

Sister Gayatri in Australia, 30 July to 13 August 2014

Melbourne, 1 to 4 August

Sister Gayatri arrived from New York into Australia on 30th July and with Sr Tara took up residence at the Centre for Spiritual Learning, Peninsula (Baxter). From her first look at Melbourne from the airport she could see that she was in Australia but felt to be still in America. However, a drive to Sorrento and Portsea in cold, rain and hail, soon gave her the unique experience of five seasons in one day, typical of Melbourne.

After morning class and stirring revision/discussion, Gayatri's first session with the Victoria BKs was an interview on "her story" with Br Sathesh. From this discussion we learned of Gayatri's and her family's introduction to Raja Yoga with Sr Jayanti and later Dadi Gulzar in their home in Guyana in 1975 and how her role in the UN developed. She shared many experiences in an open, friendly and inspiring way.

The second session on the power of silence was based around 'transformative narrative' experiences. Gayatri set a task for us all to enter the afternoon of silence and Rakhi. In summary the Journey into Silence comprised the following steps:

Introspection - Going inwards, merely observing, becoming introvert

Insights - Where your aims reveal themselves in the inner silence

Inspiration - Where a new experience emerges within and you feel a connection with God.

We were asked to mark an entry point into silence with some significance and to use the obtaining of our blessing at Rakhi as the end point – so there was an entry and an exit.



On Sunday there was a session where we honoured BK Anthony which was a very wonderful uniting sharing. Barbara Ramsay read a poem of Anthony's (the White Knight), Tamasin shared a letter that he had written to her at a significant time of her spiritual life and Robin shared many experiences of the early days with Anthony in Surry Hills, Sydney. Christine shared about time with Anthony's parents and Gopi talked about being a new BK and how much Anthony sustained her in those early days; showing Anthony's care, focus and patience with a new BK student. It was a time for shedding affectionate tears, of light hearted remembrances, love and laughter and finally a shared meditation – all in all, an honouring that left everyone feeling very spiritually full.

Sunday evening Gayatri and Tara went to Phillip Island to the Nature Park penguin parade where at sunset the little fairy penguins return from their day in the ocean to their burrows to feed their young. This is a very natural scene where mothers connect with their young, and although nowadays there are fewer penguins it is still one of the remaining sights of these penguins in their natural habitat.

On Monday there was a local TV community interview with Gayatri in an interfaith series, "Harmony in Diversity" designed to inform the public about faith traditions. Sr Morni also took part in this interview. The content tends to focus on personal spiritual stories and then from this background the influence on society today.

After this Gayatri had a "fly-by" visit to the city followed by an evening program at the Fitzroy Centre called "The Power of a Still and Stable Mind".

Melbourne BKs were grateful for the time they had with Gayatri and Tara. They left many enriching deep points of understanding, especially the value of restorative narratives on the spiritual journey.

Hobart, Tuesday 5 August.

Hobart BK centre held an Afternoon Tea for Community Leaders and their staff to meet Sr Gayatri and hear her speak about her work at the UN. The politicians present represented all tiers of government; Federal, State and Local who collectively spanned Green, Labor and Liberal parties as well as an Independent.



Those who attended included: Mr Andrew Wilkie (MP Dennison, Federal Parliament), Hon. Elise Archer MP (Speaker of the Tasmanian House of Assembly), Hon. Rob Valentine MLC (Independent Member for the Tasmanian Legislative Council and previous long term Lord Mayor of Hobart, Scott Bacon MP (Labor Member for Dennison in the Tasmanian House of Assembly), Amanda-Sue Markham (Electorate Officer, Office of Jacquie Petrusma MP, Ald Philip Cocker (Hobart City Council), Kris Schaffer (leading Aboriginal teacher, artist and horticulturalist, Isiah Lahai (Young Tasmanian of the Year), Joseph Masimo (Multicultural friends of the Tasmanian Parliament) and members of staff.



Gayatri's talk was very well received and much interest was shown in her work with the UN. Nearly everyone stayed for a half an hour over the scheduled time. The occasion turned into an acknowledgement of selfless service to the community. It was an open, friendly and respectful atmosphere, uplifting to everyone especially at the time of the sharing of blessings. In the evening there was a public program at the centre where Sr Terry interviewed Gayatri about 'Images and Voices of Hope'. Gayatri explained clearly about the activities of BKs at the UN and gave a meditation commentary. The program was attended by 23 people, mostly professionals and half of whom were new to the centre.

Canberra, Wednesday 6 August

Sr Gayatri did a bit of sightseeing and had a rakhi program at the centre for about 37 people. She linked her UN experience with the festival of rakhi being that of universal brotherhood and it was very well received.

Sydney, 7-10 August

Gayatri and Tara took a three hour bus trip from Canberra to Sydney and did a little sightseeing on arrival. On Thursday night there was a rakhi program at Ashfield centre for about 18 people including a few tying rakhi for the first time. Sr Gayatri gave a lovely talk about the bond between brother and sister.



On Friday morning she attended and spoke at the funeral of dear brother Anthony Strano. The funeral was held in a Catholic church at the school that Anthony attended, in a northern suburb of Sydney.

In the afternoon Sr Gayatri saw a bit more of the city and then stayed the night at Ashfield centre.

On Saturday morning there was morning class and rakhi for about 60 BKs at Toongabbie in Sydney's west, which is largely the Tamil speaking BK community. On Saturday night another rakhi program was held for BKs at the retreat centre at Wilton.


On Sunday morning there was a BK memorial gathering for Br Anthony, attended by his mother, siblings and other family members. Br Sotiris had also come from Athens for Anthony's funeral and memorial.

Sunday afternoon Gayatri went to the Blue Mountains retreat centre where there was another rakhi program on Sunday night. She stayed overnight and after a little sightseeing in the morning, proceeded to the airport for a flight one hour north to the Gold Coast.




Leaving Ashfield centre

The Power of Truth



BRAHMA-KUMARIS
AUSTRALIA



with Sister Gayatri Naraine

*Love is a gift that pours out from a true heart.
One whose heart is true, experiences a happiness which cannot be
compromised by anyone.*

Wednesday 13 August

7pm for meditation
Brahma Kumaris Australia
347 Milton Road Auchentorrie

Bookings:
T - 3368 2391 or
E - brisbane@au.brahmakumaris.org

Sister Gayatri was born in Guyana and currently lives in New York City. Since 1980 she has been the Brahma Kumaris' representative to the United Nations in New York.
Sister Gayatri currently serves on the board of directors of Images and Voices of Hope. IVOH is about amplifying the best in human nature and whenever possible, shining a light on the steps we can take towards the future we want.

This event is offered free of charge. Contributions are welcome.

Gold Coast, Monday 11 August

After a beautiful Rakhi evening, Gayatri was introduced to each Gold Coast BK and guest personally, and in her friendly and loving manner she shared some inspirations for their spiritual life. The following day we took Gayatri and Tara for a walk along a beach, where they soaked up the sunshine and ocean vibes. Afterwards we shared a picnic lunch at beautiful Botanic gardens, before driving to Brisbane. Gayatri's lightness and easiness and her ability to share deep knowledge left everyone feeling inspired and happy.

Brisbane, 12-13 August

In Brisbane Rakhi was, of course, a powerful highlight for around 40 souls. The following day Gayatri and Tara enjoyed a relaxing catamaran journey along the Brisbane River with local BKs, which included a stop off at historic New Farm Park. In the evening 35 public attended the Centre where Gayatri was interviewed on "The Power of Truth". Gayatri and Tara left Australia early next morning for a long flight back to the US.