




# RADIANCE

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September/October 2019

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## SACRED WORDS

*It is difficult to hear the Dharma, Even during innumerable kalpas. It is also difficult to meet a person, Who listens to the Dharma attentively. It is as difficult as seeing an udumbara-flower. This flower, loved by all living beings, And treasured by gods and men, Blooms only once in a long time.*

Lotus Sutra Ch. 2—*Expedients*

### **Tastsunokuchi Persecution Service** September 15<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

The fourth of Four Major Persecutions in St. Nichiren's life. On the night of September 12, 1271, St. Nichiren was arrested and sentenced for execution. Miraculously he escaped death when a "bright light" shot across the sky, frightening everyone. Later he was exiled to Sado Island instead, where he began to create some of his greatest treatises.

Please come join us to commemorate this important event.

### **Autumn O-higan Service** Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

The autumn equinox is the time to commemorate our ancestors. This is the time of equal parts day and night, thus the veil for this world and the "other shore" is close. Our chanting of the Lotus Sutra and *Odaimoku* can readily reach our ancestors to help them reach enlightenment. Please join us for this special service by writing down your ancestor's names on the included form and send back to the Kannon Temple with your donation.

### **Oeshiki Memorial Service** Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

On the morning of October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1282, our founder Nichiren Shonin entered into *parinirvana* after spreading the teaching of the Lotus Sutra for many difficult years. We are holding the 738<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for him. Let us join our hands together in *gassho* to show our appreciation towards him for the lessons that he has taught and the gift he has left, which is the *Odaimoku*.

### **Garage/Rummage Sale** Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m.~1:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat)

A fundraising event will be held on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> to help build a new temple. We still have many items that have been previously dropped off over the last year. If you have more items for donation, please bring to the temple at your earliest convenience. Monetary donations are welcome as well.

Paula Patterson has graciously allowed us to use her residence for the garage sale site. Address is **3272 Grayson Lake Court, Las Vegas, 89129**. We ask for volunteers to help out one or both days. Please call the temple to let us know if you can help.

### **Rare is it to Hear the Dharma**

Shoda Douglas Kanai

There is this special flower in a region of India that only blooms once in 12 years. This flower is called, "Neelakurinji." This means "blue flower." This is a special type of flower that after blooming once, dies and takes many years to bloom again. The best time to view the blossoms are towards the end of the season, August to October.

This is a rare flower and only grows in this region. As such, the locals have revered this flower. Some count their age by how many times they have seen a full blossom!

For the lucky ones, last year neelakurinji did bloom, but it was difficult to view. Many of the current spots were washed away by a typhoon and without continuous sunshine, the flowers failed to bloom. Hard to reach areas (traveling by 4x4) were the only places to view the wondrous blossoms. Some say that after the next bloom in 2030, this flower may not make another appearance due to climate change and overextension by humans.

There is an even more unlikely flower, the "Udumbara" that only blooms once in 3,000 years. In Buddhism, this flower represents a "rare occurrence" and only mentioned in some Theravada sutras and Lotus Sutra.

The most recent sightings of udumbara blooming happened in 1997, the flower started to grow on the head of a Buddha statue in Korea! This is an auspicious sign that a "Wheel Turning Holy King" will appear. Though as that may be, instead of focusing on a savior, the focus should be on improving oneself.

The teachings of the One Vehicle is even more uncommon than that of the udumbara flower. So just be able to hold the Lotus Sutra and rejoice over the Dharma, is extremely special. We are fortunate that we are in the presence of Sakyamuni Buddha and able to receive his teachings.

Most people are trying to release themselves from suffering with suffering. Their desires are so strong that they cannot remove the bonds that are holding them back. As such, they cannot or will not reach out and touch the Dharma. Thus the rarity of meeting the Buddha. It is like a person stuck in a whirlpool, ⇨

⇐going round and round with no escape. Even if there is a branch to reach out to, they either cannot see it or not willing to grab a hold.

Though we are lucky to have touched the Dharma, we cannot sit idly by and only keep the Dharma to ourselves. From Ch. 2,

I will expound the teaching of the One Vehicle, Only to Bodhisattvas.

There is no Sravakas among my disciples.

Buddha is saying that we are all Bodhisattvas, thus we are all doing the work of spreading but also improving ourselves with Buddha's Teachings.

Some may not listen, many will hate us, but we will persevere. There are many parables that the Buddha used when teaching to the level of understanding of the listener. Study and use those parables to teach others. After a while, try and make your own parable to teach others. This may be more authentic as the lesson is coming from you rather than someone else. Do not worry about abandoning Buddha's parables, as He understands your intent. He may be overjoyed that you are creating your own parables, just like He did!

In this Later Age of Degeneration (*Mappo*), it is difficult to meet the Buddha. We are fortunate that we can still hear and follow His Teaching. Let us strive to study all we can so that we can help those around us, remove their suffering and attain Enlightenment together.

### **Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3) Blessing**

**Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m. (Sat)**

Mark your calendars on November 16<sup>th</sup> for *Shichi-Go-San* Blessing! This is a special celebration for girls ages 3 or 7, or boys ages 3 or 5 in Japan. To continue this tradition stateside, we will be holding a special blessing to promote their well being.

Detailed information will be passed out later. If you have any questions or would like to participate, please contact the temple.

**New Building Fund** commemorating the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Nichiren's Birth  
\$148,523.39.

**637 shakyo** tracing Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra offered, **22,350,000** times of Chanting *Odaimoku* offered, As of August 19, 2019  
*Thank you very much! Please continue your support.*

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

### **Do You Know PLU Code?**

Kumiko Kanai

Small labels with numbers are attached to vegetables and fruits. These labels are known as PLU (price look up) code.

The sticker with only four digits in the range of 3000~4999 are items conventionally grown.

The prefix with five digits starting with number 8, are items genetically modified (GMO).

The prefix with five digits starting with number 9, means it was organically grown.

Until recently, I was not very interested in this PLU code, so I just took any vegetable or fruit one by one and put them in my basket.

When I went to Hawaii last June, I had the opportunity to talk to a third generation Japanese American woman. She was moving in and out of wheelchair in an unaccustomed manner. After speaking with her for a while, I asked, "I'm very sorry to ask a personal question, but what happened that you are in a wheelchair?"

She said, "Three years ago, I couldn't walk any more. The doctor says it's probably due to some sort of food infection."

I replied, "Huh? From food Infection?"

She said, "It's really strange. I have been so healthy so far. Be careful with what you eat."

I said, "Yes, and you take good care of yourself, too."

Upon my return to Las Vegas, I looked closely at the labeled vegetables and fruits in the store and wrote down the numbers. Then I looked up those numbers on the internet. This is the PLU code.

The conventionally grown items use pesticides, chemical fertilizers to promote growth and weed maintenance. Pesticide exposure in low quantities may not affect you drastically, but there are risks such as Alzheimer's, cancer, and depression.



From now on, I'd like to pay more attention to the numbers on the items I buy.

## **EVENTS**

### **September**

1<sup>st</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Kito* Blessing  
8<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Shodai-gyo* (Chanting Meditation)  
15<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Tatsunokuchi* Persecution Service  
22<sup>nd</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. Autumn *Ohigan* Memorial Service  
29<sup>th</sup> (Sun) **No Service** 5th Sunday

### **October**

6<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Kito* Blessing  
13<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Oeshiki* Memorial Service  
20<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. English Service  
25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m. ~ 1 p.m. Garage Sale  
27<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. *Shodai-gyo* (Chanting Meditation)

\*\*\* Those interested in Study Class and/or Counseling, please contact the temple to make arrangements \*\*\*