

404. On the First Harvest of the Year

I HAVE received . . . *koku* of rice. Since this represents the first harvest of the year, I have respectfully reported it in the presence of the Lotus Sutra. Please arrange a meeting and convey my most sincere gratitude.

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The twenty-first day of the tenth month

Presented in reply

Background

Neither the year of writing nor the recipient of this letter is known. Because part of the letter is missing, the exact amount of rice given in offering to Nichiren Daishonin is unclear. Having received this offering of rice from

the first harvest of the year, apparently from someone other than the recipient of this letter, the Daishonin expresses his gratitude and asks that his thanks be conveyed.



405. Reply to the Lay Nun Matsuno

I AM hated by the people of this country of Japan. No one comes pushing his way [through the snow] to where I am, and yet you have shown such kindness in thinking of me! It is as wonderful as fire from a stone or a lotus blossom in the flames—some-

thing extremely rare, rare indeed!

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The twenty-first day of the first month

Reply to the lay nun Matsuno

Background

This is a reply to the lay nun Matsuno, the wife (or mother, by another account) of Matsuno Rokurō Saemon-no-jō. Though the year of this letter is unknown, it was written by Nichiren

Daishonin at Minobu to thank the lay nun for the offerings she had sent. He expresses praise and appreciation, calling her consideration something extremely rare.



406. Reply to Nishiyama

FOR some time now, thinking of your next existence, you have been very sincere in your search for the way, and accordingly I have instructed you in the terminology alone. With regard

to such terminology, you should seek further explanation from your fellow practitioners. Since it is easy to understand, such a course requires no great expenditure of wisdom, no great ex-