

July 2025

President's Message

Rev. Nichiko Niwano



We Are Receiving The Precious Gift of Life

Learning from the Past

<This year marks the 80th Anniversary
of the End of WWII>

<That said>

<Okinawan poet, Yuko Momohara>

<Tragedy of Okinawa>

The Great Tokyo Air Raid,
the fierce fighting on
Okinawa, & even the
dropping of atomic bombs—
seems to be fading, little by
little, with the
passage of time.

my only experience
was going into an air
raid shelter after
hearing a siren
warning of an
approaching bomber
squadron, so I cannot
imagine the feelings
and memories of
those who survived
the air raids and
battles.

“Off they went / To be shot
to death, / Burned to death, /
And starved to death— /
Their bodies piled up, / Until
the fighting ceased” and “A
lump of brown sugar / For
today’s three o’clock snack /
Tucked in the pocket / Of a
dead child”

- Over 200,000
precious lives were
lost.
- The grief of
Momohara, a mother
who lost her son, a 2nd
yr junior high school
student who was
caught up in the battle.

<However>

<Because>

<Novelist Ayako Sono>

<At this time of the year, the
Ullambana Festival>

In order to build a
brighter future, I think it
is important that we look
unflinchingly at these
painfully sad events & the
tragically cruel past.

we are now receiving
life, it is up to us to
pass down these
memories, reflect on
them, learn lessons
from them, and turn
them into wisdom so
that we can make the
world a better place for
future generations.

“By being exposed to evil, ugliness,
cruelty, and indifference, we
develop a human mind”

- Learning from our
mistakes.
- Try not to repeat the
same mistake.
- Try to develop the
mind compassion.

And the memorial
services for the countless
victims of war present us
with times & places to
offer our prayers to
console their spirits. As
we do this, we look into
our own hearts,
acknowledge and express
remorse for our own
shortcomings, & think
about the future.

The Mind of Great Harmony

<Shakyamuni teaches us that>

<The Seventeen-Article
Constitution, Japan’s first
statutory law>

<One of the historical names
for Japan is Yamato>

<Of course>

“All people fear violence, and
all people fear death. When
you put yourself in the place
of others, you do not kill them.
And you do not make others
kill.”

Prince Shotoku included the
famous phrase “We will value
harmony” in the first article.

[大和] in Chinese
characters, which also has
the meaning “great peace.”

Of course, it is
impossible to teach
“great harmony” to
others if spouses,
parents, children,
and siblings are
fighting with each
other at home, so
we should live our
daily lives with the
mindset that there
is no peace
movement more
important than
putting our own
homes in order.

In other words, everyone
wants their days to be peaceful
and tranquil and to live their
lives with a sense of security.

In that case, there is nothing
other than this “spirit of great
harmony” that can lead to the
realization of his original vow
for world peace.

I think it is important that
as citizens of such a
country, we Japanese have
the guts to hope for a
peaceful future and world,
but we cannot do so unless
we take the lead and
demonstrate that spirit.

In addition, in order to ensure that such a
sad history will never be repeated, we
must spread the teachings of the Buddha
and strive for a world of great harmony.
What we can do for the future, as we
receive the precious gift of life as human
beings, all comes down to this one point.