

# Myosetsuji News

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GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN

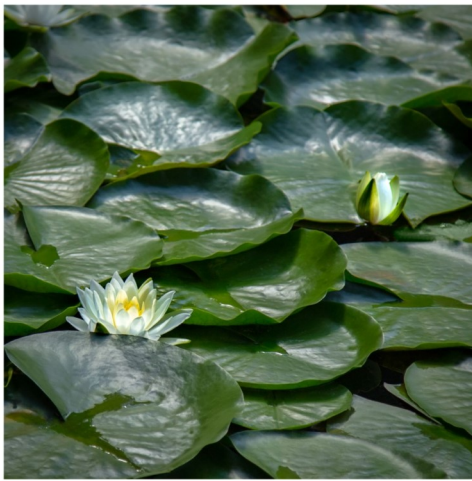
## On the Occasion of the April Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony

On this occasion of the April Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of you for your efforts to come on tozan with profound faith.

As you know, April is the month when our Founder Nichiren Daishonin declared the establishment of true Buddhism. According to the Goshos, there are two theories in regards to the declaration date of the establishment of true Buddhism: the theory of March 28 and the theory of April 28 in

the fifth year of Kencho (1253).

In some Goshos, such as *Letter to the Priests of Seichoji Temple* (Seichoji daishu chu) (*Gosho*, p.



946), *The Great White Ox Cart* (Daibyaku gosha-sho) (ibid., p. 1188), and *Orally Transmitted Teachings* (Ongi kuden) (ibid., p. 1732), the declaration date is indicated as March 28. However, in other Goshos, such as *On Persecutions Befalling the Buddha* (Shonin gonan ji) (ibid., p. 1396), and *Letter to Naka'oki nyudo* (Naka'oki nyudo-goshosoku) (ibid., p. 1431), the declaration date is specified as April 28.

Thirty-first High Priest Nichi'in Shonin expounded on the two theories of the March declaration and the April declaration. In his writing, *Interpretation of Both Declaration Dates*

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## Gosho Quote for June 2020

### *On the Transmission of the Three Great Secret Laws*

#### (Sandai hiho bonjo no koto)

There are two types of Daimoku: the Daimoku chanted during the Former and Middle Days of the Law, and the Daimoku to be chanted during the Latter Day of the Law. Although Bodhisattvas Vasubandhu and Nagarjuna themselves chanted the Daimoku during the Former Day of the Law, they did so to practice for themselves only. During the Middle Day of the Law, Nanyue, Tiantai, and others did chant the Daimoku; however, they did it only for the sake of their own practice and not for teaching others. This type of Daimoku was practiced [in order to observe one's mind] based on the theory [elucidated in the surface meaning of the words]. Now, in the Latter Day of the Law, the Daimoku that Nichiren chants is different from that of previous ages. It is the Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo of the practice for oneself, and the practice for others. (*Gosho*, pp. 1594-1595)

## GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN (CONTINUED)

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of the Establishment of True Buddhism (Shushi konryu sanshi ego-sho), he taught that March 28 signifies the Daishonin's inner realization, whereas April 28 represents the propagation of the Law to the people around the world.

Moreover, based on a detailed examination of these theories of March 28 and April 28, the former Sixty-seventh High Priest Nikken Shonin gave us the following profound sermon.

We can observe several distinctions between the March theory and the April theory. March 28 signifies the declaration of the Daimoku of inner realization, while April 28 is the revelation of the Daimoku of the propagation of true Buddhism. March 28 represents the sermon of refuting heresy, based on revealing the truth, while April 28 denotes the sermon of revealing the truth, based on refuting heresy. Further-

more, the March declaration specifically reveals the great Law for a small number of close people, whereas the April declaration signifies the Daimoku to be propagated for all people. In particular, the passage in the Goshō, *Letter to the Priests of Seichoji Temple* (Seichoji daishu chu) confirms that the declaration date is March 28. Considering that the sermon also was given in March, I believe that it is truly appropriate to conduct a grand ceremony for both March and April to repay our debts of gratitude to the Buddha. (*Dainichiren*, May 2002, p. 79)

Accordingly, our denomination conducts ceremonies for both March 28 and April 28, in order to repay our debts of gratitude to Nichiren Daishonin, unlike the other sects who are unquestioning supporters of only April 28.

In the Goshō, *On Remonstrating with Hachiman* (Kangyo hachiman-sho), the Daishonin teaches the following:

For the past twenty-eight years, from the twenty-eighth day of the fourth month of the fifth year of Kencho (1253) through the twelfth month of this current year, the third year of Ko'an (1280), I, Nichiren, have done nothing else but one thing. That is, to dedicate myself to have all the people of Japan chant the five and seven characters of Myoho-Renge-Kyo. This act of compassion is the same as a mother trying to put milk into the mouth of her infant. (*Goshō*, p. 1539)

Our Founder Nichiren Daishonin, the True Buddha of the infinite past of *kuon-ganjo*, who made his advent into this



world in the Latter Day of the Law, declared and established the great Law of Myoho-Renge-Kyo. The purpose of his advent was to give the medicine of Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo to all living beings who suffer from the three paths of earthly desires, karma, and suffering, just like a mother trying to put milk into the mouth of her infant with her deep compassion.

Furthermore, the Daishonin teaches the following in the Goshō, *Repaying Debts of Gratitude* (Ho'on-sho):

Since Nichiren's compassion is vast, Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo will prevail for ten thousand years and beyond into the future. It possesses the beneficial power to open the blind eyes of all the people in Japan, and it blocks the path to the hell of incessant suffering. Its benefits surpass those of the teachings of Dengyo and Tiantai, and are far superior to those of Nagarjuna and Mahakashyapa. (*Goshō*, p. 1036)

He teaches that the vast and boundless benefits of Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo will be bestowed on the people who live not only during the Daishonin's

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## GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN (CONTINUED)

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lifetime, but also for the ten thousand years of the Latter Day of the Law and beyond into the future, and save all living beings.

Then, we must teach this great Law of the salvation of all living beings to not only the people of Japan but also the people around the world as much as we can. It is essential that we devote ourselves to propagate Myoho-Renge-Kyo all the more.

The Daishonin teaches in the *Gosho, Questions and Answers between a Sage and a Foolish Man* (Shogu mondo-sho) as follows:

The world today is defiled with impurities. People's minds are distorted, filled with envy, and provisional and slanderous teachings abound. This makes it difficult for the true Law to be propagated. At such a time, it is of no use to practice the reading, reciting and transcribing of sutras, or to contemplate, meditate, or discipline oneself. You simply must perform shakubuku. You should powerfully vanquish slanderous

teachings and use the doctrines to censure erroneous teachings to the best of your ability. (*Gosho*, p. 403)

Precisely, in the defiled age of the Latter Day of the Law, when the Lotus Sutra and pre-Lotus Sutra teachings are confused, now is the time for us to teach the vast and boundless benefits of Myoho-Renge-Kyo, the secret Law that can save all living beings, to as many people as possible and do shakubuku. We must be aware that this is the best way to embrace the will of Nichiren Daishonin, the True Buddha.

In the *Gosho, Rissho ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism), the Daishonin teaches the following:

If one desires peace to reign throughout the entire nation without delay, he should first and foremost put an end to the slanders that prevail throughout the country. (*Gosho*, p. 247)

The Daishonin warns us that erroneous teachings, which are false doctrines and heretical religions, make not only an individual but also the entire nation and even the whole world fall into the hell of incessant suffering. Thus, our important role is to eliminate these slanders and save the people who suffer the direst distress.

At this time, the priesthood and laity of Nichiren Shoshu are devoting ourselves to the practice, day and night, with unity based on the spirit of *itai doshin*, as we aim toward our goal—to achieve a



membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by 2021, when we will commemorate the 800th Anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin.

In particular, when I look at the chaotic condition of the world today due to the evolving situation with COVID-19, I strongly feel that now is the time for the priesthood and laity of Nichiren Shoshu to teach the vast benefits of Myoho-Renge-Kyo to as many people as possible, based on the principle expounded in the *Rissho ankoku-ron*, in order to realize the establishment of the peaceful Buddha land. With these efforts it is most essential that we continue to devote ourselves to our practice, aiming toward the propagation of the true Law throughout the entire world.

I sincerely wish that you will keep this in mind and make further efforts in your practice for oneself and others.



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