

**THE HUMAN REVOLUTION**  
**MARCH 16: KOSEN-RUFU DAY**  
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The second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, said: “I entrust the future to all of you. I’m counting on you — counting on you to accomplish kosen-rufu” (see sidebar).

Sometimes it may be daunting to think about taking on the vast mission of kosen-rufu. Many times, it’s a struggle just to get through one day — wrestling with getting up in the morning, self-esteem issues, family problems, relationships, school, work or all of the above. And compared to that, the thought of declaring and spreading Buddhism far and wide, the literal meaning of *kosen-rufu*, may seem a bit removed from daily life.

Growing up, even though I didn’t know what it really meant, I used to think I had to include “the accomplishment of kosen-rufu” in my chanting goals since I heard about it over and over at the SGI meetings I attended. I continued chanting about this goal and began thinking about what it meant to me. I came to the realization that accomplishing kosen-rufu isn’t something that will happen someday in the future. It is something that applies to what I am doing right now. Conquering self-doubt, having hope even in what seems like a no-win situation — *if I can live that way, then I can help others do the same*, I started thinking. And as I grow in my conviction that the philosophy and practice of Nichiren Buddhism works in helping me become a stronger and happier person, I am more encouraged to share it with people I encounter in life.

The SGI movement to spread the greatness of chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo has always started from one person with a determination to change his or her surroundings. Nichiren Daishonin, the founder of this philosophy, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the first president of the Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda and the current SGI president, Daisaku Ikeda — all started in this way, creating a great chain reaction of faith that has spread throughout the world.

Why did President Toda pass the mission of kosen-rufu on to the youth on March 16, 1958? The “Successors” chapter of *The Human Revolution* explains, “To open the way for the eternal development of kosen-rufu, Toda gave everything he had to fostering robust, able young successors who would be unfazed by any hardship” (p. 1881). When a person develops a strong foundation of character in youth, nothing is impossible.

During the 1950s, President Toda’s closest disciple was Daisaku Ikeda. When looking at the struggles and difficulties President Ikeda has gone through — poor health, working without pay for two years, losing a son, being betrayed by those he trusted — it is apparent how his resolve to work for kosen-rufu helped him rise above all of those struggles and actually transform them into proof of the greatness of Nichiren Buddhism.

President Ikeda shares some advice for those of us in the midst of developing our lives: “Just keep advancing, even if only by one or two steps, in a way that is true to yourself. Those who live their lives to the fullest, unperturbed by the noisy clamor around them, are victors in life. Never give up. If you persevere in your efforts, some-

one will definitely support and protect you” (*Discussions on Youth*, vol. 1, p. 69). It is not that we should ignore what is going on around us, but that we should have the conviction that everything will work out for the best with our Buddhist practice.

March 16, Kosen-rufu Day, can be a time to determine not to be swayed by the “noisy clamor” around us and to think about how we want to live each day. It is also a reminder to share the benefits of Buddhist practice with friends, keeping the flow of kosen-rufu going.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Have you had an experience or experiences that have confirmed the power of chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo?
- 2) What does “accomplishing kosen-rufu” mean to you? What can you do in your daily life to contribute to kosen-rufu?

*The following excerpt from the “Successors” chapter of The Human Revolution highlights the speech given by the second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, at the historic gathering of 6,000 youth on March 16, 1958. This gathering marked a new era for the Soka Gakkai’s movement as President Toda passed the mission of kosen-rufu on to the youth.*

“From the standpoint of the Mystic Law, everyone is equal. And for individuals and the nation to achieve prosperity and happiness, there is no other way but to make the True Law our foundation. To achieve this, it is our mission to accomplish kosen-rufu without fail.

“Today, I want to bequeath this mission to you young people. I entrust the future to all of you. I’m counting on you — counting on you to accomplish kosen-rufu!”

It was a call that issued from the depths of Toda’s life, striking the hearts of the six thousand youth like a bolt of lightning and leaving them profoundly moved. For a moment, a hushed, solemn stillness pervaded. Then their emotion gave way to a powerful surge of determination that erupted the next moment into a storm of tumultuous applause. A snowcapped Mount Fuji seemed to embrace these youth who burned with such passion and resolve for kosen-rufu.

Looking out at the crowd, Toda smiled broadly.

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“The Soka Gakkai is the king of the religious world. We are afraid of nothing. Never forget that you are heirs to this legacy. I want you to fight and advance bravely, as valiant young warriors, in the proud battle to spread the Law.”

“The Soka Gakkai is the king of the religious world” — these words were Toda’s grand declaration of victory in his lifelong struggle for kosen-rufu. It was also a final roar — a call to his young successors — in the life of this great lion of a man. (p. 1897)