

One Week Vedanta Course Report



The One Week Vedanta Retreat was held at Saylorburg PA from the 15th of September to 22nd.

Approximately 80 students participated in this camp. Pujya Swami Dayanand Saraswati expounded Kathopanishad II.iv verses 1-4.

Swami Tattvavidananda taught Pancadasi Mahavakya Vivek Prakaranam. Suddhatmaji taught chanting. Pandit Mukesh Desaiji conducted Indian Music classes. Yoga classes were conducted by Mark Hertel during the camp. Additionally, the students enjoyed two Music Concerts and a Dance Drama during this camp.

Registration was complete during the day on the 15th of September. Suddhatmaji held the orientation in the evening. Suddhatmaji explained the camp schedule and provided information about the facilities available at the Gurukulam.

Pujya Swamiji taught campers four mantras from Kathopanishad. This Upanishad is one of the earliest in Vedanta. It is in the form of dialogue

between Naciketas and Lord Yama. Pujya Swamiji emphasized that a Guru is essential for the knowledge that comes when the ignorance ends. Then there are no worldly desires. 'I am Brahman' is the inner vision. Such a person is complete and full. He attains Moksha. Pujya Swamiji gave several illustrations to bring home this important fact from the Upanishad. Campers who attended this retreat had a chance of getting resolved all their doubts in question and answer sessions of Pujya Swamiji.

Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati taught Mahavakya Viveka Prakaranam of Pancadasi. Swamiji expounded the four Mahavakyas from Pancadasi :

Swamiji expounded the meaning of the Mahavakyas in detail. This was a scholarly teaching of the great statements from Vedas. It required complete attention from the students for a clear understanding. It is a search of the seeker into who he is. He has to find out what he is not rather than what he thinks he is. It is the understanding that the knower, the known and the knowing are one and the same.



Swamiji conducted guided meditations which helped everyone to remain relaxed and serene.

On the morning of the 16th of September, Maharajapuram Sri Ramchandranji presented a delightful Carnatic Music Concert. Every one enjoyed this program.

On the evening of 16th of September, a dance drama 'Nayani' was presented by Aim for Seva at the Nash Theater of the Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg, New Jersey. Many students at the camp travelled to New Jersey to watch this show depicting the story of a beautiful tribal girl. The program was presented by Rukmini Vijayakumar and her dance group. It was a delightful evening for the students. Pujya Swamiji presented 'Arsha Kala Chudamani' citations to the artists.

On the 19th of September, Ganesa Chatruthi was celebrated at the temple with a special puja to Lord Ganesa. The Ganapati Visarjan was performed on the 20th of September after a procession on the Gurukulam campus.

On the 20th of September, a Carnatic Music Concert was presented by Sri B. Balasubrahmanian. He was accompanied by Sri Kalyan Gopalkrishnan on violin and by David Nelson on Mridangam. Compositions of Tyagaraja, P. Subramanya Ayyar and Pujya Swamiji were highlights of the program.

Suddhatmaji conducted chanting classes. He taught mantras from Ganapati Atharvashirsha and the chapter Purusottamayogah of Gita,. Suddhatmaji explained how to chant the mantras properly and answered questions from students.



Pandit Mukesh Desaiji taught the Indian Classical Music. For this camp Panditji presented Raga Kedar in Eka Taal, as a Ganesa Bhajan.

The kitchen staff worked hard to serve good meals on time. Priests Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa performed the pujas regularly.

Suddhatmaji and the staff, the teachers, and volunteers worked hard during the camp to make it an enjoyable event.

This camp was full of activities and programs. The students were entertained by renowned and accomplished artists and received valuable teaching from Pujya Swamiji and Swami Tattvavidananda.

The camp ended on the 22nd of September, 2012.

Report by Arvind Bagal