

Nichiren Shu News

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(1)

'Daimokuji,' New Nichiren Shu Temple, Born in Singapore

By Rev. Ryuken Akahoshi
General Manager of Nichiren
Buddhist International Center

Another dedicated group keeping their faith in the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Shonin was newly reborn and joined the Nichiren Shu Order in Singapore. The inauguration ceremony of Singapore Daimokuji Temple of the Fivefold Hill took place on November 13, officiated by Rev. Myosho Obata, who is in charge of missions in Southeast Asia, assisted by Rev. Kanshin Mochida from Nichiren Shu Headquarters and Rev. Gakugyo Matsumoto, former overseas minister in Hawaii. It was witnessed by Rev. Ryuken Akahoshi, General Manager of Nichiren Buddhist International Center.

In front of the altar totally remodeled and shining in gold, the temple hall was filled with enthusiastic members who have been keeping their strong faith in the Odaimoku for the last twenty years or so in Singapore. They were also congratulated by members of the Penang Ichinenji Temple, the Klang Kan-onji Temple, both in Malaysia and representatives of the Jakarta Rengeji Temple of Indonesia. They came to Singapore to celebrate this commemorative occasion together. It took a 12 hours long bus trip. One of the Klang members, Mr. Lee Beng, offered to the temple's



Rev. Nun Myosho Obata officiates the inaugural ceremony at the Singapore Daimokuji Temple



The congregation gathering at the inauguration of the Daimokuji Temple in Singapore

altar the complete 28 chapters of the Lotus Sutra written in Chinese characters along with Chinese pronunciation, which he finished typing in only one year. The atmosphere of the temple hall was so energetic with about eighty people in total.

During the ceremony, Rev. Obata reported to the Buddha and Nichiren Shonin about the new Nichiren Shu temple of Singapore stating, "This temple used to be called Lotus Sutra Buddhist Association and has been a central place of having faith in the Lotus Sutra for more than twenty years in Singapore. Although they had about one thousand membership once, they faced some difficulties within the group. Since then, the Board of Directors of the temple and members have been independently keeping their faith in the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku. Last year I started communication with the Lotus Sutra Buddhist Association by visiting Singapore. Finally the relationship between the temple and Nichiren Shu had matured and they changed the temple's name to Daimokuji Tem-

ple of the Fivefold Hill and also decided to join the Nichiren Shu Order."

The members' enthusiasm and power of faith appeared in loud and harmonized voice of chanting the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku along with the sound of a drum beaten by a young lady. They seemed to feel joy to have their temple refreshed and begin the new era of the temple with the Nichiren Shu Order.

One of the dedicated members, Mr. Alvin Quah, who is the secretary of the temple, stated his joy of joining Nichiren Shu, "Although I had been a Christian, I was attracted to the philosophy of Nichiren Shonin and convinced to the philosophy of mankind in Buddhism. Then I became determined to spread the Law of the Buddha. My mind set was completely changed regarding Christianity and Buddhism. I understand that Buddhism emphasizes life of dignity. I was also moved by Bishop Tansei Iwama's lecture in China. I understand that Nichiren Shu is the open community following the origin of Sakyamuni Buddha."

Following the ceremony, Rev. Akahoshi gave his lecture in English about the doctrine of Nichiren Shu. He talked about why the Odaimoku is saving people. Some members asked him questions such as how they can eliminate sufferings or what is Hobo,

slandering the Dharma. They seemed to be happy to receive answers clearing up their doubts.

On the second day of the ceremony, November 14th, the ceremony of receiving precepts or Jukai was officiated by Rev. Obata. During the ceremony Rev. Akahoshi and Rev. Matsumoto blessed the altar and also all the members. There were about 10 families who received individual Nichiren Shu Mandala and about 25 individuals who received precepts by vowing to keep the Great Mandala and the Odaimoku.

Under the guidance of Rev. Obata and great support of Nichiren Shu Headquarters, Nichiren Shu in Southeast Asia is strongly and firmly growing with faithful members of Penang, Klang, Jakarta and Singapore and has a bright future.

Disaster Aid Donation

Also on this occasion, the members of the Penang Ichinenji Temple made the donation of 417,000 Japanese yen to the Nichiren Shu Disaster Aid, which supports the victims and the temples hit by the current Japanese disasters including the flood and earthquakes in Niigata Prefecture this fall. The Jakarta Rengeji Temple also donated US\$125 to that aid, and the Klang Kan-onji Temple announced their support to that aid.

Writings of Nichiren Shonin, Doctrine 3, Published

The third volume of the Writings of Nichiren Shonin compiled by Dr. Kyotsu Hori, former bishop of Nichiren Mission of Hawaii and professor at the Tokyo Rissho Junior College for Women, and edited by Dr. Jay Sakashita, instructor of religion at the University of Hawaii, has recently been published and distributed world wide by the University of Hawaii Press.

This book is the eleventh project of the English Translation committee of the Nichiren Shu Overseas Propaga-

tion Promotion Association (NOPPA), which has published eleven volumes of English translation of the writings of Nichiren in Japan and U.S. A. The last three of these books, published and distributed by the University of Hawaii Press, are the translation of the first three volumes of the Nichiren Shonin Zenshu (Complete Writings of Nichiren Shonin) written in modern Japanese by modern scholars of Nichiren Buddhism.

The latest volume, which has just been published, is the English version

of the Nichiren Shonin Zenshu, Volume III: Theology 3, written by Professor Gyoko Otani of the Rissho University, Tokyo, and published by the Shunju-sha in 1994. It constitutes seventeen writings of Nichiren such as the Hoonjo (Essay on Gratitude), one of the five major writings of Nichiren, which provides a general history of Buddhism in India, China, and Japan. Also included are the Kyoki Jikoku-sho (Treatise on the Teaching, Capacity, Time, and Country), Ken Hobo-sho (Clarification of Slandering the True

Dharma), Nanjo Hyoe Shichiro-dono Goshō (A Letter to Lord Nanjo Hyoe Shichiro), and Soya Nyudo-dono-gari goshō (A Letter to Lay Priest lord Soya), in which Nichiren describes his unique theology of the five principles for propagation. The remaining writings chiefly concern the comparison between the Lotus teaching against other schools of Buddhism, showing Nichiren's untiring efforts to establish the teaching of the Lotus Sutra as the True Dharma.

Those interested, please contact University of Hawaii Press Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-1888 www.uhpress.hawaii.edu

The State of Ichinen Sanzen (5)

By Rev. Kanji Tamura
(translated by Rev. Kanshin Mochida)

Ten Aspects (2) —“Three Time Refrain”

The practice of the Daimoku chanting taught by Nichiren Shonin is the integration of the world of “3,000 Existences Contained in One Thought” doctrine. “3,000 Existences Contained in One Thought” means that our minds contain the three thousand worlds: the whole universe. The numeral symbol of 3,000 is derived from multiplying the conceptual categories of “mutual possession of ten realms,” “ten aspects of existences,” and “three categories of realm.” “Mutual Possession of Ten Realms” means that all living beings can be classified into 10 kinds of existences from hell at the bottom to the realm of Buddhas on top while each of them contains the characteristics of the other nine realms inside his mind, so that the minds of all living beings are interrelated to one another and finally united in one. “Ten Aspects of Existences” describe the actual conditions of each living being in the ten realms. That is, each of them is originally equipped with ten aspects of appearances, natures, entities, powers, activities, primary causes, environmental causes, effects, rewards and retributions, and equality of the above nine aspects. “Three Categories of Realm” mean three worlds. That is to say, the whole existences in the world are divided into three categories: each living beings, its body and mind as the substance, and the environments in which all living beings exist. When these “three categories of realm” are combined with multiplica-



Rev. Kanji Tamura

tion of the “mutual possession of ten realms” and the “ten aspects of existences,” it is revealed that the flow of our one thought is not only connected and united with every move of the body and mind of all living beings, but also spreads over the whole environmental world surrounding us.

In the previous article, we described each of the “ten aspects of existences,” and this time we would like to explain the meanings of “three time refrain.” When we chant the Lotus Sutra, chapter 2 “Expedients,” we are supposed to read the part describing the ten aspects three times. This “Three Time Refrain” stands for the “threefold truth of emptiness, transiency and the middle way.”

Grand Master T’ien-t’ai demonstrates the unification of all the sutras (the whole Buddhism) by the Lotus Sutra, and describes the Buddhist practice and the contents of enlightenment in three steps.

1) First of all, a Buddhist practitioner should try to improve himself and drives for spiritual freedom by discarding all evil desires, or attachment. In order to eliminate attachment, the practitioner should contemplate the view which insists, “All things in the world are transient; they only exist temporarily due to the primary and environmental causes, and their substance is empty; nothing exists forever.” This view is called the contemplation of emptiness and by practicing this contemplation a practitioner perceives the truth of emptiness.

2) However, when we observe the actual world, there are living beings straying and suffering, attached only to the present. In order to save and guide such living beings, the practi-

tioner must dive into the existing transient world again, sharing the same viewpoint with them and lead them into the Buddhist way. Thus going back to the viewpoint of living beings and observe things from it is called the contemplation of transiency, and the condition of the real world revealed by this contemplation is called the truth of transiency.

3) A practitioner, in the course of improving himself and upgrading his practice by guiding others, should be able to achieve the contemplation of the middle way, truly free and universal, which could indicate emptiness as well as transiency without being attached to either of these viewpoints. With this contemplation of the middle way, for the first time, the essence of this whole world (the truth of the middle way) would be revealed. This is said to be the state in which all things are harmoniously fused and united.

To practice these three contemplations of emptiness, transiency and the middle way step by step is called the three contemplations of gradation. The states of the threefold truth achieved through the three contemplations of gradation is literally gradual, and each of the three states seems to be different from each other, so that they are called the threefold truth of isolation, where each of them is contrasting and separated. This is still an imperfect state of enlightenment.

Nevertheless, when a practitioner practices the three contemplations more thoroughly, eventually he would be able to go through the three views of emptiness, transiency and the middle way at the same time. That is called the three contemplations of one mind. Though the three contemplations of one mind, appears the state of the genuine enlightenment called the threefold truth of harmonic assimila-

tion, in which the truths of emptiness, transiency and the middle way are compatibly united. The contemplation of emptiness is total negation, while that of transiency means total affirmation. It is said that the contemplation of the middle way is the actual state of enlightenment appearing through negation and affirmation. The reason why the ten aspects is read three times is that the whole existence revealed through the ten aspects originally indicates the state of the threefold truth of harmonic assimilation of emptiness, transiency and the middle way. Moreover, the whole universe unveiled through ICHINEN SANZEN is, to some extent, the state of the threefold truth of harmonic assimilation of emptiness, transiency and the middle way.

However, it is difficult for us to imagine the state of “the threefold truth of harmonic assimilation of emptiness, transiency and the middle way” in practice. For example, there is a cup of coffee, to which we add milk and stir well. This fluid, coffee and milk, can be said to be coffee or milk. At the same time, it can be said to be coffee as well as milk. Yet there is milk in it, so we could literally say, “It is not coffee.” At the same time, we could say, “It is not milk.” Moreover, we could say, “It is not coffee nor milk.” When we describe it in a word, it is “café latte.” Likewise, let us imagine that all existences are consisted by fusing and uniting. As the example mentioned above show, the threefold truth of harmonic assimilation is uncovered with the piles of negation and affirmation.

Although all the existences in the world are different from one another, they exist by fusing and being united together, and intimately being assimilated with our minds. To think in this way is the basis of the “3,000 existences contained in one thought” doctrine. (to be continued)

The Legend of Nichiren (12)

By Rev. Gyokai Sekido, Ph. D.

Going to Kamakura by the Sea Route

It is known that Nichiren Shonin had been to Kamakura by both land and sea routes. The land route passes through Ichikawa from Mobarra to Kamakura. It seems that the sea route crossed Tokyo Bay from the neighborhood of Ichikawa or the Boso Peninsula to the Miura Peninsula. His accurate footprints, however, aren’t definitely known. Anecdotes about his meeting with people on the way to Kamakura, however, are recorded in the legend.

Nichiren held the “receiving the sutra” ceremony, granting the religious precepts of the Lotus Sutra to his parents when he started the journey. Because it is not his own power but his parents’ pious acts that enabled him to carry through with the faith in the Lotus Sutra, Nichiren took out the scroll of the Lotus Sutra from his bosom and pressed it on the parents’ forehead, saying, “We will uphold the Lotus Sutra seriously from now on till we attain Buddhahood. Namu Myoho Renge-kyo.” His parents shed tears of joy, and happily saw off their son. It is said that this was the beginning of the “receiving



Rev. Gyokai Sekido

the sutra” ceremony.

Nichiren arrived at the seashore (present Tomiura-cho, Chiba Prefecture) of the Boso Peninsula in order to cross the sea (present Tokyo Bay) and go to Kamakura. The north wind before the rainy season was strong and the waves were high in the middle of May. Therefore, Nichiren decided to wait for a favorable wind in the town of Izumisawa. There Nichiren met three Gonnokami brothers, Taro, Jiro, and Saburo. Touched by the personal magnetism of Nichiren, they became his eager followers. They climbed a seaside mountain to chant the daimoku, recite the Lotus

Sutra, and pray for a favorable wind to the dragon god. Thanks to their prayers the sea became calm so that Nichiren could cross the sea safely. People began to call the ground where the Gonnokami brothers prayed “Namu Valley.” The brothers then built a Lotus Hall there for their mother, which was converted to the Myofukuji Temple by Nichiren Shonin in 1279.

The ship with Nichiren aboard crossed the strait, and arrived at Komegahama of Fukadaura (Yokosuka City today). The ship could not reach the shore because of a shoal.



A fisherman carrying Nichiren Shonin on his back to shore. The woodblock print is reproduced from “Nichiren Daishi Shinjitsu-den”

Nichiren raised the hem of the kimono unwillingly and decided to walk in the sea. Seeing this, a fisherman on the beach carried Nichiren on his back to shore. Though Nichiren appreciated it very much, he saw the fisherman’s bleeding foot. It was caused by the horn of a turban shell stuck on his foot.

Nichiren, who did not have medicine with him, chanted a phrase of the Lotus Sutra, “The Lotus Sutra is the good medicine to cure the person who suffers.” Inexplicably, it is said that horn of the turban shell on this beach has disappeared since then. The Ryuhonji Temple was later built in this place.

Fifth Anniversary of Dragon Palace Temple Observed

The fifth anniversary ceremony of the Dragon Palace Temple, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India, was held on Nov. 26th officiated by Ven. Nichiki Kato, President of the Nichiren Shu International Buddhist Association and Abbot of the Myohonji Temple in Kamakura and was attended by 42 people from Japan and more than 20,000 people from the area. Ven. Shoshin Kurihara, Executive Director of Missionary Bureau, Rev. Shingyo Imai, Manager of the International Section, and Rev. Dairyo Tomikawa, officer of the Missionary Department, represented the Nichiren Shu Headquarters.

The ceremony began with the Buddha Vandana; homage to the Three Treasures, followed by the Daimoku chanting march of the Adv. (lawyers), Sulekha Kumbhare, (President of the temple), the



Marching to the temple: in the center Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare followed by the Japanese priests

Japanese delegates, and 300 students of Hardas School (the free educational institution run by the temple). The ceremony was attended by hundreds of Buddhist priests, intellectuals and spiritual leaders from various countries including Japan, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan, etc. The Tibetan monks presented the Buddha Vandana in Tibetan language.

Various public awareness and socio-cultural programs were also arranged at Kamptee, a city nearby, as a part of the celebrations. They included photo exhibition on the life of the Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar, founder of the New Buddhist Movement, free health check-up camp, free water arrangement, free legal assistance, etc. by the cooperative organizations of the temple.

After the visitation to the Dragon Palace Temple, the members of the International Buddhist Association and the officers of the Headquarters went to Sarnath, Varanasi, where the Buddha first preached His teaching about 2,500 years ago, and paid a courtesy visit to the Horinji (Dharmachakura) Temple. The Horinji Temple has now launched the



Service: from right, Rev. Shingyo Imai hitting the drum facing to the people, Rev. Nenshin Ohno, Rev. Shinyu Ogyu, Bishop Joyo Ogawa

second construction plan including the stupa for the Buddha's ashes, school, hospital, etc. for the local people. Rev. Myojo Sasaki, chief priest, Rev. Giken Kimura and Rev. Kenjo Sunaoshi, the official overseas ministers are working together very hard for the construction and they just finished the annual Oeshiki commemoration, marching on the boulevard of the Buddhist sacred place of Sarnath with the people in that area, but they welcomed the visitors from Japan with a big, heartfelt smile.

The Ten Aspects and the Three Truths

By Rev. Ryuei McCormick

So far in this series we have described the ten worlds, their mutual possession, and the ten aspects of the true nature of all existence. When these are factored together we get 1,000 of the 3,000 worlds in a single thought-moment. When the three realms of the five aggregates, living beings, and their environment multiply these then all 3,000 worlds are accounted for. Before moving on to a description of the three realms I would like to say more about the ten aspects and the reason why Nichiren Buddhists recite them three times as part of our daily practice when reciting the passage from chapter 2 of the Lotus Sutra (the Hoben-pon).

The reason for this practice can be found in the core teaching of the T'ien-t'ai school known as the "unification of the three truths." This was the T'ien-t'ai way of describing the relationship between emptiness, provisional existence, and the Middle Way and how this relationship is realized in our actual practice of Buddhism. From the perspective of the T'ien-t'ai school the teachings of the Buddha are arranged so that the Buddhist practitioner can have a progressively deeper understanding of the nature of reality as they go from pre-Mahayana to provisional Mahayana to the true Mahayana teachings of the Lotus Sutra.

According to this system, the Buddha began teaching his disciples with the Tripitika or Three Baskets teachings. They are called this because they are composed of the "three baskets" of pre-Mahayana Sutras (discourses), Vinaya (monastic precepts), and Abhidharma (systematic teachings). In these teachings emptiness is approached through analysis of the aggregates and the links of dependent origination. In other words, this teaching aims to reveal the emptiness of the self by examining the components of existence such as the five aggregates of form, sensation, perception, volition, and consciousness. It is shown that each of these is impermanent, subject to suffering, and cannot be the basis of an abiding independent self either alone or together. The links of dependent origination reveal the succession of causes and effects that make up existence and likewise reveal that an abiding self cannot be found therein. By doing this, we can realize the contingent nature of the self and thereby extinguish greed for what could satisfy the "self," anger in regard to what threatens such a "self," and ignorance regarding the selfless nature of the aggregates. In this way we can attain nirvana and free themselves from birth and death. It might be asked: What are the aggregates if they are not a self? Do they somehow exist in their own right in some manner? And who is it that is free of birth and death and who enters nirvana if there is no self?

Next, the Buddha taught the Prajnaparamita Sutras for more advanced disciples and those just starting out on the bodhisattva path. Because these teachings are

directed at both groups they are called the teachings they hold in common. This level of discourse approaches emptiness more immediately or intuitively because it does not involve analysis. Rather, one learns not to impute substance or a fixed nature onto things in the first place. It is also more thoroughgoing in its application of emptiness in that it applies it not just to the self but to all conditioned phenomena. So in answer to the above question, the aggregates not only do not provide a self either together or in part to an individual, but they themselves have no abiding substance or fixed nature. Each aggregate depends upon causes and conditions, which are also dependent on causes and conditions and so on ad infinitum. Emptiness in this teaching is the emptiness of any fixed nature or substance whatsoever. In response to the question as to who is saved, this teaching asserts that the bodhisattvas vow to save all sentient beings but do not cling to the idea that there are beings at all. It is all an empty show, but a show manifesting suffering or liberation depending upon the flow of causes and conditions. The question might then be asked: "How should bodhisattvas deal with causes and conditions if they know that they are all ultimately empty and have no basis, origin, or goal and no real self or entity abides anywhere?"

In answer to this question the Buddha taught the Flower Garland Sutra that is directed specifically to those who are firmly established bodhisattvas. At this point, one needs to see that emptiness is not a dead-end but just the beginning. This requires an appreciation for contingent phenomena and thus the truth of provisional existence. While continuing to recognize that all things are empty, the bodhisattvas also see that this emptiness is not a blank void or nothingness. Rather, the lack of a fixed or independent nature is what allows all things to flow and move, change and grow, and ultimately interrelate so thoroughly that all things affect all other things like a web that quivers all at once when any one strand is touched. All things, all beings, are provisional manifestations of this interpenetrating dynamic process. Realizing this, bodhisattvas negate the negation of emptiness. They are free to reengage the world and appreciate all things without clinging or attachment. Gradually they realize the Middle Way that integrates peaceful detachment with compassionate involvement. T'ien-t'ai calls the empty, the provisional, and the Middle Way aspects of reality the three truths. In this teaching they are approached dialectically. Emptiness is the thesis, provisional existence is the antithesis, and the synthesis is the Middle Way. This is not the final teaching however, because an even greater integration lies ahead. Finally, one might ask: "If the Tripitika and common teachings negate the self and all phenomena, and the specific teaching negates that negation, is there any explicitly affirmative teaching in Buddhism at all?"

The explicitly affirmative teaching can be found in

the Lotus Sutra and the Nirvana Sutra. These two sutras present the perfect or well-rounded (the Chinese character used here holds both meanings) teaching of the integration of all three truths - the empty, the provisional, and the Middle Way - into a seamless whole. Each of these, if properly understood, immediately leads to an understanding of the other two. For instance, what is empty of a fixed independent existence is simultaneously provisionally existent due to causes and conditions and therefore exemplifies the Middle Way. While the earlier teachings negate the world of birth and death through an analytical or intuitive approach to emptiness, or negate a one-sided emptiness by affirming the provisional existence of all things; the perfect teaching affirms the total unity of the three truths of the empty, the provisional and the Middle Way. In this teaching, the affirmative aspects of the earlier negations are made explicit. Negative and limiting aspects are emptied, positive and boundless phenomena are provisionally affirmed, and all manifests the liberation of the Middle Way. For instance, previously the vehicles of the *shravakas* (monastic disciples) and *pratyekabuddhas* (privately awakened ones) were condemned in favor of the bodhisattva vehicle, but now all the provisional vehicles are shown to be none other than the unfolding of the One Vehicle leading all to buddhahood. In previous teachings the historical Shakyamuni Buddha was shown to be a finite provisional manifestation of the cosmic principle of buddhahood that is sometimes personified as a cosmic buddha named Vairocana who is said to transcend birth or death. The Lotus Sutra, however, portrays Shakyamuni Buddha himself as the one who reveals the unborn and deathless nature of buddhahood through his timeless spiritual presence and skillful activity. Previous teachings compared and contrasted the empty, the provisional and the Middle Way, but here the intrinsic unity of the freedom of emptiness, the creative responsiveness of the provisional, and the sublimity of the Middle Way is fully revealed.

In recognition of this unity the ten aspects are recited three times, once each for emptiness, provisional existence, and the Middle Way. For instance, the first term *Nyo Ze So* consists of three characters. The first character *Nyo* means "such" and represents the "emptiness" of all phenomena because "suchness" is a synonym for emptiness in Buddhism. The third character in each of the ten aspects shows what differentiates. In this case *So* is "appearance." So "appearance" and the other terms represent provisional existence. The middle character *Ze* or "like" holds the two others together and so represents the Middle Way. Reciting the ten aspects three times began as a way of acknowledging that the three characters for each aspect expressed the unity of the three truths. And in turn this means that the unity of the three truths is very much a part of what the three thousand worlds in a single moment is all about. Hopefully, we can take this awareness into our practice and awaken to the significance of the unity of the three truths in terms of our own lives.

SAN JOSE

Welcome Rev. Sugawara

A new minister has been dispatched from the Joenji Temple in Tokyo, to support the temple activities and train as an overseas minister. He is Zuisho Sugawara from Fukushima Prefecture. After completing his education at Rissho University, he started working at the Joenji Temple. He completed his Aragyō training last year. He will be helping the temple prepare for the coming 25th anniversary next year.

Video or DVD

"Nichiren Shu Buddhist Practices" by Nichiren Buddhist International Center (Donation: \$10).

This was created to assist practitioners of Nichiren Buddhism in learning how to conduct the daily Buddhist practices. The video or DVD provides support for all levels.

"Liturgy of Nichiren Shu" by Nichiren Buddhist International Center (Donation: \$6).

Sermon by Rev. Kimura

Rev. Junsei Kimura of the Jojuji Temple in Chiba has been on the staff of the Betsuin Temple to educate young Nichiren-shu priests and was the instructor for the Shami Seminar held on October 27th at Hayward this year. The following are excerpts taken from his sermon given at the Oeshiki service at the Temple.

Children! Call 110

This is a Japanese 'Block Parents' Poster. When school children encounter any type of danger such as attempted kidnapping, stalker chase or attacks, they can run into a house that has this poster posted outside. The purpose for these posters are to protect children from these undesirable accidents. Then they call the police by dialing 110. Nowadays you can see many of these posters posted outside houses in Japan.

Why do we need such posters in modern society? What has happened to our society? It is sad to see such posters protecting the children.

On top of this, you see many kinds of posters prohibiting things which were considered common sense in the past such as "No Trash," "No Dumping," "Recycled Items Only," "No Parking," etc. These are for

adults who don't follow social rules or manners.

What is the definition of the word "adult"? The dictionary says that it is: 1. a person who is fully grown and developed, and 2. a mature person with discretion.

A child will become an adult in age, size and strength but can we truly say that an adult is a mature person with good judgement on everything because of their many experiences? An adult is supposed to be a person with good manners, common sense and moral judgement. However, in today's world we have so many adults without these qualities. Whenever, I see those negative posters I wonder whether I myself am doing the right thing as a priest or the right things for society. "Am I really sharing the teachings of the Buddha with others?" or "Am I really practicing the teachings of the Buddha?" People in general think that Buddhism concerns memorial services for the ancestors and individuals' inner self but this is not true.

Nichiren Shonin said: "When the body bends, its shadow also bends, when the Buddha's Dharma is not understood correctly and is not believed righteously, the worldly law becomes disorderly."

Japan is considered to be a Buddhist country, but I don't think they are following the teachings of the Buddha. On the contrary, it is sad to see so many unfortunate incidents.

Recently there has been a new movement like "let us reconsider our mind;" or "importance of the mind." However, this kind of teachings were taught three thousand years ago by Sakyamuni Buddha. Our talk and actions change by the state of our minds. Therefore, it is very important for us to have a right mind. Nichiren Shonin said: "Our faith will bring us to foster a right mind."

First of all, we must prepare correctly. This is the "structure of the mind."

Secondly, we must make the right efforts. This is "cultivate the mind." Buddha compares our mind to farming land. Similar to the field, one must cultivate our minds, make it soft, give fertilizer, water and sunlight and make it

Church Events

By Sandra Seki



so that our minds produce good products. If we have prejudice and curdled minds, then we miss a chance to accept good advice and other people's experiences. Therefore, we must keep our minds soft to accept other ideas.

Thirdly, we must polish ourselves with wisdom and compassion. When we have the right faith, we can brighten our minds, which will illuminate others. If we have many dark sides in our minds such as grudge, jealousy, anger, conceit, hungry spirit, and betrayal, we must polish and cultivate our mind. At the same time, we must build our character by doing good things such as to pay respect, cooperate, encourage each other, support and forgive one another. By such acts, we can try to build a true human mind. Through faith we can aim to become a good person. This is the way Nichiren Shonin lived. His name "Nichi," like the sun, brightened all beings doing away with prejudice. If you change your mind, then your attitude/ perspective will change. If you change your attitude/ perspective, then your actions will change. If you change your

actions, then your habits/ customs will change. If you change your habits/ customs, then your character/personality will change. If you change your character/ personality, then your fate will change.

If your fate changes, then your life will change. Everything in this life starts with the mind. If you change your mind, then you will have a solid foundation in faith that will not decrease or decline. Let us continue to chant the Odaimoku together!

SANGHA

'Bodhi Day' by Pres. Kay Hara

Looking back through the year 2004, we can recall certain happenings that had an impact on our lives together with some that were trivial. We can also embrace the good for joy and the bad for its deterrent lessons. We are offered a moment to open our eyes to check and balance the events which were recalled.

Observing Bodhi Day, celebrating the day when Sakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment, we are able to see things

in retrospect to think of it as an enlightening review. Of course we all have much to learn and it is said that everyday is an experience of learning. In order to carry this out we have to have an open mind. The Sangha will celebrate Bodhi Day on December 5th, one of the three greatest events in Buddhist chronology, from 11 a.m. at the Long Beach Japanese Culture Center. (Also a Seibo Year-end Party will follow.)

MAUI

Puunene Nichiren Mission

A year and three months have passed since Rev. Bungen Kaneko became the resident minister of the Puunene Nichiren Mission. Some board members have changed and new members have joined the mission. The mission has been raising funds for the management of the temple by holding flea markets and manju sales; the manju sale being one of the biggest annual events for them. This year the number of orders for the manjus were sky high. Together with several of the members, (many being senior members) Rev. Kaneko prepared manjus for three days beginning at 4 a.m. and continuing till past 4 p.m. The group made a total of 4,000 manjus which sold very well.

HONOLULU

Dedication of Memorial Monument Held

Five years ago, an elderly couple visited Bishop Joyo Ogawa from Japan. They were Mr. and Mrs. Makoto Morino who came to visit the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii through the introduction of Archbishop Nichiko Fujii of Minobusan. Mr. Morino was the president and consultant of the Eagle Industry Company, a large firm in Japan. He held memorial services for his ancestors and deceased soldiers of World War II. He had been a commander in the Japanese army and he felt responsible for letting his troops die in a battle in Burma. He had also lost his right arm in the battle.

After the War, he visited each family of the deceased soldiers in his command and delivered their personal belongings to them.

He always said that his life work was to do good for people and society. He donated \$10,000 for the building fund and another \$10,000 for the Butsugu Fund. He also donated \$10,000 to the Japanese Culture Center when the Japanese Culture Center was facing financial difficulty.

He also donated a large amount to the Kuakini Hospital.

On December 21, 2002, he called Bishop Ogawa to come and visit him at Kuakini. So Bishop Ogawa visited him and prayed for his health.

After the prayer Mr. Morino said to the Bishop, "My life is ending soon, and though I promised Archbishop Fujii that



The Odaimoku monument built in the precinct of Nichiren Mission of Hawaii

I would see him at the 100th anniversary celebration, I am afraid I cannot keep the promise. I would like to make a donation to Minobusan and your mission."

He wrote a check for \$100,000, saying it was for whatever the Bishop thought was necessary for the mission. Bishop Ogawa promised to build a perpetual memorial monument beside the new Hon-do. One week after this visit, on December 28, 2002, Mr. Morino passed away very peacefully in his sleep at the age of 84.

After discussing Mr. Morino's wish with the directors of the Mission, Bishop Ogawa got estimates from four companies, (two local and two from Japan). Finally Kawaguchi Sekizaiten from Shizuoka, Japan, was picked and all together 18 tons of monumental material was shipped to Hawaii.

On September 8th they started the foundation and on the 30th they started the structure work. The monument was

completed on October 4th. The sun shines brightly on this monument which has the Odaimoku written by Archbishop Nichiko Fujii inscribed on it. The dedication ceremony was held on Sunday, October 17, 2004. Mr. Morino will be remembered for his wonderful life and what great intentions he left.

Eitaikyo Service

The annual Eitaikyo (perpetual memorial service) was held on Sunday, November 14 from 10 a.m.

This service is held for the deceased who are registered on the perpetual memorial list. More than 300 deceased have been registered since the Eitaikyo service began in 1990.

Odaimoku Pendant

The temple has accepted the request of many members for a nice Odaimoku pendant head which will not rust or change color. It is made of 14k gold and costs \$100 each.

NICHIREN SHU NEWS

c/o NICHIREN SHU Shumuin
1-32-15, Ikegami, Ota-ku,
Tokyo 146-8544, Japan
Tel. 03-3751-7181 ~ 3

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