



Transforming the Individual & the World

Mr. Ron Gottsegen

Mr. Ron Gottsegen, the administrative director of AIMS, Amma's super-specialty hospital in Cochin, writes about Amma's mission as She turns 50.

A new millennium is a dramatic milestone for society when we take time to reflect. There is a sense of waking up to the imperative of what we need to do, an evaluation of what has been accomplished and what remains unfinished. It is a wakeup call for individuals as well as for nations and global institutions. How do we

need only sit by Amma and closely observe Her to see that Her actions reflect Her teachings. She is ever alert, aware and present—there is never a lapse.

The eternal Now is the portal to divine intelligence and *shakti* [power], and its nature is bliss. We can see these qualities emanating continuously

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make this world a better place?

For Amma, who, like other Mahatmas, has realized the unity of consciousness of the creation, it is business as usual. Amma sounds the alarm everyday. Her appearance in this world itself is a wakeup call, as She always tries to awaken within each of us the Truth of our own existence.

Amma teaches us that our mental preoccupations with past and future simply dissipate our creative energy. We brood about the past and worry about the future, however our energy can only be effectively used in the here and now—the present. One

from Amma. The intelligence and the infinite power of the universe/creation simply flow through Her.

Amma is infinitely patient and accepting of all Her children and all circumstances. Life simply evolves according to its nature. Amma teaches that this existence is the time-bound illusion that brings suffering to the people of the world.

The scriptures teach that the Guru is like a boat that carries the disciple across the ocean of *samsara* [cycle of birth and death] to the other shore. In that sense, Amma is like an ocean liner, with seemingly no limit to the number of people She is reach-

ing out to help. Amma has spent Her whole life on this planet in selfless service. Now, on the eve of Amma's 50th birthday celebrations, we can see Amma's divine energy encompassing national and global issues; and this without withdrawing any of the energy directed at helping Her children with their personal struggles. Indeed, Amma's attention to global issues has been unfolding over the last several years with Her appearances at the UN Headquarters in both New York as an invited speaker at the Millennium World Peace Summit and then in Geneva where She was presented with the 2002 *Gandhi-King Award for Non-violence*. Furthermore, Her visits and activities around the world have been given prime attention on the front pages of the world's newspapers with increasing frequency.

In reality, Amma has never been interested in Her birthday or its celebration. She acquiesces on these occasions to the wishes of Her devotees to express their love and respect to higher truth and divine purpose. Amma has used the occasion to present gifts to the needy on an escalating scale over the years, one that defies the imagination.

Amma's focus on world peace and national and global issues is the theme of *Amritavarsham50*, wherein major issues are receiving critical focus and discussion. During *Amritavarsham50's* inter-faith summit, "Religions Embracing for Peace & Harmony," spiritual leaders are coming together to create initiatives for peace and harmony, as well as a common platform to discuss issues in the future.

In the Celebration's women's initiative, "Embracing Universal Motherhood for Peace & Harmony," women leaders from around the world are coming together not only to discuss the imperative for understanding the creative untapped potential of women but also to create important initiatives to bring about change and to raise the awareness of both men and women on this important issue.

There is also a youth meet, "The Future Genera-

tion Embracing Selfless Service for Peace & Harmony," in which His Excellency the President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Amma, and many eminent personalities will address 100,000 youth to inspire them and ignite their minds.

Another historic event taking place during the birthday is "CEOs Embracing India for Peace & Harmony," a summit of chief-executive officers from leading companies in India and abroad with a focus on making India an economically secure, spiritually strong global leader among nations. This is also being presided over by His Excellency the President.

Amma's deep attunement with all life is consistently reflected in Her words and actions, and Amma has been speaking about the importance of re-establishing the harmony between Nature and humankind since the beginning of Her mission. To this end, during the *Amritavarsham50* Celebrations, the Mata Amritanandamayi Math will distribute 25,000 saplings to be planted throughout India. As Amma said years ago in Her book *Man & Nature*, "The destruction of Nature is the same thing as the destruction of humanity. Trees, animals, birds, plants, forests, mountains, lakes, rivers—everything that exists in Nature—are in desperate need of our kindness, of the compassionate care and protection of man. If we protect them, they, in turn, will protect us."

Societal transformation can only occur through the transformation of individuals. Amma always stresses that society needs to be based on ethical moral values that reflect the age-old wisdom. Amma tirelessly tries to instil these values in all of us, young and old alike.

On a deeply personal level, Amma, through Her touch, look and attention provides us with a glimpse of our true nature. In her presence, so many have been blessed with the experience of a deep sense of peace where the mind becomes still. The restless mind stops questioning at that point and only the blissful glimpse of the eternal is expe-

rienced. That glimpse serves to point us toward the goal of realizing that blissful state ceaselessly. We learn that the divine is within and not an external object separate from our own Self to be sought after.

Such is Amma, and such She would have us become.

We are truly blessed to have the opportunity to witness the evolving transformation of Nature and the world, as well as of ourselves, as we lovingly and appreciatively draw near to our Guru, imbibing Her spirit every way we can. I first met Amma in 1987 during Her first trip to the US. The 16 years since have provided me with an ever-deepening personal experience, and I continually marvel at the dramatic transformations that occur in so many of Amma's children.

May we become more receptive vehicles to better receive the blessings that endlessly flow forth from Amma, the ever-full radiant effulgence of Truth, unconditional love and wisdom, so that we may better fulfil the purpose of this life and thereby serve humanity.