



# Vedanta Society of Toronto

(Ramakrishna Mission)

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## Newsletter June 2026

### Words to Inspire

“Practise that boldness which dares know and show the Truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay, welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe, nothing can kill him. Then you will be free and know your real Soul. This Ātman is first to be heard, then thought about and then meditated upon.”

-----Swami Vivekananda

### **The Powers of the mind**

*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol 2*

Man is growing in knowledge, in power, in happiness. Continuously, we are growing as a race. We see that is true, perfectly true. Is it true of individuals? To a certain extent, yes. But yet, again comes the question: Where do you fix the limit? I can see only at a distance of so many feet. But I have seen a man close his eyes and see what is happening in another room. If you say you do not believe it, perhaps in three weeks that man can make you do the same. It can be taught to anybody.

Now, if these things are true, where can we put a limit? If a man can read what is happening in another's mind in the corner of this room, why not in the next room? Why not anywhere? We cannot say, why not. We dare not say that it is not possible. We can only say, we do not know how it happens.

There is no end to the power a man can obtain.

The whole idea was to get at the basis, to reach the fine parts of the thing. And some of them really showed most marvellous powers. Many of them were trying to float in the air or pass through it. I shall tell you a story which I heard from a great scholar in the West. It was told him by a Governor of Ceylon who saw the performance. A girl was brought forward and seated cross-legged upon a stool made of sticks crossed. After she had been seated for a time, the show-man began to take out, one after another, these cross-bars; and when all were taken out, the girl was left floating in the air. The Governor thought there was some trick, so he drew his sword and violently passed it under the

girl; nothing was there. Now, what was this? It was not magic or something extraordinary. That is the peculiarity.

Again, most of the other sciences deal with things that do not move, that are fixed. You can analyse the chair, the chair does not fly from you. But this science deals with the mind, which moves all the time; the moment you want to study it, it slips. Now the mind is in one mood, the next moment, perhaps, it is different, changing, changing all the time. In the midst of all this change it has to be studied, understood, grasped and controlled. How much more difficult, then, is this science! It requires rigorous training. People ask me why I do not give them practical lessons. Why, it is no joke. I stand upon this platform talking to you and you go home and find no benefit; nor do I. Then you say, “It is all bosh.” It is because you wanted to make a bosh of it. I know very little of this science, but the little that I gained I worked for thirty years of my life, and for six years I have been telling people the little that I know. It took me thirty years to learn it; thirty years of hard struggle. Sometimes I worked at it twenty hours during the twenty-four; sometimes I slept only one hour in the night; sometimes I worked whole nights; sometimes I lived in places where there was hardly a sound, hardly a breath; sometimes I had to live in caves. Think of that. And yet I know little or nothing; I have barely touched the hem of the garment of this science. But I can understand that it is true and vast and wonderful.

### **VIVEKANANDA DINNER 2026**

Vedanta Society of Toronto invites all to participate in the Vivekananda Dinner on July 19, 2026 (Fund raiser event), see details on Page 4.

**THANK YOU.**

### **KARMA YOGA ACTIVITIES**

It is a great opportunity to provide your services to the Vedanta Society of Toronto. We are inviting volunteers for various activities in the ashram, which includes:

*Janitorial (cleaning carpets, floors, washrooms, Shrine area, Meditation room, dusting furnitures, etc.); Garbage / Recycling waste (preferably on Wednesday or Thursday every week); Kitchen and dining hall cleaning; Book-store assistance; Library assistance; Gardening / Snow cleaning / General maintenance activities.*

If interested in volunteering, kindly contact us at [toronto@rkmm.org](mailto:toronto@rkmm.org) or contact Abhijit Bhattacharya on 416-569-9401.

**THANK YOU AGAIN.**

## **Become ready for spiritual life**

Excerpts from Sw Turiyananda's talks from the book 'SPIRITUAL TALKS from the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna'

In the Upanishads, there is a dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi. Yajnavalkya reached the state of Sannyasa as the natural outcome of knowledge. He said to his two wives,

'Now the time has come for my taking up the monastic life. So whatever I have, you both divide between yourselves.' Then Maitreyi said, 'What shall I do with that which won't give me immortality?' Hearing this Yajnavalkya said, 'Maitreyi, I used to love you before, but now I love you all the more.' Then he gave her instructions, and she too renounced.

"But can one give up the householder's life though it is no more appealing, when there are wife and children? What then will be their fate? It is selfishness, pure and simple. To be in the world and maintain the family, to fulfil one's duties—this also is certainly religion. Nothing will be gained by giving up suddenly. One cannot climb to the roof at one bound, one must ascend step by step. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'A fruit plucked before maturity rots and gets spoilt. A sore bleed if you take away the scab before time, while it drops of itself when the sore is healed.' What fine illustrations these—don't you see! Well, everything depends on the mind alone. If one happened to be married but later regretted, and informed Sri Ramakrishna of his intention to embrace the monastic life, he would say, 'Wait; don't give up the world. If you are sincere everything will be set right. You have only to pursue faithfully the course laid down in the scriptures.' It won't be good for you to leave the world. You have got children; go on doing your duty to them—do it unselfishly. To say that you are renouncing the world with the object of calling upon God, would be utterly false. Of course, one should devote time to spiritual practices, and this is the time....

"It is selfishness that is impure. First of all, a man should perform his duties according to his caste and order of life and when the mind is thus purified, he should approach the qualified teacher for the attainment of Self-knowledge. There is no way out unless one has fulfilled one's duties. And the moment you have truly finished the duties of one order of life, those of the next naturally come up. But the case is different for those who have never entered the world since their boyhood.

"Thousands of Brahmanas who were Brahmacharins from their boyhood reached heaven without continuing their line.' "(To the Sannyasins present) That you people did not enter the world was due to the good impressions of past lives. You have finished all that already, so where was the need for you to enter the world again? It is because you understood everything that you gave up. You have forsooth been born with this privilege. Don't you see that the world is mad after sense enjoyment?

People run into debt to get married. And before the debt is cleared, perhaps, they die! Whenever anybody spoke to Sri Ramakrishna about giving up the world, he would say, 'If you are sincere you will find the circumstances gradually becoming favourable.' He never said, 'Leave everything and come away.' 'If you are sincere'—that is what he used to say, because he knew the contents of everyone's mind. In everything pertaining to this world there are two factors—your own wish as well as the Lord's. Hence it is highly prejudicial to take any step through personal obstinacy. Of course, He is inside all, as the controlling principle. Sri Ramakrishna use to tell the parable of a woman in love. She attends to all her household duties but her thoughts are on her lover. When in this way her whole mind goes to her lover, she breaks the family ties and follows the man of her heart. Isn't this a beautiful parable?

Work with one hand and serve the Lord with the other. When the time comes, you will be able to serve Him with both hands. And the time does come if one is sincere.

## **Lord Jagannath – Snan Yatra**

Snana Yatra is one of the most sacred and visually delightful festivals of Lord Jagannatha, celebrated on Purnima (full moon) of the month of Jyestha. On this day, Lord Jagannatha, along with Lord Baladeva and Subhadra Devi, receive a grand ceremonial bathing (abhisheka).

Lord Jagannatha is non-different from Krishna, and His appearance in the wooden form is a divine mystery. The bathing ceremony is not merely symbolic—it's an act of divine love, purification, and public mercy.

After Snana Yatra, Lord Jagannatha becomes externally unwell and enters a private chamber called Anavasara, during which He is not visible to the public until the Ratha Yatra festival. Lord Jagannatha rests in seclusion, attended to with herbal preparations. Devotees meditate on the Lord's transcendental separation from His devotees. It represents the mood of vipralambha (divine separation) that deepens the bhakti of the devotee.

## **The Teachings of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu**

"If a creature adores Krishna and serves his guru, he is released from this world of illusion and attains Krishna's feet and leaving these temptations and religious system based on caste, the true Vaishnava takes refuge with Krishna."

"Ye the children of Amrita, have recourse to Sri Krishna-Name and arrest the perverted current of life and redirect it towards the Eternal Source."

"Vain are the pedigree, scholarship, recitals, of Mantras, and austerities in a man who lacks faith in and devotional love for God. Service to God is only the noble virtue that unites all beings together, inspiring in one the presence of the Divinity."

"The essence of all religious principles in the age of Kali is chanting of the holy names of the lord. One cannot be delivered by following any other religious principles."

## **The Classic Debate Between Mandana Misra And Adi Shankara**

(by T.N.Sethumadhavan)

The following is the gist of these mammoth discussions. Initiating the debate Shankara put forward the unity of all existence as follows. "Brahman, the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute (sat-chit-ananda ghanam) is the one ultimate Truth. It is He who appears as the entire world of multiplicity owing to dense ignorance, just as a shell appears as a piece of silver. Just as, when the illusion is dispelled the silver is sublated by, and dissolved into its substratum, the shell, so too, when ignorance is erased the whole world is sublated and dissolved into the substratum, Brahman, which is the same as one's own Atman. This is supreme knowledge as well as liberation. It brings about cessation of future births. The Upanishads which form the crown of the Vedas are the authority in support of this proposition. I am sure to prove this and be victorious in the debate. If, however, I am defeated, I shall cease to be a Sanyasin, abandon the ochre robes, and assume the white dress. Let Ubhaya Bharati be the umpire to determine success or failure." In reply to this statement, Mandana Misra made his contention as follows. "The Vedantas or the Upanishads cannot be a proof of something which is intangible i.e. Pure Consciousness, unoriginated and infinite, which has no subject-object distinguishing feature. For words can reveal only objects which are originated entities but never an abstract feature called Consciousness. Therefore, the non-vedantic part of the Vedas dealing with effects produced by works i.e. karma kanda is the real verbal testimony. In the light of performance of the actions in the form of rituals alone are the steps leading to moksha or liberation. If I happen to be defeated in argument, I shall take to the life of Sanyasa. As requested by you let my wife, Ubhaya Bharati, be the judge for the contest". Agreeing to the conditions put forward by each other, the contestants started the debate witnessed by the learned sages and even celestials. Quoting from the Vedas as their authority and supported by enlightened arguments the debate went on for several days. The arguments became keener and more complex, and the refutations and denials also became correspondingly stronger and bolder. Both the contestants raised more and more intricate questions. There was a downpour of assertions and objections from either side. Quotations from the scriptures were marshaled with marvelous skill by both, and exploited to lend support to their case. And the debate went on. Neither side could humble the other. The Acharya-Mandana dialogue was of such eloquence, scholarship and profundity that even the Gods assembled over Mandana's house and from above, remaining hidden from view, listened attentively to the debate. In this way, the debate was carried on for several days. As the days went by, Mandana started finding it difficult to maintain his position and give proper replies to Shankara's objections. Thereupon, Mandana, instead of defending his thesis, commenced attacking Advaita doctrine expounded in the Upanishads as put forward by Shankara. The sum and substance of the objections and the replies of the rivals are as under. Both Mandana and Shankara accept the authority of the Vedas as the revelation standing for the ultimate good of man. Mandana's school (Purva Mimamsa) holds that the only purpose of the Veda is to prompt man to actions i.e. rituals sanctioned by the Veda by performance of which man attains heavenly felicity of long duration at the end of which he returns to earth – again to acquire more merits by performing karmas. So the real nature of the Veda is of the nature of the commandments to actions of a ritualistic nature. If there are purely descriptive passages in it, these are descriptions of certain aids to karma like its ingredients, agents required or eulogy of the rituals etc. All such passages are to be considered as subordinate to the commandments instituting rituals. Thus the whole of the Veda is an injunction for performance of rituals and if this is not accepted the Veda becomes a mere trash, a purposeless literature. Contrary to this view are the views of Uttara-mimamsakas (Vedantins) led by Shankara. They contend that the Veda has two sections – karma kanda (ritualistic section) and jnana kanda (philosophic or knowledge section). The latter is the crown of the Veda. What the ritualists say is true of only the karma kanda and not of the Veda as a whole. The jnana kanda consisting of the Upanishads (also known as Vedanta) reveal the real or the ultimate meaning of the Veda and the karma kanda portions are merely preparatory to this. Therefore to extend the philosophy of ritualism to the understanding of the Upanishads is a great blasphemy. The statements of the Upanishads are not commandments for any action but revelations of the nature of the Ultimate Reality and man's relation to it. They are an end in themselves and not aids to the performance of any ritual. The understanding conveyed by them releases man from the false sense of duality and establishes him in the experience of the Unity of all existence (advaitam: non-duality) thus releasing him forever from the repetitive process of births and deaths (samsara)".

### **Retreat by Swami Sarvapriyananda- Save the dates**

**Spiritual Retreat will be conducted by Swami Sarvapriyananda, Minister in-Charge, Vedanta Society of New York.**

**Dates for the Retreat: September 19 and 20, 2026**

**Venue of the Retreat: Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation (Canada), 80 Brydon Dr., Etobicoke, ON, M9W 4N6.**

**Retreat program: To be announced**



## Vedanta Society of Toronto



# Vivekananda Dinner 2026 Sunday, July 19, 2026, 5:30pm.

**At Woodbine Banquet Hall, Etobicoke-Toronto**

Join us for the Vivekananda Dinner 2026—an auspicious occasion to support the Vedanta Society of Toronto, your beloved ashram

❖ **Distinguished Keynote speaker : Swami Samachittananda  
President, Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore**

### Program Highlights:

- ❖ Enriching and soulful vocal performance : Vinayak Hegde
- ❖ Dance presentations: - Paromita & group (Bhavana performing Arts)  
- Serena and Sangeetha sisters
- ❖ Drama presentation : Toronto Bengali Drama Group

*Delicious food to complete the evening of celebration and togetherness*

**Ticket price : \$300.00/ \$200.00/ \$100.00 per adult  
(All ticket prices are receiptable at less \$50.00 for value advantage)**

### For details Contact :

Chitra Ghosh - 647-860-0277  
 Abhijit Bhattacharya 416-569-9401  
 Manjula Datta - 647-975-9141  
 Vikas Sharma - 416-550-6677  
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 Menaka Rajasingham - 416-444-4952  
 Asha Burman - 647-679-4675  
 Om Lasi & Manisha Tekwani - 416-909-2411 -  
 Maya Sheshgiri - 647-824-3663

### Participate in the 'Yoga of Devotion'.

Your wholehearted support to this **fundraising event** will empower us to continue our work for the welfare of all.

Motto of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission : *Ātmāno mokṣārthaṃ jagat hitāya ca*, "For one's own salvation and for the welfare of the world".

- Formulated by Swami Vivekananda

## Vedanta Society of Toronto

### Sponsorship Form for Souvenir

To commemorate Vivekananda Dinner 2026 to be held on July 19, 2026 at 'Woodbine Banquet Hall, Etobicoke, ON

**Sponsor's Name/ Company name :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone#** \_\_\_\_\_ **FAX#** \_\_\_\_\_

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- Inside Full-Page B/W \$1,000
- Inside Half Page B/W \$500
- In side Quarter Page B/W \$300
- Inside One Line Message \$100

- ✓ **Cheques should be made payable to : "Vedanta Society of Toronto"**
- ✓ **Please provide templates or information about your business.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Events	Date & Time
<b>Vivekananda Dinner 2026</b> <i>Please see details on page 4</i>	<b>July 19 – 5 pm</b> <i>In person only, at Woodbine Banquet Hall</i>
<b>Guru Purnima</b>	<b>July 29 – 6.30 pm</b> <i>In person and also streamed live on YouTube.</i>
<b>Retreat by Swami Sarvapriyananda</b>	<b>September 19 &amp; 20 – 9am to 4pm</b> <i>Full days Retreat - In person only.</i>

### REGULAR PROGRAMMES

**SCRIPTURE CLASS:** Friday Scripture Classes begin at 7:30 pm, following the regular evening prayer at 6:00 pm. The class, held at the centre, is open to all interested persons. For details, please see the 'Calendar of Events' on the next page.

**VIGIL:** A vigil consisting of japa and meditation will be observed, from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, for date kindly see 'Calendar of Events', on next page. To participate, please call the centre @416-240-7262.

**RAM NAM:** For the date and time of the monthly Ramnam, please see the 'Calendar of Events' on the next page.

**BOOK STORE:** Limited number of books are available for purchase.

**DAILY BREAD FOOD BANK:** Daily Bread Food Bank has actively started. We would like to encourage people to donate.

**INTERVIEWS/INSTRUCTION:**

Swami Kripamayananda will be happy to give Interviews to those interested in knowing more about Vedanta and meditation. Individual interviews are also given for Spiritual instructions. Appointments for interviews should be made in advance with the Swami at 416-240-7262.

**DAILY MEDITATION:** Meditation is done at the Centre every morning from 6:00 am to 7:00 am. Devotional singing and meditation time in the evenings is from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

Vedanta Society of Toronto

A Branch Of The Ramakrishna Order

# GITARJANAM

Part III Chapters 8 to 11

**Sunday June 14, 2026**  
**10:30am**  
Free Admission

**BHAGAVADGITA**

*in an engaging performance  
through dance, music, and drama.*

*Concept, Choreography and Direction  
by Dr. Alakananda*

**120 Emmett Avenue, York, ON, M6M 2E6**

# Vedanta Society of Toronto

Minister and Teacher- Swami Kripamayananda, Ramakrishna Order of India

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### June 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> 7:30pm <b>ONLINE only</b> Scripture class 'Uddhava Gita'	<u>6</u>
<u>7</u> 11.00am Lecture: 'Becoming a Leader'  5:00pm <b>RAMNAAM</b>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u> 7:30pm Scripture class 'Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna'	<u>13</u>
<u>14</u> 10.30am <b>Gitarjanam Part-3</b> Dance play based on Bhagwad Gita Ch-8 to 11	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u> 7:30pm Scripture class 'Uddhava Gita'	<u>20</u> 6am to 6pm <b>VIGIL</b>
<u>21</u> 11.00am Lecture: 'Facing Old Age'	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u> 7:30pm <b>ONLINE only</b> Scripture class 'Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna'	<u>27</u>
<u>28</u> 11.00am <b>ONLINE only</b> Lecture: 'God's Name – Science of Japa'	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>				

### **Soup Kitchen Dates** (Starts at 9.30AM)

Main coordinator: Sayan Roy 416-305-4637

Please contact the coordinator for Soup Kitchen dates on email [r.sayandip@gmail.com](mailto:r.sayandip@gmail.com).

### **AN APPEAL FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for the Year 2026 & DONATION**

Vedanta Society appeals to the devotees and well-wishers to kindly come forward and donate generously through online means. Our thanks to those who have responded to our appeal and kindly donated to support the Society. With the current scenario, devotees and well-wishers can donate online through our website PayPal link <https://vedantatoronto.ca/donate> using Credit / Debit cards. Through PayPal you can also setup recurring monthly donations.

All members are requested to send their details by email to [toronto@rkmm.org](mailto:toronto@rkmm.org) i.e. Name, Address, Mobile - Home phone numbers, email address and amount paid. Please pay the annual subscription through our website PayPal link as mentioned above. This will help us to issue the annual tax receipt.