



Water Wheel

*Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.
—Gate of Sweet Nectar*

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Vow: An Invitation

By Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

What is a vow? A vow is an invitation to step fully into our life. We can approach this life as a mandala—a “circle of life” which encompasses everything, from the smallest particles to the boundless dimensions of universal life. It encompasses form and formless, animate and inanimate, being and non-being.

We are already living this life, and yet we must enter it fully. How do we enter our own life? We make a vow. A vow is a deeply sworn promise made with the clear intention that we will live the interconnectedness of the circle of life for the good of all. All the bodhisattvas—Avalokitesvara, Manjusri, Jizo, Samantabhadra—practiced the commitment of vows. The circle of life is not bound by space and time, and yet it is lived out in space and time.

A vow points us in a life direction of becoming a buddha—an awake being who, realizing the true nature of life, makes of it an offering of service to all. So we may ask, “How do I live such a life in the midst of my present circumstances?”

Lao Tzu wrote this verse in the *Tao Te Ching*, as translated by Stephen Mitchell:

*We join spokes together in a wheel,
But it is the center hole
That makes the wagon move.*

*We shape clay into a pot,
But it is the emptiness inside
That holds whatever we want.*

*We hammer wood for a house,
But it is the inner space*



The lemon seed fulfills itself.

*That makes it livable.
We work with being,
But non-being is what we use.*

Zen practitioners take on the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows and the Sixteen Bodhisattva Vows. At the heart of these vows is the *center hole, the emptiness inside, the inner space, the non-being* realized by Lao Tzu and the great adepts. Vows arise from this place—this vibrant life force that courses through everything and fulfills itself as everything just as it is.

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE

- 3 Bodhidharma's Emptiness by Roshi Junyu Kuroda
- 8 Programs
- 10 Day of Dana
- 11 AA Case: Our Friend of the Hotel Lobby Makes a Call by Anonymous
- 13 Sangha Rites of Passage
- 14 Dharma Combat
- 15 Sangha Appreciation
- 16 Things given are beyond measure

Simply stated, an apple seed becomes an apple tree, not a sixteen-foot palm dropping sticky black seeds all over the garden. In the same way that the apple seed fulfills itself, we humans are destined to become buddhas. We, of course, focus on all the ways that we are not so. Nevertheless, no matter how bleak our circumstances may be, no matter how we suffer or are confused, there is the impulse to override the sheer force of ego-centeredness. There is the longing for the arising of wisdom and love. We may not be clear what we need to do exactly, and yet we feel the pull of something deeply sworn—some promise made long ago that is longing to be fulfilled. It is as though something ancient is infusing this present moment—this *nen* (now-heart-mind); it is as though the future depends on it—*nen!* *Nen!*

We often relate to vows as a kind of impossible standard that we will never fulfill. In exploring vows together, the intention is to open ourselves to bringing vows into our daily life so that we may live the best possible life.

What is a best possible life? It is the life in which we become our fullest, most mature self that offers itself up for others. Does this seem too grandiose for you? To the contrary, vows are meant for our everyday life—they speak to how the life force moves these ears, eyes, tongue, body, and mind. It is the voice, the knowing, the rightness of that which keeps calling to us in the midst of sleep, in the fear of death, in the frivolity of a good time, in the quiet of the early dawn.

How do vows arise? There is moving through all of us a vibrant life force that wishes to fulfill itself. My teacher Roshi Bernie Glassman once shared with me an awakening experience of seeing the hungry ghosts. This led to his vow: *I vow to feed all the hungry spirits*. Many of us have been blessed to bear witness to the unfolding of this deeply sworn vow in his life—unfolding in a way that is unique to how he is equipped and able to grow and serve. We, too, have all that we need to fulfill our vows.

Each of us has a deeply sworn vow that has emerged or is emerging. As we practice, we feel called forth. The vow, whatever it may be for each of us, allows us to meet the reality of life as it is, without escape. I would like you all to consider that a vow is not something for the superior person that is out of your reach, but rather the impulse that is already alive in you to serve and to live the fullest possible life. You can trust that it will manifest in a way that it is possible for you yourself to grow and that you are fully able to handle, even when the conditions or tasks before you seem too much to bear.

When we pick up a vow, we align with a powerful life energy. The vow itself realigns us over and over—the vow moves forward to embrace us, constantly calling us forth, and bears witness to the way in which we are living. We can be surprised at the sheer force of vow in how it illuminates the ego's need to fulfill itself—little by little, we choose to soften and dissolve the self-centered behaviors that are counter to the vow's fulfillment.

When we live by vow, we find ourselves moving from ignorance to clarity, from anger to love, from greed to generosity. We begin to experience the *center hole*, the *emptiness inside*, the *inner space*, the *non-being*—this not-knowing place from which we step forward to bear witness and serve.

There is a powerful story from old Japan of a samurai who killed the husband of his lover. As penance, he vowed to dig a very long tunnel which would provide a way through a treacherous mountain pass. For thirty years, he begged for food by day and engaged the back-breaking work of digging with body and shovel, one shovel-full of dirt at a time at night. Two years before completing the tunnel, the son of the man he killed seeks his revenge. When they meet, the fugitive samurai says, "Please, let me first finish this tunnel, then you may kill me. I deserve it." The son agreed, and day after day, he watched the man dig. Soon he joined him. Eventually, they completed the tunnel together. But by this time, the strength of the man's vow had evaporated the son's desire for revenge.

While this is an extreme story, it illustrates how our vows affect others in ways we cannot know. We ourselves are the beneficiaries of others' vows. Maezumi Roshi had a vow to plant the Buddhadharma in America—owing to him, we are the recipients of so much. He endured hardships little known or remembered by us today. Perhaps if we had better memories, or the capacity of sight, we would not be so quick to complain or fritter away opportunities.

Our vows expand as we continue to practice and experience the immensity of the life that we are living. We become more focused and, at the same time, more all-encompassing. A vow to sit daily becomes the vow to raise the bodhi mind; a vow to be gentle becomes a vow to save all sentient beings; a vow to take care of a sick parent becomes a vow to serve as a chaplain.

Please consider your vows carefully and practice wholeheartedly, allowing yourself to open up to this circle of life. Touch the *center hole*, the *emptiness inside*, the *inner space*, the *non-being*. May you build many wheels, pots, and houses in service of all! ■

Members may listen to Roshi Egyoku's first class on vows on the Members' website. Class #2 will be held on November 8, 2009.

Shoyoroku, Case 2: Bodhidharma's Emptiness

By Roshi Junyu Kuroda

Preface

A man presented a jewel three times, but didn't escape punishment. When a luminous jewel is thrown to anyone, few do not draw their sword. For an impromptu guest, there is no impromptu host; what's appropriate provisionally is not appropriate for the real. If unusual treasures and rare jewels cannot be put to use, I'll bring out the head of a dead cat—look!

Main Case

Emperor Wu of Liang asked Great Teacher Bodhidharma, "What is the highest meaning of the holy truths?" Bodhidharma said, "Empty—there is no holiness." The emperor said, "Who are you facing me?" Bodhidharma said, "Don't know." The emperor didn't understand. Bodhidharma subsequently crossed the Yangtze River, came to Shaolin, and faced a wall for nine years. Empty—nothing holy.

The Verse

The approach is far off.

Succeeding, he swings the ax without injuring the nose; Failing, he drops the pitcher without looking back.

Still and silent, coolly he sat at Shaolin:

In silence he completely brought up the true imperative. The clear moon of autumn turns its frosty disk;

The Milky Way thin, the Dipper hangs down its handle in the night. In succession the robe and bowl have been imparted to descendants:

From this humans and divinities have made medicine and disease.

Abbot Koichi Isoda (of Keisho-in) appointed me to be the Seido (Roshi of the West Hall) today. At first I kept declining his request because there are so many high ranking priests in Shizuoka prefecture. But he strongly insisted, so I finally decided to accept it.

Anton Tenkei Coppens Roshi is also here, coming from Holland to join and celebrate this ceremony. He has often received the new abbot of this temple with warm hospitality at Zen River Buddhist Training Temple in Holland. Tenkei Roshi's original teacher was



Roshi Junyu Kuroda

my elder brother, Maezumi Roshi. My family name is Kuroda and, although Maezumi Roshi is my real brother, he was adopted by my mother's side of the family and took my mother's family name. He worked very hard to spread Zen in the United States, but unfortunately, he passed away recently. Tenkei Roshi then became a disciple of Maezumi Roshi's second disciple, Genpo Roshi. I myself also have been trying to make a small contribution in building a bridge between the East and West in Zen Buddhism. I think I was assigned to be Seido today due to those connections.

In the Zen tradition, we use the expression *teishou* (teisho) instead of "talk" or "lecture." *Tei* means "to hold up" or "to pick up and show a whole." *Shou* means to "recite." I have never been able to do such a thing as "holding up and reciting a whole" skillfully. Please forgive my inability.

There is a story about the famous Japanese Rinzai monk Sengai that almost sounds like a joke. Somebody asked Sengai, "Please draw a picture of sound." "All right, all right," he said. He picked up a brush and drew a straight line across the center of the paper and added a spear point to it. "Can you hear the sound?" "No." Then he wrote these words next to the drawing, "Ten-tsukuten-ten" (sound of a drum). It is a kind of pun. The sound of "ten-tsuku" can also mean in Japanese "to poke the sky (with a spear)."

Roshi Junyu Kuroda is the younger brother of Maezumi Roshi and Abbot of Kirigaya-ji in Tokyo. This teisho was delivered on the occasion of an inauguration ceremony at Keisho-in. It is translated by Rev. Issho Fujita and reprinted with minor editorial changes with the kind permission of Rev. Kuroda.

(Continued on page 4)

Today I am going to give a teisho on "Bodhidharma's Emptiness." As you know, this is the second case of *The Book of Serenity (Shoyoroku)*. The origin of this book is *Wanshi Jyuko* by Zen Master Wanshi Shogaku, who selected one hundred cases and added his own commentaries in verse to each case. Later Zen master Bansyo Gyoshu added further commentaries to this collection and called it *Wanshi Shogaku Zenji Jyuko Shoyouanroku*, including the name of his hermitage "Shoyouan."

Besides the *Shoyoroku*, there is another famous koan collection which is called *Hekiganroku (Blue Cliff Record)* written by Zen master Engo. Wanshi and Engo were good friends. It is often said that the style of the *Hekiganroku* is bold and big-hearted and that the *Shoyoroku* is more kind-spirited, or that in *Shoyoroku* samadhi (concentration) comes first and prajna (wisdom) comes second, and in *Hekiganroku*, prajna comes first and samadhi comes second. But I think we should master both simultaneously without any discrimination.

People often discuss the differences between Rinzai and Soto, or between Silent Illumination Zen (Mokusho Zen) and Watching-Story Zen (Kanna or Koan Zen). Some people say that everyone is already enlightened, or that our daily activities are enlightenment. But I wonder if we can really be satisfied with these statements. In fact, we cannot simply accept or take it for granted that we are already buddhas or enlightened. So I think that working with koans and finding answers one by one is a very good method to test our understanding.

Maezumi Roshi (let me call him "roshi" even though he is my brother) once said to me. "It was so helpful to go through koan training with my masters. I really feel grateful about it." He finished koan training under Hakuun Yasutani Roshi, who was a disciple of Sogaku Harada Roshi, and received *inka shomei* (qualification) from him. He also received *inka shomei* from another great teacher, Koryu Osaka Roshi, who taught Koji Zen (Zen for lay people).

In Rinzai there are two lineages in the style of koan training. My brother received *inka shomei* from both lineages. Even in Rinzai Zen, there is no one like him; it is a unique combination. I believe that tackling each koan one after the other, to resolve them and experience them in their very depth, is a wonderful training method.

This case has the following introduction: "*A man named Benka presented a jewel three times, but didn't escape punishment. When a luminous jewel is thrown to anyone, few do not draw their sword. For an impromptu guest, there is no impromptu host; what's appropriate provisionally is not appropriate for the real.*"

If unusual treasures and rare jewels cannot be put to use, I'll bring out the head of a dead cat—look!"

The Chinese characters of this man's name, Benka, are unfamiliar to us, but they occur in a story in a famous Chinese text called *Kanbishu*. Benka found a beautiful stone in Konkoukoku Valley close to Mt. Kaizan.

About ten years ago, the media reported that in China someone had found a wonderful stone in a rice field and had become a millionaire overnight. So even

**"Bodhidharma
said,
'don't know'..."**



Bodhidharma by Pom Ju Sunim

now it is possible to find such a stone in China. The man in our story, Benka, thought that it was not good to keep such a wonderful stone for himself and that it should be used for the benefit of his country. So he gave the stone to Emperor Reiou. But this emperor could not distinguish the real from the false and accused Benka of lying and cut the muscles of one of his legs. Later Benka gave this stone to the next Emperor Buou. This emperor could not understand it either and cut the muscles of his other leg.

I was severely burned twenty-six-or-seven years ago and lost all ten fingers. I have only the back of my right hand left. I cut lines in it to make it look like a hand. Half of my body suffered third degree burns. So it was a kind of miracle that I could survive. Yet I went to Mt. Godai in China with my both hands swathed in bandages. It is very inconvenient to live without ten fingers. It is particularly agonizing to be fed by someone at every meal. It is also agonizing to be attended to all my personal needs.

So Benka had the muscles of both his two legs cut and lamented alone at the foot of Mt. Keizan, "Why didn't those emperors understand what I said?" Finally

(Continued on page 5)

he gave the stone to the next Emperor, Bunou, who ordered to have it checked. It turned out that the stone was an incredibly wonderful one.

I recently went to China and bought an interesting stone there. I brought it with me to show it to you. The new abbot of this temple made a nice box for it. This is just an ordinary stone, but I will show you how it changes color when it is exposed to a bright light. Please enjoy looking at it, rather than listening to my talk.

He didn't escape punishment. When a luminous jewel is thrown to anyone, few do not draw their sword. When we see a flashing light in the darkness, we may jump up, draw a sword, and take on a defensive posture, worrying who is coming. This is *When a luminous jewel is thrown to anyone, few do not draw their sword.*

For an impromptu guest there is no impromptu host. An impromptu guest is a guest who comes without notice. An impromptu host is a host who receives such a guest. It would be much more skillful to receive an impromptu guest by saying, "Oh, welcome, welcome."

I love beer very much. I welcome any guests from morning till night because I can drink beer with them. One can fail to see the truth, or miss the truth by keeping too much to one's appearances. Maybe that is meant by the line *What's appropriate provisionally is not appropriate for the real.*

If unusual treasures and rare jewels cannot be put to use, I'll bring out the head of a dead cat— look! This sentence is meant to catch our attention and draw it to the main case. That is why these kind of phrases are called "fishing words." It means something like, "Here, I offer you a great treasure, but if you cannot use it, or if you do not understand it, then that is a big problem."

We can find the expression "the head of a dead cat" in a book titled *Egen*. The name Soto of the Soto School was taken from the names of two Zen masters, Sozan and Tozan. A monk asked Sozan, "What is the most precious thing in the world?" He answered, "It is the skull of a dead cat on the ground." This monk was surprised by this answer and again asked, "Why is the skull of a dead cat the most precious thing?" Sozan said, "It is beyond any value and price."

Now let us go to the main case. *Emperor Wu of Liang asked Great Teacher Bodhidharma.* Emperor Wu excelled in the scholastic approach to Buddhism. So he entered the dialogue with Bodhidharma with vast knowl-

edge about Buddhism. When he met Bodhidharma for the first time, he said, "Since I became an emperor, I have been building many temples and taking care of a lot of monks. The number of those temples and monks are countless. What is the merit of this?"

People actually called him the "Buddha Mind Emperor." Maybe he wanted Bodhidharma to say something good about what he had done. Then Bodhidharma said, "No merit at all." If we try to do something meritorious and expect something in return, it is not really a virtuous deed. Bodhidharma tried to tell the emperor that he should wake up to his true face and resolve the fundamental problem of life, rather than promote Buddhism to gain credit.

I had another elder brother [Roshi Takeshi Kuroda] who also passed away recently. He established a temple from scratch, and it now has more than three thousand family members. He also founded a scholarship for monks and scholars inside and outside Japan to support their practice and study. He dedicated himself so much to promoting Buddhism, perhaps because he felt the need for it so strongly. He often said, "A wooden pestle grinds down itself and does people a service. One who knows its taste is precious."

But on one occasion upon hearing this, my other brother in America leaned closer to me and whispered, "We should not forget about the mortar that the pestle grinds against, should we?" I clearly remember that moment even now. It is, perhaps, what *no merit* is all about.

This brother, the abbot of Zenkou-ji, believed in Hudo Myoou (Cetaka) and often recited "*No-Maku-San-Man-Da*." Hudo carries a big flame on his back. I think it is a kind of aura. When we have settled down, our body emits an aura that can be seen as something white shining ten centimeters above the head. St. Maria also carries a halo on her back like a Jizo. All Japanese Buddha statues carry halos on their back. These are auras, and we can see it when we have calmed down.

Emperor Wu was told that all he had done had no merit. So he changed the subject and asked, *What is the highest meaning of the holy truths?* "Holy truths" means "authentic truths." If there are authentic truths, there must also be secular truths. For authentic truths, there is a gate for leaving the secular world. For secular truths, there is a gate of the secular world. The relationship between authentic and secular is "not two," or "two is one, one is two." Emperor Wu knew very well about this "not-two-ness" of authentic and secular. That is why he asked Bodhidharma, "Then what is the highest meaning after all?"

(Continued on page 6)

There is a poem by Zen master Ikkyu. It goes, *If I say it exists, people might think it really exists. The voice of echo does not exist even when it replies back.* When you say "Hello!" it surely replies back, "Hello!" But we will get into trouble if we are asked to pick up the body of the voice and to show it. I think Emperor Wu already had some understanding, but he threw this question at Bodhidharma to really check him out.

Then Bodhidharma said, *Empty, there is no holiness.* "Empty" means a clear state of mind like a clear sky. He answered that the highest meaning was something like a clear sky. Emperor Wu probably wondered what to make of that.

Zen claims that it does not depend upon words and letters. But actually Zen is full of words. In Japanese, there is a phrase *ga-ta-pi-shi* (sound of noise). We are making a lot of noise in everyday life— *ga-ta-pi-shi, ga-ta-pi-shi*, arguing around me (*ga*) or you (*ta*), there (*pi*) or here (*shi*). We in this secular world keep fussing around being great or not, being honored or not, gain or loss, life or death, nirvana, secular world, or pure land and so on.

Zen master Hakuin said something excellent about emptiness. He said, "Cut off the root of buddhas. Cut off the root of ancestral teachers. Cut off any sort of enlightenment, too"

Ultimately speaking, this is *Empty—there is no holiness.* According to my understanding, Bodhidharma's emptiness in this case is all about shikantaza. Many commentators are not clear on this point, but I think this case is solely about shikantaza. *Bodhidharma said, "There is no holiness."* There is nothing sacred.

Emperor Wu asked, "Who are you facing me?" People call you a holy man. If there is no holiness, then who really are you? *Bodhidharma said, "Don't know."* This "Don't know" is the same as what Zen master Dogen meant by saying, "Think not-thinking. How do you think not-thinking? Non-thinking." I think this "Don't know" should be understood that way.

The emperor didn't understand. Bodhidharma subsequently crossed the Yangtze River, came to Shaolin, and faced a wall for nine years. Emperor Wu could not receive what Bodhidharma brought. Then Bodhidharma crossed the Yangtze River and went to Shaolin Temple to sit zazen for nine years facing the wall.

There is a verse added to the main case. It goes: *Empty—nothing holy. The approach is far off. Succeeding, he*

swings the ax without injuring the nose; Failing, he drops the pitcher without looking back. Still and silent, coolly he sat at Shaolin; In silence he completely brought up the true imperative. The clear moon of autumn turns its frosty disk; The Milky Way thin, the Dipper hangs down its handle in the night. In succession the robe and bowl have been imparted to descendant; From this humans and divinities have made medicine and disease.

Empty—nothing holy: The approach is far off. I already talked about "Empty—nothing holy." *The approach* means someone who comes to hear the Dharma, that is, Emperor Wu. *The approach is far off* means that he was not capable of understanding what Bodhidharma said.

***"Cut off the root of buddhas.
Cut off the root of ancestral teachers.
Cut off enlightenment, too."***

—Zen Master Hakuin

Succeeding, he swings the ax without injuring the nose. There is a story about a certain Teijin (a civil servant of Zenkan in China) whose nose was soiled with mud. An ax expert picked up his ax and cut off the mud without injuring the nose. This is a metaphor to praise Bodhidharma. He was so good at preaching the Buddha Dharma that he could open the minds of those who could not understand it. But even Bodhidharma could not make Emperor Wu understand, because the Emperor just pursued logic and stayed up in his head.

Failing, he drops the pitcher without looking back. There was a man called Moubin in Taigen. He was carrying a ceramic bottle on his back with a rope. While he was walking, the bottle slipped off and fell on the ground with a bang. Because the bottle was a very important thing for him, he was supposed to stop and look back. But he did not do so and walked on briskly. This is to say that Bodhidharma was a great adept, but once failed, he walked away briskly without looking back. Zen master Wanshi expresses his admiration here for Bodhidharma's transcending success and failure.

Still and silent, coolly he sat at Shaolin. This phrase reminds me of an episode of Jyouki Kaisen who said, "For a peaceful meditation, we need not to go to the mountains and streams; When thoughts are quieted down, fire itself is cool and refreshing." Zen master Kaisen took Shingen Takeda's disciple under his care. That upset the warlord Oda Nobunaga so much that he burned down Kaisen's temple, Erinji. These were Kaisen's words prior to being burned alive together with other monks in his temple by

(Continued on page 7)

soldiers. I think these words fit this part of the verse very well so it is enough like this.

In silence he completely brought up the true imperative. Zen master Genpo Kitano went to a prison to speak to the criminals on death row. On the stage, he looked at them and just said one word. "Oh—you are...." He descended without saying anything more. Someone in the group started weeping and soon all of them were sobbing. His silence was like a thunder, isn't it? *The true imperative* means a command or order. *Completely brought up* means something like what artist Taro Okamoto said: "Art is an explosion!" True Buddha Dharma is a war cry.

The clear moon of autumn turns its frosty disk. A little while ago when I looked outside the window of the upstairs room of this temple, I could see a persimmon tree full of fruits. I was told that persimmons would produce a good crop this year. With this phrase, Zen master Wanshi poetically describes Bodhidharma's quality of mind. He teaches Dharma and is manifesting Zen power like a moon that moves freely in the sky without being stained by clouds or dust.

The Milky Way thin, the Dipper hangs down its handle in the night. Our solar system consists of eight planets and a galaxy is made up of about two million solar systems. *Thin* means "faint." We have an expression "a faint first love." As we can see in *Romeo and Juliet*, or in *You were like a Wild Chrysanthemum* by Sachio Ito, a first love does not have any agenda and is very pure. The Milky Way is shining faintly by the moonlight, and the Dipper is falling from the sky to the horizon. What a beautiful scene!

In succession the robe and bowl have been imparted to descendants. *In succession* means "from generation to generation." *The robe and bowl* means a monk robe and oryoki. Bodhidharma was a son of a king in India and one of three brothers. One day Hannyatara was invited by this king to the palace and was given a wonderful jewel. He tried to test the three princes with this jewel. He asked, "What do you think of this jewel?" The first prince answered, "This is the most invaluable thing in the world." The second prince said, "That's right. It is so magnificent that even a great person cannot own it." Then it was Bodhidharma's turn, who was just eight years old. "How about you?" asked Hannyatara. But Bodhidharma kept silent. Hannyatara said, "You are still small. Maybe it is difficult for you to answer." Then Bodhidharma said, "That jewel is a Dharma treasure, the light of wisdom and the illumination of the noblest and supreme mind." That an eight-year-old boy would give such an answer amazed Hannyatara.

Bodhidharma had several disciples. Eka was one of them. There is a famous story of him cutting off his arm at the elbow. On a snowy day, Eka cut off his arm and offered it to Bodhidharma, asking, "Please show me the truth. Please pacify my mind." Bodhidharma said, "If your mind is not at peace and ease, then bring that mind to me." Eka meditated deeply on these words and answered, "I can't find it." Bodhidharma said, "That's it! That is a peaceful mind." Bodhidharma gave *inka shomei* not only to Eka, but also to Dohuku, Doiku and Nisoji. Altogether to four disciples. Nisoji was a daughter of Emperor Wu, who himself failed to understand Bodhidharma, but sent his own daughter to him in order to learn the truth.

From this humans and divinities have made medicine and disease. *Humans and divinities* are two of six realms and the focus is here more on the human realm. I think that this final sentence tries to express the following: we should be so grateful to be given such a wonderful medicine but this medicine could become a big problem if we are arrogant and vain because of our half-baked enlightenment. We might fall seriously ill.

In *Blue Cliff Record*, Zen master Bukka Enko emphasized very strongly the danger of half-baked enlightenment. It is said that the Buddha was enlightened five times, but as for me I will not attain such a sublime state as his even with ten million of enlightenments.

Thank you so much for patiently listening to my poor talk. ■



What space fills your heart?

Zen Programs at Great Dragon Mountain

Face-to-Face Meeting Schedule

Roshi holds FTF for members Wednesday evenings, Friday dawn, and Saturday and Sunday mornings. Changes to her schedule are posted in the DharmaFlash each week. Generally, on Saturdays, FTF meetings are rotated between Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy and Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley. On Sundays, Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen will hold interviews. Please note that all of the Teachers Circle members are also available for private appointments.

Dharma Training Fund

Through the generosity of the Sangha, the **Dharma Training Fund (DTF)** is available to all Zen Practitioners to supplement program fees. No one is ever turned away for lack of funds. If you wish to take part in a particular program, please do not let financial difficulties keep you from attending. Inquire with Dokai in the office for an application. Do not miss any opportunity to study the Dharma!

See our calendar at www.zcla.org for the daily program schedule and for additional program details and updates.

☎ Please register in advance. Contact the office at info@zcla.org to register.

Fall Practice Period

Fall Practice Period continues through December 31.

Led by Roshi Egyoku at ZCLA Normandie Mountain, Sensei Kodo Boyd at Lincroft Sangha (NJ), Sensei Daishin Buksbazen at Ocean Moon Sangha in Santa Monica (CA), and Sensei Shingetsu Guzy at Valley Sangha in Woodland Hills (CA).

For schedules and other information, refer to the ZCLA website and Calendar. The focus this year is on zazen, the Precepts, and investigating living by vow and intention in daily life. (See p.9: *Living by Vow*).

Zen practitioners are invited to join the Practice Period for a few hours, a day, a month, or the rest of the period. No fee for meals: Please sign up or call the office in advance for Thursday 6:15 p.m. supper and 7:00 a.m. week-end breakfasts. Inquire about extended guest residential practice opportunities. ☎

Zazen Programs

Buddha's Enlightenment Sesshin.* Friday evening, December 4, 6:00 p.m., supper and registration; 7:30 p.m. (sesshin begins) to Saturday, December 12, 9:00 p.m. Led by Roshi Egyoku. Buddha's Enlightenment (Rohatsu) Sesshin is a powerful annual retreat marking the awakening of the Buddha. The retreat is in silence, with sitting and walking meditation, eating formally as a community, dharma talks, face-to-face meetings with a teacher, liturgy, and samu. Sesshin provides a powerful container supporting the unification of body and mind, and our individuality with the community and the world. Please join us for this special event. Overnight accommodations available. \$320; \$600 for nonmembers. Part-time participation welcome. ☎

* Zendo remains open for non-participants.

Public Face-to-face Meetings. Thursdays

November 19, led by Sensei Ryodo

December 17, led by Sensei Shingetsu

Sensei Ryodo and Sensei Shingetsu will each speak on a practice theme and invite everyone to engage in a public dialogue with them.

(Continued on page 9)

Schedule for December 31, last day of 2009

Please join us!

The all-day schedule is as follows and is open to everyone (please check our website at www.zencenter.org for schedule changes):

9:00 a.m. to noon. Wall-gazing

3-5:00 p.m. Sangha Year-End Council

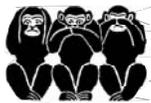
5:00 p.m. Sangha Members Annual Memorial Service followed by informal supper

Schedule for New Year's Eve (Best New Year's Event in Los Angeles!)

7:30 p.m. Atonement & Fire Ceremony with Roshi

9:00 p.m. Ringing of 108 Bells

9:20 p.m. Revolving the Sutra Service followed by a celebratory meal for the New Year.



Precept Practice

A **Day of Reflection** on the Zen Bodhisattva precepts will take place on **Saturday, December 19, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** led by Rev. Koan Janka on Precept #3: Chaste conduct.

November 21: Day of Reflection has been replaced by Day of Dana at ZCLA. (See page 10).

Open to everyone.

Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts. Saturday, November 14, 11:30 a.m. Roshi will give the precepts to Andrew Halladay and Andrew Handler. Everyone is encouraged to support and witness this important Sangha rite of passage together.

Guest Speakers

John Ott, Sunday, November 8, 10:45 a.m. Zen Center friend John Ott will speak on “The Power of Collective Wisdom and the Trap of Collective Folly,” based on his recently published book by this title. Members will recall that John and his wife Rose Pinard led an organizational spirituality initiative funded by The Angell Foundation in which ZCLA took part.

Claude AnShin Thomas, December 13, 11:00 a.m.

AnShin will speak on “The Discipline of Change,” invoking his remarkable journey from the devastating effects of childhood violence and wartime combat to finding peace with his unpeacefulness, brought about by learning and applying a discipline for change rooted in practice. He is a Soto Zen Buddhist priest within the Maezumi/Glassman White Plum Lineage and serves in many ways as an international advocate for non-violence.

Retreats, Classes and Workshops

Conversation about Practice. Sunday, November 1, 11:00 a.m. to noon. This conversation is led by a member of the Teachers circle. Sensei Daishin will introduce a topic and lead the Sangha in a conversation.

Day of Dana at ZCLA, Saturday, November 21. See page 10.

Rakus for Prison Project. Sunday, November 15, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to participate in cutting fabric for rakusu kits for incarcerated men who will be receiving Jukai through The Angulimala Prison Circle.

Autumn Wind: A Workshop on Writing Departing or Death Poems. Sunday, December 20, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Roshi Egyoku will guide us in writing a style of death poem that was written by the masters in the Soto School. Learn how the Zen masters expressed themselves at the end of their lives. Be inspired to write your own poem, to be used as a meditation throughout the coming year. For members only.

Living by Vow/Intention

Class led by
Roshi Egyoku
**Sunday, November 8
1:30-4:00 p.m.**

What is the experience of living by vow/intention? In the second of this two-part series, we will continue to explore together, and in small groups, the nature of vow; what keeps us from clear intention. We will formulate and review our vows for our own life. We will include a focus on intention and the mental and physical shifts that can occur in our lives once a vow, or a conscious decision, is made to live differently.

Fee \$15. Attendance at first class not required. The Dharma Training Fund is available to all members.

Members may listen to Roshi Egyoku's first class on vows on the Members' website.

Point Zero Painting Retreat Creativity without Limits

Led by
Michele Cassou

**December 27 to 30, 2009
1:30-4:00 p.m.**

ZCLA welcomes back Michele to share with us her revolutionary way of unblocking creative potential: “The Point Zero Method.”

This popular four-day retreat is full. Check the website for more information and to be placed on the waiting list (openings do come up).

Day of Dana 2009

Saturday, November 21, 2009

9:00 a.m. to noon Set up & assemble bags

12:00 noon Holiday lunch

Come one, come all, to ZCLA's 24th annual celebration and assembly of dana bags for 30 families-in-need in the neighborhood.

This year's Day of Dana occurs before Thanksgiving. We have two dana-partners this year. The toys, collected throughout the year from the Sangha by Steward Roberta Brehm, will be distributed to children through our long-time friends and collaborators from Esperanza Center.

The dana food bags will be distributed through this year's dana co-partner, our neighbor, St. Mary's Church. We will carry the bags to St. Mary's on Sunday morning, November 22, at 10:30 a.m. where they will be placed on the the altar and blessed during mass, and distributed to families.

The food offerings are made possible through your contributions to purchase all groceries. Please make your check payable to "ZCLA" marked "Day of Dana" mailed to Gemmon in the office; credit card and on-line web site donation are also welcome. Everyone is encouraged to lend a hand in the celebration of the assembly of the bags and lunch following.

The Day of Dana Team: Steward Ando Martinez, with Heart-Mirror Trotter, Roberta Brehm, Marley Klaus-Dowling, Lynda Golan, and Gemmon Ketterer. ■



Past Days of Dana

From top: Bill Earth-Mirror Corcoran, member of Executive Circle, and Miro Kroner organize empty dana bags.

Middle: Carrying assembled bags to truck for distribution.

Left: Our assembly line packs groceries in bags while enjoying stories, laughter, and good cheer.

AA Case: Our Friend of the Hotel Lobby Makes a Call

By Anonymous

The following is based on a talk that was recently given at ZCLA. In the tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous, the author, a Zen practitioner with many years of sobriety, is unnamed.

The teachers at the Zen Center have been giving a series of talks on the *Denkoroku*, a collection of koans that have to do with enlightenment experiences of ancient masters and the transmission of the lineage. This evening, I'd like to look at a koan or public case from a different text that is not in the Zen lineage. It's an American text from the early part of the 20th century. It has many stories, incidents and experiences of spiritual awakening. It has elements of koan, transmission and lineage.

First, I'd like to read what Maezumi Roshi wrote in the forward to the *Blue Cliff Record* that beautifully expresses the spirit of koans and how they function. He says: "Koans reveal to us what enlightenment is, what the enlightened life is, how the patriarchs (let's add matriarchs) and masters of old struggled with it, attained it, actualized it and accomplished it." Let's call that the Pointer for this case.

This text, which I've worked on quite a bit, was published in 1939 and is called *Alcoholics Anonymous*. In it, there is a very clear set of actions laid out that are specifically designed to produce a spiritual experience and freedom from addiction. The following incident or "case" is one of the seeds from which the collective spiritual practice of Alcoholics Anonymous first developed. It's a moment of conception.

The Case

Here is a brief account. Years ago in 1935, one of our number made a journey to a certain western city. From a business standpoint the trip came off badly. Bitterly discouraged he found himself in a strange place, discredited and broke. Sober but a few months he wanted so much to talk with someone. But whom? One dismal afternoon he paced the hotel lobby. At one end of the room stood a directory of local churches and a telephone. At the other end a door opened onto a lively attractive bar filled with chattering people and music. He was on thin ice. He shivered and said to himself, "What of all the others who will die because they do not know how to get well? There must be

many in this town." Selecting a church at random, he stepped into the booth and lifted the receiver.

Simple enough – just lifting the receiver and making a phone call. Turning the rotary dial: chk,chk,chk – chk,chk,chk...Hello? And from there the story continues. But let's look at the ground of this action, how the ground is turned, how the seed is planted. What grows from it ends up having an extraordinary effect on millions of lives over the next 60 years.

We begin with the "journey to a certain western city" —always the journey. It's my journey, your journey, our journey. It is our path, our actual experience and circumstances that are always the starting point. The only place there ever is. "From a business standpoint the trip came off badly." That was, by the way, the only purpose of the trip. Hoping to make a big deal, our friend was counting on reversing his financial misfortunes. And it was a complete failure. The deal ends up in a lawsuit, shot through with resentment and bad feeling.

And here he is one dismal afternoon. "Bitterly discouraged he found himself in a strange place, discredited and broke." Doesn't know how he's going to pay the hotel bill, alone, discouraged. That's a heart-wrenching place to be, isn't it? Empty, everything taken away. This is the ground, his experience of groundlessness. Does that sound like experiences in Zen practice to you? The way our forms of practice, and teachers, can throw us into that open, defenseless space?

Maybe more importantly, this broke, wounded or torn place in our friend, in me and in you, is the ground of growth and awakening. It's the very wholeness of who we are. It deeply connects us. Later on in the text, it states that the dark past is the greatest possession we have. Because it the key to life and happiness for others. Our suffering and our specific circumstances, used to benefit others, are the treasure house. Can we see that the "broken" places in others are also the treasure house?

The case continues: "Sober but a few months, he wanted so much to talk with someone, but whom?" So this need arises. I need to connect with someone or find someone who has a similar experience. "One dismal afternoon he paced the hotel lobby." Just pacing. Doesn't know which way to turn. A trapped rat. A tethered colt.

(Continued on page 12)

“At one end of the room stood a directory of local churches and a telephone. At the other, a door opened into a lively attractive bar filled with people and music.” Life going on. But not for this person. Which way to turn? This is a state of Great Doubt, of Not-Knowing. “He was on thin ice.”

Then he has an experience, an intuitive moment. He shivers and says to himself, “What of all the others who will die because they do not know how to get well?” His thoughts turn to someone else. To some inkling of trying to help, some feeling of responsibility. This is the moment of raising the Bodhi Mind. An intuitive, awakened thought. The impulse toward bodhisattva action arises powerfully and cannot be ignored. This is the functioning of deep wisdom. And this is where everything turns. Our friend doesn’t know how to help or what to do. But is moved to action and is turned in a new direction.

He must find someone to help. “There must be many in this town.” Just as there are right now in this town and in every town. This is a great shout! There must be thousands, they’re *everywhere!* “He steps into the booth and lifts the receiver.” He calls a church at random, not to seek spiritual guidance or to talk to a minister. He is asking one question. Take me to the worst alcoholic you know. Take me to the heart of suffering. Take me to somebody so desperate they may not make it through next week. That’s what he’s looking for. Isn’t that amazing? To go seek that out. Because his own life depends on it.

And he finds someone and keeps calling this guy. He makes it his mission. These two become the co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous. Then they find a third person, and eventually there’s a fourth, and then there’s a little group. All helping each other to stay sober and seek a spiritual experience. And all these years later in Los Angeles alone, there are two or three thousand meetings every week.

What I love about this phone call is that it came directly from one person’s life and that is exactly how it continues to this day. That’s the transmission, the face-to-face sharing of experience. One says to another - take it or leave it, but this is what happened to me. I’ve experienced a big shift, a complete change of direction, an awakening. And if you’re interested, I am willing to share that with you.

The offering is always myself, ourselves, herself. All I have, here it is. All I have, I’m going to share it with you because I have nothing. I have nothing else. But I have this experience. And I’m offering it because that is what saves me. That’s the medicine. It’s the only thing that

works. It’s the only thing that relieves my suffering. And so here we are. And the story doesn’t have an end, because it is still going on. It’s all unfolding.

I’ll leave you with this as a Capping Verse. It is the traditional preface to the *Blue Cliff Record*:

Boundless wind and moon, the eye within eyes, inexhaustible heaven and earth. The light beyond light, the willow dark, the flower bright. Ten thousand houses. Knock at any door, there’s one who will respond. ■

A Zen Practitioner’s Twelve Steps

1. I admitted I was powerless over my attachments to my ego and not in control of my actions.
2. I came to have faith in an Enlightened Way.
3. Without understanding it, I made a decision to practice an Enlightened Way.
4. I made a searching and fearless assessment of my ego.
5. Together with my sponsor, I made a commitment to a personal Zen practice.
6. I came to realize this practice as a lifetime discipline.
7. I came to realize the importance of seeing the effects of ego-centered actions.
8. I came to realize the importance of the role of forgiveness.
9. I made a commitment to work on my relations with others.
10. I started to study the role of personal reflection.
11. I made a commitment to deepen my realization of the Enlightened Way.
12. Having raised the Bodhi Mind, I came to realize that a commitment to serve others is an expression of the Enlightened Way.

This version of the Twelve Steps is an adaptation from the original Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was created by Roshi Bernie Glassman in 1987 at the Zen Community of New York as part of a study program.

IN MEMORIAM

We mark the passing of Roshi John Daido Loori, abbot of Zen Mountain Monastery in Mt. Tremper, New York, and founder of the Mountains and Rivers Order, Dharma Communications, and the Zen Environmental Study Institute. An artist, author, and ardent environmentalist, Daido Roshi produced many seminal works in these fields.



Roshi John Daido Loori

Zen students know him by his many publications on Zen practice and for his devotion and life-long study of the works of Zen Master Dogen. At the request of his teacher Maezumi Roshi, he devoted much of his life's work to developing an American Shobogenzo. He was the fifth Dharma successor of Maezumi Roshi and is the first to pass on. (*For more information, see www.mro.org*)

For Great Ancestor Muge Daido

I can see the two of you—

Koun Taizan's arms stretched out wide in welcome.

The bath is ready; the food prepared.

Nothing needs saying, yet saying it anyway:

"Well done, well done."

Now, you, too, will sweeten the air at Tremper Mountain—

Never leaving the side of your students, guiding them in ways they cannot yet know through the lights and shadows in the years to come.

For now, their tears mingle with the autumn leaves;

Incense smoke is indistinguishable from the solitary cloud above.

The vow lives on.

More intimate than ever is the connection—

There is nothing to separate us from you ever again.

How marvelous is this Dharma journey:

Now, everything; now, nothing at all.

With deep gratitude,

Roshi Wako Egyoku and the Zen Center of Los Angeles Sangha

Great Dragon Mountain / Buddha Essence Temple

Los Angeles, California



Sangha Rites of Passage

CEREMONY FOR RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS

Rev. Koan Janka, Preceptor

September 17, 2009

David Jigen Green

Sensei Kodo Boyd

August 30, 2009

James Ryushin Carney

Louise Myotai Dasaro

Katrina Eko Fossas-Durante

Elaine Chikai Held

Tom Seizan Jones

Vanessa Eisho Moss

Jamie Jian Nappi

Peter Nyodo Ott

HEAD TRAINEE DHARMA COMBAT

October 25, 2009

Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson

NEW MEMBERS ENTERING CEREMONY

October 11, 2009

Susanna Knittel

Kim Kimu McShane

NEW RESIDENTS ENTERING CEREMONY

October 11, 2009

Jessica Dharma-Lotus Armstrong

Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown

Andy Handler

SHARED STEWARDSHIP — Incoming

CO-CHIDEN COORDINATOR

Andy Handler

CO-TENZO COORDINATOR

Rev. Koan Janka

SHARED STEWARDSHIP — Leave-taking

CO-CHIDEN COORDINATOR

Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt

CO-TENZO COORDINATOR

Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt

DEATH

Roshi John Daido Loori

(Great Ancestor Muge Daido)

Abbot of Zen Mountain Monastery

October 9, 2009

Dharma Combat: A Rite of Passage

The commitment of a year-long training period as Head Trainee culminates with a ceremony of Dharma Combat (Hossen). This ancient ritual is taken up as a practice of setting the environment for a formal rite of passage in which the abbot invites the student to take the dharma seat. The student presents a case koan and invites the sangha to challenge her or his understanding. On October 25th, Head Trainee Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson challenged the dragons and elephants in the Dharma Hall to combat. The combat ceremony is a rite of passage for the student as well as for the entire Sangha.



Photos by Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert

Above, Hossen procession to the Zendo.

Right, Head-Trainee Luminous-Heart returning the sword to Roshi after dharma combat.

Below, the Sangha is all smiles following Dharma Combat.



Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt Thank You!

Please let our staff know of the many bodhisattvas to appreciate. Have we missed anyone?

To **Executive Circle**: Steward, **Myoho Fjeld, Ando Martinez, Faith-Mind Thoresen, Earth-Mirror Corcoran, Pine-Ocean Cleary** for their diligent ongoing work in overseeing the operations of the Zen Center;

Mary Rios, ZCLA Business Manager for her eagle eye, and mindful care of Center's business and operations matters;

Many Hands and Eyes Prison Circle: **Steward Senshin Griffith, Roshi, Sensei Daishin, Faith-Mind, Luminous-Heart Thompson, Gojitsu Snodgrass, Heart-Mirror Trotter, Getsuren Alfano, and Lynda Golan** for ongoing efforts to craft a protocol for former prisoners to enter the Sangha;

Roshi Egyoku for leading Fall Sesshin;

Sensei Daishin and **Getsuren** for gift of a lawn chair;

Staff for care of the Zen Center in so many aspects;

Residents for ongoing security check and **Kaizen Venners** for organizing and coordinating;

Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt and **Miguel Rojas**, hardworking Co-Tenzo Coordinators;

Outgoing steward **Carla**, Co-Tenzo coordinator, for her devoted care of weekend meal coordination;

Weekend volunteer tenzos: **Gary Belton, Elizabeth Bryer, Diane True-Joy Fazio, Lynda Golan, Senshin Griffith, Andy Handler, Jorge, Marley Klaus-Dowling, Gessho Kumpf, Dharma-Joy Reichert, Miguel Rojas, Carla Schmitt, and Luminous-Heart;**

Dharma-Lotus Armstrong, Andy Handler, and Gemmon Ketterer for their commitments as October Practice Period Tenzos;

Carla Schmitt, Elizabeth Bryer, Enduring-Vow Brown, Gary Belton, Gessho Kumpf, Heart-Mirror, Koan Janka, Lyndajo Thomas, Pine-Ocean Cleary, Reiju Wasserman, and Ryodo Rothrock for cleaning the kitchen with spirit, joy, and zeal;

ZCLA Board of Directors for its professional and compassionate oversight of ZCLA general policies and financials;

Bob Fisher for his practice as Tenzo during sesshin;

Francis Maile for serving as assistant Tenzo during sesshin;

All those who participated in the Hossen ceremony—and special mention to **Roshi Egyoku, Dokai Dickenson, Faith-Mind, Koan, Plum-Hermit Swanger, Gemmon, Mukei Horner, Jisen Reybin, Kaizen Venners, Heart-Mirror, Dharma-Joy,**

Yudo Burger, Francis Maile, Ando Martinez, Shogen Bloodgood, Enduring Vow Brown, and Enju Katz;

Jorge, Andy Handler, and Marley Klaus-Dowling for the delicious Hossen celebratory lunch;

Dharma-Joy Reichert for photography of Hossen and in general for ZCLA archives, and for cookies for *Hon-soku Yakan Gyocha* (Evening Tea Ceremony before Dharma Combat);

Bodhi-Song Graham for painting the verse-board for Hossen;

Lana Shoshin Spraker for leading the children's Sunday school class from St. Bede's Church, and to **Koan** for assisting;

Jotai, Ando, Koan, and Dokai for coordinating "Zen" film evening;

Submitter of Shared Stewardship Proposal: **Nelida Cartolin** on behalf of the Brown-Green Group for use of temple incense;

Dharma-Joy Reichert, Thursday night Cookie tenzo, for his diverse creations;

Incoming steward **Koan Janka**, Co-Tenzo Coordinator;

Mary, Charles, and Burt for sweeping pine needles and debris after windstorm;

Luminous-Heart Thompson for conference table in library;

Hearty welcome to new members **Kim Kimu McShane**, teacher educator from Sydney Australia and instructional consultant at UCSB; **Susanna Knittel**, somatic educator and therapist, designer, and journalist; and **Susan Tritt**, physician, scuba diver, and quilter; **David McMonagle**, musician and astrologer; and **Elaine Chikai Held**, music and choral director, musician, and master gardener, living in New Jersey;

To new residents **Jessica Dharma-Lotus Armstrong** and **Tara Phoenix Sterling**;

Congratulations to **Head-Trainee Luminous-Heart Thompson** for completion of her training year. ■

A Unique Opportunity: Resident Training

A two-bedroom apartment and a studio are now available. These are great opportunities for plunging into long-term Zen Buddhist training and living in an intentional community.

Guest and extended-guest stays for shorter terms are also available. If you are interested, please inquire at info@zcla.org and you will be directed to the appropriate contact person.

The *Water Wheel* is published by the Zen Center of Los Angeles / Buddha Essence Temple, which was founded in 1967 by the late Taizan Maezumi Roshi.

The ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple mission is to know the Self, maintain the precepts, and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism. **Our vision** is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized, and compassion flows unhindered. **Our core values** are available upon request.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi
Abbot Emeritus: Roshi Bernard Glassman
Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao
Staff: Mary Rios, Business Manager; Evi Gemmon Ketterer, Program Steward; Tom Yudo Burger, Guest Steward; Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, Grounds Steward; Jeanne Dokai Dickenson, Development Steward; *Water Wheel*: Editor, Dokai Dickenson; Assistant Editor, Burt Wetanson. Photographers: Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert and Dokai.
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ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple

923 South Normandie Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90006-1301
www.zencenter.org

Address Correction Requested

Things given are beyond measure

—Eihei Dogen

Many of you have contributed generously of your funds in these hard economic times. These acts of giving make Great Dragon Mountain a place for awakening and peace. Thank you so much!

If you have not contributed, or can add to your existing contribution, please consider giving. No gift is too small: each is deeply appreciated.

The **Great Dragon Renovation Fund** (Phase I) continues towards its goal of \$50,000 for ongoing maintenance and for planned buildings and grounds projects. The **Dharma Training Fund 2009** supports all aspects of our dharma training and teaching programs. No one is ever turned away for lack of funds; your support of the DTF makes it possible to support these training opportunities.

The **ZCLA Planned Giving** program is a way to ensure the continuation of Zen training and practice at ZCLA well into the future. Consider remainder trusts, gift annuities, gifts of real estate, and naming ZCLA as a beneficiary in your will. Contact Dokai at 213.234-8522 and/or developmentsteward@zcla.org

ZCLA Affiliated Sanghas & Sitting Groups*

The Laguna Hills Sangha (CA)
coordinated by Helen Daiji Powell

The Lincroft Zen Sangha (NJ)
led by Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd

The Ocean Moon Sangha (Santa Monica, CA)
led by Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen

The San Luis Obispo Sitting Group (CA)
coordinated by Mark Shogen Bloodgood

The Valley Sangha (Woodland Hills, CA)
led by Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy

The Westchester Zen Circle (CA)
led by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley

Contact us at info@zcla.org for information.

* Affiliated groups are led by Dharma Successors (Senseis) of Roshi Egyoku or coordinated by practitioners who are actively practicing at ZCLA with a teacher. Those interested in leading a ZCLA-affiliated sitting group may apply to the Teachers Circle.