

Living the

LOTUS

Buddhism in Everyday Life

9
2017

VOL. 144

FOUNDER'S ESSAY

Taking Pleasure in the Joy of Others

I KNEW a person who once said to me that he made it a rule to never compliment other women in front of his wife. This was because, when he praised his mother's cooking, his wife took that praise as a dig against her own cooking, and it made her jealous.

Although this may be a little different from jealousy among members of the same sex, isn't it difficult to feel the joys of others as our joy, or to experience their sufferings and sadness as our own? Even if we can sympathize with another person's suffering, it's nearly impossible to be genuinely excited for a coworker, for example, who is complimented and singled out for promotion over ourselves. While the word "congratulations" issues from our lips, inside the thought comes to mind: "If

that person is the one who wins kudos, what about me?"

We carry around a magnifying glass, so to speak, through which we unconsciously find people's faults. Even when we come across a person who is obviously a cut above us, in our eyes we recognize them as only being about the same as ourselves. It's no wonder then, that we look down on people who are our equals as being far beneath us.

Isn't it true that the extent to which we can take pleasure in the happiness of others is a good barometer of the degree to which we have overcome our own self-centeredness?

From *Kaisozuikan* 9 (Kosei Publishing Co.), pp. 18–19

Living the Lotus Vol. 144 (September 2017)

Senior Editor: Shoko Mizutani
Editor: Eriko Kanao
Copy Editor: Allan Carpenter

Living the Lotus is published monthly by Rissho Kosei-kai International, Fumon Media Center, 2-7-1 Wada, Suginami-ku, Tokyo 166-8537, Japan.
TEL: +81-3-5341-1124
FAX: +81-3-5341-1224
Email: living.the.lotus.rk-international@kosei-kai.or.jp

Rissho Kosei-kai is a global Buddhist movement of people who strive to apply the teachings of the Threefold Lotus Sutra, one of the foremost Buddhist scriptures, in their daily lives and contribute to world peace. It was founded in 1938 by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano (1906–1999) and Rev. Myoko Naganuma (1889–1957). With the guidance of President Nichiko Niwano, Rissho Kosei-kai members actively share the Dharma widely and engage in peace activities both locally and internationally in cooperation with people from many walks of life.

The title of this newsletter, *Living the Lotus—Buddhism in Everyday Life*, conveys our hope of striving to practice the teachings of the Lotus Sutra in daily life in an imperfect world to enrich and make our lives more worthwhile, like beautiful lotus flowers blooming in a muddy pond. This newsletter aims to help people around the world apply Buddhism more easily in their daily lives.



PRESIDENT'S GUIDANCE

Sharing the Dharma with Others

by Rev. Nichiko Niwano
President of Rissho Kosei-kai

The Meaning of Sharing the Dharma

As we continue to learn the Buddha's teachings and put them into practice in our daily lives, we make the wisdom our own that enables us to accept and overcome the suffering we may be facing, no matter what difficulties or sorrows we may experience in the course of our lifetimes.

Furthermore, sharing with other people the Buddha's teachings that we have learned is a practice important to acquiring the wisdom and compassion that allow us to lead better lives.

The Rinzai sect priest Taido Matsubara (1907–2009), who in his lifetime was the author of more than a hundred books that make Buddhism more accessible to the general public, was a genuine Dharma-teacher. Rev. Matsubara said, about the meaning of teaching the Dharma, "Teaching the Dharma is not for the sake of others, but for your own sake." His saying so is because someone he looked up to as a spiritual mentor admonished him, "Our practicing *zazen* meditation and chanting the *nenbutsu* invocation cannot be for the sake of others, isn't that right? So everything we do must be for our own sake. Or do you forget that you are teaching the Dharma for your own sake?"

Sharing the Dharma, that is, faith dissemination, is a Dharma offering based on our wish that as many people as possible will know the truth and become happy, and at the same time sharing the Dharma is nothing else but diligence in cultivating the fields in our own hearts and minds.

Wisdom as Deep as the Sea

We cannot communicate to others what we ourselves do not know well. So in order to communicate something to other people, we need a certain degree of understanding about it. However, the sum total of our knowledge and experience is quite small. Most important, therefore, in sharing something with others is that we have the humble attitude of "I myself do not know so much."



Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures that we chant as part of our sutra recitation contains the verses, “We take refuge in the Dharma. / May we, with all living beings, / Embrace the riches of the sutra and / Make our wisdom as wide and deep as the sea.” Indeed, because we ourselves do not know much, we always hope and vow to “make our wisdom as wide and deep as the sea.” These verses also teach us that, in order to acquire the Buddha’s wisdom as appropriate to any given situation, we should value the connection we have to others and never forget the attitude of learning something from everyone. The phrase in the verses “with all living beings, embrace the riches of the sutra” conveys this point to us.

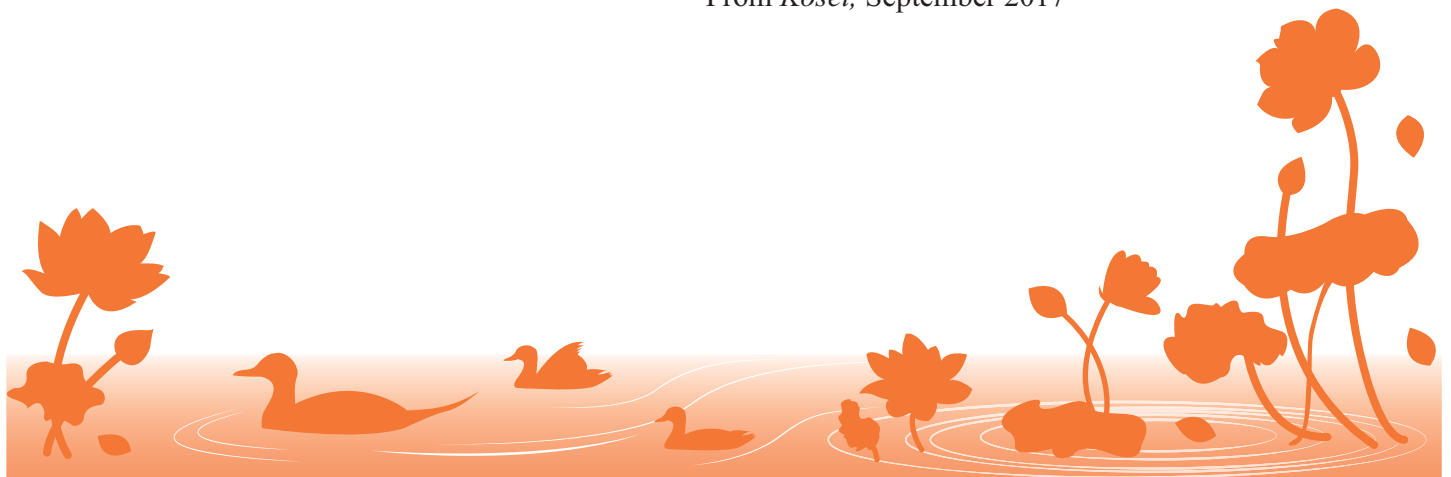
I have heard it said that the more that you try to teach, the more the fountain of wisdom dries up, and the more that you desire to learn, the more wisdom flows forth from it. So, regardless of the content of what you want to communicate, you should have the attitude of listening attentively to others and learning something from them, instead of the mind only of teaching them and communicating your knowledge to them. Then, from within you, the appropriate words and ways of expressing consideration for others that can be readily understood—that is, the fountain of wisdom that allows you and others to lead better lives—will flow forth.

Recently, when I listened to a high school student make a speech of religious affirmation, I learned anew the important points in communicating to others from his candid and refreshing speech about what had impressed him. Simply stated, nothing resounds in people’s hearts as much as sharing with them, frankly, your pure feelings of gratitude, happiness, and joy.

When we employ this idea in terms of our daily lives, it means finding many things for which to be grateful and continuing to share them with other people, doesn’t it? And therein lies the attitude of never losing a sense of gratitude, as well as the source of happiness and joy in everyday life. Then, always having a bright, cheerful outlook means being someone that others want to emulate as you achieve the personal magnetism that cannot fail to inspire others. That is, in and of itself, one form of disseminating the faith.

When we think about it, being thankful is something that only human beings can do. I hope that, based on this realization, we all will continue sharing with others the many things for which we are grateful.

From *Kosei*, September 2017



Spiritual Journey

Finding the Path to Follow

by Ms. Jeanell Jordan
Oklahoma Dharma Center

*This Dharma Sharing (Spiritual Journey) was presented
at the Sunday service, held at the Oklahoma Dharma Center.*

I BECAME a member of the Oklahoma Dharma Center in 2002. My first visit to the Dharma center was to participate in a class that a friend of mine was teaching on how to play the didgeridoo (a wind instrument developed by Aboriginal Australians) for meditation. At the end of the evening, Rev. Kris Ladusau, minister of the Oklahoma Dharma Center, gave me a tour of the Dharma center and gave me a copy of the book *Invisible Eyelashes* by Founder Nikkyo Niwano. I went home and read it in one sitting and realized there really was a name for how I had tried to live my life, and that was Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhism.

I had not been to a religious service of any kind since I was thirteen years old and here I was at forty-eight, feeling as though I had always known these teachings. As a child, I was taught to put my hands together to pray to make sure that all family members would stay well. I was always scared that if I forgot someone's name during prayer, the person might die. This was traumatic to me. When I first came to the Dharma center, I could not put my hands in *gassho*. It was after my trip to Tokyo in 2006, participating in a group pilgrimage (*dansan*) to Rissho Kosei-kai's headquarters, that I was finally able to place my hands together without any fear.

From the very first time I came to the Dharma center, I felt like I was home. That feeling has never gone away. For the first time in my life, I had a Path to follow. Growing up, if there were any difficulties in my family, I never had a way to work through them. Now, I have learned Dharma skills to help me.

My father and I never related well to each other.

He was a very racist man and was publically vocal about it, which always caused problems between us. He was also verbally abusive to my mother. When he became ill, I was able to rely on the teachings of the Dharma to help me be there for him. I held his hand and chanted the *dharanis* for him as he was dying.

My mother's dementia progressed rapidly after he passed. I was primary caretaker for her. My practice of the teachings helped me cope with the death of my parents. Earlier in my life, when



Ms. Jordan plays a shakuhachi (bamboo flute) at a farewell party for the participants in the Dharma Training Seminar for Leaders, in Tokyo, on July 22, 2017.

Spiritual Journey

stressful situations occurred, I would turn to alcohol to cope. I no longer needed the alcohol because my practice was my support.

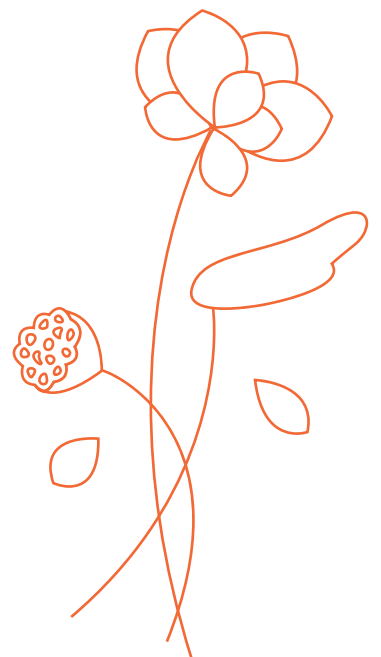
My life is better now than it has ever been. Because of Rissho Kosei-kai, I have had opportunities to travel and learn that I would never have had any other way. My life is filled with overwhelming gratitude.

I am so grateful that my sangha has always been there for me through all the changes in my life, especially during the years that I cared for my parents. From the very beginning of joining the Dharma center, I had made the decision to go as far in the studies and training as possible. I am very excited to participate in the upcoming Dharma Training Seminar for Leaders for 2017 and 2018, which will be held at the Tokyo headquarters. I love going to Japan. It feels like a second home to me.



Ms. Jordan describes her spiritual journey in the Oklahoma Dharma Center.

*My life is better now
than it has ever been.
Because of Rissho
Kosei-kai, I have had
opportunities to travel
and learn that I would
never have had any
other way. My life is
filled with
overwhelming gratitude.*



Childcare lifeline

I Am a Mother Who Has a Son Who Is a College Student

Q

When my son was a high school student, even though he attended a cramming school after high school classes, he would come back home by 11:00 p.m. at the latest. However, since entering university, he has begun to work a part-time job after college classes, and sometimes returns back home around two or three in the morning. I cannot have dinner with him, nor much time to talk with him; therefore, I have been concerned and worried about him, and wondering whether college life or his relationship with his friends are going well, without any problems.



A

Parents feel serious anxiety about their sons and daughters, no matter how old their children are or what kind of endeavors they're undertaking. In your son's case, he must have been brought up full of your love and affection, and in that sense, he has already gained the strength to try to take on a variety of challenges. Although you might be concerned about him, why don't you take a step back and accept him for what he is, someone who has been striving with his best efforts, and continue to watch over him, while considering what he really wants to do? By doing so, your son will be able to attain more power, allowing him to live a strong life.

It is quite natural for a college student to embrace different opinions or ideas than those of his parents, changing his mind from the perspectives he used to have. To acknowledge and recognize the differences between parents and children leads to mutual connections and understanding. As a parent, you may sometimes feel lonely for a moment, but on the other hand, you will be demonstrating that your son is making his own decisions, and steadily walking his path on his own. Once human beings are esteemed by others, they are supposed to behave responsibly as a result.

At any rate, you are tremendously worried about the health of your son, who is living such a tough life,

coming back home around two or three o'clock in the morning. That's why, whenever you have a chance to see him each other, it should be all the more important for you to tell him your sincere desire that he takes good care of himself, saying, "I'm just terribly anxious about your health, really." There are many students who are leading their college lives at places far away from their parents and hometowns. As for the rest, all you have to do is to place confidence in, watch over, and to wait for your son. Humans would not be able to betray other people if they found that others trusted in them.



(Answers provided by the Tokyo Research Institute for Family Education)

"Childcare Lifeline" is produced every month with the cooperation of the Tokyo Research Institute for Family Education. The institute believes that changes for the better in parents' thinking and behavior will also bring about changes in their children. The institute holds lectures and seminars for parents throughout Japan and in other countries and also offers parents personal counseling on childrearing. Since its foundation in 1975, the institute's programs have helped parents and children grow spiritually together to create harmonious, happy homes.

Embracing Your Desire as a Parent

YOUR son has begun to prepare to lead his own life, entering the world of work through his social experience to earn some money by working part-time job. In that sense, he is indeed a wonderful son with a most positive spirit of independence.

The period of being a college student is the time when he should begin to shape his own way of living, in preparation for the future, which is coming soon. At such a time, what you can do for your son as a parent is to trust your son and to let him handle his own matters; he has been striving to stand on his own two feet, and his parents need to resolutely embrace their desire for him.

Our founder teaches us what kind of desires or prayers parents should hold in their minds toward their children as follows: “The desire/prayer from parents to their children has to be the one in accord with Universal Intention in order for children to grow up and become such people that can be of a truly great help for others and society in the light of each child’s human nature, occupations, and stances” (*Yakushin*, October 1983).

Humans are supposed to walk on their own, and take possession of their own lives. Why don’t you trust, back up, and support your son as a parent, embracing the strong desire for him to be the kind of person who will be greatly helpful to other people and society as well?

(Editorial supervision by the Department of Dharma Education & Human Resources Development, Rissho Kosei-kai)



Please give us your comments!



We welcome comments on our newsletter *Living the Lotus*.

living.the.lotus.rk-international@kosei-kai.or.jp

My Diary of Gratitude

I CAN hardly wait to see the morning every day. What I look forward to is opening my diary book and writing down the encounters of the previous day before offering the sutra recitation.

I have been keeping my diary for more than twenty years, but it has become a diary of gratitude for the last ten years.

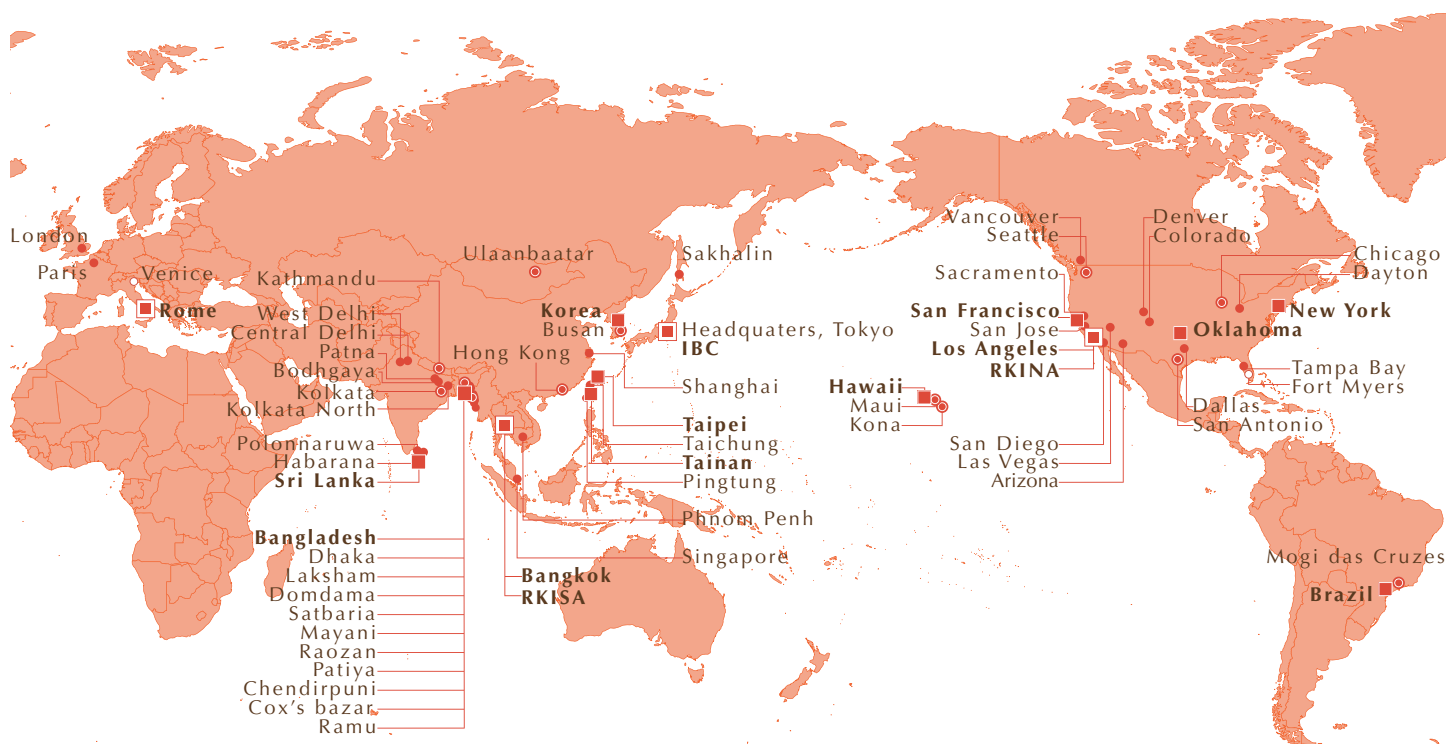
I write down three or four things and inspirations which I experienced on the previous day. It is easy to remember negative experiences and regretful events, but it requires some effort to recall things for which we should be thankful, or to find precious value in even a casual event. Even though I may wake up with a gloomy feeling, my mind becomes peaceful and filled with joy and energy when I am writing down things that inspired a feeling of gratitude in me. Then I am able to recite the sutra more mindfully. A wonderful day begins with my diary of gratitude. That is why I can hardly wait to see the morning.

The practice of expressing gratitude nurtures the mind that enables us to accept daily events, which we are apt to take for granted, with gratitude.

I am truly blessed because I could encounter the Buddha Dharma in my life and also I am able to become aware of happiness in the here and now.

Rev. Shoko Mizutani

Director of Rissho Kosei-kai International



Rissho Kosei-kai Overseas Dharma Centers

2017

Rissho Kosei-kai International

3F Fumon Media Center, 2-7-1 Wada, Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Tel: 81-3-5341-1124 Fax: 81-3-5341-1224

Rissho Kosei-kai International of North America (RKINA)

2707 East First Street Suite #1 Los Angeles
CA 90033 U.S.A.
Tel: 1-323-262-4430 Fax: 1-323-262-4437
e-mail: info@rkina.org http://www.rkina.org

Branch under RKINA

Rissho Kosei-kai of Seattle's Buddhist Learning Center
28621 Pacific Highway South, Federal Way, WA 98003, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-253-945-0024 Fax: 1-253-945-0261
e-mail: rkseattlewashington@gmail.com
http://buddhistlearningcenter.org/

Rissho Kosei-kai of Vancouver

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of San Antonio
6083 Babcock Road, San Antonio, TX 78240, U.S.A.
P.O. Box 692148, San Antonio, TX 78269, USA
Tel: 1-210-561-7991 Fax: 1-210-696-7745
e-mail: dharmasanantonio@gmail.com
http://www.rkina.org/sanantonio.html

Rissho Kosei-kai of Tampa Bay
2470 Nursery Road, Clearwater, FL 33764, U.S.A.
Tel: (727) 560-2927
e-mail: rktampabay@yahoo.com
http://www.buddhismtampabay.org/

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Church of Hawaii

2280 Auhuhu Street, Pearl City, HI 96782, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-808-455-3212 Fax: 1-808-455-4633
e-mail: info@rkhawaii.org http://www.rkhawaii.org

Rissho Kosei-kai Maui Dharma Center
1817 Nani Street, Wailuku, HI 96793, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-808-242-6175 Fax: 1-808-244-4625

Rissho Kosei-kai Kona Dharma Center
73-4592 Mamalahoa Highway, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-808-325-0015 Fax: 1-808-333-5537

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of Los Angeles

2707 East First Street, Los Angeles, CA 90033, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-323-269-4741 Fax: 1-323-269-4567
e-mail: rk-la@sbcglobal.net http://www.rkina.org/losangeles.html

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of Arizona

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of Colorado

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of San Diego

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of Las Vegas

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Center of Dallas

Rissho Kosei-kai of San Francisco

1031 Valencia Way, Pacifica, CA 94044, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-650-359-6951 Fax: 1-650-359-6437
e-mail: info@rksf.org http://www.rksf.org

Rissho Kosei-kai of Sacramento

Rissho Kosei-kai of San Jose

Rissho Kosei-kai of New York

320 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-212-867-5677 Fax: 1-212-697-6499
e-mail: rkny39@gmail.com http://rk-ny.org/

Rissho Kosei-kai of Chicago

1 West Euclid Ave., Mt. Prospect, IL 60056, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-773-842-5654
e-mail: murakami4838@aol.com
http://home.earthlink.net/~rkchi/

Rissho Kosei-kai of Fort Myers

http://www.rkftmyersbuddhism.org/

Rissho Kosei-kai Dharma Center of Oklahoma

2745 N.W. 40th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73112, U.S.A.
Tel & Fax: 1-405-943-5030
e-mail: rkokdc@gmail.com http://www.rkok-dharmacenter.org

Rissho Kosei-kai, Dharma Center of Denver

1255 Galapago Street, #809 Denver, CO 80204, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-303-446-0792

Rissho Kosei-kai Dharma Center of Dayton

425 Patterson Road, Dayton, OH 45419, U.S.A.
http://www.rkina-dayton.com/

Rissho Kosei-kai do Brasil

Rua Dr. José Estefno 40, Vila Mariana, São Paulo-SP,
CEP 04116-060, Brasil
Tel: 55-11-5549-4446 / 55-11-5573-8377
Fax: 55-11-5549-4304
e-mail: risho@terra.com.br http://www.rkk.org.br

Rissho Kosei-kai de Mogi das Cruzes

Av. Ipiranga 1575-Ap 1, Mogi das Cruzes-SP,
CEP 08730-000, Brasil
Tel: 55-11-5549-4446/55-11-5573-8377

Rissho Kosei-kai of Taipei

4F, No. 10 Hengyang Road, Zhongzheng District, Taipei City 100, Taiwan
Tel: 886-2-2381-1632 Fax: 886-2-2331-3433
http://kosei-kai.blogspot.com/

Rissho Kosei-kai of Taichung

No. 19, Lane 260, Dongying 15th St., East Dist.,
Taichung City 401, Taiwan
Tel: 886-4-2215-4832/886-4-2215-4937 Fax: 886-4-2215-0647

Rissho Kosei-kai of Tainan

No. 45, Chongming 23rd Street, East District, Tainan City 701, Taiwan
Tel: 886-6-289-1478 Fax: 886-6-289-1488

Rissho Kosei-kai of Pingtung

Korean Rissho Kosei-kai

6-3, 8 gil Hannamdaero Yongsan gu, Seoul, 04420, Republic of Korea
Tel: 82-2-796-5571 Fax: 82-2-796-1696
e-mail: krkk1125@hotmail.com

Korean Rissho Kosei-kai of Busan

3F, 174 Suyoung ro, Nam gu, Busan, 48460, Republic of Korea
Tel: 82-51-643-5571 Fax: 82-51-643-5572

Branches under the Headquarters

Rissho Kosei-kai of Hong Kong

Flat D, 5/F, Kiu Hing Mansion, 14 King's Road,
North Point, Hong Kong, Republic of China

Rissho Kosei-kai of Ulaanbaatar

15F Express tower, Peace avenue, khoroo-1, Chingeltei district,
Ulaanbaatar 15160, Mongolia
Tel: 976-70006960

e-mail: rkkmongolia@yahoo.co.jp

Rissho Kosei-kai of Sakhalin

4 Gruzinski Alley, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk
693005, Russian Federation
Tel & Fax: 7-4242-77-05-14

Rissho Kosei-kai di Roma

Via Torino, 29-00184 Roma, Italia
Tel & Fax : 39-06-48913949
e-mail: roma@rk-euro.org

Rissho Kosei-kai of the UK

Rissho Kosei-kai of Venezia

Castello-2229 30122-Venezia Ve Italy

Rissho Kosei-kai of Paris

86 AV Jean Jaures 93500 Tentin Paris, France

International Buddhist Congregation (IBC)

3F Fumon Media Center, 2-7-1 Wada, Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Tel: 81-3-5341-1230 *Fax:* 81-3-5341-1224

e-mail: ibcrk@kosei-kai.or.jp <http://www.ibc-rk.org/>

Rissho Kosei-kai of South Asia Division

3F Fumon Media Center, 2-7-1 Wada, Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Tel: 81-3-5341-1124 *Fax:* 81-3-5341-1224

Rissho Kosei-kai International of South Asia (RKISA)

201 Soi 15/1, Praram 9 Road, Bangkapi, Huaykhwang
Bangkok 10310, Thailand

Tel: 66-2-716-8141 *Fax:* 66-2-716-8218

e-mail: thairissho@csloxinfo.com

Branches under the South Asia Division

Rissho Kosei-kai of Central Delhi

224 Site No.1, Shankar Road, New Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi,
110060, India

Rissho Kosei-kai of West Delhi

66D, Sector-6, DDA-Flats, Dwarka
New Delhi 110075, India

Rissho Kosei-kai of Kolkata

E-243 B. P. Township, P. O. Panchasayar,
Kolkata 700094, India

Rissho Kosei-kai of Kolkata North

AE/D/12 Arjunpur East, Teghoria, Kolkata 700059,
West Bengal, India

Rissho Kosei-kai of Bodhgaya Dharma Center

Ambedkar Nagar, West Police Line Road
Rumpur, Gaya-823001, Bihar, India

Rissho Kosei-kai of Patna Dharma Center

Rissho Kosei-kai of Kathmandu

Ward No. 3, Jhamsilhel, Sancepa-1, Lalitpur,
Kathmandu, Nepal

Rissho Kosei-kai of Singapore

Rissho Kosei-kai of Phnom Penh

#201E2, St 128, Sangkat Mittapheap, Khan 7 Makara,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Thai Rissho Friendship Foundation

201 Soi 15/1, Praram 9 Road, Bangkapi, Huaykhwang
Bangkok 10310, Thailand

Tel: 66-2-716-8141 *Fax:* 66-2-716-8218 *e-mail:* info.thairissho@gmail.com

Rissho Kosei-kai of Bangladesh

85/A Chanmari Road, Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Tel & Fax: 880-31-626575

Rissho Kosei-kai of Dhaka

House#408/8, Road#7(West), D.O.H.S Baridhara,
Dhaka Cant.-1206, Bangladesh

Tel: 880-2-8413855

Rissho Kosei-kai of Mayani

Mayani(Barua Para), Post Office: Abutorab, Police Station: Mirshari,
District: Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Patiya

Patiya, sadar, Patiya, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Domdama

Domdama, Mirsarai, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Cox's Bazar

Ume Burmese Market, Main Road Teck Para, Cox'sbazar, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Satbaria

Satbaria, Hajirpara, Chandanish, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Laksham

Dupchar (West Para), Bhora Jatgat pur, Laksham, Comilla,
Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Raozan

West Raozan, Ramjan Ali Hat, Raozan, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Chendirpuni

Chendirpuni, Adhunagor, Lohagara, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Rissho Kosei-kai of Ramu

Rissho Kosei Dhamma Foundation, Sri Lanka

No. 628-A, Station Road, Hunupitiya, Wattala, Sri Lanka

Tel: 94-11-2982406 *Fax:* 94-11-2982405

Rissho Kosei-kai of Polonnaruwa

Rissho Kosei-kai of Habarana

151, Damulla Road, Habarana, Sri Lanka

Other Groups

Rissho Kosei-kai Friends in Shanghai