

# LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 444

September-October 2017

# jihō

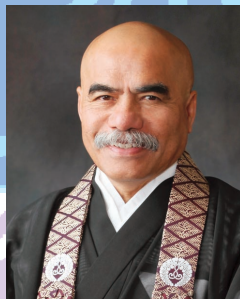
WWW

LOS ANGELES HONPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
FOUNDED 1905



## RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

## THOUGHTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ESHIN-NI AND SHINRAN



RIMBAN  
WILLIAM BRIONES

*"Although I never told your father about the dream in which I saw him as an incarnation of Kannon Bosatsu, since that time I never regarded him as just an ordinary man and continued to serve him. I hope that you too will fully appreciate what I am saying."*

As you may already know, my wife Nobuko Miyoshi is a minister at West Covina Buddhist Temple. If someone told me 23 years ago when I began my studies at IBS, that I would someday be married to a Buddhist priest, I would have told them they were nuts! But here we are, having met over 20 years ago, sharing our life as Jodo Shinshu ministers.

As you can imagine most of our time is taken up with temple work and activities. And even when we are at home, conversation is centered around work and the teachings. There is no doubt in my mind that Nobuko has been instrumental in my development and my understanding of Jodo Shinshu and she continues to influence me to reflect on the old adage, "practice what I preach."

So, I find myself trying to imagine what the dynamics were between Shinran Shonin and his

wife, Eshin-ni as they shared their life of Nembutsu but also living everyday in the mundane. It must be for certain that together they manifested the true intent of Nembutsu for the ordinary person.

In the month of October, Jodo Shinshu temples throughout BCA will be paying tribute to Eshin-ni. As we commemorate the life of Eshin-ni it gives us an opportunity to realize that despite Eshin-ni's human frailties and suffering many hardships, she was able to live a life of gratitude and great joy, embraced by Amida Buddha's compassion.

Until early in the 20th century very little was known about the life of Shinran Shonin, and even less about his family. But in 1921, ten letters, written by Eshin-ni, to their youngest daughter Kakushin-ni were found. These letters had been tucked away in the archives of Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto and forgotten for centuries. The letters attest, not only to Shinran's profound devotion to the Buddha-Dharma, but they also shed light on Eshin-ni, also a devoted follower of the Nembutsu.

Eshinni lead a very turbulent life. She was born in Echigo, and married to Shinran, who was exiled to that part of the country. Together they lived in Kanto for 20 years and then Kyoto for

*(continued on page 9)*

Los Angeles  
Hompa Hongwanji  
Buddhist Temple  
815 East First Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
TEL: 213.680.9130  
FAX: 213.680.2210  
WEB: [nishihongwanji-la.org](http://nishihongwanji-la.org)  
EMAIL: [info@nishihongwanji-la.org](mailto:info@nishihongwanji-la.org)

## BUDDHA DOCTOR

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

I recently had a problem with my back. When I picked up my briefcase, I suddenly felt a pain in my back. I thought it would be better soon so I didn't do anything to take care of it. As the result, it got worse and the back pain made it difficult for me to stand up and walk. After a week, I was finally able to walk slowly so I went to a doctor who examined me and gave me medication to relax my muscle and for the pain. This incident made me realize that I was taking normal movements of standing and walking for granted. I, now, truly appreciate my body for always working for me.

The relationship between the Buddha and an individual is sometimes compared to that of a doctor and a patient. The doctor first examines the patient. Based on the examination, the doctor determines the cause of illness. The doctor then determines the best corrective measures to bring the patient to back to wellness. Thus, the doctor maintains our physical health whereas the "Buddha doctor" maintains our spiritual health.

What kind of medicine has the Buddha doctor prepared for us? It is the Buddha's name, *Namo Amida Butsu*. Amida Buddha knew that countless people were suffering from illness so that he resolved to offer the great medicine for them. Amida Buddha successfully prepared the great medicine. Then, Amida Buddha appeared in this world by taking the form of Sakyamuni Buddha to transmit this great medicine to all beings. In this world, there are countless cures for various illnesses. If you go to a store, you'll find many sorts of medication. Shinran Shonin identified the cause of his own human suffering through his deep self-reflection and confidently revealed the great medicine created by Amida Buddha which is the best cure for our suffering.

There is one difficult issue. Many get their flu vaccine annually. Should we trust that flu vaccine? Most of us are not aware of who/how/where the vaccine is produced. We just trust that the vaccine will do its job. Amida Buddha is the doctor of our mind. We just trust his medicine without any doubts. His wish is we accept his medicine, *Namo Amida Butsu*, to be free us from our sufferings. In regards to medications, we, generally, don't know much about ingredients. In the case of Amida Buddha's medication, he clearly reveals the ingredient. The ingredient of his medication is his Primal Vow to liberate all sickness of all beings at all times from his Great Compassionate Mind and

also in all places from his Perfect Wisdom. This is why Shinran Shonin declared that the Nembutsu is the best medicine and encourages us all to take this medicine without any doubts.

Lastly, there is one important issue. When we are healthy, there is no need for any medication. Whenever we feel happy, we tend to think that there is no need for any doctor or Buddha. On the other hand, when we feel unhappy by losing beloved ones, fighting, conflicts, etc. we tend to seek help. The great medicine made by Amida Buddha is constant and is appropriate for any circumstance. His medication was made not only for us to take when we are unhappy but also when we are happy. Why would we need the medicine when we are happy? It is in order to prepare ourselves for when we face sufferings. We don't know when we have to separate from our loves ones, when death comes to us, when we have conflict with others, etc. We always need to prepare ourselves for our own suffering.

In order to prepare for our suffering, we need to know two factors. One is, who the best doctor (Amida Buddha)? The other is, what kind of medication do we need to take (Namo Amida Butsu, Buddha's Name which embodies Infinite Wisdom and Compassion). As a doctor of our minds, Amida Buddha has spent an incomprehensible amount of time to prepare for the great medication in order to save all beings from his Great Compassionate Mind. This great medication prepared by Amida Buddha was introduced by Sakyamuni Buddha, Seven Masters, Shinran Shonin, Rennyo Shonin, and many other succeeding masters to many beings. We wholeheartedly entrust and take Amida Buddha's great medicine, Nembutsu, with our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Amida Buddha for always sustaining our lives.

As such, my recent back pain reminded me of the importance of receiving the great medicine, Namo Amida Butsu, which was specially prepared for those who are suffering in this defiled world such as me.

*When I consider deeply the Vow of Amida, which arose from five kalpas of profound thought, I realize that it was entirely for the sake of myself alone! Then how I am filled with gratitude for the Primal Vow, in which Amida resolved to save me, though I am burdened with such heavy karma.*  
(CWS P.679, Tannisho Postscript)

## REMEMBERING THE INTERNMENT CAMPS

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

How did you spend your summer? I am currently writing this article enjoying the balmy summer weather. Earlier, during our Obon festivity weekend, we experienced some extreme weather. It was hot and very humid. I, personally, enjoyed helping BWA, dharma school and the Scout booths preparing food, cleaning floors and tables. With this, I was

able to mix with a many people and was able to thank them, personally, for their help. Without each individuals' efforts and support, we are not able to handle this big event at Nishi. Again, I would like to thank everyone for your generous help and contribution. Hopefully, Nishi Obon 2018 will have more comfortable weather.

Last year, I was so busy I was not able to take any trips. This summer, however, I was able to take some vacation time for a trip. For the past several years, I have wanted to visit Minidoka in Idaho, and Heart Mountain in Wyoming. These sites are two of the Japanese-American internment camps. Between these two locations is Yellowstone National Park. Minidoka is located west of the park and Heart Mountain located east of the park.

There are ten main internment camps in the United States. I had visited eight of them in last 14 years of my ministry in BCA. Having traveled to Minidoka and Heart Mountain, I was able to complete my visitations to all ten internment camps.

The Japanese who immigrated to the US after the WWII, generally are not aware of the history of the internment camps. In Japan, Japanese learn the history of Japan in school, but they do not have an opportunity to study the history of Japanese-American (J-A). The history of J-A in the US is not considered as a part of the history of the Japanese in Japan. On the other hand, it is natural that J-As do not study the history of Japanese as a part of their US history in their school.

There is a reason for my interest in the internment camps and my visiting these sites. When I had first arrived to the US (specifically Sacramento Betsuin), I officiated a funeral service for a woman. During the service, the family shared a slideshow of their mother's life story. Several photos showed the internment camps: a family photo in front of

the barrack; a photo of riding a train to the camp; a photo of their family home in California which they had lost after returning from the camp. I had never known of the J-As experiences during WWII. After the slideshow, a family member spoke of the experiences. In a letter, she said her mother lost everything, including her house, and was forced to relocate to Granada, Colorado until the end of the war. After the war, she raised her children and worked hard to rebuild their life from scratch in California. In speaking with the family, I explained that I had no knowledge of the internment camp experiences and that I wished to learn more. The family kindly shared, briefly, the history of the J-A experiences in the internment camp.

I, generally, avoid giving generic dharma messages at funerals or memorial services. I prefer sharing personalized

messages that relates to the family or the deceased. I decided that it was my quest to visit the internment camps to experience what the internees had to experience: the weather, the smells, and the environment by walking the grounds of the sites.

At the internment camps, many Buddhist activities such as obon, sunday services, and memorial services were regularly held as their spiritual backbone. The Heart Mountain Buddhist Temple was established at the Block 30 section of the Heart Mountain internment camp. In the altar of the temple,

there was a *butsudan* (home altar). It was five feet wide. During the war, out of necessity, the Heart Mountain butsudans were made of lumber scraps. The wis-teria symbol (sagari fuji) of Jodo Shinshu was carved. It is amazing that how the camp internees were able to create such intricate, detailed altar ornaments by carving it all by hand. I sensed the passion of those who wished to preserve and continue the teachings of the Buddha and transmit them to their children and grandchildren. They had no idea as to how long they would have to be in the camp. They just waited patiently. I humbly bow my head to those who survived the camps and express my gratitude to them for maintaining the teachings. If they had abandoned the teachings, our temple would not exist today.

Knowing of the internees' determination to maintain the teachings, how do we live our lives in gratitude? While we become more knowledgeable of the teachings, what do we do? Does the knowledge effectively nurture who you are? Our ancestors at Heart Mountain (and the other nine camps) who died are no longer with us, but they are still guiding us. *Gassho*



*Butsudan at Heart Mountain*



## FALL OHIGAN SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

With the waning of the hot, relaxing summer days, the Buddhist communities in Los Angeles are reminded of the coming *Higan*, a time to reflect on the human condition and examine the options open to us through the Infinite Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. The members of Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend one of the six major services in the Hongwanji tradition, the **Fall Higan Rededication Service** which will be held on **Sunday, September 17, 2017** at 10:00AM. The guest speaker for the service will be **Rev. Kenji Akahoshi** of the San Diego Buddhist Temple for English Service and **Rev. Doei Fujii** of the Tri-State Buddhist Temples for Japanese Service.

Higan is an abbreviation of "To-Higan" - literally meaning "to reach the other shore." In Buddhism, the world of suffering is referred to as "this shore" and the world of Enlightenment is called "other shore."

The term Higan comes from the Sanskrit word Paramita - "gone to other shore," and suggests the Six Paramita of charity, morality, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom. Various sutras teach that six paramita or perfections of

practice are the way of reaching the other shore from this shore.

In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, the observance of Higan is simply the expressing of our gratitude to Amida Buddha for awakening us to Boundless Compassion and Wisdom. Our part in this observance would be to put into action the Compassion which comes to us vertically from Amida Buddha and to apply it horizontally in our relation with man and other living beings on this earth. This appreciation in our daily life is the Jodo Shinshu Buddhism way of expressing our gratitude and thanksgiving for the wondrous virtues extended to us unconditionally and equally for all just like the sun's ray which falls on the earth.

In conjunction with Fall Higan Service, we are fortunate to have a Fall Higan Seminar entitled "Life of Awakening: Shinjin (True Entrusting Mind)" on Saturday, September 16, 2017. The seminar will begin at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. The registration is available at temple office. The registration fee is \$15.00 including lunch and refreshments. We encourage all of you to hear the teaching of Shinran Shonin who clarified the purpose of our lives.

## LADY ESHINNI AND KAKUSHINNI MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

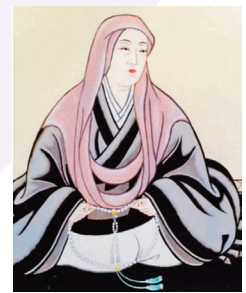
The members of LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple BWA and their families and friends are invited to attend the annual **Lady Eshinni and Kakushinni Memorial Service**, which will be held on **Sunday, October 1, 2017**. The guest speaker for the service will be **Rev. Mutsumi Wondra** of the Orange County Buddhist Church.

Jodo Shinshu, which literally means "True Teaching of the Pure Land Way," was founded by Shinran Shonin. In 1224, Shinran Shonin completed the first draft of his major work "The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way (*Kyo-Gyo-Shin-Sho*). The Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha regards Shinran Shonin who revealed the essential teaching of Primal Vow and the Name of Amida Buddha in his writing "*Kyo-Gyo-Shin-Sho*," as its founder and the completed year as the founding year. At the heart of its foundation were two women: Lady Eshinni (Shinran Shonin's wife) and Lady Kakushinni (Shinran Shonin's daughter).

Lady Eshinni gave Shinran Shonin her complete dedication and support. Her dedication is witnessed by her letters



Lady Eshinni



Lady Kakushinni

which were discovered in the archives of Hongwanji in 1921. Lady Eshinni is considered as the mother of Jodo Shinshu.

Lady Kakushinni established the foundation of Hongwanji to transmit Nembutsu Teaching for many generations. After Shinran Shonin's passing, she built a small temple in Higashiyama, Otani in Kyoto to enshrine Shinran Shonin's ashes and portrait. This temple gradually developed and

(continued on page 5)

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

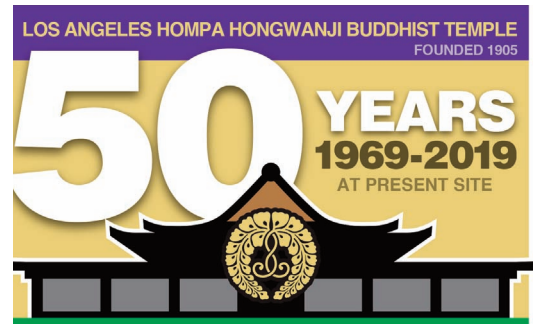
by Ernest Hida

With the conclusion of the summer season, we can look back on our successful bon odori and festival. Despite the intense heat, attendance was good, where visitors came to enjoy the festivities and food. With the heat, unfortunately, the kaikan did not provide much relief. The air conditioning system only had one chiller operating. Normally, six chillers need to be operating to properly cool the kaikan, but because of age and constant use, five chillers were inoperative.

In the temple office, there was a calm, soothing sound of trickling water. This sound was, in actuality, not calm and soothing. It was a constant reminder that the air conditioning system was "broken." The flow system was not working properly and the condensation was pooling in the ceiling and was subsequently dripping down to the floor. Strategically placed containers were collecting the dripping water from the ceiling. [see photos on page 11]

These are some examples of our aging temple building as it approaches its 50th year. Maintenance and repair costs are getting increasingly higher with time. Therefore, there is an urgent need to gather the funds so that the temple can be maintained for the future generation of members.

A temple sponsored fundraising dance was held in April to support the 50th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign and the net proceeds received by the campaign was over \$31,000. Kudos to the *Nishi Dance Committee* for its ef-



orts in planning and prepare for the dance and raising a substantial amount for the 50th Anniversary.

Other organizations have also held fundraising events and their contributions and dedicated efforts are much appreciated.

The goal for the fundraising campaign is \$2.5 million. We are grateful for everyone's generous donations. The fundraising campaign will continue on for a couple of more years and the ultimately goal is still a good distance away. We look forward to your continued generosity and support so that the campaign goal can be reached to ensure the future of the Los Angeles Betsuin.

*Gassho*, Ernest T. Hida, 50th Anniversary Chairman

*(Eshinni Kakushinni - continued from page 4)*

became Hongwanji.

The World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha BWA respectfully adopted the following resolutions;

1967 (Honolulu, Hawaii): Encourage BWA members to read "Letter of Eshinni" written by Lady Yoshiko Ohtani

1978 (Sao Paulo, Brazil): Established "Eshinni Day": Donation of the day to help youth activities

1986 (Kyoto, Japan): Designated "Eshinni Day" as World Peace Day

2002 (Sao Paulo, Brazil): Celebrate and Honor the life of Kakushinni

It is a time to remember and honor Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni who have greatly contributed to establish the foundation of Hongwanji. Let us gather at temple the opportunity given by Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni for hearing the Buddha-Dharma, their spiritual foundation.

## APPLIED JODO SHINSHU STUDIES FOR TEENS

*Rev. Kaz Nakata currently offers courses on intensive Buddhist studies to teens and preteens who are a part of the Boy Scout and Girl Scout organization at the Nishi Betsuin. The students are taught the essential teachings of Buddhism in English, Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan and Indian Sanskrit. The students are given an opportunity to share what they have learned.*

**Dukkha**

by Saiah Montoya

**Dukkha** is the Buddhist term for unexpectedness. Many people think dukkha means sadness or unsatisfactoriness, but that is not dukkha's true meaning. This meaning may come from a direct English translation. However, with unexpectedness may come sadness or unsatisfactoriness.

*(continued on page 7)*

## BWA 2017 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### KARLEE ITOMURA, JULIANNA TOM, AND MARLEY UYEMURA

Each year the Betsuin BWA awards a scholarship to a graduating high school senior based on a submitted essay that reflects what has been learned as a Jodo Shinshu youth. This year, there are three recipients. **Karlee Itomura, Julianna Tom, and Marley Uyemura** are the BWA Scholarship recipients for 2017.

The essay is based on the following question:

**What Jodo Shinshu means to me and how does it apply to my daily life?**

Below are Julianna's and Marley's essays. Karlee's will seen in the next issue of the Betsuin Jiho.



Above L-R: Rimban Briones, Julianna Tom, Karlee Itomura, Pam Tabata (BWA president). Top-right: Marley Uyemura.

**Julianna:** For me, Jodo Shinshu means a way for me to learn to accept myself and to continue learning about the changes that happen within and around me. I've always appreciated the sentiments of the quote, "To live is to suffer." While it may seem harsh, it is the reality that we live in and have to accept and survive with. I do not go a day without some sort of suffering, but it has made me into the person I am. I have insecurities in my life that affect me everyday and there are some people around me that cause me suffering as well, but I always try to be the best person I can be, despite the pain.

Last year, our Nishi Jr. YBA hosted conference, and I coled a workshop dealing with interdependence. During the preparation for the workshop, I learned a lot about myself and my relationship with others. Even though there are people around me who cause me to suffer, I take it as an opportunity to think about my own actions or to reconsider if I should be around said individuals, and I am grateful for the opportunity to improve myself. The concept of chaos theory and the butterfly effect always fascinated me; the idea that any action, no matter how seemingly insignificant, has a reaction. We play a role in everyone's life that we come into contact with, whether it be as the sidekick, the antagonist, or even the extra, side characters. Everyone's lives are so interconnected, it is hard to do anything without having some sort of effect on one another. I try to live my life by taking this into account and acting in a way that has little negative effects. Some people find it hard to act this way, or are unaware of their actions, and I only hope for them to learn about the consequences of their actions on their own, so they can grow and mature. Another quote I admire is, "Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back everything is different." Because of my connections with everyone

(continued on page 7)

**Marley:** Impermanence. Imperfection. Interdependence. These three values stand out most to me when I reflect on the teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Impermanence is when you have a really good conversation with a friend, and you both begin to laugh so hard that you can barely breathe, but realize twenty minutes later that you both forgot what you were laughing about because you were having such a good time during that moment. I can recall many moments similar to this from insiders with my mom to bad jokes with my friends, but there isn't ever an identical moment. This is what makes them so special. I believe that because of impermanence, tomorrow isn't a concept. When we "live like there is no tomorrow," we live with little to no regrets. I am able to be grateful for the simple, yet delightful things in life by doing my best to enjoy every moment to its fullest. Imperfection is when you're a dollar and fifty cents too short for that grande-sized frapuccino from Starbucks that you have been craving all day, yet your friend tells you, "Don't worry. I've gotcha covered." But imperfection means something even more when you tell that friend, "Thanks!" and you accept their offer. I believe that accepting my imperfections and being able to laugh at myself can be good—sometimes. I am teaching myself to not be so harsh towards myself and others because we all make mistakes and others can see that. Though not all people will seem to accept it right away, by accepting my own imperfections and feeling better about myself, I am able to take the mistakes I have made and try my best not to make them again. It's tough because I need to practice accepting imperfections in my everyday life if I would like others to accept mine as well. One might think what other people say about he or she is gibberish to their ears whether it be good or bad, but I know that I care. I care about having friends, family, and others I have,

(continued on page 7)



## ABA: ANNUAL EVENING AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL

by Lonny Quon

On Sunday, July 2, Nishi ABA members, families and friends attended their annual event to Hollywood Bowl's 4th of July Concert.

As in the past, they were joined by temple members of Gardena and Venice. A total of 160 seats were filled by the three temples at this sold out event.

The concert opened with special selections and patriotic songs by the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra. Special guest performers were by the Pentatonix, an acappella quintet. Their pop music style and awesome vocals filled the night air. The soothing, upbeat sounds were highlighted with a medley of Michael Jackson songs and other top hits.

We were happy to have Rev. Takata's family, Rev. Nakata, Rev. Kory Quon and families attend this year's concert. As usual, the nonstop sharing of delicious food (esp. Spam musubi), snacks and drinks were passed around throughout the concert!

The evening's event ended with a fabulous fireworks display coordinated with patriotic music by the Bowl's orchestra. Come join us next year!



*ABA members, families, & friends enjoying the music at the Hollywood Bowl*

*(Scholarship - continued from page 6)*

**Julianna:**

around me, I have changed every day, every minute. It is truly compelling to think that as soon as you think something is stagnant, it has already changed. This quote is descriptive of interdependence as well as impermanence.

We are able to change because of the influences of those around us, and we have ways to identify ourselves because of how others characterize us. Even as I write this, I am scared of how the reader will judge me and place some sort of label onto me for what or how I write. But as I grow, I learn to accept the parts of myself that I cannot force to change and to be grateful for the change.

**Marley:**

or could potentially have, strong and positive relationships with, close to me.

Interdependence is when you Snapchat your bestie about having a bad day, and ten seconds later, she calls you up to let you know that she's there if you need to talk about it. But, it is also when your friend accepts that you forgot that dollar and fifty cents that made you short on buying your frappucino, or when you're laughing with someone so hard you both forgot what you were laughing about. Interdependence is everything and anything because it connects imperfect moments that you'll never forget with people who are unforgettable. I don't expect to have all of the same people that I have by my side now to stay with me until the day I die because I can't be totally sure if I haven't even lived through tomorrow yet. What I can learn from each day until the day I die is to cherish life's moments before they're gone, laugh at my mistakes and learn from them, and that just because I travel on my own path doesn't mean I must travel it alone.

*(Youth Essay - continued from page 5)*

I can experience dukkha anytime I don't expect something that I prepared for, like when I prepare for a campout and think that the weather will be sunny the whole time, but when you get there, it is raining a lot, and you forget a jacket. Getting really wet because of the rain may bring sadness or unhappiness.

Another way I could experience dukkha is when I go on a family vacation, but I get sick on the way or while I'm there. If I'm unprepared to get sick or I was wasn't expecting it, I could become sad because I wouldn't be able to have a fun time on the trip like I would have planned on.

Some ways I experience dukkha is when I studied a lot for my science finals, and when I started taking the final, noth-

ing that I studied was on there. Although I didn't study what was on the test, I still passed. When I experienced dukkha that time, I had unsatisfactoriness because I wanted to get an "A" on the test, but I got a "C." These are some ways I can experience dukkha, and how unexpectedness can lead to unsatisfactoriness or sadness.

**Betsuin Jiho**

**Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones**

**English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto**

**Photos: Koichi Sayano and Glen Tao**

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



**HOLLYWOOD BUDDHIST CHURCH, 100TH Anniversary Centennial Commemoration 1915 – 2015, History of Hollywood Buddhist Church 1915 – 2015, p. 31**

In 1900, Hollywood was a quiet residential area located in the northwest section of the City of Los Angeles. In 1907, there were about 70 Japanese residents in the Hollywood area, most of them gardeners or housekeepers. By 1915, the number increased to about 40 Japanese families.

This was a time of great change: World War I had just begun, and a new industry was on the rise in Hollywood, the home of motion pictures in America. The beginnings of Hollywood Buddhist Church (HBC) can be traced back to this time in history when the population of Los Angeles was little more than 550,000, and only about 55,000 cars were on the streets of the city. In 1915, Japanese immigrants residing in the Hollywood area felt the need to create a place to gather and receive dharma teachings.

Under the leadership of Senji Hara, and with the support of Kanekishi Nakayama, Tauichi Yoneyama, Tomoichi Sumino, Teiji Miyamoto, and Chinzaburo Kodama, the foundation for the church was laid. It was first called “Hara-san no Bukkyokai,” named in tribute to its most influential leader. The sangha was able to use a portion of a wood frame hall on Cahuenga Boulevard between Sunset and Hollywood Boulevards for their services. Only the dedicated could find it behind a row of small Japanese business houses that included shops such as the Imai Grocery, Hara’s Barber Shop, the Toribuchi Market, and a family-run laundry. Thus, the church humbly began with much faith and hope.....

— by Yoshiye Honda, chairperson, Hideo Izumo, Masanori Nishikawa, and Yemiko Okumoto

\* \* \* \* \*

**Houki no Enishi**, (collection of writings by Reverends K. Uchida, N. Utsuki, Y. Numata, T. Jisoji, K. Kurokawa, Rimban H. Sasaki, J. Ono, S. Suginari, R. Fujimoto, and others) published by Tomoichi Sumino in memory of wife, Kinuko Sumino’s third memorial service, 1936, Hiroshima, Japan  
Highlights from article, “*Sekai ichi oishii sushi* (World’s



**Tomoichi Sumino family home in Hollywood, 1919**  
Seated, l-r: ?, Rev. Utsuki, Rev. Jisoji, Rev. Kyogoku, Kinuko Sumino (with baby of niece, Tomoichi Sumino)  
Standing: Yehan Numata, ?, ?, niece of Kinuko Sumino

*tastiest sushi*)” by Yehan Numata. Collection shared by Rev. Yutaka Jisoji of Shin’nenji, Fukuoka, Japan. Rev. Jisoji is the grandson of late Rev. Tetsugai Jisoji, who served Hongwanji Buddhist Church of Los Angeles, 1915 – 1919.

Yehan Numata arrived in the United States, after stopover in Hawaii, in 1919, after graduating from middle school in Japan. He came from a minister’s family and chanted sutras daily after work. While attending Hollywood High School, he was employed as a school boy in a Caucasian family, worked hard, and though treated well, was very lonely for his home and family in Japan. He did meet the Sumino family of Hollywood (often had dinner, there), and bicycled to Hollywood temple for Sunday services. He was often mistaken or looked upon as an illegal alien by passersby.

Numata became ill (tuberculosis), “the most miserable time of my life”, and though the family tried to care for and fed him well, he could not eat Western food, yearned for *okayu* (rice porridge) and *ume boshi* (picked plum), got worse and weakened dangerously. Fortunately, Mrs. Sumino missed seeing him, and looked in on him and finding him to be very ill, brought him *maki sushi*, which “saved my life” and was the “most delicious sushi I ever ate.” Her Japanese dishes brought him back to health. The Sumino family acted as “mothers” to many of the Japanese immigrants.

Yehan Numata recovered, graduated from Hollywood High School in 1921, then went on the UC Berkeley. He always remembered the kindness of Mrs. Sumino, and hoped to see her when she returned to visit Japan, but unfortunately, she passed away in 1934 before he could “return her life saving kindness.”

\*NOTE: In 1934, Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata started Mitutoyo to establish Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK, The Society for Promotion of Buddhism). In 1967, the first presentation of Cultural Award for Promotion of Buddhism was bestowed. In 1968, Rev. Dr. Numata was inaugurated as the first chairperson. He passed away in 1994 at the age of 97 years.

Nov 18-19, 2017, L.A. Betsuin Kaikan, BDK sponsors

(continued on page 9)



*(Rimban - continued from page 1)*

another 20 years. Later in life she returned by herself to her native Echigo, leaving behind her husband in Kyoto and for more than 10 years she took care of her property that she had inherited, plus she took care of her grandchildren.

The opening reading comes from Eshin-ni's third letter, a letter written to Kakushinni revealing a dream that she had about Shinran.

Eshinni's dream takes place at a dedication ceremony for a recently completed temple. She sees huge images of the Buddha. One of the images is emanating bright lights and she is unable to see the face. The other image is clearly the face of Buddha. When she asks what is the name of this Buddha, there is a reply, *"The one with the light is Honen Shonin, he is none other than Seishi Bosatsu and the other is Kannon Bosatsu, he is none other than Shinran."*

She awakens from her dream and she vows not to tell anyone of the dream fearing no one would believe her. However, she does tell Shinran about seeing Honen Shonin in her dream. Shinran acknowledges the significance of the dream, but she never tells Shinran that she saw him as an incarnation of Kannon Bosatsu.

Because of this dream, Eshinni regarded Shinran as an incarnation of a Bodhisattva of Compassion and assured Kakushin-ni of his exemplary religious life.

For Shinran, dreams and visions also played a significant

role in his religious development. In one such dream, while Shinran was staying at Rokkakudo in Kyoto, he dreamt that Kannon Bosatsu appeared to him and told him that because he was driven by sexual desire, that he would indeed be with a woman. Kannon Bosatsu said that he would transform himself into the woman that Shinran would embrace. And that this woman would adorn him through out his life and at death lead him to the Pure Land.

It was this dream that ultimately drove him to abandon the monastic life at Mt. Hiei, convert to Honen's teachings and eventually marry Eshin-ni and have a family.

Little is written about the relationship, the interaction between Shinran and Eshin-ni. But one can only imagine the devotion and dedication they had for one another, since they both considered that their mate was the incarnation of a Bodhisattva. Together they help propagate the Nembutsu teachings, through drought, famine, disease ... no doubt an inspiration to each other.

Truly, they were a unique couple, united in a deep and enduring faith. Together and apart they lived a life of deep gratitude manifesting the ideal of Nembutsu practitioner.

As I reflect on Shinran and Eshinni's life and their deep commitment to the Nembutsu, I can only dream, that someday I too will awaken to the same great joy and gratitude that Shinran and Eshinni shared.

*Namoamidabutsu*

## 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*

### MAY 2017

10 James K. Yamamoto	18 Robert Minoru Maeda
17 Philip Noel Ito	19 Teruko Hashimoto
19 Isao Kudow	21 Yoshie Wada
23 George Fukuhara	26 Kazuhiko Takeshige
31 Dean Keiji Hotta	29 Chiyoko Nishimori

### JUNE 2017

2 Fusako Murakami	3 Bradley T. Amano
7 Yoshiya Hatashita	7 Chiyeko Kawashima
12 Shizuye Shimizu	8 Katsuyo Kinoshita
Couey	9 Tsune Yamashiro
14 Frank S. Watanabe	12 Masako Yanohira

### JULY 2017

*(Did You Know? - continued from page 8)*

*Photo Exhibit: The Buddha's Words and Scenery of India, commemorating 50th anniversary of BDK, also, sponsored by L.A. Betsuin Dharma Center and Senshin Buddhist Temple*

*Many thanks to Rev. Yutaka Jisoji, grandson of Rev. Tetsugai Jisoji, of Fukuoka for his many e-mail correspondences, including information and photos, of the era of his grandfather's time here in the United States, in particular, Los Angeles, and the additional information regarding fellow ministers, Rev. Uchida, Rev. Utsuki, Rev. Kyogoku, and Rev. Izumida, 1915 – 1919.*

*Thanks to Cindy Oda, who has been working on and updating archives finding aid; to Suzette Kawaguchi, for cutting through a ream of 11x17size papers to form 4x6 inserts between photos in photo collections*

*Correction, July-August, 2017 JIHO issue, photo: "Obon 1940s Fujinkai", Kayo Mihara.*

BETSUIN PHOTOS



*The sultry day gave way to the setting of the sun which created a balmy evening of bon odori. The silhouette of City Hall can be seen in the distance as part of the Los Angeles skyline.*



*At the close of the Obon festivities the hustle and the bustle dissipated and the soft lights bring out the calm and the splendor of the temple*



*Okinawa Dango Frying Guys, Lonny Quon (left) & Kenji Hatakeyama*



*Chicken Grilling Guys, Kenny Itomura (left) & John Tashiro*



*Produce bargain sales*



*Bon Odori*



*Nishi Center Odori Kids*



*Tea Ceremony JoAnn Hirose (right)*



**MORE BETSUIN PHOTOS**



*Rimban Briones speaking at the Memorial Day services at Evergreen Cemetery. To his right is his wife, Rev. Miyoshi, representing Higashi Honganji (West Covina)*



*View of Betsuin office ceiling where water from the air conditioning condensation was accumulating in a sushi platter lid and dripping into containers below. [Article on page 5]*



*Repaired iron gate*



*Family Fun Day held in the kaikan, enjoyed by young and old...*



*Hatsumairi 2017 Families*

*L-R: Kyle/Shirley Tomita; William/Jill Tabata; Michael/Grace Lee Kondo with Rimban Briones in the rear.*



*Betsuin's new van subsidized by the Kouhaku Utgassen committee and a Keiro grant. Pictured: Seibi Okita, driver and ladies from Sakura Gardens*



*Attendance Awardees*

*The dharma school students proudly display their Attendance Award certificates with Rev. Takata on the far left and Rimban Briones on the right.*



**SOUTHERN DISTRICT BEC SEMINAR**

南加教区仏教教育セミナー

**“Jodo Shinshu Rituals in Daily Life:  
Gratitude and Appreciation -**

**Every Moment, Every Morning, & Every Evening”**

『毎日の日暮らしの中での浄土真宗儀礼：報恩感謝』



**Saturday, October 28, 2017**

**@LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple**

**Reverend Katsuya Kusunoki**

**Rimban, Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple**

What is a family altar? How should the altar be decorated? What are the daily rituals in Jodo Shinshu? What should we do if we don't have a family altar in our home? What should we do if we have more than 1 family altar? **BRING YOUR QUESTIONS.**

<b>Japanese Session</b>	8:30 am	Registration 登録
	9:00 am	Opening Service 開会のお勤め
	9:30 am	Japanese Session 日本語による講義
	10:30 am	Break 休憩
	10:45 am	Japanese Session continued 日本語による講義
	11:45 am	End Japanese Session 解散
<b>English Session</b>	12:30 pm	Registration
	1:00 pm	Opening Service
	1:30pm	English Session
	2:30 pm	Break
	2:45 pm	English Session Continued
	3:45 pm	End English Session

# SEPTEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Regular Service 10:00 am	4 Labor Day Temple Closed	5	6 Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rev. Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	7 What Makes You Not a Buddhist Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	8	9 蓮如上人と御一代記聞書 Rennyō Shonin (Jpn) Rev. Matsubayashi 10:00-11:30 am
10 Regular Service 10:00 am Dharma School Registration Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm	11	12	13 Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rev. Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	14 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	15	16 Ohigan Seminar Rev. Akahoshi Eng Rev. Fujii Jpn 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
17 Ohigan Service 10:00 am	18	19 Shinran Shonin's Hymns Rev. Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm	20 Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rev. Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	21 What Makes You Not a Buddhist Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	22	23 Explaining Shin Buddhism in the Simplest Way Possible Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am
24 Regular Service 10:00 am	25 Reason to Live the Shin Buddhist Way Rev. Takata 6:30-8:00 pm	26 Shinran Shonin's Hymns Rev. Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm	27 Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rev. Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	28 What Makes You Not a Buddhist Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	29	30 Explaining Shin Buddhism in the Simplest Way Possible Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am

# OCTOBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Eshin-ni & Kakushin-ni Memorial Service 10:00 am	2 Reason to Live the Shin Buddhist Way Rev. Takata 6:30-8:00 pm	3 Shinran Shonin's Hymns Rev. Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm	4 Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rev. Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	5 What Makes You Not a Buddhist Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	6	7
8 Regular Service 10:00 am Eiktaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm	9 Reason to Live the Shin Buddhist Way Rev. Takata 6:30-8:00 pm	10	11	12 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	13	14 Explaining Shin Buddhism in the Simplest Way Possible Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am 蓮如上人と御一代記聞書 Rennyō Shōnin (Jpn) Rev. Matsubayashi 10:00-11:30 am
15 Regular Service 10:00 am	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm  Reason to Live the Shin Buddhist Way Rev. Takata 6:30-8:00 pm	17 Shinran Shonin's Hymns Rev. Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm	18	19 What Makes You Not a Buddhist Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	20	21 Explaining Shin Buddhism in the Simplest Way Possible Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am
22 Regular Service 10:00 am	23 Reason to Live the Shin Buddhist Way Rev. Takata 6:30-8:00 pm	24 Shinran Shonin's Hymns Rev. Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm	25	26	27	28 So Dist BEC Seminar "Jodo Shinshu Rituals in Daily Life" Re. Katsuya Kusunoki
29 Regular Service 10:00 am	30	31				