

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MESSAGE FOR MAY 3, SOKA GAKKAI DAY OUR TIME HAS COME

‘It is time for humankind to turn away from narrow, individual self-interest and toward the welfare of the planet as a whole,’ SGI President Ikeda says. ‘It is time for humankind to develop a common identity as global citizens. In this respect, the harmonious solidarity of the SGI is a great light of hope for the world.’

My precious fellow members around the world! Congratulations on May 3, 2001! It is our first May 3 of the new century—in the year 2001 that marks a profoundly significant milestone in human history and also in the annals of our global kosen-rufu movement. It is through your unstinting dedication and tireless efforts that we are able to celebrate this day with such brilliant joy and wonderful achievements. Words cannot express the deep appreciation I feel for all of you! To each and every one of you, dear friends in 165 countries and territories around the world: “Thank you!” and “Congratulations on the first May 3 of the 21st century! Hooray!”

Nichiren Daishonin writes, “Can there be any doubt that, after this period described in the Great Collection Sutra when ‘the pure Law will become obscured and lost,’ the great pure Law of the Lotus Sutra [Nam-myoho-renge-kyo] will be spread far and wide throughout Japan and all the other countries of Jambudvipa [the entire world]” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 550).

In perfect accord with this passage, the SGI has inherited the lifeblood of the Buddha’s intent and decree, developing into a lay Buddhist organization of unparalleled scale and attaining truly monumental achievements. The dazzling sun of the Daishonin’s Buddhism has now begun to illuminate the skies of the new millennium and usher in the dawn of a Century of Life.

Today, on May 3, 2001, when we sound the first bell of the second set of Seven Bells, let us embark with renewed determination toward peace and the happiness of all humanity.

It is now widely recognized that ideologies premised on changing the human being through social reform have failed to achieve their goal, and that while scientific progress has brought much benefit to the world, it has also brought much harm. The great lesson of the 20th century, therefore, has been that global change and even our very survival hinge on our own inner transformation. When human beings change, all else will follow.

The humanism of the Daishonin’s Buddhism, which sheds new light on the human being and enables people to draw forth their infinite potential, is the sun of hope for humankind in the 21st century.

I can still hear the ringing voice of my mentor Josei Toda as he said to us youth: “Our movement of human revolution will spread throughout the world. It will start from your time. I’m counting on you. This [spreading the movement in which people around the globe strive earnestly to do their human revolution and achieve world peace] is the way to prove the validity of the Daishonin’s Buddhism. For Buddhism exists in active efforts to realize peace and enrich human civilization.”

Together with all of you, I renew my pledge to spread the “Buddhism of human revolution” around the globe.

The Daishonin also states, “I entrust you with the propagation of Buddhism in your

province” (WND, 1117). In light of these words, we each have a unique and noble mission that has been entrusted to us by the Daishonin to ensure the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law in our respective communities and regions. In the Daishonin’s Buddhism, those who are aware of their profound mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth are precious beyond measure.

The unprecedented spread of the Daishonin’s Buddhism that we see in each region around the world today started from the pioneering efforts of devoted individuals. It is always individuals with a strong sense of commitment and responsibility who open the way for kosen-rufu. I hope that each one of you will have the awareness, pride and sense of responsibility of being a leader of our global kosen-rufu movement, and become a transmission point for the spread of Buddhism in society.

Buddhism is a ceaseless endeavor for good, for positive value; it is a philosophy of social contribution. As Buddhists, we therefore strive to nurture mutual friendship and goodwill in our personal relations, to foster wisdom and trust in society, and to make practical efforts to promote culture and peace in the world at large.

Shariputra was known as the foremost in wisdom among Shakyamuni’s disciples. What led him to seek out the Buddha’s teachings? He had met one of Shakyamuni’s disciples and been deeply impressed by the sincerity and dignity of his speech and conduct. The teachings of a mentor who has such a wonderful disciple, he thought, are bound to be outstanding.

I hope that each of you, too, in your own capacity and situation, will strive as good citizens within the framework of the respective cultures and societies in which you live. I hope you will illuminate all around you with your sunny presence, brilliantly conveying the universality of the Buddhist teachings to others and radiating the warm humanism of the SGI. It is in this way that our humanistic network will expand — with one person connecting to another in a chain-reaction that steadily and solidly unfolds across the globe. Here we see the dynamics of peace creation. It is also the key to the advance of worldwide kosen-rufu.

The world is becoming increasingly borderless and interconnected. It is time for humankind to turn away from narrow, individual self-interest and toward the welfare of the planet as a whole. It is time for humankind to develop a common identity as global citizens. In this respect, the harmonious solidarity of the SGI is a great light of hope for the world.

Both humanity and the Earth thirst for compassion and care. The bright, compassionate light of the sun of Buddhism will revitalize humanity, the world, and human civilization.

From today onward, I will continue to fight together with all of you, my beloved fellow members, against the devilish forces that weaken the life force of human beings and our planet, and that threaten human happiness and peace. I will continue to work tirelessly for a new human solidarity and the creation of an ideal global human community.

Dialogue and exchange are the most effective means for achieving this. I will therefore energetically continue to conduct sincere, ongoing dialogue. Always holding fast to hope, I will continue, today and tomorrow, engaging in exchange for the sake of peace. For I believe that bridging the differences between cultures and civilizations will be one of the biggest challenges of this century.

As exemplary models of the Buddhist principles of faith equals daily life and Buddhism manifests itself in society, please strive to become bridge-builders who, based on trust and respect, forge bonds of friendship and understanding between people through dialogue and exchange.

We now embark on a new phase in our journey toward the eternal spread of Buddhism and the realization of a world where humanism and peace prevail. Let us advance in solid unity, holding high the banner of Soka humanism.

I pray with all my heart that you will enjoy happiness, good health and richly fulfilling lives of value-creation and that your families will also be blessed with good fortune. I pray that you will continue to advance harmoniously together for kosen-rufu in your respective countries, in the spirit of many in body, one in mind.

*May 3, 2001
Daisaku Ikeda, President
Soka Gakkai International*