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## **MATAJI'S 73rd BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.**

The President of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha has great pleasure to announce that the 73rd birthday celebration of Shree Shree Mata Anandamayee will be held at the Varanasi Ashram from May 2nd to May 16th, 1968. Mataji is expected to be in Varanasi during this period.

You are most cordially invited to take part in the auspicious celebrations.

*R. S. V. P.*

**General Secretary**  
**Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha,**  
**Bhadaini, Varanasi.**

### **SPECIAL NOTE :**

Kindly note that with effect from this year individual invitation letters shall not be sent by post as usual. We sincerely hope that you will please appreciate our difficulties that it has become practically impossible to send invitation letters to countless devotees of Mataji individually.

We beg to be apologised for the same.

**General Secretary,**  
**Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha.**



*Courtesy: Sri M. K. Thacker, Dhanbad.*



*Katrasgarh (Dhanbad) January, 1968.*

*Just as there is a veil of ignorance for the individual,  
So there is also a door to Knowledge.*

## MĀTRI VĀNI

The *akṣara*\* (syllable or series of syllables) by which the mind is liberated is called *mantra*.† The *akṣara* is *cinmayī* (permeated as it were by consciousness), it is the *Śabda Brahman* (expression of the Supreme Reality), it is called the *Nāma Brahman*). Feel convinced that He will be found in the Name. Have firm faith that the seed that has been buried in your consciousness will without fail grow into a tree. Just as, after sowing a seed, it has to be watered and manured, similarly the seed in the form of a mantra will be made to sprout when provided with the necessary nourishment in the form of *satsang*. As you desire God, be it in a particular form or without form, so will you find Him,

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Never remain without His Presence, without His Name. While moving about, while eating and sleeping, at all times sustain the flow of His Name. A plant will grow more or less rapidly exactly according to the measure in which you provide it with water and manure. If you do not progress quickly, you should understand that it is entirely your own fault. Call to mind that you have not been able to go beyond the way of thinking fostered life after life and dedicate yourself wholly at His feet. The wrong lies all on your side.

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\* *Akṣara* means both "syllable" and "indestructible". The 'Om' is also known as *akṣara*.

† A play upon words that cannot be rendered into English. *Man* mind, *trāṇ* liberation sounds together almost like *mantra*.



tion. You all are relinquishing the highest Bliss and thus you actually are renunciates ! By abstaining from the Supreme you have become supreme renunciates.

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How wonderful is the play in God's creation ? The Self, the *Ātmā*, is of course one. Nevertheless, there are 'you and I, yours and mine,' and all the rest of it. If you cannot give up the "yours and mine," then be the eternal servant of the Lord. How many lives have you not spent in the world, in family life, in the delusion of "this is mine and that is mine." Say to yourself : "I am immortal, the Self—there is only one Brahman without a second—I am His and His alone." If the distinction between you and I remains, then let the 'you' be God. What is in ice ? Nothing but water. He is formless as well as with form. What is He with form ? He Himself in action—actionless action. Attraction means to be attracted to one's own Self.

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Where God is there is also *māyā*. When was He not ? Therefore, *māyā* is equally beginningless. Where is the end of it ? To whom does one feel attracted ? Whose manifestation is it ? Reflect deeply ! If all is His manifestation, then whose *māyā* is it ? Endeavour to find yourself, be it as the Lord's eternal servant, be it as the *Ātmā*. You are immortal—the Bliss of the Self. Why then has one to experience birth and death ? There is but the Self reposing within Itself.

## What does Sri Anandamayi Ma say ?

DR. PRAFULLA CHANDRA DATTA

( Translated from Hindi )

After meeting Sri Anandamayi Ma, many people quite naturally ask : "What is her teaching ? What advice does she give ? What does she say ?"

To such questions I usually reply : "Mataji has no particular doctrine. Her speciality is that she has no special teaching." Further, if nothing else occurs to my mind, I say : "Rather than repeating what I have heard her say, it will be better if you go and hear her talk for yourself. Listen to the words that fall from her lips, to the language of her laugh, the message of her gaze, of her touch – listen to what she says in words and to what she communicates in silence".

When I first came to Mataji, I became interested in those who had dedicated themselves at her feet. Some were *sannyāsis* and some householders, some wore *tulasi* beads round their necks and some *rudraksha* ; in one man's hand I saw a trident and in another's a staff and a begging-bowl. And some had nothing at all. One was absorbed in reciting Sanskrit hymns, another was an aspirant on the path of enquiry, a third melting away in deep emotion with tears of divine love glistening in his eyes. On getting to know them closer, I discovered that one person was a *sannyāsi* of the Tirtha line. His story was simply that one day Mataji had told him to take *Sannyāsā* from a certain Guru belonging to that line. Another one is a *Sannyāsi* of the Sarasvati line, a third one of that of Giri, and a fourth Puri. One man is a *Vaisnava*, another a *Saivite* and yet another a *Sakta*. All say : "Ma is guiding me by this particular path." After having met Ma, some young men and women have left their



homes to live the lives of Brahmacharis and Brahmacharinis. On the other hand, Mataji has advised some young people who wanted to live in the Ashram, to get married. She told them : "Remember, wherever you may be, this little child will always be with you".

In the centre of all this diversity stands Ma, directing the currents of all these variegated streams.

In the religious life of the world, a new phase has begun with the appearance of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He went through the manifold *sādhana*s of the various religions and accepted them all as paths to the Supreme.

In Sri Anandamayi Ma we observe the cultivation of all the different lines of approach. Just as all the mothers of the universe nurse their offspring, so is Mataji engaged in fostering all the multifarious currents of religious aspiration of the world. How then can we discover any special doctrine of Ma ?

Mataji says : "There is an infinite number of paths, countless ways of advancing and countless states of achievement." Are the states of spiritual achievement also innumerable ? Mataji very definitely says : "Certainly." But there is also something beyond, where none of these are, and not even any question of them.

The special characteristic of Creation is endless variety. Everything is His manifestation. He Himself is the multifarious natures and dispositions of His diverse creatures. No matter what be anyone's idiosyncrasy, no matter at what stage he may find himself, from there he has to start and go ahead. The practice that aims at realizing one's Self, at finding Truth, at recovering one's real treasure, is called *sādhana*. Whichever activity helps anyone to discover his own intrinsic wealth, this, according to Mataji, is his real duty (*svadharma*). Anything that may be obstructing this effort has to be avoided. There must not be the least self-deception in this.

A small incident may here be related. A young married woman would under the slightest instigation go into "*samādhi*". Or rather, people thought it was "*samādhi*". On such occasions she seemed lifeless, her limbs would turn cold. Once this happened in Mataji's presence. Mataji at once understood what was the matter with the girl. She whispered a "*mantra*" into her ear. And what was the "*mantra*?" "You will very soon receive a letter from your husband." From that day the "*samādhi*" of the young woman never occurred again and her behaviour became normal. Her states of lifelessness had been anything but *samādhi*.

Another incident of a different variety. A young man used to have visions of various kinds. He would for instance witness Sri Krishna tell Arjuna the Bhagavad Gita. He was profoundly moved by these visions. Tears would constantly flow from his eyes. Mataji told him: "Don't lose your self-control. Seekers after Truth must never be overpowered by anything. Fully conscious and wide awake, with the attitude of a spectator, they must watch everything that happens."

The condition of a lady was discussed who used to get *bhāva samādhis* during *kirtana*. Mataji said: "She herself admits that she feels extremely happy while in a state of *bhāva*. Therefore it is obvious that she is in a different state at other times." Mataji also pointed out that it was often difficult to distinguish brass from gold. With utter truthfulness one has to tread the path of Truth. Mataji understands all the stages of *sādhana*.

Once someone remarked: "The Bengalis are highly emotional. For a little while they do *kirtana* and dance with ecstasy and a little later they give way to depression. What is the use of such momentary elation?"

Mataji said: 'It is true that momentary elation has no great value. All the same, let them have their way; at

least for a little while they are turned in His direction." Mataji always advises everyone to direct their efforts towards God.

A gentleman once took leave : "Ma, may I go home ?" Mataji laughed : "Yes, prepare to go home. Your present home is temporary. Look, the wonder of it is that everyone is eager to go home, yearning for his home. Only people do not know where their real home is. Pitaji, what you call home is only a dharmasala, at a moment's notice you have to quit."

Those who want to know their true home, for them Mataji makes arrangements according to their own uniqueness. Mataji has said : "Anyone, to whatever faith or sect he may belong, is given by this body whatever help he requires on his own path. It is his own Self that is assisting him—if only he will be good enough to accept the assistance."

How beautiful Ma's words are. She often says : "Always keep a piece of sugar candy (*misri*) in your mouth."

What good will this do ? While working in the office, while reading and writing, while chatting with my friends, part of my consciousness will constantly be engaged in tasting the sweetness of the sugar. What is meant by sugar candy ? The Name, God's holy Name. Mataji says : "In the Name He Himself is present. For other forms of worship one has to go to a temple or an ashram ; but for his presence in the Name one need not go to any particular place. In the Name His supremely dear Presence is ever within our reach, no matter where we may be."

Mataji says : "The Lord's name is like tamarind. The more you repeat His name the purer will your mind become. By using tamarind, dirt is removed. When vessels are clean they show their true substance. To repeat the Name means to scrub. By scrubbing, your real Nature will stand revealed ; this is *Jñāna* ( Knowledge ). By the flood of Knowledge all *karma* will be washed away."

There are already innumerable paths, what need is there of a new one? Mataji says: "There are so many different kinds of toys. The game has been played so often. Whichever toy you choose, you will come to understand that it is all the same. Saying: 'I cannot do it, it cannot be achieved' just means courting indolence. The day that is gone never returns. You are so busy playing with the toys of the world that you find no time for the real game."

"Mataji, even though being with you, I do not feel satisfied!" a young girl complained.

Mataji smiled and began to relate a story.

"A man went to the bazar for shopping. When he got there he found it very crowded and noisy. He thought: 'Let the confusion subside and then I shall do my work.' He waited for quite a long time. At last the crowd dispersed and it became quiet. But when he approached the stalls; he found that everything worth buying had been sold.

"In the play of the world there is always some confusion and trouble. This is a necessary part of the game. Face the difficulties and you will also get the goods."

"Ma, my mind does not keep still, what to do?" is a frequent question. Mataji's smiling answer: "I do not notice that your mind is agitated as yet. Has it become really restless in search of Him? After it has become thoroughly agitated with yearning after the Real, then only can it become still."

A married woman asked: "Ma, in my home nobody approves of *pūjā*, *japa*, meditation and the like. My husband, father-in-law and brother-in-law, all are opposing it. What am I to do?" Mataji said: "You observe so many religious vows in your homes; don't you keep a fast on Tuesdays and fast and do puja all night on Sivaratri? Will you try to take up the following practice, mother? One day a month, from morning till night, regard everyone as a manifestation of God. Your husband, father-in-law, brother-in-law, consider

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them to be God in different guises. That day look at your children as child Krishna and Kumari Devi ; whoever comes to your house, be they guests, beggars, hawkers, treat them all as forms of Narayana. If on that day you are visited by any sorrow or trouble, welcome them as messengers of the Lord. By continuing with this practice you will find circumstances becoming favourable to the worship of God. First of all do this once every month, then once a week and you will observe that the happiness you feel on that day will influence all the rest of the week."

Mataji continued : "Everyone should advance along one particular line. He who takes the path of the lover of God will realize Him as the blissful embodiment of Supreme Love. He who takes the path of Knowledge will realize Him as Knowledge Itself, as the formless Brahman. Just as one and the same individual is son, husband and father, so the One Brahman is Being, Consciousness, Bliss. From whichever angle a person approaches God, thus will he find Him, the ONE. If he progresses by yoga, he will realize eternal Union. He will have to go beyond the opposites of union and separation. And in the final attainment, the question of eternal and non-eternal, of beyond and not beyond, does not exist."

Mataji says, like Sri Ramakrishna, that there are as many approaches as there are sects. How then do all these various avenues end in the same Goal ? I want to reach Vaikunth, a how will I get to Kailash ? I want liberation, how can I feel eternal love ? Mataji says : "Everything is contained in everything. Just as an infinite number of trees are potentially contained in the tiny seed."

Mataji's words are not mere words, they are blossoms of a marvelous fragrance. Mataji's words are sparks in which eternal fire has been stored. Mataji's words are songs swinging on the waves of divine ecstasy. They are mantras by whose power man's life opens out and begins to flower. They

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are streams of Light that swallow up the darkness of doubt and argument. How can I carry to you the current of that fragrance, that fire, that divine ecstasy, that mantric power, those streams of Light? Those only who have listened to Mataji's words know how much magic is contained in the sweet sayings of the miraculously sweet Ma Anandamayi.

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# From the Diary of a European

*Melita Maschmann*

(X)

( Translated from German )

*Calcutta, 29th December 1963.*

Perhaps there is no country like India where people know from the depths of their hearts how sorely we need saints and sages. The Indian people's spiritual destiny and capacity has provided them with God-intoxicated men and women right up to our own days. It has taught them to recognize, love and adore the Holy and the Wise, regardless of the faith to which they may belong.

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Yesterday afternoon, Mataji, for a whole hour sat on her bed completely absorbed, without the slightest movement. Only her eyelids raised themselves off and on, but her glance reminded me of that of a blind person: it was turned towards the world without perceiving it. Her whole being expressed contemplation—the contemplation of God. Reflection of His Light by the mirror of the soul. A particle of this light occasionally reflects in us. Then only we perceive it.

Yesterday an elderly man sat in front of Ma. I was told that he was the principal of a college. Suddenly his face tore open like a bleeding wound: suffering—for himself, for the world, for God. There is nothing that can be concealed at such a moment. Later, when Ma "returned," her glance rested for a long time on the face of the gentleman, and suddenly, he began to cry. He shut his eyes and tears trickled down from under his closed eyelids. After a while he full length fell at Mataji's feet. Then he stood up and went away.



It sometimes happens that a person who leaves Mataji as this man did, transforms his home into an Ashram the next day, or puts on the robe of a *Sādhu*. I have heard many reports of how, without acting, Mataji has changed the lives of people. Usually, much less ostentatiously, but not any less effectively. Always in the direction of what she calls the goal of human existence, namely the Realization of God.

Very strange, this action in non-action. Holiness that acts of itself, by its very being and its radiation.

Christian holiness always seems to be coupled with suffering. I do not know enough about it. But the unavoidable presence of the crucified Christ binds sanctity and suffering indissolubly together. So it seems to me. According to the Catholic doctrine, even the saints, as created spirits, are not established beyond sin. They will ever be pained at their imperfections, however radiant their purity may appear to those who are allowed to contact them.

The Indian Sage realizes with his whole being: *aham brahmāsmi* (I am the *Brahman*). In this there is not the shadow of a doubt as to his own self. He realizes absolute perfection in himself. Any kind of doubt would only prove the incompleteness of his identification with the Brahman.

I have often regretted that I am not a trained student of the science of comparative religion. Yet, at certain moments it becomes clear to me how much easier this makes it for me, since the burden of concepts and categories does not interfere with my impartiality. The discussion between the different religions may be important and fruitful. But actual contact is made when a stroke of intuition throws light into the pre-conceptual depths of the other faith and we suddenly see: here also is the reflection of the highest Truth. To such knowledge Mataji helps me more than prolonged and profound study. Perhaps I am specially privileged in this matter. I am reminded of the

pathetic ejaculation of a scientist of religion who jokingly said that people of his profession were either too bigotted or too clever. In other words: they either approach a foreign religion with the prejudices of their own faith or they fail to understand the peculiarity of the religious problems which they regard from a foreign point of view. How lucky that I am neither specially pious nor specially clever.

*January 5th, 1964.*

Mataji today on the platform at Howrah, the largest Railway Station of Calcutta. I am told it has more traffic than any other Railway Station in the whole of Asia. It is impossible for a European to imagine such a babel. Whole villages, whole native tribes, hundreds of soldiers, sadhus, kulis, distinguished families, school children, groups of pilgrims, begging cripples, beggar children, chaprassis, all sorts of tradesmen and vendors—all of them running hither and thither, stumbling over huge piles of luggage and making an ear-splitting hubbub.

And Mataji in the midst of this infernal tohuwabohu, surrounded by innumerable inquisitive onlookers, hailed by her devotees. She stands quietly, wrapped in her white clothes, with her hair hanging down loosely, smiling her familiar and yet very remote smile. Stillness around her, peace in her eyes—*nirvāna* in the midst of misery!

*Puri, January 1964.*

After the inescapable teeming masses of Calcutta, Puri is a veritable paradise—at least the seashore where the Ashram is situated. Only for sleeping and for my meals I go to the hotel, all the rest of the time I spend sitting by the sea. Never before have I known such a wonderful beach. I am told it continues for over ten miles in a perfectly straight line and with the same width. The sea constantly beats against the coast with such vehemence that one is seized and dragged away by the waves like a toy. It is impossible to

swim here, but a special charm lies in letting oneself be overpowered by the roaring billows and carried back to the coast. Here and there fishermen have spread their long brownish nets. Their boats are still made in the same way as thousand years ago.

As a rule Mataji comes out of the Ashram shortly before sunset and sits on a broad pedestal of cement which has been specially constructed for her *darśana*. Her back is turned towards the house and she faces the sea.

Rarely are there more than twenty or thirty people and there is hardly ever any conversation. Mataji herself is very still here. Not absorbed in herself and closed up, but wide open, listening and seeing, in silent communion with the cosmic powers. Relaxed, she is leaning against a cushion, only her head sometimes slowly turns in a semicircle and her eyes calmly wander over the horizon, often returning to the first star whose silvery sparkle is so powerful that it is maintained right through the glow of the evening sky.

Yesterday it was night before she went inside. For almost three hours she had sat in her place, transfigured into an almost awe-inspiring depersonalization. It seemed obvious that she did not even notice the people who knelt before her to do obeisance. Her gaze seemed to penetrate right down to the depths of the universe. As long as the evening sky was beaming, one could observe the reflection of that depths in Mataji's eyes and face. It struck me that when I had my first *darśana* of Mataji, about two years ago, I was reminded of a mighty, well-grown tree. Something of this characteristic of a tree could now again be distinctly felt in Mataji. On thousands of leaves the tree exposes its heart to the sun, wind, the roaring of the breakers, the rain, the starlight. Their manifold message is not filtered and misinterpreted by the brain, but penetrates right to its marrow, to the furthest parts of its roots and is assimilated into its very substance.

A like openness for the cosmic was in Mataji last night. This is most probably a distinctive mark of her being. How could it be otherwise? For him who has reached the *Aham Brahmasmi*, the sun, the ocean, the evening star, the wind, are brothers and sisters with whom he converses in a universal language of confidence. I believe, even these metaphors are insufficient. Very likely, Mataji would say that she has no dialogue with the sea. 'Dialogue' is a concept coined by our thinking in duality.

This evening, Mataji was off and on talking to people who had come from a neighbouring town. Then again she remained silent for a long time; but I had the impression that we were all included in her monologue with the sea and the nightly sky. After she had gone inside, someone remarked: "How fortunate that God is present not only as water, that is to say without form, but also manifests as ice, which means 'with form.' If He were only water, I should feel frightened. Who could understand His voice? But in Mataji He speaks to us so that we can understand and love Him." This very aptly expressed also my own feelings.

My host in Calcutta had said: "The same Holy Ghost that revealed Itself in Christ, Buddha and other Enlightened Ones, speaks through Mataji."

This morning there was another convincing token of how concrete and vital Mataji's relation to Cosmic Powers is. We went for a stroll along the seashore. After a while, Mataji remained standing on the strip of wet sand that is regularly inundated by the largest breakers. For a long time she gazed at the ocean with calm attention. Suddenly her face relaxed in a radiant smile and she said: "The ocean is giving me *darśana*." And when a little later a wave flowed over her feet: "With this touch it greets me."

All this did not sound either solemn, nor theatrical, nor playful; it had a great, beautiful simplicity.

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