

### **Misogi Practice at Joraku-an**

On July 28, Kotaro Hiruta Sensei, head of Ichikukai Misogi Dojo in Tokyo, came to Dai Bosatsu Zendo to dedicate the new *kamidana* [Shinto shrine] in the Joraku-an zendo, thereby inviting genuine misogi practice to take place on this Mountain. He was accompanied by his students, Anekoji-san, Kuchiishi-san, Adam Sorkin, and Yuho Carl Baldini, as well as members of Brooklyn Aikikai. *Misogi-no-kokyu-ho*, a Shinto practice, purifies the body and mind, and trains the hara [tanden] through deep exhalations and vigorous chanting, mostly the syllables, "To ho ka mi e mi ta me!" Early the following morning, as the sun crested the ridge, Hiruta Sensei, dressed in the traditional garments of a Shinto priest, dedicated the kamidana. Afterwards, nearly three dozen people - including Eido Roshi, the esteemed guests, and DBZ residents - performed the first misogi practice in front of the new altar. The kamidana - complete with the traditional salt, water, and sake offerings - replaces the Buddha statue as the main item of reverence in the zendo. Over the course of several months, Yuho, Ryugan Robert Savoca Sensei, and other members of Brooklyn Aikikai, and Andrew Gregory of DBZ wonderfully refurbished the room's woodwork in preparation for this event, and to make the space more suitable as a place for practice. Thanks to the karmic interactions between DBZ, Ichikukai Dojo, and Brooklyn Aikikai, misogi practice has the chance to sprout on Dai Bosatsu Mountain. Outside of Japan, it is practiced only at Hiruta Sensei's residence near Edwards, New York and at Brooklyn Aikikai's dojo. So it is quite special that DBZ can act as a refuge for this unique spiritual tradition. Fittingly, the old zendo of Joraku-an - the epicenter of so much spiritual energy 30 years ago - will once again serve as a place of intense practice.