

Nichiren Shu News

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1

63rd Memorial Service for War Dead Held at Chidorigafuchi

The memorial service for the war dead and prayers for world peace sponsored by Nichiren Shu were held at the Chidorigafuchi Graveyard for the War Dead in Tokyo on August 15, the 63rd anniversary of the end of World War II.

Officiated by Rev. Joshin Komatsu, Chief Administrator, it was the 50th memorial service held by our sect since the graveyard was founded in 1959. Altogether 400 people, including priests and Nichiren Shu devotees attended the service.



Rev. Komatsu officiates the memorial service for the war dead at Chidorigafuchi

Following the service, several groups of Nichiren Shu priests from Tokyo, totaling about 80 staged the Odaimoku peace march, starting from the Togo Shrine near the Chidorigafuchi Graveyard.

The "East District" group paraded to the Memorial Hall of the Great Kanto Earthquake in Sumida Ward, the "South District," group to the Ikegami Hommonji Temple, and the "West group," to the Kokokuji Temple in Shinjuku.

The remains of the war dead



About 400 people pay tribute to the war dead

enshrined in the graveyard total 352,926 which were not handed over

to the war bereaved. Collection of the remains of the war dead was started by the government in 1953. These remains were collected by government-sponsored teams, individuals and repatriated soldiers. Six hundred and twenty-nine remains were newly enshrined this year. These remains include both soldiers and civilians.



Groups of Nichiren priests stage a peace march through the streets of Tokyo following the memorial service

'Rotating Service' Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the "rotating service" at the Founder's Mausoleum was held at Minobusan on July 1. It was attended by about one hundred priests and lay devotees including Rev. Joshin Komatsu, the director of the "rotating service" program.

The "rotating service" program was inaugurated on July 1, 1958, to encourage the Nichiren Buddhists to visit Minobusan, the place where "the soul of our Founder" stays. It follows the

example of the Six Senior Disciples staying at Minobusan to attend the Founder in a rotating manner after the passing away of our Founder.

The "rotating service" is conducted principally temple by temple. Its procedure is as follows: (1) a group of devotees of a temple registers at the reception office; (2) they attend a ceremony to receive a commission from the head priest of Minobusan; (3) they visit the Hall of the Founder's Ashes, making a vow to attend the Founder, and receive the Founder's "Vows of Holy Mountain" which teach us that we stay with the Founder at present and also in the future; (4) thereafter they attend the memorial service for the Founder at the Mausoleum and engage in cleaning up the compound of the Mausoleum.

A total of 670,000 devotees have visited Minobusan in 50 years of "rotating service." Rev. Zuiyu Inoue, general manager of Minobusan, expressed his hope that the entire 5,000 Nichiren Shu temples will complete their "rotating service" in five or 10 years, adding that 1,672 temples, or one third of the total 5,000 Nichiren Shu temples, had not yet made this service (as of March 2008).



Founder's Mausoleum

Five-story pagoda: the grand service to commemorate the restoration of the five-story pagoda of Minobu-

san is scheduled for May 13 to 17, 2009.



Events

August–September, 2008

- Aug. 2–Sept. 5: Annual 2nd Shingyo Dojo at Minobusan
- Aug. 15: Memorial service for the war dead, sponsored by the Nichiren Shu at the Chidorigafuchi Graveyard for the War Dead, Tokyo
- July–August: Summer schools for elementary and middle school students held at Nichiren Shu temples throughout the country
- Aug. 27: Service to commemorate the Matsubagayatsu Incident
- Sept. 3: Memorial service for Niko Shonin
- Sept. 12: Service to commemorate the Tatsunokuchi Incident
- Sept. 17: Memorial service for Nisshin Shonin
- Sept. 20–26: Autumn Higan (equinox) Week

by Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi

The Life of Sakyamuni Buddha (7)

By Rev. Shinkai Oikawa, Litt. D.

9. Sakyamuni's Manhood

(3) Meditation under the Bodhi tree —Thinking from the body

I think Sakyamuni had time to recover from exhaustion after bathing in the River Nairanjana. He went into the woods of a nearby town called Gaya, now Buddhagaya, and sat in meditation.

There stands a large tree called the "Bodhi tree," under which He sat and meditated about two thousand and five hundred years ago. I have been translating books written in the Indian language about one thousand and five hundred years ago into Japanese and found the books had some significant features. The Indian people know surprisingly well about the human body.

They knew not only the eyes, nose and mouth but also all the internal organs: the liver, kidney, heart, stomach, bowels, which were all written in the ancient Pali language.

They knew precisely about many parts as if they had already dissected a body. They explained each part by drawing its picture and comparing it to the shape of something similar. They say for example a part is similar to a coconut or a papaya, or about half the size of a mango.

There are fairly difficult explanations about the bile, which are of two types: the one which does not move and the other which circulates in the body. The Indians have known well about a human body for a very long time. So Sakyamuni thought about His own body at first.

He understood in the long run that "our body never ceased to change." No one can escape from such a process as birth, aging, illness and death. This is



Rev. Shinkai Oikawa

the strict reality that no one can deny and escape.

The next problem is feeling. This is not only a bodily faculty but the ability to catch what is spoken. In Buddhism this ability is called "to receive." We all have the ability to receive.

You know the sixth sense or the fifth sense, don't you? The six senses are the "eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind." Human beings have very excellent abilities with which they can receive everything from the outside. We receive both things joyful, pleasant and delicious as well as things painful, bitter, uninteresting and unpleasant. We cannot avoid receiving both good things and bad things.

So Sakyamuni began to think that human beings are animals in their bodies, but at the same time they are affected by their feelings. He thought it very hard in order to have peace of mind.

Sakyamuni first had a bitter experience of having practiced asceticism in vain. What is the thing He could not make clear even after long meditation and asceticism?

He survived a long period of asceticism. Why did He survive? I suppose

the Buddha then seriously wondered whether or not human beings might naturally have the desire to survive.

Generally speaking, healthy people do not think of their own bodies. However, once they get ill, they seriously think of them because they want to become healthy.

They go to the doctor. First the doctor has to make a correct diagnosis of the patient with just a cold, or a specific virus influenza, or possibly pneumonia. If he makes a wrong diagnosis, he cannot cure the illness and causes great trouble. Therefore, he must determine "the cause of the illness."

Patients go to the doctor to have the illness cured. If the doctor only determined the cause of the illness and did nothing about it, the patients would not know what to do.

The doctor must give them appropriate treatment, remove the causes of the illness and cure them completely. But if he gives them excessive treatment, the illness might worsen. He always has to understand what the best normal physical condition of human beings is and how much medicine he should give to the patients.

(4) The Attainment of Buddhahood —to get rid of mental illnesses

Sakyamuni deeply contemplated both bodily and mental illness at the same time. Actually, mental illness is quite the same as physical illness.

Sakyamuni thought he had to understand exactly what was mental affliction and what caused it.

Through various endeavors He gradually came to find ways to get rid of mental affliction. Sakyamuni, I suppose, thought the place where we have completely gotten rid of the affliction

was called the "Pure Land."

Sakyamuni earnestly contemplated the structure in which human beings live, that is to say, "what human beings are," "why we live," "what for we live," "how we should complete life and die."

He thought why and how He lived and then must clearly have seen what He was. One of my professors, the late Dr. Hajime Nakamura, writes in one of his books that "Sakyamuni did not understand very well at the moment He became enlightened, though He must have grasped at least the fundamental problem."

What is the fundamental problem? It is the structure of which human beings consist. We also call it "engi" (coming into existence by depending on other things).

Human beings exist physically and mentally in the structure that results from causation. If we understand this rule, we can see what we are at present and find it easy to make our future plans. All we have to do is to earnestly think what we should do to be happy on this foundation. Of course since every one is quite different and has his own way of thinking, each individual problem seems to be difficult to solve.

Dr. Nakamura thinks that maybe Sakyamuni did not understand the problem after all because there are no clearly definitive words of Sakyamuni in various sutras.

Certainly Sakyamuni said nothing to anyone after enlightenment, sitting silently and staying still gladly. He kept silent like this for seven weeks. He did not say, "I became spiritually awakened in this way." or "I will teach on behalf of human beings."

He seemed to think He was heartily satisfied with his enlightenment and wished no more. He seemed to only wish to die. However, a god did not leave Him alone.

(Trans. by Rev. Kanshu Naito)
(to be continued)

Reclining Buddha:

the Reclining Buddha, the oldest and third largest in Myanmar is located in Bago, 80 kilometers from Yangon, the former capital. Originally constructed in 992, the Buddha, 55 meters in length, was buried in the jungle when it was discovered by the British army in the 19th century.



Book Review

Writings of Nichiren Shōnin BIOGRAPHY and DISCIPLES — Volume 5

Compiled by Kyōtsū Hori, Edited by Jay Sakashita
(University of Hawaii Press, 2008, 255p)

This volume is the 13th project of the English Translation Committee of the Nichiren Shu Overseas Propagation Promotion Association (NOPPA). Contained in it are all the 54 writings of Nichiren included in the Nichiren Shonin Zenshu (Complete Writings of Nichiren Shonin) Vol. V: Biography and Disciples by Professor Ken'ichi Kam-muri (Tokyo, Shunju-sha, 1993).

Thanks to the encouragement and financial help of the NOPPA, the committee was able to publish 13 books altogether in the span of two decades.

The first eight volumes were in the form of "taiyaku": English translation

printed on the opposite page of the text in modern Japanese.

They are (1) St. Nichiren's Kaimoku-sho: Open Your Eyes to the Lotus Teaching, 1987; (2) St. Nichiren's Hoon-jo: Essay on Gratitude, 1988; (3) St. Nichiren's Senji-sho: Selecting the Right Time, 1989; (4) St. Nichiren's Kanjin Honzon-sho, 1991; (5) St. Nichiren's Rissho Ankokuron: Treatise on Spreading Peace Throughout the Country by Establishing the True Dharma, 1992; (6) St. Nichiren's Nyonin Goshō: Letters Addressed to Female Followers, 1995; (7) St. Nichiren's Shimoyama Letter, 1996; (8) St. Nichiren's

Shugo Kokka-ron: Treatise on Protecting the Nation, 1998.

Then the committee decided to translate all the writings of Nichiren included in the Nichiren Shonin Zenshu published by the Shunju-sha in Tokyo in seven volumes into English (without modern Japanese).

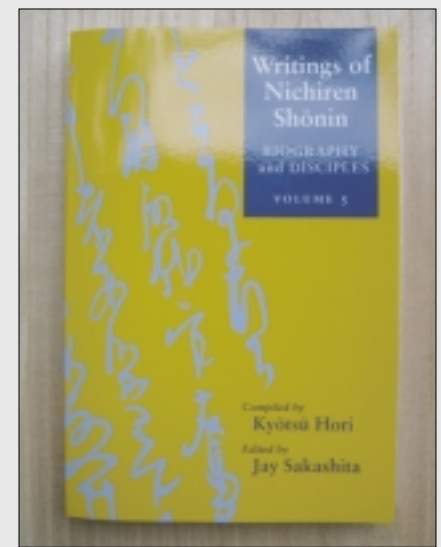
Thus our project thereafter has been published and distributed by the University of Hawaii Press. (9) Writings of Nichiren Shonin, Doctrine 2, 2002; (10) Writings of Nichiren Shonin, Doctrine 1, 2003; (11) Writings of Nichiren Shonin, Doctrine 3, 2004; (12) Faith and Practice, 2007; (13) Biography and Disciples, 2008.

The present volume includes those directly relating to the works and history of our Founder and his letters sent to his disciples.

More than 600 Writings of Nichiren Shonin—letters and religious writings—remain today partly or totally. This number is incomparably greater than the

number of other religious leaders who lived in the Kamakura Period in Japan.

It is indeed unusual that the original writings of a man survived the wear and tear for as long as eight centuries.



Nichiren Shonin and His Lay Followers (7)

By Rev. Kanji Tamura
Associate Professor,
Rissho University

The Nanjo Family (1)

Nanjo Hyoe Shichiro (?—1265) was a rear vassal of the main branch of the Hojo clan which controlled the Kamakura Shogunate Government. As a relative of the ruling Hojo Family, the Nanjo Family originally lived in Nanjo in Izu County, but later moved to its domain of the Ueno District, Fuji County, Suruga Province (Shizuoka Prefecture).

Hence, Nichiren respectfully calls Nanjo Hyoe Shichiro "Ueno Dono" (Lord Ueno). His wife was a daughter of Matsuno Rokuro Zaemon, a steward of Iobara County. The couple had more than ten children.

Hyoe Shichiro met Nichiren in Kamakura while serving his military duty and entered the faith of the Lotus Sutra, renouncing his former faith in Amida Buddha. In 1264, he fell ill and returned to Ueno.

Nichiren wrote a letter to him dated on the 13th day of the 12th month of the first year of Bunnei (1264), showing the spiritual relief of relying on the faith in the Odaimoku of the Lotus Sutra. The original manuscript of this letter is found in fragments in many places.

Showing astonishment at hearing of the illness of Hyoe Shichiro,



Rev.
Kanji Tamura

Nichiren writes in this letter, "There exists no rule on who leaves this world first. Those who have no illness hardly stay in this world, to say nothing of the sick. However, if you are thoughtful, you should aim at the coming world (so as to be born in the good place)."

The average life span of the Japanese in the Kamakura Period is presumed to have been 30 years. Life was unstable for both the young and old. When it is not known at all when we will die, we can value the lives of ourselves as well as those who surround us.

In the meantime, the Japanese boast the world's longest life span today. It may be said that we have become insensitive to the value of life.

Nichiren urges Hyoe Shichiro to determine to face death squarely. Maybe his illness has taken a sudden turn for the worse.

He continues that it is difficult for us to aim at the other world by ourselves. It can be achieved only when we rely on the teachings of Sakyamuni Buddha, the True Teacher of all sentient beings.

Nichiren refers to the Lotus Sutra, in which Sakyamuni Buddha claims

that the entire world, the world of transmigration, is His possession. All sentient beings in the world are all His offsprings, and it is only He who can protect them.

Nichiren also asserts that Sakyamuni Buddha is our parent, teacher, and master, and warns that Amida Buddha is not our parent, or teacher, or master. It is most undutiful to be against the wishes of our parent, teacher and master.

Nichiren tells Hyoe Shichiro to stick to the faith of the Lotus Sutra, by understanding that we are now in the Latter Age of Degeneration, when the Lotus Sutra is the only teaching which proves effective. Nichiren then encourages Hyoe Shichiro to fully understand the five guides in spreading the Dharma and carry through the faith in the Daimoku.

Claiming himself to be the prime practitioner of the Lotus Sutra persecuted exactly as prophesized in the Lotus Sutra, Nichiren tells Hyoe Shichiro, "to announce that you are a disciple of Nichiren, the supreme practitioner of the Lotus Sutra, to the King of the Brahma Heaven, Indra, the Four

Heavenly Kings, and Yama, the King of Hell, when you reach the other world. Then they will treat you warmly."

Thanks to Nichiren's considerate guidance, Hyoe Shichiro firmly retained faith in the Lotus Sutra, and died on the eighth day of the third month of the following year. Though Hyoe Shichiro was under the guidance of Nichiren for only two years, his faith in the Lotus Sutra was inherited by the family for a long time. Nichiren visited the grave of Hyoe Shichiro in the Ueno District of Fuji County after his death.

Nanjo Tokimitsu (1259—1332) succeeded as the head of the family and inherited the faith in the Lotus Sutra of Hyoe Shichiro. Although Tokimitsu lost his father while he was young, he grew to be a respectable person.

(Trans. K. S.)
(to be continued)



The Mieido Hall, which enshrines the statue of Nanjo Hyoe Shichiro, in the Taiseikiji Temple, was built in the Ueno District, Fuji County

5th Int'l Youth Retreat Held in Kamakura

By Rev. Sensho Komukai
Missionary Department

The fifth annual International Youth Retreat began on July 28 at the Daimyoji Temple in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, and it ended on July 31 at Minobusan. A total of 14 young people (nine women and five men), aged 17 through 37, took part in this retreat.

They came from Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Canada. Eight of them participated for the first time, while three came for the third time, and the other three did for the second time.

About 750 years ago Nichiren Shonin submitted to the military government at Kamakura his "Rissho

Ankoku Ron (Treatise on Spreading Peace throughout the Country by Establishing the True Dharma)."

It was in Kamakura that he wrote the treatise. Therefore the retreat was mainly relevant to the Rissho Ankoku Ron.

There were three lectures: "Nichiren Shonin in Kamakura" given by Rev. Kanno Nakayama, "Nichiren Shonin in Minobu" by Rev. Shuju Onishi, and "My Rissho Ankoku Activities" by Rev. Taiko Kusuyama.

Rev. Kusuyama, who is the chief priest of the Daimyoji Temple, said in the lecture, "Nichiren Shonin sought the Buddha land on earth in this world, not in the life after death.

"To make this world peaceful, he wrote the 'Rissho Ankoku Ron' with

the highest wisdom after reading 84,000 fascicles of Buddhist scriptures. We as the children of the Buddha are to save the suffering people.

"How to solve their problems and sufferings is written in the Lotus Sutra. Let us give them a helping hand. I wish all of you to be the active leaders who practice the Lotus Sutra to save the people all over the world."

On the second day, looking at the map, they as a group tried to tour historic sites in Kamakura. Then they visited temples, such as the Ryukoji Temple, at the site where Nichiren was almost executed for treason, and the Ankuronji Temple, where Nichiren is said to have planned the writing of the Rissho Ankoku Ron.

On the third and final day, moving to Minobusan, they paid a visit to our Founder's grave and in the evening conducted the shodaigyo practice while putting up with the pain caused by seiza (sitting up straight).

They also climbed up the mountain beating a

drum to attend the morning service held in the Main Hall of the Kuonji Temple.

Right after the retreat, a participant remarked: "I've learned a lot during this retreat. I deepened my belief in Nichiren-shu as well. All these experiences will be very useful for me in the future. I have made up my mind to be more active in spreading the truth to people through Nichiren-shu."



Participants visit the Great Buddha at Kotokuin, a Pure Land temple, in Kamakura. The construction of the bronze Great Buddha, a National Treasure, was started in 1252



Participants enjoy the ride of the 100-year old Enoshima Electric Railway, nicknamed Enoden, connecting Kamakura and Enoshima Island



The retreat winds up at Minobusan. Shown here are the participants in front of the Kenshu Dojo (Exercise Hall)



Temple Events

By Sandra Seki

SAN JOSE

'Mottainai' Goes Global By Arnold Matsuda

A Japanese concept of "Mottainai" conveys a sense of regret over wasted or misused resources because they are not put to its fullest use. "Mottai" itself suggests something of sacred or intrinsic value.

This "Mottainai" concept was quickly embraced by the Kenyan environmentalist Wangari Maathai, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for fighting against the desertification in Africa through the Green Belt Movement which she founded. She learned about the practice of "Mottainai" while visiting Japan in 2005 and was struck by its meaning that seemed to capture the essence of the three R's (reduce, reuse, and recycle), similar to the Swahili notion of personal responsibility for conservation.

One might want to add one more 'R' to this campaign: respect. Due respect for those who support and practice the "Mottainai" spirit!

NORTH CAROLINA

Shingyo Dojo: Not by My Effort Alone

By Rev. Ryusho Jeffus
Charlotte Sangha, Myoshoji

Just after we began our descent from Mt. Shichimen, I fell, hitting my head and knee on rocks. I was not hurt badly but I was kind of shocked. After this the Senseis had Kanjo Bassett walk behind me, holding onto my belt and another person walk in front of me so that if I fell they could catch me.

Several more times on the way down my knees and hip would give out and there would be Kanjo's steady hand to hold me up preventing me from falling.



Rev. Ryusho Jeffus

As I look back on my Shingyo Dojo experience and all of my life for that matter, I cannot help but think about all

the support I got from other people.

Without the aid from so many people I would not have been able to enter, much less graduate from Shingyo Dojo. The list of those who helped me is much too long to begin here.

Gratitude is what I think most about when I reflect on Shingyo Dojo. How can I repay all the people I am grateful to? I am convinced that I received the help from these people not because of myself as an individual.

I believe that I received the gifts of help as a wish or prayer on the part of these many people. I also believe that their wish or prayer is that I in turn help others by spreading the Dharma with all of my life.

It is with this understanding and appreciation that I pledge to all of the people who were kind to offer their support, knowledge, and wisdom that I will for the rest of my life, work to repay my debts to them by striving to spread the Dharma and help people on their path to enlightenment. (Rev. Jeffus finished the Annual First Shingyo Dojo, April 15-May 19.—Editor)

HONOLULU

Moonlight Drumming for World Peace

As the first step of the new campaign "Be a bodhisattva for world peace with compassion and respect," the Nichiren Sect Mission of Hawaii held a Moonlight Drumming for World Peace on September 13, from 6 p.m. At the event, not only members but also neighbors and non-members gathered together to beat drums to pray for world peace both inside the Hondo and outside near the pond.

Unfortunately, it was cloudy and the full moon could not be seen. The Shodaigyo Service for world peace was led by the powerful drum beating of Rev. Sugawara. After the event, refreshments were served in the social hall.

Car Pool Wanted

Recently there are many people who want to come to the temple but don't have a car or can't drive anymore. If anyone could offer rides to these people, we would cer-

tainly appreciate it. Please contact the ministers. The temple is planning to organize a car pool system. In the future when we get older and don't have a ride, this kind of system is wonderful. Let us help each other with our compassion and respect as bodhisattvas!

HOUSTON

NONA Convention

The Nichiren Buddhist Sangha of Texas (Myokenji) will host this year's NONA (Nichiren Buddhist Order of North America) convention from October 23 through 26 at the Houston Medical Center Marriott. The convention will be an important one for us to establish a new approach for propagating the teaching of Nichiren Shonin.

Registration fee: \$75, Hotel fee: \$125 per night (Special rate till October 9)

It is scheduled as follows:

October 24 (Fri.):

7 p.m. Interfaith Panel on Wisdom and Compassion in the Lotus Sutra

October 25 (Sat.):

9 a.m. NONA Convention
7 p.m. Convention Banquet

October 26 (Sun.):

9 a.m. NONA Convention
11 a.m. NONA Oeshiki Service
12 noon Sayonara Luncheon

Optional Sightseeing Areas: NASA Space Center, Museum of Fine Arts, the Holocaust Museum, etc.

Those who are willing to participate, please notify the temple no later than September 21.

For more details:
nbstx@comcast.net

PORTLAND

New English Service Book

The temple has requested its members and friends to make offerings (donations) for service books and kesa. The offering will be dedicated to the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma (Buddha's teaching) and Sangha (Buddhist Community of the Portland temple).

Instead of purchasing and keeping the service books and kesa individually, the

offering will make it possible for anyone who attends the service to use them. It is a great practice as a Bodhisattva to share the merits of your offering with many others.

The offering you make may be in the memory of your ancestors, deceased friends, World Peace, your family prosperity, gratitude to a wish that has come true or anything you would like to pray for.

On both the service book and kesa, your name and prayer will be printed and they will be kept at the temple.

The actual cost of the service book is \$15 and the kesa is \$39. Including the cost of printing your name and prayer, the temple is asking for a donation of \$60 for a set of prayer book and kesa. Please fill out a donation form and return it to the temple with the donation.

NEVADA

Study Class

The first study class on the Lotus Sutra in English was held on September 10 at the Kannon Temple. Rev. Shokai Kanai talked about the historical background of the sutra, differences with other sutras and the meaning of the one vehicle sutra.

The class will be held every Wednesday from 7:30 p.m., and the Lotus Sutra will be studied chapter by chapter every week.

The textbook for this class is "The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma" translated by Senchu Murano. It can be purchased from the NBIC [www.nichiren-shu.org].

All interested persons are welcome. There is no tuition, but a donation for the class is much appreciated. It is tax deductible.

EUROPE

First European Nichiren Shu Lay Believers Retreat By Rev. Shoryo Tarabini

The First European Nichiren Shu Lay Believers Retreat was held at the Renkoji Temple in Villasanta, (20 minutes outside of Milan) in northern Italy September 19 to 21.

This preliminary intensive course dedicated to the faith, practice and study of Nichiren Shu Buddhism was conducted in English and Italian by resident priests from throughout Europe, Japan, and the United States. It was conducted under monastic tradition including vegetarian meals, abstinence from cellular phones, alcohol, cigarettes, and coffee throughout the three-day retreat.

Courses introduced in the event:

- Fundamental elements of Nichiren Shu faith and practice.

- Correct approach and attitude in the faith and practice.

- How to correctly recite the Sutra and Odaimoku.

- Buddhist vegetarian monastic cuisine, "Shojin Ryori," for spiritual growth.

- Shabutsu (copying images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas).

- The life of Sakyamuni Buddha.

- The life of Nichiren Daishonin.

- The history of Nichiren Shu and the propagation of the Lotus Sutra.

- Nichiren Shonin and Sado.

- Monastic rules and correct attitude to be observed throughout the retreat.

- Nightly Shodaigyo meditation and Odaimoku recitation.



Group photo in front of the Renkoji Temple

Nichiren Shu News

c/o NICHIREN SHU Shumuin

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