

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1961

(January—March)

Jan. 1 —According to the Japan Bible Society, some 1,887,000 copies of the Bible were distributed during the year 1960 (Nov. 1959—Oct. 1960).

Jan. 3 —The Dalai Lama's mother and brother arrived in Tokyo unexpectedly. They were welcomed by the National Council for Tibetan Problems.

Jan. 10 —The abbot of Kōdō Kyōdan, the Rev. Shōdō Okano, left for India, Ceylon and Nepal to visit places hallowed in Buddhist history. —The chief abbot of the Nishi Honganji Sect, the Rev. Kōshō Ōtani met with Prime Minister Ikeda, and the Ministers of Education and of Foreign Affairs. He urged the government to take the necessary steps to realize the spirit of Article 9 of the Fundamental Law of Education which provides that religion must be duly respected.

Jan. 11 —The Council for Interfaith Cooperation sponsored a meet-

ing for the 1958 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Rev. Dominic Pire, O.P. (49) of Belgium. During his stay in Japan, Father Pire was received in audience by Emperor Hirohito, met Prime Minister Ikeda, lectured to a Tokyo audience of 1200 persons, spoke on the radio, and appeared on TV.

—A party led by the Reverend Gyōin Hashimoto, abbot of Yakushiji Temple, left for India to study present-day Indian Buddhism.

Jan. 12 —According to the Chūgai Nippō, Nishi Honganji is planning to build a branch temple in Brazil, the new capital of Brazil.

Jan. 14 —The abbot of Myōshinji (Rinzai Zen), the Rev. Taikō Furukawa, returned from the U.S.

Jan. 15 —Mrs. Sayo Kitamura, the foundress of the so-called Dancing Religion (Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō) left for America. (This is Mrs. Kitamura's third trip since 1952).

Jan. 17 — Higashi Honganji has built a new broadcasting station,

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—The Sino-Japanese Christian Exchange Society has started its work at the Christian Center in Ginza, Tokyo.

—The Oblate Fathers' Our Lady of Hope Seminary (Tokyo) was dedicated.

Jan. 21 —The National Cultural Conference, a group consisting mainly of "progressives," had a discussion on such subjects as: interference with freedom of faith, the labor movement and the new religions. The meeting decided to oppose any attempt to place the Ise Shrine and other shrines under governmental administration.

Jan. 23 —The Religious Peace Association submitted a letter to the General Assembly of the United Nations urging international control of nuclear weapons.

Jan. 24 —The 7th Congress for Rural Youth sponsored by the National Association of YMCAs opened in Tokyo. The main aim of the congress is to promote the modernization of villages.

Jan. 26 —The Cultural Interchange Institute for Buddhists sponsored a lecture by M. Rene de Berbal, editor of "France-Asie," at Tsukiji

Honganji in Tokyo.

Jan. 28 —President Daisaku Ikeda of Sōka Gakkai departed on an 18-day tour of Southern Asia.

—The Japan Buddhist Nuns Association was established. The Association has a program of extensive activities for the benefit of nuns and lay women.

Jan. 30—A memorial service for Mahatma Gandhi was held in Tokyo under the auspices of the Indian Embassy.

Feb. 1—The Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō) observed the 15th anniversary of its founding.

—It was reported that the first regularly scheduled Roman Catholic television program began in Osaka (Station YTV). Now shown twice a month, it is expected to become a weekly program. News was released that a new Catholic Information Center opened in Kyoto. Its purpose is to interest non-Christians in the Catholic Church. A modern 4-story building in downtown Kyoto, the Center offers stereo-music concerts, English classes, and a gift shop.

Feb. 5 —Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan

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(United Church of Christ in Japan) has decided to build a center of its own which is to include the offices of affiliated organizations.

Feb. 6 —Rishō Kōsei Kai opened a course to train its group leaders in new methods of propaganda.

Feb. 9 —The Indian Ambassador, on behalf of the Indian Government, presented about 190 scientific books to the Tokyo Ramakrishna Vedanta Association.

Feb. 16 —Dr. Shin-ichi Hisamatsu of Hanazono University in Kyoto has received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for a two year study of Zen.

Feb. 22 —The Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō) has initiated a campaign to collect signatures to promote legislation prohibiting the defamation of the Imperial Family.

Feb. 27 —On the occasion of the 750th anniversary of Saint Hōnen, founder of the Jōdo Sect, the Emperor bestowed upon him the honorary posthumous title of "Wajun Great Master" (Wajun Daishi). Commemorative services are to be observed both in Tokyo and Kyoto in the following months.

Mar. 1 —The 32nd anniversary of the founding of Seichō no Ie (House of Growth) was observed at the Tokyo headquarters.

Mar. 2 —The annual convention of the Myōshinji Sect (Rinzai-Zen) approved a reorganization which includes approval of the marriage of monks which hitherto has not been permitted.

---Dr. John A. Mackay, former president of Princeton Theological Seminary, who is on a round-the-world lecture tour, arrived in Tokyo.

Mar. 7 —The Ōsaka District Court has found several members of Sōka Gakkai guilty of violating the election law in connection with the Upper House election of 1957.

Mar. 10 — The Nishi Honganji Sect opened the first of two mammoth celebrations (*Daionki*) in commemoration of the 700th anniversary of the death of the founder of Shin Buddhism, Saint Shinran.

Mar. 12 ---A report of the Constitution Research Committee on the status of the Emperor points out some ambiguities in the present regulations concerning the status

of the Emperor, e.g., his relation to Ise Shrine, and concludes that a clarification of this point is necessary.

Mar. 15 —The Yakushi-dō of Tōshōgū, Nikkō, a national treasure and one of the representative temple buildings of the Edo period, was damaged by fire.

—A service commemorating the 1,360th anniversary of Prince Shōtoku was celebrated at the Shiten-nōji Temple, Ōsaka. About 10,000 people attended.

Mar. 16 —The Japan Buddhist Association made a gift of two bells to Tibetan refugees in India.

Mar. 19 —A new library building at International Christian University, Mitaka, Tokyo, was dedicated.

Mar. 22 —The Women's Association of the World Federation of Buddhists was established at Nishi

Honganji, Kyoto. The Federation reports some 530,000 members, including 50,000 in Nishi Honganji organizations in Japan and 30,000 in North and South America, Hawaii etc.

Mar. 23 —The National Christian Council of Japan at its 14th general assembly approved the union of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

Mar. 28 —According to Mr. Kobayashi of the Education Association of Christian Schools the number of students attending Christian schools has increased by 170% in the last 9 years. It is difficult to get Christian teachers. The percentage of Christian teachers in these schools is only 56%.

Mar. 30 —A 4-story wing with 105 beds was added to the Catholic hospital, Seibo Byōin, in Tokyo.