

It is with pleasure that I present the 2020 chairperson's report to the community members and committee of Santi Forest Monastery.

There is no other way to say it... "2020 has been a wild year". Beginning with an unprecedented bushfire threat to the Monastery and surrounds, then the COVID pandemic and its ensuing restrictions, and the news that our Monastic leadership will be transitioning over the next year or so. Then there was the bushfire clean up, including funding submissions and works undertaken. It is with great appreciation that I thank Ayya Jitindriya and Ayya Jayasara for their hard work and commitment to keeping the monastery functioning.

The Santi Forest Monastery Management Committee has met four times this year, mostly online. The dominant committee business involved the development of a child protection framework (policy and procedure), and the ongoing management of Santi's financials. Ayyas Jitindriya and Jayasara dealt with the development of covid-safe observances at the Monastery as the year unfolded.

I would like to thank committee member Melanie James for her extensive work on the Child Protection Framework. Although Santi is a low risk organisation it is important that we have, and implement, the framework to not only be compliant but to also protect under all circumstance the children and young people of our community. The framework is now in place across the organisation.

Our financials too are in a solid position. Although the monastery has had fewer visitors this year the generosity of our community members has continued (financially, through dana and work support), and the year's financial position ended in a positive place. Details can be found in the Treasurer's report, however here I would like to thank the continued support of the local communities and individuals. It is this generosity that keeps the monastery viable. Of course, it can also be noted that general expenses were less as a result of the monastery closures. A big thankyou to our treasurer Dhasha, for his continued hard work and expertise in keeping our financial records in order. And thanks also to our previous Treasurer, Ranjan De Silva, for his help to Dhasha at key reporting times.

It is with sadness that we have been told of Ayya Jitindriya's and Ayya Jayasara's intention to change their living circumstances for a quieter, more contemplative, and less physically demanding environment in the coming year. Having watched from afar for the last 12 months, it is clear why they have made this decision. As a committee we all understand the enormous workload of managing such a big environmentally challenging site, (their decision also taking into account some evolving health restrictions). A very deep bow of gratitude for all their hard work and all they have done for the monastery over the past three years. It is wonderful news that Ayya Hasapanna and the Western Australian nuns are keen to come to Santi and continue to develop the nuns' community here, and we look forward to working with them.

The monastery was definitely protected by good karma during the bushfire season and although there was damage to the grounds and surrounding forest from extensive back burning operations the monastery buildings were dominantly unscathed. A big thankyou to all that have continued to help with the clean up as a result of the bushfires.

Covid 19 of course has meant a quiet year for visitors. So far, all of Australia has been fortunate in this respect. Our hearts go out to all communities across the world, all those suffering personally, in their families and friendship circles, all those leaders navigating such a difficult time and we wish them health and ease.

Finally, I would like to thank all committee members for their continued support in the management of Santi. Although the job is not onerous, I am grateful that you are all willing to take on the role.

With kind regards,

Jennifer Smith (Chairperson 2020)