

GEDATSU COMPANION

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Gedatsu Kongo's Thought for the Month

"Gedatsu, in a sense, is the daily practice of death."

Gedatsu Kongo repeatedly taught the importance of the "Practice of Death." This does not mean physical death.

We tend to live our lives in a self-centered way. However, Gedatsu Kongo taught us that we should get rid of our self-centered mindset, have a broader heart, and devote ourselves to helping others and contributing to society. This is the path we should follow as human beings.

Practicing this teaching in our daily lives and trying to get rid of our self-centeredness is what Gedatsu Kongo meant by the daily "Practice of Death."

Editor: The "Practice of Death" mentioned above is part of Gedatsu Kongo's most distinctive teaching, "The Practice of Humility, Poverty, and Death." The teaching is explored in depth in the study series on page 5.

NOVEMBER 2026

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	1	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	8		No Service
Tue	10	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	22	10:00 am	Appreciation / Gedatsu Kongo Birthday 7-5-3 Children's Celebration
Thu-Fri	26-27		Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	1	10:00 am	Hiho Meditation Practice
Sun	8	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	15	10:00 am	Appreciation Service / 7-5-3 Children's Celebration & Luncheon
Thu-Fri	26-27		Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)

CHURCHWIDE

Mondays	5:30 pm	Weekly Steering Committee Zoom meetings
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DECEMBER 2026

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	6	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Tue	8	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	13		No Service
Sun-Thur	20-31		Church Closed (except for 12/27 service)
27	10:00 am		Last Appreciation Service of the Year / Social Hall Clean-up

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	6	10:00 am	Hiho Meditation Practice
Sun	13	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	20	10:00 am	Appreciation Service / Archbishop Kishida Memorial service / Holiday Program & Potluck Luncheon
Mon-Thur	21-31		Church Closed

CHURCHWIDE

Mondays	5:30 pm	Weekly Steering Committee Zoom meetings
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November “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.

The Sacramento Spiritual Center will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, November 1, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **George Akiyoshi, Henry Calderon, Harold Horner, Maio Kino, Kaoru Ide Kotabe, Toshiko Kusuhara, Hirohide Obu, Tracy T. Takahashi, Dorothy Tomita, Yasuno Niiguma Tsuboi, and Sho Akira Wakabayashi.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, November 8, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Kakujiro Arakawa, Moto Arakawa, Yaeko Aso, Ibo Roque Chaves, Hatsue Hiram, George Imuta, Ikuko Inoue, Seiji Inoue, Fumio Ishida, Hitoshi Ishida, Chiyoko Deguchi Kamei, Seitaro Kawamura, May Kikuchi, Fude Kikuta, Masaji George Kikuta, Ken Kimura, Tomio Kubo, Patsy M. Matsumoto, Robert Miyamoto, George Joroshi Miyasako, Masao Roy Mizokami, Emiko Okimura, Manabu Okimura, Nami Sakuma, Jon Nobuyuki Tanji, Dorothy Kiyoko Tomita, Henry Urada.**



7-5-3 Children’s Celebration

In November, Gedatsu members in Los Angeles and Sacramento will observe the *Shichi-Go-San* Festival, the traditional Japanese celebration for the well-being and healthy futures of children ages seven, five and three. So, if you have children, grandchildren, nieces/nephews of those ages, complete the application form available from your local church office to honor the children.

The 7-5-3 Celebration will be held on the following dates:

Los Angeles – Sunday, November 15
Sacramento – Sunday, November 22

Honored children will receive the traditional *chitose ame* candy, protective amulet, and gift card from the Sunday School. Lunch will be served. A donation of \$25 is appreciated.

Renew Your Church Membership for 2027

Annual Membership: Renewable annually

Individual	\$60 (including each child age 30+ living at home)
Family	\$100

Lifetime Membership: Pay your membership dues just once, instead of paying annually

Individual	\$600
Family	\$1,000

Pay Online or by Mail

- To pay online – by credit card or ACH/bank payment – go to the church website at www.gedatsu-usa. Or use Zelle (see page 3).
- Or mail your check – made payable to Gedatsu Church USA – to your nearest church branch.

Update Your Contact Information

Please notify the L.A. Church of any changes to your home address, email address, phone/cellphone numbers. Member contact information is not published. Email **Rev. Naoya** at naoya.gedatsu@gmail.com, call at (626) 288-1212, or text at (626) 233-2359. Or email **Mariko Locheo** at locheo.gedatsu.lab@gmail.com.

Order Your Holy Tea Plaques Now

Your *Amacha* holy tea plaques should be replaced at the beginning of each year. To have new plaques by New Year 2027, complete the order form available from your local church and mail it by November 1 to your church with your payment.

Renew Your Holy Paper Plaques

The new year is the time to renew your holy paper plaques for placement throughout the home for the protection of the dwelling and happiness of its inhabitants. See your local church for details on types of plaques and prices.

Support the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund

Donors to the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund provide sustaining dollars that help us achieve our longer-range plans for growth and development. Participation in the Fund requires an annual pledge of \$600, which is separate from general membership dues. Flexible payment options: one payment of \$600, two biannual payments of \$300, or 12 monthly payments of \$50. Application forms are available at your local church.



A New Secure Way to Give Digitally

You can now send your one-time or recurring donations directly from your bank account to the church's bank account using **Zelle** – a **fast, safe, and fee-free** way to give. Because it transfers funds directly between bank accounts, **100% of your gift goes directly to the church.**

How to Give Using Zelle

You do not need a new app if your bank already offers Zelle. You can complete your gift in just a few steps:

1. **Log in** to your standard mobile banking app or online banking portal.
2. **Find Zelle**, which is usually located under the "Send Money," "Transfer," or "Payments" menu.
3. **Select "Send Money"** and add our church as a new recipient.
4. **Enter our official church payment details:**
 - a. **Our official Zelle phone #: (626) 328-0092**
 - b. **First & Last Name Field: Gedatsu Church**
5. **Enter your donation amount.**

6. In the **"Memo" or "Note" field**, enter your full name and what the gift is for (e.g., *George Yamada – general donation* or *"Never Forgotten" Service in memory of Jane Yamada*) so we can properly record your contribution in the *Companion* newsletter and for your annual tax statement.
7. **Review and Send.** Double-check that the phone number (626) 328-0092 and recipient's name (Gedatsu Church) match ours exactly, then confirm your payment.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Are there fees?** No. Our church does not charge a fee, and major banks do not charge a fee to use Zelle.
- **Is it secure?** Yes. Zelle uses your bank's built-in security and authentication features.
- **Can I make recurring payments?** Check with your bank. Many major banks provide recurring payments, but smaller banks support only one-time transactions.

If you have any questions or need help setting up your first Zelle donation, please contact the church office (626) 288-1212.

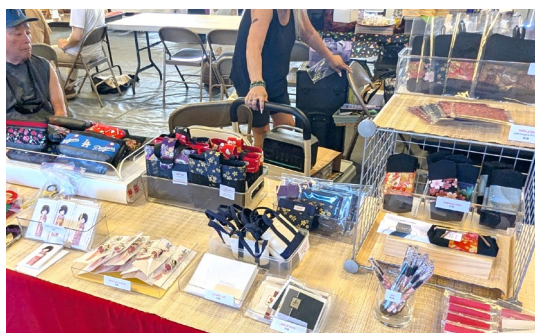
AROUND OUR CHURCH



Finding Beauty in Every Branch

In September, the L.A. Women's Club showcased the Japanese art of *Ikebana* flower arranging. Led by Janet Hirayama, class participants were instructed step-by-step in making their own beautiful arrangements.

"A big thank you to Janet for making our *Ikebana* class a success by sharing her knowledge and love of flower arranging," said Pam Shaklan, Club president. "Special thanks to her husband, Hiro, for his help and support. We truly appreciate their time and dedication to our Gedatsu Church."



A Recipe for Success: *Bento*, Crafts & Community

On Saturday, October 3, the L.A. Church buzzed with activity as this year's fundraiser got underway despite a sweltering heatwave. Members and friends worked together to prepare hundreds of *bento* boxes filled with teriyaki chicken, rice, *edamame*, cabbage *tsukemono*, and sliced oranges. Delicious *inari* sushi and Spam *musubi* were also sold. Meanwhile, dozens of local artisans and crafters showcased and sold their unique, handcrafted creations.

The *Bento* and Holiday Craft Fair is the Women's Club major event of the year. Said **Pam Shalkan**, Club president: "A heartfelt thank you to our generous donors and dedicated volunteers who helped make our *Bento* and Craft Fair a success! We are deeply grateful to our donors for their generosity and to our volunteers for their time, hard work, and unwavering commitment. The combined efforts and dedication to Gedatsu Church made this event possible, and we sincerely appreciate each and every one of you."

Gedatsu Study Series: "The Practice of Humility, Poverty, and Death" – Part 7

"The Practice of Humility" – Part 5

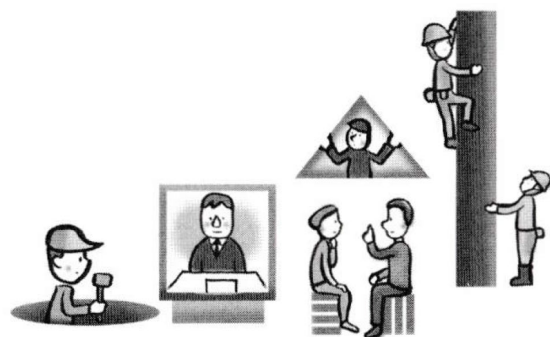
Translated and reprinted from
The Gedatsu Magazine in Japan in 2022

In this chapter, we will explore practical examples and the profound fruits of the "Practice of Humility" in our work and human relationships. We will draw upon the words of Gedatsu Kongo, the lives of historical figures, and the golden rules of great business leaders and literary masters.

In the previous chapter, we outlined the practical points of the Practice of Humility in work, based on the fundamental posture of *"noble mind, humble presence"* (keeping the spirit high, but keeping the self low). These points include putting one's whole heart into the work, seeing it through to the end, constantly seeking improvement, working silently, viewing difficulties as opportunities, and rejoicing in (being grateful for) the ability to make an effort.

Regarding work, Gedatsu Kongo left us with the following profound guidance:

"It is a mistake to think that you have not yet found your proper place. Everyone, due to various circumstances and karma, is placed exactly where they are meant to be. Furthermore, if that place is to change, there is an inevitable reason and destiny for it to do so. Therefore, you need only do your absolute best in the present moment."



"You should leave your position and status to the Divine Will. Scheming and maneuvering behind the scenes rebel against the Divine Will and only increase anxiety. Effort and struggle should not be made for the sake of status, but for the sake of the work itself. Status will be given as a result of that effort."

This teaching reveals the true essence of practicing humility in one's work.

A historical figure who perfectly embodied this was Kibi no Makibi, a statesman and scholar of the Nara period. Makibi traveled to Tang Dynasty China as an envoy, where Emperor Xuanzong recognized his brilliance alongside Abe no Nakamaro. After returning to Japan, he served actively as a core advisor to Emperor Shomu. However, he was later alienated by Fujiwara no Nakamaro, who had seized power in the imperial court.

At the age of 56, Makibi was demoted and exiled to Higo (Kumamoto Prefecture), and subsequently transferred to various remote posts. Yet, Makibi did not become embittered by this cold treatment. Even when assigned tasks completely outside his expertise, he tackled them with utmost sincerity and consistently achieved remarkable results. Eventually, when a rebellion broke out in the capital, the imperial court ordered Makibi to suppress it.

He successfully accomplished this mission and continued to fulfill the heavy responsibilities of Minister of the Right until he voluntarily retired at the age of 77.

A person like Makibi – who never cuts corners and works earnestly to achieve results, even when faced with demotion, cold treatment, or unfamiliar fields – is a truly trustworthy individual. His life serves as a magnificent example of the Practice of Humility in work.

(Continued on page 6)

(Humility – continued from page 5)

Turning Vocation into Paradise

Practicing humility in work also means experiencing work as something deeply joyful. Konosuke Matsushita, founder of Panasonic, shared the following reflection in his book, *Thoughts on Prosperity*:

"I remember it was during the summer. I would work hard every day for as long as the sun was up. Then, in the evening, I would take a bath in a tub. While bathing, I would suddenly feel, 'I really did a good job today.' It was a feeling of immense satisfaction.



"It is certainly wonderful to be praised by others. But above all, it is about the state of mind where you can genuinely praise yourself, or the kind of work ethic that leads to such a state of mind – in other words, whether you have done a fulfilling day's work. Experiencing that feeling of 'I worked really hard today' while soaking in a tub of hot water makes the bath feel incredibly refreshing, and then you eat dinner. I experienced things like that. In fact, I believe that period was my greatest paradise."

Working with all your might and being able to evaluate yourself by saying, "I have no complaints about myself today; I did a good job," is a state of immense happiness. Matsushita's words attest to this, and they perfectly align with Gedatsu Kongo's teaching: "Paradise exists within the realm of one's vocation." This is the very spiritual state attained through the Practice of Humility.

Integrity and Harmony

In human relationships, based on the foundation of "noble mind, humble presence," it is vital to keep humility and gratitude in mind, and to avoid "acting"—acting clever, acting important, or acting superior. If we describe this humble posture with other words, they would be "sincerity" and "integrity."

In his book *Understanding Human Nature*, literary critic Shoichi Tanizawa states that the most favored character trait in people is charm. He cites Toyotomi Hideyoshi as a prime example, noting that Hideyoshi captured the hearts of the nation through his innate charm.

Tanizawa then notes that the second most beloved virtue is integrity, with Tokugawa Ieyasu as the prime example of someone who governed the nation through his steadfast integrity. Charm like Hideyoshi's is largely a heaven-sent gift; superficially mimicking it often backfires. In contrast, integrity is a virtue that anyone can cultivate through effort.

Furthermore, highly polished integrity possesses the unique characteristic of becoming infinitely close to true charm. Indeed, a person who always responds with sincerity is both likable and endearing. In other words, a sincere and faithful person who dedicates themselves to the Practice of Humility naturally becomes someone beloved by all.

To further smooth human relationships, an important aspect of this practice in communication is to place emphasis on "listening" and to consistently receive the other person's words with a receptive, "I see," or "You are right." Practicing this kind of communication is the foundation for accepting others and creating harmony.

(Continued on back page)

SEPTEMBER 2026 OFFERINGS

Northern California Total: \$9,510

General Donations: J. Detwiler/J. Sebe, M/M J. Horner, K. Ogawa, M. Fukushima, No Name, R. Ide, R. Nakatani, R. Ito, S. Ito, M/M S. Shaklan

Special Acknowledgments

Fall Grand Festival	A. Akashi/P. Tomita, M/M N. Chodor, T. Ishida, M/M T. Kojima, M/M K. Kuritani, K. Kuritani, M. Okada, M/M N. Okano, T. Okano, A. Sebe, J. Tanaka, M/M H. Tsujimura, C. Tsujimura, A. Tsujimura, M/M J. Horner, N. Ito, De. Shiroishi, Do. Shiroishi, M/M C. Tanaka, No Name, M/M T. Matsumoto, M/M P. Reid, M/M D. Ide (\$500), M/M D. Tsuboi (\$500), M/M S. Mukai (\$1,000), <i>Gedatsu-kai</i> Japan (\$1,000)
M. Fukushima	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Shuji Hatae and Bob Fukushima
M/M D. Ide	Appreciation for "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Glenn Shuji Hatae, Robert Fukushima, Shigetaro Kino and Teruko Kino
T. Ishida	Memorial Tower enshrinement for Akio Yamashita
M/M S. Mukai	Appreciation and gratitude for Sadaye Tanaka Memorial Tower enshrinement
J. Tanaka	Enshrinement of Sadaye Tanaka into Memorial Tower
M/M D. Tsuboi	With gratitude September "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
M/M P. Bridgham	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Bob Fukushima
M/M C. Tanaka	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service appreciation
M/M C. Tanaka	In memory of Sadaye Tanaka (\$1,000)

Southern California Total: \$6,280

General Donations: A. Dewitt, M/M M. Hamada, J. Hamamoto, M/M T. Hiram, J. Kaku, M/M T. Kojima, M/M K. Kuritani, M/M Ke Kuritani, M/M D. Mah (\$2,000), M/M T. Matsumoto, M.M V. Mizokami, M/M M. Murakami, T. Murakami, P. Muronaka, M. Nakamura, Anonymous, K. Ogawa, Y. Oishi, T. Okimura, M/M A. Shiroishi, D. Shiroishi, J. Shiroishi, M/M S. Shiroishi, N. Takara, A. Tsujimura, H. Tsujimura, M/M H. Tsujimura

Special Acknowledgments

H. Yamashita	Memorial Tower enshrinement for Akio Yamashita
M/M S. Mukai	"Never Forgotten" service for Misako Kobata (\$500)
J. Mah	"Never Forgotten" Service for Tomoki Oyanagi and Margaret Oyanagi
B.S.	"Never Forgotten" for Linda Sanchez
H. Inouye	"Never Forgotten" for Tomiko Konishi
Matsumoto Family	In memory of H. Matsumoto

Online Donations: Total: \$1,993

General: D. Allum, M/M A. Kishida (\$1,000), J. Kitamura, J. Reid, S. Shiroishi, W. Young, H. Tsujimura, G. Hass

Special Acknowledgments

N. Kageyama	Honoring Mary Masako Kimura, who passed on 9/22/25
R. Sakamoto	Fall Festival and Ohigan

*Note: Special Acknowledgments are listed for gifts \$100+.
Dollar amounts are shown for gifts \$500+.*



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(Humility – continued from page 6)

The novelist Saneatsu Mushanokoji often wrote the following verses on calligraphy boards: "You are you, I am I, yet we get along." "How beautiful it is to be in harmony."



Human faces fill the
kanji character for "harmony" 和

People are completely different from one another; everyone is unique. If we try to reject these differences as something bad, conflict arises. If we respect and accept these differences as something good, harmony is born, nurturing diversity and richness.

On the second floor of the Gedatsu Kongo Treasure Museum at the *Goreichi* grounds in Kitamoto, Japan, there is a large calligraphy written by Gedatsu Kongo himself that reads: "The Providence of Great Nature, Gedatsu, Harmony among People." This can be reverently interpreted to mean that "harmony among people" is the "providence of Great Nature," and it is "Gedatsu."

To harmonize with one another is to align with the Law of Nature; it is Gedatsu itself. The Practice of Humility is the bedrock that gives birth to this beautiful harmony.

This concludes our study of the "Practice of Humility." The depth of this practice is profound, and the ways to implement it are highly diverse. With a "noble mind, humble presence," and without ever "acting" superior, let us prioritize and put into practice the specific forms of humility that are most effective for our own spiritual grow



Editor: The study series, "The Practice of Humility, Poverty and Death," continues next month with the "Practice of Poverty" – Part 1.