

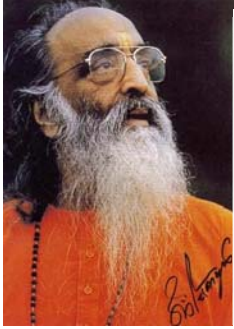


# Chinmaya Pradīpikā

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



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## The Master Speaks:

*The lamps are different but the light is the same; it comes from beyond. If you keep looking at the lamp you are lost, for from the lamp arises the appearance of plurality. Fix your gaze upon the Light and you are delivered from the dualism inherent in the finite body.*

**Swami Chinmayananda**

## CMSD launches *Chinmaya Pradīpikā*

With the blessings of **Swami Shantananda (CM Tri-state)**, we are pleased to launch *Chinmaya Pradīpikā*, a quarterly newsletter from CMSD. **Swami Sharanananda (CM Chicago)** will release the inaugural issue at the Eleventh anniversary celebrations of CMSD on January 28, 2012.

In this and upcoming issues, we will bring you news of CMSD's major events and celebrations, reflections from members of all ages, and other articles of interest. May this *pradīpikā* delight all.

CMSD Newsletter Team:

Venu Babla, Rajasekar Vaidyanathan, Suneethi Uppugonduri, Lakshmi Sukumar

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## Lakṣmī pūjā, Dīpāvalī lights bring festivities home



Member families conducted a *samūha Lakṣmī pūjā* on Friday, October 28, 2011 to celebrate *Dīpāvalī*. This year's venue, the spacious Encinitas Senior Center, allowed the function to proceed in a grand manner.

The sixteen-step (*śoḍaśopacāra*) *pūjā* was led by **Lakshmi** and **Srinivas Sukumar**, and *yajamāns* **Faith** and **Mohit Prasad**, **Manisha** and **Nikhil Varaiya**, **Anila** and **Raj Parikh**, **Heena** and **Suresh Panchal**, **Alpa** and **Mehul Shah**, and **Sangita** and **Purav Desai**.





Left to right: Panchal, Shah and Desai families; Faith Prasad; Parikh and Varaiya families

**Faith Prasad shared her experience:** “*Dīpāvalī* is a time of the year when we not only remember to thank the Lord for all his blessings, but also wish our friends and family good health and happiness. Being a part of the collective *pūjā* always makes the experience so much more fulfilling because it feels like you are part of a *yajña*, a cooperative endeavor for everyone’s well being. I don’t get that feeling as much if I were to do the *pūjā* at home by myself. *Dīpāvalī* is a festive holiday that is more fun when shared as a community.”

Mother *Lakṣmī* bestows the core values needed to make us eligible for higher knowledge. These values are the true wealth we seek when praying to goddess *Lakṣmī*.

*Dīpāvalī* is one of the major festivals observed all across India with many regional traditions and observances. In keeping with North Indian tradition, *Rāma*, *Sītā*, *Lakṣmaṇa* and a feisty *Āñjaneya* made their appearance amidst rows of lamps held by our children. (A skit portraying the legend of *Narakāsura* popular in South India was enacted earlier in the Sunday session.)

One of our own CMSD traditions is that new member families are welcomed into the Chinmaya fold on *Dīpāvalī* day with a sit-down dinner. This year was no different, and returning members prepared and served a grand pot-luck dinner to our new families. The function came to a close with an enthusiastic *Rāsa-Garbā* dance performed by many children and adults.

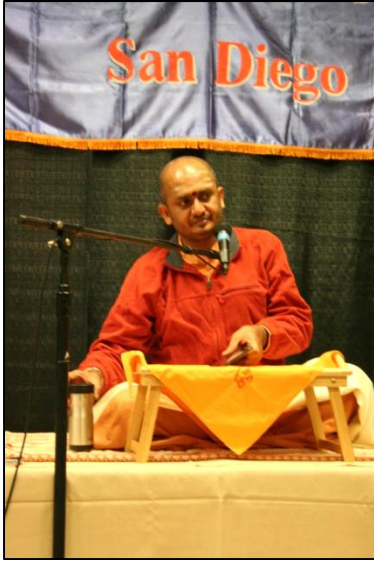


Left to right: Aditya as *Āñjaneya*, Krishna Babla as *Lakṣmaṇa*, Ravi and Nita Halker as *Rāma* and *Sītā*; Children enjoying *Rāsa-Garbā*



## Swami Sarveshananda visits CMSD

CMSD was privileged to host **Swami Sarveshananda**, *ācārya* of Chinmaya Mission Dallas-Fort Worth, on November 21-26, 2011. Swamiji conducted a *Jñāna yajña* on the *Mahābhārata* as well as a CHYK day camp.



### *Jñāna yajña* on the *Mahābhārata*

Swamiji conducted a three-day *Jñāna yajña* on the *Mahābhārata*, a somewhat unusual topic for a Vedanta discourse. The *Mahābhārata* is often called the fifth Veda, explained Swamiji, and it is said that what is not explained in the *Mahābhārata* is not worth knowing.

Eighth grader, **Nilay Shah**, who attended the *yajña* shares his reflections. “A key point from the *Mahābhārata* is that we all have freedom of choice. It is up to us to decide what path to take. *Kṛṣṇa* will not change our lives; rather he will change our view of life. *Kṛṣṇa* never says he will solve the *Pāṇḍavas*’ problems, but he is always there to support them and guide them through their problems.



“Another major point in the discourse was the idea of *trikaraṇasuddhi*, which means that our thoughts, words and actions should all be aligned. Lastly, *pramāda* is the repetition of the same mistakes in life and expecting different results. This is just the opposite of living consciously.

Swamiji’s discourse was amazing and thought-provoking, since he explained each idea thoroughly and with great clarity.”

### CHYK Workshop – CTRL+ ALT + DEL

by **Akalka Barath** (with contributions from **Parthu Kalva** and **Mayanka Barath**)

**Swami Sarveshananda** conducted a unique three-day workshop over the Thanksgiving Holidays for a group of seven young adults (3 High School seniors and four CHYKs) on the topic **Ctrl + Alt + Del**.

#### What is Ctrl + Alt + Del?

In computer terminology, this is a computing command which opens a Task Manager on the desktop. It allows us to handle the functions of our computers. We can stop the extraneous functions that are slowing our computers down, running the battery, and expending unneeded energy. From the first day, the students were guided by Swamiji to ask: What if we could apply this concept to our lives? How do we do it?



Often we can feel fatigued or trapped in our lives. We have everything we need to be physically comfortable, namely clothing, food and shelter. So the question we have to ask is - what are the mental roadblocks to our peace of mind and happiness?

**Swami Sarveshananda** addressed this point with our first task:

1. List your image of yourself, traits you may have.
2. List the traits you may wish to hide from the world.
3. List the traits we project to others, how others see us.
4. How does the world see us, and how do we want to be seen by the world?

The question is, what happens when there is disconnect in the fourth category? What happens when the way we behave in the world is different than how we want to be seen in the world? We become ruled by how we want others to see us, or how we want to see ourselves. Trapped by doubt and indecision, about our own characters, we see a huge disconnect between how we act or think internally (thoughts that are arrogant, petty, angry or selfish) and what we want to project as our nature to the world and our peers (confident, friendly, intelligent, and honest).

This is the roadblock to our happiness- a lack of integration. An integrated soul has no mental fatigue. A person who is integrated has the deep and abiding happiness found when there is no internal or external falsehood in thoughts or actions. Over the three days, these concepts were illustrated through many activities and discussion. It was also illustrated through film, as the group watched and analyzed the Dark Knight for its *Vedāntic* underpinnings.



Left to right: Parthu, Mili, Akil, Swami Sarveshananda, Akalka, Mayanka, Dheeraj and Nithin.

This camp was not just about finding flaws, but also about applying solutions. With Swamiji's vibrant sense of humor and straightforward approach, we evaluated our lives and the methods available to integrate our natures. How to achieve harmony between how we act in the world, and how we would like to act? We analyzed the intricate connection, seeing that what we eat (gross level changes to our body) and what we speak and act (changes to the mind) results in what is ultimately the quality of our thoughts and the most basic identification of the self (intellect). When we make mindful changes at each stage we can achieve the goal of self-improvement and self-realization.

The most important lesson to facilitate self-improvement is to grow conscious of every action. This can be achieved by training our systematic patterns and controlling our unwilled and unnecessary thoughts. Swamiji stressed the importance of constantly doing new and worthwhile things so that we do not get blunted by contact with the world. Instead we allow the challenges and opportunities of the world to hone us into sharp minds capable of handling all situations with strength of purpose and equanimity. Learning something

purposeful and taking action creates an active filing pattern of the brain. The ego is like a virus, it associates and identifies with a process, feeds off of it, and then strengthens itself. We must strive to remove the ego from our lives, alter our negative tendencies, and control the mind through working towards overcoming our flaws and leading a healthy lifestyle.

After the camp, we left with a renewed conviction to enlighten our lives. What are the things, the processes that need to be refined and improved? Where can I find the unnecessary things that need to go? Luckily, Swami Sarveshananda has meticulously and beautifully explained exactly what we need to do. His keen insight, charisma and striking sense of humor guided us to really reevaluate the goal of our lives. As we build our future, we have to know what kind of future we want to build for ourselves. Is it one with lasting peace and strength of mind, or is it one where we have to chase constantly for things which, or so we've heard, will give us at least temporary happiness? At the end of this camp, it is clear that the best idea is to be integrated completely: mentally, physically, spiritually with the message of *Vedānta*. And it's our duty to make it happen, no excuses!

## **Strī śakti workshop provides clarity of feminine principle**

On October 1, 2011, over twenty women participated in the **Strī Śakti** workshop, where **Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar** presented a morning of talk and discussion on *Śakti*, the sacred feminine power originating from Divinity. This workshop, exclusively for women, held at the Jewish Community Center in La Jolla, was well-timed to coincide with the *Navarātrī* festival when *Śakti* is celebrated.

*Śakti* is an exclusively feminine principle, synonymous with the great Devi, or the Great Goddess. It means "power" or "energy" derived from the verb root "*śak*," - "to be able," "to do," "to act." This power is witnessed in all the various phenomena of life and is the very life force of all living beings. The Power of Divine Mother is fully seen in Nature.

*Strī* 'in Sanskrit means woman. This word ' *Strī* ' consists of 'Sa', which stands for *Sattva guṇa* (purity); 'Ta', which stands for *Tamo guṇa* (inertia) and 'Ra', which stands for *Rajo guṇa* (activity).

The essence of femininity, thus, is the conglomeration of these three *guṇa*-s: *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

The three powers associated with **Creation**, **Sustenance** and **Dissolution** are

- Power of Knowledge- Knowledge- **Jñāna śakti**
- Power of Desire- Wealth- **Ichchā śakti**
- Power of Action- Constructive destruction- **Kriyā śakti**

The three powers are personified as the three goddesses.





To achieve anything in life we need these three powers which represent the three *guṇa-s*:

- *Sattva* - Purity attached to Happiness and Knowledge- Power of *Sarasvatī*
- *Rajas* - Passion attached to Action- Power of *Lakṣmī*
- *Tamas* - Ignorance/dullness attached to Laziness and Sleep- Power of *Durgā*

In Hinduism, every woman is said to be a manifestation of the divine *śakti*. The power of *Śakti*, the feminine principle, is believed to be directly present in creation in the form of our mothers, sisters, daughters and wives.

Feminine love is compassionate, nurturing and benevolent, but more than anything it is connected. Real feminine energy understands deeply the concerns of not only one another in the human family but in every soul, animal, plant and mineral. Its deep empathy vibrates through the hearts of all.

While *Śakti* is primarily present in woman, *Śakti* is also present in man. Interestingly, it is precisely these feminine qualities which are aspired toward in Hindu spiritual life - by both men and women.

The essence of the three goddesses that is intricately woven into the symbolism of *Navarātrī* was elaborated upon and discussed in small groups following the talk. In closing, the ladies each received a reusable cloth wipe to substitute for paper towels, in respect of Mother Nature.

**Sujatha Sonti** who attended the workshop commented, “The significance of *Navarātrī* is so much closer to me after attending this workshop. *Navarātrī* is no longer just a festival that we celebrate each year and another excuse to eat good sweets and wear new clothes. It represents the invocation of the feminine principles within us.”

## New Year's Eve *satsang*

by **Manisha Sinha**

On New Year's Eve, we traditionally watch an inspiring video of *Pūjya Gurudev* or *Guruji* followed by a discussion. Around 11:00 pm we chant *Viṣṇu sahasranāma* and end with *ārati* and *prasāda*. This year was no different. *Gurudev's* message in the video (**Planet in Crisis**) was very clear: Parents must have the clarity of thought to be able to guide and answer children's numerous questions. During the discussion, members shared their thoughts.

Lakshmi and Sukumarji shared their experiences and observation of various camps they attended with *Pūjya Gurudev* and *Guruji*. They talked about the relationship between *guru* and *śiṣya*; on how *Guruji* served *Gurudev* and how *Gurudev* cared for *Guruji*. It was a rare privilege of listening about their experiences because when they shared those moments it was like *Gurudev* and *Guruji* were around us.

As we got closer to 11:00 PM we chanted the *Viṣṇu sahasranāma* and welcomed the New Year with *ārati* and *prasāda*. All of us greeted each other and left looking forward to the **Japathon** at **Chinmaya Jyoti** the next morning.

## CMSD On-Going Events

### Festival Skits

As part of the Bala Vihar curriculum, children from different grades perform skits at the Sunday Assembly, in celebration of the various festivals. The legend of *Mahiṣāsūramardini* was performed by the fifth grade students on September 25, 2011.

Pictured here is Anusha Revuri as *Durga* with other students playing the roles of the various Gods.



### Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa

**The Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa for Chinmaya Jyoti was started in April 2008 on Srirāmanavami at Chinmaya Nivas (the Sukumar family residence). The Lord blessed us with the land shortly thereafter.**

**Each month a CMSD family hosts the Sundarakāṇḍa pārāyaṇa at their home where they are guided to perform the Hanumān Pūjā. Then all assembled sing the Sundarakāṇḍa from the Srirāmacaritamānasa, followed by Hanumān cālīsā, āraṭi and prasāda dinner. It is particularly heartening to see many Bala Vihar children participate in the singing and accompanying on various rhythm instruments with great enthusiasm. We will continue the pārāyaṇa monthly until the completion of Chinmaya Jyoti.**

Host families in the past months were:

September 2011 - Anila and Raj Parikh

October 2011- Sujatha and Shastri Sonti

November 2011- Rajesh and Rohinee Agarwal

December 2011- Sangita and Vinod Varrier

Rajit Agarwal and Rhea Agarwal are seen in the picture, performing the *Hanumān Pūjā*.



### Chinmaya Ślokāñjali

*Chinmaya Ślokāñjali* was announced on May 8, 2011 as part of the five-year centenary celebrations of our *pūjya Gurudev*. The aim of this program is to encourage children to memorize and correctly chant selected *śloka-s* and *stotrams*. CMSD's *Chinmaya Ślokāñjali* is a self-paced program and the *śloka-s* are grouped into levels according to difficulty. Testing is conducted bi-monthly by a select group of judges.

Currently sixteen children are enrolled. As of December 2011, **Ketki Chakradeo** is the first child to complete Level 1.

## CMSD in the Community

### Annadānam

Monthly food donations of milk, cheese and fruit are made by CMSD members to Third Avenue Charitable Organization (T.A.C.O.). The food donations are used to prepare breakfast and dinner on Fridays and Mondays respectively, for the homeless in San Diego.

### Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

As a part of the interfaith community, **Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar** represented CMSD and the Hindu faith in the Thanksgiving service entitled, “**Prayers of Thanksgiving, Recognizing the Blessings of Life**” on Nov. 17, 2011, at the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints in Rancho Bernardo. Various religious organizations, including Judaism, Baha’i and New Thought had representatives present to participate in a candle-lighting ceremony symbolizing oneness and unity as people of faith.

### 9/11 Memorial Service

On September 11, 2011, several members of CMSD participated in a late-afternoon program titled “**Responding from the Heart**” at Balboa Park, with representatives of local Christian denominations, Islam, Judaism and five other faiths.

“The event was designed as an alternative to other 9/11 services,” said **Rosemary Johnston**, one of the organizers and the executive director of Interfaith Shelter Network of San Diego.

“It was important that there was some sort of religiously inclusive event in a setting that wouldn’t be political or even patriotic, but focused on what we have learned in the past ten years in terms of mutual respect, the dignity of the human person, healing, forgiveness and the unity of the human family,” she said. Several choirs performed music and children read prayers from their respective faiths. Bala vihar students **Shivani Katbamna** and **Priya Garcia** chanted the *śānti pāṭh* followed by the English translation.

“Oh Lord, may all be happy, may none suffer from disabilities, may all see auspiciousness and may none be sorrowful,” said **Shivani Katbamna**.



*Lakshmi and Sukumar join other faith leaders of San Diego in a procession.*





## A gist of “Self-Unfoldment” by Swami Chinmayananda

by Indu Manickam



This book is a manual that helps us tune our body, mind and intellect equipment. It gives us the power to believe that the choice to be truly happy lies within each one of us. It shows an effective way of recognizing our strengths, removing our negativities, substituting them with positive values and thereby being happy. It enlightens us to the fact that happiness does not lie outside us but within.

It is a common misconception that our happiness comes from objects, people & events around us. The truth is that that happiness is very much a state of mind that is achieved when the mind is at peace. Happiness is our true nature; otherwise we wouldn't be always seeking it. So then there is no need to search for it outside of oneself.



Our lives are made up of a series of experiences. The *Aum* represents the pure consciousness that we are, which at the individual level is *Ātman*, and at the cosmic level is *Brahman*. The *vāsanās*, are the inherent, unmanifest tendencies, that when manifested through our **BMI (Body, Mind, Intellect)**, are our desires. **PFT (Perceiver, Feeler & Thinker)** are the roles we, the ego take on when relating to the world around us. **OET (Objects, Emotions & Thoughts)** are what make up our experiences of the world. Our *vāsanās* cloud our actions, thoughts and ideas. To summarize, we must realize that we are NOT this BMI. We are the consciousness, because of which the BMI is given sentiency.

(It is also important to be aware that there is a limited freedom – we are bound by our past deeds like a cow is to a post. But if we use our ‘limited’ freedom intelligently we can increase our ‘area of freedom’ and redeem ourselves from all entanglements. In our lives there is neither complete slavery - as we always have a choice in any situations - nor is there complete freedom. If we recognize this and the potential of our own actions, then we will make choices now to increase our freedom in the future.)



What stops me from knowing that “I” am *Brahman*? It is our absorption with memories of the past, excitement in the present, and anxiety for the future. So how do we remove this identification? We should surrender the results of our actions to God through *Karma Yoga*. The mind will be purified which means our *vāsanās* will automatically exhaust themselves. In *Karma Yoga*, we act in a dedicated, selfless manner by controlling our sense organs through the mind and focusing on a higher, nobler ideal. The pure mind is then ready to comprehend our true nature.

Our mind is simply defined to be our flow of thoughts towards the objects of the world. If the thoughts are agitated then the mind is agitated.

We must tame the mind by:

- Reducing the **Quantity** of thoughts: The Path of Dedicated Action (*Karma Yoga*)
- Improving the **Quality** of thoughts: The Path of Devotion (*Bhakti yoga*)
- Changing the **Direction** of thoughts: The Path of Knowledge (*Jñāna Yoga*)

To transcend the mind we need to quieten the mind (i.e. stop the flow of thoughts) and conquer our *vāsanās* (the cause of the flow of thoughts). Differences arise due to **different amounts** of *vāsanās*, as well as **different types** of *vāsanās*, manifesting as the various types of our thoughts. These differences are classified into 3 different **thought textures** called *guṇā-s* which govern our personalities.

1. *Sattva* – purity: thoughts that are pure and noble.
2. *Rajas* – passion: thoughts that are agitated and passionate.
3. *Tamas* – inertia: thoughts that are dull and inactive.

We experience the tormenting swings between joy and sorrow because of our identification with the matter layers... the five sheaths which can also be viewed as three bodies – gross, subtle and causal. If we reflect upon and detach ourselves from the influence of these superimpositions on our true nature, one can experience the pure Self as different from the waker, dreamer and deep sleeper.

In the microcosm, the ignorance of one's true nature is *avidyā*. **Non-apprehension** of one's true nature (rope) creates a **misapprehension** of the world (snake). In the macrocosm, the collective ignorance of all beings is *Māyā*. This is the creative power of the Creator and the cause of creation itself. *Māyā* manifests itself in the world as the three *guṇā-s*: *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Brahmaṇ* itself has no qualities or expression of its own; rather it is *Brahmaṇ* acting through *Maya* that 'creates' qualities.



The three-step process to eliminate the veiling of ignorance is:

1. Listening (*śravaṇa*)- attentive listening with one's mind and intellect to absorb Knowledge.
2. Reflection (*manana*) - reflecting on these truths contained in the Knowledge.
3. Meditation (*nidhidhyāsana*) - quiet contemplation to validate the knowledge with my own experience.

Meditation is a *sādhana* bringing *Bhakti*, *Jñāna* and *Karma* together and hence purifying the mind, intellect and ego. Sincere prayer stops the mind's agitations, and, study of the scriptures help transcend the intellect and selfless actions crush the ego.

Happiness is there where thoughts are not. "THINK!" Swami Chinmayananda says. Swami Sivananda says, "This little illusory "I" must be thoroughly annihilated beyond resurrection. This is the teaching of Vedanta."

A Self-realized person thinks the body is tired and **it** needs to rest. An ignorant person thinks I am tired, **I** need to rest. Never despair on the spiritual path. Be patient, cheerful and surrender to the Lord. *Om Tat Sat*.



## Our New Members Speak

Starting this year 2011-12, 73 new children are enrolled in Bala Vihar. With their addition, CMSD now has a total enrollment of 174 families and 257 children.

This is what some of our newest members had to say about their experience in the Mission.

We are delighted to find that Chinmaya mission activities are as much for parents as for children.  
- *Sumathi Iyengar*

My Pre-K child is always happy coming here.  
- *Hetal Babla*

We can now celebrate festivals and know the real value behind observing them.  
- *Madhuri Kondakalla*

We are so fortunate to know about CMSD! ALL the functions are a pleasure to attend.  
- *Lakshmi Sri Jyothsna Chunduri*

I am grateful for being able to study the Gita.  
- *Daisy Mishra*

Now we have answers to all our childrens' questions about our culture.  
- *Ramadevi Alla*

Bala Vihar and Dhvani helped my child greatly in adjusting to San Diego.  
- *Ramya Mahesh*



## I am a Chinmaya kid!!

**"Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit." - Swami Chinmayananda**

CMSD's Bala Vihar children wrote essays on the theme "I am a Chinmaya kid" in honor of Pūjya Gurudev on his *Mahāsamādhi* day, Aug 3, 2011.

Here is a snapshot of how our children see themselves.

"...As a Chinmaya kid it is important being a good person, which means to be kind, respectful, helpful, caring, and to always share." – *Anisha Sonti*

"...I am a Chinmaya kid because Bala Vihar is like another home for me....I am a Chinmaya kid because every week I go to Bala Vihar, even if I am tired, or don't feel my best. Almost every day I do my prayers and practice things I learn at Bala Vihar. I smile a lot, help other people, and try to do community service. Bala Vihar taught me to pray to Lord Shiva if I am scared. It taught me that material happiness is not permanent. It has taught me to be a better person." – *Solana Garcia*



"...I believe a Chinmaya Kid is someone who can inspire and assist others by implementing qualities such as honesty, integrity, and patience in themselves. A Chinmaya Kid has an undying hunger for knowledge and has the utmost willingness to serve others. A Chinmaya Kid is the embodiment of confidence and leadership; with this, he or she is always smiling and ready to work. I am a Chinmaya Kid because I strive to attain these qualities each and every day of my life and will not quit until I know I have made a difference." - *Spandana Madhava*

"...I like being a Chinmaya kid because we read scripture stories. In fact, because of the lessons in the stories, it helps me in day-to-day life and in school. Take *Rāma*; he had so much strength when he went to the forest for 14 years! He didn't argue or feel bad about what happened. Being a Chinmaya kid means that I fulfill all my duties and have a positive attitude." – *Spatika Madhava*

"...I am a Chinmaya kid because I attend class every Sunday, I attend important *pujas*, *Swamiji's* birthday celebrations, Chinmaya camps and more! I have learned so much about God that I feel there is nothing more to learn about any great living person on Earth." - *Smriti S. Panchal*

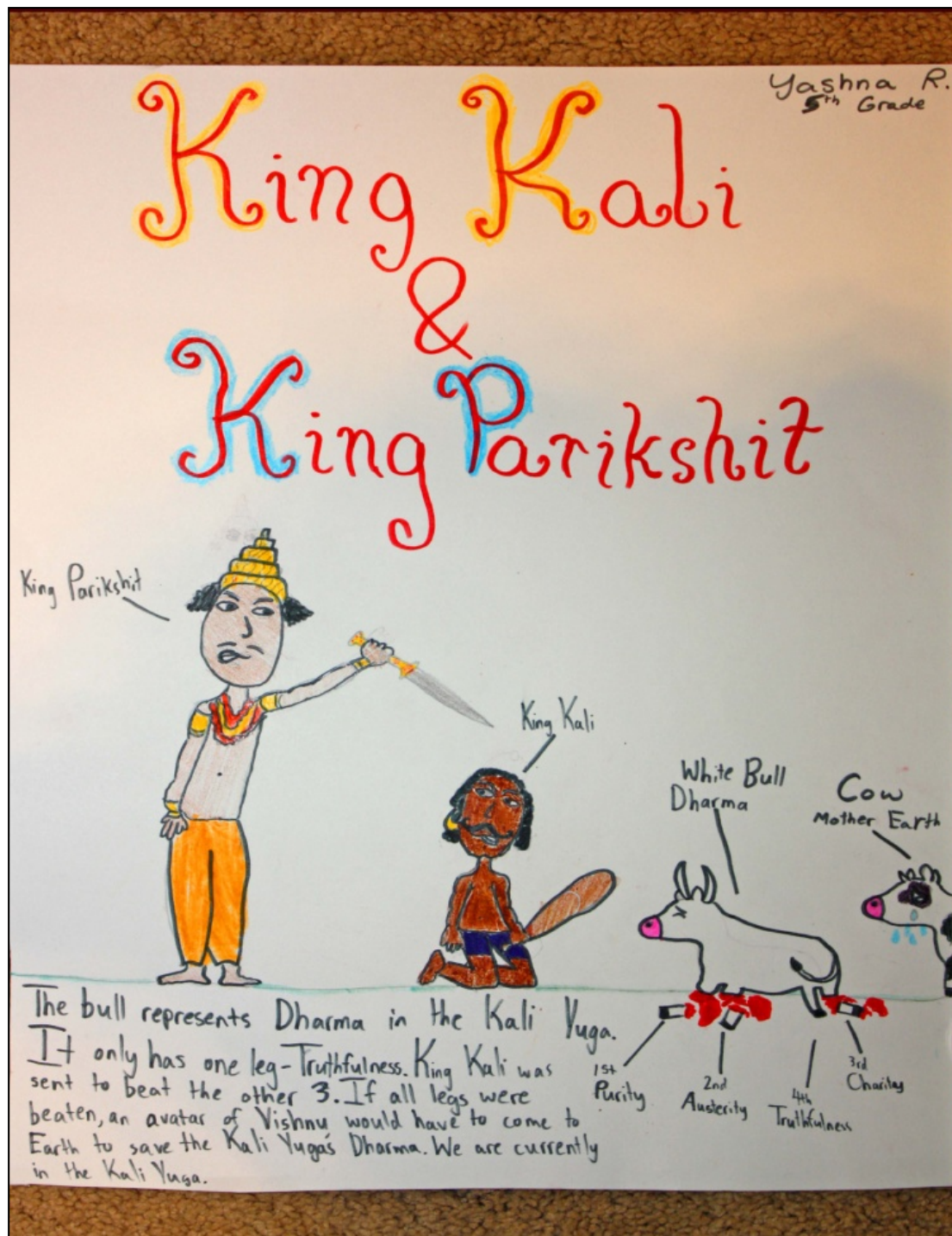
"...I love going to Bala Vihar, where I can learn about my culture and scriptures while making friends. Well, not friends really, more like one big Bala Vihar family. I truly work to live by that pledge I make every Sunday morning, and I have watched that first line grow and glow in myself and others. When someone close to me, besides my sisters, has a birthday that weekend they call up siblings to sing for them, I still go up because they are my family..." - *Priya Garcia*



## Bhagāvatam Scene

The Bala Vihar classes encourage the children to depict the stories and teachings through arts and crafts as a way of reinforcement and also allow expression of the various skills of these children.

A scene from *Bhāgavatam* is presented in this drawing by **Yashna Rajaratnam**, Grade 5.



## Wisdom of the *Gītā*

by **Mekala Sridhar**, Grade 10

The eighth *śloka* of the *Gītā dhyānam* talks about how through the grace of God a mute will be able to speak and a man without feet will be able to run across mountains. This is something that is very humbling to realize and internalize. Often times we take the power of the Lord and our very existence for granted, and we don't keep in mind that nothing can be accomplished without God. On the same note, nothing is impossible when one has the grace of God. This awe-inspiring truth gives us faith in the Lord, and this is very important. Without faith, nothing is possible.

We have so much faith in doctors and take whatever pills they give us for all our ailments, completely trusting them to give us what's right. In fact, we have so much faith in the doctor that we feel cured even when we have just taken a placebo! If we have that much faith in God and his words, all the miracles proclaimed in this *śloka* will come true.

There is also a deeper meaning to this *śloka*. This *śloka* says that in life, we are like a mute and lame man, unable to do anything. But once we realize the power of God (in this case, by reading the *Bhagavadgītā*) we will be able to speak and run, because we will be filled with the divinity of the Lord.

In Chapter 2 of the *Bhagavadgītā*, one of my favorite verses is the one about *Samatvam*, or equanimity. It says that one must never be overly happy or extremely depressed, and always be level-headed. You must always do your duty and do what's right. Once an action has been completed it is pointless to think back to it and worry about the results. This is because you have no control over the results. You can't change the past, so it only makes sense to live in the present and neither grieve over the past nor be anxious for the future. This will also help you be unattached. I find this idea to be very applicable to my life, and find it quite liberating when I'm not bound by the past or the future.



*Don't tell God how big your trouble is.*

*Tell your trouble how big your God is.*

- **Swami Tejomayananda**

