

Hello, everyone!

Am hoping all is well with you.



**The hot and the cold weather is said to be until Higan (during the equinoxes).
The summer season has passed and lately it feels like autumn is certainly upon us.**

While we are still continuing our self-restraining stay at home life to avoid the coronavirus infectious disease, it feels like we have become quite accustomed to this lifestyle. The routine pattern of whenever we go out, we put our masks on, avoid dense crowds, and when we return home, we gargle and wash our hands, has become a matter of course.

This infectious disease which has spread as pandemic throughout the world is still not ready to stop. Let us extend our deepest gratitude to everyone engaged without rest in the healthcare industry and all those essential workers who continuously support our daily lives during this time.

Let us mourn for the people whose precious lives were lost due to this infectious disease and also pray for the rapid recovery of all who are presently ill in the hospital.

This self-restraining stay at home life started in April and in no time sixth months have passed. It furthermore seems this condition will last for a while. In my ‘June message,’ I wrote: let us spend each and every day meaningfully, so that when this infectious disease ceases, we would not end up regretting and wondering, what was I doing all those days?

Not being able to meet and talk with people, nor enjoy having dinner together... what can we do especially at times like this when we can succumb to loneliness and anxiety? At first, we may feel some inconvenience every day. However, this is different from the way we spent our daily lives busily absorbed in our schedules. Hopefully, we can realize and cherish the fact that we now have plenty of time to reflect on ourselves and effectively use the time as opportunity to improve our competence.

Venerable Saicho, who 1200 years ago, studied Buddhism in China and founded the “Tendai sect” with focus on the teachings of the Lotus Sutra in Japan, described outstanding people as follows:

<What is the treasure of a country?

That treasure is in ‘Dou shin’: the aspiration for the Way

Those who possess the aspiration for the Way is called the “Country’s Treasure”

Monetary treasures such as gold and silver are not the “Country’s Treasure”

Those who “Light up a corner” is indeed the “Country’s Treasure” >

<Those with good action and speak well are the “Country’s Treasure”

Those who speak well but cannot put into action are the “Country’s Master Teacher”

Those who have good action but cannot speak well are the “Country’s Helpful People”

Those who cannot speak well nor act well are the “Country’s Traitor (disturb stability)” >

Always aspiring for the Way and continuously practicing, while speaking to many people, brightly illuminates one’s surroundings. Certainly when one person after another “lights up a corner” as such, peace in the country is being established. This is the important approach that was taught.

To put in other words, it is precisely now that we should value the precious time we have been given to open and study the Dharma as well as education and research books; not only to learn but through putting what we learn into practice, make this a suitable opportunity with the objective to work towards becoming a respectable being. I also have been able to read books I could not read before, re-read books I read once before, encountered famous classical and jazz music. Therefore, I have been able to spend the last six months deeply moved and full of discovery. While I miss seeing everyone, my every day is filled with gratitude.

There was a poet who said, what's important in life are “!” and “?”

When we remove ourselves from being swept by the busy flow of everyday life and enrich our sensitivity in a slightly slower life, we will be able to see things we could not see before and discover new things.

The word “arigatai” which means gratitude is composed of the characters “有る (aru)” and “難い (katai).” ‘Aru’ means ‘to be/exist’ ‘katai’ means ‘difficult.’ When our daily lives, which we thought were a matter of course and took for granted, changed and we experienced inconvenience, it was our first step to realize the importance of understanding how difficult things we take for granted actually are. Therefore, it would be wise to accept slight inconveniences not as seeds for dissatisfaction but as seeds of awareness.

October is Founder’s “parinirvana” month (his memorial day is October 4th). The Founder explained in a very easy to understand manner, the way we should live as a faith practitioner suitable to our actual daily lives.

Let us show our gratitude to the Founder by renewing our efforts to receive and embrace the teaching and to put into practice in our daily lives.

Gassho

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