

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin
On the Occasion of the December Kōsen-rufu Shōdai Ceremony
December 7, 2014
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

Good morning, everyone!

On this occasion of the last Kōsen-rufu Shōdai Ceremony of this year, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the large number of participants in attendance.

The final month of this year already has begun. We have only eighty-odd days remaining until the auspicious occasion of the 770th anniversary of the birth of Nikko Shonin next year. I imagine that all of you, based on unity between the priesthood and laity, are devoting yourselves to your practice, day and night, aiming toward the achievement of your shakubuku goal.

Some of you may already have achieved your chapters' shakubuku goals—to increase the membership of all Hokkeko chapters by 50 percent. As for the chapters that have not yet achieved their shakubuku goals, I sincerely wish that they too, by all means, will accomplish their goals by March 8 of next year.

Shakubuku is a valuable mission given to us by the Buddha. The Teachers of the Law (*Hosshi*; tenth) chapter of the Lotus Sutra reads:

If, after my passing, there are good men and good women, and one among them secretly preaches the Lotus Sutra, [one volume of it, a single passage] or a phrase of it to even one other person, then this good man or woman, indeed, is an envoy of the Tathagata. As the Tathagata's envoy, he carries out compassionate action in his stead. And how much more is this so for those who widely preach the Lotus Sutra for others in the midst of the great assembly.

(Hokekyo, p. 321, The Lotus Sutra, Watson, p. 162)

“An envoy of the Tathagata” indicates an emissary of the Buddha. This person behaves on behalf of the Buddha. The sutra teaches that a person who preaches the mystic Law (*Myōhō*) and conducts shakubuku to even a single person is referred to as the Tathagata’s envoy.

“He carries out compassionate action in his stead” means that this envoy preaches to the people the immutable and eternal mystic Law—the truth revealed by the Buddha.

The *Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra* (Hokke mongu) gives the following interpretation :

A practitioner in this age has great compassion and teaches the immutable doctrine in this sutra for the sake of others, enabling them to obtain the benefit. This task is called the Buddha’s work.

(*Mongu ehon chu*, Gakurin version, p. 635)

If a person teaches Myoho-Renge-Kyo to even one person, this means he has carried out a compassionate act of the Buddha’s work.

When we read these passages, we strongly feel how respectable and precious it is to sow the seeds of the mystic Law of our founder, Nichiren Daishonin, and conduct shakubuku to as many people as possible, fulfilling an important mission for kōsen-rufu.

The Daishonin teaches in the Gosho, *On Chanting the Daimoku of the Lotus Sutra* (Shō hokke daimoku-shō):

In the Latter Day of the Law, there are many who do not possess the seed of Buddhahood. There are only a few who possess it. Thus, there is no doubt that the people [in the Latter Day of the Law] will fall into the evil paths. [Since they are going to fall into the evil paths one way or another,] we should strongly teach and make them listen to the Lotus Sutra and let them form a poison-drum relationship with it. Thus, now is certainly the time to create a reverse relationship by propagating the Lotus Sutra.

(*Gosho*, p. 231)

“The poison-drum” is a drum smeared with poison. In the Nirvana sutra, it is stated:

When a drum smeared with poison is beaten, all those who hear the sound of the drum will instantly die, whether they wish to hear it or not.

(Nirvana Sutra, summary)

Even if someone hears the Law and opposes it, through the relationship of hearing the mystic Law, this person will eventually sever his earthly desires and attain Buddhahood. This is likened to beating a drum smeared with poison.

If we powerfully teach Myoho-Renge-Kyo to those who slander and make them listen to it, they eventually will be led to the attainment of Buddhahood through their relationship with the mystic Law. This is also referred to as a reverse relationship.

In the Nirvana sutra, it states:

All living beings have the potential for attaining Buddhahood.

(Nirvana Sutra, summary)

As this passage teaches, all living beings inherently possess the Buddha nature. They can attain enlightenment through listening to the true Law, awakening to it, and practicing it.

Accordingly, now in the Latter Day of the Law, not only those who have a positive relationship with the Buddha, but also those with a reverse relationship, can be saved without fail in the future, if they are led to listen to Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo of the Three Great Secret Laws and form a relationship with the true Law.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *Attaining Enlightenment at the Initial Stage of Faith through the Lotus Sutra* (Hokke shoshin jōbutsu-shō):

In any case, one should strongly teach and make people listen to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. Those who follow and take faith in it will be able to attain enlightenment, and even those who slander it will likewise attain Buddhahood in the end through the poison-drum relationship.

(Gosho, p. 1316)

Nichiren Shoshu believers are striving in the practice, based on unity between the priesthood and laity, aiming toward the achievement of our goal—to increase the membership of all Hokkeko chapters by 50 percent—by March of next year, when we will be celebrating the 770th anniversary of the birth of Nikko Shonin. Furthermore, we have the next great goal—to achieve a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by the year 2021, the 800th anniversary of the advent of our founder Nichiren Daishonin. In order to accomplish our great goal for 2021, all chapters must accomplish their current goal of increasing the membership of all Hokkeko chapters by 50 percent without fail.

I sincerely hope that, based on the benefit of achieving the goal of 2015, all the Hokkeko members will move forward toward the goal of 2021, and all of your efforts of all chapters will be equally witnessed by the Dai-Gohonzon.

In contrast, the Soka Gakkai has committed the grave slander of mercilessly denying faith in the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching. The Gakkai members have been deceived and misled into to the evil paths.

Thus, it is crucial that we refute the errors of the Soka Gakkai and save as many Gakkai members as possible.

We truly should feel grateful for our fortunate circumstances—that we are following the true denomination based on the Heritage of the Law. Thus, we must conduct shakubuku—refuting heresy and revealing the truth—with further efforts and unity. I sincerely wish that all chapters will achieve their goal and welcome the commemorative year of the 770th anniversary of the birth of Nikko Shonin with boundless joy.