

The Cross and The Lotus Journal



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Dedicated to the Realization of God and Service to Him in All Forms



The Reverend Mother, Yogacharya M. Hamilton



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The cross and lotus symbolizes the unity between East and West. The lotus is the sign of illumined consciousness, the thousand petal lotus of the crown chakra. The cross is the symbol of the body surrendered to the will of God. Following the way of the cross results in the resurrection of illumined consciousness.

*The Cross and the Lotus, symbol of man.
East and West blended, join hand in hand.
Marching toward the infinite light and life divine.
Lift up your eyes and see the star,
descending from heaven wher'ever you are.
Be filled with the peace and ecstasy of God's almighty love.
Om-Amen.*

The Reverend Yogacharya Mother Hamilton

© 2004 The Cross and The Lotus Publishing is dedicated to the publication of materials that promote God realization. Our spiritual lineage begins with Jesus Christ and Babaji and flows down to us through Lahiri Mahasaya, Swami Sri Yukteswar, Paramhansa Yogananda and Yogacharya Mother Hamilton.

The Reverend Yogacharya David Hickenbottom continues this lineage with the help and support of many sincere devotees. We are dedicated to realizing God and serving devotees of every race, color, creed and religion.

Mother Hamilton often said she was the product of two fully illumined Masters, her own Guru, Paramhansa Yogananda, and Swami Ramdas. We therefore feature articles about Swami Ramdas and Anandashram. We bow to the feet of Saints and realized Masters of all religions.

Dear Friends,

There are certain universal aspects of what it means to be human. Seeing and hearing a child laugh is immediately understood, whether one is in America, India, Europe, Africa or China; the laugh, smile and joy of the child are universal. In the same vein a mother whose child suddenly dies knows a grief that is equally understood worldwide.

Why, then, does the universality of spiritual experience not receive similar recognition? A soul uplifted in the rapture of God-experience is not different according to race, region or religion. When we read or hear of an individual account of being uplifted or receiving a revelation from the supreme spiritual Source it has a ring of authenticity, regardless of whether one is a Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist.



Yet, we find our world divided up into religious camps that often war one against another. In truth, it is only ignorance that prompts such actions. Lacking the universal vision of spiritual experience the differences of languages, customs and symbols seem to divide forever the underlying unity from which we have all sprung.

Take the grief of the mother who lost her child. It is not conceivable that a just and loving God would listen to the pleas and prayers of one grieving mother of a certain religion and turn a deaf ear to another grieving mother from a different religion. Neither is the joy of communion with God felt less by a Buddhist than a Hindu, a Christian, or a Muslim.

It is high time we turn away from localism that pronounces, “you are part of my clan, all else are separate and apart.” Jesus pronounced this universal principle when he said, “For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.” (Mark 3:35)

The Koran echoes the universal importance of doing the will of God, “And whoever submits himself wholly to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he indeed has taken hold of the firmest thing upon which one can lay hold; and Allah’s is the end of affairs. . . What is in the heavens

and the earth is Allah's; surely Allah is the Self-sufficient, the Praised." (The Koran, Luqman: 31)

Surrendering to the Divine Will brings us to the vision of God where we see the universal Principle in all creation. Krishna, speaking from that highest Consciousness, says, "Know, too, from Me shineth the gathered glory of the suns which lighten all the world: from Me the moons draw silvery beams, and fire fierce loveliness. I penetrate the clay, and lend all shapes their living force; I glide into the plant-root, leaf, and bloom-to make the woodlands green with springing sap. I glow in glad, respiring frames, and pass with outward and with inward breath." (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 15).

With the advent of this universal vision tears of grief turns to tears of joy. As the Buddha describes, "I, Buddh, [sic] who wept with all my brothers' tears, whose heart was broken by a whole world's woe, laugh and am glad, for there is liberty! . . . Before beginning, and without end, as space eternal and as surety sure, is fixed a Power divine which moves to good, only its laws endure. This is its touch upon the blossomed rose, the fashion of its hand shaped the lotus-leaves; in dark soil and the silence of the seeds the robe of Spring it weaves; that is its painting on the glorious clouds, and these its emeralds on the peacock's train; it hath its stations in the stars; its slaves in lightning, wind and rain." (Light of Asia)

Truth, like God, is one, universal. It cannot be anything less or it would not be the Truth of God. With the focus of living our lives according to the truth (in ways we already know such as being truthful, having integrity, being faithful in commitments, etc.) we will fully occupy our lives in the most fruitful ways. To strengthen our spiritual life we dive deeper into prayer and meditation. Through the inner attunement gained with this inner communion God's will is revealed. Loving service to one and all then dominates our activity, promoting goodwill. Ultimately the universal Vision of God in all creation pours through every fiber of our purified being. These spiritual goals should be the private concern of every soul.

It is upon this foundation of realized Truth that mankind will at last come to peace within and without. Each of us can do our part by taking the reigns of our thoughts, words and actions and employ them into the hands of spiritual practice now. We know the way, we know what to do, we have but to enact what we already know.

This world is changing toward the better, but it is a bumpy, uneven ride. When we look to the ills of the world we wonder, "What can I do?" It

cannot be overestimated what can occur as a result of a life lived for God. Let this be our vow, to universalize our understanding of the underlying unity of mankind, religion and God. Look beyond the seeming differences that appear to differentiate people against people, country against country, religion against religion and see that there is but one life, one mind and one heart of the Infinite Being of God.

David

David's 50th Birthday Celebrations



Celebrating David's 50th. Birthday in Seattle



Celebrating David's 50th. Birthday in Vancouver, BC, Canada



Paramhansa Yogananda

Mother on Her Master

Excerpt from
A Talk Entitled “Guru-Discipleship”
Given by Mother Hamilton
in Seattle, Washington
on June 16, 1980

Introduction

I brought along something this evening that I’d like to share with you. Many, many years ago, I had been to the Ashram, and I was asked to write an article for a book that was being published for Mother Krishnabai’s 25th anniversary*. I’d had a tremendous revelation about her and about Ramdas and about my own guru and myself. In that revelation I saw Ramdas as God Himself in human form and, believe me, there was nothing but God in that form; he was totally impersonal. He wasn’t personal and laughed and played and hugged like I do with you. But he was a tremendously God-realized man—total. I was shown that Mother Krishnabai came on the continent of India with him, as God the Father, and that I had come on this continent with my own guru, who had been pictured to me as the Christ. And strangely enough, in his early magazines, and if any of you can still get them you will find there was an article entitled, “The True Second Coming of the Christ.” Now, I don’t know anything about anything except what I was shown. But I was asked to write an article and I started this article. I wrote and wrote and wrote. I was lifted very high up, and all of sudden I got a soul sickness inside of me, and that’s all that God wanted me to write. I couldn’t send the article. No matter how hard I tried, and even though I had promised that I was going to; they wanted to know how many pages to reserve and all like that, it didn’t go. But I found it in searching through things and I thought I would share it with you. I entitled it, “The Second Coming of the Christ.” This was to appear in her book.

* Mother Krishnabai’s Silver Jubilee was in 1955

Article That Was Not Sent:

Pronam, blessed Mother Krishnabai. Greetings and congratulations from your many friends in America on this, the Silver Jubilee of your glorious and selfless service to God and the Holy Father, Swami Ramdas, our beloved Papa. I prostrate myself before the altar of God, and with utmost humility pray that His will alone will manifest itself through the written words of this chapter in your book of life. It is at His direction that in this, the last time spoken of in the Holy Bible, the fulfillment of the prophecies be made manifest. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (from Revelations, Chapter 1, verse 3)

This is the chronicle of the second coming of the Christian event so tremendous, so world-shaking that it is beyond human comprehension. The task which I approach is a Herculean one. Words must be used to describe the indescribable to a waiting and a disbelieving world. Oh, Lord, Divine Beloved, saturate my being with the perfume of Thy presence. Fill my heart with the ecstasy of Thy love. Entrance my soul with the music of Thy angels until the bliss of my communion with Thee pours forth to tell the beauty and the wonder and the glory of Thy second coming.

You may well ask what place does Revelations have in the story of your life. However, if you will journey with me back through time while God unfolds before our vision the infinite grandeur and beauty of His Divine Plan for this age. If you will share with me some of the moments and the experiences which led to my tremendous awakening in Him you will see that your life shines like a jewel in the vast expanse of His heaven.

It was in the year 1925 that the glorious sun of my Divine Master, Paramhansa Yogananda, first burst forth across the horizon of my life. He had come to America in 1920 as the Indian delegate to the International Congress of Religious Liberals which was held in Boston, Massachusetts. His first trip to Seattle on the West Coast was in 1924, but apparently, God, Who is all wise, did not design that I should meet him until the following year.

My early religious training had been orthodox, and from the moment I received my initial introduction into the scheduled routine of church attendance at the age of seven, every fiber of my being revolted against accepting the things which I was taught. The sermons I listened to dealt mostly with fear of the wrath of God, everlasting punishment, Jesus the man of sorrows who was crucified on the cross to save us from sin, and quite frequently how large the unpaid mortgage on the church still remained, and what should be done about it by those present if they expected to go to heaven.

As I grew into adolescence I began to feel a conscious awareness that the Infinite Creator could not be as He had been described to me. As my consciousness expanded I felt a sense of seeking and of reaching out for something that I

could not put into words. It was as though some mystical force took residence in my body temple, causing me to envision God not only in the personal sense, but in nature as well. I saw Him expressed as beauty, happiness, love and perfection in all people and things. I felt a tremendous urge to travel to far distant places in search of food to satisfy the hunger of my soul. All of this was in direct contradiction to the actual experiences in my life. Perhaps it happened because of them.

From the time of my first conscious memory at the age of two my life has been one long series of unusually difficult experiences. These have been constant without any space for respite, and have covered every phase of woman's existence. There were times when the burden was so heavy and my suffering so great that I cried out to God to lift the load from my shoulders, if only for a little while that I might recover from the effects of one test before another one appeared. However, such was not His plan, and became a never-ending battle between my will to live and a terrific opposing force which seemed to require that I pay a tremendous karmic debt and which also sapped almost every ounce of physical strength I possessed.

When I reached the age of 18, I decided to leave the church my parents had chosen for me. Because I was an only child and the focal point of their attention this was not an easy step to take. However, no power on earth could have dissuaded me from my decision, so great was my inner conviction that this was God's will for me. I had secured a position as secretary in one of the large business firms in the city, and it was here that I came in contact with the man who later proved to be the instrument chosen by destiny to arrange for the most momentous event of my life. This man, Robert Steinhouse, was an accountant who came in once a month to audit the firm's books.

One never-to-be-forgotten day as I sat engrossed in my work, Robert, or Bob as we called him, knowing of my interest in philosophy and religion, came into the office and told me excitedly that Swami Yogananda, one of the great rishis of India, had arrived in town and was to lecture at one of the large auditoriums that evening. He said he had heard many wonderful things about the Swami during his visit the preceding year and urged me to go and hear him. At first, I was hesitant but, after considerable prodding, I reluctantly permitted myself to be persuaded. That evening when I arrived at the auditorium I found it so crowded that it was only with great difficulty that I was able to obtain a seat. As I sat there gazing at the hundreds who lined the main floor and the balcony, I became filled with eager anticipation to see this man who had the power to draw in so large an audience.

Suddenly, the murmur of voices ceased and there was a hushed stillness. All eyes were turned toward the platform. Mine too followed their direction and then I saw him. He stood there, a man of medium stature, garbed in an ochre-colored satin robe. His long, dark wavy hair flowed around his shoulders and

framed the most beautiful, Christ-like face I had ever seen. The olive-texture of his skin served only to enhance the beauty of his large, brown eyes, aflame with the light of God. Eagerly, I absorbed every detail of his exquisitely molded face, his perfectly shaped hands, his noble bearing. He began to speak, and as I listened, my whole life changed, never to be the same again. The dynamic power of his voice and his personality impregnated with the spirit of God penetrated every soul in the audience as he told in golden words of unearthly beauty the wonder and the glory of his heavenly Father.

I do not know how long I sat there; it could have been minutes or years. Time and space had ceased to exist. It was as though I'd been caught up in the seventh heaven and found myself in paradise. For the first time I realized that God was within me and around me, everywhere equally present. Doubt and fear disappeared, leaving only a feeling of infinite peace and bliss.

As he brought his message of eternal truth to a close, he said that he would like to shake hands with everyone there. Not a person moved from his seat until the Master walked down the aisle and stood at the door. Then, quietly, one by one we stood and waited in line for the blessed privilege.

As I moved closer to him, it seemed as though I must fall at his feet so overpowering were the emotions which shook me. Suddenly, I was before him and as he looked into my eyes and held my hand, my soul dissolved into light, and wave after wave of electricity coursed through every atom of my being. In that moment, Master and disciple met, to be linked together for all eternity.

After his initial lectures he offered a series of classes to those who wished to enroll as students. It is needless to say that I was among those present. For five unforgettable nights I sat spellbound, quenching the thirst of my soul with the living waters of his infinite wisdom, absorbing the techniques which were to act as the media for attaining oneness with the Perfect One who sits on the throne of Universal Consciousness.

His departure left me with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was desolate and felt that I must renounce all earthly ties and follow him to the ends of the earth, when in direct refutation my ecstatic soul bore proof of the fact that he had never left me. And I recalled to mind the glorious promise of the blessed Lord Jesus when he said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (St. Matthew, Chapter 28, verse 20)

Eight years elapsed before my next meeting with my Master, years filled with tremendous experiences. In retrospect, I see each test met and overcome as a precious pearl in the rosary of my ascension to God. When I received the announcement that my Guru was to return to Seattle my joy knew no bounds. Once again, I sat at the feet of wisdom and tasted the ambrosia of spirit. Once more I heard and saw proof beyond question of my Master's oneness with the Builder of the Universe. The supreme experience came when we were initiated into the

science of Kriya Yoga. The power and the beauty of that holy ceremony will remain engraved on the pages of my memory for all time to come.

It was the spring of 1946 when I first journeyed to see Master at his hermitage in Encinitas, California. He was now addressed as "Paramhansaji," having received this further monastic title from his master, Swami Sri Yukteswar when he visited India in 1935. I spent three blissful days in the beautiful ashram which stands in stately dignity on the edge of a cliff overlooking the vast, blue Pacific. Who can describe the hours spent in the presence of a master? Whenever I close my eyes, the wings of memory take me back to every precious moment I shared with him. As I knelt to take the dust from his sacred feet, it seemed as though I touched the robe of God and in so touching, I felt the quality of the material out of which I must fashion my own destiny. I shall forever hear his voice pouring forth the worship of his soul to God, "Oh, my Beloved. My Infinite Beloved."

The following year marked another milestone in the road of my life. I was stricken with paralysis and had but very little use of my arms and legs. In my affliction I prayed to God to save me from the bottomless black pit into which I seemed to be falling. His voice, speaking with certainty, sounded in my ear, "Your time on earth is finished. You must now experience the state called death." To add to my despair, my physician who was a specialist in his field gave me no hope. He said that so far medical science had been unable to discover a cure for my ailment. Like a man about to drown, I saw passing in review the pageantry of my life. I was filled with deep repentance for my transgressions and eternal regret that I had not attained at-one-ment with God before it was too late. I remember telling God that if He would only spare me I would use His gift of life in everlasting service to him.

In utter despair I had a telegram sent to my Master, asking him to intercede for me with God. He replied, saying that I would have his deepest prayers. One week later I had so far recovered that I was able to go to the doctor's office alone. He expressed complete amazement at my miraculous improvement and asked me if I could account for it. With my heart filled to overflowing in gratitude to God I told him the story of my Christ-like Guru. Needless to say the doctor of medicine became a student of God.

I could go on endlessly recounting the miracles he has wrought in my life, but space does not permit. When I next saw him I knelt at his feet and attempted to thank him for his great goodness to me, but he would have none of it. He lifted me up and said gently, "Please do not thank me. God was so wonderful to grant my request. We must thank Him."

During one of my numerous visits to Mount Washington we were seated with Master in his study. My husband, son and youngest daughter sat directly in front of him, but because I had been privileged to spend so much more time with him than they I decided to sit apart so that they might have his undivided

attention. My husband had come armed with innumerable questions, but the Spirit of God speaking through the lips of my blessed Guru answered his every thought.

Master's chair was placed sideways before a window. As I watched and listened to him the room became filled with the power of the Holy Ghost and I saw a great light streaming down from heaven and enveloping him like a cloud of flame. My whole being was lifted up, and then I heard his voice saying to my children, "Your mother looks like St. Theresa, and she is like her." I could scarcely believe my ears.

Strangely enough, at that moment, a subtle force entered my being, causing me to feel a sense of separation from him. Always I had felt completely at one with him, but now suddenly that feeling of oneness disappeared, and I was left alone. I was at a loss to understand this because outwardly there had been no change in his attitude toward me. He was filled with love and kindness.

We left that night for Encinitas and the feeling of severance grew to such a degree that upon arriving at the ashram I threw myself on my bed and sobbed in uncontrollable grief. What was happening to me? I searched my soul and cried out to God, asking Him what I had done to cause my master's displeasure, but He answered only with silence. My emotional upheaval was so great that it seemed as though I had descended into the depths of hell.

We returned to Mt. Washington in a few days. However, this experience had such a tremendous effect upon me that it brought on a recurrence of my former illness. Master was away at the time and was not expected to return until that evening. Upon his arrival, he was advised of my illness, and immediately sent word that he would pray for me. It was only moments until I felt the healing effect of his prayers. Where before my circulation had been stagnant and my body cold, the blood now ran through my veins like a river of molten fire. At first I was in great pain, but gradually this feeling subsided and I dropped off into peaceful slumber. By the next day I had fully recovered my physical strength.

Later, as I was having dinner, Master sent word that he wished to see me in his study. I shall never forget that evening as long as I live. He sat on a davenport and I on a straight chair in front of him while he questioned me carefully about my illness and the events leading up to it. I told him of the strange experience I had had, and he said to me, "If you had not been affected I would not have seen you again." Strange words, but it did not occur to me at that time to ask him what he meant. I was not to receive their full impact until much later when they were to repeat themselves over and over again in my brain, causing me a thousand torments. I told him that I realized for all time that I could not live without his love, and he said, "That's right, you cannot."

As our conversation continued, he asked me if I would mind if he relaxed. I said of course not. I shall always remember how he looked as he took off his slippers, put his feet up on the davenport, stretched out and propped himself on

his elbow. It was as though, having chosen me to be one of his spiritual children and knowing how much I loved him, he knew also he could feel free to discard for a short time the robe of formality which he was ordinarily expected to wear.

We talked for hours. From time to time, one or another of the disciples would interrupt to remind him of an appointment. He thanked them graciously, but continued on with our discussion. Many times since but particularly during the last year I have had occasion to remember many of the things he told me about people and coming events. How wise he was in the instructions he gave me.

As our interview drew to a close, I told him that the world had lost its hold on me and that my one desire was for God alone. However, I lamented the fact that I had never had visions such as had been described to me by other people. I told him that many things had been given me but only through my intuition. Then he said, "To see the light is good. To hear the voice of God is better still. But to feel God is to be one with Him and is the greatest thing of all."

As we arose, he stood there for a moment looking at me. Then he took me in his arms and placed a kiss upon my forehead. It lasted only a moment, but it was as though God had held me in His arms while all the angels in heaven sang their song of bliss to my enraptured soul. I was so drunk with ecstasy that I could scarcely stand on my feet. I do not even remember saying good-bye to him, but as I reached the door he called out, "Mildred." With difficulty, I turned around and answered, "Yes, Master?" On his face was the sweetest smile I have ever seen. And he said, "I just wanted to look at you once more." That was the last time I ever saw my Master as I had known him.

When I returned to my room, I did not turn on the light, thinking my husband to be asleep. But I heard his startled voice exclaim, "What has happened to you? You are surrounded by such radiance that I can scarcely bear to look at you."

As I sit here at my typewriter, my eyes closed in meditation, listening as God dictates these words, tears are streaming down my cheeks and I am shaken with uncontrollable sobbing as I relive this most precious experience of my life. Once again I have been in the presence of my Holy One only to awaken to the realization that the beloved form has departed from this earth. I saw him only twice after that. In the meantime, I died a thousand deaths. The feeling of separation had returned immediately after I left him, only now it was more greatly intensified. Doubt crept in. Doubt and a criticism of his every word and action. Much of it caused by stories told to me by other people. It was as though I, like Jesus, was led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. I would have given everything I possessed if only I could have turned back the pages of time and found our old relationship unchanged, but I was denied that comfort. I searched everywhere for an answer, but I found none. My love, loyalty and devotion to the Master I had known was unswerving, but my soul found no recognition of this stranger.

In 1950, we attended the Kriya Yoga Convocation initiated that year by Master to celebrate Self Realization Fellowship's thirtieth anniversary in America. During our stay we, as well as other out-of-town guests, were invited to have dinner with him. Even though he had seemed delighted to see me and had extended an invitation personally, still the feeling of being at variance with him continued. I noticed him studying me several times during the evening with a very thoughtful expression on his face. However, he said nothing to me. As I watched him, I noticed that a great change had taken place in him since my visit of the preceding years. His face looked drawn and tired, and it was with apparent difficulty that he carried on his duties as host. Even so, ever willing to give of himself and his time to everyone, he said he would see each of us privately if we would all wait in the hall.

When I reentered the room, he was sitting in his chair looking like a small forlorn boy. My heart overflowing with love and tenderness, I put my arm around his shoulders and said, "Poor little Master, you are so very tired, aren't you?" He looked up at me very pathetically and he nodded his head in affirmation. (Like this . . . [Mother's voice very soft]) What blessed memories of my Christ-like guru who in spite of his tremendous spiritual stature yet had the appealing qualities of a little child.

That evening he chose to talk about his plans for the organization, particularly with regard to those of us whom he had personally appointed to do the pioneering work in the field. As he continued to draw a word picture of his blueprint for the future, I became fired with enthusiasm. "Won't it be wonderful, Master, when we can have not only center leaders but trained ministers to serve people in every city. They are so badly needed." Without an instant's hesitation he said, "I'm going to make you a minister." If the ground had opened up at my feet and swallowed me, I could not have been more dumbfounded. "But, Master!" I protested, "I cannot be a minister. I have not had sufficient education nor the benefit of the training which you personally give the disciples here." My need to escape the added responsibility, which seemingly I had unwittingly brought upon myself, became vitally urgent. "It is not my purpose to produce ministers who get their teaching diploma after a course of intellectual study. Our Doctors of Divinity must gain their spirituality in the fire of testing. I have looked into your heart and I see that it is pure. That is all that is necessary. God will do the rest." He then gave me the spiritual initiation which made me forever his servant in God.

His words have since returned to me many times to remind me of that moment. How great the testing was to be God, in His mercy, did not reveal.

And then I stopped.

Anandashram

by Peter Schultz

They say God is equally present everywhere. We might know that in theory but it sure seems like God is more easily felt in some places than others. Such is the case in a small, peaceful ashram nestled at the base of Manjapati Hill in Southwestern India. Anandashram is special in and of itself, but what makes it even more special is the journey to get there. It's a long way from anywhere in North America but from the Pacific coast it's about 21 hours of combined airtime plus layovers that turn it into about a two day journey. Then once you land in India the contrast with the West becomes immediately apparent and maybe even a little overwhelming. India is a hot, crowded and noisy mix of cultures, languages, religions and customs—all of them confusingly foreign to a North American. By the time you finish the two hour bouncing, swerving, hair-raising taxi ride south from Mangalore to the ashram you have already done a good deal of praying, have had several impassioned conversations with God, and are ready for a little stillness and peace—fortunately you get all of that—and surprisingly much more.



Nalini, a great devotee of God, on Ashram Grounds

The ashram is a haven of love, cleanliness, devotion, and shelter. The moment you set foot in this wonderful place you feel sheltered—sheltered spiritually from a noisy, frenetic outside world—and sheltered physically from the blazing tropical sun by a beautiful cool canopy of green formed by the many trees lining the walkways and around every building. Many of the trees were

Many of the trees were

Peter is the Center Leader for Ashland, OR, and is a stock market analyst and options trading teacher.

planted by Papa's own loving hands back in the early thirties when the ashram first began. After seventy plus years of devoted, hand watered attention the grounds and gardens are beautiful. The walkways are swept clean and the many buildings are maintained every day—especially the main buildings of worship—the two Mandirs and the Bhajan Hall literally shine.

But the real secret of Anandashram is the “Pearl” in the oyster. The ashram is still headed by a man of tremendous spiritual realization—Swami Satchidananda, or Swamiji as he is lovingly referred to, is the 84 year old



Swami Satchidananda

spiritual patriarch of the ashram and the successor of Papa Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai—beloved Papa and Mataji.

He is an all loving, incredibly kind and humble man that has opened himself as a conduit for God's grace to

all that come before him. Pictures and descriptions can't convey the upliftment felt in his presence. It is a presence that permeates every aspect, every nook and far corner of the ashram. In a simple way it can be summed up as kindness, from the tea lovingly brought to your door at 6:00 am every morning, to the intent of the servers at each meal to make sure you have plenty to eat and the smiles and pronams offered as you pass by.

In addition to kindness there is the tremendous devotion exhibited by the permanent residents and the people that visit. Everyone seems intensely dedicated to remembering God through the repetition of God's name or Ramnam. Chanting of Ramnam begins at 6:00 in the morning at either Papaji's or Mataji's Mandir and continues in half hour shifts, alternating between male and female groups of devotees until 6:00 in the evening. The net effect is that during the day the sound of devotion is all around you reminding you of the purpose of your visit and even the very purpose of life itself. So no matter where your thoughts may wander they are always

brought back to God through this wonderful method of conscientiously filling the air with God's name.

The chanting is very beautiful and varied between groups and the magic of it begins to take hold of you almost immediately. In addition to the all day chanting in the Mandirs chanting also takes place in the Bhajan Hall at three specific times of the day, once before breakfast at 7:00 am with a beautiful flower ceremony, then again before lunch around 12:30 and my very favorite, the evening chant and closing of the Bhajan hall at 9:30. Unlike the Mandirs, chanting in the Bhajan Hall is accompanied by musical instruments—the harmonium, tablas (drums) and little hand symbols and oftentimes the clapping of the chanters. In India chanting takes the form of 'call and response' so in many cases the caller also plays the harmonium—a lesson in coordination that can be very challenging—especially if you are “taken up” by the chanting. Cate Koler pointed that fact out to me before leading a chant at one of our very last nights at the ashram but in spite of her concerns she did a beautiful job.

Part of what makes the evening chanting so special is the Arati ceremony—the lighting of twelve candles set in an ornate silver tray presented to the pictures of Papaji and Mataji accompanied by a prayer and a traditional song. The actual ceremony is usually conducted by Swami Muktananda, a wonderful



Lakshmi, an ashram inmate, playing Harmonium

high energy, very charismatic and well loved swami. The ceremony is very beautiful and once the offering is made the tray and candles are moved over to one corner of the Bhajan hall and everyone begins to walk around the perimeter of the hall singing a most beautiful Arati song. This song visits me several times per day even now after being back in the normal workaday world. That song and ceremony is delicate and wonderful and it touched me in a very tender way—it is one of my fondest memories and I was sure to never miss one of these nightly events.

Once the candlelit Arati offering is moved to one corner of the Bhajan Hall the single file line of devotees approach it one by one—the women first and then the men. They move their hands over the flames then over their heads taking in the blessings of the Arati. Then it is on to the Samadhi room to pay respects to Papaji and Mataji and then to the room where Papaji slept for further pronams and then out into the warm, humid and star filled Indian night for Prasad—freshly made by the older Indian women devotees—usually a warm and delightful mix of sweet grains.

God may be equally present everywhere but there is something magical about being surrounded everyday with kindness, devotion and love for God. From now on it will be impossible to think of this place without being lifted up and carried away with thoughts of love and gratitude for a simple ‘servant of God’ that left his home over 80 years ago to eventually found this ‘abode of bliss’.



A devotee partaking of the Arati Flame

Swamiji

Swamiji is an all loving all giving force masquerading as a feeble old man. He sits in his chair all slumped and speaking softly but really he is dancing with joy. His one glance and he takes me with him, lifted up singing and dancing ecstatically with God. It is one more of God’s many ruses to throw us off the track; he wants us to play the cosmic game of hide and seek so when he is revealed the prize is all the more delightful.

After the morning talk in the Centenary Hall he retires to the privacy of a curtained hallway off the main meeting room. Larry and I sit and wait, hoping for an audience as everyone files out the door. Everyday so far Vinay has come to motion us behind the curtain to join Swamiji. Fortunately we receive the much hoped for nod and our hearts race with joy as



we are led to at least one more private session.

Once we are seated Swamiji orders tea making us the welcomed guests. Then he begins a story. Today he tells us the details of Papaji's initial journey from his last years as a householder to the point in his sadhana as a wandering mendicant when he finally reached Sahaja Samadhi. It was a delightful story full of fascinating bits that came alive in his twinkling eyes. For example when Papaji first left home he made his way to the rail-

road station. Not knowing where to go or what to do he just paced the platform. Finally someone walked up to him and said, "Where are you going?" Papa replied with trusting innocence, "You are Ram, you know where I should go, you tell me." The person replied with conviction that he should go to a certain city and on which train. Papa took it as a sign from Ram and at the proper time boarded the train for that city. After arriving Papa made his way to the river in the morning and took his bath, standing waist deep in the water he took the vows of a Sannyasi and let his householder white clothes drift away in the current. He then donned the other robes of the renunciant and officially began his new life as a wandering 'servant of God.'

He soon came to a temple dedicated to Vishnu and decided this would be an auspicious place to sit and repeat Ram Nam. He set out his bowl with the other swamis and chanted the name. Hours passed. Occasionally someone would drop small coins into the bowls of the swamis. After many hours the Sadhu next to Ramdas looked in this bowl and had only one pie—1/192nd of a rupee—practically nothing. The Sadhu flew into a rage, berating God for giving him so little after so much devotion. Swami Ramdas

in seeing this took the small bit of householder money he had left—one whole rupee, quite a boon in those days—and set it in the Sadhu's bowl telling him not to berate God because God always provides. Thus began Papa's delightful and adventure filled journey of complete immersion in God's will.

Swamiji then tells of the events from that point, finally concluding with Papaji's Sahaja Samadhi a little over a year after beginning his life as a wanderer.

These stories are fascinating in books and are the very best adventure tales because they chronicle the path to God—the ultimate treasure hunt. But to have them told by an all loving realized master only eighteen inches away is an experience to be remembered. Swamiji's eyes twinkle, his finger is raised to make a point and just at the right moment he looks into your eyes to bring home the meaning. All the while you are thrilling to the nonstop flow of God energy washing through you from this font of joy masquerading as an old swami. His form is the perfect grandfather telling of the great hunt that brought home the ultimate trophy—the everlasting bliss of God. And like all rapt listeners identifying with the story's hero we are made to feel that maybe, someday, with a brave heart and a fortified will, with the strength of the great masters behind us, and the inner guidance of our own guru—we might hope to bring home the prize as well.



Peter, Swamiji, Larry & Cate, with Tuli Baba, a visiting saint, and his assistant



Swami Ramdas and Mother Hamilton in 1958
(w/Swami Satchidanda at left)

The Life and Teachings of The Reverend Mother, Yogacharya M. Hamilton

by Rev. Larry Koler

SWAMI RAMDAS

Mother Hamilton first heard of Swami Ramdas in 1954 from her friend and fellow disciple, Bob Raymer. Bob wrote to Mother and told her about meeting Swami Ramdas. He recommended that she meet “Papa,” as his many devotees called him.

Mother had the opportunity to meet this great saint because in 1954, Papa was going on a trip around the world. He wrote about this trip in his book, *World is God*. Papa traveled east to west from India, through Europe, to the USA and on to the Far East. Responding to Bob Raymer’s suggestion, Papa adjusted his schedule, while in Seattle, to meet with Mother and the members of the Seattle SRF group that she headed. Mother wrote about this meeting in a three part article for the Vision Magazine in 1968, while she was visiting Anandashram.*

Meeting Papa culminated in a fulfillment of a prophecy that Mother had experienced during a spiritual experience earlier that same year [mentioned

* The Vision Magazine is published monthly by Anandashram which was founded by Papa. The articles mentioned can be obtained from our website: crossandlotus.com.

in the previous article in this series, see Vol.4 No.3]. God had promised Mother that he would come to meet her “face-to-face.” As Mother explains it in her article:

When I arose Papa said to me, referring to the devotees present, “You have here all of your fragrant flowers together. Are you all happy now? You must, of course, feel happy.” With my heart overflowing with gratitude I replied, “When God Himself has come to us why should we not feel happy?” Papa smiled a heavenly smile and said, “God has come to see God.” Hearing these words the whole world seemed to stand still because they were the fulfillment of God’s promise given to me several months before when I had offered myself to Him in full surrender. The gracious Lord had lifted me into the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi where, fully conscious, I lived in two worlds for eight days, moving in this state with very little sleep and almost no food. He revealed to me such wondrous things that the memory of them is forever engraved upon my soul. Then He spoke these unforgettable words: “I shall meet you face-to-face that our joy may be full.” How could I doubt the reality of the vision! He had indeed come in Papa’s form and my joy knew no bounds. As I stood before Papa, the bliss which permeated his whole being engulfed me like a flood. It was as though I was lifted up into the arms of God and I felt like a little child. With tears flowing from my eyes I asked, “Will you be my Papa, too?” He smiled his ever-blissful smile and answered, “Yes, he is Papa to all. All are his children.”

A few years later, Mother and her husband, Ralph Hamilton, decided to travel to India and seek Papa’s help in her spiritual quest. Mother’s guru, Paramhansa Yogananda, used to suggest that his disciples, when they visited India, take advantage of the opportunity to meet saints. It is well known by those on the spiritual path that good company can assist your upward progress and the company of saints can give an even more profound boost. An inner conviction had developed in Mother that Papa had come into her life to help her and this certainty about her destiny finally culminated in the act of selling her home and everything she owned to finance a trip to India. All this she did in order to make the necessary progress on the spiritual path to fulfill her guru’s greatest wish for all of his disciples: God realization.

Mother had also been a witness to the many changes being made in her great guru’s work after his passing—both in the loving spirit in which Master had headed his organization and in the ongoing editorial changes being made in his already completed works. Mother felt helpless to change the course of these events and hoped that Papa could help.

I often think of Mother’s life in this period of the mid 1950’s and I see clearly that she must have felt very keenly that she should put out the effort

that her own Master had done in order to attain the goal that he so often spoke of, the greatest reason for human birth. Though Mother told us that she had attained her state of realization in a previous lifetime, she knew that she must overcome the human state yet again and this time—though she didn't know it at the time—on a universal scale. She also taught us that she had come this time to help in the great work of revealing the original, true teachings of the Christ.

Swami Satchidanda, who is presently the spiritual leader at Anandashram, said* that after Mother arrived at the ashram that she frequently asked Papa for confirmation that she had attained the goal of realization. She felt certain that she had gone through the necessary experiences. Indeed, she had been taught by God each step of the way. Interestingly enough for her, she found that God was constantly directing her to the Christian scriptures for both confirmation and elucidation of the many and varied experiences that she had gone through. But, she had more to go through. This Papa seemed to know but he kept his own counsel, saying nothing in response to Mother.

After traveling to Anandashram myself in 1996, I was first struck by a clear distinction in my own understanding of Papa. I remember being greatly enamored of him from Mother's stories and from his many books and writings, but I always assumed that his nature was somewhat stern and uncompromising. Mother described him as being very impersonal. This preconception of Papa came directly from Mother in her stories and teachings about Papa. He was often portrayed by her as being unwilling to help her on the personal level. During this stage of the Mystical Crucifixion Mother often thought of Papa as the opposing force. She told us that she experienced a strange, schizophrenic-like state that can accompany the powerful uplift of Kundalini. Mother often told this story:

If I had not had faith in all of these spiritual experiences that I have gone through in my life, I could never have made it. But regardless of what I went through, always I hung onto God, because I knew that my Father God would see me through every single circumstance of my life. When I went through such tremendous suffering when I was doing spiritual discipline in India, I had no one, nothing, to hang onto but God. Swami Ramdas pushed me away when I tried to get help from him. He said, "Why do you need it? Why do you need it?" I was definitely on my own.

It is a very difficult thing when you do not have someone to turn to when these spiritual experiences start to manifest within your consciousness, because they are totally new, totally different from anything that you've ever had in your life. Where before you have relied

* Feb. 6, 1996 Interview (LJK)

on your judgment, on the things of the senses, on the wisdom of reason of your own personal discrimination, now these things are of no avail to you at all, because you're caught up. You're caught up between these two forces of good and evil within yourself, the two thieves on your own cross. [740210 Talk]

When Mother left the ashram in June of 1958, she was in a very shaky frame of mind. Herlwyn Lutz, who was there with her at the time, said that she was torn between seeing Papa as God and seeing him as the devil. Herlwyn said that it was difficult for him to get to know and enjoy Papa because of what Mother was going through and he felt his loyalty being tested. By 1960, Mother had completed this difficult phase of her sadhana and from that time on she never wavered from her faith in Papa as being God Himself. By that time she knew what Papa had gone through for her. Mother said [from a previous quote in this series]:

Because he had the courage to hurt me physically, mentally—to put me through the greatest of tortures—in order that I might find the joy of God, and the truth of Being. There can be no greater love than this for any man. No greater love. Do you not see this? [630819 Talk]

For her remaining years Mother read from Papa's books and articles as often as she did her own master's. Also, she had a fund of stories about and from Papa that was as large as that bequeathed by Master.

Mother and Father Hamilton spent nine months at Papa's ashram. It divided nicely into two sections: 4-1/2 months of bliss and training from Papa and 4-1/2 months of crucifixion. As described in the first article of this series, Mother was put into this experience by Papa when he let out a long sigh while she was sitting with him and some others. This occurred on February 24, 1958. She went through several days of schizophrenic-like experiences. She then calmed down a bit. Swami Satchidananda described one of the difficult times for Mother and those at the ashram. He described how Mother wanted to do pada-puja [worship of a Saint's feet] on Papa and once during a visit by Papa to her room, she reached out and grabbed Papa by the feet. Swamiji had to intervene by lifting her bodily away from Papa and placing her on the bed.

Later, Mother told us that she did perform the pada-puja on Papa. This came up in a story of how bad her health was during those latter 4-1/2 months at the ashram. She got a throat disease, perhaps thrush or something like that, from the puja water. She also told us that she would not take food and hardly any water because she was so afraid of being poisoned. She felt that she was in a precarious state, under assault from all sides. She only seemed to trust one person to serve her: Lingappa, Papa's personal assistant.

[To be Continued...]

Twenty Years of Service

The Reverend Yogacharya David R. Hickenbottom

Twenty years ago, March 4, 1984 I sat in the minister's room with Mother in the Congregational Church where we met for services during much of the 1980's. Mother told me she planned to make me a minister that day! I realized very recently it was exactly ten years to the month from the time I first met Mother to when she ordained me. What that day would portend I could not tell, but I was thrilled to be called into some service for God and Guru.

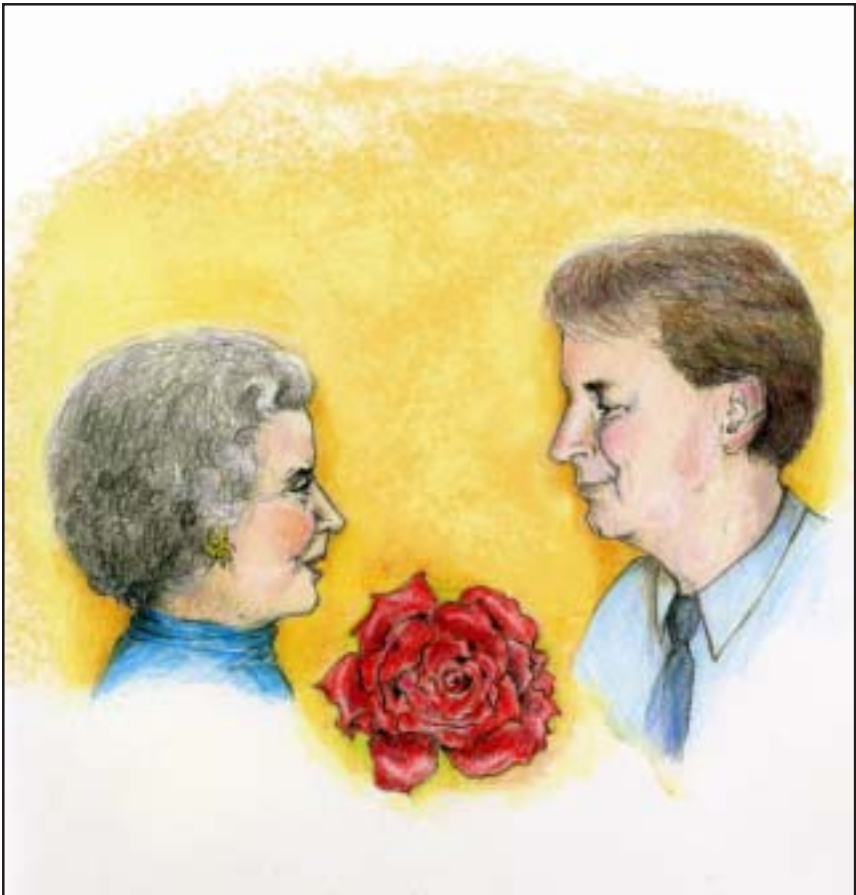
I told Mother, some years before, that I wanted to be of any service to her, any at all. At my first Kriya Initiation I showed up a few hours early. The Initiation ceremony was to be held in a chapel across the street from the University of Washington. I had thought to walk and meditate on the beautiful university campus before initiation. I pulled up in front of the chapel and Mother and Kathy Smith arrived just after I did. I asked Mother if I could help and she allowed me to help set up the chapel, to a point, then she sent me out. Mother referred back to this incident many years later when speaking about my service to her.

In the beginning, I struggled to find a way to make the title *minister* fit for me. It had certain western connotations that I was not sure about. I looked up the definition one day, always an interesting thing to do, and read one of the definitions: *To serve*. I thought, "That I can easily identify with, to serve God and Guru and all those whom God would bring to me." In yoga this is called *seva*, selfless service.

There is a twofold aspect to each practice in yoga. Karma Yoga, as a spiritual practice and discipline, cultivates in the aspirant consciously serving God through actions. When you do a task as a karma yogi you do it as if you were doing it directly for God, without any thought of reward. When you meet people, you serve them as if they were God; even when they wear an unlovely personality.

When the mind is purified through this practice, Karma Yoga as a realized state becomes spontaneous selfless service. The individual stands as a witness to what the Divine intelligence and will does through the individual form. A blissful movement of life-force makes all actions, thoughts, even breathing to occur. Personal motivation is no longer present. The spontaneous will of God is now the all and all of the soul. Yoga (union with God) through Karma (action) has now become complete. This is true service, *seva*.

All of us are ministers in God when we take up the practice of selfless service, whether we are in an official capacity or not. To achieve union with God through service is a tremendous path, especially in the active West. I would like to extend to you the invitation to be of service in your own life. It can be as simple as giving a smile to someone who is down, or as momentous as starting a large venture to serve and change this world, and everything in-between. To be God's servant leads to complete bliss and freedom, a paradox to the material mind. Come, let us serve this world together and feel that God is loving and giving to this world through us all in order to make it a better place for one and all.



Drawing of Mother and David by Lorraine Bourcier

Mercy

by John Durkin

Squeals of laughter. Calls of, “You can’t catch me.” Tearing around the house, friend in pursuit. Such happiness, such joy. A look back over your shoulder. You just brush against the table and watch in shock as the vase slowly topples to the floor. Silent pleas for help to some unseen force. Maybe it isn’t really broken; maybe you can fix it. Maybe if you hide the vase, it will not be missed. In seconds though, you realize there is no hope. All that is left is the numbing acceptance of certain punishment.



Our parents tell us repeatedly that they love us but we quickly learn that this love is conditional and controlling. This ‘love’ is a kind of nerve-racking, swirling fog that often opens to reveal dangerous angry monsters and punishment for our mistakes. Indeed it is not only our mistakes that cause the monsters to arise; any performance may be deemed to be below expectation with the resultant disapproval. The ensuing anxiety pervades our other relationships; every interaction contains further opportunities for failure and censure.

We are told about a loving God but this God’s love seems very much like the other pronouncements of love we have heard. God loves us but with conditions. We are portrayed as weak with only a few individuals ever being able to measure up to what is expected. Then we find out that even these exceptional people were far less ideal that we were told.

When we offend this God who loves us, we run the risk of being sent to eternal punishment of the most horrible kind or subjecting ourselves to reincarnation after reincarnation. With each reincarnation, we offend more and so we are caught in a hopeless, expanding feedback loop with our distance from God increasing with every reincarnation. We are told that God really does love us but the love is presented in an abstract manner and with an underlying sense of guilt that only compounds our sense of despair.

John is the Center Leader for Victoria, BC, Canada and is a professor of psychology at The University of Victoria.

Relief seems to be offered by those preaching a more direct and all forgiving concept of love. Nothing is expected of either ourselves or others. A feeling of peace is forced to prevail; any difficulty is dismissed with a dazed smile and a bumper sticker cliché. Actually our philosophical and spiritual vocabulary may be quite large and our social circle made up of large organizations of apparently quite balanced and happy people. Gradually we come to feel however that this self-defined nirvana is an illusion sustained by mutual assurances as to its reality. We shudder at having to go out in the cold again but finally we can live with the group lie no more.

Learning to live on our own is so painful. The simplistic belief systems and the continuous presence of the group protects us. Now we are alone and there are so many people who can be angry at us. All our old belief systems and conditioning come back to haunt us. We may even have taken a whole pile of psychology courses and studied all kinds of spiritual material but in our heart of hearts these concepts provide no real solace. We constantly try to use this or that therapy to relieve our anxiety but each approach only adds its own layer of guilt.

Perhaps we form a superficial relationship with some guru who offers a more sophisticated concept of spirituality. We rush to be in their presence and hang on their every word and gesture. Intelligence about their likes and dislikes is sought so that we can be sure to please; it is even more important not to displease. A smile from this guru is bliss for a week, a frown is a cause of concern for months. We hang on every explanation of some spiritual truth with the idea that just knowing this information or being in this person's presence will ensure our liberation. For some this will be the farthest they go; for the fortunate this eventually also fades and we are back in the cold again still dealing with our fears, anxieties, and guilt.

Now the real journey begins. Now we must face the beasts in our mind, must find our way through the beliefs of separation, judgment, and punishment that we built. While the destination is the same for everyone, each person's journey will be unique. Both the destination and the path will be unclear with only the beacon of our true Guru to provide both orientation and internal companionship. The traveler has to be both centered and flexible, willing to adapt tools and approaches as needed but always judging them against a gradually maturing intuitive feeling of consistency with the Guru. For me now, one of my most important tools involves a growing understanding of the concept of mercy.

At first I was shocked when I asked others about mercy. Some seemed to feel that asking for mercy was a sign of weakness. They used examples such as school-yard wrestling and where asking for mercy was seen as giving up. Many also felt that showing mercy to others reduced our power in the sense that we no longer had any hold over the person who had offended us. It seemed that the concept of mercy brought out much more feelings about true concepts of the world than did words such as love or respect that have become bumper stickers in our TV morals-defining world.

Others find the whole underlying sense of hierarchy in the concept of mercy to be difficult. Sometimes they avoid the issue of hierarchy through simplistic interpretations of the concept of karma. They believe that what happens to an individual is totally the result of past actions; either there is no one to ask for mercy or mercy would not be granted because the law of karma has to apply. While initially this type of belief might seem to be counterproductive, it does allow the individual to maintain the delusion of being in control. Asking for mercy would be an intolerable admission of failure to the ego and require the person to consider the possibility that God does not obey our laws.

Once I got an insight I felt was from Mother indicating that the law of karma applies when people close themselves off to God's mercy. God will not intervene if not wanted. For those who love God and see God as a merciful being, then God can show them mercy. Simplistic beliefs about karma or "as you sow, so shall you reap" block our feelings of mercy for others and limit the flow of mercy to us. Perhaps more helpful concepts of karma can be explored in another article.

A merciful God also implies a personal God. This again causes problems for those who have trouble dealing with the dialectic positions so common in eastern thought where two opposing statements both are seen as being true. God can be both personal and impersonal. As well as God's impersonal nature, Mother emphasized God's personal nature and her great love for that personal God including images of climbing on God's knee and planting big kisses on God's cheek.

At this stage of my understanding, mercy is a blessing to me given by a conscious Being. It is kindness way beyond what justice requires. Mercy is undeserved forgiveness and relief of suffering. It includes components of words such as compassion, empathy, grace, healing, and love but has much more of a feeling of personal blessing.

While theologians might speculate that this conscious Being could withhold mercy, in reality this cannot happen because it is the nature of this Being to be merciful. Mercy is available to all; there is no religious, ethnic, or other grouping that is more likely to receive mercy. Bad or good in the conventional sense also has no relevance in the availability of mercy.

Only my own beliefs limit the mercy I experience. The Beatitudes state that the merciful shall obtain mercy and all of the spiritual paths of the world advocate acts of mercy toward others. These actions do not produce mercy in some tit for tat arrangement but practicing acts of mercy awakens me to the availability of mercy in my life. If I in my egocentric state can make even a token act of mercy, how much more can God be merciful to me.

Eventually I will experience constantly the state where mercy itself is not seen as some kind of exchange but rather mercy and truth shall meet together. Righteousness and bliss shall kiss one another (Psalm 85). The issue will not be mercy on me so much as that I live in a boundless universe of mercy (Psalm 103).

Mother's Mahasamadhi Anniversary

On January 31 we mark the day of Mother's Mahasamadhi (the conscious exit from the body by a realized yogi). Each year we celebrate the day with a prayerful graveside service. This year, as in years past, we stood encircling the headstone. The feeling of peace was terrific, the blessing of Mother's Presence thick in the air. Then, reflecting Mother's penchant for fun we followed tradition and went for chocolate sundaes, a favorite treat of Mother's. For Sunday service we listened to a taped talk of Mother's. The day was a joyful recognition of our dear Mother.



Grave Marker for Mother and her husband

CHIEF SEATTLE'S 1854 ORATION

This speech appeared in the Seattle Sunday Star on Oct. 29, 1887, in a column [and translated] by Dr. Henry A. Smith. The occasion is the surrender of their lands to the White Man through a forced treaty.



“To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their resting place is hallowed ground. You wander far from the graves of your ancestors and seemingly without regret. Your religion was written upon tablets of stone by the iron finger of your God so that you could not forget. The Red Man could never comprehend or remember it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors—the dreams of our old men, given them in solemn hours of the night by the Great Spirit; and the visions of our sachems [chiefs], and is written in the hearts of our people.”



Christian Church in Kerala State, India, taken by Lindsey Taylor, who is accompanying Nicole Koler, our world traveling correspondent. (See our next issue.)

More pictures and stories from India will be on our website this next month: www.crossandlotus.com. Click on “What’s New.”

Calendar of Events

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| March | 7 | Master’s Mahasamadhi Day |
| | 9 | Sri Yukteswar’s Mahasamadhi Day |
| | 19 | Spring Equinox (10:48 pm PST) |
| April | 5 | Swami Ramdas’ Birthday (Hindu Calendar) |
| | 6 | Passover |
| | 11 | Easter |
| May | 7-9 | Loon Lake Retreat (in BC) |
| | 9 | Mother’s Day |
| | 10 | Swami Sri Yukteswar’s Birthday |
| June | 20 | Father’s Day |
| | 20 | Summer Solstice (17:56 a.m. PDT) |
| July | 2 | Guru Purnima |

Journal Editor: Rev. Larry Koler

Practice the Presence of God in all ways, at all times. When you walk, feel that Divinity is walking through you, moving as life energy through muscles and bones. When you think, observe the subtle movement of thought flowing from a pure spring through your mind. When you speak, project the pure vibration of truth out through your words. Keep that Presence with you as a sacred trust and you will quickly progress to the goal.

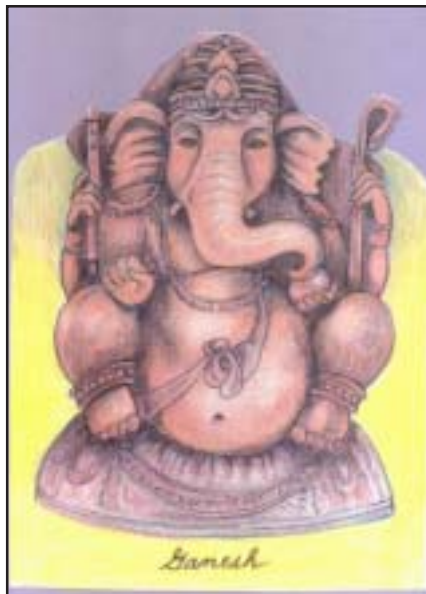
Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

So, dear ones, meditate morning and night. . . . Sit yourself in and meditate. And first your mind will rebel against your will but later you find nothing can satisfy you as meditation can. What freedom I find when I close my eyes. The joy possesses me. This is something real in my heart.

Paramhansa Yogananda

Purity is the greatest asset of a human being—purity in thought, word and deed. Purity is attained when the mind is filled with remembrance of God. A pure mind always reflects kindness, forgiveness and love towards all.

Swami Ramdas



by Lorraine Bourcier