

[RK Mission Unveils Handsome New Temple in South Africa](#)

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The Ramakrishna Center of South Africa had the official opening of its Ramakrishna Temple atop a hill in a naturally wooded area in August. It is the realization of the late Swami Sivapadananda's dream, an architectural wonder. Coming close on the heels of the World Hindu Conference, this event seems to have continued the spirit of Hinduism. A powerful aura engulfed the entire complex as mantras were chanted in the shrine and disseminated via strategically placed speakers.

The three-day event began on Friday evening with a havan ceremony at 6:30. Fifteen-hundred devotees, wellwishers and revered swamis attended this session. On Saturday some 2,000 people felt the grace of Sri Ramakrishna as they sat through the two-and-half-hour consecration ceremony. The finely carved marble murthi of Sri Ramakrishna was formally installed in its shrine, behind which is a large painting of a tree. The ceremonies were concluded by the repetition of "Om Sarva Deva Devi Swaroopaya Sri Ramakrishnaya, Swahah" mantra 108 times by all present.

Swami Premananda, in delivering his speech, saw the project as a "dream come true" for the now late Swami

Sivapadananda, spiritual head of the center. He clarified the misconceptions that Hindus are idol worshippers. "While there is an image that we focus on, something special happens. We have a special view that behind every perception is the reality. We worship the consciousness that permeates the idol," he added.

Swami Krishnaroopananda impressed upon his listeners the significance of building this temple. "It's done in the service of the master," was his message. In highlighting the importance of worship in a temple rather than in the home, Swami used the metaphor of a cow. While the milk is contained in the cow, access to it is only through the udders. Similarly, God is omnipresent, but in order to realize His presence one goes to the temple.

This event climaxed on Sunday with a capacity crowd of 3,000 people packed into a large hall. Adelaide Tamo's speech on the "Role of Religion in a Pluralistic Society" did more than justify the capacity attendance.