



GATEWAY



November 2016 -- Vol. LI No. 10



The WCBT sangha members celebrated the annual Halloween Party with creative costumes, fun games and yummy food. A wonderful annual event enjoyed by everyone. Thank you Toban A!

“Neither Monk Nor Layman”

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

In 1207, the imperial court prohibited Hōnen Shonin’s Nenbutsu teachings. Two of Hōnen’s disciples were executed, and Hōnen and seven others, including Shinran, were banished from Kyoto, the capital in medieval Japan. Shinran, at the age of thirty-five, was exiled to Echigo, currently Niigata, on the Japan Sea side.

In the postscript of Shinran’s major work, “Kyō Gyō Shin Shō (The True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way),” Shinran severely criticizes this persecution of the Nenbutsu teaching as follows;

The emperor and his ministers, acting against the dharma and violating human rectitude, became enraged and embittered. As a result, Master Genkū—the eminent founder who had enabled the true essence

of the Pure Land way to spread vigorously [in Japan]—and a number of his followers, without receiving any deliberation of their [alleged] crimes, were summarily sentenced to death or were dispossessed of their monkhood, given [secular] names, and consigned to distant banishment. I was among the latter.

As Shinran stated, the punishment was not only exiling them to remote provinces, but also returning them to secular life. Hōnen and Shinran were stripped of their monkhood and given new names as laymen. Describing this persecution, Shinran speaks of himself as “neither monk nor layman.”

What does it really mean? Shinran’s statement as “neither monk nor layman” gives us an opportunity to consider what a ‘monk’ and ‘layperson’

are.

As many of us expect, a monk is a Buddhist who takes refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and dedicates themselves to listen to the teachings in one’s life. Shinran was a witness to those people within Hōnen’s sangha and he felt deeply rejoiced that he was also able to listen to the teaching through the Nenbutsu.

Therefore, it would make sense to Shinran, if Hōnen and his disciples were stripped of their monkhood solely because they acted against the Buddhist teachings. However, in actuality, Shinran criticized that it was those who followed the teaching of the Buddha, who were accused and oppressed. Through this persecution, Shinran realized that the imperial court and



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The Dharma School children and the Sangha were treated to fun Halloween festivities on October 30. There were games, lots of treats, a delicious lunch, and yummy desserts. The children added to the festivities with their Halloween drawings. Thank you Toban A for hosting such a wonderful event!

On Sunday, November 27, we will have our annual shichi-go-san ceremony for children who have reached the ages of 7, 5, or 3 during 2016. The children will be recognized for their growth and well-being in this traditional Japanese rite of passage. If there are children in your families who have reached these ages, please let Rev. Miyoshi or me know asap!

November 13th is the date for our Ho-on-ko service this year. This is Shinran Shonen's memorial service. The Dharma School children will be presented with a lesson on the life of Shinran. In addition, a lesson on our own Thanksgiving is also planned.

Hope to see all of you at our November services and Happy Thanksgiving!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen



Growing Old Gracefully With Jodo Shinshu Buddhism

Yukiko Kovacs

WCBT Member

I have been a Higashi Honganji Buddhist all of my life. Growing up in Boyle Heights, I walked to the temple every Sunday. I had not yet learned about interconnectedness. I thought that I should do everything on my own. I felt that if I received help from anyone then I would owe that person.

My parents had no friends, and so I did not know how to make a friend or to be a friend. My parents did not trust anyone, so I guess I didn't either.

I remember being taught about the 8 fold noble path at Sunday School and I felt that I was incapable of following that path. It actually made me feel like a loser.

After high school, I left Higashi. I actually left for 30 years while I raised my 4 children. This was the phase of my life when I thought I knew it all. I thought that I was always right and that I was the smartest person in the whole world. Of course I was wrong. I wonder how many people I hurt with my sharp tongue?

Then disaster struck. My father died and I fell apart. I had lost my security blanket and I was angry, sad, and depressed. My teeth were hurting, I was getting hot flashes, I became paranoid, I couldn't trust my own eyes, and I thought I was going crazy.

I returned to Higashi to replace my family and home. Even though Higashi had moved to downtown, it was very familiar and felt safe to me. Rinban Ito taught me about impermanence. I finally stopped crying after 2 ½ years.

Rev. Miyoshi always emphasizes the specialness of each person, and I really needed that. I was able to find value in myself and to help others. I gradually learned what gratitude is.

I remember another member telling me, "If I only knew then what I know now." I did not understand her at the time, but I do now.

I am still waiting for Jodo Shinshu to hit me, but at least I feel hopeful.



The Dharma school children showed up in many wonderful costumes ready to party at our Halloween celebration.



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

The Study Class

The Study Class will meet on November 8 and 22 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will be based on selected topics that vary from week to week. The class meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (213) 219-6140.

Ho-onko Service

Our Ho-onko Service (a memorial service for Shinran Shonin) will be held on Sunday, November 13 at 4:30 PM. Our special guest speaker will be Rev. Masashi Fujii from North American District. Please join us as we welcome Rev. Fujii and stay for the complimentary *Otoki* dinner that will follow the service.

November Shotsuki Service & Board Meeting

November Board Meeting will be held on November 20 at 8:30 AM followed by the Shotsuki Service at 10 AM.

7-5-3 Service

7-5-3 or Shichi-go-san Service will be held on Sunday, November 27 at 10 AM. This special service is to recognize anyone who has reached the age of three, five or seven this year. Please inform Rev. Miyoshi if you have a family member or know of someone who will be the perfect age for this service.

Mochitsuki

WCBT's annual *Mochitsuki* will be held on Sunday, December 11. The special *mochi* rice, which will be passed out to Sangha members beforehand, should be washed and soaked the night before and brought to the Temple ready for steaming at 7:00AM. When the mochi rice is steamed to perfection it is ready to be poked and pounded and eventually shaped into smooth traditional *mochis*. Some are filled with sweet bean *an* and others are made into the traditional New Years symbolic offering, *okasane*. Come and join us in this annual tradition.

Year-end Service & Oseibo

Our Year-end Service, Oseibo gift presentation and potluck dinner will be held on Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 PM. Entertainment will be provided by the Dharma School and other members of the Sangha. If you have a talent you'd like to share, please contact Rev. Miyoshi.

The potluck assignments are as follows: If your last name begins with A-K, please bring a main dish and a salad; L-N, bring a main dish and rice dish; O-Y, bring a main dish and a dessert.

Please join us for a fun evening of entertainment and feasting on the delicious potluck spread from the West Covina Temple members.

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.

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E-Mail: dharma@livingdharma.org



NOVEMBER

Travis Hamachi, Erika Haraguchi Haines, Kyle Sato, Brandon Kanemaru, Jennifer Higa, Michelle Harrison, Jill Kato, Jean Nakatani, Hiroko Takemoto, Wesley Kawaguchi, Frank Tanji, Andrew Kochi, Lauren Oshiro, Lynette Godoy, Kaz Uyechi, Shinuki Okamura, Brian Endo, Sany Nafarrete



The adults got into the Halloween spirit with some great costumes. Can you guess the people behind the masks?



T H E G A T E W A Y

2016 MEMBERSHIP

The following is a list of our paid 2016 members as of October 2, 2016. In the case of an inadvertent omission, please contact Rev. Miyoshi. Those listed below have already paid their 2016 membership dues. If you are not listed and would like to become a member, please use the application below.

- M/M Ariza, Donald
M/M Ariza, Tom
M/M Arnheim, Bruce
Mrs. Chen, Mei-Ling
M/M de Leon, James
M/M Earley, Jerry
M/M Endo, Brian
M/M Ezaki, Leroy
Mr. Fujimoto, Glen
M/M Godoy, Jose
M/M Gonzalez, Mario
M/M Gutierrez, Anthony
M/M Hamachi, Ted
Mrs. Hansen, Claire
M/M Haraguchi, Richard
Mr. Igarashi, Toru
Mrs. Ikehara, Hideko
Ms. Ikehara-Nelson, Reiko
Mr. Ishikawa, Tadashi
M/M Iwama, Danny
Mrs. Jitosh, Merry
M/M Jung, David
M/M Kagawa, Richard
M/M Kamimura, Akitoshi
M/M Kato, Ted
Mrs. Kikunaga, Sayo
Mrs. Kinoshita, Sumie
M/M Konno, Mark
Mrs. Kobayashi, Sachiko
Mrs. Kovacs, Yukiko
M/M Kuwahara, Steven
M/M Maekawa, Raymond
M/M Martinez, Johnny
M/M Marugaki, Mamoru
M/M Masai, Chikara
Mrs. Mayeda, Haruko
Mr. Miyashiro, Henry
M/M Miyashiro, Marc-Mitchell
M/M Murakami, Akira (Supporting Membership)
M/M Nakasone, Eddie
Mrs. Nishihara, Lillian
Ms. Nishimoto, Masako
M/M Oda, Kazuo
M/M Oda, Yukio
Mr. Okamura, Shinyuki
Mr. Okamura, Tatsuo
Ms. Oku, Michiko
M/M Ormseth, Tor
Mr. Oshima, Eichi Larry
Mrs. Oshima, Miyoko
M/M Oshita, Mitsuru
M/M Sakaue, Masato
Mrs. Sakaue, Satsue
M/M Sato, Ken
M/M Shiota, Jon
Ms. Sogioka, Sadako
M/M Takemoto, Takashi
Dr. Takemura, Roy
Ms. Takemura, Vickie
Mr. Tanji, Frank T.
M/M Tawatari, Toshio
M/M Underwood, Phillip
M/M Underwood, Steve
Mr. Uyechi, Kazumi
M/M Wear, Jack
M/M Wexler, Allan
M/M Yamashita, Bob

*Please make your check payable to WEST COVINA HH BUDDHIST TEMPLE

2016 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (家族護持会費) \$ 125 (New / Renewal)
SINGLE MEMBERSHIP (個人護持会費) \$ 100 (New / Renewal)
SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP (賛助護持会費) \$ _____ (New / Renewal)

NAME:(名前) _____ Birth Month _____
Husband/Wife:(夫・妻) _____ Birth Month _____
Children:(子供) _____ Birth Month(s) _____

ADDRESS:(住所) _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

TELEPHONE #:(電話番号)() _____ E-Mail: _____

*Would you like to receive the "Gateway" and other announcements by E-Mail instead of mail? (Yes / No)



T H E G A T E W A Y

MONK, con't from pg. 1

society's understanding of a monk was completely different from what a monk truly was. In other words, although Shinran lived as a Buddhist monk since he was ordained at the age of nine, he never considered what 'living as a monk' really meant. Stripped of his monkhood made Shinran become aware that a 'monk' was merely a social status which the political authority could control. Shinran's statement "I am neither monk..." shows us that he abandoned a monk as a secular rank and returned to be a 'true' monk, someone who lives as a disciple of the Buddha.

What message then should we receive from the latter part of his statement, "...nor layman"?

Honestly speaking, I have struggled with this as a minister. For some people it may sound arrogant saying, "You are just laypeople and I am not." Obviously, I felt Shinran was not trying to convey this feeling, however, I was not sure what Shinran really wanted to say.

When he said, "I am neither monk," the 'monk' he speaks of, is one that is concerned with social status and who devote themselves to prayer for the benefit and prosperity of wealthy patrons. They made Buddhism exclusive and discriminative without realizing it.

What he tries to clarify by 'layman' or 'one in this worldly life' are those who never see their own reality. They are totally ignorant of the disconnect between the ideal and the real. They remind us of the monks during Shinran's time who became the authority on Buddhism, but lost the essence of Buddhism by exploiting their position to benefit their wealthy patrons. From Shinran's viewpoint, the monks are seen for their social status but in actuality they live as laypeople. Also, 'layman' could have described Shinran himself on Mount Hiei. Perhaps Shinran took it for granted that he was monk and never imagined himself living in the mundane world.

In the same way, the 'laypeople'

is a reflection of our life. Wishing for world peace, however, we keep creating a world suffering from conflicts and wars. We all agree with equality of all people, but when we look at our society, disparities are socially justified in the name of 'self-responsibility' and 'meritocracy.' We often close our eyes to contradictions between what we say and what we really do.

Shinran was no longer a layman because he was finally able to encounter the teaching which awakened him to his own contradiction and the fact that he had been ignoring it. It is this powerful affirmation that he received to live his life facing his own reality. His path to walk as a true Buddha's disciple began from that moment.

Shinran's statement is a light for us to reflect upon, if we live our lives as "neither monk nor laypeople."



(「非僧非俗」7頁からの続き)

のための教えを特定の人々の利益のために利用していた当時の仏教教団のあり方でもあります。あるいは、9歳で得度をし、懸命に修行を続けながら、最も大切な「僧とは何か」という問題を見過ごしてきた親鸞聖人自身の生き方にも重なります。

「俗」とは、自己や社会が抱えているそうした大きな矛盾に目が開かないという姿を表している言葉ではないかと思うのです。

そのように考えた時、「俗」とはまさに今を生きる私たちの姿そのものではないでしょうか。世界平和の大切さを叫びながら、争いや戦争の絶えない世界を作り続けている現実、平等の美しさに頷きながら、「自己責任」や「能力主義」という言葉で、

持つ者と持たざる者に人を分け、格差や差別を生み出している社会を当然として、持つ側に回るための熾烈な競争を続けている姿。本来と現実の大きな矛盾が全く問にならないという点においては、その当時の仏教教団や国家がもっていた問題は、紛れもなく今の私たちの問題でもあるのです。

親鸞聖人の「俗にあらざ」という宣言は、自らが抱えるその矛盾に光をあてる教えに出遇うことができたという宣言ではないのでしょうか。そして、その矛盾から目を逸らさずに、しっかりと向き合う歩みが今始まったという確信の言葉であったのでしょうか。それは、まさしく「真の仏弟子」としての歩みであります。

「僧にあらざ俗にあらざ」——親鸞聖人のこのお言葉は真の仏弟子としての宣言であり、同時に、真宗門徒を名のる私たちに対して、本当に「俗にあらざ」という歩みが始まっているのかということを実に問いかける言葉ではないかと感じています。



Temple Event Highlights:

- Nov. 13 Hoonko Service
- Nov. 20 Shotsuki Service
- Nov. 27 7-5-3 Service
- Dec. 11 Mochitsuki
- Dec. 18 Year-end Service
- Please See Temple News



T H E G A T E W A Y



Buddhism Quiz

Today's Buddhist quiz is the second of the 2-Part Quiz on the Six Paramitas.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

During Ohigan we dedicate our efforts to living as Buddhists according to the Six Paramitas. In Mahayana teaching, the Six Paramitas list six kinds of practice by which bodhisattvas are able to attain enlightenment. We talked about three last month. Match the remaining three Sanskrit words and its description.

1. ___ Prajna 2. ___ Ksanti 3. ___ Virya
- A. Patience, inclusiveness. With patience, we can develop an open heart, and frustration and anger will diminish
 - B. Wisdom, insight, understanding. This is to see things as they are without preconceptions and prejudices. It is the letting go of opinions and concepts, the relinquishment of the self that brings this wisdom that leads to enlightenment..
 - C. Endeavor, diligence, perseverance. This practice is to strive with one's whole heart continuously over long periods. Spiritual strength enables the individual to continue on without giving up in the face of difficulties

Answers: 1-B, 2-A, 3-C

Quote of the Month
Strong men, men who are truly role models, don't need to put down women to make themselves feel powerful.
-Michelle Obama



T H E G A T E W A Y

「非僧非俗」の名告り 見義信香

承元元年(1207)、法然上人の説く専修念仏に停止の院宣が下され、法然上人およびその門下の数名が死罪あるいは流罪に処せられました。いわゆる「承元の法難」であります。親鸞聖人も処罰された一人であり、35歳の聖人は越後に流罪の身となります。

この弾圧に対して、親鸞聖人は『教行信証』の「後序」に、

主上臣下、法に背き義に違し、
忿りを成し怨を結ぶ。これに因つて、
真宗興隆の太祖源空法師、ならびに
門徒数輩、罪科を考えず、猥りがわしく
死罪に坐す。あるいは僧儀を改めて姓名を
賜うて、遠流に処す。予はその一なり。

と、弾圧を行った権力者を厳しく批判しています。承元の法難によって、親鸞聖人は僧の資格を奪われ、「藤井善信」という俗名を与えられて流罪となりました。このとき聖人は「しかればすでに僧にあらず俗にあらず(非僧非俗)」と明確に表明されました。

この非僧非俗の表明は、「僧とは何か」そして「俗とは何か」ということを私たちに問いかけるとともに、これ以後「愚禿釋親鸞」と名のられた聖人の内にどのような自覚が確かなものとなったのかを教えてくださいようと思うのです。

僧とは仏陀の教えに生きる者で、仏・法・僧の三宝に帰依する生き方を選んだ者です。その意味では、法然上人のもとには、念仏を通してそのような生き方に目覚めた人たちがたくさん誕生していたのでしょう。

もしも、そうした生き方に背き、仏の

教えに反したから僧の位を奪われたというのならば、話はわかります。けれども、念仏の弾圧はそうした仏弟子としての生き方を選んだ人々に向けられたものであったのです。

親鸞聖人は9歳で出家をされておられますから、それ以来自分は僧であると思ってきたことでしょう。言い方を変えれば「僧とは何か」ということを考えることなくそれまでこられたことでもあります。それが、為政者の理不尽な所業によって僧の位が奪われた。そのときになって初めて「僧とは何か」ということが課題となったのではないのでしょうか。そして、自分は今まで僧だと思っていたけれども、それは国家の名によって認否される、官位としての僧でしかなかったということに気づいたのでしょう。そして、そのような社会的な地位としての僧のあり方を放棄する、そして本来の僧、つまり仏弟子としての僧として生きることを選ばれた。それが「僧にあらず」という表明に表れているのではないかと思うのです。

それでは「俗にあらず」という宣言は私たちに何を伝えようとしているのでしょうか。

正直、私自身はこの「俗にあらず」という宣言について今一つ腑に落ちない思いをずっと抱いていました。ひとつ間違くと「私はあなたたちのような一般の人たちとは違う」というなか傲慢な言葉にも聞こえます。そうではないということはわかっているのですが、そのお心をなかなか聞き通すことができませんでした。

最近になってようやくこの「僧」と「俗」を別々に見ている私の視点に問題があるのではないか、と思うようになったのです。

親鸞聖人の「僧にあらず」の「僧」が国家によって与えられた官位であり、鎮護国家や限られた人の繁栄のために祈ることを勤めとしている者を指すとすれば、「俗」という言葉を通

して聖人は、どのような人々のあり方を表そうとしておられるのか、ということをやよく考えるようになりました。

一言で言うならば、「問いをもたない生き方」が「俗」という言葉で表現されているのではないのでしょうか。それは、世間より与えられた価値をそのまま受け入れ、そこに自分を当てはめることに一生懸命になり、本当に大切な問題から目を反らし続けていくあり方です。私たちは、自分自身も、そして作り上げている社会も、本来のあり方と実際の現実が大きくかけ離れていることが往々にしてあります。当たり前とされていることが、実は本来の理念に大きく反していることもあります。それは、仏教の教えに精通しながら、あらゆる人

(「非僧非俗」5頁に続く)

お寺ニュース

法話会報恩講(日本語)

法話会では11月3日(木)午後7時半より、11月祥月法要と併せて報恩講を厳修致します。報恩講は親鸞聖人への報恩謝徳の為に行われる最も大切な仏事です。どうぞ皆様お誘い合わせの上、ご参詣下さいませようご案内申し上げます。

報恩講(英語)

11月13日(日)午後4時半より、本年度の報恩講法要(英語)を厳修致します。講師として北米開教監督部より藤井真之師をお招きしております。法要後には、お斎をご用意いたしております。報恩講は一年の節目となる最も大切な法要です。どうぞ皆様でご参詣下さい。

12月祥月法要 / 法話会

12月1日(木)

午後7時より

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



November 2016 - - Vol. LI No. 10

November

- 3 7:30 pm Howakai Shotsuki/Hoonko Service
- 6 10am-3pm Kiku Crafts & Food Fair
- 6 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 8 10:00 am Study Class
- 13 4:30 pm Hoonko Service
- 20 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 20 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 22 10:00 am Study Class
- 27 10:00 am Sunday Service/753 Service

December

- 1 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 4 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 4 10:00 am Shotsuki Service/Bodhi Day Service
- 11 7:00 am Mochitsuki
- 13 10:00 am Study Class
- 18 4:00 pm Year-end Service

2016年11月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時半 法話会報恩講法要
- 6日 午前10時 菊クラフトフェア
- 6日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 13日 午後4時半 報恩講法要 (英語)
- 20日 午前8時半 理事会
- 20日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 27日 午前10時 日曜礼拝/七五三法要

12月行事予定

- 1日 午後7時半 法話会
- 4日 午前8時半 理事会
- 4日 午前10時 祥月法要/成道会
- 11日 午前7時 もちつき
- 18日 午前10時 年末家族礼拝

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私たちのいのちは、
ただ不思議ということに
支えられてある

松本梶丸『歎異抄に学ぶ』より