The Cross and The Lotus Journal

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

Mother Hamilton in the late 1970s
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._
_Aum-Amen._

The Reverend Yogacharya Mother Hamilton
Oct. 21, 2015

Dear Friends,

A spiritual pilgrimage is a specific journey made for upliftment and transformation—for yourself and/or for others. God prompted Carla and me on just such a pilgrimage: to circumambulate North America and immerse ourselves in “Nature’s Cathedrals,” as well as both holy and historic sites and to meet Him as He manifests in all variety of human forms across this land.

Experience teaches us that on a pilgrimage there are many unexpected twists and turns. If you are caught unawares, you may think these twists are not part of the pilgrimage but detours; however, there are no accidents on a pilgrimage.

One such unexpected turn occurred a few weeks into our pilgrimage. This came as a medical emergency in which my blood count became dangerously low. I was extremely anemic and if my blood had dropped much lower I would have had a heart attack due to too little blood in my system. I was immediately put onto a fast infusion of three units of blood and scheduled for an operation the next day.

This all occurred in a larger context; since the beginning of this year I had certain knowledge that death was stalking me. I had talked about this on a few occasions, and while I did not know exactly how it would manifest, I felt it very strongly. In fact going on this pilgrimage was connected with this feeling, in that it was the death, the end, of how I had been serving as a spiritual teacher.

For many years I have given regular spiritual talks, been available for personal interviews, led bi-annual retreats, etc. Taking this pilgrimage changed all of that. I would keep in touch with regular postings at yogacharyadavid.com and make connection...
with the Spiritual Centers through Skype, but so many of the past routines were all suspended without any knowledge of what the future would hold. It was a definite ending.

“Endings” was the theme of the most recent retreat. In order for us to stay alive to our true life’s purposes we must be willing to let things go when the time is ripe. Whether it is a job or a role we play in life, transitions happen all around us and if we cling too tightly to the past without accepting transitions we will begin to die on the vine. To allow things to die can bring up our fears and attachments to keeping things the way they have been, and therefore change represents death in our lives. This death comes with a promise of resurrection, but when that will happen and what that resurrection will look like is not known beforehand.

The transition of going on this pilgrimage definitely felt like death to the old. I was taking God’s hand and proceeding into the new without any conception of how things would unfold; only that I must do this. And yet this transition to pilgrimage did not seem to fully explain the specter of death I had been feeling. I knew I was going to step through death’s door, and yet I did not know what that was to look like. While I did not completely rule out death of the body, it did stand as a possibility, but it did not seem to intuitively fit.

So we left on September 23 for the pilgrimage. September has always been a time of beginnings for me and the Fall Equinox was the perfect time for our leaving. For some time before going I had been struggling with being able to breathe, and I had low life energy in the body. The retreat, the wedding we had at our house, and other activities I did before we left were only accomplished through the absolute determined will of putting one foot in front of another in order to fulfill inwardly-directed Divine Will.

Once on the road we reached Moab, Utah and the physical crises this body was in brought me to a family clinic at the hospital and from there to the emergency room. Moab was named for a town in the Bible, a city that could only be reached by going through a long desert and with much difficulty; it was the appro-
appropriate symbolic name for this part of my pilgrimage to take place.

I kept all dear friends apprised of what was happening to this body through emails when I entered the hospital. As a result I felt the power of prayer by so many wonderful souls; it came as a definite positive force operating in and around me. In the early morning hours before I was to be taken in for the operation I experienced the absence of being stalked by death. What had been a constant presence with me since the first of the year now was not present!

Through all the medical hubbub I felt myself to be an interested but detached bystander to these events. A little later God showed me how reality was bent and reshaped by prayers from powerful souls, God-tuned souls; by you! Two doctors had been certain that colon cancer was the cause of the anemia. Thankfully, both were wrong. However, what God showed me was how one reality, cancer, was changed through acts of faith, realization and sincere prayer and replaced by another reality, a benign tumor.

With these events all happening in just the first weeks of this pilgrimage one can only imagine what may come next! I stand unafraid, for God and Gurus are my constant polestars that keep me moving in harmony with their will. And with you, my friends, remaining in attunement with God and Gurus, what is there that cannot be accomplished through His all-powerful will and His willing devotees? My heartfelt gratitude goes out to you and we will see how His tender mercy unfolds next in this ongoing pilgrimage.

David

For the other Christian virtues, each of them has its own time. But in the case of prayer, uninterrupted, continuous action is commanded. Pray without ceasing. It is right and fitting to pray always, to pray everywhere.

– from The Pilgrim Continues His Way
Letter to a Devotee

November 11, 2015

Dear devotees of the Infinite,

This is a different kind of letter, because it is not addressed in response to a single devotee’s letter, but is for all the beautiful souls who have been sending me their love and prayers over these last weeks.

For years I have had the privilege to be on the giving end of prayers for others. Of course I have been aware when others have prayed for me in the past, but nothing has compared to the life-changing power of prayer I have received since having an operation in Moab, Utah, and now that I am in an ICU unit at Valley Hospital in Las Vegas.

What God has made me keenly aware of are the tremendously powerful souls who have been praying for me. Besides the gratification I feel in receiving those prayers, I feel even more gratitude for the spiritual advancement by so many sincere souls. For this fact I stand in awe at what God has wrought.

With all love and blessings,

David

David meditating in his hospital bed.
The Start on the Journey

[Mother read this selection during the talk we are featuring this edition—see the following page.]

Come, My Beloved, let us go upon a journey together. The day is fair and the pathway lies before us, the path which is to lead us to the mountain heights of a higher consciousness. This path will as followed, lead you from sense consciousness to Soul consciousness.

I would have you as you follow this path through the pages of this book, learn to recognize Me, your Divine Helper, in all things. Learn to talk with Me as we journey together and I shall be able to point out to you many beauties of which your eyes are now unaware. We shall spend time together in quiet meditation and contemplation, resting beside pools of Living Water.

You have been taught that Divinity dwells upon a throne at the center of your being, also that there is a garden of the heart where you can come and meet Me, your heart’s Beloved. These pictures of our relationship are right and of true value. By following this teaching, you have learned to find Me close within you and have come to know Me for your very own.

Now I want you to come yet closer to Me than ever before. I want you to know and recognize Me as a traveling companion. Know Me as Spirit within the true self of you, that innermost reality with which you can step forth as pure Soul, going on to heights of consciousness which you have never known before.

This journey is not a short one, for man does not step at once from a pure sense consciousness to that of Soul. The journey will be made up of little daily steps, little overcomings of the faults of daily life, a daily growth of love for the task and devotion to the One who travels the highway with you.

— from *The Journey with the Master* by Eva Bell Werber
The Journey of the Soul
An Excerpt from a Talk Given by
The Reverend Mother, Yogacharya M. Hamilton
in Seattle on November 09, 1980.

[Bible reading is Luke, Chapter 12, Verses 13-21 ]

I want to talk to you this morning about “The Journey of the Soul.” Everything starts at the beginning. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. As God went forth from Himself, He created first His beloved Son, that state of Christ Consciousness, that which had life and intelligence and will and power over all the earth. He was the Carpenter of the universe—not the carpenter who took Joseph as his father, and who worked in that father’s carpenter’s shop—but a Carpenter of all of the universe! And He is that Life, that Intelligence, that Light which is within every atom of space, and in every form which walks the earth…. 

…Perhaps in the beginning He will appear to you as the Christ, or Krishna, or whatever deity is closest to your heart. And you will think, “How wonderful that the Lord came to me!” But still you are thinking of Him as being outside of yourself, and He is not. And that One who comes to you in that perfect beautiful vision, that changes your life, is the Christ-in-you.
Each one sees his own Christ upon his own cross. That is why so many pictures which have been painted of the Christ are all different because they are that artist’s conception of what he sees the Christ to be, because that Christ is universal. He has form but He goes beyond form. He is pure Spirit. He is pure Light.

And I want to tell you that the road is not easy. You have to be willing to suffer, but you have a choice to make: you can go on suffering day by day, with all of the mundane things of the world—the ups and the downs, the disappointments and the joys—one moment you’re up; you’re in heaven because something you want is going to happen; the next minute you’re down in the depths of despair because it has been taken away from you, or things aren’t just the way you want. And you say, “Oh Lord, help me. Help me!” And there He is, walking beside you all the time.

Lo, I am with you always, with you always, inside of you—your comfort, the One who is ready to pack your burdens, the One who is ready to do everything for you, the One who has all knowledge, all power over all of the kingdoms of not only your body but of all of the earth, if you will only contact Him who is the Source of all things.

When you come to that point, then you start to go on the greater journey. The soul is lifted up and you come in contact with the metaphysical world. Then you come in contact with the higher spiritual world. And then you are given a teacher. Many of them are not masters, but they have come a great way. These are called saints. And then you will find sometimes a supreme master, who has gone all the way, who has truly picked up their cross and followed the Christ, gone through the state of human death and come back to teach a doubting world the truth of that which they have experienced.

Story of the Salt Doll

I’ve told you many times, because it’s in one of the books that was written about Ramakrishna, that he told a story of the “salt doll” who went into the ocean, and hoped to come out of that ocean and tell everyone what the experience was. But when the doll went into the ocean, she melted because she was made of
salt (I have many times used this) and she couldn’t come out. But the one who goes all the way is blessed indeed. And that one sees the spirit of the ocean which draws again the salt to her bosom, and fashions a form which He leaves on the shore, to tell all men that God is Life and Life is God. And there is no such thing as death. I want you to remember that: there is no such thing as death.

But during your sojourn here, God has given you this life. He has put you here at this moment in time, and He has put you here but for one purpose, and that is to find your union with Him, to find out who and what you are, your true Self! And you must let Him make the decision as to when it is time for you to leave because if you die to the human-ness within you, that is a good death. And it should be rejoiced over. Certainly it’s a tremendous experience.

**The Other Face of God**

We think always of Jesus as being the man of sorrows because he had to go through the crucifixion, or the transformation. And you must meet all of your dear relatives, even as Arjuna met his relatives on the battlefield. But Krishna, the Christ was the charioteer, urging Arjuna, his disciple (which represents the human ego) to go out on the battlefield and kill those dear relatives. And he guided Arjuna every inch of the way, until finally Arjuna also saw the face of Krishna. And he had seen the beautiful face, that face that was filled with wonder and beauty and light. But all of a sudden he said, “I want to see all of you, my Lord, all of you!” And Krishna counselled him against this. “No, you do not wish to see me.” “Oh yes,” he said. “I do.”

So Krishna turned his face and showed him the other face of God. I know what he must have felt—of course this is all an allegory—because I too saw my own Master in that way. He was going through the transformation in 1948/49, and I saw for one brief moment, the other side of the face of God in him. And it was so terrible—so awful—that I shuddered inside. And the next moment it was gone. He showed me for just an instant, the wholeness of That Which Is in the whole universe. But he had overcome. And he became one that was to be the guiding light of...
not only thousands, but of millions. And it is through his grace—through his teachings, through the things that he taught me, the techniques—that I went the way, and therefore I can tell you about the way.

He didn’t tell the way. Once, somebody said that they had gotten that the body was made in the form of a cross. And he was sitting at a table, and he took a fork and he made the cross—like that. And then he made the figure of a man on that cross, and he said, “That is Jesus, the son of man—the human ego. And we must go through the crucifixion in order to become the Christed One—the Son of God—to really realize who he was.” This man from India made that statement, that tremendously true statement about the Christ in every man.

**Master Suffered Much**

So he had it all. But he couldn’t teach it in the beginning because this was a totally orthodox Christian world, and they would not have accepted it. And in many cases they did not. As I’ve told some of you, they threw rotten eggs at him; they threw tomatoes at him. They jailed him for something he didn’t do. He wasn’t welcome in any motel or any hotel in the whole face of this earth. He had to stay at the homes of students, and he had to have a trailer—maybe it was the first one, I don’t know—built to hang on to the back of his car, so he would have a place to sleep and a cooking stove where he could cook his food. But look at it now: he has centers all over the world! And although the teachings are not in the pure form in which he gave them, nevertheless still his name, and the work which he did for God, is known to thousands.

What a tremendous privilege, a tremendous opportunity, is given to every man to find his Christhood, to actually go on the Journey of the Soul, and to put God first, not the little things—to stop bickering and quarrelling, and just start to repeat His Name. Repeat it until it turns into a thing of ecstasy.

The cross—the way of the cross—is the agony. But the result is the ecstasy. I think it was Irwin Shaw that wrote a book, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, and he wrote it about a very famous artist in Europe. And I thought, what a waste of title for something
like that, even as great as that artist was, because that title could be the most tremendous book to tell of the agony and the ecstasy of every soul on that soul’s journey to God. Because sometimes you are lifted up into the light and momentarily you taste the bliss of God. And that is His—what shall I say?—enticement to you, to come and experience the greater bliss.…

…Try it! There is nothing like it that you will ever reach out for in this life—that you will find, like this—when you come into contact with God-within-yourselves. Give up the things of the world. Be not like the man in this chapter who is constantly building new buildings to store his increased earthly treasures, which he has to leave behind him when he leaves this body—this house in which he dwells. Don’t forget that this is the house of the Lord. It is His house! And you must not desecrate it. You must keep it clean and polished up. And you must do the things that are necessary to fill it with the light and the power of the Christ-within-you.

Do you know how badly you are needed on this earth at this moment, not just as human beings in the ego sense, but as God’s emissaries, God’s light, His life, the ones that should go out and spread His truth, His word, the Gospel, which is “God’s spell?” Put that spell upon all whom you meet! Put the spell of Christ on them, but put it in the universal sense, not in the historical sense. Because if you see Him as the universal Christ, then history will automatically take care of itself because man must be lifted up again out of the tremendous dungeon in which he has placed himself.

Man constantly fears hell, and yet he makes his own hell by his own decisions, his own actions, every day of his life. And when once you have put your feet on the path, believe me you cannot turn back because the road folds up behind you. And if you were to go back, you would have yourself a living hell because you would feel guilty; you would feel unfulfilled. You would feel totally different—believe me—than when you have your face turned toward God and your eyes lifted toward the hills of your own being.

When Christ went up into the mountain, he was talking about
the mountain of consciousness within you. It is indeed a high mountain. And he climbed to the utmost peak and he gave the Sermon on the Mount, and that sermon has come down for two thousand years, to all mankind: the dos and the don’ts, the Beatitudes, all the rest of it. It’s beautiful! It’s beautiful.

When you think of what you go through every day, the guilt that you build up because you do things that you know are not right in God—my God, what a debt you’re going to have to pay when that final moment comes when you are to be judged of God! And it will come to every man at some time or other. And the more you build up, the more you’re going to have to face! The greater is going to be the crucifixion, the greater the trouble—the suffering, the torture, the agony of the soul—because God’s will shall be done, believe me.

All Should Become Ministers of God

So make yourselves—all of you—candles and light that candle for God. And then take that candle and shine forth, and go forth and spread His word to all the people. But before you can be a teacher, you have to have found it within yourself. To get up before a congregation of people, or an audience, and speak to them about God is not an easy thing if you have not experienced it. And many times, many beautiful things will come out of you if you have at least partially surrendered yourself to God. But don’t develop any big heads about it. Don’t get a human-ego sense of “I am great” because as I’ve told you a million times, each and every one of us is nothing. As Christ said, I of myself am nothing. It is my Father who doeth the works. And it is God-in-you who gives you the ideas, who gives you the intelligence, who gives you the power, the strength, the desire, the incentive—the everything—to do whatever you do in this world.

You should all become ministers of God! Don’t go out and ring doorbells. We don’t have any pamphlets. But by your very being! And whenever you have a crack open in a door, then push it a little wider and offer whatever you have to somebody who is ready for that drink of spirit. But don’t ever coerce or push anybody; because if you do, they will run from you with fear, or they will stand and they will fight you. And some people fight
even if you don’t force them because they are so imbued with the idea that what they have is totally right, that they will change a world in order to prove it. They would even kill you, and that is really something when you think of it. And much of it has happened in the Christian faith—that they will kill for God.

The things to destroy—the things to kill—are the things of your own senses, the things which lead you astray, and make you apart from God. Now, you have to use your senses to live in a human body, but they can be purified. You can become master of yourself. Remember that all who believed in him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God—to all! He didn’t say, “I am the only one.” No place can you find in the Gospels where Jesus made that statement. True, he said, I am the Christ. But He didn’t say, “I am the only one.”

A disciple can never become greater than the master, but the disciple can become as great as the master. And then there is rejoicing in heaven because the master has led that one to the sanctuary of his own soul. And he is lifted up. And they embrace each other forevermore, equal in immortality.

Some of you say—many of you have said to me—“I can’t bear the thought of when you will leave this body.” The time has to come sometime, you know. But my Spirit is the Spirit of God, even as yours is. And so I can say to you, like the Christ: Lo, I am with you always because His Spirit, which is my own—and yours—is within you. And who knows? And I would hate to think that you would destroy yourself—that you would go backwards. I would like to think that you, like I did when I had the tremendous grief of losing my own Guru—do everything in the world, turn it upside down—to show my love for him, to put forth the truth of his teachings. And I went through plenty, believe me, and I am still going through it to this day because I am still getting repercussions because of the fact that I fought for the truth which he came to give. But it doesn’t matter to me because I still stand on his instructions to me, not that of an organization.

I stand on the instructions of God and my own Guru. And I have full license, full freedom, to teach from that which I myself have experienced. So what do I need to fear? Nothing. Yet con-
stantly, no matter where I go, I have this little thorn in the side. It doesn’t matter, only to those who do it, because they are the ones that are going to have to one day pay for it.

We build karma that we know not of sometimes, and that is too bad. And only when we are in the midst of the tremendous experience that each soul must go through, do we wish to God that we hadn’t done some of the things that we have. But yet that too was God because life is a growing experience, and God is all of life. And it is through the mistakes that we make that we finally are lifted up. We learn our lessons.

Knowledge comes through suffering, not through anything else. And when you have suffered sufficiently and gone into the heaven of your own being, you will find that everything that I tell you is true. Many of you have experienced it. You have tasted of it.

**The Three Wise Men or Three Gunas**

There is a story told about a man who went into the forest one day, and he was accosted and overcome by three robbers, and one of them bound him with a rope. Another had a knife and was going to kill him. But the third one pleaded with the other two to release him. So finally they did. And the third one led him to the edge of the forest and he said, “I cannot go with you any further. You must go on your way alone.”

Now, these are the three Wise Men, or the three Gunas, as the Hindus call them: *Rajas, Tamas* and *Satwa*. Rajas is the one that wants to keep you bound to the things of the senses. Tamas is the one who keeps you in a state of unrest, of indecision, of not knowing where you want to go. It’s a stupor, a darkness and you go exactly no place. But Satwa is that one which represents the incense of the soul that comes to lead you to the boundary line beyond which he cannot go because he is a part of duality. And he knows that he and the other two robbers must give their gifts and lay them at the feet of the Christ.

But that soul who can go beyond the boundary, will go into the Kingdom of Heaven within his own being, and find there his true Self, the Christ who is the Son of God. And you are That.
The Goal of our Life-Adventure

...True yogis are able to control the mind under all circumstances. When that perfection is reached, you are free. Then you know life is a divine adventure. Jesus and other great souls have proved this...

...You will finish this life-adventure only when you conquer its dangers by your will power and mind power, as did the Great Ones. Then you will look back and say: “Lord, it was a pretty bad experience. I came near failing, but now I am in the safety of Your presence forever.”

...He is the only harbor of safety from the storms of this world. “Take shelter in Him with all the eagerness of thy heart. By His grace thou shalt obtain the utmost peace and the Eternal Shelter.” In Him I have found the joy of my life, the indescribable blessedness of my existence, the wonderful realization of His everywhere-ness right within me.

– Paramhansa Yogananda
– from the booklet, Living Fearlessly published by SRF

* Quoted from Bhagavad Gita XV11:62
Sheela Trikannad - In Memoriam

Pronams and Hari Om to our dear friend, Sheela Trikannad who left the body on October 1, 2015 in Pune, India after many years of physical suffering and joined her beloved husband, Premananand, grandson of Papa Ramdas.

Some of our group came to know Prem & Sheela through Marge Ranney when they were living in San Diego. Every Thursday night they hosted a bhajan/kirtan in their home. Prem would sing and play the harmonium, Sheela would accompany him with cymbals and vocal backup and their son Deepak would be on tablas. (Many of you have heard recordings of their chants to God and they are available on the C&L website.) A large group of devotees would show up every week—locals from the Indian community, Americans who followed Eastern teachings, visiting swamis and gurus and even musicians like Ravi Shankar. Sheela served all alike with her loving smile, warm hospitality, delicious food and lodgings for visitors. She was a stellar example of one who sees “the guest as God.”

Some of us were also fortunate to spend time with them at Anandashram. They are missed on both sides of the world.—C.K.

Sheela had a wonderful sense of humor, and was totally devoted to Prem, Papa, Mataji and Swamiji. I always remember her saying, as she lovingly looked upon her husband, Prem, “The only thing harder than being a saint is living with one!” I am sure that they were all there for her transition into her new life, now free in joyful Spirit. Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram!

– Yogacharya David
Two Christmas Stories

The Cherry Tree

On their way to Bethlehem to pay taxes, Mary asked Joseph to pluck her some cherries from a tree which miraculously bloomed and bore fruit before their eyes. Weary from the journey, and anxious to get to the city in time, Joseph refused. Again Mary begged for some cherries—and the tree bent down its branches so that she could pluck the fruit.

And then Joseph understood the meaning of the miracle. The baby which Mary was soon to bear was indeed the Son of God. Filled with awe and remorse, Joseph reverently sank to his knees.

From *The Golden book of Christmas Tales: Legends from many lands* by James and Lillian Lewicki. Published 1952
The Annunciation

The Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Luke 1:28

It was on such a day and in such an hour that the first sign had come. It was back in Galilee, in the city called Nazareth. The room had seemed stiller than usual, almost too still. She knew that if she held her breath, she would hear the silence. It was as if the silence wanted her to listen. Then it spoke. It spoke with a rustling of wings and a flashing of light too brilliant to bear. When she opened her eyes, she saw the presence in the room, and a voice, like a crystal speaking, turned the silence into sound.

“Hail,” said the angel, “hail, favored of women. Blessed art thou, for the Lord is with thee.”

The girl was frightened. She was a virgin espoused to a man of the house of David, and she was troubled at the salutation, uncertain of what it might mean.

The angel reassured her. “Fear not,” he said. “Thou hast found favor with God, and thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son. And he shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And of the kingdom there shall be no end.”

“But,” she said, without lifting her eyes from the ground, “how can that be?”

She could not remember everything the angel had said; even then, she had not understood all of it. But his presence was promise and assurance, and she ceased to trouble about the meaning of the words. Holiness surrounded her while he spoke of the holy things of the spirit; fear departed, and comfort filled her heart as he told her that with God nothing is impossible. Then the wings swept by her, the light dimmed, and she was again alone.

From The Second Christmas by Louis Untermeyer. Published 1961. Mother referenced this book in one of her talks. We all know the Christmas story but each retelling can evoke the sacred, deepen the understanding and move the soul.
The Cross and The Lotus Journal

Pilgrimage to Assisi

By Wendy Pritchard

O Signore, fa di me uno strumento della tua Pace

It is Friday, the 28th of August, and I am in Assisi. As my travelling buddy, Anne, would say, “Pinch me!” After a long journey involving a flight from Heathrow and a train from Rome, both of which we almost missed, we are here and I find myself wondering if the pilgrims of the Middle Ages encountered similar obstacles.

Am I a pilgrim? I am certainly “one who travels to a sacred place.” (Webster’s) I feel full of anticipation and excitement to be here after so many years of dreaming about it.

This hilltop village in Umbria used to be called Ascesi—to ascend, and ascend we do in our taxi that takes us to the Convent of the Sisters of Beata Angelina where we will stay for two nights. I feel immediately at home here with these welcoming sisters and before long I am trying out my limited Italian as they do not speak English. (Later on they suggest that I speak with them in French!)

Our bedroom window overlooks the Basilica of St. Francis, said to be the most beautiful church in the
world. There are about 60 young people in the courtyard milling around and I begin to wonder what it is about St. Francis that draws us here.

Being here on this enchanted cobbled hilltop in the midst of Giotto paintings, I am reminded that St. Francis was a man of peace. For him it was the highest aspiration at the centre of his life. For him all persons were brothers and sisters no matter their religion, culture, tradition or nationality. Standing up for this principle at a time when anyone who was anyone was going off to fight in the Crusades might have been seen as a little odd. In his day St. Francis was odd, living simply, returning his wealth to his rich father, even taking off all his clothes publically and running off to be with the lepers. The Giotto paintings in the Basilica depict the various stages in the life of the Saint and alongside them we see depictions of the life of Christ.

Back in Canada I wonder why I felt so compelled to go to Assisi. I think it is an honor to be reminded of someone for whom following the footsteps of Christ was the norm that determined every choice of his life.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Neem Karoli Baba and some of his devotees have gone to the Kumbha Mela*. Some women (referred to as “mothers”) were brought there to assist in the bhandara (preparing food for prasad.) In the passage below the saint is responding to the author’s comment about how dedicated and selfless the mothers were in their work.

“Dada is right, seva (service) should be like this. Everyone must learn by seeing them at work. These mothers have come to the mela, leaving their households behind, and coming here they have been trapped in household work again. Where is their freedom from household work?”

Everyone heard him with full attention. Many of the mothers felt that they were receiving so much for the little work they were doing for Babaji’s bhandara. One of the old mothers was much moved and with difficulty she said, “Baba, we are not so very fortunate. We do not have any money, nor are we free from our own household work. There is so much desire to visit the places of pilgrimage, but we cannot go anywhere. Now God is so very gracious to us that he has drawn us here to Prayag, the crown of the pilgrimage centers, on this sacred occasion of the Kumbha, and has made all necessary arrangements for our stay. People go for baths in the Ganges in the morning. They purify themselves washing and cleaning in the river and after puja they leave Ganga Ma there. But Ganga Ma is exceedingly kind to us. After taking our bath and performing our ablutions and purifying ourselves early in the morning, we do not have to get away from Gangaji. We sit on her lap and do our worship for the whole day.
and offer water for her. Baba, we cannot see anyone as fortunate as we are. All we know is that you are our God, who has fulfilled all our desires and expectations.”

These were not her feelings alone, but it was actually the expression of everyone sitting there. Babaji looked at me and then said, “How very pure and supreme is their love of God. How deep is their faith. They see the grace of God in everything. These are the people who actually get the darshan of the sacred pilgrimage centers. Anyone may go to any place of pilgrimage, but only those rare ones who have real faith and devotion to God get the real darshan.”

Looking at Shukla, Babaji asked him what he thought of the mothers’ faith in God. Shukla said that he had developed great admiration for these mothers since he started helping them in their work. Babji then looked at me and said, “Shukla himself is a great bhakta. It is good to be a lover of God, but one must not neglect one’s duty to others. These mothers work for the whole day, but do not forget their God. They see God in their work and that is why they do their work so well.”

* Kumbha Mela: A major Hindu pilgrimage for the purpose of gathering to bathe in a sacred river. It is held every third year in one of four locations: Haridwar (Ganges) Allahabad-Prayaga (Yamuna & Saraswati), Nashik (Godawari) and Ujjain (Shipra.)

The soul that is full of wisdom
Is saturated with the spray of
A bubbling fountain—God himself.

— Hildegard of Bingen (1098 - 1179)
Memories of Mother  
Pageant of the Century  
By Rebecca Barnowe

“
To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.” – Ecclesiastes 3

Mother Hamilton returned to the Pacific Northwest to take up her Ministry at a new exalted level in 1964. The product of two fully realized Masters—her beloved Paramhansa Yogananda whom she had met in Seattle in 1925; and the fully illumined Master, Papa Ramdas from Anandashram whom she also met in Seattle in 1954, two years after Yogananda’s Mahasamadhi in 1952. Each in turn were to endow Mother with a tremendous universal vision, and purity of intent, straight from God.

Mother had already raised all three of her children who had been born in Seattle. She had lectured in New York City, Portland, and Canada. Made a Minister and Center Leader by Yogananda in the late 1940s, in 1951 he bestowed on Mother the formal title of Yogacharya (meaning Master of Yoga). She was the only woman in his Self-Realization Fellowship to whom he had given this distinction.

Having toured the world and the United States with her husband, Rev. Ralph B. Hamilton, Mother continually ascended into higher and higher mystical states. By 1963 when Papa Ramdas left his body in Mahasamadhi, Mother was continually experiencing an inexpressible communion with God. Her freedom in Spirit knew no bounds.

The following words describe Mother’s Services in 1964 from an eye-witness perspective of a new devotee, completely “unfamiliar” with this path. I was only thirteen years old in 1964, when these enigmatic events occurred. An in-born longing, arching over eternity, was leading me irrevocably to God this exact year. When meeting Mother Hamilton for the first time days before, I crossed an almighty threshold. My life would never again be the same as long as I lived.

Within a short time after first meeting Mother, my own mother Bonnie, my sister Barbara Lutz (who had been receiving private sessions with Mother because Mother was not yet coming-out of certain states enough to give public services) were all invited to attend a small gathering of students (disciples) in a pri-
vate home owned by Phil and Jean Anderson, located somewhere along Lake Washington. I remember the lovely landscaping leading to their entranceway.

As the door opened a vibration of great peace and tranquility immediately banished all fear. Entering a softly lit living room we each occupied a seat on comfortable folding chairs. There were about twenty—mostly adults over forty years—seated in total silence. Not one movement by any who were present. An anticipatory quiet held the promise that something very mysterious and most sacred was about to unfold.

Father Hamilton was seated near the front of the room. I had been told in advance that he would be there. He was tall and solid looking, seemed discriminating and patient.

Mother entered the room in a sublime state. She was enfolded in an ethereal glow, yet her feet were firmly planted in the here and now. How intriguing and completely lovely she was! I would never fail to be astonished by her Presence each time we met! She was wearing a simple white robe, yet it moved the whole earth off its axis to behold her in person every time!

One could sense that enormous revelations had passed through her form, leaving her face luminous and transparent. Without doubt, Mother radiated God’s most sacred Light, straight from heaven, and her services were transformative at every level.

Mother’s first devotee, my brother-in-law, Herlwyn was always in attendance, along with her loyal devotee, Win Smith. Mother’s three grown children were also there most times for years: Barbara, Billie, and Gari, as well as their spouses, lovingly in awe over the divine stature God was bringing into splendiferous bloom in their mother. (To all present she was truly seen as the Divine Mother.)
Her eldest daughter, Barbara played the harmonium at every service for many years, singing her chants, “Songs to the Infinite” in blissful abandon. The music enhanced Mother’s ineffable Presence, her passionate cadences infusing the very air with the Infinite. Whoever was led to attend received the most subtle vibrations, in rapt attention, during every service, as Mother’s concentrated deliveries uplifted each into the most rarefied states of Cosmic Consciousness. There was no doubting that Christ Consciousness was totally manifesting in the body of this illumined Master whose whole countenance was lit from within, by God’s heavenly Light!

Mother read from the Bible at every service. Her deep love of the Christ was palpable. Infused with such a Living Presence and intimate comprehension of each scriptural passage, one felt complete reverence hung on each syllable she uttered. With such a powerful Light shining brilliantly forth from her whole body and face—filling the room and everyone in it, no person could ever assault this Living Air, by speaking afterwards… overflowing with the Immortal Presence of God each one there, immovable from stem-to-stern!

O how Mother poured forth the Eternal Magnitude of God, to bring each person present, into the highest amplitude of their natural divine potential. Mother always enfolded every person in her arms, after every service, with hugs that healed life-times of loneliness. All were inebriated by her Cosmic Love, Eternal Wisdom and Bliss, sent forth to transform consciousness into a heaven on earth.

Most people there I did not know for years, for “visiting” was not indulged in—only attunement silently to our Guru! Such an alchemy was clearly heaven-sent, and cherished in earnest as the “pearl of greatest price”—a sample of what lay ahead, for those who attuned within to God.

Much later Mother began opening up the downstairs rooms for questions and answers after services, even serving juice and cookies. But nothing compared to the *Amrita* Mother exuded in vibration and splendor upstairs in those early years.
Loon Lake Retreat—September 2015

I didn’t know at the time the topic of “Endings” would lead to the end of one phase of my life and the beginning of new one. David’s teaching really helped us all see how these transitions are part of God’s love and His plan to come back home to Him. Joy expressed her experience about the topic in a poem which resonated with all in attendance (see following page.) – Carla H.

Above: Group photo at Loon Lake

Bruce & Janice Stevenson (above) celebrated their 40th anniversary at Loon Lake with cake and a photo of their wedding ceremony performed by Mother. (right)
The Transformation
by Joy Putnam

Written at the September Loon Lake Retreat, 2015

The end days of the ego
the separate I
the fear, the walls, the pleaser
the yourself, myself, proving self
I doing it

Ruthlessly rooting out attachments

No more significance for being the best
at this or that, “being spiritual”…
No more getting certainty from bank accounts,
things I own, relationships, what I know…
No more filling up with food or sugar for comfort
or distracting with TV or the next project

Letting go of doing, doing, doing
-going, going, going

The days of worrying what a person is thinking
(and are they pleased with me, will they like me)
are over

No more “should-ing”
I should do this
I should give that
I should be this way
Life or people should be that way
No more learning, workshops, programs, because I’m not feeling smart enough, don’t know enough, not rich enough, don’t have enough

No more trying to be something, prove something, trying to look good
No more fear of separation, the great lie
No more fear of not being understood
No more fear of rejection, not being liked

No more mind trying to figure it all out—how to be liked, loved, good enough

Nothing is about me

It’s a new day, a new beginning!
All walls are coming down!
The veil is being lifted!

Carla & Joy at the retreat
Ordination of Peter Schultz

By Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

Part of going on this pilgrimage and knowing this Work was changing was a clear sense that new ministers of God would be coming forward; seeds being cast to the wind. Before leaving I ordained Peter Schultz as a minister in the exalted Kriya Yoga tradition—from Jesus and Babaji to Paramhansa Yogananda and Mother Hamilton.

I remember when Mother came back from Alaska in the mid-1970s; she had given Kriya Initiation to a group there. Mother talked a lot about a young devotee she initiated there that she very impressed with; his name was Peter Schultz. For many years we knew Peter mostly from Mother’s stories, as he lived in Alaska and then was going to school in southern Oregon.

Finally we got to know Peter in person and discovered him to be gregarious, sometimes outlandish and always fun and interesting. However, the most outstanding feature of Peter was his love and devotion for God and Guru. There is no such thing as a “spiritual personality;” God-realized souls have come in all shapes and personalities. As Master once said, you cannot have Yogananda-realization, you can only get your own God-realization; besides I killed that fellow (Yogananda) long ago!”

When Peter and Larry went to Anandashram Swami Satchidananda “rolled out the red carpet” for Peter and treated him with all love and solicitude. Having the spontaneous love of fully realized masters is a sign of being a special soul, and Peter is such a one. Peter joins Larry Koler and Jill Hough as ministers of God who can perform ceremonies such as marriages, funerals and baptisms; they are also available for spiritual counseling.

As Mother said, she did not start out as a minister being perfect in God, but being a minister helped her to achieve spiritual realization. Please join with me in congratulating Peter in his ordination and support him in doing God’s work.
There were two holy ceremonies at the home of Yogacharya David and Carla on the weekend of Sept. 12/13. David had performed the marriage of devotees Terry Ahern and Rick Bohr on the Saturday and during the service on Sunday he reviewed their vows in front of the gathering of devotees and then ordained Peter Schultz as a new Minister. Devotees celebrated the two occasions during a potluck lunch and many were saying their goodbyes too—to David and Carla who were leaving soon after on their USA pilgrimage.
Yoga and Health
Trikonasana (Triangle pose)

By Briana Jones

I find in this pose a wonderful sense of expansion and opening, which is a positive way to balance the darkness of winter and to greet the new year. Find your equilibrium in this interesting body-shape and allow your inner Light to shine out your very fingertips!

**Props:** Even, firm floor, yoga mat, yoga block optional.

**Practice:** Begin standing in mountain pose. Step your feet wide—four feet apart or more. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees and your left foot in about 60 degrees. Allow your hips to open to the side naturally. Spread your arms wide and then bring your left hand to your left hip. Before continuing, imagine you are in-between two panes of glass. Your body must stay flat and aligned to the side within these panes.

On an inhalation, tilt your left hip out to the left side and reach
your right arm out and over the right leg with the torso following, side bending as if pouring out from a tea kettle. Take the torso only as far as it can go while still maintaining stacked hips, shoulders and a long spine within the horizontal plane. Rest your right hand either on the right thigh, shin, block, ankle, or if you are very flexible, on the floor along the outside of the right foot. If you feel your left hip and right shoulder rolling toward the floor, then you have gone too far with your hand. Draw the right hip under and lengthen the spine. Breathe deeply here, and when you are ready, extend the left arm straight up from the shoulder. If it is comfortable, turn your gaze to look up at the hand.

Feel the surfaces of your feet grounding into the earth while you draw up energy through your strong legs. Let the breath be free in the belly. Feel an inner radiance flowing out from your belly, heart and through your fingertips. Rejoice in the Light, given and received. When you are finished, ground into your feet and press yourself up to a vertical spine. Release the arms down and turn both feet parallel. Stand still and sense any changes before switching to the other side.

**Benefits:** Releases the hips, legs, and spinal column. Opens and stretches the side body. Clears out old emotions and creates confidence and a positive outlook through expansion. Blessings of the Christ Light to all. Namaste.

Lillian is demonstrating how to use a block
Rink Tum Diddy

Tomato soup: 1 cup canned
Paprika: 1/8 teaspoon
Onions: 2 tablespoons chopped
Butter: 3 tablespoons
Catsup: 3 tablespoons
Egg: 1, beaten
Toast: 4 pieces whole-wheat
Cheese: 1/2 cup grated

Cook onions in butter, add other ingredients except egg, and cook in top of double boiler until cheese is thoroughly melted and blended. Stir in beaten egg and serve on buttered whole wheat toast.

Comments from our C&L chef, Angela Victory

Right off the bat this sounds like something Santa’s elves would eat—imagining those hungry elves is perfect for the child-like mind. Lately, the 3 of us have been coming together on the weekends to cook as a family, each involved in the preparation rather than a cook, the cleaner and the eaters. It’s comforting and that brings us closer to God. God’s way is beautiful through meal time: sitting around the antique table that was my mom & dad’s for many years, talking about our day, sharing food. (I wonder if we can get Santa to take some God-infused to-go containers filled with Rink Tum Diddy for the exhausted elves.)
## Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>Hanukkah (sundown)–ends sundown on Dec. 14, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 21</td>
<td>Winter Solstice (8:49 p.m. PST)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 25</td>
<td>Christmas Day, Mother Hamilton’s Birthday (1904)</td>
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<td>Dec. 27</td>
<td>Swami Ramdas’ Sannyas Day (1922)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 5</td>
<td>Master’s Birthday (1893)</td>
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<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Mother Hamilton’s Mahasamadhi (1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday (First day of Lent)</td>
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<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Yogacharya David’s Birthday (1954)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>Paramhansa Yogananda’s Mahasamadhi (1952)</td>
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<td>Mar. 9</td>
<td>Swami Sri Yukteswar’s Mahasamadhi (1936)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 19</td>
<td>Spring Equinox (9:31 p.m. PDT)</td>
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<td>Mar. 27</td>
<td>Easter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 22</td>
<td>Swami Ramdas’ Birthday (1884)</td>
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Vicissitudes, pain and disappointments are part of living in this body and this world. What is it then that makes life worth living? It is God-experience, which is transcendent to all such changes. From our first breath to our last (and beyond), it is only God who is always with us and very desirous to give us peace, love and joy; all is available for our sincere asking. Pray deeply to Him now, and experience that eternal all-powerful Presence residing within you.

Yogacharya David Hickenbottom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May this Christmas and New Year time fill you with the adamantine determination to improve yourself and others as Christ would wish you to do to usher in paradise on earth.</th>
<th>The word Deepavali should be a magic word that should bring to our hearts the eternal Light that never fades, the eternal Joy that never fails, the eternal Peace that never wanes.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paramhansa Yogananda</td>
<td>Swami Ramdas</td>
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