



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

September - November 2021

Update from Swami Vidyananda

Blessed Friends,
Hari OM. Loving Greetings!

A new era has ushered into the ashrama, symbolized by me sharing the update instead of our Beloved Mother Yogeshwari.

We believe that Mother Yogeshwari attained Final Liberation on 12th November 2021 at 14h25 when she left her body. Mother Yogeshwari left the body moments after we had read to her Sri Swami Krishnananda Ji's commentary on one of the verses of the Katha Upanishad. The essential question of what happens to the soul with the death of individuality was discussed: not what happens to the soul at the time of the physical death but at the time of the spiritual death of individuality. It was a blessing to



Beloved Mother Yogeshwari

be present and witness this auspicious moment: the culmination of yoga!

From 12-24 November the ashrama conducted daily satsangs

at which we recited and read from the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, which deals with the nature of the soul, as well as singing kirtans. Mother Yogeshwari loved satsangs and this was a wonderful opportunity to transform grief into spiritual joy. We could visualize Mother Yogeshwari entering the satsang room and making some funny remark or gesture to remove seriousness and bring in lightness.

On 24 November we had a special satsang at which video messages by Sri Swami Yogasvarupananda Ji (President of The Divine Life Society), Sri Swami Padmanabhananda Ji (General Secretary of The Divine Life Society) as well as Sri Swami Hamsananda Ji (senior swami and correspondent with Mother Yogeshwari) were screened, and a message by Sri Swami Nirliptananda Ji (Vice-President of The Divine Life Society) was read out. We felt grateful for the graceful tributes of our Swamijis.

Opportunity was also given to devotees of our ashrama to share a thought or memory of Mother Yogeshwari. This satsang was very moving. The thirteen days highlighted the importance of religious/spiritual observances

when a beloved has passed away. It heals the heart.

Mother Yogeshwari of course is still with us.

Prior and following Mother Yogeshwari's passing we had observed the usual festivals.

On 8 September we celebrated Sri Swami Sivananda Ji's Birth Anniversary with kirtan singing and a discourse. We discussed some of the 108 Names of Swami Sivananda that we usually recite when we offer puja to Swami Sivananda. As we reflect on each mantra we are reminded of the sublime teachings of Swami Sivananda as well as His sublime life, which exemplified the teachings.

We also observed Navaratri (the Nine Nights of Divine Mother) from 7-15 October with the customary Divine Mother chants, kirtans and listening to the talks that Sri Swami Venkatesananda Ji gave in 1982 in Mauritius. These were the last Navaratri talks that Swami Venkatesananda gave. One gets the feeling that Swami Venkatesananda was really giving his final message of spiritual awakening to the attending devotees. He emphasized the

importance of facing our weaknesses, introspection, seeking the truth and surrendering to that Truth as the path to Enlightenment.

Then the ashrama had a special Divali programme at which a drama was offered. The drama was called “The Journey to God” and depicted the unique relationship of Lord Krishna and Queen Draupadi. Maitri Makan had written the script and directed the drama; and devotees of the ashrama enacted it. The focus of the presentation and the rehearsals was Drama as a form of Yoga. We explored the characters of the play and how they relate to our inner world. We explored the concept of violence in the light of Swami Venkatesananda’s teachings where even judgment of the villain is violence. We discussed the relationship of God and devotee. To facilitate these inner transformations we had workshops alongside the rehearsals.

This year the Mahasamadhi Anniversary of Sri Swami Venkatesananda Ji fell on 21 November according to the Hindu calendar. We worshipped with a yajna, puja, maha mantra chanting, kirtans, watching a video-recorded talk by Swami Venkatesananda, as well as meditation. We value these

kind of satsangs as they enable us to deepen our connection to the guru and receive more inspiration for the spiritual path.

We also continued the Swami Venkatesananda Birth Centenary Talks: Experiences and Lessons.

In September we had a shared talk by Pasquale D’Adamo and Geraldine Hoare from Italy, in October we had Swami Sushilananda Mataji from USA and in November we had Swami Arouna Mataji from France. All three talks were wonderful in their own unique way, depicting how Swami Venkatesananda deeply influenced the speakers’ lives, how Swami Venkatesananda left the body and how he also guided some of his disciples to a new guru. We have found these talks very valuable and insightful, receiving a broad spectrum of insights about Swami Venkatesananda, and hence the Guru principle.

Before Mother Yogeshwari left her body, she mentioned a number of times that her goal now was to be totally non-attached and to have universal love. This is the fundamental teaching of Yoga. May we all attain to that Supreme State.

Yours in Prem and Om,
Vidyananda

A Tribute To Mother Yogeshwari

By Swami Parvathiananda

Mother Yogeshwari was a foremost and much loved disciple of Sri Swami Venkatesananda, as well as an accomplished, warm-hearted joyful Hatha and Raja Yoga teacher for some sixty years.

She was also a most loving and deeply caring mother, grandmother and great grandmother and a special friend to many.

Over the many years of her personal sadhana, she became a perfected Yogi.

She was always there for people experiencing sadness, grieving or sorrow. She would offer them some tea, sit and listen to them and then in her unique and quiet way would calm and inspire them.

She became an embodiment of Sri Gurudev and Swami Venkatesananda’s spiritual teachings, and was even-tempered, calm, peaceful, kind, compassionate and unassuming. She also had a wonderful sense of humour.

Throughout her life she was also quite artistic as can be seen in all the Ananda Kutir newsletters of the past. In addition she also wrote innumerable poems in which there was always a message.

In this way she devoted a large portion of her life to serving her beloved Guru Swami

Venkatesananda.

She also loved nature and when younger, climbed various trails of Table Mountain.

In 1978 I arrived in Cape Town from Australia with Swamiji who introduced me to Mother Yogeshwari. She was the first person I met here and as we said later, we both clicked and felt that we had known each other before (in a previous incarnation).

Together with tremendous support from many friends, Ananda Kutir Ashrama was established in 1982.

Over the many years she gave of herself unceasingly and hence became a wonderful example of how to live a Yogic life.

Mother Yogeshwari attained Moksha on 12th November 2021, the auspicious Remembrance Day of H.H. Swami Krishnananda’s Mahasamadhi.

It has been an indescribable blessing to have shared my life with her for the better part of 43 years and I shall be eternally grateful for this opportunity.

OM Shanti

Offered at the feet of Mother Yogeshwari and Swami Venkatesananda on the 29th December 2021.

Cosmic Links

“Faithless is he that says farewell when the road darkens.”

J.R.R. Tolkien

“None of us knows what might happen even the next minute, yet still we go forward. Because we trust. Because we have Faith.”

Paulo Coelho

“Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark.”

Rabindranath Tagore

“Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.”

Mother Teresa

“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times.”

Martin Luther

“The greatest religion is to be true to your own nature. Have faith in yourselves.”

Swami Vivekananda

“You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is like an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float.”

Alan Watts

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Faith consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe.”

Voltaire

“If one has faith, one has everything.”

Ramakrishna Paramahansa

“Those who have weak faith themselves cannot arouse faith in others.”

Lao Tzu

Faith Is The Greatest Thing

By Sri Swami Sivananda

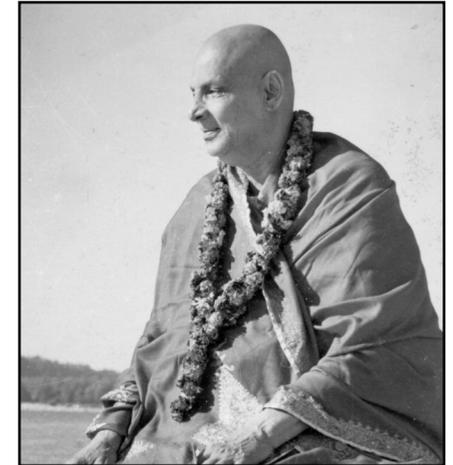
Faith is sraddha. Faith is the greatest thing in the world. Even the greatest philosopher has faith as his stronghold. No intellectualism can prove good if it is unsupported by faith. The whole world stands on faith, is guided by faith.

Religion has faith as its root. One cannot prove God if he has no faith in God. And this faith is the outcome of samskaras (past mental impressions). Faith is guided by impressions of actions done in previous births.

Blind faith should be turned into rational faith through understanding. Bhakti (devotion) is the development of faith. Jnana (self-knowledge) is the development of bhakti. Faith leads to the final experience. Whatever a person strongly believes in, that he experiences and that he becomes.

This whole world is a product of faithful imagination. If you have no faith in the world, the world does not exist. If you have no faith in sensual pleasure, you will not get pleasure from sensual objects. If you have no faith in God, you will never reach perfection. Wrong faith can even turn existence into non-existence. Faith is the fundamental necessity for spiritual sadhana (practice).

Aspiration is a development



of faith. The flame of faith burns as the conflagration of spiritual aspiration for moksha (liberation). The devotee longs to have union with the beloved - he has no sleep, no rest. He always contemplates how to attain the object of his love. He prays, he sings, he gets mad with his Lord. Divine madness overtakes the devotee and he completely loses his personality in the aspiration for attaining God. This is called self-surrender.

You must have an ideal to live for - otherwise you will be heedless, depressed and negative. Understand well before you take a step. Have a clear cut ideal and then have right attempt. Faith in God, faith in oneself, faith in the guru (preceptor), faith in the wise teachings, faith in all that is good and noble - this is the sap of life.

News from Children Of Light Educare

Loving Greetings to All

During the past 3 months at COLT Educare we have seen our older children and their parents preparing for big school in 2022! We have also been very busy on social media keeping our Birthday Campaign drive alive by sharing interviews with our teachers and educare driver. In case you missed these we invite you to go to <http://colt.org.za/category/campaign/>

Working hand in hand with our parents

Six of our children will be leaving COLT at the end of the year, taking their first big steps into Grade 1 at a formal school in 2022. These children and their parents have been with us for at least 3 years and have been instrumental in shaping our curriculum, just as much as the COLT programme has created positive shifts in their lives.

The current Education System stipulates that applications for Grade 1 have to be made by February in the current year, for placement for the next year. Many of our children do not have identity and immunisation documents and Teacher Nushfeekah has been hands-on in assisting parents with applications to Home Affairs. The process is

slow and arduous, but there has been progress and parents have receipts of applications. Our parents need encouragement and motivation so we visit them regularly. This is also to get feedback on any progress, assist where needed, and acknowledge their efforts.



We know that our children have developed a love for learning; they wake up and insist on going to school in the morning and if they miss the bus they cry until their mom walks them to school. They have dreams and goals now.

Spring Family Day

COLT children and parents were invited to a Family Day picnic in Newlands Forest on September 10. We found a quiet spot under a large canopy of trees to picnic, do some Yoga stretches and breathing, and just lie on our backs looking up at the leaves and

clouds. Everyone enjoyed a walk alongside the mountain stream and the children had time to clamber over rocks and explore the forest. Being surrounded by nature like this is very calming, healing and nurturing.

COLT 4th Birthday celebration

Children of Light Educare celebrated its 4th birthday in October with a Yajna and Birthday party.



Parent Training

Educare parents, teachers and volunteers attended a 5 day intensive parent training programme this month. Early Years Services, a non-profit organisation, has facilitated this successful programme for many

years. Group discussions covered topics about self-respect, self-care, self-love, nutrition, grief and loss, safety and protection, and domestic violence. Parents were very keen to participate in the discussions and to learn more about child development and children's rights. They were informed about local support networks such as social workers, safe houses and clinics that are available to help them become responsible parents and positive role models for their children.



On completion of the programme each participant received a certificate of attendance.

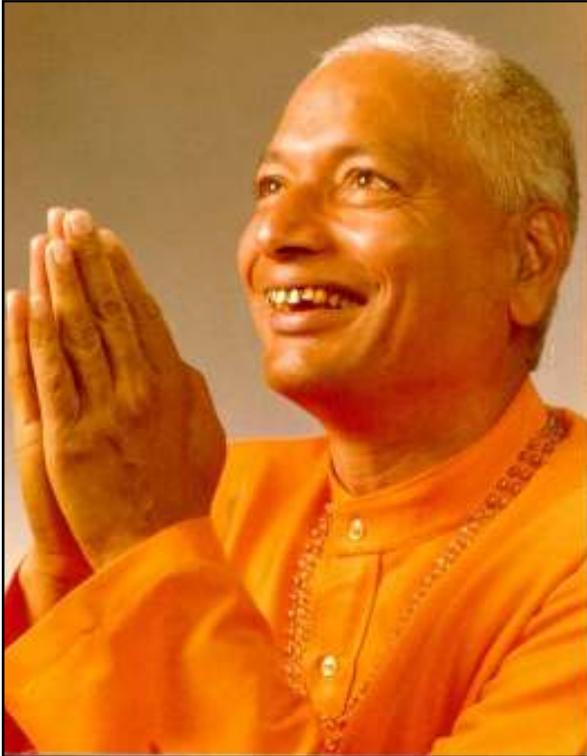
Yours in Service

Maitri Makan

Growth

By Swami Venkatesananda

What do we mean by 'growing?' Growing older implies maturation. Do we understand what this means? When you say to grow older means to mature, what have you conveyed? More experience. What is experience? Experience is knowledge. What good is it? It helps me become wiser. Again, what is wisdom? Learning through mistakes is experience! This growth, this maturity must make us wise; do the right thing at the right time and place to the right person. That is wisdom.



Maturity is the ability to decide what is the right action without being in a position to predict the result. An immature person is not able to discriminate, know which choice is safe, right. For this one needs knowledge, wisdom, maturity. Doing the right thing means making the right choice. For this I must not gamble, this is dangerous. We cannot afford to take a chance in our

decisions. What we call wisdom is this ability to make the choice correctly. This may become clear only when you get into trouble for having chosen wrongly.

What is the most essential thing in me, what must I have, how must I be, to make this right, wise choice? There is need to concentrate. The mind must be absolutely quiet. Faith in God gives you this stillness.

Wisdom from Mother Yogeshwari

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

The stronger the faith
The greater the strength

The greater the strength
The higher the achievements

The higher the goal
The greater the spirit

The stronger the spirit
The greater the love

The greater the love
The closer to God

The closer to God
The brighter the light



"To one who has no faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible!"

~ St. Thomas Aquinas

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 valid for the financial year March-February. R300 for married couples.

Name _____

Postal Address _____

Phone _____

Cellphone _____

E-mail _____

Signature _____

Date _____

For more information please contact: Ananda Kutir Ashrama 031-418 NPO

Tel: +27 21 696 1821

Email: info@anandakutir.org.za

www.anandakutir.org.za

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Banking Details

Donations to the Ashrama

Bank: Standard Bank
Branch code: 025009 (Rondebosch Branch)
Account name: Ananda Kutir Ashrama
Account No: 10158117954
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment

Donations to the Outreach Project

Bank: Standard Bank
Branch code: 025009 (Rondebosch Branch)
Account name: Ananda Kutir Outreach Project
Account No: 10158113770
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment

Donations to the Children of Light Educare

Bank: Absa
Branch code: 632005 (Claremont)
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Account No: 9322073615
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