

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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## MATRI VANI

One who serves God can never be helpless. The more ardently one seeks communion by engaging in japa, His service and contemplation, the fuller will be His revelation.

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The talents and the work God has entrusted to you are meant for His service and for nothing else, bear this in mind.

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Many feel the urge to create a new and better world. Rather than let your thoughts dwell on such matters, you should concentrate on that by the contemplation of which there is hope of perfect peace. It is man's duty to become a seeker after God or Truth.

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The activity of the mind that distracts man and takes him away from the remembrance of God is called wrong thinking.

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The stream of godly thoughts is the path that leads to the exhaustion of *karma*. So long as the goal has not been reached one is bound to reap the consequences of right action, wrong action, and inaction.

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Look, in order to pluck a rose one has to put one's hand into the midst of thorns. But if the rose is a person's aim and he has a keen desire to pluck it, he will not refrain from doing so for fear of being pricked. Moreover, the Great Mother arranges whatever is necessary for each one : She certainly knows the real need of every individual, if one has at least this much faith, there is no reason at all to feel distressed.

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## AMṚTVĀRTĀ

To aspire to the realization of Truth is alone worthy of man.

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In all forms, in all diversity and disparity is He alone. The infinite variety of appearances and manifestations, of modes of becoming and states of being, of species and types, all the numberless distinctions as well as all identity are but He Himself.

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Never relax your efforts until there is enlightenment. Let no gaps interrupt your attempt, for a gap will produce an eddy, whereas your striving must be continuous like the flowing of oil, it must be sustained, constant, an unbroken stream.

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Within the twenty-four hours of the day, some time must be definitely dedicated to God. Resolve, if possible, to engage regularly in japa of a particular name or mantra while sitting in a special posture, and gradually add to the time or the number of repetitions.

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## FAITH AND DOUBT

—SRI VIJAIANANDA (Dr. A. Weintrob)

*Shraddha*, faith— faith in the Guru, faith in the scriptures, faith in the efficacy of spiritual practices is a qualification which every aspirant on the spiritual path must have. For the great majority of sadhakas this faith is centred in the *Jnana murti*, the physical aspect of the Guru.

But this confidence must not be mistaken for what is called "blind faith", that is, a belief based on the convictions of other people, parents, teachers, friends, etc. with the resolve not to abandon it even if it does not tally with actual facts or is against sound reasoning. Nor can faith be founded only on reasoning, on the processes of the intellect. *Buddhi*, intelligence is the creator of our whole mental world and its creations are based on delusion and are liable to break down like a house built without a strong foundation. The faith which comes through direct perception is no doubt the real one, but of course far beyond the reach of the sadhaka.

The faith we have in the Guru, in Mataji, has for most of us begun with some intuitional experience revealing to us the supernatural in Her. This experience is usually the starting point, the seed of the 'tree of faith'. In some cases this first experience is so overwhelming that it immediately gives a firm intuitive conviction, against which the doubting processes of the mind are quite powerless. For others, this experience, although having given a strong impulse to the mind, has not silenced the doubting processes nor the critical attitude. For a third category of aspirants, the first contact with Mataji has nothing spectacular, but simply awakens the interest in further inquiry. For such persons it takes a very long time, sometimes years, until their faith matures; nevertheless it penetrates and permeates the mind slowly but steadily.

In fact, whatever the approach, there are three elements that must combine so that the average *sadhaka* may be established in *shraddha*. The first and most important one is the intuitional experience. No matter what be its nature and intensity, it is based on the recognition of our real nature, reflected through Mataji's physical aspect. Generally, it is '*kshanik*' (momentary) "as a twinkling of an eye" and cannot be expressed on the discursive level of the mind. Sometimes it may even be forgotten. But as its source lies in the Eternal, it can never be wiped out and

remains very powerful in the subconscious depths. The second element is supplied by our emotional nature which tries to translate the inexpressible and unique experience into terms of our experiences of the past. This is why the intuition of the Real gives rise to the attachment we have for Mataji, as a mother, a Guru etc. Thirdly, the discursive mind furnishes the cementing element in this building up of our faith, for we can finally accept only what is reasonable, has been thoroughly thought out and is not contrary to what we have heard and learnt from elders and by personal experience.

Everything in the manifested universe moves under the sway of the *dwandwas*, the pairs of opposites and the three *gunas* (the three qualities of nature). In other words the growth of faith is subject to fluctuation, depending on one of the three *gunas* predominant at a particular time. That is why doubt—the opposite of faith—will arise automatically and test whether our faith is built on unshakable foundations. If it is not, it must break down; but if it is genuine, it will stand storms and trials and emerge ever stronger.

When our mind delights in *sattwa* (harmony) doubt has no access, for everything is then clear and self-evident; doubt comes only while we are under the influence of some emotional (*rajasik*) impulse or our understanding is clouded by the stupor of *tamas*.

An old diary written in 1951-52 (*I had my first darshan of Mataji in February 1951*) gave me the idea to write this article. That diary was written with the spontaneity with which one converses with one's own self, when one can be certain that nobody else will read one's effusions. I have now translated some quotations from it from French, trying to remain as true as possible to the original. I feel it may serve as an illustration among thousands of how our faith in Mataji awakens, has to pass through several storms and cross-fires of doubt and finally emerges victorious.

### **Pondicherry, 22nd Jan. 1951.**

"I have decided to start from the Ashram on Thursday morning and travel via Calcutta, Banaras, Almora, Rishikesh, Agra, Delhi, Bombay, Kanhangad, Madras to Colombo."

*(There was no preconceived idea as regards Sri Anandamayi Ma).*

### **Patna, 10th Feb. 1951.**

"This diary has been interrupted for over a fortnight. I take it up again at Patna. What happened to me on February 2nd is far more interesting than anything I may have written about before.

"I was coming from Calcutta intending to pass through Banaras hurriedly, to stay for a few days at Sarnath and then if I had time to visit Rishikesh or else leave straight via Bombay, Kanhangad for Colombo, from where I had to sail back to Europe on February 21st..... My guide took me to Sri Anandamayi Ashram. It is a wonderful site right on the bank of the Ganges..... Ten minutes later Sri Anandamayi Ma appeared at the door of Her room. She speaks only Bengali and Hindi. I could understand Her only with the help of an interpreter.....She was standing at the entrance of Her room. I can still see Her focussing Her eyes on me with that gaze I have come to know so well now. That gaze seemed to embrace my whole destiny..... At about 9.30 p.m. the Kirtan was over. Mataji said that She could give me private interview immediately.

"B.S. acted as an interpreter. I was supposed to ask some questions, but as a matter of fact I had nothing to ask, I only wished to make a spiritual contact. It appeared as if Mataji had divined my thoughts. She Herself asked the questions. They were clear-cut and precise and it seemed as if She had guessed what I wanted to know. The interview took about 20 minutes. I went back to Clark's Hotel in a strange state. I began to understand what this wonderful being had infused into me : it was divine love, a love which from now on would bind me by indestructible ties—the love one has for the *Guru*..... But I was afraid that this feeling would not last.....Mataji had to leave for Vindhyachal, then Patna. I asked Her permission to accompany Her."

*(In this case the intuitional experience was very powerful and the intellectual doubting process was therefore silenced. But doubt is bound to raise its head sooner or later.)*

**"Banaras, July 25th, 1951.**

".....Sometimes a terrible doubt gets the better of me.....

"This immense love, is it really so different from the love one feels for a woman ? Of course there is no room for any unclear ideas. It is an absolutely pure love and yet it is still personal and limited. Nevertheless, sometimes as a perfume emanating from its phial, it seems to pervade on all beings and merges into the quest for the Absolute..... How far have I deviated from the firm resolutions of my earlier life, which had until now been the main principles of my behaviour : absolute freedom in oneself, to be one's own refuge, one's own law.....\*

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\*. When I came to India I was following the Buddhist *Theravadin* path, which lays much stress on self-reliance and does not admit the necessity of a Guru.

"This freedom I have lost. I have become the disciple of the most wonderful of all *Gurus*, but a disciple all the same.....

"Sometimes, a longing for the mountains gets hold of me again and I feel like going to a solitary place in the Himalayas and concentrate my mind on the pure Absolute to the exclusion of everything else.....

"But at other moments the certainty of being on the right path is so conclusive that no question can arise. All the same there are all states of mind and I have decided to write them down so as to become clear about myself."

*(Here is a good example of faith and doubt alternating according to the fluctuations of the gunas. When sattwa prevails there is evidence of being on the right path and questioning seems an absurdity. When rajas gets the upper hand, the ego raises its hood and laments at its lost freedom. When tamas dominates one doubts the degree of purity of one's love for the Guru.)*

**"Bhagalpur, July 29th, 1951.**

".....My love and veneration for Mataji are so great that I should like Her to be like a perfect diamond, that may be examined through a magnifying glass from every angle, without one being able to detect the minutest flaw. But who am I that I dare to judge this giant of spirituality ? Only a *jivan mukta* is able to judge a *jivan mukta*; and alas ! I am very far from that.....

".....One day when I was under a spell of doubt, Mataji said in reply to someone else's question (*I myself had not expressed my doubt nor asked any question*) that it was impossible for the *shishya* to judge his Guru, just as a student is not able to judge the learning of his professor. I feel sure that She is right."

**"Hazaribagh, Aug, 1st, 1951.**

*(Sometimes the Guru to test how far we have progressed brings about circumstances that shake the mind violently right down to its foundations. These lines had been written at the end of one storm.)*

"I am beginning to think that the whole of this inner tempest has been willed and created by Her, like the great magician that She certainly is. The ego has such subtle devices for winning back the command that has been snatched from it. Only the *Guru* can release one from the clutches of the ferocious tiger which the sense of I-ness is.

**"Banaras, 13th Aug. 1951.**

*(Again the clouds of tamas have darkened the horizon).*

"I have written to S. My resolve to go away becomes more and more firm.....

