

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Hinokishin Day 2025

This year's Hinokishin Day had participants from various districts throughout the America and Canada diocese. New York District (top left), Hollywood District (top right), Gardena District (bottom left), Tacoma District (bottom right).

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyoamericacanada.org

May 2025

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

- *Critical Thinking* -

Last month, we celebrated Oyasama’s 227th birthday. It was a truly blessed occasion.

Our Women’s Association Convention will be held this month. I hope that as many members as possible will be participating. I also hope that all our Women’s Association members will work together in unison and wholeheartedly devote themselves in the final year of our pre-anniversary activities for Oyasama’s 140th anniversary.

Also, our Tenrikyo Student Association Spring Conference will be held this month as well. We hope that our students will gather and inspire each other and continue their path toward spiritual maturity.

Furthermore, the 85th America Spiritual Development Course is scheduled to begin next month (June). We sincerely ask for your support in having many participants participate in this course.

Now, there is a term called “Filter Bubbles.. This term is defined on the website of Japan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (<https://www.soumu.go.jp/johotsusintokei/whitepaper/ja/r01/html/nd114210>).

html) as follows:

“By analyzing and studying the search and click histories of individual Internet users, an algorithm prioritizes the information that users want to see—whether they desire it or not—while isolating them from information that does not align with their perspective, ultimately causing them to become isolated within a ‘bubble’ of their own thoughts and values.”

It also states that the following three problems have arisen.

“First, there is the problem of individuals becoming isolated. For example, even when watching a specialized TV program

(continued on page 14)

Coming Up

- * Tenrikyo Students Assoc. Spring Conference
@ Mission HQ 5/24~5/26
- * Tenrikyo Young Men’s Assoc. Convention
@ Mission HQ 6/14

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April Monthly Service Prayer

March 20, 2025

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, Who is enshrined in this altar, I, Tomoyoshi Tanaka, Board Member, on behalf of the Bishop of Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, out of Your deep parental love to save all Your children in the world, You revealed the path of world salvation by revealing Oyasama as Your living shrine. We are grateful and humbled that we are able to progress on the path of the Joyous Life spiritedly. We follow the Divine Model that Oyasama had demonstrated through Her fifty years of devotion.

This month, we celebrate the birthdate of the everliving Oyasama of April 18, 1798. Today, receiving the truth of Jiba, we Service performers will perform our April monthly service by spiritedly performing the seated service and the Teodori service dance with joyous hearts. We will also celebrate the 227th birthday of Oyasama.

Looking forward to this day, we Yoboku and followers have gathered here to give thanks for Your daily blessings and pray for Your unchanging parental love. In witnessing this, we ask that You become spirited as well.

This month, many followers from our diocese have returned to Jiba for Oyasama's Birthdate celebration. After having received the truth of Jiba and have returned to their respective locals, please guide them, so that they may spiritedly engage in salvation work.

In addition, from now until next month, we will be holding our annual hinokishin day activities in various regions in our diocese. May this also serve in helping to spread the fragrance of the teachings.

As we approach the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, in light of the wars, conflicts, and disasters that the world is witnessing, we would like to reflect upon God the Parent's desire to hasten the realization of the world of the Joyous Life and, relying on the Divine Model of Oyasama, we pledge to strive on the path of single-heartedly helping others be saved.

Further, let us unite the minds of all in our diocese and further our spiritual growth in our activities towards Oyasama's anniversary.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our mind of sincerity and bless us so that, even one day sooner, the minds of all people will become purified and that this world becomes one in which we all mutually help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray, that You bless us so.

April Monthly Service Sermon

by Rev. Jonathan Nomachi

~Counting my Appreciations towards the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama~

Good morning, everyone! Thank you for attending and participating in the April Monthly service at Dendocho. I truly felt our collective joy today as we performed the Seated Service and the Teodori, led by Reverend Tanaka, and in unison with the entire congregation.

I would like to thank Bishop Fukaya for the opportunity to speak with you all today. I will say that I was reluctant to accept this opportunity as I instantly felt the pressure of speaking in April, the birth month of our Foundress. To be honest, I started to joke with myself to ease that pressure by saying that the only reason the Bishop asked me to speak today was because the Bishop and other key leaders of the faith would not be in attendance as they would already be in Ojiba and not around to see me fail miserably. So, before I begin my sermon, please jump on your social media app. (Line, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok) and send a message across the world that I delivered an amazing sermon today... #BestSpeechEver! And with that, I ask for your kind attention for a few more minutes.

As we are counting down towards the

140th Anniversary of Oyasama, I struggled in deciding what my conversation would be about. I am a pretty boring person and I don't really have any amazing or miraculous stories of faith to share with you all. But I do know that I have much to be thankful for and many appreciations in my life. Instruction Four states,

The period of 'three years, one thousand days' that leads up to an anniversary of Oyasama is a time for us to actively move forward on the path of single-hearted salvation by implementing the teachings with our sights set on the divine model.

One of those teachings is about finding joy in any situation and having appreciations for all around us. So, I decided to focus on sharing with you all some of the appreciations in my life as I reflect in preparation for the 140th Anniversary.

As this is my first official sermon, I thought I would start at the beginning by introducing myself and the church that I represent. My name is Jonathan Nomachi and I am the 3rd Head Minister of the Los Angeles Central Church in Downey, California. I was born as a 5th generation son of a farming family who begin to follow the Tenrikyo path through an illness called facial neuralgia. My parents are Rev. Yutaka



Rev. Jonathan Nomachi, head minister of
Los Angeles Central Church

and Teruyo Nomachi who served as leaders of Los Angeles Central Church for over 50 years and continue to serve as spiritual advisors for our congregation. As I became the head minister during the COVID-19 restrictions, my parents probably did not get to truly experience the appreciation by many of their peers and friends. So, I just wanted to take this moment quickly to thank my mom and dad for all their hard work and dedication as they led the church for so many years. While I know I have much to learn about being a head minister and do not always agree with the lessons shared by my parents, I am so grateful that I still have both of them to lean on.

Thanks to the amazing blessings from my parents, our church's current foundation is built around a few key families and individuals, the Watanabes, the Turners, the Wilsons, my sisters, and my amazing wife and three children. Growing up in the

church, I took for granted all the amazing blessings I received daily and just counted it as just part of everyday church life. But as I've gotten older and now the head minister, I think I see more clearly and appreciate the dedication everyone has towards the faith and our church. There is a Divine Direction which states,

I have granted the truth of a church name to various places. Church, church, a church name. At each church, there is a person who is its core. Understand well. That person should be the first one to understand My heart.

Osashizu, October 31, 1900

Whether it is a bounty of home grown vegetables and fruits brought for offerings, preparing the delicious lunch, setting up and cleaning up the service performance area, taking the kids out to pick up trash and doing art projects after lunch, and almost never missing a month despite their busy schedules, I just want to thank them for being so integral to the success of our church. While I have a lot to learn still to truly understand God's heart, I am so grateful that our church's core strength comes from the collective rather than any one person.

To strengthen my ability to better understand God's heart, I began to count my daily appreciations or blessings starting January 1st of this final year towards the 140th Anniversary. I believe I have started to miss the wonderful blessings of God all

around us each day and have been moving at a pace where it is easy to miss these moments of joy, sometimes as brief as a blink of the eye. I was inspired to do this intentional reflection by a certain line in Instruction Four that states:

Oyasama taught that, if we remain singly focused on working for the salvation of others, our minds will gradually become purified without us even realizing it and will allow us to be saved and filled with joy and brightness.

What an amazing line! You are so focused on helping others that you naturally become purified and filled with joy and brightness. I used to always think that there would be this major moment where you realize you were being saved for your good deeds of saving others. This led to my struggle in thinking I would need to have this dramatic, miraculous moment of salvation for others. But hearing this really strengthened my hope that I can experience this purification and being saved through moments of joy and brightness in my life. And in fact, I may have already had these moments and just never paid enough attention to realize it. So, I resolved in this final year of the three-year, 1,000 day drive towards the 140th Anniversary that I would continue to help others but also track as many moments as possible of the appreciations and joy that God provides for me. I felt I needed to be intentional with counting the



appreciations in my life so I can build the muscle within myself and never miss a moment of joy in my life.

As of April 19th, I have counted 4,745 moments of appreciation (an average of 44 per day) I suspect this is a big undercount from what God provides me daily [86,4000 seconds in a day] but I have been able to slow down more hear and there to acknowledge the wonders that are provided to me. Some brief observations from my counting:

- 1) Many of my high counts of appreciation were tied to doing the service; whether the New Year's Day Service at America Dendocho and our own church or our own monthly services where I am so grateful to see all the acts of kindness that is displayed by everyone in having a joyous service and lunch together.
- 2) One of my highest appreciation count days was the birth of my third son, Oren Yushin Nomachi. While I may have had the least important role that day, it just highlighted my appreciation and love for my partner, Kaori,

for all that she has done since she decided to walk this path together with me. I'm a pretty lucky guy!

3) On my lowest count days, I always seemed distracted in counting, moving too fast, or just having a bad day where I was clouded by dust. However, I would be able to catch myself with an unexpected moment of joy... whether it was when the sun shined a little brighter in my eyes or when my eldest daughter Magnolia did something unexpected and kind to my second son, Linden.

So, as I wrap up my time with you today, I want to offer a small challenge to everyone. If you are still thinking of something to do in this final year leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, please

consider trying to just count the number of appreciations and moments of joy in your life for one day. While I'm sure you will do a better job than I have been able to do but I think it could provide an opportunity to experience, even in a few fleeting moments, this feeling of joy and the desire to continue to help others each day. I'm looking forward to hearing the children sing Happy Birthday to Oyasama shortly and am excited to enjoy a nice meal together with you all where we all can be grateful about the fact that when we eat a hot dog, it tastes of a hot dog!

I thank you all for your kind attention and hope to see you in Ojiba next year to celebrate the Anniversary together!

Happy Birthday Oyasama!

The Tenrikyo Boys' & Girls' Association celebrated Oyasama's 227th birthday by crafting handmade gifts and performing a heartfelt song during the April monthly service at the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America.



1) MAY MONTHLY SERVICE (5/18)

Officiant: Bishop

Director: Shigemi Torizawa

Assistants: Masahito Kimura, Yoichi Fukui

Attendants: Brian Kojima, Kinpei Ito

Offerings Officiant: Gary Yashiki

Sermon: Satoru Onishi (J)

2) CHURCH & FELLOWSHIP AFFAIRS

- Terminal Church: Church Roof Replacement, Temporary Transfer of the Medo (2 cases), Request for Special Service
 - Divine Sanction: End of March, 2025
 - Enshrinement Service: May 31, 2025
 - Enshrinement Ceremony: May 30, 2025
- California Church: Church Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service
 - Divine Sanction (Scheduled): July 26, 2025
 - Enshrinement Service: August 31, 2025
 - Head Minister: Taichi Tony Onishi
- Illinois Church: Church Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service
 - Divine Sanction (Scheduled): July 26, 2025
 - Enshrinement Service: October 4, 2025
 - Head Minister: Hiroaki Takagaki
 - Phone Number: (847) 340-5470 *Successor's Cell Phone Number
- Kochi Omaha Fellowship: Fellowship closure notice was processed on February 4, 2025.

3) PASSING AWAY FOR REBIRTH

On April 26 (Sun) at 1:00 AM, Rev. Sachiko Nakatsuchi, head minister of the Central Coast Church, passed away for rebirth at the age of 97. The transfer of spirit ceremony was conducted on April 28 at 4:00 PM. The funeral service will be conducted on June 22 at 1:00 PM, at North America Church. We would like to acknowledge and appreciate her many years of service and dedication.

4) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

For those districts that have conducted their Hinokishin Day activities, please submit your Activity Report to the Mission Headquarters Secretaries (c/o Masuno).

5) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the Mission Headquarters is currently scheduled to be held from June 15 (Sun) to July 12 (Sat). These courses will be held if there are at least two applicants for the English or Japanese course, or five applicants for the Spanish course, as of one month prior (May 18).

6) TSA SPRING CONFERENCE

The TSA Spring Conference will be held from May 24~26 at the Mission Headquarters. The schedule will include HARP activities, lectures, Hinokishin activities, and some fun activities at the Santa Monica Pier.

Applications have been distributed to all churches, fellowships, and mission centers, and is also available on the Mission Headquarters homepage as well.

Application Deadline: May 18 *We have extended the deadline passed the original due date.

7) TENRIKYO LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (TLI) APPLICATION

We would like to communicate a few major updates to the TLI application for the Japanese Language Department in 2026.

Eligibility:

1. Those who completed formal education for a minimum of 12 years.

2. Those who have passed N5 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.

When applying for the Japanese Language Department, the Certificate of Japanese-Language Proficiency must be submitted with the application.

- For those who have not passed N5, applicants will be given study materials from the Japanese Language Department in May of the application year, in order to prepare for skill certification test, to be taken by the end of August.

- Depending on the results of this skill certification test, should TLI certify that the applicant's proficiency is equivalent to that of N5, the application will be accepted, and accommodations should be made so that the application process itself will not be hindered.

Regarding application distribution:

- As of April 25, downloadable application forms are available on the TLI website. (https://kaigai.tenrikyo.or.jp/tli/top/?page_id=1021)

- The website also contains details regarding the study requirements for the skill certification test, which can be found on the website. (https://kaigai.tenrikyo.or.jp/tli/top/?page_id=1079)

8) MEMORIAL DAY CEMETARY VISIT

On May 26 (Mon) at 12:30 PM, the Mission Headquarters will offer their prayers, then proceed to Evergreen Cemetery to pay their respects.

9) AMERICA ICHIRETSU-KAI SCHOLARSHIP

We are now accepting applications for the 2025 America Ichiretsukai Scholarship. Children of church, fellowship, and mission center heads who have been accepted to attend college are eligible. Application forms are available at the Mission Headquarters. The application deadline is June 30 (Mon). New recipients will be announced on the August monthly service day. Those wishing to continue to receive scholarship in the second, third, or fourth year will not have to resubmit applications; however, if students plan to take time off from school or transfer to another school, they must report it to the Mission Headquarters by August 31.

10) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES RELIEF FUND

The Mission Headquarters was able to collect a total of \$17,042 in donations for the wildfire disaster that affected Southern California, along with a donation of \$15,000 from the Tenrikyo International Tasukeai Net, and a donation of \$5,000 from the Mission Headquarters in Hawaii, for a total amount of \$38,792. These funds were donated to the Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA), to aid in the Southern California Wildfires disaster relief activities.

[Photo: Receiving the donations from Tenrikyo Hawaii Dendocho and the Tenrikyo Young Men's Association of Hawaii through Rev. Takatoshi Mima, a Board of Director of the Tenrikyo Hawaii Dendocho (April 25, 2025)]



11) BESSEKI LECTURES DURING THE MONTHS OF JANUARY AND APRIL, 2026

As the amount of expected Besseki Lecture attendees is anticipated to greatly increase during these months before and after the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, the days when live lectures are offered will be determined in advance. You may view this schedule by visiting the Church Headquarters

homepage, as well as via the Overseas Department homepage. The QR Codes for both pages can be found below:

Church HQ Calendar



Overseas Department Calendar



12) MISSION HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL CHANGES

Mr. Masao Tanaka (Konohana GC, Yuasa BC), who served as seinen at the Mission Headquarters since August 17, 2023, will finish his term and return to Japan on May 21.

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

- * The gate behind MP Hall is broken; Rev. Eddie Takemoto has offered to help us fix it.
- * Mr. Brian Yamasaki (Hollywood Church), along with the Mission Headquarters staff, are clearing weeds in the parking lot and in the Biotope Garden.

MISSIONARY COMMITTEE

- * Starting from July of 2025, we would like to begin monthly service duty at the Mission Headquarters for church, fellowship, and mission center heads. An email has been sent out for the purposes of compiling a duty roster. Please use the following link to submit your preferred months (first to third preference), by the end of May. <https://forms.gle/6c2ezkKVTnGbZD9N8>

Nurturing & Educational Development Committee

- * Oyasato Seminar
- Ms. Amy Morishita will be supervising students at the Myodo GC Follower's Dormitory prior to the start of the course.
- A LINE group has been established for students & counselors and another for parents/guardians to facilitate communication.
- We will have a joint orientation over Zoom on May 18, (Sun) at 4PM (PDT), for students, parents/guardians, counselors, and staff.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- * We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone's efforts and activities leading up to the 140th anniversary of Oyasama so that we can share our events & ideas with all of our congregation members. Therefore, we would like to request churches, fellowships, districts, and individuals to submit your activity reports & pictures to us (Kawakami: kamishuyo@hotmail.com or Hayashi: takhayashi@gmail.com).
- * The Mission HQ Homepage has been updated with new content, including monthly service sermons,

“SoulFire” reflection videos, and “Stories Inspired by Oyasama.” Please visit our homepage to view these videos, and let those around you know as well. Also, the domain name has been changed from Tenrikyo.com to TenrikyoAmericaCanada.org .

FUTURE PATH

* We are hosting a seminar on the Tenrikyo sacred scriptures during the weekend of August 30-31, 2025 at the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America. The sacred scriptures include the Ofudesaki, Mikagura-Uta, and Osashizu. Additional program information is posted on the Mission Headquarters website at

https://tenrikyoamericacanada.org/scripture_study_seminar_2025 .

Applications from attendees are due by July 1, 2025. If you have any questions, please contact the Mission Headquarters via email Tenrikyoprograms@gmail.com or by phone at (323) 261-3379.



WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

* District Convention:

New York District: June 22, 2025 (Sat) 1 PM @ New York Center

BOYS' & GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

* The BGA Camp will be held from June 20 (Fri) ~ June 22 (Sun). Please sign up by April 18.

Registration form link: <https://forms.gle/3Wn58k7brDhhLuyi9>

* The Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba General Group is planned for July 24~30. Also, the BGA International Hinokishin Corps will be held from July 25~30. Please submit applications by May 31.

* The 2025 BGA Service Convention will be held on August 16 (Sat). The service roster was distributed last month, so for those who did not yet sign up, please do so as soon as possible. Also, following the Mission Headquarters monthly service, we will hold service practice in the Sanctuary and in the BGA Room from 1 PM, so please join us.

* Please send an email to moto1884@icloud.com if there are any new BGA members, newborn or new to the North America congregation.

* Let's share stories about Oyasama with BGA members! Visit your churches as a family and engage in hinokishin together.

TYMANA

* We will hold our TYMANA Convention on June 14 (Sat) from 10:30 AM. The afternoon will feature several hinokishin activities, so please bring hinokishin clothes. In the evening, we will attend a game at Dodgers Stadium. We are offering subsidized tickets for TYMANA members, so please reach out to Chairman Ryo Wong if you are interested in attending (wongryo@gmail.com).

* The 99th TYMA Convention will be held in the Inner Courtyard of Church Headquarters on October 25 (Sat), from 1 PM.

NY CENTER

* 5/25 TYMA Family BBQ

Study Seminar Tenrikyo Sacred Scriptures



*Invitation to study the Ofudesaki,
Mikagura-Uta, and Osashizu*

Special Guest Speakers

Dr. Ikuo Higashibaba and Rev. Takahiko Hayashi

August 30-31, 2025

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters, Los Angeles

For further information:

website: TenrikyoAmericaCanada.org

email: Tenrikyoprograms@gmail.com

phone: (323) 261-3379

Information packet



Online application form
Due July 1, 2025



Season for Growth toward 140th Anniversary of Oyasama from Rev. Fumioka

Presentation on the introduction of Tenrikyo at Swedenborg Library in Chicago

I did a presentation on the introduction of Tenrikyo at Swedenborg Library, located in downtown Chicago, on April 17.

Swedenborg Library was established on 1877 and located one block just north of where the Second Shinbashira delivered a speech on Tenrikyo at World Religion Conference in 1933.

Swedenborg Library hosts a monthly program where they invite scholars and public figures to present on topics not only on Swedenborgian theology but also various faith in the world. The study group is open to public, regardless of one's faith, belief, and/or denominations. I was invited to talk about Tenrikyo for their program.



Rev. Kuni Fumioka, head minister of
Midwest Church (Chicago, IL)

There were 8 persons attended in person and also 9 persons attended via Zoom. There were a few more people who logged in but we had technical issues and the start of the presentation was delayed by 20 minutes. Because of that, it appears that some people had left. There were three people who attended all the way from Australia.

The presentation began with a brief overview of Tenrikyo and its history. Then I explained some of the important teachings such as the Eight Dusts of the Mind as well as A Thing Lent, A Thing Borrowed, for a total of 50 minutes. The presentation was followed by a small discussion with participants, which included a question-and-answer session for about 30 minutes.

Everyone listened to the lecture very attentively. One person told me that there were many similarities with the faith he is following, but the concept of seeing God as the Parent was very interesting. There was another comment -- The metaphor of Dust is just beautiful. It is a wonderful teaching to regard the use of the mind opposite from the Joyous Life as dust and to keep cleaning the dust of the mind since they accumulate no matter what is very easy to understand. During the discussion, I was able to read the Chapter Three of the Doctrine of Tenrikyo, the Truth of Origin as well.

I was very delighted to be able to introduce Tenrikyo to the world in our third year of the "three year, one thousand days" pre-anniversary activity period. Since the location was just across the street from where the Second Shinbashira did his speech on Tenrikyo 92 years ago. The number "92" can be read as "KU-NI" in Japanese, I felt emotional support from the Second Shinbashira. Also, when the presentation was held, it was April 18 in Japan, just before Oyasama's Birth Celebration Service was to commence. I felt that this presentation was also a birthday celebration for Oyasama.

that deals with a very narrow field, there are still other people watching who share the same values and ideas as you do. However, within an internet filter bubble, basically you are the only one alone inside this “filter bubble.” As a result, this makes the filter bubble a centrifugal force that tears us apart in an age where the sharing of information creates the sharing of experiences.

The second issue is that filter bubbles are invisible. When watching television, as long as one chooses what to watch, they understand why a particular program was selected. However, with results displayed by personalized search engines, the basis for why that information was selected is not clearly presented. Being inside the filter bubble, it becomes difficult to tell how biased the displayed information is, or whether the information represents an unbiased, objective truth.

Lastly, the issue is that users themselves did not choose to stay inside the filter bubble. When watching TV or reading newspapers and magazines, users actively choose which filters through which to view the world. However, in the case of personalized filters, it points out that users are not using filters by their own choice; rather, they are placed in a situation where the filters are difficult to avoid, even if they wanted to.

In addition, although there is some overlapping definition with the above, the following drawbacks have been pointed out according to AI (Artificial Intelligence).

- Possibility of developing biased thinking.
- Risk of becoming isolated.
- Opportunities for exposure to different opinions and alternative viewpoints may be lost.
- Easily spread false information, intentional lies, and rumors on the internet.
- This may result in increased social division.

There is also the term “ECHO CHAMBER”. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications defines it as follows:

“When using social media, users tend to follow others with similar interests and contents. As a result, when they express their thoughts on social media, similar opinions will come back to them. This situation is likened to the physical phenomenon of sound reverberating in a small, closed room.”

According to AI-generated summaries, the term “echo chamber” is pointed out as potentially causing the following negative effects:

- People become more susceptible to believing false information or fake news.
- It makes it harder to accept different opinions.
- It may cause social divisions.

- There might be a risk of extremist behavior.

Whether it is the “filter bubble” or the “echo-chamber,” both point to the risk of the closed nature of internet society influences and the risk of even people’s mind become filled with stereotypical thoughts and beliefs.

In other words, in today’s modern civilization, where we rely heavily on various devices and technologies in our daily lives, there is already a real and growing danger that humans are being controlled by these very technologies.

Although “filter bubble” and “echo-chamber” are described dangerous terms mainly for Internet users, the same issues can be seen in the so-called “old media” such as TV, newspapers, and magazines. In reality, TV networks, newspapers, and publishers intentionally do not describe accurate information to the public, instead, they control their viewers and readers.

In some cases, it is even possible to withhold or not publish information that is unfavorable to them. Even if accurate information is provided, they can still control the importance of the information by the amount of time and opportunity they devote to reporting it, the treatment they give it in print, and the number of words they use.

Given these facts, we can see the extreme importance of how people handle information in today’s information society.

What we need is the ability to determine whether the information we see and hear is accurate or not. However, I believe that one way to think about this is through “critical

thinking.”

“Critical thinking” is defined as follows on the website of Recruit, a Japanese human resources company:

“Critical thinking is a way of thinking thoroughly and comprehensively about what the current issue or problem is, what the essential issue is by taking a “critical” view of the event, and what the hypothesis or answer to the issue or problem is.”

In other words, we could refer to “critical thinking” as referring to the ability to think objectively and deeply about things and to see through to its essence.

I believe that “critical thinking” is important in our faith as well. Even though we receive various kinds of information, I believe it is important to discern the essence of the information and to derive answers based on our teachings.

In other words, it is important for us to cultivate the ability to discern the essence of what things really are, always asking Oyasama, “What would You do if You were in my shoes?”

In today’s society, there are many situations in which we are easily influenced by current trends, but it is important to have an attitude of looking at things and making good judgments based on the teachings of Oyasama. This attitude is what will nurture you to be unaffected by the world’s trends, and in turn, will build the foundation for you to walk on the correct path toward the Joyous Life.

(translation by S. Fujimoto)

TENRIKYO MISSION HEADQUARTERS IN AMERICA
2727 EAST FIRST STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90033

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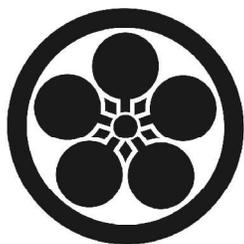
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TOWARD THE JOYOUS LIFE

TENRIKYO came into existence on October 26, 1838, when God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, became revealed through Oyasama, Miki Nakayama, to save all humankind. God the Parent is God of Origin and God of Truth who created this world and has nurtured and protected us ever since.



God the Parent created human beings so that by seeing us lead the Joyous Life, God could share in our joy. Leading the Joyous Life is, therefore, the purpose of our existence. Since God is our Parent, we are all God's children; thus, we should realize that we are all brothers and sisters.

“With human beings : the body is a thing lent by God, a thing borrowed. The mind alone is yours.”

Osashizu : June 1, 1889

We are taught that we borrow our bodies from God the Parent and only our minds truly belong to us; further, through the proper use of our minds, we will be able to lead the Joyous Life.