



RADIANCE

No. 65 (September 1, 2018)

September/October 2018

Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada
1600 E. Sahara Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89104-3488
Tel/Fax: (702)866-5956

www.kannon-temple-nevada.org
kannontemplenv@gmail.com

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SACRED WORDS

“The Bodhisattva-mahasattva also should know the following truth. All things are insubstantial. They are as they are. Things are not perverted. They do not move. They do not go. They do not turn. They have nothing substantial just as the sky has not.”

Lotus Sutra Chapter XIV—Peaceful Practices

Tastsunokuchi Persecution Service

Sept. 16th, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

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. 23th, 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.

First Year Memorial Service for Victims of Route 91 Country Music Festival

Sept. 30th, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

On October 1, 2017 58 lives were tragically cut short in Las Vegas. We chanted for these victims during the initial 49 days after passing, their first *Obon* Service and now on September 30th, we will conduct the First Year Memorial Service to help all souls reach the Buddha Land.

Please come and pray to dedicate all our merits to these victims.

Oeshiki Memorial Service

Oct. 21st, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

Oeshiki is the commemoration of our founder Nichiren Shonin entering into Pari-nirvana on October 13, 1282. Shokai Kanai Shonin and a few members will go on a pilgrimage to Nichiren Shonin’s spiritual sites including *Minobusan* and *Ikegami Honmonji*. They will attend the grand *Oeshiki* Memorial Service on the 13th, watch the *Mando* Parade and participate in *Odaimoku* Chanting on the evening of the 12th. You may watch all events live at <http://honmonji.jp>.

Kanai Shonin will share his experiences after the service.

What is Buddhism?

Shoda Douglas Kanai

Last month, I went to Utah to pray at follower’s 

 houses, gravesites and held *Obon* Service. During this visit, I was asked, “How to explain Buddhism to someone who is curious?” Utah is a very Mormon and Christian state, thus not many people know about Buddhism. My answer was “Middle Way.”

The Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path explain the foundation of what Buddhism is, there is suffering and how to remove that suffering. For beginners, instead of trying to answer the causes and releases from suffering, chose “Middle Way” as it dives deeper into what Buddhism is and especially Nichiren Shu.

The “Middle Way” can explain the Law of Cause and Effect, Four Noble Truths, Eight Fold Path, Dependent Origination and *Odaimoku* without ever going into detail about each of these teachings. Buddhism is difficult to understand even for a learned practitioner to say the least of someone new. The simplest explanation is usually the best explanation.

To explain Buddhism, start by saying “Middle Way” is the teaching where, “Everything relies upon each other to exist. Nothing just happens. It is the middle point between existence and non-existence.” Then use a parable to help illustrate this point.

First, start by using the fable “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” as there is always one porridge or bed that is just right. This is the teaching of not too hot, not too cold, not too hard not too soft. Nothing is too self-indulgent or self-denying.

Next use this analogy of the origin of any fruit. I just recently harvested figs from my yard. This fig did not just “appear.” First a seed was planted, the tree grew, with nutrients leaves and buds began to sprout, with more water the bud begins to ripen to at which point I can pick. There may be some fruits that I miss and fall to the ground but with this fruit and its seeds, can grow new trees and the cycle starts over again. This cyclical nature shows how everything is intertwined and nothing just “appears.”

As phenomena depend on previous causes, we can push that out to our behavior and thinking and not get too angry or too empathetic. If I get angry then those around me will get angry. If I am too empathetic then may come off as fake. The “Middle Way” teaching puts us in balance, as we start to understand the deeper teachings of the Buddha. One way to help find that balance is to chant *Odaimoku*. This helps us be even keel as we navigate through life, Each time we are practicing, we are trying to find the middle ground between two extremes. And as our practice grows, we start to realize the true potential within ourselves to become Buddhas.

My View Point (As I heard and as I see)
A 35-year-old Turtle is Looking for his Owner
 Kumiko Kanai

Last August 3rd to 5th we drove six hours each way to Salt Lake City and Ogden, Utah for the annual *Obon* Memorial Service. It was a short schedule but meaningful as we were able to visit follower's homes and chant prayers at various gravesites.

During the summer in Ogden, they hold a farmer's market every Saturday, fortunately it was within walking distance from the hotel.

Farmer's Market is a place where farmers in that area gather and sell produce directly to consumers. In addition to agricultural products, there were events for regional revitalization including hand-crafted goods, cafes, food stands, welfare services, food improvement, and live music.

As I was walking from booth to booth, I came upon a land turtle walking clockwise inside a one meter in diameter wash tub. An expert on animal nature conservation in Ogden asked me, "Do you wish to be the next owner of a 35-year-old land turtle?" But I refused. The previous owner found the turtle in the desert outside the city of St. George, UT and raised it. But it gradually became bigger (about 20 centimeters) and seems to have brought it to Ogden before being overwhelmed. Land turtle seems to be able to live upwards of 50 and 100 years, and said, "I wish there would be people who can raise it for generations!"

Once a turtle is handled by humans, the turtle cannot return to the original desert because of the danger of transferring bacteria to other turtles. When I heard the difference between male and female turtles, it seems that the male has a bone floating under his neck. This is used to intimidate the enemy.

If you are interested as an owner, please contact me.



The Lotus Sutra for You

Shokai Kanai

Publication of the *LOTUS SUTRA FOR YOU* is in the final edit now.

When I was the head priest of the Los Angeles Nichiren Buddhist Temple, I held a study class on the *Lotus Sutra* in English every week. It was about the same time the temple created its own website to introduce Nichiren Buddhism, which was the first among Nichiren Shu in 1997. One of the students of the class was John Villalobos who created the website and *YOHON* of the *Lotus Sutra* for chanting in Chinese characters, Japanese hiragana and Romanization. Other regular students were John's wife, Wendy, Francesca Penzani and June Takahashi. They attended all classes for the next few years to complete all 28 chapters of the sutra.

When I established the Kannon Temple of Nevada ten years ago, the study class on the *Lotus Sutra* using the same text was resumed for the followers in Las Vegas. The lectures series had been already repeated three times. Although I gave almost the same lectures, my students made corrections on my English writings. The students were replaced each time, but those who completed taking all chapters were Cindy Campbell, Tristan Moore, Yvonne Smeltzer, Audrey Oi and Meredith Hulka. I deeply appreciated all these students. Without them these study classes for the past twenty years and the publication of the book may not have been materialized.

Since there was no appropriate explanation book for the *Lotus Sutra* in English, I used many books published in Japanese, some of them were old but I trusted their explanations. So, my book may not be original, but throughout these classes I wished to make the people understand the *Lotus Sutra* correctly and added my experiences of over half century propagation in America.

I have not decided on a publisher and the price of the book yet, but I wish to publish it by the end of this year. Please help me when it is on the market.

Garage/Rummage Sale
Oct. 26th and 27th, 8:00 a.m.~1:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat)

A fundraising event will be held on October 26th and 27th to help build a new temple. If you have 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 house 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.

EVENTS

<u>September</u>		<u>October</u>	
2 nd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing	7 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing
9 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)	14 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	English Service
16 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Tatsunokuchi</i> Persecution	21 st (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Oeshiki</i> Service
23 rd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	O-Higan Service	26 th & 27 th 8:00 a.m. ~1:00 p.m.	Garage Sale
30 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	1 Yr. Memorial Service for Route 91 Country Music Festival Victims	28 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)

- Shoda Kanai Shonin in Japan for meeting and study 8/27 ~ 9/12
- Shokai Kanai Shonin & Mrs. Kanai in Japan for pilgrimage 10/8 ~ 19

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