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In this issue...



DHARMA

*Rise Dharma, like the sun to end communal strife.
Unite all in ONE and to give us New Life
- Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati*

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Festive Greetings

The months of October and December saw the celebration of the Festival of Lights - Deepavali and Christmas.

The Dharma Editorial team wishes all our Hindu and Christian readers a very happy, safe, peaceful and fulfilling time with your family and friends.

Stay safe.

A very Happy New Year 2023

“PURIFICATION OF THE SELF”

Purity is the basis on which every religion is built upon. Every religious leader or every creed has emphasised the importance of purity and every religious scripture has stressed this very important element.

What is Purification of the Self?

It is from depths of purity that the best amongst creation becomes objects of admiration and also becomes beneficial to humanity (Buddhi). Every human being is a bundle of energy with the element of intelligence that moves it. Therefore, the human has the capacity to create.

The Creative Energy in the Human Being

Out of that God-given creative energy, Man brings forth his own specie as well as creation in other fields such as art, music, poetry, scientific discoveries, and multitudes of technological inventions beneficial to humanity from time to time through his Intellect (Buddhi).

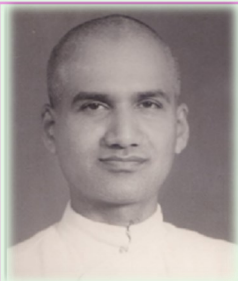
But, if ever the creative potential is misdirected or abused, for gratifying oneself for a selfish purpose, the result can turn out disastrous to oneself as well as to others and the world at large. It is here that the mind has to play its part. Man with his will needs to control and direct the mind to be still.

Culturing the Body and its potential

But, how do we do it? When you say Self, it is each one of us, as a separate entity and the Self is enclaved by the body, mind, spirit, emotions and vital energy.

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Cover page photo: Significant decorations found in the homes of Hindus and Christians celebrating Deepavali and Christmas.



All forms of lavishness and weakness that we find in men are due to fear; on the other hand, all forms of imperialism, ambition and superciliousness are born out of the incentive of gain or reward.

**- Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, 1958,
Founder-President, The Pure Life Society**



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THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

Teachers are the makers
of the world.

Teachers are the makers
of Men.

Teachers are the makers
of politicians who
guide the
destiny of mankind.

Teachers have been given
the opportunity to train
the little ones.

In a spirit of sympathy
and love.

'Tis theirs, to blend
information with
inspiration.

To blend knowledge
with love.

Teachers must be aware
that the coming world-
The world that is, the
world of tomorrow, the
world
that will be – is their
making

'Tis theirs to make it a
world of empathy,
Radiant with love, light
and truth.

- Mother Mangalam

EDITOR'S NOTE

Climate change is hitting us hard. We have had more rain than we are accustomed to, this time around and it's the same elsewhere in the world. If it's not rain, it's parched earth for the lack of it, triggering fires, all of which cause extreme hardship and misery. Particularly in Pakistan this time around, when as a result of unabated rain vast swathes of the country have been inundated.

We can't blame nature because, if left alone, it would work like clockwork and there would be order and regularity. It's too late to turn the clock back and holding action and regeneration are the best we can and should do.

But that's on the earthly side and it must be reinforced by the spiritual dimension, we, as humans, are endowed with in the context of our existence. We need spiritual strength to counter the negative effects of our wanton ways that have resulted in environmental and human degradation. It's an individual battle that requires the collective to make the difference between success or abject failure.

Religion and spiritual movements seek to awaken our spirituality to bring the wholesome success and fulfilment we seek to bring balance and sustainability in our lives.

We need to expand our mind and, in this context, Dharma, the quarterly publication we faithfully bring to you as members of Pure Life Society, has such a purpose. It's a means to an end, that of maintaining a dialogue inspired by writings and messages of spiritually awakened individuals. such as the Society's founder, HH Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, and Mother Mangalam, who continues to serve him and his objective faithfully, ever since he passed on, keeping his spirit and life's work alive.

Everything has a meaning and purpose and we need curiosity, knowledge and experience to unravel them. We need quiet moments with ourselves to reflect on what we have done or intend to do as we seek to make our lives more fulfilling and bereft of experience and emotions that drag us down.

Exploring religions, spiritual movements and practices enable us to find out what works and what does not. Turning to charity, endeavouring to save endangered nature in its many forms provide a connection we need with what is larger than us as individuals. Experience clearly tells that without commitment, worthwhile goals are never achieved. Commitment comes from our inner selves hinged on realisation that each and every one of us has a responsibility to not just ourselves, but the rest of creation as we know it.

This is the essence of spirituality and awakening it has to be the foundation on which we need to build our lives with purpose and meaning so we can truly rest in peace when the time comes for us to do so in the end.



“PURIFICATION OF SELF”

continued from front cover

It is important to cultivate all the parts surrounding the Self, so that the Self can be purified enough to be able to uplift itself through the purification of the 5 elements and serve its purpose of existence, that is, to serve humanity and its environment effectively.

As Man is an integral unit composed of the physical self, the intellectual self, the psychic self, the emotional self and the aesthetic self (which needs self-expression), each integral part needs to be developed in order that Man may grow into a balanced being.

The physical being needs to be fed with health giving foods, proper exercise and fresh air and put to work amid the struggles of life; to serve unselfishly.

The emotional part of our being is life itself, which has to stabilise itself by facing joys and sorrows (life's dualities) with equanimity. This can be achieved only through the hard rugged path experiencing life's blows and kicks and finally gaining strength by way of reading religious scriptures.

This is the path of action and reaction which goes in par with our role in life, known as Dharma. We shall have to play our several roles in life well and righteously, whether it be in the family, the community, the country or the world – play it in tune with the Eternal Divine Law. This process is known as **Karma Yoga**.

The aesthetic part of our being needs a relationship with the finer forces of nature. Thereby we learn to express ourselves clearly through speech, writing, art, music, singing, dancing and chanting in praise of the Supreme One.

It is the path of devotion and a total surrender to God with a love which has no bargaining either with God or with man. This is known as **Bhakti Yoga**. The practice of devotion to God helps to culture the heart and mind towards portraying the same degree of devotion and love towards humankind and other mundane activities.

The mental part of our being which is connected to the brain and the environment, needs to be fed with multifarious experiences which makes us to reason and to think. This is the rational part of our being. Reading of useful literature, words of wisdom and the scriptures, help in raising our consciousness.

It is the path of knowledge. Knowledge and eventually wisdom, lies within each one of us but has to be awakened by study, discussions, self-discipline, reflection, absorption, observance, concentration and self-effort. Knowledge will dawn in oneself if the individual subjects himself to the various experiences that life on earth gives him from time to time. This is known as Jnana Yoga.

The psychical part of our being needs regular exercise in silent communion, contemplation and reflection so that we go deeper into our sub-conscious self which gets purified in the course of time through our connection with the Supreme One. Herein lies the depth of wisdom. Mantra recitation and listening to divine music would carry the mind to greater heights.

It is the study of the mind, its functions, its relationship with the body and spirit, as well as with nature. Here, the mind of Man is brought out from the realm of instinct to the realm of intuition by certain exercises in the practice of proper breathing and concentration.

It also includes exercises in the development of will-power and increase of nervous energy which is a very important element for the health of body, mind and spirit. This is known as Raja Yoga. All these 4 paths are to be practised daily to live a wholesome life.

It is not enough to cultivate the five integral parts of one's being. The motivating force must arise out of pure impulses. There should be no trace of selfishness. Otherwise, the results could be negative.

No small wonder, why the great Masters of the world, irrespective of race or religion, have always been unanimous in the conclusion of life's basic philosophy that purity of thought, word and deed is the essential condition for the transformation of the human personality.

All these are contained in the Bhagavad Gita, a small text from the 4 Vedas known as the Sanatana Dharma. The word Sanatana Dharma means it is a Dharma which has no beginning and no end. In other words, it is a never-ending collection of truths that have emerged from the lips of the sages, saints, prophets and saviours through the ages, at different climes and times. The Bhagavad Gita talks about 4 paths towards self-realisation.

The Breath

While in the course of practising the 4 paths, it is important that great attention is paid to our breath, which is always taken for granted. With proper breathing and concentration, inclusive of exercises in the development of will-power, our nervous energy level in-

creases, which is very important in the maintenance of a healthy body and a healthy mind. This will help one very much in anger management and most of other uncontrollable behavioural patterns whereby wisdom and patience come into play.

The four paths mentioned earlier, if practised with earnestness, help to keep the mind at a high level of consciousness by which the God-given creative energy in one gets into creation in fields of art, music, discoveries, poetry and such kind, which would help society at large, other than the times the energy gets spent in creating the human species.

One proven way is the stimulation of the pituitary and penial glands through the practice of yoga poses and quiet reflection, commonly known as meditation. Man will eventually realise the sacredness of the body and its creative potential, whether it be his or others and stop abusing it for selfish purposes.

Therefore, it can be said that religion is a science relating to the culturing of the body, mind and spirit and all the latent potential found therein. The uncontrollable desires which are destructive in nature, evaporates and the Self remains pure and undefiled.

In common language, it is the sublimation of the sex energy or creative energy in the human being to higher levels of consciousness.

We have to constantly remind ourselves that we are not the doers but merely channels through which the Almighty Divine Force expresses Itself. It is our bounden duty to keep these channels, pure and undefiled, so that Divine Will prevails at all times. □

*- A Talk By Mother A Mangalam
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, UKM,
Bangi, 2012*

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE RELIGION OF THE HINDUS (An Address)

Founder-President of the Pure Life Society, Dr Swami Satyananda, JP

The Hindu religion is one of the major religions of the world. It is the oldest of all known religions. Its followers live chiefly in India, and also in Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Siam, Indo-China, Indonesia and South Africa.

India is the motherland of the Hindu religion as well as that of the Buddhist, the Jain and the Sikh religions. Many hold that the Hindu religion is about 20,000 years old. The archaeological findings of the Mohenjo-daro and Harappa civilization in the Indus valley show that the Hindu religion was practised by the ancient peoples at least 5000-6000 years ago.

The Hindu religion, unlike other special religions of the world, is not a single one. It is a federation of many philosophies, cults, faiths, customs and manners. In this federation, the lowest animistic cults exist side by side with the highest monotheistic and monistic faiths.

This religion has a wonderful dynamic nature for it has been growing, absorbing and continuously developing itself throughout the ages according to the changing times and conditions and, even in the present, it continues to do so.

The Dravidians, the Aryans and many other races have contributed to the growth and development of this religion. It was not founded by any particular person at a particular time.

The word 'Hindu' is derived from the name of the river Indus called in Sanskrit 'Sindhu' but mispronounced as "Hindu" by the Persians and Greeks of ancient times. The word 'India' has the same origin. The ancient people of India called their religion "*Sanatana Dharma*" in Sanskrit meaning "Eternal Religion". They called their motherland "*Bharata-Varsha*" or "*Aryavarta*".

Although there are innumerable sects and divisions in the Hindu religion, with different creeds, all of them acknowledge the supreme authority of the Vedas and accept certain basic fundamentals, viz-

(1) There is an Ultimate Reality called Brahman or Parasivam. It is personal as well as impersonal. It is neither masculine nor feminine. It is called by various names in different special religions. It is Infinite Eternal Spirit within Its creation as well as beyond creation. It is the source, creator, director, sustainer and mover of everything in the universe. Its essence is Existence Absolute, Consciousness Absolute, and Bliss Absolute (Sat-Chit-Ananda). It is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. It reveals itself to the pure, the good and the devoted in whatever form the devotee worships it. It is called by innumerable names and worshipped under different forms according to the temperaments, tastes, environment and traditions of different persons. It is conceived of as the Father, the Mother, the Friend, the Supporter and Protector of the Universe.

(2) All beings and things have a soul (Jiva), the life giving principle behind everything. God is present in the soul as its very life. There are innumerable souls. The soul is immortal eternal, formless and sexless. It is covered by ignorance, delusion and desires, and, therefore, it identifies itself with the mind and body which is a product of Matter (Prakriti). Since all beings have the same soul and the same God is present in all, the Hindu religion says that we should love our neighbours as we love ourselves. We should not do harm to any being. We must work

for the good of all beings. •

(3) As a result of its ignorance, delusion and desires, the soul, making use of the mind and body, does actions, both good and bad (Punya and Papa). Actions are bound to produce reactions or fruits of actions (Karma). Therefore, the soul reaps the fruits of its action either in this birth or in some other births for none can escape the law of action and reaction. Such births may be either in this world or in some other spheres, high or low. If its actions have been good it takes a good birth and lives a happy life. On the other hand, if its actions have been evil, it takes a bad birth and lives a wretched life, a life of suffering and pain.

It is the virtuous souls who after death live for a period of time as Devas or gods in the higher spheres. Then they are reborn as human beings and strive further for spiritual perfection. The wicked souls after death live in the lower spheres as Asuras or demoniacal beings. After a period of time in these spheres. they also take other births and strive to progress up in the ladder of evolution.

The physical body (Sthula Sarira) is just the outward covering of the soul. Beyond the physical body is the mental body (Sukshma Sarira) which contains all the impressions of the actions of several births and experiences. This is a finer body. Beyond the mental body is the causal body (Karana Sarira) which is the seat of ignorance, delusion and desires. The mental and causal bodies accompany the soul in its transmigrations.

(4) The soul can get rid of the cycle of births and deaths only by a highly virtuous and ethical life, by purifying itself completely through giving up selfishness and desires, and by practising self-control and praying to and Meditating on God the Ultimate Reality. By these practices the Grace of God manifests on the soul and the mental and causal bodies are wiped out and all actions and reactions come to an end. The soul becomes free from the bonds of matter, delusion, ignorance, desires, and unites in oneness (Advaitam) with the Ultimate Reality. This is salvation (Moksha).

Primordial Matter (Prakriti), that consists of atoms, electrons and protons (anu), is the substance out of which God by His Power (Shakti) projects the Universe. It is all pervasive but inert. It has certain modes like illumination, dynamism and inertia (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas). God by His Power makes it move and evolve, gradually into various shapes and forms. This evolution is for the good of the souls, for purifying them and making them perfect.

Evolution has several steps from the finer to the grosser, from the inert to the conscient. After a long period of time the evolved universe is dissolved and it involves into the original matter and sleeps, as it were, with all the souls in God Himself. Then after a period of time it again evolves. This evolution (Srishti) and involution (Laya) is taking place in a cyclic form throughout the seen and the unseen universe. Only those who tire perfectly pure and desireless become one with God and go beyond birth, death, suffering, etc.

To be continued.....



Kind courtesy of 'Dharma Essays' (1956)

Children's Corner

The Blue Jackal

There lived a jackal in a forest. Due to old age, he could no longer hunt like before. He was followed by few dogs. The jackal had to run to save his life and entered the street of the clothes dryers.

There he saw a big pot and he jumped into the vessel to save his life. Blue color solution was kept in the vessel to dye the clothes.

When he came out of it, he saw that the whole color of his body had turned blue. Any animal who saw its blue color would be frightened and



run away from it.

Taking the advantage of the situation, he declared himself the ruler of the animal world. The lions, tigers and cheetahs were surprised to hear his words. No one dared to cut him off.

For a few days his kingdom went on very smoothly, but then one day when he was resting in his cave, he heard the sound of other jackals outside.

Without thinking, he also started whining like jackals in his original voice. The lion and the tiger realized that the jackal had outsmarted them and they killed him.

Moral of the story: No pretense can last long, so it is better to stay in your true form always and improve yourself.



- Web Source

A TRIBUTE

DR SWAMI SATYANANDA, JP, FOUNDER-PRESIDENT THE PURE LIFE SOCIETY (SHUDDHA SAMAJAM)

Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, passed away on 9th April 1961. We received many condolence letters as well as letters of appreciation from people from all walks of life, whose lives Swami Satyananda had touched in one way or another.

I consider it most fortunate to have been able to associate myself with the late Swami Satyananda for a number of years.

Swamiji, as I used to call him, was a sage, a philosopher, a teacher and a humanitarian combined into one in an age of mass materialism, he worked to put people before things. In an age of self-seeking individualism, he paved the way for “Service Above Self”.

When I was the Minister of Education I used to discuss educational matters with him. His chief concern was for the orphans, the delinquents and the neglected. Through his own efforts he started and built up the school at Puchong. One of my last duties in the Education Ministry was to declare open the mechanical workshop at the school of which he was so proud.

Among the gifts bestowed on Swamiji was the rare ability to give his full heart to the individuals — adults and children alike — who surrounded him and at the same time always to maintain the perspective of national and world-wide needs. He stood for communal and religious harmony at all times. It is for this reason that he founded the Pure Life Society and also the Inter-Faith Council.

Swamiji led a life of devotion and penitence. This penitence not only purified his inner life but opened his soul to the indwelling power of God. He was the living embodiment of those moral principles and precepts which he taught to the people around him. Behind every ethical principle which he expounded there was the force of his own example. He gave the message of “love” and “peace” to us all, irrespective of caste or creed!

Now Swamiji is gone - but the good work which he had done still remains. It is up to us all to carry on and maintain the noble example set by him.

May God Bless his soul!

“The flower plants that sprout from the earth in a garden perish eventually.
But the flowers growing from the heart knows no decay.”

MOHAMED KHIR JOHARI
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
10th July, 1961



Timeless Frames



On a retreat at Port Dickson with the children, is HH Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, in the 50's of the last century. Mother Mangalam, known then as Sister Mangalam, was not present as she was preparing herself for an external examination.



When we are not conscious of the presence of the Divine Reality within, when we forget all about it and depend solely and wholly on the mind alone, its moods and movements, then we live in vain, because it is then a life without Spirit, a soul-less life, akin to death.

- HH Swami Shantanand Saraswathi, 'Honey Drops'

THE ELEPHANT AND THE DOG

Among Buddha's disciples, there was a monk who used to go to a friend's home every day, and he always had his meals there. After they finished eating, the two would chat until sunset. The friend would then walk with the monk back to the monastery, but they would continue talking. They didn't seem to want to part. When it was quite dark, the friend would leave to go back home, but this monk would accompany his friend back to the city. They did this every day, and many people were curious as to why they were such close friends.

One day, the monks were talking about it when Buddha walked in. He saw them chatting, so he asked, "What are you talking about?" The monks reported the situation. "Their friendship wasn't built up just in this life," Buddha observed, "but it is a result of karma that was accumulated in the past." He then told the following story.

Long ago, there was a king who liked a certain elephant very much. He hired a mahout (an elephant keeper) to take special care of it, and he fed the elephant with the finest food. One day, a small dog appeared from nowhere. At first, the dog always stayed far away from the elephant. When the elephant had its meal, it would drop some rice to the ground. The little dog then approached the elephant slowly and carefully to get the rice. As time went by, they became familiar with each other. The dog would come every day, and when the elephant saw it coming, he would always drop some food for it. They became good friends, and the dog would come and stay with the elephant every day. They both liked each other very much, and they played happily together every day. The dog would even climb up on the elephant's head, and the elephant would hold the dog with its trunk. In short, they became inseparable friends.

After a couple of years, someone came to the stable and saw the elephant and the dog playing together. "This dog is so cute," he said to the mahout. "I also have an elephant at home, and I want to buy this dog for my elephant." The mahout was only responsible for the elephant, but now someone wanted to buy that dog and he could make a profit from it! So he sold the dog. But from then on, the elephant was very depressed. It wouldn't eat or drink, and it groaned as though it were ill. The mahout was quite worried, so he reported it to the king.

The king immediately ordered a minister to find out why the elephant was ill. This minister was very wise, and when he saw the elephant, he knew that there was no problem with the elephant's health. But why wouldn't it eat or drink, and why did it keep groaning? He asked the mahout, "Has this elephant had any emotional changes in its daily life?" The mahout then told the whole truth about the little dog and how it had been sold. The minister asked, "Where does this person live?" The mahout said, "I don't know." The minister reported his findings to the king. "The elephant isn't sick. It is simply that it suddenly lost a close friend." He suggested that the king post an announcement that the person who bought the dog should return it.

A few days after the announcement was posted, the dog was indeed sent back. It was delighted to see the elephant and climbed up on its neck and head, and the elephant once again happily held the dog with its trunk.

Buddha concluded his story. "Although they were animals then, their feelings towards each other continue today. The dog is now that monk, the elephant is his friend, and I am that minister. The monk and his friend are still very dear to each other because of the karmic relationship that they built up in their past lives." □

- Dharma Master Cheng Yen, 'The Master Tells Stories'

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE (IDP) 2022

The IDP this year had two components namely, The Interfaith Dialogue on 24th September at the Church of St Francis of Assisi in Cheras and the Peace Pole Launch on 25th September at The PLS Peace Park. This is a yearly event organised by the Interfaith Spiritual Fellowship (INSaF) and the Center for Spiritual Advancement (CSA) for the Pure Life Society (PLS).

The Interfaith Dialogue, congruent with the UN theme 'End Racism and Build Peace' was very well moderated by Dr Amir Farid Bin Isahak and well received with engaging delivery by every speaker responding to questions on personal thoughts on peace, reflections of racism in Malaysia and practical solutions based on respective religious perspectives. The Key-



note Speech was delivered by Rev. Fr. Xavier Andrew, Ecclesiastical Assistant, Archdiocesan Ministry of Ecumenical & Inter-Religious Affairs (AMEIA) and the panel of speakers comprised of YB Ustaz Dr Sayyid Hussain Abdeen, The Head of Education and Training, Islamic Outreach ABIM Centre, Rev Fr. Gregory Chan, Parish Priest, Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Klang, Dr Bala Tharmalingam, Founder/President, Malaysian Organisation for Hindu Knowledge, Science, Heritage and Art (MOHKSHA), Brother Wong Choon Tat, Consultant, Persatuan Penganut



Buddha Bodhi Malaysia (BBFM) & Belia Buddhis (YBAM) and Dr Charanjit Kaur, Assistant Professor, University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). The setting for the dialogue was enhanced by the ambience of the hall, the charming Emceeing by Dr Melissa Shamini and wonderful refreshments.

The Peace Pole event on Sunday 25th September was a collaboration of about 10 organisations working for peace, led by the PLS. The event commenced with refreshments and a gathering at the Multi-



Purpose Hall that started with a rendition of Negara Ku.



The gathering was addressed by Mr Stephen Nah, Dr CD Siby, Dr Amir Farid and Datin Poonam Kukreja, who launched the event with her Opening Address.

The Organising Chairman, Mr Pathma Venthan and Mr P K Moorthy shared some history of the Peace Pole and past gatherings. The congregation then moved to the hilltop Peace Park for the hanging of origami butterflies as symbols of peace, addresses on peace and the declaration of the UN Peace Pledge that was followed by the unleashing of a new miniature

Peace Pole for a future destination.

24th October saw the culmination of this year's IDP with a beautiful ceremony to install a Peace Pole at the Ayur Center that is run by our Chairman of CSA, Dr Siby. The day coincided with Deepavali and appropriately, little lamps were lit around the Peace Pole to represent the dawn of light over darkness.

After several speeches delivering stories and messages of Peace, everyone was treated to a very sumptuous spread of Indian fare, prepared and served by the ever-humble staff of the Ayur Center.



Naturally, very few Indians could join the event due to their celebrations in their own homes and we wish all Hindus a very happy Deepavali with Peace, Light and Happiness filling their hearts and homes and that of all Malaysians who never fail to partake in all festivities in some small way at least.

‘May Peace Prevail on Earth’

- Gopal Balakrishnan

DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Vatican City

Christians and Hindus: Together promoting conviviality and co-responsibility

MESSAGE FOR THE FEAST OF DEEPAVALI 2022

Dear Hindu Friends, The Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, hitherto known as Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, sends you its joyous greetings and best wishes on the occasion of Deepavali, celebrated this year on October 24. May this festival of lights give you the grace and happiness to enkindle, besides yours, the lives of everyone in your families, communities and in the larger society!

Growing instances of tensions, conflicts and violence in different parts of the world on the basis of religious, cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic identities and supremacies - oft fuelled by competitive, populist and expansionist politics, as also by majoritarian and minoritarian movements and blatant misuse of social media - are a cause of concern to all of us, since they grossly affect the fraternal and peaceful co-existence in society. In this context, the need to promote conviviality and a spirit of co-responsibility among people becomes vital and pivotal. In keeping with our cherished tradition, we wish to share with you on this occasion, therefore, some thoughts on how we, Christians and Hindus, can together promote conviviality and co-responsibility for the good of each and everyone.

Conviviality is both the quality of being friendly and lively and the ability to live in the midst of others with their individualities, diversities and differences in a spirit of respect, love and trust. It is the act and art of forging friendly and fraternal, healthy and harmonious relationships among human beings on the one hand, and between them and nature, on the other; and it is built on a daily basis, through personal encounters and dialogue, in mutual listening and learning, with patience and perseverance, and with the conviction that “Life exists where there is bonding, communion, fraternity” (Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* - On Fraternity and Social Friendship, 2020, no.87).

Promotion of conviviality, however, entails assuming responsibility on our part to care for one another and creation. It calls for a readiness to walk and work together with charity, fraternity and sense of co-responsibility for the common good. Besides being responsible contributors in our own possible ways to the common good, it is also necessary that we make people around us responsible to make conviviality a reality by respecting the transcendental dignity of every human person and his or her legitimate rights flowing from thereof, working for the social well-being and sustainable development of all, and committing oneself to the harmonious living with everyone and nature. While on this path towards conviviality, we may face many challenges owing to the largely dominant indifference and individualism prevalent in our society today, we, as believers, are not to give into pessimism but rather stay united and act as examples for others to emulate.

Like the families, led by the examples of parents and elders, have a preeminent role in inculcating in their children and youngsters these noble values of conviviality and co-responsibility, the family of religious leaders and groups of all religions across the globe, educational institutions, means of communications, governmental and non governmental organizations also have a shared responsibility in nurturing values of conviviality and co-responsibility, using all available means at their disposal. Moreover, interreligious dialogue

which according to Pope Francis, is “a providential sign” of our times and a “privileged path to the growth of fraternity and peace in the world” (Greetings to the Delegates of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, 30 June, 2022) is and can be a powerful means of inspiring and even challenging the people of diverse religious traditions, to live these values in fraternity, unity and solidarity for the common good.

As believers and leaders of our religious communities who are grounded in our own respective religious beliefs and convictions, and with a common concern and responsibility for the welfare of human family and of the earth-our common home, may we, Christians and Hindus, joining hands with those of all other religious traditions and people of good will, promote, individually and collectively, the spirit of conviviality and co-responsibility to transform this world into a secure home for everyone to live in with peace and joy!

Wishing you all a Happy Deepavali!



Miguel Ángel Cardinal Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ
Prefect



Msgr. Indunil Janakaratne Kodithuwakku Kankanamalage
Secretary



We have to go back to philosophy to treat things as they are. We are suffering from our own karma. It is not the fault of God. What we do is our own fault, nothing else. Why should God be blamed?

(Swami Vivekananda)

WELCOMING DURVASA

The Hindu scriptures have given us a wealth of colorful stories about the "angry sage" - Durvasa. The following story is one of the most intriguing because it reveals the highest philosophical understanding that can propel an aspirant high above the petty realms of anger. When one remembers Durvasa's extraordinary antics and their mystic implications, the war against anger becomes almost delightful!

Once upon a time an imposing looking *brahmin* appeared in Dwaraka, where Lord Krishna had his palace. He was wearing tattered clothes, and carried a stick in his hand. He had a strange moustache and beard, and was unusually thin and tall. Whenever he saw anyone he announced, "Here am I. My name is Durvasa. Who would give me hospitality? There is, however, this condition: if you make the slightest mistake in attending on me, I may destroy you with my anger. So knowing this, is there anyone who would dare give me hospitality and who would risk causing me annoyance?"



Everyone was afraid and, therefore, no one came forward to welcome Durvasa. Seeing this, Lord Krishna himself came forward and said, "Oh Sage, I will offer my hospitality and I will consider it a great privilege to do so."

Thus, Durvasa came to stay at Krishna's palace, and because his demands were beyond human imagination he created tremendous inconvenience for Krishna's royal household. In one sitting he could eat up as much food as could be consumed by hundreds of people. At another time, although the royal chefs might have prepared all types of wonderful dishes, he would eat nothing - just pick up a grain and throw everything else away. Without telling anyone he would suddenly leave, and then he would reappear at any time, even in the middle of the night. All of a sudden, he would start laughing for no reason, or start crying for no reason. Once he set all his bedding and clothes on fire and slipped away from the scene. Despite all this, Krishna continued to attend to the demands of the sage, and had his entire family do likewise.

On one particular day during his visit Durvasa came and said "O Krishna I want to eat *kheer* (rice pudding) immediately." Accordingly, wonderful pudding was quickly prepared. He took a little of that *kheer* and said, "O Krishna this is *Prasad* (sanctified food). Smear it all over your body." Without any objection, Krishna took handfuls of the pudding and smeared it all over his body.

While this was going on, Krishna's Queen, Rukmini, smiled. Durvasa's attention was drawn to that smile, and he immediately commanded that Rukmini be yoked to a chariot and pull the chariot just like a horse. Rukmini looked at Krishna for help, but when he didn't say anything, she knew that the order would have to be obeyed. So she allowed herself to be yoked to the chariot and began to pull it with all her might. Then Durvasa took a whip and started whipping her, and since Rukmini was not at all accustomed to this type of treatment, she faltered and fell. Durvasa simply shouted at her and when she completely collapsed, he jumped out of the chariot and went on by foot, as if in great anger. Krishna went after him, trying to appease the Sage, his body besmeared with *kheer*. "O Lord," Krishna said to Durvasa, "Be pleased. Do not be angry

with us."

Then Sage Durvasa said to Krishna, "Oh Krishna, you have passed the test. You have conquered anger. I have not seen even a single flaw in your conduct and I am immensely pleased. As a result of pleasing me, you will become the source of attraction for all living beings, the object of infinite love. As long as the world exists, people will sing your glory. You will be the best in the three worlds, dear to all. All the things that I have broken and destroyed will become as they were and better. All the hurt that I have inflicted upon Rukmini will be gone and she will be perfectly healthy and brighter than ever, and wherever you have smeared the *kheer* on your body you will become invulnerable. Thus saying, Sage Durvasa blessed Rukmini and, having expressed his great joy, he vanished.

Durvasa is the personification of trouble and pain, of annoying situations that come in human life. Durvasa comes to visit everyone day by day in the form of situations that cause frustration and rob one of patience. For an aspirant, handling those situations is like welcoming Durvasa - and he must be careful not to incur his displeasure! If you are handling difficult situations with patience, if even in the most agonizing situations you hold your reason in balance, then you are appeasing Durvasa - that aspect of God who is testing you.

The ill-temper of Durvasa is based upon a Divine meaning and purpose. Though apparently so irrational, he is working out the Divine will through the deeper movement of his personality, leading people to their spiritual goal. Naturally, on that path leading to Self-realization, endurance must reach the highest level possible in an individual.

Troubles in human life arise from many sources. Ninety-percent of those troubles come from human sources. While interacting with other people, you often find that what you hold as most desirable is not held as desirable by your relative or friend. Then you see your expectations crushed. In turn you become the crusher of others' expectations. Durvasa is acting mutually among people. Sometimes you become Durvasa for someone else, sometimes someone else becomes Durvasa for you. Fortunately, one does not encounter Durvasa in his entirety at any one moment - if that were so one would explode. If all the annoying situations were to present themselves at once, one could not survive. Therefore, they are given to you little by little.

In those human interactions in which different types of personalities clash, tensions sometimes linger for a long time, and yet an aspirant should adopt tremendous patience. This is especially true in situations which seem irrational. As Krishna's behaviour in the story illustrates, when you follow the path of controlling the mind and ego, rationality or irrationality does not matter. Your project is simply to develop the necessary self-control. You cannot sit back and say, "Oh, I could have controlled my mind under other circumstances, but this situation is too irrational for that!" Krishna could have argued with Durvasa, saying, "Why should I smear this *kheer* all over my body? If you don't like it, throw it into the garbage!" That would be the modern approach! But He did not do so.

Everyone is joyous when things are pleasant, but life is not always filled with pleasant things. What do you do when unpleasant things come? In unpleasant situations, let not your reason be agitated. Rather, understand that unpleasantness caused by people or situations is a test, a gift of God, and if you handle it well you develop willpower. With that awareness of inner will, to your surprise you realize that things that seemed negative are actually positive. Things that were as if destroyed will come to life again; they will be revived. ▣

- To be continued.....

- Swami Jyotirmayananda, 'The Art of Positive Feeling'

CULTIVATE A LOVE FOR TREES

Clint Eastwood sang “I talk to the trees, but they don't listen to me.” Perhaps he used rough macho cowboy language and wore a gun at his hip. Plants do respond to the sound of human voices, especially a loving motherly female voice, as the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has demonstrated.

A study it conducted showed that when Sarah, a direct descendant of Charles Darwin, spoke to a tomato plant for one month it grew 2 inches taller than identical tomato plants that listened to male voices over the same period. RHS postulated that sound has an effect on plant growth and Sarah's success could be related to women's greater range of pitch or tone that affects the sound waves that hit the plant.

Plants share with humans the same basic social characteristics. Forest ecologist Suzanne Simard managed to coax the fir trees of Canada into revealing its secrets of the wood wide web. Forester Peter Wohlleben found the beech trees of Ruhe Forest in Germany living as communal beings, supporting other members of their forest community unreservedly.

Investment consultant Neoh Soon Kean was astonished when he noticed an old mango tree stump in his Penang garden being kept alive by a tall mango tree nearby that spread its roots to the stump to feed it with nutrients and water.

Knowing that plants live as a community should encourage us to prioritise forest conservation. But sadly in a pre-election survey carried out nationwide titled Suara Rakyat Malaysia Menuju PRU15 (Malaysian Voices: On the Road to GE15), climate change and environment ranked near the bottom in a list of top issues that mattered to Malaysian voters. Economic issues secured a much higher rating. Money beats environment any time.

Forests play a vital role in soaking up excess rainwater and thus preventing severe floods, but there has been a long-running controversy over the degazettement of forest reserve land in Selangor for mixed development projects. Fortunately, the State Government has gazetted 31.65% of the entire area of Selangor as permanent forest reserves and the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, has ordered the planting of 26 million trees.

Kedah folks appear to be less knowledgeable about the link between deforestation and flooding. Three years ago, the State Government proposed to grant logging concessions covering 25,000ha in the Greater Ulu Muda Forest. Environmentalists believe that licensed logging will compound the effect already inflicted by illegal logging for plantations. Forest clearing activities were blamed for last year's devastating floods in Yan, Kedah.

More than 2,000ha of Belara Forest Reserve in Terengganu have also been degazetted for conversion into oil palm plantation, according to the Malaysian Nature Society. The rationale for deforestation is that it provides much needed revenue for the states. Ecology and economy are two sides of the same coin, but state governments toss the coin to see which side it lands on. In the period 2000-2019, Malaysia lost 2,445 sq km of forest area.

Seven years ago, a flash flood destroyed a dozen houses in Damaran Baru village situated in the north Sumatran province of Aceh. Village women observed that wood was mixed in with the floodwaters barrelling down a mountain slope. The women investigated the cause of the flooding and saw the mountain had been deforested. They formed a volunteer ranger squad to patrol the jungle and replant all the slopes that had been scarred by tree loss.

In Quang Binh province, 250 loggers repented of their misdeeds when informed that Vietnam had lost 20% of its tree cover in a 20-year period up to 2021 and that the rapidly thinning forests were resulting in extreme rainfall and floods devastating communities. From calculating how much they could earn with each 100kg log carried out, the former loggers now calculate how much value each surviving tree brings to the world.

In northwest China, farmer Wang Tianchang leads busloads of young volunteers into the Gobi Desert each year to plant and irrigate new trees and bushes in a major effort to reverse desertification. Malaysia, too, has a forest champion in Cik Noriah Cik Wil who has grown about a million jungle trees in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, and Kedah. She earns a living growing saplings in her plant nursery for replanting projects.

Another Malaysian, Datuk Dr Looi Hoong Wah, owns a two-acre plot of jungle land in Kuantan, Pahang and leaves the trees alone. Why? It's because he finds that one large tree can produce one day's supply of oxygen for four people. It stores 5.9kg of carbon each year, reduces the dust level, and absorbs noise up to 40%. Trees cool the air, reducing the urban heat island effect. By holding the soil together, roots prevent storm water run-off.

Urban rejuvenation firm Think City studied the urban heat island effect and found that peak land surface temperatures had risen more than 5 degrees C since 1988 across Ipoh, Johor Bahru and George Town. Trees can break up the island heat effect reducing ambient temperatures by up to 7 degrees C.

Every jungle tree felled must be replaced by a sapling. For every hectare of forest logged, 270 saplings ought to be planted as replacement. But if there is continuous rain, replanting cannot be successfully carried out and the acreage of forest will keep reducing. Climate change, partly induced by extensive logging, causes more frequent severe rainfall in Malaysia and this impedes replanting. Lower forest cover in turn induces climate change.

How do you cultivate a love for trees? Start by appreciating every plant in your garden. If you live in a condo, grow plants in your balcony or buy indoor plants for your living room. Talk to your plants like they are your friends. Visit the neighbourhood park to hug the trees, or at least feel the bark and leaves. Keep an eye on every mature tree in your neighbourhood. Complain if you suspect that a tree has been felled for no good reason. ▣

- Joachim Ng

“It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air that emanation from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit.”

- Robert Louis Stevenson

THE UNIVERSE VIEWED FROM THE WORLD OF SPIRIT

The heaven-earth-fire-water that represents the abstract being, that is, the noumenon of the universe is always in action with its will-force. I call the noumenon of the universe God, or Great Spirit by name, and the activity itself caused by the power of sacred virtue of nature by the phrase the cardinal law of the universe.

The sun shines, giving heat and rays, all over the whole universe acting accurately in time without an instant's error in its rising and setting.

It is just the same as that in the case of the moon. Stars are also in accurate movements in time. The noumena of those heavenly bodies are silently showing themselves in their activities. There will be a state of confusion in our human world if there were any errors in their activities.

But, as a matter of fact, those heavenly bodies have been in their functions without any accidental errors throughout the long space of time since the creation of the cosmos. This errorless activity is the attribute or property of the cosmo-primal principles.

The Great Spirit of the universe, or Divine Spirit in other words, is in action with the power of sacred property, that is, virtue of nature all over the whole universe. There is not a bit of error in the force of nature which is the motive power or main spring of this great activity.

In as much as the spirit-world is well-ordered, the universe can keep up its constant function in harmony with order, that is, the normal and sound state of the former.

Our human world lacks unity owing to the errors caused by wrong notion or general concept. In consequence, humankind should learn the cosmo-primal principles; and it is most important for them to clarify the Will of God who is dominating the universe with His dynamic force of great nature.

The cosmo-primal principles expressed by natural phenomena as a means to make us perceive the former evidently, are of great importance to all men. The cosmo-primal principles are not only controlling the force of man's life, but also dominating one and all things in the cosmos.

The daily activities of the heaven-earth-fire-water are accurately and errorlessly shown to all men so that they may be easily found in all respects. There is no room to doubt the cosmo-primal principles. It is fundamentally necessary for all men to acknowledge them, and they should acquire the Spirit of this activity in their own hearts and souls.

What should a man take as a foundation to his own spirit? The universe has been keeping up its function without error through tens of thousands of years. Therefore, a man should acquire in his mind as the foundation, the Spirit that originates the activities of sun and moon. But, as it is hardly possible to acquire the Spirit in mind through human intellect, it must be taken in by the intuition.

It is possible to say that the activity of cosmo-nature is the perfect teaching as to the cosmos. I regard this theory itself as supreme-religion. In this sense, nothing can be in existence without supreme-religion. A man is worthy to be called the lord of creation only in the case that he has definitely acquired in spirit this important cosmo-primal principles. Most people of today may dismiss with a laugh what I say like this, because they are ignorant of and indifferent to the matter of spirit as a result of their being disposed to think their thoughts and ideas to be of an absolute truth.

To be continued.....

- Rev Yonosuke Nakano, (reproduced from Dharma Vol 42, No 1 & 2, 2007) - Compiled by Shin Nega, President of Ananaikyo

Remedies for Common Maladies-My Experience
By Mother A Mangalam

DRUMSTICK STIR FRY (MURUNGKAI PARETAL)

Ingredients:

Murungakai	- 5
Potato	- 3
Tomato	- 2
Pepper seeds	- 1 tsp
Cumin and fennel seeds	- 1 tsp each
Coconut milk / evaporated milk	- 4 tbsp
Grated coconut	- 2 tbsp
Ginger	- 1/2 thumb-sized
Garlic	- 4 pips
Coriander seeds	- 1/2 tsp
Mustard seeds	- 1/2 tsp
Curry leaves	- 2 sprigs
White gram dhal	- 1 tsp

Preparation:

- Peel the drumstick and cut into pieces together with potato and tomatoes.
- Roast the grated coconut.
- Blend the coconut, pepper, coriander seeds, cumin and fennel seeds.
- Smash ginger and garlic.



Method:

- Heat oil in a wok.
- Add in mustard seeds, ginger and garlic paste.
- Add in the blended ingredients. Stir well.
- Add in the drumstick and potatoes with a bit of water.
- Stir.
- Add in tomatoes and salt to taste.
- Add coconut milk and stir well.
- In another wok, fry mustard seeds, white gram dhal, curry leaves and add that into the stir-fried vegetables.
- Garnish with curry leaves.
- Serve hot.

'Feed your body with what it needs
Don't feed the body with what you like'

***Saying it
in Pictures.....
Activities @ Pure Life***

Children receiving sweets from their
beloved mother during Deepavali
celebration



Admiring products made by the
children



Children having fun activities with members
of the Alumni

The Malaysian Speaks

When we are overcome by a greedy society, the only chance at redemption requires painstaking cultivation of self-awareness and the altruism to use one's own privilege for the other than the self. The ripple effects of change can be massive, but it needs a catalyst - You.

- Shafiqah Othman, 'Cultivate self-awareness for positive change', Star Metro, 11th November 2022

"If the multi-ethnic and multi-religious community in Malaysia is ready to work together and respect each other's religious beliefs, Insyallah, all good intentions and efforts in dignifying religion and strengthening close relationships in the community of various religions, cultures and this nation can be attainable".

- DYMM Sultan Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, 'Un-Islamic to be hostile to followers of other religions', at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM)'s 30th Anniversary ceremony, Nation, The Star, 12th October 2022

To all the people out there, whether you are young or getting on in years, find a cause that you believe in and start volunteering. Look out for other like-minded individuals (usually through associations or clubs). Work together with them to advance the common cause that you have always wanted to push. Believe me, giving is so much better than receiving!

- Dr Siow Chun Lim, 'Personal rewards of volunteering', Your Opinion, The Star, 29th June 2022

Great minds of Yesteryears

"I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is over self."

-Aristotle

Reflections

Salient Thought for the Day

Your action must be vibrant. Your words must be sweet.

Lines to Memorize

He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor sorrows, nor desires, and who has renounced good and evil, he who is - thus full of devotion is dear to Me. He who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, the same in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, free from all attachment, (he is dear to Me).

Bhagavad-Gita

Lesson

Learn gentleness of speech, of step - gentleness in all your motions. Those who are in a higher state of evolution have great lightness in their touch and in their movements, in all they do. The tendency to be destructive, to overturn and to break indicates a wrong state of mind. When we move in perfect rhythm, we never destroy or hurt anything. Gentle manner and a sweet voice disarm all hatred and harshness. When we resist and assert ourselves, our action has no power other than to awaken a like spirit of resistance. Gentleness alone will overcome condemnation and anger.

Prayer

O Lord, fill me with the spirit of love.
May I never wound or injure any living thing.

May self-interest never dominate my actions.
Make me gentle and kindly in all my dealings with my fellow-men.

- Swami Paramananda

"Unless egoism and greed is dropped, avarice got rid of, and the mind made desireless, self-realization is not possible."

- Sai Baba

தீப்பால தான்பிறர்கட் செய்யற்க நோய்ப்பால
தன்னை யடல்வேண்டா தான் - குறள் 206

If one wishes not to be tormented by painful
reactions, do not harm others.

- Thirukkural

Do not look at anybody in terms of friend or foe,
brother or cousin; do not fritter away your
mental energies in thoughts of friendship or
enmity. Seeking the Self everywhere, be amiable
and equal-minded towards all, treating all alike.

- Adi Shankara

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harmony. We would love to
have your contributions.

Come, be a part of us.....



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ONE WORLD
ONE RACE

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