

Nichiren Shu News

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Nichiren Shu & Women (1)

By Rev. Myokei Caine-Barrett

In the Kaikyoge which we recite daily are the words, “honor be to the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, the teaching of equality, the great wisdom, the one vehicle.” This phrase speaks to the great significance of the Lotus Sutra. In today’s world, it is a significance that cannot be ignored.

I often wonder how many of us really consider what we are reciting or if we simply recite these words without thought or intention. What does it mean to call the Lotus Sutra ‘the teaching of equality?’ What practical application does it have to our lives and the lives of others?

When I think of the Lotus Sutra as the ‘teaching of equality,’ a very pointed and singular passage in Chapter V, The Simile of Herbs, comes to mind.

*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.*

*I am not tired of expounding
the Dharma
While I go or come or sit or stand.
I expound the Dharma to all
living beings
Just as the rain waters all the earth.*

I am reminded that my hands and mouth become the Buddha’s hands and mouth whenever I hold the Sutra and recite these words. I am mindful that my heart must respond in the same manner as the Buddha when I walk in the world because I am a practitioner—one who aspires for enlightenment. My conduct must be in accord with the four great vows we recite daily.

Over the last few decades, various movements have created positive change around the world, increasing the visibility and recognition of previously disenfranchised groups. For women, victories have been bittersweet as an increasing reactionary backlash attempts to chip away at hard-won gains. There is, however, growing recognition that nations cannot thrive if half the population is excluded from education and work, or decision-making.

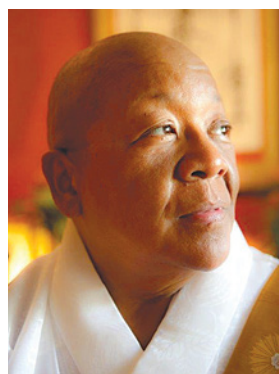
Women today may regard their status with trepidation, but they do not suffer the same limitations placed upon women during Nichiren Shonin’s time. Societal standards and mores designed to keep women in limited spaces were the five hindrances, the three obligations, and the eight rules.

Despite inclusion in the sangha since the Buddha’s time, women were

thought to be incapable of attaining Buddhahood because they were “incapable of becoming Brahma Heavenly King, Indra, king of devils [King Mara], Wheel-Turning Noble King, and Buddha” (from *Nyonin Goshō*, a collection of Nichiren Shonin’s letters to female followers, published in English). Women were also subject to the “three bonds [the Confucian moral that they should obey fathers at home, husbands when married, and children [sons] when widowed.” The eight rules were specifically addressed to nuns and their conduct around monks. Some of these limitations remain in place today in various societies around the globe and continue to govern how women can practice as Buddhists.

or breaking tradition, but by finding ways to work within norms so that women could achieve enlightenment. This granted his female followers strong support for their personal efforts in meeting the challenges of their lives. I think of Nichiren’s way as empowerment, a way of telling women followers “You are capable. Never give up. Continue to challenge yourself.”

While we may not know their given names and personal stories, the letters in the *Nyonin Goshō* are instructive and can provide today’s women support in the advancement of faith and in their lives. We can easily find ourselves walking in the same shoes as these women. The courage



Nichiren Shonin was a practical feminist...

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“You are capable. Never give up.
Continue to challenge yourself.”**

Nichiren wrote in Shijo Kingo-dono Nyobo Go-henji “Reading all Buddhist scriptures other than the Lotus Sutra, I don’t want to be a woman. Some sutras say women are messengers of hell, other sutras say women are like a serpent or a bent tree, while still other sutras say that their seeds of Buddhahood are toasted.” Nichiren Shonin definitely understood the limitations of the times and the extra burdens placed on women’s ability to practice Buddhism as a result.

Nichiren Shonin was a practical feminist, and his guidance was tempered by his knowledge of these limitations. He encouraged women not by abandoning

that Nichiren Shonin praised and inspired in these women reveal both their resilience and their willingness to challenge themselves.

We are fortunate that Nichiren Shu has ordained a significant number of women. Perhaps we will even see an Abbess of Minobu one day! Maybe not in my lifetime, but I know that women have made and continue to make great contributions to our order. Let’s explore their contributions together in the coming months.

Myokei Caine-Barrett is the resident minister for the Myoken-ji Temple in Houston, Texas.

NEW MONGOLIAN TRANSLATION OF THE LOTUS SUTRA

Rev. Gyoen Saito is the chief priest of Shunkeiji Temple in Tokyo and a delegate to the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and The Environment (ATREE), dedicated to enabling sustainable development throughout Asia. In 2006, on a visit to Mongolia, Rev. Saito met Rev. Erdenebat, a member of the Shakya branch of Mongolian Buddhism.

Like other Buddhist priests in Mongolia, Rev. Erdenebat recites the Lotus Sutra as part of his practice, using translations from Tibetan into Mongolian. The more he studied the Lotus Sutra, the more Rev. Erdenebat realized this teaching was essential to bring the people of Mongolia out of the persecution they suffered while their country was occupied by the Soviet Union, and more recently the inflation and deprivations caused by their transition to democracy. Rev. Erdenebat learned of Nichiren Shonin and his valiant efforts to spread the Wonderful Dharma of the Lotus Sutra. He also learned of

Kumarajiva’s translation of the Lotus Sutra into Chinese, and wanted to translate this work into Mongolian.

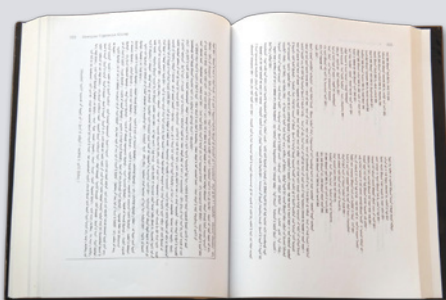
Rev. Saito was impressed with Rev. Erdenebat’s enthusiasm and made a great determination to make this new translation possible. In 2008, Rev. Saito received a letter of introduction from Mr. Mitsuoki Kikuchi, a member of Shunkeiji Temple and director of the National Archives of Japan. With this letter he visited the director of the National Archives of Mongolia to discuss this translation project. He also met with Professor Tulumbat Bordbart, of the Japanese Department in the School of Foreign Languages and

Culture at the Mongolian National University.

With funding from the Nichiren Shu Parliament, the project was underway. It took two years just to study and reconcile the different Buddhist doctrines of Mongolia and Japan expressed in the Sutra. The team decided to set aside the Tibetan terms used in the previous translation and use Sanskrit words. But this created its own problems.

It was necessary to standardize the spellings of these terms, the names of Bodhisattvas, and other nouns used in the Sutra.

The team also decided to use the classic vertical style of the Mongolian writing system to help preserve this aspect of Mongolian language. Had they



The new Mongolian translation of the Lotus Sutra will spread the Wonderful Dharma in Mongolia while also helping to preserve Mongolian language and culture.

adopted the widely used Russian Cyrillic characters to represent Mongolian words, this might have caused further erosion of Mongolian culture.

In 2013, Rev. Saito received a letter of appreciation from Mr. Shin-ichi Hayashi, counselor of the Japanese Embassy in Mongolia, for his great contribution to building cultural bridges between Japan and Mongolia with this publishing project. To celebrate completion of the translation, Rev. Saito and Rev. Erdenebat conducted a Peace Memorial Service together in the Gandantegchinlen Monastery, head temple of the Gelug Sect of Mongolian Buddhism.

Rev. Saito declared, “This project of translating Kumarajiva’s Lotus Sutra into Mongolian is a gift of love. It will lay a foundation for friendship between Mongolia and Japan. Mongolian people can now read and recite the Lotus Sutra in their own language.”

—Translated by S. Komukai. This article was published earlier in the Nichiren Shu Shinbun.

Interviews with NONA Ministers

By Rev. Shinkyō Warner

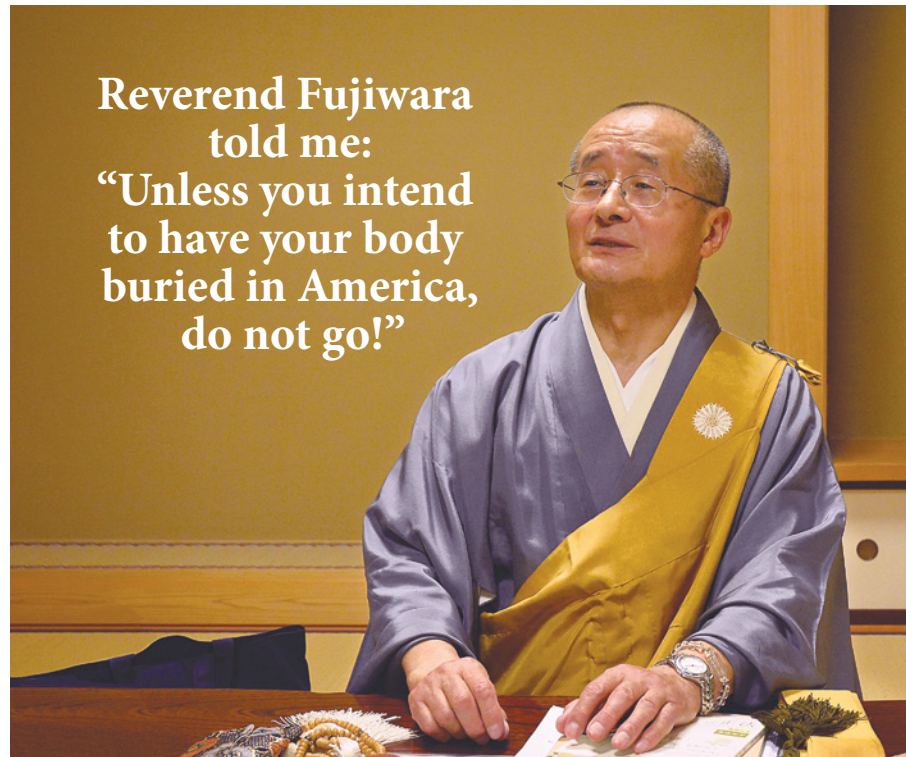
In this issue of Nichiren Shu News, we begin a series of interviews with ministers in the Nichiren Order of North America (NONA). The series starts with Bishop Shokai Kanai. Bishop Kanai is currently beginning his third four-year term as Kaikyo-kucho, or Head Minister of NONA.

Why did you want to come to North America?

When I was a senior at Rissho University in Tokyo, my English conversation teacher was none other than Bishop Senchu Murano. I knew Bishop Murano had spent many years in North America, and he knew that I wanted to go there. He sent me to a hotel to visit Rev. Ryobo Fujiwara who was then the resident minister of the Los Angeles temple. This was just before he began his 100-day Aragyō training in 1963. Rev. Fujiwara listened impatiently to my questions and then told me: “Unless you intend to have your body buried in America, do not go!”

What surprised you most about North America?

I was born and raised in Tokyo. When I came to Los Angeles, I thought it would



be another big city with people walking everywhere. But in Los Angeles, nobody walks. I thought I was in the country. I realized later that Americans use their cars for everything, even shopping for food.

Could you share with us what has made the greatest impression on you in North America?

Now that I am “semi-retired,” and living in Las Vegas, I have more time to travel and see both the national and state parks near southern Nevada.

There is so much natural beauty! You can really see how the land has been shaped by nature over billions of years. Compared to this geological scale of time, our time on this earth is only a brief sliver. That really makes

me wonder, why are we so concerned with the events of our daily lives?

What advice do you have for people who want to spread the Wonderful Dharma in North America?

When you speak with someone about the Dharma, pay close attention to how well they accept what you say. In Chapter Three of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha tells us, “Do not propagate it carelessly at the place where you are.”

He also tells us, “Those who do not believe this sutra but slander it will destroy the seeds of Buddhahood of all living beings of the world.” We should have compassion for such people and wish for their enlightenment. At the end of Chapter Three, the Buddha also reminds us, “They will be able to understand [this sutra] by faith. Expound to them the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma!”

Every day when we open the sutra, we read, “It does not matter we are wise or not, or whether we believe the sutra or slander it...” We must maintain our determination to spread this teaching for the benefit of all beings all over the world.

Study Tour 2014 Visits Cambodia

By Rev. Zenjo Nibe
Missionary Dept., Shumuin

The 10th Nichiren Shu Study Tour was held from February 22-28 in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, Cambodia. These tours are part of an international cooperation propagation movement supported by Nichiren Shu. They have already visited Laos, India, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. This year's tour was supported by the Nichiren Shu Annon Foundation and the “Helping Refugee Children Association” (NPO).



Study group at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap.

The study group had ten participants from throughout Japan ranging in age from 19 to 65.

The tour began at the World Heritage site at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap. The group was awed at the splendor and magnificence of the ancient temples.

The next stop was visit and play with children in a protective home in the slums near Phnom Penh. Although Phnom Penh has been developing rapidly recently, there are still many slums outside the city. The group visited a children's shelter in one of these areas and presented Japanese traditional toy dragonflies made from bamboo (taketonbo). They also planted ten papaya trees on the premises.

Our efforts were rewarded with the smiles on the children's faces. We were able to learn something about the history of Cambodia and mingle with the local children. All the participants gained a feel of international cooperation through this event.



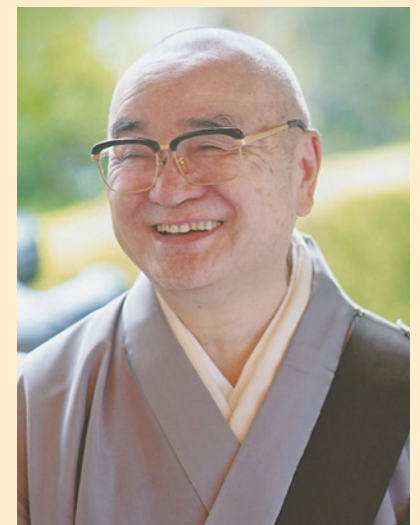
Cambodian children near Phnom Penh.

REVEREND KANNO PREACHES (30)

“...a Bodhisattva should perform proper practices, approach proper things, and then expound this sutra to all living beings.”

—The Lotus Sutra,
Chapter XIV:
Peaceful Practices

Bodhisattva (Bosatsu)



You might think a Bodhisattva is a person who has reached a high level of enlightenment. You might think that we, ordinary folk, could never be able to reach such a state as the Great Bodhisattva (Dai-bosatsu) Nichiren.

If so your understanding is incomplete. We should know that even we, ordinary folk, are able to become Bodhisattvas. This is the primary purpose of Buddhism.

A Bodhisattva is a person who does his or her utmost for the sake of others. Some of you may not think you can do this. Yes, it is possible. I am telling you: “You can become a Bodhisattva.” I am calling on you “to serve others,” which is the Bodhisattva practice.

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, many people are volunteering “to serve others.” It is admirable to have great respect for others. However, we can take a great step forward when we say, “let me serve others.”

Rev. Nisso Kanno, Head Priest, Kaichoji Temple, Shizuoka Prefecture

Nichiren Shonin's Shokutaku (5) Education for His Disciples and Lay Believers at Minobusan

By Rev. Gyokai Sekido, Ph.D.

Nichiren Shonin left his exile on Sado Island on the 13th day of the third month in 1274. He arrived in Kamakura on the 26th day of the same month. On the 8th day of the fourth month, the key members of the Kamakura Shogunate asked his opinion about the relationship of the invasion of the Mongols and Buddhism. Nichiren Shonin had already predicted a civil war and the Mongolian invasion in his *Rissho Ankoku Ron*, 14 years earlier in 1260. He then emphasized the importance of the doctrine of the Lotus Sutra. His advice was not accepted by the Kamakura Shogunate because they were only interested in the Mongol invasion.

Nichiren Shonin left Kamakura on the 12th day of the fifth month and entered Minobusan on the 17th day of the same month. This was the domain of Lord Hakii Sanenaga. Minobusan is a wonderful, quiet place surrounded by mountains and natural beauty. He imagined that this site was like Vulture Peak in India, where the Lotus Sutra was preached. He loved Minobusan very

much. To the west was Mt. Shichimen with seven cliffs and a large lake on the summit. Even today, many believers climb up this mountain and chant the Odaimoku towards the rising sun.

Nichiren Shonin educated his disciples and lay believers from his hermitage at Minobusan. Many lay believers brought letters and donations to him. On the 26th day of the seventh month in 1275, the wife of Takahashi Nyudo presented many melons, sasage beans (black-eyed peas), green soybeans, and yams to Nichiren Shonin. She was an



Nichiren Shonin's meals of summer vegetables. Melon pickled with salt, edamame (green soybeans), sasage beans (black-eyed peas) and vinegared yams.



Scene of Nichiren Shonin and audience with Shichimen Dai Myojin, a guardian goddess of the Lotus Sutra, at Minobusan. From the Nichiren Shonin Chugasan, preserved at Kyoninji Temple, Chiba Prefecture.

ardent believer, and later became a nun. She was the aunt of one of the main disciples, Nikko Shonin. Nichiren Shonin admired her faith in the Lotus Sutra and assured her that she would become a Buddha.

Sasage beans are an annual crop of the bean family. Because azuki-beans fractured when they were boiled, they were associated with the samurai spirit of "hara-kiri." "Sekihan" (rice steamed with red beans) is cooked in Japan for celebrations. In the Edo Period, sasage beans were used instead of azuki beans for "Sekihan."

A legend tells of a mysterious experience Nichiren Shonin, his disciples and Lord Hakii Sanenaga had at Minobusan. Nichiren Shonin was preaching the Lotus Sutra in his hermitage to an audience. A lovely young woman in her twenties wearing

a beautiful green and red kimono was standing outside the hermitage. The audience wondered who this woman was. When the sermon was over, Nichiren Shonin said to the woman, "Show us your actual appearance." The strange, beautiful woman smiled and answered. "I am a celestial maiden of Mt. Shichimen." She then asked Nichiren Shonin for water. He gave her the water plate used for Buddhist ceremonies. Reflected on the surface of the water was the figure of a red dragon. Suddenly, the sky became cloudy, and the woman changed her appearance into a huge red dragon, three meters long. With a sudden gust of strong wind and whirling clouds, the dragon flew up into the western sky towards Mt. Shichimen. She was Shichimen Dai Myojin, one of the guardian goddesses of the Lotus Sutra.

Archbishop Nichimyo Asahi, The Father of Modern Nichiren Shu Overseas Propagation



By Rev. Gen'ichi Oikawa

Nichimyo Asahi, who was the 18th Archbishop of Nichiren Shu from 1910 to 1913, paved the way for spreading Nichiren Buddhism throughout North America. He was born in a village in Niigata Prefecture in 1833. He entered the Buddhist priesthood at the age of 13 as a disciple of Rev. Nitto of Myokoji Temple in Niigata. Rev. Nitto, who was the 59th Abbot of Myokakuji Temple in Kyoto, was a famous preacher who delivered 13,000 sermons in his lifetime.

Nichimyo Shonin had a thorough education under Rev. Nitto. He began his studies at Nakamura Danrin (Seminary) in Chiba Prefecture. After

completing the course at the age of 19, he went to Jitsugyoji Temple in Hakodate, Hokkaido, where he made friends with a Russian clergyman. Learning about foreign countries from the Russian, he was inspired to spread the teachings of Nichiren Buddhism overseas.

It was not easy to go abroad at that time, and it would be many years before his dream was realized. In the meantime, Nichimyo Shonin devoted himself to the development of Nichiren Shu Buddhism within Japan. With his ability to deliver wonderful sermons, he went on pilgrimages to many places. He also served as the head of Higashiyama Danrin (Seminary) in Kyoto to educate the next generation. Afterward, he was appointed the resident priest of the following temples: the 6th Abbot of Koshoji Temple in Saga Prefecture, the 64th Abbot of Myokakuji Temple in Kyoto, and the 48th Abbot of Honkokuji Temple in Kyoto.

The first time he set foot on foreign soil was at the age of 58 in 1891, when

he went on a study tour to the Korean Peninsula. The following year, he established a group in Myokakuji Temple to generate interest in overseas missionary activities among people in Japan. In just nine years, he established four temples in Korea. In 1899, he went to China to establish a Betsuin (annex) of Honkokuji Temple in Shanghai. He made a pilgrimage to sacred Buddhist sites in India in 1910. He was probably the first Nichiren Shu minister to visit Mt. Sacred Eagle.

In Los Angeles, there were many Nichiren Buddhist followers among the immigrants, so Nichimyo Shonin sent his disciple (and grandson), Rev. Kanjo Asahi, to establish a temple there.

On May 26, 1914, Kanjo Shonin set up a room at the Fedora Hotel on East Second Street as a temporary worship hall. This was the first step to propagate Nichiren Shu Buddhism in North America.

The following month, he officially established a temple on East First St.

On July 12, he held an inaugural ceremony, which was attended by 150 people.

In 1915, despite being 82 years old at the time, Nichimyo Shonin sailed to San Francisco alone to attend the World Buddhist Convention and to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the Los



Members gathered for the first anniversary of the Los Angeles Temple with Archbishop Nichimyo Asahi.

Angeles Nichiren Shu Beikoku Betsuin.

Thanks to his missionary work, more temples were established in North America from 1916 to 1931 in Seattle, San Francisco, Vancouver, Portland, and Sacramento.

In 1916 Nichimyo Shonin passed away in Kyoto at the age of 84. He had delivered more than 13,000 sermons, while traveling abroad over 40 times. He was the backbone of Nichiren Shu, laying the foundation for teachings that fit a new era, and he became a pioneer for spreading Nichiren Shu Buddhism overseas.

This year we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Nichiren Shu propagation in North America. When more people recall the beneficial influence of Nichimyo Shonin and try to follow his great path, then new prospects for Nichiren Shu overseas will continue to open up into the next century.

—Translated by S. Komukai

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was originally published in Japanese in the March issue of *Kaigaifukyo* published by NOPPA.



First meeting for the founding of the Los Angeles Temple. Rev. Kanjo Asahi standing to the right of the altar.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Bishop Kanai Lecture in Tokyo Rev. Kanjo Bassett

On April 4, 2014, Bishop Shokai Kanai gave a talk for the Nichiren Shu sponsored Monthly Friday Lecture Series at the Head Office of Nichiren Shu in Tokyo. His talk covered the forthcoming 100th Anniversary of Nichiren Shu in North America and his own propagation experience in the USA beginning in 1964. He sketched his accomplishments and the challenges he faced while spreading the teachings of Nichiren Shu and raising a family in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and Seattle. He also discussed his establishment of a new temple in Las Vegas: Kannon-ji.



It was a rare and valuable opportunity for Japanese temple members to hear the adventure of a lifetime devoted to Nichiren Shu propagation.

Nichiren Mission of Hawaii Dean Makinoda Rainbow Workshop

The Rainbow Workshop, sponsored by the Headquarters of Nichiren Missions, was held on Sunday, March 30 at the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii. This workshop is a seminar to study basic doctrines, practices and protocols of Nichiren Buddhism. The workshop was open to the public and anyone interested in Buddhism.

In a single day, Bishop Hirai and Rev. Yamamura provided participants with an overview of Shakyamuni Buddha and his enlightenment, Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Shonin, a history of Nichiren Buddhism, Nichiren Buddhism in Hawaii, and new religions that have been inspired by Nichiren Buddhism. They used the story of Never Despising Bodhisattva as an introduction to gassho and other expressions of Buddhist faith.

The workshop allowed us to absorb important concepts that cannot be covered in Sunday Dharma talks. The day felt like a meeting of the sangha with the Eternal

Buddha Shakyamuni and Nichiren Shonin themselves. These workshops improve the ability of the lay men and women to support the Order.

At the end of the workshop, each participant received a certificate of completion. Everyone was delighted by this. Some even announced that they would proudly display their certificates.

Thanks to Bishop Hirai, Rev. Yamamura and, of course, to Mrs. Hirai, for making this event possible.

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.

San Jose Buddhist Temple Rev. Arnold Matsuda Nichiren Bazaar

Our annual Nichiren Bazaar was held on Sunday, May 18. This is an annual fund raiser with temple members selling tickets. Besides 800 chicken teriyaki box lunches (bento), there was curry rice, festival rice, noodles, barazushi (type of mixed rice) and manju (Japanese sweets).

The festivities included a concert by the Marimokai Koto Group (traditional stringed instrument) and the Kakehashi Chorus Group. Art from the Tachibana (Japanese language) School students and Ikebana exhibits were shown in the "Machishu Corner" along with tastings of matcha tea used for tea ceremony.

This was a wonderful opportunity to build a better spiritual center in faith, based on the support and help of all temple members.

Japanese Language Presentation (Watashitachi no Nihongo Happykai)

The Sixth Friendship Japanese Language Presentation sponsored by the Federation of San Francisco Bay and Coast Area Japanese Schools (Gakuen Kyokai) was held at our temple on Sunday, March 9. This year, 35 students participated in this presentation from San Mateo Nippon Gakuen and our Tachibana School. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to stand on stage and express their abilities to the public in Japanese. All the participants were very pleased with their presentations and received great applause.

Seattle Choeizan Enkoji Nichiren Buddhist Temple

Rev. Kanjin Cederman

We have added several ritual aspects to the activities of our temple such as serving tea and sweets after the service. The temple is our training ground, where we go deeper into our personal and group practice.

We realize that there is great meaning to the ritual and manners we observe, grounded in the ideals of mindfulness and solemnity. The orderly arrangement of shoes at the door of the temple is a manifestation of the mindfulness in our hearts.

This internalization of mindfulness and solemnity brings a better experience of Buddhism in our daily lives. Mindfulness lets us observe and release habits of the mind that maintain the illusion of a separate self or ego and keep us from the wisdom of boundless compassion. Being fully mindful means being fully attentive to everything as-it-is, not simply filtering everything through our own subjective and limited likes and dislikes. Each of us should evaluate whether we are being mindful both at the temple and in our daily lives. This allows us to realize how we affect those around us and beyond.

Buddhism is a discipline and a process rather than a belief system. The Buddha's teaching lets people see the true state of things through direct experience of our daily lives as transmitted to us through the disciplined environment of the temple dojo (place of practice). This allows the teaching to manifest as our basic sense of heart rather than just an idea. From our daily chanting of the Odaimoku we carry this realization from our lives into all parts of existence.

As Nichiren Shonin wrote in the *Shoho Jisso Sho*, "Without learning and practice, Buddhism will cease to exist."

Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple Rev. Myosho Obata

Hanamatsuri (Shakyamuni Buddha's Birthday Service)

On April 10, three Yae-Zakura (double-flowering cherry trees) in front of the temple came out in full bloom. These trees were planted about fifty years ago by members of the Portland Temple. The Hanamatsuri Service was held on April 13 at 2:00 p.m., just in time for the blossoms.



The Hana-mido (the infant Buddha's house) was decorated with beautiful flowers by our members: Kiyomi Kimura, Racheal Inouye, and Cheryl Tsunemitsu. Thanks to them, we enjoy a different Buddha's house each spring.

During the service, the infant Buddha was placed in the center of the Hana-mido, surrounded by flowers representing the Lumbini Garden where He was born. We celebrated the birth of the Buddha by pouring Amacha (sweet tea) over the statue of the infant. Following the service, we held a luncheon prepared by the temple's Fujinkai (ladies' group). We deeply appreciate their contribution to the temple.

We enjoyed traditional Japanese food including Bara-Sushi. Some of the congregation tasted the Amacha that had been poured over the statue of the infant Buddha. They enjoyed the naturally sweet flavored tea with no sugar or artificial sweeteners.

The Hanamatsuri celebration is not only the birthday of Shakyamuni Buddha. It is also a day to strengthen our faith in the Buddha.

North Carolina Sangha Rev. Ryusho Jeffus

Hanamatsuri

A Hanamatsuri celebration was held Tuesday, April 8 at the Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy Hospital (CMC-Mercy).



Teri Bolotin, Director of Spiritual Services at CMC-Mercy is committed to respecting diversity by celebrating religious events from a variety of traditions.

Teri has offered two holidays for each religion throughout the year for the hospital to sponsor events. After some discussion, we decided to observe the birth of the Buddha and the Feeding of Hungry Ghosts, Segaki.

The hospital donated flowers to help decorate the Lumbini Garden for the baby Buddha. Throughout the lunch hours, all employees, visiting families and patients were invited to bathe the baby Buddha with sweet amrita tea and take souvenir petals to commemorate the day.

Calendar for June-July 2014

JUNE 1	Minobusan, Founder's Hall, Change of the Founder's Robes
JUNE 15-17	Minobusan Kaibyaku-e, Commemorating the day when Nichiren Shonin entered Minobusan (May 15, 1274)

JUNE 25	Memorial for Nitcho Shonin
JULY 13-15	Bon Festival

Compiled by Rev. Kaikei Ochiai

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