



# NEWS

CHINMAYA MISSION® WEST BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2009, No. 128

## In This Issue

### SPIRITUAL TRAILS

Life is a Gift, Living an Art  
The Flag of Realization  
a dialogue  
Travelogue

### REFLECTIONS

Mother Lakshmi to the Rescue  
Where Is My Beloved Divine?  
I Found My Way

### NEWS & EVENTS

CM Beaumont New Property  
CM San Diego New Property  
*Krishnalaya* Camps  
CHYK Washington D.C.  
*Ekadashi* at CM Princeton  
CM Boston Expands  
CM Atlanta: "Happy Living"  
CM LA Youth Meet CORD  
CM Phoenix Performs

### FEATURE

*Chinmaya Vibhooti* Camp

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Mahasamadhi* Camp 2009  
Young Married Couples Seminar  
*Dharma Sevak* Course  
CIF's E-Vedanta Course  
CHYK Retreat  
CM Dallas Family Camp  
Vedanta Course 2010  
Sanskrit Study Course  
CM Chicago Youth Camp  
21 Weeks with Lord Ganesha!  
*Tapovan Prasad*



# MISSION STATEMENT

To provide to individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta, and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society.

[www.chinmayamission.org](http://www.chinmayamission.org)

## CHINMAYA MISSION® CENTERS IN NORTH AMERICA

### CENTERS in USA

#### **Arizona**

Phoenix (480) 759-1541; phoenix@chinmayamission.org

#### **California**

Bakersfield (661) 872-7784; bakersfield@chinmayamission.org

Los Angeles (714) 991-5274; losangeles@chinmayamission.org

Piercy (707) 247-3488; piercy@chinmayamission.org

San Diego (858) 549-2908; sandiego@chinmayamission.org

San Jose (408) 998-2793; sanjose@chinmayamission.org

Tustin (714) 832-7669 tustin@chinmayamission.org

#### **Connecticut**

Fairfield (203) 878-0945; fairfield@chinmayamission.org

#### **District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia**

Washington (301) 384-5009; washingtondc@chinmayamission.org

Dulles (703) 845-0524; dulles@chinmayamission.org

#### **Florida**

Miami (305) 279-8456; miami@chinmayamission.org

Orlando (407) 699-7331; orlando@chinmayamission.org

St. Augustine (904) 692-4121; staugustine@chinmayamission.org

Tampa (813) 909-4142; tampa@chinmayamission.org

#### **Georgia**

Alpharetta (678) 566-5018; alpharetta@chinmayamission.org

Atlanta (478) 922-9710; atlanta@chinmayamission.org

#### **Illinois**

Chicago (630) 654-3370; chicago@chinmayamission.org

#### **Indiana**

Northwest Region (219) 322-7268; nwindiana@chinmayamission.org

#### **Iowa**

Iowa City (319) 339-8624; iowacity@chinmayamission.org

#### **Massachusetts**

Boston (978) 470-2661; boston@chinmayamission.org

#### **Michigan**

Ann Arbor (734) 663-8912; annarbor@chinmayamission.org

Flint (810) 230-2430; flint@chinmayamission.org

#### **Minnesota**

Minneapolis (612) 924-9172; minneapolis@chinmayamission.org

#### **New York**

Buffalo (716) 633-1633; buffalo@chinmayamission.org

New York (718) 671-2663; newyork@chinmayamission.org

#### **Pennsylvania**

Philadelphia (215) 396-0390; philadelphia@chinmayamission.org

Pittsburgh (412) 366-3022; pittsburgh@chinmayamission.org

#### **New Jersey**

Princeton (609) 655-1787; princeton@chinmayamission.org

#### **North Carolina**

Raleigh-Durham (919) 484-9768; raleigh@chinmayamission.org

#### **Ohio**

Columbus (740) 917-9227; columbus@chinmayamission.org

#### **Oregon**

Portland (503) 299-4091; portland@chinmayamission.org

#### **Texas**

Austin (512) 255-6786; austin@chinmayamission.org

Beaumont (409) 898-2565; beaumont@chinmayamission.org

Dallas-Fort Worth (972) 250-2470; dallas@chinmayamission.org

Houston (281) 568-9520; houston@chinmayamission.org

#### **Washington**

Seattle (509) 392-8325; seattle@chinmayamission.org

### CENTERS in CANADA

Calgary (403) 203-0751; calgary@chinmayamission.org

Halton (905) 570-0440; halton@chinmayamission.org

Niagara Falls (905) 374-7644; niagarafalls@chinmayamission.org

Ottawa (613) 738-7466; ottawa@chinmayamission.org

Toronto (905) 417-2377; toronto@chinmayamission.org

Vancouver (604) 433-3441; vancouver@chinmayamission.org

Chinmaya Mission® is registered trademark of Chinmaya Mission West.

Editor: Brahmacharini Aparna Chaitanya

Layout: Odalis Valdivieso

Cover Photo of Arya Chatani: Courtesy of Neelam Raja Chatani

Copy Editors: Dipali Trivedi, James Hausman, Anupama Bathala

CM Centers' Liaison: Seema Jani

Submissions: cmwnews@chinmayamission.org

'Krishnalaya' CMW Headquarters/Retreat Center: (707) 207-5011 / fax (707) 247-3422; info-krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org

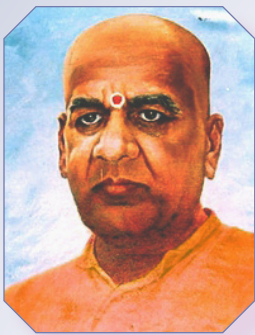
CMW Executive Secretary: Brahmacharini Aparna Chaitanya / (305) 279-8456; fax (305) 477-5362; secretary@chinmayamission.org



[www.chinmayapublications.com](http://www.chinmayapublications.com)

Toll Free (888) CMW-READ  
publications@chinmayamission.org  
(215) 396-0390; fax (215) 396-9710





### His Holiness Swami Tapovanam

All will admit that joy is to be found in peace and not in the agitations of the mind. But some look upon that goal of human life as the cessation of all sorrow, some take it as the realization of Self through the distinction between the real and the unreal, some others consider it as sheer non-existence (*shunya*), and yet others conceive of it as the height of happiness reached in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures.

The unique state of serene peace can be attained only in a non-dual state. So long as man recognizes an entity outside himself—in other words, so long as a world and a God exist apart from him, he cannot have complete detachment or absolute peace. Nothingness (*shunya*), because it is nothing, cannot be Peace, for the existent and the non-existent cannot be placed on the same footing.

By mistake, people find in comparative peace unlimited peace and liberation, fulfillment of life's purpose. Absolute peace can exist in nothing except *Brahman*, which is the negation of duality.

Source: *Wandering in the Himalayas*



### His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda

Our self-unfoldment, inner growth, personality, and charm can burst forth in all their fragrance and joy only when we plan for, and bring about, an actual translation of our idealism into our day-to-day life. We must live what we believe in. We must act upon our cherished ideas. We must strive to live our accepted philosophy of life.

As seekers and sincere aspirants to a higher cultural life, you all must learn to translate your ideal picture of yourself in your work life. This is only possible through regular self-examination and long, careful introspection. Each day, see the drama of your own daily life thrown upon the screen of your own mind. Watch. Edit the play; take new decisions; discover the faults; avoid them in your next 24 hours of life.

Thus, one by one, weed out your weaknesses in your physical contacts and dealings, in your mental feelings and emotions, and in your intellectual estimation of things and beings.

Source: *Chinmaya Udgosh*, May 2005



### His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda

*Mauna*, or “silence,” is observed at many levels. The grosser is at the level of speech. For beginners, this helps prevent unnecessary wastage of energy due to worldly gossip.

A reflective mind is also said to be in *mauna*. When a deeply contemplative mind discusses or investigates within about one's roots, it is true Self-inquiry. With subtle discrimination, we distinguish that which we are, from that which we are not. I am not the body, senses, or mind. I am the witnessing Consciousness. These thoughts should not be the repetition of learned words,

but the realization of a fact.

For example, under the influence of alcohol, I thought I was a beggar. When I am sober, I realize I am not. Such an assertive flow of thoughts, regarding my true nature, removed the wrong notion and habits of the mind, which is used to living as a limited entity. With continuous practice, these thoughts lead us to an egoless state of being.



Source: *Sat Darshan*

[Click here for Pujya Guruji's Itinerary](#)



## Life is a Gift, Living an Art

Talk by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

*Transcribed by CM Chicago; edited for print*

Thinking is a special faculty of human beings and it is undeniably a gift. When we know how to think, our problems can be solved, resolved, or dissolved. If we do not know how to think, more and more problems can crop up, and existing problems can become complicated.

What is a gift? If I go to a shop and buy something for myself, is that a gift? A lady bought herself a mink coat and told her husband, “I bought this as a gift from you, for my birthday, because you will not remember!” If we buy something for ourselves, then it is a purchase not a gift. And if we make something and give it to ourselves, it also cannot be called a gift. The fundamental element is that a gift has to be given by someone else. It should also be given out of love. A bribe involves giving, but is not a gift since there is an ulterior motive or expectation. A donation may also not be a gift if someone has asked us or forced us to give it. When giving comes from the heart and out of love, when no one demands and yet you give and feel like giving, then it is a gift.

As living beings, it is clear that we have life in us, but we cannot claim any right over it. The fact that we are living enables functions like seeing, hearing, feeling, acting, reacting, responding, and achieving. Without life, what can one do? Life is most precious. When I get up, I feel that I am alive, and when I go to sleep, I have the hope that I will wake up.

The medical profession, which helps sustain life, evokes so much respect in everyone because life is so precious. We are willing to pay any price to preserve life. Once, a bone got stuck in a man’s throat while he was eating and he almost choked. A doctor surgically removed the bone and saved the man’s life. When the man asked the doctor how much he should pay him in fees, the doctor replied, “Pay me at least half of what you were willing to pay when the bone was still in your

throat.” Life is so precious that we are willing to pay any price for it.

Everything else is possible only when there is life in us. I did not buy this life. I cannot say that my parents gave it to me, as this is also not possible. I did not create it and cannot take credit for it. I created a lot of confusion in my life, but I did not create life. The people I know also cannot take credit for it. It is a gift—but from whom? Who gave it to me? People with faith say God gave it. Atheists say Nature gave it. Whether it is Nature’s gift or God’s gift, it is a gift. And whenever we receive such a precious present, we must know how to use it.

It is very easy to abuse, misuse, not use, or even destroy life. While making good use of life is difficult, destroying it is easy. Gautama Buddha was once going through a forest where Angulimala lived. Angulimala killed people and wore a necklace made of their fingers. No one had the courage to pass through that forest. When Angulimala saw Buddha, he was surprised, as there was no fear in Buddha. He was totally calm and collected.

He asked Gautama Buddha, “Are you not afraid? My name is Angulimala!”

Buddha replied, “Yes, I have heard of you. What do you do?”

He said, “I kill.”

Buddha said, “Great indeed is your strength!”

He gave Angulimala a branch of a tree and asked him to break it. Angulimala broke it.

Then, Buddha asked him, “Can you join it back and make it a living thing?” Angulimala said, “No, I cannot do that.”



Buddha said, “Then what is so great about your strength? You can only destroy and kill, but you cannot give life.”

Angulimala fell at Buddha’s feet and was a changed person.

Life surely has a greater purpose. We always say, “Thank you,” upon receiving gifts. We feel obliged, and are grateful, for the material things we receive. Then should we not be more grateful for the most fundamental gift we have received: Life itself? We are thankful for a wristwatch, but who gave us the wrist? When a child is born, the first thing we all want to know is, “Is it alive?” Then, we check every limb.

Who gave us life? God gave us life, and we must thank Him. We repeatedly thank others, but how many times do we remember to thank Him? Some even deny God’s existence or destroy that precious gift of life.

A little boy received a violin as a birthday gift from his uncle. After ten days, he met the uncle again and told him that he really liked the violin.

The uncle asked, “So are you enjoy playing the violin?”

The boy said. “No, but my mother gives me 5 rupees each day for not playing it during the daytime, and my father gives me 5 rupees for not playing it at night!”

If I own a violin, it does not make me a violinist—only a violin carrier. But there is a possibility that melodious music can emerge with proper instruction and training. Talent and skill blossom only with practice. A violin is a gift, but playing the violin is an art.

We have received life as a gift, but what are we doing with it? It is extremely important that we understand the purpose of life. This is a very serious topic. Learning how to live life is a life-long process. We cannot ever say that we know everything about living life and that there is nothing more to learn. Every experience is a teacher. Life is wonderful.

First, we have to recognize that life is a gift and a blessing. The equipment we have—the body, sense organs, mind, and intellect—we can’t take credit for any of them, because everything is a gift. All actions are possible only because of the gift of life. So what

do we do with what we have? In spite of having this precious life, we say we do not have anything.

Once, a boy was crying, saying that he had no desire to live. An elderly person was passing by and asked him why he wanted to die.

The boy said, “I do not have anything. I do not have money. I do not have a house. I do not have parents. I want to die.”

The elderly person offered to give help, but wanted something in return, as anything received for free does not hold much value.

The boy said, “But I just told you that I do not have anything.”

The man convinced the boy that he would not be asked for anything he did not have. The man then said, “I will give you 10,000 rupees if you cut off your left arm and give it to me. And I will give you 20,000 rupees if you cut off both your hands and give them to me.”

The boy was stunned and said, “If I give you both my hands, then with what will I receive the money?”

The man said, “Oh! I see that you not only have hands, but also have brains to think. I can offer one lakh rupees for your eyes, but you will ask, ‘Then how will I see?’ Now do you realize that you already have wealth worth millions? Can you still say that you do not have anything?”

Does man make the money or does money make the man? No matter how much we have, we still say that we do not have anything. Even when we give all we have to our children, if they keep saying, “What have you given to me? I do not have anything,” how would we feel? In the same way when we say, “I do not have anything,” we are being ungrateful to God, who has given us everything. Gurudev said it beautifully, “What you have is His gift to you, but what you do with what you have is your gift to Him.”

So what can we gift Him? A father used to bring toys for his son, who would always break them. One day, the father brought an unbreakable toy. The next day, he was amazed to see that the child had used the unbreakable toy to break everything else around him. This is how we live—destroying everything with the gift God has given us. Is this the right way of living?

So, how should we live? This is an important question. Living is an art. When someone has given us a gift with love, we should use it in such a way that the giver feels his gift was used well and wishes he had given more.

There was a kingdom where the constitution allowed the ruler to rule for only five years. For those five years, he could rule in any way he wished. There was no opposition, no coup, and no election. No one could impeach him or remove him. He had unrestrained and absolute power. One king lived those five years in indulgence. He believed life was for enjoyment—just to eat, drink, and be merry. Soon, the five years were over, and the king was thrown into a forest on the other side of a river, which was infested with wild animals.

Another king came to power. He knew the fate of the first king. This king was so scared that he could not do or enjoy anything. He was worried and fearful all the time. At the end of his five years, he had a heart attack even as he was being taken away to the forest.

The next king decided to enjoy for some time and worry later. After three years of indulgent living, he spent the rest of his time in worry and fear. He, too, met the same fate as his predecessors.

The next king who came into power was bright and brilliant. He ruled justly and also enjoyed all the royal comforts. Everyone loved him, and after five years, his subjects did not want him to leave. But he was not greedy. He followed words of the constitution and left happily. He went in style. He ordered the boat carrying him to be decorated.

The boatman was surprised and asked, “O King, why are you so happy? All the others I took before you were so miserable! Do you know what horror awaits you on the other side of the river?”

The king answered that during his rule he had planned and established a forest department. The forest had been cleared and a new kingdom had been built on the other side of the river. He would now go and rule over it. The boatman also decided to accompany the noble king. On reaching the other side of the river, they found a beautiful kingdom, and its people were eager to welcome the farsighted king!

All of us have a limited time to live. We have to choose what we make of this time. Some live to

eat, drink, and be merry, and do not bother to think. Such people are afraid of serious thinking. A good example is meetings. They are held to make decisions, but no serious thought is given to the task at hand, and time is wasted in eating, drinking coffee, and chatting. All decisions remain pending. This is why a meeting is defined as “one in which minutes are kept and hours are wasted.” Thinking is a difficult process. We have to face the reality of life and cannot escape. Most people, due to lack of proper thinking, do not know how to face situations. Some get into depression or commit suicide.

One person asked God what surprised Him about the world the most. God said the most surprising thing is: People live as though they are never going to die. And when they die, it is as though they had never lived. People always ask if there is life after death. But more important is to ask how to live.

The second category is of people who are always worried and afraid. They are pessimists, and even when they are happy, they are worried that sorrow may befall them. They cannot enjoy anything in life. It is said: One should borrow money from a pessimist, because he never expects it back. Such people are positive about only one thing, and that is, that things will not work out.

The third category consists of people who believe in first *bhoga* (enjoyment), then yoga. They believe that one can remember God after retirement when there is nothing else to do. Enjoyment comes first. But later, the mind does not work. We may want to do *bhoga* and then yoga, but after much enjoyment (*bhoga*) comes disease (*roga*), not yoga. This results in sadness (*viyoga*).

The fourth type is the wise man. He knows from the beginning that life is finite and that any moment can be the last moment. He knows that he should live his life happily and productively. This is the best way of living. Such living becomes a blessing for him as well as for others. Someone may ask, “Why should I remember that I have to die?” Well, there are deadlines in business contracts, aren’t there? A person who remembers that he has to finish before the deadline remains focused and has clear priorities. He does what is most important, and does not get distracted by superfluous and meaningless activity. If clarity of mind is not there, then we lose the purpose behind life and work.

So what is the right way of living? Only an outline can be given, and each of us needs to think deeply.

We have to know that our lifespan is limited, and that we must live to make our achievements eternal and glorious. The last king in our story lived in such a way. He established another kingdom where there was no limiting term. The Bible says that the kingdom of heaven is in you. Such a kingdom is everlasting. Lord Shri Krishna says in *Bhagavad Gita* that the right way of living is to seek Him. “*Anityam asukham lokam imam prapya bhajasva mam*: Having obtained this non-permanent and sorrowful world, seek Me.” (*Bhagavad Gita* 9.33)

This statement means that this world we live in is only a passing show and has no permanent happiness; it has only an appearance or illusion of happiness. Worldly joys never put an end to our sorrows and never give us peace of mind. They give us comforts, pleasures, thrills, and excitement, but they tire and drain us completely. There is no end to sorrow.

Bhagavan says *bhajasva mam*, or “seek Me,” the Eternal. Make use of the resources and seek Me. The last king made use of all his resources. He did not waste away, destroy, or run away from life. We have to use what we have to the fullest. There is a beautiful verse in Sanskrit:

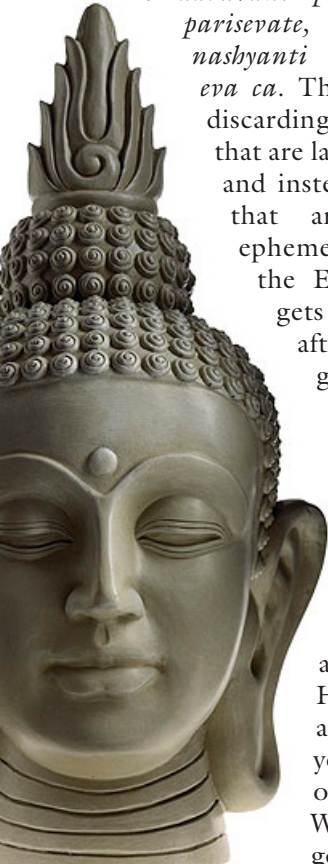
*Yo dhruvani parityajya adhruvam  
parisevate, dhruvani tasya  
nashyanti adhruvam nashtam  
eva ca.* That person who lives  
discarding and ignoring things  
that are lasting and permanent,  
and instead runs after things  
that are temporary and  
ephemeral, he never seeks  
the Eternal, so he never  
gets the Eternal. He goes  
after the temporary and  
gets what is temporary.  
So, he has lost from  
both sides. The  
temporary gets  
destroyed anyway.

Now, what is  
permanent? Great  
values and virtues  
are permanent.  
However, valuables  
are impermanent. Do  
you want to be a man  
of values or valuables?  
What we call valuable  
goods are no good,

and they will be lost. What lasts are man’s values in life. Even in today’s world, where the dollar is powerful and people run after it, only a man of sacrifices, a man of great ideals and character is respected. We may applaud a person for what he has, but we respect one for what he is. The difference between what you have and what you are must be understood. You may only want to have valuables all the time, without caring for any values, but the valuables will not last and will be lost. Even the business world recognizes credibility and ethics. People with values are respected and make progress in any field.

Right living is an art. You may call it a science if you choose. It is to understand that values are more important than valuables. We have to make good use of all things in life. They should not be misused, abused, or unused, but used to bless ourselves and others. This is the right way of living. *Bhagavad Gita* teaches us this art of right living. Unfortunately, people read the *Gita* when a person dies. Whom will it benefit? The person is dead; he cannot hear. The relatives are weeping; they cannot hear. The priest who is appointed to read does so for money, so he does not heed the message. The *Gita*’s message is profound and practical; it teaches us how to live. People procrastinate and say they will read it in their old age. What is the point of learning how to live when it is time to leave? The work of our Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji, through Chinmaya Mission, gives us this knowledge, this art of living. It teaches us how to transform our life right here and now. There is no such promise that after you die you will go to heaven—the heavenly abode is right here. The best decision is to make this life heavenly and blissful.

This is why in Chinmaya Mission we focus on inculcating noble values (*samskaras*) in our children. And when they grow up and become teenagers, and later young adults, we give them the rationale and reasoning pertaining to the important aspects of life. As they grow, reflect, contemplate, and mature through experiences in life, they realize the truth in those teachings. Then, as senior citizens, it is possible for them to abide in that knowledge. This is a beautiful way of living and I urge you all to think about this issue more seriously. Then you will see the joy of life. You will realize how precious this gift of life is. The true art of living is to know how to live it beautifully, so that life becomes a blessing for us and the world around us.







**16<sup>TH</sup> CHINMAYA MAHASAMADHI FAMILY CAMP 2009**

**JULY 29 - AUGUST 3, 2009 • TORONTO, CANADA**

# *The* **ESSENCE** *of* **BHAGAVATAM**

**Explore the Wisdom. Discover the Divine. Transform your Life.**



**SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM -  
AN ANCIENT TREASURE FOR  
THE MODERN AGE.**

Srimad Bhagavatam is the living embodiment of Lord Krishna. At the heart of this great scripture lies the profound spiritual philosophy of Vedanta. The enchanting stories of Bhagavatam beautifully illustrate how to live an enriched and fulfilling life.

**Spiritual Master, Swami Tejomayananda,** will inspire and lead you to discover your own Divine nature. Join us for an unforgettable one week journey that will awaken your devotion and transform your life.



*"There is nothing that you need to know about life that is not found in Srimad Bhagavatam."*

— **SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA, SPIRITUAL HEAD**  
*CHINMAYA MISSION WORLDWIDE*

## **VENUE:**

**Delta Meadowvale Resort and Conference Centre**  
6750 Mississauga Rd,  
Mississauga, ON L5N 2L3  
(15 min from Toronto  
Pearson Airport)

## **UNIQUE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & ADULTS:**

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✿ Meditation & Yoga    | ✿ Cultural Programs     |
| ✿ Lectures & Workshops | ✿ Children's Activities |
| ✿ Discussion Forums    | ✿ Banquet Celebration   |
| ✿ Sports & Recreation  | ✿ Mahasamadhi Puja      |



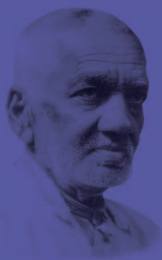
**REGISTRATION:** Day and full-week registration available.

**For complete info, pricing and to register, please visit:**  
[chinmayatoronto.org](http://chinmayatoronto.org) | [chinmayaniagara.org](http://chinmayaniagara.org)

**\*REGISTER NOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LOW CDN \$ EXCHANGE RATE AND EARLY BIRD PRICING.**

**Register  
online  
NOW!**

## Our Teachers



**Swami Shantananda**  
Princeton



**Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda**



**Swami Sharanananda**  
Chicago



**Swamini Shivapriyananda**  
Toronto



**Swami Siddhananda**  
Philadelphia



**Swami Sharanananda**  
Chicago



**Swamini Shivapriyananda**  
Toronto



**Swami Prakashananda**  
Trinidad



**Brahmacharini  
Aparna Chaitanya**  
Miami



**Brahmachari  
Uddhav Chaitanya**  
Dallas



**Brahmacharini  
Bhamati Chaitanya**  
Boston



**Brahmachari  
Prabhat Chaitanya**  
Toronto



**Acharya  
Vilasini Balakrishnan**  
Washington



**Acharya Vivek Gupta**  
Niagara Falls



**Srimati Lakshmi Sukumar**  
San Diego

## Camp Programs

### Adult Programs

Free yourself from the ordinary by immersing yourself in the extraordinary! Our diverse schedule is designed to encourage learning and not compromise on enjoying. From morning to evening, being in the company of our Acharyas will make a lasting impression.

**General Program from 6am to 10pm including:**

- Meditation
- Satsang w/ Acharyas
- Srimad Bhagavatam: Discourses by Guruji
- Sports & Recreation
- Rest
- Discussions & Workshops
- Bhajans & Chanting
- Aarti
- Social Time
- Cultural Programs

### Young Adults Programs (18-30 years)

Unleash your true potential by interacting with like minded teachers and friends. The many different activities planned will intrigue you and keep you coming back for more. For a young adult to have the opportunity to learn from an ardent Spiritual Master such as Swami Tejomayananda is indeed rare.

**General program from 6am to 10pm similar to the adult program shown above.**

### Children and Youth Programs (4-17 years)

Friends, fiction and field trips what better way to uncover the glories of Srimad Bhagavatam. From meditation to movies every moment of every day will be filled with fun! Acharyas from all over the world have been invited to teach and inspire children and parents alike.

**General Program from 7am to 10pm including:**

- Meditation
- Yoga
- Workshops
- Family Time
- Field Trip
- Sports & Recreation
- Arts and Crafts
- Drama
- Games and Movies
- Cultural Programs

**AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup>**

**Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Day Program**

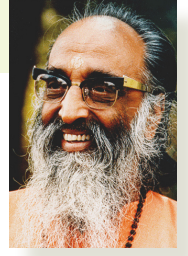
**Would you like to sponsor any part of this event?**

Please contact **Mukesh Tanna** at **416-520-7031** or visit [chinmayatoronto.org](http://chinmayatoronto.org) for details.  
*To Give is Love. To Give is Life.*

For complete info, pricing and to register, please visit:

[chinmayatoronto.org](http://chinmayatoronto.org) | [chinmayanagar.org](http://chinmayanagar.org)





# The Flag of Realization

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

*Continued from CMW News, January 2009*

When I see my own Self as the Life in all, I see that great principle of Consciousness is me. I am That alone. For such a one, the world of plurality now appears to him as a dream in himself. On awakening, the dream has rolled into the waker. The pluralistic, phenomenal world has rolled back into himself. The Reality is clearly seen—not with one's eyes, but as an experience.

“Experiencing one's own Self in all beings and all beings in the Self, one attains the Highest *Brahman*, and not by any other means” (*Kaivalya Upanishad*, 10). Pure Infinitude, the Highest, the Transcendent, is approached and experienced, not by any other means, but by meditation. One can reach it only through meditation, through halting the mind, when one realizes the merger of the universe into oneself. Thereafter, when one comes back to the awareness of the body, mind, and intellect, one sees the same old world of OET (objects, emotions, and thoughts), but around that chaotic world, there is now an aura of divinity. One recognizes everything as an expression of the same mighty Self.

By the experience of Oneness within ourselves alone can we realize the ultimate Reality and not by any other means. That is the substratum. That is all that was and That is all that will be. That is Life within me. This universe is an extension of my Self. This experience is called the highest Reality, the moment of Realization.

A man of full realization instinctively becomes a lover of the whole universe. Like spring, his is a love which demands no cause to flower into a wealth of blossoms. He who has discovered that the Self within himself is none other than the all-pervading, non-dual Consciousness. He instantaneously discovers it to be in the core of all pluralistic forms around him. Live as he does in this intimate understanding of Oneness, he cannot but love

others as his very own Self. In his case, universal love is not an art to be practiced, not a formality to be followed, not a goal to be reached—it is his very life breath. This can be brought within the understanding of the laity through a comparison.

There can be no occasion for you to feel a constant hatred for any part of your own body. Even if your hand or leg gives you a dose of pain, your anger toward it cools down when you realize that it is but your own hand or leg. For instance, if the finger of your right hand accidentally pokes your right eye, it is a cause of one part of your body giving pain to another part. These can be moments of terrible protest of anger mixed with pain. But almost immediately you realize that it is your own forefinger that is the culprit, and you cool down to a spirit of mercy and tolerance, and paternally ignore both the offender and the offended. It would be foolish to punish the finger, for the pain to it would be more pain to yourself only. Similarly, when one has realized that the Reality within him is the pith and substance that constitutes all others in the universe, love and kindness are natural and continuous in one's bosom for all in the world.

On understanding this essence of Truth in ourselves, we gain a freedom from the sense of finitude that was ours so long as we identified ourselves with the body, mind, and intellect. Since these disturbances can no longer affect a man of perfection, it is one of the surest symptoms of knowledge and saintliness in an individual who is, under all provocative circumstances, infinitely at peace with himself and with the world. Therefore, a *santa* is a man of true broadmindedness, which is the natural outcome of kindness, tolerance etc. This is the Flag of Realization.

To say that a *mahapurusha* (man of wisdom), after realization, casting off his desires, will retire, totally, to a dark cave in the Himalayas, to count



his days of forced existence in this corporeal form, is fallacious. He may dwell in the cave or may walk about in the marketplace. Where he lives is of no concern to him. Wherever he be, whether in a jail among criminals, or among devotees in a temple, irresistibly, instinctively, he will spread around him an aura of knowledge, light, cheer, joy, and peace. It is his very nature—just as heat is the nature of fire, for we cannot say that fire creates or generates heat.

Adi Shankara gives us an inimitable example in *Vivekachudamani* when he compares mahatmas and the touch of joy they lend to the world with the spring season. When spring comes, it does not court every tree to bring forth its flowers, nor does it reach the world and canvas the moon to be brighter, the sky to be clearer and cleaner, the grass to be thicker, and every heart to be more joyous. The presence of spring and the concomitant conditions are complementary. The one cannot be without the other.

Similarly, it is for the mahatma to spread knowledge and cheer around him. And whenever true seekers reach him, they are irresistibly drawn into his orbit to bask in the warmth of his personality.

The man of realization, travelling in his own experience, is one who, unasked, helps others to cross the shores of delusion and sorrow. Therefore, to surrender to such a one, requesting him to save us from our misunderstandings, is to assure for ourselves a true liberation—almost a luxury liner to Truth!



## 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 Devanagiri (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!

Visit [www.easysanskrit.chinfo.org](http://www.easysanskrit.chinfo.org)

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



Blessed Self,

## From the Desk of Swami Tejomayananda

Hari Om! *Mahashivaratri* greetings!

I am pleased to inform you all that the inauguration of the newly built Shri Akhileshwar Mahadev Temple in Prayag was most beautiful.

On this holy occasion of *Mahashivaratri*, the following were initiated into *sannyasa*:

1. Br. Vishwesh Chaitanya from CM Kanpur: Swami Gangeshananda
2. Brni. Mukta Chaitanya from Chinmaya Tapovan Trust Sidhbari: Swamini Achalananda
1. Brni. Vineeta Chaitanya from Chinmaya Tapovan Trust Sidhbari: Swamini Pramananda
3. Brni. Bhakti from CM Nelson, New Zealand: Swamini Amritananda
2. Shalini *tai*, a *vanaprasthi* from Kolhapur, who will do *tapas* in an ashram  
in Uttarkashi: Swamini Haripriyananda

Two of the *brahmacharins* who had completed the last course and had not taken *brahmacharya diksha* were also given *diksha*:

1. Brni. Jyoti teaching  
in Chinmaya Vidyalaya Shamshabad:  
Brni. Triveni Chaitanya
2. Br. Sujeet from CM Bhubaneswar:  
Br. Sarthak Chaitanya

With Prem and Om,  
*Tejomayananda*



CHINMAYA MISSION® WEST

# MARRIAGE - A MELODY

## YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES SEMINAR

*Blessed Self,*



Hari OM. For the first time ever, Chinmaya Mission West is pleased to announce "Marriage - A Melody," a two-day seminar exclusively for young married couples between the ages of 25 and 38 years (either spouse). We are in challenging times that can cause ripples in any family's relationships. Come explore with His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda and Chinmaya Mission Acharyas on how Vedanta can strengthen our relationships and help us find deeper satisfaction amid life's challenges.

The seminar sessions will be in the form of discourses, group discussions, Q&A, and interactive workshops. Topics addressed will include the following:

- Vision of Life for Married Householders
- Joys and Challenges of Married Life
- Parenting
- Dealing with Emotions and Relations

---

**When:** July 25-26, 2009

---

**Where:** Chinmaya Avantika

Chinmaya Mission Ann Arbor, 4760 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108

Cost: \$200 per couple (charges for hotel room, if needed, will be extra)

A block of hotel rooms at discounted rates have been reserved for this event. This event is limited to the first 100 couples.

Register online at [www.chinmayamission.org/annarbor](http://www.chinmayamission.org/annarbor) and click on "Event Registration."

For more information, contact:

Dr. AppaRao Mukkamala: [apparao@chinmayamission.org](mailto:apparao@chinmayamission.org), (810) 257-9828

Acharya Sharada Kumar: [sharada@chinmayamission.org](mailto:sharada@chinmayamission.org), (734) 834-1609

Bala Murthy: [murthybala@aol.com](mailto:murthybala@aol.com), (248) 930-1792





# a dialogue

## on *viveka*

with brahmachari prabodh chaitanya

**s:** how does one think and live this in daily life, especially when crises or tragedies overwhelm one's life? are most people capable of such an uphill climb of *viveka*? it seems easier for most to meander through endless fields of joys and sorrows, and just keep moving along as is.

**t:** one must start this practice when there are a minimum number of crises, or possibilities of crises, in one's life. to start with, one must distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad. thereafter, slowly one will be able to see "i" as different from the world, and then, even the five personalities.

in a crisis, the application of this *viveka* will be tested. it is tough, but the gain is so, so, so great that if someone really wants to remain happy all the time, one must make a serious attempt. With continued practice, one finds it is no longer so difficult.

there is no point in crying over everything in life. and worldly joys last only a few days. even people who think it is an uphill climb practice *viveka* in daily life, when they choose which shop to buy particular things, which house to buy, which airline to travel by, whom to marry, etc. all these decisions are based on some *viveka*, and the pursuit is for happiness alone. one may not think of one's goal as *brahman*, but what we all are pursuing is one and the same. so we just need to change the direction of our *viveka* from distinguishing between two worldly objects to distinguishing between subject and object.

**s:** i wait for a time of "minimum crisis" to practice *viveka*, but such a time never seems to come. life is always lived in a rush. no doubt, there are many factors at play here for lack of practice, laziness included. how does one get into the habit of practicing *viveka*? does it mean there's constant reminding chatter in the back of my head about what is right and wrong?

**t:** just as we have developed the habit of thinking the wrong way, we can develop the habit of thinking the right way. in the beginning, it will be deliberate attempt, but eventually, it will be natural. if one's

**student:** what is *viveka*?

**teacher:** *viveka* is the ability to distinguish things. the simplest example is: when you see red and blue balls kept together in a basket, *viveka* is being able to separately identify them. *viveka* can be between right and wrong, good and bad, *dharma* and *adharma*, related work and non-related work, etc.

**s:** what is the vedantic application here? "distinguishing" means focusing on the separateness and differences of things, whereas vedanta is about not differentiating despite the differences.

**t:** vedantic application at the start of a seeker's journey is to know that i am different from the physical personality, physiological personality, psychological personality, intellectual personality, and eventually spiritual personality. when i realize what "i" am, that i am beyond these five personalities, then the next stage is to know "i" as real and all else as an appearance. it is like the snake on the rope: these are not two entities, but one appearing as two. the realization is, "i am not distinct from all. i am all." this is the culmination of *viveka*.

knowledge base is properly prepared on what is right and what is wrong, the reminding chatter will trigger on its own, without effort.

for example, if i go shopping for a small umbrella that i know costs \$10, and someone tries to sell one to me for \$25, i won't buy it. to not buy it, i don't have to keep thinking about the umbrella price all the time—I just know that \$25 is a rip off. likewise, if i do something wrong or come across something wrong, the alarm in the intellect, which has the knowledge of the scriptures, will start ringing.

if i am not able to follow my intellect because my mind is pushier and uncontrolled, i need to better discipline the mind and senses. a lot of effort is needed here. a strong-willed person with the readiness to sacrifice other things will achieve victory in this, in due time.

s: but thereafter, how does one not become judgmental after living so much of “this is good; this is bad”? *viveka* is for oneself, yes? but do i not need to teach my kids right *viveka* as a parent? how do i ensure my *viveka* is right and should be passed on to my kids? and how to protect others in general from “my *viveka*”?

t: *viveka* is for me and the objects, people, and situations that i come across in my life. as a seeker, if i become judgmental in order to make right choices, it is not completely wrong. we do need to teach our kids about right *viveka* and how to make the right choices. the scriptures are the best guide to teach us what is right and needed at what time, in what situation—this is knowledge of *dharma*.

the best way to minimize being too judgemental about others is know that everyone has weaknesses and that god takes care of everyone. so i don't need to worry about others. i need to worry about where i am going wrong and what i need to correct. if i am a parent, i have a responsibility to my kids, but beyond that, i do not need to form strong opinions about others. i have to remember that each individual evolves in *sadhana* in his own way.

s: i have to read scriptures in order to know what is good/bad, etc. how do i convince myself that this is more important than taking my kid to ballet and giving her all the things i never had? how do i make time for studying scriptures when it is hard enough to find ten minutes of meditation time?

t: it is difficult to find time for things that are not important to us. if we know that certain things will help us in the long run, we will be able to find time for them. even the longest journeys start with small steps, and all seekers who became saints or realized masters started with these small steps. once we bring this understanding into our radar, we will start realizing the place for *sadhana* in our life.

yes, it may be hard for you to find meditation time at this point in your life, but meditation is not the essential need at the start of one's spiritual journey. *viveka* is.

s: how does one think or act while constantly saying, “this is unreal.” to a beginner, it sounds dry and dull, like a life that is not supposed to be energetically lived and enjoyed. what is the right understanding and practice of “the world is unreal”?

t: for a seeker who has just started spiritual practices, everything is very much “real.” the idea of it being unreal is too far for anyone who thinks, “i am this body; i have my family; etc.” such a seeker needs to go one step at a time.

basic enjoyments are provided by the world and are approved by the vedas. there is no need to deny yourself of anything. right now, start by restricting your enjoyments to what is *dharmik* and refrain from overindulgence. thereafter, learn to reduce your objective and grosser enjoyments so you can move on to higher and subtler enjoyments. if “right and wrong” *viveka* is not applied, “real and unreal” *viveka* will never be understood in its proper perspective.

“my world” is dearest to me, not “your world” or “your problems.” when it is said, “the world is unreal,” what is meant is, “my mind and my ego are unreal. the sense of i-ness and my-iness are unreal.” where there is no “me and my, you and yours,” there is no duality or dualism. this one-without-a-second is given the name of *brahman*.

s: you said to “restrict enjoyments to what is allowed.” what is allowed?

t: here, “allowed” means, according to my stage in life, my work environment, the world and surroundings that i live in, certain enjoyments are approved. for example, if i am a married *grhastha*, i can possess various objects, enjoy with family, and try to perform meritorious acts that help others

and the world. all this is allowed. at the same time, i should not cross the limits of scriptural and societal guidelines.

s: but there are so many different societal guidelines and so many seemingly contradictory scriptural statements. where do i go to get right understanding so that i practice right *viveka*? where do i go and what do i do when i am confused?

t: as far as basic guidelines are concerned, there are not many contradictions. taking examples from the lives of people who are in the similar stage and environment, who have better composure of mind, is another way of practicing correct *viveka*. ultimately, our own conscience will tell us whether or not we are doing the right thing. seek guidance from learned people when confused.

s: and what will my life look like as a result of this constant reminding myself that my mind and my ego are unreal?

t: when one sees mind and ego as unreal, the disturbances caused by them will be least problematic, if at all. and thus, one's peace or equilibrium will not be disturbed. this is not easy to achieve, but is the goal of life.

s: how does this goal relate to self-realization?

t: this goal allows me to know that my true self is different from the mind and ego. this goal leads me to abide in the self. without this distinction, one will never be able to experience freedom from the mind.

---

to be continued



Mark your calendars to celebrate Winter Break  
with Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda at the  
Chinmaya Family Camp in Dallas, Texas,  
December 24-30, 2009!

## Chinmaya Family Camp 2009

Conducted by:

His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda,  
Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Hosted by:

Chinmaya Mission Dallas Fort-Worth

Texts: *Kaivalya Upanishad* and  
*Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 17 (The Yoga of Three-fold Faith)

Features:

- Satsanga with Swami Shantananda,  
Brahmachari Uddhav Chaitanya,  
and other CMW Acharyas
- Children's and Youth classes and activities
- Meditation, yoga, bhajans, cultural programs
- Comfortable rooms  
and delicious vegetarian meals

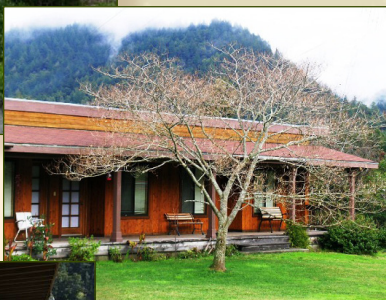
At the end of every year, an ideal getaway from the rigors of the daily routine is a peaceful and joyful family vacation. This year, you do not have to go through the rigmarole of vacation planning: Just leave it to the Sevaks of CM Dallas-Fort Worth! We look forward to planning for you and your family a memorable sojourn with Pujya Guruji in Texas's beautiful winter settings. Pack your bags and come to camp to recharge yourself and cruise through 2010!

Visit our website in May/June 2009 to get details:  
[www.chinmayamission.org/dallas](http://www.chinmayamission.org/dallas)



# Dharma Sevak Course

June 13-27, 2009  
Krishnalaya, CMW Retreat Center  
Piercy, Northern California



Conducted by

**Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda**

Text

*Panchadashi*, Chapter 7

## Registration

(includes lodging/boarding; excludes transportation)

- Full Course only: \$1,200 per person
- This camp is for adults only, and is not a family camp. Space is limited. Register early.
- Arrive at San Francisco Airport on June 13. Our chartered bus will leave for Piercy at 2 p.m.
- Departure will be on June 28 at 5:30 a.m., for arrival at San Francisco Airport at 11 a.m.

To get more information or to register (online registration is available), go to [www.chinmayamission.org/krishnalaya](http://www.chinmayamission.org/krishnalaya).

For specific questions, e-mail [info-krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org](mailto:info-krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org) or call (707) 207-5011.

# travelogue

## The Grounds for Fulfillment Life as a *Brahmachari* in the 13<sup>th</sup> Vedanta Course

by Acharya Vivek Gupta

*Continued from CMW News, January 2009*

*B*harat

In addition to the far from ordinary schedule already shared, there were even more extraordinary happenings at the ashram, the grandest of which was celebrating *Mahashivaratri*. According to the *shastras*, *Mahashivaratri* is one of the most *sattvik* of all *utsavas* (festivals), and so, one of the most important for a spiritual seeker—especially one residing in the home of Lord Jagadishvara. On this day, over 100,000 devotees pay homage at the *mandir*, with a line forming at 3 a.m. that does not clear until the next morning at 3 a.m. In these tremendous 24 hours, the *brahmachari* students and hundreds of Mission CHYKs and devotees facilitate the *akhanda nama japa* (unbroken chanting), *akhanda abhisheka* (unbroken oblations), traffic flow, safety, footwear collection, and above all, sanctity for an unbroken line of devotees. Unquestionably, this is a once in a lifetime experience.

Festivals from every corner of Bharat were celebrated in tune with the *brahmacharins* from their respective corners: *Hanuman Jayanti* and *Guru Purnima*, *Jagannath Ratha Yatra* and Swami Vivekananda *Jayanti*, *Onam* and *Pongal*, and on and on.

Many of the auspicious days recognized were made even more auspicious through *puja*. When it comes to rituals, most of us only have the slightest idea of why we do what we do. This lack of understanding is dispelled by Vedanta, which explains the rationale behind rituals. Our teacher, *Brahmachari Samvidji*, precisely shared with us *puja vidhi* (sequence of worship) and then gave each of us an opportunity to perform a *guru-paduka puja* during our second year.

Testing took form in many ways—initially via exams, then essays, later group discussions, and finally discourses of increasing lengths. The latter was a grueling endeavor, for to speak in front of a master



like Guruji, one becomes nothing, regardless of how learned one may be. Most survived.

Every scripture and teacher shares the same sentiment: that it is only through the guru's grace that one progresses on the spiritual path. To pay our respects to the place where Gurudev learned from his guru, Swami Tapovanji Maharaj, at the beginning of our second year in the course, we all traveled from Mumbai to Uttarkashi. Leaving the *Sandeepany* premises was not allowed without permission, and most never wanted to. Still, the adventures to Uttarkashi were eagerly anticipated by all. En route we visited many holy places and stayed at many hermitages. Finally, *Tapovan Kuti* appeared on the horizon. And this was to be home for the next month.

Our studies never ceased, only the scene changed: heat to cold, plains to mountains, Chinmaya to Tapovan. While in Uttarkashi, we had a chance to have *darshan* of Ganga Mata and glorious temples like Kashi Vishvanath. A month passed like a moment, and as we followed the Ganga east, we paid our respects at the ashrams of great spiritual masters, such as Pujya Anandamayi Maa in Haridwar, Pujya Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh, and Pujya Swami Narayana in Delhi. Bharat, like *Brahman*, is immeasurable.

### Why . . .

People often complain about how difficult it is to live in a university residence or with a spouse. This may be true, but there is always the opportunity to escape. And this is what we do. We try to run away from our mind through entertainment, intoxicants, even relationships. Having experienced all of this, living at *Sandeepany* was a thousand times more challenging, for all that we had ever depended on was taken away. No cell phones. No television. No restaurants. No friends. Only one's own mind. We were forced to live with the minimum and if we

could not handle this, we came to suffer. Again, there is no escape from this suffering, but to face it and transcend it is a mental rehabilitation and strengthening. In this purification process, more impurities are discovered and, hopefully, released—vices like intolerance, jealousy, lust, etc. We not only had to study with the same 60 faces, but also eat, serve, pray, live—a challenge few can ever fathom, let alone endure. If one discovers one is not capable of this, or if Guruji recognizes the same, one leaves or is asked to leave. For those who survive, blissful independence is the reward.

Spirituality is a framework to truly understand oneself. Presently we all think we know who we are, and we do, but only superficially. We know how our body looks, sometimes the moods of the mind, and if lucky, the ideals of the intellect. What

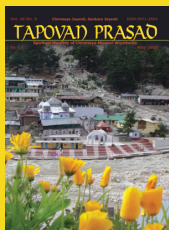
about our core, our true Nature? Once we realize there is more than the *upadhis* (equipments), our life transforms with a constant striving to know the import of the scriptures and saints on Truth and Self. This striving is fueled by questioning discontentment, which is all that the objects and beings of the world have to offer.

*Sandeepany* calls out to such seekers, and if they answer, they inevitably leave with the strength to carry themselves and others through the challenges of living. Isn't this what Gurudev did? Isn't this what Guruji does? Isn't this what the students of the 13<sup>th</sup> Vedanta Course will do? The answer is yes, yes, and yes. The purpose of Chinmaya Mission, and more specifically, *Sandeepany*, is to provide an opportunity to learn and teach. The purpose is to unleash our purpose.

*Open a window to India's ancient culture and spirituality...*

## SUBSCRIBE TO

# TAPOVAN PRASAD

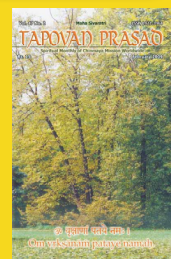
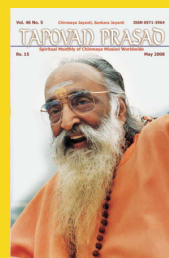


Tapovan Prasad is the international spiritual monthly magazine of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide that was initiated by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda. It bears the blessings of Swami Chinmayananda's Guru Swami Tapovan Maharaj.

Tapovan Prasad presents articles which give practical tips on spiritual life, character building, and personality development. It offers the wisdom of countless saints and sages for guidance in daily life. There are articles both for the beginners and for advanced students of Vedanta.

Tapovan Prasad also gives a glimpse into the innumerable activities of Mission centers all over the world and the announcement of upcoming events.

Set in easy, legible style, with creative illustrations and vibrant colors, the attractive layout is designed to inspire the heart and elevate the mind. Indeed, Tapovan Prasad is a must for every family, every seeker, and every Mission member.



For more details and a sneak preview of the latest issue, visit:  
[www.chinmayamission.com/magazine-tapovanprasad.php](http://www.chinmayamission.com/magazine-tapovanprasad.php)

**1 Year: \$25**

**15 Years: \$250**

To subscribe, submit your completed form and check to your local Mission center or mail them to: Tapovan Prasad, No. 2, 13th Avenue, Harrington Road, Chetput, Chennai 600 031, India.

[tapovanprasad@chinmayamission.org](mailto:tapovanprasad@chinmayamission.org)



## Mother Lakshmi to the Rescue

by Anjali Singh

Pujya Gurudev's (Swamiji's) *Gita Jnana Yajna* in March 1962 was in the heart of Delhi, in Connaught Place, where the Bank of Baroda building now stands. It was a large, open space, and thousands of people attended the talks.

Just a few days before Swamiji's talks, my father had returned from his trip abroad and gifted me a smart looking, light grey Grundig tape recorder from Germany. Few people had tape recorders then, and this particular one was a luxury, for it was the latest and best in those days. It was as large as a medium-size suitcase and weighed at least 10 or 15 kilos! Each recording spool was about 8"x 8" and had one and a half hours of recording time. My father gave me three spools.

I was thrilled with this gift. I missed hearing Swamiji, and our last meeting had been a year ago. Now, I would be able to record Swamiji's talks during this *yajna* and listen to them whenever I wanted. For this, I was overjoyed. But the 21 days of talks on the 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* meant I needed 18 more spools.

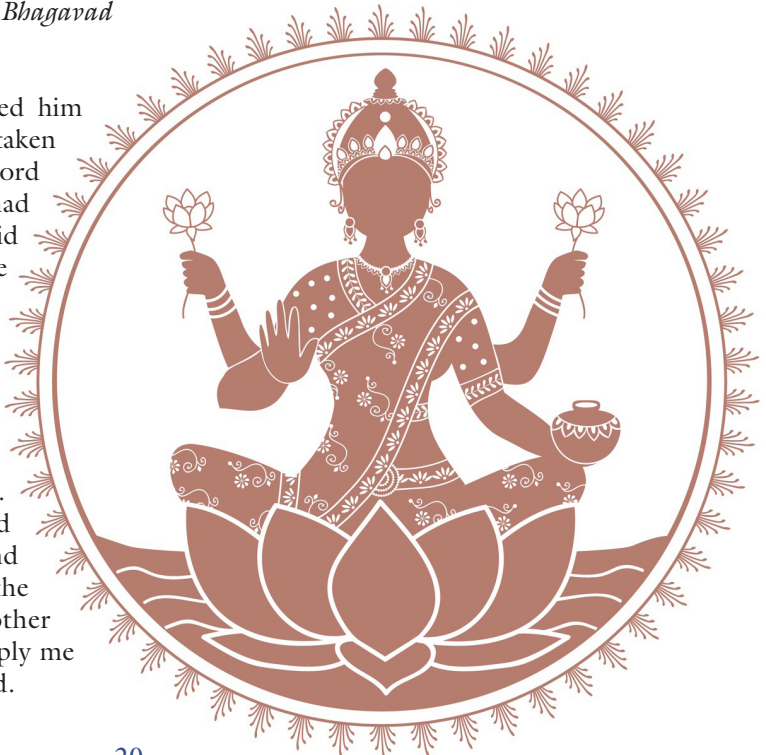
I went excitedly to my father and asked him for money to buy them. He was a little taken aback that I wanted 21 spools to record Swamiji, especially considering that he had never even heard Swamiji's talks. He said I could get five or six more and manage with those. I went off in a huff, because the thrill of getting a tape recorder had suddenly lost its charm. "What use is a tape recorder without tapes?" I asked.

To be fair to my father, I had not even given him a chance to think about it. Instead, I went to my room and cried a lot. Then I went to the bathroom and decided to take a shower to wash off the tears. While bathing, I prayed to Mother Lakshmi and asked her if she would supply me with the money, since no one else would.

In the meantime, my father reasoned with himself that at least his daughter was asking for money for a *dharmic* purpose, to record spiritual talks, and not to waste it on something frivolous. He felt so badly that he ran and knocked on my bathroom door, loudly exclaiming from outside, "You can have the money for the spools. I should not have refused you. I did not get time to think!" But I kept sulking in the bathroom for his earlier refusal (needless to say, I was a pampered and spoiled brat).

I did get all the spools I wanted, but my father never got the credit. Since that day, Mother Lakshmi has been one of my two favorite forms of Divine Mother. She, along with Mother Ganga, I truly see as "Mother." Both have generously gifted me all my material and spiritual requirements, all my life.

I attended Swamiji's talks, and every evening, the tape recorder was carried 15 minutes in advance, by helpers, and placed in the front row, with its microphone on Swamiji's table. I used to sit next to the tape recorder and had to lift my neck up at an angle to be able to see Swamiji's face above. Almost everybody, including Swamiji,



noticed the girl who would come in with this huge machine.

One day, I brought the tape recorder, but forgot the extra spool. The one I was using had very little recording time on it. I sent the driver to buy one quickly and give it to me in the front row. Swamiji's talk was in progress when the driver returned. There was quite a commotion, as he had to request many people to give way. Swamiji stopped his talk and stared at the driver all the way until he came to me and handed me the spool. Swamiji looked at me grimly. Now he knew who was the real culprit. I went red in the face and nothing would swallow me up. After another 20 seconds of stunning silence, he resumed his talk.

Years later, Swamiji told me that he did not recall our first meeting in 1961, though it had been so momentous for me, and he had even put me back into college, so I was no longer a dropout. But he remembered me from this *yajna* because of "the two frog-eyes that would pop up and sit on my table in front of me. And who could miss that suitcase of a tape recorder!" He said throughout his talks he could only see these two big eyes.

It was during these talks that I heard Swamiji relate the "Ganga Opening" story. It was a story of some people who wanted to please a foolish politician, so they invited him at a particular spot near Gangaji to cut a ribbon and declare the Ganga open. Swamiji related it so humorously and animatedly that the audience was in splits of laughter. It was the funniest joke I had heard.

I played the tape to my father at home because he was quite into the political scene in those days. He made me play the tape to many of his political friends (and was quite pleased that he had gotten me the spools). The politicians also enjoyed the joke, with the exception of one politician's wife, an Austrian, who could not understand Swamiji's heavy South Indian accent. So she asked me, "What language is he speaking in?"

In those 21 days, my basic education about Vedanta was complete and whatever I have learnt since then has been an elaboration of these talks.

A few things that Swamiji said had a particularly great impact on me. One was his explanation about the three kinds of happiness, which later helped me understand ethics properly and

eventually resulted in the book, *On Wings and Wheels*. Another was his eloquent exposition on the destructiveness of war. Most importantly, I came to know what was necessary to achieve the ultimate goal in life, and how the three *gunas* pervaded all our actions and reactions.

Some memorable quotes from these talks include:

- Religion fails when the mind fails to bring itself to the temple.
- One whose heart has the capacity to pierce beyond the intellect is a poet.
- Nature abhors vacuum. If one thing is removed, another one takes its place.
- Life is short, the path is very long, and the pinnacle is very high. We have no time.
- Among the debris of your disappointments, keep Me in mind.
- *Sattvik* happiness is an inward joy that is subjective self-satisfaction, not dependent on others' opinions.
- Sense gratification may temporarily give me happiness, but it never reaches the summit of its beginnings. Such happiness is *rajoguni*.
- A joy that is born of physical sleepiness, emotional indolence, and intellectual heedlessness, and from beginning to end is delusionary, is *tamasik* joy.
- The goal of life is a total state of complete fulfillment. The three layers of pulsating personality—the physical, emotional, and intellectual—must come to a satisfactory rest.
- Man does not usually want to share objects of the world outside. But an aesthetic thing like a sunset, he wants to share the pleasure of it with others. All moral enjoyments and aestheticism are stepped up in the enjoyment when shared with others.
- Progress without a civilization, prosperity without a culture . . . erupting more and more a painful, cancerous life and the pangs of a world war every 15-20 years. . . . The Boer War of 1903, the World

War in 1918, the World War in 1939, and now again the winds are blowing hot and cold. Between two successive wars, we say there is peace. What peace? The warring parties, in annihilating wars for four to five years, come to a stage where half the generation is liquidated and the other half becomes maimed, broken, shattered, shell-shocked. These dilapidated personalities are allowed to creep back again to their homes and recover their lives. They eat and breed again a more dilapidated, mentally shattered generation of little children. . . . What then is peace, except preparing another generation for war to mutually annihilate each other, or else materialism cannot stay. It cannot stay unless there is this propitiation of the world by the blood of mankind. In order to satisfy this monstrous devil called hatred, we are propitiating generation after generation.

- If the conquest of our selves, within our selves, is not done, the world will always be the wild brute outside.
- We must be dynamically good. We do not have the courage to live up to our convictions because of fear of others.
- Arjuna and Krishna together represent a generation of labor, motivated by a philosophy of action—a happy blending of matter and spirit.
- It is much better to have wild animals outside than to have wild animals within.
- Don't leave your capacity to earn, to produce; leave the *thirst* for creating wealth. Thirst for wealth molests our capacity.
- What you meet in life is *prarabdha*; how you meet it is *purushartha*. At this present moment, we are the product of the past. What we will be, will be the product of what we do today.
- The ideal of our Self is wonderful. The actuality of our selves is despicable.
- To fall in love is *prema*. To rise in love is devotion.

- Love is a measurement of our identification with a being.
- Every action is permeated with a touch of imperfection.
- Religion is a method of dedicating everything to the Lord, making Him, as it were, an unseen Partner in life.

Swamiji taught us how to make the mind plastic through prayer. He said prayer should come from the heart, and it can help anyone, no matter what the state of the mind. In one talk, he had the lights dimmed and asked us all to pray with him:

“O Lord, please guide me. I know not what is the goal, nor do I know what is the path by which I can improve myself. Really, I have no faith that I can improve. I am fallen, fallen to the dregs. I am helpless. I am tired. I am weary. I have no other help. I surrender unto Thee. I am confident that Thou shall help me. O Lord, take me, however unworthy I am. I have no right to call or demand Thy love, because I never loved Thee ever. I have no right to ask Thy guidance, because I never served Thee at all. And yet, helpless and hapless, O Lord, beaten out in the world outside, tired and weary, I cry out to Thee with a hope that Thou shall come to my succor and nourish me. Give me the strength to walk the path. Guide me by the hand, encourage me when I revolt, punish me when I stay back, take me by force to the higher bosoms of Thy own love. I surrender totally to Thee.”

## Where Is My Beloved Divine?

by Anonymous

It was January 1, 2009, and the time to send and receive trite e-messages of overall (yet supposedly memorable) thank-you-s, admirations, and moments now referred to as historic. When my daughter sent me such an e-mail, I understood the words and the sentiments behind them. Yet I wondered: Amid the fluffy words of “transform,” “create,” “vision,” “grow,” “inspire,” “possibilities,” and even “love, health, happiness,” where were faith, devotion, wisdom?

This January 1, I was moved to reply: “In all of this, my dear, where is Truth, beloved Divine? Who is you and who are the you-s being thanked in this appearance of a world held onto with such might? From these infinite verbs soaked in doership, floating in a seeking mind . . . run to Freedom!”

## *I Found My Way in My CIRS Notebook*

by Rohit Binjrajka

Dearest Sumati Didi,

Hari Om. I am Rohit. I had studied at CIRS from 1999 to 2002, Grades 5-8. I am sure it would be difficult for you to remember me, as there were so many Rohit-s at CIRS. Anyway, Didi, I have something to tell.

It’s strange that I remembered you yesterday, and it’s even stranger that I am trying to contact you after six years. Well, maybe it’s a blessing of sorts. Didi, in the past few months, I have become more inquisitive about religion and spirituality. It all started when a Muslim friend of mine kept telling me about the glory of Islam and continually hinted to me the evils of *sati*, the caste system, and on and on. I think he was determined to brainwash me, but all this got me thinking, and I tried to search for answers to my questions. Are we independent in our actions and judgment, or does God decide everything? Where is God? Is rebirth true? What about people who are not exposed to spiritual knowledge: Is it their fault? Will they get an equal chance at liberation?

All the same, I kept questioning elders, priests, and organizations like Iskcon, Brahmakumaris, Art of Living. Some were convincing, like Iskcon, while the philosophy of the Brahmakumaris seemed made up and unreal to me. Whatever. If I continued, it would never end. A part of me felt stupid trying to be so thirsty for knowledge, yet I also felt a genuine quest.

I now believe that God is so loving and caring, that He shows the way. Because just last month, while searching for something, I found a long, bound notebook with “Morning Classes” written on it. I immediately sat down to read the notes from

the start. It had notes of many morning classes conducted by you and some by Samahit Bhaiya, containing explanations about *Gita shlokas*, *Atman*, and even *Hanuman Chalisa*.

One particular sentence really hooked me, “All of us are children of God. And whatever happens, God is always there for us.” It may seem funny that a 21-year old, studying biotechnology has gotten so fascinated with a simple sentence, but it actually had a huge impact, Didi, and the immediate result was that I calmed down and my restlessness was gone. I read many *Gita shlokas* and as I tried to comprehend their meaning, I found answers coming. I decided to read *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*, start to end. It took me about three weeks to complete, reading aloud the translations to my grandfather and contemplating every day. Now I feel so uncoiled and relaxed. Yet I feel that I have not at all utilized this *manushya yoni* (human birth) to know God, to develop *bhakti*, to fulfill the purpose of this birth. But now I shall try.

All of this might sound weird to you, but I just wanted to write to you and express my feelings and gratitude, because it all started with your morning classes. Didi, I can’t thank you enough for your role in this enlightening experience, which has not been less than a Dronacharya. I can’t help but hum one of your *bhajans* that I always loved so much when I was at CIRS: “*Jab se pyaaraa ishvar aayaa, meraa jeevan badal badal gayaa.*”

Now I am hoping to take up CIF’s foundation Vedanta correspondence course. Thank you a million times, Didi!







# 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Chinmaya Yuva Kendra CHYK Retreat

A spiritual retreat for  
young professionals  
and university  
students.

## Lifelines

Tuesday, June 30 - Sunday, July 5

Hindu philosophy  
and encompassing  
scriptures provide  
exacting methods for  
purification of the  
mind. The timeless  
scriptures are *lifelines*  
for personal and  
spiritual achievements.

**Br. Prabodh Chaitanya**  
from San Jose, and  
**Acharya Vivek Gupta**  
from Niagara Falls will  
lead discourses with  
applications to daily  
living.

Highlights include  
spiritual discourses,  
yoga and meditation,  
sports and recreation,  
open mic, garba/raas,  
and a Chicago outing.

Full camp: \$325  
Includes meals and  
accommodation.

Daily Rate: \$65

**Early Bird Rate:**  
**\$275 by May 1st**



### Location :

Chinmaya Mission Chicago Badri  
11 S 80 Kingery Highway, Willowbrook, IL  
(630) 654-3370

[www.chykwest.com](http://www.chykwest.com)

[chykchicago@gmail.com](mailto:chykchicago@gmail.com)

### Contact:

Pooja Merai (708) 567-6372

Tejal Chande (708) 253-3573

Neel Mansukhani (847) 571-5567





**CHINMAYA  
MISSION  
WEST**

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

**ONE-YEAR,  
RESIDENTIAL,  
FULL-TIME , INTENSIVE  
VEDANTA COURSE**

**AUGUST 2010-2011**

**AT CMW's  
KRISHNALAYA ASHRAM  
IN NORTHERN  
CALIFORNIA, AMIDST  
SERENE REDWOODS**

**CONDUCTED  
IN ENGLISH**

**ENHANCES ONE'S  
UNDERSTANDING AND  
CLARITY OF BASIC  
AND ADVANCED  
VEDANTIC CONCEPTS**



# Vedanta 2010

## HARI OM . . .



With the blessings of His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission worldwide, Chinmaya Mission West (CMW) is pleased to announce its one-year, residential Vedanta Course at CMW's headquarters, the ashram of *Krishnalaya* in Northern California, amidst the serene Redwoods.

This residential, full-time course, without any holidays, will be conducted in English.

### ELIGIBILITY

This Course is open to sincere seekers between the ages of 20 and 70 years.

### REGISTRATION

\$12,000 (covers registration, lodging, boarding, and books; payable in installments)

### DATES / ACHARYAS

The course will commence August 7, 2010 and end in August 2011.

#### **Full-time Resident Acharya**

Smt. Sharada Kumar

#### **August**

Puja Swami Tejomayananda

#### **August-October**

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya

#### **November-December**

Swami Ishwarananda

#### **January**

Swami Shantananda

#### **February-March**

Swami Ishwarananda

#### **April-May**

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya

#### **July-August**

Puja Swami Tejomayananda

### TEXTS

**His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda:** *Mandukya Upanishad, Tattva Bodha, Essence of Shrimad Bhagavatam and Ramayana*

**Swami Shantananda:** *Dakshinamurti Stotram, Sat Darshanam*

**Swami Ishwarananda:** *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*

**Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya:** *Upadesha Sara, Atma Bodha, Drg Drshya Viveka, Panchadashi Ch. I, and Upanishads (Ishavasya, Kena, Katha, Mundaka, Taittiriya)*

**Acharya Sharada Kumar:** *Vivekachudamani, Sanskrit, Vedic chanting, bhajans, suktams, sahasranaamavalis,*



### TO REGISTER

Complete the online form at

[www.chinmayamission.org/piercy](http://www.chinmayamission.org/piercy)

All applications received will be reviewed. Eligible candidates will be asked to schedule a personal interview, the details of which will be provided at a later date.

#### **For more information:**

[prabodh@chinmayamission.org](mailto:prabodh@chinmayamission.org)

(707) 207- 5011



## Property Purchased for CM Beaumont



*Pujya Acharyas,*  
Hari OM! Salutations!

It gives me a great pleasure to report to you, on behalf of the Chinmaya Mission Beaumont directors, that we acquired a property for Chinmaya Mission Beaumont on February 5, 2009. Pujya Guruji reviewed the property details and approved its acquisition in the summer of 2008. The property is on a 2.4-acre lot that consists of a 2,100 sq. ft., three-bedroom house, a 2,400 sq. ft. metal building, and 1.5 acres of open land. It is situated in a good location in Beaumont, Texas. We expect to shift our Mission activities to the new center once we make the necessary code modifications.

This note is to thank you for the inspiring talks and encouragement over the years, which helped build the momentum and make this acquisition possible, and also to request your continued blessings for the *sevaks* and *sevikas* of this center to rise to Pujya Gurudev's and Pujya Guruji's vision.

In Pujya Gurudev's Service,

Subrah Cheruvu

## Spiritual Camps at *Krishnalaya*

by Jayanthi Balachander

*Krishnalaya*, CMW's headquarters and retreat center, Piercy, California, was the venue for CM San Jose's two family camps, each of which lasted four days during Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays in 2008. Both camps were conducted by Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya (CM San Jose) and attended by well over a hundred delegates, some of whom had to stay at motels in nearby Garberville because the lodgings at *Krishnalaya* were full, and some of whom came from as far as Oregon and Pennsylvania.

Against the ashram's backdrop of the beautiful fall colors of November, Prabodhji gave discourses

twice a day on *Mukunda Mala*, an intense devotional offering to the Lord of Srirangam, who is beautiful Lord Vishnu reclining on Adishesha. This composition of 45 verses by the poet-king Kulashekhara Alwar moved the listeners with its melodious poetry and the devotional depth.

The talks were followed by hour-long discussion sessions where the delegates discussed questions related to the discourse of the day. A highlight of the Thanksgiving camp was Prabodhji teaching the delegates to chant the *Dakshinamurti Stotram*, along with a brief explanation of each verse of this sublime Vendantic work.

*Kaivalya Upanishad* was taught by Prabodhji during the December camp. This short yet powerful Upanishad moved at a breathtaking pace in indicating the ultimate Truth to the seekers at the camp. Despite the constant drizzle and cold temperatures outside, the 110 delegates kept busy with myriad activities, including meditation sessions, discourses, discussion forums, Vedic chanting, yoga, *arati* and *bhajans*, cultural activities, and Bala Vihar classes for the youngsters.



The children decorated a huge Christmas tree on December 25<sup>th</sup>—complete with piles of presents under it—sang carols in perfect harmony, and received presents from Brahmachari-s Prabodhji and Ericji (resident *acharya* at *Krishnalaya*), both of whom sported Santa hats for the occasion.

As always, the delegates were awed by the sumptuous and delicious meals, in which no item



was ever repeated. Indeed, the cold mountain air gave an edge to everyone's appetite and resulted in many empty pots in the kitchen after every meal.

At both camps, the concluding cultural activity featured a play by the adults and various plays by the different age groups of Bala Vihar children. Usually, first-timers to the camp are chosen to act in these plays and "play night" is one of the most anticipated camp programs.

The other camp highlight is a Jeopardy-style quiz that is conducted on one of the four days. This event ends up being a riotous event with the four teams vying with each other as they put to test their knowledge of our spiritual heritage.

All CM San Jose family camps close with Pujya Gurudev's *paduka puja*, which is offered just



before leaving, after four days of spiritual rejuvenation in the serene surroundings of *Krishnalaya*.

## Junior CHYK Camp and CHYK Satsangs at CM Washington D.C.

by Pooja Lahoti

During this past winter break, we were blessed to have Acharya Vivek Gupta (CM Niagara Falls) lead the youth camp for CM Washington D.C.'s Junior CHYKs. The theme of the camp was "Meeting of the Mind."

For over three days, the students were engaged continuously in activities that stimulated their minds through various discussions and interactions. Vivekji's goal was simple: to learn to watch our mind and keep the mind always alert.



During the morning discussions, students were able to openly discuss the negative and positive aspects of the mind: What are the diseases of our mind that feed the negative thoughts? What are the positive qualities of our mind that cultivate the positive thoughts? Activities such as *maunam* (silence), *likhita japa*, meditation, and reflection through 20 minutes of continuous writing, allowed the students to learn how to focus on the mind and its flow of thoughts.

By late afternoon, activities such as one-minute extempore speeches, which the students dreaded at first, brought awareness to how the mind's state plays a role in the effectiveness of speech. By the last day, the students were able to better detach from negative thoughts that inhibited them from speaking in front of their peers.

Vivekji taught mind-alertness through movies and games like Taboo and through these the students enjoyed their related discussions to what they were learning in Chinmaya Bala Vihar.

The youth camp was well-structured and a grand success. With Vivekji's effortless dedication, each student enjoyed, began to understand the affect that one's mind has on one's actions and reactions, and probably got far more from the camp than what they expected.

After a long day of camp, Acharya Vivekji graciously conducted CHYK *satsangs* in the evenings. The theme of the CHYK get-together was "Spirituality in Society." As young adults, we rarely recognize the relevance of Vedanta in our day-to-day lives. Yet, through innovative approaches, Vivekji made Vedantic teachings relatable to youth today.

One *satsang* that all the CHYKs and parents enjoyed was the spiritual music jam. The purpose of this *satsang* was to make CHYKs more aware of how Vedanta and spirituality surrounds them. Each CHYK was asked to bring or play a song that held some significance for them, after which, they had to explain how it relates to Vedantic teachings they have learned. A few songs, including Vivekji's choices, were surprising to all, at first; their relevance became



clear after the discussions on the lyrics. Each person saw things in a new light. We were encouraged to listen to music instead of just hear it, and this is the same approach we used when discussing the movie we watched.

During our three evenings of *satsang*, Vivekji made us become more aware of how spirituality surrounds us, unraveling the importance of Vedanta in the world we live. With the positive feedback received, slowly and surely, more CHYK activities will be fostered locally.

## CM Princeton Celebrated Vaikuntha Ekadashi

Report submitted by CM Princeton

With the grace of Pujya Gurudev and the blessings of CM Princeton's resident *acharya*, Swami Shantananda, the new year was ushered amidst great enthusiasm in central New Jersey with a grand, three-day celebration of *Vaikuntha Ekadashi* on January 5-7, 2009 at the *Chinmaya Vrindavan* ashram. Over 120 devotees participated in chanting *Vishnu Sahasranama* over 1,200 times on January 5-6, with the *sahasranama namavali archana* on January 7, *Ekadashi* Day.

As devotees entered the prayer hall, all eyes were riveted to the *mandapam*, which was beautifully decorated with intricately designed *mukudams*, blue peacocks, and gold *torans*. Pillars shining in gold tissue silk were ornamented with gold leaves and big blue gems. In the *mandapam* was a breathtaking picture of Lord Vishnu with Mother Lakshmi rising from his chest. The picture, bejeweled with beautiful gemstone-like decorations and flower garlands was a sight to behold!



The celebrations began on January 5 with the *Mahavishnu Puja* at 5:30 p.m., followed by the chanting of *Vishnu Sahasranama* five times. Chanting continued on the 6<sup>th</sup> another five times. It was a moving experience to hear the rhythmic chanting of sincere devotees.

Following the *sahasranama archana*, the priest conducted a *dvara puja* complete with Jaya

and Vijaya (two Bala Vihar students dressed as doorkeepers). As devotees entered Vaikuntha through the beautifully designed and decorated *svarga vasal*, through which devotees approached the altar, chanting *Om Namo Narayanaya*. Blessed by *darshan* of the Lord, devotees received *tirtham* from Swamiji. Indeed, the Lord's grace permeated the ashram.



## CM Boston Expands

by Gopala Dwarakanath

CM Boston's new construction phase is going reasonably well despite the slowing down due to inclement weather. CM Boston hopes to complete its final phase of adding 16,500 sq. ft. of facilities by July 2009.



Last year saw a successful fundraising of \$1.5 million and all pledges have been received. While an additional \$1.5 million loan may be needed, CM Boston is inspired and dedicated to furthering Pujya Gurudev's vision and Mission through the growth of the center. By Pujya Gurudev's grace, we expect it will be a grand, functional center upon the completion of construction.



## CM Atlanta Hosts “Happy Living”

by Seema Jani

CM Atlanta was blessed to hosted a three-day *jnana yajna* conducted by Brahmacharini Sumati Chaitanya (acharya of CM United Kingdom), January 9-11. The talks on “The Art of Happy Living” were held in Atlanta’s Hindu Heritage Hall, and focused on a different topic each day: “What is the cause of an unhappy life,” “How to live a happy life,” and “The life of a happy person.” Each day, Sumatiji used everyday-life examples and melodious singing to elaborate Lord Krishna’s teachings from *Bhagavad Gita*.

The *yajna* was attended by 120-130 people each night, and for most of them, this was their first exposure to Chinmaya Mission.

Sumatiji also visited CM Atlanta’s two Bala Vihar locations, in which she engaged the students and addressed parents’ questions on parenting and spiritual growth. She continued to emphasize not to forget our Source, and to always offer humble prostrations to Pujya Gurudev, for it is through His grace that we are blessed with *satsanga*.



The overall response to Sumatiji’s visit was tremendous. Many who were new to the Mission and Vedantic teachings were awestruck by the wealth of

knowledge that was shared and the examples of applications in everyday life. Everyone felt blessed in the presence of such a dynamic and knowledgeable *acharya*, and it is hoped that there will now be many more visits to come: *Jai Gurudev!*

## CM LA Youth Get a Taste of CORD

by Nimmi Raghunathan

The Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CORD) in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu (India), adopted under its wing the Thennamnallur *Panchayat*, which has four villages under its jurisdiction: Thennamnallur, Puttur, Sandhegoundan Palayam, and Kallimedu. Help is extended to the surrounding areas, which include tribal villages.

Hope and vitality shone through in December 2008, when seven youth, who were graduates of CM Los Angeles’s Bala Vihar program, traveled to serve at CORD under the guidance of Swami Ishwarananda.

Preethika Venugopal, Medha Raj, Anand Cherukur, Ravind Kumar, Ayesa Misra, Anusha Ramakrishnan, and Adarash Cherukuri, none of whom had any extended contact with rural India, carried with them enthusiasm and determination to make a difference. In this endeavor, they were helped by Dr. Meera Krishna, the CORD coordinator whose unflagging energy proved to be an inspiration. Aided by a small team, her supervision covered medical camps, self-help groups, *mahila mandals*, *balvadis*, and sanitation and environmental issues.

A large, traditional home, with a rectangular courtyard in the middle, functions as the CORD center. The youth team helped set up an altar for Pujya Gurudev using the existing materials. With some professional help, they also built a beautiful altar for Lord Ganesha.





By the time the youth were done ten days later, the center looked dramatically different. There was new paint on its gate and walls, a shoe rack was constructed outside the door, weeds from the front yard had been removed, an old electronic sound system had been reactivated to function effectively for small gatherings, *rangoli* decorated the front steps, and a work area was set up for the staff. This, the youth team could not have done without the cooperation of the CORD workers, every one of whom pitched in, and by the end of it, American draws and Tamil mingled freely with warm smiles and gestures.

Indeed, each set of volunteers was energized by the other. Seeing the activity, the villagers also came to lend helping hands. The neighbor's request for his walls to be painted too indicated that a small ripple effect had begun.

The youth completed the tasks they set out to do in the mornings and then accompanied Dr. Meera. Their new Bala Vihar classrooms were now fields or village roads, where children are more likely to congregate. Here, in these *balvadis*, the children would gather around to hear tales of the Lord, and get practical lessons on cleanliness and more.

The youth participated in these *balvadis*, and with the children who came to the center, by teaching dance *mudras* that depicted various forms of God and symbols from nature. They taught arts and crafts, and told simple stories in broken Tamil and mime, and learned to love and be loved by the little ones, who strove to do their best for the visitors.

The team also attended *mahila mandals* and self-help groups, learning firsthand the pressing local issues of alcoholism, sheer poverty, and the tremendous impetus that is needed to convince villagers to install toilets and move away from caste discrimination. One volunteer said, "Writing a check for a developmental cause is different from actually trying to bring about development." Dr. Meera pointed out that charity can be quick, but development is slow.

In these villages, alcoholism is so rampant that young children are known to get addicted. After field labor during the days, the villagers wash away their daily wages in liquor, marginalizing whole families economically. "Cute little children," when approached, turned out to be not so little. Malnutrition has hampered their growth and made ten-year-olds look almost two years younger.

Sanitation is also a huge matter for CORD in the area, and building toilets requires some investment. CORD also urges the villagers to take care of stagnant water and wear slippers to prevent disease.

At the medical camps, the youth learned to check blood pressure, pulse, fetal heart sounds, etc. They also witnessed and participated in cases that included patients battling heart disease, hemophilia, and malnutrition.

For the team, every interaction was a learning experience. Some were touched by the love of the children. Others felt uncomfortable at first in the presence of the sick and poor, but learned their personal stories and empathized. For all, the Himalayan task that is called "development" took on new meaning. None remained unaffected. Indeed, the center, the children who came there, and the volunteers, were all affected in different ways.

The final day was a tearful one—for the visitors and for those remaining behind. Before the long goodbyes, requests, and promises of return, there was a fitting Lord Ganesha *puja* performed, with the chanting of *Guru Stotram*. Dr. Meera and the team exchanged ideas not just about development processes, but social and cultural matters as well.

The team stayed at the Mission ashram in Siruvani and spent some time with the resident acharya, Brahmachari Ajit Chaitanya. They also attended *satsangs* and *pujas* conducted by Brahmachari Samvid Chaitanya, acharya of the Mission's current *purohit* course.

## CM Phoenix Sings "Human to Hanuman"

by Bala Iyer



Children and adult members of CM Phoenix sang the catchy "Human to Hanuman" tune in a chorus performance at the India Nite festival on January 24. Donned in splashes of India's tricolors—children in white with tricolor sashes, ladies in saffron and green, and the men in white—the energetic song urged everyone to rise above petty quarrels, desires, and false pride, and instead fill the

heart with love for God. Sometimes with hands folded in respect, sometimes holding hands and swaying to symbolize love and brotherhood, and sometimes marching to symbolize energy, the children's performance touched the hearts of one and all. Initiated, organized and choreographed by volunteer members, the performance was a success in raising awareness about the Mission in the local Indian community.

## New *Chinmaya Jyoti* Ashram in San Diego

by Rajasekar Vaidyanathan

"It all began with Gurudev, and finally he departed from here. He not only left his body here; he left his spiritual brilliance here. This is why we have the beautiful name, *Chinmaya Jyoti*, which means 'flame of Consciousness.' . . . Some 300 centers around the world are looking forward to this center." Swami Ishwarananda (CM Tustin) had delivered this address on January 28, 2006, at the fifth anniversary banquet of CM San Diego (CMSD). He had challenged CMSD members to build a center by 2008.



At CMSD's eighth anniversary banquet, held on January 24, 2009, a video presentation featured messages of good wishes and blessings, all leading up to Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's announcement of CMSD's purchase of eight acres of land in Poway, home to the new center known as *Chinmaya Jyoti*. The property is bordered on the western side by a hill, which Guruji has named *Tapovan Giri*. "You get firmly rooted in knowledge like this *Tapovan Giri*, and shine in your life like *Chinmaya Jyoti*," said Guruji, congratulating and blessing all CMSD members.

For a few moments after this surprise announcement, there was silence in the dimly lit banquet hall. And then, as Guruji's message slowly sank in, the audience broke into great applause.

Over the years, many sites all across San Diego County had been scouted by Srinivas Sukumar, with help from Harish Babla, Yogesh Babla, and Anil Mavalankar. Each of the visited sites had initially looked promising, but was later found

lacking in some critical area. Lakshmi Sukumar said that Gurudev must have had a good laugh watching us search all over the map, while He had already chosen a spot right under our nose.

She then described the layout plans for the center, which included the main altar, classrooms, *satsanga* hall, pathway for meditative walks, *acharya's kutir*, and so on. Brahmachari Girishji unveiled a site model of *Chinmaya Jyoti*, which had been completed by architect John Pyjar.

The 2009 banquet was presided over by Brahmachari Girish Chaitanya (CM Austin). He was welcomed with *puṇnakumbha* and Vedic *arati* by CHYKs. Pujya Gurudev described children as "lamps" to be lit, and fittingly, eight of tiny-tot "lamps" also welcomed Girishji to mark CMSD's eighth anniversary. Girishji inaugurated the function by lighting the *Chinmaya Jyoti* at Pujya Gurudev's altar. Following *bhajans* melodiously rendered by CMSD's *Chinmaya Dhvani* choir, India's Republic Day was recognized by parading of the flag and singing the national anthem.

In his address, Girishji said he had visited the site straight from the airport, and that it was indeed an impressive location. He said that *Tapovan Giri* would be a magnet for hikes and all sorts of children's activities, and in time, *Chinmaya Jyoti* would be a beacon for members worldwide. He impressed on the members the importance of coming together and offering in *yajna* spirit toward building the new center.

Harish Babla made a brief presentation of the road toward building *Chinmaya Jyoti*. Pledge forms were distributed. The forms even made it easy for young children to make contributions by making sacrifices. Even before the day was done, over 40 pledges had come in.

Lastly, Lakshmi and Srinivas Sukumar invited all CMSD members to join in the pledge, "*Chinmaya Jyoti*: We will keep it glowing!" Buttons with this slogan were distributed to all members, who were urged to wear it every Sunday as a reminder of the goal ahead.

The function concluded with a potluck buffet served by volunteers. As *yuva sevaks* moved from table to table offering water and second helpings, the diners relished the banquet meal and looked forward to realizing the goal of *Chinmaya Jyoti* that is now closer at hand.



# Chinmaya Mission Chicago



## Vedic Heritage Youth Camps



2009

*Conducted by Acharayas of Chinmaya Mission*

### Badri

July 13<sup>th</sup> thru  
July 19<sup>th</sup> 2009

### Yamunotri

August 10<sup>th</sup> thru  
August 16<sup>th</sup> 2009

*Life is a Gift;  
Living an Art*

(Grades 9 thru 12)

*Holy Places  
and  
Temples of India*

(Grades Kg thru 8)

*The Art of  
Self Perfection*

based on Uddhav Geeta  
(Grades 9 thru 12)

*Shree Krishna  
Leela*

(Grades Kg thru 8)

1 Child - \$200

2 Siblings - \$375

3 or more Siblings - \$450 (from same family)

Please register by:

Mail \* At the mission - Badri/Yamunotri \* Online

50% off of the 2<sup>nd</sup> camp, if attending both the camps.

Free accomodation and local transportation for out-of-state children, 10 years & above

[www.chinmaya-chicago.org](http://www.chinmaya-chicago.org)

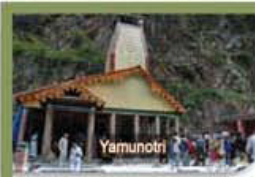
e-mail: [camp@chinmaya-chicago.org](mailto:camp@chinmaya-chicago.org)

#### Contacts:

Vasavi Chakka (630) 527-0326  
Sonia Chugh (708) 479-4528  
Shanker Pillai (630) 789-6607  
Ashok Dholakia (708) 349-6396

#### Contacts:

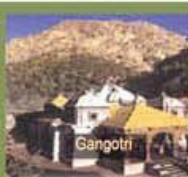
Shubi Mansukhani (847) 680-8555  
Archana Anant (847) 549-0501  
Rajul Bhalala (847) 295-2383  
Ashok Bhatia (847) 680-4735



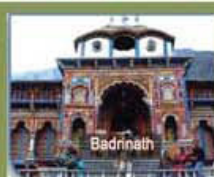
Yamunotri



Puri Jagannath



Gangotri



Badrinath



Rameshwaram



# 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](http://WWW.CHINFO.ORG) TO REGISTER  
OR GET MORE DETAILS.

## From the Desk of Swami Tejomayananda



To: All Members of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Blessed Self,

Hari OM!



I am pleased to inform you that the second phase of *Chinmaya Vibhooti* is nearing completion in January 2009. The third phase will commence soon after that. The main feature of this third phase will be the temple of Lord Ganesha—named Shri Pranava Ganesha—on the hilltop. To make this temple project a successful and memorable event, we have designed a new initiative in which all our Chinmaya Family can easily participate.

### 21 WEEKS WITH LORD GANESHA!

- Each participating devotee should write the mantra, “*OM GAM GANAPATAYE NAMAHA*”—in any language—everyday, 21 times, continuously for 21 weeks (147 days) only.
- Each week, each devotee should make some offering as well, of Rs. 11 or \$11 (it can be more or less).
- Each devotee can start writing on any day, but once started, it must be done everyday for 21 weeks continuously.
- Upon completion, devotees should send their notebooks and offerings to their local center or to Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (Saki Vihar Road, Powai, Mumbai 400 072 India).
- The notebooks received will be deposited directly under the shrine on the day of the temple’s consecration. The funds received will be utilized for the temple.
- Please encourage your children also to write this mantra. They can make an offering of Rs. 1 or \$1 each week.

It is said that prayers go up and blessings come down! Lord Ganesha’s blessings will be with you forever. While writing this mantra, pray to Lord Ganesha for the peace, prosperity, and happiness of all.

May the Lord’s grace and Pujya Gurudev’s blessings be with you!

In the Service of the Lord,

*Tejomayananda*

## First International Camp at *Chinmaya Vibhooti*

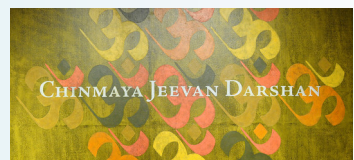
December 26, 2008 – January 1, 2009

by Parveen Bahl

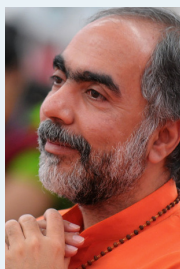
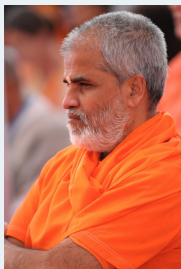
The First International Camp at *Chinmaya Vibhooti* was an event that will linger long in the memories of those present. Truly international in flavor, there were representations from various parts of the globe: New Zealand, USA, UK, Sri Lanka, Australia, Holland, Kenya, Canada, other countries, and of course, the many Mission centers in India. It was one large happy family that gathered to be a part of the *Vibhooti* experience, to witness in person a part of the glory of Pujya Gurudev and pay respectful homage to him.

This camp had much to celebrate. It was the first international camp and the first camp of this magnitude in *Vibhooti*. Coincidentally, it was held 25 years after the first international camp by Pujya Gurudev in 1983. The show stealer was the inauguration of the *Chinmaya Jeevan Darshan* (CJD) by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda, Pujya Swami Purushottamananda, and Pujya Swami Brahmananda.

Delegates were privileged to walk through the truly magnificent, artistically brilliant, aesthetically pleasing, and profoundly moving memorial to Pujya Gurudev. The murals depicting the life of Pujya Gurudev are outstanding works of art. They are befittingly complemented by the well-researched commentary on his life, vision, and monumental work achieved in a short span of 43 years. The state-of-the-art technology brings alive the brilliance of his presence in our lives. The lifelike wax figure of Gurudev, in style and quality like the figures at Madam Tussaud's, stopped many a breath. With folded hands, devotees stood in mute silence, heads bowed in gratitude.







In just three years, *Chinmaya Vibhooti* has moved from the drawing boards to a huge campus currently able to house over 700 delegates. *Annashree*, the dining hall with a state-of-the-art kitchen, was able to serve the most appetizing meals smoothly and timely. If there were any hiccups, certainly nobody noticed. The cottages and the blocks of rooms were all ready and functioning efficiently. For transportation from point to point on campus, were the *Pavan Vahans* (battery operated golf carts). The reception area was meticulously managed and manned by ever-smiling volunteers.

Guruji's discourses on *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 10 (*Vibhooti Yoga*), brought alive the memory of the *vibhooti* (glory) of Pujya Gurudev. Each of the projects Gurudev established, and each of the lives he touched, bespeak his glory. Obviously enjoying every *shloka*, Guruji made us aware of the beauty of the One manifesting as many (*vibhooti*) and the many being witnessed as One (*yoga*).

Swamini Vimalananda, Swami Swaroopananda, Swami Ishwarananda, and Swami Abhedananda, who were present for the camp, contributed by sharing their thoughts with the delegates in the mid-morning class. Each spoke on different topics complete with scriptural teachings. One is amazed by the wealth of talent the Mission has to offer. Our brigade of committed and brilliant *sannyasis* is indeed Gurudev's *vibhooti*.

Young parents were able to soak up the discourses, while their children were kept gainfully occupied by Swami Swaroopananda (with youth) and Swamini Vimalananda (with children). Needless to say, they all had a blast! On the final day, we witnessed briefly some of what they had learnt.



*blue shadows  
fade languorously*

*illusion is  
all that isn't*

*world whispers  
beauty*

*encompassing emptiness  
fullness is*

*love crosses  
sound shapes*

*- anonymous*

The evenings were a cultural fest of music, song, dance, drama. Each of the cultural performances was unique, moving, and of high caliber. The CHYKs staged “*Surya 108*,” a truly magnificent effort. The final offering was *Sangeet Pravachan* by Guruji, based on *nava-vidha bhakti*.

Delegates ushered in the New Year with a *puja* and the chanting of *Vishnu Sahasranama*. The hall had been beautifully set up for the event, down to every tiny detail. The chanting of the one thousand names of Lord Vishnu in different *ragas* was a soul-stirring experience. The midnight hour witnessed general merriment and a few enthusiasts dancing to the beat of the *tabla* and the singing of *bhajans*.

The camp ended with a *Guru Paduka Puja* performed by Pujya Guruji, where he offered the miracle of *Chinmaya Vibhooti* and the success of the camp at the feet of Pujya Gurudev, humbly prostrating at the *padukas* of his beloved Gurudev.

At the valedictory function, Guruji thanked all the organizers and workers for such a smoothly functioning camp, lauding the dedication and devotion of the *Vibhooti* team. Guruji, ever generous in his tributes, left out no one, from the trustees to the maintenance staff.

This is one of many camps in the future of *Chinmaya Vibhooti* that will bring the Chinmaya family together, binding them in the embrace of Pujya Gurudev’s love, as he lights up and transforms every devotee’s heart.

