

Nichiren Shu News

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Nichiren Mission of Hawaii Celebrates Centennial



Clockwise from upper left

1. Ministers and attendees from Japan in front of the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii altar
2. Archbishop Nisso Uchino conducting the Grand Memorial Ceremony
3. Members of the Hawaiian missions lining up to offer incense
4. The Archbishop addressing the banquet audience
5. Banquet at the Ala Moana Hotel
6. The Archbishop greets a young member of the Hilo Mission at the airport

**By Rev. Shodo Seki
Administrator's Dept., Shumuin**

On Sunday, July 1, the first Hawaii Nichiren Mission celebrated its 110th Anniversary and the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii celebrated its centennial with a Grand Memorial Ceremony conducted by the Archbishop of Nichiren Shu and Chief Abbot of Minobusan Kuonji, Nisso Uchino. Over 100 priests and guests from Japan joined the congregation in sharing the celebration of this memorable event.

The service began at 1:00 p.m. with a prelude performed by the Royal

Hawaiian Band followed by the traditional conch-shell-blowing ceremony and Hawaiian welcoming chant. A long procession of ministers from Japan entered the hall, accompanied by the chanting of the Odaimoku from all those present. After the congregation recited the main chapters of the Lotus Sutra, the Archbishop gave a congratulatory address. He emphasized "Kyozon Kyosei" which means, all living things coexist, no matter where we live and what ethnic background we have, we should all join hands to live in peace and harmony with one another.

The presentation of the Nichiren Shu Award of the Highest Order was presented to Rev. Joyo Ogawa, the former Bishop of the Nichiren Mission for his hard work and dedication to build up the Mission.

From the Japanese Delegation, Chief Administrator Rev. Shobin Watanabe and Rev. Nichiyu Mochida, President of the Nichiren Shu International Buddhist Friendship Association also presented their congratulations and appreciation.

The ceremony closed with words of gratitude from Rev. Shingyo Imai, the present Bishop of Hawaii.

A celebratory banquet followed at the Hibiscus Room in the Ala Moana Hotel. Months of preparation by the board members, headed by Board President Keith Nagai, made the banquet a great success. After many congratulatory speeches from the Japanese visitors, a celebration message was given by Bishop Imai followed by an appreciation by Mr. Nagai.

The banquet ended with a chorus of 'Aloha Oe', a traditional Hawaiian song of farewell that ends with; "until we meet again."

(Tr. S.S.)

A Brief History of How the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii Began

By Bishop Shingyo Imai

In the late 19th century, Japan had been changing with breathtaking speed. Japanese Buddhism began to look outward. In Nichiren Shu, a visionary, Archbishop Nichimyo Asahi, rekindled the overseas missionary spirit of Nichiren Shonin's direct disciple, Nichiji Shonin. Archbishop Asahi personally visited Korea, Russia and India and began to dispatch

overseas missionaries to the West. Building on this vision, Rev. Gyouin Takagi came to Hawaii for the first time in 1899. In 1902, Rev. Takagi opened the first Nichiren Shu temple of Hawaii in Kau, on the Big Island. The year 2012 marks the 110th anniversary of the Nichiren Shu overseas mission in Hawaii. Our temple is indebted to the decisive vision of Archbishop Asahi and the courage of Bishop Takagi to commit to an unknown

future in Hawaii.

It was not until 1912 that Rev. Takagi journeyed to Honolulu to meet with a small group of Nichiren believers. On April 2, 1912, Rev. Takagi and his group established the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii. They set up a small propagation center in a temporary rented house on Liliha Street in the area behind the present Times Market.

By that time the the population of

Japanese issei immigrants had risen in Honolulu, making the Japanese the largest ethnic group in Hawaii. Rev. Takagi and his fellow believers called to fellow immigrants saying, "Rise Up Nichiren Believers" and in 1917 the group was able to establish a new Japanese-style temple on Barron Lane off School Street. He probably had no idea that our temple would grow up to be 100 years old.

Shobo: Nichiren Shonin's Thoughts on The Lotus Sutra

Chapter V and Nichiren Shonin reflecting on persecutions

By Rev. Hoyu Maruyama
Senpukuji Temple, Yokosuka

**I see all living beings equally.
I have no partiality for them.
There is not 'this one' or 'that one' to me.
I transcend love and hatred.
I am attached to nothing.
I am hindered by nothing.
I always expound the Dharma to all living beings equally.
I expound the Dharma to many in the same way as to one.
I always expound the Dharma.
I do nothing else. (Chapter 5 of the Lotus Sutra: "The Simile of Herbs")**

These beautiful gatha (verses) are quoted from "The Simile of Herbs"

chapter of the Lotus Sutra. The Buddha tells us that he is always expounding the Dharma to us with no partiality. Even if he is surrounded by a crowd, the Buddha showers the rain of the Dharma on each of them equally as if he were speaking to one person.

In the 2,220 years or so since the passing of the Buddha, I, Nichiren, am the only one who has verified the Buddha's words in the whole world. ("Persecution Befalling Nichiren Shonin" taken from Showa Teigi Ibun)

This is the letter Nichiren Shonin wrote at Mt. Minobu on the first day

of October in the second year of the Koan Period (1279). In the letter, it is explained that it is addressed "to my followers, and that this letter should be kept by Lord Saburo Zaemonnojo (Shijo Kingo Yorimoto)." Nichiren Shonin wrote this letter to encourage his followers not to give up their faith in the Lotus Sutra.

Right before he wrote this letter, the Atsuwara Persecution fell on his followers in Atsuwara of Fuji County. During this crisis he encouraged them not to be frightened but to strengthen their determination.

At the beginning of the letter he referred to his first proclamation of the Odaimoku on the 28th day of the 4th month in the 5th year of Kencho (1253). This was the start of Nichiren Buddhism. In the letter, he asserted,

"It is predicted in the Lotus Sutra, 'Many people will hate this sutra with jealousy during my lifetime. Needless to say, more people will hate it after my death.' ...During my propagation of the teaching of the Lotus Sutra in the past twenty-seven years, I, Nichiren, encountered many persecutions. I was exiled to Izu, injured on the left hand and forehead, placed on the execution mat, and exiled again to Sado. I do not know whether my difficulties surpass those of the Buddha, but those of his followers since his death cannot compare to mine. Therefore, if I had not appeared in the Latter Age of Degeneration, the Buddha would have been a big liar." (Tr. S. Komukai)

(to be continued)



The historic site of Shijo Kingo's house



The Atsuwara Persecution



Maha-Kasyapa

Counseling in the Tohoku Area

By Rev. Koyo Watanabe
Chokuji Temple, Tokyo

Over a year has passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake struck the Tohoku area on March 11, 2011. I visited the area for the first time last November and in April, I went for the second time to give support to the evacuees. Both times I joined a group of Nichiren Shu priests and nuns from all over Tokyo who organized a team to send aid to the Tohoku area right after the disaster. At first the people there wanted food, clothing, and other daily necessities. However, as time passed they wanted mental care and help to overcome the tragedy.

As a Nichiren priest I asked myself, "How can I help these people after such a tragedy?" However, I am also a counselor and have been teaching psychology for many years, I decided to just take time and listen to whatever worries these people had. One lady said that she could not overcome the sudden loss of her husband and she kept on weeping. Another elderly man, living all alone, said he could not erase the sight of his wife being swept away by the tsunami right in front of his eyes.

We must continue supporting these people who have lost so much and assure them that even if time goes by we will never forget about this disaster. Our duty is to listen to their stories and help them move on in life. I would like to

continue visiting the Tohoku area and support this volunteer project.

Editor's note:

Rev. Koyo Watanabe, Professor of Psychology at Rissho University, retired from his teaching career in March, 2012. He continues to do counseling and hold lectures on psychology.

(Tr.S.S.)



Reverend Watanabe (far left) counseling disaster victims at the evacuation center

Rev. Kanno Preaches (19)



**"Myo" means revival. It means "come back to life."
(Hokke Daimoku-sho)**

Revival

Nichiren Shonin addressed this letter to his aunt. The letter is full of human warmth and compassion. "Myo" is the spirit of the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku. Our founder intended to show we will be reborn by the power of the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku.

Literally, revival means resurrection. The word also suggests the possibility of changing one's way of life. In the phrase "myo means revival,"

Nichiren Shonin shows us, "the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku" are the basis for the power of life and they help us hold on to our intention of "living through."

The Lotus Sutra is not only meant for the afterlife. The sutra provides us great support in the present life. Let us chant the "Odaimoku of revival."

(Rev. Nisso Kanno, head priest of Kaichoji Temple, Shizuoka Prefecture)

Living the Lotus Sutra (2)

Odaimoku in the Streets

By Rev. Shinkyō Warner

As part of the 2012 NONA Pilgrimage, we paid our respects at a memorial on the streets of Kamakura where Nichiren preached the Lotus Sutra. From there, we marched to one of the busy intersections of that city, holding high our Omandala banner, beating an uchiwa taiko drum and chanting Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō! It was thrilling to follow in Nichiren's footsteps and fulfill his wish that we use the Lotus Sutra to lead all beings to enlightenment.

Kamakura's afternoon crowds of ordinary people swirled around us. Some were walking. Some rode bicycles. Others sat in cars and buses. Students came and went from school. Housewives headed home from stores after buying food for their families. Office workers ran errands. A few people smiled at our noisy group and bowed with their hands pressed together in gasshō. Most, however, only glanced briefly at us, if at all, and went about their normal routines.

As we were chanting, I noticed what thoughts swirled through my own mind. There was no worry about whether



Rev.
Shinkyō Warner

anyone judged our group badly for making a spectacle of ourselves with our loud chanting and drumming. Then again, I did not assume they should thank us, much less acknowledge or understand what we were doing. I just smiled and thought how wonderful that our chanting was helping all these people to become Buddhas.

In his Treatise on Chanting the Great Title of the Lotus Sutra (Shō Hokke Daimoku-shō), Nichiren wrote: "You should remember that the secret doctrine to save the evil, the stupid, and those without Buddha-nature is not revealed in sutras other than the Lotus Sutra. This is the very reason the Lotus Sutra is superior to all other Buddhist scriptures."

In other words, when we chant Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō, the heart of the Lotus Sutra, we do not need to know the condition of the people who hear us. We did not need to judge their minds or

their behavior to make sure they can learn from what we teach them. With the Odaimoku, we can lead anyone to enlightenment.

This passage also says something about us who keep and practice the Buddha Dharma. The world rewards those who are intelligent, aggressive, determined, and talented. We are told that unless we have these qualities, we cannot be productive members of society. If we listen to the world instead of the Buddha, we could believe that before we can practice the Wonderful Dharma, awaken our Bodhisattva nature, and not regress towards becoming enlightened, we need to have these four qualities and make sure everybody knows we have them. This leaves little space for humility or even curiosity.

On the other hand, the Buddha says we do not need any qualities other than what we have already. In Chapter 28 of the Lotus Sutra, he proclaims: "Anyone who keeps, reads and recites this sutra, memorize it correctly, understands the meanings of it, and acts according to it, know this, does the same practices that I do."

To practice as the Buddha practices means to practice as an enlightened being. When we chant the Odaimoku, we are being enlightened. And we are enlightening others. Even if we believe that we are stupid, submissive, distracted or clumsy, it does not matter. Even if the world rejects us because we do not meet their standards, it does not matter. We do not have to pass a qualifying examination to practice Buddha Dharma. The Buddha tells us to chant the Odaimoku with confidence and faith as we are, however imperfect that may be. That is enough.
(to be continued)



Pilgrimage group chanting on the street corner in Kamakura

Lotus Sutra Lecture in Cambodia

By Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi
Missionary Department, Shumuin

On June 2, 2012, the Seventh Lotus Sutra Lecture sponsored by Nichiren Shu, was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As in previous years, Rev. Yosei Ikegami, Professor of Minobusan University, gave a lecture on the Lotus Sutra. This program began in 2006 and has continued with the support of Catudisa Sangha, a group supporting the development of villages in Cambodia, and the Ministry of Culture and Religion of Cambodia.

At the Basak Hall in Phnom Penh, where the event took place, about 100 attendees including Buddhist monks and followers, Muslim groups and minority ethnic groups gathered together. The event began with the national anthem of Cambodia, followed by a prayer by 100 priests in unison. Then Mr. Min Khin, the head of the Ministry of Culture and Religion, gave a speech to welcome the attendees. He said, "We are very happy to have so many people here again this year. We would like to deepen the ties between the Cambodian Buddhist Association and Nichiren Shu and also strengthen the relationship between the two countries of Cambodia and Japan."

Before the lecture, Rev. Kangyo Noda, minister in charge of the Nichiren Shu Southeast Asia Region, read a message from Chief Administrator Rev. Shobin Watanabe. In his message, Rev. Watanabe expressed gratitude to all the people of Cambodia for their donations and support for the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake. He also said, "If you wish to have peace for yourself, you should first of all pray for peace of the whole world," which was an excerpt taken from Nichiren's treatise: the Risshō Ankoku-ron.

"All of us, human and all living beings are connected and nurtured by sacred life. We must respect each other and live in coexistence," Rev. Watanabe continued.

"In other words, we cannot live by ourselves and must be grateful for everything that allows us to exist. I believe this is the universal message of Buddhism that all societies can relate to. In such times, this is the message we must send out to the world."

In Rev. Ikegami's seventh Lotus Sutra lecture, he summarized Nichiren Shonin's history up to the Rikkyō Kaishū, when Our Founder first proclaimed the Odaimoku. Then he explained "Ichinen Sanzen" and the "Odaimoku" as being the core of Nichiren Shonin's teachings. He summarized and explained the different chapters of the Lotus Sutra, and reflected on other Mahayana Buddhist sutras. He also explained who the Bodhisattvas of the Lotus Sutra were and compared them to the Bodhisattvas of Theravada. He concluded the lecture by explaining an excerpt from the Lotus Sutra teaching the "True One Vehicle." The gigantic cloud which appears is the Buddha, the rain that falls on the parched ground is the teaching and the plants that revive from the rain are all living things.

One participant said that he had attended all seven lectures. To him, the story about the "True One Vehicle" was most impressive. He felt this lecture was like the rain which falls on all mankind equally. Also when Rev. Ikegami compared the lotus flower to a human being, the participant felt that everyone had a Buddhist nature to make the lotus flower bloom.

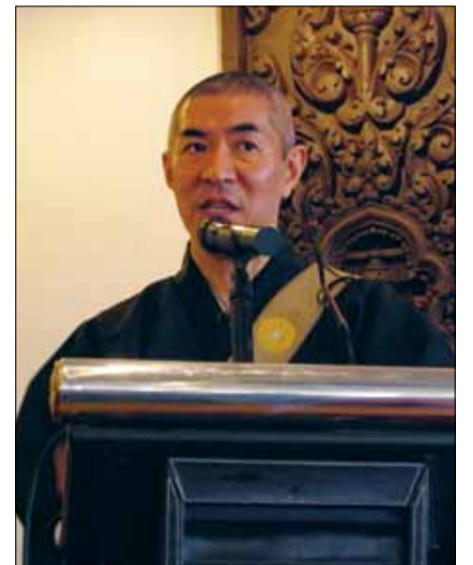
After the lecture, the Catudisa Sangha hosted a "Pray for Peace" Service. All the participants held a service at the Killings Fields where thousands of people were massacred by the Pol Pot Regime.

Theravada, Mahayana Buddhists and Muslim followers all joined in for the service to pray for world peace.

(Tr. S.S.)



Theravada monks chanting



Reverend Yosei Ikegami lecturing on the Lotus Sutra



Paying respects at the Killing Fields Memorial

Temple Events

Nichiren Mission of Hawaii

By Rev. Eisei Ikenaga

Shin-Bon and Obon Services

The word Obon originally comes from the word "Urabon" which means comfort the deceased souls. In Japan, it is said that the souls of one's ancestors return to their homes and spend time with their bereaved families during the Obon season.

Our temple observes Obon with two services: Shin-bon and the regular Obon. Shin-bon service (Obon for newly deceased ones) is dedicated to those who have passed away since the last Obon. This year the Shin-bon service will be held on July 14 at 7:00 p.m. The ceremony of floating lanterns will be held after the service. A \$20.00 donation is requested for each lantern. Refreshments will be served after the lantern ceremony.

Obon service is dedicated to your ancestors and deceased friends. We will hold the regular Obon service on Sunday, July 15 at 10:00 a.m. The toba which represents a stupa or tower can be offered. We believe that we can accumulate great merits by offering toba to the Buddha and our deceased ancestors. Offering the toba expresses our sincerity, respect and appreciation towards our beloved ones. We are asking for a donation of \$8.00 for each toba. Please apply for lanterns and toba in advance.

A light refreshment will be prepared in the social hall by the Fujinkai after the service. A Bon Dance will be held again this year on Saturday, August 25. Last year's bon dance

was a great success with a large turnout, all enjoying the dancing, refreshments and game booths.

We would like to have another successful event and so we are asking for many volunteers for the different areas: staging and setup, food preparation, facility maintenance, food sales, etc. We welcome all volunteers, whether experienced or not, including high school volunteers from our members or their families.

Wahiawa Nichiren Mission

By Rev. Junsei Nagayoshi

Visitation & Tana-gyo

(private service at your home altar)

Recently, some of our members have not been able to come to our temple. Rev. Nagayoshi is happy to make home visits to provide support and encouragement. Services can be held at your home. The services include Kito blessing, O-bon services and memorial services. Please feel free to contact Rev. Nagayoshi.

The Wahiawa Nichiren Mission will hold its annual Obon and Segaki Service on Sunday, July 29 from 10:00 a.m. These are very important Buddhist services. It is said that our ancestors' souls come back to our world at Obon. There are over one thousand ancestors before ten generations, over a million ancestors before twenty generations and over a billion ancestors before thirty generations. If just one of our ancestors did not exist, we would not be here. So, we have been indebted to them since we were born. Obon service is

a good opportunity to express our gratitude, especially if this is the first Obon (Shin Bon) for a deceased one. Let's join in the service and dedicate our prayer with alms to our ancestors. The service will be followed by a potluck lunch.

Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada

By Bishop Shokai Kanai

Obon memorial services originated during the time of Sakyamuni Buddha. One of His disciples, Maudgalyayana's (Mokuren) mother was saved from suffering from starvation in hell. She was there because of selfish conduct in order to raise her beloved son.

The Obon service will be held on Sunday, July 22 at 10:30 a.m.

Let us show our appreciation to deceased parents, grandparents and all our ancestors.

Nichiren Buddhist Temple San Jose

By Rev. Shinko Matsuda

The Obon service originates with the Ven. Mokuren, one of the Ten Great Disciples of the Buddha, who saved his mother from the World of Hunger. By means of giving various offerings to "hungry souls", paying homage to graves, and having priests chant sutras, we pray that our ancestors' souls are saved from suffering and enjoy a peaceful life in the land of the Buddha.

We clean and decorate our Buddhist altars for the departed souls during the period between the 13-15 of either July or August and meet and see off souls with an Obon fire.

The annual Obon service will be held on Sunday, July 15 at 10:00 a.m.

Choeizan Enkyoji Temple Seattle

By Rev. Kanjin Cederman

We are growing into a very happy, large Sangha and will be coming up on our two year anniversary. I am so happy to see everyone volunteer in making our temple a positive Buddhist community. Our dreams of building a temple for training and a "Heiwa Mura" (peace village) are coming more into focus with each day. We still need to let people know we are here. Please check our website at: < seattlebuddhist.org >

Our big event this year is the

NONA retreat from August 3-9. We want as many of our members to attend.

I will be going around to private homes to pray at the altar for the Obon Tanagyo from July 13-16. Please make an appointment with the temple so that I can visit as many homes as possible. We will have the Obon service at our temple on Sunday, July 15 at 10:30. A potluck lunch will be held after the service.

World Missionary Conference

By Rev. Kanjo Bassett

Missionary Dept., Shumuin

The 9th World Missionary Conference was held at the Head Office of Nichiren Shu, Ikegami, Tokyo, June 13 to 15. Twenty ministers attended from abroad representing the mission districts for Hawaii, North America, South America, Europe, Korea and Southeast Asia.

Discussions included reports and updates from the various mission districts, challenges and possible solutions. Major topics included the upcoming 100th Anniversary of Nichiren Shu in North America and the vision for the next 100 years of Nichiren Shu overseas propagation.



The World Missionary Conference participants from abroad this year were: Bishop Shokai Kanai, Reverends Chishin Hirai, Eisei Ikenaga, Jyosho Yamamura, Tetsudo Takasaki, Ryusho Matsuda, Join Inoue, Kenjo Igarashi, Myosho Obata, Hosho Higuchi, Ryuoh Faulconer, Kanjin Cederman, Ryusho Jeffus, Shogen Kumakura, Yodo Okuda, Myoho Ishimoto, Kanto Tsukamoto, Shoryo Tarabini, Hokken Woo, and Kangyo Noda

Calendar August- September 2012

August 2-September 5: Third Shingyo Dojo of 2012 at Minobusan
August 3-9: Lay member's retreat in the state of Washington, by NONA
August 13-15: Obon
August 15: Memorial service at Chidorigafuchi National Cemetery for the unknown war dead sponsored by Nichiren Shu
August 25-26: Lay member's retreat at Nichiren Shu Buddhist Temple of U.K.
August 27: Service to commemorate the Matsubagayatsu Incident

September 3: Memorial service for Niko Shonin
September 12: Service to commemorate the Tatsunokuchi Incident
September 16: Inauguration ceremony and lay members' retreat at the Kuala Lumpur Sangha
September 17: Memorial service for Nisshin Shonin
September 18-19: Grand service at Shichimenzan
September 20-26: Autumn Higan (equinox) Week
September 27-29: Nichiren Order of North America national convention in Nevada
September 30: Fifth Anniversary and Inauguration ceremony of Kannonji temple in Nevada

By Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi

Nichiren Shu News

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