

Nichiren Shu News

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New Year's Greeting: Let Us All Have a Beautifully Flowering Mind

By Venerable Rev. Nichiji Sakai
Archbishop of the Nichiren Shu
Order

Happy New Year to you all! I hope to keep my eyes focused on the happiness of living vividly and cheerfully and in good health every day of this new year.

As you all know, the Lotus Sutra preaches an infinite poem in praise of humans, namely it extols banzai to human beings. The sutra preaches that every human by nature is equipped with the Buddha-nature: the mind of the Buddha. Isn't it wonderful?

The Buddha-nature, however, must always be nurtured with gratitude and love. Otherwise it loses strength. That is to say our precious possession is left to rust. Isn't it wasteful? Therefore it is



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important for us to keep ourselves sound and healthy both in mind and body, especially in mind.

As we cannot measure anything correctly with an incorrect ruler, when our mind is ill, everything we see or hear looks or sounds crooked. Then we begin to think that nothing obeys our mind until we give up in desperation. This is the so-called loss of confidence. This cloudiness in our mind cannot be cleansed by anybody except ourselves.

This is the very time when we

should chant the Odaimoku wholeheartedly to wake up the Buddha-nature innate in ourselves. The Buddha-nature in ourselves never fails to respond to our sincere prayer. Who can save us except ourselves?

Our warm-hearted parents, teachers, siblings, and friends all try to help us, but it is our own "strength" that is encouraged by their affections and climbs up from the bottom. This "strength" is nothing but the Buddha-nature, namely the mind of the Buddha innate in us.

The New Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe, appealed to the public to create a beautiful Japan. This is a most agreeable proposal that nobody can oppose. However, it cannot be accomplished automatically when we leave it in the hands of a statesman. It

will remain as a dream unless each of us in this country tries to do his best daily to make it beautiful. The establishment of a beautiful country can be accomplished only when husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and families become beautiful.

As Nichiren Shonin teaches us, "When one looks down on one's father and neglects one's mother, a hell exists in one's mind," we cannot beautify our country unless we beautify ourselves in mind.

A poem by Mr. Tokuya Azumi reads like this:

Pea flowers bloom in a rubbish heap,

Lotus flowers blossom in a muddy pond,

People all are equipped

With the seed of beautiful flowers.

What flower can we see tomorrow?

People all have the seed of beautiful flowers. May you all be sound and healthy in mind and body throughout this new year, and try to grow a beautiful flower of the spirit.

New Year's Greeting: Minobusan Is Spiritual Hometown of Nichiren Buddhists

By Rev. Joshin Komatsu
Chief Administrator, Nichiren Shu
Headquarters

It is said that every human being has a spiritual hometown. For us Nichiren Buddhists, Minobusan is our spiritual hometown.

The reason why the scenery of Minobusan sinks deeply into our minds and bodies is not just the benefit of the great nature. It is due also to the appearance of our Founder's mountain, which is very much similar to Mt. Sacred Eagle, the dwelling of the Original Sakyamuni Buddha. I believe it was created by the constant sound of the Lotus Sutra being recited and the chanting of the Odaimoku ever since our Founder entered the mountain in the 11th year of Bun'ei (1274).

Our "Rissho Ankoku-Odaimoku Kechien Campaign" will actually begin in April of this year, and the opportunity for all Nichiren Buddhists to pay homage to Minobusan is growing. Just in time, Venerable Reverend Nisso Uchino, who is a descendent of



Rev. Joshin Komatsu

Lord Nambu Sanenaga, was invited to become the 92nd Chief Priest of the Kuonji Temple on Minobusan last October.

Regrettably, the former Archbishop of the Nichiren Shu Order and the Chief Priest of Minobusan passed away in September last year. He used to preach citing the similes of the fire in a rock and a flower in a piece of wood" from the "Kanjin Honzon-sho (Spiritual Contemplation and the Most Venerable One)."

Speaking of the wonderful cherry tree in front of the Founder's Hall of the Kuonji Temple, the late Archbishop taught us that nowhere in the tree, neither in the trunk or branches of the tree nor in its roots, can we find the fragrance and color of the beautiful flowers. As we all are equipped with the precious Buddha-nature, he said, the Buddha-nature in our mind will appear only when we chant the Odaimoku by mouth.

However, as we see Venerable Rev. Uchino, who is closely related to our Founder and Minobusan, enter the Kuonji Temple as the Chief Priest, I feel it is an auspicious omen for the Buddha and our Founder spreading the True Dharma in the world of degeneration.

tion.

There can be no individual happiness without the happiness of the whole world. We who hold the seed of the Odaimoku should realize the peace and happiness of the world through the teaching of the Lotus Sutra. This is the

spirit of "Spreading Peace Throughout the Country by Establishing the True Dharma (Rissho Ankoku)."

Minobusan is where the spirit of Nichiren Shonin resides forever. I hope everybody pays homage to this mountain in order for those who are Nichiren Buddhists to strengthen their faith. Young people or those who have not yet established relationships with Nichiren Buddhism should also visit the mountain in order to meet the "spirit" of Nichiren, listen to the preaching of the True Dharma and finally to establish the relationship to the Buddha and Nichiren Shonin.



Some 50,000 devotees visited Minobusan Kuonji and admired the winter cherry blossoms during the first three days of the New Year



Events

December 2006 – January 2007

Dec. 4: Funeral Service for Rev. Nichiko Fujii, Former Head Priest of Minobusan, at Minobusan

Dec. 8: Service in commemoration of Sakyamuni Buddha's attainment of Buddhahood

Jan. 1: Service in memory of Nichiji Shonin

Jan. 1: Rev. Taisei Iwama, Former Chief Administrator of Nichiren Shu, passes away

Jan. 21: Service in memory of Nichiro Shonin

by Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi

The Doctrine of Ichinen Sanzen (17)

Theorem (RI) and Actuality (JI)

By Rev. Kanji Tamura

Various Meanings of
"JI: Actuality" (7)

(continued from 9. [No. 156])

Its full title is "A Treatise Revealing the Spiritual Contemplation and the Most Venerable One for the First Time in the Fifth 500-year Period after the Death of Sakyamuni Buddha." This indicates to reveal the spiritual contemplation as the Daimoku and the most venerable one as the Mandala for the first time in the beginning of the Latter Age of Degeneration. The title itself shows the solid resolution of Nichiren Shonin to spread the Daimoku and the Mandala of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Age of Degeneration.

"Kanjin (Spiritual Contemplation)" originally means the practice to observe one's mind, which in due course reaches the state of Ichinen Sanzen, where one's mind is completely equipped with the 3,000 existences. The purpose of the spiritual contemplation is the mastery of the Ichinen Sanzen, and it is also the main theme throughout the treatise. It begins with the Ichinen Sanzen, its content is about the Ichinen Sanzen, and its conclusion also leads up to it. In the beginning of the treatise some passages about the Ichinen Sanzen are cited from "the Great Concentration and Insight." That is: a mind contains the ten realms from hell to the Buddha's land and each of the ten realms also contains the ten realms. Then each of the ramified realms contains the ten aspects and the three factors of existences. Then, totally the



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3,000 realms are contained in a momentary thought of the mind. The treatise explains this state as mysterious; it is inexplicable.

In the first half of the treatise, Nichiren Shonin states, based on that contemplation of Ichinen Sanzen, "Originally the spiritual contemplation is to see the ten Dharma worlds (the ten realms) through observing one's mind." Thus the basis of the spiritual contemplation is to find the states from hell to the Buddha in one's mind. Then what is the realm of hell and what are the Hungry Spirits or animals contained in one's mind? Is the realm of Buddhas really contained in our mind always filled up with the worldly desires? Especially this point forms the subject in the first half of the "Kanjin Honzon-sho."

10. Accomplishment of Ichinen Sanzen by Upholding the Daimoku Explained in the "Kanjin Honzon-sho"

In the "Kanjin Honzon-sho (A Treatise Revealing the Spiritual Contemplation and the Most Venerable One)" Nichiren Shonin explains the Mutual Possession of the Ten Realms through the examples of how those realms are contained in our minds and actually appear in our daily life. That is, (1) anger represents the realm of hells;

(2) greed, the realm of hungry spirits; (3) ignorance, the realm of beasts; (4) flattery, the realm of asura; (5) calm, the realm of men; (6) delight, the realm of gods; (7) and (8) feeling the impermanence of life, the realm of Sravaka and Pratyekabuddha; and (9) compassion, the realm of bodhisattvas.

However, according to Nichiren Shonin, the realm of Buddhas is hard to see. When our body and mind are equipped with those of the Buddha (Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha as the Original Teacher), both the Mutual Possession of the Ten Realms and Ichinen Sanzen (the Three Thousand Existences Contained in One Thought) are accomplished.

Then, do we really have the realm of Buddhas? Do we really have the Buddha nature? Are we truly connected with the realm of Buddhas? The Lotus Sutra preaches, "Buddhas cause all living beings to open the insight of the Buddhas." Thus, it is certain that all living beings are connected with the realm of Buddhas, and all of them have the Buddha nature, but it is very rare that the realm of Buddhas or the Buddha nature appears in our daily life.

Regarding this, Nichiren Shonin states that in spite of our defiled nature living as we do in the Latter Age of Degeneration, we are able to have faith in the Lotus Sutra because we are equipped with the realm of Buddhas. Nichiren also presents the scriptural proof showing that Never Despising Bodhisattva saw the Buddha nature inside everyone he met, bowing to them respectfully and giving them the

assurance of the future Buddhahood, and that Sakyamuni Buddha Himself attained Buddhahood from the realm of men.

In the "Kanjin Honzon-sho" Nichiren Shonin further investigates the subject of whether we, the unenlightened wandering in delusion in the Latter Age of Degeneration, truly hold the essence of Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha, Lord Teacher of the Essential Section of the Lotus Sutra. This subject is directly connected with the question of whether or not we can accomplish Ichinen Sanzen in reality. Then as its conclusion, he states that the Daimoku of the Lotus Sutra contains all the virtues of Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha (the virtues of all his bodhisattva practices and all the merits of his enlightenment. In a broad sense, those merits mean Ichinen Sanzen itself). Therefore, when we believe and uphold the Daimoku, Ichinen Sanzen is accomplished, and also Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha becomes one with us.

Nichiren Shonin articulates that only the Lotus Sutra contains the Buddha's seed of Ichinen Sanzen, and its crystallization is the Daimoku of Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo. The seed of the Five Letters of Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo is like the concentration of the whole DNA of Sakyamuni Buddha. For example, the meaning of the word "Japan" includes all the natural resources, communities, human beings, cultures or living beings from Hokkaido to Tokyo, to Okinawa. Likewise, the Five Letters of Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo contain whole Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha as the Original Teacher. Nichiren Shonin says that the word "Myo" of Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo means to completely contain (all things).

(continued on page 4)

The Legend of Nichiren (25)

By Rev. Gyokai Sekido, Ph. D.

Passing into Nirvana

Nichiren Shonin entered Minobusan in 1274. He educated his disciples and lay believers in his hermitage. Many lay believers brought articles of donation to his hermitage. Many letters of gratitude written by Nichiren Shonin exist even today. Nichiren wrote two of his major works: the "Senji-sho (Selecting the Right Time)" and the "Hoon-jo (Essay on Gratitude)" on Minobusan in 1275 and 1276 respectively.

Nichiren developed a gastrointestinal disorder while being persecuted repeatedly.

The cold winter was a severe environment for him. He was in poor health every winter. Worrying about Nichiren's ill health, his disciples sent medicine to him. Accepting the advice of his disciples, Nichiren decided to go to a hot spring in Hitachi (present Ibaraki Prefecture) for recuperation in 1282. He left Minobusan on the eighth day of the ninth month, arriving at the mansion of Ikegami Munenaka of Ikegami (present Tokyo) on the 18th of the same month. But the condition of his illness was too serious for him to continue his trip. Feeling that his days were numbered, Nichiren named the Six Senior Disciples as his successors on the 8th day of the 10th month. He asked the very young Kyoichimaro



Rev.
Gyokai Sekido

(Nichizo) for the future propagation in Kyoto. Then he gave a lecture on the "Rissho ankoku-ron" for the last time. While many disciples and lay believers recited the sutra, he passed into Nirvana in the temple where a mandala Honzon was enshrined at 8 a.m. on the 13th day.

A legend tells us a mysterious experience of Nichiren Shonin in the 11th month in 1277. He was preaching on a rock in the swamp on a warm spring-like day. There was a beautiful woman about twenty years old who wore a green and red kimono in the audience. The audience wondered who this woman was. When the sermon was over, Nichiren Shonin said to the woman, "Show us your actual appearance." The woman smiled beautifully and answered, "I am a celestial maiden on Mt. Shichimen." She then asked for water. The sky became suddenly cloudy when Nichiren Shonin gave her the water in a flower vase. That beautiful woman suddenly changed to a huge dragon of about 6 meters long. In a strong wind and whirling cloud, the dragon flew away into the western sky. She was Shichimen Dai Myojin who protected the Lotus Sutra.

A legend says that the Kamakura Shogunate asked Nichiren Shonin for a prayer at the time of the Mongolian attack in 1281. Nichiren Shonin made a large flag of about 2 meters. He drew the sun on the front surface and the moon on the back. He drew the Four Heavenly Kings in the four corners and drew 8 dragon kings in the eight corners. Then, he wrote the principal object of worship on the central sun and the moon. He supplied the Kamakura Shogunate with this flag. General Utsunomiya Sadatsuna and his force of 30,000 men had this flag and they marched to Kyushu. Then they stood this flag on the mountain of Hakata (present Fukuoka Prefecture). Then storms appeared suddenly, and the Mongolian army was blown off like tree leaves. A victory was won without the Japanese army shedding blood by the mysterious power of Nichiren Shonin.

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Nichiren Shonin predicted on the 23rd day of the 9th month in 1281, "A big earthquake will occur on the occasion of my last moments." A big earthquake occurred on the 13th day of the 10th month as predicted. Though it was autumn, the whole mountain of Ikegami was covered by cherry blossoms. This is the reason why the cherry blossoms made of paper decorate the O-eshiki services.

(The End)



The Legend of Shichimen Daimyojin reproduced from the Nichiren Shonin Den Emaki painted by Chokusai Uenaka (1885-1977), published by Minobusan Kuonji

People I'll Always Remember (7)

By Rev. Ryusho Matsuda



'Please Go to the Temple and Sit in Front of the Buddha'

A Letter to a Cambodian Refugee

Dear Friend,

My diary reminded me of your sudden visit to our temple 20 years or so ago. I do not remember your name. Much less where and how you live now. Naturally there is no doubt that this letter will not reach you, but my wish is that at least you might receive my heart wherever you are.

"Pale and Agonizing"

When you visited me, you were so pale and were agonizing badly. You started telling the story of how you fled your native country with your son, leaving your wife and daughter behind. I could hardly hear you because you cried, gasped and murmured, but I clearly heard when you said: "Our country has been a Buddhist country and the people have kept the teaching of the Buddha from generation to generation. Even when some strifes occurred in neighboring countries, our country stayed neutral in the beginning. But because our country borders Vietnam, the Vietcong army set up bases there. That caused the South Vietnam military forces to bomb our country heavily beginning in 1969. We are victims of the Vietnam War. Hell in Back, and Hell in Front."

I remember you said: "I had lived peacefully with my wife and was blessed with two children. However, in

1975, Communist forces, known as the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, took control of our weakened country. They forced most people in cities to move to rural areas to work as farmers. They killed over 1 million people who did not follow their orders. I thought they would kill my family, so I decided to flee with my family. However, my wife said, 'It might be impossible for us to take two small children to another country. I will stay behind with our daughter. But at least I want you and our son to stay alive.' After a long argument with my wife, I bid a sorrowful farewell, and we promised each other that we would meet again in the future, if not in this life, then in the next life."

Fleeing was not easy. You hid on the bank of a river, in ditches of rice fields during daytime and ran through rice paddies and hills at night for five days to reach Thailand.

You were rescued and given asylum and were permitted to enter the U.S. However, in a strange country where the language and culture were different, the only job you could find was as a dishwasher, which started in the afternoon. When you went home, your son was already sleeping. In the morning, when you woke up, your son left for school. You said: "My wife and daughter might have already been killed in my country. Although I live with my son, there is no family life at

all."

To your story, I had no words to console you. I was only able to say, "Please go to the temple and sit in front of the Buddha."

20 years or so later, the world is still not peaceful. There are fears of wars, terrorism, civil wars, and violence. And we want to cover our eyes to the inhumanity in which many civilian lives have been unnecessarily taken.

"The Same History"

It is really absurd. Humankind has been repeating the same history of ruining the land, taking precious human lives and giving rise to endless wars and terrorism in retaliation.

When Sakyamuni Buddha stayed at Vaisali, there was a long drought, causing irrigation problems of the Rohini River between two kingdoms—Kapilavastu and Kosala. This led to conflict between the two kingdoms.

Hearing of strife, the Buddha hurried back to Kapilavastu and stood between the two armies. Seeing Him in the midst of the battlefield, both armies threw down their weapons, and shouted, "O World-Honoured One, please move away. We can not shoot our arrows!"

The Buddha summoned the generals of both armies and asked them, "Why are you about to engage in battle?" Both generals answered that it was over water needed after a long drought. Then, the Buddha asked again, "Compared with human life, how valuable is water?" They answered that human life is of course more valuable than water. The Buddha spoke: "Why, then are you trying to kill invaluable human beings, over the dispute for water which has so little value?"

"No Killing!"

No Killing! is the most important precept in Buddhism. Sakyamuni Buddha said: "There is no one who does not treasure his own life, so we must not kill others or force people to commit murder, and that we should think what it is like to be killed."

You have experienced enough to see human cruelty, brutality, betrayal and violence. You might still have a grudge against someone who created your life's misery. However, the Buddha said, "Anger will never disappear so long as there are thoughts of resentment in the mind. Anger will disappear just as soon as thoughts of resentment are forgotten. You must trust the goodness of human beings. Without trust, there will be no future for human beings and this world. Being a Buddhist since childhood, I hope you will

keep the teaching of the Buddha, whose compassion embraces all living beings, and try to find the light of the Buddha in your darkness.

Church Events

By Sandra Seki

SAN JOSE

New Year Services

The annual New Year's Eve service was held on December 31 at 11:30 p.m. After the service the traditional Toshikoshi soba was served.

The following day, the New Year service was held at 8:30 a.m. After the service otoso (New Year's traditional spiced sake) was served. The ministers also had special prayer services from January 1 to 7, praying for individual families' health and happiness throughout the coming year. Donations for the prayer service was \$15 or more. Omamori amulets were also offered at \$7 each.

On January 14, Sunday, a new year prayer service was held for the members from 11:30 a.m. Before the service a general meeting to report on the 2006 temple activities, treasurer's report and planning for 2007 was conducted. After the service, the annual New Year Party was held.



Rev. Tansei Iwama

Rev. Iwama Passes Away

Rev. Tansei Iwama, former Chief Administrator of Nichiren Shu (photo) passed away on January 1, 2007. He was 71. He was born in 1937 in Yamanashi Prefecture as the son of Rev. Iwama Nichiyu, the Head Priest of the Shofuku-ji Temple, who later became the 90th Head Priest of Minobusan. He served as Chief Administrator from 2003 to 2005.



A scene of the bean-throwing Setsubun-e at the San Jose Myokakuji Betsuin

The Year of the Boar

By Rev. Shinkyō Ikeya

The year 2007 falls in the Year of the Boar, the last year of the twelve-year cycle of the Chinese (and Japanese) zodiac calendar. The boar is often referred to when we express the behavior of a dash in both the good and bad sense as the boar rushes headlong into things.

The boar is mentioned, too in Nichiren Shonin's letter addressed to Nanjo Tokimitsu written at Minobusan in 1278. (Tokimitsu was a faithful follower of Nikko Shonin, who built the Taiseikiji Temple, the head temple of the Nichiren Sho Shu.) The letter reads



as follows: "Sakyamuni Buddha assured Aniruddha (one of the Ten Great Disciples of Sakyamuni Buddha),

who was renowned for his divine sight, of his future Buddhahood. What was the good cause for his future Buddhahood?

"There was a hunter. He was making a living by hunting beasts in the mountains. He was cultivating millet

for his food. Since it was a time of famine, there was no food to eat. When he was taking a single cup of millet, a lone saint, called Rida, visited the hunter and begged for food.

"The hunter told the saint, the food had gotten dirty since it was put into a dirty bowl. The saint said he would die if he did not take food now. The hunter served the bowl to the saint filled with awe. The saint returned the bowl to the hunter leaving one barnyard seed in it.

"Then the seed turned into a boar, the boar turned into gold, the gold turned into a dead man. The dead man turned into a man of gold. When the man pulled out one finger to sell, the finger was restored.

"Thus the hunter was reborn as a billionaire for 91 kalpa (aeons) and

now serves the Buddha in the name of Aniruddha. Although it was a single barnyard seed, he saved the life of a monk in the country of starvation, and obtained this happiness as a result."

In the "Shuju Onfurumai Goshō," (written at Minobusan in 1275), Nichiren Shonin quoted a fable of a boar from the "Great Concentration and Insight," written by T'ien-t'ai. The fable says, envying the glow of a gold mountain, a boar rubbed his own body against the mountain to dull the glow, but the glow only increased. Referring to this fable, Nichiren Shonin stressed that the difficulties a man encounters in spreading the Lotus Sutra will enable him to attain a great achievement, incomparable to his experience.



Church Events

By Sandra Seki

NONA

Dharma Conference, Feb. 17, 18

On February 17 and 18, 2007, a Dharma Conference sponsored by NONA will be held at NBIC in Hayward, California.

The schedule for February 17, Saturday: Opening Ceremony and Orientation, 9:30 a.m.; Nichiren Shu Slogan by Bishop Kanai, 10:00-10:30; Lecture on Historical Background and Formation of the Lotus Sutra by Rev. Zuigaku Kodachi, 10:45-12:00; Lunch, 12:00; Nichiren Shu Wasan Practice by the L. A. Wasan Group, 1:00-1:45; Odaimoku Shakyo by Rev. Shobo Mitomo, 2:00-2:45; Lecture on Nichiren Shu by Rev. Ryuken Akahoshi, 3:00-4:00; Practice Singing Gathas by NONA Ministers, 4:15-4:45; Lecture on the Lotus Sutra by Rev. Ryusho Matsuda, 5:00-6:00; Dinner, 6:00; Shodai-Gyo by Rev. Shinko Matsuda and Rev. Ryuei McCormick, 7:00-7:45. The schedule for February 18, Sunday: Lecture on "The Silk Road and the Lotus Sutra" by Professor Kenyo Mitomo, 9:30-11:00; Sunday Service Commemorating Nichiren Shonin's Birthday (Shomyo/Wasan/Gathas/Odaimoku), 11:15-12:00; Lunch; Lecture on "The Lotus Sutra and Christianity" by Professor Kenyo Mitomo, 1:00-2:00; Remarks on the conference followed by the closing ceremony, 2:00-2:30.

Registration Fee (\$50 for two days including three meals and materials or \$33 for Sunday only including one meal and materials) will

be charged. For further information, please contact the temple office at (408) 246-0111.

LOS ANGELES

New Year's Greetings from Bishop Shokai Kanai

In preparation for the 800th anniversary of Nichiren Shonin's birth in 2022, the Nichiren Shu Administration in Japan has started a special campaign: "Rissho Ankoku and Odaimoku Kechien Campaign." It literally means, "Let us plant the seeds of the Odaimoku with the spirit of Nichiren, Establishing Peace and Security of the Nations with the Lotus Sutra."

At the NONA conference last August in Portland, we paraphrased it as, "Transmission of the Odaimoku Brings Peace to Society and Happiness to All." At the conference, the ministers and delegates exchanged their opinions on how to bring this slogan to reality. More than ten ideas were brought up at the time. We are still accepting your ideas on how to make the slogan a reality on different levels of NONA: each temple, church, family, and individual.

We understand that Nichiren's "Nation" applies not only to the country, but also your family, community, your country and the world. How can we bring peace and happiness to all these people? The answer is Nichiren Shonin's propagation of planting the seed of the Sacred Title of the Lotus Sutra, "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo." In order to plant the seeds we must learn and practice the sutra

ourselves. For this reason, all NONA temples, churches, communities, and sanghas provide various services, study classes, and other events. Let us join these events and cultivate our faith.

In August, we are planning to hold "The Seventh Year Memorial Service for the Victims of the 9/11 Terrorist Attack and World Peace" near Ground Zero. Revs. Join Inoue and Shogen Kumakura in New York are working hard to get various permits and cooperation. This event will be a good chance to plant the seeds of the Odaimoku in the general public. Please save your money in order to participate in this event. Let us all start to truly understand the Odaimoku to prepare for further upcoming campaigns for a peaceful society and happiness for all.

Setsubun-e and Hoshimatsuri

The annual Setsubun-e and Hoshimatsuri, the Festival of the Planets and Stars will be held on Sunday, February 4 at 10 a.m. During the service people born in the year of the boar will throw beans at the congregation to chase away the evil in our minds. They shout "Fuku wa uchi! Oni wa soto!" which means "Good fortune inside! Devils outside!"

People born under the Chinese zodiac sign of the boar are those born in 1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1949, 1983, 1995, and 2007. Those born in the year of the boar who would like to throw the beans, should contact Rev. Kanai and arrive at the temple an hour earlier in order to prepare wearing the

formal attire of Kamishimo.

HONOLULU

Rev. Nagayoshi Completes Training

Rev. Junsei Nagayoshi who had been going through training as an overseas minister at the Hawaii Nichiren Shu Betsuin, completed his four and a half month training at the end of last year.

Everything was new to him and he was anxious when he arrived in Honolulu on July 11, 2006. He wanted to become an overseas minister because he felt that the Odaimoku and the Lotus Sutra were prayers that could unite the whole world overriding ethnic problems, language barriers, and cultural differences. What he found most difficult was communicating in English. He attended several language classes and aggressively participated in discussions and school activities yet he found that he was unable to bring forth his ideas and thoughts easily.

While helping with the services at the Betsuin he was given a chance to give sermons in English every Sunday. The pressure and the anxiety would make him ill, but through the many sessions he was able to get used to the style in Hawaii. Although the sutras were the same, the way of conducting the whole ser-

vice was different. Buddhist hymns would always be sung during the services and he would sometimes have to lead the hymns that were very difficult.

He also was surprised to find that one of the important duties of the minister was hospital visitation and giving the last rites at the hospital to a dying member. In Japan the hospital would not be pleased if a priest entered the patient's room in his robes to give him his last rites. In Hawaii, this seemed to be a natural duty of every priest. Giving spiritual support to the family who is losing their loved one is an important duty of a minister.

He also found the importance of visiting nursing homes to encourage the elderly. Making regular visits brought him closer to the elderly and remembering their names and faces also helped in communicating. Here again he found that he had to study English harder so that he could express his feelings.

The ardent members are at times more powerful and dynamic than the members in Japan. At workshops or temple meetings, the attendees speak out and express their thoughts freely. The ministers are able to understand their needs and their hopes for the future. For the members, the temple is a link between the past (their ancestors) and the future.



Rev. Nagayoshi (left) receives his letter of appointment during the Sunday service of Nichiren Mission on December 1

(continued from page 2)

The Doctrine of Ichinen Sanzen (17)

The Kanjin Honzon-sho describes, "Sakyamuni Buddha's practices of cause (all his bodhisattva practices in the nine realms before he became a Buddha) as well as his virtues of effect (all his virtues as the Buddha) that are (completely) contained in the Five Letters of Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo, and when we uphold these five letters, naturally the merits of Sakyamuni Buddha's causes and effects would be bestowed to us." Describing the state of the accomplishment of Ichinen Sanzen, in which we are united with the realm of Buddhas, Nichiren Shonin then writes, "Now, through receiving the Daimoku, the eternal time of the

Essential Section opens its gate, then this Saha-world becomes the never-ending Pure Land, Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha, transcending the past and future, appears in front of us, and we, who uphold the Daimoku, become one with Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha. That is the completion of Ichinen Sanzen contained in our minds." Nichiren Shonin realized with real feeling the oneness with Eternal Sakyamuni Buddha and the unification with the Saha-world as the Pure Land while upholding the Daimoku.

11. The Great Mandala Based on Ichinen Sanzen Explained in the

"Kanjin Honzon-sho"

The Ichinen Sanzen doctrine includes the Three Factors of Existences—living beings, their bodies and minds, and environment), and in the "Kanjin Honzon-sho," Nichiren Shonin states that only when the completion of Ichinen Sanzen, the spirit of the Buddha enters the portrait and a statue of the Buddha, making it the Most Venerable One, the object of worship. Wood, paper and ink are made of plants which grow on the earth. They represent the Factor of Environment (in the Three Factors of Existences). At a glance, those things do not have mind at all. However, when the doctrine of the Ichinen Sanzen is accomplished through upholding the Daimoku, the Factor of

Environment also becomes connected with the realm of Buddhas, there the Pure Land manifests with the Buddha, and wooden pictures or statues also become the Buddha.

The Great Mandala Honzon is the illustrated diagram of Sakyamuni Buddha's State of the Ichinen Sanzen, namely the Saha-world as the Pure Land mentioned above, into which the upholders of the Daimoku should enter. The Great Mandala includes the various honorable ones of the Ten Realms, and the Daimoku in the center integrates them all. Thus, Nichiren Shonin implies that not only the Mutual Possession of the Ten Realms but also the Ichinen Sanzen are realized by the Daimoku.

(Trans. by Rev. Kanshin Mochida)
(to be continued)

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