
Teisho for Shinzan

Teisho by Roland Yuno Rech, Gyobutsuji, February 2013

Most of you came a long way to take part in these ceremonies. They express the vital importance of the quest for the ultimate truth that gives our life its real meaning.

Bodhidharma was once invited by the Emperor Liang who asked him: *“What is the fundamental point of the holly truth?”* Bodhidharma answered: *“Vast, empty, obvious, there is nothing holly”*.

Seeking the liberation Path, we want to see the ultimate reality. But if we do that in order to be released from the causes of suffering, isn't there a chance that this desire becomes a bigger suffering?

And then to believe that we can grab the ultimate truth, isn't that illusive? If we could do that, it wouldn't longer be the ultimate truth and it would have lost its precious power to guide us beyond ourselves.

So lets leave the great Dharma Gate open onto the infinite by seeing the emptiness of all mental productions. This is what Bodhidharma showed the emperor. The holly and liberating truth *iskakunen musho*: vast, empty and obvious. The emperor who was attached to the merits of his practice couldn't grasp that, later on, others were able to see that and transmit it.

Shakyamuni once revealed his first disciples the Four Noble Truths as the essence of the Dharma he had realized. But if one practices this Dharma with a greedy mind or worst, and believes he has realized it, he actually moves away from it.

Therefore Master Tosan declared: *“I have a bad habit: I was never concerned about the Four Holly Truths”*. Then Master Ungan asked him: *“Are you happy though?”* And Tozan answered: *“It would be wrong to say that I am not happy. It is as if I had found a bright pearl on a manure heap.”*

In order to be realized, the ultimate truth must be abandoned, because it is beyond that which can be grabbed. Even saying that it is elusive, it is already saying too much.

Thus during this winter angu, we sit in zazen and we realize the vast mind that doesn't separate small from vast, temporary from ultimate and which sees the obviousness of non-separation.

But, since there is always a beyond the limits of these words and thoughts, the ultimate is never really the ultimate. That's why we keep trying to express and practise that which cannot be grabbed. And even if we cannot see the ultimate truth, it sees us, it sheds light on our delusions and helps us severing our attachments.

There are no more further steps: without knowing it, we were always there.

But we have to live and share that for the happiness and liberation of all beings. Then, the generous minded practice becomes a joyful progress and a daily Dharma realization.

Let's hope we are able to say as Master Dogen:

"I am far too stupid to become a Buddha, but I hope to be a monk who helps the others to make it to the other shore."

Then, what is the difference between this side of the river and the other one?

I wish you all a good journey on the Path to the Nirvana where Master Yoka used to say: *"Only the accomplished ones play together."*

So here it is, thank you for your patience and kindness.

Please take care of yourself.