

# Nichiren Shu News

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## A Spiritual Quest

### 'Buddhist priest is called to share her faith with a diverse following'

By Zen T. C. Zheng  
Houston Chronicle

As if a Mediterranean breeze wafted through Wallace Pack Unit's steel reinforced walls and columns, the aromas of hummus, falafel and fattoush permeated the prison's classroom.

"I've forgotten food could taste this good," said inmate Albert Mason, savoring a bit from his pita sandwich.

While inmate Dusty Russell filled his fifth plate of fresh mixed fruits, Michael Wooldridge munched on a leafy green salad, his first in six years of incarceration.

"I was moved, I wanted to cry, that something so small could be huge and make them so happy," said Rev. Myokei Caine-Barrett, a Houston Nichiren Shu Buddhist priest, who brought the vegetarian meal for the first time during her five-year ministry at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's correctional facility outside Navasota.

To her 21-member congregation behind bars, Caine-Barrett brought foods that pleased more than their palates.

In this classroom that the inmates called "a little heaven" found in a "hellhole," they feast on food for the soul Friday evenings and the occasional Sunday when Caine-Barrett makes the two-hour drive for her ministry.

"When I'm here chanting, I feel a sense of happiness and joy," said inmate Jesse Peña. When the inmates leave the incense-filled classroom, Mason said, they "carry that energy" with them. On this Sunday, the Mediterranean treats complemented a full-day retreat that began with a drum-accented chanting and a sermon on the teachings of Nichiren, the 13th-century Japanese founder of the name-sake school of Buddhism. After a jovial lunch, a repentance session ensued, followed by a shakyo meditation, in which inmates, in deep concentration, hand-copied the Lotus Sutra that Nichiren followers revere as the Buddha's central wisdom.

The day concluded with a "refuge-taking" ceremony in which nine inmates took vows of faith and precepts to officially become disciples.

"This was the first time I have initiated so many people at once," she said. "I feel I have gained more from the experience than they do."

Chaplain David Nichols, a Christian, said that Buddhist ministry tends to a need among prisoners. "She cares about the guys and is very dedicated," he said.

"Buddhist volunteers work in eight of 113 state prisons," said Jason Clark, a TDCJ spokesman.

Caine-Barrett's prison congregation grew slowly as her own Buddhist cultivation deepened. Started as a monthly program at a few inmates' request when she was a novice in training, the service became weekly after she was ordained in 2007.

"At 58, Caine-Barrett is the first female priest in her affiliated Nichiren Order of North America," said Rev. Ryuoh Faulconer, Caine-Barrett's Boston-based master.

The order, headquartered in Hayward, Calif., evolved from Nichiren Buddhism study groups started by Japanese immigrants in the early 20th century and has since established more than a dozen temples for its 1,000 members nationwide.

Caine-Barrett became associated with the Order nine years ago after breaking away from Soka Gakkai, a lay Buddhist organizational philosophy.

Her discovery of the Nichiren order and subsequent meetings with clergy members sparked her desire for a Houston branch and a full-time priesthood.

Born in Japan's Kawasaki City to her Japanese mother and African-American father, Caine-Barrett moved to the United States with her family at barely two and grew up mostly in El Paso. Her return to Japan in 2007 for her ordination was soul-stirring for her relatives there.

"My aunt said, 'You've finally come home,' and they were happy to have a priest in the family," she said. "I felt like I completed a full circle."

That circle had a jagged start, though. She grew up rebellious, lonely and looking for something to fill a social void. At age 13, she attended a Buddhist gathering in El Paso that proved to be the start of her spiritual path.

She dropped out of college as a student activist against the Vietnam War, worked odd jobs and was eventually hired by the El Paso Natural Gas Co.

Her Buddhist activities intensified in Houston. On the bus with a group from a retreat in California, she got sick. The care showered on her by Michael Barrett, a group leader, led to their marriage.

When Caine-Barrett split from the Soka Gakkai group, Barrett and several members followed her and began their own weekly meeting at the couple's home in the Third Ward.

Barrett was "taken aback" at first by his wife's decision to seek priesthood, but soon supported her and dedicated their home as a temple and the headquarters of their Nichiren Buddhist Sangha of Texas, of which he

**Editor's Note:** This article, featuring Rev. Myokei Caine-Barrett's activities, is reprinted with permission from the November 13, 2009 issue of the Houston Chronicle. Copyright 2009 Houston Chronicle Publishing Company. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.



NATURAL LEADER: Nichiren Shu Buddhist priest Myokei Caine-Barrett, leads a group of inmates at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Pack Unit

also assumed leadership.

"It was the next logical step for her. We've seen her faith crystallized," said follower Christie Carrington, a friend of two decades. "She has always been a leader, a visionary."

Caine-Barrett made herself known through word-of-mouth, Buddhist journals and public appearances in interfaith programs across the city. She created a "Meetup" social networking group to recruit potential members, and she live-streams her temple services on the Web.

Outside the prison, she has built a small congregation diverse in race and sexual orientation, with members scattered in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Tampa, Fla., Mexico and Costa Rica.

At her home temple, a handful of adherents gather Wednesday nights for an hour-long service, and her Sunday full-morning program draws about a dozen devotees whose chanting, accompanied by drums, bells and other instruments, echoes in neighborhood streets.

"We're called the noisy Buddhists," she said, noting that chanting is an essential Nichiren practice. "I often open the windows so people can hear us."

She envisions one day, building a stand-alone temple filled with people. But for now, her challenges are real: New members are hard to recruit and money is scarce.

Faulconer said the difficulties are shared by the Nichiren order nationally, as older Japanese immigrants make up much of a membership that lacks younger followers and ministers.

Caine-Barrett said some potential followers change their minds once learning the temple is home-based. Some participants come and go as they try to find a comfortable practice or they're drawn to better-known Bud-



HOME TEMPLE: Meri Eckhoff prays during a Houston service led by Rev. Myokei Caine-Barrett, the only woman in North America to lead a Nichiren Buddhist congregation

dhist traditions.

Bianca Schonberg, a black college administrator in search of a Buddhist group with African-American representation, said she is inspired by Caine-Barrett's "community-oriented spirit" but remains uncommitted to the Nichiren school because of its focus on chanting.

At the prison, however, chanting has been a big draw for the inmates, including those not ready to be initiated as Buddhists.

"I still believe in Christianity," inmate Norman Larson said. "But when I chant and meditate here, I feel all the negativity is washed off me."

Some of the Nichiren faithfuls have remained in touch with Caine-Barrett after their release. Dereck-Esparza, who will soon be free, wants to return for Caine-Barrett's program and help other inmates.

"It's reassuring to hear this," said Caine-Barrett, packing to leave the classroom as the incense dissipated and dusk fell.

Driving out of the Pack Unit, she flashed back on the same incense she smelled as a toddler in Japan.

"I didn't realize until now that the Buddhist seed was planted back then," she said. "It will flower beautifully."

# The Life of Sakyamuni Buddha (16)

By Rev. Shinkai Oikawa, Litt. D.

## 10. Sakyamuni's Missions and Entering Nirvana

### (7) Those who prevent Sakyamuni's mission

I am telling strange stories, but everything did not go well when Sakyamuni propagated His teachings. His teachings are Buddhism, but there are many kinds of religions in India other than Buddhism. It is natural that the more widely Buddhism came to be practiced, the more offerings came to Sakyamuni's Buddhism. It means that fewer offerings went to the other religions. As a result, those concerned were getting angrier at Buddhism, thinking "Those fellows! Damn it to hell! What a shame!" So some of them began to try to crush or kill Sakyamuni. That is why not everything was well with Him.

However, Sakyamuni did not do wrong and had nothing scandalous about Him. Some of them tried to put Him in a difficult position by trickery. The best way to cause scandals has, from olden times, been to use a woman, that is, to lure a man into a love affair. It is the worst blot for a religious leader.



Rev. Shinkai Oikawa

He must be called "a sham religious leader." The other religious people often tried such ways.

One of them persuaded a pilgrim's pretty young daughter called "Chincha" to "act as a decoy." She agreed to the offer, saying, "Yes, I will do it." She acted in order to attract public attention by lingering around Jetavana-vihara, where Sakyamuni lived. When she was asked, "Where did you go?" she answered, "I have been to Sakyamuni." Before long she began to act by putting some pieces of cloth around her stomach as if she were pregnant. What is

more, she had something like a large washbasin under her clothes and it was rumored that she had already reached her full term.

And then, rumors spread all over the town that Sakyamuni had made Chincha pregnant in spite of His marvelous remarks. Hearing the evil rumors, His disciples worried about Him. But He did not mind the rumors and acted with utter indifference, saying "Leave them as they are. This kind of evil deed will be uncovered when the time comes."

Chincha still answered I am pregnant with Sakyamuni's child. But her waistband happened to be untied and the basin dropped down unexpectedly. So all her evil deeds were uncovered at once. Sakyamuni could escape from Chincha's swindle with a dignified attitude meaning that He had done nothing wrong at all.

Another similar story is still to be found. The scheme goes as follows: Those who had something to do with other religions spread an ugly rumor that He had got into a relationship with a prostitute by alluring her to hang around Him. And then, they killed and buried her in the moat of the castle,

spread a rumor saying "She disappeared. Where is she now?" After that, they dug up her body, and made a claim, saying "Buddhists did such a cruel thing. They killed and buried her in the moat in order to cover up the rumor."

Hearing the rumor, a disciple said to Sakyamuni, "Something awful happened to us. What shall we do?" He answered "Leave it as it is. It will be uncovered soon." The strict examinations by the police proved before long that someone other than Buddhists had committed the crime.

In a word, the Buddhist order seemed to have developed satisfactorily, but from the viewpoint of the other religious orders, they felt somewhat uncomfortable in the presence of the Buddhist order. Actually they fought for followers and there were many struggles between them concerning the increase of followers. It is just like the sales battles between supermarkets. When the sales figures of one store go up, those of another store fall down. In order to solve this problem, one store may spread a rumor that another store sells poor quality goods. Although it is a talk on quite a low level, generally speaking, in fact, religion is not so refined as we presume. I only wanted to tell you that they had many problems about their order at that time.

(Tr. K. N.)

(to be continued)



## Rev. Kanno Preaches (5)

"... those who obtained various merits and virtues By almsgiving or by observing the precepts... Have already attained The enlightenment of the Buddha." (Chapter II, Expedients, the Lotus Sutra)

### 'Merits and Virtues'

"Breathing" is one of the Buddhist practices. It is the practice to keep mind and body in peace. Intending "to breathe out evil spirits accumulating in the body," let us breathe out gently for a good while and breathe in as much air as breathed out. Let us exhale through the mouth and inhale through the nose. When we repeat this, our mind becomes calm and peaceful.

"What we should do first is to breathe out." "If we do not breathe out, we are not able to breathe in." "We will breathe in as much as we breathe out." This is not a principle

limited to breathing. It is applicable in all phases of our human life.

We are able to "obtain merits and virtues" only when we make contributions to others. We should be "helpful to others, first, then we will obtain the merits comparable to the contributions we have made to others."

"One must sow before one can reap." This common saying teaches us "practice first." We should not "lie in bed till meat falls into our mouth." Let us sow the seeds of merits and virtues.

(Rev. Nissho Kanno, head priest of the Kaichoji Temple, Shizuoka)

## Events

### February–March 2010

Feb. 3: Setsubun (first day of spring) Service and bean-throwing event at temples throughout Japan

Feb. 10: Service observing the completion of the 100-day aragyo (ascetic) practice at Nakayama Hokkekyoji Temple, Chiba prefecture

Feb. 15: Nirvana Day Service, paintings depicting Buddha's Nirvana are displayed at temples

Feb. 16: Service in commemoration of the birth of our Founder

March 9–12: General meeting of Nichiren Shu Congress

March 18–24: Higan services at temples and family graves

by Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi

## Aragyo:

Priests are leaving Nakayama Hokkekyoji after completing their 100-day ascetic practice. The practice begins every year on November 1, and ends on February 10.



A total of 129 priests, completed this year's practice. They gather together to chant in the Soshido of Hokkekyoji on February 10, the final day of the practice.



## Relief Called for Haiti Earthquake Victims

The Nichiren Shu International Relief Fund initiated a fund raising campaign for the victims of the recent Haiti earthquake. Contributions are being accepted at the Missionary Department of Shumuin Head Office.

In this regard, the department issued the following statement; "Throughout its history, Japan has suffered from many large earthquakes so we understand better than anyone the suffering of the Haitian people.

There are still scars from the Kobe and Niigata earthquakes and those reconstruction efforts were not limited to domestic

help only. We sincerely ask for your assistance so that the people of Haiti can soon return to a safe and secure life."



Minobusan Kuonji hold a fundraising event for the Haitian earthquake victims, with 14 novices chanting and marching angya style through the streets of Minobusan. Contributions amounted to ¥410,000



Fifteen priests hold a fundraising event for the Haitian earthquake victims at Daikyoji temple, Shibamata, Tokyo on January 16. Contributions amounted to ¥300,000

# Nichiren Shonin and His Lay Followers (16)

By Rev. Kanji Tamura, Litt. D.  
Associate Professor,  
Rissho University

## Nichiren Shonin and Nun Nichimyo Shonin

**Visit to Sado from Kamakura:** Nichimyo (? - ?), a devout faithful of the Odaimoku, became a nun after she lost her husband. In the fifth month of 1272, she visited Nichiren Shonin at Ichinosawa, Sado, far away from Kamakura, bringing with her an infant. In those days, the order of Nichiren followers was often oppressed by leading figures of the Kamakura Government. As a result "999 of 1,000" followers of Nichiren gave up their faith. While the Order of Nichiren Buddhism was in a critical condition, Nichimyo devoted herself to the faith of the Lotus Sutra. Moreover, though a frail woman, she crossed the strait defying the dangers of a long journey to visit Nichiren Shonin.

In his letter addressed to Nichimyo, dated the 25th day of the fifth month, the Founder shows how precious the merit Nichimyo had obtained when she visited the Founder by overcoming hardships en route from Kamakura in her reverence for the Lotus Sutra. "It spans one thousand ri from Kamakura of Sagami Province to the northern province of Sado. On the way, mountains are towering, the sea is raging, wind and rain assault travelers timelessly, and bandits and pirates are rampant. You must have gone through ordeals of Three Evil Realms (hell, realm of hungry spirits and realm of animals).

**All Practices Concentrated in the Character of "Myo":** In the letter, the



Rev.  
Kanji Tamura

Founder gives episodes of practice done at the risk of lives (practices of Sakyamuni Buddha in His previous existence), which are taught in various sutras, and praises the undaunted devotion to the faith. For instance, the Founder cites the ascetic who made a writing brush out of his bone, peeled off his skin to make a sheet of paper, produced ink out of his bone marrow and water out of his blood. Other ascetics mentioned are the one who fed a hungry devil with his own body; the one who made offerings by burning his own body; the one who continued to preach defying slandering, stone throwing and striking with sticks; the one who allowed his body to be the seat of his teacher. All of these ascetics show the previous existence of Sakyamuni Buddha.

All the practices in His previous existence turned into His merits, being accommodated in the character of "myo" of Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. As we believe in the Lotus Sutra, we are able to receive all the merits of Sakyamuni Buddha, becoming Sakyamuni's children and equal to Sakyamuni Buddha. Thus, Nichiren Shonin clarifies the preciousness of the faith in the daimoku.

**Attainment of Buddhahood by Women:** The concept of discrimination against women was influential not only in ancient India but also in ancient civilizations throughout the world, not to mention the samurai society of Kamakura in Japan. Discrimina-

tion against women is often reflected in sutras. Nichiren Shonin cited several instances of discrimination in his letter to Nichimyo. It is written in a certain sutra, he says, the mind of a woman is compared to a river as all rivers meander; a woman is compared to an insane person; or the transient mind of a woman is compared to the surface of water.

However, "the attainment of Buddhahood with one's present body" is revealed in the Lotus Sutra through the example of attaining Buddhahood by the eight-year-old daughter of the dragon king. Thus the assurance of the future attainment of Buddhahood for women is preached in the sutra. The Founder tells Nichimyo that only the Lotus Sutra reveals the Buddha's true words.

**Title of 'Shonin' Bestowed:** In the letter, the Founder praises her, saying "I have never heard of a woman who followed a rugged path of one thousand ri in search for the truth of Buddhism." He assures her that Sakyamuni Buddha, Many Treasures Buddha, Replica Buddhas of Ten Directions, Superior Practice Bodhisattva, Limitless Practice Bodhisattva, and other bodhisattvas, the King of Brahma Heaven, King Sakra and the Four Heavenly Kings will nestle to you as a shadow follows the body," and praises her as "in Japan, you are foremost among women who practice the Lotus Sutra, and I call you as Nichimyo Shonin."

**Founder's Sympathy:** Mentioning Nichimyo's existing state of affairs, the Founder states, "You are taking care of an infant. You have long been separated from the infant's father, who ought to take care of the infant. Thinking of

the situation, my heart is choked with sorrow and I will stop writing here." Here we perceive the deep affection and sympathy the Founder held for her. Nichiren Shonin was so compassionate and sympathetic, more than anyone else, with the hardships of others. He stressed the teaching of "Great sympathy and shouldering of the distress of others." "Great sympathy" denotes broadmindedness of sympathizing with others in their distress and removing their distress.

Each of us has worries and distress, serious or not, in our daily lives. If a master appears and sympathizes with us from the bottom of his heart, sheds tears with us and shares the distress, we will give him our absolute reliance. Nichiren Shonin was such a person for his followers.

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

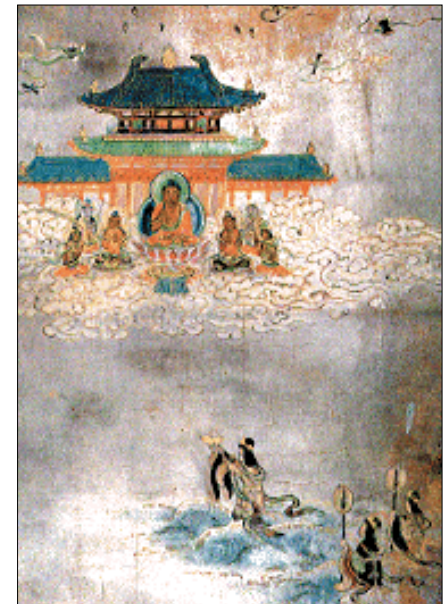


Photo shows an illustration of the Lotus Sutra, depicting the attainment of Buddhahood by the daughter of the dragon king. The copy of the Lotus Sutra, a national treasure, was donated by the Heiki clan and is preserved at the Itsukushima Shrine, Hiroshima

## Study Tour in India

By Rev. Tsuoh Yokoi  
Missionary Department

The third study tour interchange with the street children in India, sponsored by the Nichiren Shu Missionary Department, was held from February 14 to 22 in Kolkata (former Calcutta). The purpose of this study tour is to find and educate capable people to help Nichiren Shu international cooperation activities and overseas propagation in the future.

Nine people participated in this year's tour; three students, five priests and one member of a priest's family. Two women were included.

As in the past two years, the tour was assisted by "Raindrop," headed by Rev. Homan Kita and the "Calcutta Social Project," an NGO based locally, to help the street children become self-reliant.

The nine participants did cultural exchange activities at two of the outdoor classrooms set up on vinyl sheets on the road and park on Madan Street and Bow Bazar. Although they could not communicate verbally, the Japanese members taught the children origami and Japanese songs.

One of the participants, Akihiro Tamura, said, "Japanese children are blessed with material goods, so why are the schools being affected by bullying and disruption? Here in India, the

children are eager and happy to learn even if they don't have the proper facilities or textbooks. I think this is because material abundance does not equal mental well-being. Before coming to India, I thought the two went hand in hand, however, I now realize that I was wrong."

The nine participants of this tour felt there was a serious reality behind the smiling faces of the children, and a sense of helplessness overcame all of them. However, all the members tried their best to see what they could do now and open their hearts to the situation and mingle with the children. "When we think of international cooperation, we are prone to think of 'what we can do to help,' however, just watching the children striving to live their lives taught us something greater instead," said one of the members.

As a result of the experience from this tour, hopefully all the members will have broader perspectives and use their experience in their daily lives.

(Tr. S. S.)



Outdoor classroom at Bow Bazar



Outdoor classroom at Madan Street



Using small slate boards as notebooks

# Temple Events

## Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple

By Rev. Myosho Obata

It has been a year since I was assigned as a resident minister of the Nichiren Buddhist Temple of Portland on April 12, 2009. Everything has been the first time for me, especially the annual fundraisers of the temple.

### Belmont Street Fair

First of all, the Belmont Street Fair held on September 12, 2009, was an annual fundraiser that served as a community outreach as well as an income generator.

The Fujinkai was coordinating preparations four days prior to the event. The members and supporters had an early start at 8 a.m. to set up the temple booth. Food stalls selling yakisoba, tofu bento, chicken bento and beverages were thriving with customers. Besides, Rev. Obata performed the Japanese Tea Ceremony next to our booth and served matcha (Japanese tea powder) and sweets. It was very important for our temple to get involved with the community.

### Mochi-Tsuki 2010

The second event was Mochi-Tsuki 2010 which the JACL sponsored. This celebration of Japanese culture and tradition was held on January 31, 2010. It was another successful fundraiser for our temple. Through this kind of event, we are able to inform the people where our temple is located and what kind of services we hold. This is a kind of the propagation of Nichiren Shu. We had booths where we sold maki sushi, chicken and tofu bento, chow mein and drinks. Our temple booth was quite successful and we sold-out all our food.



Rev. Myosho Obata

### The 18th Spring Bazaar

The biggest event for the Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple was the 18th Annual Spring Bazaar held on Sunday, March 28, from 11.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at our temple. Before the Spring Bazaar, we had to do many things for this great event, such as advertising the bazaar, selling tickets, and raffles, preparing a lot of ingredients, cleaning the temple and so on. We sold tonkatsu, chicken and tofu bento, chow mein, and baked cookies. The Spring Bazaar was the largest fundraiser of the year for our temple. We worked together and succeeded in this event.

The Nichiren Buddhist Temple of Portland was founded in 1932 by Japanese Issei pioneers. Seventy-three years have passed and since then, a lot of members and supporters have dedicated themselves to maintaining our temple with their innumerable contributions. With their great contributions, we have been able to continue our practice of the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku, Namu Myoho Renge-kyo, in Portland, Oregon. We will make an effort to propagate Nichiren Shu Buddhism and maintain our temple with the spirit of ITAI-DOSHIN (different bodies with one spirit).

## Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada

By Rev. Shokai Kanai

### The Ultimate Goal for Buddhists

The ultimate goal for Buddhists is to attain Buddhahood. What does it mean to attain Buddhahood? If we do not know, then we cannot aim for it. It is to become a person of character who awakens from illusion and is liberated from lust, worldly desires, and karma, one who attains Buddha Dharma and one who is well-rounded.

### Recommendation of Shakyō

Shakyō is to copy or trace the sutras or Buddhist scriptures. The Kannon Temple of Nevada is now ready to offer tracing of Chapter XXV of the Lotus Sutra, Kannon Bosatsu, "The World-Voice-Perceiver Bodhisattva" in English and Japanese.

Shakyō will help you become peaceful, calm,

improve your handwriting and for some to have a spiritual experience. The first class for Shakyō will start in April after the Sunday service. Those who are not able to attend may request for a Shakyō booklet. Once the Shakyō is completed please write your prayer, name, address and date on it; then send it back to the Kannon Temple with your donation. Rev. Kanai will pray for you. Your donations will go towards the Building Fund for a future temple.

## San Jose Nichiren Buddhist Temple

By Rev. Arnold Matsuda

### Support Sought for the 30th Anniversary Projects

On October 30, 2010, the Nichiren Buddhist Temple (Myokakuji Betsuin) of San Jose will be commemorating the 30th anniversary of the temple. To commemorate the event, the following anniversary projects were approved in the preliminary setup meeting which was held on January 24.

1. Ceremony on Saturday, October 30

We would like to invite all temple members and friends who are affiliated with our temple to the ceremony, luncheon, and other events to be held that day.

2. Publication of a "Nichiren Shu" book

3. Temple restoration: Termite control for the Hondo Building, repair and restoration of the pillars surrounding the Hondo and their painting, parking area resurfacing, and others.

In preparation for this wonderful occasion, our goal is to raise the fund of \$32,000. It was approved in the Sodai meeting to use the Bazaar profits for three years, however, we still need to raise \$17,000. Therefore, we appeal for your kindness in the form of a monetary pledge to support this event. If you wish to make a contribution, please write your pledge and send it to the temple. Thank you so much for your understanding and support.

## Nichigatsuzan Horinji

By Kalsang Norbu,  
Chief of Staff at Horinji

### Dedication Ceremony for Buddhist Statue and Relics

Nichigatsuzan Horinji is situated at Sarnath in Varanasi, where the Buddha Sakyamuni gave his first sermon about the

"Four Noble Truths" to his five disciples. Sarnath is one of the most holy and peaceful places in India. There are lots of Buddhist temples, for example Thai, Tibetan, Chinese, Korean, and Burmese. The Japanese temple is about 18 years old and its (Puja) O-eshiki service was held on November 20 and 21. On the first day, Japanese monks chanted "Tathagat yushma Pranam parivartan Sutra" (part of Satdharm Pundarika Sutra) and on the fol-



The newly dedicated statue of the Buddha



Group photo of Indian and Japanese representatives at the dedication ceremony

lowing day they performed Shanti Stupa Puja. Shanti Stupa is under construction.

The new statue and Buddha relics, Kyoseki & Shakyō were dedicated on November 21, 2009 in the presence of high officials of the Indian government and honorable monks from Japan as well. On that day, a lot of local people gathered in the temple and some Ladakhi monks performed the Tibetan Mask dance in order to make the event a more memorable one.

To spread peace and harmony in the world is the primary aim of building the Shanti Stupa here at the Horinji Temple, Sarnath. One unique routine of the temple is that many local people participate in prayer and beat the Dharma drums. They recite the sutra "NAMU MYO HO REN GE KYO" both in the morning and evening. The temple always remains full of people from India, Japan, and other countries. So naturally the temple is surrounded by a peaceful and tranquil atmosphere. In this way, the Horinji temple remains as the symbol of peace and love and to cultivate compassion in the people who come to visit.

**Editor's Note:** The Shanti stupa which is under construction at the moment will be completed by the end of October 2010. An inaugural cere-

mony is planned for November, in time with the Horinji O-eshiki.

## Toronto Nichiren Buddhist Church

By Rev. Kenno Fukushima

### Lotus Sutra Chanting and Buddhism Study Class

A Lotus Sutra chanting session and an hour-long Lotus Sutra study class started in February. Every month two sessions will be held after Sunday service.

### O-higan Service

During the Higan period, Rev. Fukushima prepares O-toba for everyone's ancestors. O-toba was once a symbol for Buddha's grave. Today it represents a letter that conveys our thoughts and feelings to our ancestors, friends or pets, etc., who have passed away. The temple hopes everyone gives an O-toba not only to his ancestors but also to the spirits of the universe. These deeds will bring everyone happiness.



Cherry blossoms of Minobusan

## Nichiren Shu News

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