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Editorial

Struggle! Struggle! Struggle!

Struggle! Struggle! Struggle! This was the advice Swami Yatiswaranandaji received from Swami Brahmananda, about spiritual progress.

Even after years of struggle many of us are not sure whether we have made any progress at all. The reason, perhaps, is that we focus mostly on the process and not on the goal.

We make a routine of japa, meditation, study of holy books, etc. and try to follow it faithfully. Much of our spiritual satisfaction comes just from this. Following a set

practice regularly, undoubtedly has its benefits, for no action goes without result. It indicates that we have a sincere desire and some amount of will-power.

This is good but not good enough. What is needed is a thorough understanding of what spiritual life is.

According to Vedanta each soul is potentially divine. Spiritual struggle is an attempt to manifest this divinity, to transform the potential into fact. It means removing the veils covering the Atman.

The veils are various defects like lust, anger, greed, etc. *"Lust, anger and greed these three are the gateways to hell. Therefore one must renounce them."* (Gita-16:21)

To the extent these evil qualities are lessened and their opposites are developed, to that extent we make spiritual progress.

Sri Krishna, through Arjuna, advises every spiritual seeker to acquire the 'Divine Wealth'. This divine wealth consists of twenty-six spiritual qualities.

We will deal with these in our future editorials.

Swami Dayatmananda

Pilgrimage to Diveyevo

John Phillips

Diveyevo is the location of a convent about two hundred miles to the east of Moscow. The convent was first begun in 1765 by its founder and benefactor Mother Alexandra,

but its further development received a boost in 1788 when, a few weeks before her passing, she invited Father Pakhomii to come there from the Sarov monastery to give her communion. He was accompanied by St Seraphim, who was then a deacon. She requested Father Pakhomii not to abandon her sisters at the monastery. He, knowing that he himself did not have long to live, entrusted the task to St Seraphim, who for the rest of his earthly life nourished and protected the Diveyevo convent. It is believed that his spirit still watches over it.

After St Seraphim passed away, it was a hundred years before he was canonised as a saint. On 1st August 1903 the last Tsar of Russia, Nicholas II, the Tsarina, and all the Russian royal family, gathered at Diveyevo to witness the solemn ceremonies connected with the canonisation.

Now, one hundred years later, we six pilgrims from England gathered at the same spot to attend the celebration of the centenary.

On both occasions one of St Seraphim's prophecies came true. He had said that a time would come when Pascha (Easter) would be celebrated in the summer. This happened then in 1903 and again this year, when the Patriarch shouted in honour of St Seraphim: "Christ is risen!" We stood in a crowd of some twenty thousand at the Patriarchal Liturgy served in the open square at the Diveyevo convent, when this joyful Paschal proclamation filled the air.

In the days preceding the great feast, the relics of the saint were taken in solemn procession to Sarov, about sixty miles away, to the site of the monastery where St Seraphim had spent most of his life. Sarov is still a closed town, used over many years for developing military weapons, and so only the top dignitaries were allowed to enter.

The next day, the Patriarch, in the presence of President Putin, re-consecrated the

cathedral, which has now been handed back to the Church. On the third day the relics were brought back to Diveyevo to be greeted by the assembled Metropolitans and Bishops from all parts of Russia. Many hundreds of people had joined the procession and made the round trip of one hundred and twenty miles on foot! Many others, including one of our little group of pilgrims, joined the procession when it was only a few miles away from the convent on the return journey.

The whole thing was very moving. Such reverence and devotion were shown by the people, such mutual respect and love. There was a feeling of solidarity that I have not experienced anywhere else. When it came to holy communion, I thought that, with such a huge crowd, I would not have much chance of getting to the front. To my surprise, people near me saw that I was elderly and taking me by the hand and pulling me by my arm, led me through the throng right to the front. I was overwhelmed with gratitude at such concern.

Apart from the centenary celebrations, we also took the opportunity to explore something of the forest where St Seraphim had spent so many years as a hermit. Praying in the forest at the rock known as the "Great Bear", where he had passed a hundred days in constant prayer, one felt something of the true spirit of St Seraphim.

During Soviet times the monastery at Sarov and the convent at Diveyevo were closed down and the monks and nuns who escaped, kept to their way of life in what became known as the Green Cathedral, that is the forest.

Perhaps the culmination of our forest wanderings came when we visited a hermit woman living in its depths. Our driver, a local man who knew where she lived, had brought a bag of food for her. She does not usually receive visitors, but to his surprise, she asked if we could go and see her. Here she had lived for ten years, hardly ever seeing anyone.

Well hidden away from the outside world, living in a tiny log cabin, she told us of her devotion to St Seraphim. We noticed there were a lot of birds in the trees round about. She said: "Yes, they are my friends. I understand the language of the birds. This morning they came and asked for food and I have put some out for them." "What do you do in winter?" we asked. "Are you not afraid?" "No, not at all. I have my brothers, the wolves, to protect me." I asked her whether she understood the language of the wolves. "No," she replied, "but they protect me." She also said she had a bear, who was her brother and protected her. When he comes to see her, she feeds him with whatever food she may have. She described how her hut had been in need of repair, but, in answer to her prayers, St Seraphim assured her that all would be well. Two weeks later, a rich businessman from Moscow happened to come across her as he was walking in the woods and he promptly ordered and paid for a new log cabin to be built for her! Here was a simple woman of great faith, living in the depths of the forest, desiring nothing else. Indeed, I was impressed by the fact that she asked us for nothing. She is really following in the footsteps of St Seraphim. She said that he often came to see her and sat on a log near her cabin. She invited me to sit there for a while, which I did, although I felt unworthy to sit on the seat used by a saint.

Another highlight of the pilgrimage was a visit to the Tsiganovka spring. This holy spring of St Seraphim maintains a constant temperature of 4 C throughout the year, so that it feels very cold in summer and, we were told, quite warm in winter when the surrounding temperature is minus 30 C. Pilgrims climb down into the water and immerse themselves totally three times. A monk has to immerse himself twelve times! In this way a great blessing is acquired, often with physical and spiritual healing. I saw a crippled boy being taken down naked to the water and I could not restrain a tear when the poor boy's body touched the cold water and I heard him gasping for breath under the shock. I pray to God that the immersion had a healing effect on him. When it came to my turn to

go in, I remembered plunging in the cold water of the Ganges at Rishikesh and thought: "I can take it." All the same, the sudden feeling of cold water on my warm body made me gasp. Did it wash away my sins? I do not know, but I could not but remember Sri Ramakrishna's words about the Ganges, that the sins wait in the trees and jump back on the bather when he comes out of the water.

To end on a rather sad note, at Suvarova, some thirty kilometres from Diveyevo, it was moving to see the restoration of the village church, formerly used as a storehouse. In it were the relics of four brave women. In Soviet times one of them, a nun, was sheltering with her sisters and friends when the police came to arrest and certainly execute her. Her sisters however told the police that if they took her, they must take them also. The police did so and shot all four. They have now been declared martyrs to be venerated. They have thus not been forgotten, but their memory is preserved for future generations.

St. Anselm of Canterbury

Wolfram H.Koch

Sometimes in mountainous regions when the radiant evening light of autumn floods the valleys with its mellow transparent glow, the larches and cembra-pines, swayed by the icy winds of the summits, appear to compose themselves in a deep dream of certainty and joyous calm in a deep inner recognition of the goal of all life. The steeper and more precipitous is the rocky slope and the deserted ravine in its barrenness, the more icy the destroying breath from the snow-clad peaks, the stronger and more tenacious do their

roots become and reach out in a mighty irresistible effort towards the light. They seem so many symbols showing man that there is no goal worthy of that name except that which is realized through daily effort and one-pointed sincerity in supreme aspiration.

These larches and cembra-pines on the rocks flanking the bluish current of the glaciers make man think of the different Divine Messengers who were and are sent to him, to show him the way back, from animal and instinctive life, to the Spirit and the certainty of never changing values.

It was in such majestic surroundings that Anselm of Aosta was born. The little town of Aosta was founded by the Romans under the name of Augusta Praetoria Salassarum between 23 and 22 B.C. in order to safeguard the important Great and Small St. Bernard Passes. In 1032 it passed into the hands of the Counts of Savoy. It is encircled by the most beautiful and uplifting mountain ranges of the Alps and wonderful glaciers and spreads itself out in a broad fertile valley of the Western Italian Alps. All round some of the finest summits majestically raise their heads, among which the Testa del Rutor, the Grand Combin and the Mount Emilius are the most imposing. Not far off tower the mighty masses of ice and rock forming the Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa and Matterhorn ranges. It may be that the elevating scenery he saw daily as a child helped in forming the rare qualities of insight and thoughtfulness which were to become the outstanding characteristics of St. Anselm in later years. Like other boys growing up among hills, he thought that heaven was spread out on the summits of the mountains and that the marvellous palace of God was raised there. Once, while he was still a child, he dreamed he had climbed up onto the peak of Mount Emilius and there spoken to God, who had given him a shining loaf of bread. All through his life St. Anselm firmly believed in the reality of this experience. Anyone who travels through the wonderful valleys round Aosta will still feel the calming and other worldly influences radiating from those lofty heights

and become rapt in the contemplation of values that transcend his everyday occupations and interests.

Anselm was born in 1033 or 1034 at Aosta in Piedmont of noble parents. His father Gundulph descended from the Longobardian aristocracy and was not a native of those parts. His mother Ermenberga, however, was distantly related to the house of the Counts of Maurienne, the ancestors of the house of Savoy, who, even as early as that time, were settled at Aosta and 60 years later were given the fiefs of Susa and Ivrea. Gundulph's life was not of the best. He squandered their considerable possessions, and the thriftiness and cleverness of Ermenberga scarcely sufficed to create some order in the economics of the household. Eadmer, St. Anselm's biographer, tells us that her habits were pure and irreproachable and supported by exceptional understanding. Anselm had a sister, Richera, who was very fond of him. There were also two cousins, Peter and Folkerad, whom he loved deeply. Ermenberga died some time before her husband. It must have been her influence, supported by the imperceptible influence of the hills, which brought about the decided fondness of the boy for deep studies and the monastic life. When the father felt his end approaching, he entered a monastery so as to be able to die in peace, but up to this time he seems to have continued to lead a thoughtless happy-go-lucky profligate life of pleasure and distractions. He died after Anselm had already left Aosta.

At the age of not quite 15 Anselm wished to become a monk, but the abbot of the monastery school to which he had been sent, energetically declined his request. Even when he informed him that he was in danger of death, the abbot still refused to admit him, because his father was against Anselm's idea of consecrating his life to spiritual disciplines and aims.

After Anselm regained his health, he was still firmly determined to dedicate his life later

on to spiritual pursuits. But for a time he came more and more under the influence of his father and threw himself into all sorts of pleasures. This development in the boy might have been fatal, had not his father become more and more inimical to him, persecuting him in every way even more for the sake of his good actions than for his evil ones.

In order to avoid the menacing dangerous clash, Anselm took up a wandering life, made his way through the Mont Cenis Pass and spent the next three years partly in Burgundy and partly in France. After that he lived for a time in Avranches in Normandy and from there went to the abbey of Bec drawn by the great fame of Lanfranc. The first impression he got from his great teacher was overwhelming, and he at once dedicated himself to serious studies in the company of the monks under the guidance of Lanfranc himself. His way of living differed very little from that of the monastic inmates. During this time the wish to become a monk again made itself felt. The struggles previous to his entering the Order are very typical of Anselm's character. He saw himself placed before the choice of joining the famous congregation of Cluny or of professing at Bec itself. Cluny did not appeal to him as the customs there did not enable him to make full use of his considerable knowledge, either for his own good or for that of his fellow-men. In Bec he believed himself to be superfluous, too unimportant beside Lanfranc, but very soon he realized that such thoughts should not determine the choice of a monastery in any sincere aspirant. Thus he decided to remain at Bec after having asked the advice of Maurilius, Bishop of Rouen. He felt that it was just beside Lanfranc that he would have to discipline himself in self-effacement, for there no self-seeking aim under whatever cloak could seduce him into seeking anything but God and the purification and sanctification of his soul. He professed at Bec in 1060.

Three years later Lanfranc, till then prior of Bec, became abbot of St. Stephen's at

Caen. Anselm was now nominated prior by abbot Herluin of Bec. This meant: directing the studies, upholding the discipline, and being responsible for the care of souls. Anselm was specially qualified to be prior, master of the novices and spiritual guide, because owing to his deep knowledge of God he possessed a deep knowledge of man, as his biographer Eadmer repeatedly tells us. He took great trouble with his young monks and pupils, and in his own words we find the fine psychology of education which he applied practically to all whose guidance was put in his hands. He says, 'If you do not leave any freedom to the boys, but always surround them with menaces, blows and terror, they become crippled. Because they do not experience any love from you, they have no confidence and see in everything the outcome of hatred and malice. One must gain hearts through mildness, patience and gentleness, before one can apply rigour'.

Through his great patience he also succeeded in gaining the hearts of the older monks whose envy had been roused by his early promotion to be prior. Anselm's fame spread very fast in spite of the slowness and difficulty of communications at that time, and many fellow-monks and abbots asked his counsel and advice in difficult matters.

In 1070 Lanfranc was called to be Archbishop of Canterbury. From there he came back to Bec in 1077 in order to inaugurate the new monastery church, the foundations of which he had laid in 1059 together with abbot Herluin. On 26th August 1078 abbot Herluin passed away, and Anselm was unanimously chosen as his successor. Giselbert, Bishop of Evreux, ordained him abbot. From now a terrible burden rested on Anselm's shoulders for he did not wish to give up the control of the life in the monastery nor of the lessons. Eadmer writes of this period: 'How often did the whole day not suffice for giving advice to all, seeking counsel of him!'

His fame spread more and more over the whole of Normandy, France, Flanders, even as

far as England, and induced many to come to Bec and to consecrate their lives to God.

When Anselm crossed the channel for the first time, because of some possessions the monastery of Bec had in England, he was received there by Lanfranc who had been called to the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1070. It was in the cathedral of Canterbury that Eadmer made Anselm's acquaintance. Through his often repeated journeys to England Anselm became more and more familiar with English conditions and at the same time gained the greatest respect in that country. For this reason he was chosen as the successor of Lanfranc after his passing away in 1093. From then on till his own death Anselm's whole life was one of unending troubles owing to the obstinacy of William II, in the question of the right of investiture. It would be useless to give a full account of all the variations in the struggle between the Church and the King of England, but there is no doubt that Anselm was greatly oppressed by it and that his whole soul longed for peace and quiet spiritual contemplation. This is felt in a few words, which are typical of his nature, spoken during a sermon to the chapter on one of his short visits to his beloved monastery of Bec. Anselm touchingly says, 'When the horn-owl sits in the nest with its young, it is full of joy and feels happy. But among ravens, crows and other birds, it is attacked and lacerated and is quite miserable. Thus it is with me. With you I am well and happy, and incomparable is the consolation of my life. But when I dwell among worldlings, they lacerate me with their manifold disputes and torture me with their wordly affairs, which I do not love. Then I am miserable and in fear, trembling lest this state bring an everlasting loss to my soul'.

Twice Anselm was banished and went to Rome. The first time in 1097 till 1100, when he was able to return to his archbishopric after the death of William. The second time at the age of 70 in 1103. Peace was finally established in 1106. The king renounced the investiture with ring and staff, and St. Anselm agreed to swear the oath of fealty. The

last years of his life were given to a rigorous reform of his church that had greatly suffered through the absence of its head.

After several previous attacks of illness, Anselm became completely bed-ridden during the Passion Week of 1109. His passing away was very beautiful as if God had meant it to be an example of the words: *Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors sanctorum eius.* - Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His saints. In the night between the Tuesday and Wednesday of Passion Week, while the monks were devoutly singing matins in the Cathedral, one of those standing by his bed took the Gospel and read out the passion according to St. Luke. At the words -- *Vos autem estis qui permanistis in tentationibus meis* -- Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations -- the breath of the dying saint became slower. According to the custom of the Order he was laid upon sackcloth and ashes. At sunrise on the Wednesday of the Passion, on 21st April 1109, Anselm passed away in peace at the age of 76 in the 16th year of his pontificate. He was buried on Maundy Thursday in the Cathedral by the side of Lanfranc.

And while the centuries roll on, two mighty domes watch over him, the old Cathedral where he spent the last part of his life and the mightier one for ever hanging over his native town, resting its infinite transparency on the pillars of the snow-clad peaks which were playmates to him in his boyhood's dreams and the signposts pointing to the eternal heights after which his soul yearned and aspired.

Reprinted from Vedanta Kesari, June 1967

Illness: Accidental and Inherent

From the Yoga-Vasishtha-Maha-Ramayana

Rama said: Tell me, O holy sage, how our health and sickness are connected with the organs and arteries of the body.

Vasishtha replied: Know, Rama, that uneasiness and sickness are both of them the cause of pain to the body... It is ailing of the body that we call sickness, and it is the trouble of the mind that we term uneasiness. Both of them take their rise from our inordinate desires, and it is our ignorance of the nature of things alone that is the source of both...

As the good or bad proclivities of men are the result of their actions in prior and present births, so the anxieties and diseases of the present state are the effects of the good and bad deeds both of this life and of the lives of the past.

I have told you, Rama, about the growth of disease and anxiety... now hear me tell you the mode of extirpating them from the human constitution.

There are two sorts of illness common to human nature, namely, the accidental and the inherent. The accidental rise from the occurrences of daily life; the inherent are what are inborn in our nature.

Our ordinary needs are removed by the attainment of the objects in want; and the diseases growing out of them are also removed (in the same way). But the inherent infirmities of one's disposition, being bred in the blood and bone, cannot be removed from the body without the knowledge of the soul; just as the error of the snake and the rope is removed only by examination of the rope...

The non-essential or extrinsic diseases that are derived from without, are capable of

being removed by the application of drugs;... as also by medicaments and treatments, according to the prescriptions of medical science and the practice of medical men.

You will know, Rama, the efficacy of baths and bathing in holy rivers, and are acquainted with the expiatory mantras and prescriptions of experienced practitioners; and as you have learned the medical Sastras, I have nothing further to direct you in this matter.

Rama rejoined: But tell me, sir, how the intrinsic causes produce the external diseases; and how are they removed by other remedies than those of medicinal drugs?

Vasishtha replied: The mind being disturbed by anxieties the body is disordered also in its functions, just as the man who is overtaken by anger loses the sight of whatever is present before his eyes. He loses sight of the broad way before him, and takes a devious course of his own; like a stag pierced with arrows that flies from the beaten path and goes in amidst the thickets.

The spirit being troubled, the vital airs are disturbed and cause the breath to come out in fits and snatches, in the same way as the waters of a river being disturbed by a herd of elephants, rise above its channel and overflow its banks.

The vital airs, causing irregularity in the breath, derange the lungs and nerves, and all the veins and arteries of the body; just as misrule in the government puts the laws of the realm into disorder.

The irregular breathing unsettles the whole body by making the blood vessels empty and dry in some parts, and full and stout in others, resembling the empty and full-flowing channels of rivers.

The want of free breathing is attended both with indigestion and bad digestion of the

food, and also evaporation of the chyle and blood that it produces. These defects in digestion bring forth a great many maladies in the system.

The vital breaths carry the essence of the food we take to the inferior organs, as the currents of a river carry the floating weeds down a stream.

The crude matter which remains in the intestines, for want of its assimilation into blood and circulation through the frame, becomes finally, because of this restraint in breathing, a source of multifarious maladies.

Thus it is that the perturbed states of the mind and spirit produce the diseases of the body, and are avoided or removed by the removal of mental anxiety...

I have told you, Rama, that pious acts, holy service, virtuous deeds and religious observances serve (to do this) by freeing the mind from its impurities, as the gold is depurated by the touchstone.

The purity of the mind produces a delight in the body, in the same way as the full moon rising, spreads the gentle moonbeams upon earth. Because of this purity the vital airs breathe freely, and these, tending to help the digestive process in the stomach, produce nutrition for the body, and destroy the germs of disease.

Reprinted from Message of the East

The Only Remedy

From Spiritual Letters by Fenelon

So long as we are centred on self, we shall be a prey to the contradiction, the wickedness, and injustice of men. Our temper brings us into collision with other tempers; our passions clash with those of our neighbours; our wishes are so many tender places open to the shafts of those around; our pride, which is incompatible with our neighbour's, rises like the waves of a stormy sea; everything rouses, attacks, rebuffs us. We are exposed on all sides by reason of the sensitiveness of passion and the jealousy of pride. No peace is to be looked for within when we are at the mercy of a mass of greedy, insatiable longings, and when we can never satisfy that "me" which is so keen and so touchy as to whatever concerns it. Hence in our dealings with others we are like a bed-ridden invalid, who cannot be touched everywhere without pain. A sickly self-love cannot be touched without screaming; the mere tip of a finger seems to scarify it. Then add to this the roughness of neighbours in their ignorance of self, their disgust at our infirmities (at the least as great as ours towards theirs), and you soon find all the children of Adam tormenting one another, each embittering the other's life. This martyrdom of self-love you will find in every nation, every town, every community, every family, often between friends. The only remedy is to renounce self. If we set aside -- lose sight of -- self, we shall have nothing to lose, to fear, or to consider; and then we shall find that true peace, which is given to "men of good will." i.e., those who have no will save God's, which has become theirs. Then men will not be able to harm us, they can no longer attack us through hopes or fears, for we shall be ready for everything, and refuse nothing. This is to be inaccessible, invulnerable to the enemy. Man can only do what God permits, and whatever God permits him to do against us becomes our will, because it is God's. So doing, we shall store our treasure so high that no human hand can reach to assail it. Our good name may be tarnished, but we consent, knowing that if God humbles us, it is good to be humbled. Friendship fails us: well it is because the One

True Friend is jealous of all others, and sees fit to loosen our ties. We may be worried, inconvenienced, distressed; but it is God, and that is enough. We love the Hand which smites; there is peace beneath all our woes, a blessed peace. We will that which is, we desire nothing which is denied us, and the more absolute this self-renunciation, the deeper our peace. Any lingering wishes and clingings disturb it; if every bond were broken, our freedom would be boundless. Let contempt, pain, death, overwhelm me, still I hear Jesus Christ saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Powerless indeed are they; even though they can destroy life, their day is soon over! They can but break the earthen vessel, kill that which voluntarily dies daily. Anticipate somewhat the welcome deliverance, and then the soul will escape from their hands into the Bosom of God, where all is unchanging peace and rest.

Reprinted from Message of the East

Beethoven and the Indian Yoga System

Romain Rolland

We are happy to be able to print the following extract from M. Rolland's great work; for it indicates clearly and emphatically both the glories and the dangers involved in the practice of Yoga. Unfortunately, the Western mind, with its will to personal

achievement, has been so dazzled by the glories that, in spite of the warnings of master spirits, the dangers have been ignored, often with disastrous results. Where the impelling genius is absent, with its contempt for danger and even death in the face of the vision, Yoga should be treated with the caution and the profound respect an intelligent novice would feel while handling chemicals in a scientific laboratory; for in it lie all potentialities from destruction to deliverance.

Every true artist has within himself, diffuse and intermittent, this dream-life that flows in great streams in the subterranean world of him. But in Beethoven it attains to a unique intensity and that long before the closing of the doors of his hearing blockaded him from the rest of the universe. ... If not so precocious as Mozart in the art of smooth harmonious speech, how much more precocious he was in his interior life, in knowledge and mastery of himself, of his passions and his dreams! His hard childhood, his premature experiences developed these aptitudes early. I see Beethoven as a child, as his neighbour the baker used to see him, at the window of that garret of his that looked out over the Rhine, his head in his hands, lost in his "beautiful, profound thoughts." Perhaps there is singing within him that melodious lament, the poetic adagio of his first pianoforte sonata. Even as a child he is a prey to melancholy; in the poignant letter with which his correspondence begins we read, "Melancholy, that for me is an evil almost as great as illness itself..." But even in the early days he has the magic power to win free of it by fixing it in tones.

But conqueror or conquered, he is always alone. From his infancy, wherever he may be, in the street or in the salons, he isolates himself with a peculiar strength. Frau von Breuning used to say, when he was thus lost in the distance, oblivious of everything, that he had his raptus. Later this becomes a gulf in which his soul disappears from the sight of men for hours and days. Do not try to recall him! That would be dangerous: the

somnambulist would never forgive you.

Music develops in its own elect that power of concentration on an idea, that form of yoga, that is purely European, having the traits of action and domination that are characteristic of the West: for music is an edifice in motion, all the parts of which have to be sensed simultaneously. It demands of the soul a vertiginous movement in the immobile, the eye clear, the will taut, the spirit flying high and free over the whole field of dreams. In no other musician has the embrace of thought been more violent, more continuous, more superhuman.

Once Beethoven takes hold upon an idea, he never lets it go until he possesses it wholly. Nothing can distract him from the pursuit. It is not for nothing that his piano playing is characterized by its legato, contrasting in this respect with the Mozart touch, that was delicate, pointed, clean-cut, as well as from that of all the pianists of his own time. In Beethoven's thought, everything is connected, and yet it appears to gush out in torrents. He controls the thought, and he controls himself. He appears to be delivered up to the world by his passions; but in fact no one can read the thought that is moving in the depths of him...

Now I myself, when studying the essence of Beethoven's creative genius, had been struck by the "furious concentration" that is the characteristic mark of it, and that distinguishes him from all the composers of his epoch. I had insisted on this point in my commemoration address at Vienna: "In no other musician has this grapple with thought been more violent, more continuous, more invincible than in Beethoven... All his music bears the imprint of an extraordinary passion for unity... The whole of his work is stamped with the seal of a will of iron; we feel that the man's glance is sunk in the idea with a terrific fixity. *And it is not merely a case, as might be thought, of the solitary immured in himself by deafness, who is untroubled by any sound from the outer world.*

Long before the deafness the same characteristic is observable... It is a natural disposition. From infancy Beethoven is absorbed in his interior vision, that eyeless vision that is at once of the whole body and of the whole spirit. When an idea occurred to him, in the crowded street, in the course of a walk or of a conversation, he had, as he used to say, a *raptus*; he no longer belonged to himself but to the idea; he never loses his hold on it until he has made it his. Nothing will distract him from the pursuit. He described this frantic chase to Bettina in the language of hallucination: 'I pursue it, I grasp it, I see it fly from me and lose itself in the seething mass. I seize it again with renewed passion, I can no longer separate myself from it; I have to multiply it in a spasm of ecstasy, in all its modulations.' This passionate pursuit, this multiplication of the idea that has been seized upon, bent to his will, subdued, and is imposed on the hearer by the hammering of the rhythm, the hallucinatory repetitions, the sensuous heat of the orchestral colour and the modulations, produces on simple and sincere natures that yield themselves up to it *an effect of hypnosis, a Yoga. Like the Indian Yoga, once one has attained to it one carries it about with one everywhere, when walking, talking, working, in every act of the daily life. It is subjacent; it is like an aromatic oil injected under the skin...* It was not at hazard that I employed this word Yoga... During the course of the present year my labours have brought me into contact with some of the greatest of the contemporary Indian minds that have practiced Yoga, notably, the extraordinary Ramakrishna, that incomparable master of religious contemplation, and his great disciple Vivekananda. I had read their strangely precise description of all the degrees of this Yogist concentration, and of the physiological and moral effects of what they call the rising, in the canals of the body, of the *Kundalini Sakti* (the essence of energy). But they know the dangers of it, through having, like Ramakrishna, escaped them by a miracle; and they warn their disciples of these dangers. They forbid them to surrender themselves to Yoga at hazard and without an inward necessity; they know well

that these exercises in passionate and boundless concentration always conduct to the brink of cerebral apoplexy or of mental alienation. Some of these adepts have come out of their spells of Yoga with eyes red and bleeding, "as if eaten by ants."

All these images recurred to my mind when I was thinking of the congestions that Beethoven used to extinguish brutally with ice-cold ablutions. And when I read Dr. Marage's diagnosis (on Beethoven's deafness) I communicated to him, on 4th February 1928, the passage I have just quoted, and I asked him if there were not points of analogy between the state of Yogist concentration and Beethoven's violent, tenacious, continuous, absolute absorption in the fixed idea. Could not the otitis have been brought on by this cerebral regime, in truth that of a genius, but a murderous regime, the natural psycho-physiological dispositions thus provoking the catastrophe? And could this, in its turn, have reinforced tenfold the dispositions of nature?

Dr. Marage agreed wholly with my suggestion. "The cause of Beethoven's deafness," he replied on 6th February, "seems to me to have been the congestion of the inner ear and the auditory centres -- a congestion due to the over-working of the organ by his furious concentration, his terrific fixity of idea, as you so well express it. Your comparison with the Indian Yoga appears to me to be very exact..."

he conclusion one thus seems driven to by the force of the facts is one that is tragic in a different way from everything that this glorious misfortune has suggested to our imagination and our pity. The cause of the misfortune was in Beethoven, was Beethoven. It was his destiny; it was himself, who like Oedipus, brought about the catastrophe. It was inscribed in his nature from the beginning, as it were a law of his genius.

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Leaves of an Ashrama: 3 Discovering the Sweet Life

Swami Vidyatmananda

I finally went to see the famous Fellini film *La Dolce Vita*, and I am glad that I did. Far from being an advertisement for the supposed delights of worldliness, this classic motion picture impressed me as being an honest morality play whose theme a Vedantist can appreciate. For the film says what Vedanta says: There is no real satisfaction in maya¹. As a viewer of this movie one is permitted to examine, through the experience of an idealized Worldly Man, the best satisfactions normal life has to offer -- sophisticated cleverness, one romantic adventure after another, sociality among people who are amusing and elegant. Even domestic affection of a sort is portrayed, and religious aspiration based on a supposed miracle. Our Worldly Man is limited by nothing. He roams the broad universe of the Eternal City freely. His partners are among the most beautiful, fashionable, and well-to-do persons in the world. He is young and handsome. He can and does do everything. Surely if maya could ever provide happiness, this Man would be happy.

But how, for our Worldly Man, does every experience end? In emptiness. The sole response to the lessening of a pleasure is to seek it in a more exaggerated form. The only solution to satiety is promiscuity. Tired, but unable to stop, hungering but unable to find food for his soul, the Man goes on searching -- an ever more melancholy search

until the film's end. No, this is not a gay portrait of license. The title is ironical. La Dolce Vita is a serious allegory bathed in sadness.

What does seeing this motion picture mean to me? It told me nothing new, but it did confirm me in a position I have taken; it reinforced my resolution to seek and follow dispassion. It reminded me, as I must ever be reminded, that the Sweet Life of the world is not sweet at all. It is, all things considered, most bitter. Why You designed matters as You did, Lord, I do not know.

Why You made us want what must eventually frustrate us I cannot understand. Your purpose is a secret which I may not share. But this is how it always works out, and I must just make up my mind to live with your enigma.

"An imitation," someone has said, "is proof positive of the existence of something real." Our instincts argue that a Sweet Life is somewhere available. Our heart tells us so, and countless saints have said that they themselves have entered into it. The secret is in being willing to shun the semblance in order to seek the real. Is it possible that the unraveling of the Lord's enigma is the following? "The things you think you want -- I have made them frustrate you in order that you may hunger more intensely for the hidden Real and pursue the one course necessary to gain it. Frustration is the tool which I, in my compassion, have forged so as to bring you to Me."

The Blessed Lyubushka Ryazanskaya

E.A Masalitinova

Translated by John Phillips

The Blessed Lyubov is a special intercessor for the city of Ryazan and the orthodox believers living there. Her people simply call her affectionately "Our Lyubushka". The people cherish with special fondness and affection the memory of their saint who followed the path of being a fool for Christ. Her life stretched over a most difficult period for Russia, the revolution and the persecution of the Orthodox Church.

1. The Blessing of Saint Nikolas

There is no one now living who could say where Lyubov Semenovna Sukhanova was born, who her parents were and how many years she lived on this earth. It is only known that she lived with her mother and sister Olga Semenovna in the city of Ryazan, in the parish of the church of the Annunciation of the Mother of God near the Kazan women's monastery. Lyubov's soul flew up to God, but her body was weak: for fifteen years she was unable to move -- to stand and walk on her own feet. In the room where she always lay there was an icon of Saint Nikolas the Wonder Worker, and Lyubov prayed to him and loved the saint with all her heart -- she knew what a lot of good he had done to people.

One day, when Lyubov was alone in the house, St. Nikolas the Wonder Worker himself appeared to her. And when her mother entered the room, she found Lyubov standing on her own legs. Seeing this, her mother joyfully rushed to her, saying: "Daughter, is this you? How did you get up on your feet?" Lyubov raised her hand and, pointing to the Saint's icon, said: "Saint Nikolas appeared and said to me: 'Arise, Lyubov, walk and be a fool for Christ' -- I stood firmly on my feet, and he disappeared."

Her mother was very glad about this occurrence, but at the same time she was sad to

hear of her daughter's intention to be a fool for Christ. Thinking the matter over, she went to the priest, told him everything and asked for advice. When the priest had heard her words, he answered: "It is the will of God, do not hold your daughter back, let her go and may she go and become a fool for Christ. A person's steps are guided by the Lord." The mother bowed to the will of God. From that time onwards Lyubov undertook very difficult spiritual feats. She began to pray in all the churches in Ryazan, and she also loved to visit the Kazan women's monastery and lived for a long time with some of the sisters, often with the abbess Ekaterina, who was a wise and well-read spiritual woman from a noble family.

2. In seclusion

Under the canopy of the stone arches of the churches, in the mysterious semi-darkness of flickering lamps, the dark faces of the saints looked down on Lyubov and called her to asceticism. The urge towards ascetic feats matured in her heart and Lyubov shut herself in her house in the niche between the stove and the wall. It was not a place for seclusion, but the desire to undertake an ascetic feat arose and she accepted it. There is no doubt that during this period of her life she came to be a person with a strong will and an elevated soul.

Time passed and Lyubov Semenovna, after remaining in her niche for three years, came out of it. Prayer for others, good advice, kindness, sympathy, the desire to warn against danger and compassion for people fell to her lot. Lyubov was often seen on the streets of Ryazan. She went into the shops of small merchants and took what was needed without asking. The merchants did not scold her, did not chase her away: they were glad, because this was a sure sign that on that day the business would be especially successful. Doors were not closed to her. Some merchants called her, but she appeared

not to hear and walked past.

Sometimes, when she was tired from walking, she would sit in a house porch, and the occupants would offer food: from some she took gladly, but to others she said: "You yourselves have little," and would not take it. What she did take, she did not carry home, but distributed to the needy on the way. Poor people and beggars knew and loved her.

There were people who were afraid of Lyubov's perspicacity. She was probably very mistrustful of people or those who did not have a clear conscience. There were also those who did not believe in her and laughed at her. She bore everything patiently and a smile almost never left her face which expressed, apart from her usual affability, great strength of will.

Lyubov Semenovna, or as the people lovingly called her, Lyubushka, dressed simply but cleanly. She did not wear "a nun's habit". She wore bright coloured clothes and on her head a scarf -- either blue or pink. She loved pink and wanted her tomb to be edged with pink when she died.

One girl was very much afraid of Lyubushka, fearing her perspicacity. The girl was not bad, nothing unpleasant was noticeable about her, but her fear was uncontrollable. She got up one morning and began to start the samovar. A large family lived in that house and everyone took a turn in starting the samovar. She began to light the kindling, then looking out of the window, she saw Lyubushka coming through the gate. In terror, she ran quickly to lock the door, so that the Blessed One would not enter. But Lyubushka was already on the threshold and said: "But I hurried, afraid that you would lock the door." Then she took a chocolate out of her pocket and gave it to her, saying: "Here is a sweet for you, please eat it without fail, do not give it to anyone." The girl did what

Lyubushka said, and from that time her fear left her and she joyfully met the Blessed One every time.

3. Predictions

Lyubushka sometimes visited houses of acquaintances. Knowing which things were with which woman, she would obtain scissors and paper and begin to cut out some figure, and then give the cut out figure to the person for whom it was intended. One man was afraid of such offerings and hid the scissors in advance, but he did not succeed in avoiding the prediction. In such cases she tore the figures out of the paper with her hands and gave them all the same to the person intended: for the girl to be married -- a garland, for the one to die -- a tomb. She made these figures very skilfully. She silently handed them over and went away. So it would come to pass.

The novice Frosia lived in the Kazan monastery with the nun Artemia. Frosia's sister sometimes visited her there. This sister wanted very much to enter the monastery, but she was young and they would not accept her. Once she came to the monastery and again spoke of her wish to be there. At that same time Lyubushka also came to Mother Artemia. From the chest-of-drawers she took scissors and a large sheet of paper and quickly started to cut out something. She laid a cut-out circle on the table. The circle was like the monastery wall, church and choir. Pointing out the choir to the young girl, Frosia's sister, she said: "That is where you will sing, and you will also read there." The time came and she entered the monastery. They assigned her as a task to sing in the choir. She showed she was gifted with a rare voice -- a female bass. Besides singing in the choir, her task was also the reading of the "Epistles". When the monastery was closed, she sang in another church almost until her final illness, as it is said in Psalm 145: "I shall sing to my God as long as I live."

Lyubushka foresaw a long time in advance the closure of the Kazan monastery, when there was no rumour at all of it. She told some elderly mothers: "You will leave your bones in the monastery, but the others will not."

The sad day arrived and the monastery was closed. How many tears were shed! How much sorrow was experienced! What awaits us yet? each nun involuntarily asked herself on leaving the monastery, which was so close and dear to them. After the quiet of the monastery, life in the world frightened many of them: anxiety gripped their hearts, along with the unknown nature of what the future held for them. If there were not the love and hope in the protecting Mother of God, what would happen? On that day, as often happened, Lyubov Semenovna came to the monastery. The anxiety and agitation of the sisters surrounded her. She was serious and concentrated, almost did not speak a word, but worked skilfully with experienced hands ... A sheet of paper, scissors or just tearing -- and all was clear: who would marry, who would die, who would go away, and who would live at the church and work. Each figure cut out expressed her look into the future. For the mother recounting this story she cut out a church with a beadle and a bell and said: "Here you will live and will be well fed". The mother lived for ten years at the church of the entry of the Mother of God into the Temple, carrying out various jobs. She also had to ring the bell. Subsequently many sisters from the Kazan monastery met one another and recalled what Lyubushka had cut out for them then and confirmed that all her predictions had come true.

"She came to our family," recounts X., who knew Lyubushka personally, "as though it were her own and loved us all. At that time my father died in Moscow. My mother decided to have the body brought to Ryazan and buried here. Although it was difficult to do this in those hard times, they nevertheless brought the body and buried it in Ryazan. Lyubushka was also here. They began to dig the grave at the cemetery and she went a

little way away and began to dig another grave. Our grandmother saw this and said to her reproachfully: 'Lyubushka, what are you doing? You are digging a second grave, while we have not yet finished digging this one.' 'But we shall bury a little sparrow here,' she replied. A little two-months-old boy soon died in our family. Then we understood for which little sparrow she was digging a grave."

In one family there were three children, and a fourth was to be born into this world. Once Lyubushka visited them and said to the man: "Konstantin Pavlovich, take me as a wife," and she smiled so invitingly. He also smiled at her words and replied: "Yes, I would gladly take you, Lyubov Semenovna, as a wife, but what would we do with my wife, Pelagrea Fedorovna?" This time, as sometimes happened with her before, she said straight out: "She will die." And in fact she died in childbirth, leaving four children behind her. After the funeral there was a big memorial dinner. Lyubushka was also invited. She sat silent at the table, did not look at anyone, and as soon as she got up from the table, she left and from that time was never again in that house.

Lyubov Semenovna was invited not only to funerals, but also to marriages, with the idea that her presence would bring happiness to the young people, but it was not always like that. One of the rich merchants of Ryazan, who had his house in the former old bazaar, married off his daughter. Many guests were invited from the families of the bride and bridegroom. There was luxury everywhere: a well served table, music, flowers, etc. For some reason the bridegroom had a strong desire to marry the merchant's daughter: whether he was inspired by personal gain or by love -- this was now forgotten, but he carefully hid the fact that he had a strong passion for alcohol, although no one suspected him of being a drunkard. What then was the surprise of the guests and the bride's parents, when Lyubov Semenovna, who did not previously know the bridegroom, loudly proclaimed at table: "The bridegroom is a thorough drunkard and the girl will not

be happy." The happy mood of the celebration was darkened, and they even regretted having invited the blessed one. But afterwards, when they became convinced of the truth of her words, they loved and respected her as before.

Lyubushka repeatedly returned to her own home, where her large family lived. At that time her grandfather was still alive. It happened that when his child's godfather came to her grandfather, Lyubushka also came at that time. The godfather was a jolly fellow. They talked to the grandfather, laughed together. The godfather decided to have a little joke with Lyubushka and asked her: "Look, Lyubov Semenovna, tell us, when you die, who will you leave your house to?" The blessed one smiled and answered: "To the soldiers." They began to laugh at her words. No one could think, that in time the house would really be commandeered and on that spot a military depot would be established and military equipment would be stored in it. Subsequently the place where the house was situated was left to the soldiers.

Three girls, who were friends, were preparing for their examinations. Anyone who has experienced this will understand their anxiety, for it sometimes happens that, although you know a lot, at the examination you lose your head and do not give reasonable answers, but with poor preparation worse than that, you might come out on top. The friends heard about Lyubushka, that she could predict what would happen, and they decided: "Let us go to her and ask how the examinations will turn out." No sooner said than done. They came, but did not manage to cross the threshold of her little house before she met them invitingly, saying: "And so Katya, Shura and Lida have come to me!" -- and she named every one by her real name, although she did not know them before. And she began to say: "You will soon have the examinations, and you are afraid. Do not be afraid at all, everything will go off well." They girls went away consoled, and they successfully passed their examinations.

Just before the overthrow of the Orthodox Czar in 1917 the Blessed One went through the city streets and repeated: "The walls of Jericho are falling, the walls of Jericho are falling." She was already well known and people asked her what that meant. But Lyubushka did not explain her words, and when everything was overturned, their meaning became clear.

During the Christmas fast, at four o'clock they always drank tea in the Sh. family. The grandmother came to the table and poured out the tea for the members of the family. Lyubov Semenovna also often came at that time: she loved to talk to the grandmother. In this way she once came, carrying something in her hands, and the grandmother asked: "What is that you have in your hands, Lyubushka?" She answered: "I was going past the undertakers and there they were upholstering a coffin. I took a piece of velvet. Take it." -- "But why are you giving it to me?" the grandmother asked. She did not manage to get an answer from Lyubushka before they came with the news that Darya Afinogenovna Maryeva, who was related to the grandmother's child's godmother, had died. The deceased's coffin was lined with the same velvet, a piece of which Lyubushka had brought with her. She had hurried to prepare grandmother for the sad event.

Lyubushka foretold the subsequent fate of two little girls. She was a frequent visitor of their parents. Once she came to them. The pure children's hearts were not afraid of anything, and so they trustingly attached themselves to the Blessed One: "Aunt Lyuba, tell us what you know," they asked. Lyubushka smiled, took a small packet out of her pocket, unwrapped it and in her hands appeared two little paper icons. One icon with the image of the Orthodox Saint Alexander Nevski was for the elder girl, and for the younger one was the Orthodox Anna Kashinskaya. Later the elder daughter married, her husband's name was Alexander in honour of the Orthodox Saint Alexander Nevski and they lived together at the "Alexander Nevski" station. The fate of the younger one was

similar to the life of the Orthodox Princess Anna Kashinskaya. She also lost her husband early, and became a widow with two children.

Lyubushka often went to one family of people well known to her. She once came in the evening, when they were preparing to drink tea. They had her sit down at table, and she gratefully said: "Oh, how nice to drink a cup of tea!" But she herself, somehow unnoticed by everyone, was busy with something else: she poured earth on to the table, made two little graves, and made crosses out of splinters of wood on each grave and said: "How nice!" The hostess, looking at her, became worried and at once asked: "What is this, Lyubushka? Who did you do that for?" And she again repeated: "Everything is fine, do not worry." It so happened that within a week this woman's father and mother died. The question automatically arises as to why is this good. Is it not that we are accustomed to look upon death as something terrible, but Lyubov Semenovna saw in it a transition from one life to another, eternal life. As a sincere servant of the Lord she could know more about one's fate in the next world than in this world.

4. Prediction of her own death

Liza M, who knew the Blessed One very well in her youth, recounted as follows concerning Lyubushka's death. "Three weeks before her death Lyubushka came to our house. Our family was large and she loved them all and came when she wanted. I was the youngest in the family and she loved me particularly. This time Lyuba affectionately called me by name and said: "Lizonyka, I shall soon be dying, you pray for me. Go to my grave and take some sand from it, and line my coffin in pink." I asked her: "Why should I take the sand?" I saw that after these words some sort of shadow passed over her face. She thought for a moment and said: "Take sand all the same, pour it into a jar and it will be a blessing in the house." When Lyubushka died, I was at work. Returning home, I learned of her death and at once went to her. Cleaned up, she lay in the coffin, which

was well made, but not lined with anything. I remembered Lyubushka's request to line the coffin in pink, and became sad: how could I fulfil her request? She died in 1921. There was nothing in the shops at that time. They sold materials on coupons, and our family had already spent all ours. You would never get any more, however much you asked. What could I do? Well, I thought, I shall go to a store and ask just for gauze. It would still be better than just a bare coffin. I came into the store, began to speak to the manager: "I would like to buy gauze from you: I need to line a coffin of an old lady acquaintance of mine. She earlier asked me about this." The manager called the apprentice: "Misha, there on the shelf we have pink gauze, go and fetch it." I thought to myself, "Is he making fun of me, is there such a thing as pink gauze?" But I looked and saw the boy bringing a whole pile of gauze of good taste and pink in colour. Such gauze was never on sale. So I lined her "little house" in pink. And they made frills and bows around it -- the coffin lining turned out fine. In this way Lyubushka's wish expressed before her death was fulfilled.

In was in 1921. A difficult year. The Civil War was raging. People were suffering at the front and suffering in the rear: there was no bread, kerosene or firewood. In the houses it was as cold as on the street. Instead of lamps they lit flickering tapers in the evening. With such lighting the children learned their lessons. Adults were busy getting food for the family. In short, it seemed, that each person thought only of himself. But when they learned that Lyubushka had gone to the Lord and she was being buried, everyone dropped what they were doing and hurried to accompany the Blessed One on her last journey. All the streets on the route followed by the funeral procession as far as the grave itself were full with a living wall of people. The police took steps to maintain order. In this way the people honoured Lyubushka's memory.

After her mother died, Lyubushka lived with her sister. Olga Semenovna treated her

condescendingly. She did not oppress her, did not offend her, but did not believe in her, saying: "Our Lyuba assumes an air of blessedness." But when she saw the huge number of people accompanying Lyubushka on her last journey, she wept bitterly and said: "How many people knew my sister, only I did not know her." In this way the words of the Gospel were confirmed: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." (Matthew 13:57).

5. Miracles on the grave

Lyubov Semenovna died on 8 February 1921. By the zeal of the deacon of one of the churches in Ryazan, and also of other admirers, a memorial was to be erected on her grave. But years passed and the memorial was not erected. With the passing of years the grave became almost neglected. Not far from the cemetery a hostel was built for mentally handicapped children. They brought to the cemetery the spirit of destruction and disorder. Fewer people came to visit it. Then at that time a certain military man came from somewhere to Lyubushka's grave. He soon had a cross and metal fence erected at his own expense. The grave took on a good appearance. The military man said about himself that his life had been extremely unsuccessful. He was sick, and no doctors could help him, but Lyubushka appeared to him in a dream and said: "Do not be sad and upset, go to Ryazan, find the grave of Lyubov Semenovna in the cemetery, erect a fence around it. After that you will be healthy and happy." He did everything as she had said, and received healing. His health improved and failure stopped dogging him. In memory of this appearance and in gratitude for the help provided, he then came every year to her grave and had a memorial service conducted.

One girl lost her mother. They had lived together and her mother was her only near relative and loved one. Being left on her own, she became very sad and depressed and wept. Good people advised her to ask for forty days of prayer to be said for her mother,

saying this gives peace to the soul of the deceased, and brings relief to the survivors.

The girl replied: "I would ask for this, if I could, but I spent my money on the funeral and I have no money for the forty days of prayer." Then she had a dream. Lyubov Semenovna appeared to her and said: "Do not cry, do not get upset, but take the government bonds, check them, perhaps you have won." And in fact, when the girl checked her bonds, it turned out that that there was a win on them. During the time of her mother's illness and funeral she had completely forgotten about them. With this money the girl ordered the forty days of prayer for her mother, after which she began to feel more relieved. Then she came to Lyubushka's grave and thanked her for her help.

This is what a strongly believing man related. He preserved the memory of the Blessed Lyubov all his life, remembering her in his prayers to God and the Most Pure Mother of God.

"The Second World War was raging from 1941 to 1945. During that time I was fourteen years old. In the town, bread was given out on ration cards, but in our village outside the town they issued flour. There was a queue and I stood in line. The weather was cold and my clothing was rather poor. I felt myself becoming cold. I thought, where can I go? Not far away there lived some friends and I went to them. When entering the hallway, I saw a perch had been erected for chickens and chickens were sitting there, and in the corner under them was something like a broad plank or a door with a sheet of wood on it, standing against the wall and all stained by the chickens/ droppings. I thought, let me look at it from another side. Looking a bit, I saw the fingers of a hand drawn. I did not think for long but took my bag and began to remove the dust. Something I inherited from my mother -- I forgot about the queue and the flour, I wiped everything, and it turned out that this was an icon of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. Then I went into the house and asked the hostess: "Elena Petrovna, sell me the icon I saw in your

hallway." And I myself thought: "I do not have any money at all, and mother will hardly give me any. Maybe I can get it by begging." And she answered: "Volodenka, how can I sell that icon? You see, it may be a sin, and also they may open the church. No, I will not sell it nor give it away. Don't think of such a thing." I said: "Well, if they open the church, we shall give it to them." At that time I had only two icons in the house: the Saviour and the Mother of God. But she did not want to hear of it. So I went away with nothing. During the day I decided to go to the grave of the Blessed Lyubushka. I came and stood by the grave, then told her everything as though she were alive: "You see, there is an icon, it is standing in the dirt, it is no use to anyone, and they will not give it to me. Please, Lyubushka, try, pray to God for them to give me the icon of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul." Some time passed. Once I was at home and was busy with something. Suddenly my mother called out: "Yurka has come for you." I went and asked: "Yurka, why have you come?" He replied: "Grandmother Elena Petrovna asks you to come now." I went to her and she said: "I do not know, Volodenka, what has happened to me. This icon has stood in our hallway for so long and nothing happened, but today such a fright came on me that I cannot even tell you. I sent Yurka to you. Take this icon and take it to the place you know." And she gave it to me. I thanked Lyubushka in my heart for her help. I took the icon and carried it, and it was big, almost bigger than me. I was still small then. And the icon was dirty. I thought, how can I get home with it? I washed all the dirt off in the pond and took it. This was the first large icon in our house."

Vera, the servant of God, the wife of a chorister in the Skorbyashchenski church, fell ill. She suffered a deep depression, so strong that it swallowed up the desire to pray. She stopped going to the church for she was no longer drawn there. Seeing such a dangerous state of her soul, Vera went to the Blessed Polyushka, who lived in the Zakharovski district of the Ryazan region, asking her to pray for her and for help in misfortune. She came to Polyushka and told her about the difficult situation of her soul. But the latter

answered: "Why have you come to me? Go back to Ryazan, go to the grave of the Blessed Lyubov, ask her for a cure and take some sand from her grave. Pour out some water, sprinkle the sand in it and drink it -- you will recover your health." Returning to Ryazan, she did as Polyushka had asked her and felt herself well again. The depression passed, the desire to go to church appeared and in prayer she found comfort and consolation. Vera began to go to church as before.

Once an elderly woman appeared in the Skorbyashchenski church. She requested to be shown the grave of the Blessed Lyubov, saying at the same time that she was ill and the doctors could not help her. She had dreamed of an elderly woman whose name was Lyubov Semenovna, buried in the Ryazan cemetery, and she promised to cure her, if she visited her grave and held a memorial service there. In fulfilment of this instruction, the sick woman had come there.

6. The Protectress of Ryazan

The Blessed Lyubov, the protectress of Ryazan, also appears to people from other towns. People come for her help from Moscow, Kostroma, Nizhni Novgorod, etc. Some come already healed, with great gratitude to the holy Lyubov. Here is a case from not long ago, which occurred on 14 August 1992. A woman, venerating the holy relics and icon of the Blessed one, left with Maria Yakovlevna a large sum of money for the repair of the chapel and related the following:

"My name is Valentina, I come from the Ukraine. I was sick for a long time. I had treatment with various doctors, but did not get better and so I began to fall into despair. Then I had a dream. A woman came to me and said: "You have been ill a long time, the doctors have shown themselves to be incapable of curing you, but I will help, on condition that you go to Ryazan and visit my grave." I replied that I agreed to that

and asked: "Who are you and how shall I find your grave?" "As you agree, you will soon be well again. I am the Blessed Lyubov of Ryazan. When you come to the Church of the Joy of all those in Sorrow, have a public prayer celebrated for your recovery and the people will show you my grave." After that dream I began to feel better and better, and soon I was quite well again. My arrival is connected with the promise to visit the grave of the Blessed Lyubov and I go home with a clear conscience."

The inhabitants of Ryazan love their Blessed One very much. This is especially noticeable on the day of the Holy Great Martyrs Vera, Nadyezhda, Lyubov and their mother Sofia, when in the Church of the Joy of all those in Sorrow a festival service is conducted on the day of the Angel of the Holy Blessed Lyubov. The church is full of believers of all ages, of various social strata, well-being and education -- all of them as one in their love for the saint and, united in one body -- the Church of Christ, as they pray: "We call you blessed, Holy and Blessed Lyubov, and esteem your memory as holy." After the conclusion of the service a public prayer is held in the chapel at the grave of the holy Lyubov. The chapel was recently painted in Lyubov's favourite pink colour, and the cross on the cupola was gilded. Here it must be stated that last summer the little chapel was vandalised. But the evil act did not go unpunished. This is what a witness Maria Yarovlevna Morozova related:

"After the vandalism, I noticed that a young man often came here to pray. One day he came to me and said: 'Mother, I cannot keep silent any longer. Forgive me, but it was I who vandalised the chapel.' 'Ask forgiveness of God and the Blessed Lyubov,' I replied and was interested to know how it happened. He said he himself does not know how it happened, but he remembers that some other-worldly devilish powers literally took him up, carried him to this place and made him knock out the windowpanes in the chapel. He was having no rest and had ceased sleeping and eating. Then he took new glass

panes, inserted them and now he wants to go to confess in church."

From this example it can be seen how great is the holy Lyubov's compassion, who punishing the man for committing the sin, nevertheless gave him the possibility of repenting and correcting himself. How great and wise is God's Providence, which turns evil into good, for the erection of the chapel became even more beautiful. In it appeared the carefully drawn shroud of the Blessed Lyubov, and now orthodox believers with still greater joy and devotion come to venerate her holy relics.

Discrimination

Swami Dayatmananda

Self-integration

We discussed in our last article about self-analysis. Done honestly and objectively it should give us a fairly good idea of the inner workings of our minds. It is a step towards self-improvement. The next step is self-integration or integration of personality.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say: *"There are two types of egos, one 'ripe' and the other 'unripe'. 'Nothing is mine, whatever I see, or feel, or hear, nay, even this body itself, is not mine: I am always eternally free and all-knowing,' -- such ideas arise from the 'ripe ego'. 'This is my house; this is my child; this is my wife; this is my body,' -- thoughts of this kind are the manifestation of the 'unripe ego'."*

