

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin
On the Occasion of the January Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony
January 1, 2021
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

In this early spring of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin, I wish you a Happy New Year!

I believe that all of you have welcomed the start of this significant year, feeling refreshed, and have renewed your pledge to make further efforts in your practice.

As you know, upon welcoming this auspicious occasion of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin, in 2021, Nichiren Shoshu made a pledge, “to establish a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by then.” In order to achieve this goal, the guiding priests as well as the Hokkeko believers around the world have made a cooperative effort, based on the spirit of many in body, one in mind (*itai doshin*), and have courageously performed shakubuku—refuting heresy and revealing the truth. As a result, they have admirably achieved their goal. I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations.

This is solely due to the strong faith of each guiding priest and his devotion to achieve the goal, and I offer my hearty congratulations. Moreover, it is owing to the earnest efforts of the Hokkeko believers. I offer my deepest appreciation.

On the other hand, regarding the chapters that could not achieve their goals by the end of last year, I sincerely wish that each member will take to heart the Daishonin’s teaching: “one’s life is insignificant while the Law is supreme. You should be willing to give your life to propagate the Law.” Then, the members of those chapters should unite in one mind, based on the spirit of *itai doshin*, and exert their utmost efforts to carry through shakubuku right down to the wire, so that every single chapter will keep its promise to the Gohonzon and achieve its shakubuku goal without fail.

Through our shakubuku challenge during this tough time, I strongly feel that the key to victory is as follows:

[When Hoki-bo, Sado-bo and others, as well as the Atsuwara believers are united] with the spirit of many in body, one in mind, they will achieve everything, whereas, in the case of one in body, many in mind, they will not accomplish anything.

(*Gosho*, p. 1389)

As these golden words teach, we must know that unity based on the spirit of *itai doshin* is the key to success.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the *Gosho*, *On the Heritage of the Ultimate Law of Life and Death* (Shoji ichidaiji kechimiyaku-sho):

All disciples and believers of Nichiren should chant Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo with the spirit of many in body, one in mind, overcoming all differences among themselves, [to become united with the heart of the Buddha], just like fish being inseparable from the water in which they swim. This is called the Heritage of the ultimate Law of life and death. This is also what Nichiren is trying to propagate now in the Latter Day of the Law. When you are so united, even the great aspiration for kosen-rufu can be fulfilled without fail. However, if there are any among Nichiren's disciples who are many in body, many in mind, they are like subjects in a castle who destroy the fortress from within.

(*Gosho*, p. 514)

In our challenge toward the achievement of the propagation of Myoho-Renge-Kyo throughout the entire world, it is essential that we read these golden words respectfully and reaffirm how important unity based on the spirit of *itai doshin* is. Then, the members of each chapter should unite as one and move forward on the path to kosen-rufu.

In particular, when I look at the chaotic situation of the world today due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, I strongly feel it is important that each of

us have pride and awareness as a disciple and follower of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth, and overcome this crisis by steadfastly chanting Daimoku, and devoting ourselves to propagate the mystic Law (*Myoho*). We must be aware that this is the key to success.

I sincerely pray that you will continue practicing for yourself and others and further devote yourselves to the achievement of kosen-rufu.