

After Orlando

Last Sunday, after giving the welcoming teisho as Junpo Roshi's Hollow Bones Sangha began sesshin, I returned to Syracuse to the news that yet again, members of the GLBTQ community were attacked, this time at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando. Yet again, assault weapons, legally purchased, resulted in a massacre.

At our temples, we have been chanting Dai Segaki for the deceased and Kanzeon for those wounded in the attack, and for the families and friends of those killed.

Tuesday evening I joined some 50 clergy members in the Annual Central New York Pride Interfaith Service to express solidarity and loving support in the midst of our grief. I opened a meditation with words from the *Dhammapada*: "One's life is shaped by the mind... Hatred can never put an end to hatred; love alone can. This is an unalterable law."

This mind, which we all share, is the mind of compassion, the mind of peace, the mind of love. Feeling the truth of this unalterable law, we can extend this mind to everyone, everywhere, vowing to let go of fear, resentment, and hatred.

As members and allies of the LGBTQ community, we stand against homophobia and Islamophobia. We call upon our political leaders to prohibit individuals from buying assault weapons manufactured for war. Legislation that would prevent suspected terrorists from getting guns and expand background checks for all gun sales is finally up for a vote in Congress.

The Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh, who saw his country devastated during decades of killing, says: "There are two things: to be and to do. Don't think too much about to do—to be is first. Being peace. Being attentive. Being generous. Being compassionate. This is the basic practice. It's as if another person is sitting at the foot of a tree. The tree does not do anything, but the tree is fresh and alive. When you are like that tree, sending out waves of freshness, you help to calm down the suffering in the other person."

May we offer these waves of freshness to everyone we encounter.

However innumerable all beings are, we vow to save them all.
However inexhaustible delusions are, we vow to extinguish them all.
However immeasurable Dharma teachings are, we vow to master them all.
However endless the Buddha's Way is, we vow to follow it.

--Shinge