

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 437

July-August 2016

jihō

WWW

LOS ANGELES HONPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
FOUNDED 1905

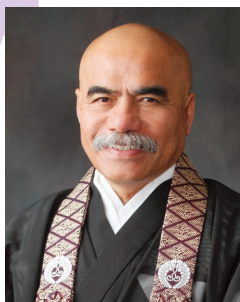


RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

As for me, Shinran, I can only accept what my venerable master Honen said: "just say the Nembutsu and be saved by Amida".

I personally, do not know whether reciting the Nembutsu will be the seed of my birth in the Pure Land or whether it will create the karma which will cause me to fall into hell. But even if I discover that I have been misled by Honen Shonin, and that because I have said the Nembutsu I will fall into hell, I will have no regrets. If it were possible for me to become enlightened by performing some other practice, but I fell into hell because of saying the Nembutsu, I might well regret having been deceived. But since I am incapable of any religious practice whatsoever, hell will be my home in any case.



RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES

As a kid, I loved to be outdoors, we lived near a creek and during the summer my friends and I would spend all day hiking along the dry creek, picking berries, catching lizards and snakes, collecting rock. Sometimes we'd packed our lunch into our army packs and we'd follow the creek up

into the mountains and up to a pristine reservoir. There we would rest along side the bank, have our lunch and skip rocks along the still waters, until the Park Rangers kicked us out.

I was truly awed with nature. I marveled at the natural rhythm and beauty of nature. As I look back at those innocent days, I think I can say these could have been my first encounters with reflecting upon my life with the bigger scheme of the universe or at least with Mountain View.

Could these reflections be considered spiritual ... I don't know. What I do know, I never made the connection between the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church and the life cycle of nature and how I fit into the scheme of things.

My life as a ten year old and the catechism classes that I attended almost three times a week were not the least related. As I grew older I found the religion I grew up in was not consistent in what I was experiencing and feeling in my life. I saw religion as dogmatic and moralistic. So for the most part, as a teenager, I thought of myself as "spiritual, but not religious".

Perhaps some of you might think I'm "Splitting hairs" or you might think it's not that big of a deal. I read somewhere that one out of five people believe they are "Spiritual but not religious".

We might think spirituality deals with our private realm of thought and personal experience, while the religious is connected with some sort of membership in a religious institu-

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JULY 09 & 10
Carnival & Bon Odori

Detailed information can be found on page 11

ULTIMATE DESTINATION

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

When my family lived in Hawaii, my daughters attended the Hon-gwanji Mission School. After school, they attended Japanese school daily, sponsored by the Hongwanji Mission School. The majority of students at the Hongwanji Mission School were Japanese. However, when we moved to Arizona, the Japanese were a minority so that private and public schools didn't have any Japanese schools as in Hawaii. After moving from Hawaii to Arizona, my daughters attended the Arizona Gakuen at Mesa Community College on Saturdays to study math and language in Japanese. Once a year, the Arizona Gakuen had an excursion. That year, there was an excursion to White Tank Mountain. Because my wife was busy that day, I took my daughters to the excursion.

I didn't know where the White Tank Mountain was located. I thought I could easily reach there with my GPS. The scheduled meeting time with their teachers at the White Tank Mountain 9:30 am, hiking for two hours, and having lunch. The day before the excursion, I checked Google maps to see how long it would take to get to the site from my residence. When I checked the map, it indicated about a half hour. We left home at around 8:30 am, an hour prior to the time to meet with teachers. I thought we would arrive there by 9 am.

When we left home, I put my destination on my GPS in my car but my GPS didn't know where White Tank Mountain was. So I used my iPhone GPS. I followed the directions and drove for about a half hour. I saw many mountains on my way to White Tank Mountain and I thought that the White Tank Mountain must be one of the mountains and I would reach there soon. Nine o'clock passed and then it was 9:30 — the time my daughters were to meet with their teachers and I was still driving. Kaylee and Shanti kept asking me when they would arrive there. I told them that we would reach there soon so don't worry. I drove for an hour and it became two hours and the GPS was still telling me to drive. I just focused on following GPS and didn't realize I was heading in the wrong direction. I was driving Arizona State Route 101 and was heading towards Peoria where we live. So it turns out that I drove in a circle on the 101 taking over a two hours. When we finally did reach White Tank Mountain, it was already 11:30. It took a total of three hours to get there. It was time for lunch time. After having lunch, we returned home quickly be-

cause I had to go to the airport to pick up a guest. I worried about how long I would take. It took only 20 minutes. I realized I had driven a very three hours for a very short distance.

In my family, I am very famous for not having a good sense of direction. I, however, always think myself, *"I know this. I can reach there. I know how to get there."* But, this incident reminded me of my imperfectness and foolishness. I was very confident that my GPS would get us to my destination. However, I was totally ignorant to the truth and foolish in trying to reach my destination. This is my true self. I am always wondering and losing my way in my daily life on how to live in this world of suffering. I always need guidance how to reach my ultimate destination. Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life, always guides me on how to live in this world of suffering with his great compassionate mind. I always, however, tend to forget about his caring mind because my ego, self-centered nature, and attachment comes first. I have many faults and make many mistakes in my daily life due to my blind passions, Amida Buddha keeps showering me with his Great Compassion and Perfect Wisdom for making me realize my imperfectness and foolishness. His caring mind, the universal truth of the Dharma, always guides me and reminds me to depend on his GPS which is his Perfect Wisdom to reach my ultimate destination without losing my way.

In the historical past, there was no GPS to guide travelers. The sun and the moon was the source of direction. I'm sure it was difficult to accurately reach anywhere by this means. In order for me to reach my destination, I depend on my GPS. Even then, I still fail to reach my destination. However, in the case of my ultimate destination, which is the Amida's Pure Land, I need not depend on any form of technology or anything in nature. Amida Buddha constantly guides me to reach my ultimate destination without severing my foolish nature. Shinran Shonin teaches us that ***"Amida Buddha's guiding Light surpassing sun and moon, illuminating countless worlds; and all beings receive this Light of Wisdom and Compassion. (Shoshinge)"***

Hatsubon and Obon Service will be observed at many temples during this summer season. This is an opportunity given by our loved ones. Amida Buddha represents all of our loved ones. I believe that the most grateful teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is that those who passed away

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BEING BUDDHIST IS BEING A LIFE-LONG LEARNER

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

The argument that Buddhists who do not read or study sutras (Buddhist scriptures) and their commentaries, are not able to be enlightened [to transcend the uncertain ocean of birth and death]. Such argument does not have solid evidence to provide its truthfulness.

The various sutras which reveal the essential teachings of Amida Tathagata, clearly state that one who will become Buddha when the person assents to the Primal Vow in the Infinite Life Sutra and recites the six characters of Na Mo A Mi Da Butsu (Myogo). Neither academic study nor non-academic study are necessary to be enlightened. If one does not understand this logical explanation, indeed, the person should acquire the purport of the Primal Vow by studying very hard.

It is most lamentable that even if one reads or studies sutras and their commentaries, the person does not get their true intention.

The Myogo was established along with the Primal Vow for everyone to their enlightenment so that the recitation of the Myogo is not required literacy nor any Buddhist studies. It is the profound foundation of the Jodo Shinshu teachings, and it is the reason the teaching of Jodo Shinshu is called the Buddhist teaching for the ordinary populace in the world (I-gyo). A group or an individual who consider the study is the primary condition for their enlightenment, is called people who are walking on the path for becoming the sages (Sho Do Mon), or is called the Buddhist teaching for the high-end seeker (Nan-gyo).

The Lamentations of Divergences,
Tannisho – Chapter 12

When I arrived at the San Francisco International Airport from Japan in the August of 2003 for my assignment as a minister in the BCA, it was my first trip abroad and I only knew five English phrases: “Hello,” “How are you?,” “Thank you,” “I’m sorry” and most importantly... “I am hungry!”

Many temple members in Sacramento encouraged me to attend school to learn English. During my busy ministerial schedule, I found a time to take an English course at the Sacramento City College. After I spending two semesters at the college, my speaking skills improved a great deal. I am always in appreciation of those who encouraged me to go to school.

Several years after studying English in Sacramento, I had the opportunity to take a chaplaincy training course which is provided by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County for a year. I was able to complete the course and I was assigned as a county chaplain in Virginia. By serving as the chaplain and taking the course of the chaplaincy training, I was able to promote Jodo Shinshu at the national level. I was able to share the Jodo Shinshu teachings at the White House and the Rayburn building for the House Representatives. For most of the congressmen and congresswomen, it was the first time to hear of Jodo Shinshu and its teachings.

While I was working as a chaplain, I was interested in studying non-profit organizational management so I entered the business school at Strayer University. The school was originally established in 1892 for working African Americans in Maryland and 90% of students were considered as having African American origin when I was attending the classes. Coming from Japan, it was an unique atmosphere to me to spending time at the campus and I learned that the importance of the interracial environment in the U.S. The BCA has been supportive of the Japanese American (Nikkei) community in the broader sense. As such, when I came to the U.S., I had the idea that the Jodo Shinshu teaching was for those who have connections with Japan or the Japanese culture. Having attended the business school, my stereotypical mentality completely changed. Although our temple is located in the Little Tokyo District which is a center of Japanese cultural heritage, various multi-racial visitors stop by and ask for information about our temple and teachings. I really enjoy speaking about the temple and Jodo Shinshu in the hondo.

I had spent four years to pursue my MBA at the business school and in 2014, I became interested in studying Buddhism to maintain and improve my knowledge. I had a discussion with then temple president, Lonny Quon, about my continuing education. He had been a principal at various district schools, so he knew the value of an education and supported my decision to further my education. As the BCA Bishop, Rev. Umezu has always supported and encouraged the ministers to continue their education and was please to hear about my desire to continue my Buddhist studies.

I was admitted to the masters program of Buddhist studies at the University of the West in the Fall of 2014. The main curricula for two years was the Pure Land Buddhist teachings in India and China, and Sanskrit as a research lan-

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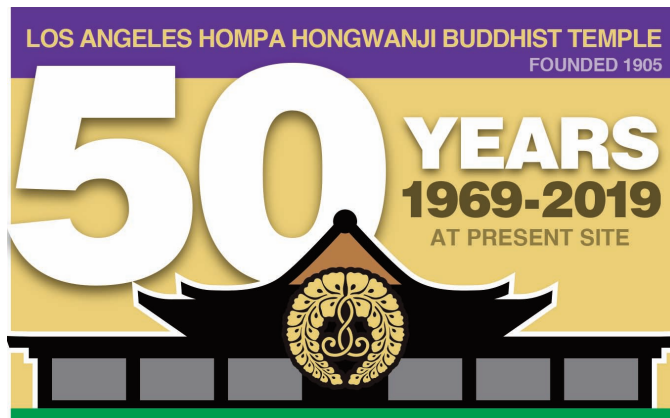
50TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

by Ernest Hida

On May 20, the statue of Amida Buddha returned home to LA Betsuin. The statue was returned from Kyoto by the staff of the Wakabayashi Butsugu Company of Kyoto, who is also refurbishing the onaijin. Upon arrival from the airport, a special service to accept and install the statue was held in the Wisteria Chapel conducted by the Rimban and the ministers and attended by the Betsuin president, president-elect and the *komons*. The statue was installed temporarily in the Wisteria Chapel until the onaijin returns in October. It is wonderful to have this main statue back at the Betsuin as it means that onaijin will not be far behind to return to the Betsuin. The onaijin pieces are still in the process of being refurbished.

On the following night, May 21, the Betsuin sponsored the the 2nd Annual 50th Anniversary Fundraising Dance in the kaikan. It was a great success with the support of approximately 300 attendees and many table sponsors. The popular band, *Kokoro*, provided the dance music. Our big "thank you" to the Dance Committee for their tireless and dedicated efforts to arrange this fundraising dance for the Betsuin's 50th Anniversary.

The Dharma School students are continuing with their fundraising project of collecting recyclable plastic bottles and aluminum cans. Please support the students by bringing your recyclables to the dharma school office. It is very heartwarming to see these students making a big effort to raise funds for the 50th Anniversary. A big thank you to the students for their ongoing fundraising project and to the dharma school teachers for their efforts and



guidance.

With your generous donations, we have finally reached the 1 million dollar level of the **50th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign goal of 2.5 million dollars**. We are still away from our goal and we ask for your continued support to reach the fundraising goal. As was explained previously, in addition to the renovation of the onaijin, your Temple require much needed repairs to its structure and facilities, therefore we would like to preserve the Temple for our future generations so they, too, will have a place to learn about the Nembutsu teachings, as we all have at this temple.

Thank you very much for your past and future donations. *Gokurosama deshita.*

Gassho, Ernest Hida 50th Anniversary Chairman



Scenes from the 2nd Annual 50th Anniversary Fundraising Dance.



Above: Sangha has the opportunity to view the vacated onaijin area that is being prepared for the reinstallation of the refurbished onaijin pieces: Right: a sample floral tile for the onaijin ceiling (see article on page 6)g



DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



1971 – Nishi BWA Celebrated 50th Anniversary

Congratulatory commendation presented by Mr. George Saiki, representing the City of Los Angeles, to Rimban Masuoka, Mrs. Shizuye Yamada and Mrs. Michiye Nakamura.

In 1971, during the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Los Angeles Fujinkai (BWA), it was proposed to form a scholarship fund to award outstanding high school graduates. Through the generosity of the members, enough monies were donated to honor four high school graduates beginning with the year 1976. From 1976 through 1999, over \$18,000 have been awarded to temple high school graduates.

**“Jr. Matrons...
by Mrs. Y.
Nakashima,”
Betsuin Jiho,
October 10,
1952**



The Jr. Matrons of Nishi Hongwanji held their monthly meeting on Sunday, Sept. 21, preceded by Ohigan Service.

The special service had Rev. Nagatani of San Jose as speaker. Important business discussed was Japanese Movie Night co-sponsored by the Sr. and Jr. Matrons, which was held on Saturday, Sept. 27, 1952. “Hatsukoi Monogatari” and “Ashura Hangan” were the titles of the movies.

On Sept. 13, the Jr. Matrons spent an enjoyable evening, both spiritually and socially, at an Ohigan Social, with the Pasadena Buddhist Women’s Ass’n as hostesses. Making the trip were Mrs. S. Ushio, C. Yamamoto, Y. Kishi, T. Aratani, M. Nagamoto, K. Wakabayashi, D. Goto Yukawa, H. Goto, L. Aratani, and Y. Nakashima.

**“Obon Carnival Plans Set: Iseda to Chair,”
Betsuin Jiho, 1956**

Plans for the 10th Annual Obon Carnival are rapidly coming to a head with Kho Iseda, sitting at helm as General Chairman. This year the Obon Carnival Site will be

the County Parking lot at Second, Weller and Los Angeles Streets. The Obon street dance will in all probability be held on Weller Street. Hereon, the Obon Committee will meet weekly to report its progress. The committee members serving under Iseda are as follows: Ai Shibata, Sats Yoshida, Co-chairmen; Mineko Nishikawa, Recording Secretary; Dorothy Hayashida, Fumi Nakahara, Corresponding; Jack Oriba, George Inatomi, Treasurers; George Waki, Tomo Yoshida, Publicity; Martha Tsuji, Henry Ishii, Ken Kaya, Nancy Naito, Donations; Yas Ariza, Mary Yamashita, Lily Takechi, Raffles; Shig Sato, Charlie Mayeda, Jerry Kikuchi, May Tanaka, Helen Abe, Booths; Toshio Washizaki, Equipment; Joe Watari, Layout; Toshi Kusumoto, Audrey Kaya, Coupons; and Sam Yoneyama, Advisor.

The Carnival will be scheduled on July 14th and 15th.

**“Congratulations to the Newly Elected Officers
for 1957,” Betsuin JIHO, Jan. 1**

With the coming of the New Year, we find also the birth of a new cabinet for many of the affiliated organizations. Our heartiest congratulations go to the elect officers. It is hoped that the task of the organization will not be left solely to the elected ones, but equal share be taken by the members. We are no longer children, but adults. It is rather for us to set the standards and prestige which our children can respect and follow.

HOLLYWOOD JUNIOR MATRONS:

Mrs. F. Izumi, President; Mrs. K. Izumo, Vice pres.; Mrs. K. Tani, Rec.Sec.; Madames M. Shimizu and M. Murakami, Corres.Sec.; Mrs. M. Kunihiro, Treas.; Mrs. F. Sugimoto, Social Chrmn.; Mrs. M. Misawa, Publicity.

SUN VALLEY SUNDAY SCHOOL CABINET

Mrs. H. Nakaba, Pres.; Mrs. Kono, Vice pres.; Mrs. Okita, Sec.; Madames Nakamoto and Gohata, Tres.; Madames Morita, Baba and Muranaga, Social Chrmn; Mrs. K. Inouye, Assistant.

L.A.BETSUIN SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Joe Watari, Superintendent; Toshi Kusumoto, Assistant; Michi Matsuhara [Matsunami], Sec.; Roland Okano, Tres.; Eiko Masuyama, Music; Babs Mikami [Keimi], Publicity Historian; Tak Kosakura, Religious; Harry Shibata, Library; Joanne Hirata [Onaga], Research; Ben Jinkawa, Recreation.

to be continued.....

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OBON DHARMA SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The annual **Hatsubon** (First Obon) Service for those who passed away from last Obon until today is scheduled for **Saturday, July 2, 2016 at 10:00am and 1:00 pm.**

The annual **Obon service** is scheduled for Sunday, July 17, 2016, with guest speaker, the **Reverend Fumiaki Usuki** of West LA Buddhist Temple for English and Japanese Service, guiding us through this reflective time.

The term Bon is an abbreviation of a Japanese Buddhist term "*Urabon*," which is derived from the Sanskrit term "*Ullumbana*." "*Ullumbana*" means to be liberated from a spiritual state of pain and hunger caused by greediness, one of three blind desires.

Even as we reflect on the sorrowful consequence of basic human defilement, we, as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, joyfully reflect on the Primal Vow Power of Amida Buddha which has been fulfilled, thus enabling us to live in grati-

tude. The Bon Service is called the "Gathering of Joy" in Jodo Shinshu tradition, instead of being merely called a "Memorial Service."

The donation envelope for Obon Service is attached to the Jiho, temple newsletter. The amount of donation is not set. It is up to your decision how much you wish to contribute toward receiving the Dharma. Your sincere and mindful donation of any amounts is truly appreciated to offset the expenses of the major service. This enables all of us, as a Sangha, to listen to the Dharma on this special occasion. We sincerely ask for your understanding and cooperation as we devote ourselves to listen to and share the teachings of the Nembutsu through the embrace of Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion, never to be abandoned.



Rev. Fumiaki
Usuki

Nakata - continued from page 4)

guage. On May 14, I took part in my commencement ceremony. While I was listening to the Pomp and Circumstance, I was reflecting upon all of those who helped and supported my schooling. I deeply appreciate my family's support, especially, my wife Michi. Without her selfless support, I would not have been able to earn my master's degree. I am looking forward to sharing what I have learned with sangha at the Betsuin.



Each time as I complete my schooling at different schools, there have been have similar comments. I have heard, "You are already a Sensei. Why do you go to school?" Then I always reply:

"If you think I am Sensei/teacher or call me Sensei, you completely misunderstand the essence of Jodo Shinshu. Our founder, Shinran Shonin clearly stated that he had no students/disciples. Because he believed that he lived his life as a lifelong learner. That is why, "keep listening (learning)" is most essential daily deed in the Jodo Shinshu tradition. But at the same time, Shinran Shonin stated that it is not a re-

quirement to study sutras and commentaries. He did not force anyone to study Buddhism, but he simply enjoyed doing so. I just follow the path of Shinran Shonin as a lifelong learner. It is something I can do as a Jodo Shinshu minister and as a living example to people who follow the same path of O-Nembutsu. I am not leading someone to the path as Sensei by facing to everyone, but I am walking the path with everyone as a student by facing the same direction."

When you consider yourself as a Jodo Shinshu follower, then you really know I am not really a "Sensei."

Gassho

Takata - continued from page 3)

return to this world of suffering as the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life to guide us to the ultimate destination. It is not an end when they passed away. Our loved ones keep living as the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life and they are constantly guiding us in the Nembutsu. The Obon Service is one of their compassionate activities for us to listen to their grateful messages, the perfect guidance, to live in the Infinite Light and Life of the Nembutsu, Namo-Amidabutsu, as a basis of true and real life. Let us listen to the voiceless voice of Amida Buddha and our loved ones in our daily lives.

BETSUIN PHOTOS



HATSUMAIRI 2016

Pictured are the Hatsumairi participants and their extended families. The babies pictured (l-r) Tenji Theo with parents Amy & Tsuyoshi Tsugawa; Dustin Masayoshi with parents Lina & Jeff Shimizu; Emaline Emiko with parents, Leanne & Trevor Silverthorne; and Akika with parents Michiko & Rev. Kazuaki Nakata.



Above & below: Hanamatsuri 2016



Left: Girl Scout leaders at the Court of Awards. Right: Boy Scouts flip-flop pancakes at their annual Pancake Breakfast.



(Know? - continued from page 7)

* * * * *

Thank you to Mr. Kenji Hatakeyama, president of Betsuin Board, for bringing back from the 2016 BCA National Council Meeting, held in Visalia, three books to be shared with the Sangha: *Scripture: Canon: Text: Content, Essays Honoring Lewis R. Lancaster*, Edited by Richard K. Payne; *Dawn of the Bodhisattva Path, The Early Perfection of Wisdom*, by Gil Fronsdal; *Trust, Realization, and the Self in Soto Zen Practice*, by Daijaku Kinst. These books can be found in the Nishi library.

SAVE THE DATE



HOLLYWOOD BUDDHIST CHURCH
Proud Supporter of the Nishi 50th

BREW HA HA
August 19, 2016
A Beer Tasting Event
with Gourmet Appetizer Pairings

(Rimban - continued from page 1)

tion, participation in formal rituals and devotion to some official denominational doctrine.

Spirituality exists wherever we struggle with the issues of how our lives fit into the greater cosmic scheme of things. We encounter spiritual issues every time we wonder about the origins of the Universe, why we are here, or what happens to us when we die. We also become spiritual when we become moved by beauty, love, nature, art ... the birth of child ... the death of a loved one. On the other hand Religion is organized, institutionalized spirituality. It's about rituals, ceremony, it's about tradition. Religion is about community and fellowship. Religion is like a road map to the truth. Each religion has their own set of rules, laws, guilds, moral doctrine, etc.

Shinran never intended to found a new school of Buddhism. In the VI Chapter of the Tannisho he clearly refutes his role as a religious master.

"I, Shinran, have not even a single disciple. If I could bring people to say the Nembutsu, then I could call them "my disciples." But it would be preposterous to call somebody "my disciple" when that person says the Nembutsu solely through the working of Amida's compassion."

"I, Shinran"..... Shinran singles himself out. I, Shinran. Several times in the Tannisho Shinran refers personally to himself. When Shinran says, *"I, Shinran..."* he is not talking on behalf of some official denominational doctrine or a textual interpretation, but it is the texture and essence of his own life that is being expressed. Shinran points to an important element of religious life. Our religious life is something on which we base our life by. It is not mere belief or information, but is identified with our existence. For Shinran there is no split between faith and life.

However, in today's hectic life we tend to compartmentalize our lives, and there by have a hard time relating to Shinran. Religion is something one may do on a special day or special time. It must compete with other activities of life for attention. However, in the truly spiritual person, such as Shinran, religion is what one is at every moment of his life and in ever relationship. It is the spirit and quality of that life.

The reading that I began with, is from the Chapter II of the Tannisho,

"If it were possible for me to become enlightened by performing some other practice, but I fell into hell because of saying the Nembutsu, I might well regret having been deceived. But since I am incapable of any religious practice whatsoever, hell will be my home in any case."

Shinran is saying this based on his own personal experience, his own spiritual journey to find the truth. For twenty years he tried to become enlightened by following the difficult path of traditional Buddhist discipline and practice. But from his own experience Shinran realized he couldn't perform those practices prescribed by those on Mt. Hiei. In facing up to the meaning of his spiritual imperfection, he searched deep within. The deeper he reflected on the nature of his own human imperfection, the more real and spiritual aware he became of Amida's compassion and Vow.

Being "spiritual" goes beyond being the kind of person who appreciates a sunset or likes to light candles or burn incense. The question is, if you are a spiritual person, how does that actually transform or change the way you live your life?

Shinran placed his faith in Amida's Vow as a result of his own personal spiritual experience, something that can't be read from a book. The essences of religion has to be experienced. Shinran understood this. He ends his statement by saying, "And now, whether you entrust yourself to the Nembutsu or reject it is entirely up to you".

METTA AWARD

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata

Metta Award presentation was held on April 10 during the Sunday Service at LA Betsuin. Five Nishi Cub Scouts received their medal and certificate. Although our temple is located in the Little Tokyo community, our Nishi Scout program is a model case that integrates the Japanese American community with the diverse communities of Los Angeles. Some of our Metta recipients are of Mexican-American background and so, the presentation was offered in English, Japanese, and Spanish. I am grateful to be able to provide the youth Buddhist education for the future of the Buddhist-base mixed cultural society.

The boys receiving the Metta Award were: Laurens Chao, Bradley Conlin, Jose Davalos, Daniel Martinez, and Liam Safranek.

In Gassho



SO. DISTRICT OBON ODORI SCHEDULE

July 09 & 10

L.A. BETSUIN 7:00 / 6:00

Oxnard 6:00 (Saturday only)

July 16 & 17

Orange County 7:00
 Santa Barbara 4:00 (Saturday only)
 Venice 6:30

July 23 & 24

Pasadena 6:30
 Vista 6:30



July 30 & 31

West Los Angeles 6:30
 Higashi 6:30- not BCA

August 6

San Diego 6:30 (Saturday only)
 Las Vegas 12:45- not BCA

August 13 & 14

Gardena 6:00



OBON PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

RELIGIOUS Q&A 3³⁰ - 4⁰⁰
 4³⁰ - 5⁰⁰

CARNIVAL 1⁰⁰ - 9⁰⁰

BON ODORI 7⁰⁰ - 9⁰⁰

BINGO 4⁰⁰ - 10⁰⁰

DEMONSTRATIONS

Tea 2⁰⁰ - 4⁰⁰

BRIEF SERVICE

by ministers on yagura 6⁴⁵

CULTURAL DISPLAYS

STAGE PERFORMANCES

Nishi Center @ 3⁰⁵

Matsutoyo Kai @ 4⁰⁰

Ho' Aloha Polynesian @ 4⁴⁵
 Dancers

LA Matsuri Taiko @ 5³⁰

Kokoro @ 9⁰⁰ - 10⁰⁰

SUNDAY

RELIGIOUS Q&A 3³⁰ - 4⁰⁰
 4³⁰ - 5⁰⁰

CARNIVAL 1⁰⁰ - 9⁰⁰

BON ODORI 6⁰⁰ - 8⁰⁰

BINGO 4⁰⁰ - 8⁰⁰

DEMONSTRATIONS

Tea 2⁰⁰ - 4⁰⁰

BRIEF SERVICE

by ministers on yagura 5⁴⁵

CULTURAL DISPLAYS

STAGE PERFORMANCES

Nishi Center @ 2⁰⁵

Da Kapakahi's @ 3⁰⁰

The Bluesettes Quintet @ 3⁴⁵

LA Matsuri Taiko @ 4³⁰

Amy Singer & Friends @ 5³⁵

RAFFLE DRAWING @ 8⁰⁰



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*

March, 2016

- 16 Tadao Tad Fujii
- 17 Kenso Nakamori
- 17 Matsumi Ishigame
- 19 Tatsuo Kochi
- 20 Yoshihiko David Higashi
- 21 Don T. Nakanishi

- 18 Seichi Yokoyama
- 22 Yukie Kawashima
- 24 Gladys Misao Toguchi
- 30 Robert Taniguchi

May, 2016

- 6 Morio Kow
- 10 Atsuko Nishida

April, 2016

- 10 Deborah Naomi Yamamoto
- 13 Frances Nitta



OBON DANCE PRACTICE DATES



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

July 5 @ temple
 7 @ Keiro Retirement Home @ 6:00 pm

Betsuin Jiho

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

COMMEMORATION ON THE ACCESSION OF THE JODO SHINSHU JAPAN TOUR

On June 6, 2014, the Jodo Shinshu Tradition was transmitted to the **25th Head Priest, Sennyō Monshū**. The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition or Dentō Hōkoku Hōyō, is conducted standing before Amida Tathagata and Shinran Shonin to formally announce that the newly-inducted Head Priest shall take on the responsibilities as Monshū, following in the footsteps of his predecessors to spread the Dharma on to new generations and embracing the opportunity to spread the Nembutsu teaching to the greater people. It is also a festive occasion welcoming everyone to celebrate the inauguration of the new Monshū.

There is an opportunity for those who are interested in attending this commemoration. Ernest Hida, of American Holiday Travel, has created a package tour which will include attendance at the Nishi Hongwanji Mother Temple (honzan) for the Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition.

The following is the scheduled itinerary:

Mar 27, Mon. DEPART LAX via Singapore Airlines

Mar 28, Tue. ARRIVE TOKYO
After arrival, clear Immigration/Customs. Transfer to hotel.

Mar 29, Wed. TOKYO
Morning visit to Tsukiji Outer Market, Tsukiji Betsuin and Tokyo Skytree. Lunch at a local restaurant.

Mar 30, Thu. TOKYO – KYOTO
Mid-morning transfer to Tokyo Station and take Shinkansen to Kyoto with bento lunch on board. The rest of the day and evening is free. Sakura should be blooming during this period, so if anyone wants to go to Maruyama Park, near Gion, to see sakura, we can take the public transportation to Gion and Maruyama Park.

Mar 31, Fri. KYOTO
Attend morning service at Honzan, then for those who are interested in participating in the Kikyoshiki Ceremony, they may do so after the morning service. Later, return to the hotel for breakfast. In the early afternoon, return to Honzan and attend afternoon Dento Hokoku Hoyo. After service, visit the Shoin at the Honzan.

Apr 1, Sat. KYOTO
Morning visit to Suminobo Betsuin, Rokkaku-do, Shorein, then lunch. After lunch, visit Otani Hombyo

and Wakabayashi Co. Wakabayashi is hosting a BBQ dinner for the group.

Apr 2, Sun. KYOTO – KANAZAWA
Morning departure by bus for Kanazawa. Enroute, visit Yoshizaki Betsuin in Fukui, then continue to Tojimbo for lunch. After lunch, continue to Kanazawa and visit Kenrokuen Park. Later, visit the goldleaf shop to see how the goldleaf is made.

Apr 3, Mon. KANAZAWA - TOYAMA
Travel to Noto Peninsula and visit Wajima morning market, Kiriko Kaikan to see festival floats, and Shioyasu Lacquerware shop to see how lacquerware is made. Lunch in Wajima. Later, drive by Noto Kongo, then later, drive on Chirihama Beach, and continue to Toyama. Later, visit Rev. Takata's temple and have service and a fellowship dinner with temple members.

Apr 4, Tue. TOYAMA
Today, sightseeing around Toyama visiting Kokando Museum, Minamoto Museum and enjoy the experience of making masu (trout) sushi for your lunch. After lunch, visit Castle Park and enjoy a boatride around the canal with sakura trees lining the canal.

Apr 5, Wed. TOYAMA – MYOKO – AKAKURA ONSEN
Travel by bus to Naoetsu and visit Kotogahama Beach where Shinran Shonin was exiled. Later, visit Gochikokubuji and Kokufu Betsuin. Then visit Eshin No Sato Museum with lunch there. After lunch, visit a sake brewery, then continue to Akakura Onsen. Tonight, enjoy a Japanese-style dinner.

Apr 6, Thu. AKAKURA ONSEN/MYOKO – TOKYO
This morning, take the Shinkansen to Tokyo.

Apr 7, Fri. TOKYO – LAX
Morning open. Afternoon transfer to Narita Airport for your flight back to LAX, arriving the same day, April 7.



The walkway between the Amida-do and the Goei-do.

JULY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Hatsubon Services 10:00 am & 1:00 pm
3 Family Service 10:00 am Eitaikyo Shotsuki Service 1:00 pm	4	5	6	7	8	9 Obon Carnival and Odori 1:00 - 9:00
10 Obon Carnival and Odori 1:00 - 8:30	11 Obon Carnival Clean-Up 6:00 pm	12	13	14 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm
17 Evergreen Cemetery Service 9:00 am Obon Service 10:00 am Nokotsudo Obon Service 1:00 pm	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Family Service 10:00 am	25	26	27	28	29	30
30 Family Service 10:00 am						

AUGUST 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Memorial Service 10:00 am	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Family Service 10:00 am Eitaikyo Shotsuki Service 1:00 pm	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17	18	19	20
21 Family Service 10:00 am	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Family Service 10:00 am	29	30	31			