



MAY 2022 -VOLUME 20 NUMBER 05

The Vedanta Kyokai Newsletter

NEWS, UPDATES AND MISCELLANY FROM THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF JAPAN

JUNE 2022 Calendar



Swami Vivekananda
Public Celebration
Indian Embassy Tokyo
Complete Details
Pages 3 & 4

Birthdays

There are no birthdays of
note for the month of
June 2022
according to the
Vishuddha Siddhanta
Almanac

Zushi Events

May Calendar Page 2

While many COVID
restrictions had been lifted
somewhat by the Japanese
government, new Omicron
variants require we continue
to observe stringent
precautions.



✧ Thus Spake ✧

“Have no motive except God. Dare to come to Truth even through hell.”

- Swami Vivekananda

“Those persons who know and sow in their hearts the seed of His name, are liberated from death and birth again and again and get salvation forever without pain.”

- Guru Nanak

May Monthly Retreat Buddha Birth Celebration

“The Three Wisdoms of Lord Buddha”

Special Guest Speaker: Jyōkei Sato, Zen nun, Zentsuji Temple
Interpreted, Summarised and Reported by Leonardo Alvarez

Jyōkei-san is a nun from the Esoteric Buddhism sect called “Shingon-Shū” (lit. “Mantra Sect”) founded by Kōbō Daishi, a monk who lived between the 8th and 9th century, and learned Sanskrit in China from Indian monks and brought that tradition to Japan. She currently lives in Zentsū-ji, a temple built on the birthplace of Kōbō Daishi, in Kagawa Prefecture, in the Shikoku Region of Japan.

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Vedanta Society of Japan

Message Regarding Monthly Programmes for June 2022

Although COVID restrictions imposed by the Japanese government with the recent wave of the Omicron variant have been partially lifted, many precautions will remain in place.

The Vedanta Society of Japan continues to observe social distancing, mask wearing, and avoiding crowding in programme areas. Space is limited so please contact us if you wish to attend these programmes.

*Swami Medhasananda, President
Vedanta Society of Japan*

JUNE 2022

Calendar of Programmes

1st (Wed) June

Weekly Upanishad Study Class

8:30 ~9:30 (in Japanese only)

4th (Sat) June

Bhagavad Gita Study Class at the Indian Embassy

* Video uploaded later

10:30 ~12:00 (In Japanese only)

8th (Wed) June

Weekly Upanishad Study Class

8:30 ~9:30 (in Japanese only)

12th (Sun) June

Public Celebration

Swami Vivekananda: 159th Birth Anniversary

Indian Embassy Tokyo

Guest Speakers Address: 'The Ideals of Swami Vivekananda'

Cultural Programme

SEE DETAILS ON PAGES 3 & 4

22nd (Wed) June (Zoom)

Weekly Upanishad Study Class

8:30 ~9:30 (in Japanese only)

* 26th (Sun) June

Monthly Zushi Retreat

HOURS 10:30~16:30

AM Session / Lunch / PM Session

* SPACE LIMITED - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED TO ATTEND *

Please contact prior to June 10th - 046-873-0428

Bi-Lingual Live Streaming [Click here](#) to go to YouTube.

Please note:

From July the full Retreat hours and schedule return to the 3rd Sunday of each month.



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: 159th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date: Sunday, 12th June, 2022. 2:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m. (Hall opens at 1:30 p.m.)

スワミー・ヴィヴェーカーナンダ第159回生誕記念祝賀会

日 時：2022年6月12日（日）午後2時～5時半（開場午後1時半）

Venue : Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Embassy of India
2-2-11 Kudan-minami, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

Speech : 'Ideals of Swami Vivekananda'



場所：ヴィヴェーカーナンダ文化センター、インド大使館
東京都千代田区九段南2-2-11

スピーチ：「スワミー・ヴィヴェーカーナンダの理想」





SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: 159th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

スワミー・ヴィヴェーカーナンダ第159回生誕記念祝賀会



Jointly organised by Embassy of India, Tokyo & Vedanta Society of Japan

共催：在日インド大使館及び日本ヴェーダーンタ協会

You are cordially invited to attend. 心よりご参加くださいますようお願い申し上げます。



Date: Sunday, 12th June, 2022. 2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. (Hall opens at 1:30 p.m.)
Venue: Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Indian Embassy, 2-2-11 Kudan-minami, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
Programme highlight: Theme of the speech: 'Ideals of Swami Vivekananda'; Cultural Programme
日時: 2022年6月12日(日)午後2時~5時半(開場午後1時半)
場所: ヴィヴェーカーナンダ文化センター、インド大使館：東京都千代田区九段南2-2-11
主なプログラム: スピーチのテーマ：「スワミー・ヴィヴェーカーナンダの理想」、文化交流プログラム

Speakers 講演者



H. E. Mr. Sanjay Kumar Verma
Ambassador of India to Japan
サンジェイ・クマール・ヴァルマ閣下
駐日インド大使



Dr. Tomohiko Taniguchi
Professor, Keio University
谷口 智彦博士
慶應義塾大学教授



Fr. Cyril Veliath SJ
Professor Emeritus, Sophia University
ヴェリヤト・シリル・S.J神父
上智大学名誉教授

Cultural Programme 文化交流プログラム



Dance: 'Dhwani'
Dance group
ダンス：「ドクワニ」
ダンス・グループ

Exhibition: Books on Hinduism, Meditation, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda in Japanese and English.
Light snacks will be distributed.

***No Admission charge.**

展示物: ヒンドゥイズム、瞑想、ラーマクリシュナ、ヴィヴェーカーナンダに関する日・英両語による書籍が展示されます。
軽食をお出しします。

※入場は無料です。

Important notes

1. Prior registration for admission is required. Hence please confirm your attendance by sending a mail to vivekanandaceln2022@gmail.com by June 9, 2022.
2. Precautions for using the hall:
 - Please avoid attending the programme if you have/had any symptoms of cough, fever in recent days.
 - Body temperature will be measured at the entry point.
 - Wearing a mask is mandatory.
 - Sterilizing hands at the entry point is also mandatory.
 - Name, address, contact telephone/mobile number of all the visitors will be recorded.
 - No food and drinks will be allowed inside the hall.
 Your cooperation is earnestly solicited. Thank you.

ご来場の際してのお願い

1. ご参加いただくには事前登録が必要です。2022年6月9日までにEメール vivekanandaceln2022@gmail.com にて、ご来場者の人数をご予約ください。
2. ホールのご利用については以下の通りご協力をお願いいたします。
 - 過去数日以内を含め、発熱、せきの症状がある方はご来場をご遠慮ください。
 - 会場の入口で検温します。
 - マスクを必ずご着用ください。
 - 会場の入口で手指の消毒を行ってください。
 - ご来場者全員のお名前、ご住所、お電話番号を記録させていただきます。
 - 会場内での飲食は禁止されています。
 どうぞよろしくお願い申し上げます。ありがとうございました。

Map of The Embassy of India



For further details, please call:
 Swami Medhasananda
 (046)873-0428
 Mr. S. Kar (045)622-6451
 Mr. S. Brahma (03)3816-6075
Office Address: Nippoo Vedanta Kyokai, 4-18-1 Hisagi Zushi-shi, Kanagawa-ken 249-0001
 Pbone (046)873-0428
 Fax (046)873-0592

インド大使館地図



より詳しい情報を知りたい方は、
 ここにお問い合わせ下さい：
 スワミー・メダサーナンダ
 Tel: 046-873-0428
 事務所住所：日本ヴェーダーンタ協会
 (ラーマクリシュナ・ミッション日本支部)
 249-0001 神奈川県逗子市久木
 4-18-1
 Tel: 046-873-0428
 Fax: 046-873-0592

Three Wisdoms (from page 1)

In December last year she had the opportunity to listen Maharaj's talk in Osaka whose topic was on how to assimilate spiritual teachings and make them part of our lives. At that time, she thought that in Buddhism there were many similarities with Vedantic ideas, and that moreover, since Buddhism has had a very long tradition in Japan, she wanted to present the Buddhist teachings on assimilation.

Today she focused on positive living and some of the main Buddhist practices regarding assimilation, which are summarized as the three wisdoms of “門・思・修 (Mon – Shi – Shu)” or “Listening, Pondering Deeply and Practicing in Earnest (In Sanskrit: Sruta Mayi Prajña, Chinta Mayi Prajña, Bhavana Mayi Prajña)”. These practices actually tally with the Vedantic method of “Sravana, Manana and Niddidhyasana”.

She then launched into her talk with a brief historical introduction of Lord Buddha:

‘Lord Buddha brought light into this world 2500 years ago as the first-born son of King Suddhodhana and Queen Maya in the Shaka Kingdom in what is now Nepal. At that time one sage came to pay obeisance to the newborn, and prophesied to his father: “If your son stays in the palace, he will be a great king, he will not rule by force, but by righteousness, and shall gain recognition all over the world. However, if he ever sees disease, old age, death and suffering, he will give up the world and become a world saviour.”

‘Naturally, King Suddhodhana wanted his son to be a king, he did not want him to renounce home and hearth. Hence, he strove to provide as many comforts as he could for the young prince. The most pleasurable type of environment; when it was winter, he would shift his son to a palace in a warmer location and when it was summer, he would send him to a palace in a cooler region, and so forth.

‘However, since it is inevitable to come across death, suffering and disease, Prince Siddhartha – as Lord Buddha was known then – resolved to give up the world. Yet at that time he had married princess Yashodha and had a son, whom he called “Rahula” which some interpret to mean “a fetter to enlightenment”. In spite of that, he carried on with his conviction to find a way out of suffering, illness, old age and death, and left his palace in the dead of night with his charioteer Chanda. Once they reached the forest, he gave up his royal garments and wore the robe of a mendicant monk and began his struggle and pursuit for Enlightenment.

‘From the onset Prince Siddhartha looked for teachers in the path of meditation, as there were many renown sadhus expert in meditation. He went to two teachers, Alakarna and Uttarakamaputra, and learned as much as he could from them, but they could only teach him how to reach the state of voidness and the state of neither voidness nor non-voidness, but not that Reality which is beyond. He then decided to pursue the path to Enlightenment on his own, and after 6 years of severe austerities, he took the ultimate resolution by sitting beneath the Bodhi Tree:

“Even if my blood should dry up, my flesh decay and my bones crumble, I shall not rise from my seat until I achieve full Enlightenment”

Three Wisdoms (from page 5)

‘After some time, having conquered all his passions and sources of inner temptation, he reached Nirvana and became the Buddha, the Awakened One. From then on, He preached the message of Truth for the next 45 years throughout India.

• Thought of the Month •

“Delight in heedfulness! Guard well your thoughts!”

- Lord Buddha

In Japan, Jyōkei-san mentioned an ancient tradition that holds that before Lord Buddha became enlightened, there were 24, or at least 6 previous Buddhas, and that they all shared a common teaching which can be summarized as: “Refrain from evil, do good unto others and be pure.” Throughout the ages all the Buddhas taught more or less the same things, if through different words.

‘Today’s talk deals with a particular focus on suffering. There is physical suffering, which is mostly derived from outside stimuli, and is rather of a gross kind, but there is another type of suffering, which is more subtle, and comes from within, from our own minds, based on our attitudes and perceptions. Hence, our focus should not be so much on the outer conditions, of which we mostly have no control, but rather on the inner conditions, which we can control, analyze, and strive to change, by purifying our minds from negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, biases, prejudices and so forth.

Then Jyōkei-san gave an analogy between the mind and a lake:

‘When someone throws a stone into the still waters of a lake or there are some disturbances below the waters, ripples are created which expand throughout the whole surface of the water, and thus, it can no longer reflect properly the surroundings. But when the lake becomes calm and quiet again, its waters can reflect the surroundings properly and see things as they are without any distortion. In Japanese Buddhism they have a word for that “大円境地” Daien-Kyochi), or “The state of mind which is like a pure and perfect mirror of wisdom”, which is what we want to achieve. Once we are settled in that state, we can reflect the Truth directly, and we are able to perceive our own essence.

Jyōkei-san then returned to the three teachings of Listening, Pondering Deeply and Practicing in Earnest.

- The first one, Listening, means listening to the teachings of Lord Buddha, the teachings that will lead us to Truth and to Liberation, and trying to fully comprehend what is the relationship between these teachings and our own lives. This brings forth a wisdom which robbers cannot steal and which persists after death.

- Then comes “Chinta-Mayi-Prajña”, which means pondering deeply on the teachings until they become part of us.

- Lastly, “Bhavana-Mayi-Prajña”, or the wisdom acquired through persistent practice, specifically by trying to help others, being altruistic and living rightly, until that becomes part of our own nature.

Three Wisdoms (from page 6)

‘The problem some of us have is that, although we know about the teachings, we fail to practice them. So, we must strive hard to practice and make these teachings an inextricable part of ourselves.

‘Regarding suffering, Buddhism tells us that there are two types of suffering: One type of suffering which puts an end to suffering, is characterized by the practice of austerities, meditation, virtues, as well as self-control, denying oneself engaging in immoral pleasures, and so forth. In the beginning it is hard to do, hence one feels a sort of difficulty or pain when practicing them. However, these practices will help to quiet and control the mind, our greatest enemy, and also bring lasting joy and happiness, to oneself and to others.

‘On the other hand, there is a type of suffering which increases suffering, like adding oil to fire. That is exemplified by the sufferings accrued from vices, such as gambling, bad habits and addictions, etc., and other fleeting pleasures and wrong notions.

‘In Japanese there is a saying: “良薬は口に苦し” (Ryoyaku wa kuchi ni nigashi), which means “ Good medicine tastes bitter”, so in the same way, we should practice self-control, austerities, and meditation, which are like good and bitter medicine to our minds, and thus, heal us from our vices.

‘Along with the aforementioned triple practices of wisdom, there are also three steps of practice, namely of Moral Disciplines (Sīla, in Sanskrit), Meditative Absorption (Dhyāna) and Wisdom (Prajña). Sīla means following the basic moral precepts of Buddhism such as avoiding stealing, killing, immoral acts, violence, drinking alcohol, etc. These practices foster self-control. Likewise in Esoteric Buddhism, confessions are important. It means to confess one’s own transgressions or sins, and trying to fix the source of those errors, so that you can enter into meditation with a better mind-set. This is done before the monastic/disciple community, the Sangha, or before the image of Lord Buddha.

Swami Medhasanandaji (Maharaj) who was also in attendance, then commented that in India there is a similar tradition. There are four types of confession practices: Confessing before God, before the guru, before the monastic community, and the other one is to confess while immersing part of the body in the Ganges River, since the Ganges purifies the devotees from all their sins. This is specially done on the day Doshahara (lit. The day in which 10-types of sin are forgiven), where Mother Ganga is worshipped ritualistically (usually around October).

‘After the practice of Moral Disciplines in Buddhism, one’s power of concentration increases, whereby all other irrelevant thoughts and feelings are subdued and only the object of meditation arises in the mind. This is the state of Dhyāna. After this state of deep concentration continues for a long time comes the state of Prajña, or Wisdom arises, in which the sources of misery are forever destroyed and a pure, insightful mind, with all the noble qualities such as altruism, self-control, etc., arises. This is the final stage in the aim to Buddhism and is equivalent to the state of Nirvana.

Three Wisdoms (from page 7)

One living example of this state was Sariputra, one of the first and foremost 10 monastic disciples of Lord Buddha. Sariputra was said to have an excellent character, endowed with many virtues, and above all, humility. Some people upon hearing this were doubtful that such a person could embody so many virtues, and hence, they wanted to try him. They thought, "Well, let us hit him as hard as we can, and then let us see how he reacts! Then he will show us his true humility, self-control, and all that!". These evil-minded people waited for the right opportunity to come. One day they saw Sariputra walking slowly on the street, as was his wont. Then, they silently approached him from behind and all of a sudden hit him. However, Sariputra did not turn around, and simply kept on walking as before. This further angered the perpetrators, who started beating him more, but to their amazement, Sariputra would not moan or react, but just keep on walking as if nothing had happened.

Now, tired of punching him, the men walked forward and prostrated themselves before Sariputra and beseeched him thus: "*Oh Dear Sir! Please forgive our unpardonable transgression of hitting you! Now we know that you are truly the embodiment of many virtues. Please teach us the way to Truth and Enlightenment!*". To this, Sariputra calmly replied: "*Of being hit, I know not what you are talking about. For there was no hitter nor anyone to receive any hits. Everything is just a combination of matter, volition, the mind, and so forth. There is no self who experiences all of these. Hence there is nothing to apologise for.*" And then he proceeded to explain Lord Buddha's doctrines to these heretofore wicked men, who went to embrace the Teachings of the Awakened One and proceed in the path of Enlightenment. •

Monthly Zushi Retreat
Sri Bhagavan Buddha Birthday Celebration
Sunday, 15 May 2022
Venue: Main Ashram

Programme

14:00	Chanting : Reading :	Vedic Mantra, Trisharana Mantra, Buddha Sutra Lord Buddha's Teachings
	Talk : Sub : Interpreter:	Jyōkei Sato, Nun of the Zentsuji Temple, Kagawa 'Three teachings of Lord Buddha' Leonardo Alvarez
15:30		Swami Medhasananda's trip to India: Narration with slide show
16:30		Tea
1830		Evening Prayers





Jyōkei-san



Mr. Alvarez

Ms Shanti

Swami Medhasananda

• Story to Remember •

What We Sow, We Reap

One day while Buddha was meditating, a young man who looked very upset approached him. Buddha asked him what had upset him, and the young man said that his father had died and he could not redress his sorrow. He said he wanted to perform the best after-life rituals for his father, so that his father's soul would go to heaven irrespective of what his father had done during his lifetime, whether good or bad. He continued, "Please do the afterlife rituals for my father, so that his soul may gain entry to heaven and reside there".

Buddha Said, "Okay, bring me two earthen pots, some pebbles, and butter to fill 'the pots'".

Young man believing that these items are for last rituals went to the market and bought them.

Buddha said, "Fill one pot with pebbles and one pot with Butter and seal them. Then take the pots and drop them both into that nearby pond".

The young man did so and both the pots sank to the bottom.

Then Buddha said, "Now break both pots open with a stick!"

The young man struck hard and broke the pots, the butter from one pot floated to the surface, while the pebbles from the other pot settled on the bottom.

Buddha then said, "Well I have done this much, now call all the priests and ask them to pray, so that butter will sink down and pebbles will start floating on the surface!"

The young man in shock asked, "How is it possible?. The pebbles are heavier than water and they will stay at the bottom, whereas butter is lighter than water and only it will float. So, doing the opposite is against the laws of nature".

Buddha said, "Young man, you understand the laws of nature pretty well, but you forget that it applies to everyone. During his life, if your father performed wrong actions that were heavy like pebbles, he is bound to go down and no one can pick him up. If he had performed right actions that were light like butter then he is bound to go up and no one can push him down".

The young man now understood the law of nature and fell at Buddha's feet thanking Him for the His teaching on the laws of nature.

Moral of the story:

The laws of nature clearly define that in life whatever we do, either good or bad, we are going to get it back, that's the Law of Karma. No external power can change it. While we live, we must perform only good things in our day-to-day life. What we sow, we reap.

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