

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 424

May-June 2014

jihō

WWW

RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

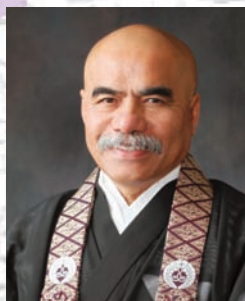
THOUGHTS ON FEEL GOOD BUDDHISM AND JODO SHINSHU

*Although I take refuge in the Pure Land way,
It is hard to have a true and sincere mind,
This self is false and insincere;
I completely lack a pure mind.*

*Each of us, in outward bearing,
Makes a show of being wise,
good, and dedicated;
But so great are our greed, anger,
perversity, and deceit
That we are filled with all forms of
malice and cunning.*

*Extremely difficult is it to put an
end to our evil nature;
The mind is like a venomous snake
or scorpion.*

*Our performance of good acts
is also poisoned;
Hence it is called false and empty practice.*



**RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES**

On the front cover of the February 3, 2014 issue of TIME magazine, there is a young, beautiful, blond woman, with eyes closed meditating. The caption reads “*The Mindful Revolution.*” Turning to the article, the author writes about her short journey in meditation and mindfulness and how it transformed her to resist the urge to check her e-mail or Facebook on her cell phone while dining at a restaurant. Of course I am being somewhat sarcastic, but

in truth this is what many “*night stand Buddhists*” are searching for ... how to deal with stress of everyday life.

Regarding the “*seeker-friendly*” approach ... there’s no doubt that many schools of Buddhism use this approach, the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh to name some of the more popular Buddhist leaders. Their feel-good approach seems to be reaching many westerners who are searching for something spiritual yet not religious – something to make them feel good yet not too critical of oneself. Many are curious about what Buddhism is and “what can it do for me”.

However, as we consider the narrative of the historical Shakyamuni Buddha, the goal of Siddhartha Gautama becoming enlightened was not to feel good, but to end suffering. If Siddhartha wanted to feel good, he would have never ventured out from the comfort of his father’s palace.

Likewise, Jodo Shinshu is not a warm “fuzzy-wuzzy” religion. It does not intend to make you feel good. Jodo Shinshu stresses the ego, the limitedness, and foolishness of human beings.

The reading I began with is from Shinran Shonin’s *Shozomatsu Wasan, Hymns Of the Dharma Ages ... Gutoku’s Hymns of Lament and Reflection.* There are 16 verses of Shinran’s deep spiritual awaking to his true self.

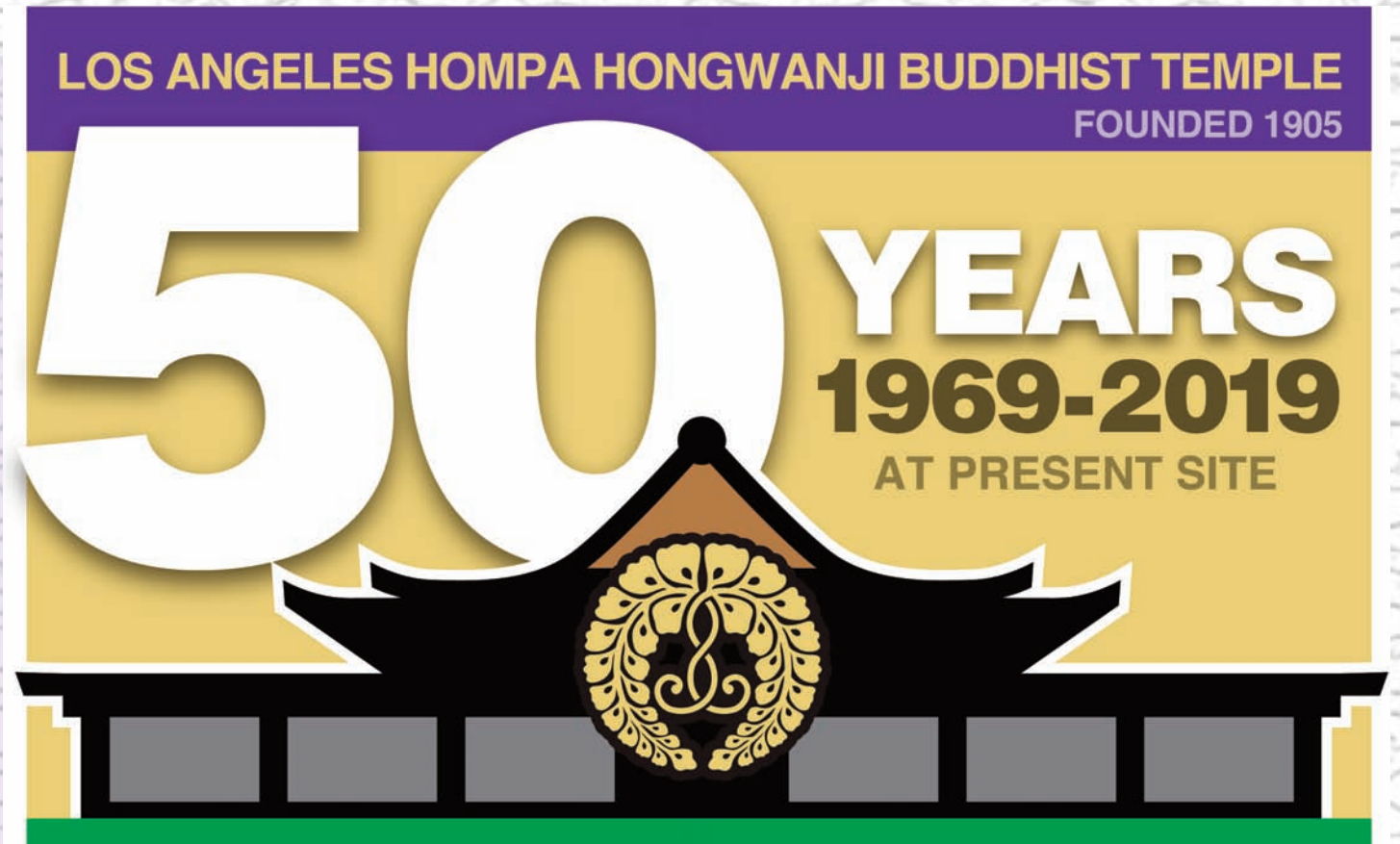
Some people think that the teachings of Jodo Shinshu are pessimistic or negative because all we ministers ever talk about is how evil and
(continued on page 9)

Los Angeles
Homba Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple
815 East First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

TEL: 213.680.9130
FAX: 213.680.2210

WEB: nishihongwanji-la.org

EMAIL: info@nishihongwanji-la.org



BETSUIN, 50 YEARS AT FIRST & VIGNES

In the year 2019 the Los Angeles Betsuin will celebrate its 50th Year at its current site on the corner of 1st and Vignes Streets in Little Tokyo.

To commemorate this auspicious occasion, a 50th Year project has been inaugurated. This project is composed of three parts:

- Onaijin (Altar) Restoration
- Updating/Repair of the building facilities
- Buddhist Education Project Expansion

Further information will be forthcoming in upcoming issues of the Betsuin Jiho.



Posters of photos depicting on-aijin and temple facilities damages needing restoration and repairs.

MY ALTAR, MY SPIRITUAL HOME

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

On March 21st, the long awaited refurbished scrolls of Rennyō Shonin, Myōnyō Shonin, and Seven Masters were returned to our temple from Kyoto, Japan. (Pictures on page 10)

The scrolls were granted to us by our mother temple, Hongwanji, in Kyoto, Japan and issued by the former Monshu Kosho Ohtani on August 12, 1969 just prior to the Dedication Ceremony for the installation of the new altar and completion of the construction of the present Betsuin temple. The commemoration service was held on November 16, 1969, and officiated by the former Monshu Kosho Ohtani. There were many dedicated members who made tremendous financial sacrifices to engage in their strong commitment to hand down the essential teaching of the Nembutsu to the generations to come and spread the Buddha-Dharma to all.

The scroll of Rennyō Shonin was donated by Mr. Eiju Sasajima and the scrolls of Myōnyō Shonin and Seven Masters were both donated by Mr. Masami Sasaki. Both donors were our Betsuin presidents. They have already passed on but I strongly believe that their founding spirit of the propagation of the Buddha-dharma is still alive today within our sangha and present Betsuin temple. On March 30th, we observed the Dedication Service for the refurbished scrolls and Kick-off Service for 50 Years at Present Betsuin Location to express our appreciation to the masters and teachers for enabling us to encounter the true teachings. Also to our forefathers for what they have left for us, which is not only the temple facility but, foremost, the essential teaching of the nembutsu. I was happy to have witnessed the many sangha members joyfully chanting the sutra and listening to the teachings on this occasion as we rededicate ourselves for renewing our commitment to walk the path of the nembutsu. Also to engage in our commitment to maintain and preserve our spiritual home which is represented by our temple altar and the temple facilities as our main commemoration project for **50 Years at Present Bestuin Location**.

There are many ornaments representing the working of *Boundless Wisdom* and *Compassion of Amida Tathagata* in the altar. They are expressions of the working of the Primal Vow of Amida Tathagata in a tangible form. Amida Tathagata is colorless and formless as well as the Pure Land. For those who cannot see the perfection of the true reality by our inner eyes which are always covered with blind passions like me, Amida Tathagata manifests Universal Truth of Oneness in a form of body as the most

compassionate, wise, and noble figure and also in a form of space and time, our temple altar, as the world of Infinite Light and Life.

It is said that *shinjin* or true entrusting mind emerges from the proper care and arrangement of the Buddha's altar as actualized and established the Pure Land by Bodhisattva Dharmakara who became Amida Tathagata with Primal Vow. Disposition of an altar reflects individuals' attitude toward the true entrusting mind and heart of the Buddha and the teachings. The statue, image, or Name of Amida Tathagata is the manifestation of Boundless Wisdom and Compassion and also represents our forefathers who selflessly dedicated and contributed their time and energy to our temple for solely planting the seeds of the nembutsu and handing down the essential teachings of the nembutsu to the next generations. Our temple altar represents their constant working as all buddhas who always remind us to listen to the teachings and live in the teachings daily in the Universal Truth of Oneness. Although they have already passed away, they, as buddhas, are still working hard for us to listen to their dharma messages. As we commit ourselves to refurbish our spiritual home which is our temple altar as our main commemoration project for 50 Years at Present Betsuin Location, it is my wish that each and every person who is able to participate in this once-in-a-life-time occasion becomes mindful of the intentions and efforts of our forefathers, carefully listens to the nembutsu teaching based on the Primal Vow of Amida Tathagata, and positively moves forward to realize and renew the true intent of establishment of this temple, LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, which is primarily a place for listening to the Primal Vow of Amida Tathagata. I hope each one of us as a sangha will further take on our pioneers' Buddhist heritage as we move forth positively into a new history of the LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. I look forward to working with you for the future of our temple and Jodo Shinshu in the spirit of Oneness on the Nembutsu Teachings.

*Such is the benevolence of Amida Buddha's
Great Compassion,*

*That we must strive to return it,
even to the breaking of our bodies;
Such is the benevolence of the masters
and true teachers,*

*That we must endeavour to repay it,
even to our bones becoming dust.*

—CWS P.412, #59, Hymns of the
Dharma-Ages, Ondoku-san



MONPO — LISTEN TO THE DHARMA

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata

*As the marks of not apprehending Buddha's wisdom:
People doubt the dharma which is known as Universal truth.*

People believe in karma such as a good deed brings good fortune and a bad deed brings bad fortune.

People compete with how many times they recite the nembutsu, therefore they are missing the opportunity to be enlightened.

—"Gatha On the Offence of Doubting the Primal Vow", by Shinran Shonin



REV. KAZ

In my previous article in the Jiho newsletter, I shared some stories of Ho On Ko, Shinran Shonin's Memorial Service. Now we welcome the month of May. Time passes so swiftly!

During the month of May, we have another special service for Shinran Shonin. It is his birthday celebration service, **Gotan-e**. "Gotan" means "birth" and "e" means "gatherings".

In Jodo Shin-shu, *Gotan-e* only means Shinran Shonin's birthday celebration. In other Buddhist traditions, *Gotan-e* means Shakyamuni Buddha's birthday celebration. We call the birth day of Shakyamuni "*Hanamatsuri*". Therefore, the meaning of *Gotan-e* depends on each Buddhist tradition.

During Shinran Shonin's lifetime during the Kamakura period, he wrote more than 500 *gathas* (Buddhist poems) to provide a better understanding of the Jodo Shinshu teachings for those around him. Most of his *gathas* belong to the three *gatha* series which are (1) *Gatha series on Jodo Shinshu Teachings and Texts "Jodo Wasan"*, (2) *Gatha series on Seven Masters in Jodo Shinshu "Koso Wasan"*, and (3) *Gatha series on Age classifications of Dharma "Sho Zo Matsu Wasan"*. Each *gatha* series contain more than 100 *gathas*. The most notable of the *gathas* are appeared in the *Gathas series on Jodo Teachings and Texts*.

For special services and the monthly memorial service for Shinran Shonin, the *Shoshinge* is chanted. Generally, the *Juseige* is chanted during Sunday services and the daily services with Nishi Center students. So, many (including the Nishi Center students) have memorized the phrases of *Juseige*.

When opening the temple service book, which chanting text or title appears first? It is the *Shoshinge*. The *Shoshinge* was written by Shinran Shonin which details the essence of the Jodo Shinshu teachings. As such, the *Shoshinge* text is generally printed at the very beginning

of most Jodo Shinshu service books.

As the *Shoshinge* is being chanted, but *gathas* are also being chanted within the *Shoshinge*. During the *Shoshinge*, there is a singing portion. A solo voice sings first sentence of the six *gathas* and everyone follows afterwards. These six *gathas* are from the *Gatha Series on Jodo Teachings and Texts*.

At the beginning of my article, I quoted from Shinran Shonin's *Gatha on the Offence of Doubting the Primal Vow* which is one of the chapters of the *gatha* series on *Age Classifications of Dharma*. *Gatha on the Offence of Doubting the Primal Vow* consists of 23 individual *gathas*. These *gathas* were written, when Shinran Shonin was between 85 to 90 years old after he had experienced the life of nembutsu for 60 years. These 23 *gathas* express how Shinran Shonin clearly stated, "What is the Jodo Shinshu way of living, and what is not the Jodo Shinshu way of living."

Since being in the United States as a minister, I began to see that the understanding of the Jodo Shinshu teachings in English differs from that of the teachings in Japanese. I realized that the understanding is different due to individual cultural or religious backgrounds. For instance, what does the term, "compassion", bring to mind? Those with a Buddhist foundation, will probably think, "Buddhist compassion". However, if those coming from a non-Buddhist society or believers of another religion would probably think of "God's compassion," or, perhaps, of a man on the holy cross.

The English language has influences from Latin and the Christian culture. Therefore, when Buddhism is explained in English, there will likely be influences of the Christian culture in the explanation. For example, what comes to mind when you hear the term, "salvation?"

To prevent any misconceptions, I mindfully use the appropriate vocabulary when speaking of Buddhism. When using a quotation from a secondary source (ie: English translations of Jodo Shinshu texts), I carefully compare and examine the text of English translations with the original documents in Japanese. Otherwise, my dharma talks would sound like Christian sermons.

As previously mentioned, I quoted from the *Gatha on the Offence of Doubting the Primal Vow*. My version is paraphrasing the *gatha*, somewhat different from the official translation of the "*The Collected Works of Shinran*." My focus is on **what** Shinran Shonin wanted **express** in the


(continued on page 9)

GOTAN-E SERVICE BIRTH OF SHINRAN SHONIN

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the annual Gotan-e Service, which is one of the six major services in the Hongwanji tradition to be held on Sunday, May 18, 2014. The guest speaker for the service will be Rev. Julie Hanada of the former Betsuin minister for English Service and Rev. Tesshi Aoyama of the BCA Minister Emeritus for Japanese Service.

Gotan-E celebrates the birth of our founder Shinran Shonin who was born on May 21, 1173. Reviewing Shinran Shonin's life, he did not live a fortunate life filled with happy environmental conditions. Both his parents were gone at an early age and he encountered many hardships throughout his life. But his spiritual experiences which evolved under many trying conditions and in many places, have given the many followers of the Buddha's Teachings an answer to the purpose of life in this world.

Shinran Shonin spent his simple and modest life of ninety years with no thought of making himself spectacularly prominent and impressive among the people. But millions of nembutsu followers are rejoicing over his way of life through the guidance of Amida Buddha and his teachings. Let us see the true aspect of Shinran Shonin's Shinjin (true entrusting mind) and live the life of oneness with the strength and conviction through the teachings of the nembutsu. 


INFANT PRESENTATION CEREMONY

by Rev. Koho Takata

The Infant Presentation Ceremony (*Hatsumairi*) will be held in conjunction with the Gotan-e (birth of Shinran Shonin) Service on May 18, 2014.

The term "*Infant Presentation Ceremony*" means parents formally present their child to the Buddha and the sangha for the first time on this occasion. It will be a precious opportunity for child, parents, and the *sangha* to rededicate themselves to walk together in the footsteps of our founder Shinran Shonin and become aware that we are always in oneness with Amida Buddha at all times and in all places in the Infinite Light and Life

We welcome those parents of children up to the age of one year to take part in the "*Infant Presentation Ceremony*" to nurture individuals to rejoice in the *nembutsu*. Children are nurtured by parents and parents, in turn, are fostered by children, and by living in Amida Buddha's heart we are able to build a nembutsu life actualized by Shinran Shonin.

(The registration form can be found on page 12) 

**TUNE IN TO
KTYM AM 1460
Sunday 12:50 PM Dharma Message**

BOOK CENTER

NEW ITEMS

New Necklaces

Now we have beautiful necklaces with *sagarifuji* or chrysanthemum and new wrist nenju styles. Perfect for a special gift.

Personalized Name – Children's Onenju

Now you can create a special o-nenju for a little boy or girl! Choose you're their favarite color and one can be made with any name from 3-7 letters.

These crackle glass beads is crowd pleaser for the little ones! This o-nenju is used as a wrist o-nenju or hand o-nenju for small children.

New Fire-Safe Candle

Fire-safe battery operated candles automatically turns off after 10 minutes.



NEW BOOKS

Amida's ABCs by Rev. Diane Johnson

The alphabet based on Buddhist Teaching.

Example:

B - Bodhi Tree – The Bodhi Tree has strong roots and beautiful heart-shaped leaves. A very wise man named

(continued on page 8)

2014 SURF & TURF UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS

Surf & Turf Fundraiser 2014 was an unprecedented success having raised over \$35,000 while serving over 1,550 dinners. The kaikan was filled with people enjoying their dinners, playing BINGO, checking out the Silent Auction items, having a good time with family and friends. New this year was the drive-through take out service, without which there would not have been enough seating for everyone to sit and enjoy themselves in the kaikan.

Every one of the Betsuin's organizations, young and old, pitched in to make this event such a success. Organizations provided baked goods for desserts as well as wine and beer for the adults. BINGO games were also available for the children in the Lotus Room downstairs. There were groups who took care of the salads and those who prepared the beef and the fish. Others packed the dinners while there were those who distributed the dinners in the kaikan and out in the parking lot for the drive-through service. The Silent Auction as well as the raffle also had to be organized by a group of people.

What a sight to see everyone working side-by-side like a finely tuned machine, working towards a single goal: to support the Betsuin.

The Betsuin would like to express its appreciation to the temple and affiliate members for their participation in helping to make this Surf and Turf fundraiser such a tremendous success.

The following are the winners of the Surf and Turf raffle:

First Prize:

Hawaiian Package at the CAL
Mary Kunihiro

Second Prize:

Laker tickets
Mike Miyashima

Third Prize:

Maison Akira gift certificate
Misao Miyagishima



Wall to wall Surf and Turfers enjoying themselves with food and fun with family and friends.



Beef grillers...



Drive-through service...



Silent Auction item



Dinner packers...

TROOP 738 LEADER & PARENTS RECOGNITION

by Ernest Hida

At the Los Angeles Area Boy Scout Council's Northstar District Annual Recognition Dinner, **Ken and Lisa Kawasaki** were awarded the District's *Bob and Marie Whiter Couples Award*.

This award recognizes the generous and dedicated contribution to Scouting that occurs when both husband and wife are devoted to the program. Ken and Lisa have devoted many years to Troop 738 as leaders and parents. They have two sons, Jonathan and Darren, who have earned the rank of Eagle Scout and a daughter, Marisa, who has earned the Gold Award as a Girl Scout.

Another awardee was **Wayne Omokawa**, who was awarded with the *Chairman's Award* for his many years of service as the District Advancement Chairman and, at the same time, serving as Troop 738 Advancement Chairman. This award recognizes the Scouter who has made an outstanding contribution to the Northstar District through his



L-R: *Wayne Omokawa , Lisa and Ken Kawasaki*

leadership and dedication, and is a role model to other volunteers and exemplifies the Scout Law in his daily life. As the District Advancement Chairman, he was responsible for the Eagle Award process of Eagle Scout candidates from all troops in the Northstar District, meeting with, and counseling Eagle candidates every Friday evening to ensure that the Eagle process is proper and on time.

We salute these outstanding Scout leader and parents for their dedication to the Scouting program and to the temple.



METTA AWARD



Rimban Briones presents Bradley Tashiro and five other Cub Scouts with the Metta Award. The Metta Award is a religious award given by the Scouting program.



National Buddhist Committee on Scouting Buddhist Churches of America Metta Award emblem awarded to Cubs Scouts who have completed 12 hours of instruction.

Join Us at the...

FAMILY FUN DAY



Sunday, June 22, 2014
in the Kaikan
10:30am - 2:00pm

Hot dogs, hamburgers, cups, plates and eating utensils will be provided.

Pot Luck: Families attending are asked to bring a side dish of salad, rice or dessert. Families whose last name begins with:

A - K (Desserts) L - P (Rice/Sides) Q - Z (Salads)

Please Sign Up at the temple office.
We look forward to seeing you there!

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



“NEW TEMPLE PROJECT”

Hompa Hongwanji Los Angeles Betsuin Dedication, November 14, 15, and 16, 1969, 815 E. First Street, Los Angeles, California 90012

Several seconds of stunned silence filled the room. A few heads nodded absently in unison. Betsuin president Keiichiro Sayano was already prepared for what he knew would be a long evening. There was nothing routine about the report just about to be made by Mr. (Tetsujiro) Nakamura.

The agenda that June evening in 1963 had included what ordinarily would have been a routine recommendation for carrying out the first of a series of major repairs to the temple building. Instead, Mr. Nakamura introduced a letter. City Hall was contemplating plans to widen First Street from San Pedro to Alameda. To do so, it would take twenty feet all along the north side of the street. In addition, it was asking for Betsuin remodeling plans if part of the temple was sliced off to accommodate the proposed plan.

The subject of repairs was quickly discarded. Makeshift remodeling ideas were rejected. Slowly the outline of a major project began to take shape—the building of a new temple.

A new temple...but this temple is not old. Some board members could still remember the date it was built. It was Taisho ju-yonen (14), 1925.

925 was 38 years ago. It has been a long time. But during those years, this temple served us well. It filled our inner needs and became the focal point that brought meaning into our lives.

Many of us are gone; but, now, surely our beliefs will survive.

However, 40 years is a long time. Many things have changed. Newer concepts must be formed to meet the newer conditions. Younger men like (Masami) Sasaki-kun, (Keiichiro) Sayano kun, (Eijiu) Sasajima kun, (Kyuji) Hozaki kun...

Tentative recommendations including the need for a trust fund and planning board were drawn up. Meetings were scheduled to hammer out proposals to be presented to the Betsuin members.

...to be continued in a subsequent Jiho issue

* * * * *

Mrs. Kazuko Yakumo of Salt Lake City, Utah, donated

many books to the Nishi library from her late husband's collection. Her late husband, Rev. Chijun Yakumo (1939 – 1991) was born in Tottori Prefecture, Japan, and graduated from Ryukoku University with an MA in Buddhist Studies. He became a BCA minister in 1965 and served in Minneapolis, San Diego, Seattle, Visalia, Dinuba, and Salt Lake City. He wrote extensively about his understanding of the Buddha-dharma. THANK YOU NAMOA-MIDABUTSU is a collection of some of his essays (in English and Japanese).

* * * * *

Thank you to Bruce Shinohara and Penny Shinohara Nishimura, son and daughter of the late Yutaka and Takako Shinohara, for their donations of photos and memorabilia of the past to Nishi Archives.



(Book Center - continued from page 5)

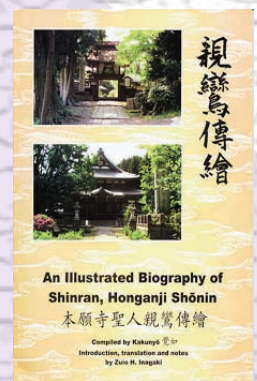
Siddhartha sat under this tree many years ago. He became a great Buddha.

Did you find the Bodhi Tree in the LA Betsuin yard?

T - Temple Bell – The temple bell is very beautiful. When you hear its sound, it is time to be quiet in temple. The sound of the temple bell makes you think about the Buddha.

Illustrated Biography of Shinran Shonin

During the Hoon-ko Seminar, Rev. Kuwahara referenced this book of Shinran Shonin's life story which had many colored pictures. Due to many who expressed interest, a limited number of this book were ordered. Note: This book will be helpful Rev. Takata's Monday night study class.



BEGINNING BUDDHISM STUDY CLASS

1st & 3rd THURSDAYS from 6:00 PM

3rd TUESDAYS from 7:00 PM
for age 30s/40s

LED BY: Rev. William Briones

(Rimban - continued from page 1)

ignorant we are. However, I think some people have this opinion because they understand human imperfection only from an ethical or moral perspective. Ignorance and evil in Jodo Shinshu is to be understood in a spiritual context.

Yes, moral guidance is a real and valid concern, but moral guidance must be rooted in the spiritual. In Buddhism the spiritual is our first concern while the moral dimension is secondary. Faced with critical choices of doing good and bad, we choose that which will fulfill our own self-centered needs, even subconsciously.

I think we often feel that being a good person expresses this moral guidance ... that being a good person and feeling good is all they want to be. But in Jodo Shinshu it's not just being a good person or feeling good. The goal of Buddhism is to become "real" by becoming more aware of the true nature of oneself and our human frailties. If our motivation is only to be good people and to feel good, we can easily become self-righteous and bitter when things don't go our way. When we are motivated, however, by a desire for awareness and truth, we often become "good" and find joy as a natural outcome of the process.

To truly see your ignorance, anger, and self-centeredness, is actually liberating. One experiences the freedom in being able to accept our short comings and failings. This process is liberating because one can finally awaken to how one really is, stripped of all pretensions, defenses and self-images.

In Jodo Shinshu, we are truly freed, precisely because we are foolish, not in spite of it. The realization of our foolish and human nature is a very important part of our awakening. "Just as you are," *sonomama*, when such a feeling flows through our hearts and minds, then we are overwhelmed with a true sense of joy and gratitude.



Namo Amida Butsu



Jr YBA provides serves at a BEC breakfast

(Nakata - continued from page 4)

gatha instead of the word by word translation. Once again, please read the gatha:

As the marks of not apprehending Buddha's wisdom:

*People doubt the dharma which
is known as Universal truth.*

*People believe in karma such as a
good deed brings good fortune and
a bad deed brings bad fortune.*

*People compete with how many times they recite
the nembutsu, therefore they are missing
the opportunity to be enlightened.*

Why do people have difficulties in understanding Buddhism, particularly Jodo Shinshu Buddhism? Shinran Shonin clearly stated in his *gatha*, religion generally requires you to believe in a conditional truth which is known as a religious truth. Buddhism, on the other hand, does not force you to believe in unconditional truths which is also known as the universal truth. A universal truth itself is an unalterable, permanent fact.

I sometimes hear or see the term *kugarma*. While I was reading an online thread discussions about car repair, the term *karma* appeared several times. While I was watching TV, the emcee said, "Oh my god! It's your *karma*!" The emcee was not responding to anything about Buddhism, Christianity, or Hinduism. The term *karma* has become a part of casual language without any reference to its true meaning. The emcee's comment was harmless and a funny example of this. However, when you are in midst of hardship and someone says to you, "*Because of what you did, you are now suffering this hardship. It is your karma.*" How would you react to this statement? Do you curse or blame it all on your fate? You may get temporary relief by cursing or blaming but such actions won't help to remedy your situation.

Based on the universal truth of dharma, the term *karma* is pointless and unreasonable. If it were true that good deeds bring good fortune and bad deeds bring bad fortune, as a minister, I should be billionaire by now! (Yes, I get my Mega Million lottery ticket twice a week.) Therefore, *karma* is simply based on superstition. Shinran Shonin clearly stated that if we live a life of superstitions such as *karma*, there will be no chance of becoming enlightened.

Lastly, there should be no concern as to the number of times we recite the nembutsu. In the *gatha* quotation, Shinran Shonin emphasizes that the recitation of the nembutsu is not for any benefit, gaining merit, nor for competition.



Gassho

BETSUIN PHOTOS



The Betsuin ministers wearing the new robes purchased by the Betsuin BWA to replaced the previous well-worn robes that were constantly needing repair.



Rev. Nobuo Miyaji (left) and Rev. Shousei Hanayama served as guest speakers at the Ohigan Seminar and Service.



Rimbán Briones receives the three scrolls from Rev. Takata to be reinstalled in the onaijin.



Rev. Takata (left) and Rev. Nakata install the Rennyō Shōnin scroll in the onaijin



Several months ago the above three precious scrolls were vandalized. They were sent to Japan to be repaired. A dedication ceremony took place to reinstall the scrolls.



IN MEMORIAM

The *Nishi Betsuin* extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the *Nembutsu*.

--*Namo Amida Butsu*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>February, 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Sam Yutaka Suyenaga 9 Harry Tadashi Oune 9 Jean Sumiye Burke 11 Tae Kinjo 13 Ruriko Goto Uesu 16 Hiroshi Mimura 17 Hikoji Jack Takeuchi 26 Daichi Tokudome 27 Bertha Hatsuko Yamamoto | <p>March, 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Fumi Iwata 5 Yasuto Hamamoto 9 Fred Ichiro Kimura 10 Ernest Mamoru Hirayama 14 Douglas Hedeki Okamoto 18 Alvin Masaru Shingu 22 George Bunzo Moriyama 25 Ben Tsutomu Yumori 25 Henry Haruo Yoneyama 29 Kodama Mann |
|--|---|

OBON DANCE PRACTICE DATES



Where: Northwest Parking Lot
Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Days: Tuesdays & Thursdays

June 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, & 26
July 1, & 8 @ Keiro Retirement Home @ 6:00 pm

Betsuin Jiho

Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones
English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto
Photos: Koichi Sayano & Glen Tao

SO. DISTRICT OBON ODORI SCHEDULE

<p>June 7 & 8 Arizona 6:45</p> <p>June 21 & 22 Sun Valley 7:00 / 6:30</p> <p>June 28 & 29 San Fernando 7:00 / 6:30 West Covina 7:00 - not BCA (Saturday)</p> <p>July 5 Senshin 7:00</p> <p>July 12 & 13 L.A. BETSUIN 7:00 / 6:30</p> <p>Oxnard 6:00 (Saturday only)</p> <p>July 19 & 20 Pasadena 6:30</p>	<p>Orange County 7:00 Santa Barbara 4:00 (Saturday only) Venice 6:30</p> <p>July 26 & 27 Guadalupe 3:00 (Sunday only) WLA 6:30 Vista 6:30 Higashi 6:30- not BCA</p> <p>August 2 & 3 Gardena 6:00 San Diego 6:30 (Saturday only) San Luis Obispo 6:30 (Saturday only)</p> <p>August 9 Las Vegas 12:45 - not BCA (Saturday)</p>
--	--

HATSUMAIRI

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME OF CHILD: _____

BOY _____ GIRL _____ BIRTHDATE: _____

NAME IN KANJI	
------------------	--

PARENTS' NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

TEL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ ZIP: _____

**PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE BETSUIN OFFICE BY:
MAY 4, 2014**

**LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
815 E. 1st St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: 213-680-9130**

**Email: info@nishihongwanji-la.org
FAX: 213-680-2210**

MAY 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class 6:00 pm		
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Regular Service 10:00 am Kouhaku Uttagassen 1:00 pm	Study Class Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm Annon Cafe 7:30-8:30 pm			Board Meeting 7:30 pm		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Regular Service 10:00 am		Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm		Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class 6:00 pm		
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Gotanye/Hatsumairi Service 10:00 am	Study Class Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm Annon Cafe 7:30-8:30 pm	Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class for 30s & 40s 7:00 pm				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Memorial Day Services 10:00 am 1:30 pm	Memorial Day Services Rose Hills Cemetery Evergreen Cemetery Betsuin Nokotsu-do	Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm				

JUNE 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Regular Service 10:00 am	2 Study Class Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm Annon Cafe 7:30-8:30 pm	3	4	5 Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class 6:00 pm	6	7
8 Regular Service 10:00 am	9	10 Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm	11	12 Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm Board Meeting 7:30 pm	13	14
15 Fathers' Day Family Fun Day in Kaikan 10:30 am	16 Study Class Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm Annon Cafe 7:30-8:30 pm	17 Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm	18	19 Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class 6:00 pm Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm	20	21 Sun Valley Obon
22 Sun Valley Obon	23	24 Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm Beginning Buddhism Rimban Briones Study Class for 30s & 40s 7:00 pm	25	26 Bon Odori Practice 7:00 pm	27	28
29 Graduation and Attendance Award Service 10:00 am	30					