



## "Kokorokubari" (deliverance of attentiveness or mindfulness)

In Japan, they use the expression of "kokorokubari" in every day life. "Kokoro" means heart and "kubari" means deliverance.

"Kokorokubari" means attentiveness. Whenever we interact with other people, we are keenly aware of each other's expressed remarks, thoughts, demeanors and so forth. Even in a family, presence of "kokorokubari" makes a big difference. If both husband and wife consciously exercise their "kokorokubari" they would enjoy a peaceful relationship. In the business world, especially in the people-oriented services, "kokorokubari" to customers, clients and their employees can be one of the key elements if the business would succeed or not. This may be also true for the operation of a church.

The expression of "mindfulness" seems to have been spreading in the community at large, not only in the religious communities. It is said the expression is originated from Buddhism. I find the same elements of "kokorokubari" in mindfulness in the practice of faith.

Actually, the spirituality of mindfulness has been deeply ingrained in the everyday Japanese way of living. You might have used the expression of "arigato gozaimasu," "omedetou gozaimasu," "mottainai," "itadakimasu," "okagesamade," "osewani narimasu" and the list may keep on going. These expressions have been used by any common people, not just deeply religious people. When we use those expressions, we are consciously or subconsciously aware of indebtedness to others and any other identifiable or unidentifiable elements that help actualize the circumstances when we naturally pour out those expressions. We have been aware of elements that help us in one way or another.

When we say, "okagesamade" for the good health we enjoy, we are expressing our gratefulness to some greater power or elements that help us to keep enjoying our good health. If we can enjoy perpetual good health through our own endeavor alone, such as paying attention to our health, natural, organic foods consumption in the most nutritional manners; through our health-oriented body and mind exercises being done by millions people using billions of dollars and any other manners, but nobody can be sure we can continue to enjoy good health. We can witness many episodes of the uncertainty of good health we may take for granted. There can be an invisible, unidentifiable element that help and sustain our good health. Actually, this

spiritually-oriented mindfulness is one of the ingrained elements of the broad Japanese culture we may not be much aware of. We enjoy Japanese TV programs in Hawaii every day. In any day of the program, there can be one or two episodes in which people enjoy meals. During such occasion of food partaking, they always have the guests show the gesture of pressing their hands together and say "Itadakimasu." The regular English caption of "Itadakimasu" is "Let's eat." But the expression of "Itadakimasu" is a religiously-oriented expression.

In accordance with the Konkokyo practice, we extend this thought of partaking foods in appreciation of the blessed nature of foods being nurtured and brought to be served at the dining table through countless elements of blessings, such as the work of nature, hard work of farmers, distributions systems and the people who cook it. Basically majority of the Japanese may understand that every grain of rice can has the potential of producing thousands of grains. The simple act of eating can be expressed by the word "taberu," but we use the expression of "itadakimasu" which holds the context of partaking food with the heart of appreciation and gratefulness.

There are many other religiously mindful expressions in the everyday Japanese conversations. "Mottainai" or try to consume given gifts with the heart of appreciation and gratefulness and try not to waste any portion of the item, can also be one of those expressions of mindfulness.

But in the Konko faith community, the term "kokoro kubari" is used in a different manner. There are two instances of the expression "心配" in the Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures. The one is "Practice faith with a sincere and considerate heart (心配)" (II Kondo Fujimori 29). The other is "Direct the energy of your worried heart toward practicing faith instead, then you will receive divine blessings easily" (II Yamamoto Sadajiro 1-6).

As Konko believers, "kokorokubari" can simple be understood as attentiveness in identifying elements of blessings we enjoy from Kami-Sama knowingly or unknowingly. Waiting to get blessed is futile. We should actively exercise "kokorokubari" in identifying elements of blessings in our daily living, and we are to get blessed in all aspects of life.

In the Konkokyo faith community, the Founder Konko Daijin related to Jiroshiro Kataoka, "Those who practice faith should always pray with *miki* in their hearts. Then Kami will make any request come true.' Those who practice faith should not forget this. *Miki* means the three ki which are *arigataki* (gratefulness), *osoreo-ki* (awe), and *mottaina-ki* (reverence). If those who practice faith forget these three things, they will be able to receive divine blessings" (III Jinkyukyogoroku135).

The message is a good example of *kokorokubari* in our faith life.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Konko-Sama, the late Rev. Kagamitaro Konko used to express the thought of “*Sewani naru sebeteni rei wo yuu kokoro Heiwa unidasu Kokoroto ihan*” or to have the heart of wanting to express appreciation for any and all elements of blessings we enjoy is the heart that can contribute to promote peace. If we

try to apply the expression of mindfulness in the expressed thought of Konko-Sama, we can easily understand the message. Actually I have been introducing his identical extended thought in my prayer shared at the annual interfaith prayer meeting.

While I was at the Konko Church of Amagi for my spiritual training before I came to Hawaii, the Rev. Fumio Yasutake always reminded the student minister to exercise the heart of “Kokorokubari” or trying to exercise extended mindfulness in identifying blessed elements and respond accordingly in the daily living at the church. The shugyo practice at the church is a sort of exercising this spirit of “Kokorokubari” in such a meticulous manner that help us to remind the elements of divine blessings in the very living condition of the day to day living. The Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake, the founding minister of the church showed such an extreme mindfulness in using anything at all. He used only a limited supply of water for bathing, and used the wash-cloth in such a manner that the towel can last the longest. He even tried to use a portion of used papers for different purposes and maximized the given life of that paper which was to be thrown away.

At one occasion, while he was riding a train, and was eating lunch. Accidentally some grains of rice fell down onto the floor. He picked up that rice on the window sill of the train. When the train crossed a river, he put down that rice onto the river. The accompanied person asked what the reason for his strange act. He responded that the food once touched the floor is unsanitary for consumption, but that can be fed fish in the river. It may sound strange in today’s world, but that was the extent of his extended mindfulness for the blessed nature of rice, and try to fulfill the divine intention in such a seemingly minor element in daily living.

During autumn, the ginkgo trees in the church yard turned yellow and fell down on the ground. The leaves keep on falling down soon after the area was cleaned. A wise student minister tried to swing the bamboo sweeper over the braches and tried to shake off leaves. The Head Minister witnessed this act and chided that he should not disturb the natural falling down of the leaves just for his own convenience. He said let the leaves fall down on the ground naturally. This is also an example of “Kokorokubari” for the trees.

## Konko-Sama Says . . .

Although people live between heaven and earth, they are unaware of Kami's blessings. Shrines, temples, and houses all stand on Kami's land. Without realizing this, people consult the

Days and Directions and are disrespectful to Kami. They suffer hardships due to these offenses. Tenchi Kane No Kami has sent Ikigami Konko Daijin to provide blessings and teachings so that mankind may prosper. Kami is Kami because of man, and man is man because of Kami. Both are fulfilled through this mutual relationship. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 3)

## Bulletin Board

### Monthly Services for July, 2019

- 1 Mon -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 6 Sat -Sumer Ohana Camp Day 1(9am registration)
- 7 Sun -Sumer Ohana Camp Day 2(ends at 2 pm)
- 14 Sun -Monthly Service, Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)  
-KMH Volunteer Act. at Kuakini Hospital (9:30 am)
- 21 Sun -Monthly Memorial Svc & Back to School Svc (9 am)
- 27 Sat -KMH Ministers Mtg. at Honolulu Church (10:30 am)
- 28 Sun -KMH Faith Enrichment Mtg at HNL Church (10 am)  
-No Sunday Service at Wahiawa Church, join function  
At Honolulu Church.

### August 1 2019

- 1Thu -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)

### Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility will be made on Friday, July 12, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

### HCRP Meeting

The Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will hold the regular meeting on Monday, July 15, 2019 at Palolo Hongwanji Temple at 1:30 p.m.

### KMH Committee Meetings

The KMH Community Engagement and Outreach Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday on Friday, July 23 at 1:00 p.m. and the KMH-KCNA Joint Conference Committee Meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. at Konko Mission of Honolulu.

## Honoring the Mitama Spirits

### July

Shimeno Iwasa	7/1/1966
Kirsten Abe	7/3/2015
Wesly Katsumi Ooyama	7/4/1981
Randy Yamamoto	7/5/2014
Yasuo Hayashida	7/5/1998
Masao Yoshihara	7/12/2002
Robert Walker	7/15/2015
Masae Baba	7/20/1987
Rev. Yoshie Yoshino	7/21/2005
Asa Miyamoto	7/23/1933
May Shimao	7/30/2004



If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

## Insight into the teachings in “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “Voice of the Universe”

*The following are excerpts of series of an English translation of “Tenchi wa Kataru—Kanwa-shu” or “Compilation of Insight into the teachings in the Voice of the Universe” which contains 400 selected teachings from the original “Konkokyo Kyoten” or the “Konkokyo Scriptures.” Three authors, namely, the Revs. Mikio Seto, Yasushi Hata and Matsutarō Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 383, 384 and 385)*

**No. 383: Give teachings while weaving or while sewing a kimono. You will save people by giving teachings.**  
*(II Kashiwabara Toku 10-2 Kyoten page 475)*

### Save people by sharing the episode of blessing received.

Toku Kashiwabara made her initial visit to see the Founder in 1876. She started to the practice of faith and provided the service of Toritsugi-Mediation at Onomichi in Hiroshima in 1878.

The number of visitors to her Hiromae increased day by day in such a phenomenal manner. The regional Shinto priest responded to this unusual development in his district and tried to interfere with the religious work of Toku. He stated, "A person like you who has no official religious certificate should not have engaged in any religious activities." He took away monetary offering in the offertory box and envelopes from the desk. At one occasion, the local mountain ascetic priests invaded the Hiromae and took away offerings placed on the offertory tables.

When Toku went to see the Founder and related the matter, the Founder responded, "Let them take whatever they want. Stop praying if they tell you to. Give teachings without praying, while weaving or while sewing a kimono. You will save people by giving teachings." She persevered in that given condition and followed what the Founder related. Eventually, she saved many people who revered her by addressing, "Kashiwabara Konjin." Her influence advanced all the way to Innoshima Island in the Seto Inland Sea.

In this manner, those pioneer ministers had to deal with many difficult encounters and get engaged in their services to Kami-Sama. They never succumbed to these disturbances and suppressions from authorities and continued to help people based on their conviction that helping others was their primary objective.

Some of those ministers stayed in their services while weaving and sewing a kimono that sustained their own livelihood.

When I extend my personal thought about this aspect of the pioneering ministers, I should appreciate their endeavor and perseverance of their getting engaged in their services to Kami. Today, it has been regulated for ministers to get engaged in any income earning jobs and dedicate only to the services at their given conditions. We may have to appreciate the original intent of the organizational rule, but we also have to take a look at what has been developed in America and other countries. Some of those pioneering ministers who got engaged in their missionary work, they have started regular work to earn their livings during the weekdays and engaged in their services to Kami-Sama. In this manner, they helped their congregations and built their own churches.

If the way the ministers get engaged in their missionary work would become more flexible, it would also affect how the lay believers get engaged in assisting the operation of the church. I feel grateful in witnessing some leniency in the faith community that allows both ministers and lay believers to work together in promoting the Konko faith.

**No. 384: If you practice faith and receive divine blessings through someone's teachings, you should express your appreciation by teaching others in turn. This is the responsibility of a person who practices faith.** *(III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 26 Kyoten page 817)*

### Obligation for blessings received

The majority of believers might have initiated the practice of faith through their episodes of getting blessed. When we get blessed for our personal concerns, we feel so grateful for the work of Kami-Sama. But what matters is how we respond to the initial blessings received.

In Japan, they say, "Danger past, God forgotten." Some people who enjoyed the initial blessings received respond in such a manner that they would reform their way of living in line with the heart of Kami and enjoy advancement in their pursuit of faith. They also respond in search of how they would be able to extend their gratitude for the blessings received.

One day, Mimura Sano asked, "Konko-Sama, since I have been receiving many divine blessings, I would like to offer thanks to Kami-Sam. What could I offer that would please Kami-Sama the most?" Konko-Sama answered, "Mimura-san, if it were possible to give thanks to Kami-

Sama for your divine blessings by offering things, you would never be able to offer enough. Offerings such things won't make Kami-Sama happy, and he doesn't ask for them. Tell about the divine blessings you have received to those who are unaware of Kami-Sama's blessedness. Then those people will be saved. Giving thanks this way will make Kami-Sama most happy" (II Senda Shima 3). The pioneer minister and dedicated believers followed the words of Konko-Sama faithfully and got engaged in perpetuating the operation of the religious faith.

How do we get engaged in pursuit of faith? Have we extended due thanks to Kami-Sama for the blessings received? Have we fulfilled our due responsibilities as Konko believers? In those days, individualism in society has prevailed. We only care about ourselves and do not care much about other people.

A Konko minister once stated, "Do not ever pursue faith in such a manner as you would enjoy 'manjū' (steamed pastry buns filled with bean jelly in the privacy of a bathroom stall."

### C. Extending Kindness

**No. 385: One cold day, I met a pitiful old man on my way to the Hiromae. I felt so sorry for him that I gave him the clothes I was wearing. When I arrived at Hiromae, Konko-Sama said, "You received a splendid blessing today. When you met an unfortunate person, you felt pity for him and helped him wholeheartedly, putting your needs aside. The heart that feels pity is a heart of Kami. You are able to receive divine blessings through the heart of Kami. That is faith." (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 168 Kyoten page 875)**

### Compassion

The message is in "Jinkyu Kyogoroku" that is a compilation of messages related by Jirosiro Kataoka. As has been stated in the quotation, Jirosiro Kataoka met a poor elderly person on his way to see Konko-Sama. He reflectively responded to the circumstance and gave the man that was cold his own clothes to comfort him in compassion.

Jirosiro also suffered from the effects of the cold weather condition and arrived to see Konko-Sama. Upon his arrival, Konko-Sama responded to him by saying, "You received a splendid blessing today."

Our primary concerns are directed to our own well-being. While Konko-Sama was always concerned how he would

be able to serve Kami-Sama and helping people in need. Konko-Sama said to Jirosiro, "When you met an unfortunate person, you felt pity for him and helped him wholeheartedly, putting your needs aside." Konko-Sama's words to Jirosiro was just a reflection of his own dedication.

"Kawaii" in the original Japanese message refers to the heart of compassion, not the general meaning of lovely.

Even if we feel like helping others, it would not be easy to act in compassion while putting our needs aside. We can help others in blessedness. As Konko-Sama stated, "The heart that feels pity is a heart of Kami." Compassion is an external manifestation of Kami's work within ourselves. If we keep this activation of Kami's heart within ourselves, we are to get blessed in all aspects of our lives. "This is faith," Konko-Sama stated. When we get engaged in various volunteer activities, we would like to appreciate the heart of compassion.

### Visitors to Wahiawa Church



*Rev. Motoo Tanaka of Konko Church of Osaki came to visit on June 10<sup>th</sup>. He stopped over Hawaii on his way back to Japan after attending the 30<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for Late Rev. Fumio Matsui of Konko Church of San Francisco.*



*Congratulations Mr. Taiyo Kanemitsu who completed his studies at the University of Hawaii at West Oahu with a Bachelors in Business Administration with Concentration in Tourism. We are very proud of you! Taiyo and his family are members of the Konko Church of Takachiho in Miyazaki, Japan. He stayed at Honolulu Church for around 5 years.*