

Gathas
at
Buddha Essence Temple



Zen Center of
Los Angeles

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General Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time
All Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas
Maha Prajna Paramita

Gatha On Opening The Sutra

(before Dharma talk)

The Dharma, incomparably profound and infinitely
subtle,
is rarely encountered, even in millions of ages.
Now we see it, hear it, receive and maintain it.
May we completely realize the Tathagata's true
meaning.

Gatha Of Atonement

(before morning zazen)

All evil karma ever committed by me since of old,
on account of my beginningless greed, anger, and
ignorance,
born of my body, speech, and mind,
now I atone for it all.

Verse Of The Kesa

(after dawn zazen)

Vast is the robe of liberation,
a formless field of benefaction.
I wear the Tathagata-teaching
saving all sentient beings.

The Four Vows

(after evening zazen and Dharma activity)

Sentient beings are numberless;
I vow to save them.
Desires are inexhaustible;
I vow to put an end to them.
The Dharmas are boundless;
I vow to master them.
The Buddha Way is unsurpassable;
I vow to attain it.

Gatha of Bowing

Bowing and being bowed, nature is empty.
My body and others' bodies are not two.
Realize liberation with all sentient beings.
Raising the Supreme Mind, return to True Nature.

Informal Meal Gatha

Let us reflect on the efforts that brought us this food and consider how it comes to us.

Reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

Regard greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind;

Regard this meal as medicine to sustain our life.

For the sake of enlightenment, we now receive this food.

First, this food is for The Three Treasures;

Second, it is for our teachers, parents, community and all beings everywhere.

Third, it is for all beings in the six realms.

Thus, we eat this food with everyone.

We eat to stop all evil,

to practice good,

to liberate all beings,

and to accomplish the Buddha way.

Meal Chant

Verse Upon Hearing the Meal Signal

All:

Buddha was born in Kapilavastu,
Enlightened in Maghada,
Taught in Varanasi,
Entered Nirvana in Kusinagara.

Verse for Setting Out Bowls

Now we set out Buddha's eating bowls.
May we, with all living beings,
Realize the emptiness of the three wheels:
Giver, receiver, and gift.

The Buddha Names

Leader:

In the midst of the Three Treasures
Together with all beings,
Let us recite the names of Buddha:

All:

Pure Dharmakaya Vairochana Buddha
Complete Sambhogakaya Lochana Buddha
Myriad Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni Buddhas
Future Maitreya Buddha
All Buddhas throughout space and time;
Mahayana Sutra, Lotus of the Wondrous Dharma.
Great Wisdom Manjusri Bodhisattva;
Great Action Samantabhadra Bodhisattva;
Great Compassion Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva;

Great Vow Jizo Bodhisattva:
All Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas;
Wisdom beyond Wisdom Maha Prajna Paramita.

Food Offering Verse

Head Trainee/Shuso: (Breakfast)

This food comes from the efforts of all beings, past and present; and its ten benefits give us physical and spiritual well-being and promote pure practice.

Food Offering Verse

Head Trainee/Shuso: (Lunch)

We offer this meal of three virtues and six tastes to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and to all the life in the Dharma worlds.

Verse of Five Contemplations

All:

Let us reflect on the efforts that brought us this food and consider how it comes to us.

Reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

Regard greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind;

Regard this meal as medicine to sustain our life.

For the sake of enlightenment, we now receive this food.

Verse of Food for Spirits

All: (Lunch only)

Oh, spirits, we now give you this offering;

This food is for all of you in the ten directions.

Bowl-Raising Verse

All:

First, this food is for The Three Treasures;
Second, it is for our teachers, parents, community
and all beings everywhere.

Third, it is for all beings in the six realms.

Thus, we eat this food with everyone.

We eat to stop all evil,
to practice good,
to liberate all beings'
and to accomplish the Buddha way.

Verse of the Rinse Water

All: (When bowl cleaning water is being collected)

The water with which we wash these bowls
tastes like ambrosia.

We offer it to all you various spirits.

May you be fully satisfied.

Om Makurasai Svaha!

Verse of Purity While Abiding in the World

Leader: (After the meal)

Abiding in this ephemeral world
like a lotus in muddy water.

The mind is pure and goes beyond.

Thus we bow to Buddha.

Version of Meal Chant adapted from ZCLA and Soto Shu.

Evening Verse

(Call and Response)

Leader: Let me respectfully remind you

All: life and death are of supreme
importance.

Leader: Time swiftly passes by

All: and opportunity is lost.

Leader: Each of us should strive to awaken,

All: awaken!

Leader & all:

Take heed. Do not squander your life.

Let me respectfully remind you
life and death are of supreme importance.
Time swiftly passes by and opportunity is lost.
Each of us should strive to awaken, awaken!
Take heed. Do not squander your life.

Closing Ceremony (Nenju)

Updated 1/10/16

I respectfully announce to everyone:
Since the parinirvana of the Great Master
Tathagata, until this year 2008,
twenty-four hundred and seventy years have passed.
When this day has passed, our days of life
will be decreased by one.
Like fish living in a little water, what sort of
tranquility or comfort can there be?
Let us practice diligently and eagerly as though
extinguishing a fire upon our heads.
Let us contemplate impermanence and not
squander our actions.
The buildings and the soil protect the Dharma
and give peace to all.
The Sangha in the ten directions will increase
in fortune and wisdom.
For their sake, we sincerely vow to become one
with:

- ◎ Pure Dharmakaya Vairochana Buddha
- ◎ Complete Sambhogakaya Lochana Buddha
- ◎ Myriad Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni Buddhas
- ◎ Future Maitreya Buddha
- ◎ All Buddhas throughout space and time
- ◎ Mahayana Sutra, Lotus of the Wondrous
Dharma

- ◎ Great Wisdom Manjushri Bodhisattva
- ◎ Great Action Samantabhadra Bodhisattva
- ◎ Great Compassion Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva
- ◎ Great Vow Jizo Bodhisattva
- ◎ All Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas
- ◎ Wisdom beyond Wisdom, Maha Prajna
Paramita

The Three Refuges Verse

(Receiving the Precepts Ceremony)

Be one with the Buddha.

Response: Being one with the Buddha.

Be one with the Dharma.

Response: Being one with the Dharma.

Be one with the Sangha.

Response: Being one with the Sangha.

Be one with the Buddha, the incomparably
Honored One.

Be one with the Dharma, honorable for its purity.

Be one with the Sangha, honorable for its harmony.

The Buddha has been revealed.

The Dharma has been revealed.

The Sangha has been revealed.

The Three Refuges Prayer

(Atonement Ceremony)

Being one with all Buddhas,
with all beings,
raise the Bodhi Mind,
let the supreme way be realized.

Being one with all Buddhas,
with all beings,
penetrate all sutras,
may wisdom be like the ocean.

Being one with all Buddhas,
with all beings,
lead the people,
may harmony pervade everywhere.

Soto Shu Verses

Bath Verse

Bathing the body,
may all living beings
be clean in body and mind,
pure and shining within and without.

Face-Washing Verse

When picking up the toothbrush
Holding the toothbrush,
may all living beings
attain the true dharma,
and be naturally pure and clean.

When using the toothbrush
Brushing the teeth in the morning,
I vow with all beings,
to care for the eyeteeth
that bite through all afflictions.

When rinsing the mouth

Rinsing the mouth,
may all living beings
approach the pure dharma gate
and accomplish liberation.

When washing the face

When washing the face,
I vow with all beings to
attain the pure dharma gate
and be forever undefiled.

Create your own gathas!