

YOUTH, SCALE THE MOUNTAIN OF KOSEN-RUFU OF THE 21ST CENTURY !

Wishing to present the youth division with new guidelines for the 21st century, SGI President Ikeda recently revised his 1981 poem "Youth, Scale the Mountain of Kosen-rufu of the 21st Century!"

"Why do I climb mountains?
Because they are there!"
So declared a famous mountaineer.

We are about to scale the summit
Of the mountain of the 21st century,
The mountain of kosen-rufu!

My beloved youth!
Courageously climb
The mountain of the 21st century,
Holding high the flag of truth of the Mystic Law,
And in so doing
Achieve a truly independent and satisfying life.

To this end,
You must ascend,
Step by step,
And one by one,
The mountains, large and small,
That confront you each day.
For the value of a deeply fulfilling youth
Can be found only in the lives
Of those who strive to conquer
The treacherous mountains of life and society!
Only by pursuing this path
That you have deeply resolved to follow
Can you develop with quiet strength
A self as inexpressibly vast and boundless
As an infinite field,
And thereby lead a life of unshakable confidence!

Youth, who are my disciples!
Live, live, and live on —
For the cause of the Great Law,
Eternal, absolute and indestructible!
To accomplish the noble mission
For which you were born!
To ring the bell of peace in the world

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And raise the flag of justice in society —
Goals which are our creed!

The sun rises each day —
It rises majestically
On spring mornings when cherry blossoms bloom,
On days of blistering summer heat,
In the autumn of red-gold leaves,
And despite blizzards and stormy skies.
We should emulate its strength!
My friends, heirs to the future,
Live a youth in which
The shining sun of the Great Law
Rises moment to moment
Within your hearts!
My young friends!
Youth is synonymous with the sun.
Embracing that sun which shines
With unlimited potential,
Please win in every aspect of your life,
Today and every day!

It is more than 700 years
Since the Buddhism of the sun rose.
Now the great river of propagation
Has spread widely throughout the world,
True to the principle of
“The farther the source, the longer the stream”!

A half-century has passed
Since the founding in 1951
Of our youth division for kosen-rufu,
Courageous and full of conviction,
Holding high the banner
Of the Buddhism of the sun.
At that time some 260 youth —
Gallant young men
And pure-hearted young women —
Gathered with an indomitable spirit.
Over the course of five decades,
The river they created has flowed on,
Its waters sometimes crashing into rocks,
Sometimes rising in heavy rains,
Sometimes falling under scorching heat.
Yet today it has grown
Into a great rushing torrent 5 million strong!
The presidents who succeeded President Toda

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Were all from the youth division.
Please remember this!

No one can stop
The momentous flow of this river!
It will surge on toward the vast ocean
Growing ever deeper,
Ever wider along the way,
Leading the times,
Unimpeded by any force of authority
Or any dark obstruction!

Thanks to the brave and vigorous
Propagation efforts of the youth,
Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism of the sun
Has come to shine beyond Japan
To illuminate the entire world.
This mighty river of propagation of the Mystic Law
Now flows through 128 countries.
As the world's foremost philosophy,
It flows jubilantly and eternally,
For peace,
For the dignity of life,
Imparting every possible compassion.

It has always been the youth
Who have led the way in these efforts!
The Daishonin states,
"If Nichiren's compassion is truly great and encompassing,
Nam-myoho-renge-kyo will spread
For 10,000 years and more, for all eternity"!

In our harmonious movement
Of compassion and philosophy,
Committed to protecting religious freedom,
There are no class distinctions,
No national boundaries!
Ours is a movement dedicated to helping each person
Realize the mission, rights and happiness
That are inalienably theirs!

We absolutely oppose violence!
We absolutely oppose war!
Based upon this great Buddhism,
We expand the circle of mutual understanding
Beyond borders,
Beyond ideological differences,

Creating a momentum for peace and culture.
Because every human being
Has a right to be happy!

I am waiting — no, I am praying
With all my heart for your growth.
Because I know that your growth is the only way
Kosen-rufu will be accomplished.
Therefore I say to you:
Never forget that gongyo and daimoku
Are the driving force for your ascent
Of the mountain of the 21st century.

As the Daishonin states,
“If you cannot get across a river 10-feet wide,
How can you cross one that is
A hundred- or 200-feet wide?”
You must win, no matter what,
Where you are right now!
No one can beat a person
Who has chanted daimoku
With all their might —
For daimoku is the very heart
Of the Daishonin’s Buddhism!
My young friends!
Remember the spirit expressed
In the above passage!
And take action based on it,
Courageously and wholeheartedly!

Never lose hope,
No matter how painful your situation!
Hope is infinite strength.
For having hope is faith!

Human beings, as innate value-creators,
Have the ability to tap hope from within.
Though sometimes sadly
You may suffer setbacks
In the course of life,
You must never let your faith
Be destroyed!
If your faith is invincible,
Then deeply satisfying proof of victory
Will definitely be yours one day!
That proof will be revealed
In society for all to see,

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For you embrace the Buddhism
Of actual *ichinen sanzen*!

My young friends who will live in the new century!
Grow into leaders of great wisdom,
And never forget to always walk
Together with the people,
For the people are sovereign!
The history of the world has always clearly shown
The ordinary people to be wise!

As long as we have the people's support,
And as long as we practice this faith,
Our movement will create a history
Of even more limitless advancement!

Therefore, my young friends,
Take pride in having to shoulder many burdens,
Become guides in life
Of good citizenship for others!
And make your highest honor
Being youthful philosophers of action!

We know
That the new century hopes
And waits in expectation
For such outstanding young leaders.
People devoid of faith or philosophy
Are like ships without a compass!
The times are already moving,
Moment by moment,
From an age of materialism
To an age of spirituality,
And from an age of spirituality
To an age of life.
People have begun to realize
That only in life itself
Can we find the value
Of true human happiness.
Today what matters
Is not popularity, fame or wealth!
Inherently wise,
The people respect and long for
Leaders of integrity and character!

In this age of the people,
True leaders are those

Who win the people's trust.
We are all equal;
No one is superior or inferior.
My young friends,
I hope each of you
Will become leaders of the new century,
Who day and night
Are in contact with the people,
Living among them,
Cultivating warm human relations,
Sharing their concerns,
And empathizing with their struggles!

I have faith in you!
And place high expectations upon you!
For without you,
Kosen-rufu cannot be achieved!

Enduring all kinds of persecutions,
I, too, as one of the disciples of Josei Toda,
Whom I chose as my mentor in life,
Have striven to advance the cause of the people,
Giving my all to the struggle for kosen-rufu,
The goal I pledged with my mentor to achieve!
I assert here
That all false, groundless charges against me
Will be clearly judged by history!

For the victory flag of human revolution
Will fly forever high in the sky
When we stand as towering individuals,
Resolute in our determination,
Surmounting all persecution,
No matter what authority or power
May seek to oppress us!

My friends!
I absolutely implore you —
Never be ignoble!
Never be cowards!
Never be traitors!
For the hearts of such people,
No matter how high-sounding their rhetoric,
Are base and degenerate,
Ruled by the worlds of Hunger and Animality.

Young leaders!

Develop penetrating insight
So that at all times
You may clearly perceive the essence
Of various problems and incidents
That confront us!
And rigorously denounce
The plots and schemes
That lie at their root,
Designed to disrupt our efforts
To propagate Buddhism.

Youth, champions of the future!
Be wise!
Be revolutionaries!
Do not be fools!
Do not be deceived!
Be people of discernment and wisdom!
These are the requisites of faith —
As the Daishonin states,
“When the skies are clear, the ground is illuminated....”

Buddhism at its essence
Is ultimately a struggle between
Happiness and unhappiness,
Good and evil,
The Buddha and devilish forces!
Please recognize this deeply and strongly!

My young friends,
I hope that you will victoriously
Move beyond those mournful comrades
Who abandoned their faith,
And associate with people of seeking spirit
Who reveal the Treasure Tower in their lives,
And that you will continue to strive single-mindedly
To promote our great Buddhist movement.

To lead a truly fulfilled
And meaningful life,
A profound philosophy
And strong faith in it
Are indispensable!
Make your greatest source of pride
Embracing this noble Buddhism of the sun
And living out your youth with passion and joy!
For this is the essence of youth!

The mountain of the 21st century is near!
Already within sight,
The new century belongs to you!
It is your dawn!
It is your time to shine!
It is the grand stage
On which to give full play to your potential
And further solidify our movement!

May 3, 2001 —
Let us make that the glorious day
That we together reach the summit!
Please remember
That this day will decide
The outcome of our struggle
In the second chapter of kosen-rufu.
My young friends of profound mission!
Until that day,
Press on with your assiduous Buddhist practice
With a light and cheerful step!
Please give your all each day,
In good health and high spirits!

All of your hard work is for you,
For the people,
For friends who are suffering —
Be confident that this is the path
Of a youth dedicated to good!
And create a magnificent personal history,
Unforgettable and forever engraved in your life!
Brave and vigorous practice
Is the only way to achieve this!
When you are faced with suffering
Or feel deadlocked,
Have courage, dauntless courage,
And remember that you have comrades
You can rely on and who rely on you!
Your seniors in faith everywhere
Are looking forward to your success!
Your dear fellow members recognize your efforts!
And such comrades exist all over the world!
In any event, chant daimoku
To win over yourself!
Do not spare your voice!
And do not hesitate to speak out for justice
With the force of a lion's roar!

Remember, too,
That all of your actions and endeavors
Are unmistakably witnessed by the original Buddha
Who surveys the three existences of life —
Past, present and future.
The original Buddha also promises
That the Buddhist gods will definitely protect you,
The heroes of kosen-rufu.
This is faith!

Do not be afraid of a few insults
And the scornful criticisms of others!
Such travails are nothing
Compared to those of Shakyamuni,
Much less the great persecutions
That befell the Daishonin!
As proof that we live in accord
With the Daishonin's teachings,
It is only natural that we should encounter
The buffeting winds of obstacles.
We should regard this
As the Gakkai's unsurpassed honor.

My noble young successors!
Cherish your worthy parents,
Place importance on actual society,
And realize with pride
That the Buddhist principle
Of lotus flowers blooming in muddy water
Applies to the swamp-like reality of society
In which we conduct our daily struggles!
Life in the real world is complicated
And full of contradictions.
However I call on you, young successors,
To build, with great dignity and confidence,
A magnificent palace within your own life!
Know that infinite happiness and peace
Reside in the depths of your being!
Sometimes wait and endure!
Sometimes strike out boldly to score a stunning victory!
Today will never come again,
So advance resolutely each day,
Moving ever forward.
That is the life of a Bodhisattva of the Earth.

Faith means
To fear nothing!

To make yourself eternally a victor!
To take action and thereby
Become a person of outstanding humanity
Who can link people, society and Buddhism together!
Society is harsh —
Do not be complacent,
Do not let yourself be swept away
By society's ever-changing tides!
Remember that you are the protagonists,
Proudly writing your own history!
Do not be led astray by society's superficial phenomena!
If you allow yourself to be swayed by the eight winds,
By others' praise or censure,
You will have let yourself be sadly defeated.
Dear friends, please be victors!

My young disciples,
Whose growth I pray for unceasingly!
Now once more
Solidly unite in your efforts
And continue on this great unending path!
Advance cheerfully and spiritedly,
Singing well-loved Gakkai songs —
Sometimes "Song of Crimson,"
Sometimes "Song of Indomitable Dignity"!
Countless young successors
Are following in your footsteps.
Working together side by side,
Let us climb the invincible mountain
Of the 21st century!

And when we reach the summit
Of that mountain,
The world that unfolds before us
Will all be yours.
There is no higher path
Than dedicating one's youth, one's life,
To the joyous and fulfilling work
Of propagating Buddhism.
Confident of this,
I entrust everything to you!