

# VOLUNTARY LEAGUE APPEAL

## Spring 2010

*"Self-Realization Fellowship was not brought into existence merely to give glimpses of God through words, but that you might know Him through your own experience. If you contact God within yourself, you will know that He is in everyone, that He has become the children of all races."*

—Paramahansa Yogananda

Dear Friend,

In gratefully reflecting on your support of Paramahansa Yogananda's spiritual work, we were reminded of a beautiful vignette from our Guru's life:

Paramahansaji once said to a group of devotees who had rendered him service, "You are all so kind to me with your many attentions." One of the devotees exclaimed, "Oh, no! It is you who are kind to us, Master." The Guru then responded with a sweet smile: "God is helping God."

In this past year of severe economic difficulties for so many, we have been deeply touched by your loyal support of Self-Realization Fellowship through your monetary contributions, prayers, and acts of service. It has been an inspiring example of "God helping God," and all the more moving because of current world circumstances.

We are especially grateful for your outpouring of assistance in response to our last appeal. As you will recall from our Fall 2009 *Voluntary League Newsletter*, repairs to SRF's International Headquarters Building atop Mount Washington are urgently needed. We had planned to make these as part of the major renovation and retrofitting of the building that we announced in 2008. However, the need to make significant reductions in expenses because of the recession forced us to put the enormous retrofit project temporarily on hold. (Nevertheless we are maintaining and nurturing the growth of a special fund earmarked for its earliest possible commencement.)

We are very happy to report that your contributions to our Fall appeal have provided us with the necessary funds to carry out the urgent interim repair work on the headquarters, the beloved home of our Guru for much of his life and of his Self-Realization Fellowship work for more than 80 years—a sacred shrine of pilgrimage for members and friends from around the world. (The work will begin soon and last through at least early 2011, but we do not expect public access to the building to be affected.)

It is through your ongoing support that we are able to carry on the manifold other activities through which Self-Realization Fellowship serves souls all over the world with Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings. That is why we send out these special appeals for your assistance two or three times a year—and we are always deeply moved by the selfless spirit in which so many of you generously respond, time after time.

One area where we depend on your help is meeting the basic expenses (food, living quarters, medical and dental care, etc.) for Self-Realization Fellowship's monastic order—monks and nuns living and serving the work at the Mother Center and other SRF ashrams, ranging in age from the early 20s to the late 90s and hailing from more than twenty countries.

Vowed to lead lives of simplicity, centered in daily meditation and practice of the presence of God in dutiful activity, SRF monastics serve our Guru's vast spiritual family through their many outreaching responsibilities, through concentrated prayers in meditation every morning and evening, and through personal counsel. The latter includes individual counseling to thousands in the study and practice of our Guru's teachings (freely offered through correspondence, in person, and by telephone), guidance and administrative support for the large congregation of Self-Realization Fellowship meditation centers and groups and temples around the globe, and visits by monks and nuns to conduct classes, services, and Kriya Yoga initiations worldwide.

Monks and nuns also serve in a variety of "behind-the-scenes" capacities, including maintaining the beautiful ashrams, temples, and meditation gardens that our Guru established and blessed with his communion with the Divine, and overseeing the worldwide dissemination of his liberating teachings through his books and many other publications in multiple languages, and also audio-video products. Essential to these efforts is the assistance of many talented and dedicated lay members and non-members (some who volunteer and some who serve as paid employees).

As you can easily imagine, providing these services—along with the necessary administrative infrastructure (computers and their support personnel, accounting and bookkeeping staff, vehicle maintenance, telecommunications expenses, property and liability insurance, etc.)—comes at a considerable expense; but your donations make them all possible.

We cherish your every gift, no matter how large or small, and want you to know that we continue to pray for those of you who face financial and other difficulties. Your offering is received as a loving expression of your devotion to God and your desire to serve others by assisting in the spread of our Guru's soul-awakening teachings. Among the many testimonials we recently have received, the following account of one's person's transformation was eloquently inspiring:

*I realized that for my whole life, I had been searching for a way to experience lasting peace and contentment, but it was to no avail. The Autobiography of a Yogi and the Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons appeared at a crucial time in my life, unveiling to me the self-created causes of my distress and discontent. The light of Master's words felt like rays of sun pouring through the stained glass window of my soul, awakening me to my true nature. Jai Guru!*

Please know that your continued commitment to this sacred cause is truly "helping God" to touch the lives of countless people all over the world. May God and the Great Ones bless you with an ever deeper awareness of Their protection, guidance, and unconditional love in your life.

In divine friendship,



SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP  
Mother Center