

Jizo Bosatsu



One of the most beloved of all Japanese divinities, Jizo works to ease the suffering and shorten the sentence of those serving their time in hell. He is the guardian of unborn, aborted, miscarried and stillborn babies in particular, as well as expectant mothers, fireman, travellers and pilgrims. He is seen as the overseer of transformations. Jizo statues can be found everywhere in Japan, most especially in graveyards. In some translations, Jizo is known as "Womb of the Earth".

He is usually portrayed as a monk, often carrying a pilgrim's staff with six rings that jingle to warn animals of his approach and prevent mutual harm. When he shakes the staff, he awakens us from our delusions. Jizo also carries the bright jewel of Dharma truth, the mani jewel, whose light banishes all fear. Jizo travels to wherever there are people who are mired in the darkness of unhappiness and fear, unable to free themselves. Often a halo surrounds his head, and he sits or

stands on a lotus flower.

Sometimes you may find little heaps of stones around Jizo statues, as many believe that a stone offered in faith will shorten the time their child suffers in the underworld. Jizo statues are often clothed in tiny garments adorned by sorrowing mothers in the hope the kindly god will specially protect their child. A little hat or bib is a gift of a rejoicing parent whose child has been cured of sickness thanks to Jizo's intervention.

Jizo Mantra

On kakaka bisanmaei sowaka (Japanese)
Om ha-ha-ha vismaye svaha (Sanskrit)
Om, oh Wondrous One, Svaha (English)