

NICHIREN SHOSHU BENIN



Reverend Shindo Imafuku's visit to Benin on July 4 – 7 2019

July, 4th

All Benin district members have been honoured as they welcomed Rev. Shindo Imafuku and Koto, Dr. Kwame Boamah on July 4th at 5PM GMT in Benin main meeting place at Bazoukpa. First, Rev. Imafuku led evening gongyo with 16 members and 3 guests. At request of the General Secretary, Reverend explained the correct way to: clean one's altar, offer water before morning gongyo, the position of accessories, ringing of the bell, and how to do sansho and hiki daimoku. After which members were given the opportunity to ask questions. Below are some of the questions and short answers.

Q1: A member did not respond "I do" during Gojukai ceremony: Was his Gojukai really completed?

Rev: Once the Joju Gohonzon is rested on his head, the relationship is established.

Q2: Why is it said that people during Shobo and Zobo age received conspicuous benefit and those during Mappo received inconspicuous benefit?

Rev: Because the relationship Shobo and Zobo people had formed with the Lotus Sutra during the distant past had finally matured. On the other hand, those born today in Mappo receive the seed of Buddhahood for the first time, and their benefit is therefore inconspicuous.

Q3: While one is sick, can he practice gongyo and shodai on the bed?

Rev: It is allowed if one can't sincerely practice in a sitting position.

Q4: I have done Gongyo at home before paying visit to a member or before going to a Buddhist meeting. Should I do Gongyo if the member I am visiting is doing Gongyo or if Gongyo is going to be done at such meeting?

Rev: You can repeat it, but it is not an obligation.

Q5: How can I practice to face hardships and to overcome poverty?

Rev: You should practice as Buddha taught. Never miss Gongyo, attend district and temple meetings and do shakubuku.

The meeting ended after 2 hours.

July, 5th



Djakotomey

The second day of Reverend's visit was devoted to a journey to Djakotomey to see new members. It is located in the south-west of Cotonou, about 150 km. Reverend and koto, followed by 6 Benin leaders travelled for 2 hours to get there. At 9AM GMT Reverend conducted ceremonial Gongyo and 30 minutes of shodai with 43 guests. Then Reverend gave a lecture on "Good causes lead to good effects, bad causes, lead to bad effects".

The in-depth explanation of Reverend's sermon raised the guests awareness. As result, they asked many questions. Here are some:

Q1: Comparison between Buddha and God. Is Buddhism a religion of God or a religion of Voodoo?

Q2: If Buddha is a human being, are we sure to go to heaven?

Q3: How can Buddha manifest himself?

Q4: How do we worship Buddha?

Q5: Can this religion help to overcome poverty?

In the long run, 23 guests received Gojukai and the meeting ended at 12PM GMT.



July, 6th

The third day was devoted to the third Reverend's visit to Porto-Novo, Benin's Capital. At 7:45 AM Reverend started Shodai followed by morning Gongyo at 9 AM GMT.



Porto Novo

Reverend's sermon based on The four (4) and eight (8) sufferings. The lecture was well received by the 12 guests and the 31 members in attendance.

Many questions were asked by the guests:

Is only Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo enough to overcome our difficulties?

Saying Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, means that other Buddhism exists. Why is it so?

What does Buddhism think about Jesus?

Why doesn't Buddhism trust in God?

Is polygamy allowed?

Does the effect from parents and ancestors' causes affect children?

Reverend devoted a good deal of time to answer these questions. He did 8 Gojukai, and the meeting ended at 12 PM GMT. One hour later, he led a leaders' meeting which lasted 2 hours.



July, 7th

As the last day of Reverend's stay, a meeting took place in Benin main center of Bazoukpa. 44 members and 57 guests proudly did 1 hour of shodai and morning gongyo at 9 AM GMT. Reverend expounded his sermon on yesterday's topic: Four (4) and eight (8) sufferings.



Bazoukpa

Many questions were asked.

"I have just received Gojukai, but my husband won't allow me to attend Buddhist meeting once we move out of our current house". What should I do?

Why can't my desires be fulfilled?

How can I practice to overcome a specific karma?

What about fasting to solve difficulties?

If a member "taitens", shall other members hate him/her?

As a new member, should I have a particular attitude in society?

As a new member, can I still use the clothes on which are printed scriptures of my former religion?

Why are people happy during birth and sad during death?

What about life after death?

How does the world begin?

Reverend spent two hours and half to answer these questions. Finally 35 people received Gojukai.



After evening Gongyo and commemorative photos, the meeting came to an end.



All Benin members feel grateful for reverend's visit since it helped us to deepen our faith and achieve our shakubuku target. We have to support these members to do more shakubuku and for a successful Oeshiki in October.

More chanting!!!!