



Katagiri-roshi

#### KATAGIRI-ROSHI VISITS

In the fall of 1975, Dainin Katagiri-roshi spent a month at Zen Center as a visiting teacher. Katagiri-roshi was one of Zen Center's teachers for many years, and led the practice with Suzuki-roshi during Zen Center's years of formation and growth. Now he is Master of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center in Minneapolis.

During his stay, Katagiri-roshi gave several general lectures and taught a seminar on "Zenki" ("Total Dynamic Working"), another on "Shoji" ("Life-Death")—both fascicles from Dogen's *Shōbōgenzo*—and also taught a class on the history and lineage of the early Soto lineage in Japan.

"Zenki" and "Shoji" are among the shorter fascicles of *Shōbōgenzo* and both deal with the subject of birth-death, living-dying. "Zenki" is in part a commentary-teisho on the words of Zen Master Engo Kokugon; "Life is total dynamic working (zenki); death is total dynamic working." Although these works can be read as literature or philosophy, the primary intent of Dogen's writings was to help practitioners of the Way to penetrate zazen, and this was Katagiri-roshi's emphasis during the seminars. He spent one week on each fascicle, lecturing for an hour and a half every morning.

The class on the history of the Japanese Soto lineage was interesting partly because the period of time discussed—the first generations after Dogen's death—parallels our own in many ways, a time of political and social unrest when Zen was first becoming established in the country. Katagiri-roshi's detailed presentation brought to life a time and events that are little known even in Japan outside of the Soto tradition. There is almost nothing in English on the subject.

As this issue goes to press, Katagiri-roshi is just finishing another stay with us of two weeks, during which he has taught a class on the history of the later Soto lineage in China (this class was just for priests and priest-candidates) and a class on Dogen's "Awakening the Bodhi-Mind."

It is hard to convey our deep pleasure having Katagiri-roshi with us again— hearing his voice, seeing his presence, having him sit with us. His practice is part of Zen Center's foundation.

