

Nichiren Shu News

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Message from Archbishop Nisso Uchino

Nichiren Shu Kancho

To all the ministers of temples, sanghas and devotees all over the world: We are at a loss of words after the unprecedented disastrous earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011 off the Pacific coast of the Tohoku area.

This devastated an extensive area from Northern Japan to the Kanto area.

It was with the deepest sorrow that we heard the news that there were Nichiren Shu ministers and devotees who lost their precious lives and that many were left suffering with temple buildings and homes damaged.

I respectfully wish to pray for the repose of the souls of the departed and to express my sincere sympathy for all those who are suffering. Though the recovery will not be easy, we Nichiren Shu Buddhists, priests and devotees alike, stand united in stretching out our hands to assist those who are suffering.

With the protective help of the Treasures of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, we will reconstruct a peaceful society, with our aim to bring about the Buddha land by establishing the true Dharma.

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo
March 23, 2011



(clockwise from top) Only steps remain at Myojoji Temple in Iwate prefecture after the tsunami, Rev. Komano talking to evacuee at Kannon Kyokai Miyagi prefecture, Fallen statue of Nichiren Shonin at Unzanji Miyagi prefecture, Rev. Watanabe and members of the Shumuin collecting donations at Kamata station, Volunteers clearing rubble at Myojoji, priests praying for victims of the tsunami

Donations

Nichiren Shu has two funds to help the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake and assist the recovery efforts. The first fund is called the Nichiren Shu Gien Fund and is specifically for the purpose of rebuilding damaged Nichiren Shu temples and helping

temple members. Nichiren Shu will collect Gien funds up until September 30, 2011. After that date the collected funds will then be donated. At present, three temples are known to be seriously damaged and five temples completely destroyed. Rebuilding

will be difficult for some as they lost many temple members in the tsunami disaster.

The second fund is the Nichiren Shu International Support fund (Nichiren Shu Kokusai Kyohryoku Kikin) which is a general fund supporting disaster relief

through NGO and local relief organizations.

Please contact your local temple or priest about making a donation or visit the NBIC web site <http://nichiren-shu.org> which has instructions for donating by check or paypal.

Nichiren Shu Gien Fund

Japan Post Bank
Head Office
3-2, Kasumigaseki 1-chome, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo 100-8798, Japan

Account number: 00130-0-427422
Account name: Nichirensu Gienkin
SWIFT code: JPPSJPJ1

Nichiren Shu International Support Fund

The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Ltd.
Ikegami branch
32-11 Ikegami 4-chome, Ohta-ku, Tokyo Japan

Account number: 116-1342633
Account name: Nichirensu Kokusai Kyohryoku Kikin Mochida Kanshin
SWIFT code: BOTKJPJT

Buddhism and International Society

By Rev. Kanshu Naito, Ph.D

Buddhism and America (3)

The colonies which would become the future United States of America was established by English trading companies. In 1607, the first English colony was established in Virginia by the charter of King James I and named Jamestown. The immigrants included people from different classes; from the rich gentry to the poor peasantry. More and more people immigrated to the New World and developed farming as they succeeded in growing tobacco.

In December 1620, the Pilgrim Fathers arrived in Plymouth after many difficulties with William Bradford (1590-1657: the second governor of Plymouth Plantation) as their leader. The group found the area very forlorn and in the midst of the wilderness.

It is said that many of the 102 immigrants died from disease and starvation that first winter and only about half survived over the year. Immediately after landing, they signed the "Mayflower Compact" on board their ship and confirmed the rule of law and self-government, and what was



Rev.
Kanshu Naito

more, they tried to defend their freedom of religion. This thought was to be the American fundamental principle of democracy hereafter. The Congregationalists of Puritans, who had been fighting to purify the Anglican Church in England, arrived in Massachusetts Bay under the command of John Winthrop (1588-1649: the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Plantation) in 1630. There were a lot of intellectuals in this large group of immigrants, who desired eagerly to build an idealistic society which should be looked upon by the world as "a city upon a Hill" (the Gospel of Matthew 5:14) Massachusetts Plantation with Boston as its center, held the strict reins of theocratic government based on the Bible.

This thought, Puritanism, became one of the main current streams of American cultural history. Although Puritanism often gets criticized for its overzealous leadership such as witch

trials, and other incidents, their passion for simplicity, diligence, high regards for labor, education and culture, developed the wilderness, and produced and nurtured the "New England Spirit".

I would like to briefly explain the "Salem Witch trials" which were a series of hearings before the county court to prosecute people accused of witchcraft in colonial Massachusetts between February 1692 and May 1693. One of the worst trials was conducted in Salem Village in 1692. One girl at the Séance suddenly began to rampage and scream. A doctor found no physical evidence of any ailment and diagnosed that she was possessed by the devil. What was worse, one after another, many other girls who attended the meetings began to behave aberrantly. A minister exorcised the evil spirits from those girls in vain. When a woman servant was accused of witchcraft and later arrested, there was a chain reaction of mass hysteria which accused many innocent woman of being witches, all over the village. Of the one hundred and fifty people who were accused, fourteen women and five men were hung. And one man who refused to

admit his sins was crushed to death under heavy stones in an attempt to force him to admit witchcraft. Many died in prison.

John Hawthorne, ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne, a famous American novelist, was an executor in the Salem witch trials. He adjudicated on these cases and Cotton Mather, a principal influential Puritan leader, gave support to the judgment. However, there were a number of people raising doubts about this since the situation was getting uncontrollable. Soon the governor of the state ordered to stop the trials and granted amnesty to the prisoners.

This finally ended the Salem witch trials. In this way it can be said that this phenomenon is part of an inevitable exclusionism and search for a scapegoat which always seems to accompany the process of integrating America, which is a manifold of different races and religions. The persecution of the Quakers by the Puritans also depicts this problem. American history has many problems concerning race, religion and philosophy. (to be continued)

Service for the Tsunami Victims

Nichiren Shu Shimbun

On March 18, a special prayer for the victims of the Tohoku Kanto Earthquake was held in a Japanese garden in Portland, Oregon. Many Americans attended the ceremony, which was officiated by Rev. Zuigaku Kodachi of the Nichiren Shu Minori no Kai and Rev. Gregory Gibbs of the Jodo Shinshu Honganji Sect of North America, Oregon Buddhist Temple. Both the Nichiren Shu and Jodo Shinshu services were an hour long and the number of attendees making a queue in order to offer incense continued to grow.

Mayor Sam Adams, of Portland, said, "We would like to send our love from Oregon to Japan." Also present was the Japanese Consul, Mr. Takamichi

Okabe who said that he felt the deep ties between Japan and the U.S. through this ceremony. The attendees wrote get-well messages and donated monetary gifts to the earthquake victims.

On April 3, another memorial service officiated by Rev. Kodachi was held in a park along the Willamette River. The ceremony was held by the Japan-American Society under cherry blossoms that were in full bloom. After the service, carnations were placed on the river to prayer for all the lives that were lost in the disaster.

Rev. Kodachi, who had come to the U.S. from Aomori more than 55 years ago, had special feelings towards the Tohoku area since it was where he was born and raised. "The American people are so concerned about Japan as if this tragedy had occurred

in their own country. I truly respect their warm-heartedness and generosity. If Nichiren Shonin were here today, what would he have done and said. I conducted the ceremony whole-heartedly and felt that we, the followers of Nichiren Shonin, should always remember to follow the Rissho Ankoku Ron spirit. I thought I saw this spirit put into practice here in America. I pray for the earliest recovery of Japan," commented Rev. Kodachi. (Tr. S.S.)



Attendee writing a get-well message



Rev. Kodachi on the left with Portland Mayor Adams

Rev. Kanno Preaches (12)



**"If he is hated and threatened
With swords or sticks or tile-pieces or stones,
I will produce men and dispatch them to him
In order to protect him."
(Lotus Sutra, Chapter X, Teacher of the Dharma)**

Savior

When a person who faithfully keeps the Odaimoku is threatened by others who hold malicious intent to him, the Buddha will dispatch a savior in the figure of an ordinary person to him, thus teaches the Lotus Sutra.

The truth of the sutra is proven several times in the life of Nichiren Shonin. However, every one of us is doubtful if a savior will rush to us when we are facing utmost difficulties.

Nichiren Shonin teaches us, "Don't throw away a bag because it looks dirty." Comparing us, ordinary persons, to a dirty bag and treasures contained in the bag to the Buddha's teaching, Nichiren Shonin shows us how the Buddha protects us by sending a savior to us.

When we chant the Odaimoku very faithfully, and devote ourselves to the Buddha Sakyamuni, a savior will never fail to come along. (Rev. Nisso Kanno, head priest of Kaichoji Temple, Shizuoka)

Calendar June ~ July 2011

February - May 2011

- June 1: Minobusan, Founder's Hall, change of the Founder's robes
- June 7: Lecture on the Lotus Sutra in Cambodia
- June 15-17: Minobusan Kaibyaku-e, commemorating the day when Nichiren Shonin entered Minobusan (May 15, 1274)
- June 15-17: The 8th World Missionary Conference
- June 25: Memorial for Nitcho Shonin
- July 13-15: Bon Festival
- July 26-29: Nichiren's doctrine study session at Shumuin

By Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi

Small Talk on Various Topics of Buddhism (6)

By Rev. Gyokai Sekido, Ph.D

The Compilation of Sutras of Mahayana Buddhism

The first council for the compilation of sutras was held at Rajagriha immediately after the passing of Sakyamuni Buddha. Five hundred priests attended. Kasyapa, one of the ten great disciples of the Buddha and well known for his frugal way of living, chaired the meeting. In those days, there existed no habit of recording sermons in a written language. The disciples had memorized the Buddha's sermons and they could recite them. The sermons of the Buddha were introduced at the meeting and were compiled in a written language.

About 100 years after Sakyamuni Buddha's death, the second council for the compilation of sutras was held. About seven hundred priests attended the meeting.

The third council was held 200 hundred years after the Buddha's death. The council, attended by one thousand priests, was called by King Ashoka (B.C. 268-232), a devoted Buddhist. He built a united nation in ancient India.

The fourth council was held by King Kanishka in the second century in Kashmir, northwestern India. King Kanishka ruled Central Asia and north India. In the sphere of his rule, cultures of India, Greece, and Rome were



Rev. Gyokai Sekido

harmonized and different types of religions, including Buddhism prospered.

Priests gave up their itinerant life soon after the Buddha's death, and they started living in temples. They

received economic assistance from royal families and influential merchants. They concentrated on learning and meditation. Such an early order of Buddhists divided into many schools of doctrine.

There existed two types of priests. One was sravaka. Originally a disciple of Sakyamuni Buddha, later a follower of Hinayana Buddhism. Sravaka is a priest who attains enlightenment by listening to the Buddha's teaching.

The other was pratyekabuddha, one who attains enlightenment without the teacher's guidance but by observing the principles of 12 causations. The ideal of sravaka and pratyekabuddha was to become "Arhat", a saint. Arhat is a Hinayana saint who has completely destroyed his evil passions and attained emancipation from the cycle of birth and death. On the other hand, there were priests having progressive ideas, aimed at becoming "Buddha" by following the bodhisattva practice. Mahayana Buddhism

rose into power in the first century.

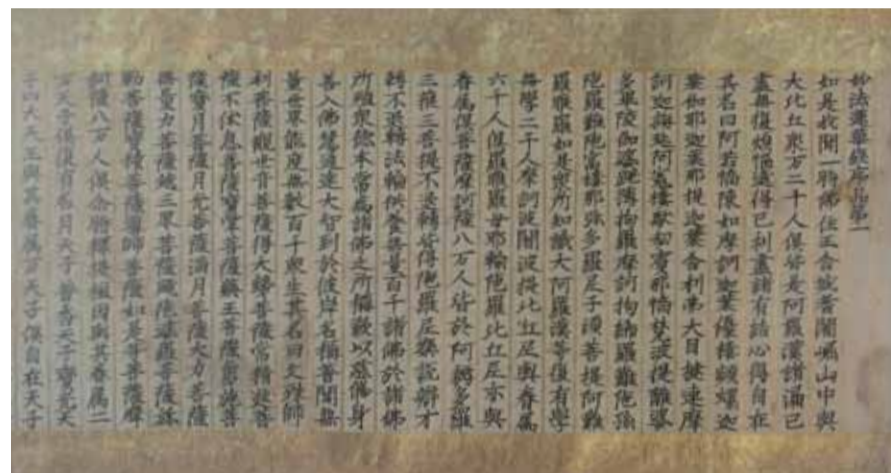
Sravaka priests were spending a group life in temples. Pratyekabuddha priests were pursuing philosophical themes living in fields and mountains. They did not teach people. Their purpose was to attain their own emancipation. On the contrary, those following the bodhisattva practice were aiming at becoming "Buddha" and were teaching people while practicing themselves.

Sravaka and pratyekabuddha are Hinayana Buddhists. Their purpose is to achieve their own improvement. Bodhisattva is a Mahayana Buddhist who teaches and guides people while practicing to become "Buddha". Mahayana Buddhism is the Big Vehicle which

leads people to attain enlightenment.

In this manner, Mahayana sutras such as the Wisdom Sutra, the Lotus Sutra, and the Flower Garland Sutra were compiled after the first century. In the third century, the study of the idea of void (all existing things are originally void) showed remarkable progress under Nagarjuna.

The Srimala Sutra and Nirvana Sutra were compiled in the fourth century. Afterwards many sacred books and research documents were compiled. It can be said that the philosophy of Buddhism which Buddha proposed came to be embodied in the Lotus Sutra, the supreme sutra of Buddhism through the long history of the compilation work of sutras and commentaries.



Lotus Sutra in miniature scripture, preserved at Kokuzenji Temple

Tokudo Ceremony for Shami Jisho Rogers

By Rev. Ryusho Jeffus
Myoshoji Temple, Charlotte, NC

On March 19, 2011 the Tokudo service was held for Allen Rogers. During this ceremony Allen took vows to begin his training as a novice priest in Nichiren Shu. This has been a milestone in the practice of this young man and certainly will not be the end of his spiritual journey. The road to becoming a priest is a long and difficult path, and Tokudo is only one point along that path.

During the week before the actual ceremony Ryuoh Faulconer Shonin and Myokei Caine-Barrett Shonin flew to Charlotte to help with preparations and conducting of the ceremony. There were many activities, which included practicing for the actual ceremony. In many ways the week activities was like a brief Shami training session. It also served as an opportunity for the novice to meet other priests and to form a bond with them. It also allowed other priests to examine the candidate,

assessing his qualities and what he can offer to Nichiren Shu as a future priest.

On the day of the ceremony many of Shami Jisho's family members and friends came to witness this important event. His mother and sister had been to the temple several times before. However it was the special presence of his grand parents for this event that really had a profound effect on all who attended. His grand parents are strong Christians and previously had some concerns about Shami Jisho's Buddhist practice. However after the service both his grand parents expressed joy and pride in what their grandson was doing, even if not embracing his faith.

Tokudo is the first step a person takes if they decide to begin training to become a priest. During the ceremony there was ritual shaving of Allen's head, a presentation of his robes, beads and the garment of the Buddha, the wagesa. During the ceremony he attested to his willingness to abandon his family and personal life to begin a life as a priest dedicated to learning and teaching the Dharma. Of course he will continue to

honor and respect his family and friends but his entire focus should be directed towards study and practice in preparation for achieving his goal of ordination.

The process begun here will take many years. There will be many sacrifices expected of Shami Jisho; sacrifices of time, sacrifices of desire, and sacrifices of comfort and pleasure. The journey is long as well as hard.

It is not uncommon for people to abandon their efforts when faced with any number of obstacles which may arise. There may be times when the demands seem too hard or too unreasonable, or too unclear. There may be people met along the way with whom he disagrees with. But in all cases the primary reason why people do not complete the process of becoming a priest is because their intentions were impure or unclear.

It is important for the Shami to always maintain within their heart the reasons why we become a priest. It is not for fame or glory. It is not for riches or a

life of ease and comfort. It is solely so that we may fulfill the mandate of the founder of our order, Nichiren, to spread the Lotus Sutra throughout the world in the Later Age of Degeneration. Nichiren said that we should even go without food, shelter, or rest; sparing no effort to ensure the spread of the Dharma.

When we think of the hardships Nichiren underwent how is it even possible to compare our efforts to his. It will be critical for Shami Jisho, as he progresses along this path, to know clearly what is in his heart. If he forgets or does not know what his intentions are then he will truly struggle.

Today, in many ways, is the easiest part of a Shami's journey, but it is the most important. The causes he makes at this point will set the stage for the causes he will make in the future.

It is my sincerest wish that Shami Jisho studies hard and prepares well for a future of the spread of the Lotus Sutra in America that extends far into the future long after I have passed away.



Shami Rogers, Ryuoh Faulconer and Myokei Caine-Barrett



Myokei Caine-Barrett putting the wagesa on Shami Rogers



(Front L to R) Ryuoh Faulconer, Shami Jisho Rogers, Ryusho Jeffus and Myokei Caine-Barrett with Myoshoji members and friends

Temple Events

Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada

By Bishop Shokai Kanai

Sympathy

I am deeply sorry for all the victims who perished in the earthquake and tsunami that hit northern and eastern Japan on March 11. I have erected a toba for them and pray for them every morning during my morning service. I also would like to extend my deepest sympathy for those who lost their loved ones, homes, and jobs. I sincerely pray for a quick recovery and a better life for those who have been affected.

The Nichiren Order of North America continues to accept any amount of monetary contribution toward the Japan Disaster Relief Fund. Please make out a check payable to NONA and send it to your local Nichiren Shu temples and churches. I will take all the accumulated donations to the Nichiren Shu Headquarters in May.

No More Service at Kannon Temple?

“No church worship in a residential district” is common in American society.

Since we opened a new temple in Las Vegas over three years ago, there were no complaints. However, in order to expound the Lotus Sutra and Odaimoku, I placed a banner with the temple name and Sunday service advertisement in front of the house.

A few weeks later, two Code Enforcement Specialists came and gave us a Notice of Violation. We are now in the process of obtaining a use permit. We had to turn

in many documents to Clark County; as a result, we are scheduled to present our case to the Town Board Meeting and Planning Commission Meeting to seek approval. Even if we are successful in being granted a use permit, we cannot change the appearance of the residential house and we are not able to have a regular worship or scheduled services.

We need your help in purchasing a new building with enough space for parking to be able to meet the county codes. I sincerely request your support of any amount towards the building fund. In the meantime, we are still continuing Shakyō as part of the building fund donation. We wish to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary and Open the Temple in the fall of 2012.

In the meantime, we will continue to have Dharma Discussions on Sundays at the same place until we are able to move to a new location.

Nichiren Buddhist Temple of San Jose

By Rev. Shinko Matsuda

Annual Bazaar and Earthquake Relief

Our temple received a total of \$7,071 relief contributions from many people and will forward it to the Japan Red Cross through the American Red Cross and Nichiren Shu Shumuin. Myokakuji Betsuin contributed \$800 from the gross income of selling curry rice and noodles at the annual Bazaar which was held on April 24. 800 bentos (teriyaki box lunches), curry rice, noodles, festival rice and Barazushi were all sold out. Besides the food booth, we had booths for Omanju by the Tachibana School. We

also had a koto performance by the Marimo-kai and Chorus performance by the Kakehashi-kai. The Sogetsu Campbell Class displayed their Ikebana works and demonstrated their flower arrangements. Our thanks also go to the members of the San Jose Kendo Dojo and Shorinji Kempo Dojo for their great help.

We also received \$319.37 in our Relief Fund Box. The temple will also send about 20 Etegami (post cards with pictures) which were created by children, to cheer up the victims of the earthquake.

Renkoji Temple, Italy

By Rev. Shoryo Tarabini

The Renkoji website is finally back online after some absence. The address is www.nichirensueuropa.com. There are still a few small problems and language corrections (editing) to do, along with adding a few more files. In the “news” section, you will find a list of temple events and activities. At a later date, we will also add the programs for the various “ko” (groups) in various countries.

The website is completely bilingual at the moment, in Italian and English, however, we are working to provide the website in Spanish, French, and Polish. The format has changed from the previous one. It is divided into two parts; one for the general public and the other for the members, believers, and friends of the temple. For the second part you will need a password. This section will contain more detailed information, including translations of the “Gosho”, various texts, articles, and sermons. We have decided to divide the website into two sections in order to protect both the temple and the Sangha. Thank you for your

patience and understanding.

Earthquake Relief

We have been praying for the victims who perished in the Tohoku Kanto Earthquake which occurred on March 11. Shodaigyo is being conducted by the followers in Italy, France, Spain, Poland and Africa for Japan. Monetary contributions have been collected and will be sent to Japan via the Red Cross.

Honolulu Myohoji

By Rev. Josho Yamamura

How Do We Avoid Disaster?

We can find some answers in Nichiren Shonin’s writings. Nichiren Shonin said in the “Rissho Anokoku Ron” (Treatise on Establishment of Righteousness and Security of the Nation). The cause of national calamities come from all the people going against the right Dharma, therefore protective deities and sages abandon the country and will not return. We should promptly discard our false faith and take up the true and sole teaching of the Lotus Sutra at once. Then this world of the unenlightened will all become treasure worlds. Will treasure worlds ever be destroyed?

When our country does not decay and the world is not destroyed, our bodies will be safe and our hearts will be tranquil. Believe these words and revere them.

Why did Nichiren Shonin say that the Lotus Sutra is the right Dharma?

Because the Lotus Sutra teaches us that the Buddha’s pure land is here, not outside of the earth. If we respect and support each other, this world can become a paradise. If we want to try and avoid disaster in the world, we

should pray for peace and keep tranquil and serene hearts in our minds. We should prepare ourselves to face any disaster with peace and compassion and try to support the Japanese people, even in small ways.

Nichiren Sect Mission of Hawaii Facebook Page

By Kalei Kini, Facebook editor

For those members who are currently using Facebook, please check out our new temple’s Facebook page. It will list the temple’s monthly schedule, apprise members of temple activities, and feature Bishop Imai’s dharma talks.

When you are in Facebook, type in “Nichiren Mission of Hawaii” in the search block to access our page. We’ve already uploaded a lot of content so check it out and tell us what you think. You may leave a comment or click the “like” button to share it with friends. Facebook is a social networking site on the internet that facilitates communication between friends and groups of people, such as the Nichiren Mission members. To access the temple’s page, you will need your own Facebook account, which you can create by logging onto www.facebook.com.

Our Bhutan trekkers, Bishop Shingyo Imai, Leslie Goto, Ramona Chiya, and Jerry Muller will be touring Bhutan between May 9-22. They will be using our temple’s Facebook page to update us members on their travel adventures. Log on to Facebook and join in on what they are doing, however, since the internet access in Bhutan is still limited to the larger cities, our trekkers may not be able to update their travel logs as often as they may wish.

The Digital Future of Nichiren Shu News

<http://www.nichiren.or.jp/information/shuumuin/20110601-347/80/result>

We thank you for taking time to share your opinions and thoughts regarding the digital future of Nichiren Shu News. We have set up a web page explaining the survey results that will help us create a new digital publishing platform. Please visit the survey results page to see what other readers have say about the future direction of Nichiren Shu News.

Nichiren Shu News

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