

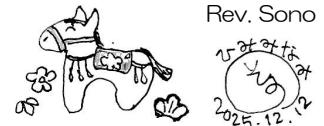
LEARNING FROM KENJI MIYAZAWA, PART ONE: A BROAD PERSPECTIVE AND THE MIND OF A BODHISATTVA

Living Our Lives, Aware of the Galaxy

Happy New Year! Let's be diligent in our practice and together make the most of each and every day so that 2026 will be a turning point in spreading peace all over the world.

Below are the words of Kenji Miyazawa, famous for the juvenile novel *Night on the Galactic Railroad* and the poem "Undefeated by the Rain." This year marks the 130th anniversary of Kenji's birth.

It is impossible for the individual to be happy until the whole world becomes happy. / Awareness of the self gradually evolves from the individual to the community, society, and the universe. / This trajectory is the path that the ancient sages pursued and taught, isn't it? / The new era is moving toward a world that is becoming a single organism with one awareness. / To live correctly and strongly means to be aware that the galaxy exists within yourself and to act accordingly. / Let's seek the true happiness of the world. Our seeking the Way is itself the Way.



Rev. Sono

When we read his writings,

in light of the current world situation, we can see that they contain valuable messages for us today.

I believe that our challenge and responsibility is to learn from Kenji's spirit and insight—so grand in scale that they stretch to the galaxy—and to consider and act in accordance with our happiness and the happiness of others from an even broader perspective.

I believe that "planting and growing" this kind of awareness in the minds of young people is the essence of cultivating human beings.

The Notebook "Undefeated by the Rain" Is Scripture

Kenji Miyazawa

was a firm believer in the Lotus Sutra, and I think that he conveys, in the form of stories and poetry, the teachings of the One Vehicle and the idea of eternal life that are revealed in the Lotus Sutra.

In doing so, though,

he had no intention of indoctrinating people, and Kenji himself warned, "Never think of indoctrinating others!"

Undeniably

Kenji purely and honestly expressed in his literary works what he himself believed, while steadfastly praying for "the whole world to become truly happy" and earnestly hoping for everyone to be liberated from suffering.

However, those who read his poems and stories

naturally learn the joy of benefiting other people and being considerate of them. Readers are made all the more aware of the foolishness of greed and anger, and they are struck by the transience and eternity of life.

"Believing yourself convinces others to believe."

I hope that

whether we are in our workplaces, doing housework, or raising children,

each and every one of us will—through our pure determination and our vow to lead our lives like bodhisattvas--

naturally show such deep consideration for others that it will resonate with them and inspire empathy,

thereby giving rise to more bodhisattvas.

famous poem
"Undefeated by the Rain,"

I have the same sensation I have when I am reciting scripture.

On the first page of the notebook containing this poem, Kenji copied "Meditation on the Place of the Way," followed by a simplified mandala with the names of the four bodhisattvas (Superior Practice, Boundless Practice, Pure Practice, and Steadfast Practice) written on either side of the *o-daimoku*, *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*, an arrangement that expresses invocation, just like in Rissho Kosei-kai's *Kyoten*.

Then,

following these words expressing Kenji's determination and his vow, comes the poem "Undefeated by the Rain,"

which resonates within me and sinks into my heart like scripture.

I previously described this poem as "'The Bodhisattva Never Unworthy of Respect' translated simply into Kenji's words."

Your Takeaway

In next month's issue, I would like to use this poem as the starting point of reconsidering the way of life and the spirit of a bodhisattva.