

# OCTOBER 28

October 28 Visits

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## Seichoji Temple (also referred to as “Kiyosumi-dera”)

### SEICHOJI TEMPLE (ALSO REFERRED TO AS “KIYOSUMI-DERA”)

Seichoji Temple is where The Holy Priest Nichiren Shonin came to study Buddhism when he was twelve. Seichoji was originally associated with the Tendai Sect in 836. In the early Edo period, the temple was converted to the Shingon Sect, and then the Nichiren Sect in 1949. After leaving to study in places such as Kamakura and Kyoto, Nichiren returned in 1253 at the age of 32 and established his own doctrine.

Seichoji is also home to the Thousand Year Cedar (Sennen Sugi), a Nationally Designated Natural Monument. Also, Asahigamori, which is located within the temple grounds, has been nominated as one of Japan's Top 100 Most Beautiful Sunrise Spots.



“More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body. The most valuable of all are the treasures of the heart.”

— Nichiren Daishonin, The Major Writings Of Nichiren Daishonin

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## Mantra Meditation Experience

### MEDITATION EXPERIENCE

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Nichiren Buddhists practice a form of mantra meditation. Mantra meditation is a kind of meditation that uses a phrase (mantra) to aid focus. Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a form of mantra meditation that is similar but using mantras associated with Hinduism as opposed to Buddhist philosophy. The mantra that Nichiren Buddhists use is "Namu myoho renge kyo."

The form of meditation used in Zen, more akin to Mindfulness Meditation, involves the stopping or slowing of discursive thought in order to allow your deeper nature to come to the forefront, to harmonize your mind with your true self. (Zen meditation uses the term "void" where Nichiren Buddhists use "true self.") Mantra meditation follows a similar premise, but rather than stopping thought, a mantra is used to redirect thoughts and shut out incompatible thoughts. The method is more about realigning of attention. Zen meditation attempts to accomplish the same thing, however, there is more focus on settling the mind, whereas Mantra meditation is more focused on redirecting the mind. Mantra meditation is both stopping discursive thought and redirecting attention at the same time, in other words, using two tools to accomplish a goal.

The positive effects of meditation, including mantra meditation, have been studied and documented. Even though meditation in general has been shown to have great positive influence, what a person meditates on is also of significant importance. Nichiren Buddhists say, especially to themselves, think and believe has a significant influence on how we feel, who we are, and what we do.



Repeating any positive phrase will have a positive impact, but the more powerfully positive the phrase, the more we believe what we're saying, the more mental energy we expend on it, and the more we stand by it, the more influence it will have over us. Given that what we think and believe affects our actions, the philosophy by which people live is also of significant importance.

Nichiren Buddhism is a form of Mahayana Buddhism named after the priest Nichiren, who devoted his life to the enlightenment and happiness of the entire universe. His basic story is similar in a couple of respects to the historical Buddha credited with the original teachings of Buddhism. Concerned with the suffering of the people all around him, he dedicated years of his life to seeking a way to eliminate their suffering.

“One should become the master of one's mind rather than let one's mind master him.”

— Nichiren Daishonin, *The Major Writings Of Nichiren Daishonin*