

Report on Arshavidya Gurukulam's 29th Anniversary Sunday, August 16, 2015, Saylorsburg PA



In the presence of Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Maharajapuram Sri S. Ramchandran, vocalist, along with highly talented accompanists, Arun Ramamurthy, violin and Vijay Ganesh, mrdangam, presented an unforgettable concert.

Following the honoring of the swamijis, swaminijis, dignitaries, board members and staff members, the master of ceremonies, Ajay Khilani, spoke about the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam. He said that the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam is an institute for the traditional study of advaita Vedanta, Sanskrit, yoga, astrology, and other classical Indian



disciplines. The learned swamijis in residence at the gurukulam offer an opportunity to study profound spiritual knowledge of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Brahma Sutras and many other classical Vedic texts in English. This is done through a number of programs for adults including weekend classes, resident courses and family retreats. Additionally children's camps are organized to support young families in their need to impart traditional teaching to their children. This is an invaluable resource for young parents in their constant attempts to foster a cultural and religious continuity with the Indian tradition in their own children. The gurukulam also hosts workshops and seminars on yoga, music and many more disciplines, as well as on-line Sanskrit classes.

Following the Books and CD releases, the Chief Guest, Dr. Anil Kumar Chopra, Chairman and Founder of Petro Tel Inc. spoke.

"Swamiji, it is truly an honor and a great pleasure to be here. When I came to Houston, long back I was president of India Petrol Association, and I invited Swami Chinmayananda to come and we had a two-months-long lecture series by Swami Chinmayanandaji at the University of Houston. So it's a true pleasure to be here. The tradition continues and Swamiji, what you have done for the society here in making so many children grow up to be a great success, and given peace and quality of life and spirituality to the whole generation. It's a great pleasure to be here



and I wish a very happy 29th Anniversary to all of you. Thank you.”

PUJYA SWAMIJI's TALK ON "GURU KRIPA"

Namaste. Thank you Ajay! You have done a good job. All our swamis are talking swamis, not talkative swamis. You can see from their talks how well informed each one is. To talk perhaps is easy. To talk sense relevant to the occasion is something else. They announced a topic, for this anniversary: Guru *mahima*, guru's grace, guru *kripa*. "The *mahima* (greatness) of Gurukripa". *Kripa* is translated as grace, a good translation. But the English word "grace" has its own advantages and difficulties in conveying *kripa*. *Kripa* is grace.

Don't ask the question: where does this grace come from? Generally the answer will be God. How does it come from the Lord to you particularly? Others also get it and if others get it, who are the others? - The entire humanity? These others may not want grace, they may ask for things that grace is supposed to bring about. We Indians also use the word "grace". We can use the word, meaning what you say.

The Lord cannot have a "lucky dip" (lottery) in the morning to find out who are the recipients of grace. He has to go by some norms. Therefore, the definitions must be clear. You have to earn your grace. You earn your grace by good karma, charitable karma, prayer. This karma alone can earn grace. If you teach a child a lesson, it may be your own child who doesn't understand and you make him understand, you earn grace. We call it *punya*. You earn *punya*. You plant a tree and water it regularly, you earn *punya*. Daily you bring some flowers and offer them to the Lord in a shrine that you have at home, you earn *punya*. If you do regular *puja*, you earn abundant *punya*.

This *punya* has to be there for everyone in abundance. Then at the right time, the right word comes to you. You may have the word, but at the right time it has to come. At the right time it will disappear. You may have the name of the person, but it doesn't come. You meet this man at the airport and you know him, you know his wife. The wife's name doesn't come. Then he has to ask, "How is she?"-which she? "How is your wife?" It is odd to ask. You keep quiet, you create situations so that he will mention about his wife. He doesn't. This is called





lack of grace! [Laughter.] In day-to-day life you need a lot of grace! [Applause.] Especially when you are on the road, driving, you require grace. That is the beauty of grace. You have to earn the grace of the guru. May be it is available, but you have to earn it with *shraddha* and *bhakti*. With *shraddha*, in seeking knowledge you go through what is taught again. You need not write it down, keep it in your mind and ruminate over that. That is earning the guru's grace. When the guru's grace is there, the words of the *shastra* he teaches become real to you. They become a reality. In fact, you become that reality. The guru's grace will help you cross the distance between having the words and understanding them. It is called *laksha* [auspiciousness]. That *laksha* is accomplished by guru's grace. May all enjoy guru's grace, Ishwara's grace, *shastra*'s grace, *āpanā* grace, one's own grace. We all live in grace. We live upon grace. May the grace of all the sources of grace be with you all!

Thank you very much. Om. [Applause!]

I am very happy that I am able to participate in this 29th anniversary. It's not easy. I am very happy I could attend; I could see all of you. [Applause.] I didn't have time to talk to everyone, but I have

seen you all with satisfaction. I have special attachment for all of you. You all have helped me develop this place and I have worked with you. And therefore, I can say that this is your place, our place. And you have no doubts about it. When I see the ladies coming in their best Kanchipuram saris [laughter], I feel something is happening in their home. This is their home. Something great is happening. Wonderful! [applause] Here also you have gained grace. Om tat sat.

SRI SUDDHATMA'S VOTE OF THANKS

Our salutations and pranams to Lord Dakshinamurti, for providing us a beautiful day and conducive weather for conducting our anniversary function. In Hindi, there is a saying. It's called *pran jai provachana jai*, a stake or a challenge in our life to fulfill a commitment; that is our Pujya Swamiji. [Applause.] Despite innumerable health discomforts, back in India, and here too, Swamiji did take a challenging flight all the way, 16 hours from India to be here with all of you to share his knowledge and grace. Our respectful pranams and gratitude to resident acharyas: Swami Viditatmanandaji, Swami Tattvavidanandaji, and Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji, for taking all the pain to come here from India, year after year. Our gratitude and pranams to all the swamijis for conducting all the classes at the gurukulam along with a lot of outreach programs. We are grateful for their loving guidance to all of us to run the gurukulam very efficiently. And we also thank our visiting swaminis, Swamini Ramananda for conducting Meditation workshops, and Swamini Svratmavidyananda is always on call, she is "on call swamini".

Thanks to our loving gurukulam staff for being with me with their wonderful support. I'll be able to achieve all this because of their support. Please give a big round of applause to our gurukulam staff.



Thanks to our souvenir committee, Swamini Srividyanandaji for editing the articles of Pujya Swamiji, the cover page design by Samatha Chaitanya, ads coordination, Mrs. Nalini Rao, and Mrs. Vimala and Mrs. Shubha for follow-up work, and we thank Sun Litho for printing a beautiful souvenir on this occasion. Give a big round of applause for all of them. We also thank all of our ads sponsors for every year when we call them up, being ready to say “yes” to our ads. Our thanks to Special Events, Mr. Butch and his crew for installation of these tents, Mr. Hobbe for electrical work, and wonderful sound arrangements by Mr. Fu, City Entertainment. Where is he? Mr. Fu. Big thanks to our loving and caring volunteers for their time and experience. Give them a big round of applause! And special thanks to those who are in the parking lots. You know what it takes to be there in 90 degree temperatures. Thank you.

This is very important: our gratitude and special thanks to the panel of doctors here and back in India for taking utmost care of Pujya Swamiji. We would like to mention

our special, special, this goes endless... thanks to our dearest Sureshji for continued *seva* to Pujya Swamiji all the time with a smile and readiness!

You have heard the word *sutradara*, means coordinator or conductor, one who has to put together things; that’s very important because everybody is in different direction. That is made possible with the help of our great coordinators, Lata and Raju. [Applause.]

Our thanks to all of you for making this function a grand success. And we are so lucky to have Pujya Swamiji in the midst of all of us, with all the challenges that he is going through [voice chokes]. And all these years there are some people at the front, board members, some who are at the back, all the way we have a couple who guided us, who helped us, who made this possible with the vision of Swamiji. Give a big round of applause to our Piyushbhai and Avantika Shah! Whatever Swamiji has invisioned, with the help of Piyushbhai, and other board members, we were able to achieve it. Thank you Piyushbhai and Avantika bhen for being with us. And today’s function all went in time. There is someone who orchestrated all this. And he is the boy who grew up at the gurukulam in past years under the guidance of Pujya Swamiji, and that is our Ajay Khilani! As a boy Ajay has been with Pujya Swamiji so he has gained all the good qualities to be a good person, a good citizen, and we are happy to have Ajay and the whole family, Vijay Khilanis with us. Ajay, you did a very good job. Give a big round of applause. Thank you very much for coming over here! And we will see you more often, other than anniversary. Thank you very much. Enjoy your day. Enjoy lunch prepared by our kitchen group, Mr. Ramachandran, Tara bhen and all the volunteers. Thank you, thank you, thank you very much! [applause!]