

Navaratri Puja at AVG



Navratri puja was celebrated with fervor and enthusiasm at Anaikatti from Sep 24, 2014 to Oct 2, 2014. Elaborate and exquisite alankara was performed every day to Goddess Jnaneswari. The atmosphere was charged with divinity by the pujas and **Lalitha sahasra nama archana** and **paarayanam** performed on all the nine days.

On the day of Lalitha panchami on Sep 29, 2014 special **eleven dravya abhisekam** was performed for Goddess Janeswari. All who participated in the puja were indeed

blessed, watching Devi Jnaneswari who is ever smiling and brimming with motherly love.

On Oct 2, 2014 **Sarasvati puja** was celebrated at the Gurukulam. Students prepared an altar made of their books in the lecture hall. Special Puja was performed for Goddess Sarasvati, the bestower of knowledge along with the chanting of **Sarasvati Astotram**.

Pujya Swami Dayananda Sarasvati initiated the students to **Sarasvati moola mantra**

“om aim hriim sarasvatyai namah”. Swamiji spoke about how the mantra is the code to invoke the grace of Goddess Sarasvati, as the special power of Isvara. Led by Pujya Swamiji, the students chanted the moola mantra.

On Oct 3, 2014 **Vijaya Dasami** was celebrated. Punar puja was done for the books. Pujya Swamiji blessed the students. Bhagavat Gita bhasyam books were distributed to the students. Led by Pujya Swamiji, the students chanted **“sarasvati namastubhyam varade kaama ruupini, vidyaarambham karisyaami siddhir bhavatu me sadaa”**. Pujya Swamiji explained the meaning of the prayer verse **“Oh Sarasvati! I salute you. You are the bestower of boons and blessing the devotees with the desired objects. I am beginning my studies. Let there always be success for me.”**

Pujya Swamiji gave his anugraha bhasanam. He said that on Vijayadasami day we worship knowledge in the form of books. Pujya Swamiji opened his Gita book and in that page he found the verse **“saankhya yogau prathag baalaah....” Gita 5-4**. He explained that both the life styles of karma yoga and sannyasa will take one ultimately to the same goal, moksha.

Vedic chanting, Sanskrit and Viveka chuudaamani classes were conducted.

Pujya Swamiji inaugurated the **Gita bhasyam** class in the afternoon. He said that Gita is a pramana because it is Bhagavan’s

own words and also because it contains the essence of the Sruti. The meaning of Tvam, Tat and Asi padas are explained in 6 chapters each. Any object in the world has the possibility of invoking likes or dislikes in one. One cannot follow Dharma if under the spell of likes and dislikes. The Gita comes to the rescue of humanity by giving the means for purification of the mind. It teaches how to master likes and dislikes. It highlights the values and attitudes to be cultivated by the seekers. It elaborates on the two committed life styles, how karma yoga and sannyasa lead to the common goal of moksha. The Gita mentions the goal – purusharta siddhi, the Sruthi’s vision and also the means – antahkarana shuddhi and jnana prapti.

Later in the evening, the students presented a **short skit in Sanskrit** on the theme of **evolution of Sanskrit teaching parampara** over the ages starting from Panini to the present day. The skit depicted the transformation of Panini to a great grammarian, the composer of Astadhyayi, after being blessed by the Lord himself with the Maheswara sutras. The highlight was the **shiva tandava with Mahesvarani sutras coming out of the lord’s drum**. In the end, Pujya Swamiji spoke at length about the unique qualities of Sanskrit language and how one develops a love for its grammar for its sheer brilliance.

Report by N. Avinashilingam