

December 10, 2013

Via E-mail and Registered Mail

To: Christiane Ranger
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cc: James Houle, MD
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Ron Uilkie
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Dear Christiane,

We have been very concerned about the present and future situation at Bodhi as well as felt sympathy with your personal situation. We have extensively examined the various emails and documents that have gone back and forth between Roshi and you and the putative Bodhi trustees. These include the following:

- **June 13:** Roshi's letter to you informing you of administrative changes at Bodhi Manda and asking if you want to remain at Bodhi Manda as full-time staff or if there is something else you would prefer to do.
- **June 15:** Your response to the June 13 letter in which you assert you are Abbot, not Joshu Sasaki Roshi, and indicate neither you nor the putative Bodhi Manda trustees will cooperate.
- **July 6:** Statement Affirming Joshu Sasaki as Abbot of Jemez Bodhi Manda refuting your assertion that you are Abbot as presented in your June 15 letter.
- **July 11:** Roshi's letter to putative Bodhi Manda trustees accepting your declaration of obedience and requesting you to resign as Vice Abbot and move forward with a proposal to build your own Zen Center.
- **September 24:** Roshi's follow-up letter to putative Bodhi Manda trustees formally removing you as Vice Abbot, and appointing Seido Vice Abbot since no response or

action had been taken by the putative trustees. You are offered \$20,000 to help you go forward in a new direction contingent on the execution of a severance agreement.

- **October 5:** transcript of a formally witnessed and recorded meeting in which you assert you are Administrative Abbot and in which Roshi repeatedly says that he does not want to separate from his disciple.
- **October 12:** Roshi's letter to putative Bodhi Manda trustees informing them that you are no longer an Osho or nun. This document is already available on the Rinzaï-ji forum.
- **November 5:** letter from putative Bodhi Manda trustees to Roshi indicating: a) they do not consider Roshi Abbot in practice; b) Seido's appointment must be ratified by the board; c) you will be retained as a paid secular manager; d) any decline of support of Bodhi Manda is due to Roshi not you; and e) Jim Houle resigned and Jundo Stephen Slusher has been elected to the board.
- **November 29:** Roshi's letter to putative Bodhi Manda trustees urging the recipients to help Seido with the transition process.
- **2002-2013:** Extensive online documentation of Bodhi Manda fund raising appeals and *kessei* announcements that clearly state that you are Vice-Abbess and that Joshu Sasaki Roshi is Abbot.

After examining these documents and discussing the situation among ourselves, with the intent of securing the current and future well being of the sangha and Bodhi, we have prepared two very strong letters: one to the putative Bodhi trustees urging them to encourage you to comply with Roshi's original directives; and a second to the ordained sangha explaining our actions, including the above listed documents, and asking them to join us in urging you to follow these directives. We are quite prepared to circulate these letters, but before doing so, we are making one final request that you aid in the transition process of Seido Clark assuming his role as Vice Abbot and that you leave Bodhi Manda as directed by Roshi.

Let us be clear on one thing: throughout the many years during which we have practiced at the Bodhi, you have always told us – and we have always believed -- that Roshi was Abbot and you were Vice-Abbot. So we have no doubt that this is the case.

Because of your many years of service and in order to avoid possible negative repercussions to both you and our sangha, we would also like to encourage you to accept the offer that Roshi made in his letter of September 24 in which he offers you financial help to go forward in a new direction. We are all prepared to do whatever we can personally and as a group to assist you in doing this. Whatever has transpired during the past year, for many years prior to this we have regarded you as a sister in the Dharma, and we wish to help to assist you as you move to the next challenge in your practice.

Please seriously consider our request. We look forward to your clear and unequivocal response to this email by midnight of December 12th.

With gratitude for your long years of effort in our sangha and deep respect,

Gassho,

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***** The two letters referred to above, although *****
***** unsent, are reproduced below *****

*** Letter A - to putative trustees ***

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing you about Christiane Ranger and the difficult situation at Bodhi Manda Zen Center. For many years Christiane has been our friend in practice, learning with us a life of non-attachment under the guidance of our teacher Joshu Sasaki Roshi. All of us have had a difficult year. We have all been painfully revealed to ourselves and to others many times.

We are grieved to know that Christiane has been unable to let go of her proprietary attachment to Bodhi Manda Zen Center, a sangha temple which we have long supported with our labor, love and good will. We have seen Christiane refuse to step down as Vice Abbot as directed by Joshu Sasaki Roshi, misappropriate the titles of Abbot and Administrative Abbot, and shuffle the Bodhi Manda board of trustees during an effort to tighten her grip on a sangha temple. Bodhi Manda is not a personal temple. We do not want Bodhi Manda to be used for any person's personal advantage.

We are also dismayed to learn that putative Bodhi Manda trustees wish to retain Christiane as a paid secular manager. This is contrary to the spirit of selfless service which, despite all of our flaws, has long been the working ethic of every Rinzai-ji Zen Center.

While it is not our position to know why Roshi instructed Christiane to step down as Vice Abbot, and later to leave Bodhi Manda, Christiane's response reveals the appropriateness of this instruction. Perhaps this is why. Perhaps the cause is revealed in the result.

We urge you, the recipients of this letter, to encourage Christiane to leave Bodhi Manda. We do this out of grave concern for Bodhi Manda. We do not want Bodhi Manda to fall into spiritual decline, to become the battlefield of politics and ambition. We also do this out of heartfelt concern and friendship for Christiane, so that she can find her way forward in this difficult situation.

Because it is not clear who may be a legitimate Bodhi Manda trustee this letter is addressed in general to the recipients.

With respect and appreciation,

The Undersigned Rinzai-ji Monks and Nuns

*** Letter B - to the ordained sangha ***

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing you to ask for your help resolving a very difficult impasse surrounding one of our principal training centers, the Bodhi Manda Zen Center in Jemez Springs New Mexico.

As part of a series of directives aimed at unifying and preserving our spiritual organization, Joshu Sasaki Roshi asked Christiane Ranger, whom many of us know under her former Osho name of Hosen, to step down as Vice Abbot of Bodhi Manda and go forward to establish her own Zen center. In a word, she has refused. Christiane has:

- Refused to step down as Vice Abbot as directed by Joshu Sasaki Roshi.
- Asserted that she is Abbot instead of Joshu Sasaki Roshi. The Abbot is the spiritual guide of Zen trainees.
- Asserted that she is Administrative Abbot.
- Shuffled the putative Bodhi Manda board of trustees during an effort to tighten her grip on a sangha temple.

At this time people who may be Bodhi Manda trustees wish to retain Christiane as a paid secular manager and have not moved forward with the administrative transition.

In an effort to resolve this situation, we – a group of 18 monks and nuns who have practiced extensively at the Bodhi and now sincerely hope that it stays within our organization – have written a letter to Christiane and the various people who may have recently served on the Bodhi Manda board of trustees encouraging Christiane to leave Bodhi Manda. We are asking you to join us in signing this letter.

Many of us have already spoken with Christiane, urging her to consider deeply what is right conduct in this situation, and what is truly for her own benefit, the benefit of the sangha, and the benefit of Bodhi Manda Zen Center. These efforts have not been successful. Before asking for your help the 18 of us wrote a letter to Christiane expressing our sympathy with her situation and urging her to accept an earlier offer which provides \$20,000 or more to help her go forward apart from Bodhi Manda. This letter concludes:

Because of your many years of service and in order to avoid possible negative repercussions to both you and our sangha, we would also like to encourage you to accept the offer that Roshi made in his letter of September 24 in which he offers you financial help to go forward in a new direction. We are all prepared to do whatever we can personally and as a group to assist you in doing this. Whatever has transpired during the past year, for many years prior to this we have regarded you as a sister in the Dharma, and we wish to help to assist you as you move to the next challenge in your practice.

Sadly, Christiane has rejected our appeal. And so we are now writing you to ask for your help.

For decades we have acknowledged Roshi as our spiritual guide and leader of Rinzai-ji. All of us have directly benefited from his teaching. We do not think that undermining the final directives of Roshi's long teaching career is an appropriate way to honor his many years of devotion in teaching us, nor is it conducive to the strength and unity of our sangha as we are entering what will be, perhaps, our most challenging period.

We are asking you to join us as a signatory:

- To make clear to the putative trustees that Christiane does not have our support in her actions, thereby improving the likelihood of a peaceful resolution, and perhaps clearing up a misapprehension.
- To encourage Christiane in friendship and with heartfelt concern to reflect more clearly on the situation.
- To bring peace and openhandedness to Bodhi Manda for the benefit of our sangha.

To be clear, we are not placing a referendum before the sangha. We are inviting our brothers and sisters to join us in expressing our encouragement and deep concern.

Detailed documentation surrounding this issue is available through the links below. Please examine this material carefully as it provides a comprehensive view of what has been going

on. Most of this information has not been shared with the sangha until now. Both Roshi and his attorney have agreed that these documents can be shared with the ordained sangha in order to clarify what has transpired. These documents are available for your personal and confidential review. Please do not share these documents with anyone else.

- **June 13:** Roshi's letter to Christiane informing her of administrative changes at Bodhi Manda and asking if she wants to remain at Bodhi Manda as full-time staff or if there is something else she would prefer to do.
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- **November 29:** Roshi's letter to putative Bodhi Manda trustees urging the recipients to help Seido with the transition process.
- **2002-2013:** Extensive online archives of Bodhi Manda fund raising appeals and *kessei* announcements that clearly state that Christiane as Jiun Hosen is Vice-Abbess and that Joshu Sasaki Roshi is Abbot.

These documents are available at this link: [[link](#)]

The letter which we are sending to the putative Bodhi Manda trustees, and which we ask you to join us in signing, is available at this link: [[link](#)]

The 18 of us together accept responsibility for appealing to you, our brothers and sisters. We are asking you to agree to be a signatory to the above letter. Please reply to this email, directly to Seido Larry Clark, indicating whether or not you agree to be a signatory by midnight of December 20th, 2013. Please do not reply-to-all or use this email as chain for discussion.

If you have questions, please contact any of us. Thank you for your serious consideration and participation in this undertaking.

With gratitude and deep respect, Gassho,

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