

## Reflections for Contemplation for Candidates for Ordination

### Light of God's Love,

I am thinking of you and praying with you daily as you prepare for ordination. You have come forth and declared your deepest commitment at a seminal time in this ministry and I know that God has inspired you to take this important step in your soul's journey in accordance with this time. When you are sincere, it can be no other way. I welcome you with love, both with love's tender embrace and with its transforming fire for what is ordination but a fire rite in which we submit ourselves to a life no longer our own?

Some express the desire to wear the minister's robe or place the title Reverend in front of their name. During this time of your preparation, you must consider what these outer symbols mean and not seek them for their own sake for then they would be only empty props, an outer show. Rather, seek in your heart to belong only to God, to live fearlessly and with the highest commitment. Then it matters not what you are called or what you wear. Didn't Jesus say, "don't worry about what you will wear"? Put God first. Live with surrendered devotion and all that you need is provided for you. Above all else, I want for you this awareness of your innate wholeness, for it is the key to freedom and ever new joy that the life of ministry is based on.

You must consider the needs of this ministry today and your own willingness to serve. In the days before your ordination, turn to the second chapter of the *Gita* for inspiration. Study this chapter and my Guru's commentary on it as your preparation for ordination.

Consider this: Arjuna has said: *I am ready! Take me out onto the field so that I can see what is before me.* He has a sense of confidence in his training as a warrior and his ability to do the job. But when he sees what is being asked of him on the battlefield, he shrinks back. What is the cause of this cowardice? Is it that he sees clearly what is before him and with high spiritual resolve does not want to harm himself or others? We know this is not the case. Although he puts forth a high-sounding argument, we can see right through it. He is afraid. He is afraid because he has identified himself with the way things are. He is *attached* to his present situation and does not want to change it. How easy it can be to rationalize our attachments to certain ways of living and make it sound as if we are basing our actions on spiritual teachings when all the while we are identified with body, mind, or circumstances and are not willing to let go of what we want to confront and accept the good that God offers us.

This chapter of the *Gita*, the dialog with Krishna and Arjuna, reveals the auspicious transformation that is available when one becomes willing to answer the call. Remember, the call is not made for you; it is not made to fit you or what you want. In other words, it is not that God will present to you something tailor made to your likes and expertise and free from your dislikes and challenges. God will present to you a way, a path of service, and that will be your path of transformation. *The call is not made for you.*

*You are made to fit God's call.* Consider this as a living, breathing, *growing* “you are made” – you are made in the image and likeness of God *unfolding*. The potential is there to be developed. The call is your vehicle of transformation. Each of us must be transformed. And, if you want to be a minister of God, this way of transformation is the only way. It will be your greatest delight because through it, you will discover God as your life, God as your constant companion and vital support.

You will discover God in this life of karma yoga. You will know beyond a doubt that of yourself you can do nothing and that all is accomplished in God. If instead you remain clinging to the shore of self-will, afraid or unwilling to launch your little boat into the great sea of surrendered service, how will you know God as charting your course? Expect God to provide. Even as Yoganandaji would, demand it. Expect and know that the divine potentials within you are even now roused to greater expression. Be great. For your greatness is only the glory of All Mighty God revealed. Think of Yoganandaji, think of Roy, and consider that you ask now to stand with them, those great ones whose commitment to bring souls to God is felt around the world. They did not shrink back for fear that God would ask too much of them. They willingly gave their all.

Here are some reflections from Sri Aurobindo on the teachings in the second chapter of the Gita:

“...grow not by weakness, but by ascension from strength to strength. Arjuna is the divine man, the master-man in the making and as such he has been chosen by the gods. He has a work given to him, he has God beside him in his chariot, he has the heavenly bow Gandiva in his hand, he has the champions of unrighteousness, the opponents of the divine leading of the world in his front. Not his is the right to determine what he shall do or not do according to his emotions and his passions, or to shrink from a necessary destruction by the claim of his egotistic heart and reason, or to decline his work because it will bring sorrow and emptiness to his life or because its earthly result has no value to him in the absence of the thousands who must perish. He has to see only the work that must be done, *kartavyam karma*, to hear only the divine command breathed through his warrior nature, to feel only for the world and the destiny of mankind calling to him as its god-sent man to assist its march and clear its path of the dark armies that beset it.”

Our path of ministry service has us ask not “what do I think I can do” or even “what should I do” but “*what must I become*” in order to embrace what God places before us. We look upon the abyss we are to cross with confidence that God, and God alone, will carry us across. Who can call themselves a minister who has no faith in God? We come from a shining tradition of karma yogis who demonstrate its true meaning with their lives in their ministry. It is selfless service that brings freedom from action and its influence, not the refusal of action. Performed in the right spirit, this service which is both disinterested and dedicated purifies the mind and heart and thus is an aid to liberation.

Ordination at CSE is only for those who are ready to serve in this ministry tradition. There is no intention to ordain independent ministers, those who are seeking

ordination free of organizational ties and responsibilities. This means that those who are answering the call to minister in this tradition are attuned to CSE's vision, mission, and purpose and are willing to work side by side with the other ministers and devotees to accomplish the purposes set before us. *There is a great work being done as we bring our energy together and there is a place for you. The conch shell is blowing, with its call to rise.*

I bring my palms together at my heart and say to you, Namasté—reverence, deepest reverence, to the Divine within you.

With unceasing love,

Uma