

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Opportunity for Spiritual Growth: Towards Oyasama's 140th Anniversary 2024 Annual Yoboku Gathering

The 2024 Annual Yoboku gathering was held at the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America on Saturday, November 16, with 65 participants. The gathering included missionary work, service practice, delicious food, and lively performances. Above is a performance by the America Canada Tenrikyo Boys and Girls Association.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

December 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

- *Sales and “Missionary Work”* -

(part 1)

It is already December and the second year towards Oyasama’s 140th Anniversary is coming to a close.

I am very grateful that on June 30 this year, we were able to joyously conduct our 90th Anniversary commemoration service. This is wholly due to our predecessors’ achievements and the support for our Mission Headquarters from various people inside and outside our diocese. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for all your efforts for our 90th Anniversary as well as for all the support you provided throughout this past year.

I would like to ask for your continued support and cooperation in the upcoming year as well. Also, as next year is the final year for our pre-anniversary activities towards Oyasama’s Anniversary, let us mutually encourage each other in following this path.

Now, I would like to mention a new book with a long title called, “Lessons Learned from the Business Diary of the Man who Sold the Most Coca Cola in Japan” (Written by Akihiko Yamaoka, Published by Koudansha). It sounded interesting, so I read it.

I chose the title for this month’s article to be “Sales and Missionary Work.” I am sure some people may think these two have nothing in common. However, I read the book and some-

how I feel there are commonalities and believe it would be a good reference when we do missionary work. The author writes in this book about his personal lessons learned regarding sales and I felt that these lessons could be applied in our missionary work as well.

For example, one of the headlines in the book is, “It starts with the other party saying, “NO!”

When trying to make a business sale, the salesperson pitches their product responding to the client’s needs, and it is rare to make a sale immediately. Usually the first response from the client will be, “No!”

Similarly, for door-to-door missionary work, usually the first response we get is, “No!” No matter what kind of missionary experience we have; what skills we have; or what school we graduated from; rarely would anyone listen to our talks immediately. Even if there were some-

(continued on page 14)

Coming Up

*Oyasato Seminar Preliminary Session

- 12/26 ~ 12/29 @ Mission HQ

* TSA Winter Conference

- 12/26 ~ 12/29 @ Mission HQ

* Mochi Pounding

- 12/28 @ Mission HQ

*New Year’s Day Service (1/1)

- 7:00AM @ Mission HQ

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November Service Prayer

November 17, 2024

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, who is enshrined in this altar, I, Hiroshi Alexander Fukaya, Bishop of the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, You created human beings and this world where there was no form, and with the arrival of the Promised Time, You revealed Yourself to the world with Oyasama as Your Shrine. and revealed the ultimate Teaching to save the entire world.

Since then, the Teaching has spread to the world, and in America and Canada, we are blessed with those who rely on Oyasama's Divine Model and work towards the realization of the Joyous Life world. This is entirely due to God's blessings and Oyasama's parental love.

Daily, we follow the path of single-heartedly helping others be saved, and this fine day is our November Monthly Service. Receiving the truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our minds to spiritedly perform the seated service and the Teodori service dance.

In Your presence, we Yoboku and followers have eagerly gathered here to give our gratitude for Your daily and constant blessings. Please witness our spirited singing and become spirited as well.

Yesterday, we successfully held our Yoboku Gathering here at Mission Headquarters. Thank you very much. It was an opportunity for our friends in this diocese to make each other spirited. Going forward, we ask for Your nurturing so that we may become conscious of our mission as Yoboku to mutually to help each other become saved and broaden the Path.

Reflecting upon the unending conflicts all over the world, we hope to make even small steps toward realizing the Joyous Life world. Also, as we approach the end of the second year of our three years and one thousand days pre-anniversary period toward the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, we shall unite the minds of those in our diocese and endeavor in our mission of world salvation.

Dear God the Parent, we humbly ask for You to guide us when we are lacking so that, even one day sooner, the hearts of all people will be purified and that this world will be transformed into one in which all people help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

November Monthly Service Sermon

by Michael Yuge

~My Three Heroes~

Good afternoon. Having just completed the spirited and joyous performance of the November Monthly Service together with all present, I am certain that God the Parent and Oyasama are looking upon us with joy. As I have been appointed to deliver this month's sermon, I would like to ask for your kind attention.

Earlier this year, I was happy to attend the 90th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters with my family. However, when we arrived in Los Angeles, my mother was not feeling well and the next day, she was hospitalized with pneumonia. Thankfully, she is doing much better now, but it was unfortunate that she could not be here to celebrate the 90-year history of Mission Headquarters. In 1936, my grandfather was sent to Los Angeles to serve as secretary of Mission Headquarters. Due to the unfortunate circumstances of World War II, the bishop at the time was sent back to Japan since he had served in the Japanese army in his younger years. My grandfather eventually became the third bishop, and my mother and her six siblings were born and raised here at Mission Headquarters. My mother is in many of the historical pictures including one when she was just a baby with the construction of this sanctuary in the background. My mother is the same age as this building.



Michael Yuge delivers the
November monthly service sermon

After she married and had children, my parents resolved their minds to become live-in staff members of Mission Headquarters. That is why my siblings and I were also raised here. Ever since that time, my mother has been a fixture at Mission Headquarters for most of its 90-year history.

My mother was always the familiar face that most visitors would recognize even if the staff members would often change. She would be the one who would share the history of Mission Headquarters to Spiritual Development Course students. She also dedicated her efforts to nurturing the next generation with the Boys and Girls Association and the Children's Pilgrimage. She would return to Jiba every summer for the Children's Pilgrimage for over 30 years. Some of the children in New York saw our family

pictures and they asked us why the lady from 38 Moya was in our photos. They thought she lived at 38 Moya because every time they returned to Jiba, they would see my mother there.

When my father passed away in 1991, she decided to start Heritage Church. In a speech she delivered in 2002 at the age of 65 for the Joyous Life Lecture in Europe, she stated:

The reason that I began Heritage Church under Mission Headquarters was to ensure that our family's future generations would have a firm basis of belief and responsibility to carry on our teachings. It was also because I felt that our children will be protected and be given guidance to live a joyous life. . .

She continued by stating:

I am very happy to see my children and grandchildren following the faith. When my one-and-a-half-year-old grandson who lives with me, runs to the altar and claps his hands and bows, it makes me very happy to think that even after I'm gone, God willing, he will be able to deal with life and its trials grounded in the faith. He will learn the importance of the service performed daily in the morning and evening. He will learn as the years go on that there is joy in helping others and working together with other children. He will learn that in order to have peace and harmony in this world, we must persevere to get rid of the dust that accumulates so persistently and quickly.

Then she ended her speech by saying,

Living in this time and age is a blessing. All the chances, all the opportunities that I have had, my life and my family are the greatest joy.

It was quite an honor for her to be asked to deliver a speech about her faith to those living in Europe. I am certain that her thoughts represent the thoughts of many of us parents whose greatest hopes are that the next generation will follow our footsteps in working towards the joyous life world.

Then, one day, she began to forget things and was diagnosed with dementia. She was no longer allowed to drive a car normally, but did receive permission to drive only to Mission Headquarters. She continued to visit Mission Headquarters daily to help out with anything she could such as tuning the women's musical instruments. Actively helping out in hinokishin at Mission Headquarters has given my mother so many blessings and she has lived a long and fruitful life.

I feel blessed to have a mother who is so well liked, is easy to work with and is always willing to help others. I hope that I can be as strong, dedicated, sincere and humble as my mother. She is a model of how I should live and I am proud to call her my mother. Please join me in thanking my mother (who is here today) for all her contributions to our congregation.

I would now like to talk about another model or hero of mine. This year marks the 15th year since Rev. Jiro Morishita passed away. It was

about 35 years ago that Rev. Jiro, who was the chairman of the Young Men's Association, was preparing for the convention. A group of us decided to make a video of our Boyle Heights neighborhood for the convention. We were traveling in two cars and Jiro was sitting next to me in my car as I was driving and taking the lead. After taking a video at a local King Taco, we decided to drive down the alley behind the building where the Young Men's Association room was to check out a local neighborhood party. Between us and the party, a gang was hanging out and blocking the narrow alley. I couldn't go around them so I decided to back out of the alley. They became suspicious of us possibly thinking that we were from a rival gang, they pulled out a high-powered rifle and shot at us. I heard a loud bang and Jiro said he was shot, writhing in pain. The bullet had gone through the door and had hit his leg, shattering his femur which is the largest bone in the body. Jiro was sitting with his legs up since it was a small car, and if it hadn't hit him, it probably would've hit me.

Fortunately, there was a police officer nearby who called an ambulance, but they treated us like we were gang members as opposed to innocent victims. Even at the hospital, there were other gunshot victims that took higher priority so he wasn't treated all night. In the morning, he was transferred to another hospital and, by that time, so much time had passed, they said they may need to amputate his leg. They said that even if he recovered, he would never be the same and that he would never be able to play any sports.

Jiro getting shot was only the beginning of the nightmare. After being told that he might lose his leg, Jiro said that he started to imagine what it would be like to have a prosthetic leg. He viewed everything in a positive light and would often talk about his experience as a point of reflection.

As written in Instruction Four, Oyasama said:

Buds sprout from knots.

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

Instruction Four pg. 4

In "A Glossary of Tenrikyo Terms," illnesses and other troubles are taught as being "knots"—"knots" in the sense of tree nodes or bamboo joints from which new growth occurs. One is encouraged to take advantage of "knots"—whether encountered in the form of illness or other troubles—as opportunities to reflect deeply on one's "dusty" use of the mind, awaken to the parental love embodied in the "knots," and commit oneself to a life rooted in the "mind of sincerity" (A Glossary of Tenrikyo Terms, page 195).

In the Divine Directions, we find the following teaching:

When you find yourself in a situation where you think this may be your end, recall that



it is a knot. Make a commitment of spirit and stand firm. If you stand firm, the Truth of Heaven will work for you. This I teach.

Osashizu, August 23, 1904

Many of us, especially with the Young Men's Association, took this incident as a knot for us all to reflect upon. Jiro showed us the way to proceed through his actions and demeanor. He never expressed anger or regret about the incident and instead he was able to regain his ability to function at a high level including being an active coach for Tenri Judo and helping to build sanctuaries for numerous churches and fellowships including New York Center. He also was pivotal in establishing nurturing programs such as the Joy Workshop and the Three Day Course.

One year after the incident, I was living in Tenri city teaching English at Oyasato High School. Almost all of Jiro's operation and rehabilitation was covered by a state program for victims of violent acts. After multiple

surgeries and physical therapy, the only thing that remained was the surgery to remove a metal plate and large screws which held his leg in place while it healed. However, the money in the state program had dried up and he did not have enough money to cover the surgery himself. Fortunately, with special permission, he was allowed to have the required surgery done at Ikoi-no-Ie Hospital in Tenri. Jiro had a high school friend named Yuko Hirano whose younger sister, Yoko, worked in the operating room of the hospital. Yuko asked Yoko to help Jiro with his surgery, so they became friends. I visited Jiro at the hospital every day after work where I met Yoko briefly. And after his hospitalization, Jiro invited both Yoko and me to dinner telling Yoko that I was really lonely living in Japan. Jiro kind of nudged us into getting together and we eventually married, moved to New York to work at Tenri Cultural Institute and had three children.

Years later, Kuni Fumioka was a graduate student in Connecticut who would come to New York Center every month. We introduced him to Michiko, Yoko's younger sister, and they eventually married. They have been doing their best as the Head Minister and wife of Midwest Church in Chicago. Then, more recently, Michiko introduced her older sister, Yuko, who was the original friend of Jiro in high school, to Rev. Kimura of Chicago Church. They too were a good match and they just got married last month. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Rev. Masahito and Yuko Kimura! Welcome to the family!

From that one bullet 35 years ago, we now

have three couples and three children that do their best to contribute to the path in America. To me, this truly feels like multiple buds that have sprouted from a very difficult and unimaginable knot. Jiro always felt like an older brother to me that I could always look up to and ask for advice. He was an inspiring leader who helped to pave the way for many of us to follow. Even to this day, it is difficult to understand why he left us at such a young age. However, he still lives with us through Brotherhood Church and the Morishita family as well as all the lives he has touched through his dedication to the path.

Third on my list of heroes is Wesley Dote. We were all shocked and saddened to hear of his passing away last month. He was a friend to everyone and dedicated his time to driving from Sacramento to Mission Headquarters monthly, returning to Jiba every summer for the children's pilgrimage and doing his best to nurture the next generation through the students association and the nurturing committee. He was joyous, inspired, encouraging, kind, generous and dedicated. He was always around to lend a helping hand behind the scenes, to take pictures, and to buy tacos for everyone. These are characteristics that we all strive to be better at. Wesley was like a quiet angel within our congregation and we didn't even realize how much he meant to all of us. He will be deeply missed.

In Instruction Four, the Shinbashira encourages us to follow the Divine Model of Oyasama. This is a wonderful teaching which can be a challenging and sometimes unreachable



ideal. The three heroes that I just mentioned did an amazing job in following Oyasama's Model. We can look to their examples as fellow travelers on the path to help us along to give us the energy, inspiration and motivation to push forward for the greater good of our community and our fellow children of God, our brothers and sisters around the world.

Instruction Four states:

Our predecessors earnestly followed the path that had begun with Oyasama alone by using Her Divine Model as their dependable guide and maintained the path for us to walk on. The efforts to learn and pass down the faith from parents to children, from children to grandchildren, and so on, will allow this path to continue for endless generations.

Instruction Four pg. 7

Let us do our best to continue the path that our predecessors so earnestly followed and

maintained for us to walk on. When I look at our sanctuary at New York Center, I am reminded of all the incredible efforts that Rev. Keigo Morishita and his son Rev. Jiro made, so that we can do our best to pray and help others. When I look at the landscape around our New York Center sanctuary as well as the wonderful garden at Mission Headquarters, I remember Rev. Uesugi and his efforts to raise our awareness about our environment. And when we prepare our audio visual systems and translation equipment in our New York Center sanctuary, I remember Mr. Yokoi traveling to New York multiple times even with a kidney condition to install our system. Let us do our best to pass down these stories of sincerity to nurture the next generation.

As we are in the middle of our pre-anniversary period, it is important to remember that anniversaries are also seen as knots. We hope that new buds can sprout from the upcoming 140th Anniversary of Oyasama in 2026 as well as New York Center's 50th Anniversary in 2027. Let us do our best to "grow spiritually" during this period to bring joy to God the Parent and Oyasama and our many predecessors in our Path in America. God is urging us to renew our faith and energy as we increase our efforts to nurture our youth so that they can carry the path forward for many years to come. I look forward to working together with everyone here, united in mind, as we proceed on the path of the Joyous Life during this special time.

Thank you very much.

2024 Annual Yoboku Gathering



(photos cont. on pg. 13)

News and Announcements

1) DECEMBER MONTHLY SERVICE (12/14)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Marlon Okazaki, Zen Yukimoto
 Director: Kuniaki Hasegawa Attendants: Eddie Takemoto, Ray Tadokoro
 Offerings Officiant: Steven Yukimoto
 Sermon: Robert Shimizu (E)

2) CHURCH & FELLOWSHIP AFFAIRS

* Divine Sanctions:

Brotherhood Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Head Minister: Raymond James Brown

Divine Sanction: November 26, 2024

Installation Service: February 8, 2025

San Francisco Church: Request for Relocation, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction (Scheduled): January 26, 2025

Enshrinement Service: January 31, 2025

Installation Service: February 1, 2025

3) NEWLY APPOINTED SERVICE PERFORMERS

As of January 1, 2025 (Wed), Orange Church head minister Rev. Kinpei Ito will be appointed as a service performer at the Mission Headquarters. Accordingly, the following persons shall be appointed as of January 18, 2025 (Sat): Joyous Fellowship head Mr. Kozo Manome; Taitan Church head minister Rev. Lynn So; Utah Church head minister Rev. Masayo Obayashi; High Sacramento Church head minister's wife Mrs. Maki Tadokoro; Central Fresno Church head minister's wife Mrs. Sayaka Yukimoto; and Sunlight Fellowship head Ms. Sayuri Yukimoto.

4) TSA WINTER CONFERENCE

The TSA will be hosting its annual Winter Conference at the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America from 12/26 (Thu) till 12/29 (Sun). Applications have already been distributed, and you may also download the application from the Mission Headquarters website. Application deadline: December 8 (Applications will be accepted past the deadline, but an additional fee of \$20 will be required for attendance).

5) END-OF-YEAR / NEW YEAR ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

The Mission Headquarters will be holding our annual end-of-year cleanup from 12:30 PM following the December 26th Day Service. If you would can part in the cleaning, and also if you plan to request lunch for that day, please contact the Mission HQ by November 30 (Sat). We will be holding our annual Rice Cake Pounding (Mochitsuki), planned for December 28 (Sat), and we ask for hinokishin from those that live near the Mission Headquarters. Also, we will be conducting our New Year's Day Service on January 1 (Wed) from 7 AM (we will open the portals and prepare the offerings from 6:40). If you are a service performer local to the Mission Headquarters and will not be able to take part in performing the New Year's Day Service, please contact the Mission Headquarters by November 30 (Sat).

6) THREE DAY COURSE

The Three Day Course is scheduled for February 21 (Fri) ~ 23 (Sun), 2025. The English course will be held if there are at least 4 applicants, and the Spanish course will require at least 2 applicants. The deadline for applications is February 16, 2025, but please contact the Mission Headquarters as soon as possible if you know of anyone interested in attending.

7) SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE IN JIBA

Shuyoka (three-month Spiritual Development Course in Jiba) English Class will be held from the end of March next year. Non-Japanese applicants must apply for a visa, which can take several months. If you are thinking of attending, please let the Mission Headquarters office know as soon as possible. Also, please be aware that there may be circumstances where the English Class may be canceled, or the prospective students may not be able to obtain a visa.

8) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

We request each district to prepare for next year's Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day. We will distribute the Hinokishin Day Plan Report documents to all district representatives, and we ask you to submit them to the Mission Headquarters by December 26.

9) APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL ICHIRETSUKAI SCHOLARSHIP

The application for the 2025 Special Ichiretsukai Scholarship is now available for students who will attend college or university next fall. The application deadline is December 31, 2024.

10) SERVICE ROSTER

We request service performers to communicate their plans to attend the monthly service, including any changes, to the Mission Headquarters by the end of the month prior to their attendance. For example, please communicate your final availability for next year's January spring grand service by the end of this month (December 31, 2024).

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS**Missionary Committee**

* The Seminar for Heads of Churches, Fellowships, and Mission Centers and their Spouses is scheduled for the afternoon of February 15, 2025.

Program under consideration: Increasing understanding regarding mental health, as well as content that will help in salvation work activities.

* From 2025, we will resume Corridor-Cleaning Hinokishin at Jiba.

Dates: January 25, April 17, & October 25

Please assemble at the rear east side of the South Worship Hall, 45 minutes before the Church Headquarters morning service.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

* Oyasato Seminar

- The Oyasato Seminar Preliminary Session will be held from December 26 (Thu) ~ December 29 (Sun). We currently have seven students (one female, 6 male) planning to attend.

12 News and Announcements (cont'd.)

- Ms. Rachel Parker, from America, will serve as the female counselor for the Preliminary Session (12/26~12/29) and the summer 2025 Jiba course.
- This year's OS Preliminary Session will be held so that students will also be able to participate in the fun activities of the TSA Winter Conference. This schedule will also enable students to create bonds with other students around the same age.
- Upon the passing of the late Mr. Wesley Dote, we plan to facilitate a "Peer grief support" session centered around the teaching of "A Thing Lent, A Thing Borrowed."

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).
- * Mission HQ Homepage
 - Snapshots of the 90th anniversary, along with the video from Doyusha, the "Stories Inspired by Oyasama," "SoulFire" reflection videos, monthly service sermons, & podcast videos are now viewable on the Mission Headquarters homepage. Please visit our homepage to view these videos, and let those around you know as well.
 - The rituals practice video for the Mission Headquarters has been uploaded to the homepage. Please use this as a reference if you are assigned to the rituals at the Mission Headquarters.

Future Path

- * The Tenrikyo main scripture study session is being planned for August 30~31, 2025.

Women's Association

- * Gathering for District Leaders: January 18, 2025 (Sat) @ 2PM (Zoom)
- * TWA America Convention: May 17, 2025 (Sat) @ Mission HQ

Boys & Girls Association

- * The 2025 BGA Service Convention will be held on June 14. More details about the convention, along with a survey, will be distributed this month, so please fill out and return these forms by the Mission Headquarters' spring grand service in January.
- * Please send an email to [moto1884@icloud.com] if there are any new BGA members, newborn or new to the North America congregation.
- * Currently Recruiting Fife & Drum Corps Members: Let's expand our circle of friends of the path. We are conducting activities that teach mutual help and the joy of exerting one's sincerity for the salvation of others. Please contact the email address above for more details.
- * Let's share stories about Oyasama with BGA members! Visit your churches as a family and engage in hinokishin together.

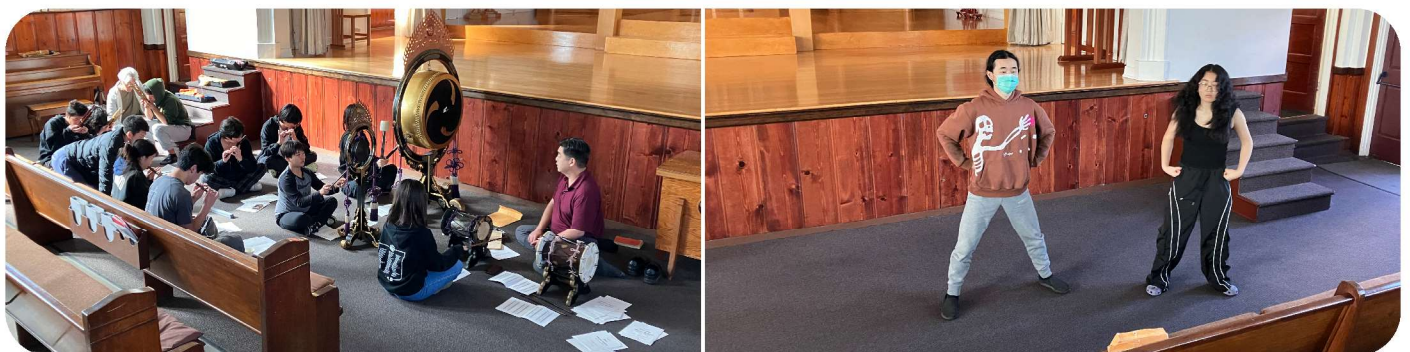
NY Center

- * 12/15: Holiday Bazaar
- * 12/28: Rice-Pounding (Mochitsuki)

2024 Annual Yoboku Gathering



Youth Gagaku Practice and Sleepover



one who listened to the missionary's talk, they would not join the religion right away. The majority will dismiss the missionary with a "NO!" Door-to-door missionary work is the process of repeatedly getting the response of, "NO!"

Now, this will be an introduction to the book, and I would like to take the next few months to write articles with the same title, by introducing different lessons learned by the author and linking them to missionary work. I hope you will be able to utilize these lessons in your missionary efforts.

Furthermore, if you wish to learn more about this topic, I suggest you purchase this book and read it. However, the book is in Japanese only, so I apologize in advance for you non-Japanese readers.

This book has several sub-headings so I would like to make a few of these be the subject of my thoughts on these topics.

Read for 30 minutes a day

(Aforementioned book, Page 18)

The book stated that "sales is learned in the field," however, your sales results will not increase just by mimicking your veteran salesperson's pitches.

Therefore, the author read a lot of books regarding business sales himself and incorporated these techniques when attempting to make a sale. However, once the conversation got a bit deeper, he wasn't able to convey his message effectively and found out the hard way that his words didn't resonate with his client.

One day, a senior at his company told him that no matter how much technical expertise he gains from a book, it is like a single telephone pole standing on its own without any support and would easily be knocked down. Just a bit of knowledge would not be of use in the field, so he was told to broaden the range of his knowledge

to supports that pole.

In other words, if the pole is the center, it is important to support it from all directions, similar to the shape of a mountain. It is beneficial to have technical expertise, but it is more important to have a solid foundation to support the pole in not easily falling over. In order to do that, one must read a lot of books. Unlike school learning, the author was given advice to read a book for 30 minutes a day.

The author made it a habit to allocate time to read 30 minutes a day and the books varied from different genres. Once he began reading, he was able to converse more deeply with his clients. In addition, he learned to be able to listen more actively. He was especially able to listen to the needs of his clients and understand the points they were trying to make.

I feel the things this author wrote about can also be applied to our path. If we merely vaguely memorized the teachings, we wouldn't be able to convey the path and others would not be convinced by our message. I think it is important to read Tenrikyo related books, especially those related to the three scriptures, including "The Doctrine of Tenrikyo," "The Life of Oyasama," and "Anecdotes of Oyasama," in addition to lectures on the teachings by our predecessors or other books on the teachings. In other words, it is important to deepen our knowledge of the teachings, and at the same time deepen our faith in the teachings. So no matter your age, studying the teachings is essential.

Wear proper attire

(Aforementioned book, Page 23)

The author's office was at the Coca Cola Kochi Branch Office. At his office, all the employees are required to wear a uniform. As they handle their products every day, their uniforms get dirty, but there is a uniform cleaning service

at the office. So every morning, they are able to receive a clean set of uniforms and go out to the field. However, the employees are required to bring their own shoes so they have to purchase and take care of their own shoes.

One day, a senior at the firm pointed out the importance of one's appearance. He said it is common to have a clean uniform and hairstyle in order, but it is especially important to maintain a clean pair of shoes.

The senior stated that a salesperson will walk a lot when they are out in the field, so it may seem "natural" to think your shoes would get dirty. However, people surprisingly pay attention to your shoes. So just having clean and well-maintained shoes gives the impression that you are a reliable person.

After hearing this, the author always focused on maintaining his shoes. One time, a client said to him "You always have clean shoes." From that point, the author was able to start a business relationship with that client.

I believe that we, who follow that path, also need to pay attention to our appearance. When we go out to do missionary work, males often wear a dress shirt and a necktie. However, we must also pay attention to how much we consciously keep our shoes clean. Also, it may be a good idea to be mindful of how our shoes look regularly.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words
(Aforementioned book, Page 26)

When the author joined the company, he attended an orientation for people in sales, but he only learned very basic things. Once out in the field, a salesperson must think for themselves and choose how they want to approach their business transactions.

However, from the client's perspective, it doesn't matter if the salesperson is a new hire

or a veteran. They see them as a member of the company and will interact with them equally when conducting business negotiations.

The author used to routinely visit a small store weekly that was run by a lady by herself. The vending machine at the store was getting old so he wanted to propose to the owner to replace the machine, however as she ran a small business, he was hesitant to initiate his sales pitch.

One day, he was delivering some products to the store and noticed that the vending machine was a bit dirty. So he cleaned it, and thereafter, he made it a habit to clean the machine every time he made deliveries.

Then one day, the owner stopped the author and asked him to take a seat. There he saw a vending machine catalog that he had never given to the owner. The author's colleague had brought this catalog to her, along with other products, when she had made an unexpected order. That colleague suggested that she might want to replace her old vending machine, but the owner wanted to order a new vending machine only from the author. The reason was because he had always cleaned her vending machine when delivering orders, so she wanted to buy it from him instead.

From this experience, the author recalled the proverb, "Actions speak louder than words." Isn't this the same when we do missionary work? Of course, it is important to use our words to convey the teachings, but isn't it also important to strive to become a follower as described by the Second Shinbashira, "I would like you all to strive to be able to decisively say, 'If you want to know about Tenrikyo, look at my actions'" (Outline of the Ofudesaki, Page 124). (To be continued)

(translation by Y. Nakagawa)

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

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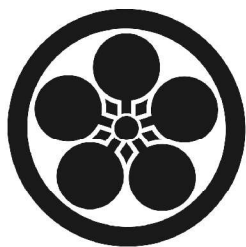
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TOWARD THE JOYOUS LIFE

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.