



【To “Repeatedly Reflect (温習 *onshuh*)” is the path for me to become a buddha】

This winter in Manhattan • New York has been unusually warm. From about 10 days ago, however, continuous days with temperature below freezing have arrived. It snowed on the 17th and the streets were drastically transformed. Winter is finally showing its true colors.

On January 1, 2016 at 6:00AM, the New Year’s Day Celebration was held at our organization’s Headquarters in Tokyo. Kosho-sama led the sutra recitation and we received the first “words” from President Niwano for this New Year.

Our President said: “Because we are so busy in our daily lives, we seem to be having less time to talk to ourselves or to think about things on our own.

I feel we are increasingly losing our true self. If that were to happen, we would probably exist only as if we were just a machine called human, moving about this way and that in total confusion, without the ability to do what is of utmost importance – to grasp and comprehend our own selves. When we greet someone for the New Year’s, we actually simultaneously greet our own selves. This means it is important ‘to understand our own selves clearly as we live.’ To create such an opportunity is the significance of the New Year.”



And furthermore, on January 7th, during the First Guidance of 2016 (*Goshinkyō*), the President said he conveyed in the first issue of Kosei Newspaper for this year “Passing Along the Important Things.” Although he did not refer to any particular content, that message was also included in the annual policies.

- (1) Create a Theme and Use Your Ingenuity to Focus on What is Important
- (2) Always Focus on and Devote Yourselves to What Shakyamuni Wishes for Us
- (3) The Essence of Buddhist Giving Results from a Sense of Human Unity

Outlined above is what the President repeats over and over in any place, under any situation, thoughtfully from his heart. Point by point, I would like to firmly keep each in mind.

Moreover, he introduced his first calligraphy writing of the New Year (*kakizome*).

They were “とうみょう 燈明 (*tohmyōh - light*)” and “おんしゅう 温習 (*onshuh – to repeatedly reflect*).”

The President said, “I have continuously written *tohmyōh* (*light*) for almost 10 years now, but this year, for the first time, I am acknowledging *onshuh* (温習 *to repeatedly reflect*: meaning of each character 温=*warm* 習=*learn*). Although this word does not actually appear in the Lotus Sutra, with the meaning of ‘to review (*osarai*)’ or ‘to revisit (*fukushuh*),’ I sensed a presence of warmth with these characters and wrote them instilling such feelings.”

After he said that, he referred back to his message on New Year’s Day by mentioning that “he would like to start this fresh New Year by recapturing his true self.

We, who have received the Buddha’s teachings, are applying the bodhisattva practice which concretely ‘put others first and self later,’ and should repeatedly reflect on and revisit this practice.”

And lastly, the President concluded by saying, “We have been practicing the Dharma until this day, but when we repeatedly revisit (*fukushuh*) over and over again to understand just what actually had



liberated us, and from what we have learned, what actually allowed us to become enlightened, we are practicing ‘*onshuh* – repeated reflection.’ Because I wish for you to place ‘what allowed me to become liberated’ as the starting point, I chose the word ‘*onshuh*.’ Each of us, one by one, comes to different personal realization while learning various things from numerous people. Everyone, however, accepts things according to one’s nature and understanding and when you become liberated through that, I wish for you to recall the word ‘*onshuh*’ and put it into practice in your daily lives.

Of course, we accept the important teaching from the Buddha to live according to ‘Make Yourself Your Light, Make the Dharma Your Light,’ and when we practice *onshuh* by revisiting and reflecting over and over again what had liberated us in any particular situation, I feel that will be the foundation of our true liberation.”

Whenever I contemplate the President’s words from the First Guidance of 2016, I would feel the Buddha’s wish seep deeply into my heart. Immensely deep realization came to light for me. Especially, with each and every one of his concluding words, the President is completely accepting things as is and making them all come to life. He said to cherish things as is, acknowledging that “you are fine just as you are,” at the same time, sincerely putting the effort in our daily lives to reflect • review over and over again the joy of the realization we have at any moment is valuable and will become the foundation of our liberation. I am truly amazed by these words that opened me to have a deep realization and experience remarkable liberation. Every day, I would like to revisit • reflect such a thankful realization.

Gassho

New York Center Minister
Etsuko Fujita

Topic for January

< Make Yourself Your Light; Make the Dharma Your Light >

The other day, one of the members received guidance from Rev. Fujita and, with her permission, I would like to share that guidance with you.

Ms. A. said having people leave her is the most distressing for her. Therefore, when someone tries to leave, she tries too hard to accommodate that person, even to the point of denying her own needs, so that person would not leave, and she is exhausted with herself.

Rev. Fujita listened very deeply to Ms. A. Then she gave the following guidance: “Ms. A, if you depend on people or money, they will betray you or disappear. You are quite capable of living on your own. If you believe in yourself and live with the Dharma at the center of your life, you will never be betrayed. You will be fine.”

Ms. A. realized, “I was trying to live depending on others as if to be carried on people’s back.”

Since then, when a similar situation occurred, because she started to think of making herself her light and the Dharma her light, although she still felt slightly sad to have someone leave, she was able to accept the situation calmly.

Thanks to Ms. A’s experience, I learned the meaning of Make Yourself Your Light; Make the Dharma Your Light – the importance of keeping our own feet firmly on the ground and devote ourselves to practice.

Ms. A, thank you for always helping me learn.

Yuri Sugino



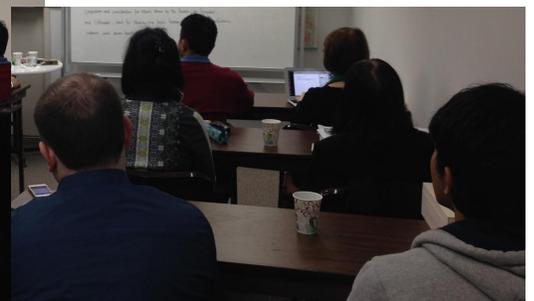


1/1 New Year's Day Service



1/14 Monthly Memorial Service

1/17 President's New Year Dharma Guidance by Rev. Fujita



SCHEDULE FOR NEW YORK CHAPTER

February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Special Practice of the L.S. Chanting 9am Japanese 7pm English C.25,26,27,28 Lotus Sutra	2 Special Practice of the L.S. Chanting 9am J. 7pm E. Sutra Meditation 10:30am Steering Committee Missionary Mtg	3 9AM Setsubun-e	4 9AM Memorial Svc for Founder	5	6 Closed Dharma Practices at home
7 1PM Sunday Svc President Dharma Talk	8 10 AM	9	10 9AM Memorial Service For Cofounder	11 9AM Monthly Memorial Service	12	13 Closed Dharma Practices at home
14 1PM Nirvana Day Service Sharing our merit	15 President Day	16 2-4PM Area Leaders' Meeting 6pm Meditation	17	18	19	20 Youth Leaders' Web Ex Meeting Closed
21 1PM Sunday Svc Study Session	22	23	24	25	26	27 On-line Seminar on Internet Ministry Mtg Closed
28 Ceremony for Anniversary of Rissho Koseikai's Founding	29					