



# GATEWAY



July 2014 -- Vol. XLIX No. 7



*The Sangha celebrated Father's Day and Graduation at our June 15 Family Service.*

## Sangha A World without Boundaries

**Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi**

*I take refuge in the Sangha. May we, together as one, united in the spirit of universal brotherhood as a member of the Sangha, strive to live for the enlightenment of all beings.*

The preceding is from the passage in "Three Treasures." This sounds very familiar to us, since we recite this at every Sunday Service. "Treasures" means something very important for us and our lives. In other words, Three Treasures—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—are the three things that our lives should be based on. Among them, I would like to focus on the word Sangha. What does Sangha mean after all? As I reflect upon this question, I find that I hardly consider the meaning of Sangha, even though I recite this passage all the time.

I believe the most common image of Sangha might be "a group" or

"gathering" consisting of Buddhists. There is no doubt this is the basic meaning of Sangha that can be found in the Buddhist dictionaries. As for us, the people of the Sangha has a more specific image. When we think of Sangha, we actually think of our own temple members. It could be said, then, that "A group of Buddhists" is the most common image of Sangha that we usually have. However, I am afraid that this is somewhat lacking when we try to explain what Sangha really is.

Regarding a group, we all know that there are so many different kinds of groups in our societies, and we belong to multiple groups in our everyday lives. Also, one's nationality and ethnicity are categorized as groups too. Looking at our lives, we belong to various kinds of groups and gatherings. If we understand Sangha as a group, is it possible to consider

Sangha as one of these groups in our societies? I believe that there is one significant difference between Sangha and all other groups.

The very basic purpose of any group in any society is to divide people into those who are inside of the group from those who are outside. The system exists because of our tendency to distinguish ourselves from others. When we see someone who does not share a commonality with us, then we think, "I am not like him/her." "All living things are unconditionally equal" is a statement that most of us can readily agree with. Yet, in actuality, our heart and body does not always resonate this truth. Rather, we prefer to distinguish ourselves from others, or even discriminate between others, by focusing on any differences that exist. Moreover, generally speaking, we easily regard those that we like as part of us, members of our group, whereas we tend not to accept anyone that we do not like to be part of our group. As a result, making boundaries between "us" and "them" is the fundamental meaning of creating groups.

On the other hand, Sangha has no boundaries to divide people. Sangha is a gathering of people who awake to the Teachings of Buddha. It is the teachings of the truth that every living thing is unconditionally equal. "Unconditionally equal" does not necessarily mean everyone is the same. Rather, it means that every living thing is unique and different, yet we are not subjected to discrimination that

*Please see Sangha, con't on page 5*

### Temple Event Highlights:

- July 3 Howakai
- Obon/Hatsubon Service
- July 6 Shotsuki Service
- July 20 Obon/Hatsubon Service (English)
- Please See Temple News



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The hot days of summer have arrived. By the time you receive the July Gateway, our temple will have already celebrated Obon. A big **Thank You** to all who have helped out with Dharma School booths!

I did some quick research on the celebration of Obon and learned that, in addition to Japan, Korea, the United States, Canada, and Brazil, Obon is also observed in Argentina and Malaysia. Most of these celebrations were started by Japanese communities in their respective countries. Bon dances, taiko performances and food booths are typical of these festivals.

Obon season in Southern California is in full swing. I hope that you will be able to enjoy other temples' festivals by dancing, meeting with friends, enjoying good food, and remembering to be mindful and thankful for everyone who have loved and supported you.

And, oh yes, as a retired teacher, I'm reminding all Dharma School children to visit your local libraries and read lots of books during your time off! Have a great summer vacation!!

Gassho,  
Claire Hansen



*Dharma School teacher, Pat Sato, helped pass out gifts to the dads on Father's Day.*

## Father's Day Message

Kevin Kawawata



It has been over a year and a half since my dad was assigned as the head minister of the Hawaii Higashi Honganji district. It was a huge jump for him, being the minister of West Covina for 14 years, and it impacted my life as well. I was given the choice to move to Hawaii, or stay here. When I heard my dad was given the position in Hawaii, it was initially a sudden shock, but now I see it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that would never come again. Looking from now and then, a lot has changed between us.

My dad was born and raised in Japan as the youngest of three in a family running a Buddhist temple. He had a typical childhood in Japan, though I found it hard to believe he was a naughty rascal. He was also a boy scout in Japan, and was taught many skills in life. He graduated from Otani University with a degree in Philosophy. He moved to LA in 1986 being assigned to Higashi Honganji as a minister. That was where he met my mom, who was working at the Lumbini Child-care Development Center, which is part of Higashi. He was then assigned to West Covina in 1998, and was the minister there until he was assigned to Hawaii in 2012.

My relationship with my dad over the years is rather interesting. It is hard for me to tell when he is serious or just messing around. In the past, when I did not really understand what it was to be a minister, I often found him

asleep with a book, which made me think that he was lazy. He often took me to places like the beach, though I did not enjoy it much back then. This was probably more obvious when I was in my teens and early 20s. When my dad and I were together, we always seemed to find something to argue about. There was also a time while I was in college that I stopped going to service—since I had to listen to him talk all the time. Even if I was at service, I would not particularly listen. My dad once said that I sometimes hated him, which I guess I cannot argue about.

I started to get along better with my dad as I graduated from college. I think I finally started to give him respect even more when he moved to Hawaii, though I miss the bickering. It is hard for me to talk to him directly, as his schedule is busy, so whatever messages I have to give him, I normally tell my mom. I even thought of becoming a minister since I notice he is learning all the time through his books and messages, though I obviously cannot chant as loud as he does. It also runs in his family. His family in Japan has been influencing my life as well, as I want to live in Japan one of these days.

It feels like my dad is like a father to many at West Covina, and to Higashi too. He has impacted many of our members with his support. Members from both remember him in different ways. Some remember him for his dharma messages, others remember him for his good sportsmanship in golf, and this can go on. What do you remember him for? Father's Day is a day not only to honor your fathers, but also to remember them for what they have done for you during their life.

### Quote of the Month

An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind

-Mahatma Gandhi



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

**Obon & Hatsubon Service**

Obon & Hatsubon Service will be held on July 20 at 4:30 PM. Come and join us in welcoming Rimban William Briones from Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (Nishi Betsuin) and then sit back and enjoy as he speaks for the first time with Rev. Miyoshi (his wife) as head minister of West Covina. Please remain for the complimentary *otoki* dinner that will follow the service.

**Betsuin Obon Festival**

The Betsuin Obon will be held on the weekend of July 26-27. WCBT will again be selling our delicious tamales. Sign-up sheets will be at upcoming services so please find a time you can help out in the tamale booth and join in the dancing and festivities at the Betsuin Obon.

**The Study Class**

The Study Class will meet on July 8 and 22 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will continue to focus on the Shoshin-ge. The class meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (626) 689-1040.



*Our new street banner invites the community to our Obon Festival.*

**Las Vegas Trip**

WCBT will be sponsoring its annual fundraising trip to Las Vegas on the weekend of August 8-10. The \$140 per person fee, for double occupancy, will include round-trip bus fare, two nights at the Main Street Hotel & Casino, Bell captain tips and lots of fun and games. A beverage will be served on the ride to Las Vegas as well as all the snacks that everyone brings to share.

The Las Vegas Obon will be on Saturday, August 9. Please let us know if you are planning to attend and need transportation.

The bus will depart on Friday, August 8 promptly at 1:00 PM from ESGVJCC. The return bus will leave from the Main Street Hotel on Sunday, August 10, promptly at 11:00 AM.

The bus is currently full but if you would like to be put on the waiting list please contact Ted Kato (626-918-2680) or Merry Jitosh (714) 271-3803.

**August Schedule**

The August board meeting will be held 8:30 AM on August 3 followed by the Shutsuki Service at 10:00 AM. We will then take our annual summer break so there are no Sunday Services on August 10 (Las Vegas trip), 17, 24 and 31. Services will resume again on September 7.

***GATEWAY Staff***

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*West Covina Buddhist Temple Mission Statement:*  
In the spirit of universal brotherhood, West Covina Buddhist Temple provides the opportunity for all to listen to and share the Teachings of the Buddha in order that we may awaken to our true selves, living our lives fully and dynamically.

*The Temple's mailing address is:*

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West Covina, CA 91793  
(626) 689-1040

*Website:* www.livingdharma.org  
*Facebook:* facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple  
*E-Mail:* dharma@livingdharma.org



**JULY**

Jamie Nakatani, Jaylene Gutierrez, Kevin Hata, Lauren Koga, Russell Martinez, Laura Miyake, Margaret Takemoto, Ryoko Kodama, Richard Haraguchi, Craig Taguchi, Corey Taguchi, Terri Takemura, Pat Sato, Garrett Kawaguchi, Tyler Kobayashi, Marcus Nishihara, Lillian Nishihara, Kurt Kowalski, Jamie Teragawa, Jonathan Hoey, Jeffrey Akune, Jaylene Gutierrez



*The Ormseth family celebrated their daughters' graduation: Joy from middle school and Cora from college.*



T H E G A T E W A Y

Pictures from our June 7 "Make it a date with Oldies Dance XLVIII!"



*Dancers swayed to the ever popular "Shiawase Samba."*

*Everyone enjoyed the circle dances.*



*Kevin and Joanie showing us their dance skills.*

*Ted Kato swept Mary off her feet as they twirled around the dance floor.*



*The lucky winners of our 50/50 raffle!*



# T H E G A T E W A Y

*Sangha, con't from pg. 1*  
may arise from our differences. Moreover, the Truth of equality tells us that there are no lines or boundaries to divide living things into “our group” and “the other group.” In other words, it is Sangha that enable us to go beyond any boundaries drawn between “us” and “them.”

Nothing—a certain nationality, ethnicity, social status, jobs, or sex—is required to become a member of Sangha. Also, none of those distinctions should ever become a reason to exclude someone from Sangha. Moreover, whether one is a Buddhist or not does not even matter with Sangha, for the truth that Buddhism reveals to us is not truth only for Buddhists, but also for all living things. In this sense, wherever we are in the world, whatever we do, whoever we are, whether we are a Buddhist or not, and even when we were born, once we realize the preciousness of life we receive and life of others, Sangha will surely reach us. And through us and our life, Sangha ceaselessly will keep expanding and growing toward those who are around us. The interconnectedness of those who appreciate the truth will keep the world of Sangha wider and deeper.

The world of Sangha includes both those who we like and do not like, and to those who were born before us and those who will be born in the future. Sangha always reminds us of the interconnectedness with all things. Therefore, reciting, “I take refuge in the Sangha” is meant to be our declaration that we realize that the world is truly equal, and live our life based on that understanding.

It was Shinran Shonin who was truly amazed in discovering the world of Sangha, and found that it was the only place to which he could return. Therefore, he refers to everyone, without exception, as “*On-Dōbō*” (*on* is a honorific term and *dōbō* means fellow followers of Nembutsu teachings). My mother often says, “The most amazing thing about Shinran Shonin is that



*Jennifer leading the Bon Odori practice.*

he goes beyond Japan without any hesitation even though he had lived his entire life in Japan.” Shinran Shonin might have had little knowledge about other countries, but there is no doubt that it did not matter to him. Being Japanese or not has nothing to do with the world of Sangha for him. Beyond all boundaries of time and space, his *On-Dōbō* is a call for everyone in the world of Sangha to live in the world of equality. In this sense, undoubtedly, he also calls us who were born more than seven hundred years after his time *On-Dōbō*. Sangha is the world without any boundaries, and it keeps expanding wider and deeper through those who are awakened to the truth of the equality of all living things. And this is the world that the passage of the Three Treasures clearly shows us.

—「僧伽」7ページからの続き

です。その意味で、僧伽とは空間や時間すらも超えた新たに新たに広がり続ける世界であり、これが三帰依文の「一切無碍ならん」という言葉によって顕された世界ではないでしょうか。自分にとって大切な人はもちろんのこと、あまり好きではない人とも、さらに私たちの前に生きた人、そして私たちの後に生まれる人とも、つながり続ける世界、これを私たちは僧伽と呼ぶのです。そして、この僧伽を親鸞は「御同朋」という言葉で顕わされたのではないかと思うのです。

私の母は常々「親鸞聖人のすごいところは、日本にいながら日本を超えたところだなあ」と感嘆を込めて私に語ってくれます。聖人が日本以外の国について知ることはほとんどなかったことでしょう。しかし大切なことは、聖人にとっては日本人であるとか、アメリカ人であるとかいったことは全く問題ではなかったということではないでしょうか。聖人の「御同朋」という呼びかけは、日本人やアメリカ人といった枠を超え、さらには、聖人と同じ時代に生きた人々のみに向けられたものではなく、あらゆる時代に生きる人々への呼びかけであります。そして、その呼びかけに目覚め、全身をあげてその呼びかけに応えた人たちの歴史が仏教の歴史であり、真宗の歴史であり、そして僧伽の歴史ではないかと思うのです。

そのようなことを思いながらあらためてこの三帰依文を口に唱えてみると、その言葉が輝きをもって胸に響いてくるような気がするのです。

## Buddhism Quiz

This is July’s “How well do you know your Buddhism.” We hope it will be interesting and informative for our readers.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

- According to Shinran, Pureland Buddhism is
  - A theist version of Buddhism with Amida Buddha in the role of a god leading everyone to salvation and the Pureland.
  - A symbol of the Dharma
  - Our destination goal
- The Buddha realized the nature of impermanence. Which of the following statements is FALSE?
  - Impermanence is not neutral.
  - Changes that occur in our life are not necessarily good or bad in and of themselves although they are labeled as such depending on our reaction to them.
  - Suffering is caused by our own ignorance of the reality of impermanence.



T H E G A T E W A Y

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S





## T H E G A T E W A Y

## 広がり続ける僧伽 見義信香

自ら僧に帰依したてまつる。まさに願わくは衆生とともに、大衆を統理して一切無碍ならん

ご存知のようにこれは三帰依文の一節です。折に触れ皆さんも唱和されている耳に馴染みのある文ではないかと思えます。三帰依文とは仏・法・僧を私たちの拠り所としますという私たちの宣言文がありますが、このうちの「僧」、つまり「僧伽」について皆さんはどのようなイメージを抱いていらっしゃるでしょうか。もしも誰かが「僧伽って一体なんですか？」と尋ねられたら、皆さんはどのようにお答えになりますか。かくいう私がおもしろいような質問をされたら、おそらくドキッとしたいと思います。それは聞き慣れ、言い慣れてきたこの文言を、何となく分かったつもりで今までできてしまったということに、否応なく気づかされる質問だからです。

「僧伽」という言葉を聞いたとき私たちが思い浮かべるイメージは、仏教にご縁をもった人が寄り集まっている様子ではないでしょうか。仏教学辞典を開きますと、まさにそのイメージ通りの「仏法を信じて仏道を行う人々の集団」という説明を見つけることができます。またお寺で「僧伽」という言葉を使うときは、そのイメージはより具体的となり、御門徒ひとりひとりの顔と重なることでしょう。

ところで、私たちは日常生活において僧伽以外にも様々な集団の中に身を置いています。学校や会社、父母会、スポーツや趣味の同好会、ボランティアのグループなど、私達の生活には様々な集まり、グループが存在します。さらに、私たちひとりひとは日本人やアメリカ人という集団のメンバーでもありまじ、家族も同じような視点で見れば、ひとつの集団と考えることができるかも



しれません。このように私たちはたくさんの方々と関わりながら生活しているわけですが、僧伽もそうしたグループのひとつと考えてよいのでしょうか。私は、社会に存在するそのような集団と僧伽には、ひとつの大きな違いがあるのではないかと思うのです。

僧伽は仏法に目覚めた人々の集まりといえるでしょう。仏法に目覚めるとは、あらゆる生きとし生けるものものは無条件に平等であるという真理に目覚めるといことです。「あらゆるいのちあるものは平等」ということは、私たちひとりひとりがもっているあらゆる違いが、人と人との、あるいはいのちあるもの同士の間で線引きをする材料とはならないといことです。そしてその真理に目覚めた人と人とのつながりを、「僧伽」という言葉で表現されているのではないのでしょうか。

一方、私たちはとかく「私」あるいは「私たち」と「その他の人たち」というふうに分けて人を区別したがるものです。「私」は「あの人とは違う」という思いを抱いた経験が誰もおもちだと思います。私たちは日常生活において、知らず知らずのうちに自分と他の人たちの違いを見つけ、それを理由にその人たちと自分とを切り離して考えようとしています。また、好きな人とは仲間意識を感じますが、嫌いな人や会ったこともない人を仲間と感じることはなかなかできません。「私たち」と「その他の人たち」との間で区別のための垣根をつくる、これが社会に存在するほとんどの集団がもつ根本的な役割かもしれません。

ところが、そのような私たちの思いに基づいて築き上げられたあらゆる垣根を楽々と突き破っていくのが、僧伽なのです。職業や社会的地位、性別や国籍など、いかなることも僧伽の一員になるための条件としては全く必要ありませんし、同時に僧伽から除かれる理由にもなり得ません。さらにいうなら、仏教徒だと自覚しているかどうかということすらも問題にはなりません。なぜなら、仏教の説く真理は仏教徒にとってのみの真理ではなく、あらゆるいのちあるものにとっての真理だからです。世界中のどこで生活していても、どんな職業でも、どんな人であろうと、さらには、どの時代に生まれようと、自分と周りのあらゆるいのちの尊さに目覚めた時、僧伽はすでにその人の足元まで確実に広がっているの

—「僧伽」5ページに続く

## お寺ニュース

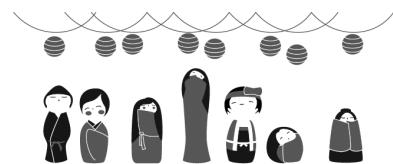
### お盆 / 初盆法要

日本語によるお盆 / 初盆法要は、7月3日(木)午後7時半より7月祥月法要と併せてお勤めいたします。

また英語によるお盆 / 初盆法要は、7月20日(日)午後4時半よりお勤めいたします。ご講師には本派本願寺羅府別院のブリオネス・ウィリアム輪番をお招きいたします。法要後にはお齋をご用意しております。ご家族、ご友人お誘い合わせの上、是非お参り下さいますようご案内申し上げます。

### 別院お盆フェスティバル

来る7月26日(土)と27日(日)の両日、ロサンゼルス別院お盆フェスティバルが開催されます。当寺院では例年フードブースにてtamaleを販売しております。ご多用中とは存じますが、どうぞお手伝いいただきますよう、よろしくお願い申し上げます。



### 基金募集ラスベガス旅行

来る8月8日(金)から10日(日)まで、当寺院恒例の基金募集ラスベガス旅行が行われます。参加費はお一人\$140です。宿泊はメインストリートホテル2泊(お2人で1部屋です)で、往復のバス運賃込みです。ラスベガスへの往路では、軽食とお飲み物が用意されます。

往路のバスは8月8日(金)午後1時、コミュニティセンターより出発します。復路のバスは10日(日)午前11時30分にメインストリートホテルから出発します。

参加希望の方は、地頭所メリー氏(714-271-3803)までお問い合わせ下さい。

法話会 7月祥月法要  
お盆 / 初盆法要  
7月3日(木)  
午後7時半

East San Gabriel Valley  
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple  
1203 W. Puente Avenue, West Covina, CA 91790  
P.O. Box 1616, West Covina, CA 91793

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THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

❁ **GATEWAY** ❁

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**July**

- 3 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service  
Obon/Hatsubon Service
- 6 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 6 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 8 10:00 am Study Class
- 13 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 20 4:30 pm Obon/Hatsubon Service  
(English)
- 22 10:00 am Study Class
- 26-27 Betsuin Obon Festival
- 27 10:00 am Sunday Service

**August**

- 3 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 7 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 8-10 WCBT Las Vegas Trip
- 17 (No Service)
- 24 (No Service)

2014年7月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時半 法話会祥月法要  
お盆/初盆法要(日本語)
- 6日 午前8時半 理事会
- 6日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 13日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 20日 午後4時半 お盆/初盆法要(英語)
- 26-27日 別院お盆フェスティバル
- 27日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

8月行事予定

- 3日 午前8時半 理事会
- 3日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 7日 午後7時半 法話会
- 8-10日 ラスベガス旅行
- 17日 日曜礼拝お休み

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浄土は言葉のいらぬ世界  
人間界は言葉の必要な世界  
地獄は言葉の通じぬ世界  
—曾我量深