

## **Five Requests & Five Practices** (Sermon Feb. 13, 2022)

Good morning! Happy Sunday in this New Week of Kami's blessings! Thank you very much for joining today's service. This is our monthly service for February 2022. I hope all of you stay safe and are in good health & in excellent spirits.

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I would first like to extend a birthday greeting to a special friend, Mr. Ben Vose. Feb. 7 was his 84th Birthday. Ben was the fourth-grade homeroom teacher for our oldest son, Mitsunori, when we were in Portland. That was back in 1994. Since then, our friendship has deepened. For many years he had edited my English writing. He now is in Senior Living. Still he kindly sends his precious donations to KC Chicago every month.

Ben, Happy Birthday! We continue to pray that you are in good health and in excellent spirits for many more years.

I have recently been talking about my deeper understanding of the Divine Reminder. Kami revealed the Divine Reminder to our founder in his most critical time. At that time, he clearly realized Kami's parental heart. Like our founder, I have realized Kami's parental heart more deeply through the coronavirus pandemic by seeking Kami's heart more precisely, instead of fearing it.

As a parent, Kami cares for each one of us, more than we care for ourselves. Kami bestows unconditional love to us humans; we are being cared for by our immortal parents. When we depend on Tenchi Kane No Kami for all things, nothing is impossible. However, by not giving requests to Kami we humans cannot feel protected. People who don't pray cannot realize what's to happen in the future.

Kami is waiting for us to pray to Kami for everything with sincerity. Kami's wish for us, as children of Kami, is to pray for everything and reach closer towards praying for Kami's wish to be fulfilled.

With this deeper insight of Tenchi Kane No Kami as the Divine Parent, I have reached such a natural understanding of the Divine Reminder:

**Through Divine Mediator, to Divine Parent of the Universe,  
Let us pray for everything with all our heart. Then,  
Since Kami's blessings depend upon our peaceful & joyful heart,  
Kami is requesting we deepen the peace & joy in our hearts.  
On this very day, pray for our mutual fulfillment.**

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We can think of the Divine Reminder, in our hearts, at any time and at any place. The design of the Divine Reminder in Japanese is as follows:

**Divine Parent of the Universe** is at the center. Underneath it is written *pray with all our heart*. **Divine Mediator** is written at the right side of **Divine Parent of the Universe**. *Kami's blessings depend upon our own peaceful & joyful heart* is written at the left side of **Divine Parent of the Universe**. Then to the left of it is: *On this very day pray*.

Through this design, we can easily imagine the worship hall of our Konko headquarters and each church. The mediator usually sits at the right side of the worship hall and Kami's altar is always placed at the center. While imagining the Divine Reminder in our heart, we can seek the Mediation of Ikigami Konko Daijin and pray to Tenchi Kane No Kami for everything. We can do it at any time, at any place, by our own, and continue developing our relationship with Kami more and more deeply.

As for praying for everything, I now realize the importance of 'The Five Requests & The Five Practices' which is recited in Chicago every day at every prayer service.

Here are the five requests:

1. That we may be physically healthy.
2. That we may have a peaceful home.
3. That we may have families thrive and prosper.

4. That I may awaken to see that which Kami asks of me and rise to my calling of true service.
5. That we may contribute to the fulfillment of Kami's wish to create the Wagakokoro era.

Here are the five practices:

That we may carry out the practices of going to church, listening to teachings, praying regularly, training the spirit and with these accepting all happenings as blessings.

Shodai Otsubo Soichiro Oyasensei taught us, "The five requests are what we have to pray with our family and should be recited whenever we offer our prayers. He also taught us the desires of Kami and the desires of humans would be achieved when 'The Five Requests' would be fulfilled.

Whenever Shodai Oyasensei wrote the Saishi Prayer for the Grand Ceremonies at KC Airaku, he told us that the following prayer should be included at any time. Here is what we called, *Shodai's Prayer*:

While praying for the Five Requests,  
may we test and manifest the philosophy of Airaku  
with our daily worship, listening to teachings, and  
offering prayers on a regular basis,  
with our spiritual training, and trying to insert  
the Divine Will into our everyday tasks.

By so doing, may great blessings please be allowed  
each & every day, month after month, year upon year.

With such blessings may a faith so true be manifest  
without sickness, poverty or conflict,  
sparkling in goodness, beauty and truth,  
prospering for generations to come.

Shodai Oyasensei received the following words from Kami:

*Exquisite joyfulness sprouts with richness.*

Prosperity not based on joyfulness is equal to a fragile, sandy castle. Real richness should be accompanied by exquisite joyfulness. We can come to realize exquisite joyfulness when we understand Kami's wish through every happening. And, even though there are disappointing things or inconvenient happenings, we can deepen our heart through them.

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By reciting *The Five Requests* and following *The Five Practices*, let us deepen peace & joy in our heart by respecting and being grateful for each & every happening in our life as Kami's sacred doing. When we can achieve this, we come to taste life without poverty, strife or sickness and live in a world of truth, goodness and beauty.

With such exquisite joyfulness in our heart, let us work together to establish the era of peaceful joyful hearts, so all people in the world can attain true world peace.