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THE CALL BEYOND

ONLINE

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*Heaven's call is rare, rarer the heart that heeds;
The doors of light are sealed to common mind,
And earth's needs nail to earth the human mass,
Only in an uplifting hour of stress
Men answer to the touch of greater things:
Or, raised by some strong hand to breathe heaven-air... ..*

Sri Aurobindo

Savitri, Book 11, Canto 1, p. 689

Contents

<i>contents.</i>	2
<i>editorial</i>	3
• <i>How Old is the Call Beyond.</i>	3
<i>article</i>	4
• <i>Pursuing the Beautiful in Daily Life</i>	4
<i>hundred years ago</i>	6
• <i>The Last and Only Refuge</i>	6
• <i>The Synthesis of Yoga</i>	7
<i>twenty-five years ago</i>	9
• <i>The Truth I am Seeking.</i>	9
<i>may i help you?</i>	10
• <i>'V' wants to know</i>	10
<i>inspirations.</i>	12
• <i>Feedback from B.Ed. Students from Amity Institute of Education</i>	12
• <i>Feedback from Madhuban, Ramgarh</i>	13
<i>notice board</i>	14

Age is something controversial, to put it mildly. Is one as old as she looks, as old as she thinks, as old as she thinks she is, or as old as she is willing to admit? It was some such doubts that prompted us to number the first online issue of The Call Beyond Vol.1, No.1. But with this issue, we have finally decided to admit our true age. In 2015, the publication entered its fortieth year, and hence this issue is Vol. 40, No. 6. As the Mother said once, she had seen people young even at seventy, by which she meant that they had not given up their aspiration for progress. In that sense, The Call Beyond will continue to be young, irrespective of its age.

Beauty may not be skin-deep, but in an article in this issue, Dr. Bharat Gupt gives this concept an unusual twist. Anything that gives joy is beautiful, he asserts. A drama, even when it shows misery, may give joy, and is therefore considered beautiful. That is possible because we do not feel attached to the victim of the misery. Life is also a drama on a grand scale, and if we can observe it with detachment, life can be beautiful, life can be full of joy. Not easy to practice; but good food for thought, reflection, and psycho-spiritual discipline. We do hope this article, and the rest that follows, gives you joy, and in that sense, you find The Call Beyond beautiful.



Pursuing the Beautiful in Daily Life

In a very comprehensive view of beauty, anything that gives joy is beautiful, says the author. Can life become a source of joy, and in that sense, beautiful? Why not, if a TV serial can be enjoyed even if it depicts suffering. We enjoy the serial because we are not attached to the person who is suffering. Thus, the key to making life a source of joy is to cultivate the same detachment that we have towards the character in the TV serial.



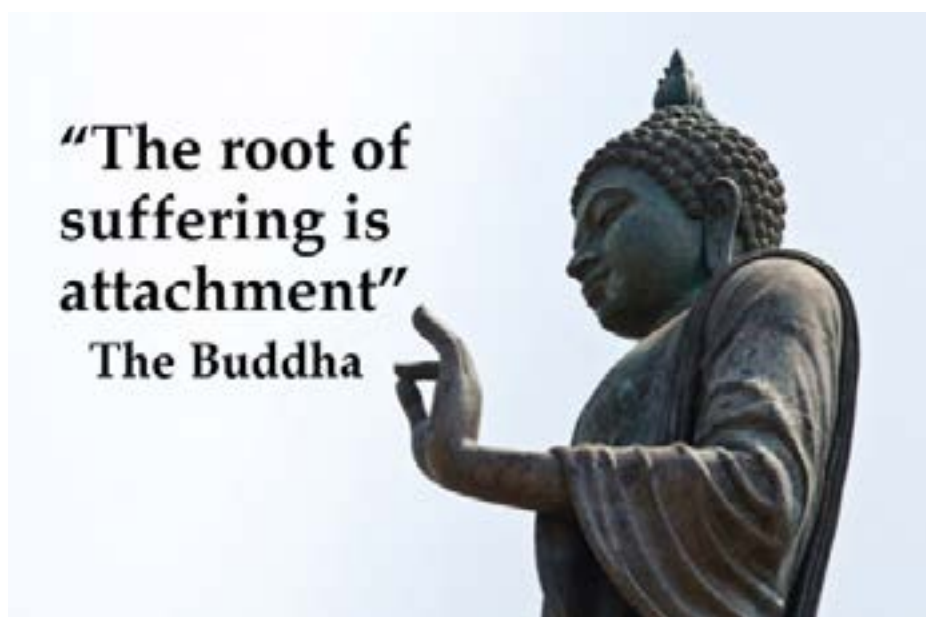
The first image that beauty evokes is of something that looks good. Thus a person may be beautiful, and so may be a painting, or a sunset. But beauty is not only something to be seen. In the Indian tradition the concept of beauty is very comprehensive. Anything that gives joy is beautiful. The question then arises, can life be made beautiful; or in other words, can life be lived in a way that it becomes a source of joy. The question may seem absurd, because life is not a painting. But life is more like a story, or a play; and stories and plays can be sources of joy, and therefore be beautiful. Is a story beautiful only if it is made up entirely of happy events? The story of Mahabharata is full of misery, and yet it brings joy. It would not have survived for years if it had not been a source of joy. Nearer our times, there are so many TV serials in which an innocent woman is tortured by a cruel and cunning woman. We feel sad for the innocent woman, and yet watch the serial episode after episode. We watch it because it brings us joy, and is in that sense beautiful. What makes a story or a serial a source of joy is that the person who is suffering in it is 'somebody else'. It is neither we, nor anybody close to us, that is suffering. The fact that we do not feel sufficiently connected to the person who is suffering makes it possible to cultivate the detachment that enables us to enjoy the story in spite of the suffering that it depicts.

Thus, the key to making life a source of joy is to cultivate the same detachment that we have towards the character in the TV serial. The detachment should encompass ourselves, as well as our near and dear ones. This detachment can come only if we can create the same distance from the story of our life that we have from the story in a drama. This distance can be created by treating life as a drama. It is an understanding of the deeper truths of existence that gives us the capacity to treat life as a drama. Internalizing these truths leads us to treating all creation as a great drama, a magnificent piece of art.

If life is a drama, and we are all actors, who has scripted the play? Fatalists would say that the script of each individual life has been written in the minutest detail well before birth. But that is not the Vedantic view, and certainly not Sri Aurobindo's view. While there is a level of determinism on the higher plane that guides each individual over a series of lives towards union with the Divine; in each individual life, we have free-will, which we can use to accelerate or slow down the march towards the ultimate destiny. Through the choices we make, we not only rise or fall in consciousness, we also create the conditions and circumstances under which our subsequent choices will have to be made. Each individual using its free will to rewrite the finer details of the script of its life is a part of the drama, or 'leela', that the Divine has created. Sri Aurobindo has gone further to point out that not only does free will rewrite the destiny of each individual life, it also makes a small but finite contribution to the collective consciousness. By consciously working for a rise in consciousness, we can facilitate the evolutionary urge for a higher consciousness in manifestation.

(Based on a lecture delivered by Dr. Bharat Gupt in the Meditation Hall of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch on 11 Oct 2015)

Editor's note: *The enlightened man can take a detached view of the vicissitudes of life, and enjoy it like a story. This leads to a corollary: that is perhaps why such a man has no need to read novels or watch films for entertainment. He can simply enjoy the never-ending drama of 'real' life.*



hundred years ago

The Last and Only Refuge



Without any external sign, any special circumstance, the moments passed by majestically, in so solemn an inner silence, a calm so deep and vast, that my tears began to flow profusely. For the last two days the earth seems to have been going through a decisive crisis; it seems that the great formidable contest between material resistances and spiritual powers is nearing its conclusion, or, in any case, that some element of capital importance has made or is going to make its appearance in the play.

How little do individual beings count at such times! They are like wisps of straw carried away by the passing breeze, whirling for a moment above the ground, only to be flung back upon it again and reduced to dust. And individual beings who thus feel so insecure, so stripped of importance, suffer and groan in painful agony. For them the waiting itself is a perpetual menace, everything speaks of danger and destruction. . . .

But what grandeur, what sovereign beauty lie in the depth of this outer anguish all formed of narrow egoism; what splendor dwells within the waiting, grown sacred through deep contemplation, when the walls of personal blindness have fallen and the individual consciousness has taken its flight into immensity to unite with Thy eternal consciousness.

This sorrowful world kneels before Thee, O Lord, in mute supplication; Matter, tortured, takes shelter at Thy feet, its last and only refuge; and imploring Thee thus, it adores Thee, Thee whom it neither knows nor understands! Its prayer rises like the cry of one in a last agony; what is disappearing feels vaguely the possibility of living once again in Thee; the earth awaits Thy decree in a grandiose prostration. Listen, listen: its voice implores and supplicates to Thee.... What will be Thy decree, what is Thy sentence? O Lord of Truth, this individual world blesses Thy truth which it does not yet know, but which it calls, and to which it adheres with all the joyful energy of its living forces.

Death has passed, vast and solemn, and all was hushed in a religious silence while it was passing by.

A superhuman beauty has appeared upon earth.

Something more marvellous than the most marvellous bliss has brought a foretaste of its Presence.

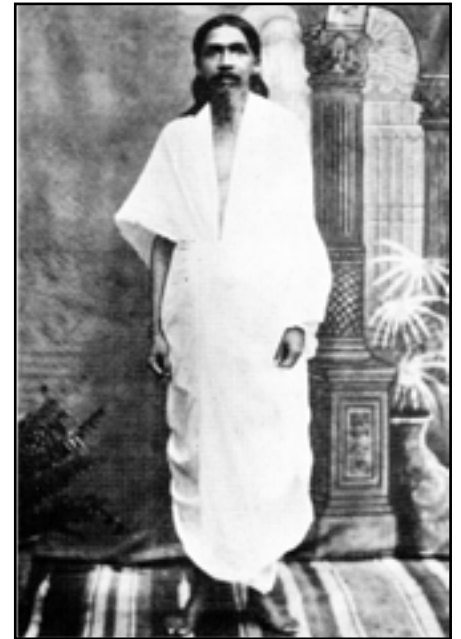
THE MOTHER (In Prayers and Meditations, prayer dated 15 November 1915, 3a.m.)

**Title given by the Editor*

The collection *Prayers and Meditations* consists of extracts from the Mother's spiritual diaries. Most of them are from the period 1912 to 1917



... The idea of a great work to be done for humanity is the natural overflowing of the liberation which the Karmayogin achieves. The contrary notion is intimately bound up with the prevalent idea that the sole aim of liberation is to secure for the individual soul freedom from rebirth and that, this freedom once assured, there is no work for it in life except that which the continued existence of the body demands or the yet unfulfilled effects of past life



necessitate. This little that is left will exhaust itself rapidly and will cease finally with the departure from the body. This aim of escape from rebirth has been long fixed in the Indian mentality as the highest object of the soul, even as the enjoyment of a heaven beyond was fixed in the mentality of the devout by other religions or even by the Indian religion when the gross external interpretation of the Vedic hymns was the dominant creed. It is necessary to emphasize the comparative triviality of this escape from rebirth. Undoubtedly it is an infinitely nobler lure than the offer of a heaven of mental joys or physical pleasures after death, but it is all the same a lure; it is not the true justification and should not be the supreme motive of the Karmayogin. The desire of personal salvation, however high in its form, is after all an egoism and rests on the idea of our own individuality and of its desire or good as the aim of existence. To rise beyond the desire of personal salvation is necessary for the complete rejection of egoism. The pursuit of liberation, of the soul's freedom is justified because it is the highest law of our nature, because it is the attraction of that which is lower in us to that which is highest. All other motives are excrescences or useful lures which the soul must abandon the moment their utility has passed.

The Gita declares that the action of the Karmayogin must be directed not by desire, but towards the keeping together of the world, its government, guidance, impulsion in the divine path appointed to it. This injunction has been interpreted in the sense that the world being an illusion in which most men must be kept, since they are unfit for liberation, he must so act outwardly as to cherish in them an attachment to their customary works laid down for them by the social law. If so, it would be a poor and petty rule and every noble heart would reject it



... But if rather we accept the view that the world is a divinely guided movement of Nature emerging in man towards God and that this is the work in which the Lord of the Gita declares that he is ever occupied although he himself has nothing ungained that he has yet to win, – then a deep and true sense will appear for this great injunction. To participate in that divine work, to live for God in humanity will be the rule of the Karmayogin; to live for God in humanity and therefore to help by whatever way the world in its obscure pilgrimage to move forward to the divine ideal. ...

...The supreme and final word of the Gita for the Yogin is that he should leave all dharmas, all conventional formulas of

belief and action, all fixed and external rules of conduct and take refuge in the Divine alone. Free from desire and attachment, one with all beings, living in the infinite Truth and Purity and out of the profoundest depths of his inner being, governed by his immortal, divine and highest self, all his works will be directed by the Power within through that essential nature in us which, knowing, warring, working, loving, serving is always divine, towards the fulfillment of God in the world.

The real reason why we must seek liberation, is not to be delivered, individually, from the sorrow of the world; the real reason why we must seek perfection, that is to say a divine status, purity, knowledge, strength, love, capacity, is not that personally we may enjoy the divine Nature or be even as the gods; but because this liberation and perfection are God entirely manifested and it must be manifested in the individual in order that he may help to manifest it in the world. Even in the ignorance the individual lives really in and for the universal, for he is forced by Nature to contribute by his egoistic action to her work and purpose in the worlds; but it is imperfectly and to her imperfect and crude movement. Liberated, purified, perfected the individual Divine lives consciously and entirely, as was from the first intended, in and for the Divine in the universe.

SRI AUROBINDO (In the Arya, Vol. 2, No. 4, 15 November 1915)

twenty-five years ago

The Truth I am Seeking

SHRI MURARI LAL PARASHAR

(DIARY OF JANUARY 1983)

The truth that I am seeking and trying to manifest is the truth of my being, the truth of the Universal being and the Truth of the Divine being. It is one Truth manifesting in all the three beings simultaneously. I have discovered the being of Delight that is manifesting through me and through all forms and becomings. How fully it manifests itself I have left to His Will, in which my will has been merged.

I was without shelter. Thou gavest me the house of this body and mind to live in. This sense of being well sheltered has made me love these walls which sometimes become the walls of a prison house. This wide earth with its company of heaven which was the playground of my spirit once has now become a source of terror to my limited self, which has fallen in love with its own slavery.

Everyone forges some limits and wants to work within them. Slowly and slowly he forgets that he had made these limits himself. He feels they have been imposed upon him. Then he gets so used to them that he is afraid of getting beyond them. From there begins the story of his fall and ultimate resurrection.

Love joins heaven to earth and it has come out of heaven to beseech earth to make a room for it by inhabiting itself where it may bring back to it its glory which it fears it has lost by taking a plunge into the darkness of matter. Earth must remember that it was for increasing the intensity of love that earth parted from heaven. When the required intensity is attained, both heaven and earth will dance in harmony ever growing.

Sometimes one is in circumstances and surroundings that jar upon one. Even then one should accept them with joy rather than with resentment or indifference. By the presence of joy in one, one can learn from all situations. The effect of this joy may not appear at once, but it has a positive good effect. At least one learns a little more patience which is not a small thing.

When flowers blossom and youth blooms an atmosphere of happiness is created all around. When both flowers and youth fade, a gloom naturally spreads. But these are all appearances. Man is in search of That whose appearances these are. That which thus appears is behind and above these appearances. Man has to get into another consciousness to find it.

People talk about occult power and siddhis. To me even breathing is an occult power. The more a man knows himself the more power he acquires. Not only in man, but in every particle of dust countless powers are hidden. The being of man, which descends from the Divine for purposes of evolution contains in itself the knowledge of processes and powers which work in the world. They reveal themselves to him at their proper time.

The power of thought has great influence on the activities of our life. Similarly life influences our thought. They are so much intermixed and interdependent that it is difficult to draw a line of demarcation between them. We must discover the energy that gives birth to both of them. It is that discovery to which our attention should be directed.

Beauty and love are the objective and subjective sides of our existence. The desire to love is innate in all existence that is manifested in form. It is always the formless that is attracted by the form because without form there is no manifestation. Because all forms are the masks in which the formless appears, they attract one another as love and beauty.

All power is born out of the Divine power and it is omnipotent. It works directly and also through chosen instruments. If an instrument becomes conscious of it, it becomes more effective. The whole manifestation is working to make all objects in the manifestation conscious of the Divine power which creates, sustains and destroys forms to be replaced by others.

Excerpts from The Call Beyond, Vol. 15, No.4, 1990, pp. 27-29.

may i help you?

'V' wants to know

In this column, we shall try to answer three types of questions from the readers: those related to spiritual quest ('aspiring high'); those related to psychological issues ('feeling low'); and those related to physical health ('frailties of the flesh').

It is needless to say that the identity of the person sending the question will be kept confidential. The questions may be sent to

callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

How does a person know that he is on the spiritual path?

In a way, everybody is on a spiritual journey, the ultimate destination of the journey being union with the Divine. But not everybody is conscious of the fact. For example, if a person carries a pet in the train, the person knows where he is going, but the pet does not although it is also on the same journey. A person knows that he is on the spiritual path if he has at least a dim awareness of the following truths, and if he is making a conscious effort to organize his life around them:

- the presence of the Divine in all creation,
- the hand of the Divine behind all happenings, and
- the opportunity that lies in all happenings for becoming a better person.

Further, the person on the spiritual path finds that the above truths become progressively more real to him; and as that happens he is able to organize his life more easily around these truths, and doing so loosens around him the bondages that are responsible for the suffering that characterizes worldly life. Thus, in spite of his continuing engagement with the world, he receives inner peace and freedom from fears, anxieties and insecurities although he is not pursuing any of these actively.

Who decides what is the right thing to do?

Each person is potentially capable of deciding what the right thing to do is in a particular situation. This can be done by going deep within, and listening to the inner voice emanating from our deepest Self, the psychic being.

But is this what God wants me to do?

Yes, the voice of the psychic being is that of God within the individual. To identify the voice of the psychic being, the person has to ask himself one simple question and answer it with total sincerity. The question is: ‘will this action of mine leave me in lasting mental peace?’ If the answer is yes, it is the voice of the psychic being. On the other hand, if the action will make me uneasy, if the action will continue to haunt me with a sense of guilt, it is not the voice of the psychic being.

Who decides if I am being sincere?

Gross insincerity is for all to see, but there are subtle levels of insincerity that only the person himself knows. It is the psychic being of the person that makes him aware of the insincerity. It is the same as saying that God sees everything, because the psychic being is the divine essence of the person. The God that knows about the insincerity exists not only outside but also within the person. The psychic being makes the person aware of the insincerity by making him feel uneasy.

If the person himself can know what is right, are all scriptures, books and guides useless?

Listening to the voice of the psychic being, and accepting it as the most reliable guide, is not easy. Till one is sure about it, it is better to use a written ethical code from a scripture or a book, or go by the advice of a guru or a reliable guide. That is why, the advice to abandon all standard codes of ethics comes only towards the end of the Gita (18:). For the same reason, when a seeker asked Sri Aurobindo what he should do if there was a conflict between what he thought was the voice of his psychic being and what the Mother said, Sri Aurobindo told the seeker to do what the Mother wanted him to do.

But my ‘right’ may not be the same as someone else’s ‘right’...

Yes, that is possible. Then each person should do what is right for him in that particular situation.

Here is a real life story that illustrates this point. Once a boy, whose name was Narendra, was talking to a few of his friends in the class while the teacher was teaching. The teacher saw them. He paused, pointed them out, and asked them how they could listen to what he was saying if they started talking to each other. Then he asked them one by one to repeat what he had just spoken. Most of them could not. The last to be asked was Narendra. He repeated exactly what the teacher had spoken. Narendra was so intelligent that he could pay attention to the teacher, and participate in the gossip with his friends, both at the same time. Then the teacher punished all those who were gossiping, except Narendra. Why did he spare Narendra? He spared Narendra because he could repeat what the teacher had spoken. But Narendra did not think he deserved to be spared. The punishment was for gossiping, and he was also guilty of it. Still, he could have kept quiet about what the teacher had done. But he did not. He told the teacher that he also wanted to be punished because he was also talking.

Let us see how Narendra decided whether to keep quiet, or ask for punishment. Punishment is normally not a pleasant experience. But he did not care for that. He could have thought that, well, he could repeat what the teacher was speaking, and therefore he deserved to be spared. That is the logic the teacher had also used. But still Narendra knew somewhere deep within that the right thing to do was to ask for the punishment. Further, this gut feeling of his could also be justified. The punishment was for talking, and Narendra was also talking. Thus, reason alone is not enough to tell us what the right thing to do is. But for Narendra, the right thing to do was to ask for punishment because he knew that that was the only right thing to do. Doing it made him happy, and left him in peace.

Now let us look at the issue from the teacher's point of view. He also had the same reasons available to him – one for sparing Narendra, and one against it. But somewhere deep within he knew that the only right thing to do for him was to spare Narendra. The teacher had made it appear that he was angry because the boys were not paying attention. And, he had selected repeating what he had just spoken as the test for attention. Since Narendra had passed the test, the teacher would have felt guilty if he now punished Narendra. Thus, we see that the right thing to do could be different for different individuals in the same situation. And, reason does not necessarily help us decide what the right thing is. We know that from our inner voice, which tells us for sure what, for us, is the only right thing to do. We also know that we will be happy if we do what the right thing is; doing otherwise will make us feel guilty, and we may continue to feel uneasy for a long time. When Narendra grew up, he came to be known as Swami Vivekananda.

inspirations

Feedback from B.Ed. Students from Amity Institute of Education

(About 100 students doing B.Ed. at the Amity Institute of Education, Saket, and a few of their teachers spent a day at the Ashram on 16 October 2015. Here is a sample from the feedback that they provided at the end of their visit.)

Our sessions today were excellent, as in the past, thoroughly encouraging and motivating. I have been truly inspired by the views of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother as shared by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani beautifully. Many questions and conflicts keep arising in the mind while dealing with the demands and patterns of the society. It is sometimes seems difficult to remind oneself of the inner truth while chasing the societal norms. Nevertheless I'm sure I'll keep reminding myself to stay connected with the soul and not only with the intellect!

Thank You

With deepest regards

Dr. Puneet Rahi

(Faculty, AIE, Saket)

The session was very inspiring and helpful. Meditation in the beginning opened my mind and had a deep impact on the soul. It was a good way to start an inspiring session as I could concentrate more than otherwise. If you know the meaning of a mantras the effect of chanting it multiplies. Knowing some interesting facts about life was inspiring as it helped in checking if we were on the right path.

The environment here is very peaceful. It gives a feeling of joy, peace and happiness. The food was delicious too. I am thankful for all this as I'm taking a lot from here. I will try to imbibe this in my life.

Thank you

Deepika Bisht

It has been an enriching experience. I have learnt how to make right choices in my life and how they will lead to my personal and spiritual growth.

Thank you for understanding my situation and for providing me with a practical solution. I will try to look for an opportunity of spiritual growth in any adverse or unfortunate circumstances. I will also try to see the Divine in everyone and make my situation better rather than bitter.

Mindful walking in the morning was very meditative and helped me imbibe natural powers from the environment. A very useful session by Jayanthi Didi helped me a lot in understanding the purpose of the teacher in a student's life. I learnt how to make studies useful, practical, logical and yet enjoyable without any stress.

I'm looking forward to visiting the ashram again.

Thank you very much.

Ritika Gautam

First of all, I would like to thank you immensely, Sir, for acquainting me with ideas that are extremely relevant to leading a meaningful life. I am sure that these insights will gain greater importance in the near future as I will embark on the journey of teaching budding and impressionable minds. I can say for sure that I will be mentally revisiting the lecture you and Didi gave. To say the least, the session was not only informative but extremely enriching. It would be a wonderful opportunity for me if I could be associated with your team once I complete my B.Ed. course.

I also appreciate the proximity to nature that is maintained in the ashram.

Shreya Gupta

Feedback from Madhuban, Ramgarh

From: Satheesh Namasivayam

To: Dr anju khanna (in an e-mail dated 24 October 2015)

Dear Anju,

Bade and I missed seeing you in Madhuban or Delhi this time.

Meantime, I am writing this quick note to thank you for all the arrangements you had made for our program, which went really well. Your menu was appreciated by the program participants. Amar and the other cook from Delhi did a great job in the kitchen. Angela too was amazingly organized to make everything easy for the group. Thank you too for thinking about the bonfire, which made a difference for the children on the last night.

The conference hall [Prashanti, at Madhuban] has come out to be really beautiful, and provides a perfect space to hold a group for deep dialogues or fun games. We did greatly appreciate the fact that we could have direct natural light in, which made it quite nice to be inside the hall. Using the projector during the day was completely impossible though, even after we put some temporary screens on the glass windows! But, Taradidi did mention that she is looking at a projector whose brightness could be modulated for daylight.

Look forward to the next opportunity to reconnect in person!

Love,

Satheesh

notice board

CONTACT US

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

To get *The Call Beyond* online

To get The Call Beyond online regularly,
month after month,
please send an e-mail to:
callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

To get the Ashram's e-magazine, *Realization*

To learn about the recent and forthcoming
activities through the Ashram's e-magazine,
Realization,
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after filling-in two fields as follows:
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About AMSS - Kechla Project

Please visit the website
www.auomira.in

Feedback

Please send your feedback to:
callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

Sri Aurobindo Ashram - Delhi Branch:

Tuesday, 17 November 2015

*Take one hour of your life, the one which is
most convenient for you, and during that time
observe yourself closely and say only the absolutely
indispensable words*

*THE MOTHER (In Commentaries on the
Dhammapada, p. 79)*

The Mother's Mahasamadhi Day, 17
November, will be observed in the Ashram
as the Day of Silence

6:45 p.m. Offering of the Lights of
Aspiration
Samadhi Lawn
7:00 p.m. Silent Meditation
Meditation Hall

.....
Tuesday, 24 November 2015

Program for the Siddhi Day

7:00 a.m. Invocation: Karuna Didi
Meditation Hall
6:00 p.m. March Past & Lights of
Aspiration
Samadhi Lawn
6:30 p.m. Musical offering: Karuna Didi
& Reading by Tara Didi
Meditation Hall