



REACH

Newsletter of the Vedanta Centres of Australia

Motto:

*Atmano mokshartham
jagad hitaya cha,*

**“For one’s own
liberation and for the
welfare of the world.”**

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Sayings and Teachings

Bhakti alone is sufficient

“One can see God through bhakti alone. But it must be ‘ripe’ Bhakti, prema-bhakti and raga-bhakti. When one has that Bhakti, one loves God even as the mother loves the child, the child the mother, or the wife the husband. When one has such love and attachment for God, one doesn’t feel the attraction of maya to wife, children, relatives, and friends. One retains only compassion for them. To such a man the world appears a strange land, a place where he has merely to perform his duties.”

--- **Sri Ramakrishna**

Sri Ramakrishna: A Biography in Pictures
Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati page 61.

On the knowledge of Brahman

“The path leading to Brahman is very difficult. It is quite natural for a man to forget God. Therefore, whenever the need arises, God becomes incarnated on earth and shows the path by practising spiritual discipline Himself. This time too, God has shown the example of renunciation. But it seems to me, my child, that the chief characteristic of the Master’s sadhana was his renunciation. Has anyone ever seen such natural renunciation? ... He who is able to renounce all for God’s sake is a living God.”

--- **Sri Sarada Devi**

Sri Sarada Devi: A Biography in Pictures
Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, page 71.

On Education

“Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-building, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.”

--- **Swami Vivekananda**

Teachings of Swami Vivekananda; Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, page 53.



The Vedanta Church of Universal Religion
The front view of Vedanta Centre of Sydney—Perth Chapter at 51 Golf View Street, Yokine, W.A. 6060.

FORTHCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Function	Centre	Date
Durga Puja	Auckland	Sunday, 21 October 2012
	Sydney	Monday, 22 October 2012
An Evening of Music	Adelaide	Saturday, 3 November 2012
Annual Retreat	Adelaide	Saturday, 1 December 2012
Christmas Eve	All Centres	Monday, 24 December 2012
Kalpataru Day Birth Anniversary of Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi (also Kalpataru Day)	Brisbane	Tuesday, 1 January 2013
	Melbourne	Friday, 4 January 2013
	Perth	Friday, 4 January 2013
	Sydney	Friday, 4 January 2013
	Auckland	Friday, 4 January 2013

Welcome

We welcome you all to the Ramakrishna - Vedanta Movement and invite you to attend our programmes and actively participate in the propagation of the Universal message of Vedanta as epitomized in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda.

News from and activities of the Vedanta Centres of Australia and New Zealand for the period from May 2012 to August 2012

ADELAIDE CENTRE

Monthly activities:

a) Swami Sridharananda continued his three-days-a-month visit to Adelaide and delivered discourses on the *Bhagavad Gitā* and *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* at the Dulwich Community Centre, 14 Union Street, Dulwich SA 5065. Swami Chandrashekharananda visited in August and gave talks on *Kena Upanishad*. The lectures have been recorded. For details of the ongoing monthly programmes please contact Dr. Raman Sharma, Secretary, on 08- 8431 9775 or Mrs. Pathma Iswaran on 08-8379 5336.

b) Every month on a prescheduled Sunday a 'reading from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*' was conducted from 2:30 p.m. at 33 Woodhouse Crescent, Wattle Park, SA 5066.

BRISBANE CENTRE

Daily activities:

Morning worship, evening *ārati*, *bhajans*, and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* are the regular activities of the Centre at **181 Burbong Street, Chapel Hill, QLD 4073**, (Phone no. 07-3720 0228). A resident volunteer looks after the day-to-day activities at the Centre.

Monthly Activities:

a) During the monthly prayer meeting held on Friday, 4th of May both Swami Sridharananda and Swami Atmeshananda were present. In the meeting Swami Sridharananda hosted spiritual question and answer session attended by more than 40 devotees. Swami Atmeshananda visited Cairns from the 1st to the 3rd of July 2012.

He also conducted -

i) Scripture classes at the Centre on the 1st Saturday and Sunday, and Second Friday and Sunday of every month.

ii) Prayer meetings on the 1st Friday of the month in Deception Bay, QLD.

iii) Discussion groups on the 1st Monday and Tuesday of every month in Sunnybank Hills, QLD.

iv) A class on the 1st Wednesday of every month at Springfield, QLD.

Celebrations:

a) The 8th Annual Celebrations of the Centre was held on the 9th of June 2012. Hon. Glen Elmes, Minister for Aboriginal & Torres Straits Islander and Multicultural Affairs & Minister assisting the Premier, Queensland, was the chief guest. The programme consisted of devotional hymns, classical and folk dances and speeches by Dr. Maha Sinnathamby, the Hon. Glen Elmes and Swami Atmeshananda. More than 350 persons attended the programme.

CANBERRA CENTRE

Swami Sridharananda conducted classes on the *Bhagavad-Gitā* twice a month at the Majura Community Centre in Canberra. Contacts: Mr. J. Venkataraman, Secretary - 02-6258 7612.

MELBOURNE CENTRE

Daily Activities:

Vesper service is held daily at the Centre at **5-7 Angus Avenue, Ringwood, Vic 3135** from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. It includes set hymns, scriptural

readings and meditation and occasional devotional singing.

The bookstall made available literature on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Vedanta philosophy, and other spiritual topics in print, audio, and visual media throughout the period. For further information please contact Mr. Suresh Ravinutala, Secretary, on 03-9803 6154 or Mr. Mohana Krishnan on 03-9801 6174.

Weekly/Monthly Activities:

a) Swami Sridharananda continued to deliver monthly **discourses** on the *Bhagavad-Gitā* from Thursday to Saturday of a prescheduled week at Monash University Clayton Campus of Law, Wellington Road (L. Theatre L4). The Thursday and Friday sessions were from 7:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. and the sessions on Saturdays were from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. The recordings of these discourses are available in Audio, Video and MP3 formats.

b) **Prayer Meetings** were conducted on the first Sunday of every month, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. which included prayer, recitation of sacred mantras, singing of *kirtan* and *bhajans*, followed by selected readings from the scriptures and discussions on them by the participants. The meetings concluded with an *ārati* and the distribution of *prasād*.

c) **Group studies** through the viewing of (i) the *Mundaka Upanishad* lecture series video is held on every Sunday from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and (ii) the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* lecture series video is held on every Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.



Brisbane Centre—the 8th Annual Celebration— photos (from) inauguration by the dignitaries by lighting of the lamp, (middle) singing by devotees and (right) classical dance performed by local artists.

Celebrations:

a) **Guru Purnima** or Vyasa Purnima was celebrated formally on the monthly prayer day in July. Some devotees also gathered on the 3rd of July 2012 and celebrated the day with singing of *bhajans* and readings.

b) **Krishna Janmashtami** was celebrated on the monthly prayer day in August.

Other Activities:

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday the 11th of August at 12 noon at the Monash lecture theatre. The Secretary's report and the Treasurer's report were read out and discussed and the same were passed by the General body. The society also placed before the body two special resolutions : (i) To rename itself as a chapter of the Australian official centre 'The Vedanta Centre of Sydney Melbourne Chapter' and (ii) To adopt the constitution of the Vedanta Centre of Sydney. Both the resolutions were passed and accepted by the Body.

PERTH CENTRE

Daily Activities:

The Centre located at **51 Golf View Street, Yokine W.A. 6060** holds vesper service daily at 7 p.m. with *ārati*, readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and meditation. The Centre maintains a small bookstall and a library. Contacts: Mr. Hiren Mukhopadhyay, Secretary - 0411 478 244, Mr. Parthiv Parekh, Asstt. Secretary - 0430 511 699.

Monthly Activities:

a) Swami Sridharananda visited the Centre every month from Thursday to Saturday on a prescheduled week and conducted discourses on *Bhagavad Gītā*. A good number of devotees

attended the discourses. Swami Chandrashekharananda visited the Centre from the 22nd of June to the 2nd of July 2012 and conducted classes on *Kena Upanisad*, and Meditation. *Rāmanām-Sankirtanam* and *bhajans* were sung during his stay.

b) Monthly *satsang*, which includes the singing of *bhajans* and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and other inspiring books, was conducted on the first Sunday of every month from 11 a.m.

c) Revision session on *Bhagavat Gita* was started in August 2012. An audio recording of the talk on Gita of the previous month was played to revise and refresh the audience's memory.

Celebrations:

a) **Guru Purnima** was celebrated on 3rd July 2012 after *ārati*. It included chanting of Stotras on Guru, devotional singing, and readings from spiritual books followed by listening of a recorded talk by Swami Sridharananda delivered in Sydney on the same day on 'Significance of Guru'.

b) **Shri Krishna janmashtami** was celebrated on 9th of August 2012. after *ārati*. Worship of Shri Krishna and devotional singing, readings from '*Bhagavatam*', *Pushpanjali* (offering of flowers) were the main items in the function followed by Prasad distribution.

Other activities:

a) A Trash 'n Treasure cum Community Food Fair was organised for spreading the message of Universal brotherhood on 12 May 2012. It was a fun event with many people participating

b) The Annual General Meeting of the Centre held on 18th May 2012 at 8:45 p.m.

SYDNEY CENTRE

Daily Activities:

Daily worship including chanting and meditation is held every morning from 6:45 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. at 2 Stewart Street, Ermington. The vesper service starts in the evening at 7 p.m. and this includes devotional singing, reading from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and meditation.

Counselling, interviews and discussions with devotees are also conducted on a daily basis. The library is available to devotees for reference and research. The Centre maintains a bookstall which has a range of books on the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Vedanta, Yoga, and other spiritual literature. Devotional songs, discourses on the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, *Mundaka Upanisad*, and other topics are also available in various media.

Weekly/ Monthly Activities:

The Centre conducted the following activities in Sydney:

a) Swami Sridharananda conducted **classes** on the *Bhagavad-Gītā* every Sunday morning from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Centre.

b) **Classes** on *Bhagavad Gītā* were also conducted by Swami Sridharananda at 1/11 Boyle Street, Balgowlah, NSW 2093 **Manly Beach** on Tuesdays from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

c) Some devotees availed **spiritual counselling** and guidance. The Swamis also visited the homes of devotees when required.

d) **Meditation** sessions were held at the Ermington Centre on Sundays from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

e) **Sanskrit language** classes were held on Saturdays and Sundays for various levels of adult students.

f) **Bala Sangha** Classes on **moral and spiritual lessons and drama**



Perth Centre—the Trash-n-Tressure cum Community Food Fair and a class in progress.

and movement were conducted for children every Saturday from 4:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at the Centre during the academic term.

On an average 26 children participated in the two-day long **holiday camp** conducted at the Centre from the 4th to the 5th of July 2012.

g) Classes on **moral and spiritual lessons** were also conducted for children at Eastwood Public School on Wednesdays from 9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. during the academic term.

h) For the benefit of students the Centre provided **English Language tutoring** on Tuesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. during the school term.

i) *Rāmanām Sankirtana* was sung on *Ekdashi* days after the vesper service.

j) A class on *Meditation and Spiritual Life* was conducted on selected Mondays twice a month from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for ladies.

k) **150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda:** Two talks were given by Dr. Debu Mukherjee on Swami Vivekananda (i) at the North Ryde Rotary Club on the 1st of June. (ii) at the Paramatta Library in a function organized by Sewa International on the 4th of August 2012. (iii) Few handouts were given in a meeting organized by BITS Pilani Alumni Association on 9th June 2012.

l) A bookstall was organized at the

Olympic Park in the India Australia Friendship Fair on 19th of August 2012.

Celebrations:

a) **Buddha Purnima, Guru Purnima and Krishna Janmashtami** were celebrated on 6th May, 3rd July and 9th August 2012 respectively.

Overseas Visit:

Swami Sridharananda visited New Zealand from the 1st to the 8th of August 2012.

AUCKLAND CENTRE

Daily activities:

A vesper service is held daily from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Centre at 27 Arawa Street, New Lynn, Auckland. It includes the singing of hymns and readings from the *Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master* followed by meditation.

Monthly and annual activities:

a) On the **second Sunday** of every month *satsang* programmes, which include singing of *bhajans*, discourse on the *Ramayana*, reading and discussion about the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and meditation were conducted from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

b) On the **last Sunday** of every month reading and discussion on the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, the life and teachings of Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda were conducted in addition to the above. Music and chanting classes

were also held on these days.

c) Swami Sridharananda conducted classes on *Bhagavad Gita* on 2nd, 3rd and 4th of August from 7:45 p.m. to 9 p.m. and on the 5th of August 2012 from 11:30 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Celebrations:

a) **Buddha Purnima** was celebrated on 6th of May 2012 from 8 p.m. Devotees sang *bhajans* and presented talks on Bhagavan Buddha.

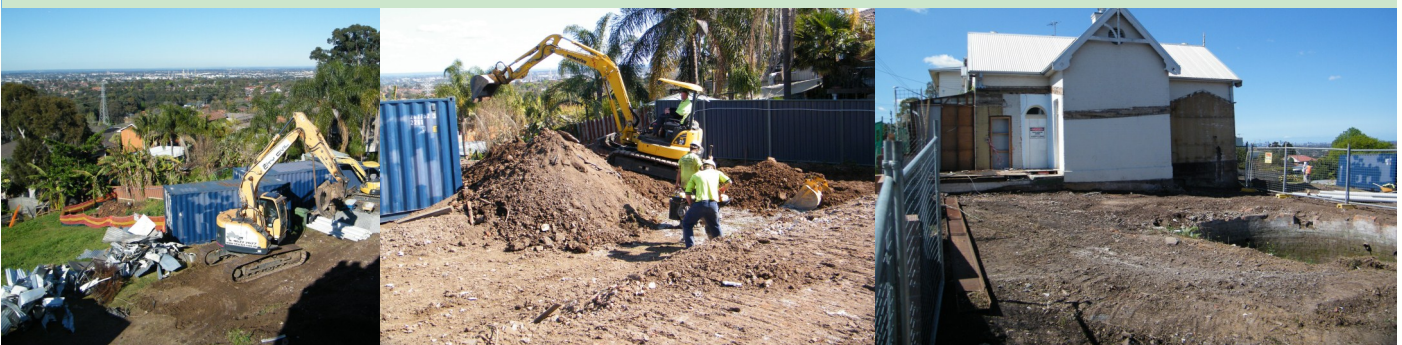
b) **Guru Purnima** was celebrated on 3rd July 2012. The programme started at 8 p.m. after vespers and finished at 9 p.m. with *prasād* distribution. The program consisted of *bhajan*, talks on Guru and Significance of Guru Purnima.

Other Activities:

The Annual General Meeting was conducted on the 24th of June 2012 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. after the *satsang*. It entailed a welcome, confirmation and acceptance of the last AGM's minutes, presentation of the financial and activity reports for the year 2011-2012, and presidential address. The members unanimously authorized the existing office bearers for their continuation in their positions for another two years. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks from the president.



Sydney Centre— (Left to right) Guru Purnima Celebration and Inaugural worship to start the construction of the new multi-purpose building; (Below) demolition of the demountable extension over the well.



SYDNEY

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Mrs. Kanaka Ramakrishna.
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Mrs. Vandana Sarathy.
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Treasurer: Mr. Surender Reddy.
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Dr. Jenny Spencer,
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Mr. Jaishankar Venkataraman,
Mr. Pathy Pathmanabhan,
Mr. Srinivas Avvari,
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Mr. Kalamangalam Mohan,
Mr. Mark Atkinson,
Mr. Anthony Jackson,
Mr. Kerry Reid,
Mr. Atul Sood,
Mr. Sankar Chandrasekaran,
Mr. Dilip Mohanty,
Mr. Yatish Kumar.

ADELAIDE

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Mrs. Pathma Iswaran.
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Mrs. Pathmini Parasivam,
Mrs S. Gowri Rajaramanan,
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Mrs. Madhu Saraf.

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Mr. Mahalingam Paramanathan,
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Mr. Pranev Pillai,
Dr. Bodapati Naidu,
Mr. Supratim Banerjee,
Mr. Rajah Kunarajah.

CANBERRA

President: Swami Sridharananda.
Secretary:
Mr. Jaishankar Venkataramanan.
Treasurer & P.O. : Dr. Ian Doherty.
Members: Mr. Venkat Krishna,
Mr. Murugesan Puthur.

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Mrs. Aruna Paul.
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Tresurer: Mr. Govindan Aiyar.
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Dr. Ajit Kumar Ghosh,
Mr. Vierend Ramsaran,
Mr. Moulinath Ganguly,
Mr. Kirit Kapadia,
Mrs. Rita Khazanchi,
Mr. M. Neelakantan,
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Mr. Kannan Joghee,
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Mr. Suryanarayana Saripalle.

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Mrs. Savithiri Sinnathamby,
Mr. Cecil and Mrs. Julie Bethell.
President: Swami Sridharananda.
Vice Presidents: Dr. S. Devi,
Dr. Ganendranath Bose.
Secretary:
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Jt. Secretary: Mr. Parthiv Parekh.
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Mr. George,
Mrs. Nirmala Veaudry
Mrs. Chandrani Basumallick,
Mrs. Radha Raghavani,
Mrs. Siva Shankaralingam.

VEDANTA CENTRES OF AUSTRALIA

Chairperson:
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Secretary: Mrs. Modhumita Chaudhuri.
Directors: Swami Sridharananda,
Swami Atmeshananda,
Swami Chandrashekharaananda,
Dr. Jennifer Spencer, Dr. S. J. Iswaran,
Mr. Jaishankar Venkataraman,
Mr. Shubroto Bhattacharjee.

AUCKLAND

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Mr. Harish Kumar Sundarji.
Vice Presidents:
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Secretary: Mr. Monnay Kumar.
Treasurer: Mr. Javahri Lal (Jailal).
Members:
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Mrs. Chitra Mukerjee
Mrs. Ira Sondhi
Mrs. Jassu Ben Natally
Mr. Mahesh Sundarji
Dr. Moushumi Das
Mr. Prem A Mukerjee
Mr. Shiu Ram,
Mr. Suresh Raniga.

Swami Vivekananda on Discipleship

Based on the talk delivered by Swami Vivekananda in San Francisco, on March 29th, 1900.

Introduction:

An old proverb of India, "There are hundreds of thousands of teachers, but it is hard to find one disciple" seems to be true. The one important thing in the attainment of spirituality is the attitude of the pupil. When the right attitude is there, illumination will come easily. What does the disciple need in order to receive the truth? The great sages say that to attain truth takes but the twinkling of an eye - it is just the question of knowing - the dream breaks. How long does it take? In a second the dream is gone. When the illusion vanishes, how long does it take? Just the twinkling of an eye. When I know the truth, nothing happens except that the falsehood vanishes away: I took the rope for the snake, and now I see it is the rope. It is only a question of half a second and the whole thing is done. Thou art That. Thou art the Reality. How long does it take to know this? If we are God and always have been so, not to know this is most astonishing. To know this is the only natural thing. It should not take ages to find out what we have always been and what we now are.

Yet it seems difficult to realise this self-evident truth. Ages and ages pass before we begin to catch a faint glimpse of it. God is life; God is truth. We write about this; we feel in our inmost heart that this is so, that everything else than God is nothing - here today, gone tomorrow. And yet most of us remain the same all through life. We cling to untruth, and we turn our back upon truth. We do not want to attain truth. We do not want anyone to break our dreams. You see, the teachers are not wanted. Who wants to learn? But if anyone wants to realise the truth and overcome illusion, if he wants to receive the truth from a teacher, he must be a true disciple.

Conditions to be a Disciple

It is not easy to be a disciple; great preparations are necessary; many



Swami Vivekananda
(1863 -1902)

conditions have to be fulfilled. Four principal conditions are laid down by the Vedantists.

1. Give up all desires

The first condition is that the student who wants to know the truth must give up all desires for gain in this world or in the life to come.

The truth is not what we see. What we see is not truth as long as any desire creeps into the mind. God is true, and the world is not true. So long as there is in the heart the least desire for the world, truth will not come. Let the world fall to ruin around my ears; I do not care. So with the next life; I do not care to go to heaven. What is heaven? Only the continuation of this earth. We would be better and the little foolish dreams we are dreaming would break sooner if there were no heaven, no continuation of this silly life on earth. By going to heaven we only prolong the miserable illusions.

What do you gain in heaven? You become gods, drink nectar, and get rheumatism. There is less misery there than on earth, but also less truth. The very rich can understand truth much less than the poorer people.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." The rich man has no time to think of anything beyond his wealth and power, his comforts and indulgences. The rich rarely become religious. Why? Because they think, if they become religious, they will have no more fun in life. In the same way, there is very little chance to become spiritual in heaven; there is too much comfort and enjoyment there-the dwellers in heaven are disinclined to give up their fun.

They say there will be no more weeping in heaven. There is no sorrow or misery there; therefore they do not care for anyone's misery. They drink their nectar, dances go on; beautiful wives and all that.

Going beyond these things, the disciple should say, "I do not care for anything in this life nor for all the heavens that have ever existed-I do not care to go to any of them. I do not want the sense-life in any form-this identification of myself with the body-as I feel now. 'I am this body-this huge mass of flesh.' This is what I feel I am. I refuse to believe that."

The world and the heavens, all these are bound up with the senses. You do not care for the earth if you do not have any senses. Heaven also is the world. Earth, heaven, and all that is in between have but one name-earth.

Therefore the disciple, knowing the past and the present and thinking of the future, knowing what prosperity means, gives up all these and seeks to know the truth and truth alone. This is the first condition.

2. Ability to control the internal and external senses

The second condition is that the disciple must be able to control the internal and the external senses and must be established in several other spiritual virtues.

The external senses are the visible organs situated in different parts of

the body; the internal senses are intangible. We have the external eyes, ears, nose, and so on; and we have the corresponding internal senses. We are continually at the beck and call of both these groups of senses. Corresponding to the senses are sense-objects. If any sense-objects are nearby, the senses compel us to perceive them; we have no choice or independence. There is the big nose. A little fragrance is there; I have to smell it. If there were a bad odour, I would say to myself, "Do not smell it"; but nature says, "Smell," and I smell it. Just think what we have become! We have bound ourselves. I have eyes. Anything going on, good or bad, I must see. It is the same with hearing. If anyone speaks unpleasantly to me, I must hear it. My sense of hearing compels me to do so, and how miserable I feel! Curse or praise -man has got to hear. I have seen many deaf people who do not usually hear, but anything about themselves they always hear!

All these senses, external and internal, must be under the disciple's control.

(i) By hard practice he has to arrive at the stage where he can assert his mind against the senses, against the commands of nature. He should be able to say to his mind, "You are mine; I order you, do not see or hear anything," and the mind will not see or hear anything- no form or sound will react on the mind. In that state the mind has become free of the domination of the senses, has become separated from them. No longer is it attached to the senses and the body. The external things cannot order the mind now; the mind refuses to attach itself to them. Beautiful fragrance is there. The disciple says to the mind, "Do not smell," and the mind does not perceive the fragrance. When you have arrived at that point, you are just beginning to be a disciple. That is why when everybody says, "I know the truth," I say, "If you know the truth, you must have self-control; and if you have control of yourself, show it by controlling these organs."

(ii) Next, the mind must be made to quiet down. It is rushing about. Just as I sit down to meditate, all the vilest subjects in the world come up. Why should the mind think thoughts I do

not want it to think? I am as it were a slave to the mind. No spiritual knowledge is possible so long as the mind is restless and out of control. The disciple has to learn to control the mind. Yes, it is the function of the mind to think. But it must not think if the disciple does not want it to; it must stop thinking when he commands it to. To qualify as a disciple, this state of the mind is very necessary.

(iii) Also, the disciple must have great power of endurance. Life seems comfortable; and you find the mind behaves well when everything is going well with you. But if something goes wrong, your mind loses its balance. That is not good. Bear all evil and misery without one murmur of hurt, without one thought of unhappiness, resistance, remedy or retaliation. That is true endurance; and that you must acquire.

Good and evil there always are in the world. Many forget there is any evil- at least they try to forget; and when evil comes upon them, they are overwhelmed by it and feel bitter. There are others who deny that there is any evil at all and consider everything good. That also is a weakness; that also proceeds from a fear of evil. If something is evil-smelling, why sprinkle it with rose-water and call it fragrant? Yes, there are good and evil in the world—God has put evil in the world. But you do not have to whitewash Him. Instead have faith and keep quiet.

When my Master, Sri Ramakrishna fell ill, a Brahmin suggested to him that he apply his tremendous mental power to cure himself. He said that if my Master would only concentrate his mind on the diseased part of the body, it would heal. Sri Ramakrishna answered, "What! Bring down the mind that I've given to God to this little body?" He refused to think of body and illness. His mind was continually conscious of God; it was dedicated to Him utterly. He would not use it for any other purpose.

This craving for health, wealth, long life and the like—the so called good—is nothing but an illusion. To devote the mind to them in order to secure them only strengthens the

delusion. We have these dreams and illusions in life, and we want to have more of them in the life to come, in heaven. More and more illusion. Resist not evil. Face it! You are higher than evil.

There is this misery in the world—it has to be suffered by someone. You cannot act without making evil for somebody. And when you seek worldly good, you only avoid an evil which must be suffered by somebody else. The disciple says, "Let the miseries of the world come to me; I shall endure them all. Let others go free."

But I will not drag the ideal down. I feel I am the body resisting evil. If I get a headache, I go all over the world to have it cured; I drink two thousand bottles of medicine. How can I understand these marvellous minds? I can see the ideal but how much of that ideal? None of this consciousness of the body, of the little self, of its pleasure and pains, its hurts and comforts, none of these can reach that atmosphere. By thinking only of the spirit and keeping the mind out of matter all the time I can catch a glimpse of the ideal. Material thought and forms of the sense-world have no place in that ideal. Take them off and put the mind upon the spirit. Forget your life and death, your pains and pleasures, your name and fame, and realise that you are neither body nor mind but the pure spirit.

When I say 'I', I mean this spirit. Close your eyes and see what picture appears when you think of your 'I.' Is it the picture of your body that comes, or of your mental nature? If so, you have not realised your true 'I' yet. The time will come, however, when as soon as you say 'I' you will see the universe, the Infinite Being. Then you will have realised your true Self and found that you are infinite. That is the truth: you are the spirit; you are not matter. There is such a thing as illusion-in it one thing is taken for another: matter is taken for spirit, this body for soul. That is the tremendous illusion. It has to go.

3. Faith in the Teacher

The next qualification is that the disciple must have faith in the Guru (teacher). In the West the teacher simply gives

intellectual knowledge; that is all. The relationship with the teacher is the greatest in life. My dearest and nearest relative in life is my Guru; next, my mother; then my father. My first reverence is to the Guru. If my father says, "Do this," and my Guru says, "Do not do this," I do not do it. The Guru frees my soul. The father and mother give me this body; but the Guru gives me rebirth in the soul.

We have certain peculiar beliefs. One of these is that there are some souls, a few exceptional ones, who are already free and who will be born here for the good of the world, to help the world. They are free already; they do not care for their own salvation—they want to help others. They do not require to be taught anything. From their childhood they know everything; they may speak the highest truth even when they are babies.

Upon these free souls depends the spiritual growth of mankind. They are like the first lamps from which other lamps are lighted. True, the light is in everyone, but in most men it is hidden. The great souls are shining lights from the beginning. Those who come in contact with them have as it were their own lamps lighted. By this the first lamp does not lose anything; yet it communicates its light to other lamps. A million lamps are lighted; but the first lamp goes on shining with undiminished light. The first lamp is the guru, and the lamp that is lighted from it is the disciple. The second in turn becomes the Guru and so on. These great ones whom you call Incarnations of God are mighty spiritual giants. They come and set in motion a tremendous spiritual current by transmitting their power to their immediate disciples and through them to generation after generation of disciples.

But first you must find a teacher, a true teacher, and you must remember that he is not just a man. You may get a teacher in a physical body but he is not the physical man—he is not as he appears to your eyes. It may be the teacher will come to you as a human being, and you will receive the powers from him. Sometimes he may come in a dream and transmit things to the world. The power of the teacher may come to us in many

ways. But for us ordinary mortals the teacher must come, and our preparation must go on till he comes.

We attend lectures and read books, argue and reason about God and soul, religion and salvation. These are not spirituality, because spirituality does not exist, in books or in theories or in philosophies. It is not in learning or reasoning, but in actual inner growth. Even parrots can learn things by heart and repeat them. If you become learned, what of it? Asses can carry whole libraries. So when real light will come, there will be no more of this learning from books—no book-learning. The man who cannot write even his own name can be perfectly religious, and the man with all the libraries of the world in his head may fail to be. Learning is not a condition of spiritual growth; scholarship is not a condition. The touch of a Guru, the transmittal of spiritual energy, will quicken your heart. Then will begin the growth. That is the real baptism by fire. No more stopping. You go on and go on. Baptism is the direct introduction into the life of the spirit. If you receive the real baptism, you know you are not the body but the spirit. Give me that baptism if you can.

The Guru must teach me and lead me into light, make me a link in that chain of which he himself is a link. The man in the street cannot claim to be a guru. The Guru must be a man who has known, has actually realised the Divine truth, has perceived himself as the spirit. A mere talker cannot be a Guru. A true Guru will tell the disciple, "Go and sin no more"; and no more can he sin, no more has the person the power to sin.

I have seen such men in this life. The living power you cannot find in the books. The power that can transform life in a moment can be found only in the living illumined souls, those shining lights who appear among us from time to time. They alone are fit to be Gurus. "The teacher was a boy of sixteen; he taught a man of eighty. Silence was the method of the teacher; and the doubts of the disciple vanished forever." That is the Guru. The disciple must worship the Guru as God himself. All a man can know is a living God, God as

embodied in man, until he himself has realised God. As you look at him, the Guru gradually melts away and what is left? The Guru picture gives place to God himself. The Guru is the bright mask which God wears in order to come to us. As we look steadily on, gradually the mask falls off and God is revealed.

"I bow down to the Guru who is the embodiment of the Bliss Divine, the personification of the highest knowledge and the giver of the greatest beatitude, who is pure, perfect, one without a second, eternal, beyond pleasure and pain, beyond all thought and all qualification, transcendental." Such is in reality the Guru. No wonder the disciple looks upon him as God Himself and trusts him, reveres him, obeys him, follows him unquestioningly. This is the relationship between the Guru and disciple.

The next condition the disciple must fulfil is to conceive of an extreme desire to be free. We are like moths plunging into the flaming fire, knowing that it will burn us, knowing that the senses only burn us, that they only enhance desire. "Desire is never satiated by enjoyment; enjoyment only increases desire as butter fed into fire increases the fire." Desire is increased by desire. Knowing all this, people still plunge into it all the time. Life after life they have been going after the objects of desire, suffering extremely in consequence, yet they cannot give up desire. Renunciation of the senses and desire is the only way out of this misery. If you want to be spiritual, you must renounce. This is the real test. Give up the world—this nonsense of the senses. There is only one real desire: to know what is true, to be spiritual. No more materialism, no more this egoism, I must become spiritual. Strong, intense must be the desire. If a man's hands and feet were so tied that he could not move and then if a burning piece of charcoal were placed on his body, he would struggle with all his power to throw it off. When I shall have that sort of extreme desire, that restless struggle, to throw off this burning world, then the time will have come for me to glimpse the Divine Truth.

They all say that God is the Truth, the only thing that really exists; that

spirit alone is, not matter. Yet the things they seek of God are rarely spirit. They ask always for material things. In their prayers spirit is not separated from matter. But man should hunger for one thing alone, the spirit, because spirit alone exists. That is the ideal.

We are trying to be disciples. Our sole concern is to know the highest truth. Our goal is the loftiest. Let us worship the spirit in spirit, standing on spirit. Let the foundation be spirit, the middle spirit, the culmination spirit. Stand thou in the spirit. That is the goal. We know we cannot reach it yet. Do not despair. The important thing is: how much less you think of the body, of yourself as matter—as dead, dull, insentient matter; how much more you think of yourself as shining immortal being. The more you think of yourself as shining immortal spirit, the more eager you will be to be absolutely free of matter, body, and senses. This is the intense desire to be free.

4. Discrimination of the Real from the unreal

The fourth and last condition of discipleship is the discrimination of the real from the unreal. There is only one thing that is real—God. All the time the mind must be drawn to Him, dedicated to Him. God exists, nothing else exists, everything else comes and goes. Any desire for the world is illusion, because the world is unreal. More and more the mind must become conscious of God alone, until everything else appears as it really is-unreal.

Conclusion

These are the four conditions which one who wants to be a disciple must fulfil; without fulfilling them he will not be able to come in contact with the true Guru. And even if he is fortunate enough to find him, he will not be quickened by the power that the Guru may transmit. There cannot be any compromising of these conditions. With the fulfilment of these conditions—with all these preparations—the lotus of disciple's heart will open, and the bee shall come. Then the disciple knows that the Guru was within the body, within himself. He opens out. He realises. He crosses the

ocean of life, goes beyond. He crosses this terrible ocean; and in mercy, without a thought of gain or praise, he in his turn helps others to cross.

Source:

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume VIII; Mayavati Memorial Edition; pages 106-121.

Sayings and Utterances of Swami Vivekananda

“Remember!” he said once to a disciple, “Remember! The message of India is always ‘*Not the soul for nature, but nature for the soul.*’”

“I am persuaded that a leader is not made in one life. He has to be born for it. For the difficulty is not in organisation and making plans; the test, the real test, of a leader, lies in holding widely different people together along the line of their common sympathies. And this can only be done unconsciously, never by trying.”

Answering the remark of a disciple who felt that it would be better for her to come back to this life again and again and, help causes that were of interest to her instead of striving for personal salvation, with a deep longing to get out of life, the Swami retorted quickly, “That’s because you cannot overcome the idea of progress. But things do not grow better. They remain as they are; and we grow better by the changes we make in them”.

“Never forget to say to yourself and to teach to your children, as the difference between a firefly and the blazing sun, between the infinite ocean and a little pond, between a mustard seed and the mountain of Meru, such is the difference between the householder and the Sannyasin.”

“Everything is fraught with fear: Renunciation alone is fearless.”

“Blessed be even the fraudulent Sadhus and those who have failed to carry out their vows, inasmuch as they also have witnessed to their ideal and so are in some degree the cause of the success of others!”

“The less you read, the better. Read the Gita and other good works on Vedanta. That is all you need. The present system of education is all

wrong. The mind is crammed with facts before it knows how to think. Control of the mind should be taught first. If I had my education to get over again and had any voice in the matter, I would learn to master my mind first, and then gather facts if I wanted them. It takes people a long time to learn things because they cannot concentrate their minds at will.”

“If a bad time comes, what of that? The pendulum must swing back to the other side. But that is no better. The thing to do is to stop it.”

“What the world wants today is twenty men and women who can dare to stand in the street yonder, and say that they possess nothing but God. Who will go? Why should one fear? *If this is true, what else could matter? If it is not true, what do our lives matter!*”

Source:

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume VIII; Mayavati Memorial Edition; pages 262-280.

Listener

Oh mind,
you cannot hear me,
for I am the silent listener
to the beat of hearts.

Do not look for me,
with the minds' eye or other,
for eyeless,
I am the seer of sight.

Strive not to touch me
as Michelangelo's Adam would,
for I have no one body,
but am all,
touching all.

I am the toucher of touch.
Do not presume
to measure me,
nor sound the depth of infinity
with a weighted thought,
nor divide eternity to intervals,
grasping at the sky.

Oh my mind!
you do not know
your own depth,
for I am the knower
of all that is known,
the Self of yourself,
the silent listener to the
beat of hearts.

- - - Russel Atkinson (Gurudas)

According to the Vishuddha Siddhanta Almanac Swami Subodhananda's birthday celebration will be observed on Sunday, the 25th of November, 2012.

Introduction

In September 1885 Sri Ramakrishna moved to Shyampukur in north Calcutta for cancer treatment. Whenever he found any opportunity, Subodh would visit the Master. On 11th December 1885 Sri Ramakrishna was moved from Shyampukur to Cossipore. On Sri Ramakrishna's last illness Subodh said, "It was extremely difficult for the Master to talk. One day I said to him, 'Sir, if you wish you can get well. Please cure yourself.' The Master then asked, 'Do you really believe that?' 'Yes, I do believe that,' I replied. 'What you have said is true,' the Master said, 'but I shall not try to save this body, which is made out of flesh and bone, blood and marrow. Whatever is created is subject to destruction.' Then he said to me, 'Promise that you will never ask me this again.' Thus the Master made me promise."

Sri Ramakrishna passed away on 16th August 1886. When Subodh heard of the Master's death, he cried out while holding his mother, and then fell unconscious. Subodh did not go to Cossipore either because of his family's resistance, or because he thought that the grief and pain would be too much for him to bear. He was then nineteen years old.

Days of Austerity and Travelling

From his very birth Subodh was endowed with passion for God and dispassion for the world. After his guru's passing away, the fire of renunciation was enkindled in his heart. Without the Master he felt empty, and his home became a prison to him. It is said that when the Holy Mother moved from Cossipore to Balam's house in Calcutta, Subodh visited her everyday. Subodh tried to finish his education, but as soon as he would open a book, he would see the Master standing in front of him. He slept very little and felt no inclination to eat. He would spend a long time in meditation in the temple that belonged to his family. It soon became unbearable for him to stay at



Swami Subodhananda
(One who enjoys the bliss of
Spiritual Intelligence)
(1867 -1932)

home, so one day he simply walked away.

Subodh crossed the Ganges and started walking on the Grand Trunk Road, which led to Varanasi. His longing was so intense that he felt his life was useless without God-realisation. After visiting Lord Vishwananth and Mother Annapurna in their respective temples he felt some degree of peace. Meanwhile, his relatives found out where he was and brought him back to Calcutta.

Early Days in the Monastery

It is difficult for a free bird to live in a cage. Ramakrishna had given Subodh a taste of renunciation and divine bliss. He could no longer live at home. He joined the Ramakrishna Monastery at Baranagore. Performing the traditional *viraja homa*, Subodh took final monastic vows and became known as Swami Subodhananda. As he was one of the youngest among the disciples, he was known as "Khoka Maharaj" in the Ramakrishna Order. Swami Vivekananda and others lovingly called him "Khoka", which means "little boy." About his days in Baranagore, Subodhananda said, "Swamiji and others were engaged in deep meditation and japam. I used to wash the dishes, sweep the floor, and

do all sorts of household work." In spite of hardship and poverty in the Baranagore Monastery, the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna lived in a joyful mood. Ramakrishna had joined them together like a necklace of pearl and had united them in their one goal—God-realization. They dived deep in the realm of spirituality and at the same time made their lives joyful with fun and jokes.

At night when all were asleep, Latu would practise meditation, under his mosquito curtain. Subodhananda knew this. Mischievously, he put a wet cloth on the top of Latu's curtain. As the water began to drip, Latu became frightened because the Baranagore Monastery was haunted. After discovering the mischief-maker, Latu exclaimed, "Sharat! Look, this rascal Khoka is frightening me!"

Pilgrimage

In December 1889 Subodhananda and Brahmananda went to Varanasi to practise austerities. They stayed at Pramadas Mitra's garden house and lived on alms like other itinerant monks. In the early part of 1890 they went on a pilgrimage to Omkarnath and Panchavati in Central India; Bombay, Dwaraka, Girnar, Pushkar in West India; and later to Vrindaban, the playground of Krishna. Subodhananda and Brahmananda stayed in Vrindaban from the first week of February to the middle of April 1890, practising various spiritual disciplines. As Subodhananda was very fond of tea, he would go for tea everyday to the cottage of a saintly devotee of Sri Ramakrishna during which time they would often speak of the Master.

From Vrindaban, Subodhananda left for a pilgrimage in the Himalayas. He visited the holy shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath. He also visited some important holy places of South India, such as Kanyakumari, Rameswaram, Madurai, and Madras. In 1892, the Ramakrishna Monastery was moved from Baranagore to Alambazar, near Dakshineswar. Be-

tween his travels, Subodhananda lived in the monastery with his brother disciples.

With Swami Vivekananda and others

After Vivekananda returned from the West in 1897, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission. He asked his brother disciples to propagate practical Vedanta as taught by Sri Ramakrishna for the good of humanity. Before this, most of the disciples had either lived in seclusion and practised spiritual disciplines, or had wandered throughout the country as itinerant monks. Swamiji wanted his brother monks to become accustomed to speaking in public, so he persuaded them to take turns in giving weekly lectures at the Alambazar Monastery. When Subodhananda's turn came he tried in vain to be excused. The other monks thought that this was very funny and gathered eagerly in the hall to watch Khoka make a fool of himself. At last Subodhananda mounted the platform-miserable and unwilling- and opened his mouth to speak. But before he could say a word, the building began to vibrate and rock, and trees crashed down outside: this was the devastating earthquake of 12th June 1897. The meeting was dissolved. Swamiji humorously added, "Well, Khoka, you have made an earth-shaking speech!" All laughed, including Subodhananda.

Subodhananda was among the first group of trustees of Belur Math appointed by Vivekananda in 1901; later he was elected treasurer of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. His love for Swamiji was second only to his love for the Master. Swamiji also had great affection for him. Sometimes when Swamiji would become so serious that none of his brother disciples dared to approach him, it was left to Khoka Maharaj to go and interrupt his mood. Subodhananda narrated the following incident: "One night Swamiji was reading a book while lying on his stomach. He was extremely serious. The dinner bell was rung, but he did not hear it. We were all waiting for him. When nobody dared to call him, Swami Brahmananda asked me to call Swamiji. I silently went to his room, looked at the page number, and abruptly closed the book. Swamiji

said angrily, 'Khoka, you rascal! Why did you close my book? Now how shall I know which page I was reading?' I immediately opened the book and showed him the exact place. Then I said, 'Please come for supper. The food will be cold and all are waiting for you.' He then came to the dining hall and ate with us."

Travel and relief work

Subodhananda was very fond of travelling. Between his stays at Belur Math in 1899 he visited Almora, Mayavati, and again Kedarnath and Badrinath. The next year he went to Navadwip (the birthplace of Chaitanya), Darjeeling, and Kamakhya in Assam. In 1902 he revisited Mayavati and was there when Swamiji passed away. In 1905 he went to Almora again to recover from a serious infectious disease. As a trustee of the Ramakrishna Order, he shouldered the responsibility for philanthropic activities with his brother disciples. During the plague epidemic in Calcutta in 1899, he worked hard to relieve the suffering of the helpless, panic-stricken people. He had a very tender heart, and sometimes begged money from others to help poor patients with food and medicine.

In 1908 there was a great famine in the Chilka region of Orissa. Subodhananda threw himself heart and soul into the relief work. He collected and distributed rice, lentils, and clothes among the famine-stricken people.

Subodhananda was extremely devoted to Holy Mother. He visited Jayrambati in 1891 with Girish Chandra Ghosh and Swami Niranjanananda. In 1911 When Holy Mother visited Belur Math after her pilgrimage to South India, Brahmananda arranged a grand reception for her. The shrine was decorated, and monks and devotees stood in line as Holy Mother walked slowly onto the monastery grounds. Brahmananda announced that no one should break the line and rush to take the dust off her feet. Suddenly, however, somebody came from behind the line, took the dust of Mother's feet and disappeared into the crowd. Amused, Brahmananda cried out, "Who is he? Catch him!" Everyone laughed, seeing Subodhananda's childlike nature.

Subodhananda's love and respect for Swamiji was phenomenal. Once in Varanasi, Swami Raghavananda asked him, "Maharaj, who is greater—Trailanga Swami or Swamiji?" Subodhananda replied, "Trailanga Swami is the greatest among men, but Swamiji is Shiva Himself. If anybody criticized Swamiji before the Master, he would say, 'Here the Lord Shiva has been criticized, please sprinkle a little Ganges water.'"

As a guru, and trips to East Bengal

Subodhananda's unassuming nature and plain clothing hid the fact that he was a great soul and a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna; but his renunciation and simple, joyful face attracted devotees. In the monastery he wore an ochre cloth, a T-shirt, and a pair of slippers. He washed his own clothes, and ate with the other monks on the floor of the dining room. Subodhananda was reluctant to give spiritual instructions to devotees. If anybody approached him for initiation, he would say, "What do I know about initiation? I am a Khoka. You go to Swami Brahmananda or Holy Mother—they are highly spiritual." Once Holy Mother said, "Why does Khoka not initiate people? As long as the Master's disciples are alive, let the people receive their grace." He also received a command from the Master to instruct people. In 1915 Subodhananda began to initiate devotees privately. Subodhananda was extremely self-effacing and did not consider himself to be a guru. Once a woman disciple asked him, "Swami, I don't know the Gayatri mantram or ritual or chanting. People practise the Gayatri thrice a day. Could you teach me all those disciplines?" Subodhananda said humbly, "Mother, I don't know all those things either. You see, I am a Khoka. I have given you what I have received from the Master, what I have known from my own experience, and what has kept me in a blissful state. Please control your mind and practise japam and meditation. In 1925 Subodhananda again went to East Bengal, and gave initiation to many people, even outcasts. His affection for them was no less than his affection for the highly cultured people of society.

One day he talked about the efficacy

of japam: "All power belongs to God. If anyone repeats the mantram, he will definitely get the result. For instance, when a farmer sows seeds, no matter whether they are placed in the ground straight or upside down, they shoot up all the same. He is everything—it is He who gives pain and again He who gives peace. One can overcome all obstacles by repeating the mantram.

Subodhananda was a moderate eater. Once a devotee invited him to dine and he asked about the menu. The devotee humbly said, "What could we offer you, Swami? We have arranged simple food—rice and lentils." Subodhananda went to the dining room and found that the devotee was actually serving various delicacies, but he ate only rice and lentils. In spite of the devotee's frequent request, he did not change his mind. The swami said to him, "The Master taught us that one should hold to the truth and keep his word."

Days in Belur Math

In the early days of Belur Monastery, Subodhananda worked in the vegetable garden with Advaitananda. Brahmananda collected various kinds of fruit trees and flower plants from different parts of India and planted them in the monastery garden. Subodhananda used to make grafts of those trees and plants so that they could be preserved and planted in other places. Sometimes he would go to Akhandananda to collect *michelia champaka*, which was a favourite flower of Sri Ramakrishna. He would also travel to raise funds for the Master's festival or to buy food for the monastery. He would nurse sick monks like a loving mother, cut vegetables, and manage the kitchen. "One day", wrote a monk, "the bell was rung, but nobody came to cut the vegetables. Khoka Maharaj therefore cut five kinds of vegetables for the Master and asked the cook to offer those five items to him. He arranged to have rice, lentils, and boiled potatoes cooked for the monks. In the dining room, Swami Saradananda was pleased to have this simple menu. Then he asked, 'Have you not offered any vegetables to the Master?' Khoka Maharaj replied, 'Yes, five kinds of vegetables were offered to the Master;

but since the monks did not come to cut the vegetables, I arranged this simple menu for them.' Immediately Swami Saradananda said in front of all the monks, 'Tomorrow I shall come to cut the vegetables.' This took care of the problem."

Belur Math was Subodhananda's favourite place. In his later years he was reluctant to go anywhere else. Once when someone suggested that he go to a health resort to recuperate from his illness, he said, "It is better to live on rice and spinach at Belur Math than to have good food somewhere else." Everyday, when he was weak, Subodhananda would walk with a cane to Vivekananda's Temple at the southeast corner of the monastery. He told the monks, "The Master said that Swamiji was Lord Shiva Himself. To respect him is equivalent to worshipping Lord Shiva." His room was adjacent to Swamiji's bedroom. Every morning he used to go to Swamiji's room and bow down to his portrait.

Subodhananda followed a daily routine. He got up at 3.30 a.m. He would smoke a hubble-bubble, then after washing, would go to the shrine at 4 a.m. and bow down to the Master. Then until 9 a.m. he would sit either on his bed or in a chair on the upper eastern veranda facing the Ganges: His calm appearance indicated that his mind was roaming in a mysterious realm. After tea he would take his bath, and then go to the shrine to bow down to the Master. Until lunch he would read some scriptures—especially the Puranas—sitting on an easy chair and facing the Ganges. He loved the stories of the saints and divine incarnations in the Puranas. After lunch he would take a little rest. In the afternoon he would go for a walk, and in the evening he would sit quietly until supper. He did not like monks to misuse time in chatting and gossiping. It was not his nature to give unwanted advice to anybody; if anyone asked spiritual questions, he would answer in a simple way.

Towards the end

Towards the end, Swami Subodhananda suffered from various ailments including diabetes and blood dysentery. In 1927 Subodhananda went to Varanasi, and in 1929 he went to Bhubaneswar

for a rest. Wherever he went, he initiated devotees and inspired them with the message of Sri Ramakrishna. In the beginning of 1931 he contracted tuberculosis, and in spite of all medical help, his body began to deteriorate. He wrote a letter from Belur Math, "Only the Master knows how long he will work through this body. I have no objection whether my body remains or dies." In spite of all his suffering Subodhananda did not forget what the Master had told him, "Think of me twice a day." The terminal tuberculosis devoured all his energy, and he could not even change his position without help. Still, in the morning and before he went to sleep at night, he would lift his head with much effort and look at the picture of the Master behind his head and salute him with folded hands. Subodhananda demonstrated in his life how to face inevitable death. When he was sick, he could not read the scriptures, so his attendants would read to him *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, the *Bhagavata*, and the Upanishads. Sometimes in an inspired mood he would say, "The world with all its enjoyments seems like a heap of ashes. I don't feel any attraction for all these things."

Subodhananda was fully conscious and cheerful until the last. An hour before his death, he looked intently at the picture of Sri Ramakrishna, and then suddenly his face glowed with a smile. He passed away at 3.05 p.m. on Friday, the 2nd of December 1932. The night before he passed away, Swami Subodhananda said, "My last prayer is that the blessings of the Master be always on the Order." Surrendering himself completely to Sri Ramakrishna, he conquered death. On his deathbed he would often say, "It does not matter if this body dies. I shall go to the Master joyfully." And he did. Swami Subodhananda remained the same joyful little boy throughout his life—the ideal model of a divine child of Sri Ramakrishna.

Source:

God lived with them: life stories of sixteen monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Chetananda; Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata; October 1998; pages 529-556

