

RADIANCE

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SACRED WORDS

Water is essential for fish to live. Soil is essential for plants to grow. Food is essential for man to live. To live is most essential for all.

Nichiren – *Jiri Kuyou Ji*

Spring *Hi-gan* Memorial Service **10:30 a.m., March 18 (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 heaven but here with us. The world we can see is this shore while the other shore is the spiritual world that we can see only through our faith. *Higan* Memorial Service is a ceremony to show our appreciation to the deceased in the spiritual world. By offering our chanting to our ancestors, they also attain Buddhahood.

Buddha’s Birthday Celebration and **Blessing New Born Babies** **10:30 a.m., April 8 (Sun)**

Happy Birthday to the Buddha!

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 legend was based on a recorded document that the Buddha said to a Brahman priest after his enlightenment. Even in the Twenty-first Century today, there is no one like the Buddha who attained the Realty of Existence.

Please write your name and the names of your ancestors or their individual names on the enclosed prayer form and send it back to the Kannon Temple of Nevada with your donation. Let us chant the Sutra and Odaimoku together for them. Buddhahood, we at least try to be like the

Buddha through faith. Process is more important than the result now.

We welcome anyone to attend the celebration. We will serve sweet tea in honor of the Buddha's birth.

Newborn babies will receive Rev. Kanai's blessing and amulets.

Cycle of Birth and Death in Lotus Sutra

Rev. Shokai Kanai

Do you believe in rebirth?

The Lotus Sutra teaches many examples of rebirth. In Chapter One, at the time of Sun-Moon-Light Buddha, Maitreya Bodhisattva was a monk called Name-Seeking and his teacher was Wonderful-Light who is Manjusri in this life.

“There was a lazy man among the disciples of Wonderful-Light, the Teacher of the Dharma. The lazy man was attached to fame and gain. Always seeking fame and gain, he often visited noble families. He did not understand what he had recited, gave it up, and forgot it. Because of this, he was called Fame-Seeking. But he later did many good karmas, and became able to see innumerable Buddhas. ... He will become a Buddha in his future life. He will be called Maitreya. He will save innumerable living beings. The lazy man who lived after the extinction of Sun-Moon-light Buddha was no one but you. Wonderful-Light, the Teacher of the Dharma, was I (Manjusri).” (*Lotus Sutra* translated by Murano P.21~22)

This story of the past lives of Manjusri (Wonderful-Light) and Maitreya (Name Seeking) was revealed at Mt. Sacred Eagle while Sakyamuni Buddha was in deep meditation. The story tells us that we also have past lives. The story also emphasizes that we can become Buddhas like Maitreya Bodhisattva by practicing the Six Paramitas.

In Chapter Three, Sakyamuni Buddha told that he taught Sariputra to attain Buddhahood in a previous life but Sariputra had forgotten every thing. The following dialogue is the conversation between Sakyamuni Buddha and Sariputra:

“Under two billion Buddhas in the past, I always taught you in order to cause you to attain unsurpassed enlightenment. You studied under me in the long night. I led you with expedients. Therefore, you have your present life under me. ... You forgot all this, and thought that you had already attained extinction. In order to cause you to remember the Way you practiced under your original vow, I now expound to the Sravakas this sutra of the Great Vehicle called ‘Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma,’ the Dharma for Bodhisattvas, the Dharma Upheld by the Buddhas. Sariputra! After a countless, inconceivable number of kalpas from now, you will be able to

practice ... the Way which Bodhisattva should practice, and to become a Buddha. ...” (*Lotus Sutra P.55~P.56*)

We study the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Shu Buddhism. It seems to us that we study the sutra for the first time in this life; however, we might have practiced the Way of the Bodhisattva in our previous lives but we may have just forgotten just like Sariputra. Here again the sutra teaches us that by practicing the Way of Bodhisattva (the Six Paramitas), we are able to become Buddhas.

(Continue to the next issue)

Studying Leasing Possibility for the Temple

Since January 1st, we have been looking for a commercially zoned building or house for the future Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada. However, the accumulated amount of \$110,900 donated from many people will not be enough even if Reverend Kanai sells his house. So he has realized that it is time to change and consider leasing a store front office or a place that can be purchased later.

Those who have donated faithfully towards the Building Fund please understand this situation and continue to support the Kannon Temple of Nevada.

NONA Convention

Sep. 29 (Sat) all day

Banquet

Sep. 29 (Sat) evening @ Plaza Hotel, Downtown Las Vegas

The 5th Anniversary of Kannon Temple of Nevada

Sep. 30 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

Luncheon at noon @ The Temple

Please participate in these events!

Setsubun Soy Beans Donation

Throwing roasted soy beans is a part of the *Setsubun* Service to chase away evils from our minds. The roasted beans were donated by Miyako Oriental Foods Inc. in Baldwin Park, California through the Las Vegas Mutual Trading Company. Mr. Noritoshi Kanai who is the president of both companies donated the organic beans every year. Since the beans were roasted professionally, everyone enjoys eating them. Some people requested two or three bags. Thank you very much for the donation!

Kathleen Andrews, Taka Takeishi and Katie Hutchinson participated in tossing the beans as they were born in the Year of the Dragons, while Hideyuki Takeishi and Tristan Moore put devil's face masks.

Study Class on Buddhism for Beginners

The lectures on the Lotus Sutra which were held every Wednesday ended with Chapter 28 in February. You can study all series of lectures by searching online for Kannon Temple of Nevada,” then click Teaching, then to Lotus Sutra.

New Study Class on Buddhism for beginners has begun. The class is held every Wednesday when Rev. Kanai is in town. Please check the month event calendar.

Wasan Practice

Mrs. Kumiko Kanai will teach Wasan. Anyone who is interested, please come to the temple on March 25 and April 22 at 10:30 a.m.

A Point of View

Yee-Sang
Kumiko Kanai

The Ichinenji Temple in Penang, Malaysia invited Rev. Shokai Kanai and me for its 10th Anniversary Events on February 1 to 7th. It took almost one and a half day from Las Vegas to Penang via Hong Kong. Rev. Kanai gave a lecture on “The Lotus Sutra and Daily Life while I taught *Wasan* to the youth group.

We and other ministers from various countries were invited to a dinner. Appetizer was Yee-Sang that was served in a large platter with vegetables arranged around a small serving of raw fish (salmon) in the middle with sweet-and-sour sauce. Before eating everyone stood up with chopsticks and pick up the vegetables and fish high and toss to mix them several times while shouting, “Happy new year!” and “Prosperous New Year!” Then everyone sits to eat.

Eating Yee Sang is a tradition in Malaysia and Singapore during Chinese New Year Days which was January 23 to February 5 this year. The shredded vegetables were green pepper, carrots, radishes, red pepper, egg plants, ginger, Chinese parsley, crushed peanuts, and sesame seeds. The table became messy but it was part of the fun and joy. We were treated to the traditional Yee-Sang every dinner till February 5.

HELLO FROM JAPAN!

Rev. Douglas Shoda Kanai

It has already been a couple of months since I left the US for Japan. It seems like I have been here longer than that. The biggest shock soon after arriving was the coldness. I was still used to the Las Vegas warmth, but I now am experiencing freezing and below freezing temperatures. I took it easy the first couple of days to acclimatize. With drastic change in temperatures, the body could weaken, making it easier to get sick. From previous extreme cold experience, I knew that I would get used to the cold, but it would take a few weeks. Those first few weeks were the toughest.

Shinnyo-ji, is where I am staying. It is located in a town called “Nose”. It is pronounced “NO-SAY” and not NOSE. It is in Osaka Prefecture, at the very upper tip. Kyoto city is actually closer than Osaka city. The temple is in the mountains and countryside so the only way to get here is by car or by bus. The temple grounds are very sacred, as there are many deities revered here, the main being “Myoken-san” and “Shichimen-san”. Many visitors come to ask these deities for help and pay homage to them.

Mt. Myoken is not far from here. This is a holy site where Myoken or the Deity of the North Star resides. There is a special star shaped building at the top as well as a temple complex. As it is winter, many people brave the cold and hike up to the top, partially for exercise but also to gain the countless blessings from deity Myoken.

Since arriving, I have been busy with preparation of special events around the temple as well as the many festivals celebrated at the beginning of the New Year. First off was New Year’s. Many people came to the temple to ask for good blessings for the upcoming year. New Year’s began around the 30th and lasted till about the 15th. Why so long? Because many people from all over the region come to visit, they cannot all come at the same time. Second, every second Saturday is regular service where the followers come to ask for blessings and pray for the deceased/ancestors. There is no weekly service like there is in the States, as many people travel great distances and cannot come on a regular basis. Third, Setsubun was held on February 3rd. Also held on this day was “Hoshimatsuri” or the “Japanese Lunar New Year”, where followers asked for special blessings for the upcoming New Year. Here the service began at 8p and went until all the names were read. There had to be over 1,000 names. Everyone took turns reading names and chanting Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra in 30 minute blocks. After midnight, I went around to all the buildings and threw soybeans for good luck. Fourth, “Otakiagematsuri” or “Burning Festival” was held on February 11th at Mt. Myoken. At this event, all old religious items were ritualistically offered back to the universe. A pit was dug, about 30ft x 30ft x 10ft to contain all the old items. This great heap was then covered with pine branches. It was very cold, but clear day. Over 800 people came to make offerings to the bonfire. Finally, “Gotan-e” (St. Nichiren’s Birthday) was held on February 16th. Again, followers asked for special blessings to mark this

occasion. It was made more special as those who have completed the 100 day “Dai Aryago” returned to do “suigyō” and do “kito” blessings.

As I assist with temple duties, I am doing my best to chant and be able to read the Lotus Sutra in Chinese. I have a test coming up in May which I need to pass. The next couple of months may not be as busy so I may have more time to practice. All in all, after two months, I have now become accustomed to the culture, weather, and language. I am still working on my legs, though as sitting “seiza” will take much longer getting used to.

EVENTS

March

Morning Chanting (Everyone Welcome)	Daily 7:00 a.m.
Monthly Blessing Ceremony	11th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Spring <i>Higan</i> Memorial Service	18th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
<i>Wasan</i> Practice	25th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Study Class on Buddhism	14th & 21st (Wed) 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Shokai Kanai will have a meeting at NBIC on March 2 - 4

Rev. Shokai Kanai will visit Japan for a Congress Meeting on March 5 - 10

Rev. Shokai Kanai will visit Japan for NONA Pilgrimage from March 25 to April 3.

April

Morning Chanting (Everyone Welcome)	Daily 7:00 a.m.
Buddha’s Birthday Cerebration	8th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Monthly Blessing Ceremony	15th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
<i>Wasan</i> Practice	22nd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Sun Worshipping Service & Picnic at Sunset Park (Birthday of Nichiren Shu)	29th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Study Class on Buddhism	11th & 18th (Wed) 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Shokai Kanai will visit Japan for District Mangers’ Meeting from April 19 to 27th