

Message
Chōyū Ōtani (Shaku Shūnyo)
The 26th Abbot, Shinshū Ōtani-ha

July 1, 2020

On this occasion, I have assumed the solemn responsibility to succeed to the position of the 26th Abbot of the Shinshū Ōtani-ha in response to the trust placed upon me by our fellow seekers across the country and overseas districts.

First of all, I express my sincerest respect and appreciation to the former Abbot Chōken Ōtani for his consummate dedication to his duties as Abbot in continuing to listen to the teaching and maintain the Shinshū Honbyō and our denomination. For the past twenty-four years, he has cultivated and nurtured deep relationships with our fellow seekers.

In retrospect, it was about ten years ago when I was appointed as the Overseas District Abbot and Associate Abbot (a family member of the Abbot entrusted with the key to the shrine of Shinran Shōnin). In 2014, I had the honor to be chosen as the successor to the Abbot. Since I grew up in Brazil and had little experience in the tradition of our denomination, I was filled with anxieties in carrying out my duties. But thanks to the tremendous support extended to me by many people, I have been able to perform my responsibilities to this day.

As I take on this new responsibility, I am determined to devote my entire life to listen deeply to the teaching of Jōdo Shinshū, to the duties of officiating services to express our respect to our spiritual forebears on the Buddhist path, and to work towards the realization of a society based on the spirit of fellow seekers, under the principles of our Constitution, which clarifies and defines the spirit of the *Dōbōkai* movement.

In 2023, we will observe the 850th Celebration of the Birth of Shinran Shōnin and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of Jōdo Shinshū. Regarding that auspicious event as an important opportunity, I will devote all of my energies to propagate the teaching of *Namu Amida Butsu* even more widely throughout the world. On this occasion, I humbly ask for your continued support and cooperation.