



Arsha Vidya Newsletter

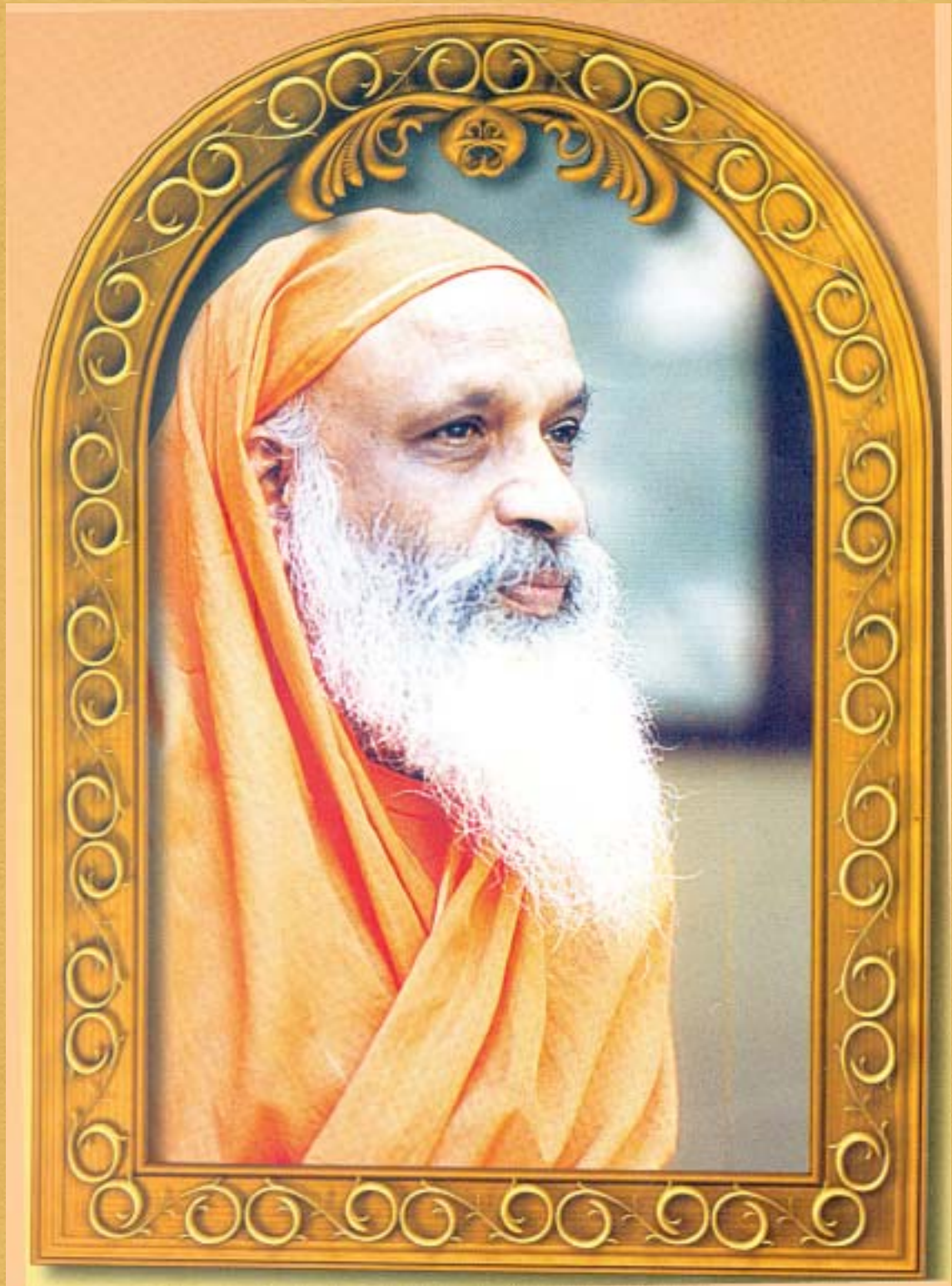
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*Arsha Vidya
Newsletter*

In fearless voice may
we proclaim

The Rishi's message
from all house-tops

And bring the men
of different claim

To a fold of Love
where oneness lasts!

which can withstand all the cyclones, sharks and so on. Even the ships can sink; what is there to say about the rafts? The rafts do not help one to cross even a river in spate; so there is no question of crossing the ocean with them.

The yajñās can help one to cross pain like naraka, hell, and adho-yonis, lower wombs, but not the ocean of saṁsāra. The jīva will not get into lower wombs because of its good karma. It will go higher up. The rituals can help one cross duḥkha, sorrow, temporarily. Therefore, they are called plavāḥ. They are vehicles to take one to the limited lokas only. Here again, the rituals are insecure because one will not get even svarga if they are not done properly. What are these rituals?

Yajñarūpāḥ aṣṭādaśa yeṣu avaram karma uktam : these rituals consist of eighteen limbs on which they depend, and hence, they are inferior. Aṣṭādaśa means eighteen. There are sixteen priests required in performing certain karmas where mantras from all three Vedas are used. There are priests belonging to each Veda. They are called ṛtviks. All these priests must be there to complete certain rituals, but not for rituals like agnihotra.

In the performance of a ritual the Yajurveda is important. The Yajurveda priests¹ are called Yajur-gaṇa, the Ṛgveda priests² are hotṛ gaṇa, the Sāmaveda priests³ are udgātṛ gaṇa and the Atharvaveda priests are brahma-gaṇa. The four gaṇās, groups, consist of sixteen priests. Then the yajamāna, the one who does the ritual and patnī, his wife, complete the eighteen⁴.

For performing Vedic rituals like agnihotra one requires one's wife. Without the wife one cannot perform rituals. When one performs the ritual, his wife gets fifty percent of the puṇya. She provides the infrastructure, like the home, prepares naivedya, offerings, and so on. She comes at the start of the ritual to give him permission to do the ritual. That is why she gets fifty percent of the puṇya. It is a clean partnership. If he commits any pāpa, fifty percent of it will come to her. This is absolutely unacceptable! But that is how it is. It is completely one-sided and it is true. Women are given a big place in the scheme of Vedic life. If the women have some problem in India, that is due to the influence of other cultures.

¹ Their names are : advaryuḥ, pratiprasthātā, nestā and unnetā.

² Their names are: hotā, maitrāvaruṇaḥ, acchāvakaḥ, and grāva stutaḥ.

³ Their names are udgāta, prastotā, pratihartā, and subrahmaṇyaḥ. Subrahmaṇya is not the deity, it is the name of a Sāmaveda priest.

⁴ षोडश ऋत्विजः पत्नी यजमानोश्चेति अष्टादश । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Karmas that are mentioned here with reference to the eighteen limbs are not simple karmas like agnihotra, but refer to great karmas because sixteen ṛtviks and lots of dakṣiṇā are involved. Even though they are great karmas, still, they are avara,⁵ 'inferior' or very small, because they are not backed up by upāsanaś. So, they cannot take one to brahma-loka. They are called 'avara' because they depend on eighteen factors and they are subject to perish.⁶ Even if they take one to heaven, they are still 'avara' because the journey does not come to an end and one will come back from heaven. This is the nature of karma, and therefore, any end achieved by this karma is going to be impermanent only. Śaṅkara gives the example⁷ of loss of milk etc., when the container is destroyed. This person says, "I did not destroy the milk. I did not do anything with the milk. I only destroyed the pot". Similarly, the karma itself is subject to end and naturally what one accomplishes through karma is also anitya, impermanent.

Ye mūḍhāḥ etat śreyah itī abhinandanti : these deluded people who are committed to karma take delight in presenting it as the means of mokṣa. They really do not see through all these things. They think that they will be liberated in heaven. So, they reinforce the belief that the rituals will take them to mokṣa. Such people are in millions in the world. Suppose someone says, "I am going to cross the Atlantic Ocean by this raft", what will you think? You can only pity him.

Jarāmṛtyuṁ te punarevāpi yanti : they gain old age and death repeatedly. It means they remain in saṁsāra. As a result of performing these karmas they go to svarga. They think that having reached heaven they will become immortals. In heaven it is said that there is no old age and death. Lord Death does not go to heaven because he need not go there. The people who go there deliver themselves into the hands of Lord Death by coming down at the end of their sojourn. The idea is that they do not gain mokṣa.

As long as these deluded people think and do so individually, it is all right. But they become leaders also, and take a few people along with them. That is the problem. That is what the śruti says next:

To be continued....

¹ अवरं केवलं ज्ञान वर्जितं कर्म - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

² अतस्तेषाम् अवर-कर्माश्रयाणाम् अष्टादशानाम् अदृढतया प्लवत्वात् प्लवते सह फलेन तत्साध्यं कर्म - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

³ कुण्ड-विनाशादिव क्षीर-दध्यादीनां तत्स्थानां नाशः। मुण्डक भाष्यम्

श्री रुद्रम्
Śrī Rudram
Anuvāka 6

(continued from the last issue)

नमः॑ उर्व॒र्याय॑ च॒ खल्या॑य च
namaḥ॑ urvāryāya ca॒ khalyāya ca

Namaḥ urvāryāya ca ca॒ khalyāya ca—The Lord is in the form of things that have come from the earth and in the form of grains. Urvaraya is that which exists on urvara, earth. It means all the plants, forests and so on. Again, khala also refers to earth where one sows seeds and reaps the harvest. It refers to cultivated land where different crops are grown which are fodder for animals and also food for human beings. Unto the Lord my salutation.

नमः॑ श्लो॒क्याय॑ चा॒वसान्या॑य च
nāmaśślokyāya cā'vasānyāya ca

Namaśślokyāya¹ cā'vasānyāya ca – Salutation to the one who obtains in the veda and Vedanta. In the Vedas, many deities such as Indra, Agni and others are praised. They are also ślokyah or vareṇya. Praiseworthy. Here we are referring to the Lord and so all the differences are swallowed. He is the only one who is ślokyā. Avasāna refers to the end of the Veda, that is, Vedanta. My salutation to the one who obtains in Vedanta as its subject matter, the non-dual Brahman.

नमो॑ वन्या॑य च॒ कक्ष्या॑य च
nāmo vanyāya ca॒ kākṣyāya ca

¹ ślokeṣu veda-mantreṣu bhavaḥ ślokyah tasmai – the one who obtains in Vedic mantras, unto Him.

Namo vanyāya ca kakṣyāya ca — The Lord is in the form of what obtains in the forest and woods, vanya. Kakṣa means a cluster of trees. Unto him my salutation.

नमश्श्रवाय च प्रतिश्रवाय च
namaśśravāya ca pratiśravāya ca

Namaśśravāya ca pratiśravāya ca – The Lord is in the form of sound and also echo. Any sound is śravā. Śrūyate iti śravaḥ, what is heard śrava. My salutation to the Lord who is manifest in all languages in the form of sound. Pratiśravā is echo. Unto Him who is in the form of echo my salutation.

नम आशुषेणाय चाशुरथाय च
nama āśuṣeṇāya cāśurathāya ca

Nama āśuṣeṇāya cāśurathāya ca – The Lord has a swift moving army and swift chariot. Āśuṣeṇa is that commander-in-chief or king with a swift moving army. Salutation unto Him in the form of swift moving devatās like vāyu who are propitiated for quick results. They go to the propitiator so quickly that they seem to have fast moving vehicles!

नमश्शूराय चावभिन्दते च
namaśśūrāya cāvabhindate ca

Namaśśūrāya cāvabhindate ca - Salutation to the one who is śūrā, brave warrior and the one who shatters (the protective armour and fort-walls). The śaurya, bravery, in every warrior belongs to the Lord. He is also the one who does *avabhindana*, shattering the fort of all the enemies. He is the one who has no hindrance anywhere. Unto Him my salutation.

नमो वर्मिणे च वरूथिने च
namo varmiṇe ca varūthine ca

Namo varmiṇe ca varūthine ca – Salutation to the one who has the protecting armour and who is in the form of the protective secret placed of the charioteer.

Varūtha is the secret place of the chariotdeer or anyone who wants to protect himself. If there is any protection for a person, then that protection and the protected person are also the Lord. Unto Him my salutations.

नम॑ बि॒ल्मिने॑ च॒ कव॑चिने॑ च
namā bilmine ca kavacine ca

Nama bilmine ca kavacine ca – Salutation to the one who has protecting helmet and the one with protective armour. Not only does He have them, He is also in the form of helmet and armour. Kavacin is the one who has kavaca, armour (that reaches upto the ankles). Unto Him my salutation.

नम॑श्रु॒ताय॑ च॒ श्रु॒तसे॑नाय॑ च॒ ॥
namaśrutāya ca śrutasenāya ca ॥

Namaśrutāya ca śrutasenāya ca – Salutation to the one who is well known in the Vedas and who is in the form of army or presiding deities. The word śruta means śrutya pratipāditaḥ, the one who is revealed by the śruti and has thus become well-known. Whenever you praise anyone, you praise the Lord alone since all glories belong to the Lord. Wherever there is glory, it belongs to me alone, the Lord says in the Bhagavad Gītā². The Lord is in the form of śruti prasiddha-senā, the famous army of devatās such as Agni and Varuṇa, as revealed in the śruti. The one who is also in the form of devatās—unto Him my salutation.

To be continued...

² yadyadvibhūtimatsatvaṁ śrīmadūrjitameva vā tattad evāvagaccatvam mama tejomśasambhavam—whatever, a thing or being, is endowed with glory, wealth and might, know that to be born of a fraction of my glory (Chapter 10, verse 41)

Inauguration of Parivu, A Senior Citizens' Society



Parivu, a Senior Citizens' Society was inaugurated on September 29, 2013 at Kikani Higher Secondary School, Coimbatore.

Dr. P.C.Raju, President of the Society welcomed the gathering. He advised the Senior citizens to accept their limitation and limit their expectation.

Pujya Swami Dayananda Sarasvati gave the inaugural address. He said that Dr. P.C.Raju and Dr. Rajagopal are the people behind this initiative. It can become a movement.

If we ask a simple Villager anywhere in India, where God is, he will tell that God is everything and everywhere. This is a profound knowledge taught by Isa Upanisad, "Isavasyam idam sarvam". The Villager got this knowledge by vridha vyavahara handed over by Elders.

For us home is temple, marriage is yoga, money is Laxmi and knowledge is Sarasvati. All that is here is God. This vision is imbibed from Elders.

A society that takes care of Elders is a mature society. We had joint family system and we did not have a problem of Elders.



Now husband and wife both go for work. We have nuclear families. It is not easy to take care of Elders.

Elders should have a certain maturity. Doting on children is not going to help. As we grow older, we should grow out of



emotional need from children. Allow them to grow in their sphere. If they do not come to us, feel good. If the children cannot make it, leave it, it is their problem. We give them our blessings and leave them alone. Be grateful to God that you have survived so many winters and summers and earned the wrinkles. We should work as a



team and help mutually. We should do whatever help that is possible from our side. We should learn to age gracefully with maturity and leisure.

Dr. V.S.Natarajan, Senior Geriatric Surgeon gave the special address. He advised Senior Citizens to go for preventive geriatrics like vaccination. Walking is the best exercise. Food should be nutritious. Service to humanity is the best way to be emotionally and physically healthy.

He advised the Senior Citizens' Society to start Geriatric department in Hospitals, start Geriatric day care centre, arrange home visit of medical personnel, arrange awareness programme in schools and colleges and arrange meals on wheels.

Report by N.Avinashilingam



Parampara Speaks

By the grace of Pujya Swamiji the in-depth study programme of Vedanta, Sanskrit, Vedic Chanting and Yoga at Anaiakatti has reached completion. Some of the graduating students have shared their thoughts and gratitude.

When I decided to attend this course, I was not able to understand English well. I said to Acharya Swami Sakshatji, "Not only English. I don't have any knowledge of Vedanta either. But I want to stay and learn." Swamiji accepted me and said, "Don't worry, just listen to Pujya Swamiji".

Later I realized that this gurukulam is open to all who want to study. I learned a lot of things here, the biggest thing being the importance of being open. The gate of the gurukulam is always open and anybody can come and listen to all the classes. This environment makes everybody turn towards studying spontaneously. Just like all people, whether rich or not, regardless of age or gender, get same prasada from temple, we can all get this knowledge and blessings from Pujya Swamiji.

I remembered the words that Swami Sakshatji said, "Don't worry, just listen to Pujya Swamiji", over and over, especially when studying was difficult. Recently, Pujya Swamiji said to students who may wonder if they did well or not after 3 years, "Don't worry, this teaching goes and sits inside". When I face any situation, I will remember these words and overcome the situation with the help of this knowledge. *Aiko - Japan.*

When one does not fit into a category that is generally acceptable in the world, that sense becomes intensified in a closed community. These 3 1/2 years have been challenging, but I wouldn't choose differently. I knew why I was coming. I know why I stayed. Seeing the thinking that, "I am different", resolving into the truth of myself is the biggest blessing one can ask for.

The traditional Vedantic way of life is profound; if I could choose my next janma I would choose a birth into a traditional family.

Namaskar to Dakshinamurti. Pranams to Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji who continue to bless me on this journey.

Ananda - Israel.

Praying to Ishvara and understanding oneself to be Ishvara is a quantum jump which can only happen through the teaching of Ishvara. Ishvara, in the form of Pujya Swamiji who is endowed with unlimited daya, compassion, consistently showered us with this teaching that unfolds the truth of oneself. Understanding the shruti and seeing the meaning of the words of the shruti is a huge task which can only happen when shivayanam, listening, takes place in the presence of the Guru himself and not otherwise. Being in the presence of a Guru and listening to the shruti constantly for a length of time, with shradha in what he says about the truth, one cannot but have a paradigm shift in one's thinking. While unfolding the truth Pujya Swamiji makes one learn the art of living and the art of teaching. We are indeed blessed. *Amsavanti - Malaysia.*

The time spent as a student in Anaiakatti has been a stream of grace and learning. Words fall short of what it really means to be here. Pujya Swamiji has given us the entire teaching without any shra. The teaching merged in him completely. Swami Sakshatkratananda effortlessly made all our issues seem manageable with his magical smile. Swami Shankarananda was available whenever needed without any reservation. Swamini Vedanthananda and Swamini Sharadananda tirelessly taught us chanting. The environs perfectly fit into my idea of a gurukulam of the ancient sages. I offer my gratitude to all who contributed directly or indirectly in making my stay here memorable.

Bindu Bhatt - USA.

Pujya Swamiji has made me see myself and the world as it is. The whole teaching is but a means for making me see who I am. In fact it is all a journey into this knowledge. The gradual growth of clarity is like a photo being developed. Like the chemicals in the developing tray, the same words may be used over and over but when they are seen as a reflecting medium the picture of my non-dual nature slowly becomes clearer and clearer.

The vision that is revealed through them again and again has left me in wonder at the emergence of new and unforeseen clarity that embraces me and lifts me beyond this life.

Camilla Bellocio - Italy.

Given the earth as writing paper, the oceans as ink, the trees as pens, even these would be inadequate to write about the glories of this parampara and the teachings of Pujya Swamiji. Each class, each satsanga, each meeting with Pujya Swamiji provided many brilliant insights and privileged learning opportunities for me. Be it Vedanta, vyakarana, astrology, music, medicine, the grahashta-ashrama mother-in-law, the young villager—to list a select few, each word is meaningfully articulated with one objective—to help us understand with clarity the teaching of the shastra and implement this teaching into our daily life. Perform my activities in keeping with the order of dharma and I am in tune with Ishvara. Ishvara is the cause for what is here—this entire world, sanam jagat—known and unknown to me. The understanding that I have no choice over the results of my actions, that there is no success or failure, gives me the capacity to be objective and accept the results as they come—prasada buddhi. What there is, is grace—grace of Ishvara. As I continue this journey I gracefully let go of the demand of what "should be", and cheerfully accept "what is". *Charufra Kanihi - Canada.*

Githamasi, we heard him say
Five and twenty thousand hours ago.
The words are the same even today.
But, on its own have taken a glow.
The Vision, Writing on the Wall
In words bright, large and thick
Words screaming, many meters tall;
Open your eyes, *pramana*! I do the trick.

To that Gurus, we say, "We are blessed, you are the best!"

He summed up every text
As indeed no one else can
Solved problems, however vexed
With compassion, and élan.
He helped us soak in LSK
Halantya, *iko yanai, chu-tu*.
Letting the *sutras* hold sway
Softly, slowly, into us they grew.

To that Acharya, we say, "We are blessed, you are the best!"

Ashadhyaayi was indeed forbidding,
But, after class one, two or three
Finding it not-so-tough, but edifying.
Opened the beauty of *Panini* for us to see.

To that Acharya, we say, "Thank you, you are the best!"

Loved going to the temple
Mantra chanting drawing us there.
With guidance kind and gentle
Now we can chant too. Beware!

To the Swamiji, we say, "Thank you, the near
impossible happened!"

The many other teachers
Of subjects very diverse
Who gave us many new features
Some in prose, some in verse.

To them, we say, "Thank you. We have really gained!"

And then the support staff here
Office, kitchen, maintenance, others
Making life very easy to bear
To us, kind sisters and brothers.

To them we say, "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

The climate just about right
The aura very positive
Clear, calm and very bright,
All actions collaborative.
An old adage says, the whole
Is greater than the sum of parts.
Allowed us to focus on the goal,
And won over all our hearts.

To Ashwini we pray, "Continue to bless us!"

Ganeshi K - Coimbatore

I am not different from Brahman. My teacher explains "which includes you and all". So there is no destruction for you. I understand this fact and am happy because I continue to recognize through his teaching that the expression of knowledge is directly proportional to the expression of consciousness in all beings, ranging from Hydra to Einstein. Through the *rishis* the knowledge of consciousness is expressed totally. My teacher is a *rishi* and a scholar and is different, because there is no such *sadhu* among modern scholars and there is no such scholar among modern *sadhus*. Being the *svarupa* of knowledge he helped us to reorient our thinking to knowing, from becoming. He removed our feeling of alienation from Ishvara and made us recognize that we are one with Brahman, *chaitanya svarupa*. By understanding this fact I am secure without a second, I am *ananta-ananda svarupa*. For making me to understand this truth I salute him. Swami Sakshatkratanandaji along with Swami Shankaranandaji, Swaminis Vedarthananda and Sharadananda, the yoga teachers, Sri Sujit and Smt. Devi, put the things together for the successful completion of the course. Lord Medha Dakshinamurti with his *parivara devotas* blessed by showering immense grace on the students to complete the three plus years course.

Chandraprakash - Tirupati



Living together with our Gurus and *gurubhais* allowed us to be totally immersed in Vedanta without having to justify why you are not doing anything else. In this exposure many unresolved areas surfaced, assisted by issues related to health, diet, environment etc. One can either dig in one's heels or repeatedly surrender, realizing anything I hold onto cannot be myself. Gradually, a bigger picture emerges as one becomes aware of the habitual filters through which one lives. With Pujya Swamiji's grace I pray that our entry back into life beyond the ashram may flow smoothly oiled by the growing clarity and wisdom resulting from this unique "detox" program.

Giaryga - Scotland

मङ्गलमस्तु कल्पयेन्मयः नमः ।

Gita Chaitanya - Coimbatore

Om. Pujya Swamiji's teaching has been a continuous flow of wisdom and care pouring into my heart for more than 3 years, leaving me with an inexplicable sense of fulfillment. A relaxation with the ways of my mind has developed through the teaching, and through the interactions with the Swamis, *gurubhais* and everyone at the ashram.

My gratitude to both Pujya Swamiji and Acharya Swamiji, as well as to all the supporters, and to this great culture for the innumerable gifts. My prayer is for the capacity to share the *sampradaya* selflessly, and with the least hurt possible, as is exemplified by our revered Sri Parama Pujya Swamiji.

Julia Lorimer - USA

Vasudevam kutumbakam - the whole earth is family. I enjoyed the congenial atmosphere of the ashram. I got the support of all here whenever and wherever I needed.

Punctuality pays a person. The gurukulam conducts all activities at the proper time. Our most respected Swamiji and Acharya Swami Sakshatkratananda as well as our other Acharyas are vigilant around the clock to enhance us and to develop us in all aspects of our lives. All the other activities of our gurukulam have inspired me - decoration, cleaning etc. I'll try to imbibe all these in my life.

After completing the course, I'll try to follow our scriptures, the learning imparted to me and share the love, affection bestowed on me. I will do my best to teach Sanskrit, Bhagavad Gita etc., to all my relatives, friends etc. In short, I am inspired to serve the society, irrespective of nation, caste or class. May Bhagavan bless me to embody divinity in me alongside others.

Sanam khalu idam brahma. *Jyoti M. Sakaria - Junagadh*

These two years with Pujya Swamiji have passed all too quickly, but every class, every satsanga, has brought growing clarity; not always smoothly or predictably, but very surely. Pujya Swamiji's love for every word of shashtra and for Shankara bhashya means that he never glosses over issues, and his brilliant insights and patiently chosen words help us see what shashtra wants us to see. With what kindness and patience does he surface lacunae and vagueness in our thinking and with what insight pick out our samshaya bhas and address them so that we cannot but see! It is as if the compassion and brilliance of the entire Guru parampara is working through him for our welfare.

For me, many emotional issues have also surfaced in this time, but I am more able to be objective to them. Daily puja at the temple has also helped me deal with my emotions. At least I know what pratibandhas I have to address in me while continuing to do shraavanam and mananam. For instance, Pujya Swamiji's unfailing compassion to all who approach him has made me seriously examine my own shortcomings in this area.

It has been the blessing of my life to meet Pujya Swamiji, and to be given the privilege of listening to shashtra unfolded by him. My prayer is for his long and healthy life. I also pray for undivided focus to continue to grow to assimilate the vision, and that Pujya Swamiji's teaching will continue to ring in my heart till my last breath. *Krishnan - USA*

The first time I met Pujya Swamiji was in 1997 in Rishikesh. Swamiji is one of the best teachers and after hearing Pujya Swamiji's talks, I had a desire to get exposure to this great knowledge directly under his guidance. There is nothing like listening directly from Swamiji because of the way the teaching is revealed with such clarity in thinking. Now I understand that, "All that is here is Ishvara". This is the vision of the Vedas. Great leaders don't tell you what to do...they show you how it's done. The ashram is serene and the location is ideal for this spiritual pursuit. This all by Gurn's grace. Om. *Kripa Chaitanya*

To me, this experience of learning Vedanta traditionally under a shrotriya brahmanishta shook the whole personality and brought out both the nectar and the poison from inside of me. The nature of the nectar of this knowledge is such that it nullifies the effects of poison absolutely. After three and one-half years of study in the gurukulam, what I am left with is only this knowledge-wealth which is the knowledge of all knowledges (sarvavidya prasthita). I do not know what life is ahead of me but this knowledge will definitely help me in accepting it as it unfolds. It is a long way for this knowledge to become as clear as daylight but I will continue to work on it till I own it completely.

R. Lakshminarayana - Chennai

All the students of this 3 year course are most blessed to gain the 'great teaching' from the 'great teacher' Swami Dayananda Saraswati. The focus of the teaching was on prasthana-trayam and a few prakara granthas. Also came the study of Sanskrit, chanting, yoga and an exposure to Indian art and culture. In the gurukulam every day was a: puja dnam, shasta dnam, vyakarana dnam, and samshayanvartaka dnam.

Untiringly Pujya Swamiji unfolded the shashtra through Shankara bhashya and by yukti, pramana and anubhava. In conclusion, upadeshas, proper lifestyle and how to handle problems while teaching was given. Our Acharya Swami Sakshatkratanandaji ably guided us all through the programme. As Kathopanisad says - ananya prokte gat' ratra nasti - Pujya Swamiji 'made us see' by snapping all our seeking through knowledge. To this niratishaya gurave namo nama.

Lalitha R. - Coimbatore

Guru Stotram has a verse that begins, "ajnanatimirandhasya..." It tells how the Guru removes the darkness. At first it was difficult to study because of different background and a lot of unsettled issues. When Swamiji told about the 'order' is nothing but Ishvara, it made everything change. Now I have the space to accept my self and also others as they are. In each Gita shloka I can see how to resolve our day to day life issues. When I return to Malaysia I will share the knowledge with all my people. Another project will be to refine an equivalent of mantra pushpam written in Tamil and Devanagari script.

Manaswin - Malaysia

When I joined the course halfway through, together with my husband, I had a doubt: is such a thorough intellectual study of shashtra not more a man's affair? But when I came to the gurukulam I discovered the majority of the students were female. And in fact, I happened to love the classes. The whole programme helped to purify my mind and release unconscious pain from my childhood. The programme enabled me to establish a wholesome loving relationship with myself and a true relationship with Ishvara, based on understanding. With the blessings of Pujya Swamiji, I hope to continue this study in the coming years in the gurukulam. *Marion - Holland*



Among the great mahatmas Pujya Swamiji is the crown jewel. Pujya Swamiji who through the exposition of the Upanishads, revealed the truth of Bhagavan, the repository of the six-fold ashwas and thus removed the fear of death from me and immersed me in the knowledge of immortality.

Pujya Swamiji has also given us all the gift of the presence of the great Acharya in Pujya Swami Sakshatkratanandaji. Truly my Acharya deva, complete with the pearls of noble values from the sattu ocean of life. He is endowed with brilliance and knowledge of the ancient rishis and is a shining example for the modern world. He is fully surrendered at the footsteps of Pujya Swamiji. He is an ideal for those jñāsis endowed with puruṣārtha nishchaya. His life becomes the mirror looking at which the goal of moksha becomes very dear. My crores of salutations to Pujya Swamiji who effortlessly reveals the ever presence of the immediate limitless truth that is the self. May we always pray to the Lord for the good health of Pujya Swamiji. *Mamaswini - Vrindavan.*

Revolution has happened from deep inside over these three years. It is a very rare and auspicious opportunity to see the self. Pujya Swamiji teaches one the truth. Staying with this knowledge is really a blessing. It was not easy, but these three years have changed me a lot and made me free from being critical and from a sense of helplessness. I want to live with this vision of the truth for my whole life. I am making a sankalpa to be objective, to live a dharmic life, and to stay with this teaching which is gifted by Swamiji. Arigatou Gooaimashite! (million times thanks in Japanese) *Mio - Japan*

The wave yearned to be water. And Medha Dakshinamurti smiled. Every moment in this traditional gurukulam (which is like no other place in the world) has been prasada. The biggest blessing was to be in Pujya Swamiji's presence, svarupa of Dakshinamurti himself who helped me assimilate the pramanabam of the shastra and gave his teaching, love and compassion, unconditionally. I learnt 'to just be' from Swami Sakshatkratanandaji's teaching and care. The wave had always been water. Now, life is more about doing whatever is required to further this most glorious sampradaya while preserving dharma and the culture of India. My love and gratitude to all. Om Tat Sat.

Mrinalini Rao - Mumbai

Grace brought me to the feet of Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji. The teaching methodology that Pujya Swamiji uses blesses all. I have learned to understand this life, body and mind. The ashram has been very supportive in my almost four years of study. There are no words to express my gratitude. This teaching is priceless! My namaskaras to all teachers in this lineage. Pranams Pujya Swamiji.

Rishi Prasad - Brazil

Being in the three-year course was like being in Brahma loka because Swamiji's teaching cannot be received anywhere else and everything was given making it conducive for studying. Even so, we had to face ordinary and extraordinary laukika problems, of course, but here we learned that those problems are also opportunities given to overcome and help our growth. Even after the course, wherever we are while transacting in "normal" life, I hope all of us can continue to be with Pujya Swamiji and Sakshatkratanandaji in the form of knowledge we have received. Indeed this can be better than Brahma loka with this Param Vidya. My pranams to the Guru and the Acharya. I thank all who supported me directly and indirectly for my growth and studying. Om Tat Sat.

Mukthi Megumi - Japan

Set in the verdant Nilgiri hills, AVG is an ideal place for contemplative pursuit of Vedanta. Veda chanting classes and temple activities add another dimension to this by providing variety and growth towards maturity. Though there is no prerequisite for entry to this three year prasthana-traya study, one would get the most out of this course when equipped with sadhana-chaturstaya, which gives one the clarity that moksha is the only thing worth pursuing in life, and one should do it with the urgency with which one will seek water when one's house is on fire. Those with mathematical bent of mind will enjoy the study of Panini, and all will be able to sharpen their intellect by this study, which is very valuable in mastering Sankara-bhasya. Finally, by staying steadfast for three years in all aspects of the course as presented in AVG, one will have complete understanding of Ishvara and the vision of shastra. *Nirayani - Mumbai*

The time I spent here is the GOLDEN TIME because of the wonderful environment, rich nature, excellent pujas and a very loving Pujya Sakshat Swamiji, who as the Acharya, made it possible.

The comfortable accommodation, the opportunity to live in close proximity with the Guru, and being very well "taken care of" made life easy, so all one's attention could be put to studies. Marvellous teachings by Pujya Swamiji who, making us laugh, would push the TATVA tablet in. And, now and then backed by Pujya Sakshat Swamiji's explanations and elaborations has made Vedanta more enjoyable. I would say it is "well-sunk" into the being. Pujya Swamiji has given his all for us and made the TATVA real and dear as a fruit on the palm. Now, if something needs to be done to own it up, it is to increase my adhikarham.

As this teaching removed my erroneous understanding about the "good life", I wish to take it to others. I've planned to adhere to shastra, contemplating on it for myself and advancing to the desirous ones. Om

Neda Nitya Chaitanyat - Vallabhi Vidyanagar



In the gossamer light, I saw
the image inside our heart/mind
trees, flowers, sky, clouds..... Thru your eyes
I see
the dancing photons
every perception there
tainted rose and amber
and in the sanctum
[you, the invariable presence
of the hearts cave]
the world pours
effortlessly.....out
thru your senses
woven into one fabric
the heard, tasted, touched, streaming, flowing
perception, relation, interpretation where all the todays
and yesterdays
make up the one
we call cosmos.
In the gossamer light, I saw

Phil - USA

Story of a seed

Once upon a time Lord Sadashiva felt like creating a forest of Vedantic teaching parampara, स एषाव सowed a seed. There came some trees (वृक्ष) who produced many many seeds which were scattered all over, and the place is बृहदारण्य now. Among these trees, one well grown selfless, compassionate tree, aware of oneself (Pujya Swamiji) decided to help others to know the self, helped them to grow well with the understanding "the problem is you and the solution is you". This tree produces many many seeds and now is the right season for harvest. The nutrition for these seeds are the prasthanatrayam bhashya teachings, well nourished by Panini grammar classes, protected by Panchadasi. These seeds are ready to be sown in various places in the forest where there is a lot of sunlight (अभ्युपेक्षा) and enough water (आत्मकुपा) will be there to make the forest dense. Other seeds have adhikari potential to enrich the forest. I am the blessed seed.

Radhika - Hyderabad

With the blessings of Bhagavan, Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji, we in the three-year course were able to receive this knowledge which has been handed down through the Guru-shishya parampara since the beginning of creation. This knowledge is that which expounds the truth about the Lord, jagat and myself. It gives me immense satisfaction to have been able to complete this course. Thank you Bhagavan.

Sarala Rani - Malaysia

I would like to say about this course that it is one of the very successful courses conducted by Pujya Swamiji and assisted well by Swami Sakshatkratanandaji. My own personal feeling is that, what I wanted, I got at the right time in the right place.

I got a nice opportunity to listen to Pujya Swamiji in great detail for a long time. It has given me an insight for further study of Vedanta, especially by doing Panini grammar which has given me a good means to understand the language. So thank you for providing this opportunity.

Once again my gratitude to Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji
Br. Shriveti

Our precious three-year course, taught by the most compassionate Guru, Pujya Swamiji, was for only one thing: to know the self. Pujya Swamiji has created many teachers. Learning with him is a great blessing. I see in myself growing darity. Living with co-students from different countries and backgrounds is a nice experience. All are able to relate to each other in keeping with the vision. I will share what I have learned and continue to serve to my best ability. One thing I have to tell here, our Acharya Swami Sakshatkratanandaji with great compassion has taken care of all students - we are truly blessed by him.

Srinivasan - Anantapur

This course helped me change my attitude to my response to situations. I am able to bring Ishvara in all my transactions. Whatever I receive I am trying to accept as Ishvara's grace. The course helped me to know more about the glory of the Upanishads and the importance of Upanishads with Shankara bhashya to reach the goal. More than the teachings, through his actions, Pujya Swamiji is a living example and a role model for me. In spite of his health, his commitment to taking classes helped me change my attitude and study more. Having studied a similar course elsewhere, I appreciate the depth of the teachings. Without any expectations in any way or any kind from the students this is the Guru-shishya parampara. It is really the grace from Ishvara to be here in the course. I felt that Sakshat Swamiji's love was like my mother's love. When we are in the ashram, the system supports us totally. I want to spread what I have learnt here - the how and why will have to be worked out, once we return. Pulluri Srinivas - Hyderabad.

It must have been no small grace, due to which, I entered AVG Anaiakatti for the three-year course. I entered as Jeevanika, a jiva, wanting to know myself. I am going out as Jivanmuktananda, knowing myself to be the very content of ananda, myself which is free, myself which is free while living. I have gained myself as it were... and... I will be sharing this ananda with others! This happens when Pujya Swami Dayananda Sarinewadi is the teacher and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji the resident Acharya. My pranams to both of them.

Swamini Jeevanmuktananda - Coonoor



I joined the second half of the course, together with my wife. Because of my upbringing I was already familiar with Vedanta, but due to lack of a proper teaching method, I still had doubts about the subject matter. Entering into this full-time pursuit, Pujya Swamiji's crystal clear teaching put an end to my doubts one by one. A new understanding of Ishvara's order helped me to really come to terms with all aspects of the world. We have planned to spend a few more years in the gurukulam, in order to become firmly rooted in this knowledge and to master Swamiji's way of presenting this wonderful teaching method.

Remmert - Holland

Reflecting upon my time in Arsha Vidya Gurukulam listening to Pujya Swamiji's teachings, I feel that it has been time very well spent and I can only call it a blessing all the way through. I should say that I have been getting more than what I expected in terms of clarity and also in terms of life and culture for which Pujya Swamiji has been creating opportunities with love and care even at the age of 83.

As far as what I see ahead for myself after the course, I really don't have any new expectations but at the same time feel more committed to the parampara and confident about taking up anything and performing it with love and contentment. I look forward to Pujya Swamiji's guidance on this matter all through my future. I should say that my life feels very different, more committed to this tradition of learning and teaching, extremely content and ready to love, learn and serve. I thank Ishvara for making this happen in my life.

Suryanarayana - Chennai

காட்டில் ஒரு தீபம் காற்றினால் சூடத்தில் இட்ட தீபமாக இருந்தது. நான் ஆயிரத்து நூற்று எண்பத்து ஐந்து நாட்களில் முயலிவந்தது கற்றுற்று கம்பத்து வகுப்புகளில் கோபுரத்துடன் இட்ட ஞான தீபமாக கோலினில் வைக்கப்பட்டது.

எப்படி

எங்கே வெதாந்த மரபில் வந்த பரம பூஜனிய, நயானந்த குருவாக்கிய பரிசுத்தரின் ஞானம் கனம்மலம், மரபாமலம், ஆணமலம் போகும், அங்குள்ள இருளை நீக்கி "அறிவாகிய ஆன்மாவன் நீ" என்பதை தெளிவுபடுத்தி என்னுள் ஞான தீபத்தை ஒளிரச் செய்த "என் குருகுரத்தின் திருபாதார கிரீடங்களுக்கு" அளந்த கோடி நமஸ்காரம்.

Translation: Story of a Lamp in the Forest

(A small little lamp, afraid of the wind was kept in a mud pot. Then after 3555 classes of teaching for 1185 days, I was shifted to a gopuram of a temple, shining bright. How did this happen? By the teaching "That is You" (Vedanta) by my Guru who is none other than Parama Pujya Dayananda Swamiji, from the vedantic tradition of Shankaracharya. Lighted up by the knowledge of "I am none other than that Ishvara," my darkness of ignorance was removed, sanchita, agami, parabdha - karmas are negated. I offer my ananta koti namaskarams at the feet of my Guru.

Swamini Sudhavidyavanarula Saranavati

Extraordinary punya brings one to the sacred pursuit of Brahmanidya at the lotus feet of Pujya Swamiji. An amazing programme of growing clarity, it reprograms our notions, putting everything in its proper place. It is magic. Pujya Swamiji is the mayavin unfolding the greatest secret - "You ARE what you are seeking". Fascinating all the way, telling you how wonderful you are!

Yoga, Parini, festivals, japa, seva, pujas etc., - help one stay focussed.

One relaxes - appreciating the Order through prasada-buddhi. There is no other way!

Given a chance I would do it all over again! It is the greatest gift to oneself.

Swamini Sumatrananada - Anakkattil

When I heard about the three-year course that it would completely change a person I wondered, "how is it possible?" It is possible because of the powerful perennial flow of knowledge coming through Swamiji to oneself. It seems to wash away all what one doesn't need leaving behind understanding and cheerfulness of being.

Things considered to be complex lose their complexity when explained by Swamiji. One can see that it's possible to have freedom in relationship, to discover love and to live a life of values.

The apex of spirituality in the world is saintliness, which is a possibility for everybody, and a stepping stone to self-knowledge. What a blessing to have a unique opportunity to grow into one in whom the knowledge stays.

My Gratitude to Swamiji whose love and compassion allowed me to see what is!

Uma / Olga - Russia

Among many achievements like even learning to think properly and the joy of discovering Bhagavatpada's bhashya etc., what tops the mind at the moment is the conviction I got about the paramanyam of shastra-paramana. That is really big for me. Thank you Pujya Swamiji and Acharya Swamiji.

Venkiteswara Tyer - Trivandrum

I feel very honoured and blessed for being able to stay these three years in AVG and appreciate the opportunity to express this gratitude. Pujya Swamiji touched us with his brilliance, good humour and lots of care during this time. Even with challenging health he was really always there for anyone of us. Swami Sakshatji treated us as his own children, always with an open heart and a desire to nourish and provide that which would bring us back to being the basic person, whenever necessary. I feel that our necessity for knowledge, care and love was constantly fulfilled by the teachers and the ashram as a whole, enriching our lives and making us understand that they did not only teach us Vedanta, but also how to live and love. Harih om

Vivekanatha - Brazil



For us the Gita Camp from April 2010 was an eye opener. We had come to the gurukulam for the first time and hadn't listened to Swamiji other than a few classes on the internet. The Gita camp helped us get *punarvartta nishchaya* and in getting the vision and the depth of the shashtra and of course how to handle the teaching. Just by watching Pujya Swamiji we can imbibe so much, what to talk of being exposed to the teachings of the shashtra in the classroom. The vision of the shashtra unfolded by Pujya Swamiji is unparalleled.

The insights into our rich culture we got through the shashtra and different programmes and talks on Indian music, dance, temple architecture, ayurveda were extraordinary. We feel it is difficult to get such an extensive exposure even being born in this culture. We are thankful to Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sakshatkratanandaji for designing and conducting such an extensive programme. This has indeed helped us to grow and appreciate our rich culture in the light of Vedanta. We remain ever saluting all the teachers.

The Satabhishekam in July 2011 was a big memorable event that we will cherish. We consider ourselves blessed to have been able to participate.

On the regular morning walks, there might have been over 100 elephant sightings as well as a number of sightings of the Indian Gaur (wild buffalo), herd of deer, wild dog and varieties of wonderful birds around the gurukulam. I recall, though with a chill, when I was caught in the middle between a tusker and an elephant size Indian Gaur, but still able to watch both the large mammals in their natural habitat.

The ambience of the Dakshinamurti temple and the Munagan temple is something we would remember always. We thank all co-students especially those in the medical and paramedical field for their support and help. While we may have grown older physically at the gurukulam we leave with the dear vision that we could never grow old at all. Om tat sat

Sreekanth and Saraswathi - Abu Dhabi

The time I spent at Anaitatti studying directly from Pujya Swamiji is the most useful and fulfilling part of my life. I will share with society, the knowledge that I have received from Pujya Swamiji. I am able to see *bhava* in all that is, and everything that happens.

N. Avinashalingam - Coimbatore

The 3-year course with Pujya Swamiji reinforced the paramount importance of adhering to *dharma* (virtuous exemplary values and attitudes) in general and one's own, *svadharma* (duties) in particular.

While *moksha*, in the form of *jnana* (knowledge), is summum bonum of human pursuits, a lifestyle committed to *dharma* empowers the individual to overcome feelings of guilt due to omission and/or commission committed advertently/inadvertently. *Dharma* also forms the basis of *adhikaritam* (prerequisite qualifications) in the form of *sadhana chatustaya* (4-fold qualifications) for *moksha*. Being an *adhikari* makes the individual available and consequently receptive of *shashtra jnanam*. Though *shashtra* enjoins complete freedom for *sannyasis* and *janis*, in their wisdom and for setting the right example, they would continue adhering to *dharma* working towards the welfare of all.

Naval Agnawal - Chandigarh

As long as a human body lives, there is always scope for mental maturity and spiritual growth. The study of Vedanta provides both the ancient tradition of teaching this precious philosophy has been brought by Pujya Swamiji to the modern era without compromising any aspect.

I observed that Pujya Swamiji would never miss the opportunity to glorify Sri Adi Shankara. This reverence of Swamiji depicts his humbleness and makes him an ideal teacher. The 3 year Vedanta study prepare one to be a good '*grihastha*', a Vedanta teacher, a social worker or a perfect renunciate, because time and again one learns here that 'I am not the karta.'

Vijaya Veeraswamy - USA

It has been a blessing to receive the knowledge and the vision of the shashtra from Pujya Swamiji during the 3 year course. This was the first occasion that I stayed away from home for a prolonged period of time. The course included students from all over the world with different backgrounds bringing along with them a diverse set of thinking. The course provided oneself the opportunity to be with oneself and resolve one's issues. This resolution makes one available to receive the teaching of the shashtra. Pujya Swamiji emphasizes the importance of *punarvartta nishchaya* (commitment with regards to one's goal in life) to successfully complete the course and live the vision of the shashtra.

Vishnu Vivekar - Nagpur

May we share the blessings that we have received with all those we meet. May our compassion extend to others in the way it has been extended to us during our time here. May the knowledge flow through us for the benefit of all. May we have the clarity to teach as we were taught. *Koti koti namams to Pujya Swamiji, Swami Sakshatkratanandaji and the parampara. Jai namo Mrinalini.*

ओम् नमो ब्रह्मादिभ्यो ब्रह्मविद्या सम्प्रदाय
कर्तृभ्यो वंशऋषिभ्यो महद्भ्यो नमो गुरुभ्यः ॥
ओम् शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Navaratri Puja at AVG, Anaikatti



Navaratri started on Oct 5, 2013. During the nine days of navratri, special sahasranama archana was done to Goddess Jnaneswari.

On Friday the Oct 11, 2013 very elaborate abishekam and archana were done for Goddess Jnaneswari.

On Oct 12, 2013 on Ashtami day, Sri Lalitha sahasranama archana was done for Goddess Jnaneswari.

On Oct 13, 2013 Sarasvati Puja was celebrated. Around 11 AM, all the students made an Altar with their books for

Sarasvati Puja. Puja was done for the books under the guidance of Pujya Swami Dayananda Sarasvati .

Pujya Swamiji delivered his anugraha bhashanam. He said that Goddess Durga is maya sakthi and Goddess of progress, wealth and power. In ayudha puja all the tools are kept out in puja and worshipped. Saravati is the Goddess of knowledge. She is worshipped on Sarasvati puja day seeking knowledge. On Vijaya dasami account opening puja is done at Gujarat. Sarasvati puja is celebrated at West Bengal, Maharastra and Tamil Nadu.



Led by Pujya Swamiji, the students chanted the Sarasvati mantra. The meaning of the mantra is that we pray Goddess Saravati for all sakthi and for all knowledge.

On Oct 14, 2013 Vijaya Dasami was celebrated. Punar puja for the altar of books was done followed by Pujya Swamiji's class and blessings.



Pujya Swamiji taught Bhagavat Gita bhasyam. This was followed by meditation class in which Pujya Swamiji taught contemplation of Vedantic teaching.

Pujya Swamiji congratulated Sri G. Krishnan of MKSG Memorial Trust, Sri S.N. Ramachandran and Smt Latitha Ramachandran for their initiative regarding panchayathana puja. He distributed murtis for panchayatana puja to the students who were willing to do that daily. The murtis were Shiva, Ganesha, Ambal, Vishnu, and Adhitya in salagram. He said that sodasa upachara puja or 16 steps puja should to be done daily to the murtis. He also gave them a book and DVD on the puja procedure to be followed.



The puja concluded with maha prasad.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Prasna Upanisad Class at AVG

Swami Sakshatkritananda taught Prasna Upanisad with bhasyam at AVG during September 2013. A brief summary of the classes is presented.

SHANTI MANTRA: Shanti mantra is chanted by the students as a prayer seeking a healthy body and a co-operative mind to pursue the study of Brahman.

INTRODUCTION: Prasna Upanisad appears in brahmana portion of Atharva Veda. It is an explanation of Mundaka Upanisad that appears in mantra portion of Atharva Veda. Six students who had done upasana on saguna Brahman approached the Teacher Pipphalada with samit in their hands. The Teacher asked them to stay in his Gurukulam for one year by observing brahmacharya and tapas and with sraddha. He told the students that he would answer their questions after one year, if he knew the answer.

PRASNA 1: After one year, Kabandhi, great grandson of Katya asked the Teacher Pipphalada, who is the cause of the srusti? The Teacher answered that Prajapati is the cause of the srusti. Prajapati made mithuna srusti of rayi (food) and prana (eater). Then he made loka srusti, kala srusti, anna srusti and praja srusti. Those who follow dharma and live a life of tapas

would be blessed with comfortable life here and hereafter.

PRASNA 2: After that, Bhargava Vaidarbhi asked the Teacher Pipphalada which Devatas sustain the body. Who among them talk of their glory? Which Devata is the greatest? The Teacher answered that 24 Devatas sustain the body. They are 5 karma indriyas, 5 jnana indriyas, 5 pranas, 4 antahkaranas and 5 elements (panca bhutas). All the Devatas talk of their glory. But Prana is the greatest Devata. Prana pretended to leave the body. All the Devatas understood that they cannot survive without Prana. They praised Prana. They prayed to Prana to protect them like a Mother protecting her child.

PRASNA 3: Then Kausalya, son of Asvala asked the Teacher Pipphalada what is the cause of Prana. How vyasti prana enter the body? How prana depart from the body? How prana divides itself and dwell in the body? The Teacher replied that para Atma is the cause of Prana. Due to sankalpa and karma phala, Prana enters the body. Like a King employing Officials in charge of certain villages, Prana made other pranas like apana, samana, vyana and udana incharge of certain functions while retaining some functions for itself. Prana in association with udana on the basis of the

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A Well Wisher

last thought of a departing person lead him to next birth. The benefit of doing prana upasana is krama mukthi. His progeny will continue.

PRASNA 4: After that, Gargyah, grandson of Surya asked the Teacher Pipphalada, which indriyas do not function during dream? Which indriyas function during dream? Who experience the dream? Who experience happiness during deep sleep? What is the adistanam for everything?

The Teacher replied that during dream, 5 karma indriyas and 5 jnana indriyas do not function. During dream 5 pranas and mind function. Mind experience the dream on the basis of earlier perception. Prajna experience the happiness as a result of karma phala. Para atma is the adistanam. Everything resolves in para atma. The one, who gets this para atma jnana, identifies himself with Para atma.

PRASNA 5: Then Satyakama son of Sibi asked the Teacher Pipphalada what phala is there for meditating on the first letter of Om. The Teacher replied that he will have next birth as a human being endowed with tapas and sraddha and enjoy manusya ananda. The student asked what phala is

there for meditating on the second letter of Om. The Teacher replied that he will go to deva loka and enjoy deva ananda for some time and will be reborn in this world. The student asked what phala is there for meditating on Om. The Teacher replied that he will go to brahma loka and get krama mukti.

PRASNA 6: After that Sukesa son of Bharadvaja asked the Teacher Pipphalada where is sodasa kala purusha. The Teacher replied that he is everywhere and he is also in the body. He said nirguna Brahman is sodasa kala purusha. All rivers get absorbed in the sea and lose their name and form. Similarly jiva on getting brahma jnana resolves everything in Brahman.

CONCLUSION: Upasana is a means to neutralise habitual wrong thinking about tat pada and tvam pada. This Upanisad uses adhyaropa apavada method to teach. Finally the Teacher said that he had taught all about Brahman and beyond that there is nothing else to be known. The students thanked the Teacher for helping them cross the ocean of ignorance. They did namaskar to the Teacher.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

साधूनां दर्शनं पुण्यं तीर्थभूता हि साधवः ।
कालेन फलते तीर्थं सद्यः साधुसमागमः ॥

sādhūnām darśanam puṇyam tīrthabhūta hi sādhaḥ |
kālena phalate tīrtham sadyaḥ sādhusamāgamaḥ ||

Beholding a saintly man is a blessing because the saintly man is himself like a pilgrim centre. The pilgrimage brings good results only in a due course of time. But the sermons of a saintly men are the instant blessings.

The Yoga and Sound Retreat



The Yoga and Sound Retreat was held at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam in Saylorsburg PA from September 6 to September 13. Approximately fifty students attended this camp. Some of the students in this camp were well accomplished in yoga and were themselves yoga teachers. Sri Ramanandji Patel and Pandit Mukesh Desaiji conducted this camp. Pujya Swamiji conducted classes on Vision of Vedanta every day. The yoga workshop was held at the Yoga Studio. On September 6th Suddhatmaji conducted the orientation. Sri Ramanandji Patel and Pandit Mukesh Desaiji are considered experts in their fields. They have developed a method of utilizing sound and yoga to promote deeper understanding of asanas, the breath, the sense and ultimately the self. Sound is also used to facilitate harmonious breath and movements.



The students were taught various musical compositions, some composed by Pujya Swamiji. Many mudras were taught. The mudras help cure some diseases and keep the body healthy. The class schedule was intense with two and half hours of sessions in the morning and in the afternoon.

Pujya Swamiji conducted classes on Vision of Vedanta. This was an overview of Vedanta and its significance to the





Mumukshu (seeker of knowledge). The human being is self conscious and self judgmental. This is a unique problem with the human being. A person is dissatisfied and cannot accept himself or herself. This results in helplessness and insecurity. Vedanta points out that the dissatisfaction is not because of the external circumstances, it is because of the ignorance of the person. It says, ' you are not what you think you are. You are already what you want to be. You are acceptable. This is the truth about you. You are trying to solve a problem that does not exist.' This is Self Knowledge. Vedanta teaches this knowledge. This is vision of Vedanta.

Pujya Swamiji conducted satsangs everyday and answered all questions from the students.

The Kitchen staff worked hard to serve delicious food. Priests Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa performed the pujas regularly.

Suddhatmaji and the staff, the teachers and the volunteers worked hard to make this camp a success.

The camp ended on September 13, 2013.

Reported by Arvind Bagal

Mahākumbhābhīṣekam Program Schedule

Monday, 3rd Feb 2014

6.00 am to 8.00 am

Anagha, Vighnesvara Pūjā
Dhana Pūjā, Gaṇa Pūjā

9.30 am to 11.30 am

Go Pūjā Mahāganapati, Homa
Muhūrtakṛmī, Homa
Śrī Navagraha Homa
Rakṣagraha Homa Vāstudevī
Mṛtāngghana
Prasādhābhīṣeka Yagyalā Alankāra

6.00 pm to 10.00 pm

Vighnesvara Pūjā Arkaśrāpaka
Rakṣābandhana, Kumbhābhīṣeka
Kālākṛmī
Yāgalālā Parvata
Prathama Kālā Pūjā
Parvathā Dīparādhana

Tuesday, 4th Feb 2014

8.00 am to 12.00 Noon

Devīya Kālā Pūjā Pārmohatī
Dīparādhana

5.30 pm to 9.00 pm

Tṛtīya Kālā Pūjā Pārmohatī
Dīparādhana

Wednesday, 5th Feb 2014

8.00 am to 12.00 noon

Caturtha Kālā Pūjā Pārmohatī
Dīparādhana

5.30 pm to 9.00 pm

Pañcama Kālā Pūjā Pārmohatī
Dīparādhana, Aṣṭādhana

Thursday, 6th Feb 2014

5.00 am to 9.00 am

Saṁtha Kālā Pūjā
Mahāpārmohatī
Mahāpārmohatī

Muhūrtā

6.30 am to 10.00 am

Yātrā Dīna, Chāta Udvāhana
Kumbha Sāhita Ājāya
Pradakṣiṇa

9.15 am

Vīradīva Mahākumbhābhīṣeka

9.35 am

Mohādhana
Mahākumbhābhīṣeka &
Mahāpārmohatī

10.00 am onwards

Open to Devotees for
all devotions

11.30 am to 12.15 pm

Pūjya Swamiji's
Anugraha Bhikṣana

12.30 pm

Mahāpārmohatī

4.00 pm

Mahābhīṣeka

5.30 pm

Śrīva Sahasraṁbhava Pūjā &
Mahāpārmohatī

ON TAT SAT



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Arsha Vidya Pitham

Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh
cordially invites you to the auspicious

Mahākumbhābhīṣekam

at

Śrī Gaṅgādhareśwara Temple

at the Ashram

Monday, 3 February 2014
to Thursday, 6 February 2014

Situated on the banks of holy Ganga is the temple of Śrī Gaṅgādhareśwara at Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh. The main deity is a svayambhu linga discovered in 1966 under a swarm tree near Ganga, and pūjā was performed by Pūjya Swamiji himself for a few years. The temple was later consecrated in 1975. By the benign grace of Lord Gaṅgā-dhareśwara and as envisioned by Swamiji, the ashram grew by leaps and bounds within a short span of time.

With expansion and renovation works, a second Kumbhābhīṣekam was performed in the year 1996. At that time the mūrtis of Gaṅgādhareśwara, Mahāganapati, Devīdāta Jyotirlinga, Aṣṭa Sankarācārya, and Śrī Āṇācārya were installed and consecrated.

Pūjā along with Vedic chanting and Ganga Aarti is an inspiring daily ritual in the ashram. In the very presence of Lord Gaṅgādhareśwara and Mother Haimavati more than 230 disciples have been initiated into the holy order of Saṁnyāsa by Pūjya Swamiji. Śrī Gaṅgādhareśwara continues to be a source of blessing and inspiration for all who come to Him.



"Only by consecration does even a traditionally sculpted idol become an altar of worship. This procedure of consecration is a series of steps of highly meaningful rituals and prayers. After the consecration, the daily worship keeps an altar alive with the presence of the Devata. Human emotions call for reconsecration every twelve years, the period that Jupiter (Guru) takes to complete a full round of the Zodiac."

"It is time now that we reconsecrate our altar, Lord Gaṅgādhareśwara on the banks of Ganga at Rishikesh."

Dayananda

With the grace of the Lord and Pūjya Swamiji's saṁkalpa, we plan the reconsecration on 6th February 2014.

There will be an elaborate pūjā and rituals conducted by 40 vaidiks before the Mahākumbhābhīṣekam ceremony for four days from 3rd to 6th February 2014. Naturally a ceremony of this scale will involve a large expenditure. Therefore, we appeal to you for your participation and generous donation.

The following sponsorship schemes are available:

1. Gold coated Kalasa - ₹ 2,00,000
2. Silver Kalasa - ₹ 1,00,000
3. Copper Kalasa - ₹ 25,000
4. Annadānam (per session) - ₹ 10,000
5. Rituals Saṁkalpa per day (up to 5 persons) - ₹ 5,000
6. Ganga Aarti per day - ₹ 3,000

The holy water kept in the kalasas during the ritual will be blessed by Homas and Chants for four days and offered to Lord Gaṅgādhareśwara & the parvata deities during the consecration. The sponsored kalasa will be given to the sponsor after the function.

Chalques/DD in favor of ŚRĪ GAṅGĀDHAREŚWARĠ TRUST

A net banking facility is also available at www.dayananda.org

Traversing Temples in Tamil Nadu

By Julie Carpenter, Mrinalini Rao and
Swamini Sumatmananda

It all started when at the end of a series of lectures on temples given by Dr. Nagaswamy, Pujya Swamiji stated, "It is one thing to see a temple, but to see that temple through Dr. Nagaswamy's eyes is quite another."

Dr. Nagaswamy is the former director of Archeology, Government of Tamil Nadu. His expertise touches every aspect of ancient temple arts, culture, history and architecture. When one sees a temple through Dr. Nagaswamy's eyes one appreciates the enormous hard work and workmanship of the thousands of artisans and labourers as well as the shraddha and bhakti of the kings reflected in the sculptures and structures. The sculptures come to life as Dr. Nagaswamy points out the craftsmanship, be it in the detailing of the eyes, the curve of a smile, or the appearance of movement in the stone form. Over hundreds of generations, temples have served as an irreplaceable sanctuary for people from all walks of life, an altar of worship, a place of fulfillment of wishes and desires as well as a reflection of the art, culture and times of that generation. Therefore, the opportunity to take a tour of Mahabalipuram, Kanchipuram and Chidambaram with Dr. Nagaswamy as our guide was a tremendous blessing. Swami Sakshatkritanandaji, Swami Shankaranandaji and about 50 to 60 three-year course students from Anaikatti set off on September 2nd. The first stop was in Salem for lunch hosted by Mr. Ravikumar at the LRN Residency, where all enjoyed a sumptuous lunch. Arriving at the Uthandi ashram we were greeted

by Swami Ishwaranandaji and enjoyed the warm hospitality of the ashram staff.

Mahabalipuram: Our first visit was to Mahabalipuram, also known as Mamallapuram. Dr. Nagaswamy transported us to back to the reign of the glorious Pallava dynasty spanning 600 years from 2 CE (Current Era) to 9 CE. The kings of this period, like the great Narasimha Varman and his successor, Rajasimha Atyantakama (a king of unlimited fancies), were lovers of Sanskrit and creative art. Dr. Nagaswamy explained that the temples here portray events described in the Mahabharata, as well as showcase the transition from rock-cut architecture to structural building.

Each sculpture in Mahabalipuram is unique. From the beautiful sculptures at Tiger cave and Arjuna's Tapas to the Five Rathas, Dr. Nagaswamy shared the symbology behind the sculptures, and vividly brought their stories to life. Arjuna's penance is a 90-foot long rock face with a fissure in the centre representing Ganga coming down. Arjuna is portrayed doing penance as Shiva presents him with the Pashupata astra while various beings and creatures, meticulously sculpted, look on.

At Mahishasura Mardini cave there is a powerful depiction of the fight between goddess Durga, and the buffalo-headed Mahishasura, symbolizing the triumph of knowledge over avidya. The mandapa is carved into the granite rock face of a hill and is considered as one of the best of the Pallava period.

Adivaraha cave is also rock-cut, dating from



the late 7th century. Bringing our attention to the subtleties of various sculptures, Dr. Nagaswamy particularly pointed to the sculpture of Lord Vishnu in the incarnated form of Varaha, the boar, lifting Bhudevi, the mother earth goddess, from the sea. In this scene the sculptor managed to portray the gentleness with which Varaha must have held Bhudevi.

In the same Varaha cave, the Trivikrama panel depicts Vishnu as the Lord of the three worlds. There is also a panel of Krishna lifting the Govardhana Hill, as well as Shiva as Gangadhara. The bhakti and skill of the artisans of the Five Rathas is particularly apparent. Each ratha, is carved from a single stone. While having nothing to do with the Pandavas, they are named after them. The largest, named Dharmaraja Ratha, is a three storied temple with an octagonal shikara. At the close by Shore temple, one finds Shiva and a reclining Vishnu. The wall of this temple, overlooking the Bay of Bengal, is topped with Nandi sculptures.

Kanchipuram: In Kanchipuram we first visited Kailasanatha temple, the most ancient surviving temple that has not had any alterations since 700 CE. Both its outer and inner prakaras contain sculptures that are of superb quality. Unique to this temple is the pradakshina route around the main sanctum, the entrance and exit for which are no more than tunnels, which some of us bravely crawled through. Legend has that this pradakshina symbolises circumambulation around Mt. Kailas.

It is said about this temple that Lord Shiva delayed the planned consecration date by a day. Shiva appeared to the builder of the temple, King Rajasimha, in a dream informing him that the consecration of this temple could not take place on the day that had been set as he had promised to attend the consecration of another temple that very day. Upon awakening the King made inquiries about the other temple. He discovered that the other temple consecration was for a temple built by a poor brahmana, piece by piece, over many years - completely in the brahmana's heart. The king was so inspired by the brahmana's bhakti that he proceeded to construct a physical version of the brahmana's temple.

At the Shiva temple of Ekambaranatha, Dr. Nagaswamy explained that when one worships the Shivalinga one invokes Shiva as the whole. That is Shiva, Brahma, and Vishnu - the creator, sustainer, and resolver. The base of the lingam

which is not visible, represents Brahma. The middle octagonal portion represents Vishnu and the top portion represents Shiva. Sharing this profound treasure of symbolism as per Agama shastra, he quipped that the so called division between Shaivites and Vaishnavites was due to not understanding this. It is said that at this temple Parvati performed penance and worshipped a Shivalingam made of sand in the hopes of gaining Lord Shiva as her husband. Wanting to test her devotion Shiva caused river waters to overflow and thereby threaten to engulf the Shivalingam. Using her body to shield it, Parvati embraced the Lingam, thereby saving it from destruction. Shiva touched by the gesture materialized in person and married her.

In Kanchipuram we experienced the kind hospitality of Br. Kumar Chaitanya and his family members who hosted all of us in their home for a delicious lunch that was generously sponsored by Smt. Karuna. Fortified by the meal we headed to Vaikunta Perumal temple. Here Vishnu is worshipped as Vaikunthanathan and his consort Lakshmi as Vaikundavalli. There are three separate sanctums on different levels, each one shows Vishnu in different forms, sitting, reclining and standing. There are many beautiful sculptures on the walls in the prakaram, and each pillar has a sculpted lion.

Although Kamakshi Amman Temple was not on our itinerary, Devi beckoned to us - something that was not to be resisted. We took darshan of Kamakshi, seated in a majestic Padmasana, a form signifying peace and prosperity, instead of the traditional standing pose. A notable feature of this present Kamakshi temple, is a Sri Chakra.

The last temple we visited in Kanchipuram was the Varadharaja Perumal Temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu. It is one of the Divya Deceams, the 108 temples of Vishnu believed to have been visited by the 12 poet saints, or Alwars. We glimpsed the smiling Lord, 40 feet in height and His assuring abhaya mudra. The temple shows the architectural skills of ancient vishvakarma sthapatihis in temple architecture. There is a 100-pillared hall which has sculptures depicting Ramayana and Mahabharata. There are many murals of the late Vijayanagara empire painted on the ceilings, as well as many beautiful structures. Another significant feature of the temple are the beautifully carved lizards, gilded with gold that are over the sanctum.

(To be continued..)

One Week Vedanta Retreat 2013 at Saylorsburg Gurukulam



The One Week Vedanta Retreat was held at Saylorsburg PA from September 14 to September 21. Approximately 120 students participated in this camp. Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati taught Mandukya Upanisad Chapter I verses 1 and 2. Swami Tattvavidananda taught selected verses from Panchadasi Chapter IV. Suddhatmaji taught chanting. Pandit Mukesh Desaiji conducted classes in Hindustani Classical Music. Yoga classes were conducted by Lance Daniels during the camp.

Registration was complete during the day on September 15. 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 in detail the two verses from the Upanisad. Mandukya Upanisad belongs to Atharva Veda. There are in all twelve verses in the Upanisad.



Pujya Swamiji expounded the meaning and significance of OM. The pratika (symbol) 'OM' stands for what was before, what is now and what will be in future. It consists of letters A, U and M. The letter 'A' is formed in the back of the mouth, 'U' in the center and 'M' by closing the lips in the front. It contains all the speech and sounds. It also identifies with the triplicity (group of three) in Vedanta. Pujya Swamiji then explained the four padas(quarters) as states



of waking, dream, dreamless sleep and Turiya(the state of pure consciousness). The three states are means for understanding as though the fourth state, Turiya.

Pujya Swamiji held satsang everyday and answered questions from the students.

Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati taught selected verses from Vidyarananya's Panchadasi. Swamiji explained the relationship between Jiva and Iswara. It is the relationship between the mind and the Soul. Iswara has a Shakti (power) of Maya. Maya creates Moha (delusion) which is the cause of desire, fear and bondage. Jagat and the objects are creation of Iswara. Jiva derives enjoyment from the objects. Jiva creates the happiness or unhappiness while the objects remain the same as created. Mind creates its own world and identifies with it. This identification is the cause of unhappiness, pain and sorrow. The Jiva creates duality of two kinds, one conforms and the other does not conform to the scriptural injunctions. The one which conforms should be kept in mind until Brahman is understood. Kama and Krodha have to be given up. The tendency of unnecessary thinking on objects can be removed by meditation. One has to understand that he is not the mind and that he can control it. Mental poise and



concentration is required to study the scripture which ultimately removes the notion of duality.

On September 17, Pradosha Puja was performed at the temple with Abhiseka for Dashinamurti.



On September 18, a ceremony for Ganapati Visarjan was performed by the students. It is traditionally a procession undertaken on the last day of Ganesha Ustav. In Mumbai and throughout the state of Maharashtra as well as all over India this is a very big festival. In Saylorburg Gurukulam Savithri Maniji started this ceremony last year. This is the second year it was performed in this Gurukulam. After the Puja, The Ganapati idols were taken in a procession on Gurukulam Campus. There was music and Dandia dances. The students chanted



“Ganapati Bappa Morya, Pudhachya Varshi Lavakar Ya” which translated from Marathi means, “Lord Ganapati we love you. Please come back quickly next year.” Procession stopped at the Ganga Building (Pujya Swamiji’s residence). Swamiji blessed the gathering from the balcony. Sawami Tattvavidananadaji and Swamiji Pratyagbodhananadaji joined the ceremony. The idols of Ganesha were taken to the water for Immersion. The Ganapati Visarjan was performed in the Ganga Pond behind the Temple.

On September 20, the students were pleasantly surprised when Jayendra Swami



of Rajarajeswari Temple in Bangalore visited Swami Tattvavidnanada's class in progress. Swami Jayendraji addressed the class for few minutes. He said that Raga (anger) is not just a passion but it is also an indication of attachment. So, convert the Raga into Prema (love).

Suddhatmaji taught the Vedic Chanting classes. The Chanting included Ganapati Atharvashirsha and Purusottamayoga.

Pandit Mukesh Desaiji taught the Indian Classical Music. On September 21, Panditji's students presented Puja Swamiji's composition of 'Ram Bhaje Shyam Manasa'

in Raga Durga, Adi Talam/Keharava. Swamiji was very pleased.

The kitchen staff worked hard to serve delicious 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.

The camp ended on September 21, 2013

Reported by Arvind Bagal



Being Alive to the Presence of Ishvara

"The various forms of worship we have, come from the vision of God that we have. Every form that is here is His form, every phenomenon that is here is an expression of the Lord. Being manifest in the form of various orders pervading the jagat, the Lord is infallible. In the awareness of this Ishvara, one sees the absence of alienation at any time. And this is how one can bring Ishvara in one's life."

Learn from one of the greatest living Masters of Vedanta
A profound thinker, writer and spiritual master for the mind, heart and soul

Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati



Being Alive to the Presence of Ishvara

Nov 18 - 22 2013 (Monday-Friday)

NMKRV Mangala Mantapa, Jayanagar, Bangalore

5.45 pm - 6.20 pm : Classical music recital

6.30 pm - 8.00 pm : Talk by Pujya Swamiji

All are welcome

Corporate Seminar

Spirituality in the Workplace

By

Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Nov 20, 2013 (Wednesday)

9.30 am - 2.30 pm

Best Western Premier La Marvella, #1, 14th Cross, South End Circle, 2nd Block Jayanagar, Bangalore

Contribution of Rs. 5,250/- per participant covers 3 months sponsorship per child.

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All India Movement for Seva is a public charitable trust founded in 2000 by Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, with a vision to transform society through a network of seva, of caring, to help each child to contribute to the progress of the nation. This is done through the concept of Free Student Home (FSH). AIM for Seva runs a network of 100 FSH across 14 states of India. It also manages schools, colleges, health care projects and special projects. More than 35,000 students have benefitted by this novel education project, with 6500 students in the system at any given time.

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Pre-announcement for a three year course in Vedanta and Sanskrit at Coimbatore beginning April, 2014

A three year residential course is planned to be offered at the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti PO, Coimbatore 641 108, INDIA starting in the last week of April, 2014

This is a pre-announcement for the course with a tentative timeline. Please await a confirmed course announcement inviting applications in a prescribed form soon on the Gurukulam website (<http://www.arshavidya.in>) and Newsletter.

Tentative Timeline

30-Nov, 2013	Course announcement inviting applications
31-Dec, 2013	Due Date for receipt of applications
15-Feb, 2014	Admission decisions
29-Apr, 2014	Three year course commencement (Last week of April)

Acaryas: Swami Sadatmananda Saraswati assisted by Swami Shankarananda Saraswati under the guidance of **Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati**

Contents:

- Vedanta: Important Upanisads and Bhagavad Gita and the first four sutras of Brahmasutra along with Shankara Bhasyam, and any other supporting texts deemed useful
- Sanskrit – Sanskrit language and grammar with a focus on Panini-Sutras
- Chanting
- Meditation
- Satsanga

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vedantacourse2014@gmail.com

Arsha Vidya Newsletter

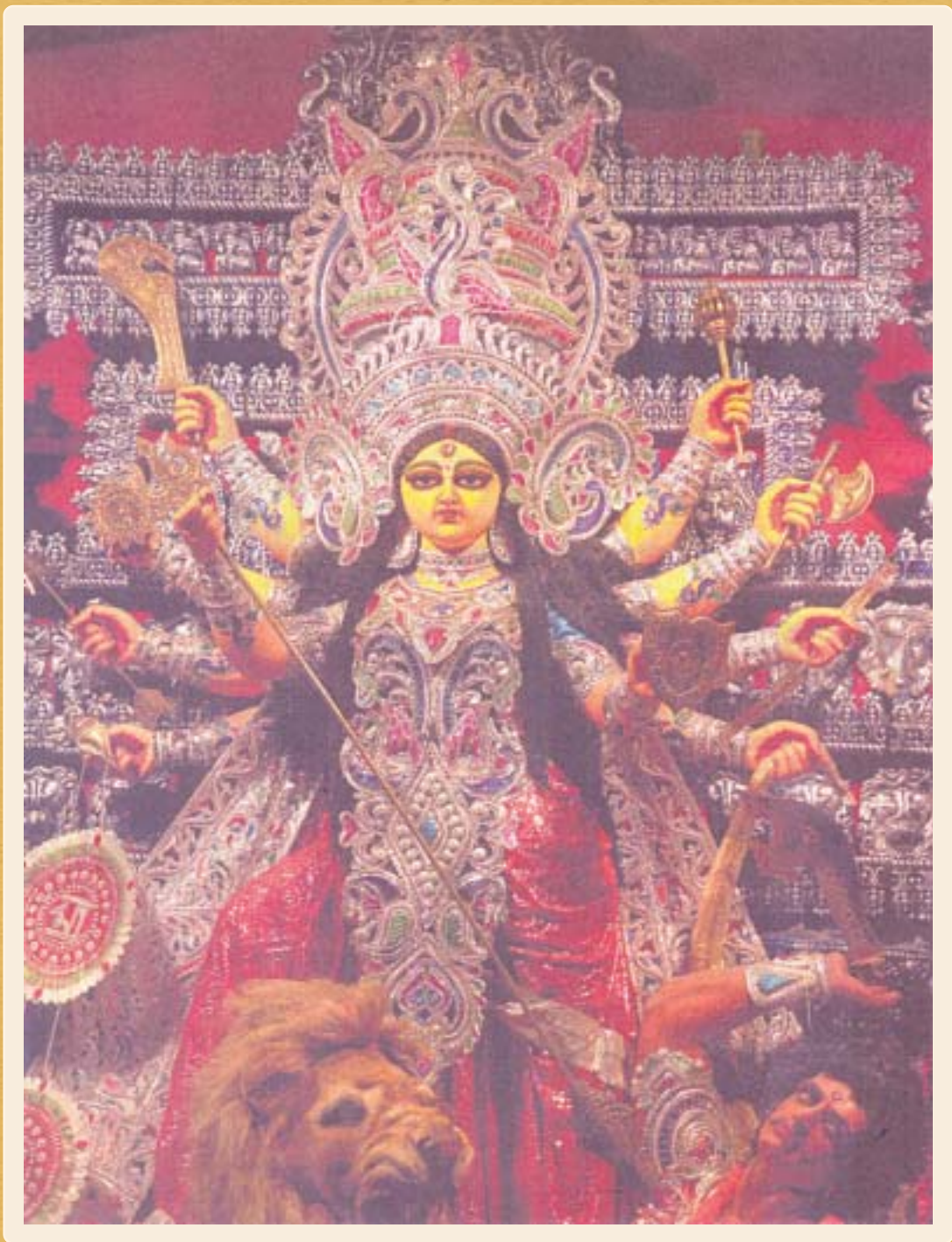
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