



It is the objective of this Ashrama to disseminate the Teachings of  
H.H. Swami Sivananda Maharaj  
according to H.H. Swami Venkatesananda Maharaj

**November 2017 - February 2018**

### **Update from Sri Yogeshwari Mataji**

Dear Friends,  
Hari Om! Loving greetings!

The end of the year was filled with many activities. Though classes closed from mid December for the Festive Season, there were continued Satsangs, including the Commemorations and Celebrations in honour of those great beings who are guiding us!

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, the young and beautiful Mahatma Suvidhya Bai Ji gave a brilliant talk on the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The talk emphasised the importance of looking within and was presented in such a light-hearted way, that the message was easily accepted and assimilated!

Swami Vidyanandaji continued with his excellent lectures and in-depth study of the



Bhagavad Gita to keen students on Wednesday evenings.

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December in honour of our Guru and Patron Swami Venkatesanandaji we had our yearly Interfaith Satsang. The theme was on Faith which invoked much inspiration from the guest speakers. This yearly event brings

those of different faiths together in such an amicable way! It is always very friendly with a sharing of ideas, which is like being able to see through many windows!

On the following day December 3<sup>rd</sup> we chanted the Maha mantra from 4am to 4pm. The wonderful vibrations created energy which lasted into the next day.

On 5<sup>th</sup> December to commemorate the Mahasamadhi of Swami Venkatesanandaji, a talk was given with many devotional chants.

On 24<sup>th</sup> December the birth of Jesus Christ was celebrated with a series of messages interspersed with carols.



On 29<sup>th</sup> December we shared the teachings of our Guru and Patron, Swami Venkatesanandaji accompanied by kirtans.

The yoga classes have been very well attended especially in recent weeks! Each yoga teacher has a different approach and way of presenting the class, so those who attend can derive much benefit by coming on different days of the week

At Swami Padmanabhanandaji's invitation Swami Vidyanandaji left on 15<sup>th</sup> January for India, travelling with Swamiji to Andhra Pradesh visiting spiritual centres. Returning on 12<sup>th</sup> February Swamiji showed pictures the following Saturday and commentated on this fruitful pilgrimage during the satsang. So we all left with a wonderful taste of India at its best with the fragrance of its spirituality.

Our hard working and saintly Vani Mataji left before Christmas to spend a few weeks at the Divine Life Society Ashram in Rishikesh for the customary Christmas celebrations there. This has been a well deserved blessing for her the past few years. Our Headquarters is a special place in our hearts to imbibe the spirit of Gurudev Sri

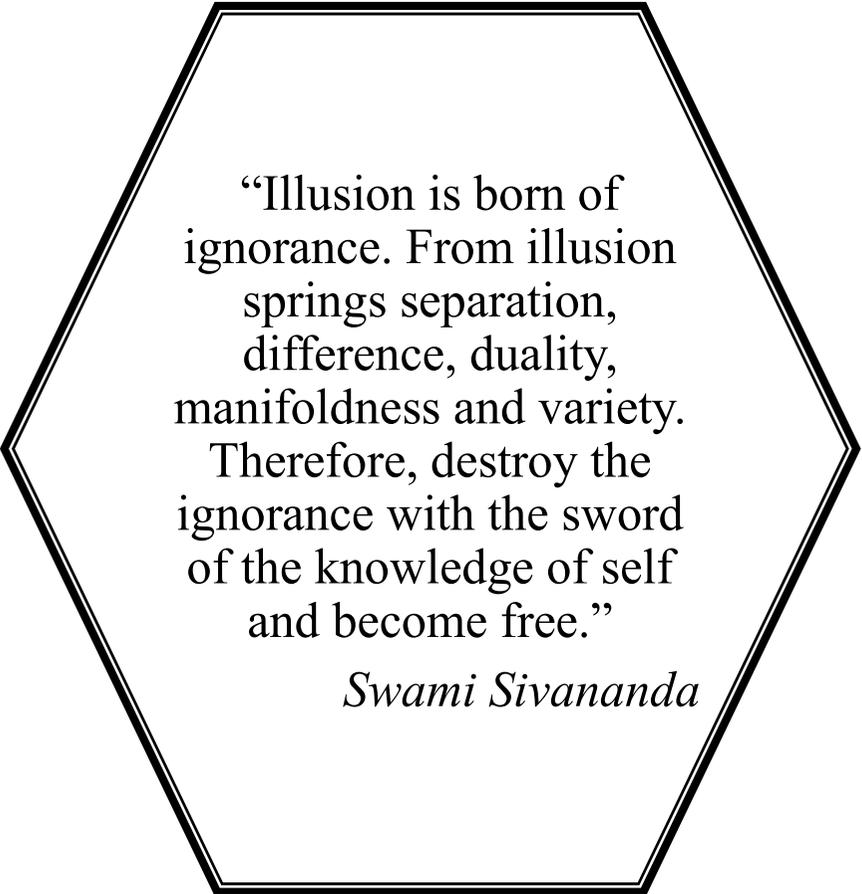
# Cosmic links

Swami Sivananda Maharaj, which is kept alive by our beloved and enlightened President Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj and His Gurubhais. We warmly welcomed her return after three weeks!

We celebrated Mahashivaratri on 14<sup>th</sup> February from 6pm to 6am. The chanting created an atmosphere that kept one awake all night and the following day.

May we continue to share our blessings with others, have the courage to face difficulties, ignore what is disturbing our peace of mind, yet keep it open!

With love  
Yogeshwari



“Illusion is born of ignorance. From illusion springs separation, difference, duality, manifoldness and variety. Therefore, destroy the ignorance with the sword of the knowledge of self and become free.”

*Swami Sivananda*

“Often, it’s not about becoming a new person, but becoming the person you were meant to be, and already are, but don’t know how to be.”

Heath L. Buckmaster

“When you go deep inside nothing is all there is. There is no 'I am'. The 'I am' merges in the Absolute.”

Nisargadatta Maharaj

“The harder the struggle, the more glorious the triumph. Self-realisation demands very great struggle.”

Swami Sivananda

“Self-realisation is the knowing – in body, mind, and soul – that we are one with the omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it come to us, that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God's omnipresence is our omnipresence; that we are just as much a part of Him now as we ever will be. All we have to do is improve our knowing.”

Paramahansa Yogananda

“Every human has four endowments - self awareness, conscience, independent will and creative imagination. These give us the ultimate human freedom... The power to choose, to respond, to change.”

Stephen Covey

“When your intellect, that is confused by the conflicting opinions and the ritualistic doctrine of the Vedas, shall stay steady and firm with the Self, then you shall attain Self-realisation.”

Bhagavad Gita

“Men can starve from a lack of self-realisation as much as they can from a lack of bread.”

Richard Wright

“Stop looking outside or at others for that which you seek of yourself.”

Rasheed Ogunlaru

“Our own self-realisation is the greatest service we can render the world.”

Ramana Maharshi

## Epistle of Swami Sivananda

By Sri Swami Sivananda

Self-realisation is not a process. It is not a becoming. It is pure being. It is not a new thing to be attained.

The aspirant knows that he is the all-pervading, immortal soul. To know that is to become that.

Self-realisation is direct, intuitive perception of the atman. All distinctions vanish. The sage is freed from fear, sorrow and pain.

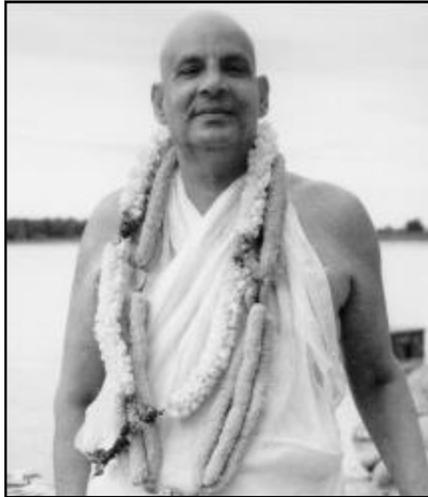
Do not get false contentment. Do not imagine that you have reached the highest nirvikalpa state, and stop your sadhana (practice).

Slay spiritual pride. Shun the company of worldly persons who always talk on sexual matters, money and worldly topics.

Observe the laws of health and hygiene. Be moderate in eating and drinking. Do not overwork. This will produce fatigue.

Fight bravely in this battle of life. Be bold. Be cheerful. Be patient. Be wise.

Arm yourself with the shield of discrimination and the sword of dispassion. March forward courageously, O brave spiritual soldier. Yield not to temptations.



Yoga is an exact science. It aims at the harmonious development of the body, the mind and the soul.

Thou art divine. Live up to it. Feel and realise thy divine nature.

Yoga of synthesis is a unique yoga. It is suitable for the vast majority of persons.

Man thinks, feels and wills. He must develop his heart, intellect and hand. Then alone can he attain perfection or integral development.

Everyone should have one yoga as a basic yoga. He must combine karma yoga, hatha yoga, raja yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. This is the yoga of synthesis.

## Remedial Action

By Swami Venkatesananda

Life or the existence of energy implies motion, movement, activity. All life is motion and, paradoxically, in all this motion there is a state of absolute equilibrium or balance. How is this balance maintained? By a fantastic trick which is the basic law of electro-magnetism - unlike poles attract each other. So, by keeping two unlike poles together, we build a force of attraction.

Everything is vibrating, everything is in motion and yet in an orderly motion. It is possible for this orderly motion to be momentarily disturbed and that momentary disturbance is remedied by immediate balancing counteraction or remedial action. This is Nature and this is what we see in our life. When one sees the beauty of this balancing nature, one realises there is an intelligence behind it. And also that that intelligence seems to be superior to our intelligence because it is able to remedy our stupidity. When these two are seen, then the sources of real action are seen.

The 'I' which superficially appeared to be the doer of all actions is seen to be non-existent and therefore non-active. But that which was beyond the understanding of the mind and the ego-sense - that is the real doer of all actions.

Yoga does not deal with the self or God, but with the obstacles to the vision of God, to this natural living. The world or

the creation takes no notice at all of your private desires. The world has not been created to satisfy your cravings or to avoid what you do not like. What experiences pleasure? What experiences pain? How do they come in? Where does attachment come from? It is these things that really interfere with the natural flow of our life and introduce pleasure, pain, appointment, disappointment, hope, despair. The art of dealing with these is called yoga.

Yoga leads to Self-realisation. Self-realisation is not the end-product of the practice of yoga; but when the yoga practice removes all obstacles, the Self is realised to be the sole reality.



## News from the Outreach Project

The Ashram Community shared their love and made the end of the year very special:

300 children at Stormont Madubela received goody-bags containing sweets, small toys and chips.

120 Patients at Masincedane and Crossroads Clinics received food hampers.

The children at Crossroads Clinic received 5 black bags full of toys.

200 children at Masincedane and Nyanga received gifts from The Brave Foundation.

18 Grade 7 Learners were sponsored to attend their Graduation Camp-Out at SCAS Eiland in Stellenbosch.

Thank you to Primella Magan for arranging the Thursday bread donations, 10 loaves of which Elsa takes to The Church of Reconciliation Manenberg (their letter of thanks on adjacent page) and Heaven's Nest Shelter for abandoned and abused children.

By Jennifer Stephens



Dear Mrs E Oliver

### WEEKLY BREAD DONATION

Our Parish Church of Reconciliation Manenberg serves a community that has a 70% unemployment rate and as a result, a huge amount of social problems. It also carries with it the stigma of being home to some of the most notorious gangs in the Western Cape. We are faced with many social ills and somehow our church still manages to build into the lives of the community in spite of our limited resources.

On behalf of the Parish of Reconciliation Manenberg, I wish to place on record our sincere thanks and appreciation for the sponsored weekly bread donations. I can report and testify that those receiving the bread are extremely grateful and thankful.

Once again thank you for your support and partnering with me, as we strive to serve and meet some of the practical challenges that our community faces.

Yours in Christ

Rev. M. Slingers

*M. Slingers*

Yours sincerely

Reverend Marcus Slingers  
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ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

From: outreach@westcoastcancer.org  
Subject: Fwd: appreciation support  
Date: March 6, 2018 at 9:03 PM  
To:  
Bcc: outreach@westcoastcancer.org



From: Rene Malan  
Subject: Re: appreciation support

Morning

On behalf of the Crossroads cdc staff we would like to thank Ananda Kutir and team for their support during 2017, your support to us was highly appreciated and still is.

We are looking forward to work with you and your team in the year 2018, and still being part of the valuable assets to us in the community.

We have programs that we will be forward to you for the year and planning around these dates that still need to be done, we therefor request again your support to the Crossroads family staff.



Rene Malan  
Administrative officer  
Crossroads CDC  
Metro District Health Services  
Klipfontein Mitchell's Plain

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Fax: (+864436764)  
E-Mail: [Rene.Malan@westcoastcancer.org.za](mailto:Rene.Malan@westcoastcancer.org.za)

C<sup>2</sup>AIR<sup>2</sup>

Competence • Caring • Accountability • Integrity • Respect • Responsiveness

“Kindle the light of love in thy heart, for love is the immediate way to the kingdom of God, the vast domain of perennial peace and joy.”  
Swami Sivananda

## Community Classes

### Maitland Town Hall

This newer community class has now been in place for a full year and it is flourishing.

Devi Harker started teaching a group of seniors in the Maitland Town Hall in February last year. This is a weekly class which sees this group coming together every Tuesday morning.

A relatively new 59 year old student who has rheumatoid arthritis, hypertension and depression recently expressed how she was benefitting from yoga. After just four months, she has found that her mood and mobility have greatly improved and her blood pressure is now well controlled.

Isa, one of the first seniors to join this class, has a cochlear implant and also suffers from hypertension. She recently fractured her arm after a fall at home and being quite fed up with having to miss her yoga classes, elected to come back with her arm in a cast and did what she could in a chair.

Two of the more senior students from last year have had to stop because of family commitments. Their time is not yet their own as they have been called upon to take care of grandchildren and relatives who are ill.

Fortitude is a quality that quickly comes to mind when teaching this group of yoga students!

### Maitland Garden Village

This Friday morning class has unfortunately not been as active. My personal circumstances have led to me being unable to teach this class with the same regularity as before. A member of my family took ill and I found myself relying heavily on my co-teacher, Shanti Roopnarain, who stood in whenever possible. Thanks again Shanti! We eventually decided to postpone this class indefinitely.

During this time, I have certainly learnt a little more about the students who attend this class - there have been very few weeks that have passed without an encouraging note from one of them. They certainly are a gracious and supportive bunch!

This class will resume again as soon as it is possible. In the meantime, if there are any yoga teachers who would like to join our volunteer team, please let us know. It would be great to have an added teacher in the wings so that this kind of volunteer work can continue without interruption.

By Kamala Wengrove

## Ananda Kutir Ashrama School Project

Greetings and best wishes for the New Year.

As the school programme is rolled out we learn more about ourselves, the meaning of the term 'Education', the shape and approach the school should take to realise our vision.

Our school vision is Integral Education that nurtures the innate divinity and potential of children and youth. In order to realise this vision, an analogy of caring and nurturing a plant came to mind. This guides me on a daily basis in the classroom when being interactive with the children. As teachers, we need to create a space for children to play, to share fantasy stories, incorporate rhythm and songs into the daily activities and provide nutritious food. In order to enable self-discipline, we create boundaries, structure and a consistent routine in our programme. Just as we would care for a plant by preparing the soil, house it in a suitable container and feed it, the plant will flower naturally. We have no control in the outcome of the flower. Whilst the child is engaged in activities, the outcome of the engagement will



“The teacher is the centre,  
Gives form to their will,  
not by her doing but by her being.  
The child sees her and wants to do  
that too.”

Waldorf Kindergarten

unfold naturally in its own time according to the soul's journey. This is the approach we have now adopted at the school.

We are also exploring various education models such as the Montessori and the Waldorf approach that will foster a child-centred approach for our children who are currently living in an environment where they are exposed to violence in various forms, are under-nourished and neglected. We have observed the effects of this in their behaviour and irregular attendance at school.

As we introduce principles of the Waldorf education, we have seen shifts in the children's behaviour in a positive way. The Waldorf kindergarten essentials are to have a broad sensory experience, self-directed play and opportunities to imitate everything the child sees modelled in the environment.

For example, Diego, a pupil at our school, is now exploring activities which are self-directed and he shows a keen interest and

love for cooking. His play involves imaginary cooking and thereafter shares the food with all friends and staff at the school. He feels so proud to do this and his beautiful character of sharing is emerging so naturally. He is happy and this participation has led to his self-esteem emerging and a sense of free will and independence.



Our weekly programme includes baking, visits to the park, creative play and music. Our relationship with parents has been very positive and is developing daily and this is beneficial for the children.

### Birthdays are special days at school

In February, we celebrated Asanda's birthday with joyful singing, praise to her and baking a chocolate cake. The highlight for her, was to take the cake home for her mother to taste.



### Prayer before mealtimes

A further illustration of the impact of the programme is shared by Duren's mother, who proudly informed us that when she asked Duren what are his experiences at school, one of his immediate reactions was telling her about him praying at school before meals. This indicates the importance and value that prayer has had for Duren, as it is his connection with God.



## Sewing Training Course

Two of our school committee members who are residents of the community have completed a sewing course with the NGO 'Yes We Can'. These skills will enable them to start their own business at home. This is an initiative of empowering residents of the community, so as to promote sustainability and socio-economic development.



We sincerely thank all our donors and supporters of the school.

Yours in Service  
Maitri Makan



## Wisdom from Mother Yogeshwari

### REPUDIATION

It is said that aspiring Yogis should not look in the mirror!  
When I look in the mirror, I thank God that  
'I am not this body' and  
When I forget something, I thank God that  
'I am not this finite, limited mind'.  
Thankfully, I remember that  
'I am the immortal Self or Atman'.

### Book Review

#### Book of God - Bhagavatam

The Bhagavatam (or Book of God) is one of the very popular Hindu scriptures that deal with the life and teachings of Sri Krishna. The teachings of yoga (especially bhakti yoga) and Vedanta are portrayed beautifully and inspiringly through innumerable mythological stories. Mythologies are not mere myth but they symbolically teach the spiritual truths and the spiritual journey.

There are also wonderful descriptions of Creation that would be of interest to the scientist.

Swami Venkatesananda translated this scripture into English and maintained its spirit of deep devotion. It is in a Daily Readings format, allowing the busy person to read just one page a day, and yet completing the scripture within a year.

## Ananda Kutir Ashrama Membership Application Form

Seekers who are keenly involved in the ashrama and who are actively supportive of its objectives can become members. A member receives a copy of Swami Sivananda's 20 Spiritual Instructions and Swami Venkatesananda's Prayer. A member can vote at the AGM and can serve on the management committee.

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

R200 for a one-year membership.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**For more information please contact:  
Ananda Kutir Ashrama**

**031-418 NPO**

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Email: [info@anandakutir.org.za](mailto:info@anandakutir.org.za)

[www.anandakutir.org.za](http://www.anandakutir.org.za)

Residential Address: 24 Sprigg Rd, Rondebosch East,  
Cape Town, South Africa

Postal Address: PO Box 36134, Glosderry, 7702  
South Africa

### **Banking Details**

#### **Donations to the Ashrama**

##### **Electronic Transfers:**

Bank: Standard Bank  
Branch code: 025009 (Rondebosch Branch)  
Account name: Ananda Kutir Ashrama  
Account No: 275500551  
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment

#### **Donations to the Outreach Project**

##### **Electronic Transfers:**

Bank: Standard Bank  
Branch code: 025009 (Rondebosch Branch)  
Account name: Ananda Kutir Outreach Project  
Account No: 275471152  
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment