

Madurai students in Anaikatti



The much awaited trip to Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti, to have a darshan of Pujya Swamiji Dayananda Saraswati, a mahapurusha, a sage, happened on 15th and 16th September, 2014. The well spread out ashram, with kutias named after rivers, the serene air and the majestic temple were all warm and welcoming.

The advent of our guru Vasanthiji in Madurai is a boon indeed. She is guiding us in Vedanta by taking regular classes in Sanskrit, Tattvabodha and Bhagavad Gita at the Arsha Parampara centre in Madurai. Vasanthiji uses simple and easy to understand words to teach. It is our purvapunyam that we got such a great teacher. We all enjoy and benefit from the classes.

Among the very many students in Madurai, we were the fortunate group of twenty, who accompanied our guruji to Anaikatti and it was athithi devo bhava from the start. We felt at home in the ashram. After refreshing in the kutias allotted for us, we

went for lunch. The food in the ashram is healthy, tasty and wholesome. After lunch, our guruji took us to the gallery, where she gave an overview of Pujya Swamiji's life history. It is amazing how one person – Pujya Swamiji – has contributed so much to our society – creating so many teachers, establishing gurukulams, reaching out to so many people through AIM for Seva, convening Acharya Sabha, etc.

We were brought to focus by our Vasanthiji who took a class on karma yoga in the temple mandapam. Her explanation of Isvararpanabuddhi and prasadh buddhi set us thinking on the right lines. We attended the Acharya Swami Saddatmanandaji's class on Viveka Chudamani after which our group met him at his kutia. Swami Sadatmanadaji briefed us on sadhana chathustayam.

We then went to the temple to have darshan of Sri Medha Dakshinamurthy and sought his blessings for our pursuit. After attending the arathi, we had dinner and then waited outside Pujya Swamiji's kutia for his darshan.

The much awaited moment finally came. Pujya Swamiji had just then returned from Udumalpet and as his name goes, he being the personification of daya, called us despite his weariness. The darshan of Pujya Swamiji was sublime and the air was thick with emotion. Ever since Vasanthiji had started taking classes, we had been wanting to meet him but his illness kept us away. Like a mother, Pujya Swamiji bestowed

each one of us with a loving glance and had an ear for all of us. Madurai is famous for “malli” (jasmine) and Swamiji happily accepted the special garland we had brought for him along with prasadam from Meenakshi Amman temple while we all chanted the Guruvarashatkam.

Swamiji was full of zest and showed a lot of interest in meeting us. All of us told Swamiji that we were benefitting a lot from Vasanthiji’s classes and thanked Swamiji for sending her to Madurai. Swamiji said that we were lucky to have her since she had studied well and taken in whatever he had taught. He then blessed us all with steadfastness in our pursuit. The day ended on this happy note, and many of us were emotional, having received his blessings in abundance. His compassion made us feel complete.

The vedic chants of Rudram drew us to the temple at 5.30 the next morning after which we walked to the Murugan temple for darsan. Swami Shankaranandaji then spoke to us about purusharthas. With his sharp and quick questions, he made the session interesting. Swamiji said that happiness is the state that one seeks, and moksha is freedom from seeking. ‘Want not to want’ and ‘happiness is a resolution from a sense of want’ are the quotes we took down from him.

We rushed to find our place in the lecture hall to listen to Pujya Swamiji’s talk on Atmanasthu kamaya sarvam priyam bhavati Swamiji told us about Sage Yajnavalkya, who was a master of spiritual wisdom. In his conversation with his wife Maitreyi, he explains that for the sake of the self, everything is dear. Atma is the most loved and so it is anandasvarupa. To be with oneself is happiness.



After class, Pujya Swamiji called us to his kutia and spoke to us about the aim of life. He said that we were always in search of something or the other without knowing what we wanted. He then explained the preciousness of human birth with the song “nandavanatthil oraandi”. Taking his blessings once again we took leave of him.

Swamiji by giving us our Vasanthiji has set us on the right path. Thank you Swamiji. Filled to the brim with happiness, we left for Madurai with renewed and refreshed energy.

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