

## PURE LAND IN SIGHT

To Reverend Ji-Shin Diane Dunn  
whose Great Compassion encourages me.

Due to protracted illness I have not had  
the energy to collate these spontaneous  
seventeeners in appropriate order, or  
situate them with background notes.  
This is simply the way they came to me,  
day by day, moment by moment, during  
a month in Spain, deprived of internet.  
Diane will be big-hearted enough to ignore  
their many shortcomings.

“Work out your salvation  
with diligence.” Those were  
the Buddha's last words.

“Take possession of my body,  
mind, heart and soul this morning,  
Master.”

“What is it leading to,  
this life of ups and downs?”  
“Birth in the Pure Land.”

Everyone I meet in this life  
is taken with me  
to the Pure Land.

As long as I say  
Namo Amida Butsu  
nothing can go wrong.

All my efforts  
to write haiku end in  
Namo Amida Butsu.

Flat on my back.  
Amida reassures me  
everything is all right.

Thought dissolves into  
empty-mindedness.  
Speech turns into nembutsu.

I gaze out the window  
at the calm blue sea  
and just say nembutsu.

*(reading Eiken Kobai)*

“Gladly hearing the Name”,  
“rejoicing in Faith” -  
two moods to learn about.

“It's a relief to know  
that perfection in this life  
is not required.”

Happiness doesn't mean  
that everything has to be  
hunky-dory.

*Diane might like this one.*  
Not just “I hope to get  
to the Pure Land”, but  
“the Pure Land is in sight.”

The misery of waking up  
bears no resemblance  
to what follows.

I'm not as bad  
as Shinran makes out.  
Practice has rounded the edges.

Psychiatry, my wife  
and other “good friends”  
reduce my blind passions.

Conscious of Amida's love  
I pace the floor  
murmuring nembutsu.

Fear is the enemy of happiness.  
Only love can conquer it.

I take the Great Masters  
at their word and simply  
recite nembutsu.

Namo Amida Butsu -  
smiles on the faces  
of Spanish fishwives.

Namo Amida Butsu -  
I long to be born  
in the Land of Bliss.

While Maria shops  
in the sales, I say  
Namo Amida Butsu,

ignoring the undoubted  
physical beauty of  
one young salesgirl.

Amida must have walked  
in these shoes in the course of  
a thousand lives.

The vegetarian salad  
at Bodhi-Green  
was the best ever.

Watching doves fighting  
for crumbs on the Paseo.  
No peace anywhere.

It was a worthwhile day.  
We were together.  
Some Buddhas were sighted.

I can clearly see  
my bedroom Buddha on his altar  
back in Bruges.

Manna to the soul -  
those moments of meditation  
in Alicante.

Old age is a hill  
you needn't climb by yourself -  
Amida will help.  
*(for Amida read Maria)*

Now we settle down  
to the horrific world news  
and a hot footbath.

Let go and let God.  
Namo Amida Butsu.  
Complete abandon.

Try to imagine  
what enlightenment is  
and strive to attain it.

“Please stop propagating  
conceptual thoughts  
and find peace in your heart.”

Regular practice  
of nembutsu will lead  
to enlightenment.

Neptune is the most spiritual planet  
and represents Amida.

24 February. Sun in Pisces.  
My daughter is fifty.

All I can hear is  
the waves beating on the shore,  
breath of night and day.

Enlightenment must always  
take others  
into consideration.

Gratitude counts more  
than anything else  
in cultivating the soul.

A degree of enlightenment  
may appear  
on the nembutsu path -

Namo Amida Butsu  
Namo Amida Butsu -  
but is not

by any means the real thing,  
which comes after birth  
in the Pure Land.

Beware of minor  
irritations and setbacks.  
Life is a struggle!

Flexibility  
is a desirable gift  
which can save some scrapes.

Think you have shinjin?  
Wait till you're hungry, angry,  
lonely and/or tired ...

Grateful for this  
El Campello sunrise -  
"Namo Amida Butsu".

Gratitude is the great solvent.  
It puts paid to dissatisfaction.

"I write to instruct.  
That's one of my major goals.  
A teacher at heart."

Maria on couch.  
Her modest serenity  
is most impressive.

Last meal in El Campello.  
Martine and Michel  
have come to collect us.

Namo Amida Butsu.  
I'm glad to be alive  
and in good health.

The best, in fact  
the only thing to do,  
is to utter nembutsu.

Enlightenment has  
a lot to do with  
relaxing and letting go...

a confident attitude  
to events that lie ahead  
*here and now.*

We spend the last few days  
a long way further south  
in hotter sunshine.

Namo Amida Butsu -  
my soul united  
with Tathagata.

I'm utterly free to be  
myself, and to think  
what I want to think.

Namo Amida Butsu,  
I cannot do  
anything wrong today.

Michel is giving us lunch  
at the sea.  
Namo Amida Butsu.

At every New Moon -  
love and gratitude  
to my father and mother.

Closer to Amida,  
I settle down  
for a Spanish siesta.

Namo Amida Butsu -  
let everything happen  
the way it wants.

Listen to the advice  
Amida transmits  
through the Sun, Moon and stars.

“It's in the Pure Land  
that we are able to save  
sentient beings.”

I can't help feeling  
my beloved Shitoku  
is helping me now.

“You're on the right track,  
Markitos. Simply avoid  
conceptual thought.”

*after reading a few more  
pages of Eiken Kobai:*

“I think Shitoku  
is capable of saving me  
as he wishes.”

I surrender  
to his benevolence.  
“Namo Amida Butsu.”

“Good health is the first condition  
for esoteric training.”  
- *Rudolf Steiner*

“Rest your eyes, Marcus,  
on that woodland scene.  
The Pure Land is also green.”

Asking myself  
“what I can do right?”  
the answer comes: *Say nembutsu.*

Our second last day.  
Namo Amida Butsu  
is all I can say.

A quarter to four.  
I doubt if Diane is up.  
Her chickens unfed.

Every single moment  
is an opportunity  
for feeling good.

In every situation  
Namo Amida Butsu  
matters most.

Thousands of bodhisattvas  
attend the bombu  
who says nembutsu.  
*Known as angels in the West*

This Chinese bazar  
is full of plastic Buddhas  
waving happily.

Honen believes  
that constant recital  
of nembutsu is the best.

Slackness of practice  
in saying nembutsu  
leads to doubts about the Vow.

Nembutsu practice  
is a lifelong commitment.  
It's just like a marriage vow.

“Perhaps Shitoku  
is advising me to keep  
my feet on the ground.”

This is the last day  
of our holiday in Spain.  
Pluto on my Moon.

“I am entirely at your disposal.  
I am ready for anything.”

“How could I not hear you,  
Marcus?” Amida asks.  
“I am inside you!”

Sitting outside here  
in harmony with the stars  
nothing bothers me.

Namo Amida Butsu.  
Namo Amida Butsu  
is my secret.

“When we are born  
in the Pure Land and become Buddhas  
we save others.”

*I should study the teachings more often.*

“I'm not more important  
than anyone else.

A benighted bombu.”

*Reciting nembutsu  
is the only sure mind  
of Great Compassion.*

*- Shinran in Tannisho*

Namo Amida Butsu,  
gazing at the forest  
of neat green trees.

*Based on Einstein:*

Mercury gets me from A to Z.

Neptune takes me to the Pure Land.

From the side window  
a glimpse of the morning sun  
we leave behind us.

All I have to say  
in the airport is  
Namo Amida Butsu.

*'random-checked'. no hassle.*

We are in the air  
and flying back to Brussels.  
Thank you, Amida.

Our Spanish outing  
is now approaching its end.  
We're nearly in Bruges.

All I can say is  
“Namo Amida Butsu,  
thank you very much.”  
*Maria is also very grateful.*

“Reciting nembutsu  
is all I know how to do  
with assurance.”

*First sober reflection  
upon return to Belgium.*



Never say you are bored.  
There are always more  
nembutsus to recite.

Reciting nembutsu  
will help you to stay awake -  
if that's what you want.

Constant gratitude  
creates an attitude of love  
towards our friends.

Sit down and say nembutsu  
instead of fluttering round  
like a bat.

Deep breathing combined  
with nembutsu will certainly  
promote good health.

I sit in the shed.  
A feather lands on the hedge.  
I breathe. Nembutsu.

“You don't have to prove yourself.  
Keep saying Namu Amida Butsu.”

Namu Amida Butsu  
is given to me.  
It's not my own work.

Kuan Yin's right hand  
fell off and broke when I stretched out  
to pick up the phone.

Consider time as your friend,  
not your enemy -  
things will go better.

As long as I have  
Namu Amida Butsu to say  
I'll be oké.

Ten to seven.  
Our blackbird is chirping  
Namu Amida Butsu.

“I did it my way!”  
And look what a disaster  
it turned out to be.

Namo Amida Butsu  
is the solution  
to all my problems.

The pain in my toes goes away  
when I say  
Namo Amida Butsu.

“Come just as you are.  
You have never done anything wrong  
in my sight.”

Friends! It would be terrible  
if I didn't see them  
in the Pure Land.

My work for today  
is only to say  
Namo Amida Butsu.  
*The flu pinned me down.*

Every single nembutsu I say  
is a step towards the Pure Land.

There on our return  
to greet us with cold white love -  
heavenly snowdrops.

20 past 3. Grey.  
Signs of birdlife in garden.  
“Keep saying my Name.”

All I am capable of is  
saying Namo Amida Butsu.

I RESPECT the tiredness  
of body and mind  
which has gripped me this week.

In the flower of life  
nembutsu is good.  
Approaching death, better.

If you had a thousand days to live,  
how would you think of spending them?

When your time comes  
to leave this cheating world,  
will anything hold you back?

Getting through the day  
without going bananas -  
second flu attack.

*Basho's 'death-haiku',  
a modern interpretation*

“Where warriors with deep wounds  
once slaughtered one another -  
wind-blown grass”

SPECULATION.

It hits the best of us  
at unexpected moments.

The only answer is  
Namo Amida Butsu  
a hundred times.

Chuck out the ballast  
in your feverish brain.  
Have compassion with yourself.

*On the bridge again:*

I turn, face the sun  
and say a dozen  
Namo Amida Butsu's.

*And here comes my printer.*

The blackbird came  
hopping along the path  
so I quickly filled his bath.

Don't forget -  
your Guardian Angel  
is always with you  
and can take  
any form he wants.

84,000 bodhisattvas  
protect  
the nembutsu person.

More helpful, less demanding -  
one way to bring myself  
into balance.

One night for Diane.  
Amida has given me  
more than a million.

Don't let your karmic condition  
interfere  
with saying nembutsu.

While Marcus moans about  
his flu, twenty million others  
are starving.

Namo Amida Butsu,  
enjoy this moment  
in a sunny street.

Unexpected moments like this  
are gifts of heaven  
and must be seized.

I think Amida  
wanted to keep it simple  
for us poor bombus.

Nothing could be easier  
than saying the Name.  
It's a shining sun.

Namo Amida Butsu -  
the light is everywhere  
in town today.

What the catholics call  
"the power of love"  
I draw from each nembutsu.

I am a blind old man  
in black glasses.  
Nembutsu is my guide-dog.

Amida is not only  
in Sukhavati -  
He is everywhere.

The true meaning of  
Namo Amida Butsu  
is 'hearing the call'.

Guidance is necessary.  
Where on earth would I be  
without my friends?

ZUISHIN MARCUS CUMBERLEGE  
Alicante – Bruges, February - March '17