

## MAY THE FRAGRANT LAURELS OF HAPPINESS ADORN YOUR LIFE

*SGI President Ikeda presented the following poem for the young women's division members on March 24.  
— Dedicated to my most precious and beloved young women's division members —*

O how beautiful is the sun —  
Its infinite brilliance  
Illuminating the dignity of humanity!  
O power that exists  
In order to fulfill its own pledge,  
In order to eternally brighten all things!

In the presence of the sun,  
There is no darkness.  
In the presence of the sun,  
There is no discrimination.  
In the presence of the sun,  
All share equal rights.  
In the presence of the sun,  
All is a shining realm of peace.

Today once more  
I will walk my chosen path,  
I will pursue my chosen work,  
To write a magnificent personal history.  
Undeterred by the rain of insidious lies,  
I will walk the path of happy smiles,  
True to myself,  
Undefeated by anything,  
Striving in my own way!  
For this path  
I regard as my greatest treasure.

Youth —  
It never comes again.  
Youth as precious as a rare jewel.  
For that reason,  
Radiant with joy and vitality,  
I will live with all my might.  
For in such effort  
Lies the foundation of life;  
For in such effort,  
My own happiness,  
A new inner happiness,  
Is born and begins.

I will never stop moving forward!  
Even in difficult times,  
I will not look behind me.  
Life must be lived  
With strength, integrity and optimism.

There will undoubtedly be bad times  
Along with the good.  
But, still, I will never curse life.

Youth is life continually growing!  
In each joyous step along the way  
Are countless books of knowledge,  
And the wisdom for which you seek.  
All the hardships of this existence  
Must be triumphed over  
Within the depths of your own life.

A youth, and a life, lived wisely  
In the beautiful world of the heart,  
Cherishing happiness and constructive hope,  
Brings great joy and delight.

In such a way of life,  
Everything you experience  
Forms the garland of flowers,  
Sweetly fragrant,  
That you wear as your crown.

O daughter of wondrous mission!  
You can transform a bleak winter landscape  
Into the setting of a vivacious dance of spring,  
Bathing all in bright sunlight.

I will not lose my footing  
In the morass of society.  
I have no need to feel envious  
Of empty, illusory glamour or fame.  
Nor am I intimidated  
By cruel criticism or abuse.

For I embrace the eternal Law  
In which I have absolute faith,  
And I have my sisters in the YWD,  
As well as my SGI family,  
Whom I can talk to about anything  
And whom I deeply trust with all my heart.

The sunny, vibrant life-force of youth  
Possesses the world's gold;  
Youth itself dwells in a jeweled palace.

Ah!  
The palace of your life sparkles  
With the brilliant light of glittering gems,  
More numerous than stars in the heavens.

There is nothing more priceless than this.  
Everyone equally possesses this precious treasure.  
In this world, there are no special people:  
We are all human beings.

A dear friend,  
The world-acclaimed violin virtuoso  
Yehudi Menuhin,  
Once said in his later years,  
"God resides within our hearts."  
Naturally, the Buddha is also found  
Within our lives,  
Not in temples or monasteries.

No one can take that treasure away,  
For that treasure is you, yourself.  
To awaken to this truth  
Is happiness.

Just as a lantern you light for others  
Illuminates your own way,  
Your prayers for the happiness of your friends  
Bring the star of happiness  
To shine brightly in your own heart.

The abode of happiness in which I dwell  
Is far from small!  
It can accommodate everyone,  
This friend and that.

People of selfish ego  
Callously drive others out,  
Wanting to gain sole possession  
Of the jeweled abode.  
But ultimately they bar themselves  
From the palace  
And wander lost  
In the hell of loneliness.

Like an endless vista  
Of beautiful festoons of flowers,  
The warm camaraderie  
Of friends joined hand in hand  
Multiplies my joy boundlessly.

“Kindness is the flower of strength,”  
Said José Martí,  
Hero of Cuban independence.

I am a flower that blooms with dignity,  
Undeterred by the pounding rain!  
I will share my smile  
With my friends!

If you are cowardly and weak,  
You cannot protect others.  
In the end, you’ll only see a pitiful self,  
A person with no compassion.

Only by triumphing  
Over your own sorrows,  
Can you understand  
The dark despair and pain of others.  
Because you refuse to be defeated  
By your own weaknesses,  
You can help others  
To overcome their sufferings.

Be strong! Ever strong!  
These are the crucial watchwords  
In your efforts to open the door  
To the palace of happiness.  
Say good-bye to sad songs,  
Win over your weak tendencies,  
And never succumb to deception.  
You must know a self  
That never betrays justice or truth.

Faith is not wallowing in self-pity;  
It is being absolutely victorious in life!

Daughter with sparkling eyes!  
Your youth in itself  
Makes you a princess of happiness!  
Soar high above the morbid clouds of suffering!  
With your own lively, animated spirit,

Spread wide the wings of freedom!  
Gaze down serenely upon  
The murky swamps of jealousy and envy!

You must not be a pathetic slave  
To constantly vacillating emotions.  
Have pride and dignity!  
And be the ruler of your own heart!

Always remember  
You are a queen of humanity!  
Regal on your treasure throne,  
Blessed with a world rich in color,  
Strive to concentrate on your mission!

The Gosho urges,  
“Become the master of your mind  
Rather than let your mind master you.”  
These words are an eternal beacon  
Lighting life’s path.

In my heart  
Burns an immortal flame of philosophy,  
Shines the light of my lifelong mission,  
Resides a great purpose!

Those who pray deeply  
With a firm and unshakable  
Conviction in faith  
Are liberated from the fear and anxiety  
Of being cast adrift in the darkness.  
In the depths of their hearts  
A bright, untrammelled path  
Of peace and contentment  
Unfolds without end.

I am not obsessed  
With the illusion of fame,  
Which like a passing image  
Shimmers but fleetingly  
On the water’s surface!

Make companions  
Of the sun and the moon,  
Who shine with undying light!  
Take great joy  
In working hard

In the sphere of your daily endeavors!  
Live a life of true substance  
Leading to happiness!

Noble YWD!  
Do not be attached to trivial things!  
Because the foolish are far removed  
From the world of heavenly emissaries,  
And they are swept away  
By angry, roaring waves.

You must never be deceived!  
You must never be taken in!  
Nor is there the slightest need  
For you to envy anyone!

Only you know the reality  
Of your own life;  
The undeserving scorn of others,  
Has no meaning!  
You must be true to yourself —  
Those who are,  
Know happiness.

If you are wise and discerning,  
Then you will win for yourself  
A life of great victory.

I possess the mirror of a pristine life  
That reflects with unsparing clarity  
The evil of this world —  
A life that, like the pure white lotus,  
Remains unsullied  
By the squalor of this defiled age!  
I possess the sharp jeweled sword of idealism  
That makes the corrupt and unscrupulous  
Tremble for shame!

O flower of a new revolution!  
The Joan of Arc of the New Century!  
With your silvery voice,  
You constantly invigorate sleepy veterans  
Of past campaigns;  
You inspire courage in the hearts  
Of the fatigued older generations  
To rise up and fight again.

History recounts  
That Joan of Arc  
Was just an ordinary young woman.  
But the people of the village  
Where she lived  
Say she was a young woman  
Of great initiative.

She willingly worked,  
She readily spun thread,  
She gladly pulled a plow....  
And finally she took the lead,  
Standing up to fight  
To save France from peril!

And now —  
The curtain has begun to rise at last  
On the brilliant stage of the 21st  
century!  
The time has come  
For the daughters of the sun,  
Crowned with verdant laurels,  
To stand up and begin  
Their inspired dance!

A fresh breeze blows,  
And the blue, blue sky,  
Stretches on for eternity.  
So let us spread our wings!  
Let us dance with courage  
And fly with burning hope,  
Into the future that lies waiting  
for us  
In the grand new century ahead.

Daughters of the sun!  
Always remember the noble mothers  
And the stern fathers,  
Who worked selflessly,  
Braving wind and rain,  
To build our Castle of Soka!

*March 24, 1999*

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Poet Laureate*