

# Shoyo Sensei's Dharma Message

**“Thankfulness and Happiness Go-Hand-In Hand:  
When there is Thankfulness is, Happiness is.  
When Happiness is, Thankfulness is.**

One of the oldest Buddhist texts, called “The Greatest Happiness Sutta,” says:

“ . . . being content and grateful,  
This is the greatest happiness.”

SACBC, asked the Alameda Food Bank to send two big barrels. It is for the “Food Offering.” “Food” this time means imperishable and non-fresh foods such as cans or dried noodles. First we offer them to the Buddha, then move them into the barrel. When barrels are filled with these foods, we donate them to the Alameda Food Bank. Several years ago, it took several months to fill one barrel, but now, it takes only a few weeks to fill two barrels. The Buddha said, “The more we do DANA, the better we become in doing DANA: We are definitely becoming better in DANA!

To think of it, we are blessed with tremendous amounts of things. We are given not only material things, but also much freedom, skills, health, security, and safety, And yet, we do not even know it. We hardly appreciate that we have them already. When we have a sense of appreciation of having all these things, we feel happy and positive, and this happiness and positive energy enhances kindness and compassion to others.

The following passage will give us deep appreciation and thankfulness, make us happy, and encourage us to be nice to others.

## THANKFULNESS

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you should be thankful, for there are the million who won't survive the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation, you should be thankful, for there are 20 million people around the world who experience these dangers.

If you can work without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or even death, you should be thankful, for there are more than almost three billion people in the world who have such fear.

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your rack, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealth. 68% of the people in New Orleans do not have any saving account.

If you can hear this message, you should be thankful, for there are over two billion people in the world that cannot hear anything at all.

If you can hold someone's hands, hug them or even touch them on the shoulder, you should be thankful because you are offering healing touch of Amida's Wisdom and Compassion.

You should be thankful so many ways you may never even know.

If you are feeling thankful, repay the thankfulness bestowed unto you and do something for others.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you should be thankful because the majority can, but most do not.

Thankfulness cannot be kept within you.

If it stops with you, then the thankfulness will disappear. The thankfulness will only keep working if it is continuously passed around. If you are a recipient of thankfulness, keep the thankfulness working by being the source of thankfulness to other people.

Namu Amida Butsu,

Shaku Shoyo