# Swami Vivekananda

Foremost Saint of Modern India

The Man and His Message  To The people !

# Beginning…

- Born: January 12, 1863 in Calcutta on Makara Sankaranti Day. His name at birth was Narendranath.
- Father: Sri Visvanath Datta, a very successful and distinguished lawyer.
- Mother: Bhuvanesvari ,a very pious lady. Prayer of the Lord was a way of life.

# Childhood and Early Youth…

- Narendranath was highly inquisitive and bright in his studies and play. He was well read and had a remarkable power of understanding and retention. He completed Bachelor Arts degree from Scottish Church College, Calcutta in 1884.

- He was a great thinker and often challenged existing customs and rituals.  He often wondered about this world and its Creator.

- He extensively studied different religious and philosophical systems of East and West.

- However, no one could satisfy his curiosity and he developed a feeling that the whole talk of God was a myth.

# Transformation…

- Encounters with Sri Ramakrishna…
  - Silver Coin Test
  - Vision of the Lord
  - Asking Boons from God
- Narendranath spent about 5 years as a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and learnt everything concerning Spirituality based on Advaita philosophy.
- Sri Ramakrishna passed on all his spiritual power to Narendranath before going into samadhi.
- Narendranath takes charge of Ramakrishna mission at the age of 23, comes to be known as Swami Vivekananda.

# Later Life…

- Swami Vivekananda travelled across the country from Himalayas to Kanyakumari, studying and understanding the motherland and her problems.
  - Episode with Maharaja of Alwar
- Meditated deeply at Kanyakumari on the last bit of Indian rock for 3 days and had the "Vision of one India". He also contemplated about going West. India had to be awakened, and that could be done only by making India's message appreciated in the West.

# Visit to the West…

- In 1893 Swami Vivekananda sailed to America to attend the Parliament of Religions at Chicago.
- Episodes from his initial struggle in US…
- His "Sisters and Brothers of America.." speech in the religious assembly.
- Swami Vivekananda stayed for couple of years in the US and in England, delivering an extensive series of lectures on Vedanta philosophy preaching universality and brotherhood in various Universities and congregations.
- Sets up Vedanta Society in New York and England.

# Return to Homeland…

- In 1897 Swamiji returns to India and is hailed as the new Sankaracharya.
- Establishes Ramakrishna Mission on May 1, 1897, which is dedicated to the task of teaching self realization and service to humanity.
- Establishes Belur Math in early 1898 to be a permanent abode for the monastery and monastic order.
- Revisits the West in 1899-90 and establishes Vedanta society in San Francisco.

# Teachings…

- Swami Vivekananda firmly believed in the equality of mankind and preached extensively to remove biases and exploitation based on caste, creed, race and gender.

- Swamiji sought to bring back the spiritual awakening of the nation by instilling faith and pride for India's culture and heritage.

- Swamiji is widely regarded as the India's foremost nation builders. Many other subsequent national leaders including Gandhiji, Nehru, Aurobindo were influenced by his teachings on spirituality and service to the fellow beings.

# Swamiji's contributions

- Contribution to World Culture:
  - New Understanding of Religion
  - Bridge between the East and the West
  - New Principle of Morality and Ethics
  - New View of Man
- Contribution to Hinduism:
  - Identity
  - Unification
  - Defence
  - Meeting the Challenges
  - New Ideal for Monasticism
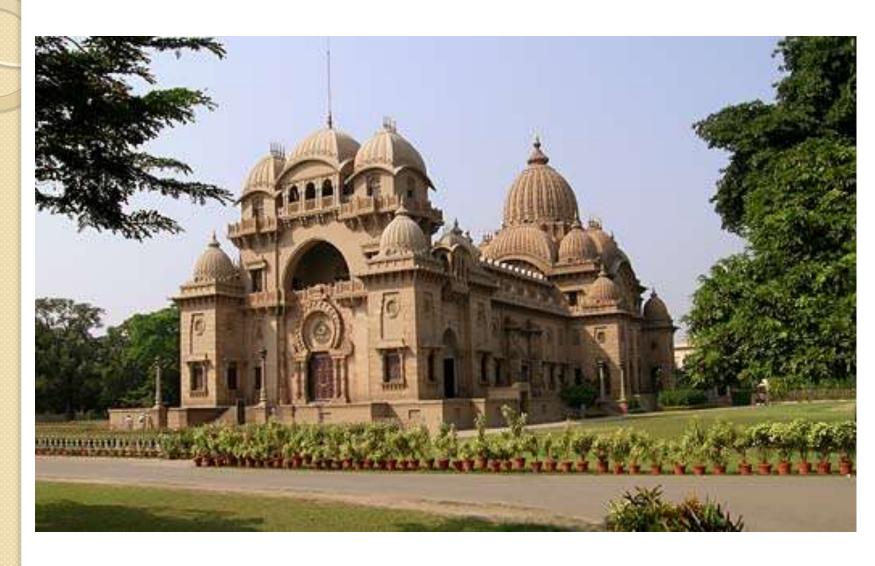  - Refurbishing of Religious Doctrines

# Maha samadhi…

- Swami Vivekananda attained maha samadhi on July 4, 1902 at his Belur Math during meditation. He had a premonition about this. Three days before his death he pointed out the spot for this cremation—the one at which a temple in his memory stands today. In the morning of July 4, he gave instructions concerning the future of Ramakrishna mission to one of his disciples.

- He had remarked to several persons that he would not live to be forty.

- His teachings and mission continues to inspire us even after 100 years…
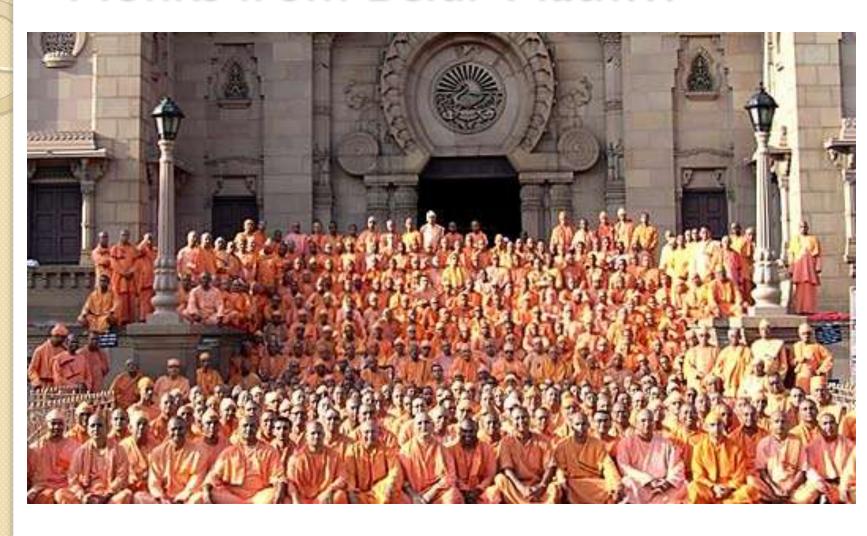
# Belur Math

- Belur Math is the headquarters of Ramakrishna Mission and Math. Situated over 40 acres on the banks of river Hooghly (Ganga) in Howrah, about an hour drive from Kolkata.

- Campus includes:
  - Temples dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda.
  - It also houses the main monastry of the Ramakrishna Order.
  - Administrative offices for the mission.
  - Resident Training Center for Vedic education.
  - Charitable Dispensary to serve the sick and needy.

- "Service to man is the service to the Lord" is the founding principle of Ramakrishna Mission. Today there are mission centers in almost all states of India and several other countries.

# Belur Math…

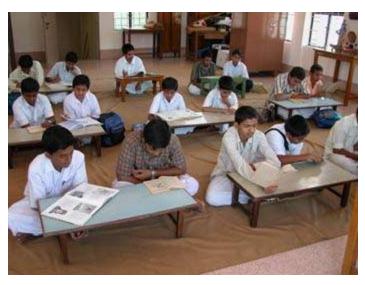# Monks from Belur Math…

# Relief Work and Service to Humanity

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# Pearls of Wisdom

Arise, awake and sleep no more. Within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and miseries.

# Pearls of Wisdom

March on!
Anything that makes
you weak physically,
intellectually and spiritually,
reject as poison.

# Pearls of Wisdom

There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point, that is the secret.

# Pearls of Wisdom

Blame none for your own faults, stand upon your own feet, and take the whole responsibility upon yourselves.

# Pearls of Wisdom

Conquer yourself, and the whole universe is yours.

# Pearls of Wisdom

Let us work without desire for name or fame or rule over others. Let us be free from the triple bonds of lust, greed of gain, and anger.

# Pearls of Wisdom

Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life. Think of it, dream of it. Live on that idea.

Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea and just leave every other idea alone.

This is the way to "SUCCESS"

# Pearls of Wisdom

A few whole hearted, sincere, energetic men and women can do more in a year than a mob in a century.