

# RADIANCE

No. 35 (September 1, 2013)

September/October, 2013

## SACRED WORDS

The Nirvana you attained is not true. I divided the One Vehicle of the Buddha into three only expediently. I say this just as the leader, who saw that his party had had a rest in the great city which he had made by magic in order to give them a rest, said to them, “The place of treasurers is near. This city was not true. I made it by magic.”

*Lotus Sutra Chapter 7*

## **Autumn *Higan* Memorial Service Sep. 22nd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.**

Please write your names and ancestors’ on the provided prayer form and send or bring to the service with your donation. We read the Lotus Sutra, chant the Odaimoku and pray together for your ancestors.

If you recall from a year ago, we held this Higan Service at a nearby hotel. We now own the temple building, and it is open to general public. Thank you very much for the Power of Odaimoku and everyone’s support.

## **Why Do We have to Hold Memorial Services Again and Again?**

Rev. Shokai Kanai

We have just had the Obon Memorial Service in July. There are autumn Higan Memorial service in September and spring Higan Services in March. After the funeral, there are the First Seventh Day Service followed by the 49<sup>th</sup> Day and 100<sup>th</sup> Day Services. During the funeral service the officiant priest presented a special Buddhist Name to the deceased assuring him or her to attain Buddhahood. The spirit of the deceased should be in the Buddha’s Pure Land. Why do we still hold the memorial services? Have you ever wondered?

In Christianity it is said that the deceased goes to heaven that is paradise blessed with God. The spirits rest in the heaven until the Last Judgment. Therefore, we often hear, “Rest in Peace” during Christian funeral service. I sometimes said the same words after my sermon in English. Recently I found out that this is wrong to say for Buddhists after reading an article by

Professor Akira Masaki in the monthly journal, IKEGAMI, in the June issue of this year. He said that Buddhists go to the Pure Land. If he or she believed in the Pure Land Sects, they go to Amida Buddha's Pure Land in the far west. Nichiren Buddhists go to the Mount Sacred Eagle. The names of Mt. Sacred Eagle appear twice in JIGA-GE, Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra, "I reappear on Mt. Sacred Eagle with my Sangha," and "I live on Mt. Sacred Eagle and also in the other abodes."

In the Pure Land Sects, the deceased are born in the Buddha Land; therefore, the memorial services are for appreciation purpose only and not for sending our merits of chanting. Most priests in these sects do not believe in rebirth. What about the Nichiren Sect? The Lotus Sutra reveals many examples of previous lives of the Buddha and his disciples. We say the spirits go to the Mt. Sacred Eagle where Sakyamuni Buddha and Nichiren Dai'Shonin dwell and are preaching the Lotus Sutra.

According to Professor Masaki, the spirits of the deceased do not rest or sleep, but study and practice for attaining Buddhahood under the guidance of the Buddha and Nichiren. In other words it is an ideal training center for improving themselves. Thus, Mt. Sacred Eagle is an active place for attaining Enlightenment. This is in stark contrast with Pure Land Buddhism and also Christianity.

We send our chanting to our ancestors on Mt. Sacred Eagle, and we, the descendants also try to attain Buddhahood together. The deceased are probably worrying about us, in return we send appreciation to them and cheer them on with reciting the Lotus Sutra and chanting the Sacred Title of the sutra. The more we pray for them, the more they increase the power of protection for us in this world. When the time is right, they will be reborn on this earth in better place in order to help and save the suffering and wondering people.

The term, attaining Buddhahood, is difficult to comprehend the meaning. To make Buddhism easier to understand and practice, I say, Buddhahood means betterment. Everyone is trying to improve themselves daily but do not know how. By offering chanting and prayers to our ancestors, we both improve step by step. When the deceased will be born again, they should be more helpful to others and save people. This world where we live and the other world where the deceased live are the place to practice for betterment.

Thus, the Eternal Buddha revealed, "The Nirvana you attained is not true" in Chapter 7 of the Lotus Sutra. Nirvana for those people who seek not to be born again by quenching all desire is the teaching of the lesser vehicle. This is because the salvation is only for him or her. The Lotus Sutra teaches the true practice is the Way of Bodhisattva that is to save others as well as improve ourselves so that we all can attain Buddhahood.

**O-E-SHIKI SERVICE**  
(Appreciation Ceremony to  
Nichiren Dai'Shonin)  
**10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 13th**

October 13<sup>th</sup> is the Memorial Day for the founder of our order, Nichiren Dai'Shonin who passed away in 1282. His life time work was to establish righteousness and bring peace and security to the nation.

In starting a new tradition, we will have a Peace March for about 10 blocks (Sahara Avenue north and south) with a banner of the *Odaimoku* and a placard saying, "PEACE AND SECURITY with NAMU-MYO-HO-REN-GE-KYO.  
This is a march to pray for this community.

**Katie Hutchinson Received Mandala Gohonzon**

Shoda Douglas Kanai

Immediately following the Obon Service on July 28<sup>th</sup>, we held a special service for Katie Hutchinson so that she could receive her *Mandala Gohonzon*. Many wonder why we hold an "Eye Opening" Ceremony whereas anyone could purchase one or print one off the internet (not recommended as this is not the correct *gohonzon*). As the object of worship, this *gohonzon* represents all the ten worlds in Buddhism. This is the representation of the Buddha Land, balance and harmony of universe. By having a dedicated ceremony, especially done by a *Shuho-shi* (special prayers done with *bokken* or wooden sword), energizes the *gohonzon*, awakening its spirit and opens a portal to the other world. When Katie chants in front of her *gohonzon*, her prayers will be heard directly by the Buddha. This connection is very sacred thus giving this *gohonzon* special meaning.

**Billy Zumbrun Won Utah Heavy Weight Champion**

Shokai Kanai

Rev. & Mrs. Kanai visited members and cemeteries in Utah for Obon. On August 17<sup>th</sup> there was a boxing title match in Layton, Utah. The couple was invited ringside, as this was the first time for Rev. Kanai to witness this kind of sporting event. Nine matches preceded the title match; Billy fought tough for eight rounds. He won by unanimous decision.

Rev. Shokai Kanai conducted the marriage between Billy Zumbrun and Candace Flowers at Lake Las Vegas on March 1, 2008.

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

## **Start Dream Cars Rental**

Kumiko Kanai

Hertz Rental at Las Vegas McCarran Airport has 21 Porsches, 5 Cadillac STS-Vs, 4 Mercedes-Benz E63 AMGs plus a Ferrari since last May.

If you bought a Ferrari, it would retail for more than \$200,000. But if you rent it, it costs \$1,500 a day, \$500 a day for Porsches. The Cadillac and Mercedes-Benz each go for \$279.

Hertz workers will pick up the customers at an airport for those who made the reservation for the dream cars and will have an one on one orientation. The dream car rental business is also operating in 35 other cities. It must be manageable as business. In Las Vegas about 20 high rollers hit this town on a weekend. I wish to see what kind of persons rent these dream cars, but I should not.

A friend of mine from Los Angeles drove her Porsche to Las Vegas and visited me a few weeks ago. Yes, it is very comfortable and looked expensive. Since there are many gauges on the dashboard, it seems to be hard to drive. I may not be able to drive it.

## **HELLO FROM JAPAN (9)**

Rev. Shoda Douglas Kanai

As summer draws to an end, I would like to share with you my recent trip back to the States. Some of you were able to see me when I came back to perform *Kaji Kito* Blessing and participate in the Las Vegas *Obon/Segaki* Memorial Service. Though I wished I could have stayed longer to visit with you all, I was only traveling through, making my way to Boston for the NONA Weeklong Retreat. I was asked to be one of the instructors and eagerly waited to meet all the participants. The event was held at a Buddhist retreat center in New Hampshire, about one hour drive north from Boston. This was a secluded, wooded area which suited the weeklong retreat perfectly.

Many of the participants were new to Nichiren Shu and its way of practice. They even had assigned Buddhist names! So I was eager to impart my knowledge onto them. The participants were kept busy with various activities and mindful of the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Shonin.

The day started at 5:30am with *suigyō* (water purification of body) then on to Morning Service which lasted one hour. We chanted subsequent parts of the Lotus Sutra in *shindoku* (Chinese reading), broken out by “days” according to the “32 Days” set by Minobusan Kuonji Temple. A lecture followed immediately afterwards to explain the portion of the Lotus Sutra just chanted. Everyone was broken out by groups to rotate cleaning and assigned duties. Either lecture or *shakyō* (tracing the sutra) came next followed by *dokkyō* (chanting practice). Afternoons were filled with more lectures, *shakyō* or *angya* (Odaimoku chanting walk). Evening service was similar to morning service and lasted one hour. Dinner soon followed, but talking was not allowed. This was a time to reflect and appreciate all those who have made it possible for the food to reach the table, from the farmer in the field to the supermarket and finally the cook. Meals were all vegetarian. Evenings ended with *shōdaigyō* (Chanting Odaimoku and meditation) and free discussion time.

As the week progressed, I could see the confidence grow in everyone through their loud chanting voice and mannerisms. They were all excited to be part of this retreat and were exposed to many different rituals performed in Nichiren Shu, from *Tokudo* (transition from laity to priest-to-be), *Obon/Segaki* & commemoration of Hiroshima atomic bomb victims, *Rai Hōkke Gi Shiki* (repentance service), *Kaji Kito* (special blessing) and *Nyūshinkishō Shiki* (recognition of new member and receiving *Gohonzon*). The participants were fortunate to witness many aspects of Nichiren Shu practice in such a short amount of time.

I highly recommend everyone to make an effort to attend one of these retreats. NONA is planning to move the location around to capture both coasts. It will be an excellent opportunity to practice and further strengthen your faith. Plus you will be able to meet many other practitioners from around the country to share your ideas and make new friends. There is also a preliminary plan for a pilgrimage in 2015 with members from around the world. Please start saving your pennies now so we can send a large contingent to represent the U.S. Date has yet to be determined, but selfishly I would ask that the timing be when I finish my 200<sup>th</sup> day Arago on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Most likely though it would be spring so that it will be warmer and you will hopefully enjoy the cherry blossoms at Minobusan.

## **Odaimoku Chanting**

**Reached Ten Million Times on July 11, 2013** (Since April 1, 2010)

By August 27th, we have reached 1,129 sheets of the Ten Thousand Times *Odaimoku* Chanting which have been offered to Kannon Temple of Nevada. If you wish to participate in this campaign and want a new sheet of ten thousand time chanting, please contact the temple.

## **EVENTS**

### **September**

Monthly Blessing Ceremony	1 <sup>st</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting and Meditation)	8 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Service	15 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Autumn <i>Hi-gan</i> Memorial Service	22 <sup>nd</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
No Sunday Service	29 <sup>th</sup> (Sun)
Morning Chanting	Daily 8:30 a.m.
Japanese Language Class	Tue. 4:30 p.m.
Buddhism for Beginners in English	Wed. 3:00 p.m. & 5:00p.m.
Buddhism for Beginners in English	Thu. 12:15 p.m. & 4:00p.m.

### **October**

Monthly Blessing Ceremony	6 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
<i>O-E-Shiki</i> Appreciation for St. Nichiren	13 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
No Sunday Service	20 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) Rev. Kanai in Seattle
Deity Daikoku Service	25 <sup>th</sup> (Fri) 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Service	27 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Morning Chanting	Daily 8:30 a.m.
Japanese Language Class	Tue. 4:30 p.m.
Buddhism for Beginners in English	Wed. 3:00 p.m. & 5:00p.m.
Buddhism for beginners in English	Thu. 12:15 p.m., 4:00p.m.