



# NEWS

## CHINMAYA MISSION® WEST BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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

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His Holiness Swami Tapovanam

Of all the methods to purify the mind, inquiry, or *vichara*, is the best. . Whereas other methods of *sadhana* attempt to purify and control the ego, knowledge removes the very cause of the ego's existence—the ignorance of one's true nature as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

Source: *Ishvara Darshan*

His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda

The steadiness of our mind and the acuteness of our intellect are not accidental happenings but are the product of continued and conscious living of the Life Divine. . . . It is only when the great ideas of Truth and Immortality, either heard directly from a guru or indirectly from a textbook, are well digested in intellectual reflections, that they can leave any strong impression upon the listener. . . . The actual delay in Self-realization is only in gaining, by ourselves, for ourselves, the required inner purification.

Source: *Kathopanishad Commentary*



His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda

By the practice of *sadhana*-s, like dispassion and concentration, the mind must be purified. If the mind is not pure, the man may hear the Truth expounded a thousand times but the Truth itself will not dawn upon him. Difficult indeed is the attainment of the purity of heart. But once it is gained, Vedanta says, the person immediately secures the knowledge of Brahman.

Source: *Manah Shodhanam*

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





## The Brilliance of the Self

by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Talks at CM Houston in June 2009; transcribed by Preeti Narain; continued from CMW News, November 2010

There is a story in *Tulasi Ramayana* about Sage Narada, who was wandering in the Himalayas and came across a beautiful cave in which he saw Mother Ganga flowing. As he continued, he came to a serene and sacred ashram. His mind was delighted. He saw the mountains, the river, and the forest, and his heart was filled with love for God. And where there is love, there is remembrance. So look at what he saw and what it reminded him of—he saw God in everything. This is *tejas*, or Bhagavan’s glow.

Narada Muni’s brother, Daksha Prajapati, had cursed him that he would never be able to stay at one place, but Naradji only said, “Good. I will visit more places and teach more people.” But in this story, it is said that when he remembered the Lord, even that curse became ineffective. Naradji sat down, and effortlessly and spontaneously, his mind became so calm and pure that he went into samadhi.

What we see with the eyes and what fills our mind after seeing, are two different things. Many people go to the holy (and cold) place of Yamunotri, but see it only as a place with a hot water spring. And some people go there and see how God is so kind that there hot water is there. And other people go and think, “Hot water? I can start a tea shop here!”

When you go to a shop and a beautiful children’s dress, what does that dress remind you of? Your child. You see one thing, but you remember something else and then your thoughts are filled with that something/someone else. So, here is a devotee like Sage Narada. What else will he see other than God?

It is said that the Himalayas all aspects of beauty in all ways. Such beauty, like the holiness in a river like Gangaji, belongs to Bhagavan. “*Vishnu-pada saroja jaasi*”: Gangaji has come from the toe of Lord Vishnu, so the sanctity

or *pavitrata* She has is because of Bhagavan. So, too, the grandeur you see in the Himalayas is also His: “*Sthavaranam himalayah.*” In *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord says, “Of the firm and immovable, I am the Himalayas. . . . Of the rivers, I am Ganga.” These are His *vibhutis*, or glories. So, whether you see Gangaji or the Himalayas, the common factor is the Lord.

*Bhuti* is everything that is. And *vibhuti* is the particular or special quality that you see in everything that is. The common denominator or Substratum of all is God; whatever you see is God. If we always recognize this, wherever we look, we will see only Divinity—this is called bhakti. Where there is *bhakti* (devotion), there is no *asakti* (attachment).

Because you know that whatever you see, its very existence, essence, or specialty belongs to God alone; it is not manmade. Can you create matter? Can you create energy? Mechanical energy may be able to convert into heat energy, but you had nothing to do with its intrinsic nature to do this.

I read a dialog between a scientist and God. The scientist told God, “You can retire. Because now we have become so competent that we can do anything that you can do. Cloning, artificial intelligence—we can do it all.”

Bhagavan said, “Good. But before giving you full charge, I want to make sure that you can handle it.” So He made a clay pot and asked the scientist if he could make a clay pot.

The scientist said yes and put his hand in the clay. Bhagavan said, “Wait a minute. You have to make own your clay first.”

So it better to say, Bhagavan, You do Your job. I will just keep playing with whatever You give me. The main switch is always in

the hands of the Lord alone. We are merely allowed to play. We think we are so capable and build our *abhiman* (ego, arrogance). When it comes to our intelligence or brilliance, we think it is ours, and our ego rises. So, too, when we think that the specialties of all objects belong to the objects themselves, then we have attachment for them, an attraction for them, a possessiveness. If some people start saying, “Oh, he is such an intelligent person,” then others also start believing it. And then that person himself thinks, “They say I am brilliant,” and *abhiman* or *ahankara* comes. Whether I, I, I or my, my, my. But in both ways if we remember that it belongs to God, then it is a totally different thing.

Once, in a *satsanga*, someone asked Shri Akhandanandji Maharaj (of Vrindavan) to explain what is humility. Swamiji smiled and said, “If you want to know humility, just look at Swami Chidananda (of Divine Life Society). He is the embodiment of humility.”

Afterwards, when people requested Swami Chidanandji Maharaj to speak, he said, “If Maharaj-ji says I have humility, it must be true, because a mahatma cannot be wrong. But the question is, who put that humility in me? From where has that humility come?” Such are the answers of great mahatmas.

So, understand that we may think some quality or object is ours, but “*Sakala kalyana guna nidhana*,”—all is Bhagavan alone. Any virtue that comes is only by God’s grace, by Guru’s grace, by a mahatma’s grace. Otherwise, what comes is only arrogance. So, the *bhakta* says, if there is any virtue in me, Bhagavan, it can only be yours, because you alone are the virtue of the virtuous, the intelligence of the intelligent, the effulgence of the effulgent. If I remain aware to whom all glories belong, then I am saved. This awareness becomes *bhakti*. Then, there is no attachment or possessiveness. You see and enjoy everything, but seeing everything, your mind is lifted only to God. There is no *asakti*; there is only *bhakti*.

Therefore, Bhagavan says, *Tejas tejasvinam-aham*, or “I am the effulgence of the effulgent, the brilliance of the brilliant.” Wherever you see brilliance—sun, moon, stars, fire, body, mind, intellect—all is God. The one who understands this gets a different

*teja*, a spiritual glow. Some people can see and measure auras of different colors. This spiritual aura or glow is what you call *prabhavali*, and this is Bhagavan’s aura in essence.

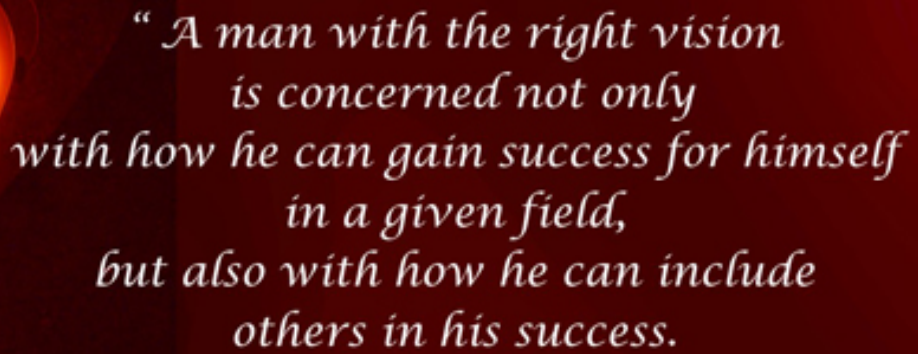
Once, a great mahatma, who was a householder, had become quite famous. A person who had heard about his greatness found out the mahatma’s address and went to his house. There, he asked his wife where the mahatma was. She said someone had died in the town and so he had gone to the cremation ground. She told him to go there to meet him. The person asked, “How will I recognize him?”

The wife said, “He has a bright, shining halo around his head that you can see clearly. This is how you will recognize him.”

The person was goodhearted and he went. To his utter surprise, every person there had that glow. So now he was confused and thought to himself how he would recognize this mahatma. He stood at the exit gate as people were leaving. And he saw that as they got out of the gate, their glow also went away! This happened for everyone, except one. As that man exited, his glow remained bright and brilliant. Immediately the person understood that this is the mahatma.

Do you know what had happened? When everyone went to the cremation ground, his or her heart was filled with dispassion. They thought, what is life? Everything ends like this. Suddenly they became very spiritual. This is called *smashana vairagyam* (graveyard dispassion). Because of this *vairagya*, a temporary halo came. But there was no abidance in this knowledge, so as soon as they came out, it all went away, because soon they would be more interested in finding the written will of the deceased.

Thus, there are different kinds of *tejas*—*sharirik*, *bhautik*, *manasik*, *baudbhik*—but *adhyatmik teja* is something totally different. illnesses. Just look at any picture of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi—you can see that glow. If only in the photograph you can see this, like in the photos of Swami Tapovanji Maharaj, then imagine what they must be in person.



*So in the New Year let us broaden our vision  
making it all encompassing to live life  
successfully, completely and joyfully.”*

*Swami Tejomayananda*





# Puja Gurudev's Sevaks' Training Camp February 16 - March 3, 2011



## A Camp with a Difference

Exclusively for Chinmaya Mission Members Only  
Conducted by Puja Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Additional faculty includes other Chinmaya Mission Acharyas and full-time Sevaks in charge of various Mission activities. This unique Sevaks' Training Camp, culminating on Mahashivaratri Day, is will be held at the Sandeepany Sadhanalaya ashram in Powai, Mumbai, for all those wishing and willing to serve Puja Gurudev on a full-time basis.

### Camp Eligibility

- Professionally aspiring, seva-oriented adults, ages 25-35 years
- Middle-aged single persons or couples, ages 35-60 years, who are relatively free from responsibilities
- Senior citizens, ages 60-70 years

### Camp Sessions

- Concept of Sevaks' Camp
- Presentation of all Chinmaya Mission activities and projects
- Interaction with full-time Mission sevaks of various age groups
  - Dealing with apprehensions
  - Options for seva
  - Identifying talents and abilities
- General training common for all Mission work

### Camp Donation

Rs. 300 per person, check payable and mailed to  
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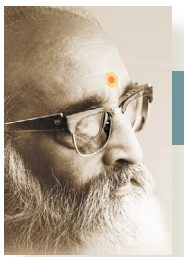
Include your name, age, address, phone, email, education qualifications, present occupation, and local center name. Be sure to enclose a certificate from your local Mission center, confirming your membership in Chinmaya Mission.

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# To Be Dynamos of Living Philosophy

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Talk at K.C. College, Mumbai, India, 1967

It is a fact that around the world today there is total unrest. It is not that the times are bad—it is you and I who are to blame. The sun and the moon have not changed. The flora and fauna are yet the same. There is complete peace and tranquility in them. It is the people in this so-called “awakened age of enlightenment,” who are suffering. Some say it is the lack of food. In countries where there is plenty of food, they declare it is lack of distribution. In the affluent society of America, people cannot come out of their homes because of various kinds of disturbances. Everywhere there is an immediate diagnosis of the trouble, but the problem remains the same.

The philosopher’s task is to watch the problem from the footpath, to watch quietly the whole *tamasha*. From platforms everywhere, people are constantly crying, “What will happen tomorrow?” Unless we have moral evolution, unless we have a moral foundation, even if wealth were to come to us—and it has not come so far—we would use it for utter annihilation. Thus, without a moral foundation, there cannot be peace and tranquility. When humanity understands this, that it is inner purification and not outerprogress that creates our world, it will come to know what peace is. Outer progress must be, and can only be, the reflection of inner transformation. Crying that we want more money or more things in the outer world shall not bring us out of this condition. It all depends upon us.

It is not the miracle of a single individual. It is upon the shoulders of each one of us that tomorrow’s world is going to rest. If you and I do not take responsibility for this situation from an inner revolutionary standpoint, what will happen in the future? The future, after all, is nothing but the past modified, improved, or deteriorated into the present. If we determine today that we shall improve ourselves, then a better future we shall make! Otherwise, the

future can only add to the destruction that is going on at present. If you simply worry over it, nothing will change for the better.

Under these circumstances, what can we do? Why, we can ourselves become dynamically good. You must have courage and conviction, utterly scientific, logical conviction. If each one of us is a dynamo of living philosophy, everything will change. But we are unable to operate it, to implement it in our life, to bring a rhythm and teamwork into it. If we cannot work together, then what can help us? Who can help us? Until each one understands and puts into his own life the following message, we cannot progress—we can only deteriorate:

*tad-buddhaya-tad-atmanah  
tan-nishthas-tat-parayanah  
gacchantyapunaravrttim  
jnana-nirdhuta-kalmashah*      Gita 5.17

The intellect that is absorbed in That, in the Self, being That, established firmly in That, with That as their supreme Goal, go whence there is no return; their sins are dispelled by Knowledge.

We must intellectually, ourselves, understand what this great way of life is. When we study it from the book, it is only quoting the great rishis. Without any deeper thought, we then repeat it, because those ideas have not yet become our own. When I contemplate and reflect upon it, I realize that it has irresistible logic. Then it becomes my conviction. We must strive hard to live this conviction.

In the beginning stages, Krishna says, “Whenever it is safe and conducive, at least at those times, live your conviction.” At other times, when it is not possible, then compromise. Live them whenever it is convenient. Afterwards, as you grow, live those convictions consistently, whatever the obstacles! When a person moves consistently

in that direction, it is like the flow of the Ganga. En route there may be mountains; it does not matter. Whatever stands in her way, she moves it all toward the Bay of Bengal. If there are obstacles, she may move around it, but she consistently moves eastward. Similarly, consistency arises in the minds of those individuals who are convinced of a greater ideology. Otherwise, it is just prattling Vedanta.

If we can have an army of men and women who know what this culture and philosophy are, who have started living it and have come to the determined attitude that whatever happens, we shall not budge from these convictions, then overnight we shall find a remarkable change in our situation. If India can strive for it, it will be an example for the world to follow.

Today, I have noticed that we are lacking in two things. In the beginning we sit together, discussing things. There is some intellectual curiosity and intellectual appreciation. But intellectual appreciation of a great philosophy is not going to change our way of life. We remain the devils we are.

In order to change, it is not sufficient that we hear these ideas. We must learn the art of exposing ourselves to these ideas. We, as individual personalities, are deeply entrenched in ourselves, in our wretchedness, in our own political, negative tendencies. We use our intellect to understand the ideas sentence by sentence; they have a good, appealing logic. Some of you have been attending study groups for even four years, but have you exposed yourself to the ideas?

Exposure to the idea is like exposing a tree or plant to the sunlight. The plant world grows and thrives with energy absorbed from the sunlight. We do not try to blossom forth with spirituality; we only try to understand the ideology. What you have understood leaks out through the mouth—it never goes to the heart.

After exposing ourselves to the ideas, we move to the next stage, which requires a tremendous amount of heroism. It is not just a matter of gaining a belief that makes us go to the temple and break a coconut. We are talking about transformation and transmutation. It

is not just study—we must get committed to the philosophy. To commit oneself with unshakable faith is a totally different thing: “Intellect absorbed in That, their very Self being That, established firmly in That . . . .” Then, no matter what the challenge, “I shall not turn back from this philosophy.”

Buddha could have remained in his palace saying that it was his *prarabdha*. Then he would have remained merely a prince; he would not have become the Buddha. But he committed himself to the discovery of the answer to a great question. Shankaracharya had a feeling of spiritual quest almost suffocating him. He came out of *samsara*. How many of us are ready to commit?

If we are gaining nothing after many years of study, it is because we are not exposing ourselves, but are interested only in the word meanings of the statements. Remember, these statements should be used as bullets to evolve ourselves to greater heights, to bloom, to grow, to develop. Even if a few hundred among you exposed yourselves to the ideas, then the country will have turned the corner. Those few will bring prosperity and glory to the nation, and set an example to the world.

In Chinmaya Mission, we find that people are changing slowly, very slowly indeed. It is almost imperceptible. But I console myself with whatever little there is. Still, why are we not progressing more? The growth of a banyan tree cannot be noticed. It has a life of a thousand years. I hope that my culture and country are slowly growing. This is a consolation. The growth is slow, very slow, but at least we have started growing.

Every Mission organization must now take up the responsibility. You have to put things right; you have to drag the country from the mire without discussing who put it there. Let someone else write the history for the future. We shall rescue the country. That will make its own history. We have to reinstate our way of life, not only for India, but for the whole world.

If you still doubt, it is only because you have not fully understood. When you have understood this new way of life, there will not be any doubt. Essentially, it is the expression of Me alone in others. In the others, I live. Their joy and sorrow are my joy and sorrow.

As our pledge says, every individual comes to live, not in aggrandizement, but learning to give more than what he takes from the society, producing more than what he consumes. It is potential, dynamic activity that leads to spiritual, mental, and physical prosperity. And such prosperity is based upon the individual's ready and loving contribution to the community, wherein each individual feels pride in the fulfillment of giving to society, not in taking from it. Then our prosperity will be more enduring. We shall, thereby, recreate our society from the desperation into which we have fallen.

What I say may not be the language of politicians or economists, capitalists or Communists. What I am talking of is the spiritual Truth, and whenever India has lived a Golden Age, it has been a life that has visualized the ideal of the whole world.

The world makes a pilgrimage to our country. Even on the international platform India has its place, because of our hoary spiritual wealth. Discover that inheritance and raise yourself. All work is noble when we undertake it in the right spirit of selflessness and detachment.

Chinmaya Mission Orlando proudly presents  
**Chinmaya Family Spiritual Camp 2011**

**When:** June 21 - June 26, 2011 **Where:** Orlando, Florida



**Bhagavad Geeta - Chapter VI (The Yoga of Meditation)**

Conducted by H.H. Swami Tejomayananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

For more information:

Phone: Vibhu Agrawal (407-963-6301) Website: [www.chinmayaorlando.org](http://www.chinmayaorlando.org)

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Ages 20-30 years (exception allowed for deserving candidates)

DURATION

Two-year residential course, commences on Ganesha Chaturthi, September 1, 2011  
Upon completion, students may opt to serve Chinmaya Mission or pursue individual goals.

ACCOMODATION for 2 YEARS

Private room/common bathroom US\$3,500    Private room/attached bathroom US\$5,000  
Private room/air conditioning/attached bathroom US\$7,000  
(tax-deductible donation)

ACHARYAS

Chief Acharya: His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda  
Resident Acharya: Swami Advayananda  
Upa-Acharya: Brahmachari Samvid Chaitanya  
and other visiting Acharyas of Chinmaya Mission

INTERVIEW

Personal interviews will be conducted for all candidates.  
Specific locations in North America will be intimated.

APPLICATION FORM

Download the Application: <http://sandeepany.chinmayamission.com/application-form>  
Submission Deadline: April 30, 2011

## *A Journey of the Spirit*

by Dwaraknath Reddy

Kerala—a labyrinth of waterways, a land calm and serene beneath the swaying palms, part of the tumultuous ocean, and yet a scheme apart. There, on the west coast of India, in the princely city of Cochin, was born Balakrishna Menon, in a respected and affluent family of highly placed judicial luminaries. The child grew up as a favorite of the *kula-gurus*, the family preceptors.

Kerala is a land of fragrant tradition and flowery ritual, a land that has cradled many a spiritual giant from Adi Shankara onward. Balan, scarcely six or seven years old, submitted, for nearly two hours, to a daily drill at dusk while *puja* was performed. He spent the crawling moments in listless gazing at the many pictures of deities—in awe, in ridicule, in amusement, in confusion—until the picture of Lord Shiva held his gaze, to the exclusion of all else. The boy learned to close his eyes, to see more vividly more intimately, in the sightless recesses of his own inner being, the kindly presence whose redeeming grace would transform him twenty years later into Swami Chinmayananda.

Adolescence brought freedom. Time was spent at school or on the beaches, in play or in friendships, and daily worship faded away. Only between wakefulness and sleep was there a moment of communion with Him and His love.

Youth brought a quickening of the intellect. Was it an awakening or an arrogance? The subdued surrender to unexplained symbolism in his boyhood now gave way to the cynical superiority of a sharpening mind. “Am I an extension of God, or is God a creature of my creation?” he questioned. And, conveniently content with apparent rationality, he plunged into life to seek pleasure, success, fame, and fortune.

To the brilliant, handsome, witty, and virile young man, trailing M.A. degrees in literature and law behind his name, the things he sought came easily, and for a while, society opened its

treasure chest for him. But as he fondled the gems he had so longed for, he saw in them the degraded glitter of tinsel, the wayward wealth of spurious imitation, the optical illusion of colored beads. “Shall I mortgage all my life for more of these?” he asked.

His gaze turned inward. And he felt deeply, “Beloved Lord, whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are, in some sense you are me too, an integral part that cannot be lost. This touch of your being is more enduring and more rewarding than anything that life outside can offer me.”

Once, in the innocence of childish fulfillments, it had seemed enough to laugh and play upon this earth. In the adult world of pleasures and passions, of pursuit and possession, love was but lust, charity but conceit, truth a convenience, virtue a compromise. A false eternity was filled with time and frightened humanity moved toward a troubled death, desperately seeking water in a mirage.

Balan stood apart and saw all this. The movement within commenced. The burdensome imposition of boyhood prayers now returned as a welcome practice to soothe the wounds of the bruised adult. Later, Swami Chinmayananda was to say of this period, “The *japa* came back to Balan. He took it up again, not in a spirit of defeatism, but with the refreshing realization that the path of life divine was not running parallel to the paved roads leading to the noisy palace of life.”

He took to an intense study of philosophy, both Indian and Western. Brief spells of intellectual satisfaction only revealed wider areas of discontent and discord. A faith that would not be denied, and a devotion that could not be verbalized, strained for self-expression.

At this turbulent stage, Balan chanced upon books by Swami Vivekananda, Rama Tirtha, Aurobindo, Swami Sivananda, and Ramana Maharishi. They directed his efforts, “explained, comforted, cheered, and encouraged” him. He left the dry polemics of a labored philosophy and taught himself to “be good and do good;

to serve, love, purify, meditate, realize, and be free.”

Three years passed thus. Again the discontent grew. An ancient ache was rising, a forgotten melody was returning, a dormant destiny was awake and calling. He began to think about life in an ashram, a deliberate and total identification with Lord Shiva, who was bidding His time within Balan’s heart. He bent his hesitant steps toward Rishikesh and was accepted in the ashram of Swami Sivananda.

The new life seemed to hold all the peace and beauty that his tormented heart had sought. But could this tranquility, too, be a deception? On the rebound from an indulgent, insensitive, and greedy society, was he deluding himself into ascribing positive, dynamic, enduring values to the stillness of a graveyard, the meekness of a coward, or the charity of one bankrupt?

He watched himself for several days, and slowly the conviction grew, “This is what my soul has longed for, this is the path to my fulfillment; beyond all doubt, this is it.”

Balakrishna Menon took *sannyasa*, and Swami Chinmayananda was born.

In the Himalayan ranges, about 200 miles from Delhi and 100 from Rishikesh, where the river Bhagirathi flows, which in the lower regions becomes the Holy Ganga, is the hamlet of Uttarkashi. Nearby, in a tiny dwelling upon a hilly slope resided a spiritual colossus whose glory a continent could hardly contain. Swami Tapovan Maharaj, adored by all the saints and sages of the land, reveling in the serene silence and scenic splendor of the mountains, his fame soaring higher than the snow-clad peaks around him, was the renowned teacher of teachers. To him went Chinmayananda, already initiated yet thirsting for knowledge.

Nine summers Chinmayananda spent at the feet of his master—taught, loved, rebuked, and adored, always and again led forward firmly towards the Truth of his own Self.

The young swami lived an austere life. Too intent to glow with the new fervor, he once decided he would recreate every cell of his body under the power of his pristine purity.

The vibrations of his meditation should reconstruct the very tissues of his physical frame to make it a worthy abode for his sanctified spirit. So thinking, he undertook an intense fast of 40 days, and would have died as he lay dazed on a forest path, had not Providence directed a *sadhu* that way to help him. Later, Chinmayananda was to narrate the incident as an example of a discipline overdone, an error to be warned against.

Yet another time, Chinmayananda decided that even the proximity of Swami Tapovanam, and of his fellow disciples, was a hindrance to the solitary existence he needed, and he sneaked out from the master’s camp while dawn yet lingered behind the eastern hills. But the master’s eyes were as sharp as his inner sight, and he quickly recognized both the form and the purpose of the one receding into the distant mist. A courier was hastily dispatched, and soon the abashed and chastened disciple stood before his amused teacher. This incident, too, was later used by Chinmayananda to persuade overenthusiastic disciples to grow peacefully in their natural surroundings.

Nine years passed, and Chinmayananda was secure in the armor of his knowledge. His mind enjoyed the abiding peace of one freed from the compulsion of motley desires; yet, the memory of the people he had left behind came back to him. They were just like he had been—intelligent and energetic, eager to succeed, but with no measure of success except in terms of pomp, power, and possessions—fighting their unequal battles against time. The best of them sinned without knowing, and suffered without understanding.

He decided to return to the arena he had abandoned and involve himself again in the destinies of those who, left to themselves, would make of their lives no more than brief gasps of pain between birth and death. The *pandits*, discoursing upon the scriptures, were caught in the superficialities of words and vain argument. The need was to expound the intrinsic nature of experience and show the intimate truth of persona existence here and now.

Chinmayananda knew it, and knew that he knew it; yet could he convey the subtle Truth to crowds in the marketplace? He stood in

doubt upon the banks of the Ganga. “Mother Ganga in her incessant hurry seemed to tell me, ‘Son, don’t you see me? Born here in the Himalayas, I rush down to the plains taking with me both life and nourishment. Fulfillment of any possession is in sharing it with others.’ ” He felt reinforced.

Tapovan Maharaj gave hesitant approval to the pleading of his brilliant disciple; not that he doubted the will or wisdom of his ward, but because he knew how mighty and diabolical could be the cumulative power of prejudice and perjury, of sloth and superstition, of habit and ritual. Yet he graciously blessed the young man and freed him to go on his chosen path.

Chinmayananda packed up his dream and stepped out. He would talk in the idiom of the educated. He would revive the vibrant culture of his ancient land.

That was 1951.

The first *jnana yajna* was held in Pune. A handful sat around the young *sadhu*—curious, cynical, or hopeful. Word spread of the clarity

of thought, the cascade of words, the cadence of laughter, and above all, the exhilarating relevance of the theme to personal living.

Today, Swami Chinmayananda completes one *yajna* only to start another without rest of respite. Out of love and reverence for him who holds out the gift of a greater life, men and women in many cities of the world have banded themselves into Chinmaya Missions, seeking spiritual growth in study and *satsanga*, or in service to humanity through work in hospitals, schools, or places of worship.

Swamiji is bound by his personal mission of mercy to open our eyes, to clear our sight, and to give us the light that illumines. He succeeds because he is so intensely involved. He cannot be rejected by us, because he does not set himself apart from us. Ever joyous, he knows the problem of our sorrow. Ever peaceful, he understands the conflicts of our personalities. He does not beckon to us from distant peaks, but holds our hand upon the path in the foothills of our upward journey, guiding us one sure step at a time.



# Kishkindha Kand

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Four days of spiritually focussed lectures by H.H. Swami Prakashananda
- Interactive Sessions for Children with Bharti, Arpita, Chaitanya, CM Florida
- Morning Meditation at the Temple in The Sea
- Visit to 85ft Hanumanji Murti
- Convocation Banquet

**COST FOR 7 DAYS**

**INDIVIDUAL COST**

Individual (Per Person)	\$750.00 USD
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(NO CHARGE FOR CHILDREN BELOW 3 YRS)

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31ST DECEMBER, 2010

CHINMAYA MISSION - TRINIDAD & TOBAGO



# CHINMAYA MAHASAMADHI FAMILY CAMP 2011

Chinmaya Mission Chicago

Chinmaya Mission Northwest Indiana

## Mind and Beyond: The Gītā Way



Discourses on

*Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*

*Chapter IX*

by

His Holiness

**Swami Tejomayananda**

Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

**July 29 - August 3, 2011**

### Camp Highlights

- Additional Discourses: *Jñāna Sāra* by Swami Shantananda
- Bala Vihar Classes for Children • Cultural Program • Recreation: Golf, Mini-Golf, Tennis, Swimming
- Yuva Kendra (CHYK) Program for College Students and Young Professionals • Vegetarian Meals
- *Upananayanam Ceremony* in Holy presence of Swami Tejomayananda — website for details

### Camp Fees

(Rates Effective until March 31, 2011)

Double Occupancy: \$700/person

Children: \$275/child

CHYK: \$475/person (Quad)

### Contacts

Ach. Shanker Pillai (630) 789-6607

Rajul Bhalala (847) 302-2383

Padmini Makam (219) 924-7268

**For Camp Details and Registration go to: [www.chinmayamahasadhi.com](http://www.chinmayamahasadhi.com)**

**E-mail: [info@chinmayamahasadhi.com](mailto:info@chinmayamahasadhi.com)**



### Camp Venue

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## *A New Way to Think*

by Michael Purewal

Everyone knows the feeling. It's distinct. It's memorable. It's happiness. For many, it's the feeling of running down a long road on a quiet morning, playing an intense sport, singing or dancing to your favorite song, playing your favorite musical instrument, watching your children laugh, or just being lost in yoga or meditation.

What is "it" exactly? It is the feeling of being absorbed in the moment. That feeling when nothing else matters, when your mind is so single-pointed into a particular activity that no other thoughts come into your mind. "It" is a wonderful feeling, and we all have experienced it.

If thoughts are like traffic, sometimes stuck bumper to bumper, you can only get frustrated. What if you could limit the number of thoughts or prolong your thought-focus on one single object? The mind would be that much more calm and peaceful, like a single car driving down a long highway with no traffic. This may sound difficult, but with practice you can actually watch all of your thoughts and eventually stop them at will. Imagine the power to control all your negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones.

Regrets about the past, anxieties about the future, and excitements and expectations in the present take us away from being in the moment. Here in California, thoughts of the past keep passing through my mind: How did I get here? Why did I sell my house? And then these are quickly followed by thoughts about the future: What am I going to do when I get back? Where am I going to live? This brings an onslaught of expectations in the present moment: Why haven't I changed my way of thinking? Why am I living without my usual comforts of home? These thoughts pile on and on, and take my mind for a joy ride. This is what it's like for most of us. We're always waiting for something—when the weekend comes I'll be happy; when I go shopping I'll be happy.

Our mental energy and vitality drains simply due to our thoughts. Imagine you are watering your garden. If the hose has no leaks,

the water flow and quantity will be fullest. If the hose has 10 leaks, then less water flows to the garden. If the hose has 25 leaks, less water still. In the same way, if the hose of our mind has so many leaks, we become highly inefficient. No leakages are the secret to happiness and peace.

So the next time you are in the moment, after a beautiful long run or an intense game of ball, when you come out, appreciate and reflect on what you just experienced.

"We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world."

"Today is the tomorrow that we worried about yesterday."

## *Our Duty to the Universe*

by Ramya Gurunathan (Grade 11)

We live in exponential times. With modern technology it is hardly an exaggeration to say that anything is possible. With Facebook, Ipods, and texting, we can listen to our favorite music or talk to our favorite people at any time of the day. It seems like we have a wonderful system worked out for us. So why is it that according to a recent survey, 43% of adults in America suffer from stress symptoms? What we have forgotten is that these petty gadgets and technologies never truly satisfy us; they just keep us wanting for better and newer devices.

In a competitive and aggressive society, where we struggle between what is right and what is easy, where we practice "the end justifies the means," we have lost sight of our dharma—our duty to the universe. Dharma, a supple fundamental for every situation in life, transcends time, and is the backbone of Hinduism's deep-rooted beliefs.

A 2005 survey done by Duke University revealed that 75% of high school students in America admit to cheating on exams. The challenge is to realize that no amount of success is honorable if it is of dubious distinction. Dharma teaches us that our possessions and laurels are not strictly our own. We live and

succeed not only for ourselves, but also for the common good. We all hold a supreme obligation to the world around us.

In today's capitalistic society, each day is a struggle between greed and munificence. We hear countless stories of opulent CEOs who take exorbitant paychecks and bonuses, and then leave the company they destroyed. As the importance of money grows in our lives, so does the gap between the rich and poor.

As society continues to value possessions, we lose interest in the simple and fulfilling aspects of life. Relaxation and meditation do not appeal to us as much as wasting hours in front of an action-packed movie displayed on 50 inches of high definition. As our possessions grow more complex, our thoughts and desires grow more primitive. We spend more time worrying over whether our cell phones have power instead of focusing on whether our mind and body have power. With our contemporary lifestyle, if we cannot free ourselves from mere technology, how can we free ourselves from the jealousy, ego, and ignorance that fill the human mind?

Today's western culture clashes with dharma in a plethora of ways. Even the biggest critics

of mankind, like Mark Twain, agree that humans have a beautiful capability to love and believe even in what cannot be proven. Once we open our eyes, we can find shining examples of dharmik pioneers in the western world, from the humanitarian philanthropist Bill Gates to the humanitarian primatologist Jane Goodall.

Vedantic principles highlight the value of the many creatures with whom we share our world. In the words of Albert Einstein, "Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion, to embrace all living creatures, and the whole of nature and its beauty."

Pujya Gurudev describes the dharma of humans as connecting with the Divinity in each of us. "Just as the smoke veils the flame or dust covers the mirror . . . God cannot be seen through the barrier of an unclean mind." To find and embrace the God that resides in our hearts is to bless the world with newfound enlightenment. The concept of Hindu dharma is timeless and can be accommodated into virtually any lifestyle. Here we can discover an answer to our inert struggle toward peace, harmony, and balance.

## Fossil

*Will it  
whisper  
of  
autumn's blush  
in your palm?*

*Will it  
rustle  
up  
your silver  
like a rushing wind?*

*Will it  
waft  
your fragrance  
slipped into  
a summer's strands?*

*Will it  
wonder  
about  
my thoughts  
teased  
many eons  
past,  
by your  
imminent rusting,  
and eventual  
resting,  
as a fossil?*

*- Chetana Neerchal*

## In Memoriam: Sivaraman



Reknowned in the global Chinmaya Family as Pujya Gurudev's long-time personal caretaker in India, Sivaraman was one of the first devotees of Pujya

Gurudev in the 1950s. He served Pujya Gurudev for over 40 years, and after Pujya Gurudev's *mahasamadhi*, he continued the upkeep of Pujya Gurudev's *kutir* in the Sidhabari ashram as a sacred shrine. Sivaraman passed away on December 6, 2010. Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda wrote this message to the Chinmaya Family worldwide:

"I am grieved to inform you all that our Sivaraman, who served Pujya Gurudev for so many years in Uttarkashi, Mumbai, and Sidhabari, passed away in Ludhiana on December 6, 2010 after a brief illness. Many of you have seen him as he continued to look after Pujya Gurudev's *kutia* in Sidhabari. He was 86 years old.

We are grateful to Amrit Nagpal, who took care of all his medical needs, and Srinivas and the *brahmacharis* from the Sidhabari ashram, who served him all the time during his stay in Ludhiana."

## Anusaaraka Featured in International Conference

by Shibani Khorana

Chinmaya International Foundation's computational linguistics research project named "*Anusaaraka*" was featured in an international conference held in New Delhi on the "Role of Translation in Nation Building, Nationalism, and Supra-nationalism," December 16-19, 2010.

Organized by the Indian Translators Association (ITAINdia) and LINGUAINdia, the participants of this

conference—one of the largest in ITAINdia history—included translators, academicians, and experts from 60 universities of national and international repute, involved in translation and cross-cultural studies. Over 150 speakers across India and 40 delegates representing 25 different countries shared their views on various subjects related to translation.

The discussions featured diverse topics relating to the crucial role translation plays in the economic, social, and cultural growth of a country, and the vital importance of translation in nation building, national integration, and supra-nationalism. Specific related themes regarding translation included interpretation, diplomacy, nation branding, cultural diversity, teaching and training, quality standards, terminology and project management, and technology and innovation.

The presentation of "*Anusaaraka*: Nation Building and Supra-nationalism" was presented by *Anusaaraka*'s project manager, Shibani Khorana. The presentation was included in the category of Machine Translation Initiatives in India, and was appreciated by all. It focused on the English-Hindi *Anusaaraka* Language Accessor. A participant suggested that *Anusaaraka* can also be used later as a language learning device. An entrepreneur from Chennai's Indian Institute of Technology and various translators came forward and offered their support for the project. Each speaker offered a 15-minute presentation and a 5-minute Q&A session. The Chairperson of the Machine Translation session appreciated the completion of the presentation within the allotted time—a hallmark of Pujya Gurudev and Chinmaya Mission.

## Dazzling Dipavali at CM Houston

by Vinod Sharma and Padmashree Rao;  
photos by Nilesh Shah

*Dipavali* at CM Houston's *Chinmaya Prabha* dazzled the local Indian community as beautiful prayers blended with a procession of lights and culminated in spectacular fireworks.

The festival marking the victory of good over evil was celebrated as a three-day event. On the day of *Dipavali* (November 5), Chinmaya families participated in the *Ashtalakshmi Puja*, invoking Mother Lakshmi in her eight-fold glory, and praying for the wealth of good qualities to illumine their lives and the world.

The *Dipavali* festivities continued on Saturday, November 6, as a record 1,800 members of the CM Houston family gathered in the courtyard of the temple, *Soumyakash Shivalaya*. The temple courtyard was beautifully decorated with strings of lights; the temple was adorned with flower garlands; and the temple deities shone brilliantly, ushering joy in every heart. The entire ashram was filled with smiles, cheers, and hugs, as families and friends exchanged *Dipavali* greetings and wishes for a blessed New Year.

The main program began with an invocation and introduction by Acharya Gaurang Nanavaty, who spoke on Lord Rama's reverence for Lord Shiva and His *Shiva Puja* after defeating Ravana.



Thereafter, each of the 1,800 devotees carried a beautifully decorated lit lamp in a unique *diya* procession around the temple, chanting “*Om namah Shivaya.*” At the end of the procession, the lamps were gently left to float in the pool surrounding the temple, creating a visual spectacle, both surreal and serene.

A sumptuous dinner followed, served with loving efficiency by an army of volunteers. Soon it was time to assemble in the temple courtyard again, this time, around a 14-foot towering effigy of Ravana, a symbol of the negative tendencies lurking within us, to be destroyed only by the grace of Lord Rama.

Devotees offered personal prayer notes that were collected and placed beside the effigy as all waited with bated breath for the arrival of Lord Rama, especially the children, who grew excited by the minute.



Heralded by conches and trumpets, a procession of Lord Rama, Lakshmana, and Hanuman emerged from the temple and proceeded down the steps toward the Ravana effigy. Cheers of “*Ramachandra-ji ki jai!*” resounded as the effigy burst into flames and brilliantly lit up the temple courtyard, radiating warmth in the cool evening. Children and adults watched the *Ravana Dahana* in awe, reminded of the victory of good over evil. Everyone rejoiced with *garba* and *raas* to celebrate Shri Rama's victory.

The final treat of the evening—a spectacular display of fireworks—was made even more memorable by vibrant Hindustani music. The blues, greens, purples, pinks, and golds burst, showered, screamed, scattered, jetted, and bloomed in the full panoply of patterns.

Devout prayers began on November 7 at the Smrti Hall with the worship of Lord Ganesha, Mother Lakshmi, and Lord Narayana. As the chants of *Lakshmi Ashtottara-shata-nama* and *Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram* filled the hall, everyone could feel the spiritual





power of the festival. The conclusion to this distinctive *Dipavali* came with the offering of sincere respect and thanks to the center's *acharyas*, Gaurang and Darshana Nanavaty, who have nurtured the CM family in Houston. Like a platter of *Dipavali* sweets, this year's experiences will be savored, with memories of India, light, and joy.

## New Satellite for CM Minneapolis

by Manu Madhok

CM Minneapolis opened a satellite Chinmaya Bala Vihar eastern St. Paul in October 2010. To welcome the new Chinmaya family members and commence the festivities for the holiday season, a *Diwali Mela* was held. It included carnival games for kids, arts, crafts, and a variety of food stalls. Despite the cold weather, children enjoyed playing on the inflatable rides outside and kept warm with enthusiasm, fresh popcorn, and hot chocolate.



The overnight children's camp over Thanksgiving weekend at the *Chinmaya Ganapati* ashram was an especially memorable experience. The children were divided into four teams, each led by a high school team leader. They participated in team-building

activities, including tug-of-war, pull-the-car, mind games, skits, and a bonfire. The children stayed up late but still managed to get up early, so as not to miss *surya namaskar* and the fun-filled morning sessions. The camp sevaks were overjoyed when the kids requested for a two-day camp in 2011.



## The Awakening

by Bina Sutarwala

CM Ottawa's Awakening Indians to Canada (AIC) Competition in 2010, in which 50 participants competed from coast to coast, successfully concluded with the following winners:

- 1st Prize: Anusha Kamesh, CM Halton  
(two roundtrip tickets to India)
- 2nd Prize: Ajay Shah, CM Toronto  
(Canon PowerShot digital camera)
- 3rd Prize: Aditya Mohan, CM Ottawa  
(8GB nano iPod)

CM Ottawa sold over 300 books all across Canada. The project created CM awareness across the country through advertisements in newspapers, television, and radio. It also connected CM Ottawa to other CM centers and groups, from New Foundland to British Columbia.

First Place Winner, Anusha Kamesh, wrote "The Awakening" to describe her AIC experience:

On an ordinary day, sometime in the middle of July 2010, I received a phone call. My CM Halton Bala Vihar teacher, Meena Bhaga, called



# Bala Vihar Teachers' Training Seminar

April 21-24, 2011  
Chinmaya Mission Houston

Ācārya Smt. Darshana Nanavaty will conduct this seminar based on the newly developed curriculum for Chinmaya Mission Bala Vihar with blessings from Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandaji.

This curriculum provides a unique approach of looking at scriptures as they apply to our daily lives, which helps make spirituality more relevant for children.

- An innovative way to jump start a value-based education program that has been created for our children.
- Structured, age appropriate program which is developed for KG to 12th grades.
- Provides twelve well-developed teachers' handbooks. All books have 40 lessons and each lesson is designed for 60 minutes class time.

## Program Highlights:

Detailed instructions on how to conduct Bala Vihar classes. Learn the 3 P's - Prepare, Present, Perform.

How to make teaching more engaging, enjoyable, and exciting for children.

Interactive hands on training through providing choices, challenges, and creativity.

Special emphasis on teaching High school children. Teach Bhagavad Gita using flow-charts and lesson messages.

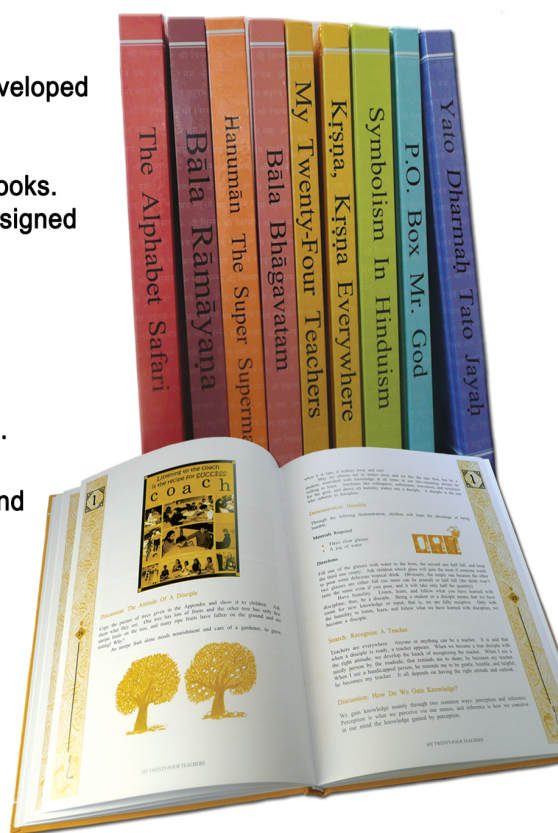
## Seminar Schedule

Thursday April 21, 2011 7:00 PM  
Dinner meeting with participants.

Friday April 22, 2011 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Training session conducted by Ācārya Smt. Darshana Nanavaty.

Saturday April 23, 2010 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Demonstration of different teaching methods. One on one teachers' training by grade.

Sunday April 24, 2010 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
Attend Sunday Satsanga and participate in a Bala Vihar class.



For registration and program details visit  
[www.chinmayahouston.org/](http://www.chinmayahouston.org/)

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to inform me of a contest. After talking with my parents, we decided that it would be a good experience to enter the contest. Even if I didn't win, I would still gain so much exposure to India. I registered, and obtained a copy of the book.

Very quickly I realized how little I knew of a country that I was born in. The book was broad in its coverage and gave me wonderful insight into India. I chose to take notes from the book. Most of my summer I spent huddled at my desk with the book, a pencil, and a notebook. At times it seemed like I could never be prepared to write the exam, but my family reminded me to focus on the knowledge. Soon after, I realized the hard work had only begun, because now, I had to decode my own writing. I decided to type out all my notes. My parents helped read and type for me. I had to also get the pronunciation right. Finally, after two months of studying, I felt ready.

On the day of the exam, I refrained from thinking too much and instead reviewed only select information. The exam took almost two hours to complete, after which I began double checking my answers. It was a relief to hand over my papers.

Sometime in the last week of October, as I was checking my emails, I came across an email from His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda. Attached was a letter that stated that I had placed first in the contest. Swamiji also beautifully wrote, "You have actually received two prizes: one that you can touch and feel, and one that is a little more subtle. . . . Your second and more important win from this experience is a greater knowledge of India's achievements and the associated pride that comes with this knowledge. While a trip may come and go, knowledge stays with you forever." Immediately, I called my mother and showed her the letter. Before I could even finish my sentence, both of us were in tears.

I cannot begin to sum up my appreciation for Chinmaya Mission and its members. Without them, I would not have had the tools to take part in this amazing experience. The book in itself is a wonderful reference about what India was, is, and will be.

## CHYKs Fly Together

by Ramesh Cheruvu

The CHYKs of CM Houston hosted a spiritual CHYK camp November 26-28, 2010. Themed, "CHYKs Fly Together," the camp proved to be a successful retreat for 65 CHYKs, all primarily alumni of Chinmaya Bala Vihars in Texas. Our camp *acharya*, Acharya Vivek Gupta (CM Niagara Falls), shared his unique perspective on Vedanta and it particularly resonated with the CHYKs. His innovative and passionate style made the ancient wisdom of Vedanta seem more relevant, relatable, and reachable.

The camp activities were designed to appeal to the intellectual capacities and interests of the attendees, and included 90-minute sessions dedicated to analyzing the Vedantic message that can be found in contemporary music, ranging from hip-hop to rock. The camp also allotted time for a cooking workshop, in which our CHYKs learned *sattvik* cooking techniques and how to apply them to simple recipes. CHYKs demonstrated their talents on Open Mic Night, showcasing their various acting, instrumental, and vocal abilities. In the *Dharmik* Debate, students dissected the subtleties between the theories of free will and destiny.

Campers rose at 6:00 a.m. every morning for an hour-long yoga and meditation session, which complemented the practices of solitude and silence (*maunam*), and through which they learned the importance of reflection and contemplation. All these activities were accented by three exceptionally engaging discourses: Saving *Satsanga*, Silent Seva, and Simple *Sadhana*.



Overall, CHYK camps like this provide a forum for like-minded Hindu youth to gather and encourage spiritual discussions in a fun and interactive manner. The camp had a perfect balance of spiritual learning with social activities that facilitated the formation of lifelong friendships. It was an honor for CM Houston CHYKs to plan this camp and to host fellow CHYKs from across the country. Everyone is looking forward to the 11 CHYK camps planned for 2011!

## CHYK NY's CORD Walkathon

*Submitted by CHYK New York*

CM New York CHYKs organized a walkathon to raise funds for the Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CORD) on Sunday, October 17, 2010. CORD, envisioned and founded by Pujya Gurudev, provides health, literacy, micro-financing, and other services in India's rural communities.

At Riverside Park, approximately 15 CM members met and enjoyed the beautiful weather, views of the river, Fall foliage, and wonderful *satsanga*. Acharya Krishna Moorthy (CM New York) led a prayer to start and end the walk, and engaged in spiritual discussions with CHYKs. Over \$1,500 were raised for CORD.

Following the walk, the participants enjoyed dinner at a nearby Indian vegetarian restaurant. Chetan Devchand, one of the CHYK organizers, said, "The walkathon was wonderful because we met as a group to take time for a wonderful cause. The weather was amazing, the people were inspired, and more awareness for CORD was raised. I am definitely looking forward to raising the bar next year." To learn more about CORD, visit [CORDusa.org](http://CORDusa.org).

## CORD Walkathon by CM Philadelphia

*Submitted by CM Philadelphia*

CM Philadelphia organized its first CORD (Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development) Walkathon on October 31,

2010, to initiate and encourage CORD supporters to give back to their respective regional communities in India. The event was held at Playwicki Farm, in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, and included the walk, a *puja*, and food. There were smiles and laughter the entire day, and a sense of community, alongside the healthy benefits of walking. The event helped instill important values in the



youth and CM Philadelphia looks forward to conducting the event in 2011 also. Thanks to all the volunteers and participants, the CORD Walk was attended by over 150 people and raised over \$5,000. To learn more about CORD, visit [CORDusa.org](http://CORDusa.org).

## Learning Sadhana at CM Calgary

*by Tanu Dixit*

CM Calgary hosted a *Gita jnana yajna* by Swami Sharanananda (CM Chicago), November 11-14, 2010. Swamiji spoke on *bhakti* yoga, as taught in *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 12. Swamiji also conducted morning discourses on *Sadhana Panchakam*, explaining the importance of and ways to practice *sadhana* for Self-realization. Swamiji had everyone spellbound with his engaging storytelling and humor. His stories and ability to relate to everyday situations touched a common chord and made the sessions memorable. On the last day, Swamiji addressed the Chinmaya Bala Vihar students of Calgary and explained the concept of the BMI Chart with depth and clarity. Swamiji's visit left devotees wanting more spiritual exposure.

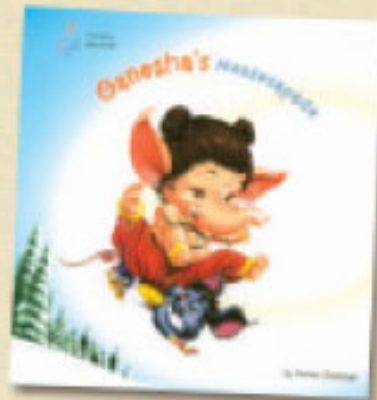
Swarnima Shrivastava said, "My mother forced



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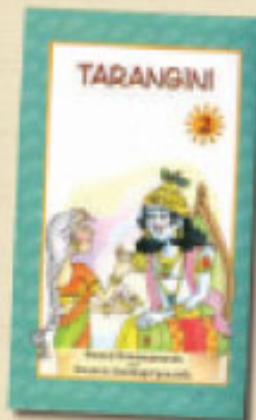


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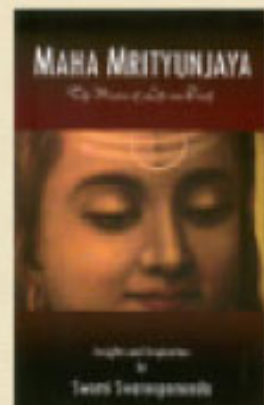
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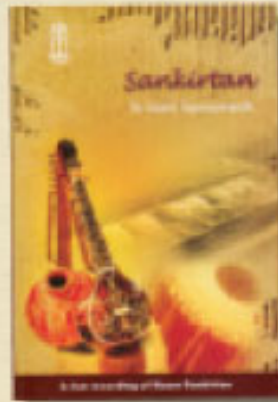
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me to attend on the first day, but I enjoyed myself so much that I happily attended the rest of the days. Swamiji cleared many of my doubts and I learned about the *Gita* and *bhakti* yoga. Swamiji said we will be more motivated to do our chores if we do them for God than ourselves. I know with certainty that the next time such talks are held in Calgary, I will be there, because these talks enriched me in a way I could never have imagined.”

## CM Vancouver’s Year in Review

*Submitted by CM Vancouver*

By Pujya Gurudev’s and Pujya Guruji’s blessings, CM Vancouver successfully hosted four major events in 2010.

Acharya Vivek Gupta (CM Niagara Falls) conducted its second annual children’s camp in April. The three-day camp, themed, “Save the Environ-ME-nt,” was a huge success and brought in the participation of Chinmaya Bala Vihar students and other children from the community. Vivekji’s style endeared him to the children so much that they each agreed to bring at least one more child with them if another camp is held.

Concurrent to the children’s camp, Vivekji gave a discourse every evening on “Life is a Gift, Living an Art,” expounding on learning to live beautifully so that one’s life becomes a blessing for everyone. His extensive knowledge, eloquence, and simplicity were appreciated by all.

Swami Chidatmananda (CM Hyderabad) visited CM Vancouver in May and conducted a lecture series on “The Art of Healing.” Swamiji’s visits are always looked forward to with great anticipation in Vancouver and this year was no exception. The evening

lecture series based on Adi Shankara’s work and the guided meditation morning sessions were a wealth of knowledge that Vivekji communicated simply and easily.

“*Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram,*” CM Vancouver’s annual fundraiser in June, was a variety entertainment program that featured the talent of local artists of various ages. With the support of Chinmaya Mission members and patrons, the program was a great success and well received by all.

## Holiday Gifts for *Chinmaya Vijaya*

*by Andrea Tufts*

Sometimes the connections we have to people and places, although ever-present to us, are overshadowed by our far-removed daily lives. Then when the time is right, those same connections pull us back into their realm in a way that powerfully adds meaning to our lives. So it is for Bhavya Pandayaram (age 13) of New Jersey and Priyanka Sekhar (age 13) of Ohio who will be traveling during the winter break to India, the place of their parents’ origin. There they will be assisting at the Chinmaya Orphanage, hoping to add meaning to the lives of young girls in kindergarten through fourth grade. They are doing so in their own ways—quietly, without much fanfare or financial assistance from outside sources.

The *Chinmaya Vijaya* orphanage, located in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, was created under the auspices of Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CORD). The orphanage is committed to the care and education of orphaned and homeless girls irrespective of their caste, color, creed, or ethnicity. On the sprawling five-acre campus, which consists of two hostels, a school building, senior citizen housing, an organic farm, and dining, prayer and recreation halls, girls find a home where they are truly embraced. They are able to grow at *Chinmaya Vijaya* physically, spiritually, and intellectually until they graduate, become employed or married, and are ready to enter the greater world as responsible citizens.

CORD supports village groups with social programs such as income-producing activities and natural resource management. CORD

has greatly impacted women by revealing their potential to serve their communities. His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda is the inspiration behind CORD, and his words, “Let us be humble and grateful for the opportunities available to us to serve society and the world,” influence the structure and vision of all CORD programs.

Bhavya Pandyaram has been involved with CORD for several years, by participating in yearly walkathons and read-a-thons in her hometown of North Brunswick, NJ. Inspired by a trip she made to the main CORD center in India last year, Bhavya decided to get more directly involved in CORD missions. “The main CORD center is located in northern India, an unfamiliar place to me, and I wanted to help somewhere that I could really connect with the people. When I heard that there was a group organizing a trip for students to go to Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, I was excited. My parents were born and raised in the same state, and I grew up learning the local language, Telugu. I find that by helping those that you can relate to more, you can have more of an impact on them,” she said.

In order to prepare for her trip, Bhavya learned Telugu more fluently and in the appropriate context. This will be her second visit to the Chinmaya Orphanage.

Priyanka Sekhar is making the trip for similar reasons. “I decided to go because India is where my family originated, and I really wanted to help the society that my parents come from. In India, orphans do not get as much attention or care as they do in the U.S., so it is nice to help in a place where help is actually needed and truly appreciated. You hear about India rising, but it is still struggling with poverty and needs help.”

Both Bhavya and Priyanka are looking forward to teaching the girls English, an essential language that even rural children have the opportunity to learn, and mathematics, which is increasingly important to the new competitive India. In addition to that focus, they will engage in special afterschool activities with the girls, such as arts and crafts, sports, and dance. “If nothing else, I hope that the girls remember that we came specifically for them, and that we want to help,” said Bhavya.

## CM Dallas-Fort Worth’s New Ashram *Chinmaya Chitrakoot*



## Adi Shankara: The Mighty Missionary

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Adi Shankara Jayanti and Shri Chinmaya Jayanti both fall on May 8 in 2011. Chinmaya Mission centers worldwide plan to celebrate Adi Shankara Mahotsava in 2011 to spread the message of Vedanta, support and increase awareness of the Chinmaya International Foundation, and create momentum toward Pujya Gurudev's birth centenary celebrations, 2015-2016.

In recent years, *Shankara Jayanti* has been gathering momentum and has now become almost a national festival in Bharat. We find this day celebrated in Delhi among intelligent government officials, with equal ardor in Calcutta among the industrialists, in Bombay among the commercial crowd, and in Madras and Kerala. Why, up to Cape Comorin and almost everywhere, in all towns and even in every enlightened village, *Shankara Jayanti* has become an annual festival.

### All in One

There is no doubt that serious students of Hindu philosophy can ever overlook the contributions of Shankara, the philosopher. No devotee of the Lord can ignore Shankara, the author of the devotional invocations. No seeker can walk the path of self-unfoldment in himself without drawing upon the fund of information regarding this great pilgrimage that lies in the bulk of Shankara's works. The utter fulfillment of all seeking is indeed in the total experience of absolute Oneness, and this alone is the theme of Shankara, the *Advaitin*.

### Striking Lessons from His Life

The one ideal that Shankara preached throughout his life, not through his commentaries, not with his chants, nor through his famous disquisitions, but by the vigorous cadence of his extraordinarily dynamic life (a short 32 years), - is what we find eloquently preached through the actions of this Kerala *brahmin*:—Missionary zeal. . . .

### An Ideal Blend

Indeed, among Hindus, there are two different theories regarding the authorship of the Vedas. One school believes that the immortal scriptures are God-revealed (*Ishvara-krtam*), and the other insists that the Vedas are the declarations of mortal *rishis* (*rishi-proktam*).

If the Vedas are God-given, then they are assuredly immortal and eternal. And if at all there be any danger of them dying away, it becomes the responsibility of the Supreme to revive them. On the other hand, when a community believes that its scriptures are *rishi*-declared, then a sacred responsibility rests upon the community to see that the scriptures are spread and lived by the maximum number of people. Shankara declared the former belief in his life, and this is an ideal that Bharat should now imitate and practice.

The missionary in Acharya Shankara not only understood and realized scriptural revelations, but he constantly lived endeavoring to expound, revive, and revitalize them. He made popular the notion that the very basis of our national life is a sacred philosophy that is not borrowed, but has sprung from the very genius of Bharat.

### Our Need

It is a false notion that a nation can be created merely by industrial progress. True prosperity can never be ushered by any amount of increased production, agricultural or industrial. Wealth so produced may, with an intelligent economic vision, get redistributed equitably. Yet, man cannot be happy, nor the community united, nor the nation strong, unless the country's citizens cultivate in themselves a healthy philosophy of right living. A philosophy of life, when lived by a people for eras, becomes the warp and woof of the very

culture of those people. Thus viewed, it is not difficult for us to realize how the missionary work of the indomitable *acharya* contained in itself the plan for a heroic cultural revival in our country.

### ☞ The Past: An Unseen Partner

A true son of Bharat must not only absorb the essential logic of the scriptures, but must live them fully; experience the unfoldment so gained; and come to expound, express, and preach his scripture to the growing generation of his children. Members of each generation must not only receive thus the torch of knowledge, lit from the past and handed down to them, but they must, in their own lives, nurse and nourish its glow and hand it down to the immediate future. As long as the zeal and anxiety to know, live, and preserve the tested ways of life, the proven values of social contacts, and the declared virtues of true living, are kept up, as long as the nation's cultural life is maintained vibrant with the creative genius of the present generation, so long we shall have the past with us in our present, as an unseen partner in our achievements and failures. The present, in its planning and vision, shall, thereby, become a true shareholder in all the future glories and successes of the nation.

If not for Shankara's missionary zeal, Hinduism would have been totally buried by now under the debris of the decadent ideologies. It is Shri Shankara who ploughed and weeded out the unhealthy overgrowths and redeemed the immortal philosophy of the sages to its pristine beauty.

### ☞ Shankara Technology

Let *Shankara Jayanti* be an occasion for the nation to feel the necessity to make a close and serious study of the *Bharatiya* culture. It is the duty of each one to impart what little he knows to all those around him—not merely by words, but by the inescapable eloquence of the purity of his own actions, the glory of his own self-sacrifice, the beauty of his own love, and the glow his own charity in life. There is no way to revive a country in its human values other than this, and we may call this as “Shankara technology.”

Let Shankara Jayanti be the sacred occasion, the auspicious hour, in the cultural history of our country when we, the self-exiled children, decide to come back home to the Bharatiya view of life. To achieve this will be the greatest tribute we can truly pay to Shri Acharya Shankara, the first mighty missionary of Hinduism.

### ☞ The Only Cure

No trouble seemed to him too great. Removing misunderstandings and bringing true knowledge in the bosom of all was his mission in life. Shankara was the one who had taught not only our country, but the whole world, the oneness of life, everywhere, at all times, in all conditions. To such a self-dedicated teacher, nothing can be more satisfying than to see the harmony of oneness lived in society. Let him be our guide and our ideal. The responsibility of carrying this knowledge to the world outside rests upon our shoulders. It is a world that stands today dejected in its helpless conditions, persecuted by its self-created restlessness, torn with the manmade strife, and despaired with a million nameless sorrows. To the calamitous era of our nuclear age, the Shankara philosophy that preaches the sanctity of life and insists on universal Oneness can alone be the only available cure.





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We thank you sincerely for your generosity.

CORD USA Read-a-thon

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Reader's Goal (#): \_\_\_\_\_ books OR \_\_\_\_\_ pages

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	Name	Email	\$ per book
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2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

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My Reading Record

	Title of Book	Start Date	Finish Date
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

\* Initials of parent/guardian. Children: Add more pages if necessary. Keep up the good work!

We are so proud of you!

## The Burning Candle

This candle burns  
for you, my Lord  
burns for you  
and you alone.

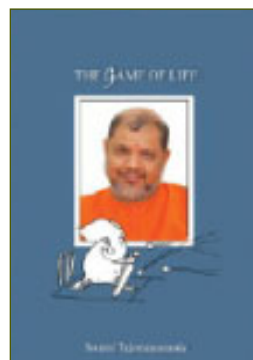
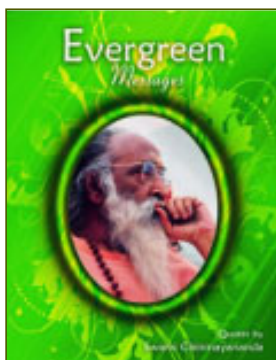
Every thought,  
every word,  
every action  
burns for you alone.

- Chetana Neerchal

The journey  
is dark  
so this candle  
burns  
to light this path  
to you alone.

## 2011 Festival Dates

Makara Sankranti	Jan. 14	Raksha-bandhan	Aug. 13
Mahashivaratri	Mar. 3	Krishna Janmashtami	Aug. 22
Holi	Mar. 20	Ganesha Chaturthi	Sep. 1
Rama Navami	Apr. 12	Navaratri Begins	Sep. 28
Hanuman Jayanti	Apr. 18	Vijaya Dashami (Dassehra)	Oct. 6
Chinmaya Jayanti	May 8	Dipavali (Diwali)	Oct. 26
Guru Purnima	Jul. 15	Gita Jayanti/ Tapovan Jayanti	Dec. 6
Chinmaya Mahasamadhi	Aug. 3		



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