

# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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**SPECIAL ISSUE – AUGUST 2014**

## Hoto Keisho Shiki

### Ceremony of Transmitting the Jodo Shinshu Tradition

The Ceremony of Transmitting the Jodo Shinshu Tradition (Hoto Keisho Shiki in Japanese) was held on June 5 and 6, 2014 at Honzan Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan. This is a ceremony to mark the retirement of His Eminence Monshu Koshin Ohtani and the succession of His Eminence Shinmon Kojun Ohtani to the position of Monshu. Monshu is the Head Priest of the Hongwanji and Spiritual Leader of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Denomination. The tradition of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha has been transmitted from Shinran Shonin through successive generations of Monshu, and on this special occasion, the Jodo Shinshu Tradition was transmitted from the 24<sup>th</sup> Sokunyo Monshu (His Eminence Koshin Ohtani) to the 25<sup>th</sup> Sennyō Monshu (His Eminence Kojun Ohtani).

#### "MESSAGE ON RETIREMENT"

**ADDRESSED BY MONSHU OHTANI KOSHIN (SOKUNYO MONSHU)**

**AT THE SHOSOKU PROCLAMATION CEREMONY ON HIS RETIREMENT ON JUNE 5, 2014**

#### Message on Retirement

I would like to announce that as of today, June 5, 2014, I am retiring from the posts of Hongwanji *jushoku*, the resident priest and Monshu of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha institution and entrust them to Shimmon, the Heir-Apparent Monshu and Hongwanji *jushoku*.

It has been thirty-seven years and two months since I was inaugurated into these posts, succeeding my predecessor in the Jodo Shinshu tradition on April 1, 1977. I would like to say that the credit for my being able to carry out the duties until today all should go to the Buddha and masters for their guidance, as well as the continuous support, understanding, and cooperation that I have received from all individuals and concerned parties, both within the Hongwanji organization and from the general public. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of you.

During my tenure, thanks to everyone's efforts, the Hongwanji was able to undertake the restoration of the Amida-do Hall, the 400th Memorial for Kennyo Shonin, the 500th Memorial for Rennyo Shonin, the great restoration of the Goeido Hall, and the 750th Memorial for Shinran Shonin. In addition, several decades ago we were able to acquire the parcel of land on the north side of the Hongwanji precinct, and we have been able to utilize it for a wide range of activities. Furthermore, we have been able to develop and promote our equality awareness campaign that was named the Core Program, as well as initiate a variety of activities and projects. The circle of the nembutsu teaching has continued to



expand and the recitation of Namu Amida Butsu can be heard in various places in the world. Fortunately, I was enabled to confirm these facts for myself by hearing the voices of my fellow nembutsu followers during my official visits to every district of the Hongwanji institution. For this, I am truly grateful to everyone.

Compared with my predecessor, Shonyo Shonin's turbulent fifty years, which included the period of World War II, my thirty-seven year tenure can be described as rather calm. During those years, however, domestically speaking, there were a number of natural and human-made disasters that took place one after another, and due to the exaggerated priority placed on economic profit and status, issues concerning people's mental health and well-being have become more critical. Worldwide concerns include serious issues such as armed conflicts, economic inequality, global climate change, and proliferation of nuclear materials. Among them are ones that directly concern humanity's existence. Unfortunately, amidst this, it is with regret that we, Jodo Shinshu Buddhists are not able to say that we have satisfactorily demonstrated our ability to cope with these issues.

Our sangha has a glorious tradition of upholding and transmitting the Dharma from person to person. It is my hope that we will keep this wonderful custom despite of the current social fluctuations, and discover diverse potentialities in the teaching and tradition of Jodo Shinshu so that we can share them with as many people as possible and together follow the path toward realizing a society in which everyone is mutually accepted and respected. In order to realize that, I believe it is important to bring out the individuality and conditions of each person and generation, paying special attention to the young generations who possess the sensibility and ability to implement concepts.

My successor, Shimmon Kojun, worked at Tsukiji Hongwanji in Tokyo as an on-site leader of the temple for five years and nine months. It is for certain that this experience has allowed him to expand his knowledge. Upon accepting his new responsibilities, he will be obliged to maintain the Jodo Shinshu tradition while considering the organization in its entirety by constantly attending not only to the Hongwanji institution, but also the whole religious society. I would like to sincerely request that you continue to provide your warm assistance to the new Monshu.

As for myself, I will be turning seventy in a little more than a year. Although nobody knows what the future holds, it is my intent to continue revering the Buddha Dharma as taught us by our Founder, being conscious that I am always embraced in the unwavering working of Amida Tathagata's Primal Vow, and will carry out my duties as a Jodo Shinshu priest for as long as I am able to the best of my ability.

June 5, 2014

Shaku Sokunyo  
OHTANI Koshin  
Monshu, Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

#### 退任に際しての消息

本日、平成26年6月5日をもって、私は本願寺住職ならびに浄土真宗本願寺派門主を退任し、後を本願寺嗣法・新門に託すことにいたしました。

昭和52年4月1日、法統を継承して以来、37年2か月になります。至らぬことが多々あった中、今日まで務めることができましたのは、仏祖のご加護は申すまでもなく、宗門内外の方々のご支援、ご理解とご協力のお蔭であります。皆様に、心より感謝申し上げます。

この間、本願寺では、阿弥陀堂の修復、顕如上人400回忌、蓮如上人500回遠忌、御影堂の修復、宗祖上人750回大遠忌等のご縁を皆様とともにすることができました。さらに、北境内地を取得できたお蔭で、活動をより広く展開できるようになりました。また、宗門では基幹運動の推進とともに、さまざまな活動や事業がありました。世界各地にも、お念仏の輪が広がっています。

それらを、巡教などによって身近に知り、御同朋の思いを確かめることができましたこと、まことに有り難く思います。

この37年間は勝如前門主の戦争を挟んだ激変の50年に比べれば、やや穏やかとも言える時代でしたが、国内では大小の天災・人災が相次ぎ、経済価値が優先された結果、心の問題も深刻化しました。世界では、武力紛争、経済格差、気候変動、核物質の拡散など、深刻なあるいは人類の生存に関わる課題が露わになりました。その中で、心残りは、浄土真宗に生きる私たちが十分に力を発揮できたとは言えないことです。

私たちの宗門は、門信徒一人ひとりに、み教えが受け継がれるという素晴らしい伝統をもっています。これからも、社会の変動の中にあって、浄土真宗のみ教えや伝統にある多様な可能性を見つけ出し、各人、各世代、それぞれの個性と条件を活かし、特に若い世代の感性と実行力を尊重して、一人でも多くの方を朋とし、御同朋の社会をめざして歩むことができるよう願っております。

後を継ぎます新門主は、築地本願寺で5年9か月の間、副住職を務めて経験を積み見聞を広めています。今後は、法統を護るとともに、宗門全体を思い、広く宗教界を視野に入れて、務めることとなります。皆様の一層のご支援をお願いいたします。

なお、私は、70歳まであと1年余りとなりました。先のことは予測できませんが、阿弥陀如来の揺るぎない本願力の中に、宗祖聖人のみ教えを仰ぎ、浄土真宗の僧侶としての務めを、できる限り果たしたいと思っております。

2014年（平成26年）6月5日

龍谷門主 釈即如

**"MESSAGE ON SUCCESSION OF THE JODO SHINSHU TRADITION"  
DELIVERED BY MONSHU OHTANI KOJUN (SENNYO MONSHU)  
AT THE SUCCESSION CEREMONY ON JUNE 6, 2014.**

**Message  
Succession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition**

Today, according to my predecessor, Sokunyo Monshu's wishes, I was inaugurated into the posts of Hongwanji *jushoku*, resident priest and Monshu of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha institution.

On this occasion, I would like to extend my deep gratitude to him for his many years of nurturing and guidance. At the same time, I acknowledge the monumental responsibility of succeeding the Jodo Shinshu tradition and am resolute in carrying out my duties to the best of my ability.

The teaching on how we are saved by Amida Tathagata's Primal Vow was set forth by Sakyamuni Buddha, and it was transmitted by the seven Pure Land masters to Shinran Shonin, who clarified it into the Dharma of Jodo Shinshu. That tradition has been passed down to us through the efforts of successive Monshu of Hongwanji, fellow Jodo Shinshu followers, and many people who have supported their work until today. In inheriting this illustrious tradition, I will exert every effort to convey the Dharma of Jodo Shinshu to the future.



Looking back on the past, there were occasions during which the Hongwanji institution addressed some issues in ways that contradicted the Jodo Shinshu teaching, sometimes by not questioning or doubting

some common practices that were accepted in the society during a certain era, and sometimes by having to make harsh decisions in order to enable the Hongwanji to survive. Learning from such history, we must constantly keep a careful eye on social conditions and ourselves so that we will never again indiscriminately accept common, popular behavior and tendencies of a particular time nor return to the kind of society that would compel us to make painfully bitter decisions again.

In reflecting on the present circumstances of our organization, it is significantly important to consider how we can approach and reach out to persons who have never had any contact with a Buddhist temple, as well as those who are already involved with one. The nembutsu teaching that is based on Amida Buddha's Primal Vow remains unchanged, regardless of the changing times and society. However, the methods for transmitting and sharing it needs to evolve and adapt according to social changes. Now is the time for our Hongwanji institution to utilize our collective wisdom and knowledge for considering approaches to convey the Buddha Dharma to our contemporaries today.

There are also other numerous issues and problems that we must deal with, such as, "What is the most appropriate and effective manner we can offer support to the many victims and disaster-stricken locations of the East Japan Great Earthquake to facilitate their recovery?"

Let us always keep in mind the venerable words, *jishin kyo ninshin*, "secure our own entrusting heart to the Dharma, guiding others to the same path" as we cope with the various problems and hardships of the contemporary world, walking together towards realizing a society in which everyone is equally respected.

June 6, 2014

Shaku Sennyō  
OHTANI Kojun  
Monshu, Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

#### 法統継承に際しての消息

本日、私は先代門主の意に従い、法統を継承し、本願寺住職ならびに浄土真宗本願寺派門主に就任いたしました。

ここに先代門主の長きにわたるご教導に深く感謝しますとともに、法統を継承した責任の重さを感じ、能う限りの努力をいたす決意であります。

釈尊の説き明かされた阿弥陀如来のご本願の救いは、七高僧の教えを承けた宗祖親鸞聖人によって、浄土真宗というご法義として明らかにされ、その後、歴代の宗主方を中心として、多くの方々に支えられ、現代まで伝えられてきました。その流れを受け継いで今ここに法統を継承し、未来に向けてご法義が伝えられていきますよう、力を尽くしたいと思っております。

宗門の過去をふりかえりますと、あるいは時代の常識に疑問を抱かなかったことによる対応、あるいは宗門を存続させるための苦渋の選択としての対応など、ご法義に順っていないと思える対応もなされてきました。このような過去に学び、時代の常識を無批判に受け入れることがないよう、また苦渋の選択が必要になる社会が再び到来しないよう、注意深く見極めていく必要があります。

宗門の現況を考えます時、各寺院にご縁のある方々への伝道はもちろんのこと、寺院にご縁のない方々に対して、いかにはたらきかけていくのかを考えることも重要です。本願念仏のご法義は、時代や社会が変化しても変わることはありませんが、ご法義の伝え方は、その変化につれて変わっていかねばならないでしょう。現代という時代において、どのようにしてご法義を伝えていくのか、宗門の英知を結集する必要があります。

また、現代のさまざまな問題にどのように取り組むのか、とりわけ、東日本大震災をはじめとする多くの被災地の復興をどのように支援していくのかなど、問題は山積しています。

「自信教人信」のお言葉をいただき、現代の苦悩をともに背負い、御同朋の社会をめざして皆様と歩んでまいりたいと思います。

2014年（平成26年）6月6日

龍谷門主 釈専如

**MAHALO TO SOKUNYO SHONIN AND ALOHA TO SENNYO SHONIN!  
BY REV. ERIC MATSUMOTO, BISHOP**

The day was June 5, 2014, the Main Temple (Nishi Hongwanji) was filled with thousands of special guests who gathered to personally hear from our 24<sup>th</sup> Spiritual Leader His Eminence Koshin Ohtani (Sokunyo Shonin) his intent to retire from the position of Spiritual Leader/Monshu and his decision to pass on the succession of the position to His Eminence Kojun Ohtani who becomes the 25<sup>th</sup> Spiritual Leader of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji Denomination. It was an honor for me to be in attendance representing the all of you, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, at this very special ceremony which took place in the Founder's Hall before the revered image of Shinran Shonin to express our Mahalo to His Eminence for his 37 plus years of guidance and gentle leadership. His Eminence Koshin Ohtani expressed his deepest gratitude to the Buddha and Great Masters for their guidance and acknowledged that without the support of so many people and organizations, both within the Hongwanji and outside of the Hongwanji, he would not have been able to fulfill his role as Spiritual Leader. He reemphasized his wish *"Our sangha has a glorious tradition of upholding the transmitting the Dharma from person to person. It is my hope that we will keep this wonderful custom despite of the current social fluctuations, and discover diverse potentialities in the teaching and tradition of Jodo Shinshu so that we can share them with as many people as possible and together follow the path toward realizing a society in which everyone is mutually accepted and respected. In order to realize that, I believe it is important to bring out the individuality and conditions of each person and generation, paying special attention to the young generation who possess the sensibility and ability to implement concepts."*

On the following day, June 6, 2014, the temple complex of Nishi Hongwanji was, again, filled with thousands who had gathered to express their warmest Aloha and to hear the message of His Eminence Kojun Ohtani (Sennyō Shonin) accepting his father's wish and announcing to the entire Hongwanji Sangha that he would assume the role of Spiritual Leader of the Denomination as the 25<sup>th</sup> Spiritual Leader. His Eminence emphasized *"In reflecting on the present circumstances of our organization, it is significantly important to consider how we can approach and reach out to persons who have never had any contact with a Buddhist temple, as well as those who are already involved with one. The nembutsu teaching that is based on Amida Buddha's Primal Vow remains unchanged, regardless of the changing times and society. However, the methods for transmitting the sharing it needs to evolve and adapt according to social changes. Now is the time for our Hongwanji institution to utilize our collective wisdom and knowledge for considering approaches to convey the Buddha Dharma to our contemporaries."*

Both Spiritual Leaders encourage and have expressed their deep aspiration for sharing the Nembutsu Dharma with as many people as possible around the world so the Teachings can become a source of inspiration and guidance for our suffering world and together we can nurture a world of oneness, peace and harmony in which there is mutual respect and appreciation for one another. Let us embrace their aspiration and pledge to do our part in our corner of the world so that the aspiration expressed by Shinran Shonin *"May there be peace in the world and may the Buddha's Teaching spread!"* can be realized.

Last, but not least, as part of this transmission, Lady Ruzumi Ohtani succeeds Lady Noriko Ohtani. We look forward to her guidance. We, also, express our sincere gratitude to Lady Noriko Ohtani for her years of guidance. I conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Hawaii Sangha to be able to represent you at these very special ceremonies held in June 2014. Namo Amida Butsu/Entrusting in the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light