

Oneness-Blessings
from the
Christian World



Printed by:
Agni Press
84-47 Parsons Blvd.
Jamaica, New York 11432
June 1987

(ii)

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INTRODUCTION

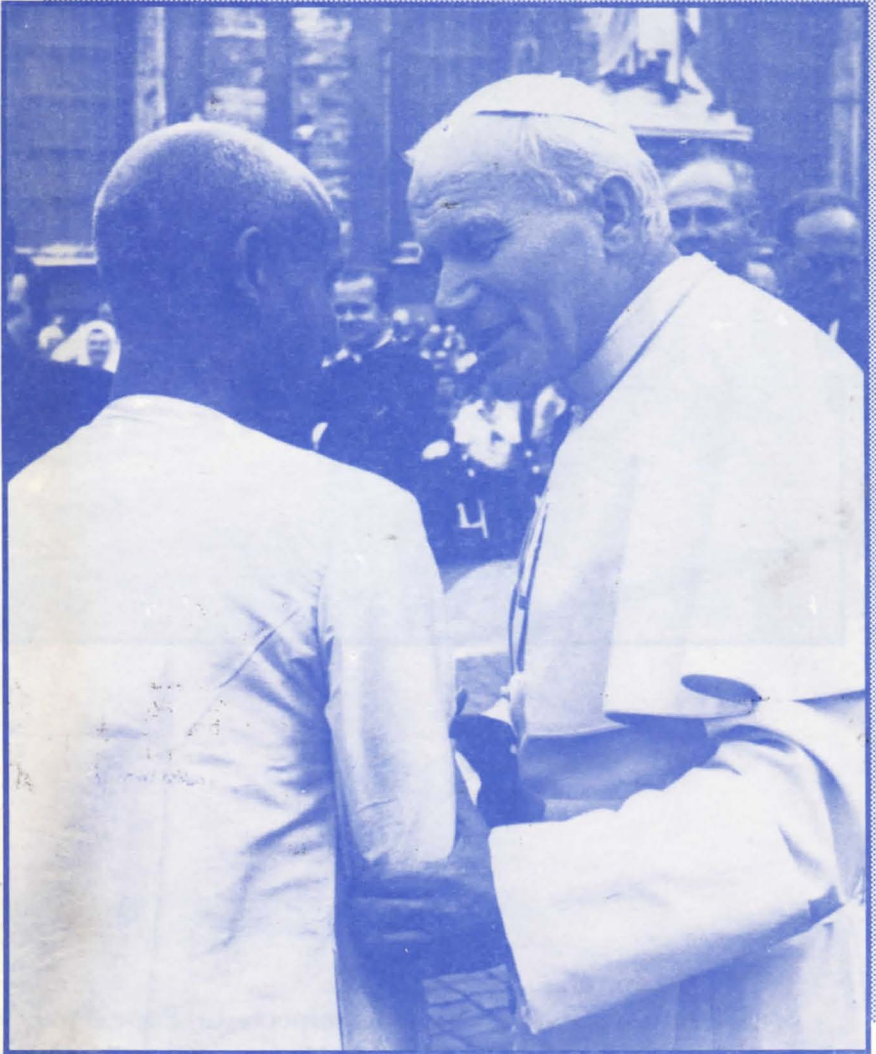
At a time when religious beliefs provoke turmoil and divisiveness in the world more often than harmony and love, spiritual teacher Sri Chinmoy has been striving to promote unity and global awareness among the world's religions. Although he was raised in a Hindu family, his philosophy is that of a universal truth-seeker and peace-lover. He feels that just as each person lives in his or her own home but goes out to work or study in the larger world, each person, while maintaining the traditions of a particular religion, can also actively support a universal spirituality upon which world peace must eventually be founded.

In 1974 Sri Chinmoy was interviewed by an Italian priest and nun in Milan. The interview lasted about an hour, during which time the Sister, on behalf of the Italian-speaking priest, asked Sri Chinmoy many questions—about Jesus, about the United Nations, about his path and that of other Masters. When the Sister asked him whether he believed in Jesus Christ, Sri Chinmoy answered, "I have the deepest admiration and adoration for the Christ. Although I was born in India and brought up on the teachings of Krishna, the Buddha and other spiritual Masters, when I studied the Bible, I found that the teachings of the Christ and the teachings of our Indian Masters are the same. This is because God is Truth, God is Love, and Truth and Love are universal."

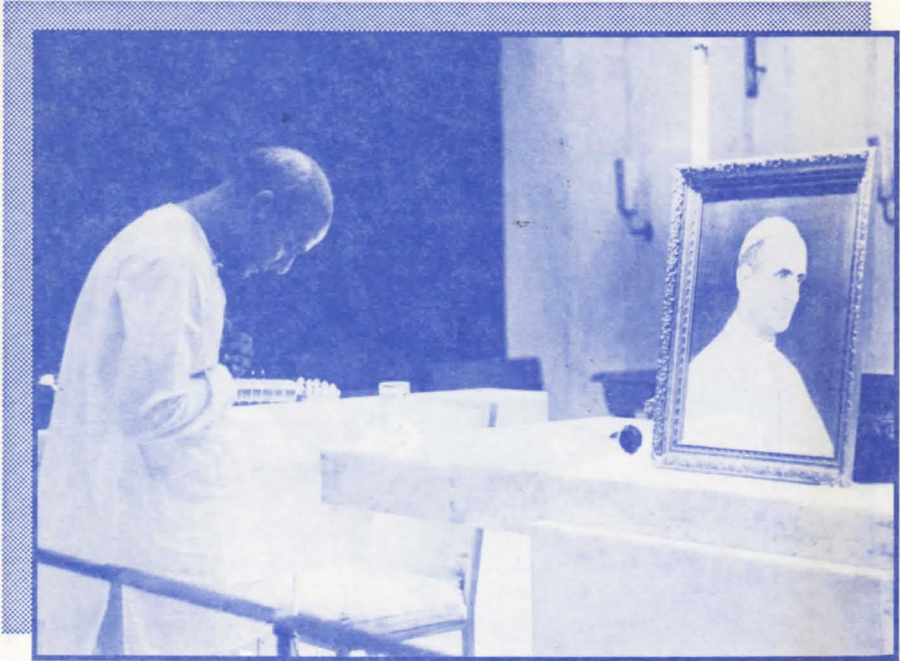
In this spirit of oneness, and because of their sincere desire for peace among people throughout the world, members of the Christian clergy have often supported Sri Chinmoy's work for world peace. This booklet is a collection of some of the words offered by the religious community. Sri Chinmoy treasures these comments as beacon-lights of hope for a world struggling to raise itself from darkness. To each Sister, Priest and Brother he offers a special flower of gratitude.



Pope Paul VI and Sri Chinmoy met one another for the first time on March 22, 1972. "This meeting of ours has been most essential," the Holy Father told the spiritual teacher. "The Hindu life and the Christian life shall go together. Your message and my message are the same. When we both leave this world, you and I, we will meet together." The two religious leaders met on two other occasions, sharing mutual appreciation for their efforts towards world peace. At their last meeting in 1976, Sri Chinmoy presented the Holy Father with a book he had written about him, entitled *Compassion-Father, Champion-Brother, Perfection-Friend*.



Pope John Paul II received Sri Chinmoy with great warmth at a meeting in the Vatican on June 18, 1980. The Holy Father offered his "special greetings" to the members of the meditation group that Sri Chinmoy leads at the United Nations, and concluded the interview by telling Sri Chinmoy, with considerable feeling, "We shall continue together."



Sri Chinmoy offers his deepest respects to Pope Paul VI before his photo at the United Nations Church Centre ceremony.



Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, participated in a ceremony sponsored by the Peace Meditation at the United Nations on September 23, 1977 in honour of the eightieth birthday of Pope Paul VI.

Archbishop Cheli addressed the members at the special program in this way:

“Your intentions and your work in this beautiful Meditation Group under the leadership of this highly respected master of spirituality, Sri Chinmoy, are in harmony with those of the Pope. He will be, therefore, especially happy to receive your greetings on this occasion because he will appreciate the spiritual unity that you share.”



Msgr. Thomas Hartman, Director of Radio and Television for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, spoke at a Peace Meditation program at the United Nations on November 21, 1983. "The need for us to communicate, the need for what you are doing, is so vital. It may appear to be just symbolic to many, but I think it is more than symbolic. It is real."

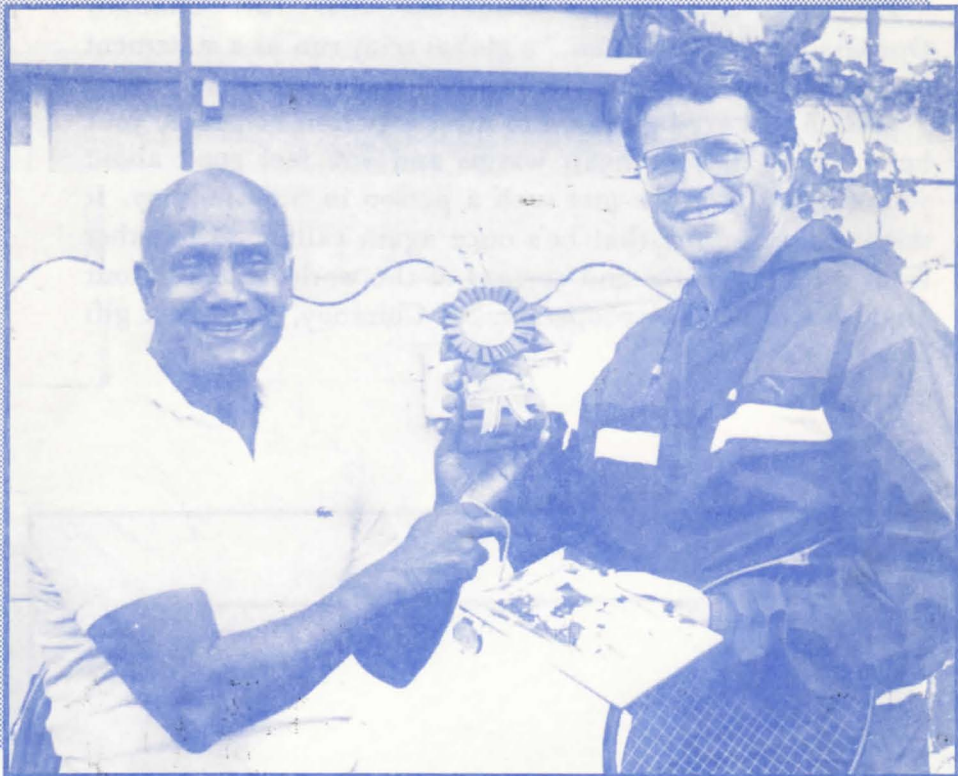
In November 1983 Sri Chinmoy was interviewed by Msgr. Hartman on his television show, "Outreach." They enjoyed a second interview in March of 1987 on his latest Telicare program, "To the Point." Their discussion about prayer and meditation highlighted the fact that spirituality at its highest level is simple and heart-centered—and thus goes beyond the boundaries of different religions.

Sri Chinmoy answered one of the interview questions with this message: "I come from the Hindu family, and perhaps you come from the Christian family. Although we live in two different houses, we can always come together to share our ideas and ideals, for together we will be of greater service to aspiring mankind."

Following a discussion about the 1987 "Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run," a global relay run as a statement for world peace, Msgr. Hartman had this to say:

"When you are privileged to meet a person of peace, your heart expands, your heart warms and you feel good about yourself and life. I've met such a person in Sri Chinmoy. It doesn't surprise me that he's once again calling us together from different faiths and corners of the world to realize our oneness and need to cooperate. Sri Chinmoy, you are a gift from God."



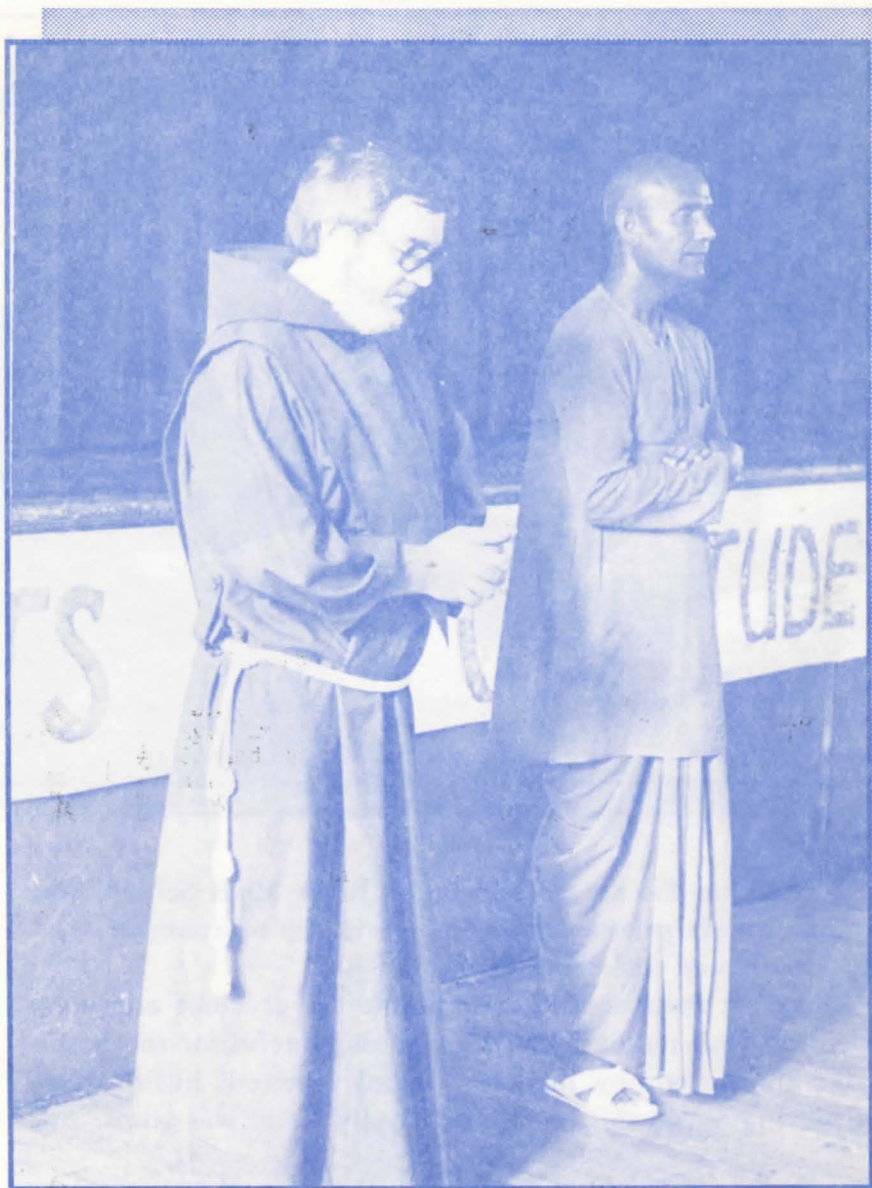


He who is responsible for blue skies and golden sun blessed the afternoon of October 28, 1986, for the first annual Sri Chinmoy Tennis Tournament for Priests. Msgr. Thomas Hartman, Director of Communication and Television for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, received a special award for his inspiring level of performance on the court.



Father Jim Fischer, President of Regis High School, was among the six priests who competed in the tournament, and he commented to Sri Chinmoy:

“Pleasant surprise is my reaction to the gracious afternoon spent on your tennis court. I am most grateful for the hospitality and the trophy, medal and book received. In fifty years of playing tennis this is the first trophy I ever was given.”



Brother Charles Murphy and Sri Chinmoy pray together in silence for world peace.

“Sri Chinmoy in Concert”—a musical tribute to New York State—was held August 5, 1979, in Albany’s historic Palace Theatre. Brother Charles Murphy, a Franciscan friar at St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church in Albany, had seen posters announcing the concert and invited Sri Chinmoy and his students to rest and refresh themselves at the church before their long journey home. Brother Murphy counsels musicians and practices meditation himself; thus his interest in Sri Chinmoy’s meditative music.

Brother Murphy’s welcome to Sri Chinmoy and his students follows:

“I am genuinely and sincerely honored to have Sri Chinmoy here at St. Patrick’s. While this has been the first opportunity that I have ever had to meet Sri Chinmoy, I have been an admirer from afar. I personally feel that the history of religion and spirituality of America, when it is written, will have a very important place for Sri Chinmoy.

“For those from the Capital District, I might say as both a Catholic priest and a member of our own Bishop’s Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, very definitely the Catholic Church supports your participation in the spirituality of Sri Chinmoy. Allow me to read from a very beautiful statement that was drawn up at the second Vatican Council:

For all peoples comprise a single community, and have a single origin, since God made the whole race of men dwell over the entire face of the earth (Acts 17:26). One also is their final goal: God. His providence, His manifestations of goodness, and His saving designs extend to all men (Wis. 8:1; Acts 14:17; Rom. 2:6-7; 1 Tim. 2:4) against the day when the elect will be united in that Holy City ablaze with the splendor of God, where the nations will walk in His light (Apoc. 21:23).

Thus in Hinduism men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through an unspent fruitfulness of myths and through searching philosophical inquiry. They seek release from the anguish of our condition through ascetical practices or deep meditation or a loving, trusting flight toward God.*

*Abbott, Walter: Documents of Vatican II. Excerpts from the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

“Unfortunately, those words are very, very seldom proclaimed and spread abroad, and very, very little understood. I would hope that people such as you who have tasted from experience of that higher consciousness—of that Divinity Who is within us all and Who is the end and goal of us all, Who is our only source of eternal happiness—I would hope that you who have had that taste and live in the sun will return and share that light and that radiance with all who come into contact with you.

“In the future, whenever you return to Albany, you’re always welcome here at St. Patrick’s. It will be our privilege and our honor. I do hope that when I come to New York I’ll be able to stop by your Centre.”



After his Peace Concert performance at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, Sri Chinmoy warmly greets Father Peter Mann. Father Mann commented, "Sri Chinmoy's music creates an atmosphere for deep closeness with God."

The two men first met when Father Mann interviewed Sri Chinmoy on his television show, "East Meets West," aired on nationwide Catholic television. This show was also used for an adult education program by the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York.

Brother Seraphim, a member of an order of Brothers in Los Angeles under Papal jurisdiction, has been an admirer of Sri Chinmoy's philosophy for several years. He described his feelings after hearing a concert by Sri Chinmoy:

"Meditation from the heart and music of the heart and soul bring us peace and joy. This is what Sri Chinmoy's life journey means to me. Sri Chinmoy's quietness of peace and his presence and deeds bring peace to the hearts of men and women he meets, and this is where peace begins. Peace and oneness are the basis of this age of ecumenism and heart's openness, and this is what Sri Chinmoy offers to all of us."

* * * * *

Father Edward Lavin, a Jesuit priest who teaches art and meditation at Regis High School, has been supportive and inspiring to students of Sri Chinmoy who wish to share his philosophy of meditation with those in the Catholic community who are interested in expanding their ability to "listen to God." A group meets weekly at St. Ignatius Loyola Church in Manhattan for meditation instruction, followed by a half hour of silent meditation for world peace. Father Lavin has said, "Sri Chinmoy has worked with great zeal over a number of years to bring about an ecumenical understanding between East and West. He is received in many Christian circles with gratitude and love."

* * * * *

Rev. Thomas E. Ahlburn, Senior Minister at the First Unitarian Church of Providence, RI, kindly offered Sri Chinmoy the use of his church for a concert of music for meditation. It was the beginning of a warm friendship that has lasted for many years. Rev. Ahlburn made the following comments after hearing a tape of Sri Chinmoy's piano music:

"I felt immense awe while listening to Sri Chinmoy's recent piano meditations. I find that when I am served this way by Guru an almost painful longing in me for something not unlike God's great playful dance, God's infinite sound and boundless love, is given exquisite expression and sweet release. And it seems to go on and on endlessly and I do not ever want it to stop. I sense that it is endless, that it will never stop. Flowers of light bloom above and below and within me; all things become at once most vivid but also wonderfully transparent. This is to hear the music of creation lovingly and openly and without any hint of mere self-expression. Creation praises its Master and is therefore perfect. Immense awe and love returned for love so freely given. May all beings find the Guru's love and grace.



Sri Chinmoy offers his gratitude to Rev. Ahlburn following the concert at his church.

Sister Marion Irvine, outstanding U.S. masters marathoner, expressed her joy at Sri Chinmoy's weightlifting achievements (by the end of 1986 he had already lifted 700 pounds and went on to lift $7,063\frac{3}{4}$ pounds with one arm in January 1987):

"O my God, I think that's great, absolutely great! It's that determination. It takes so much courage and set determination to do what he's done. It will serve as an inspirational force for many others. To hear this buoys me up because I've had a running injury this year and to see someone approach a whole new field with so much determination really, really inspires me."





Sister Marion, also referred to as the “Flying Nun” by news media for her outstanding running ability, recently commented on Sri Chinmoy’s piano music:

“What an intriguing piece, hardly what I expected for meditation-music! What incredibly high energy! It must be so exhausting just to play. The piece was so masterfully executed. Sri Chinmoy struck every note with such great force and precision.

“I must say, it’s what I’ve come to expect from the Master Sri Chinmoy. One comes to expect that everything he does will be done masterfully, in keeping with everything else he does. He has played with such power like the true master he is.

“I have heard Sri Chinmoy’s very haunting flute music at the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team’s races. The memory of it has always stayed with me.

“I would very much like to use Sri Chinmoy’s piano and flute music in the convent where the nuns take turns guiding the group in prayer and meditation. I would also like to use it in the convent for the Sisters’ private prayer and meditation session. It would help them enter into a more silent state of prayer.”

Sister Mary Joan, a Sister of the Divine Compassion from Good Counsel Convent, sent a message to Sri Chinmoy when he transcended himself in his weightlifting endeavours:

"Congratulations, Sri Chinmoy!" Rumor has it that you continue to find new ways to develop the powers with which the Creator has so richly endowed you. We can't run in your footsteps or lift weights, but we can recall the Easter morning you spent with us expanding our Judeo-Christian concept of a God who gives life. We all join you in running toward the Lord in our life's journey and in lifting burdens from heavy hearts that all may know that our God is a God of Compassion. Congratulations from all of us!"

* * * * *

Sister Mary Rita, Mother Superior of the Carmelite Sisters in St. Catherines, Ontario, was kept informed of Sri Chinmoy's weightlifting progress during the months it took him to reach his latest feat of lifting $7,063\frac{3}{4}$ pounds with one arm. She was constantly amazed by his fast progress, and her response was:

"O my word! I certainly do offer him my congratulations. But more than that, from his wonderful books and writings I feel that he is a gift to the world at this time—that such a man of prayer exists."

* * * * *

When Sri Chinmoy presented a gift of his first 300 books to the Library of the Harvard Divinity School, Peter Oliver, Librarian of the Andover-Harvard Library, said, "To have the presence of your own outpourings and your own understandings among us, I hope, will open the hearts of many of our students to learning and to new understandings."

On that same occasion there was an exhibition of Sri Chinmoy's paintings, called *Jharna-Kala* ("Fountain-Art"), and Dr. Krister Stendahl, Dean of the Harvard Divinity School, commented, "Your gift to Harvard Divinity School seems to me to be another and significant piece in that wonderful puzzle of the totality of human religion. . . . I see this Fountain-Art of yours, I feel it is beautiful and it might be the beauty of holiness. Therefore we are very graced."



(From left): Dr. Krister Stendahl, Dean of the Harvard Divinity School and Mr. Peter Oliver, Librarian of the Andover-Harvard Library of the Harvard Divinity School.



Professor Ralph Lazzaro, Director *Emeritus* of Language Studies at Harvard Divinity School, translated poems by Sri Chinmoy into Latin. In his introduction to this book, entitled *Simplicitas Cordis*, he describes his first reaction upon receiving a book of Sri Chinmoy's poems:

"This simply *must* be put into Latin! The poems are beautiful in their simplicity and profound in their significance. Latin is a concise language and it seems a natural medium in which to convey the directness of Sri Chinmoy's poetry."

*Unicum nostrum officium
Beate vivere est.
Ad hoc requiritur
Sicut sancti vivere
Et fieri sicut parvuli.*

There is only one duty,
And that duty is to live happily.
To live happily
What we need is a child's heart
And a saint's life.

*Noli timere.
Potentiam propriam nemo habet.
Solummodo Deus potens est,
Cuius Potentia
Aliter vocatur Amor
Numquam qui dormit,
Semper qui vigilat.*

Have no fear.
Nobody has any power of his own.
Only God has power,
And His Power is another name
For His Love, sleepless Love.



Leaders from six of the world's major religions participated in a program at the Church Center for the United Nations in honor of the National Day of Prayer, proclaimed by President Ford, July 24, 1975. Sri Chinmoy presided, opening the meeting with silent prayer, and then inviting leaders representing Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Baha'i groups to offer their prayers for world peace.

Sri Chinmoy leads the opening meditation at a Spiritual Summit Conference at the United Nations, sponsored by the Temple of Understanding on October 24, 1975, before Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim delivers the opening remarks. Among those seated on stage is Mother Theresa.



In 1973 Sri Chinmoy wrote *The Son*, a play about the life of Jesus. It was performed by his students in the New York area and Canada in 1974 at over 30 churches. He himself has performed a highly moving solo dramatization of several scenes. The Kettledrum Theatre Company of London has taken the play and polished their performance to a professional standard. They have performed it at the United Nations during an American tour and also throughout Europe, with an enthusiastic response.

There have been over 50 performances of *The Son* in churches and religious departments of universities in Great Britain.

Brother Daniel, a Roman Catholic member of the Westminster Interfaith Group, went to see *The Son* performed by students of Sri Chinmoy. Following is his reaction. "I was impressed that before and after the play the performers formed a circle and prayed. I was also impressed that the students made such a devoted effort to put on a play about Jesus. It was meaningful, and reminded me of my own way of putting the gospel across through plays. Through the visual the message can reach many people.

"Sri Chinmoy's insights into the life of Jesus are surprising. The interpretations are deeper than many thoughts expressed in some Christian books."

When Martin Grubb, leader of the Quaker Hall in Ealing, saw *The Son*, he immediately invited the group to return for a second performance. He said, "How nice it was how we enjoyed getting together with other groups to see Jesus through the eyes of others from a different religious tradition. The fellowship between Sri Chinmoy's group and the Quakers was most valuable, and it was this play, *The Son*, that made that possible."

The Radius Drama Group, which is the drama wing of the Church of England, attended a performance of *The Son*. One of the members commented, "After the play was performed, I felt a spiritual atmosphere more than in any play I had *ever, ever* seen."

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