



Vedanta Society of Toronto

(Ramakrishna Mission)

120 Emmett Ave. Toronto, ON M6M 2E6 CANADA

Tel.: 416-240-7262 Email: info@vedantatoronto.ca Website: www.vedantatoronto.ca

Newsletter June 2016

WORDS TO INSPIRE

"It will be sufficient for the youngsters who come here if they know only two things. If they know these, they will not have to practise much discipline and austerity. First, who I am, and second, who they are."

-Sri Ramakrishna

Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "Eat as much as you like during the day, but eat sparingly at night."

Swami Brahmananda, the eminent disciple of the Master, explains the meaning of these words: The idea is that the full meal taken at noon will be easily digested, and if you eat lightly at night, your body will remain light and you can easily concentrate the mind. A heavy meal at night produces laziness and sleep. How do you want to spend the night - in sleep or in meditation? People are generally busy during the day, so it is difficult to still the restless mind at that time. But at night nature becomes calm and all creatures go to sleep. This, therefore, is the best time for meditation. Concentration becomes easily intensified in the quiet hours of the night.... The glutton who has no restraint over his palate injures his body and mind. Whenever he gets some choice food, he overeats and then suffers from breathing difficulty. His whole energy is spent in digesting that food, and if he cannot digest it, he falls ill. Foods like onion, garlic, and chili excite the body and mind so much that later one finds it extremely difficult to bring the system under control. I think that those who want to lead a spiritual life should pay special attention to what they eat and drink. Don't overeat. Eat that food which is nutritious, easily digested and not exciting. Avoid stimulating food because it is injurious, and also avoid that food which increases lethargy (tamas). What is the purpose of food? To maintain good health and one needs good health for God-realization.

Discrimination with regard to food and moderation in eating are very much connected with mastery over the senses.

As Swami Turiyananda, another disciple of the Master, observes:

All trouble is over if the palate and the sex impulse are conquered. When Sri Chaitanya went to Keshava Bharati for initiation into sannyasa, the latter remarked, "You are in the bloom of youth and so surpassingly handsome. Who will be bold enough to initiate you into sannyasa?" Sri Chaitanya replied, "Sir, you usually examine an aspirant before conferring sannyasa on him. If you find me qualified, you will naturally be inclined to initiate me also. So please examine me and see if I am fit for it." Bharati said to Sri Chaitanya, "Put out your tongue." On the disciple's putting out his tongue, the guru put some sugar on it. The sugar was left as it was, without being moistened in the least, and was scattered in the air the moment it was blown out. There was no more need to examine the sexual instinct. "A man who has controlled all other senses except the palate is not to be considered a master of his senses. When the hankering of the palate is controlled, everything else is controlled" (Bhagavata, 11.8.21)....Unless the senses are brought under control there cannot be any spiritual progress. So the Bhagavad Gita repeatedly says: "Therefore, O best of the Bharatas, control thou the senses first, and thereby kill this sinful propensity of lust, which destroys one's Knowledge and Realization."

From the book '*Meditation & Its Practices*'
by Sw. Adiswarananda...Pg 224-225

IMPORTANT NOTE

Vedanta Society will be closed from May 15 to September 15, 2016 for Renovation Project Phase-2. During this period no activities will be conducted. Members and Devotees are requested to call the following numbers for any further information regarding the Society's activities:

416-240-7262 or 647-990-1418 or 416-569-9401 or 905-799-0023.

Swami Sadananda

In the latter half of 1888, as a wandering monk, Swami Vivekananda, got down on Hathras Railway station, with an uncertain program about where he would proceed next. The station-master happened to see this monk, whose bright eyes and happy countenance attracted him. 'Well Swamiji', he said, 'why are you sitting here? Won't you go further? Would you like to have a smoke?' 'Yes, if you offer one', said Swamiji, in a detached and calm tone. Swamiji's powerful and handsome personality attracted him. 'Ah! I have never before come across such a wonderful monk.' He further enquired, 'Well, sir, you seem to be hungry. Will you please come with me to my house? I stay there alone.' 'Well, let's go.' On reaching his house the monk asked, 'Well, how are you going to entertain your guest?' In reply, his host quoted a Persian verse which meant, 'Oh! Beloved, you have come to my house. I shall prepare the most delicious dish for you with my heart's blood.' This station-master was Sharatchandra Gupta, who later became Swamiji's first disciple under the name Swami Sadananda, also known in the Order as 'Gupta Maharaj'. He was born on January 6, 1865 at Jaunpur, near Varanasi. His elder brother, Adharchandra Gupta, also renounced the world and became a sannyasi. Now Swamiji, being a wandering monk, could not stay at one place for long. Sharat, then humbly asked Swamiji to make him his disciple. Seeing his determination Swamiji asked Sharat, 'Since, you want to follow me, can you take my begging-bowl and beg our food from the porters of the station.' Immediately Sharat went to beg from his own subordinates and offered that to Swamiji, who heartedly blessed him and accepted him as his disciple. Sharat resigned his job, dyed few clothes ochre, and accompanied Swamiji as a monk. Swamiji initiated him into monastic vows and gave him the name Sadananda. While traversing the rugged mountain paths in the Himalayas, Sharat was carrying a bundle containing his few belongings including his heavy shoes, and found it difficult to keep up pace with Swamiji. Seeing his miserable plight, Swamiji took the bundle and placed it on his own head. Sadananda would recall later, this incident with tearful eyes, and would say proudly, 'Was it for nothing that I accepted Swamiji as my guru? I was born only to serve Swamiji and have no other desire. Had he (Swamiji) not been so great, would I have accepted him as my guru?'

Sadananda recalled, 'Once, when we were moving through the jungle, we came across some bleached human bones, with pieces of rotting ochre cloth lying here and there. Pointing to them, Swamiji said, 'See, a tiger had devoured a monk here. Are you afraid?' I promptly replied, 'Not with you, Swamiji!' Swamiji returned to Calcutta in October 1898. from the West. When plague relief work started on March 31, 1899, the people of Calcutta received a share of Swamiji's boundless love for humanity through Sadananda. The rich left the city in great panic; the helpless masses cursed their fate, and

the unfortunate victims of the disease awaited death. In this city of despair, Sadananda presented a picture of hope and fearlessness, whose very presence had a calming effect on the panic-stricken people. Due to the hard work of Sadananda and Sister Nivedita, the plague manifesto drafted by Swamiji in Bengali and Hindi, reached the masses. There were hardly any sweepers to clean the garbage that had piled up in the slums of Calcutta. So Sadananda himself, with a broomstick in his hand, used to go about cleaning the slums and lanes of the city. Day after day, he cleaned the foul-smelling places from which even the scavengers shied away. Seeing his example, many young men came forward as volunteers to help in the work. Sadananda used to rush to the bedside of any plague victim he heard of, and forgetting, food and sleep, would engage himself in his service. The educated citizens of Calcutta were speechless on seeing his service. When plague broke out in Bhagalpur in 1904, again Sadananda was the guiding hand behind the relief operations, conducted by the Ramakrishna mission. Once when he was staying at a charitable boarding-house, he woke up to find that he had been sleeping next to a leper. He quickly left the place out of fear and apprehension. However he remembered Swamiji's words of worshipping God in human form. He immediately returned back and served the leper with great affection for a few days. But due to overwork, his health broke down. A touching incident illustrates Sadananda's love and faith in his Master, even during his final days. In 1911, Swamiji's Complete Works were then being published from Mayavati. The manuscripts were sent to Sadananda, from time to time, and he would read them with great reverence. By this time he was completely bedridden and could not even get up to answer the call of nature. For this reason, pieces of paper used to be spread under his bedsheets. One day he asked his attendant what paper was being used for this purpose. When he was informed that old newspapers were being used, he said with great consternation: 'No, no, please do not use newspapers. Goddess Saraswati herself resides in those. They may even contain articles on other gods and goddesses. By spreading this kind of paper you are making me guilty of an offence.' His attendant then asked, 'But then Goddess Saraswati resides in all paper with writing, so which paper should I use?' With tears in his eyes, Sadananda immediately replied: 'Use those papers on which Swamiji's words are printed. I am his son; he will surely not take any offence at anything I do. He can forgive all my faults. He is my father, my mother, my guru-in fact, my all in all.' Finally, on February 18, 1911, at about 3p.m., Sadananda's gaze became fixed on the picture of Swamiji. Then he uttered his beloved Master's name three times – 'Swamiji, Swamiji, Swamiji' – and became united with him forever.

Extracted from the book: '*Monastic Disciples of Swami Vivekananda*'...by Swami Abjajananda



***Vivekananda Dinner 2016 ***

Vedanta Society of Toronto

Saturday, June 11, 2016, 5:30 pm.

at Bombay Palace Banquet Hall

200 Advance Blvd. Brampton, Ontario. L6T 4V4 Canada - (905) 799-9777



- ❖ **Chief Guest** : REV. SWAMI ATMAGHANANANDA,
President, Ramakrishna Math, Kanchipuram, TN - India
- ❖ **Keynote speaker** : PROF. MANJUL BHARGAVA, Princeton University
(Recipient of 2014 Fields Medal)
- ❖ **Classical Dance by** : SANJUKTA BANERJEE & Saugandhikam Dance Academy
- ❖ **Flute Recital by** : DEEP GANGULY
- ❖ **Music Ensemble** : VARAGUNAN MAHADEVAN

- Back colour Page : \$5,000 Includes 4 Complimentary tickets
- Back Inside colour page : \$4,000 includes 3 complimentary tickets
- Full page colour inside : \$2,000
- Full page B/W inside : \$1,000
- Half page B/W : \$500
- Quarter page B/W : \$300

Tickets are available : \$120, \$110, \$100

For details Contact :

Menaka Rajasingham - 416-444-4952

Jitendra Sheshgiri - 647-300-2661

Chitra Ghosh - 905-799-0023

Indrani Sanyal - 647-308-8325

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There Is No Higher Virtue Than Charity – Swami Vivekananda

Vedanta Society of Toronto

2016 Annual Summer Retreat **REGISTRATION FORM**

This year, the Vedanta Society will hold its Annual Summer Retreat only on **Saturday, June 18**. The Retreat will be conducted by **SWAMI TATTWAMAYANANDA**, Head of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, SAN FRANCISCO and **SWAMI ATMAGHANANANDA**, Head, Ramakrishna Math, Kanchipuram, INDIA. The program will take place at **Professor's Lake Recreation Centre, 1660 North Park Drive, Brampton** ON L6S 5S8. The Subject of this year's Retreat is 'The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna-Chapter 1: **Master and Disciple**'.

The program will begin in the morning at 9:00 am and will conclude at 4 pm

The registration fee is kept at **\$60.00** to meet the expenses for food, guest Swamis airfare and rent for the Venue.

Lunch, Tea/Coffee and Snacks will be provided. All menu items will be vegetarian.

Please fill out the following form and mail it with your remittance to Vedanta Society of Toronto, 120 Emmett Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M6M 2E6.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Number of Participants:

_____ x \$60.00 = \$ _____

Attached is a cheque/Money Order made out to the "Vedanta Society of Toronto" towards the full amount of the Annual Retreat 2016.

Signature _____ Date _____

- 1. Please register now itself and return the above form as soon as possible as the capacity in the rented hall is limited. All forms will be processed on first-come / first-served basis. Registration will be accepted until the seats are available or until June 10, 2016**
2. If you have any questions regarding your registration or for any other information, please contact the Society at 647-990-1418 or at <info@vedantatoronto.ca>

IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THIS MONTH

VIVEKANANDA DINNER 2016 will be held at Bombay Palace, 200 Advance Boulevard, Brampton from 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm

ANNUAL RETREAT will be held on Saturday, June 18 from 9am to 4pm at Professor's Lake Recreation Centre, 1660 North Park Drive, Brampton, ON L6S 5S8.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Program detail	Date & Time	Venue Address
Guru Purnima	<u>July 19</u> 6:30 pm	Tagore Centre, 140 Millwick Drive, Toronto
Janmashtami	<u>Aug 25 at 6:30 pm</u>	To be announced
Seminar	<u>September 10</u> 9am to 4pm	To be announced

REGULAR PROGRAMMES

SCRIPTURE CLASS: Every Friday at 7:30 pm, following the regular evening prayer at 6:00 pm.

VIGIL: A vigil consisting of japa and meditation is observed from 6:00am to 6:00pm. For the date of this month's vigil, please see the 'Calendar of Events' on the next page. *To participate, please call the Centre.*

RAM NAM: For the date and time of the monthly Ramnam, please see the 'Calendar of Events' on the next page.

INTERVIEWS/INSTRUCTION:

Swami Kripamayananda will be happy to give interviews to those interested in knowing more about Vedanta and meditation. Individual interviews are also given for spiritual instruction. Appointments for interviews should be made in advance with the Swami at 416-247262.

DAILY MEDITATION: Meditation is done at the Centre every morning from 6:00 am to 7:00 am. Devotional singing and meditation time in the evenings is from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

DAILY BREAD FOOD BANK: Many less fortunate families are dependent on the food bank for their daily nutrition. Please help us by contributing non-perishable food items that we may pass along to the Daily Bread Food Bank.

SOUP KITCHEN: The Soup is cooked at the Vedanta Society and offered serving meals at Syme Woolner Neighborhood & Family Centre, 2468 Eglinton Ave W, Unit 3, Toronto ON, M6M 5E2. Please contact the Centre, if you are interested in participating. ***Donations for the Soup Kitchen will be highly appreciated***

BOOK STORE: The Book Store is open after Sunday Services and special programs, and arrangements can be made by phone for weekday and Saturday visits. We carry selected titles from the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, as well as other Vedantic materials.

RENOVATION UPDATE

Contractor for the Phase-2 renovation has been selected and awarded through bidding process involving 5 Contractors. Packing and moving has begun. Permit is awaited from the City to begin work.

Vedanta Society of Toronto

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Minister and Teacher - Swami Kripamayananda, Ramakrishna Order of India

June 2016

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Friday	Saturday
VEDANTA SOCIETY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION			<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> 7:30pm No Scripture Class	<u>4</u>
<u>5</u> No Lecture	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> No Scripture Class	<u>11</u> VIVEKANANDA DINNER at Bombay Palace, Brampton at 5:30pm
<u>12</u> No Lecture	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> No Scripture Class	<u>18</u> 9am – 4pm ANNUAL RETREAT at Professor's Lake Recreation Centre, 1660 North Park Drive, Brampton
<u>19</u> No Lecture	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> No Scripture Class	<u>25</u>
<u>26</u> No Lecture	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>		

AN APPEAL FOR DONATION – ASHRAMA RENOVATION

Vedanta Society plans to start the Phase-2 Renovation Project in May 2016, which is estimated to cost \$1.4M. Members and Devotees are requested to come forward and donate generously for this purpose. The proposed Phase-2 includes : Prayer hall expansion, relocate the stairs for fire safety enhancement, Mezzanine floor expansion, Increased number of washrooms, New Lift for elder & physically challenged devotees, new flower room, new book store, new guest rooms for visiting Swamis, more multi-purpose meeting rooms (Vidya Mandir, spiritual discussions, library), Energy efficient kitchens with better equipment and washing facilities, Energy efficient lighting, better heating-cooling & ventilation, better security and safety (CCTV cameras, alarms) and better audio-visual facility.