

Vedanta Camp in Arsha Gurukulam, Somangalam

Swamini Sumatmanandaji planned a three days retreat from 14 -16th Oct '2022 in Arsha Gurukulam, Somangalam, an ashram near Tambaram, Tamilnadu, An ideal place surrounded by mango groves with excellent facilities for temple puja, meditation, yoga and Vedanta classes. It was Pujya Swamiji's sankalpa to have this Arsha Gurukulam near Chennai and had blessed it in 2015 as a learning centre , with a digital library and research centre.

12 mumukshu students of Swamini from Hyderabad, Delhi, Chennai and Mysore gathered at Somangalam where Swaminiji taught the new, profound text, Kamalajadayitaash-takam dedicated to Sharada Devi of Sringeri and composed by the 33rd Sringeri Shankaracharya, in which there is a fervent appeal to Devi to bestow Sadhana Chatushtayam- a pure mind and Atma Vidya- instantly, without delay! This beautiful prayer seeks spiritual growth and is worth learning and reciting everyday at home specially by a serious spiritual aspirant.

Many students attended ' in person ' classes for the first time after 3 years of online Gita session. Face to face contact and direct class experience was simply awesome.

Swaminiji explained each word and the meaning beautifully from a vedantic angle and with such crystal clarity that we picked up all the 8 verses of Kamalajadayitaashtakam with ease!!

We were privileged to be the first batch of Vedanta campers at Somangalam Gurukulam which is managed with great devotion by Swami Shivaswaroopanandaji and well supported by Kannan and family. It has a very beautiful temple of Lord Vidya Dakshinamurthy and a small Ganesha shrine under a bamboo grove.

Swamiji performs morning and evening pujas and Guru padapuja meticulously. The early morning Rudrabhishekam and beautiful alankarams of the Lord done with great devotion are so divine.

We also had a few enjoyable interactive and fun filled sessions of Samskritam Sambhashanam taught by one cheerful Bhagini Vengalakshmi of Samskrita Bharati, Chennai. Every day ended with Satsang including elevating bhajans. In addition we chanted 6 chapters of Gita and also Lalitha Sahasranama and Vishnu Sahasranama parayanams. Amma also did brief meditation sessions each day.

One Satsang with Swami Sakshatkritanandaji , transiting via Ashram ,resident Acharya of Rishikesh Dayananda Ashram was a surprise bonus and a great blessing for all of us. In a brief address, Swamiji highlighted the value and role of self knowledge.

On the last day Mr Kannan and family were present and spoke in detail about Pujya Swamiji and vision and purpose of Somangalam gurukulam, they invited all to revisit.

We enjoyed the stay in this Gurukulam's serene pollution free atmosphere in comfortable single rooms with attached bath. Food was also good.

We were immersed totally in a different world for these three days, cut off from our role plays and worldly routines. From a spiritualistic atmosphere now we have to go back to daily routines. But the impact we have had will surely have its influence.

Just as we charge our laptops and mobile phones regularly, we need to recharge ourselves with spiritual energy by attending such camps. Such periodic camps centered on a Vedic lifestyle are rejuvenating and contribute to inner growth, clarity and peace.

We are thankful to Amma for giving us this opportunity. Thanking Mr Kannan and his family for all facilities and support.

Praying to Ma Sharada, Kamalajadayita, to bestow us with good health and deep shradha, to pursue this spiritual journey and to bless us with spiritual knowledge and alert mind.

विद्यां शुद्धां च बुद्धिं कमलजदयिते सत्वरं देहि ममम् ।

Om Tat sat. Om Sri Gurubhyo Namah.

- Report by Sudha Ramanathan and Jaishree Raghunathan, students of Swamini Sumatmananda

