The Essential Shinran: A Buddhist Path of True Entrusting

What are the details of this book?
The "Essential Shinran: A Buddhist Path of True Entrusting" contains:

- A Foreword by Rehen Habito
- An Introduction by Alfred Bloom
- A Glossary of Foreign Terms
- An Index of Selections and
- A Select Bibliography for Further Reading.

Renowned scholar Alfred Bloom presents the life and teachings of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shin (or Pure Land) Buddhism, the most popular form of Buddhism in Japan, drawing extensively on the writings of this influential Japanese religious reformer.

Bloom presents a wide selection of Shinran's essential writings on the key Shin Buddhist idea of "true entrusting" (shinjin) to the Other-Power of Amida Buddha through sentient beings.

Dr. Bloom has done it again. Shinran is now even more accessible to the English language readers. The Essential Shinran lets Shinran speak for himself by culling his words into a framework that contemporary readers will find refreshingly approachable.

—Professor Kenneth K. Tanaka, Musashino University

The Essential Shinran is available in March 2007, [ISBN 978-1-933316-21-5], is priced at $22.95, and has 272 pages. To order call 1-888-wwbook1 (1-888-992-6651) or visit www.worldwisdom.com. The book is also available through the BCA Bookstore and online at www.bcabookstore.com

“I BOW TO YOU” Traveling Exhibition of Buddhist Sculptures by Thomas Matsuda

Participating temples and galleries are pleased to announce “I Bow to You,” a traveling exhibition of Buddhist sculptures by Thomas Matsuda. The exhibit, which travels venues and selected Buddhist churches on the west coast, will feature the recent Buddhist sculptures of Matsuda.

The exhibit will feature “Creating Jizos in Clay,” a workshop in self-hardening clay and demonstration of carving Buddhist sculpture. Receiving his basic training in the arts at Pratt Institute, where he now teaches, his aesthetic sensitivity has been shaped by American artistic beliefs and attitudes. But he has lived in Japan for twelve years as an adult, first studying under the renowned sculptor, Koueki Eri of Kyoto, who specializes in Buddhist images, later spending most of his time in remote mountain villages in the tradition of Enku and Mokujiki, both well known sculptors who carved Buddha figures for the populace. Also, having worked closely with Native American spirituality, he identifies with their respect for mother earth and all living beings equally.

While this rich background comes together in various, positive ways, Matsuda is also his own person and brings his own vision to his works. His Buddhas and bodhisattvas are neither Japanese nor American, rather, they are creations of an artist who brings something new and universal to our fragmented world. They reflect what his teacher Eri said of old sculptures that contain “a mysterious strength that has the power to penetrate our spirits.”

Among people who saw his works displayed at the Hilyer Gallery at Smith College in October 1998, one praised his sculptures, saying “That is stillness and transcendence conveyed through these forms. They draw me into the flow of shapes, form and meaning.”

Tom Matsuda is quickly becoming one of the foremost Buddhist sculptors in North America.

Full Schedule: July 7 through August 12
July 6-11 Los Angeles Zen Center
July 13-17 West LA Buddhist Temple
July 20-22 Palo Alto Buddhist Temple
July 24-31 Denton Gallery, S.F.
Aug. 2-5 San Francisco Zen Center
Aug. 8-9 Dharma Rain, Portland, OR
Aug. 10-12 Great Vow Monastery, Clarksaner

For more information, call (415) 359-9570.
J une is a month of graduations and also the month of Father’s Day. I still remember a few Dharma Talks of my Sunday. I still remember a Dharma Talk.

My father compared the commencement ceremony to the Buddhist expression of death. He said that death in Buddhism is not the end of our eternal lives, but it is “Ojo” or “Birth into the Pure Land.” It is the beginning of a new life as the Buddha, the Enlightened One, and the Compassionate One.

Jodo Shinshu Buddhism teaches that we will all be born into the Pure Land to become the Buddha after we die. The development of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism can be traced in the historical development of three types of learning in Buddhism: precept (samma), meditation (samadhi), and wisdom (prajna).

Practicing the three types of learning, ordinary people gradually realize the difficulty of practicing precepts and meditation in order to attain the state of enlightenment. From the realization of this difficulty arose Mahayana Buddhism to provide more suitable guidance on the path to enlightenment. Mahayana means “(Maha) (yana) Vehicle.” Mahayana Buddhism is the teaching that can carry more people to the state of enlightenment. The Bodhisattva ideal became the important characteristic in Mahayana Buddhism, because the Bodhisattva spirit is to work for the mutual benefit of oneself and others in seeking enlightenment. The Bodhisattva Dharmakara became Amida Buddha by fulfilling Forty-eight Vows in order to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment. Then, Amida Buddha established his Pure Land, where sentient beings are born to become the Buddha.

When Father’s Day comes, I recall my late father and I realize that his Dharma Talk is still alive in my heart. The following is my favorite poem to remind me my late father’s Dharma Talk.

Even though parents are gone,
The compassionate hearts of parents will continue to remain in blessing the child to become a truthful person.

Happy Father’s Day in Gasabo!

Rev. Dr. Matsumoto Receives Doctorate

Rev. David Ryoe Matsumoto, resident minister of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple and Director of the Institute of Buddhist Studies Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies, was recently awarded his Doctorate of Philosophy degree from Ryukoku University, Doctorate Division, and Department of Letters in Shin Buddhist Studies at Kyoto, Japan.

Upon completion of his course and resident requirements he submitted his dissertation titled, “An Approach to the Qualities of Humaneness in Contemporary Western Shin Buddhism: A Western Shin Buddhist Theology of Disability.”

Rev. Dr. Matsumoto is a graduate of University of Minnesota with a BA followed by a Juris Doctor degree from the UM Law School. While teaching at the university he became interested in Shin Buddhism and attended the Institute of Buddhist Studies. Upon receiving his MA he attended Ryukoku University and received a MA in Shin Buddhist Studies.

He served as a minister at the Stockton Buddhist Temple prior to being appointed the Director of the IBSSB.

Helen Chizu Iwanaga
1914-2007

By Takeo “Babe” Utsumi

Ms. Helen Chizu Iwanaga passed away on April 10, at the age of 92. She was the eldest of four children in the Okamoto family of Stockton, California.

A younger sister, Alice, died in her teens. Her brother, Tom, one of my dearest and closest friends, passed away in his 60s. Now, only the younger sister, Meri Umino, survives.

I was privileged to sit on a panel along side Chizu, play-write Philip Goranda and Rev. Seigen Yamaoka at Stockton Buddhist Church’s 100th anniversary celebration last fall. It was included in this distinguished group, not because I was in their class, but as a fill-in for Barry Saiki, who has passed away just a week before of a heart attack.

Chizu grew up, like most of us old-er Nisei, in the Depression era. Some-
Aabout a year ago it became completely clear that we, as a national organization, were facing a financial crisis. We needed to borrow money to pay the bills for the final stages of the construction and outfitting of the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley. Banks were quite willing to lend us the money we needed—so long as we could secure the loans with enough collateral to ease the bankers’ worry that we wouldn’t be able to pay our debt in full. So the question became where the collateral would come from to put the bankers’ minds at ease.

We appealed to temples and organizations to loan BCA the money to provide the collateral. We recognized that this would be a sacrifice for them, because they would lose the use of the money for the time that the national organization was using it. So we said would pay interest on the money that was lent (5.15% annual rate, plus reimbursement for any penalty a temple or organization paid for withdrawing funds prematurely from a Certificate of Deposit account).

In a remarkable display of confidence, trust, faith, and pure selfless giving, twenty-nine temples and organizations lent, or donated, a total of almost 3.4 million dollars. Approximately $2.9 million of the total was as loans, and about $520,000 was as gifts.

This outpouring of support once again strengthened my long-standing belief that many members and member organizations of BCA shared the commitment to the future of Shin Buddhism in America that I had absorbed initially from Reverend K.T. Tsuji and that has been a part of me all along. Approximately $9 million dollars. And as a result of this, there were as loans to the temples and organizations had made a year ago. On May 18, 2007, we mailed checks returning the loans, with interest as promised, to every organization that had trusted us. The interest on these loans amounted to approximately $100,000. The total repayment was approximately $3 million dollars.

Organizational, we have crossed a hurdle. But it was by no means a final hurdle. We have built a reasonably efficient vehicle to carry our hopes forward for several years. But “reasonable efficiency” is only relative. Under the circumstances, it was the best that could be done. Our total indebtedness remains at approximately $9 million dollars. And beginning now, we still owe our creditors approximately $70,000 every month. Almost all of that money is interest payments. Money up the smokestack or down the pipe, depending on which metaphor you prefer. We can avoid wasting some of that money by repaying these debts ahead of schedule. We can repay the debts ahead of schedule by making significant contributions to our Campaign. Please do that. And as you do, please remember that the future of Shin Buddhism in America will be longer than our individual lives if we act to make it so. The Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley is essential for our future.

Personally, I breathe a single breath of relief and want to say, Please join us. OK, now let’s move on to the next adventure.

Gacken, Gordon Bermant

Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Church
Campaign BCA – The 21st Century

With a goal of 100% participation from the Betsuin Ministers, Cabinet, and Past Presidents, we demonstrated that our temple leadership supported the campaign. Our Board Members and Sangha followed with their commitment. A monthly publication of participants’ names in the Betsuin Newsletter and names listed on a poster in the temple foyer seemed to encourage others to join the fund drive.

Although the temple was in the midst of an extensive remodeling project, leaders and members of our Betsuin Board of Directors were very concerned that the Jodo Shinshu Center was in serious financial trouble. The directors approved having the Seattle Betsuin participate in support of the Campaign. That decision prompted 100% participation by the temple affiliated organizations and more members joined in with their donations.

By Oct. 2006, we were able to surpass our BCA Campaign’s “Suggested Goal for Seattle Betsuin.” The following Seattle Betsuin affiliated organizations also gave to the campaign: Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Church, Buddhist Women’s Association, Adult Buddhist Association, Young Buddhist Association, Boy Scout Troop 252, Cub Scout Pack 252, Camp Fire Group #699, Dharma School, Betsuin Kids Summer Program, and Betsuin Matsuri Taiko.

For more information, please contact your temple representative, your local minister, or Robert Noguchi (left) looks on as President Dr. Gordon Bermant (right) signs up for PayPal during credit card gifts to the campaign. Gifts (recurring or one-time) can be made directly from the BCA website www.buddhistchurchofamerica.org or use the form below.

Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Church
Campaign BCA – The 21st Century

Submitted by committee members: Masaru Tahara, Dale Kaku, Kevin Yokoyama and Terrie Tanino
Goen: Our Karmic Causes and Conditions Given by Amita Buddha

Reflecting upon the past year has given me an opportunity to taste and savor (Ajiru) my Goen (Innumerable causes and conditions that have led me to this life). As I thought of my present hobbies, I can’t help but think of my hobbies I had in Japan. I enjoyed making many fish that make up the sun and moon, as well as various jewelry, wood, jewelry, and even the movies in the form of video games, going to movies, playing with the Buddhist toys, and doing board games and exercising everyday. But now I only have time for video games, stowboarding and exercising. Since working at Nishi Betsuin I don’t have too much leisure time for hobbies. Also, I think it could be my attitude. So, I thought I should find a new hobby. I asked my wife what she thought about it and she suggested I should try making Asian knots. Asian knots are popular in Japan. There are many uses for Asian knots, for example, coasters, bracelets, accessories for bags, and cell phones. I thought this was a good hobby because I like hand-crafts, so I started doing Asian knots. Do you think this is hobby only a girl would do? I think so. However, just to tie strings together, it also has the meaning to “connect people,” “connect persons and events” in China, Korea, and Japan.

I noticed this way of thinking is similar to what we see in Buddhism. Originally, Buddhism was introduced from India into China, Korea, and Japan by women. Since the Asian knot has the feeling of connecting, which exemplifies Buddhist ideals. Shinran also emphasizes Goen. However, Shinran says there is good Goen and bad Goen. That’s why they believe that they can decrease bad Goen and increase good Goen by praying to the Karmi for purification. There are some Buddhist traditions that have a similar belief, but Jodo Shinshu Buddhists do not believe in those rituals.

On occasions my friends have asked me to do a purification ritual for them, because they say the Goen they have are bad. I tell them I can’t do the purification because I need to consult with family and friends. I can only chant the sutra if they want. I tell them however, “By chanting the sutra, I cannot decrease your bad Goen but I can increase your good Goen. This is because Buddhism teaches us that our Goen is neither good nor bad. It is our own creation, and we are able to use it for our purposes.” For an unpleasant person that makes us sad or angry I would change my Goen. This is why we call this Goen “Butsu-ru,” which means Buddha’s Goen.

There is a wonderful word from the Japanese tea ceremony which has its roots in Buddhism. “Sen no Rikyu” is one of the most famous persons in the Japanese tea ceremony. He is the one who said “Ichigo-Ichie.” Literally, it means “one chance.” In other words, “cherish all meetings because they are not repeatable.” But I believe it has a deeper meaning, because Ichigo means “life.” Born into this world is not ordinary and is due to the causes and conditions. So, the important thing is to “savor our life and live our best everyday.” That’s why Ichigo reappears two meanings to taste and savor our Goen of everyday life. And the other is to cherish life and make it meaningful. So, the important thing is to “savor the present and to savor our own lives, to realize and rejoice that our life is due to innumerable causes and conditions.

In the beginning of my article I wrote that by looking at the knots appearance before chanting, I am not to forget how to braid and tie my Goen. So, I would like to write about one of Shinran’s Buddhist beliefs. The “Nenju” is just an accessory. The biggest bead on the Nenju represents Amida Buddha and the other beads represent our selves, parents and friends. The Amita Buddha head is seen in the center and the others are connected by a single cord. We are not only connected with family and friends but we are all connected by the cord of Amida Buddha’s power and the Nembuta. Within this circle of family and friends, we have life and we are here now. This Goen is given to us by Amida Buddha. This is one of the meanings of Nenju.

I am happy that together we are able to share how fortunate and rare it is to be born into this world and to the Goen that connect us. I wish my Dharmic message will be an opportunity for you to look into your self and savor our own Goen.

Hoppo-Fukuoka Exchange Program

Back row, standing from left to right: Keiko Ohmura, Fumido Kato, Kath-leen Terusaki, Harumi Kishida, Taeko Sotomatsu, Yasuyos Arinobu. Seated: Keiko Funrudo, Lady Hirono Ohtani, Joyce and Kathleen traveled to Fukuoka Distric.

This year’s participants were Keiko Furumato of Enmanji Buddhist Temple, Harumi Kishida from the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, Joyce Minowa of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, and Kathleen Terusaki of the Buddhist Church of Oakland. It was an honor and privilege for me to be in the company of such active and dedicated BWA leaders. The program was totally fantastic in that we were treated like celebrities from the moment we left the Kansai Koku Raihou Kenkou Kan and the Kansai Koku International Airport in Osaka. We were greeted and welcomed by Rev. Tomoaki Harada of the Fukuoka District and four women, the president and vice president of the Fukuoka District, and the president and vice president of the Fukuoka District Fujinkai. The four women held a banquet welcoming us, savoring the local cuisine and welcoming us. We were so happy to see the welcoming committee after a long 11-hour flight!

We boarded a chartered bus for a two-hour ride to Kyoto where we stayed at the Monkou Kaiakan. We were prepared for dormitory accommodations but were delighted with very comfortable hotel accommodations.

Monsignor Terusaki and Kathleen traveled to the Fukuoka District.

Rev. and Mrs. Yosikiko Shirakawa provided home-stay for Keiko and me at the Shuzenji Temple, a beautiful temple in the peaceful and serene countryside of Chikuzen-machi. There is a magnificent Japanese garden adjacent to the temple and residence. The garden has a statue of Shimenon, an art togesse, a small pond and a kissined monument. Rev. Shirakawa greeted us with an outpouring of warmth and hospitality. He showed us the accommodations which were very much like that of a Japanese inn or ryokan. Rev. Shirakawa lives with his lovely wife, Nobuko-san, his 94-year-old mother, Masako-san, and his 3-year-old daughter, Momo-chan. We were fortunate to observe the dynamic and family of four generations under one roof. That evening, the Shirakawa family members gathered together and celebrated Girl’s Day (Hinamatsuri) together.

The menu consisted of shizukuchan, assorted sashimi (including Blowfish), brains, spinach, and marukake. Momo-chan instructed us to eat a variety of dishes such as Momo-chan enchanted us with song and dance, and then we played bingo. Keiko and I were so happy to play bingo with Rev. Shirakawa and the Fujinkai ladies.

On March 5, we boarded a chartered bus to Honganji Fukuoka Kaikan where we re-visited the temple where we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Bay District BWL/Hoppo Fukuoka Exchange Program. About 20 ministers dressed in ceremonial costumes performed gogaku (ancient court music). The sounds were remarkable. After the service, we walked to the Nishinomaru Grand Hotel, where approximately 100 people gathered for an anniversary banquet. We four women were the guests of honor and many people came to our table and shared stories with us. The first four ladies who had traveled to the United States through the Hoppo-Fukuoka Exchange Program twenty years ago introduced themselves and gave us each a present. We were each presented with a gorgeous bouquet of flowers. We were overwhelmed with everyone’s generosity and hospitality.

The Hoppo-Fukuoka Exchange Program is a meaningful vehicle for exchanging good will, friendship, and Buddhist perspectives between Japan and the United States. As Rev. Shirakawa mentioned on our last day at Shuzenji Temple, he hopes that the program succeeds in shortening the bridge between Japan and the United States.

I would like to thank Rev. Zuki Terusaki and the Bay District BWL for the opportunity to have shared this wonderful program. We would also like to thank the Fukuoka Bay District BWL for applying to participate in the program. It is truly a life-enriching experience for everyone involved. We hope to continue to have this program to share the two BWA districts to consider establishing a similar cooperative agreement with Japan.

Harumi Kishida
Buddhist Church of San Francisco
The Northern California District Dharma School Teachers Association hosted the Federation of Dharma School Teacher’s League Conference on the weekend of April 27-29 in Sacramento. With over 200 delegates attending, we had to turn people away because they registered too late. What a great problem to have had. Our entire Conference Team worked for months to bring our theme to life with meaningful content.

We are deeply grateful to Dr. Satsuki Ina for giving so much of her valuable time to attend our planning meetings. There she provided training and helped us create our workshops and weave them together with the conference theme. And we especially appreciate her meaningfully reflective and insightful Keynote message. Dr. Ina’s presentation focused on growth and self discovery, and our workshops followed through with this theme.

As we have found in hosting these conferences, the more we put into them, the more we are allowed through with this theme. And we especially appreciated her meaningful reflection and insight. We felt it was important to separate not only our Teaching School Teachers because it gave us insights into our personality traits…and also asked us to consider not only our Teaching Modes…but also what we, as teachers, EXPECT from our students.

We separated into four “personality categories” and concluded our many exercises, guiding us towards growing Self Awareness, with a project where we could apply our reflections and…”make them real.”

That evening we had “Mind Body Workshops” as a part of our Northwest District MAPQUEST Training Session

Participants in the Minister’s Assistant Program (MAPQUEST) from the Oregon Buddhist Temple (Portland) and Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple (Ontario, Oregon) gathered in Ontario April 13 through April 15, for a weekend of training and instruction followed by participation in Sunday Morning’s Hanamatsuri Service. Providing instruction were Rev. Dennis Fujimoto of Idaho-Oregon, Rev. Gregory Gibbs of Oregon Buddhist Temple, Rev.Kakei Nakagawa of White River Buddhist Temple (Auburn, Washington) as well as Rev. William Masuda of Palo Alto Buddhist Temple.

Rev. Masuda, who was scheduled to speak for the Idaho-Oregon Hanamatsuri celebration, graciously extended his stay to three days to help broaden and enrich the training session.

Activities alternated between practice in ritual, chanting, and dharma talks and sessions on doctrine and history. Three services were conducted over the course of Friday evening and Saturday with new trainees taking turns presenting the onaijin, ringing the kancho, leading the chanting and giving the houa (Dharma message). Emphasis was placed on the Shoshinge with waans (in continuation from the previous district training session in January) by the Shuhozo (Three Respectful Callings).

Rev. Masuda led a discussion on several points of Jodo Shinshu doctrine, encouraging trainees to continue to ask questions and to develop a deep understanding of the teachings.

Rev. Nakagawa provided a frank, scholarly, and well-organized presentation of Jodo Shinshu institutional history, setting it within the religious and political history of Japan. This intense activity was interspersed with several opportunities for relaxed conversation and fellowship, including a well-attended banquet dinner with the Idaho-Oregon sangha and minister was sincerely appreciated.

Ryo Yo Brenda Fugate

Northwest MAPQUEST group photo, from left to right, Rev. Dennis Fujimoto, Sharmom Sadamori, Rev. Greg Gibbs, Teresa Soto de Ro- man, Anne Spencer, David Wright, George Gedhill, Brenda Fugate, Tommy Herald, Rev. Dr. Will Masuda, Etsuko Osaki, and Rev. Kakei Nakagawa.

Northwest MAPQUEST group photo, from left to right, Rev. Dennis Fujimoto, Sharmom Sadamori, Rev. Greg Gibbs, Teresa Soto de Ro- man, Anne Spencer, David Wright, George Gedhill, Brenda Fugate, Tommy Herald, Rev. Dr. Will Masuda, Etsuko Osaki, and Rev. Kakei Nakagawa.

By Rinban Bob Oshita

Sacramento Betsuin

At right, guest speaker Dr. Satsuki Ina at the FDSTL Conference.

“Dharma for Dummies 2”

JUNE 2007

WHEEL OF DHARMA

PAGE 5

FDSTL Conference 2007

By Rinban Bob Oshita

At right, guest speaker Dr. Satsuki Ina at the FDSTL Conference.

“Dharma for Dummies 2”
Buddha's Vow. And how are we to entrust which is like our entrusting in the
entrust which get in the way. If so, take your
yourself to the Vow, why haven't you?
just as you are.”
tirelessly to assure us, “you are fine
death, and so will we eventually. So, if
much we fight it, our loved ones will
hair will increase, and no matter how
different things to different people.
eons ago, he became a Buddha named
his Name.
shinshin's declaration of his

Phase Two
Phase 2 of “letting go” is the act of
how we experience three qualities

Phase Three
In the third phase of “floating and
the sailor swims again toward
the island but with a qualitative
message from the Dharma Ocean!” In
quality of who

Phase Two
Just as the sailor reached the end of
our religion in English.

President's Perspective
Continued from Page 5
clarifying during the next several

International Ministeri-
Al Activation Program.
The Hongwanji supports the development of a
practical training and orientation
experience for ordained (kyōshi) ministers from Japan and elsewhere
to be administered by the BCA
at the Center for Buddhist Education in the Jodo Shinshu Center. The goal of
this program is to prepare foreign-born ministers for effective service as kaju
shi, the BCA's ministerial curricula for the program includes practice in English
conversation as well as historical, organizational, and religious education
centered on the BCA's 21st century. It is anticipated that the Hon
watanabe will provide funding for the staff and resources re
quired to make this program a success.

Preparations for Shin
shonin's 750th Memo-
rial Ceremonies.
The Honwatanabe is already very far in raising funds and organizing programs for celebrations in 2011. BCA
participates in several of these
workshops, the Honwatanabe to make this significant time
in the life of Jodo Shinshu a
particularly active and effective
time for the propagation of our
religion in English.

FDSTL
Continued from Page 5
program: Massage, Tai Chi, Yoga, Introduction to Medita-
tion.

Conference enjoyed being re
cluded an ever-growing Aware-
ness of “WHO WE ARE... as
we also journey within and
revel in the Palace of our Po
tential.”
令月の法話
二十一世紀における
仏教の役割（改）
ランスバーグ仏教花山勝清

○ 日本仏教の現状

一念発心し、生まれ故郷であるアメリカの地に戻り、およそ十年か。祖父が在年中他者したのが1993年でから、
遺志を取り継ぎてから十三年の歳月が過ぎ、今、私は早や二十四回总単をの年です。正直
言って、日本における「仏教仏教」には魅力
認めず、25歳で再度以来、僧侶たるお勤め
は自己成長だけでした。大学で心理学を
専攻したのち、今思い、単に自己成長の
追求であり、悩み苦しみを自己成長に加えて
もたなかったのです。

ご存知のように、日本における寺僧連絡の
経済収入の大半は、お供をだった、故郷の定
期的収入であり、とりわけ、僧侶と在年中他者
は、葬儀屋の委託業務が主です。私の父
はこのことを皮肉にして、「今頃の坊主はただ
お飯の配達人」でと嘆いていました。私は
自営業を必死でお願いいたしました。なお、僧侶
としての経済的収益は、まるで持ち、むしろ
友人と共に仏教普及のための研究会
に時間とお金を費やしました。

もちろん僧侶は唯一の責任ではありませんが、
日本仏教の多くが「仏教仏教」もしくは
「観光仏教」となっており、特に、は単結
えられた布教のチャンスを活かすことなく、
活かしても、チャンスをチャンスにお
経を数分あけて、お礼だけはしっかりか
いたい傾向…という強い意欲も生まれ
てしまったようです。（一部略）

○ アメリア仏教の鏡

メンバーシップと懸念制度の大きな違い
は、構成員が「個人」が「家族」かの違いだ
と思います。これは、その国の歴史、習慣、
文化も大きく関連することでしょう。私は
ここでその善念を必要とられていけない
ので、広く二国間の比較は避けますが、
帰無をまず感じたのが、仏教徒の皆さんの
純粋です。「お寺を守って教えよう…」
という意識が強く伝わってきました。然」
し、その多くが年齢者であり、日本と同じく
若者の宗教離れが進行している現実にも気づ
かれたのです。

これは来年ならびに各宗教に共通して言
ることから知られませんが、先進国であればあ
るほど、他の多くの魅力的対象が心奪われ
、若者たちは宗教や仏教を離れていってい
ますようです。とりわけ、年相若者や
外では、この問題は深刻で、政治や経済
支援を求めていしています。つまり、若者は
都合を変えてお仕事を求め出て行ってしま
い、若い労働力がなくなった地域では、
年齢者たちのみでは運営が困難となっています。

しかしその年齢者たちは、若者たちがお金や宗教の
中層人物として必要である、と言っているの
はありません、「亀の甲をよる年功」と言
うように、若者たちの葛藤が心をかすめてお
かつ、若い力が活きているので、そのバラン
スが崩れつつあり、潜在パワーが発揮され
ると言いたいのです。

時に、絶対的な、顕著な感情を形成し、
つまずき不実な宗教の現実にもかかわらず香
ます。なぜ若者たちが今現に来たったので
かの理由を探ることは簡単です。それよりも
今、私は、どうすれば「若者の仏教」と
取り戻すことができるのかが課題だと思う
のです。

○ 改革は常に少数派から

第十六代米政大統領アラフム・リン
カンが偉大なる格言を私たちに残してくれ
ました。皆さんご存知のように、「人民
により、人民のため、人民の政治」というこ
とです。この格言の背景には、大いなる民主
主義運動、人権問題の実現、民族・宗教間
の紛争の停止など、さまざまな意味合いが含
まれていることは周知の通りです。

民主主義においては、単に少数派が多數
派を制圧と考えられがちですが、少数派の
意見や主張を取り込んでこそ、多数派の
支持率が上がることがあるのです。しかし、残
念ながら、現在の宗教間における闘争の多く
は、他宗教の意見や考えを無視して、
自立心の強化を目的とすることもあります。

この場合、若者たちの宗教離れ傾向を
考えると、私は難しいと思うのです。

キリスト教徒においても選択されたこのアメ
リアの地で、はっきり言って、仏教徒は少数
派です。しかし、多くのアメリカ人がアジ
ア諸国の文化や仏教の教えに興味を持ち始
め、有能な研究者たちや信奉者たちも増え
ています。私たち仏教徒にとっては、またと
ない布教のチャンスであるにもかかわらず、
この好機をつまらぬ経験自粛のために逃
してしまってはいけないでしょうか？この
事実を、民主主義の原則に従って、私たち仏教徒
が普及させ、このアメリカの地で、多数派とは
ならなくとも、より大きなゼニオリー
ダとなるべく、より大きな社会の集合体の結団
と結果が必要なのでしょうか？まとめ
小競り合いは、組織を単なる鳥の群と化
してしまいます。

○ 幸せになる秘密

会社でも家庭でも、経済でも政治でも、そ
の内のバランスはとても重要です。各団体
や組織の一つひとつの細胞や構成員がバラン
スを保つと、暴走し始めるのです。これは
観時的に見ると仏教に言えることでしょう
の。ユーダ教を含めたキリスト教徒と、イス
ラム教の二大世界宗教は、こうした緊急した
状態を乗り越えて来ています。もう一つの
世界宗教である仏教も、対岸の火事などと
同様に、こうした緊急状態を乗り越けて来
ています。仏教の台頭がなければ、三大世界宗教のバラン
スを保つ大切な役割を担われているのです。

実は、仏教のすばらしいことを世界に広めること
とは至って簡単なものでない。私たち仏教徒が
仏教としてこの人生を楽しみ、生き生きとした生活を送ることだよいかの
のです。それでも、ストレスが少なく、健康で
長生きできるため、人々の指導の場がまい
ます。また、争いを避ける生き方、無駄
な結話し合わないのですみません、他人から
恥ずかすことありません。その上、毎日を
感謝のうちに、ユニークと生活していれば、
自然と多くの人々が私たちの周囲に集まって
きます。それを「幸せになる秘密」と呼べ
ます。

とは言え、人生に幸せという、悲しい
こともつきもので、そんなとき、今後の
自分の存在に感謝することができれば、ビン
チをチャンスに変えることができます。私も
思う存分人生を楽しむことは、一緒に
偉大なる人生と教えを残した先輩、父や
祖父を初めとする先祖様に感謝し、その
恩恵を再び信じていただきたいと思います。

2500年を超えて仏教の根本教義は変わら
ずとも、その布教方法を時代に即した手法で
伝播して行うこととはとても大切なことです。
時代に適応できてもこそ、生き残ることができる
というのも、自然の伴侶なのです。
いま日本の仏教界は日を東に向けています。本願寺は将来の人力育成をこのアメリカの地でいろいろな計画を進め

何か変？

日本で、小野寺が講師に

小野寺

曹洞宗本山で講

小野寺

曹洞宗本山で講

小野寺

曹洞宗本山で講

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