



RADIANCE

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July/August 2024

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SACRED WORDS

Maudgalyayana immediately cast away the 250 precepts of Hinayana Buddhism and chanted “Namu Myoho Renge Kyo” to become a Buddha called Tamalapatracandana Fragrance. This is the very moment when his parents, too, became Buddhas. Therefore, it is stated in the Lotus Sutra, “Our wishes have already been fulfilled, and desires of the multitude are also satisfied.” Maudgalyayana’s body and mind are the legacy of his parents. When his body and mind became a Buddha, those of his parents also attained Buddhahood.

Nichiren Shonin’s Words—*Urabon Goshō*

Weekly Services

We will continue to hold services with limited in-person attendance and broadcast online via **Zoom**. For those interested in participating online, please contact the temple to obtain meeting ID and password. Donations can be made either by check payable to **Kannon Temple of Nevada** or **Zellepay.com** to kannontemplenv@gmail.com.

Obon Memorial Service

July 14th, **10:30 a.m.** (Sun)

Buddhism can save all souls even those in hell. The *Obon* Memorial Service originated with the story from one of Sakyamuni Buddha’s disciple, Maudgalayana, who saved his mother from her incessant suffering in the level of Hungry Ghost.

For the newly deceased, this will be their first *Obon* Memorial Service. We will create a special *Toba* (wooden tablet) with their name written on it and make special offerings to them. This is a special message to the deceased.

Please write your name and ancestors’ on the enclosed prayer form and send it back to the Kannon Temple before July 14th with your donation. Together with the congregation, we will pray for your deceased loved ones and all hungry spirits in the lower realms.



Matsubagayatsu Persecution Service

Aug. 25th, **10:30 a.m.** (Sun)

The first of four major persecutions in Nichiren Shonin’s life. An angry mob tried to kill him and burned his hut down. According to legend, he was saved by a white monkey.

Please come join us to commemorate this important event.



Electronic Newsletter

If you wish to receive this bi-monthly newsletter electronically, please email temple with your request at kannontemplenv@gmail.com. We are in the process of moving many processes online, which will help reduce temple expense.

Saving our Ancestors

Shoda Kanai

As we move into July, traditionally in Japan is the start of *Obon* season and many temples and communities begin to hold *Bon-Odori* or Bon Dance festivals.

Growing up, my parents would send my brothers and I to our grandparent’s house in Tokyo every summer right after school ended in mid-June and did not return until Labor Day in September. Almost every weekend, there was some *Bon Odori* or fireworks festival that we went to. I especially liked the vendors and sampling various types of Japanese street food, which culminated in my love for *yakisoba* and *taiyaki*. Hopefully you too can enjoy *Bon Odori* in your neighborhood.

We all enjoy these festivals, but do you know the origin of how this ceremony came about? Let me briefly recap for you.

Maudgalyayana was one of Buddha’s brightest disciples. Him and Sariputra were the de facto leaders of the other monks. His specialty was psychic powers, whereas Sariputra specialized in wisdom, which they used to help the other monks attain Enlightenment.

One day, after missing his deceased mother, he decided to go visit her using his psychic powers. “He was able to see everywhere in the great earth and in the three evil realms. It was as if he were looking at the fish below the water through the ice shining in the morning sun. It was then he saw his own mother in the realm of hungry spirits.”

He saw his mother whose neck was thin as a thread and her belly swollen. He tried feeding her, but the food turned into fire. Same with the offering of water. Nothing he did was able to save her. Distraught, he turned to the Buddha for help.

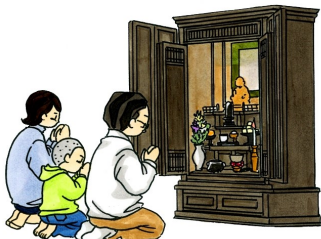
Buddha mentioned that his mother’s bad karma was such that no amount of his special powers could save her. No other deities could assist. The only way to save her from Hungry Spirit realm was to offer food on her behalf to the monasteries during the →

⇐rainy season and with them together offer merits to her. Through this act, he was able to save his mother and have her reborn in the Heaven realm. Maudgalyayana was so overjoyed that he “danced.” Thus, the tradition of Bon Dance Festival.

Nichiren further states in his Words, *Urabon Goshō*, that Maudgalyayana was not able to save his mother because he did not have the Lotus Sutra to help. Once he was able to touch the Lotus Sutra, he became a Buddha, thus was also able to save his mother as well as seven generations down.

Many of us are new to Buddhism and specifically to Nichiren Shu. We may still hold on to the old traditions of our parents and treat their passing accordingly. We may believe that they are in heaven and doing ok. But through the lens of Buddhism, they are not. They could be suffering in one of the three lower realms due to their karma in their many previous lives. Until their bad karma can be extinguished, they cannot be reborn into one of the higher realms.

We are very fortunate that we have met the Buddha and the Lotus Sutra. Because we chant “*Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō*,” we are not only saving ourselves but also our parents and ancestors. Lotus Sutra mentions “dedication of merits.” We make an offering of the sutra to our ancestors so that even if they have yet to meet it, they can through us. How fortunate that we are able to encounter this wonderful gem! How wonderful that in our previous lives, we obtained good karma so that in this life we can touch the Lotus Sutra and hear the Dharma again.



We may still feel a bit uncertain about offering merits to our ancestors. Do not fret. Just as Maudgalyayana was able to save his mother from the horrors of the Hungry Spirit realm, we too can save our ancestors and help them be reborn in one of the higher realms and hopefully as a Buddha.

New Building Fund commemorating the 800th Anniversary of Nichiren Shonin’s Birth

752 *shakyo* tracing Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra offered, **24,810,000** times of Chanting *Odaimoku* offered, As of June 24, 2024

Thank you very much! Please continue your support.

From the High Desert, I Bring you Good News!

有難う (Arigatō)

Shoda Kanai

The other day I had the privilege to conduct a funeral service for a retired Nichiren Shu priest in Las Vegas. Yes, that’s right a Nichiren Shu priest! He retired from his home temple in Japan and came to live with his daughter in America. I was fortunate to meet with him a couple of years ago. He was happy that there was a temple here in Las Vegas.

In assisting the daughter with funeral preparations, she asked me to help with translating a quote of his,

Thank you: When written in Japanese ‘Arigatō’ literally means, “Having something is very difficult.” If one thing is missing, then nothing can be accomplished. That’s why we can say, ‘Thank you’ to be grateful for what we are now and for being alive.

Very powerful words! Kanji characters have a second, more spiritual meaning according to my father. (recall Radiance no. 79 when I discuss how the Buddha 仏 character resides within us 私).

The character 有 (a-ru) means “exist” and 難 (muzuka-shii) means “difficult.” I always wondered why the character for difficult was in “thank you” but didn’t think about the first character. Now I know.

We are all precious. It is difficult to be born as a human being according to the Buddha. If 4,096 people (10 generations) did not meet, we would not be alive right now. Therefore, we must make the best of the life that we have and also should consider ourselves to be fortunate that we could encounter the Buddha and His teachings, especially the Lotus Sutra. We have received a special gem to cherish, thus we should not squander it.

Appreciate everything, the good and the bad, as not everything is a life lesson, just events that happen around us. Continue to use the Dharma to help guide you in your decision making to be able to create the Buddha Land here and now. And always show your appreciation to all by placing your palms together in *Gassho*, to say, “Thank you!” from the bottom of your heart.



Thank you for always watching over us

EVENTS

<u>July</u>		<u>August</u>	
7 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing	4 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing
14 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Obon</i> Memorial Service	11 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	English Service
21 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)	18 (Sun) 10:00 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)
28 (Sun) No Service	Traveling to another temple	25 (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Matsubagayatsu</i> Persecution

*** Join in every Wednesday night at 6 p.m. for **Tea Time with a Priest** to have your questions answered. Email temple for zoom ID and password ***

*** Those interested in Study Class and/or Counseling, please contact the temple to make arrangements ***