

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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Ma in a highly ecstatic mood during the Durga Puja in Bombay in October, 1966, with Didima sitting on her right.

CONTENTS

1.	Matri Vani	...	1
2.	Conversation with Western devotees — <i>Vijayananda</i>	...	3
3.	The Atmosphere of the Miraculous — <i>Dr. Bithika Mukerji</i>	...	9
4.	The Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy — <i>P.C. Mehta</i>	...	14
5.	From Notes taken in Sree Ma's presence — ' <i>Kirpal</i> '	...	20
6.	Reduce yourself to zero — <i>Jyotish Chandra Roy (Bhaiji)</i>	...	22
7.	<i>Bhakti & Bhumikā</i> of Gopigeet — <i>Madhavi Badiani</i>	...	27
8.	Sri Ma and Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj — <i>Arun Sen Gupta</i>	...	29
9.	In association with Sri Ma — <i>A.K. Dutta Gupta</i>	...	32
10.	Ma—Perfection Incarnate — <i>Gurupriya Devi</i>	...	35
11.	Gopi's love — <i>Swami Sivananda Saraswati</i>	...	38

URGENT CIRCULAR

All devotees are desired to make a special note that the next *Purna Kumbh Mela* is going to be held in Allahabad in January, 2001.

The principal bathing days are as under :

1. *Paus Sankrānt* - 14.1.2001
2. *Mauni Amāvashyā* - 24.1.2001
3. *Vasant Panchami* - 29.1.2001

Those who are desirous of attending and also staying in our Ashram camp in the Mela ground are requested to intimate in details the exact period of their stay alongwith actual number of persons accompanying them to enable us to hire tents etc. in advance and make other arrangements. All this information should reach the undersigned latest by 15th November, 2000.

—Panu Brahmachari
Mata Anandamayee Ashram
Bhadaini, Varanasi-221001

MATRI-VANI

Where no question of birth and rebirth exists, no question of being bound, this surely, is called eternal.

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It is movement as that of the ocean (*Samudra*), He *expressing* Himself (*sva-mudrā*). The waves are but the rising and the falling, the undulation of the water and it is water that forms into waves (*taranga*), limbs of His own-body (*Tār anga*), water is the essence.

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You call transient, that which never stays fixed anywhere, do you not ? But what does not stay? Who does not stay? Who comes ? Who goes? Change, transformation - what are they ? WHO? grasp the root of all this ! Everything passes away, that is to say, death passes away - death dies .

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He himself as action; He Himself as form, for this reason He is called *Sākāra* (with form). He Himself as Qualities (*guna*) . Therefore, He is called *Saguṇa* (with qualities) where the Lord (*Isvara*) or anything pertaining to this Divine Splendour is manifested, He Himself (*Svayam*) appears in action, yet ever remaining the non-doer. He as such is the Essence of Absolute Truth.

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The beauty of it is that man's very nature is to long for Reality, Supreme Wisdom, Divine joy; as it is his nature to return home when the play is over. The stage of the play is His, the play is His as well, and so are those who take part in it, friends and fellow beings, everything is He alone.

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It is your nature to crave for the revelation of that which Is, for the eternal, for Truth, for limitless knowledge. This is why you do not feel satisfied with the evanescent, the untrue, with ignorance and limitation. Your true nature is to yearn for the revelation of what you ARE.

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At a certain level one sees glimpses, sparks as it were of Reality, this also is one of the states, One cannot understand what one perceives and therefore is bewildered. There are indeed states and stages without number, The power of fire to burn is one and undivided, but how can there possibly be wholeness and completeness in the so-called glimpses or sparks that one gets ? Only where that wholeness is, there, the question of division does not arise.

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You should understand that if a veil of ignorance has been burnt or dissolved, as it were, the seeker will, for a certain period of time, have unobstructed vision. Afterwards it becomes blurred again. All the same what will be the result of such a glimpse? Ignorance will have become less dense, and true knowledge gained greater prominence; in other words, by the momentary removal of the veil, the individual's bonds will have been loosened.

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In the Kingdom of forgetting one forgets. So long as you are identified with the body, it is your very nature to call out : give, give, You say 'give' ! because you are in want. Where want exists, there must needs be error and ignorance; and where error and ignorance abide, there will most certainly be forgetting. When in the midst of all this you practise *sadhana* in order to realize yourself, or rather, when by God's Grace *sadhana* comes about, - for to be able to engage in *sadhana* is itself the grace of God — There after having worked through layers and layers of ignorance, you discover: "I am in fact the whole". I am — this is why there are trees and plants, and everything that exists, however manifold. Every single form is in fact I.

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CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN DEVOTEES

—Vijayananda

[Nine]

SADHANA

Question - (A Spanish young lady, whose mother's family is from Avila) I am back here after a year, as if not a single day has gone by. Why is it so ?

Answer : This is the place where God alone is enough, like in the famous poetry of St. Teresa of Avila.

Question - (In tears) I am not sincere enough in my sadhana.

Answer - Sincerity is a question of discernment and understanding, not of effort. If you feel that sadhana is the most central thing, then you will find it. For me it is not an effort. If you have a taste of the experience of true meditation, that will help you a lot. But while you wait for that experience, try to practice regularly. Sometimes, flashes can come, even outside of meditation. I had one when I was a student. I felt that it was that, and that was the only interesting thing.

Question - What are the signs of progress in sadhana ?

Answer- The experience of a great inner bliss.

Question - Isn't it selfish to spend my time doing sadhana with the intention of gaining bliss for myself > Shouldn't we be trying to become selfless and spend time trying to serve others to made them happy?

Answer - In the end, realisation destroys the ego. Even if at the beginning the motivation for starting sadhana was selfish, the practice purifies. Regarding serving others: it is like a student in medicine. He has to spend all his time for several years studying so he can become a doctor. During that time, he does not have time to spare for helping others. But after that time, he comes back and is able to treat people, which he wouldn't have been able to do if he hadn't studied.

Question - Why is the mind and people, so difficult to change ?

Answer- *Tāmas* is the strongest force in this world. That is because there is this reversed quality, which is the symmetry of the Self, that change is so difficult. The Self is also a base which doesn't move.

Question - (A member of a French group in the ashram for a short visit): Can we combine worldly pleasures with the spiritual path ?

Answer- (Vehemently) No! God is jealous, as it says in the Bible. We must consider that it is only the spiritual path which is really important. That's why I'm here. However, when we are in this world, the spiritual path consists of acting with as little ego as possible and in offering the results of one's work to God.

Question - There is a spiritual teacher who says, there are seasons for sadhana. A season to gather, for instance, and a winter season, to rest. What do you think?

Answer- There is no season to rest in sadhana. We must always be ready to work for spiritual progress.

Question - Are there some paths in sadhana which are shorter than others ?

Answer- The paths in sadhana are like those in the mountains. The one that seems the shortest can in fact be the longest and the most dangerous, because we could be facing cliffs and unsurmountable obstacles. It is better to follow the beaten track. When we see that the grass has been walked on so much in one place, that means that many people have come this way, and that the path leads somewhere.

Question - How to realise our short comings ?

Answer- Spiritual seekers usually have trouble realising their shortcomings. If we help them by telling them, they can get angry with us, sometimes for life. The guru puts them in situations where their hidden defects come to the surface. The very fact that you are conscious that you have shortcomings is itself a rare quality. But let go of your inferiority complex. In the end, it is only you who can change your inner self and dissolve your defects.

Question - What is the relationship between ritual and devotion?

Answer- The more ritual there is, the less devotion there is. Rituals are not ends in themselves. They are only there to awaken devotion, but people forget that and they act automatically. The true prayer is done from within, in a completely unified state, just as Moses did when he asked for his sister to be cured from leprosy. He said only five words, of one syllable, "El nah refa nah la", My God, make her be healed', and his prayer was granted.

BASIC QUALITIES

Question - Is it really useful to follow completely the *yamas*, *niyamas* and the monastic rules?

