

SACRED WORDS

How shall I (the Eternal Buddha) cause all living beings to enter into the unsurpassed Way and quickly become the Buddha?

(Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra)

The New Temple Living Together and Prosper Together

Rev. Shokai Kanai

I wish to build a new temple by 2022, celebrating the 800 Anniversary of the Birth of Nichiren Dai'Shonin.

Las Vegas is not only known for its gambling; it is also the city that holds conventions almost every day at hotels and convention centers. It is the city thousands of tourists visit from around the world every day. Many tourists and convention attendees do not gamble but enjoy watching various shows, shopping and visits to national and/or state parks around the city. Because of them Las Vegas is prosperous.

Our temple had visitors from Japan, Italy, Brazil and Canada last year. Some of them only visited for a day, others stayed in area hotels for a few days and contributed towards the prosperity of the city.

The city is also a place where some people come to develop their spirituality. I met a few people who claim to communicate with Jesus Christ and other divinities last year. The city is not only for those who seek material gain but also who seek spiritual gain.

The current Kannon Temple becomes full capacity at 30 people. Only ten cars can park behind and around the temple and there are no living quarters and kitchen. Sunday Service attendees are increasing little by little since opening two years ago, so the building is getting smaller now.

By the way, do you know the origin of Senso-ji Temple in Asakusa, Tokyo? When you look at a Tokyo tourist guide, the temple is shown with a big red lantern hanging from the ceiling of the entrance gate. The temple is crowded with many tourists from morning to sunset. The temple originated with two fishermen who caught a small statue of Kannon Bodhisattva with a net while they were casting in the Sumida River over 1,300 years ago. Seventeen years later, Shokai Shonin (the same name as with me) who was on a pilgrimage around Japan stopped by Asakusa and built a small shrine for the Kannon statue. This small shrine turned into one of the largest and most famous in Tokyo.

My vision for the future of Kannon Temple is similar to that of Senso-ji. This will be a temple not only for faith but also for anyone who wants to visit to hear the sound of chanting or enjoy the quietness and solemnity, so that they can gain peace of body, mind and spirit. Therefore my plan is include a dormitory for those who wish to stay at the temple for a few days or weeks to practice chanting, studying, copying the Lotus Sutra or assisting with daily duties of the temple. This will also be a place for anyone who needs counseling, too.

In order to fulfill such a vision, I need your help. The projects that I started in April, 2010 are still alive. They are to copy Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra and to chant Odaimoku 10 thousand times per a sheet then send it back with your donation. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated. Let us build this new temple together so that we can create a place of tranquility to better the people of Las Vegas and those from around the world. This will be an on-going project, so please send a check payable to Kannon Temple of Nevada any time during next seven years.

Welcome Home Ceremony for Rev. Shoda Kanai

10:30 a.m., March 8th (Sun)

Rev. Shoda Douglas Kanai has completed his second 100 Days Ascetic Training at Hokekyo-ji Temple in Chiba, Japan together with 141 fellow monks on February 10th. He emerged from the monastery gate with a lot of hair like a black bear.

The Welcome Home Ceremony and reporting his safe return to the Gohonzon of the Kannon Temple will start at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday March 8th. The ceremony will begin with a Peace March on Sahara Avenue followed by *Suigyo*, a water purification ritual. At the end of the service, the five monks who finished the ordeal will bless those in attendance. Members and the general public are welcome.

A Pot Luck Luncheon will be held following the ceremony. Please bring your favorite dish. Thank you very much for your support.

HELLO FROM JAPAN (18)

Rev. Shoda Douglas Kanai

Wow, my second 100 Days Ascetic Training is now complete! It seemed like a very long time while I was inside the monastery. From November 1st of last year to February 10th, with 141 other trainees, we performed water purification 7 times a day (pouring cold water over your shoulders), chanted Lotus Sutra Chapter 16 many hundreds of times, held morning, noon, afternoon and evening services, ate twice a day consisting of rice gruel and *miso* soup and slept for 2.5 hours. This routine continued the entire period.

For those second timers and above, after the first 35 days of personal ascetic training, the Outer Hall is opened up for visitations and *kito* blessings. I was able to perform *kito* blessings a couple of times as well as be able to assist with other blessings almost every other day. This was good practice, as some days there are well over 25 separate *kito* blessings performed.

Some say the second time is the most difficult 100 Days out of five, and I could not agree more. I questioned myself many times why I came back to this difficult type of training. When one is at his most troubling moment, he can either be consumed or surpass the difficulty. Several times I was consumed by my difficulties. Each day though, I learned something new that helped me overcome my difficulties. Many times I would reflect on all of you back home which helped me gain the strength to keep pushing forward. This training may seem like it is only me present, but actually everyone's spirit is with me, therefore I am not alone. We together have completed this 100 Days Training.

Currently, I am attending other trainee's Welcome Back Services. My Welcome Back Service will be held on March 8th. I have invited four other trainees to assist with my service. All is welcome.

In the meantime, I am trying to rest, to regain my health. I did drop many pounds and being careful of what I eat to regain those lost pounds. They say to be cautious of my health until August. That is how long it takes to mostly heal from this arduous ordeal. Hopefully the summer heat of Las Vegas will not make me sick but rather warm my body core temperature back to normal.

Spring *Hi-gan* Memorial Service

10:30 a.m., March 22nd (Sun)

Hi-gan means the "other shore" (Buddha Land) while *Shi-gan* means "this shore" (worldly land of the material.) Nichiren Shu teaches the Buddha Land is not in the far west nor up-heaven but here with us. The world we can see is "this shore" while the "other shore" is the spiritual realm that we can see only through our faith. *Higan* Memorial Service is a ceremony to show our appreciation to those in the "other shore". By offering our chanting to our ancestors, they also will attain Buddha-hood.

Please write your name and family names of your ancestors or their individual names on the enclosed prayer form and return to the Kannon Temple of Nevada with your donation. Let us chant the sutra and Odaimoku together for them.

Buddha's Birthday Celebration

Blessing New Born Babies

10:30 a.m., April 12th (Sun)

Happy Birthday to the Buddha Sakyamuni!

According to legend, the baby Buddha, soon after his birth, stood firmly, and walked seven steps and proclaimed, "From heaven to the earth, I alone am the most honored one!" by pointing his right index finger to heaven and his left index finger to the earth. This means the Buddha is the only person who has attained such precepts, meditation and good roots of virtue. Even in the 21st century, there is no one like the Buddha, who attained the Realty of Existence.

We welcome everyone to attend the celebration. Sweet tea in honor of his birth will be served.

Newborn babies will receive Rev. Kanai's blessing and amulets. Please let him know the name of the new born baby ahead of time.

***Kaishu-e* Outdoor Sunday Service and Picnic**

10:30 a.m., April 26th (Sun)

@ Red Spring at Calico Basin

Facing the rising sun Nichiren Dai'Shonin chanted, "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" for the first time at the top of Mt. Kiyosumi on April 28th, 773 years ago. To honor this event and to show our appreciation, we will have the *Kai-shu-e* Outdoor Sunday Service at *Red Spring in Calico Basin* followed by picnic and hiking to a spiritual spot. Bring your own food and beverage.

Direction to the site: Go towards Red Rock Canyon National Park on Charleston Blvd. About 1 mile before the entrance of the park, turn right at Calico Basin. Enter the picnic area of *Red Spring*. Please try to arrive earlier since it will be crowded with other visitors on Sunday.

***Setsubun* Soy Beans Donation**

Hoshimatsuri and *Setsubun* Service were held on February 1st. Throwing roasted soy beans are a part of the *Setsubun* Service to chase away evils from our minds. The roasted beans were donated by the Las Vegas Mutual Trading Company (Noritoshi Kanai). Since the beans were roasted professionally, everyone enjoys eating them. Thank you very much for the donation!

Rev. Shokai Kanai and Rev. Eisei Ikenaga participated in tossing the beans as they were born in the Year of the Sheep.

My View Point (As I heard and as I see)

Happy Birthday, *Oba-chan!*

Kumiko Kanai

January 27th was my birthday.

Two Canadian friends celebrated my birthday with English tea. My youngest son and his wife's parents called me from Maui and sang "Happy Birthday". I immediately responded with "Merci" in French and "Mucho Gracias" in Spanish. They laughed loudly what I said.

My grandson, Matthew, in Seattle sent me a video message saying, "Happy Birthday, O-baa-chan!"

This year's Birthday messages to me were very joyful.

EVENTS

March

1 st (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly Blessing
8 th (Sun) 10:00 a.m.	Welcome Home Ceremony for Rev. Shoda Douglas Kanai
15 th (Sun) No Service	Rev. Shokai Kanai in Japan
22 nd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Spring Higan Memorial Service
29 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Shodai-gyo (Chanting and Meditation)

Rev. Shokai Kanai will be in Japan for General Congress Meeting from 3/9 to 3/17.

Rev. Shokai Kanai will be in Moses Lake, WA for a funeral service from 3/26 to 27th.

April

5 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing
12 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Hanamatsuri</i> Buddha's Birthday Service
19 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Sunday Service conducted by Rev. Shoda Kanai
26 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Kaishu-e</i> Outdoor Service & Picnic

Rev. Shokai Kanai will be in Houston, TX for Installation of NONA Bishop on April 19th.

Individual Study Classes

Since everyone has different schedules and different levels of understanding of Buddhism, Rev. Shokai Kanai holds individual lessons on Buddhism, Nichiren Shu Teachings, and Chanting lessons

during weekdays and nights. Anyone interested in learning, just call (702)866-5956 to set up a time and day that is convenient for you.