



**FOCAL POINTS
PULLOUT:**
Gabriella Larios
shares her joy of
practicing
Buddhism with
her family.
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‘The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin’ Published

In commemoration of Nov. 18, Day of the Soka Gakkai’s Founding, the SGI publishes new Goshō compilation.

By **TED MORINO**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The *Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* has been published in celebration of Nov. 18, Day of the Soka Gakkai’s Founding. The publication of the writings of Nichiren Daishonin available in English in one volume will usher in a new phase of the SGI’s worldwide kosen-rufu movement. *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* combines all seven volumes of *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, containing 172 of the Daishonin’s writings. This con-

stitutes about half of the *Nichiren Daishonin Goshō Zenshu*, the collection of the Daishonin’s writings in Japanese that has 426 of his writings.

Nikko Shonin, the Daishonin’s successor, envisioned, for the sake of worldwide propagation, that the writings of his teacher needed to be translated in the future. He states, “When the Buddhism of India spread eastward, the Sanskrit texts were translated and introduced in China and Japan, so when the time comes to widely declare the sacred teachings of this country, the Japanese texts

are sure to be translated and spread in China and India” (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1613).

It is some 30 years since the Soka Gakkai first turned to the translation of the Daishonin’s writings in the above spirit. The first volume of *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* was published in 1979.

In his foreword to the new volume, SGI President Ikeda states: “Today the expansion of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism to 128 countries and territories worldwide attests to the realization of these golden words of the Daishonin [from “On the Buddha’s Prophecy”]: “The moon appears in the west and sheds its light eastward, but the sun rises in the east and casts its rays to the west. The same is true of Buddhism. It

spread from west to east in the Former and Middle Days of the Law, but will travel from east to west in the Latter Day” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 401).

He also states: “The Goshō is a work of faith, of philosophy, of daily living, of eternal peace, and of boundless hope. It is set with myriad jewels of guidance. SGI members have read a single passage of the Goshō with their entire life, and not only changed their lives for the better but also achieved their human revolution.”

This 1,291-page volume, 6 in. x 9 in., which includes appendices and glossary (that can be used as a Buddhist dictionary), will soon be available in all SGI-USA bookstores as well as through mail order for \$25.



All the other writings of the Daishonin, including the “Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings,” will continue to be translated from now. In the future, SGI members will have a complete English translation of the Daishonin’s entire Goshō. **WT**

Chicago Culture Center Wins Awards

Photo by PAUL REID



Lotus pond.

The Mayor’s Landscape Awards Program has again recognized the gardens at the SGI-USA Chicago Culture Center, this year with the 1st Place Award for Community Garden in the city’s Region No. 3.

Chicago member Paul Reid, who designed and installed the landscaping, accepted the award on Nov. 6. The grounds have been maintained since the Culture Center’s opening in 1995 through the volunteer efforts of

many Chicago members.

Last year, the garden won 2nd Place citywide in the category of Naturalized Gardens. The grounds are open to members and visitors during the operating hours of the center.

Meanwhile, *Faith and Form* magazine and the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art and Architecture have decided to give the 2000 Design Award for the Chicago Culture Center in the category of Religious Architecture — New Facilities. The Cul-

Photo by SUSAN HARRISON



(L-R) Tom Donohue, Chicago Botanic Garden Chairman of the Board; William Abolt, Commissioner, Department of Environment of Chicago; Paul R. Reid, award-winning landscape designer of the gardens at the Chicago Culture Center.

ture Center was one of only seven projects nationwide honored in this category.

Faith and Form and IFRAA will recognize the winning designs at the 2000 IFRAA Biennial Conference in Boston next October. An exhibition of the award-winning projects will be displayed at the 2000 Convention of the American Institute of Architects in Philadelphia.

— GUY McCLOSKEY

Photo by GUY McCLOSKEY



The SGI-USA Chicago Culture Center.

Photo by PAUL REID



Front-gate entrance of the Chicago Culture Center.

AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

Faith in the Gohonzon

SGI President Ikeda raises the question 'What is the basic cause behind the Soka Gakkai's phenomenal growth?' He answers that it's 'the great power of the Gohonzon and the faith of the Soka Gakkai members.'

I have heard that a well-known and respected Japanese scholar of religion has said: "The development of the Soka Gakkai is one of the great miracles of postwar Japan. The Gakkai has encountered many difficulties, but it has overcome each of them brilliantly and continues to grow and develop even further. I have deep respect for it."

The Soka Gakkai is a bright sun of hope rising in the skies of the 21st century. Its history has been marked by an uninterrupted series of persecutions—mountain upon towering mountain, wave upon crashing wave. But like a massive, indestructible rock, it has withstood all the buffeting. Until today, it rings with the cheers of the people's victory and happiness.

What is the basic cause behind the Soka Gakkai's phenomenal growth? The great power of the Gohonzon and the faith of the Soka Gakkai members. As the famous passage from Nichikan Shonin's "*Commentary on 'The True Object of Worship'*" states: "If you have faith in this Gohonzon and chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo even for a short while, no prayer will go unanswered, no offense unexpiated, no good fortune unbestowed, and no righteousness unproven."

In exact accord with this passage, the noble members of the Soka Gakkai have placed their faith in the Gohonzon. They have chanted Nam-myoho-enge-kyo earnestly, praying and challenging themselves with all their might, and as a result have triumphed in all their endeavors.

On the upper left-hand side of the Gohonzon, Nichiren Daishonin inscribed the words "Those who make offerings to the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra] will enjoy good fortune surpassing the ten honorable ti-

ties." The ten honorable titles are the 10 names or epithets of the Buddha that describe his many virtues. They are: Thus Come One; Worthy of Offerings; Right and Universal Knowledge; Perfect Clarity and Conduct; Well Gone; Understanding of the World; Unexcelled Worthy; Leader of People; Teacher of Gods and Humans; and Buddha, the World-Honored One. [Other versions of the ten honorable titles also exist.]

The Buddha is called Worthy of Offerings, for example, because he is qualified to receive offerings and respect from others. Since he correctly perceives reality in its entirety, he is called Right and Universal Knowledge. As he has perfected both wisdom and practice, he is called Perfect Clarity and Conduct. And thanks to his transcendence above the world of delusion and his attainment of enlightenment, he is called Well Gone (to the world of enlightenment).

He is called Understanding of the World because he comprehends everything in it completely. And he is called Leader of People because he courageously instructs people and helps them refrain from doing wrong. He is called Teacher of Gods and Humans because he guides all human and heavenly beings.

These 10 names are like a badge of honor, a medal given to someone who has mastered the study of humanity and the art of leadership.

The Daishonin teaches that the blessings obtained from embracing faith in the Mystic Law and making offerings to the Gohonzon are even greater than the blessings received from making offerings to Buddhas possessing such illustrious titles.

Next year will mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Soka Gakkai by Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda, its first and second presidents, respectively. It will also be 40 years since I, as third president, inheriting the spirit of these great mentors, first opened the door to worldwide kosen-rufu.

Over the years since our organization's founding, we have faced and defeated the nefarious schemes of the three powerful enemies and succeeded in spreading the Daishonin's Bud-

dism around the world. Through our efforts, people in 128 nations and territories today embrace faith in the Gohonzon. This achievement represents an unprecedented offering to the Law in the history of Buddhism.

The words inscribed on the Gohonzon promise that as a result of the benefit we accumulate through our Buddhist practice, we will be reborn in lifetime after lifetime as great leaders of foremost wisdom and character, able to pursue our path unhindered.

•••••

On the upper right-hand side of the Gohonzon, however, are also the words "Those who vex or trouble [the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra] will have their heads split into seven pieces." This phrase, "their heads will split into seven pieces," can also be expressed as "their minds will be split into seven pieces" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 201). In other words, the minds of those that slander the Gohonzon or persecute the practitioners of the Mystic Law will fall apart in shreds.

The disintegration of the mind means the collapse of one's spiritual and emotional center. Just as a folding fan with a broken pivot falls apart, the core of what makes a person human becomes disordered. When that happens, of course, they can no longer distinguish right from wrong or good from evil. They will come to hate what is good and right, and thus destroy themselves, sinking into the darkness of hell.

•••••

The words written on the upper left- and right-hand sides of the Gohonzon—"good fortune surpassing the ten honorable titles" and "their heads split in seven pieces"—demonstrate the strictness of the law of cause and effect. They show the uncompromising outcome of any struggle in the realm of Buddhism.

Mr. Makiguchi would frequently say: "The Gohonzon has great power. It is inconceivable that it should bring forth great benefit [in response to good], without also bringing forth punishment or negative effects [in response to evil]. For instance, a father who lacks the

strength to scold his children [when they have done something wrong] will also lack the power to bring them happiness. Try chanting intently to the Gohonzon. Can't you hear it saying, "Those who vex or trouble [the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra] will have their heads split in seven pieces'?"

In his essay "*The History and Conviction of the Soka Gakkai*," Mr. Toda introduces Mr. Makiguchi's ideas on this subject and states: "Benefit and punishment are the substance of our real, everyday lives, together forming the totality of a life of value. They [the Nichiren Shoshu priests] had forgotten this important fact. I can still vividly recall their state of panic and confusion when Mr. Makiguchi brought this subject up. They painted a truly comical picture. Thus, I am dumbfounded to see some of these same degenerate priests now act like they have known this concept [of benefit and punishment] all along. On the other hand, some ignorant priests are still not aware of this principle even now. I am saddened rather than surprised by their ignorance."

It was more than ignorance, though, because these contemptible priests went on to attack Mr. Makiguchi vehemently, accusing him of going against the school's teachings when he discussed punishment when he was propagating the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Their actions are, in fact, a perfect example of "those who vex or trouble" the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra. The very fact that they tried to coerce the Soka Gakkai into accepting the Shinto talisman during World War II is clear evidence of their insanity, or—in the words of the Sutra—of their heads being split into seven pieces.

The Daishonin's successor and second high priest, Nikko Shonin, says in "*Guidelines for Believers of the Fuji School*" that the five senior priests who betrayed the Daishonin "one and all denigrated this object of fundamental respect [the Gohonzon]." He clearly points out their grave offense. It is the spiritual descendants of those five senior priests who make up today's Nikken sect.

The Daishonin's Buddhism is the Buddhism of the sun, illuminating the entire world. In

the Daishonin's writings, there is the passage "The king of the asuras, angered at the deity Taishaku, shot an arrow at the sun god, but the arrow came back and struck the king himself in the eye" (MW-4, 240). This is an apt description of the Nikken sect, which is shooting arrows at the Buddhism of the sun—and of what will happen as a result of their folly.

In other words, since the negative effects of their actions will return to them without fail, they are advancing inexorably down the path of self-destruction. This is the destruction warned against in the admonition "their heads will split into seven pieces."

The Daishonin also declares, "If we surmise the degree of benefit according to that of punishment, then there can be no doubt that my followers will enjoy 'good fortune surpassing the ten honorable titles'" (MW-6, 226). The beneficial power of the Gohonzon is indisputable! The triumph of Buddhism is clear! The benefit accruing to the SGI, which acts in accord with the Buddha's will and decree, is immeasurable.

My comrades, my noble friends! Bathed in the brilliant light of happiness—and with ever-growing strength and dignity—let us dance onto the stage of the dazzling Century of Soka together!

This essay was published in the "Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*" series in the Oct. 9 *Seikyo Shimbun*.

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Closing Arguments To Be Heard in Seattle Incident Trial

Closing arguments will be heard Dec. 7 in the Seattle Incident trial. A verdict is expected from the Tokyo District Court in early 2000.

The trial, which started in 1995, involves a defamation lawsuit filed by High Priest Nikken and Nichiren Shoshu against the Soka Gakkai and its publications. In order to prove he has been libeled, Nikken must convince the court that Mrs. Hiroe Clow's account, which was carried in Soka Gakkai publications, of his March 1963 dispute with prostitutes and subsequent run-in with Seattle police is untrue.

The 26th session of the trial was held Oct. 26, at which time attorneys for the Soka Gakkai introduced further evidence refuting Nichiren Shoshu's claim that defense witness and former Seattle police officer Ronald Sprinkle was not present at the incident because he was on active military duty (see the Oct. 15 *World Tribune*, p. 2). The new evidence included affidavits from various officials of the U.S. Air Force and Seat-

tle Police Department.

In a new affidavit from Mr. Sprinkle, he explained that, although he joined the Air Force Reserves in 1962, he held down his job with the Police Department at the same time that he was in training at Paine Field Air Force Base near Seattle.

Regarding Nichiren Shoshu's allegations that Mr. Sprinkle's badge and gun were officially checked in and not in his possession at the time of the incident, Mr. Sprinkle testified that because the guns issued by the Police Department then were not of the highest quality, he had for years carried his own gun while on duty.

And as for the badge: While Mr. Sprinkle had checked his personal badge in for the duration of his military training, the Police Department had a system in which "loaner badges" were issued to police officers reporting for work without badges. Mr. Sprinkle testified that he believes he had been issued a "loaner badge" the day of the incident.

Providing background to Mr. Sprinkle's testimony was

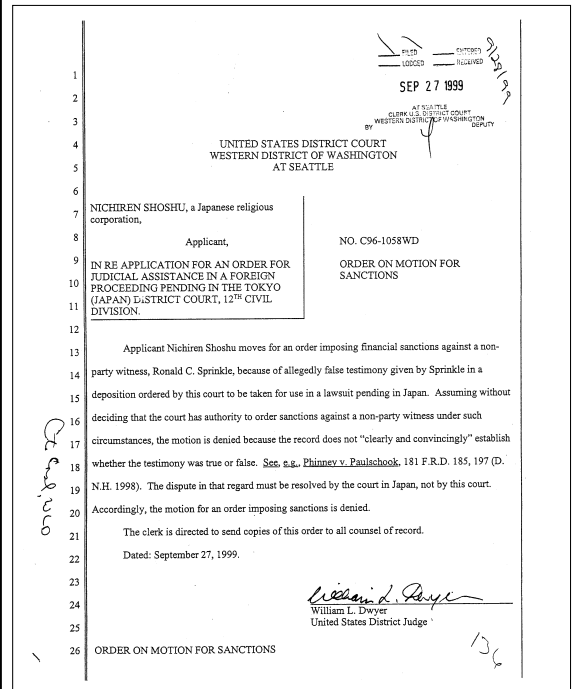
the testimony of Thomas Bowie, the commanding officer of the Air Force Reserve training unit to which Mr. Sprinkle was assigned. Mr. Bowie stated that Mr. Sprinkle was in his unit, and that he remembers Mr. Sprinkle was also a Seattle police officer at the time. He also stated that he had no opposition as Mr. Sprinkle's commanding officer to the latter's police work while under his command.

The Soka Gakkai's attorneys also submitted to the court many pieces of documentary evidence showing Mr. Sprinkle to have been working as a Seattle police officer at the time of the incident.

For the latest on the Seattle Incident trial, subscribe to our free, weekly e-mailer on temple issue news, the *Justice Chronicle*. Here's how: 1) Open a new e-mail message; 2) Enter to: ListManager@sgi-usa.org; 3) Enter message text: SUBSCRIBE chronicle. You'll receive a confirmation message and then a new issue every week!

— JEFF FARR

The U.S. District Court Decision



In the Oct. 15 'World Tribune,' we reported on this recent decision against Nichiren Shoshu by the U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington at Seattle. After Nichiren Shoshu alleged in the 'Daibyakuho,' the temple members' newspaper in Japan, that former Seattle police officer Ronald Sprinkle was not at the site of the Seattle Incident in March 1963 (see story above), attorneys for Nichiren Shoshu filed a motion in Seattle requesting monetary sanctions against him for 'perjury.' The court record says that 'the record is denied because the record does not "clearly and convincingly" establish whether testimony was true or false.' It adds that the dispute 'must be resolved in the court in Japan, not by this court.'

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SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S OCT. 24 SPEECH—PART 1

The Power of Culture

SGI President Ikeda says that 'the power of culture—the force that links human hearts across differences of race, nationality and religion' will change human history in the new century.

The following is part 1 of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Oct. 24.

To the Yamaguchi Prefecture members: Thank you for coming from so far away. Congratulations on your commemorative leaders meeting!

And congratulations to the young women's division International Group on your commemorative general meeting!

Many thanks, too, to the members of the YWD Fuji Chorus.

And thanks to the representatives of the Business Professionals Division who have gathered here from all over Japan!

The members of the YWD International Group have presented me with a collection of quotes by poets from around the world. I thank you for this gift!

Today, I want to introduce these words of the ancient Roman philosopher Seneca: "Manliness gains much strength by being challenged." And this statement by Henrik Ibsen, the great Norwegian dramatist: "The man who stands alone is the strongest." Since such wisdom strikes a chord with the teachings of Buddhism, I share these words with you today.

Today, Oct. 24, is U.N. Day. On this day in 1945, the "Parliament of Humanity" was inaugurated. This was just a little more than three months after that momentous day of July 3, when our mentor Josei Toda was released from prison, where he had been held by the Japanese militarist authorities, and began his struggle as an invincible hero for truth and justice.

Mr. David Tay, president of the Photographic Society of Singapore, who is with us today, was born the same year that the United Nations was founded—and, coincidentally, in July of that year, the month of Mr. Toda's release from

prison. Mr. Tay is a gentleman of outstanding caliber who, like the United Nations, has spent his life working to achieve a culture of peace. The United Nations, as you may be aware, has designated 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace.

What will serve as the fundamental force for taking humanity from this 20th century of war into the 21st century of peace? This is a question of the gravest consequence for humankind. The answer is the power of culture—the force that links human hearts across differences of race, nationality and religion. This unifying power of culture represents a brilliant light of hope for all 6 billion members of the human family.

Nichiren Shoshu praised barbarous actions by the Japanese military.

During World War II, Japan invaded Singapore and occupied it for three years and eight months, subjecting it to the cruelest oppression. Tens of thousands of people are said to have been slaughtered in the Japanese army's massacres. The Japanese military brutally tortured the people of Singapore, even destroying hospitals. What barbarity!

Japanese military authorities went on to suppress the culture of Singapore, requiring people to use Japanese, setting the local time to match Tokyo time and forcing the State Shinto religion on them.

Nichiren Shoshu praised and supported these barbarous actions. The high priest at the time, Nikkyo—who later burned to death in a fire—flattered and fawned on the military authorities, publicly declaring the Japanese invasions of Singapore and other Asian countries proof of "the invincible power of the Japanese Army, Navy, and Air Force."

The high priest also traveled to different parts of Japan performing religious ceremonies for the victory of Japanese forces. And each time he did so, he expected the believers in each area to host sumptuous banquets in his honor. These facts are clearly recorded in the internal records of Nichiren Shoshu.

In contrast, the first and second Soka Gakkai presidents, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda respectively, were outraged at the deplorable cow-

ardice and corruption of the priesthood and chose the path of martyrdom for their beliefs.

The SGI is creating a culture of peace that respects and upholds the sanctity of life.

The SGI utterly rejects violence and the destruction it causes. Our organization is creating a culture of peace that respects and upholds the sanctity of life; it is an unparalleled champion of justice and truth. In this respect, I look on photography as part of my spiritual struggle, not as a hobby.

Most esteemed President Tay: It is with deep appreciation and a solemn sense of responsibility that I accept the award of Honorary Life Membership in the prestigious Photographic Society of Singapore. The PSS has some 1,200 members. During the half-century since its establishment in 1950, it has made tremendous contributions to international exchange through the art of photography, a visual poetry of peace.

I am also aware that your society has contributed greatly to heightened awareness of environmental issues, care for the elderly, the education of youth and local development. Mr. Tay has stood at the forefront of activities for the promotion of culture and education, and acted as a linchpin for an alliance of many different peoples. On behalf of this assembly, I express our deepest respect for him and his endeavors.

Today, members all the way from Yamaguchi Prefecture—a region renowned for producing people of outstanding ability and talent, and for ushering in the dawn of modern Japan—are gathered here in high spirits. Yamaguchi Prefecture, then known as the Choshu domain, was the birthplace of the innovative thinker and educator Yoshida Shoin, who was instrumental in preparing the way for the Meiji Restoration and who, for this reason, is regarded as the father of Japan's modern era.

The day before the authorities executed him for his anti-government activities, Shoin wrote: "Though I may die in the fields of Musashi [modern-day Tokyo], I will leave behind the Japanese spirit." He was perfectly willing to die for his be-



SGI President Ikeda receives an award of Honorary Life Membership in the Photographic Society of Singapore, Oct. 24.

liefs. One of the greatest struggles in my youth also took place in Yamaguchi Prefecture.

Yoshida Shoin was a young scholar and educator of the late-Edo period. He showed academic brilliance from an early age. Talented youth, many of whom went on to become leading activists of the age, flocked to study under him. His involvement in anti-government activities led to his arrest. He was sent to Edo (present-day Tokyo) for trial and there executed at age 29. After his death, a number of former students played key roles in overthrowing the Tokugawa military government and carrying out the Meiji Restoration,

which led to Japan's opening and the start of its modernization along Western lines.

Yamaguchi Prefecture is also a pioneering region in photography. The first person to do a translation of a European technical manual on wet-plate photography, which was published in 1860, had close ties to this area of Japan: Nakajima Jihei of the Choshu domain. The 19th-century photographic portraits of Takasugi Shinsaku and other revolutionary figures who studied at Shoin's school are well known to many Japanese people.

(To be continued in next week's issue)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS

A Century of Peace

From This Speech:

What will serve as the fundamental force for taking humanity from this 20th century of war into the 21st century of peace? This is a question of the gravest consequence for humankind. The answer is the power of culture—the force that links human hearts across differences of race, nationality and religion. This unifying power of culture represents a brilliant light of hope for all 6 billion members of the human family.

1. SGI President Ikeda says that culture is the "fundamental force" that will change a century of war into a century of peace. How do you think that culture can do that?
2. How would you define *culture*? And what is the "power of culture"?
3. How, as an individual, do you see yourself contributing to culture?
4. Do you have any ideas about how the SGI organization can contribute to culture more?
5. Besides culture, what other forces are there for making the 21st century a century of peace?
6. Imagine it's the end of the 21st century of peace... what things do you think will have happened in human history?

A Genuine Religion

A Record of My Life
by Daisaku Ikeda

Expressing the SGI's strong stand against nuclear weapons, SGI President Ikeda says that 'a genuine religion does not dream of some ideal vision of society while making people forget the issues they face in reality....'

In September 1987, on the 30th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, the "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World" exhibition was held in Japan in Yokohama, Kanagawa, where the declaration was made. The late Governor of Kanagawa, Kazuji Nagasu, said at the opening: "I sincerely hope that this exhibition being held in Yokohama, a city with an illustrious history, will unite and strengthen the commitment of the people of our prefecture to work for the abolition of all nuclear weapons."

Along with the exhibition, we held a lecture series on peace, and the Soka Gakkai youth division members in Kanagawa conducted a public opinion poll among local residents on nuclear weapons. The Kanagawa organization also held a culture general meeting to coincide with these events, marking a fresh start for the prefecture's activities.

In my speech, I said: "Let us carry on our mentor's vision and go out widely into the world, there striving for its realization." From that time, I have worked and fought without rest to make that wish come true.

The Soka Gakkai's peace movement is a natural consequence of the Buddhist ideal of peace articulated in the "Risho Ankoku Ron" (On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land) and active involvement in society. A famous passage from this treatise is succinct on this point: "If the nation is destroyed and families are wiped out, then where can one flee for safety? If you care anything about your personal security, you should first

of all pray for order and tranquillity throughout the four quarters of the land, should you not?" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 38).

A genuine religion does not dream of some ideal vision of society while making people forget the issues they face in reality; it does not lose itself in meditation on a perfect world while fleeing from daily life. True security for both oneself and others can only be attained by praying and acting for "order and tranquillity throughout the four quarters of the land."

Why has the SGI's peace movement spread throughout the world and proven so enduring? In Japan in the 1950s, there were numerous organizations and movements vehemently opposed to nuclear weapons. As the only nation that had experienced nuclear warfare, this wasn't surprising.

But while, for a time, these movements had widespread support, many later were turned into political tools, which led to growing division within their ranks and a loss of momentum. The Soka Gakkai's peace movement, in contrast, has endured tenaciously and spread from Japan to the rest of the world. It has never become alienated from the people.

That is because it has always remained firmly based on the bonds of mentor and disciple. This strong foundation has saved it from being swayed from its course and from becoming self-centered. The motivation behind everything in our movement is to carry out the wishes of our mentor in life, and that is why our movement has never become a venue for personal gain or self-promotion. As long as we remain true to the spirit of our mentor, our way will be eternal and unchanging.

It was not a coincidence that Mr. Toda chose to make his declaration in Kanagawa, an area experiencing tremendous membership growth in those days. A headline in the first issue of the *Seikyo Shimbun* (April 20, 1951) paid tribute to one of Kanagawa's leading chapters: "The Flame Burns High in Tsurumi."

In more recent times, it was from Kanagawa, after stepping down as Soka Gakkai president in 1979, that I began my furious struggle for the integrity of

Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. During those days, when scheming foes surrounded me and tried to keep me isolated, my mentor's image was always in my mind, his words of encouragement always in my ears.

Selfless efforts for others will eventually awaken people's conscience.

In February 1979, just a few months before stepping down, I visited India, a nation with a great spiritual heritage, having given birth to Buddhism in ancient times and to Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent movement in this century. I have an unforgettable memory of that particular visit: It was after my meeting with one of Gandhi's leading disciples, Mr. J. P. Narayan, who was called the conscience of India, at his home in Patna, Bihar State. I stood on the banks of the Ganges River, not far from our hotel. It was evening, and high in the western sky was a bright full moon.

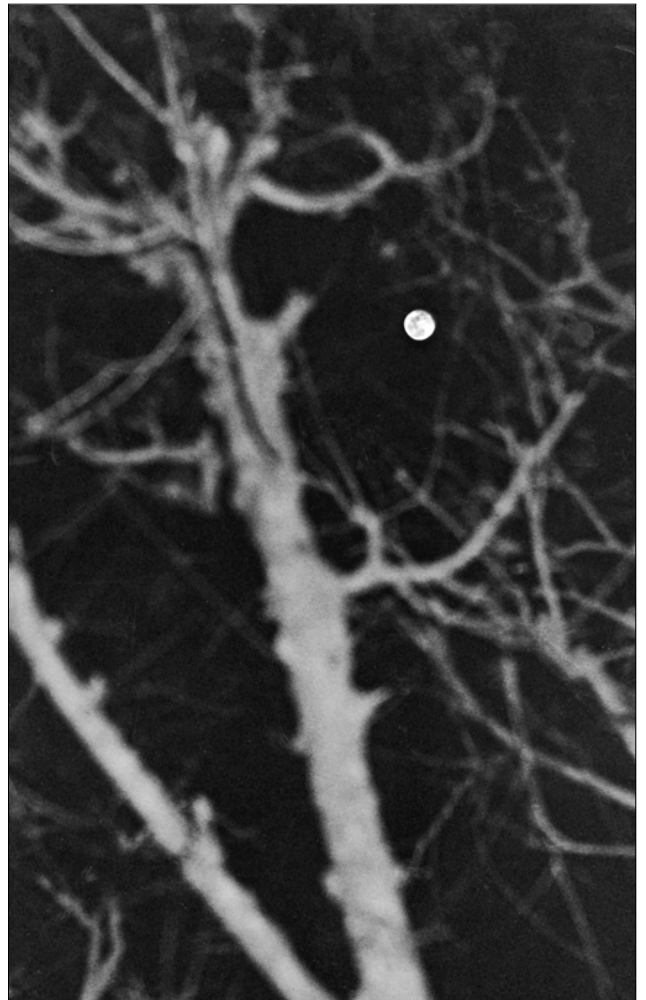
The fiery sun that seemed to scorch all beneath its rays during the day had sunk below the horizon, and the moon had appeared, bringing with it the cool night air and a serenity that seemed to calm the city bustle. The full moon's reflection wavered on the surface of the Ganges, which flowed with a dark majesty through the night. When the moon passed behind a cloud, its round outline shone dimly, radiating an otherworldly aura.

That day was Feb. 11, my mentor's birthday.

Years ago, Mr. Toda had written this poem:

*To the people of Asia
Who pray for a glimpse of
the moon
Through the parting
clouds,
Let us send, instead,
The light of the sun.*

Mr. Toda, struck by the turmoil affecting the people of Asia, fervently wished to intro-



"The moon is a symbol of selfless devotion." Photo by SGI President Ikeda.

duce Buddhism to them again, in accord with the Daishonin's prediction of the westward transmission of Buddhism.

Since ancient times, the light of the moon and the scent of sandalwood were thought in India to relieve the heat. Based on this, the moon and sandalwood came to be regarded as possessing the power to calm human passions and anger. Moonlight became a symbol of wisdom and truth. Shakyamuni attained enlightenment on the night of a full moon.

One of the Sanskrit names for the moon is *shashin*, meaning that which possesses a rabbit (Skt *shasha*). There is an Indian folktale about the moon and the rabbit: Once, in the woods, there was a man who was near death from starvation. The animals took pity on him and brought him gifts of food, but the rabbit

had nothing to give, so it leapt into the cooking fire and offered its own flesh to the man. The god Indra (Jpn *Taishaku*), moved by the rabbit's spirit of self-sacrifice, rescued it from the flames and carried it to the heavens, giving it a permanent home on the moon.

The moon is a symbol of selfless devotion. It is also a symbol of sincerity. Selfless concern and efforts for the welfare of others will eventually quell the flames of hatred and will, without fail, awaken people's conscience.

I am reminded that it is the selfless devotion and sincere words and deeds of our members, the noble children of the Buddha, that have led to the growth of the *kosen-rufu* movement that we see today.

Three in a series

the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

'EARLY SPRING'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 3, PARTS 21-22

In Paris, Shin'ichi Yamamoto says that 'Soka Gakkai members are global citizens in the truest sense. The most important qualities for a global citizen are to possess a philosophy that will lead people to happiness, to put that philosophy into practice and to win respect as a human being while never succumbing to self-interest.'

The leaders traveling with Shin'ichi Yamamoto listened to him intently.

"The only way to ensure that the many diverse peoples and nations of Europe will live together in peace and mutual prosperity," he said, "is to set in motion the wheels of progress leading to unification. I also believe that this move toward unification is ripe with fresh potential. This move toward unification will take the form of a gradual improvement in relations among nations, starting as it has with the economic union forged after the war and slowly increasing in scope to a political union as well.

"Moreover, the aim of such unification is not a simple merging of the nations of Europe into one enormous state. Nor is it a case of one dominant state absorbing many different peoples and cultures and melding them into a single whole. What Europe is aiming for is a federation of unique, autonomous nations

that function as equal partners. This constitutes a profound change in the concept of national borders, and at the same time, of the very concept of the nation."

Shin'ichi elaborated on this view: "Up until now, international politics meant power politics between nations, of which war was always the last resort. But the move toward European unity since the war seems to me the beginnings of a new approach that will transform the old notion of the nation and transcend national borders.

"Most important, this move toward unification was born from the determination to avoid at all costs the occurrence of the tragedy of another great war like the last one. As long as the people of Europe speak up for peace, the move for European unification can only broaden and gather momentum."

Shin'ichi spoke with even greater emphasis: "I also think that the attempt to unify Europe is an experiment for the

eventual unification of the entire human race. Coudenhove-Kalergi wrote, when he first launched the Pan-European Movement: 'Every great historical happening began as a utopia and ended as a reality.' The challenge to realize great ideals leads to historic achievements. This is a perspective that resonates with our own beliefs.

"In the course of the Cold War, nuclear arms have proliferated to the extent that they can now destroy the human race. Will humanity survive, or will we be wiped out in a nuclear holocaust? Faced with this reality, humanity surely can no longer afford to spend its time in strife and war.

"This is why I believe events will move inevitably toward peace and the unification of humankind, whether in the form of a world federation or a world government. Indeed, we must work to make this happen."

After listening to Shin'ichi, Yoshihiko Ohya said: "Having this opportunity to visit Europe and speak with our members here, I feel that the Soka Gakkai is a religious organization that links people together, transcending national borders. For example, yesterday after the inaugural meeting of Europe General Chapter, one of our French members told me that he wanted to teach a British friend of his about this Buddhism and help him become happy.

"And in Düsseldorf, a member asked if there were not some way she could share the teachings of Buddhism with a friend in East Germany. Many of our members in Eu-



Illustrations by KENICHIRO UCHIDA

rope may not yet have thoroughly studied Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and completely mastered its teachings. But through their Buddhist practice, they have come to have a deep appreciation of the humanity they share with all people, regardless of race or nationality, and to possess a strong desire for the happiness of all people along with their own."

"That's right," responded Shin'ichi. "President Toda cherished the ideal of a global human family. True to this vision, I am confident that the Soka Gakkai will eventually become a model gathering of world citizens—global citizens—transcending all differences of nationality, ethnicity and race.

"For this is what the philosophy of Buddhism teaches us. I believe that Soka Gakkai members are global citizens in the truest sense. The most important qualities for a global citizen are to possess a philosophy that will lead people to happiness, to put that philosophy into practice and to win respect as a human being while never succumbing to self-interest.

"The Soka Gakkai members uphold the teachings of Buddhism, pray and take action each day for world peace and the happiness of their friends while struggling to achieve their personal human revolution. In this respect, they are supremely qualified as global

citizens—qualified in a more fundamental way than simply being able to speak a foreign language.

"As our members' sincere wish for others' happiness weaves a tapestry of friendship that spreads throughout the world, it will definitely become a grass-roots force for bringing humanity together."

Seen from the hill of Montmartre, Paris was aglow in the golden light of sunset.

Shin'ichi continued to talk as they walked slowly: "I am reminded of how Victor Hugo continued to call for European unification for the sake of peace and the happiness of the people. He predicted that in the 'United States of Europe' he envisioned, national borders, customs barriers, military conflict and armaments, poverty, ignorance and misery would all disappear. No doubt, the unification of Europe is still far off, but the establishment of our Europe General Chapter is a pioneering step in that process. It is a very important event."

The wind was cold, but Shin'ichi's heart was ablaze with a powerful resolve for the future.



ユゴーとヴィクトル・ユゴー文学記念館

Victor Hugo's House of Literature, an SGI facility, located in Bièvres, France.

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1963.

Encouraging Words

I want to thank Mr. Evers for his encouraging words (Sept. 10 *World Tribune*), not only contained in his article but from the time I was married and living in North Carolina. I remember Mike as a warmhearted and caring individual who set a true example of a family man for kosen-rufu. Unfortunately my own marriage dissolved, mainly because I was a battered wife, but also because it was my own human revolution to open my eyes to the truth of the situation I was in, so I could win over my "victim" karma.

Thanks to Mike Evers, Walter Woodall, and many others in that area. I always knew deep inside that I could do better, so if I do remarry, it will be to someone who is man enough to respect women.

—LYNETTE BRAWER,
Arlington, Va.

About the Environment

The Oct. 1 *World Tribune* article by Frank Hotchkiss about the environment demands a response. Frank has encouraged us to keep to the facts, and we wholeheartedly agree that emotionalism and sensationalism hinder progress and understanding. Unfortunately, many of the facts presented in the article are misleading, in particular those about acid rain, global warming, biodiversity loss, forest extent and lack of consensus among climatologists. Nor do we agree with the premise that environmentalists are fundamentally pessimistic....

In discussing the phenomenon of "acid rain," Frank correctly notes that the Earth's oceans emit five times more sulfur dioxide than all of human industry. However, the ocean is huge, so the concentration of sulfur dioxide coming from the oceans is extremely dilute, even though the total emissions is very large. Industrial centers like America's heartland and Europe, on the other hand, emit highly concentrated sulfur dioxide, which turns to sulfuric acid and causes acid rain. Even though we humans produce less sulfur dioxide than the oceans, we produce lots of it in highly concentrated areas, and that is the real problem (Schlesinger, Biogeochemistry, Chapter 13, <http://odin.dep.no/html/NOFovalt/depter/md/publ/acid/AcidRaInE.html>)....

Frank suggests that scientists have not come to a consensus on the effects of...extra CO₂ in the atmosphere. While there may not be 100 percent agreement, there is a consensus. "In November 1995, 2,500 leading climate scientists announced that the planet

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

is warming because all the emissions from coal and oil burning are trapping more of the sun's heat than is normal for our climate. Even if that warming is not yet obvious, they warned, it is already generating bizarre and extreme changes in the weather" (The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Summary for Policymakers: Scientific Technical Analysis of Impacts, Adaptions and mitigation of climate change, November 1995).

That humans cause global warming is not uncertain, the uncertainty lies in estimating how much, and if it's enough to significantly affect our lives and the lives of our great grandchildren. The question becomes not "will it happen or not for sure" but "how much risk is enough for us to take action?" The key to wise action is more accurately defining that risk through scientific investigation. As Linus Pauling and Elie Wiesel claimed, "We are worried (about) the emergence of an irrational ideology opposed to scientific and industrial progress." It is exactly that scientific progress that we advocate as necessary for defining what our Earth is capable of sustaining.

Environmentalism has often been cast in opposition to industry.... In a recent book *Natural Capitalism* (www.rmi.org), Paul Hawkin, Amory Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins argue that environmentalism and industry go hand in hand. Through the reduction of waste, both companies and the environment can gain.... Industry and environment can work together, and must if we are to maintain a high quality of life. Such a transformation will not occur on its own, and we must remain vigilant in the pursuit of a harmonious relationship with nature.

Most importantly, environmental concerns need not lead to resigned pessimism. They are instead challenges that encourage all human beings to think of ourselves as part of a global community. Recently, there have been numerous successes in solving environmental problems on the local and global scales that prove our abilities to solve problems collectively. Air quality, including emissions of sulfur, has improved in many U.S. cities, and the use of dangerous pesticides has been curtailed. Globally, international agreements to phase out the use of ozone destroying chemicals have shown that the world has the capacity to think of itself as an intercon-

nected whole—a precursor to world peace.

The recent global warming summit at Kyoto again proves our capacity to think and work together as an integrated whole. Identifying and working to solve environmental problems should not be a cause for retreat but re-joyce for the opportunity to unify the world under a common spirit of environmental awareness and responsibility.

—TRENT BIGGS, Ph.D. candidate, Bren School of Environmental Science and Management, University of California, Santa Barbara; tbiggs@bren.ucsb.edu
—PETE PETERSON, Research Associate, Institute for Computational Earth System Science, University of California, Santa Barbara; pete@icess.ucsb.edu

I applaud and congratulate the *World Tribune* for publishing Mr. Frank R. Hotchkiss' article, "Some Good News About the Environment," in the Oct. 1 issue. To my knowledge this is the first truly objective piece about the environment ever published by the *World Tribune*. Long a supporter of the Heidelberg Appeal and an uncredentialed signatory, I appeal to each member to learn more about it.

—STAN KLEMANOWICZ
Torrance, Calif.
stanklem@earthlink.net

I trust that I will be only one among many readers who write in to point out the inaccuracies and distortions in Frank Hotchkiss' Perspective article on what he considers "good news" about the environment. Of course the greenhouse effect is "normal," but with natural systems, even a change of a small percent can have farreaching and disastrous consequences. If our body temperature raises by less than 10 percent, for example, which means to about 107 degrees, you'd be dead pretty quickly. Earth's temperature needs to increase by only 1 or 2 degrees for sea levels to rise and inundate coasts and islands.

And Mr. Hotchkiss points out that "forest growth exceeds forest harvesting, and has since the 1940s." But much of the virgin forest was felled in this country well before the '40s, and the "forest growth" that is so abundant is often made up of soft-wood, fast-growth trees which are sown and harvested commercially. This type of "forest" does not sustain the plants and animals that would

be found in natural, native forests. And I could go on.

But let me quote from Dr. Kawada's article on the Earth Charter in September's *Living Buddhism*: "To practice the bodhisattva way, first we must appreciate that our very existence is sustained by the interdependent world of nature. Then, with deep gratitude, we must strive to control our desires and adjust our lifestyles.... We must mobilize all our resources to restore the Earth's ecosystem where it has been destroyed or damaged by human acts."

—NANCY MERRITT,
(RMERRITT@MAIL.SMRN.COM) Burlingame, Calif.

Thanks to Chicago Youth

Earlier this year my wife and I were visiting Chicago, where we met and practiced 15 years ago, from our present home in Minnesota. I hadn't seen the Chicago Culture Center since the opening ceremony, and Susan had never seen it. So, on a Saturday afternoon we drove downtown and wandered in the front door like a couple of tourists.

There were several youth practicing swing dancing. One of them approached us and we explained that we were members from out of town. I remember at the opening ceremony that it was stressed for us members from out of town, the culture center was our home away from home. I would now find out if that was true.

Gyasi Ayo Kress introduced himself and took us to the desk to sign in. He then offered to give us a tour.... His attitude was one of pride and caring.... At the end of the tour, he explained about the (Chicago) culture festival and we got him to explain his role in it. It sounded exciting then and I was especially excited to read his experience in the *World Tribune*. At the end of our tour, we joined a group chanting and did evening gongyo with them....

Congratulations to the Chicago youth! Thank you for your hard work and your experiences. They have reached farther than you could have imagined.

—MEL TURCANIK,
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Kasson, Minn.

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The *World Tribune* welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

Pioneering Peace in Trinidad & Tobago

Photos by TROY FLETCHER



(Above) Enjoying a special luncheon after the general meeting hosted by the Emerald Isles Area. (Center) Sheila Robertson (left) and Pamela Banfield receive the Peace Medal of SGI Germany for their pioneering efforts. (Far right) Chorus performs at the meeting.



The Emerald Isles Area hosted a meeting Oct. 24 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, with Soka Gakkai Vice President Kenji Yoshigo and approximately 200 members and guests. The meeting opened with a video showing of "Daisaku



Soka Gakkai Vice President Kenji Yoshigo

Ikeda Up Close," which chronicles the life of SGI President Ikeda. A cultural program featuring songs, dances, poems and steel-pan performances showcased Trinidad and Tobago's rich, diverse culture.

After a former temple member who had returned to the SGI shared her experience, Vice President Yoshigo spoke about the temple issue. Quoting "The Three Kinds of Treasure," "The real meaning of Shakyamuni

Buddha's appearance in this world lay in his behavior as a human being" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [rev. ed], p. 240), he clarified that the benefit of the practice of the Daishonin's Buddhism appears in the positive changes one displays in his or her behavior.

Mr. Yoshigo noted that the Daishonin recognized that we all have problems, but by chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and fusing our lives with the Go-

honzon, we can tap the courage and wisdom to challenge these. Then, we can make every possible effort to win in our daily lives. Only by showing actual proof of faith in our daily lives, he said, can we deepen our confidence in this Buddhism and our innate Buddhahood.

In this regard, Mr. Yoshigo urged the members to first set specific goals, so that they can have clarity when offering prayers to the Gohonzon. He

asked everyone to renew their determination for their own and others' happiness, thus calling President Ikeda to visit Trinidad and Tobago in the near future.

The SGI president, in appreciation for the members' dedicated efforts over many years to share the Daishonin's Buddhism in the Caribbean, sponsored a luncheon for the members held after the general meeting.

—TED MORINO and MICHAEL HENRY

Friendships Rekindled After 30 Years

More than 140 former Fife and Drum Corps members from the 1960s and early 1970s gathered with SGI Vice Women's Leader Yumiko Hachiya at a festive reunion Oct. 30 at the Los Angeles Friendship Center. Participants came from all around California, Illinois, Indiana, Nevada and Washington, D.C., and enjoyed a buffet luncheon in the main hall of the Friendship Center and musical performances by several women. Throughout the afternoon everyone had time to catch up and share their experiences.



Women travel from five states to attend the Los Angeles Fife and Drum Corps reunion held at the Los Angeles Friendship Center.

Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI and JEAN PRITCHARD



SGI Vice Women's Leader Yumiko Hachiya reminisces about her activities in the United States three decades ago.



(L-r) Peigi McDaniel, Pam McBride and Doris McCloskey share fond memories.



(L-r) Sandy Knapp, Susie Sempers and Landis Susie Kearnan reunite.

Dear SGI-USA
Members,

Thank you for all your efforts so far this year. We are now preparing for the year 2000, which the SGI has named "Raising the Curtain on the 21st Century — The Year of Youth." With our Nov. 18 commemorative meetings nearing completion, we will soon launch into the first quarterly focus for the new year: propagation.

I recently spoke to a woman who enthusiastically described her joy at having a friend — for whom she had been chanting for years — begin to chant herself. I was moved. Why does this exuberance well forth from our lives when we speak about our Buddhist practice, our SGI organization or our quest for peace and the people's happiness that we've inherited from Nichiren Daishonin?

When we tell even one person about the Lotus Sutra, we become an envoy of the Buddha. As the "Teacher of the Law" chapter of the Lotus Sutra says: "If one of these good men or good women in the time after I have passed into extinction is able to secretly expound the Lotus Sutra to one person, even one phrase of it, then you should know that he or she is the envoy of the Thus Come One. He has been dispatched by the Thus Come One and carries out the Thus Come One's work" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 162).


An "envoy of the Buddha," is empowered as the Buddha and can take action as a Buddha. When we take action as Buddhas we feel joy.

As we teach others about Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, the highest condition of life — Buddhahood — becomes manifest in our lives. Joy is but one of the results. Whether or not the person we're talking to is motivated to practice by anything we have said, all efforts to propagate have this same result — fortune develops within one's life and manifests in our own life-condition.

Our joy can be further magnified when a person we have been encouraging actually begins to chant and we can clearly see the changes in their lives.

"We exert ourselves to spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and carry out other activities so that we can accumulate good fortune and become happy," President Ikeda reminded us in February 1990. "We do all this for our own sake, not for the sake of the organization and most certainly not for the sake of our leaders" (*Faith into Action*, p. 157).

I sincerely hope that everyone can experience the great joy and benefit that accompanies telling others about our Buddhist practice. By beginning the new year with a focus on propagation, we hope to produce a momentum of joy and benefit throughout the year.



Fred M. Zaitsev, SGI-USA General Director



For December, January, February

Making Breakthroughs in Life

During her recent visit to the United States, SGI Vice Women's Leader Yumiko Hachiya gave encouragement to individuals at their homes and in small group discussions. At meetings, she interspersed her speeches with stories from her 49 years of practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.



SGI Vice Women's Leader
Yumiko Hachiya

When I finished high school, I started looking for work. Every day, I went to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters in Shinanomachi, Tokyo, to chant daimoku. My prayer was to get a job that would allow me to leave early on weekdays, with weekends off, so that I could attend activities and practice Buddhism freely; in addition, I wanted to make lots of money.

One day at the Headquarters, I met Daisaku Ikeda, who was then the leader of the youth. He told me that Buddhism is win or lose. He said it is up to my faith and practice whether I would achieve my dreams. Eventually, I was hired at a bank. It turned out that I had to work every night, as well as on Saturdays and Sundays, and I was paid less than average. I really worried, but I made the determination that I would endure every hardship.

There was a great propagation campaign in 1957-58. All reports I received as a leader in the young women's division flowed into the bank to the branch manager's phone; there were so many calls, he asked me if I were running a business somewhere else!

To tell the truth, I really wanted to work somewhere else. But Mr. Ikeda said, "A person who cannot fully devote herself to the workplace cannot make progress." So, I worked hard at the bank for five years, and those years became the foundation of my practice.

On April 1, 1960, shortly be-

fore his inauguration, Mr. Ikeda told me: "You have worked hard at the bank for five years. Now, please come to work for the Soka Gakkai." I was thrilled. It was a dream come true.

On Oct. 2, 1960, President Ikeda departed for Hawaii and San Francisco on his first trip overseas. I was able to help him prepare his suitcase. I packed ramen, miso, salt, rice, seaweed and sugar — I packed as if he were going to a country where there was no food. In photographs in magazines, it seemed that everybody wore a hat, so I got him a hat. When President Ikeda returned to Japan after the trip, he said, "Nobody wears a hat over there." But that's how you see pictures of President Ikeda as he went around the world in those early days — wearing that hat.

In "Repaying Debts of Gratitude," the Daishonin declares, "Nam-myoho-enge-kyo will spread for ten thousand years and more, for all eternity, for it has the beneficial power to open the blind eyes of every living being" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, p. 272). When Nikken stopped the conferral of Gohonzon to members of the SGI in 1991, he put a stop on this prophecy. But the Gohonzon is for everyone in the world.

I have yet to find someone introduced to this practice by a priest. Hearing the news that the SGI members were ex-

communicated, President Ikeda was saddened. He said that whatever Gohonzon we have, let's share it and treasure it.

In 1992, Mr. Sendo Narita, one of the priests who left Nichiren Shoshu, said: "We have a Gohonzon that has been handed down from generation to generation that was inscribed by Nichikan Shonin, the 26th high priest and the restorer of the Daishonin's Buddhism. I want the Soka Gakkai to use it to distribute Gohonzon to people." Incidentally, right after the war, it was a Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon that was giving to new members.

I received such a Gohonzon when I joined. But in 1993, Nikken went awry, saying that SGI is giving out fake Gohonzon.

Last January through March, I made a trip to the United States, and among the places I visited, I went to Seattle and Chicago. I met with Mr. Shoga Nishimura, a Nichiren Shoshu priest in Chicago. I think he was trying to persuade me. He repeatedly told me that the Soka Gakkai is conferring fake Gohonzon. I asked him who first told him about the practice of the Daishonin's Buddhism. "Soka Gakkai members," he said. I replied, "Had the Soka Gakkai not been a reality, you would not be here as a priest." Then I said, "Let's study the Goshu." He said, "Sorry, I didn't bring my Goshu today." It was unbelievable that he would not bring the Goshu to such an important meeting. So I offered him mine to read. He said, "That's a fake Goshu, I can't use it."

Before the Soka Gakkai published the Goshu under the guidance of the second president, Josei Toda, on April 28, 1952, the priests had been using the Goshu compiled by the Minobu sect. Last year, they published their own Goshu, but it is based on the

PLEASE SEE BREAKTHROUGHS, B

'The Best Thing That's Happened to Our Lives'

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Gabriella Larios with her two sons, Nick, 13 (left), and Eddy, 12.

EXPERIENCE:

GABRIELLA LARIOS,
Inglewood, Calif.

Gabriella: I am originally from Nicaragua and I came to the United States in 1985. Two months ago, I met a beautiful lady, Momoyo Martin, at West Los Angeles

College in my English class. We had an assignment to discuss something in front of the class, and Momoyo brought the pamphlet "The Winning Life" and talked about her religion. She gave me the pamphlet to read and I started to feel that this was what I had been looking for all my life. I felt warm inside. It seemed

too good to be true, so I asked Momoyo to teach me about Buddhism.

I took the pamphlet home for my kids to read. I told them how beautiful it was and how I felt my life going in a new direction.

I didn't believe in anything; I was tired of religion. My life felt empty and I wasn't sure how to change it or solve the problems in my family. The kids were always fighting with each other and with my husband and me.

Nick: At first I thought the pamphlet was boring, but later on I into got it.

Eddy: Yeah, it was interesting.

Gabriella: One day Momoyo briefly told me to chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, but she couldn't explain much more because she was in a hurry. So I started chanting like crazy with my kids whenever we could. A couple days later, I felt peace in my home like never before. I was always fearful for some reason, but I started to feel light and I was no longer afraid of anything. My day feels different when I chant; it's not heavy.

Also since we've been chanting, my son Eddy, who has asthma, doesn't have to go to the hospital and he hasn't had to use his inhaler much.

Nick: We chant mostly together. Usually I chant for what I want—like for this game I

wanted. Then I started chanting to stop fighting with Eddy and then to cool my temper.

Eddy: I chanted for my mom to change. She used to scream a lot but now she's doing much better.

Gabriella: I'm really chanting for my family's happiness. I grew up with a philosophy that was very wrong for me. I didn't know the purpose of life. I didn't know what to teach the kids. Now I teach them about cause and effect, and help them understand why things are happening. I want to give my kids the right material to read so they can decide if they want to practice.

Nick: At first my mom made us chant, but later on when we came to activities it became fun. I thought chanting would be boring, but I chanted 45 minutes and I wasn't bored one minute—especially learning gongyo! I am a part of Z-Wave [an activity group in Los Angeles for youth ages 9–12].

Eddy: I like learning about Nichiren Daishonin and the history of Buddhism. We are also learning to cook Japanese food from Philip in Z-Wave.

Nick: Yeah, he said we need to learn the basics before we can learn to cook like him.

Gabriella: I really feel this practice is going to help my kids. At one point, I wanted to leave Los Angeles because I didn't want my kids to be influenced by so

many [negative] things. But I'm not afraid anymore because they know the truth.

Eddy: I shared with my teacher that I was Buddhist, and she asked me so many questions, so I gave her "The Winning Life." She thought it was very interesting.

Gabriella: The teachers are noticing a big improvement in my son Eddy.

Nick: This counselor at school was going to hold Eddy back in the seventh grade because of his poor grades. She told my mother that if he doesn't improve within a few weeks he won't graduate. We started chanting and he started doing his homework more often and reading a little bit more each day and some of his grades improved. Then they decided not to hold him back.

Eddy: I was happy and I think chanting really helped.

Gabriella: I'm pushing them to study more. I tell the kids chanting is not going to give you As. Chanting is going help you become happy and more interested in school. Education is so important.

I really want to thank my friends Momoyo and Lillian for all their support. Without their support, I think I would be depressed. But I'm not—I feel so happy. I feel this Buddhism is the best thing that has happened to my life, and I'm not going to let it go. **WT**

FROM BREAKTHROUGHS, A

work of the Soka Gakkai. It was a hurried job, and I understand there are too many errors in it.

I told Mr. Nishimura that Nikko Shonin's "Twenty-six Admonitions" states, "Do not follow even the high priest if he goes against the Buddha's Law and propounds his own view" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1618). His answer was that Nikko Shonin's writings were not meant for members, they were meant for priests. I asked him to show me where in the *Gosho* that that was written and to please not tell lies.

When the meeting came to a conclusion, Mr. Nishimura refused to chant to the Gohon-

zon that was enshrined where we met. He said that he couldn't chant with someone who is on the wrong path and who does not respect the high priest. I felt it was a disgrace that he refused to sit in front of the Gohonzon transcribed by Nittatsu Shonin, Nikken's predecessor. Then, one of the American members spoke up, "You are discriminating," he said. "You think priests are above lay people." At this, Mr. Nishimura went pale.

I saw the reality of the situation in my encounter with Mr. Nishimura—that the priests were trying to deceive the precious American members, who are so kind-hearted and unaware of their true nature. Please go back to your

districts and encourage even one person to understand the nature of this conflict. When you make such an attempt, you strengthen your own life. And the protective forces in the universe that we call Buddhist gods come to your aid.

In "Upholding Faith in the Gohonzon," the Daishonin states: "When one embraces this mandala, all Buddhas and Buddhist gods will gather around him, accompanying him like a shadow, and protect him day and night, as warriors guard their ruler, as parents love their children, as fish rely on water, as trees and plants crave rain, or as birds depend on trees. You should trust in it with all your heart" (MW-5, 177). Make that determination

and then pray to Gohonzon.

In a "Letter to Sairenbo," the Daishonin states that when a bamboo shoot grows, it develops a growth ring. But to grow still more, the bamboo shoot must break through its own growth ring. It is the same with us. We have many problems and face various challenges as we attempt to make breakthroughs in our lives. What happens as we continue to break through? We develop a life-condition that is truly indestructible. President Ikeda once said that obstacles don't say, "Knock, knock, I'm here." They sneak in at our weakest spot.

In "Letter to Misawa," the Daishonin says, "Although the people who study Buddhism

outnumber the dust particles of the earth, those who actually become Buddhas are fewer than the number of dust particles one can place on his fingernail" (MW-3, 251). Why? He goes on to explain that obstacles and benefit exist side by side in your life. The three obstacles and four devils arise. He writes, "Even if you should manage to overcome the first six, if you are defeated by the seventh, you will not be able to become a Buddha" (MW-3, 252). The seventh is the hardest of all to detect; it is called the devil of the sixth heaven, and it enters the lives of authorities to harass you.

You may ask yourself: "What's wrong? I'm chanting and I'm dedicating myself to

Understanding What It Means To Practice

EXPERIENCE:

SANDRA L. WINKLER,
Baltimore, Md.

The Daishonin repeatedly urges his followers to exert themselves harder, to redouble their efforts. He says in "A Ship to Cross the Sea of Suffering," "You should therefore strive in faith more than ever to receive the blessings of the Lotus Sutra" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 9). Benefit is something we have to win for ourselves. No one can give it to us.

The day dawned sunny and bright. I was filled with excitement as I completed gongyo and began packing for my trip to Dover, Del., to attend a summer conference.

I was introduced to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in 1984, and had known the district leader of Dover, Del., since she began her practice. Over the years, we had grown to really like each other, having many long-distance, late night telephone conversations. Usually these conversations were about our love lives—or lack thereof.

Because I really liked this lady, I went to Dover only to support this major effort her district was undertaking. Little



Sandra Winkler (right) with her daughter, Nicole A. Jones (middle), and sister Evelyn Douglas, whom she introduced to the Daishonin's Buddhism.

did I know how my attitude toward my Buddhist practice would change! Though I have always had a very strong practice—chanting many hours of daimoku, introducing many people to Buddhism and subscribing to and reading all the publications, still I only looked for material benefits—most significantly, a boyfriend and a big promotion on my job.

practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

For many years, this had been my dream because Evelyn had become very depressed over a divorce that had occurred many years before. Since it was taking my sister so long to overcome the pain of the divorce, I knew practicing this Buddhism would be the answer to her happiness. For that

Months before the conference, my sister, Evelyn—who in the '70s had been salutatorian of her high school graduating class and had graduated from a major university—

reason, I was determined to share it with her, teach her gongyo, take her to activities and encourage her to subscribe to the publications.

It has only been a few months since my sister began her practice, but she does gongyo incredibly well. This has come about because, in addition to attending numerous weekly activities, my sister and I recite slow gongyo twice a week.

Due to working so diligently and sincerely with my sister and another person I had introduced to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, my life-condition was high and my spirits soaring. So, going to the conference started out being just a "fun" thing to do.

There were many lectures held at the conference over the weekend: The Spirit of Volunteerism, Improving Our Relationships and Propagating Buddhism Through Shakubuku. Somehow, as I listened, I knew the path that I had been traveling in terms of my practice was the correct path.

As one lecturer spoke of volunteerism, I thought about the community activities with which I had become involved. The relationship lecture spoke about looking at our own be-

havior and having a relationship with ourselves. Yes, I had begun doing that. And, finally, when the lecturer talked about propagation, I thought of the many discussion meetings our district had had, and the guests I always managed to bring. In addition to the guests, I thought of my sister, who was practicing because I did not give up on her.

I thought: "Yes, this is it! This practice is not about getting a boyfriend, though I would like to have one. It is not about getting a big promotion at work, though I would like that also. This practice is about doing what you can do to lead people to this wonderful practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and ultimately to their happiness."

Because of my sincere efforts over the years, there are currently two more people in my family practicing—my daughter for 10 years and my sister for six months.

Since that wonderful conference my friend's district sponsored, along with her husband—(yes, over the years, she overcame her inability to find the perfect mate)—I have vowed to continue my sincere practice, and to lead many, many people to the Gohonzon. **WT**

the Gohonzon. Why is this happening to me?" You may even find such obstacles appearing within the organization to create conflict between you and another person, so that the two of you cannot get along. This devilish function causes you to harbor ill feelings and doubt. That's why President Ikeda always says let's be friends, let's be kind to one another, let's work in unity.

The devil of the sixth heaven will inhabit the most respected person to prevent people from attaining Buddhahood. However, when you really chant, your life force becomes strong enough to counter the enemies of the Buddha.

You all know the story of Devadatta, the cousin of Shakyamuni Buddha, who tried all sorts of things to get Shakyamuni killed. He represents the condition of jealousy. People like him cannot make room for anyone they think is more respectable than they are. And so we see High Priest Nikken destroying everything built by his predecessor, Nittatsu. His

life has become the entity of the devil of the sixth heaven.

In Japan, I'm in charge of two wards—Adachi Ward has 500 districts, and Shibuya Ward has 110 districts. Our chapter and area leaders go into the districts in order to better serve the members. I try to ensure that the meetings are joyful, because then our members will want to attend. Also, meetings should reflect a sense of determination. At the meetings, it's important to exhibit hearts of compassion in order to touch the lives of people who are suffering. President Ikeda always tells me that if I don't move for the sake of the members, I'll get old.

Next year is the 70th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai, the 40th anniversary of President Ikeda's leadership, and the 100th anniversary of President Toda's birth. So, let's celebrate the best way we know how. Let's challenge ourselves and work toward resolving even one or two situations in our lives before New Year's. **WT**

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THE SPIRIT OF PROPAGATION

Words to the Wise



Our desire is to share this blessing equally with all people, and we, together with them, will attain Buddhahood.

—“The Dragon Gate,” *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol 1, p. 251

FROM SGI PRESIDENT DAISAKU IKEDA:

The following excerpts of SGI President Ikeda’s guidance on propagation were taken from Faith Into Action (now available in SGI-USA bookstores and by mail order).

✽

The dual nature of practice, for ourselves and for others, will never change. Practice for ourselves constitutes chanting daimoku and doing gongyo with faith in the Gohonzon, while practice for others constitutes teaching others about the Mystic Law.

✽

How can one propagate the Daishonin’s Buddhism without knowing about other teachings in the world? When based on the Mystic Law, all laws of the world and society begin to function in their most valuable way. All endeavors in human society — in the fields of politics, economics, learning and so on — become revitalized. They come to display their full potential and attain new life. The lifeblood of Buddhism pulses within society. Cut off from secular affairs, Buddhism cannot reveal its full validity.

✽

People may sincerely think they are practicing Buddhism, but if they do not tell others about Buddhism, neglect to take action for kosen-rufu and give no encouragement to fellow members, then they cannot be said to be correctly practicing the Daishonin’s Buddhism. Attending discussion meetings, giving individual guidance and sharing thoughts and opinions with our

friends — these and other activities we of the SGI undertake are in direct accordance with the Daishonin’s teachings. And the Daishonin would surely applaud our efforts.

✽

Nichiren Daishonin said to one of his lay followers: “I entrust you with the propagation of Buddhism in your province. Because the seeds of Buddhahood sprout in response to the proper influence, one expounds the teaching of the one vehicle” (MW-5, 151). Forming connections with other human beings is important. For each of us, everything starts with developing connections with others, forging bonds of friendship and winning their trust.

✽

When something needs saying, it is our duty to speak out. When something is right, we should say so; and when something is wrong or mistaken, we should likewise point that out. Cheating, lies or scheming should be denounced with alacrity. It is precisely because we have done this that the Soka Gakkai and SGI have developed to the extent that they have. To say what must be said — that is the spirit of propagation and the essence of the Soka Gakkai and SGI.

✽

There is no need whatsoever to be impatient in propagating Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. Rather, it is preferable that strict standards be applied when granting admission to the organization, to the extent that those eager to

join will find that their wish is not easily granted. One must absolutely never have an easygoing or careless attitude when it comes to allowing people to receive the Gohonzon.

✽

It is our hearts that changes others’ hearts. Friendship changes people. Travelers who pull their capes over their shoulders and brace themselves determinedly against the cold wind naturally relax and change their outlook and actions when warmed by the sun.

✽

Propagation is the action of the Buddha’s envoys. We should treasure and most highly respect those who carry out this noble, benevolent practice.

✽

“You’ve done well. You were able to plant the seed of Buddhahood in your friend’s heart. That’s a splendid thing.” So saying, you should praise and encourage one another, sharing one another’s joy as brothers and sisters. Touched by such a family-like atmosphere, more and more people will begin to take faith in true Buddhism. Love and peace are the lifeblood of a true home.

✽

We exert ourselves to spread Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism and carry out other activities so that we can accumulate good fortune and become happy. We do all this for our own sake, not for the sake of the organization and most certainly nor for the sake of our leaders.

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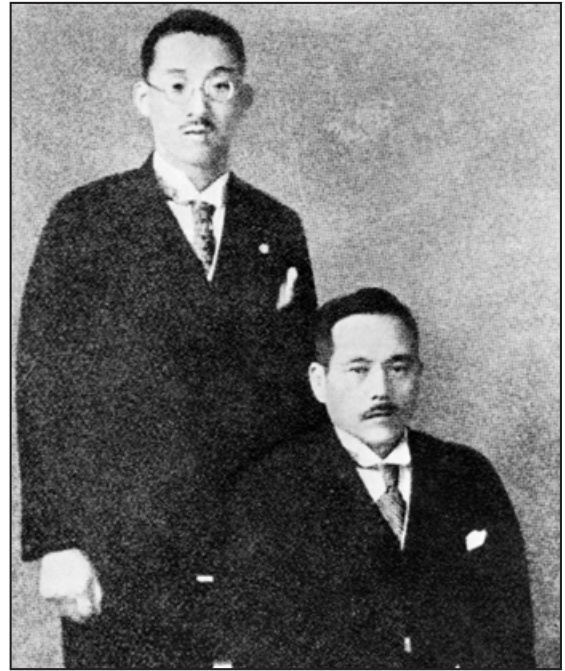
GOSHO DE NICHIREN DAISHONIN

LA OFRENDA DE UN HITOE (UN QUIMONO SIN FORRAR)¹

El cuarto volumen del Sutra del Loto señala: "El odio y los celos hacia este sutra abundan aun cuando El Que Así Llega se encuentra en el mundo".² El quinto volumen explica que el Sutra del Loto "será objeto de gran hostilidad y [que] resultará muy difícil creer en él."³

Tal vez sea que el gran maestro T'ien-t'ai nunca leyó estos fragmentos con su propia vida. Eso se debe a que el Sutra del Loto era una enseñanza universalmente aceptada y creída por las personas de su época. Tampoco es probable que el gran maestro Dengyo haya sido capaz de vivir estas palabras, ya que las condiciones del momento en que él vivió no coinciden con las que describe el fragmento "[ya que el odio y los celos hacia este sutra abundan aun cuando El Que Así Llega se encuentra en el mundo,] ¿cuánto peor será una vez que él haya muerto?"⁴

Si yo, Nichiren, no hubiera aparecido en el país del Japón, estas palabras de oro del Buda habrían sido en vano. El testimonio del Buda Muchos Tesoros (Taho) no habría servido de nada. Y las palabras de todos los budas de las diez direcciones habrían sido puras mentiras. En los dos mil doscientos veintitantos años transcurridos desde que falleció el Buda, nunca antes en la India, la China o el Japón hubo alguien a quien se le pudiesen aplicar las palabras del sutra "será objeto de gran hostilidad, y resultará muy difícil creer en él". Si no hubiera aparecido yo, Nichiren, las palabras del Buda hoy serían letra marchita.⁵



El espíritu de no dejar que se marchiten las palabras del Buda Original, Nichiren Daishonin, es la postura de la Soka Gakkai. Así vivieron Tsunesaburo Makiguchi y Josei Toda

Disertación del presidente Ikeda: Aprendamos del Gosho, La eterna enseñanza de Nichiren Daishonin

**"La ofrenda de un hitoe (un quimono sin forrar)"
segunda parte.**

El Daishonin demostró la verdad del Sutra del Loto

"El Budismo existe porque yo existo." He aquí la inmensa convicción del Daishonin. En cierto sentido, las palabras del Buda demostraron ser ciertas precisamente porque el Daishonin sobrellevó sin reservas ni especulaciones los peores hostigamientos.

Para demostrar la proposición "el Budismo es verdadero", el Daishonin voluntariamente provocó la aparición de las funciones negativas y las venció. Sin semejante contienda, hasta la escritura más prominente del mundo habría pasado a la historia, en última instancia, como un simple texto. Hasta el más profundo de las sutras hoy sería mera literatura. Pero sus palabras sólo se revelaron como auténtico Budismo, como una religión genuina, cuando alguien las sometió a prueba con su propia vida.

Este año, una vez más, hemos conmemorado el 2 de abril [aniversario del fallecimiento de Josei Toda, segundo presidente de la Soka Gakkai]. Mi maestro, a quien recordaré por toda la eternidad, dedicó su vida entera a demostrar la veracidad de cada palabra del Daishonin. A lo largo

de su existencia, demostró en la realidad el ideal del Kosen-rufu que, durante setecientos años, había sido sólo un postulado.

El Daishonin afirma: "Si no hubiera aparecido yo, Nichiren, las palabras del Buda hoy serían letra marchita". Este espíritu de no dejar que se marchiten las palabras del Buda Original, Nichiren Daishonin, es la postura fundamental de la Soka Gakkai. Así vivieron nuestros dos primeros presidentes, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi y Josei Toda. Y este juramento es la actitud cabal de un discípulo.

El señor Makiguchi deploraba profundamente el deterioro que había entre el clero. Los sacerdotes tenían una única preocupación: resguardar sus propios intereses, aun si para ello debían inclinarse ante las autoridades militares y embarrarse hasta el cuello en actos contra la Ley. "¿No creen que éste es el momento de amonestar al gobierno?", proclamó "¿A qué le tienen miedo?". Y, con ese mismo arrojo, se erigió en mártir de la enseñanza del Daishonin.

En una oportunidad, al recordar a su amado maestro, el señor toda dijo:

La última vez que vi al presidente Makiguchi con vida fue en 1943, en el segundo piso del Departamento Metropolitano de Policía, Iban a llevarlo a la cárcel de Sugamo, en Tokio, adonde yo mismo iría a parar poco tiempo después. Le dije al oficial que quería despedirme de mi maestro, y avancé

hasta donde él se encontraba.

Cuando llegué a su lado, lo miré a los ojos y me puse a llorar. No me salían las palabras de la boca. Lo último que atiné a decirle fue: "Por favor, cuidese".

Cuando el maestro Makiguchi falleció, yo ni siquiera me enteré. Jámás olvidaré el día. Un 8 de enero de 1945, en que fui llamado a presentarme frente al juez interviniente por primera vez en todo ese tiempo, y lo escuché decir, al entrar en el recinto: "Makiguchi murió". Me quedé allí, estupefacto, sin siquiera poder derramar una lágrima. Sólo cuando volví a mi celda, me entregué sin pudores al llanto.

Nunca había conocido un dolor tan tremendo como el que me embargó en esos instantes. Allí, en ese preciso momento, decidí: "¡Le demostraré al mundo, le demostraré sin el menor asomo de duda, la total rectitud del hombre que fue mi mentor! Si tuviese que adoptar un seudónimo, el mío sería Conde de Montecristo [el héroe, injustamente encarcelado, de la novela escrita por Alejandro Dumas]. Con esta determinación, haré algo grandioso para retribuir todo lo que debo a mi maestro".

El presidente Makiguchi no ha recibido el reconocimiento que merece. Pero yo estoy resuelto a dedicar lo que me queda de mi vida a demostrar la rectitud de todos sus actos.⁶

Cada año, cuando llega el 2

de abril, mi corazón se embarga de sentimientos exactamente iguales hacia mi maestro, el presidente Toda.

Hoy, el nombre del señor Makiguchi se conoce en el mundo entero. Por ejemplo, en un barrio de San Pablo, Brasil, hay una autopista llamada Profesor Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. Y la ciudad brasileña de Curitiba está construyendo un parque que lleva su nombre, además de una avenida denominada Josei Toda.

¡Cuán felices se sentirá el señor Toda de saber que su maestro es objeto de tantos honores! Casi creo ver su rostro sonriendo a través del diáfano cielo vernal.

En tales circunstancias, mantengo mi vida a fuerza de comer nieve, como lo hizo Su Wu⁷ cuando fue encarcelado, y subsisto envuelto en cobertor de paja, como lo hizo Li Ling.⁸ Cuando los árboles de las montañas en que vivo quedan vacíos de frutos o de bayas, puedo pasar dos o tres días sin tomar bocado. Y cuando se me hizo jirones el manto de piel de venado que solía cubrirme, anduve tres o cuatro meses sin abrigo. Por alguna razón, usted se apiadó de una persona en tales condiciones y, aunque todavía no nos conocemos, me envió un manto para que pudiese vestirme. Es algo por lo cual le estoy infinitamente agradecido.⁹

El Daishonin llevaba más de

un año viviendo en las honduras del monte Minobu. El mismo describe las condiciones de su subsistencia. Su Wu y Li Ling eran generales de la China antigua que lucharon denodadamente en bien de su país; sin embargo, a partir de su captura a manos del enemigo, debieron llevar una vida durísima.

El Daishonin comía nieve, se cubría con un rústico manto hecho de paja y vivía en un cobertizo de mínimas dimensiones. En tales circunstancias, lideraba el movimiento por la amplia propagación de la Ley Mística. Además de la compañía de sus discípulos, sólo recibía la ocasional visita de aves y ciervos.

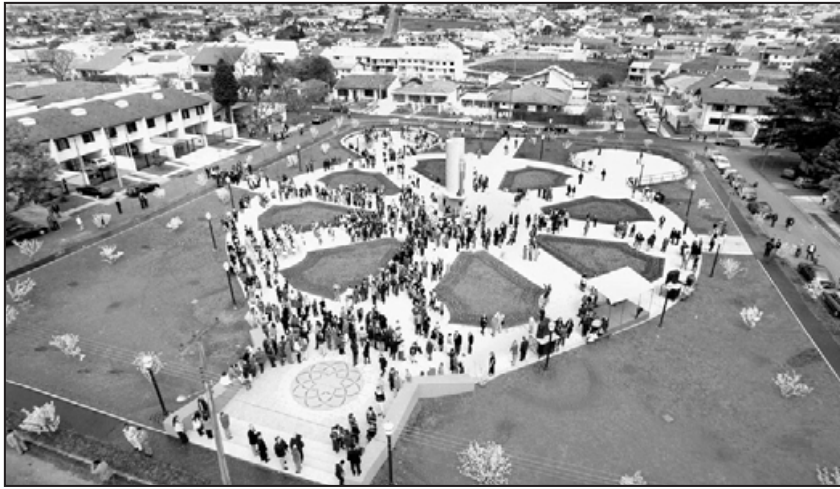
En invierno, el frío era extremo; tanto, que les impedía conciliar el sueño. No disponía de miso o de sal. Se dice que el Daishonin recolectaba nueces y perejil, que juntaba leña y cocinaba para sí mismo, y sus discípulos. También se sabe que, para cubrirse del frío, el Buda usaba la piel de un venado que había hallado muerto por causas naturales.

Merecía que se le acordase el tratamiento debido a un verdadero maestro nacional. Pero el Japón sólo le retribuía con persecuciones, de modo que el Daishonin pasaba necesidades elementales y carecía hasta de comida y de vestimenta.

Cuando el presidente Toda leía en el Gosho la vida del Daishonin durante esos años, solía derramar copiosas lágrimas y

Véase Gosho pág. II

Cortesía de Seikyo Press



Se revela estatua del primer presidente de la Soka Gakkai, Sr. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, en una ceremonia llevada a cabo el 25 de septiembre, en el parque de su mismo nombre en la ciudad de Curitiba, Brazil.

Gosho de la pág. I

murmuraba: "Cuánto sufrió Nichiren Daishonin...Pase lo que pase, si somos sus verdaderos discípulos, tenemos que perseverar. Tenemos que dar a conocer al mundo la inmensa misericordia del Daishonin".

Por otro lado, el Buda Original, aun en tales condiciones, siguió alentando y forjando a sus seguidores, siguió escribiendo Goshos para la posteridad e inscribiendo Gohonzon. Estaba decididamente consagrado a establecer la ruta del Kosen-rufu en el Último Día de la Ley. De veras, ¡su misericordia no conocía fronteras! ¡Qué afortunados somos de ser sus seguidores!

El Daishonin describe su vida cotidiana en los términos más francos. Si pasaba frío, decía que hacía; si pasaba hambre, lo expresaba con toda claridad. El Buda no es un ser sobrenatural; es humano de pies a cabeza. El presidente Toda solía utilizar la expresión "un gran mortal común". Y no le gustaba que se refirieran a él con aspavientos llamándolo "fundador". El Budismo no es una religión que produce "budas vivientes". Por el contrario, les permite a las personas comunes, así como son, manifestar la luz de un humanismo supremo.

Nichiren Daishonin, a pesar de experimentar adversidades extremas en su vida, brindaba a estos seguidores aliento sincero y cálido. Lo mismo hizo durante su estadía en Izu y en Sado. Aun en el exilio, le preocupaba más las odiseas ajenas que las propias.

En una oportunidad, cuando el Daishonin fue visitado por ciertos seguidores en la isla de Sado, se desarrolló una escena profundamente conmovedora. Ellos

habían hecho un larguísimo viaje para saber cómo está el Daishonin, pero éste, por el contrario, se sentía tan preocupado por los gastos del viaje de regreso de sus seguidores que llegó al extremo de solicitar dinero en préstamo para dárselo a estos creyentes. Aun enfrentado a las peores dificultades, el Daishonin poseía la magnanimidad y la amplitud mental de preocuparse por el bienestar de los demás. En su conducta, lo que se evidencia es una belleza y una fortaleza verdaderamente humanas.

Una sincera ofrenda confiere beneficios inmensurables.

Cuando me pongo esta túnica y recito el Sutra del Loto ante el Buda, aunque la prenda es sólo una, logra vestir a sesenta y nueve mil trescientos ochenta y cuatro budas. Esto se debe a que en el Sutra del Loto hay sesenta y nueve mil trescientos ochenta y cuatro caracteres y a que cada uno de ellos es un buda de oro.

Así pues, estos budas sin falta los visitarán a ambos, marido y mujer, por haberme obsequiado la túnica, y les brindarán protección, como cabe a dos seguidores.

En esta existencia, su sincera ofrenda constituye una oración por el logro de cada uno de sus deseos y, a la vez, un tesoro. Cuando ustedes fallezcan, dicha ofrenda será la Luna y el Sol; será un camino, un puente, un padre y una madre, un caballo o un buey, un palanquín, un carruaje; será una flor de loto, una montaña, y los conducirá a la pura tierra del Pico del Aguila. Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.

Nichiren

En el octavo mes del primer año de kenji (1275) Reúnanse siempre con la esposa de Toshiro y lean esta carta junto con ella.¹⁰

¡Qué promesa alentadora formula el Daishonin! Dice que la pareja que hizo esa ofrenda al devoto del Sutra del Loto será protegida por 69, 384 budas. Es una imagen tan espectacular, que desafía la imaginación. Con semejante amparo a través del pasado, presente y futuro, ¿a qué puede tenerse miedo?

En otra parte, dice "el corazón es lo único que realmente importa". Cierta historia cuenta que un niño hizo una ofrenda de un pastel de barro a Shakyamuni y que, por sus actos sinceros, luego renació con la identidad del rey Ashoka. Como dicho episodio ilustra, el corazón es, en verdad, un ámbito místico e inescrutable.

La Ley Mística esclarece las funciones insondables del corazón humano, la doctrina de ichinen sanzen -cada instante de la vida posee tres mil aspectos- explica el inmenso poder del corazón. Buda es alguien que comprende, en el nivel más profundo, las funciones inescrutables y el poder del corazón.

Un pasaje del Sutra del Loto dice: "disfrutarán de paz y de seguridad en esta existencia, y de buenas circunstancias en vidas futuras".¹¹ Como refieren dichas palabras, el Daishonin asegura al matrimonio que no deben temer a nada, ni en esta vida ni en existencias venideras.

Primero, dice que en esa existencia la ofrenda se convertirá en una "oración" y en un "tesoro". Con ellos, indica que, mediante la función protectora de todos los budas, esa sincera fe que los llevó a ofrecer una

túnica pasará a ser la causa de que se cumplan todos sus deseos y de que se acumulen enormes beneficios.

Luego, con respecto al "viaje después de la muerte", afirma que serán protegidos por todos los budas y que no deben dar lugar a ningún temor. Esa fe que los llevó a ofrendar la túnica será como un "Sol" y una "Luna", para iluminar espléndidamente su travesía; será un gran "camino" y un "puente" por los cuales transitará para llegar a destino.

Serán dulcemente guiados de la mano de la "madre" y del "padre" llenos de amor. Podrán montar con toda calma sobre un "buey" o un "caballo", marchar sobre un "palanquín" o un "carruaje". Y por fin, subirán a la "flor de loto" en la cual viajan los budas y bodhisattvas, para llegar a la "montaña de los tesoros", a la tierra pura del Pico del Aguila donde reside el Buda.

Por una ofrenda tan sencilla como un simple kimono sin forrar, el Daishonin promete eterna buena fortuna, eternos beneficios. Y ello es porque él percibe la sinceridad que impregna esa ofrenda.

El hitoe que este matrimonio le había enviado estaba hilado y cosido con fibras de pura sinceridad, que el Daishonin percibía al sentir su tibieza y textura. ¡Qué noble e impecable era el corazón de esta pareja que creía en el Daishonin y se dedicaba a protegerlo, cuando todo el país parecía tener la idea fija de hostigarlo!

La persona que ha cruzado el precipicio de la vida y la muerte muchas veces comprende en qué consiste el verdadero valor humano. Ni el poder ni la fama confieren grandeza a alguien. La luz de la auténtica grandeza humana resplandece deslumbrante en la gente común, de vida transparente y honesta, libre de ambicionar honores o de codiciar riquezas. Imagino la alegría incontentible que habrá sentido esta pareja al recibir la carta del Daishonin...

Dicho sea de paso, en la posdata se menciona el nombre de la "esposa de Toshiro". Esta persona era, también, amiga de la familia de Shijo Kingo.

El Daishonin termina la carta exhortándolos a que se reúnan con otra seguidora a leer juntos sus palabras. Si traducésemos esto a la época moderna, estaría diciéndoles que hagan reuniones de diálogo. Mientras sigamos estudiando el Gosho y debatiendo sobre la fe con amigos y compañeros, no habrá riesgo de que nos apartemos del camino correcto.

En esa breve posdata, el

Daishonin toca un punto esencial: mantener la fe en unión con otros compañeros que creen en la Ley Mística. Esta minuciosa consideración es característica del Daishonin; aquí está el espíritu del Buda Original.

Hay que valorar y atesorar a cada persona minuciosamente. Aquí está el espíritu del Gosho y la postura de la SGI.

El Gosho es la joya de la humanidad; en sus páginas queda cristalizado, con la claridad del diamante, el humanismo de Nichiren Daishonin. En esta época de desolación espiritual, estudiar el Gosho y regresar al humanismo del Daishonin es más importante que nunca.

(Así concluye la disertación del presidente Ikeda sobre el Gosho Un hitoe sin forrar).

NOTAS:

1. *Hitoe Sho*, escrito en agosto de 1275, cuando el Daishonin tenía cincuenta y cuatro años.

2. *The Lotus (El sutra del Loto)*, trad. al inglés por burton Watson, Editorial de la Universidad de Columbia, Nueva York, 1993, cap. 10, pág. 164.

3. *Ib.*, cap. 14, pág. 207

4. *The Lotus sutra*, cap. 10, pág. 164.

5. *Gosho Zenshu*, pág. 1514.

6. Extraído de las palabras de Josei Toda durante el 11º servicio fúnebre en memoria del presidente Makiguchi (1954).

7. Su Wu (140-60 a.C.): Ministro del emperador Wu de la dinastía Han temprana. En el año 100 a.C., el emperador envió a Su Wu a la tierra de una tribu septentrional a exigir que rindieran lealtad. El cabecilla hizo capturar y aprisionar a Su Wu en una caverna, donde, durante su tiempo de cautiverio, se vió forzado a comer nieve.

8. Li Ling (fall. 74 a.C.): Comandante militar de la dinastía Han temprana. Durante una batalla, fue capturado por bárbaros y tomado prisionero. El emperador Wu creyó erróneamente que éste se había vuelto contra la dinastía Han e hizo matar a todos los miembros de su familia.

9. *Gosho Zenshu*, pág. 1514

10. *Gosho Zenshu*, pág. 1515

11. *The Lotus Sutra*, cap. 5, pág. 99

EXPERIENCIA

MIEMBRO PIONERO, SR. AUGUSTO B. SILVA RECIBE HONOR DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA SGI, DAISAKU IKEDA

¡Felicitaciones!

En una reunión realizada en el 'Los Angeles Freindship Center' (Centro de Amistad de los Angeles), con asistencia del director General de la SGI, Sr. Eiichi Wada, y la Señora Hachija, responsable de la División de Damas de la SGI. Junto a otros miembros, el Señor Augusto B. Silva recibió una medalla de reconocimiento del presidente Ikeda. A continuación el Sr. Silva relata un breve resumen de sus experiencias en su práctica budista.

"Oro de todo corazón al Gohonzon para cumplir con todos mis objetivos. Llevar la relación de Maestro-Discípulo hasta el último momento de esta existencia y por toda la eternidad."



Nací en Lima, Perú el 19 de febrero de 1925, y mi renacimiento fue el día que recibí el Gohonzon, 20 de septiembre de 1969. Uno de mis primeros beneficios, fue la realización de poder ir a visitar a mi hijo, quien residía en los Estados Unidos y hacía 2 años que no veía. Varios meses después regresé a Perú y me integré de lleno a las actividades en el distrito que me correspondía en la organización, asumiendo sobre los años diferentes responsabilidades como líder, y toda mi familia también empezó a practicar este Budismo.

En 1974, fui asignado al equipo de transportación, y debido a esto tuve la fortuna de ir a recibir al presidente Ikeda en marzo de ese mismo año, y poder estar cerca de él y su esposa en todas las actividades en la ciudad de Lima. Mi corazón

estaba lleno de agradecimiento hacia el Gohonzon por los beneficios de mi práctica. Sobre los años, he tenido que darle el frente a un sinnúmero de obstáculos y desafíos junto a mi familia. Aquí, mencionaré algunos.

En 1979, regresé nuevamente a los Estados Unidos de América, otra vez a visitar a mi hijo, a quien no veía desde el 1970, él me invitó a un festival de soccer, que había sido organizado por la compañía donde él trabajaba, en el evento faltó un jugador, y yo me ofrecí a reemplazarlo, y a los 20 minutos de iniciarse el partido, túve un choque con otro jugador, golpeandome la pierna derecha y cayendo en la grama, corrieron a auxiliarme mi hijo y sus compañeros, quienes decían que me habían partido la pierna, por lo que llamaron a una ambulancia y me llevaron al hospital donde

se comprobó que tenía tres fracturas. El Médico de Turno me dijo que por mi edad iba a demorar mucho en sanar y que mi pierna quedaría rígida, al escuchar todos estos problemas, me di cuenta que solo me quedaba una alternativa- cantar Nam-myohorenge-kyo-. A los pocos días me enviaron a la casa con la pierna enyesada, esa misma noche al no poder soportar el dolor, tomé un cuchillo de serrucho de cortar pán y corté el yeso de mi pierna; a la semana siguiente regresé al hospital, donde me tomaron nuevas radiografías, las mismas que no mostraban señal alguna de fractura previa, el médico dijo que era un milagro, yo le hablé de Nam-myohorenge-kyo y le expliqué que ésto era el

efecto de mi práctica.

Decidí quedarme en este país con la determinación de poder lograr mi residencia legal en los Estados Unidos de América. Reforcé mi práctica diariamente, asistiendo a las actividades, estudiando las enseñanzas de Nichiren Daishonin y las guías del presidente Ikeda. Comencé a trabajar, y logré mi residencia legal en los Estados Unidos de América.

En el año 1995, sufrí un embolio que me llevó al hospital, quede paralizado medio cuerpo, sin poder articular una palabra, pero en ningún momento me olvidé de mi fe en el Gohonzon, consideraba que aún no había cumplido con mi misión, e hice la determinación de transformar ve-

nenos en medicina con el poder de la fe. Logré recuperarme poco a poco, y volví a caminar y hablar. El próximo año, junio de 1996, pude ir a la conferencia en la Florida a la cual asistió el presidente Ikeda y pude encontrarme con el Sr. Carlos Shima Director General de la SGI-Perú y otros miembros peruanos.

El año pasado logré mi ciudadanía Americana. Llamo de agradecimiento cada día, oro de todo corazón al Gohonzon para cumplir con todos mis objetivos, llevar la relación de Maestro-Discípulo hasta el último momento de esta existencia y por toda la eternidad.

El Viento Un Cuento por Daniel Román San Juan, Puerto Rico



Este cuento se trata de un indio llamado Viento. El pobre niño no podía estar con nadie, porque cada vez que respiraba tumbaba todo a su alrededor. La gente estaba bien furiosa con él, porque como él no cantaba todas las mañanas, no quiso tomar el tiempo para aprender. Todos querían hablar con el Gran Jefe, sobre este indiesito. El pobre Viento estaba tan triste que fue a pedirle ayuda a los Budas, los cuales vivían en la Montaña del Yunque.

Su misión era ir donde el

Buda para que lo ayudaran a aprender a cantar Nam-myohorenge-kyo. Por el camino se encontró con muchos amigos, como los son el coquí, los peces, las cotorras y muchos otros animales. Él le preguntó al coquí qué por dónde estaba el Yunque y él le contestó: "Coquí por ahí..." Pero en el camino se perdió.

Después se encontró a los peces. Ellos se ofrecieron para darles a Viento de comer. Después comenzó a caminar y se volvió a perder. Viento se encontró a la co-

torra. ¿Sabes dónde está el Yunque? Le preguntó. La cotorra le contestó "sigues ese río y cuando llegues al final, sigue a la derecha". Viento llegó al final del río, pero continuó a la izquierda en vez de coger la derecha y tuvo que regresar.

Se encontró con el Gran Carey que sabía todo y le dijo "viento, ¿eres tú el que quiere llegar al Yunque?" Viento le dijo "¿cómo es que tú sabías eso?" El Carey le dijo "es que yo soy el Gran Sabelotodo. Viento, tienes que tener cuidado" Viento le

preguntó: "¿por qué? La tortuga le dijo- "porque el Gran Juracán está de camino". Viento le dijo, "eso no me va a detener", y siguió.

Al otro día, llegó al Yunque y encontró su primer Buda; Agua. Este le preguntó: "¿Qué puedo hacer con mi problema de no saber Nam-myohorenge-kyo?" Agua le contestó que él no sabía. Y así siguió de Buda en Buda y todos le decían que no tenían la contestación y que fuera

Véase Cuento pág. IV

PREGUNTAS Y RESPUESTAS SOBRE LA FE

¿Cuál es la Perspectiva del Budismo sobre la Duda en la Fe?

Por TED MORINO

Consejero del Dpto. de Estudio-SGI-USA



P¿Cómo debemos ver la duda en la fe, desde la perspectiva de nuestra práctica budista?

REn el Budismo, la duda es definida como uno de los cinco venenos de la vida (los otros cuatro son la avaricia, la ira, la estupidez y la arrogancia).

Mediante nuestra práctica budista tratamos de establecer una fe inquebrantable -sin ninguna duda- Pero es de gran importancia comprender que en el Budismo, una fe sin duda no quiere decir una fe ciega e inquestionable.

Una fe sin duda es una condición de vida en la cual estamos totalmente seguros y cómodos en nuestra creencia. Por supuesto, no es un estado estático, en esta condición de confianza continuamos nuestros esfuerzos para profundizar nuestro entendimiento del Budismo y fortalecer nuestra fe, o sea, nuestro estado de vida.

Sin embargo, nuevas dudas siempre pueden surgir. Pero también es posible que nuestra naturaleza iluminada siempre pueda ganar sobre las nuevas dudas hasta el punto en que podamos establecer una convicción absoluta en la Ley Mística, tal como el ejemplo dado por Nichiren Dai-

shonin.

Cuando los creyentes hacían preguntas a Nichiren Dai-shonin sobre los principios del Budismo, el Daishonin antes que nada, elogiaba el espíritu de búsqueda de ellos. El agradecía la oportunidad que cada pregunta le brindaba para poder aclarar un aspecto esencial de su enseñanza. Sin preguntas, no podrían haber respuestas.

Con esto como base, quiero compartir tres puntos del Capítulo 6 de *Gran Concentración y Discernimiento* citados por Tien-t'ai como obstáculos que estorban nuestra práctica budista. Ellos son: 1) Desconfianza de sí mismo, 2) desconfiar del mentor de uno y 3) dudar de la Ley Mística.

Desconfianza de sí mismo es la peor de las dudas. En cuanto a esto, Tien-t'ai declara, "La falta de fe en sí mismo significa que usted se menosprecia a sí mismo, pensando que no es merecedor y capaz de poder llevar a cabo la práctica budista." De esta manera, señala como la desconfianza de nosotros mismos puede prevenirnos en lograr beneficios y puede llevarnos hasta el punto de abandonar nuestra práctica budista.

Lamentablemente, estamos viviendo en una época de escepticismo, en la cual es muy fácil para la gente desconfiar de todo, comenzando con ellos mismos. Mucha gente no tiene confianza en la política, educación, la prensa, religión y hasta la misma raza humana. Esta "lista de desconfianza" sigue creciendo sin límite. Sin embargo, al tope de dicha lista, está la desconfianza de sí mismo. Así que vemos aquí, un ciclo vicioso: La desconfianza

de sí mismo afecta desfavorablemente nuestro ego y autoestima, lo cual últimamente degrada la sociedad aun más. Una de las grandes metas del Budismo es eliminar la desconfianza de sí mismo de la faz de la tierra y ayudar a cada individuo establecer una verdadera confianza en sí mismo.

El presidente Ikeda una vez dijo: "Porque no es fácil tener confianza en sí mismo, ponemos confianza en el Gohonzon, de esta forma hacemos nuestra fe en la Ley Mística la base de nuestra confianza, dicho de otra manera hacemos 'nuestra innata Budeidad' que es nuestra verdadera identidad la base de nuestra confianza." Por el contrario, podemos ver aquí otro círculo vicioso, si somos la clase de persona que no puede tener confianza en sí mismo, en consecuencia no podemos tener confianza en nuestro mentor o la Ley Mística de todo corazón. Esta es la razón por la cual somos alentados a practicar y a estudiar espontáneamente para nuestra propia revolución humana. Llevando a cabo nuestra práctica budista con buenos amigos, es un gran medio que nos ayuda a tornar nuestra falta de confianza en convicción. El desafío que todos tenemos es fortalecer nuestra fe utilizando todos los medios posibles para así hacerlo. El Budismo nos guía a abordar nuestras debilidades en cada aspecto de nuestras vidas.

El Budismo nos enseña que podemos tener confianza en la belleza y el potencial supremo de nuestras vidas. Nichiren Dai-shonin nos enseña cómo trascender nuestro 'yo pequeño' o superfi-

cial y despertar al 'yo superior' que existe en cada uno de nosotros, el 'yo superior' que yace en el nivel más profundo de nuestro ser-Nuestra Budeidad, La Novena Conciencia.

"Yo siempre hacía sólo mi propia cosa. Pero ahora, puedo orar por la felicidad de otros." O "tengo esperanzas para el futuro." O "lo voy hacer en vez de preocuparme, pensarlo o solamente deseárselo." Frecuentemente, escuchamos declaraciones similares en las reuniones de diálogo de la SGI-USA. El altruismo transmitido o la fuerte determinación hacia el futuro señalado por tales declaraciones son prueba real de la confianza en sí mismo adquirida mediante esta práctica.

Los siguientes son datos y consejos que pueden ser entresacados del principio de La Novena Conciencia para que podamos incrementar la confianza en nosotros mismo y desarrollar una práctica budista más fuerte.

Primero, Debemos simplemente hacer el esfuerzo consciente de entonar daimoku con un sentimiento de confianza en el Gohonzon. Entonces, debemos de ejercitar un 100% en los esfuerzos de afrontar los desafíos de nuestra vida cotidiana. Esta combinación de oración y acción nos capacitará para que podamos ganar sobre los pequeños asuntos que se nos presentan día por día, y de esta forma adquirir confianza en nosotros mismos.

Segundo, a medida que conscientemente continuamos haciendo tales esfuerzos, ellos gradualmente serán parte de nuestra forma de ser, lo cual significa que empezaremos a sub-

conscientemente tener confianza en nosotros mismos (la séptima conciencia).

Tercero, al continuar este proceso, tener confianza en nosotros mismos se convertirá en nuestra inclinación natural, lo cual es llamado el *Karma* (la octava conciencia).

Cuarto, El Budismo enseña que a la vez que continuamos practicando con tales sentimientos positivos en nuestro corazón y pensamientos en nuestra mente, nuestra alegría y confianza en nosotros mismos emana de una forma en la cual verdaderamente disfrutamos nuestra vida, experimentamos la alegría de la Ley. Esta es la prueba de que hemos fortalecido o manifestado nuestra Budeidad (La Novena Conciencia). En esta condición nuestra confianza en nosotros mismos es inquebrantable. La duda se ha convertido en algo extraño para nosotros.

El presidente de la SGI Daisaku Ikeda dice: "Quiénes tengan un espíritu de búsqueda siempre estarán radiantes, con esperanzas y colmados de alegría. Debemos darnos cuenta de que sólo mediante un espíritu de búsqueda es que podemos pulir y profundizar nuestra fe. Esto no es solamente una realidad en el ámbito de la fe. En cualquier intento, el espíritu de búsqueda de uno es lo que determina todo.

El primer paso que debemos dar para deshacernos de la duda en la fe está muy claro en el Budismo: Comienza a la vez que incitamos nuestro espíritu de búsqueda.

(Traducción del *World Tribune*. 25 de junio, de 1999, pág.6)

CUENTO de la pág. III

a preguntar a otro Buda.

Entonces llegó al último, el Buda Verdadero. Ambos comenzaron a hablar mientras caminaban. El Buda ya sabía todo lo que Viento le iba a preguntar y le dijo, "no me preguntes nada, solo tú puedes conseguir la respuesta en tu corazón si cantas Nam-

myoho-rengé-kyo" y Viento le dijo: "Yo he venido desde mi pueblo hasta aquí y tengo que buscar la solución". El Buda Verdadero le dijo: "Sí".

Viento se quedó en el Yunque hasta que se aprendió Nam-myoho-rengé-kyo. Luego se recordó que la Gran Tortuga Sabelotodo le había dicho que el Gran Juracán venía. Se fue corriendo como un caballo asustado

mientras corría cantaba las palabras que le había enseñado el Buda Verdadero.

Cuando llegó a su pueblo, el Gran Juracán estaba llegando y empezó a derrumbarlo todo. Entonces, Viento se puso tan furioso que de un soplón sacó de su vista a Juracán. Todo el pueblo estaba feliz con Viento y lo aplaudían. Dijeron que por fin aprendió a cantar y gracias a

su Viento rescató a todo Puerto Rico.

Pueblo por Pueblo se fue contando este cuento. Cuando Viento murió sintieron un aire fuerte y fresco y le llamaron Viento y así fue como la palabra Viento se usó por primera vez. Y así fue que Nam-myoho-rengé-kyo se volvió tan importante.

MORALEJA

La moraleja es que cantes todos los días, para tener un excelente día sin problemas, canta Nam-myoho-rengé-kyo.

(El autor de este cuento Daniel Román tiene 11 años de edad y está en el sexto grado.)