



Metta

Summer 2018

Statement Against the Separation of Families

Inside this issue:

-Statement Against the Separation of Families
Page 1

-Announcement: BSC Shakuhachi Club
Page 2

-Jewels: An Introduction to Buddhism for American Youths, Scouts and the Young at Heart
Page 3

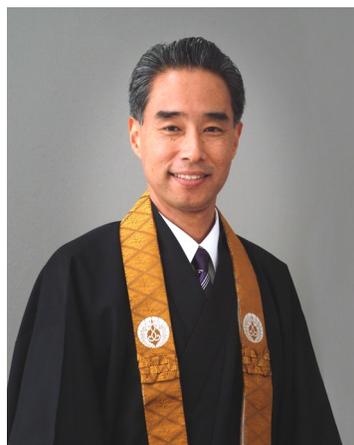
• BSC Summer Session Schedule
Page 5

- Buddhism and Shakuhachi
Page 5

-What to say when someone sneezes?
Page 6

-Mahalos and In Memoriam
Page 7

-Upcoming Events
Page 8



"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." In just a few words, the above, which is found on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, summarizes for many around the world, past, present and future, what America represents, promises, is and should be. As human beings, as people, we all need hope. As a nation, are we going back on our promise to the world? I hope not.

From a Buddhist perspective, both the process and end result are important. The procedure of how matters are handled is as important as the outcome. While the current policies of our nation do not outright deny individuals and families entry into the United States, the procedure must be more compassionate and should not be tearing families apart. The bond between parent(s) and child(ren) is one of the most, if not the most, precious relationships a person can have especially when young. The policy of Zero Tolerance is too extreme. As Americans, I believe, we have pride in that we are a just and fair nation. We may not be perfect, but in our interactions around the globe, we have tried to uphold this standard which is becoming of a world leader.

Our Jodo Shinshu Buddhist tradition has a long history of valuing human life, seeing the importance of relationships including with the natural environment and emphasizing inclusiveness as evidenced by the Great Vows of Amida (Amitabha-Amitayus) Buddha and writings of Shinran Shonin and Rennyo Shonin, our foremost spiritual leaders.

Although the circumstances may have been a little different, I also draw from the past experiences of a segment of our Buddhist membership who, because of their (Japanese) ethnic and national origins, had to unfairly experience separation from family during the last great world war. There was, and for some still remain, so much pain and trauma from the separation. It is a circumstance that should not be repeated for anyone. Is it not one of our basic understandings in America that the family is the backbone of our nation? We need strong individuals and families being guided by universal values to be a better nation and world.

A quote from the Metta Sutra reads, "May all life be happy. May they be joyous and live in safety. All life, whether weak or strong, in high or middle or low realms of existence, small or great, visible or invisible, near or far, born or to be born. May all life be happy. Let none deceive another nor despise any life in any state; Let none by anger or hatred wish harm to another. Even as a mother at the risk of her life watches over and protects her only child, so with a boundless mind should one cherish all life, suffusing love over the entire world, above, below, and all around without limit; so let us cultivate an infinite goodwill toward the whole world."

As such, with this statement, I express my lament and express my ardent wish that we rescind the Zero Tolerance Policy and its ramifications which result in separating families. May we become a more just, fair and compassionate nation.

Eric Matsumoto
Bishop

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, June 20, 2018

Announcement: BSC Shakuhachi Club

The BSC has established the BSC Shakuhachi Club as a BSC sponsored club. The head instructor of the Shakuhachi Club is Rev. Thomas Okano, former Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. During his studies at Ryukoku University to become a Shin Buddhist minister, Rev. Okano also undertook the study of playing the shakuhachi with Shunzan Tomii, a proponent of the Tozan School. Rev. Okano continued his study with Genzan Miyoshi, a student of Shunzan and then received the title, Junshihan and the artistic name of "Ryozan" in 1966.

The Club members receive a weekly lesson from Rev. Okano, former bishop of the Hawaii Kyodan. The BSC and Club periodically sponsors special classes conducted by Genzan Miyoshi in the BSC Lecture Hall. Miyoshi sensei, as mentioned, is a teacher of Rev. Okano and a Dai Shihan (Grand Master) of the Tozan School. (For more about Shakuhachi and its history please see page 5)

Rev. Okano with members of the BSC Shakuhachi Club in 2014

(Rev. Okano is the third person from the left in the first row)



The current logo from all the documents I have found was designed in 1992 under the direction of Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, when he was director of the Buddhist Study Center. The background of the black circle with the white stripes images a scene of the calm ocean and symbolize serene and tranquil state of mind created by the Buddhist teachings which is represented by the white lotus flower in the center of the logo.

This also symbolizes the BSC, located in Hawaii on the crossroads of the Western cultures and the Oriental cultures, which shares the better understanding of different cultures and contributes towards the peace of human beings and the world.

The white lotus flower symbolizes a stage that is associated with the state of bodhi; that of becoming awakened to the wonders of it all. When one reaches this state it is said that one has mental purity and has reached a state of spiritual perfection.

Metta
The Newsletter
of the Buddhist Study Center
Volume 46, Number 1– Spring 2018

METTA is published by the:

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Introduction to the Upcoming Book:
**Jewels: An Introduction to Buddhism for American Youths,
 Scouts and the Young at Heart**
With a bit of Humor
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Kenshin Tanaka



This is the Introduction to a new book that Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka, this year's Summer Session speaker, is presently working on. He has graciously given Metta the permission to share it with our readers — The Editors.

The title of this book, Jewels, comes from the Buddhist teaching that sees all living beings as the priceless jewels. You and I, along with all beings, are like the jewels that are linked together to illuminate each other. Also, these jewels are within each one of us waiting to shine forth to overcome suffering and realize Awakening, the aim of Buddhism. So, the jewels symbolize the outer and the inner conditions of our lives. Let us first look at the outer jewels.

The outer jewels are talked about in a well-known metaphor called the "Indra's Net of Jewels" in a scripture called the Flower Garland Sutra*. I have expanded on the original version to make it more meaningful to young readers.

An expansive net extends endlessly throughout the whole universe in all four directions. At each "eye" (where the woof and warp cross) of the net hangs a shining jewel. Hence, countless number of jewels is found on the net and together forms a galactic bed of shimmering jewels. It's an amazing sight to behold!

Since each jewel is tied to the net, it is connected to all the other jewels. No jewel is left out or is isolated. Each jewel feels especially connected to those jewels located nearby, for they are easily seen. How-

ever, since all the jewels are connected to the same net, a jewel is actually connected even to those unseen jewels located thousands of miles away. No jewel can shine by itself. It needs the light from the other jewels to shine. This relation among the jewels is called "All for one," for all the other jewels are involved in illuminating that one jewel.

On the other hand, a jewel does not just receive light but also gives out light to illuminate the other jewels. Each jewel illuminates the nearby jewels with greater intensity but also illuminates those jewels located thousands of miles away no matter how meager the intensity. This relation is called "One for all," for that one jewel is actively involved in illuminating all the other jewels.

Hence, each jewel receives light in the "All for one" relationship and simultaneously sends out light in the "One for all" interaction. The jewels engage each other in a passive as well as in an active manner. They need each other and help each other. So, the jewels are mutually linked, interconnected, and interdependent.

Next important quality of the jewels is that each jewel is unique. Despite the countless number of jewels, no two are exactly the same. Every jewel is unique in its shape, size, color and texture. Some are diamond-shaped, round, rectangular, and the rest are in every conceivable shape imaginable. The same goes for their size, color and texture. Some are small as a dewdrop, others as large as a baseball, and others are in between. The colors are of the primary colors of red, green, and blue, while others are of secondary colors of yellow, magenta and cyan, and others are colors in between. The textures vary from smooth to bumpy to jagged to everything in

between and beyond. Even the lights differ in their color, sheen and brightness.

On this net of jewels, each jewel is acknowledged for its unique qualities. Amidst the trillions of jewels, no two are exactly the same. And each jewel is counted and valued for its contribution to the functioning of the entire net of jewels. So, every jewel has the right to exist and thrive but also has an inherent self worth for its unique qualities and its contribution on this net of jewels!

So, based on this metaphor, each of us is one of those jewels. We are unique, yet dependent on others. We are dependent on others, yet can have influence on others. Such is the nature of our existence and our relationship with others, which includes our family, our friends, our community, the nation, the international community and the natural world.

Buddhism helps each of us to come to fully realize and appreciate this reality and to contribute to greater happiness and peace for others and for ourselves. Doesn't this offer an encouraging and positive outlook on life? I hope you have been inspired by the metaphor of the Net of Jewels.

Let us now take a look at the inner jewels as told in a parable found in another scripture called the Lotus Sutra. A poor man visited the house of a close, rich friend. The friend wined and dined him with delicious food. The poor man had gotten drunk and fell asleep. The rich friend had to go out on an official business without telling the man, but before leaving the rich friend left a priceless jewel by sewing it in the lining of his friend's clothes. Not noticing anything, the poor man woke up and set out on a journey to other countries.

The poor man did not make himself aim for a better life. So he earned little money and had to be satisfied with very little. It was a struggle to make ends meet. One day by chance, he ran in to his rich friend, who saw how hard life continued to be for his friend. The rich man scolded the poor friend for not realizing the priceless jewel he had left in his friend's clothes. In realizing that he was in posses-

sion of a priceless jewel, the man was overjoyed for he was now rich enough to fulfill all of his needs.

How do you like this parable? The priceless jewel symbolizes the potentiality that we all have to become a happier, wiser, and better person like the Buddha, the Awakened One. No one is excluded. Everyone is on board.

I hope that you gained greater confidence and optimism from the metaphor and the story about the outer and inner jewels. It is now up to each of you to open your mind and heart to learn the basic teachings and practices. An "open mind" is like the parachute, for it works best when it's opened! So, let us get started.

We look forward to the upcoming book that will be published in the near future.

About Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka 2018 Summer Session Speaker July 23-27

After serving as Associate Professor and Assistant Dean at IBS for 10 years and a resident priest for 3 years in a Jodo Shinshu temple in California, Dr. Tanaka taught as Professor of Buddhist Studies at Musashino University for 20 years. He currently serves as Chairman of the Editorial Committee of the Chinese Buddhist Canon English Translation Project sponsored by the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism (BDK). He was recently appointed Adjunct Researcher at the Hongwanji Comprehensive Research Center.

He is the former President of the Int. Assoc. of Shin Buddhist Studies as well as the Japanese Assoc. for the Study of Buddhism and Psychology.

He is the 2017 recipient of the 27th Nakamura Hajime Eastern Study Prize, awarded to scholars who distinguish themselves in the field of Indian and Buddhist studies. He was the object of a one-hour NHK Educational Television documentary series entitled "The Age of Kokoro (heart/mind)" on April 8, 2018.

SUMMER SESSION SCHEDULE AT THE BSC

Monday, July 23, 2018

6pm Registration

6:30-9 Session (Opening Service) starts

Lecture: Dr. Tanaka

Topic: Everyday Buddhism: How We Look at Life and Dealing with Difficult People and Situations

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

6pm Registration

6:30-9 Lecture: Dr. Tanaka

Topic: Everyday Buddhism: Confronting One's Own Death and that of Our Loved Ones

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

6pm Registration

6:30-9 Lecture: Dr. Tanaka

Topic: Everyday Buddhism: Turning Difficulties into Renewed Life and Actions to Bring Centeredness in our Lives

Thursday, July 26, 2018

6pm Registration

6:30-9 Lecture: Dr. Tanaka

Topic: Everyday Buddhism: You're Fine Just as You Are and Life is a Beautiful Bumpy Road

Friday, July 27, 2018

6pm Registration

6:30-9 Session (Closing Service) starts

Lecture: Dr. Tanaka

Topic: Everyday Buddhism: You Can Always Let Go When You get Tired and Working to Benefit Others



Buddhism and Shakuhachi

The Shakuhachi is a bamboo flute introduced to Japan from China. The name is a reference to its length in traditional units of Asian measure: *Shaku*, which is 30.3 centimeters and *Hachi*, which is eight, is actually an abbreviated reference to *Hachi Sun*, which means "eight Sun". A *Sun* is one tenth of a *Shaku*. So, a standard Shakuhachi is one shaku and eight sun or 54.54 centimeters in length, thus the name *Shakuhachi*.

Playing the Shakuhachi was adopted by an offshoot of Rinzai Zen Buddhism, called the *Fuke Shu*. The proponents of *Fuke Shu* referred to the Shakuhachi as a *Houki*, or Dharma Instrument, because they employed it in the meditative practice of *Suizen* (Blowing Meditation). The *Fuke Shu* were especially active from the thirteenth through the nineteenth centuries. The monks who were practitioners of *Suizen* were called *Komuso* and wandered throughout Japan playing their flutes and wearing distinctive woven basket hats that entirely covered their heads. However, this practice and the playing of the Shakuhachi fell out of favor during the Meiji Period because of the sect's relationship with the Tokugawa government that the Meiji Imperial government had replaced at the beginning of that Period. The

(Continued on page 6)



Ask Rev. Ron

Rev. Ron Miyamura is the Resident Minister of the MidWest Buddhist Temple in Chicago Illinois. The temple newsletter has a feature column called "Ask Rev. Ron" where readers get responses to questions related to Buddhism and being Buddhist. This is from the April, 2018 issue.

What to say when someone sneezes?

Q: Rev. Ron, what do you say to someone when they sneeze?

A: There are a variety of explanations for why people say "God bless you" or "bless you" when someone sneezes. Among them is the belief that it is said to prevent the devil from stealing your soul because it once was believed that a sneeze separates the soul from the body.

According to Wikipedia, National Geographic reports that during the plague of AD 590, "Pope Gregory I ordered unceasing prayer for divine intercession.

"Part of his command was that anyone sneezing be blessed immediately ('God bless you'), since sneezing was often the first sign that someone was falling ill with the plague." By AD 750, it became customary to say 'God bless you' as a response to one sneezing. The other common response to a sneeze is "gesundheit," which means to wish someone good health when they sneeze and hopefully to forestall the illness that the sneeze portends.

But these explanations don't relate to any Buddhist beliefs or those in Asian cultures and, thus, as a Shin Buddhist, there is no need for a "blessing" when someone sneezes. But as an American, it is certainly appropriate to respond to a sneeze with a "bless you" or "gesundheit" out of cultural politeness—just realize that it is not a Buddhist thing.

COMMENT: Some people who consider themselves Buddhist do not participate in common courtesies or traditional activities associated with other religions "for religious reasons" not realizing that it could a form of dichotomous thinking that Buddhist should be aware of or even avoid because it can be the cause of intolerant or hurtful behavior. Great answer Rev Ron!

(Continued from page 5)

Meiji government later on permitted the playing the Shakuhachi and gradually the playing of the instrument was revived.

During that revival, there were two major schools of Shakuhachi: the Kinko School that adheres more to the traditions and practices originating with the *Fuke Shu*, and Tozan School that tends towards community performance and interaction with other forms of music and instruments. Kinko emphasizes the cultivation of the player very much in accordance with the self-cultivation practice of *Suizen* while the Tozan School emphasizes players performing with and for others, mirroring in a way how Shin Buddhists gather in social communities to live together with Buddhist values. One way is not better than the other but appeals to different personal preferences and personalities.



Tozan School Founder: Tozan Nakao

A Brief History: Tozan School of School of Shakuhachi

The founder of the Tozan School, Tozan Nakao, was born Rinzo Nakao on October 5, 1876 in present day Hirakata City. In 1894, at the age of seventeen he became a *komuso* and on February 15, 1896 established the Tozan School. He moved to Tokyo in 1915 and together with Michio Miyagi, the blind koto master, established the *Shin Nihon Ongaku*, or the New Japan Music movement. In 1930 Tozan moved to Kyoto to concentrate on nurturing the

(Continued on page 7)

MAHALO FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO THE BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER

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IN MEMORIAM

In Memory of Mrs. Florence Yamasaki
Mrs. Raymond Yamasaki Petaluma, CA

We gratefully welcome memorial donations and donations in all forms. We are now on Paypal! There is a link on our website. Please make all checks payable to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Thank You.

The Golden Chain of Love

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.

I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself.

I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, and to say pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful deeds, knowing that on what I do now depends not only my happiness or unhappiness, but also that of others.

May every link in Amida Buddha's Golden Chain of Love become bright and strong and may we all attain Perfect Peace.

(Continued from page 6)

next generation of Tozan performers and teachers. Among them was Shunzan Tomii, the teacher of Genzan Miyoshi and Thomas (Ryozan) Okano.

The Tozan School And the BSC Shakuhachi Club

Until recently it was a little known fact that Rev. Okano is a Junshihan of the Tozan School and started teaching informally free of charge at the BSC starting in March of 2013. Rev. Okano still donates his time but a formally sponsored club, the BSC Shakuhachi Club has been established this year 2018. See page 2 more details.

Pictured to the right is Genzan Miyoshi performing at the Hawaii Betsuin. Miyoshi Sensei began studying Shakuhachi with Shunzan Tomii at the age of twelve, received the artistic name of "Genzan" in 1964 and the title of Dai Shihan (Grand Master). In 1983 he received the highest designation in the world of Shakuhachi, *Chikurinken*. He is a graduate of Ryukoku University a Nishi Hongwanji Institution.

The BSC is very fortunate that Miyoshi Sensei is working with the BSC to help nurture a cultural awareness of the Shakuhachi in Hawaii.



Dai Shihan Genzan Miyoshi

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Metta

is a publication of the
Buddhist Study Center

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Upcoming Events

Summer Session with Dr. Ken Tanaka	July 23 - 27
Buddhist Discussion Group	July 23
Zen Meditation	July 31
Shakuhachi with Rev. Thomas Okano	Aug 1
Yoga Class with Lisa Yanagi	Aug 1
Shakuhachi with Rev. Thomas Okano	Aug 2
Zen Meditation	Aug 7
Shakuhachi with Rev. Thomas Okano	Aug 8
Yoga Class with Lisa Yanagi	Aug 8
Annual 3 Petals Peace Day Walk	Aug 9
Shakuhachi with Rev. Thomas Okano	Aug 9