

# 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 where e'er you are.  
Be filled with the peace and ecstasy of God's almighty love.  
Om-Amen.*

The Reverend Yogacharya Mother Hamilton

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© 2005 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,

In 1920 Paramhansa Yogananda brought the ecumenical message to America that all religions may be seen as coming from a singular loving Source. As a Hindu, Master (Yoganandaji) did not come to promote Hinduism in this largely Christian culture, rather he sought to unify all religions based on universal principles.

Mother Hamilton, Master's great disciple, once had a vision in which she saw all the religions of the world as so many pieces of a pie. During this vision she saw that Master had clearly come to bring all the differing pieces together in peace and harmony. This universal message that was so needed in 1920 is still very much needed today.

There is a story which asks the question, "What makes God laugh the most?" The answer is, "When God watches two people draw a line in the soil and say, 'This side is mine,' this really makes God laugh!" When someone says, "Only my religion is right; all others are wrong and are to be condemned," they have mentally made God a very small god indeed.

Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan. In the story only the Samaritan (a man from Samaria) stopped to help a man who was robbed, beaten and left on the side of the road; no one else, including a priest, had stopped to help. This story had particular significance to those whom Jesus was telling the story; Samaritans were commonly thought of as impure, people you would never associate with or see any redeeming value in. The story Jesus told illustrated the universal nature of his teachings based upon principle, not religious bigotry: this good man, this Samaritan, was the only one who stopped to help—he showed by his actions he was of a higher consciousness.

In the world today there are many who operate according to the kind of bigotry that eschew others because they do not belong to a certain



religion, class (caste), nation or look the same. This kind of bigotry is not solely relegated to true believers of a particular religion. There are many today who suspect anyone who follows a particular faith, holding that someone who is committed to a religion is a hypocrite and mean spirited. Whatever kind of bigotry one may have, it blinds one to the universal vision.

Great Spiritual Masters are examples of the universal vision, and Swami Ramdas was pre-eminent in this realization. Through the love and service Papa gave to the world he raised consciousness, individually and collectively. In this vision of a universal God permeating all creation, every individual is seen clearly manifesting a degree of the Light of God. Not only is their manifest Light seen, but a realized Soul also sees the potential Light residing within everyone he or she meets.

Through old habits we view others with suspicion and fear. Yet, how can love be manifest when fear dominates? To cultivate the universal vision we must practice seeing the good in others, recognizing their hidden Light. Even when faced with bad behavior we find what Light there may be.

This does not mean we live in a fool's paradise, disconnected from reality. Jesus powerfully pointed out errors in others, especially those who betrayed their roles as keepers of the Light. He called upon those temple leaders, rabbis and his own followers to live up to the highest standards and principles, but when it came to compassion for the fallen and the repentant, his heart knew no bounds of forgiveness. Perfectly balanced, Jesus provided an example for us all.

Saints and realized Masters, both East and West, manifest this same Light. In any congregation you are likely to see at least one or two, whose faces are suffused in divine Light.

Babaji, the spiritually perfected Yogi-Christ of India, once gave his darshan to Swami Pranabananda ("The Saint With Two Bodies") at Lahiri Mahasaya's home. Babaji was dressed as any Indian young man may have been dressed at the time. Swami Pranabananda was taken aback by Babaji's ordinary appearance. Babaji declared to the Swami his own freedom in dressing this way. Such great Masters have nothing to sell, no ego to feed with name or fame, no need to be noticed—they

have it all including freedom from any particular form; thus they may come in any form.

Practice the universal vision as a means of keeping your mind upon God and in this way your mind is purified. See the Divine Light radiating in all whom you meet (you never know when you are meeting a perfected Soul). Practicing the universal vision means you look for the good, for the Light of God in every individual you meet. Attunement with this universal vision, or Christ Consciousness, will give you a compassionate heart and it will reveal the true nature of a person or thing, devoid of distortions made by the ego.

As Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” In a single statement Jesus declares that his message is for all mankind, everyone who operates according to Divine Will, not the puny human ego.

At this time of year we celebrate the birth of Jesus, a universal Master, a savior for all mankind. To really celebrate his birth means we surrender to the Divine Will, that still small voice of our better angels speaking through our conscience and our intuitional wisdom.

We are also marking the beginning of a New Year. What better way to mark the birth of this great Master and to bring in the New Year than to dedicate our lives to realizing this universal vision.

Make it your habit to see God in all people, in all situations and in all things. Honor the Divine Presence in all the great religious traditions, saints and wise men the world over. Attune yourself to this universal vision until your mind is so purified that you realize that God is truly present in all creation and He becomes your All in All. What greater gift can you give to yourself and to this world at this sacred time of year?

Joy to this world, and goodwill to all mankind,

*David*

*The Spiritual life is the real life—all else is illusion and deception. Only those who are attached to God alone are truly free. Only those who live up to the highest light they have find their lives in harmony.*

“Steps Toward Inner Peace” Peace Pilgrim



Mother in 1975

## **Christmas Service**

**Excerpt from a talk given by Mother Hamilton  
in Portland, Oregon on December 14, 1960**

Two thousand years ago, a wonderful event happened in this world—the Christ Child was born. Many children were born before that time, and many, many children have been born since that time. Why was this particular birth so outstanding? It was outstanding because another Son of God had come to earth. And this was something special because, although many masters had come before, each to fulfill his own destiny in God, this one above all others came with a specific, a special and a dynamic purpose, and that was to show through his own exemplary life every single thing which happens within man.

It is said that with the cradle there came also the shadow of the cross on which he was to be crucified. And with this shadow of the cross was also the crown which he was to bear upon his head.

### **Teachings of Original Christianity and Yoga Are One**

We have talked much about the mystic Christ within. We have been taught by our blessed Master, who came but for one purpose and that was to give us the underlying truth and show us the unity of the teachings of the East and the West, the original yoga and original Christianity.

The East is as the head of Christ, with the thousand-petalled lotus.

And the West is as the body of Christ, the cross. Because each man is the cross. Each man as he is born into this world is the cross. And the birth of this child was a miracle, a tremendous mystical event. And every time, every year that we know his birthday is to come, a sense of wonder permeates our beings, and we have this mystic feeling of the Christ's presence within us.

The child became a man. And that man became the eternal Principle. No matter what religious path you follow in this world, still you follow the path of the Christ because he is the Son of God within you. He is your true, your spiritual Self. And he has come to lead you to the Father. This is the purpose of it.

### **Mother's Revelations in India**

I remember so well this little room in India with the bars around the windows just like a prison. And in all of the revelations that had come to me, there is one that stands out in my mind very, very vitally.

I had been shown all of these wonders that had been and that were to come during the last half of this cycle when all must go back to God. I had experienced within myself the birth of John the Baptist, the birth of Jesus the Christ within. I had experienced many things—the transition from the physical to the subtle body, the transfer of the heart from the left to the right, in order that I might have wisdom.

Each time I would get something like this, it would seem to come about twelve o'clock at night. And I remember this one night so well because I got these things in great pain. And I woke up screaming. I tried to get out of my bed, and Father had to help me, like he always did, and I was taken into the other room where there was a lamp hanging. And it seemed as though I saw the cross there in this lamp in the way that it was shown.

And God said to me, "I have shown you, and you have experienced the birth and the death of the Christ within yourself. But there is one thing that I want you to remember always, and that is the Universal God, the Universal Christ, who came to save all men from sin, to lift them up."

Jesus the Christ actually lived. He was a man who became One with God, who became Christ, the anointed one, the King of the Jews—for surely he was. Because as we come out of the land of Egypt within our own beings, we ascend into [Judaea] or Jerusalem. And Christ came from the Jews. These are the spiritual people, the spiritual people

of the earth, and it was meant that he should be the king of all. Because he of all of them went through this one terrific experience.

### **All Paths End in God**

Ramakrishna started at the middle, and he pursued every single religious path only to find the same God the Father at the end of each. No matter which techniques he used, which rituals he used, which creeds, it didn't make any difference.

And I was shown that Master came to bring all of the pieces of religion, or the pieces of the pie, back together again, to unify them, that truly he also had the consciousness of the Christ.

Every Christmas was a very special occasion for Master. And on the twenty-fourth, all of the days of his life with us here on this continent, he spent the day in meditation with all of those who would meditate with him. And the vibrations that came in that place were beyond human conception. And he used to pray to God, "Oh Lord, reveal Thyself, reveal Thyself. Christ come to me."

### **Emulation of Christ's Life Is Salvation**

Because you see, in the beginning, man is in material consciousness. Then gradually he develops into the mental state, and he begins to read and to conceive of some idea of the consciousness of the Christ. And gradually his spirit is lifted up, and he has a tremendous longing in his heart to know God, to know the Christ, to follow him.

Many say that they are saved because they have accepted this Christ as their savior. But this saving is just the beginning of the path. Because in order to be saved you must truly pick up your cross and follow the Christ if you would be his disciple. And this means to emulate him in every single instance of his life and of yours. It is a wonderful thing to feel this consciousness.

### **Mystic Christ Seed Originates in Claustrium**

The Christ was a tremendous gift of God. You see, as I have told you before, this sacred fluid which carries the Christ seed, the mystic seed within yourself, comes from the sacred claustrium, or "Santa Claus" (that is where the name Santa Claus originated, St. Claus).

But it seems that there was a saint, and he was called St. Nicholas (and gradually he's come to be known as Old St. Nick, down through

the centuries) who, instead of concentrating completely on the spiritual gifts that were to be received, instigated the idea of giving material gifts. Now, this is wonderful because there are many poor, hungry people who have very, very little. And if we can show them the Christ spirit at this particular time, it is a wonderful thing. But Christmas has come to be commercialized, and this should not be.

### **Give Gifts of the Spirit**

Christmas really is for little children because Christmas day honors the birth of the Christ Child. And yet sometimes we forget to pay any attention to the little children opening their gifts under the tree. We forget to give them the gifts of God, of Christ, of the Spirit, the things that will make them into great men and women.

This world, as Master said here, and this could not have been more timely had he written it this year, this world is in a terrible state at the moment. Man is fighting against man, brother against brother, nation against nation. We have forgotten the Christ principle in all men. And if one person dares to say that perhaps we are not doing as we should with some of these other nations, immediately he or she is called a traitor. This is not always so, because there are truly some people who see the Christ in every man and they don't want war, they don't want hatred, they don't want to criticize their brothers and their sisters; they want only to love them, to be at peace with them.

Divine Love is the greatest weapon this world has ever known. And if we sit in constant judgment upon our brothers, this is not manifesting the Christ spirit at all. Remember what it said: "Judge not, lest ye be judged;" and that you should "remove the beam in your own eye before you look to the mote in your brother's eye." He who is constantly picking fault with other people is showing nothing but his ego. He is not demonstrating the Christ within him.

### **Find God Within through Christ**

Because every master who has ever come has come but for one purpose, if he be a true master, and that is to show us how to go within ourselves and find the mystical kingdom of heaven, to become One with God the Father through the Christ.

Many times we meditate, sometimes for weeks, for months, for years,

and we see nothing but darkness. But don't forget that Christ and the light are also behind that darkness, that truly there is nothing but light everywhere. But these shadows come in order that we may appreciate the light when we see it. We would not know the true meaning of joy unless we had experienced sorrow. We could not know love in its purest and highest form unless we had felt hate sometimes within our being. But nothing is accomplished through hate. It is only through love, which the Christ came to give us, that this world will be changed and truly that there will be peace on earth, good will toward all men.

### **Story of the Fourth Wise Man**

I remember a story about the other Wise Man. He was to meet these original Three Wise Men (that were spoken of in our chapter) at a certain place. And he had left all of his earthly possessions except three beautiful, perfect stones which he had in a little pouch. One was an emerald; one was a red ruby; and one was a pearl.

And as he started out to keep his appointment with these three men, he came across a man who seemed as dead under a date tree. And he thought to himself, "I am in a tremendous hurry, but I will get off of my horse and see if there is anything I can do to help this man." So he got down and he felt of the man's pulse and, although it was very weak, still he found that he lived. He gave him of his water to drink and of his bread to eat. And the man was refreshed. And he thought to himself, "This is a good deed because this man will live."

He went a little bit farther. And his horse gave out on him, and he had to find another horse. Everything delayed him until at last he got to the place where he was to have met the original Three Wise Men, and they had already gone. So he thought, "I will catch up with them."

And as he went along, he came to a village. It seemed that he came in contact with these very men who had been sent by Herod to cut off all of the heads of the male children in the village in the hope that they might find the Christ and destroy him so that he would not be able to take Herod's throne. And he went to the door of one of the women, and she said, "Oh please, kind sir, help me. I have my young son here, and I am afraid that they will take him." So he stood in the door and, as the king's soldiers came, he said to them, "Do you see this pearl?" He said, "It is yours. Isn't this a beautiful jewel?" The men were so greedy as they looked at

this pearl that they reached out and took it and were on their way, and this little boy was saved.

A little bit further he went. And he came to a girl that was suffering. And he said to her, "My child, what is the matter?" She said, "I am to be sold as a slave." He said, "Where are those who would buy you?" She pointed to them. He went over to them, and he said, "Here is my ruby. I was to present it to the King of the Jews, but I give it in return for this girl's life." And she was set free.

He wandered on and on. He thought to himself, "I shall never see the King. Surely I shall never see his face." The years went by, and he became old and his hair was gray. And still he wandered on.

Finally, one day, he came to Jerusalem. He saw a tremendous crowd of people gathered there. And he thought to himself, "I wonder what all these people are here for." So he asked somebody, and this person said, "Did you not hear? This man whom they call Jesus is about to be crucified." And he said, "Who is this Jesus?" "Oh," they said, "he is the King of the Jews." He thought to himself, "Oh no, not the King. I must see the King." But he fell beside the roadside. He was so weak, so worn out. Finally someone came, and he said, "I am hungry. I am thirsty. I would see the King. If you will but take me to the King, I will give you this jewel." And he parted with his emerald, the last perfect jewel that he had.

They tried to get him to the King, but still he could not be there. Still he could not. And he thought to himself, "I have failed." Just as he was about to die, he heard a voice saying to him, "My son, you have not failed. Because it was I whom you saw. It was I whom you saved when you saved the little boy. It was I whom you saved when you saved the slave girl. It was I who invoked in you the spirit to want to see me. Here I am. Open your eyes and gaze upon me." And the Fourth Wise Man looked, and the glory of the Christ filled his eyes and his being. And with this vision he passed into Paradise.

### **Seek Spiritual Gifts**

Many times we think we have failed but this is not so, because the Christ is there. He is in the spiritual eye. He is constantly knocking on the doors of our eyelids, waiting for us to let him into our hearts. But somehow we always turn him away. We turn and reach out for the presents of St. Nicholas, and we turn from the presents of St. Claus, or Santa Claus.

If we would but persevere, we would find this wonderful presence within ourselves. We would find the Star of the East, the Star of Bethlehem, and we would know that every man on this earth is born to be a Christ one day. But most of us have given up our glory, and we have been content with a crown of tinsel instead of the crown of shining gold of Christ Consciousness.

### **The Birth of the Christ Within**

...If we will go inside, if we will meditate every day of our lives—let us put God and Christ first—the day will come when we will not only have the consciousness of the Christ, but we will also see him actually in form. Many have had this vision. Surely he must exist. Surely he must exist. When you have seen him, then you know for all time to come, you can never doubt again, never. He is always there, waiting for you.

...This is what we want, the Christ within us. Then we will become radiant beings. “And if I be lifted up,” said the Christ, “I shall draw all men unto me.” Let us be like him. Let us be fishers of men. Let us, during this holy season, realize the birth of the Christ Child within our own consciousness. And let us ask him to lead us to the Father who is within.

May God bless all of you.

## **Where Is Jesus and What Is He Doing Now?**

**by Paramhansa Yogananda, December 26, 1943**

*In this excerpt of a talk are Master's original words and experiences; what a wonderful Grace brought this great God-man to America. As Mother once remarked, she learned more about real Christianity from this Hindu master than through any church she attended. Master's knowing did not come from reading dusty books, but from reading the book of life of direct experience. - David*

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for sending us Jesus Christ and the great Masters to inspire us to seek Thy kingdom and be there forever and ever. Heavenly Father, we will give all our homage to Thee. Glory to Thy Name. Aum, peace, Aum, bliss. Heavenly Father, may Thy love shine forever upon the sanctuary of my devotion and may I be able to awaken Thy love in all true hearts.

I was sitting in meditation the other evening, December 24. It was

all dark, and there was no light and then who appears before me? Jesus Christ. I was so surprised. I had always prayed and asked Him to come but this time he came without my prayer. His nose is a little bit flat, but his eyes are so wonderful. I saw him four times. Once as a little baby, and when he came the experience I felt I cannot describe. And I think that was why he came. He was very pleased that I had started this Christmas meditation idea. Really it is the greatest slur on Jesus that men drink on his day and forget him completely. Jesus' life is a spiritual life and to make it a purely social affair is terrible. It must become a sacred thing. If you honor Christ, don't think of exploiting him on that day. Jesus will be closer to you if you start with meditation on that day.

And another thing is to have meditation on Saturday nights. Everyday is a Christmas for me but I am glad to see so many souls looking forward to that day of meditation. There is no other way to happiness but by going within yourself. You will never find it otherwise. As Americans you are not contented. Even though you have more than most people in other countries. Inside you have a burning fire of discontent. But this teaching has come to take that away from you. Those who are coming here regularly will find that happiness. They will be drunk with the wine of God. I am all the time that way. To the last day of my life I will try to get you there. Those who will keep coming regularly for the services and classes will get there. And reserve Saturday or Sunday for meditation at least four hours. You spend that much time in the movies, why not with God? If you don't attain Christ by this you may jump on my name and say I have told the biggest lie ever told. God can only be known by knowing the art of Kriya. The method that I taught you. One man came to me in India and said, "I am waiting for devotion." I said, "You are wasting time." For months that man meditated deeply and still his soul felt dry as dust. I told him to practice Kriya. When he came back to me in seven days he had felt the contact of God. Because he was eager.

The world is registered on the surface of your skin, and here (Christ Center) God is registered. When you consciously go here you get God quicker. God can be known only through law. It is most easy to approach Him through law. You must use the techniques India discovered. It was Jesus himself who sent this work here. He is not dead. He is watching. It doesn't please him to see the churches just big places of

social gatherings.

Thought of God is not enough. You have to make conscious effort. We go to church for God. We don't go there for singing. Music is all right but we should go to church for God alone. I went to many teachers to find God. Then I came to preach. Otherwise I wouldn't stand here and tell you about Him. Why should I tell you about God if He is just a fancy in my mind? I live in His living presence always. Last night I was asking for sunshine this morning. No answer. That means sunshine. So after a little while I hear the word, "Yes," and when I looked through my window this morning, there was sunshine. And I told Him. This is your handiwork. You are the sunshine. And there is no other sunshine but You.

So you see, He is a living God. It is the most wonderful thing to know Him. No love, no joy, no intoxication can compare with it. The proof of existence of God lies in joy. When you sit in meditation and practice the method and feel that great joy, then you know God. And that joy is intelligent. Things begin to change for you. Everything I have ever wanted has been given to me. You can talk to Him. He will guide you in everything. This isn't just a little joy of your imagination. God is approachable. Everything comes from God, He is much more real than all His things are. Why has become everything here, but God? Why do you think He is not personal? He is personal. When you become one with God you find wave and the ocean are the same. You see yourself one with the ocean of God's presence. I and my Father are one.

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## Mataji's Blessings

by Smt. Sarala Gupta

*Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram*

I got married in 1967. It is only after marriage I came to know about saints and the Ashram.

My father in law, Sagarlal Gupta, who accompanied Papa and Mataji in their world tour was very much attached and devoted to them. Their advice was a command for the entire family. All the family members had full faith and confidence in Papa Mataji's direction and guidance. It was a new experience for me and I wanted to come to Anandashram and experience it myself.



I first visited Anandashram in mid 1968. The personal first vision of Mataji mesmerized me. She was beautiful, soft, love in her eyes, laughter on her face and though I had no experience of spiritual life I could feel the Divine aura around her. She made me feel so welcomed.

In that trip she made me feel at home, gave [a] lot of love, general talks about the Ashram and Papa—perhaps to make me feel that

spiritual life is not something scary and difficult. Mataji introduced me to Ashram activities; she would make me distribute prasad daily—which I really enjoyed—and initiated me into Ramnam.

In my frequent visits she started telling me about Papa—swaroop<sup>1</sup> of Papa. Mataji encouraged me to do more and more Ramnam. She

would ask me to do a certain number of Ramnam and if I doubted my ability, she would encourage me to do, saying, “Have you tried?” Believe me I could do it effortlessly. That power was given by her!

[Mataji] always preached “Nam-Dhyan-Seva” i.e. name, contemplation of God’s attributes and service. She had already introduced me to Ramnam and to meditate on Papa and Papa’s attributes.

Service: Mataji encouraged me to serve my family members. She said, “Papa has brought you in a big family to give you an opportunity to serve and love. Whomever you serve, feel you are serving Papa himself.” Slowly she encouraged me to widen the circle and go beyond merely the family circle. She was a great votary of charity and felt very happy when we fed the poor or gave them offering in different ways like money, clothes etc.

My children and grand-children are all devoted to Papa, Mataji and Swamiji. In their early age too—they talk to Papa Mataji through their



Sarala Gupta

<sup>1</sup> Swaroop - Truth, essential nature of being, unconditioned by Rajas and Tamas.

pictures, recite Ramnam melodiously, sing aratis, love to come to Ashram and be with Swamiji. Swamiji pampers them too.

A few incidents come to my mind:

1. According to my husband's horoscope his period was not good and there was risk to his life. I was too young to understand the real import of [this] prediction; more than me, Mataji was concerned and worried. She asked me to do 11 crore<sup>2</sup> of Ramnam for my husband. Realizing my difficulty, she gave [a] loan of Ramnam. She asked me to distribute prasad daily to children who were doing the Ramnam. It's something unbelievable and I feel what I have today is because of her mercy and love.

*Stage by stage she lifted me in spiritual life without my realizing it but she always ascribed all happenings to the will of Papa.*

2. A rare privilege I had was to remove the bunched and matted plaits of hair of Mataji as desired by her. I was apprehensive whether I would be able to do it at all. Mataji gave me the simple technique of unraveling the knotted plaits. I was thrilled to find in the end that I was able to do it and was astounded to find that she, even in her failing health, could give detailed instructions on how to go about it.

*This was a lesson that with Mataji's blessings I could overcome fear and disability to achieve things.*

3. Once I was in Mataji's room and Mataji was gifting away sarees, she enquired if I would like to have one. I accepted the gift. Another day I was sitting with Mataji, one maid brought something and showed it to Mataji. I enquired, "What was it?" Mataji said, "It's ghee." and wanted to know if I would like to have it. I thought if I said yes again, it's like getting greedy and declined. My family members, who were present there, told me later that we should never decline the offer or contradict the words of saints.

Next day I went to Mataji and requested her to give me a little quantity of ghee. Accordingly she instructed the maid to give [a] **little quantity** of ghee. (I should have asked for ghee, shouldn't have added the quantity.)

Surprisingly from that time the consumption of ghee in my house

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Crore is equal to 10 million

dropped from 16 kg. to a few kgs. and I lost [my] appetite for ghee. Much later, after Mataji's Mahasamadhi, once when I was in [the] Ashram, Swamiji sent ghee for me and I resumed consumption, but in smaller quantity only.

*Then I realized if we do not implicitly accept saints' directions such consequences happen.*

4. Once we came to Ashram—a group of eight to ten ladies. Mataji used to call us to have evening tea with her. One day she asked us to have tea from the next day in our room because some old devotees from Bangalore were coming and they would not be able to join and they will feel hurt. I said, “Yes, Mataji,” but I was disappointed for losing that opportunity.

The same evening in the Ashram Bhajan Hall a parable from Swami Ramdas' Gospel was being read. A king deserted a faithful wife and wanted to remarry, even though the queen faithfully carried out every instruction of the king, including abandoning her children. But eventually the king called her back. Thus the queen was rewarded ultimately because of her total surrender and detachment. After hearing this story I felt comforted and relaxed.

Strangely enough the next day much to our delight Mataji called us to resume our evening tea with her.

*I learned the valuable lesson that when you repose [in] full faith and surrender, totally, and cultivate detachment, events flow naturally—that gives peace and happiness.*

Our human failings got corrected by the gracious advice of Mataji. A lot of family misunderstandings, petty irritations, etc. were easily avoided and mental peace was restored. We learned the art of living without tension through various instructions and narratives by Mataji. All her messages contained the single philosophy of **Universal Love**.

In our house there are photos of Papa, Mataji, and Swamiji and we feel their vibrant presence with us.

After Mataji's Mahasamadhi we imbibed the spirit of [the] Ashram from Swami Satchidanandaji. The great void created by the physical absence of Mataji was filled by his immanent presence.

May Papa bless us all to have Swamiji with us for a long, long time to come—in perfect health!

# Brother Lawrence's Practice

## Introduction by Donald Attwater-editor

*The author of those writings and reported conversations generally known as The Practice of the Presence of God was born at Herimesnil, in Lorraine, about the year 1611. His family name was Herman, he was christened Nicolas, and he was well brought up by his parents, who were religious folk. At the age of eighteen he became a soldier, but was wounded in a raid by the Swedes on the village of Rambervilliers, and he had to give up that profession. For some time he was a footman, but his naturally religious tendency, encouraged by the example of an uncle who was a Carmelite friar, impelled him towards the religious state.*

*Several times he attempted the life of a hermit, but was soon reduced to such a state of spiritual instability and uncertainty that he realized that he must submit himself to a rule. At last, after a further period of irresolution, he offered himself as a lay-brother to the Discalced Carmelites of Paris; he was accepted, received the name of Lawrence-of-the-Resurrection, and was set to work in the kitchen.*

*The rest of his life may be found in his works. Abbe de Beaufort, vicar general of Cardinal de Noailles and chronicler of the Conversations, has written of him: "Nobody can paint the saints so well as they themselves...so nothing can bring this servant of God more clearly before you than his own words spoken in the simplicity of his heart."*

## **The Third Conversation** (November 22, 1666)

*Br. Lawrence told me-*

...That it was impossible, not only that God should deceive, but also that He should permit suffering for any length of time to a soul entirely given up to Him and determined to suffer all things for Him.

That he had now attained a state wherein he thought only of God. If some other thought or a temptation intruded, he felt it coming, and, such was his experience of God's prompt help, that sometimes he allowed it to approach until it was almost upon him, when he turned to God and it disappeared at once. For the same reason, when he had business to do, he did not think of it beforehand; but when it was time to do it God showed him as in a mirror, how it should be done. For some time he had followed this plan of not anticipating difficulties; but before his experience of God's help in

such matters he had been troubled when looking forward to them.

That he did not reflect upon those things which were over and done, and even scarcely adverted to that which he was actually doing, and after a meal he did not know what he had eaten. He did all, in his own simple way, for love of God, thanking Him for directing his actions and making many other “acts”; but all quite simply, in such a manner as to maintain himself in the loving presence of God.

That when outside occupation diverted his mind a little from God, some reminder from Him would seize his soul, giving it so strong a sense of God and so kindling it that he sometimes cried aloud, singing and dancing like a lunatic.

That he was more united with God during his ordinary activities than in religious exercise, in which he was generally afflicted with spiritual dryness.

That he expected before long some trouble of body or mind, and the worst would be to lose that sense of God which he had had so long; but the goodness of God assured him that He would not forsake him utterly, and would give him strength to bear whatever evil He might allow to happen to him; therefore he feared nothing and had no need to consult anybody about his spiritual state. When he had tried to do so, he had always come away more perplexed than before, and so, as he knew he was prepared to die and be lost for the love of God, he had no qualms about it. To abandon oneself entirely to God was a sure way and on it was always sufficient light whereby to go forward.

That in the beginning of the spiritual life it was necessary to act faithfully, and renounce one’s own will, but after that there were joys indescribable. In times of difficulty we need only to turn to Jesus and ask for His grace, with which all things become easy.

That many souls get stuck among systems and particular devotions and neglect that love which is their real end. This can be seen at once in their works, and is the reason why we see so little solid virtue.

That neither skill nor knowledge is required to enable us to go to God, but just the heart determined to turn to Him only, to beat for Him only, and to love Him only.

## I Have a Dream

*This inspired speech was made by Martin Luther King on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. Reverend King was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi for his non-violent civil rights movement. As you will note in this speech, his vision is not limited to equal legal rights only, but a vision where **all** will be able to sit together at the table of brotherhood. May this vision find fulfillment everywhere. Martin Luther King Day will be celebrated January 16, 2006.*

– David



...I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. *We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.*

I have a dream that one day out in the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

...I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character....I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be engulfed, every hill shall be exalted and every mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.

With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to climb up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that, let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi and every mountainside.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

# Anna

## The Mother of Mary

From *Jesus The Son Of Man* by Kahlil Gibran

And the child grew in body and spirit, and He was different from other children. He was aloof and hard to govern, and I could not lay my hand upon Him.

But He was beloved by everyone in Nazareth, and in my heart I knew why.

Oftentimes He would take away our food to give to the passerby. And He would give other children the sweetmeat I had given Him, before He had tasted it with His own mouth.

He would climb the trees of my orchard to get the fruits, but never to eat them Himself.

And He would race with other boys, and sometimes, because He was swifter of foot, He would delay so that they might pass the stake ere He should reach it.

And sometimes when I led Him to His bed He would say, "Tell my mother and the others that only my body will sleep. My mind will be with them till their mind come to my morning."

And many other wondrous words He said when He was a boy, but I am too old to remember.

Now they tell me I shall see Him no more. But how shall I believe what they say?

I still hear His laughter, and the sound of His running about my house. And whenever I kiss the cheek of my daughter His fragrance returns to my heart, and His body seems to fill my arms.

But is it not passing strange that my daughter does not speak of her first-born to me?

Sometimes it seems that my longing for Him is greater than hers. She stands as firm before the day as if she were a bronzen image, while my heart melts and runs into streams.

Perhaps she knows what I do not know. Would that she might tell me also.

## A New Year's Message

by Paramhansa Yogananda

The New Year has come to greet you with new hopes, new determination, new will to achieve new activities. In the temple of the New Year renew your reverence for the unlimited hidden power of God within you. The trails of trials and the yawning chasms of woe have been left behind in the dark night of the past. Now you are entering the daylight of a newborn hope for the New Year. Cast off the coil of the decayed thoughts of the past years; be reincarnated into the vital living of the New Year.

Every regret for shattered hopes of success must be transformed into the joy of new achievements during the New Year. Old sorrows of disappointments must be buried beneath the sepulcher of the past year. Those dark bandits of discouragement must not remain any longer to steal the wealth of your desire to succeed.

Every day in the New Year must become an altar for the god of new living, new achievements in wisdom and new joy. Every day in the New Year must bring hope and cheer to yourself and all humanity. Take all the salvaged treasures of good experiences from the sea of past experience and use them to buy new accomplishments in the New Year. In the garden of the New Year culture the seeds of well-planned new activities until they grow into fragrant flowering plants of diverse successes that every day in the New Year become a step upward on the ladder of your Self Realization.

Make every day of the New Year a better day than the previous one for greater effort to succeed in business, family happiness and increasingly ever-new joy-contact of God in meditation. The old year has gone, but the New Year is full of treasures for you to use. Bury the bad habits of failure in the tomb of the old year and reincarnate your life energy in the vitality of the New Year. May the New Year spread the example and message of your renewed life and renewed power unto all creation!

(Date unknown, read by Mother in a talk, "Following the Birth of the Christ" on December 31, 1972.)

## Moments with Mother

by Janice Stevenson

Sometime around 1979, we had the blessing of having Mother visit us and stay in our home. Although my memory is usually very good, I have very few memories of her visits. I'm not even certain if she visited once, or twice, although I tend to think the latter. I think her presence plunged us into levels of consciousness we had little experience with, and our usual memory was somewhat scrambled.



Mother had previously visited another friend and devotee, and she told me Mother had taken a wicker chair in her home, turned it upside-down, and cleaned it. “I’m doing this for God,” Mother had said. My ego, which has a strong fear of personal criticism, stirred me into a cleaning frenzy in preparation for Mother’s visit. I didn’t want any dirt to be found. By the time she visited, you could have eaten off the ceiling, let alone the floor.

When Mother arrived, she was a completely gracious guest, and exhibited her usual impeccable manners. She said we had a lovely home, and commented that the house was “a difficult house to keep clean.”

In the years since, what has stayed with me is the thought, “I’m doing this for God.” I will pick up a piece of litter, or do a chore that I hadn’t thought was mine, and mentally say, “I’m doing this for God.” Not every time (there’s a lot of litter out there), but many times—when God inspires me.

# Lahiri Mahasaya and the Bank

Story told by Acharya S.B. Dasgupta

One day Lahiri Mahasaya had gone to the bank to take care of some business. Now at that time the bank was very busy and there was a very long line of people waiting for assistance. Because of this long line Yogiraj had gone to a bench in the bank to sit down and wait. Now as he had been sitting and waiting the Yogiraj gradually began to become immersed into the Inner Bliss.

He became fully immobile in breathless Samadhi State there sitting on that bench. Yogiraj was lost in that state for a long time. It came time for the bank to close up for the day and the bank employees spotted the Yogiraj there. They summoned the manager to ask what to do. Now the manager of that bank was very righteous man and he was brought to the place where the Yogiraj was seated in samadhi.

He immediately understood what was occurring and he had known who the Yogiraj was. He very kindly said to the bank employees, "Well, we must not disturb this great being in any way. We shall just wait here for his holy trance to end. We are actually very blessed that we should be here for this."

Gradually, after some time the Yogiraj began to regain outer consciousness. He looked around shyly and saw that it was dark outside and that the bank was closed. Lahiri Mahasaya was a very humble and modest Master. When he realized the situation he bowed his head and apologized to the bank employees for keeping them from going home to their families. The bank manager and employees however felt VERY BLESSED and would accept no apology on the part of the Yogiraj and they said, "Holy Sir, it was our great honor to be here with you. Please do not think of apologizing!"

They then took care of Yogiraj's bank transaction with great loving care even though the bank was "officially" closed to business. Yogiraj then, very quietly, with head bowed, slipped out through the door of the bank and returned to his home.

I bow to the lotus feet of the performers of Kriya from all the different lines and traditions.

## Gift of giving blesses others—and you

by Mary Hunt

Over the past few weeks, Americans have opened their hearts and wallets to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Giving is not a new subject when it comes to getting out of debt and living below your means. In fact, it is one of the principles. Giving is one of the “magic bullets” that will help you get control of your financial situation. It slays that monster named Greed that all of us deal with from time to time. Here’s how it works for me:

- Giving proves the condition of my heart. The very act of giving is an expression of gratitude. It is a tangible way I can say “thank you” for everything I have and for every way I have been blessed. Without gratitude operating in my life, more is never enough and nothing brings genuine satisfaction.

- Giving connects me to the world. We live in a materialistic society. We have so much that it is easy to become complacent, perhaps even spoiled. Giving keeps me from being self-centered. It opens my eyes to the big picture—to the needs of others. It allows me to see the world through eyes of compassion. I see how vast the need, how short the time and how unimportant my stuff is by comparison.

When I connect to the world, I allow my heart to be broken. It is in that brokenness that my pride and arrogance can be washed away. Then I become content with what I have, and that makes me more useful.

- Giving opens my eyes to who I am. When I take a step of faith and give back the first part of my income, I make statements of affirmation about my past, my present and my future.

- Giving teaches my brain that I have more than enough. When I give, I tell myself I am beyond scarcity. It is affirmation that someone greater than myself is in control; I have what I need and I am grateful. Giving reminds me that I am only the caretaker of the resources I’ve been given to manage. I am a steward and I am responsible for the decisions I make.

Since I made the decision back in 1982 to become a purposeful giver:

- I have paid back more than \$100,000 in unsecured debt (that doesn’t count all the interest nor does it make an adjustment for inflation, to give you an idea what that would lie in current dollars).

- I have found unbelievable fulfillment in a career I never could have imagined, using talents I did not know I had.
- I've had the privilege of leading thousands of people out of debt. Has giving changed and blessed my life? You be the judge.

Mary Hunt writes for Newspaper Enterprise Association, Paramount, California.

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## Remember

by Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

*These writings came to me spontaneously after our Prosperity Retreat.*

Remember...

Let every lack prompt you to open wider the door to prosperity.

Let every darkness make your demand for Light grow in fervor.

Let fatigue remind you to open the floodgate of living Waters.

Let sorrow make you feel love enfolding and supporting you.

Let every ache and pain of the body make you see and feel healing forces washing away pain and feel comfort.

Let every need make you know that God is calling on you to be a conduit for His unlimited Grace to flow through your prayer-demand.

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Unlimited is God's Grace—it moves through you, out to manifest creation. You are His gateway—and you are the witness to His loving - joyful creative abundance demonstrated moment by moment, day by day!

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Many have a love-hate relationship with money—others a desire-fear or other conflicting relationship with prosperity. You must heal your conflicting relationship before you can enjoy all that He is ready to give. Make your first prayer-demand, “Oh Lord, open Your doorway of Grace to these places of conflict, making my hate, distrust, fear and anger disappear in Your Light of Understanding and Grace of Joy!”

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It is not a matter of whether you have the funds for a particular desire or not—it is only important whether you feel it is for the highest good of all—in keeping with Divine Will. Once you establish your desire is for good, then place your prayer-demand to God—for He is waiting to give all His Good to you, now and always.

## House Blessing for David and Carla

*True Renunciation Is Within, Not Without. So [Swami Ramdas] said the householder can go to God sometimes even more rapidly than a renunciate, because renunciation is not outward alone. It is what you renounce in your mind, in your heart, in your soul, that makes you a true renunciate of God. And this is true. This is absolutely true.*

*Mother Hamilton*



On November 13, devotees from Canada and the U.S. gathered at David and Carla's new home for a House Blessing. David gave an uplifting talk, and then lighting the lamp that was a gift from Swami Satchidanandaji, blessed the house and dedicated it as a dharmashala.

Carla welcomed all to come and use the house for personal retreats for spiritual work with David.

After the ceremony all shared in a table-full of delicious food offerings. The atmosphere was charged with love and light blessing the house and all those within.

– Cate



Michelle Englehart after the House Blessing

Delight is to him, whom all the waves of the billows of the seas of the boisterous mob can never shake from this sure Keel of the Ages. And eternal delight and deliciousness will be his, who coming to lay him down, can say with his final breath—O Father!—chiefly known to me by Thy rod—mortal or immortal, here I die. I have striven to be Thine, more than to be this world's, or mine own. Yet this is nothing: I leave eternity to Thee; for what is man that he should live out the lifetime of his God?

[From the “Chapel Sermon” in *Moby Dick* by Hermann Melville.]

# Loon Lake Retreat, November 2005



Ruth Lamb and  
Geraldine Di Ciccio

Andrew Schmidt  
(with glimpses of  
Geraldine and  
Jonni Anderson)



Kathy and Win  
Smith



Loon Lake was the site for a retreat in November. We focused on Prosperity from a spiritual point of view. As children of the Infinite we are natively endowed with the ability to be a conduit of plenty to supply our own needs as well as the needs of others. We also had time for group meditation and kirtans, as well as for laughter and fun.

–David

### Calendar of Events

Dec.	21	Winter Solstice (10:35 a.m. PST)
	25	Christmas Day, Mother Hamilton’s Birthday
	27	Swami Ramdas’ Sannyas Day
Jan.	5	Paramhansa Yogananda’s Birthday (1893)
	31	Mother Hamilton’s Mahasamadhi (1991)
Feb.	4	Mother Krishnabai’s Mahasamadhi (1989)
	26	David’s Birthday (1954)
March	1	Ash Wednesday
	7	Paramhansa Yogananda’s Mahasamadhi (1952)
	9	Sri Yukteswar’s Mahasamadhi (1936)
	20	Spring Equinox (10:23 a.m. PST)
April	16	Easter

Journal Editors: Larry & Cate Koler

What joy there is in welcoming in a New Year. Entering therein bring with you your voice filled with His sound, legs to dance to His tune, hands to serve with, a mind to hear His thoughts and an open heart to feel His undying love. There is joy in the coming year and it is yours to fill it with your all.

Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

To fly away from everything is the easiest thing. But you only gain strength when you rattle. The one who doesn't have difficulties is the one who doesn't conquer. The more you try to materialize your own good resolutions, stronger you become.

*Paramhansa Yogananda*



Christ is the very incarnation of infinite Love and Peace. From year to year at the time of Christmas, the day of Christ's advent into the world, we remember the supreme message he came to deliver to the world. He taught that all human beings should live with each other in a spirit of mutual love and service.

Swami Ramdas