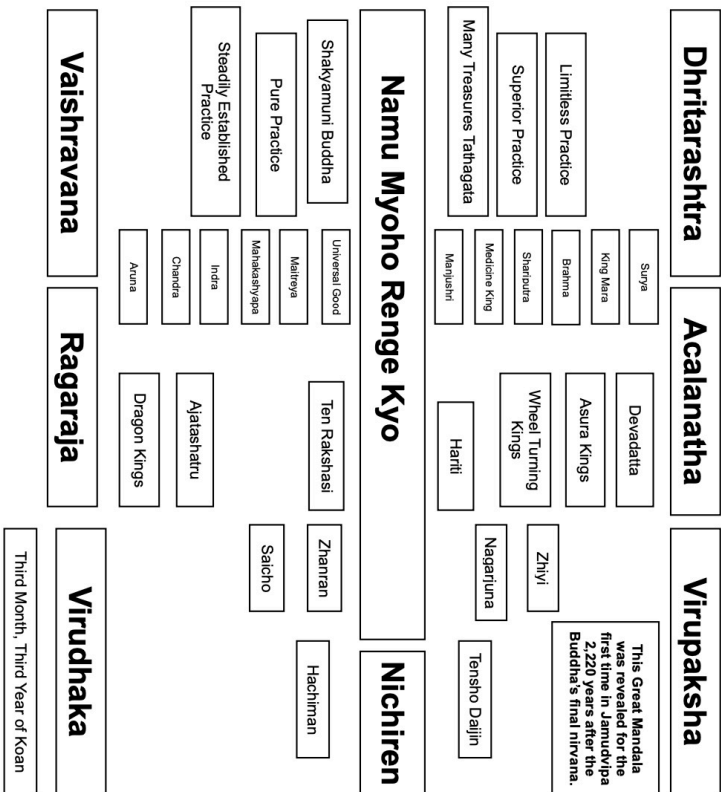


*All buddhas, the most honored of bipeds,  
Know that, since phenomena are ever  
without self-nature,  
The seeds of buddhahood come from  
dependent origination.  
Therefore, they expound the One Vehicle.*  
- from Chapter 2 of the *Lotus Sutra*

*Everything I teach is true and not false.  
Why is this? The Tathagata sees the  
character of the triple world as it truly is.  
Birth and death do not leave it or appear  
in it. Also, no one lives in it and afterward  
reaches extinction. It is not real and not  
false, not thus and not otherwise. I do not  
see the triple world as those in the triple  
world do. These things, the Tathagata sees  
clearly and without mistake.*  
- from Chapter 16 of the *Lotus Sutra*



The calligraphic mandala on the next page was inscribed by Nichiren Shonin in March of 1280. It is known as the *Rinmetsudoji Gohonzon*, or the “Focus of Devotion at the Time of Entering Nirvana” because it was enshrined by his deathbed. It is also known as the *Shutei Gohonzon* or “Authorized Focus of Devotion,” because it the Gohonzon that Nichiren Shu recommends that its priests bestow upon practitioners.



上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...

上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...

上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...

上由無...  
 上由無...  
 上由無...

# Celebration and Practice of the Lotus Sutra

Enryuzan Shinganji

圓龍山 眞願寺

Perfect Dragon Mountain  
True Vow Temple

# Table of Contents

<i>Opening Reverence</i> .....	7
<i>Verse on the Place of Awakening</i> .....	8
<i>Revering the Three Treasures</i> .....	10
<i>Invocation</i> .....	11
<i>Verses for Opening the Sutra</i> .....	12
<i>Chanting of the Lotus Sutra</i> .....	14
<i>Directing Our Intention</i> .....	48
<i>Odaimoku Chanting</i> .....	49
<i>Verses from the Stupa of Treasures</i> .....	50
<i>Dedication of Merit</i> .....	52
<i>Four Great Vows</i> .....	54
<i>Threefold Refuge</i> .....	55
<i>Farewell</i> .....	59
<i>Closing Reverence</i> .....	60
<i>Optional Practices and Prayers</i> .....	61
<i>Visualizing the Ceremony in the Air</i> .....	62
<i>Readings from the Lotus Sutra</i> .....	63
<i>Dharanis</i> .....	67
<i>Mindfulness of Breathing</i> .....	72
<i>The Perfect and Sudden Contemplation and Insight</i> ....	74
<i>Memorial Prayer</i> .....	76
<i>Prayer for Healing Illness</i> .....	78

*Meal Prayer* ..... 79  
*Shodaigyo Meditation* ..... 80  
*Introduction to Nichiren Buddhism* ..... 85  
*How to celebrate Gongyo* ..... 90  
*How to practice Shodaigyo* ..... 97  
*Acknowledgments* ..... 101

# Opening Reverence

○○○

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

# Verse on the Place of Awakening

## Dojo-ge 道場偈

△  
jōki

付  
assembly

△ 十 ju 一  
|  
方 hō 一  
|  
三 sa 一<sub>n</sub>  
|  
宝 bō 一  
•  
影 yo 一  
|  
現 ge 一<sub>n</sub>  
|  
中 chu 一<sub>ヨ</sub>

△ 我 Ga 一  
|  
此 shi 一 道 Dō  
|  
道 dō 一<sub>六</sub> 場 Jō  
|  
場 jō 一 偈 Ge  
•  
如 nyō 一<sub>六</sub>  
|  
帝 ta 一<sub>六</sub> i  
|  
珠 shu 一<sub>六</sub>



頭 zu —	我 ga —
面 me — <sup>n</sup>	身 shin —
接 se —	影 yo —
足 so — <sup>ku</sup>	現 gen —
△ •	•
歸 ki  <i>kokugu-teizu</i>	三 sa  <sup>n</sup>
命 myō 	宝 bō 
<i>fukuhai</i>	
礼 ra  <i>chōsoku</i>	前 zen —
△	
	山

This place of awakening, where I am, is like a gem  
in Indra's net.

All the Three Treasures of the ten directions are  
gathered here.

These Three Treasures are all before me.

I prostrate myself in homage and raise up the  
Buddha's feet.

# Revering the Three Treasures

## Sanbo-rai 三宝礼

一 I —	一 I —	一 I 𠄎 <span style="color:red">▲</span>	<i>jōki</i> <i>gasshō</i>
心 shi - <u>n</u>	心 shi - <u>n</u>	心 shi 𠄎 <u>n</u>	
•	•	•	
敬 kyo <u>u</u>	敬 kyo <u>u</u>	敬 kyo 𠄎 <u>u</u> <sup>六</sup>	
			三
礼 ra 𠄎 <u>i</u>	礼 ra 𠄎 <u>i</u>	礼 ra 𠄎 <u>i</u> <sup>六</sup>	San
• 付 <i>assembly</i>	• 付 <i>assembly</i>	• 付 <i>assembly</i>	寶
十 jū —	十 jū —	十 jū 𠄎 𠄎	Bō
方 hō —	方 hō —	方 hō 𠄎 𠄎	
•	•	•	礼
一 I —	一 I —	一 I 𠄎 𠄎	Rai
切 sa 𠄎 <u>i</u>	切 sa 𠄎 <u>i</u>	切 sa 𠄎 <u>i</u> <sup>六</sup>	
• <span style="color:red">▲</span>	• <span style="color:red">▲</span>	• <span style="color:red">▲</span> <i>kikorai</i>	
常 jo <u>u</u>	常 jo <u>u</u>	常 jo 𠄎 <u>u</u> <sup>六</sup> <i>rise</i>	
		<i>kokugu-teizu</i>	
住 ju 𠄎 <u>u</u>	住 ju 𠄎 <u>u</u>	住 ju 𠄎 <u>u</u> <sup>六</sup> <i>R foot</i>	
		<i>fukuhai</i>	
僧 So <u>u</u>	法 Ho <u>u</u>	佛 Fu 𠄎 <u>u</u> <sup>六</sup> <i>chōsoku</i>	
<span style="color:red">▲</span>	<span style="color:red">▲</span>	<span style="color:red">▲</span>	

With all our hearts, we revere and worship the  
Buddhas throughout the ten directions.

With all our hearts, we revere and worship the  
Dharma throughout the ten directions.

With all our hearts, we revere and worship the  
Sangha throughout the ten directions.

## Invocation

### Kanjo 勸請

○ ○ ○

Honor be to the Great Mandala, the Perfect Circle of all Honorable Ones, revealed by our Founder Nichiren Shonin.

Honor be to the Eternal Buddha Shakyamuni, our Original Teacher, who attained Awakening in the remotest past.

Honor be to the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, the teaching of Equality, the Great Wisdom, the One Vehicle.

Honor be to our Founder, the Great Bodhisattva Nichiren Shonin, dispatched by our Original Buddha.

Honor be to Renge-ajari Nichiji Shonin, the first overseas missionary.

Honor be to the heavenly gods and benevolent deities who protect the practitioner of the One Vehicle.

May all you venerable ones come to this consecrated place out of your compassion toward us, see us with the light of your wisdom, and accept our offering of the savor of the Dharma.

## Verses for Opening the Sutra

### Kaikyo-ge 開經偈



The most profound and wonderful teaching is presented in this Sutra. This Sutra is difficult to meet even once in thousands and millions of eons. Now we have been able to see, hear, receive, and keep this Sutra. May we understand the most excellent teaching of the Tathagata.

The most excellent teaching of the Great Vehicle is very difficult for us to understand. We shall be able to approach awakening when we see, hear, or touch this Sutra.

Expounding is the Buddha's reward-body. Expounded is the Buddha's Dharma-body. The letters composing this Sutra are the Buddha's accommodative-body.

Just as perfume is caught by something put nearby, so shall we be richly benefited by this Sutra, even when we are not aware of being so benefited because infinite merits are accumulated in this Sutra.

We can expiate our past transgressions, do good deeds, and attain Buddhahood by the merits of this Sutra.

It does not matter whether we are wise or not, or whether we believe the Sutra or slander it. This Sutra is the most wonderful and most excellent taught by the Buddhas of the past, present, and future. May we meet and receive it, birth after birth, world after world.

Chanting of the Lotus Sutra

Dokkyo 読経

# Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo

*Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma.*

## Ho Ben Pon Dai Ni

*Skillful Means. Chapter Two.*

Ni ji se son, ju san mai 'an jo

*At that time, the World-Honored One, rising calmly from*

'ni ki, 'go Shari hotsu, °sho but'

*samadhi, addressed Shariputra. "The wisdom of buddhas*

chi e, jin jin mu ryo, go chi e

*is infinite and extremely profound. The approach*

mon, nan ge nan nyu, °is' sai

*to their wisdom is difficult to enter and difficult to understand.*

sho mon, hyaku shi butsu, sho

*It is beyond the comprehension of even shravakas and pratyekabuddhas.*

fu no chi, sho i sha ga, °butsu zo

*Why is this? Because the buddhas have been in*

shin gon, hyaku sen man noku,

*close association with hundreds of thousands of millions of other buddhas,*

mu shu sho butsu, jin gyo sho

*fully practicing countless teachings of the Way, boldly and diligently*

butsu, mu ryo do ho, yu myo

*advancing, and making their fame universally known.*

sho jin, myo sho fu mon,

*Having accomplished the extremely profound and extraordinary Dharma,*

jo ju jin jin, mi zo u ho,

*they have taught it according to what was appropriate,*

**zui gi sho setsu, i shu nan ge,**

*but their intention is difficult to grasp.*

**Shari hotsu, go ju jo but' chi rai,**

*Shariputra, since I became Buddha, I have spoken*

**shu ju in nen, shu ju hi yu, ko en**

*far and wide and taught with various parables and examples from the past,*

**gon kyo, mu shu ho ben, in do**

*and by countless skillful means I have led living beings,*

**shu jo, ryo ri sho jaku,**

*freeing them from their attachments.*

**sho i sha ga, nyo rai ho ben,**

*Why is this? Because the tathagatas are replete with skillful means*

**chi ken hara mitsu, kai i gu soku,**

*and the paramita of knowledge and insight.*

**Shari hotsu, nyo rai chi ken,**

*Shariputra, the knowledge and insight of the tathagatas*

**ko dai jin non, mu ryo, mu ge, riki,**

*are broad, great, profound, and far-reaching. With their infinite virtues,*

**mu sho i, zen jo, ge das' san mai,**

*their unhindered wisdom, and their powers, fearlessness, meditations,*

**jin nyu mu sai, jo ju is' sai,**

*emancipations, and samadhis, they have entered into the boundless realms*

**mi zo u ho, Shari hotsu, nyo rai**

*and fully attained the extraordinary Dharma. Shariputra, the tathagatas*

**no shu ju fun betsu, gyo ses' sho**

*are able to distinguish all things,*



ho, gon ji nyu nan,

*explain the teachings skillfully,*

ek' ka shu shin,

*use gentle words, and bring joy to the hearts of all.*

Shari hotsu, shu yo gon shi,

*In essence, Shariputra, the buddhas*

mu ryo mu hen, mi zo u ho,

*are fully accomplished in the infinite,*

bus' shitsu jo ju, shi, Shari hotsu,

*boundless, and extraordinary Dharma. That is enough, Shariputra,*

fu shu bu setsu, sho i sha ga,

*I should say no more. Why is this? Because the Dharma*

bus' sho jo ju, dai ichi ke u, nan ge

*the buddhas have attained is understood only rarely and with great difficulty.*

shi ho, yui butsu yo butsu,

*Only a buddha together with a buddha*

nai no ku jin, sho ho jis' so,

*Can fathom the ultimate reality of all things.*

*(repeat the section below three times)*

o<sup>3</sup> sho i sho ho,

*That is to say, among all things, each has*

nyo ze so,

*such an appearance,*

nyo ze sho,

*such a nature,*

nyo ze tai,

*such an embodiment,*

nyo ze riki,

*such a potential,*

nyo ze sa,

*such a function,*

nyo ze in,

*such a cause,*

nyo ze en,

*such a condition,*

nyo ze ka,

*such an effect,*

nyo ze ho,

*such a reward,*

o<sup>3</sup>nyo ze hon matsu ku kyo to.

*and from the first to the last, such an ultimate identity.”*

## **Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo**

*Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma.*

## **Nyo Rai Ju Ryo Hon Dai Ju Roku**

*The Life Span of the Eternal Tathagata. Chapter Sixteen.*

**Ni ji butsu go sho bo satsu, °gyu**

*At that time, the Buddha said to the bodhisattvas*

**is' °sai dai °shu, sho zen nan shi,**  
*and all the great assembly, "Good children, you should believe*

**°nyo to to shin ge, nyo rai jo tai**  
*and understand the sincere and true words of the Tathagata."*

**shi go, bu go dai shu, °nyo to to**  
*Again he said to the great assembly, "You should believe*

**shin ge, nyo rai jo tai shi go, u**  
*and understand the sincere and true words of the Tathagata."*

**bu go sho dai shu, °nyo to to**  
*Yet again he said to the great assembly, "You should believe*

**shin ge, nyo rai jo tai shi go, ze ji**  
*and understand the sincere and true words of the Tathagata."*

**bo satsu dai shu, Mi roku i shu,**  
*Then the great assembly of bodhisattvas, with Maitreya at its head,*

**gas' sho byaku butsu gon,**  
*placed their palms together and said to the Buddha,*

**se son, yui gan ses' shi,**  
*"Please explain, World-Honored One,*

**ga to to shin ju butsu go,**  
*for we will believe and accept the Buddha's words."*

nyo ze san byaku i, bu gon,

*They repeated their request three times.*

yui gan ses' shi, ga to to

*"Please explain, for we will believe and accept the Buddha's words."*

shin ju butsu go. Ni ji se son,

*Then the World-Honored One, perceiving that the*

chi sho bo satsu, san sho fu shi,

*bodhisattvas did not desist even after making this request three times,*

ni go shi gon, nyo to tai cho,

*declared to them, "All of you, hear clearly*

nyo rai hi mitsu, jin zu shi riki,

*about the mysterious and transcendent power of the Tathagata.*

is' sai se ken, ten nin, gyu

*All heavenly beings, humans, and asuras in all worlds say,*

a shu ra, kai i kon Shaka muni

*'This Shakyamuni Buddha*

butsu, shus' Shaku shi gu,

*left the palace of the Shakya clan,*

ko Ga ya jo fu on, za o do jo,

*sat down at the place of the Way not far from the city of Gaya,*

toku a noku ta ra san myaku

*and attained Supreme Perfect Awakening.'*

san bo dai, nen zen nan shi,

*In fact, my good children, immeasurable, boundless hundreds of thousands*

ga jitsu jo but' chi rai, mu ryo

*of millions of myriads of kalpas have already passed since I became Buddha.*

mu hen, hyaku sen man noku,  
*“For instance, suppose someone were to take five hundred thousand*

na yu ta ko, hi nyo go hyaku sen  
*million myriads of three-thousand-great-thousandfold worlds*

man noku, na yu ta, a so gi,  
*and grind them into the smallest possible particles,*

san zen dai sen se kai,  
*travel eastward through five hundred thousand million*

ke shi u nin, mat’ chi mi jin,  
*myriads of lands, and drop one particle there.*

ka o to bo, go hyaku sen man  
*Then suppose he continued to travel eastward in this manner until*

noku, na yu ta, a so gi koku,  
*he had finished dropping all of the particles.*

nai ge ichi jin, nyo ze to gyo,  
*What do you think, my good children,*

jin ze mi jin. Sho zen nan shi,  
*can you possibly imagine or calculate the number of worlds*

o i un ga, ze sho se kai, ka  
*he had traveled through?”*

toku shi yui kyo kei, chi go shu  
*Maitreya Bodhisattva and the others all said to the Buddha,*

fu, Mi roku bo sat’ to, ku byaku  
*“World-Honored One, the number of those worlds is immeasurable,*

butsu gon, se son, ze sho se kai,  
*boundless, beyond the scope of calculation, and beyond the reach of thought.*

mu ryo mu hen, hi san ju sho chi,

*Of all the shravakas and pratyekabuddhas*

yaku hi shin riki sho gyu, is' sai

*with their undefiled wisdom, not one would be able to know or imagine*

sho mon, hyaku shi butsu, i

*the extent of such a number.*

mu ro chi, fu no shi yui, chi go

*Even for those of us who dwell in the stage of nonregression*

gen shu, ga to ju a yui ot' chi ji,

*it is incomprehensible. World-Honored One,*

o ze ji chu, yaku sho fu

*the number of such worlds would be infinite and boundless."*

das' se son, nyo ze sho se kai,

*Thereupon the Buddha said to all the great bodhisattvas,*

mu ryo mu hen. Ni ji butsu go,

*"Good children, I will now tell you about it in detail.*

dai bo sas' shu, sho zen nan

*Suppose that all of these worlds in which a particle*

shi, kon to fun myo, sen go

*had or had not been dropped were also reduced to particles*

nyo to, ze sho se kai, nyaku

*and that each particle represented one kalpa.*

chaku mi jin, gyu fu chaku sha, jin

*The number of those kalpas would still be hundreds of thousands of millions*

ni i jin, ichi jin ik' ko, ga jo but'

*of kalpas less than the time that has passed since I became Buddha.*

chi rai, bu ka o shi, hyaku sen man

*Ever since then, I have always existed here in this saha world,*

noku, na yu ta, a so gi ko, ji

*expounding the Dharma and teaching and transforming living beings.*

ju ze rai, ga jo zai shi, sha ba

*And I have also been guiding and benefiting living beings in hundreds*

se kai, sep' po kyo ke, yaku o

*of thousands of millions of myriads of lands in other worlds as well.*

yo sho, hyaku sen man noku,

*"Good children, during this time, on occasion*

na yu ta, a so gi koku, do ri

*I have told of other buddhas,*

shu jo, sho zen nan shi, o ze

*including Lighter of Lamps, and have told of their entering nirvana.*

chu gen, ga setsu Nen to but' to,

*All of these different descriptions were nothing but*

u bu gon go, nyu o ne han,

*skillful means. "Good children, whenever*

nyo ze kai i, ho ben fun betsu,

*living beings come into my presence,*

sho zen nan shi, nyaku u shu jo,

*I observe them with my Buddha eye*

rai shi ga sho, ga i butsu gen,

*and discern whether they are keen or dull*

kan go shin to, sho kon ri don,

*in their faculties, namely, faith and so on.*

**zui sho o do, sho sho ji setsu,**

*Depending upon how best to liberate them, in different times and places I*

**myo ji fu do, nen ki dai sho, yaku**

*call myself by different names and describe my life span differently*

**bu gen gon, to nyu ne han, u**

*and moreover appear to them and announce that I will enter nirvana.*

**i shu ju ho ben, setsu mi myo**

*I also use all sorts of skillful means to teach the sublime Dharma,*

**ho, no ryo shu jo, hok' kan gi**

*inspiring great joy in living beings. "For example,*

**shin. Sho zen nan shi, nyo rai**

*good children, when the Tathagata sees those living beings*

**ken sho shu jo, gyo o sho bo,**

*who delight in lesser teachings and are meager in virtue and heavy*

**toku hak' ku ju sha, i ze nin**

*in defilement, for their sake I say that in my youth*

**setsu, ga sho shuk' ke, toku**

*I renounced home life and attained Supreme Perfect*

**a noku ta ra san myaku san bo**

*Awakening. In reality, though, ever since I did become Buddha,*

**dai, nen ga jitsu jo but' chi rai,**

*so have I been for eternity, just as I have said, and I only*

**ku on nyaku shi, tan ni ho ben,**

*make such another explanation as a skillful means to teach and transform*

**kyo ke shu jo, ryo nyu butsu do,**

*living beings, and enable them to embark upon the Buddha Way.*



sa nyo ze setsu, sho zen nan shi,

*“Good children, the sutras expounded by the*

nyo rai sho en kyo den, kai i do

*Tathagata are all for the purpose of*

das’ shu jo, waku sek’ ko shin,

*liberating living beings. I may speak of myself.*

waku set’ ta shin, waku ji ko shin,

*I may speak of someone else. I may appear as myself.*

waku ji ta shin, waku ji ko ji,

*I may appear as someone else. I may appear through my own deeds.*

waku ji ta ji, sho sho gon zetsu,

*I may appear through someone else’s deeds.*

kai jip’ pu ko, sho i sha ga,

*And whatever I teach and whatever I say is valid and never in vain.*

nyo rai nyo jit’ chi ken, san gai

*“Why is this? The Tathagata perceives the character*

shi so, mu u sho ji, nyaku tai

*of the threefold world as it really is. Birth and death*

nyaku shutsu, yaku mu zai se,

*do not leave it or appear in it. There is no staying in the world*

gyu metsu do sha, hi jitsu hi ko,

*or departing from it for extinguishment. It is neither substantial*

hi nyo hi i, fu nyo san gai,

*nor insubstantial. And it is neither thus nor otherwise.*

ken no san gai, nyo shi shi ji,

*This is not how the threefold world sees itself,*

**nyo rai myo ken, mu u shaku**

*but the Tathagata sees such things as these clearly*

**myo, i sho shu jo, u shu ju sho,**

*and without error. Because all living beings have various natures,*

**shu ju yoku, shu ju gyo, shu ju**

*various desires, various behaviors, and various thoughts and biases,*

**oku so, fun bek' ko, yoku ryo**

*in my desire to enable them to nurture their roots of goodness,*

**sho sho zen gon, i nyak' kan in**

*I have expounded many different teachings, employing various*

**nen, hi yu gon ji, shu ju sep' po,**

*words and terms, parables, and examples from the past.*

**sho sa butsu ji, mi zo zan pai,**

*I have never abandoned the work of a buddha, not even for a moment.*

**nyo ze ga jo but' chi rai, jin dai**

*"In such manner, a vast expanse of time has passed since I became*

**ku on, ju myo mu ryo, a so gi ko,**

*Buddha, and this life span of innumerable kalpas is everlasting*

**jo ju fu metsu, sho zen nan shi,**

*and never extinguished. Good children,*

**ga hon gyo bo satsu do,**

*the life span I gained through my long practice*

**sho jo ju myo, kon yu mi jin,**

*of the bodhisattva way is still unending and will continue*

**bu bai jo shu, nen kon hi jitsu**

*for twice the duration that I described before.*

metsu do, ni ben sho gon,

*Thus I am actually not now passing away, despite my proclamations*

to shu metsu do, nyo rai i ze

*that I will take the course of extinguishment. These are the skillful means*

ho ben, kyo ke shu jo, sho i

*used by the Tathagata to teach and transform living beings. "Why is this?"*

sha ga, nyaku buk' ku ju o se,

*If the Buddha abides long in the world, people with meager virtue*

haku toku shi nin, fu shu zen

*will not cultivate their roots of goodness. Lowly and impoverished*

gon, bin gu ge sen, ton jaku

*and greedily clinging to the five desires, they will become enmeshed*

go yoku, nyu o oku so,

*in assumptions and wrong views. If they see the Tathagata*

mo ken mo chu, nyak' ken

*as ever-abiding and not passing away, they will then become complacent,*

nyo rai, jo zai fu metsu, ben ki

*self-indulgent, lazy, jaded, incapable of conceiving*

kyo shi, ni e en dai, fu no sho o,

*that he is difficult to encounter, and unable to hold him in reverence.*

nan zo shi so, ku gyo shi shin,

*"Therefore, the Tathagata employs skillful means in saying,*

ze ko nyo rai, i ho ben setsu,

*'Know, monks, that the buddhas' appearance*

bi ku to chi, sho bus' shus' se,

*in the world is a rare occurrence.'*

nan ka chi gu, sho i sha ga,

*difficult to encounter. Why is this?*

sho haku toku nin, ka mu ryo

*Even after countless hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas,*

hyaku sen man nok' ko, waku

*some people of meager virtue might see a buddha,*

u ken butsu, waku fu ken sha,

*while others might not. For this reason I say,*

i shi ji ko, ga sa ze gon, sho

*'Monks, a tathagata can only rarely be seen.'*

bi ku, nyo rai nan ka tok' ken.

*All of those living beings who hear me say such things*

Shi shu jo to, mon nyo ze go,

*will certainly imagine the difficulty of encountering a buddha,*

hit' to sho o, nan zo shi so, shin

*and cherish and long for one, looking up with thirsting hearts.*

ne ren bo, katsu go o butsu,

*Then they will plant roots of goodness. This is why, although*

ben shu zen gon, ze ko nyo rai,

*the Tathagata does not actually pass away, he says that he does.*

sui fu jitsu metsu, ni gon metsu

*"Furthermore, good children, so is it also with the teachings*

do, u zen nan shi, sho butsu

*of all buddha-tathagatas. Since they are solely for the sake*

nyo rai, ho kai nyo ze, i do shu

*of liberating living beings, they are all valid and not in vain.*

jo, kai jip' pu ko, hi nyo ro i,  
*"Suppose there is a good physician, wise and understanding,*

chi e so datsu, myo ren ho  
*and expert in compounding medicines and curing diseases.*

yaku, zen ji shu byo, go nin ta  
*This man has many children, perhaps ten, twenty,*

sho shi soku, nyaku ju, ni ju, nai  
*or even a hundred. His work takes him away to a distant land.*

shi hyaku shu, i u ji en, on  
*After he has left, his children drink some kind of poisonous medicine.*

shi yo koku, sho shi o go, on ta  
*The effects of the poison make them delirious with pain,*

doku yaku, yaku hotsu mon ran,  
*and they roll on the ground in agony.*

en den u ji, ze ji go bu, gen  
*"Then the father comes home from his journey.*

rai ki ke, sho shi on doku,  
*Having drunk the poison, some of the children have lost their senses,*

waku ship' pon shin, waku fu  
*and some have not. On catching sight of*

shis' sha, yo ken go bu, kai dai  
*their father in the distance, they are all overjoyed.*

kan gi, hai ki mon jin, zen nan  
*They kneel respectfully to greet him and say,*

non ki, ga to gu chi, go buku  
*'We are glad that you have returned safely. Fools that we are,*

doku yaku, gan ken ku ryo, kyo  
*we mistakenly drank poison. Please cure us and save our lives!*

shi ju myo, bu ken shi to, ku no  
*“The father sees how his children are suffering,*

nyo ze, e sho kyo bo, gu ko  
*so as prescribed by various formulas, he searches for*

yaku so, shiki ko mi mi, kai  
*all the necessary medicinal herbs, which are perfect*

shitsu gu soku, to shi wa go, yo  
*in color, smell, and flavor. He grinds, sifts,*

shi ryo buku, ni sa ze gon, shi  
*and mixes them together. Giving this medicine to his children,*

dai ro yaku, shiki ko mi mi, kai  
*he tells them to take it, saying, ‘This is the best medicine,*

shitsu gu soku,  
*perfect in color, smell, and flavor. Take it and you*

nyo to ka buku, soku jo  
*will be quickly relieved of your suffering*

ku no, mu bu shu gen, go sho  
*and completely recover.’ “Those children who still*

shi chu, fu shis’ shin ja, ken shi  
*have their senses see that this good medicine is fine*

ro yaku, shiki ko gu ko, soku  
*in color and smell. So they take it immediately*

ben buku shi, byo jin jo yu, yo  
*and are completely cured of their illness.*

shis' shin ja, ken go bu rai, sui

*The others, who have lost their senses, are also delighted*

yak' kan gi mon jin, gu shaku ji

*to see their father return and ask him to cure them.*

byo, nen yo go yaku, ni fu ko

*But they are unwilling to take the medicine he offers them.*

buku, sho i sha ga,

*Why is this? The poison's effects have reached deeper*

dok' ke jin nyu, ship' pon shin ko,

*inside them and made them lose their senses.*

o shi, ko shiki ko yaku, ni i fu mi,

*Therefore, although the medicine is fine in color and smell,*

bu sa ze nen, shi shi ka min,

*they do not think it is good. "The father thinks they do not think*

i doku sho chu, shin kai ten do,

*it is good. "The father thinks to himself, 'These children are to be pitied.*

sui ken ga ki, gu shak' ku ryo,

*The poison has completely distorted their thinking.*

nyo ze ko yaku, ni fu ko

*Although they were happy to see me and asked me to cure them,*

buku, ga kon to setsu ho ben,

*they are refusing to take this good medicine. Now I must devise*

ryo buku shi yaku, soku sa ze

*some skillful means to make them take this medicine.' So he tells them,*

gon, nyo to to chi, ga kon sui

*'You can see that I am now old and frail, and my death is drawing near.*

ro, shi ji i shi, ze ko ro yaku,

*I am leaving this very good medicine right here.*

kon ru zai shi, nyo ka

*Take it and drink it. Do not worry, for it will cure you.'*

shu buku, mot' tsu fu sai, sa ze

*"Having given these instructions, he once again leaves*

kyo i, bu shi ta koku, ken shi

*for another land. From there, he sends a messenger back to*

gen go, nyo bu i shi, ze ji

*inform them, 'Your father is dead.' When the children hear*

sho shi, mon bu hai so, shin

*of their father's death, their hearts are filled with grief and*

dai u no, ni sa ze nen, nyaku

*anguish. They think to themselves, 'If only our father*

bu zai sha, ji min ga to, no ken

*were still here, he would show us kindness and compassion.*

ku go, kon ja sha ga, on so ta

*He would care for us and cure us. But now that he has*

koku, ji yui ko ro, mu bu ji ko,

*abandoned us and died in some far-off land, we are orphans,*

jo e hi kan, shin zui sho go,

*with no one to rely on.' Continuous grieving finally*

nai chi shi yaku, shiki ko mi mi,

*brings them to their senses, and they realize how good*

soku shu buku shi, doku byo

*the medicine is in color, smell, and flavor. They take it and are*



kai yu, go bu mon shi, shit' chi

*completely cured of the poison's effects.*

toku sai, jin ben rai ki, gen

*As soon as the father hears that all of his children have recovered,*

shi ken shi. Sho zen nan shi, o i

*he returns home and lets all of them see him. "Good children,*

un ga, ha u nin no, ses' shi ro i,

*in your estimation, can anyone say that this good physician is*

ko mo zai fu, hot' cha, se son,

*guilty of lying?" "No, World-Honored One." The Buddha said,*

butsu gon, ga yaku nyo ze,

*"So is it also with me. In the infinite, boundless hundreds of thousands*

jo but' chi rai, mu ryo mu hen,

*of millions of myriads of kalpas since I became Buddha,*

hyaku sen man noku, na yu ta,

*I have used the power of skillful means for the*

a so gi ko, i shu jo ko, i ho ben

*sake of living beings and said that I am about to enter*

riki, gon to metsu do, yaku mu

*extinguishment, and yet no one can legitimately*

u no, nyo ho setsu ga, ko mo

*say that I am guilty of telling falsehoods."*

ka sha. Ni ji se son, yoku ju

*At that time, the World-Honored One, wanting to*

sen shigi, ni setsu ge gon:

*repeat the meaning of what he said, spoke in verse.*

# Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo

*Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma.*

## Nyo Rai Ju Ryo Hon Dai Ju Roku

*The Life Span of the Eternal Tathagata. Chapter Sixteen.*

Ji ga toku butsu rai,

*“Since I became Buddha,*

·sho kyo ·sho kos’ ·shu,

*Countless hundreds of thousands*

mu ryo hyaku sen man,

*Of millions of immeasurable*

oku sai a so gi,

*Numbers of kalpas have passed.*

°jo sep’ po kyo ke,

*In the innumerable kalpas since then,*

mu shu oku shu jo,

*I have ceaselessly expounded the Dharma,*

ryo nyu o butsu do,

*Teaching and transforming countless millions of beings*

ni rai mu ryo ko.

*And enabling them to embark upon the Buddha Way.*

°I do shu jo ko,

*I employed skillful means to reveal my nirvana*

ho ben gen ne han,

*In order to liberate all living beings.*

ni jitsu fu metsu do.

*In truth, though, I am not extinguished,*

jo ju shi sep' po,  
*For I always abide here teaching the Dharma.*

o ga jo ju o shi,  
*Although I am always dwelling in this world,*

I sho jin zu riki,  
*By using my transcendent powers,*

ryo ten do shu jo,  
*I cause living beings with distorted minds*

sui gon ni fu ken.  
*To be unable to see me, even though I am near.*

Shu ken ga metsu do,  
*All who perceive that I have perished,*

ko ku yo sha ri,  
*Everywhere pay homage to my relics.*

gen kai e ren bo,  
*All who cherish and long for me,*

ni sho katsu go shin,  
*Look up with thirsting hearts.*

shu jo ki shin buku,  
*At last, when living beings humbly believe,*

shichi jiki i nyu nan,  
*Are upright in character and gentle and flexible in mind,*

is' shin yoku ken butsu,  
*And wish with all their hearts to see the Buddha*

fu ji shaku shin myo.  
*Even at the cost of their lives,*

Ji ga gyu shu so,

*Then I and all the Sangha*

ku shutsu Ryo ju sen,

*Appear together on Divine Eagle Peak.*

ga ji go shu jo,

*At that time, I tell all living beings*

jo zai shi fu metsu,

*That I am always here and did not pass away.*

i ho ben riki ko,

*I use the power of skillful means to manifest*

gen u metsu fu metsu,

*Both that I am extinguished and that I am not.*

yo koku u shu jo,

*If, in other lands, there are living beings*

ku gyo shin gyo sha.

*Who are joyful, reverent, and faithful,*

Ga bu o hi chu,

*I will teach the supreme Dharma*

i setsu mu jo ho,

*Among them as well.*

nyo to fu mon shi,

*You, not hearing of this,*

tan ni ga metsu do,

*Merely think I have perished.*

ga ken sho shu jo,

*I see all living beings*

**motsu zai o ku kai,**

*Sinking in the sea of suffering,*

**ko fu i gen shin,**

*And I do not appear before them,*

**ryo go sho katsu go.**

*So that they begin to thirst for me.*

**In go shin ren bo,**

*When their hearts are filled with the deepest longing,*

**nai shutsu i sep' po,**

*I then come forth to teach the Dharma.*

**jin zu riki nyo ze,**

*Such are my transcendent powers.*

**o a so gi ko,**

*Throughout immeasurable kalpas,*

**jo zai Ryo ju sen,**

*I am always on Divine Eagle Peak*

**gyu yo sho ju sho,**

*And abiding in all other places.*

**shu jo ken ko jin,**

*When living beings see great fires burning*

**dai ka sho sho ji.**

*At the time of the end of a kalpa,*

**Ga shi do an non,**

*This land of mine is tranquil and calm,*

**ten nin jo ju man,**

*Always filled with heavenly beings and humans.*

on rin sho do kaku,  
*Its gardens, groves, halls, and pavilions*

shu ju ho sho gon,  
*Are adorned with every kind of gem,*

ho ju ta ke ka,  
*And its jeweled trees are full of blossoms and fruit.*

shu jo sho yu raku,  
*Here, all living beings take their pleasure*

sho ten kyaku ten ku,  
*While heavenly beings strike heavenly drums,*

jo sa shu gi gaku.  
*Always making many kinds of music,*

U man da ra ke,  
*And showering mandarava flowers*

san butsu gyu dai shu,  
*On the Buddha and his great assembly.*

ga jo do fu ki,  
*My pure land is never destroyed,*

ni shu ken sho jin,  
*Yet all see it as consumed by fire*

u fu sho ku no,  
*And filled with every kind of*

nyo ze shitsu ju man,  
*Grief, horror, pain, and distress.*

ze sho zai shu jo,  
*Those errant living beings,*

i aku go in nen.

*Because of their bad karma,*

Ka a so gi ko,

*Never hear of the names of the Three Treasures*

fu mon san bo myo,

*Throughout immeasurable kalpas.*

sho u shu ku doku,

*But those who perform virtuous deeds*

nyu wa shichi jiki sha,

*And are gentle and upright of nature*

sok' kai ken ga shin,

*Will all see me here*

zai shi ni sep' po,

*Teaching the Dharma.*

waku ji i shi shu,

*At times, for the sake of them all,*

setsu butsu ju mu ryo.

*I teach that a buddha's life span is beyond measure.*

Ku nai ken bus' sha,

*To those who see a buddha only after a very long time,*

i setsu butsu nan chi,

*I teach that a buddha is rarely met.*

ga chi riki nyo ze,

*Such is the power of my wisdom*

e ko sho mu ryo,

*That its light shines infinitely.*

ju myo mu shu ko,

*My life span is of countless kalpas,*

ku shu go sho toku,

*Attained through long cultivation of practice.*

nyo to u chi sha,

*Those of you who have wisdom,*

mot' to shi sho gi.

*Give rise to no doubt about this.*

To dan ryo yo jin,

*Bring doubt forever to an end,*

butsu go jip' pu ko,

*For the Buddha's words are valid, not in vain.*

nyo i zen ho ben,

*A physician with skillful means*

i ji o shi ko,

*Who is actually alive and announces his death*

jitsu zai ni gon shi,

*Only in order to cure his deranged children*

mu no sek' ko mo,

*Cannot be accused of falsehood.*

ga yaku i se bu,

*Like a father to all in this world,*

ku sho ku gen sha.

*I cure their sufferings and diseases.*

I bon bu ten do,

*For the sake of ordinary people with distorted thinking,*



jitsu zai ni gon metsu,  
*I say that I am extinguished, though truly I am here.*

i jo ken ga ko,  
*Were they always to see me,*

ni sho kyo shi shin,  
*They would grow complacent and self-indulgent,*

ho itsu jaku go yoku,  
*Lose themselves in attachment to the five desires,*

da o aku do chu,  
*And fall into evil paths.*

ga jo chi shu jo,  
*I always know living beings,*

gyo do fu gyo do.  
*Those who practice the Way and those who do not,*

Zui o sho ka do,  
*And for their sake expound various teachings*

i ses' shu ju ho,  
*To liberate each of them accordingly.*

o mai ji sa ze nen,  
*I am ever thinking:*

i ga ryo shu jo,  
*'How can I cause living beings to*

toku nyu mu jo do,  
*Embark upon the unsurpassable Way*

o soku jo ju bus' shin.  
*And quickly accomplish embodiment as buddhas?'"*

# Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo

*Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma.*

## Nyo Rai Jin Riki Hon Dai Ni Ju Ichi.

*The Transcendent Powers of the Tathagata. Chapter Twenty-one.*

Sho buk' ku se sha,

*"The buddhas, liberators of the world,*

ju o dai jin zu,

*Abide in great transcendent powers,*

i es' shu jo ko,

*And in order to bring joy to living beings,*

ogen mu ryo jin riki,

*Demonstrate their immeasurable transcendent powers.*

zes' so shi bon den,

*They extend their tongues up to the Brahma heavens*

shin po mu shu ko,

*And emit countless rays of light from their bodies.*

i gu butsu do sha,

*They display these rare wonders*

ogen shi ke u ji.

*For those who seek the Buddha Way.*

Sho buk' kyo gai sho,

*The sound of the buddhas' throat clearing*

gyu tan ji shi sho,

*And the sound of the snap of their fingers*

shu mon jip' po koku,

*Are heard in all the lands of the ten directions,*

o ji kai roku shu do,  
*And the ground shakes in the six ways.*

i butsu metsu do go,  
*Because there are*

no ji ze kyo ko,  
*Those who can keep this Sutra after the Buddha's passing,*

sho butsu kai kan gi,  
*The buddhas all rejoice*

gen mu ryo jin riki.  
*And reveal immeasurable transcendent powers.*

Zoku rui ze kyo ko,  
*Because they wish to entrust this Sutra to others,*

san mi ju ji sha,  
*They praise those who receive and embrace it.*

o mu ryo ko chu,  
*Even throughout immeasurable kalpas,*

yu ko fu no jin,  
*They could never finish their praises,*

ze nin shi ku doku,  
*For the merits of these people*

mu hen mu u gu,  
*Will be as boundless and inexhaustible*

nyo jip' po ko ku,  
*As space in the ten directions,*

fu ka toku hen zai.  
*Which cannot be limited or contained.*

No ji ze kyo sha,

*Those who can keep this Sutra*

soku i i ken ga,

*Have thus already seen me,*

yak' ken Ta ho butsu,

*The Buddha Abundant Treasures,*

gis' sho fun jin sha,

*And the separated embodiments of me.*

u ken ga kon nichu,

*Furthermore, they have already seen me*

kyo ke sho bo satsu,

*Teaching and transforming these bodhisattvas on this very day.*

no ji ze kyo sha,

*Those who can keep this Sutra*

ryo ga gyu fun jin.

*Cause me, my separated embodiments,*

Metsu do Ta ho butsu,

*And the extinguished buddha Abundant Treasures*

is' sai kai kan gi,

*All to rejoice.*

jip' po gen zai butsu,

*They have also seen and paid homage to*

byo ka ko mi rai,

*The present buddhas in the ten directions*

yak' ken yak' ku yo,

*As well as those of the past and the future*

yaku ryo tok' kan gi,

*And likewise caused them to rejoice.*

sho butsu za do jo,

*Those who can keep this Sutra*

sho toku hi yo ho.

*Will before long also grasp*

No ji ze kyo sha,

*The innermost essentials of the Dharma*

fu ku yaku to toku,

*Attained by buddhas seated in their places of the Way.*

no ji ze kyo sha,

*In expounding the words, terms,*

o sho ho shi gi,

*And meanings of the various teachings,*

myo ji gyu gon ji,

*Those who can keep this Sutra*

gyo setsu mu gu jin,

*Will take delight without limit,*

nyo fu o ku chu,

*Just as the wind in the sky*

is' sai mu sho ge.

*Is never blocked or obstructed.*

O nyo rai metsu go,

*After the Tathagata has passed away,*

chi bus'-sho sek' kyo,

*They will know the causes and conditions as well*

in nen gyu shi dai,

*As the proper sequences of the sutras taught by the Buddha*

zui gi nyo jis' setsu,

*And teach them according to their true meanings.*

nyo nichu gak' ko myo,

*Just as the light of the sun and the moon*

no jo sho yu myo,

*Can chase all darkness away,*

shi nin gyo se ken,

*So these people, practicing in this world,*

no mes' shu jo an.

*Can bring living beings out of darkness*

Kyo mu ryo bo satsu,

*And cause countless bodhisattvas*

hik' kyo ju ichi jo,

*To at last abide in the One Vehicle.*

ze ko u chi sha,

*Therefore, after my passing,*

mon shi ku doku ri,

*Those who have wisdom,*

o ga metsu do go,

*Hearing that these virtues are beneficial,*

o ju ji shi kyo,

*Will receive and embrace this Sutra.*

ze nin no butsu do,

*Such people, while on the Buddha Way,*

°ketsu jo mu u gi.

*Will be firmly determined and have no doubts.”*

## Directing Our Intention

### Unzo 運想



The Wonderful Dharma expounded in the Lotus Sutra whose Sacred Title we now chant, is what the past Buddhas taught, the present Buddhas are teaching, and the future Buddhas shall teach. It is the Great Dharma, true and pure, the propagation of which was entrusted primarily to the Great Bodhisattva Superior Practice by the Buddha on Mt. Sacred Eagle. Once we chant the Sacred Title Namu Myoho Renge Kyo we shall attain the right view that the three thousand worlds exist in our minds just as they are; the Pure Land of Tranquil Light shall be made manifest in our sight; our Buddha-nature shall be identified with the Buddha of Three-Bodies-in-One; and, together with all other beings, we shall enjoy living in the Land of Truth. May the sound of our chanting the Sacred Title permeate the whole world, be offered to the Three Treasures, and bestowed on all beings. May all beings enter the World of the One Reality, the Great Vehicle; may the Buddha-land be adorned, and all beings favored with the merits of our chanting.



# Odaimoku Chanting

## Shodai 唱題



### ***Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō***

*Devotion to the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the  
Wonderful Dharma*

Chant each Odaimoku mindfully in a moderate tempo free of distraction or drowsiness with courageous effort. Generally, at least 300 times is a recommended number. The last three times at a slower tempo with deep sincerity and clarity so that everyone is focused and mindful of the Odaimoku.

○ Before the last three Odaimoku. ○ on “Ren” in the last Odaimoku.

## Verses from the Stupa of Treasures

### Hoto-ge 宝塔偈

Shi~kyo nan ji,

*This Sutra is so difficult to keep*

nyaku zan ji sha,

*That if anyone keeps it, even for a short while,*

ga~soku kan gi

*I will be pleased,*

Sho~butsu yaku nen,

*And so, too, will all buddhas.*

Nyo~ze shi nin,

*People such as these*

sho~butsu sho tan,

*Will be praised by all buddhas.*

ze~soku yu myo,

*Such people are courageous and strong.*

ze~soku sho jin,

*They are called keepers of the precepts*

ze~myo ji~kai,

*Therefore, they will speedily attain*

gyo zu~da sha,

*The Supreme Buddha Way.*

so~kui shit' toku,

*In the future, those who*

mu~jo butsu do,  
*Can read and embrace this Sutra*

no o rai se,  
*Will be true buddha children*

doku ji~shi kyo,  
*Abiding in a state of pure goodness.*

ze~shin bus' shi,  
*Such people are diligent.*

ju jun zen ji,  
*And practitioners of austerities.*

butsu metsu do go,  
*After the Buddha's passing,*

no ge~go gi,  
*Those who can grasp its meaning*

ze~sho ten nin,  
*Will serve as the eyes of the world*

se~ken shi gen  
*For heavenly beings and humans.*

o~ku i se,  
*Thus should all heavenly beings and humans*

no shu yu setsu,  
*Pay homage to those who can,*

is' sai ten nin,  
*Even for a moment,*

kai o ku yo.  
*Teach it in fearful and terrifying times.*

## Dedication of Merit

Eko 回向



We respectfully dedicate all our merits now gathered to the Great Benevolent Teacher Shakyamuni the Eternal Buddha, to the Supreme Teaching, The Lotus Sutra, to the Leader of the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma, our Founder, the Great Bodhisattva Nichiren Shonin, and the protective deities of the Dharma.

May all beings under the heavens and within the four seas live in accordance with the Wonderful Dharma!

May the Wonderful Dharma spread throughout the Ten Thousand Years of the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma!

May we realize this world is the Eternal Buddha's Pure Land!

May peace permeate all the world and all beings enjoy peace and happiness!

May all beings live in safety and live long without misfortune!

May the peace and happiness last forever and all beings be prosperous!

We pray that all beings awaken to the true nature of reality which is the Buddha Dharma!

May all beings of all realms be helped equally, overcome suffering, and gain the happiness of blissful liberation through the merits of following the teaching of the Lotus Sutra!

We pray for the spirits of our ancestors and all the spirits of the universe!

May we purify our minds, limit our desires, learn to be content, feel free to experience the quiet unassuming joys of life, and learn to abandon all attachments formed in the mind!

With this prayer, we endeavor to increase our understanding and appreciation of what others have given and contributed to us, and to develop constant, mindful consideration of how our thoughts and actions will beneficially contribute to others.

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*



## Four Great Vows

### Shiguseigan 四弘誓願

#### Shujō Muhen Seigandō

*Sentient beings are infinite, I vow to liberate them all.*

#### Bonnō Mushū Seigandan

*Defilements are innumerable, I vow to resolve them all.*

#### Hōmon Mujin Seiganchi

*Dharma gates are inexhaustible, I vow to know them all.*

#### Butsudō Mujō Seiganjō

*The Way of the Buddha is unsurpassed, I vow to become it.*

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo 3x*

○ ○ ○

# Threefold Refuge

## Sanki 三歸

	△ <i>kikorai</i> <i>L leg up rise 立</i> 六			△ <i>jōki</i> <i>gasshō</i>	
體 ta	自 ji	一 I			
解 ge	歸 ki	切 sa i			三
大 da i	依 e	恭 ku			San
道 dō	佛 fu	敬 gyo			歸
	△ • 付 <i>assembly</i>				Ki
拜 <i>kokugu-teizu</i>					
発 ho	當 to u				
無 mu	願 gan				
上 jō	衆 shu				
意 i	生 jō				
	△ • <i>chōsoku</i> 山				

△ *kikorai*  
*L leg up rise 立*

深 ji ny

入 ny u

經 kyō —

蔵 zo —

△

自 ji —

歸 ki i

依 e —

法 ho u

•

拜  
*kokugu-teizu*

智 chi —

恵 e —

如 *R foot* nyo —

海 *fukuhai* ka i —  
*chōsoku*

△

• 付  
*assembly*

當 to u

願 gan —

衆 shu —

生 jō —



△ *kikorai*  
*L leg up rise 立*

統 to u

理 ri /

大 da i

衆 shu u

△

自 ji u

歸 ki /

依 e u

僧 so u

•

拜  
*kokugu-teizu*

一 i u

切 sa i *R foot*

無 mu u

礙 *fukuhai*  
ge u *chōsoku*

• 付  
*assembly*

△

當 to u

願 gan u

衆 shu u

生 jō u

△

With complete reverence:

I take refuge in the Buddha.  
May all sentient beings  
embody the great Way  
by generating the unsurpassable mind.

I take refuge in the Dharma  
May all sentient beings  
delve deeply into the sutra treasury and  
obtain wisdom as vast as the sea.

I take refuge in the Sangha  
May all sentient beings  
harmonize with the great assembly,  
wholly free of obstructions.

# Farewell

## Buso 奉送

各 Ka 	唯 Yu 	
到 tō 	願 ga 	
随 zu 	諸 sho 	
所 sho 	聖 sho 	奉
安 a 	衆 shu 	Bu
	付 	送
	<i>assembly</i>	
後 Go 	決 Ke 	Sō
復 bu 	定 jō 	
垂 su 	證 shō 	
哀 a 	知 chi 	
赴 fu 	我 ga 	
<i>fukuhai</i>		
山		

Honored Ones!  
Thank you for joining us,  
Be where you wish,  
Remember us, and  
Please come again out your compassion for us.

## Closing Reverence

○ ○ ○

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

## Optional Practices and Prayers

## Visualizing the Ceremony in the Air

*(Optional, may be offered before chanting of the Lotus Sutra)*



This morning/evening as we recite the Lotus Sutra,  
The sound moves the galaxies,  
The Earth below awakens,  
In her lap flowers suddenly appear.

This morning/evening as we recite the Lotus Sutra,  
A Jeweled Stupa appears resplendent,  
All over the sky bodhisattvas are seen,  
And Buddha's hand is in mine.



# Readings from the Lotus Sutra

## Yokuryoshu 欲令衆

*(Optional, may be used after chanting of the Lotus Sutra.)*

*(Selection from Chapter 2, Skillful Means)*

**Yoku ryo shu jo, 'kai but' 'chi ken, 'shi**

*Buddhas, the world-honored ones, desire to cause living beings to*

**toku sho jo ko, shutsu gen no se,**

*open their eyes to the knowledge and insight of the buddhas and become*

**o yoku ji shu jo, but' chi ken ko,**

*pure. Therefore, they appear in the world. They desire to demonstrate the*

**shutsu gen no se, yoku ryo shu jo,**

*knowledge and insight of the buddhas to living beings. Therefore, they appear*

**o go but' chi ken ko, shutsu gen no se,**

*in the world. They desire to cause living beings to realize the knowledge and*

**yoku ryo shu jo, nyu but' chi o ken do**

*insight of the buddhas. Therefore, they appear in the world. They desire to*

**ko, shutsu gen no se, Shari hotsu,**

*enable living beings to embark upon the Way of the knowledge and insight*

**ze i sho butsu, yui i ichi dai ji in**

*of the buddhas. Therefore, they appear in the world. This, Shariputra,*

**nen ko, shutsu gen no se.**

*is the One Great Cause that causes buddhas to appear in the world."*

(Selection from Chapter 3, A Parable)

**San gai mu an, yu nyo ka taku**

*There is no safety in the threefold world.*

**shu ku ju man, jin ka fu i,**

*It is just like the burning house full of all kinds of sufferings,*

**jo u sho ru, byo shi u gen,**

*and is truly to be feared. Ever present are the distresses of birth,*

**nyo ze to ka, shi nen fu soku,**

*aging, illness, and death. These are fires that burn unceasingly.*

**nyo rai i ri, san gai ka taku,**

*The Tathagata had already freed himself from this burning*

**jaku nen gen go, an jo rin ya,**

*house of the threefold world, to live in tranquil seclusion*

**Kon shi san gai, kai ze ga u,**

*in the safety of the forest plain. Now this threefold world is*

**go chu shu jo, shitsu ze go shi,**

*all my domain, and the living beings in it are all my children.*

**ni kon shi sho, ta sho gen nan,**

*But now it is filled with disaster and trouble,*

**yui ga ichi nin, no i ku go.**

*and only I am able to rescue and protect them.*



(Selection from Chapter 10, Teachers of the Dharma)

**Ga ken ge shi shu, biku biku ni,**

*I will send forth apparitions of the four groups, namely,*

**gis sho shin ji nyo, ku yo o hos' shi,**

*monks and nuns and laymen and laywomen who will pay*

**in do sho shu jo, shu shi ryo cho bo,**

*homage to these Dharma teachers and lead many living beings*

**nyaku nin yok' ka aku**

*to assemble and hear the Dharma. If some try to harm*

**to jo gyu ga shaku, sok' ken**

*them with swords, sticks, shards, and stones I will conjure*

**hen ge nin, i shi sa e go.**

*forth people and send them to serve as their guards and protectors.*

(Selection from Chapter 11, The Appearance of the Jeweled Stupa)

**Ni ji ho to chu, sui dai on jo,**

*Then a great voice of praise issued forth from within*

**tan gon zen zai zen zai,**

*the Jeweled Stupa, saying, "Excellent, Excellent,*

**Shaka muni se son,**

*World-Honored Shakyamuni. For the sake of the great assembly,*

**no i byo do dai e,**

*you are able to expound the Wondrous Dharma Flower Sutra*

**kyo bo sap' po, bus' sho go nen,**

*of universal great wisdom, a teaching that instructs*

**Myo hok' ke kyo, i dai shu setsu,**

*bodhisattvas and that buddhas protect and keep in mind.*

**°nyo ze nyo ze, Shaka muni se son,**

*So it is, So it is. All that the World-Honored Shakyamuni*

**nyo sho ses' sha, °kai ze shin jitsu**

*expounds is the truth."*

# Dharanis

*(Optional, may be used after chanting of the Lotus Sutra)*

## Chapter 26

(Medicine King)

A ni

ma ni

ma ne

ma ma ne

shi rei

sha ri tei

sha mya

sha bi ta i

sen tei

moku tei

moku ta bi

sha bi

a i sha bi

so bi

sha bi

sha ei

a sha ei

a gini

sen tei

sha bi

dara ni

a ro kya ba sha ha sha bi sha ni

ne bi tei  
a ben ta ra nei bi tei  
a tan da ha rei shu dai  
u ku rei  
mu ku rei  
a ra rei  
ha ra rei  
shu gya shi  
a san ma san bi  
bod' da bi kiri jit' tei  
daru ma ha ri shi tei  
so gya ne ku sha ne  
ba sha ba sha shu tai  
man tara  
man tara sha ya ta  
u ro ta  
u ro ta kyo sha rya  
a sha ra  
a sha ya ta ya  
a ba ro  
A ma nya na ta ya

(Brave In Giving)

Za rei  
ma ka za rei  
uk' ki  
mok' ki  
a rei  
a ra ha tei

ne rei tei  
ne rei ta ha tei  
i chi ni  
i chi ni  
shi chi ni  
ne rei chi ni  
ne ri chi ha chi

(Heavenly King, Protector of the World)

A ri  
na ri  
to na ri  
a na ro  
na bi  
ku na bi

(World-Holding Heavenly King and Gandharvas)

A kya ne  
kya ne  
ku ri  
ken da ri  
sen da ri  
ma to gi  
jo gu ri  
bu ro sha ni  
at' chi

(Kishimojin and Ten Rakshasi)

I dei bi  
i dei bin  
i dei bi  
a dei bi  
i dei bi

dei bi  
dei bi  
dei bi  
dei bi  
dei bi

ro kei  
ro kei  
ro kei  
ro kei

ta kei  
ta kei  
ta kei

to kei  
to kei  
toku mu sho bo nin

(Samantabhadra - Universal Sage Bodhisattva)

A tan dai

tan da ha dai

tan da ha tei

tan da ku sha rei

tan da shu da rei

shu da rei

shu dara ha chi

bod' da ha sen ne

saru ba dara ni a ba ta ni

saru ba ba sha a ba ta ni

shu a ba ta ni

so gya ha bi sha ni

so gya ne gya da ni

a so gi

so gya ha gya dai

tei rei a da so gya to rya a ra tei ha ra tei

saru ba so gya san ma ji gya ran dai

saru ba daru ma shu hari set' tei

saru ba sat' ta ro da kyo sha rya a to gya dai

shin na bi kiri dai tei

## Mindfulness of Breathing

*(May be used for a period of guided meditation prior to  
Odaimoku chanting)*

Breathing in, I know if I am breathing in long.  
Breathing out, I know if I am breathing out long.  
Breathing in, I know if I am breathing in short.  
Breathing out, I know if I am breathing out short.

Breathing in, I am aware of the whole body.  
Breathing out, I am aware of the whole body.

Breathing in, I calm the whole body.  
Breathing out, I calm the whole body.

Breathing in, I feel joyful.  
Breathing out, I feel joyful.  
Breathing in, I feel at ease.

Breathing out, I feel at ease.

Breathing in, I am aware of the mental formations.  
Breathing out, I am aware of the mental formations.

Breathing in, I calm the mental formations.  
Breathing out, I calm the mental formations.

Breathing in, I am aware of the mind.  
Breathing out, I am aware of the mind.

Breathing in, I gladden the mind.  
Breathing out, I gladden the mind.

Breathing in, I concentrate the mind.  
Breathing out, I concentrate the mind.

Breathing in, I liberate the mind.  
Breathing out, I liberate the mind.  
Breathing in, I observe impermanence.



Breathing out, I observe impermanence.  
Breathing in, I observe the fading of craving.  
Breathing out, I observe the fading of craving.  
Breathing in, I observe cessation.  
Breathing out, I observe cessation.  
Breathing in, I observe letting go.  
Breathing out, I observe letting go.

# The Perfect and Sudden Contemplation and Insight

## Endon Shikan 圓頓止觀

*(May be used after Odaimoku chanting in place of the Verses  
from the Stupa of Treasures)*

En don sha, Sho-en jis' sō,

*The perfect and sudden from the beginning takes the true mark as its object.*

zo kyō soku chū, mu-hu shin jitsu,

*No matter what the object might be, it is indivisible from the middle. There is nothing that is not the truth.*

ke-en hō kai, ichi nen hō kai,

*When one is fixed upon the Dharma-realm and unifies one's mindfulness with the Dharma-realm,*

is' shiki ik' kō, mu-hi chū dō,

*then there is not a color or scent that is not the middle way.*

ko-kai gyū buk' kai,

*The realm of the self, the realm of the buddhas,*

shu-jō kai yaku nen,

*and the realm of sentient beings are also thus.*

on nyu kai nyo, mu-ku ka-sha,

*The aggregates and senses are all suchness, so there is no suffering to be abandoned.*

mu-myō jin rō, soku ze-bo dai,

*Ignorance and troublesome impurity are indivisible from awakening,*

mu-shū ka-dan,

*so there is no origin of suffering to be cut off.*

hen ja-kai chū shō, mu-dō ka-shu,

*Extreme and wrong views are all the middle, so there is no path to be cultivated.*

shō ji-soku ne-han,

*Samsara is indivisible from nirvana,*

mu-metsu ka-shō,

*so there is no cessation to be realized.*

mu-ku mu-shū, ko-mu se-ken,

*There is no suffering and no origin of suffering, so there is nothing worldly.*

mu-dō mu-metsu,

*There is no path and no cessation,*

ko-mu shus' se-ken,

*so there is no transcending the worldly.*

jun itsu' jis' sō,

*There is a pure and singular true mark,*

jis' sō ge-kyō, mu-bep' po,

*aside from this true mark there are no separate phenomena.*

hos' shō jaku nen myō

*That all phenomena are naturally quiescent is called "calming";*

shi-jaku ni-jō shō myō kan,

*that, though quiescent, they are ever luminous is called "contemplation."*

sui gon sho-go, mu-ni mu-betsu,

*Although we speak of before and after, they are neither divisible nor separate.*

ze-myō en don shi-kan.

*This is called the perfect and sudden calming and contemplation.*

## Memorial Prayer

*(Optional, may be used in place of the standard Dedication of Merit for a memorial service)*



Today is the [number] memorial service to remember and honor [name]. We respectfully dedicate the chanting of the *Lotus Sutra* and the Odaimoku in the presence of the Three Treasures and his/her loving family to [name]. May the sound of the *Lotus Sutra* and Odaimoku permeate throughout the Universe, and all the merits gained transfer to [name] ensuring his/her enlightenment and rebirth in a higher realm.

Dew on the branch tips,  
Drops on the trunk.  
All sooner or later,  
Must vanish from this world.

Birth, aging, sickness and death. We all share this continuing cycle of life together. There is no permanence in this life. Life is fleeting! This present life is a dream within a dream. When you die, Shakyamuni Buddha and all the buddhas throughout the universe will come flying, lead you by the hand or carry you on their shoulders to Mount Sacred Eagle. At that moment, the two sage bodhisattvas, two heavenly kings, and ten rakshasi will protect you, the upholder of the *Lotus Sutra*,

and various gods and deities will hold up a canopy over your head, wave banners, guard you, and certainly will send you to the Pure Land of Eternally Tranquil Light.

The *Lotus Sutra* is a ship on the rivers of the Three Paths, the great white ox cart on the Mountain of Going Forth in Death, a lamp on the paths of the underworld and is a bridge whereby we may go to Mount Sacred Eagle. It is the light on the paths of the underworld; it is an excellent horse on the Mountain of Going Forth in Death. It is like the sun and the moon in the heavens. It is like Mount Sumeru on Earth. It is the ship for crossing the ocean of birth-and-death. It is the guiding teacher for the realization of buddhahood.

When we chant *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* there are no blessings that fail to come to one, and no good karma that does not begin to work on one's behalf. The power of our prayer and practice reaches into the past, present, and future. Today, and forever we remember, honor, and pay respect to [name]. Be well and be safe [name]. Go with love and peace to the next realm.

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*



## Prayer for Healing Illness

*(Optional, may be used in place of, or added to the standard Dedication of Merit for a healing service)*



In the *Lotus Sutra* it says, "I am leaving this very good medicine here. Take it and drink it. Do not worry, for it will cure you." It also says, "This Sutra is good medicine for the diseases of the people of the world. If the sick hear this Sutra, their illnesses will instantly disappear. They will neither grow old nor die." In the honored writings of Nichiren Shonin it says, "And yet even though a finger might point to the great earth and miss it, a person tie up the sky, the ocean's tide lack an ebb and flow, or if the sun should rise in the west, there cannot be a time when the prayer of a practitioner of the *Lotus Sutra* is not answered."

[Name], aged [number] years, repents of all wrong actions, words, and thoughts against the Dharma and contrary to the mind of the Buddha. We respectfully pray that his/her transgressions may be extinguished, that his/her six sense organs be purified, that his/her illness be rapidly cured, and that his/her bodily health be protected.

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*



## Meal Prayer

*(Optional, may be done at mealtime)*

(Before meal)

The rays of the sun, moon, and stars which nourish our bodies, and the five grains of the earth which nurture our spirits are all the gifts of the Eternal Buddha. Even a drop of water or a grain of rice is nothing but the result of meritorious work and hard labor. May this meal help us to maintain health in body and mind and to uphold the teachings of the Buddha to repay the four debts of gratitude and to perform the pure conduct of serving others.

I humbly accept this meal. *(Itadakimasu)*

***Namu Myoho Renge Kyo***

(After the meal)

Thank you for this feast. *(Gochisō-sama deshita.)*

***Namu Myoho Renge Kyo***

***Namu Myoho Renge Kyo***

***Namu Myoho Renge Kyo***

# Shodaigyo Meditation

## 唱題行

(For Shodaigyo instructions please refer to page 97)

〇 〇 〇

### **Raihai** 礼拝

(Reverent Salutation) (*Hands in Gassho mudra*)

△ Raihai △

### **Dojokan** 道場觀

(Contemplation of the Place of Awakening)

△ Leader: Let it be known that

△ All: This place, where the stupa is erected, is the place of awakening. Here, the buddhas attain unsurpassed, complete, and perfect awakening. Here, the buddhas roll the Dharma wheel. And here, the buddhas enter final nirvana.



## **Honmon Sanki 本門三歸**

(Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures of the  
Original Gate)

△ Leader: Honor be

△ All: To the Eternal Buddha Shakyamuni, our  
Original Teacher, who attained Awakening in the  
remotest past.

△ Leader: Honor be

△ All: To the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the  
Wonderful Dharma, the teaching of Equality, the  
Great Wisdom, the One Vehicle.

△ Leader: Honor be

△ All: To our Original Teacher Superior Practice,  
our Founder, the Great Bodhisattva Nichiren  
Shonin.

## **Joshingyo 淨心行**

(Practice to Purify the Mind)

(Hands in Dharma-realm Meditation Mudra)

○ Silent meditation ○

**Shoshogyo** 正唱行

(Practice of Correct Chanting) (*Hands in Gassho.*)

Chant *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

**Jinshingyo** 深信行

(Practice to Deepen Faith) (*Hands in Dharma-  
realm Meditation Mudra*)

○ silent meditation ○

**Kigangyo** 祈願行

(Practice of Prayer) (*Hands in Gassho mudra*)

We offer the merits of our practice to all beings. We uphold for all beings this universal teaching of equality. We vow to diligently strive for world peace. We pray that all beings find sanctuary in the Wonderful Dharma of Myoho Renge Kyo.

***Namu Myoho Renge Kyo***

We pray for our family and friends to live in accordance with the Dharma. We pray they all enjoy good health in body and mind. May all beings increase their wisdom, expiate past transgressions, do good deeds, and live a virtuous life. We pray that all beings awaken to the true

nature of reality which is the Buddha-nature, and that we all attain awakening.

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

We pray for all the deceased, for our ancestors, and especially for [name]. May they all find refuge in the Buddha and attain awakening.

*Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*

We offer the merits we have accumulated through our practice to all beings and may we all attain awakening.

**Shiguseigan 四弘誓願**

(Four Great Vows)

Sentient beings are infinite,  
I vow to liberate them all.

Defilements are innumerable,  
I vow to resolve them all.

Dharma gates are inexhaustible,  
I vow to know them all.

The Way of the Buddha is unsurpassed,  
I vow to become it.

**Juji 受持**  
(Receiving and Keeping)

Leader: With this body,

All: Until I attain buddhahood, I will uphold my  
faith in the *Lotus Sutra*.

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo 3x

**Raihai 礼拝**  
(Reverent Farewell)

△ Raihai △

○ ○ ○

## Introduction to Nichiren Buddhism

For over 2500 years the Buddhist tradition has been offering a way for every person to become awakened, thereby realizing and actualizing one's own buddha-nature. The Buddha never said he was a god nor did he say that we should follow him to an otherworldly heaven. Instead, he said, "Come try this and see for yourself." The Buddha emphasized personal responsibility and accountability. In essence, Buddhism teaches that if we liberate ourselves, we can liberate the world. Mindfulness and compassion are noble human qualities that all can cultivate. Through practice, we can live with trust and confidence, so that our thoughts, words, and actions can transform us and positively influence everyone and everything around us.

The Nichiren Buddhist tradition shares much with the other traditions, like all Buddhists, we take refuge in the Three Treasures:

- ❖ The Buddha
- ❖ The Dharma
- ❖ The Sangha

We acknowledge the Buddha's foundational teaching of the Four Noble Truths:

- ❖ Life is suffering (when infinite happiness is sought from finite things).
- ❖ Suffering is caused by greed, hatred, and delusion.
- ❖ We can end suffering.
- ❖ We do this by following the Eightfold Path of Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

The Mahayana tradition evolved the Eightfold Path into The Six Perfections of Generosity, Morality, Patience, Energy, Meditation, and Wisdom, by emphasizing Generosity and Patience. Generosity for others is critical for everyone's benefit. Without Patience, hatred and anger can overwhelm us.

In Nichiren Buddhism, following the teachings of Tiantai Zhiyi (538-597), we believe that we can awaken to the following three truths:

- ❖ Truth of Emptiness: no person, place, thing, principle, or event has an unchanging, independent “essence” or “self-nature.”
- ❖ Truth of Provisionality: yet all phenomena are constantly arising, changing, and ceasing in accordance with causes and conditions. All phenomena have a provisional existence that is impermanent, interdependently composed of other phenomena, and subjectively apprehended by our mental perceptions.
- ❖ Truth of the Middle Way: all phenomena are both empty and provisional. We are empty of self-nature because we are provisionally existing in every moment as a flow of causes and conditions with no fixed or independent self-nature. The first two truths necessarily imply each other. A complete understanding of any one of the Three Truths will lead to an understanding of the other two. Understanding the Middle Way allows us to experience each moment fully without being entangled by aversion or attraction which gives rise to suffering. By awakening to the Middle Way, we can be fully liberated and also fully engaged with the world.

Nichiren (1222-1282) established the tradition that now bears his name on April 28, 1253. Nichiren's genius and great gift to us all was encapsulating all the Buddha's teachings into a form of practice accessible to all of us living in today's world. The three parts of his practice are called the Three Great Secret Dharmas:

- ❖ The Gohonzon or Focus of Devotion
- ❖ The Odaimoku of Namu Myoho Renge Kyo
- ❖ The Kaidan or Place of Practice

Nichiren believed that wisdom, the sixth perfection was the goal of Buddhist practice, and yet nearly impossible to attain when life is so difficult and filled with so many distractions. Therefore, he taught that one must initially approach wisdom through faith, which is to say trust and confidence, in the Wonderful Dharma itself. If people found traditional meditation and calming practices too difficult, they could attain calming and contemplation of the Wonderful Dharma through a devotional practice of joyful trust in the Buddha's teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*.

Nichiren taught a fully immersive, devotional style of practice in the chanting of Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is called the Odaimoku, or "Sacred Title," of the *Lotus Sutra*. In many ancient wisdom traditions, the complete presence of a being or thing is encapsulated by its name or title. Nichiren taught that chanting Namu Myoho Renge Kyo creates the space inside and around us that can give the wisdom within our lives the opportunity to emerge and guide us. This gives us the power and ability to express the Six Perfections and Eightfold Path. In this way, we can live the life of a bodhisattva, practicing for the benefit of both ourselves and others.

The way whereby we sow the seeds of buddhahood in our lives as Nichiren Buddhists is to place our palms together in the mudra of reverence as we chant the mantra *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* in a consecrated place of practice wherein we have enshrined the mandala that is the focus of devotion. Our continued practice nurtures those seeds and allows the inner wisdom of our buddha-nature to grow and develop. This is the positive feedback loop of Buddhist practice: The wisdom of our buddha-nature inspires us to practice, our practice sows and nurtures the seeds of buddhahood, as those seeds of awakening ripen our wisdom grows, and our wisdom in turn inspires us to continue cultivating our practice and to share its fruits with others.

In general, the only things we can truly control in our lives are our perceptions and reactions to the world. We can change our perceptions by training our minds to develop a correct view of the reality around and inside ourselves. As a result, our behavior gradually transforms, moving towards wholesome activities and mind-states and doing less harm to others and ourselves. As we endeavor on this path, we, and the people around us, become happier.

To ensure that we have a firm basis for our continued cultivation of joyful trust in the Wonderful Dharma, as well as our practice and study of the Wonderful Dharma motivated by that joyful trust, we should also keep in mind the Four Reliances that Shakyamuni Buddha taught, which he emphasized in his final sutra, the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*:



Rely on the Dharma,  
not upon the person;

Rely on the meaning,  
not upon the words;

Rely on wisdom,  
not upon discriminative consciousness;

Rely on the definitive meaning,  
not upon the provisional meaning.

## How to celebrate Gongyo

### 勤行

Welcome to *gongyo*, the sacred and sublime practice of Nichiren Buddhists. *Gongyo* means "diligent practice."

There is no strict format to celebrate gongyo. Practitioners have a great deal of personal discretion in how to celebrate gongyo, shortening or lengthening their ceremony as time and inclination permit. Feel free to adapt what you find in this service book to fit your time and preference. The one guideline to keep in mind is that chanting *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* is the primary practice. If you only have time for one thing, please just chant the *Odaimoku*. And, when doing a full service make sure that you put your emphasis on chanting the *Odaimoku*. All of the rest of the service is just a support for the practice of *Odaimoku*.

Nichiren Buddhists celebrate gongyo twice a day, beginning and ending the day with gratitude for the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Our attitude during gongyo is very important. In Chapter 16 of the *Lotus Sutra*, the Buddha says, "All who cherish and long for me, look up with thirsting hearts. At last, when living beings humbly believe, are upright in character and gentle and flexible in mind, and

wish with all their hearts to see the Buddha, even at the cost of their lives, then I and all the Sangha, appear together on Divine Eagle Peak.” In Chapter 6 it says that the great voice-hearer disciples, “...trembled with anticipation, placed their palms together and, with a single mind, gazed up to the World-Honored One's face, not for an instant lowering their eyes.” Furthermore, in that same chapter, the Buddha said, “Everyone, with a single mind, listen to what I say.”

Gongyo is a celebration of the Eternal Buddha. It is a way to recollect and express our Buddha-nature. It is an expression of True Reality – the three thousand realms in a single moment of life that are inconceivable as empty, provisionally existent, and the middle way. The Great Master Miaole wrote: “You should understand that one's life and its environment at a single moment encompasses the three thousand realms. Therefore, when one merges with the Eternal Buddha, one puts oneself in alignment with this fundamental Reality of Life, and one's body and mind at a single moment merges and permeates the entire realm of phenomena.”

Offering one's practice to the Gohonzon and Odaimoku is not mere idol worship using magical incantations. The intention of gongyo is to merge ourselves with the Eternal Buddha. We should

strive to cultivate and practice a deep feeling of faith, respect, connection, gratitude, and mindfulness during gongyo. The *Lotus Sutra* embodies all the Buddha's teachings, and each letter represents the Buddha's body, voice, and heart. Nichiren wrote in the Response to My Lady, the Nun of Ueno, "In the case of the *Lotus Sutra*, when one touches it, one's hands immediately become Buddhas, and when one chants it, one's mouth instantly becomes a Buddha. For example, when the moon rises above the eastern mountain, its reflection immediately shows on the water. Sound and resonance occur simultaneously." (Writings of Nichiren Shonin, Volume 7, p. 58)

We should chant each word clearly, with a ringing voice, coming from deep within our diaphragm, with serenity; neither too fast nor too slow. Also, we should always try to keep our shrine and the surrounding area clean and neat and dress appropriately for the offering of this daily service.

We do not practice gongyo to escape or retreat from the world. Gongyo trains us to fully engage with the world and act intentionally within it. Gongyo trains the mental muscles of Concentration Clarity, Equanimity and Loving-kindness that we need to be deliberate, mindful, and compassionate. It enables us to realize that our lives are inextricably intertwined. Therefore, what we think, say, and do matters to all, as all things awaken through our

efforts, and the liberating efforts of all beings matter to us as their efforts join with ours.

We begin gongyo by recognizing that the place where we practice is the Buddha's Pure Land, by taking refuge in the Three Treasures, and by inviting all the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and protectors to celebrate with us.

We recite the Hoben-pon and Juryo-hon from the Lotus Sutra once through. It is acceptable to skip the prose section of the Juryo-hon (pages 19 - 33) and just chant the Jiga-ge portion (pages 34 - 41) to shorten the service. If chanting the entire Juryo-hon, which includes the Jiga-ge, you should skip the title of the Lotus Sutra and the chapter at the beginning of the Jiga-ge section as they have already been chanted at the beginning of the chapter.

We then begin our essential practice of chanting the Odaimoku: Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. There is no specific length of time or quantity of Odaimoku to chant, though chanting it at least 300 times for our daily practice is suggested in the *Shutei Nichiren Shu Hoyō Shiki (The Standard Nichiren Shu Ceremonies and Protocols)*. Because chanting Odaimoku is the essential practice we should chant it often with sincerity and mindfulness. Remember, however, that it is not the quantity but the quality of

the Odaimoku as an expression of joyful confidence in the Wonderful Dharma that matters. Generally, we recommend chanting the Odaimoku for at least twelve minutes during gongyo.

We conclude gongyo by dedicating the merits we have accumulated to all beings and vowing to practice the Bodhisattva Way to save all beings.

When offering gongyo in a group, passages in bold typeface are recited by the leader of the ceremony, and passages in regular typeface are done by the entire Sangha together.

The additional sections are optional and may be added to gongyo if you wish to vary the ceremony or perform a specific ceremony. To perform a healing service or memorial service, use the Healing Prayer or the Memorial Prayer by either substituting them for or adding them where noted to the Dedication of Merit.

There is no substitute for learning gongyo by practicing with others. Please seek out fellow believers in your area and form Dharma groups to chant Odaimoku, study, and support each other.

## Pronunciation Guide

### Vowels

A as in father

E as in egg

I as in machine

O as in oh

U as in rule

Y as in yes

UI as in louie

AI as in eye

### Consonants

CH as in chair

G as in go

J as in jewel

S as in sun

SH as in show

Z as in zebra

H is always sounded

## Bell and Percussion Instruments

Bells and other instruments not only add beautiful sounds to the service, they are also used to indicate the opening and closing of the service as well as to signal other transitions and actions.

- indicates when to strike the bell strongly.
- indicates when to strike the bell softly.
- △ indicates when to strike the *inkin* (印金) [small hand bell].
- indicates when to strike the *kei* (磬) [gong].

Striking wooden percussion instruments, such as the *mokusho* (木柀) or *mokugyo* (木魚) [wood block], or a taiko drum aids in keeping tempo amongst a larger group. They are usually struck once per syllable.

○3 means that the bell is only struck during the third repetition.

• before a syllable indicates when to strike. After the third such mark, the percussion instrument being used is struck once per syllable.

∩ indicates that the two beats are closer together.



## How to practice Shodaigyo

This practice combines Odaimoku with silent calming and contemplation. It was developed by Bishop Nichijun Yukawa (1876-1968) of Nichiren Shu.

### **Raihai**

*Raihai* is a deep bow to prepare oneself to receive the Buddha Dharma before the Gohonzon. One begins in *gassho*, with palms together in reverence. Upon the ringing of the *inkin*, or hand bell, one touches one's forehead to the floor and lifts one's hands above the head palms up. When the *inkin* is rung again, rise back into a sitting posture with hands in *gassho*.

### **Joshingyo**

*Joshin-gyo* is a practice to purify the mind and body to receive the benefits of chanting the Odaimoku. This meditation is a form of calming (*shamatha*) meditation, common to all schools of Buddhism. Sit down in a comfortable and stable posture, whether that is sitting up straight in a chair, in the half-lotus, or even full lotus posture. Your eyes should be open or semi-closed with your gaze resting on a spot two handbreadths in front of you.

Your open left hand should rest lightly on your open right hand with your thumb tips touching as if to form a small moon. This is called the Dharma-realm Meditation Mudra. Hold this mudra against your abdomen just below the navel. If your thumb tips break apart or your hands slip down into your lap or your posture begins to deteriorate, that should help alert you to the fact that you are either getting distracted or drowsy and should return your attention to the subject of your meditation. Begin by inhaling gently through the nose and exhaling through the mouth up to three times to get settled and to exhale all impurities. Then close your mouth and breathe only through the nose. Breathe from the diaphragm. Naturally allow the breathing to become deep, even, and quiet. Focus your attention on your breathing. There are several methods one may use to maintain your attention on the breath. Use the one that best works for you. In no particular order, they are:

- You may count each cycle of inhalation and exhalation, from 1-10. If you lose count, begin again at 1.
- If counting seems too crude or is preventing a deepening of focus on the breath, stop counting and just follow the breath.
- If following the breath seems too crude, just rest your awareness at a point roughly three fingers below and two finger widths behind the navel,

called the *tanden* (丹田) or “elixir field,” and observe your breathing from that still point beneath the diaphragm as it expands and contracts.

- You can also silently recite the Odaimoku with each breath. For example, you can silently recite “Namu” as you inhale and “Myoho Renge Kyo” as you exhale.
- You can use the guided meditation Mindfulness of Breathing.

Regardless of which of the above methods you are using, treat thoughts and feelings like passing clouds or leaves floating by in a stream. Stay attentive to your breathing. If you get caught up in thinking or daydreaming, take notice and return your attention to your breathing. The process of catching the mind and returning to the subject of the meditation is the way to train your attention and the power of your concentration.

### **Shoshogyo**

Chant Namu Myoho Renge Kyo with your hands in *gassho*. Start slowly at about 10 recitations per minute, and then increase the tempo until it is very fast at about 30 recitations per minute. Then, slowly reduce the tempo until chanting very slowly again. A drum may be used to keep cadence, striking one beat for each of the seven characters

of Namu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo. You may do several cycles if you wish. ○ Before the last three Odaimoku. These last three are recited at a slower tempo with deep sincerity and clarity so that everyone is focused and mindful. ○ on “Ren” in the last Odaimoku.

### **Jinshingyo**

This period of silent meditation is a form of Insight (*vipashyana*) meditation where one should match a mental recitation of the Odaimoku to the breath focusing on that; such as “Namu” while breathing in, and “Myoho Renge Kyo” while breathing out]. Essentially, one is to abide in the energy and contemplate the merit of having chanted Odaimoku and gradually ground that energy by sitting with it in silence.

### **Raihai**

(As above)

## Acknowledgments

*We are deeply grateful for Kosei Publishing's permission to use their Lotus Sutra English translation from The Threefold Lotus Sutra: A Modern Translation for Contemporary Readers, translated by Michio Shinozaki, Brook A. Ziporyn, and David C. Earhart, Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 2019. These translations were used in the section "Chanting of the Lotus Sutra."*

*We are also grateful to Parallax Press's permission to use Thich Nhat Hanh's verse for reciting the Lotus Sutra, from his book Peaceful Action, Open Heart: Lessons from the Lotus Sutra (2008). We have adapted it for the section called "Visualizing the Ceremony in the Air."*

*Published by the  
Nichiren Buddhist Sangha of the  
San Francisco Bay Area  
[www.nichirenbayarea.org](http://www.nichirenbayarea.org)*

*First Printing 2021  
Revised 2024*