

SGI President Ikeda's Poem Into the Storm

President Ikeda wrote this poem for the youth division members in commemoration of July 3, the Day of Mentor and Disciple. July 3 is the day on which second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda was released from prison in 1945, after being held for opposing Japanese militarism, and the day on which President Ikeda, then Soka Gakkai youth division chief of staff, was in 1957 arrested and detained for questioning on false charges in connection with the Osaka Incident.

— Dedicated to our successors, my beloved
youth division members, who are the
treasures of the SGI.

*Fierce winds, blow!
Angry waves, surge!*

*I am a youth,
I am the scarlet banner waving in the storm —
Nothing daunts me,
Nothing defeats me.*

*Here where I stand
Is the headland from which I set forth;
Today, this moment,
Ever a fresh, new campaign —
When I think of my future,
Boundless strength and courage
Well up in my heart.*

*Wind! Waves!
As an indomitable youth,
I will bravely battle
Your relentless onslaughts.*

*My friend, you go by sea;
I'll go by land.*

*I will rise resolutely
To champion the goal
I have chosen in life;
I will embark
With unswerving determination,
Cherishing a sublime mission.*

*I am a youth
Flying into the storm*

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*On glorious wings of freedom
That take me higher than any aged national leader,
That make me wiser than any self-serving politician.*

*Such is the preeminence of youth
That nothing can destroy.
We embrace the star of our eternal destiny
And shine —
Such is our youth
Played out on a global stage.*

*For that reason,
The youth are the treasure of the world,
The youth are the verdant fields of peace.
When we unite in common purpose,
A deafening thunder resounds,
Condemning the abuses of arrogant powers.
Your bright eyes,
Your enthusiastic, gallant forms
Brimming with life,
The inexhaustible vitality
With which you advance without bound —
All are manifestations
Of the noble spirit of hope.*

*Such youth are undeterred
By sorrow, pain or obstacles.
Toasting each other cheerfully
And striving for the Arch of Triumph
Of their life —
There, the brilliant, scarlet banner of victory
Waves fearlessly.*

*I will advance without fail!
For this will be my proof in this lifetime
Of an unsurpassed youth.*

*“For what purpose?” —
Seeking the answer to this question,
I fight without end.
On nights when storms rage
Or waves crash with savage fury,
I will keep pressing onward undaunted,
Looking forward to the morning sun
That will rise majestically once more
In the eastern sky.*

*Youth!
Dear friends!
With astute perception,*

*Look closely, speak out, forge ahead!
And remember that
Beyond the distant horizon,
Countless successors will follow,
Longing for the sun's timeless light.*

*My young friends,
Prepare to mount your white horses!
Positioning yourselves gallantly
At the vanguard of the people,
Devoting yourselves to the mission
Decreed by the Buddha,
Gallop forth bravely!*

*Cross mountains and valleys,
Advance joyfully,
Transcending all obstacles
With exhilaration and delight,
Along with fellow members
Throughout the world.*

*Ride on through the darkness —
For all your priceless sweat and effort
Will lead to the golden stage of the new era
All of us have dreamed of.*

*Youth!
Hold your heads high,
Stand tall.
My friends!
Take the lead in all struggles
And make your presence known.*

*Youth are never defeated
By anything or anyone —
For never giving in
Is what victory is all about.*

*Youth are never discouraged —
For if you are never downcast
By even the direst adversity,
A brilliant stage awaits you.*

*Watch me!
When I awake,
When I unleash my true potential,
A new age will be born,
A revolution will dawn.*

*I am the eyes that reflect the future,
I am the flash of spirited eloquence
That separates lies from truth,
I am the keen blade of justice
Cutting through evil,
Striving eternally to awaken society —
This is youth.*

*Therefore,
May light shine in the eyes of youth,
May strength reside in the hearts of youth.*

*Century of carnage and bloodshed
Now drawing to a close —
What sorrowful wounds you have inflicted,
How bitter your legacy of grief and fear!
Humanity has trembled in the shadow
Of demonic weapons,
Shuddered at the dark clouds
Obscuring the horizon —
The oppressive gloom of the fin de siècle world.*

*The musical score of the old century
Is scattered with the sounds of destruction,
Of gunfire and bomb blasts,
The heartrending screams of mothers and children
Running desperately for cover.*

*“O friends, not these sounds!”
As Beethoven implored.*

*The powerful song of youth
Will revitalize history,
Too long one of human suffering.*

*When a truly new age arrives
A brand-new procession of youth
Will conduct a colossal symphony
That will reverberate throughout the universe.*

*My friends,
Sing, dance and rejoice together!*

*The curtain has risen on
A grand, dignified overture —
The performance
Of a towering symphony orchestra
Of heroic youth
Has already begun.*

*The departure bell has sounded —
Set the sails!
Raise the anchor!
It's time for the youth to embark
On their great, unending journey,
Bathed in the brilliant light of the stars.*

*Comrades throughout the three existences!
Are you well prepared for victory?
Never neglect the smallest detail,
But once you leave the pier,
Don't look back.*

*Get ready now!
Carve your way through the water
Like majestic orcas,
Regard the tossing waves
As the soothing rocking of a cradle,
Remember that bravery and daring
Are vital for victory and success.*

*Each of you, young comrades!
Work to enable everyone,
Friend and foe,
To reach the shore
Of peace and happiness
Without fail,
Without exception.*

*Sometimes
Be the ship's bow
Always first to brave
The wind and waves,
Sometimes
Be the ship's booming engines
Or its propellers,
And sometimes
Labor day and night in the engine room,
Covered in oil and grime.
Each of you, my friends!
Cross the stormy seas
With energy and enthusiasm
On a journey of self-development,
Setting a course for an uncharted realm,
Overgrown with untraversed jungle,
And go courageously ashore.*

*Life is a struggle,
Life is a battle to the very end
That none can escape,*

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That none can avoid.

*I am a valorous warrior
Of stand-alone spirit,
My heart is always
On the battlefield
That knows no rest.*

*I am on the stage
Upon which a fierce struggle is waged
Between the opposing forces of
Hope and despair,
Courage and cowardice,
Challenge and inertia.*

*Whether I'm forced to eat dirt
Or hang by my nails at the edge of a cliff,
I will move forward,
Even if just an inch or two,
Determined to break through adversity.*

*My friends,
May you, too, fight with
A noble, heroic spirit,
Remembering the Daishonin's admonition:
"Nichiren's disciples cannot accomplish anything
If they are cowardly,"
And that of his successor, Nikko:
"Until kosen-rufu is achieved, propagate the Law
To the full extent of your ability
Without begrudging your life."*

*You, my young friends,
Who know an indeed profound philosophy,
Do not be deceived by hypocrites,
Do not be fooled by glossy illusions —
Unsheathe the spiritual sword of justice
And fight until the last tyrant falls.
Let blow the winds of courage,
Boldly sound the bells of advance each day,
Let forth the thunderous roar,
Of comrades united and strong.*

*Fear not the howling of wolves,
Let them hear the lion's roar!*

*We live in a world
Defiled by the five impurities —
So keep advancing,
Unlocking the floodgates of our indignation*

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*Toward those who would destroy justice;
Making them aware of how bitter will be
Their everlasting regret.*

*Let's win
And together weep tears of joy;
Never bow down
To frauds and oppressors.*

*Youth!
In the course of our struggle,
Topple every enemy of the Buddha
Without fail,
And become the sun
Whose brilliant light
Will free all people from fear.*

*In Hall Caine's famous novel
The Eternal City,
Rossi and Bruno,
Two youthful comrades
Bound by mutual trust,
Firm and unafraid in their cause
Even under threat of death,
Fight to the limits of their being
And build an eternal city of the heart.*

*My young friends,
With united purpose
And shared commitment
Surpassing even theirs,
May you create your eternal city,
One that endures across the three existences
Of past, present and future —
This is kosen-rufu.*

*Until that is accomplished,
Solidly unite
And continue to advance.*

*There are countless youth,
Untold noble comrades,
Who share this philosophy of peace,
Not only in Japan,
But in North America,
Central and South America,
Europe and Africa,
Throughout Asia and Oceania,
In every corner of the world.*

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*Joining hands
With youth around the globe,
Create an untrammelled network;
Working in concert,
Build an eternal city,
A realm of indestructible brilliance
In the 21st century.*

July 3

— Commemorating the day of
my mentor's release from
prison and the day that I
was imprisoned.

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