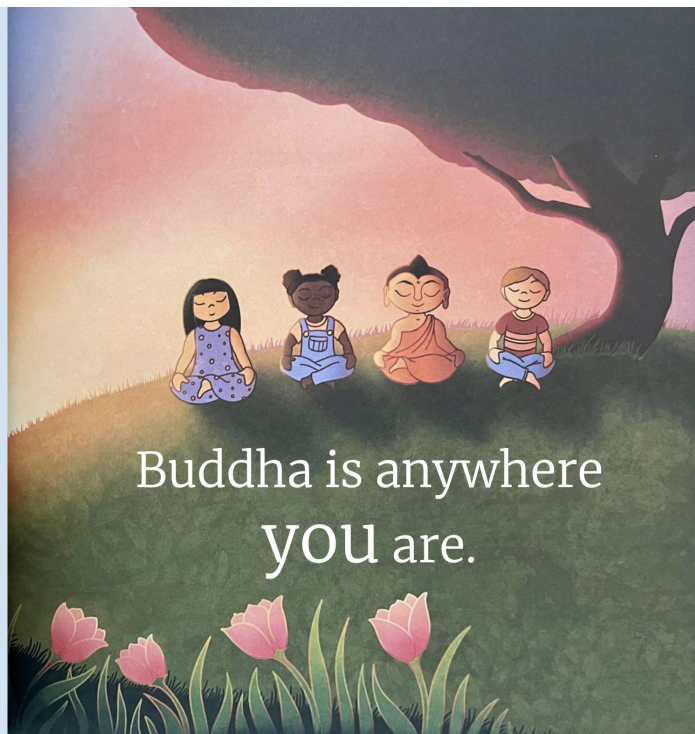
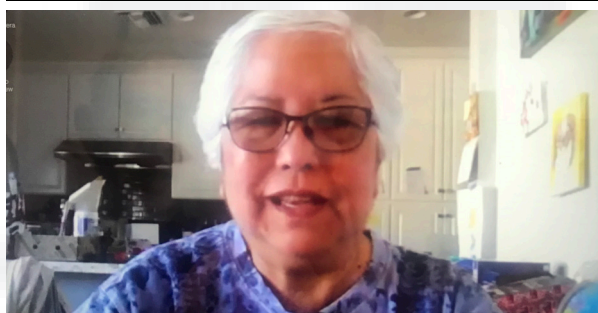
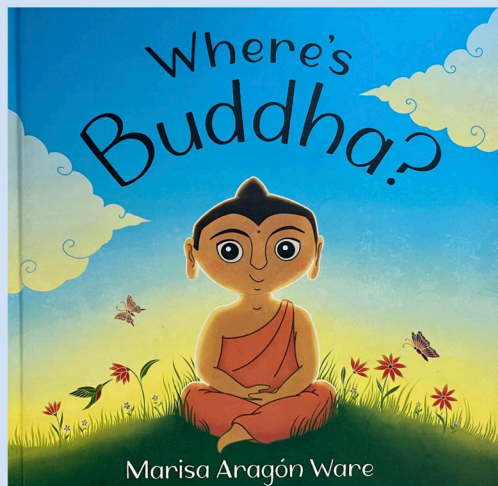




# GATEWAY



December 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 7



*At the recent Shichi-Go-San service Claire Hansen introduced all our 3, 5, and 7 year olds to the sangha. We were able to see a lot of happy young faces as they listened to the reading of "Where's Buddha?"*

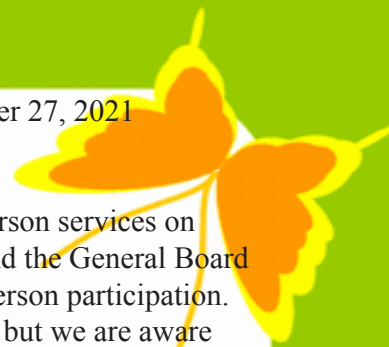
November 27, 2021

Dear Sangha Members,

WCBT is moving forward. The temple is planning to reopen our in-person services on January 23, 2022. This will coincide with our annual Eitaikyo Service and the General Board Meeting. The service will be a hybrid format, combining Zoom and in-person participation. Hopefully, this will mark the reopening of our regular services at WCBT, but we are aware of changes in the spreading of new variants which could affect this. We will be following the guidelines of the Community Center, which include proof of vaccination that must be submitted to the Center ahead of time. We strongly encourage attendees to be fully vaccinated and ask those who are not vaccinated to attend the service via Zoom or until we are ready to offer a rapid test at the door. Masking and spacing will also be necessary during the service.

We hope to see you there!

With the best of holiday wishes and gassho,  
Johnny Martinez





# T H E G A T E W A Y

## DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

On November 28, some of our students were recognized during our Zoom Shichi-Go-San ceremony. It was so nice to see the children who were able to join our service!

The following youngsters were honored: The three year olds are Lauren Jucksch, Owen Fiske, Kai Calvo, and Sienna Martinez. The five year olds are Evan Hamachi, Max Shimamura, and Blake Le. The seven year olds are Miles Isaksen, Derek Hamachi, Amelie Kagawa, Sayler Jobe, Luke Shimamura, and Kylie Noguchi.

Congratulations to you all!

This year is rapidly coming to a close. Soon it will be 2022. This is a good time to express our gratitude for all the help we received during 2021. The following is a short Buddhist story about gratitude:

A monkey and a partridge hopped onto the back of a patient old elephant. The tired elephant stopped to rest under a large ancient tree. He said, "You two should be thankful that I am letting you ride on my back".

The monkey and the partridge laughed and said, "You should be thankful to have our company". The ancient tree thought, "Foolish animals! You are standing in my shade without even thinking about being thankful to me!"

We often think like the animals and the tree. This time of the year, perhaps we should think about how grateful we are to everything we encounter everyday. It's a good time to realize how interconnected we are to everything around us!

Have a good and safe holiday season!

Gassho,  
Claire Hansen

## *84,000 Dharma Doors did Buddha Open. But Who Opened the Door the Buddha Went Through?*

**Rev. Frederick Brenion**

It is said that Buddha opened 84,000 Dharma Doors by which we may enter to find awakening. That's a lot of doors! Of course this is a symbolic way of saying that there is a door for everyone! It's better than "Let's Make a Deal" where one door has the deluxe car, a world cruise, and more money than you can count, and the other door has the goat, or even worse, me! Of course, it can take a while to find the right door for yourself, but the experience of trying different doors helps point you to the one door that is just right for you.

Yet it is unnerving when people come to our little door called 'Jodo Shinshu – Higashi Style' and they peer inside and say, "What the Hell is this?", "Where's the Zafus?", "Where's the practice?", "What are these people doing in there when they could be doing something?", "It looks a lot like Church here!" We've heard it all before, and more.

I've thought these things myself... till I wised up after getting slapped around by reality! But then I'm not that wise. So I have to ask. Is this a door that the Buddha himself opened? Or are we the 84,001st door? Would Buddha open a door devoted to 'Other-Power' practice? Perhaps as a kindness to us, but is it something that he himself would do or need for himself?

To answer this we must ask a different question. Buddha opened doors for us, but then who opened the door for the Buddha to go through? And what kind of door was it? It must have been a mighty special door!

Of course, when we read the sutras we see the Buddha as this great spiritual athlete, meeting head-on any challenge, any difficulty. In some ways we present Buddha as a kind of 'Superman'. Oh, yes, we boast of his humanity, but he is far superior

to everyone by leaps and bounds.

We present Buddha as the epitome of 'Self-Power'. He did it all without teachers or help. Discovering the Dharma on his own. A Hero of heroes.

That's good P.R. and it misses the reality by more miles than I can imagine.

Siddhartha succeeded by first failing. There is no lasting avenue to success by success alone. There is no limit to self-power...until you happen to hit bottom.

Let's take a quick review of Siddhartha's adventures. He left home to pursue his own spiritual quest. He left a young wife and new born son. He left his father in the lurch in terms of the future of the kingdom. He's went off to solve the mysteries that no one else had ever solved. This was a young man totally operating under

*Please see DOORS, con't on page 6*



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## T E M P L E N E W S

### Sunday Services

All Sunday services will be conducted via Zoom until further notice. Look for an email from Rev. Miyoshi or Rev. Fred inviting you to the services with the Zoom meeting ID and Password. If you have not received an email from them, please contact the temple [wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com). The attendance for the services are growing every week and it's such a pleasure to see all the familiar faces so please join us!

### Discussion Class

The Discussion Class in December will be on Thursdays, December 2, 9, and 16 and will resume its weekly format on Thursday, January 6, at 10 am via Zoom. There is a different topic of discussion each week and a lively dialogue with a growing number of participants. Look for the email invitation with meeting ID and passcode or contact Rev. Miyoshi for the information.

### Study Class

December's Study Class will be on Tuesday, December 14 and will resume Tuesday, January 11 for its usual format of every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm and we invite those who are unable to attend the morning Discussion Class to join us. The Study Class focuses on the history and teaching of Jodo Shinshu. If you are interested in purchasing "The Teaching of Jodo Shinshu and the History of the Honganji Community" book which will be used as reference, please contact Rev. Miyoshi.

### Mochitsuki

Mochitsuki will be cancelled again this year due to the pandemic but we look forward to next year with great anticipation!

### Year-end Service

Our Year-end Service will be celebrated via Zoom on Sunday, December 19, at 10:00 am.

### New Year's Day Service

A special online service to commemorate the New Year will be held on Saturday, January 1, 2022, at 11:00 am.

### Sunday Service

There will be no Sunday Service on January 2 since the New Year's Day Service will be the day before.

### Board Meeting and Shotsuki Service

January Board Meeting and Shotsuki Service will be held on Sunday, January 9, 2022.

### Eitaikyo & General Meeting

Eitaikyo and General Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 23 at 10:00 am and may be our first hybrid service with in-person participation, pending the health and safety concerns of the Center, and Zoom.

### WCBT Seminar

WCBT will again have a virtual seminar on February 5, 2022 with Josh Hernandez Morse, head of The Pacific Buddhist Academy in Honolulu, Hawaii, the first Shin Buddhist college prep school in the U.S. See page 4 for more information.

## GATEWAY Staff

*Layout & Editing:* Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Hisako Koga, Claudia Haraguchi, Richard Kagawa

*Contributors:* Claire Hansen, Michael Jitosho, Joanie Martinez, Phillip Underwood

*Circulation:* Rev. Fred Brenion, Joy Kitaura

*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:*

West Covina Buddhist Temple  
P. O. Box 1616  
West Covina, CA 91793  
(626) 689-1040

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*Facebook:* [facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple](https://facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple)

*E-Mail:* [wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com)



## DECEMBER

Allison Haraguchi, Kyle Kagawa, Aki Kamimura, Chris Nakano, Denise Underwood, Larry Oshima, Susan Iwama, Johnny Martinez, Tristan Miyashiro, Helen Nakawatase, Sandra Nakano, Jonathan Ogino, Kristin Dubble, Merry Jitosho, Jessica Saucedo, Taylor Saucedo, Katrena Sakaue, Brandon Kwan, Brett Miyamoto, Chau Chen, Wesley Zhao Chen, Julie Griffith, Jack Wear, Dawn Masai, Sean Underwood, Richard Kagawa, Takashi Takemoto, Max Shimomura, Kai Haraguchi Calvo

*\*If you have not received emails from the temple, please send your email address to us ([wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com)). We will send you invitations to services and updated information. Thank you.*





# T H E L I V I N G D H A R M A

W e s t C o v i n a B u d d h i s t T e m p l e P r e s e n t s

## The 2022 Online Seminar: “Living Dharma In Education And In Our Lives”

**Lecturer: Mr. Josh Hernandez Morse**  
(Head of School of Pacific Buddhist Academy, Honolulu)

**Date: Saturday, February 5, 2022**

**Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm (PST)**

(No Registration Fee)

Pre-register by email to  
[wcbl.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbl.livingdharma@gmail.com) to be added  
to the Zoom meeting invitation for the  
seminar.

More Info: (626)689-1040

[revnobuko@gmail.com](mailto:revnobuko@gmail.com) (Rev. Miyoshi) or  
[pishsato@gmail.com](mailto:pishsato@gmail.com) (Pat Sato)



### ◆ *About the Seminar*

How do Buddhist values get integrated into the curricula of The Pacific Buddhist Academy, the first Shin Buddhist college prep school in the U.S.? Can the universal values of compassion, gratitude and interdependence lead us towards peace and contentment as individuals and further influence the community and world around us?

This is an excellent opportunity to learn how we can activate the teachings of Buddhism in our lives. Please join us as we listen to and explore a novel approach to answer these questions.

### ◆ *About the Lecturer*

Mr. Josh Hernandez Morse has over 20 years of educational experience at the secondary and university levels in Oregon, Central America and Hawaii. He has been at the Pacific Buddhist Academy in Honolulu, HI since 2003 and has been serving as the head of the academy since 2014. The academy is the first college preparatory Shin Buddhist high school in the U.S. He attended the University of Oregon and received his Bachelor's degree in Anthropology and his Master's degree in Creative Writing. He was selected for a William J. Fulbright Award to Nicaragua. At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, he was a Masters of Education candidate.

### Program: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

1:00-1:10	Welcome/Intro
1:10-2:00	Lecture
2:00-2:10	Break
2:10-2:40	Breakout Room
2:40-3:00	Wrap-up

.....

\*If you wish to make a donation, The Living Dharma website now has a link (<https://livingdharma.org/index.php/donations/>) for donations and membership dues. You can use PayPal, credit and debit cards to make donations to the temple with a few simple clicks. Checks are still and always accepted as well for the traditionalist. Please make your check payable to WEST COVINA HH BUDDHIST TEMPLE, and mail to P.O. Box 1616, West Covina, CA 91793. We truly appreciate your generous support.



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## Dharma Seeds Retreat #3: The Gatekeepers

Tanya Kato

On Saturday, October 23, 2021, I attended my third Dharma Seeds retreat. The third generation Dharma Seeds met over Zoom and Reverend Tomoyuki Hasegawa presented on the first half of our spiritual forebear, Shinran Shonin's life.

Reverend Hasegawa shared that much of what we know of Shinran is from Kakunyo, Shinran's great-grandson, who wrote a record of Shinran's life, as well as from letters of Eshinni, Shinran's wife. Some of the major life events that were highlighted from the first half of Shinran's life were: his early life during a great transitional period in society and his ordination at the age of nine; his time studying on Mount Hiei for twenty years; and Shinran's hundred-day retreat at Rokkakudo and dream vision that resulted in his visit to Honen. Shinran then became a disciple of Honen and studied the nenbutsu, as well as received permission to copy Honen's major work, Senjaku hongan nenbutsu shu (Senjakushu).

Towards the end of Reverend Hasegawa's presentation, he discussed how Shinran struggled to find the Mahayana spirit, or the essence of Mahayana on Mount Hiei. Reverend Hasegawa shared a story in which Shinran encountered a woman at the entrance of Mount Hiei who wanted to study and practice the teachings but was not allowed to enter Mount Hiei because women were prohibited. The woman then asked how the pure water (teachings) at the top of Mount Hiei could benefit sentient beings (commoners), if the water could not flow down from the "high" places. While Reverend Hasegawa could not say whether this story was true historical fact, it did illuminate the radical teachings of Honen who later opened the nenbutsu teachings to commoners.

Since I am interested in different religious traditions, I decided to attend a St. Ignatian Catholic retreat over the weekend of November 12-14, 2021 in South Pasadena. It started out light and fun, then got deeper and more contemplative. My small group discussions were candid and insightful.

On Saturday evening, Mass was held in the church social hall. When it was time for Communion, I stayed seated because I am not Catholic. One of my small group members sitting next to me said that if I crossed my arms, I could stand in line [for a blessing]. In the line closest to me, stood a lay retreat attendant who was receiving people, as opposed to the other line in which the priest presiding over the Mass stood. When I walked up, the lay person and I both looked at each other, but neither of us said a word to one another. Although I do not recall, I was told that I put my hand out not knowing what to do and the lay person handed me the Communion bread (wafer). As I walked back to my seat, one of the priests proceeded to take the wafer from me and said that the lay person did not know that I was not Catholic. As soon as that happened, my heart sank, and I became teary-eyed. I felt so much sadness and very emotional; I felt rejected. During the remainder of the evening, I felt dejected, and my once enjoyable experience turned into sullenness.

The next day, the priest who had taken the Communion bread from me, came up to me and said that he had wanted to talk to me about what had occurred the previous night. Not quite knowing what to expect, I wondered what he wanted to tell me.

The priest then distributed a sheet with an exercise for us to do. Printed on the sheet, was an explana-

tion of First Love, an unconditional and unlimited love—God's love. This contrasted with Second Love, described as a love that often leaves us doubtful, frustrated, angry, and resentful—the affirmation, affection, sympathy, encouragement, and support we receive from our parents, teachers, spouses, and friends which can be limited, broken, and very fragile. It was explained that behind the many expressions of this Second Love, there is always the chance of rejection, withdrawal, punishment, violence, and even hatred.

After the priest's talk, it was lunch time. As the retreat participants headed to lunch, I spoke with the priest. He apologized to me and said that he "fumbled" and could have approached the situation differently regarding the Communion. I felt a sense of relief and appreciated his effort to clarify the situation. We ended up briefly talking about various spiritual paths and he mentioned his fondness of Thich Nhat Hanh.

During lunch, I sat with my small group and shared what had happened the night before regarding the Communion incident. They said that it was very courageous of me to return for the final day of the retreat despite still being very emotional. We then discussed various aspects of the Catholic church such as how to create a welcoming environment to newcomers or those returning to the Catholic church after being away, as well as the role of shame.

In reflecting on my Catholic retreat experience, I was reminded of the story that Reverend Hasegawa shared during the Dharma Seeds retreat and Bishop Ito later mentioned during our Hoonko service about the woman at the bottom of Mount



# T H E G A T E W A Y

*DOORS, con't from pg. 2*

his own Self-Power. He took up, one after another, two of the most highly regarded meditation teachers of his time. He reached arcane heights of meditative prowess, attaining levels so deep I cannot even describe them, so beyond normal comprehension. Each time, after mastering their teachings, he turned his back on them, even though he was offered the chance to succeed his teachers. They thought him an outstanding success. What happened?

They didn't get him to where he wanted to go. The problem with these techniques is that ultimately you must come down from them. No one can sit seiza forever. There is so much a body can handle. One needs to breath. One needs to eat. No one talks about it, but after meditation there is the race for the restroom! As Zen folk say, "After the Ecstasy, the Laundry!" One smiles at this, but it is the truth about our reality as it is. Siddhartha wanted more. How can you make the most incredible mental states last forever when your body says "Please stop!" And so he sought out the practice of Asceticism. The practice of whipping and denying the body till its hold weakens enough for the spiritual goal.

And he did so with great alacrity. He whipped himself. Meditated under frigid water. Leapt into thorns. Allowed his body to be bitten by insects. Starved, eating the most minimal of foods. He did this and more, according to the stories, for six years. Desiring to leave the world of suffering he piled suffering upon suffering! What was he thinking? It is said that he was so emaciated that he looked like a living skeleton. I have seen pictures of survivors of the Holocaust. It is not pretty. It is not something that a sane person would take on. In any book, and I have plenty, Siddhartha's Self-Power defies Sanity.

And...he got his wish...his body

said, "Fine, you win. It's over. Have your way now. We surrender." At the moment of victory he perceived the final cost. He was dying. He had gone too far. He would never find his answers. He lost. To destroy the hold of one's body is to destroy one's self. The only end to Self-Power is Self-Destruction. An inexorable law of nature.

On the brink of his own abyss a moment of clarity, a reward of insight came. Perhaps he should have lived a more balanced life. He was a person of extremes going to extremes. A middle-way through life would have been a surer course to steer by. But an insight at the last moment will not stave the last moment. Regret is what he left with. And he paused...

Siddhartha had striven to push open the door of Self-Power to find that the harder one pushes, the stronger it stays shut. There is an overused saying that when one door closes, and in this case slams shut, that another one opens. But the door ahead was not of his doing or power. It is a door by which a Buddha to be can enter through to that Buddhahood.

Siddhartha was not alone that day in the forest grove. He had his ascetic companions, not very far away. Great friends they were too. Encouraging him to keep going forward, though that way was leading to his death! But another person was approaching. Unasked for, unlooked for. Siddhartha's eyes were closed as he prepared for the end. But it was an end that was to be a new beginning.

Her name was Sujata. She was the wife of a farmer, a milkmaid. And she came to the grove for her own Ho-onko. She wanted to express her deepest gratitude to a tree. A special tree for her. For Sujata and the people of her time, trees were filled with spirits who would listen and perhaps even grant wishes, and she had a deep wish. She had wanted a child and it came to pass! We may smile at

this, but recollect that Siddhartha's mother had stopped in a garden, a sacred grove, and it was there that she gave birth. Trees have been fundamental in Buddha's life, associated with great moments for him. So he would understand this. It is quite possible that Sujata gave birth under this tree, so all the more reason to honor and praise. Hers was a path of gratitude, not of self-power. An openness of heart not a striving of mind.

She approached with a bowl of kheer, a milk-rice pudding, and to her amazement she saw a shape that seemed to be a part of the tree, so still it was. It was the shape of a Sramana, a monk, a holy person. This must truly be the tree-spirit appearing before her to receive her gift, and he looked so much in great pain. And so she knelt and offered.

Siddhartha opened his eyes. A strange thing was happening. Was he delirious? A farmer's wife was kneeling before him offering a bowl of rice-milk to his lips. Was this a vision? A temptation of Mara? A gift? His mind was helpless, but his heart opened as he heard her thanks. What can this mean? What does one do? His mind slipping, his lips received the life-nourishing milk like a child.

His world changed. His life was saved. Unlooked for. Unhoped for. A new thing came to him. Compassion was offered and received. 'A Power Beyond The Self' as Kiyozawa Manshi would say arrived. A spark of Wisdom came when he saw his need for a middle-path of life. But it was the overflowing of Compassion given to him that gave him the strength to live it.

In time his strength grew. His health restored. He had much to think about and ponder. He slowly made his way to another grove. Another tree awaited him to put it all together. How his Self-Power failed. How an Other-Power from a grateful

*Please see DOORS, con't on pg. 8*





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



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The Temple has registered with the AmazonSmile donation program. For those of you who shop online with Amazon, the AmazonSmile foundation will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to the Temple, at no cost to you. You just need to login to “smile.amazon.com” which will connect you to the same Amazon website you know. It will display the same products, same prices, and same service. On your first visit select ‘West Covina Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple’ as the organization that you wish to support. It’s that easy.

Happy shopping!



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## *DOORS, con't from pg. 6*

mother saved him. How an insight of wisdom at his ruin gave him another direction. How a gift of compassion gave him strength to walk it.

The Buddha opened many doors for us. But he opened them because of this gift of Other-Power that he received. But this door that he walked through is a special door only for those who find themselves broken by their own Self-Power efforts. It is a door that makes a Buddha a Buddha. Centuries later another monk named Shinran saw the meaning of this door and pointed the way for us to enter. This Supreme Door meant for all.

## *DHARMA, con't from pg. 5*

Hiei. While I did not identify with the woman at Mount Hiei during the Catholic retreat, I have come to see some similarities in our stories. When I was talking to the priest, I shared what Phil Underwood once said about Sunday mornings being one of the most segregated times in America according to Martin Luther King Jr. because of our separation during church services.

As I continue to open my ears to the dharma, the more my limited beliefs and (mis)understandings surface. While I like to think of myself as an "open" and "accepting" person of others and ideas, I very much live my life holding tightly to my self-centered ideals. The night of the Communion incident, I decided to partake in Reconciliation (Confession) with one of the Catholic priests. As I was sharing how the Communion incident weighed heavily on me, I also spoke of how I have rejected my own mother and am guilty of what I would later learn to be as Second Love, a shadowed love, something of "this shore" that I could not see until the mirror of "rejection" was reflected to me.

Coincidentally, a week after the Catholic retreat, one of my small

group members text messaged me saying that she was in Kentucky. She wrote that there happened to be a cathedral around the corner from her hotel with an interfaith center and it had a picture of Thomas Merton, a Catholic monk who explored interfaith understanding, especially with Buddhism. She then sent me a picture of the image of Thomas Merton...standing next to the Dalai Lama.

Even though I'm not sure where to begin in trying to understand the essence of Mahayana Buddhism, the image of a Catholic and a Buddhist standing together sounds like a start.

(「八万四千」9頁からの続き)

です。彼が思い知ったことは自力の終着点は自己破壊であるという事実でした。

死の淵に臨み、初めて中道という生き方の大切さを思い知ったのかもしれませんが。けれども今更何を思おうとももう遅いという諦めもあったことでしょう。それは自力に敗れた姿でした。けれども開けようと万策を尽くした自力の門が完全に閉じられていると知らされた時、別の門が開かれていることに目覚めることができたのです。

シッダールタの目が閉じられ、その命がまさに尽きようとする時、差し伸べる手がありました。それがスジャータという名の女性でした。彼女農婦であり乳搾りを仕事としていました。彼女はシッダールタが倒れていた木にお礼を言うために訪れたのでした。その木は彼女にとって特別な木でした。その時代、人々は特別な木に願い事をかけていました。彼女もその一人で、彼女の願いは子供をもつことでした。そしてその願いが叶ったのでお礼を言いに来たのでした。それは自力に執着する心を離れた純粋な感謝の心でした。

骨と皮だけになったシッダールタを見たスジャータは彼を木の精と思ったのかもしれませんが。お供えするつものの乳粥を彼に与えました。

これはシッダールタが予想もしなかった出来事でした。朦朧とする意識の中で

スジャータの感謝の言葉を聞いて彼は何を思ったのでしょうか。身体に染み渡る乳粥に何を感じたのでしょうか。

確かに言えることはこの出来事を通して彼の世界が大きく変わったということです。自らの意思や努力を超えたところで生かされている存在であるという目覚めが起こったのです。慈悲を与える存在ではなく賜る存在であったという気づきでもありました。中道の歩みを促す智慧との出遇いでもありました。慈悲のはたらきが彼に人生を生ききる強さを与えました。自力を尽くし、自力に敗れた時に他力のはたらきに出遇ったのが釈尊という方ではなかったのでしょうか。

釈尊は多くの法門を私たちに開いてくれます。それは彼自身が他力のはたらきに生かされた人であったからということではないのでしょうか。彼が通った法門は自力を尽くし自力に敗れた人のみが気づくことのできる特別な門です。それこそが、釈尊が仏であるということの証明でありました。それから何世紀も経て親鸞という名の僧侶がその門の意味に目覚め、あらゆる人が通入できる道であると説いたのです。



## *Online Donations*

The Living Dharma website now has a link (<https://livingdharma.org/index.php/donations/>) for donations and membership dues. You can use PayPal, credit and debit cards to make donations to the temple with a few simple clicks. Checks are still and always accepted as well for the traditionalist.





# T H E G A T E W A Y

## 八万四千の法門 ブレニオン・フレデリック

釈尊は私たちが悟りを得るための道として八万四千の法門を開いたと言われています。その数の多さ自体に驚きますが、それが意味するところは覚りへの道は全ての人に開かれているということだと思うのです。私が進むべき門はどれなのかということが定まるまでは時間がかかるかもしれません。様々な門戸を叩いてみることを通して自分の進むべき道が明らかになるのではないのでしょうか。

数多くの法門の中で浄土真宗、しかも大谷派の門となると、あまり魅力的なものではないかもしれません。多くの人のもつ仏教のイメージとはかけ離れているからです。「座禅をしない仏教などあるの?」「修行がないじゃないか?」「他力なんて何もしないということ?」「お寺はまるで教会みたいだ」などの声が聞こえてきそうです。そしてこれらの声はかつての私の声でもありました。今私はこ

う思うのです。「真宗は釈尊が自ら開いた道なのだろうか、それとも真宗は八万四千一番目の門なのだろうか」と。言い換えるなら、他力の教えは私たちのような凡夫を哀れんで釈尊が説いてくれた教えなのか、それとも自らの求道の果てに見出した教えなのか、ということです。

この問いに答えようとする時、さらなる問いが生まれてきます。釈尊は私たちのために法門を開いてくれました。それでは、釈尊のために法門を開いてくれた人は誰なのでしょう。もし、誰かが法門を開いてくれたとしたら、それはどのような道だったのでしょうか。

私たちがこのような問いをもつ時、多くの場合「お釈迦さまにしか通れない特別な道だったのだろう」と考えます。経典の中のお釈迦さまは常に特別な存在です。そう考える時、お釈迦さまを自分とは全くかけ離れた次元の存在だと考えがちです。それは私たちがお釈迦さまを自力を極めた人と見ているからです。師をもたず自らの精進で覚りを獲得した人とするからです。

それは一方では真実です。でもそれだけでは大切なことを見失うのではないか

と思うのです。

釈尊は自らの行に敗れたことを通して目覚めた人ではなかったでしょうか。自力を尽くすといってもそこにゴールはありません。あるのは尽くしきることのできないという絶望的な事実のみです。

一国の王子であつたシッダールタは、王位を捨て妻子を残し、求道の旅に出ます。自らの力や努力で、誰も解決できなかった問題を解き明かそうと思ったのです。まさに自力を頼む人でした。様々な師の元で教えを学び、師が後継者にと望むほどその教えを深く習得しました。師の教えを完全に習得することは、周りから見れば大きな成功と言えます。けれども彼はそれに満足することができず、師の元を去るのです。

彼にとっての究極の求道とは身体的限界を超えて修めるものでした。だからこそ彼は苦行の道を選んだのです。自らの体を限界まで痛めつけ否定することで精神的なゴールに到達することを望んだのでした。

冷水の中での修行や、断食に近い修行などありとあらゆる苦行を行いました。それは六年間にも及びました。この世の苦しみから解放される道を明らかにするために、自らの身に考えうる限りの苦痛を与えたのでした。

そうした長年の苦行によって彼が最終的に得たものは、自らの死に直面するということでした。苦しみからの解放を得る前に身体と命が尽きようとしていたの

(「八万四千」8頁に続く)

## 寺院での活動再開について

ウェストコピナ東本願寺の理事会は対面での法要の再開を一月二十三日(日)といたしました。この日は永代経法要と総会が開かれます。法要ならびに総会はオンラインと対面のハイブリッド形式で行います。

寺院での活動再開につきましては、コミュニティセンターのガイドラインを遵守いたします。お寺に来られる方にはワクチン接種証明書の事前提示をお願いいたします。法要中のマスク着用、ソーシャルディスタンスの確保もお願いいたします。また対面での法要参加は当面の間ワクチン接種を終えた方とさせていただきます。接種を終えられていない方、対面での参加に不安を感じる方はぜひオンラインで法要にご参加ください。

新たな変異株が見つかり、まだまだ先を見通すことのできない状況ではありますので、日程は暫定的ではありますが、ご門徒の方々と一月二十三日にお寺でお会いできることを心より願っております。

合掌  
理事長  
マルティネス・ジャーニー

## お寺ニュース

法話会につきましては来年一月まではオンラインによる法要を続けていきたいと思っております。12月の法話会は12月2日(木)、新年1月の法話会は1月6日(木)を予定しております。時間はいずれも午後7時となっております。法要参加に必要なインフォメーションは法話会案内として皆さんのお手元に郵送でお届けいたします。

また修正会法要は2022年1月1日(土)午前11時より同じくオンラインにてお勤めいたします。

East San Gabriel Valley  
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple  
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# GATEWAY

December 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 7

## December

- 2 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 2 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service-online
- 5 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki/Bodhi Day Service  
-online
- 9 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 12 7:00 am Mochitsuki-cancelled
- 12 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 14 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 16 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 19 10:00 am Year-end Service-online

## January

- 1 11:00 am New Year's Day Service-online
- 6 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 6 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service-online
- 9 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 9 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 11 6:00 pm Study Class-online

## 2021年12月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時 法話会—オンライン
- 5日 午前8時半 理事会—オンライン
- 5日 午前10時 祥月法要—オンライン
- 12日 午前7時 もちつき—キャンセル
- 12日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン
- 19日 午前10時 年末家族礼拝—オンライン

## 2022年1月行事予定

- 1日 午前11時 修正会法要—オンライン
- 6日 午後7時 法話会—オンライン
- 9日 午前8時半 理事会—オンライン
- 9日 午前10時 祥月法要—オンライン
- 16日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン

\*Emailをお使いの方はメールアドレスをお寺までお知らせください。(wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com)  
オンラインでの日曜礼拝のご案内、最新の情報をお送りいたします。

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凡夫、煩惱の泥の中にありて、  
仏の正覚の華を生ず

親鸞聖人『入出二門偈頌文』