

GEDATSU COMPANION

GEDATSU CHURCH USA
www.gedatsu-usa.org

MARCH 2018

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Gedatsu Kongo's Thought for the Month

*"Ancestor spirits are, indeed,
the best guide to bringing
us closer to God."*

There is no one who does not have
parents. Even a man who lives
dissolutely, or an atheist, was born
from parents.

Our parents and ancestors love and
protect us unconditionally. Even if
your parents are gone already, their
spirits are protecting you all the time.

When you become aware of your
ancestors' love, you may easily
become aware of God's love.
Recognizing the existence of your
ancestor spirits is the first step toward
your recognition of God.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	4	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	11	9:30 am	Appreciation Service / Regional Board Mtg.
Sun	25	9:30 am	Appreciation Service / <i>Higan</i> Service

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	4	10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	11	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Fri	16	10:00 am	Propagation Meeting
Sat	17	10:00 am	Board of Directors Meeting
Sun	18	10:00 am	Appreciation Service (Japanese & English) <i>Higan</i> Service
Sun	25	10:00 am	English Appreciation Service / <i>Ajikan</i> Meditation L.A. Regional Board Mtg. / "Life in Your 20s"

APRIL 2018

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	1	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service Clean-up for Grand Festival
Sat	7	9:30 am	Preparation for Spring Grand Festival
Sun	8	9:30 am	137 th Spring Grand Festival <i>Saito Goma</i> Service
Sun	15	1:00 pm	San Jose Branch <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	22	9:30 am	Appreciation Service / Regional Board Mtg.
Sun	29		Church Closed

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	1	10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	8		Spring Grand Festival (in Sacramento)
Sun	15	10:00 am	Appreciation Service (Japanese & English)
Sun	22	10:00 am	English Appreciation Service / <i>Ajikan</i> Meditation L.A. Regional Board Mtg. / "Life in Your 20s"
Sun	29		Church Closed



March “Never Forgotten” Memorial Services

The Sacramento Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, March 4, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **John Chin, Sumiko Sebe, Takeo Sekikawa, Eleanor Ikesaki, Fred Shigeru Tanaka, Muneo John Hatae, Tamimasa Tsuboi, Mary (Mitsue) Tsuboi, Kotsuru Noritake, Toyota Kino, Rin Ide and Richard Shinichiro Kitasoe.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, March 11, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Meiko Arakawa, Vincent Giroux, Shikazo Hamaoka, Ernest Hirayama, Naoye Kimura, Lily Yuriko Kuritani, Bill Long, Norma Long, Jean Emiko Matsune, Hisano Miyashita, Masao Mori, Chisato Naito, Shigeru Nakamura, Hiroshi Nakatani, Kazuyoshi Okazaki, Masao John Onishi, Antonio Palumbo, Giulia Palumbo, Joe Sanchez, Joseph Sanchez Jr., Terry Fumio Shiroishi, Shigeru Fred Tanaka, Yoshio Wakasa and Hiromi Whitaker.**

Note: Because of the Spring Festival, the “Never Forgotten” service will not be held in L.A. in April. Therefore, the March service will also honor the following souls who passed in April: **John Macias Castillo, Maria Lechuga Covos, Sameko Hamaoka, Ted Tadashi Hayashi, Kazuye Ito, Will Karger, Fumiko Kawamura, Karen Mineko Kawamura, William Masami Kawamura, Yoshimi Richard Kikuchi, Masaichi Richard Kikuta, Mokubei Kumashiro, Shikazo Kumashiro, Thomas Mahoney, Matsuko Yamashita Miyasako, Clifton Mizokami, Haruko Nagura, Yoshinobu Nakamura, Harry Odama, Otomatsu Odama, Tomoyo Ogura, Akiko Okazaki, Emiko Okimura, Helen Shiroishi, Hidemi Pat Shiroishi, Dayna Slotnik, Tsutako Sherrie Takimoto, Bobby Kiyoshi Tanji, Alice Tsukamaki, Joseph Harold Wessman, Jr., and Enes S. Sarvello Zeto.**

“Never Forgotten” Memorial Services are held monthly to honor the memory of those who have passed away during that particular month. People of all faiths are welcome to attend, so invite your friends and family members to attend. Even if you are unable to attend, you may still honor the soul of a loved one.

Saito Goma and Manbu Kuyo Applications Due

Please submit your prayer applications for *Saito Goma* and *Manbu Kuyo* services by March 18. The *Manbu Kuyo* service is explained below. Application forms are available at your local church.

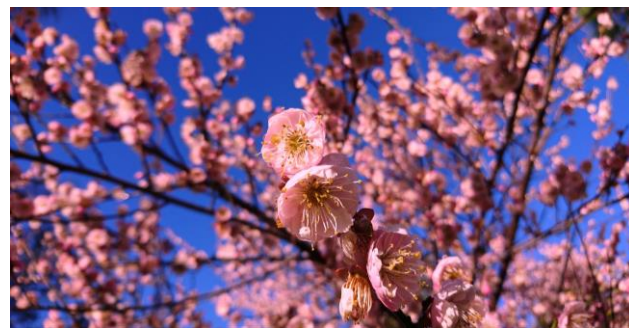
Manbu Kuyo Service

Twice a year, as part of the Gedatsu Spring and Fall Grand Festivals in Japan, a memorial rite for spirits is conducted on the *Goreichi* holy grounds. Called *Manbu Kuyo* – literally meaning ten thousand expressions of respect – the ceremony is performed to liberate all spirits from suffering and to transform them into protective spirits who benefit the living.

Members who would like to apply for *Manbu Kuyo* should complete the application form (inserted in this issue) and are urged to consult with one of the ministers, who can explain the significance of the service and various categories on the form.

Spring Grand Festival – Sunday, April 8

The Spring Grand Festival will be held at the Sacramento Church on Sunday, April 8, beginning at 9:30 am. A chartered bus from Los Angeles will leave the L.A. Church at 10 pm on Saturday night, April 7. Once again, through the generosity of **Senior Deacon Jackson Ito**, bus riders will be able to ride to Sacramento free of charge.



Delicate plum blossoms signal early signs of spring on the *Goreichi* grounds in Sacramento.

Obituary

The L.A. Church is saddened to announce that long-time member, **Noriko Yoshihara**, passed away on January 17 at the age of 90. She is survived by her sister-in-law, **Toshiko Yoshihara**, and a son.

Generous Offer: Free and Half-fare Airline Tickets for Japan Tour Participants

This year, the 90th Anniversary of the Gedatsu Church will be celebrated in October at the Grand Fall Festival at the Japan *Goreichi*. A special tour group from America is being organized, and all U.S. members are encouraged to participate in the celebration.

To encourage as many American members as possible to participate, **Senior Deacon Jackson Ito** is making an extraordinary gesture of generosity and goodwill. He has offered to subsidize a portion of the cost of every airplane ticket for everyone who plans to attend.

Specifically, Jackson offers to pay one half of the airline travel fare for every attendee . . . and will pay the entire fare for young people under the age of 25, or for those not yet working full time.

Jackson explains the reason for his offer: “Over the past two years, when I visited the Japan *Goreichi* in person and saw the arrangements of the various shrines on the sacred grounds, I gained a deeper understanding of Founder Gedatsu Kongo’s quest for world peace through Gedatsu. I have learned so much about the path to achieving spiritual enlightening from my Gedatsu teachers and my experience in Japan.

“To share what I have learned and to encourage the future growth of our church, I wish to have as many U.S. Gedatsu members as possible attend the 90th anniversary celebrations and experience the sacred *Goreichi* grounds for themselves.”



Jackson Ito attended the Grand Fall Festival in October 2017 at the *Goreichi* in Japan. From left, Rev. Taki (seated); northern Calif. members Avalon Akashi, Judy and Dennis Tsuboi; Jackson; and Sr. Rev. Sebe.

The tour will leave from Los Angeles and San Francisco on October 11, with a three-day stay in Saitama, Japan, where tour participants will attend the Fall Festival in *Goreichi* on Sunday, October 14.

Sightseeing activities to various areas – including Kanazawa, Takayama and Kyoto – are being planned. Ten- and four-day tour packages are available. Contact **Rev. Naoya Okano** at the L.A. Church if you are interested in participating.

Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund (*Hosankai*)

The Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund was established to allow members to show their appreciation to Gedatsu Kongo and demonstrate a higher level of commitment and support for the church.

Participation in the Fund requires an annual pledge of \$50 per month, or \$600 a year, which is in addition to the general membership dues. Special green envelopes for Fund donations are available at the churches.

2017 Appreciation Fund Donors

Fred / Cookie Barthel
Katsuo / Kazumi Chinen
Dan / Mary Harada
Tadao Ishida
Jackson Ito
Mary Kimura
Shinji / Hitomi Matsuhashi
Tetsuya / Sachiyo Matsumoto
Mariko Michiuye
Victor / Marian Mizokami
Teruko Nakamura
Minaye Okada
Tom Okimura
Paul / Joyce Reid
Sam / Harriet Sekikawa
Sadaye Tanaka
Dennis / Judy Tsuboi
Howard / Carole Tsujimura
Kazuo Yamada
Yoko Yamada

AROUND OUR CHURCH

Sacramento Members Celebrate the New Year



Following the first service of 2018, Sacramento members enjoyed their annual potluck party and gift exchange. They were entertained by the beautiful musical offerings of Nori Tagawa, noted violin instructor and professional freelance musician. The son of late member and banjo hall-of-famer, Charlie Tagawa, Nori charmed the audience with his virtuoso performance.

Enhancing the musical program, San Francisco member, Pauline Tomita Akashi, sang popular Carpenters songs, accompanied by Nori and Rev. Yamada on ukulele.

Jessica Scott Shares the Art of Tea



Sacramento member, Jessica Scott, at left, recently hosted friends and family members in *Hatsu Chakai*, the first formal tea ceremony of the year of the traditional Japanese practice. She conducted the service in the home tearoom of fellow church member, Ritsuko Nakatani (in light-colored

kimono), a teacher of the Urasenke tea ceremony school. As Mrs. Nakatani's student, Jessica served tea and Japanese sweets (which she also made) in accord with the traditional discipline of the ancient ceremony.

DEAR REVEREND

Q

I feel helpless when I see conflicts among my family members. What can I do to create peace and understanding within my family?

A

I am sorry to hear that. Conflicts within the home can be the most challenging to resolve because we are often too emotionally involved.

If you don't have a *kuyo* plaque for "Unrested Spirits of Friends and Foes Connected to Your Family and Ancestors" at home, I recommend you order one and start offering *amacha* holy tea blessing daily.

Our founder, Gedatsu Kongo, said, "Everything is your mirror." In other words, *everyone* is your mirror.

In Gedatsu, we stress the importance of "self-reflection." When you see conflicts among family members, self-reflect to see if you yourself have acted or thought like that in your own daily life.

Our founder also said, "What is Gedatsu? In short, it is to live a life of compassion."

Please don't blame family members for fighting each other. Instead, be compassionate and empathetic. Try to be nice and kind to them.

"When you see conflicts among family members, self-reflect to see if you yourself have acted or thought like that."

Although we may have compassion in our heart, we tend to be self-centered and blame others. According to one Gedatsu teacher, being self-centered is "anti-Gedatsu." He suggests three helpful tips to resolve any human conflict:

1. Try to see the good in others and praise them.
2. Put yourself in others' shoes.
3. Listen to others.

If you can practice these three tips, the atmosphere of your family will improve.

It is also important to "count your blessings, not your worries." Even though there may be family conflicts, say "thank you" to family members as often as possible. The point is, don't expect "thank you" or "peace" from others. Rather, become a person who gives others "thank you" and "peace."

The words "thank you" have a big impact on your family. If you stay grateful, the people around you will create peace and understanding.

Rev. Tatsunori Kamiya

A Brief Biography of Gedatsu Kongo

Translated and Condensed by Rev. H. Taki

Chapter 3

The Darkness of Despair

In the spring of 1905, at the age of 23, Eizo Okano (Gedatsu Kongo) returned home from Korea after a year of separation from his family. He apologized to his parents for causing them to worry for his long absence. He then performed his duties to his parents, engaging in farming and, once again, entering the revived subcontract weaving business on a full scale.

In those days, Japanese spinning and weaving factories – managed and financed by big capital – bought many foreign-produced power looms for wide cloth, increasing the production of cotton textiles and threatening the subcontract weaving. In discussing the business crisis, Eizo and his business friends concluded that they should merge their business to compete with big enterprises.

Joining forces to compete

Thus, the Cotton Textiles Association was organized in November of 1906, initially consisting of twelve businessmen, with Eizo elected as one of its three directors. Its purpose was to produce cotton textiles as cheaply as possible.

At that time, Eizo was in love with a girl named Aki Kamishiro. She was a *geisha* and 18 years old. She and Eizo fell in love at first sight, when she was hired to a party of the cotton textiles businessmen at a restaurant. Since then, Eizo visited the restaurant frequently, engaging Aki every time.

Market pressures

In January of 1907, the stock market declined substantially, and business activity suddenly deteriorated and worsened through the year. The ordinary weaving companies, whose markets were limited to the domestic areas, were getting pinched. By November, the businesses decided to dissolve the association. Despite that, Eizo, was determined to carry on the business. However, saddled with considerable debts, he found that the harder he worked, the more the deficits mounted.

A fateful decision

With his back was against the wall, an idea occurred to Eizo: he could survive by selling cotton textiles to the wholesaler without paying the consumption tax for textiles. Eizo decided to put that idea into action.

Like many businessmen, Eizo reasoned that the consumption tax for textiles was only a special emergency tax enacted during the Russo-Japanese War and was likely to be lifted. Its continuance after the war was highly unpopular, leading to tax revolts.

Despite public sympathy for abolishing the tax, five months later, in May of 1908, two police officers arrived at Eizo's home, confronting him with the words: "You are Eizo Okano, aren't you? You are suspected of tax evasion." They took Eizo to the police station.

An intensive investigation started that day. Eizo stated everything honestly. His father, Makitaro, came to see him. Looking totally worn out, he said, "What a shameful thing you did! I am ashamed to my ancestors." Filled with remorse and profound regret, Eizo begged his father's pardon on his knees.

A heavy price to pay

Over the coming months, Eizo's tax-evasion trial started, was postponed and was delayed several times, much to Eizo's irritation. Meanwhile, the Okano family faced serious matters. In Eizo's absence, creditors pressured Makitaro, forcing him to assume all of Eizo's debts himself. Shocked, Eizo pleaded with his father, "Don't do it, please. I am to blame for everything."

With this entire body trembling, Makitaro shouted back, "You fool! Who can watch his son falling without helping?"

"Please forgive me!" Eizo replied, kneeling before his father and tears falling, not able to raise his head.

By February, all debts were paid off. Eizo felt that he had destroyed everything his father had built up through unimaginable hardship. "I ruined all the efforts of Father's life."

(Continued on page 6)

Eizo cleaned his house and burned all unnecessary things. He then visited the Okano house. Having dinner with the family, Eizo really felt the warmth of the family. He thanked all the family and said goodbye. He apologized to Makitaro by bowing with his hands on the floor saying, "I am very sorry to have caused you much trouble because of my faults. Please forgive me."

Makitaro nodded slightly and said, "It's all over. This is the loss of the Okano family, after all. So, there is nothing wrong with my paying the debts." Listening to his words, Eizo could not hold back his tears.

Three letters

Eizo returned to his home, where he wrote three letters. The first letter was to his parents (see letter below). "Thank you very much for your love and kindness until today. I will never forget what you have done for me. I shall be born again as an eternal spirit for the family."

He then wrote to his brother Kakutarō. "This is all the result of my stupidity. I will return to life again as an immortal spirit. After my rebirth, I will dedicate myself to my family. Please devote yourself to our parents and take care of your brothers after I die."

Resolved to die

Lastly, Eizo wrote to one of his relatives, so the reasons for his suicide could be explained to his relatives. "I am really sorry that I could not make up for my loss. That was all my fault. A nation's war is not actual fighting alone. The daily war in business is very important for the country, too. Reflecting on myself now, I am completely defeated. I cannot help it. Please understand my situation."

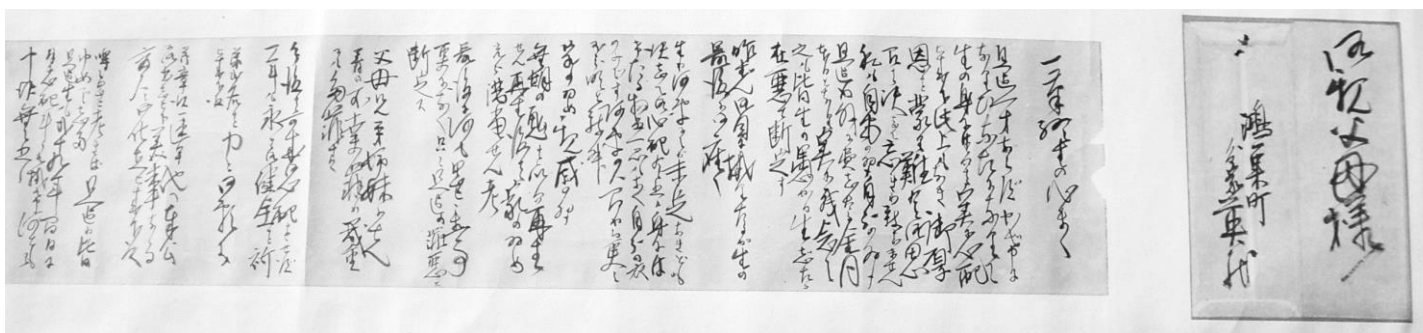
After he finished writing the letters, Eizo put them in envelopes, placed them on a desk and calmly closed his eyes. Presently, he heard a voice in the entrance. "Eizo, are you here? May I come in?" Makitaro came in the room. He found the letters and read them.

"You fool!" he shouted, slapping Eizo's face with all his might. Straining his voice, he spoke from the bottom of his heart, "Listen carefully, Eizo. You can kill yourself at any time you like. Instead, why don't you try to survive to the end?"

Saved by a father's love and understanding

His words touched Eizo's heart deeply. Tears flowed. Eizo tried to apologize to his father on his knees, but he choked on his words. Makitaro placed his hands on Eizo's shoulders and nodded without uttering a word.

(Continued on page 7)



Eizo Okano, at the age of 29, resolved to kill himself because of the indescribable misfortunes he had brought upon his family. In what he believed would be his last communication to his parents, he wrote: "Thank you very much for your great help and kindness until today. I shall never forget what you have done for me. I am truly sorry that I have lost a great deal of money and caused the family much trouble. I conclude that all of these misfortunes have been caused by my stupidity." As he wrote his parting words, his resolution became firm – "I shall be born again as an eternal soul for the family and relatives. After my rebirth, I shall never fail to support the family."

Eizo abandoned the idea of killing himself. He was resolved to wait for the decision of the court and make a fresh start as if he had been given a second chance at life.

Finally, the court decision was pronounced on April 7. Guilty. Eizo was ordered to pay his fine (over 600 yen) in installments over 15 years – more lenient than he had expected. However, Tokyo was in the throes of an economic depression, and Eizo had difficulty finding a good job under the difficult situation. Once again, Eizo found himself in a tight corner.

More economic hardships

In order to pay the court fine and cost of the trial in installments, Eizo embarked on a series of failed business ventures and jobs in various businesses. He lost his money in the ice-making business. He was hired by a toothpaste factory, but his wages were insufficient to pay his trial fees. A job with a freight-forwarding agency barely covered his daily subsistence.

With his living standards at their lowest level, he supported himself by day labor – often resorting to heavy labor or deplorable conditions. He had no regular residence, staying at cheap lodging houses.

Still, the lowliest job was better than none. At least, Eizo could have a meal, stay at a lodging house, and sleep, rolling himself up in thin blankets. But at times, when he failed to get a job, he did not have enough money to eat and was forced to sleep under an elevated railway or on a park bench.

A homeless existence

Eizo later spoke of this period in his life. “Once, when I was jobless, I wandered about town without eating for three days. I can never forget that.”

With few clothes to wear, he often spent days with nothing but the clothes on his back, whether they were dirty or torn. His hair and mustache grew long. He could not remember when he had last taken a bath.

(Continued on back page)

The Sacred Practice of Goho Shugyo

Founder Gedatsu Kongo gave to us three esoteric practices that are unique to the Gedatsu Church. Two practices – Amacha Kuyo blessing and Holy Hiho meditation – were explained in previous issues of this newsletter. The third practice, Goho Shugyo, is explained here.

It is significant that all three practices incorporate the miraculous power of the Holy Goho. The Holy Goho consists of the five spiritualistic Sanskrit characters – representing the five aspects of universal life and encompassing the total cosmic forces, which give life to all things.

Gedatsu Kongo, through his great spiritual powers, realized the sacredness of the Holy Goho and discovered, to his amazement, that he was able to manifest the Holy Goho by simply writing the characters. In a state of divine spiritual revelation, he inscribed the holy characters on paper, plaques and amulets.

In describing his ability to manifest the Holy Goho, Gedatsu Kongo stated: “A circle, square, triangle, or anything – they are all the Holy Goho that the Supreme God of the Universe wrote. I am not writing the Holy Goho, but merely copying on paper the characters that I see in my mind.”

Holy Goho Central to Gedatsu Study

Gedatsu Kongo discovered the Holy Goho in the late 1920s, just as he was establishing the Gedatsu Church in Japan. Thus, the Holy Goho became an intrinsic part of the Gedatsu teaching from its earliest days. Today, the Holy Goho is copied from the Founder’s original writing and printed on Amacha kuyo plaques, stupas and amulets, which we use in our homes and at church.

(Continued on page 8)

(Holy Hiho Meditation – Continued from page 7)

Shortly after discovering the Holy *Goho*, the Founder began to realize the amazing power and utility of this instrument in connecting the seen and unseen worlds, especially in being able to communicate with spiritual entities.

Through early spiritualistic practices and experiences with the Holy *Goho*, the Founder began instructing his followers in the practice of *Amacha Kuyo* blessing and *Goho Shugyo*, meaning practice or training, as early as 1930.

Goho Shugyo is performed by meditating and holding the amulet of the Holy *Goho* between your palms, with eyes closed, in a prayerful posture before the altar. Through the power of the Holy *Goho*, the mysterious energies of spiritual forces are then manifest.

When you perform *Goho Shugyo*, you should realize that you are holding a sacred instrument, a symbol of God or Universal Life itself. Therefore, you should put your analytical mind aside, entrusting all to the Universal God and the miraculous power vested in the Holy *Goho* through the Founder, Gedatsu Kongo. This total emersion of your will and mind to God is in itself critical to the effectiveness of the *Goho Shugyo* practice. With this attitude, the Holy *Goho* will guide you appropriately.

Training to Cultivate, Perfect Your Character

The basic objective of this practice is perfection of character. The practice enables you to cultivate your character by recognizing your negative traits, discarding your selfish thoughts and attitudes in life, and strengthening your volition, or will power.

This method of disciplining your mind and soul strengthens your intuitive faculties, enabling you to realize your true self and grasp the inner meaning and truth in all things.

Through sincere and continuous performance of *Goho Shugyo*, your outlook on life gradually changes, allowing you to enjoy and appreciate all things with deep faith and conviction, leading to your spiritual awakening.

Developing Spiritual Perception

Goho Shugyo practice also enables you to experience and comprehend the existence of the spiritual world, and how it significantly impacts your daily life. Through your heightened awareness of the relationship between the physical and spiritual worlds, you become aware of and appreciate the help and guidance given to you by your ancestors and guardian spirits.

Because the Holy *Goho* possesses an all-encompassing power, many spirits are attracted to the *Goho* and its penetrating ability to render purification to unrested souls. Therefore, when you meditate with the Holy *Goho*, you may experience the mysterious energies of spiritual forces. Most often, this consists of communication with ancestral spirits and/or unrested spirits of other entities.

Because of this spiritual contact, it is important that the *Goho Shugyo* practice be performed at church in the presence of an experienced teacher or intermediary, who can correctly interpret these spiritual communications and instruct you appropriately.

Also, during the performance of *Goho Shugyo*, *Amacha Kuyo* blessing is diligently performed to console spirits with appreciation and allow them to rest peacefully in the spiritual realm.

The regular practice of *Goho Shugyo* enables you to understand the true, total nature of yourself, amid the vibrations of the seen and unseen worlds in which you exist. When unrested spiritual conditions of your ancestors and others closely connected with you are understood – and subsequently purified and settled – through the power of the Holy *Goho*, your ultimate destiny appears before you. Your volition is strengthened. Your life unfolds harmoniously.

Such is the beauty, sacredness and power of the *Goho Shugyo* practice.



[Editor's Note: The Companion is indebted to the late Archbishop Kishida and Rev. Arthur Sakamoto, as well as Rev. Hisakazu Taki and Rev. Kazuo Yamada, whose writings and/or sermons were referenced in this article.]

JANUARY 2018 OFFERINGS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$5–\$49: P. Harada, V. Matsuura, J. Muramoto, K. Gibson, M/M N. Nishio, T. Johnson, S. Yabut, K. Kitasoe, K. Schubert, C. Umeda, M/M R. Nakatani, M/M D. Ide, K. Tsukamoto
\$50–\$99: S. Tanaka, S. Taketa, Mrs. Nishio / N. Nishio / S. Nishio, M/M D. Tsuboi
\$100+: M/M B. Ide, J. Tanaka, J. Sebe / J. Detwiler, S. Nishino, M/M A. Akashi, A. Cool, A. Sebe
\$200+: Rev. Mrs. Yamada, J. Ito, M/M S. Sekikawa

Special Acknowledgment

T. Johnson In memory of Harvey Johnson (\$100)
 A. Sebe Personal study (\$100)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$5–\$49: H. Kumashiro, M/M V. Mizokami, M. Morita, Ne. Muronaka, No. Muronaka, Y. Naruko, A. Okimura, M. Sakata, T. Sato, M/M M. Shiroishi, S. Shiroishi
\$50–\$99: M. Kimura, T. Murakami, K. Nagao, T. Nagao, M. Nakamura, R. Nakamura, M. Okada, M/M S. Shaklan, M/M A. Shiroishi, T. Toyama, M/M R. Tsujimura, M/M P. Young
\$100+: M/M R. Allum, N. Chuk, H. Fujii, M/M M. Ishida, M/M T. Fukushima, M/M B. Hamamoto, L. Ito, M/M T. Matsumoto, M/M M. Murakami, M/M L. Muronaka, T. Nakamura, Y. Oishi, M/M N. Okano, J. Shiota, J. Shiroishi, F. Sueyoshi, M/M H. Tsujimura, M/M G. Wood
\$200+: M/M F. Barthel, M/M K. Chinen, C. Harada, M/M M. Hamada, M/M K. Kuritani, S. Okimura, T. Okimura, T. Oyanagi, L. Sanchez, D. Shiroishi
\$300+: K. Fujii, T. Ishida
\$400+: Yuujou Daiko, J. Ito
\$700+: Gedatsu Kendo Dojo
\$5,000+: C. Tsujimura

Special Acknowledgment

Janice Weiss Peck In honor of Tomiko Mizokami (\$1,000)
 Kari Kuritani Appreciation for end of year (\$100)
 Diana Mukai New Year appreciation (\$500)
 Tadao Ishida New Year appreciation (\$100)
 Naoya Okano New Year appreciation (\$100)
 Minaye Okada New Year appreciation (\$100)
 Rev. A. Sebe Appreciation for Companion (\$1,200)
 Suzan Abe-Walusko Session with Terry Matsuura (\$300)
 Jo Ann Shiroishi Appreciation for year end (\$100)

Special Acknowledgment (Continued)

Nester Gonzalez Memorial service for Noriko Yoshihara (\$500)
 Mrs. Rivera Appreciation for Nintendo Switch (\$150)
 C/H Tsujimura Memorial service for Sumiko Tsujimura and Frank Young (\$100)
 A/R Tsujimura Memorial service for Sumiko Tsujimura and Frank Young (\$100)
 Irene Kawamura Appreciation for Never Forgotten (\$800)

2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 13 (Sun) Sacramento Mother's Day Service
 May 20 (Sun) L.A. Mother's Day service
 May 26 (Sat) L.A. Rummage Sale (TBD) 8 a.m.
 May 27 (Sun) Sacramento plaque burning (*Joen-nogi*)
 May 29 (Tue) Church closed (in lieu of Memorial Day)
 Jun 10 (Sun) Sacto Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
 Jun 17 (Sun) Sacto Set-up for *Rokujizo* Bazaar
 Jun 17 (Sun) L.A. Mother Kiyota's Memorial Service
 Jun 23-24 (Sat-Sun) *Rokujizo* Bazaar Sacramento 11 am
 Jul 4 (Wed) Church Closed (Independence Day)
 Jul 15 (Sun) L.A. *Obon* Service/Graduates Honored
 Jul 22 (Sun) Sacramento Obon Service
 Jul 26-29 (Thu-Sun) Youth Camp in Sacramento
 Aug 4 (Sat) Lake Tahoe *Benzaiten* Service (TBD)
 Aug 29 (Sun) L.A. *Benzaiten* Service
Sept 2 (Sun) Fall Grand Festival 9:30 a.m.
 Sept 4 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
 Sept 15 (Sun) L.A. *Higan* Service
 Sept 23 (Sun) Sacramento *Higan* Service
 Oct 6-7 (Sat-Sun) L.A. Autumn Moon Festival
 Oct 9 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Columbus Day)
 Oct 20 (Sat) Sacramento Trip to Apple Hill (TBD)
 Oct 21 (Sun) L.A. *Ujigami* Service
 Oct 28 (Sun) Sacramento All Souls Service
 Nov 4 (Sun) L.A. Gedatsu Kongo 70th Memorial Service
 Nov 11 (Sun) Sacto Gedatsu Kongo 70th Memorial Service
 Nov 17 (Sat) L.A. Casino Bus Trip (TBD)
 Nov 18 (Sun) L.A. Gedatsu Kongo Birthday and 7-5-3 Children's Celebration
 Nov 22-23 Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)
 Nov 25 (Sun) Sacramento Gedatsu Kongo Birthday and 7-5-3 Children's Celebration
 Dec 2 (Sun) L.A. Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service
 Dec 9 (Sun) Sacramento Last Service of Year Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service / Church Clean-up
 Dec 9 (Sun) L.A. Church Clean-up
 Dec 16 (Sun) L.A. Christmas / Last Appreciation Service
 Dec 23-31 Church Closed

3 月度教会行事予定

ロサンゼルス教会

4 日 (日) 10:00A	日本語感謝会
11 日 (日) 10:00A	祥月追善法要
16 日 (金) 10:00A	布教会議
17 日 (土) 10:00A	理事会
18 日 (日) 10:00A	日英感謝会・彼岸法要 *講話：岡野総長
25 日 (日) 10:00A	英語感謝会 リージョナル委員会

サクラメント教会

4 日 (日) 10:00A	祥月追善法要
11 日 (日) 9:30A	感謝会・リージョナル委員会
25 日 (日) 9:30A	感謝会・彼岸法要

3 月度みさとし

「父祖の霊は実に我等を神に近づける
最大の先導者である」

親のない人はいない。たとえ自堕落な生活をしている人でも、また神など信じないという無神論者でも、かならず親から生まれたのである。親・先祖の愛と加護は無条件であり、たとえ肉体としてはこの世にいても、親・先祖は常にわれわれをしっかりと見守ってくださっているのである。自身が親・先祖と共に在ることは、誰にとっても比較的容易に感じる事ができるものであるが、その認識を得るならば、親・先祖よりもさらに大きくわれわれを包み込み導いてくれる神の存在を認識するところまで、もう一步なのである。親・先祖の加護を認識することは、神の認識に至る捷徑なのである。

解脱人生相談

家族・親族間の仲が悪い…。

【質問】 家族親戚間のトラブルが絶えず、どうしたらよいかわかりません。平和で円満な家庭を築くために何かできることはないですか？

回答者：神谷 龍典

ご質問の内容からは、あなたがいつもご家族親戚間のトラブルに巻き込まれているのかどうかかわからないのですが、家族の問題は複雑で、感情的になりやすいため、自分ひとりでは解決できないこともたくさんあります。

もしご家庭に「〇〇家祖先代々敵味方無縁之霊」のご供養札が無ければ、この機会にお申込みをされてはいかがでしょうか。ご自宅でご家族親戚が円満に過ごせるよう祈念して、特に「敵味方」のご供養札を意識して天茶供養を毎日続けてみてください。

会祖解脱金剛様は「一切は自己の鏡」と言われました。前回の私の解脱人生相談で「自己反省」の大切さについて触れましたが、ご家族親戚が争ったりしている姿を見たら、「日ごろの自分は家庭や職場でどうなのか」と「自己反省」してみることが大切です。

金剛様は「解脱とは何か。これを手短かに言えば、人間よろしく思いやりに生きよというにある」とも言われています。ご家族や親戚の方たちに対して「どうして争ってばかりなの」と責める気持ちではなく、「みんないろいろな問題を抱えて辛いんだろうな」と思いやりの気持ちで接するように心がけてみてください。

私たちには思いやりの心が本来備わっているのですが、それが発揮されず、逆に自我の方が働き、相手を批判したり責めたりしていることが多いものです。

解脱会の先生が日本の各支部にご出講された時に「三つの生活の心得」を話されるそうです。

- 1) 相手の長所をよく見てほめましょう
- 2) 相手の立場になって考えましょう
- 3) 相手の話をよく聞きましょう

この三つの心得を実践すれば、夫婦や家庭も円満、職場でもみな仲良くなれるそうです。

また、毎日の生活で「心配ごと」よりも「感謝できること」に目を向けるというのも大切です。ご家族や親戚に対して自分から率先して「ありがとう」を言ってみてください。この「ありがとう」は「相手に強要しない」のがポイントです。

「有り難い」という気持ちを持っていると周りが変わっていきます。「感謝に過ぎれば、真に安心立命を得られる」ことをぜひ体験してみてください。

講 話

ご霊地—靈性を養う聖なるお庭

サクラメント教会・山田 一雄

アメリカのご霊地で奉仕させていただくことは、私にとって大きな栄誉と幸福であり、しばしば至福と感謝の気持ちに包まれます。そのご霊地のはかり知れない価値と魅力について、ぜひ皆さまと分かち合っていきたいと思います。

「ご霊地」という名称は、聖なる霊の地という意味を持つ日本語です。ここには、すべての命の源である天神地祇をはじめ、弁財天、不動明王、馬頭観音、六地藏尊、万物万霊が祀られています。

様々な木々や植物が茂り、小鳥や小動物が憩う敷地の小道を歩けば、神聖な空気に心が洗われるようです。ここがいかに聖なる場所であるかということは、理屈でわかるような問題ではありません。自然に対して感動する心や靈性を見るような感性が必要です。その意味では、ぜひゆったりと境内を散策し、参拝してみてください。心が穏やかになり、敷地の神聖な雰囲気

味わうことができ、癒されることと思います。

このご霊地の敷地全体が、霊的資質を養うことができる聖なるお庭のようになっており、ウォーキング・メディテーションにも最適です。池をしつらえて、そのほとりに弁財天を祀ったのも、岸田先生がここを精神的な聖なる庭のようにしたかったからに違いありません。沢山の教会やお寺はありますが、このような聖地のあるところはめったにありません。私たちのご霊地は本当にユニークな存在だと思います。

二のような聖地に浸り、ぜひ心から祈りをささげてみてください。帰るころには、心に清々しさを感じるに違いありません。そして真心からの祈りは必ず聞き届けられます。あなたは後になって、そのことに気づくかもしれません。そしてそれがたとえ望んだ答えではなかったとしても、それがあなたの魂に一番だと神が思っただけに授けてくださった答えです。神があなたの真心を無視することは絶対にありません。

人々は、ここでそのような体験を得ることができません。実際、ご霊地の参拝を通し、そのような体験をした多くの会員の報告があります。心がけ次第で、聖なるメッセージを受け取れる場所であるのです。

さらに、教会の中では、いつでも天茶供養ができます。そして、ミニスターの仲介のもと御五法修行で霊魂との交流を通し学ぶこともできるのです。

ご霊地は、自分で自分を清らかにすることができる修行場であり、霊性を高めたいと思っている人々のための財産であり、私たちのための宝物でもあります。私たちは、このご霊地を大切に、守っていかなければなりません。それは、私たちの学びの前提であり根本的な義務でもあります。なぜなら私たちの祖先や多くの会員が祀られている解脱金剛霊廟があるからです。その霊廟祭祀を末永く守るのが、お祀りされた霊魂との約束であり、ご霊地存続の意義の一つでもあります。

三ご霊地は 1950 年に設立され、最初の教会ホールは会員たちの手によって建設されました。そして今日、このご霊地は、子孫の幸福を願って教えに深く帰依した前世代から私たちへと委ねられました。

幸い、現時点では、ご霊地は絶えず美しく保たれています。ジョンとスコットが常に敷地内の土地や設備を管理してくれているからです。特に、昨年のサクラメント・リージョナル・ボードの設立以来、現在は、日々の教会の運営や行事が、会員自身によって話し合われ実行されています。会員たちが自らの足で立て、自らの教会・聖地として支えていくことが最も望ましい形であり、大切なのです。

やがて IoT（モノのインターネット）の発展に伴い人間の生活様式も劇的に変わっていくでしょう。その中、人間の心の研究が引き続き探求されるにつれ、人間の霊性を深める意義と重要性がさらに増しています。ご

霊地は、霊性を養いたいと願う人々のために存在します。その意義と必要性もますます高まるでしょう。

まだ未整備な点のあるご霊地を、今後さらに魅力ある場にしていくことを目指し、私たち一人一人の知恵と力を結集しましょう。それは、人々の魂に資する仕事です。そしてこのご霊地をアメリカの宝となるような場所にしていきましょう。

掲示板

ジャクソン伊藤氏からの篤志奉納について 日本ツアー参加者へ航空券代金の補助があります

本年 10 月、日本の解脱会ご霊地において「立教 90 年」の祝典があります。現在アメリカからの記念ツアーグループが組織されており、米国会員もお祝いに参加することが奨励されています。

この機にできるだけ多くのアメリカ会員が参加できるようにと、米国教会首席ディーコンのジャクソン伊藤氏から、ツアー参加者全員の航空券の一部を補助する篤志奉納の申し出がありました。

この篤志奉納の内容は、「各出席者の航空運賃の半分を支払う。また、25 歳未満の若者あるいはフルタイムで働いていない人には全航空運賃を支払う」というものです。ジャクソン氏はこのたびの奉納に至った気持ちの次のように話しました。

「私はこの 2 年、ご霊地を個人的に訪れ、聖地に祀られる様々なご祭神にふれ、会祖・解脱金剛さまの解脱を通しての世界平和への探求を深く理解することができました。日本での経験と先生方のお蔭で霊的な啓蒙を達成する道を多く学ばせていただきました。

私が学んだことを分かち合い、将来の米国教会の成長を奨励するために、可能な限り多くのアメリカの人達に立教 90 年の記念式典に出席してもらい、神聖なご霊地を体験していただきたいのです」

ぜひこの機会にぜひ多くの参加を期待します。ツアーの詳細については、追って各教会にて発表されます。

- 柴燈護摩および萬部供養の申込受け付け中ですがなるべく 3 月 18 日までにお申し込みください。
- LA 教会から春季大祭の無料バスが出ます
サクラメントの春季大祭に向けロサンゼルス教会からバスが 4 月 7 日（土）夜 10 時に出発します。バス代は、ジャクソン伊藤さんが寄付くださいますので、無料です。バス利用希望者は、教会のサインシートにお名前を記入ください。

訃報

- ロサンゼルス教会会員・吉原憲子さん(90 歳)におかれましては 1 月 17 日に逝去されました。ここに謹んで哀悼の意を表します。



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The *Gedatsu Companion* is published monthly for Gedatsu members like **Tetsuya Matsumoto** of the L.A. Church. Born in Japan, Tetsuya came to America with his parents in 1966. An architectural engineer, Tetsuya is owner of a design

and construction firm in L.A. He, his wife, **Sachiyo**, and sons, **Satoshi** and **Wataru**, are actively involved in the Gedatsu Church (Tetsuya serves on the Board of Directors and L.A. Regional Board), as well as Gedatsu USA Kendo Dojo, for which Tetsuya is president and coordinator.

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(Biography – Continued from page 7)

The value of adversity

Such were Eizo's dreadful circumstances when New Year 1910 arrived. With nothing to eat, Eizo spent the first three days of the year drinking water only. He began to stay around Ueno at that time and got acquainted with those who were under similar circumstances.

Later, reflecting back on those days, Eizo stated, "When I was leading a homeless life, I could survive on only five *sen* a day. Two *daifuku-mochi* with salted bean jam and water were enough for me to survive.

"Man should experience this kind of life of extreme poverty. You can truly never experience heart-to-heart relationships and the essence of humanity among the common people without going through adversity."

One day, Eizo heard about a job at the harbor. He went there and found many dock workers energetically unloading ships. After visiting one of the shipping agents, "Uchida Kinzo Store," Eizo was hired. The next day, he and other dock workers assembled to perform the very hard work of unloading cargo from barges. Although he had always prided himself on his strength, Eizo was too tired to stand up.

As he became accustomed to the work, Eizo began to build a wide circle of acquaintances. He enjoyed having open relations with the workers. He thought, "I lost everything. It may be interesting to stake my life for this world."

By the spring of 1910, Eizo's homeless life was over. A new stage of his life was emerging.

(To be continued next month)

