

## Giant Straw Sandals

A gigantic pair of traditional straw sandals hang on the wall of the corridor to the right of the Great Buddha. The sandals are 1.8 meters long, 0.9 meters wide, and each weighs 45 kilograms. Sandals of this kind were first presented to Kotokuin Temple in 1951 by the Children's Association of Matsuzaka-cho in Hitachi Ota City, Ibaraki Prefecture. At the time, Japan was still recovering from World War II. The message sent by the children to accompany the sandals was this: "We pray that the Daibutsu will walk throughout Japan, working for the happiness of everyone." Every three years since 1956, the same children's group has made a new pair of giant straw sandals and presented them to Kotokuin.