Associazione Buddhista
del Sūtra del Loto
妙法蓮華経仏教協会
Myōhō Renge Kyō Bukkyō Kyōkai
Tempio Nichiren Shu Jokozan Myoshoji 浄光山 妙照寺

妙法禮誦式

Myō Hō Rai Ju Shiki

Liturgy of Veneration of the Wonderful Dharma

English Version

Bujō · Verses of Invitation

We humbly ask all the Buddhas and sages dwelling in the ocean of the Dharma Realm to come here, moved by their compassion, and adorn this place of practice.

We humbly pray that body and mind may be purified, so that good fortune and wisdom may manifest in the three activities of body, speech, and mind, and all may attain Tathāgatahood.

We humbly pray that the merits accumulated may be transferred to this world and throughout the ten directions, bringing infinite benefit to all.

Sambōrai · Prostration before the Three Treasures

With all our hearts, we bow before the Eternal Buddha and all the Buddhas, His emanations, throughout the worlds of the ten directions.

With all our hearts, we bow before the Eternal Dharma, which constitutes the teachings of the Buddhas throughout the worlds of the ten directions.

With all our hearts, we bow before the Eternal Sangha, which embraces the devotees of the Buddhas throughout the worlds of the ten directions.

Kanjō · Invocation

If a person rejoices upon hearing this Dharma and utters even a single word in praise of it, that person should be regarded as having made offerings to all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future.

Honour be to the Great Mandala of the Most Venerable, the Perfect Circle never before revealed.

Honour be to the Eternal Buddha Śākyamuni, the Great Benefactor, the Original Teacher who attained Buddhahood in the remotest past.

Honour be to the Buddha Tahō, who appeared in this world to bear witness to the truth of the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma.

Honour be to the Buddhas of the worlds of the ten directions, of the past, present, and future, emanations of the Eternal Buddha Śākyamuni.

Honour be to Jōgyō, Muhengyō, Jōgyō, Anryūgyō, and all the other great Bodhisattvas who emerged from the earth, disciples of the Eternal Buddha Śākyamuni.

Honour be to Monju, Fugen, Miroku, Yakuō, Yakujō, Yūze, Myō-on, Kannon, and all the other Bodhisattvas, disciples of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni and of the Buddhas who have come from other worlds.

Honour be to Shinji, Mokuren, Kashō, Anan, and all the others. These great śrāvakas have recently received the assurance that they will attain Buddhahood in the future.

Honour be to the heavenly gods and benevolent deities who protect the practitioners of the One Vehicle.

We venerate the Three Treasures that dwell within the Lotus Sūtra.

In particular, honour be to our Founder, the Great Bodhisattva Nichiren, the Great Guide of those of us living in the age of Mappō.

Honour be to the Six Senior Disciples, the Nine Senior Disciples of Nichirō, and all the other disciples who contributed to the Nichiren Order.

In particular, honour be to Renge Ajari Nichiji Shōnin, the first overseas missionary.

May all of you, Venerable Ones, come to this place of enlightenment, moved by your compassion for us, look upon us in the light of your wisdom, and accept our offering of the flavour of the Dharma.

Kaikyōge · Verses of opening the Sutra

Mujō Jinjin Mimyō no Hō wa Hiakusenmangō ni mo Ai Tatematsuru Koto Katashi. Ware Ima Kemmon Shi Juji Suru Koto wo Etari. Negawaku wa Nyorai no Daiichigi wo Gesen. Shigoku no Daijō Shigi su Bekarazu. Kenmon Sokuchi Mina Bodai ni Chikazuku. Nōsen wa Hōshin Shosen wa Hosshin Shikisō no Monji wa Sunawachi Kore Ōjin Nari. Muryō no Kudoku Mina Kono Kyō ni Atsumareri. Kono Yue ni Jizai ni Myō ni Kunji Mitsu ni Yakusu. Uchi Muchi Tsumi wo Messhi Zen wo Shōzu. Moshi wa Shin Moshi wa Hō Tomoni Butsudō wo Jōzen. Sanze no Shobutsu Jinjin no Myōden Nari. Shōjō Sese Chigu Shi Chōdai sen.

Translation

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 enjoyment-body. Expounded is the Buddha's reality-body. The letters composing this sutra are the Buddha's transformation-body.

Just as perfume is caught by something put nearby, so shall we be richly benefited by this sūtra, 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 encounter it in successive lifetimes and receive it with devotion, generation after generation.

Myōhō Renge Kyō	**妙法蓮華經**
Hoben pon dai ni	**方便品第二**
Ni ji se son	爾時世尊
ju san mai	從三昧
an jo ni ki	安詳而起
go shari hotsu	告舍利弗
sho but’ chi e	諸佛智慧
jin jin mu ryo	甚深無量
go chi e mon	其智慧門
nan ge nan nyu	難解難入
is sai sho mon	一切聲聞
hyaku shi butsu	辟支佛
sho fu no chi	所不能知
sho i sha ga	所以者何
butsu zo shin gon	佛曾親近
hyaku sen man noku	百千萬億
mu shu sho butsu	無數諸佛
jin gyo sho butsu	盡行諸佛
mu ryo do ho	無量道法
yu myo sho jin	勇猛精進
myo sho fu mon	名稱普聞
jo ju jin jin	成就甚深
mi zo u ho	未曾有法
zui gi sho setsu	隨宜所說
i shu nan ge	意趣難解
shari hotsu	舍利弗
go ju jo butch’ i rai	吾從成佛已來
shu ju in nen	種種因緣
shu ju hi yu	種種譬喻
ko en gon kyo	廣演言教
mu shu ho ben	無數方便

in do shu jo	引導衆生
ryo ri sho jaku	令離諸著
sho i sha ga	所以者何
nyo rai ho ben	如來方便
chi ken hara mitsu	知見波羅蜜
kai i gu soku	皆已具足
shari hotsu	舍利弗
nyo rai chi ken	如來知見
ko dai jin non	廣大深遠
mu ryo mu ge	無量無礙
riki mu sho i	力無所畏
zen jo ge das' san mai	禪定解脱三昧
jin a yu mu sai	深入無際
jo ju is sai	成就一切
mi zo u ho	未曾有法
shari hotsu	舍利弗
nyo rai no shu ju fun betsu	如來能種種分別
gyo ses sho ho	巧説諸法
gon ji nyu nan	言辭柔輭
ek ka shu shin	悦可衆心
shari hotsu	舍利弗
shu yo gon shi	取要言之
mu ryo mu hen	無量無邊
mi zo u ho	未曾有法
bus shitsu jo ju	佛悉成就
shi	止
shari hotsu	舍利弗
fu shu bu setsu	不須復説
sho i sha ga	所以者何
bus sho jo ju	佛所成就
dai ichi ke u	第一希有

nan ge shi ho	難解之法
yui butsu yo butsu	唯佛與佛
nai no ku jin	乃能究盡
sho ho jis so	諸法實相

(se repite tres veces)

sho i sho ho	所謂諸法
nyo ze so	如是相
nyo ze sho	如是性
nyo ze tai	如是體
nyo ze riki	如是力
nyo ze sa	如是作
nyo ze in	如是因
nyo ze en	如是緣
nyo ze ka	如是果
nyo ze ho	如是報
nyo ze hon matsu ku kyo to	如是本末究竟等

Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo	**妙法蓮華經**
Nyo Rai Ju Ryo Hon	**如來壽量品**
Dai Ju Roku	**第十六**
Ji ga toku butsu rai	自我得佛來
sho kyo sho ko shu	所經諸劫數
mu ryo hyaku sen man	無量百千萬
oku sai a so gi	億載阿僧祇
jo sep po kyo ke	常說法教化
mu shu oku shu jo	無數億衆生
ryo nyu o butsu do	令入於佛道
ni rai mu ryo ko	爾來無量劫
i do shu jo ko	為度衆生故
ho ben gen ne han	方便現涅槃
ni jitsu fu metsu do	而實不滅度
jo ju shi sep po	常住此說法
ga jo ju o shi	我常住於此
i sho jin zu riki	以諸神通力
ryo ten do shu jo	令顛倒衆生
sui gon ni fu ken	雖近而不見
shu ken ga metsu do	衆見我滅度
ko ku yo sha ri	廣供養舍利
gen kai e ren bo	咸皆懷戀慕
ni sho katsu go shin	而生渴仰心
shu jo ki shin buku	衆生既信伏
shichi jiki i nyu nan	質直意柔軟
is shin yoku ken butsu	一心欲見佛

fu ji shaku shin myo	不自惜身命
ji ga gyu shu so	時我及衆僧
ku shutsu ryo ju sen	俱出靈鷲山
ga ji go shu jo	我時語衆生
jo zai shi fu metsu	常在此不滅
i ho ben riki ko	以方便力故
gen nu metsu fu metsu	現有滅不滅
yo koku u shu jo	餘國有衆生
ku gyo shin gyo sha	恭敬信樂者
ga bu o hi chu	我復於彼中
i setsu mu jo ho	為說無上法
nyo to fu mon shi	汝等不聞此
tan ni ga metsu do	但謂我滅度
ga ken sho shu jo	我見諸衆生
motsu zai o ku kai	沒在於苦惱
ko fu i gen shin	故不為現身
ryo go sho katsu go	令其生渴仰
in go shin ren bo	因其心戀慕
nai shutsu i sep po	乃出為說法
jin zu riki nyo ze	神通力如是
o a so gi ko	於阿僧祇劫
jo zai ryo ju sen	常在靈鷲山
gyu yo sho ju sho	及餘諸住處
shu jo ken ko jin	衆生見劫盡
dai ka sho sho ji	大火所燒時

Ga shi do an non	我此土安隱
ten nin jo ju man	天人常充滿
on rin sho do kaku	園林諸堂閣
shu ju ho sho gon	種種寶莊嚴
ho ju ta ke ka	寶樹多花果
shu jo sho yu raku	衆生所遊樂
sho ten kyaku ten ku	諸天擊天鼓
jo sa shu gi gaku	常作衆伎樂
u man da ra ke	雨曼陀羅華
san butsu gyu dai shu	散佛及大衆
ga jo do fu ki	我淨土不毀
ni shu ken sho jin	而衆見燒盡
u fu sho ku no	憂怖諸苦惱
nyo ze shitsu ju man	如是悉充滿
ze sho zai shu jo	是諸罪衆生
i aku go in nen	以惡業因緣
ka a so gi ko	過阿僧祇劫
fu mon san bo myo	不聞三寶名
sho u shu ku doku	諸有修功德
nyu wa shichi jiki sha	柔和質直者
sok kai ken ga shin	則皆見我身
zai shi ni sep po	在此而說法
waku ji i shi shu	或時為此衆
setsu butsu ju mu ryo	說佛壽無量
ku nai ken bus sha	久乃見佛者
i setsu butsu nan chi	為說佛難值

ga chi riki nyo ze	我智力如是
e ko sho mu ryo	慧光照無量
ju myo mu shu ko	壽命無數劫
ku shu go sho toku	久修業所得
nyo to u chi sha	汝等有智者
mot to shi sho gi	勿於此生疑
to dan ryo yo jin	當斷令永盡
butsu go jip pu ko	佛語實不虛
nyo i ze ho ben	如醫善方便
i ji o shi ko	為治狂子故
jitsu zai ni gon shi	實在而言死
mu no sek ko mo	無能說虛妄
ga yaku i se bu	我亦為世父
ku sho ku gen sha	救諸苦患者
I bon bu ten do	為凡夫顛倒
jitsu zai ni gon metsu	實在而言滅
i jo ken ga ko	以常見我故
ni sho kyo shi shin	而生憍恣心
ho itsu jaku go yoku	放逸著五欲
da o aku do chu	墮於惡道中
ga jo chi shu jo	我常知衆生
gyo do fu gyo do	行道不行道
zui o sho ka do	隨應所可度
i ses shu ju ho	為說種種法
mai ji sa ze nen	每自作是念
i ga ryo shu jo	以何令衆生

toku nyu mu jo do	得入無上慧
soku jo ju bus shin	速成就佛身

Myo ho ren ge kyo	**妙法蓮華經**
Nyo rai jin riki hon	**如來神力品**
dai ni ju ichi	**第二十一**
Sho buk ku se sha	諸佛救世者
ju o dai jin zu	住於大神通
i es shu jo ko	為悅衆生故
gen mu ryo jin riki	現無量神力
zes sho shi bon den	舌相至梵天
shin po mu shu ko	身放無數光
i gu butsu do sha	為求佛道者
gen shi ke u ji	現此希有事
Sho buk kyo gai sho	諸佛謦欬聲
gyu tan ji shi sho	及彈指之聲
shu mon jip po koku	周聞十方國
ji kai roku shu do	地皆六種動
i butsu metsu do go	以佛滅度後
no ji ze kyo ko	能持是經故
sho butsu kai kan gi	諸佛皆歡喜
gen mu ryo jin riki	現無量神力
Zoku rui ze kyo ko	囑累是經故
san mi ju ji sha	讚美受持者
o mu ryo ko chu	於無量劫中
yu ko fu no jin	猶故不能盡
ze nin shi ku doku	是人之功德
mu hen mu u gu	無邊無有窮
nyo jip po ko ku	如十方虛空

fu ka toku hen zai	不可得邊際
No ji ze kyo sha	能持是經者
soku i i ken ga	則為已見我
yak ken ta ho butsu	亦見多寶佛
gis sho fun jin sha	及諸分身者
u ken ga kon nichi	又見我今日
kyo ke sho bo satsu	教化諸菩薩
no ji ze kyo sha	能持是經者
ryo ga gyu fun jin	令我及分身
Metsu do ta ho butsu	滅度多寶佛
is sai kai kan gi	一切皆歡喜
jip po gen zai butsu	十方現在佛
byo ka ko mi rai	竝過去未來
yak ken yak ku yo	亦見亦供養
yaku ryo tok kan gi	亦令得歡喜
sho butsu za do jo	諸佛坐道場
sho toku hi yo ho	所得祕要法
No ji ze kyo sha	能持是經者
fu ku yaku to toku	不久亦當得
no ji ze kyo sha	能持是經者
o sho ho shi gi	於諸法之義
myo ji gyu gon ji	名字及言辭
gyo setsu mu gu jin	樂說無窮盡
nyo fu o ku chu	如風於空中
is sai mu sho ge	一切無障礙

O nyo rai metsu go	於如來滅後
chi bus sho sek kyo	知佛所說經
in nen gyu shi dai	因緣及次第
zui gi nyo jis setsu	隨義如實說
nyo nichi gak ko myo	如日月光明
no jo sho yu myo	能除諸幽冥
shi nin gyo se ken	斯人行世間
no mes shu jo an	能滅衆生闇
Kyo mu ryo bo satsu	教無量菩薩
hik kyo ju ichi jo	畢竟住一乘
ze ko u chi sha	是故有智者
mon shi ku doku ri	聞此功德利
o ga metsu do go	於我滅度後
o ju ji shi kyo	應受持斯經
ze nin no butsu do	是人於佛道
ketsu jo mu u gi	決定無有疑

Unzō · Direction of Thought

(Alternatively, a passage from the writings of the Founder may be read.)

The Wonderful Truth expounded in the Lotus Sūtra, whose Sacred Title we now chant, is the same Truth that the Buddhas of the past taught, the Buddhas of the present teach, and the Buddhas of the future will teach. It is the Great Dharma, true and pure, whose propagation was entrusted primarily to the Bodhisattva Jōgyō by the Buddha on the Sacred Eagle Peak.

When we chant Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō, we attain the right understanding of the three thousand realms existing within our minds, exactly as they are. The Pure Land of Tranquil Light manifests in our inner contemplation, and together with all other beings, we enjoy living in the Land of Truth.

May the sound of our chanting of the Sacred Title permeate the entire world, be offered to the Three Treasures, and reach all beings. May all beings enter the World of the One Reality, the Great Vehicle. May the Buddha Land be adorned, and may all beings enjoy the merits of our chanting.

Sokun · Writings of Nichiren Shōnin

Our Founder, Nichiren Daishōnin, taught us in his writings:

1. Nyosetsu Shugyō Shō

When the various teachings of the Buddha are united in the One Vehicle of the Buddha—that is, when only the Wonderful Dharma flourishes among people who chant “Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō”—the winds will not rustle the branches, and the rain will not damage the earth. The world will become as peaceful as it was during the reigns of the emperors Fu-hsi and Shên-nung in ancient China, and all people will be free from calamities and able to enjoy long lives. The Wonderful Dharma is eternal; it neither ages nor perishes. The same can be said of those who believe in the Wonderful Dharma. This truth guarantees peace in the present life. Have no doubt about it!

2. Hō On Shō

Nichiren's compassion is boundless, and therefore Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō will continue to spread throughout the ten-thousand-year period. It has the merit of curing the blindness of all people and closing the path to hell. This merit surpasses that of Dengyō, Tendai, Ryūju, and Kashō. A hundred years of practice in the Pure Land cannot compare with the merit of chanting the Odaimoku for a single day in this impure world. The propagation of the Odaimoku during the two thousand years following the Buddha's passing cannot compare with its propagation, even for a short time, in the Latter Age of the Decline of the Dharma. This is not due to my wisdom, but solely to the age in which I live.

3. Kanjin Honzon Shō

When the sun shines brightly in the sky, everything on earth becomes visible. Likewise, those who understand the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma can understand the causes of calamities. The Buddha's compassion is immense. To save those who live in the Age of the Decline of the Dharma, and those who are too ignorant to understand the Truth of the Three Thousand Realms in a Single Thought-Moment, the Buddha wraps His jewel in a pouch containing the Five Characters—Myō Hō Ren Ge Kyō—and hangs this pouch around their necks. Those who receive this pouch will be protected by the Four Great Bodhisattvas, just as King Ch'êng-wang was supported by T'ai-kung and Chou-kung, or as Emperor Hui-ti was assisted by the Four Elders.

4. Kanjin Honzon Shō

The Sahā World, as the pure and eternal world of the Original Buddha Śākyamuni, is immune to the three calamities and the four kalpas of transformation. The Original Buddha Śākyamuni did not enter Parinirvāṇa in the past, nor will He be reborn in the future. The same can be said of His followers, because the three thousand realms, including the three aspects of existence, are contained within their minds.

5. Kaimoku Shō

Let the gods abandon our country. Let all difficulties fall upon me. I shall cease practicing the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma only when my life comes to an end.

Śāriputra abandoned the Bodhisattva practices he had carried out for sixty kalpas because he could not endure the insult inflicted by the brāhmaṇa who begged him to give up one of his eyes. Some people were fortunate enough to see the Buddha Śākyamuni five hundred thousand million world-dust-particle kalpas ago, and others to see the Buddha Daitsu three thousand million world-dust-particle kalpas ago. Nevertheless, they had to wait for the appearance of the Historical Buddha Śākyamuni and His attainment of enlightenment because, unfortunately, they encountered evil friends who led them away from the Bodhisattva practices. For whatever reason, whether good or bad, abandoning the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma means falling into hell. I shall make a great vow. Even if I were told: “The throne of Japan will be yours if you chant the Nembutsu. Abandon the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma and place your hopes for your next life in the practice of the Kan-muryōju-kyō and other sūtras. If you do not chant the Nembutsu, your parents will be beheaded,” I would resist these temptations unless a wise person refuted my faith. All other persecutions would be as insignificant as a speck of dust before the wind. I shall be the pillar of Japan. I shall be the eyes of Japan. I shall be the great vessel of Japan. I shall never break these vows.

6. Risshō Ankoku Ron

You should promptly abandon your erroneous faith and embrace faith in the True One Vehicle. Then this world will become the Buddha Land. Could the Buddha Land ever fall into decline? The ten directions will become the “Land of Treasures.” Could the “Land of Treasures” ever be destroyed?

When the land neither declines nor is destroyed, your body will be safe and your heart will remain at peace. Believe in these words and revere them.

7. Shohō Jissō Shō

Have faith in the Great Mandala, which enshrines the Most Venerable One of Jambudvīpa. Make sure that your faith in the Great Mandala is firm and strong, so that you may be protected by the Buddha Śākyamuni, the Buddha Tahō, and the Buddhas of the ten directions. Follow the twofold path of practice and study. Practice yourself and teach others. Practice and study arise from faith. Expound this Sūtra to others as best you can. Even a single verse or a single phrase will be sufficient.

8. Shōji Ichidaiji Kechimyaku Shō

All my disciples and followers should regard their relationship with one another as that between fish and water, and chant Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō with one mind. This is the transmission of the “bloodline” of the most important matter of our life and death. After all, this is what I, Nichiren, am striving to propagate. If this comes to pass, my great desire to sow the seeds of the Lotus Sūtra will be fulfilled. Furthermore, if some among Nichiren's followers are in disagreement with one another, it will be like a defender of a castle being attacked from within.

9. Kanjin Honzon Shō

The practices of the Buddha Śākyamuni and the enlightenment He attained through them are contained within the Five Characters: Myō Hō Ren Ge Kyō. When we uphold these Five Characters, we automatically receive the merits of the Buddha's practices and enlightenment.

10. Shijō Kingo Nyōbō Gosho

Is there anything more radiant than the sun and the moon? Is there anything purer than the lotus flower? The Lotus Sūtra is the sun, the moon, and the lotus flower. That is why it is called the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma. I, Nichiren, am also like the sun, the moon, and the lotus flower.

11. Kaimoku Shō

The filial piety taught by the Confucian school is limited to this life. Since it does not help parents in their future lives, its wise and learned men are wise only in name, not in reality. Other non-Buddhist schools may know about past and future lives, but they have no means of saving parents. Only Buddhism can help parents in their future lives. Therefore, in Buddhism, such people truly deserve to be called “wise and learned.” However, even within Buddhism, according to the various scriptures and schools that preceded the Lotus Sūtra, people were unable to attain enlightenment for themselves, much less could their parents attain it. These were merely words without true meaning. Only when the Lotus Sūtra was expounded and it was declared that women could attain Buddhahood did it

become possible for our mothers to attain Buddhahood. And when it was declared that even an evil person such as Devadatta could attain Buddhahood, it became possible for our fathers to attain Buddhahood as well. Therefore, among all Buddhist scriptures, this is the Sūtra of filial piety.

12. Shohō Jissō Shō

Tears flow down my face when I think of the great difficulties I must endure today, but I also cannot hold back tears of joy when I think of attaining Buddhahood in the future. Birds and insects cry without shedding tears. Nichiren does not weep, yet his tears continue to fall. These tears are not shed over worldly matters, but solely out of love for the Lotus Sūtra. Therefore, they may be called tears of nectar.

13. Shuju On Furumai Gosho

For more than 2,200 years after the Buddha's passing, not even His disciples, nor later scholars such as Kashō, Anan, Memyō, Ryūju, Nangaku, Tendai, Myōraku, and Dengyō, preached the Five Characters of Myō Hō Ren Ge Kyō, which constitute the essence of the Lotus Sūtra and the eyes of the Buddhas. Today, at the beginning of the Latter Age of the Decline of the Dharma, Nichiren is the first to reveal the auspicious sign that the Five Characters will be propagated throughout the world. My followers should follow me in the second and third battalions and rise above Kashō, Anan, Tendai, and Dengyō. If you fear the ruler of a small island such as Japan, what will you do when the king of hell reproaches you?

As I have already said, those who show cowardice while claiming to be messengers of the Buddha are people of the lowest standing.

14. Shijō Kingo Dono Gohenji

Accept suffering as suffering and joy as joy. Life consists of suffering and joy; therefore, chant Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō in both circumstances. Is this not true religious ecstasy? Please strive to maintain steadfast faith.

15. Ueno Dono Gohenji

Among those who believe in the Lotus Sūtra today, the faith of some is like fire, while the faith of others is like water. Some people become enthusiastic, like a blazing fire, during a sermon, but as soon as they leave, they forget what they have heard. When I say “like water,” I mean a person who maintains constant faith. You have always placed your trust in me without wavering, and therefore your faith is like water. This is admirable.

16. Hakii Dono Gosho

I was sixty years old when I left Minobu on September 8, 1282, and arrived at Ikegami, in the village of Senzoku, Musashi Province. The Buddha Śākyamuni preached the Lotus Sūtra for eight years on the Sacred Eagle Peak in India. He passed away in eastern India, northeast of the Sacred Eagle Peak. Although He died in the house of Chunda, near the Ajitavati

River in Kusinara, His tomb was built on the Sacred Eagle Peak because He had preached the Lotus Sūtra there for eight years. Likewise, I, Nichiren, may die at the residence of His Lordship Ikegami Munenaga, in Musashi Province, which lies northeast of Mount Minobu. No matter where I die, please build my tomb on Mount Minobu, because I spent nine years there chanting the Lotus Sūtra, and that was my wish. My heart will live forever on Mount Minobu.

17. Hokke Shuyō Shō

We sentient beings of this Sahā World have all been beloved children of Lord Buddha Śākyamuni since “five hundred dust-particle kalpas” ago. Because of our mistake of being undisciplined, we have not been aware until today that we are His children. Yet we are not the same as the sentient beings of other worlds. The relationship between the Buddha and ourselves, established in the remotest past of five hundred dust-particle kalpas, is like the moon in the sky reflected in clear waters.

18. Myōhō Ama Gozen Gohenji

Reflecting upon my life, I, Nichiren, have studied Buddhism since I was a child. Our lives are uncertain: breathing out once does not guarantee that we will be able to breathe again. Life is as fleeting as dew carried away by the wind, and its end comes suddenly to anyone, whether wise or ignorant, old or young. Therefore, I believed that, before studying anything else, I should first examine the question of the final moment of life.

19. Matsuno Dono Gohenji

There are thousands of fish eggs, but only a few develop into fish. Hundreds of blossoms appear on mango trees, but only a few develop into fruit. The same is true of human beings, because most are led astray by harmful distractions. There are warriors in an army who wear armor, but few attain Buddhahood.

20. Sado Gokanki Shō

I, Nichiren, have vowed to study and master Buddhism and attain Buddhahood so that I may save those from whom I have received kindness. To attain Buddhahood, we must not think selfishly, even when our own lives are at stake.

21. Myōichi Ama Gozen Gohenji

Faith is nothing extraordinary. It is like a wife who loves her husband and a husband who devotes his life to his wife; like parents who do not abandon their children and children who do not forsake their mother. You should place your faith in the Lotus Sūtra, in the Buddha Śākyamuni, in the Buddha Tahō, in all the Buddhas of the universe, in the Bodhisattvas, and in the deities. This is faith.

22. Zui-ji-i Gosho

The Lotus Sūtra is called “Zui-ji-i” because it expresses the true mind of the Buddha. Since the Buddha's mind is so vast, even if a person does not understand the profound meaning of

the Sūtra, they can obtain immeasurable merits simply by reading it. Just as mugwort grows straight among hemp plants, and a snake straightens itself inside a tube, if a person has good friends, their mind, behavior, and words will naturally become kind. Likewise, the Buddha considers that those who believe in the Lotus Sūtra will naturally become virtuous.

23. Hokke Shoshin Jōbutsu Shō

A caged bird that sings will attract free birds, and upon seeing them, the caged bird will long to be free. Likewise, the chanting of the Odaimoku will release the Buddha-nature that exists within us. The Buddha-nature of Bonten and Taishaku will be called forth by the chanting and will protect the person who chant. The Buddha-nature of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will rejoice at being invoked. To attain Buddhahood quickly, a person must abandon the banner of arrogance, cast aside the staff of prejudice, and chant “Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō.”

24. Myōmitsu Shōnin Goshōsoku

I, Nichiren, sincerely practice the Lotus Sūtra, the most profound of all the sūtras that are being preached, have been preached, and will be preached. I also chant the Odaimoku, the essence of the Sūtra, and teach others to chant it. Mugwort grows straight in a field of hemp. Trees do not always grow straight, but when they are properly cut, they become useful. If a person chants the Sūtra, their mind will be straightened. You should understand that it is difficult for us to chant the Odaimoku unless the spirit of the Eternal Buddha enters our bodies.

25. Itai Dōshin Ji

Everything is possible when people are united in one spirit. Nothing can be accomplished when they are not united. Teachings of this kind also appear in non-Buddhist scriptures. For example, in ancient China, King Chieh of Yin had an army of seven hundred thousand men who were not united in spirit, and he was defeated by King Wu of Chou, whose army consisted of eight hundred men united in one spirit. Thus, if a person has two conflicting thoughts, they cannot accomplish anything. Even if there are hundreds or thousands of people, if they are united in one spirit, they will certainly be able to achieve their goals.

26. Omosu Dono Nyōbō Gohenji

Imagine that we ask where the Buddha and hell are to be found. Some sūtras state that hell lies beneath the earth, while others say that the Pure Land of the Buddhas is in the west. But the truth, clearly expressed, is that both hell and the Buddha exist within our five-foot-tall bodies. It could probably be said that hell exists in a person's mind when they despise their father and disown their mother. Just as the lotus seed contains both its root and its flower, we carry the Buddha within our minds.

27. Urabon Gosho

The great virtue of the Venerable Mokuren, who placed his faith in the Lotus Sūtra, made it possible not only for him to

become a Buddha, but also for his parents to attain Buddhahood. Furthermore, all his ancestors and descendants of seven generations unexpectedly attained Buddhahood. In addition, children, husbands and wives, their servants, devotees, and an incalculable number of people were liberated from the three lower realms. And not only that: they all attained the stage of shojū and eventually attained Buddhahood. Therefore, in the third fascicle of the Lotus Sūtra (Parable of the Magic City), it is taught: “May this merit extend to all living beings, so that we and all others may attain Buddhahood together.”

28. Myōichi Ama Gozen Goshōsoku

Those who believe in the Lotus Sūtra are like winter because of the many unceasing difficulties they face. But spring inevitably follows winter. No one has ever heard of winter turning into autumn. Nor has anyone ever heard of a believer in the Lotus Sūtra returning to the state of an ordinary person. The Lotus Sūtra says: “All people who hear this Sūtra will attain Buddhahood.”

29. Tsuchi-rō Gosho

Tomorrow, I, Nichiren, will be exiled to the island of Sado. On this cold night, I am thinking of you, confined in a freezing prison. I believe that you have read and practiced the Lotus Sūtra with your heart and through your actions, and that, because of this, your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, ancestors, and everyone around you will be saved. Other people read the Sūtra aloud without feeling it in their hearts.

Even if they read it with their hearts, they do not practice it as the Sūtra teaches. Compared with them, you are especially precious because you practice the Sūtra through your actions, your voice, and your spirit.

30. Hōren Shō

The Buddhas of all the worlds throughout the universe attained Buddhahood by taking the verses of the Jiga-ge as their True Teacher. Therefore, the verses of the Jiga-ge are like the parents of all beings in the world. […] Every character of the Lotus Sūtra is a living Buddha, but when seen through the "ordinary eyes" of an ordinary person, it is nothing more than a written character. […] In light of this, you, the monk Hōren, produce golden characters from your mouth every morning. When you read and chant the verses of the Jiga-ge, you produce 510 golden characters. Each of these characters transforms into a sun, which in turn transforms into the Buddha Śākyamuni, who emits brilliant rays of light illuminating the earth, the three lower realms, the hell of incessant suffering, and all directions: north, south, east, and west. They shine upward as far as the "Heaven of Neither Thought nor Absence of Thought," at the summit of the formless realm, searching everywhere for the spirit of the deceased. When they find the spirit of your father, they will gently say: "Who do you think we are? We are the characters of the Jiga-ge of the Lotus Sūtra that your son Hōren chants every morning. We shall be your eyes, your ears, your legs, and your hands." Then your father's spirit will say: "My son Hōren is not merely my son, but a good teacher who guides me toward Buddhahood." And he will pay

homage to you in the direction of the Sahā World. This is certainly true filial piety.

31. Tokidono Gosho

The followers of Nichiren should strive to attain Buddhahood by reducing their hours of sleep and giving up periods of rest. Otherwise, they will regret it forever.

Odaimoku Chanting

南無妙法蓮華経

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

There is no rule prescribing how many times the Odaimoku should be chanted. It may be chanted just once, a hundred times, or more.

“One may chant all twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sūtra each day, or a single chapter, a paragraph, a sentence, or even a single character. One may also chant the Odaimoku, Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō, just once a day, or even only once in an entire lifetime. One may also share in the joy of those who rejoice upon hearing someone chant the Odaimoku. The joy arising from the chanting of the Odaimoku, passed on from one person to another fifty times, will gradually diminish until it reaches the fiftieth person. By then, it will be as uncertain as the mind of a two- or three-year-old child, or as unpredictable as that of a horse or a cow, which cannot distinguish between head and tail. Nevertheless, the merit gained by that person will be a hundred, a thousand, or millions of times greater than that of people of great wisdom, such as Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Mañjuśrī, and Maitreya, who knew the texts of the various sūtras by heart.”

Gassui Gosho

Hōtōge	寶塔偈
Shi Kyo Nan Ji	此經難持
Nyaku Zan Ji Sha	若暫持者
Ga Soku Kan Gi	我則歡喜
Sho Butsu Yaku Nen	諸佛亦然
Nyo Ze Shi Nin	如是之人
Sho Butsu Sho Tan	諸佛所歎
Ze Soku Yu Myo	是則勇猛
Ze Soku Sho Jin	是則精進
Ze Myo Ji Kai	是名持戒
Gyo Zu Da Sha	行頭陀者
Soku I Shit Toku	則為疾得
Mu Jo Butsu Do	無上佛道

No O Rai Se　能於來世

Doku Ji Shi Kyo　讀持此經

Ze Shin Bus Shi　是真佛子

Ju Jun Zen Ji　住淳善地

Butsu Metsu Do Go　佛滅度後

No Ge Go Gi　能解其義

Ze Sho Ten Nin　是諸天人

Se Ken Shi Gen　世間之眼

O Ku I Se　於恐畏世

No Shu Yu Setsu　能須臾說

Is Sai Ten Nin　一切天人

Kai O Ku Yo　皆應供養

Translation

It is difficult to uphold this Sūtra. I shall be glad to see anyone who upholds it, even for a single moment. And so shall the other Buddhas.

This person will be praised by all the Buddhas. Such a person will be worthy and diligent, and should be regarded as having already observed the precepts and practiced the dhūta (ascetic practices). This person will quickly attain the unsurpassed enlightenment of the Buddha.

Anyone who reads and chants this Sūtra in the future will be a true child of Mine and should be regarded as dwelling in a state of purity and goodness.

Anyone who, after My extinction, understands the meaning of this Sūtra will be the eyes of the worlds of heavenly and human beings.

Anyone who expounds this Sūtra, even for a single moment, in this fearful world should be honored with offerings by heavenly and human beings.

Ekō (Prayer for the Transfer of Merits)

With devotion, we offer the merits accumulated through the chanting of the Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma and the Odaimoku to the Venerable Ones invited into the Great Mandala, the Perfect Circle never before revealed until the age of Mappō.

With devotion, we offer the merits to the Great Bodhisattva Nichiren, our Guide in this age of Mappō.

We offer the merits to all the deities of heaven and earth who protect the Wonderful Dharma.

May all people throughout the world have faith in the Wonderful Dharma.

May the Wonderful Dharma spread far and wide and be preserved until the end of the ten thousand years of the age of Mappō.

May the entire world live in peace.

May the correct teachings be cherished and erroneous views be eliminated.

May all temples prosper; may those who support them remain faithful to the correct teachings of the Buddha; may their families flourish, and may they always aspire to enlightenment.

May the deceased monks who now dwell in the World of the Perfect and Wonderful Dharma bring more beings into their world. May they sit close to the Buddha, and may their world be richly adorned.

May those who have passed away without attaining enlightenment abandon their delusions and attain Buddhahood through the merits of this Sūtra.

May we atone for our offense of slandering the Dharma through the merits of this Sūtra.

May we have the strength to deepen our study of the Buddha's teachings and be able to guide others appropriately.

May we maintain a right and steadfast mind at the final moment of our present lives.

May the merits accumulated through this offering be distributed among all living beings, and may we, together with all living beings, attain the enlightenment of the Buddha!

May all beings throughout the Dharma Realm receive its benefits equally.

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

Shisei (Four Vows of the Bodhisattva)

(Leader) Shujō muhen seigan do

(Assembly) Bonnō mushū seigan dan

Hōmon mujin seigan chi

Butsudō mujō seigan jō

(Leader) Sentient beings are innumerable: I vow to save them all

(Assembly) Our defilements are inexhaustible: I vow to quench them all

The Buddha's teachings are immeasurable: I vow to know them all.

The Way of the Buddha is unexcelled: I vow to attain the Path Sublime.

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

Sanki (Three Refuges)

With the deepest devotion:

I take refuge in the Buddha. May all living beings understand the Great Way and aspire to supreme enlightenment.

I take refuge in the Dharma. May all living beings enter the treasury of the Sūtra's riches and make their wisdom as vast as the ocean.

I take refuge in the Sangha. May all living beings form a great community free from obstacles.

Busō (Verses of Farewell)

O Venerable Ones! Remember us, dwell wherever pleases you most, and return again out of your compassion for us!

Tsuizen Ekō (Memorial Prayer for the Deceased)

We offer the merits accumulated through the chanting of the Lotus Sūtra and the Odaimoku to […] so that this person may share in the joy of the Dharma.

May this person be freed from suffering, leave behind the world of birth and death, and dwell in the realm bestowed upon them as the reward of their positive karma.

May this person receive our offering of the flavor of the Dharma; eliminate the grave offenses committed since the beginningless past; behold the Buddhas of the worlds of the ten directions; hear the Wonderful Dharma; develop their Buddha-nature by contemplating the Truth and practicing goodness; attain the three virtues of the Buddha; travel throughout the Dharma Realm in the Jeweled Vehicle; swiftly reach the place of enlightenment; attain the penetrating wisdom of the Buddha; sit upon the throne of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma; and attain enlightenment equal to that of the Buddha.

The Buddha says in Chapter II of the Lotus Sūtra: “Whoever hears the Dharma will without fail become a Buddha.”

He also says in Chapter X: “If you hear the Dharma, even for a single moment, you will be able to attain perfect enlightenment immediately.”

The deities say in Chapter III: “We have gained merits through the good karma accumulated in our present and past lives. We have also gained merits by beholding the Buddha. May we attain the enlightenment of the Buddha through these merits.”

“May the merits we have accumulated through our offerings be distributed among all living beings, and may we, together with all beings, attain the enlightenment of the Buddha.”

Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō

Liturgy of Veneration of the Wonderful Dharma

English Version

Associazione Buddhista del Sutra del Loto

Tempio Nichiren Shu Jokozan Myoshoji

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