Appendix

Appendix A

The following post blog entry shows the interest shown by a devotee about Devi Bhava.

“When I first read on Amritapuri.org that Amma was going to hold Devi Bhava in India, I was actually sad. I had just left Amritapuri on Tuesday and have been staying in the San Ramon Ashram for a week. Even though there will be Devi Bhava here in the US during Summer tour, there is something about seeing one in India. I had been in India for the last Devi Bhava, but I missed most of it because I had gone to bed early thinking that it would last well into the morning and I could participate more fully after a good rest. However, that darshan ended at 4am, and I was only able to catch the last few seconds before the doors closed (having been awakened from my sleep by Swami singing ‘Vagadeshwari’). Anyway, the initial sadness gave way to happiness for all my brothers and sisters in the Ashram – some of whom may have never seen Devi Bhava. And I was looking forward to reports and stories that would be posted on the blog.

I have fond memories of when Amma used to hold Devi Bhava twice a week on Thursdays and Sundays in the small temple. Back in 1998, I stayed in the dorms on the 5th floor of the Temple. I remember the heat coming up the stairs from all the bodies in the temple below. The vibrations from the bhajans would come right through the floor and into the bed where I would lay trying to rest. The whole place would pulse with energy. Though last night’s Devi Bhava was held in the big Main
Hall, I’m sure that in many ways, the energy was equally intense, if not more, on stage, in the hall, and throughout the entire Ashram.

In some ways, we felt some of that energy here in San Ramon. Earlier tonight, we held the evening bhajans in the main temple rather than the puja room (it was being cleaned). We didn’t know whether Amma was still giving darshan or not. Someone asked what color Amma was wearing – of course, someone knew (thanks in part to the teaser photo below!). Anyway, we continued to sing bhajans, and for the last one, we decided to sing ‘Aye Giri Nandini’ – a bhajan normally reserved for special occasions. The energy during the chanting was very high and we could feel Amma’s presence in the room. After Arati, we all headed back to the Main House. It was then that word came from Amritapuri that Devi Bhava had just ended – turns out that we were singing Aye Giri Nandini at the same time…

On another note, April 22nd is also Earth Day in the US and many of us thought it quite auspicious that Amma chose this day to hold Devi Bhava.

With Amma’s Love and Light,

Sri Pati

22 April 2007 San Ramon – US”
Appendix B

Manasapuja instructions given by Mata Amritanandamayi

“Sit in a comfortable asana (posture) and try to feel a deep peace filling your being. Breathe slowly, deeply, consciously for 2-3 minutes. Chant Aum three times with eyes closed. While chanting, imagine taking Aum from the navel upwards to Sahasrara; also imagine the bad mental dispositions and bad thoughts within us flowing out.

Then while praying “Amma, Amma” with devotion, love and tearful longing, imagine that the Divine Mother is standing before you, smiling and looking at you compassionately. For a minute enjoy Mother’s exquisite beauty, visualizing every part of Her divine form. Prostrate at Mother’s Lotus Feet, feeling the touch of your forehead on Her Holy Feet. Pray to Her, “O Mother, I take refuge in You. You are the only lasting Truth and support for me. You alone can give me real peace and joy. Never forsake me, never leave me!”

Then visualize the resplendent form of Devi on the inside of your palms. Rays of compassion from Devi’s eyes envelop you. Rub your face and from face to downwards with the palms. Feel that a divine energy is permeating you, and feel all misfortunes, all inauspiciousness being driven away.

Throughout this puja, continuously repeat with your lips, but without making any sound, “Amma, Amma, Amma, leave me not, forsake me not”.
Imagine now that you are bathing Mother. As you pour water on Mother’s head, watch the water flow down over each part of Her from until it reaches Her Lotus Feet. Then do ablutions with milk, ghee, honey, sandal paste, rose water, etc. With each item enjoy the beauty of Her form. Through offering these materials, you are offering your own purified mind to Mother.

Next, do ablutions with vibhuti (sacred ash). Watch how it slowly reaches Mother’s Feet. Then shower flowers on Mother’s head. Thake a nice towel and wipe Her face and body. Adorn Her with a beautiful sari, as if you are dressing up your own child. Pray to Her, “O Mother, come sit in my heart. Only if You sit in my heart, can I tread the right path”.

Apply Perfume on Devi. Adorn Her with ornaments: earrings, necklace, belt, anklets, etc. Apply kumkum on Her forehead. Place a crown bedecked with jewels on Her head. Garland Mother. Enjoy watching Mother’s peerless beauty, and let your glances pass from Her head down to Her feet and from Her feet to Her head again.

Like a child, talk to Mother about all kinds of things. Pray to Her, “O Mother. You are pure love. I am too impure to deserve Your Grace. I know that my egoism and selfishness must be reprelling to You. Still, bear with me. Mother, please be with me, You are the holiest river. I am a stagnant, filthy pond. You flow to me and purify me, overlooking my shortcomings and forgiving my mistakes.”

With sandal paste, write “Om” on Mother’s feet. Offer flowers three times.

Now, after reciting the ‘Dyana sloka’ in a meditative mood, begin to chant the Sahasranamavali, beginning with the ‘Om Sri Matre Namah’ (if chanting in a group, respond to each chant with ‘Om Parashaktyai namah’). As you chant
each Name, imagine that you are picking a flower from your heart, and mentally offer the flower at Mother’s Lotus Feet. (The flower represents your own pure thoughts.) When the thousand Names have been chanted, sit erect silently for a few minutes, imagining that divine vibrations are spreading throughout your being.

Now offer sweet porridge as naivedya (sacred food offering) for the Mother with your own hands and imagine that She relishes it. The real naivedya is your pure love for the Mother.

If you can sing, sing then a song offering to the Mother. Imagine that hearing the song, the mother is dancing. Dance along with Her. Suddenly in the midst of the dance, She leaves you and runs away. Run after Her until you catch hold of Her. Cry out to her: “O Mother, why are You forsaking me? Why do You allow me to perish in this forest of samsara? I am being burnt in the fire of worldliness. Come, lift me up and save me.”

Mother now stops running and she calls you, holding out Her arms towards you. Run to Her and embrace Her. Sit on Mother’s lap. Take complete freedom with Mother, as a child would with its own mother, caressing Her body and Lotus Feet, plaiting Her hair, etc. Ask Mother to never tease you like this again. Tell Her all your grievances and your anxieties. Tell Mother that you will never again allow Her to leave you.

Ray to Her: “O Mother, I am offering myself at your Lotus Feet. Make me an ideal instrument of Yours. I do not want anything of this world. My only desire is to behold Your Divine form and to be in Your company. Give me eyes that see nothing but You. Let Your will be my will, let Your thoughts be my thoughts, Your words my words. Whatever I do. Even eating and sleeping, let
all my actions have only one aim—that of merging in You.” Constantly talking and praying like this fix your mind on the Divine Mother’s form.

Wave lighted camphor before Mother, who stands before you smiling. Her eyes full of compassion. Imagine that you are offering all your good and your bad qualities, and the whole of yourself to Her.

Do pradakshina (circumambulation) and prostrate at Mother’s Lotus Feet with the prayer in your heart: “O Mother of the Universe, You are my only refuge, I surrender to You.”

Chant the peace invocations:

Om asatoma sadgamaya
Tamasoma jyotirgamaya
Mrityorma amritamgamaya
Om santih santih santih
Om, lead us from untruth to Truth,
From darkness to light,
From death to immortality.
Om peace, peace, peace
Pray for everyone
Loka samastah sukhino bhavantu
Loka samastah sukhino bhavantu
Loka samastah sukhino bhavantu
Om santih, santih, santih
Om, may all the beings in all the worlds be happy!
Om peace, peace, peace
After seeing Her there, while feeling peace and fullness of heart, bow to Her and to the place where you sat. Conclude the puja. If possible, meditate on Her form for some more time.

Om purnamadah purnamidam
Purnat purnamudacyate
Punasya purnamadaya
Purnam-eva-vasisyate
Om santih santih santih

Om, That is the whole, this is the whole,
From the whole the whole becomes manifest
Taking away the whole from the whole,
The whole alone remains.
Om peace, peace, peace.

Om sri gurubhyo namah; hari om
Om reverence to the auspicious gurus, Hari Om”

From the website of Amritapuri, www.amritapuri.org
<http://www.amritapuri.org/activity/cultural/puja>
Appendix C

Amma Doll: Experience of a devotee posted on an online portal.

“After viewing the Amma doll pages that have recently been added on the amritapuri.org site, I feel like sharing my Amma doll experience.

I had wanted an Amma doll for a long time, but always came up with some excuse for not buying one: they cost too much, boys aren’t supposed to play with dolls (though I had seen some male devotees with them), even fears about having to declare the doll on my return to Canada.

When I saw a devotee with a doll, I would always ask if I could hold his/her doll for a little bit. I felt like a smoker bumming cigarettes, not that I have that nasty nicotine addiction. I decided before going to Ann Arbor last month, that this would be the year to get a doll of my own and stop bumming other devotees’ dolls. The $90 price for a medium size 8” doll was no longer a deterrent. I usually spend much more than that at Amma’s programs for books, tapes, etc. There was such a large selection of dolls on display in Ann Arbor, that it took me several minutes just to pick one out. Usually they have a few for sale, but they must have been working overtime at the Amritapuri doll factory to meet the Christmas demand.

Doll in hand, I awaited Amma’s darshan. Amma might not see too many grown men bringing dolls for blessing, but without having to ask “your doll?” she knew it was a special gift for myself. She tilak’ed the doll- and me too! I don’t recall Amma ever sticking kumkum paste on my forehead
before. Since the doll received Amma’s blessings, it’s not easy to let go of her. She is sitting on my lap as I work on my computer. I sleep with her, and reach for her when I wake up. I talk to her and hug her as if this doll is Amma herself. The doll is not only soft and nurturing to cuddle but fills the longing for Amma’s darshan during the long wait between her tours. It’s like a murti of the Divine Mother. But while most murtis are made of hard metal or stone, this is very warm, fuzzy, huggable, snuggable murti. And now other devotees ask me if they could hold my doll.

Notwithstanding the cultural taboo against boys playing with dolls, I think every little boy should have an Amma doll. And big boys too!

The devi bhava sari could be on next year’s shopping list. Just like Barbie dolls, “clothing and accessories sold separately”!

Jai Ma!”(Keval, 2001)


Appendix D

In his article titled “Amma- Ee noottandile Upanishad” Sreekumaran Thampi writes, “I hear the most beautiful poem of consolation when Amma embraces me and whispers “ponnu mone” (precious son). How did this wonder happen? Why does it feel like the Amma is touching my soul when she touches me? That is how I understand the soul is brahma. Amma reminds me of the suktas ‘I am Brahma’, ‘thou are that’ ‘what we call soul is brahmam’ all the time. This is the power that binds me and Amma. The Upanishads are the darsanasamhitas that enlightened saints (brahmajnanikalaya risheendranmar) secretly advised to the disciples who sit close to them. Amma is not only making her children sit close to her but also embrace and kiss them on their forehead. Console them saying that Amma will ‘imagine the brahma’ for them. Amma sings kirtans blissfully in their company. Lifts the torch of truth that everything is Agni, by symbolically representing it in the vilakkupuja. Even when I write this short article I am ruled by the proud state of ‘I’. I escape from this ‘I’ only during those few seconds I spend with Amma? I become a son, a child in front of Amma who is younger to me. What a wonder! Chandogyopanishad says that only the seed of soul can overcome melancholy. Amma’s touch removes my sadness at least during those few moments.

Amma does not show any tricks. Does not offer any material status. Amma is not just a saint—she is the music of solace. One day a person of high status in society comes to visit Shirdi Sai Baba, with his consorts. A dog also entered inside along with the group. When the man tried to shoo away the dog, Baba asked him to
come along with the dog. Baba announced that the *chaithanyam* in both human beings and dogs are the same.

Many people come to the Amma’s sannidhi. Amma has the discriminatory knowledge, still she does not show any difference to anyone. She is like the thirichenthoor sea that receives both the teertha that flows from lord Muruka’s idol and the dirty water that comes from the drainage. Amma is the living Upanishad of this century. Adi Shankara calls river Ganga, ‘poornabrahma swaroope’. I will press my face of Amma’s lap and call her ‘poornabrahmaswaroopinee’.

One drop of water
Wont’t be river
It is when
Many drops combine
That the river flows.
Thus hearts will flow together
Only if the love
In all human hearts unite ”.

Appendix E

The following list of challenges is made by a person named Abraham T. Kovoor in 1963 who declares an award of 1 Lakh Sri Lankan rupees to those who claim godliness such as Satya Sai Baba, Pandri Malai Swamikal, Neelakanta Tathaji, Nirmala Devi Srivastava, Pujya Dadaji, Dattabali, Thripayar Yogini, Gurudev Anandamurti, Kamubhai, Chinmayananda, Acharya Rajneesh, Muktanand, Swami Rama, Swami Haridas, Sivabalayogi and Maharshi Mahesh Yogi.

1. Read the serial number of a sealed up currency note.

2. Produce an exact replica of currency note.

3. Standing stationary on burning cinders for half a minute without blistering the feet.

4. Materialise from nothing an object I ask.

5. Move or bend a solid object using psychogenetic power.

6. Read the thought of another person using telepathic powers.

7. Make an amputated limb grow even one inch by prayer, spiritual or faith healing powers, Lourdes water, holy ash, blessing etc.

8. Levitate in the air by yogic power.

9. Stop heart-beat for five minutes by yogic power.

10. Stop breathing for thirty minutes by yogic power.

11. Walk on water.
12. Leave the body in one place and reappear in another place.

13. Predict a future event.

14. Develop creative intelligence or get enlightened through yogic meditation.

15. Speak or understand an unknown language as a result of rebirth or by being possessed by a spirit, holy or evil.

16. Produce a spirit or ghost to be photographed.

17. Disappear from the negative when photographed.

18. Get out of a locked room by spiritual power.

19. Increase the quantity by weight of a substance by divine power.

20. Detect a hidden object.

21. Convert water into petrol or wine.

22. Convert wine into blood.

23. Astrologers and palmists, who hoodwink the gullible by saying that astrology and palmistry are perfectly “scientific”, can win my award if they can pick correctly within a margin of five percent error- those of males and females, and living and the dead from a set of ten palm prints or astrological charts giving the exact time of birth correct to the minute, and places of birth with their latitudes and longitudes.