

Chinmaya Smrithi



A Bi-Monthly News Magazine of the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)

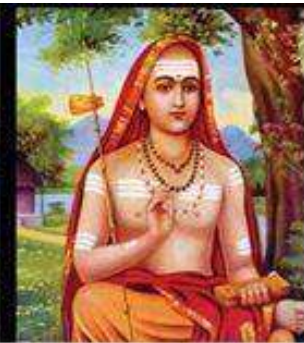
Volume 29, Number 4, July 2019



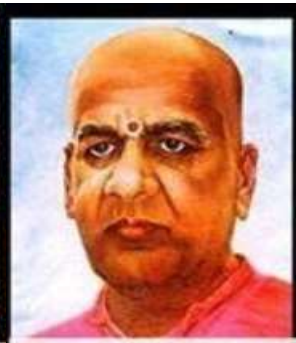
Bhagavan
Dakshinamoorthi



Bhagavan
Veda Vyasa



Bhagavan
Adi Sankaracharya



Pujya
Swami Tapovanam



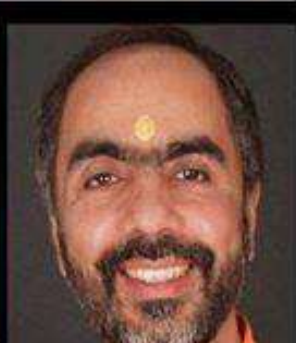
Pujya
Swami Sivananda



Pujya
Swami Chinmayananda



Pujya
Swami Tejomayananda



Pujya
Swami Swaroopananda

Our humble prostrations to the Guru Parampara on Guru Purnima

Foreword: Swamiji's Message



Editor's Note: [Our beloved resident Swamiji, Swami Dheerananda gave an inspiring message on the occasion of Guru Purnima which fell on July 15th this year. A transcript of his message as well as a link is provided below].

Shri Gurudev declared that "Whenever you need me, just close your eyes and look into your heart and I will be there". This clearly indicates that our Guru is always within us. Guru is considered as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. Vyasa Purnima is considered as Guru Purnima because Veda Vyasa is considered as Brahma himself without the four heads; Vyasa is considered as Maha Vishnu without the four hands and he is the Maheshwara without the three eyes. Hence he is Brahma, the generator of knowledge; the organizer of our culture and Dharma therefore he is Maha Vishnu; because he destroys the darkness of ignorance he is Maheshwara Himself. In this way, since he Generates the knowledge, Organizes the Dharma and Destroys ignorance, he is considered GOD himself; G for generator, O for organizer and D for destroyer. He is the Parabrahma. Vyasa Purnima is Guru Purnima. So, we bow down to the great sage Veda Vyasa on the occasion of Guru Purnima to bless us on the path of virtue, courage and wisdom. May the grace and blessings of all the Gurus (the entire Guru Parampara) flow through us to everyone around us.

Thank you. Hari Om!

To listen to the message, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qj4oynv4fjc&feature=youtu.be>

Calendar and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

- July 22 – Aug 16: Summer Camp at Chinmaya Somnath, VA.
- July 29th to August 4th: Discourses on Shri Krishna Leela by Swami Swaroopananda during the 26th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Camp at Pittsburgh PA.
- August 23rd: Janmashtami celebrations at Chinmayam, Silver Spring from 10 p.m. to midnight.
- August 24th to 27th: Avadhuta Geeta an ancient text on Advaita Vedanta by Dattatreya Muni– talks by Swami Ramakrishnananda at Chinmaya Somnath.
- August 28th – 29th: Navayogi Prasangam from Srimad Bhagawatam based on the conversation between King Nimi and the Nava Yogis – talks by Swami Ramakrishnananda at Frederick, Maryland.
- August 30th – 31st: Prashnottara Ratna Malika a collection of 67 verses with questions and answers pertaining to spiritual and temporal living – talks by Swami Ramakrishnananda at Chinmayam, Silver Spring.
- September 27-29: Krishna: A Pan-Indian Musical Experience with AKS and Lakshmi at Chinmayam, Frederick and Chinmaya Somnath on Fri, Sat and Sun.
- November 16th: Annual Fund Raiser at Julia Bindeman Suburban Center, Potomac MD.

Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Ravi Ravichandran ji by email at ravi5211@yahoo.com , if you are interested in forming or learning more about study groups.

Bookstore/Library

- Browse Books, CDs, DVDs, etc. online at www.chinmayapublications.com . Contact Sevak to order (Vijay Singh at Chinmayam, Subbarao Kari at Chinmaya Somnath and Bijay Dash at Frederick)

Next Edition of Chinmaya Smrithi

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly edition – Sep 2019, are due by August 31, 2019
- Email submissions to smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org.
- Browse Past editions at www.chinmayadc.org/Smrithi/Smrithi.htm

Useful Links:

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust www.chinmayamission.com
Chinmaya Mission West www.chinmayamission.org
Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Courses www.chinfo.org
Chinmayam Chapter – Silver Spring MD website <http://chinmayam.chinmayadc.org/chinmayam-chapter/>
Chinmaya Somnath Chapter – Chantilly VA website www.chinmayasomnath.org
Chinmaya Frederick Chapter – Urbana MD website <http://www.frederick.cmwrc.org/>
Chinmaya Richmond Chapter – Richmond VA website www.chinmayarichmond.org
CMWRC – Washington Regional Center www.chinmayadc.org

Please Note

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or CMWRC

Editorial Staff: (smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org)

Editor: K.A. Lakshmanan

Advisers: Sri Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji. Sitaram Kowtha

BV students – Bhuvan Devarsu

Please contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial staff!

News & Tidbits

Tilak Ceremony

The Tilak Ceremony was held at Chinmayam on May 18. Swamiji blessed all the graduating students from the three chapters in CMWRC. For more details and photos from the event, please access the special Chinmaya Smrithi graduation edition.

Summer youth camp

A summer camp based on lessons from the Yoga Sutras titled “The Life Examined: from Asana to Attitude” was conducted by Shri Vivekji from July 8 to July 12 for rising 9th graders to rising college freshmen. The camp held at Chinmaya Somnath was well attended by children from both Virginia and Maryland.

Arpanam

Please refer to the CMWRC website to learn more about this exciting new consolidated fundraising initiative. It offers the Chinmaya family an opportunity to donate at various levels on an on-going basis to support the current and future growth of CMWRC. Inspired by Gurudev’s message that true loving is not in passive taking but in dynamic giving, the program is expected to help the mission pay down its debt while also positioning it for future growth to continue to spread the spiritual message of Vedanta. Donors making an Arpanam pledge may fulfill the pledge during the calendar year, and all tax-deductible offerings, such as Gita chanting registration, membership, Bala Vihar, enrichment, Guru Dakshina, event sponsorship, etc. are recognized towards the fulfillment of the pledge.

Please make your pledge today !

Vedantic Retreat

A Vedantic Retreat was held from July 12 to July 14. Organized by CHYK and CSK, the retreat was led by Shri Vivekji and Shri Shankarji. It uncovered the secrets in the Shrimad Bhagwatam and the art of building Bhakti – yearning for the divine.

Summer Camp

The annual summer camp was successfully held in Frederick from July 8 to July 19 and in Silver Spring from June 24 to July 19.

Chinmaya Somnath Carnival

A grand carnival with many games, variety of food and exciting prizes was held at Chinmaya Somnath on the occasion of Gurudev Jayanthi. For details and pictures from the event, please read the article in this edition.

Guru Purnima

Guru Purnima was celebrated with a Rudrabhishekam and Paduka Puja with Gurudev Ashtottaram, Shiva Ashtottaram and Tapovana Ashtottaram along with videos from Gurudev, Swami Swaroopananda and Swami Dheerananda on the significance of Guru Paduka Puja and the significance of Guru Purnima. For links to these videos, please look for the Guru Purnima messages in this edition. The occasion also marked the 5 year anniversary of the inauguration of the Chinmaya Somnath facility in Virginia in 2014.

Vision of Vedanta

On Saturday, July 20, Shubhaniji and Swetaji gave talk on Vision of Vedanta, drawing from an Upanishadic verse. The talk, peppered with practical examples, focused on understanding the purpose and adjustments needed to be steadfast in the path of spirituality. The audience enjoyed the inspiring talk by the visiting Vedanta Teachers, who had just completed assisting Swami Dheeranandaji in conducting 2019 Children Summer Camp at Silver Spring MD. Shubhaniji is from CM New York and Swethaji is from CM Houston.

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Bala Vihar

Enriching our children with the great knowledge of Sanatana Dharma through scriptural stories, games and activities. Join us every week as we learn about values and ideals with laughter and joy!

'Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit.'
- Pujya Swami Chinmayananda

Registration
for 2017-18
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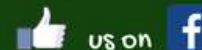
Location:
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Chantilly, VA 20151



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CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER



Arpanam

An Offering of Gratitude | Annual Fundraising Initiative

Whoever offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water,
that I accept, offered by the pure-minded with devotion
Geeta Chapter 9, Verse 26

True loving is not passive 'taking'
but a dynamic 'giving'
- Swami Chinmayananda

Pledge Today Generously



Patram (Leaf) - \$2700 and above



Pushpam (Flower) - \$5400 and above



Phalam (Fruit) - \$10,800 and above



Toyam (Water) - \$21,600 and above

**Grow Spiritually and Help Our Center
Expand to Serve More**

Follow us on Facebook!

Exciting news! We now have a Chinmayam Facebook page for our Silver Spring center where we can showcase our vibrant community, events and activities. **We request all members to "follow us" and "like us"** to receive important updates, information on events and special guests, photos of your children in Bala Vihar, quotes from our Gurudev, and more. Updates will be sent to your phone or email accounts. **Don't be left out - join now !**

Step 1: Login at Facebook.com (or join Facebook by creating your profile - it's free and easy)

Step 2: Search Chinmaya Mission DC

Step 3: Click on "Like" and "Follow"

Step 4: Click on "Invite Friends" and send the page to your friends, members and non-members.

**Publicity team needs volunteers who are active on social media! Please contact
Amita Jain, amitajain815@gmail.com**

Chinmayam Learning Center

Chinmayam is now available for rental services!

We are delighted to announce your single destination for enrichment programs!! Presenting the Chinmayam Learning Center, weekdays and weekends!

For more information, please contact: Raja Kirkire, rkkirkire@gmail.com,
Meena Sankar, meena17.sankar@gmail.com



Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center

CHINMAYA SOMNATH
4350 Blue Spring Drive, Chantilly 20151



July 22 to August 16, 2019

All day activities

Conducted By

Swami Dheerananda

- Dance and Drama • Indoor Games •
- Outdoor Athletics • Art • Inspiring Stories •
- Shlokas & Bhajans • Fun Fridays •



Summer Immersion Camp

Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa



Early Registration (till March 31, 2019): \$1200

Registration (from April 1, 2019): \$1400

Sibling discount available

For rising 1st to 8th grades as of September 1, 2019

<http://summercamp.chinmayadc.org>
only 108 seats available

Questions: summercamp@chinmayasomnath.org

Sri Adi Shankara's Vivekachoodamani Class by Pujya Swami Dheerananda

Attend Pujya Swamiji's class on Sri Adi Shankara's Vivekachoodamani!! In-person or via web!

Recording and Dial-in Information:

- The class will be live streamed via Zoom. Please use the information below to access the live stream video and/or audio.

Venue: Kailas Niwas

Day: Every Thursday, starting Oct 4, 2018

Time: 7:00-8:30 PM Eastern Standard Time (US and Canada)

Zoom Webinar ID: 872-939-557

To join via the **Zoom client** (for video and audio on PC/Mac/iOS/Android), please click the link below which will prompt to install necessary software automatically.

<https://zoom.us/j/872939557>

To join via **iPhone one-tap** (audio only, automatically dials the extension) press:

US: +16699006833,,872939557# or +16465588656,,872939557#

To join via **telephone:**

US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 872-939-557

International numbers available [here](#)

- Class recordings can be found [here](#). Please do not rely on the recordings for missed lectures.



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2019

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\$50 Adult

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Chinmaya Mission, Princeton
Head of Chinmaya Mission West

& fun activities for Children

Venue

Julia Bindeman Suburban Center

11810 Falls Road

Potomac, MD - 20854

Date & Time

Saturday, November 16th 2019

4 PM to 9 PM

For more information, visit cmwrc.chinmayadc.org



 **Chinmaya Mission West**
presents

26th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Camp

Discourses on
Sri Krishna Leela
(from Srimad Bhagavatam)

By His Holiness,
Pujya Swami Swaroopananda
(Global Head, Chinmaya Mission)

July 29 - August 4, 2019



CHINMAYA MISSION® WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER, CHINMAYAM



janamashtami celebrations

Join us in celebrating the birth of Lord Krishna!

Friday, August 23, 2019

10pm-Midnight

Chinmayam

46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

10:00pm-10:35pm

Dance performances

10:35pm-11:40pm

Bhajan marathon - all are welcome to join!

11:40pm-Midnight

Message & Meditation by *Swami Dheerananda*

Midnight

Shri Krishna Janam and Palan Jhulan



Contact Urvi Mehta

urvimehta59@gmail.com, (301)263-2954



**CHINMAYA MISSION®
WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER**

warmly welcomes Swami Ramakrishnananda



Avadhuta Geeta

Ancient text on Advaita Vedanta by
Dattatreya Muni

SAT, AUGUST 24 **SUN, AUGUST 25**
7.00PM - 8.30PM 5.00PM - 8.30PM

MON, AUGUST 26 **TUES, AUGUST 27**
7.00PM - 8.30PM 7.00PM - 8.30PM

CHINMAYA SOMNATH

4350 Blue Spring Dr
Chantilly, VA - 20151

For more information, contact
Samatha Mure - samathasri@gmail.com

Prashnottara Ratna Malika

A collection of 67 verses comprising
of questions and answers pertaining to
both spiritual and temporal living

FRI, AUGUST 30 **SAT, AUGUST 31**
7.00PM - 8.30PM 9.00AM - 10.30AM
11.00 AM - 12.30 PM
6.00 PM - 7.30 PM

CHINMAYAM

46 Norwood Rd
Silver Spring, MD - 20905

For more information, contact
Ravi Ravichandran - ravi5211@yahoo.com

Navayogi Prasangam

This text from Bagavathapuram is
based on the conversation between the
king Nimi and the Nine Sages

WED, AUGUST 28
7.00PM - 8.30PM

THURS, AUGUST 29
7.00PM - 8.30PM

CHINMAYA FREDERICK

3511 Pontius Ct
Ijamsville (Urbana), MD - 21754

For more information, contact
Shiva Vanam - vanamshiva@gmail.com

Swami Ramakrishnananda

Chinmaya International Foundation
Center for Sanskrit Research
www.chinfo.org

Chancellor Nominee, Chinmaya
Vishwavidyapeeth
University for Indic Studies
www.chinmayauniversity.ac.in





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As graduates of Balavihar/Chyk from CMWRC and Chinmaya Seva Center, Singapore respectively, Aks & Lakshmi have performed at several Chinmaya Mission ashrams and Mahasamadhi camps across the US.

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CHINMAYAM

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MD - 20905

FRI, SEPTEMBER 27
8.00PM - 9.30PM

CHINMAYA FREDERICK

Urbana Middle School
3511 Pontius Ct
Ijamsville (Urbana)
MD - 21754

SAT, SEPTEMBER 28
5.00PM - 6.30PM

CHINMAYA SOMNATH

4350 Blue Spring Dr
Chantilly
VA - 20151

SUN, SEPTEMBER 29
5.00PM - 6.30PM

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national chykwest camp



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based on the best-selling book by

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Global Head, Chinmaya Mission

August 30 - September 2, 2019

Dallas- Fort Worth, TX

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Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth | An Appeal



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(DEEMED TO BE

UNIVERSITY

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WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION BUILT ON INDIAN WISDOM

Hari Om Chinmaya Family,

The World Chinmaya Sevaks' Conference was a grand opportunity to connect with the global Chinmaya Mission Centre representatives and we are overwhelmed by the support extended to the **Chinmaya University**.

Chinmaya University founded on the principles of Purity, Spirituality, Practicality and Innovation, our core mission is to blend the ancient and time-tested wisdom of India with present day knowledge fields. It is breaking new ground where necessary and adopting the merits of all that has come before, but always leaning towards the winds of innovation. Striking a careful balance between the old and new, the organization offers common streams of courses with unique electives and supplementary subjects, with an intent to mould the teenagers of today into well-rounded, responsible, value-grounded, young adults that contribute to the nation, and the world at large.

Learn more about Chinmaya University by clicking this [link](#).

Like Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth on [Facebook](#).

Attached are additional materials for your review and get insights into Chinmaya University:

1. [Swami Advayananda's presentation](#) about Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth's unique Vision & Inception (video)
2. [Chinmaya University - An appeal for support](#) (video)
3. [Chinmaya Shree: Bi-annual Newsletter of Chinmaya University](#) (PDF)

Chinmaya University looks forward to your **continued support and engagement** in the years to come. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any information or clarification.

In His Seva,
On behalf of Dr. AppaRao Mukkamala
Managing Trustee

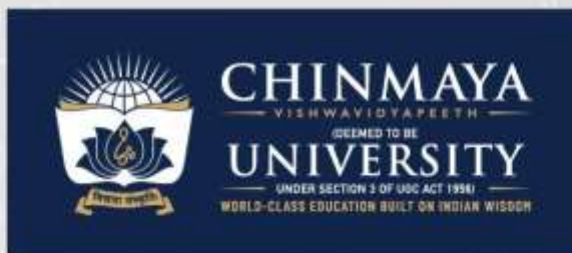
Swami Advayananda's presentation : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AO9ts04tSM8&feature=youtu.be>

Chinmaya University: An appeal for support: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NADht0NBRxM>

Chinmaya Shree: Bi-Annual newsletter of Chinmaya University:

https://gallery.mailchimp.com/80619a985e5d6e34c2ba01298/files/a46d5eac-b4e8-44f6-94b1-9b553915eb57/CVV_Newsletter_Dec_2018_Volume_1_issue_1_Final.01.pdf

Learn more about Chinmaya University at: <http://www.cvv.ac.in/>



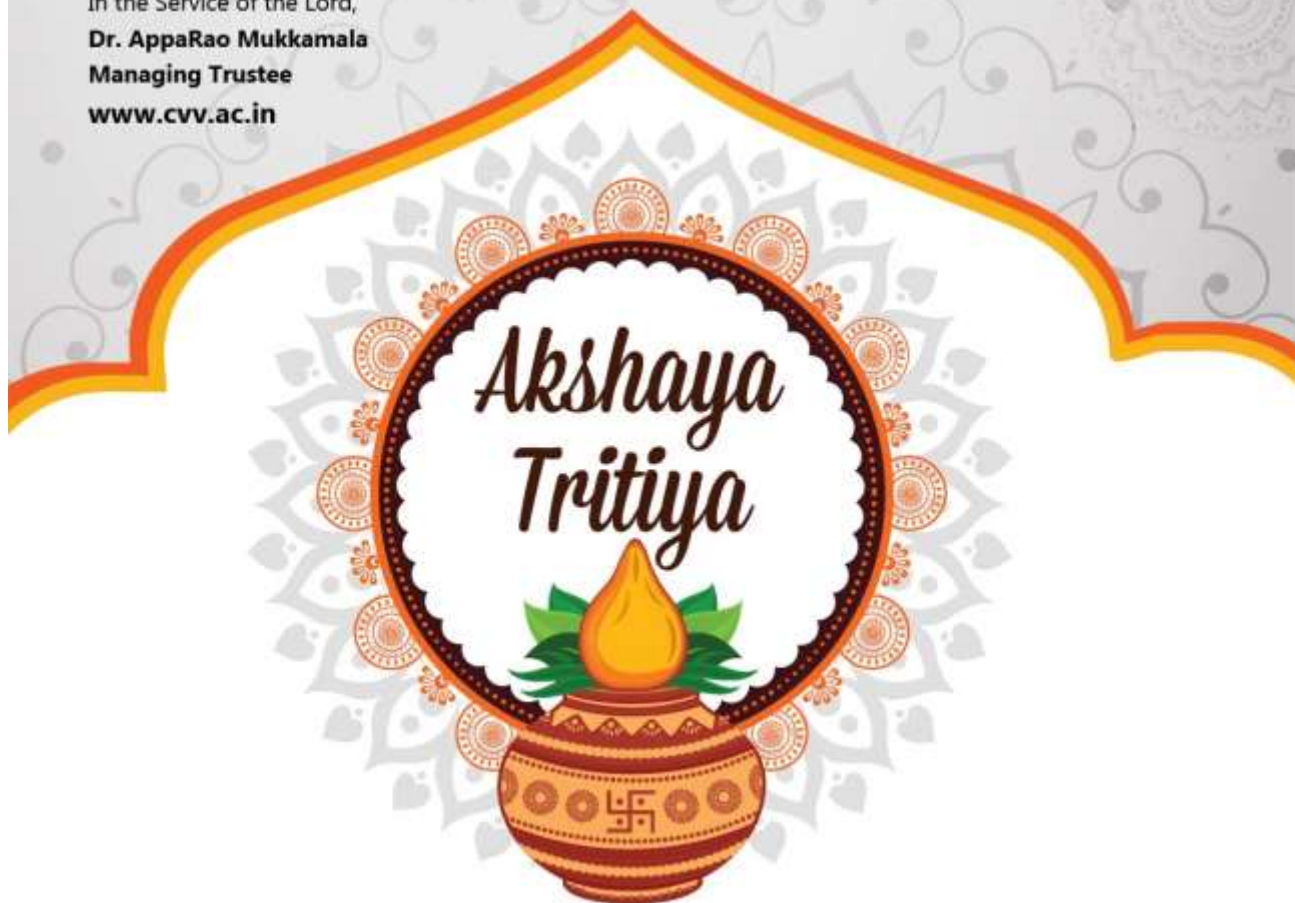
Greetings from Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth on the auspicious day of AkshayaTritiya. This sacred day marked the beginning of Satya Yuga and it is said that all sat-karmas undertaken on this auspicious day become Akshaya (अक्षय) that is 'imperishable, eternal' in the sense of 'prosperity, hope, joy and success'.

The Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth Trust expresses deep gratitude to all the well-wishers, supporters, donors, students and their parents, faculty, staff and the community that is supporting the University. On this auspicious day Chinmaya University is launching the **Vidya Lakshya Nidhi (विद्या लक्ष्य निधि)** schemewhereby a donor of ₹1 lakh (USD 1500) per year for 5 years, will be titled **Vidya Mitra (विद्या मित्र)** – a friend of the Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth, and the donor's name will be permanently engraved on the donors list at the Chinmaya University. In Puja Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's words, Vidya stands for Vishwavidyapeeth and Lakshya means the goal or aim. May this endeavour build an Akshaya Nidhi or Eternal Bounty for the Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth to serve the global community for posterity.

We invoke the grace of Bhagavan and blessings of Puja Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda on all the Family members that have and are supporting the Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth.

Thanking You,

In the Service of the Lord,
Dr. AppaRao Mukkamala
Managing Trustee
www.cvv.ac.in





Param Puja **Swami Swaroopananda**
(Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide)

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- For 31 - 45 years: Course Donation: Rs. 24,000/-
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- For all candidates outside India: Course Donation: US\$ 750
- Understanding of any one of the following languages: Hindi/English/Telugu/Tamil/Kannada.
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Tel: 0422-2615637/93604-61566

Divya Chaitanya: 8790557412

Email: chinmayagarden@gmail.com

Application Form can be downloaded from the website
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Home page > News and events > Join Basic Purohit Course

Select pamphlet - English / Hindi / Tamil

Click download application form - download, take print out,
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Guru is not an individual.

He is an **institution**.

He is not a person. Guru is a personality...

Teacher is a phenomena.

He is **Narayana** Himself
in different forms at different occasions
according to the need and demand,
they come and go.

But all of them are adding to your
spiritual stature and help you
to unfold your personality.



Swami Chinmayananda

For a more detailed message about the significance of Guru Paduka Puja, please visit the video below which has Gurudev explaining the significance of why we worship the Guru's Padukas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNlrNteDkSw>

Surrender in utter humility and devotion to
the subtle, imperceptible Self, who is none
other than the infinite Lord within ourself -

THE GURU.



SWAMI SWAROOPANANDA

Please click on the link below to listen to the inspiring message from Swami Swaroopananda on the occasion of Guru Purnima.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAjYyZ_MFiY&feature=youtu.be

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Mananam Series of Books These are inviting and engaging series of books that go into depth into one selected spiritual theme per edition (Truth, Compassion, Education, Fear- face it, Science of Sciences, and so on) and bring perspectives on it from different thinkers, writers and traditions of the world. The recent editions of Mananam have focused on the life, teachings, inspiration and legacy of Sri Gurudev, in honor of his birth centenary.

Subscription: please write to editor@mananam.org. Current and past editions can be purchased at our bookstores.)

Tapovan Prasad Subscription (print version or E-version). Tapovan Prasad brings out each month - excerpts from teachings of Swami Tapovan Maharaj, Sri Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda and CM acharyas. In addition, it captures the pulse of Chinmaya Mission world-wide with reports on happenings and upcoming events.

Tapovan Prasad Subscription Instructions:

1. Please go to www.tapovanprasad.com website
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3. Subscription - Overseas'
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Gurudev's teaching

Pallavi Nithyanandan – reflection on Gurudev Jayanti

The topic for today's talk is about a teaching of Swami Chinmayananda that touched my heart. There are many teachings of Gurudev that have touched my heart. In fact, all of Swamiji's teachings, what I learn in the study group, from various Chinmaya Mission Acharyas, reading commentaries on texts are all teachings of Gurudev. Today I am going to talk about one teaching/message from Gurudev that has truly touched my heart, it is Gurudev's message on ***the importance of love and compassion-devoid of attachment in spiritual growth***. Gurudev has touched on this concept in several works and commentaries. Gurudev exemplified these qualities in his life; he was an erudite scholar who demonstrated love and compassion for all. This is evident from the various anecdotes and names in the astotthara namavali: Suhride, Sumanase, Manoharaya, Madhurasvabhavaya, Janapriyaya, lokaprasiddhaya, bahubhaktaya, and so on. People were not only drawn to and influenced by him due to his sharp intellect but also his compassionate and loving nature and teaching in a way that they could connect to.

This teaching means a lot to me mainly because I recognize this to be an area I need to work on most, in order to progress both spiritually and in worldly matters. In many commentaries/books, Gurudev talks about development of the heart, in one place he says: "It is easy to develop the intellect, but difficult to develop the heart." The first time I read it, I have wondered if it was possible for one to become more compassionate and loving? Isn't it just people's personality? I have known many people that are very kind, friendly, and able to express love and affection so effortlessly, and have wondered how they are like that. At that time, I thought you know what I am smarter than most people so it should be Ok. But that is obviously not a helpful attitude. Seva has definitely been an effective tool to bring about some changes, it is then bringing the right attitude in other aspects of life.

Now I will share how this teaching has significance in various aspects of my life:

- At work: I am working on adapting my communication and interaction styles based on the person I am dealing with. Critical thinking is important, but how and when to communicate is very important. Being an active listener, sensitive to

others, at the same time taking feedback directed to me in an objective manner to develop strength and resilience, are some things I am working to improve.

- In family life/friendships: Improving relationships with family, friends, handling kids etc. Gurudev says "In life to handle yourself, use your head, but to handle others use your heart." In case you are wondering how it is going for me, that a whole different story and I have had varying degrees of success. With family, I have learnt that to maintain harmony it is not that important to be factually correct, but to have empathy and not hurt feelings. Catching myself before saying something which is not necessary, balancing discipline with love for kids, are some things that I have managed to do. Other times, I have only been able to reduce my pitch from A# to G, I am referring to talking, not singing! One of my daughters asked me the other day, "Amma, do you correct spelling mistakes in our notes and cards to you? You are not supposed to do that!" I am being mindful of things like ignoring typos on greeting cards from kids or at least not pointing them out; my emails can use editing to correct typos. I believe these are small but steady steps in the right direction.
- Performing seva at the mission or any other voluntary service/charity: If done with an attitude of love and service to the Lord through service to people, these activities are more effective and reward my mind with a feeling of peace.
- In spiritual matters: It is clear that memorizing, and understanding scriptures like other books or technical documents is not going to get me far in my spiritual development. Prayers with increased love for the Lord, will invoke the Lord's grace, and lead to assimilation of the teachings.

I hope these efforts will contribute to building "shat sampatti" or the six-fold spiritual wealth, which will make me a more qualified student of Vedanta. I will close this part of my talk with a beautiful quote from Gurudev which says: "The spirit of Advaita is not to keep away from anything, but to keep in tune with everything", and this can be achieved only if the heart is sufficiently developed.

Thankfully, Gurudev has also said “The glory of life is not in ‘never falling’, but in ‘rising’ each time we fall.” Therefore, I plan to continue working on developing love and compassion in my heart. Thank you for listening.

Hari Om!



Sidestepping Anirvachaniya

Dr. Anoop Kumar

Is the world real or is the world unreal? This question goes to the heart of what Advaita Vedanta asserts. Advaita Vedanta asserts Brahman alone is real. Naturally, the inquisitive mind will then ask why this world then appears. It is a fitting question since every person experiences a world.

The response to the question of why this world appears if Brahman alone is real is typically given from the perspective of individuality, since it is from that view that the question was born. One answer might be that Vasanas are the reason. They cloud and individuate the mind so that it perceives a multifarious world. Avidya is another answer. It plays the role of veiling the reality from the individual. Maya is a third answer. These explanations in turn lead to questions about where Vasanas and Avidya and Maya come from. Ultimately, we come to the conclusion that we see the world because we don't see Brahman, and we don't see Brahman because we see the world. With that, we have entered the labyrinth of Anirvachaniya, the inexplicable.

Science also follows the same line of thinking. The Big Bang signals the movement from the unmanifest to the expansion of space. Why did the Big Bang happen? Anirvachaniya. The quantum vacuum is the unmanifest energetic soup in which quantum fluctuations reach the level of manifest particles. Why do quantum fluctuations happen? Anirvachaniya.

We cannot say why the world appears, why the Big Bang appears, or why quantum fluctuations appear. All we can say is they do indeed seem to appear. To probe this further, we have to ask a new kind of question: To whom does the world appear? To whom does the Big Bang appear? To whom do quantum fluctuations appear? Naturally, they appear to you and me, individual human beings.

The world arises in accordance with the individuated perceiving mind. We know this to be true because different species, meaning different minds, perceive the same stimulus differently. A cat sees in ultraviolet, so the tree it perceives is different from the tree we perceive. A bat senses with echolocation, so the boulder it perceives is different from the boulder we perceive. A spider has eight eyes, so the form it perceives is different from the form we perceive. Whose world is the correct world, the

real world, the world by which subjective experiences are measured? Can we say the human standard of perception is independently accurate when there are species that have more powerful senses of perception than us?

The above line of thinking demonstrates that this world we experience exists only in relation to the individuated perceiving mind, and to make matters more complex, that individuated perceiving mind is itself part of the world. But this complexity is a clue. If world and individual are co-dependent co-experiences, then we have our answer to what the true nature of the world is. It is conditional.

In sleep, for example, the multifarious world disappears into its unmanifest potential state as the sense of individuality disappears. On the other side of the spectrum, in the Astavakra Gita, as King Janaka cracks the shell of individuality, his mind convulses, "Where is the world and where is the seeker?!" From these examples we can conclude that the world is conditional in nature. Where there is an individual, there is a world.

So, is the world real or is the world unreal? As long as the question arises, the sense of individuality is strong and the world appears real. As the question resolves itself, the world as an independent dancing entity no longer appears real. The world is neither real nor unreal. It is conditional.

To say that the world is unreal denies the experience of the individual and is a self-contradictory statement in that it acknowledges a world to negate. To say that the world is real denies Brahman as the reality and blinds the aspirant to the possibility of her higher nature. One way to sidestep this difficulty is to call the world false, placing one foot in the absolute and the other in the relative. The other way is to say the world is conditional, giving the world its due (and not an iota more) from the individual's perspective, while also recognizing the dissolution of the experience of a world as individuality is seen through.

A conditional world honors both the absolute and the relative. As the aspirant's Vasanas cool off, the veil lifts on not only his/her nature and world's nature, but also the falseness of the dichotomy of individual and world. That mind, buoyant and radiant, ascends to Heights Divine.

Chinmaya Jayanthi Carnival – Chinmaya Somnath

Ashutosh Somalwar

Chinmaya Somnath celebrated Gurudev's 103rd Jayanthi on May 5th with pomp and ceremony. The preparations for the event started weeks in advance. Starting with the registration for Geeta Chanting Competition. The youth in the Youth leadership program (YLP) planned the Carnival games meticulously for weeks and months. YLP, the program gives hands on leadership experience for 6th to 9th graders, and the kids put their leadership to good practice by meticulously planning the games, negotiating the ticket prices and gift donations, marketing the event, and executing each of the games with the crowd control. They clearly demonstrated that they were the budding leaders of the future. They not only organized and executed the games on the Carnival day but also held a story telling competition with age-based themes from Hindu Spiritual texts, and participant ages ranged from 4 to adults in preparation for the event. All the money raised in the games would be donated to CORD. Everyone in Chinmaya Somnath was excited and awaiting the arrival of May 5th to celebrate our Pujya Gurudev.

The morning of May 5 started with spring showers for a clear atmosphere. All the 5 senses were activated as soon as one entered Chinmaya Somnath. The entire building was beautifully decorated with flowers and "thorans" with an inviting atmosphere to walk into. All floors were bustling with energy with booths for carnival tickets and vendors selling saris, kurtis, t-shirts, books and games. The aroma of multitude of food from the cafeteria was a feast to the nose and the taste of the food was heavenly. The variety of food was appetizing and included the palate from all regions of India North to South, East to West.

First event of the day was the red-carpet welcome to the participants of GCC; with an overwhelming 305 participants this year, it was an apt way to celebrate Gurudev's vision of "Ghar Ghar mein Geeta". A photo booth was set up with a beautiful background of Bhagavad Gita and taking pictures and selfies at the booth was a prime attraction for the Gita chanting participants and their families. The Guru Paduka pooja provided a beautiful start to the proceedings with over 450 people in the auditorium. The children received trophies & certificates along with ice-cream coupons, while the adult participants received bookstore vouchers. At the end of the GCC Awards ceremony, the walls of Chinmaya

Somnath reverberated with the chanting in unison of Geeta Chapter 12 by everyone present in the auditorium.

At noon the carnival games and food stalls started. volunteers walked the halls with tickets to sell so the participants could have uninterrupted fun in each of the game rooms and fill their stomach with mouth-watering food. Each classroom was filled with different games and games ranged from Obstacle courses to Escape room, fun for kids and kids at heart. Each game had an opportunity to win tokens which could be redeemed for prizes at the prize counter, all prizes donated by friends and families of Chinmaya Somnath. Mehendi and Face painting showed the artistry of the volunteers while putting smiles on the faces of kids.

Chinmaya Somnath Learning Center(CSLC) showcased their educational programs with vendor booths, and held friendly Chess competition with the young Chess prodigy for the carnival participants which showed off the flagship CSLC chess program. We had over 10 local businesses supporting the event showcasing their services ranging from health care services, traditional Indian performance art, tutoring services, boutiques, insurance, organic herbals, catering and real estate.

Starting at 2 pm the auditorium vibrated with the sound of beautiful songs, anklets of the dancers, dandiya and "lezims"; all as part of the cultural programs. There were over 12 performances, showcasing the diversity of Indian Classical dances to different types of music, with over 100 artists performing in various capacity. The prizes for the Story telling competition was distributed in the auditorium as well. The auditorium gave a standing ovation to the youngest winner of the story telling competition who was just 4 years old.

Annapurna team outdid themselves with the variety of the food available in the cafeteria for purchase. Over 50 volunteers worked hard for weeks to recreate the feel of Mumbai street food. The fully decorated dining area and high tables and chairs added to the charm of the cafeteria. Food from different parts of India: Biryani to Masala Dosa, Vada to Chats, cotton candies to sugar cane juice was available in the cafeteria for purchase. Fresh made to order Dosa, Bhel puri, and freshly squeezed Sugar cane juice was main attraction for the adults and the kids loved the cotton candies, popcorn and ice-creams. With a

constant stream of people walking in and out eating, the cafeteria was a perfect place to catch up with long lost friends, and then going back and enjoying the cultural show and games.

Umpteen number of volunteers, young and old alike, spent countless selfless hours to make this event possible on such a grand scale. With Gurudev's continued blessing, let us look forward to the next Jayanthi celebration on an even grander scale. Hari Om!

Link to the full photo gallery:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/4fyHUUjDCHEd5QBu6>

A few sample photos here:





Influence of Gurudev on my life

Alok Shastry – Reflections on Gurudev Jayanti

Gurubramha Guru Vishnu Guru Devo Maheshwara,

Gururev Shakshat para brahma tashmeva Shri Guruveh
namah

Chinmayam vyapi yat sarvam yak kinchit cha chara
Charam,

tappadam darshitam yena tashmayi shri guruveh
namah!!

Hari OM!

I am Alok Shastry. Today, I will be speaking about the
Influence of Gurudev in my life.

I have been a Chinmaya Mission member since 2014, for about five years. Like many Chinmaya Mission members, I know Gurudev through Chinmaya Mission and weekly discourses by Swami Dheerananda Ji. I went to school for 24 years, learned a lot about science and engineering, arts etc. But I did not understand the spiritual aspect of life. I thought to myself, “What is the real purpose of life? Is there more to life than good education, career, friends and family?” Even in fleeting moments, when these questions came about life and God, I used to procrastinate these thoughts for future; perhaps these need to be addressed when I settle down more in life or even retire; to be able to spend time on spiritual subjects. All this changed rather quickly when my family and I moved to Maryland in 2013. One of my good friends, Vijay Kumar Ji, also one of the founding members of CMWRC, encouraged me to join a Bhagwat Gita Study group in Germantown. I felt really connected to the study group and the message of Bhagwat Gita. When my family eventually moved here, he encouraged all of us to join Chinmaya Mission. When we joined, Swami ji was teaching Chapter 12 of Bhagwat Gita. Through his teaching, I really got interested in Bhagwat Gita and continued in earnest.

The teachings of Vedanta tell us that a student who practices Shravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam will eventually purify his/her mind and intellect and be able to realize the Truth. These truths in the Vedantic texts have been explained in the Upanishads, Brahma sutras and Bhagwat Gita. Recognizing the need of the times, Gurudev has explained these erudite teachings in a simple manner, and in a language that is accessible to the

masses. Attending the weekly classes, study Groups, and reading the commentaries; it has inspired me to understand the concepts and reflect on them to evolve my personality.

“To remember the ever present Divine at all times, even while acting in the world is the most positive practice for a seeker who is striving to evolve. He will thereby transform his inner personality from its present condition, to a state of harmony and efficiency”. With this simple but inspiring and impactful message, our Gurudev has given us a practical vision and path to spirituality. By establishing Chinmaya Missions worldwide, our Gurudev has made practicing and applying this vision possible for all of us. For example, I started attending study group led by Devyani ji for the last two years, where we are reading and discussing “Atma Bodha”. This is a wonderful experience where we can listen and learn from others, ask questions to clarify and improve our understanding of teaching of Adi Shankaracharya in this Prakarna Grantha.

Gurudev recommends some regular practices for a spiritual seeker that I found very useful:

1. Follow a life of self-control. When one has no control over the sense organs, one has no control over the world outside; one becomes a slave to it. Gurudev prescribes an intelligent formula by person by which one could sublimate (as opposed to suppress) to a higher spiritual living.
2. Develop the capacity to discriminate between the permanent and the impermanent. The Reality alone is eternal; everything else is ephemeral. This conviction alone is the discrimination between the permanent and the impermanent.
3. Perform selfless actions, entertain selfless emotions and maintain self-less thoughts so that one's actions, emotions and thoughts do not add to this present load of Vasanas, but actually exhaust them. For example, Performing Seva at mission is a good practical way to put it into practice.
4. Reading scriptures and religious texts. Once you read or listened to them, reflect on it until the concepts are clear and become your own. Reading and reflecting provides us the capacity to quieten the mind, which lies dormant in us. As Swamini Supriyananda said last week,

“there is a big difference between knowing and being.” You may know some of these scriptures, but really incorporating their lessons into your daily life is what is important.

5. Develop dispassion; strength to give up the sorrow giving, impermanent and joyless objects, mentally or physically. As Gurudev once said, “Dispassion and Discrimination are closely dependent on each other. Dispassion arises from discrimination. Dispassion purifies the mind and makes one capable of subtler discrimination.” Hence, dispassion increases discrimination and vice versa.

6. It is most important to have faith in the Guru, as he can instill in us faith in the scriptures, the means, the goal, and even in the ability to reach it. He said, “Faith enables us to listen to the scriptures with an open and alert mind.” He had also added a word of caution that “It should not stop enquiry”.

7. Pray regularly. It’s simplest method to invoke some greater power by which we can develop within ourselves the capacity to fulfil our goals, whether material or spiritual. But the word “prayer” is often misunderstood these days. Gurudev said “We don’t pray to God, we pray to God!” He pointed out that prayer is an “invocation” it is not “beggary”. It is instant connectivity with God.

8. Develop a regular habit to practice Meditation. Meditation is a true education, a secret preparation to face the world of changing circumstances and evanescent glories. Meditation can transform an ordinary man into an incomparable genius. The stories of the great Rishis of the world tell us that they had nothing much to claim for their general education. Many of them had none of the circumstances to achieve anything spectacular. Yet, they grew to such stature merely through Meditation. Regularity and Sincerity is the key to success in this endeavor.

Let us strive to focus on the present, by not dwelling on the dead past and not worrying about the unborn future. As we try to make our spiritual journey, let us invoke Gurudev’s grace and blessings.

Gurudev Mahima

Arun Shastri – reflections on Gurudev Jayanti

I never met or saw Swami Chinmayananda speak at a live event. How electric must our own Gurudev have been? Did he send a thunderbolt through everyone he graced with his presence? Did people stop what they were doing and sit in rapt attention to listen, learn and be inspired? Come to think of it I am sure that this was the case and in even greater proportions than I imagine. Why am I so sure?

unless it is about “Chau-Chau” [*head of a monkey, neck of a giraffe, body of a buffalo, legs of a hippo and tail of a horse*]. And I am not sure I know exactly what stage I find myself in my spiritual quest, but I do know that I feel great when I am in Chinmayam. I feel secure, comfortable and in a cocoon for the two hours on Sunday morning. That to me is Gurudev’s Mahima!

- Infer - If our own Swami Dheeranandaji got up at 3 AM and took the first bathroom slot from 3:00 AM to 3:20 AM so that he could be outside of Gurudev’s Kutiya well in time to see him when he came out at 4 AM every day, I can infer that he must have been electric. For Swamiji is a wise man and there is a purpose to everything he does.
- Perceive - 'On a Quest' the movie made on the life and vision of our Gurudev follows his journey from an atheist to a spiritual seeker. I saw on the screen the transformation unfolding from a skeptic to a Master reaching out to the world in a special way that gave us access to lessons that we never before had.
- Sound - Anyone who has ever listened to Gurudev’s discourses on the Gita cannot but walk away feeling inspired
- Comparison – Interaction with our own Swamiji during Bhiksha gives me so much joy. I so look forward to being around him for that one or two hours in Kailas Niwas. Gurudev must have been no different
- Non-perception gives cause to knowledge of non-availability – Never have I heard of a human being who walked away from a Swami Chinmayananda discourse disappointed.
- Cause & Effect – Every Sunday, I begin to feel a sense of calm as I enter Chinmayam. And during Aarthi, I usually look up at Gurudev’s picture on the top right-hand side of the auditorium and he is looking down at me, smiling and I get goose bumps.

I am not always sure that I truly absorb everything that Swamiji talks about the first time (or second or third or....)

Happy birthday, Chinmaya Somnath !

Anil Kumar, President, CMWRC

[Editor's Note: Message from Shri Anil Kumar, President CMWRC issued on July 14, 2019]

Hari Om!

Dear Chinmaya Family,

This Monday (July 15) is Guru Purnima. It also marks the fifth anniversary of inauguration of Chinmaya Somnath facility and chapter.

Growing up is full of experiences and exposures, and each one is a step to an accomplishment. It is a journey and we encounter many exciting opportunities and learning experiences as we take this journey. Each pause in our journey only helps us in establishing ourselves as confident and strong members of the society.

Learning to sit, crawl, walk, distinguish tastes and sounds, touch and looks, recognize toys and play with them, ride a bike and learn to balance are all joys of being accomplished. They are the pauses in our journey of growing up. Our collective journey at Chinmaya Mission is no exception. From study groups to two chapters at Dulles and Springfield, we also took this journey to grow into this beautiful place we call our home – Chinmaya Somnath. It is the collective efforts of our sevaks who have nourished this new home of ours and it is a moment to cherish our accomplishments. This too has been a journey of experiences, exposures and pauses. It is now a moment of celebration as it could not be achieved without the hard working selfless dedicated sevaks. They keep on learning from their collective experiences and steer our “ship” for the best voyage so that our journey is delightful.

Much has happened in the last five years of our journey. We have been fortunate to have the blessings of many Swamijis visiting us, notably Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, and Swami Swaroopananda. They have showered us with their thought-provoking discourses. These experiences and exposures too are true examples of Gurudev's grace that flows through us to the world around us. Our Swamiji oversees our spiritual growth and we are blessed with the gift of many Vedanta teachers. Swami Dheerananada also continues to be our inspiration to grow and motivate others to join us in our quest.

These have been a good five years, building momentum for many wonderful things to come. How beautiful to coincide this celebration with Guru Purnima and pay tributes to our Gurus whose shining light keeps on leading us from darkness to light. We are truly blessed.

Congratulations sevaks and thanks for all you do.

Happy Birthday Chinmaya Somnath.

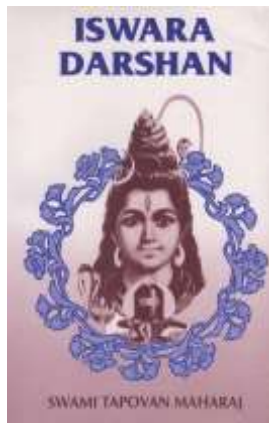
You are a joy! A monument to Gurudev's works and vision.

Hari Om Sri Gurubhyo Namah.

Messages from an autobiography of a Mahatma -12 (Iswara Darshan)

Sitaram Kowtha

Editor's Note: In this series, selected excerpts from the book "Iswara Darshan" by Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj of Uttar Kashi, are provided by Sitaram Kowthaji to inspire the students of Vedanta to delve deeply into the glories of a mahatma who inspired our sadhguru, Swami Chinmayananda.



Part 2 Chapter 3 – Nepal and Kailas yatra

Rainy season in Rishikesh

During the rainy season, the trees, creepers, climbers and even thickets in the forests of Rishikesh grow luxuriantly and appear enchantingly beautiful putting on tender leaves and flowers. Everywhere there is greenery. Its divine beauty charms eyes as well as hearts.

But our young sannyasin was not destined to drink in the nectar of boundless loveliness. He was stricken by malaria, common during this season in this forest belt. He suffered in pain and discomfort for several weeks with no one to nurse him. Taking it as another form of 'tapas', he minimized his suffering. It is possible to transform every evil into good. "Whatever sorrow comes, take it as tapasya because Mother Veda says that sorrow does not happen for sorrow." Among the faithful who have surrendered themselves completely to God and who live upon the love of God, such conduct is nothing extraordinary. Swamiji would recite Sivananda Lahari to the sannyasin who gave him care. The hearer was filled with joy with the recitation rendered in faith, attention and humility.

The heavy rains swelled Ganga and many hermitages along its banks were swallowed up. Many sannyasins were all at once emancipated from their mortal existence.

The grief caused by the calamity touched even those who enjoyed supreme peace.

Dissonance at Ashram

The ashram where Swamiji stayed was in chaos. The head of Brahmananda Ashrama was removed and the position was vacant. Swami Paramanandagiri, who was head of a neighboring ashram was also looking after this. Swamiji was asked if he would take up the role of 'Mahant' or head. Swamiji declined citing lack of qualifications, interest in worldly activities and lack of competency in local language and customs.

Swamiji decided to travel to Nepal and participate in the famous Sivaratri festival at Pasupathinath. He learned that travel to Nepal be done when the weather becomes warmer. As he bided his time, he had an opportunity to meet his guru, Sri Jagadguru Swami Satyananda Saraswati. He had come to Himalayas to preside over a meeting of Advaitins held annually in Kailas Ashram. His Holiness was moved at the sight of Swamiji's physical appearance and understood that he was malnourished. HH and Swamiji met every day and discussed all matters worldly and spiritual. HH also visited the ashram where Swamiji is staying and instructed the sannyasins there to give special attention to Swamiji for he is no ordinary sannyasin. Swamiji then experienced that "only so long as a sannyasin's merits remain unknown, can he enjoy supreme peace and flawless divine joy; once the public learns of his greatness and he becomes a popular figure, it is impossible for him to enjoy such peace and joy." It is not uncommon for sannyasins to pass their days in mountain caves, devoid of great qualities, but gain celebrity status. It is also not uncommon for people with great qualities living in the midst of society unsung, unhonored and unknown.

Swamiji broached the notion of visiting Pasupathinath with HH, who expressed interest in the yatra together after a few days in Haridwar. HH asked Swamiji to join him in Haridwar in a few days.

Haridwar

Swamiji listened to various sannyasins describing difficulties along the road to Pasupathinath, but decided to push ahead. Upon arriving at HH Swami Satyananda

Saraswati Ashram in Haridwar, he and HH entered into discussions about the pilgrimage. A Dandiswami, whom Swamiji had encountered in an earlier trip to Haridwar interrupted them. Dandiswami recognized Swamiji and questioned how HH can treat Swamiji as a friend. Even though Swamiji is learned and good natured, he is not a Brahmin. HH cut short Dandiswami and said, "We are not of course ignorant of the fact that Swamiji is by birth a nonbrahmin. But our conviction, born out of long acquaintance with him is that he is a Brahmin among Brahmins. Such is his true Brahmanya."

As preparations for the pilgrimage were completed, HH received an urgent telegram from his disciples. HH urged Swamiji to proceed with the journey. "You see how unfortunate we, heads of Mutts are! Of course, householders too are unfortunate who labor under the heavy weight of worldly duties. Unlike us, you are lucky. Start for Pasupathinath tomorrow itself." HH had repeatedly and lovingly offered urged him to accept money for the travel, but Swamiji declined, for the fear that it might damage his spirit of dispassion. "Finish your pilgrimage quickly and successfully and return to Dwaraka or wherever we then happen to be. You can reside there freely observing the rules of a sannyasin's life without excitements or disturbances." Such were the parting words of the Jagadguru ringing with sincerity and feeling. HH attained Mahasamadhi soon thereafter. Swamiji had no chance to meet HH again.

Just as trees protect men from heat with their shade, Mahatmas should suffer pain for other's sake. They will always be ready to do so. That adds to the greatness and to the beauty of their lives.

Journey to Pasupathinath temple in Nepal

Swamiji boarded a train to Lucknow and 070731 proceeded to Gorakhpur and on to Veergunj. There he joined many travelers head to the capital of Nepal. The journey took him through dense forests, dark as night even at midday. After four days of tiring journey he reached the town of Pasupathinath.

One day, on the way, the pilgrims seated themselves along the road at sunset. Swamiji too spread his woolen rug and got ready to rest for the night. Just then a middle-aged, good looking sannyasin approached him. "You are a sannyasin and guru. I wish to fulfil the object of my life and make myself blessed by nursing your holy feet." With no bashfulness or hesitation or waiting for permission, she began to catch hold of his feet. Swamiji stopped her with a salute and folded hands, and respectfully said, "O

mother, No, No, I do not want such comforts. Be good enough to leave me." Alas! In the mountains of Uttar Pradesh, many young widows, having no place for them either in their husband's homes or in their own, are driven out to streets in despair and sorrow to assume the garb of devotees or sannyasins. Many wish to live in contact with holy men and lead the life of wanton prostitutes. Teachers of religion, proud of their vedic love, entrenching themselves behind conservatism, shut their eyes to these bitter nuisance and sufferings of helpless women. Other leaders of society, being distracted by their numerous other activities, have no time to devote to the removal of such abuses. Men do not suffer half as much as by death of their wives, as women suffer by the death of their husbands, and naturally men are indifferent to the matter. Leaders of Hindu society ought to pay far greater attention to this question than they have yet done.

At Pasupathinath Temple

Swamiji prostrated himself with devotion before the five-faced Pasupathinath in the golden temple. Pasupathinath is the tutelary diety of the kings of Nepal. But the priests who minister to Him are Brahmins from South India. The whole temple was reverberating to the repetition of holy names, recital of hymns, etc. At the end of the Shivaratri festival, most pilgrims and visitors had left. At the request of sannyasins and local householders, Swamiji decided to stay in Dasanami ashram nearby. Gradually, the fame of his saintly life and great learning spread, and sadhus and large number of people came to pay homage to him. Every evening he held discourses on Jnana, Raja, Karma and Bhakti yogas. Swamiji was able to dispel misconceptions about sannyasin life and yoga: occult powers, gaining siddhis or display of marvelous powers in front of ignorant people.

Discourse on 'Siddhi'

One of the evening discourses was on 'Siddhi', which is a manifestation of uncommon power. They are numerous siddhis. A person who possesses the power is called 'siddha'. Some are born siddhas. Others, yogis believe, can acquire siddhis through medicine, spells and incantations, tapas and austerities, as well as by samadhi. For creatures that fly through the sky, that skill is natural. Similarly, on a consideration of the conduct and skill, it will be easily clear that all creatures are born with certain powers. Among earthly beings, the king possesses royal wealth; the lion has fierceness and strength; the musk-deer produces musk; the insect vajradamshtara pierces all kinds of substances; the eagle sees far; the owl sees in

darkness, etc. These exceptional skills and powers prove that all animals, whatever be their variety, have inborn siddhis.

So, one will have to agree that great yogins who have acquired marvelous power, and the born siddhas are on the same footing. The born siddhas, it is clear, lead lives of sorrow and pain as worldly beings distracted by desire, anger, etc. Those who have acquired siddhis, too, are unable to transcend the limits of worldliness. In the lack of true devotion and knowledge, which alone can dispel the darkness of worldliness, both types of siddhas are equal. So, the object of sannyasa and tapas is not the acquisition of siddhis but the gaining of that ultimate liberation which can be secured through steadfast devotion and through the knowledge of the Supreme Truth, which alone destroys all desires and leads to supreme and everlasting peace.

It is wrong to infer that those great ones who have attained the vision of God must possess all the siddhis because of the blessings of God and their power of mind-control. Those who have seen God have also mind-control, being full of dispassion and discrimination (between that which is real and unreal), will use it only for Self-realization, not for acquisition of material siddhis. They know that material siddhis are only obstacles on the way to Self-realization.

Some people hold that since siddhas do good to the world by granting them children, wealth or knowledge, they are superior to sannyasins who do nothing of the kind. If some siddhas do possess such power and confer temporary benefit, they are like doctors and rulers. How can they be said to be superior to the true knowers of Brahman who alone do imperishable good to mankind by teaching them Supreme Truth that finally emancipates them earthly sorrow?

On meat eating

One day the evening discussion turned to meat-eating. Two of the three learned Brahmins, who used to eat meat, took part in the discussion. “Jeevo Jeevasya Jeevanam” – no creature can live without killing other creatures. Yet as far as possible, the infliction of pain and death should be avoided. This is the teaching of Ahimsa – non-violence. ‘Tamasik’ nature has its origins in meat eating. That is also the main reason for giving up meat eating. So, those who aim at spiritual practices, should give up that bad habit. There are passages in the Vedas and Smritis that seem to suggest that even great rishis of old used to eat meat. Perhaps it is better to interpret

those passages as allegorical. With such explanations and comments Swamiji convinced his hearers that meat eating should be given up.

Everyday such spiritual discussions were held where Swamiji was staying. He visited nearby towns, Buddhist Viharas, Hindu temples and other sights. He also took time to study the history of Nepal. In this manner days turned into weeks and weeks into months.

Kinship

Suddenly Swamiji had an attack of smallpox. The disease itself was not serious. For some days he was not able to stir out of bed. Some of his regular devotees who attended his discourses nursed him tenderly with all the affection of near kinsmen. By grace of God, he soon recovered from illness.

Ignorant people, living at home, surrounded by their family, enjoying their affectionate attention, fancy that upon earth they can receive real love only from their family; that such love is unavailable elsewhere, that kinship alone can assure one of sincere affection. Such misconceptions narrow down the feelings of people who aim at worldly enjoyment and confine themselves to the limits of their own homes. But enlightened know that love is universal. It is immanent everywhere and, in all people, and it will manifest itself in congenial surroundings. Love begets love. If on the principle “Vasudha eva kutumbakam”, a man loves all others as members of his own family, to him the world will be full of love. So men must try to sublimate their narrow, brutish and pleasure-loving loyalties into unselfish, unlimited and divine love. If they do, they can find sweet love everywhere.

Journey to Mount Kailas

As weather turned warmer, Swamiji decided to journey to Mount Kailas. His devotees asked him to stay longer in Nepal and avoid the very difficult journey, especially for someone as frail as Swamiji. He paid attention to their concerns and wishes but remained determined. A nobleman in the royal court planned for Swamiji’s travel.

In this journey, Swamiji was accompanied by a young sannyasin from Assam. His name is Anandagiri. This young man was enterprising and full of humility. He too was happy because he could serve Swamiji and visit Kailas.

The first part of the journey was covered on foot and the entourage reached the town of Veeraganj. Next they

traveled by train; they reached the town of Nepalganj. After a few days stay in this small town in Himalayan valley, they proceeded forward. Going through beautiful fields, small villages, pleasant sights, they entered thick and fierce forests. After several days journey they reached the capital of Jarjarecote state. Here, at royal family's request, Swamiji stayed in a summerhouse. He was all by himself. The servants and villagers brought him food. He freely wandered in the gardens and forests and spent time in undisturbed meditation. No discourses. No worldly duties. He spent some time here in this way. "The plurality that the ignorant believe in, which is at the root of all fear, is an illusion; the unchanging Parabrahman alone shines as Truth". Thus, drinking in the natural beauty of the forests and immersing himself in the Supreme Bliss, he spent time. These days became an unforgettable time in Swamiji's life.

Swamiji took leave of the royal family and accompanied by Anandagiri and another young man who was to serve as a guide, the three of them started forward journey to Mount Kailas.

Their journey took them through high peaks. At one point they were surrounded by silvery peaks and Swamiji took time to enjoy the view. The path also went through villages and small towns. He was received with warmth and welcome and they affectionately asked him to take rest, to stay with them and avoid the journey. They were concerned about his frail body and health. The journey ahead was treacherous. But Swamiji described his mindset to go to Mount Kailas, "Like a lover speeding to the tryst, heedless of all risks". He observed a high mountain in front of him. Although with much difficulty, he was able to cross it by nightfall. After a few days of journey, they crossed more mountains, forests and villages he reached a town called Yaree. The following day he reached Nara pass on the northern border of Nepal. The pass, several thousand feet high, inspires joy and terror all at once. The sight at the top of the pass was celestial. – a bird's eye view of the endless chain of snow-covered mountains. Getting down from that pass, he was now in Tibet.

On a vast plain he spotted a Lamassery called Khocharnath. He went there and paid homage to Sri Buddha and other divinities. The priest received him and took him to a place where monks were studying scriptures and singing hymns. For the night they directed him to a hermitage for rest. It was bitterly cold, and he had no warm clothing. His companion, who was carrying a woolen blanket had not joined him yet. He spent the night in great discomfort. After several days of forward

journey, he reached the plains called Gaurihuga. This plain at the foot of Mount Mandhata was a dreaded haunt of robbers and thieves.

Robbers

Swamiji set out on the plain, which was bare, devoid of trees. As the sun had set and he had lost sense of direction, he sat down by the bank of a river. Hardly an hour went by when two ominous looking fellows, armed with swords and spears, approached him. They examined Swamiji from head to toe and paid particular attention to rudraksha mala Swamiji has around his neck. Swamiji was convinced that these were robbers but did not display any sense of fear. He had nothing in possession of value. The conversation between them was through gestures. He communicated that he lost direction and also was hungry. The two men gave popped-corn flour and invited him to come to their village for more food. Swamiji gestured that he could not walk further, and they left.

The following morning, though feeling feverish, Swamiji, accompanied by Anandagiri, slowly made his way forward and by late afternoon reached a monastery to the southeast of famous Manasasarovar. He felt happy. He has reached the goal of this yatra.

Manasasarovar – Divine Lake

Kailasa Parvate Rama Manasa nirmitam param

Brahmana narasharadula teneda manasam saraha

O Rama! This lake was created on Mount Kailas by the mind of the Creator, Brahma

Swamiji recalled great poets and their poetry describing this lake, which is walled by high mountains on all sides, eight monasteries on its eight sides, it appears to be a circle with a 50-mile circumference. The more Swamiji enjoyed the beauty of the lake and the birds on it, the thirstier he felt. It is an ancient lake, ever fresh.

Mount Kailash

Having reached the lake, he slowly made his way to the foot of Mount Kailash. He was in no hurry. For the first time in his life he saw kailas which he had till now seen only in imagination. Standing before his very eyes – Kailas where Sri Parameshwara, conqueror of Kama, and Lord of 'bhutas' abide with his spouse. He recalled Siva as Lord of Peace; Lord of Knowledge, the Truth and Beauty.

To appear fresh every second is the true nature of beauty. He began to dance in joy, "how blessed I am".

A region so high and so cold; a body emaciated and weakened by disease; lack of clothing to protect the weak body from the extreme cold; first rain, then snow fall – it was with great difficulty he spent the night in open air. Next morning, feeling that he has escaped death owing solely to the mercy of Lord of Kailas, he got ready to return. Swamiji did not entertain the idea of circumambulation around Mount Kailas, which is about 30 miles, because he was so weak. He therefore prostrated devoutly and repeated to the Lord started his return journey.

A wealthy lady camping on the plains provided him food and some provisions. Energized, he continued on a treacherous path. Though he was becoming ill frequently, he gained strength from the beautiful vistas and spiritual thoughts. He kept going.

Lippu Pass

The path took him through Lippu pass. Climbing to Lippu pass was challenging even for strong and well-built men. Swamiji would undertake this on sheer will power. Bare-footed, without umbrella, body weakened by disease, without food or warm clothing, ..., he moved without fear or worry. Snow below, rain from above, his limbs became numb and felt his body would fall. Still he proceeded step by step. In this manner he reached the top of the pass and began to climb down. Anandagiri was faithful and ready to serve but was well ahead of him. It started to snow. After some distance, he could not proceed any further. Benumbed with excessive cold, he lay on a flat rock, alone and helpless. The hand of God is everywhere! A group of three or four sannyasins noticed him, gave him some food and assisted him to a place of rest nearby. Anandagiri was already there waiting for his master. Together they spent the night in the unbearably foul-smelling place. The next morning, bright sunshine and the sight of rare and wonderful beauty all around reinvigorated Swamiji. He had been reclaimed from death a second time during this journey.

Resuming their journey, they reached a town of Garvyang. It was Janmashtami day. Swamiji spent the day in contemplation of Lord Krishna. After three days in this town, he slowly made his way to a town of Almora after crossing Narponia mountain. They rested in a decaying and dirty hut where a middle-aged poor lady lived with her three children. She received Swamiji with respect, went in the night to a field to bring potatoes. She offered boiled salted potatoes. That was all she had and could offer.

“Matrumaan Pitrumaan Acharyavaan Veda” – Mothers are our best and noblest teachers. If only the number of noble women, cultured, religious, dutiful and loving, whom Swamiji met in the neighborhood of Mount Kailash, went up, no doubt, the demoniac nature of the present world will give way to the divine one. Meeting such women was enough reward of all his wanderings!

Swamiji, then made his way back to Rishikesh via Baireilly. Does pilgrimage confer any spiritual benefit? The sight of the wonderful landscapes and objects of nature purifies the soul, just as beating improves the quality of gold.

To Be Continued

Iswara Darshanam - XVI

Discussion of the 11th Chapter of Gita – Acharya Sadanandaji

Looking at the destructive form of the Lord, and remembering the sAtvic form before, Arjuna becomes engulfed by fear and wonderment and says, “Oh! Lord! Who are you?” On one side Bhagavan appears to be very compassionate and on the other side He seems to be very cruel causing massive destructions. “Hai Bhagavan! I want to know your real nature,” says Arjuna, putting prostrations again and again.

akhAhimE kO bhavAnugrarUpO

namOstu tE dEvavara prasIda

vijnAtumicchAmi bhavantamAdyam

na hi prajAnAmi tava pravRittim|

“Oh! Lord! With this terrible form of yours, I do not know who you are, please explain to me. My prostrations to you, again and again. Be compassionate towards me and tell me your real nature, since I am unable to grasp what is your real nature from these changing and frightening visions.”

To Him the Lord explains.

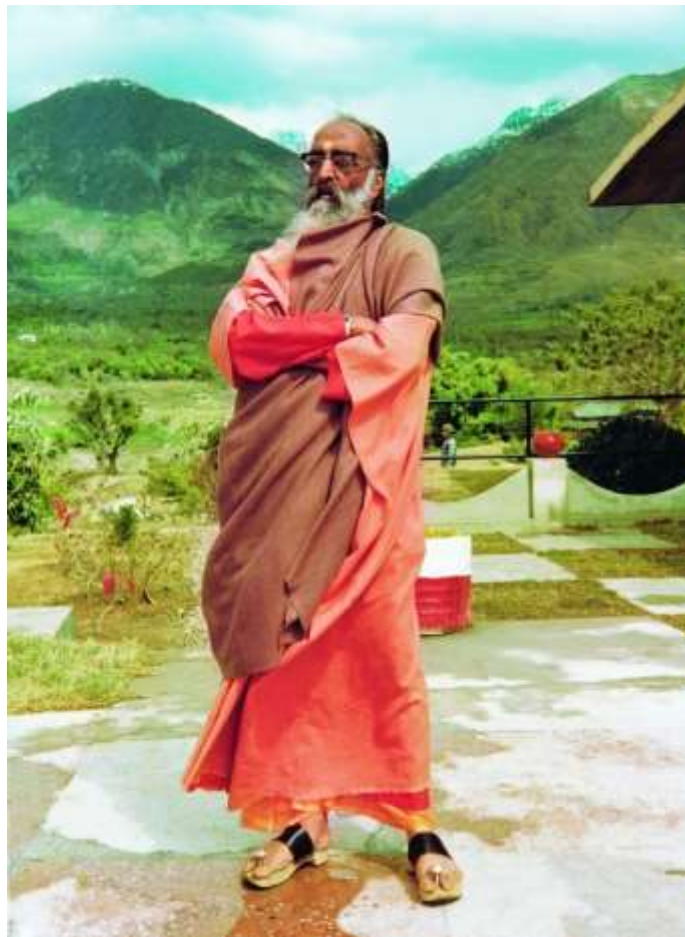
After seeing the terrifying form of the Lord with fearful teach as though chewing the jiivas that are rushing into the mouth like the moth entering the blazing fire, prostrating again and again asks “Oh! Lord! Who are you? Before I saw a wonderful vision of you but now I see your fearful form. I see the Sons of dRitarAShtas entering your mouth. I see Grandsire Bhishma, my teacher droNa, sUta putra KarNa, and other great warriors entering your mouth. Heads of some of these great warriors are getting stuck between your teeth. I see you swallowing everything including the worlds. The fearful blazing brilliance is spreading all over in all directions. I prostrate to you again and again and please tell me, I am unable to know your true nature.” To that frightened Arjuna, the Lord answers. Arjuna’s emotional state is changing from wonder to fear, while on one side he sees the formidable great warriors of Kouravas are getting crushed in the mouth of the viswarUpa Iswara, on the other side there is the unbearable frightening form of the Lord. Here fear prompted devotion to the Lord is being expressed by Arjuna.

We tend to respect authority out of fear. Many pray God out of fear. If the police are there, we follow the rules. We fail to understand that the rules are there for our own safety. In India, red light means look around to see if there are police in the vicinity. If there are none, then proceed as though it is a green light. Only thing is make lot of noise so that the cars coming on the other roads slowdown so that you can cross the road without being hit. In the States, everybody slows down and goes at the speed limit as soon as they see a police car. Fear for authority is universal.

Concluded – this concludes the Iswara Darshanam series in Chinmaya Smrithi. On behalf of the Chinmaya Smrithi editorial team, I would like to express our gratitude to Acharya Sadanandaji for his contributions over the past many years. To continue to stay in touch with Acharya Sadaji’s latest blogs, please subscribe to Facebook live where he continues to publish his teachings.

Gurudev Uvacha

Inspiring Quotes from Pujya Gurudev Chinmayananda



[Editor's Note: Continuing the series of inspiring quotes from Gurudev].

To drag Man's boat-of-hope out of the sands and set it again on the main mid-stream of existence is now the function of True Religion.

"As the demand so the supply". Let the people demand for a Yogeshwara: the incarnation of Sree Krishna has to and WILL take place NOW..... HERE!! "Ask and thou shalt be given", is an Eternal Promise.

A devotee considers the happenings in his life as His plan for him and will try to shine out in all circumstances by his efficient cheerfully actions.

Bhakti is not a practice of beggary at the Feet a noble ideal, however transcendental it may be, but a constant and consistent effort at raising the ego-centre from the welter of its false values to the memory and dignity of Self-hood.

Vedanta cannot add the Rock of the Soul to our inner personality unless we give repeated and daily massage to our mind-and-intellect with the Vedanta-Balm!