

Nichiren Shu News

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Reverend Nissho Kanno Installed as 54th Archbishop of Nichiren Shu

From Nichiren Shu Shimbun



Rev. Nissho Kanno, Bishop of Ikegami Honmonji Temple, became the 54th Archbishop of Nichiren Shu, in a ceremony officiated by Rev. Hosen Nakagawa, Chief Administrator of Nichiren Shu.

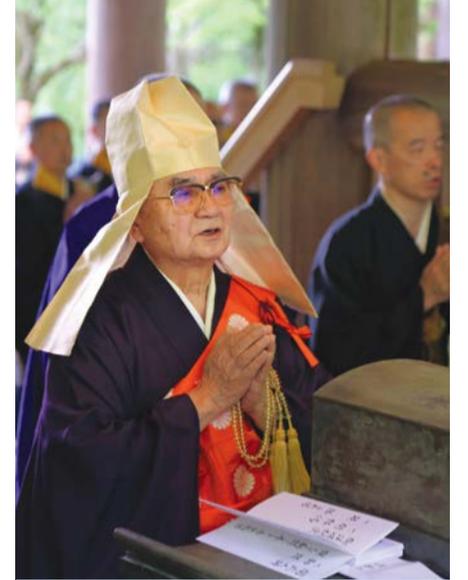
Rev. Nissho Kanno, Bishop of Ikegami Honmonji Temple, became the 54th Archbishop of Nichiren Shu. The inaugural ceremony was held on May 9 at the Head Office of Nichiren Shu, where he received the Seal of the Archbishop from Rev. Hosen Nakagawa,

Chief Administrator of Nichiren Shu. In his inaugural address, Rev. Kanno remarked, "Our life has become uncertain and more confusing. To calm such personal and social anxieties, we as Nichiren Shu priests and devotees are required to work together so that

we can realize our Founder's wish to spread peace throughout the land by establishing the True Dharma. We need your help."

The following day, Rev. Kanno went to the tomb of Nichiren Shonin at Minobusan to announce his inauguration to our Founder. In front of the tomb he stated, "I, Nissho, respectfully receive the mandate to unify Nichiren Shu. I will do my best to perform this important responsibility with the spirit: 'We will not spare even our lives' and 'I will transmit the True Dharma at the cost of my life.'" He also pledged to meet the expectations of Nichiren Shu followers and devotees and to repay the favors of our Founder by promoting our Rissho Ankoku and Odaimoku Kechien Campaign. After the ceremony, he met the Honorable Rev. Nisso Uchino, Chief Abbot of Minobusan Kuonji Temple, and former Archbishop of Nichiren Shu, who kindly said, "I hope we all will fully support you so that our Founder's wish can be realized."

Rev. Kanno's term as Archbishop of Nichiren Shu is four years. During this



Archbishop Kanno praying at the grave of Nichiren Shonin at Minobusan.

period, he will conduct the services honoring the 800th anniversary of the birth of our Founder in many districts before holding the main commemorative service at Tanjoji Temple in Chiba Prefecture in 2022.

—Translated by Sensho Komukai

WESAK CELEBRATION HELD IN PENANG, MALAYSIA

By Rev. Yuon Ito, Ichinenji Temple, Penang



Pouring sweet tea over the baby Buddha.

On May 29, the Wesak Celebration was held in Penang. Wesak is the biggest annual event for Buddhists in Southeast Asia, wherein people commemorate the birth, attainment of Awakening, and Parinirvana of Shakyamuni Buddha on the same day. This event is held on the day of the full moon every April according to the lunar calendar in Malaysia. Ichinenji Temple held a pre-service on the night of May 28. The main ceremony was held the next morning. It was conducted by Rev. Yuon Ito, assisted by Revs. Kangyo Noda and Kenin Ito. Around 120 members of

the congregation joined the ceremony which was decorated with many flower arrangements and offerings. Participants burned incense in front of the statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, poured sweet tea over the statue of Prince Siddhartha (the baby Buddha) and offered flower petals to the sleeping Buddha while chanting the Odaimoku. This year, seven other priests from the Nichiren Shu Youth Association of Wakayama Prefecture, Japan, attended the ceremony and conducted a Kito blessing for the members. Ichinenji Temple was filled with smiles and happiness throughout this event.

In addition to the temple celebration, another special parade was held at night. This parade was sponsored by the Malaysian Buddhist Association,

and over 30 other Buddhist Association groups joined as well this year. People walked around the center of George Town for seven kilometers for about three hours alongside the flower-decorated float with the statue of the Buddha sitting in the middle. Ichinenji Temple joined the parade for the ninth time and spread the merits of the Odaimoku to the people on the streets while beating their hand drums.

A member of Ichinenji Temple, Jeney Phoon said, "This is the eighth time for me to participate in this Wesak Day celebration. I feel myself purified and freed from the defilements of the three poisons of greed, hatred and delusion when I bathe the statue of Buddha in the ceremony. I was happy to be able to join the parade to spread the Odaimoku by



Beating hand drums and chanting the Odaimoku.

chanting and beating the hand drum. I promised myself to keep participating in this event in the future."

Another member of Ichinenji Temple Margaret Yeoh said, "Wesak Day has always been the most significant day among the Buddhist community. From the preparation process to the end of the entire procession journey, everyone from Penang Ichinenji Temple put their whole heart into it and came together as one. This scene truly touched my heart and reminded me that Buddha's teaching needs nothing more than constant practice and working as one."



Members preparing flowers for the float.



Priests from Wakayama Prefecture join members in a prayer service and perform a Kito blessing.



Ichinenji Temple float in the night parade.

KAKURINBO

By Yoshiko Smallman

In Minobu, Yamanashi Prefecture, lies Gyogakuin Kakurinbo. First and foremost, it is a Nichiren temple, but it is also a charming *shukubo* at the edge of Kuonji, which welcomes guests of all backgrounds. Nitcho Shonin, one of Nichiren Shonin's six senior disciples, considered as a patron saint of study and the eyes, was the founder of Gyogakuin. While *shukubos* were originally resting places for visiting priests and pilgrims from afar, Kakurinbo welcomes all who wish to experience a stay in an authentic Japanese temple setting. Rev. Zeryo Higuchi is the head priest of the temple, and Mrs. Junko Higuchi is the gracious and talented manager, who is busy greeting guests and running the temple as well as the *shukubo*. Hearing from other guests who stayed at the same time that I did, not all *shukubos* welcome guests who don't speak Japanese because of the language barrier. Here, there was no problem at Kakurinbo. During my stay, there were guests from Spain, Switzerland, Brazil, the U.K. and the U.S.

The rooms are divided by screens called *fusuma* and fitted with comfortable futons on tatami mats. Guests are welcomed by a friendly staff and served green tea in their rooms. Before dinner, you can explore the surrounding mountainous areas, stroll to Kuonji Temple, walk down the path to the main shopping street, walk around the garden, or relax in a big communal, but gender-separated, *Koshu* salt wine bath.



Dinner and breakfast are served in a large dining area. The delicious multi-course meals are mostly vegetarian and focus on local specialties such as *yuba*, *akebono daizu*, and local vegetables that are in season. I enjoyed each dish for the delicate taste and aesthetic presentation. They also have a drink menu that includes beer, sake, and more.

At first, I thought that I had made the mistake of booking two nights, so I asked to cancel my reservation for the second night. However, when I woke up in the morning, I asked them to restore



my reservation, because I was having such a pleasant experience.

The next day, Mrs. Higuchi had a Japanese bride's kimono set up, and it took only five minutes to put on and take pictures. This was fun. She also introduced me along with two other guests to her pottery teacher, Mr. Akihiro Takeshita. In his studio, we made cups and bowls in the beautiful and peaceful setting of Minobu.

I reserved my stay on AirBnB, but the other guests had reserved through the Kakurinbo website, Booking.com, TripAdvisor, and others. For people who stayed the night, breakfast was included, but dinner varies depending on the way the reservation is made.

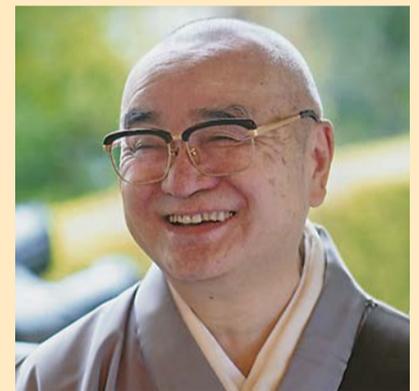
Kakurinbo is easily accessible from Tokyo. There are buses from Shinjuku as well as trains to Minobu Station. From Minobu Station, Kakurinbo is a taxi or bus ride away. If you are looking for an adventure away from the big cities, this is the adventure to try!

For more information, you can visit www.kakurinbo.com

REVEREND KANNO PREACHES (52)

“Each letter of the words of the Lotus Sutra is compared to the earth.”

—Nichiren Shonin,
Reply to Ounichi-dono



“Equality”

Japan is blessed with four seasons. In spring, the entire country is gloriously filled with blossoms, grass and trees. Imagining life in countries where the climate is cold throughout the year, or places where spring does not come, I feel a deep sense of gratitude. In the letter above, Nichiren Shonin shows us “the richness and the greatness as well as the capacity of the earth, is not limited to Japan,” comparing it to the “supreme teaching of the Lotus Sutra.”

The Earth nourishes all life. The Earth gives those who believe in the Lotus Sutra the power to live toward tomorrow. The Earth accepts everything. Likewise, it is taught in the Lotus Sutra that, however great they may be, the offenses committed by a person who believes in the Lotus Sutra can be expiated by the merits of the Odaimoku he or she chants while repenting their offenses. The Lotus Sutra accepts us all as we are and enables us to grow spiritually.

The Earth has no boundaries. The current borders are the product of the greed of mankind. It is not what the Earth desires. No thought of racial or any other kind of discrimination exists for believers of the Lotus Sutra. Whenever and wherever, the Lotus Sutra is impartial to all of us. All plants grow, equally receiving the benefits of the earth. They grow differently, however, in accordance with their capacities to receive the benefits. This is not the result of the Earth's discrimination. It is a mere difference based on the individual nature of each plant. Likewise, no discrimination should exist among believers of the Lotus Sutra. This is why we praise the Lotus Sutra saying, “*Namu, Byodo Dai'e Ichijo Myoho Renge Kyo*,” which means “Honor be to the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, the Teaching of Equality, the Great Wisdom, the One Vehicle.”

*Rev. Nissho Kanno, Archbishop of Nichiren Shu and
Bishop of Ikegami Honmonji Temple, Tokyo*

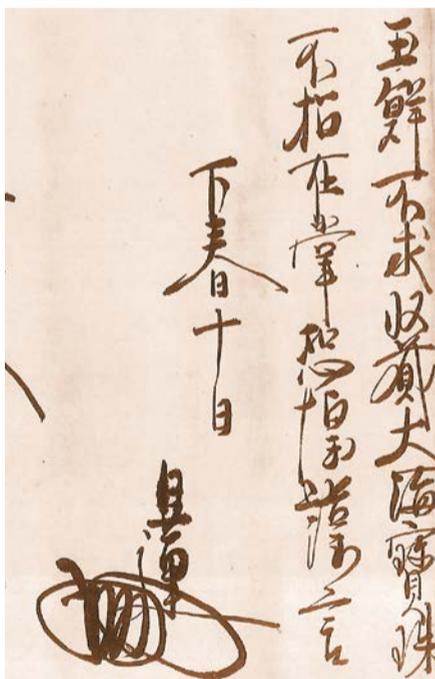
Buddhism Q&A (10)

By Rev. Gyokai Sekido, Ph.D.

Origin of the Name “Nichiren”

The name “Nichiren” means “Sun Lotus.” The “Sun” part of his name originated in Chapter 21 of the Lotus Sutra, “The Supernatural Powers of the Tathagatas,” wherein the Buddha describes the keeper of the Lotus Sutra as follows, “Just as the light of the sun and the moon eliminates all darkness, He will be able to cause innumerable Bodhisattvas to dwell finally in the One Vehicle.” The “Lotus” part of his name originated in Chapter 15, “The Appearance of Bodhisattvas from Underground,” wherein Maitreya Bodhisattva says of the bodhisattvas from underground, “Those sons of yours are innumerable. They have practiced the way to Buddhahood for a long time. They have supernatural powers and the power of wisdom. They have studied the way of the Bodhisattvas well. They are not defiled by worldliness just as the lotus-flower is not defiled by water.”

Nichiren Shonin became a priest when he was sixteen years old, and he was conferred the priest name “Rencho” (Lotus-Eternal) by his teacher Dozen-bo. After that, he studied in many famous Buddhist temples in places including Kamakura, Kyoto, and Nara. He returned to his home town Kominato, Chiba in 1253 and announced the result of his many years of researching Buddhist



This detail from “A Letter to Soya Nyudo” includes the signature “Nichiren” at the end of the letter.

teachings. This was the day that Nichiren Shonin proclaimed the supremacy of the Lotus Sutra for the first time and inaugurated the practice of chanting *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*. At that time, he also changed his name from Rencho to Nichiren. This was the way he expressed his determination to save all the people of Japan from warfare and natural disasters.

We always welcome questions about Buddhism from our readers. Please send your questions by e-mail to editor-nichirensunews@nichiren.or.jp or contact us through your local temple.

GREAT FIGURES WHO HAD FAITH IN NICHIREN SHU (1)



Hokusai Katsushika's most famous woodblock print from the "Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji."

By Rev. Sensho Komukai

Hokusai Katsushika (1760-1849), born in Tokyo, was an *ukiyo-e* artist known for his colored woodblock prints. His major works include the "Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji" and "Hokusai's Sketches." Yet it is little known that he had deep faith in the teachings of Nichiren Shonin and the Lotus Sutra. He especially revered Myoken Bodhisattva (the Deity of the Big Dipper). He often visited Ikegami Honmonji Temple and Horinouchi Myohoji Temple. Whenever he walked outside, he would chant the *dharani* (spells) of Universal-Sage Bodhisattva. He was so focused on this that he often did not even see friends as they passed by. The *dharani* of Universal-Sage Bodhisattva begins with "Atandai, tandahatai, tandahatei..." According to Chapter 28 of the Lotus Sutra, anyone who hears this *dharani* will be protected by the Universal-Sage Bodhisattva and be able to ward off evil spirits.

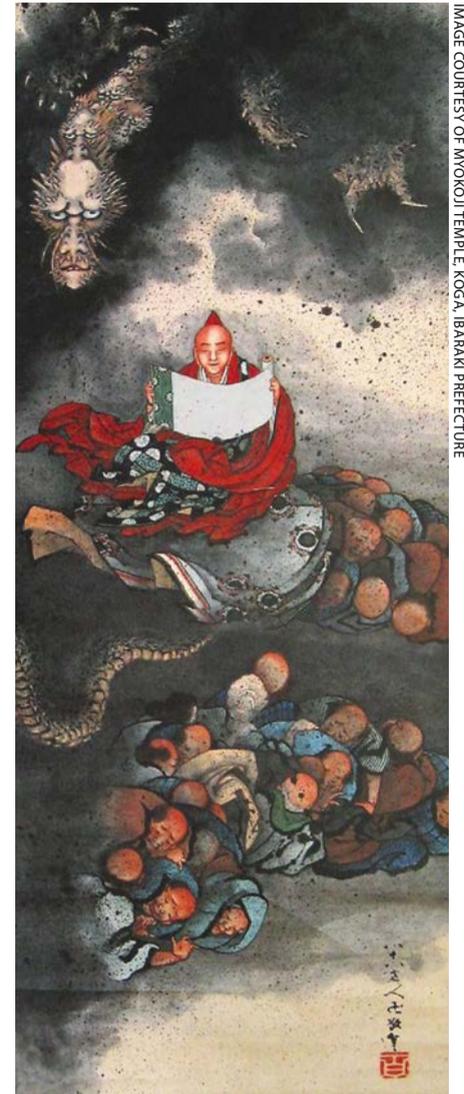
In Hokusai's name, "Hoku" means "North." He took this name due to his wish for long life, because it was believed in China that human life would be determined by the Big Dipper in the North. "Sai" means "to shut yourself away in your home on an unlucky day and to prohibit anyone from entering the house." Therefore, the name Hokusai came from his sincere wish to be protected by the Deity of the Big Dipper. To avoid any evil influences, he chanted the *dharani* whenever he had to go out.



Self-portrait of Hokusai Katsushika.

Despite his devout faith, he created few works that were overtly religious. This is because *ukiyo-e* art was closely related to worldly affairs. Religious subjects were not considered suitable themes for *ukiyo-e* paintings. One of his few works dealing with his religious background is *An Illustration of the Responsive Manifestation of the Great Goddess Shichimen*, which shows how frightened people were to see a female dragon with seven faces, while Nichiren Shonin calmly chanted the sutra before her. This picture was completed two years before Hokusai passed away.

Hokusai preferred a modest life and simple food, not caring about his appearance. An apprentice at a bookstore who went in and out of Hokusai's house on errands said, "Hokusai would make a rough sketch, shutting himself up in a six-mat *tatami* room with little sunlight. A futon was left spread out near his working table and a rice bowl or a pot that looked as if they had never been washed were on the floor. All his clothes were begrimed with dirt and entirely worn out." He showed no interest in anything but the development of his art. He devoted himself intensely to the pursuit of a perfect piece. Just before he died, he said, "If I were given ten more years of life, or say at least five years, I would be able to become a genuine painter with absolute value." He died at the age of 90.



An Illustration of the Responsive Manifestation of the Great Goddess Shichimen is a rare example of Hokusai Katsushika's religious-themed work.

IMAGE COURTESY OF MWOKOJI TEMPLE, KOGA, IBARAKI PREFECTURE

2018 Kokusai Fukyoshi Conference in Tokyo

By Rev. Shinkyō Warner

Every year, Nichiren Shu Ministers working outside Japan gather in Tokyo to share our experiences and learn more about our traditions and practices. This year, we had a detailed discussion of what it means for us to train both disciples, *shami*, and our members in general. That discussion was supported by lectures from Rev. Shoshi Mihara, Director of the Nichiren Shu Modern Religious Research Institute, and Revs. Kosho Ohara and Shunko Kawasaki, experts in *shomyo*: the ceremonies and traditions of Nichiren Shu.

Rev. Mihara talked about Nichiren, both as our teacher and as a disciple of his master Dozen-bo. Even though Nichiren disagreed with Dozen-bo about the true practice, his reverence and respect for his teacher was an example for all of us.



Rev. Shunko Kawasaki explains *shomyo* theory.

Rev. Ohara reminded us as ministers that, whether we are training our disciples or members in general, the goal of training is not merely to pass along information. It is important that we teach people about the Lotus Sutra, using the teachings of Nichiren as our guide. But the true purpose of any training is to increase faith.

Rev. Ohara discussed the concept of *ikusei*: raising up through education. We

want to help all people develop their faith through understanding and participating in ceremonies, through learning the contents of the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren's writings, and through purifying our spirit through chanting the Odaimoku. In this spirit of faith, making effort without neglect, we constantly renew ourselves, develop kindness, consideration and respect, and demonstrate our faith to all people.

Seeing our faith as renewal, we can still find ways to match modern styles and remain grounded in our traditions. If we lose that grounding, if we do not have a deep appreciation of our traditions, then we just create our own styles; we just go through the motions. With that grounding, our ceremonies and our lives are true expressions of our faith.

I greatly enjoyed spending this precious time with my fellow overseas ministers.



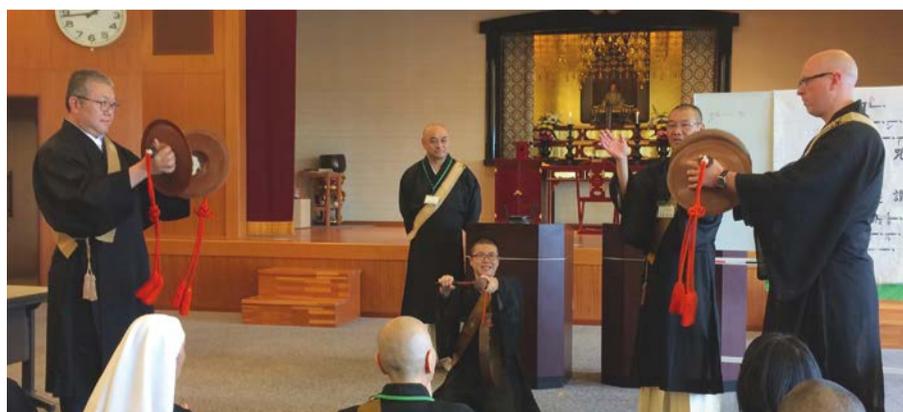
Revs. Ervinna Myoufu and Myojitsu Nagakubo enjoy seeing articles about their sanghas.

Not only was it a chance to see and talk to people dear to me whom I had not seen in a year, it was also an opportunity for all of us to learn how to refine our faith through practice and inspire that faith in others.

We Kokusai Fukyoshis are all grateful to the International Department of Nichiren Shu for organizing and sponsoring this conference. This will help us all to work together to further our Founder's wish to spread Namu Myoho Renge Kyo throughout the world.



Rev. Shoshi Mihara, speaks about teacher-disciple relationships in Nichiren Shu.



Revs. Hokken Woo, Ervinna Myoufu and Kanjin Cederman practice *shomyo* with guidance from Revs. Kosho Ohara and Shunko Kawasaki.



Rev. Kanju Ueda and Rev. Shokai Kanai looking over Rev. Hokken Woo's new book about his temple in Gwangju, South Korea.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Honolulu Myohoji Mission Daniel Liu, Temple President

Seminar by Two Ministers from the Mainland

On March 24, a special seminar was held with guest speakers NONA Bishop Myokei Caine-Barrett from Texas and Rev. Kanjin Cederman from Seattle. Both are Nichiren Shu ministers who were born and raised in the U.S. and are successful in propagation on the mainland.

Rev. Caine-Barrett's unique propagation style is bringing Nichiren Shu to prisons in Texas.

Rev. Cederman has developed a large network of communities, 22 in all, with approximately 200 members, spreading the faith and practice of the Lotus Sutra.

The commitment of both ministers to Nichiren Shu Buddhism is absolute in the many teachings there are to offer to all communities. They have shown energy and excitement in their work. It was a clear demonstration of the diversity and



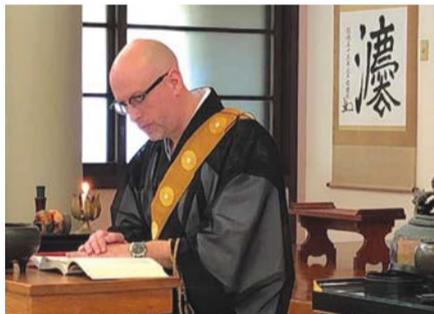
universality that is inherent in Nichiren Shu Buddhism.

Although it was a small group that attended their meditation service on Friday evening, their seminar on Saturday, their Sunday service, and their Dharma instruction on the Lotus Sutra, all walked away reflecting upon the tremendous amount of information and knowledge that was shared.

My own personal takeaway was the set of values emphasized in developing a community of believers, or Sangha. There is a need to develop strong relationships with people who are looking for trust and sincerity, who are hoping to find acceptance and joy in their own lives as well as with others. There is also a need to continue teaching and learning, to keep doing something, and to accomplish something as Nichiren Shu Buddhists.

We have an important and meaningful message to spread. It is not the numbers that are important but the equality of those participating in the Faith and Practice. The numbers will come! Develop energy within the Sangha, and maintain a constant presence for the Sangha.

My sincere thanks to Rev. Yamamura for putting this together. Our sincere thanks to Rev. Caine-Barrett and Rev. Cederman for their enthusiasm and insights into our great Faith! In Gassho.



Rev. Kanjin Cederman spoke on the importance of developing a strong community of believers.

San Jose Myokakuji Betsuin

Rev. Shinko Matsuda

New T-3 Day Event

2017 marked the 35th year of the annual Chicken Teriyaki Bento Bazaar. On behalf of the temple, I would like to express our sincerest appreciation to everyone in the community for their longtime support for these successful events. From this year, we started a new event called T-3 Day (Tachibana Talent Taikai).

On May 5, the event started off with a study class by Yuko Haneishi from the Japanese-American Community in the Senshokan Hall. The theme was "Security and Enrichment of Our Lives in the U.S."

A flower arrangement demonstration was conducted by Kiho Yonenaga and Kisui Matsuda. Then there was a Shorinji Kenpo demonstration led by Katsuya Hirayama and a joint dance session led by Noriko Rovner, which all the attendees actively participated in.



In the Hondo (main hall), there was a Koto performance by Yukari Sakaguchi and the Tachibana students. A Talent Show featured students performing on violin, clarinet, and ukulele. It also had ballet numbers and martial arts and flower arrangement demonstrations.



In the Shoin (guest room), people bought handmade manju (Japanese sweets), Nichiren Special curry rice, noodles, and other handmade items.

This event was held in the Tachibana School, but we also had a lot of supporters from organizations affiliated with Myokakuji Betsuin. The event made a net profit of more than \$1,700. Thank you all for your hard work and support!

Nichiren Buddhist Sangha of Texas (Houston)

Rev. Myokei Caine-Barrett

Important Conferences Being Held in Toronto

I am on the board of the North American Buddhist Alliance, which will hold a one-day interfaith conference on Buddhism on October 31 in Toronto, Canada. The theme is "On Inclusion! A Buddhist Intrafaith Gathering." Directly following that, the Parliament of the World's Religions will be held in Toronto from November 1-7. I will be making a presentation as a panelist on "Buddhist Wisdom on Social Inequity in North America." It would be wonderful to see Nichiren Shu support these activities and promote the attendance of Japanese priests to show the worldwide reach and strength of our faith.

MY EXPERIENCE AT KITAYAMA HONMONJI TEMPLE

By Shami Yotatsu Chiamulera, Brazil

On March 14, I started my third trip to Japan. The first, in 2015, was for the Docho Ceremony at Seichoji Temple in Chiba. The second, in 2017, was to attend the Nichiren Shu Study Tour 2017 promoted by the Head Office of Nichiren Shu, at the Gyogaku Dormitory of Minobu University. Now, the goal was to stay for



Shami Chiamulera with Bishop Nichiju Asahi, Rev. Gaei Asakawa and Rev. Kyokei Ono.

a week at Dai Honzan Hokke Honmonji Kongen to study and practice.

Thanks to my master, Rev. Yodo Okuda, with the support and collaboration of Rev. Kyokei Ono, resident minister of Kitayama Honmonji, I received permission from the abbot of the temple, Bishop Nichiju Asahi, to stay at the temple during Ohigan.

I arrived in Kitayama on March 17, and I was welcomed by Rev. Ono and Bishop Asahi. Rev. Ono speaks English fluently, and I could understand and speak with him. However, he always tried to communicate with me in Japanese for the purpose of training.

While there, I went to every ceremony, including the Ohigan Service. I assisted in the activities of the temple and got to know the temple's buildings and land. I also learned some of the history and tradition of the Fuji Lineage that was



Shami Chiamulera in front of the Hondo (main hall) of Kitayama Honmonji Temple.

established by Nikko Shonin, one of Nichiren Shonin's Six Senior Disciples.

I also visited Honzan Koizumi Kuonji, another of the five great temples of the Fuji Lineage, which enshrines the tomb of Nitcho Shonin, another of the Six Senior Disciples. Before returning to Nagoya by Shinkansen, I visited Kotokuji Temple, which was founded by Nikko Shonin.

My next goal is to attend the Sodorin to advance my formation as a minister, aiming not only to enter and complete Shingyo Dojo, but also to engage in the propagation of Nichiren Shonin's teaching in Latin languages, especially in Brazil.

This time at Kitayama Honmonji Temple was very special, and I want to thank everyone who helped me accomplish that dream. My biggest motivation to repay these great debts of gratitude is to always advance on the Buddhist Path. In Gassho.

Calendar for August 2018 – September 2018

AUG 13-16 Obon (Traditional Chinese Calendar)

AUG 15 Memorial Ceremony for Victims and Unknown War Dead and Prayer for World Peace at Chidorigafuchi National Cemetery, Sponsored by Nichiren Shu

AUG 27 Matsubagayatsu Persecution Memorial Day

SEP 3 Memorial for Niko Shonin

SEP 12 Tatsunokuchi Persecution Memorial Day

SEP 17 Memorial for Nisshin Shonin

SEP 18-19 Grand Ceremony at Shichimensan

SEP 20-26 Autumn Higan (Equinox) Week

Nichiren Shu News c/o The Head Office of Nichiren Shu, 1-32-15 Ikegami, Ota-ku, Tokyo 146-8544, Japan; Tel. +81-3-3751-7181, E-mail: editor-nichirensunews@nichiren.or.jp
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