



# DAILY CHANTS

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North Carolina Zen Center

Cover Image

*Shoots of Orchids*, by Shitao

Mind is unlimited.  
Chanting, when performed egolessly, has the power  
to penetrate visible and invisible worlds.

*Roshi Philip Kapleau*



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## Chanting and the Zen Tradition

Zen chanting can be thought of as another form of zazen, and therefore differs from chanting in other traditions. In Zen, having a conscious awareness of the meaning of the words is not of primary importance; the meaning is absorbed on a subconscious level. Instead, emphasis is given to the mind-state created by chanting—namely, absolute oneness to the point of self-forgetfulness.

The mealtime chants are an expression of gratitude, both toward the many beings whose labors make our meal possible and for the nourishment that the meal provides.

### *How to Chant*

Zen chanting must be clear, wholehearted, and concentrated. In this way, chanting is a way to strengthen our samadhi and deepen our understanding. Accordingly, our Buddha-nature will shine with greater luster in our daily life.

During chanting, each person finds their own lowest natural pitch—a note in the lower part of one's range that can be maintained without strain. At the same time, it is important for one to blend in with others so that there is a harmonious unity in the chanting. The words of the chants should flow together. If the syllables —particularly the consonants— are

enunciated too precisely, chanting becomes choppy. At the same time, care should be taken not to let the pitch rise and fall in a sing-song fashion.

### ***Posture and Chanting***

The preferred posture for chanting is seiza, or the traditional Japanese kneeling posture. The knees should be two fist-widths apart to reduce strain. It is important to keep the body relaxed, especially the shoulders, chest, and throat. Tight or constricting clothing should be loosened.

The energy for chanting comes from the hara (lower abdomen), with the sound resonating in the throat, chest and body cavities. Thus it will not help to tighten or tense the vocal cords, as this will only cause a more constricted sound. Do not sway or rock during the chanting, but maintain a taut, erect posture. During most of the chants, the position of the hands is similar to the zazen mudra, but with the thumbs resting next to each other. The hands are placed palm to palm during the *Return of Merit*, the *Ancestral Line*, the *Female Buddha Ancestors*, the *Ten Directions*, and the *Four Vows*.

The mokugyo (wooden fish drum) sets the cadence, one beat for each syllable, for the chants. Follow the beat of the mokugyo and adjust to its changes at the beginning and end of each chant.



# Daily Chants



## **Verse of the Rakusu**

Wondrous is the robe of liberation,  
a treasure beyond form and emptiness.  
Wearing it I will unfold Buddha's teaching  
for the benefit of all sentient beings.

## **The Three Treasures**

*(Hands Palm to Palm)*

**Chant Leader:** *The Three Treasures*

**All:** I take refuge in Buddha,  
*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and resolve that with all beings I will understand The Great Way whereby the Buddha seed may forever thrive.*

**All:** I take refuge in Dharma,  
*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and resolve that with all beings I will enter deeply into the Sutra Treasure whereby my wisdom may grow as vast as the ocean.*

**All:** I take refuge in Sangha,  
*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and in its wisdom, example and never-failing help and resolve to live in harmony with all sentient beings.*

*(When the bell rings, take a seated position.)*

# Heart of Perfect Wisdom

*(Prajñā Paramita Hridaya)*

## Chant Leader:

*Prajñā Paramita Hridaya – Heart of Perfect Wisdom*

## All:

The Bodhisattva of Compassion  
from the depths of Prajñā wisdom  
saw the emptiness of all five skandhas  
and sundered the bonds that cause all suffering.

Know then:

Form here is only emptiness;  
emptiness only form.  
Form is no other than emptiness;  
emptiness no other than form.  
Feeling, thought, and choice—  
consciousness itself—  
are the same as this.

Dharmas here are empty;  
all are the primal void.  
None are born or die,

nor are they stained or pure,  
nor do they wax or wane.

So in emptiness no form,  
no feeling, thought, or choice,  
nor is there consciousness.

No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind,  
no color, sound, smell, taste, touch,  
or what the mind takes hold of,  
nor even act of sensing.

No ignorance or end of it,  
nor all that comes of ignorance:  
no withering, no death, no end of them.

Nor is there pain, or cause of pain,  
or cease in pain,  
or noble path to lead from pain;  
not even wisdom to attain:  
Attainment too is emptiness.

So know that the Bodhisattva,  
holding to nothing whatever,  
but dwelling in Prajñā wisdom,  
is freed of delusive hindrance,  
rid of the fear bred by it,  
and reaches clearest nirvana.

All buddhas of past and present,  
buddhas of future time,  
through faith in Prajñā wisdom,  
come to full enlightenment.  
Know then the great dharani,  
the radiant, peerless mantra,  
the supreme, unfailing mantra,  
the Prajñā Paramita,  
whose words allay all pain.

This is highest wisdom,  
true beyond all doubt;  
know and proclaim its truth:

Gate, gate, paragate,  
parasamgate,  
bodhi, svaha!

गते गते पारगते पारसंगते बोधि स्वाहा

## **Emmei Jikku Kannon Gyō**

*Ten-Verse Kannon Sutra*

Kanzeon  
namu butsu  
yo butsu u in  
yo butsu u en  
buppo so en  
jo raku ga jo  
cho nen kanzeon  
bo nen kanzeon  
nen nen ju shin ki  
nen nen fu ri shin.

## **Ten Verse Kannon Sutra**

Kanzeon  
Praise to Buddha!  
All are one with Buddha;  
all awake to Buddha.  
Buddha, Dharma, Sangha—  
eternal, joyous, self, pure.  
Through the day Kanzeon—  
through the night Kanzeon.  
This moment arises from Mind;  
this moment itself is Mind.

# **Shō Sai Myōkichijyō Dharani**

*Disaster Preventing Dharani*

No mo san man da  
moto nan  
oha ra chi koto sha  
sono nan to ji to  
en  
gya gya  
gya ki gya ki  
un nun  
shifu ra shifu ra  
hara shifu ra hara shifu ra  
chishu sa chishu sa  
chishu ri chishu ri  
soha ja soha ja  
sen chi gya  
shiri ei so mo ko.



## **Daihishin Darani**

*Great Compassion Dharani*

Namu kara tan no  
tora ya ya  
namu ori ya  
boryo ki chi shifu ra ya  
fuji sato bo ya  
moko sato bo ya  
mo ko kya runi kya ya  
en  
sa hara ha e shu tan no ton sha  
namu shiki ri toi mo  
ori ya  
boryo ki chi  
shifu ra  
rin to bo  
na mu no ra  
kin ji ki ri  
mo ko ho do  
sha mi sa bo  
o to jo shu ben  
o shu in  
sa bo sa to

no mo bo gya  
mo ha te cho  
to ji to  
en  
o bo ryo ki  
ru gya chi  
kya ra chi  
i kiri mo ko  
fuji sa to  
sa bo sa bo  
mo ra mo ra  
mo ki mo ki  
ri to in ku ryo ku ryo  
ke mo to ryo to ryo  
ho ja ya chi  
mo ko ho ja ya chi  
to ra to ra  
chiri ni  
shifu ra ya  
sha ro sha ro  
mo mo ha mo ra  
ho chi ri  
i ki i ki  
shi no shi no

ora san fura sha ri  
ha za ha zan  
fura sha ya  
ku ryo ku ryo  
mo ra ku ryo ku ryo  
ki ri sha ro sha ro  
shi ri shi ri  
su ryo su ryo  
fuji ya  
fuji ya  
fudo ya fudo ya  
mi chiri ya  
nora kin ji  
chiri shuni no  
hoya mono  
somo ko  
shido ya  
somo ko  
moko shido ya  
somo ko  
shido yu ki

*(continued)*

shifu ra ya  
somo ko  
nora kin ji  
somo ko  
mo ra no ra somo ko  
shira su omo gya ya  
somo ko  
sobo moko shido ya  
somo ko  
shaki ra oshi do ya  
somo ko  
hodo mogya shido ya  
somo ko  
nora kin ji ha gyara ya  
somo ko  
mo hori shin gyara ya somo ko  
namu kara tan no tora ya ya  
namu ori ya  
boryo ki chi  
shifu ra ya somo ko  
shite do modo ra  
hodo ya  
so mo ko.

## **Return of Merit**

*Honzon Eko*

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Faith In Buddha, Dharma, Sangha  
brings true liberation.*

*We now return the merit of our chanting to:*

*Shakyamuni Buddha*

*Manjusri Bodhisattva*

*Avalokita Bodhisattva*

*Bhadra Bodhisattva*

*We place our faith in the Great Heart Of Perfect  
Wisdom.*

*May All Beings Attain Buddhahood!*

### **All:**

Ten Directions, Three Worlds,

All Buddhas, Bodhisattvas-mahasattvas,

Maha Prajñā Paramita.

## Master Hakuin's Chant in Praise of Zazen

*(Zazen Wasan)*

From the very beginning all beings are Buddha.  
Like water and ice,  
without water no ice,  
outside us no Buddhas.

How near the truth  
yet how far we seek,  
like one in water crying 'I thirst!'  
Like a child of rich birth wandering poor on this earth,  
we endlessly circle the six worlds.

The cause of our sorrow is ego delusion.  
From dark path to dark path we've wandered in darkness.  
How can we be free from birth and death?  
The gateway to freedom is zazen samadhi—  
beyond exaltation, beyond all our praises,  
the pure Mahayana.

Upholding the precepts,  
repentance and giving,  
the countless good deeds

and the way of right living  
all come from zazen.

Thus one true samadhi extinguishes evils;  
it purifies karma, dissolving obstructions.  
Then where are the dark paths to lead us astray?  
The pure lotus land is not far away.

Hearing this truth, heart humble and grateful,  
to praise and embrace it,  
to practice its wisdom,  
brings unending blessings,  
brings mountains of merit.

And when we turn inward and prove our True-nature—  
that True-self is no-self,  
our own Self is no-self—  
we go beyond ego and past clever words.

Then the gate to the oneness of cause and effect  
is thrown open.  
Not two and not three,  
straight ahead runs the Way.

Our form now being no-form,  
in going and returning we never leave home.

Our thought now being no-thought,  
our dancing and songs are the voice of the Dharma.

How vast is the heaven of boundless samadhi!  
How bright and transparent the moonlight of wisdom!

What is there outside us,  
what is there we lack?  
Nirvana is openly shown to our eyes.  
This earth where we stand is the pure lotus land,  
and this very body—the body of Buddha.



## **The Ancestral Line**

*(Soshi Ekō)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*O Awakened Ones! May the power of your samadhi sustain us. We now return the merit of our chanting to:*

### **All:**

*Vipashyin Buddha, Honored One*  
*Shikhi Buddha, Honored One*  
*Visvabhū Buddha, Honored One*  
*Krakucchanda Buddha, Honored One*  
*Kanakamuni Buddha, Honored One*  
*Kāshyapa Buddha, Honored One*  
*Shākyamuni Buddha, Honored One*

*Mahākasbyapa, Honored One*  
*Ānanda, Honored One*  
*Shanavāsa, Honored One*  
*Upagupta, Honored One*  
*Dhritaka, Honored One*  
*Miccaka, Honored One*  
*Vasumitra, Honored One*  
*Buddhanandi, Honored One*  
*Buddhamitra, Honored One*

Bhikshu *Parshva*, Honored One  
*Punyayashas*, Honored One  
*Ashvaghosha*, Honored One  
*Kapimāla*, Honored One  
*Nāgārjuna*, Honored One  
*Kānadeva*, Honored One  
*Rāhulata*, Honored One  
*Sanghānandi*, Honored One  
*Gayashāta*, Honored One  
*Kumārata*, Honored One  
*Jayata*, Honored One  
*Vasubandhu*, Honored One  
*Manorhita*, Honored One  
*Haklenayashas*, Honored One  
Bhikshu *Simha*, Honored One  
*Basiāsita*, Honored One  
*Punyamitra*, Honored One  
*Prajñātāra*, Honored One  
*Bodhidharma*, Honored One

Dazu Huike, Honored One  
(*Dah-zoo Hway-kuh*)  
Jianzhi Sengcan, Honored One  
(*Jyan-jer Sung-tsan*)

Dayi Daoxin, Honored One  
*(Dab-yeo Dow-syin)*

Daman Hongren, Honored One  
*(Dab-ma Hoong-wren)*

Dajian Huineng, Honored One  
*(Dab-jyan Hway-nung)*

Qingyuan Xingsi, Honored One  
*(Ching-yuen Sing-si)*

Shitou Xiqian, Honored One  
*(Sher-toe See-chyan)*

Yaoshan Weiyan, Honored One  
*(Yow-shan Way-yen)*

Yunyan Tansheng, Honored One  
*(Yun-yan Tan-shung)*

Dongshan Liangjie, Honored One  
*(Doong-shan Lyang-jye)*

Yunju Daoying, Honored One  
*(Yun-jew Dow-ying)*

Tongan Daopi, Honored One  
*(Toong-an Dow-pee)*

Tongan Guanzhi, Honored One  
*(Toong-an Gwan-je)*

*(continued)*

Liangshan Yuanguan, Honored One  
*(Lyang-shan Yuen-gwan)*

Dayang Jingxuan, Honored One  
*(Dah-yong Jing-swan)*

Touzi Yiqing, Honored One  
*(Toe-zi Yee-ching)*

Furong Daokai, Honored One  
*(Fu-roong Dow-kai)*

Danxia Zichun, Honored One  
*(Don-sya Zi-chun)*

Zhenxie Qingliao, Honored One  
*(Jen-sye Ching-liow)*

Tiantong Zongjue, Honored One  
*(Tyan-tung Zung-jwe)*

Xuedou Zhijian, Honored One  
*(Swe-doe Jer-jyan)*

Tiantong Rujing, Honored One  
*(Tyan-tung Roo-jing)*

Eihei Dōgen, Honored One

Koun Ejō, Honored One

Tettsū Gikai, Honored One

Keizan Jōkin, Honored One

Meihō Sotetsu, Honored One  
Shugan Dōchin, Honored One  
Tessan Shikaku, Honored One  
Keigan Eishō, Honored One  
Juzan Ryōun, Honored One  
Gizan Tōnin, Honored One  
Shōgaku Kenryū, Honored One  
Kinen Hōryū, Honored One  
Daishitsu Chisen, Honored One  
Gukei Shojun, Honored One  
Sessō Yūho, Honored One  
Kaiten Genjū, Honored One  
Shūzan Shunshō, Honored One  
Chōzan Genetsu, Honored One  
Fukushū Kōchi, Honored One  
Myōdo Yūton, Honored One  
Hakuhō Genteki, Honored One  
Gesshū Sōko, Honored One  
Tokuō Ryōkō, Honored One  
Hōgan Soren, Honored One  
Sekisō Tesshū, Honored One  
Ryūkō Ryōshū, Honored One  
Renzan Sohō, Honored One

*(continued)*

Motsugai Shidō, Honored One  
Gukei Yōun, Honored One  
Kakushō Sodō, Honored One  
Daiun Sogaku, Honored One  
Hakuun Ryōkō, Honored One

Zentetsu Kapleau, Honored One

**Chant Leader:**

*... and to the unknown women,  
centuries of enlightened ones,  
whose commitment to the Dharma  
nourishes and sustains our practice—  
you who have handed down the light of Dharma,  
we shall repay your benevolence!*

**All:**

Ten Directions, Three Worlds,  
All Buddhas Bodhisattvas-mahasattvas  
Maha Prajñā Paramita

## **The Ancestral Line**

(Abbreviated Version)

*Vipashyin* Buddha, Honored One  
*Shikhin* Buddha, Honored One  
*Vishvabhu* Buddha, Honored One  
*Krakucchanda* Buddha, Honored One  
*Kanakamuni* Buddha, Honored One  
*Kashyapa* Buddha, Honored One  
*Shakyamuni* Buddha, Honored One

*Mahakashyapa*, Honored One  
*Ananda*, Honored One  
*Ashvaghosha*, Honored One  
*Nagarjuna*, Honored One  
*Vasubandhu*, Honored One  
*Bodhidharma*, Honored One

Dazu Huike, Honored One  
(*Dah-zoo Hway-kuh*)  
Jianzhi Sengcan, Honored One  
(*Jyan-jer Sung-tsan*)  
Dajian Huineng, Honored One  
(*Dah-jyan Hway-nung*)

Eihei Dogen, Honored One  
Daiun Sogaku, Honored One  
Hakuun Ryoko, Honored One

Zentetsu Kapleau, Honored One.



## **Affirming Faith In Mind**

***Note:** During this chant, the indented portions will be chanted at a lower pitch.*

### **Chant leader:**

*The Great Way...*

### **All:**

... is not difficult for those  
who do not pick and choose.

When preferences are cast aside,  
the Way stands clear and undisguised.

But even slight distinctions made  
set earth and heaven far apart.

If you would clearly see the truth,  
discard opinions pro and con.

To founder in dislike and like  
is nothing but the mind's disease.

And not to see the Way's deep truth  
disturbs the mind's essential peace.

The Way is perfect like vast space,  
where there's no lack and no excess.

Our choice to choose and to reject  
prevents our seeing this simple truth.

Both striving for the outer world  
as well as for the inner void  
condemn us to entangled lives.

Just calmly see that all is One,  
and by themselves false views will go.

Attempts to stop activity  
will fill you with activity.

Remaining in duality,  
you'll never know of unity.

And not to know this unity  
lets conflict lead you far astray.

When you assert that things are real,  
you miss their true reality.

But to assert that things are void  
also misses reality.

The more you talk and think on this  
the further from the truth you'll be.

Cut off all useless thoughts and words,  
and there's nowhere you cannot go.

Returning to the root itself,  
you'll find the meaning of all things.

If you pursue appearances,  
you overlook the primal source.

Awakening is to go beyond  
both emptiness as well as form.

All changes in this empty world  
seem real because of ignorance.

Do not go searching for the truth,  
just let those fond opinions go.

Abide not in duality;  
refrain from all pursuit of it.

If there's a trace of right and wrong,  
True-mind is lost, confused, distraught.

From One-mind comes duality,  
but cling not even to this One.

When this One-mind rests undisturbed,  
then nothing in the world offends.

And when no thing can give offense,  
then all obstructions cease to be.

If all thought-objects disappear,  
the thinking subject drops away.

For things are things because of mind,  
as mind is mind because of things.

These two are merely relative,  
and both at source are Emptiness.

In Emptiness these are not two,  
yet in each are contained all forms.

Once coarse and fine are seen no more,  
then how can there be taking sides?

The Great Way is without limit,  
beyond the easy and the hard.

But those who hold to narrow views  
are fearful and irresolute;  
their frantic haste just slows them down.

If you're attached to anything,  
you surely will go far astray.

Just let go now of clinging mind,  
and all things are just as they are:  
In essence nothing goes or stays.

See into the true self of things,  
and you're in step with the Great Way,  
thus walking freely, undisturbed.

But live in bondage to your thoughts,  
and you will be confused, unclear.

This heavy burden weighs you down—  
so why keep judging good and bad?

If you would walk the highest Way,  
do not reject the sense domain.

For as it is, whole and complete,  
this sense world is Enlightenment.

The wise do not strive after goals;  
the foolish put themselves in bonds.

The One Way knows no differences;  
the foolish cling to this and that.

To seek Great Mind with thinking mind  
is certainly a grave mistake.

From small mind come rest and unrest,  
but mind awakened transcends both.

Delusion spawns dualities—  
these dreams are merely flowers of air—  
why work so hard at grasping them?

Both gain and loss, and right and wrong—  
once and for all get rid of them.

When you no longer are asleep,  
all dreams will vanish by themselves.

If mind does not discriminate,  
all things are as they are, as One.

To go to this mysterious Source  
frees us from all entanglements.

When all is seen with ‘equal mind,’  
to our Self-nature we return.

This single mind goes right beyond  
all reasons and comparison.

Make movement rest, and nothing moves;  
see rest in motion—there’s no rest.

When rest and movement cease to be,  
then even oneness disappears.

This ultimate finality, beyond all laws,  
can’t be described.

With single mind one with the Way,  
all ego-centered strivings cease;

Doubts and confusion disappear,  
and so true faith pervades our life.

There is no thing that clings to us,  
and nothing that is left behind.

All’s self-revealing, void and clear,  
without exerting power of mind.

Thought cannot reach this state of truth,  
here feelings are of no avail.

In this true world of Emptiness,  
both self and other are no more.

To enter this true empty world,  
immediately affirm 'not-two.'

In this 'not-two' all is the same,  
with nothing separate or outside.

The wise in all times and places  
awaken to this primal truth.

The Way's beyond all space, all time;  
one instant is ten thousand years.

Not only here, not only there,  
truth's right before your very eyes.

Distinctions such as large and small  
have relevance for you no more.

The largest is the smallest too—  
here limitations have no place.



What is is not, what is not is—  
if this is not yet clear to you,  
you're still far from the inner truth.

One thing is all, all things are one—  
know this and all's whole and complete.

When faith and Mind are not separate,  
and not separate are Mind and faith,  
this is beyond all words, all thought.

For here there is no yesterday,  
no tomorrow,  
no today.

## **The Harmony of Relative and Absolute**

The Mind of the great sage of India  
is intimately conveyed from West to East.  
Though humans may be sharp or dull,  
the Way has no northern or southern ancestors.  
The subtle source is clear and bright.  
The branching streams flow through the dark.  
To attach to things is delusion.  
To encounter the absolute is not yet enlightenment.  
Each sense gate is related to its field  
and yet independent,  
related and interacting,  
though each keeps its own place.  
Forms differ in their character;  
forms differ in appearances.  
Sounds may be pleasant or harsh.  
The dark makes all words one;  
light distinguishes good and bad phrases.  
The four elements return to their true nature  
as a child to its mother.  
Fire is hot, wind moves, water is wet, earth hard.  
Eyes see, ears hear, nose smells,  
tongue tastes the salt and sour.

Each is independent,  
like leaves that come from one root.  
Root and branches return to the great reality.  
‘High’ and ‘low’ are used relatively.  
Within light there is darkness,  
but do not try to understand that darkness.  
Within darkness there is light,  
but do not try to find that light.  
Light and darkness are a pair,  
like the foot before and the foot behind in walking.  
Each thing has its own intrinsic worth  
and relates to everything else in function and position.  
Everyday life fits the absolute as a box and its lid.  
The absolute and relative work together  
like two arrows meeting in mid-air.  
Hear these words and grasp the great reality.  
Do not judge by your own standards.  
If you do not see the way,  
you do not see it even as you walk on it.  
When you walk the way, it is not near, it is not far.  
If you are deluded,  
you are mountains and rivers away from it.  
To those who wish to be enlightened,  
I respectfully say,  
‘Do not waste your time by night or by day.’

# The Four Bodhisattva Vows

*(hands palm to palm)*

## **Chant Leader:**

*The Four Vows...*

## **All:**

All beings, without number,

I vow to liberate.

Endless blind passions

I vow to uproot.

Dharma gates, beyond measure,

I vow to penetrate.

The Great Way of Buddha

I vow to attain.

# Sesshin Chants

*morning*



## **Affirming Faith In Mind**

*Note: During this chant, the indented portions will be chanted at a lower pitch.*

### **Chant leader:**

*The Great Way...*

### **All:**

... is not difficult for those  
who do not pick and choose.

When preferences are cast aside,  
the Way stands clear and undisguised.

But even slight distinctions made  
set earth and heaven far apart.

If you would clearly see the truth,  
discard opinions pro and con.

To founder in dislike and like  
is nothing but the mind's disease.

And not to see the Way's deep truth  
disturbs the mind's essential peace.

The Way is perfect like vast space,  
where there's no lack and no excess.

Our choice to choose and to reject  
prevents our seeing this simple truth.

Both striving for the outer world  
as well as for the inner void  
condemn us to entangled lives.

Just calmly see that all is One,  
and by themselves false views will go.

Attempts to stop activity  
will fill you with activity.

Remaining in duality,  
you'll never know of unity.

And not to know this unity  
lets conflict lead you far astray.

When you assert that things are real,  
you miss their true reality.

But to assert that things are void  
also misses reality.

The more you talk and think on this  
the further from the truth you'll be.

Cut off all useless thoughts and words,  
and there's nowhere you cannot go.

Returning to the root itself,  
you'll find the meaning of all things.

If you pursue appearances,  
you overlook the primal source.

Awakening is to go beyond  
both emptiness as well as form.

All changes in this empty world  
seem real because of ignorance.

Do not go searching for the truth,  
just let those fond opinions go.

Abide not in duality;  
refrain from all pursuit of it.

If there's a trace of right and wrong,  
True-mind is lost, confused, distraught.



From One-mind comes duality,  
but cling not even to this One.

When this One-mind rests undisturbed,  
then nothing in the world offends.

And when no thing can give offense,  
then all obstructions cease to be.

If all thought-objects disappear,  
the thinking subject drops away.

For things are things because of mind,  
as mind is mind because of things.

These two are merely relative,  
and both at source are Emptiness.

In Emptiness these are not two,  
yet in each are contained all forms.

Once coarse and fine are seen no more,  
then how can there be taking sides?

The Great Way is without limit,  
beyond the easy and the hard.

But those who hold to narrow views  
are fearful and irresolute;  
their frantic haste just slows them down.

If you're attached to anything,  
you surely will go far astray.

Just let go now of clinging mind,  
and all things are just as they are:  
In essence nothing goes or stays.

See into the true self of things,  
and you're in step with the Great Way,  
thus walking freely, undisturbed.

But live in bondage to your thoughts,  
and you will be confused, unclear.

This heavy burden weighs you down—  
so why keep judging good and bad?

If you would walk the highest Way,  
do not reject the sense domain.

For as it is, whole and complete,  
this sense world is Enlightenment.

The wise do not strive after goals;  
the foolish put themselves in bonds.

The One Way knows no differences;  
the foolish cling to this and that.

To seek Great Mind with thinking mind  
is certainly a grave mistake.

From small mind come rest and unrest,  
but mind awakened transcends both.

Delusion spawns dualities—  
these dreams are merely flowers of air—  
why work so hard at grasping them?

Both gain and loss, and right and wrong—  
once and for all get rid of them.

When you no longer are asleep,  
all dreams will vanish by themselves.

If mind does not discriminate,  
all things are as they are, as One.

To go to this mysterious Source  
frees us from all entanglements.

When all is seen with ‘equal mind,’  
to our Self-nature we return.

This single mind goes right beyond  
all reasons and comparison.

Make movement rest, and nothing moves;  
see rest in motion—there’s no rest.

When rest and movement cease to be,  
then even oneness disappears.

This ultimate finality, beyond all laws,  
can’t be described.

With single mind one with the Way,  
all ego-centered strivings cease;

Doubts and confusion disappear,  
and so true faith pervades our life.

There is no thing that clings to us,  
and nothing that is left behind.

All’s self-revealing, void and clear,  
without exerting power of mind.

Thought cannot reach this state of truth,  
here feelings are of no avail.

In this true world of Emptiness,  
both self and other are no more.

To enter this true empty world,  
immediately affirm 'not-two.'

In this 'not-two' all is the same,  
with nothing separate or outside.

The wise in all times and places  
awaken to this primal truth.

The Way's beyond all space, all time;  
one instant is ten thousand years.

Not only here, not only there,  
truth's right before your very eyes.

Distinctions such as large and small  
have relevance for you no more.

The largest is the smallest too—  
here limitations have no place.

What is is not, what is not is—  
if this is not yet clear to you,  
you're still far from the inner truth.

One thing is all, all things are one—  
know this and all's whole and complete.

When faith and Mind are not separate,  
and not separate are Mind and faith,  
this is beyond all words, all thought.

For here there is no yesterday,  
no tomorrow,  
no today.

## **Shō Sai Myōkichijyō Dharani**

*Disaster Preventing Dharani*

No mo san man da  
moto nan  
oha ra chi koto sha  
sono nan to ji to  
en  
gya gya  
gya ki gya ki  
un nun  
shifu ra shifu ra  
hara shifu ra hara shifu ra  
chishu sa chishu sa  
chishu ri chishu ri  
sowa ja sowa ja  
sen chi gya  
shiri ei so mo ko.

## **Return of Merit**

*(Honzon Eko)*

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Faith In Buddha, Dharma, Sangha brings true liberation.*

*We now return the merits of our chanting to:*

*Shakyamuni Buddha*

*Manjusri Bodhisattva*

*Avalokita Bodhisattva*

*Bhadra Bodhisattva.*

*We place our faith in the Great Heart Of Perfect Wisdom.*

*May All Beings Attain Buddhahood!*

### **All:**

Ten Directions, Three Worlds,

All Buddhas, Bodhisattvas-mahasattvas,

Maha Prajñā Paramita.



# Sesshin Chants

*evening*



## The Three Treasures

*(Hands Palm to Palm)*

**Chant Leader:** *The Three Treasures*

**All:** I take refuge in Buddha,

*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and resolve that with all beings I will understand The Great Way whereby the Buddha seed may forever thrive.*

**All:** I take refuge in Dharma,

*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and resolve that with all beings I will enter deeply into the Sutra Treasure whereby my wisdom may grow as vast as the ocean.*

**All:** I take refuge in Sangha,

*(Single prostration or bow)*

**Chant Leader:** *and in its wisdom, example and never-failing help and resolve to live in harmony with all sentient beings.*

*(When the bell rings, take a seated position.)*

## **Heart of Perfect Wisdom**

*(Prajñā Paramita Hridaya)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Prajñā Paramita Hridaya – Heart of Perfect Wisdom*

### **All:**

The Bodhisattva of Compassion  
from the depths of Prajñā wisdom  
saw the emptiness of all five skandhas  
and sundered the bonds that cause all suffering.

Know then:

Form here is only emptiness;  
emptiness only form.  
Form is no other than emptiness;  
emptiness no other than form.  
Feeling, thought, and choice—  
consciousness itself—  
are the same as this.

Dharmas here are empty;  
all are the primal void.  
None are born or die,

nor are they stained or pure,  
nor do they wax or wane.

So in emptiness no form,  
no feeling, thought, or choice,  
nor is there consciousness.

No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind,  
no color, sound, smell, taste, touch,  
or what the mind takes hold of,  
nor even act of sensing.

No ignorance or end of it,  
nor all that comes of ignorance:  
no withering, no death, no end of them.

Nor is there pain, or cause of pain,  
or cease in pain,  
or noble path to lead from pain;  
not even wisdom to attain:  
Attainment too is emptiness.

So know that the Bodhisattva,  
holding to nothing whatever,  
but dwelling in Prajñā wisdom,  
is freed of delusive hindrance,  
rid of the fear bred by it,  
and reaches clearest nirvana.

All buddhas of past and present,  
buddhas of future time,  
through faith in Prajñā wisdom,  
come to full enlightenment.  
Know then the great dharani,  
the radiant, peerless mantra,  
the supreme, unfailing mantra,  
the Prajñā Paramita,  
whose words allay all pain.

This is highest wisdom,  
true beyond all doubt;  
know and proclaim its truth:

Gate, gate, paragate,  
parasamgate,  
bodhi, svaha!

गते गते पारगते पारसंगते बोधि स्वाहा

## Return of Merit for the Heart Sutra

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Buddha Nature pervades the whole universe,  
existing right here now.*

*In reciting the Maha Prajñā Paramita Heart Sutra,  
we dedicate its merit to:*

*The great Master Shakyamuni Buddha  
The all pervading and everlasting Three Treasures  
All Arhats and Bodhisattva Mahasattvas  
And their relations throughout the Dharma world.  
May our sincere vows to accomplish the Buddha way be realized  
together.*

### **All:**

Ten directions, three worlds, all buddhas,  
bodhisattvas-mahasattvas  
Maha Prajñā Paramita.

## **Emmei Jikku Kannon Gyō**

*Ten-Verse Kannon Sutra*

Kanzeon

namu butsu

yo butsu u in

yo butsu u en

buppo so en

yoraku ga jo

cho nen kanzeon

bo nen kanzeon

nen nen ju shin ki

nen nen fu ri shin.

## **The Harmony of Relative and Absolute**

The Mind of the great sage of India  
is intimately conveyed from West to East.  
Though humans may be sharp or dull,  
the Way has no northern or southern ancestors.  
The subtle source is clear and bright.  
The branching streams flow through the dark.  
To attach to things is delusion.  
To encounter the absolute is not yet enlightenment.  
Each sense gate is related to its field  
and yet independent,  
related and interacting,  
though each keeps its own place.  
Forms differ in their character;  
forms differ in appearances.  
Sounds may be pleasant or harsh.  
The dark makes all words one;  
light distinguishes good and bad phrases.  
The four elements return to their true nature  
as a child to its mother.  
Fire is hot, wind moves, water is wet, earth hard.  
Eyes see, ears hear, nose smells,  
tongue tastes the salt and sour.



Each is independent,  
like leaves that come from one root.  
Root and branches return to the great reality.  
‘High’ and ‘low’ are used relatively.  
Within light there is darkness,  
but do not try to understand that darkness.  
Within darkness there is light,  
but do not try to find that light.  
Light and darkness are a pair,  
like the foot before and the foot behind in walking.  
Each thing has its own intrinsic worth  
and relates to everything else in function and position.  
Everyday life fits the absolute as a box and its lid.  
The absolute and relative work together  
like two arrows meeting in mid-air.  
Hear these words and grasp the great reality.  
Do not judge by your own standards.  
If you do not see the way,  
you do not see it even as you walk on it.  
When you walk the way, it is not near, it is not far.  
If you are deluded,  
you are mountains and rivers away from it.  
To those who wish to be enlightened,  
I respectfully say,  
‘Do not waste your time by night or by day.’

## **Return of Merit**

*(Honzon Eko)*

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Faith In Buddha, Dharma, Sangha  
brings true liberation.*

*We now return the merits of our chanting to:*

*Shakyamuni Buddha*

*Manjusri Bodhisattva*

*Avalokita Bodhisattva*

*Bhadra Bodhisattva*

*We place our faith in the Great Heart Of Perfect Wisdom.*

*May All Beings Attain Buddhahood!*

### **All:**

Ten Directions, Three Worlds,

All Buddhas, Bodhisattvas-mahasattvas,

Maha Prajñā Paramita.

# Meal Chants



## The Five Reflections

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*With all that lives  
let us honor the Three Treasures.  
Let us recall the exertions  
of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.*

*(clappers)*

### **All:**

This meal is the labor of countless beings—  
let us remember their toil.  
Defilements are many and exertions weak—  
do we deserve this offering?  
Gluttony stems from greed—  
let us be moderate.  
Our lives are sustained by this offering—  
let us be grateful.  
We take this food to attain the Buddha Way.

*(Food is served. Put a piece of dry food aside for the hungry ghost dish  
when it is passed around, and have some liquid in your cup for the  
thirsty spirit offering.)*

## **Verse of the Main Meal**

*(clappers—all with raised bowls or plates)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*Our meal is offered ...*

### **All:**

... to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

With teachers and family,

with nations and all life,

let us equally share.

To beings throughout the six worlds

we offer this meal.

## **Offering to the Hungry Ghosts**

*(clappers—hands palm to palm)*

### **All:**

All hungry ghosts ! All tortured spirits!

Now we give you this Dharma-food.

May it fill the ten directions and satisfy hunger

in realms of darkness.

All hungry ghosts! All tortured spirits !

Abandon greed and rouse the desire for enlightenment!

## Offering to the Thirsty Spirits

*(clappers—hands palm to palm)*

### **All:**

To you spirits tortured by thirst  
we give this liquid offering.  
May your thirst be relieved,  
may your suffering diminish.  
May all beings attain Buddhahood!

# Other Chants and Recitations



## **The Gatha of Repentance**

All harmful actions committed by me  
since time immemorial, stemming from  
greed, hatred, and delusion,  
arising from body, speech and mind,  
I now repent having committed.

## **The Three General Resolutions**

I resolve to avoid evil.

I resolve to do good.

I resolve to liberate all sentient beings.



## **The Ten Cardinal Precepts**

I resolve not to kill, but to cherish all life.

I resolve not to take what is not given,  
but to respect the things of others.

I resolve not to misuse sexuality,  
but to be caring and responsible.

I resolve not to lie, but to speak the truth.

I resolve not to cause others to abuse alcohol or drugs,  
nor to do so myself, but to keep the mind clear.

I resolve not to speak of the faults of others,  
but to be understanding and sympathetic.

I resolve not to praise myself and disparage others,  
but to overcome my own shortcomings.

I resolve not to withhold spiritual or material aid,  
but to give them freely where needed.

I resolve not to indulge in anger, but to practice  
forbearance.

I resolve not to revile the Three Treasures, but to cherish  
and uphold them.

## Memorial Prayer

O Buddhas and Bodhisattvas,  
abiding in all directions,  
endowed with great compassion, endowed with love,  
affording protection to sentient beings,  
consent through the power of your great compassion  
to come forth.

O Compassionate Ones,  
you who possess the wisdom of understanding,  
the love of compassion,  
the power of protecting in incomprehensible measure,  
[*name of deceased*] is passing from this world to the next.

She is taking a great leap.  
The light of this world has faded for her.  
She has entered solitude with her karmic forces.  
She has gone into a vast Silence.  
She is borne away by the Great Ocean  
of birth and death.

O Compassionate Ones,  
protect [*name of deceased*], who is defenseless.  
Be to her like a father and a mother.

O Compassionate Ones,  
let not the force of your compassion be weak,  
but aid her.  
Forget not your ancient vows.

*(If the deceased was male, 'she, her and hers' should be replaced with 'he, him and his.' Otherwise, please use appropriate personal pronouns corresponding with the gender identity of the deceased.)*

## **Mantra of Bhaisajyaguru, Buddha of Healing**

Na-mo bha-ga-va-te  
bhai-sa-jya-gu-ru  
vai-du-rya  
pra-bha-ra-ja-ya  
ta-tha-ga-ta-ya  
ar-ha-te  
sam-yak-sam-bud-dha-ya  
ta-dya tha om  
bhai-sa-jye  
bhai-sa-jye  
bhai-sa-jya  
sam-mud-ga-te  
sva-ha.

## **Female Buddha Ancestors**

*(hands palm to palm)*

### **Chant Leader:**

*O Awakened Ones! May the power of your samadhi sustain us. We now return the merit of our chanting to:*

### **All:**

Prajñā Pāramitā, Mother of All Buddhas, Honored One

Mahā Māyā, Honored One

Shrīmālā, Honored One

Tārā, Honored One

Ratnavatī, Honored One

Prabhūtā, Honored One

Sinhavijumbhitā, Honored One

Mahāpajcpati Gotami, Honored One

Khemā, Honored One

Sundarīnandā, Honored One

Patāchārā, Honored One

Bhaddākundalakesā, Honored One

Sumanā, Honored One

Kisāgotamī, Honored One

Dhammā, Honored One  
Uppalavannā, Honored One  
Yashodharā, Honored One  
Somā, Honored One  
Sakulā, Honored One  
Bhaddākapilānī, Honored One  
Singālakapitā, Honored One  
Sāmāvatī, Honored One  
Sanghamittā Theri, Honored One  
Prasannasillā, Honored One  
Jingjian, Honored One  
Zongji, Honored One  
Lingzhao, Honored One  
Ling Xingpo, Honored One  
Moshan Liaoran, Honored One  
Liu Tiemo, Honored One  
Miaoxin, Honored One  
Shiji, Honored One  
Juhan Daojen, Honored One  
Daoshen, Honored One  
Huiguang, Honored One  
Huiwen, Honored One  
Fadeng, Honored One  
Yu Daopo, Honored One

Miaodao, Honored One  
Zhidong, Honored One  
Miaozong, Honored One  
Qinguo, Honored One  
Miaohui, Honored One  
Zhiyuan Xinggang, Honored One  
Jizong Xingche, Honored One  
Jifu Zukui, Honored One  
Shenyi, Honored One

Zenshin, Honored One  
Kōmyō, Honored One  
Ryōnen, Honored One  
Shōgaku, Honored One  
Egi, Honored One  
Mugai Nyodai, Honored One  
Kakuzan Shidō, Honored One  
Ekan, Honored One  
Kontō Ekyū, Honored One  
Mokufū, Honored One  
Sōitsu, Honored One  
Eshun, Honored One  
Yōdō, Honored One

*(continued)*

Kōgetsu, Honored One  
Sōshin, Honored One  
Tenshū, Honored One  
Daitsū Bunchi, Honored One  
Ryōnen Gensō, Honored One  
Someko Tachibana, Honored One  
Tokugon Rihō, Honored One  
Satsu, Honored One  
Ōhashi, Honored One  
Teijitsu, Honored One  
Rengetsu Otagaki, Honored One  
Temmyō Jōrin Mizuno, Honored One  
Mitsu Hori, Honored One  
Sōzen Nagasawa, Honored One  
Myōdō Satomi, Honored One  
Kendō Kojima, Honored One  
Eshun Yoshida, Honored One  
Jōshin Kasai, Honored One  
Sumiko Kudō, Honored One

Ruth Eryū Jōkei Fuller, Honored One  
Maurine Myō-on Stuart, Honored One  
Hōun Jiyū Kennett, Honored One



## **Dharani of Jizo Bodhisattva**

Om ka ka kabi san ma e sowa ka.

## **Sesshin Evening Ritual**

Even as night darkens the green earth, the wheel turns.

Death follows birth.

Strive as you sleep with every breath,

that you may wake past day, past death.



