

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Spirit of the Rabbit

BY JER

Last week, the Buddhist Community of University of Lynchburg celebrated Lunar New Year by giving away lucky coins, candy, bookmarks, and friendship bracelets in Drysdale. It was a wonderful time. We have moved into the Year of the Rabbit, and according to the Chinese zodiac, the rabbit is a symbol of calmness and contemplation.

On campus, we find ourselves in the second week of classes, and already, some people's planners are filled with meetings, assignment due dates, and appointment reminders. Certainly, it can be overwhelming. Yet in the face of this intensity, I am reminded of Lao Tzu's advice: "Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished." Perhaps, if we break our projects and obligations into smaller, more manageable pieces, we can avoid the anxiety associated with rushing. We can complete our tasks in a more efficient and less stressful manner by taking our time to produce engaging papers, presentations, pieces of art, performances, etc.

Throughout all of the work, however, we can find ourselves overloaded. This world is a busy realm; it is easy to lose our center, our heart-space of serenity. We must find ways to return to our center again and again, whether this be through prayer, meditation, chanting, exercise, deep breathing exercises, or sharing a meal with friends or family. Self-care is important. Zenful states of being are critical to our overall wellness.

And when there are moments in which we feel we have not done our best, we must control the negative self-talk while affirming our worth. The Buddha reminds us of how our own thinking shapes our existence. He states, "All that we are is a result of what we have thought. What we think we become." If we think of ourselves as peaceful, successful beings, we can work to achieve our responsibilities to our classes or jobs while

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also making time for wellbeing and centeredness. When we fall short, and since we are human this will happen, we must have compassion for ourselves. We are not defined by our mistakes or "failures." We are defined by how we continue to move forward.

This semester, may we find inspiration in the spirit of the Rabbit. May we embrace peacefulness and contemplation, and in the spirit of contemplation, may we think before we speak or act. May we return to our center of calmness each time an obstacle arises. May we believe in ourselves, the beauty of our own existence. May we spread compassion and love for beings, while also cultivating compassion for ourselves.

Did You Know?

Tu B'Shvat (February 5-6 this year) is now celebrated as an environmental holiday by persons of the Jewish faith. The day reminds us all of our duty to care for the natural world. For instance, many Jewish people plant trees, build a birdhouse, clean-up a park, or engage in similar activities.

Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Our sympathies are extended to:

- **Sarah Rhodes** (Advancement) on the death of her grand aunt, Helen Burnette Harvey. Link to obituary in email.

The Chaplain's Corner is a newsletter published by the Spiritual Life Center (SLC) at the University of Lynchburg. We share campus concerns and updates, spiritual life events and activities, and words for the journey. If you have a joy or concern you'd like to share, reply to this message, email the SLC office - spirituallife@lynchburg.edu, or call 434.544.8348.

We only share with your permission. Current and previous issues are on the SLC page of the University website - go to Link in signature (www.lynchburg.edu/spiritual-life) and click on "Newsletter."

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on student spiritual life student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree (Link is in email).

Dates to Remember

Sundays at 11 a.m.

Worship with
CHURCH OF THE COVENANT
in Snidow Chapel

Sundays at 4:30 p.m.

Weekly ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS
in Snidow Chapel

Friday, February 3

4:30 p.m. in Drysdale
Catholic Campus Ministry's
DONUT GIVEAWAY

February is

Black History Month