

The Bede Griffiths Sangha Newsletter

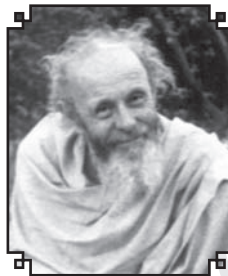
The Bede Griffiths Sangha is committed to the search for the truth at the heart of all religions

Spring 2009 Volume 10 Issue 8

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Preparations are under way for our celebration of the centenary of the birth of Swami Abhishiktananda, who, together with Father Monchanin, inaugurated the ashram at Shantivanam in 1950. In anticipation of this event we are including in this edition of the Newsletter an account of Abhishiktananda's early life in Brittany and an extract from one of his books on the subject of advaita.



Abhishiktananda



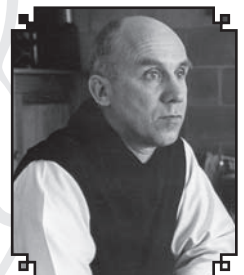
The Sangha logo



Brother Martin



Kim Nataraja



Thomas Merton

The articles in this newsletter were collected by Tim Glazier and put together by members of the working group. Artistic designer Ricardo Insua-Cao

Welcome to the
Spring 2009
Bede Griffiths Sangha
Newsletter

This Newsletter is published three times a year to provide a forum for articles and comment within the remit of the Sangha to search for the truth at the heart of all religions, to record Sangha activities and give details of future events and resources available.

Correspondence and contributions for inclusion in future editions are welcome and will be considered by the editorial team.

To receive a printed copy of the Newsletter, please send your details to Jane Lichnowski (see below) for inclusion on our data base. The Newsletter is free but an annual donation towards costs will be invited with the Spring edition. Copies, for friends or interested organisations, can be provided.

Current and back numbers of the Newsletter are available on www.bede.griffithsangha.org.uk

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details of Meditation Groups,**

Abhishiktananda in Britany

As a curtain raiser to the meeting to celebrate Abhishiktananda's centenary in July 2010, here is a short account of his early life in Brittany. It is written by Shirley du Boulay and taken from her selection of his writings published by Orbis books. We reprint it here with their kind permission.

Swami Abhishiktananda would have been seen at any time as a remarkable man, for he was one-pointed, eloquent, uncompromising, bold, passionate and fearless. So what puts this Breton born country boy among the most significant spiritual figures of the twentieth century, deserving a place in a series called 'Modern Spiritual Masters'? He has earned it for the courage with which he endured the anguish of being torn between two great religious traditions, for the radiance which emanated from him after his great 'awakening' experience and for his legacy of diaries, books and letters, which confirm that he was not only a pioneer in interfaith relations, but a mystic on a par with Meister Eckhart, St John of the Cross, Ramana Maharshi and the Dalai Lama.

The story of Abhishiktananda is a story of transformation. It tells how Henri Le Saux, the eldest son of a large, devoutly Roman Catholic family, became a Benedictine monk who was taken over by a passionate longing to go to India. In 1948 he achieved his ambition, the monk became a sannyasi and Dom Henri became Swami Abhishiktananda. He co-founded Shantivanam, an ashram in Tamil Nadu, and after many years of travel and exploration of India spent the last years of his life living as a hermit in a hut in the high Himalayas. So the devout Roman Catholic struggled with the enchantment of Hinduism and the Benedictine monk, initially a typical product of French Catholicism before the Second Vatican Council, found himself at the cutting edge of twentieth century spirituality. It is the story of a man searching for God, prepared to give up everything and to

risk all in the search. A man caught in contradiction but ultimately finding reconciliation in the truth beyond the opposites.

He was born Henri Le Saux in 1910 in St Briac, a little town in the north of France, in Brittany. His parents ran a grocery shop and were devout Roman Catholics, very French - indeed very Breton. Henri was the eldest by seven years, thus becoming almost a second father to his siblings and developing a special, very deep, relationship with his mother - after all he had her to himself for nearly eighty years. He was also a practical man, which somehow one does not expect but which perhaps owes something to his place in the family.

He was a brilliant student and in 1929 he became a Benedictine monk at the monastery of Kergonan in south Brittany. He did this completely wholeheartedly, writing very typically that 'A monk cannot accept mediocrity - only extremes are appropriate for him.' [i] He was not a man for half measures and already he felt that God asked for everything. He was, as a great friend said of him, 'madly in love with God.'

His monastic routine was interrupted when he did his military service and again in 1940 when general mobilisation was decreed and he served as a foot soldier. He was captured in the Mayenne when his unit was surrounded by German troops. He managed to escape before the names were taken and he somehow contrived to borrow a bike and rode home to St Briac: his practical streak proved useful.

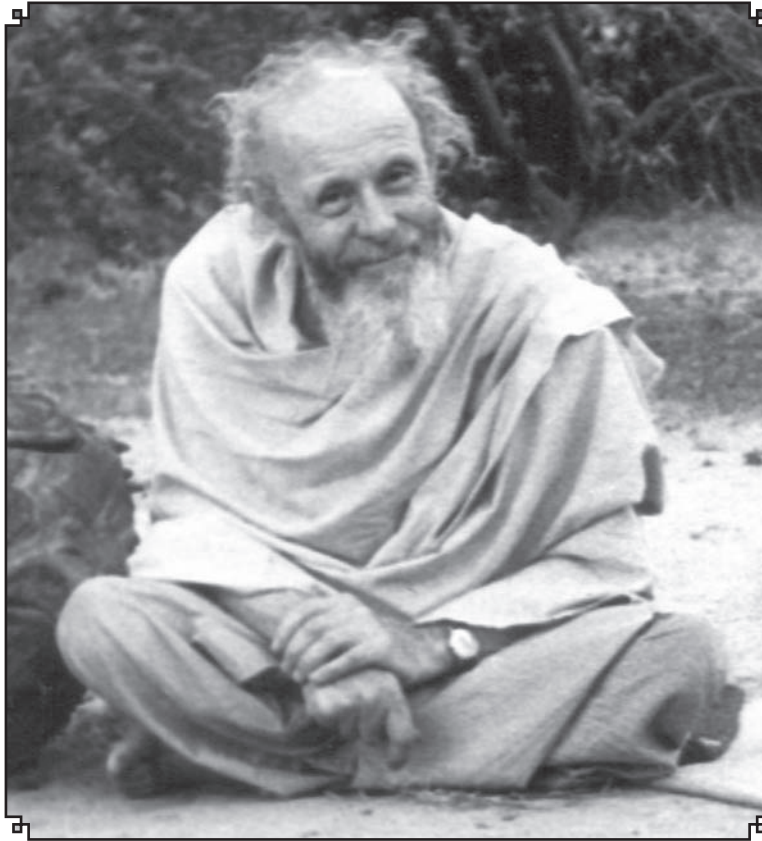
1910-1948

On his return to the monastery he was made Cérémonaire, the monk in charge of the liturgy, one of the most important jobs in the monastery. Even in those days when liturgy was strict, he was considered an exceptionally punctilious liturgist. When we see how he developed in his long years in India this has a comic side to it - he himself would laugh when he remembered the way he insisted that everything was done 'Just so. Spick and span.' Despite this fussiness and strictness he was very popular with the monks because he did everything in such a kind and friendly way. He was also librarian and taught Church History and Patristics.

He was a good and devoted monk and it must have been assumed that he would see out his days in the monastery of Kergonan. However he had, unknown to absolutely everyone, the monks, his Abbot, even his devoted family, become obsessed with the idea that he must go to India. This can be dated with some accuracy to 1934, when he only 24 years old and even before he was ordained. How he acquired this passion to go to India has an intriguing element of mystery in it, as it seems that a few articles in magazines sent to Kergonan by a Belgian monastery were the only possible source of his interest. His friend Canon Lemarié, with whom he corresponded all his life, was mystified too, as there was little on the subject in the library at Kergonan and certainly none of the great scriptures such as the Upanishads or the Bhagavad Gita. At most there were a few reviews of the missions to the East.

Henri's attitude to his monastery was

ambivalent. On the one hand he had taken a vow of stability, requiring him to remain in his monastery for the rest of his life; also he loved Kergonan, only weeks before his death admitting that Kergonan had been the background of



all that he had been able to do in later life. On the other hand there were times when the negative side could not be contained and he admitted to a distaste for the monastery and conceded that life in the monastery did not fulfill him; indeed that 'It was in my deep dissatisfaction that my desire to come to India was born.'^[ii]

There is no certainty as to what drew him to India, though there is the possible influence of a missionary uncle, who the family had been encouraged to think died a martyr's death and was thus an inspiration to the young Henri. Somehow the air of mystery adds to the force of his passion: it seems so unreasonable, based on so little direct information, that it was as if there was something in his blood that he simply could not deny. This feeling is reinforced

by the determination he showed in actually getting there at a time when the passage to India was not the well-worn route it has now become. His efforts started immediately after the death of his beloved mother - he would not have left France while she was alive. He went to see his Abbot, explaining that he wanted to go to India to establish the contemplative monastic life there in an Indian form; or if that was not possible at least to live in India as a hermit.

For four years he wrote letters to likely people in India, endured disappointments, vacillations, hesitancy and the changing of ecclesiastical minds. He persisted and at last, on July 26, 1948, he left a sad monastic community behind him, for he was a popular monk, and set sail for India - the fulfilment of a dream that had had

him in its grip for fourteen years. He was never to return to France.

[i] To Raymond Macé, October 27, 1929, *Life*, 6.

[ii] *Ibid*, March 13, 1967, *Life*, 13.

The anthology from which this is taken is one of the Modern Spiritual Masters series, Swami Abhishiktananda: Essential Writings. There is also a biography, written by Shirley du Boulay, The Cave of the Heart: The Life of Swami Abhishiktananda. Both are published by Orbis Books and are available in paperback from bookshops or from:

Alban Books Ltd,
14 Belford Road
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Birth of Christ in the Soul

Kim Nataraja 

The Sangha was delighted to welcome Kim Nataraja to speak at the Advent retreat, held at Ammerdown last December. This is her summary of her presentation.

The joyful period of Advent is not only a celebration of a historical event, the birth of Jesus of Nazareth here on earth more than 2000 years ago, but more importantly it also celebrates a potential cosmic event, beyond time and space, that can happen at any moment in any one of us, which Meister Eckhart and St Augustine called the Birth of Christ in the Soul.

Supporting the potentiality of this event are the ideas of the Perennial Philosophy, which consists of the common ground of all the world's great religions and philosophies. Fr Bede introduced many of us to this tradition, of which Meister Eckhart is an ideal representative. This philosophy proclaims uncontroversially that there is an Ultimate Reality that is both universally immanent in creation and transcendent to it. The reality we can apprehend with the senses, including ourselves, is embedded in and sustained by this all pervading Reality. There is consequently something in the highest part of the soul of every human being that is similar in essence to this Ultimate Reality. This innate commonality allows a true relationship between us and Ultimate Formlessness. It allows us to truly, intuitively, experientially 'know' this 'Reality', which Meister Eckhart as well as the Upanishads called 'Being, Consciousness and Bliss' – Saccidananda - and become one with it.

The essential quality of this Higher Reality is that it cannot be reached by the senses or the rational mind:



it cannot be expressed clearly in language. It is only actual practical spiritual experience that validates the truth expressed in this philosophy. Fr Bede says: *“When the human mind reaches a certain point of experience it comes to this same understanding and this is what constitutes the Perennial Philosophy.”*

Meditation is a spiritual discipline that leads to this experience. It allows us to go beyond all thoughts and images of self, others and God, beyond the

personal 'ego'. It helps us to realise how our thoughts and images build up a

false sense of self, our 'ego', how they colour our perception of ordinary material reality and even how we are imprisoned in it, taking it for the only reality and denying the possibility of the existence of an all-embracing Ultimate Reality.

Meditation does so by making us focus, by “fixing the mind on God” (Meister

Eckhart). By paying one-pointed attention we switch from the limited rationality of the left brain, our 'ego', to our right brain with its intuitive intelligence, our capacity to access a higher level of consciousness and experience communion with Ultimate Reality. Interestingly, brain research has proven that children under the age of two function mainly on this higher level of consciousness, as is shown by the prevalence of alpha waves in their brain; this slowly diminishes as they come nearer to 5 years of age. The implication of this is that they are still in touch with Higher Reality and therefore also that there is nothing for us to strive for; it is not an achievement; we just need to remember this gift inherent in our human nature. We need to 'become like little children'. We can then consciously return to this original wider consciousness, which in children is an unconscious state: *“Meditation is a return to our original innocence”* (John Main)

On this level of consciousness we experience *“pure spiritual knowledge;*

“Meditation is a return to our original innocence (John Main)”

therein the soul is rapt away from all bodily things. There we hear without any sound and see without matter...” We become aware of the ground of our being, the ground of our consciousness that is one with Ultimate Reality, eternal, beyond time and space. We become aware of *“the spark of God in the Soul”* (Meister Eckhart). This moment of awareness of our innate potential for all-embracing unity is the *'Birth of Christ in the Soul'*. Once we have become aware of this 'spark', it will grow into a transforming fire, purifying and integrating the whole of our being; we are then gradually transformed by grace to be more and more in tune with Ultimate Reality.



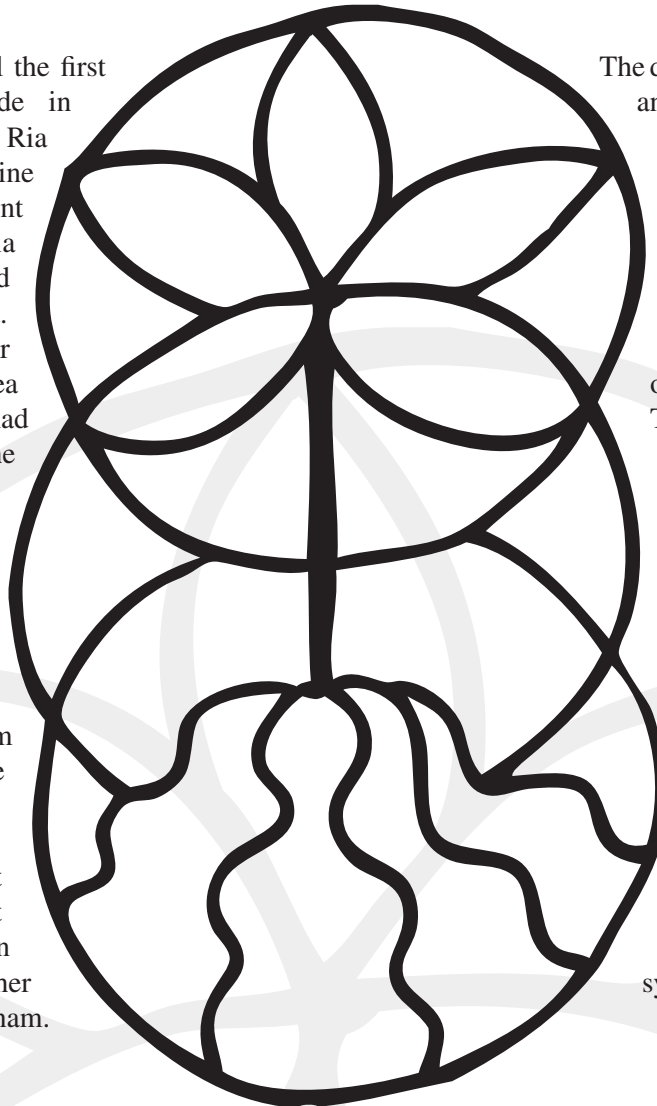


The Sangha Logo

Caroline McKenzie

The Sangha Logo is as much part of the Sangha's life as its tradition of singing the Gayatri Mantra facing the sun in the early morning. It was created by the artist Caroline McKenzie and we asked her to tell us a little about its origin.

As far as I can recall the first designs were made in 1994 during a visit with Ria Weyens to the trappistine monastery of Soleilmount in Belgium. Through Ria the nuns had established a foundation in India. Because of my earlier work in India in the area of inculturation they had invited me to design the windows for the new chapel. We went there to discuss this project. The logo design is based on one of the first window designs that I drew. Others featured Jonah emerging from the whale and an upside down tree. It was on the way back to England on the ferry that Ria first started talking about her idea of a European sangha modelled on her experiences at Shantivanam.



The design combines the lotus and the Trinity. I wanted to get across the Indian sense of the imminence of the divine in all aspects of life. The roots embedded in the mud are as important as the fragrant leaves opening up to the light. The three circles can refer to any sets of three besides Father Son and Holy Spirit. They might suggest body, psyche and spirit, or the personal, the social and the cosmic. The five roots and five petals could be related to the five elements - earth, water, fire, air and ether. I think I was also reminded of the Indian lamps that have five wicks and are often symbolic of a tree.

These are the ideas I consciously put into the design.
I would be most interested to hear what others see in it.

Caroline McKenzie

As well as an artist, Caroline is a talented and enthusiastic singer and we are delighted that she will be leading this day for us.

Sing into Spring - Bhajan and Chant Day

28th February 2009 - The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay, near Oxford

The day will be lead by long time Sangha member Caroline MacKenzie. She both an artist and singer, and has spent much in India deeply immersed in the relationship between Hindu and Christian spirituality. The day will include meditation and short readings from both traditions.

It promises to be an enjoyable and enriching day. A chance to sing, learn more about the chants and bhajans we know and to learn new ones. We will also hear how they relate to spirituality, where they come from in India and how they relate to the western context.

For more details please contact Jane Lichnowski 01285 651381 or jane@lichnowski.com

Sanatana Dharma. The term 'perennial philosophy' is the idea that a universal set of truths common to all people and cultures exists; it was first coined by the German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz and later popularised by Aldous Huxley. 'Sanatana Dharma' is the traditional name for the Hindu religion and means the Eternal Law. These terms were used by Father Bede and by Abhishiktananda and Ken Knight introduces these reflections on the subject with quotations from both men.

'One of the greatest needs of humanity today is to transcend the cultural limitations of the great religions and to find a wisdom, a philosophy, which can reconcile their differences and reveal the unity which underlies all their diversities. This has been called the "perennial philosophy", the eternal wisdom which has been revealed in a different ways in each religion.'

Father Bede Universal Wisdom p.7

Writing of the sanatana dharma Abhishiktananda wrote:

'Sanatana dharma, the eternal law, the religion that has no beginning, is the traditional name of what is commonly known as Hinduism. It is certainly one of the loftiest expressions of the cosmic covenant.'

Saccinananda pp 52-54

This is an important concept for us to understand because many Hindus continue to be increasingly wary of Christian expansionism and criticism of Hindu culture and theology. An energetic Hindu renaissance has turned wariness into an open challenge to Christian conversions. Some claim that only Hinduism is Sanatana Dharma with other traditions necessarily lacking in some way. However, Hindus have traditionally respected all the great faiths and honoured their spirituality. So others insist that we need to remember that the Sanatana Dharma be equally respected and honoured in the Vedic spirit of "Truth is one, paths are many."

A clue to understanding the true meaning of Sanatana Dharma is in 'The Truth is One' statement. This 'Oneness' is beyond words and formulation, as Father Bede reminds us:

'All words which are used about this mystery are signs and symbols of the ineffable and are of value only in so far as they point towards this mystery and enable its presence to be experienced in the 'heart' or the inner 'centre' of the person beyond speech and thought'

The Universal Christ p.47

'The perennial philosophy stems from a crucial period of human history in the middle of the first millennium before Christ. It was then that a breakthrough was made beyond the cultural limitations of ancient religion to the experience of ultimate reality.'

Universal Wisdom p.7

At Sangha gatherings the 'purnamada' chant is used which describes, as best may be done with words, this Sanatana Dharma.

**Purnamadah Purnamidam
Purnat Purnamudachyate
Purnasya Purnamadaya
Purnamevavashisyate**

It is through the apparent meaninglessness of a paradox that

the teaching is given in this chant: 'take fullness from fullness and the remainder is fullness'.

Sanatana Dharma declares that something cannot come out of nothing and, therefore, the universe itself is the manifestation of the Divine being if we have eyes to see and ears to hear. Sanatana means 'that eternal, unchanging' hence it is the divine presence behind, and yet filling, all forms. Dharma has many meanings, common ones being 'path' or 'philosophy' but we can best understand it if we know that the root of the word is dhri. This means 'to

hold together, to sustain.'

So Sanatana Dharma is the eternal, unchanging, sustaining philosophy, or

sanatana dharma
is the eternal,
unchanging

in Huxley's phrase, 'the perennial philosophy'.

In summary then, the Divine remains ever the same; since the universe has come forth from the Divine, all things and beings are sacred and must be treated so in human thought and action. The Divine sleeps in minerals, awakens in plants, walks in animals and thinks in humans. That is the essential teaching of Sanatana Dharma and this is the underpinning truth of advaita, it is the fullness of the 'perennial philosophy' and the ultimate Christian experience of meeting Christ in everyone and everything and taught to us in the words of Abhishiktananda:

'Nothing less than this wonderful foreshadowing of the Church's destiny is contained in the assertion of the transcendent value of advaita, and with it of the sanatana dharma, with which the Christian is met when he comes into contact with a spiritual Hindu.'

Saccidananda pp72-73

Challenge of Advaita

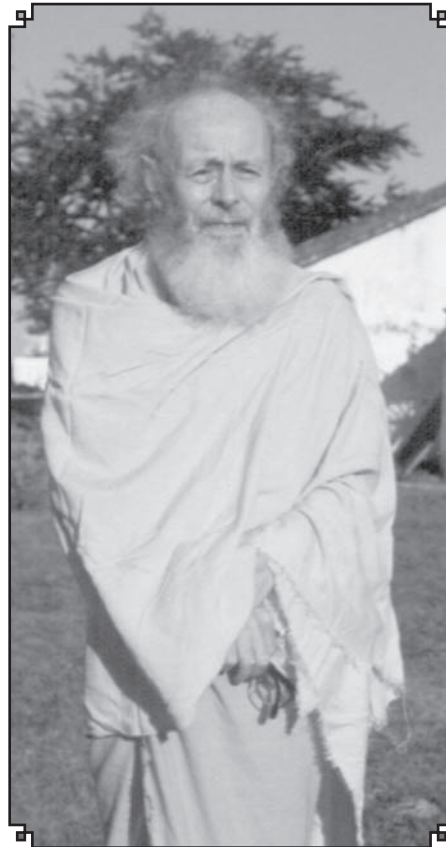
Abhishiktananda

Abhishiktananda arrived in India on August 14th, 1948 and within a year he had met the famous sage, Ramana Maharshi. Through Ramana he discovered advaita, a subject that will undoubtedly come up at the centenary conference. This enriched his life immeasurably, but was also the source of much pain and tension as he feared it would be impossible to reconcile advaita with his deep-rooted Christianity.

The word advaita comes from two Sanskrit words, a and dvaita, and means literally 'not two' - non-duality. Its central teaching is the oneness of the individual soul with the Absolute, and it is recognised to be the fundamental insight of the Upanishads. It was to dominate the rest of Abhishiktananda's life. This passage about the challenge Christianity and Advaita present to each other comes from his book "Saccidananda".

One day someone asked Sri Ramana Maharshi why Christ taught his disciples to give God the name of Father. He answered, 'Why should one not give God a name, so long as God remains for him "another"?' Once a man has realized the truth, what room is left for anything like an I or a Thou or a He? Who is left even to whisper: 'O my God, Thou alone art; I am nothing!?' In the blinding light of this experience there is no conceivable place for any kind of differentiation; there is nothing but a-dvaita, 'not two'.

The Christian also is no doubt aware that God is in him and not merely that he comes to him (John 14:23; Rev. 3:20), and that the very centre of his soul is God's dwelling place. He likewise knows that God is in all things; and in order to meet God he seeks to plunge deep within himself and within all things, in pursuit of his own and their final secret. The more he does this, the more he discovers the truth of God's presence, ever more luminous, more elemental. He then searches in the depths of his heart for a place where he might as it were stand and contemplate this Presence, the inner sanctum where his own incommunicable individuality issues from Being itself and springs



into existence. He looks for that inner source from which his life and personal existence stream forth to be manifested on the outward plane of body and intellect. He seeks for that fine point of his consciousness, that 'apex' of the soul, where more truly than anywhere else he might be himself in the presence of God, face to face with his Father, where he

might be an I saying Thou to his God. Even if he must be consumed in the divine embrace for which the Spirit in him yearns (Song of Solomon 1:2), he wants at least to perceive himself at the moment of casting himself into this fire, and to be able to say to God, 'I give myself to you'.

Alas, when he tries to take his stand in the ultimate recesses of his self he finds that God is already there! He seeks vainly to recover his footing, so that he can withdraw into himself and try to save at least something of his own separate personal existence: like Moses and Elijah, he wants to hide in some cleft of the rock from which he may contemplate God. However, even the remotest and most inaccessible 'caverns' of his heart turn out to be occupied already, and the darkness in which he had hoped to save his personal existence from annihilation in Being is already ablaze with the glory of God. He still struggles desperately to utter an I, a Thou; but now no sound makes itself heard, for where indeed could it come from? And even if by some means this I were to be pronounced, it would immediately be submerged in the one I AM that fills eternity ... the thunder of Sinai, the immensity of waters mentioned in the Psalms. Like a shipwrecked sailor floundering in the high seas, tossed from wave to wave, he vainly struggles against the current that masters him and sweeps him away. All is up with him; soon there will no longer be any I to be conscious of any experience whatever, still less to be aware that all possible experiences are now finished. No one remains to say 'I have reached the plane of the Absolute' - still less to say: 'I have passed beyond, lost myself'. Nothing is left, apart from that consciousness itself, pure and unalloyed: This (tat) ... that (sat) ... OM - 'OM tat sat', as the Gita says (17:23). For man cannot see God and live (Deut. 5:26).

Saccidananda pp 63-65 ISPCK, 1974

Mission without Conversion

Br. John Martin 

Following a conference in Italy last Autumn Brother Martin wrote this heartfelt letter. In it he investigates what it means to proclaim the Good News of Jesus in a way that promotes growth, unity and liberation. It will form the basis of his presentation at the Sangha Summer Seminar at Park Place in July (see enclosed flyer).

O LORD, MAKE US INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE

An Open Letter to the Christians

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

May the peace of Christ be with us all and may we all become the instruments of peace.

With much anguish and pain in my heart, I write this open letter to you. I am neither a religious leader nor a scholar nor do I have any authority. But I do have deep concern and love for my Christian brothers and sisters, the people of India and the world. As I read of the violence committed against Christians in various parts of India - innocent people killed, churches burnt and destroyed, a nun raped, and people made homeless and driven into the forest - my heart bleeds for them. I pray for all those people affected, and their families, and ask God to grant them consolation and peace. My heart also bleeds for the people who indulged in this violence. No one who indulges in violence can have peace of mind. Violence breeds violence. I also pray to God to grant peace to those who perpetuated this violence. Let us ask God to forgive them with the heart of Jesus Christ, who asked God to forgive those who did violence to him. Jesus felt that they were doing so out of ignorance. Let us also ask God to forgive us if we have offended other's religious sentiments, consciously or unconsciously, because we also might have done this out of ignorance. Ultimately ignorance - not knowing our essential unity - is the source of violence.

These incidents also should make us reflect on the will of God - the will of Christ - for our times. Recently I took part in a conference in Italy on the theme "Becoming the good news



of Christ". I had an opportunity to share my thoughts on this subject. As I remembered the violence directed against Indian Christians, who are accused of performing marvelous and heroic humanitarian service only in order to convert the recipients to Christianity, I wondered what it means to become the good news of Christ today. It is very painful to see people carrying out violent acts in the name of religion as the essence of every religion is non-violence and peace. As a follower of the path of Christ to God, I asked myself how preaching the message of Christ can invite violence, as Jesus Christ is peace, his message is peace and he proclaimed peace. Of course Jesus

met a violent death, not for trying to convert people but for breaking down the barriers, for including everyone in his vision, for actively trying to liberate people from oppression, particularly religious oppression, and for inviting his tradition to grow in divine human relationship according to the plan of God. His religious authorities refused to grow and interpreted his claims as blasphemous. That refusal resulted in violence. Jesus died for growth, unity and liberation. How then can we preach a message of Christ that is divisive and exclusive? I began to reflect whether we can proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in a way that promotes growth, unity and liberation without having the mission to convert. This leads to the fundamental question of whether Jesus intended 'conversion' to mean the way Christian tradition has interpreted it.

I have been a student of inter-religious dialogue, particularly Hindu-Christian dialogue, and I realized how similar are the essences of the teachings of the sages of the Upanishads and the teachings of Christ, though there are some basic differences like karma and reincarnation, which need to be discussed and understood in their deepest levels. The sages of the Upanishads were universal spirits beyond any particular labels, just as Jesus Christ was. I have to acknowledge the fact that studying Hindu scriptures and Hindu philosophy helped me to understand Christ better. Many Christians are ignorant of Hindu Wisdom and they tend to misinterpret the symbolism of Hindu tradition. Unfortunately we cannot blame them as they are conditioned in that way. I began to realize that our interpretation of Christ is very narrow and exclusive and this does not do justice to the all inclusive and universal message of Christ. I began to realize that Jesus Christ is not identical to Christianity, and different Christian churches have different interpretations of Jesus Christ and his message. Though all Christian



Mission without Conversion - con't ...

Br. John Martin

denominations claim to be Christians, there are many different interpretations among them. Christianity is not one religion (even though all Christians accept Jesus Christ and the Bible) but a congregation of many religions, as there is many divisions within the label of Christianity. It is the same with Hinduism. Hinduism is not one religion but a congregation of many belief structures even though all call themselves Hindus and accept the same scriptures. This can be said of all major religions. My study of Hindu scriptures and the scriptures of other religions has made me realize that sharing the good news of Christ today is not about converting people from other religions but about having a genuine and sincere dialogue with them. It means recognizing the plan of God in every religion and learning together. Even though inter-religious dialogue does not have the ultimate answer, it is a stepping stone as it reveals the positive contribution of each religion and also the limitations of each religion since religions belong to the historical manifestations of truth, which is conditioned. Dialogue prepares the ground for all religions to open to the eternal truth that heals the divisions created by the historical truth and invites them to grow into unity. The eternal truth at the same time preserves each religion's cultural richness. Real growth takes place only when each religion realizes its limitations.

Christians need to reinterpret the two most important statements of Jesus: "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn.14.6) and "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." (Mk.16.5). These two statements have been interpreted in an exclusive way in the sense that Jesus Christ is the only way to God and the Christians have the obligation to preach this good news and convert people to Christ or Christianity. Surely that interpretation

has served to bring Christianity so far even though tainted with violence (Christians received violence and Christians also used violence), but today Christianity needs to outgrow this interpretation. I personally came to the conclusion that this way of interpreting these two statements of Jesus did not do justice to the all inclusive and universal message of Christ. These two statements as told by Jesus have much more universal and inclusive message than the interpretations given by the Christian tradition. Of course it would be very

“Real growth takes place only when each religion realizes its limitations”

difficult for many Christians even to think of it and this suggestion itself may provoke strong reactions as it has been the tradition of two thousand years. However, there is no other way than this if we want to do justice to Christ and if we want to become the instruments of peace for the world. The number of years or the number of believers is not the ultimate criteria for truth. People believed for many centuries that the earth was flat but someone said that it was round. People for many centuries believed that the Sun went around the earth but some one said that it was the earth that went around the Sun. The greatest need of Christianity today is to grow into Christ, to convert itself to Christ, to make a quantum jump, to inaugurate a kind of Galilean revolution. We have to be humble to say that we are in the process of knowing Christ and have not arrived at the end - and probably there is no end to this knowing of Christ or Truth.

There are six important criteria to interpret the message of Christ. The interpretation must be:

1. *Universally Valid*
2. *Unifying*
3. *Liberating*
4. *Give possibility for growth*
5. *Reasonable*
6. *Openness to new understanding which fulfills the above five*

The way we have interpreted these two statements of Jesus does not satisfy this criteria. It is not enough to believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to God because Jesus said so or it is written in the Bible. We also need to convince others with reasonable arguments how one individual can say that he is the only way to God. It is not enough to say that Jesus Christ is the prince of peace but our belief structure should be such that it should really promote peace within and without. The good news of Christ is simple and direct but it cannot be defined. It can only be described in many ways.

In the conference in Italy, I have presented the following twenty points to the question of what it means to become the good news of Christ for our times.

It is to become like Christ, to become the kingdom of God which is to discover the universal presence of God and the essential unity of humanity with God. Jesus proclaimed his good news saying, "The kingdom of God is at hand, repent." (Mk 1.15). It means that God is everywhere and everyone and everything is in God; the humanity and the creation are essentially one with God though functionally different. When Jesus said "I and the Father are one." he revealed his essential unity with God. When he said "I am in the Father and Father is in me.", (Jn.14:10) and "My

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Father is greater than I." (Jn.14:28) he revealed his functional difference. Repentance is a process of continuous inner purification or growth until we discover this truth. It has two aspects: ascending and descending. In ascending we discover our unity and in descending we return to our functional difference.

2 *It is to become the instruments of peace.* Jesus is peace and his message is peace. To do this, we need to be free from any ambition of expanding our boundaries and increasing our number. Instead, we need to see everyone already in the kingdom of God and help them to discover this truth. We need to renounce religious conversions. Where there is mission to convert there is violence within and this violence produces violence outside. With this inner violence we cannot become the instruments of peace.

3 *It is to become spiritual liberators and not spiritual colonizers.* Jesus was not a spiritual colonizer who wished to convert people to his authority and rule them. He was a spiritual liberator who came to make people free with his truth. "Truth will make you free," (Jn.8.14-15) he said. "I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father," (Jn.15.15) Jesus declared.

4 *It is to transform our religious identities or boundaries from being essential to functional.* It is not to identify with the means but to focus on the destiny, which is our unity with God. Instead of saying "I am a Christian." I prefer to say "I am journeying to God through the path of Christ." Suppose if I go to London

and take Air India, I do not say "I am Air India.", but "I am flying by Air India." Where there is essential identity with the means there is an essential boundary and where there is essential boundary (not functional, which is necessary) there are seeds of conflict and war.

5 *It is to become the seekers of the Kingdom of God, not just to remain as the believers of the kingdom of God.* This transition from being believers to seekers is very important today. Remaining as believers is the source of conflict

“Jesus Christ is the archetype of this radical love”

and violence. Jesus said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God and its righteousness and all things will be given unto you." (Mt.6.33). Believing is only the starting point. We also need to have an inclusive vision of being a Christian. A Christian is not just one who believes in Christ but everyone who is searching for Truth or God or the kingdom of God.

6 *It is to become who we already are.* Our spiritual journey is to discover our deepest reality and not to become something else. Jesus said, "You are the Light of the World." (Mt.5.14). He did not say, "You must become the light of the world". We need to discover this truth for ourselves and help others to discover it.

7 *It is to become the way, the truth and the life just as Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life.* This way is not exclusive but like a trunk that holds all the branches and the leaves so includes all ways, truths and ways of life but transcends

them. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn: 14.6). It means that in order to enter into God we need to transcend the conditioned truth that is present at the levels of the branches and enter into the trunk, which is the unconditioned truth. The way is to move from the conditioned truth to the unconditioned truth. This is the only way through which Jesus entered it and this is the only way for everyone.

8 *It is to realize that there is only one way to God and this one way is inner conversion of purifying our ego and surrendering it to God so that it becomes an instrument of God.* Every religion is trying to help people to do this in its unique way and Christianity does it in its unique way. The difficulty is that sometimes religions create a subtle religious ego rather than freeing people from the ego. Jesus said, "If you lose your 'self' (conditioned self or ego) you gain your 'self' (unconditioned self or true self); if you hold or gain your 'self' (conditioned self or ego) you will lose your 'self' (unconditioned self or true self)." (Lk.9.23-24). Jesus used different words to describe this one way of conversion: repentance, rebirth, becoming like little children, interior death, and growing into the kingdom of God.

9 *It is to recognize that every religion is a gift from God to humanity and every scripture reveals the will of God - but conditioned by the era in which it was revealed.* So we always need to be open to understand the will of God for our times. The will of God is not static but dynamic.

10 *It is to embrace within us the radical love of God and the radical love of neighbour just as*



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Jesus Christ is the archetype of this radical love. "I and the Father are one." (Jn.10.30) reveals his radical love of God and "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters that you do unto me." (Mt. 25.40) reveals his radical love of neighbour. The Eucharist is the essence of this radical love.

11 *It is to affirm the dignity of human beings and the equality of men and women in all areas of life. All social, political, cultural, moral and spiritual values have to be evaluated according to this human dignity and equality of sexes.*

12 *It is to build harmony between our creation (cosmos) humanity (anthropos) and God (Theos).*

13 *It is to proclaim the good news of Christ to the whole creation and not just to human beings. Jesus said, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." (Mk.16.15). We need to proclaim to every human being that he/she is the manifestation of God and to every creature that it is also the manifestation of God. First we need to believe in this truth and then, through repentance or conversion, we realize this essential truth for ourselves and invite others to do so.*

14 *It is to abolish the spiritual apartheid between Jesus and other humans and make it possible for everyone to experience Jesus realized in his life. Jesus opened this possibility to everyone but Christianity closed it. Jesus not only said, "I am the light of the world." (Jn.8.12) but also "You are the light of the world." (Mt.5.14). These statements are the two wheels of Jesus' good news.*

15 *It is to identify with the poor and the suffering humanity and give them the message of hope and liberation. Jesus identified with the message: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor, he has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set liberty those who are oppressed." (Lk.4.18). This we have to do without the motive for conversion.*

16 *It is to become humble, which comes from the realization that we are all interconnected and what we*

“If we really want to become the instruments of peace then our vision must be an inclusive one in which there is no mission to convert but only inner conversion or transformation ”

are now is the gift of others. We need to serve others in love and compassion. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, an effective symbol of humility and service (Jn.13.14).

17 *It is to affirm that God or Truth is greater than belief structures (religions), human beings in their deepest level are greater than belief structures, and belief structures are meant to be at the service of human beings and not human beings at the service of belief structures. "The Sabbath is made for humanity and not humanity for the sake of the Sabbath. The Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath," (Mt.12.8) said Jesus. When Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." he was affirming this basic truth. Violence comes when people serve religions or belief structures.*

18 *It is to transform our religion (belief structure) into a nest where human beings are born, protected, nourished and given security until the wings are grown and then helped to move into the freedom of the Kingdom of God. This is what it means to fulfill religion or the Law. Jesus said, "I have not come to abolish the Law (religion) but to fulfill the Law (religion)." (Lk.5.17).*

19 *It is to live in the eternal present, which fulfills the past, manifests in the present and opens to the future. The time does move to eternity but manifests eternity. It becomes the instrument of eternity. "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit," (Jn.3.8) said Jesus to Nicodemus.*

20 *It is to see God in the community since God is the community. God is the relationship, the Trinity. God is the unity of life and peace (Jn.17.21). It is to experience Jesus in the breaking of the bread (Lk.24.13-35). It is in loving relationships with our brothers and sisters that we purify ourselves and grow into love, unity, and peace.*

Istrongly feel that today proclaiming the good news of Christ does not imply the mission to convert. (Thanks to all the missionaries who spread the good news of Christ even at the cost of their lives. It is because of them I am a Christian and I feel it has been a grace to be one.) It is simply to proclaim that everyone is already in God and invite them to discover this truth for themselves. The conversion to which Jesus invited us is not from one belief to another belief, not from one religion to another religion but to inner transformation. It is growing into

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radical love of God and radical love of neighbour. Conversion is a process of continuous inner purification or growth through which we discover the indwelling and the universal presence of God and this realization manifests itself spontaneously in the love of neighbour. In this process one may go through different levels of understanding of truth or belief structures. One may be attracted to other spiritual personalities or beliefs which do not belong to one's own tradition. People should have the freedom to do so. No one has the right to take away this freedom. This process still belongs to the level of purification. It belongs to the evolutionary process of the human consciousness. It is not the ultimate. The goal is to go beyond beliefs and personalities and become the way, the truth and the life. The real conversion is internal and it is for everyone, including Christians.

When Jesus sent his disciples on their

mission he just told them to proclaim to everyone that the kingdom of God is at hand (God is everywhere and everyone is in God) (Lk.10.8-9). This is the 'mission without conversion'. This mission may be explicit but not specific to Christianity. Every religion has this mission. Every holy person gives the same mission to his or her disciples. The mission of every religion and every holy person is to invite people to discover the indwelling and the universal presence of God. It is to bring people to God not to themselves. They are only 'means' and 'means' should not become ends. If all religions and all holy persons are united in this single mission then there will be harmony and peace in the world. As long as we think that we have the mission to convert people then we become exclusive and sow the seeds of violence within and we cannot become the instruments of peace. If we really want to become the instruments of peace then our vision

must be an inclusive one in which there is no mission to convert but only inner conversion or transformation. Only then do we become "real missionaries" the bearers of the good news of peace. Prophet Isaiah says: "*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation (freedom or liberation) who says to Zion (to the world), 'Your God reigns' (The Kingdom of God is at hand) (Is 52.7).*"

United with St. Francis of Assisi, I pray: "*O Lord, make us instruments of your peace.*"

10.11.2008,

Br. John Martin

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brothermartin111@hotmail.com

Thomas Merton - A Reflection

by Tony Pannett

Thomas Merton (1915 – 1968) was a Trappist monk of the Abbey of Gethsemani, in the state of Kentucky. He was also a poet, a social activist, a student of comparative religion and the author of numerous works on spirituality. He wrote more than 60 books, scores of essays and reviews, and is the subject of several biographies. Merton was a keen proponent of inter-religious understanding, engaging in spiritual dialogues with the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh and D.T. Suzuki. Tony Pannett is among his many admirers.

I would like to write of the persistent theme of solitude and silence that occurs regularly through Thomas Merton's writings:

"With our inner self we have to come to terms in silence. That is the reason for choosing silence. In silence we face and admit the gap between the depths of our being, which we consistently ignore, and the surface

which is untrue to our own reality. We recognise the need to be at home with ourselves in order that we may go out to meet others, not just with a mark of affability, but with real commitment and authentic love."

(Thomas Merton Creative Silence in "Love and Living")

Silence is a leitmotiv in his writings, particularly in the journals he wrote whilst in the monastery. Even here he

sought for more silence and solitude by asking for, and eventually getting, access to a hermitage to spend some days and nights alone with nature. The sound of the rain on the roof, the whispering of the trees, the night sounds of the birds and animals delighted him and he obviously found great peace there.

I think Thomas Merton would have liked Annie Dillard's writings had he lived long enough to read her work.

"The silence is all there is. It is the alpha and the omega. It is God's brooding over the face of the waters; it is the blended note of the ten thousand things, the whine of wings. You take a step in the right direction to pray to this silence, and even to address the prayer to "World". Distinctions blur. Quit your tents. Pray without ceasing."

 **Thomas Merton - A Reflection - con't...**

by Tony Pannett

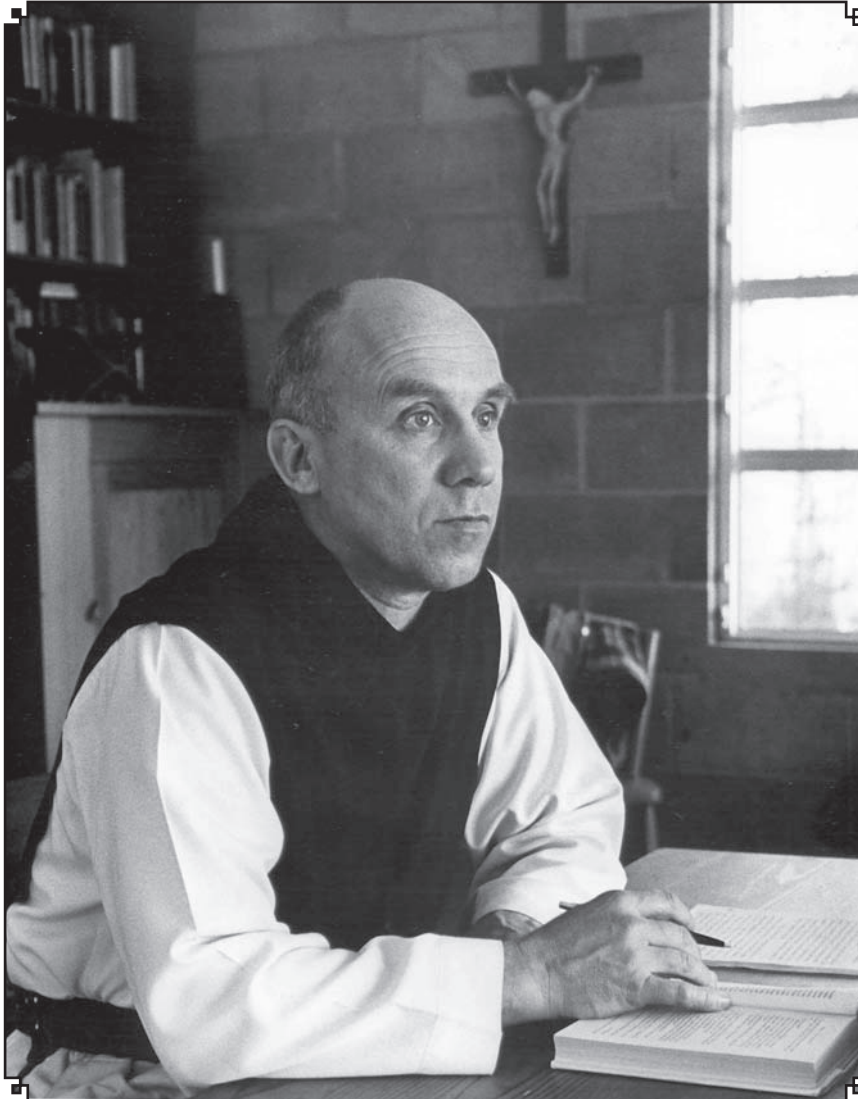
(Annie Dillard: Teaching a stone to talk. p76)

She writes with an eye for nature and describes beauty and suffering with a graciousness that is deeply moving. Merton, likewise in his journals, gives us an inner landscape that is at once arresting and revealing. It is nature reflected in this one man's spiritual journey from turning his back on the world to a loving, compassionate and enduring interest in it. December 10th, 2008 marked the 40th anniversary of his tragic accidental death in Bangkok, Thailand. He was attending a monastic inter-faith conference, where he had been invited to be one of the speakers. Known to the world by his writings, he had entered the Abbey of Gethsemani in February, 1942; it seemed to him to be 'the centre of America' and he felt it 'has been keeping the universe from cracking in pieces and falling apart.' (The

Journals of Thomas Merton Vol. 2 Entering the Silence)

I first came across Merton in 1963, when a slim volume fell into my hands whilst rummaging through a bookshop; the title intrigued me - "Zen and the Birds of Appetite". It was a series of essays by Merton and a dialogue between him and D.T.Suzuki, the great scholar of Japanese Zen Buddhism. The book set me on the road to contemplative prayer, meditation and an engagement with Buddhism which continues to the

present day. So I came to read Thomas Merton from the front to the back as it were - his later books first and then some of his earlier writings. And this theme of silence and solitude is never far away, it is scattered throughout



the journals and becomes a recurring theme. While resting in the infirmary during a bout of influenza, he confides to this journal:

"To have nothing to do but abandon yourself to God and love God! It is the greatest of luxuries. Silence and solitude are the luxuries of life" (The Intimate Merton March 19th 1948)

In the book of essays "The Vision of Thomas Merton" there's an excellent one by Jonathan Montaldo called "Loving winter when the

plants say nothing", he says: (*"Merton's)...extant journals, now wholly exposed, do not chronicle an ascent to ever higher stages of human and spiritual development. They reveal instead a disconcerting journey of his descent into an ever-deepening spiritual poverty"*). They disclose Merton's being mastered by the Spirit as his wilfulness is purified in the furnace of failure...." (The Vision of Thomas Merton p.99)

It is not too difficult to find an element of contradiction in Merton's aspirations for silence and solitude. It is reckoned that he wrote over 7,000 letters whilst in the monastery as well as receiving a stream of visitors. Jonathan Montaldo in the essay quoted above wryly comments

"In the face of his recurring desires for a more perfect place to become his idealized self,

he acquiesced, although often with loud complaint, to voices of authority, especially those of his abbots. (Ibid. p. 108)

This short introduction will I hope be an encouragement to take his books and share the journey with him in his aspirations, in his contradictions but above all in his deep humanity and, through it all, to come to realise his real commitment and his authentic love.

Tony Pannett

News from The Bede Griffiths Charitable Trust

Update from India by Adrian Rance

The Bede Griffiths Charitable Trust has been supporting village projects in India since 2004. Before then individuals had been supporting the social work activities of Shantivanam and the Swami Bede Dayananda Trust which was founded by Brother Martin and Sister Rose in the 1990's. The idea was that the Trust would provide a conduit for these donations and would be able to get the benefit of Gift Aid tax relief from the UK government.

When the Trust was founded we anticipated an annual turnover of about £5000, but in the four years since then almost a quarter of a million pounds has been donated to projects through the Charitable Trust – a miracle indeed. Of course what made the difference in a big way was the decision to fund the St Adrian Reachout Centre in the tsunami hit village of Muttom on the south coast of Tamil Nadu. This year the centre changed its name to Anbaham (Tamil for House of Love) which an easier name for local people to both say and remember.

Anbaham

I visited Anbaham and spent Christmas there with Selvi and some of the children. What first struck me was how beautiful the finished building is. The



upper floor was completed towards the end of 2008 and Michael, the builder, has created a place that is truly stylish and pleasant to be in. The fact that the building is elegant and well cared for is an important reflection of the deeper purpose of Anbaham. The children (they are all girls now apart from Sumison who some of you will remember as a wonderful outgoing little boy: he will move on to a boarding school in due course), come from the very poorest families and homes in Muttom and the surrounding

villages. Selvi's vision is that they should grow through encountering love at the centre, through living in community, through experiencing the deep spiritual intention of the place. The children grow in self-worth, attitudes to cleanliness, hygiene, sharing, taking part in the housework, the gardening, doing their school work with some supervision. They have opportunities to learn dance with qualified teachers.

The idea is not that these girls will go on to become super heroes, but that they will take these values back into their homes and so, little by little, by transforming the children, the society is transformed.

When I say that the quality of the built environment at Anbaham is important, it is precisely because even new homes such as the recently built tsunami houses, rapidly become squalid and deteriorate under the depressing influence of harsh poverty. At Anbaham, the children learn how to care for the environment in which they live.

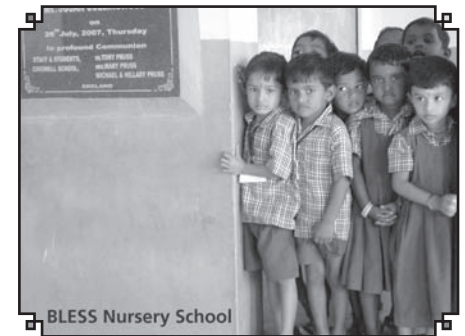
The project is very new and innovative. It is not at all like a conventional orphanage. The Tamil word which is translated as 'reachout', actually means to 'show the way', with a particular meaning of showing the narrow way. So Anbaham is about showing these girls a new way to live their lives.

There are only 13 children there at the moment – others have left for a wide variety of reasons, all of which will help Selvi plan the future, but it should be up to complement of 30 for

the new school year. There are plans to open the stitching training centre in the near future once funds have been secured to purchase sewing machines to be donated to successful trainees so that they can work and earn money at home.

BLESS

Senthil has now opened the primary school at Inungur and what a huge achievement he has made in only two years, largely thanks to donations



from parents and children at Chigwell School. Special mention should go to Tony and Mary Pruss (who is now a Trustee) who funded the Primary School in memory of their son Timothy who was killed in an accident in 2005. The school is a wonderful memorial to Timothy and their generosity. Together the nursery and the primary school have 18 staff and a roll of just over 200 children.

Swami Bede Dayananda Trust

And in conclusion, so many of you know and support Sister Rose and the



Swami Bede Dayananda Trust, and you will be happy to know that she has now completed the old people's day centre and has 13 elderly men and women coming each day.

Sangha News, Retreats & Resources

The Sangha Working Group

The day to day practical running of the Sangha is done by the Working Group which meets several times a year.

*If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact: Jane Lichnowski
Tel 01285 651381 or jane@lichnowski.com*

Sing into Spring - Bhajan and Chant Day
28th February 2009
The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay, near Oxford
For details see page 5

'Hermits in Company' Silent Retreat
May 1 – 4th 2009 - Now full

Sangha Summer Seminar

Park Place Pastoral Centre
17th-19th July 2009
For full information

See enclosed flyer or information on the website
www.bede.griffithsangha.org.uk

The Caldey Island Retreat

September 12th to 19th 2009
The theme of this year retreat is Divine Light.

The retreat is limited to 16 people. The cost of £220 (£195 for low income) includes full-board simple vegetarian fare. A deposit of £35 is required with your booking.

The retreat follows the Shantivanam routine with periods of meditation, chants & readings. We observe silence in the retreat house. The Caldey Abbey community and the natural beauty of the island provide further activities. See past Spring newsletters for retreat reports.

Enquiries for further details and/or requests for a booking form to Aileen & Martin Neilan tel 01834 871433 or e-mail aileen.neilan@btinternet.com

Sangha Advent Retreat

AMMERDOWN 4th-6th December 2009
Details in the next newsletter.

A Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Swami Abhishiktananda

Gaunts House, Dorset 15th to 18th July 2010
Further details from Hilary Knight
hilaryhones@hotmail.com

OTHER EVENTS

From time to time members hold events that may be of interest to others. At the editorial discretion of the working group we are happy to make these known. However, we need to point out that The Bede Griffiths Sangha Working Group has not endorsed these events nor can it be held responsible for their organisation or content.

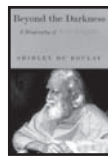
Studying the life of Shankara - 28th-29th March

Studying the life of Shankara through a biography, scriptural texts and a biographical film of his life with Ken Knight.
One Spirit, a Christian - Hindu Meeting Point 17th-19th April 09 with Ma Tureea a Christian nun who is also a Swami and Swami Nityamuktananda.

Both events will be held in Adforton, Shropshire.

For further information phone Annette 01568 770436
gooldena1@btinternet.com B+B available

Books from the Sangha



Beyond the Darkness

Shirley du Boulay's definitive biography of Father Bede Griffiths.



The Four O'Clock Talks

Transcripts of Brother Martin's daily talks at Shantivanam, recorded and presented by Atmajyoti

Suggested donation of £7.00 each to cover UK p&p

Cheques made out to "Bede Griffiths Sangha" to:
Jane Lichnowski, 82 Gloucester Road, Cirencester GL7 2LJ

An Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience

by Marianne Rankin. This is a comprehensive new introduction to a wide range of spiritual experiences, from the experiences of the founders of the major religious traditions to events in the lives of ordinary people today.

Marianne is a former Chair of the Alister Hardy Society, affiliated to the Religious Experience Research Centre at the University of Wales, Lampeter. She holds a Master of Studies from the University of Oxford.

Keith Ward: *'A remarkably comprehensive global survey of types of religious and spiritual experience ... fascinating in its range and lucidity of expression.'*

£24.99. Special offer until 30th March: £20 plus £3.95 P&P

Available from: Marketing Department, Continuum, The Tower Building, 11 York Road, London, SE1 7NX.
info@continuumbooks.com also from Amazon

From the WCCM

Books, dvd's and cassettes of Father Bede and books and tapes on meditation.

Medio Media, St Mark's, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX
mail@wccm.org or call Jan Dunsford on 020 7278 2070

Regional & Overseas Sangha Contacts

*For Sangha and Newsletter Contacts see page 2.
If any one would like to have their names removed
or added as local contacts please let us know.*

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Cornwall	Penzance - Swami Nityamuktananda 01736 350510
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Essex	Revd. Chris Collingwood 020 8501 5771
Gloucestershire	Timothy and Victoria Glazier 01453 839488
Hereford and Shropshire	Annette Criswell 01568 770436 - gooldena1@btinternet.com
Hertfordshire	Graham Thwaites 01279 834315
Kent	Canterbury - Jill Hemmings 01227 752871
London	N4 - Ann O'Donoghue 0207 359 1929
London	SE (Kent) - Hilary Knight 0168 986 1004
Middlesex	Pinner - Catherine Widdicombe 020 8866 2195 mjc.widdicombe@grailsociety.org.uk
Norfolk	Chris Smythe 01493 664725
Northants	Henry Worthy 01604 513032
Somerset	Bath - Kevin Tingay 01761 470249
Staffs	Stoke on Trent - Sr Sophia 01782 816036
Suffolk	Wendy Mulford 01728 604169
West Sussex	Gillian Maher 01444 455334
Chichester	Therese O'Neill 01730 814879
Worcs	Nick & Mary Saddler. 01386 751443
Yorkshire	Barnsley - Margaret Cadnam 01226 217042 Group

Northern Ireland

Ballyhoran Stan Papenfus
02844 841451

Scotland

Aberdeen	Angelika Montoux 01224 867409
Glasgow	Steve Woodward 01355 224937
Easter Ross	Revd George Coppen 01862 842381 - gcoppen@tiscali.co.uk

Wales

West Wales	Martin and Aileen Neilan 01834 871 433
Mid Wales	Montgomery - Jonathan Robinson 01588 620779 Holywell - Philip Francis 01352 711620

Channel Islands Jersey

Sean Arnold
01534 747643 - seanwalter@uku.co.uk

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Italy	Mario la Floresta - laflor_l@libero.it
Malta	Godwin Genovese - shine@vol.net.mt
New Zealand	Christchurch - Kevin Moran s.friend@paradise.net.nz
USA	Florida - Michael Spillane mspillane@legalaidpbc.org Oklahoma - Carolyn Cowan ccmission@cox.net Nevada - Jackie Greedy 775 883 0854 Big Sur - Father Cyprian Consiglio cyprianconsiglio@sbcglobal.net

Meditation Groups

Gloucestershire	Nailsworth - Timothy and Victoria Glazier 01453 839488 - Mondays 6:30pm
Hertfordshire	Bishop Stortford - Graham Thwaites 01279 834315 Thursdays 6:30pm
London	SE (Kent) - Hilary Knight 0168 986 1004 - Wednesdays 7:30pm SW (Barnes) - Stefan Reynolds 07930679905 stefandreynolds@yahoo.co.uk - Wednesdays SW (Barnes) - Silvia Howell 020 8748 3722 sylvia@howell20.orangehome.co.uk Wednesday 3:45pm
Middlesex	Pinner - Catherine Widdicombe jcwiddicombe@tiscali.co.uk - Fridays 8:00pm
Northants	Henry Worthy 01604 513032 - Thursdays at 8:00pm
Surrey	Woking - Kath Higgins 01483 833101 - Wednesdays 5:30pm
Sussex	Chichester - Therese O'Neill 01730 814879 - 2nd Wednesday of each month Arundel - Mary Corbyn 01903 882508 - Tuesdays
Yorkshire	Mirfield - Margaret Cadnam 01226 217042 - 1st Thursday of each month
WCCM Groups	WCCM contact - Kim Nataraja kimshankarnataraja@googlemail.com 020 7727 6779