

AMATSU TATARA TAIKAI – IRELAND August 2nd – 4th 2009

Dear students

I hope you are all well and enjoying happiness in your lives.

As Martial Artists we are not complete if we are devoid of the balance of Bumon and Shumon. Our teacher has said this so many times. Grandmaster Shoto Tanemura has dedicated his life not just to the study of Martial Arts and ancient wisdom traditions but to the spread of this knowledge to his students through the Genbukan. He has given openly and freely to those who would share his heart so that they may avail of a wonderful freedom and benefit society. This gate is now open to all.

Sensei has said many times that God is our father and that as a teacher Sensei teaches us this same way with the love and kindness of a father. Sensei taught me one time that when our children are born on this earth we have the same heart towards them that God has for all humans. This teaching reveals to us how much God loves us. Like a parent to a son or daughter. Even as we age, and make mistakes God forgives us with a kind heart just like a father forgives his children and sees them in the light of a loving parent. Often we smile at the memory of simple things, moments when we share in our children's' happiness such as the wind gently catching our daughters hair or when a son catches the humour in unison and we laugh together. Such memories are important for our spirit but we must see that they are equally important for God. When we are away from our children the memories are endearing and we wait until wondrous tones of joy and laughter fill our presence. There is inner peace and happiness when we are all together again. How God must muse at our foibles and misgivings awaiting our return.

When words are written with kindness of heart poetic fluidity embraces the quill and words become alive in time and space. Such words are beneficial and beautiful, thriving and flourishing and filled with grace and freedom creating circumstance where the writer will sojourn from place to place upon the parchment and with freedom bring words to light and life. This however cannot and moreover will never compare to the teacher's words heart to heart. A student who has become part of the perfect circumstance sitting in front of the teacher and embracing the words that enter the heart like water into sand. Kotodama; The light inside the words. These teachings are only truly heard one time and perceived perhaps only once. Our Grandmaster bestowing evenly to all, reminiscent of the sun shining all over the Earth, each person receiving whatever the heart will ingest. It is important for the student to sit in front of the teacher for it is only he that can carefully place the words upon our hearts. We may then consider that there is much more to see and that our lives are shared. There is so much in our time that is sacrificed for material wealth that in truth has no value. There is much propagated by the modern world that cannot fulfil us anymore and it is becoming an incumbent part of every aspect of everyday life all over the world, but our world is changing and we have to wake up. Older generations have values that are fast becoming distant and are anathema to modern times. There are values therefore preserved in older generations from all walks of life and from all nations and we must embrace the beauty of their years and see how generations before us survived with dignity and happiness. Ancient people were closer to God and could appreciate why they lived on this Earth. History for that reason is a teacher colossal and ancient knowledge preserved is our guide. How can we know the spirit if we do not know why we are here. It is at the oracle of Delphi where we find the same inference through the oracular verse of Apollo 'know thyself'. How terrible it must be to forget our past and eventually our nature. Through a simple perusal of history we can see how modernity has allowed us a somewhat inconsiderate eminence of our human nature. We have become self righteous and ignorant where in fact we should attract to ourselves only that which is honest and good. Each fault is simply a catalyst for the next fault until eventually it becomes terminal and disastrous and much more than a weak human condition will allow us to escape from. Our inconsiderations therefore have blinkered our view of

the ancient world where the wise would aid us on our path and guide us on the road to the divine. Modern times have brought us many good effects but there is greed that appears inexorable and impossible to sate but history teaches us that the philosophers of old did not gorge on the largest meal. They simply enjoyed the tastiest morsel!

We have guidance through our spirit guardians but how often today do we recognise their efforts and say thank you. Grandmaster Tanemura tells us so often that we must be thankful for all that we receive. An appraisal of our lives in reflection daily is difficult as we may not want to face the truth. That however is the goal that we must attain in order to truly appraise our lives. It is easy for us to become heavy burdened with hapless thoughts and profane ideas. Ill-fated and endeared to the sloth (not the animal, one of Gods creatures, but the expression analogous of its temperament and characteristics) an endearment that is somehow seen as becoming of human nature in modern times. It is time now to look towards the heavens and the magnificence of creation. Accepting freedom is accepting God. Occasionally acceptance can be an ecstatic moment and a joyous release but often misunderstood just like the knowledge that allows us see the sunrise. The dawn that brings freedom. This comprehension is held within the words of the teacher that are transmitted heart to heart Master to student. These are the words of wisdom, the words of truth. The words that open the gates and give us our freedom. How lucky in our lifetime that we can sit in front of our teacher and receive the knowledge direct heart to heart.

A prodigious time has come where the knowledge of the Grandmasters will be shared and our chance to balance that which we strive to become in Bumon the Martial gate and Shumon the Spirit gate.

Time although boundless is upon us once more and we verge towards a remarkable experience with our teacher Grandmaster Shoto Tanemura. The world's first Amatsutara tai-Kai has received an enormous response to date. It is a great honour for us that many of you will be travelling with your families and friends. We will greet you all with 'cead mile fáilte' (one Hundred thousand blessings) and make certain that you all enjoy the warmest Irish welcome to our shores. Our greatest honour of course is in the delight we have together where we may avail of times shared. A rare occasion historically where all people as one may include in their lives the wisdom of the Amatsutara tradition. A wisdom that transcends time and relates throughout the ages to all.

We have the chance to witness, through the teaching of Grandmaster Shoto Tanemura 58th Grandmaster of the Amatsutara tradition, a wonderful knowledge unfold. Our world is changing and in time many occurrences may endeavour to prevent us from reaching the truth. In our time we may endure hardship and observe many changes in the world that will appraise our resolve and reveal our nature, but our true nature as a human being is to develop and grow in the light of Gods law and our path to this as a Martial Artist is through the teachings of our Grandmaster and the Amatsutara tradition.

Thank you all

Yours Sincerely

Martin O'Raghallaigh

Kyoshi