

RADIANCE #42

November 1, 2014

SACRED WORDS

The Buddha, the Leaders, expound the teachings of Nirvana in order to give a rest to the living beings. When he see them having already had a rest, he led them to the wisdom of the Buddha. (The end of Chapter 7 of the Lotus Sutra)

What you had attained was not perfect extinction. I cause you to plant root of Buddha-hood a long time ago. I expound the teaching of Nirvana as an expedient. (The middle of Chapter 8 of the Lotus Sutra)

The gods, men and *asuras* in the world think that I, Sakyamuni Buddha, left the place of the Sakyma, sat at the Anuttara-samyak-samobdhi forty and odd years ago. To tell the truth, good men, it is many hundreds of thousands of billions of *nayutas* of *kalpas* since I became a Buddha. (The beginning of Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra)

The ground of the Saha-World quaked and cracked and many thousands of billions of Bodhisattvas sprang up from underground simultaneously. Their bodies were golden-colored, and adorned with the thirty-two marks and with innumerable rays of light. (The beginning of Chapter 15 of the Lotus Sutra)

Nirvana Is Not True

Rev. Shokai Kanai

December 8th is the holiday for Buddhists because the prince of the Kapila Palace, Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha after renouncing his prince-hood, became a homeless life of a monk, and sought freedom from suffering of old age, disease and death. After six years of self-denial ascetic practice, he attained Enlightenment. It is said that he has reached Nirvana.

There are two meanings in Nirvana. The first is the state of enlightenment by Sakyamuni Buddha. Accordingly, it means the state which can be reached by extinguishing all illusions and destroying all *karma*, which is the cause of rebirth. One who has reached the stage is called the Buddha. The other meaning is when the Buddha passes away and ends of his physical body and all attachment.

The motivation of the Siddhartha's renunciation from prince-hood was solution from the cycle of birth, old age, decease, and death. There are some people who never get sick through their lives; however, he or she cannot escape from old age and death. The simple answer not to get old and death is not to be born. It is very important to realize how one will not be born in the law of the cycle of birth and death. There, the Buddha told the beginners to quench all their desire, deny existence of themselves and eliminate all karma to be born again. Then they will reach Nirvana. So Nirvana is the state of no activities of body, mind and soul. It is the teaching small vehicle.

On the contrary, Mahayana Buddhism denies the concept of Nirvana in the small vehicle. Since we have desire, there is enlightenment; hence, even if you do not quench all desire, you can attain enlightenment. If one attained enlightenment, he or she has not worry and suffering. It says, "Birth and death equal to Nirvana" and "Desire equals to Enlightenment." They are the same with that we can attain Enlightenment because of birth and death, and that because there is desire, there is Enlightenment.

Contradict these Nirvana, "Nirvana is expedient, just a resting place, and temporally teaching," says Chapter 7 of the Lotus Sutra. "I will tell you truth," says Sakyamuni Buddha in Chapter 16 of the sutra. "It is many hundreds of thousands of billions of *nayutas* of *kalpas* since I became a Buddha." It means the existence of the Eternal Buddha (ever-before originally enlightened one and everlasting eternal one).

In other words, "Do not stay in the Buddha Land for ever after the enlightenment. Come back on this Saha-World of endurance and help those who are suffering." That is Buddha Sakyamuni's true teaching. Therefore, the countless number of Bodhisattvas appeared from underground. "Their bodies were golden-colored, and adorned with the thirty-two marks and with innumerable rays of light." These bodhisattvas are qualified as Buddha because they have Buddha's 32 marks, gold color bodies and emitting rays of lights, but all of them remained as Bodhisattvas. One of the four leaders is Nichiren Dai'Shonin. Since he chanted O'Daimoku first time at Mt. Kiyosumi on April 18, 1253, innumerable number of people have chanted it and is chanting now and will chant. Therefore, we are parts of the innumerable number of the Bodhisattvas from the underground. We are born and live on the Saha-World. We eat food from this earth.

Please chant "Namu Myo-ho Ren-ge Kyo" a lot, avoid attachment, be free from sufferings, and help other people to become happy. Even if you attained Nirvana, be born again on this earth and lead others to better way of life with less suffering. We always say at the end of the Opening Cannon, "... May we meet and receive this sutra birth after birth, world after world."

4th Seminar

For Nichiren Shu Members and for the interesting people
December 20th, Saturday

The guest instructors will be Venerable Ryusho Matsuda of San Jose Nichiren Buddhist Temple and Rev. Ryusho Jeffus of the Myosho-ji Temple in Charlotte, North Carolina. Rev. Matsuda will talk about the Mandala Gohonzon and the Ten Stages of One' Mind, while Rev. Jeffus will talk on the parables of Magic City and Poison Sicked Children and their Father. I will teach how to chant Chapter 16 from "Hi Nyo Ro I" on P.29 of *Dharma* and explain why we chant from there. In another lecture, I will instruct how to use a *fude* pen to write ODAIMOKU. Saturday lectures starts at 9:30 a.m. and continue to 5:00 p.m. The registration fee is \$50 per person. It includes two text books, a *fude* pen, an Odaimoku sample and other materials. Lunch is your own.

On Sunday, we will have *Shodai Angya* or Peace March with Odaimoku Chanting on Sahara Street followed by the Bodhi Day Candle Light Service. Venerable Matsuda will give a message of the Day after the service.

Peace March and Bodhi Day

On Dec. 20th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

We will march for *Peace and Security* for our neighborhood on Sahara Avenue while chanting *Odaimoku*. Please arrive early, so that we can make preparation before starting the march. Everyone is welcome to join.

After the march, we will celebrate Buddha Sakyamuni's Enlightenment Day with offering candle light. We place a homemade *bodhi-tree* representing the time when the Buddha enlightened. The candle lights represent the Buddha's wisdom.

A potluck luncheon will be immediately followed after the service. Please bring your favorite food for your family and friends.

The New Year's Eve Service

7:30 p.m., Dec. 31st (Wed)

The New Year's Eve Service will start at 7:30 p.m. on December 31st. This is to show our gratitude to the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Gohonzon, deities, ancestors, and all those around us throughout the year 2014.

All attendee will hit the *hansho* bell in total 108 times symbolizing 108 attachments and illusions. All negatives will hopefully be gone with the sound of the gong to welcome A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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

Bus Trip to L.A. for Shopping

Kumiko Kanai

I joined a shopping bus tour to Los Angeles, California from Las Vegas on September 24th. It was sponsored by Japanese Culture Club. The bus was the large one. Forty people joined and 90% of them were women and the oldest lady was 92 years old.

The bus left Las Vegas around 6:30 a.m. and returned at 10:30 p.m. on the same day. The first stop was at Mitsuwa in Torrance for one hour and a half including lunch time. Next stop was at Daiso, \$1.50 store, and the last stop was Marukai in Gardena for two hours. Following someone's advice, I took a picnic ice-chest, a small size luggage and big duffle bags. I bought all kinds of Japanese food full of two shopping carts.

In the bus, people passed around snacks, talked a lot, or slept. Everyone enjoyed the one day trip of shopping to Los Angeles. Although there are three small Japanese markets in Las Vegas, but they do not carry enough items and expensive. So once in a while we go to Los Angeles by bus even though paying extra money for the ride.

Japanese meal will be on the table for a while.

HELLO FROM JAPAN (16)

Rev. Douglas Shoda Kanai

Retreat at Shinnyo-ji Temple

On November 1st, I will be entering my second 100 days ascetic training at Nakayama Hokekyo-ji in western Chiba Prefecture, close to Tokyo. The official title is *Nichiren Shu Dai-Aragyodo*. This training is always conducted during winter as the cold helps us better focus on our practice and build spiritual strength. My goal is to gain a deeper understanding on how I can help others through the power of Odaimoku.

Here at Shinnyo-ji Temple, there is a five day retreat for lay leaders held every October. This is a chance for the many followers to increase their devotion and practice. From 5 a.m. till 10 p.m. the day is filled with study classes, chanting practice, *shakyo* or copying the Lotus Sutra, cleanup work, and *suigyo* or ritual water purification. There is a waterfall on the temple grounds that are utilized for this purpose. Those who have completed five day retreat are now referred to as *senseis* or lay leaders. The leaders can help priests with propagation of Nichiren Shu and also help understanding of other lay people. The leaders can create their own *dojo* or meeting places to expound their message to other people. Then once a month the leaders and their followers come to the temple for service. If need be, those followers can stop by the temple for memorial service as well as for special blessings or *kito*.

My father's intention is to establish such a *dojo* (a place of intensive practice) in a new Kannon Temple of Nevada by 2022.

There are many ways in spreading Odaimoku to more people. Holding and attending retreats is one way to further develop faith and understanding of Nichiren Shu. This increased faith will help sprout the seeds of Buddha-hood.

EVENTS

November

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| 2 nd Sun | No Service | Because Rev. Shokai Kanai is still in Japan. |
| 3 rd Mon | | Rev. Kanai returns from Japan. |
| 8 th Sat | all day | Rev. Kanai visits Roy for a memorial services |
| 9 th Sun | 10:30 a.m. | Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing |
| 16 th Sun | 10:30 a.m. | Sunday Service (<i>Shodai-gyo</i>) |
| 23 rd Sun | 10:30 a.m. | Sunday Service (Reading Chapter 7-1 of the Lotus Sutra) |

30th Sun No Service Because the 5th Sunday
Rev. Shokai Kanai will be in Toronto, Canada for O'Higan Service from 12th to 14th

December

7th Sun 10:30 a.m. Monthly *Kito* Blessing
14th Sun Sunday Service (Reading Chapter 7-2 of the Lotus Sutra)
20th Sat 9:30 a.m. 4th Retreat on Nichiren Buddhism
21st Sun 10:30 a.m. Buddha Sakyamuni 's Enlightenment Day
21st Sun 12 noon Year End Potluck Luncheon (Bonen-kai)
28th Sun No Service Because the Year Ends
31st Wed 7:30 p.m. New Year's Eve Service

January, 2015

1st Thu 10:30 a.m. New Year's Day *Kito* Blessing

Individual Lessons

We currently have three private classes on Buddhism. Since everyone has different schedules and different understanding on Buddhism, Rev. Shokai Kanai holds individual lessons during the week, day or night. Anyone interested in learning Buddhism, Lotus Sutra, Teachings of Nichiren Shonin or practice chanting the sutra are welcome to join anytime. Just call (702)866-5956 to set up a time and day that is convenient for you.