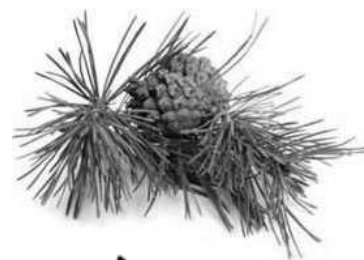


秋 Sangha Life



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www.missourizencenter.org

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December 2012-February 2013

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Our Journey to Jukai

By Kathleen Cople and Bob Croft

We started our journey to lay ordination over a year ago. Although we have been companions on the path to ordination, Kathleen and I have taken different roads to get to the point last year when we made our decision to take the precepts. We share our experiences and thoughts so that they might inspire and encourage others who might be considering taking their Zen practice to the next level.

Kathleen-

I started this journey over a year ago. Shuri helped me pick out my cloth and she helped me begin. I quickly discovered that it was not going to be an easy journey. Although I have been somewhat 'crafty' all my life making a hooked rug or a cross stitch piece, I was not prepared for this type of sewing. Which is why after Erin informed me about a sewing retreat in North Carolina given by Tomoe-san Katagiri that I jumped on it.

What an amazing experience that was! Not only did I get to go to beautiful Asheville, North Carolina with Erin and sit zazen at Great Tree with Rev. Teijo Munnich as the abbot but I was with others that would take ordination and was taught by Tomoe-san (Reverend Katagiri's wife) who taught the Missouri Zen Center and of course many many other centers around the country how to sew the rakusu. I felt privileged. Not only was I learning from a master but I felt the sense of history.

So, no I did not finish my rakusu in those three days. At the time I was disappointed that I did not. But it put me on the road to continue the journey at the Missouri Zen Center to sew with Bob Croft and to have Shuri and Erin as our teachers. Sharing this experience with Bob with his open and kind heart has also enriched the experience. Shuri and Erin gave us generously of their time, taught and guided us along the way. What this means to me is that my rakusu is not my rakusu. It is the culmination of all the people that helped me along the way. One thing that was taught at Great Tree is that you should

Continued on Page 2

A Brief Reflection by Shuri

Going to Japan for 2 ½ months last summer was an exercise in uncertainty. As I walked through the doors of O'Hare's International Terminal, I felt a bit of panic. What was I, a middle school teacher, doing here? When I got to the gate, I surveyed the crowd and wondered what was I, the only Caucasian, doing here. When I stepped out of Kansai airport to get a cab, I wondered what was I, seemingly the only English speaker, doing here.

Being an English speaking, Caucasian teacher was a big part of my identity and it was neither useful nor particularly valued in my new life. Living in the monastery where I understood very little of what was said, or what was going on, it became comfortable to drop many of the views about who I was and just be present to being told where to be and what to do. It was freeing. My body relaxed. I felt happy.

I figured out that if I got up 10 minutes after the wake-up bell, the folks who had more costuming than I could use the bathroom first and we all had plenty of time. I learned how to pick slippers to wear to the zendo that did not belong to someone else although I never figured how to pick ones that didn't give me athlete's foot!

I learned that before each meal I might as well stand at the end of the table and be amused during the great discussion regarding who was to sit where and that I could then slide into the last spot just as they got it settled and the teacher was entering the room.

I learned that kindness transcends more than I ever could have imagined, chocolate is appreciated by folks from all over the world, and that having no idea what is going on can be an invitation to smile and go with the flow. Perhaps it should be no surprise, but I also was reminded that who I think I am is not nearly as useful as paying attention to what's going on around me.

Our Journey to Jukai cont'd from page 1

have others put a few stitches in your rakusu which I have done.

Why take ordination? Why am I taking ordination? Good questions, no easy answer. It certainly is not necessary. You can make your own commitment to Buddhism, to the practice of zazen, to the sangha, to follow the precepts, without ever taking ordination. And quite frankly I wasn't sure I ever would. I didn't know if I needed to but have since discovered that I do.

When thinking about it lately my mother keeps popping up in my head. My mother is now 93 and has severe dementia. I so wish I could ask her the story again. But this is what I remember. She was raised Protestant and when she and my father decided to get married she decided to become Catholic. My father was Catholic and they were both in their late 20's at the time.. She told me it was a very conscious decision. She did not do it for others although I'm sure it made my dad very happy. She told me she had a spiritual experience. She never told me any more details than that. That's the part I wish I could ask her again but knowing my mother that is probably all she told me. She was a very pragmatic woman. I wish I could expand on this and tell you she had some type of vision but I don't believe it was like that. It was a decision that felt right to her. And she became a very committed Catholic practitioner.

And so, it is kind of as simple as that. I was raised Catholic but have now decided on my own what feels right to me. The teachings of Buddhism and the practice of zazen feel right to me.

Being part of our sangha with Rev. Rosan Yoshida as my teacher feels right to me. Thank you Rosan for all the teachings and guidance you have given me for which I will forever be grateful.

And so taking ordination just feels like the right next step.

Bob-

Like Kathleen, my journey to Jukai began over a year ago. Although I have been coming to MZC religiously (pun intended) on Friday evenings for over ten years, I never seriously thought about lay ordination until the fall of 2011. For me, as for Kathleen, it felt like the right step at the time. One day, I wasn't thinking about it and the next I was committed heart and soul to taking the precepts. My journey over the last year has confirmed for me the rightness of my choice. A Zen story helps to explain what happened to me as I struggled with sewing the rakusu.

In Kosho Uchiyama's *Opening the Hand of Thought*, he recounts the story of Sekko, who loved dragons. But the dragons he prized were not real but only representations. When Sekko unexpectedly met a real dragon he dropped dead from fear on the spot!

The lesson that Uchiyama draws from Sekko is that we too often prefer imitation to the real thing. It would have been easy for me to give up after a year came and went and I had made very little progress on the rakusu. After all, I could still get a lot out of practicing Zazen and studying Zen texts. But, as Uchiyama says, "When you meet a real 'dragon' you should be filled with joy and resolve to wrestle with it." For me, sewing the rakusu was a "real dragon." It represents the reality of Zen practice. It's hard and you often feel like giving up. But you stick with it and in the end it's all worthwhile.

Lay ordination means, at least to me, committing one's self to Zen Buddhism. In the process of taking the precepts, I am making a public pronouncement of my intention to dedicate my life to the Three Refuges: the Awakened, the Dharma and the Sangha. Even though we end every sitting at the MZC with a recitation of

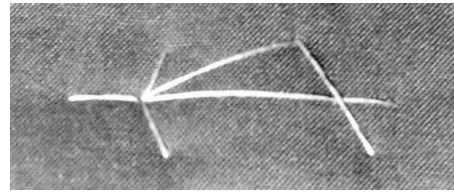
the Three Refuges, I believe, for me, that the words don't have the same meaning unless you make a total commitment to following them.

What I originally thought would be an individual effort—sewing the Rakusu—became, fundamentally, an opportunity to become integrated fully into the life of the sangha. Despite what you might think about making your own Rakusu, it requires collaboration, particularly in my case since I came to the process with very little training in how to sew. I have been truly fortunate to have had many excellent teachers, not just in sewing but, more importantly, in applying Zen principles to my life.

From the beginning, on a beautiful fall day last year, I have been helped by members of the Sangha. Meiku and Kuryo cut the fabric and started me on the journey by imparting their wisdom to me on that October day. Maku provided valuable assistance and inspiration along the way. Shuri recognized early on that I needed the discipline of sewing at the MZC at least one night a week so she graciously gave of her time one evening a week before going to Japan in May.

I cannot begin to adequately thank Kathleen and Erin, however. Kathleen has been a steadfast companion on this year-long journey. She has been a source of inspiration as I struggled through the arcane stitching techniques. Her example allowed me to believe that it was possible to finish after all. Erin provided us with all the assistance we could ever need. While Kathleen and I are struggling to finish our first Rakusu, she is working on her second and third at the same time!

Last but not least, Dr. Rosan Yoshida has provided me with invaluable teaching while I've worked on the rakusu. I owe him a huge debt of gratitude for making this possible in the first place.

**The Pine Stitch** by Erin Davis

A few of us had questions about the pine stitch that appears on the maneki of the rakusu. I wrote to both Mrs. Tomoe Katagiri and Rev. Zuiko Redding about it, and we discussed it with Rev. Yoshida as well. All had similar insights about its form and meaning. Here is Zuiko's concise response: As I was taught by Tomoe-san and by Rido-san at Zuioji, the pine stitch is significant in a number of ways. The pine is always green, symbolizing eternity/constancy - the eternity and constancy of the Buddha's teaching. Pine branches are also very flexible on the ends and this symbolizes the flexible mind/spirit that results from following the teaching. We bend in the wind, but we always return to our original straightness. The stitch seems to be a little cluster of pine needles with one broken. If you pull on a cluster of needles in, for instance, a white pine, they will come out together. There will be a little end that lodged in the branch with all the needles fitting into it. I think that's what's portrayed here. Also, we make the stitch the way we do because it's both flexible and strong. It allows the saos and maneki to move independently but stay together and it's hard to break this stitch. Even if one piece comes out, the rest stays in place.



The Adventures of Tiger, Piper, Horse, Natalie, and Sometimes Jack (Or Raise High the Intentions, Marshmallows!)

by Richard Fischer

After twenty minutes of thought scrubbing or wall bump examination as the case may be, the participants in the family sitting at 10 am on Sunday are led on a variety of adventures by a host of authors. One of the authors was the daughter of the man who brought Sufism to the West and she was a hero for the Allies in WWII. (She worked as a spy in Paris and was caught and executed.)

The latest adventure involved a young monk who talked to his thieving hand which he caught in someone else's tea jar! Jataka tales of all kinds lead us to exotic places. Buddhist stories teach the ethics of the Awakened Way. This past Sunday Tiger's posture was particularly exemplary.

Activities follow the storytime and one included the construction of paper samurai hats. Rosan deciphered the technique from obtuse instructions. Marshmallow making marked a move to the kitchen one day for an exploration of gooeyness. Piper shared some of her reading material which included a huge snake. She also ate a whale which took eighty years, or was that something a character in her book did? Natalie usually has a plethora of observations, corrections, assorted thoughts, and quite a collection of legos. Recently Jack has not been able to get out of bed and he is missed, but you see he is at that stage between early childhood and late childhood (also called adulthood) which we call teenagerhood.

Before we know it the clock strikes eleven (actually it's a buddhist clock so it shakes hands with eleven), family sitting is over, and we rejoin the world refreshed. By the way, Tiger and Horse go back in the closet where they have a nice long nap.

Oh, I forgot to mention the recitation of the seven intentions which I find particularly useful. During the rest of the week they sometimes just pop into my thoughts.

Today I will practice non-harming.

Today I will be helpful.

Today I will further my spiritual practice

Today I will be impeccable with my word.

Today I will not take anything personally.

Today I will not make any assumptions.

Today I will do my best.

A Crisis of Faith by Daniel Layton

It was during the second semester of a downward spiraling science PhD program that I began visiting the Missouri Zen Center. For years I was convinced that academia was the career for me, yet it took only a few months for that conviction to be thoroughly smashed. Strangling thoughts about the direction of the future and decisions of the past swirled around at all hours. What was I to do after all the years I had spent getting here? It seemed that there was no other option, and now I was stuck like a writhing fly on glue.

And yet, after living with this mental state for what seemed like years, it dissipated and calmed with amazing speed once I began to practice Zen. Such is the nature of our monkey minds, I suppose. Actually practicing, as opposed to reading books on Buddhism as I had done in the past, had an amazing power. Coming from a science background, zazen was for me a revolutionary means to objectively observe my own mental behavior. Because one is normally so involved with one's own thoughts, this seemed an impossible thing. Who would have guessed that simply sitting still could overcome this? The thoughts that had plagued me became nothing more than a constant feed of data. I was on the fast track to equanimity, I thought.

A year or so into my Zen practice, however, which until that point I had hardly questioned, I began to think it might not be the panacea that it seemed (or at least if it were, I would have a devil of a time realizing it). What bothered me most was Buddhism's immunity to criticism. If you have a problem, it's your ego, not the system. In a non-dual state, nothing can be criticized. It makes a certain sense, but how can one really accept that, let alone fully realize it? Does it not seem rather like a cleverly crafted authoritarianism? Are these grounds to throw it all away, or do they point to something else?

In the Shobogenzo Zuimonki, Dogen wrote: "If you want to study Buddhism, do not bring with you the conditioned mind of the past, present, and future. I knew for certain that I must forget the various views and opinions accumulated from the past and that I must gradually reform myself." This seems to be something of a paradox. Presumably when one's conditioned mind is gone, one has already achieved Understanding. Dogen here states that doing so is both a precondition and the final goal of practice. Crucially though, this points out that Zen is ultimately not so much a belief that one's practice is right or wrong, but rather an absence of any belief at all. Really one does not have to accept the authoritarianism of non-dualism, but rather forget authoritarianism and non-dualism altogether.

Dogen's quotation above also points to the fact that Buddhism explicitly rejects individualism. Our individual thoughts and conceptions are mostly barriers to studying the Way. The United States and the rest of the Western world, however, have a fierce sense of individualism stemming largely from the centuries it took to overthrow abusive authoritarian governments and religions. Coming from that culture, I find the giving up of my own individualism to be the most difficult aspect of my practice. Intellectually, I understand and embrace why individualism is a hindrance to practice, but it takes a long time to internalize. Zen institutions in the West forget this at their peril.

Dear Sangha and Friends of the Missouri Zen Center - Kathleen Copple - MZC President

As the year comes to a close, it is time for reflection, both personally and as a member of the of the Missouri Zen Center (MZC) community.

During 2012 the MZC sangha worked together to maintain the sitting schedule and to offer a number of special events for the sangha and the wider community.

Our teacher and abbot, Reverend Rosan Yoshida, continues to give generously of his time on behalf of all beings, and taught two Beginners Mind classes, both a 5-part series, to share the Buddha's teachings. We continue to have Beginner's class on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month as well.

We have new doans to help us maintain a rather rigorous sitting schedule. They include Bob Cropf , Pat Bernstein , Shaughn Uebinger and Allisyn Gillet. We are grateful for their practice and for all the doans' continued commitment to keep our sitting schedule stable.

In April we welcomed new board members Bob Cropf, Buddhist Council representative, and Daniel Layton, secretary. In addition, new Board officers include Kathleen Copple, President; Brittany Lueken, Vice President; and Erin Davis, Treasurer. We are grateful to have Board members willing to contribute their energies and talents. Thanks also to the members who put time and energy into the day-to-day needs of the center. We are grateful to them, as well.

We were fortunate to have two visiting teachers give Dharma talks at MZC. In May, Rev. Daigaku Rumme, Director of Soto Zen Buddhism of North America and Head Priest at Zenshujii Soto Temple in Los Angeles, was the Vesak Day speaker and gave a dharma talk at MZC on "Zen Practice Within Everyday Life". In September, Rev. Shundo Sekimizu from Tosenji Temple in Japan gave a dharma talk 'The Way of Living Together Harmoniously' with Rev. Daigaku Rumme interpreting. Both talks were well attended and enjoyed and we are grateful to both of them.

As a member of the Buddhist Council of Greater St. Louis, MZC participated in three events organized by the Buddhist Council. Our sangha worked hard to make 1000 cranes for Vesak Day in May. Oh, those cranes!! I have to say I probably lacked the most skill and made the least but we had some very dedicated people to get it done in time. Special thanks to those who coordinated, showed up for crane folding, took them home, and designed and made the presentation boards. They were beautiful when placed on the altar at Fo Guang Shan! Thanks, also, to all who participated in the ceremony to present them that day!

The other two Buddhist Council events were Socially Engaged Buddhism and Mindfulness day. Rosan was a speaker at both of these events.

Along with our regularly scheduled sittings we had Spring and Fall Equinox Sesshins and Rohatsu Sesshin which included a Jukai (lay ordination) ceremony for Kathleen Copple and Bob Cropf. These are weekend long sesshins to assist with deepening our practice. As Rosan refers to sesshin as 'to touch the mind'. We also have had several one-day sesshins throughout the year.

We hosted the Webster Works group from Webster University for a day. They did an amazing amount of work in our yard and some small house maintenance chores. It was a fun day of being around students, lots and lots of food mostly provided by Rosan, and good conversation.

Dharma study group, reading Rosan's translations of the Shobogenzo, continues on Thursday evenings after zazen. As well as a writer's group on Tuesday evenings after zazen.

Three of our members as well as Rosan (he was one of the teachers) participated in the week-long Great Sky sesshin at Hokyoji Zen Practice Community in Minnesota.

As you can see we are all very blessed to have this community to practice together and continue to bring the Dharma to the St. Louis area. We offer profound and continuing gratitude to our teacher, Reverend Rosan Yoshida, for all his work as our teacher and abbot. We rely on membership and donations to make all of these opportunities happen in the St. Louis area. We did not partake in the Japanese Festival this year, usually our largest fund-raiser.

We hope the sangha will continue to support the Zen Center in the next year as it has in the past, by sitting with us, work practice, and financially. We are a 503c organization, your donations are tax deductible, and financial donations of any amount help us share the dharma.

Please e-mail us at info@missourizencenter.org for more information about any of these events or how you might participate more fully in our sangha.

We wish all a Happy Holiday Season! May our practice sustain and benefit all beings in 2013. Please join us for our sittings on New Years Eve and partake in the celebration after!



A Visitor From Japan

By Richard Fischer

In September MZC was treated with an unusual visit by a lecturer from Japan. Rev. Shundo Sekimizu was accompanied by Rev. Daigaku Rumme who interpreted. Daigaku had been here earlier in the year when he gave an excellent talk at the Vesak Day celebration. Daigaku is quite tall and Shundo is less so.



Shundo is a Sotoshu Specially Dispatched Teacher. He is resident priest of Tosenji Temple in Kanagawa. He received ordination at the age of ten.

Shundo's talk, **'The Way of Living Together Harmoniously,'** focused on the events of the March 11, 2011 earthquake and resulting tsunami and what they mean to us today. He told the story of the lone remaining pine tree in Rikuzentakata which had become a symbol of hope for people in Japan. There had been a grove of more than 70,000 pine trees planted along the shore about 300 years ago by villagers. The trees made the area a tourist attraction. The tsunami wiped them all away except for one lone remaining tree. This tree became a symbol that everything was not lost. He went on to talk about the interconnectedness of all, and about the Way that liberates all beings.

Shundo's talk also expressed the following: "Human wisdom has brought about the advancement of civilization and culture. However, we keep repeating the same mistakes and conflicts

that jeopardize our own lives and dignity. The just sitting that Zen expounds is a valuable practice to humbly entrust this body/mind to the truth of the universe, letting our remarkable abilities to reflect and reason rest. Last year, the Japanese people learned a lot from the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident that suddenly struck our country. Again, we realized the foolishness and powerlessness of human beings in the midst of nature and the universe."

Many visitors came to the talk from Inside Dharma and the Shinzo Zen Meditation Center, including Rev. Kalen McAllister who introduced Daigaku and Shundo since Rosan was out of the country.

After the talk Shundo answered questions. One of those asked if the Soto Zen organization officially supported the ending of nuclear reactors. He indicated that the Soto Zen leadership did support the ending of reliance upon nuclear energy although it may not be accomplished immediately.

Shundo and Daigaku were very gracious and helped reorganize the rooms after the talk ended.



Family Sitting by Kathy Albers

This January marks the 9th anniversary of the Missouri Zen Center's Sunday morning family sitting. Nine and a half years ago at a MZC outdoor potluck lunch, several members had brought their babies there. We had discussed before how we wished we could sit zazen with our spouses but that could not happen unless we had a babysitter. We also wanted a spiritual community that we could bring our children to. My husband and I had gone to a few different churches after our baby was born, but didn't find a comfortable fit at any we had visited. We felt like zazen was good for us adults but wasn't possible for most children. Sitting still and quiet for 40 minutes was hard for most adults and impossible for most children. With a push and great help from Kalen Mc Allister and Rosan's blessing (he was still living in Japan at the time), we started the family sitting 6 months later.

The collective agreement in those first weeks was to model proper posture and attitude. Several babies nursed and were held during the sitting or would sleep in their car/pumpkin seats. Older babies might be crawling around and playing with toys. Snacks and books were often helpful for co-operation during the sitting times. We did not expect small children to be able to sit still or to be quiet. We encouraged them to be as quiet as possible as we taught them Buddhist ideas and practices such as mindfulness and non-harming.

Nine years later we continue to follow the same relaxed yet functional guidelines. Over time the children learn from our example and suggestion and sit quietly for longer periods of time. At some age determined by the parent, the child will be sitting quietly on a zafu in zazen position for the whole 20 minutes.

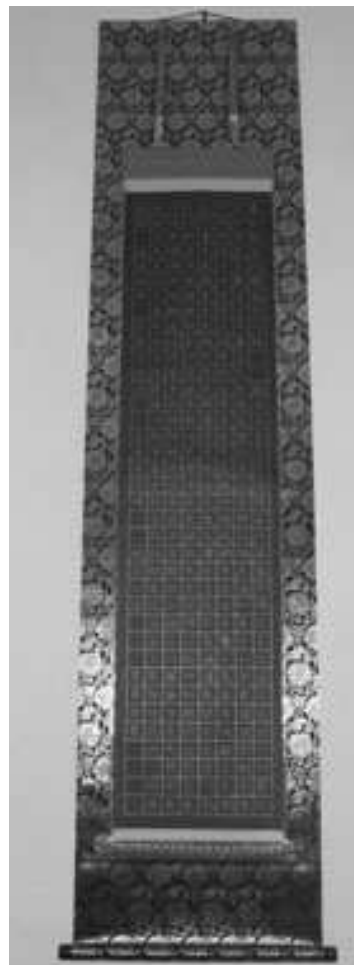
After the 20 minute sitting time there is a short chant and then a story is read. Sometimes a craft or activity happens. We draw, color, fold paper (origami), make collages, cook, etc. Often the adults participate or help, and sometimes they have their own discussions. What happens at the family sitting is as unique as those who come on any given week.

Over the nine year history of the family sitting there has been a large number of families with children of all different ages. The community of young sitters has constantly changed. Local universities bring young families in to town and they join the family sitting while finishing their degrees. We have lost many of these families to new job placements elsewhere. Although our Zen center seems to attract those folks who are not yet settled, we are hoping to build a stronger base from those who are settled here as well as those who will be moving on.

We have met many good friends through the Missouri Zen Center. We hope you decide to come to the MZC and try out the family sitting too. Every person of any age is welcome and invited to join us any time. Often adults come without children for this sitting time. We meet Sundays starting at 10 AM. If you have any questions regarding the family sitting, please contact Kathy Albers at kayessence@sbcglobal.net.

Donations to MZC Needed

Please consider a donation to the Missouri Zen Center. If you are in a position to contribute financially please do so to the extent you are able. We know that everyone has been affected by the state of the economy and if you are not able to contribute financially then consider a donation of your time and talents. We suggest a \$25 per month donation for those who can afford it though we gratefully accept whatever you can contribute. If you are in a position to donate more at the end of the year, please know that it will be especially welcome this year, as the fund raising at Japanese Festival did not occur. If you are not able to donate money then your commitment to work on the property and perform labor is a way to help MZC maintain its physical plant and helps foster the community around MZC.



This year Rosan obtained a new hanging scroll, *The Heart Sutra*, Prof. Hajime Iwamoto's calligraphy in gold letters made in Japan, well matched with the scroll of the Three Venerable Ones, Buddha, Dogen, and Keizan

MZC Member Blogs

Claire Schosser - <http://livinglowinthelou.blogspot.com>

Mark Frank - <http://crossingnebraska.blogspot.com>

Kim Mosley - <http://blog.kimmosley.com>

Note: The symbols on the front page are those for Autumn 秋 and Winter 冬.



Bob Croft offering incense at altar with Rosan presiding at left and Kathleen Copple standing at right.

Lay Ordination after Rohatsu Sesshin

Zen monasteries commemorate Buddha's awakening by holding a week long sesshin ending on Dec. 8. which is Rohatsu, the day Buddha awakened according to Zen tradition. MZC held its version of the Rohatsu sesshin beginning on Friday evening, Dec. 7, and ending with the regular Sunday morning schedule through the family sitting on Dec. 9. Lay ordination followed on Sunday morning at 11:30. Kathleen Copple and Bob Croft accepted the precepts and obtained dharma names, Katsurin and Rohatsu respectively. Katsurin (活林) can be interpreted as "Lively Forest" and Rohatsu (魯朧) as "from stupidity issues the ultimate ground."

After the lay ordination we had a vegetarian feast with quite a few guests who had come to see their friends' ceremony.

Better than the one who would live one hundred years not seeing immortal state, is the one living one day seeing immortal state. - The Dhammapada, 114

Rosan's words on lay ordination

Ordination is ordering all by coming home of supra-mundane realm in the ultimate truth, settling in nirvana (peace unconditioned, lit. windlessness, by karma blowing) and penetrating prognosis (witness of it, wisdom of bringing it into mundane

realm) – unconditioned peace and unsurpassed awakening. Without it we are constantly troubled by fluxes, *âsava*, flux or leak (漏); *bonnô* (煩惱), vexation or defilements, *klesha*, *zenma* (染汚), beginning with the triple poisons of thirst, anger, and delusion, coming from karmas (action and action results) developed and developing through evolution.

The Buddha said that all beings are karma machines. He prognosticated the direct concrete way of stopping them – still sitting to stop karmas (physical, verbal, mental, past, and present), sitting *zen*, *jhâna*, *chan*. The antidote against the triple poisons is the triple learning, *sîla*, *samâdhi*, and *prajñâ*.

The awakened way is to become awakened and wakefully live according to his precepts of taking refuge in the triple treasures – embracing all beings, virtues, and morality (in triple learning working in them in the opposite order and together in unison throughout the process).

Without ordering and reorienting our karmas we are endlessly driven and devastated by karmas in fight and flight. However through the practice of precepts and purifying process through the meditation stages, we eventually reach the primordial purity, peace, and prognosis.

The awakened way prescribes the four applications of decreasing existing bad karmas, stopping them, starting new good ones, and increasing existing good ones. Ordination is thus the crucial cornerstone to build buddha's life on it openly and decisively vowing to walk the path of the awakened way.

Prajñâ-pâramitâ, Prognosis-perfection

In his best seller "How to Live," author Kazuo Inamori, founder of the Kyoto Prize and the company Kyocera, and renovator of other large companies, tells us that how to live is the most important question in our life. In describing how to live the best life, he says that we can achieve what we aspire to with the utmost sincerity and striving.

Practitioners in the Great Way, Mahâ-yâna, aspire to the six perfections, pâramitâ, of giving, precepts, patience, striving, concentration, and prognosis. It is said that if one perfects one of these, one perfects all of them. This is because the perfection of any of them requires that all of the perfections are functioning together, interdependently.

These six perfections are the concrete or extended practice of the four embracing matters, sangaha-vattu, of giving, loving words, beneficial actions, and sameness (doing the same, with others), corresponding to the four immeasurables, appamañña, or holy abode/living, brahma-vihâra, of friendship, compassion, joy, and equanimity (throwing away, of self).

The wholly embracing (individual, social, ecological), whole-hearted (mental, physical, communal, continuous) effort is the essential engaged and evolving element, which dissolves and resolves the individual, social, and environmental habitual forces, karmas, ingrained impediments, of the three poisons, dosa, of anger, thirst, and delusion.

Rosan Yoshida

E-mail List

Subscribe to our e-mail list at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/mzclist>

Once you are signed up, you can send messages to the list using this address:

mzclist@googlegroups.com

Regular Zendo Schedule

Sunday

6:20 am	Zazen
7:00	Service (sutras)
7:20	Zazen
8:00	Kinhin
8:10	Short Zazen
8:30	Lecture (Teisho)
9:30	Work period (Samu) & tea

You are welcome to come throughout the morning, but please do not enter the zendo inner room during zazen, but quietly enter the outer room.

10-10:20 am	Family Sitting
10:20-11	Children's Activities

Monday

6-6:50 am	Zazen & Heart Sutra Beginner's Night
<i>(Registration requested 24 hours in advance)</i>	
6:30-7 pm	Instruction
7-7:20	Zazen
7:20-8	Discussion/Q&A

Tuesday

6-6:50 am	Zazen & Heart Sutra
7-7:40 pm	Zazen
7:40-9	Tea/Discussion

Wednesday

6-6:50 am	Zazen & Heart Sutra
7-7:40 pm	Zazen

Thursday

6-6:50 am	Zazen & Heart Sutra
7-7:40 pm	Zazen
7:50-9	Dharma Study Group <i>(call for details)</i>

Friday

6-6:50 am	Zazen & Heart Sutra
7-7:40 pm	Zazen

