

## Swami Narayanananda Tirth

(also known as Narayan Swami/ Nepalda).

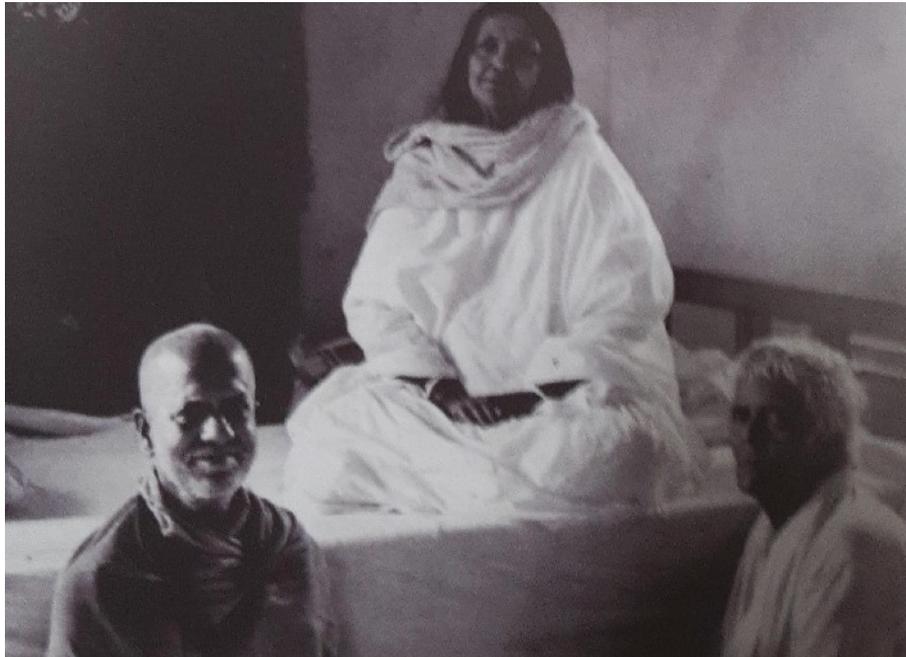


Photo of Narayan Swami with Gurupriya Didi before Sri Ma

Swami Narayanananda Teerth (birth name Sri Nepal Chakraborty) was born in Kashi (Varanasi) in a pious brahmin family. He lost his parents early in his childhood, and was raised by his widowed aunt (father's sister). The family had a Narayan Shila (currently in the Annapurna temple in Varanasi ashram) which was worshipped daily. Narayan Swami was also taught the worship from a young age.

He was one of Sri Ma's earliest devotees. He had his first *darsana* in 1927 when Mataji was staying in the house of Gurupriya Devi's uncle at Ramapura, Varanasi. He immediately felt profoundly impressed and irresistibly attracted. He spent the rest of his life (54 years) at Mataji's feet. He travelled with Her a good deal and after some time joined the Ashram.

In Vindhychal ashram, when Ma took silence for two years (speaking only on Thursdays from 11 am till 5pm), Narayan Swami also started his maun simultaneously and had it at least until 1978 (time of publishing of the book *Santan Vatsala*), occasionally transferring it to someone in the ashram when required, per instructions from Ma. He acted as the chief priest during the "*Akhanda Mahayajna*" for four years (Jan. 14th, 1946 to Jan. 14th, 1950) and, following Mataji's advice, became a *dandi Swami* soon after. Throughout his long life he was entirely devoted to the search after Truth. He had no other interest. Sri Ma said of him that he was the embodiment of renunciation, ("*tyager-murti*")·

On the 'Tithi Puja' day (70<sup>th</sup> birthday, 1966), two priests simultaneously worshipped MA and a 'Narayan-Shila'. The next day, at the ashram, MA blessed everybody by touching their heads and chests with the 'Narayan Shila'. It was decided that devotees would have this unique opportunity twice a year - once during the birth anniversary celebrations in May, and again during the observation of the 'Restraint Week': The Narayan Shila in ashram is the one from Narayan Swami's family. He grew up worshipping this.

For the last few years of his life, due to failing health, he was unable to accompany Ma on Her peregrinations with a very few exceptions. He lived mostly in his little room in the Varanasi Ashram and spent his free time in writing and translating spiritual books (8 books in Bengali). In response to numerous requests he wrote down his memories of Ma in two volumes "*Santan Vatsala Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi*." These were so much in demand that the first volume had to be reprinted within two years. Many experiences and incidents from Narayan Swami's life are described in Santan Vatsala which is now translated in Hindi from Bangla in 2020. One such experience happened in 1958 in Varanasi after the Durga Puja in the ashram. Swamiji decided that he was too old and decided that he would live the rest of his days in *Kashi* (Varanasi) as it is the place of Lord Shiva and it is believed that Shiva Himself gives the Tarak Mahamantra in dying person's ears that frees them from the cycle of birth and death. However, Ma called him the very next day on Nov 10, 1958 and told him that he was to accompany Ma and Giriji (*Didima*) to Samyam Saptah in Kanpur. He tried to reason with Ma about his resolve to spend rest of his days in Kashi. Ma promised him emphatically that wherever he went with *This Body*, that was Kashi for him. Kashi the place, banks of Ganges, and in front of Ma Annapurna, who else, but Ma, the Goddess Herself, can assure Her children with this ultimate truth.

Narayan Swami left this world on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1981 just at the time of the Samyam Saptah. Shortly before, on October 14<sup>th</sup>, Ma left for Kashi after receiving the news of his serious illness and there was no hope of his recovery. She spent a week there to cheer up the ailing devotee, who was in our Charitable Hospital, consoling the suffering Swami by saying: "God at times makes you suffer a little only to ward off a bigger suffering. A living body is bound to undergo illness." His health improved to some extent, so that he was able to enjoy Sri Ma's *darsana* in full consciousness. Her parting advice was: "Always inward always inward - meditation of own self, remembering, thinking always. That is enough. As much as you can, to your ability. Whatever He may wish to do, in whatever state He may put you - That is all." When She returned to Kankhal on the 21st of October morning, She said : "Let us see for how many days he can hold out!"

MA described him as an '*embodiment of renunciation*'.

**Taken from:** Ananda Varta Vol 29, No. 1 (1981), and Santan Vatsala Sri Sri Ma Anandmayi (*Hindi*), Ma Anandmayi Sangha Publications, (Varanasi, 2020).