



TWA 70th Anniversary Comemmorative Pilgrimage to Jiba

From April 17-20, many members from the congregation returned to Jiba to attend Oyasama's Birthday Service and the TWA Convention. The 70th Anniversary Comemmorative Pilgrimage to Jiba for the American chapter will continue throughout the year. Please contact the Women's Association if you have or are planning to return to Jiba this year.

Pictures of this pilgrimage, as well as pictures of Hinokishin Day and Sunday School, can be found in the online version of the Newsletter!

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

— *Meaning of Words* —

The Tenrikyo Women’s Association of America will hold their convention this month. By the time you read this article, it will have already been completed, and I hope that as many women members as possible will have attended.

Some districts held their Hinokishin Day activity last month, and some will hold it this month. I encourage the participation of those in the districts that will be holding their Hinokishin Day activities this month. Also, as stated in Instruction Four, “Engage in hinokishin on a daily basis,” I would be delighted if you keep the thought of “hinokishin” in mind not only on a “Hinokishin Day” but also on an everyday basis.

People often say that learning Japanese is difficult. The same kanji (Chinese character) may be read differently depending on the context of the sentence.

Even if a kanji for “person” is written in “Ofudesaki,” it may be read as “hito” or “nin.” Although the reading of the kanji for “person” varies depending on the preceding and following verses and the context, it must be quite difficult for non-native Japanese speakers to instantly

decide whether it should be read as “hito” or “nin.”

There are Japanese words that are changing in meanings depending on the generation using the word. I do not think this occurs only in the Japanese language. Therefore, it makes it difficult to translate Japanese words into English sometimes.

In addition, the English translation of the same Japanese word may have to be changed according to the context.

Especially the younger people (as I use this expression, I feel really old myself) in Japan sometimes use Japanese as a colloquial expression that has a different meaning from the same word used by my generation.

For example, there is the word “yabai.”

From my understanding of Japanese,

(continued on page 10)

Coming Up

* June Monthly Service Sermon (6/18)

- by Rev. Yoichi Fukui (J)

*85th America Spiritual Development Course (Shuyokai)

- June 18 (Sun) to July 15 (Sat)

* America Ichiretsukai Scholarship

- Application Deadline: June 30 (Fri)

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April Monthly Service Prayer

April 16, 2023

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, who is enshrined in this altar, I, board member, Marlon Masao Okazaki, on behalf of the Bishop of Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, due to Your profound parental love to save all humankind, You revealed Yourself in this world through Oyasama as the Shrine and laid the path for universal salvation. Since then, with Oyasama's fifty-year Divine Model as our guide, we are able to walk spiritedly on the path toward the Joyous Life through implementing the teachings, and for this, we are truly grateful.

Further, this is Oyasama's birth month, and on this fine day, we shall hold our April monthly service. We service performers will unite our minds to do the seated service and the Teodori service dance with joyous minds. And by doing so, we shall celebrate Oyasama's 225th birthday.

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

This month, the Women's Association of America is holding a group pilgrimage to Jiba. Please guide them so that their members can receive the truth of Jiba and do salvation work in high spirits upon returning to their respective locales.

Further, from this month into the next, we are planning to hold Hinokishin Day activities at local districts within our diocese. We pray that these activities will help in our efforts to spread the teachings.

At this seasonable time, as we embark upon our pre-anniversary activities toward Oyasama's 140th Anniversary, we shall ponder about Your intention to hasten universal salvation and about the conflicts and natural disasters that we are being shown throughout the world.

With Oyasama's Divine Model as our dependable guide, we pledge to strive in realizing the Joyous Life world and also to further our spiritual growth toward our 90th Anniversary, which will be observed next year.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our sincerity and continue to provide us with Your unchanging parental love, so that this world will, even a day sooner, be transformed into one of the Joyous Life—where all people mutually respect and help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

April Monthly Service Sermon by Eddie Takemoto

~*My Life, My Hinokishin*~

Well, I'd like to start off by saying that I've been a minister for half my life, and hopefully there is a successor to take over my position at the church. First off, I am a son of the fourth head minister of my church and, before I became a minister, I had no thought of taking over my father's church. However, I was told by head ministers of other churches that I was the eldest son and had to take it over. I don't know if anyone like myself, as the eldest son, was ever told to take over.

Even though I was the eldest son, or so-called successor, it didn't faze me at all, but at thirty years of age, I came to notice things happening around me as I grew older.

One day, I was at the monthly service here at Dendocho. That's when Bishop Itakura invited me to take part in hinokishin at the Overseas Mission Department in Tenri for one year with people of other nationalities. I never heard of such hinokishin at the Overseas Department before. So, I thought, "why not try something different in my life." So, I happened to mention this to my parents, that I would like to try this volunteer work at the Overseas Department in Tenri




Rev. Eddie Takemoto is the fifth head minister of the Stockton Church.

for a year. When my mother heard about what I was going to do, she panicked and worried for a whole day and she even asked my father if it was alright for me to volunteer there.

"Well," my father said, "it's all O.K. It's good for him to try a new experience and a chance of a lifetime." I did not hesitate at all because I wanted to go so badly.

That would be my 5th time at Jiba and my very first time at the Overseas Mission Department. My dorm's staff employee and I were instructed to take part in hinokishin daily. We read the Ofudesaki every morning with all the staff members of the Overseas Mission Department. Basically, it was all hinokishin (volunteer) work and basic Japanese language schooling, in reading and writing. I also learned how to prepare for a monthly service



and finally, how to perform all the musical instruments at our church. After half a year had passed, my friend and I, together with the main staff leader, visited many grand churches around Tenri.

At that time, my mind started to change a little as the year of my hinokishin activity at the Overseas Mission Department was coming to an end. On the last day, all my friends and I were told to continue doing hinokishin wherever we go and make it a part of our lives, and of our heart. Again, I didn't know what that meant, but in my later life, I know that I'm still continuing to do hinokishin daily. After I returned to my follower's dorm, I pondered how much I enjoyed staying at Jiba and was not ready to return home to America.

After I finished my duty at the Overseas Mission Department, my number one goal was to focus on hinokishin. And since I accomplished that goal, my next goal was to focus on becoming a new head minister. I felt I wanted to stay at Jiba for just a little longer and perform hinokishin at the follower's dorm. I thought it might be a great idea to stay in Japan. I think this was God the Parent teaching me how to operate my church in a proper way, with "no short cuts."

In doing so, the follower's dormitory head staff minister asked if I was willing to perform more hinokishin there and I said, "yes." So, he said,

"I'll let you know soon." Later, the staff member at follower's dormitory said, "Yes. But there is one thing. You have to return to the grand church as a seinen." At first, I did not understand what seinen hinokishin was, until one of my friends mentioned that I had to perform tasks at the grand church daily, such as, getting up early and doing worship hall cleaning, doing *otefuri* (hand dance) and *nioigake* (misionary work) during the day, and reading the Ofudesaki in front of all the staff members at the grand church. As my year ended at the follower's dormitory, I agreed that I would do my best at the grand church as a seinen, doing young men's association hinokishin duty.

In addition to my regular duty at the grand church, my main goal was to practice *otefuri* while I'm at the grand church. I had all the time in the world because I didn't have anything else to do in my free time. So, this gave me a chance to begin practicing *otefuri* in the evening where there was no one in sight, in an empty room. This really helped me prove to myself that I could perform the Service at my own church without anyone's help. As I improved my *otefuri* dance every night, I finally accomplished learning all twelve songs. It was a great feeling knowing that I had help from someone there to get me through learning the *otefuri*, and believing that it must be Oyasama since I agreed to return to my grand church. Now my shoulders

had been lifted and also my life had changed as well, so after that period of two years at the grand church as a seinen, it was time to return back to America and slowly start taking over my father's church.

My mentor who helped me through all of the teachings and through my time at the church told me to, "Keep all your skills and what you learned, be kind and help others, do not complain, be sincere to others. Then your life will be joyous." I remember that from the heart, of Rev. Hiroshi Moriya's words; he was the greatest mentor of my life. I will never forget him.

So, I came back here to the mainland and helped my father and his church for a year or two. I decided to tell my father when he was in his mid seventies, that "I wish to take over his church." He was shocked, I mean by looking at him, he was shocked! It was as if I took his church and power away from him. He did not answer right away. It took about a week or two until my parents discussed this with each other and decided that it was time for change. I decided to also discuss this with my siblings, but there were no answers from my brothers or sister.

I've been running my own church for the past twenty-six years, doing the *sazuke*, and performing *hinokishin* and *nioigake*. Now, I would like to get back to the way it was before the pandemic started. The most difficult

tasks I've experienced had to do with two friends from my upper church who had very bad illnesses. First, one had a heart attack. He was at his son's sports game and he was cheering for his son. He suddenly collapsed, holding his chest. He was immediately rushed to the hospital and once I heard, I hurried down to the hospital as soon as I could. When I arrived at the hospital, I started to perform the *sazuke* for my friend. It was many nights before he recovered, and he had to stay at a rehab center.

In Part I of the *Ofudesaki*, verses 31-38 it talks about an illness of the leg, but it actually can also be about illness anywhere on the body.

What is the cause of my regret thus far?

The lameness of your leg is my prime regret.

You are saying that your leg is affected by illness.

It is not an illness but the anger of God.

My anger is not a small matter.

It is the result of causes accumulated and piled up.

To say why it is that I am angry: it is because the wrongdoing has not been removed.

Unless this wrongdoing is completely removed,

know that it will stand in the way of the construction.

No matter how stubborn this wrongdoing may be, it will be removed by the admonishment of God.

If this wrongdoing is completely cleared away, the lameness of your leg, also, will be cleared away.

If only your leg is made completely well, nothing will remain but to prepare for the construction.

As we *yoboku* follow God the Parent's teachings, God says, "... all human bodies are thing lent by Tsukihi. If this truth is known all over the world, no one will remain selfish or greedy." (Ofudesaki, VI:120-121) My friend has recovered completely, and he is trying his best to take part in the monthly service at my church.

A year later, another friend became ill with stage-4 cancer. He happened to be a relative of my friend who had the heart attack. After my work shift, I would head to his hospital, which was near my work, and perform the *sazuke*.

After I finished performing the *sazuke*, I would return home to my church and perform the twelve songs of the *otefuri* every night. The reason why I do the *otefuri* now is, in the

past, my father used to do that. When he returned home to our church, he would perform all twelve songs and, perform the *sazuke* to any person who needed it. He would come home and do the *otefuri* every night and I would ask my mother, "why is he doing all twelve songs?" She would say, "he is asking God the Parent for help for an ill patient to get well." She also said that this tradition went back to my grandfather and the first head minister of this church. So, she told me to do the same thing when I find someone to save, and to not break that promise. My friend passed away for rebirth and this hit me hard to see a friend passing away for rebirth at such an early age.

In conclusion, let me read from the Shinbashira's Instruction Four where he quotes from Oyasama:

She encouraged those around Her by saying that whatever happens is God's arrangement for guiding people to spiritual maturity.

Further, we are taught:

Through saving others, you will be saved.

Thank you very much for your time.

Online Exclusive: Photo Gallery

**Tenrikyo Women's Association
America 70th Anniversary
Commemorative Pilgrimage to
Jiba**



Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day



New York District



Sacramento District



San Diego District



Gardena District



Washington DC District



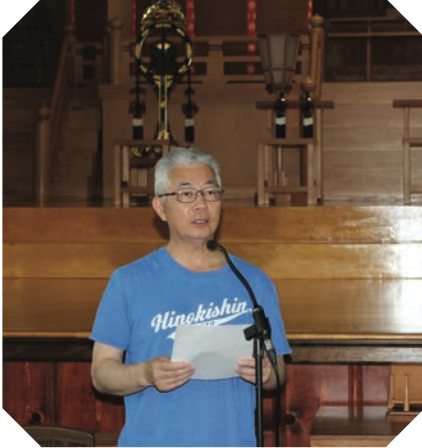
Hinokishin Day Cont'd.



East San Gabriel Valley District



Boyle Heights District



News and Announcements

1) MAY MONTHLY SERVICE (5/21)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Tomoyoshi Tanaka, Takahiko Hayashi
 Attendants: Robert Shimizu, Steven Yukimoto Director: Kuniaki Hasegawa
 Offerings Officiant: Eddie Takemoto Sermon: Keiko Nagao (J)

2) SERVICE PERFORMER APPOINTMENT

As of May 20, Mr. Taichi Onishi of California Church has been newly appointed as a Service Performer of the Mission Headquarters.

3) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

For those districts that have conducted their Hinokishin Day activities, please submit your Activity Report to the Mission Headquarters (% Morishita).

4) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the Mission HQ is currently scheduled to be held from June 18 (Sun) to July 15 (Sat). There is no minimum number of participants for the English class; we will be offering a Spanish class (minimum 5 people) and a Japanese class (minimum 2 people), upon the condition that the minimum number of applications are received by May 20th (one month prior to the start of the spiritual development course).

5) TSA SPRING CONFERENCE

The TSA Spring Conference will be held at the Mission HQ on May 27~28. The theme for this year's conference is, "The Service (Otsutome) – Sweeping Away the Dusts of the Mind." It will feature a couple of spiritually enriching lectures, HARP-based workshops, hinokishin, and fun activities.

6) ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY CEMETARY VISIT

On May 29 (Mon) at 10 AM, the Mission Headquarters will offer their prayers at the Memorial Shrine in the sanctuary, then proceed to Evergreen Cemetery to pay their respects.

7) STAYING OVERNIGHT AT THE MISSION HEADQUARTERS

We require those who are planning to stay overnight at the Mission Headquarters for the grand services and monthly services to contact the Secretaries by the Second Sunday of the month that you plan to visit..

8) AMERICA ICHIRETSUKAI SCHOLARSHIP

We are now accepting applications for the 2023 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 (Fri). 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.

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Nurturing & Educational Committee

* The applications for this year's Oyasato Seminar, to be held in Jiba from July 16~22, have officially been accepted.

Applicants are required to finish eight Besseki Lectures before the beginning of the course. We are currently coordinating with the Overseas Department to arrange in-person English Besseki Lectures.

* The TSA Spring Conference will be held at the Mission HQ on May 27~28.

Public Relations Committee

* We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone's efforts and activities leading up to the 90th anniversary of the Mission Headquarters 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).

* As of April, the Ichiretsu/Newsletter will now be available to view on the Mission HQ website without a password. Under the "Resources" tab, you can now find a new section titled, "Publications." The password-free content can be viewed here. On this page, you can also find links for the 2021-2022 Tenri Kids, as well for the Tenrikyo Newsletter.

* From the June issue, we will be changing the paper size being used for the Ichiretsu/Newsletter; moving forward, it will be printed to the same dimensions as New York Center's Progress.

Translation Committee

* We will be holding a mini-conference online, from May 27~28, to continue our efforts in retranslating the Anecdotes of Oyasama.

Women's Association

* TWA America Convention: May 20 (Sat) from 9:30 AM PT, at the Mission HQ. In-person. Will be livestreamed.

Boys & Girls Association

* Details regarding the summer Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba will be announced in early May. The International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corps will be held from July 26~29. If you are interested in volunteering to be a counselor for the Hinokishin Corps, please contact the head of the B&GA America, Rev. Motohiro Iwahashi.

* The B&GA America Service Convention will be held in-person at the Mission Headquarters, on August 19 (Sat). Those members and parents who cannot make it to the Mission HQ may participate virtually to hear the message from the Association President.

* Vertical Mission Seminar: On behalf of B&GA Headquarters, Mr. Kazumoto Kubo will be visiting to conduct the seminar on August 20.

* New B&GA guidelines have been announced: "Let's implement the teachings using Oyasama's Divine Model as a dependable guide and convey to children the joy of faith!"

[CONCRETE GOALS] - Let's tell children stories of Oyasama - Let's hold children's gatherings at our churches - Let's carry out hinokishin activities with children in local communities

TYMANA

* This year's annual TYMANA Convention will be held at the Mission Headquarters on July 15 (Sat) from 11AM.

* TYMANA will provide financial assistance for Soulfire registration to all local and out-of-state student attendees. Details of reimbursement can be found on the TYMANA Facebook/Instagram pages.

NY Center

* May 21: Yard Sale

* May 28: Family BBQ

* July 21-27: Japanese Language Instructor Training Seminar

“yabai” is used in the negative sense of “dangerous,” “bad,” or “not good,” but it is now used in a positive sense and in many ways.

There is a website with English translations of the meaning of the Japanese word, “yabai.”

1. Cool, 2. Cute, 3. Terrible, 4. “Too Bad, 5. Beautiful, 6. Awesome, 7. Dangerous

I think my generation mostly uses “yabai” to mean 3, 4, or 7. As for the younger generation, for example, in the sense of “Cool,” a female student would probably say “yabai” when she sees a handsome male student. If it is a case of “Cute,” she would say “yabai” when she sees a pretty thing or a person.

When I first heard it, I did not understand how it could be used in this way! However, understanding what that meant helped me stand on the same stage as the younger generation. So, even the use of “yabai,” which sounds a bit weird, is now somehow acceptable.

Japanese adults often say “domo” and this word also has many connotations. Various English translations are required depending on the situation. The English translation of “domo” is as follows on the aforementioned website.

1. Hello, 2. Sorry, 3. Thanks, 4. Somehow, 5. Domo-kun, 6. Good to see you, 7. Nice to meet you

Domo-kun is the name of a mascot

character on a Japanese TV program.

Then there are the English translations of “daijobu.”

1. It's OK, 2. I am good, 3. That's fine, 4. I'm all right, 5. No Problem, 6. Don't worry, 7. No thank you

Although not listed on this website, there is a word “kekko (good)” in the Japanese language. Sometimes I am unsure of the true meaning of a young person's reply by “kekko,” and I have to confirm their true meaning.

For example, when I am with a young person who is looking at a restaurant menu, and I ask him/her, “Do you want to order that? Sometimes he/she says, “Kekko desu (I'm good.)” as a response. The tone of voice is flat, and there are no gestures associated with the reply. Does the youngster's reply, “Kekko desu” mean “yes” to order the menu item that I asked about, or “no” to indicate he/she does not want it? I get confused sometimes. If the reply is, “Sore de kekko desu. (Yes, I'm good with that.)” then I know that he/she wants to order the dish on the menu, and if it is, “Sore wa kekko desu. (No, I'm good.)” then I understand that he/she does not want it. Also, if the reply had some intonation or contrast, it would be easier to tell whether they are making an “affirmation” or “denial.” But if it is said in a flat tone, with no facial expression or gestures such as nodding or shaking their head, I have to wonder, “Which is it?”

In this light, I am sure it would be difficult to translate this article into English

just by reading it. By the way, “Thank you to all of you who are translating this article into English.”

Now back to the subject.

Words can change their meaning depending on the situation and the era. Without understanding this, the content of the conversation may come across differently than it was meant to.

You would hardly use the word “yabai” when talking about the path, but I think that even in the terminology of our teachings, depending on the time and circumstances, the listener may understand the meaning of the word differently. I also think that doctrinal terms as in a sentence rather than as individual words may lead to misunderstandings.

For example, Tenrikyo could be interpreted as a “faith to receive worldly benefits” by taking literally the words, “Through saving others, you will be saved,” as cited in Instruction Four. , It says,

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.

As so stated, we do not view these words as a “faith to receive worldly benefits.”

I believe that we need to be careful in our use of doctrinal language and terms when we are imparting the fragrance of the teachings or administering the Sazuke.

If used incorrectly, it could lead to a misrepresentation of the teachings, and in the long run, this will lead us away from the Joyous Life.

In order to avoid misrepresentation of the teachings, it is essential that we ourselves first get a firm grasp of our doctrines. For this reason, doctrinal study is fundamental.

When doing doctrinal studies, if we do not understand a Tenrikyo expression or a doctrinal term, we must be careful to, first of all, become versed with the three scriptures of the “Mikagura-uta,” “Ofudesaki,” and “Osashizu.” I also believe it is important to reference books such as The Life of Oyasama and The Anecdotes of Oyasama, and memoirs of predecessors who were taught directly by Oyasama.

In the meantime, we must be careful about unsubstantiated “doctrines” that are said to be based on the “oral instructions” of Oyasama. When we hear a “doctrine” that is not clearly sourced and has no basis other than being based on what a renowned reverend said or wrote, we must first investigate the origin of the doctrine. And it is crucial to make efforts to learn the authentic teachings.

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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.