

# Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre of Auckland

## Annual Report for the Year 2017-2018

I have pleasure in presenting a brief report of our Centre's activities for the year ended 31st March 2018.

**Membership:** The membership at the end of this financial year stood at 110, a slight decrease on last year. While I thank the members for their interest, I cannot emphasise enough the importance of them coming forward voluntarily with their subscriptions in time. Subscription revenue forms an important part of our income, hence your cooperation will be appreciated.

**Finance:** A full and detailed audited Financial Report will follow this report. You will see that our finances are healthy. However, as we expand, our financial needs will also increase. I am grateful to all those who are regularly contributing and encourage others to consider joining in with whatever they are comfortable with. This year I intend to personally approach a few more to join in this group.

Two items I wish to particularly draw your attention are (a) the investment we made in renovating and refurbishing the flat, and (b) the Bhajan Sandhya, a fund raising project.

The flat is now fully modernised and earning a rental of \$425 per week. The kitchen/dining area is also now renovated and converted into one and is suitable as a meeting room as well as for holding a small function. While the amount spent on this may appear large, the expenditure is one-off and will see us through for a long period.

While the Bhajan Sandhya did not earn us the income we expected, the project gave us good exposure to the general public. I thank Amit Sengupta for his efforts in overseeing this project.

**Activities:**

Daily Arti: A vesper service is held daily at 7 pm. Presently, 7 families have undertaken this responsibility. However, I request others who can spare some time to come forward and join these 7 families by attending whenever it is convenient to them. This is important, as on rare occasions when one of the committed families is not able to fulfil its responsibility, the burden is then passed on to one of the remaining families.

Satsangs: Regular Satsangs are held every second and last Sundays of each month from 11 am to 1 pm followed by Prasad-lunch. I am grateful to the members who have voluntarily undertaken to read and speak on the various books we study. Once again, I encourage all members to attend regularly and take part in these programs.

Other Celebrations: All special occasions celebrated by the Mission are also observed by us. During the year we observed the birth anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda. We also observed Kalpataru Day, Shiva Ratri, Buddh Purnima, Guru Purnima, Durga Puja and Christmas Eve.

**Swamiji's Visits:** During the year under review, we had a brief visit from Swami Sarvarupanandaji of the Colombo, Sri Lanka Centre. He participated in one of our regular Satsangs and took the opportunity to catch up with some of his old friends.

Swami Tadanandaji continued visiting us regularly and speaks at our Satsangs.

One of the highlights of the year was the 3 days visit by the Vice President of Ramakrishna Math and Mission Revered Swami Suhitanandaji Maharaj accompanied by his personal assistant Swami Chandrakantanandaji. During this visit, Revered Maharaj graciously bestowed initiation on 30 devotees, and held a well-attended Satsang in the evening. We extend our sincere gratitude to Revered Maharaj for extending this privilege to us, and his kind and favourable comments on our Centre. This was Revered Maharaj's second visit to our Centre, the first being in November, 2014. We are grateful to Swami Tadanandaji for facilitating this visit. I also acknowledge Amrat Lal's efforts on this occasion.

**Affiliation to HQ:** Since the visit of Revered General Secretary Maharaj in November 2014, we have been in regular communications with Belur Math regarding full affiliation to the Ramakrishna Mission, and the appointment of a resident Swamiji for NZ. We have satisfactorily complied with all the requirements of the HQ in this regard. Their Law Office and Audit Department have confirmed their approval of all our documents to the office of the GS Maharaj. The latest update from them is **“In this regard we would like to inform you that your Vedanta Centre is in the panel of centres which are shortlisted for affiliation. However, apart from your Vedanta Centre, we have pressing requests from a few more independent centres for affiliation. But in view of our limited monastic man-power and also the various commitments we have already made, we need some time before we accede to such requests. Please be assured that we shall get back to you at an appropriate time.”**

The response to our latest enquiry is that the situation has not changed, but we are on a short-list, which is encouraging.

**Appreciation:** I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has assisted and supported this Centre.

I would like to single out our Secretary and Treasurer Kumaran Ramakrishnan and Jai Lal for their hard work. Kumaran’s enthusiasm and initiatives in bringing about changes and additions to our programs are appreciated. His idea of introducing the projector to screen video talks of Swamijis from other Centres and his efforts in putting together a comprehensive book of prayers, chantings and bhajans is the most significant additions this year. Jai Lal’s untiring efforts during the flat renovations are also appreciated. This saved us a considerable sum in the costs of the project. They have both been very dedicated to their responsibilities and I sincerely appreciate their services.

I also thank all Committee Members, and indeed all our members, friends, well-wishers and supporters for their continued participation and support. Please continue with your good work.

I wish everyone a successful coming year.

**Harish Kumar Sundarji**

**President**