



Jiun Hosen, Abbess  
Bodhi Manda Zen Center

Dear Esteemed Sangha and Community,

I write this letter particularly to those women with whom I share a past, practicing with the late Joshu Sasaki Roshi, and to others in the Sangha whose confidence I feel I have betrayed. I offer this as my personal and heart-felt apology to you.

I failed you, and myself, out of blind devotion to the Roshi. Because of how much I gained in studying with him, I was not able to separate the practice that I valued so much from Joshu Sasaki the person, with his personal failings.

I benefited greatly from the Roshi's teachings. He was someone I trusted with my life for proper Buddhist guidance, someone supposedly enlightened, to whom I gave my complete faith and obedience. When I and others confronted him regarding the accusations about his behavior, he repeatedly said, "Who are you going to believe, me or them?"

In ignorance and blindness I turned away my eyes and was unable to act to protect those harmed by Joshu Sasaki's actions. I am sorry; I was wrong. I was not able to see this clearly until he died and the spell of his authority was lifted.

I am aware that there are many Sangha members whose wounds are still bleeding, who struggle with anger over this past harm. To those of you who have not yet shared your experience, I extend my sincere invitation to meet, whether by email, phone or in person, to share whatever you wish which may bring healing and allow me to offer my own personal apology to you.

The death of our teacher, the loss of the direct transmission of the mind seal, and the uncovering of the scandal surrounding him, cast a shadow on the lineage of Rinzai Zen Buddhism.



The Bodhi has always been a place of deep healing and great community. Healing, and the renewal of our community, are needed now. This is an opportunity for me, and for all of us, to truly embody the Buddhist teachings and support each other in doing so. We must not lose sight of the practice that has brought value into our lives, which is larger than any one of us, including Joshu Sasaki.

I humbly ask for your participation in the future of Zen practices at the Bodhi.

In particular, I ask that we contemplate how to truly support the evolving role of women in expressing themselves fully as modern Buddhists. We must never allow *any* cult of personality, even the overarching domination of a patriarchal Zen master, to distort the teachings and harm the Sangha. As Abbess of the Bodhi Manda, I vow to protect even more fully the feminine presence within our Sangha and remain true to the core of Zen Buddhist practice. In this way, we will celebrate both male and female polarities by fully empowering men and women to join together to take the next steps in the unfolding of Buddhism at the Bodhi and in America.

In appreciation and gratitude for the *Three Jewels*- Buddha, Sangha and Dharma, I again offer my sincerest apology for any harm which I allowed.

In Gassho, I bow to each and every one of you.

Jiun Hosen, Osho