

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Salvation Work Promotion Meeting for Head Ministers and Spouses

On February 17 (Sat), the Mission Headquarters held the Salvation Work Promotion Meeting for Head Ministers and Spouses. After receiving a video message from Rev. Yoichiro Miyamori, Director-in-Chief of Religious Affairs, those in attendance watched a video displaying head ministers and their spouses engaging in salvation work, followed by group discussions. In this second year of pre-anniversary activities, 88 participants (including remote attendees) pledged to further their efforts towards the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

March 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

— *Changing One’s Way of Thinking* —

We will be holding the Spring Memorial Service this month. Let us always remember that we are here today thanks to the accomplishments of our predecessors. Using this as a foundation to further the growth of our Path, it is important that we pass these teachings along to the next generation.

Our 90th Anniversary, taking place on June 30, is almost upon us. We will also be holding the of our Women’s Association and Young Men’s Association of America 70th Anniversary joint convention the day before as well. In the hopes that we can bring joy to God the Parent and Oyasama, as well as to the heads of the Women’s and Young Men’s Associations respectively, let us gather in great numbers for both our 90th Anniversary and the joint convention. I ask for your support and cooperation.

Now, let’s go to the subject of my article. Last September, a Japanese liquor producer opened a sake brewery and a sake tasting room in Hyde Park, NY.

In the past, this brewery’s sake was very popular and had high resale value. During that boon, the brewery had an advertising campaign that said “do not buy our sake at a

high price” and stated the proper retail price. Currently, this brewery has grown and is exporting their sake worldwide to about thirty countries.

While it is known today as a success story of a very popular sake brewery, it was seen as a failure when the current CEO, who was in his thirties at the time, took over just after the former CEO had passed away. Back then, it was a local brewery who supplied sake wholesale to the local shops. Yet, because there weren’t any differentiating characteristics to their sake, a lot of it sat in storage unsold, and they tried to get rid of it through discounts and by giving freebies to retailers. Also, due to the general lack of interest in sake at that time, this left the brewery teetering on the verge of bankruptcy.

(continued on page 14)

Coming Up

- * **April Monthly Service Sermon (4/21)**
- Rev. Brian Kojima (E)
- * **TSA Spring Conference (5/25~27)**
- Application deadline: May 5
- * **Mission HQ Major Cleaning (5/26)**
- Following 26th Day Service

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February Monthly Service Prayer

February 17, 2024

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, Who is enshrined in this altar, I, Hiroshi Alexander Fukaya, Bishop of Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, in accord with Your deep desire to save all Your children, humankind, these ultimate teachings have spread to the world, including America and Canada. We are truly grateful for being blessed with followers of the path who yearn for Jiba and devote themselves to world salvation.

Aiming for the realization of the Joyous Life world, we work spiritedly each day, relying on Oyasama's Divine Model. As this fine day is our February Monthly Service, from now, receiving the Truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our hearts to perform the seated service and service dance joyously.

In Your presence, Yoboku and followers have gathered looking forward to this day, and we give our gratitude for Your daily protection and humbly pray for Your continued blessings.

As we express our joy through our spirited performance of the service, we ask that You, God the Parent, become spirited as well.

Yesterday, the leaders of our diocese gathered to participate in the Salvation Work Promotion gathering for Head Ministers and Spouses as an opportunity to gain momentum during our second year of the pre-anniversary activities leading up to Oyasama's 140th Anniversary. I kindly ask that You guide and nurture them so they can truly become inspired, as leaders of our congregation, to actively spread the teachings and help others be saved in preparation for Oyasama's anniversary.

Considering the various incidents occurring around the world today, during the second year of our activities toward the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, we will ponder and resolve to advance forward with the spirit of salvation towards the realization of the Joyous Life world while we pledge to pass on these teachings to the next generation.

Further, for our 90th Anniversary on June 30th, we members of this diocese pledge to unite our minds, redouble our efforts to grow spiritually and joyously perform the commemorative service.

God the Parent, please accept our sincerity and continue to provide us with Your free and unlimited workings while guiding us where we are lacking, so that we may transform this world, even one day sooner, into one in which all people can live together by helping one another in harmony. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

Spring Grand Service Sermon by Rev. Toshihiko Okui

~Season of Spiritual Maturity~

It brings me great joy that we have just completed the spirited performance of the February Monthly Service of Mission Headquarters lead by Bishop and Mrs. Fukaya. I have been assigned to deliver the sermon, so I ask for your kind attention.

We are in the midst of the “three years, one thousand days” period leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, and in June, the 90th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters in America will be held during this “season of spiritual maturity.”

Exactly fifty years ago, plans to establish New York Center, where I have served for many years, began as a special project for the 40th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters. After World War II, many missionaries from Japan crossed the Pacific with a fervent desire to engage in overseas missionary work and became the pioneers of the path to sow seeds of sincerity for the blessing of a mission post in New York, and their full-fledged efforts played a major role in the establishment of New York Center. Three years from now, in 2027, New York Center will be commemorating its 50th anniversary. During the years after it was established, we have celebrated the



Rev. Okui was the former head of the New York Center, & is currently a Mission HQ board member. anniversaries of the Mission Headquarters, of Oyasama, and the New York Center four times, respectively. For every occasion, we set our goals appropriate to each season by responding to the voice of our parents, working together at times boisterously, to grow spiritually and reach the present state.

Forty-five years ago, Rev. Yasuhito Shinomori, who was the bishop of Mission Headquarters at the time, asked me to go to New York for approximately two years, and in September 1979, I was appointed as the second minister of New York Center. Although I had no experience working on the path, I remember accepting his request thinking, if it’s for two years, I might be able to do it.

The promised two years quickly passed by, and the first momentous and joyous occasion arrived. It was the visit to New York in July 1981 by the Third Shinbashira and Mrs. Masa Nakayama, and the President of the Young Men's Association (the current Shinbashira).

The former Shinbashira and Mrs. Nakayama had visited New York ten years before in July 1971, also as a stopover to Brazil. However, this was before New York Center existed, so Rev. Yoshikazu Terada, who was serving as the secretary of Mission Headquarters and the chairman of the Young Men's Association of America flew out to New York to prepare for the visit and welcomed them by celebrating the former Shinbashira's 39th birthday with 30 other followers from the area. As a result of this gathering, the desire to establish a mission post in New York as the project for the 40th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters gained momentum even within the local followers and became a reality.

In 1981, the former Shinbashira's visit to New York coincided with his 49th birthday. After thinking about ways to welcome and bring joy to our parent, we decided to organize a reception at a venue that would create an American style atmosphere together with as many people as possible. At the time, most of us were still in our 20's and 30's and filled with overflowing joy from the planning stages, and started

reaching out to the followers of the mid-eastern regions, in places such as Chicago, Kentucky, Washington DC, and Toronto. As a result, approximately 140 followers gathered as children of the path to welcome our parents, and we were able to spend a truly joyous and harmonious time together.

The welcome party was organized right around the time when "Oyasama's 100th Anniversary Song," written by the former Shinbashira, was announced. So, we decided to translate the lyrics into English and asked an American Yoboku who was a music professor to compose the song into a 3-part baroque arrangement. We also prepared an arrangement for a full band and both renditions were performed for the former Shinbashira's party.

For this occasion, a Yoboku and a former member of the Tenri High School brass band, who was studying jazz in New York, reached out to his musician friends and formed a full band. What became the highlight of their performance was when the guest female singer sang "New York, New York," Frank Sinatra's hit song, and after an evening of entertainment, the former Shinbashira and his party departed the venue to the lively sound of "Oyasama's 100th Anniversary Song" in jazz arrangement.

The former Shinbashira's visit laid the framework for the path in New York to rally around New York Center and build momentum toward the "season of spiritual

maturity” leading to the 50th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters, 100th Anniversary of Oyasama, and the 10th Anniversary of New York Center. The 50th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters was held three years later in 1984 and was attended by 51 people from the east coast. Several young missionaries who came from Japan after New York Center was established helped the congregation grow by settling in the area and engaging in missionary work. Since the former Shinbashira’s visit in 1981, the number of attendees to the monthly services at New York Center nearly doubled and exceeded 50 adults and children each month.

One woman started to attend the monthly service on the same month when the former Shinbashira visited New York and continued attending every month afterwards. However, since she would leave as soon as the service was over, we did not get a chance to talk with her, so we asked her to come for a separate visit and found out that she was an artist and a college professor who lived in Manhattan. She explained, “Manhattan can be a very harsh place to live, and I think the service has a way of soothing one’s body and soul—and that’s why I look forward to the first Sunday of each month.”

Back then, New York Center’s small sanctuary where the service was performed was a converted living room in a residential home with enough space for only 4 service

dancers. The service performers were all dressed in contrasting service garments and performed the service while relying on the song guide without the accompaniment of all the musical instruments. Yet despite that, knowing there was someone who looked forward to our service amazed me and made me realize its importance and significance, and I apologized to Oyasama for how we had been performing the service. At the same time, I reflected on ways to perform the service in a manner which would bring joy to Oyasama.

Six months later, the person in this story returned to Jiba and became the first Yoboku under New York Center, and she is doing well and continues to inspire us.

Two years later, at the Spring Grand Service in 1983, the former Shinbashira instructed us to live during the “three years, one thousand days” period leading up to the 100th Anniversary of Oyasama as follows:

If there are things you intended to do but couldn’t act upon, and thinking about this has been weighing you down, choose one thing that carries the most truth, am I clear? Think about something that seems the most difficult to do, set a goal during the ‘three years, one thousand days’ period, and be decisive by working as hard as you can for God’s blessings. Now that I have conveyed my intention, let us collectively make this

our determination today.

[Unofficial Translation]

In response to the voice of the parent, and in preparation for the 10th Anniversary of New York Center to be held a year before the 100th Anniversary of Oyasama, we decided to focus on improving the performance of the monthly service by performing it the way it was taught by Oyasama. We asked all the service performers to wear service garments, assigned six performers (instead of four) for the hand dance, nine performers for the musical instruments, and one singer for each of the three sections of the entire service, and practiced emulating the singing style of the former Shinbashira.

“Aiming towards the Completion of the Service” became our slogan, and we strived to attain this goal through activities such as workshops that enabled everyone to practice singing the songs accurately for the service. Additionally, we were blessed to complete the construction project to change the direction of the north facing upper dias to face west, and expanded the worship area by double, all within one month. During this “season of spiritual maturity” leading up to the 50th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters, the 100th Anniversary of Oyasama, and the 10th Anniversary of New York Center, we all decided that our main goal would be to perform the service without error as we moved forward onto the

next milestone.

During the season leading up to the 20th Anniversary of New York Center, through the tremendous support of the Overseas Department, the Young Men’s Association Headquarters, the Women’s Association Headquarters, as well as with Mission Headquarters’ parental heart and the warm support from the followers of our diocese, TCI was established as a vehicle to serve the community and will be celebrating its 33rd anniversary on the 26th of this month.

For the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of New York Center, we were able to realize our dream of constructing a new sanctuary under the leadership of the fourth minister of New York Center, Rev. Keigo Morishita, by receiving unconditional support from Church Headquarters and Mission Headquarters, in addition to the sincerity of the east coast followers and others of our diocese, and above all with God’s marvelous workings and Oyasama’s guidance.

It’s hard to imagine just how many people have relied on New York Center, which was established as a project for the 40th Anniversary of Mission Headquarters, as a gathering place to grow spiritually by performing the service and participating in association activities. I am overcome with immense gratitude, thinking about this.

Now, I would like to share a personal story. At the beginning of the new year, my younger brother became critically ill with

empyema, which is a bacterial infection in the lungs that causes fluid and abscess to build up in the pleural space. Surgery was performed on January 2nd, but my brother's wife called me under the instructions of the attending doctor who felt the need to inform the family members because of my brother's grave condition. I immediately returned to Japan on January 5th and spent about a month in my hometown of Izumo in Shimane prefecture.

Apparently, my brother was working as usual until mid-December. But when I visited him in the ICU with my second son and his wife who flew in from Tokyo, we could not even recognize him because of all the tubes and catheters that were covering his face and upper body, in addition to the 2 ventilators that were keeping him alive. I immediately administered the Sazuke, and from the following day began my daily routine of visiting my local church in the morning to perform the 12 songs prayer service and going to the hospital in the afternoon. Each day, I administered the Sazuke on the upper body of my brother, who was completely sedated, but on January 16th, after the Spring Grand Service at my church, his condition changed. After performing the Spring Grand Service at my church, I went to the hospital and administered the Sazuke. Immediately after, we were approached by the attending doctor, who said, "I have good news today!" According to the doctor, there

were several holes in his left lung that were being monitored because of air leakage, but since they healed on their own, the second invasive surgery was no longer necessary.

On January 18th, I performed the Spring Grand Service at my parent church, and on the 20th, attended another Spring Grand Service at another parent church. I was also able to attend the Spring Grand Service in Jiba which gave me the opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to God the Parent and Oyasama. On January 30th, the day when I departed Japan, I was delighted to hear that my brother was transferred out of the ICU to the SDU (Step Down Unit) because of the progress he was making. And today, I received news that he was transferred to the general ward!

Illnesses or troubles are manifestations of God's divine guidance that help us grow spiritually. We are taught that God is simply taking us by the hand and leading us further onto the true path of the Joyous Life.

My brother and his wife, who are both Yoboku have a small shrine in their home, and besides the morning and evening services, they have performed the monthly home service for over 30 years together with their church minister.

Their only daughter, also a Yoboku, lives overseas but decided to leave her two small children behind to care for her father while supporting her mother. The three of us visited the hospital every day and put all our

heart into administering the Sazuke to my brother.

The Osashizu teaches:

Although truth is invisible, it is as if everything is recorded in a notebook. If there is any surplus, I will return it. Whatever is short, I will collect it. The balance in each account is very precise.

January 13, 1982

Building truth (or merit) means putting Oyasama's teachings into practice in our daily lives, and working diligently until it accumulates. Everything we do will be recorded in God the Parent's notebook without fail. When the amount of truth (or merit) has reached and exceeded our goal, it will be manifested as a miraculous blessing. However, once we are shown a miraculous blessing, it means that the truth (or merit) we've accumulated has been used up, and we will have to start all over again. We are taught that this is the process that will enable us to grow spiritually.

Although my brother still has a long road ahead of him, including the grueling process of physical therapy, I am determined to express my utmost gratitude to God for saving my brother's life by renewing my mind and resolving to spend the remaining "three years one thousand days" decisively and in high spirits.

On June 30th, the 90th Anniversary

of Mission Headquarters in America Commemorative Service will be held, and the day before on the 29th, the Women's and Young Men's Association of America 70th Anniversary Joint Convention will be held welcoming President Harue Nakayama, and President Daisuke Nakayama. Let us attend these significant events with as many people as possible and fill the entire Mission Headquarters with overflowing joy!

I hope we can all keep the momentum and grow spiritually during this special season leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama by praying for the true settling of the world while advancing forward on this path towards world salvation.

Thank you so much for your kind attention.

(translation by Y. Okui)

News and Announcements

1) MARCH MONTHLY SERVICE (3/17)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Marlon Okazaki, Zen Yukimoto Attendants: Eddie Takemoto, Steven Yukimoto

Director: Toshikiyo Yukimoto Offerings Officiant: Mitsuharu Ito Sermon: Masahito Kimura (E)

2) CHURCH & FELLOWSHIP AFFAIRS

* Divine Sanctions:

Utah Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction: March 26, 2024 Head Minister: Masayo Obayashi Enshrinement Service: April 21, 2024

Canada Church: Request for Special Service, Request for Temporary Change of Service Date

Divine Sanction: April 18, 2024 90th Anniversary Commemorative Service: December 1, 2024

Chicago Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction: April 18, 2024 Head Minister: Yohsuke Kimura Enshrinement Service: July 28, 2024

Titan Church: Request for Relocation & Special Service

Divine Sanction: April 26, 2024 Head Minister: Lynn Mitsuno So Enshrinement Ceremony: July 27, 2024
Enshrinement Service: July 28, 2024

* Fellowship Head Change:

Hon Richmond Fellowship:

New Fellowship Head: Joey Ken Manalisay

3) ALL YOBOKU ACTIVITY DAY

We ask all District Representatives who have yet to submit their All Yoboku Activity Day plan for the second event to submit your plan to the Mission Headquarters Secretaries as soon as possible.

4) SPRING MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Mission Headquarters will hold its Spring Memorial Service at 7 PM on March 16 (Sat). On this occasion, we will enshrine the name of Shoichi Obayashi, seventh head minister of Utah Church.

5) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the Mission Headquarters is currently scheduled to be held from July 21 (Sun) to August 17 (Sat). These courses will be held if there are at least two applicants for the English or Japanese course, or five applicants for the Spanish course, as of one month prior (June 16).

6) NOTO PENINSULA DISASTER RELIEF

The Mission Headquarters has set up a box in the office to collect donations for the earthquake disaster that affected the Noto Peninsula, until March 17 (Sun). Please write checks to “Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America” and write “Noto Earthquake” on the memo line. Please do not send cash by mail. If you require a receipt for tax purposes, please write your name, address, donation amount, and “Noto Earthquake” on a slip, and include this with your check or cash donation. Thank-you letters will be sent out from the Mission Headquarters at a later date.

All donations collected will be sent to the Church HQ Disaster Relief Corps, which will then be used towards the Noto Peninsula earthquake disaster relief.

7) MAJOR CLEANING TOWARDS ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

This year on May 26 (Sun), following the performance of the May 26th Day service, we will

hold a major cleaning in the afternoon, from 12:30PM. It will be conducted the same as our year-end cleaning, as we clean the sanctuary and the other buildings. We ask the heads of churches, fellowships, and mission centers near the Mission Headquarters to reach out to you followers and join us in our major cleaning. In order to prepare meals for that day, if you would like to eat lunch, please contact the Mission Headquarters secretaries by the May monthly service date (5/19).

8) SERVICE ROSTER

Currently, we are confirming the attendance of service performers for the Mission Headquarters monthly services every six months, and waiting for final confirmation of their attendance until about the second Sunday of that month. As a result, the service roster is distributed after the second Sunday, and we find ourselves in a situation where we are receiving numerous calls to confirm the service roster roles. From this year (2024), we would like to distribute the service roster by the beginning of each month, therefore we request service performers to communicate their final availability to the Mission Headquarters by the end of the month prior to their attendance. For example, please communicate your final availability for the April monthly service by the end of this month (March 31, 2024).

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Construction Committee

- * Drain pipe cleaning completed.
- * Door installation on the second floor of the Tenri Kaikan will begin shortly.
- * Tenri Kaikan building roof repair.
- * Wall has been repaired and painted in MP Hall first floor (room adjacent to TWA room).
- * Wall repairs planned for MP Hall second floor men's bathroom.
- * Large tree root in front of Kaikan building removed for planned drain pipe repair.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

* The TSA Spring Conference is scheduled to be held from May 25 (Sat) ~ May 27 (Mon), at the Mission Headquarters. Application forms will soon be distributed.

Program: lecture, attendance of 26th Day service, major cleaning participation, and other fun activities.

Public Relations Committee

* We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone's efforts and activities leading up to the 90th anniversary of the Mission Headquarters so that we can share our events & ideas with all of our congregation members. Therefore, we would like to request churches, fellowships, districts, and individuals to submit your activity reports & pictures to us (Kawakami: kamishuyo@hotmail.com or Hayashi: takhayashi@gmail.com).

* Mission HQ Homepage

- The "Stories Inspired by Oyasama," SoulFire, monthly service sermons, & podcast videos are now viewable on the Mission Headquarters homepage. Please visit our homepage to view these videos, and let those around you know as well.

12 News and Announcements (cont'd.)

Women's Association

- * 106th Tenrikyo Women's Association Convention April 19, 2024 (Fri), from 9:30 AM at the Church HQ Inner Courtyard
- * The TWA America 70th Anniversary Commemorative photo album, and the joint-convention, are under preparation.
- * Meetings with Committee Heads by the Chairwoman are currently being held.
- * 31st Young Women's Group Convention: November 11 @ Church HQ

Boys & Girls Association

- * The BGA America Service Convention will be held at the Mission Headquarters on August 17 (Sat). Please provide the information regarding service roles and garment size by March 17 (Sun).
- * Children' Pilgrimage to Jiba General Group: July 24~30. The International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corps will be held from July 25~30. From this year, the America-Canada and Hawaii groups will be combined and participate together.
- * We ask for your help in fundraising! In order to provide new t-shirts for the children's pilgrimage, we will be using the service "Double Good" for fundraising. More details will be provided in a separate notice.
- * Age eligibility requirements for the "KIDS FUNFEST," a BGA activity at the 90th anniversary celebration: 5~14 years old; children 4 and under must be accompanied by a guardian. We have put together some fun activities to learn, including lectures, games, crafts, and more. Please see the separate flyer for more details and register by April 21.

TYMANA

- * 3/16 @ 10AM: Sanctuary walls, windows, and benches cleaning Hinokishin
- * 4/20 @ 10AM: Sanctuary conference room, sanctuary blinds, dining hall walls and ceiling cleaning Hinokishin
- * 5/19: Guest mattress, playground cleaning & east hall repair Hinokishin
- * 6/16: Pressure wash building walls & exterior windows, weeding of parking lot, & other items.
- * 6/26 @ 2PM: TWA/TYMANA 70th Anniversary Joint Convention.
- * 7/18~24: International Hinokishin Corps. Applications have been distributed to TYMANA members. Please submit all applications and questions to kkryono@gmail.com.

NY Center

- * 3/3: Joy Workshop resumed (4 participants)
- * 3/11: US-JAPAN Council TOMODACHI Initiative (TCI)
- * 3/17: Spring Memorial Service
- * 3/22-24: Three Day Course
- * 3/15-4/15: Taiwanese American Arts Council (TCI)

90th Anniversary

SHARING OUR JOY OF FAITH
Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters
in America

Saturday
JUNE 29

1:30 - 3:30 PM

70th Anniversary Joint Convention
Young Men's and Women's Associations
Attended by Mrs. Harue Nakayama and Mr. Daisuke Nakayama

3:30 - 9:00 PM

Commemorative program and Dinner Reception

Sunday
JUNE 30

10:00 AM

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America
90th Anniversary Commemorative Service

1:30 - 3:00 PM

Reception and Entertainment



For Further Information, visit our website at tenrikyo.com
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Then, the CEO decided that in order to differentiate themselves from other breweries, he proposed to the head brewer in charge of all sake production to begin production of Junmai Daiginjo grade sake. However, the head brewer opposed this, saying, "It would be too much work." With that, he hired a new head brewer and learned from and collaborated with him to make a new Junmai Daiginjo sake and reform their brand name.

While they did rebrand themselves, they could not easily shake off their bad reputation amongst the locals for their inferior sake. With that, they resolved to fix their image and came up with an idea to travel to Tokyo to expand their market and fervently promote their sake there. As a result, their brewery became prosperous through building up their popularity within two to three years and getting more and more places to order from them.

As it went on, to further their brewery's prosperous growth, they decided to start a new business venture and begin beer production while their brewery was inactive during the summer months, as well as to open a restaurant.

However, due to this reckless and lavish spending, that year's profit was whittled down to almost nothing, leaving them once again on the brink of bankruptcy. Therein, the head brewer told the CEO that, "While I would like to continue making sake, I cannot do so at this kind of company," and he ended up resigning.

Amidst this crisis, the CEO resolved to begin making sake just by themselves. In other words, they were going to run a sake brewery without a head brewer.

The first thing they did was to convert the entire operation that was built on the shoulders of the head brewer and his experience and intuition into data. For example, how long to soak the sake rice for, documenting how many seconds the rice spent steaming, or how much koji mold was to be scattered over the steamed rice to turn it into malted rice.

Through this process, they discovered what was previously only known by the head sake brewer's intuition and know-how, letting them see everything that was in the proverbial "black box." Of course, this was only achieved through repeated trial and error.

The entire sake brewing process was converted into data, with the thought that the process itself could be mechanized. It turned out that this only increased the amount of manual labor. However, setting out on this path of sake brewing did bring about incremental increases in quality.

Then, to stand toe-to-toe with wine, they moved into France. Through recognition by a famous French chef, they collaborated to open restaurants in Paris, and started selling sake to establishments in various places around town, leading to the expansion of sake further throughout the world.

Next, they targeted the United States market to have sake be just as easy to drink as wine. Currently, while sake rice still has to be imported from Japan, the hope is that in the future, "American-born sake" can be produced by using rice harvested in the States and local water supplies.

The reasons behind their entry into the U.S. market are very interesting.

When leadership changed hands from the former CEO, the mentality of “I came here to make mistakes,” and to look at mistakes as a positive experience was used as a base.

Last year, the brewery started a new brand of sake in the U.S, and this new sake currently rivals their sake produced in Japan.

They are now pioneering the selling of their product directly to retailers, versus selling through wholesalers. The reason behind it is that clients will be getting their sake quicker.

While the hope is that sake produced in New York will eventually be sold in Japan someday, for now, sake sales are restricted to online purchasing and selling directly to retailers within New York and the surrounding areas.

It is very interesting to look back at the history of sake production and to see how such challenging innovations as this will be made going forward.

I do not believe there is anyone on earth who has not experienced failure in their life at some point. It is more how one handles themselves when reaching such crossroads in life and in dealing with those failures. It is important for us to learn from the many mistakes we make and apply them to our lives going forward. In other words, it is crucial for us to be able to see our previous failures in a positive light and use that as a springboard for personal growth. I think the same process applies to our spiritual growth.

The current CEO of this sake brewery accepted the fact that his head brewer quit. Then, in a revolutionary moment, embarked

as a sake company without a head brewer, something that has never been done before (to my knowledge). From there, they were able to experience growth. If they simply decided to hire another head brewer instead to replace the one that quit, who knows if this company would have been as prosperous. In other words, this CEO turned a crisis into an opportunity.

A situation like this can occur in any field or line of work.

The same can be said for our own respective lives of faith. In such situations, I believe that how we accept and deal with them, and how we can utilize unexpected occurrences and setbacks in life as stepping stones is most crucial.

Oyasama taught us about tanno.

...our path of faith is always to reflect on our minds, to understand that all occurrences are from the will of God the Parent, and live with and brightness without allowing our spirits to fall. This way of settling the mind is taught as tanno.

(Doctrine of Tenrikyo, p. 58-59)

This is the mindset we should have.

Having the ability to deal with unforeseen circumstances and setbacks and change them into opportunities, or, in other words, “changing one’s way of thinking,” I believe, is also a very important skill to have in our life of faith.

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TOWARD THE JOYOUS LIFE

TENRIKYO came into existence on **October 26, 1838**, when **God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto**, became revealed through **Oyasama, Miki Nakayama**, to save all humankind. **God the Parent is God of Origin and God of Truth** who created this world and has nurtured and protected us ever since.



God the Parent created human beings so that by seeing us lead the Joyous Life, God could share in our joy. Leading the Joyous Life is, therefore, the purpose of our existence. Since God is our Parent, we are all God's children; thus, we should realize that we are all brothers and sisters.

“With human beings : the body is a thing lent by God, a thing borrowed. The mind alone is yours.”
Osashizu : June 1, 1889

We are taught that we borrow our bodies from God the Parent and only our minds truly belong to us; further, through the proper use of our minds, we will be able to lead the Joyous Life.