





CHAPTER THREE

The Rising of the Sun

SANYAS

SANYAS IS THE OFFICIAL RENUNCIATION OF WORLDLY ATTACHMENTS, TIES, EXPECTATIONS, AND TEMPTATIONS AND AN OFFICIAL DECLARATION OF THE SURRENDERING OF EVERY CELL OF ONE'S BEING, EVERY MINUTE OF ONE'S LIFE, EVERY OUNCE OF ONE'S

energy to the service of God and humanity. "Idam Namamah," not for me, but for You. Not for me, but for You. Nothing I have, nothing I know, nothing I can do, nothing I achieve or attain or receive is for me. It is all for You.

Although Muniji's path had been laid on the day that Pujya Swami Brahmaswarupji touched him on the forehead (and, perhaps, had been laid the moment his soul selected Matashri's womb in which to take birth), the official embarkation upon the life of *sanyas* is taken at the *diksha* (initiation) ceremony. Twelve years after taking vows of *brahmacharya*, one is eligible for *sanyas*, in the Shankaracharya lineage.

Mahashivratri is a day on which Hindus across the world abstain from food and stay awake all night in meditation on the element of the Divine that destroys what is old and impure to make room for new birth. It is a day on which, despite the infrequency of rain in the dry winter, Ganga invariably falls from the sky. It was on this day in 1975 that Sant Narayan Muni received the saffron garb of a *sanyasi*, the cloth dyed to resemble the color of the setting and rising sun, to resemble the color of fire. Pujya Swamiji explains.

The sun gives and gives, with no hesitation, no discrimination, no expectation, and no vacation. The sun never says, "I am too tired to rise today. I think I'll take a day off." Nor does she say, "You haven't

OPPOSITE Pujya Swamiji in the mid-1970s, shortly after being officially initiated into *sanyas* by Pujya Swami Dharmanandji.