



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

July - October 2024

News on Recent Events

Blessed Friends and Well-wishers,
Hari OM.



Sunday 21 July marked the very important day on the annual calendar of the ashrama life: Sri Guru Purnima. It is the day when we especially remember the Guru and His/Her teachings, which have been guiding our spiritual life. Gratitude and renewal of inspiration and dedication mark the day with various spiritual activities, such as worship, listening to spiritual talks and singing kirtans.

The Guru Purnima day was followed by a week of evening lectures at which the essential teachings were discussed. These culminated with the Mahasamadhi Commemoration of Sri Swami Sivananda Ji. This is the day when Swami Sivananda left the body and merged with the Absolute Reality, the destiny of all seekers.

The residence acquired the long-awaited balcony for the upstairs section. When the upstairs residence was added in 2002, the balcony could not be built due to shortage of funds. Thanks to the kind bequest of the late Sri Ravi and Chandra Liebman the balcony could now be added 22 years hence!

Swami Vidyananda was invited to give a talk at the

Unitarian Church on Sunday 18 August. The theme of the talk was 'The Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita'.



Monday 26 August was the wonderful and lively celebration of the Advent of Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna was an important Divine Incarnation,

particularly through His teaching in the form of the Bhagavad Gita, a text for everyone who wishes to lead a spiritual life regardless of their background. The special Satsang went onto Midnight which marked the time of the Lord's Birth.



On Friday 30 August the ashrama hosted a beautiful concert by Desert Rose. Desert Rose (a husband and wife duo) render meditative, yet devotional, music

composed by the couple. It was a evening of spiritual delight.



Sunday 8 September the ashrama celebrated the Birth Anniversary of Sri Swami Sivananda with a special programme. Swami Sivananda was (is) one of the

most influential Gurus of modern times, due to His personal experience of the Divine, and his innumerable writings covering the entire gamut of Yoga and Vedanta. His teachings emphasised the practical aspect and hence millions of people have received direction and guidance just from his books.



Then from 17 to 21 September the ashrama had the amazing privilege of hosting Sri Swami Muktananda Ji, Spiritual Head of Anandashram. Swami Muktananda Ji gave inspiring talks every evening on practical ways of transforming our lives. Swamiji endeared himself to all through his humility, humanness and sincerity.

This year Navaratri was observed from 3-11 October



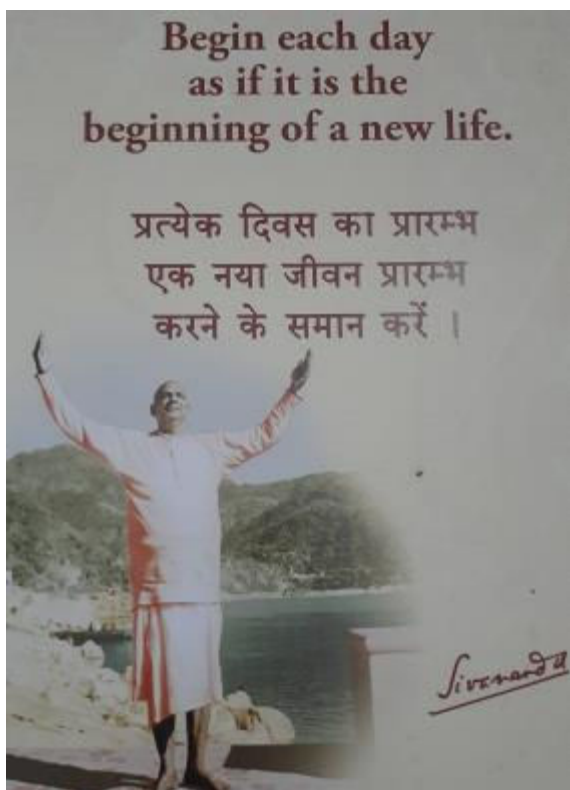
culminating in Vijaya Dasami on 12 October. Navaratri is the period in which the Divine is contemplated

as Divine Mother. Chanting and kirtan singing as well as listening to video talks by Swami Venkatesananda comprised the daily satsangs. Swami

Venkatesananda's talks highlighted the importance of overcoming attachment, egoism and the intellect barrier. Swamiji shared the way that these can be overcome, so that we may reach enlightenment.

May all attain to That.

Yours on behalf of
Swami Parvathiananda,
in Prem and Om,
Vidyananda



Cosmic Links

“Dispassionate objectivity is itself a passion, for the real and for the truth.”

Abraham Maslow

“Dispassion and humility lead to spiritual knowledge. Without them no one will see the Lord.”

Maximus the Confessor

“Vairagya (detachment or renunciation) is the art of avoiding that which should be avoided.”

B. K. S. Iyengar

“The root of suffering is attachment.”

The Buddha

“Non-attachment is the freedom of real love.”

Sri Chinmoy

“Vairagya is non-attachment to life, because it is the will to enjoy that brings all this bondage in its train; and abhyasa is constant practice of any one of the Yogas.”

Swami Vivekananda

“At the individual level Swaraj is vitally connected with the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing self-reliance.... It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“Dispassion (vairagya), according to the Yoga-Sutra (I.15) of Patanjali, is “the awareness of mastery of him who is not thirsting after visible [that is, earthly] and revealed [that is, invisible] things. The ‘revealed’ objects spoken of here are those promised in the sacred texts, such as heavenly delights.”

Georg Feuerstein

“If you realize that all things change, there is nothing you will try to hold on to. If you are not afraid of dying, there is nothing you cannot achieve.”

Lao Tzu

“Attachment to views is the greatest impediment to the spiritual path.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

True Dispassion

By Sri Swami Sivananda



Vairagya (dispassion) does not mean abandoning social duties and the responsibilities of life. It does not mean detachment from the world, or a life in a solitary cave of the Himalayas or in the cremation ground. It does not mean living on neem leaves, the wearing of matted hair and carrying a water-pot made of gourd or coconut-shell in the hand. It does not mean shaving of the head and discarding one's clothes. Vairagya is mental detachment from all connections of the world.

A man may remain in the world and discharge all the duties of his order and stage of life with detachment. He may be a householder. He may live with family and children. But at the

same time, he may have perfect mental detachment from everything. He can perform his spiritual practice systematically. That man who has perfect mental detachment while remaining in the world is a hero, indeed. He is much better than a holy man who is living in a cave of the Himalayas, because the former has to face innumerable temptations at every moment of his life.

Wherever a man may go, he carries with him his fickle, restless mind, his desires and subconscious impressions. Even if he lives in solitude in the Himalayas, still he is the same worldly man if he is engaged in building castles in the air and in thinking of the objects of the world. In that case even the cave becomes a big city for him. If the mind remains quiet, if it is free from attachments, one can be perfectly dispassionate even while living in a mansion in the busiest part of a city like Calcutta. Such a mansion will be converted into a dense forest by him. Vairagya is purely a mental state.

The Qualified Student

By Swami Venkatesananda

When a disciple sits near the master and asks the right question or listens with intense receptivity, what takes place between them is upanishad. The truth however is not in the master's pocket - it is in you! The answer is in you, but because you are unable to discover it for yourself you go to a spiritual teacher.

What is the problem that the student should experience within himself to qualify him to go to the master? Why should a man go to any spiritual master at all? The spiritual teacher can do nothing if one is satisfied with the type of life one is leading. Only when one's present life itself poses a problem, when one finds no satisfaction in it or in the world, can one meaningfully enter into a dialogue with a spiritual teacher. Understanding of this distinction is called viveka.

My guru Swami Sivananda, said: "There are many spiritual teachers in this world, but there are not many disciples." A disciple becomes fit to approach a master only when this dissatisfaction has arisen in him; it is then that he really turns away from worldly pleasures and ambitions i.e. there is vairagya or dispassion in him. But first comes viveka, dissatisfaction, questioning: "Is

this real? What is life? What am I doing here?"

What can really make me question this world? Almost nothing! One can suffer in this world, one can have all sorts of misfortunes, but there is no guarantee that they will inevitably give rise to viveka.

Only the right understanding of the impermanence of all that we seek in this world and intuitive faith concerning the existence of something beyond this can really and truly produce virtue. When the student endowed with all this goes to the master, he possesses virtue, self-control, control over the mind. This virtue is natural to him.

Virtue must be born of right understanding, of a right sense of values. All these are based on what is known as mumukshutva or an intense longing for liberation. That aspiration is there only when one knows that somehow one is caught and that this bondage is intolerable; then the disciple goes to the master and asks him: "Please tell me where and how I am caught and how I can find release?"

News from Children Of Light Educare

MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL

Mala Makan

Loving greetings, dearest friends of COLT.



Another year has gone by in the blink of an eye and we are already into the final term of the school year. This is an exciting time for us as COLT as we have a number of year end events to look forward to. It is a

special time for our children as we count down to our Christmas Party - a highlight for all our current and past pupils. In the days leading up to the Christmas Party, our teachers include stories about the birth of Lord Jesus into daily lessons in the classroom. This is used to bring the nativity scene to life in the hearts and minds of our children. It is a great opportunity to use the medium of storytelling to inculcate good values, prayer and gratitude in our children.

Once again, thank you to all our friends, supporters and well-wishes. We wish you a joyous year end and a happy new year for 2025.

God bless and take care.

COLT IS 7 YEARS OLD!



The Children of Light Educare turned 7 years old this October. We celebrated the values of COLT, which are Serve, Love, Focus and Learn, together with the children and staff. Teacher Juliet baked a cake and the party was full of fun and joy.

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER, PATRICK



When Patrick Mueller arrived in Cape Town from Germany, he was searching for an opportunity to intern at an educare where he could volunteer his

time and skills and learn about a different culture at the same time. When he heard about COLT from a friend, he immediately made contact with us and went on to spend two weeks at the educare. He immersed himself fully into our daily routine and helped out with mealtimes, classroom activities and play time.

Our children benefited greatly from Patrick's background in education and previous history of volunteering at a forest kindergarten in Germany. We are grateful to Patrick for the love and joy he spread while at COLT.

PRIMARY SCHOOL REGISTRATION



In August, Teacher Nushfeekah, set up a working session for the parents of graduating pupils from COLT. This was to ensure that parents felt supported through the process of applying to surrounding primary schools for placement of their child into Grade R.

This is quite a daunting task for parents as they feel intimidated by the online application process. They sometimes do not have cellphones or are unable to upload supporting documents themselves. Teacher Nushfeekah helps them apply and this ensures that our children can continue with their school education.

GARDENING WITH TEACHER DEVI



The weekly gardening session under the expert guidance of Teacher Devi is a firm favourite for the children. Over the year, and depending on the season, the children get to grow a variety of plants, flowers and vegetables. The vegetables are harvested and find its way into delicious soups for lunch.

Together with Teacher Devi, the children also started and maintain a worm farm which provides rich worm tea and fertiliser for our garden patch.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS



We had a number of parent and community engagements over the term and these are a critical component of our offering at the educare.

When parents are included and kept informed about the activities at the educare and the progress of their children, they are better equipped to support their child. Parents attend quarterly meetings at the educare. We use this opportunity to include parent training on pertinent topics like health and safety, hygiene, wellness and lessons on values. In July parents watched the movie Capernaum at the educare and were treated to hot chocolate and popcorn. The movie centres around poverty, struggle and hardship as experienced through the lens of a child. Lessons from the movie were then discussed at subsequent parent meetings.

We also held a special event for parents graduating from our parenting class in August. This event coincided with Women's Day and gave us an opportunity to celebrate, honour and thank our children's moms.

FAREWELL TEACHER NUSHFEELAH



Teacher Nushfeekah joined COLT in 2019 and has been an integral part of the educare since then. Before joining COLT, Teacher Nushfeekah ran her own Early Childhood

Development centre. She is a qualified Waldorf teacher and qualified as a Social Auxiliary Worker in 2023. She served as the Grade R teacher and led the social and auxiliary work in the community.

Teacher Nushfeekah also embraced all the principles of yoga philosophy as integrated into COLT's holistic curriculum with the child at its heart.

Although she will be sorely missed, we are proud to share Teacher Nushfeekah has taken up a role as a Counselor and Social Auxiliary Worker at Childline. She will be an asset and make a huge difference to this critical capacity there - where she will no doubt touch the lives of many more children. We thank Teacher for the significant contribution to COLT and look forward to working in close partnership with her in her new role. Go well and in light, Teacher Nush.

UPCOMING EVENTS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



As the year winds down to a close this final term, there are many exciting celebratory events to look forward to. Please contact us if you would like to get involved as a sponsor or a volunteer (info@colt.org.za).

Our Graduation ceremony will be held on the 29th of November. This is a bittersweet occasion for those of us at COLT. On the one hand, we mark a

significant milestone in the personal and academic life of our children who graduate from one grade to the next. On the other hand, we also bid farewell to those children who are moving onto Grade 1 at a neighbouring primary school and therefore, leaving COLT.

Even though they may no longer be physically at COLT, we continue to maintain close contact with our graduating children, their families and new teachers. We may even meet some of them through our Aftercare Programme.

Our annual Children's Christmas Party takes place on the 4th of December this year. It is always an event filled with so much joy, wonder and excitement as the children are treated to special treats and presents from friends of COLT. This year we are putting together Santa Goodie Bags for each of the children. Please contact us if you can assist with items needed like toiletries and stationery.



What To Renounce

By Sri Swami Sivananda



Mere outward giving up of things is nothing. It is not real renunciation.

Real tyaga or sanyas (renunciation) consists in absolute renunciation of all vasanas (tendencies) and the destruction of the heart-knot of ignorance, the cit-jada-granthi (confusion between the conscious subject and inert object).

What is to be renounced is the bheda buddhi (divisive intellect) which says, "I am superior to that man". "I am the body." And the karttrva abhimana which thinks, "I am the doer". There is no use in your renouncing your home, wife and children. You must destroy moha (attachment) for the body, children, money, house, property - then you will get that state of immortality from which you will never return.

He who has merely withdrawn himself from worldly possessions, cannot be regarded as having renounced the world altogether; but he who is living in actual contact with the world, finds out its faults. He who is freed

from every passion and whose soul depends on nothing may be said to have truly renounced the world. Read the story of Raja Sikhidhwaja and Queen Chudala in the Yoga Vasishta.

The spirit cometh and goeth. Therefore you will have to be careful always in nourishing and protecting your spiritual samskaras (impressions) with burning vairagya (dispassion), intense and constant sadhana (practice) and burning mumuksutva (desire for liberation). Increase your good samskaras. Develop them. Multiply them.

People do not want to remove mala (impurity) by selfless service and viksepa (restlessness of mind) with upasana (devotion). They think that bhakti and service are nothing. They at once jump to open the kundalini and raise the brahmakara vrtti (the feeling of Brahmin is the all). They will only break down their legs.

Serve and worship; jnana and yoga will come by themselves; kundalini will be awakened by itself.

News From The Outreach Project

FOOD PACKS

On Monday mornings the dedicated Outreach volunteers are busy assembling 100 food packs of rice, split peas/lentils and soya mince. Each pack, with water added and cooked for about 30 minutes, provides a nutritious meal for 4 people.

Our grateful thanks go to Ladles of Love who have been collecting and delivering the food packs to the clinics we support: Masincedane in KTC, Mazomemhle in Browns Farm and Crossroads 2 and Phumlani in Crossroads. The clinics receive food packs on a rotational basis every 3 to 4 weeks.

HOME ROSTERS

Juliet Clavaux and her friends, long-time supporters of the Outreach project continue to make food packs which are delivered to the ashrama.

WINTER DRIVE

During July when Cape Town was experiencing one of its coldest and wettest winters for many years we bought blankets for the clinic clients. 79 fleece blankets measuring 2m by 1.5m and costing R99 each were

donated to Browns Farm and Crossroads Clinics. The clinic sisters sent us some very happy photos of the clients receiving their blankets.

OUTREACH FINANCES

Very special thanks go to our donors whom we rely on to sustain the Outreach project: the regular monthly donors and those who donate during the year. In these uncertain times we keep a 6 month money buffer to protect the project from unforeseen circumstances. Everyone involved does so on a voluntary basis: all money received is used for the benefit of the clinic clients we support.

My thanks go to my fellow co-ordinators Damyanti Gajjar, Elsa Oliver and Jennifer Stephens.

Rosemary Frith

Dispassion

By Swami Venkatesananda



In our daily life we are caught by two suggested ‘opposing’ techniques or concepts – either/or. In all this the central problem is forgotten – the ego and its conditioning. The truth is that there is attraction and repulsion (hatred, violence and so on) in me, in the mind.

It is not a question of suppressing either the physical or mental expression of dislike or resentment - nor indeed of attraction. The main issue is mental conditioning, the conditioning of the mind.

Whatever our mind sees is coloured and so we divide life into ‘black’ and ‘white’ – ‘I like this’ and ‘I do not like that’. We must learn to see anew, to de-colour the mind. For this the sage teaching yoga, introduced vairagya (dispassion).

This is not a discipline leading to suppression on the ‘either/or’ basis. It recommends neither repressing the desires by running away from them, nor closing the eyes to their existence, nor heroic resistance.

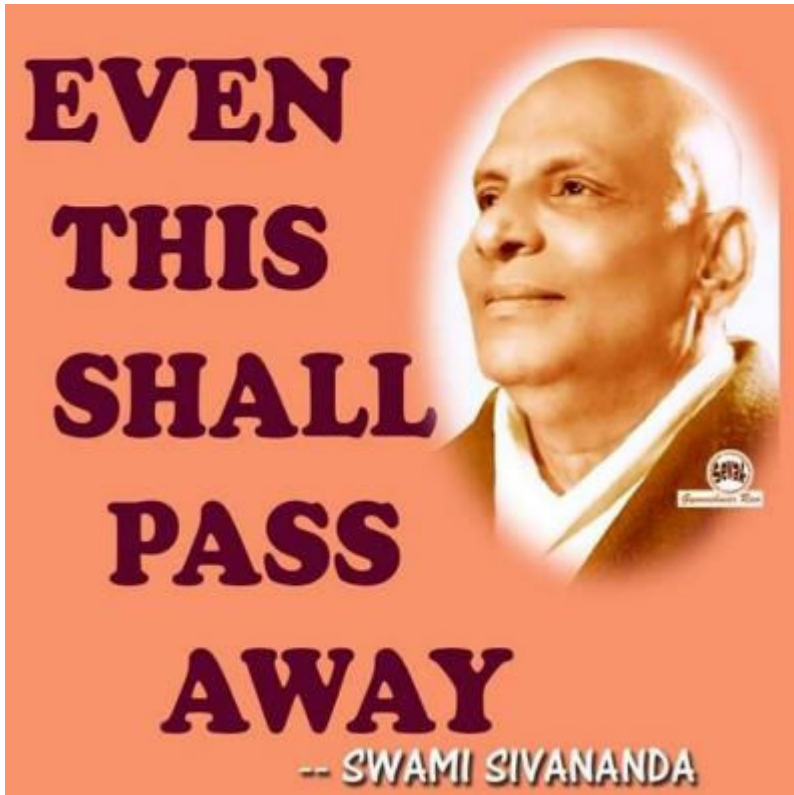
Neither shunning the world and its enjoyments, nor turning the back on places of worship can lead us to truth, peace.

Wisdom from Mother Yogeshwari



VAIRAGYA (Dispassion)

**A sign of maturity is to be unaffected by
adversity and humbled by success.**



Ananda Kutir Ashrama Membership Application Form

Students 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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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 Branch)
Account name: Children of Light Educare Trust
Account No: 9322073615
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment