



Ananda Kutir Ashrama

serve . love . give . purify . meditate . realise

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

March - July 2022

Update from Ananda Kutir Ashrama

Hari OM.

Loving Greetings on behalf of
Swami Parvathiananda Mataji.

The ashrama has been continuing with its activities of providing friends the opportunity for gaining spiritual knowledge and the practice of Yoga in all its aspects.

Yoga classes are being offered and we encourage all who have not returned yet to recommence their lessons here at the ashrama.



Yoga is best learnt in-person rather than through a screen.



The month of March started on a most auspicious note with the celebration of Maha Shivaratri, an annual all-night vigil, in which we sing the

names and glories of the Divine. Also, we offered four Pujas (i.e. worship rituals) and ended the vigil with song and dance. All were joyful and uplifted when the morning sun rose to greet the devotees.

On 6 May was the Birth Anniversary of the 9th century Saint Sri Adi Shankaracharya, whose Philosophy and Teachings

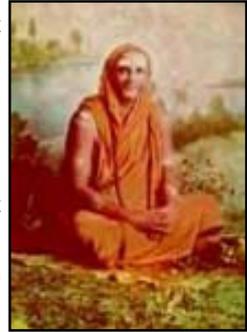


form the backbone of Indian Spirituality. Also, our ashram is fundamentally based on his teachings, as this is our Guru lineage since Swami Sivananda was initiated into one of the orders that Sri Adi Shankaracharya established .

Since the Birth Anniversary fell on a Friday, the ashrama conducted a weekend Yoga Camp, consisting of various Yoga activities, with the main focus on the teachings of Sri Adi Shankaracharya. We viewed the inspiring biographical film on Adi Shankaracharya which was produced by C.V. Iyer. It is a masterpiece and is rich with teachings and deep symbolism and during the Yoga Camp we contemplated these. All felt enriched by the profound teachings and the yoga practices.

On 1 June we celebrated the Sannyasa Diksha of Swami Sivananda. Sannyasa Diksha is the ceremony that is performed when a seeker takes the vow of renunciation and becomes a swami. Swami Vidyananda shared

stories about and teachings by Swami Sivananda based on the mantras that are used in the ritual worship of Swami Sivananda.



Swami Parvathiananda reached another milestone with her 80th birthday on 12 June. A beautiful satsang was given in her honor at the weekly Saturday Satsang. Many friends shared tributes and dedicated devotional songs. Also, a slideshow of photographs of Swami Parvathiananda was screened. A reading about the teachings of Hatha Yoga given by Lord Shiva to Mother Parvathi which gave rise to the great Yoga Master Matsyendranath was offered by a group of friends.

As part of celebrating Swami Parvathiananda's birthday a



special food distribution was organised. Thanks to generous donations by many friends, a group of devotees was able to create hundreds of ready-made rice and dhal

packets for TB/HIV patients in the townships of Cape Town.



13 July was Sri Guru Purnima. It is the most important calendar date in the life of Ananda Kutir Ashrama as this is the day dedicated to one's Guru as well as to the memory of all Saints, Sages and Prophets of all traditions. It was poignant that this was the first Guru Purnima without the physical presence of Mother Yogeshwari. Her Holy Presence was felt though. After a beautiful Puja, in which all friends participated with great devotion, Swami Parvathiananda offered a wonderful talk describing the spiritual qualities of her Guru Swami Venkatesananda through anecdotes, the inspiring teachings of the Sage Yajnavalkya to his wife Maitreyi, encouraging all to imbibe these qualities.

A week later on 22 July we commemorated the Maha Samadhi of Swami Sivananda. Maha Samadhi is the conscious exit of a



Yogi at the time of physical death. At that moment the Yogi merges with the Divine. After Puja Swami Vidyananda again shared stories and teachings of Swami Sivananda based on the mantras in the Puja. We also watched a short video clip of Swami Sivananda. How wonderful that we can see these sages even after they have passed away. One can only imagine what it would be like to see film footage of Jesus Christ, the Buddha or Prophet Mohamed.

It is heartening to see the devotional attendance of our friends in the satsangs.

May we all attain to the Highest.

“The practitioner of asanas always laughs heartily and radiates joy, strength and vigour wherever he moves.”

Swami Sivananda

Cosmic Links

“It is while practicing yoga asanas that you learn the art of adjustment.”

B.K.S. Iyengar

“The asanas are useful maps to explore yourself, but they are not the territory.”

Donna Farhi

“Perfection in asana is achieved when the effort to perform it becomes effortless and the infinite being within is reached.”

Patanjali

“Nowadays, the practice of yoga stops with just asanas. Very few even attempt dharana and dhyana (deeper meditation) with seriousness. There is a need to search once more and re-establish the practice and value of yoga in modern times.”

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya

“Calming the mind is yoga. Not just standing on the head.”

Swami Satchidananda

“The success of Yoga does not lie in the ability to perform postures but in how it positively changes the way we live our life and our relationships.”

T.K.V. Desikachar

“In an asana, the mind has to reach inside the body to find a quiet space until a point comes where perfect balance is felt.”

Geeta Iyengar

“Asana is a very important part of life. It keeps you healthy, strong, and energetic. And it enables you to discover and reclaim the innate wisdom of your body. But it is only after you rediscover the self-luminous nature of your own mind that you will begin to experience the true power of asana. That discovery comes from the meditative aspect of yoga.”

Rajmani Tigonait

“You cannot do yoga. Yoga is your natural state. What you can do are yoga exercises, which may reveal to you where you are resisting your natural state.”

Sharon Gannon

“Each asana is like a piece of music that has a certain characteristic, a certain power.”

Laura Huxley

Yoga Asanas

By Sri Swami Sivananda

Health is wealth. Good health is a valuable asset for one and all. It can be achieved by the practice of yoga asanas, which control the emotions and produce mental peace. It also distributes prana evenly throughout the body and different systems. It helps in maintaining the healthy functioning of the internal organs. It gives internal massage to the various abdominal organs.

Physical exercises draw the prana out but asanas send the prana in. The practice of asanas cures many diseases and it awakens the kundalini sakti. These are the chief advantages of the yogic system of exercises - advantages which none of the other systems have.

Practise a few asanas daily - at least for fifteen minutes. Soon you will possess wonderful health. Be regular in your practice - this is of paramount importance.

Asanas should be done on an empty stomach in the morning or at least three hours after food. Morning is the best time to do the asanas. Do not wear your spectacles whilst doing them. Wear a langotee and a singlet if necessary.

Be moderate in your diet. Practise brahmacharya (celibacy). Begin with a minimum time and

gradually increase it. Answer the calls of nature before you begin doing the asanas.

The endocrine glands play an important part in the economy of nature. The practice of sarvangasana keeps the thyroid healthy and this means a healthy functioning of all the organs and systems in the body.

The diaphragm, the muscular partition between the chest and the abdomen, is also developed by certain exercises such as - dhanurasana, mayurasana, pascimottanasana. The movement of the diaphragm massages the abdominal viscera and organs. There will be daily evacuation of the bowels in the morning. Constipation, dyspepsia and a host of other ailments of the stomach and intestines will disappear.

Four asanas are prescribed for the purposes of japa (repetition of God's name) and meditation. They are padma, siddha, svastika and sukha. Be able to sit in any of these for three hours without shaking. Then only you will be able to control the breath and do meditation. If you can be steady in the posture for even an hour you will acquire a one-pointed mind and feel infinite peace.

Health (TFT 5 January)

By Swami Venkatesananda



Discovery is to uncover the cover that covers the truth!

Yoga is not a therapeutic system. It does not hold out physical immortality or total freedom from disease and old age as its goal. It is a technique for *discovering* the wholeness that already exists in us.

Even the yoga asanas, when they are said to promote health, do just this: they remove the toxic substances that cover the vital organs of our body and thus enable us to discover health.

‘Health’ is wholeness, not just the absence of symptoms of sickness. In fact our divine Master’s physical life proved that real health could be enjoyed in spite of symptoms of physical maladies.

Wholeness in yoga implies the integration of one’s own personality, harmonious relationship with others and cosmic consciousness. These are already there – yet one has to discover them to be aware of them.

Yoga Asanas (TFT 6 January)

By Swami Venkatesananda

Even yoga asanas, if performed with devotion and a spirit of humble enquiry and discovery, can intensify one's inner awareness and help one to 'learn' the secrets of one's body. One learns to discover and thus to understand the language of the body. Then pain ceases to be painful. It is a message from the intelligence that governs the body, it is a signal to be heeded, not a danger to be dreaded. 'Terminal' ailments cease to be fearsome. They are signs that the life-force is beginning to withdraw, ready to depart.

When the student of yoga thus learns the facts of physical life, he is no longer oppressed or distracted by the state of the body; and the body's own intelligence looks after it well.



Then the student of yoga turns his attention to the mind. For all our problems exist in the mind and mind is its own victim (for the anxiety, worry, suffering and frustration afflict the mind). In meditation the yogi asks himself such questions as 'What is mind, what is thought, what is feeling?' In order to ask these questions in the right inner climate in order to get the correct answers, the mind should be quiet and receptive.

News From The Outreach Project

The Outreach project was started by Mother Yogeshwari and Swami Parvathiananda in the 1980's to teach the TB patients yogic breathing exercises. The TB medication causes nausea if not taken with food. So the project expanded to include sandwiches which were made by volunteers at the ashram. COVID19 protocols and continuing unrest in our disadvantaged communities, as well as transport problems have made it difficult to support all the clinics. During March and April Jou Ma se Veges continued to supply fruit and vegetable packs to the clinics on a weekly basis; each clinic receiving 120 packs once a month.

We thank Mr and Mrs Byleveld, for their generous service to the clinics over the last two years.

Swami Parvathiananda's Birthday Seva

To celebrate Swami Parvathi's 80th birthday in June, friends and devotees of the ashram donated almost R13,000. On Saturday 18th June a happy band of volunteers assembled at the ashram and made up about 800 food packs consisting of 1 cup of rice, ½ cup of soya mince and ½ cup of dhal. Each pack added to

1.5 litres of water and boiled for 30 minutes can feed 4 people. The ingredients were bought in bulk to minimise the cost. Our thanks go to the Peninsula School Feeding Scheme who sold us the soya mince, which they receive from a supplier in Durban, at cost price. Also to The Cape Spice Emporium for the rice and the dhal. These, together with hard boiled eggs and naartjies went to Masincedane Clinic in KTC. Saturday 16th July was another opportunity for seva; the process being more streamlined this time as we had learned a lot from the previous time! These food packs will go to Mzamomhle Clinic in Brown's Farm. Phumlani Clinic received 30 dozen hardboiled eggs along with their weekly sandwiches.

Sandwich making

Our volunteers started making peanut butter sandwiches again on Tuesday 24th May after a break of more than two years during the COVID19 lockdown. These have been going to Phumlani Clinic. Golden Crust bakery in Delft has been supplying us with 70 loaves of brown bread on a weekly basis. However it became difficult to sustain this as deliveries were sometimes unreliable and the bread was not always fresh. Encouraged by the

success of the food packs made for Swami Parvathi's birthday we decided to discontinue the sandwich making and to make food packs instead.

Homeless Project

The homeless people on Imam Haron Road, Claremont continued to receive tins of baked beans over this period. Swami Vidyananda donated R5,000 to this project in March.

A homeless man called Mohammed worked in the ashram garden for four days earning R1,200. This helped him renew his PDP (Professional Driving Permit) so he could find employment and get his wife and himself off the streets.

Donations

Thank you to all our friends who donate on a monthly basis. At the moment our monthly expenditure exceeds our monthly donations so we are drawing on our investments. If anyone is able to donate on a monthly basis we would be most grateful.

My thanks go to my fellow coordinators Damyanti Gajjar, Jennifer Stephens and Elsa Oliver.

Rosemary Frith

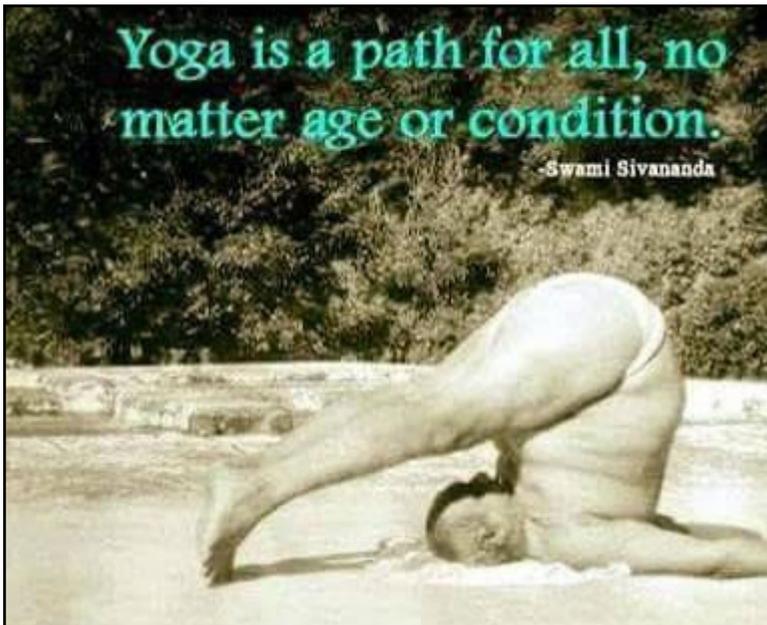
“Toxins are to the body what thoughts are to the mind. See this and they drop off effortlessly. This is yoga. You do asanas and enjoy it, you feel lovely and light. Let your consciousness discover your body, i.e. you starve for 2 days, or go without supper, then the body is light the next day. When the body is free from toxins you will see the life-force, the real you, then the mind is seen as emotion, thought, ignorance and prejudice. When that ignorance, that prejudice hurts my whole being, I will see the Self as an image of God. I need the help of a master to see my Self... You only want power over the body if you think you are the body.”

Swami Venkatesananda

Wisdom from Mother Yogeshwari

YOGA

When you've played games long enough,
And you're bored by worldly stuff,
No more seeking something new,
Which soon becomes a burden too,
Practise Yoga and grow wise,
Find the light which never dies,
Hidden deep within your heart
Loving all, no more apart.
Keep the light from going out.
That's what Yoga's all about!



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:
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www.anandakutir.org.za

Residential and Postal Address:

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Rondebosch East, 7780
Cape Town, South Africa

Banking Details

Donations to the Ashrama

Bank: Standard Bank
Branch code: 051001 (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: 051001 (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)
Account name: Children of Light Educare Trust
Account No: 93-2207-3615
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment