

SRI SRI MA ANANDAMAYI

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GURUPRIYA ANANDA GIRI
(GURUPRIYA DEVI)

Translated by Tara Kini

*With an introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath
Kaviraj, Padma Vibhushana, M.A., D. LITT.*



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Ma Anandamayee

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Didi with Ma

Offering

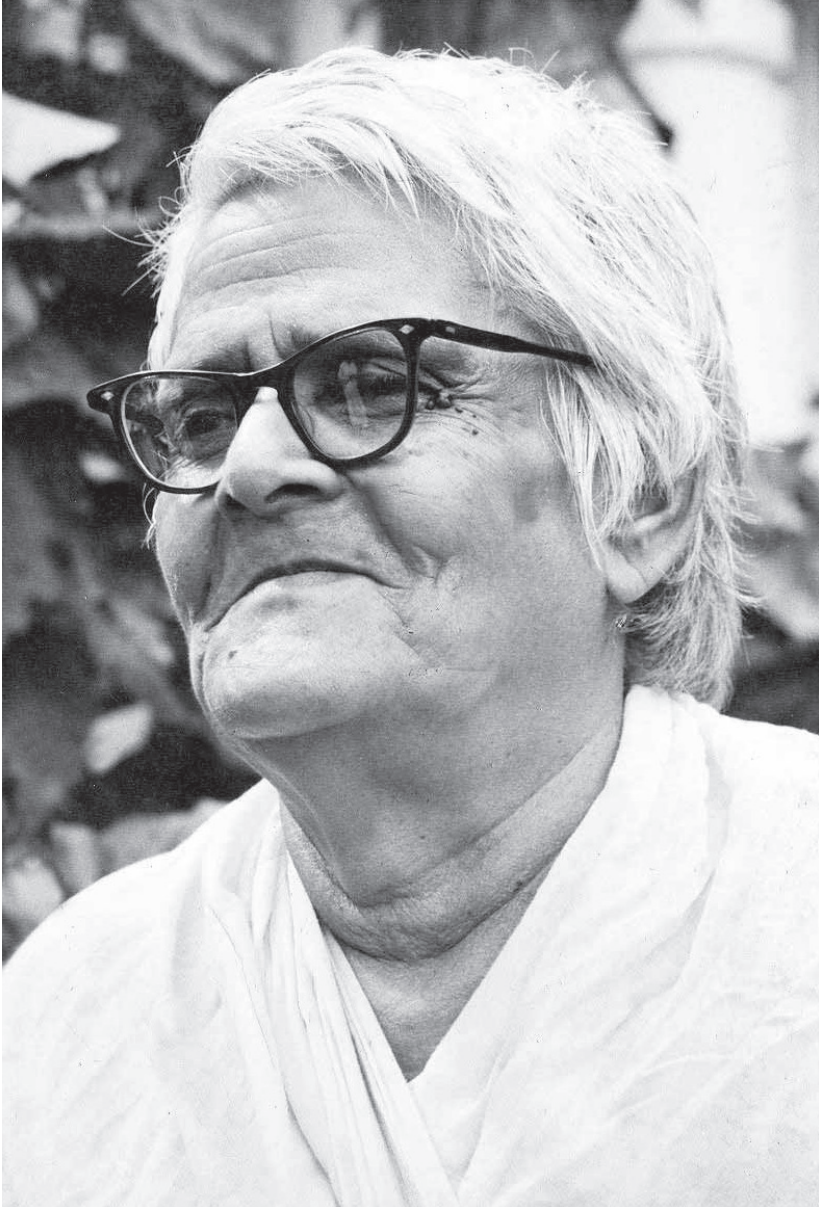
To the One who is beyond the grasp of the human intellect and who, though residing in Her own abode of complete bliss, for the sake of conveying the message of the effulgent and ever peaceful abode, through Her compassion has appeared in a human form in this world, and who has shown by Her own conduct how one can enter the *Mahābhāva* through the action, devotion and knowledge pervaded *khanda-bhāvā*, and how, after the ceaseless dancing of the waves of *bhāva*, eternal rest is attainable in the end in the ever peaceful consciousness of one's own true nature which is beyond *bhāva*, to that Mother of all who seek refuge, who is most worthy of worship, Sri Sri 108 Mukteshwari Mata Anandamayi's lotus feet which promote the welfare of the universe, I offer with profound veneration this small floral garland of Her own holy life story, in the form of an oblation of devotion and love, which is like performing Ganga puja with Ganga water.

The humble authoress.

Dedication

It was about twelve or thirteen years ago, when I first had Ma's darshan and was enthralled ; at that time I once had the desire to write about these happenings, so that I could read them and derive bliss. Driven by this desire, I did write something, though most of my time was spent with Ma and not much leisure was available for writing. And when I sat down to write, I felt that it was not possible to communicate these incidents and divine lilā through language; yet I wrote a bit. After a few days my writing stopped due to unavoidable circumstances. When my father and I came away permanently from our home on Ma's instructions, all the note books remained behind. Later, when Ma left us at Siddheshwari my heart started pining for Ma. One day, I thought that if I read the stories of Ma's past, I would find relief, but though the whole house was searched, the note-books could not be found. I felt very sad. Some years later, the respected late Jyotish Rai (Bhaiji) requested everyone to write incidents from Ma's life (in whichever form each one saw and experienced them). I then decided not to write anything. But I do not know why and by whose inspiration, the desire to write awoke little by little. Jyotish Dada also said, "It is appropriate for you to write, because you have spent much time with Ma and witnessed many happenings, big and small." By his encouragement, the eagerness to write increased. At that time, the facility for this was also created by Ma — she left me almost

alone at the Vindhyaachal *Ashram*. In that solitary place, during my spare time, I started writing again. By Ma's grace, earlier incidents began to awaken in my memory more and more. Just as a definite time was allotted for the repetition of God's name (*japa*), similarly, I set apart a definite time for writing about Ma's life. I considered it a part of my spiritual practice (*sādhana*). Though for a person like myself to write about Ma's life was like a dwarf's desire to touch the moon, still I wrote and felt it was good to do so. I knew that in learned circles this book would be considered worthless because I do not at all possess the necessary knowledge and intelligence needed to produce a book. But I thought that those who came in contact with Ma would read these anecdotes and experience bliss, and that the shortcomings in the language of the writer would not come in the way. Because I have experienced that when many of us get together and start talking about Ma, then taking one incident only of the past and thinking it over again and again, we have spent so many nights without anyone feeling the slightest boredom or fatigue. It was as if every detail about Ma were perpetually novel. And it is also very true that it is totally beyond our power to understand Ma's nature. I have only written that which I have understood, seen, or heard. I have tried very hard that there should not be a word of exaggeration. Yet, those of my kind brothers and sisters, who have come in contact with Ma, will notice any number of examples of my incompetency. I ask forgiveness for that. To those who have not seen Ma and who are coming to know her only through this book, I make an entreaty that if they misunderstand Ma's nature or character at any place, the failing is mine. There is no imperfection or shortcoming in Ma's conduct anywhere. Those who have met Ma will understand the truth of this statement. It is a pity that several incidents of Ma's life are kept concealed because those special sayings which Ma has uttered privately



Gurupriya Didi

to certain people, or some special activities of Ma which have been revealed only to certain individuals, remain secret, and may probably always remain secret, because no one may be prepared to reveal them.

I shall say one thing before ending my discourse. I wrote all this haphazardly and handed it over to revered Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Sri Gopinath Kaviraj, D.Litt. (Ex-Principal, Government Sanskrit College, Benares) who worked hard to put this book into shape and who has also written an introduction to it. For this I am eternally grateful to him. Ma's old devotee Bāla Brahmachari Sri Nepalchandra Chakravartiji¹ helped Kavirajji in this work to the best of his ability. He has toiled over it day and night. He delights in doing Ma's work. I express my gratitude to him.

Jyotish Dada is not in this world anymore. It was only by his encouragement that I got involved in this work. How happy he would have been, had he been here to see Ma's life story being published. If anyone experiences the slightest bliss by reading this life story of Ma, I shall consider my effort to be successful.

Varanasi, May, 1942

-Gurupriya Devi

¹ Late Shri Nepal Chakravarti known as Swami Nārāyanānanda Tirtha after taking samnyāsa.