

Svāmi Pratyagbodhananda's 60th Birthday at AVG, Coimbatore

Sri Svāmi Pratyagbodhānandāji and over 60 of his students and devotees from Gurjarat and other places were recently at AVG, Coimbatore for the occasion of Svāmiji's 60th birthday and a one-week Camp.

On Sunday, the 19th of September Ekādaśa rudram and homa, was performed. The homas ended with Vaśoddhārā and pūrnāhuti. Abhiṣekam was done to Svāmiji with the sanctified waters of the kalasās.

The following day ṣaṣṭiyabdhapūrti sāntikarma pūjās and homas were done. Gaṇeśa, Navagraha, Nakṣatra, Mṛtyunjaya, Āyuṣya, Sudarśana and Dhanvantari homas as well as pūjas for Mārkaṇḍeya and for other Rṣīs, were performed. The homas ended once again with pūrnāhuti and Abhiṣekam to Svāmiji with the sanctified waters.

On Tuesday a Durgā homa was performed. Mata Durgā was invoked and Durgā saptasati homa was done for both the welfare of Svāmiji and the welfare and prosperity of the gurukulam.

To benefit all, a Gaṇeśa homa, a Mṛtyunjaya homa, and Bhagavati śevā were done on Wednesday. The homas and puja were led by a well-versed and expert Sri Narayana Namboodiri, from Kerala. That night we were blessed with heavy rains for several hours, which are most needed in this area; the rain is still continuing for many days.



The final homa of the camp, an Āvahanti homa, was done for the ashram so mumukṣus in large numbers from all directions and all over the globe continue to come. All the students and devotees who were present at the ashram on that day participated in chanting of the avahanti mantras.

Eleven dravya abhiṣekam and pujas were done to Lord Medhā Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Lord Kalyāṇa Subramanyaśvami on these occasions. Svāmi Prāśantānandāji, Svāmi Veditātmānandāji, Svāmi Sākṣatkṛtānandāji, and Svāmini Vibhavānandāji graced the homas and worship on all days. Sri Santaram and Smt. Sunitha Amma were present as well as the students of the three-year course who were blessed with an invitation from Svāmiji to attend the homas in between their classes.

After the homas, classes were held by Svāmi Pratyagbodhānandāji for the Camp participants on Vākyā Vṛtti. Svāmiji also kindly accepted Svāmi Sākṣatkṛtānandāji's invitation to hold satsang for the three-year course students. Regaling the students with stories of Kṛṣṇa Līla, Svāmiji talked on Bhāgavatam. Svāmiji also covered Navavidha Bhakti, clearly explaining how one's devotion is expressed in nine ways with illustrations that frequently reflected Svāmiji's warm humour.

Svāmi Veditātmānandāji graciously accepted Svāmi Sākṣatkṛtānandāji's request to hold classes for the three-year course students during his stay at the ashram. Discussing the importance of values, Svāmiji highlighted ahimsa. The basis for any violence, Svāmiji pointed out, is a sense of personal inadequacy. In the animal kingdom, this feeling of 'not being good enough' is confined to the human being. Its behavioral manifestation is often not



recognized and Svāmiji illustrated vividly how every choice that is made brings a possibility of adhārmik action. From choices one has about what and how much food to eat, to how one interacts with others, with an attentive mind one can make choices that minimize inimical effects around one. The more one develops a mind that is alert and discriminating the greater the chance that one will live in harmony with the order of ahimsā.