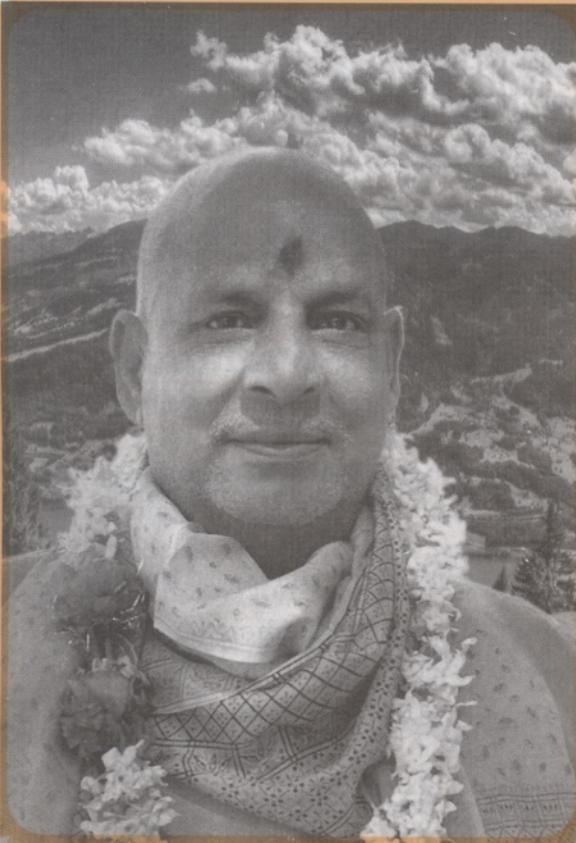




The DIVINE LIFE



O Wanderer
in this Samsara!
Return, return to your
original home of pristine purity
and divine splendour. Within is the
Light of lights. Why dost thou roam?
The mind and senses are duping you.
Hear not the voice of the mind. Turn
within, gaze within. Meditate on thy
innermost Self and drink the
nectar of Immortality.

Swami Sivananda

DECEMBER 2019

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art Satchidananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute).
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

—Swami Sivananda

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

You should always try your level best to speak the truth at all costs. You may lose your income in the beginning but in the long run, you are bound to be victorious. You will realise the truth of the Upanishads—“Truth alone shines, but not falsehood.”

Even a lawyer who speaks the truth in law courts, who does not coach up false witnesses may lose his practice in the beginning but later on, will be honoured by the judge as well as the client. Be truthful. You will have a peaceful death. Do not kill your conscience in order to have comfortable living and to please your wife. Life here is evanescent and like a bubble. Aspire to become divine. The various formulae—Ahimsa is the highest of all virtues; speak the truth and do virtuous actions; do unto others in the same way as you wish others to do unto you; love thy neighbour as thyself—are all best calculated to develop the moral aspect of a human being.

Swami Sivananda



THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. LXXVIII

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No. 9

PRASNOPANISHAD

TRITIYA PRASNA (QUESTION III)

KAUSALYA AND PIPPALADA

उत्पत्तिमायतिं स्थानं विभुत्वं चैव पञ्चधा ।

अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते विज्ञायामृतमश्नुत इति ॥१२॥

12. He who knows the origin, the entry, the seat, the fivefold distribution of Prana and its internal state in the body, obtains immortality, yea, attains immortality.

महागुरुवर्णमातृकास्तोत्रम्

MAHAGURU-VARNA-MATRIKASTOTRAM

(Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri)

अज्ञानान्ध्यमपास्य सात्विकगुणानुद्भाव्य भक्तव्रजं

विज्ञं कर्तुमनारतं कृतमतेरन्यूनतेजोनिधेः ।

प्रज्ञावैभवनिर्जितामरगुरोरात्मज्ञचूडामणे –

विज्ञानाप्तिकृते पदाब्जममलं सेवे सदा सद्गुरोः ॥१॥

1. To be blessed with the Supreme Knowledge, I always worship the holy lotus feet of Sadguru, who is the crest-jewel among the knowers of the Self, who excels Devaguru Brihaspati in wisdom, who is abode of luster and who is constantly engaged in making his devotees wise by dispelling their darkness of ignorance and instilling divine virtues in them.

आत्मानात्मविवेचनं जनिमतामानन्दसन्दायकम्

आशापाशनिकृन्तनं निखिलहृदोषापहं शान्तिदम् ।

आनन्दानुभवप्रदा निरुपधिः संतृप्तिरित्यादिका –

नादेशान्हृदि धत्त देशिकमणेर्ज्ञानाम्बुधेर्मानवाः ॥२॥

2. O Men! Enshrine in your heart the instructions of Sri Gurudev such as – “The discrimination between Atman (Self) and Anataman (Non Self) bestows happiness; the cutting of the noose of worldly passions removes all the evils of mind and gives peace; and the absolute contentment blesses one with the experience of Bliss.

(To be continued)

INDIAN CULTURE BASED ON THE BHAGAVADGITA¹

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

The essence of true culture lies in its being based upon a spiritual sense of values and a spiritual outlook on life. The assertion of the essential divinity of man is the heart of Indian culture. The civilisation of India rests on inner refinement, on the nurture and unfoldment of the spiritual spark in man. India is a land of spirituality and the aspiration of every true Indian is for Atma-Swarajya or freedom in the Highest Divinity of the Self, attainable through the conquest of the internal and the external nature. Self-realization is the goal of the people of India.

The Bhagavadgita is a universal scripture and it is the true articulate expression of the genuine cultural heritage of India. The Gita is a gospel of non-attachment, the immortality of the Soul and the ultimate freedom of the Self in the Absolute. It is the sacred teaching on the all-inclusive inwardness of the Spirit. The indispensability of non-attachment follows from the fact of the oneness of existence. Sri Krishna asserts that second to Him naught else exists "*There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Arjuna. All this is strung on Me, as clusters of gems on a string*" (VII. 7). The

truth being an undividedness of life, attachment to outward forms obviously means clinging to falsehood and a breach of truth, the inevitable result of which is misery. "*Those pleasures which are contact-born are only wombs of pain*" (V. 22). Anasakti (detachment) marks the spirit of real renunciation and right activity that does not bind the doer to its fruits. Real culture tends to freedom and it is the glory of the seers of India that with their deep wisdom, they realised the freedom of the immortal Self within and proclaimed this truth to the world.

Desirelessness and inward peace mark the distinctive feature of culture in India. Knowledge which characterises real culture is not mere learning but wisdom with an ethical background. The extent to which one has succeeded in moral discipline determines the quality of his knowledge. Knowledge does not end with mere understanding but culminates in realising the deepest truth of life. Such a cultured life is not possible without freedom from prejudice and attachment in thought and action. "*As the ignorant act with attachment to action, so should the wise act without attachment, with a*

¹ Taken from YVPU Weekly 1951

view to promote the welfare of the world" (III. 25). Perfect detachment is not possible without the knowledge of the ultimate unreality of things which one generally comes in contact with and which act as the causes of attachment towards them. The Indian mind has detected the error in the commonplace view of life held by those who yield to the dictates of their mind and the senses and has brought into light the fact of the transitoriness of physical life amidst the objects of senses. All philosophy starts from the consciousness of pain and suffering and the inadequacy of life in the sense-world. The Viveki seeks emancipation from imprisonment in earthly life and does not pin his faith to things that perish. The Gita points out that this world is 'Anityam' (impermanent), 'Asukham' (unhappy), 'Duhkhalayam' (abode of sorrow), and 'Ashashwatam' (non-eternal). When this discrimination dawns in a person, he becomes desireless and is not attached to anything. The fullness of God within reveals the pettiness of life outside, and the seeker of perfection clings not to fleeting appearances.

Culture in India is synonymous with the blossoming of the faculty of religious and spiritual consciousness without which man is very little superior to creatures with mere

instinct. The Gita enjoins renunciation of belief in and desire for outward forms and exhorts that no man who is mindful of eternal peace should think or act with a selfish motive or with any particular phenomenal end in view, "*Established in Yoga, perform actions, casting off attachment" (II. 48). To act, thus, without 'Sanga' and to be inwardly unified with God even while acting in the world is what the Gita stresses upon as the art of right living and the way to peace both here and hereafter. Every bit of effort that is put forth towards the achievement of this end has its own indestructible effect. "There is no destruction of effort here; nor is there the production of contrary result. Even a little (practice) of this Dharma delivers one from great fear" (II. 40). No attempt is a waste; every effort shall lead to a corresponding effect, for the Soul is essentially immortal.*

The great truth to which the Indians hold on and which they can never forget or disbelieve is the immortality of the Soul and the continuance of life after death. The Gita, at the very outset, declares that the Atman cannot be destroyed. "*Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of That, the imperishable. (II.17). He is not born, nor does He ever*

die; after having been, He again ceases not to be; unborn, eternal, ever-lasting and ancient, He is not killed when the body is killed" (II. 20). Nothing can be more glorious than the recognition of this supreme fact. This saving knowledge is the very life-breath of the Indian nation, the solace of mankind and about the realization of which, the Absolute in the form of Sri Krishna speaks to Arjuna who is the representative of humanity itself. The culture of India is permeated throughout and thoroughly influenced by the indubitable belief in the immortality and divinity of the Spirit in man. To the Hindus, the world of empirical experience is not the reality, but the Atman or Brahman is the Reality. They have no faith in the unstable universe, but they have full faith in the Eternal Being. God is their aim and this world is only a passage or a step, a mere means and not the end or finality of experience. The Gita is the message of the Life Transcendent which embraces within itself the entire universe which is seen in it in an altogether new light. Every individual can have this experience and even the wicked and the sinner has a hope. "Even a man of bad conduct, when he worships Me with singular devotion, should be regarded as righteous, for he has rightly resolved" (IX-30). "Even those who are born in sinful wombs,

taking refuge in Me, go to the supreme Abode" (IX-32). There is no such thing as 'original sin' or innate evil in man, for the Soul of man is immortal and "Even as blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes" (IV.37). Here knowledge stands for the realization of the imperishable Self. As the ultimate destiny of man is identity with God, he passes from one life to another, from one body to another, according to his desires and actions, until he exhausts all experiences resulting therefrom, and attains identity with God. Reincarnation cannot stop until Self-realisation is attained, for the immortal Self asserts itself every moment and the individual cannot find rest anywhere except in its realisation, which, again, is not possible unless all Karmas are burnt up or exhausted. The Hindu theory of rebirth and immortality is unparalleled in the religious history of the world, and it is the only scientific and satisfactory explanation of the meaning of life. Without the fundamental acceptance of the immortal Self, no experience can be explained or understood and the theory of Karma is only a corollary to this basic truth which is the central pivot and theme of philosophy and religion.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE¹

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

Om Jesus, Jesus Christ, Om Jesus,
Jesus Christ, Om Jesus, Jesus
Christ.

*Our Father who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name, Thy Kingdom
come.*

*Thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread and
Forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those*

who trespass against us.

*Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

*For Thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory, forever and
forever.*

Om.

Radiant Immortal Atman!

Sincere seeking souls assembled together here in the spiritual presence of beloved and worshipful Holy Master in the sacred Samadhi Hall of his holy Ashram! May your heart, your thoughts, feelings and the reasoning of your intellect all flow in an unbroken stream towards the goal supreme, towards that Being Who is not only the source and origin of all existence, Who is not only the support and sustainer of all existence, but is also the fulfillment and the ultimate goal of all existence.

In Him alone, all imperfection vanishes, all sorrow ceases. In Him alone, you can ultimately find an

answer to all questions, the ultimate dispelling of all doubts and total satisfaction. In Him alone, all fetters fall away, all binding shackles fall away, all bondage is destroyed, and the individual soul experiences untrammelled freedom and a state of fearlessness. Greatest of all treasures, wealth of wealth, that supreme attainment is more than all the treasures of this earth put together.

The great Gita Jnana Upadesha, the teachings of the world teacher Lord Krishna, focuses upon this one truth: Having come here, adore the Eternal and become free from all sorrow, pain and suffering.

All other activities, all other movements should only be subordinate to this one great movement towards that Being who is your Alpha and Omega, the beginning, middle and end. Thus, the Supreme Being has declared in no unmistakable terms.

The great Divine Teacher of the Middle East, whose advent we all observed yesterday declared: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven". Make that the main goal and the central objective of your life, and let all other activities and movements be subordinate to it. Not only subordinate! All movements, every activity, every thought, every wave of sentiment or emotion, every intention, every

¹ Talk given at the Samadhi Mandir on December 25, 1989

motivation of action and speech, should be supportive of this central movement. They should help you to move in the direction of the Supreme Goal. They should in every way further this movement. They should be of such quality, of such nature.

Resolutely you should turn away from all thoughts, words and actions that are likely to keep you bound to this present level, that are likely to hold you back. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." – "Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy. Fill our hearts with divine virtues." In this way, be aware of the importance of a God-oriented life day by day, from morning until mid-day, from mid-day till evening, from evening till night, from night till morning. The whole day should be devoid of any thing that is contrary to this central objective. A venerable monk of the Sri Ramakrishna order said, "Life should be an unbroken flow, a constant upward ascent towards the goal supreme. All other things should not only be subordinate but supportive".

It is here that we turn to Gurudev. If you want everything to enhance that movement, to take you faster towards that goal and keep your being in that direction, then lead a life true to your real nature! Let your life be a manifestation of Divinity! Let your thoughts, emotions and moods be divine. Let all your speech and actions be divine. You are Divine! It is in such a life filled with God in thought, word,

and action that prayer, meditation, Japa, worship, all become fruitful. It becomes a fertile ground for the sprouting of the seed of Bhakti and Jnana. It becomes supportive of your inner Sadhana, your Yoga Abhyasa, your Jijnasa, your Mumukshutwa.

Ponder well this secret of success in spiritual life and make your life divine. Mould yourself into a perfect instrument of the Divine. Strive simultaneously to engage in Sadhana and advance in the life divine, in the life ethical, in the life of moral idealism. These are interconnected. Very clearly realise the necessity of this mutual support between what you think, feel, speak and do and between what you aspire to achieve and realise in this life. Let them be integrated. Let there be a harmony and oneness between life and the living of your life, between aspiring, striving and seeking the eternal, seeking liberation, seeking God-realisation. Very clearly see the need for such harmony in your life within and without, spiritual and seemingly secular. Such a recognition and such an earnest attempt constitute Divine Life of service, worship, meditation, realisation, truthfulness, compassion and kindness, purity in thought, word and deed, control of senses, conquest of desire.

Let these following seven days, from today onwards until the 31st be a time of contemplation upon this central truth of life, upon this life-transforming gift that Gurudev has placed before us

as his central teaching. Let your life be divine. This is the secret to attain God-realisation and liberation. Let these seven days be a contemplation upon the secret of success in spiritual life. And when the New Year dawns upon the first of January, let these seven days of contemplation prove the entry point. Let them give the right start and give you the formula for living the next year. Let this one week of dwelling upon the divine life be the preparation to enter into this New Year. Determine to live your New Year in a divine way, from January to December in all thoughts, words and actions; to make them shine with a divine quality.

May God grant you success in this attainment. May the benedictions of Gurudev ever go with you in this spiritual adventure of transforming your normal life into a divine life. May God's grace and holy Master's

blessings be combined with your determination to do all that you can to totally divinise your life; for the grace of God is always here and the saints always seek to bless you. But it is for the individual soul, the human being to be open to the inflow of God's grace and the ever-present blessings of saints and sages and divine masters.

This third factor is the key factor – your own determination and opening the doors of your heart for the entry of the light of wisdom teachings, so that you become illumined within.

May God's grace and Gurudev's blessings take you towards a new birth and a new life, a new spiritual determination when the New Year dawns. God bless you and grant you success in this all important task of regaining the consciousness of your divine perfection.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

The goal of our life is Self-realisation. God is Truth, Love, Light, Wisdom and Infinite Beauty. Be good. Do good. Practise Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya. Be regular in your meditation. Do not waste even a minute. Occupy yourself in Kirtan (song) and meditation. Sing the Lord's name. Be established in the above threefold virtues which are the foundations for Yoga and Vedanta. This is life divine. While remaining in the world, give the mind to God. Realise God, the goal of your life, right now, this very second.

—Swami Sivananda

THE SON OF GOD AND THE SON OF MAN (SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDA)

(Spoken on Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1991)

There is a mysterious element operating in the life of everyone when we ask for better things and expect what is generally considered as betterment in our lives, which manifests itself in every moment of time without our clearly knowing as to how it operates. There is no occasion when we would not be expecting things to be better. If things become better, it does not mean that we shall be satisfied with that state of affairs because even in that condition of our expected betterment of things, we feel an impulsion from within to ask for a further betterment. There is always an expectation for what exceeds the present condition of things.

What is it actually that we are asking for when we demand that things should be better? Is it clear to the mind of anyone what exactly we want when we say things should be better? Do we mean that all the walls should be plated with gold, and when it rains only honey should fall from the skies, or the river Ganga should flow with milk? Or do we expect the whole earth to be covered with velvet or that there should not be ups and downs and there should be only level ground? What is our idea of betterment?

If merely these fantastic wishes were to be granted, that would not be a satisfying situation in our life. Honey and milk, level ground, velvet and gold and silver perhaps do not constitute what we call a better state of affairs. There would be something that we would be expecting, more than all these

abundances that heaven may bestow upon us. This is a serious matter on which everyone should concentrate in an impartial manner. We are not satisfied with anything because of the fact that we are going to be satisfied with something else. How is it possible for us to be dissatisfied with a thing if what can be called satisfying is not clear to our mind? This is an eluding factor which slips from our mind every moment even if it insists on presenting itself in our life. There is something compelling its presence in our life, and yet forbidding our understanding of what it is that is working in this manner.

An impossible-to-resist impulse within is also something which we can never grasp in our hands. Our betterment does not actually mean a state of physical transmutation that we are expecting in the world. I briefly mentioned the possible abundances and material prosperities that we may be having in our mind, yet we shall not be satisfied because there are primary aspects which elude the grasp of understanding, namely, the impossibility to possess the wealth of the world for a long time, and at the same time the impossibility even to conceive the very fact of what we call possession. Neither is it possible to possess a thing really, nor is it possible to continue the apparent possession for a long time. The objects possessed will vanish, and the possessor also will vanish.

Notwithstanding this peculiar phenomenon in life, there is an expectation of a betterment in life. What we are, therefore, eager to achieve as a glorifying, satisfying state of affairs does not seem to be what is visible to our eyes and what is connected with our physical, social existence. Our asking is mysterious, as I mentioned, because this impulsion can be regarded only as a mystery that passeth understanding.

Often this superabundant, overwhelming impulse within is called a religious consciousness. We have to guardedly use the word 'religion' when we speak in this fashion because we have many religions in the world, and every denominational asking for an ideal that cannot be visibly found in this world may go by the name of a religion. All religions ask for that which is not in this world. In this way, religion has managed to remain a transcendent element, a superior form of a betterment of the values of life, a thing which cannot be seen at all anywhere. There is nothing in this world which we can call the best. The world does not contain anything which can be regarded as the best because there is always a better thing than even the best thing in the world. Even if something better than the best is not visible to our eyes, we are compelled to conceive something which is more than the sun and the moon and the stars and all the values that we can imagine with the knowledge of our encyclopaedias.

Here is the principle of the religious consciousness, as they call it; we may call it the God of religion. This God, this ideal of religious awakening,

does not seem to be confined to anything that is seen with the eyes, and does not seem to be capable of limitation even to conceivable phenomena. Thus, the God of religion is an intriguing demand perpetually arising from the hearts of all beings, not merely human. Every living being is expecting a betterment of its condition: survival in the most befitting manner for the longest period of time, abundance in every possible way, in every conceivable manner.

All this is suggestive of the fact that the soul's asking in the form of a God of religion is not to be had in this world. It cannot be attained under the conditions prevailing in the material world. Yet, there is this asking, a demand for that which we cannot have. Is this not self-contradictory? We are asking for an abundance, a fulfilment and a perfection which we cannot have, and nobody has had in the history of mankind. Are we being tantalised? Is it a carrot that is hung before our nose which moves away as we move forward, tempting us, giving us promises which can never be fulfilled? Here we are in this world which is acting as a medium to manifest this asking from within our own selves, but it remains as a medium alone, as a medium of reflecting what we are expecting, but never permitting us to achieve what we are actually asking through that medium.

What is our fate then? We want to somehow or other bring into our present life a concrete form of manifestation of that thing which is otherwise intriguing, eluding, mystifying and transcendent. This compulsive descending of an otherwise impossible perfection into our

practical day-to-day existence is an Incarnation, a physically embodied form of that which can never be found in any physical embodiment. This is the Avatara. The condensation into a formation of a character capable of comprehension by the human mind under the condition it is placed at any given moment of time is the God descending. We can visualise only a descended God in the sense of that Ideal which, notwithstanding its being above us, is also with us and can walk with us, and can be our friend, philosopher and guide. Here is a real mystery which is the blending together of a totally transcendent superhuman principle enlivening and working through the medium of a human personality.

In Indian cultural lore, the doctrine of Incarnation does not necessarily limit the descent to human beings only. God can descend in any other form also, but mostly the belief is that an Incarnation is a human embodiment of a superhuman ideal. The highest or the higher makes itself felt by an immanence of its presence through an embodiment which is like a human being. Mystics call this transmutation of the Infinite entering into the human form as God encasing Himself in the sentient human personality, who then acts like a human being, thinks like a human being, and can understand the predicament of human beings. Thus, it can cooperate with human beings, assist and even redeem them, without itself being a human being. This non-human or superhuman element operating through the medium of a human personality with its head

towering in the heavens and its feet planted on the earth, as we may say, is the coming together of God and world, divinity and mortality shaking hands in a fraternal embrace.

All this is mostly a phenomenon and beyond human comprehension. We mystify, mythologise and bring into historical situations, and at the same time limit this phenomenon to geographical, ethnic and cultural patterns so that it may become more and more familiar to our weaker senses of perception. Religion becomes more and more concrete, material, social, economic, even political, when human thought descends into the lowest categories of perception and the great ideal which is resistlessly pressing itself forward in everyone's life is made to appear as the answer to the call of man in his particular given state or condition.

We know very well that we are not always in one mood, in one state of mind, and our requirement is not always one thing. Every day our requirements may change, and we would require a God to answer to that particular call in that condition of our mental mood or psychological condition. Nevertheless, such a tricky phenomenon is possible. The power of this unimaginable Universal impulsion to manifest itself in any form whatsoever, at any moment, is the solace of our life. Though our moods may change, it can answer every one of them. God's response to our human call is not a mathematically precise, stereotyped procrustean bed of utter limitation that He will come only in this way and not in any other way. The word 'Infinite' implies the capacity of that structure to adjust itself to modes of

every kind in the process of evolution, so that we can contact God in any state of our mind, at any moment, in any mood, whether we are laughing or weeping, whether we are jubilant or in a state of despair and depression, whether we are rich or poor, whether we are wanted or unwanted. Whatever be the state of our mind and our life in the world, with that it can adjust itself. Under every condition this call can be listened to. It has an ear which can listen to any music, any sound, any cry and any asking.

This is why in such proclamations of religious gospels such as the Bhagavadgita, for instance, we are given the assurance that at any critical moment of time God can descend into action. The timeless does not take time to act. This is the way in which the Infinite acts through the finite. God does not take time to come because timelessness has no time in it, so it is not a question of tomorrow or the next moment. It is here and now. Instantaneity is the nature of its action.

That being the case, it is the greatest solace for us. We are never without a friend. We are never discarded. We are never without succour. There is a perpetual eye gazing at us, an eternal vision ready to come to our aid. No father, no mother can equal this tender care. Such is the manner in which the God of true religious consciousness descends into action as an Avatara.

Today, at this moment of Christmas Eve, we bring to our memories one of such descents—God made flesh, as people generally say, but not becoming flesh, only manifesting through the formation which is called

flesh, the tabernacle of human nature. The purified consciousness is called Christ, the anointed one, as they say—that is, the consecrated ideal, the *mahaprasada* of Ultimate Divinity in its tremendous compassion and the eternal loving care unsolicitedly coming to our aid when our cry arises from the deepest recesses of our heart.

Actually, we need not ask God to come to us, because God is aware of our needs. The intensity of the manifestation depends upon the intensity of our asking, as the taste of a dish depends upon the intensity of the appetite or hunger. If the call is from the whole of man, then the Son of Man descends. It is not one man's calling; it is Man as such demanding the coming of that redeeming element. Jesus the Christ is sometimes designated as the Son of Man, and sometimes as the Son of God. Both these nomenclatures are characteristic of a blend of two features in an Incarnation, namely, the total mankind embodied in that Incarnation, and also the total God embosomed in that formation. The total God manifesting Himself in the totality of mankind's aspiration is the explanation of this dual nomenclature of Christ being the Son of God and the Son of Man at the same time.

At this holy moment we invoke, from the deepest recesses of our being, the coming of God into perpetual action in this world of today for the highest manifestation of values that we regard as the great betterment of human conditions, so that what we consider as peace, abundance and prosperity may prevail everywhere. May we await that moment of God coming.

FOUR TRADITIONAL SADHANAS¹ (Sri Swami Chidananda)

Within the framework of Sanatana Vaidika Dharma, there are different beliefs and different modes of approaching the Supreme Reality. Any insect, bird or human being – all come from the womb of the mother. Therefore, the Shaktas conceived of a great cosmic power that is the source of all things – the Great Divine Mother. The philosophy of Shakta-Sadhana is to realise this as the Supreme Being. Some believe that this Cosmic Being is a great personality called the Adi-Narayana. They are the Vaishnavites. And some call Him Parama Siva. They are the Saivites.

But an interesting fact is that within all these different concepts and approaches, the practices for attaining the ultimate supreme experience are more or less the same. And ultimately, all of them converge at the universal point of Dhyana. Whether you are a Shakta, Vaishnavite or Saivite, whether you believe in Adi-Sankara or Ramanuja or Vallabhacharya or Nimbarkacharya or Sri Krishna-Chaitanya, or whether you are a Buddhist or a Jain – they all believe that ultimately you have to meditate. The mind must be concentrated and taken inward, and it should be constantly fixed upon the Reality. *Yogibhir dhyana gamyam* — He can be known through meditation!

And many other things are also common. For example, all of them believe in Nama and Japa, though the Names may be different. This interesting phenomenon of the commonness of the actual Sadhana practices, brings us to the conclusion that no matter what the concept of the Ultimate Reality is, when spiritual life and worship are actually commenced, and when they actually end-up in experience; they all find that they have discovered the same Cosmic Reality, only known by different Names. This truth was realised long ago in the Vedic era, and thus they said: *Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti* — there is only One, but It is called by many names.

So what do these various spiritual Sadhanas ultimately aim at? All Sadhanas aim only at one thing — the direction of your entire personality towards that which is Eternal and Imperishable, not towards the many, not towards the outward, not towards the temporary or transitory, but towards the One, the Immortal, towards that which has neither beginning nor end!

And what is the basis of this quest? The basis is that the Anitya (Impermanent) cannot give you real peace, happiness or satisfaction. And who does not desire peace, happiness and satisfaction? Whether they are easterners or westerners, capitalists or

¹ Talk given at the Chandigarh Sadhana Camp in March 1982

communists, no matter what nationality, what race they belong to — this is the one common quest of human beings all over the world. Everyone desires happiness, peace, satisfaction and the absence of pain, grief, suffering, sorrow or discomfort.

Our ancients have declared that there is no happiness in the perishable, petty things of the world. Even in hundreds of births, if you try to find happiness in these things, you will not find it. So why are you wasting your time? This human life is a God-given opportunity — why are you throwing it away?

And they declared that supreme blessedness, absolute bliss, permanent peace and Nitya-Triпти (eternal satisfaction) is to be found in the Creator alone, in the Being who is at the center of all things, in the one hidden Reality that dwells in all beings:

*Eko devah sarvabhuteshu gudhah,
sarvavyapi sarvabhutantaratma;
Karmadhyakshah sarvabhutadhipasah,
sakshi cheta kevalo nirgunashcha.*

(Sv.Up. 6.11)

That Supreme Being, who is the witness of all your different states of the body and mind, who is the innermost silent witness, who is the indweller of all beings, who supports you, who is the source and ultimate goal of all beings and things, in Him alone can we find supreme bliss. Therefore, make that Being your goal! Your entire personality is now caught up in the search for petty satisfactions in this world of perishable

things. Enough of this folly! Stop this ignorance! Be wise, and seek happiness where it is to be found. That requires a diversion of your energy and potentiality towards the attainment of the experience of the Absolute.

So, how to set about doing this? First and foremost, try to know something about it. Go to a Satsanga where the nature of that Great Reality is expounded. Once you get a little knowledge, the very beginning is already done. Then try to think about what you have heard, try to reflect over the different aspects of its meaning, try to enter deeper into its real implications. This process is all intellectual. Through reasoning, you bring to bear your intellectual faculty upon what you have listened to, to analyse it and enter deeper into its meaning.

Then you also back it up by your own study, and ultimately by such continuous listening and reflecting, studying and contemplating, gradually there will come about a transformation in your interior. These truths that are expounded will become firmly rooted in your interior, and they will bring about a transformation in your consciousness. Constant reflecting and abiding in that truth will become part of your natural tendency.

Then from time-to-time, make a little occasion and start meditating upon these truths. And through such meditation, you can ultimately attain illumination. You can transcend the

mind and intellect and enter into spiritual experience. This is called Atma-Jnana or Self-realisation or Aparoksha-Anubhuti. This is direct experience – not through the medium of the senses, mind or intellect – but an immediate experience of the Cosmic Spirit through the pure spirit within you.

This is the Sadhana of the intellectual faculty in attaining the Supreme Experience. But every human individual is also endowed with feeling. Usually, our feelings are totally involved in the outer objects or individuals. That is natural, and you cannot do anything about it. But you can add one more object of affection. Until now it has only been for your mother, father, wife, husband, children, brother, sister and friends; but there is a Being who is to you not only your source and ultimate goal, but He is also your father, mother, friend and relative. He is your Sarvasva, (all-in-all) because all these relationships came into being only after you entered into this world, and they will vanish after some time. He alone is the eternal and imperishable. Therefore, include Him within the orbit of your affections. Love Him. Cultivate Prema for Him.

Through the diversion of your heart, feeling, emotion, love, affection and attachment towards your divine father, mother, friend, relative, towards your divine beloved, your divine all-in-all, you enter into a state of constant remembrance of That Being. The heart

becomes so much filled with love that we cannot forget Him. Then, gradually, you begin to have greater attachment to Him than to other things, and ultimately it leads to a state of Bhavuka-Prema or Bhavuka-Dhyana — a state of Meditation, not directed by reasoning, analysis or intellectual discrimination, but brought about by the overwhelming force of pure love and devotion.

The third faculty we have is the power to think. What is our mind engaged in thinking from morning till night? Each one should answer this question for himself. Start thinking of That Being who is really your very own, with whom your connection is not for a little duration, but forever. And thus discipline the mind and train it to constantly think of that Supreme Reality, ultimately arousing such a powerful current of God-thought that it pushes out all contrary thoughts, and the whole mind becomes unified in one unbroken flow of God-thought.

The analogy given is that of sunrays passing through a powerful magnifying glass. In the same way, gather the mind towards that one God-thought. That also leads you into a state of meditation that is occult or mystic, but in a very scientific way.

Thus, the three faculties of your interior – intellect, emotion and thought – all of them are given a new direction and made to flow towards the Eternal Reality. This is the general form of Sadhana.

But now arises a problematic area of our life where – whether you want it or not – the physical activity of your body is directed outward, towards the many, and it is always involved in appearances. Why? Because you are body-bound, and you are caught in a state of consciousness where you are very much aware of the incessant demands of your body – hunger, thirst, heat, cold and the demands of Vyavaharika Prapancha. You have to do some business and earn money to support your dependents. Therefore, this once again takes us back to the starting point. Whereas the three methods described above interiorise your consciousness, here you are compelled to exteriorise your consciousness. And this is the greater part of your life! So, what is the solution to this problem?

There is a wonderful solution. The main message of the Bhagavad Gita is that the activities of the body can also be spiritualised and turned Godward. How? By the direction of all your activities towards God, who is in all beings.

*Samam sarveshu bhuteshu tishthantam
parameshvaram,
Vinashyatsu avinashyantam yah
pashyati sa pashyati.*

(BG 13.27)

Verily, he is the seer who sees the Supreme Lord as the only imperishable substance abiding equally in all perishable beings.

The vision that you must adopt is to always feel the presence of God in all beings, and thus performing all

activities as worship or Yajna, offering them up at the feet of God.

*Yat karoshi yadashnasi yajjuhoshi
dadasi yat,
Yattapasyasi Kaunteya tat kurushva
madarpanam*

(BG 9.27)

Arjuna, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as oblation into the sacred fire, whatever you bestow as a gift, whatever you do by way of penance, offer it all to Me.

This is Bhagavan Sri Krishna's clear injunction. In this way, all activities are spiritualised and they become Yogic activities. Thus, it becomes a way of worshipping God, who is not only within, but God who is before you as this entire universe of visible names and forms. Whatever there is in this world is only an expression of God. This is the wonderful solution given by the Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

These are the four traditional Sadhana paths that we have received as our spiritual heritage in this land of the Upanishads, Gita and Bhagavatam, in this land of the Ganga and Himalayas, in this land of sages, seers, Acharyas, Mahapurushas and Yogis.

This is the brief picture of Sadhana that I have had the good fortune of placing before you, which in essence means one thing: directing your human consciousness Godward – towards the Eternal, Immortal and Supreme Cosmic Reality. Make that your goal!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

NANDANAR (*Sri Swami Sivananda*)

Nandanar belonged to the depressed class of South India. He was a Pariah saint. He was an embodiment of humility, patience and sincerity. He was a great devotee of Lord Nataraja of Chidambaram. Chidambaram is known as the Southern Kashi. It has a big temple. 'Nataraja' is another name for Lord Siva who is worshipped in this temple. If you remain in Chidambaram for some time, your sins will be destroyed. This is a popular belief.

Nandanar was serving a Brahmin in the cultivation of lands. When Nandanar asked his master for permission to go to Chidambaram for Darshan of Lord Siva, the arrogant Brahmin landlord abused him and said, "You low-caste Pariah! You want to worship the deity of the Brahmins? Go and worship the ghosts, the Bhutas—your family deities." Nandanar was a great devotee of Lord Nataraja. He was always praying with devotion. On the incessant request of Nandanar, the Brahmin landlord told him, "Yes, you can go to Chidambaram, if you finish planting paddy in 250 acres of the farm in time." Nandanar was in great despair. He wanted to attend the yearly festival at Chidambaram. He had to finish the work within two days. He cursed himself and prayed the whole night for Lord Nataraja's grace and guidance. Lord Nataraja did a miracle to help His

Bhakta. The next morning, the entire plot of land of 250 acres was green with paddy plants, with ears just shooting up. The Brahmin was quite astonished. He thought that Nandanar must be a great devotee. He immediately allowed him to go to Chidambaram.

Nandanar was thus able to go to Chidambaram. Here, he had to face another trouble. The Brahmin temple priests, the Dikshitaras, would not allow Nandanar to enter the temple as he was of low birth. Lord Nataraja appeared to them in their dream and said, "O priests, perform all the necessary purificatory ceremonies for Nandanar. He is My great devotee. Allow him to worship Me inside the temple."

The Brahmins performed the ceremonies accordingly and allowed Nandanar to enter the inner shrine. Nandanar went into the inner shrine and worshipped Nataraja and was in the height of divine ecstasy. A dazzling, effulgent light was seen. Nandanar disappeared. He was nowhere to be seen. He became one with Lord Nataraja.

God makes no difference between a high-caste Brahmin and a low-caste Pariah. What He wants is sincere devotion. Nandanar was more dear to Him than the Brahmin temple-priests. In the realm of Bhakti, there is no distinction of caste, creed or colour. He who has devotion is dear to the Lord.

ASHRAM CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS EVE¹

(Sri Swami Gurusarananda)

24th DECEMBER, 1956

Today the Ashram celebrated the Christmas Eve at Satsang time in the Satsang hall which had been well decorated. The picture of Jesus Christ shone in the Satsang-temple, where usually the picture of a Hindu God or Goddess would be kept, according to the day of the week. Srimati Sivananda-Zapporah of Australia, Srimati Beatrice Vigo of New York, Srimati Dayananda of Paris, Sri Van Gannep of Indonesia, Srimati Florence Theodora Van Gannep of Indonesia, and Sri Dharmalingam of South Africa, who had been staying in the Ashram since different dates, were among those who attended the celebration. Copies of the Holy Christmas Number of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Weekly were distributed at the outset, and then the function commenced with the singing of a specially composed poem by Sri Sivananda-Zapporah. Thereafter, Sri Dharmalingam of South Africa sang an English song, which was followed by the singing of a prayer jointly by Sri Van Gannep, Sri Florence Theodora, and Sri Sivananda-Zapporah. Then Swami Turiyananda read out Swamiji's Christmas Message, entitled "Prayer is the answer", and delivered a short lecture on Jesus Christ. Swami

Chidananda also spoke a few words on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. An English gramophone record was then played, and it was followed by Swami Vidyananda's Veena recital. Sri Van Gannep then gave a lecture on the spiritual significance of Christmas Eve, in which, among other things, he said, "I am not talking tonight of Jesus and His Gospel. This is better done in the words of our beloved Swamiji, because he is the true saint of the world. He is the greatest Christian I have ever met in my life, because he is an example of what Christianity ought to be, and on account of this, Swamiji, I like, with the deepest of my heart, to pay homage to you in whom Christ Consciousness has come to its full bloom.

"I know you are living here near our beloved Swamiji. His spiritual greatness, his high vibrations and love go on coming to all of you. You are every day living in the Sun, so you will not appreciate the Sun like people who are living in darkness, like the darkness of the northern part of the universe. If you live in darkness, then you will appreciate what it will be to miss the sunshine. Then, you will know and understand what sunshine can mean to man; and here you are sitting, every day

¹ From Sivananda Day-to-day

receiving the blessing of the Spiritual Sun, which we have amidst us. We who come from afar appreciate that, because we have not got this Spiritual Sun in our neighbourhood, and that is why we are so glad to have been able to come down to you here. Swamiji, we enjoy every moment, every minute of our being here, because soon we have to go again to Indonesia, and we will be far away from here in body. But we know even when we are in Indonesia, working for the glory of God, Swamiji will always keep on blessing us. We have experienced before our coming here, Swamiji's blessings. Before we had any chance of coming to you, we have received blessings of Swamiji, and these give us strength to continue our further work in Indonesia, and we are so glad that God has made it possible for us to make this journey to Rishikesh and to come to Swamiji. Several people who met us ask us whether we are not going out and see many beautiful things in India such as New Delhi's great monuments, and my reply was always 'No'. The only aim which brought us here is to go and see Swamiji. That is sufficient, because here we have a living Sun, living power, which has much more value than the most beautiful things. We must live in the present. We must not live in the past. We must see what we can do now every moment of our life, and here we have an example of how life should be lived, and I will ask all of you and pray to live up to the example of our great Swamiji who is here amidst us and who can give us his grace."

After Sri Van Gannep's speech, Srimati Beatrice Vigo sang a Christmas song, and Swami Dayananda also sang a Christmas song. Then followed a very interesting item—folk-dance by children around the Christmas Tree, in the course of which Swamiji also joined the dance, wearing a specially made paper-cap, which threw the entire assemblage into uproarious laughter. The merriment of Christmas seemed to have reached its climax when Swamiji danced along with the children, wearing the special cap and making various kinds of gestures. Thereafter, Christmas Greeting Cards were presented to distinguished guests. Christmas cakes were then presented to them, as also other presents. Children indulged in various kinds of fireworks, and with Swamiji's Kirtan, Arati and distribution of Prasad, the function came to an end.

On the following day, i.e., the Christmas Day, at the Satsang, special songs were sung by Sri Beatrice Vigo, Sri Hardyal Obera and Sri Parameswaran. Sri Beatrice Vigo gave a lecture about how Christmas is celebrated in America, in the course of which she characterised Swamiji as 'Jesus personified'. Thereafter, slides showing the Christmas celebrations last year in the Ashram were screened by Swami Saradananda of Sivananda Art Studio, and the function came to an end, with Kirtan by Swamiji, Arati and distribution of Prasad.

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS (*Swami Atmaswarupananda*)

All the great religions declare the necessity of a foundation of living a life of morality, of the importance of cultivating virtues. Each one will emphasize different virtues as being prime, possibly depending upon the culture that that religion appeared in.

Gurudev, Swami Sivanandaji, emphasized ahimsa, satyam and brahmacharya. They are not only key virtues and part of the culture, but if we understand them correctly, they will lead us past the outer virtue to creating an inner virtue of the mind and attitude, and ultimately convert them into divine virtues. They are thus a direct connection with our goal.

Virtues come in different qualities. They can begin as a quality such as ahimsa or non-injury, then become an attitude of universal good will, and ultimately become an experience and expression of the love of God.

But then, there are other virtues that are meant to take us to an absolute place in a different way. They are meant to lead us to the oneness of all things by negating all differences. And we do that finally by taking everything back to the *Source*, which is absolutely unknowable. Normally, this is done through enquiry, especially the enquiry of Who am I? If done properly it takes us back ultimately to a conscious presence and finally to the unanswerable

question of What is it that knows this?

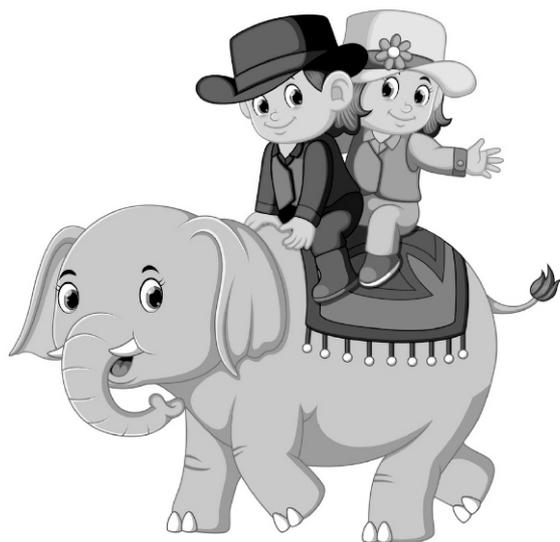
The only answer is “I”, but we have no idea who or what that “I” is. It is totally beyond the mind. It is from that point beyond the mind that utter humility arises, that total universality arises. When everything arises from an unknown source we cannot differentiate anything or discriminate or judge between different things because of the overriding oneness of it all.

One virtue that takes us to that place in a direct way is the virtue of forgiveness, and perhaps that is why Jesus made it a central part of His prayer: “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” In other words, God’s forgiveness or God’s enlightenment depends upon us taking everyone else with us.

The reason it is necessary is because everything is arising from that which is beyond the mind. When everything is arising from that which is beyond the mind, it equally belongs to that mystery. Therefore, it is our own Self. Everything is seen as part of That, and it utterly changes our attitude to all things. When everything is seen as one, we become a different person.

That is the goal of the spiritual life, a transformation, a transformation that sees all things as one. And one of the paths is the path of total forgiveness.

Children's World



SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER

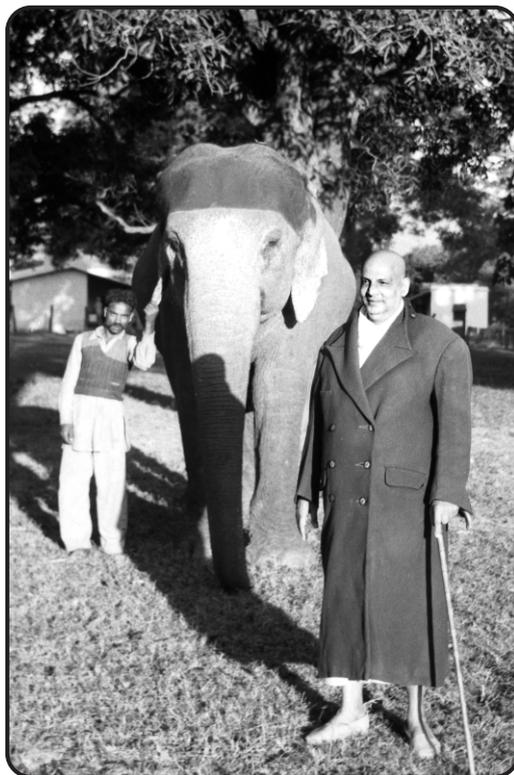
Beloved Divine Children!

Om Namō Narayanaya!

Saint Xavier was born in the small kingdom of Navarrie in Spain in 1506. He lost his father when he was nine years old. His two elder brothers were soldiers. He wanted to become a professor and joined the University of Paris in 1525. He remained there for eleven years. He was an athlete. He had a good countenance. He took his Arts degree in 1530.

Xavier was a linguist. He talked in five languages—Latin, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Basque. He was an erudite philosopher and a great theologian. He was fastidious and sensitive. He was sincere and unselfish. He was humble and plain without any show.

Ignatius Loyola came to the University. He was a cripple. He was a soldier. His leg was smashed by a cannon ball. He was now a Knight of the Church of Christ. He had a conversation with Francis Xavier. He used to say very often, “Master Francis! What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?” Xavier liked the company and talks of Ignatius, but he did not wish to abandon the ambitions of worldly life. Fame and honour were before him. But the words of Ignatius, “What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?” were ringing in his ears.



Francis Xavier seriously contemplated on the profound import of the words of Ignatius. He abandoned all ambition, worldly position and income. He embraced poverty and chastity and made a firm resolve to live for Christ and Christ alone. Discrimination and dispassion dawned in him. His mind was definitely turned towards God. Ignatius became his guide and spiritual teacher. Xavier spent much of his time in prayer and meditation. He went to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage.

Xavier distributed all that he had to the poor. He clothed himself in coarse garments. He took a staff in his hand and put a leather mantle on his shoulder. He set on foot to Venice. He underwent a lot of hardship on the way. He endured the showers of France and the winter cold of Germany. He passed through the Alpine snow.

The secretary to an ambassador was Xavier's companion when Xavier was moving through the Alpine snow. He fell from his horse and was swallowed up in a huge mass of snow. It was upon a slippery and precipitous rock. Down below, there was a swift torrent. The friends of the secretary did not venture to save his life. But Xavier regarded the life of the secretary as his own. He went to the spot and drew him up from the snow. He risked his own life. What a large, sympathetic heart Xavier had!

Xavier arrived in Venice in 1537. He was exhausted with the cold and hardship of the journey. He started his service in Venice. He tended the sick in the hospital and served many incurable sick persons. He talked to the people about the love of Christ. He went to the prison, served the prisoners and prayed with them. He proceeded to Rome on foot. The country was so flooded that he had to walk at times in water up to the waist. But Xavier was ever joyful. He visited the villages and preached the gospel of Christ.

In 1541, Xavier set sail from Lisbon for India with three or four old garments and two books. Though he was clad in rags, he had the bearing of a prince or a great divine personality.

King John of Portugal arranged a first-class ticket for Xavier. But Xavier became the ship's doctor, steward, nurse, evangelist, tutor and cook. He did the humblest services possible to the passengers. He gave up his cabin to a sick person and himself slept on a coil of rope. He washed the clothes of the poor and the sick passengers. He was supposed to dine at the table of the Governor, but he ate with the common people.

His food was sent to him from the high table, but he distributed it to the sick. He cheered up those who were very sick and gave them words of encouragement and hope of recovery.

In 1542, Xavier landed in India and reached Goa. He was thirty-six years old then. He had a weak physical body on account of continual hardships and frequent fever during the voyage. But he had unabated zeal and enthusiasm and eagerness for service to humanity and unbounded love. Xavier lived in the hospital near the harbour. He slept at night on the floor at the foot of the beds of those who were dangerously ill, so that he might reach them at once, when called.

This is real service. This is a real flower that can be consecrated at the altar of God. Young aspirants should imbibe the wonderful spirit of service of Xavier and follow his footsteps in the path of Karma Yoga. Such service only can purify and soften the heart and prepare it for the reception of divine light and grace.

Xavier moved from village to village and begged for the lepers, the starving and the prisoners. He raised a large sum of money and did permanent good to the helpless. Xavier went to the jail to teach and minister to the prisoners. He visited schools and taught the prayers, creed and commandments to the boys.

On one occasion, Xavier used an umbrella. That was his greatest luxury. He went barefoot with a poor torn gown. Everyone loved him so much. Xavier caused forty-five churches to be built along the coast. Sometimes he would climb up a tree and from there he would address a big audience of six thousand people in their own language. He made a large number of converts.

Xavier went to Malacca and Ceylon. Then he proceeded to Japan in 1549. Though he went with high hopes, his work was spoiled by the cruelty of the Portuguese. Yajiro, a Japanese, was his first convert. The number of Japanese converts was small.

Xavier came back to India. He wanted to take the gospel into China, but he found it difficult to get entry into the ship. He fell ill and had no food or shelter. He passed away quietly repeating some psalms on the day of the Festival of St. John, the Evangelist. He lived for forty-five years only on this earth.

—*Swami Sivananda*

LEAD A SIMPLE LIFE

Lead a **simple** life. Let your **thoughts** be lofty. Fear God. Speak the **Truth**. **Love** all. **See** your own Self in all. Be **honest** in all your dealings. You will **succeed** in your life and **God-realisation**.

Never worry yourself on any matter. Be always **cheerful**. Use your **common-sense** and reason always. Have a **balanced** mind always. Turn your **mind** towards God. Sing His **Name**. Thirst for His **Vision**. Be **sincere** at heart. The **Divine Grace** will descend on you.

Have a **strong determination** and **iron will**. You have got everything to **transmute** yourself into a **sage**. Apply yourself **diligently** and ignite the **spiritual** dynamo within. **Exert**. **Plod**. **Ignite**. **Realise**.

—Swami Sivananda



Search the words given in bold letters above in the forest of letters:

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E	P	S	A	G	E	C	H	E	E	R	F	U	L	D	U	R	I	S
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G	O	D	R	E	A	L	I	S	A	T	I	O	N	L	C	A	I	T
A	D	B	A	L	A	N	C	E	D	H	M	N	A	I	E	L	O	Z
I	R	O	N	W	I	L	L	O	V	E	P	E	M	G	E	I	N	E
T	E	S	S	P	I	R	I	T	U	A	L	S	E	E	D	S	O	R
C	O	M	M	O	N	S	E	N	S	E	E	T	T	N	I	E	G	O
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A	S	E	G	M	I	N	D	E	O	D	E	V	Y	E	E	T	E	Y

Sri Skanda Shashthi Celebrations at the Headquarters Ashram



The glorious occasion of Sri Skanda Shashthi marks the triumph of the divine over the undivine, of light over darkness and of Supreme Knowledge over ignorance. This sacred occasion was celebrated with great devoutness at the Headquarters Ashram from 28th October to 2nd November 2019.

During the forenoon of the first five days, grand Abhisheka of Lord Skanda was performed to the chanting of Vedic Mantras and Bhajans-kirtans at Bhajan Hall. Thereafter, the beautiful idol of the Lord was embellished with glittering ornaments and multi-hued flower garlands. It was followed by floral Archana of the Lord to the Trishatanamavali, Arati and distribution of



sacred Prasad. The Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and devotees of the Ashram participated in Abhisheka and Archana of the Lord with great devotion. Every evening, Sri Swami Sadasivanandaji sang “Kandara Anubhuti” Stotra in Tamil extolling the Lord Skanda and the devotees sang divine names of the Lord. The evening Satsanga concluded with Archana and Arati of the Lord.

On 2nd November, Sri Skanda Shashthi Day, the





celebration commenced with a Kavadi procession from the Ganesh Temple on the banks of Mother Ganga to the Bhajan Hall wherein the devotees, singing joyfully the sacred names of the Lord Skanda, carried the holy waters of Mother Ganga in beautifully decorated Kavadis for the Abhisheka of the Lord. Following this, the grand worship was offered to the Lord. Thereafter, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and devotees of the Ashram worshipped six 'Kumaras' representing the six-faced Lord Skanda and offered them food and other gifts. The celebration concluded with distribution of the sacred Prasad.

May the abundant blessings of Lord Skanda and Sadgurudev be upon all.

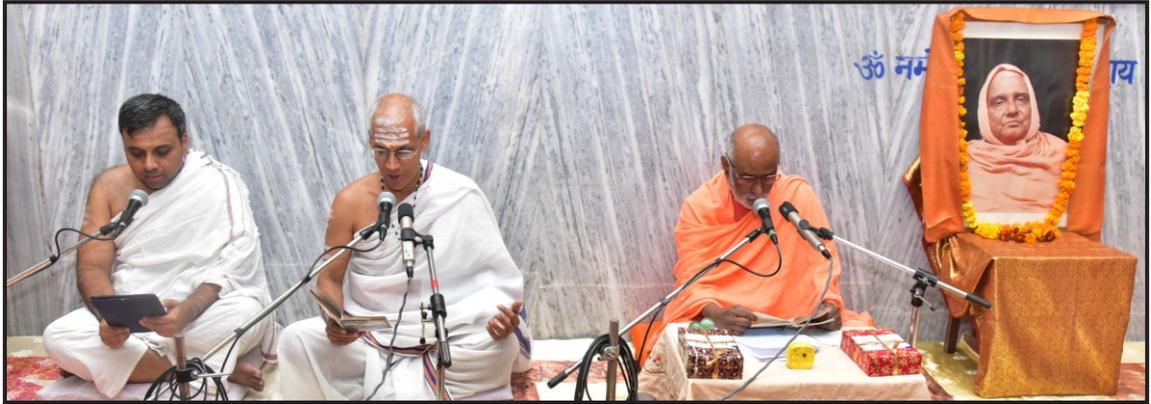
Celebration of 18th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj



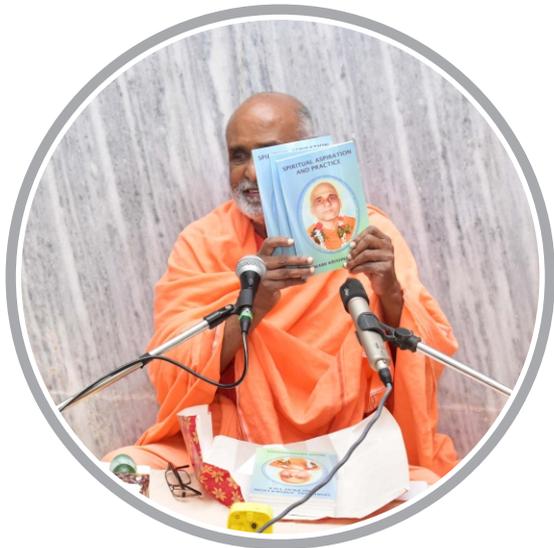
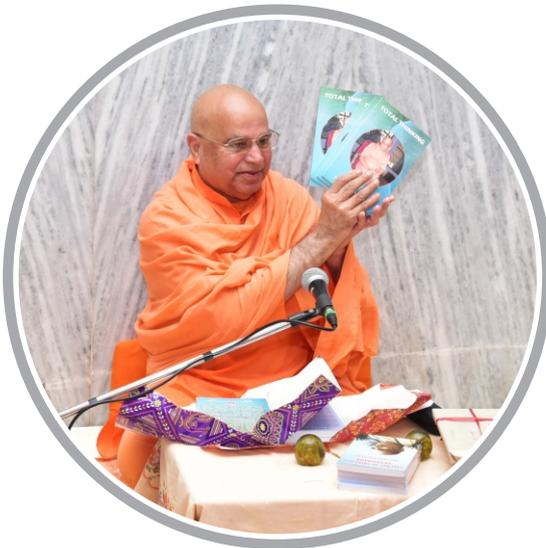
The sacred day of 18th Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's Mahasamadhi was observed with great devotion at the Headquarters Ashram on Gopashtami day i.e. 4th November 2019.

The day's programme commenced with special Puja and Havan at Sri Vishwanath Mandir for the welfare of entire humanity. In the forenoon, grand worship was offered to the sacred Padukas of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in the holy Samadhi Shrine wherein Senior Swamijis, Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and guests of the Ashram devoutly participated.

During the night Satsanga, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj reminiscing his association with Pujya Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj highlighted Worshipful Sri Swamiji Maharaj' great love for Vedic chanting. Thereafter, Sri Arunachalam and Sri



Mahadevan of Mumbai chanted various Vedic Mantras and Suktas as their reverential tribute to our scholarly saint. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj gave a lucid commentary of these Mantras and Suktas and explained their significance in Sadhana as well. Everyone felt immensely blessed to have Darshan of Pujya Swamiji Maharaj and listening to his soul-elevating message through a DVD show. Four books were also released to commemorate this sacred day. The Satsanga concluded with Arati and distribution of Jnana Prasad and Prasad.



May the grace of Sadgurudev and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

CULTURAL TOUR OF

H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj

Param Pujya Papa Ramdas, one of spiritual luminaries of twentieth century, founded Anandashram at Kanhangad, Kerala in 1931. After Pujya Papa's Mahasamadhi, his foremost disciple Mother Krishnabai succeeded him as the Head of the Ashram. Pujya Sri Swami Satchidanandaji, who served them both, shouldered the responsibility of furthering the Mission after Mother left her mortal coil.

The Divine Life Society Headquarters Ashram and Anandashram have been closely associated since the time of their inception. Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Pujya Papa Ramdas had great regard for each other. Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj had also great love and devotion towards Pujya Papa and Mother Krishnabai. Pujya Sri Swamiji Maharaj visited Anandashram regularly and had loving interactions with Pujya Sri Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj. After Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj's Mahasamadhi, Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj has been paying regular visits to Anandashram.

This year i.e. 2019 marks the Birth Centenary Year of Pujya Sri

Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj. At the kind invitation of Sri Swami Muktanandaji Maharaj, the present Head of the Anandashram, Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj along with Sri Swami Sridharanandaji and Sri Mahendranji visited Anandashram during the second week of November to attend the Centenary Celebrations. Sri Swamiji Maharaj attended the Satsang on 11th November and blessed the devotees with his discourse. On 12th November, the 100th Birthday Anniversary of Pujya Sri Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swamiji Maharaj released Pujya Swamiji's book 'Experiences and Reflections' and addressed the gathering as well.

From Anandashram, Sri Swamiji Maharaj along with Sri Swami Sridharanandaji, Sri Mahendranji and Sri Datta Prasad of VITAL (Value Integrated Teaching and Learning) proceeded to Kalpetta to visit VSET (Vishwa Seva Educational Trust). VSET is an NGO managed by dedicated youngsters committed towards the propagation of Living Values i.e. Values in action among the teenagers. Sri Swamiji Maharaj interacted with the VSET members and evinced keen interest

in their programmes and projects. During his stay at Kalpetta, Sri Swamiji Maharaj visited Vivekananda Medical Mission Hospital, Muttil, Wayanad, a charitable hospital to serve the tribal people in the area. Sri Swamiji Maharaj also visited Vivekananda Tribal Vidyalaya, Mattilayam and Shree Sankar Vidyaniketan, Cherukara. Vivekananda Tribal Vidyalaya is a residential school for tribal children run by Wayanad Girijan Seva Trust and Shree Sankar Vidyaniketan is an open school for tribal children. Sri Swamiji lovingly interacted with the school children and their teachers. Sri Swamiji Maharaj returned to the Headquarters Ashram on 18th November 2019.

On 28th November, Sri Swamiji Maharaj proceeded to Odisha to attend 4th Annual Sadhana Shivar and Spiritual Conference being organised by Dibya Jivan Sangh (Swami Sivananda Sevagram Charitable Society) from 28th November to 1st December 2019 at Sivananda Sevagram, Gaham, Talcher. Sri Swamiji Maharaj presided over the Conference on 29th and 30th November and 1st December, and also blessed the devotees with his discourses in different sessions of the Conference.

Sri Swami Tyagavairgyanandaji Maharaj, Trustee DLS Headquarters and Sri Paramhansa Prajnananandaji Maharaj, President, Kriya Yoga International graced the programme with their presence and addressed the gathering as well. Among other speakers were Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Dharmanisthanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Swarupanandaji Maharaj, Pujya Babaji Sri Brijbandhu Dasji Maharaj, Sri Birendra Kumar Pandaji, Bramhachari Sri Biswambharji, Bramahachari Sri Sivaprasadaji, Sri K Sridhar Dashji, Acharyaa Annapurna Deviji and Sri Radhamohan Singhji. Morning Yogasana and Pranayama class was conducted by Sri Swami Dharmanisthanandaji Maharaj. The night Satsang featured various cultural programmes. Sri Swami Krishnadasanandaji Maharaj ably conducted all the sessions of the Conference as the Master of Ceremonies.

On 1st December, a Blood Donation Camp and a Free Eye Operation Camp were organised. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Camps and blessed the donors and patients with his inspiring words. Sri Swamiji Maharaj returned to the Headquarters Ashram on 2nd December 2019.

Sri Ramacharitamanas Parayana at the Headquarters Ashram

7th May 2020 marks the sacred occasion of Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this auspicious occasion, 108 Sri Ramacharitamanas Parayana Yajna has been initiated this year by the devotees and 54 Parayanas have been organised so far at different DLS Branches.

The 55th Parayana of Sri Ramacharitamanas was conducted at the Divya Naam Mandir of the Headquarters Ashram by the devotees of the DLS Faridpur Branch. The DLS Faridpur Branch was established with the blessings of Worshipful Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj. The devout members of the Branch chanted Sri Ramacharitamanas as their reverential offering at the lotus feet of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj. They commenced the Parayana at 9 a.m. on 26th November 2019 and concluded it at 9 a.m. on 27th November.

May the divine grace of the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev be upon all.

46th TELUGU DIVINE LIFE CONFERENCE 25th - 27th JANUARY 2020 at KARAVADI, ANDHRA PRADESH.

By the grace of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the 46th All Andhra Divine Life Society Spiritual Conference will be held from 25th to 27th January 2020, at Karavadi Village, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh.

The Conference will be blessed by senior monks from Headquarters and saints and scholars from other institutions. Devotees from all the Branches of the Divine Life Society are cordially invited to participate in the Conference aimed at dissemination of spiritual knowledge.

Delegate fee for participation in the Conference will be ₹116/- per person inclusive of food and accommodation. Last day for registration is 10th January 2020.

Address for communication:

G.S. Sai Babu,
Swami Sivananda School, at/PO-KARAVADI,
Dist-Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh-523182.

For Registration and Information please contact:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Sri G.S. Sai Babu | 0 93940 05462 |
| 2. Dr. N. Nageswara Rao | 0 97049 98319 |
| 3. Sri Ch. Ramakrishna | 0 94405 64735 |

-The Divine Life Society

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

‘Sivananda Home is a Center for the loving care of the destitute and the dying people who are found by the roadside, with no one to care for: the people who are home-less, temporary or permanent, fell sick, got lost or were abandoned’
(Swami Chidananda)

Two Mahatmas arranged to send a patient from the opposite bank of Mother Ganga. He was brought lying down on a Theli (cart), and could hardly walk. It was an elderly Sadhu who had been wandering around from one place to another, but was at the end stuck up in front of an Ashram, not able to eat any food offered to him. Loose motion and vomiting did not stop and his condition deteriorated. The Sadhu was admitted and by Gurudev's grace recuperated steadily with medicines and diet according to his needs.

Another new patient came by himself, as he was directed by a few passers-by. He was hardly able to walk, due to injuries on both his legs, caused by an old fracture and an infected wound infested with maggots. Filthy stitches above the eyebrows and on the scalp were stuck in the skin with dried-up pus. His arm was fixed in a dirty plaster bandage, and his mind was anxious and disturbed. It is a true miracle how he reached the Home. After a refreshing bath, a shave, removal of stitches, cleaning and dressing of the wounds, he enjoyed a hearty meal, and almost seemed like a different person. Originated from Nepal, he was on his way to his job in a restaurant, when he was hit by a car on the road. Medical treatment was difficult; being alone; at the same time needing to look after his day-to-day needs became more and more difficult. Consultation with Orthopedic surgeon and investigations revealed fracture of the leg and underarm which was re-set and put into a circular plaster. He himself is still amazed how suddenly everything was taken care of, and not needing to worry about his medical treatment, but also food, clothing, a warm bed and security, all included. To arrive at Gurudev's feet brought him true solace and freed him from worries and cares, also the mind could quietly settle down. To be on the road alone, makes a person extremely vulnerable and problems can easily pile up till complete desolation and destitution follows. Gurudev provided a safe haven for this gentleman.

With repairs and painting going on in the different wards of the Sivananda Home this month, a new and fresh look for the inward patients and residents was appreciated.

Om Sri Satgurudevaya Namah. Jai Sivananda! Jai Chidananda!

“Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms. Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms. Let us ever remember Thee. Let us ever sing Thy glories. Let Thy Name be ever on our lips. Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.”

—**Swami Sivananda**

In Memoriam



With a deep sense of loss and profound sorrow, we report that Sri Swami Radhikashritananda Mataji, one of the senior most inmates of the Ashram, left her mortal coil on 9th November 2019.

Revered Sri Swami Radhikashritanandaji Mataji, pre-monastically known as Ms. Santosh Sharma, was born on 6th February 1937. As her parents Principal Sri Chamanlal Sharmaji and Smt. Rampyari Sharmaji were ardent devotees of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, she got the blessed opportunity to have Sri Gurudev's Darshan at a very early age. She used to come to the holy abode of Gurudev during every summer vacation

with her family and actively participated in enacting the Lilas of Lord Krishna and other cultural programmes at night Satsang.

In the year 1957, Sri Gurudev said to her, “Oji, Now, do M.A. in English.” With abundant blessings of Gurudev, she completed her education and started working as a teacher (PGT) in a government school. Revered Mataji took voluntary retirement as Vice-Principal in 1986 and joined the Ashram after being blessed with Jnana Sannyasa Diksha by Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. On the sacred day of Makar Sakranti in 1987, Mataji along with her three sisters, was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa by Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj and was given the name Swami Radhikashritananda Saraswati.

In obedience to Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, Mataji delivered weekly lectures during night Satsang at the holy Samadhi Shrine for two years. She also served as the In-charge of Sivananda Central Library and offered her valuable services in managing personal library of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. In spite of her ill health, Revered Mataji tried to attend Sivananda Matri Satsang regularly. Simple hearted and introvert by nature, Mataji led an austere life of a true Sannyasi. She breathed her last at 3:10 p.m. on the sacred day of Utthan Dwadashi of Kartik month i.e. 9th November 2019.

May her soul rest at the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna and Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

ANNOUNCEMENT**DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, WEST BENGAL – SADHANA SHIBIR**

The Annual Sadhana Shibir of The Divine Life Society, West Bengal, will be held from 12th February (evening 6.00 pm) to 16th February (forenoon) 2020 at Sri Kashi Viswanath Seva Trust Complex located at Hamiragachhi. Railway Station: Malia on Howrah-Tarekeshwar Railway line; 54 km by road from Kolkata to venue.

Participation fee will be Rs. 450/- per person for delegates from West Bengal and Rs. 350/- per person for delegates from other States. This includes food and dormitory accommodation.

The last date of enrollment is 31st January 2020.

For Enrollment and information please contact:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Sri Nitul Parekh | 0 98300 40730 |
| 2. Sri Prafulla Kumar Mahapatra | 0 94383 03624 |
| 3. Sri Bijoy Kumar Swain, | 0 93393 92845 |
| 4. C Meher Ali Mondal Street,
Mominpur, KOLKATA,
West Bengal-700027. | |

All Devotees are requested to participate.

-The Divine Life Society

ANNOUNCEMENT

Platinum Jubilee Celebration of The Divine Life Society, Bangalore Branch

By the grace of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Platinum Jubilee Celebration of The Divine Life Society, Bangalore Branch will be held from 12th to 14th January 2020 at the Branch premises, Tasker Town, Bangalore.

The daily programs will include Morning Meditation, Nagara Sankirtan, Yoga Asans, Bhajans followed by Discourses by Saints and Sadhus from Head Quarters' Ashram, heads/representatives from various Ashrams in Bangalore and from neighboring states.

The Evening session will also have Spiritual discourses/lectures by saints and Professors followed by Cultural programs.

To mark this occasion a special Postal cover and a Souvenir will be released on 14th January 2020.

All are requested to participate in the joyous event.

For details please contact:

Sri N Shivaprasad : Mobile: 0 98804 63737

- **The Divine Life Society**



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY (THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY)
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, PIN: 249 192, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, (INDIA)

ADMISSION NOTICE

Applications are hereby invited for undergoing the **94th** residential Basic YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE of two months' duration, i.e., from **01-03-2020 to 29-04-2020**. This Course will be held in the Academy premises at the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, Rishikesh.

The details are as follows:

1. It is open to Indian citizens (Men) only. The classes are for admitted applicants who have been duly registered as students for the Course.
2. Age Group: Between 20 and 65 years.
3. Qualifications:
 - (a) Preferably Graduate with keen spiritual aspiration and deep interest in the practice of Yoga-Vedanta.
 - (b) Must be able to converse in English fluently as the medium of instruction is English.
 - (c) Should have sound health.
4. Duration of the Course:- Two months' residential Course on Yoga, Vedanta and Cultural Values.
5. Scope and syllabus of the Course:
 - (a) An outline study of History of Indian and Western Philosophy, Studies in Upanishads, Studies in Religious Consciousness, study of the Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali's Yoga System, Narada Bhakti Sutras and The Philosophy of Swami Sivananda.
 - (b) Practical:—Asana, Pranayama, Meditation and Karma Yoga, Lectures, Group discussions, Questions and Answers, and final examination will form part of the Course.
6. There will be no charges for training, boarding and lodging. Pure vegetarian food (Breakfast and two meals a day only) will be provided. Smoking, drinking and use of intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
7. The students who are admitted for the Course and complete the training shall give an undertaking that they will pursue and practise the teachings in their life.
8. Application Form duly filled-in should reach the undersigned by **15-01-2020**. The aim of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is not merely an academic equipment of students, but to prepare the students for a successful life in the world and to facilitate the living of a wholesome life with an integrated personality. The Course conducted in this Academy is more of the nature of an all-round discipline than merely providing students with scriptural learning or textual information.

For the Application Form and Prospectus please write to:

THE REGISTRAR,

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy,
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192
Distt: Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand
Himalayas, INDIA
Phone : 0135-2433541 (Academy)

Also Application Form and Prospectus
can be downloaded from website
www.sivanandaonline.org
www.dlshq.org
e-mail: yvacademy@gmail.com

SHIVANANDANAGAR

- Note:— (i) The selected student alone is expected to come. He is not permitted to bring along any other family member or relative with him.
(ii) The above syllabus (vide 5) is subject to slight alterations without previous notice, in case such a need arises.

Applicable in India only

**MEMBERSHIP FEE AND BRANCH AFFILIATION FEE OF
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY HEADQUARTERS
SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192, Uttarakhand**

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. New Membership Fee* | ₹ 150/- |
| Admission Fee | ₹ 50/- |
| Membership Fee | ₹ 100/- |
| 2. Membership Renewal Fee (Yearly) | ₹ 100/- |
| 3. New Branch Opening Fee** | ₹ 1,000/- |
| Admission Fee | ₹ 500/- |
| Affiliation Fee | ₹ 500/- |
| 4. Branch Affiliation (Renewal) Fee (Yearly) | ₹ 500/- |

* Application for Membership should be sent with Photo Identity and Residential proof of the Applicant.

** Prior written permission has to be obtained from the Head quarters for opening a New Branch.

⇒ Kindly send Membership Fee and Branch Affiliation Fee by Cheque or by DD payable at any Bank in Rishikesh.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR “REMITTANCE”

All remittances to the D.L.S shall be by cheque/ D.D. drawn in favour of **“The Divine Life Society” Shivanandanagar, Uttarakhand**, payable at Rishikesh. A covering letter with Post Mail address, Phone No, Email Id and PAN should accompany the remittance.

In case of remittances through Electronic Money Order, please send us a letter indicating purpose of remittance and EMO number and date.

Remittance directly into our Bank Account without our consent are not accepted by the Society due to Management and accounting reasons.

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Ambala (Haryana): 132 Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and 103rd Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Paduka Puja, Bhajans and chanting of Mahamantra etc. Besides this, weekly Satsang on Sundays and Tuesdays with Japa, Bhajan, Kirtan and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa were continued by the Branch. Free Jala Seva and Homeopathy Dispensary continued to serve the people.

Angul (Odisha): Daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays with Guru Paduka Puja were continued by the Branch. Sadhana Diwas was held on 13th October with Nagar Sankirtan, Paduka Puja, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Vishnu Sahasranam etc.

Bangalore (Karnataka): Weekly Satsang on Thursdays with Paduka Puja, Swadhyaya, recitation of Guru Gita and Bhagavad Gita were continued regularly. There was Akhanda

Kirtan of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on 3rd Sunday of every month. Special Satsang was arranged on 27th October with Bhajans.

Bargarh (Odisha): The Branch had daily Swadhyaya, Pranayama and Meditation, Rudrabhishek on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays, weekly Satsang every Saturday, and recitation of Bhagavad Gita and discussion on Sundays. The Oriya Magazine "Mahat Vani" was published for free distribution, and Homeopathic treatment of poor patients was carried on regularly.

Barbil (Odisha): In the months of September and October, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and residential Satsang on Mondays continued by the Branch. Free Homeopathic treatment of poor patients was carried on regularly, and Sadhana day was observed on 24th of every month.

Bhanjanagar (Odisha): The Branch arranged Devi Navaratri Puja and Pravachan on Devi

Bhagavat from 29th September to 7th October. There were also recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on S a n k r a n t i d a y a n d Vishnusahasranam and Gita Path on Ekadasis. Monthly Sadhana day was held on 20th with Paduka Puja, Havan and discourse on life and teachings of Sri Gurudev.

Bhubaneswar (Odisha):

Daily Paduka Puja, weekly Satsang on Thursdays, Yoga class and Bhajan Sandhya on Tuesdays and Ramataraka Mantra chanting and Bhagavat Parayan on 24th of every month are the regular programmes of the Branch. Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated. These were concluded with Narayan Seva.

Bhavnagar (Gujarat):

The Branch had Matru Satsang on Wednesdays, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays with recitation of Vishnusahasranam and discourse on Viveka Chudamani, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month. There was Gita Path on Ekadasi day. Navaratri was celebrated with Kanya Puja. Special Satsang was held on 28th

October. Sivananda mobile dispensary served the needy people with treatment and medicines, and grocery kits were distributed to the lepers. Besides this, free tuitions to students and every Saturday Sivananda Bala Sanskar Kendra various programs on every saturday were other events.

Chandapur (Odisha):

Weekly Satsang on Saturdays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. Sundarakanda Parayan was done on 18th October for world peace. Special Satsang was held on 28th.

Chhatrapur (Odisha):

The Branch continued daily Puja, and Study of Srimad Bhagavata. besides weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Birth Anniversaries of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch. These were concluded with Narayan Seva. Sundarakanda Parayan was done on 28th.

Dalabhanapur (Odisha):

In the months of September and October, the Branch had daily Yoga class, weekly Satsang on Tuesdays

with Gita Path, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Bhajan and Kirtan. Birth Anniversaries of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Nagar Sankirtan and Paduka Puja. Besides this, Sadhana Day was held on 22nd September and 13th October. Ramcharit Manas Parayan and Pravachan was arranged from 20th to 30th October.

Dhenkanal (Odisha): Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch with Paduka Puja, Bhajans and discourse on life and teachings of Gurudev. Special Satsang was held at Autonomous College and Bapuji M.E. School. The Programme was followed by discourse, and distribution of books and sweets to students.

Gaham (Odisha): In the month of October, the Branch has successfully rendered service to poor patients through Chidananda Centenary Charitable Dispensary. Around 400 patients were examined and provided with free

medicines.

Jamshedpur (Jharkhand): The Branch continued its weekly Satsang on Fridays, and organised free drawing and Yoga classes for poor children of the Antyodaya Bastee every Sunday. Special Prayers were offered for patients at Meherbai Memorial Cancer Hospital.

Jeypore (Odisha): The Branch had daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays. Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Paduka Puja, Havan, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Vishnu Sahasranam. Besides this, Homeopathic Dispensary continued to serve the people.

Kabisuryanagar (Odisha): Daily Narayan Seva and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays were continued regularly. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj Jayanti and golden jubilee of the Branch were celebrated on 8th September with Prabhatpheri, morning Prayers and Paduka Puja etc. Chidananda Jayanti was arranged on 24th as Sadhana day.

Kapileswar (Odisha): Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch with Paduka Puja, Bhajans and discourse. Special Satsang was held on 29th at orphanage ashram, and chocolates, pen and notebooks were distributed to the children.

Kanpur (U.P.): Daily chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and Durga Saptashati was continued. Under Birth Centenary Celebration of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandji Maharaj, the Branch conducted Sundarakanda Path on 5th October, Narayan Seva on 6th, Paduka Puja on 7th and Akhand Kirtan on 19th. Besides, monthly Satsang together with Satyanarayana Katha was arranged on 20th.

Kendrapara (Odisha): The Branch had daily Satsang with Paduka Puja. Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated on 2nd October, followed by speech competition for students of Sivananda Vidya Mandir. Mobile Satsang was held on 20th. Navaratri Puja was arranged with Kanya Puja and Narayan Seva.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch had its daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Navaratri was celebrated from 29th September to 8th October with recitation of Lalitha Sahasranam, Bhajan and Kirtan which concluded with Kanya Puja. Ekadasis were observed on 9th and 24th with recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam. Sadhana day was held on 13th with Japa, Paduka Puja and Swadhyaya etc. 3 days Yoga Shivar was conducted from 19th to 21st, Sri Swami Dharmanistanandaji of DLS Hqs, Rishikesh conducted Yogasana, Pranayama and spiritual teachings.

Khordha Road—Jatni (Odisha): The Branch celebrated special occasions like: Ganesh Chaturti on 2nd September, Birth Anniversaries of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and Pravachan. These were concluded with Narayan seva. Besides, from 9th to 23rd daily mantra chanting, recitation of Hanuman chalisa and Vishnu Sahasranam also continued.

Lanjipalli (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja and one hour Mahamantra Sankirtan. Besides this, there was weekly Satsang on Sundays with Narayan Seva. Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti were celebrated on 8th and 24th September respectively. Sadhana day was observed on 29th.

Lucknow (U.P.): The Branch conducted special Satsang at Lekhraj Homes on 13th October with Prayer, Bhajan, Gita Path, Mantra Japa and Swadhyaya etc.

Nalgonda (Telangana): 132nd Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th and 103rd Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th September were celebrated by the Branch with Archana, recitation of Vishnusahasranam and Gita, and fruits and biscuits were distributed to the patients. Daily Satsang continued regularly.

N a n d i n i n a g a r (Chattisgarh): The Branch celebrated special occasions like; Ganesh Chaturthi from 2nd to 14th September, Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th with Nagar Sankirtan, Paduka Puja,

chanting of “Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya”. Manas Gosti on Ramcharit Manas on 8th, and Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th. Besides this, daily Yogasan class, mobile Satsang on Thursdays and Matri Satsang on Saturdays with recitation of Sundarakanda and Hanuman Chalisa were continued. There was Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd of every month. Durga Navaratri was celebrated from 29th September to 10th October with Archana, Bhajan, Kirtan and Havan. Kanya Puja was offered on 7th.

Raipur (Chattisgarh): The Branch continued weekly Satsang on Sundays and recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam on Ekadasis. Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 24th September with Paduka Puja and Bhajans etc.

Rourkela (Odisha): Daily Yoga class, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays continued with Paduka Puja, Archana and chanting of Vishnusahasranam etc. As usual free Accupressure treatment and medicines were provided to needy people. Special Satsangs were held on 22nd and 27th October.

Sirpur Kaghaznagar (Telangana): The Branch continued its Shiva Abhishek and Bhajans on every Monday and Paduka Puja on Thursdays. Five days in a week Satsang and Bhajans were conducted at different places. Durga Navaratri was celebrated from 29th September to 7th October, and Shami Puja was done on 8th.

Steel Township—Rourkela (Odisha): Ganesh Chaturthi on 2nd September, Sivananda Jayanti on 8th and Chidananda Jayanti on 24th were celebrated by the Branch with Nagar Sankirtan, Prayers, Paduka Puja, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and talks etc. Besides, mobile Satsangs, free Yoga and Music classes on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Swadhyaya on Saturdays and weekly Satsang on Sundays were continued regularly.

South Balanda (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Fridays, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month are the regular programmes of the Branch. Gita Path, recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Hanuman Chalisa was done on

Ekadasis. Sri Swami Sivanandaji's and Sri Swami Chidanandaji's birth anniversaries were celebrated with Paduka Puja. Special Satsang on 18th October and Mahamantra Sankirtan on 31st were other activities.

Vadodara (Gujarat): 69th anniversary of the Branch was celebrated on 1st November. Prabhatpheri and Paduka Puja were the events of the celebration.

Visakha Rural Branch (A.P.): The Branch had daily Yogasana class and Bagavannam Sankirtan on Mondays at Vishwanath Mandir. Six days in a week Satsang was conducted at different neighbouring villages. In addition to this, monthly Satsang was held on 1st September with Bhajans, Pravachan and Narayan Seva.

Warangal (Telangana): The Branch celebrated Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th with Paduka Puja, Pravachan on Sundarakanda and Annadana Seva.

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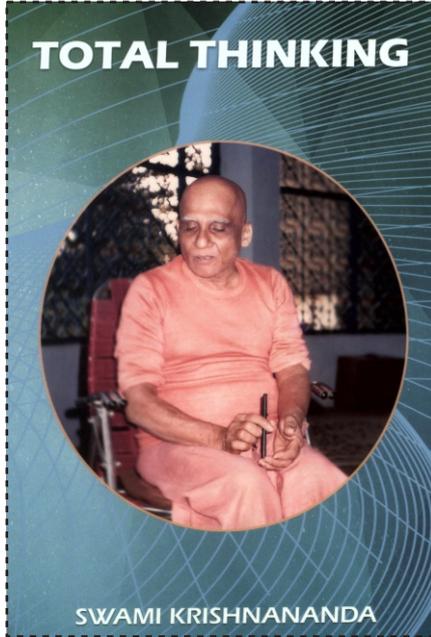
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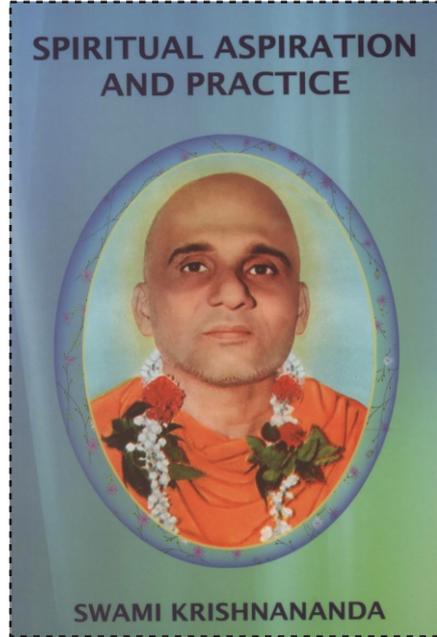


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TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

By H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

- 1. BRAHMA-MUHURTA:** Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.
- 2. ASANA:** Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing the east or the north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercises as walking, etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayamas.
- 3. JAPA:** Repeat any Mantra as pure Om or Om Namō Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination, from 108 to 21,600 times daily.
- 4. DIETETIC DISCIPLINE:** Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, Dhal and bread without any Chutni. Do not ask for extra salt for Dhal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.
- 5. MEDITATION-ROOM:** Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.
- 6. CHARITY:** Do charity regularly, every month, or even daily according to your means, say six Paisa per rupee.
- 7. SVADHYAYA:** Study systematically the Gita, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Sri Vishnu-Sahasranama, Lalita-Sahasranama, Aditya Hridaya, the Upanishads or the Yoga Vasishtha, the Bible, the Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Tripitakas, the Granth Sahib, etc., from half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.
- 8. BRAHMACHARYA:** Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation—Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.
- 9. PRAYER SLOKAS:** Get by heart some prayer Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit in the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.
- 10. SATSANGA:** Have Satsanga. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.
- 11. FAST ON EKADASI:** Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.
- 12. JAPA MALA:** Have a Japa Mala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.
- 13. MOUNA:** Observe Mouna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily.
- 14. SPEAK THE TRUTH:** Speak the truth at all cost. Speak a little. Speak sweetly.
- 15. PLAIN LIVING:** Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.
- 16. NEVER HURT ANYBODY:** Never hurt anybody (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).
- 17. DO NOT DEPEND UPON SERVANTS:** Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.
- 18. SELF-ANALYSIS:** Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register. Do not brood over past mistakes.
- 19. FULFIL DUTIES:** Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).
- 20. SURRENDER TO GOD:** Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Sharanagati).

Om Santih Santih Santih!

This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhanas. This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give leniency to the mind.

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Swami Sivananda

To

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