

## Śraddhānjali to Swami Omkaranandaji

By disciples

"I and my family have had a long association with Sri Swami Omkarananda. We have fond memories of his helping us during the shatabhishekam of Sri G.K. Sundaram, Chairman, Lakshmi Mills. Swamiji also played a leading role in the ritualistic aspects during Pujya Sri Swamiji's shatabhishekam celebrations. Again, during the temple kumbhabhishekam in the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti, Swamiji guided all the activities with great interest. We will be ever grateful for the long association that we have had with him and remember him as a very learned, enthusiastic, energetic and cheerful mahatma. Many pranams to his lotus feet."



- **R. Santharam , Chairman, Sruti Seva Trust**

"Omkarananda Swami was a star within our tradition, which enlightened many minds and inspired many.

I had the privilege of being with him sometimes, especially in the coordination of shatabhishekam rituals. His voice dispensed microphones, had that Vedic tone, and he had a deep and penetrating gaze: even with everything going on around him, he entered a kind of trance and chanted as if he were receiving the mantras at that moment directly from Īsvara.

Omkarananda has inspired and inspires many of us with his Vedic chants, with his life dedicated to the Vedic Tradition.

Here in Brazil we have the privilege to listen to many of his chanting recordings and the students has connected to him through his voice and spirit. "

- **Jonas Masetti, Vishva Director Vedanta Life, Brazil**

"Having had the blessing to study under Pujya Swami Omkarananda ji for few years now, He has become an integral part of my life. It's extremely hard to get my head around the sudden turn of events in the past few days which happened so suddenly and rapidly. To accept the physical absence of our Guru who was teaching until a few days back is really

difficult.

Generally, many Acharyas predominantly teach either Sanskrit or Tamil texts. In Swamiji, we find a unique style, where He gave an equal status to both literature, and presented them in accordance with the sampradaya in an extremely cogent manner . The clarity of His teachings, the choicest usage of words, His majestic and sonorous voice, all made His classes irresistible to all seekers across the world.

Swamiji's teachings reflect the vision of the shastras of an inclusive Sanatana Dharma that embraced all facets of the culture, traditions and never saw discordance among them. Swamiji passed on His bhakti towards Ishwara, Guru, shastra, Bharata desham and Sanatana dharma through His teachings.

Swamiji was so meticulous in devising the syllabus for the Atma Vidya course and, it is in many ways sad to see that He couldn't finish the full five years. Swamiji embraced technology like a child's play and, it was delightful to see how he handled the devices and even glitches with humour. Swamiji was extremely well informed with a great sense of humour. He could quote from a film song or a recent WhatsApp forward to make a point.

We'll miss His physical presence dearly. However, the great consolation is that, He is very much present in the form of His teachings in every Kural we read, every Gita verse we study, every nama we chant of bhagavan. I sincerely pray to our Guru to continue to guide us to follow His teachings steadfastly, and remain committed to dharma and jnanam.” - **Prashanth Mohan, Sydney**

“HH Sri Swami Omkarananda has taken up the sacred mission of rejuvenating the spiritual values and cultural traditions of India. Born in a family steeped in culture, he adopted the Vedic life style from an early age. He studied Vedanta under Pujyasri Swami Paramarthananda, one of the foremost disciples of Pujyasri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi.

Through his eloquent discourses, he drives home the deep insights of the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, such that even an average person can comprehend them with ease. He expounds the essence of some of the sacred texts in Tamil, such as Tevaram, Tiruvachakam, Tirumandiram, Tayumanavar's hymns, Bharatiyar's songs and in particular Tirukural.

He interacts freely with people of all strata without discrimination of caste, creed, age, economic status or education and attracts them by his compassionate words and friendly demeanour.” - **A disciple**

“That Swami Omkarananda attained samadhi now is a great loss for Tamil Hindu society and it does feel orphaned in this loss of the physical presence of the Swami.

Goshteswara Sharma was the name given by his parents and he grew up mastering Vedic recitation and rituals. Even in his young age he had mastered Vedic recitation.

His spiritual led him to Swami Vivekananda's works. He obtained his sanyasa deeksha – initiation into monkhood – from Swami Chidhbavananda. He later learnt traditionalist Vedanta from Swami Paramarthananda of the Swami Dayananda Saraswathi Guru-tradition. Following the footsteps of his deeksha-guru Swami Chidhbavananda, Omkarananda Swami took the Tamil classic Thirukural to the masses.

Thirukural, a civilizational high peak of Bharatiya culture and spirituality has been reduced to a source of stage rhetoric and a means to further Tamil chauvinism. Swami Omkarananda valiantly rescued Thirukural from the pseudo-rationalist racial forces. He did it through various means. Not only Thirukural, his other favourite are the songs of Bharathi and hymns of Thayumanavar. Subramanya Bharati was not just a freedom fighter and social reformer. What animated his poems were his eternal spiritual nucleus. Swami Omkarananda brought this out in his lectures.

Swami Dayananda Saraswathi chose him as the head of Dharma Rakshana Samithi (DRS) – a vibrant movement under Swami Dayananda Saraswathi that had spread in almost all villages infusing energy to protect Dharma in all forms of its manifestations – from renovation of village temples to immunising against proselytising.

We Hindus traditionally hold that when great seers attain samadhi they do not cease to be but become even greater forces operating in the society through individuals and institutions, peoples, and movements to establish and protect Dharma and society.

With that in mind, even as the society accepts the physical loss, may he ever be a blessing and inspiration for the protection of Dharma and society in Tamil Nadu – particularly in these testing times.” - **Aravindan, contributing editor at Swarajya**

“I am a student of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi since early 80'. For the past 1 year had been hearing to Swami Omkarananda.

Swamiji's talks had been so inspiring and connecting Gita Shastram to Thirukural and other great Tamil saints expressions. Swamiji took the Tamil knowing people to a great dimension of understanding Shankara Bashyam with quotes of scholars of sangath Tamil Swamiji's reverberating voice and the continuous flow is a pravaham.

His video classes are a great wealth which has no comparison.

Swamiji will remain as a teacher of Atma jnanam who had and wanted to share with his listeners all that he could. So compassionate Swamiji had been. “ - **Janaki Krishnan.**

“While the news of Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamigal's attainment of siddhi or mahasamadhi shook the Spiritual world at large and particularly the Tamil speaking followers of Sanathana Dharma, it was an unacceptable personal loss for me.

Our beloved Omkarananda Mahaswamiji was the swami for the scholars as well as the common mass; for the orthodox as well as the ordinary! He was the synergizing factor

amongst the traditional and non-traditional mutts. In Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamiji - we could experience a vidwan par excellence like Swami Paramarthananda Saraswati, a Tamil scholar like Vaariyar or Kundrakudi Adigalar, an upasaka like Pudukotai Shanthananda Swamigal, a tapasvi like Swami Chidbhavanandaji Maharaj, a dharmic warrior like Sri Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and a humanitarian and dharmic hero like Swami Vivekananda.

May it be the shathabishekam of Pujya Swamiji, or the rebuilding of the magnificent rathams and conducting the annual Ratotsavam at Tiruvidaimaruthur or Kumbhabishekam at Ananikatti or elsewhere, his role was inevitable.

He maintained the same amount of shraddha for both Sringeri and Kanchi Jagadguru Shakaracharyas and had greatly contributed for a synergy amongst the devotees of both the mutts. The dimension of being the peetadhipathi of Bhuvaneshwari Peetam, brought a lot of guidance to the world of upasakas. Being a Vaidhika himself in his purvashrama and an approachable traditional sanyasi later, he had emerged as a guiding light to the community of Vaidhikas.

Ever approachable, easily understandable, ever cheerful and most practical he was! Swami Omkarananda ji mentored the Dharma Rakshana Samiti so well that it started emerging as the common voice of Sanathana Dharma.

After the mahasamadhi of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati ji, it was only Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamiji who had aroused to continue the spiritual leadership, especially in Tamil Nadu.

As soon as I invited him with a short notice to inaugurate the event of “Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum” on 11th August 2020, organised by Adhyatma Yoga & Advaita Academy, Swamiji happily agreed, blessed me immensely and delivered his anugraha bhashanam. This is one of the few rarest talks that he had given in English. That was the last time I came in touch with Swamiji directly in the recent times.”

**- Yoga Mitra Dr A Subramanian, Bangalore**

Swami Omkaranandaji was at Pujya Swami Dayananda's sixtieth birthday celebration in Rishikesh. He was so friendly and open, a bright candle of enthusiasm, independence, and maturity, a tribute to his teachers Swami Paramarthananda and to Pujya Swamiji. He embodied their dedication and devotion and their sense of the universality of Advaita Vedanta. In Tamil Nad he grew to a justified position of authority and Vaidika contribution. Many evenings in the fresh air of his ashram he would take satsang with pathashala and other students, teaching in Tamil from the Ramayana and other texts. Early Theni temple mornings the cow puja was conducted before the prominent standing Dakshinamuri. Pujya Swamiji knew he could depend on him. “ - **John Warne, USA**