



Thus Spake...

"Whatsoever is originated will be dissolved again. All worry about the self is vain; the ego is like a mirage and all the tribulations that touch it will pass away. They will vanish like a nightmare when the sleeper awakes." ...The Buddha

"Arise! Awake! Stop not till the goal is reached!" ...Swami Vivekananda

Swami Siddharthananda Remembered

On Sunday, September 7, the Zushi Centre held a short memorial service for its first president (1984-1993), Revered Swami Siddharthanandaji Maharaj, who passed away on 3 August at the Varanasi Home of Service this year, as part of the regularly scheduled monthly retreat. Several long-time devotees who had come to know and love the Swami during his 9-year tenure at the Zushi Centre attended the retreat in order to pay their respects and briefly share fond recollections with the congregation.

The meeting room adjacent to the main shrine room was utilized for this function and a framed photograph of the Swami was offered flowers and incense. After a suitable introduction by Swami Medhasanandaji, the current monk-in-charge, personal reminiscences were given by the current Secretary, Mr. M. Osonoi; the Society's first Secretary, Mr. S. Rao; Mr. E. Morimoto, Mr. R. Gupta and Mrs. R. Kar. Mr. Samudra Gutra paid his respects by beautifully performing devotional songs.

As the Vedanta Society of Japan's first full-time monk, Swami Siddharthanandaji set about the work of organising Centre activities according to the Order's traditions and ideals. He introduced the Ashrama lifestyle of meditation, evening services, etc., along with regular birth observances of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, the Buddha and Jesus Christ. Discourses, retreats and private interviews began; publications were increased and sales improved. As many admirers commented during the memorial service, Swami Siddharthanandaji dedicated much of his time to serious study of the Japanese language, as he felt this was key to best serving Vedanta and Japanese society. And the Swami did, indeed, attain some level of mastery of the language, but failing health forced him to return to India before this ability could be fully utilized.

It was evident to all in attendance that Swami Siddharthanandaji was dearly loved and admired and that the Society was fortunate to have had such a devoted servant of the Lord at its helm during its early years. (cont)

Monthly Calendar

A VERY SPECIAL EVENT

Swami Bhaskaranandaji

Head, Vedanta Society of
Western Washington in
Seattle to give talk at
Zushi Retreat on Nov 16

BIRTHDAYS

Swami Subodhananda

5 Nov

Swami Vijnanananda

7 Nov

Siddharthanandaji (cont from page 1)

After the lunch-prasad break the monthly retreat continued with a talk and kirtan (melodic chanting of the Lord's name) on Sri Sri Krishna, as His birth celebration was observed on 19th August this year. Again, our friend Mr. Yoshiro Ito served as interpreter for the day. It may be interesting to note here that at times Mr. Ito found himself translating Swami Medhasananda's words into English, rather than the reverse. Many found this an amusing turn.

Sri Sri Kali Puja (Worship of the Divine Mother Kali)

On Friday, October 24th, the Vedanta Society of Japan celebrated the worship of Mother Kali at the Zushi Centre. This year's Kali Puja was to be the most elaborate and ritualistic of any held at our Japan Centre thus far.

The west wall of the main shrine room was beautifully transformed. A large swath of red cloth had been draped along the wall and two large spot lights were set at either end - brightly illuminating the shrine, the offerings and the many articles of worship. (See photo on page 4)

A small new photograph of Mother Kali was now the centre of focus and admiration; adorned with vibrant red flowers and installed upon an altar with Her own throne and beautiful flower arrangements and many candles at Her feet. In front of this, numerous articles of formal worship had been carefully laid out for the puja.

At about 7 p.m. about 56 Japanese and Indian devotees the Swami motioned for all to take places on the carpeted floors of the shrine room, meeting room and even the hallway extending out the main shrine doorway, and he sat at the place of worship with his assistant (Tantradharak) on this occasion, Mr. Nikhil Chakrabarti. A long-time practitioner of Kali worship and a former student at the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandir College during the Swami's tenure there, we wholeheartedly thank Mr. Chakrabarti for providing his knowledgeable assistance allowing us to observe and participate in this more formal worship and invocation of Mother Kali. All were blessed. (cont)

• A Story to Remember •

Footprints

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonging to him, and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, You said that once I decided to follow You, You'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed You most You would leave me."

The Lord replied, " My son, My precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

- Author Unknown

Sri Sri Kali Puja (continued from page 2)

Silence was observed (well, as much as possible with energetic and curious children afoot) throughout the 2-hour-plus worship and invocation of the deity; flower offerings and devotional singing in chorus forming part of the Puja. Since it was held on a Friday, it was hoped the schedule would allow devotees enough time to leave their places of employment; join friends or family members; make the trip to Zushi; participate in the Puja; enjoy the prasad dinner with the other devotees; and make it back home at a reasonable hour.

In fact, most stayed beyond the sumptuous dinner-prasad and continued to visit with the Swami and each other well after 10 p.m. Young and old alike could be seen enjoying small fireworks displays and sparklers at the front entrance, but as the hour grew later, train schedules prompted many to call for taxis to get to the station.

•Thought of the Month•

Working on Mind

If we work on marble
It will perish.
If we work on brass
Time will deface it.
If we rear temples
They will crumble to dust.
But if we work on immortal mind;
If we imbue it with principles;
With just fear of God;
And love of our fellow men,
We engrave on these tablets
Something which
Brightens to all eternity.

...Daniel Webster

News Briefs

• Shimbashi, Tokyo

The new series of discourses on the Bhagavad Gita continues the first Saturday of each month. All are invited to attend. The location is Shimbashi Station, Shimbashi Ekimae Building Number 2, 9th Floor.

• Zushi Retreat

Revered Swami Bhaskaranandaji, President, Vedanta Society of Western Washington, USA, will visit the Zushi Centre from November 13 to 21. The Swami has graciously agreed to give a talk at our monthly Zushi Retreat on November 16. All are cordially invited to attend.

• Indian Embassy

The monthly talk at the Indian Embassy in Tokyo on October 25th had to be cancelled due to non-availability of the meeting hall.

• Swami Addresses World Peace Group

The day following his return to Japan, the Swami was a scheduled speaker the IIFWP (Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace) Conference held in Yokohama on October 19th. About 300 people were in attendance.

Swami Medhasanandaji's Visit to India

As many of you know the Swami paid a visit to India from September 9th to October 18 with stopovers in Singapore and Malaysia on his way back to Japan. The Vedanta Kyokai presents here the Swami's itinerary and comments of particular interest.

09 Sep:	Narita (Japan) to Dumdum (Kolkata) via Singapore
10 Sep - 14 Sep:	Belur Math - Kolkata
15 Sep - 18 Sep:	Jayrambati - Kamarpukar
19 Sep:	Belur Math
20 Sep - 26 Sep:	Puri - Bhubaneshwar
27 Sep - 05 Oct:	Belur Math*
06 Oct - 09 Oct:	Varanasi**
10 Oct:	New Delhi
11 Oct - 17 Oct:	Singapore and Malaysia***

Notes: *Most Revered President Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj is keeping fairly well at Belur Math and he conveyed his blessings to our "devotees".

**An endowment has been created in the name of Revered Swami Siddharthanandaji out of money donated by the Kyokai and the Swami for the Varanasi Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service. The interest of which is to be spent for the hospital there.

***This was Swami Medhasanada's first visit to Malaysia where a new branch centre of the Order has recently opened.



Mother Kali's Photo Decorated in the Kyokai Shrine for the Puja

Issued by: **The Vedanta Society of Japan** (Nippon Vedanta Kyokai)
4-18-1 Hisagi, Zushi-shi, Kanagawa-ken 249-0001 JAPAN
Phone: 81-468-73-0428 Fax: 81-468-73-0592
website: <http://www.vedanta.jp> email: info@vedanta.jp