



# GEDATSU COMPANION

GEDATSU CHURCH USA  
www.gedatsu-usa.org

## DECEMBER 2019

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Gedatsu Kongo's  
Thought for the Month

*"When you live to benefit others,  
you will always progress in life."*

During Japan's *Edo* era, there was a renowned village leader/reformer named Sontoku Ninomiya, who restored many poor and desolate farming villages.

He said, "You can learn the Universal Law by observing water in a bathtub. If you try to pull the water toward you, the water will go the other way. When you push the water away, the water will come toward you."

"When you give for the sake of others, you will receive. This is the Universal Law."

Think on this. When we help people and work for the sake of society, we ourselves enjoy a good life.

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

- Sun 1 10:00 am "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
- Sun 8 9:30 am Last Sunday Service of the Year /  
Archbishop Kishida's Memorial Service /  
Regional Board Meeting / Church Clean-up
- Sun – Tue 22-31 Church Closed for Holidays

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

- Sun 1 10:00 am Appreciation Service (Japanese and English)  
Archbishop Kishida's Memorial Service
- Sat 7 10:00 am Church Clean-up
- Sun 8 10:00 am "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
- Sun 15 10:00 am Appreciation Service (Japanese and English)  
Christmas Program
- Sun – Tue 22-31 Church Closed for Holidays

## JANUARY 2020

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

- Wed 1 9:00 am New Year Homage (until noon)
- Thu-Fri 2-3 Church Closed
- Sun 5 10:00 am "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
- Sun 12 9:30 am First Service of the Year  
Potluck Party & Gift Exchange
- Sun 19 1:00 pm San Jose Branch *Kanshakai* Service
- Tue 21 Church Closed (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- Sun 26 9:30 am Appreciation Service / Regional Board Meeting

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

- Wed 1 7:30 am New Year Homage (until noon)
- Thu-Fri 2-3 Church Closed
- Sun 5 10:00 am Japanese *Kanshakai* Service
- Sun 12 10:00 am "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
- Sun 19 10:00 am Appreciation Service (Japanese & English)  
New Year Service / Potluck & Gift Raffle
- Tue 21 Church Closed (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- Sun 26 10:00 am English Appreciation Service /  
L.A. Regional Board Meeting



### December “Never Forgotten” Memorial Services

“Never Forgotten” Memorial Services are held monthly at the Gedatsu Church to honor the memory of those who have passed away during that particular month.

People of all faiths are welcome, so invite your friends and family members to attend. Have them fill out the application form, which is inserted in this newsletter. Even if you are unable to attend, you may still honor the soul of a loved one.

The Sacramento Spiritual Center will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, December 1, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Tomiji Nakayama, George Sekikawa, Tokio Tateishi, Tomota Tateishi, Kiyoshi Tateishi, Soshiro Hatae, Shizuye Kodani, Kazuo Ide, Kanzaburo Ide, Mariko (Mizumoto) Takemura, Dorothy Keiko (Takemura) Nakamoto, Kiichi Ogawa, Kimi Yamada, Eizan Kishida and Albert Ryoze Akiyama.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, December 8, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Tomiko Amabe, Yoshio Arakawa, Consuelo T. Castillo, Eiko Ishida, Junnosuke Ishida, Natsu Grace Kikuchi, Chizu Kitagawa, Helen Akiko Matsumoto, Tatsumi Matsuura, Shizuyo Mizutani, Johnny Kazuhiko Numata, Mitsuko Numata, Kiichi Ogawa, Donald Roy Omiya, Kou Helen Sakuma, Dale Smith, Thomas Yasukiyo Sueyoshi, Chisayo Taniguchi, Goro Gary Tanji, Ruby Toshiko Tanji, Shiro Paul Tanji, Tomota Tateishi and Toru Toyama.**

### Return Your Old Kuyo Plaques

If you ordered new *amacha kuyo* plaques for the new year, the church urges you to show the proper respect for your old plaques. Give prayers of appreciation to your old plaques, wash and dry them thoroughly, then return them to your local church. They will be burned in a plaque-burning service in Sacramento in the spring.

### Renew Your Church Membership for 2020

Gedatsu Church USA is supported through pledges, donations and membership dues. Please renew your annual membership dues now.

Individual Fee	Annual: \$45	Lifetime: \$450
Family Fee	Annual: \$70	Lifetime: \$600
Additional Women’s Club Fee	\$6	

Mail or deliver your check – made payable to Gedatsu Church USA – to your nearest church branch.

### Year-End Membership Roster – Any Changes? Email Addresses Requested

Did you move, change your phone numbers or add an email address in the past year? The 2020 annual “Seasons Greetings” membership roster is currently being updated.

Please check the 2019 roster and advise **Rev. Naoya Okano** at the L.A. Church if you have any changes to your mailing address, phone number and/or email address. All changes must be received by December 1. Rev. Okano’s email address is: [naoya.okano@gedatsu-usa.org](mailto:naoya.okano@gedatsu-usa.org).

### Become a Donor to the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund

Gedatsu Church USA is supported through membership fees and the donations of members and friends. Many years ago, the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund, or *Hosankai*, was established to allow members to demonstrate a higher level of commitment, appreciation and support for the church.

Participation in the Fund requires an annual pledge of \$600 a year, which is in addition to the general membership dues. This \$600 may be paid in a single lump sum; two biannual payments of \$300; or 12 monthly installments of \$50. Donations to the Fund are tax deductible.

If you would like to support the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund, complete and submit the application form that is available at your local church office. A list of donors to the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund is published annually in the *Gedatsu Companion*.



### **“MAD” for Maryvale**

Be a Gedatsu Angel and **M**ake **A** **D**ifference. Together, we can brighten the Christmas season for the children of Maryvale by making a charitable donation to the Gedatsu “MAD for Maryvale” Angel Fund. Donations will purchase Christmas gifts for children of Maryvale, a local agency that cares for orphaned, abused, abandoned and neglected children in the foster care system.

This year, the focus of the program will be on teen girls, many of whom are dealing with serious emotional disturbances and whose needs are often neglected. Gifts from Gedatsu Church will help to brighten their holiday and show them that others care about their happiness and well-being.

Donations in any amount are welcome and will be collected through December 8 at the L.A. Church. Please make checks payable to Gedatsu Church USA, earmarked for the Gedatsu Angel Fund.

The Gedatsu Angel program is a community outreach project promoted by the L.A. Regional Board and spearheaded by L.A. members **Mark** and **Marie Ishida**.

Many thanks to everyone who supported last year’s successful drive, which enabled us to purchase Christmas gifts for more than six dozen children and youths. Let’s fill the truck again!

### **Ministers’ Schedules**

While **Rev. Naoya Okano** remains in Japan, awaiting issuance of a green card for U.S. permanent residency, minister schedules are flexible, as follows:

- **Rev. Kazuo Yamada** will remain at the Los Angeles Church through January 31, pending Rev. Naoya’s return.
- **Rev. Hisakazu Taki**’s tentative U.S. schedule for 2020 is February 27 through April 30 and July 23 through October 7.

### **You Can Become a Gedatsu Minister**

*The best way to find yourself  
is to lose yourself in the service of others.*

-- Mahatma Gandhi

Over the 70-year history of Gedatsu Church USA, American members have studied Gedatsu under the guidance and support of many dedicated teachers from *Gedatsu-kai* Japan, a tradition that continues to this day. The long-term goal of our church, however, has always been the training and ordination of our own U.S.-born ministers.

To that end, the church offers salaried positions with flexible ministerial pathways tailored to fit individual goals, experience and life situations.

If you have a sincere desire to serve the Gedatsu Church and its members, and aspire to be trained in the Gedatsu ministry, we encourage you to advise your local regional board. To determine candidates’ suitability for training as a minister, the review process requires recommendations by the regional board, Board of Directors of Gedatsu USA and the ministerial staff.

The minister-training course is composed of a six-to-12-month program under the supervision of U.S. ministers (including doctrinal study and basic instruction in Gedatsu practices, services, prayer, etiquette, etc.) and the completion of training at *Goreichi Gedatsu-kai* Japan, leading to ordination upon Bishop/ministerial approval.

If you are interested in learning more about the Gedatsu ministry, please contact your local church minister.



## AROUND OUR CHURCH

### Saying “Thank You” with Good Food, Fun and Friendship

Sacramento members demonstrate their appreciation to their Bazaar volunteers



In conjunction with the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration year, members of the Sacramento Spiritual Center held an Appreciation Luncheon in October for their hard-working and dedicated team of volunteers, who come out each year to support the annual *Rokujizo* Bazaar.

Speaking on behalf of members, **June Tanaka** sincerely thanked friends and family members for their contributions to the church’s annual fundraiser – noting that without their help the Bazaar would not be possible. Members and guests alike were treated to a delicious catered luncheon buffet of brisket, barbecue chicken and vegetarian entrees. An afternoon of fun games and prizes was enjoyed by young and old.

To commemorate the event, everyone gathered for a group photo (see back page).



### Singing Now Part of Sunday Services

The sound of music and song now fill the worship halls of Sacramento (top photo) and Los Angeles (below). The new Gedatsu song, “My Gedatsu Life,” which was created earlier this year, concludes the Sunday services on a joyful, harmonious note.





Sharon Reckers: the creative mind behind L.A. Church's award-winning *Tanabata* designs

### Imagine That

This summer, when the Los Angeles Gedatsu Church won top prize in the 2019 L.A. *Nisei Week Tanabata Festival* with its “Romance in the Stars” *kazari* ornament, it was the tenth year that the church had competed in the annual event. Across that decade, the L.A. Church has won a handful of prestigious awards and honors for its entries – earning a reputation among Festival officials and the public for its imaginative and highly creative designs.

Credit the amazing design eye and talents of L.A. member **Sharon Reckers** for that creativity.

As lead designer on the *Tanabata* Workshop team, Sharon is an enthusiastic, active crafter and DIYer (as in “do it yourself”) and into all things creative: quilting, drawing, painting, jewelry, scrap-booking, etc. With “an imagination that just won’t quit,” Sharon is constantly thinking about, creating or researching projects that will ultimately delight the eye. She’s part of a dynamic crafting/DIY community that connects online and at craft fairs to share ideas, get inspired and enjoy creative expression.



**Incorporating three-dimensional forms (on left) and hand-painted illustrations (on right) are exciting new innovations that Sharon Reckers introduced into the design of *tanabata* displays.**

For the church’s *Tanabata* entry, Sharon strives to raise the creative bar each year. For example, in 2013, for the church’s first-place winning “Sailor Moon” entry, Sharon boldly stepped away from traditional *kazari* forms to incorporate three-dimensional characters. In this year’s award-winning *kazari*, Sharon illustrated the romance story by beautifully hand-painting the star-crossed lovers on the delicate fabric panels. Her innovative, out-of-the-box ideas invariably inspire imitators, so Sharon begins each year conceptualizing new techniques and forms, always staying one step ahead.



**After seeing a spiral *origami* display online, Sharon visualized its design and construction. Then, with the help of workshop volunteers, she transformed that concept into reality.**

In addition, this year, when the church wanted to produce a 1,000-*origami* crane display for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, Sharon conceptualized a spectacular design of 1,000 miniature multi-colored *origami* cranes, suspended by threads in an intricate six-foot-tall spiraling display. The result – admired by everyone at the celebration banquet – is nothing short of breathtaking.

What’s next for Sharon? You can bet that she’s already on to new projects (like her incredible design projects below), led by her never-ending imagination, amazing talent and drive to create.



### **“Welcome to Gedatsu”**

**By Rev. Hisakazu Taki**

#### Chapter 6: The Path of Self-awareness

#### **The Universal Law and Human Beings**

Master Gedatsu Kongo said:

*“The purpose of our Gedatsu study is to become aware that we are allowed to live by the Universal Law and nurtured by receiving immeasurable blessings from many people and everything in the universe.”*

We human beings live each day by receiving many blessings from everything on earth according to the Universal Law. The celestial rotation, seasonal alteration, and the life activities of living things on earth are all controlled by the Universal Law. We, not only our physical bodies but also our spiritual aspects, are all governed by the Universal Law.

Master Gedatsu Kongo also said:

*“Man is a spiritual offshoot of God. We are allowed to live by God. Just as our physical being exists in accordance with the universal phenomena, our hearts and minds must also exist in harmony with God. Herein lies the basic law – that we cannot, even for a second, be separated from God. Therefore, the fundamental path of human life is to be conscious of God, to communicate with God, and to live according to God’s Will.”*

Through the study and practice of Gedatsu, we can learn how to live according to the Universal Law.

#### **The Goho Study, the Path of Self-awareness**

Physical phenomena can be seen, but we cannot see the spiritual world. However, our existence is the combination of physical and spiritual aspects.

Therefore, it is important to be aware of our spiritual aspect in order to live a good life. The *Goho* study is a path to truly understand ourselves in both our physical and spiritual aspects.

When we practice the *Goho* study, we hold the Holy *Goho* between palms. The Holy *Goho* is a spiritual amulet, which represents the Universal Law. Master Gedatsu Kongo gave us this amulet for our *Goho* study through his spiritual power.

When we perform the *Goho* study, we give ourselves entirely up to the Holy *Goho*, or the Universal Law. This is most important aspect in our *Goho* study. With this attitude, we hold the Holy *Goho* between our palms with respect, breathe naturally, and concentrate on reciting “*Namu-Gedatsu-Kongo*” repeatedly in our mind. We then come in contact with various spirits through the spiritual power of the *Holy Goho* and Master Gedatsu Kongo and become aware of the ties between ourselves and the spiritual world. Through this practice, we learn how to understand ourselves more deeply.

#### **Two Aspects of Self-awareness**

The purpose of the *Goho* study is to understand what we really are. We are more or less selfish because we are the fruit of generations of ancestors physically, mentally and spiritually. Through the *Goho* study, we can become aware of our selfishness and reform our attitude in life.

There are two aspects of our self-awareness. One is to be aware that we are connected with everything in the universe. Our existence is supported and nurtured by many people and things around us. We receive immeasurable blessings from God, ancestors, and many others.

Through the *Goho* study, we become deeply conscious that God and ancestors are always with us and watching over us, and that we are allowed to live by receiving immeasurable blessings from all people and everything in the universe.

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Path of Self-Awareness – continued from page 6)*

Another aspect of self-awareness is to recognize what we really are. We are all egotistical. But it is hard for us to be aware of this. This is because we are connected with generations of ancestors physically, mentally and spiritually. Through the *Goho* study, we learn of the karmic traits from our ancestors. We then become aware of our selfishness and, by reforming our attitude, we are able to move toward a life of appreciation and gratitude.

### Unconditional Appreciation

When we practice the *Goho* study, we might face a hard lesson about our karmic traits from the past and feel burdened with them. But we must not forget that we are still blessed with many wonderful things.

The contemporary Vietnamese Zen master, Thich Nhat Hann, said:

*“The ocean of suffering is immense, but if you turn around, you can see the land. The seed of suffering in you may be strong, but don’t wait until you have no more suffering before allowing yourself to be happy.”*

*“When one tree in the garden is sick, you have to care for it. But don’t overlook all the healthy trees. Even while you have pain in your heart, you can enjoy the many wonders of life – the beautiful sunset, the smile of a child, the many flowers and trees. To suffer is not enough. Please don’t be imprisoned by your suffering.”*

No matter what difficult problems you may have in your family and ancestors in the past, you should be aware that your existence today is possible because of them. By learning from the past, you can change your attitude in life for a better future.

Thich Nhat Hann also said:

*“If you have experienced hunger, you know that having food is a miracle. If you have suffered from the cold, you know the preciousness of warmth. When you have suffered, you know how to appreciate the elements of paradise that are present. If you dwell only in your suffering, you will miss paradise. Don’t ignore your suffering, but don’t forget to enjoy the wonders of life, for your sake and for the benefit of many beings.”*

Everything that happens to us in life has profound meaning. Through experiencing those things, we can learn something from them and start afresh to create a better future.

Master Gedatsu Kongo said:

*“When you become aware of negative karma from the past within you, accept and appreciate it as a challenge to improve yourself. You will then be able to start afresh and live a full life. Human existence is not possible without karma in the past. All people desire to live a happy life. When you practice Gedatsu and create new good karma, you can live happily.”*

*“Karma should not be a cause of pessimism or despair. Why don’t you make the best of the karma? When in adversity, make use of the adverse circumstances to change your life positively.”*

No matter what difficulties you may have in life, accept everything as a challenge to improve your life. Have hope and courage to live positively with appreciation. There is no dead end in life. This is Master Gedatsu Kongo’s teaching of “Unconditional Appreciation.”

Gedatsu is the path of happiness for everyone. No matter what difficult problems you may have in life, you can attain happiness by practicing Gedatsu. Please keep this in mind always and practice Gedatsu wholeheartedly.



### Daily Expressions of Gratitude

By **Senior Reverend Akira Sebe**

The day before the *Rokujizo* Bazaar in June, I listened to the Sacramento-area weather report and heard the temperature would be as high as 106 degrees.

I thought to myself, "This is an opportunity to appreciate the divine nature of water, to remind us what a blessing water is for humans."

Therefore, I deeply and sincerely expressed my gratitude for water and its divine nature. I expressed my appreciation without any thoughts in my mind and concentrated on my feelings of sincere thanks.

The next morning, the day of the bazaar, I woke up to feel a cool breeze.

I couldn't believe it. Sr. Deacon Jackson Ito said that he had been offering prayers, too.



Nature's system of water circulation – meaning the cycle of water evaporating from the ocean, forming vapor clouds, which give way to rain and snow, which in turn provide the water source for human life – Gedatsu Kongo appreciated Nature's system of water circulation as the divine work of the guardian spirit of water.

The Gedatsu study is the sincere belief in the divine nature in all things.

Divinity is everywhere – in all of nature and within our own selves and all people. We can practice Gedatsu by recognizing and appreciating this divinity within ourselves, our children, our grandchildren, in all things.

Oftentimes, hardship or suffering compel a person to search for this divinity, as an answer to one's suffering. I myself had to go through hardships and sort through my problems before I could recognize this fact. I am not an easy person.

We can be proactive and begin with a simple expression of thanks towards a person or thing that we accept as pure and beautiful, or divine, in nature. It can be a grandchild. It can be your garden, or your spouse. It can be anything that brings you joy.

As you express your thanks repeatedly every day for this person or thing, your feelings of appreciation will naturally deepen and become more and more sincere.

The magic of the words "thank you," when repeated, will build up the feeling of gratitude within you, so that you won't have to think anymore when you express your thanks. Instead, you will *feel* gratitude, happiness and a sense of peace.

Bishop Kishida told me that the Universal Life Force can elevate our souls when we become aware of and appreciate its existence.

That is the deeper practice of Gedatsu. I encourage you to try this and discover the transformative quality of expressing gratitude each day.





## OCTOBER 2019 OFFERINGS

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**\$5–\$49:** M/M R. Nakatani, S. Tanaka, Akashi family,  
K. Schubert  
**\$50–\$99:** S. Taketa, M/M D. Ide, J. Tanaka, M/M D. Tsuboi,  
Rev. A. Sebe, J. Tomita  
**\$100+:** M/M S. Sekikawa  
**\$200+:** M/M J. Horner, *Senkakukan*

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

**\$5–\$49:** M/M K. Chinen, M/M M. Hamada, M/M F. Kloer,  
K. Kuritani, M/M V. Mizokami, A. Okimura  
**\$50–\$99:** J. Hamamoto, M/M K. Kuritani, T. Murakami,  
M/M M. Murakami, M. Nakamura, T. Nakamura, Y. Oishi,  
M. Okada, T. Toyama, M/M H. Tsujimura, M/M R. Tsujimura  
**\$100+:** M/M F. Barthel, K. Fujii, M/M M. Ishida, T. Ishida,  
M. Kimura, M/M S. Mukai, T. Okimura  
**\$200+:** M/M R. Allum, D. Shiroishi, M/M A. Nishino  
**\$300+:** J. Ito

#### **Special Acknowledgment**

Anthony Sanchez Funeral service for Linda Sanchez (\$300)  
M/M T. Matsumoto Never Forgotten for Hiroishi Nakaguchi &  
Shizuya Nakaguchi (\$100)  
Sherrie Chodor Appreciation for 7-5-3 (\$100)  
Jackson Ito In memory of Linda Sanchez (\$100)



## 2020 UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 16 (Sun)	L.A. Sun Spirit Service
Feb 18 (Tue)	Church Closed (in lieu of Presidents' Day)
Mar 13 (Fri)	Propagation Meeting 10 am
Mar 14 (Sat)	Board of Directors Meeting 10 am
Mar 15 (Sun)	L.A. <i>Higan</i> Service (Japanese & English)
Mar 22 (Sun)	Sacramento <i>Higan</i> Service
Mar 29 (Sun)	Church Closed
Apr 12 (Sun)	141 <sup>st</sup> Spring Grand Festival 9:30 a.m.
May 10 (Sun)	Sacramento Mother's Day Service
May 17 (Sun)	L.A. Mother's Day Service
May 24 (Sun)	Sacramento plaque burning ( <i>Joan-no-gi</i> )
May 25 (Mon)	Sacramento Inter-religious Memorial Day Service
May 26 (Tue)	Church Closed (in lieu of Memorial Day)
Jun 7 (Sun)	Sac'to Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
Jun 21 (Sun)	L.A. Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
Jun 27-28 (Sat-Sun)	<i>Rokujizo</i> Bazaar Sacramento 11 am
Jul 4 (Thu)	Church Closed (Independence Day)
Jul 12 (Sun)	Sac'to <i>Obon</i> Service / Graduates Honored
Jul 19 (Sun)	L.A. <i>Obon</i> Service / Graduates Honored
Jul 23-26 (Thu-Sun)	Youth Camp – Sacramento
Aug 1-2 (Sat-Sun)	Lake Tahoe <i>Benzaiten</i> Service (TBD)
Aug 16 (Sun)	L.A. <i>Benzaiten</i> Service
Sep 6 (Sun)	142 <sup>nd</sup> Fall Grand Festival 9:30 am
Sep 8 (Tue)	Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
Sep 20 (Sun)	L.A. <i>Higan</i> Service
Oct 3-4 (Sat-Sun)	L.A. Autumn Moon Festival
Oct 13 (Tue)	Church Closed (in lieu of Columbus Day)
Oct 18 (Sun)	L.A. <i>Ujigami</i> Service
Oct 25 (Sun)	Sacramento All Souls Service
Nov 1 (Sun)	L.A. Gedatsu Kongo Service
Nov 8 (Sun)	Sacramento Gedatsu Kongo Service
Nov 15 (Sun)	L.A. 7-5-3 Children's Celebration
Nov 22 (Sun)	Sac'to 7-5-3- Children's Celebration/ Gedatsu Kongo Birthday
Nov 26-27	Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)
Dec 6 (Sun)	L.A. Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service
Dec 12 (Sat)	L.A. Church Clean-up
Dec 13 (Sun)	Sacramento Last Service of Year / Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service
Dec 20 (Sun)	L.A. Last Service / Christmas Program
Dec 24-31	Church Closed

## 12 月度教会行事予定

### ロサンゼルス教会

- 1(日) 10:00A 日英・感謝会・岸田英山先生法要  
7(土) 10:00A 教会大掃除  
8(日) 10:00A 12 月祥月追善法要  
15(日) 10:00A 日英・感謝会・クリスマス会  
22(日)～31(火) 教会休み

### 2020 年正月

- 1 日(水) 7:30A 新年参賀(正午まで)  
2～3 日 三が日休み  
5 日(日) 10:00A 日本語初感謝会

### サクラメント教会

- 1(日) 10:00A 祥月追善法要  
8(日) 9:30A 年納め感謝会  
岸田英山先生法要・大掃除  
22(日)～31(火) 教会休み

### 2020 年正月

- 1 日(水) 新年参賀(～正午)  
2～3 日 三が日休み  
5 日(日) 10:00A 祥月追善法要



## 12 月度みさとし

「真実世のため人のために眼醒めた世界には、  
一切の行き詰まりはない」

勤勉と儉約によって没落した生家を再興し、小田原藩領など各地の荒廃した農村をよみがえらせた、江戸時代の農民指導者・二宮尊徳は、人間の生きるべきあり方を「湯船の教え」として次のように分かりやすく説明している。「湯船の湯を見れば世の中の道理がわかる。湯船の湯を手で自分の方へかき寄せれば、湯はこちら側に来るようだが、全部向う側へ流れていってしまう。向うへ押せば、湯は向う側へ行くようだが、全部自分の方に戻ってくる。少し押せば少し戻り、強く押せば強く戻る。これが天理である。仁・義とは、相手の方へ押すことであり、手前にかき寄せれば不仁となり不義となるのだ」と。天理(天地の理法=大自然の法則)とは、一言でいえば「循環」であり、この理にそった「与えて求めぬ」「努力して要求せぬ」生き方、感謝報恩の心で世のため人のために献身する生き方に目覚めたとき、人間は決して行き詰ることのない喜びの人生を送ることができるのである。

## 解脱人生相談

病気が治るよう神に祈るのは  
良くないことですか？

回答者：岡野 尚也

結論から言うと、私は間違っていないと思います。自分が病気になってしまい治療しても薬を飲んでもなかなかよくならない。または、愛する人が病気になって苦しんでいる。そういった状況になったとき、「どうか助けてください」と、元気になるよう神に祈りたくなる気持ちは誰にでもある普通のことです。

自分の病気の回復を祈る際は以下の3点に気を付けてください。

### 1. 病気になった理由をよく考える事

暖かい格好をしないで寝たら風邪をひきますし、お酒を飲みすぎたら肝臓を悪くします。このように病気は自分の行動を反省するための神様からの慈愛ともいえます。まず、病気になった自分をよく振り返ることが大切です。

### 2. 自分のできることを精一杯すること

1番で自分の行動に反省すべき点を見つけられたらそれを改善することと言うこともできます。お酒を飲みすぎているのであれば、量を減らしたり、運動をしたり、健康的な食事に切り替えたりすることはあると思います。自分ができることを前向きに精一杯努力する。神様はきっとその努力を見ていて手を差し伸べてくれると思います。

### 3. 病気が治った際にはきちんと神様に御礼を申し上げ、社会のため、人のために努力すること。

人に何かをお願いして、何かをやってもらった時は「ありがとう」と言うと思います。これは神様に対しても同じです。きちんとした形で「ありがとうございました」と神様に報告することはとても大切です。また、病気になるとお医者さんや、周りの人に支えてもらっている自分に気づくと思います。今度は、元気になったあなたが、一生懸命働いて社会に貢献したり、困っている人がいたら助けたり、支える側になることです。

こういったことを忘れずに神様に祈るのであれば、それは“自我充実”な祈りではないと私は思います。あなたの健康をお祈りいたします。

年末にいただく新年の  
『歳徳霊魂・一陽来福』のお札について

山田 一雄

**本** 来お正月というのは、年の初めにあたって、その年の幸福をもたらす「年神（としがみ）」さまが降臨（こうりん）される神聖な月です。新年の神さまである年神さまは祖霊神、または農耕神と考えられており、子孫繁栄（しそんはんえい）や五穀豊穡（ごこくほうじょう）に関わり、人々に幸福を授けるとされていて、「歳徳神（としとくじん）」または「正月さま」とも言われています。その年神（歳徳神）さまを迎え入れてお祝いし、一年の幸せを授けてもらうために、様々な正月行事や風習があるのです。

たとえば、門松（かどまつ）は、その年神さまが降りて来られる際の目印として門や玄関前に飾られます。

鏡餅（かがみもち）は、年神さまへのお供えものであり、依り代（よりしろ=居場所）でもあります。年神様は、新しい年の幸福や恵みとともに、私たちにみ魂（みたま=神の精気）を分けてくださると考えられてきました。その年の魂、すなわち年魂（としだま）をいただくということから、家長が家族に年魂を与える＝「お年玉を与える」という風習も生まれました。丸い餅の形は神器である古代の円形の銅鏡からきており、また、大小2段で太陽と月、陽と陰を表すとともに、円満に年を重ねるという意味も込められています。お正月に、この神のみ魂が宿る鏡餅をいただくことで人々は神の精気を頂いたのです。

**米** 国解脱教会では、年末、御五法の入った『歳徳霊魂・一陽来福』のお札が、『立春大吉』のお札と共に「金剛さまからのお歳暮」として会員や希望者に無料で配られます。金剛さまが生前中になされていたことを伝統として踏襲しているものです。

『歳徳霊魂』とは冒頭に述べた年神さま、歳徳神のことで、金剛さまは「歳徳霊魂」と表されました。

また『一陽来福』は、「陽の気持ちで過ごして幸福になるように」との祈りが込められた家の守り札です。

『一陽来福』の「福」は、本来復活の「復」の字を用いて、「一陽来復」と書きます。中国の『易経』から来た言葉で、日本の神社仏閣では冬至の日から節分にかけて、この「一陽来復」のお札が配られます。それは、冬が去り春が来るように「陰が極まって陽に転ず

る」という意味で、太陽の力が復活するとのことから、物事が良い方向に向かうというお守り札です。

私の知るところでは、東京の穴八幡神社など、毎年この「一陽来復」のお札を求めて長蛇の列がでる神社もあります。金銀融通、商売繁盛のご利益があるとされ、陽の気の到来とともに開運を願う人々です。

金剛さまはあえてこの「復」を「福」とされました。それは「陽の気と共に福が来るのだ」という教えが込められているのだそうです。つまり、単にご利益を待つのではなく、自らの気持ちを陽にすることで、福は運ばれてくるのだという真理をお教えくださっているとのこと。ですから、単に「玄関にこのお札を飾れば開運のご利益がある」というのではなく、「来る新年、何事も感謝で前向きに受け取る陽の気で過ごそう」という決意で祈り、お祀りするのが大切だということです。自らが明るい陽の気に同調することで、明るい道が開けてくるとのことなのです。

新年の諸札はいつ頃お取替えするのか？

**通** 常、新年に年神さまをお迎えする前、年末には神棚や仏壇、家屋を清める意味で「大掃除」を行ないます。それは12月13日に江戸城で行なわれた「スス払い」に由来し、その12月13日を「正月事始め」とし、正月準備を始める目安としています。ですから、大掃除をしたなら13日以降、早めに新札やご神前のお飾りをされても構いませんが、一般的にはクリスマス（25日）以降28日ころまでを目安に新年のお飾りをします。

なお、29日は「二重苦」に通じて縁起が悪く、31日の大晦日も「一夜飾り」と言って避ける風習は現在も変わりません。正月の神を迎えるのに一夜で用意するのでは誠意に欠けるという意味からのものです。この意味において、解脱会でも「一夜飾り」にならないよう、少なくとも30日までにはお正月の準備をするよう勧めています。

もちろんアメリカにおいては、しめ飾りや門松など入手するのも困難ですし、お飾りを簡略化したとしても一向に差し支えありません。要は真心と礼節を以て新年のお飾りさせていただくことが大切です。また、1年お世話になった古札類には御礼を申し上げ、新札にお移りいただくご挨拶をして。後日、「古札感謝」を添え各教会までご返還ください。





The *Gedatsu Companion* is published monthly for members like **Kohei Ishida** of the L.A. Church, who resides in Temple City with his wife, **May**. The son of the late **Rev. Jun** and **Eiko Ishida**, Kohei was raised in the Gedatsu faith from early childhood.

After a 28-year career in Law Enforcement with the Los Angeles Police Department, Kohei retired in 2009 as a Sergeant. Since then, he and May have enjoyed traveling the world, taking line-dancing classes and going to the movies. He credits the Gedatsu teaching for giving him a deep sense of gratitude in serving the people of Los Angeles and appreciates his ancestors and guardian angel for keeping him out of harm's way. He thanks his parents and ancestors for "the life given to me. I feel very blessed."

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### **Sacramento Members Say "Thank You" to Its Valued Volunteers** (See story on page 4)

