his going to Dharma School. His father said, "So you are going to Dharma School tomorrow. Fine! Jimmy, wait here. I will give you something." Father went to the Obutsudan and came back with a nice brown ojuzu.

"Here. This is for you. I want you to carry this with you whenever you go to Dharma School or the temple. You see, Jimmy, this ojuzu went to the war with me. I carried this ojuzu all the time when I was in the army. When I felt lonely and sad in a strange land, I put it on my hands and said, "Namu Amida Butsu" and I always felt better. By holding this I know I was not alone. Amida Buddha is always with me. This is a precious ojuzu for me but now that you are going to Dharma School, I want you to have it and take good care of it."

Jimmy took the ojuzu from his daddy, "Gee, thank you, Daddy! I will take good care of it." His father smiled and said, "Go to bed early tonight, Jimmy."

Jimmy tried to sleep but he couldn't. He couldn't sleep because he was thinking about Dharma School and the name of the person who would be very, very happy to see him at Dharma School.

The next morning Jimmy was still sleeping when his mother called, "Jimmy, you are going to Dharma School, aren't you?" Yes, today is the day! Jimmy jumped out from the bed and washed his face in a hurry. At the breakfast table his father was already looking at the

Sunday papers. Jimmy said, "Good morning, Daddy, good morning, Mommy," and sat down at the table. He kept asking his mother many times, "Isn't it time to go yet?" Finally, his father said, "It's time to go to the temple." He took Jimmy and Mother in his car to the temple. In the temple there were already many children. Jimmy and his mother got out of the car and climbed up the steps to the temple. Jimmy had been to the temple many times before, but today it seemed different and he clung to his mother's hand. Do you know how he felt? Yes, he was a little afraid.

Soon they met the minister in the black robe. Jimmy's mother said, "Good morning, Reverend." The minister smiled at both of them and said, "This young man is Jimmy, isn't he? So you are coming to the Dharma School. I am so happy to see you here. I hope we will see you every Sunday." He shook hands with Jimmy. When the minister left them, Jimmy asked, "Mother, is he the one who would be very, very happy to see me at Dharma School?" She said, "Yes, but there is still another special person."

Soon they were introduced to the kindergarten teacher who was also happy to see him there. Jimmy again asked his mother, "Is she the special one?" Mother said, "No, there is still another special person."

When they all went into the hondo to worship, Jimmy whispered to his mother, "Will we see him now?" Mother said, "Yes." During meditation Jimmy was still wondering who that special person could be. Then the minister began to speak. He said, "All the Dharma School teachers and I welcome all you children back to Dharma School. There is one other person who has been waiting for all of you to come back to Dharma School after summer vacation. I am sure he must be very, very happy now. Do you know who he is?" Jimmy was so excited he was sitting on the edge of the chair, waiting for the minister to tell the name. "Look!" said the minister, pointing at the shrine. "Amida Buddha is standing there, eager to see you all. He is stretching his hands to welcome you, for you are the children of Amida Buddha. Buddha is always with you. Let us start this Dharma School year right and become the children of Amida Buddha." And the minister smiled a nice big smile for all of the children. Jimmy was so happy to find out who the special person was, and snuggling closer to his mother, he looked up with a big smile. He was very happy to have come to Dharma School and he promised Amida Buddha that he would come to Dharma School every Sunday.

Now I hope you will be happy too, just like Jimmy.

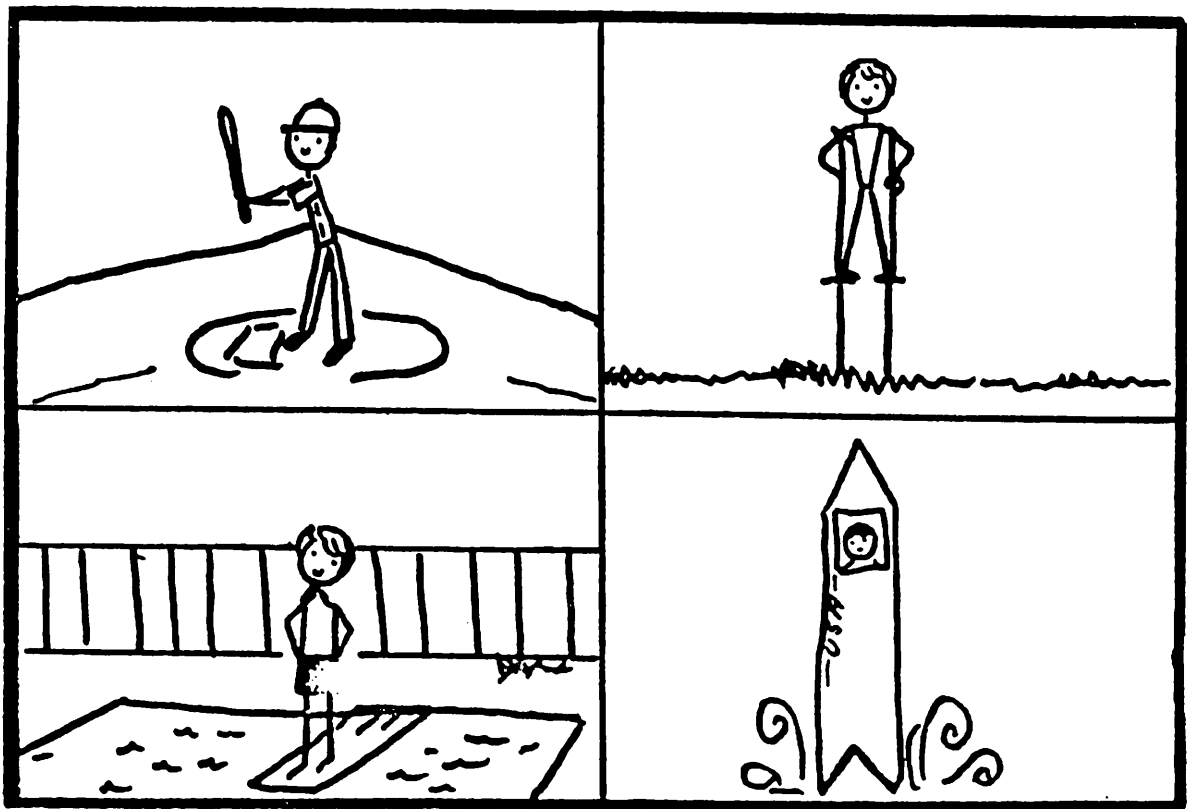
NOTE: Use the new 8 colorplates: Lesson sheets. (Available through Dharma School Coordinator. This is a new set of cards available for sale immediately.)

The Family and Home and Temple

PURPOSE: Oral expression

1. Distribute sheets of paper and crayons.
2. Help each pupil fold his/her paper into four equal sections and
 - ...on the first section, draw a picture of one thing he/she can do of which he/she is very proud
 - ...on the second section, draw a picture of one thing he/she helps do at home
 - ...on the third section, draw a picture of one thing he/she would like to do to help at home
 - ...on the fourth section, draw a picture of one thing he/she would **really** like to do at temple
3. Assemble the pupils together near the bulletin board. Ask each pupil to select one drawing and discuss how each are part of their family.

(Sample)



CHAPTER IV

Who Is Amida Buddha?

Long, long ago, a Bodhisattva felt sorry for all living things.

“Poor men and women. Poor little children. Poor animals and birds. They cannot find happiness by themselves. They cannot find the right way to live. I will show them the way to be happy.”

So the Bodhisattva, named Darmakara, made 48 great and noble promises, to make everyone happy.

At last the Bodhisattva Dharmakara became the most loving and wisest Buddha of all time.

We call him Amida Buddha. We call him “Namu Amida Butsu.”

Amida Buddha said, “Trust in me. Say my holy name—Namu Amida Butsu.”

Amida Buddha is the one who will bring all of us to happiness. We put our faith in him.

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

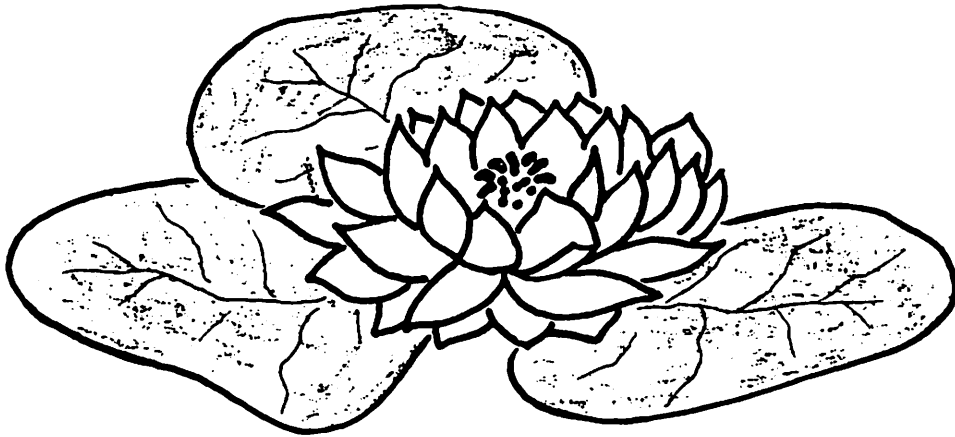
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

南无阿弥陀佛

NAMU
AMIDA
BUTSU

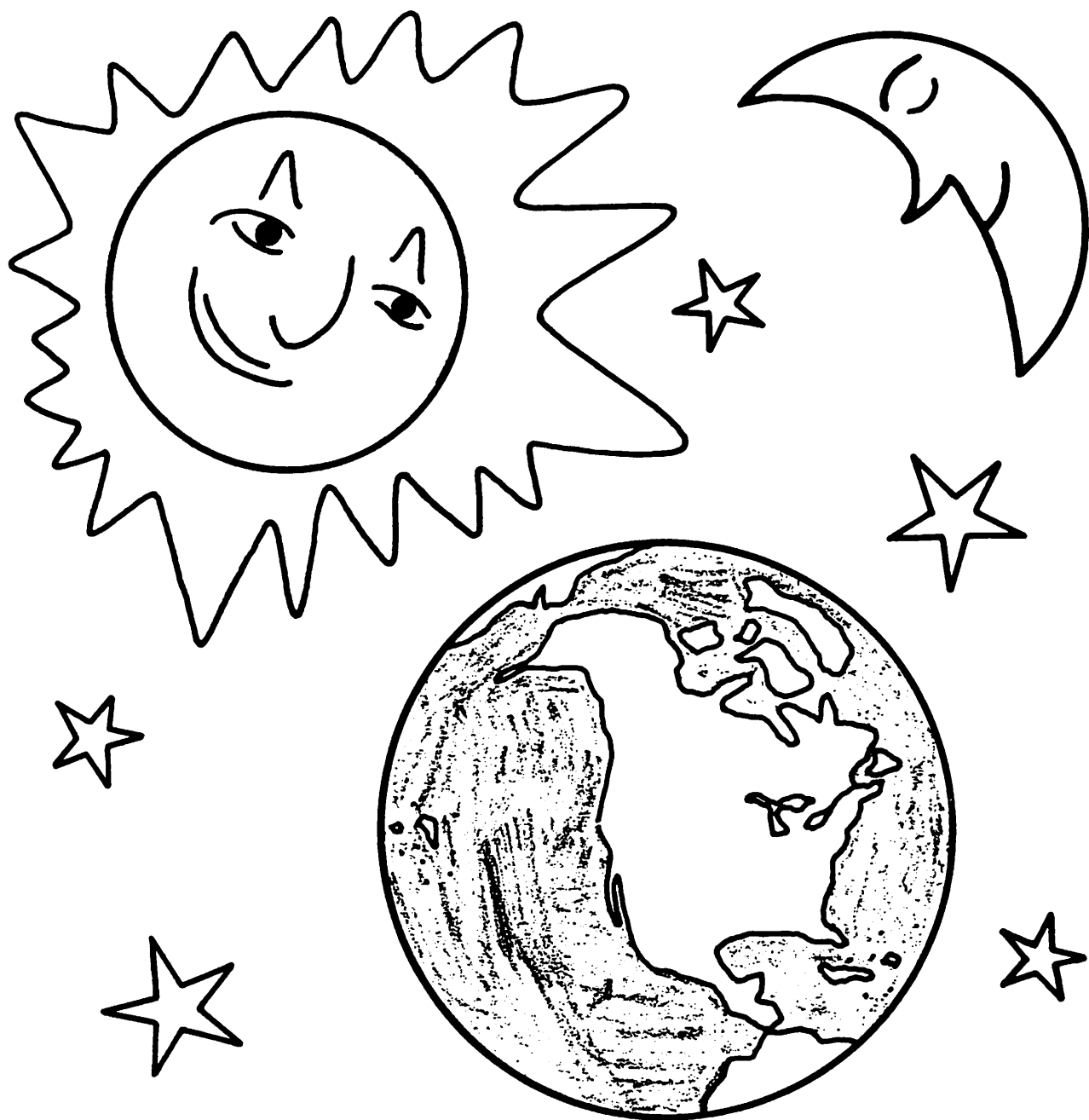
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU



We say “Namu Amida Butsu”
and Amida Buddha answers,
“Here, here I am with you.”



Amida Buddha says,
“I love all things,
I love little animals,
I love trees and flowers and
I love you.”
And we say,
“Thank you Amida Buddha, Thank you.”



Amida Buddha's love
reaches to the moon
Amida Buddha's love
reaches to the sun
Amida Buddha's love
reaches to the stars

ONE BIG WORLD

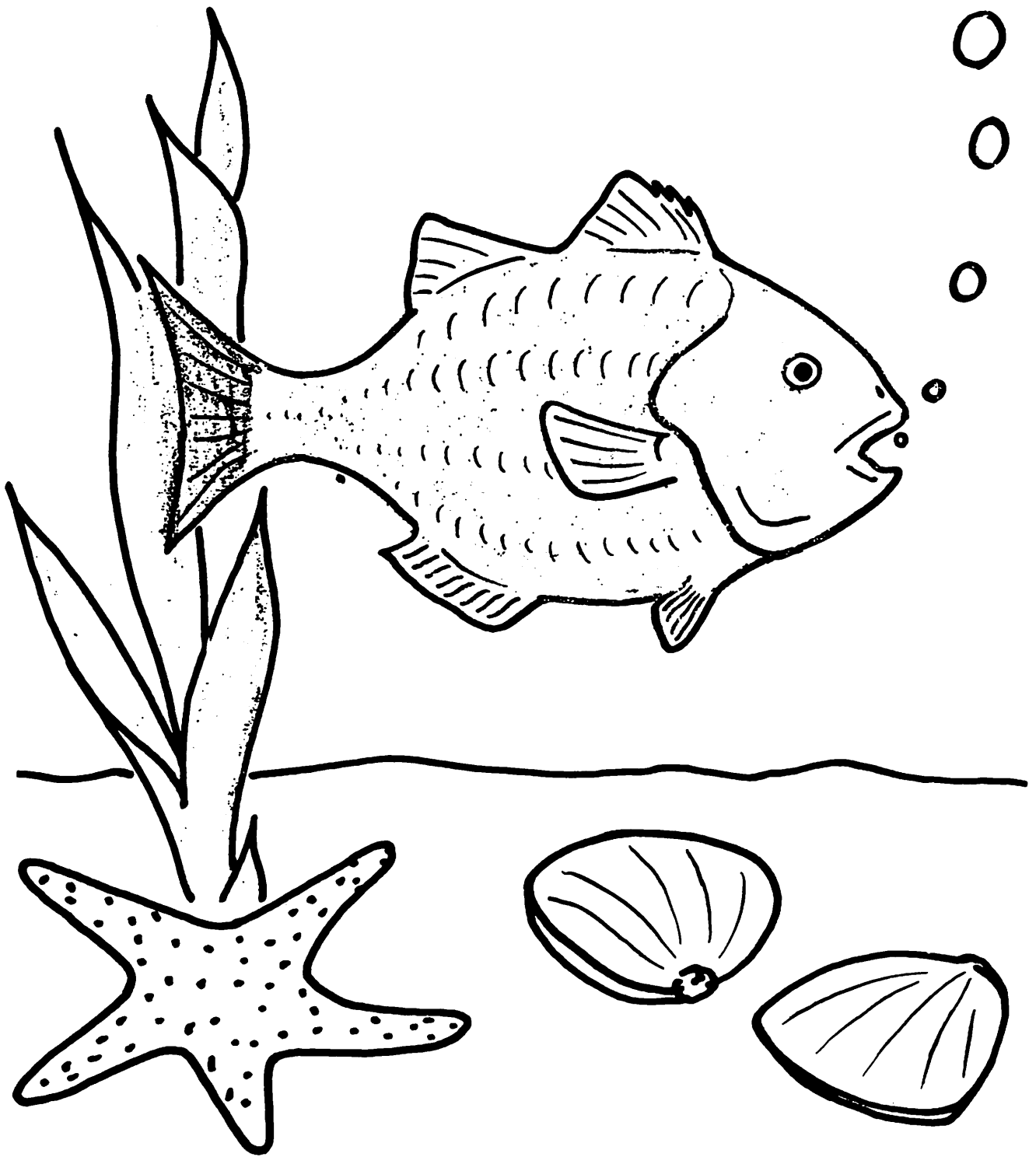
This is a big, big world
In it are many kinds of flowers, plants and trees
Green ones, pink ones, yellow ones. Many kinds.
Amida Buddha loves them all.

This is a big, big world
In it are many kinds of animals.
Puppies, fat kittens, funny monkeys
Fierce tigers, roaring lions. Many kinds.
Amida Buddha loves them all.

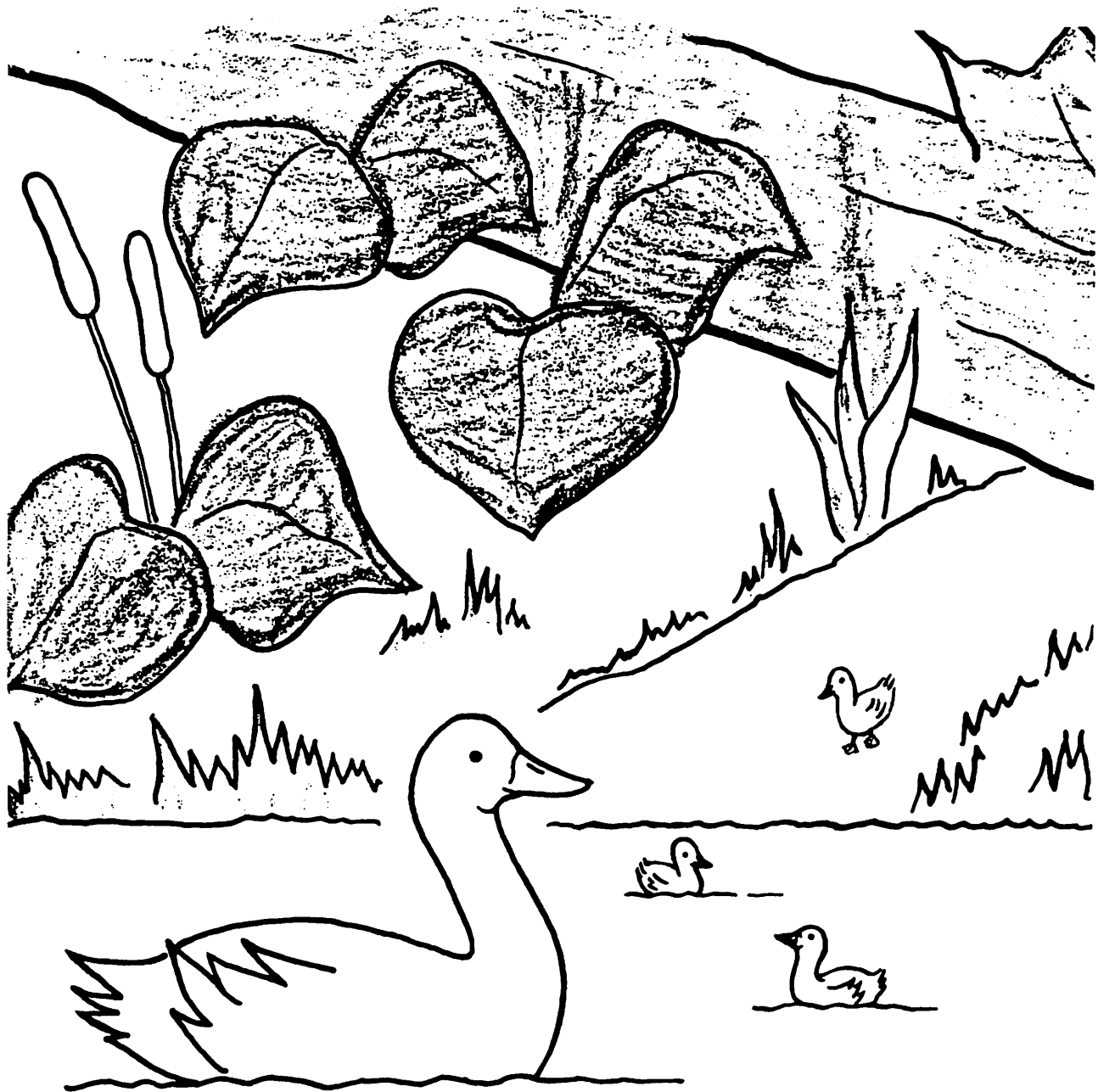
This is a big, big world
In it are many kinds of fish
Pink salmon, goldfish, whales
Swordfish, wiggly eels, crocodiles. Many kinds.
Amida Buddha loves them all.
This is a big, big world.
In it are many kinds of children. Fat ones, skinny ones.
Black, white, yellow and brown ones. Many kinds.
Amida Buddha loves them all.



Amida Buddha loves me.
The Dharma guides me.
The Sangha helps me.
Namu-Amida-Butsu.



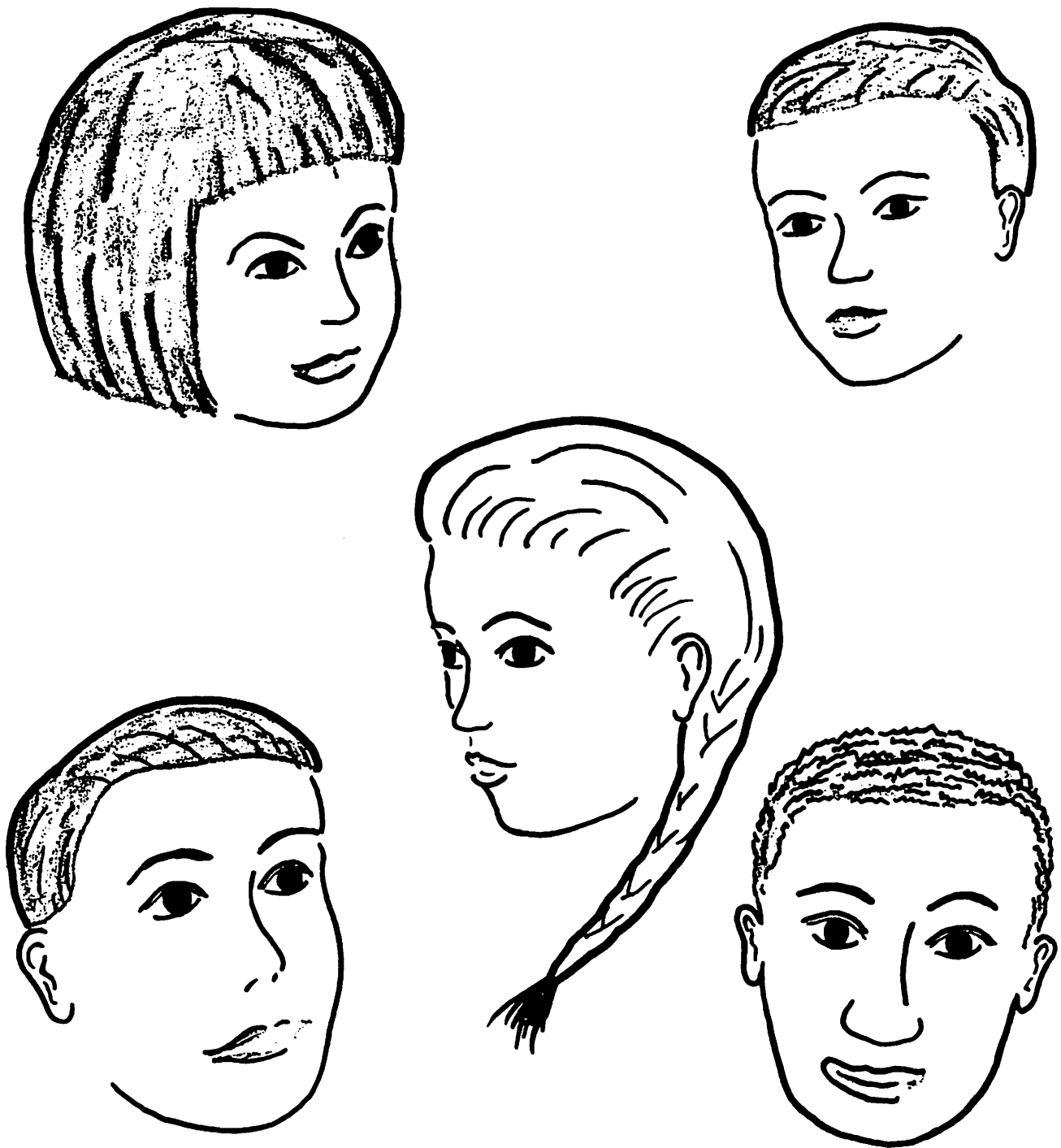
This is a fish.
This is a seashell.
Amida Buddha surrounds all
Life with deep compassion.



This is a mother goose.
These are her goslings.
The mother loves her goslings
And Amida Buddha loves them all.
He loves them like a mother.



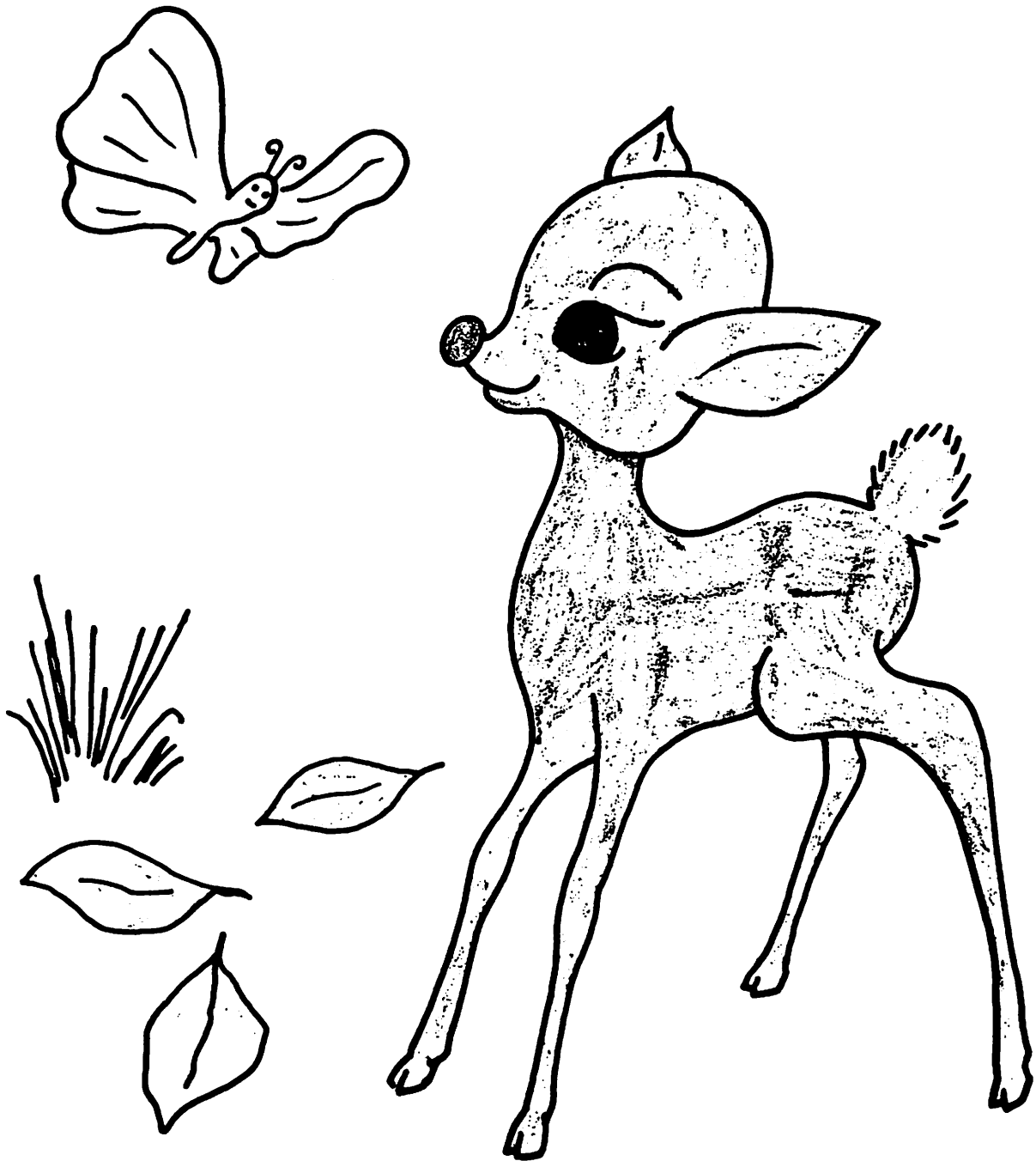
The young Dharma student is thinking.
The love of the Amida Buddha fills the sky.
The love of the Amida Buddha fills the whole world
The love of the Amida Buddha fills all things.
Namu-Amida-Butsu.



Amida Buddha loves all children
And all children love Amida Buddha.
We love him and call His Name.
We say, "Namu-Amida-Butsu."



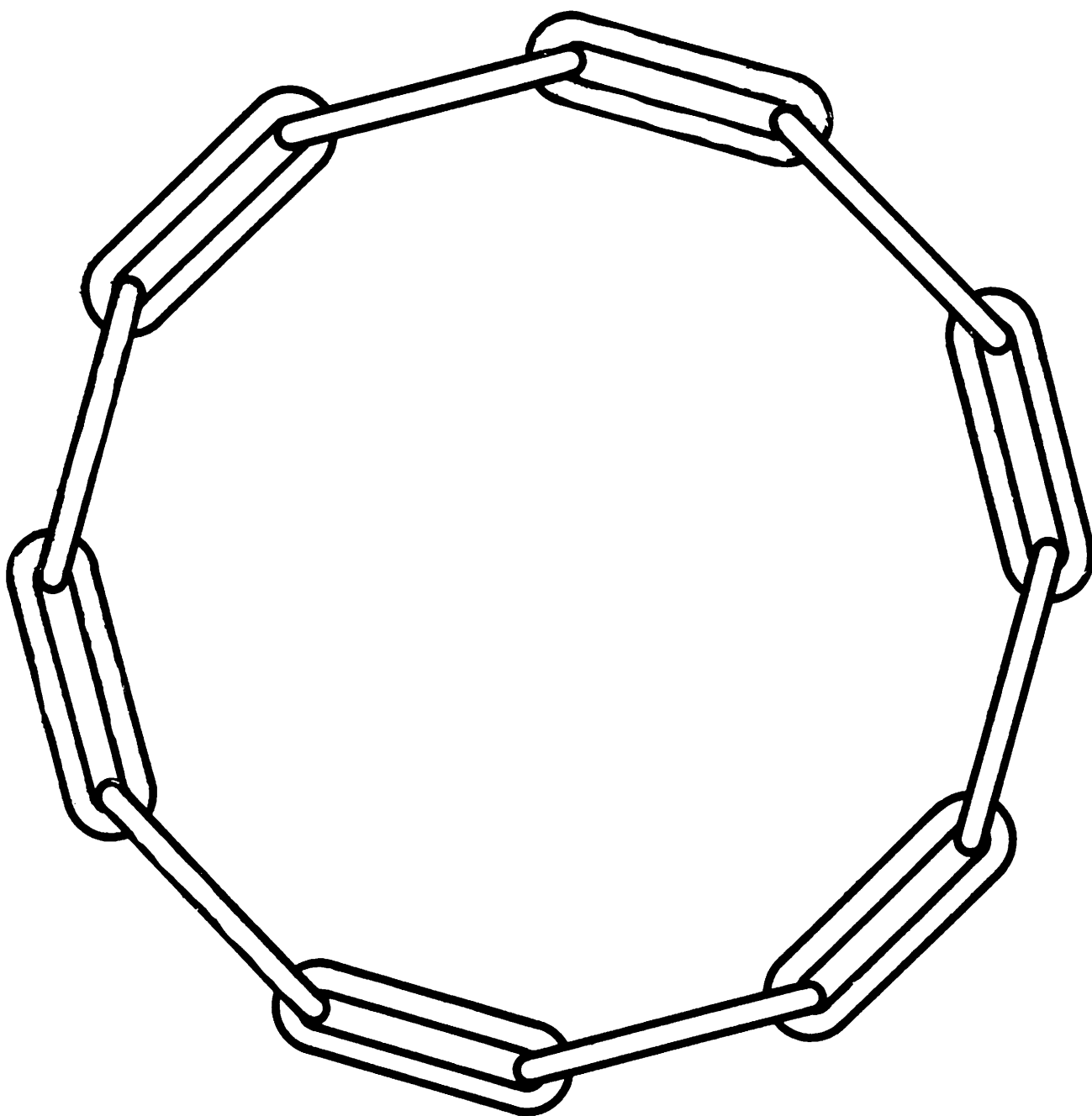
This is a picture of Sakyamuni Buddha.
Sakyamuni Buddha told us of Amida Buddha and
His deep love for all living creatures.
We are thankful to Sakyamuni Buddha.



Amida Buddha loves all things.
He wants us to love them too.



This is a picture of St. Shinran.
Sakyamuni Buddha told the world of Amida Buddha.
St. Shinran is the founder of Jodo Shinshu.
We are thankful to St. Shinran.



I am a link in Amida Buddha's golden chain of love
that stretches around the world.
I must keep my link bright and strong.

AMIDA BUDDHA AND I

1. Amida Buddha and I.
2. Buddha is the head of my family.
3. My family:
Fill in the faces and if no brother or sister, use the space for a relative or friend.
Discuss family and the members of the family.
Your role in the family.
Name your family and relative or friend.
4. My name is:
Fill in extra space with family member, relative or friend.
Discuss what a name is.
5. I live at:
Address.
Discuss the neighborhood.
Discuss how you get to Dharma School on Sundays from your home.
6. This is my Temple:
Discuss who comes to Dharma School with you.
What is inside the Temple?
Who is inside the Temple?
What do you do inside the Temple?
7. I like to go to Dharma School:
Discuss why I like to go.
What I like best.
8. This is Rev. _____ .
Ask the children to name the "Sensei".
Visit the "Sensei".
9. My class teachers are:
Discuss your names, your families, where you live and how you get to the Temple on Sundays.
10. With my hands I learn to Gassho:
Practice—Gassho.
Recite the Nembutsu.
Burn incense.
11. We sit quietly in the Hondo and listen.
Discuss—What do you hear?
12. My Dana
Discuss what do you offer at your home "Obutsudan".
Ask the class to bring the offering for the following Dharma School service.
Send a note home to the parents with the child's offering, i.e., apple, orange, candy, flowers, etc.
13. We are all Buddha's children.
Discuss—Coming to Dharma School and learning about Amida Buddha.
14. I recite the Nembutsu.
Practice with the children the reciting of Namu Amida Butsu.



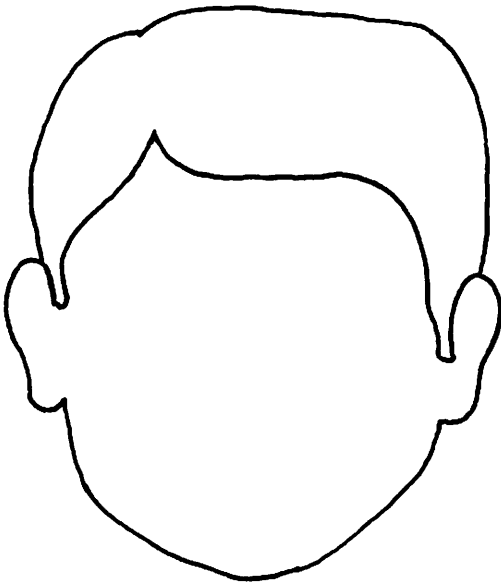
Amida Buddha and I

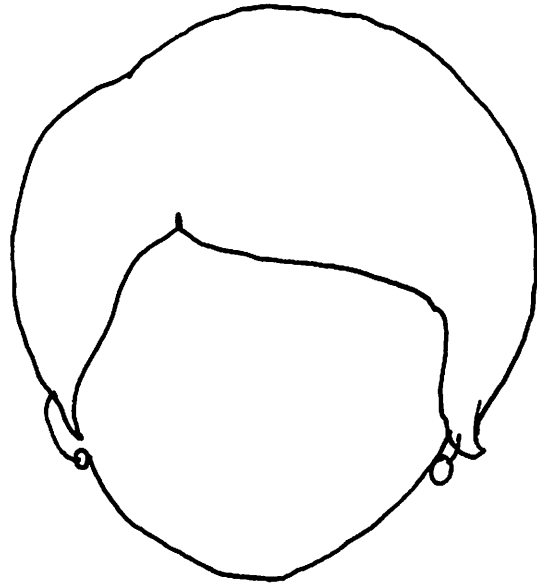


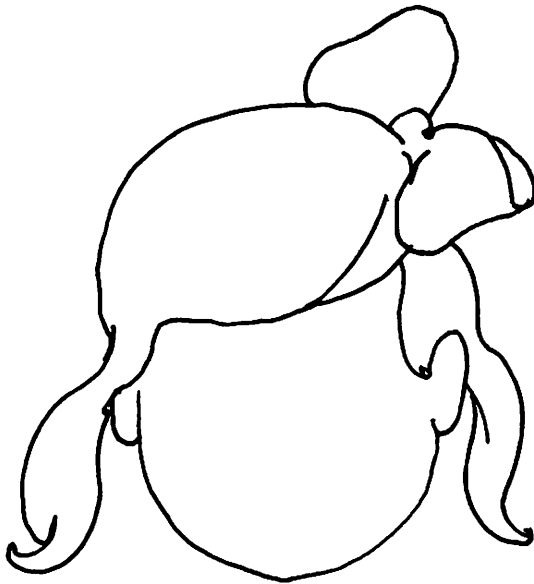
Buddha is the head of my family

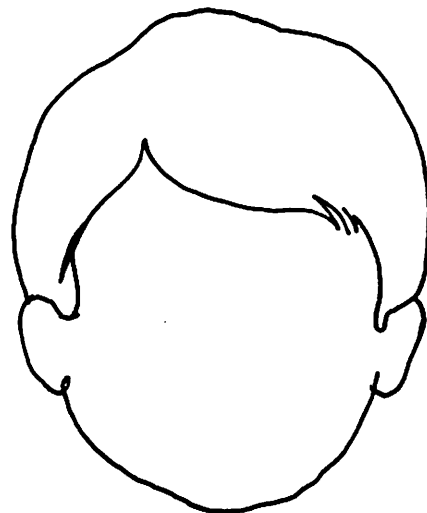
Hotoke Sama

My Family

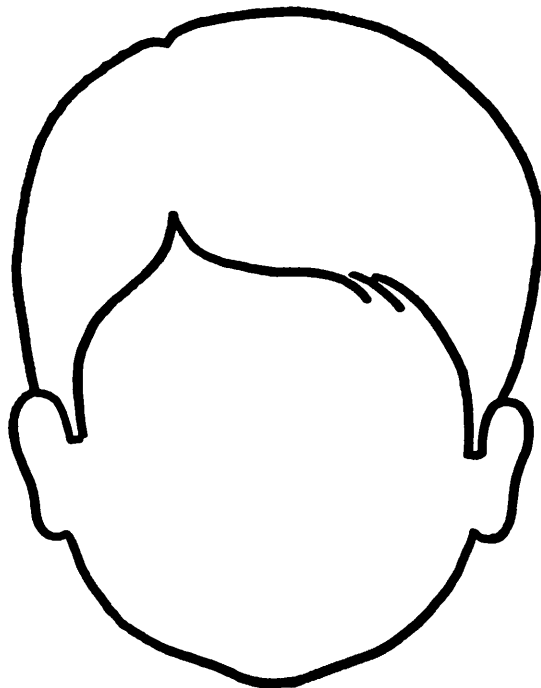
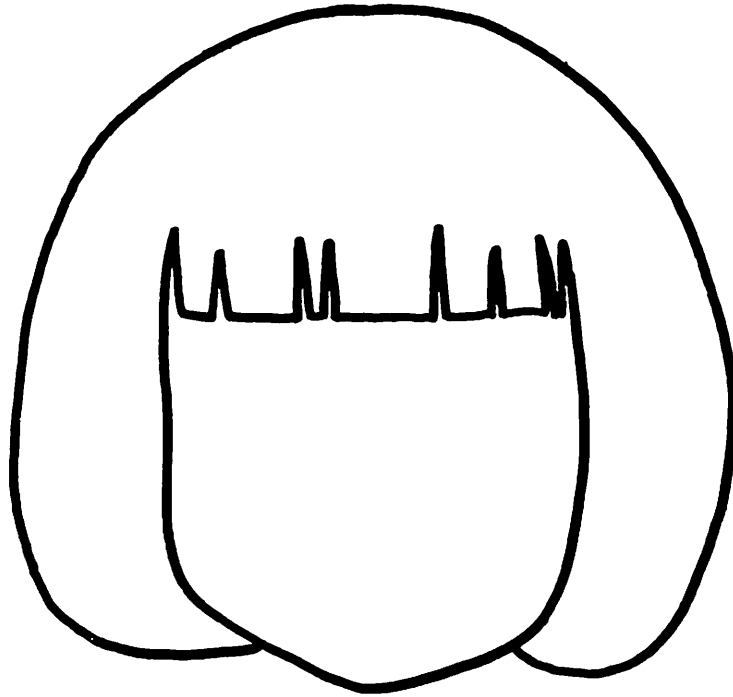




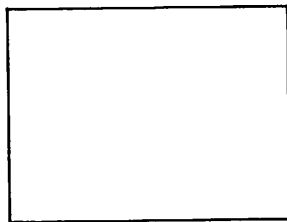
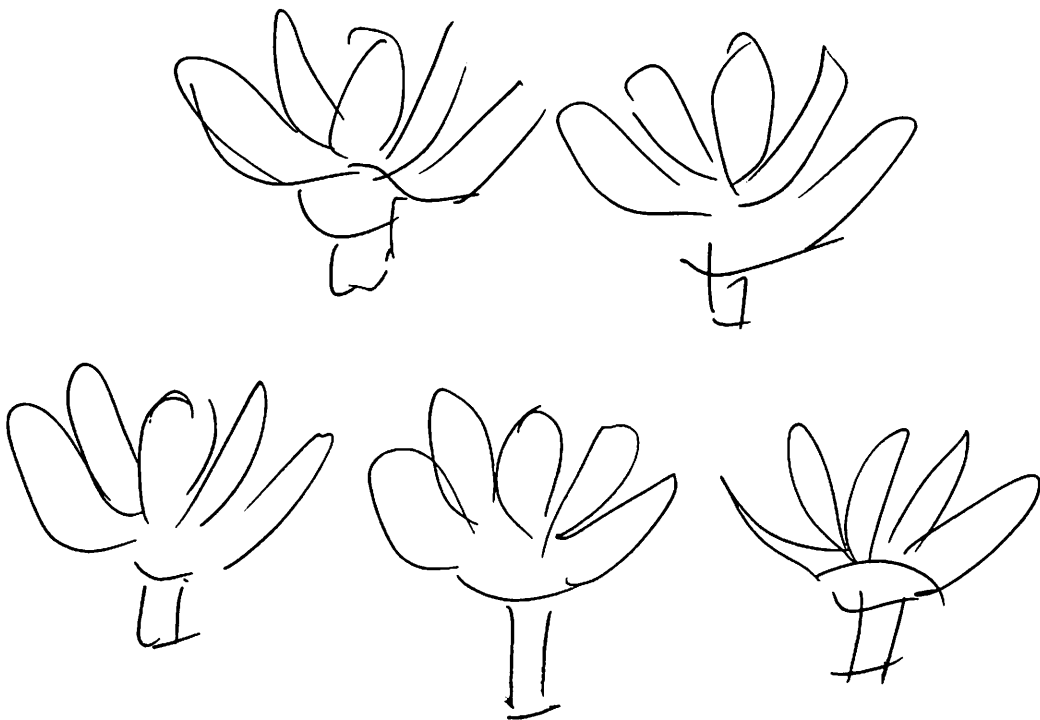




My name is



I am

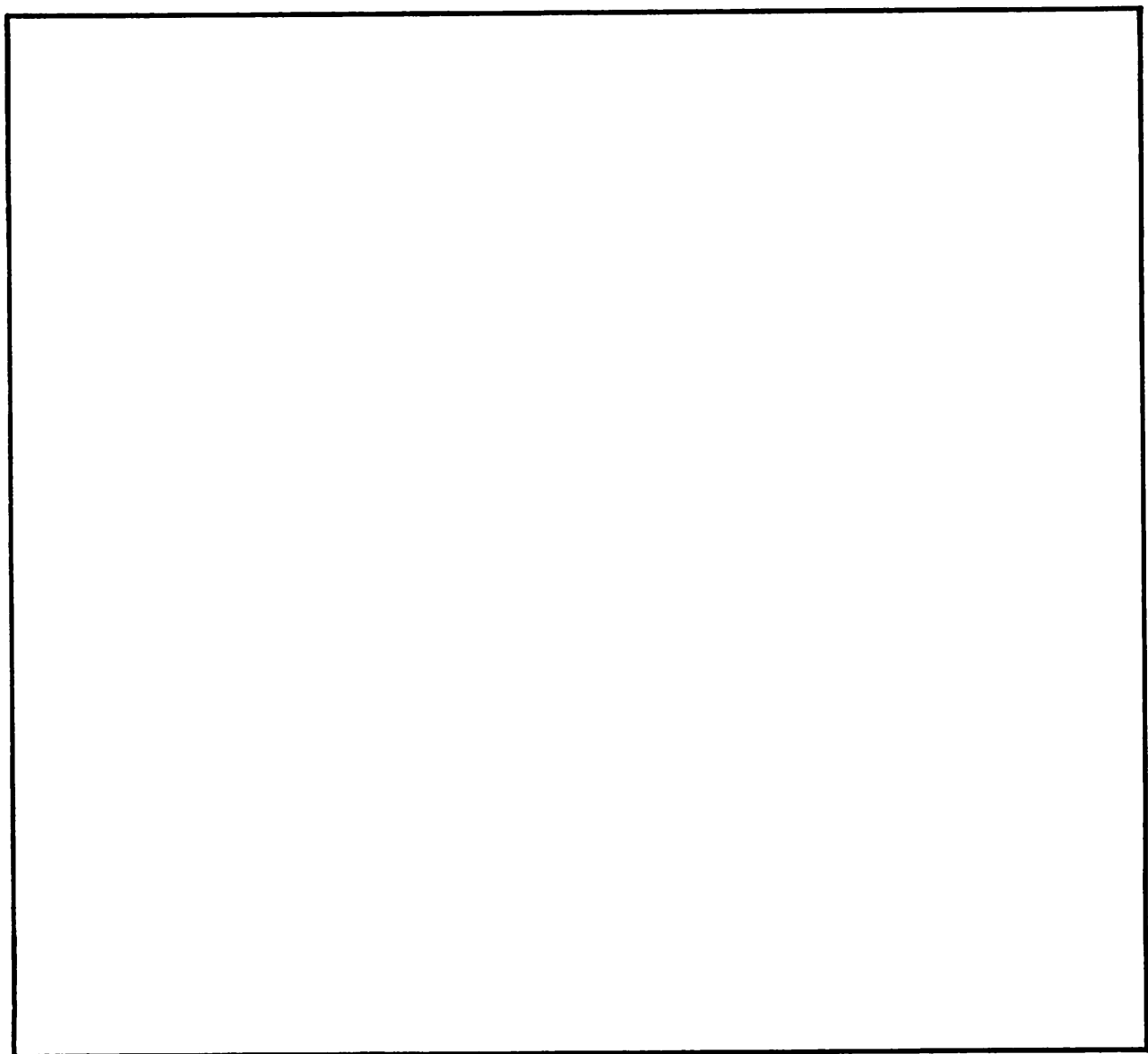


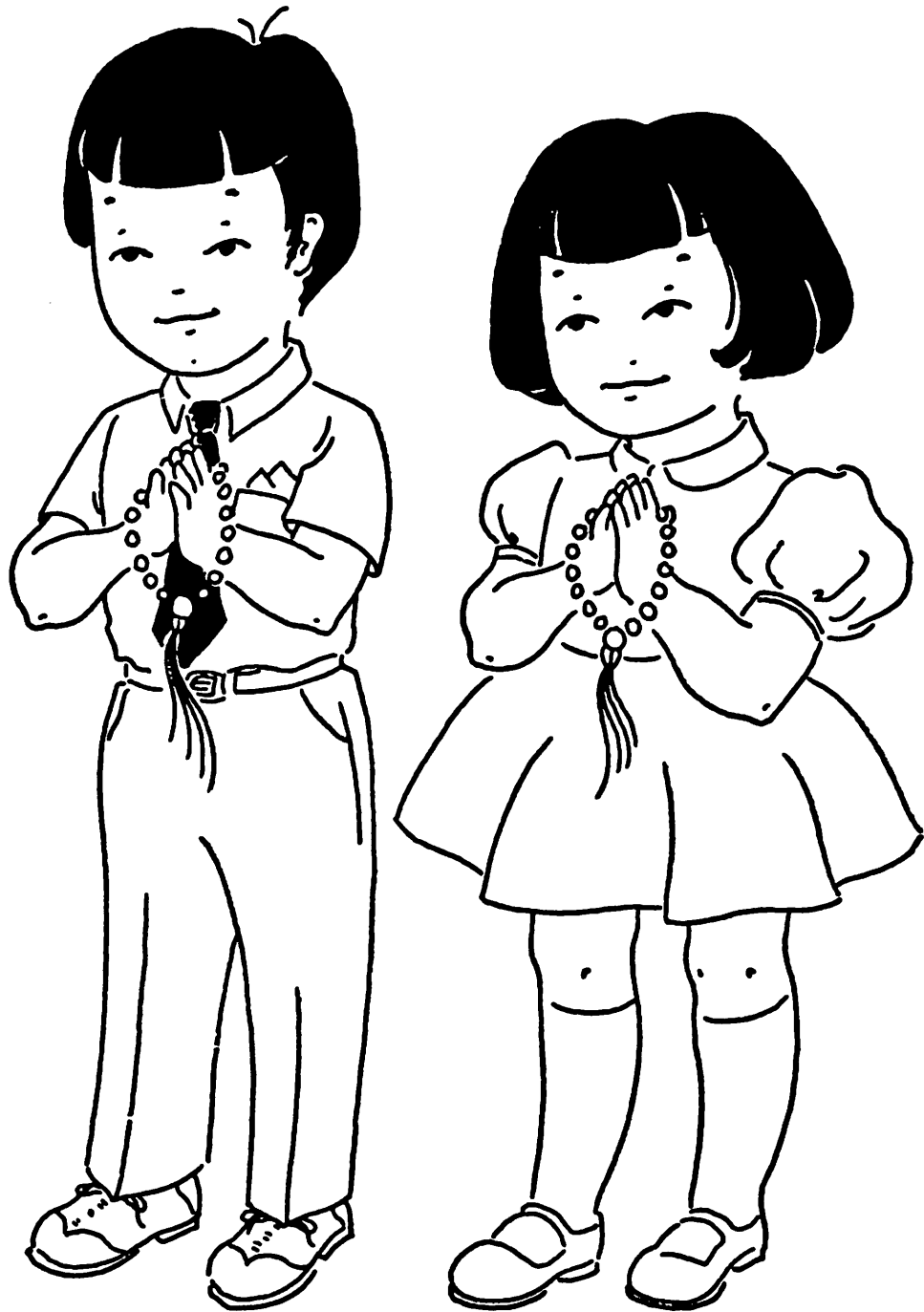
years old



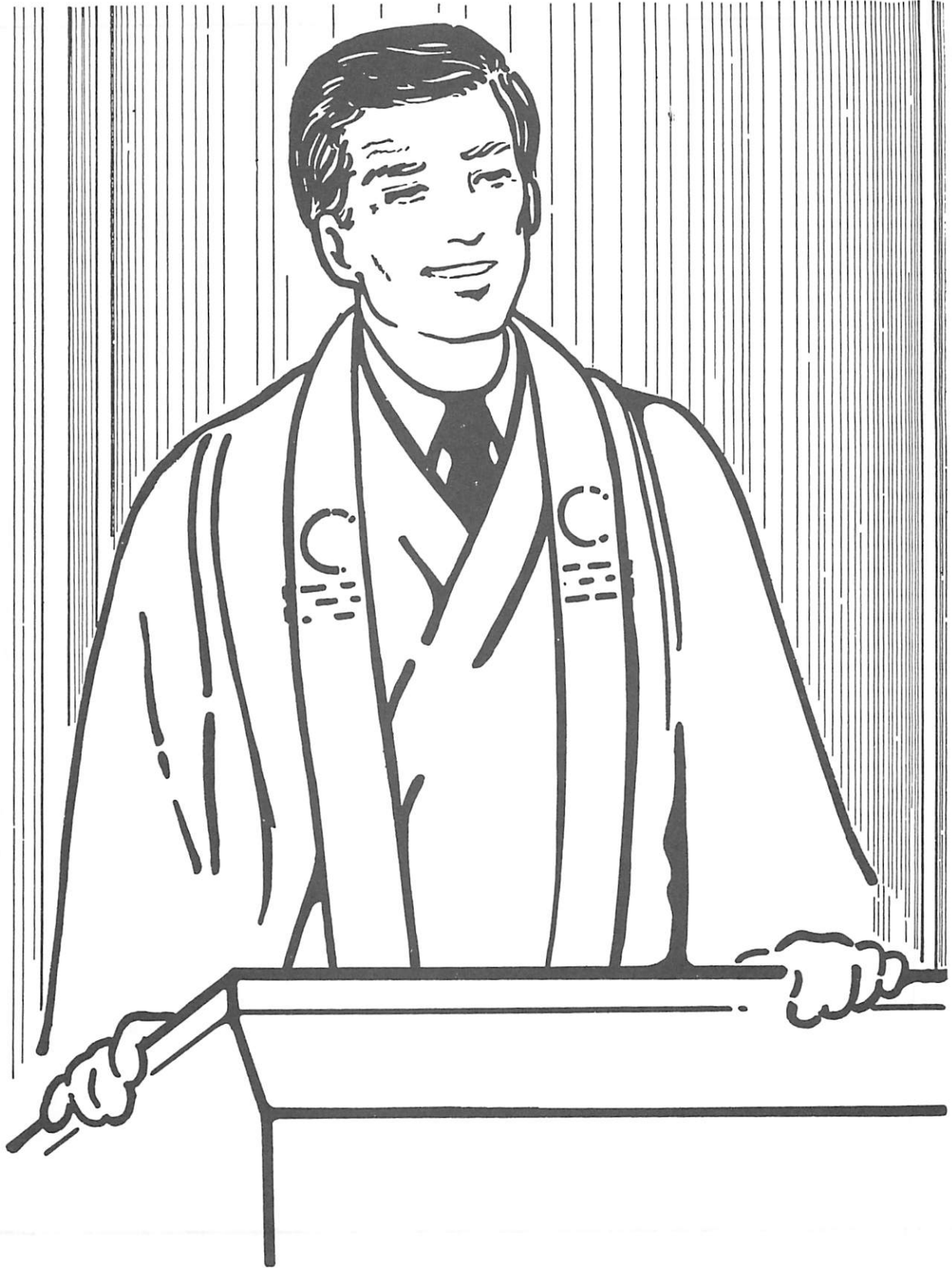
I live at

This is my Temple





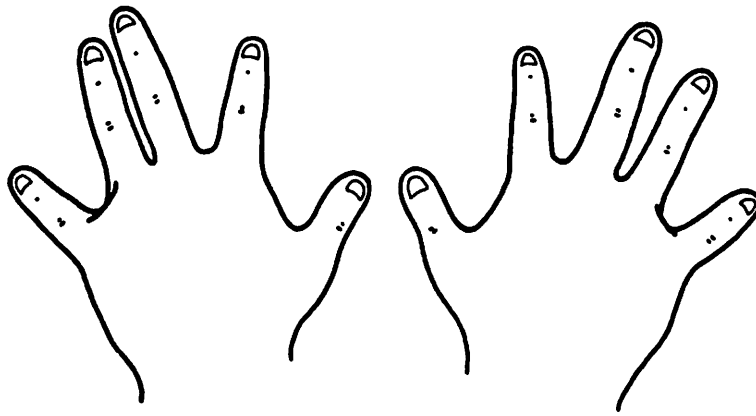
I like to go to Dharma School



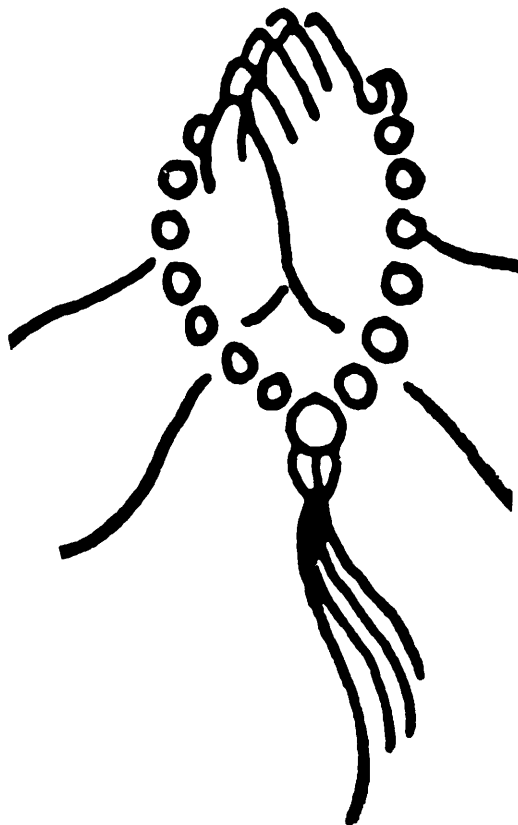
This is Rev. _____ .
We also call him "Sensei"

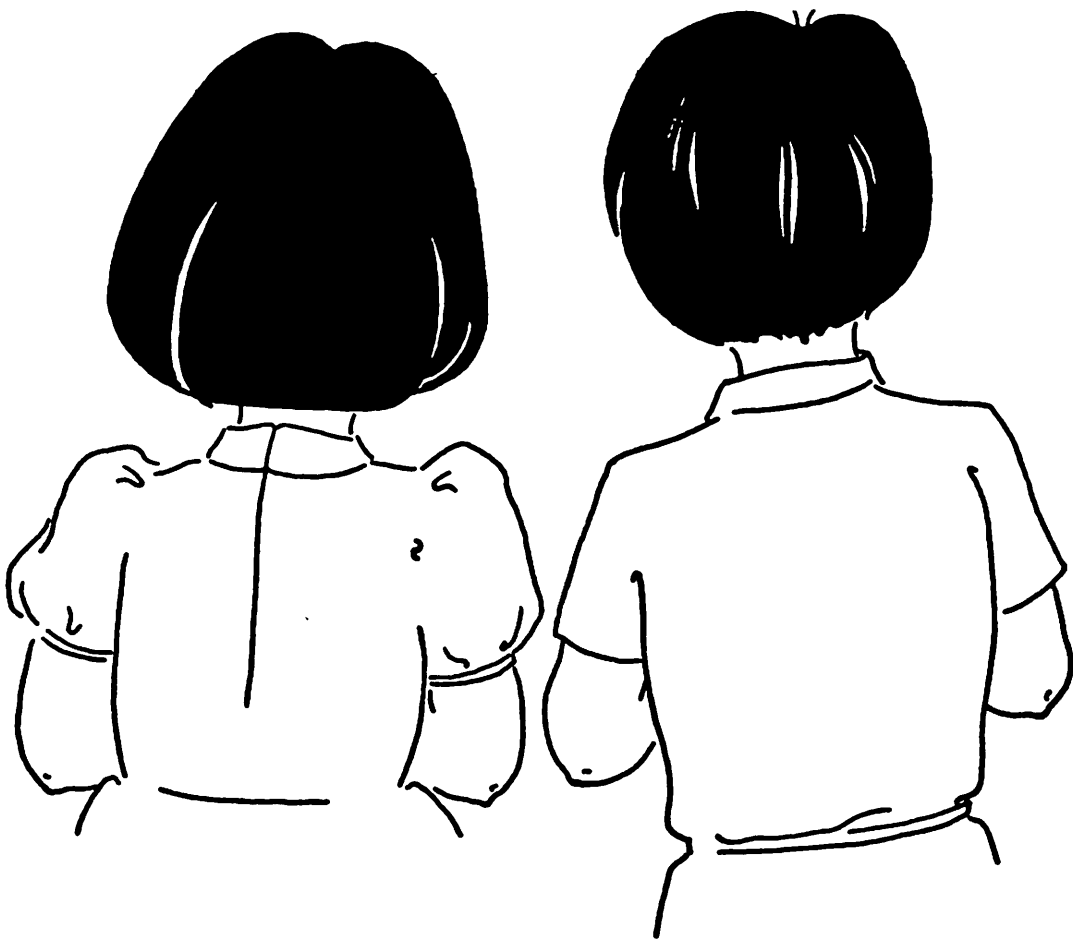
A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, occupying the upper half of the page. It is intended for a child to draw or write about their class teachers.

My class teachers are:

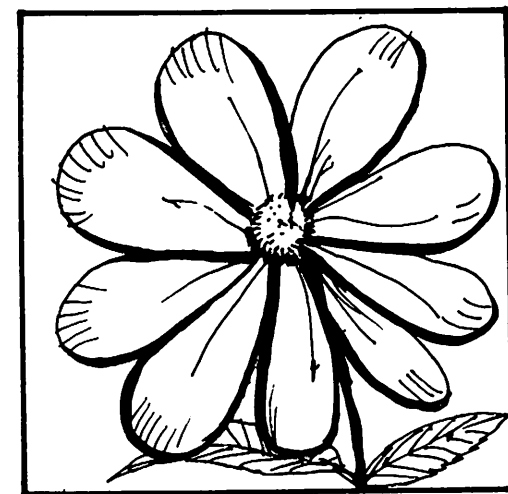
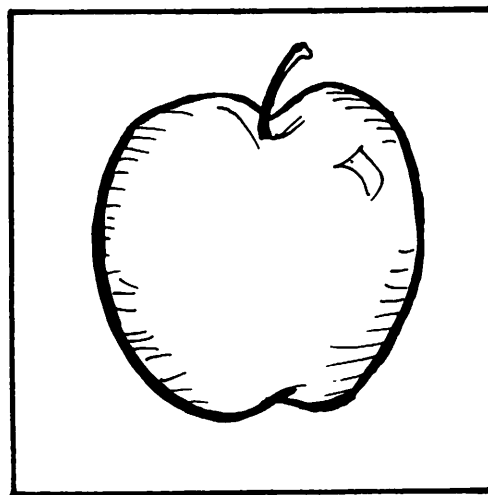
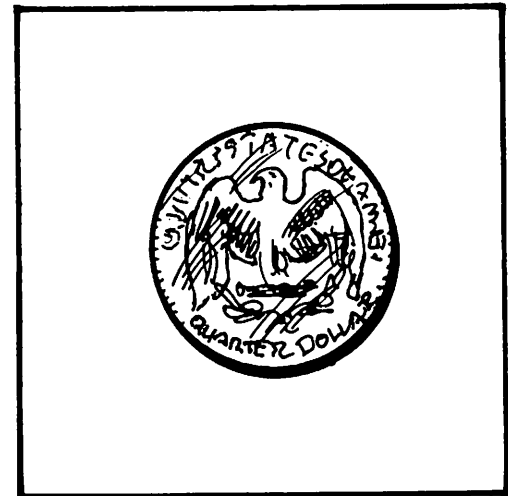
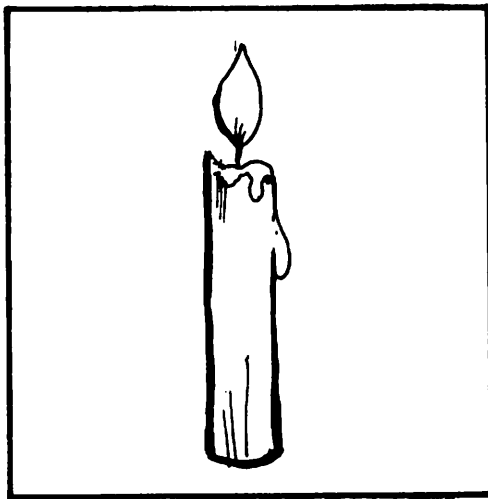
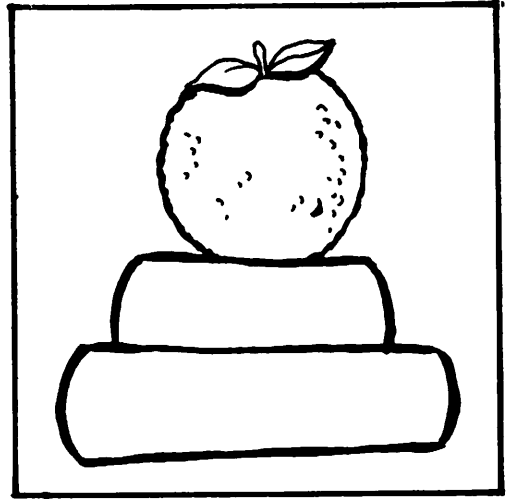
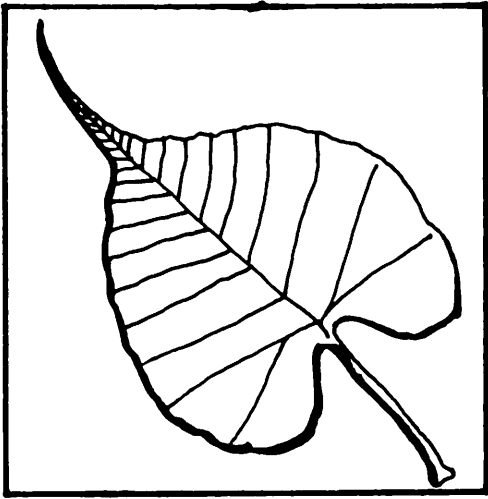


With my hands I learn
to
Gassho



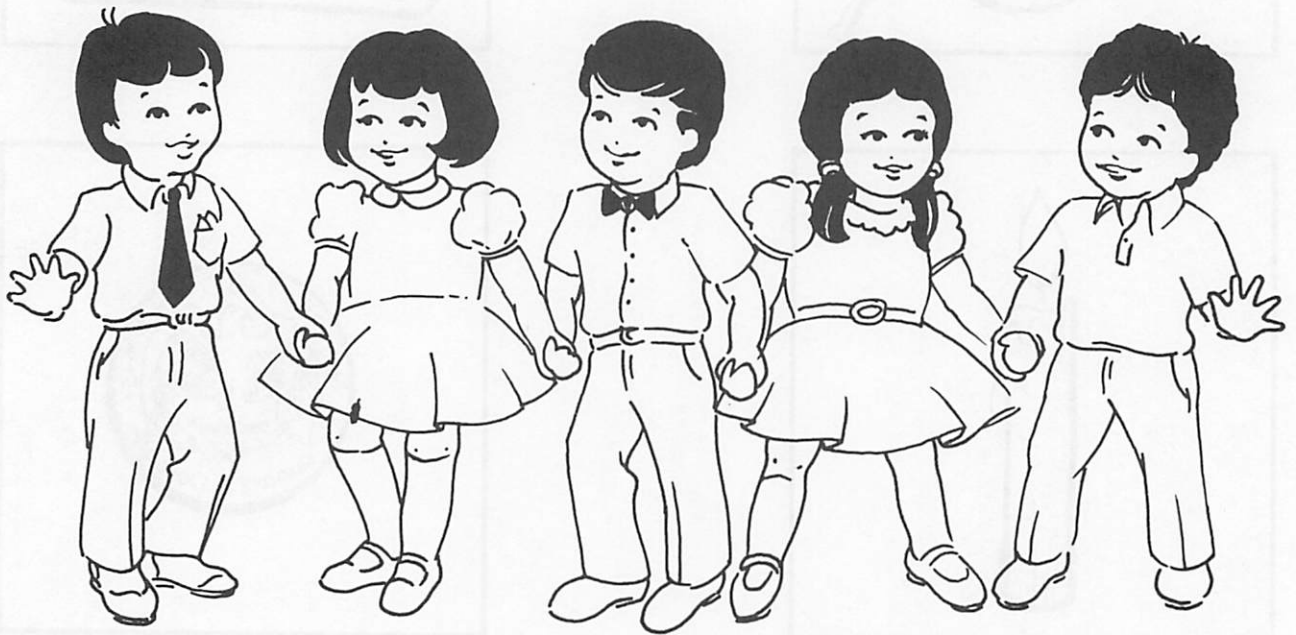


We sit quietly in the Hondo and listen



My Dana

We are all Buddha's children



南无阿弥陀仏

I recite the Nembutsu—Namu Amida Butsu

As a Buddha's Child

I Know Why I Go to Temple

Draw pictures of five different children and their reasons for coming to church on separate sheets of paper. (Make drawings large enough for children to see from their seats.)

1. I go to church because my mommy and daddy tell me to go.
2. I go to church to be with my friends.
3. I go to church because I like to go to church.
4. I go to church because it is so nice and quiet there.
5. I go to church to be with Buddha.

Talk about each picture with the children.

On a single sheet of paper have a similar drawing of the five children. Hand this paper to all the children and ask "What is your reason for coming to church? Please put a circle around the picture or pictures that explains best why you come to church." After the children have put a circle around the picture, ask a few children to come in front of the class to talk about the picture they chose. While no answer is incorrect—try to steer the children's way of thinking to "I go to church to be with Buddha."

In order to do this, ask if there is any child who put a circle around the picture, "I go to church to be with Amida Buddha." Talk with the children why this answer seems better than the others.

(Although I know Amida Buddha is always with me, I often forget and going to church helps me to remember. In the church, I feel closer to Amida Buddha. The Minister and teachers tell me about Amida Buddha.)

As A Buddha's Child

I Take Good Care of Books

Preparation Before Class:

1. Have a variety of books on the table so that all children may look at the books.
2. Have one well-kept Gatha book and one worn-out Gatha book.

Talk with the children about books:

Point out why books are wonderful—

1. Books have nice pictures.
2. Books tell us stories.
3. Books teach us new things.
4. Books teach us songs.
5. Books teach us about Buddha.

If books are so wonderful, how should we take care of them?

1. We should not throw them about.
2. We should not chew on the corners.
3. We should not tear the pages.
4. We should not write with pencils or crayons in books.
5. We should handle books with clean hands.
6. We should hold the book nicely and turn the pages carefully.

The priests always raised the Sutras to their heads in respect. Out of respect for the book, they never sat on a book or stepped on a book.

Show the children the well-kept Gatha book and the worn-out Gatha book. Read the story on the next page—*If Books Could Talk*.

Have the children look through different books during the rest of the lesson period.

Set aside next Sunday as “Book Sharing Day” and encourage children to bring a book from home to share with their friends in Dharma School. The teacher may read one of the books brought by the children.

As A Buddha's Child

I Try To Keep My Room Clean

We are learning more and more about how to be Buddha's children. We are learning how to act in the temple, how to listen carefully, and how to take care of our books. Today, let us talk a little about keeping our rooms clean. Just as we try to keep ourselves clean (the way we think, say and do things) we must keep our surroundings clean. Papers, chewing gum, candy wrappers, toys and books must be picked up and not thrown all over. Let's look around our room. Shall we try to clean up a little bit to see how nice things can look?

(Spend a short time with children in tidying up. Motivate children so they are really interested in keeping a place clean. The attitudes of neatness should not just center in one's own surroundings but everywhere at any time.)

Ask children to bring oatmeal boxes to Dharma School. If they have more than one, encourage them to bring all they have to share with others. When enough boxes are collected for all children, they may make attractive waste paper baskets by covering the boxes with wallpaper. These waste paper baskets are to be taken home by the children to encourage neatness at home.

As A Buddha's Child

I Try To Be Friendly

Use Flannel Board for Illustrations

Puppy lived in a large apartment building. He became very excited when Peggy took him to Grandpa Farmer's ranch. How nice it was to roll on the grass. How nice to smell the pine trees, the honeysuckle blossoms and the fresh warm milk. But what a big, big surprise when Puppy saw pigs, chickens, little calves and even butterflies. Why, Puppy didn't know other kinds of animals lived at all. He had never seen a pig in the apartment building. Or a baby calf walking down the halls. Or even a butterfly. Puppy raced about...here...there...everywhere. Bark...Bark...Bark. Puppy just couldn't stop barking. He barked at the pigs, the new born calf standing on shaky legs and at the fluffy white rabbits. And every time Puppy barked, the little animals ran away crying. The pigs squealed. The calf fell and the rabbits hid in a thorny bush. Puppy laughed and laughed. SUCH FUN...SUCH FUN. Each day his bark became louder and louder. No one wanted to be anywhere near him.

Then one day, Grandpa Farmer brought a large box from his truck and set it in the yard. Out stepped a white goose. With a loud bark, Puppy raced to the goose, ready to nip its tail. BARK...BARK...BARK. Oh, but the goose didn't run away frightened. Instead, it whirled around, swift as lightning and stuck out its tongue.

Puppy let out a cry and scooted under the porch. After a while he peeked out. He scooted further under the porch, into the darkness. All day long the goose kept watch. By nighttime, the mischievous Puppy was scared, cold and hungry. Lonesome, too.

"Why doesn't someone help me," he cried.

"Woooooooooooo...Woooooooooooo...Woooooooooooo."

Grandpa Farmer laughed. Puppy listened. He heard heavy footsteps coming outside.

"Come here, you saucy goose," said Grandpa Farmer. "I'll have to put you back into the box tonight."

"Puppy, Puppy," called Mistress Peggy.

Looking this way and that, Puppy came slowly from his hiding place.

All at once, Puppy knew that he had been very, very foolish and not one bit friendly. The next day, Puppy never barked once...he just went around wagging his tail and keeping an eye open for the saucy goose.

Vishaka

Discussion of story . . .

What are some of the things Puppy could not see by living in an apartment? What are some of the things he saw for the first time, while traveling to the farm? What happened to Puppy? What happened to all the other little animals? Do you think they had fun too? What came in the box? What sound scared the Puppy? Did you ever see a goose? Where did he hide? What do you think Puppy thought about while he was under the porch? Who heard the Puppy howl? Do you think Puppy barked again the next day at the animals? Or would he now be friendly?

All of you children are now going to school and also coming to Dharma School. You can go to them both and make a lot of noise and push others around and scare smaller children. Or you can make lots of friends. Which would you like to do? How can you make friends at school? At Dharma School? What can you do for your teachers? If you saw a child standing all alone, what would you do?

DISCUSS MAKING FRIENDS.

As A Buddha's Child

I Shall Not Be Selfish

Have you children ever heard your mother or father tell you "Don't be selfish"?

What does it mean when they tell you not to be selfish. Does it mean that we must think of others and not only think of ourselves?

Let us hear a story that will probably help you to understand what is meant by the word "selfish".

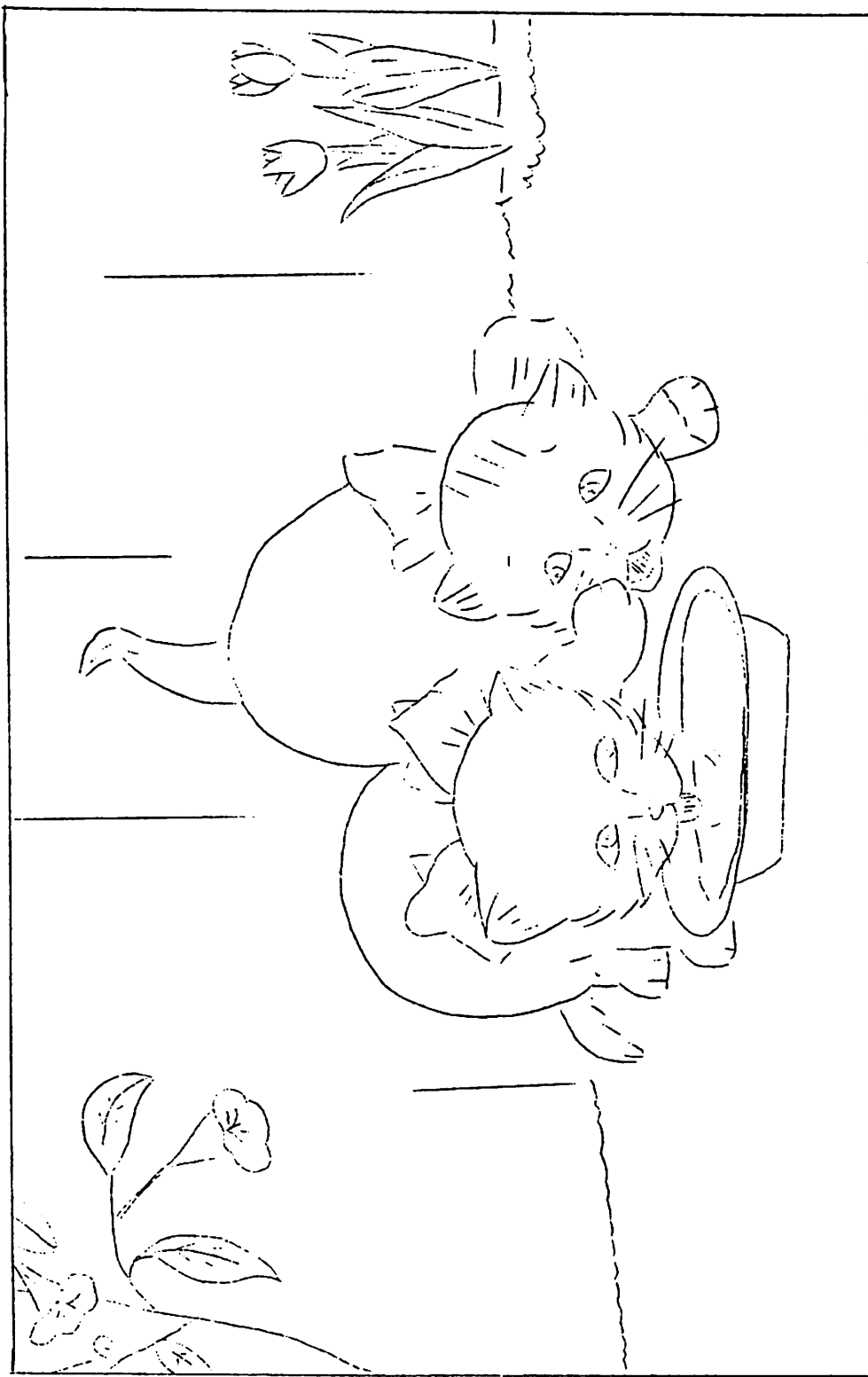
Show the next two pictures:

Discuss how the kittens are behaving.

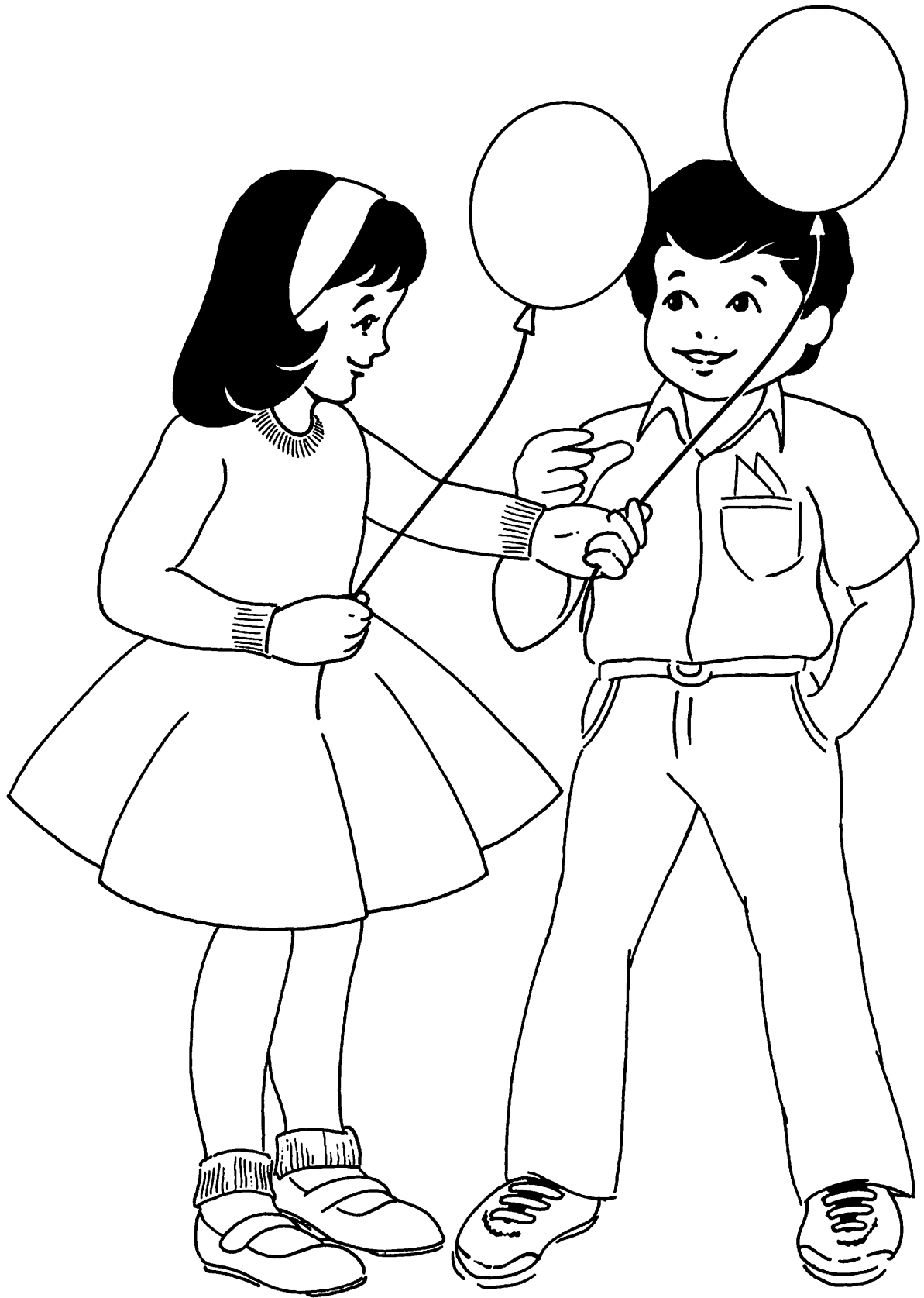
Discuss the young lady with the balloons.

Discuss how each of the children can share.

Buddha's children like to share.



Have the children discuss what message is in this picture.



Have the children discuss what message is in this picture.

AS A BUDDHA'S CHILD

I enjoy going with my parents wherever they take me. . .

Collect pictures from magazines to illustrate what you say.

As a Buddha's child, I enjoy going with my parents wherever they take me. Sometimes they take me to places that are not very interesting for me . . .

(Show pictures of places where children are taken with parents that children do not particularly enjoy but nevertheless have to go with parents. For example: (1) visiting new friends I do not know, (2) shopping for something that is of no interest to me, (3) going for a long ride.)

but I try to enjoy myself because it may not be so bad as I think.

Besides, there will be other times when they can take me to places where I enjoy going . . .

(Show illustrations of places where children enjoy going: (1) park (2) beach, (3) zoo.)

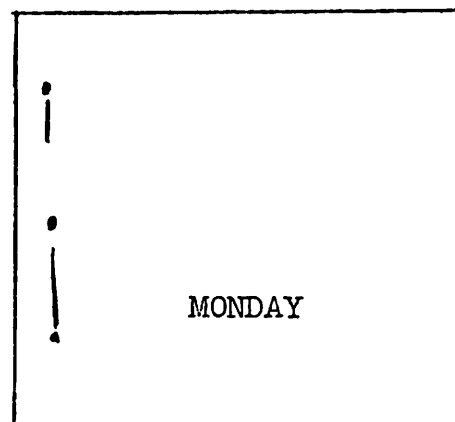
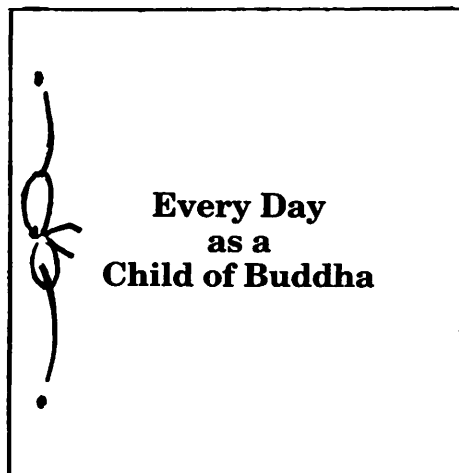
As a Buddha's child, I try to go along with my parents wherever they ask me to go. I try to be a good sport and enjoy myself even though it may not be too much fun. It makes me happier and everyone else happier that way.

EVERY DAY AS A BUDDHA'S CHILD

You children all know the days of the week, don't you? Shall we name them all together? (Monday, Tuesday, -----). We come to Dharma School on Sunday morning, don't we? Here in our Dharma school we learn about being Buddha's children. Do you try to follow the Buddha's teaching not only on Sunday but every day of the week?

Make a "Days of the Week" booklet out of colored construction paper. Hand out seven sheets of paper (all the same color or mixed if desired) to each child. There should be holes at the sides of the paper so children may tie booklet together with colorful yarn. Each paper should have the name of the day of the week printed at the top or bottom. (Be sure the days of the week are in order before children string the book together.) Have children look through old magazines or greeting cards to cut appropriate pictures showing children having a good time and paste them on each page.

When children are finished, have children talk about their pictures.



To Temple We Go



“AS A BUDDHA’S CHILD”
“I HAVE BUDDHA’S LOVE WITHIN ME”
(Buddha Nature)

The other Sunday when we were pretending to be Buddhist children of India, we talked about why the Indian Buddhists greet each other with their hands in the position of gassho. Does anyone remember the reason why the Indians greet each other in this manner? (Yes, the reason is that the Indians believe that within each of us is the love and wisdom of Buddha.)

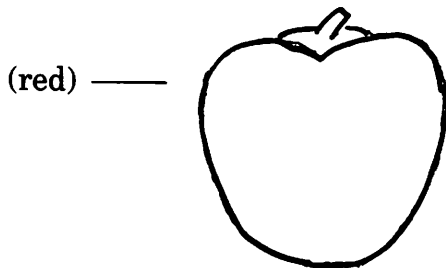
Where does an apple come from?

(from the tree)

Where does the tree come from?

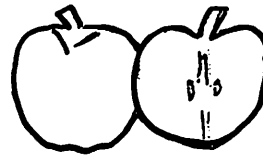
(From the seed that was in the apple)

To help children visualize what you are saying, make an apple out of red and white construction paper.

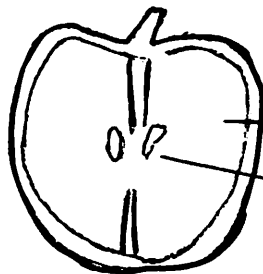


Outside of apple

Make the apple on double thickness of paper folded at the side.



Apple opened to show inside



Paste white paper

Seeds

Inside of apple

Note - a real apple may be used and sliced in half so that the children may see the seeds.

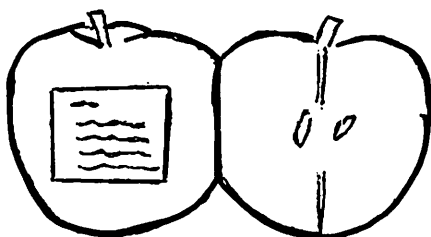
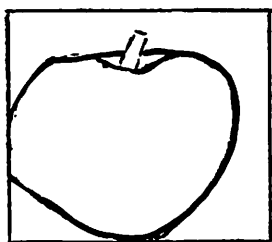
Tell the children that deep inside the apple are seeds. These seeds, though very tiny, have the power within them to mature into a tree. This is hard to believe, but we know it is true, don't we? In the same way, deep inside of us is the love of Amida Buddha always trying to help us to be good boys and girls so that we can eventually be a Buddha ourselves.

For Review of Last Sunday's Lesson

Children can make cut-out of apple with construction paper. (Do not skimp on little children's art work. Make the apple at least 3" in diameter.)

Directions:

Fold



Have these materials ready for the children:

1. Using red construction paper, draw outline of apple with heavy pencil. Children can color stem black.
2. On white construction paper cut the shape of an apple to represent the inside of the apple. Make this slightly smaller than the outside of the apple.
3. Have seeds cut out of black construction paper.
4. Have typewritten message to parents for children to paste inside.

To Mommy and Daddy,

As the seeds deep within the apple eventually grow into a tree, I, too, have the precious seed of Buddhahood within me to help me realize Enlightenment.

The children should do the cutting and pasting themselves.

The value of a project is lost when the project is done just for the sake of making something. The teacher should always have a good reason for having a project. In this case, the teacher will review a lesson. During the project, the teacher should take every opportunity to interject into the conversation the highlights of the previous lesson.

The idea of Buddha Nature was introduced as the children went through their role-playing as Indians. Buddha Nature was again brought up by connecting the idea of Buddha Nature with the seed in the apple. Each lesson is a step towards helping the children to grasp the meaning of Buddha Nature at their own age level.



I'M BUDDHA'S CHILD

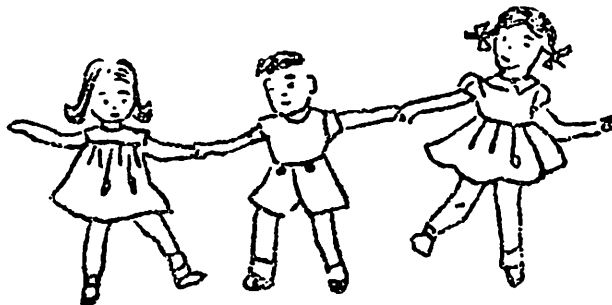
I'm Buddha's child,
I'll tap, tap, tap
Let's clap, clap, clap,
Let's clap and tap.

I'm Buddha's child
and so are you.
Let's shake, shake, shake
How do you do?

I'm Buddha's child,
I'll hold your hands.
Let's swing, swing, swing,
Let's be good friends,

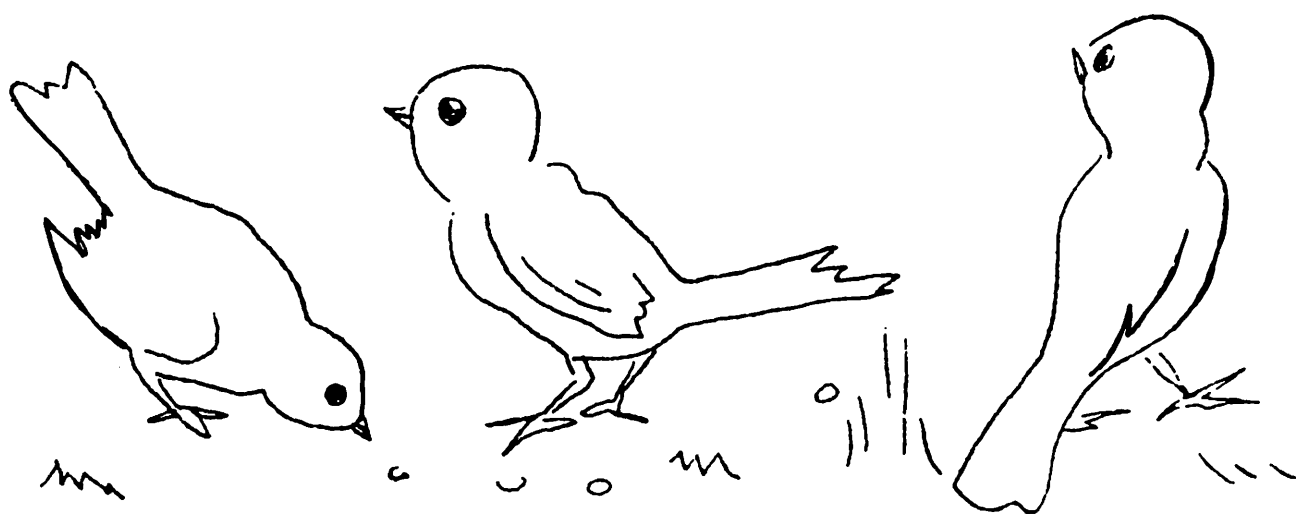
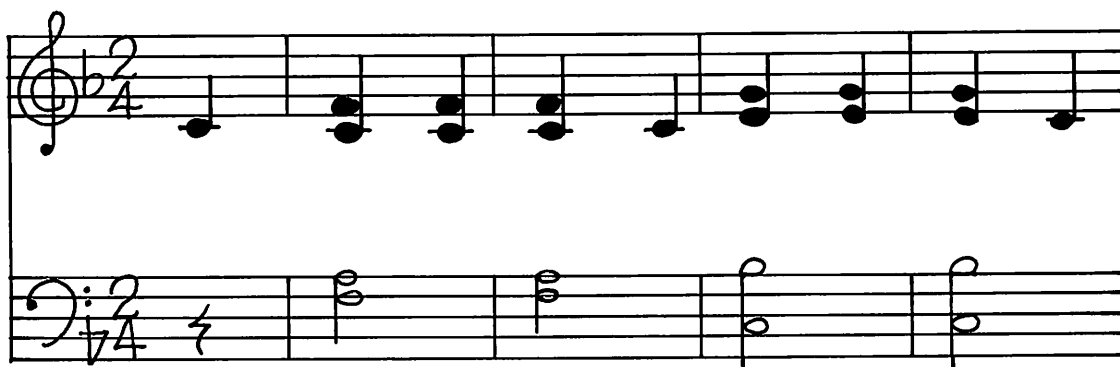
I'm Buddha's child,
I'll smile, smile, smile,
Let's turn, turn, turn
We'll play awhile.

Let's meet again,
We will, I know,
Goodbye, my friends,
Goodbye, gassho.



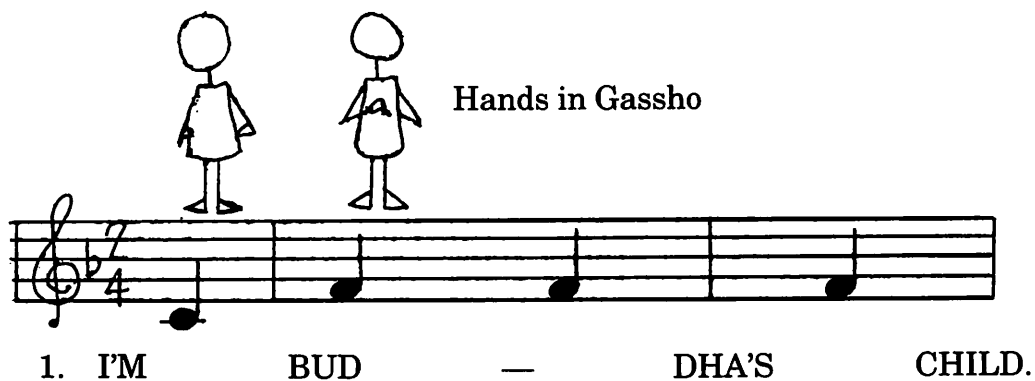
I'm Buddha's Child

(For Piano)



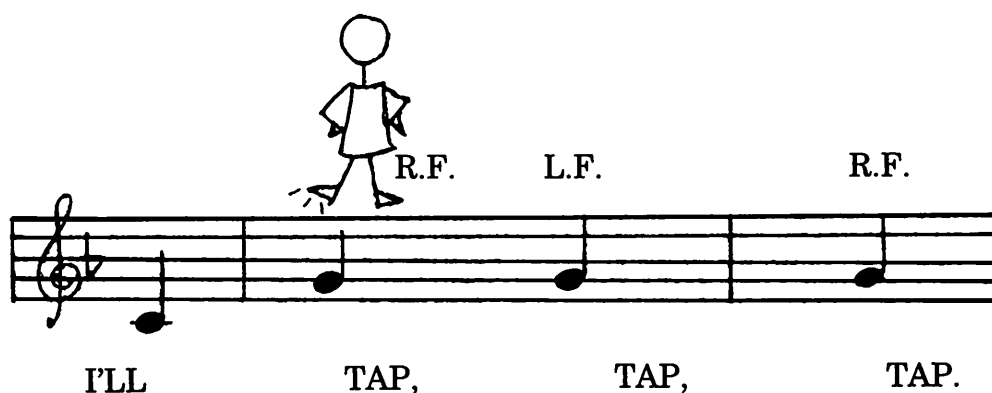
I'm Buddha's Child

Starting position: Stand erect with hand on sides. Face audience.



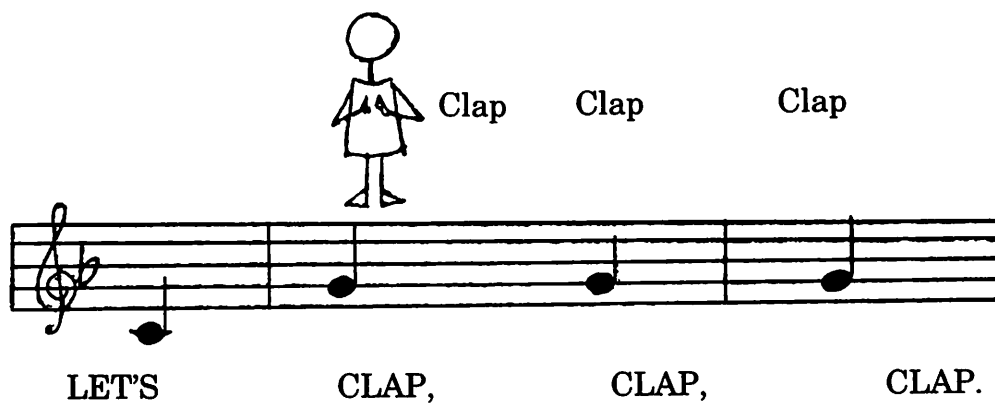
Hands in Gassho

1. I'M BUD — DHA'S CHILD.



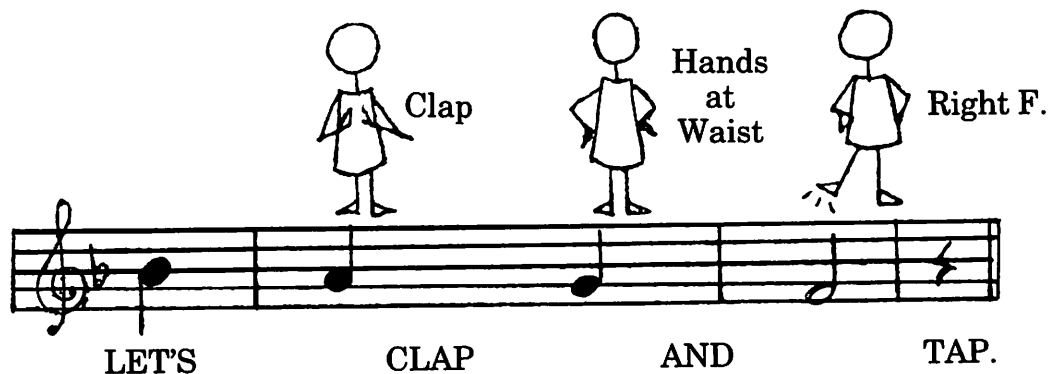
R.F. L.F. R.F. L.F.

I'LL TAP, TAP, TAP.



Clap Clap Clap

LET'S CLAP, CLAP, CLAP.



Clap Hands at Waist Right F.

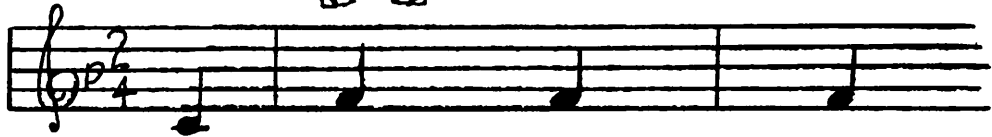
LET'S CLAP AND TAP.

I'm Buddha's Child

FACE PARTNER:



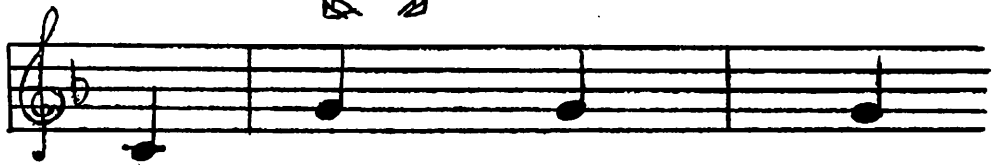
Hands in Gassho



2. I'M BUD — DHA'S CHILD,



L. Hand at waist
R. Hand point to partner

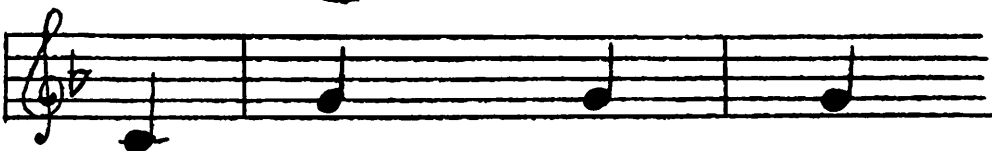


AND SO ARE YOU.



Shake hands (R. Hands)

Shake Shake



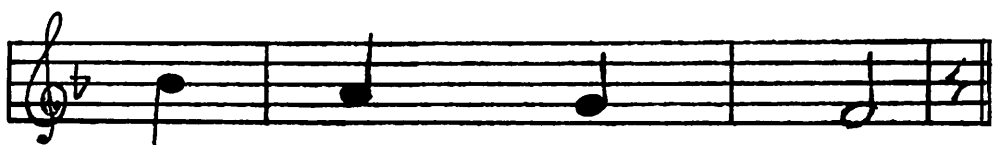
LET'S SHAKE, SHAKE, SHAKE.

Same as
above

Shake

Shake

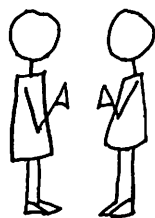
Shake



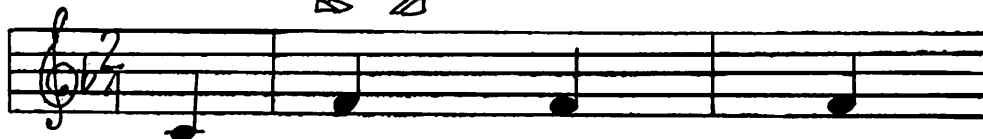
HOW DO YOU DO?

I'm Buddha's Child

FACE PARTNER:



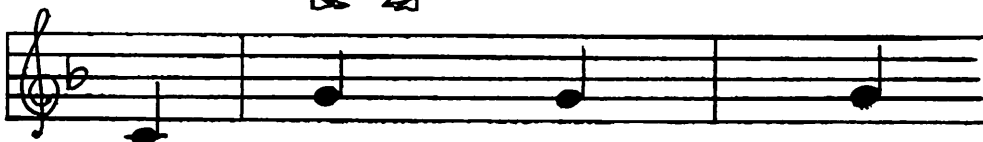
Hands in Gassho



3. I'M BUD — DHA'S CHILD.



Hold both hands



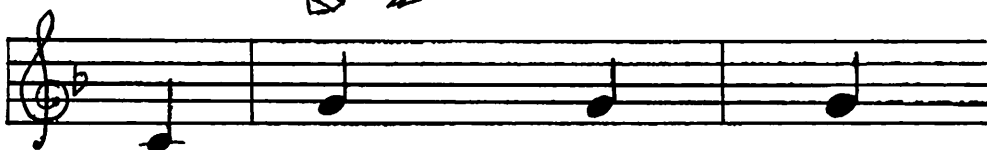
I'LL HOLD YOUR HANDS.



Swing
out

Swing
in

Swing back
to center
position



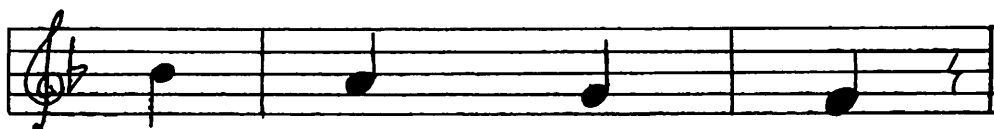
LET'S SWING, SWING, SWING.

Same as
above

Swing
out

Swing
in

Swing back
to center
position



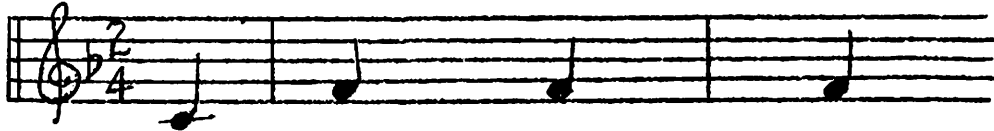
LET'S BE GOOD FRIENDS.

I'm Buddha's Child

FACE AUDIENCE:



Hands in Gassho



4. I'M BUD — DHA'S CHILD.



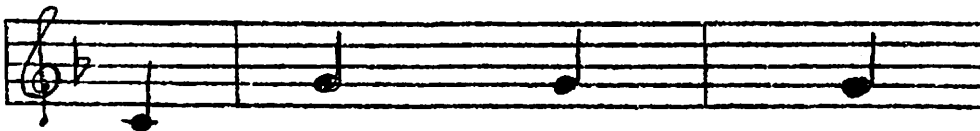
Nod R.



Nod L.



Nod R.



I'LL SMILE, SMILE, SMILE.

Starting with R.F. turn, stamping with each beat, completing circle with 7 beats.

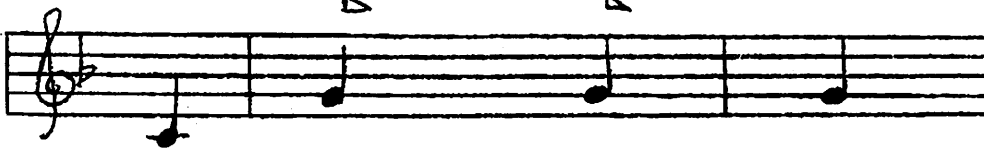


Turn clock-wise R.F.



Turn clock-wise L.F.

Continue turning R.F.



LET'S TURN, TURN, TURN.

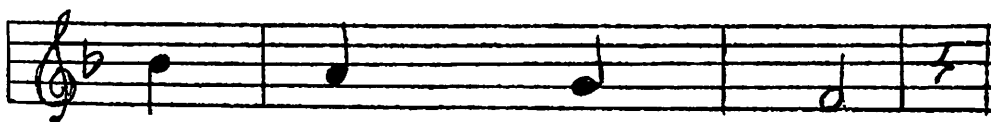
L.F.

R.F.

L.F.



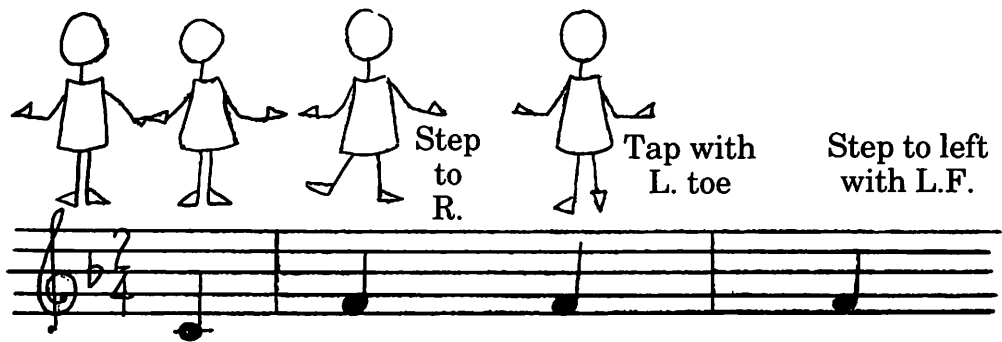
Ending circle with R.F. (Face front)



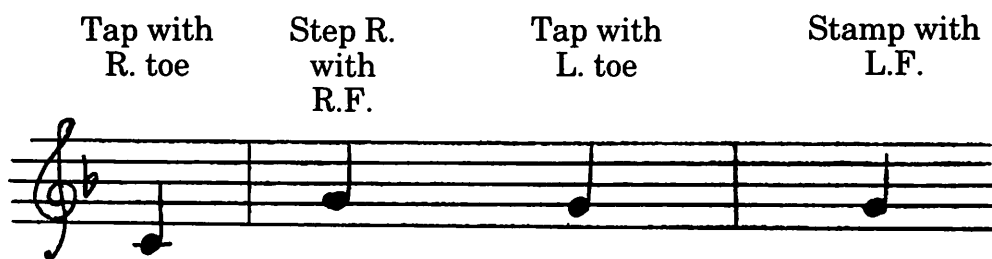
LET'S PLAY A — WHILE.

I'm Buddha's Child

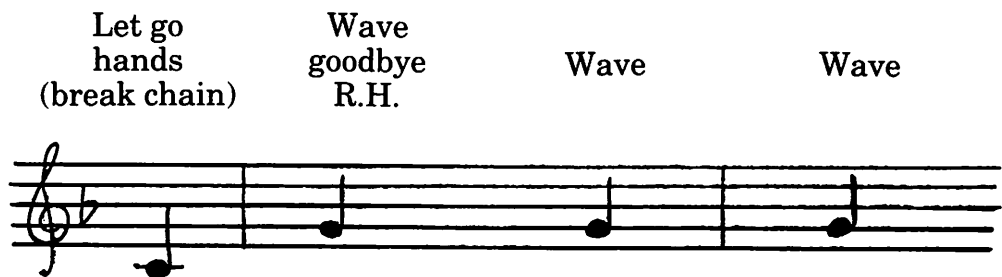
FACE AUDIENCE: Form a chain by holding hands.



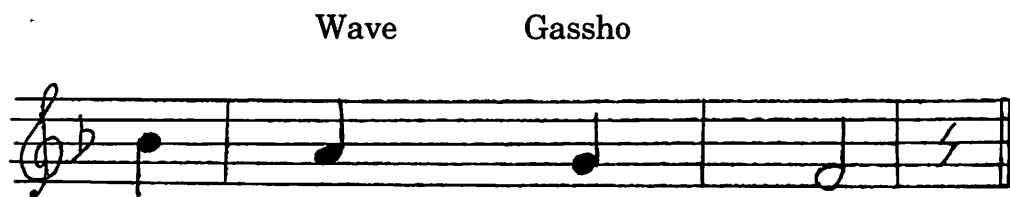
5. LET'S MEET A — GAIN;



WE WILL, I KNOW.



GOOD — BYE, MY FRIENDS,



GOOD — BYE, GAS — SHO.

A. Tsu ki ga de ta,
tsu ki ga de ta.
 Point right index finger
 upwards at arm's length.
 Move wrist up and down
 4 times.

B. Te ma ri no yo - ni-
 Starting with hands lowered
 at sides, make a complete
 circle with arms, as you
 take 3 steps forward,
 with right foot first.
 On 4th step, stand feet
 together, arms up.

C. ma n ma ru ku,
 Take 3 steps backwards,
 starting with right foot,
 gradually lowering hands.
 On 4th, feet together.

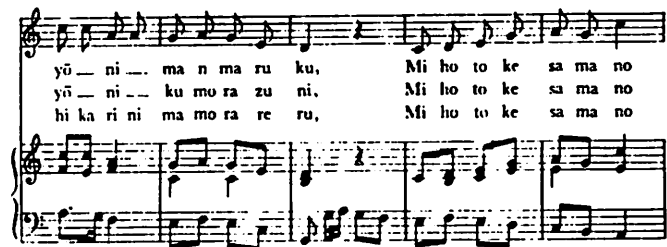
D. Mi ho to ke sa ma no
o ko ko ro wa,
 Hands crossed on chest,
 take one step to the right,
 then bring left toe behind
 right foot
 Take one step to the left,
 then bring right toe behind
 left foot.
 Make circle in 8 counts and
 face front.

E. Tsu ki no yo ni
ma n ma ru i.
 Hold hands with person next
 to you.
 Take 3 steps to the right.
 In 4th step, left toe tap
 right foot.
 Repeat to the left.

Tsuki ga Deta

Nichiyōgakkō Dōjin
 ♩ = 100

Seijin Nomura



TSUKI GA DETA The Moon is Shining

The moon is shining, the moon is shining
 like a big round ball,
 the Buddha's heart
 is also round like the full moon.

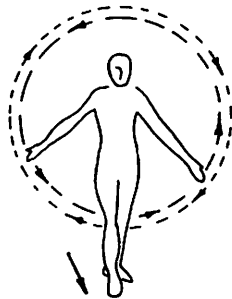
The moon is shining, the moon is shining
 like a clear bright mirror,
 the Buddha's heart
 is also clear and never becomes cloudy.

The moon is shining, the moon is shining
 we are guided by the light of Compassion,
 the Buddha's heart
 is as beautiful as the full moon.

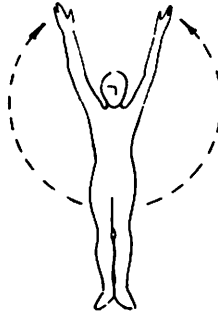
Tsuki ga Deta



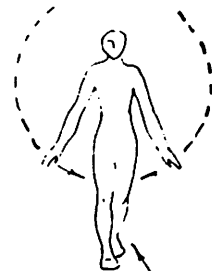
A



B-1



B-2



C



D-1



D-2



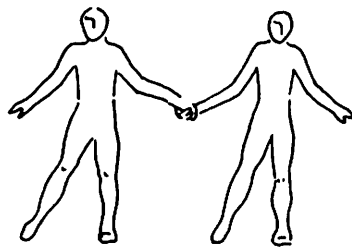
D-3



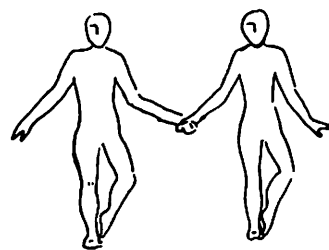
D-4



D-5



E-1



E-2

Thank You Amida Buddha

Print the words Namu Amida Butsu
or its pronunciation:

NAMU

AMIDA

BUTSU

A reflective activity to stimulate an awareness of our gratitude to Amida. Draw or glue pictures from magazines that show the various kinds of gratitude that we find in our daily lives. Evaluate the project by putting them up in the classroom. Let the students discuss their work and think of other things for which they are grateful.

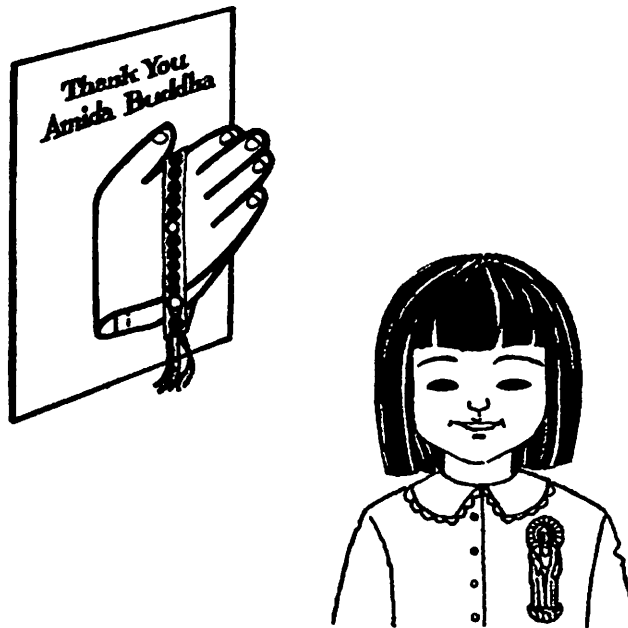
Use the sheet as a booklet cover. Expand upon project “d” by adding pages of your own. These may include stories, photographs, study sheets, student compositions, as well as pictures with captions.

For a colorful discussion of gratitude to Amida Buddha, create a “window” to see the world. Cut out a rectangular hole approximately 2½” by 5”. If you have pictures that you do not wish to cut, place the window over them and share it with the class. Students can also do this. Create a challenging atmosphere in your classroom by showing just a small portion of a picture; have the children guess what the object of appreciation is through riddles. And of course, one can peer through the hole say “Thank you” for everything one can see!

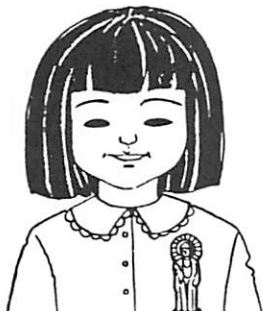
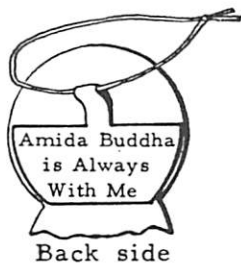
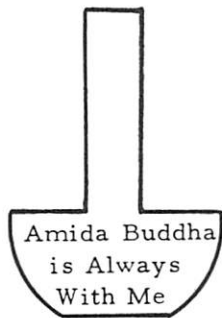


Thank You Amida Buddha

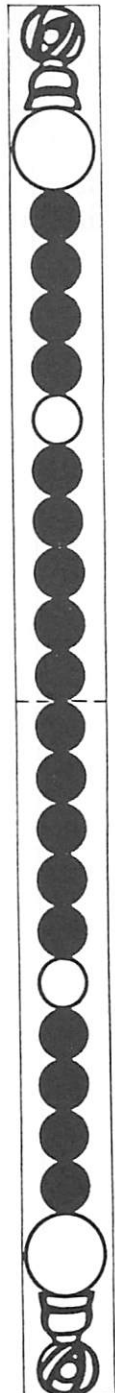
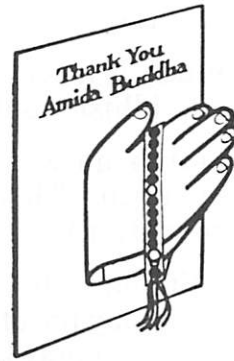
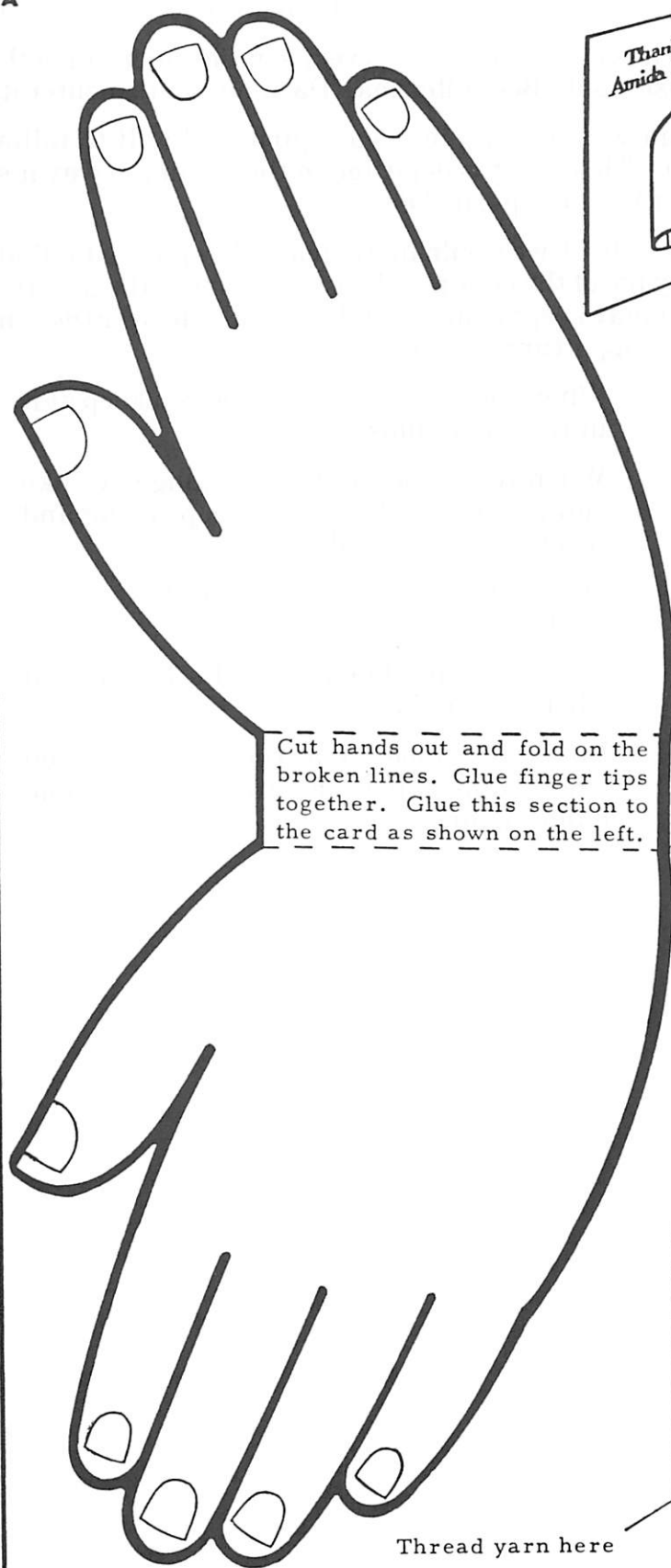
Thank You Amida Buddha



- a) Hands are reverently placed together to show the oneness of the Universe and our oneness with the Buddha. Glue the hands on another cardboard then print the words 'Namu Amida Butsu' or 'Thank You Amida Buddha' etc.
- b) Children will enjoy this activity which is reminiscent of Amida's everlasting love and compassion. Cut out the figure of Amida Buddha and the mushroom-shape tab. Glue together as shown. Attach short string and tie a knot. (refer to page 28, "Buddha Loves Everyone")



A



Thread yarn here

DARUMA-SAN

The Daruma-san has long been one of the favorite toys of Japanese children.

Inasmuch as it is only a toy, it has a very significant origin in that it is modeled after the great Buddhist monk, Bodhidharma. (Daruma is a transliteration of Dharma).

Bodhidharma was a monk of great spirit and will to follow in the way of the Buddha's teaching. This spirit is depicted in the toy in the way it stands in the upright position no matter how it is pushed down.

In the Sunday school, we would like to teach the spirit of Bodhidharma in connection with the every day life of the children. These are some of the questions we asked the children. Perhaps you may keep them in mind also and talk over these matters with the children whenever the opportunity arises.

When you start something, do you keep at it until you are finished?

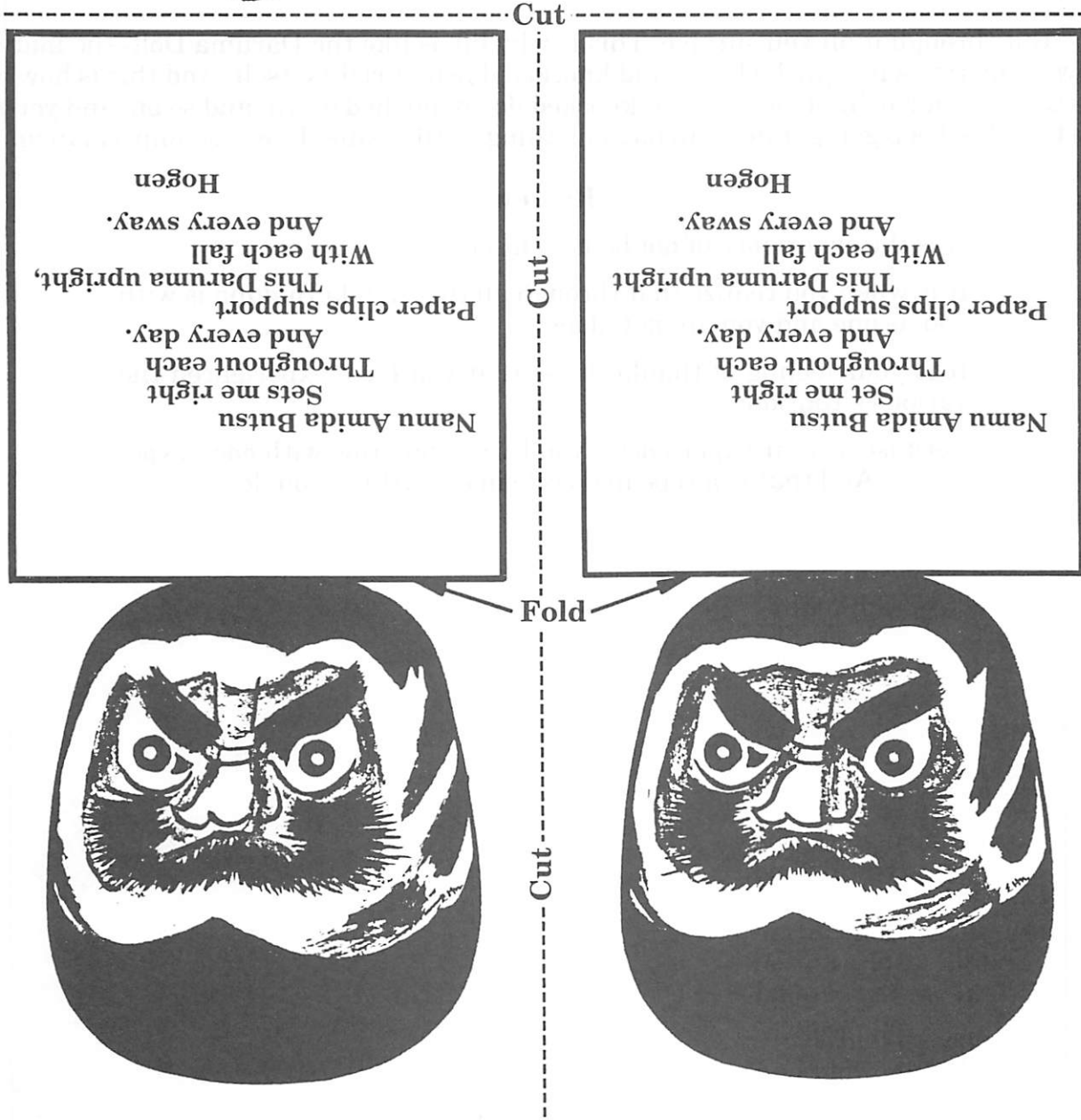
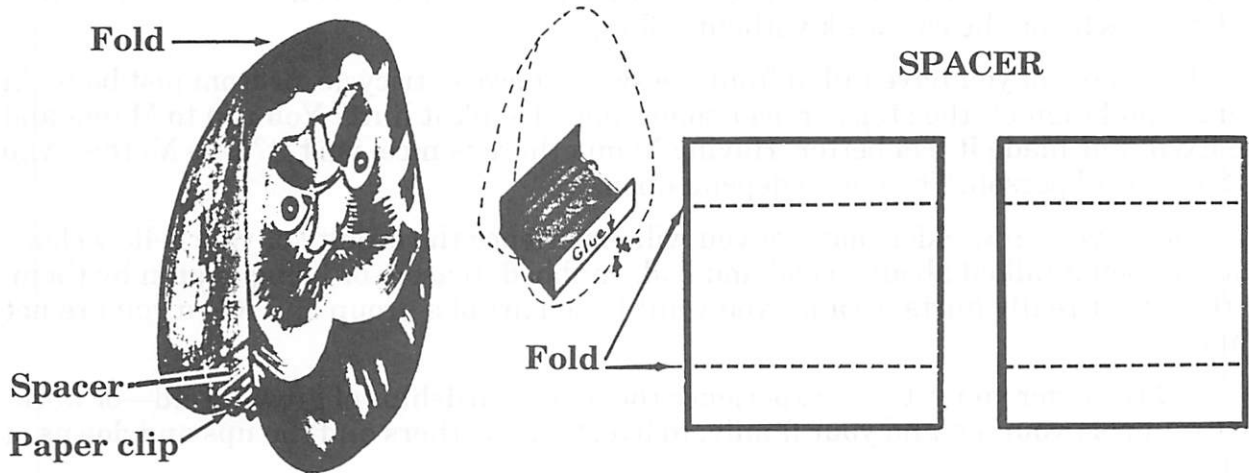
When you are learning something new, like riding the bicycle, do you keep trying and trying even if you fall down?

Do you try to eat most of the things your mother cooks for you?

Do you remember to say the Nembutsu when you are happy?

Do you remember to say the Nembutsu even when things go wrong and try to become happy again?

Daruma-san



THE DARUMA DOLL

How many of you have seen a little baby take his first steps? You see the many times that he falls before he can walk without falling.

How many of you have fallen from the swing, bicycle, tricycle, or from just being in a rush and fallen off the steps or over something? Didn't it hurt? You ran to Mama and she fixed it or made it feel better. Having Mama there is nice, isn't it? The Mother who is the fit-it-all person. The one to depend upon.

And as you grow older many of you will experience the cruelty of your fellow classmates of being talked about—good and bad, snubbed, teased, or being beaten by them. At this age it really hurts because you want to be part of a group and when you are not it hurts.

And the older you get, you experience the many hardships of growing old—of working to support yourself and your family, to live, to help others and the ups and downs of living.

But through it all you survive. This is why life is like the Daruma Doll—no matter how many times it is pushed over and knocked down, it rights itself. And this is how we are also. We have fallen down, been knocked down, pushed down, and so on, and yet we survive. We keep going. Life is an ongoing thing until we die. Life is so impermanent

Review

It is the experience of not being a loser.

It is when you realize that through all this Amida Buddha is with you as one and you are not alone.

It is your feeling of thankfulness that you have experienced the various situations.

Because of your experiences, you learn and grow with each experience. And that is a repeated cycle in everything you do.

Because of your experiences, you learn what is good, what is bad, and try not to have too many of the bads repeated, but most of the good. In other words, from your experiences, you learn and grow with each experience. And this is a repeated cycle in everything you do.



Daruma Dolls are symbols of a well balanced life

YOU'LL NEED:



Plastic egg-shaped hosiery container

OR



Real egg with the insides taken out (have a 1/2" hole at the "pointed" top and shake yolk and white out)



Yarn (for hair)

Piece of clay 1" square



Glue



Permanent marker

WHAT TO DO



1. Open the plastic container and press clay to bottom.

2. If using a real egg shell, glue pebble to bottom and cover hole with yarn hair.



3. Decorate with markers in red and blue to make a face and body.

4. Push it over-and it returns to a stable position.

Chapter V

Storytelling

IF BOOKS COULD TALK

As long as we are talking about books, shall we just pretend for a moment and hear what a book could say if it could talk? Perhaps it might begin in this way —

“I am a clean, new book, and I would like to stay that way. My outside will keep clean if you will take good care of me. My insides will stay clean if you will always wash your hands and dry them carefully before touching me. Don’t ever wet your fingers to turn my pages.

And another thing, do you like being pinched? Well, I don’t either! Please don’t pinch down the corners of my leaves to mark your place. Use a slip of paper or a ribbon instead.

Would you like to be thrown face downward on the floor? It hurts, really it does! Sometimes I get my back broken that way. Won’t you close me carefully and put me in a bookcase when you have finished reading me?”

POINTS TO CONSIDER IN STORYTELLING

I. AUDIENCE ADAPTATION

When choosing stories for a particular group, the following factors should be considered:

1. Sex and age of the listener
2. Economic status of the audience
3. Hobbies and interests of the group

II. AGE GROUPS

A. Age of Repetition (3 to 6 years old)

1. Stories for this age group should be based on concrete, familiar concepts. Stories should be within the child’s limited experience—*about trips to the zoo; about dogs, cats, toys.*

2. Much of the child’s experience is based upon the five senses.

3. Repetition is enjoyed by children. Children within this age group do not have the attention span of an adult, so constant repetition gives them a sense of assurance and pleasure of recognizing events and characteristics.

B. Age of Fancy (6 to 9 years)

This is the magical period for story-telling. Much creative thinking can be developed. This is a period where generosity is rewarded and evil-doing and selfishness are punished. This is the age of making-believe.

C. Age of Hero-Worship (9 to 12 years old)

Children in this age category are in want of danger, and daring action. Here, they are interested in the exploits of Babe Ruth, Robin Hood, King Arthur and Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. Here again, the choice of stories must be based on how the stories will satisfy the desire for adventure and instill high ambitions and ideals as well.

D. Age of Idealism (12 to early teens)

This is a period of lofty ideals. Stories which point up the value of good manners, social adequacy and healthy boy-girl relationships are important. Boys and girls in this age group are interested in stories which explore vocational and professional areas. Stories of athletics are important to the boys of this group. Stories about girls of the same age will be appreciated.

POINTS IN PREPARING STORY TELLING FOR THE CHILDREN

1. Know The Story

Read the story and be familiar with the main theme. Try to make the story a part of your life as well as relating to the children on a personal basis.

2. Analyze The Story

Make sure the children will understand the language used. Add your personal interest to the story.

3. Telling The Story

Spontaneity and adaptability are key to your presentation. Be exciting. Have the children participate whenever possible.

4. Evaluation

How effective has the story been?

1. Ask the children to repeat the story; carefully listen to each child and respond to their interpretations.
2. Ask the children to draw a character or scene from the story.
3. Question and answer period. Make sure you allow enough time for the question and answer period. Perhaps you can review its points at the beginning of the lesson on the following Sunday.

KATIE THE CATERPILLAR

It was a beautiful autumn day and Katie Caterpillar decided to go for a walk. She was such a happy caterpillar and loved all the other insects.

To her surprise, Katie heard some laughter coming from the pond. She went over to see what was so funny and to have a nice talk with Freddie Frog and Stevie Snake. They were laughing very hard and Katie asked what they were laughing at. Freddie Frog croaked, "We're laughing at you," and Stevie snake hissed, "Because you're so ugly!"

That hurt Katie's feelings, but she tried not to let it bother her. She walked further and saw Anthony Ant and Gloria Grasshopper having a cup of tea together. "Ah - Tea would really hit the spot," thought Katie. She went over to greet them, but before she saw down, Anthony Ant said, "Get out of here, Katie. We don't want an ugly creature like you to be around us! Gloria Grasshopper nodded her head in agreement.

Katie was very surprised at how mean her friends were. But, she walked on and thought they were just having a bad day. From a distance she saw Susie Spider spinning her web. Katie loved to watch her make her beautiful web. When she got close enough to watch, Susie told her to go away because she wanted her web to be around beautiful things and not around ugly creatures.

Katie couldn't believe how her friends were treating her. She decided to go home and sleep and forget about it.

When Katie Caterpillar woke up, she saw beautiful blossoms and green leaves. She had slept all winter in a little shell. Her body felt different as if she could fly or something. She started moving her arms, but her arms became wings and she began to fly around. She had become a beautiful butterfly!

As she was flying, Stevie Snake, Freddy Frog, Anthony Ant, Gloria Grasshopper and Susie Spider blinked their eyes again and again. They couldn't believe how beautiful Katie had become.

Katie smiled and waved to everyone. They all invited her to play with them and have tea. Katie forgot all about the way they treated her when she was an ugly caterpillar.

She said YES to everyone and was very happy to have so many friends. The others were thankful that Katie was willing to forgive them and they all lived happily ever after!

THE LOSS OF THE BUDDHA'S FLOWERS

Once upon a time, there was a nice obachan by the name of Kato. She was so nice to all the young people that everyone called her 'Bachan Kato' even though she wasn't their bachan (grandmother).

She lived all by herself in a nice little house. Her husband had died and all her children were grown up and had homes of their own. She wanted to live alone and have her own little garden in the yard as long as she was healthy. So, she took very good care of her house and her garden and everyone admired her pretty flowers.

One day, Bachan Kato picked a few flowers and went to visit a friend who was not feeling too well. She thought the flowers might brighten her friend's day and make her feel happier. She had a nice visit, and her friend had been so happy to see her.

She came home after being gone for perhaps an hour or two and as she got near her

home, she saw a dog run from her yard. Then, she saw her neighbor running after the dog with a stick.

She called out "What are you doing?" Then, as she looked at her yard, she realized that the dog had dug up all her beautiful flowers and her neighbor was chasing the dog away. She said "don't hurt the dog; he didn't know any better. And, remember, Buddha loves all living beings, so please stop."

Then, she sat down on her front step and the tears came rolling down her cheeks. She was very, very sad. Her neighbor put her arm around Bachan Kato and said "I will help you with your garden. Maybe we can still save some of the plants."

Bachan shook her head and said "It is no use now for this year. I was taking care of my garden so I could take the flowers to the temple so they can be put in the Hanamido to decorate it. I wanted to so much to give a special gift to Buddha for his birthday, Hana Matsuri Day."

When the neighbor heard this, she understood why Bachan was so sad, so she told the sensei what had happened. Sensei came to visit and told Bachan, "We know how hard you worked to grown those flowers and we all appreciate your thoughtfulness".

Bachan felt much better and promised to work just as hard the next year to have beautiful flowers for the Hanamido.

DISCUSS THE STORY

...What happened in this story?

The bad dog dug up Bachan Kato's flowers.

...How did you feel when you heard the story?

I was mad at the dog.

I was sad for Bachan Kato.

...Why were you angry? The dog didn't do anything to you. Should you have been angry?

Well, he was mean to Bachan and she didn't do anything to him either!

...You were sad for Bachan, do you know a big word that means caring about other people and things?

Compassion

Do you think Bachan Kato had compassion?

Yes, because she told the neighbor not to hurt the dog even though it did a bad thing to her.

...Why do you think Bachan said what she did? Would you have if the dog did something bad to you?

Because she knew that all living things are the same to the Buddha; that we are all one and that the Buddha loves us all.

...Wasn't she lucky to have a friend like her neighbor and the sensei care about her?

Yes, and we must always be grateful for our friends and everyone and everything that helps us.

Though this was a sad year for her and what happened hurt her very much, she knew that with effort, she could grow more beautiful flowers and have them put in the Hanamido the next year; Sensei and everyone knew of her efforts and her love.

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

The Yamato family lived in a small town in California near Stockton. Father's name was Ken; Mother, Kimi; 5 year old sister, Judy and myself, Ricky, 8 years old.

One cold and windy night in January, the electricity and telephone wires were blown down. There wasn't much we could do but sit and play some games with the light of candles and flashlights.

The house seemed to echo whenever somebody talked. The heater in the house did not work, and everyone wore coats and blankets to keep warm. And yet, the house didn't feel as cold, because everybody huddled together and played a game together. It isn't often that the family will play a game together. Dad usually watched TV after dinner. Mom always had plenty of work to do in the kitchen. Judy and I usually played after we cleared the table.

The four of us were saying how good it is to be in darkness sometimes, because we realized it's the only time we did anything together. Then all of a sudden, Dad slumped to the floor. I said, "Dad, wake up, it's your turn." Mom mentioned what a poor sport Dad was. That he decided to go to sleep, just because he was losing. After shaking him, he still didn't get up. And then we started to worry. I turned the flashlight at his face and looked like he was in pain. Mom put a pillow under head. Judy started to cry. And I was trembling with fear. Mom ran to the phone to call a doctor, but there was no dial tone—the phone was dead.

We decided we'd have to take him to a hospital. All three of us lifted Dad and carried him to the back seat of the car. Mom carried his back and arms. Judy lifted one leg, and I lifted the other leg. The hospital was around 30 minutes away, but it seemed like a two hour ride.

As Mom drove, I could hear her whispering something. She was repeating Namu Amida Butsu. Saying it over and over seemed to give her strength and calm her shattered nerves. She told us, "Don't worry, Daddy will be all right." I still trembled with fear that he might be dead already, that we may get there too late. I was so scared, I started to feel weak and sick. I told myself this is no time to get sick. We have to care for Dad—I must be strong. I started repeating Namu Amida Butsu. and all of a sudden, I felt stronger and stopped trembling. Judy whimpering during the ride. But she too, calmed down when sensed that Mom and I weren't as nervous and tense as before.

We finally reached the hospital. Mom drove up to the emergency entrance and ran inside. Two men came out with her, lifted him from the car and took him to a room. Nurses and Doctors rushed in and out of his room bringing things in and out. It seemed like an hour. Then finally one doctor stopped to talk to Mom. Dad had suffered a massive heart attack. He said it would be hours before anybody could see him, so he said it would be best if we waited at home.

Mom drove to Grandma and Grandpa's house. They lived about 10 blocks from the hospital. Grandma said she would go back to the hospital with Mom, so Judy and I stayed with Grandpa. Grandpa's house had electricity, television and a heater. Yet the house seemed cold and empty without Mom, Dad, and Grandma with us in the house.

I helped Grandpa make some hot chocolate and the three of us sat down and talked and drank the cocoa. Grandpa told us he was sure Dad would be all right. Judy finally smiled and said, "Then we can be finish our game!" We all smiled and agreed with Judy.

The phone rang and Grandpa ran to answer it. Grandma called to say Dad was out of danger and was able to talk a little. Grandpa kept saying "Good-Good" and smiled as

he hung up the phone. He told us the good news and Judy and I jumped up and down with happiness.

Judy fell asleep on the sofa, so Grandpa and I talked. I told Grandpa how scared I was when we were going to the hospital. I said I had never been that scared ever. When I started saying Namu Amida Butsu over and over, all of a sudden I was no longer scared and I felt stronger. I'll never forget it as long as I live. Grandpa looked at me and tears were in his eyes. He said to me, "Ricky, I'm an old man and I just learned something more valuable than life from you. And you're only 8 years old. You don't know how proud I am to have a grandson like you." And he hugged me so hard I could hardly breathe.

Dad was home from the hospital in two or three weeks time and the family was once again together and very happy.

—THE END—

COMMENTS:

Remember not to ask for something you want and then say "Namu Amida Butsu", because you may become sad and depressed when you don't get it. Wanting or asking for things like a new toy for yourself is a greedy desire, and saying "Namu Amida Butsu" will not grant you your wish.

Ricky is now a father himself. He still thinks about that night, especially when the lights go out. He values what he learned that night more than his 16 years of education in schools. The two important lessons Ricky learned at 8 years old:

1. Be thankful each day Mother and Father are alive.
2. Gratitude in Namu Amida Butsu.

RABBIT ON THE MOON

Once upon a time, when Gautama Buddha was yet a Bodhisattva, he was born a rabbit and lived in a forest at the foot of a mountain. There lived three other friends in this lonely forest. They were a bird, a monkey and a dog. Every evening they gathered together and talked about many things to keep each other company.

One evening as they sat talking as usual, the rabbit looked up into the sky and said, "Tomorrow will be a day of fasting. A gift given on this day will bring good fortune. Therefore, we must share all food gathered tomorrow with anyone who might ask for it". So they agreed not to eat anything that day but to bring back whatever food they might find for Dana.

Early next morning the bird went to the mountain. He brought back a bunch of berries and hid them in the far corner of his nest. Then he flew to a nearby branch and sat looking towards the nest thinking, "If no one comes today asking for food, then I can have those berries for my meal tomorrow."

The monkey came back with three large mangoes. He hid them in the hollow of the tree and thought to himself, "I will eat those tomorrow if no one comes today."

The dog found a dried fish by the river bank where fishermen dried their catch. He came home with it and then he too sat thinking of the good meal tomorrow if no one comes by today asking for food.

The rabbit went out as usual looking for tender grass and thought of he was lucky he might find a fallen fruit. And then he realized that if a man came asking for food, he

could not very well offer him grass to eat. He must find some fruit. But it would be very difficult to find any fruit at this time of the year.

After a while he came home empty-handed. He had given nothing to offer if a man came by for food. He finally decided to give his own body. A man can eat his flesh. With joy in his heart, he sat waiting for someone who would come for food.

As the rabbit made the promise to offer his flesh, the whole earth seemed to shake with joy, the air was full of music and the sky was full of glorious colors. Sakra, the Lord Guardian of Eastern Sky, seeing the reason for the beautiful colors in the sky decided to put it to a test. He went down to the forest in the form of an old man, a poor traveller begging for food and shelter.

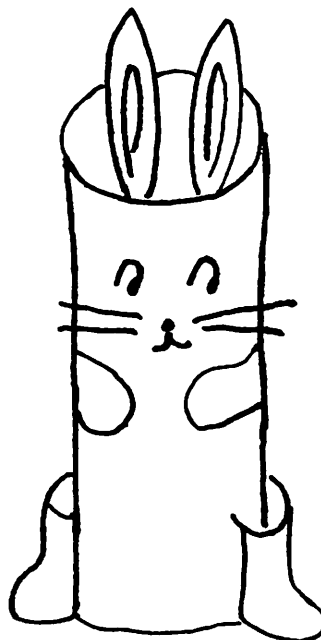
All three friends of the rabbit were able to offer food but the rabbit had none. The rabbit asked the old man to build a big fire so he could offer his body to him. As soon as the old man made the fire right in front of the rabbit, the rabbit shook himself three times making sure no small creatures were left behind in his fur. He then jumped willingly in to flame and offered himself to the old man.

Then something really wonderful happened. The fire was not hot at all but cool and even refreshing. It did not scorch even a single hair on his body. The rabbit was in the hand of the old man and the fire that was there a moment ago had now completely disappeared.

The old man said, "I am Sakra. I came here to test you. You are indeed a very kind and wise rabbit. Everyone will remember your sacrifice for a long, long time." Then he took a special juice from the mountain and he drew a rabbit on the face of the moon so that all the people of the world could see him.

Adapted from the Jataka Stories

Rabbit



Material: Bathroom tissue tube (white)
Cardboard or heavy stiff paper (white)
Toothpick, bristle from broom or brush
Cotton ball
Glue
Scissors

Procedure: Use bathroom tissue tubes for the body. Cut such things as legs and ears from thin cardboard or heavy stiff paper. For whiskers use toothpicks, thin strips of paper, thin wire or bristles from a brush or broom. Use cotton ball for the rabbit's tail.

The Big Black Bear

I. AIMS AND PURPOSES

- A. To become aware of . . .
 - 1. the Buddhist creed — “...Being kind and gentle to every living thing weaker than ourselves.”
 - 2. the importance of Right Effort in working together
 - 3. practicing Dana by sharing a sermon with other students
- B. To feel. . .
 - 1. compassion for others
 - 2. working together for the common good
- C. To do. . .
 - 1. create masks
 - 2. dramatize a story
 - 3. evaluate project together

II. MATERIALS NEEDED

- A. Masks — crayolas, scissors, string, paper
Make your own masks. (See: Preschool Book)
- B. Invitations (optional)

III. PRESENTING THE LESSON

A. Introduction

Open the lesson with questions similar to the following:

If a friend fell and hurt his knee, what would you do? Why? If your mother was very tired at the end of a long day, what would you do? Why? If you saw pieces of broken glass on the playground, what would you do? Why? If you had a thirsty puppy at your feet, what would you do? Why?

Discuss helping others.

Every Sunday we say the Golden Chain. Do you remember the words which tell us about helping others? (...I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself.) What does it mean to us?

B. Body of Lesson

1. Tell the story of the “Big Black Bear.”

Discuss the character of the Bear
Why did he frighten the other animals?
Did he mean to scare the smaller animals away
Why did the other animals change their minds?
What did we learn from the Black Bear?

2. Motivate them to share the lesson with others.

Ask the students if they would like to act and to share the play with others.

3. Prepare the students.

Discuss different ways of conveying the different personalities through gestures, i.e. different ways of walking (meekly, forcefully, hesitantly); postures show that a person is proud, frightened, or happy; arms can be crossed to show strength or thrown upward to show surprise.

*The *secret* behind successful characterization is merely *understanding* how the animals feel and *wanting* others to understand the same feelings.

Discuss how everyone is important in the success of the play (cooperation and Right Effort). We can show Right Effort in many ways—listening for cues, helping other students if they forget their parts, wanting others to understand the characters in the story, etc.

*Remind them that the success of the play is dependent upon Right Effort on the part of everyone.

4. Optional

Invite the family and a friend (a good way of expanding membership!).

IV. CONCLUSION — the presentation itself

Be sure to work with the minister. Consult him on the date, what he might expect, changes that should be made, etc.

V. EVALUATE THE LESSON

Discuss:

Did the Dharma school students enjoy our sermons? Why did everyone enjoy our play? (seek positive evaluation)

Can you think of ways in which we could have improved our play?

Did all of us try our best in making the play a success? How? (Discuss Right Effort.)

Summarize the entire project: What did we learn from this project?

Importance of helping others

Importance of Right Effort

Even kindergarten students (young as they are) can share.

When we share what we know or what we can do, there is Dana.

THE BIG BLACK BEAR

Once upon a time there was a big black bear who lived in a dark forest. Although he looked mean and fearful he was, at heart, very gentle and kind. But did the other animals of the forest know about this? Oh no, they were all afraid of him, and whenever they saw him they would run for their lives. They would say, "Run for your life, the big black bear is coming..." Before Mr. Bear could go near them, all the animals would dash off to their hiding places and shake with fear. Mr. Bear only wanted to tell them that he was not mean, but he was unable to do so.

One day, on a narrow path of the forest, he came face to face with Mr. Jack Rabbit. You should have seen Mr. Rabbit's face! It turned from white to blue, and then from blue to purple. His legs shook so much that his whole body was shaking like a leaf. Mr. Bear thought here is my chance to tell Mr. Rabbit that he was not as mean as they thought he was, so Mr. Bear opened his mouth to talk, but his mouth was so huge that Mr. Rabbit thought he was going to be eaten. Quickly he turned around and started to run. What a sight it was! His legs shook so much that he was unable to run at all. His body was leaning forward trying to run but his legs would not move, and when Mr. Bear started to talk in his very loud voice, Mr. Rabbit felt as though lightning had hit him. And this time Mr. Rabbit really took off. He ran so fast that before Mr. Bear could say "Jack Rabbit", he was out of Mr. Bear's sight. Mr. Bear was very sad because he did not know how to make the others understand how he felt about them.

Days went without Mr. Bear making any friends

One summer day in this same dark forest, all the animals decided to hold a birthday party for Mrs. Skunk. Mr. and Mrs. Fox, Mr. Chipmunk, Mr. and Mrs. Squirrel, Mr. Jack Rabbit, Mr. Wolf and Mr. Deer and all the other animals of the forest gathered to celebrate this happy occasion at the big field in the middle of the dark forest. But do you think Mr. Bear was invited? Oh no, they wouldn't think of inviting him! They were all afraid of him.

They held this party so deep inside of the forest that nobody from the outside of the forest could see or hear them even if they were near the place. They were going to have a wonderful time! There were altogether 60 candles on the cake. That was because Mrs. Skunk was very, very old and she had lived a long, long time in the big forest. When the candles were lit they asked her to make a wish and blow out the candles—all 60 of them! Mrs. Skunk made a wish and then she huffed and she puffed to blow out all the candles. She blew all the candles out except the one candle at the farthest corner of her cake, but everybody, including Mrs. Skunk, thought she blew all of them out so this one candle was left burning in the corner without anybody knowing about it.

Somebody suggested that it would be a good idea to have a square dance before they cut the cake and so they started. Mr. Rabbit played the fiddle and all of the animals clapped their hands and danced. They were having a wonderful time. While they were all merrily dancing and clapping their hands, this one candle kept burning silently and every time they clapped their hands, it shook. Gradually it tilted until with the clap of their final dance the candle tipped from the top of the cake to the ground. Quickly, the dead leaves around the cake caught on fire and began to burn. Before the animals realized what was happening, the place was up in flames. The fire was getting bigger and bigger but the animals did not know what to do. Suddenly, a huge figure appeared in front of them. It was Mr. Bear! The animals were frightened but they could not get away because the fire was right behind them. Mr. Bear shouted with his tunder-like voice, "Everybody follow me and I will take you all to a safe place." Saying this, he made a path through the thick forest with his huge body to the stream nearby. When they safely

reached the stream, they noticed a neatly built bridge across the stream. It was Mr. Bear who had made this bridge for the safety of the animals in the forest. Quickly, all the animals crossed the bridge to the other side and there they were—safe!

By this time Mr. Rabbit and the rest of the animals realized how gently and kind-hearted Mr. Bear was. They all apologized to him for being so rude to him, but Mr. Bear just laughed out loud with his thunder-like voice and said, “I am glad to have made so many friends!”

DRAMATIZATION OF “THE BIG BLACK BEAR”

Would you children like to act out the story of “The Big Black Bear” that you heard last week?

We will have to choose people who would like to be:

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Acting | 1. Black Bear | 6. Mr. and Mrs. Fox |
| Parts: | 2. Mr. Jack Rabbit | 7. Mr. and Mrs. Squirrel |
| | 3. Mr. Skunk | 8. Mr. Deer |
| | 4. Mr. Chipmunk | 9. Other animals |
| | 5. Mr. Wolf | 10. Few children to be trees |
- Props:**
- a. Birthday cake with many candles made of cardboard.
 - b. Drawing on paper or cloth of different animals to pin on children. (This can be done in other ways—but do something so children will know what they are.)

Directions — Clear the room so children will have lots of space. Show the children which side of the room is the forest and which side is the clearing—make a chalk line for the stream. All details should be talked over with the children. All the children should understand the story thoroughly. Since story acting is on kindergarten level, allow children to dramatize freely as they follow the narration. Except for a few necessary props—other props such as a fiddle and the bridge can be handled through the imagination of the children.

It may seem that the teacher is going through a great deal of trouble to dramatize a story the children already know. Also there will probably be a great deal of confusion, but the advantage of dramatic play is that children will be actively participating in a story. Dramatic play of a story will help the children to understand and feel the story much more intimately. They will also remember and recall the story because they have actively taken part in the story.

THE BIG BLACK BEAR

(Enter Bear)

(Animals
shake with
fear)

Once upon a time there was a big black Bear who lived in a dark forest. Although he looked mean and fearful he was at heart very gentle and kind. But did the other animals of the forest know about this? Oh no, they were all afraid of him, and whenever they saw him they would run for their lives. They would say, "Run for your life, the big black bear is coming." Before Mr. Bear could go near them, all the animals would dash off to their hiding places and shake with fear. Mr. Bear only wanted to tell them that he was not mean, but he was unable to do so.

(Enter Rabbit)

One day on a narrow path of the forest he came face to face with Mr. Jack Rabbit. You should have seen Mr. Rabbit's face. It turned from white to blue, then from blue to purple. His legs shook so much that his whole body was shaking like a leaf.

Mr. Bear thought here is my chance to tell Mr. Rabbit that he was not as mean as they thought he was, so Mr. Bear opened his mouth to talk, but his mouth was so huge that Mr. Rabbit thought he was going to be eaten. Quickly, he turned around and started to run. What a sight it was! His legs shook so much that he was unable to run at all! His body was leaning forward trying to run but his legs would not move, and when Mr. Bear started to talk in his very loud voice, Mr. Rabbit felt as though lightning had hit him. And this time, Mr. Rabbit really took off. He ran so fast that before Mr. Bear could say, "Jack Rabbit" he was out of Mr. Bear's sight.

(Exit Rabbit)

Mr. Bear was very sad because he did not know how to make the others understand how he felt about them.

(Exit Bear)

Days went by without Mr. Bear making any friends. One summer day in this same forest, all the animals decided to hold a birthday party for Mrs. Skunk. Mr. & Mrs. Fox, Mr. Chipmunk, Mr. & Mrs. Squirrel, Mr. Jack Rabbit, Mr. Wolf and Mr. Deer and all the other animals of the forest gathered to celebrate this happy occasion at the big field in the middle of the dark forest. But do you think Mr. Bear was invited? Oh no, they wouldn't think of inviting him. They were all afraid of him. Instead they all wanted to invite Mr. Badger because he was always hungry.

(Animals
shake heads)

(Enter Badger)

(Enter Mrs.
Squirrel with
cake)

They held this party so deep inside of the forest that nobody from the outside of the forest could see or hear them even if they were near the place. They were going to have a wonderful time! There were many candles on the cake. That was because Mrs. Skunk was very, very old and she had lived a long, long time in the big forest.

When the candles were lit they asked her to make a wish and blow out the candles. Mrs. Skunk made a wish and then she huffed and she puffed to blow out all the candles. She blew

all the candles out except one—the one candle at the farthest corner of her cake, but everybody, including Mrs. Skunk, thought she blew all of them out and so this one candle was left burning in the corner without anybody knowing about it.

While they were all merrily dancing and clapping their hands, this one candle kept burning silently and every time they clapped their hands it shook. Gradually, it tilted until with the clap of their final dance the candle tipped from the top of the cake to the ground. Quickly the dead leaves around the cake caught fire and began to burn. Before the animals realized what was happening, the place was up in flames.

(Enter flames)

The fire was getting bigger and bigger but the animals did not know what to do. Suddenly, a huge figure appeared in front of them. It was Mr. Bear. The animals were frightened but they could not get away because the fires was right behind them.

(Enter Bear)

Mr. Bear shouted with his thunder-like voice. “Everybody follow me and I will take you all to a safe place.” Saying this, he made a path through the thick forest with his huge body to the stream nearby. When they safely reached the stream, they noticed a neatly built bridge across the stream. It was Mr. Bear who had made the bridge for the safety of the animals in the forest. Quickly all the animals crossed the bridge to the other side and there they were safe.

By this time Mr. Rabbit and the rest of the animals realized how gentle and kindhearted Mr. Bear was. They all apologized to him for being so rude to him, but Mr. Bear just laughed out loud with his thunder-like voice and said, “I am glad to have made so many friends.”

**“I WILL BE KIND AND GENTLE TO ALL LIVING
THINGS AND PROTECT ALL WHO ARE
WEAKER THAN MYSELF.”**

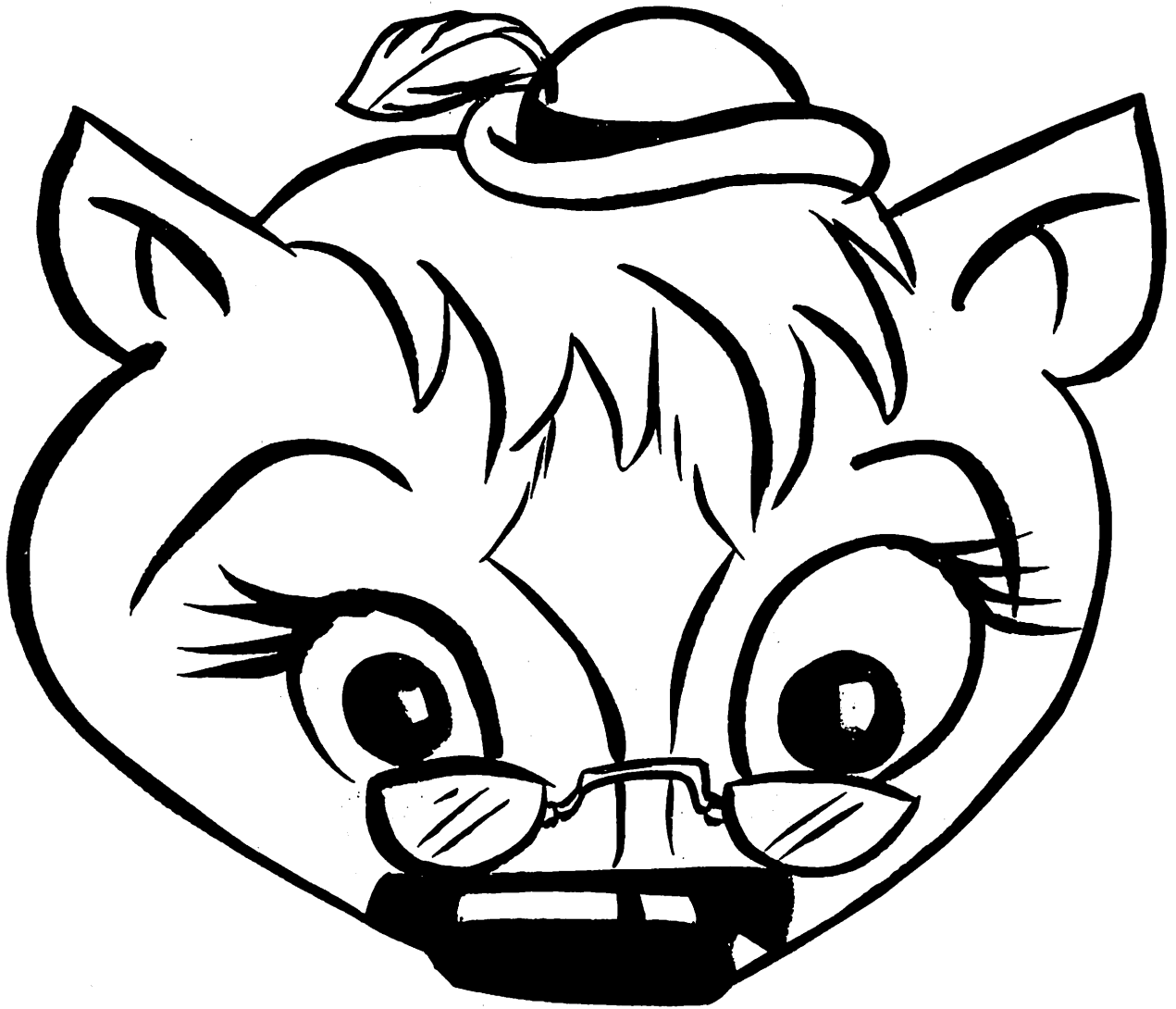
Mr. Bear



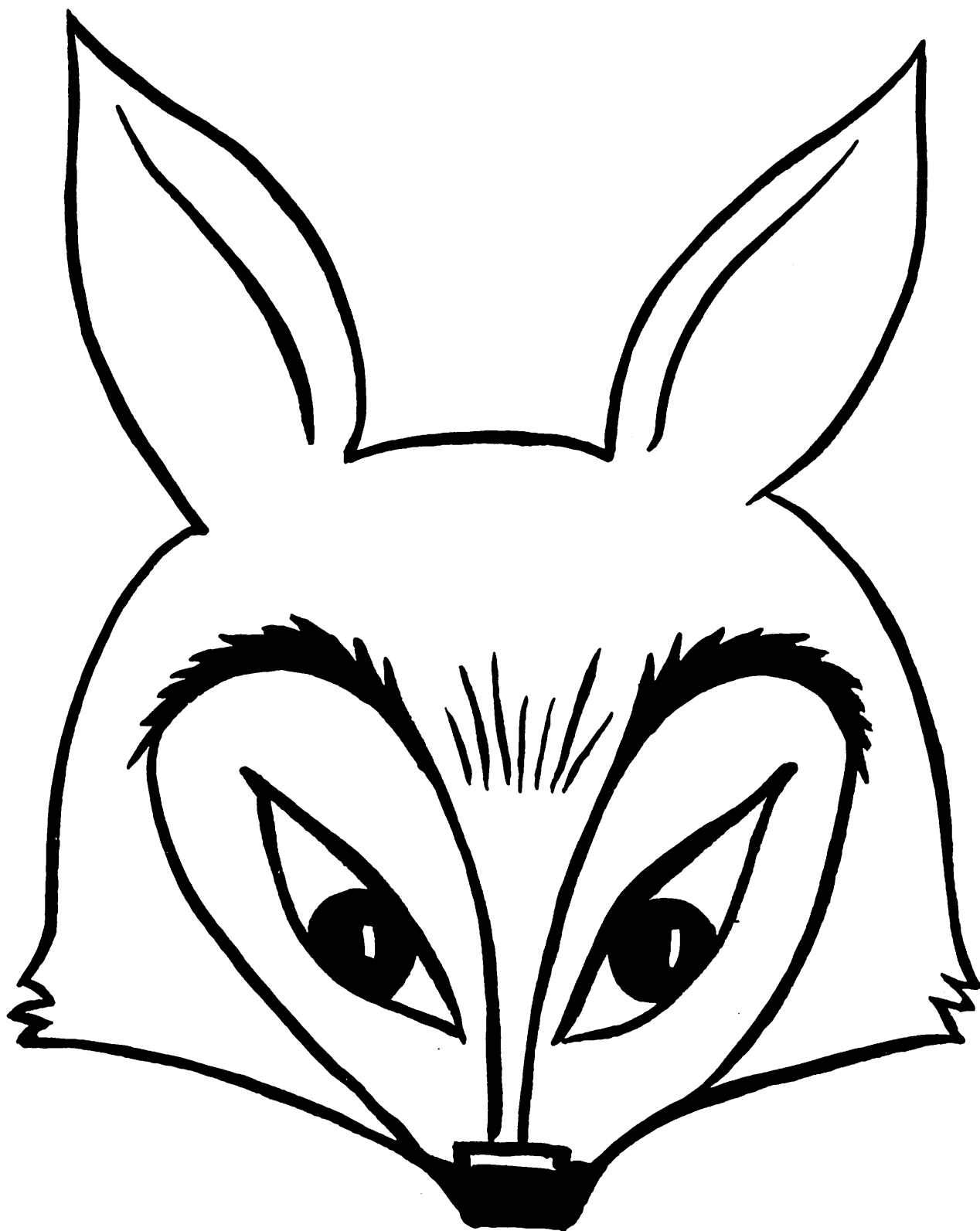
Mr. Jack Rabbit



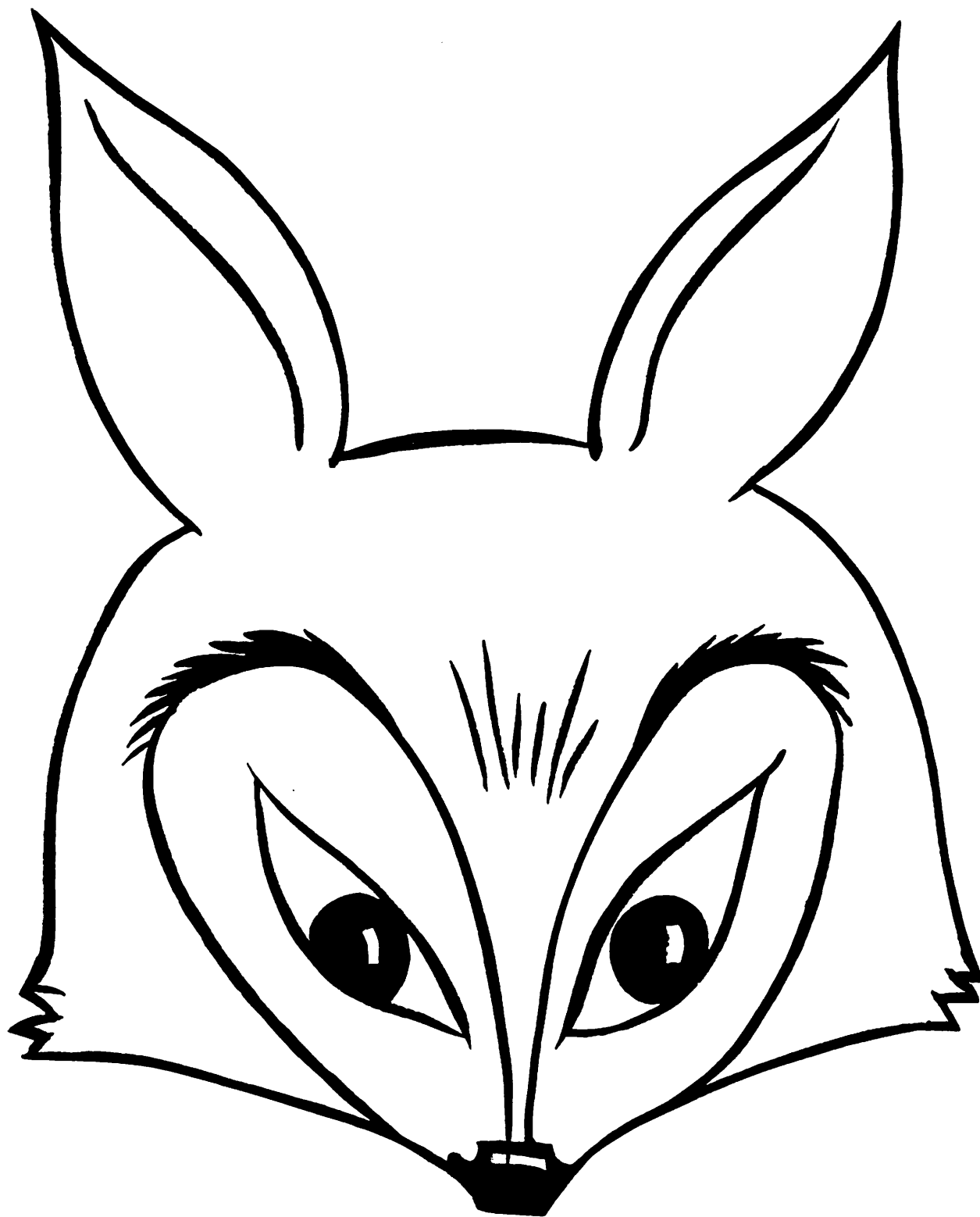
Mrs. Skunk



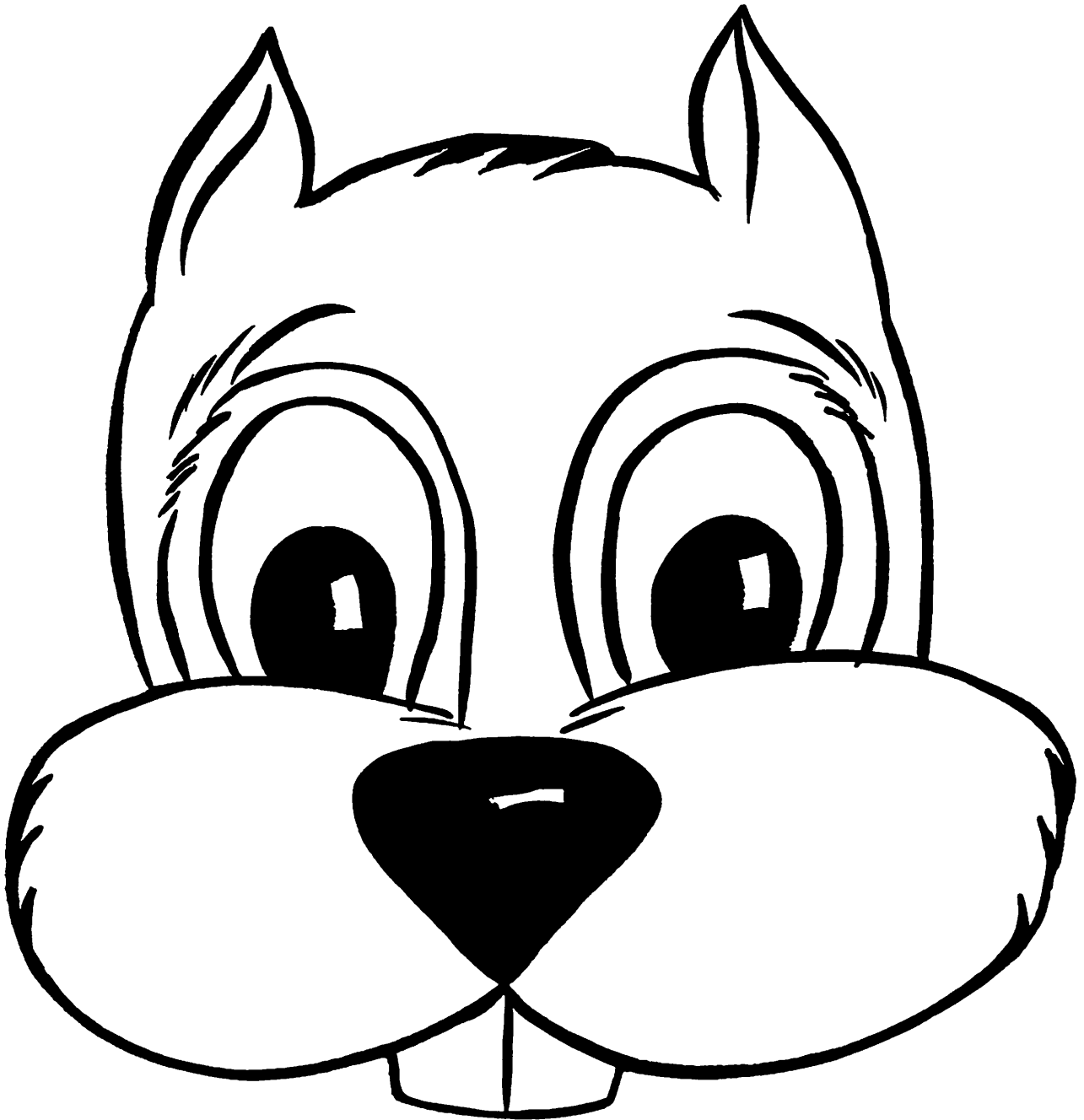
Mr. Fox



Mrs. Fox



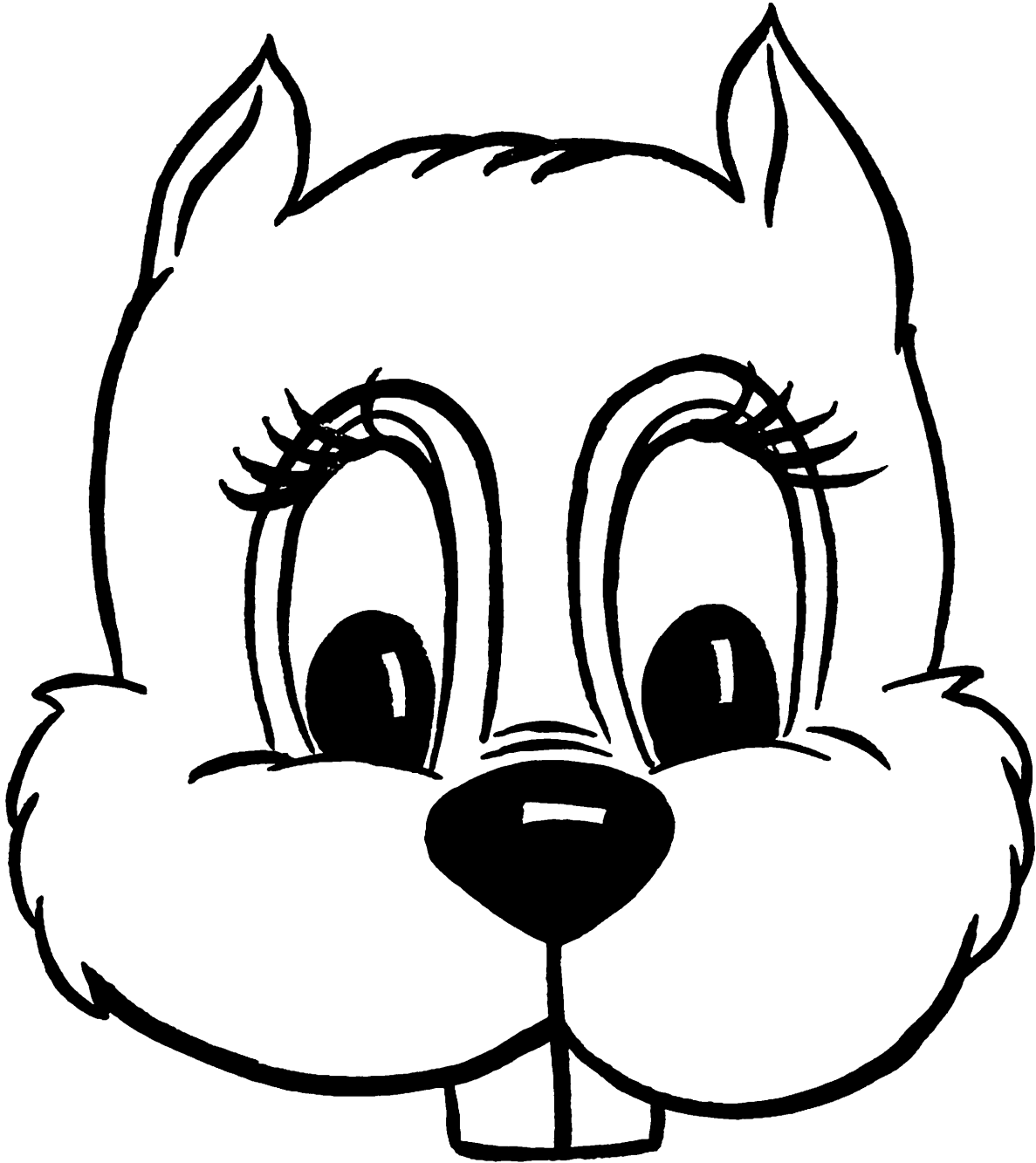
Mr. Chipmunk



Mr. Squirrel



Mrs. Squirrel



Mr. Wolf



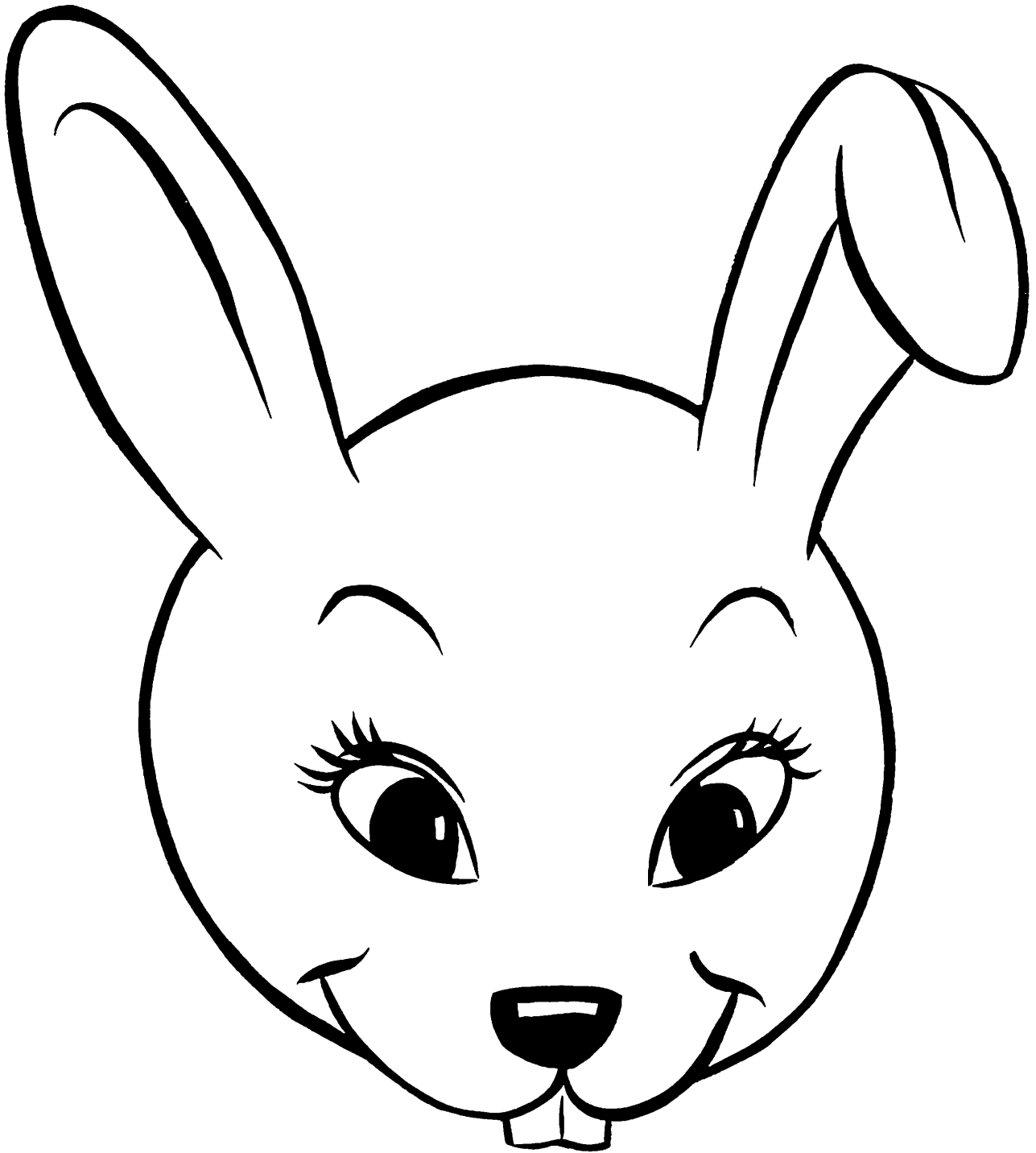
Mr. Deer



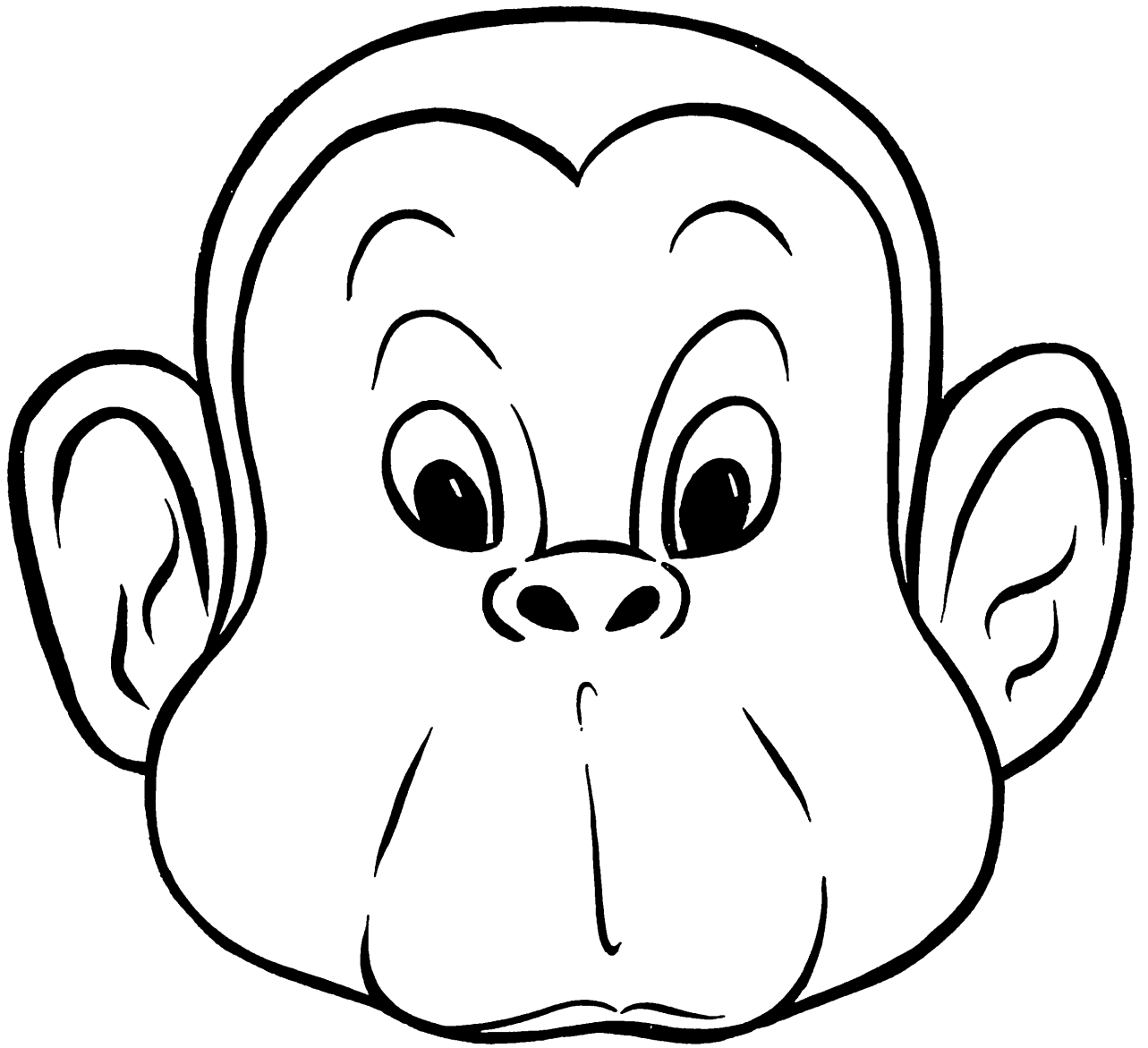
Mr. Badger



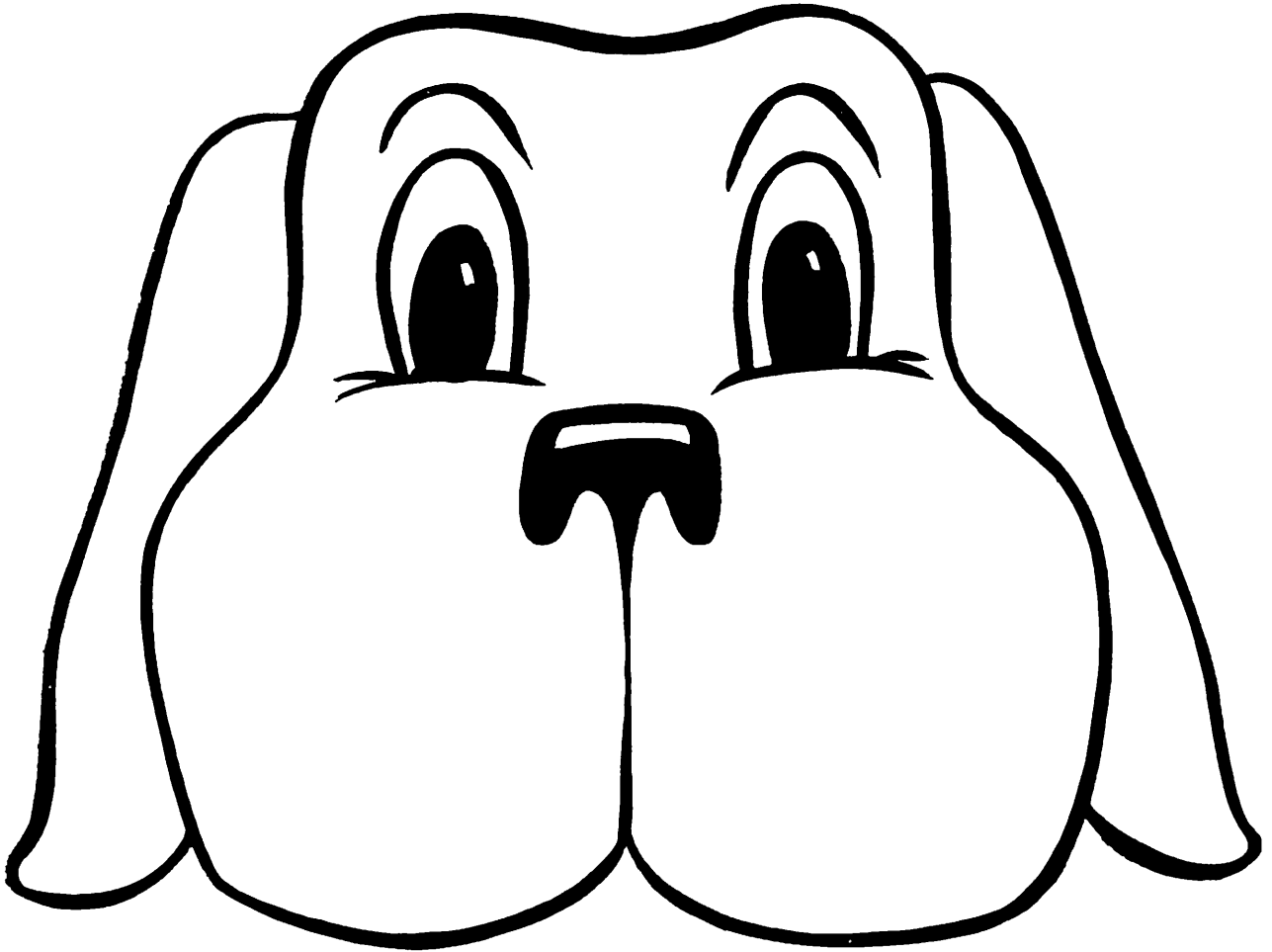
A Rabbit



A Monkey



A Dog

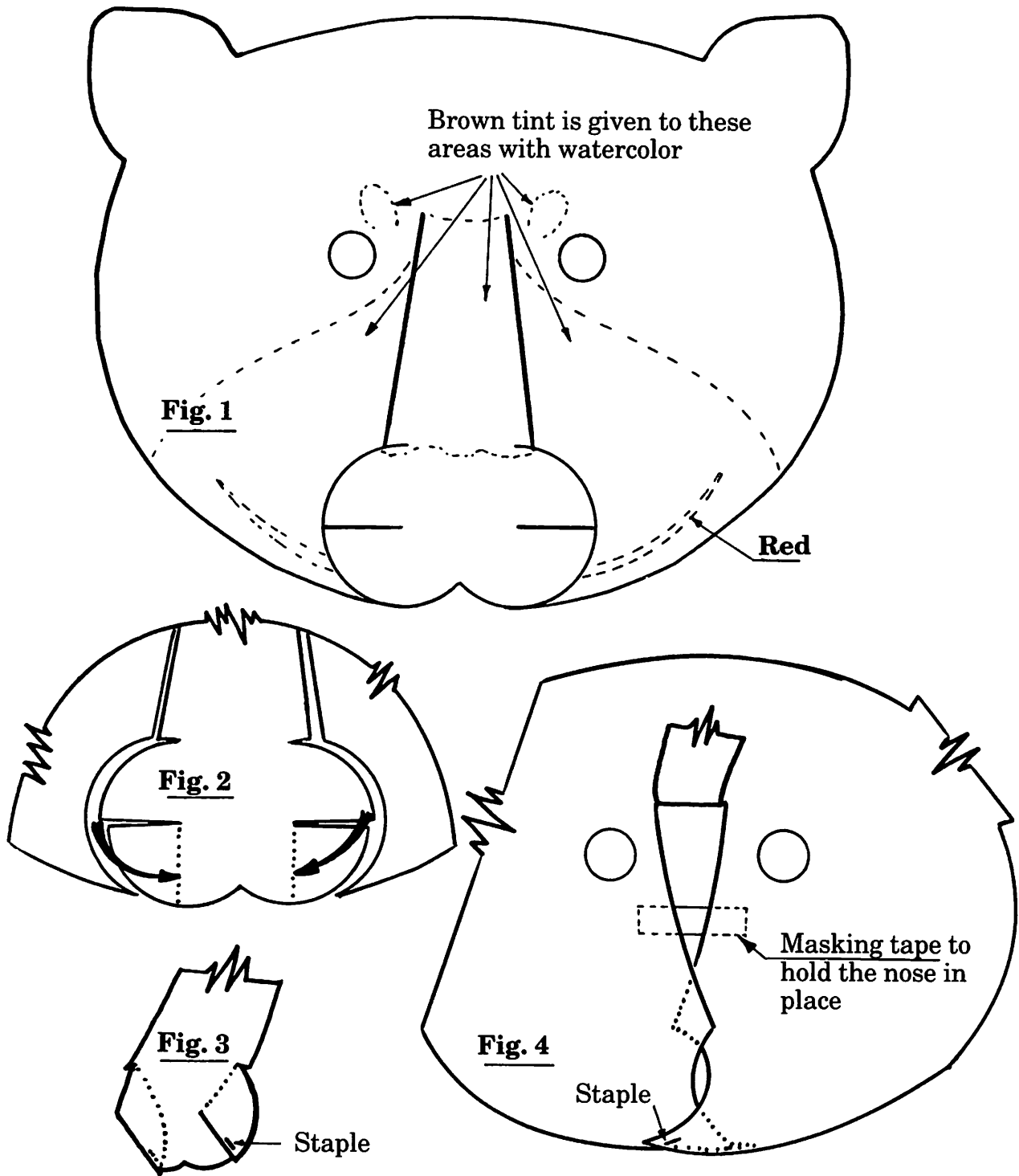


A Bird

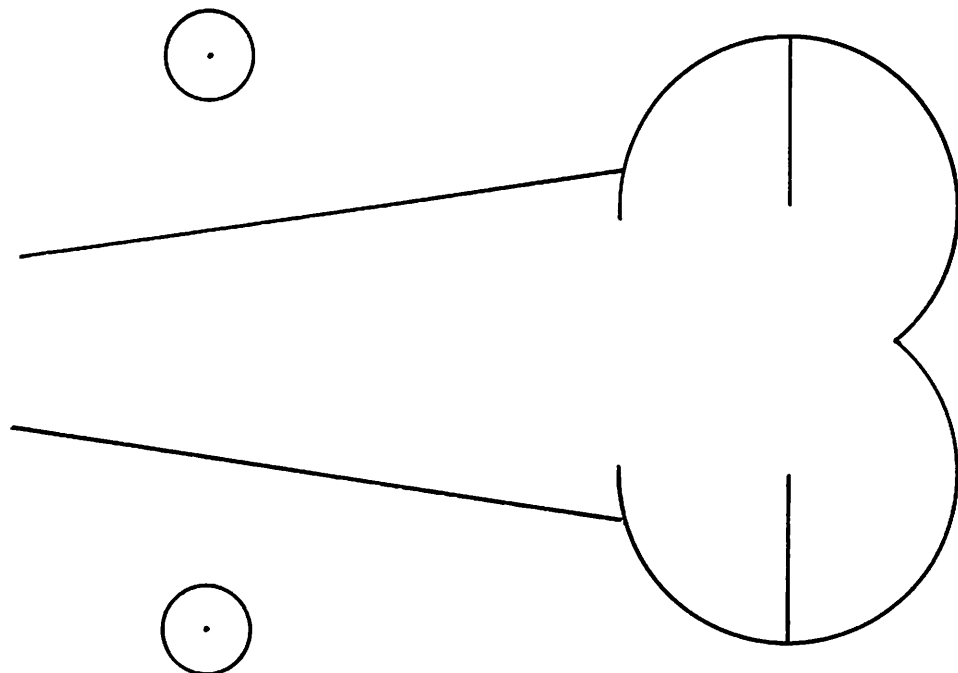


A Mask

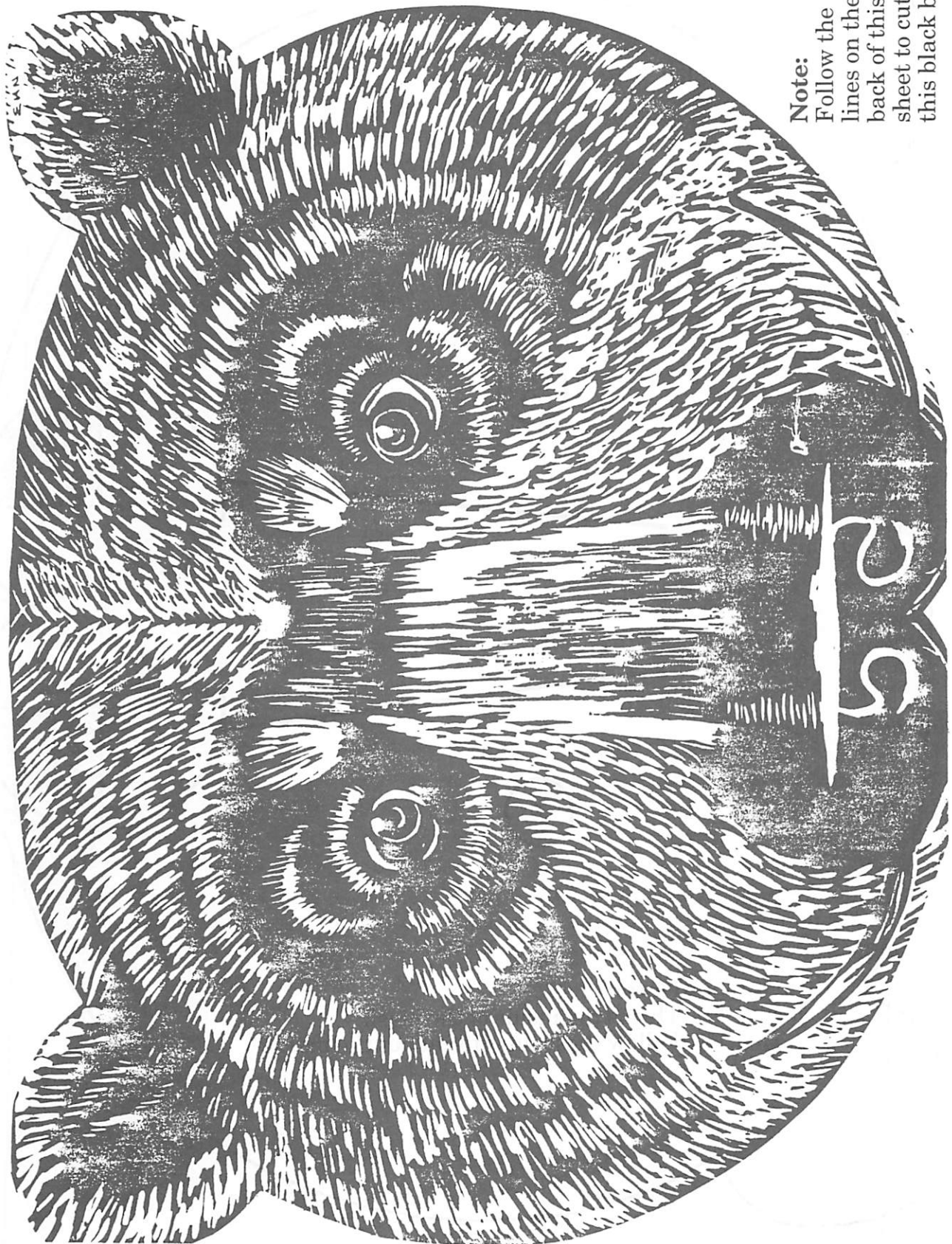
The Big Black Bear

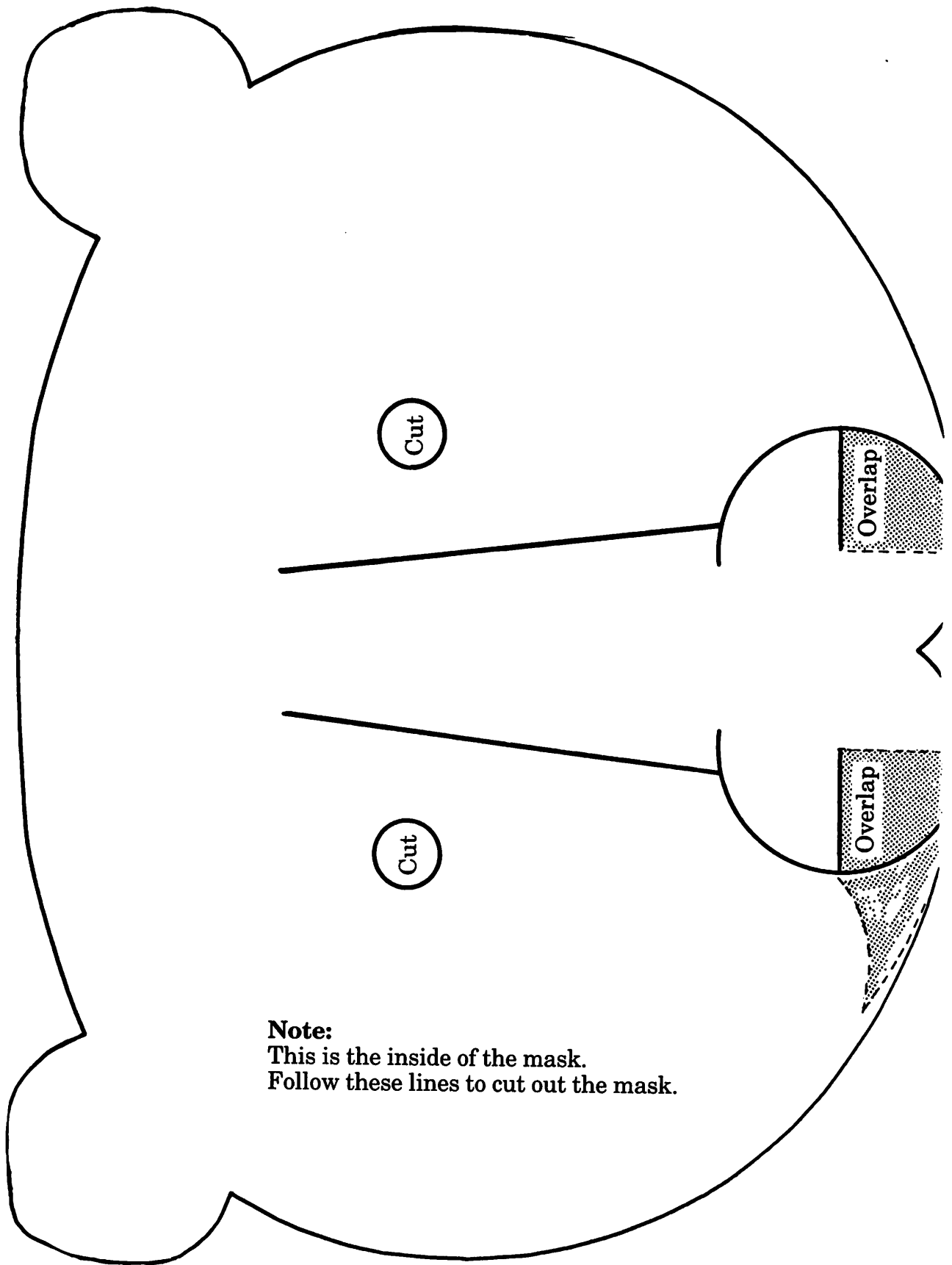


A Basic Pattern - for an animal mask



Note:
Follow the
lines on the
back of this
sheet to cutout
this black bear





AMIDA BUDDHA'S WISDOM

Talking together with the children -

From the story "The Big Black Bear" we learned about Amida's Love.

Shall we talk today about different kinds of love?

Sally says, "I love chocolate cake."

Ronnie says, "I love ice cream."

It isn't only Sally and Ronnie—we all say I love this—I love that. But is this the kind of love the big black bear felt for his animal friends? (No.....)

When we say, "I love chocolate cake — I love ice cream," it is love of something to make ourselves feel good. But the big black bear's love was the love to help others. How did he help others? (Pause for answers.) We also love to help others, don't we? We help our mothers and fathers—we help our friends. But our love sometimes doesn't make sense. For example, Sally loved her brother so much she gave him all her candies. What do you think happened that night?

Sally's brother had a toothache.

On the other hand, the big bear loved others and did the right thing to save his friends.

The big bear had Love and Wisdom.

What is Wisdom?

Wisdom is knowing, saying and doing the right thing.

Amida Buddha's love is full of wisdom.

Amida Buddha's love helps us to do the right thing — just like the big bear.

— AMIDA BUDDHA'S WISDOM —

Does anyone remember the word “Wisdom” from the last week? What does “Wisdom” mean?

Wisdom means Knowing, Saying, and Doing the right thing.

Does Amida Buddha have wisdom? What else does he have? (Love) Yes, Amida Buddha has Love and Wisdom.

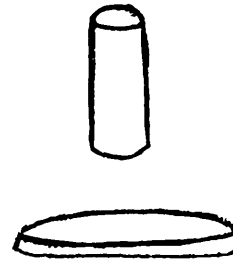
Amida Buddha with Love and Wisdom helps us to live as good boys and girls. Amida Buddha is like a candle that lights the way in the darkness.

Would you boys and girls like to make a make-believe candle today? After you have finished the candle, you make it home and keep it where it will help you to remember that Amida Buddha is always with you—guiding you with love and wisdom.

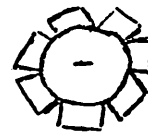
Directions for making candle

(You will need parents to assist)

Materials needed: 1. a cylinder about 4" long
2. colored construction paper
3. paste
4. cover from peanut can



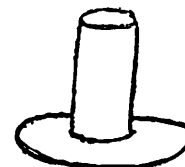
Procedure: 1. Cover the top of the cylinder with construction paper.
Paste or scotch tape.



Made a hole for the “flame”.

Tape along edges.

2. Cover the cylinder with desired shade of construction paper.
3. Cover the top of the peanut can with construction paper.
4. Place the cylinder in the center of the peanut can cover.



cylinder -----

peanut can cover--

Put flame made out of construction paper through the slit in the cylinder.

There are many possible variations in making this candle. Please develop your own ideas to fit your purposes.



A GREEDY MONKEY AND GREEN PEAS

Once there was a monkey who lived in a tall, thick tree in the forest. Every day he would go out and prowl about in his search for food, and towards evening he would come home laden with things for his dinner. On a nearby branch of this same tree lived a flock of pigeons.

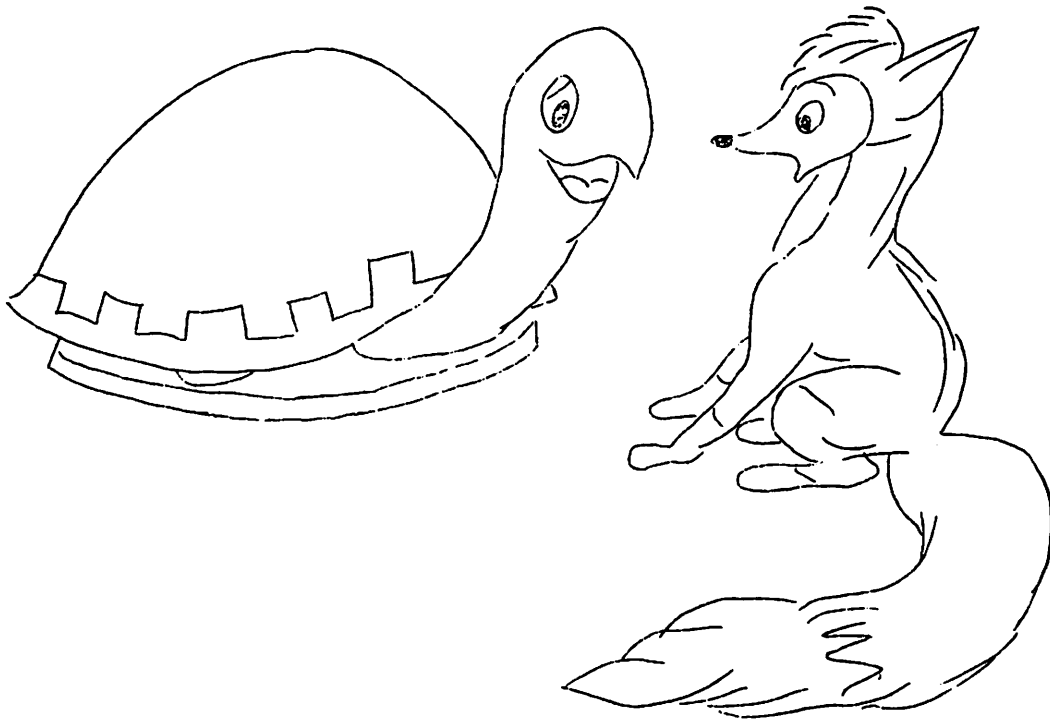
One day the monkey came back with a handful of green peas and was enjoying his dinner when one of the pigeons came flying toward him and alighted a few feet in front of the monkey.

“Good evening, sir,” the pigeon said. “I’m sorry to disturb you at your dinner. I only came to ask you if you would be so kind as to spare me a few of the peas which you have in your hands. Today I did not feel well, so I couldn’t go out to search for my dinner. Please pardon me for interrupting you.”

The greedy monkey gave no answer; he only stared coldly at the pigeon. Finally, he made a motion with his hands in an effort to drive the poor bird away. At this moment, a single pea slipped through his fingers and fell into the bushes below, far out of sight.

So saying, the greedy monkey started to climb down the tree. he forgot everything except the recovery of that single pea. Because he concentrated so hard on that single pea that fell out of his hand, all the rest of the peas in this hands also slipped away into the bushes below where there was no hope for ever finding them again.

The monkey not only failed to regain the lost pea but lost all those in his hands as well, simply because of his greediness.



THE TURTLE AND THE FOX

Once upon a time a turtle was sunning himself on a grassy mound near a river after a hearty noon-day meal.

“How thankful I am that I moved out here from that little mill pond where food was scarce. Here I can get all I want. Now for a nice quiet nap.” Saying this, he gave a big yawn and closed his eyes, little knowing that a fox was watching him from a nearby mound.

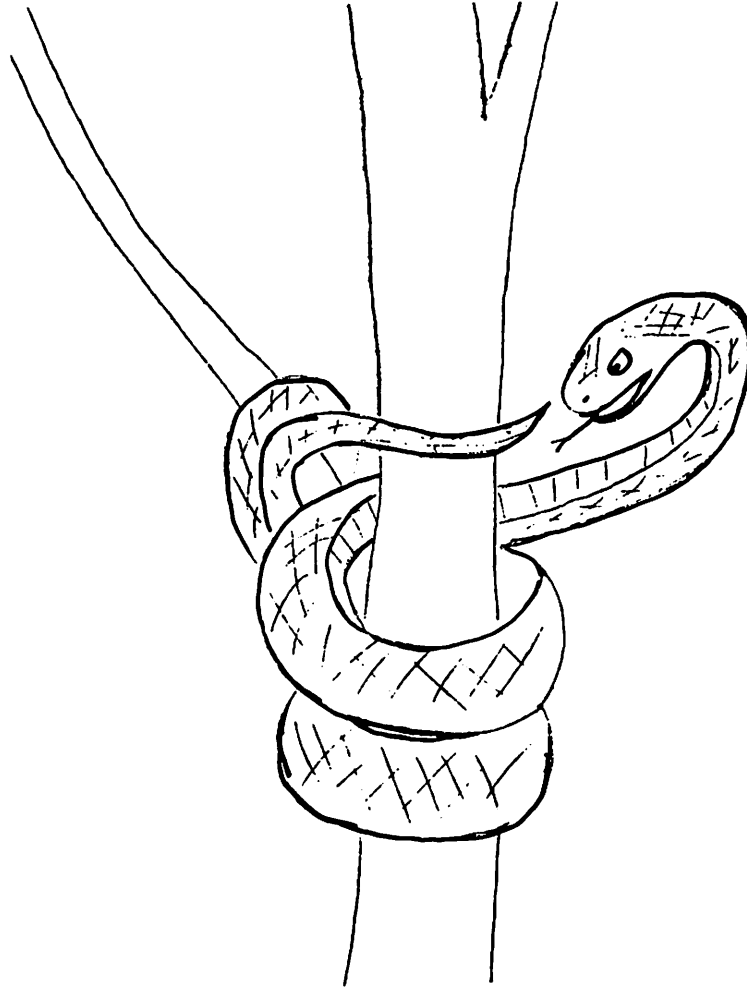
A sense of coming danger warned the sleeping turtle into awakening. He became aware of the presence of the fox and hurriedly withdrew his head and feet and tail into his shell. When the fox saw this, he was greatly disappointed for he knew that even his sharp teeth would be unable to pierce that hard armor-like shell. He decided to sit by and wait for the turtle to show his head from under the covering, because he felt too tired and hungry to look elsewhere for something to eat. After a time the turtle peeped out from under his shell, and seeing the fox sitting close by knew that it would be wiser and safer to stay as he was. It became a contest of patience to see who could wait the longer. When two long days and nights had passed by, the turtle pushed his head out just a wee tiny bit and pulled it in right away, for he saw the fox lying on his stomach still waiting.

Another day passed and when the turtle again looked out, the fox was still there, but he had become so weak from hunger that he was panting wearily and rolling his tongue. Although the turtle himself was very hungry, he decided to wait a few more days and see if he could outlast the fox in patience.

“Oh, how long must I wait for that turtle to come out of his shell? My poor stomach is surely shriveling up,” wailed the fox.

Hearing the rustling of the grass, the turtle cautiously poked his head out from within his shell and how happy he became. The fox had at last given up. He was dragging his weary, hungry body away, sighing with each step, “Oh me, Oh my! Now I shall surely die of starvation.”

The turtle stretched out his cramped legs and tail and with all the speed he could muster waddled his way to the river and food. He had saved his life by being patient.



THE SNAKE

Once there was a large hungry snake who roamed the jungle in search of food. But one day, though he roamed far and wide, he could find no food to eat. The weather was very hot, and the snake grew very, very tired and angry.

Soon, the head of the snake and the tail of the snake began to quarrel bitterly. "You do not know how to look for food. If you had my strength, you could find things much sooner," said the Tail to the Head.

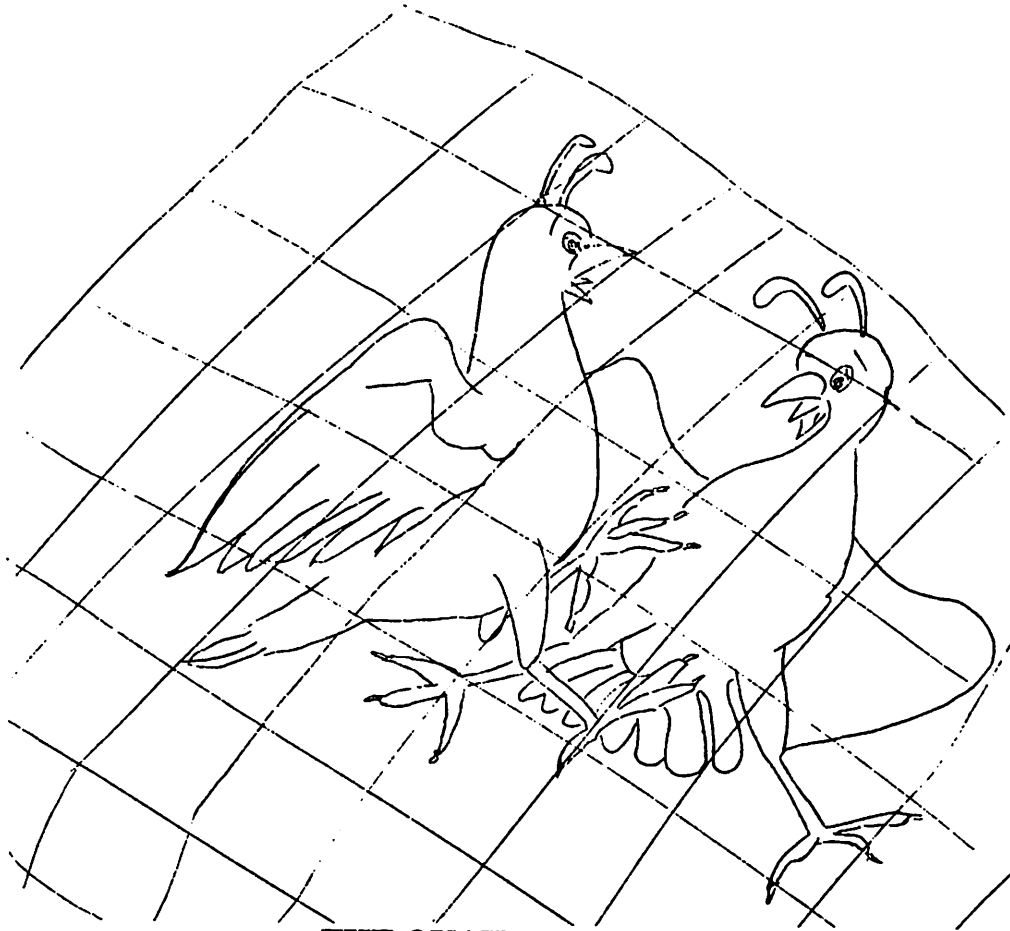
"That's not true," said the Head, "It is you who are holding me back. I could find things much sooner if you could only follow me more closely."

The tail grew very angry, and coiled himself very tightly around the branch of a tree. The Head was powerless, for he could not move ahead at all. For three long days and nights he remained without any food and water.

On the third day, the Head humbly said, "You are right. You are much stronger than I. From now on, I shall follow you."

"I told you so. Now we shall surely find food," said the Tail as he started to uncoil himself from the branch.

But the Tail, having no eyes, slipped and fell off the high branch and the poor snake was dashed to his death on the sharp rocks below. What a pity they could not get along together!



THE QUAIL IN THE NET

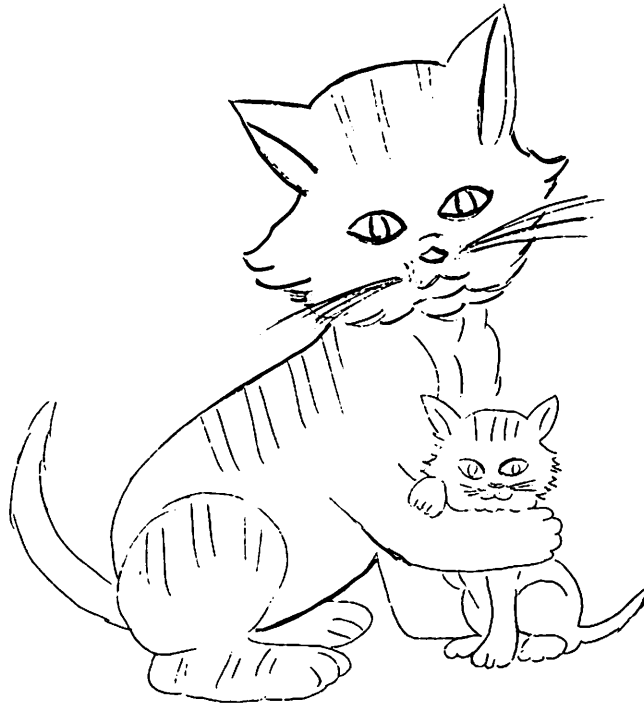
Once upon a time, there were thousands of quail in a forest. Though they were very happy, their lives were often spoiled by a fowler who came every morning to catch them. He first imitated the call of a quail, drew them together, and then flung his net over them. In this way, many of their friends were trapped every day and taken away by the fowler.

One day, all the quail in the forest gathered together to see if they could not find a way to stop this fowler from taking away their friends. One of the wise quail stood up and said, "There is only one way. When the fowler throws his net over us, all of us in the net must thrust his neck through a mesh in the net and fly away with the net and leave it on a thornbush. Then we will be able to escape." Everyone agreed that this was a wise plan and decided to work together the next time the fowler tried to catch them.

For many times after that, the fowler went home without any quail. Then one day, while alighting on the feeding ground, one of the quail trod on another's head by accident.

"Who trod on my head?", cried the second quail. "I'm sorry, my dear friend," said the first quail, "I did, but I did not mean to do it. I hope you will not be angry." But the second quail grew very angry and would not accept the first quail's apologies. Soon the two quail began to quarrel and all the other quail also joined in the quarrel.

The next day, the fowler again came and threw his net over the quail. The quarrelsome quail did not fly in the same direction that day and each quail tried to go his own way. The net, of course, did not rise from the ground. All the quail were caught by the fowler, simply because they could not get along with each other.



THE CAT AND HER KITTEN

Once upon a time a mother cat lived in the cellar with her kittens. She fed the kitten from her own breast and kept them warm at night. Pretty soon the kittens grew and began to run around the cellar.

One day one of the kittens asked the cat, “Mother, what kind of food may I eat when I am able to take care of myself?”

The mother cat answered, “I don’t need to tell you what you should eat. If you will just keep your eyes open and look carefully around you, you will soon find out what you should get for your food.”

The little kitten, following his mother’s advice, began to look around the kitchen for his food. One day he hid himself behind the cupboard hoping to learn about the food he could eat.

Pretty soon he heard the lady of the house tell the cook, “Dinah, you had better put this fish in the cupboard so that the cats won’t get it.” “Aha!” said the kitten to himself. “There is something called fish and I can eat it, because the lady said not to let one of us get it.”

Some days later the kitten overheard the cook say to herself, “I must put this milk away before the cats find it.” The kitten learned that milk was another thing he could eat. At another time the kitten heard the little girl of the house tell the cook, “Dinah, this meat is so good that I want to eat half of it tomorrow. You put it away and don’t let the cat get it.

“The meat!” The kitten thought to himself, “It must be something I can eat. There must be lots of foods that I can eat.

The little kitten looked around some more and learned that he could eat rice, bread and vegetables besides the fish, milk, and meat. Thus the bright little kitten, just by keeping his ears and eyes open and noticing what was going on around him, learned many things.



THE MONKEY AND THE TORTOISE

Many, many years ago, there lived a big tortoise near a huge lake. One day, he heard two birds on a branch overhead talking about the most delicious food in the world — the liver of a full-grown monkey.

The tortoise, upon hearing this wonderful news, decided to find himself this choicest of all foods. The country where the monkeys lived was clear across the huge lake. So after two days and nights of constant swimming, the tortoise finally reached the country.

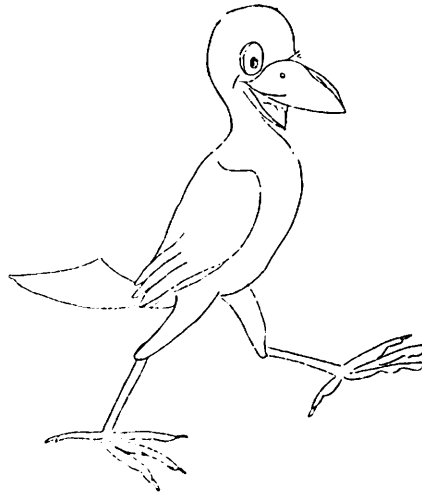
As soon as he arrived, he looked around for a monkey which seemed to have a large liver. Finally, he saw just the monkey he wanted, so he called him down from the tree.

“My good friend,” the tortoise said in a sweet voice, “your life must be very tiresome, seeing the same fields and trees, and eating the same food day after day. In the land where I live, there are thousands of pleasures awaiting you. Food which you have never tasted before, water which tastes like honey, beautiful flowers, trees of pearls and diamonds, and many, many other precious things. Get on my back and I will take you across this lake to my home.”

The monkey, thinking that the tortoise was being very kind, immediately decided to get on this back and go across the lake to his country. But when they were in the middle of the lake, the tortoise suddenly turned and said, “Aha, I have fooled you, my poor friend! All the wonderful things that I told you about my country were not true. I only wanted to get you out in the middle of the lake so that I could have your liver and eat it. Now give it to me!”

The monkey was very surprised, but he tried to hide his fear, and thought of a plan to escape this terrible death. “Mr. Tortoise,” he said, trying to still his beating heart, “you have picked the wrong monkey if you expect to have liver for your dinner. Don’t you know that we sometimes take out our livers and hang them out to dry in the sun? I have left mine hanging on a tree back home today. If you will take me back, I shall be happy to give it to you.”

The tortoise, believing what the monkey had said, turned back to the shores where the monkey lived. The monkey jumped off his back onto dry land and was saved. He never again took a ride on the back of the deceitful tortoise, and was happy just to live in his own country.



FOOLISH CROW

All through the long summer days, there was not even one drop of rain. The stalks of rice, wheat, oats and other grains had withered long ago, and grass and weeds were drying up under the heat of the sun.

Blackie, the big black crow, flew this way and that way, looking all over the city for something to eat. But, alas, not one bit, not even a grain of rice could he find. Tired and hungry from long hours of flying, he at last alighted on a branch of a leafless tree.

"I've searched high and low in this city without any luck. Perhaps, there may be something to eat in the country." And so saying, he lifted his tired wings and flapped many, many weary miles into the country. But wherever he went, not even green grass was to be seen. Blackie was about to give up hope and return on the city when he saw a large pond. And lo, there by the side of the pond was a long-necked black swan. And what was even better, the swan was busily eating a large fish. Blackie's mouth watered. He flew down swiftly and stopping near the swan cried, "Please, Mr. Swan, give me a bite of that fish. I'm so hungry, I'll do anything for you if you will."

The swan lifted his long neck, and swallowing a big piece of fish, said, "I am the king of this pond. All the fish here belong to me. If you want some, you will have to be my servant and do as I say."

"Yes, yes! I'll be your servant and do everything you say. Only give me something to eat before I die," pleaded Blackie. "Very well, here is a piece of fish. But don't forget, you are my servant from now on and must do as I order."

For a week everything went well, and Blackie was getting fatter and fatter. One day after filling his stomach with the leftovers from the swan, Blackie thought to himself, "Why, the swan always eats the best part of the fish and leaves me nothing but the leftovers. I am a bird just as much as he is. I have feathers as black as his. It is too much work being a servant to the swan. I will get my own fish and do as I please in the future."

That evening Blackie watched the swan carefully and saw just how to dive for fish. "Now I know what I should do to catch fish," said Blackie to himself. And so saying, he flew into the pond, but all he could do was to flap the water with his wings, and when he tried to fly out of the pond, his wings had become so soaked with water that he barely reached the shore alive.

After this, Blackie stopped being so greedy and was willing to be just a servant to the swan.

THE WILD LION

Once in the deep jungle there live a wild lion who killed and ate any animal that he met in the jungle. All the rest of the jungle animals were very much afraid and didn't know what to do, for they could not even walk around in the jungle without thinking that they might be eaten by the wild lion.

So, one day, the animals held a meeting and decided to see the lion. They went to the lion and said, "We promise that one of us will come every day to be eaten by you, so please don't bother the rest of us at any other time." Hearing this, the lion said, "Well, that will be all right, let's have it that way, but if one animal doesn't come every day, then I shall eat all of you!" Then he roared, and the animals all ran away with fear.

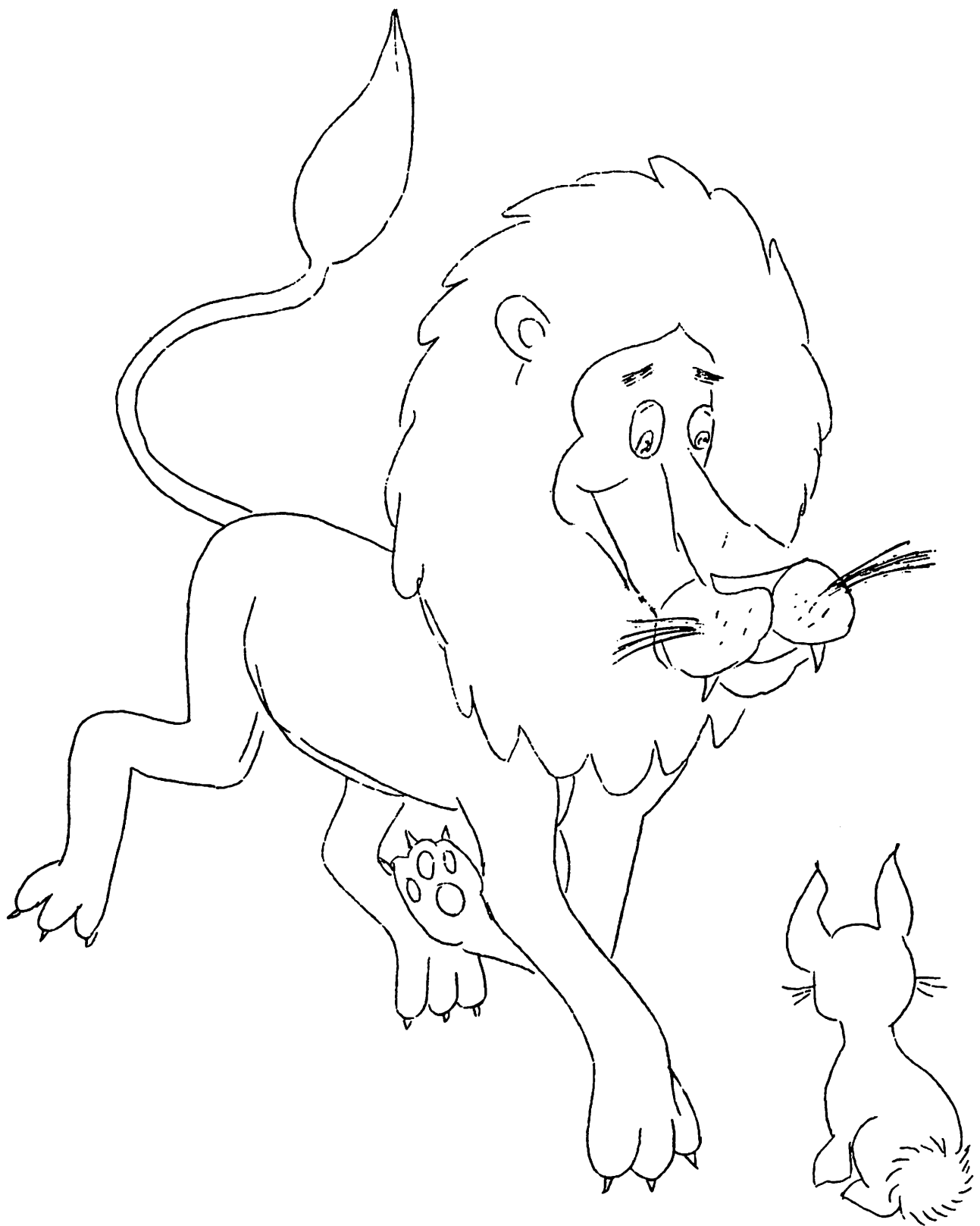
From then on, every day, one little animal went to the lion's place to be eaten up. Because of this, the rest of the animals were able to live in peace until their turn came.

One day, it was the turn of a little white rabbit to be eaten by the lion. Since it was his turn and he couldn't do anything about it, he started out towards the lion's den. On the way, however, he felt that he didn't want to give himself to the lion, and tried to figure out a way to avoid this. While passing through the jungle he passed a deep well. He leaned over and looked inside the well, and saw another white rabbit at the bottom. When he saw this, the rabbit jumped up with glee, for he thought of a way to escape from the lion.

When the white rabbit reached the lion's den, the lion roared. "Why are you late?" Then the rabbit acted very timid and said, "Oh, Mr. Lion, I couldn't help being delayed, because on the way through the jungle I met another lion. This lion said, 'I understand there is a lion who lives in this jungle who thinks he is pretty wild. If he is so strong and wild, I want him to challenge me,' and that's why I was delayed." When the wild lion heard this, he shook all over in a fit of anger and demanded, "Where is this other lion who dares to challenge me to a fight? Show me where he is!" So the rabbit said, "Come with me, and I shall show you where he is." And so, the rabbit started to prance down the jungle road with the angry wild lion following him.

Soon the white rabbit came to the deep well. He pointed it out to the wild lion as the place where the other lion was. "I see now that that lion is afraid. That's why he went into that deep hole!" The wild lion rushed to the well and looked inside. Sure enough, he saw a wild lion looking up from the bottom of the well, so he let out a great big roar of challenge. The roar shook the inside of the well and bounced back as an echo. It sounded just as though the lion in the well had roared back. At this, the angry wild lion because furious and jumped into the well to fight the other lion. Naturally, the wild lion was drowned.

The white rabbit then pranced happily back to his other jungle friends to tell them of what had happened. When they heard the story, they said, "You may be very small, white rabbit, but you are a very smart animal."



THE GRATEFUL ELEPHANT

A long, long time ago, when a great king ruled at Benares in India, there was a lumber camp in a forest near the city. The lumberjacks cut down the trees, made boards out of them, took them to the city to be sold for building materials.

One day when the lumberjacks were hewing logs near their camp, they espied an elephant with a big splinter in his front paw. The elephant was in great pain, so the lumberjacks took pity and pulled the splinter from his paw. Then they washed the wound with clear water, and putting some medicine on it, they bandaged it carefully.

The elephant was well in a few days, and he was very glad and thankful. "I owe my life to these good lumbermen; now I must do something for them in return," he thought to himself. When the elephant told the lumberjacks that he would stay and work for them they were pleased, because they knew that the animal could lift heavy logs for them. From that day, the elephant stayed in the camp and helped his friends with their work.

Many years went by peacefully for both the lumberjacks and the elephant. As the elephant grew older, he grew weak so that he could no longer work as hard as he had before. One day he said to the lumberjacks. "My dear masters, I am getting on in years and am no longer strong enough to do the heavy work, but I have a son who will take my place as your servant."

One of the lumberjacks answered, "Yes, we have noticed that you were no longer very strong, and were thinking of giving you your freedom. It is not at all necessary to leave your son with us, for you have more than repaid what we have ever done for you.

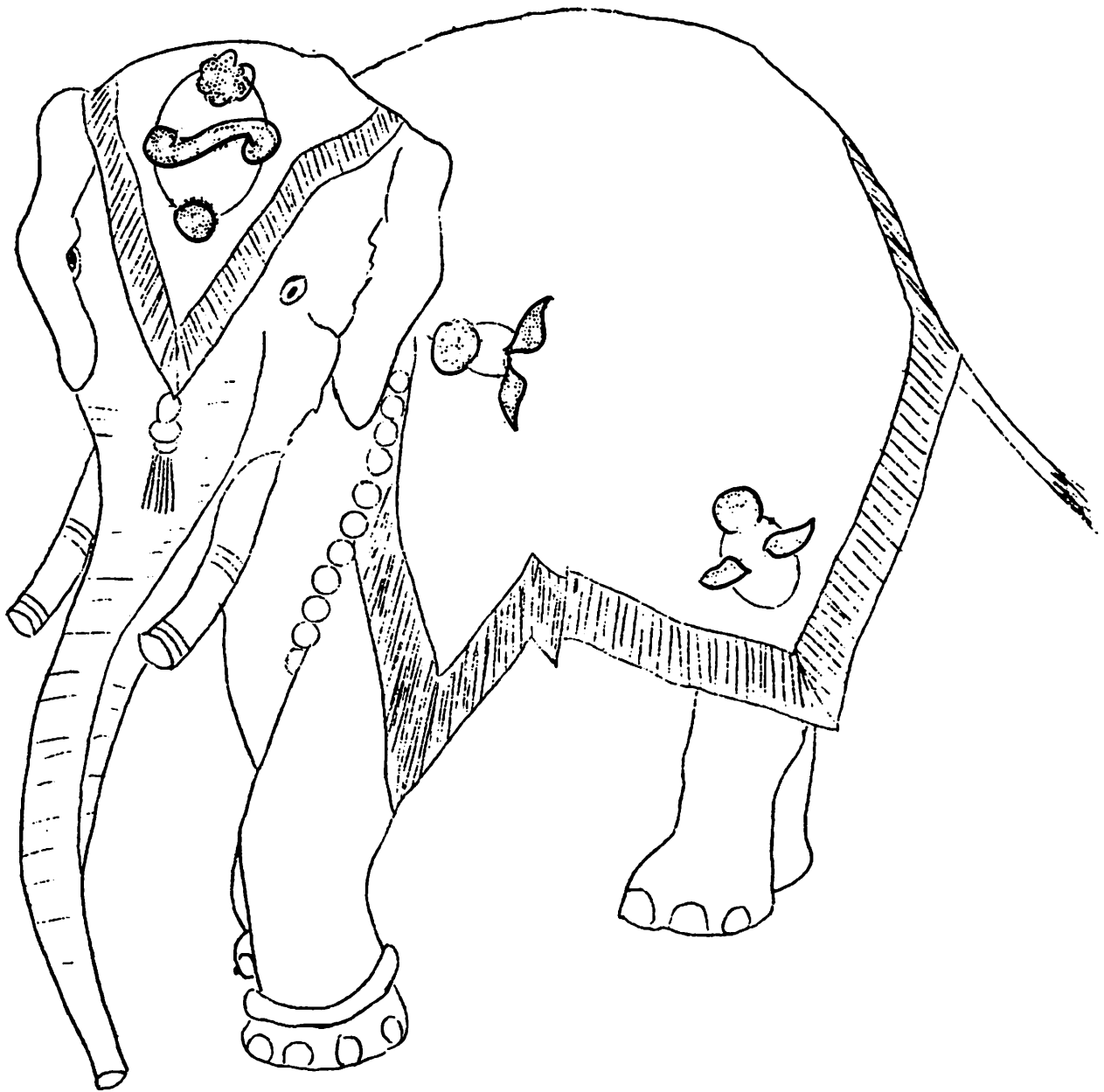
"No, no, my masters, I can never repay your kindness for saving my life," the elephant said. "One short life cannot repay one kindness; therefore, I am leaving my son to serve you even as I served you."

The lumberjacks let the elephant have his way, so the old elephant went into the woods and brought his young son to the camp. When the two elephants came to the ground where the lumbermen were at work, the old animal said to his son, "My son, these are the good people who saved my life a long time ago. I have spent my life trying to repay their kindness, but it is not enough. I want you to take my place and serve these good people as well as you can."

"Father, I owe my being to you; therefore it is my filial duty to do all I can to repay the lumbermen's kindness for you," the noble young elephant replied, raising his long nose high into the air.

The white and noble young elephant took his sire's place and worked hard. The lumbermen liked him and took very good care of him giving him plenty of food and letting him play with their children.

The fame of this white elephant reached the ears of the good King at Benares. The King wished to have such a noble animal for his royal carrier, so he bought the elephant from the lumbermen with a large sum of money and brought him to the castle. There the king and the elephant became fast friends and the King gave the elephant the best of care as long as he lived.



THE MOUSE THAT BECAME A TIGER

Long ago, there lived a hermit in a forest. One day while standing by the front gate of his dwelling, a crow flew by. This crow had a small field mouse in his beak. However, the field mouse slipped out of the beak and fell to the ground near the hermit's dwelling. The mouse quickly ran to the feet of the hermit and said, "Please save me, please save me!" The hermit felt very sorry for the field mouse so he took him home. He gave the mouse part of his own food and took care of him.

One day, a large cat came by and chased the mouse. The terrified mouse became pale and ran into the room where the hermit was sitting. When the hermit saw this, he clapped his hands two times, and thereupon, the small mouse turned into a very large cat. The cat who did the chasing became very much frightened at this, and turned around and ran out of the house. The mouse that became a cat was very happy. He felt that he could meet any cat from now on.

Not too long following that escapade, a large dog came in and started to chase the cat. Thereupon the hermit clapped his hands twice. When he did so, the cat changed into a large black dog. The dog that came in from the outside was frightened at this, and turned around with his tail between his legs and ran out. The mouse who became the black dog was very happy, and he thanked the hermit very much for this favor.

A few days later, however, while the black dog was out walking he met a tiger and was almost eaten alive. Fearing for the dog's life, the hermit again clapped his hands twice. This time, the dog turned into a very large tiger. He was so happy that tears streamed down from his eyes. He thanked the hermit again and again. This time since he became a large tiger, the hermit's house was too small for him to even sit inside the house. The hermit said, "You are now so large and strong that you need not fear anybody. Why don't you go and live in the woods behind the house?" So, the mouse who became a tiger went into the woods to live.

Whenever people met him on the road, they yelled, "A tiger! A tiger!" and ran away. When the tiger saw this, he felt tickled and was very pleased with himself. He was so strong now that he was able to fight anybody. He valiantly roared at the top of his lungs and went around trying to frighten people. When the hermit heard about this, he said to the other people, "Well, although he looks like a tiger, in reality is only a little mouse that I changed into a tiger, so you need not be afraid of him at all." When the people heard this they said, "Well, is that all? He is nothing but a mouse! We have nothing to be afraid of!" The people were not afraid anymore.

After this, the mouse-tiger was very much displeased. "Just when everybody got to be afraid of me, the hermit went and spoiled it all. He has made a fool of me!" So thinking, he became very angry and planned to kill the hermit. However, the hermit knew what was going on in the mind of the mouse-tiger. So when the mouse-tiger came to his house, he immediately clapped his hands twice; thereupon, the large tiger instantly changed into the small mouse.

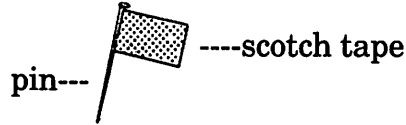
Now, the mouse felt very remorseful and felt sorry for the way that he had acted. But now it was too late, for while he was running around in the yard, a bird swooped down and captured him and took him away.



BUDDHIST CHILDREN OF OTHER LANDS

For a long time, now, we have been talking about Amida Buddha. We understand now how he loves us and cares for us. We believe in Buddha so we are called Buddhists. But are we the only Buddhists in the world?

(Show the children a map of the world. Secure the map on the wall at the children's eye level. Put a marker, such as a pin with flag made with colored scotch tape, to show



where the children are located on the map. Place flags elsewhere—India, Japan, to show that children in these far away countries also are Buddhists and believe in Buddha.

Tell the children that there are many more Buddhists all over the world—so many that if we were going to talk about them all, we would never get through. Therefore, in our kindergarten class we will talk only about the Buddhists of India and Japan.

(If children are confused between American Indians and Asian Indians, clarify this point before going any further).

If possible, have pictures of Japanese and Indian Buddhists, Buddhist Temples, etc. on the wall to show children.

Learn Verse--

Buddha Loves Little Children

Buddha loves little children
Children all over the world
The yellow, the red, the black and white
They are all the same in His sight.

From north and south and east and west
The rich and poor and all the rest
Buddha loves little children
Children all over the world.

Making a Buddhist Flag

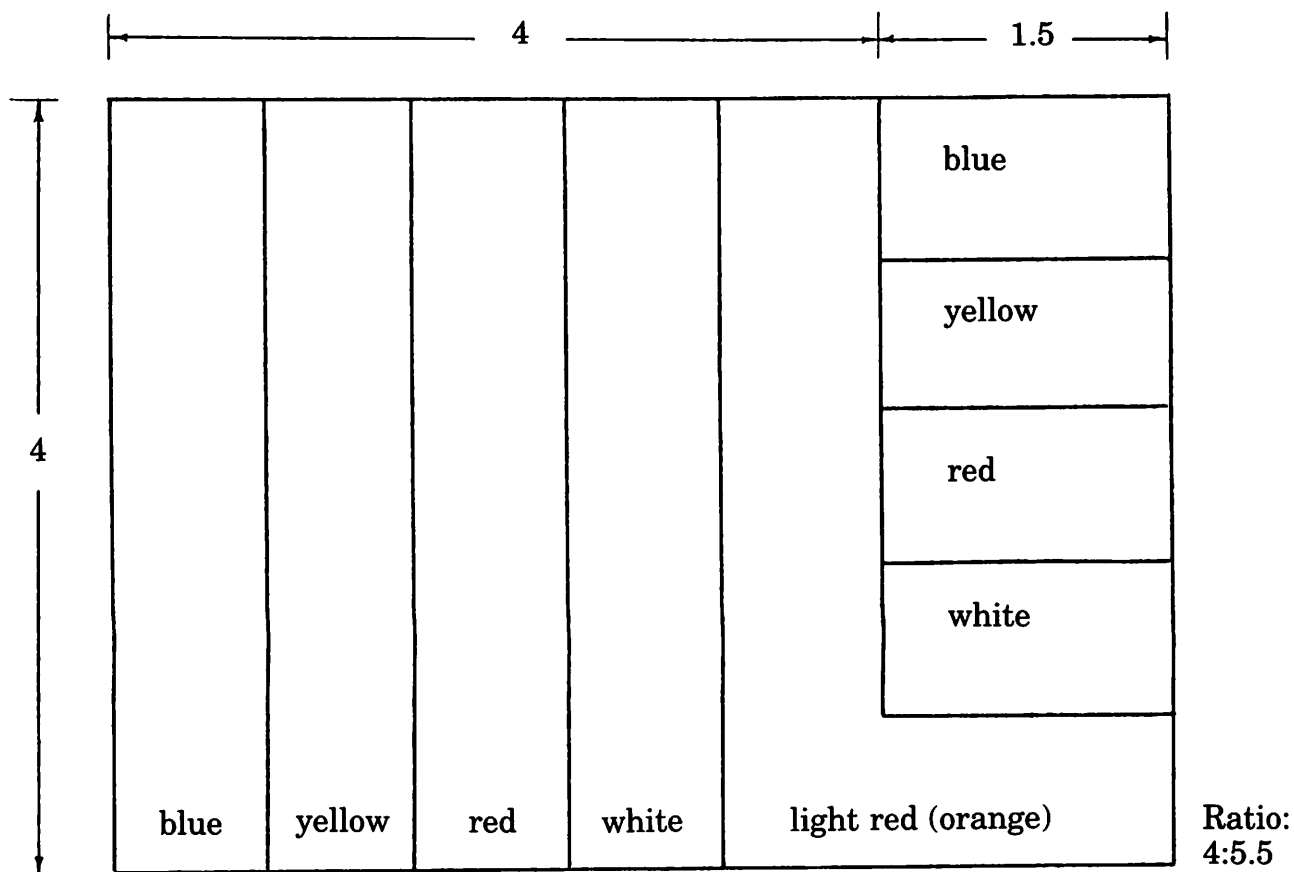
A. Materials

1. White paper (for background)
2. Colored paper: 1) blue 4) white Left to right,
 2) red 5) pink Top to bottom
 3) yellow

3. Scissors
4. Glue

B. Assembly

1. Ditto the white sheets marking the 10 different areas.
2. Pass out strips of colored paper (20 in all) which have been pre-cut to size.
3. Glue to white background, following markings.



BUDDHIST FLAG

INDIAN BUDDHISM

This lesson is intended to show that the children of many countries attend the Buddhist Temple.

Suggested Story:

ARUN

Good morning boys and girls. This morning I will tell you about a little boy who lived in a beautiful land called India. Have you heard of this land before? Of course you have. It is the land where Lord Buddha was born, wasn't it? Well, this story took place in that land.

Once there lived in a small town in India a tiny boy by the name of Arun. With his Papa and his Mama he lived very happily in a small wooden house at the far end of the town.

During the weekdays, Arun, like you boys and girls, went to school where he learned many games as well as how to sing and to write. How wonderful it was to learn something new from his teachers. He loved the school so much that he never missed a day.

Like any other good boy and girl he also went to the Temple, where he heard about Lord Buddha. There he heard, from his teacher, many wonderful stories as told by Lord Buddha. He listened very carefully so that he never missed a word. And when the classes were over he went straight to his home and told his parents about the stories that he had heard from his teacher.

Of course, all the townspeople liked Arun because he was so kind and gentle. Especially was he loved by the people because he never, never got angry. No one in town had ever seen Arun raise his voice in anger. He always greeted people with a kindly smile.

Now, there lived a little ways out of town, three bad boys who never went to school nor did they go the Sunday School. They were very, very jealous of Arun for his popularity among the people. As the days passed, their hatred toward Arun grew stronger and stronger. Finally, they decided to make Arun angry in front of the townspeople.

One morning, as Arun was going home from the temple, these boys went up to him and purposely put out their legs in front of Arun, tripping him to the ground.

"Ouch!" cried Arun, as he rolled onto the ground. Blood came oozing out from his left knee.

"Watch where you're going!" shouted one of the boys.

Arun slowly got up and said to the boys, "Oh, excuse me for being so clumsy. I am very sorry."

But because these boys came with the mind to make Arun angry, one of them said again to Arun, "You must be really stupid to trip over our legs."

And another boy joined him and said, "You must be a weakling for not picking a fight with us."

All three of them started to tease Arun by shouting to him. "Arun is scared, Arun is scared, Arun is scared....."

However, Arun stood still, with a smile on his face. Seeing that Arun was still smiling, at last one of the boys picked up a stick and, bang, he hit Arun over the head. Nat-

urally, if it was anybody else, he would have lost his temper and would have been a fight with these boys. Do you think Arun fought? No he did not. He kept on smiling as if nothing had happened to him. And he asked gently to these boys, "May I go now?"

How astonished these boys were when they found Arun still smiling ever so gently. And so they asked him why he did not get angry.

Arun said, "How can I get angry after hearing the story of Lord Buddha? Lord Buddha said, that we were all His children. And since you too are the Buddha's children I cannot get angry with you."

When these three bad boys heard these words they felt very ashamed of themselves. They all asked Arun to forgive them for what they did and became true children of the Buddha by going to Dharma School.

Activities

1. Make Indian boy and girl cut-outs. Make clothing. The children will color the cut-outs and cut and dress the dolls.
2. Go to your local library and find a picture and story of an Indian boy.
3. Invite an Indian or Ceylonese Buddhist to tell you about life in these countries.

WE ARE BUDDHIST CHILDREN OF INDIA

(Before class, clear room and clean floor so children may sit on floor.)

This morning shall we pretend that we are in India? I am an Indian teacher—you are Indian boys and girls. We are in a beautiful Buddhist Temple. As you enter, how will you greet me?

(Have the children form a single line and take turns coming forward to greet you.)

After the greetings have taken place, all the children are to sit cross-legged on the floor close together in front of the teacher. The teacher may sit on a low stool (for the sake of convenience) to teach the children the following lesson.

When you entered the room just now you greeted me by putting your hands together. Do you know why we greet each other in this manner? We greet each other in the same way as we gassho before the Shrine of Amida Buddha because we believe that all people have the love of Buddha within them. When I greet Tommy (name a boy or girl in the class) in the Indian manner, it is because I believe Tommy is a child of Buddha and deep inside of him is the love and wisdom of Buddha. When I greet Margaret in the Indian fashion, I am doing it with the faith that Buddha is with Margaret. Don't you think this is a most beautiful way of saying "hello" to one another?

Now that classtime is over, shall we depart in the same spirit as we entered with the thought of Buddha in our minds?

(Have children rise and come before you one after the other as in entering.)

Suggestion to the teacher:

A lady or a man from India may be invited to show pictures or tell stories to the children. Ask the Indian visitor to wear native costume if at all possible.

WHAT DO THE CHILDREN OF INDIA WEAR?
WHAT KIND OF TEMPLES DO THEY HAVE?



PRAJAPATI and SIDDHARTHA

Prince Siddhartha was born on April eighth in Lumbini Park, near Kapilavastu. His birth was greatly rejoiced by his father, King Suddhodana, and the people of Sakya Kingdom. But life was not all happiness after Prince Siddhartha's birth, for Queen Maya passed away seven days after she gave birth to the prince. The king was deeply saddened by the loss of his beloved queen and his heart was filled with great pity for his motherless child. Since the king could not mourn for his queen too long, he carefully laid the queen's ashes in the family shrine and resumed the work of ruling his country.

Although the king wanted to keep his son at his side at all times, he could not do so because he had many duties to take care of so he called for Queen Maya's younger sister and said, "Prajapati, (for that was her name) your dear sister is now gone, but my son must be brought up as a prince. I feel that you are best fitted to bring him up for you are his aunt. Will you do this for your dear sister's sake?"

"Yes, my king," Prajapati answered, "I will bring him up as my own son, and I shall do my best to help him become a great king."

"Very well," the king said, "I shall leave him to you. I know that you will do your best to fulfill my wishes."

And thus it was that Prince Siddhartha grew up under Prajapati's loving care.



PRAJAPATI AND SIDDHARTHA

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA

One day, King Suddhodana and his son, Prince Siddhartha went out of the castle with a few followers to look over some land. When they left the city of Kapilavastu and came upon the countryside, they stopped to admire a breathtaking view of the beautiful land. The sun was shining bright, casting a warm glow everywhere. The far away mountains seemed to be raising their purple heads over the horizon to greet the sun. The nearby jungle looked as if it was painted with all shades of lively green.

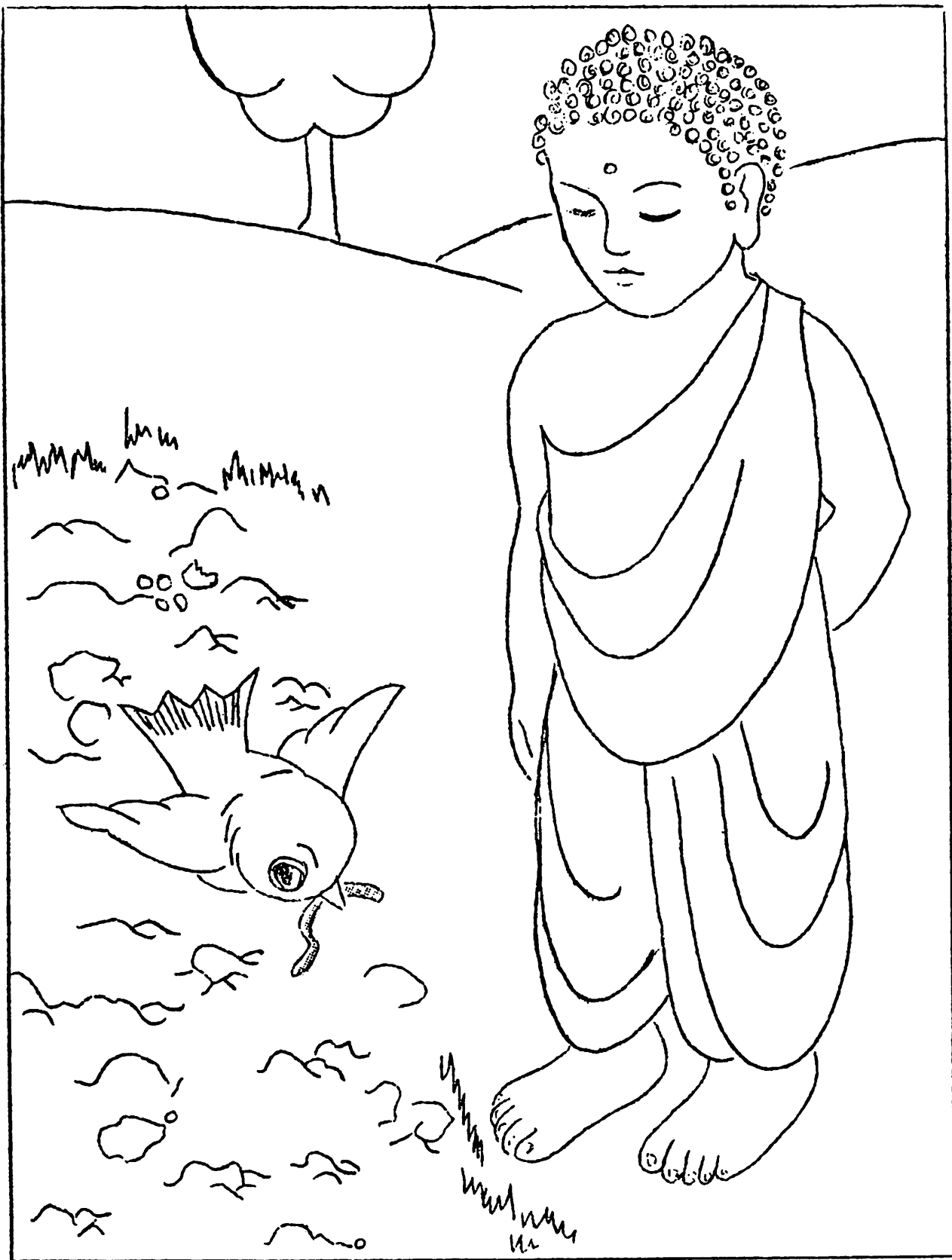
Along the edge of the forests the apple, peach, pear, mango and other fruit trees were in full bloom, and the beautiful blossoms looked like dancing, bright-colored clouds. The sweet fragrance of lilacs and roses were floating in the air, scenting the whole countryside. All the birds were singing in the trees while the bees were buzzing among the flowers. The fields were green with growing wheat, and the farmers were busy plowing the rice. Everywhere, everything seemed to be just bubbling with happiness.

The king looked down and said to the prince, "My son, all these trees, all those flowers, all those fields, and everything which I possess are yours. Are you not the luckiest of all boys?"

The prince saw the scenery too, but what he saw was something much, much deeper than the outward appearances that the others saw. He saw a snake catch a frog and swallow it alive. He then saw a fierce hawk chase a sparrow and kill it. Next, he saw a lizard eat the ants, and the birds eat the worm. Prince Siddhartha saw living things kill and eat each other and took great pity on the weaker creatures. He sighed, and said, "Father, is this the fair land you wanted to show me?"

"Yes, my son," the king answered, "Don't you think everything is beautiful?" "No, father," the little prince said sadly, "I see the farmers working hard to earn their daily bread. I see living things killing and eating each other. Alas! why must all living creatures kill each other?"

The king was surprised and worried at his son's question. He realized that his son was not like other children for he was too quiet and he thought too deeply for his age. This experience showed the king that the prince might someday leave home and become a great religious leader when he grew up — just the wise men and had told him at the time of Prince Siddhartha's birth.



PRINCE SIDDHARTHA

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA AND DEVADATTA

One day Prince Siddhartha was playing in the garden with his cousin Devadatta. All at once the two young princes heard cries of wild birds. They looked up and saw some wild geese flying towards the Himalaya Mountains. The birds were flying there to make their nests.

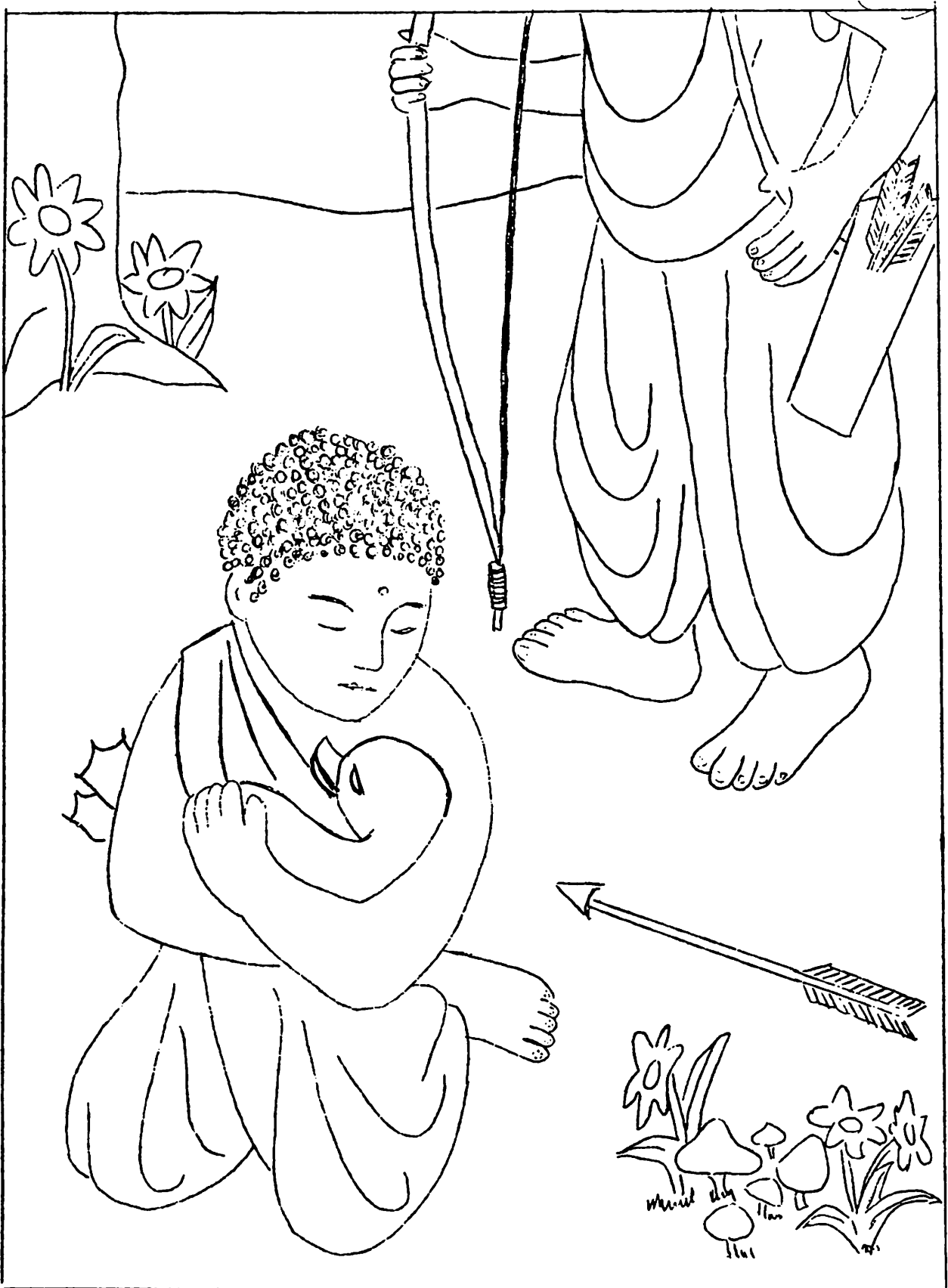
Suddenly, Devadatta called to a servant nearby, "Quick, bring my bow and arrow." The servant ran into the house and fetched the bow and arrow and gave them to Devadatta. He pointed his arrow at the largest goose. It struck the goose on the wing. With a loud painful cry, the goose fell near Siddhartha. Siddhartha was very sad upon seeing the wounded bird, and picked it up in his hands. He gently pulled the arrow out and soothed the goose with his soft hands. Devadatta came running to the spot where Siddhartha was standing with the bird.

"Let me have my bird," said Devadatta. "No my cousin, it is still alive so I will not give it to you. I cannot give it to you to be killed mercilessly," said Siddhartha.

"But it belongs to no one when it is flying in the air. I shot it down, so it belongs to me," said Devadatta. But Siddhartha did not give the bird to his cousin. He took the goose inside and cared for his wound. Devadatta grew angry and told his father who, in turn, told it to the king. The king was a very fair man, and ordered his wisemen together to hear the case for them to judge. Upon hearing the story, the whole court fell silent. The wisemen divided themselves into two groups, one for Devadatta's rights, and the other for Siddhartha's rights. After many arguments, an old priest stood up and said, "My wise lords I have heard your words well. I know that they are filled with justice and wisdom, but thus do I think about this matter: The man who saves life, owns the living things. The man who wants to kill has no right to own the living things. The slayer wastes life; he is lacking in mercy. The saviour of life helps his fellow creatures; he is noble, he has mercy. A living thing in the hands of such a one would prosper. So my lords, please let the prince have the bird."

All the wisemen knew the priest had spoken the truth. The court decided to give the bird to Siddhartha.

The prince cared for the bird's wing for a few days longer. Then he took it out into the yard and let the bird fly high into the air. The bird gave a cry of happiness and glided away to join his friends.



PRINCE SIDDHARTHA AND DEVADATTA

THE LESSON GIVEN TO RAHULA

The Lord Buddha had one son. The son's name was Rahula. This is a story about Rahula when he was still a young child.

Far, far up on the top of a mountain, there stood a Buddhist Temple. The temple was hidden among many tall trees. The leaves of the trees were dark green and had tiny specks of yellow on them. Early in the morning, the sun's rays would peak through the tall trees here and there. The rays would then come to rest on the roof of the temple.

And in this temple lived Rahula. This was also his school. Here, Rahula learned to read and write. He learned to chant sutras. He practiced silent meditation. He studied the great teachings of the Buddha in order to become a good boy. But quite often Rahula did not practice what he learned. Sometimes, he was a naughty boy. Sometimes, he even told lies!

One bright morning, the Lord Buddha climbed up the mountain to visit His son. He carried a big bowl in His arms. Rahula heard his father coming and jumped up and down with joy! He ran out to the entrance to meet his father.

Rahula reached for his father's bowl. Into it, he poured cool mountain water which he had brought from a nearby stream. The water was pure and clear as glass.

The Lord Buddha's feet were covered with dirt. For it was a long climb up the mountain. He dipped His feet into the cool water. At once, the water turned muddy. The Buddha then asked, "Rahula, can you drink this water?" Rahula answered, "No, Father, this water was once pure and clear. But now it is muddy and dirty. I cannot drink such dirty water!"

The Buddha said, "Rahula, very often you are a naughty boy. Above all, you tell lies. Did you know that when you tell lies, your thoughts are smeared with dirt, too?" The Buddha then pointed at the bowl. It sat on the ground, overflowing with dark, murky water. The Buddha continued, "Rahula, let us pretend that your body is this bowl. This bowl holds foul water. Therefore, your body, too, carries foul thoughts."

Rahula looked at the bowl. He imagined the dark foul water whirling about his body, around and around. The Buddha explained: "Rahula, you said you could not drink such dirty water. Think well . . . if you tell lies, no one will want you. You will have no friends with whom you can talk or play."

Rahula then pictured himself standing at the peak of the mountain, all alone. Only the wide blue sky extended over his head. He tiptoed and raised his arms as high as he could, but the sky was helplessly beyond his reach. He wanted to cry!

It was not time for the Buddha to leave. Rahula's face looked rather anxious as he watched Him empty the bowl. The Buddha promised him another visit soon and started down the mountain. Rahula kept his eyes on his father's back. He tried not to lose sight of His moving figure. The figure grew smaller and smaller until it finally disappeared among the tall trees. Everything was still!

Rahula thought: "If I stop telling lies and be kind to other people, I am sure they will want me as their friend. Yes, I must start this practice today!"

Rahula beamed! His anxious face broke into a happy smile! He looked down at the spot where his father's figure had disappeared and thanked Him from his heart. He thanked the Lord Buddha for His great teachings.



LORD BUDDHA AND RAHULA

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

Many centuries ago, crowds of people gathered around the Buddha to listen to His great teachings. However, His teachings were so deep that very often they could not grasp the true meaning. As a result, each man told the story in his own way. Some were not able to grasp His words at all; and for these people, Buddha told simple stories, precisely for their needs. In this way, Buddha led every man to eventually find the path of life best suited for himself.

As time went on, the teachings and parables which were first told by Buddha began to change, since each man claimed that he understood the Buddha's words correctly. This frequently caused many arguments.

So one day the Buddha told His people the following story:

"Once upon a time, there was a king. One day the king ordered some blind men to gather in the palace garden. A huge elephant was then hustled onto the green grass. The king said to the blind men, 'Here is a thing called as elephant. Can you tell me what an elephant is like?'

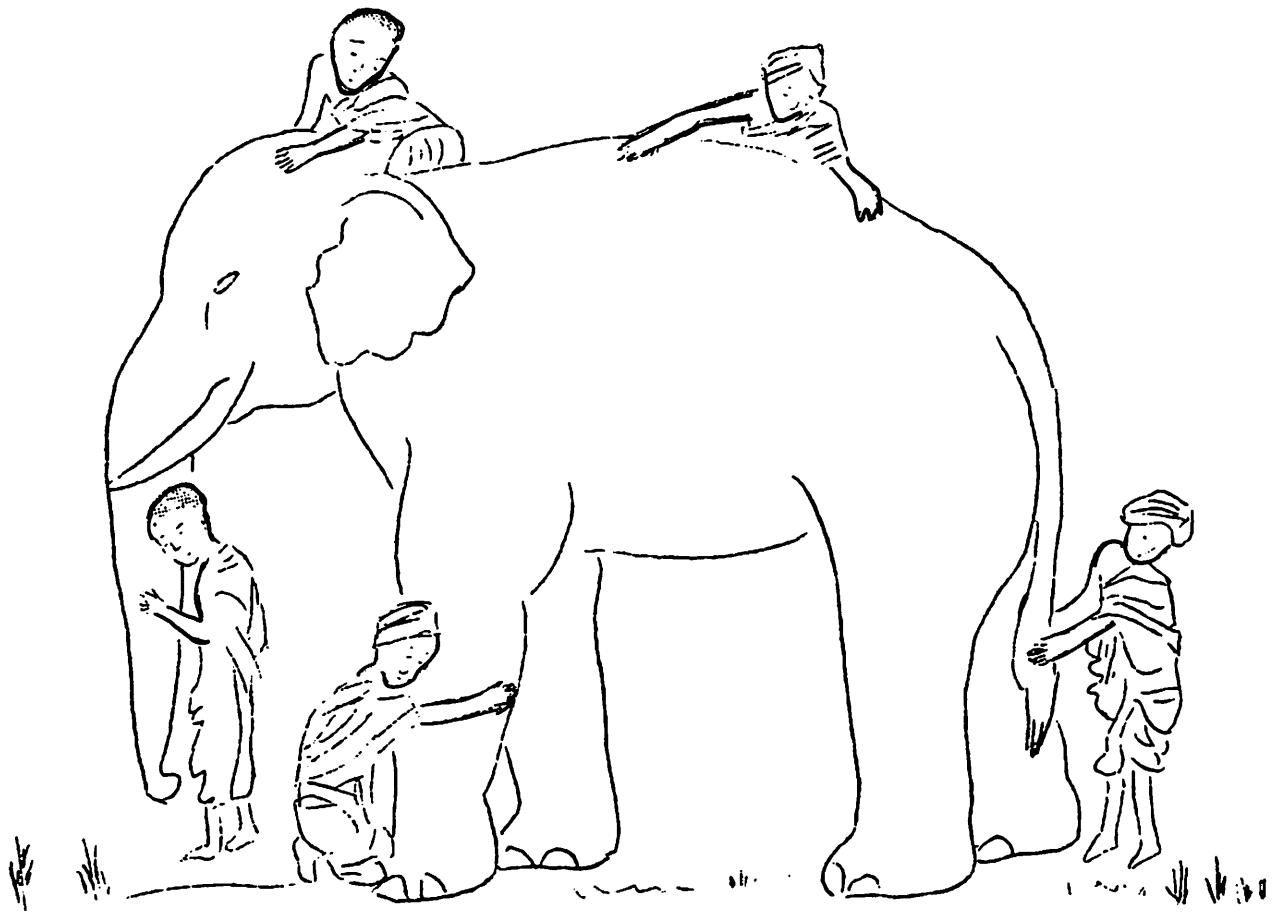
"The blind men gropingly passed their hands over the elephant. One blind man climbed over the elephant's head, another touched its ears, another felt its trunk, and still another touched its tail.

"The king watched his with a broad smile. After a while, he called the blind men and asked, 'Now, tell me exactly what an elephant is like.' The blind man that climbed over the elephant's head said, 'The elephant is similar to a turtle.' The blind man that hugged the trunk said, 'No, no, that is wrong! The elephant is like a big, round log.' The blind man that felt the tail laughingly replied, 'You all say the elephant is like a turtle, or that it is like a log, but feel it well again. It is just like a broom.'

"The answers that the blind men gave were numerous. Each blind man insisted that he was the only one that was right, and that all the others were mistaken."

This was the end of the parable.

The Buddha finally said to His people: "The blind men thought they knew that the elephant was like all thought there were right. Are they not ridiculous? And yet, you who are in the crowd are much the same as these blind men. Though your eyes are kept open, your mind is blind. Awaken your mind! Make an effort to avoid the error made by the blind men. Be able to see this world in its true form."



THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

In America, we greet each other by saying “hello” or “hi” or we shake hands. Do you suppose this is the way people greet each other everywhere?

When greeting one another the Buddhists of India put their hands together in the form of gassho. When Buddhist children greet their teachers, they bring the hands (in gassho position) up to their faces with the fingertips almost touching the forehead.

greeting each other

greeting teacher

Buddhist children in Japan (all Japanese, in fact) bow their heads low in greeting.

Demonstrate to the children these different ways of greeting. Ask the children to copy you.

Comment that both ways of greeting are quiet, very gentle and show one’s respect for the other person.

While the American way of greeting is very friendly and uninhibited—we do have a great deal to learn from the customs of other countries.

Tell the children to remember the greetings of boys and girls in India and Japan. Ask them to remember the quiet, gentle quality of their greeting. Although the children may not follow the gestures of Indian and Japanese children, they can put into practice the quiet, gentle mannerisms into their own greetings.

In the coming weeks note—if any—the change in the way the children greet each other, their elders, their ministers, etc.

Remind them often (and gently) to put into practice what they learn in Dharma School.

WE ARE BUDDHIST CHILDREN OF JAPAN

Talking Together

Shall we travel a little ways to Japan (point to map) and pretend that we are children of Japan? How shall we greet each other this time? Yes, we bow our heads to each other. Where shall we sit? Once again we are on the floor as in India, but this time, we do not sit directly on the floor, we sit on zabutons or cushions. We do not sit cross-legged as in India, but we sit with our legs folded underneath. (Demonstrate to the children). Children in Japan say *Namu Amida Butsu* and *Gassho* with the *ojuzu*.

We’ve done enough talking for now. Shall we try making believe we are in a Japanese Temple now?

The children all bow to the teacher and take their places sitting down on the zabuton. Recite the *Nembutsu* and *Gassho*.

(Since the children are not used to sitting long with their legs cramped and underneath them, tell them that they may relax.)

For the lesson, teach Gatha, “Children of Japan”.

For the closing of the lesson, sit nicely once more and repeat *Nembutsu*.

For additional information, the children may be told that when they say *Namu Amida Butsu* they are calling Amida Buddha’s name in Japanese.



**WHAT DO THE CHILDREN OF JAPAN WEAR?
WHAT KIND OF TEMPLES DO THEY HAVE?**

TARO

Good morning boys and girls. This morning I will tell you about a little boy named Taro. He lived in a far away land called Japan. How many of you have heard of Japan before? It is a country where boys and girls wear long kimonos and walk on wooden sandals called “geta”, isn’t it? Well, Taro wears these things too.

Clad in kimono and geta on his feet he clippity-clopped on the street playing all by himself. Day in and day out he played all by himself. At first, boys and girls of his neighbors came to play with him. But whenever they came, Taro played a mean trick on them until one day he found no one to play with him. Taro was a bad little boy.

Not only was he mean toward other boys and girls, he was also naughty toward his mother and father. Whenever his mother asked him to do something for her, he always answered, “Nah, I don’t want to do it.” He was so bad that his parents did not know what to do.

One Sunday morning while everyone was attending Sunday School, Taro played with a ball in front of the house. He never went to Sunday School because he thought that the church was the place for sissy people to go. He played all alone, throwing his ball against the wall. While he was playing, a huge black dog appeared from nowhere. He was so big he looked like a calf. This black dog silently watched Taro playing with the ball. Then suddenly he leaped and caught the ball in his mouth. Quickly, he started to dash off with Taro’s ball.

Taro became very angry. He grabbed a long stick and started to chase after the dog, and as he chased he yelled at the top of his voice, “You stupid dog, give me back my ball . . . help, help, somebody, get my ball from him.”

Nobody came to help Taro get his ball from the dog, for everybody was at the church attending Sunday School. He ran and he ran all by himself, yelling to the dog to give the ball back.

“Give me back my ball you big stupid ox!” he yelled as he ran. He ran and he ran until he was so tired that he could not run any longer. He sat on the ground puffing and huffing, cursing to himself for the the ball he had lost.

Just then from somewhere he heard the sweet voices of children. Taro looked around to see where they were coming from.

“Wa re ra wa Hotoke no kodo mo na ri

The voices were coming from the inside of the church. They were the gatha. But he said to himself as he approached the church, “Those who go to church are sissies.” And yet, as he approached the church, he felt as if something was pulling him. Closer and closer he came near to the church muttering to himself that he will not go into the church. “One who goes to church is a sissy, one who goes to church is a sissy...” He repeated these words as he walked closer to the church. But finally, without realizing, he was walking right into the church.

The church was beautifully decorated with different colored papers, and huge balloons were hanging from the ceiling. The church was holding the Bodhi Day celebration.

How many of you know what Bodhi Day is? It is the day when Prince Siddhartha became a Buddha, isn’t it?

Well, the Sunday School children were holding this happy celebration. What a wonderful time the children were having! They sang and they danced, their hearts overjoyed. On the tables were lots and lots of food, too.

When one of the Sunday School teachers saw Taro standing in front of the entrance, she quickly went up to him and invited him in. Slowly, Taro walked into the church, but as he walked he muttered to himself, "I am not a sissy . . . I am not a sissy . . ."

Just then the teacher called the children and started to tell the story of Amidha Buddha. Taro never heard such a story before, and when he learned that he was Amida Buddha's child, a very faint smile came over his face. He listened very carefully to what the teacher said, trying very hard to hear every word. By the time the story ended, Taro was smiling sweetly. He no longer was the boy that played mean tricks. He danced and sang with the rest of the children, and he never did have so much fun in his life. When the party ended, Taro said to himself, "Thank you, black dog, for bringing me to the church."

- Suggested Activities:**
1. Let group of children make a picture of Taro.
 2. In addition to coloring, let the children draw an ojuzu in Taro's hand.
 3. Ask children to wear their kimonos or bring some article that came from Japan.
 4. It would be a good idea to build up the lesson by holding an exhibition.

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

PICTURE STORYBOOK

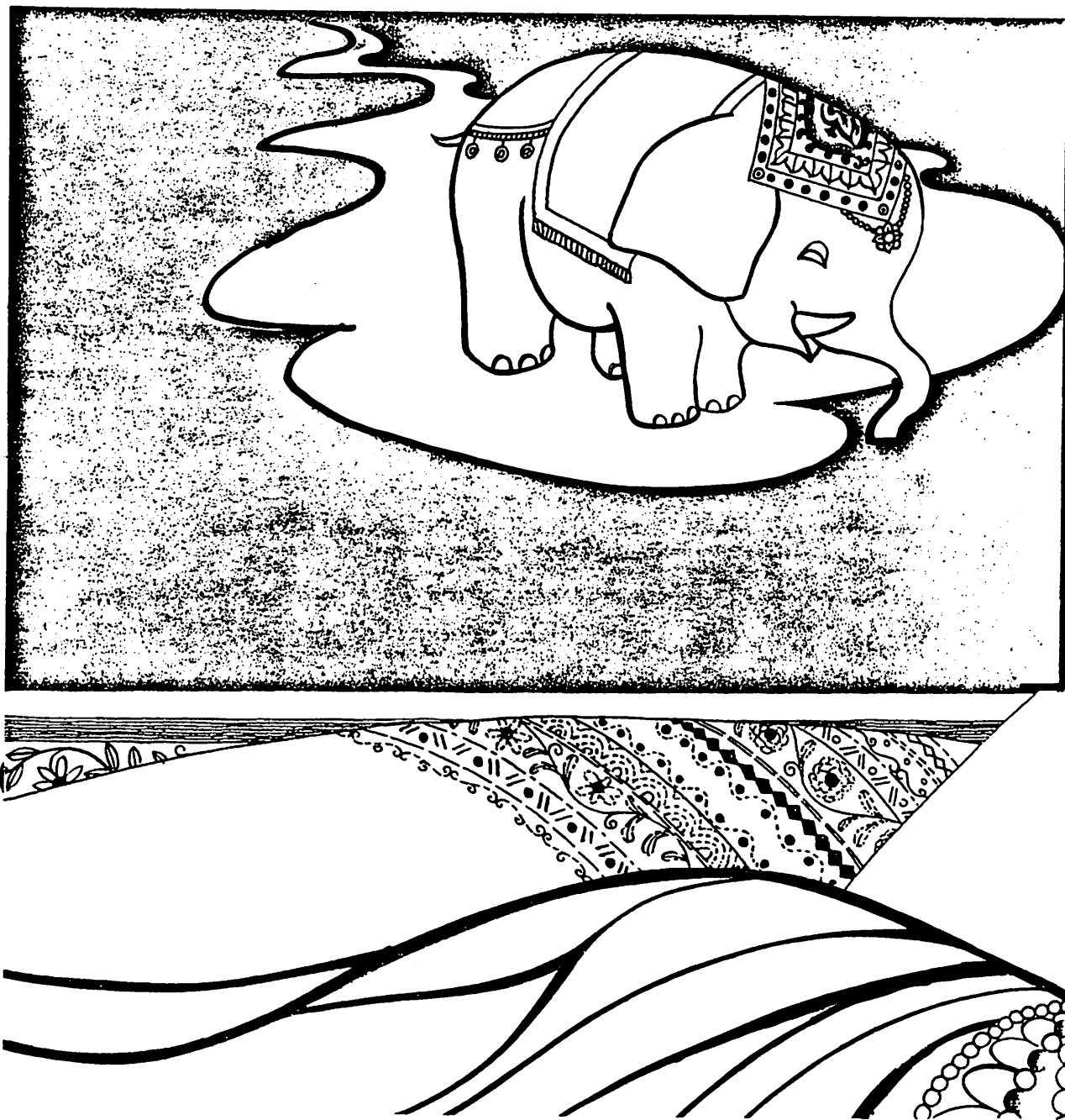
This story shows the children through pictures the **time** of the Buddha's life. It's important for children to realize its difference in society and time.



King Suddhodana and Queen Maya ruled the kingdom of Kapilavastu. Everyone loved the wise king and his gentle wife.



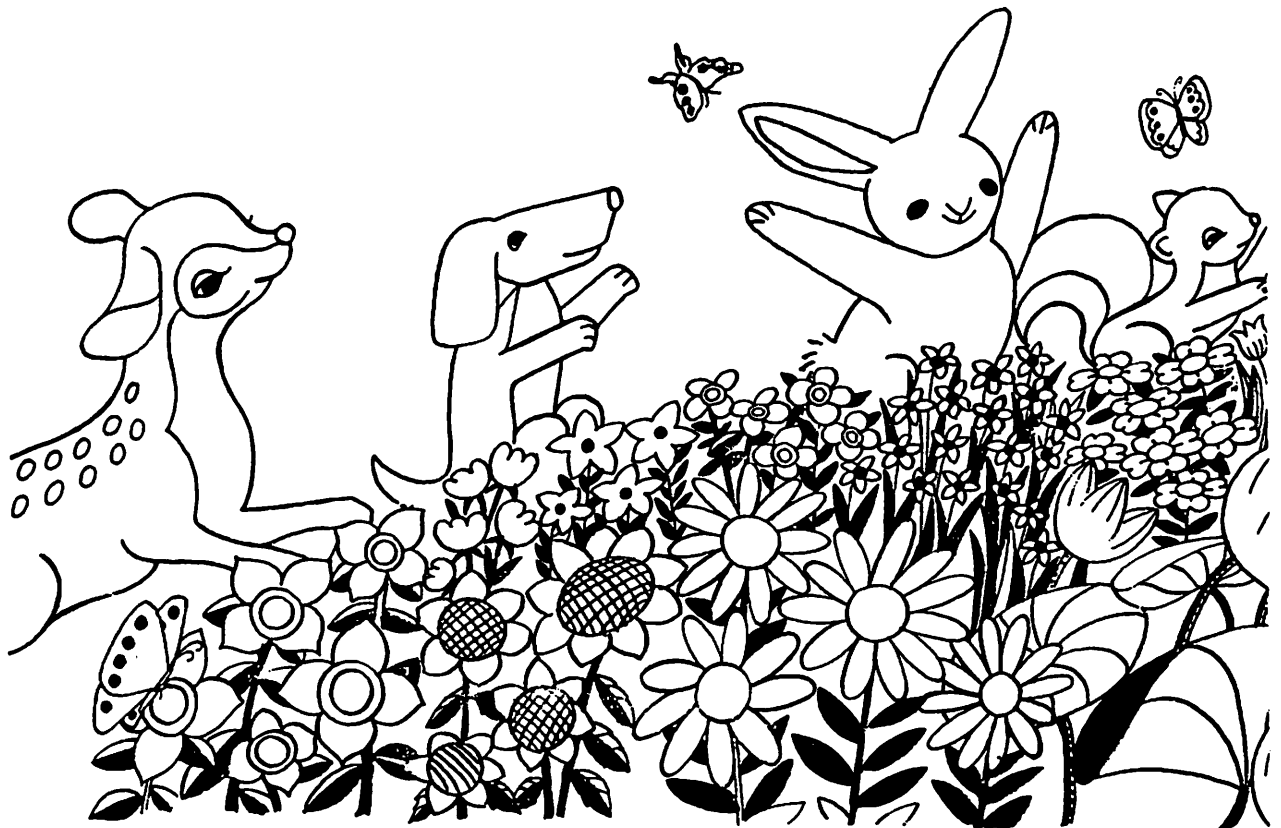
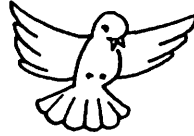
For many years, the king and the queen wanted an heir. They deeply wished for a son who would rule the land some day.



One night, the queen had a strange dream. She dreamt of a big white elephant with six tusks.



This puzzled the queen so she asked the wise men about the dream. The wise men nodded their heads knowingly and smiled. They knew it was a sign that a wonderful child would be born.



As was the custom long ago, Queen Maya returned to her parents' home to give birth. The tired queen came to Lumbini Garden along the way and stopped for a rest.



While resting amid the beautiful flowers, the royal prince was born. It was on April 8th that the long-awaited heir was born. The prince was called Siddhartha or “every wish fulfilled.”

Soon Prince Siddhartha was ready to learn so the wisest teacher in the land was chosen. He eagerly studied during the mornings. In the afternoons, his teacher spoke about the shining sun, the song birds and the green meadows.



The prince also learned about living things through his own horse, Kanthaka.

“Take good care of him. Be kind and gentle. He will be a great horse.”





The prince grew into a fine boy.

One day, Devandatta shot a white swan with an arrow. Siddhartha gently picked up the trembling bird.



“That is my bird. I shot it down,” demanded Devadatta.

“No, please let this bird live,” said Siddhartha.

The boys finally decided to let the king settle the dispute. “The bird belongs to the boy who saves its life.”



How wise and kind the king was and Siddhartha wished to be like him. But to his dismay, he saw many things which he could not understand.

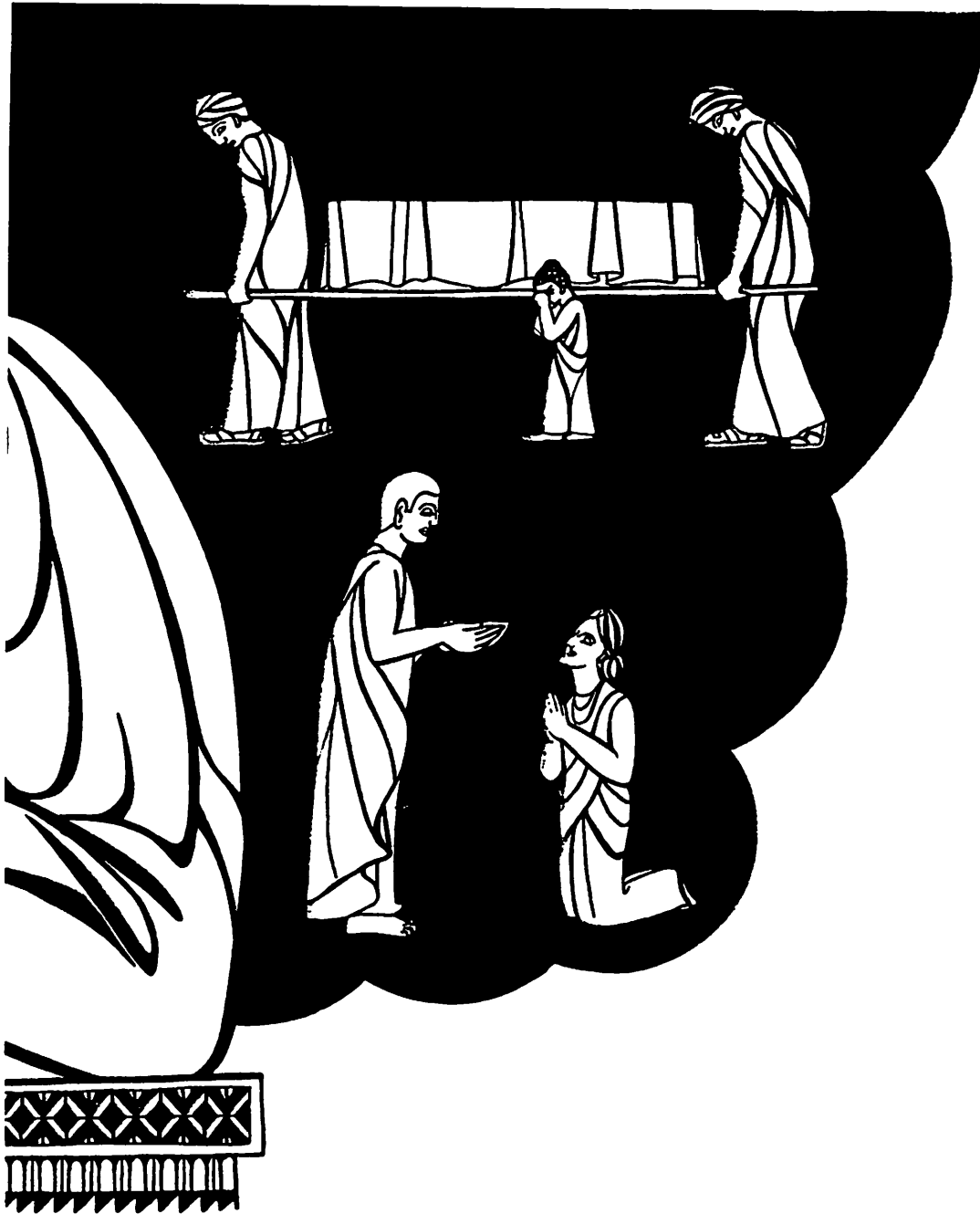
One day, the prince and his father walked through the fields.



“Look there, my son. The butterfly will be snapped up by the frog. The snake is ready to swallow the frog. The eagle is waiting to swoop down on the snake. Everywhere one life takes another life. This is nature.”



The prince often thought of the sadness he had seen. Therefore, the king tried to help him forget them by making life at the palace gay.



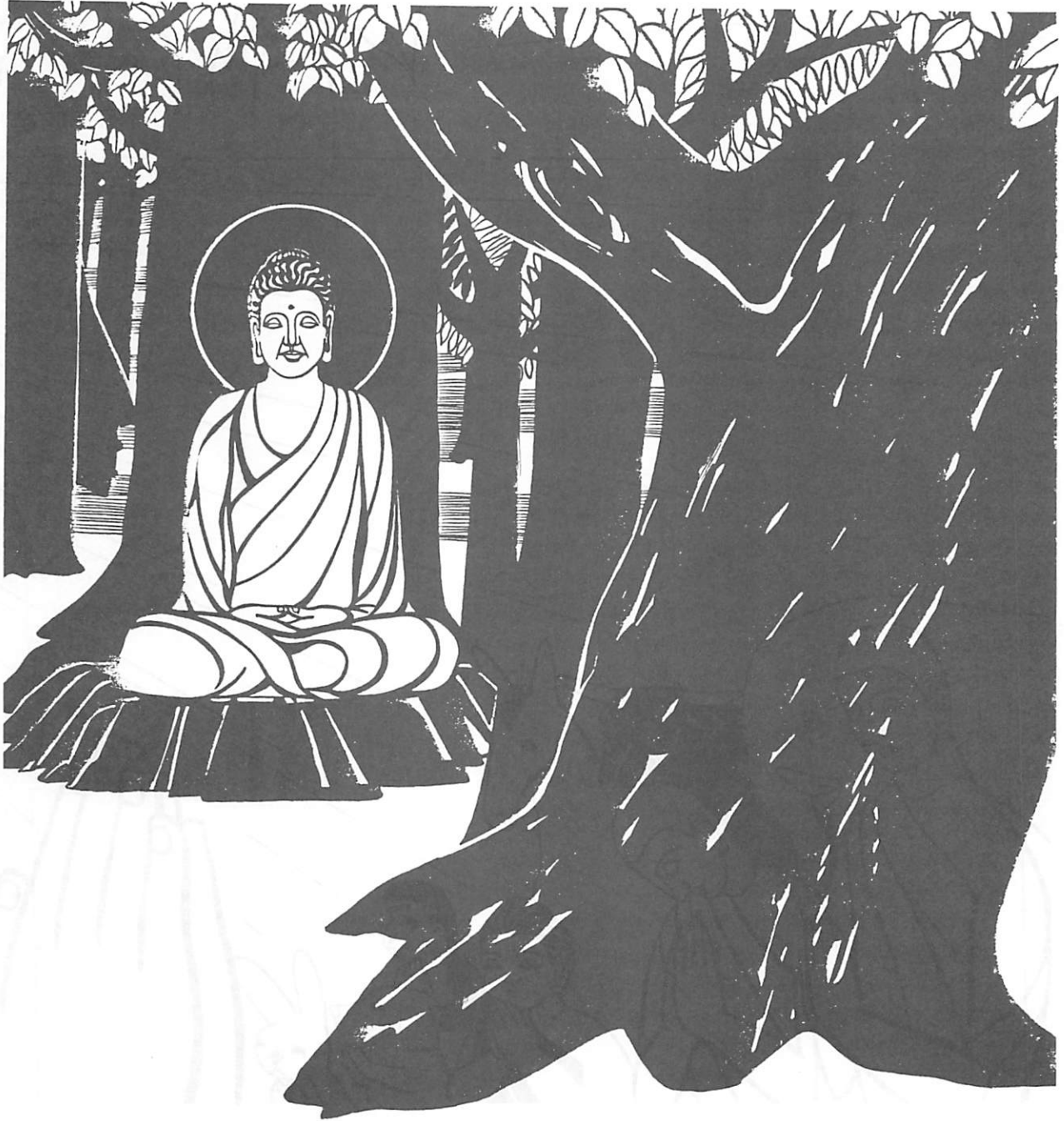
“Why? Why?”

“One cannot avoid old age, sickness, and death. There must be an answer to this riddle. I must go out and seek the answer . . . like that monk I saw.”



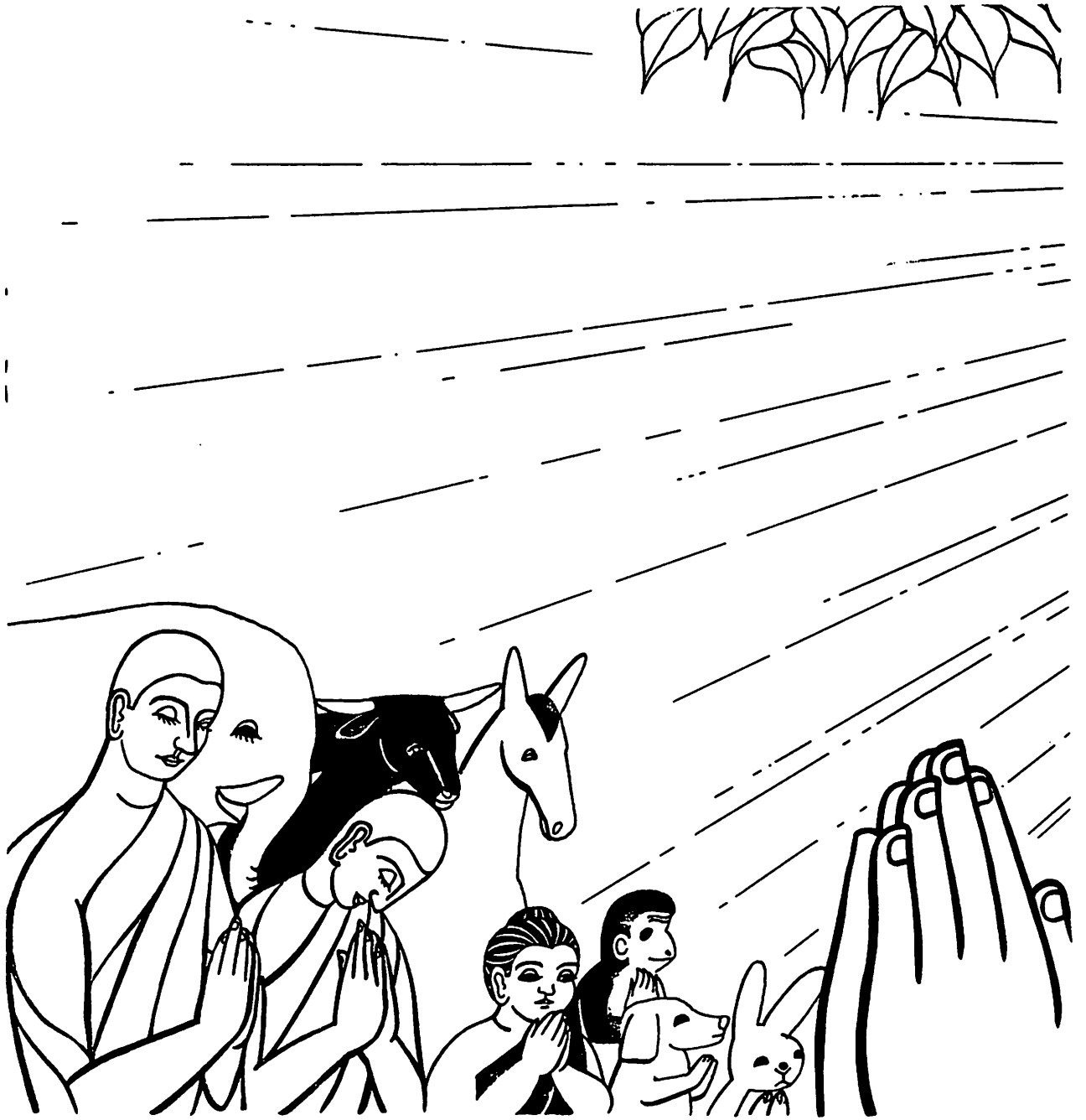
The search for Truth was difficult.

For six long years, Siddhartha studied the ways of the holy men. He ate a single grain of rice each day. He sat still for weeks



and weeks until he became tired and weak. He thought and thought. The agonizing months became years.

Still he found no answer.



Peace at last! The darkness was finally gone!

On December 8th, Siddhartha found the answer under the twilight shadows of the Bo Tree. Siddhartha had become the Enlightened Buddha.



From that day on, the Buddha spread the Truth. He showed others the way to fill their hearts with peace and happiness.



Blind Anuruddha was a faithful follower. One day, he struggled to thread a needle. Poor Anuruddha! He could not see the hole. When the Buddha saw this, he stopped to help him.

“Do even the smallest good deed . . . so small that it could pass through the eye of the needle.”



The Buddha's love was endless. Every living thing was important.

Because of this great compassion for all, he often shared his food with the hungry birds and animals.



Panthaka was not very bright. He learned very slowly so the Buddha asked him to sweep the ground. Panthaka's broom swished from morning until night. Day after day, he worked to keep the yard clean.

Soon he understood that he must work constantly to keep himself pure, just as he cleaned the yard.

Once a few blind men gathered around an elephant. One pulled the tail and said it was like a rope. Others said it was like a tree trunk, a big palm leaf or a wall. Each touched only one part of the body and tried to picture the elephant.

No one can get a true picture of anything or any happening by understanding only one part.



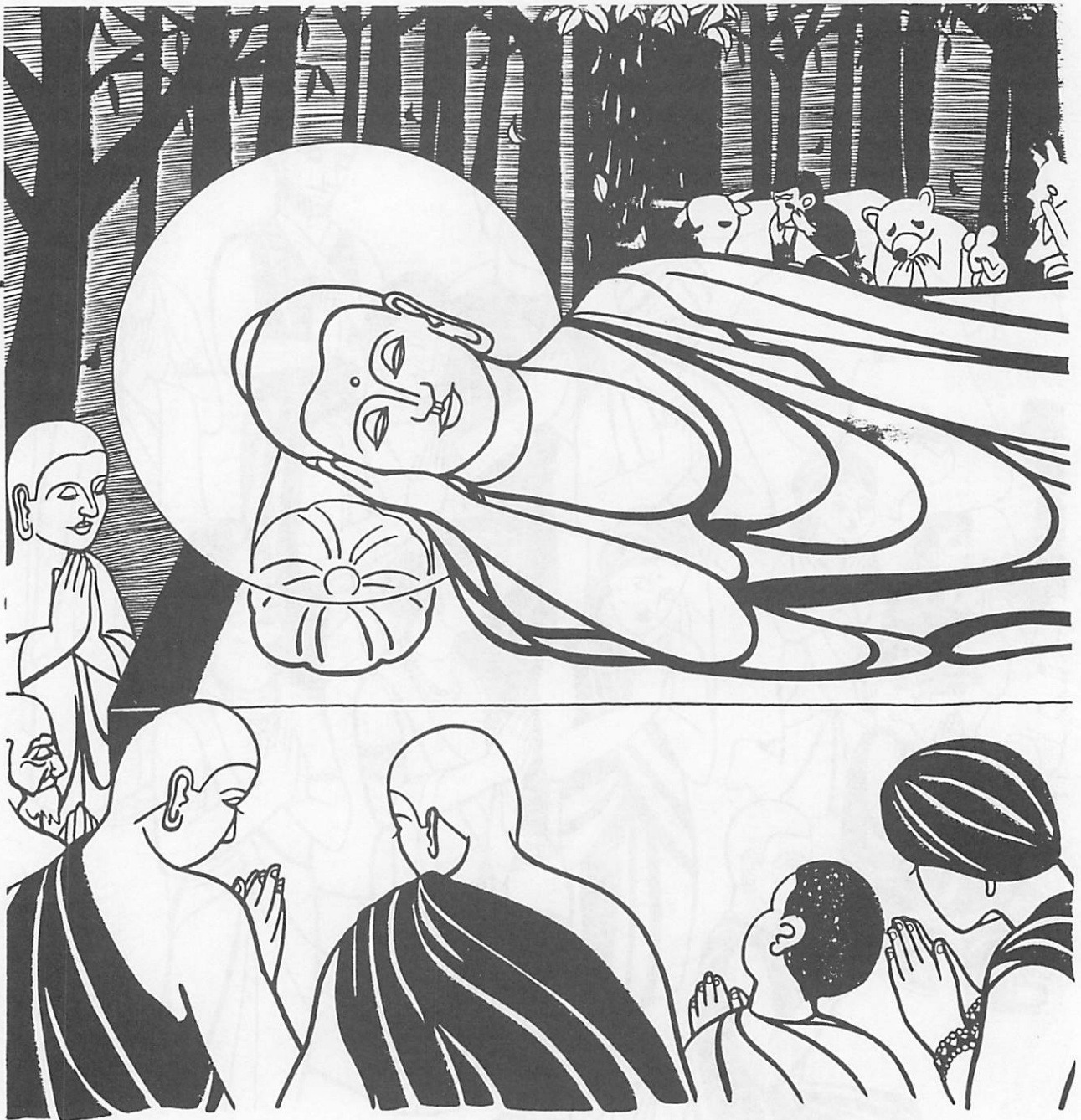


For forty-five years, the Buddha spread the Dharma among the people.

Everyone from near and far bowed their heads with respect as

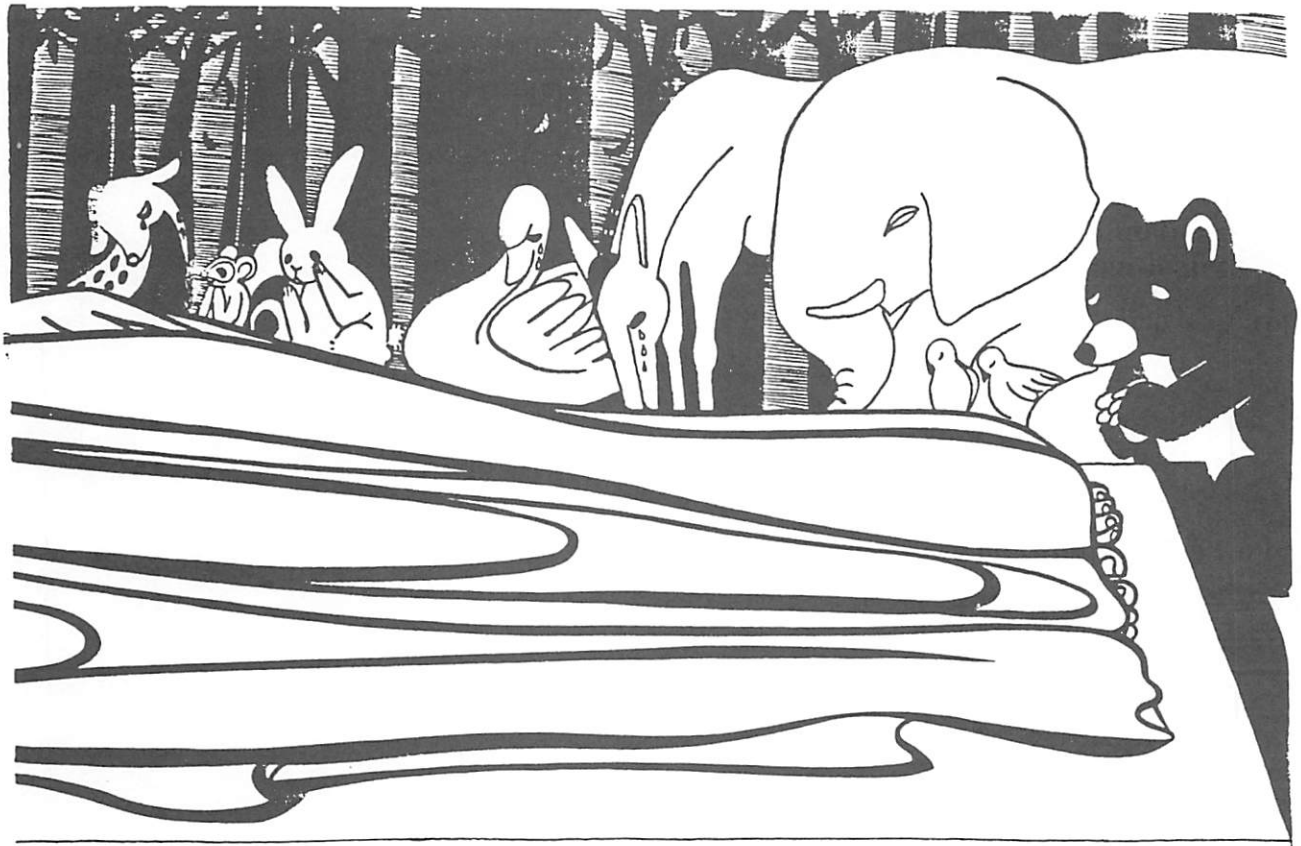


they listened to his wisdom. His great compassion reached the young and old as well as the rich and poor. The number of followers of Sangha grew bigger and bigger.



The Buddha became ill when he was eighty years old.

He smiled warmly and said to his sad friends, "Do not weep. Everything that is born must also die. Such is life. But the Dharma I have taught will never die. Keep this Dharma in your hearts."



The Buddha passed away 2,500 years ago. Since then millions of people have been helped by his greatest gift of all . . . the Dharma.

CHAPTER VI

Buddhist Etiquette

THE BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA “TEMPLES”

Officially founded on September 1, 1899, in San Francisco, what is today the Buddhist Churches of America began as an overseas missionary program of the Jodoshinshu Hongwanjiha headquartered in Kyoto, Japan. Formerly known as the American Buddhist Organization (Beikoku Bukkyodan—**米國佛教団**), the name was changed in 1944 to the Buddhist Churches of America or BCA. This was done by the national organization of Buddhists then headquartered in the Topaz Relocation Center in Topaz, Utah, one of the many camps in which Japanese and Japanese-Americans were incarcerated during World War II. It was an attempt to reorganize and “Americanize” the Sangha and to shift emphasis from the Japanese to the English language.

There has been a move in recent times to change the word “church” to “temple”. The objection to the word “church” lies in its meaning of “house of God” since the Buddhists deny the existence of a supreme creator God. The word “temple” is preferred since the Japanese word “tera — **寺**” and the usual English translation “temple” both mean simply “a space marked off for a religious purpose”.

To date, the BCA temples have been largely ethnic institutions composed almost entirely of Japanese and Japanese-American members. There has, however, been a small but continuous participation in temple life of non-Japanese priests and laymen since the early 1900's.

Since Jodoshinshu is a layman-centered, non-monastic sect of Buddhism, the buildings of the temple complex are designed to serve a lay community of Buddhists rather than a separate order of monks. The Jodoshinshu clergy is by tradition and doctrine a married clergy, and its temples are committed not to a mountain seclusion but to cities and towns. Unlike other Buddhist traditions, the Sangha in Jodoshinshu refers to all Buddhists and not just to the order of monks or priests. Thus, the buildings in a typical BCA temple complex serve three basic purposes:

1. A ceremonial or ritual purpose: This takes place in the Hondō or main hall of the complex. The Hondō houses the altar and is the main building of the complex. The Hondō is sometimes incorrectly referred to as the Seidō (**聖堂**—“sacred hall”), a word used in reference to the main hall of a Confucian temple or to the sanctuary of a Christian church. A large temple may have one or more additional altar rooms usually referred to as “chapels”, which are used for family memorial services. There may also be a Nokotsudo (**納骨堂**—“cremated remains hall”) or columbarium. These may either be a part of the Hondō or a separate building.
2. An instructional purpose: There is usually a classroom building or area of classrooms for instruction. Instruction ranges from Buddhism, Japanese language, Japanese and/or Buddhist culture to crafts, cooking, etc. Meetings, community programs, etc. also take place in these classrooms.
3. A social-cultural purpose: Usually called the Social Hall, this building invariably contains a large kitchen and seating area for banquets, shows, receptions, various cultural events and the serving of Otoki or vegetarian meals after Buddhist holiday services.

In some cases all three buildings are combined into one multi-purpose building. Some temples have gymnasiums, teahouses, bell towers, minister's residence, etc.

Traditionally, the temples were not only religious centers, but social, cultural, educational and economic self-help centers as well. Prior to World War II, almost the whole of Japanese life outside the home took place at the temple. This was in keeping with the tradition of village temples in Japan being the center of village life. This tradition was reinforced in America by a history of strong anti-Japanese sentiment, especially in the Pacific Coast states. In the early period, old Christian churches were bought and converted into temples. It is only in more recent times that new temples have been built along more Buddhist lines. The Christian influence in architecture, music and service format, however, is unmistakable. Recent trends have shown a return to more traditional forms of architecture and liturgical music.

In the traditional language of Jodoshinshu, in its architecture, and in its liturgical music and ritual movements, there is a strong sense of the horizontal rather than the vertical. References are to the "inner" and "outer", to the "left" and "right", rather than to "above" and "below". In architecture, the roof is the main element of the buildings, with a sweeping horizontal thrust. The buildings are rectangular with the entrance on the widest side rather than on the narrow side as is the case in Christian buildings. As you enter the building, the altar area will be along the entire length of the opposite wall. The eye is drawn from side to side rather than upwards. The seating area is tatami mats placed between the many pillars which support the roof. The effect is one of walking through a forest towards the altar of Enlightenment — recalling the origins of Buddhism in the forests of India.

In BCA temples, the tendency has been to use a central aisle with the entrance to the building placed at one narrow end and the altar at the other end. Although this has solved the "problem" of seating in chairs the largest number of people in the space allotted, it has also resulted in a confusing clash of lines — a long narrow seating arrangement with a central aisle which draws the eye upward, in a building whose lines are otherwise horizontal.

The expressions of Jodoshinshu awakening have always been horizontal. There is a strong sense of being in touch with the earth, of being supported by it, of being rooted in it. The expression is not one of going upward and out of what we are, but one of going down and inward to what we really are. Instead of soaring vertically, it is a vibrating horizontally. This horizontality will be encountered again and again in Buddhist music, dance, ritual, etc.

HONDŌ — 本堂 — "main hall": The Hondō is the principal building of the temple complex and is divided into two parts: the Naijin (内陣 — "inner area") or altar area, and the Gejin (外陣 — "outer area") or seating area. With the rise of the Pure Land schools in Japan, a new type of architecture was created to meet the needs of its followers. Prior to the 13th century in Japan, the Naijin took up the major portion of the floor space of a temple. This was to accommodate the larger number of monks who lived in monastic surroundings. Rituals were conducted by the monks alone. Laymen did not participate in the rituals but only attended as observers in a small area called the Gejin. The new emphasis placed upon communal gatherings of laymen and priests together by the Pure Land schools resulted in the shrinking of the Naijin area and the enlarging of the Gejin area.

This is particularly the case with Jodoshinshu where Shinran Shonin had effected the most radical changes in the definition of the Buddhist clergy and its function. Until Shinran, Buddhist monks maintained a celibate life of secluded practice in mountain monasteries or taught in metropolitan temples that catered to the aristocracy. They were required to cut off all ties with their families and the secular world. Shinran, however, viewed himself as being “neither monk nor layman” (非僧非俗—Hisō Hizoku), a position which gave rise to a new definition of Buddhist clergy, one which is perhaps best translated as “priest”. Shinran considered all beings as “fellow travellers” (御同行—Ondōgyo) and “fellow brothers and sisters” (御同月—Ondōbō) on the same path of the Nembutsu. Laymen as well as priests were to be participants in ceremonies and rituals and not simply observers. Later history was to complicate this egalitarian view of Shinran with the creation of a hereditary priesthood in Jodoshinshu.

Although the idea of communal gatherings of laymen and priests in the temple was to greatly change the course of Japanese Buddhism, certain distinctions between priests and laymen continued. One such rule is the tradition that only a priest may enter the Naijin and this only when he or she is in full vestments. There are, no doubt, sociological reasons for this rule, but the religious reason is fairly clear. The Naijin is a representation of the Buddhist concept of the universe and, more importantly, of the realm of Enlightenment. Thus, only one who was well versed in the meaning of the symbols found in the Naijin was prepared enough to enter it. This meant a priest in full vestments, full vestments being a sign of his qualification. One who entered the Naijin had to know what he was entering into; what was required of him in thought, speech and action so that the ritual he performed resulted in the deepening of understanding and naturalness of action which was his goal.

In Jodoshinshu the order was reversed — the Naijin and the ritual performed in it was ideally the natural expression of what one had been awakened to. The ritual was in praise of the Truth called Amida that one had been made aware of. It was not a means to that awareness but rather the result of it. Like the Nembutsu, the chanting and other ritual acts were seen as the expression of gratitude and joy which naturally arose from the awakening experience. In orthodox language, they are the expressions of gratitude and joy for the Wisdom and Compassion bestowed upon us by Amida Buddha.

Short of this awakening experience, however, the ritual and Nembutsu nevertheless have a powerful teaching function. Just as the formal study of the doctrine prepares the mind to truly receive the Dharma, so chanting and Nembutsu, and the physical movements of the ritual prepare the other five senses to receive the Dharma as it is (sono mama). Together they are the practices which reorient our six senses from the normal order of things to the natural order flowing beneath them. As regards the rule of entering the Naijin, practical considerations have made the rule more flexible in BCA temples.

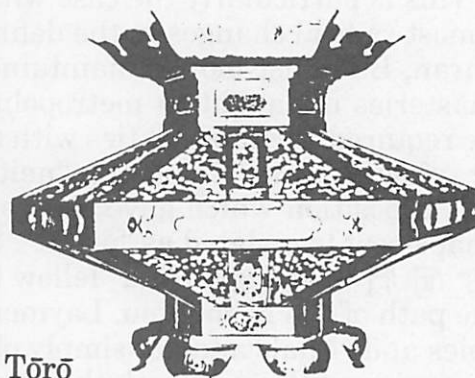
GEJIN—外陣—“outer area”: The Gejin is the seating area of the Hondō and takes up approximately three-fourths of the total floor space. Chairs or pews have replaced tatami mats. At the front of the Gejin, directly in front of the main altar, is a large Kōrō (香爐) or incense burner of dark metal on a lacquered-wood stand. The Kōrō is most often decorated with figures of dragons, elephants, Chinese lions and/or lotuses. A number of smaller Kōrō may be found to the left and right of the central Kōrō. On the lacquered-wood stand will be a round, lacquered-wood box called a Kōgo (香盒), which is filled with a ground incense. This incense is placed on the glowing embers in the Kōrō and is the basic ritual of Oshōkō (御焼香—“burning incense”).



GEJIN



Tōrō



Hanging from the ceiling of the Gejin or on pillars or walls of the Gejin, are two types of lanterns called Tōrō (燈籠).

The first is a jar-shaped lantern of metal usually attached to pillars or walls of the Gejin. The second is a hexagonal lantern of metal suspended from the ceiling. The lanterns are very often donated by members and have the donor's name and the circumstances of the donation engraved on them.

A large offertory box is often found either at the entrance to the Gejin or next to the central Kōrō. In some cases the offertory box, called the Saisenbako (賽銭箱) is built into the stand upon which the Kōrō stands. The Kanji or Chinese characters on the box most often read:

"Saisen" —	賽銭	— "offering"
"Jōzai" —	淨財	— "pure-offering"
"Kisha" —	喜捨	— "joyously-discarding"

The Kanji imply that Dana or "giving" is to be done without ulterior motive; without the desire for thanks or recognition, without any self-centered thoughts.

Most temples will also have an organ or piano and one or two speaker's stands in the Gejin.

NAIJIN — 内陣 — "inner area": The Naijin or altar area is made up of one, three, or five altars, depending upon the size of the Hondō. The Naijin is anywhere from a few inches to several feet above the level of the Gejin (traditionally only a few inches).

MAKISHŌJI — 巻障子 — "folding shoji": The Naijin is usually closed off from the Gejin by a series of folding Shoji or paper screens. The wooden lattice of the Shoji is painted in black lacquer and decorated with metal ornaments. In some temples the Naijin will be closed off by a simple curtain.

FUSUMA — 襖 — "sliding door": The Fusuma is a sliding door faced with a solid sheet of heavy paper. The paper may be plain gold in color or painted with phoenix birds, wisteria, etc. Larger temples will have Fusuma on either side of the Makishoku.

MISU — 翠簾 — "green blind": The Misu is a blind made of thin strips of bamboo edged in brocade. They are suspended from the cross beams between the front pillars of the Naijin. They were originally used as sun and wind screens in palace architecture. The rolled up blinds are held up by metal holders decorated with tassels.

RANMA — 欄間 — "transom space": The Ranma is a transom carving found directly over the Makishōji. The carved wood decoration may be a simple geometric design or an elaborate carving of birds, flowers, heavenly beings, etc. In Jodoshinshu temples, the Ranma carving is most often of peacocks and peony flowers in gold leaf. The Golden Peacock and the Golden Peony are the bird and flower associated with the Buddha Amida.

GAKU — 額 — “Tablet”: The Gaku is a tablet or framed plaque placed above the Makishōji. It will either be a quotation from the sutras in Chinese characters or the characters “Ken-Shin” (見真) meaning “seer of Truth”. This is the posthumous honorary title bestowed upon Shinran Shonin by the Emperor Meiji.

GOHONZON — 御本尊 — “honorific principal object of reverence”: The central altar enshrines the Gohonzon or “central or principal object of reverence”. The Gohonzon of Jodoshinshu is Amida Buddha which may take one of three forms: a standing statue of wood, a picture scroll or a scroll with the characters “Na Mu A Mi Da Butsu” written on it. Rennyo Shonin states that a painted picture of Amida Buddha is preferable to a statue and that the written characters “Na Mu A Mi Da Butsu” is preferable to the painted picture. This is in recognition of the tendency of man to look upon Amida Buddha as a concrete “thing” of definite form and physical attributes and to rely upon it as one would an anthropomorphic god. The six-character scroll is thus preferred by Rennyo Shonin over that of the statue or picture representation of the reality called Amida Buddha. Be that as it may, the statue of Amida Buddha is still the most common form of the Gohonzon.

The statue is always a standing statue of wood, usually gilded in gold leaf. The statue leans slightly forward, representing the dynamic aspect of Wisdom-Compassion. The “mudra” or hand gesture is the “an-i-in jōbongeshō” (安樂印上品下生) or the gesture of tranquillity and protection, signifying the entry of Amida Buddha into the realm of sentient beings for the purpose of teaching and effecting their enlightenment. The thumb and index fingers of both hands are joined to form the circle or wheel of perfection, i.e., the Dharma of the Buddha, perfect and eternal, having neither beginning nor end. The right hand is raised to shoulder level with palm facing outward symbolizing Wisdom, the attainment of perfect enlightenment, the Nirvana world. The left hand hangs pendant with palm facing outward, symbolizing Compassion, the world of Sam-sara, and the turning of all sentient beings to the truth of the Dharma. The raised hand also represents Light and the pendant hand Life, Amida being the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life. Between and slightly above the eyes is a spot called the “Byakugo” (白毫), originally said to be a tuft of white hair which curled to the right and one of the 32 physical marks of a Buddha. The Byakugo is said to emit rays of light and is symbolic of the third or spiritual eye. The “Nikkei” (肉髻) or protuberance on the top of the head is another of the 32 physical marks of the Buddha. It is the “bump of Spiritual Wisdom”.

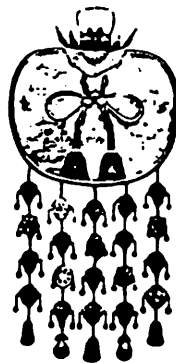


The statute stands upon a throne or dais in the shape of a lotus blossom. The symbolism of the lotus is highly developed in Buddhism. The lotus grows in muddy water but rises above the water to bloom — pure, beautiful, and unaffected by the defilement which surrounds it. Unlike other plants, the lotus flower at full bloom already has fully developed seeds at its base — that is to say, the flower and seeds develop simultaneously. This is related to the Dharma and Enlightenment which also arise simultaneously. In the Pure Land tradition, the lotus flower is associated with sentient beings and the offering of lotus flowers to the Buddha is symbolic of abandoning one's imagined nature and returning to one's true nature.

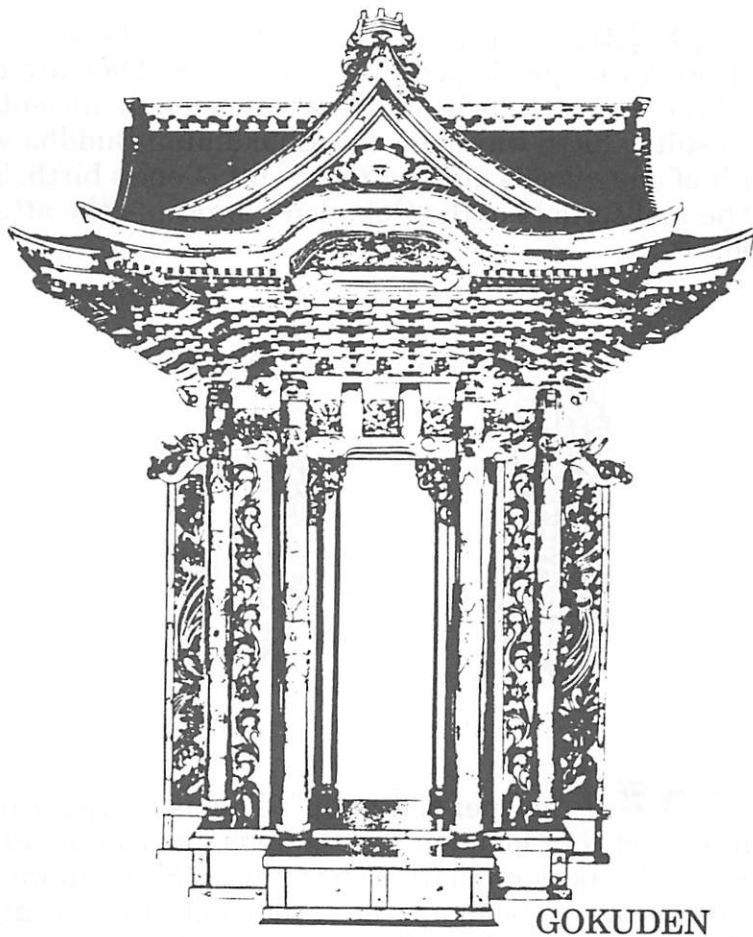
Behind the statue and attached to the throne or dais is the “Kohai” () or “background of light” from which is derived the halo of western religions. Two types of kohai are used. First is the kohai in the shape of a boat standing on end. It is carved with intricate tracery and is gold-leafed. A lotus flower motif is carved just behind the head of the statute. The second and more common form of the kohai is a half-boat shaped background topped by 48 spokes radiating from a circle behind the head of the statue. The spokes represent rays of light and the number 48 is for the 48 vows made by the Bodhisattva Dharmakara, who perfected them to become Amida Buddha.

TOCHŌ — 斗帳 —: The Tochō is a curtain of hemp, metal or brocade which outlines the body of the statue. Originally, the curtain completely hid the statue and was raised when ceremonies took place.

KEMAN — 華鬘 —: Derived from neck and hair ornaments worn by men in ancient India, the Keman is made of cloth or metal and is attached to the top center of the Tochō and partially covers the face of the Buddha statue. The implication here is that the Truth or face of Amida Buddha is never seen completely, that each man and each sentient being sees from his own unique and peculiar point of view, and that there is always a different or deeper view of the Truth to be seen. This ornament is mentioned in the Larger Sutra as hanging from the branches of the Jeweled Trees in the Pure Land.

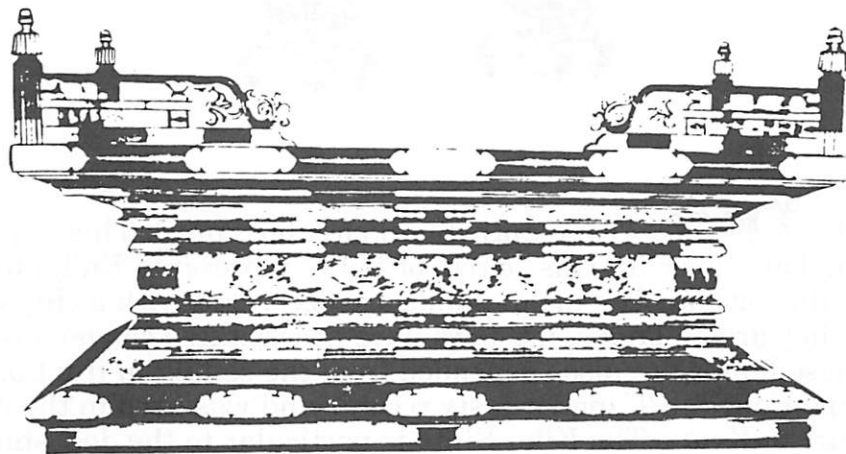


GOKŪDEN — 御宮殿 — “honorific palace hall”: The Gohonzon is traditionally placed in a structure called the Gokūden. It is one of the structures in the Pure Land mentioned in the Meditation Sutra. A replica of Japanese palace architecture, the Gokūden houses the Gohonzon and is profusely ornamented. In the Hongwanji School, the pillars and ornaments are all gold in color. Embellishing the roof beams are carved figures of elephants, lions and dragons, all guardian animals of the Buddha and symbolizing the Buddha's spiritual power, resounding voice of Truth and majesty, respectively. The style of construction is said to be in Chinese T'ang Dynasty style.



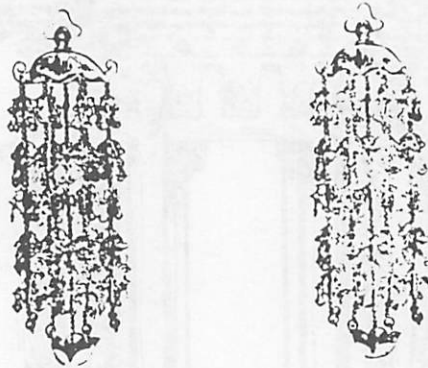
GOKUDEN

SHUMIDAN — 須弥壇 — “Sumeru-throne”: The Gokūden sits upon a rectangular dais or throne called the Shumidan. The throne is widest at the top and bottom and narrowest in the middle, resembling a flattened spool. This is said to be the shape of the cosmic mountain called Sumeru in Sanskrit. In Indian cosmology, Mt. Sumeru is the highest mountain in the center of our world system. The Shumidan is made of wood lacquered in red and black and decorated with floral, wave and animal designs which are brightly colored. A red railing encloses the top of the throne.

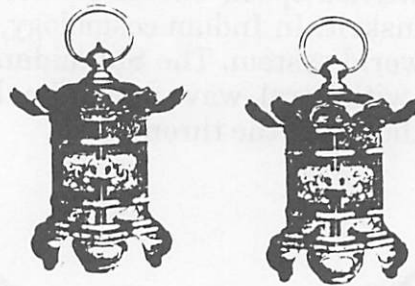


Three additional ornaments decorate the central altar.

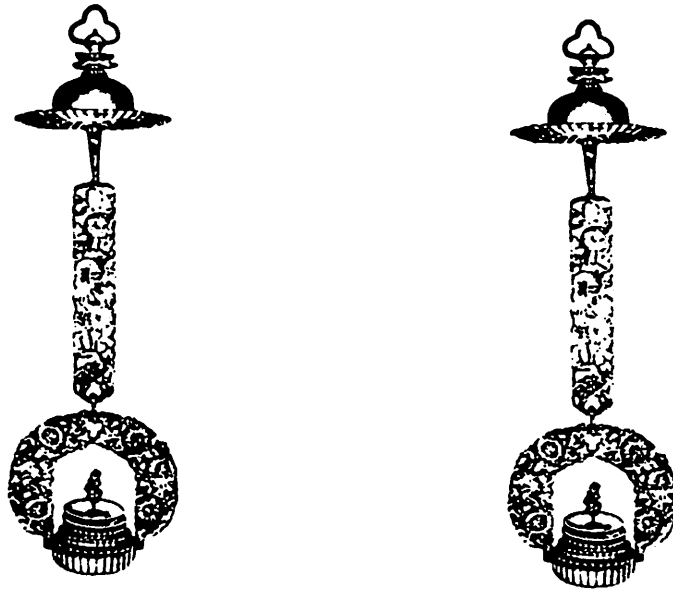
SUMI YÔRAKU — 隅瑠瑠 — “corner-ornaments”: Yôraku are necklace-like ornaments suspended from a canopy shaped like a lotus leaf. They are derived from ornaments worn around the neck and body of aristocratic men in ancient India. The idea of nobility being the result of birth was denied by Shakamuni Buddha who stated that nobility was the result of one's deeds and not the result of one's birth. The pair of Yôraku which hang from the roof corners of the Gokûden represents the attainment of nobility through noble deeds.



TSURI TÔRÔ — 釣燈籠 — “suspended-lamp”: This is an enclosed lamp suspended from the ceiling in front of the Gokûden. The lamp is made of metal incised with floral designs. The lamp is said to be derived from one made by Shakamuni Buddha for his disciples when traveling at night. The lamp was used to light the way at night and to avoid the accidental killing of insects and small creatures on the road.

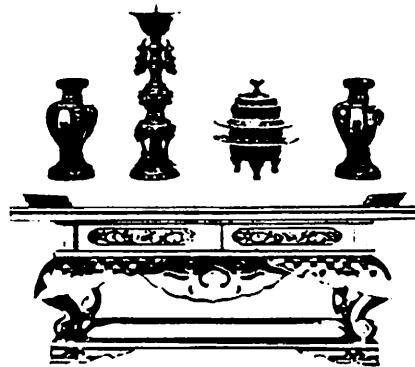


KIKU RINTÔ — 菊輪燈 — “chrysanthemum circular lamp”: This is an open oil lamp with a circular band over it. This “circle of light” represents Enlightenment, perfect, without beginning or end. The metal bands are decorated with a chrysanthemum pattern. Though they are oil lamps, fire laws have necessitated converting them into electric lamps. These lamps are also suspended from the ceiling in front of the Shumidan. The Rintô is mentioned in T'ang Dynasty records and was used in the Audience Hall of the Heian Court in Kyoto. The Kiku Rintô is particular to the Jodoshinshu Hongwanjiha.



Next is a series of altar pieces used for ritual offerings which are placed before the Gohonzon.

UAJOKU — 上卓 — “upper-table”: The Uajoku is a small, gilded table on the Shumidan immediately in front of the Gohonzon. In a set arrangement called Shigusoku (四具足) or “four element arrangement”, the following offerings are placed:



RÔSOKUTATE — 蠟燭立 — “candle-holder”: This is a candlestick of dark metal placed to the rear center of the Uajoku.

KASHA — 火舎 — “fire-house”: The Kasha is a double-tiered incense burner of dark metal with a lid. It is placed immediately in front of the candlestick.

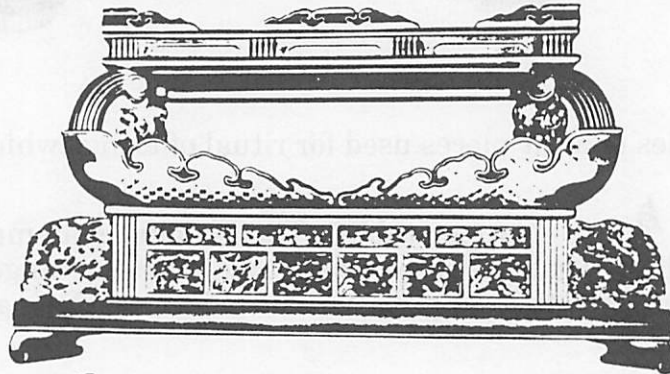
KEBYÔ — 華瓶 — “flower-vase”: The Kebyô is a bulb-shaped vase of dark metal. Although called a flower vase, it is a vessel used for the offering of water, the sustainer of all life. A branch of the Shikimi (— Star Anise Tree) or other greenery is placed in it to symbolize flowing water. Only flowing water remains pure and is the symbol of the Dharma, ever-flowing, ever-pure.

BUPPANKI — 佛飯器 — “Buddha-food-vessel”: In addition to the “arrangement of four” mentioned above, two light metal, compote-like stands of mounded rice are placed on either side of the candlestick. The eastern equivalent of the “staff of life”, rice is the basic food. Offerings of rice on the altars other than that of the Buddha are referred to as Guhanki (供飯器 “offering-rice-vessel”). The pair of Buppanki is said to symbolize the Jodoshinshu concept of Jiri Rita Enman (自利利他圓滿), or the perfect integration and completion of self-benefit and benefitting others. The Buppanki is placed upon a wooden stand which is usually gold-leafed.

In recent times, the double Buppanki has been replaced by a single Buppanki placed in the Gokūden.



MAEJOKU — 前卓 — “front-table”: This is a large table ornately carved and lacquered, and placed in front of the Shumidan. Two basic arrangements of offerings are placed on the Maejoku.



1. MITSUGUSOKU — 三具足 — “three-element-arrangement”: The three elements are:

KŌRŌ — 香爐 — “incense-burner”: This is a dark metal incense burner with three legs which is placed upon a gold-leafed wooden dais. Since Ming Dynasty times, the lid and sides of the burner have been decorated with lions, elephants, dragons or Kirin. Just as all tremble before the Lion (獅子), so do all evil beings tremble before the Buddha-Truth. The elephant (象) is the symbol of spiritual kingship and steadfast meditation. And just as the Dragon (龍) is said to be able to make a great rain from a single drop of water, so the Buddha can make a great good from a small one. The Kirin (麒麟) is a Chinese mythological animal with the body of a deer, the tail of an ox, the hooves of a horse and a single horn. The hair on its back is multicolored and its belly yellow. The Kirin is said to appear on the eve of auspicious events and as proof of the good government of a ruler.

In some cases, a celadon ceramic incense burner called a Dogōrō. (土香爐 — “earthen-incense-burner”) is placed in front of the Kōrō (as you face the altar). It is used instead of the Kōrō except for special ceremonies.

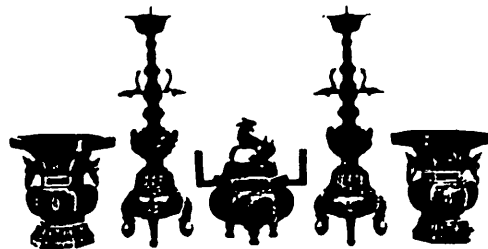


RŌSOKUTATE — 蠟燭立 — “candle-stand”: As you face the Maejoku, the Rōsokutate will be on the right side of the Kōrō. It is a larger candleholder of dark metal on three legs and usually decorated with cranes. Cranes are said to live to be 1000 years old and are the symbol of longevity. For everyday use, white candles are used in BCA temples. For Buddhist holidays, red candles are used. For dedications, weddings and other similar occasions, gold candles are used with red candles as a substitute. For funerals, memorial services and other similar occasions, silver candles are used with white candles as a substitute. In far eastern tradition, red is the color of happiness and felicitations while white is the color of mourning. In Japanese style candles, a rolled paper wick is used which causes the flame to flicker, giving the effect of radiating light.

KAHIN — 花瓶 — “flower-vase”: This is a heavy metal flower vase of dark metal with a flaring lip. It is placed to the left of the Kōrō as you face the altar. Formal arrangements of flowers and branches are made in the Kahin. The art of flower arrangement in Japan is derived from this offering of flowers in a vase to the Buddha, which began among the Buddhists in China. In India, the custom was to scatter flower petals or pile flowers on a table. Traditionally, no flowers with thorns, disagreeable smell or bitter taste are used. Poisonous plants are not used.

In American usage, the color of flowers and candles are a mixture of East and West. White flowers and candles are usually used for funerals and memorial services since white is the color of mourning. But white is also used in weddings as it is the color of purity in western tradition. Likewise, red candles and flowers are often used for Buddhist holidays regardless of whether or not it is a memorial observance or a birthday.

2. GOGUSOKU — 五具足 — “five-element-arrangement”: The five elements are: The Kōrō is again placed in the center; next a Rōsokutate is placed on either side of the Kōrō; and finally, a Kahin is placed on the outside of each Rōsokutate.



In the Mitsugusoku arrangement, the candle is on the right and represents the world of Enlightenment. The flowers are on the left and represent the world of Delusion or Samsara. The candle and flower represent the worlds of Nirvana and Samsara, respectively. The incense burner is placed between the two seemingly opposite worlds — the sometimes beautiful but always fragile and fleeting world of Samsara on the left, and the eternal and unchanging world of Nirvana on the right. These two opposite worlds, as they are, are identified or brought together in Oneness as symbolized by the burning incense which comes to life and begins the process of dying at the exact same moment of being lit.

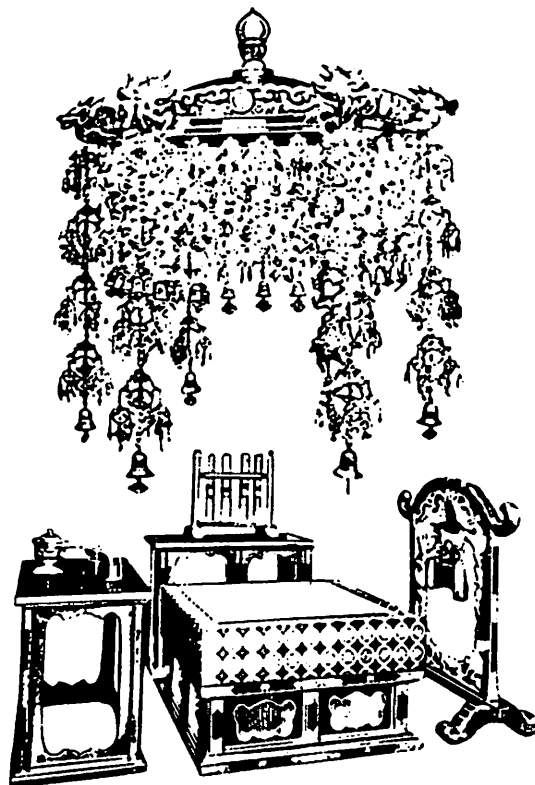
In the Gogusoku, or more formal arrangement, the flowers are placed on the outside to represent the outer, ever-changing world of Samsara. The candles are placed on the inside to represent the inner, unchanging world of Enlightenment. The Kōrō is again in the center, pointing to the Oneness of the two worlds of Samsara and Nirvana, of Namu and Amidabutsu, of myself and Amida.

Mizuhiki & Uchishiki: During the lifetime of Shakamuni Buddha, a custom was established of spreading out fine pieces of cloth for the Buddha to sit on when preaching to his disciples and others assembled to hear him. The cloth would be spread out and the disciples would bow in reverence to the Buddha with their foreheads touching the cloth at his feet. The cloth later came to decorate the altar tables of temples on special occasions of hearing the Buddha's teaching.

MIZUHIKI — 卓圍 — “table-enclosure”: The Mizuhiki is a rectangular cloth of rich brocade which covers the front and sides of the Maejoku. It is also referred to as a Shitakake (下掛 — “pendant-hanging”).

UCHISHIKI — 打敷 — “strike-spread out”: The Uchishiki is a triangular piece of cloth which hangs over the front of the Maejoku over the Mizuhiki. The cloth is also of rich brocade using gold and silver thread. The literal translation “strike-spread out” refers to the origin of the cloth which was “spread out” for Shakamuni Buddha, whereupon the disciples bowed in reverence “striking” their foreheads to the ground. Smaller Uchishiki are draped over the Uajoku and tables of the other altars.

In the time of Rennyo Shonin in the 15th century, the sleeves of the kimono of deceased persons were donated to temples and made into these altar cloths. Later they came to be made from fine silk brocades. The Uchishiki is lined with white cloth so that it may be reversed for funerals in the absence of a pure white Uchishiki.



RAIBAN — 礼盤 — “ceremonial-dais”: Directly in front of the Maejoku is a set of two tables, a dais, and a stand used for special formal ceremonies by the officiating priest. The Raiban is a low dais approximately 2½ feet square with a tatami matting on top. The officiant sits in Japanese style on this dais and leads the chanting. In some cases, the Raiban will be somewhat narrowed and taller for sitting on in western style.

MUKŌJOKU — 向卓 — “facing-table”: This is a small table placed between the Raiban and the Maejoku. On this table is placed the Rikkyōdai (立經台 — “standing-sutra-rack”) a rack holding four scrolls containing the three principal sutras of Jodoshinshu in Chinese.

WAKIJOKU — 脇卓 — “side-table”: On the left side of the Raiban is another small table on which are placed two incense vessels.

Zukōki — 塗香器 — “smearing-incense-vessel”: This is a small, lidded cup of brass on a brass stand. It contains a finely powdered incense. This powdered incense is rubbed on the hands and robe of the officiant at the beginning of the Raiban ceremony.

Egōrō — 柄香爐 — “handle-incense-burner”: This is a small incense burner with a long handle attached to it. It is most often in the shape of a lotus flower. It is held by the officiant at the beginning and end of the Raiban ceremony to cense the altar.

KEIDAI — 磬台 — “kei-stand”: To the right of the Raiban is a rack from which is suspended a small metal plate called the Kei. This is struck with a wooden mallet at the beginning and end of the chanting.

The Raiban has its origins in Tendai Buddhism and is first mentioned in China in Sui and T'ang Dynasty writings. In Japan it has been in use since Heian Times.

TENGAI — 天蓋 — “heavenly-canopy”: The Tengai is an ornately decorated canopy which is sometimes suspended from the ceiling directly over the Raiban. This canopy is mentioned in the sutras as one of the ornaments of the Pure Land and is said to be “suspended in the empty sky”.

WAKIDAN — 脇壇 — “side-altar”: The next series of altars or shrines will be to the right and left of the Gohonzon. To the right as you face the Gohonzon is a smaller version of the central altar which enshrines a picture of Shinran Shōnin, the founder of Jodoshinshu. In the Wakidan on the left is a picture of Rennyo Shōnin or one of the other hereditary heads of the Jodoshinshu Sect. The two altars are similar to that of the central altar, though on a smaller scale. The offerings on the Maejoku are in the Mitsugusoku or “three element arrangement”. On special occasions, Uchishiki are draped over the Maejoku.

YŌMA — 余間 — “remaining-space”: The last series of altars are in the Yoma or remaining space to the extreme right and left of the central altar. On the extreme right is enshrined a picture of Shōtoku Taishi and on the extreme left a picture of the Seven Patriarchs of Jodoshinshu.

Shinran Shōnin — 親鸞聖人 — :1173-1262 A.D. Founder of Jodoshinshu and one of the great figures of Japanese Buddhism.

Rennyo Shōnin — 蓮如上人 — 1414-1499 A.D. The eighth hereditary Gomonshu from the blood line of Shinran Shōnin. He was largely responsible for the restoration of Jodoshinshu teachings as a major force in Japanese Buddhism and for organizing the sect into its present form.

Shōtoku Taishi — 聖徳太子—: 572-622 A.D. An Imperial Prince, the second son of Emperor Yōmei. An ardent Buddhist and strong supporter of its acceptance and spread in Japan, Shōtoku Taishi is regarded as the Father of Japanese Buddhism.

The Seven Patriarchs: The seven spiritual fathers of the Pure Land teaching according to Shinran Shōnin and regarded by Shinran as Bodhisattvas.

India: Nagarjuna (龍樹) — 2nd or 3rd century A.D.

Vasubandhu (天親) — 5th century A.D.

China: T'an Luan (曇鸞) — 476-542 A.D.

Tao ch'o (道綽) — 562-654 A.D.

Shan tao (善導) — 613-681 A.D.

Japan: Genshin (源信) — 942-1017 A.D.

Hōnen (法然) — 1133-1212 A.D.

In some temples, the candlestick in the Yoma altars and the left altar of the Waki-dan is in the form of a tall oil lamp called the Kikutō (菊灯 — “chrysanthemum-lamp”). This is a metal oil lamp with a chrysanthemum pattern.



MAWARIJOKU — 回卓 — “bordering-tables”: Also called Kyōjoku (經卓 — “sutra-tables”) this is a series of low lacquered wood tables forming two lines, one on either side of the central altar. On the tables are black lacquered boxes containing the Wasans or hymns written by Shinran Shōnin and rectangular boxes containing the three sutras of Jodoshinshu. The priests will sit behind these tables during the ritual. In BCA temples, taller tables with chairs are used instead of the traditional low tables which require sitting on the floor.

When offerings of mochi, manju, fruits, and or vegetables are made, two types of stands are used.



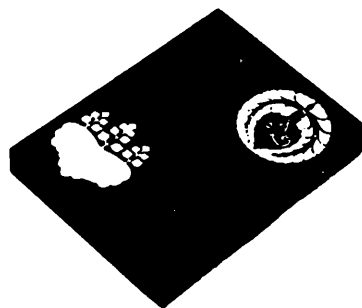
GOBUNSHŌBAKO — 御文章箱 — “honorific-letters-box”: The Gobunshōbako is a black and gold laquered box which contains the Gobunshō or letters of Rennyo Shōnin.

Although traditionally kept on an altar of the Naijin, in BCA temples it is most often found on the podium in the Gejin. These letters are read by the priest at the end of a service in a formal reading style.

“Anakashiko” — At the end of each reading from the Gobunsho, the priest will say the word “anakashiko” two times as he closes the book and raises it to his head. Anakashiko is an ancient expression in use during the late Heian and early Kamakura periods. It has the meaning of “osore ōku mottainai”. A rough translation might be “These venerable and awe-inspiring words are wasted on beings such as we.” It is a formal expression of extreme indebtedness and gratitude.



Gobunshōbako



Godenshōbako

GODENSHŌBAKO — 御伝針箱 — “honorific-transmission-writings-box”: The Godenshōbako is very similar to the Gobunshōbako but contains the Godensho, the traditional biography of Shinran Shōnin. The Godensho or sections of it are traditionally read in formal style at Hōonko, the memorial observance for Shinran Shōnin. The two crests of the Hongwanji-ha decorate both boxes.

KERŌ — 華籠 — “flower-basket”: The Kerō is a flat metal platter with three sets of cords hanging from its rim. The cords are white, red and green in color. The Kerō is not left in the altar area but is brought out for use in a ceremony called “Sange” (散華 — “scattering-flowers”). The scattering of flower petals was an important ritual in Indian Buddhism. Although Far Eastern Buddhism generally offers flowers arranged in a vase in formal arrangements, the ancient ritual of scattering flower petals survives in the ritual of Sange. In the ceremony, priests will stand and scatter brightly colored pieces of paper cut in the shape of a lotus flower petal. These paper petals are called “keha” (華葩 — “flower-petal”) and are scattered at designated places in the Shōmyō chanting. Branches of real flowers are also used instead of the Kerō and Keha. In this case, branches of flowering plum or cherry are held in the priest’s hands and the flower petals picked and scattered at the appropriate time.



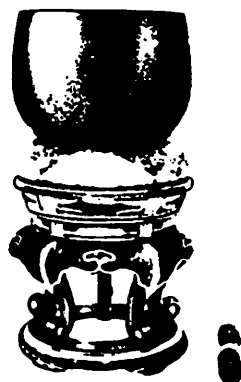
KESOKU — 華束 — “flowery-bundle”: This is a wooden stand of hexagonal or octagonal shape decorated with flower designs. Paper flower petals are inserted into the top of the stand to give the appearance of an open lotus flower. The Kesoku is used for offerings of Komoshi, Manju, the New Year Kagamimochi, and similar offerings of a single variety.



DANMORI — 段盛 — “tier-pile”: This is a simple stand of four circular tiers held in place by three wooden dowels. The Danmori is used when two or more varieties of fruit, vegetables, komochi, manju, etc., are offered.

These food offerings are either placed on the Maejoku or on the Shumidan of the altars.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: Several musical instruments are used in the Naijin. All of them are percussion instruments which are used to mark the beginning and end of the chanting and to emphasize certain portions of the text being chanted.



DAIKIN — 大磬 — “large-bell”: The Daikin is a large inverted bell which is struck on the outside lip with a leather covered clapper made of lacquered wood. It is placed on a cushion atop a circular stand of lacquered wood. It is placed between the first and second tables of the Mawarijoku on the right or left side of the central altar. Of Chinese origin, the Daikin is said to be in the shape of the Buddha Shakamuni’s begging bowl. The deep, resonant tone of the Daikin symbolizes the impermanence of all things.

In Jodoshinshu the Daikin is used principally to mark the beginning and end of various sections of the chanting. It is not used to accent certain portions of the text as is done in other traditions and is primarily a signalling instrument.

The beginning of the main body of the chanting is marked by one of two patterns:

KAKNYŪ — 緩急 — “slow-fast”: The Daikin is struck once, followed by a series of slow, loud beats which de-crescendo to fast, soft beats and end in the striking of the Daikin twice.

SASŌ — 作相 — “creating-form”: The Daikin is struck once, followed by fast, soft beats rising to a crescendo of slow, loud beats. The slow, loud beats then de-crescendo to fast, soft beats, followed by the striking of the Daikin twice.

In less formal services, the Daikin is simply struck twice at the beginning of the chanting.

The sound of the Daikin is the basic sound of all Buddhist music. Like the total sound of chanting voices, the sound of the Daikin contains many layers of overtones, giving it a rich, full sound rather than a single, pure note. This layering effect of Buddhist liturgical music, in both the chanting voice and in musical instruments, is its unique feature and is the musical equivalent of the Buddhist idea of the many being at the same time One.

THE FAMILY ALTAR (BUTSUDAN)

BUTSUDAN — 佛壇 — “Buddha-altar”

The Family Altar

When the Teachings of Buddha (Buddhadharma) came to America, a new development in the history of Buddhism evolved. Here, for the first time in Buddhist history, we have seen the start of a weekly Sunday service at the temple. From this, two characteristics have arisen which sociologically changed the manner in which the Buddhadharma is taught and practiced. The first is that now one's Buddhist education takes place primarily in the temple. The second is that now this education takes place predominantly only on Sunday.

Buddhism is a religion that is often associated only with funerals and memorial services for the dead. This is a misconception that has developed out of superstition and ignorance of the Buddhadharma. Buddhism is a religion for the living. Funeral and memorial services are also for the benefit of the living. There is no benefit for the deceased in conducting a religious service. To do so would be contrary to the teachings of Jodoshinshu. The study of the Buddhadharma is intended to enhance our daily lives and awaken us to the very source of life itself...Amida Buddha. To find joy and truth in the Buddhadharma is to live each and every day to its fullest. Therefore, to designate a single day and place as appropriate, in the cultivation of our religious consciousness, would be contrary to the purport of Buddha's teaching.

Out of their religious consciousness and devotion, the Issei pioneers have built for future generations many large and beautiful temples. The temples are extremely important because they are centers for our religious study and a guiding force for the development of our religious consciousness. The prosperity of these temples will insure the future of the Buddhadharma and will enable propagation throughout the greater society of America. Also, the development of the temples in America is a reflection of the ability of Buddhism to adapt to the social conditions and culture of its followers. But as the Buddhadharma is being transmitted to a western society and a new culture, we must be cautious against abandoning the very rich and beautiful traditions that have formed the spiritual essence of Buddhism. By installing a simple Butsudan in each home, we are not only continuing a rich tradition, but we are also bringing the very profound and compassionate teachings of Buddha into the daily lives of ourselves and our children.

For all Buddhists, the Butsudan has a deep spiritual meaning for each individual in the family. The Butsudan and the practice of maintenance serves as a mirror for each individual to see their true self and to fully awaken one's religious consciousness. Since the Buddhadharma is intended to enhance our daily lives and awaken us to the conditions that sustains this life, the Butsudan is always located centrally within the household dwelling. Its obvious presence is a practice to overcome our own ignorance and enable us to listen more diligently to the Buddhadharma.

History

The teachings of Buddha began in India over 2,500 years ago. For approximately 200 years after the death of Shakamuni Buddha, there were no sketches or carvings of the image of Buddha. At the time it was considered sacrilegious since it is impossible to create the form of Buddhahood or Ultimate Truth. However, following the first expedition of Alexander the Great to India in 327 B.C., the first images of Buddha began to be carved. Up until this time, the only objects of reverence for Buddhists were the Sharira

(relics or ashes) of Shakamuni Buddha. The Sharira were enshrined on the top of stupas located throughout India. The best known are the stupas of Bharhut, Bodhgaya, and Sanchi. In Japan the Sharira were enshrined at the foot of metal columns (金剛塚 — Kurin), which were placed atop three- and five-storied pagodas.

The first historical images of Buddha were carved out of stone and appeared in the northwest region of India called Gandhara (present day northern Pakistan) in about the first century B.C. This type of sculpture reflects a tremendous amount of Greek influence and is referred to as the Gandhara style. At about the same time, images appeared in the Ganges River region. These stone images were referred to as Mathura. It was the Mathura style of making images that accompanied the spread of the Buddhadharma throughout Central Asia, China, Korea and Japan. As the Buddhadharma flourished, correspondingly, the practice of making images of Buddha prospered.

In the year 685 A.D., during the reign of the Japanese Emperor Tenmu, an imperial order was declared encouraging every household to construct an altar with a dais where an image of Buddha and a sutra could be enshrined for the purpose of family services. According to old records, this practice never met with widespread acceptance. During the 13th century, the followers of Jodoshinshu had begun to construct their own Butsudan. However, it was not until the 17th century, following an order of the Tokugawa Shogunate, that the Butsudan became a general practice throughout the country. This policy by the Tokugawa Shogunate was intended to counter the spread of Christianity in Japan. But, for Jodoshinshu Buddhists, the idea of a Butsudan has always been a deep part of Jodoshinshu tradition from the days beginning with Shinran Shōnin.

During the early days of Jodoshinshu in Japan, there were no temples established as we know them today. In those days, the followers of Jodoshinshu had met in what was called a “Dōjō” (道場) or “place to practice”. Practice implied listening to the Buddhadharma. It was common that each follower or household had enshrined its own scroll with Amida Buddha’s name (Myōgō—名号) inscribed on it. For these followers, this scroll became a place in the home deeply saturated with the hue of spirituality. As the teachings of Jodoshinshu spread throughout the countryside, correspondingly, the practice of enshrining a Myōgō prospered. Today we recognize this practice as the Butsudan or family altar.

Adornments

The Butsudan is essentially a very simple place where we may enshrine a Myōgō, portrait or statue of Amida Buddha. The most priceless adornment that any Butsudan may have is the outpouring of gratitude for the Wisdom and Compassion of Buddha. The ornaments and decorations that we are used to seeing in a Butsudan vary greatly. It may be an ornament, a carving, gold or a colored decoration. Nevertheless, they are all referred to as adornments. All of the adornments that we see in the Butsudan have a very strong basis in the sutras. There are countless referrals to these adornments and that is why they have become very common in the Butsudan. But we must be aware of the meaning of “adornment”, especially as it is used in the Three Sutras of Pure Land Buddhism.

Adornments are essentially only symbols or external emblems of Ultimate Truth or Reality. This Truth is ineffable. It is void of taste, color or thought. But yet, these adornments are relative expressions of this Truth and are a means to bring us closer in understanding this Truth as the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. The acquisition of various adornments in the family Butsudan may seem to be only an extension of the wealth of the household, but it can also be an expression of one’s understanding and gratitude for the teaching of Wisdom and Compassion.

For the family Butsudan, all that is necessary is a Myōgō, portrait or statue of Amida Buddha. This Myōgō, portrait or statue is adorned with flowers, a candle, and an incense burner. This is all that is necessary. Any other adornments such as lanterns, special dais, goldwork, etc. are not necessary. The articles of the family Butsudan should be centrally located within the household. They may be arranged on a table, shelf or prepared along a wall. Again, it must be remembered that there is no “right” or “proper” way. What is most important is the attitude of the household.

Central Image of Reverence:

Traditionally, statues, portraits or scrolls written with Buddha’s Name were enshrined in the altars of Jodoshinshu Buddhists. During the time of Shinran, it was common to see wooden statues of Buddha in the temples. However, in the “Dōjō” and homes of the followers of Jodoshinshu, the hanging scroll was most prominent. It is believed that even Shinran had preferred the hanging scroll. This tradition of high regard for the written scrolls was emphasized by Rennyo Shōnin.

“In other traditions preference is given to painted images of the Buddha over a scroll bearing the Name, to wooden images over the painted images; in our tradition preference is given to painted images over wooden images, to the Name over painted images.”

—Rennyo Goichidai Kikigaki

The scroll most commonly found in the family Butsudan is that which contains a portrait of Amida Buddha or one written with the Six-Character Name (六字名号 — Rokuji Myōgō) of Na-mu-a-mi-da-butsu (南無阿彌陀佛). This is the Myōgō that is generally used in the utterance of the Nembutsu. Either one of these two scrolls or a statue of Buddha may be enshrined as the central image of reverence.

In some of the larger family Butsudan, there are often three images of reverence. In the center is located the statue, portrait or Name of Buddha. On the right (as you face the Butsudan) we may see a hanging scroll with the Ten-Character Name (十字名号 — Jūji Myōgō) of Ki-myo-jin-jip-po mu-ge-ko-nyo-rai (歸命盡十方無碍光如來 — I take refuge in the Tathagata of inconceivable light filling the ten quarters) or a portrait of the founder of Jodoshinshu, Shinran Shōnin. On the left, we may see a hanging scroll with the nine-character Name (九字名号 — Kuji Myōgō) of Na-mu-fu-ka-shi-gi-ko-nyo-rai (南無不可思議光如來 — I take refuge in the Tathagata of inconceivable light) or a portrait of Rennyo Shōnin, who is considered to be the restorer of Jodoshinshu in Japan. This arrangement corresponds to the one found in most temple altar settings.

Candles:

“No one can see anything in the darkness without light. Candlelight is the symbol of the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha which illumine the darkness and ignorance of human beings. The candle flame is always flickering and moving in the breeze. If the breeze is strong enough, the candlelight will be extinguished. Like this, the breeze is ignorance or darkness which always tries to destroy wisdom or light. In this sense, therefore, it is better to have candlelight than electric light, since electric light will never be extinguished by mere breeze. Because of the wisdom of the Buddha, we shall be able to be freed from our passions and be enlightened. Candle lighting is the symbol of spiritual light or wisdom in the darkness of life.”

—*Buddhist Handbook for Shinshu Followers*
Shoyu Hanayama

Traditionally, only white candles are used during the religious service. On special designated occasions such as Shinran Shōnin's birthday (Gotanye), red or specially colored candles are used. Following the end of all religious services, the candles are extinguished by a quick fanning motion of the hand or by using a candle snuffer. The flame of the candle must never be extinguished by the blowing of one's breath.

Flowers:

Throughout the sutras, there are countless referrals to the offering of flowers. It is said that to offer even a single flower, one creates a connection with the Buddha. Therefore it is not necessary to offer an entire bouquet at all times.

Flowers are very beautiful, and in this sense almost anything can be offered in substitution. But, flowers are very symbolic of the impermanence of this life and serve as a reminder of the necessity to awaken to the Ultimate Truth of Wisdom and Compassion. The flowers we offer are cut from the stems. Although we place them in water and they continue to live for some time, they are nevertheless dying. But yet, we are able to appreciate their beauty. The flower is very beautiful, vibrant and full of life. As human beings, we too are dying from the instant we are born. Therefore, flowers are not offered as mere decorations, they are a constant reminder of our human existence.

Traditionally, any flower in season may be used as an offering. However, poisonous and thorny flowers should be avoided, if possible. In some of the larger family Butsudan, there are upper and lower shelves with vases. This corresponds to the arrangement found on many temple altar settings. In the vases on the upper level, evergreens are customarily placed to symbolize longevity. If at all possible, artificial flowers should not be offered.

Incense:

There are many references to the use of incense in the sutras and there are countless similes and metaphors given in the commentaries. But essentially, incense has been traditionally associated with cleanliness. It is a way to provide a fresh and pure scent in the home and temple, both enhancing the religious atmosphere of the place of reverence and of the follower.

One simile of incense is that the human body is like incense itself. While the smoke of incense rises, it releases a beautiful scent which fills the room. The human body is likened to this as long as breath and life rises from it.

The offering of both flowers and incense are also referred to as a means of praising the Buddha. They are expressions of thankfulness and gratitude in deep recognition of those causes of our existence and those conditions which sustain this existence.

Traditionally, the long incense sticks are not placed in a standing position in the burner. They are broken into appropriate lengths and then laid into the burner. There is no rule regarding the number of sticks of incense used.

Food Offerings:

Within the Jodoshinshu tradition, only rice offerings are made except on special occasions. However, rice, sweets, vegetables and fruits are traditionally offered before the family Butsudan. These offerings are not only given in recognition of those who have passed away on the debt of gratitude that we owe them, they are also expressions of our thankfulness and gratitude for being able to hear the very beautiful teachings of Namuamidabutsu.

In Asia, rice is the staple product, and naturally has become accepted as the traditional offering. It is very common to see an offering of rice being made in the morning. This is the first serving taken from the first meal of each day. To begin each new day with such a feeling is a total expression of thankfulness and gratitude. Of course, in the United States, rice is not the staple food and we rarely would eat or prepare rice in the morning. In this case, any offering of the morning meal is appropriate. Also in the United States, dinner is the main meal and an offering from the food prepared would be more appropriate. What is important to remember is that the food offerings are an expression of thankfulness and gratitude for those causes for our existence and those conditions that sustain this existence. It is to be grateful for those who have departed before us and for being given this opportunity to hear the teachings of Buddha.

Family Death Register, Memorial Tablet, and Photographs of the Deceased:

Through the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha, we receive those conditions which sustain this existence. The sole object of our reverence is this Wisdom and Compassion, manifested in our daily lives as Namuamidabutsu. Therefore, the Butsudan should not be used to enshrine the deceased.

Traditionally, the Memorial Tablet (位牌 — Ihai) is not used in Jodoshinshu. However, it is a very common practice to have a Memorial Tablet made. If this is the case, the Memorial Tablet should be placed on the side of the Butsudan and never in the center. This also applies to any photographs of the deceased. They must be placed within a close proximity to the Butsudan, but never within it. The Family Death Register is a record of the family ancestors and may be kept in one corner but never in the center. All of the aforementioned items are important and hold a very emotional and sentimental place in the hearts and minds of all families. However, although such reminders may bring us closer to the Butsudan, we must not forget that the sole object of our reverence is Amida Buddha. Here we may find the very crux of our karmic ties.

Dharma Name (法名 — Hōmyō)

The cards inscribed with a Hōmyō for the deceased or living should be placed in a drawer or compartment of the Butsudan.

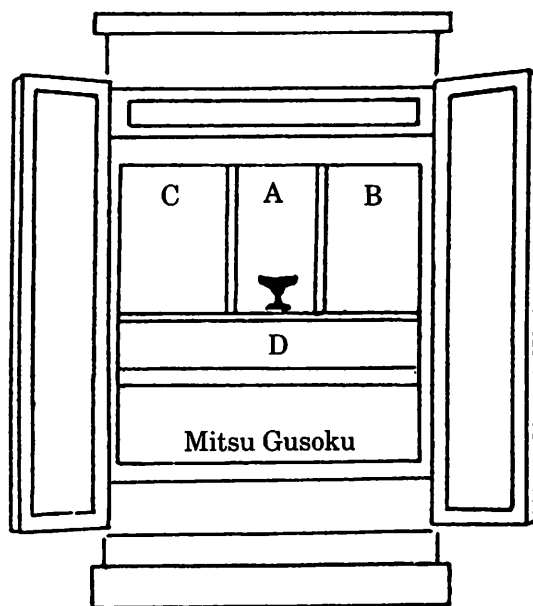
Arrangement of Butsudan Articles.

Essentially, the components comprising the family Butsudan are the central image of reverence (Myōgō, portrait or statue of Amida Buddha), a flower vase, candlestand and an incense burner. The arrangement of these three articles that adorn the central image of reverence is referred to as “mitsu gusoku”. In some family Butsudan, we may sometimes see two candlestands and two flower vases. This arrangement is called “go gusoku”, and is normally used only on special occasions. The mitsu gusoku arrangement, however, is the traditionally accepted one for daily practice and most observances.

As you are facing the central image of reverence, the candlestand is always placed on your right side of the central image. The flower vase is always placed to the left and the incense burner is placed in the center. Any food offering is always placed on a special vessel (Bukki) or on a plate and is always situated directly in front of the central image of reverence. A small bell (Rin) is placed in front of the Butsudan arrangement towards the right side.

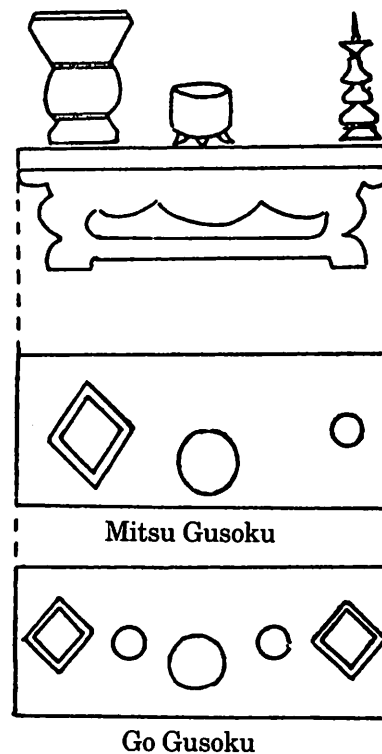
In many family altars, there is a brightly colored triangular brocade cloth called an Uchishiki. The uchishiki is taken from the triangular straw mat or cloth that the historical Buddha Shakamuni sat upon while lecturing. In the Butsudan, the necessary articles are arranged atop the Uchishiki. In the event of a death of a family member, the

Uchishiki is turned over exposing a plain white material. White is traditionally the color associated with death, and the Uchishiki is kept with the white side exposed until the 49th Day Memorial Service for the deceased. During this time, brightly colored flowers, especially red, should be avoided.



Butsudan

- A — Myōgō, Portrait, or Statue of Amida Buddha
(central image of Reverence)
- B — Portrait of Shinran Shōnin or 10-Character Name
(Juji Myōgō)
- C — Portrait of Rennyo Shōni or 6 Character Name
(Kuji Myōgō)
- D — Buppanki



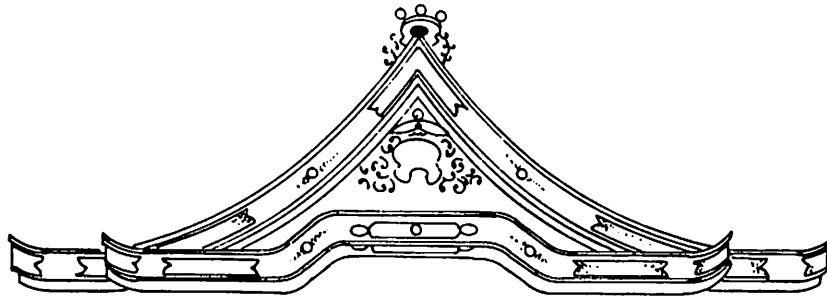
Butsudan Altar Arrangement

Daily Practice

Traditionally, both morning and evening observances should be held at the family Butsudan by all family members, whether individually or as a group, regardless of length or simplicity. This may be in the form of Gassho-Raihai, Oshoko (incense offering), recitation of Nembutsu (Namuamidabutsu) or sutra chanting. What is most important is that the observance is an expression of gratitude and thanksgiving for the benevolence of Buddha. Such an attitude should be cultivated so that the daily Butsudan observances may become an integral part of one's daily life.

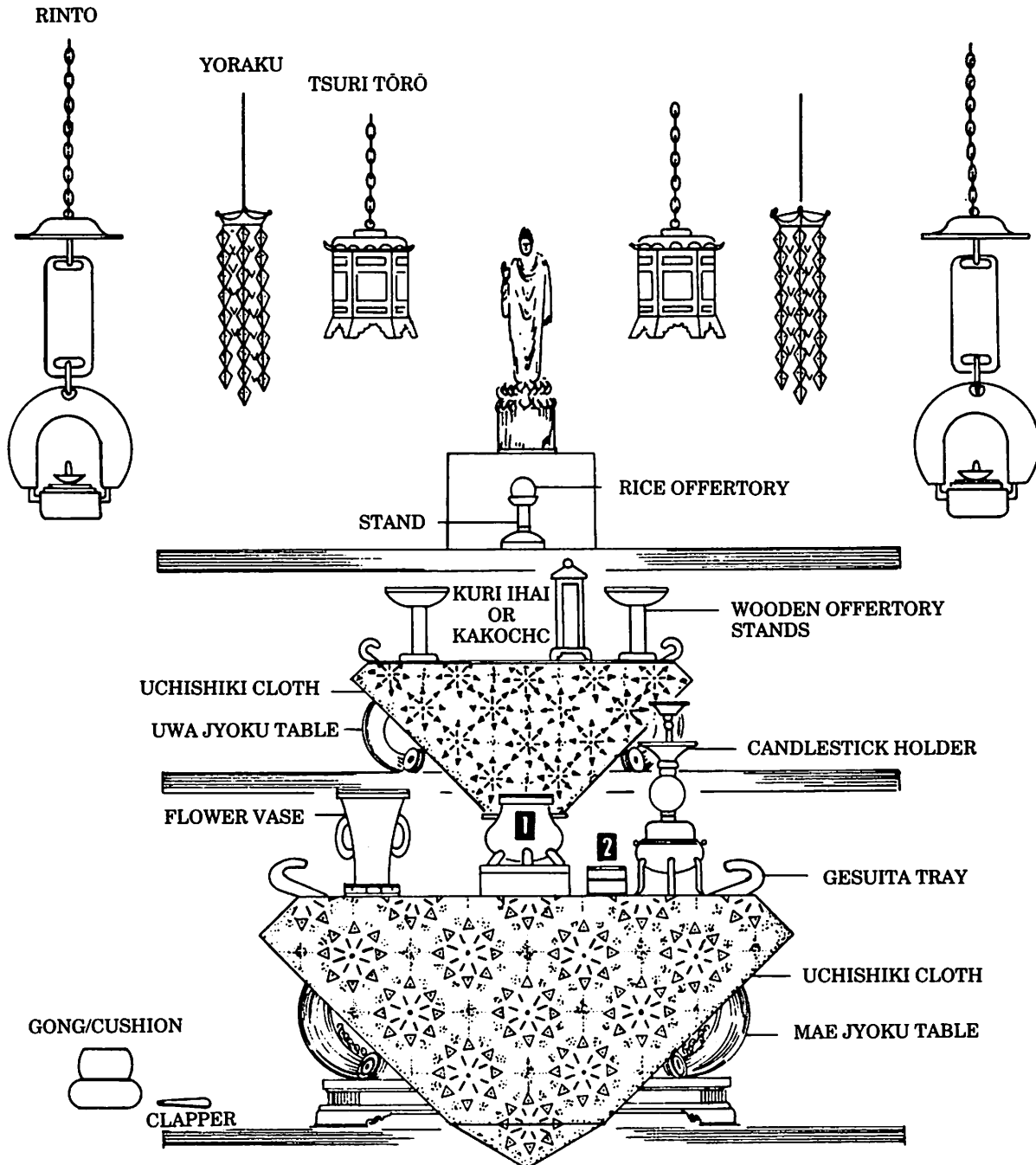
For families with young children, it is most important that the children experience daily family Butsudan services in order to cultivate an appreciation and understanding of Buddhism in their everyday life. A designated time, such as early morning or upon return from the day's activities, should be established for the children. They may offer their reverence alone or as a family group. One suggested practice is to have the children conduct their own service. They may strike the Rin (bell) once, gassho and recite Namuamidabutsu. Such a practice encourages the child in developing a spiritual consciousness and avoids the fire dangers often associated with candles and incense.

Since the Butsudan represents the spiritual heart of the family home, it should always be kept as clean and beautiful as possible. Fresh flowers should always be placed before the Butsudan, and since flowers are representative of impermanence, the use of artificial flowers is to be discouraged. The food offerings (Osonaye) have traditionally been rice, but as a gesture of gratitude and thanksgiving, any offering from the daily menu will suffice. However, during New Year's, mochi (Okagami) is traditionally offered; on Ohigan, Dango; on Hanamatsuri, sweet tea and flowers; and on Obon Somen, fruits and vegetables.



SHRINE LAYOUT

- 1** (BRONZE) CENSER
- 2** INCENSE BOX



WHAT IS BUDDHIST ETIQUETTE?

The whole concept of etiquette in general is concerned with the refinement of human behavior in its relationship with other human beings. Common courtesy, cordiality, grace and beauty, along with tradition, are all involved.

BUDDHIST ETIQUETTE takes into consideration this concept of etiquette, but it is more concerned with the refinement of our behavior in its relationship with the Buddha, His Teaching and His Brotherhood.

Thus, while it is necessary for the Buddhist to observe the ordinary rules of good conduct toward his fellow men, it is more important that he move with reverence and gratitude toward all things which are related to the Buddha.

Reverence and gratitude for the Compassion and Wisdom of the Buddha form the basis of Buddhist etiquette. Without this basis, the learning and practice of the outward forms become empty and meaningless. Gassho is meaningful only when it is the Nembutsu in action—when it is the expression of our gratitude and reverence. Therefore, in teaching the forms of Buddhist Etiquette, or in practicing them oneself, it must be to express the spirit of gratitude and reverence.

When Shinran spoke of “Shomyo Nembutsu”—the actual utterance of the Nembutsu—he was saying that it is not enough for man to think about noble thoughts and deeds: they must be expressed in words and action.

In light of this the purpose of etiquette in the lives of Buddhists becomes clear: we must put into action the reverence and gratitude which we feel for the Buddha. In teaching small children, then, it should be enough to convey this feeling of reverence and gratitude, and the bare basic forms of etiquette. Children will learn through the examples set by their teachers.

For the teachers, however, it is necessary that the details of etiquette are learned and observed so that they may set the proper example.

While it is true that Buddhists in America cannot adopt some of the rules of etiquette as conceived and practiced in Japan, there is still much to be said for the perpetuation of the others. Of these, the more common are included in this Guide. With the passing of time, more changes will probably be made necessary, but until such changes are made and adopted, the following is presented to the Sunday School teacher as a guide on etiquette as it is practiced today in the Buddhist Churches of America.

GASSHO

Gassho means to put the hands together. The palms of both hands are placed together with the fingers and thumbs extended and with the ojuzu encircling both hands and held lightly between the thumbs and the fingers. Both elbows should be fairly closed to the body and the hands should be at mid-chest level. To bow during gassho, the hands should be held steady, while the body is bent forward from the hips and then back to upright position.

Gassho is the natural expression of reverence and gratitude.

THE OJUZU

The ojuzu should be treated with the utmost respect at all times. At home it should be kept in a special place, such as in a drawer near the family altar. At other times, the

Buddhist should carry the ojuzu in the purse or the coat pocket so that it will always be available. During the service, the ojuzu should be held in the left hand.

The ojuzu encircles the hands during gassho, symbolizing Oneness.

OSHOKO (BURNING OF INCENSE)

Walk up to the front of the altar and bow at a distance of about two steps in front of the Oshoko table. Step up to the table and with the right hand take a pinch of powdered incense and drop it into the burning-incense bowl. Gassho and bow. Take two or three steps backward, bow and return to your seat.

Oshoko is the acceptance of transiency and fulfillment in life.

USE OF THE SEITEN (AND GATHA BOOKS)

Since the Seiten contains scared words, it should be handled with proper care. The Issei “itadaku” the book before using, i.e., they reverently hold it with both hands and bow in a gesture of gratitude. It is hoped that such an attitude of reverence will be perpetuated by the younger generations.

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE HONDO (CHURCH HALL)

The Hondo should be entered quietly and with due reverence. Upon entering, gassho facing the altar. Take your seat and wait quietly for the service to begin.

Avoid being late, but when you must enter the Hondo after the service has started, be especially careful not to disturb the others. Try to find a seat in the back rows. If you enter during a period of mediation, wait until it is over before moving toward the pews.

Before leaving the Hondo, turn to face the altar and gassho.

RECITING OF THE NEMBUTSU

As Shinshu is based on the realization of the Nembutsu, the importance of reciting it correctly cannot be overemphasized. “Namu-Amida-Butsu” should be recited clearly and accurately.

LISTENING TO THE READING OF SACRED WRITINGS

The minister often reads excerpts from the “Sacred Writings of St. Rennyo” (Go-bunsho) or other scriptures before or after delivering his sermon. The congregation should sit with heads bowed and listen to the words.

RESPONDING TO THE SPEAKER’S BOW

When the speaker bows in greeting the congregation, or when he bows after his talk, the congregation should return his bow.

LEADING THE CONGREGATION IN READING

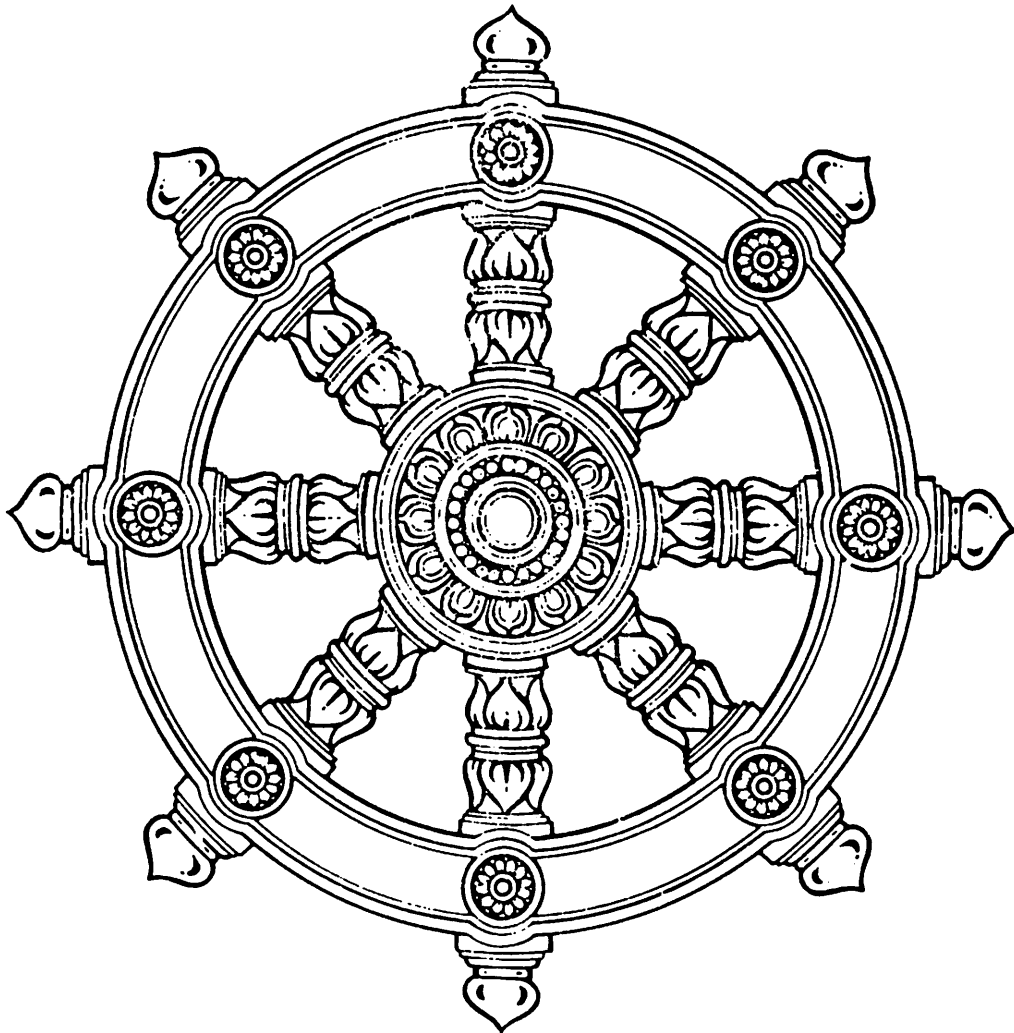
Leading the congregation in reading, whether it is the “Golden Chain” or excerpts from the Dhammapada, is an honor and therefore should be performed in that spirit.

Before beginning the reading, gassho and bow toward the altar. Hold the book with both hands. Read slowly and distinctly so that the congregation can follow together.

After the reading, gassho.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The manner of personal appearance is another way of showing respect. Neatness, cleanliness, or, in general, “looking one’s best” is a good rule to follow, especially in church.

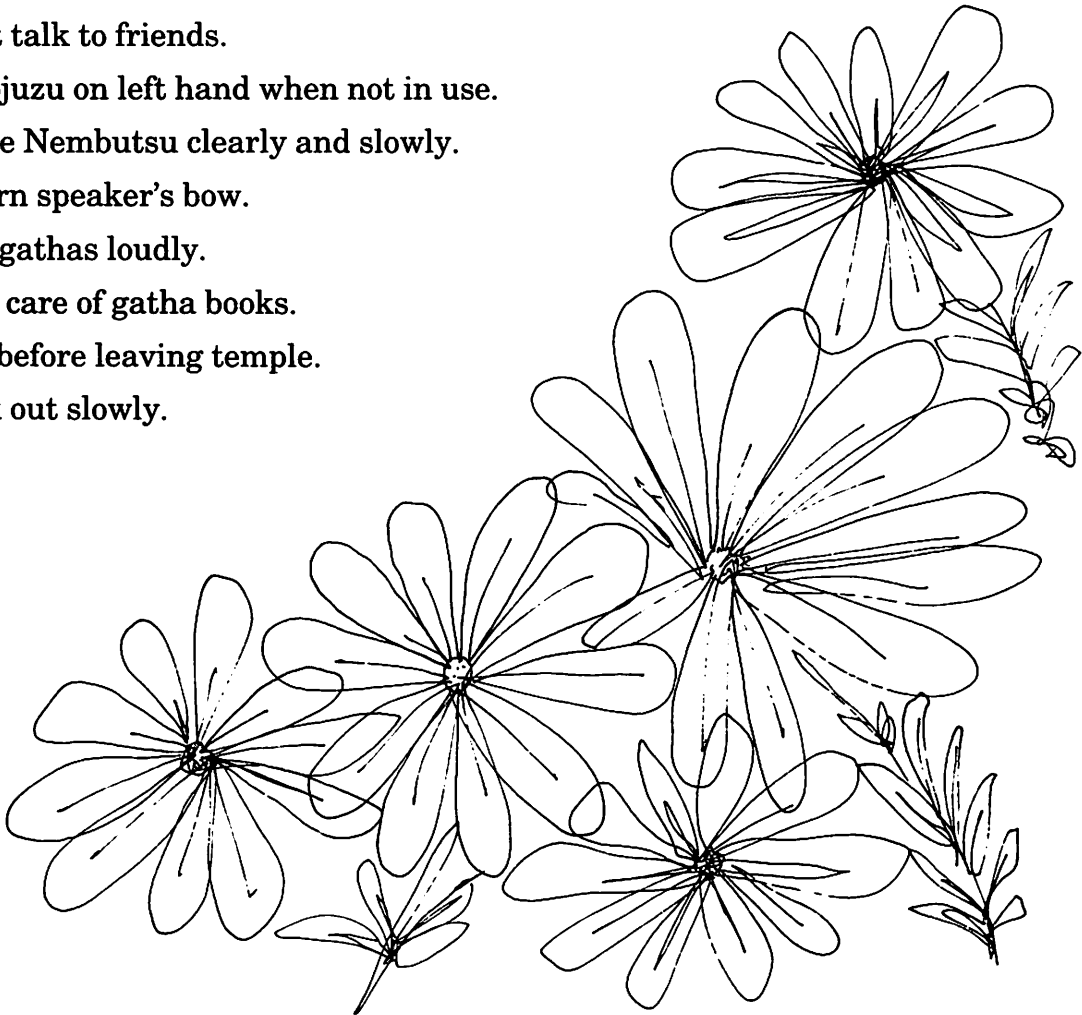


Dharmacakra—The Wheel of the Law. Sakyamuni Buddha set the Wheel of the Law in motion with his First Sermon in Deer Park near Benares, India.

TEMPLE ETIQUETTE

AMIDA AND I ARE ONE

1. Gassho at shrine.
2. Sit down quietly.
3. Don't talk to friends.
4. Put ojuzu on left hand when not in use.
5. Recite Nembutsu clearly and slowly.
6. Return speaker's bow.
7. Sing gathas loudly.
8. Take care of gatha books.
9. Bow before leaving temple.
10. Walk out slowly.



When the service starts, we put our hands together with the Ojuzu around them. The tassel is hanging down, of course. We stand very quietly and say to ourselves . . .

I PUT MY FAITH IN THE BUDDHA
I PUT MY FAITH IN THE DHARMA
I PUT MY FAITH IN THE SANGHA
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

We do the same thing when the incense is being offered and at the end of the service.

Sensei and Mother said that we should keep our Ojuzu in a little case so that it won't get soiled or broken. Buddhist children keep their Ojuzus with them every day. Each morning and night, Mother, Daddy, and I stand in front of our obutsudan. We put our Juzus about our hands and say. . .

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

FOR THE TEACHER OF LITTLE CHILDREN

HOW TO WALK IN THE TEMPLE

Children are naturally inclined to jump and run instead of walking quietly, but they must be taught that “in church” they must walk. The teacher walking beside some of the more energetic ones may be able to help them remember this.

HOW TO SIT IN THE TEMPLE

Again even the best-mannered child will need constant reminding on how to remain seated quietly throughout a service. Instruct the children that “good Buddhist children” sit up straight, facing the altar.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE

Etiquette in general requires children (and grown-ups, too) to refrain from talking out of turn, from whispering and chit-chatting when in a large group and from poking or otherwise annoying their friends. It is even more important that such behavior be discouraged in church. Try to direct their attention to the part of the service being conducted.

Emphasize the need to do everything quietly and reverently: turn the pages of the Gatha Book quietly, close the book quietly, etc. Any necessary movement should be made in a quiet and respectful manner.

It should also be pointed out that it is impolite to the speaker and to everyone else, as well as being disrespectful to the Buddha, to leave the hall during the service. Teach the children that, except for the rare emergencies, they are to remain quietly seated until the service is over.

DIVIDING INTO CLASSES

The system for dividing the Dharma School into classes differs with the individual churches. In some churches the children file out in row-by-row order. In this case the children should wait quietly for their turn to leave. In other churches a more informal dispersal takes place. Whichever the system, supervision by the teacher can keep the process orderly and efficient.

TEMPLE ETIQUETTE

To develop the understanding that the church, as well as the school and the home, is a place for good manners.

MATERIALS

1. Story, *Three Fishes*
2. Chart paper for rules
3. For puppets: crayons, paper, scissors, stiff paper, paste, tongue depressor
4. A ready-made puppet for example

PROCEDURES

1. Tell the story of *The Three Fishes*
We will not act foolishly if we listen carefully to what the sensei says during Dharma School.
2. Discussion
We don't want to be like the 3rd fish who was foolish! What are the things we can do in Temple to become good Buddhist children?
 - a. Be very quiet when we enter the Temple.
 - b. Walk in the Temple.
 - c. Sit quietly and face the altar during the service.
 - d. Stay in your seats unless something very urgent arises.
 - e. If you are late, quietly take a seat without disturbing anyone.
3. Construct simple puppets of ourselves.
Now that we know how to behave in Temple like good Buddhist children, show me how *you* would look when you are in Temple.
 - a. Pass out materials: crayons, paper, scissors, tag board (any stiff paper), paste, tongue depressor.
 - (1) Children draw themselves
 - (2) Cut them out and paste on stiff paper with tongue depressor between them to hold.

EXTENDED EXPERIENCE

1. Dramatize with puppets
If you were the sensei (give a child a puppet made of the sensei) and you ran in Temple, what would you do?
Let each child take the sensei's part or the children's parts.

THE THREE FISHES

Once upon a time there were three fishes living in a cool mountain stream. Their mother taught them all the same things and yet they were all very different. The first was very smart. He used good judgment at all times. He knew how to stay away from the fishermen and where to find the best food. Now, the second fish was only half smart. Sometimes he acted very wisely but often he was reckless and foolish. As for the third fish, he was very foolish. He was always taking chances and snapped at the fisherman's bait or took naps right in the middle of the stream where the water was clear and shallow. One day a very clever fisherman came to the stream where the three fishes lived. He had a net with him. The wise fish knew what to do right away and swam away as fast as he could and hid in the ferns where he was safe. The second fish took a chance and continued to play. The net was closing in on him and then he became terribly frightened and raced this way and that. He luckily escaped the net. The third fish was such a foolish fish that he kept on playing and teasing the fisherman. He thought he was having a wonderful time. Finally he was caught in the net and was made into a wonderful dinner for the fisherman and his wife. It is nice to have fun but we must remember to use good judgment. If we follow Lord Buddha's teachings we will never act foolishly.

OUR FAMILY WORSHIPS DAILY BEFORE THE FAMILY SHRINE

"Buddha teaches that we are to pay respect to the six directions of Truth and then that we are to behave wisely and virtuously..."

"Now, what are the six directions of Truth? They are east for the way of father and son, south for the way of teacher and pupil, west for the way of husband and wife, north the way of man and his friend, below for the way of master and servant, and above for the way of the disciples of Buddha." (*Buddha, Truth and Brotherhood*, pp. 140-144)

From ancient times man brought his hands together in what we call "gassho" to express utmost respect to supreme reverence for the unknown forces of the universe. The two hands, representing opposing forces, were united into one act for a singleness of purpose whether it was to overcome fear or to express deep rooted aspirations and hopes. The typical act of gassho represented the spiritual power of Oneness.

The above quotation in the "Buddha, Truth and Brotherhood" which was condensed from the Singalovada Sutra, clearly teaches in its organized way the establishment of harmonious universal

relationship of the father and son (parent and child), the teacher and pupil, the husband and wife, man and man, the master and servant, and the teacher of Buddhism and the follower. The teaching of this sutra shows us the favorable mental attitudes that developed in all our associations.

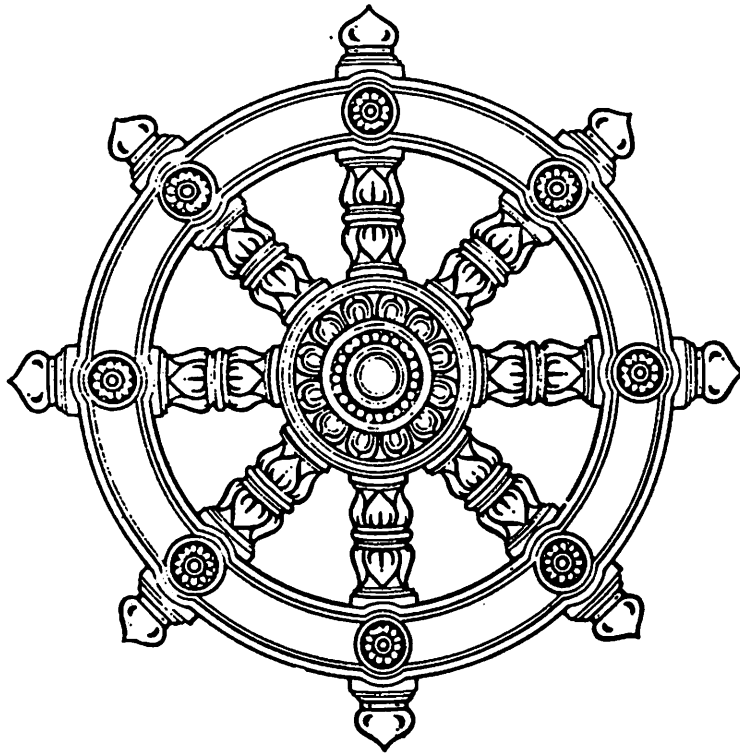
The six directions are concentrated in the Buddhist shrine with the central image of Amida Buddha. He, who worships Amida Buddha, will naturally be able to enjoy smooth working relationships with his fellow men. For example, he will show the proper respect for his parents' advice, and learn from their guidance. His humility before the Infinite Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha will manifest itself in humility before the knowledge of his teachers. Pride stifles religious growth but humility engenders spiritual progress.

The simple daily gassho before the family shrine makes us conscious of the people around us who contribute to our well-being. The Nembutsu of gratitude awakens us to an appreciation of all the little things that enrich our lives. The family that worships daily before the family shrine is united in Amida's Compassion and the members live together in love, respect and understanding.



ETIQUETTE WITH FAMILY SHRINE (OBUTSUDAN)

1. Fresh flowers should be offered.
2. Make sure there is always an offering such as rice or fruits.
3. Light candles and “fan” them out.
4. Light incense and “fan” out.
5. Don’t play with gong. Use only when chanting the sutra.
6. Put everything away when closing the obutsudan.
7. Gassho.



ETIQUETTE AT HOME

THE FAMILY SHRINE (OBUTSUDAN)

The family shrine is the heart of the Buddhist home. Because this is so, we must pay homage to our altar in every way possible. It should be kept as beautiful as possible. It should never show signs of neglect or carelessness. The best flowers available should always be offered and each stem piece kept in proper position. If a student in the Dharma School has no family altar, he should be helped in obtaining an omyogo from the church.

To prepare the family shrine for a service, the following points should be remembered:

FLOWERS

See that fresh flowers have been offered. Since flowers are symbolic of transiency, artificial flowers should not be used. Paper flowers are used by some other religious groups, but it should not be confused as a Shinshu practice.

OSONAYE (OFFERINGS)

There is a great difference between the Buddhist asonaye and the primitive sacrificial offerings to the gods, just as there is a difference between the gassho and the prayer. The difference lies in the meaning behind the acts: the osonaye is made in thanksgiving while the sacrificial offerings was made in petitioning the favor of the gods. Through the ages the Buddhists have made offerings to the Buddha in this spirit of thanksgiving. In America, too, the practice is continued.

Rice has become the traditional main offering. As it was the staple food in Japan, it became the practice to offer the first portion of each day's rice to the Obutsudan. Other customs regarding offerings on important Buddhist occasions developed. They include:

New Year: Omochi (okagami)

Ohigan: Odango

Hana-Matsuri: Sweet tea and flowers

Obon: Somen and things customarily connected with the Thanksgiving season and harvest such as cucumber, eggplant, peaches, melons, etc. (Kyuri ya nasubi ya momo suika...)

Offerings of Ohatsu are made in the sense of giving the "first of the season" to the Buddha. Other offerings, made to present the best or the most important item, may include the first slice of a birthday cake, presents received, paychecks, letters, etc.

CANDLES

Light candles and douse the match by fanning it (not by blowing).

INCENSE

Break the incense sticks into lengths which will fit across the incense burner. Hold one end of the incense sticks up to the candle until they glow. Hold the flaming end down and fan the flame out (do not blow). Then lay the incense down in the burner and replace the cover. (Not all burners have covers.)

The incense burner should be about half filled with ashes. If for any reason the incense burner is found to be empty (as it is sometimes at outdoor services), it may be temporarily filled with salt.

GONG

The gong is used only when chanting the sutra. There are various other religious groups which use the gong for other purposes, but in Shinshu churches and homes it is used only to announce the beginning of the sutra and, later in the sutra, to punctuate it. Only those familiar with the sutras and the proper punctuation points should use the gong.

The correct way of striking the gong is to use a wrist action and strike the gong lightly but briskly. Hit the upper part of the gong using a right to left motion (not up and down).

CLOSING THE ALTAR

Put out the candles, using either the tool made for this purpose or with a fanning motion of the hand (again, do not blow), and close the doors (if any) of the Obutsudan. Gassho.

DAILY EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

MORNING AND EVENING GASSHO

Morning and evening services should be observed, however short or simple. This may take the form of gassho alone, or the recitation of some words of thanksgiving in gassho. The words one may choose to repeat before the altar is of personal preference. They are usually determined by the guidance one receives from his Sunday School teacher and his parents. The important point is that the morning and evening orei...the expressing of gratitude to the Buddha...becomes a regular and important part of one's daily life.

Whenever a child finds that his home altar is not accessible at his bedtime, it is better that he gassho kneeling beside the bed, or sitting in bed, than for him to omit the observance.

AT THE DINNER TABLE

Let us encourage the practice of giving thanks at the dinner table.

"Itadakimasu" and "Gochiso sama" are two expressions of receiving with gratitude. Even for those who do not understand Japanese, the utterance of "Itadakimasu" before the meal and "Gochiso sama" after the meal could be of real meaning if expressed with thanksgiving in gassho.

GRATITUDE

Morning

Good morning, Amida Buddha—
I will try to follow your teachings,
At home, in school, and at play
Namu Amida Butsu.

At Night

Thank you Buddha for this day
In guiding me in work or play
Thank you for your shining Light
To make our world so good and bright.
Namu Amida Butsu.

* * * * *

Thank you Buddha for this day
In guiding me in work or play.
Thank you for your loving care
To keep us all happy and safe.
Namu Amida Butsu.

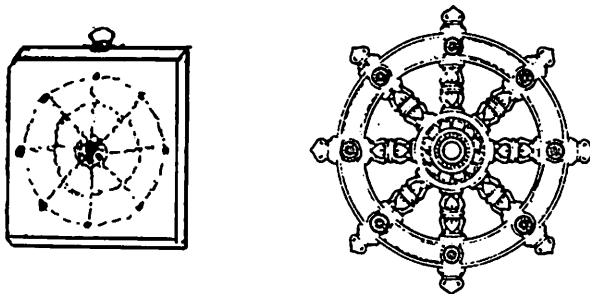
Mealtime

Thank you Buddha for this food,
And all the things that make it good—
For my health and wisdom too,
Namu Amida Butsu.

AMIDA'S CALL

Go over Eight-Fold Path again. Introduce the Dharmacakra — symbol of Buddhism and Buddha's main teaching.

Make Dharmacakra wall plaque. Use wooden plaque or cardboard or paper plate. Have two circles (one smaller than outer) drawn and eight lines radiating out of center. Using glue from squeeze bottle, have children trace lines with glue. Take yarn and press down on outline of glue. Glue beads at eight points and in the center.



AMIDA'S POWER

Discussion: No matter who we are, if we have faith in his power, he receives us and we receive and hear his teachings. We show our thanks for his power and gift by going to the altar at any time and say the Nembutsu. We can do this especially at Thanksgiving, a timely reminder.

Make a shrine either on a wooden wall plaque or cardboard. Use wooden beads, dried flowers, cut-out pictures for altar pieces. Write Nembutsu for center. Hang up and children will have their own shrine to practice the Nembutsu.

NEMBUTSU, THE PURE ACT

Discussion: We recite the Nembutsu to show our faith and gratitude in Amida. Being forever thankful reminds us of his teachings.

Learn the significance of the ojuzu. One hand is Amida and one hand is "Me". The ojuzu helps bring the two hands together into one. We are One with Amida Buddha.

EIGHT-FOLD PATH

Discussion: Buddha taught that to like yourself and be liked by others we must practice 1. Right View — to seek the truth 2. Right Thought — have pure or good thoughts 3. Right Speech — speak truthfully, always tell the truth 4. Right Conduct — act truthfully 5. Right Livelihood — live honestly 6. Right Effort — follow the teachings of the Buddha 7. Right Mindfulness — think of Buddha 8. Right Meditation — recite the Nembutsu, Namu Amida Butsu.

Suggested Activity: Make an octopus. Wad newspaper into a ball to fit palms of hands. Cover with tissue paper. Cut out 8 legs. Teacher will have written the Eight Fold Path on the legs. Fasten to base (of body) with paper fasteners. Glue eyes on. A toy-like reminder of the Eight-Fold Path.

FIVE PRECEPTS

Discussion: What are they? 1. Compassion — feeling, tenderness, love with wisdom, not hurt or take a life 2. Honesty — we don't take what is not ours 3. Morality — we do nice things 4. Sincerity — we talk of the good of things, forgive the bad, we don't lie 5. Temperance — we try not to drink alcohol, smoke tobacco, take drugs which all make us act badly — not like overselves.

SIX PERFECTIONS OR PARAMITAS

Discussion: What are they? 1. Dana — being helpful to others, giving, osaisen 2. Sila — doing right, being truthful 3. Ksanti — patience, understanding, waiting your turn 4. Diligence — effort, do my best in all things, not give up easily 5. Meditation — think about Buddha's teachings 6. Wisdom — always seek the light or truth, good judgment, understanding, principles or teachings.

PRACTICE OF THE TEACHINGS

As the first of the Six Paramitas, and a major virtue in the Buddhist Teachings, the practice and understanding of dana (giving selflessly) should be constantly taught to the Sunday School pupils. The Sunday School and other church activities afford various opportunities in which dana, along with the other Paramitas, may be practiced.

OSAISEN (OFFERTORY)

It has long been the practice of Sunday School children to make small contributions each Sunday to the Temple. The teachers may help their pupils grasp the importance of their acts of dana through stories showing the merits of this act. Money given boastfully or niggardly is not true osaisen. Teach the difference so that they may appreciate the true meaning of giving.

The method of accepting the contributions varies with different churches. The majority of the churches have “osaisen-bako” (box for osaisen) near the entrance of the Hondo. The children drop their osaisen in this box as they enter the church. Some churches have the system of collecting the osaisen in the separate classes.

FLOWERS FOR THE SHRINE

Those with abundant flowers in their gardens should be encouraged to bring them to the church on Saturdays so they may be arranged for Sunday Services.

For Hana-Matsuri, every child should be encouraged to bring at least a few blossoms to offer the Hana-Mido.

GIVING OF ONE’S SERVICE

Along with the giving of material goods, giving of labor and love for the church must be taught to the children. The unselfish concern for the welfare of the church, which is necessary for all Buddhists, young and old, must be taught from an early age. Cleaning the church and church-yard, helping with bulletins, volunteering for child care, lining up chairs or distributing Gatha books can help the children acquire this unselfish concern.

RECEIVING WITH GRATITUDE

The majority of Sunday Schools give small gifts to the children. These range from the occasional gifts of candy to special gifts as the “graduate’s gift”, attendance pins, etc.

Receiving with gratitude is as important as giving with a pure heart. In this land of abundance, it is not difficult for a child to think little of a small gift. The teacher must somehow convey to pupils the feeling of special appreciation for gifts from the church.

If the Sunday School pupils can understand this feeling, they will treat the gifts with appreciation. Then, in the case of candy bars, they will not tear off the wrappings in church, but rather, they will take the candy home and first present it to their family altar.

IDENTIFYING THE ARTICLES ON THE SHRINE

ACTIVITIES

A. Purpose

To experience duplicating a pre-arranged arrangement of objects.

Materials needed

Objects familiar to children: flowers, candles, fruit.

Directions

1. Teacher places three objects in a row on the table.
2. She gives each child a set of the same three objects.
3. She asks children to place their objects in the same order as hers are placed.
4. Teacher changes objects and order for variety.
5. Discuss its importance and significance.

Other ways and other materials

Simplified -

Use two objects.

More challenging -

Use four-five objects.

B. Purpose

To identify and add the missing part of a "What's missing" lotto card.

Materials needed

"What's Missing" lotto game

Directions

1. Teacher will give each child a game board.
2. Teacher will hold up small card and ask children: Look at your game board and see if _____ is missing from it.
3. Teacher gives card to child who needs it to complete his/her picture.
4. When all game boards are completed children will return cards to box. Draw all of the articles on the shrine.

C. Purpose

To reproduce an original arrangement of objects

Materials needed

Objects familiar to child: Articles on the Shrine

Directions

1. Teacher places three objects in a row on the table.
2. Teacher and children discuss how they are arranged.
3. Teacher gives each child a set of similar objects and covers her set.
4. Children are to place their objects in the original order.
5. Teacher uncovers her set and children can compare.

Other ways and other materials

Simplified —

1. Have children duplicate and arrangement
2. Use two objects.

More challenging —

Use four or five objects.

D. Purpose

To remember objects seen by playing a visual memory game.

Materials needed

Three familiar objects: Articles on the Shrine.

Directions

1. Teacher will put objects on table for free exploration.
2. Teacher will have children name and describe their properties: comb - black, you comb your hair with it, etc.
3. Teacher will continue this process until the children have labeled and described all items presented.
4. Teacher will place items in the center of table in a row and tell children they will play a game by closing their eyes while the teacher takes something away. When they open their eyes they are to tell what is missing.
5. She will take away a different object each time, always leaving two objects on the table.
6. All objects will be placed on the shrine

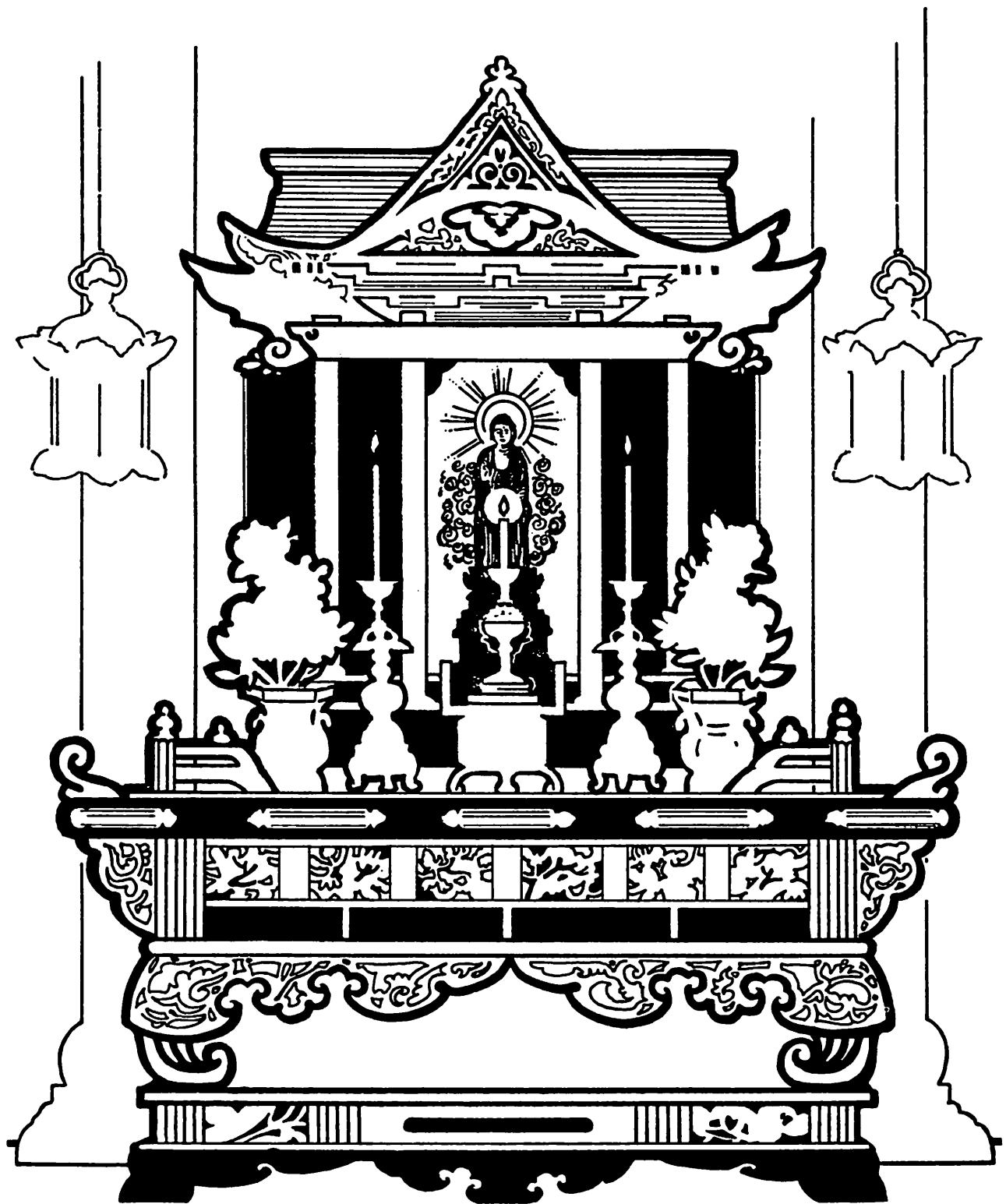
Other ways and other materials

Simplified —

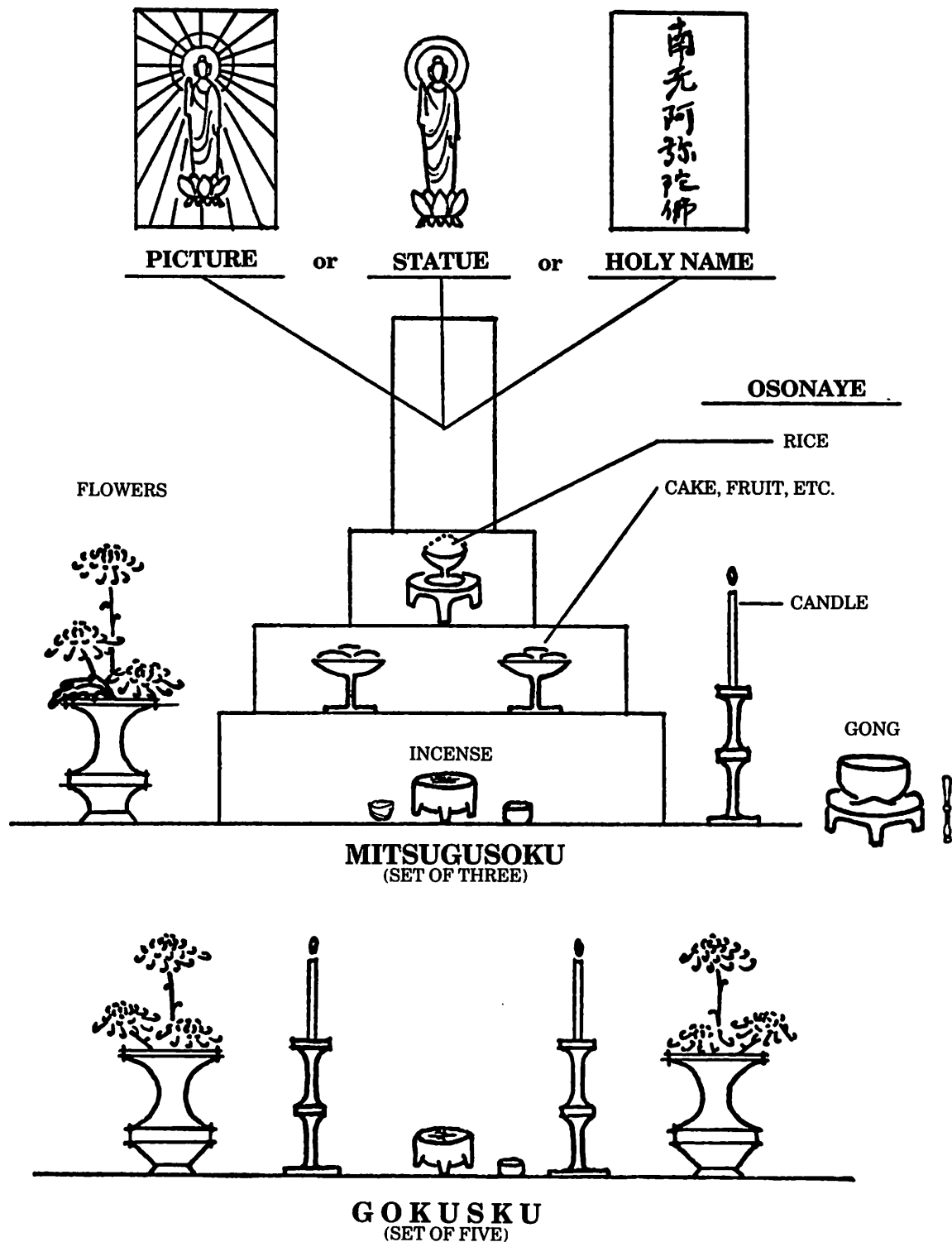
1. Start with fewer items on the table.
2. Have the children feel the missing object with their eyes closed.
3. Give children a duplicate set of items and have them match the order of placement to the teacher's model.

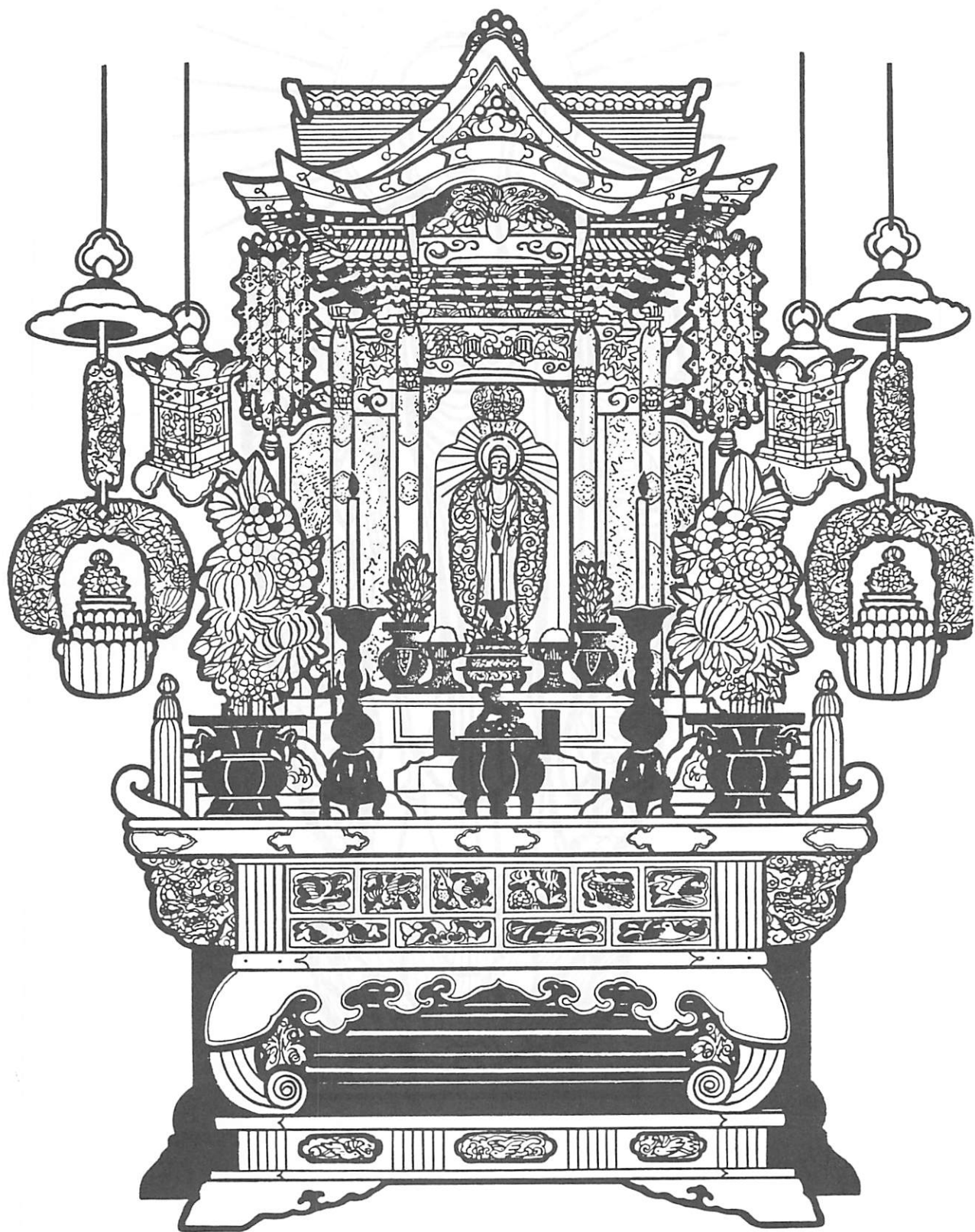
More challenging —

1. When eyes are closed, add one object and take away one. Then ask what is added and what is taken away.
2. Have more objects on the table to start with.
3. Take away more objects at a time: 1 object, then 2, 3, etc., and have children tell what is missing.



ARRANGEMENT OF THE SHRINE







The Buddhist shrine is a beautiful reminder of Amida and his teaching.

How peacefully the Buddha stands in the shrine. He glows with warmth and reminds us of his promise to help everyone. Amida Buddha loves us all.



He is wisdom and compassion. His light brightens our world. See how he holds his hands to comfort and bless us?

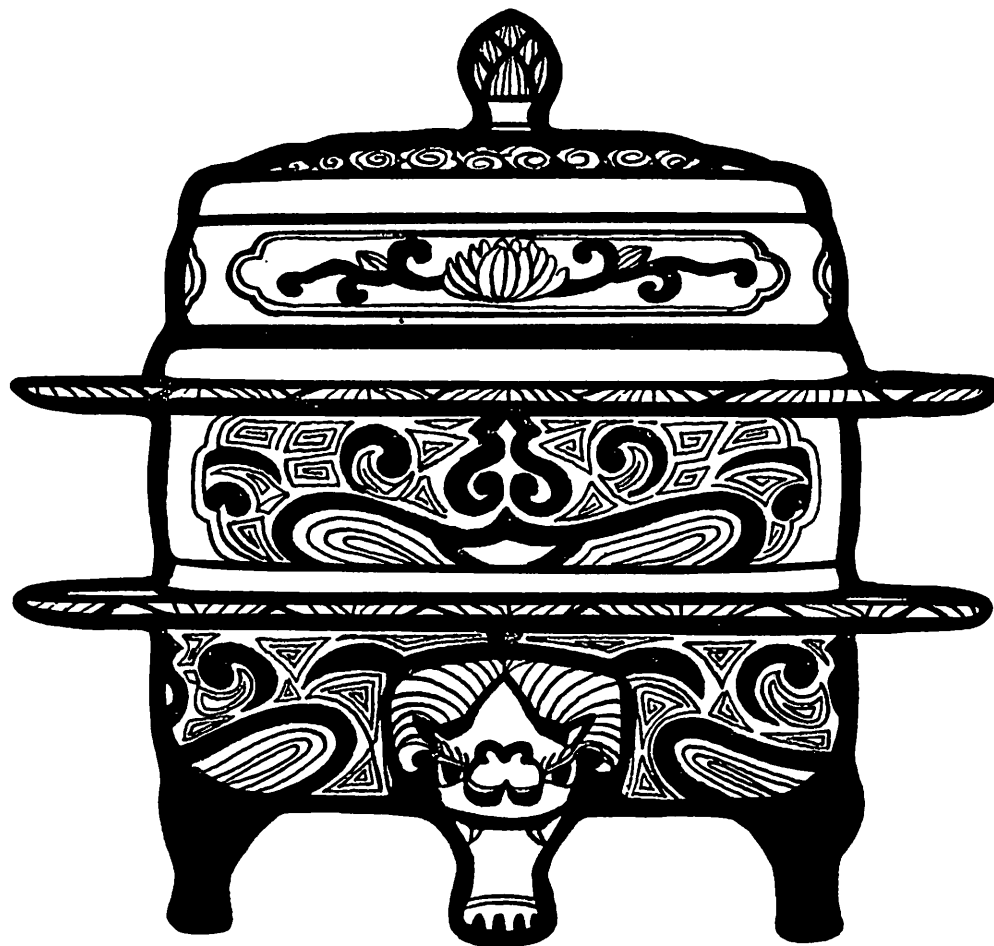
Beautiful reminders fill the altar. Below Amida are three important things which help us to remember him.



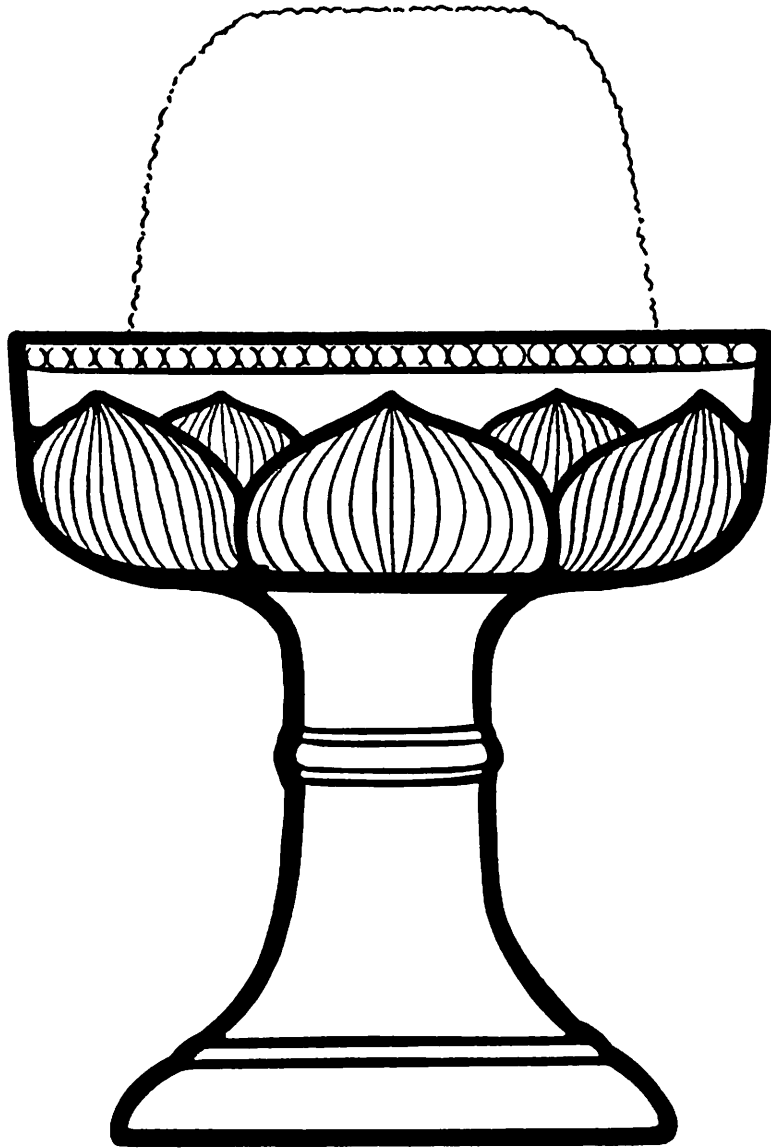
The candle glows softly and quietly...
...lighting up the darkness,
...gently telling us that we should not remain in the dark.



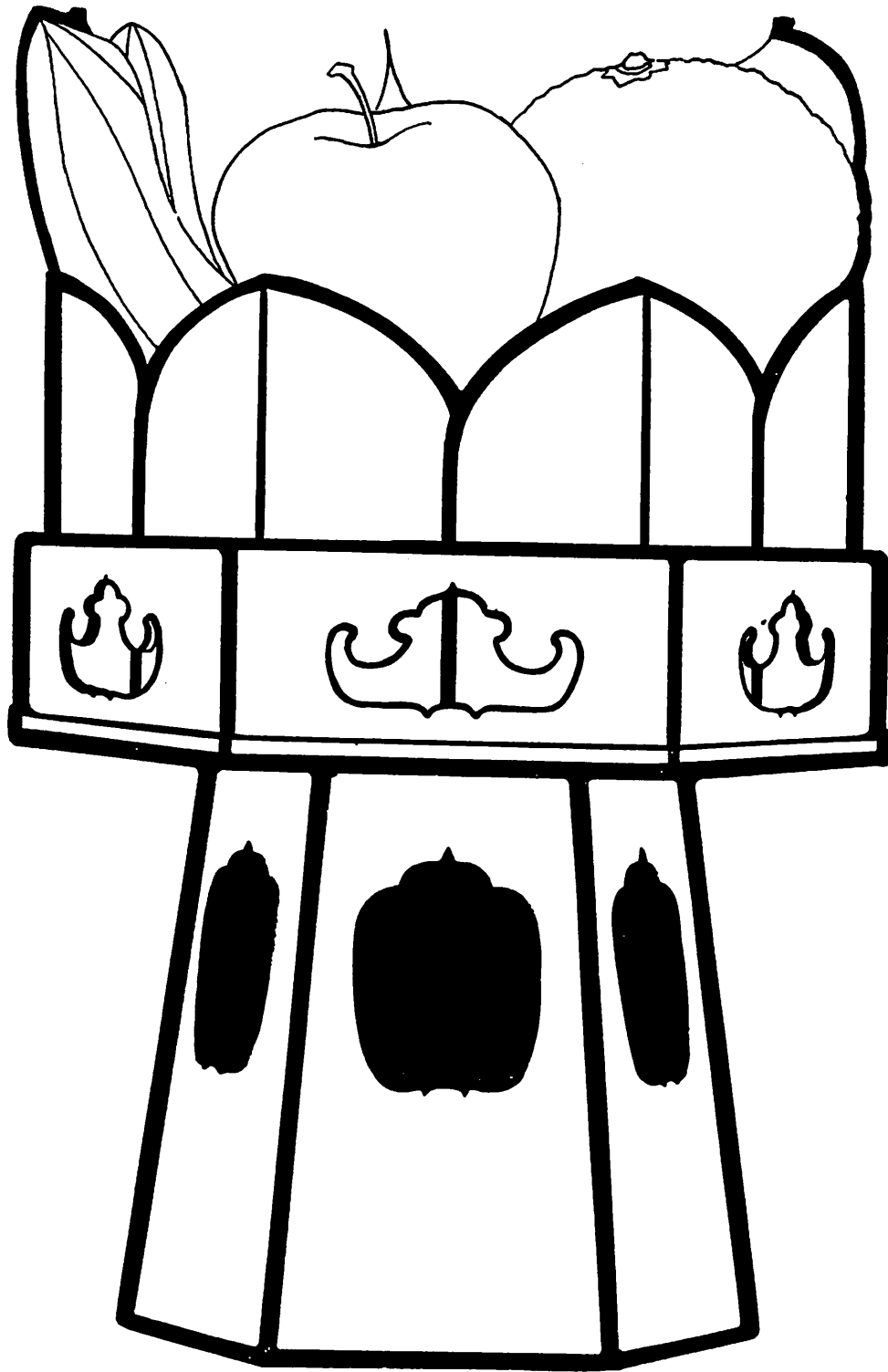
And next we find a vase holding young green leaves all year round. The vase gives the leaves water to remain fresh. In the same way, the Buddha gives us his wisdom for a peaceful and happy life.



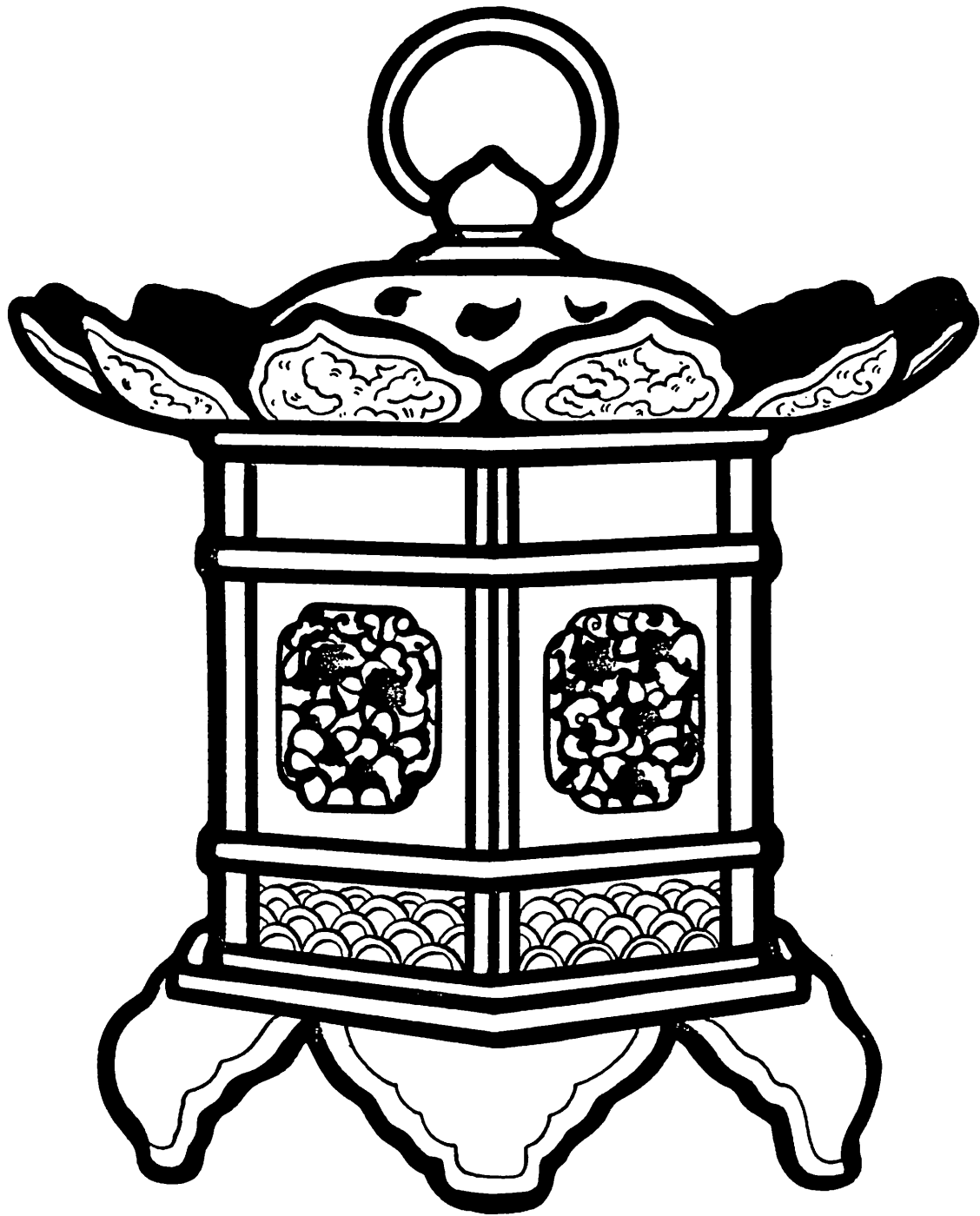
In the center ribbons of soft smoke curl up ward and fill the temple with a wonderful scent. And so, we say that the incense purifies the place. It reminds us that we are together with Amida.



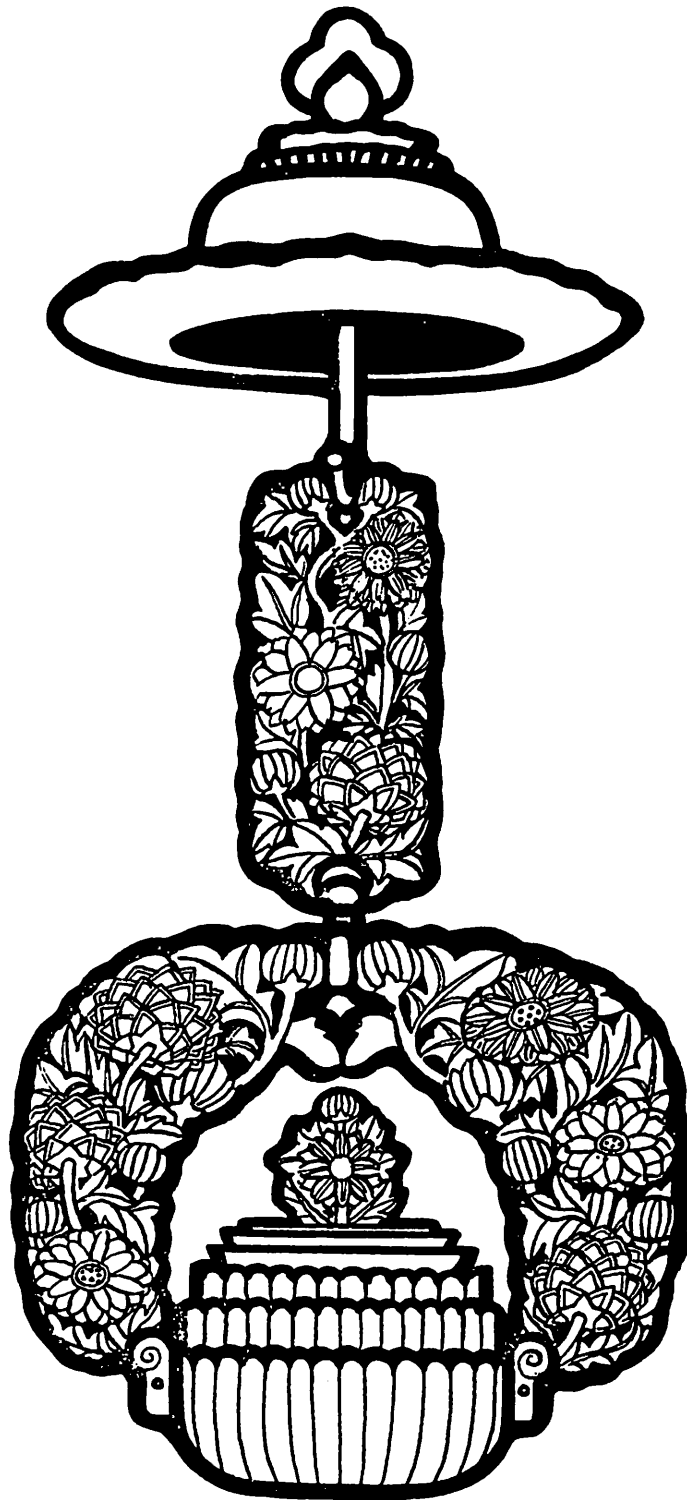
The shrine is our way of saying, “Thank you, Buddha.” What a wonderful way of showing our gratitude by sharing our daily food with Amida. And at important services,



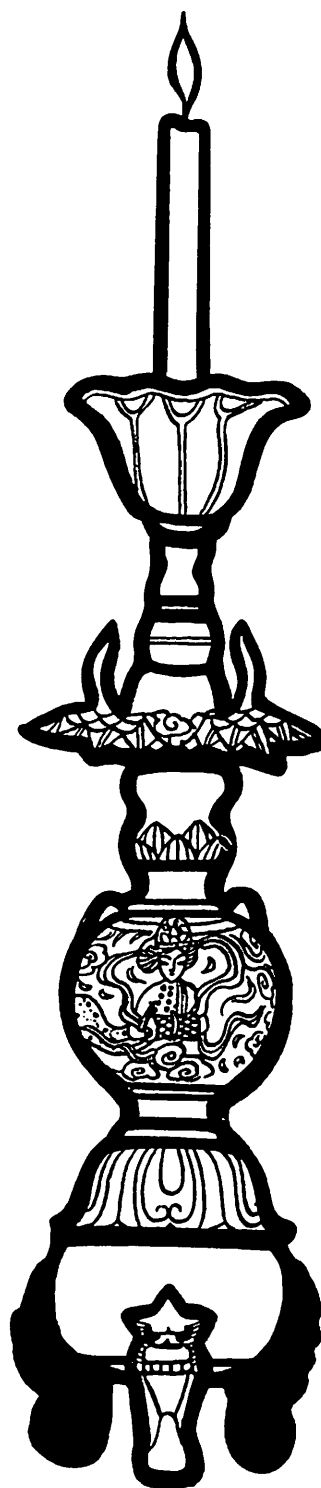
we give different kinds of food. What are some of the special offerings you have seen on the shrine?



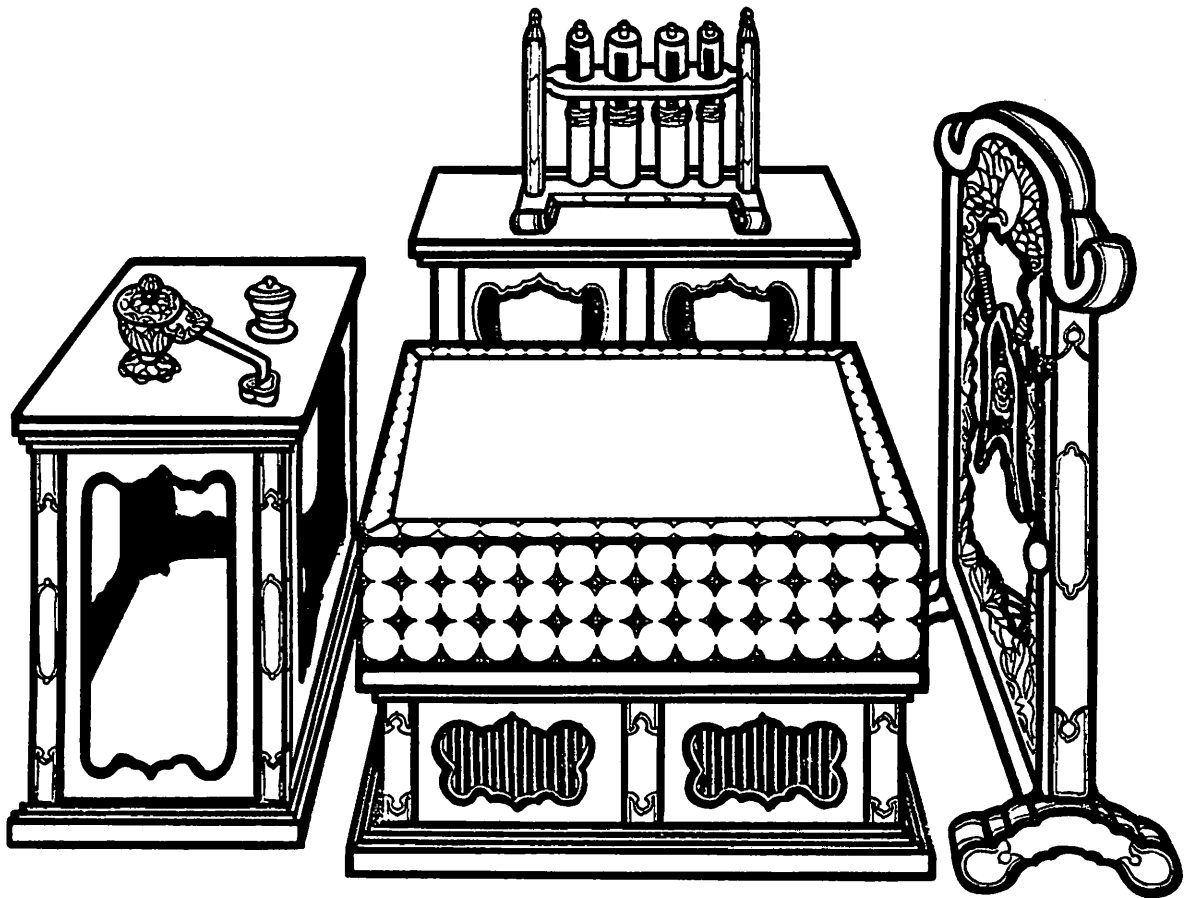
Glow brightly, little lamp! The lamp on the altar lights up the darkness.



Have you seen lamps which are sheltered from the soft breezes and oil lamps with tiny flames that flicker slowly and silently?

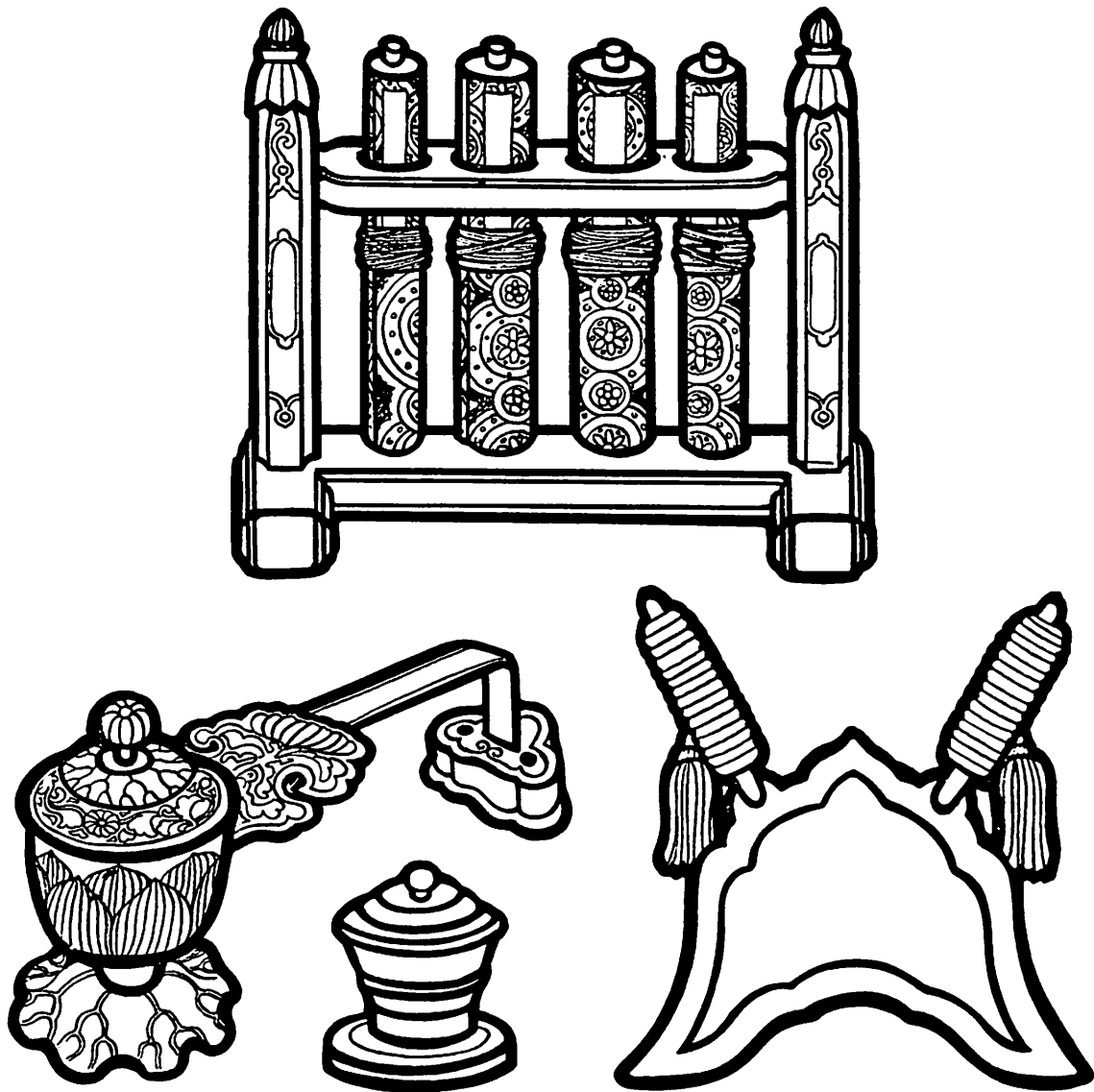


We thank Amida Buddha for his teachings by placing offerings of flowers, candles and incense on the shrine and by saying “Namu Amida Butsu.” These are the treasures of our gratitude.

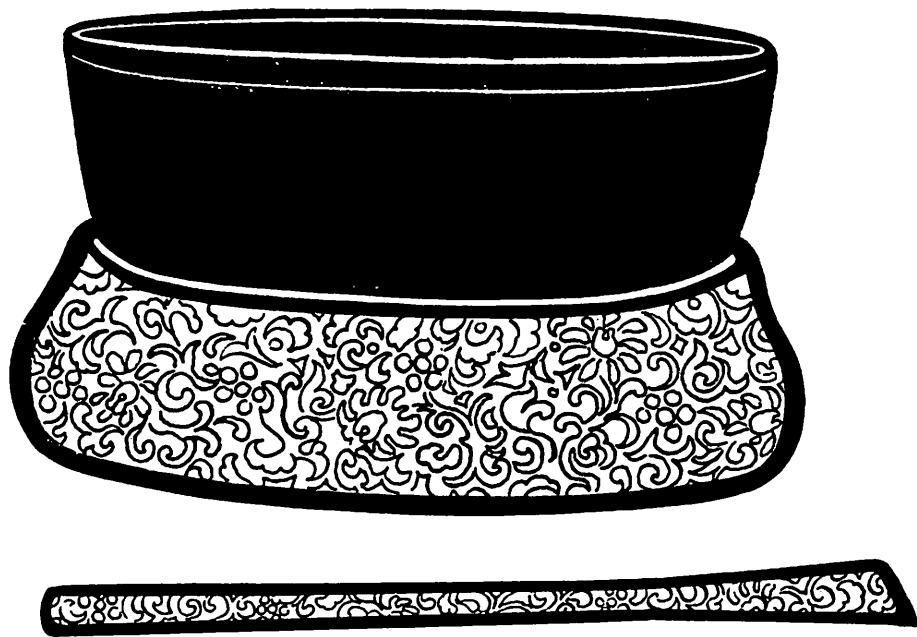


As we look very carefully, we find a place for the chief minister in the front of the altar for special services. He will bow deeply in gassho three times before sitting on the seat.

There, you will also find...

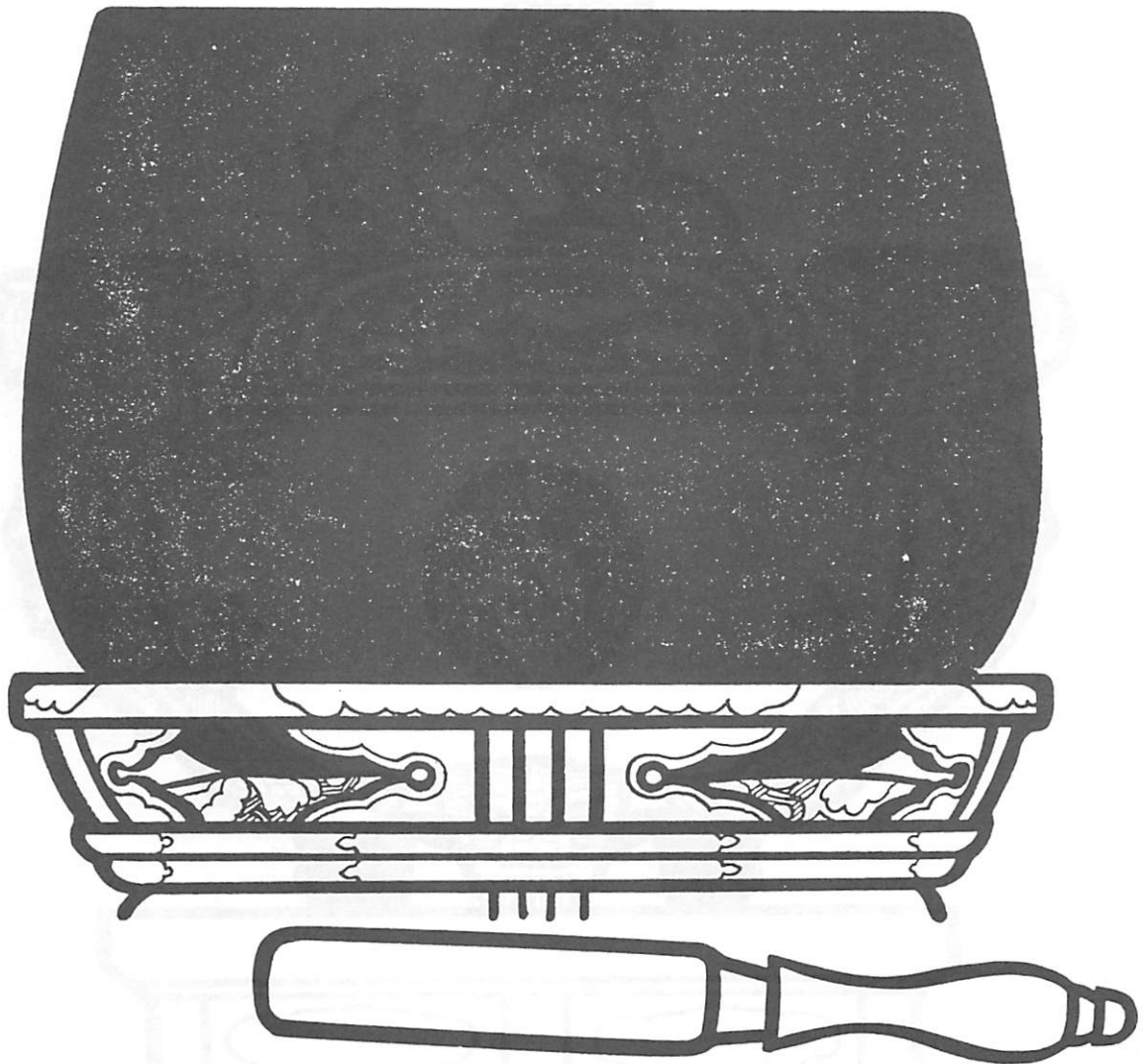


...a stand holding four important scrolls,
...an incense burner with a long handle,
...and a special gong. Can you find it?

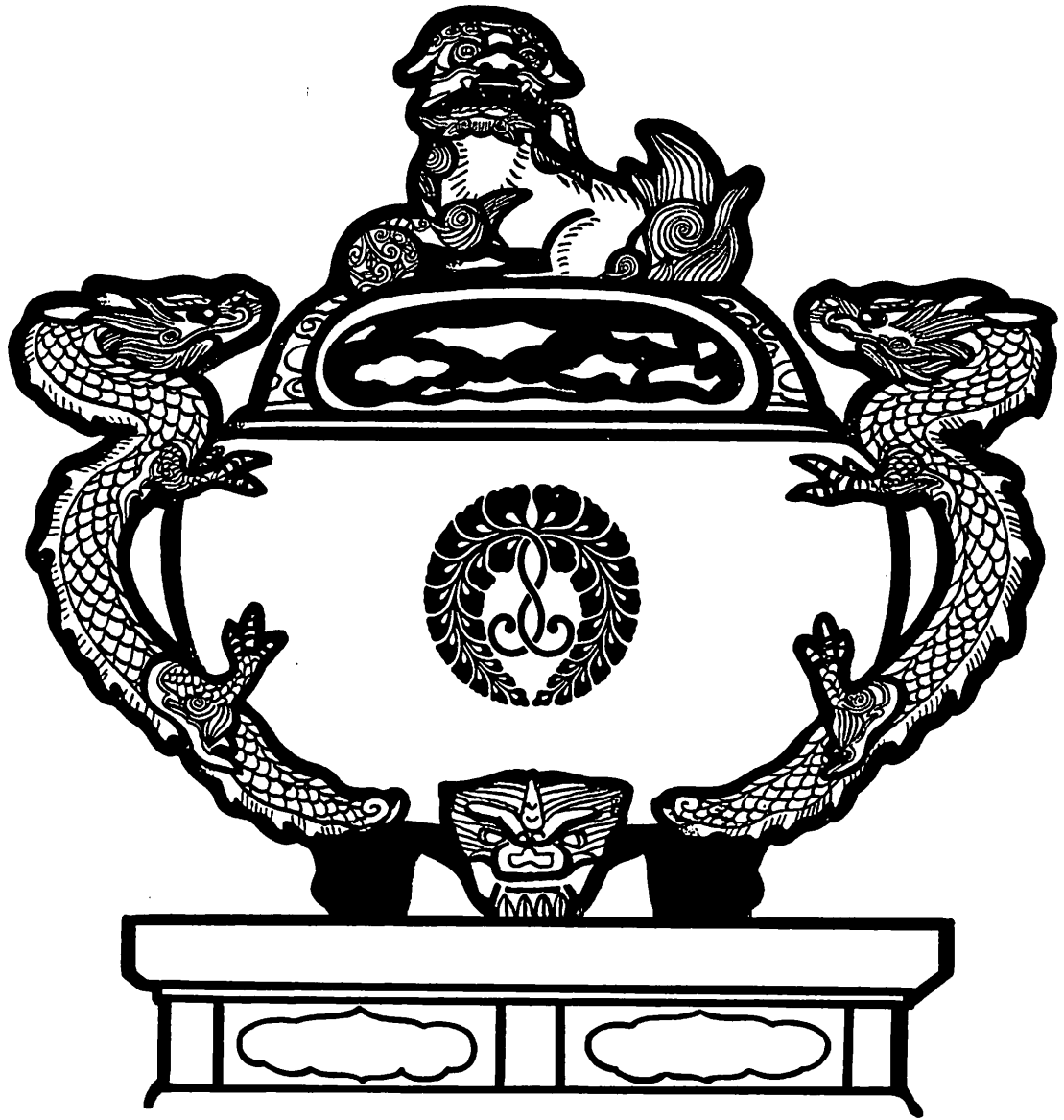


The little brass gong has a high tinkling ring. When struck on the inside, it seems to say, "The service is about to begin."

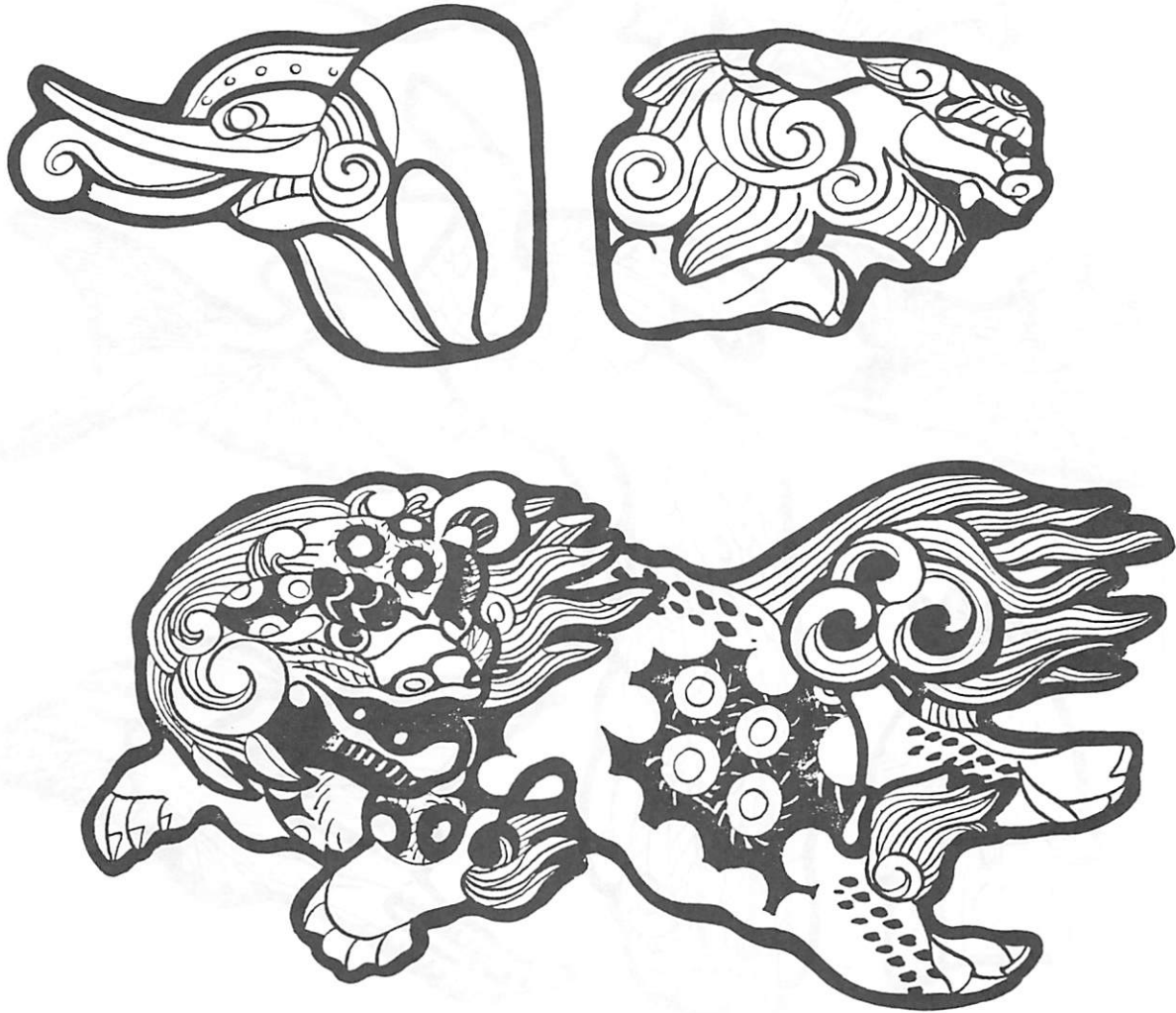
On the other hand...



...the large black gong has deep and low ring. Listen very carefully...the sound of the gong will float through the temple. When struck on the outside, it seems to say, "Let us listen to Amida's teachings."



A large incense burner rests at the very front of the altar. We offer our incense here...with gratitude.



A little lion dog sits on the top. He is there to protect us.

Have you seen other animals on the shrine?

They are beautiful and strange. It's as if they have come from a far off land which we have never seen...a land where they live peacefully together.



Graceful birds decorate the shrine.

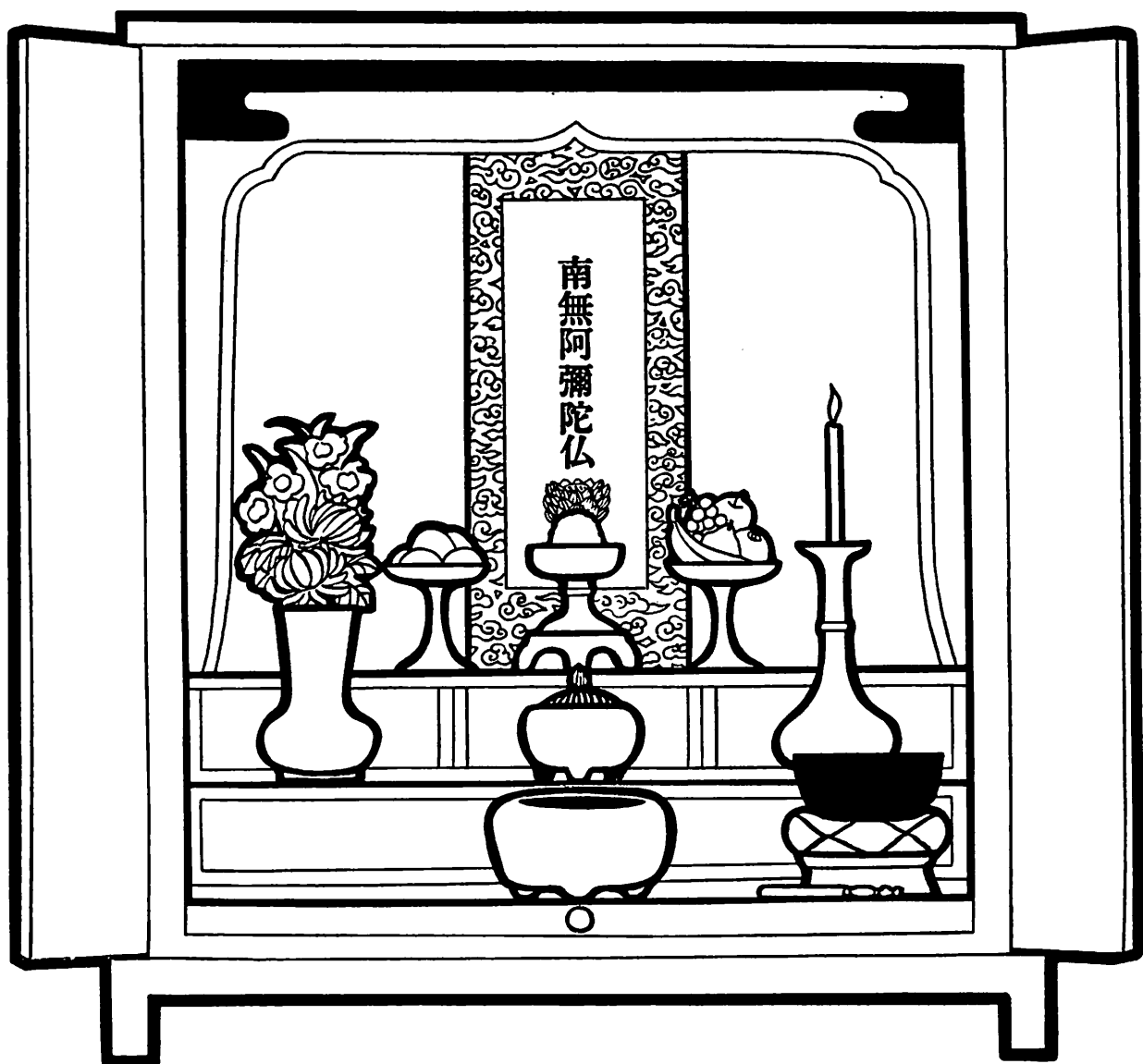
Do you think they also live peacefully in Amida's world? The birds sing songs to Amida Buddha.



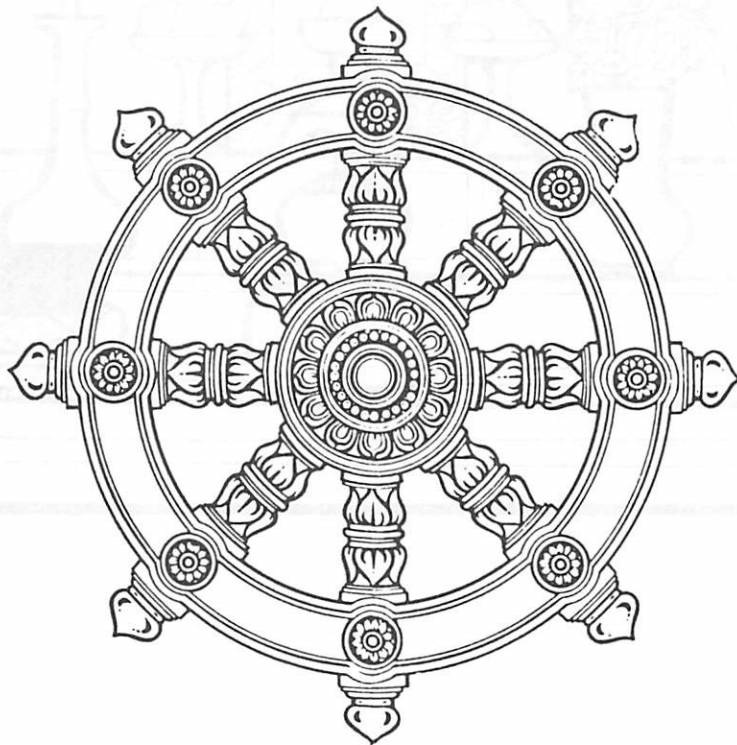
The perfect beauty of flowers has been caught on the altar. Day after day, they bloom to help us remember the beauty and the pleasantness of Amida's world.



How does Amida Buddha appear in your church? Does he appear in the worlds “Namu Amida Butsu,” in a picture or in a statue?



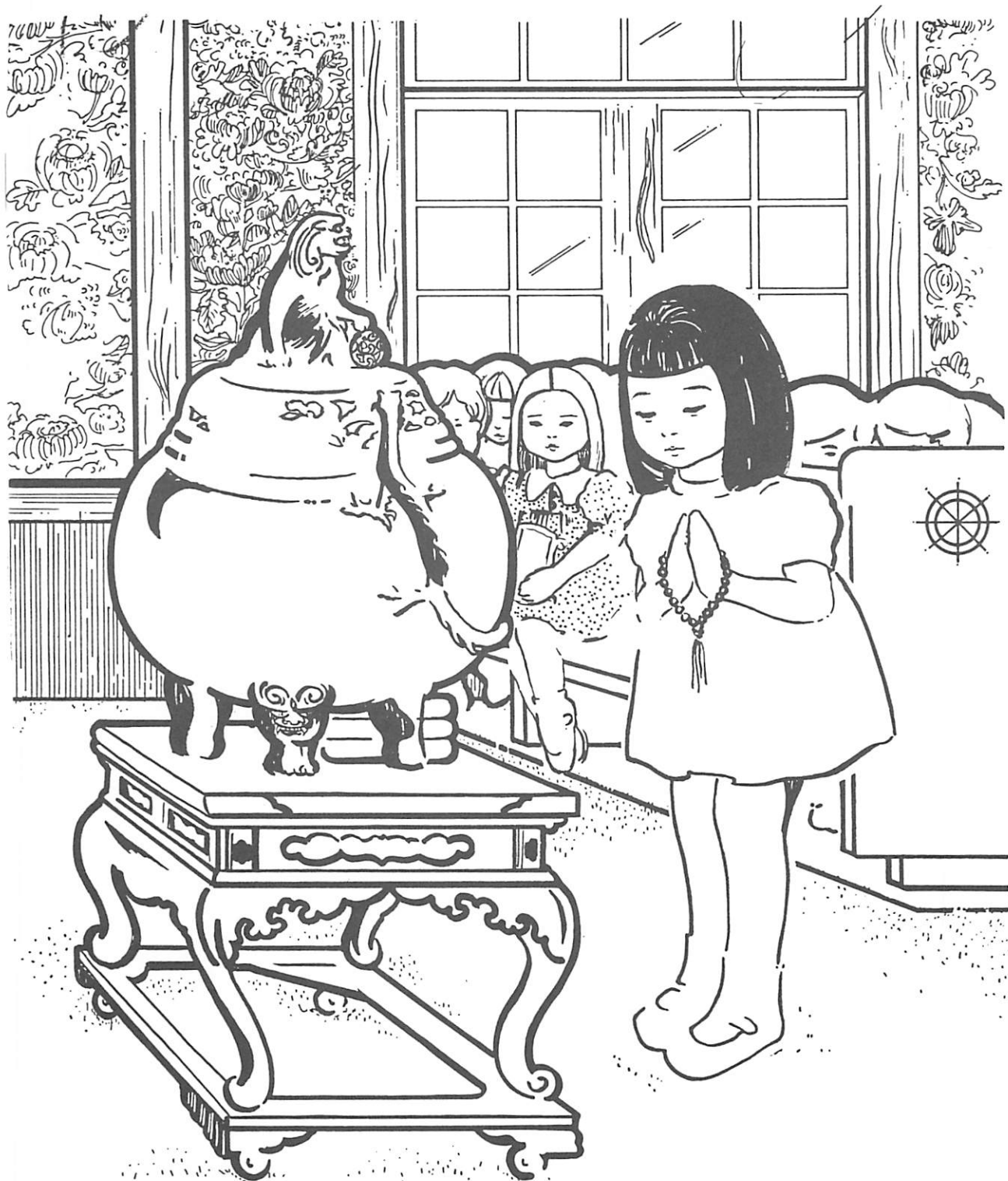
The family shrine is like the temple shrine...only smaller. It is also a beautiful reminder serving us in everyday worship at home.



Have you seen these in church? The flowers remind us of our thankfulness to Amida Buddha and the Sangha. The wheel helps us to remember his teachings or the Dharma.

These are our beautiful reminders of Amida's world. And they are ours to keep...forever!

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU



CHAPTER VIII

BUDDHIST OBSERVANCES

Special observances, in Japanese, are called gyoji—literally “religious happenings.” They are special occasions when the Sangha gathers to observe ritually the principles of Buddhism. It is a time to gather and a time to share. It is a time to reflect upon and appreciate the intricate bonds that enable us to live and a time to show our gratitude for the teachings and the teachers who serve as guides in our journey to spiritual understanding.

MONTH	BUDDHIST OBSERVANCE	DATE	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
September	B.C.A. Founding Day Higan	September 1 September 23	Higan E	B.C.A. Founding Day Autumnal Equinox
October				Halloween
November				Thanksgiving Eitaikyo Service
December	Bodhi Day Joya E	December 8 December 31	Jodo E Joya E	Enlightenment New Year's Eve
January	New Year's Day Shinran Shonin Memorial	January 1 January 16	Shusho E Ho-on-ko	New Year's Day
February	Nirvana Day	February 15	Nehan E	Passing of Sakyamuni into Nirvana Presidents' Day
March	Higan	March 21	Higan E	Spring Equinox
April	Buddha Day	April 8	Hanamatsuri	Birth of Gautama Buddha
May	Shinran Shonin Day	May 21	Shuso-Gotan E	Placed his faith in Amida's power Mother's Day Memorial Day
June, July	Obon	June, July, August	Obon	Obon Festival Father's Day Independence Day

NOTE: SEE THE TEACHER'S GUIDE (Green Binder) FOR DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE DEFINITIONS OF THE BUDDHIST OBSERVANCES.

HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

SHŪSHŌ-E — 修正会 -“observe-new year-gathering”:
NEW YEAR’S DAY SERVICE

JANUARY 1st

The Japanese Buddhists, with a few exceptions, have adopted the western calendar. Even those dates still based on the old lunar calendar have set dates which do not fluctuate as they do according to the lunar calendar.

The observance of Shūsho-ē originated in the Nara period and lasts for seven days in all the temples throughout Japan. Homes are cleaned and debts paid before the new year. Oshōgatsu (お正月) or New Year’s customs vary from prefecture to prefecture, but the foods and decorations all have to do with symbols of long life, happiness, prosperity and fertility.

The Shūsho-ē begins the cycle of those holidays and festivals which root one ever deeper in the Buddhadharma. Three special traditions associated with Oshogatsu are:

SHŌCHIKUBAI — 松竹梅 -“pine-bamboo-plum”: The traditional floral arrangement of pine, bamboo, and plum branches in homes and as altar offerings is of relatively recent origin. Pine branches were used in the New Year’s Day ceremonies from the middle of the Heian Period. The pine, being an evergreen, is symbolic of long life. Bamboo was added to the pine branches in the Muromachi Period. The bamboo is the symbol of endurance and resiliency since it bends but never breaks. The plum was added in the Tokugawa period and the term Shochikubai was coined as the floral symbol of the new year. The plum tree is the first to bloom in late winter and is the symbol of hardiness.

KAGAMI MOCHI — 鏡餅 -“mirror-mochi”: This offering is also referred to as Kasane Mochi (重餅 -“piled-mochi”). Mochi, a rice cake made from glutinous rice, has been served on all festive occasions since Heian times. Kagami mochi is so named because of its resemblance to the traditional metal mirrors. It is also called Kasane Mochi since the Oshogatsu offering of mochi on the altar is made up of two cakes of mochi, one piled on top of the other. An orange or tangerine is then placed on top of the piled mochi. The fruit was originally a citrus called bitter orange or daidai (木橙) in Japanese. The bitter orange is a tree whose fruit are yellow in winter but turn green again if left on the tree until spring. This seeming return to youth came to represent the prosperity of children from age to age. The term “from age to age” is also pronounced “daidai” (代代) in Japanese, hence the use of the bitter orange. Temple offerings of Kagami Mochi are often Kōhaku Mochi (紅白餅 -“red-white mochi”), where one of the two cakes is colored red and the other left white.

ZŌNI — 雑煮 - “mixed-boil”: Zōni is a clear soup containing mochi, a green vegetable, and kamaboko. Traditionally, it is the first thing eaten on New Year’s Day. The eating of mochi on the first day of the new year appears in the earliest records and most probably began in prehistoric times. Zōni is often served after the Shūshō-e service.

GHOKI HŌONKŌ — 御正忌報恩講 -“honorific-death anniversary-repay-indebtedness-observance”:

DEATH MEMORIAL OF SHINRAN SHŌNIN

JANUARY 16th

Hōonkō, meaning a gathering to express our indebtedness and gratitude, is a memorial service in memory of Shinran Shōnin, and is an occasion to express our gratitude to Amida Buddha for having awakened us to life's supreme meaning. Hōonkō is the most important Jodoshinshu observance in Japan. At the Honzan (本山 - “main-mountain”) or mother temple in Kyoto, Hōonkō is a week-long observance from the 9th through the 16th of January.

According to the western calendar, Shinran Shōnin was born on May 21st, 1173 and died on January 16th, 1262. According to the traditional lunar calendar, this memorial service began with Shinran's disciples gathering on the 28th day of each month in memory of their master. The 3rd Gomonsu (御門主 - “honorific gate-master”) of the Hongwanji, Kakunyo (覚如), some 33 years later, set the regulations for this ceremony called Hōonkō Shiki. Later, the 4th Gomonsu, Zonkaku (存覚) set the observance for once a year. The ceremonies were started on the 21st and concluded on the 28th of the 11th month according to the lunar calendar. In 1872, the Hongwanjiha (Nishihongwanji) changed to the western calendar, setting the date at January 16th. The Otani-ha (Higashihongwanji) observes Hōonkō according to the old lunar calendar but has set the day as the 28th of November.

Hōonkō is one of the principal holidays in which one participates in the art of “hearing the light” (聞光-monko) through listening to sermons, talks, ritual, and Sangha fellowship.

NEHAN-E — 涅槃会 -“Nirvana-gathering”:

NIRVANA DAY

FEBRUARY 15th

The Sanskrit word Nirvana comes from the root “va” which means “to blow”, adding the verb stem “ana” which means “to make”, and the prefix “nir” which means “off” or “out”. Hence, Nirvana means “the blowing out” or “the extinction”. It is understood to mean the blowing out or extinction of the flame of personal desire.

When Shakamuni Buddha attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree, he had achieved this Nirvana. However, since he still was in his earthly form, he had not achieved complete Nirvana. When he died at the age of 80, he entered into complete Nirvana. His disciples then gathered from all directions and divided his cremated remains into eight parts. They enshrined these parts in stupas or reliquary mounds in order to preserve the memory of the Buddha. Over the centuries, the ashes were divided and re-divided many times. The stupa of the San Francisco Temple enshrines a small portion of the Buddha's remains which were donated to the BCA by the King of Siam (now Thailand) in 1935.

The Japanese Buddhists and the Mahayana Buddhists in general, observe the birth, enlightenment and death days of Shakamuni on three separate days. The Theravada tradition observes all three events as having occurred on the first full moon day of the fifth month, a major holiday known as Wesak.

SHUNKI HIGAN-E — 春季彼岸会 -“spring-season-other-shore-gathering”:

SPRING HIGAN GATHERING

MARCH 21st

SHŪKI HIGAN-E — 秋季彼岸会 -“autumn-season-other-shore-gathering”:

AUTUMN HIGAN GATHERING

SEPTEMBER 23rd

SANBUTSU-E — 讃佛会 - “praise-Buddha-gathering”:

Higan, which means the “other shore” of Nirvana or Enlightenment as opposed to “this shore” of Samsara or Delusion, is observed by Japanese Buddhists during the spring and autumn equinox of each year. In Jodoshinshu, the Higan observance is also call Sanbutsu-e or Gathering in Praise of the Buddha, which is one of the two purposes of ritual gatherings — the other being to listen to the teachings. During these two times of the year in Japan, the days and nights are equal in length and the weather is neither too hot nor too cold. It was a time for Buddhists to meditate on the harmony of nature which pervades the universe and to devote oneself to the realization of this harmony is ones own inner life.

The Higan observance is not mentioned in Indian or Chinese records and is believed to have originated in Japan in the time of Shotoku Taishi. The two times of the year are discribed in the Meditation Sutra as appropriate to the first meditation of facing the setting sun in the west, the symbolic direction of the Pure Land of Amida. Traditionally, Higan is a week-long observance from March 18th-24th and September 20th-26th with the fourth day as the main day of observance. During the week-long observance of study and meditation, emphasis is placed on the observance of the Six Pāramitās which bring us to “the other shore”. Pāramitā is the Sanskrit for “other-shore”.

1. The Path of Giving — Dānā
2. The Path of Right Behavior — Sīla
3. The Path of Endurance and Patience — Kṣānti
4. The Path of Endeavor or Effort — Vīrya
5. The Path of Meditation — Dhyāna
6. The Path of Wisdom — Prajñā

The Jodoshinshu emphasis is upon the basic harmony of all elements of the universe as represented by the virtues of Amida Buddha.

KANBUTSU-E — 灌佛会 - “bathe-Buddha-gathering”:

HANAMATSURI — 花祭 - “flower-festival”: BIRTHDAY OF THE BUDDHA

APRIL 8th

Hanamatsuri or “Flower Festival” is a service of rejoicing in which we commemorate the birth of Shakamuni Buddha with the decorating of a flower pavilion and the rite of Bathing the Body of the Buddha (Kanbutsu).

The Buddha was the only child of King Suddhodana Gautama and Queen Māyā of the Sākya Kingdom. Ruling from the capital city of Kapilavastu, the king and queen were childless for some 20 years. Then one day, after having a dream of a white elephant with six tusks entering her side, the queen became pregnant. According to the custom of the time, Queen Maya was returning to her parent’s home to await the birth of the baby when she stopped to rest in a garden called Lumbini. In the middle of the summer season, the garden was mysteriously in full bloom. As the queen reached up to touch the blossoms of the Asoka Tree, the baby was born from her right side. The earth shook in six directions and a light, sweet rain fell from the sky to bathe the body of the baby. Flowers bloomed everywhere and fell from the sky. The newborn baby took seven steps, pointed his right hand to the sky and his left hand to the earth, and spoke the following words:

“Above and below the heavens,
I alone, am the World-Honored One.”

The joy of the King was great and he named the child Siddhārtha, which means “every wish fulfilled”. Sadly, Queen Maya died seven days thereafter. The date is given in the Mahayana tradition as April 8, 565 B.C. In the Theravada tradition, it is on the full moon day of the fifth month 623 B.C.

When Prince Siddhārtha was 19 years old, he married Princess Yasodharā, a cousin. When the prince was 21, a son named Rahula was born. In spite of this happiness, and the luxuries of palace life, Prince Siddhārtha was very “restless” over the sorrows of life — of old age, sickness and death. He decided to leave his family to seek a solution to this “restlessness”. After six years of ascetic practices and after having rejected them, he found the path to Enlightenment while sitting in meditation under a tree. The tree has henceforth been called the Bodhi Tree, the Tree of Enlightenment. A descendant of the original tree still grows at the site of the Enlightenment at Bodhgayā and is the world’s oldest documented tree. The Buddha, the “Awakened One” was then 35 years old. For the next 45 years, he went about the countryside teaching the way to the ending of this “restlessness”. He is also referred to as Sākyamuni or “the sage of the Sākya Clan” (Shākamuni in Japanese).

For the service, a flower-decorated shrine known as a Hanamidō (花御堂) or “flower pavilion” is set up in front of the Naijin, representing Lumbini Garden. The Hanamidō is often set upon the back of a figure of a white elephant, recalling Queen Maya’s dream. In the center of the flower-decked shrine is placed a small statue of the infant Siddhārtha in a bowl of Amacha (甘茶) or “sweet tea”. The Amacha is made from the dried leaves of the *Hydrangea hortensis*, a bush found in abundance in the mountain regions of the orient. This is the original sweetener of the Japanese before the introduction of sugar. Before pouring the sweet tea over the image, the Kanbutsuge (灌佛偈) or “Gatha of Bathing the Buddha” is chanted:

“We now bathe all the Tathagatas, whose
Pure Wisdom is adorned with innumerable
virtues. They cause sentient beings of the
Five Periods of Decay to be separated from
their sufferings and together attain the
Pure Dharma-Body of the Tathagatas.”

The bathing of the Buddha image was a popular festival ritual practiced in India and China. It has been practiced in Japan since the Nara Period but was not observed by Jodoshinshu until the Meiji era.

SHŪSO GŌTAN-E — 宋祖降誕会 - “sect-founder-birthday-gathering”:

BIRTHDAY OF SHINRAN SHŌNIN

MAY 21st

Gōtan-e celebrates the birthday of Shinran Shōnin, the founder of Jodoshinshu, the True Pure Land Sect. Shinran was born in Hino near Kyoto to Lord and Lady Arinori Hino and was named Matsuwakamaro. Matsuwakamaro lost both his parents at an early age and it is said that because of this, he decided to become a priest. At the age of nine, young Matsuwakamaro was ordained at Shōren-in Temple in Kyoto. He studied for 20 years on Mt. Hiei, enduring the most difficult studies and practices, but he found it impossible to attain Perfect Enlightenment through his own efforts. At the age of 29, he was led to the Way of the Nembutsu by Honen Shōnin and found the true path to the attainment of Buddhahood through the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. He spent many years in exile, spreading the Nembutsu teaching in the distant provinces. In his later years, he was pardoned and eventually returned to Kyoto where he spent his days writing and communicating with his many disciples near and far. Until he died at the age of 90, Shinran’s life was lived simply and humbly — a life of profound spiritual depth.

In November 1877, the Emperor Meiji honored Shinran Shōnin with the title of Kenshin Daishi or Great Master, Seer of Truth.

KANGI-E — 歡喜会 - “joyous-gathering”:
URABON-E — 盂蘭盆会 “Ulambana-gathering”:
OBON お盆

JULY 15th

The origins of Obon can be traced to the Ulambana Sutra, which relates the story of Mahāmaudgalyāyana (Mogallana in Pali), the most gifted of Shakamuni Buddha’s disciples in the area of extraordinary sense perceptions. A very filial son, Mahamaudgalyāyana one day used his extraordinary powers to visualize the whereabouts of his mother who had died. Searching all the realms, from the highest of the heavens to the lowest of the hells, he was surprised and horrified to find his mother suffering the torments of the realm of Hungry Ghosts. With his powers again, he filled a bowl with food and sent it to his mother. The food burst into flames each time she put it to her mouth. Finding himself helpless in aiding his mother, he ran to the Buddha seeking help.

The Buddha told Mahamaudgalyāyana that he needed the combined help of all the monks to help his mother. He was told to bring offering of food from land and sea, and sweets piled on a platter to the Sangha at the end of the Pravarana. The Pravarana was a period of retreat for the Buddha and his disciples during the rainy season in India. This was from the 15th of April to the 15th of July by the western calendar. Monks were forbidden to travel in order to avoid the killing of insects which multiplied greatly during the rainy season. They were to stay in one place to listen to the Buddha’s talks, study and meditate. This tradition of study and meditation continued in China and Japan and was known as the Uango (雨安居 - “rain-quiet-stay”) or Ango. Mahamaudgalyāyana made the prescribed offerings and his mother and seven generations of his ancestors were relieved of their sufferings. Mahamaudgalyāyana was so overjoyed that he clapped his hands and danced for joy. This is said to have been the beginning of the Bon Odori.

Since that time, offerings of food and clothing were made to the monks at the end of their retreat on the 15th day of the 7th month. This custom was first observed in China in 538 A.D. by the Liang Emperor Wu-ti.

In China, the date July 15th was particularly auspicious since it was also the important Taoist observance of Chung Yuen (中元 - “middle-beginning”) a midsummer Lantern Festival. This was an important harvest festival with offering of food and lights to the spirits of the earth. The offering of lights was added to the Obon observance which was then transmitted to Japan. Chung Yuen in its Japanese reading of Chūgen is still observed as a time of gift giving, especially of seasonal foods.

In Japan, outdoor dancing called Bon Odori was added to the Obon observance and “welcome” and “sending off” lanterns or lights in various forms were lit for the spirits of ones ancestors. Jodoshinshu again does not look upon Obon as the time when the “souls” of one’s ancestors’ return, and that the services, offerings, dancing, lights, etc. are for the benefit of one’s dead relatives. It is rather a time to remember and honor all those who have passed on before us. It is to appreciate all that they have done for us and to recognize the continuation of their deeds upon our lives. Obon is a time for self-reflection — an important Buddhist practice, for it is only when man becomes aware of his imperfections and insufficiency in contrast to his ideals, that religion becomes a matter of personal concern.

Obon is also called the Gathering of Joy by Jodoshinshu Buddhists. It is not the happiness of getting what you desire, but the joy of being shown the Truth of what one is, no matter how damning that truth is to the image of our ego-self. It is the joy of the awareness of being embraced in the Truth, in Amida Buddha, in Namuamidabutsu. Bon Odori too is not a dance of happiness, but rather a Dance of Joy.

EITAIKYO — 永代経 - "perpetual-sutra (chanting)":

PERPETUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

USUALLY IN NOVEMBER

Eitaikyo is a Japanese Buddhist observance. Each temple has an Eitaikyo Book which is kept on the altar. It is a calendar book in which the names of deceased persons are entered on the day of their death. Donors to a special Eitaikyo Fund have the names entered in the Eitaikyo book. The morning service is dedicated to the memory of those persons entered on the page for that day. Thus, sutras were chanted yearly for those names entered in the Eitaikyo Book in perpetuity. The Eitaikyo Fund is a special fund that is to be used for the support of the temple only when it is in extreme circumstances. In addition, a special memorial service is held in memory of all those listed in the Eitaikyo Book once a year, usually in November. The relatives and friends of the deceased are notified of the special service. Again, in Jodoshinshu the observance of Eitaikyo is not for the benefit of the dead, but indeed for the benefit of the living.

SÔCHÔKI — 総長忌 - "Bishops'-memorial":

BISHOPS' MEMORIAL SERVICE

ONCE A YEAR

The Sôchôki is a yearly memorial service in memory of all the past bishops of the Buddhist Churches of America. It is held in grateful memory of the efforts of the succeeding Bishops in behalf of the Buddhadharma.

JÔDÔ-E — 成道会 - "attaining-Enlightenment-gathering":

BODHI DAY

DECEMBER 8th

Bodhi Day is the day that the Prince Siddhartha became the Buddha at the age of 35.

Siddhârtha left his home in search of Truth, even though he had every material thing he could desire in life. Yet he was not satisfied with his life. After diligently practicing all manner of ascetic disciplines, including starving himself to the point of death in order to gain control over his body, he rejected the ascetic path and took food again. He realized that one could not think clearly and have a healthy mind without a healthy body. Siddhârtha instead turned to a middle ground of meditation. According to the Mahayana tradition, in the early morning hours of December 8th, Siddhartha became the Buddha, the Awakened One, the Perfectly Enlightened One. By his example, he showed us that it was possible for a man to become a Buddha, a fully enlightened person. We are therefore in possession of this potentiality, this Buddha-nature, which, when awakened and cultivated, will enable us to achieve the same Enlightenment.

JOY-E — 除夜会 - "last-night-gathering":

YEAR END SERVICE

DECEMBER 31st

The year end service is observed to express gratitude for the past year and to reflect on the interdependency of all life, on all the things that have made it possible for us to live this one year.

On this night, temples with the large bell called the Bonsho will ring the bell 108 times. This is called the "Joya no Kane" or "bell of the last night". It is the symbolic ringing away of the 108 passions which afflict man and bind him to the world of delusion. It is a reminder of the need to free ourselves from the entanglement of our self-centeredness as we face the new year. We do not know whether our lives will be fortunate or unfortunate, but in the Nembutsu we can know that whichever it is, it will be all right.

The character "E" (会) is usually read "kai" and means group or association. In the Buddhist reading of "E" it means "a gathering of the Sangha".

SHOTSUKI HÔYÔ — 祥月法要 - "beginning-month-Dharma-essential":

MONTHLY MEMORIAL SERVICE

MONTHLY

On the first or near the first Sunday of every month, the temple observes a monthly memorial service in memory of those people whose Meinichi or date of death falls in that month.

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