

Nichiren Shu News

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SHUGYO: TRAINING TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE



Shami Ryusei at Shinnyoji Temple following Higan Service held over Zoom with the New England Sangha.

By Shami Ryusei Iizuka

I arrived in Japan in February. Coming to Japan, I had three major goals—to attend Docho-shiki at Seichoji Temple in Chiba and to train at Shinnyoji Temple in Osaka Prefecture and Myokyoji Temple in Okayama, but my experience here has been so much more than that.

My first stop was Oiso, Kanagawa, home of Myorinji Temple, which is more than 700 years old. The temple is headed by Rev. Riju Kumazawa, a Shomyoshi. During our week together, he drilled me on chanting the Lotus Sutra, shomyo, and taught me the basics of being doshi for a memorial service. We also visited several historic temples

together in Kanagawa, including Ryu-koji Temple, where I was able to train with his Shomyoshi colleagues. I am forever grateful for Rev. Kumazawa's teaching and kindness and for arranging my training at Myokyoji Temple.

Days before Shakyamuni Buddha's Parinirvana Day and Nichiren Shonin's birthday, I arrived at Minobusan Kuonji, Nichiren Shu's head temple. The serene Minobu landscape is mountainous and peaceful, creating the perfect environment to develop a relationship with the deities, the land, and the wisdom of our Founder. Rev. Kumazawa left me in the care of Rev. Yuon Ito, head priest of Kuonji Temple in Nagoya. In celebration of Nichiren Shonin's birthday, we had a one-hour *Shodaigyo* session in front of his grave. Even in the cold night, when we could see our breath, it was a magical experience. There were special services for the above-mentioned two holidays which, combined with an incredible stay at the Hinosawabo temple inn and the kind nature of the people of Minobu, made for an amazing experience.

My next destination was Shinnyoji Temple. Training there every day was an incredible honor. The temple's head minister is Rev. Kanju Ueda, who I cannot thank enough for accepting me into his temple as well as for his kindness, and for training me. My time there was spent learning the principles of monastic life and how to care for enshrined deities in a temple. Nichiren Shonin taught us that we should pray for our ancestors seven generations into the past and into the future. I truly

learned the importance of this practice through daily memorial services for temple members who have passed.

After more than a month at Shinnyoji, I departed for Seichoji Temple, for the powerful experience of taking vows in the Docho Ceremony at the same place where Nichiren Shonin first took his vows to become a priest. As part of a Shami's route to Shingyo Dojo, Docho is for newly inducted Shamis, novice ministers, to be added to the official registry of priest trainees. I once again had the opportunity to be supervised by Rev. Ito. I am forever grateful to him for escorting me to Seichoji Temple and standing in for my master who was not able to attend due to the ongoing coronavirus-related travel restrictions.

Currently, I am training at Myokyoji Temple in Okayama. It is a beautiful temple that fully embraces interaction between Buddhism and Shintoism. It is on a mountain just outside the city and is the home of Saijo Inari. I have been working in the temple's office in the Department of Prayers and Memorial Services, with eleven priests who are charged with carrying out hourly blessings, memorial services, and other religious affairs. The temple has a 1200-year-long history, much of which it spent independent of any Buddhist sect, making much of its practices unique and, of course, new to me. I spent my first several weeks re-learning basic practices in the style of the temple, including things such as the procession taiko, hansho, and a unique form of odaimoku taiko known as Inari Daiko.



Rev. Riju Kumazawa, Shami Ryusei, and Rev. Gishin Seita at Honrenji Temple.

I later moved on to practicing *suigyo*, water purification, *shakyo*, copying the Lotus Sutra, and reciting prayers unique to the temple.

I am incredibly thankful to all of the temples and teachers that have taken me in during my time in Japan. Although I will be in Japan for an extended period of time to train more, I vow to bring back all of the knowledge that I have gained to continue to do my part in helping spread the Lotus Sutra and teachings of Nichiren Shonin in the U.S. and around the world.



Rev. Gishin Seita drilling Shami Ryusei on shomyo at Honrenji Temple.

ONLINE STUDY TOUR TEACHES ABOUT TRADITIONAL FESTIVAL FOODS



By Rev. Kanjo Bassett

The Third Online Study Tour for 2022 took place March 28. The program included two components: an online lecture on *Washoku*, Traditional Dietary Cultures of Japan, and a virtual pilgrimage tour of Minobu.

If you stay for any length of time in Japan, you will inevitably be asked, "Does your country have four seasons?" You might answer, "Of course we do." But you might not know the cultural reason why Japanese like asking this question.

Japan has well defined seasons with culturally observed days that go back to the Heian-era Imperial court. They were later designated as national holidays in the Edo era, becoming deeply ingrained



customs that celebrate the change of seasons with special food, drink, and lively festivals. There are tightly linked to the localized Chinese lunar calendar used up until the Meiji era, and are called the Gosekku, or Five Seasonal Festivals:

January 7 (1/7) Jinjitsu no Sekku. Seven grass rice porridge for good health at the start of the New Year.

March 3 (3/3) Joshi no Sekku. The peach blossom festival now known as Girl's Day.

May 5 (5/5) Tango no Sekku. Originally Boy's Day, now Children's Day.

July 7 (7/7) Shichiseki no Sekku. Tanabata Festival.

September 9 (9/9) Choyo no Sekku. Originally observed with chrysanthemum wine but now a time for autumn festivals.

As part of the study program, Aya Kiyoshi, a researcher specializing in traditional Japanese dietary cultures, explained how these traditional seasonal festivals spread to all levels of society, incorporating Shinto and Buddhist practices while adapting to various local cultures and foods. Comments from the online participants were positive and engaging:

"The detailed but easy to understand explanation of traditional events and food helped me understand their origins and meanings, and taught me to enjoy Japanese cuisine."

"I've always been interested in studying the traditional Japanese seasons, based on the Chinese lunar calendar, but my knowledge grew deeper thanks to today's lecture. I knew Japanese cuisine was registered by UNESCO but honestly only thought of it as health food. The various expressions of gratitude towards the Buddha and Shinto gods, nature and culture, joining families and local regions together in celebration."

"It's important to pass on traditions to later generations."

So much has been simplified and lost. The lecture was about Gosekku, but it made me think of many different cultural traditions. I want to plan something that will transmit these to younger generations."

The virtual pilgrimage was presented to the participants as a YouTube video. It included a 'walk and talk' tour of important temples and places in Minobusan. Currently, the video is entirely in Japanese, and it has not yet been made available to the public. The International Missionary Department plans to create a public version of the video with subtitles in several languages. We look forward to letting you know when these become available.





NBIC EVOLUTION

By Rev. Tetsudo Takasaki

The Nichiren Buddhist International Center located in Hayward, California has many functions and provides services that Nichiren Shu practitioners outside of Japan may not be aware of.

In the second half of the 20th century, Nichiren Shu priests worked to fulfill the wishes of our founder to spread the Dharma to the four corners of the world, crossing the Pacific to propagate in Hawaii and America. Propagation has been taking place for over 100 years. The initial focus was taking care of the Japanese immigrants with all propagation activity in Japanese.

By the late 20th century, propagation and education in English was needed to take care of second and third-generation Japanese Americans. With the increasing use of English-language propagation, the number of non-Japanese American people interested in Nichiren Shu started to grow.

As the propagation material brought from Japan was only in Japanese, the first English-language teaching materials were individual efforts. As priests began to take on English-speaking disciples, the need for English-language materials for priest education became very important.

Before the Internet, without the online translation tools we enjoy today, do-it-yourself (DIY) individual translation efforts and priest education were difficult and extremely time consuming. And because it was DIY,

priests did everything from translation, teaching basic ceremonies and providing guidance. With everybody doing their own thing, there was no coordination. This resulted in differences in texts and disciple instruction.

To address the problem, reduce duplication and provide better priest education, the overseas ministers worked with the Nichiren Shu Head Office to create and fund the Nichiren Buddhist International Center (NBIC) as a single place to coordinate all overseas propagation and education efforts and to share resources.

The first NBIC home was the Nichiren Buddhist Temple of San Jose, followed by the Nichiren Buddhist Temple of Portland. The permanent home, and current location, was established with the purchase of land in Hayward in 1999. The building was refurbished to provide office and guest accommodations for workshops and retreats. When these additions were completed in 2002, an independent NBIC was off and running.

The NBIC has four main functions covering: (1) retreats and workshops, (2) publications, (3) public relations and promotion, and (4) research and surveys. Retreats include shami and lay leader training workshops, which have unfortunately been curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Publications cover our English-language books and pamphlets, including our current main effort to update the *Writings of Nichiren Shonin* series to make it more widely

available in modern digital formats. Public relations efforts cover the NBIC website and advertising in Buddhist-related magazines. Research looks into the current state of Nichiren Shu sanghas internationally as well as the state of other religions.

Presently, there is a growing shortage of Nichiren Shu priests located outside of Japan, particularly in America. For this reason, the education and qualification of regionally based priests is an urgent



issue. NBIC takes this problem very seriously, and we are working closely with various Nichiren Shu associations to address it.

NBIC doesn't have much direct connection with temple and sangha members, but we do sell books and juzu through the NBIC website store. <https://nichiren-shu.org/> Please visit if you are interested. NBIC is always interested in your input and requests. We look forward to hearing from you.



LOTUS JEWELS

*Other people's inability to become a Buddha
is your inability to become a Buddha.*

*For others to become a Buddha
means for you to become a Buddha.*

—Nichiren Shonin, *Ichidai Shogyo Tai-i*,
Outline of All the Holy Teachings of the Buddha (ST 10)

In another example of how Nichiren makes the wonderful and mysterious Dharma of the Lotus Sutra simple and direct, this passage reminds us of how important it is to respect all the people we share our world with. In the same way, when we have solid faith in the Buddha assuring us of our capacity for enlightenment, we see that same capacity in everyone around us.

—Rev. Shinkyō Warner

Hiki Yoshimoto and Myohonji Temple

By Rev. Kosei Uchida

"The 13 Lords of the Shogun" is a historical drama series broadcast by Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) since January 2022. "The Shogun" here refers to Minamoto no Yoriie, the second shogun of the Kamakura military government. Minamoto no Yoritomo, who had established his shogunate in Kamakura, died suddenly due to a fall from a horse in 1199. Yoriie, a legitimate son, took over the office of shogun, but he was only 18 years old. He had so little experience in politics that 13 immediate vassals called *gokenin* administered government affairs under a council system. One *gokenin*, Hojo Tokimasa, who was eager to seize real political power, assassinated another *gokenin* named Hiki Yoshikazu who was flatly opposed to Tokimasa.

The whole Hiki family was murdered, but a two-year-old son, Hiki Yoshimoto (1201-1286) was spared. He went to Kyoto for studies to become a Confucianist and also earned a reputation as a good calligrapher and scholar. He came back to his hometown of Kamakura and met Nichiren Shonin in 1251. Yoshimoto was so deeply touched by the firm belief and

intellectual power of Nichiren Shonin, who spread the true Dharma at the risk of his life, that he decided to become his devotee and offered assistance for whatever he could do. With his wonderful calligraphy, Yoshimoto made excellent copies of letters. He even advised Nichiren Shonin for revisions of his treatise, the *Rissho Ankoku-ron*.

Yoshimoto converted his hermitage into a chanting hall for the Lotus Sutra in order to pray for the repose of the souls of his murdered family and donated the hall to Nichiren Shonin. This is the origin of Myohonji Temple located in Kamakura. His dedication never stopped. Even after Nichiren Shonin left Kamakura for Minobusan, Yoshimoto was always concerned about the life of Nichiren Shonin. As soon as Yoshimoto heard that Nichiren Shonin was lying on his sickbed, he rushed to Mt. Minobu. When Nichiren Shonin died on October 13 in 1282, Yoshimoto attended his deathbed and funeral at Ikegami. He showed every courtesy and loyalty toward Nichiren Shonin. Hiki Yoshimoto passed away on February 15, 1286 at the age of 85. The gravesite of the Hiki family is located at Myohonji Temple.



Myohonji Temple.



Hiki family grave.

Funeral Role as a Buddhist Minister

By Rev. Ryoyu Nishijima,
Zen-oji Temple, Fukuoka Prefecture

We, as Nichiren Shu ministers, hold wakes or funerals, giving the departed a Buddhist name based on the personal character of the departed. Some die in peace at the age of 100, or sometimes people meet with the moment of death unreasonably. When one dies young or in babyhood or in an accident or commits suicide, there is nothing to do other than to pray for their attainment of Buddhahood. I am always talking to them in my heart, “True, you have had a short life, but I do believe it was a meaningful life for you, wasn’t it?” When a mother died leaving little children behind, I asked her in myself, “Please watch over your children from the next world. When they get into

trouble, extend a helping hand to them.” After a farewell ceremony, flowers are offered into a coffin before it will be carried out of the house to a crematory. An emotion of great sadness is aroused at this moment. Full of tears. This may come from looking back on the good days with the deceased, or it may come from deep regrets. In Buddhism, it is both important to pray for the repose of the person’s soul or recite healing prayers and to expound the meaning of a sutra or a doctrine of our Founder. It is wrong to go too far to one side, making less account of the other. In my opinion, just sutra chanting for a memorial service or a study class in a temple is not enough. Preach a sermon. Remember that people will judge you as a priest through a sermon more than you imagine. You do not have to be a

good speaker. Those who are all talk and no action will not be relied on. Look at how our Founder Nichiren Shonin spoke to his follower who was quite prostrate with grief. He wrote to a wife who had lost her husband as if talking gently: “Did you have any interaction with him after he passed away? I wish you can meet him through a dream. I am sure that he is watching over you from the Pure Land of Mt. Sacred Eagle. As both you and your husband have had faith in the Lotus Sutra, you will live with him in the Pure Land of Mt. Sacred Eagle someday. There is no doubt that he has attained Buddhahood. Therefore, you are expected to respect your lost husband. I deeply understand how much you weep



over his death, but try to pray for the repose of his soul, based on your faith in the Lotus Sutra.” Instead of talking down to her with a superior air, or from afar, expounding difficult doctrines, he

showed great empathy to share her sorrow. He even shed tears for her. He offered words of comfort, trying to find a way for her to get past her grief. What a considerate and kind heart he has! We can learn a lot from his attitude to do his best toward joining with a person in his or her sorrow and finding some relief together.

This piece is excerpted from an article that originally appeared in *Shuho, Nichiren Shu Gazette*.

LIVING IN THE ODAIMOKU

A part-time series in the spirit of the long-running Japanese newspaper series highlighting personal stories showing the power of Odaimoku and Nichiren Shu faith in everyday life.

This is the story of Hideo Shitara and his wife Yasuo who run a soba restaurant in the Fukagawa area of East Tokyo, an old neighborhood dating back to the Edo period. Originally a lively diner-like soba restaurant that he had taken over from his father, Shitara decided to remake the family business into a quiet, upscale soba restaurant. This proved to be popular with the surrounding temples, who would order soba box lunches to serve at the

temple after memorial services. Shitara himself was not particularly religious though many of his relatives belonged to Nichiren Shu temples. However, this changed suddenly with the death of the eldest son in 1987. The loss of their very young and beloved Kazunobu was painful torment for the couple. In the midst of darkness, they talked many times with Rev. Joyu Koshu, the resident priest of Honryu-in, expressing their sorrows. Eventually, they moved their son’s grave to Honryu-in where they could pray every day, sometimes wailing. Meanwhile, they buried their suffering in work but also came to the temple to chant Odaimoku with other members. Gradually, a new thought came into their

hearts. “We want to be parents our son would be proud of, being useful to others in every way we can.” Hideo is now a lay leader of Honryu-in and a community leader in many areas, from religion to crime prevention and education. The same spirit is in their work, delighting restaurant customers with delicious soba yet always striving to improve. Their soba is very popular with young people, yet Hideo and Yasuo sense a growing crisis as their young customers have little interest or connection with temples and shrines. Hideo explains, “Everybody likes the noisy fun of a traditional festivals, but the all important reverent celebratory spirit behind it, the gratitude and awe, are missing. That is the important lesson I want to teach the younger generation in the years I have left.” (Translated by Rev. Kanjo Bassett)



NEW BROCHURE FOR PILGRIMAGE AT KAMAKURA

By Rev. Chishin Hirai,
Ankokuronji Temple, Kamakura

There are many ways to look at Nichiren Shonin’s life to help understand him. One way is to divide it into three periods. The first period was from his birth to the proclamation of his new faith, Rikkyo Kaishu. The second period was from the proclamation to his moving to Minobu. The last period was from entering Minobu to his passing. The most active and difficult time for him was the second of these periods in Kamakura. We can think of this as the Kamakura Period. Present-day Kamakura City is much bigger than in Nichiren’s time. Kamakura was created as a town under the Kamakura Shogunate. There are many historic and sacred sites of Nichiren Shonin in Kamakura. Nichiren Shonin proclaimed his new faith facing the rising sun at the top of Asahigamori at Seichoji Temple on April 28, 1253. After that, he went to Kamakura, the capital of the Kamakura Shogunate, to start his new propagation. He built a small hut at Matsubagayatsu and propagated the teaching of the Lotus Sutra on the streets. We call this *tsuji seppo*, or street propagation.

In those days, there were many disasters including earthquakes, typhoons, famines and pandemics. Nichiren Shonin wrote his main treatise, the *Rissho Ankoku-ron*, to address those difficulties. He presented it the shogunate in 1260 and was then attacked by other religious followers about a month later. This is called the Matsubagayatsu Incident. In the following year, he was exiled to Izu, then two years later he was pardoned. Nichiren Shonin went back to his hometown to see his sick mother after the Izu Exile. There, he was attacked again by an estate steward. This is called the Komatsubara Incident. Nichiren Shonin then returned to Kamakura. He propagated more than before and had many disciples

and followers. Shogunate authorities didn’t like it and arrested him again. He was taken to Tatsunokuchi and almost beheaded there. This is called the Tatsunokuchi Incident. He managed to escape death, but he was exiled to Sado Island right after that. Four years later, he returned to Kamakura from Sado and admonished the Shogunate for the last time. However, the Shogunate didn’t accept his advice. He decided to move to Minobu and left Kamakura in 1274. This Kamakura Period of 22 years was very important for him. It was the most productive and most dangerous time for him. His propagation made him deepen his understanding of the teaching. He also realized that his life proved the righteousness of the teaching and who Jogyo Bodhisattva was.

We have 18 Nichiren Shu temples in the old Kamakura City area called Kamakura Gumi or the Kamakura group. Each temple has its own unique bonds with Nichiren Shonin. For example, my temple, Ankokuronji, is where he built his hut, wrote the *Rissho Ankoku-ron*, and was attacked in the Matsubagayatsu and Tatsunokuchi Incidents. Myochoji is where he left for Izu. Kosokuji is where Nichiro was imprisoned when Nichiren Shonin was exiled to Sado Island. There are so many more to see. Kamakura Gumi published a new pilgrimage brochure recently. It carries pictures and simple explanations of each temple. It also shows a Kamakura City map with temple locations. A flower calendar and recommended routes for pilgrimage are also included. In addition, there are QR codes at each temple that you can read with your smartphone. These will lead you to their websites or to Google maps. You can find the new brochure for free at Kamakura Gumi temples or with other tourist information at Kamakura station. We only have a Japanese version now. However, an English version will be published in the next year. If you come to Kamakura and follow Nichiren Shonin’s footsteps, please use it.





Honolulu Myohoji Temple

Rev. Josho Yamamura

Kannon Kou

We worship Kannon Bodhisattva at Honolulu Myohoji Temple on the 18th day of every month. I am a Kannon worshipper and practitioner. Kannon-sama is a bodhisattva. There are bodhisattvas that are visible and those that are invisible. A person who forgets his own needs and devotes himself to society and others is a living bodhisattva.

Kannon-sama is always trying to save those suffering on this earth. Yet, the real form of Kannon-sama is a Buddha called Shohomyo Buddha. Moreover, the Buddha is the Eternal Buddha of the universe and also our parent. The Buddha manifests Himself as Kannon Bodhisattva and is working to save us. Therefore, to pray to Kannon-sama is to pray to the Buddha. Furthermore, Kannon-sama changes form according to the type of human suffering.

In Buddhism, there is no greater compassionate existence than Kannon Bodhisattva. Since Kannon-sama is the Buddha, who is our parent, His mind of Love arises to save all living beings, who are His children. To work to save the deluded living beings, and we who

are suffering and unhappy, is the natural state of mind and action of Kannon-sama. Kannon-sama reacts to our voices that call dearly to Him, and He immediately extends His hand of salvation. This is why it is important to call to Him by reciting "Namu Kanzeon Bosatsu." If we sincerely pray to Kannon-sama, in our mind and recite His name with our lips, we will be given the power to overcome any kind of unhappiness and suffering.



Nichiren Mission of Hawaii

Rev. Shokai Kanai

Sunrise Service (Kaishu-e)

On April 24, we held a Sunrise Service at the Halona Blow Hole. We celebrated in remembrance of Nichiren Shonin's first chanting of the Odaimoku, *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*, on April 28, 1253 at Mt. Kiyosumi in Chiba Prefecture, Japan.

Pet Monument

It has been a year since we erected the pet monument near the lotus pond. If you haven't seen it yet, please come. This area has been designated as the scattering place for your beloved pet's ashes. It is a peaceful area, on the slope just before the stone benches that overlook the pond. You can also view the monument from above while sitting in the shade of the Bodhi tree.

If you'd like to scatter your pet's ashes here, please contact Rev. Kanai.

Kannon Temple of Nevada

Rev. Shoda Kanai

Stress Relief Chanting Meditation

There is much stress that affects our daily lives. Some things we can control and others we cannot. There are many tools available to us such as meditation, yoga, and exercise that we can incorporate into our daily lives to release the stress.

I would like to recommend adding our *Shodaigyo* practice. This is our sect's form of meditative practice. It combines both chanting and quiet contemplation. This is simple to carry out, and anyone can try it, no matter how old or how experienced they are at chanting.

Shodaigyo traditionally starts off with quiet meditation followed by chanting the Odaimoku, *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*, with the chanting starting off slowly then rapidly gaining speed, then finally slowing down again. It ends with several minutes of quiet contemplation.

At the Kannon Temple, we usually schedule *Shodaigyo* on the last Sunday of each month. I recommend everyone to join in.

A key point to remember is to focus on your breathing while you chant. When we chant fast, breathing intake is shorter but try focusing on taking in longer breaths, just like when you are sitting in quiet meditation. Breathe in through your nose, hold for three seconds, then exhale. While exhaling, chant the Odaimoku. Then take another breath and repeat. When you're not actively chanting the Odaimoku out loud, chant it in your mind. That way there is a continuous flow of chanting without any breaks. In this manner, you can gain the most benefit of both active and passive chanting.

As we continue in this practice, it can bring forth a sense of calmness and serenity, just like being a Buddha. The stress of the world melts away. Notice how you feel next time after chanting!

Ro-O-Zan Enkyoji Nichiren Buddhist Temple

Rev. Kanjin Cederman

New Temple in Buffalo, New York

We are pleased to announce the opening of a new temple for Nichiren Shu. I had been living in Seattle for over 13 years and wished to return to Buffalo to take care of my parents. We have had believers here for a long time, and the area has grown to include a Thai Buddhist Monastery. I had prayed to allow the Lotus Sutra to be established where I was born. We received a wonderful opportunity from a local institution that my family has been connected with for generations. The local Masonic lodge offered to rent us a private space in their building for our Hondo and office. This was a great chance to establish our temple and be accepted in the community. We held our first public service on March 6. Many visitors from different groups came. We now hold weekly services and *Shodaigyo* meditation practice. We've planned an open house to welcome people to our new space.

It has been a dream of mine to build a temple on my family property. We are moving forward to build. We have begun meeting with local government officials to share our plans. Hopefully, this will result in a physical stupa of treasures in the next few years. We hope all of you will visit our growing temple. Let us continue to spread our tradition around the world.



INTERNATIONAL PROPAGATION ONLINE LECTURE

By Rev. Kangyo Noda

On February 22, Rev. Shoryo Tarabini, resident priest of Renkoji Temple in Italy, gave a lecture to the Nichiren Shu Young Priest Association of Wakayama regarding his experiences and the current state of Nichiren Shu propagation in Europe.

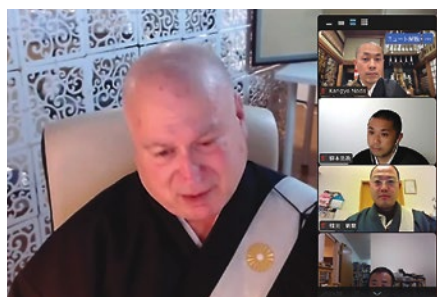
Rev. Tarabini went to London in 2002 as a missionary after working as a missionary in Southeast Asia and India. He explained that being in different cultures meant that he had to adapt propagation methods. While Europeans might seem accepting of Buddhism, deep acceptance of the spiritual side is hard. It's difficult for many to become true Buddhist followers. As

such, Rev. Tarabini feels that propagation is hard work in any country.

He outlined the history of Nichiren Shu propagation in Europe, the establishment of Renkoji Temple and his propagation efforts. Italy is predominately Catholic, so his propagation activities must always be respectful of other religions. He also emphasizes that Buddhism is not an exotic import but a religion for human life.

European countries have different languages and customs. For Nichiren Shu to take root, it is important to propagate in local languages. Rev. Tarabini is creating chanting books for different languages.

The pandemic has changed propagation methods and temple activities. Online



video has become the mainstay. There was a real concern that temple members and followers would drift away, but he has actually seen the opposite. Members started feeling they had to step up and support the temple. The change in attitude has been an opportunity for them to

understand temple activities more deeply.

After the lecture, there were many questions. Rev. Tarabini shared that when a priest bases his actions on compassion and respect, followers and newcomers feel an affinity to Nichiren Shu teachings, with the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha. The event organizer, Rev. Kokyo Yanagimoto, said he was surprised how much Rev. Tarabini had achieved in a place with no history of Buddhism, that Rev. Tarabini's single-minded, diligent activity has resulted in many Nichiren Shu devotees. Rev. Yanagimoto also noted that there were a lot of helpful spiritual leadership experiences that could also be useful for Japanese propagation.

Calendar for June – July 2022

JUNE 15-17 Minobusan Kaibyaku-e, Commemoration Day of Nichiren Shonin Entering Minobusan

JUNE 25 Nitcho Shonin Memorial Day

JULY 13-16 Obon (Western Calendar)

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