

SGI YOUTH TRAINING COURSE BEGINS

More than 400 youth division representatives from 55 countries and territories gathered at the Soka International Friendship Hall in Tokyo for the opening session of SGI Youth Training Course on Sept. 8. SGI President Ikeda sent a message, addressing the participants as “outstanding young leaders of the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law.”

Here are some of his main points:

- Thank you very much for coming all this way. I extend my warmest, heartiest welcome to each of you.

You have gathered together in high spirits for this important training course being held on the threshold of the 21st century. What an immense and wondrous mission you possess!

All the Buddhas and heavenly deities throughout time and space are most assuredly praising you, saying: “Excellent! Excellent!” You are definitely being protected by them and enveloped in their warm embrace.

I have also been eagerly awaiting your arrival: I bow to you in profound respect, my palms pressed together in reverence. The Lotus Sutra states, “If you see a person who accepts and upholds this sutra, you should rise and greet him from afar, showing him the same respect you would a Buddha” (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 324).

- I am sure that, leading up to this training course, many of you encountered various obstacles in your daily lives. Yet you succeeded in valiantly overcoming and winning over them. Now, you have taken your place joyfully in this gathering for worldwide kosen-rufu, an eternal gathering transcending time. There is absolutely no doubt that you will accumulate boundless fortune and benefit, and shine with indestructible glory into the infinite future.

- I am praying earnestly, sending you daimoku, with the sincere wish that you will have a most enjoyable, bright, meaningful and memorable training course. Please use it as an opportunity to strengthen your life, enhance your mental and physical health and elevate your life-condition.

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