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Reach

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SAYINGS AND TEACHINGS

Sri Ramakrishna on Harmony of Religions

I have practised the disciplines of all the paths, each for a few days. Otherwise I should have found no peace of mind. (*Smiling*) I have practised all the disciplines; I accept all paths. I respect the Saktas, the Vaishnavas, and also the Vedantists. Therefore people of all sects come here. And every one of them thinks that I belong to his school. I also respect the modern Brahmajnanis. (The members of the Brahmo Samaj.). A man had a tub of dye. Such was its wonderful property that people could dye their clothes any colour they wanted by merely dipping them in it. A clever man said to the owner of the tub, 'Dye my cloth the colour of your dye-stuff.' (*All laugh.*) Why should I be one-sided? The idea that the people of a particular sect will not come to me does not frighten me.

Source: *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna Volume II* by Mahendranath Gupta, Translation by Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Ch 28: At the Star Theatre, Vol 2, p. 538.

Swami Vivekananda on India's Spirit of Harmony

I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation.

Source: Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, Vol. 1, p. 4

IN THIS ISSUE

Special Issue in Pictures:
Inauguration of the first phase of
the Vedanta Precinct of the
Brisbane Chapter
(Vedanta Centre of Sydney).

We welcome you all to the Vedanta Movement in Australia, as epitomized in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda, and invite you to involve yourselves and actively participate in the propagation of the Universal Message of Vedanta.

Special Issue in Pictures: Inauguration of the first phase of the Vedanta Precinct of the Brisbane Chapter (Vedanta Centre of Sydney).

BRISBANE

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The first phase of the Vedanta Precinct of the Brisbane Chapter of the Vedanta Centre of Sydney was inaugurated over five days between 27 June 2018 and 1 July 2018. The celebrations were attended by the following monks of the Ramakrishna Order: Swami Veetamohananda from France; Swami Sarvadevananda from Hollywood, USA; Swami Tattvamayananda from San Francisco, USA; Swami Tyagananda from Boston, USA; Swami Yuktatmananda from New York, USA; Swami Guruvarananda from Nadi, Fiji, and Swami Rajeswarananda from Colombo, Sri Lanka. There were also devotees from interstate and overseas who attended the function.

On 27 June 2018, the programme began at 6:00 pm with Vighneswara Puja, Vaastu Shanti, Rakshoghna Homam, Vaastu Homam, Ashta Dik Bali and Deepa Aradhana. This was followed by a bhajan programme by Brij Bhajan Mandali. The worship was conducted outside and in the lower ground hall. Devotees were also served with dinner *prasad*.

On 28 June 2018 Sri Maha Ganapathi Homam, Sarvadevata Homam and Deepa Aradhana were conducted and followed by lunch *prasad*.

In the evening bhajans were held by Svaraalaya, Sri Krishna Music Academy and Sulagna Basu, followed by dinner *prasad*.

On 29 June 2018 the Sri Durga Saptashati was chanted by Swami Veetamohananda. At the same time, different pujas connected with the worship of the Divine Mother were conducted. These included Sri Chandi Devata Sankalpa, Avahana, Agni Pratishtha, Sri Sri Chandi Homam, Shobhana Dravya Samarpana, Sumangali Puja, Dampati Puja, Maha Purnahuti, Yati Puja and Maha Deepa Aradhana. In the evening bhajans were conducted by the devotees of the Vedanta Centre, Mata Amritanandamayi Centre (Brisbane) and the Woollongabba Sai Centre.

The dedication of the shrine at the Centre took place on 30 June 2018. The proceedings of the day began with a smoking ceremony by Uncle Des Dandy, a local Aboriginal elder. This was followed by a procession of the monks and devotees. The senior swamis carried pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda around the building three times. After this, the shrine was formally dedicated by Swami Sridharananda, President, Vedanta Centre of Sydney. Soon after this, Shodashopachara puja (worship

with 16 sacred items) was undertaken by Swami Tyagananda with Swami Guruvanananda assisting him. This was followed by a homam (fire worship).

On this occasion the shrines to Buddha and Jesus Christ were dedicated by Ven. Ithalagonagama Nanda Thero, from the Sri Lanka Buddhist Monastery and Fr. Stephen Bliss from the Ipswich Catholic Community respectively. Subsequently, a multi-faith prayer was held in which representatives from Hinduism, Judaism, Islam (Sufi), Sikhism, and Bahai participated. Following an address of benediction by Swami Sridharananda, mementoes were distributed to the architect Jignesh Kathiria, the builder, as well as others associated with the construction and the pioneers of the Centre.

Australia is a multicultural society and this important theme was brought out in a multicultural programme held outdoors that evening at the Robelle Domain Parklands, Springfield Central from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm. The cultural programme showcased dances, music and songs from Indian, Aboriginal, African, French, Italian, Maori (Indigenous

New Zealanders), Classical Western etc. The guest of Honour at this function was the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Government of Queensland. The acting Mayor of Ipswich, Wayne Wendt, local MPs and other dignitaries participated and spoke at this event. In a carnival atmosphere many outsiders also attended the function and visited the various food stalls. The programme ended with fire works.

On 1 July 2018, there was an informal musing with the Swamis in the shrine of the Vedanta Centre where the visiting swamis either chanted or gave talks. There was chanting by Swami Rajeswarananda and others. Following this, Swami Tyagananda spoke on 'Sri Ramakrishna of the Heart'. Swami Sarvadevananda spoke on 'Breaking the Chain of Karma', Swami Yuktatmananda spoke on 'Divine Assurances in the Gita', Swami Veetamohananda spoke on 'Vedantic Values for Everyday Life' and 'Swami Tattwamayananda spoke on 'Spiritual Humanism in Advaita Vedanta'. The talks were interspersed with music and meditation.



Final Preparations



Floral Arrangements for the Shrine



Arrangements for the Worship in the Shrine



Setting up the Marquee for the Worship Outside



Handyman Work

27 June 2018



Vastu Homam



The Witnessing Swamis

28 June 2018



Worship on 28 June 2018



Worship on 28 June 2018



The Homam on 28 June 2018

28 June 2018



Worship on 28 June 2018



Bhajans in the Evening



Members of the Audience during the Bhajans

29 June 2018



Swami Veetamohananda Chanting the Durga Satashati (Chandi)



Saptashati Homam (Invocation of the Divine Mother in the form of fire)



Worship related to the Divine Mother



Devotees Witnessing the Worship related to the Divine Mother



Worship related to the Divine Mother



Maha Purnahuti—Worship related to the Divine Mother

29 June 2018



Kumari Puja



Kumari Puja



Yati Puja



Yati Puja



Evening Musical Programme



Evening Musical Programme

30 June 2018



An Aboriginal Elder Performs a Smoking Ceremony



Beginning of the Procession around the Building



Procession



Procession



Placing of the photos in the Shrine



Homam after the performance of the Puja of Sri Rama-krishna

30 June 2018



Ven. Ihalagonagama Nanda Thero dedicating the shrine to Buddha



Fr. Stephen Bliss dedicating the shrine to Christ



The Shrine Hall at the time of the Inauguration



Mahalingam and Yoga Sinnathamby with Swamis Sridharananda and Atmeshananda



Robelle Domain Parklands, Springfield Lakes



Aboriginal Dance by the Yerongpan Aboriginal Dancers

1 July 2018



Chanting by Swami Rajeswarananda, Sunishthananda and Guruvarananda



Swami Tyagananda speaking on 'Sri Ramakrishna of the Heart'



Swami Sarvadevananda speaking on 'Breaking the Chain of Karma'



Swami Yuktatmananda speaking on 'Divine Assurances in the Gita'



Swami Veetamohananda speaking on 'Vedantic Values for Everyday Life'



Swami Tattwamayananda on 'Spiritual Humanism in Advaita Vedanta'



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As God is One, we respect all Religions

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First Phase of Vedanta Centre Inaugurated

Continued from Page 1

Homam, Vaastu Homam, Asta dik bali and Deepa Aradhana. Brij Bhajan Mandali did the bhajans, dinner was provided every night.

On Thursday 28th the morning program began at 9am and finished by 11:30am at the Marquee. The evening program began at 7pm and concluded by 8:30pm. The program included pooja and Homam during the day, Bhajans and dinner in the night.

On Friday 29th the morning session began at 8am and went on till around 12:30pm. Chanting of Durga Saptashati was followed by various worship and finished off with Maha Deepa Aradana, lunch and dinner was provided to all.

Saturday 30th June saw a more official program which began by the smoking ceremony by indigenous elder Uncle Des Sandy which led into the procession around the multipurpose building. Senior monks carrying pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, holy mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda led devotees around the Ashram building to Vedic chants and hymns. This followed the formal dedication of the shrine whereby Swamis placed pictures and made floral

offering and mangal sarati.

Dr. Ashim Majumdar, vice president of Vedanta Centre, Brisbane Chapter welcomed official guest and asked the members of the multipath religious leaders to each say a short prayer. After the vote of thanks dignitaries joined Swamis for a group photo.

The evening program was held at Robelle Doman Parkland, with Minister Hon Stirling Hinchliffe as the guest of honour, the cultural program included Skit by children of Bala Sangha, multicultural performances, and festival style food stalls and finished off with the grand finale fireworks.

On Sunday 1st July, everyone had a chance of informal musing with Swamis at the lower ground level hall which finished off with Arati, lunch and Prasadam.

The centre will be open from 8am till 12:30pm and 6pm till 8pm, the daily programme will include morning prayer and meditation from 6:30am till 7:30am and evening Vespers (Aratirakam) from 7pm till 8pm on weekdays, Saturday and Sunday evening prayers will be from 6:30pm till 7:30pm. The contact details of the Centre is as follows email info@vedantabrisbane.org Telephone (07) 3818 9986.

First Phase of Vedanta Centre Inaugurated

BRISBANE Chapter of Vedanta Centre of Sydney now has a permanent home in the leafy precinct of Springfield. The project has been a long time coming and has come to fruition with the hard work and perseverance of the hard working committee under the untiring drive of Swami

Atmashananda Ji.

A project of this magnitude takes a lot of planning and administration. There are a whole lot of permits that need to be sought, many town planning criteria needs to be fulfilled, funds need to be raised and the list goes on, with such strenuous

requirements many committees give up on projects of this size, and their projects never get past the drawing board.

The new centre situated in Vedanta Drive, Springfield underwent a full traditional inauguration ceremony which began on 27th June and finished

on 1st July. The prayers on 27th June began with Vigneshwara Puja – prayer to Lord Ganesha remover of all obstacles, Vaastu Shanti – to create peace, prosperity and harmony within the new facility. Followed by Rakshoghna

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