



AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES

NEWSLETTER

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The Main Hall of Zenshuji filled with many students and friends for the Ordination Ceremony on October 22, 1989

SENSEI BECOMES A ZEN PRIEST AT THE ZENSHUJI TEMPLE.

On October 22, 1989, from 1:30pm, Furuya Sensei received the Shukke Tokudo Shiki or Ordination Ceremony to become a Zen priest under the guidance of Reverend Bishop Kenko Yamashita of the Sotoshu Hokubei Betsuin Zenshuji Temple.

There were about 175 people attending the ceremony with about 140 people attending the reception for Sensei afterwards in the lower community room. Most of the guests were students of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles. Other guests were from the Zazenkai of Zenshuji Temple, the Urasenke Tea Ceremony group under Madame Sosei Matsumoto and members of the Nanka Token Kai (Southern California Sword Society). This is only the second of such ceremonies in the 70 year history of Zenshuji and a very rare ceremony indeed to witness.

Shukke Tokudo is the formal ceremony in which

one leaves the secular world to become priest. In this case, under the direction of Bishop Yamashita. In the ceremony, one makes prostrations (or greetings) to Shakyamuni Buddha and one's teacher and bids farewell to his parents. At that time, he makes a pledge, his head is shaved, symbolizing renunciation of the secular world, and he receives his new name. Furuya Sensei's name comes from the first character of his teacher's name (Kenko) or "Ken" and the first character of his own given name, "Masa" or "Sho," becoming "Kensho."

Furuya Sensei has been undergoing a special training session of 100 days under the guidance of Reverends Hakuji Kuroyanagi and Koshin Honda.

Although renouncing the world, Sensei will continue to teach Aikido and Iaido at the dojo while continuing his training and beginning work at the Zenshuji Temple. He will continue with his tea ceremony training and continue publishing various articles and magazines. An important element of Zen training is to enter a special training temple in Japan but it is also important to

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realize the practice of Zen within one's daily life as well. Sensei will continue to teach Aikido as part of his expression of his Zen training. Indeed, he firmly believes that his training under Yamashita Sensei at Zenshuji will greatly further his ability to teach Aikido well to his students.

As the first and second generations of Japanese Americans in this country are disappearing, so is their heritage and the cultural traditions they brought with them from Japan. There is a generation gap with the younger generations of Japanese Americans who do not speak the language and have no background or interest in their heritage. If this continues, many of the institutions established in this country from the turn of the century will gradually disappear too. In order to prevent this, it is necessary to re-introduce this heritage and cultivate an interest in the cultural traditions of Japan here in this country. Within this context, many Americans who have had a strong and enduring interest in Japanese culture must also not be neglected. Furuya Sensei hopes to bridge this gap through his work at the temple. Because of this, it is all the more important for him to continue his teaching at his dojo and persevere further in his studies within the various arts.

MESSAGE FROM SENSEI:

First of all, I want to thank all of my students who worked so hard to prepare the reception and who attended my Ordination Ceremony on October 22nd. I also want to thank everyone for their patience and continued loyalty during the busy time of my training at the Temple and during the busy preparation period just before the ceremony.

The Ordination Ceremony marks an important stage in my personal life. To become a priest has been a long time personal aspiration but I never thought I would have the opportunity or the means to achieve it. I was so happy when Yamashita Sensei accepted me as his student and I am so happy to work with the many wonderful teachers and priests at the Temple. It is a tremendous learning experience for me.

I think some students must be afraid that I will quit teaching Aikido. Some friends are afraid that I may stop writing about swords for the Southern California Sword Society. I will continue my present work. Actually, I wish to throw myself back into teaching Aikido more. The only thing that has really changed is my shaved head!

Teaching is a way to serve people. To be priest is also a way to serve people. This is what I love to do the most. and this is what I have made my life's work and this is what I will continue to do from now on.

What has made me happier than becoming a priest is to realize what fine and excellent students I have. (Of course, I always knew it.) I received so many compliments about my students at the Temple, especially how hard they worked to clean the lower community room, how well they set everything up for the reception (The smallest details were perfect.) and how well behaved and well mannered everyone was throughout the entire Ceremony. Usually, during a normal service, one priest told me that they always hear people talking and moving around, but, during the Ordination Ceremony, everyone was so quiet. They said this is very unusual and this excellent kind of behavior is not seen often these days. Even many tea ceremony teachers who attended the Ceremony were so impressed with everyone's behavior and manner. I believe this is an excellent compliment for everyone in the dojo and shows how much you have learned and how well you are doing yourselves in your Aikido training. Please keep up the good work. You may not realize it yourselves but your training shows in your posture, gait, mental attitude, outlook, appearance, etc. and you appear to most people and everyone around you as very special.

Also, to see everyone work together so very well with each other and to see each person generously give up his time and energy for another person is the essence of Aikido, I believe. This is what O-Sensei was trying to teach. Never forget this spirit. Please continue to train hard because I am so proud of everyone of you.

Again, I hope I can have you kind support and encouragement from now and in the future. I still am just a novice priest with a great deal to learn. And, I am trying to fit this into my already busy schedule at the dojo and for the United States Aikido Federation Newsletter and the Nanka Token Kai.

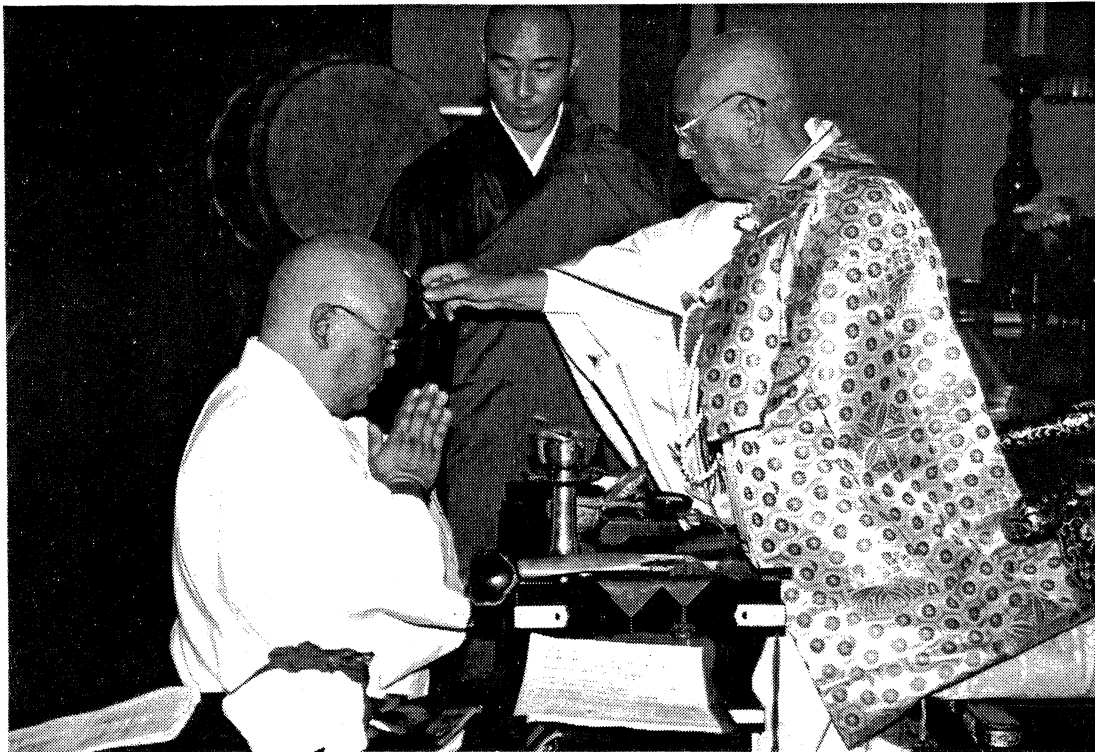
As you can see, I have a great deal of confidence in each and every one of you and I know that, if you continue your training as you have been doing, you will make great progress and achieve your dreams.

In Zen, there is a saying, "Everyday is a good day." Make each day a good day. And see even bad days as good days. Be grateful for everything around you. Be thankful for what you have. And, despite the difficulties before you, always go a step at a time without ever giving up. I think this is where Aikido and Zen meet. If a poor Aikido teacher like me can become a priest under a great teacher, then everyone can achieve their aspirations as well.

Thanks again for so much.

With all my prayers,

Kensho Furuya



Reverend Bishop Kenko Yamashita shaving the head of Furuya Sensei as Kuroyanagi Sensei looks on. This is one of the most important moments of the Ordination Ceremony.

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All the Reverends and guests outside of Zenshuji after the Ordination Ceremony on October 22, 1989. Among some of the special guests were Koen Sensei, a nun visiting from Japan, Madame Sosei Matsumoto Sensei, of the Urasenke Tea Ceremony, Kiyoharu Omino Sensei, Director of Public Relations of the Nihon Token Hozon Kyokai, Tokyo, Japan, and Dr. Nathan Rosenbloom, Vice-President of the Nanka Token Kai. There were nearly 150 guests in attendance including many students from the dojo.

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**All the Reverends of Zenshuji. Top row left to right: Koen Sensei, Bishop Kenko Yamashita, Kenko Furuya, and Keiho Jo Sensei. Bottom row left to right: Koshin Honda Sensei, Nobuyoshi Fukushima Sensei, Howard Miyoshi Sensei and Hakuji Kuroyanagi Sensei.
October 22, 1989.**

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YOUNG CITIZENS MARTIAL ARTS CONGRESS

Our dojo represented Aikido at the Young Citizens Martial Arts Congress on September 16, 1989, in Westwood. We would like to thank the following students for their participation.

Douglas Firestone
Kaz Nishida
Victor Rodriguez
Mitsuko Yoshimoto
Jim Graves
Ron Hill
Yasushi Matsuki
Morgan Weisser
Ken Watanabe
Charles Armijo
David Nava
Mark Francis
Gary Myers

CONGRATULATIONS TO MANUEL ALMAGUER

Congratulations are in order for Mr. Manuel Almaguer who graduated from the Rio Hondo Police Academy (Class 95) on November 3, 1989. Mr. Almaguer in a first degree black belt and one of the senior members of the dojo.

NEWS ITEMS

On September 17th, Mr. Douglas Firestone and Mr. Gary Myers demonstrated Iaido to about 150 seniors citizens at the Keiro Kai ("Respect Senior Citizens Club") luncheon held for senior citizens at the Zenshuji Temple. They enjoyed the demonstration very much.

Mr. Tony Gonsalves, a senior student of the dojo, visited us for training from his new home in Florida, from September 28th through October 3rd. He took and passed his black belt test on September 30th.

Furuya Sensei entertained close to fifteen guests from Japan during the month of October. Many of the guests were teachers from Japan for the Japanese Sword Convention, Nihon Token Hozon Kyokai, in Los Angeles from October 21st through the 22nd. Master Takahiro Ichinose and Master Shinjiro Miyajima, both great artists in Japan, visited the dojo and commented that they were so happy to see such a Japanese style dojo in this country where it is disappearing in today's modern Japan. They hope to visit the dojo again sometime in the future.

MASTER HSU CHI WILL VISIT THE DOJO

Master Hsu Chi, one of the foremost teachers of Chinese kung-fu and Tai Chi Chuan in this country will give a introductory seminar on November 11th and 12th at the dojo. All members are invited to participate. This seminar is open to members of the dojo only. It is the first time he will be teaching exclusively Aikido students and this is an experimental program which we hope will be successful. The fee is \$25.00 per person.

Sensei met Master Hsu at the International Martial Arts Exposition in Oakland around 1975. Master Hsu is formally a professor of Chinese classical philosophy and literature at the University of Taiwan and has written extensively on Chinese martial arts. Last year, he travelled across Mainland China and visited many areas where no outsider has been for decades. He will talk about his trip to China as well. He is one of the great martial artists of this country and this is why Sensei has invited him to the dojo to teach his students.

Seminar Schedule:

Saturday, November 11, 1989

9:00am to 12:00pm Noon: Chen Style Tai Chi Chuan

1:30pm to 4:30pm: Miao Dao "Willow Sword" technique.

6:30pm: Welcome Party for Master Hsu.

Sunday, November 12, 1989

10:00am to 1:30pm: Applications of Kung Fu.

**2:00pm: Luncheon for Master Hsu
(Optional, but students are welcome to join us.)**

Monday, November 13, 1989.

Master Hsu returns home.

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NOVEMBER 1989 SCHEDULE

November 5th.

Tea Party at the Pasadena Buddhist Temple celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Sei Sa Kai tea house in their Japanese garden. Attended by Sensei and Mr. Douglas Firestone.

November 11th and 12th.

Special Seminar by Master Hsu Chi at the dojo.

No regular classes during this weekend.

Iaido Class is cancelled today.

November 18th.

Shogun Santa Parade for the Children's Class in Little Tokyo.

November 19th.

Grand Opening Ceremony for the "Mizuya" or "preparation room for tea" on the first floor of the dojo by Matsumoto Sosei Sensei and the Sei An Kai.

November 23rd.

Thanksgiving Holiday. Morning Class only.

November 26th.

Aikido and Iaido Demonstration at the Japan Expo at the LA Convention Center. Everyone is invited to participate. Please see Mr. Firestone for details.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please note the following training schedule changes:

Sundays

Children's Class: 8:00am to 9:00am.

Beginning and Open Classes: 10:30am to 11:30am.

Effective as of November 1, 1989.

New Year's Party

We would like to plan a New Year's Party for sometime in mid-January, 1990. We would like to get some volunteers together to begin preparation please see Sensei for details.

There will be a Special New Year's Practice on December 31, 1989 from 11:30pm to 12:30am, January 1, 1990. Everyone is invited.

SPECIAL WORD OF "THANKS"

The dojo would like to express its thanks to the following members for all of their help preparing the reception hall for the Ordination Ceremony on October 22nd. Many people helped and please let us know if we did not include your name in this list. We will enter it in next month's issue.

Special thanks goes to Junko and Ron Hill for the donation of the beautiful flowers. Special thanks also goes to Ms. Kyoko Arai and Mr. Alex Takagi of the Zenshuji Zazenkaï for preparing extra food, tea, coffee, etc. and helping with the serving. Mr. Takagi made the delicious "udon" noodles and Mrs. Arai prepared the "musubi" rice balls. Ms. Arai also made two white kimono especially for Sensei's Ordination.

(Names not in order.)

Charles Armijo
James Doi
Mark Francis
Douglas Firestone
Andrea Guild
Ron Hill
Junko Hill
Gary Inouye
Sukkoo Lee
Norm Lew
Tom McIntyre
Yasushi Matsuki
Henrique Morimura
Kaz Nishida
Rick Newsome
Chirs Prejean
Keith Perske
Victor Rodriguez
Lorraine Rowan
Lennie Senibaldi
James Sims
Steve Stephanides
Steve Tarrango
Keiko Tomatsu
Larry Tuzan
Esther Tudor
Edgar Viado
KenWatanabe
Ron Waddy
Tom Wyngarden
Dan Yoshimura