



# Self-Realization Fellowship

## VOLUNTARY LEAGUE Newsletter

A Report on Our Recent Activities

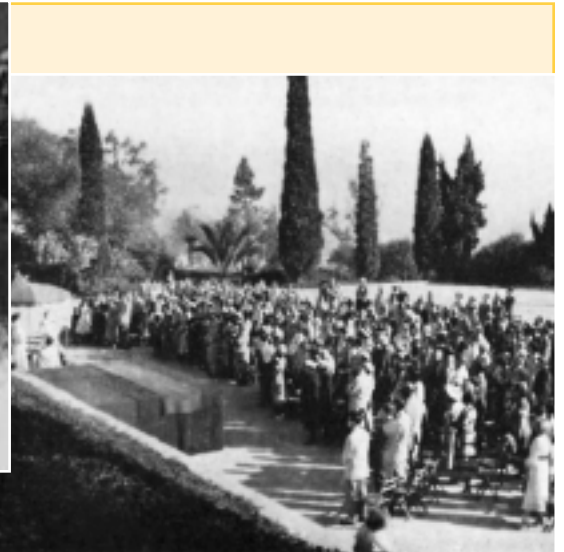
FALL 2003

### 10 Years Since Paramahansa Yogananda's Centennial — A Decade of Growth, A Time of Challenges

During the preparations for the 1993 SRF Convocation, Self-Realization Fellowship *sanghamata* and president Sri Daya Mata spoke these prophetic words of guidance to a group of monastics:

*“With the centennial celebration of Gururji’s birth, the work will grow to another level. Master laid the foundation, and we disciples have endeavored to make it strong for the ages. Now a building of any size that God wants can be erected upon it. But you will have to build that building. And you will succeed in doing so by working in the same way we have: by striving to be completely in tune with our blessed Guru.”*

The speed with which the pre-



Shown at right are participants at the 1951 SRF Convocation—the

last one held during our Guru’s lifetime. Standing on the open-air porch of the second floor of the Administration Building, he addressed the devotees assembled below on the tennis court. Now, thanks to our monks’ digital restoration of the audio recording of that event, released this summer, his words can be heard by you all—a soul-stirring testimony to the direct power of God flowing through the Guru to all his disciples:

*“I want to remain in the steady spirit of God, that I can give you something, saturate you, bathe you in the Ocean of Infinity, and you change forever, forever, forever in this Ocean of Light which I behold....”*

*“Christ said: ‘Seek ye the kingdom of God first.’ Not only those that are monks, but all people.... But how shall you seek? Through Self-Realization, the greatest dispensation that Christ and Babaji sent.... Self-Realization will take you to your highest goal: God, our own Beloved.”*

Also included on this recording is Paramahansaji’s inspiring talk at the Easter Sunrise service at SRF Lake Shrine, 1951.



dicted growth came to pass was remarkable. In ten short years, the number of our centers and meditation groups around the world grew from 430 to nearly 600. Attendance at Convocation tripled from 1992 to 1993; and has never returned to pre-1993 levels. A beautiful temple, re-

reat, and ashram were built at our Lake Shrine, along with major new centers in New York, Atlanta, Portland, Sacramento, Seattle, and as far away as Perth, Australia; Bogotá, Colombia; Cuenca, Ecuador; Turin, Italy; and elsewhere.

Paramahansa Yogananda’s land-

## “The Honey and the Hive”

In early 2002, Sri Daya Mata met with the monks and nuns from all of Paramahansa Yogananda’s ashram centers. Daya Mataji and the other members of the Board of Directors—Mrinalini Mata, Brother Anandamoy, Uma Mata, Brother Vishwananda, Sister Shivani, and Brother Achalananda—each spoke about the current and future mission of SRF.

“As our Guru’s work continues to grow,” Daya Mataji told the gathering, “we need to consider how best to respond to the press of operational matters of this worldwide organization. We must carefully assess how to most effectively disseminate his teachings worldwide and best serve our ever-increasing membership—while taking utmost care to preserve the strength of our spiritual foundations....”

“Our Guru often said, ‘Church is the hive and God is the honey.’ While we are making necessary and major changes, we must take the time to ensure that we continue to fill the hive of Master’s organization with the honey of our love for God and our own Self-realization. Each and every change we make in the organizational structure—and also the way we carry on our daily duties and interactions with others—must be reflections of our Guru’s sublime how-to-live principles. This is only possible when our spiritual life is vibrantly expressing itself in all our words and actions. Let us be known first and foremost as Gurudeva’s disciples who strive every day to live, serve, and love God in a spirit of divine friendship, harmony, and attunement. In Guruji’s own words, “If you all work together with love, harmony, kindness, and humility, the work will sweep the world.”



organizational services the unconditional love, personal caring, and divine joy that is the living spirit of our Guru.

A great deal of progress has been made in the blessed work of “building a house of God.” Even as we go forward, though, day-to-day operating expenses have also accelerated substantially—expenses that must be met in order to fulfill Paramahansaji’s “blueprint” for the spread of the SRF teachings.

As with any major organization, our computers, telecommunications systems, printing presses, audio/video recording gear, and other vital office equipment must be periodically upgraded or replaced. Wages and healthcare benefits have to be allocated for the skilled and dedicated employees who help us serve you. Food and lodging must be provided for our monks and nuns, as well as healthcare for elderly monastics who for so many years have served Paramahansaji’s work. Our Guru’s shrines, and the public SRF

mark commentary on the Bhagavad Gita was published—as well as his acclaimed spiritual interpretation of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, a third large volume of his *Collected Talks and Essays*, and more than 30 other new books in English and other languages. Before his centennial, Paramahansaji was of course well-known to readers of his *Autobiography of a Yogi*; since 1993, however, public and media interest has grown exponentially. He has become recognized as “the father of Yoga in the West” and “an avatar of yoga for the coming world civilization.”

In Paramahansaji’s ashrams, the first generation of disciples who so lovingly and beautifully served the Guru during his lifetime and for the half-century since his *mahasamadhi*, and the expanded family of monks and nuns who will be carrying on into the future, are focusing on how best to respond to this growth (See sidebar above.)

Every department in SRF—Membership Services, Correspondence, Publications, Spiritual Counseling, Public Affairs, Planning and Building, Center and Temple Departments—is analyzing how to serve our Guru’s rapidly growing spiritual family with the greatest efficiency and economy, while continuing to infuse in all our



Your support of our audiovisual program through the years has enabled us to record many hours of stories, reminiscences, and reflections by those disciples who spent time with Paramahansa Yogananda. In the video shown here, released last year, Sri Mrinalini Mata shares fascinating stories of how the Guru trained her for the editing of his talks and writings for publication, as well as other deeply inspiring memories of her life with him.

This video also includes brief segments of archival motion-picture footage of Paramahansa Yogananda and Swami Sri Yukteswar.

## Films and Recordings of Paramahansa Yogananda

For several years, a dedicated band of monastics at the Mother Center has been working to preserve precious archival film footage of Paramahansa Yogananda. Digital technology is used to restore and stabilize old films, some dating from the 1920s—a priceless legacy of inspiration for you and for future generations.

This summer we have just released a documentary covering the great Guru's early years in America. (*See photo at right.*) Written, narrated, and produced by our monastics, the presentation includes several segments of motion-picture footage—brief but powerfully inspiring—some never before seen by the public. Restoration of more archival films is underway. This is made possible by your generous assistance, which enables us to take advantage of the sometimes costly technology required to complete this labor of love.

meditation gardens enjoyed by many thousands of souls each year, must be maintained and preserved. The list of expenses is not a short one!

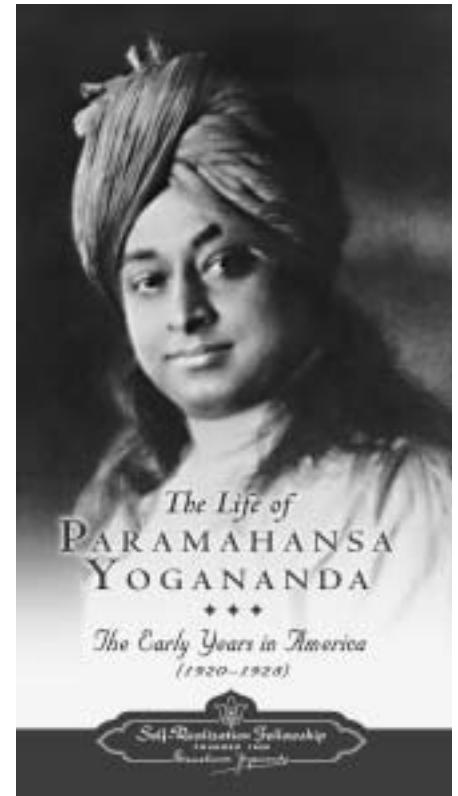
In *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Paramahansa Yogananda said, “Lord, Thou hast given this monk a large family!” He created Self-Realization Fellowship for every one of us. And it will unfailingly thrive and grow as we continue to work together as a spiritual family.

We invite you to help us continue to build the Master's work, a spiritual home for his ever-growing family of souls—a home that rests upon the foundation laid by Paramahansaji himself and the devoted disciples who have followed in his footsteps.

### New Scriptures, Precious Memories

“We who were with Master have an obligation to focus our time on certain vital tasks he entrusted to us—the publications of his writings and lectures, documenting and setting in place the guidance he gave on so many aspects of the future of the work, and more.”

So wrote Sri Daya Mata in a letter last year to all ashram residents and employees of SRF. With other dedicated monastics gradually assuming more of the day-to-day responsibilities of the organization, Sri Daya Mata and other senior direct disciples have been able to give more time to these



sacred endeavors.

As we go to press, Sri Daya Mata—who is a veritable “living history” of SRF—is working on her memoirs about her many years of living in the Guru's presence and receiving his spiritual guidance on the path of Kriya Yoga and love for God.

As the Guru's personal secretary

### Online Ordering Comes to SRF

We are delighted to announce that online ordering from our catalog of books, recordings, and other items is now available on our website. Just log on to [www.yogananda-srf.org/catalog/index.html](http://www.yogananda-srf.org/catalog/index.html), register, and select any number of items to be purchased.

Ordering online from SRF is easy, convenient, and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year—no matter your location in the world. In order to shop online, you will need a Visa or Mastercard. The site has state-of-the-art security features, ensuring that your personal and credit card information remains secure and private.

All orders are received, processed, and shipped to you by 4<sup>th</sup> Way Fulfillment Company, with whom we have contracted to simplify our operations as well as reduce the overall labor costs of fulfilling orders.

Our online catalog offers several other appealing features. Items that you wish to send as presents can be gift-wrapped. The site allows you to search by category of interest, such as meditation, self-improvement, prayer, relationships, etc. And you can view all items available in English, Italian, Spanish, German, Portuguese, and French.

In the short time that the online catalog has been operational, orders have come in from Argentina, Perú, Canada, South Africa, England, New Zealand, Italy, Scotland, the Netherlands, Japan, Indonesia, Iceland, and Belgium—and of course from all over the United States!

While our members and friends from around the world will benefit from our new online ordering capabilities, we also hope that this feature will attract other truth-seeking souls new to the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda.

and assistant, recording his instructions in both spiritual and organizational matters, Daya Mataji witnessed the evolution of his thoughts and plans over the last twenty years of his life on earth. Much of her time is now given to organizing Paramahansaji's directives for his mission, and other historical material pertaining to his life and work, to ensure that Paramahansaji's wisdom-filled guidance for the organization he founded and nurtured at God's behest will endure for the ages.

We are grateful that Sri Daya Mata can now devote more of her time to these important undertakings, which for so many years had to be put aside due to the press of other organizational demands. As always, her service will strengthen Paramahansaji's society and bring great inspiration to us all.

As most of you know, Sri Mrinalini Mata was personally chosen by the Guru for the monumental task of preparing his manuscripts, lectures, dictated notes, and other material for permanent publication. Since her completion of his comprehensive two-volume translation of and commentary on the Bhagavad Gita a few years ago, she has been devoting heart and soul to another eagerly anticipated work—*The Second Coming of Christ*—our Guru's revelatory interpretation of Jesus' life and teachings.

Sri Daya Mata has worked closely with Mrinalini Mata in preparing this epoch-making scripture, which is now nearing completion. "It is my hope and prayer," Daya Mata has written, "that in this new millennium the publication of my Guru's long-awaited *Second Coming of Christ* kindle the flame of love divine in the hearts of all

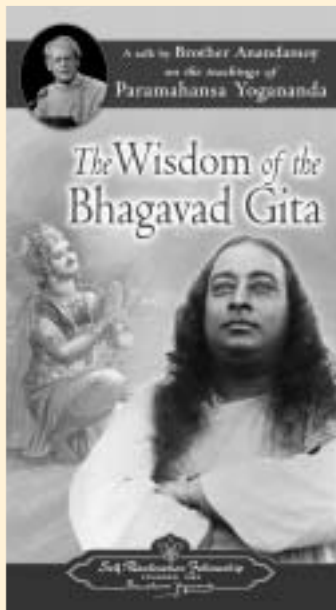


who read these pages. The message herein illumines the universal path that welcomes and embraces persons of every race, nationality, and religion. May the surpassing truth and inspiration set forth in these volumes help to usher the world into an enlightened era of peace, unity, world brotherhood, and communion with our one Father-Mother-Friend-Beloved God."

How thrilling to look forward to understanding the essence of Christ's soul-liberating teachings through our Guru's personal communion with Jesus. Your support will help in the preparation and publication of this and other books by Paramahansa Yogananda—and books and recordings by his first generation of disciples, whose memories of their blessed life with our revered Master inspire us all.



It is always a joy to share updates on our ongoing progress with those of you who have shown interest in the spiritual work begun by Paramahansa Yogananda. We look forward to reporting on further events in our next newsletter. May you ever feel the divine blessings and nearness of God and our Guru.



Brother Anandamoy's new video "Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita"

Among the *Aims and Ideals of Self-Realization Fellowship* set forth by our Guru is: "To reveal the complete harmony and basic oneness of original Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ and original Yoga as taught by Bhagavan Krishna; and to show that these principles of truth are the common scientific foundation of all true religions."

With Paramahansaji's voluminous commentary on Jesus' teachings in the Gospels hastening toward completion, we are also happy to share with you a wonderful video presentation on the Guru's insights into the Bhagavad Gita.

This powerful talk by Brother Anandamoy, a direct disciple of our Guru, was given to an audience of more than 4,000 at one of our annual Convocations in Los Angeles. Shining throughout are Brother Anandamoy's compassionate wisdom, delightful wit, and inspiring personal stories of his years with Paramahansa Yogananda.

It is because of your generosity in helping us to acquire and maintain video recording and editing equipment that the classes at our Convocations can be preserved and shared with you all.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP • 3880 San Rafael Avenue • Los Angeles, California 90065-3298 U.S.A. • [www.yogananda-srf.org](http://www.yogananda-srf.org)

Self-Realization Fellowship is a tax exempt, nonprofit religious organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and the California Franchise Tax Board as a public charity. Accordingly, contributions to Self-Realization Fellowship are deductible to the maximum extent permitted by law for income tax and for estate tax purposes. Deductible donations can be made

through outright gifts in the form of cash, appreciated securities, real or personal property, and other types of assets, and deferred gifts in the form of charitable trusts. Bequests eligible for a charitable estate tax deduction can be made by naming the organization as a beneficiary in, among other things, a will, a trust, or an insurance policy.

Copyright © 2003 Self-Realization Fellowship. All rights reserved.

Printed on recycled paper ♻️

10264-32