

Suzuki Roshi's Funeral

Baker Roshi's Talk

Dec. 12, 1971

Niwa

Miwa Roshi, and Katagiri Roshi, Moriyama Roshi: Domo....gozaimasu (?)

There is no easy way to be a teacher or a disciple, though it must be the greatest joy in this life, no easy way to come to a country without Buddhism and leave it having brought many disciples well along the path, priests, laymen and thousands of persons throughout this country whose lives have been changed by him in the last thirteen years, and started and nurtured by him a monastery, community, and practice centers in California and many other places in the United States. He brought us Buddha, himself and an understanding of Buddha which included us. There was room for everyone. He knew himself that well. He brought us dharma, such a thorough understanding and living of the teaching that grasses, trees, ~~and~~ flowers, tables did actually teach us. He brought us sangha, the traditional, ancient Buddhist community, with a full sense of how to live through Buddhist tradition, learning ~~xxx~~ from his own Japanese culture and including our culture, through which Buddhism must find its expression. But this no easy way, this extraordinary accomplishment rested easily with him, for he gave us from his own true nature our true nature. In Hazel Paget's funeral ceremony and Trudy Dixon's funeral ceremony he spoke of three minds: joyful mind, the joy of Buddha's mind in all conditions, compassionate mind, which includes all of us without any idea of self, and big mind, as big as a mountain, deep as an ocean, without discrimination, penetrating fully and exactly, one with everything simultaneously, through the intimate and unconditioned ^{relationship of} teacher and disciple, he left us intimate with Buddha and ourselves. He left as much as any man can leave, everything essential, the mind and heart of Buddha, the practice of Buddha, the teaching and life of Buddha. He is here, he is here in each one of us, if we want him,

and in the life here, which was his life work, to allow us to continue. Let us do everything possible to allow his passage, in many forms, to be complete, treating each other as Buddha. Let us each be reborn now. Let us realize our own true nature.

At the beginning of Buddha's Nirvana sesshin, just after the bell and the first period of zazen beginning, our great teacher, Suzuki Shunryu Daiocho joined Buddha. He passed with decision and gentleness. A few days before he died, when it was difficult for him to speak, I asked him, "Where will we meet you?" A small hand came out from underneath the covers, made a small bow, and drew a circle in the air.

transcribed by Barry Eisenberg

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