



CHINMAYA NEWS

CHINMAYA MISSION® WEST BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

January 2010, No. 133

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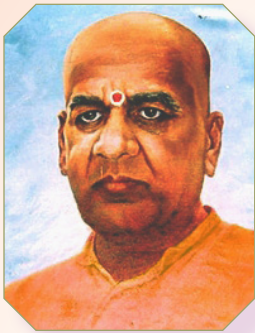
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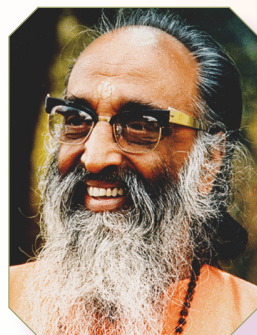
His Holiness Swami Tapovanam

The knowledge of the God principle, which is the highest, showers bliss on a person whether he is on the top of a mountain or in the middle of a city, whether he is on a pilgrimage or is selling meat. This knowledge [of the God principle] and the desire for it is sure to sprout in a man's heart one day if not today, in one life if not in this life.

Source: *Kailasa Yatra*

His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda

Mind is at once the breeding ground of desire, the dung-heap of contending thoughts, as well as the glorious castle of perfect Joy! When mind is stilled—when it ceases spewing its scorching lava of thoughts—Peace is the subjective experience of the possessor of the thoughtless mind. Peace is joy. This is why, in peaceful, dreamless sleep, every living creature feels nothing but joy.



Source: *Meditation and Life*

His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda



Vedanta says that the joy that each one is searching is not outside; it is within. It even goes a step further and says, “You are that joy!” Our struggles end as soon as we realize this. . . . Dependence is sorrow; freedom is joy. When we depend on things outside for peace and joy, we get only bondage, not peace. There may be a fleeting glimpse of joy for a moment, but that is not true happiness; it is only an illusion of happiness. Real happiness is that which puts an end to sorrow.

Source: *You Ask, He Answers*

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



Graceful Aging

by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Continued from CMW News, November 2009

Retiring with Grace

Vrddhastavat bhikshavrttah.

In old age, when one enters *vanaprastha ashrama* and moves toward retirement, there must be *bhikshavrttah*. *Bhiksha* is the food you get by begging. The idea here is not begging for food, but having total contentment with life as it comes to you: *Yaddrchchha labha santushtah* (*Bhagavad Gita*). This stage in life should be one where there is no more craving, greed, or hankering—for food, clothing, or shelter—where everything is fine as it is. No complaint at all. A *bhikshu* and a beggar are different. When a *bhikshu* begs for alms, he is not called a beggar, for he is merely fulfilling his basic needs at the minimum, living contentedly with whatever comes to him. *Brahmacharis* and *sannyasis* who go to different houses for *bhiksha* cannot say give me *laddu* and *pedaa* because today is my birthday. Whatever is given, they accept.

After you have achieved all you need to in life, living as one who is *bhikshavrttah* means your life is now fully dedicated to spirituality. Throughout life, the spiritual aspect may have been there, but this is the time when spirituality alone is the goal. It is the time to be completely content with whatever life offers.

The literal meaning of *vanaprastha* is “one who lives in the forest,” but it is interpreted as living in a solitary place that is away from family, children, etc. In the word *vanaprastha*, *stha* means “staying in the *vanam* (forest),” which means staying away from home. *Vanaprastha* indicates a life that leans toward solitude. In modern day, staying in the *vanam* means residing alone and independently, withdrawn from social activities. In the word *vanaprastha*,

pra indicates “completely” or “totally.” This means there aren’t constant phone calls and e-mails to check up on everyone, find out how they are, or hear the latest gossip. “I am in *vanaprastha ashrama*. My son’s flat is on the third floor and mine is on the fourth.” This is not really a solitary place, but even this much is fine for many people.

In the Upanishads, a different meaning is given for the word *vanam*. Toward the conclusion of *Kena Upanishad*, the mantra says, “*Tad vanam namah. Tad vanam. Iti upasitavyam.*” Here, *Paramatma* (the supreme Self or supreme Lord) is called *vanam*. So, one meaning is “forest,” but the other meaning of *vanam* is “*Paramatma Brahma*,” which is *vananiyam*, *bhajaniam*, *iti vanam*—that which is most adorable, most worshipful, the Supreme. Thus, the meaning of *vanaprastha* is “one who intends to abide in *Brahman* alone.”

Brahmachari (student) means *brahmani charati iti itam shilam akshyam-yasya*, or “one who revels or wants to revel in *Brahman*, whose very nature is *Brahman*.” *Brahman* means the supreme Self, but the word also refers to the Vedas. So, in the beginning, the student must study and be devoted to the Vedas. But the Vedas should be studied only for knowing *Brahman*. Later, when one enters *vanaprastha*, the sole attempt is to revel in *vananiyam Brahma*, the Self of all beings.

Kena Upanishad says that the one who does the *upasana* (worship) of *Brahman* as *tad vanam* attains the state of *sarvani bhutani-abhisamvanchhanti*: “He endears himself to all beings,” including trees and

plants, birds, and animals. Such a seeker is loved by all, for it cannot be that we feel we are spiritually growing, yet no one wants to be in our company.

A man went to a doctor and said, “Doctor, everybody ignores me.”

The doctor said, “Next!”

We may have experienced this feeling that everyone is ignoring us. But in true *vanaprastha*, everyone should welcome my company—because I love all. All is my Self alone. Thus, in *Brahman* we have to revel. This is called graceful aging.

The Point of No Return

Sa eva brahmani sadanuraktah.

The *bhikshavrttah vanaprastha* becomes *parama brahmani sa eva saktah*, wherein he revels in *Brahman* alone. This is the goal of, and connecting thread through, all the four *ashramas* of *brahmacharya*, *grhastha*, *vanaprastha*, and *sannyasa*. I read some simple statements of these four *ashramas*: In *brahmacharya ashrama*, you “learn.” In *grhastha ashrama*, you “earn.” In *vanaprastha ashrama*, you “turn.” And from *sannyasa*, there is “no return.”

In *grhastha ashrama*, when we say earn, we don’t mean only money. As a *grhastha*, we can earn wealth for ourselves, society, the community; we can earn name, fame, power, and more. But in *vanaprastha*, we must turn also. Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda would say, “Make a U-turn.” Turn toward *amara vaha desava jahan se ayo*: That land of Immortality from whence you have come. That *Paramatma* is the real source of your origin; you have to go back There, so turn now. Turn.

And in *sannyasa*, from this turn, there is no return! In India, we find that even River Ganga, which flows from Gomukh to the Bay of Bengal, after a short time, turns toward its source and returns to the ocean. *Vanaprastha* is like this turning toward the source, which becomes *sannyasa*. If one revels in learning, has a disciplined resolve, and is content with whatever life brings him—in these stages—

then *sa eva brahmani sadanuraktah*: Such a person alone ages gracefully and comes to revel in the supreme *Brahman*.

Passing the Torch

All children, as students, must be given *shiksha*. The first chapter of *Taittiriya Upanishad* is called, “*Shiksha Valli*,” which includes the last parting words the teacher gives the students before they leave the *guru-kulam*. Having completed their studies, these are the final, specific instructions they receive from their teacher. Throughout their long stay of 10-12 years, they would have learned various subjects and received many types of detailed instructions. But to lead life, one needs guiding principles. So much is taught over the years, but what is the essence of it all? What are the basic, fundamental principles to always keep in mind?

People buy books—for instance, the *Bhagavad Gita* with commentary—and then request, “Please autograph this.” Some devotees would ask this of Pujya Gurudev. And while he was signing, they would say, “Please write a message for me.” Now, the whole book is a message, isn’t it? But they would think of it is an extensively long message, so they would ask for a short and personal message meant just for them. Pujya Gurudev would spare no chance to get Vedantic teachings across, so he would sign, “Read this book 15 times,” or he would write, “Read two pages every day,” like a doctor’s prescription. I found very few people who followed even these instructions, though they asked for a personal message or specific guidance.

In newspaper or magazine interviews also, they usually ask this as the last question: “What is your message for our readers?” Or, on the radio, they ask, “What is your message for our listeners?” Or, on television, they say, “What is your message for our viewers?” In the same way, in his valedictory address, the *guru-kulam acharya* (teacher) says, “I have taught you many things, but I want to teach you some salient features of the teachings as a whole, and these you must keep in mind. No matter what branch of specific knowledge you have studied,

there are certain aspects that are common in all teachings.”

Vedam-anuchyacharyo' nte vasinam-anushasti.

Having taught all the Vedas, the *acharya* gives his final instructions and guiding principles for students to remember and adhere to as they live and work. When Lord Rama wanted to give one last chance to Ravana, he asked Angada to go as a messenger. Angada asked, “*Bhagavan*, I will go there, but please give me some guiding principle. Keeping it in mind, I will accordingly act and speak to Ravana.”

Bhagavan said to Angada, “*Kaju hamara tasu hita hai*”: Do or speak anything that is required, in such a way that our mission is accomplished and no harm comes to Ravana. In this lies the welfare of our mission, as well as Ravana. Keep this in mind and go.

Similarly, the *Upanishad acharya* states the common, fundamental foundation of guidelines that all should follow, regardless of profession, social status, gender, religion, etc.

☞ If Truth Be Told . . .

Satyam vada.

Speak the truth. In another mantra in the same *Upanishad*, again it is said, “*Satyan-na pramaditavyam.*” Don’t be careless in speaking the truth.

If someone ever asks you, “Can you do this job,” speak the truth. There are some people who are wonderful at taking on tasks and doing nothing to complete them. If you can’t do something, or don’t want to, you should say so truthfully, so that the other person doesn’t depend on you. But if you make a promise, fulfill it. *Satyam vada*. If you are asked about someone, but you do not know anything about him or her, just don’t give any opinion, for it is not your business to qualify someone as a good or bad person. Clearly and definitely say, “I don’t know.” Don’t guesstimate!

But why should I speak truth? Let’s say some people ask me my name. To one person I say, “Swami Ghanananda.” To another I say, “Swami Ganananda.” To a third I say, “Swami Nandanandananda.” Now I will have to

remember to which person I told which name. Imagine the confusion! Naturally, one day, the lies will surely be uncovered and my bluff will be called. By not living a life of truthfulness, I create problems for myself and suffer.

By not speaking the truth, one slowly creates a split personality in oneself, but the biggest loss is the loss of one’s credibility. There is a famous story of a shepherd who would needlessly cry out, “Tiger!” (In another story, it is a wolf.) When people would come to help him, he would laugh, “Look how I fooled you!” One day, when the tiger really came, no one came to help when he cried out, because he had already lost his credibility. When you speak one lie, ten lies follow.

☞ Hold High the Flag of Dharma

Dharmam chara.

Live a life of *dharma*, or righteousness. Note that it is not said, “*Dharmam vada*” (speak *dharma*). One should not merely speak of ethics, morality, and righteousness; one must live such a life. There are the Ten Commandments in the Bible—the do-s and don’t-s. Sometimes people ask if there are any such commandments in Hinduism. Here they are.

Dharma is that which integrates our inner personality, our family, our community, and our nation. *Satya* is very important in maintaining *dharma*. In this *Upanishad*, *satyam vada* is all the more distinctly said, in addition to *dharmam chara*. Speaking the truth is good, but more important is whether or not it is *hitam* (beneficial, does good) to the listener. Sometimes there is no need of speaking, even if it is the truth, if it may be hurtful or unnecessarily create problems.

If your *satyam* is in keeping with *dharma*, then stick to the truth. But if, sometimes, for the sake of *dharma*, you have to speak an untruth, then know that this is also *satyam*. For example, if a villainous man with evil motives is chasing a woman, and she comes to hide in your house, at that time, if the man comes to you to ask if you saw where she went, you should not say, “Come in!” If you speak the truth in this case, it would not be in accordance with *dharma*, because *dharma* is “that which protects.” By telling an untruth, if you can protect her, then

you should. By doing so, you will protect her, as well as the man—at least this time—from committing a sinful act.

In *Valmiki Ramayana*, when Ramachandraji was leaving Ayodhya in Sumantra's chariot, everyone was crying and following him. At that time, Lord Rama told Sumantra, "Move fast," but Dasharatha Raja came running out and said, "Sumantra, stop!" Now what should Sumantra do? The king says stop, and Ramachandraji, the prince, says keep moving.

Sumantra said to Ramji, "But Maharaj is asking me to stop."

Ramji said, "But I am asking you to move. And if he questions you later, you tell him there was so much noise that you did not hear him."

So, now was *Bhagavan* telling *asatyam*? No, what *Bhagavan* said was right, because Dasharatha Maharaj was emotionally overwhelmed and therefore trying to prevent his son from leaving. In fact, if he had done so, it would not have been in keeping with *dharma*. And it was because of *dharma* that Ramachandraji had been asked to leave in the first place! Once it was settled that he had to go to the forest, why should he delay and stay? If one gets carried away by emotions and sentiments and acts accordingly, *dharma* will be lost, and this should not happen at any cost. *Bhagavan* Ramachandraji stood for *dharma* alone. His life was very difficult, and indeed, who can understand a life of such a level of perfection? Even his opponents called Shri Rama "the embodiment of *dharma*."

I read a beautiful quotation: "If you don't stand for something, you fall for everything." Lord Rama stood for *dharma* alone and was willing to sacrifice everything except *dharma*. So, when it comes to *satyam* and *dharma*, whatever one does to maintain *dharma* is called *satyam*. For example, when driving in India, you are told to keep in the left lane. You are a law-abiding citizen, so you do. But suppose a truck is coming in the left lane, straight at you. Will you say, "I am law-abiding citizen, and even if the truck is coming straight at me, I will not go to the right side." If you continue to do this, one day people will surely get the news of your departure from this world! So while keeping to the left is for everyone's

safety, if following that rule puts your life into danger in a particular instance, your first duty is to protect yourself. This is the difference between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law; the spirit is called *dharma*.

Alert Living

Svadhyayan ma pramadah.

Let there be no inadvertence or negligence in *svadhyaya*, or self-study. In order to clearly know *satyam* and *dharma*, do your *svadhyaya*, or self-study of the scriptures. In his text, *Sadhana Panchakam*, Adi Shankaracharya says, "*Vedo nityam-adhiyatam*": Study the Vedas daily, because these profound teachings are so subtle that we sometimes cannot clearly see what is *satyam*, *dharma*, or *hitam*. This is why each one of us must remain steadfast in our scriptural studies.

Svadhyaya has numerous meanings. Doing *japa* or *parayana*, or chanting *Vishnu Sahasranama*, is called *svadhyaya*. Studying two to three pages of a scriptural text everyday is also called *svadhyaya*. Most importantly, "self-study" is called *svadhyaya*, meaning, study your Self! Thus, this study should be done daily, so that we are constantly reminded of these teachings and never lose sight of life's ultimate goal.

to be continued

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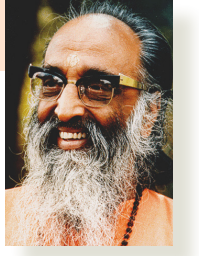
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A Mission with a Vision

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

(Edited excerpts from Pujya Gurudev's talk on the Tenth Anniversary celebrations of Chinmaya Mission)



The Missionary

A missionary should not be understood to mean a visionary. One's mission and vision in life are two totally different things. A missionary must have a vision, admitted. But a visionary need not be a missionary. A visionary is a dreamer; he cannot stop dreaming, getting wonderful ideas and new programs at every moment. But the missionary's job is not merely to visualize the possibilities. He is one who, having visualized a single program or an idea, discovers in himself the right type of energy and integrity, and puts forth all his energy in that direction until he executes and brings into the world his particular vision. However, over-enthusiasm is a curse to the missionary. It is not possible for any one solitary individual to do all the work in a nation, community, or society. All works are done by the Creator, from Whom all activities flow: *Yatah pravritir bhutanam*. You and I are all His agents. We have been appointed for certain work, and if we can do it truly and dedicatedly, this itself is the greatest of all *sadhanas*.

The Nature of Missionary Work

Spiritual development is a silent process. Nothing happens all of a sudden. We cannot immediately demonstrate the fact of spiritual development as a scientist can do, in this field of work. You will not be praised. You won't find your work in the front page or last page of a newspaper. You will be cursed and beaten. But the missionary is one who, the more he gets the kicks, the more he serves.

It's Not about the Numbers

You cannot claim greatness for yourselves in your numbers, nor can you derive satisfaction

from the number of years you have survived. Years add glory only to archaeological pieces.

Your accounts of money collected and spent will not be a measure of your progress. Each one has to look within oneself and assess one's own progress and development.

What is required is a lot of *tapascharya*. To do *tapas* is not an easy joke; it requires great heroism. Even in the rishi-days, how many disciples do you think were there? For a rishi, perhaps one in his lifetime! You are talking about a small state in the country. Now there are so many people and that is a great progress. But there is nothing to feel disappointed [about low numbers]. Ours is not a political party trying to catch votes, or a social service or community project. How many "*bhagavatars*" are there in the country? How many Sanskrit scholars are there? How many Sir C.V. Ramans are there? . . . Diamonds are many, but the real ones are rarely to be found, and it is those that we are counting. We are trying to pan out of society those distinct few who constitute the true membership of Chinmaya Mission, and it is through them, from them, and along with them that the entire society is to improve and be glorified.

You must see how far you have become an institution yourself. We must always be dealing with these ideas, think in terms of these ideas, and through study classes, get these ideas again and again revived. Slowly bring it into the conversation and just leave it at that. And then again discuss them. Others will not accept your ideas unless you are also improving day by day. If they are seeing you

improve internally, they will begin asking you, “How have you totally changed?” Then give them additional ideas. Don’t flood them out. Give your ideas in cups and not in tubs—people are not elephants!

Let us not think in terms of membership. Institutions like universities may claim greatness and preservation for themselves in numbers. But artifacts alone gather value because of the number of years they have survived. A 15th century brass vessel might have been used as a spittoon, but it gains more value only because it has survived through time. If you also say Chinmaya Mission survived ten years, it becomes an archaeological piece; so don’t calculate by the number of years.

The Real Report

The anniversary is not important. Ask what have you earned in these ten years. Have you progressed or not? How far have you progressed? . . . In five years, an ordinary Narendra became a Vivekananda. Have you at least become a *viveki*, a discriminating individual? He did not get all the information you have gotten in five years, and yet, because he used to live what he knew and struggled hard to realize it, because he had the heroism and refused to come down and identify himself with his body, mind, and intellect, he became Vivekananda. He was a king of men (*narendra*). But even Vivekananda was not as great a missionary as Ramakrishna was. Ramakrishna created a Vivekananda.

How many of you have proved to be better men? This is the thing to be considered. It is not merely to be considered in terms of what we did and what we did not do. It is not to regret that we have come. It is to enable us to take an estimate of ourselves and see how far we have progressed. This can be understood by reflecting over how you were living before, and how or where you would have landed had you continued in the same direction. After seeing in what direction you have changed, if you have changed, and how far you have progressed, congratulate yourself and prostrate onto Narayana. In this way you should grow. There is no hurry in improving the world. The world will be improved if you are improving. The world cannot improve if you are not improving. You may spend some energy, some perspiration,

but at the end of it, you will have to die away in this world with no happiness for anyone.

Look within yourself and see how much you have progressed and that development is the progress of the Mission. A true missionary is one who must be living every word he is talking. When we look within, we will find how we are. To lift ourselves to the Ideal is the work of the Mission.

There will be no topic for you to talk except the topics of Vedanta. Unless you thus talk constantly, your conviction will not grow. When you begin doing this work, you will be condemned by the nearest man. If the condemnation does not come, you are living in a dead society. The more honest you are, the more will be the criticism. But the criticism does not matter. A missionary must be a dynamic conveyor of his convictions. You must be able to live up to it, despite conducive or non-conductive environments. Such missionaries will be less in number and will go unappreciated. This is also good, or else you will develop vanity. Do all this as *Narayanarpita*. As best as we can, we are trying to surrender ourselves to His will. In this attitude, let us work on.

Everyone thinks, “The world is bad; I am not bad.” Let us first understand that there must be some weakness in us, and as a program for self-development, let us try to speak about them and discuss them with others. Chinmaya Mission is not looking into the world outside to understand how far it has progressed, nor is it looking into the members it has. Each of us is trying to individually grow within himself. Some think that the Mission must not only have vision, but it should also preach. You are soaked with the idea of proselytization of men. You think in terms of how far we have done this outside and not inside. It is not for that sort of work that we have started this Mission. We are trying to improve ourselves, and when we have improved our vision of the world, the world will be improved. It is with this idea that we have been starting Mission centers all over the country.

Work in the Green Room

Ours is a silent, behind-the-scenes activity. Our work is the work of the green room, not the

main stage. Actors act on the stage and the applauses are for them, but not for those in the green rooms, who, without even proper ventilation, work against time and amidst the confusion of hundreds of costumes and make-up equipment. Similarly, our members work in the green room, “making up” the character and position of our country. The mighty men who give a new turn of thought, who come onto the platform—the politicians, economists, and scientists—will get all the glory. But we will just be the silent workers from behind.

Everywhere it is the same. Culture works from behind; it never expresses itself out; it does not even claim success. In ten years time, even to create in the heart of the country a reverence and adoration for the idea of cultural values, is itself something great, because for centuries these ideas have been taken away from our minds. Not only have they been taken away from our minds, but by a well-conceived and silent education system, our children have been perverted to consider our culture as grotesque. This is where we were ten years ago, and in those days, we would not even get a place to talk—even temples refused. At last we found a place, because the Muslim landlord was kind enough to spare it, though he asked us to use only the front portion because the rest of the building was not livable.

Now, enthusiasm is everywhere, and things have much improved over the past four years. In the ten years of the Mission, it took six years just for the Mission’s promoters to realize the glory of it. Now, even in the cities where we thought there was no hope, there is great enthusiasm. In Bombay this has caught on like wildfire. Groups are increasing in number and all of them are honest and serious. The Madras Mission has the glory of being the father of the Mission, as all the other Mission centers came after.

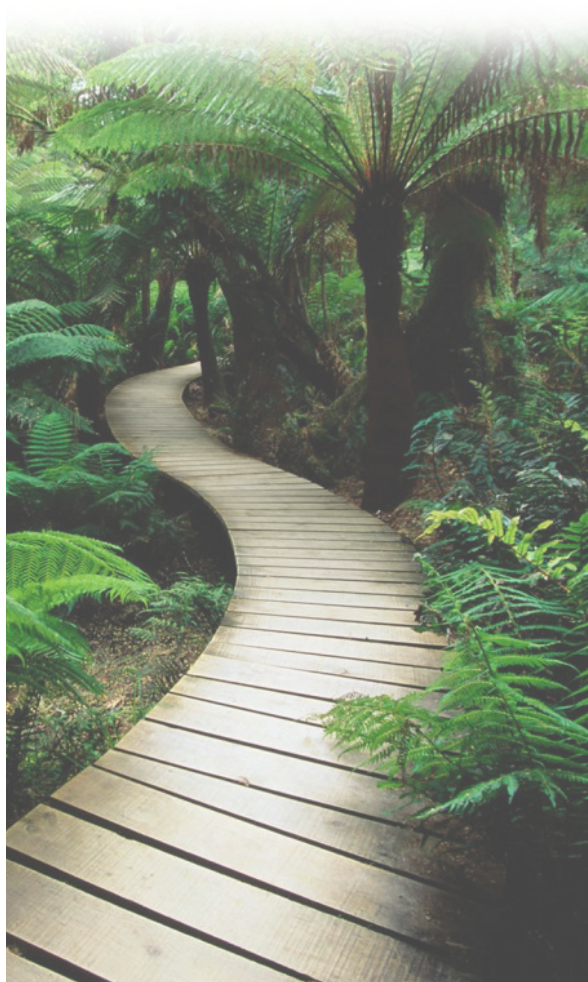
True Progress

The degree of tranquility and depth of serenity gained by an individual day by day should be measured as the Mission’s progress, not how many branches, etc. Though as an organization we certainly want numbers, the real progress is within. Give some attention to it and you can win it. It is not your fault if you are not able to

do it now. With *Narayana smriti* (the Lord’s remembrance), act on.

A constant awareness of a greater reality in and through our activities is necessary. Even though the mind has its agitations and the intellect has its throbbing, behind it all, a substratum of peace and tranquility that never ends must be found. Each individual must be aware of himself. It is his duty to see that his mind is perfectly tranquil. Try to use this to measure your progress, and not any other way.

In this way, in these ten years [of the Mission], there has been good progress. And if we keep it up, the next tenth anniversary will be a spectacular moment in the spiritual renaissance of the nation. Everything depends on you ultimately.





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

Vedanta 2010

DATES / ACHARYAS

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

Full-time Resident Acharya

Acharya Smt. Sharada Kumar

August 2010

Puja Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

August-October 2010

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya

November-December 2010

Swami Ishwarananda

January 2011

Swami Shantananda

February-March 2011

Swami Ishwarananda

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July 2011

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August 2011

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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

(707) 207- 5011

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)

Acharya Sharada Kumar: Taittiriya Upanishad, Vivekachudamani, Vedic Chanting, Sanskrit, Sahasranamavalis, Bhajans

Pujya Gurudev's Birth Centenary 2015-2016



From the Desk of Swami Tejomayananda

June 13, 2009

Chinmaya Mission Centers and *Acharyas* Worldwide

Blessed Self,

Hari Om! Greetings from *Sandeepany*!

I am very pleased to inform you that the Overseas *Acharyas*' Conference held at *Chinmaya Vibhooti* in May 2009 was a great success.

The most important point which was brought out overwhelmingly is that the birth centenary year of Pujya Gurudev (2015 - 2016) should be celebrated in a grand manner befitting His stature. In order to do this, we should gear ourselves from now onward, so that the momentum will be created by the year 2015. Even though it will take some time to plan the details of the various programs to be conducted by each wing of the Mission, one thing can be done with immediate effect: To celebrate the three auspicious occasions—Pujya Gurudev's birthday, *Guru Purnima*, and Pujya Gurudev's *Mahasamadhi* Day—in a more organized and grand way. These days are, in any case, celebrated in all Mission centers each year.

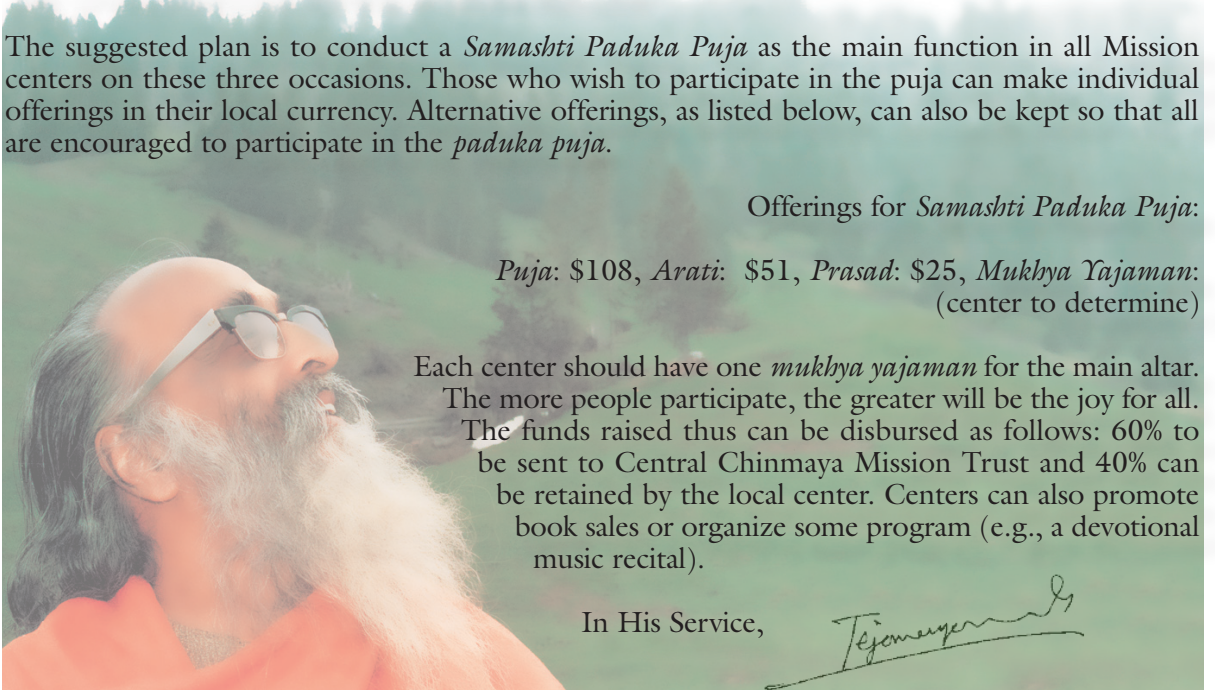
The suggested plan is to conduct a *Samashti Paduka Puja* as the main function in all Mission centers on these three occasions. Those who wish to participate in the puja can make individual offerings in their local currency. Alternative offerings, as listed below, can also be kept so that all are encouraged to participate in the *paduka puja*.

Offerings for *Samashti Paduka Puja*:

Puja: \$108, *Arati*: \$51, *Prasad*: \$25, *Mukhya Yajaman*:
(center to determine)

Each center should have one *mukhya yajaman* for the main altar. The more people participate, the greater will be the joy for all. The funds raised thus can be disbursed as follows: 60% to be sent to Central Chinmaya Mission Trust and 40% can be retained by the local center. Centers can also promote book sales or organize some program (e.g., a devotional music recital).

In His Service,





Chinmaya Mission.....Trinidad

Experience the Divine Wisdom from the

The Spiritual Master
Swami Tejomayananda

This Summer 2010!

Six (6) Nights Discourses on
CHAPTER 4 OF BHAGAVAD GITA
"Fundamentals of Hinduism"
August 24th to 29th, 2010

Two (2) Day Symposium on
TIPS FOR HAPPY LIVING
Commencing with Meditation on the Beach
August 28th to 29th, 2010



Registration Cost:

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(For 6 day Duration)
Foreign Delegates

\$300US

(For 3 Day Duration)
Foreign Delegates

\$700TT

Local Delegates

Package Includes:

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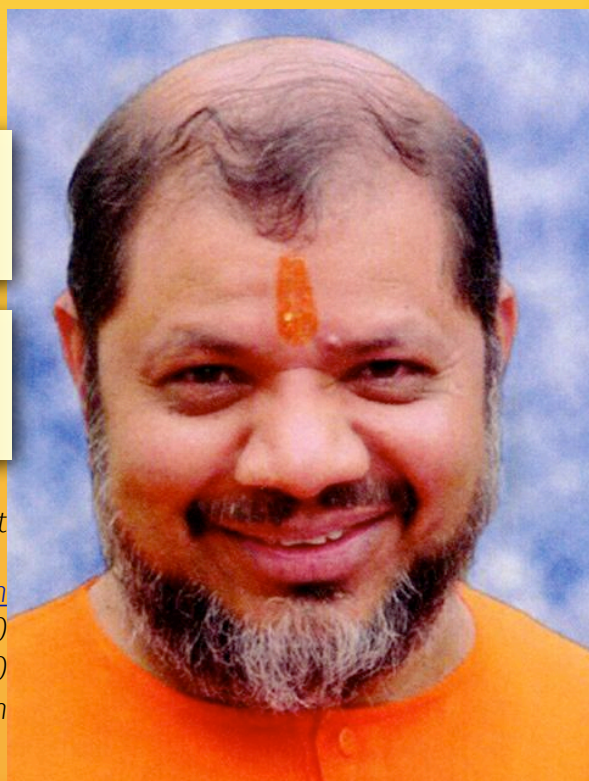
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Chinmaya Dham Yatra 2009

A Tour of Major Chinmaya Centers and Projects in India, led by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

by Subha Varma Pathial

Delhi: October 19

The *Chinmaya Dham Yatra*, led by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda, commenced from Delhi, with 62 delegates from Australia, Canada, India, Kuwait, Philippines, Hong Kong, St. Martin, Singapore, U.K., and U.S.A.



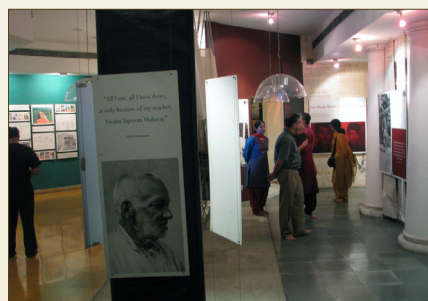
In his inaugural speech, Guruji explained the purpose of this *yatra* as being to travel together while learning about Gurudev, bonding as a Chinmaya Family in the process. He said, “Bharatji did a *Rama Dham Yatra* when he visited Lord Rama in the forest. We are doing a *Chinmaya Dham Yatra*.” He also gave an introduction of the CM Delhi center and its various branches, including the Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CORD).

In 1953, Delhi became the third city, after Pune and Chennai, to host Pujya Gurudev’s *jnana yajna*, during which he spoke on *Mandukya-Karika* for 91 days. Since then, Delhi has been a hotbed of Chinmaya Mission Activity. In 1992, Pujya Gurudev performed the *bhumi puja* (ground-breaking ceremony) for the Chinmaya Center for World Understanding (CCWU). When he attained *mahasamadhi* in 1993, his body was kept there overnight and devotees poured in to pay their respects. The place where his

body sat during that night is now the site of a beautiful *samadhi* shrine that is surrounded by a lotus pond.



CCWU also houses “*Chinmaya Chetna*,” an interactive multimedia exhibit on Pujya Gurudev’s life and teachings. Photographs and videos capture *Tapovan Kuti*, Pujya Gurudev’s childhood, and other precious moments. The exhibit also gives a broad view of what Chinmaya Mission is today and shows how one noble ideal transformed an individual life, and through it, all of society.



During this *yatra*, one of the main priorities was to retrace the steps of Pujya Gurudev, thus deepening our understanding of his vision of Chinmaya Mission. It was indeed a bonding experience to get to know different Mission members and different centers, standing as one family. Before leaving, we all did a *paduka puja* to get Pujya Gurudev’s blessings for a successful *yatra*.



Delhi - Dehradun - Uttarkashi: October 20

As we packed into the ATR Turbo-Prop aircraft, overflowing with enthusiasm to get going, we found out that the *yatris*' luggage didn't fit (apparently, we had not packed lightly enough). All of us were reminded of Guruji's words, "The Lord is a teacher and teaser." Swami Mitrananda (CM Chennai), one of the organizers of this tour, stayed back and ensured that the remaining baggage arrived later that night at the Uttarkashi ashram.



After a warm welcome from CM Dehradun, where we were provided with lunch and snacks for the trip, we boarded our next mode of transport—three buses named Ganga, Yamuna and Sarasvati. Guruji moved between the buses and spent time with all the *yatris*.



We arrived at *Tapovan Chinmayam*—a well-kept, aesthetic, serene ashram—at 9:20 p.m. Resident *Acharya* Swami Dhyanananda welcomed Pujya Guruji with a garland. Nearby we could hear Mother Ganga roaring. We experienced more teasing from the Lord as we were made to wait until the next morning to see the majestic Himalayas and beautiful Ganga.

Uttarkashi is situated 165 km. from Rishikesh and its lowest regions are 5,800 ft. above sea level. It is bordered on all sides by the Varanavata mountain range and the tributaries of River Bhagirathi flow around the mountain tract like two hands hugging the plains. At the central point in the plains, almost like the lap of the mountain tract, is Ujeli. It is here where *Tapovan Kutir*, the home of Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj, is situated.



Built in 1936 by some of his devotees, *Tapovan Kutir*'s location is truly unique. Built into the side of a hill, with the River Bhagirathi flowing beneath, it is a picture of serene solitude. The *kutir* is a small, sparse, one-room hut where Swami Tapovanji lived. It remains the same even today, pristine and untouched. The mud-walled, dung-floor hut contains his cot and *kamandalu* (water pot), and little else. The modest verandah outside the hut, where Swami Tapovanji would sit and marvel at Nature's beauty, or give Vedantic discourses, has been converted into a shrine. It is here that Pujya Gurudev spent several years studying at the feet of his guru. Even now, devotees speak in hushed tones of the profound experiences they had while meditating there.



The facilities of the Tapovan ashram were recently expanded and renovated. A three-story building, *Tapovan Chinmayam*, built on land donated by a devotee, was inaugurated by Pujya Guruji on March 15, 2005. It has 24 well-equipped rooms with balconies, all with breathtaking views of Mother Bhagirathi and the surrounding mountains.

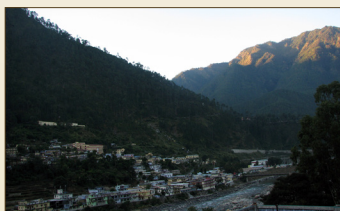


The ashram can house at least 125 persons, and the *satsang* hall on the ground floor of *Tapovan Chinmayam* comfortably seats 300. A large, white marble *murti* of Lord Jagadishvara sits in the middle of the stage, with Mother Sarasvati and Lord Ganesha gracing either side. Portraits of Swami Tapovanji Maharaj and Pujya Gurudev look on. The foyer is dedicated to a pictorial life sketch of Swami Tapovanji.



Uttarkashi: October 21

Most of the *yatris* would agree that waking up in *Tapovan* ashram was similar to entering a state of meditative contemplation. The presence of Swami Tapovanji Maharaj is easy to feel and difficult to deny.



After everyone had eaten breakfast, Guruji invited everyone to see Pujya Gurudev's *kutir*. There, the *yatris* observed the humble dwelling of a master in the making. Later that morning, Guruji shared that it was the 26th anniversary of his *sannyasa diksha*. He spoke on how spending this day in *Tapovan Kutir* made him feel truly blessed. Guruji then movingly described how he met Pujya Gurudev and how he first came to Uttarkashi.



We made a pilgrimage to the nearby Soumyakashi Temple, which is over 6,000 years old. Individual *abhishekam* (sacred bath) was offered by everyone.

After lunch, rest, and tea, we had *satsang* with Guruji. He described the five most important places for a seeker's spiritual practices: Varanasi is ideal for *shravanam*, Haridwar and Rishikesh for *mananam*, Uttarkashi and Gangotri for *nididhyasanam*. In Uttarkashi, Guruji's advice to all *yatris* was to just abide in their own Self.

After *satsang*, we performed a *samashti paduka puja* in observation of Guruji's *sannyasa diksha* day. The ceremony was most certainly a culmination of that day's descriptions by Guruji of his initiation into the monastic order of Chinmaya Mission.



Chinmaya Mission's foundation is based on two different dynamics given to Pujya Gurudev by his two gurus: the intense, unwavering *tapas* of Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj, and the overflowing love and compassion of Pujya Swami Sivananda. Pujya Gurudev's style of teaching and imparting knowledge can be seen as a combination of both. Guruji explained that the early members of Chinmaya Mission were the bedrock upon which the organization stands today.



At 6:30 in the evening, we performed both *Shri Tapovan Arati* and *Shri Ganga Arati*.



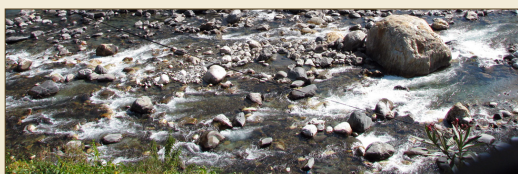
During our *satsang* with Swami Dhyanananda, he spoke on the origins of Chinmaya Mission in Uttarkashi and described the

spiritual importance that Uttarkashi is given in *Skanda Purana's Kedar-Kandam*.



Uttarkashi: October 22

Guruji gave us a discourse on the four verses of *Tapovan Stuti*, which had been spontaneously composed when he was posted in San Jose in 1989. *Tapovan Stuti* is a personification of the virtues of renunciation found in Swami Tapovan Maharaj. *Sannyasa dharma* reached its pinnacle in him.



At 10 a.m., we went for a dip in the Ganga, at the confluence of the Rivers Aasi and Bhagirathi. Guruji was the first one in.



Lunch was at the ashram of Mata Brahmajyoti, or Babaji, as she is fondly called. She has been witness to Chinmaya Mission's entire *guru-shishya parampara*. She knew Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj well; Pujya Gurudev considered her his younger sister; and Pujya Guruji always pays his respects to her when he visits Uttarkashi. She has a deep closeness and high regard for Guruji. During her *satsang*, she likened Pujya Gurudev to Maharshi Veda Vyasa.



In the evening *satsang*, Swami Mitrananda shared his experiences on *yatras* as a powerful means of self-purification.



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॥ पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति । तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥

Whoever offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, that I accept, offered by the pure-minded with devotion.

- Bhagwad Gita 9.26

For More Details Contact

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Email: worship@chinfo.org



Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF) is located in the sacred precincts of Adi Sankara Nilayam.

Many of the *yatris* were invited to sing *bhajans* with Guruji. The *bhajan* session ended with Guruji's composition, *Prarthana Gitam*.



Uttarkashi - Haridwar via Rishikesh: October 23

We boarded the buses at 8:30 a.m., bidding a grateful farewell to Swami Dhyanananda and his efficient staff. All along the curvy mountain roads, we enjoyed the majesty of the Himalayas and the flowing music of Mother Ganga alongside. Intermittently, we also got glimpses of the snowcapped peaks of the Gomukhi Mountains, in which Gangotri and Gomukh are nestled.



Guruji and Swami Mitrananda shifted between the buses, interacting with all of us at the tea stops and during lunch. We all enjoyed the lunch packets prepared lovingly for us by Swami Dhyanananda's team.

Rishikesh is considered the yoga capital of the world, and it is a famous center of pilgrimage. Also known as the gateway to the Himalayas, it is located 25 km. from another holy city, Haridwar.

Rishikesh is the starting point of travel to the sites of the *Char Dham* pilgrimage: Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri.

It was in Rishikesh that Pujya Gurudev began his spiritual journey with Pujya Swami Sivananda Maharaj, who initiated him into *sannyasa*. Sivananda Ashram, on the banks

of the Ganga, is one of Rishikesh's many famous ashrams.



Haridwar is famous for its temples and it is where Mother Ganga first emerges from the mountains to bless the plains. This point of emergence is known as Har-ki-Pauri, and thousands of pilgrims come to it every day to take a holy dip in the Ganga.

We reached Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh around 4 p.m. and received a warm welcome.

We offered our prostrations at Pujya Swami Sivananda's *samadhi* shrine and visited Swami Sivananda's *kutir*, which is maintained immaculately by his devotees.



Bhajans and *Ganga Arati* are offered daily at *Sivananda Kutir*. This evening, Guruji was their honored guest and led the *bhajans* and *arati*. It was a remarkable and uplifting sight to see *Ganga Arati* at sunset, with our *diyas* merging with the *diyas* from the neighboring temples and ashrams.



Our day ended at *Siyaram Janaki Vallabha Seva Sadan*, a wonderful *dharamshala* run by the family of one of our fellow *yatris*. Complete with amenities, it included Internet

and air conditioning. What moved us most was the heartfelt welcome, the rose petals and special garlands from Vrindavan for Guruji, and the sumptuous meal that the owners so personally attended to, that was indeed touching. Indeed, we experienced Indian hospitality in all its grace: “*Atithi devo bhava.*”



During Guruji’s *satsang* there, he gave each of us a pot of *Ganga jal*, which had been gifted by our kind hosts.

☞ Haridwar - Sidhbari: October 24

We were split into two groups for our charter flight from Dehradun to Dharmashala Airport. Guruji accompanied the first group and Swami Mitrananda accompanied the second group. The second group had the welcome opportunity to visit the Manasa Devi temple, via Har-ki-Pauri, before leaving Haridwar. Herculean preparations of cleanup and site preparations were going on in Haridwar, where the *Maha Kumbha Mela* will be held in 2010, and where 1.2 crores of pilgrims are expected.

Manasa Devi Temple is situated atop a hill accessible by foot and cable car. We opted for the cable car. It was a wonderful journey and we were happy to see the temple’s well-organized *darshan* process. We did a marathon-*darshan* in an hour and returned in time for our flight.



After a hearty lunch from our generous hosts, we

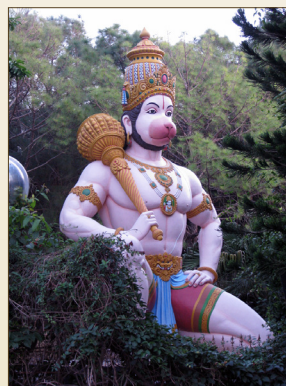
bade goodbye and boarded our charter flight at the Dehradun Airport. We enjoyed regal views of the Himalayas as we flew into Dharmashala.

We finally arrived in Sidhabari, the resting place of our Pujya Gurudev. We were warmly greeted by Swami Subodhananda and the earlier group of *yatris*.



Sidhabari, the Valley of the *Siddhas*, is nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, at the foothills of the Dhauladhar mountain range, and is an awe-inspiring showcase of Nature and Spirit, the place where Kapila Muni once lived.

The Sidhabari Ashram story is quite interesting. Construction began in 1979, but it was beset by howling winds that barred progress. It was Pujya Gurudev’s *sankalpa* to install the *Vira-Hanumanji* idol, and indeed, the timely arrival of this *Vayu-putra* (son of Lord Wind) immediately stopped the winds and resolved the construction issues. The well-known sculptor Shri Kashinath of Shimoga sculpted the concrete idol of Hanumanji in *vira-asana* posture. It is 25 ft. tall and rests on a 7-ft. granite pedestal. Pujya Gurudev consecrated the idol on October 10, 1982.



Vira-Hanumanji is seated at Sidhabari under the Milky Way, open to his father's embrace. Hanumanji successfully keeps all damaging winds at bay. The worship of Lord Hanuman grants strength, courage, fame, alertness, eloquence, and wisdom. *Vira-Hanumanji's mastaka-abhishekam* is performed with elaborate *pujas*, *havans*, and joy every five years. Mission devotees from all parts of the world gather for this milestone event.



Sidhabari is home to the *samadhi sthala* of Pujya Gurudev. Devotees from all corners of the globe come to meditate, worship, and bask in the presence of the Master, whose mortal remains are buried under his sculpted image. The *bhu samadhi* of Pujya Gurudev took place on August 9, 1993. Built in traditional Kerala style, the *samadhi sthala* houses Pujya Gurudev's *ashta-dhatu pratima*, or sculpture made of eight metals. Worship and *arati* is offered twice daily. The *samadhi* is the most revered and an intense abode of silence and the focal point for ashram residents and visitors.



We celebrated Swami Mitrananda's birthday today.

The 6 p.m. *arati* at Pujya Gurudev's *samadhi sthala* is followed by *arati* at the *Ram Mandir*, followed by the chanting of Hanuman Chalisa before *Vira-Hanumanji*. After the evening *arati*, Guruji had a short *satsang*, in which he told some of the history of the Sidhabari ashram. Although it opened in 1981, it has been envisioned as a place of retreat a few years earlier. Pujya Gurudev had wanted to give back to the surrounding village communities that had been serving various saints across the Himalayas for countless generations. Thus, what was once a barren, windy hillock, by the Lord's grace and Pujya Gurudev's blessings, has now become a verdant and serene ashram visited by countless devotees and tourists.



The Sidhabari ashram soon evolved as a *triveni sangam* (tri-fold confluence) of *jnana*, *bhakti*, and *karma* yoga. The ashram expounds knowledge through its two-year Vedanta course in Hindi, devotion through the worship of Lord Hanuman and Shri Rama, and service through CORD. CORD Sidhabari has established scores of community and rural service projects across over 500 villages, including vocational training for women.

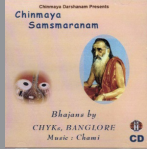


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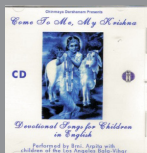
Abhinandanam

Sanskrit greeting songs composed and sung by Swami Tejomayananda



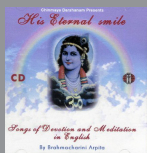
Chinmaya Samsaranam

Bhajans by Chinmaya Yuva Kendra Bangalore



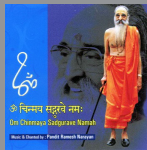
Come to Me, My Krishna

Devotional songs for children in English by Brahmacharini Arpita



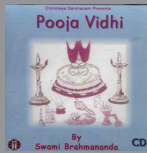
His Eternal Smile

Songs of devotion and meditation in English by Brahmacharini Arpita



Om Chinmaya Sadgurave Namah

Mantra chanting (continuous) by Pandit Ramesh Narayan



Pooja Vidhi

Puja chants by Swami Brahmananda



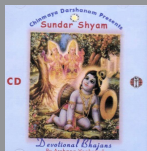
Prarthana

Bhajans by Brahmacharini Sunita Chaitanya and others



Soundarya Lahari

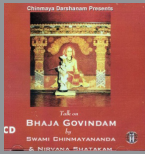
Chants by Subbalakshmi Krishnamoorthy



Sundar Shyam

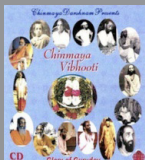
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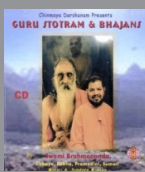
Bhaja Govindam and Nirvana Shatakam

Talks by Swami Chinmayananda; Chanting by Sudha Malhotra



Chinmaya Vibhooti

Audio CD, Bhajans on Puja Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, Sung by Swami Brahmananda and CM Devotees, \$6



Guru Stotrams and Bhajans

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4.5" Acrylic idol of Hanumanji in golden color, \$8



Acrylic Keychain

2" Acrylic keychain with pictures of Hanumanji, Lord Jagadishvara, or Puja Gurudev, with OM symbol on reverse, \$2



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OM Symbol in Case

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Golden OM borders on Kerala handloom cotton cloth, \$8

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Vande Mataram

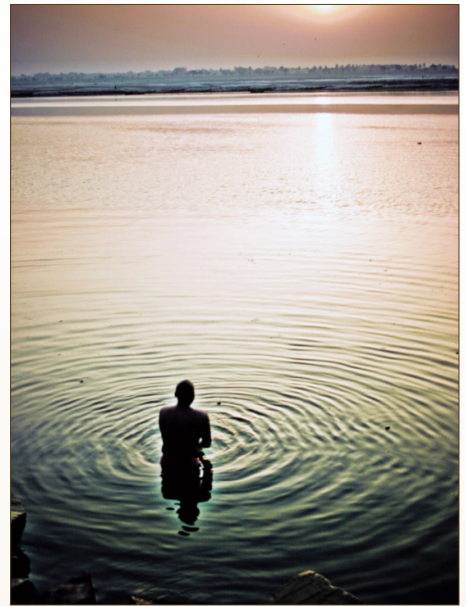
by Varun Khanna

Continued from CMW News, September 2009

☞ March 4

Today, at around 8:30 a.m., we started from my uncle's house in Noida for Gurgaon, where my *nani* (mom's mom) lives. We ate lunch there and my Dad, Nani, and I pushed off for the airport to go to Banaras, a.k.a. Varanasi, a.k.a. Kashi. When we landed in Banaras, I noticed that the people looked noticeably different from the people I had seen in Delhi, Kashmir, and Bangalore. It's always interesting to note how every city has its own kind of people. Almost all of India's cities have differences in skin color. Some cities have differences in facial expressions. Some cities have predominantly mustached men and some don't. Some have women covered head to toe and some have women with almost no clothes at all. In Banaras, I can't pinpoint yet what the exact difference is, but when I figure it out, I'll write about it.

We arrived in Varanasi around 3:45 p.m. and took a taxi from the airport to the J. Krishnamurti Foundation Center in Raj Ghat. One of Varanasi's peculiarities is that it is split up by *ghats*, or banks, along the Ganga River. The center is beautiful and the view is ridiculously more so. The main campus is on the west side of the Varuna River, while the Rural Center is on the east. Both campuses are on opposite sides of the intersection of the Varuna and the Ganga Rivers. The shortest route from one campus to the other is an 8-minute walk that includes crossing a wood-plank bridge, which literally looks like the bridges of medieval times, complete with wide spaces and broken planks. Walking across it does sometimes require a strong dose of faith. I learned that every year the bridge breaks, and every year they rebuild it. During the rainy season, the water level rises so high (the bridge is at least 20 feet above the water) that it actually takes down the bridge!



Upon arrival, we dropped off our bags in a guesthouse and went to the Rural Center, where I would later move to and stay in for the rest of the month. We visited Partho Uncle, the center's operations in-charge, who gave us a tour and guided us on how to take the boat ride that goes all the way up and down the Ganga so we could see each *ghat*. He said we could go all the way up to Dashashvamedha Ghat to the famous *arati* performed there. So we rushed to catch the 6:30 p.m. rowboat and set out for Dashashvamedha Ghat. Our boat was rowed from the front by an old man named Ramlochan, and steered (from the back, with another oar) by a young man named Kamlesh. We made our way along the *ghats* and reached Dashashvamedha Ghat over an hour later. We watched the *arati* and returned in 45 minutes, getting into our guesthouse at 9:15 p.m. After dinner, which was an awesome home-cooked meal, we retired to our rooms to rest.

☞ March 5

I am now in my main place of study for the month and I am already in love with this city—not because of its beauty, not because of its people, and not because of its weather. I am simply in awe of its glory and unfathomable history. I'm no historian, and in fact I always disliked history class, but India's history in general, and more specifically Varanasi's, is outright fascinating. Imagine the 200 years of

American history we learn in school versus the 7,000+ years of cultural history of India! I say cultural history because India's history itself is older than 7,000 years, but the age where the culture we predominantly see and learn about today formed around 7,000 years ago. In Varanasi, I may not be 5,000 years in the past, but I am living in the oldest city in the world!

☞ March 6

Today we went to Sarnath to explore Lord Buddha's history. Sarnath, Varanasi's neighboring city, is where Lord Buddha held his first discourse, and it is resplendent with Buddhist architecture and history. Sarnath is a pilgrimage city for many religions, but it remains the main attraction for Buddhists. Varanasi, in turn, is also a big hub for Buddhism. When we stopped at the place where Lord Buddha gave his first discourse, I went back a few thousand years to imagine this sage who was born in Lumbini (border of Nepal and India), who traveled in eastern India with other saints and seekers, who sought the Truth and discovered it in the city of Gaya. I imagined the enlightened master coming to the holy city of Varanasi and his sojourn to this spot in Sarnath, where he taught the nature of the Truth to his five initial disciples.

We ventured to the other side of Varanasi to meet Dr. Rana Singh in a bookshop at Assi Ghat. He gave me all the materials I needed to start my explorations of the city. Ranaji is a big, jolly guy with a serious face but the nicest smile. He looks at you like you're the most wrong-looking person he has ever met, but when he talks to you he sounds like Santa Claus. We talked on lots of different topics and I ended up buying quite a few books (some authored or edited by him).

We then made our way to the nearby Banaras Hindu University (BHU), also known as *Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya*, where my father went to college about 30 years ago. He spent five years there and graduated in 1979 from BHU's Institute of Technology. He was filled with old memories when we arrived on campus and he kept enthusiastically pointing out the many places and structures that were familiar to him. We did a simple drive-thru visit of the campus, checking out the main buildings and my dad's old hostels (dorms).

Finally we stopped at BHU's main temple, *Kashi Vishwanath Mandir*, offered our prayers, and left, exiting through the campus's "Lanka Gate" (because the gate leads into the locale known as Lanka). Just after crossing the gate, my dad told the driver to stop, randomly, on the side of the road. He quickly told me, "Come on. I want to show you something," and started walking to the other side of the street. We crossed the street and went to "Pehelwan's," a *lassi* shop. We ordered three sweet *lassi*-s and got two clay pots (half the size of a normal cereal bowl) that included *lassi*, molasses, and *rabadi*. At Pehelwan's, this alone makes a *lassi*, and it is probably the best drink I have ever had. I'm having amazing drinks wherever I go—from coconut water in Bangalore to *lassi* in Varanasi. My dad said that Pehelwaan's used to be his favorite *lassi* shop when he was in college. It felt so cool to experience this place with him 30 years later. Had I come here by myself, it might not have been as good. This was my first *lassi* in India, but not my last. I appreciated the eco-friendly clay pot that you could toss anywhere for it to become part of the earth again.

We soon reached a Hanuman *mandir*, which my dad said he used to visit frequently (especially before tests). We entered the temple, said our prayers, and left. Our next stop was a Durga *mandir*. As we entered, I felt a strange sensation rising in me, a feeling of connectedness, though it was not to the place or anything in particular. With the thought of Durga *Mata* in my mind, I felt . . . complete. It was interesting, and not something I can fully describe, but I felt good. We offered our prayers and moved away from the altar. My dad said, "I have to show you something," so I followed him to a small window overlooking a huge square pool. The water inside it was a dirty green. I immediately recognized it as *Durga Kund*, where bathing was considered sacred at one time. Sadly, it is no longer used or properly maintained.

☞ March 8

We made our way to BHU again, this time stopping at the university's Shri Sunderlal Hospital near the Lanka Gate. Here, we met Dr. Ram Harsh Singh, a highly accomplished, retired BHU professor, who was a practicing ayurvedic doctor in the hospital and a mentor

for several Ph.D. students. He would be my Ayurveda teacher for the next month.

When we met, we talked about why I wanted to study Ayurveda for a month. He said, “If you’re really interested in Ayurveda, then go for the full course.” I said that was part of the plan and that I was looking into attending BHU. He recommended I apply right away to see if I am eligible. He welcomed me to visit his office anytime and observe or ask whenever I wanted. I told him I would be moving closer to BHU only in April, so that’s when we would start our course. He suggested that I read his book, *Holistic Principles of Ayurveda*, in the meantime. I told him I would and mentally decided to apply to BHU right away, to see if I could start the full course in August.

March 14

I have met many people here so far, and they are all unique. And awesome.

My cousin Raman’s wife’s sister, Kalpana, is here with her aunt (Chellam Aunty). Kalpana and I meet at mealtimes and around the Krishnamurti Center campus every so often. We chitchat, and it’s a good time to get know family.

My friend, Shayur, is a 27-year-old Indian from Kenya and one of the coolest people I have ever met. He is just adventuring around India like me—meeting people and collecting things along the way; we have a lot in common. He is so interesting to talk to because he has this air of peace around him. He makes it seem like everything is calm and quiet, or “chill,” as he likes to say all the time. His accent is also quite interesting because it seems to be a mix of British English, Kiswahili, Indian, and American. For a constant traveler, it is easy to click with people and have a friendship that is without negativity or expectations, where both friends know that parting is inevitable. It is being friends for friendship’s sake.

My Sanskrit and Vedanta teacher at the center is Swami Chidananda, who is such an interesting character and always cool with everything. Swamiji is a deep ocean of knowledge, but he also has a great sense of humor and never passes up an opportunity to tell a joke.

Josephine, from Holland, is a lady I have lots of interaction with, but can never quite understand. She is a research psychologist by profession and has done some interesting/crazy things to herself in the name of research. She is the most animated person I have ever met. Everything she says has a hand gesture attached to it, and she always tells jokes, though mostly not funny ones. I laugh though, not because the joke was funny, but because the silence after it is funny. Every time. She’s maybe in her 50s—I can’t tell and I don’t want to ask.

A Canadian lady I met here, whom I have seen in Toronto and in Chicago, is Mai. I admire her calm and control, which may be the result of her age or her wisdom. She is Canadian, humble, and fascinating, and her presence is often enough to calm people down.

Marc is another charming character who has such a sweet view of life. He looks like he is in his late 40s. He really tries to live in the present moment and inspires me to do the same. My conversations with him are always moving and uplifting.

Kevin is 21 years old. He has finished his third year of college and is taking a year off to explore the teachings of J. Krishnamurti. He is insightful and I want to find out more about him, but somehow, even after talking to him, he’s just as mysterious.

At the Rural Center, Rita *Didi* acts as my caretaker. And she is phenomenal. I don’t know how she manages to take care of everyone here, but she does it. You always read about those people in ancient times who had mental techniques of just “knowing things”—she is one of these people, so simple and so wise.

And finally, there’s Hema Aunty. She fascinates me because in her own way, she seems to be a living example of the teachings of J. Krishnamurti. I have been (and will be) having discussions with her about experiments and explorations in learning what it means to observe, listen, watch oneself and one’s surroundings, and live in the present. “Explore” is my new favorite word and I continue to do this.

to be continued

India in My Heart

by Gautam Varma

India. The very word can evoke a wide range of different emotions and thoughts. For some it is a land of mysticism and magic. Others view it as an emerging power in the world of the future. Still others see only the dark corners, where groups of starving children beg for food that can sustain them for another day. Everybody has a different relationship with the country.

Being born and raised in America, I used to view India as a background element in my life. Sure, my parents were from there. Sure, my name came from there. Sure, my grandparents lived there, and I would visit them roughly once every two years. But that was all it was. For a long while, I regarded India as a place I would never truly belong to, and I kept it at a distance. That would all change, however. My high school years would prove to me just how deep in my heart India was truly situated.

I had been very close to my maternal grandfather while growing up. We had taken several trips together, just the two of us, traveling to various places in Kerala that were dear to his heart. One such trip involved a three-day stay in the town of Guruvayoor, where I managed to get lost on the last day. But I was lucky enough to get help from a kind young man who ran the phone booth at the local bus station. Another time, when we were taking a bus ride to a neighboring town to visit some relatives, I observed how some of the younger men moved aside in the overcrowded bus and made room for the both of us, willing to dangle alongside the bus in order to let the old man and his young grandson sit comfortably. Even after my grandfather passed away unexpectedly while we were visiting in 2005, I saw the grace of people who reached out from all over to offer us support in a time of need. Experiences like this have brought me in contact with an incredible reservoir of kindness that resides in the hearts of the people of India.



Although these things were all fine and lovely, I still saw them only as an outsider. As I got older, I felt something lacking, a gap of some sort—one that I wasn't quite sure how to fill. I did realize, however, that this had something to do with my background, my heritage. It had something to do with the place India held in my life. By the time my junior year in high school came around, I found an opportunity to face this feeling.

I decided to do my eleventh grade in an I.B. program at the Chinmaya International Residential School (CIRS), on the outskirts of Coimbatore in South India. At first I was hesitant and unsure of whether to commit an entire year to staying in India, where I was sure to have difficulties adjusting to their vastly different system. In the end, it turned out to be one of the best decisions I had ever made.

While my experiences in the school of making new friends and attending classes were not all that different, I did get many opportunities to do something I had never truly gotten to do before: To connect with a country that lay claim to a great deal of my personal history. The land where my ancestors, grandparents, and parents came from was a land that proved to be a constant source of fascination for me. Experiencing the culture from within, as opposed to from without, led me to develop an entirely different perspective on the country. I was no longer just a visitor; I was now a resident. The culture of India that I experienced, however, influenced by other cultures it may have been (this was after all an

international school), became my own. I was surrounded by it, embraced by it, and to my great surprise, accepted by it.

I learned various things about the different people of India. I made it a point to speak with the *annas* (brothers) and *akkas* (sisters), the terms we used to address the young men and women who helped maintain the school facilities (cooking, cleaning, decorations, etc.). Through their stories, I came to understand the resiliency of the Indian spirit and of how they continued to put in an honest day's work even though the hours were long and the labor was difficult.

During a two-week school trip through the Himalayas with my classmates, I interacted with the mountain villagers and learned from their wonderful simplicity. Even a kind word and a wave were enough to put a smile on their weather-worn faces. On our return journey by train, I realized what held such a diverse country together: A shared sense of belonging and a common willingness to accept a stranger, however unfamiliar, into their own group. I observed these qualities in almost all of the Indians I encountered, both from the North and South.

My choice to spend a year in India was not a typical one. I do not know many American-born children who have spent their entire life in the U.S. and taken such a leap. But I did it, and I thank God for it. I learned so much about a country that I now understand to be an inseparable part of myself. In essence, that year spent in India was a year spent in self-discovery. I have come to terms with the fact that I am neither Indian nor American, that I am both. While America is the land of my birth and a land that will have my allegiance, India is the land that has given me the richness of culture that I can now fall back on and feel good about who I understand myself to be. While America has given me a place to be myself, India has given me the power to be myself. I will be forever grateful to Her for this.



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.

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India's Former President Visits CM Orlando

by Vibhu Agrawal



On an unusually warm October morning, the excitement in the air was evident as the students, teachers, and volunteers scurried about preparing for the arrival and welcome of India's 11th President, His Excellency Dr. Abdul Kalam, at the Chinmaya Mission Orlando ashram.

As the meditation hall began to fill, the organizers were certain that the word of Dr. Kalam's visit had spread beyond the immediate Chinmaya Mission members. Fortunately, arrangements had been made for a closed circuit audio and video feed of the event in the adjacent hall. The meditation hall was packed with over 250 students and the adjoining hall was just as full with adults vying for the best spot. The children were barely able to contain themselves, and if it wasn't for the peaceful ambience of the meditation hall, graced by Lord Shiva's calming presence, it would have been difficult to keep the audience settled.

Dr. Kalam arrived on October 25, accompanied by Chinmaya Mission's senior *acharya*, Swami Shantananda (CM Princeton). The honored guests were welcomed in the traditional manner. Young children greeted them with *arati* and a beautiful flower garland of India's tri-colored flag. The soothing sounds of *Vande Mataram* were soon drowned by a thunderous applause welcoming Dr. Kalam and Swamiji.

The program began with an invocation by Chinmaya Mission Orlando's *acharya*, Shailaja Nadkarni. An invocation prayer to the Guru was chanted, followed by the Chinmaya Mission Pledge. A group of children, some as young as three years old, chanted the first five verses of the *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 15. The flawless pronunciation of complex Sanskrit words from

children born and brought up in the U.S., left no doubt that the vision of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda is being fulfilled in Chinmaya Mission centers all over the world.

Swami Shantananda introduced Dr. Kalam and reminded everyone of the achievements of the President of a billion people who was also known as the "Missile Man of India." The introduction made it evident that behind Dr. Kalam's small physical stature were his huge accomplishments as a teacher, scientist, author, philosopher, and leader.

It is no easy task to give a speech to an audience of kids ranging from innocent three-year olds, to eager teenagers, to seasoned adults. The topic of Dr. Kalam's speech was: "Righteousness in the heart leads to beauty in the character." The educator in Dr. Kalam, read the audience wonderfully, and instead of giving a speech, he gave the children an interactive lesson which they will remember for a long time. He made the kids repeat the equation, "Knowledge = Creativity + Righteousness + Courage." He explained how a combination of these characteristics can generate enlightened citizens. He concluded with an inspirational challenge to have a mission in life and to work toward that mission.

Although time was running short, Dr. Kalam answered many questions from the children, from simple to complex ones, from "What was your favorite subject in school?" to "What can children of Indian heritage living in the U.S. do for India?"

Dr. Kalam's visit concluded with a tree-planting ceremony wherein he and Swamiji assisted in planting a mango tree in the compound.

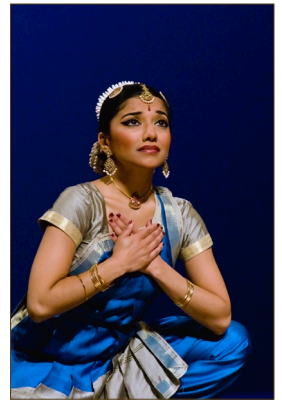
Swami Prakashananda Visits a Flourishing CM Minneapolis

by Manu Madhok

Chinmaya Mission Minneapolis hosted a *jnana yajna* on *Upadesha Sara*, November 18-21, 2009, as well as a workshop on "Develop and

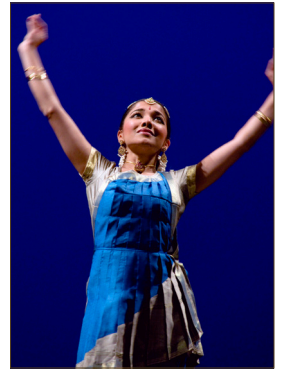


Library in Chicago. Anjal's dance recital was an amazingly moving, artistic, and creative presentation of poetry through graceful movements. Her expressions were captivating and her footwork was impeccable. The program was unique with original ideas, new lyrics and musical compositions, and novel music.

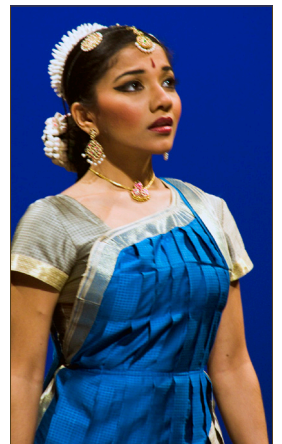


Deepen the Practice of Meditation," both of which were conducted by Swami Prakashananda (CM Trinidad) at the *Chinmaya Ganapati* ashram.

As a Sri Lankan, I try to visit Chennai in December for the music and dance season to witness the laudable performances. Anjal took me to another world through her concert, which made a deeper understanding of spirituality come alive on stage, and led me to quiet reflection and contemplation.



"Poetry in Motion" was a lunchtime presentation aimed to be an educational event. Anjal discussed and demonstrated her innovative choreography of traditional Bharatanatyam, proving that contemporary doesn't have to mean parting from tradition, but rather deriving from the traditional. Anjal discussed that *natya shastra* says a dance recital should create *rasa* to emote the genre of feelings in the artists as well as the audience, resulting in a



Swamiji also spoke of the CM Trinidad ashram and warmly invited everyone to visit during Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda's visit in July 2010, which many CM Minneapolis members are now planning to do.

Chinmaya Ganapati participated in a 24-hour online fundraising drive and raised \$38,000. GiveMN.org sponsored this "Give to the Max" day, where donations were matched by the St. Paul Foundation, Minneapolis Foundation, and Bush Foundation.

Over Thanksgiving weekend, an overnight camp was held for Bala Vihar children. The camp included indoor and outdoor games, bonfire with veggie Smores, a treasure hunt, *bhajans* and *arati*. All the participating children and adult volunteers enjoyed it immensely.

Chinmaya Ganapati celebrated the coming New Year and holiday season with a pizza party on December 14. At this event, the *Chinmaya Ganapati* volunteers were appreciated and presented with a book signed by Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda. By the Lord's grace and the blessings of our *Guru-parampara*, our Chinmaya Family looks forward to a spiritually fulfilling year in 2010.

Poetry in Motion

by Gowrie Mahenthiran

I was so glad to get an opportunity to watch the performance of Chicago CHYK Anjal Chande, on October 7, 2009, at the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium of the Harold Washington

transfixed audience and moving performance.

Anjal offered a good sampling of her repertoire and performed excerpts from traditional items such as *mallari* and *varnam*, set to an original music score. Three novel pieces, entitled, Creativity, Darkness, Acapella Tillana, exemplified her imaginative potential as a Bharatanatyam as well as new age artist. Anjal Chande, Gaurav Venkateshwar, and Arjun Venkatswami did a phenomenal job creating the original music for this work. The work, so tastefully created and presented, opens up doorways in all directions to Indian art's limitless possibilities.

In the Creativity piece, Anjal playfully delivered a profound message that by gaining any kind of knowledge, one should derive the ultimate joy, and with that joy, serve humanity. Anjal's lyrics in the Darkness piece was highly relevant to current events and the continuing struggle of the human soul, through which she got the audience to dive within in deeper silence. Her *tillana* piece set to acapella was simply breathtaking, novel and rhythmically precise.

In Anjal's artistry was a tapestry of beautiful modern music woven with traditional dance techniques. She has indeed raised the bars of Bharatanatyam dance and given it a new dimension. Well-known in her local community as a dance and tabla artist, she is also the founder and director of *Soham* Dance Space, a center for dance in Chicago.

Walk for CORD Inspires Ann Arbor

by Sangita Shivakumar

An enthusiastic group of 300 supporters gathered to participate in Chinmaya Mission Ann Arbor's first walkathon for CORD (Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development) on Saturday, October 10, 2009. Held at picturesque Kensington Park in Milford, Michigan, the walkathon was a booming success and included 170 adults and 130 Chinmaya Bala Vihar students. The walkers ranged in all age groups, from as young as six months to over 82 years old.

The sun shone brightly and the weather was

a cool 55°F. It was heartwarming to see the enthusiasm in both children and adults alike, all of them happy to be contributing in their own measure toward a greater cause.

Prior to the event, members publicized the walk during regular Bala Vihar and Study Group classes, informing everyone about CORD activities and Dr. Kshama Metre's contributions in elevating the program to a national level in India. During subsequent weekends, pledge forms were distributed, which contained information regarding the various CORD programs and walkathon guidelines.

During the week prior to the walkathon, the center buzzed with activity. Volunteers worked the telephone lines to maximize participation, built sign posts for mile markers and registration sites, gave out directions, developed logistics for parking, onsite registration, and security, and put together an appealing menu of snack items.

On the day of the walkathon, the event began at 3 p.m. with a prayer. Walkathon rules were provided with specific instructions regarding respect to the environment and fellow walkers. This was followed by a brief session of yoga and stretching exercises. Acharya Sharada Kumar gave an inspiring message that encouraged the walkers to practice *karma yoga*.

To control the flow of people through the narrow walk paths, batches of 20 participants departed within two-minute gaps. A cycle patrol ensured the safety of the walkers and other park users. At the end of the three-mile walkathon, the walkers gratefully received the treats of *garam chai*, *samosas*, cookies, and lemonade.

Thanks to the contributions of the walkers, donors, and volunteers CM Ann Arbor's CORD Walkathon raised over \$13,000, not including the additional donations that continued to pour in even after the event.





SECOND PUROHIT COURSE

(2010 – 2011)



“One who leads others on the path of good by keeping others interest before his own is called a Purohit.”

AN APPEAL

THE TRADITION

Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji desired the Hindus to be 'true practicing Hindus'. In order to do so, he started Gurukulas to train Acharyas who in turn could spread the message of Vedanta. In line with his vision, the Chinmaya Mission now proposes to start a Purohit Course to train 'Purohits' (Hindu Priests) with knowledge of Puja Vidhis, Shodasha Samskaaras, Vaidik Chanting, Sanskrit and Hindu Culture.

THE TEMPLE OF LEARNING:

This course will be conducted in the sylvan surroundings at the foothills of the Nilgiris at Chinmaya Vaidik Vidyapeeth, Chinmaya Gardens, Coimbatore.

THE SALIENT FEATURES:

- * One and a half year's **RESIDENTIAL COURSE**.
- * Starting on **18th JUNE, 2010**
- * **Inauguration by PUJYA GURUJI SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDAJI**
- * **NO COURSE FEE**. Free accommodation, food, clothes, medical care and books will be provided by Chinmaya Garden Trust.

THE VEDAPUTRA SCHEME (Vidya Daanam)

1. Sponsorship for 25 students for 1 ½ yrs.	: Rs. 15,00,000/-	US \$ 30,000
2. Sponsorship for 1 student for 1 ½ yrs.	: Rs. 50,000/-	US \$ 1,000
3. Sponsorship for 1 student for 1 yrs.	: Rs. 36,000/-	US \$ 800
4. Sponsorship for 1 student for 6 months	: Rs. 18,000/-	US \$ 400
5. Patron	: Rs. 10,000/-	US \$ 200
6. Donor	: Rs. 5,000/-	US \$ 100

THE BHIKSHA SCHEME (Anna Daanam)

1. Per day bhiksha	: Rs. 11,000/-	US \$ 250
2. Lunch bhiksha	: Rs. 6,000/-	US \$ 150
3. Dinner bhiksha	: Rs. 4,000/-	US \$ 100
4. Breakfast bhiksha	: Rs. 2,000/-	US \$ 50



THE APPEAL

To educate a person is great. To provide education and livelihood is greater still. To impart education, livelihood, culture and religion to those who will in turn spread our religion and culture and aid our worship (the Purohit) is truly noble.

DO JOIN US IN THIS NOBLE SEVA, BY SPONSORING THE EDUCATION OF A PUROHIT.

THE VEDAPUTRAS:

After completing the course, the Purohits may opt to work for the Chinmaya Mission, or pursue their individual goals.

THE DONATIONS:

- * All amounts are covered under IT 80G.
- * Cheques to be drawn in favour of 'Chinmaya Garden Trust' payable at Coimbatore.
- * Donations within India may be transferred vide ICICI Bank A/c No.001601005298 (Trichy Road Branch, Coimbatore).
- * Please contact us for 'SWIFT TRANSFER' from abroad indicating the currency & donor's PAN No.

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

BRAHMACARI BHASA CHAITANYA, CHINMAYA VAIDIK VIDYAPEETH

Chinmaya Gardens, Siruvani Road, Coimbatore 641114. India.

Tel: +91-422-2615637/2615493 Email: purohitcourse@gmail.com

VEDAPUTRA DONATION FORM

To,
Sri Sureshan, Administrator
Hari Om!

I am happy to sponsor the education (vidya daanam) of a Vedaputra under (please tick your option)

Category 1 ☐ Category 2 ☐ Category 3 ☐

Category 4 ☐ Category 5 ☐ Category 6 ☐

I am happy to sponsor the bhiksha (anna daanam) for the Vedaputras under (please tick your option)

Full Day ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Breakfast ☐

Enclosed herewith is a Demand draft/Cheque for Rs. / \$ _____
(Indian Currency / any non Indian currency)

The donation may be instituted in the name of
(write name in capitals) _____

Signature

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____ Mob: _____

Email: _____ PAN No. _____

Getting CORD to the Finish Line

by Poonam Merai



Two years ago, I had an opportunity of a lifetime: to live in a simple Indian village, to meet one of my heroes, Dr. Kshama Metre, and to be loved unconditionally by strangers. Volunteering at CORD (Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development) in Sidhabari, Himachal Pradesh, taught me that humans are resilient beyond belief so long as they are nurtured and empowered in the right environment. Ever since I left there, I have felt the need to give back, despite living on the other side of the world.

Recently, I stumbled across the opportunity to run the Rock and Roll Half Marathon in Chicago. If someone had told me a year ago that I would sign up to run 13.1 miles, I would have laughed my head off. But after leaving a place like CORD, where the impossible becomes possible every day, I decided to prove to myself that by putting my mind to something, I could make it possible.

On the morning of the race, I checked off my list to make sure I was prepared: my iPod player loaded with upbeat songs and *bhajans*, running shoes, and water. The energy and enthusiasm of the other runners was infectious, with everyone running to support a cause. But by Mile 9, my knees started aching, my lungs started hurting, and I was losing my concentration. Thoughts of doubt started creeping into my mind. They taunted, “You’re never going to make it to the finish line,” and, “You should have trained more.” I took a deep breath, and with one thought, I was able to make all the doubt and negativity disappear. I just remembered Dr. Didi sitting at her desk under Gurudev’s picture, never taking breaks and never giving up. As I crossed the finish line, I looked up at the sky and tears filled my eyes: This one’s for you, Dr. Didi!

CM Toronto’s Stream of Energy

by Swamini Shivapriyananda

There is a refreshed energy at the *Chinmaya Shivalaya* ashram, and I am happy to report on the success story. CM Toronto’s project of removing the pond on the ashram property, and creating a stream, is now complete. Our Mission members found it incredibly exciting to witness the transformation that took place, changing almost hour by hour, in front of their eyes. There is an obvious freshness and dynamism brought about by the flowing stream, and everyone seems to be aware of it. After watching the water for some time, they began to spread the excitement and positive energy to one another. The stagnant feeling the pond exuded has now been replaced by the clean, fresh, and lively flow of the stream that meanders and twists around the northern and eastern borders of the ashram grounds.

When I first saw it, my mind called out, “Mini-Ganga!” True, it’s not a big river by any means, but its gurgling waters rolling over the rocks resonate like the melody of Mother Ganga. CM Toronto is pleased to announce that Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda has blessed it as “Shiva Ganga.” [Click here](#) to see a video clip.

Lock-In at Chinmaya Dhara

by Hesha Desai



Chinmaya Mission Niagara (CMN) organized its first-ever Bala Vihar Lock-In, November 7- 8, 2009. “The Game of Life” was the theme and the *Chinmaya Dhara* ashram was the venue. Quantitatively, the Lock-In was a great success with 25 students and 10 volunteers participating from the small Niagara community. And qualitatively, this unique event was even more successful. From the start of the Lock-In, when everyone

was outside playing soccer, to the end, when everyone was cleaning the dining hall, smiles were seen on every face. In between there were insightful classes, fun meals, the movie feature of “Horton Hears a Who,” sleeping bags and pillows everywhere, laughter-filled yoga and recycling-oriented crafts. The balance between learning and playing had all the students eagerly asking when the next Lock-In would be.



Under the guidance of Acharya Vivek Gupta, the CMN *sevaks* offered love toward the Niagara community by serving the ones who mattered the most—the children. Sharing love and encouraging children to do the same is one of the greatest investments one can make in a society. All the teachers and volunteers were not only given the opportunity to teach, but to learn as well. In addition to the parents, many young adults were involved in conducting the Lock-In; this served to inspire the children even more.

Chinmaya Dhara continues to serve its purpose of flowing out to serve the community. With the grace of Pujya Gurudev and Pujya Guruji, this flow promises to be unbroken. CMN's next Lock-in is scheduled for July 24-25.

CM Columbus Thrives

by Priya Arun

For the members of the Chinmaya Mission Columbus family, this last quarter of 2009 was quite eventful and replete with festivities.

The series of joyous celebrations began with *Navaratri* festival in September 2009, as devotees gathered decorative dolls, toys, and other such items from their homes, and arranged a beautiful *golu* at the *Chinmaya*

Archana ashram. On each of the nine auspicious nights, they invited their friends and family to the ashram for *haldi* and *kumkum* worship of Divine Mother, recited *Shri Lalita Sahasranama*, and sang *bhajans*. On the ninth day, after the regular Sunday classes, all the children and parents stayed back and celebrated Navaratri with a *Sarasvati Puja*, wherein they worshiped their books.

A month later, everyone gathered on October 24 for a jubilant celebration of *Dipavali*, which featured cultural performances by Bala Vihar students, a sumptuous feast, and the joyous dance of *raas*.

CM Columbus had the privilege of hosting Brahmachari Uddhav Chaitanya (CM Dallas), November 16-20, during which he conducted *satsanga* on various interesting and inspiring topics, such as: *Gita* in Daily Life, Guru's Grace, Introduction to Vedanta, and Life/Living/Well-being. Uddhavji's discourses were humorous and thought-provoking, scintillatingly insightful and witty. Uddhavji dedicated the last night of his stay to CM Columbus's teenagers. Together they watched the movie *Chariots of Fire*, which was followed by a vibrant spiritual discussion.

That very weekend, November 20-22, CM Columbus was honored by the presence of Acharya Sharada Kumar (CM Ann Arbor), who came to train the Bala Vihar teachers of *Chinmaya Archana*. She offered many great ideas and helpful tips. From understanding the basic essence of Bala Vihar, to the essential qualities of a teacher, to the how-to and must-do points, to the arts and crafts suggestions, she left no leaf un-turned. The teachers had eight hours of charged training session, at the end of which each one felt inspired and ready to teach, with amplified confidence and renewed energy.

CM Toronto's Gita Jnana Yajna

by Anu Parmar

The long awaited annual *jnana yajna* with Swami Ishwarananda was held from October 25-31,




2009 in Toronto, Canada, featuring the theme of “Know Thy Self,” wherein *Mukunda Mala* was the morning text and *Hamsa Gita* was the evening text.

This year’s *yajna*, which is eagerly awaited by CM Toronto members every year, was extended from the customary six days to include a seventh day event—a public lecture at the University of Toronto. Entitled “In Pursuit of Happiness,” the topic for the talk was a theme that has been receiving widespread attention in recent years. Many top universities, such as Harvard and Columbia, are actively researching the concept of happiness. Swamiji expounded on this topic from the spiritual perspective, which takes the current transactional approach in understanding happiness at a deeper, more authentic state, which Vedic scriptures refer to as ‘bliss.’ Swamiji explained the nine steps to happiness in his usual lucid style that is engaging, absorbing, and meaningful. The Asian Television Network (ATN) covered the event, including a one-on-one interview with Swamiji, and aired the feature on ATN’s “*Gurave*

Namaha” a few weeks later. The week-long talks will eventually be aired on the Aastha channel. Additionally, Swamiji’s interview with Canadian National Vision Television aired on “*Namaslokar*” and “Reflections on Hinduism.”


“Dare to Make a Difference” was the topic for the annual CHYK retreat with Swamiji, and it was held at the University of Toronto’s Multi-faith Center. The retreat included intimate and interactive discussions, as well as an opportunity for the group to have lunch *bhiksha* with Swamiji. Swamiji gave inspirational and practical tips to young professionals on how to succeed in all aspects of life in a way that is wholesome and complete.

Finally, a special Saturday retreat featured the topic of “Who Am I?” as taught by Shri Ramana Maharshi. Swamiji repeatedly cautioned all listeners to simply inquire within quietly, and wait and see. He powerfully led the group through a brief practice of self-observation. This half-day session left the attendees thirstier and yearning for more.



Chinmaya Mission Chicago
Badri

A spiritual retreat for
young professionals
and university
students.





Chinmaya Yuva Kendra
(Global Youth wing of Chinmaya Mission)

*A Spiritual
Conference
for Young
Professionals
and University
Students*

January 15-17, 2010 | Acharya Vivek Gupta
11 S 80 Kingery Highway | Willowbrook, IL

**Acharya Vivek Gupta from
Niagara Falls, NY**

**Keynote Address:
Ravi Baichwal from ABC7
News**

Topics:
Time Management
Stress Management
Synergy in Relationships
Transcending the Rat Race
Valuing Peace

Cost: \$100 (includes meals,
activities and accommodation);
Daily rate \$60

Register Online:
www.chinmaya-chicago.org/chyk

Email: chykchicago@gmail.com
Contact: Tejal Chande 708-253-3573
Nikhil Aggarwal 630-947-2857



LIFE IS A GIFT, LIVING AN ART

CIF'S CORRESPONDENCE VEDANTA COURSE

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

OBJECTIVE

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

LEVELS

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

ABOUT CIF

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

REGISTRATION

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

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

Eternity

*I want to weep again
Not in sorrow or anger
Nor in anger or disappointment
I want to weep again
The joyful tears of awareness*

*I want to sleep again
Not in a soft, feather bed
Nor in the cold, hard ground
I want to sleep again
The joyful sleep of existence*

*I want to sigh again
Not in frustration or sadness
Nor in longing or desire
I want to sigh again
As I did with the wind
- Roshni Jhanjee (Age 13)*

Chinmaya Mission Chicago 2010 Vedic Heritage Youth Camps

June 21-27

Yamunotri Ashram

“GOD-SYMBOLISM and RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES”

30877 N. Fairfield Rd., Grayslake, IL 60030

July 19-26

Badri Ashram

“MOTHER GODDESS: DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS”

11 S. 80 Rt. 83, Willowbrook, IL 60527

An Upanayanam (Sacred Thread) Ceremony for children
will be conducted at both camps. Contact us for details.

CAMP FEES, per family

1 child \$200 2 siblings \$375 3 or more siblings \$450

Children Attending Both Camps: 50% for the second camp

Free accommodation and local transportation
for out-of-state children, 10 years and older

Register by Mail or Online

www.chinmaya-chicago.org

camp@chinmaya-chicago.org

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