

In November 1981, after a memorable guidance tour to Shikoku, I returned to Osaka to attend the Third Kansai General Meeting. At that time, our young Kansai members, Hearts blazing and brilliant as the sun, told me that “we’re going to make our culture festival an event that will let the world know that the Gakkai is here! And that our mentor is as vigorous as ever! A hundred thousand Kansai youth division members are waiting for you, Sensei!”

Right after the New Year of 1982, I went to snowbound Akita Prefecture to offer Guidance and encouragement to our members, and there launched a battle against the three obstacles and four devils there. I threw myself into the forefront of the struggle, like a lion, determined to topple the malign forces that sought to destroy Buddhism. That initiative was a signal to all our members, inspiring them, too, to fight and speak out.

From an essay by Daisaku Ikeda appeared on WT 5/28/99

At the start of 1982, on a freezing Jan. 10, I traveled to Akita Prefecture in northern Japan. Twenty years had passed since that guidance tour to snowy Akita.

At the time, **our members in Akita, together with those in Oita Prefecture, Kyushu, had just weathered the crazed persecutions of villainous priests who dared assume the Banner of “Correct Faith”** [the Shoshinkai (Correct Faith Association) priests]. I had visited Oita in December, and I was determined to visit Akita next.

Some advised me to wait until spring. However, in the midst of a struggle, delay can be fatal. One must always quickly act and take the initiative to open a way forward to victory.

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As I traveled by car from Akita Airport to the Soka Gakkai’s Akita Culture Center, our indomitable Akita members at several points along the way welcomed me. Each time, I got out of the car to speak to them—our encounters becoming an unforgettable outdoor discussion meeting in the snow.

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In Akita, the plotting of unscrupulous priests began about 1977 or 1978. How deeply their actions distressed our members in Omagari and Noshiro, in particular!

The priests there coldly announced that they would not conduct funeral services for Soka Gakkai members. They said the deceased would go to hell, and they refused to confer posthumous names. If members did not like it, they said, they could leave the Soka Gakkai and join the temple organization.

This was a stab in the back—an incredibly vile, cowardly way to treat the people who had made such generous offerings to the priests. This was all the more despicable given the valiant way in which the Soka Gakkai members in this northern rural area of Japan, with its deeply entrenched customs, had persevered in faith despite encountering Prejudice and misunderstanding from their neighbors and relatives.

But our Akita members fought back against these heartless priests. As the Roman poet Virgil writes, “You must not give way to these adversities but must face them all the more boldly wherever your fortune allows it.” The nameless heroes of Akita did as the poem urges, and women, men and youth alike courageously struggled to protect the great citadel of Soka.

From an essay by Daisaku Ikeda WT 02/22/02

Snowing January, 1982.



Guidance trip in Akita, northern Japan where priests attacked Gakkai members hard. President Ikeda had a determination to visit Akita after Oita, Kyushu, the southern part of Japan. In six days he met almost 10,000 members.

March 22, 1982

Under clear blue skies, **the six-story pyramid was formed** on that historic, noble ground. Members in one section of the stands held up cards to spell out a colorful, giant “Youth, Scale the Mountain of Kosen-rufu of the 21st Century!”

The fourth level of the pyramid rose.
Slowly and surely, the fifth rose.

At 3:06 p.m., the young man alone on the top stood up and lifted his face to the heavens. He cried out the name of his deceased friend and shouted, “We did it!” Holding up both arms, he was a picture of life’s boundless dignity.

At that instant, members in the stands, with their cards, spelled out in scarlet letters on a golden background, “The Kansai Spirit.” The pyramid stood triumphantly against the cloudless blue skies of Ever-victorious Kansai as tumultuous cries of victory rang out.

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As I recall, **it was two or three days after the culture festival that I received a message from the head temple to go immediately there. The high priest, infamous for his vindictive jealousy, had summoned me.**

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