

## Sankara Jayanthi at AVG



*Sankara Jayanthi* was celebrated at AVG, Anaikatti on May 4, 2014. We celebrate *Sankara Jayanthi* to seek the blessings of the greatest *acharya* of Vedanta the world has seen – Adi Sankaracharya, who was also a critical link in the traditional teaching *parampara* (lineage) of *Vedanta*. At this juncture, it is worthy of note that in 2012,

the Sringeri Mutt presented the “*Adi Sankaracharya Award*” to Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Sarasvati in recognition of his traditional teaching of the *Sankara bhasyam* to students and seekers from all over the world. We are indeed blessed to have the living Adi Sankaracharya in the form of Pujya Sri Swamiji.





**PUJA:** The altar for the *puja* (worship) was the *murti* (deity) of Adi Sankara at the lecture hall. Led by the temple priest, the *Sankaracharya Astotra Sata Namavali* (a hundred and eight names glorifying Adi Sankaracharya) was chanted. An elaborate, traditional puja was performed. Master Siddarth sang a song in praise of the greatest acharya, Adi Sankara.

**ANUGRAHA BHASANAM:** Pujya Sri Swamiji began his *anugraha bhasanam* (address) by saying that before the classes everyday, we would be chanting three slokas glorifying Adi Sankara: Sadasiva Samarambham..., Sruti, Smruti, Purananam..., and Sankaram Sankaracharyam.

He said that some people try to glorify Adi Sankara by attributing miracles to him; even if we do not consider those miracles, the fact that we are discussing about him after 1000 years of his time itself is great. He said that *Sankara bhasya* is not a matter of *belief*; we are going to study that.

Swamiji pointed out that but for Adi Sankara, the teaching tradition would have

become extinct: he had the vision that a teaching has to be preserved and presented in the form of words. So, he wrote commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanisads* and the *Brahma Sutra*, and these commentaries expound the vision of the non dual *Brahman* that one is. He also said that the tradition owes a lot to Adi Sankara.

Swamiji explained that *Sankara* means the one who puts an end to *samsara* (ignorance-born notion of bondage) and gives one the blessing of freedom. Swamiji said that today, we are here because of Sankara and that here, at the Gurukulam, we will learn and understand Sankara in his own words. What reveals Sankara is his *bhasyam*. It is believed (in the tradition) that Lord Narayana in the form of Veda Vyasa wrote *Brahma Sutra* and Lord Siva in the form of Adi Sankara wrote the *bhasyam* (commentary) on that.

The celebrations ended with a prayerful chanting of "*Jaya Jaya Sankara, Jaya Hara Sankara*".

*Report by N.Avinashilingam*