



2554 B.E. (Buddhist Era)  
*From the Parinirvana (death of the Buddha)*

From May to May by the Lunar calendar

2011 C.E. (Common Era)  
*From the Birth of Christ*

Heisei Nijūsannen  
*23<sup>rd</sup> year of the Heisei Emperor's Reign*

Chinese Calendar Year  
*Year of the Rabbit*

## GUSHA/CHISHA

愚者知者

*Visiting a temple is for tourists; living with a temple is for a Sangha; mutually nourishing, supporting, and encountering. The former brings knowledge of, while the latter brings understanding in. The former is an institution, the latter is a community; the former a corporate entity, the latter a community mom-and-pop store.*

In the Pure Land analysis of the other schools of Mahayana Buddhism, the term Gusha/Chisha is sometimes used. Chisha means *a man of wisdom*, while Gusha means *a foolish man*. Chisha refers to all the other schools of Mahayana, the path of sages, the path of knowledge, practice and wisdom. We however are the Pure Land path, the path of the ignorant, the foolish, the path of the Bōzō, as in Bōzō the clown. The path of the Chisha is the normal path of learning, practice, of monks and nuns, of holy people and sacred this and sacred that, and parallels the secular paths of learning.

What does it mean then to become a Gusha, a Bōzō? It means to finally recognize one's true and

real nature. And that religiously, that true and real nature of Bōzō-ness is an awakening of the most significant kind. It is like learning and doing something for the first time, with the openness, connectedness, and appreciation of a first time student. A master of anything is a student no longer, and with it, openness, connectedness, and appreciation. It is like the old PhD. position in an older Japan where the degree is bestowed only after a lifetime of study. Enlightenment is not a particularly helpful translation for us, awakening is. With awakening to our Bōzō-ness as a lifetime event, there is a unfolding of openness, connectedness, appreciation of the other, gratitude, and joy. There is the thousand-petal lotus – i.e., the constant unfolding of the Bōzō condition of “How do you do?” The know-it-all on the other hand, is self-enclosed, since there is nothing above him. His only

joy is in telling others about his superiority. His stance and being is adversarial, self-righteous, aggressive, and interfering.

In the Nembutsu teaching, “thinking of the Buddha” is to discover our Bōzō-ness and the “How do you do?”-Wonder that is its essence. I know the last time I was in a know-it-all mode, a seemingly constant condition. It has been a while since I became a Bōzō. I can only hope Bōzō Bodhisattva will point me in the direction of the Buddha of Bōzōs, Amida.

Bōzō/Buddha Bōzō/Buddha Bōzō/Buddha

Gassho,  
 Rev. Mas