

Hari OM
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"O *Bhagirathi!* He who is purified by a mere look from the corner of Thine eyes, which have looted the charm of the blooming blue lotus, indeed, he comes to live in boundless peace"

Source: *Hymn to Ganga*

"When sensuous *vasanas* are eliminated, the mind calms. Such a serene mind of peaceful thoughts is called a pure mind. . . . Through study of the scriptures, devotion to the Lord, reverence to Mother Divine, when the mind's agitations calm themselves, the devotee experiences boundless Peace, or *nirantah-shanti*."

Source: Commentary on *Hymn to Ganga*

"It is a paradox that the Self is ever-present, but is veiled by ignorance and impurities of the mind. When we study the scriptures, we understand that the happiness we seek in life is not somewhere outside, but is our own true nature. However, we are still unable to abide in that realization. Our problem, therefore, is not a lack of knowledge, but a lack of adherence to that knowledge. When we do not abide in this Self-knowledge, our state becomes most unenviable. Though we are aware that our nature is pure bliss, we still suffer. When we were unaware of this fact and suffered, it was understandable, but when we know the Truth and are still sorrowful, it is much worse!"

Source: *Manah Sodhanam*

SPIRITUAL TRAILS

Integrity: The Secret of Success

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Reprinted from Truth, Mananam Series

The will to face the challenges we encounter is born out of our own courage of conviction. There are many dreamers, but few who realize their dreams. There are many chair-side inventors, but few who bring their inventions into reality. Most of us, at the mere suggestion of a challenge to our ideas, fall readily victim to the challenge and are ready to compromise. The lives of all great people reveal to us that the basic necessity for the development of a strong will is the ability to live up to one's intellectual convictions and to act in harmony with them. When we live in the spirit of our intellectual convictions, we live in truthfulness (*satyam*).

[For example,] Margaret decides that she will dedicate all her free hours to help clean up the environment—to support the ecological health of her community. She begins to lobby the local organizations and to work with her colleagues in trying to get enough money raised and petitions signed to help put a major ecological issue on the next ballot. However, the local industries, with much to lose if the new legislation goes through, wage a major battle against the activists and succeed in publishing a series of inflammatory articles about the activist group, smearing their reputation in the eyes of the public. Margaret, convinced of the loftiness of her goal, does not allow this unfair attack to dishearten her and continues to fight vigorously for her ideal.

Only the intellect has the capacity to keep our values and ideals in place despite all external challenges. When we allow our ideals to be broken by our own weakness of mind, we compromise and end up living a life of dishonesty (*asatyam*). When we thus compromise our convictions, we form a split in our personality, becoming cowardly in the face of further challenges in life.

The secret of success in life lies in keeping the head above the storms of the heart (the mind). A successful person never allows his discrimination and judgment to be disturbed by the rising tides of his emotions. When emotions and impulses start dictating our actions, we sink to the level of animals.

Living Up to Our Ideals

We must be ready to consider and reconsider an ideal for a thousand times if necessary, and in light of all the evidence available, accept or reject it. But once we accept an ideal as ours, we must discover in ourselves the heroism to live up to it at all times. This is called truthfulness—the source of the will and the courage to act upon our deepest convictions.

The most important trait in an eminent, successful person's life is integrity—an inflexible, undaunted, and firm integrity or truthfulness at all levels of activity. Once an individual has developed in himself an indomitable integrity, he finds that he is the master of every challenge and every situation. And as others observe his efforts, they see in him a self-assurance that is both captivating and rewarding.

A person of integrity is accepted, believed, trusted, and befriended by all. To attract to oneself such genuine attitudes from others is to create and assure a vibrant environment for great undertakings and, with others' ready help, even for spectacular successes. Integrity is a personal asset for any person, in any field.

The nobility inherent in integrity is rooted deep in the quality and beauty of our intentions. If the spring of our thoughts is pure and if we have the heroism to live unflinchingly the great ideals we believe in, however impractical and utopian they may seem, even if immediate failures confront us, we will still have cultivated integrity, our great inner treasure. Thus, with each apparent failure, with each insurmountable obstacle, with each moment of social criticism, or even with merciless ridicule

endured, we steel our nobility and reinforce our determination to live the honorable life, consistent with our ideal. Guided by such determination, our personality unfolds in glowing poise.

Such individuals alone are the true evolvers; all others are mere adapters. Adapters compromise at every turn, with every circumstance, ever struggling to readjust to the changing pattern of challenges. They may struggle on, helpless slaves to their habits, but they will never command the world to march to the appointed goal chosen by their own vision. Only a person of integrity has this power over life and its happenings. Naturally, then, integrity is the essential secret of an eminent, successful life.

Boxed Material

Satyam, or truthfulness, is the spirit to govern our intellectual world within. Having gotten some experience from the outer world and having cooked it well in the mind, when it is digested by the intellect into a shapely decision, determination, or conclusion, satyam is the honesty of one's intellectual conviction to act.

The world outside is indeed a great university in which all of us are free students. Nature, every day, moment to moment, gives us a variety of chances to learn through innumerable experiences. Man, provided with an intellect and mind, is the only being who can read and understand this unwritten script of Nature's language. And having thus learnt, man is expected to act up to his own gained wisdom.

But many of us do not, and naturally, we suffer. A majority of us have forgotten the use of our intellect and mind, and through disuse, they have lost their burnished efficiency. Religion, by its insistence on the principle of being truthful to one's own previously gained wisdom, merely emphasizes that we should constantly and consistently exercise our subtle bodies of mind and intellect.

Vedanta: The Original GPS

by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Edited foreword from Vedanta: Swami Chinmayananda,

His Words, His Legacy, part of Mananam's

Chinmaya Birth Centenary Series

In honor of Pujya Gurudev's birth centenary, Chinmaya Mission released the second book in the *Mananam* series, entitled, *Vedanta: Swami Chinmayananda—His Words, His Legacy*. The theme of this book is how Vedanta, as taught by Pujya Gurudev, can transform a person's worldly way of living into a vibrant spiritual life.

In order to transform our lives, we first have to know that spirituality does not lie in doing something special, but in doing everything in a special way. It is more of a vision than an action.

We begin to walk the spiritual path when we first feel the dissatisfaction of living a worldly lifestyle, despite its great achievements and joys. As long as we are happy with the way we live, earn, spend, and enjoy, the question of changing our outlook in life does not arise. Generally, when we experience sorrow, we want to get rid of that sorrow by pursuing another worldly source of joy. But when we realize that the so-called worldly joy is also sorrow, in that it can never make us complete, our spiritual life begins. Thus, the first step toward the spiritual life will be through this dissatisfaction even in the midst of many achievements. From a worldly standpoint, everything will seem to be fine, but the person feels something is missing and no material object, person, or experience seems to be able to fill that emptiness.

If my deep dissatisfaction with worldly life leads me toward a quest for truth and not frustration, then I begin to ask, "When I have achieved all these worldly gains and still I don't feel fully satisfied, then what is the purpose of my life? Who am I? Is this how I should be living—just going on and on? What is

my true nature? What is the truth of my Self?"

One may not be able to verbalize it in these words, but an intense longing develops. And no other thing is able to satisfy that person. He finally says, "I want to know what the truth is—the truth about myself and the world around me." Why the world also? Because both he and the world are here, so how they came to be, and what their relationship is, are to be correctly understood.

Without this longing to know, there is no spiritual life. When there is an intense longing for knowledge, one is not satisfied with attending religious ceremonies, going for an occasional *satsanga*, or reading some spiritual books. Vedantic literature describes this longing as similar to one's hair being on fire. At that time, will the person say he will put out the fire after retirement? That person wants the fire to be put out right away! The longing is so strong that the person thinks, "Moment by moment, my life is passing by and I am not reaching anywhere!" This quest for Self-knowledge, this intense longing to know the truth of this world, is the second step toward living a spiritual life.

The *shastras* say one's longing must transform into inquiry. Inquire until you gather the knowledge, not that you inquire for a few days and then say, "I think that will do." The third aspect of spiritual life is thus the realization that the truth of my own Self, and the truth of this world, are one and the same. At the empirical level, I can call myself "I," an individual, but my essential nature is something very different from this body and these senses. It is different from my *pranas*, mind, intellect, and ego. I am pure Existence, Consciousness, infinite Bliss—*Sat, Chit, Ananda*—this is my *svarupa*, my true nature. This, indeed, is the true nature of this whole world also. Then I realize that the one Self appears as many, that Oneness as my own Self. Then I look upon all beings as my own Self. Unless and until I have that realization of my oneness with all beings, true spiritual life has not even begun. Dissatisfaction, longing for knowledge, Self-inquiry—these are all preparations. Realization is this: The Self in me is the Self of all beings.

What is the result of this realization? The result is seen from two standpoints: (1) with respect to me, the individual, and (2) with respect to the world.

From the personal standpoint, the result is total fulfillment, *krtakrityata* it is called. As the *Gita* says in the last verse of Chapter 15, "Thus, this most secret science (teaching) has been taught by Me, O Sinless One. On knowing this, (a man) becomes wise and all his duties are accomplished, O Bharata." The earlier sense of incompleteness vanishes and there remains nothing more to see, hear, gain, know, or become, for one is complete and totally fulfilled—*purna paramatma*. Thereafter, one just revels in this knowledge, in this bliss, sporting with his own Self. There is nothing more to achieve.

Self-realization with respect to the world is recognizing one's own Self as the Self of all beings. This realization of oneness with all beings results in love for all and hatred for none. There is only love, and that love cannot remain without there being the spirit of service to all people. It had been beautifully said, "Love made visible is work," or love made visible is *seva*. In service, there is no feeling that I am obliging anybody. I am serving myself only, loving my Self. This is the essence.

We are advised to practice all kinds of virtues—love, kindness, service, compassion. The culmination of all these virtues is only in Self-realization. In fact, this truth that we are one with all beings is the foundation of all virtues. When it is said, "Love all," I might ask, Why should I? The answer is, because you are All. Why show compassion? Because you are All. The very basis and foundation for all virtues is this truth of oneness of the Self. Therefore, whenever we practice these virtues of love and kindness, the practice is complete only when it culminates in the realization of Oneness. This is why all these virtues are so natural and spontaneous for the Man of Perfection. If we practice these virtues for material gain, such virtues will not last long. For example, if we practice honesty to gain profit in business, honesty will not remain with us for long. If we can get money by other means, we will say goodbye to honesty.

What is the message of a spiritual life? A spiritual life teaches us to look at life as a whole and to live a

whole life. As we look at our life, we find our vision is fragmented, for we have made many compartments. This is why we are partially successful—a hero in one field, but a zero in other fields.

Look at your life as a whole and live a complete life—this is the message of a spiritual life. The topic is vast. Spirituality is not an activity. If someone says, “Please sing, dance, do some *hatha yoga*,” that can be done because those are particular actions. But if someone says, “Show me honesty for two minutes,” can you do that? Honesty is not an activity. Honesty is the virtue reflected in every thought, feeling, word, and action of the person who is honest. Similarly, spirituality is not a particular activity. One who has attained Self-realization will manifest this realization in every thought and action. There is no more division of, “This is my personal life,” and “This is my business life,” and “That is my public life.” A Self-realized person’s whole life is spiritual. It is whole.

REFLECTIONS

A Prescription for Painless and Efficient Recovery by Swamini Shivapriyananda

Swamini Shivapriyananda (CM Toronto) underwent surgery on August 28, 2012 for the removal of a tumor. During her recovery, she offered her thanks to Mission members worldwide: “My wholehearted love and gratitude for your prayers and good wishes. God bless you all.” As an expression of gratitude, she composed a prescription for all surgery patients—spiritual ones, in particular.

- Countless prayers, communal and individual, poured from hearts filled with devotion
- Timely application of the modern advancements of medical science
- Ample care and support from medical professionals
- When applicable, individual doses of support from homeopathy, naturopathy, as well as sympathy
- Carefully measured and timely administered doses of organized support in the form of selfless *seva*, offered 24/7
- Total surrender to the Lord, for He knows what is best
- Infinite grace and guidance from the Guru

Krishna Meets Swamiji by Anjali Singh

Krishna was staring at us from a stall of brass idols in the famous narrow streets of Vrindavan. It was *Janamashtami* eve in 1961. “Pick me up!” he seemed to say, and I just had to do it. That night we did not stay in Vrindavan, so the birth of Krishna from out of His cardboard box prison happened at midnight in the car on the way back to Delhi.

My mother, my aunt, and Mata Brahmajyoti-ji were in the car with Krishna, who was about to take birth. It was dark outside with no street lighting on the road that connects India’s east to its west. We kept singing *bhajans* until midnight and then He was brought into this world by Mataji, a great yogi saint. She and Pujya Gurudev had known each other from their early *sannyasa* days. Her Guru, Avadhuta Om Asharam Maharaj, and Param Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj were two contemporary

spiritual luminaries of Uttarkashi at that time. It is said that saints, *rishis*, and *munis* gather when and where the Lord incarnates.

Krishna was taken that night across Grand Trunk Road to New Delhi, where He spent His childhood with me. In 1964, when He was three years old, a momentous event took place. Swamiji [Pujya Gurudev] paid his first visit ever to our home for *bhiksha*. He went up to my room and Krishna looked at him in awe, with eyes wide open. Swamiji immediately named Him, "The Great Witness."

"He is the great witness of all that is happening around," Swamiji said. Swamiji and Krishna had both come into my life in 1961 within the same month. The Guru came first in July, and the Lord incarnated in August, but their meeting occurred only two years later, on that day of Krishna's naming ceremony. Swamiji also fed Krishna and thus marked His first rice-eating ceremony.

We had prepared quite a feast for Swamiji in Krishna's honor. It was not *chappan bhog* (the feast of 56 dishes served to Indian royalty), but an array of Indian and continental food had been laid on the 12-person dining table in buffet style.

My mother and I had no idea how to serve Swamiji. He was sitting in the drawing room. We handed him a plate and asked him to help himself. But he would not get up to do so, so we had the waiter bring all the items to where he was sitting, and watched Swamiji put some pasta on his plate. He then put the baked green beans that had not been de-strung properly. Then, he put servings of various Indian dishes right on top of whatever was on his plate already. At the end, he mixed all the items into an unappetizing *kicri*. My mother and I looked askance at each other.

While Swamiji ate on his lap, he also separated the green beans with his hands and teeth! We did not realize that he was teaching us how not to serve a swami. We thought maybe South Indian swamis eat like that!

From this day onward unfolded the adventurous and unique play of Swamiji and Krishna in the next 30 years of my life.

To be continued . . .

A Clean Pot by Sanjay Patil

Hasten, but slowly, with patience abound.
Light up and burn, but without a sound.

Neither do I remember birth,
nor can I think of death.
Drifting like a lost shadow,
how far did I really go?

I drank all the seven oceans
and pulled up the blanket of skies.
Yet life after life, cold and thirsty,
new silly hopes of dreams still shake me.

To behold Eternity,
my pot needs to be empty.
But is a pot fully clean

if still filled with the need to clean?

What is Vedanta?

by Swami Advayananda

Originally printed in Tapovan Prasad

Vedanta is generally known to be a philosophy of India. Though such an understanding is not wrong, it is vague. What is Vedanta? The Upanishads are Vedanta.

The word *vedanta* is comprised of two parts: *veda* and *anta*. The word *vedanta* is explained in Sanskrit as *vedanam antaha*, literally meaning, "the end of the Vedas."

The Vedas are divided into the following portions:

1. *Mantra* or *samhita*, which contains prayers to the various deities like Indra, Agni, etc.
2. *Brahmana*, which states the rules for the employment of the various hymns of the mantra portion at the various *yajnas*
3. *Aranyaka*, which contains various *upasanas* (contemplations on the deities)
4. The *Upanishads*, which is the philosophical section

Since the Upanishads form the end portion of the Vedas, they qualify for the term "Vedanta." Texts like *Brahma Sutras* and *Bhagavad Gita* are also Vedanta.

The word *antah*, or "end," can also be understood as not merely a section or portion, but that which is conclusive or final. Hence, the word *vedanta* can also mean the conclusive teaching or the *siddhanta* of the Vedas. The final and conclusive teaching of the Vedas is technically called *jiva-brahmaikya*, or the essence of oneness of the individual and the supreme Reality. The Upanishads establish this *jiva-brahmaikya* and hence form Vedanta. Also, since the *Brahma Sutras* of Shri Veda Vyasa, *Smritis* like the *Bhagavad Gita*, commentaries of Shri Adi Shankaracarya on the Upanishads, etc. also deal with the same topic and help us understand it, they are also called Vedanta.

The word Veda also means Scripture; the Vedas form the foundation of *Sanatana Dharma*. The word also means "knowledge," as the word *veda* is derived from the verbal root *vid*, or "to know." Hence, Vedanta can also mean "the end of knowledge," which refers to:

- The end of duality: All knowing presupposes the duality of the knower and the known. The knowledge of oneness (*jiva-brahmaikya*) ends duality.
- The attainment of supreme Bliss or complete happiness: All our pursuits, including that of knowledge, are in search of happiness.

Here “end” indicates fulfillment.

Vedanta thus primarily means the Upanishads. By implication, the study of texts like the *Brahma Sutras* and *Bhagavad Gita* end the realm of duality and lead one to the attainment of supreme Bliss.

Lost in the Forest of Samsara

Talks by Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya on Chhandogya Upanishad;
transcribed by David Brown

Chhandogya Upanishad contains a metaphorical story about a man who, having been tied and blindfolded by thieves and left in a desolate forest, wanders lost and does not know which way leads to home. The man calls out for help, and a passing traveler, hearing his cries, unties him and points out the direction to his village.

What is the forest where this person is lost? The body is the forest. In this forest that is the body, there are all kinds of problems that can arise—in *vata* (wind), *kapha* (phlegm), *pitta* (bile), *dvandva* (dilemma), *duhkha* (suffering), *vaca* (speech). The body is troubled by heat, cold, gas, fat, digestion, infection, and much more. Something is always off somewhere and it is an ongoing condition. Formerly, up to the age of 40, generally the body was fine. Over time, lifestyles and food habits have changed drastically, and now serious illnesses are common even earlier than 40. This body is the forest in which people wander and get lost.

What is the blindfold? People are not able to see that they are not making real progress in life because they are blindfolded by infatuation and delusion. It is like a goat in a herd falls into a well and all the other goats blindly follow the same suit. Without recognizing what they want as individuals, people follow the mainstream. “I will go to school because everyone else is going to school. I will go to college because everyone else is going to college.” The same happens with professions, marriage, housing, children, and so forth. Without inquiring why they follow what they follow and what they get out of it, they live under a blindfold: *Moha patta abhinanda aksha*.

With what ropes are we tied? The ropes of craving for sense objects, seen or unseen. One’s emotional dependence on sense objects of desire is bondage. The beauty of freedom from such bondage was clearly seen in the life of Sant Tukaram Maharaj, the great Indian poet-saint of the 17th century.

Who are the thieves who have taken this person to the forest? Who, or what, has pushed us into the forest of life? Our merits and demerits, or our *karma phalas* (the fruits of our actions), have pushed us into *samsara*.

And what is this person’s feverish assertion in life, and consequential lament? I am the son of so and so. I belong to them and they are mine. I am happy. I am sorrowful. I feel like a dunce. I am the most intelligent. I am a sinner. I am religious because I go to the temple every day. I am so well known and so well respected. I have lost everything. All this talk shows clearly one’s intense identification with body, mind, *pranas*, relatives, friends, objects. Parents often long to complete their unfulfilled desires through their children.

In this manner, he who is lost in the forest is tied by hundreds and thousands of wrong thoughts because he does not know his true identity, and so he keeps shouting in frustration. There comes a time when, through grace and/or the accumulation of merits, that a Guru appears in one’s life. The Guru knows Truth and is free from bondage. Therefore, he alone can untie the person lost in the forest, for he is ever free, abiding in the Truth of “I am *Brahman*, the One without a second.” The

Guru, out of intense compassion, shows the student the flaws of *samsara* (the state of perpetual rebirth). These defects of *samsara* are associated with pain, impermanence, dependence, and dissatisfaction. When a student understands correctly and becomes dispassionate toward the world, he wants to find something higher and looks to the Guru for this teaching.

The moment the Guru gives the knowledge of the Truth to the student, the student is liberated—though it may take time for him to even realize this. The blindfold of ignorance is first removed. Then the Guru gives *upadesha* (instructions) to get established in the truth that the seeker is not a *samsari* (a wanderer in *samsara*), not the body, etc. That the student is *Brahman*. Infinite. Ever free. That all sorrows are related only to the instruments of body and mind, and that the *Atman/Brahman* is not related to or affected by those instruments in any way.

To own up to this Truth is to be free. Abidance in this Truth is true and permanent freedom and peace. This is the poignant meaning of this story.

Chhandogya Upanishad also shows in another chapter how the proper means must be used to acquire knowledge. A student tries different methods of looking, smelling, and touching water to determine if there is salt in the water. But only when the teacher tells him those are the wrong means and tells him to taste the water does the student get immediate knowledge. In the same way, I believe that I am this body only. I may know how healthy my body is, or where it is, or how old it is, but these are all invalid means of knowing who I am. One needs the right means from the right teacher to get right knowledge. What type of teacher is needed? The one who is established in Truth, who has experienced and can reveal the true subtle import of the scriptures. The ready student who learns from and follows the Guru attains liberation.

FEATURES

Shri Hanuman Mastakabhikshekam October 2012
by Anjali Singh

Shri Hanuman Mastaka Abhishekam
Sandeepany Himalayas
Sidhbari, Himachal Pradesh, India
October 10, 2012





In the Heart of India by Subha Varma Pathial

My son, Kapil, and I had an amazing trip this summer that took us into the heart of rural communities in India.

We met a 17-year-old girl who is a little taller than three feet and looks like a toddler because of nutritional issues and health conditions. We met Kanchana, a disabled woman who needs to be carried by her mother even to the bathroom, but who was always smiling and knitting beautiful bags through her hardships.



We went to school in a slum where the teachers bathed, fed, and readied every student they taught! How can I complete this CORD newsletter without talking about these incredible people I met?



CORD Sri Lanka adopted a school in Tharmapuram, Kilinochchi, one of the most war-stricken areas where the primary focus now is survival. CORD takes an extra initiative to help provide education for children in the community. They have started teaching English and providing children with after-school snacks and sports equipment. They are continuously working with the school to continue further development. [See *CMWN's* News section.]

CORD Siruvani continues to promote health. During the last quarter, approximately 1,000 patients were examined and treated for various illnesses along with approximately 150 villagers, who received vaccination against Hepatitis B. They also held an immunization camp for children where around 70 of them received MMR vaccine, and an eye camp where 40 patients were examined and 11 of them were taken for cataract surgery. Read more.

CORD Thamaraiakkam facilitated a state government Farmers' Awareness Camp in Vadhatur. Several government workers from various departments, including agriculture, horticulture, seed quality certification, and revenue, participated and explained various proposed plans to the farmers. The knowledge and expertise received during this training will undoubtedly raise the standards of farming in the area. Read more.

Addressing one of India's largest challenges of nutritional security, CORD Deuladiha's mission is to provide regular access to nutritional food by educating and empowering local farmers. CORD has introduced there the cultivation of the paddy system under the System of Rice Intensification over 20 hectares of land. It has also prompted the paddy system under line transportation on 100 hectares of land manned by 276 farmers. Read more.

Resident *acharya* Swami Kevalananda joined CORD Lathikata and conducted a health awareness program in various villages to help improve the quality of healthcare in rural India. Swamiji educated people on a healthy lifestyle, including proper food habits, hygiene, yoga, *pranayama*, and overall good health. He discussed alternative medicine practices that use local herbs, shrubs, and plants to cure many diseases if applied according to the ayurvedic system of medicine. Swamiji also distributed ayurvedic medicines to ailing patients at no cost. Read

more.



When we hear the accounts of individuals who complete a **CORD Sidhbari** Service Visit, we can feel the tremendous impact CORD has made on the lives of so many. One such group took part in this summer's Service Visit and witnessed CORD Sidhbari's longstanding goal to empower women, children, and the disabled. Seeing such selfless work changed many of them as they realized that true service requires going beyond oneself for the

greater good of all. Read more.

The incredible summer journey of my son and I It started with CORD Siruvani in the village of Thennamanallur, where the CORD program is headed by Dr. Meera Krishna, who received accolades for her selfless service recently by The Hindu (read more). She took us to the medical camp and clinic, where I interacted with CORD health assistants and Kapil taught Bala Vihar children how to draw a portrait.



Later in our travels, we went to Puthur and visited the tribal village of Mullangadu, where we met the three-foot 17-year-old girl with sickle cell anemia. She would initially run and hide, and it took CORD workers a few visits to make her feel more at ease and help her understand that they were well wishers.

Our next adventure was trying to get to Sidhbari, a small town in the foothills of the Dhauladhar Mountains, about six kilometers from Dharamshala and about 15 kilometers from McLeod Ganj, where the 14th Dalai Lama lives. The last time I went there, it was by flight from Delhi to Dharamshala. Well, not any more. Kapil and I had an eventful train ride from Old Delhi to Pathankot in Punjab. CORD Sidhbari received us from Pathankot for the 2-hour ride to the center.



CORD's National Director, Dr. Kshama Metre initiated the Sidhbari Project and was bestowed India's prestigious Padma Shri Award in 2008, in honor of her magnanimous work. It is always an incredible experience to meet and speak with her, to take in her words of wisdom. Recently, she was short-listed as one of the five nominees for the 2012 Guardian International Development Award.



At Sidhbari, I visited the Jhiyol and Sakoh Jatehad village *panchayats* to get a glimpse of CORD's programs and Kapil stayed back at CORD Sidhbari to make Kangra paintings with the hearing impaired youth group and bead necklaces with the disabled children.

Wherever I went—be it a women's group, farmer's group, or a *panchayat* member's house—we were received with tea, mangoes, biscuits, and crackers! We were at a farmer's place looking at his vermin compost when I told him I really could not have any more tea. So, he gestured to his wife and she quickly came offering me a big, full steel tumbler of milk!



Thamaraipakkam is a small village tucked 29 kilometers away from Chennai where CORD activities are headed by P.N. Kannan, a quiet man who becomes particularly eloquent and compassionate as soon as he starts discussing CORD programs and their participants. There, we went to see Pakkam Tailoring

Center, set up by the ladies and young girls trained by CORD. We continued on to the Sivanvoyal and Nelvoy hamlets to talk to the women's self-help groups. There we saw a women's group and a disabled group busy screen printing and making the paper bags that are given out by Chinmaya Publications. Kapil was quite fascinated as he watched and learned how to make the paper bags. It is in Nelvoy that I met Kanchana.



While in India, I also had a chance to discuss and exchange notes with Mona Malkani, administrator of the CORD Head Office in Delhi.

Both Kapil and I came back home with many memories and little trinkets collected from everywhere throughout the trip. We felt blessed to have been able to meet so many incredible people. Someone told me, it's about making a difference in the lives of the people we meet. But I feel it is also about meeting the people who make the difference in so many lives!

Sign up at http://groups.google.com/group/friends_cordusa to receive news and updates from CORD USA.

NEWS

CORD's National Director Nominated for the 2012 Guardian International Development

Achievement Award

Submitted by CORD Sidhbari

Dr. Kshama Metre, National Director of CORD (Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development), is one of five nominees for the 2012 Guardian International Development Achievement Award. Online voting was open September 7- October 7, 2012. The winner will be announced at the Award Ceremony on November 22.

The *Guardian*, a reputed and award-winning UK national newspaper founded in 1821, is in its fourth year of offering this annual award, which aims to celebrate one individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the lives of some of the world's poorest people. The award is supported by Marie Stopes International and run in partnership with Barclays and GSK.

The award is designed to recognize the unsung heroes of international development—from health workers to campaigners, community organizers to teachers. Nominations were welcomed for individuals of any nationality and based anywhere in the world. These are individuals whose work has made a profound contribution to the alleviation of poverty, working above and beyond the call of duty to make a difference. These contributions can be made either directly through their own work or

actions, or indirectly by others using their achievements to improve lives.

The selection of nominees was based on the following criteria:

- The extent to which the nominee's achievements and actions have helped alleviate poverty, either directly or indirectly
- The sustainability of their achievements in terms of longevity, legacy, and impact
- The extent to which the nominee's achievements and actions changed the social situations, public attitudes, structures, or policies that may be behind the direct or indirect poverty of the people affected

Swami Prakashananda Awarded Chaconia Gold Medal by Vaani Ramkhelavan

Swami Prakashananda (CM Trinidad and Tobago) was awarded Trinidad's illustrious Chaconia Gold Medal in September 2012. The Chaconia Medal, Trinidad's second highest national award, is bestowed on only ten or less recipients a year. The award recognizes achievement in social work that promotes community spirit and national welfare through long-term meritorious service in various fields.

Swamiji has tirelessly worked to promote *Sanatana Dharma* throughout the length and breadth of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as various countries abroad. CM Trinidad and devotees worldwide offer Swamiji heartfelt congratulations for this well-deserved, prestigious award.



CORD Sri Lanka Needs Your Help by Gowrie Mahenthiran

With deep thanks for all the support received to date, CORD Sri Lanka continues its inspiring and relentless *seva* in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, Ramboda (plantation sector), and has now expanded its network to the areas of Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, and Vanni. CORD Sri Lanka offers a beacon of hope to those in need of socio-economic help after three decades of war—particularly badly affected and displaced widows, orphans, and single parent families.

Because of generous donors and well-wishers, needy children are provided education, medical care, nutritional meals, and counseling. Women are being encouraged to engage in cottage level income generating projects through the formation of Self-Help Groups. CORD Sri Lanka plans to start teaching programs in English and computer literacy to increase employment opportunities.

CORD Sri Lanka's Executive Director said, "We deeply appreciate every bit of support and thoughtfulness. It has enabled us to expand and continue to help those who are in need through mentoring and support. We want to express our profound and sincere gratitude for every valuable contribution and let everyone know that their compassion and generosity is truly making a difference in the lives of so many people in need."

Education

- Chinmaya Vision Program (CVP): To date, three CVP workshops have been completed by Swami Sivayogananda (CM Madurai) and Swami Ramakrishnananda (CM Nagapattinam), and resident *acharyas*, Brahmachari Jagrat Chaitanya and Brahmacharini Mahima Chaitanya. The workshops were conducted on various topics in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, and Trincomalee, in collaboration with the northern and eastern Directors of Education and Hindu Culture. The workshops were designed for victims of war and greatly appreciated by over 1,500 participants. The resident *acharyas* continue to offer regular CVP teachings on a weekly basis.
- CORD Sri Lanka offers a workshop to teach English to government English teachers and children on a regular basis during weekends and holidays.
- IT Center: CORD Sri Lanka is working on a proposal to establish an IT center to provide under-privileged students computer and Internet literacy. The program would begin with three computers with accessories at an approximate cost of \$3,000.
- Spiritual Education: Weekly Vedanta classes are offered to all ages by the local CM *acharyas*. Limited transportation availability remains a major constraint in Jaffna.

Sponsor a Child

This child sponsorship program helps support the continuing education of vulnerable and poverty-stricken children who have either lost one or both parents. Nearly 100 children are presently being provided school uniforms, study materials, medical care, and health needs such as daily provision of food supplements and vitamins as recommended by doctors.

A three-day residential camp was conducted April 6-8, 2012 in Jaffna, for sponsored children and youth, ages 10-18 years. This "Youth Talent Quest" camp offered competitions in *kolam/rangoli*, art, music, drama, and photography, as well as a fun and memorable picnic. The children enjoyed their time thoroughly and requested similar programs in the future.

A photography exhibition entitled "I Love Jaffna" featured 30 sponsored children's works, and was held in Jaffna August 4-16, 2012. The for sale A4 sized, framed photographs reflected the young artists' imaginations and views of Jaffna.

Water and Sanitation Project

Ariyalai, a fishing village in Jaffna, which was under high security, has now been reopened for residents to move back to their homes. The dilapidated wells and bathrooms need urgent repairs. In most cases, new wells have to be constructed. CORD is collaborating with an International Fund to start a pilot project in Ariyalai and later hopefully extend to the Ullavanoor village in Kilinochchi.

Socio-Economic Development

For socio-economic development, CORD Sri Lanka is presently focused on self-employment opportunities and livelihood sustainability (e.g., home gardening, cash crops, and animal husbandry) at cottage level. Some activities, such as cow breeding, have been halted due to high purchase costs and low funds.

Women's Self-Help Groups

Empowering women to make them participants and benefactors in nation building is the aim of the

Self-Help Groups (SHG). The programs help develop leadership, self-confidence, social awareness, good health and hygiene, and offer psychological counseling to the emotionally traumatized. The availability of educational materials, resources, trained volunteers, and funds are some of the challenges faced.

There are 24 SHGs in Batticaloa, 23 in Jaffna and Kilinochchi, and 4 in Ramboda. Each group consists of 10-35 members who are engaged in cottage industries, such as preparation and packaging of food items, weaving bags from Palmyra leaves, and tailoring.

Value Chain Association is an income generation project conducted by the SHG. The money earned is rotated among members every six months and is interest free.

Nurses' Training Program

Four nurses' training courses have been completed; each course has included three months of full-time lectures and two months of hospital training. Thereafter, students have moved on to various healthcare institutions. The students are from low-income communities and rural areas. The fifth batch is presently in training.

Volunteer at CORD Sri Lanka

CM volunteers from USA, UK, and other countries have come to CORD Sri Lanka to stay for 3-6 months and conduct classes in English, tuition, games, self-defense, and motivation. Their accommodation, meals, and local expense allowances have been provided by CORD.

Learn more about CORD Sri Lanka's programs and activities at cordsrilanka.org and on Facebook.

Shri Chakra Homam at Chinmaya Vrindavan

by Brahmachari Eric Dee

CM Princeton hosted an *Ashtottarashata Shri Chakra Homam* at the *Chinmaya Vrindavan* ashram on September 29, 2012 in collaboration with Soundarya Lahiri, a non-profit organization dedicated to the *Shakta* tradition.

The purpose of the *homam* was to purify the ashram grounds for the upcoming construction of a new Radha-Krishna temple. The atmosphere was filled with spiritual vibrations as 108 aromatic herbs and 5 different types of ghee (which was flown in from India for this event) were offered into the *agni kunda*.

The 108 *kundas* covered a chakra that had been calculated on the fly and lovingly hand-drawn on the ashram's front lawn. When completed, it covered 250 sq. ft. Swami Shantananda and Swami Siddhananda attended the *bindu homam*, where Subbarao Kompella from Soundarya Lahiri chanted *Saubhagya Panchadasi*, *Lalita Sahasranama*, and *Khadgamala Stotram*.

The altar was graced with a beautiful picture of Goddess Kamakshi that had been studded with hundreds of Swarovski crystals. The altar decorations also included over 700 dozen bangles laced together in a cascade of glistening colors.

This was the first *homam* of this size conducted in North America. Attendance is estimated to have been around 1,500. An unknown number of people worldwide watched the event as it was broadcast live on the Internet. By the grace of Divine Mother, despite the rain forecast for the whole day given by every broadcast station, not one drop fell from the sky, and the sun burst through the clouds when the invocation prayer was chanted.



Humane Approaches to Management at Seton Hall University by A. D. Amar

Swami Ishwarananda's successful workshop on "Ancient Indian Management Techniques" at the Academy of Management's annual program in 2011 in San Antonio, Texas led to an invitation from Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey to speak on applying India's ancient management techniques to modern day issues.

Swamiji spoke on "Humane Approaches to Management" on September 24, 2012 in the university's Jubilee Auditorium. The lecture was attended by students from various departments, including Organizational Behavior, Operations for Competitive Advantage, Leadership Institute, and Knowledge and Innovation Management, and was moderated by Professor A. D. Amar (Stillman School of Business).

Swamiji detailed the typology of the human personality according to *Rg Veda* and *Bhagavad Gita*, the impact of a manager's personality in his work role, and the need for managers to be ethical and humane in accordance with the scriptures. Swamiji said humans are capable of becoming aware of the way they experience the world, controlling their minds, and developing their personality. He gave an insightful connection between desire, thought, and action, linked the quality of thoughts to the quality of actions, and explained how thoughts give birth to actions and are thus vital in constructing right actions.

The lecture was well received by the audience; some said they learned the importance of correcting mistakes that individuals make without punishing the individuals. Quoting Swamiji, one attendee said, "A wise manager should try to find out what went wrong rather than who made the mistake." Many were impressed when Swamiji quoted, "Do unto others as you would have them to do unto you," and so appropriately applied it to the workplace and humane management. Students also appreciated Swamiji's message, "The success of managers is in earning trust from their colleagues," and "That trust is generated by keeping their word." One student said, "His teaching about life and one's inner self taught me many things I was not aware of." Another said, "This was a great lecture that I feel all managers should hear from because it touches on many different aspects of how to manage different people in different ways."

Before the lecture, Swamiji was hosted to a lunch in the University Club by Dr. Joyce Strawser, (Dean of the Stillman School of Business), Dr. Jason Yin (Chair of the Department of Management), and Dr. A. D. Amar. After his lecture, Swamiji was felicitated by Dr. Larry Robinson, Provost of Seton Hall University.

Swami Prakashananda Delights CM Los Angeles by Nimmi Raghunathan

In his week-long visit to Chinmaya Mission Los Angeles, Swami Prakashananda delighted devotees with his discourses, steeped in *bhakti*, simplicity, and practicality.

The mornings of September 18-23 were dedicated to *Vibhishana Gita* for the Devi Group. In answer to Vibhishana's question on how Lord Rama, barefoot and without chariot or armor, would fight a Ravana bedecked in armor and on a chariot, the Lord expounds on the mystical Dharma Chariot that always leads to victory. This symbolic chariot is the one each seeker should ride, for it has valor and fortitude as its wheels; truthfulness, good character, and steadfastness as its flags of victory and safety; strength, discrimination, self-control, and caring as its horses; and forgiveness, compassion, and equanimity as its reins. This chariot enumerates a seeker's required inner qualities to fight the battles of *samsara*.

Swamiji's evening talks on *Purajana Gita*, from *Uttarakand* of the *Ramayana*, featured Lord Rama's instructions to the residents of Ayodhya on how to attain *mukti*. With human birth being the rarest of the rare, it should be used primarily for *sadhana*, not merely the attainment of pleasure. Swamiji reminded that in *Ramayana*, *satsanga* is given great importance as a *sadhana*, for it helps develop *viveka* and *vairagya* in the seeker.

Swamiji met with the center's Chinmaya Bala Vihar teachers for a Q&A session. On dealing with children in class, he said, each child, disciplined or not, is God's own, and with this understanding, teachers can be more effective in communicating with all types of children. On *sadhana* and meditation, his advice to punish the mind and develop firm determination rang clearly.

Throughout all the sessions, Swamiji's soulful voice brought to life all his beautiful *bhajans*. Indeed, his humorous and easygoing style was appreciated and enjoyed by one and all.

During his address to Mission devotees of CM LA's San Fernando Valley satellite and local devotees in the Northridge area, Swamiji asked, "Which is best? Being educated, religious, rich, or good? Everyone had a different choice!"

Swamiji answered that being "good" was the best, because a good person will bring happiness to all. He gave the example of Lord Rama and elucidated on a verse from *Ramacharitamansa* to explain the importance of humility and simplicity. He reminded that anything that we have should be credited to the Supreme—to put oneself last when claiming credit, if at all. He also emphasized practicing simplicity in dress, food, and speech, for complexity in these is the cause of disease. Simplicity in food without too many spices keeps the mind calm; simplicity in clothing keeps one's attitude under check; and simplicity in speech keeps one from unnecessary loose talk.



Chinmaya Pradeep Glows in CM Houston's Bala Vihar by Padmashree Rao, photos by Jayesh Mistry and Mahendra Vaishnav

True to the spirit of Pujya Gurudev's saying, "Children are lamps to be lit, not vessels to be filled," CM Houston's Chinmaya Bala Vihar program began its new year of scriptural learning with glowing lamps and a growing congregation of joyful children.

A glorious sense of promise filled the sprawling premises of the *Chinmaya Prabha* ashram on Sunday, September 9, 2012, as over 800 excited children and over 800 eager parents were welcomed by an enthusiastic team of 70 Bala Vihar teachers and numerous special volunteers under the guidance of Acharya Gaurang and Darshana Nanavaty.

The opening invocations of the Vedic *Aarti* and *Chinmaya Aarti* signaled the spiritual start of the special day. The children sat in designated rows by grade, with their Bala Vihar teachers on both flanks. Madhavi Vaidya, Bala Vihar Coordinator, first invoked the blessings of God and Guru as she welcomed everyone.

In an engaging audio-visual presentation, Shobha Ravishankar addressed the gathering and highlighted the significance of the *Chinmaya Pradeep*, the emblem representing the learning core of Chinmaya Mission. She elaborated on how the *hamsa* bird symbolizes the art of proper discrimination, knowing which helps us live a harmonious, God-centered life. Fueled by the discriminative knowledge of the scriptures, the *Chinmaya Pradeep*, meaning a "well-lit lamp of Consciousness," inspires everyone to live a brilliant, ethical life.

On conclusion, as each child and adult received a lit lamp to hold while chanting the Chinmaya Mission Pledge, the message of the *Chinmaya Pradeep* took on a living meaning. A melodious Guru *bhajan* charged the air and groups of children proceeded by grade with their teachers to offer *pranam* to Pujya Gurudev's *pratima* before entering their Bala Vihar classrooms.

It seemed like an endless procession of shining lamps and smiling faces. The unifying white and energetic red hues of the saris worn by the Bala Vihar teachers streamlined the rainbow of children as they walked toward another meaningful Bala Vihar year.

Acharya Gaurang Nanavaty welcomed the adults and parents to embark on their own journey to spiritual freedom. With prayers to Lord Ganesha and Mother Sarasvati for the uninterrupted pursuit of knowledge, he brought to attention a common question from Bala Vihar parents: "Why do we need to attend *satsanga* and learn the scriptures when we bring our children to Bala Vihar? We are well-versed in the ways of Hinduism." Gaurangji explained that our 9-to-5 job and five-day workweek are loaded with responsibilities and we have not yet found the happiness and freedom we seek. Such freedom is promised by the scriptures, he said, and invited every aspirant to put aside worldly responsibilities for a few hours every Sunday morning to come experience it at *Chinmaya Prabha*. He emphasized regularity in studies because learning can only be strengthened by disciplined application, and began his introduction to *Upadesa Sara* by Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi.

The shining glory of *Chinmaya Pradeep* has blessed CM Houston's Bala Vihar to grow from just 55 children in 1984 to over 800 children in 2012, alongside an equal attendance of more than 800 adults under the *acharyas'* nurturing guidance. By Pujya Gurudev's unflinching grace, with over 50 new children joining the ranks on the opening day alone, the light of knowledge grows stronger each year, as does the inspired and united commitment of teachers, volunteers, parents, and children.



Music Lovers Captivated by CM LA's *Kalanjali* Concert by Raj Mantha

CM Los Angeles's *Kalanjali* second event organized at the *Chinmaya Rameshwaram* ashram in Tustin California featured the blissful, vibrant, three-hour Hindustani vocal concert of Ramesh Narayan on September 29, 2012 that left the audience wanting more.

Over 250 attendees were treated to music that was reminiscent of Narayan's guru, Pandit Jasraj of the Mewati Gharana. Narayan presented spiritual elements, open throated vocalizations, enthralling *sargams*, and pure melody. He began with an invocation to Lord Ganesha, followed by some *bandish* pieces. He was ably supported by local artists—Abhiman Kaushal on tabla and Gopal Marathe on harmonium. Toward the end of the show, he asked for a volunteer from the audience to randomly write a few lines, which he set to music and performed immediately, much to the enjoyment of the audience. He concluded with his signature rendition of *Nirvana Shatkam*.

Narayan returned to CM LA on October 1 and 2 to teach an open *bhajan* class. On the first day, 30 *rasikas*, including members of CM LA's *Chinmaya Swaranjali*, gathered for this after the evening temple *puja* and *abhishekam*, during which Narayan sang the *Shiva Stuti*. The next day, over 50 people gathered and were thrilled to learn *bhajans* in Raga Malhar, Bhagyashri, Bhimpalaa, and Charukeshi. Narayan shared his knowledge freely, with great inspiration. He later sang for another 40 minutes with Hemant Ekbote on tabla and Babu Parameshwaran on harmonium. The perfect *baithak* style setting enchanted all the attending music lovers.



CM Ann Arbor Walks for CORD by Sunitha Grandhee

CM Ann Arbor successfully conducted its fourth annual Walk for CORD with over 150 participants in the presence of Swami Chidatmananda (CM Hyderabad) on Sunday, September 16, 2012 at Kensington State Park in Milford.

Kensington State Park's 4,000-acre wooded, hilly terrain surrounds serene Kent Lake. Its lakeside walk paths were picturesque and the weather was a perfect 70° F with a cool, pleasant breeze.

The event brought together families from all the five Chinmaya Bala Vihar locations in Southeast Michigan (Troy, West Bloomfield, Novi, Ann Arbor, and Canton). Swami Chidatmananda personally appealed to the parents and told them about the wonderful programs conducted under the CORD banner.

As in previous years, walkers submitted their pledge forms at the walk, which started promptly at 4 p.m. with an invocation prayer. Basic rules and specific instructions on environmental awareness were given. Acharya Sharada Kumar (CM Ann Arbor) ji and Swamiji motivated everyone, reminding them about the importance of *seva*. Swamiji formally initiated the three-mile march along the lake. On completion, walkers were treated to cookies, lemonade, and popsicles.

With their enthusiastic support for CORD and loving camaraderie, the CM Ann Arbor Family created yet

another set of cherished memories. Special thanks to the many volunteers and participants who contributed to the success of this joyful event.



Pujya Gurudev's Glory Remembered on *Mahasamadhi* Day at CM Houston by Padmashree Rao, photo by Hanumantrao Akula

Devotees gathered at CM Houston's *Chinmaya Prabha* ashram to offer their reverential gratitude on the sacred day of August 3, 2012, which marked the 19th anniversary of Pujya Gurudev's *mahasamadhi*.

In memory of Pujya Gurudev's teachings and life of selfless spiritual service, *Mahasamadhi* Day is honored as a *Sadhana* Day (or *Aradhana* Day) in all Chinmaya Mission centers worldwide. Pujya Gurudev transformed his life to offer the world the timeless gift of his Vedantic teachings, giving everything and expecting nothing. To practice his spiritual teachings is the highest offering of homage on his *mahasamadhi* anniversary.

The sacred observance began with Guru *bhajans*, an outline of the evening's program, and the sharing of Pujya Gurudev's words on "Silence," which tells of what inspired his global, spiritual mission. With the words and memories of Pujya Gurudev filling their heart, everyone walked into the foyer that houses a life-size idol of Pujya Gurudev.

The *pratima puja* was performed by a devoted couple and the foyer was filled with the vibrant chanting of *stotras*, including *Chinmayashtakam*, *Guru Paduka Stotram*, and *Krtajnata* (Pujya Guruji's original composition and tribute to Pujya Guruji). It was a unique worship, wherein Pujya Gurudev's *pratima* was gently wiped from head to foot, with devotional care. Even his eyeglasses were cleaned with a love that moved devotees to tears. The *pratima puja* ended with *Chinmaya Aarti*.

Devotees reentered the main Smrti Hall for the *paduka archana* that was offered with the chanting of *Shri Chinmaya Ashtottarashata Namavali*, remembering in 108 ways and more Pujya Gurudev's timelessness and infinitude. The *archana* concluded with every devotee reverentially touching Pujya Gurudev's *padukas* in silence.



CM Calgary Revels in Vedantic Teachings from Swami Prakashananda by Vinita Uppal

CM Calgary devotees were blessed to learn Vedanta from Swami Prakashananda (CM Trinidad), July 24-29, 2012. Swamiji's evening lectures on *Sundarkand* from *Ramacharitamansa* were a veritable treat for all attending spiritual aspirants. Swamiji interspersed the talks with melodious *bhajans* that instilled deep-seated *bhakti* in all. The lectures were well attended and received, with a packed hall each day.

Swamiji's absorbing morning discourses on *Shri Dakshinamurti Stotram* were held at a devotee's residence.

A highlight of Swamiji's visit was the "Rocky Mountain Weekend Retreat" organized by CM Calgary at the Alpine Club of Canada, in the picturesque surroundings of Canmore. At the retreat, the day started at 5 a.m. with guided meditation; Swamiji's presence provided great motivation for all the attendees. Swamiji's chosen topic for Saturday's one-hour morning and evening talk was "Eternal Freedom," during which Swamiji elucidated important concepts from *Mundakopanishad*. Swamiji's sparkling wit and style made the difficult concepts seemingly simple. In one of his sessions, he also stressed on the importance of Bala Vihar and requested all members to spread the word about the ongoing classes in Calgary.

Swamiji truly endeared himself to one and all with his simplicity and approachability. At the end of the *yajna*, everyone felt a deep sense of fulfillment. All are eagerly looking forward to Swamiji's next visit.



CM Los Angeles Interfaith Event with Sikh Community by Nimmi Raghunathan

As the divine words of the *shabad*, "Ram Ram bol, Ram Ram, tyaago man ke sagal kaam," rang through the hall of the *Chinmaya Rameshwaram* ashram of CM Los Angeles on August 26, 2012, the listeners were moved as they dove deeper in silence and devotion, many hearing verses of *Guru Granth Sahib* for the first time.

The gentle, meditative suggestion by the singers for devotees to chant the name of the Lord, and let go of desires and negativities of the mind, was especially poignant in this program of solidarity in the wake of the tragic shootout at a Wisconsin Gurudwara on August 5, 2012.

Navneet Chugh, president of the Sikh Center of Orange County, began his address on the need for tolerance and understanding by reading out the names of the Wisconsin victims and their ages. He cited different faiths articulately and pointed out that 80% of the world's population belongs to the Semitic, Hindu, or Sikh faith, each of which emphasize prayer, charity, and oneness. Going to places of worship, he said, help affirm and rejuvenate positive inner qualities and the goal of reaching the Ideal. He stressed that there are many roads to the One.

Amrit Singh, an active Sikh member, offered some historical facts on Sikhism, reiterated the philosophy of Oneness, and quoted Guru Nanak Dev: "The Creator is One, so who is to say someone is good or someone is bad?" No path is wrong or better, said Singh, for all lead to the One, and once this is understood, we live a life for the betterment of society, serving all equally.

In his address, Swami Ishwarananda (CM Los Angeles) said, "The whole world is a university. To discover a unity in diversity is life." A sword and a gun can be tools of violence if used improperly, he said, but when used correctly, they can protect. So, just as it is up to us on how to use them, religion

too, depends on how we use it. Religion is not wrong; people are if they coerce and manipulate others. As leaders and thinkers of society, with the capability of approaching religion with right understanding, Swamiji said it is for us to be responsible and on the right course. Quoting the *Ramayana*, he said, "*Yatha raja tatha praja*," which means, "As the king, so the people," indicating that followers think and behave as their leaders do.

In conclusion, the congregation observed a moment of silence for the Wisconsin victims and their families.



Pujya Guruji Visits CM Harleysville by Dhananjay Samudralwar

Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda visited and blessed the new Chinmaya Mission Harleysville center in Pennsylvania, and its newly acquired ashram property, named by Guruji as *Chinmaya Ramalaya*, on May 19, 2012. Pujya Guruji was accompanied by Swami Siddhananda (CM Philadelphia), Swami Shantananda (CM Princeton), and Brahmacharini Aparna Chaitanya (CM Miami).

Pujya Guruji arrived at Indian Valley Middle School mid-morning for a cheerful reception by CM Harleysville devotees and Chinmaya Bala Vihar children chanting Vedic mantras. The children welcomed Guruji by performing a unique *Ashta-Lakshmi* dance on the eight forms of Mother Lakshmi. Guruji later appreciated their performance and said he had never before seen a dance on the eight forms. Select children and adults chanted all the verses of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 12, which they had memorized for CM Princeton's recently held *Gita* Chanting Competition. Guruji was also welcomed by leading representatives of various local religious and cultural organizations.

CM Harleysville offers weekly Chinmaya Bala Vihar and language classes for children, Chinmaya Study Group and Sanskrit classes for adults, and yoga classes for both at a local school. Anticipating continued growth, dedicated *sevaks* sought to acquire property for the center. Through local contributions and substantial help from CM Princeton, a 4-acre property with an existing house was purchased in Harleysville.

Pujya Guruji visited the ashram site and was pleased to see the scenic location atop a small hill. Guruji was given an overview of the upcoming construction plans for approval. The existing house has been renovated for immediate use. The proposed 20,000 sq. ft. new building will include a shrine of Lord Rama, well-equipped classrooms, an auditorium, a yoga studio, a community hall, and a cafeteria.

Pujya Guruji announced the new ashram name and expressed his joy at visiting the site. In his inspiring talk, he encouraged all the Mission members to utilize this opportunity and serve the local community efficiently. He also requested all local members to spread the message of upcoming Chinmaya Mission center in the neighborhood.

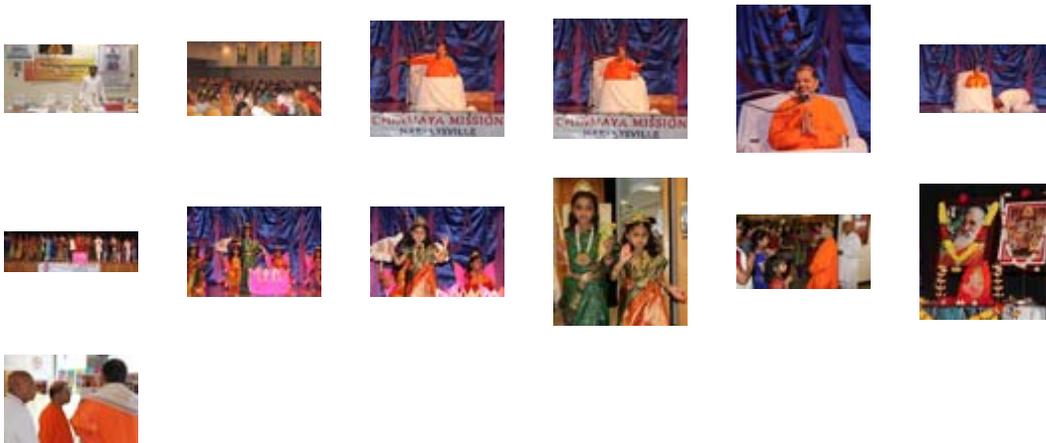
In his easy, loving, and witty style, Pujya Guruji addressed an audience of over 250 devotees on the priorities of human life through his talk on "We Can, We Must." Guruji congratulated the local community for supporting the upcoming new center and presented several inspiring thoughts how this can be achieved while progressing individually on the spiritual path. He said, "We are capable of doing

many things, good and bad. However, making right choices to perform right actions that are beneficial to yourself, your family, and the community is very important." He reminded that teaching children the higher values of life is a primary responsibility of all—family, community, and nation. Through humorous practical examples that brought forth bursts of laughter, he pointed out some of the challenges of teaching in Chinmaya Bala Vihar and the tips to succeed. He added, "If we do not value something, we may fall from everything."

During his visit, Pujya Guruji released the new audio CD, *Swaranjaneya*, on which he has sung *Hanuman Chalisa* in seven *ragas*, and the new book, *Marriage—A Melody*, in which he has shown how the spiritual and Vedantic approach to the sacred bond of marriage leads to a harmonious life in *grhastha ashrama*.

CM Harleysville was blessed with, and most grateful for, Pujya Guruji's blessings and guidance, and the opportunity to serve. In addition, sincere thanks were offered to Swami Shantananda and Swami Siddhananda for their continuing encouragement and support.

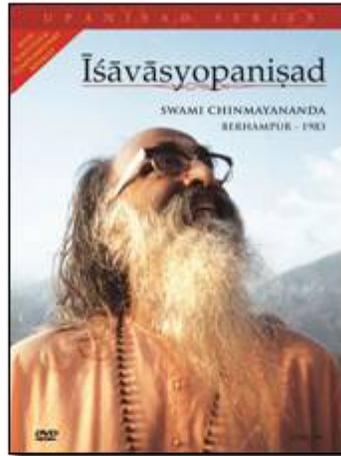
Pujya Guruji's visit concluded with *bhiksha* and *satsanga* with *sevaks* and their families at the home of Chandu Patel, who has been instrumental in initiating the activities of CM Harleysville.



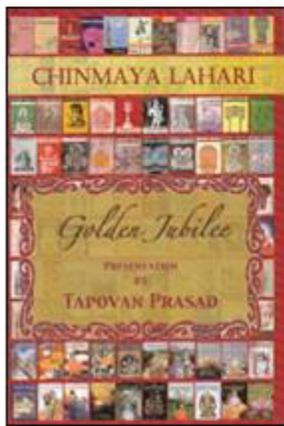
Announcements

New Releases from Chinmaya Publications

Chinmaya Publications New Releases



Discourses on Ishavasya Upanishad
by Swami Chinmayananda
DVD Set of 3
\$30



Chinmaya Lahari
Compilation of Words of Advice
from Swami Chinmayananda
\$12



Yuva Rhythms
Bhajans CD
\$6



Ashtavakra Gita (set of 2 MP3 CDs)
LIST PRICE: \$16.00

Ashtavakra Gita talks by Swami Tejomayananda



Brahmarpanam Mug
LIST PRICE: \$6.00

Brahmarpanam Mug with Brahmarpanam verse in English.



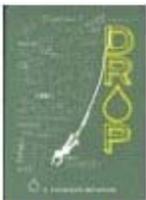
Book of Ashtottaras and Aratis
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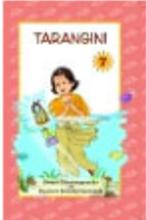


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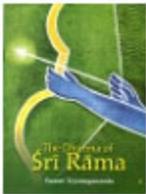
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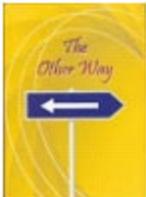
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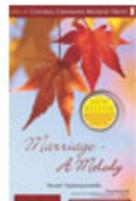
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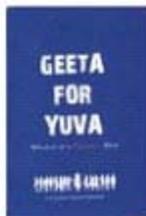
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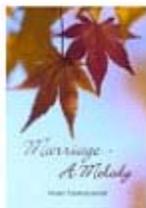
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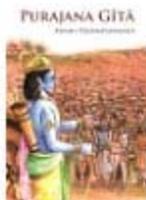
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Nov 26 - Dec 2, 2012

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Audio clips from vocal applicants and video clips
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❖ Submission deadline Oct 15, 2012

Donation:
Before Nov 1, 2012 – Rs. 5,000/- or US \$150
After Nov 1, 2012 – Rs. 5,500/- or US \$165
Registration closes Nov 18, 2012

Contact:
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+91 96898 89153

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India

For more information visit
www.chinmayanaadabindu.org/WinterArtsIntensive2012

Bhagavatam Camp with Pujya Guruji February 2012 at *Chinmaya Vibhooti*



Chinmaya Vibhooti invites you
to the following two mega-events
by Pujya Guruji
Swami Tejomayananda

Shrimad Bhagawata

Camp in Hindi - 16th to 23rd February 2013

Camp in English - 24th to 31st December 2013

"Shrimad Bhagawata is a series of lively interactive sessions between enlightened spiritual masters and great seekers of knowledge.

Theme: It deals with the theme of understanding human life in its completeness and totality. The Bhagawata considers all aspects of an individual's life, the world around him, the Reality that lies behind the entire creation and their mutual relationship.

Essence: The essence of Bhagawata lies in immersing one's mind in pure love of God, called devotion.

Unique feature: Listening to Shrimad Bhagawata not only blesses the listener, but even his or her ancestors.

Come, listen and learn the art of facing your life and realising your dreams. Learn from King Parikshit the heroic way of departing from this world with mind absorbed in God."

- Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Donation for each camp: Rs 4,000 or US\$ 100 per person (non-refundable)

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Rs 51,000 or US\$ 1,100 for the Hindi Bhagawata camp

Rs 1 Lakh or US\$ 2,100 for the English Bhagawata camp

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Rs 21,000 or US\$ 500 for the Hindi Bhagawata camp

Rs 30,000 or US\$ 700 for the English Bhagawata camp

Cheques/DDs to be in favour of CENTRAL CHINMAYA MISSION TRUST

The camp donation is applicable to all Saptah and Utsav Yajamans who wish to attend the camp

Inquiries & Registration

• chinmaya.vibhooti@chinmayamission.com

• +91-9689891939 (Chinmaya Vibhooti Swagat Team)

Chinmaya Vibhooti, Post Kolwan, Taluka Mulshi, Dist.

Pune 412108, Maharashtra, India

CORD Sri Lanka Activities



"I love Jaffna..." is a photography exhibition & fundraiser with photographs taken by local children. They were taught how to use cameras and asked to capture someone, somewhere, some place they love in their local area

When: August 4th - 17th from 4-6pm everyday

Where: Chinmaya Mission, 9 Chetty Street Lane off of Temple Road (Kovil Veethy), Jaffna

"Make It Happen" - Online Study Course

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- Center for Sanskrit & Indology -



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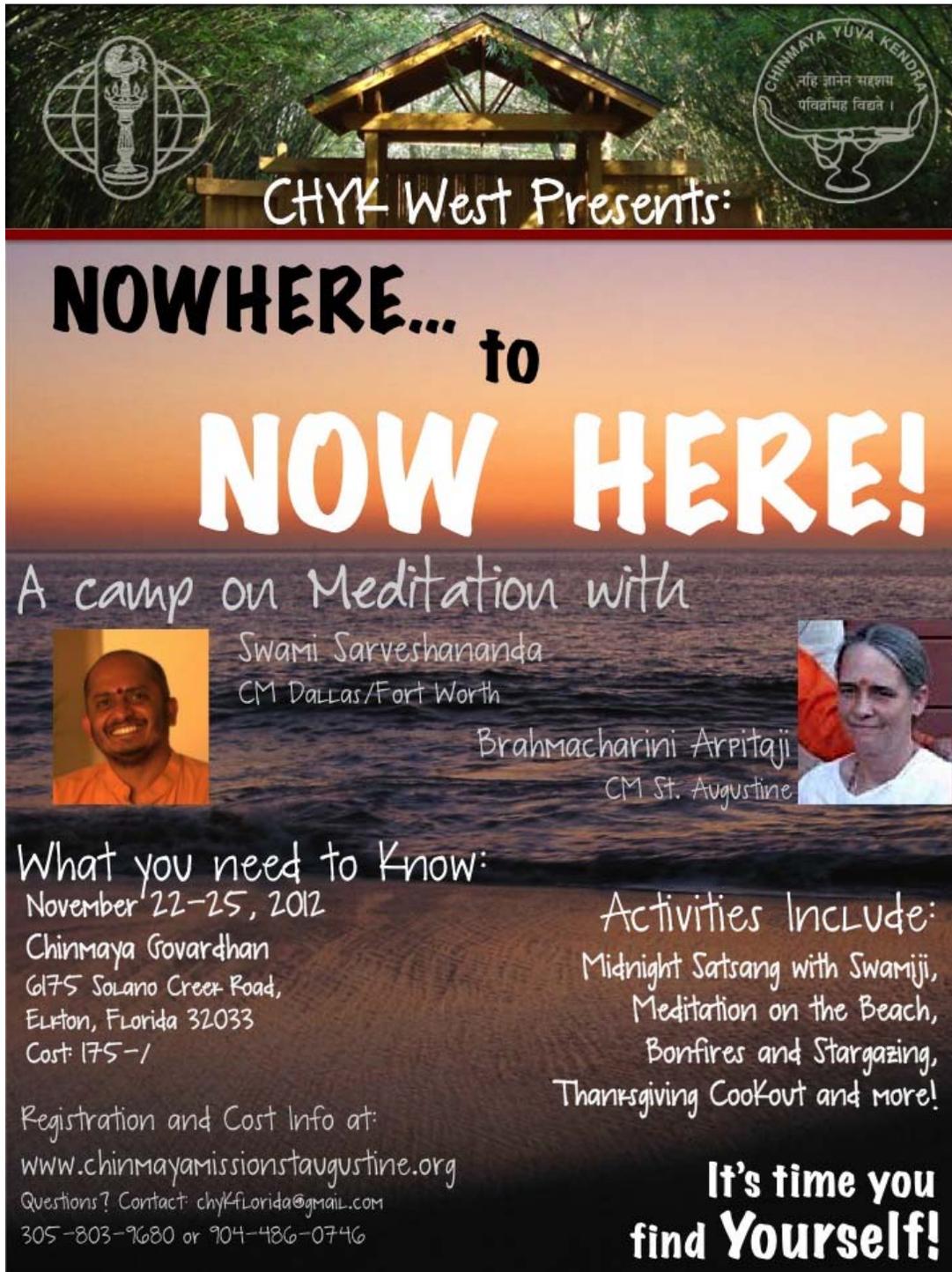
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First-Ever CM Global Camp for Teenagers: December 2012 at CIRS, India

Chinmaya Mission

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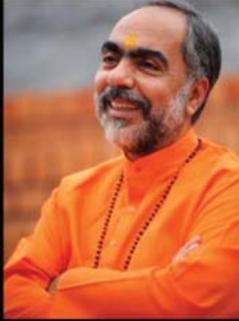
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Ages 12 to 16

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Swami Swaroopananda: Is famous amongst the teens and youth for His inimitable style, wit and ability. Swamiji has worked tirelessly to fulfill the vision of His Guru, Swami Chinmayananda, and along the way has inspired countless individuals to not only take interest in spirituality, but to put elevating teachings into practice. At present Swamiji is the director of the Chinmaya International Residential School in India but He still manages to travel the world, spread the knowledge of our Ancient Culture, and inspire generations to live up to the values put forth by our Rishies.



THE POWER OF

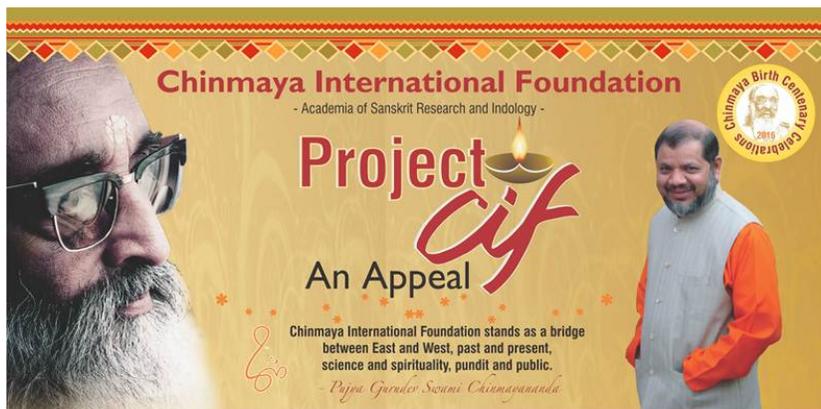
LEADERSHIP	DEDICATION	GOD	ETHICS	FREEDOM	SELF ACTUALISATION	NATURE
						



In seven inspiring days, Swami Swaroopananda will reveal the Seven Powers that at present lie dormant within us. Swamiji will not only reveal these powers, but will also show us how we awaken them and bring these powers, but will also show us how we can awaken them and bring them into manifestation in all aspects of our lives! Along with Swamiji's revelations on The powers, the camp will feature self-discovery workshops and entertaining cultural activities to invoke and celebrate the 7 Powers and their festivals while engaging in our profound Hindu culture.

Nestled in the foothills of the western Ghats, Chinmaya International School (CIRS) is located on the fringes of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. With this unique locale as the backdrop, the school offers excellent amenities and modern technologies that are sure to make the stay more pleasant.

Support Chinmaya International Foundation



Chinmaya International Foundation
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Project Cif
An Appeal

Chinmaya International Foundation stands as a bridge between East and West, past and present, science and spirituality, pundit and public.
- Puja Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Chinmaya Birth Centenary Celebrations 2016

Sponsor a ROOM in this Auspicious and Uplifting Environ

Started in the year 1989 by Puja Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF), is a centre of excellence for the study, research and dissemination of knowledge in the areas of Indian philosophy, culture, art and science, business management, both modern and ancient.

CIF is housed at Adi Sankara Nilayam, a hallowed place, the maternal home of the great saint, savant and philosopher Adi Sankara – the very abode that he was born. Located in a small hamlet called Veliyanad in Ernakulam District, Kerala, India, CIF stands on an 8.3 acre plot of land amidst luxuriant sun blessed greenery, temple shrines and lotus and lily ponds. It offers an ambience that attracts aspirants who come in search of peace and solitude from the world over.

Project CIF

CIF was one of the last projects undertaken by Puja Gurudev during HIS lifetime. The year 2016 marks the birth centenary of Puja Gurudev. Important construction projects have been planned for enhancing the facilities at CIF to dedicate unto HIS Lotus feet on this auspicious occasion. We invite and welcome all spiritual seekers and philanthropic devotees to join hands with us to fulfil HIS vision for CIF.

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Regular Room: INR 5 lakhs/USD 10,000

- o A self sufficient two bedded room where in the name of the donor would be displayed on the wall of the room. The room can be occupied for 5 days in a year with family as Guest of CIF for a period of 25 years.

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www.projectcif.chinfo.org/sponsor



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Website: www.chinfo.org

CIF's 3-Day Math Workshop

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(Recognised by Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi; Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala; IGNOU, Delhi)

presents

A three-day Non-Residential Workshop
ANCIENT INDIAN MATHEMATICS FOR MODERN TIMES
An opportunity for Mathematics Teachers to gain insights into deeper levels of Mathematics

November 23rd – 25th, 2012 @ Chinmaya Vidyapeeth
Time: 9:00 am – 5:30 pm Warriam Road, Pallimukku, Ernakulam

Mathematics has been the queen of all sciences. Indians laid the foundation stone in the field of Mathematics which has helped the world to delve in the subject further. However, today many are unaware of the long lost contributions by Indian Mathematicians and how they advanced in the subject.
Focus: How Ancient Indian Mathematics can be implemented in modern day classrooms thus widening the horizons of classroom teaching.

Topics covered:

1. Conceptual clarity of various topics in Algebra
2. Interconnection between Geometry and Trigonometry
3. Brahmagupta's Geometry
4. Progression
5. Permutation & Combination
6. Numeration in ancient India
7. Ways of teaching Mathematics in Ancient India - Are they still useful and can it be practically implemented in the current curriculum?

Benefits:

- An opportunity for the Mathematics teachers to use Ancient Indian Mathematical concepts to make modern-day Mathematics more interesting and easy for students.
- Interaction with the distinguished faculties to gain valuable insights in Mathematics.

Faculties:
Shri Venugopal Heroor is an engineer by profession. Heroorji has been doing research in Indian Mathematics for the past 25 years. He has presented many research papers at various Universities & National Seminars throughout India; has conducted classes for research scholars, teachers & professors, and has authored many books related to Indian Mathematics which includes translation of various Sanskrit works on Mathematics.
Shri Venkata Subbarao is an Engineer by qualification and has been conducting training programs on innovative teaching methods for teachers & college professors all around India. He has also developed content on Mathematics for International Govt. bodies. His main area of focus is Indian Mathematics.

Fees: ₹ 1500 (includes Camp Kit, Lunch and Tea)

Offline Registration: Send DD/Cheque favouring 'Chinmaya International Foundation' to Chinmaya International Foundation, Adi Sankara Nilayam, Vellyanad PO, Ernakulam – 682313.
Outstation participants may arrange their accommodation

For further details, contact:

Chinmaya International Foundation
Adi Sankara Nilayam, Adi Sankara Marg, Vellyanad – PO, Ernakulam – 682313
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Third "Meditation Demystified" Camp in Coimbatore with Swamini Vimalananda



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Dates
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Course Donation
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Rs.2,400/US\$100 per person
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Candidates must be between 18 & 65 years of age and of sound health. Prior knowledge of meditation techniques is not necessary.



Course Content:

- † Total 6 hours of Meditation per day
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- † Individual and Group Meditation
- † Introspection and Contemplation
- † Yoga, Prayer and Worship

For registration and further inquiries, please contact:

Administrator
Chinmaya Gardens
Nallur Vayal PO, Siruvani Road, Coimbatore 641114
+91-422-2615637/ +91-9360461566
chinmayagarden@gmail.com

*"Meditate! Meditate!! Meditate!!!
This is the highest vocation in life and man alone is capable of it.
Let us meditate and discover for ourselves its benefits and blessings."*
- Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Register Now for these Home-Study Courses from CIF:

- E-Gita Course

cif Chinmaya International Foundation
Affiliated to Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, Recognised by Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam
and Indra Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

welcomes you to a home study

BHAGAVAD GITA COURSE
Go through Gita... Grow through Gita...

Author: **His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda**
Head, Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Course Highlights:
18 Chapters covered in 30 lessons
15 months duration @ 2 lessons per month
shows you the art of living Vedanta in your daily life

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Residents of the Indian sub-continent: ₹3,000	Postal Course	Other Residents: US\$250
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Knowledge of Sanskrit is not required
as the medium of instruction is English.

REGISTER NOW!

To see lesson samples, get more details, and to register online:
www.chinfo.org/courses/bhagavadgita

For further details contact:
Administrator, CIF Home Study Courses
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Phone: +91-484-2749676, 2747307 Fax: +91-484-2749729
Email: gitacourse@chinfo.org

- E-Vedanta Course

CIF'S CORRESPONDENCE VEDANTA COURSE

THE CHINMAYA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION (CIF) IS PLEASED TO INVITE ALL SPIRITUAL STUDENTS TO ENROLL IN ITS PROGRESSIVE HOME-STUDY PROGRAM FOR VEDANTIC STUDIES.

OBJECTIVE

The primary aim of these courses is to provide clarity and depth in a seeker's Vedantic studies. Each course covers, in a series of 24 detailed lessons, various central Vedantic concepts as taught in introductory texts such as Vivekachudamani, Atma Bodha, Tattva Bodha, Vakya Vritti, and Panchadashi.

LEVELS

CIF's one-year correspondence Vedanta Course is offered on two levels, Basic/Foundation and Advanced. While students must have general Vedantic knowledge before opting for the advanced course, CIF's specific basic course is not a pre-requisite to sign up for the advanced course, which provides an in-depth understanding of principal Vedantic concepts.

ABOUT CIF

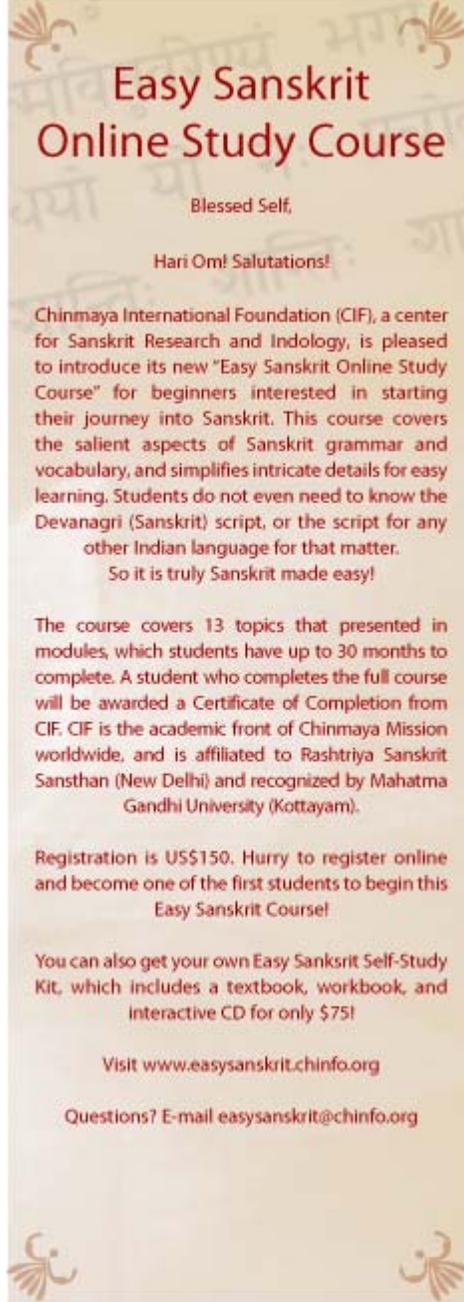
Established in 1989, CIF is a research center for Sanskrit and Indology, recognized by the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, India. Swami Chinmayananda visualized CIF as a bridge between East and West, past and present, science and spirituality, pundit and public. CIF is located in Kerala, India, at the maternal ancestral home and birthplace of the Advaita Vedantin, Adi Shankara.

REGISTRATION

Students may choose to enroll at any time during the year in either a postal correspondence course or an online correspondence course (lessons are sent via e-mail).

E-COURSE: US\$100; POSTAL COURSE: US\$175
VISIT WWW.CHINFO.ORG TO REGISTER
OR GET MORE DETAILS.

- Easy Sanskrit Course



**Easy Sanskrit
Online Study Course**

Blessed Self,
Hari Om! Salutations!

Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF), a center for Sanskrit Research and Indology, is pleased to introduce its new "Easy Sanskrit Online Study Course" for beginners interested in starting their journey into Sanskrit. This course covers the salient aspects of Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary, and simplifies intricate details for easy learning. Students do not even need to know the Devanagari (Sanskrit) script, or the script for any other Indian language for that matter.
So it is truly Sanskrit made easy!

The course covers 13 topics that presented in modules, which students have up to 30 months to complete. A student who completes the full course will be awarded a Certificate of Completion from CIF. CIF is the academic front of Chinmaya Mission worldwide, and is affiliated to Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan (New Delhi) and recognized by Mahatma Gandhi University (Kottayam).

Registration is US\$150. Hurry to register online and become one of the first students to begin this Easy Sanskrit Course!

You can also get your own Easy Sanskrit Self-Study Kit, which includes a textbook, workbook, and interactive CD for only \$75!

Visit www.easysanskrit.chinfo.org

Questions? E-mail [easysanskrit@chinfo.org](mailto: easysanskrit@chinfo.org)

Tapovan Prasad Celebrates 50 Years:

- Message from Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda



SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA



17 December 2011

All Chinmaya Mission Centres and Acharyas

Dear All,

Hari Om!

Our magazine *Tapovan Prasad* is entering the 50th year of its publication in January 2012. Throughout this Golden Jubilee Year, it should be our endeavour to give wide publicity to the magazine. For this, a special video presentation of four minutes duration has been prepared. It will be forwarded to all the centres, along with other publicity material.

The video presentation is to be screened at *jnana yajnas* and all other events where people gather in large numbers. One person can be appointed to collect the subscriptions at the book stall or other specified place. Since *Tapovan Prasad* is a window to all our Mission activities, it should be circulated widely.

With Prem and Om,

P.S. For more details, please contact the Tapovan Prasad office.

Email: tapovanprasad@chinmayamission.com

Tel: +91-044-28363641

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Balvihar Magazine Rate Increase

Balvihar Magazine New Rates - Effective July 1, 2012

Due to increased cost of paper, printing, freight and overhead expenses, the new BalVihar Magazine rates have been increased to the following:

1 Year	\$50
2 Years	\$80
3 Years	\$120
5 Years	\$200
15 Years (Long term)	\$500
Long term subscription as gift to a relative/friend in India	\$75



