2010 Fukan Report

By Rev. Bob Oshita, Sacramento Betsuin

F rom Aug. 9-12, the Northern California Ministers’ Association hosted the annual BCA Ministers’ Association Summer Fukan Seminar at the Silver Legacy in Reno, Nevada. The theme of the Fukan this year was “Hondo – Propagation.” We were very fortunate to have as our keynote speaker, Dr. Taira Sato, the founder of the Three Wheels Buddhist Temple and Community in London, England. Rev. Sato was born in 1939 in Oita, Kyushu, Japan. He graduated in religious philosophy from Kyoto University studying under Professor Krij Nishitani. He has the remarkable distinction of being the last disciple of D.T. Suzuki and was one of the pall bearers at his funeral. He presently serves as director. In 2009, he received the Japan Society Award. In the award, it stated, “Rev. Sato has a truly international and ecumenical mind…” He was lauded for his work with the Burma Campaign Society, “always bringing wisdom and tolerance to its reconciliation activities and discussions.” Throughout the Seminar, Rev. Sato was able to share with us his perspective on the religious and philosophical aspects of “Harmony within Diversity” and taking refuge in Amida Buddha. His experience in London, was presented in Reverend Sato’s opening talk the morning of August 10 and followed by discussion. This talk touched on the religious and philosophical aspects of “Harmony within Diversity,” as well as the work achieved by the Sanrin Shoja, the Three Wheel Buddhist Community.

2) Reverend Sato’s second talk, “Difficulties Encountered in Translating Buddhist Terms from English,” was presented that same afternoon. One of the tenets I was very interested in was the translation of the term, Anjiki, or Peaceful Awareness. This was followed by a special panel discussion which included BCA Bishop, Socho Koshin Ogui and David Unruhe. Socho Ogui began the discussion asking the ministers to consider this question: “If Jodo Shinshu is truly a universally amazing teaching, why is it not catching on in America?” Could it be that perhaps we are not presenting it well?

3) Reverend Sato’s third presentation was the first of two D.T. Suzuki’s essays, Anjiki, Peaceful Awareness in Zen & Shin, first published in June 1967. This essay was actually dictated by D.T. Suzuki to Reverend Sato, when Sato Sensei was twenty-six years old. This flowed into a remarkable impromptu panel with Rev. Sato and Rev. Yokoyama discussing the insights of D.T. Suzuki and his appreciation for the Myokonin, sharing poems of Myokonin Asahara, Saichu.

5) Reverend Sato’s fourth presentation was the second of D.T. Suzuki’s essays, Anjiki, Peaceful Awareness, translated into English, was presented this time Reverend Sato was able to share with us his perspective on the religious and philosophical aspects of “Harmony within Diversity,” and taking refuge in Amida Buddha. His experience in London, was presented in Reverend Sato’s opening talk the morning of August 10 and followed by discussion. This talk touched on the religious and philosophical aspects of “Harmony within Diversity,” as well as the work achieved by the Sanrin Shoja, the Three Wheel Buddhist Community.

From left to right: Rev. Dr. Taira Sato, Socho Koshin Ogui, Wayne Yokoyama, David Unruhe (Placer Buddhist Church).
A few years ago a young woman came to visit our temple. She was under the impression that it held out of curiosity. As I greeted her and began chit-chatting, she looked up for the first time, another visitor made a request, “What’s up with that?” I was rather taken aback and embarrassed. “Exactly.” I proceeded to give an explanation and answer her other questions about the temple and Buddhism. I believe the sign was put up about 50 years ago but we have been known as “temple” for a long time. It was recently updated.

After sitting through a Sunday service for the first time, another visitor made a bolder comment that the service looked and felt like the church he had just left. While sitting in service, many survey the hondo and Onaijin and observe the minister while reading the service book. They follow the lyrics of the songs, read the service etiquette section and try to make sense of different passages. Some try to follow the sutra as it is chanted and perhaps they become more confused with the translation. People come to us very excited, wanting to explore this great religion called Buddhism. There is much to observe on a first visit. The outside of our temple looks like any other building with no particular architecture or sign that hints of a traditional Japanese temple. And yet the temple is very serene and repre-
sents what a Jodo Shinshu temple should look like. So the first time, visitors may be impressed with what they see and they earnestly make an effort to understand the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu. However, soon they come to question whether or not this is the kind of Buddhism they expected or wanted.

With a limited understanding of the Buddhist and Jodo Shinshu traditions, it must be very challenging to take it all in as they sit through a service which includes melodic songs, recitations, organ music, sitting in pews, seeing people pouring money into a silver tray, etc. To them, this may also seem very western and Christian, which is exactly how BCA temples grew in the earlier days of discrimination and assimilation in the West.

To visitors, the Amidha statue in the center of the busy Onaijin may look like a representation of a deity. It is also understandable, as we stand and participate together in devotional reactions. As I watch them survey the surroundings and later talk to them, I find them gracious and appreciative, but I also imagine that they have the same kinds of anxieties and questions that I encountered when I first entered IBS (Institute of Buddhist Studies) to study Jodo Shinshu for the first time. We cannot deny that our temples are the products of a long and rich Jodo Shinshu and Japanese tradition. For most of us, sitting in the hondo on Sundays and participating in events and fundraisers are a significant part of our lives and we are comfortable with the way it is. After all, this is 100 years of heritage that we dare not challenge and we hope that it will continue this way for another 100 years. But all is not what it seems to be, especially looking in from the outside. We may want to take a cue from these visitors who want to come but often do not stay. This is not necessarily a question about the future of our temples, but a real question about whether we are truly comfortable with the Onemubutsu as it has been represented traditionally. Are we simply going through the motions when we come to the temple, even though we may have many questions in a deep, personal sense, but are afraid to ask? There is no doubt that we are good members and regularly attend services and events. We also do not question that our children will be raised in the Jodo Shinshu tradition and somehow acquire values that will help them in their future lives. However, in personal and religious commitment, are we not like these visitors?

The recent topic in our study class as we began another new session in September was “Back to the Basics.” It focused on understanding and accepting the truth claim of Jodo Shinshu and making it “my” truth so that there is a personal under-standing and commitment in our quest for the Onemubutsu. Without this fundamen-tal commitment we cannot proceed meaningfully. Instead, we will have many questions and doubts that may bother us forever. This is the challenge many of us may have experienced for a long time, even as we have participated as loyal members. All of us are great temple members but can we say the same for our personal religious commitment? Shinran Shonin asked the same questions 700 years ago.

What’s Up With That?

By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki
WLB Buddhist Temple

few years ago a young woman came to visit our temple. She was under the impression that it held out of curiosity. As I greeted her and began chit-chatting, she looked up for the first time, another visitor made a request, “What’s up with that?” I was rather taken aback and embarrassed. “Exactly.” I proceeded to give an explanation and answer her other questions about the temple and Buddhism. I believe the sign was put up about 50 years ago but we have been known as “temple” for a long time. It was recently updated.

After sitting through a Sunday service for the first time, another visitor made a bolder comment that the service looked and felt like the church he had just left. While sitting in service, many survey the hondo and Onaijin and observe the minister while reading the service book. They follow the lyrics of the songs, read the service etiquette section and try to make sense of different passages. Some try to follow the sutra as it is chanted and perhaps they become more confused with the translation. People come to us very excited, wanting to explore this great religion called Buddhism. There is much to observe on a first visit. The outside of our temple looks like any other building with no particular architecture or sign that hints of a traditional Japanese temple. And yet the temple is very serene and repre-
sents what a Jodo Shinshu temple should look like. So the first time, visitors may be impressed with what they see and they earnestly make an effort to understand the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu. However, soon they come to question whether or not this is the kind of Buddhism they expected or wanted.

With a limited understanding of the Buddhist and Jodo Shinshu traditions, it must be very challenging to take it all in as they sit through a service which includes melodic songs, recitations, organ music, sitting in pews, seeing people pouring money into a silver tray, etc. To them, this may also seem very western and Christian, which is exactly how BCA temples grew in the earlier days of discrimination and assimilation in the West.

To visitors, the Amidha statue in the center of the busy Onaijin may look like a representation of a deity. It is also understandable, as we stand and participate together in devotional reactions. As I watch them survey the surroundings and later talk to them, I find them gracious and appreciative, but I also imagine that they have the same kinds of anxieties and questions that I encountered when I first entered IBS (Institute of Buddhist Studies) to study Jodo Shinshu for the first time. We cannot deny that our temples are the products of a long and rich Jodo Shinshu and Japanese tradition. For most of us, sitting in the hondo on Sundays and participating in events and fundraisers are a significant part of our lives and we are comfortable with the way it is. After all, this is 100 years of heritage that we dare not challenge and we hope that it will continue this way for another 100 years. But all is not what it seems to be, especially looking in from the outside. We may want to take a cue from these visitors who want to come but often do not stay. This is not necessarily a question about the future of our temples, but a real question about whether we are truly comfortable with the Onemubutsu as it has been represented traditionally. Are we simply going through the motions when we come to the temple, even though we may have many questions in a deep, personal sense, but are afraid to ask? There is no doubt that we are good members and regularly attend services and events. We also do not question that our children will be raised in the Jodo Shinshu tradition and somehow acquire values that will help them in their future lives. However, in personal and religious commitment, are we not like these visitors?

The recent topic in our study class as we began another new session in September was “Back to the Basics.” It focused on understanding and accepting the truth claim of Jodo Shinshu and making it “my” truth so that there is a personal under-standing and commitment in our quest for the Onemubutsu. Without this fundamen-tal commitment we cannot proceed meaningfully. Instead, we will have many questions and doubts that may bother us forever. This is the challenge many of us may have experienced for a long time, even as we have participated as loyal members. All of us are great temple members but can we say the same for our personal religious commitment? Shinran Shonin asked the same questions 700 years ago.

What’s Up With That?

By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki
WLB Buddhist Temple

few years ago a young woman came to visit our temple. She was under the impression that it held out of curiosity. As I greeted her and began chit-chatting, she looked up for the first time, another visitor made a request, “What’s up with that?” I was rather taken aback and embarrassed. “Exactly.” I proceeded to give an explanation and answer her other questions about the temple and Buddhism. I believe the sign was put up about 50 years ago but we have been known as “temple” for a long time. It was recently updated.

After sitting through a Sunday service for the first time, another visitor made a bolder comment that the service looked and felt like the church he had just left. While sitting in service, many survey the hondo and Onaijin and observe the minister while reading the service book. They follow the lyrics of the songs, read the service etiquette section and try to make sense of different passages. Some try to follow the sutra as it is chanted and perhaps they become more confused with the translation. People come to us very excited, wanting to explore this great religion called Buddhism. There is much to observe on a first visit. The outside of our temple looks like any other building with no particular architecture or sign that hints of a traditional Japanese temple. And yet the temple is very serene and repre-
sents what a Jodo Shinshu temple should look like. So the first time, visitors may be impressed with what they see and they earnestly make an effort to understand the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu. However, soon they come to question whether or not this is the kind of Buddhism they expected or wanted.

With a limited understanding of the Buddhist and Jodo Shinshu traditions, it must be very challenging to take it all in as they sit through a service which includes melodic songs, recitations, organ music, sitting in pews, seeing people pouring money into a silver tray, etc. To them, this may also seem very western and Christian, which is exactly how BCA temples grew in the earlier days of discrimination and assimilation in the West.

To visitors, the Amidha statue in the center of the busy Onaijin may look like a representation of a deity. It is also understandable, as we stand and participate together in devotional reactions. As I watch them survey the surroundings and later talk to them, I find them gracious and appreciative, but I also imagine that they have the same kinds of anxieties and questions that I encountered when I first entered IBS (Institute of Buddhist Studies) to study Jodo Shinshu for the first time. We cannot deny that our temples are the products of a long and rich Jodo Shinshu and Japanese tradition. For most of us, sitting in the hondo on Sundays and participating in events and fundraisers are a significant part of our lives and we are comfortable with the way it is. After all, this is 100 years of heritage that we dare not challenge and we hope that it will continue this way for another 100 years. But all is not what it seems to be, especially looking in from the outside. We may want to take a cue from these visitors who want to come but often do not stay. This is not necessarily a question about the future of our temples, but a real question about whether we are truly comfortable with the Onemubutsu as it has been represented traditionally. Are we simply going through the motions when we come to the temple, even though we may have many questions in a deep, personal sense, but are afraid to ask? There is no doubt that we are good members and regularly attend services and events. We also do not question that our children will be raised in the Jodo Shinshu tradition and somehow acquire values that will help them in their future lives. However, in personal and religious commitment, are we not like these visitors?

The recent topic in our study class as we began another new session in September was “Back to the Basics.” It focused on understanding and accepting the truth claim of Jodo Shinshu and making it “my” truth so that there is a personal under-standing and commitment in our quest for the Onemubutsu. Without this fundamen-tal commitment we cannot proceed meaningfully. Instead, we will have many questions and doubts that may bother us forever. This is the challenge many of us may have experienced for a long time, even as we have participated as loyal members. All of us are great temple members but can we say the same for our personal religious commitment? Shinran Shonin asked the same questions 700 years ago.
CBE TRAINING & EDUCATION

Participation in training sessions are arranged through CBE or co-sponsors. Please call for information.

Sept. 30- Oct. 3: MAP Training Session
Oct. 7 - Oct. 9: Tokudo (Berkeley, JSC) (Continues in Kyoto Japan 10/9-17)
Oct. 9: FBWA Delegates Meeting (SAC) Small Group Discussion project: BUDDHA’S WISH FOR THE WORLD
Oct. 15 - 17: Seminar for Temple Leaders
Oct. 15 - 17: College YBA Retreat Visit BCA Youth website or call CBE.
Oct. 19-21: Ministers Continuing Ed.(MCE)
Oct. 21-24: MAP Training Session
Oct. 25-27: MCE

CBE PUBLIC EVENTS CALENDAR

At Jodo Shinshu Ctr unless noted. See details online

Oct. 30: Public Lecture: Engaged Buddhism in the Age of Obama at the NY Buddhist Church. Presented with the American Buddhist Study Center. See ad.
Nov. 12: Public Lecture at JSC: Caroline Brazier, Author, Teacher, Counselor Co-sponsored by IBS.
Feb. 18—20, 2011: First International Conference on Other-Centered Approaches (ICOCA) - New Directions in Buddhist Psychology. Co-sponsored by IBS, Amida USA, Amida Trust, UK, & To Do Institute.

Ohigan & the Sounds of Enlightenment!

“In reality, we are surrounded by the sounds of enlightenment. Everything is preaching the Dharma. In other words, everything around us is urging us to listen to the real meaning of life.”

This was my message for our 4th Annual Baby Boomer’s Seminar which just took place here at the Jodo Shinshu Center. It was directed toward the generation born after World War II, now entering retirement age and/or experiencing other life transitions. The seminar just concluded, during the week of Ohigan, or autumn equinox -- a special time for Jodo Shinshu followers to reflect on our lives.

In a larger sense, we can imagine that Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America may be is in the midst of its own ‘life transition,” affirming its roots, through the 750th memorial of Shinran Shonin, and at the same time springing forth new native varieties and hybrids, as seen within our temple network and beyond.

Looking at our CBE calendar in October, it seems to be bursting with the light and sounds of the Dharma! We are hosting two Minister Assistant Program (MAP) Training sessions, each 3-4 days long: one group that includes Tokudo ministers, and a second group of more recent MAP participants. Conducting the Tokudo Training for 3 days here in Berkeley and sending eleven aspirants to Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan, we are literally and metaphorically crossing many shores. Also during this month, we will have Ministers’ Continuing Education Seminars for two groups of ministers, where we will review our traditions in a variety of ways.

This is all the result of Socho Ogui’s dynamic vision and leadership, and our collaborations with local temple ministers, temple leaders, IBS and Nishi Hongwanji-ha. We at CBE have had the privilege of working with and witnessing the development of over 80 MAP participants from diverse areas of our BCA temple network -- inspired by the Dharma, they are adding new dimensions to our ancient chanting -- and this fall, we have nearly a dozen “taking the plunge,” of undergoing Tokudo in Kyoto -- Dharma light and sound, in motion.

As I reminded the Baby Boomers: We are at an age where we really need to pause and look at our past, present and future. Life is short, so let us try to hear the sounds coming from our friends, families and our own lives. Let us all tune in to the sounds of enlightenment!

- Rev. Kodo Umezu, CBE Director

CBE 2011 Shinran Shonin Tour— Spaces still open!

CBE has planned four special tours to take place between April 6 thru 21, 2011, to coincide with the historic 750th Shinran Shonin Memorial events in Kyoto. The tours will be led by Rev. Umezu and Brian Nagata. Please call Judy Kono (510) 809-1402 or email: jkono@cbe-bca.org for details on the tour packages. Details also online.

BCA Center for Buddhist Education - October 2010 - News & Highlights
Impersonance and Shinran

By Kimi Yonemura Hirasum

Impersonance is the basic insight of Buddhism. Every thing in the world, including each of us, is constantly changing according to the conditions we may encounter every moment. For most of us, the biggest change we feel is death, the end of physical form. The moment we are born, death will surely pursue us to our very end. Some will blame karma -- our continous accumulation of bad karma -- that causes our inability to gain full compassion or to attain our Awakening to full Enlightenment.

They claim to have received this idea from the TANISHO; Shinran’s teaching. Actually, the TANISHO was written by Yui-en, his disciple, from his own understanding of what he had heard from Shinran. However, whoever takes the trouble to approach the TANISHO V, quoted playing a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.

The summer course developed by Ohyangai has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. Ryukoku also has a graduate exchange program with U.C. Davis. Ohyangai played a major role in the development of the Jodo Shinshu Center. The JSC is to study and go on field trips to tech companies in the Bay Area. Some 70 students have participated in this program to date.
Protecting Our Elders

By Rev. Gerald Sakamoto
San Jose Bethsuan

On September 21, 2010 a summit meeting of nearly 300 clergy and lay religious leaders was convened in Cupertino, California. The meeting brought together religious community leaders and community agency advocates in a continuing conversation and education process regarding awareness and providing for the needs of our elders.

This program, which focuses on faith community response to elder abuse, began nearly 5 years ago under the leadership of Betty Malls, formerly of the Santa Clara Mental Health Department, in Santa Clara, California. Her idea was to develop a program that would train those who work with elders to respond to the needs of our elders in our communities. It is in the hope that this training will eventually be integrated into the curriculum of seminaries. The training is even more critical for clergy who, in many states, are mandated reporters of elder abuse. The knowledge to recognize conditions and respond with appropriate resources can help provide for the safety and well being of our community’s elders.

Abuse can take many forms. We are probably most familiar with physical abuse where injury is readily recognizable. However abuse can also take the form of financial, emotional, neglect and sexual abuse. Abuse towards any elderly who is alone and isolated is particularly vulnerable to abuse. The conditions for abuse can manifest in a short period of time, with rapidly changing conditions such loss of job or sudden illness or gradually escalating, almost unnoticed, over time.

Government services can be helpful but can vary from state to state and county to county. In Santa Clara county, the role of Adult Protective Services is first to evaluate and recommend support services to individuals or families. “The Social Services Agency’s Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAA) promotes a safe and independent lifestyle for seniors, dependent adults and the disabled through the delivery of protective services, quality nutrition and supportive in-home services. In addition, DAA assists in the provision of long term care for the frail and elderly and safeguards the property of conservators and manages the assets of conservatees and decedent estates.” – Department Overview, DAA

Find out what services are available in your community. Together with the support of family, community and our sangha, elders can live independently and with dignity. The best response is to get involved. As one presenter from Adult Protective Services put it: “When in doubt, talk it out.”

We need to expand our minds and hearts to truly feel how fortunate we are to be a part of Shinran’s teaching.

Using our imagination, if we look back it is inconceivable to understand that some 10 kalpas ago, before the appearance of the historical Shakyamuni Buddha in our world, a Bodhisattva made 48 Vows for the sake of all beings. Then Shakyamuni appeared into this world some 2,557 years ago, he did his exhaustive practices to attain enlightenment for all beings caught in the world of suffering, and revealed the teaching of the Buddha of Wisdom-Compassion, Light-Life, Enlightenment-Truth Itself, known to us as Amida, who would embrace all beings to help them seek their freedom from suffering.

750 years ago Shinran appeared in this world, and after years of struggle, came to understand Amida’s Wisdom and Compassion teaching.

Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Anniversary

By Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka

A s the Jodo Shinshu Hongon-ji prepares to commemorate the 750th Anniversary of Shinran and the founding of Shin Buddhism, all of us need to deeply reflect on how inconceivable it is that we here in the United States are a part of this great religious tradition. We need to expand our minds and hearts to truly feel how fortunate we are to be a part of Shinran’s teaching.

Using our imagination, if we look back it is inconceivable to understand that some 10 kalpas ago, before the appearance of the historical Shakyamuni Buddha in our world, a Bodhisattva made 48 Vows for all beings without exception. It was then, that Buddhism became available to everyday householders. Over 112 years ago, Shinran’s teachings came to America with the immigrants, who left Japan to carve out a life in an unfriendly society and community. Life for our pioneers was not easy and often degrading, but they were able to persist because they found something profound in the teaching that they brought with them.

The struggle of countless people unknown to us to pass down the teachings because it touched their lives is truly inconceivable. The teachings had to survive through social upheavals, disasters of many forms, discrimination, language barriers, and the complexity of life in a new country. We need to truly reflect on the inconceivable causes and conditions for what makes us live up in this moment.

Yes, it is hard to know, but it can be felt. That is what is important. That is what Shinran hoped that we would understand about our lives. He called it the life of Shinran/Nembutsu.

Eagle Scouts

By Dr. Rev. Seigen Yamaoka

The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Churches of America Bookstore will be celebrating its 51st year in October 2010. With its new store front location, in the Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue in Berkeley, the bookstore has evolved into a state-of-the-art bookstore with walk-in customers, many on-line orders from throughout the world, and the support of BCA temples and members. The state-of-the-art store provides a wide variety of authored mainstream Buddhist books and many Buddhist items for propagating the Dharma. Bookstore Manager Jeffrey Kimoto stated that, “The Bookstore has a long history of ups and down over the years. At one point there was thought of closing it down. However, with the support of the BCA leadership and members, it managed to keep operating. With the move to our new store front at the JSC, we have a store front in a major educational facility, which enhances our exposure to the general public. With the start of our on-line program, we are now reaching people from throughout the world.”

“Our main support is from the BCA temples who continue to purchase books and items from the store and also allow us to sell at the local temple bazaars,” said Gayle Noguchi, assistant manager.

According to the BCA 75th Anniversary Book, the Bookstore was officially registered with the State Board of Equalization in 1959—Buddhist books in English were primarily sold to members of the BCA. Prior to this date, the Sunday School Materials Department under Rev. Katsuki Fujinaga sold books and educational materials for children. With the organization of the Bureau of Buddhist Education in 1959 under Rev. Kenyu Tsuji, the sales department was initiated. Total sales in 1959 was $2,000.

The Bookstore was housed in the old BCA Headquarter building at 1710 Octavia Street in San Francisco, servicing the needs of the BCA temples and affiliated organization. In 1966, the bookstore was opened to the public. In 1971 with the dedication of new BCA Headquarter building on Octavia Street, the Bookstore found its home inside the new building on the second floor. Its main source of income was the temple ‘s bazaars. Mail order was started which gave the store a broader customer base.

With today’s widespread interest in Buddhism, the BCA Bookstore is striving and has a bright future for much growth in the years to come. “With a fully computerized inventory system, bar coding of all inventory, and wireless payment device, we can literally take the Bookstore anywhere in the U.S.,” said Manager Kimoto.

My vision was to make the Bookstore a true 21st Century store, books from all sects of Buddhism, complete with merchandise you cannot obtain anywhere else in the world—other than Japan, of course.”

People are welcomed to visit the Bookstore in Berkeley or 24/7 on-line at www.bcbkstore.com. The Bookstore is open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., phone number (510) 809-1435.

Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Anniversary

By Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka

The Southern District Jodo Shu YBA has been selling “Panko” as a fundraiser for Campaign BCA – The 21st Century at all of the Southern District Obon carnivals and their respective temples.

The panko was donated to the SD Jr. JBA by Gary Kagawuchi, owner of Upper Crust Enterprises, which manufactures the product. It is a Japanese-style bread crumb product that is used for cooking.

The SD Jr. YBA decided to donate the proceeds from the sale to the Campaign, to benefit the Jodo Shinshu Center. Gary Kagawuchi is also president of the Los Angeles Betsuin, and his son Jonathan is currently president of the LA Betsuin Jr. YBA.

A 12 oz. bag of the panko sells for $3.83 each. If anyone is interested in purchasing, please contact any of the Southern District Jr. YBA chapters. Thank you so much for your continued support!
“An Empty Urn”  
by Tamiko Panzella

Very much, May and Tamiko!  

An Empty Urn” was written by Tamiko Panzella, a Japanese actor, when NHK broadcasted the TV program entitled, “New Woman Report from America: Hiroko who lived under the Star-Spangled Banner” on 4th March. She would like to share this very impressive essay with you. Thank you very much, May and Tamiko!

I am looking up at a wall covered in Japanese characters. I am crying, even though I cannot read a single one. But I know that each name represents an individual who was a victim of the atomic bomb. The wall is covered in sisters and brothers, daughters and sons. I know that there has been unimaginably painful deaths, that each witnessed true evil within the last hours of their too-short lives. They died on this day that mine go unnoticed. An elderly man sits on a bench behind me, and he is crying too. Maybe his brother or sister is up there on that wall. Maybe his family never found his sibling’s body among the heaping piles of burnt, battered flesh. I know that my grandma and her father found little Mama’s body after searching through the wreckage for three days and nights. I recognized her only by the embroidery on her undergarments; her face had been burned and bruised beyond recognition. If they had come along a few minutes later, she would have been burned to ashes along with hundreds of other unidentified casualties. Maybe this old man’s little brother or sister has been one of these piles, and he is crying here in hopes that this empty urn of a monument will carry his prayers to heaven, where he now may be; maybe he does not read Japanese either. Maybe he is crying because he knows that for a while in a corner of his face. That those faces blended together, indistinguishable from one another, and those voices that followed the blast, just as

their names seem to blend together now on this wall. That each child’s cries were indistinguishable among the thousands of other desperate voices. That the streets and buildings in which those children had been brought up were filled with desolate, eradicated in wind that followed the flash of heat. I look around and still can’t believe that Peace Park, so full of color and beauty, was the site of the most tragic events in history. Lush green has overtaken the ruins that once spanned a one mile radius. But we follow old paper cranes that have been rebuilt by monuments and memorials, each covered in origami cranes in the shape of a swan, that their own cranes are flying somewhere among the others. The thousands of cranes that my family, my friends, and I worked so hard to fold into the rainbow of the hundreds of thousands of other cranes that have that same three folders. Each time I come to this wall, I see thousands of cranes with me. This time, my new roommates helped me. I taught them how to fold the birds, and the story of how this tradition started. I told them that Sadako Sasaki was two years old when the bomb was dropped. Ten years later, she fell sick as a result of the radiation. While in the hospital, she heard a story about a crane who lived to be one thousand years old. She thought that if she could fold one thousand paper cranes, the gods would cure her. She reached 644 before she died at twelve years old, and her classmates finished the remaining 346 to be buried with her. A few years after her death, her holding golden crane was erected in the Peace Park. Since then, millions of people have brought thousands of thousands of cranes to Hiroshima. “Awww,” my roommates crooned when I finished my story. “That’s so sad.” But they did not cry. And they could not understand why I, the girl who never let anyone see me cry, was reduced to tears over a story about someone I did not even know. They helped me fold cranes, but they did not understand what they were folding. That the fruits of their labors would bring a splash of color into a place. My fear was that nowhere to turn. That they were folding wings to be able to fly. That this city has been brought to its knees, fly.

Do you want to help? Me, a tourist from the west, taps me on my leg and snaps me back to reality. “With what?” I asked, dabbing the last tear from the corner of my eyes. “We’re making an offering.” She hands me a small water bottle, and I can tell that she is preparing to fold her crane as she is supposed to do with it. I take her hand and lead her around the wall to where a tall memorial statue stands. I open the bottle, hand it back or, and prod her to step forward. She places the bottle at the statue’s feet, then steps back next to me. We put our hands together, bow, and whisper, “Nana Amida Butsu.” “I put my faith in Buddha.” She looks around self-consciously, probably wondering why people are looking at her and smiling for doing what would usually be considered listening. She does not know that she has pro- vided fresh, cool water to people who had been so thirsty that they were ultimately killed by water poisoned by radiation. If she knew, she would feel as proud as I did when I performed this ritual some thirteen years ago. I was six years old when I made my first trip to Japan. My mom, my uncle, my sisters, and I went into the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum while my grandma waited outside. “Why isn’t she coming?” I asked, but I was shushed and ushered into the museum. I found out soon enough. It started off like a normal museum, but within a few rooms I began to feel as if I had stepped into a nightmar- e. I saw images of extreme pain and suffering – people whose bodies had been mangled, whose clothing patterns had been embalmed onto their skin, whose skin had melted and dripped off their bones like wax off a candle. I was carried out of the emergency exit to where my grandma waited outside. We cried together, and I wondered why anyone would purposely cause so much pain, why they would be so mean. I would have nightmares for the following weeks, waking up in the middle of the night and asking those same questions.

My aunt remembers this and has decided to spare me the damage. I will still not be visiting the museum on this trip. A part of me envies her innocence. But I will never forget the sense of pride I felt when giving water to those who had been thirsty for so many years. My aunt may have mercifully spared my cousin the terror, but without that terror her actions have no meaning for me. I can feel the way my experience changed my life each time I choose forgiveness over anger, kindness over hostility, or love or hate. I refer to the other side of the wall where my grandma is showing the rest of my family which characters spell out her name. “There,” she says, pointing at the Wall, “Mama Tamura.” Her sun- glasses cover her eyes, so I cannot tell what she is thinking. She is probably remembering her little sister as she was during the good times. I wonder if she is ever able to repress the awful memories of these three days she and her father spent looking for her body. I see a tear trickle out from behind her glasses and know that she has not forgot- ten.

We step back and look up at the wall of names which memorials to the women who proved to be so mean. Now she is crying, I am crying, my sisters and my mom are crying. The old man is still sitting on that bench behind us, and he is still crying. Hundreds of people are probably crying throughout the park. Maybe they are crying for their lost brothers or sisters, sons or daughters, mothers or fathers. Maybe they are crying for their friends, neighbors, their teachers, or their classmates. But they are probably like me. We are crying for them all.

Fuku
Continued from Front Page

Continued from Front Page

Hisatsu

Continued from Page 4

Great Power of AMIDA, to pull us out of a terrible condition, he had missed Shingon’s point of looking to AMIDA not only as the

combined Other in the Oneness of Life needs to make the necessary changes, but the Boundless Compassion and Infinite Wisdom which together with us in the Oneness of Other despair all that exist in the entire universe! AMIDA is not a separate Everlasting Power, or God, that has no other need.

The more we open our eyes to Shinran’s wonderful insight, the more we can appreciate from the oneness of the great religious thinkers of the 13th century. Jodo Shinshu (True Pure Land Sect) will improve and develop.

Gaiso

Dharma Missionary Project

ministerial staff to conduct the service every Sunday. On a rotational basis the ministers, including Rev. Harada, Rev. Akio Miyaji, and three Ministers Assistants, Rev. Mutsuko Wonda, Mr. Bill Dearth and Mr. Jon Turner have taken turns every week to serve the needs of the Vista sangha. Fortunately, Vista and its members are the recipients of this wonderful program. The Assistants, in particular, have conducted services on Sundays, given dharma talks and led discussions. The program is a highly successful conclusion. The event was a wonderful experience. The program is a refreshing. The MA Program far exceeds all expectations we had. Some members say that the present ministerial situation is working even better than ever before and are grateful to Reverend Harada and to the program. In collaboration with the leaderships of both temples the assistants program has been a great success. The program provides a “win-win” situation for Vista members and the MAP participants.

I will end this article with what I refer to as a “win-win” situation for Vista members and the MAP participants. While attending a committee meeting in Berkeley recently, I had lunch at a local Chinese restaurant. As in many small towns like Reno, Nevada would seem to have little to do with Rev. Satô’s circle of Dharma Missionary Project in London. However, as D. T. Suzuki observes in one of his essays, “Zen talks of a pair of mirrors facing one another in which nothing is reflected. In the place where no images dwell Zen and Shin mutually complement and shed light on one another.” Much the same can be said to have taken place by Reverend Satô kindly sharing of his London experience with the ministers of the BCA.

Thanks to the intensive efforts of Reverend Satô, the “Ne-Sumitsu” Kofuku Kenbu Kai of the BCA Ministers Association was brought to a highly successful conclusion. The event was a rare one that opened up the channels to let the world know that there is a Zen and Shin mutually complement and shed light on one another.”

This brief report very respectfully submitted by W. S. Yokoyama, of Kyoto, Japan; an observer for the MAP.

Thanks to Rev. Satô, we enjoyed a most meaningful Fuku. A special thanks to Rev. Wayne Yokoyama for attending and particip- ing in the Dharma Missionary Project Project in London.

Much the same can be said to have taken place by Reverend Satô kindly sharing of his London experience with the ministers of the BCA.

The more we open our eyes to Shinran’s wonderful insight, the more we can appreciate from the oneness of the great religious thinkers of the 13th century. Jodo Shinshu (True Pure Land Sect) will improve and develop.

Gaiso
今月の法話

私が生きるということ

お釈迦様が、まだ釈迦族の王子、シッダルタ王子であっただけの話です。ある日、王子は、父親と一緒に、ある農村へ出掛けました。そこでは、鰻で飼われていた農民がいました。その農民が、鰻で飼っているところや、犬の毛の中から、一匹のミズが飛び出されてきました。そこで、一羽の鰻を飛んでき、そのミズを食べました。それを見上げる王子は、「ああ、なんだと美しいこと。生き物は、生き抜くためにお互いに生命を奪い合っている……」とおっしゃられました。

私は、その王子が見たと同じような場面を見ることができました。私が小学生のとき、鰻を食べていました。ある朝、鳥が目をしていたところ、鰻がおり、鰻は、鰻で食べられてしまいました。テレビを見ていても、アフリカの大地で、ライオンが、サウナを捕えて食べてしまう場面を見ることもあります。そんな場面をみると、たいそうだ、残酷だと思いました。しかし、鰻はライオンも自分を生きるために何かを食べなくてはいけません。それがあなたの食用でしょう。

その時、私は思っている悲しみは、ただの観客としての悲しみです。私は、私もミズと同じように、いつ食べられるかわからない、いつ命が終わるかわからない、という心配はしていないのです。そして、また、私も鳥を同じように、他の命を奪って、食事を生いているという意識もありはありません。

しかし、実は、私は、あるミズを食べて生きていると同様に、蛙を食べ、魚を食べ、野菜を食べ、いろんな命を奪って、いただいており、生きています。かんがえても、あがたいことです。ところが、私は、いつも生きつついただいており、あがたいことだと、他の命に対して、感謝や犠牲の念を持ちながら過ごしているわけではありません。

ある日、たくさんのカタツムリが玄関の横の壁に、張り付いていました。カタツムリは、我が家の植木、草花を食べています。そこで、わたしたちは、「これも自然の冒険、カタツムリ生きるために食事をしている。壁がどう汚れても仕方がない……」と考えることもなく、壁の全部のカタツムリを壁からたたき落として、殺虫剤を塗り、また、裏庭へ回り、カタツムリがいないところに殺虫剤を塗り、全滅させました。数日後、無数のカタツムリの殻が庭にありました。その日、私が思ったのは、「ふー、やっぱ、やっつけた！'

豚や魚や野菜に対しては、食事の念があったとしても、カタツムリに対しては、「このやる」——という憎みも似た思いしかありません。それぞれ的生命に対して、態度も思いもかえて、差別して生きているのが私です。

また、ミズが、壁に飛出して来て僕の首にしてきた時も、彼らは、まきっぱ、そんな突然、死ぬとは思っていなかったのでしょうか。しかし、ミズは、僕に食べられれ、カタツムリは、僕の張った殺虫剤によって突然、その命を奪われました。私の命も同様で、いつ終わるかわからない命を生きているはずです。しかし、私は、決して自分の命で、ミズやカタツムリのように突然窮地となることはありません。それぞれの命の延長、生命のあり方は、一つ一つ異っているものです。長く生きる命もあるし、短い命もあります。50年先も生きている命もあれば、明日に何が起こればしないことでしょう。それも、わかりているから、私は、明日にはこの命がなくなっているとは、全く思っていません。

また、私の生活は、その農民と同じです。農民は、ただ、命を食していただけです。その農民は、自分が命をくれたことにとって、ミズが農村に食べられると考え、気付きもしていなかったでしょう。農民は、ただ、自分の仕事をしただけですね。

私も、その農民と同じです。大いに運命を運転した次日、車の前を見てみると、車名を知らない小さな虫の命がたくさん食べられやすいと知っています。車を運転している間、そんなこと、気付きもしません。私は、ただ、安全に気をつけて運転していただけはしないでしょうか。しかし、事実として、多くの命を食べています。それにかかわらず、反省する思い、かわいそうに思う思いはありません。

このお話は、お釈迦様が、お説を出家される一つのきっかけになった出来事です。お話いのち、ただ、観客として一つ一つの命を見たのではなく、農民でもミズでも、それぞれが自分の命と同じであると見ればならないでしょう。私が、生きるために、いただいた生命は、犠牲にして生命を関与している命は、家族や友達との関わり、日常でいたいる食事物にとっての関わりなど、自分が気付きているところ、見えているところだけでなく、日常気付けていないところ、見えていないところにもたくさんあるということを、このお話は、教えているように思います。

合掌

楊 活也
ローダイ仏教会、ウォルナッツクラブ仏教会駐在

ご門主の願いを受けて
日本仏教史に輝く巨星

法然上人と親鸞聖人

「アメリカでアメリカの会員の得度（とくど）を」という教団の長年の願いを全国すべての会員に伝えることができないが、この度本来京都の西山別院で行なわれる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝えた。この度本来京都市西山別院の習礼所で行われる得度習礼の半分をバークレーの浄土真宗センターで行なう、と伝え