

## WOMEN'S ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR 2001

*The following guidelines are just that: guidelines. Each zone is encouraged to discuss thoroughly how best to carry out these activities.*

### **Commemorative Meetings (February)**

Our February women's meetings have become a tradition of which we can be very proud. To say they are diverse is an understatement. In every zone, the variety of meetings is exceeded only by their warmth, by the joyous building of relationships, and by the sense of victory. In fact, it is that sense of victory—in particular, the hope and energy that comes from women empowering other women in faith—that gives our commemorative meetings real life.

See the accompanying box on this page for the SGI women's theme recently adopted. Each zone is free to use all or part of this theme, which will be ours for the next several years.

### **Planning Committee**

The women's planning committee is intended in general to support regional activities and specifically the region women's leader. It can serve as a conduit for the collective voice of women, communicating needs, concerns and ideas in the advancement of peace. Planning committees in the past have been the source of creative solutions and proposals and have been instrumental in communicating these to the women's leadership, as well as helping to carry them out.

Although each planning committee operates according to the needs and resources of the region, following are some points to consider:

- Establish diverse representative participation—for example, include members from a range of life experiences, ages, lengths of practice, organizational positions, etc.
- Set a term limit. In many areas, this is two years.

### **Sophia Group**

The Sophia Group, established by SGI President Ikeda in 1990, provides the impetus for personal development as well as a supportive environment for in-depth study. Its goal is to enable its participants to take what they learn and infuse their districts, communities, workplaces and homes with the Soka Spirit.

Sophia Groups across the nation reflect the diversity of our organization, and this is to be commended. It is hoped that participants will continue to take the initiative in creating opportunities as appropriate in their locales.

Some points to consider include:

- In-depth study of *The Human Revolution* or *The New Human Revolution* is recommended.
- Group size should be intimate enough to allow everyone to share in dialogue. There is no limit on the number of groups.
- A one-year term is recommended.
- The zone is encouraged to create a support system for facilitators as may be beneficial.

## **Mothers/Parents of Young Children Group**

Acknowledging that families, especially in the United States, come in all shapes and sizes, each zone is free to choose whether to have a Mothers Group, a Parents of Young Children Group, or perhaps both. This group provides support and encouragement in faith for parents of young children (ages birth through 5), especially new parents.

Some points to consider:

- Seek encouragement from seniors in faith with long-term perspectives on parenting.
- If interested in child development topics, participants are encouraged to invite input from a child development professional.
- A regular study curriculum is encouraged. As a suggestion, the *Living Buddhism* is planning to publish monthly installments of a dialogue with President Ikeda on the parent/child relationship.