

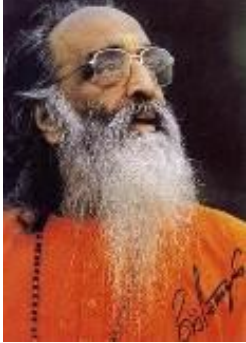


Chinmaya Pradipika

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



Jan 2015, No. 13



The Master Speaks:

*It is not sufficient just to read, think and meditate;
you must live fully the life of spirituality.*

- **Swami Chinmayananda**

In this issue of *Chinmaya Pradīpikā*

This quarter commenced with *Sarasvati pūjā* and *Vijayadasami* celebrations. *Samskr̥ti Nilayam* was filled with a festive mood with joyous *Dipavali* celebrations followed by a Hindustani flute concert, and music and dance workshops by **Chinmaya Naada Bindu** artists.

The highlight of the issue, however, is the "Overview of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*" - a week-long *yajña*- by CM Acharya, **Swami Ramakrishnananda**, and his "Learn *Samskr̥tam* joyfully" workshops in November.

Finally, a perfect finale of 2014 was the *Gaṇapati Homam* and *Śrī Sudarṣana Homam* on Christmas Day by **Pandit Ravichandran**.

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Vijayadasami</i> Celebrations	2
<i>Dīpāvalī</i> Celebrations	3
Chinmaya Naada Bindu enralls	7
Swami Ramakrishnananda endears	10
<i>Śrīmad Bhāgavatam</i> - <i>Jñāna yajña</i>	10
Joyful <i>Samskr̥tam</i>	12
CMSD on-going events	14
BV Students' corner	15
Christmas, the Chinmaya way!	17
CMSD 2014 Highlights	19

Dīpāvalī lights at *Chinmaya Jyoti*



Sarasvati Puja and Vijayadasami at Chinmaya Jyoti



On October 2nd, *Sarasvati pūjā* was performed and on October 3rd on the auspicious day of *Vijayadasami*, members of Chinmaya Dhvani Youth choir learn a new bhajan in praise of Mother *Sarasvati*.

As is the tradition at CMSD, all Bala Vihar *sevaka*-s and *sevikā*-s seek the blessings of Mother *Sarasvati* and Pujya Gurudev, and recommit themselves to *sevā*, on *Vijayadasami*.

Also, group chanting of *Viṣṇu Sahasranāma* by all members, every Saturday morning, was initiated on this day.



Dīpāvalī celebrations at *Chinmaya Jyoti*

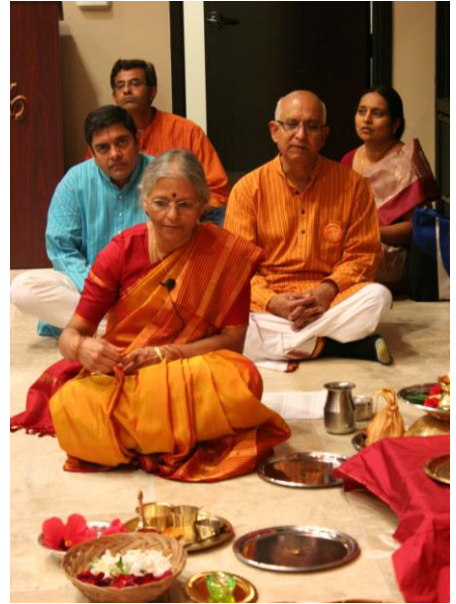


On the evening of Friday October 24th, *Dīpāvalī* was celebrated at *Chinmaya Jyoti* with *ṣoḍaśopacāra pūjā* of *Lakṣmī Devī*, *saṅgīta sevā*, *nṛtya sevā*, *Garbā* dance, and *prasādam* dinner.

Smt. Lakshmi and Sri. Srinivas Sukumar led the *mukhya yajamāns- Vasanthi and Divesh Anireddy* and *Shobana and Jayantibhai Patel*, along with their families, through the 16-step worship of *Lakṣmī Devī* in Pranava Nilayam, while other members followed along.

In keeping with CMSD tradition, existing members cooked a grand *prasādam* dinner to welcome new members of the CMSD family.





Upon culmination of *Lakṣmī pūjā*, 7th Grade Bala Vihar children enacted the story of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Narakāśura*.



Divya Bhatia "... The play by the 7th graders reminded us about the true reason to celebrate *Dīpāvālī*. We ended, as always, with a scrumptious feast. I am very grateful to have spent such a joyous occasion in a



community that celebrated *Dīpāvālī* in the true spirit of devotion."

Members share their impressions about the event in the comments below:



Monika Verma "...Sitting and doing *Mahālakṣmī pūjā* in Pranava Nilayam felt like goddess *Lakṣmī* was personified there. The entire energy was very auspicious."

Kavitha Atti "...A very lively evening ensued after the puja, with melodious renderings by Chinmaya Dhvani, a beautiful play of the *Narakāśura samhāra*- performed by our 7th graders, and raas-garba. The memorable evening culminated with a feast put together and served by our *Devī*-s."

Divija Anireddy "... It was very enlightening to witness the community spirit and the lights (at CMSD)."





Rohit Loomba "...The soothing blend of the various art-forms was refreshing and blissful. The music and dance rendezvous continued with a beautiful *garbā* in the courtyard while some of the Bala Vihar kids performed their skit on Lord *Murāri*. ... The existing pool of CMSD members welcomed the new members by serving them home cooked delicacies with love and gratitude to the feeling of *Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam*.

May this *Dīpāvali* illumine the Self to dedicate this life to a higher purpose with love and gratitude to all!"



Chinmaya Naada Bindu Enthralls!

CMSD received a grand introduction to Chinmaya Naada Bindu (CNB) with the visit of two of its Directors – **Smt. Ramaa Bharadwaj and Sri Himanshu Nanda**, and **Sri Anutosh Dagharia**. They presented us a musical cornucopia of Dance, Flute and Tabla workshops and an outstanding Flute and Tabla recital. At the Sunday Bala Vihar session on November 2nd, they described in detail the CNB facility in Kolwan near Pune, where various residential programs are conducted in a *typical Gurukul* fashion, lasting between one month and three years. They also shared various *Seva* and outreach activities that CNB conducts in villages near Pune.



Several CMSD members shared their joyous experiences from the workshops:

Dance Workshop - 'Advaita in Abhinaya' by Smt. Ramaa Bharadwaj

Aditi Puttur (Grade 9) – "...The workshop was simply a joy to attend. Over a period of seven hours, we learned different aspects of *Abhinaya*, or the art of conveying emotions. This was done through a dance on the *Advaita* philosophy preceded by other fun activities that included portraying "the walk" of a jaywalker, a lady in a kimono, or even a soldier. We also experimented with different ways to convey one word, namely "No". Finally with these principles, we plunged into the dance choreography. This beautiful dance touched our hearts, by conveying that everything was 'The One', no matter the caste, no matter the species. This workshop was very helpful and fun, and has most definitely made me a better dancer."



Aparna Sundaram – "... Ramaa akka taught us a *saṅkīrtanam*—"Brahmam Okaṭe". She first expanded our knowledge on the word "*Abhinaya*" and gave each one of us a role to act impromptu. She made us say the dialogues just like theatrical play and asked us to act out our dialogues. She gave a meaning for every word and taught us the *Abhinaya* for the inner depth of the song...Ramaa akka made this workshop as an eye opening (experience) for me. At the end of the workshop, I never felt like wrapping up, and going home...."



Divya Bhatia (Grade 9) – "I had the most amazing experience... (Ramaa Aunty) covered almost all aspects of dance in general; from theory to the dance piece itself. She focused on each and every one of us, perfecting each movement and every emotion. In just one day I was introduced to different techniques in dance that I had never heard of before. We learned an *Abhinaya* piece, " *Brahmam Okaṭe, Para-Brahmam Okaṭe* ", composed by Śrī Annamacharya and choreographed by Ramaa Aunty. I am very grateful for this rare opportunity to dance under the guidance of a teacher of such caliber."

Meenal Chakradeo – "... Ramaa-ji started the workshop from the basics of

Abhinaya and led us all the

way to expressing *Advaita*. This 6-hour dance intensive was truly one of a kind. Her approach to teaching, choreography and concept clarification was so different yet so perfect. Ours was a mixed group with dancers at various levels of expertise and she challenged us all at our levels and helped us learn and move on to the next one. ... It was truly a privilege to learn from Ramaa-ji and I am looking forward to many more of such opportunities.”

Flute Workshop by Sri Himanshu Nanda



Surabhi Kulkarni (Grade 10) – “This workshop was an amazing experience. In the beginning we learned techniques to increase the breath. Although, I had learned some things about Hindustani Classical Music, I never understood them properly until the workshop. I had a revelation when Himanshu uncle explained how all of the *alankaars* are based on mathematical permutations and combinations. ..In just three hours I learned countless new things that are definitely going to further my progress in the future.”

Tabla workshop by Sri Anutosh Dagharria

Omkaar Kulkarni (Grade 5) – “*Awesome!* That was the first thing that came to my mind after the tabla workshop. At first I had no idea how I would be able to play tabla for two and half hours (I had a one hour tabla class right after the workshop), but soon I found that Anutosh uncle’s workshop helped me in my next class and would also help me in the future...Anutosh uncle taught us in a way that was fun, interesting, and packed with information.”



Music Quotient to Happiness Quotient (MQ2HQ) workshop – by Sri Himanshu Nanda

Ravi Kulkarni – “...-why there are seven *svara-s* in Hindustani music? ...what are the attributes of a *rāga*? Which bird/animals make sound of each of the *svara-s*? In this workshop, **Himanshuji** answered not only these questions but with very simple experiments he also taught the participants how to listen, and showed the link between music, concentration and meditation... One of the other takeaways was how the seven *svara-s* are intertwined with everything in the universe and yet when we just change one of them how vividly they show the emotional range. To demonstrate this, Himanshu-ji exhibited calmness/peace through *rāga Bhūpālī*, longing through *Śivarañjani*, and gloom through *Śuddha Bibhas*. And finally, to inspire the children and adults he talked about great artists and their work in promoting the culture of India.”



“After enjoying the wonderful flute concert by **Shri Himanshu Nandaji**, director-music, **Chinmaya Naada Bindu**, I was driven to join his workshop next day, full of curiosity and keen to hear and learn whatever he had to offer through his music appreciation workshop, **MQ 2 HQ**. Right at the outset, Himanshuji encouraged full participation from the audience consisting of adults as well as many children. His interaction with the audience, especially the younger ones, intermingled with his great sense of humor, turned this workshop into a very lively and joyful event.

Himanshuji talked about many different and unique aspect of Indian classical music starting with distinction between two types of sounds, *Āhat and Anāhat*. He described a simple technique and encouraged us to try to experience the Anaahat, the cosmic vibration (the humming sound) which is ever present, and can be heard by yogis all the time, and by others too, sometimes. He explained how our *prāṇa-s* are source of our power and how a musician learns to control the *prāṇa*. He mentioned how a great performer on stage is essentially in a meditative state where the mind ceases to exist and the performer becomes merely an instrument in the hands of the higher power. Himanshuji highly recommended “music bath” once or twice a week. Like anything else in the creation, he categorized music into 3 types: *sāttvic*, *rājasic* and *tāmasic*. He asked everyone to join him in singing the seven *svara-s* at different tempo. This was truly a daunting task for most of us but I have to admit that we had fun. He then explained the concept of ragas while illustrating the specific mood aspects of several ragas on his flute. He encouraged, especially the younger ones, to listen and learn to identify the sounds of various instruments of our classical music on the internet. He played a piece of music and encouraged his audience to identify all the instruments in there.

Finally he talked about the various programs, camps and facilities at Chinmaya Naada Bindu and encouraged us to participate in 7 or 21 days summer camps. He concluded his workshop with the mention of several legendary masters of Indian classical musical including his own guru Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia and how inspiring their lives, their dedication and their hard work are. Overall, it was a great workshop, with the well balanced mixture of information, insight, interaction and some adventure as well.”

-Alok Gupta



Himanshu Nanda and Ramaa Bharadwaj gave a detailed account of all the CNB programs to the CMSD members at the weekly Sunday morning session.

Swami Ramakrishnananda Endears!

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Jñāna yajña

Between November 16 – 22, CMSD members were blessed to host **Swami Ramakrishnananda, Acharya of CM Nagapattinam**. In the evenings Swamiji spoke on the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* where he kept the “Full House” of 100-or-so attendees educated, engaged, inspired, tickled, entertained and spell-bound by the stories and the import of the *Bhāgavatam*! Swamiji also held daily morning classes on Learning *Samskr̥tam* Joyfully (intermediate and advanced students) and a full-day Saturday workshop on *Samskr̥tam* for families. All the events were well attended and well received.

On the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam yajña*, **Meera Nichani** writes: “...Little did I know that I was going to be blown away by Swamiji. Unlike other *Bhāgavat Saptāh* that focus mainly on stories, Swamiji also gave us an academic overview of the scripture, breaking it down to each canto, explaining the purpose and the logic of story flow, while at the same time filling awe and *bhakti* in our hearts with the storytelling. We cannot wait to see Swamiji again and wish for the next year to hurry up and get here.”



Zil Arya (Grade 5) was one of many young children who attended. She joyfully recalls...

“Last week Swami Ramakrishnananda was here in San Diego. He had a 7-day lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and I was there the entire week. His lecture was very interesting and funny, and there was a lot of learning too. He taught about *Svāyambhu Manu* and *Śatarūpā*. He talked about how in they led their life with their children. He also told us who the children married when they grew up. We had a lot of fun with Swamiji. I think I was the center of attention when Swamiji said EXCUSE ME. The Sanskrit class was very fun too we did a lot of laughing and learning there too. I can't wait for Swamiji next visit next year. I think if you didn't come this year you should definitely try come next year. Hari Om!”



Rajasekar Vaidyanathan adds: “...While covering the stories, it was Swamiji's unique narrative style, convincing role-play, thoughtful messages and hilarious jokes that kept memories fresh and the audience engaged and entertained. One memorable incident was when Swamiji had the *karma*-soaked *Prācīnabarhis* exclaim that he would rather break his head in Upanishad class than make sense of the tangled parable of *Purañjana*, the whole audience could only explode with laughter!! Everyone's attention was thus held captive to then receive the esoteric significance of the *Purañjana* tale.”

T.R. Sethumadhava, while making comprehensive notes, lists some of the valuable lessons Swamiji drew out of the stories for our benefit. Among them:

From the story of *Parikṣit*: “Teacher will appear when student is ready...We need to be honest like *Parikṣit*, observe patience like *Śamīka ṛṣi* and avoid impatience and anger unlike *Śṛṅgi*.”

From the story of *Kardama*, *Kapila* and *Devahūtī*: “The duties of life must be performed by everybody. Work must be looked upon as worship...There is always God’s blessing for good cause. We need to obey parents. Pray to God like *Kardama* and support spouse like *Devahūtī*.”

From the story of *Dakṣa prajāpati*, *Sati* and Lord *Śiva*, “Do not take any decision when you are emotional... Our own people are the ones who won’t listen and cause trouble. Do your part and participate in the crisis, but don’t involve yourself.”

On the story of *Dhruva*... “If we know that it is a good path, we need to march ahead with do or die attitude.”

Nikhil Varaiya writes, "I found the lectures to be extremely well-organized. Swamiji was able to provide an overview of the comprehensive text and the key characters. Especially valuable were the lessons he drew for us in the world today. His sense of humor was contagious, and His PowerPoint presentation was outstanding!”

Swamiji also addressed the CMSD Sunday morning session before leaving for the airport.



Learn Samskrtaṁ Joyfully

ठं ठं ठं ठं ठं ठं ।।

(thaṭhaṁ thaṭhaṁṭhaṁ thaṭhaṭhaṁ thaṭhaṁṭha)

You are probably thinking, *what are these meaningless sounds?*

During Swami Rāmakṛṣṇānandaji's "Learn Samskrtaṁ Joyfully" workshop for beginners, a crowd of excited learners laughed our way into a better understanding of Sanskrit. For about 5 hours, he talked about the different aspects of Sanskrit that make it such an interesting and joyful language to learn.



Swamiji gave 8 aspects including *Beauty of the Sound, Influence, Synonyms, Word Formation, Many Interpretations, Highly Poetic, Well Structured, and Value Based Language*. The odd phrase above is part of his explanation for how *Samskrtaṁ* is highly poetic. Swamiji told us a story with the phrase. *Kālidāsa* and other poets got an assignment from their king to compose a poem which must include this phrase as the last line. Ingenious he was, as *Kālidāsa* created a story, for the first three lines of the poem, about when *Śrī Rāma* came back to Ayodhya. During *Śrī Rāma*'s coronation celebration in the city of Ayodhya, a golden pot fell down the stairs from the hands of a proud and happy young girl.

The rolling pot made the sound ठं ठं ठं ठं ठं ठं.

The completed poem was:

*rāmābhiṣeke madavihvalāyā hastāccyuto hemaghaṭastaruṇyāḥ ।
sopānamāsādyā karoti śabdaṁ thaṭhaṁ thaṭhaṁṭhaṁ thaṭhaṭhaṁ thaṭhaṁṭha ॥*

In this way a meaningless sound was made meaningful, with the power of poeticism in Sanskrit. Another aspect which I will share with you is Sanskrit being value based. In English we refer to different personal pronouns as being 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person. But in Sanskrit, 3rd person is *prathama puruṣaḥ*, or first priority. 1st person is *uttama puruṣaḥ*, or greatest one, and 2nd person is *madhyama puruṣaḥ*, the middle, getting the best of both. All three are in essence equivalent. See how amazing Sanskrit is?



All these examples and more truly got the audience's attention for how intricate and interesting this language is. The deeper you go, the more you discover about the power of this divine language.

-Aditi Puttur (Grade 9)

Ravi Kulkarni records his experiences from the advanced *Samskr̥tam* class:

“A couple of years back I started attending *Samskr̥ta vihār*. Since then, *Lakṣmī* auntie had been telling us about Swami Ramkrishnananda and his expertise in *samskr̥tam*. So, after she announced his visit to CMSD, I was really looking forward to learn *samskr̥tam* from Swamiji. The workshop started on Monday and from the first day itself I was in a whole different world. Swamiji’s entertaining and easy style of teaching fulfilled the promise of the word “Joyfully” in the workshop’s title “Learning *Samskr̥tam* Joyfully”.

In the workshop he covered the *upasargāḥ* (prefixes) and *pratyayāḥ* (suffixes) of the verbs. Throughout the workshop, he illustrated the concepts using simple everyday life examples. For instance, when he was telling us about how to form a past-tense of a verb by just adding *sma* after the word, he gave the example of a calf following a cow. He said that the way calf always follows the cow, so should *sma* when changing the verb for the past-tense. Another of his examples was about the relationship between learner and composer being similar to a diner and a chef. *Śrī Vyāsa* and *Kālidāsa* are the chefs and we enjoy the “food” prepared by them. Anybody can enjoy the food, but chefs are rare.



As we say at Chinmaya Mission, every successful *yajña* results in the blessings by the Gods in the form of rain. I think the Gods were so pleased with this *yajña* that they decided to bless us even before the *yajña* was finished. On Friday morning, when I went to *āśrama*, it had rained and a very beautiful double rainbow had arched Tapovanagiri. I did not realize that they were the auspices of what was going to happen in that class. In that class, Swamiji continued with *pratyayāḥ* as usual, but later, he shared with us his certificates with an A+ grade in his MA (*Samskr̥tam*) degree. That humbled me even more.

When I look back at the week, I feel really blessed. So, I felt very happy when at the end of the workshop he said that he will come back to San Diego to teach us more *samskr̥tam*!”



CMSD On-Going Events

Sundarakāṇḍa pāṛāyaṇa

Host families for the monthly *Sundarakāṇḍa pāṛāyaṇa* in this quarter were:

CMSD *Devi*-s in October; Rama and Pavan Neelakanti in November; Anu and Rajasekaran in December.



CMSD families and members of the San Diego community continue to derive peace and joy reciting the *Sundarakāṇḍa* every month. It is particularly heartening to see our Bala Vihar children take part playing different rhythm instruments and singing the chorus and *Hanumān Cālīsā*. Students learning to play *tabla* from Amarnath Puttur took turns joining their teacher in *tabla* accompaniment.

Bala Vihar Corner

Bala Bhagavatam : 5th Grade students' posters of class topics

Parikshit Meets Kali

Parikshit was the crown prince of the Pandava Kingdom. One day he was walking along the banks of the River Saraswati when he saw a woman who was crying and holding a dead cow. Parikshit was very curious and asked her what was wrong. She told him that her cow had been killed by a bull and she was very sad. Parikshit was very kind and he helped her to find the bull. He found the bull and he killed it. He then gave the cow back to the woman and she was very happy. Parikshit was very kind and he helped many people. He was a great king and he was loved by all his subjects.

Purity means to have a clean mind and clean body. It means to be free from all kinds of impurities. Purity is a very important quality and it is the foundation of all virtues. We should always try to be pure in our thoughts, words and actions. Only a pure heart can see the truth and only a pure mind can understand the will of God.

Austerity means to keep your mind away from the worldly pleasures. It means to give up all kinds of pleasures and enjoyments. Austerity is a very important quality and it is the foundation of all virtues. We should always try to be austere in our thoughts, words and actions. Only an austere heart can see the truth and only an austere mind can understand the will of God.

Charity means to help the needy people. It means to give to the poor and to the sick. Charity is a very important quality and it is the foundation of all virtues. We should always try to be charitable in our thoughts, words and actions. Only a charitable heart can see the truth and only a charitable mind can understand the will of God.

Truthfulness means to always tell the truth and to do what is right. Truthfulness is a very important quality and it is the foundation of all virtues. We should always try to be truthful in our thoughts, words and actions. Only a truthful heart can see the truth and only a truthful mind can understand the will of God.

Devika Sovani

King Parakshit and Kali
by: Harshil

Harshil Chava

COW **Kali** **bull** **King Parakshit**

King Parakshit was roaming with his cow a many years ago. The cow was Kali. The cow was mother earth and the bull was a demon. Mother earth was crying because Kali was biting the bull's legs. The bull's legs stood for purity, austerity, charity and truthfulness. But the legs were broken due to Parikshit's charity. King Parakshit was a great king. Kali that he would have to give in the bull's place. King Parakshit's aim was to restore the 4 pillars of Dharma. Kali's death was a great loss.

Madhavi Akella

The Story of Kali & Parikshit

One day King Parikshit was walking in the forest. He saw a woman who was crying and holding a dead cow. He asked her what was wrong. She told him that her cow had been killed by a bull and she was very sad. Parikshit was very kind and he helped her to find the bull. He found the bull and he killed it. He then gave the cow back to the woman and she was very happy. Parikshit was very kind and he helped many people. He was a great king and he was loved by all his subjects.

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KING PARIKSHIT MEETS KALI

The cow symbolizes Mother Earth in a terrible state. The 3 legs missing on the bull show that Purity, austerity and charity are all gone in our world. Kali is the river of the Kali yuga.

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Ketaki Chakradeo

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Sarika Pasumarthy

7th Grade Write-Ups on WWW [Work, Worship, Wisdom]

“Work, worship, wisdom relates to each other. Work, for example, could be anything ... doing homework for instance. Worship connects to work because worship means doing my best and working hard. I am putting my best effort to do homework. Wisdom means knowledge that I will gain from doing homework.”

Shreya Paalakodety

“Work, worship, wisdom have a connection. So the work part is what we like to do. Let’s say I like painting. I do it for the fun of it. When I love doing it and do it with devotion it is considered as worship. If my work is worship then I gain wisdom.”

Gaurav Chintamneedi

“Work is what we do for others. Worship is showing gratitude. Worship is also respect to someone who is an elder. Wisdom is being wise and making the correct choices in life. That is all it is. It ties in together because it leads to one thing ... respect. This is why it is so important in life.”

Arav Watwani

“**Work, worship, and wisdom** are related because when working and thinking of the Lord it is worship and our worship gives us the wisdom. An example when we do *pūjā*, we are thinking of the Lord. If we work like that all the time then this leads to worship. From this work and worship we get the wisdom. When we plug this into everything we do then we get work, worship, and wisdom.”

Uma Sinha

“**Work, worship and wisdom** are three words that are interconnected, and can show me how to lead a good life if I look between the lines. Work usually has a negative connotation, but when I have a positive attitude and do it for the Lord and not for selfish gain, it becomes worship. I should be treating everything I do as an offering to the Lord for the life he has given to me. This way I will gain wisdom thru’ work with the right attitude. This is how I think I can apply work, wisdom, and worship to my life.”

Dhivya Manickam

“Work is something that everyone has to do. It depends on how we look at it. Even though work can be boring, I can gain wisdom from it if I do work as worship. Work can become worship when I work for the Lord or the greater good. It can become worship because I am doing work to thank the Lord for all I have. I can get smart by doing work but wisdom I can only gain when I work for the Lord. This is why the three W’s are a great foundation for life.”

Ankit Bhatia

“Work is what we do for personal benefit, for example homework and class work. Worship is something we do for the Lord. For example, praying or *pūjā*. Wisdom is the ability to know right from wrong. The three W’s are interconnected because if I do work to please the Lord or my Guru then that work becomes worship. When I work wholeheartedly and with devotion I gain wisdom. I use **work, worship and wisdom** in my life because when I do my work I always think ‘would Gurudev be happy with my work.’”

Rachna Halker

“**Work, worship, wisdom** are the three W’s that happen when I do my work with devotion and concentration. Work is what I do every second of my life, from eating to praying, to even writing down my feelings about the three W’s. I am always doing work. When I keep doing the same work it will become a habit and I won’t even have to think about it. In worship I’ll have the same devotion each time I do that work. After that I will receive the proper knowledge. This is when wisdom comes. Wisdom is when I have right knowledge of work. Now whatever I do, wherever I go, I will have a clear goal. This is the process of three W’s.”

Smriti Panchal

“**Work, worship and wisdom** are the three interrelated W’s that can occur with devotion and reverence to the Lord and Guru. When we do our work as worship we gain wisdom. For example, if I have a lot of homework from school, instead of feeling that I have to do so much, I should think of it my *sevā* to the Lord. By doing the work as worship I’ll gain wisdom. Once I complete the homework with Lords name in mind I will gain knowledge from the work and I’ll also learn to focus my mind on the Lord.”

Rhea Gandhi

“Some people classify **WWW** as the World Wide Web but in Bala Vihar **WWW** is the short form for **work, worship, and wisdom**. To me this means doing work properly and with respect. When we do work usually we think how to get success and look good. What I learned with work, worship and wisdom is to think of the Lord as I work and how it will please him. This basically goes unto the next step, worship. As we think of the Lord while we are working, we get a chance to pray and ask for a good life and wisdom. When we do first two steps, work and worship, we can get the knowledge of how to do things perfectly. From all of this I can conclude that good work leads naturally to perfection, which is wisdom. In spiritual path it is not enough to worship, we should also engage in good work.”

Anushka Gupta

“Work is just work. Work is also when I put in the effort to do something but when does this work turn into worship? Work becomes worship when I do it with devotion. Worship is to work without expecting anything back in return. I am simply doing the work out of love. I should carry the good feeling I get from doing *pūjā* through all of the work I do. This way I will gain wisdom.”

Pavan Navani

CMSD celebrates Christmas, the Chinmaya way!





The courtyard was decorated with Christmas lights, *toranams* of mango leaves and beautiful *kolam*-by our in-house artist, **Swaroop Kalva**. Trees in the courtyard were decorated with Christmas ornaments saying *Harih OM* and *Damaru* decorations made by our Bala Vihar children in grades PK-2.

It was Christmas day morning 7: 30 AM .

Pandit Ravichandran ji invoked the blessings of the presiding deity *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* and performed the *Gaṇapati Homam*. *kozakattai* and *aval pāyasam* were offered in *naivedyam*. Unexpected heavy rains immediately following the *Gaṇapati Homam* affirmed that Lord *Jyoti Vināyaka* was pleased. An elaborate worship of the *Sudaršana Cakra* followed to invoke the protection of *Śrī Mahāviṣṇu*. About 80 members and guests joined in chanting the *Sudaršana mantra* while four of our members offered oblations in the sacred *Homam* Fire. Panditji explained the significance of the rituals. Entertaining the audience, Pandit ji explained the story of the retrieval of the *Sudaršana Cakra* by means of *thorpukkaraṇam*. *Śrī Mahāviṣṇu* did a thousand *thorpukkaraṇams* (holding both ears and doing sit ups) to secure the *Sudaršana Cakra* from baby Lord *Gaṇeśa*.

Naivedyam consisting of *Ven pongal*, *Sakkarpongol*, *avial*, *vadai*, *kheer* and *appalam* was served as *prasādam* to all present. The children also went home with some Christmas candy.

-Sumathi Iyengar



CMSD Highlights of 2014

2014 at CMSD was filled with learning, celebrations, *satsaṅga* and service. As we bid adieu to 2014 and get ready to usher in 2015, with a heart filled with gratitude, some of the CMSD *sevaka*-s and *sevika*-s recount the highlights of the past year.

The *Srimad Bhagavatam jñāna yajña* by **Swami Ramakrishnanda**: the entire audience ranging from ages 8 to 80 returned day after day for a thrilling experience.
- *Rajasekar Vaidyanathan*

Events at CMSD are joyous and colorful; the feeling of togetherness is enlivening.
- *Sumathi Iyengar*

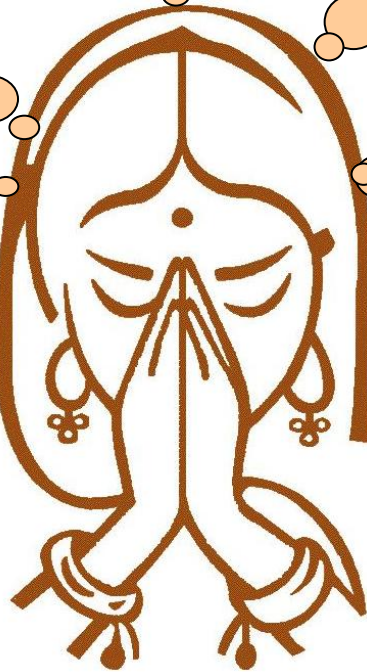
CMSD conducted the first month-long **Annual Summer camp** attended by 75 children.
- *Smita Bhatia*

I think the highlight of 2014 was **Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandji's** visit to inaugurate *Chinmaya Jyoti*.
- *Parag Kelkar*

Jñāna Gaṅgā continued to flow with full force this year. **Swami Ramakrishnanda's** lectures on *Shrimad Bhagavatam* introduced the text in a simple and practical way.
- *Nagesh Nookala*

Celebrating Hindu customs and traditions with the understanding of why we do what we do.
- *Dheeraj Navani*

Chinmaya Kala Jyoti presented the First *Carnatic* concert- Vocal and the First *Hindustani* concert- Flute
- *Ranga Sampath*



Spirituality provides one the motive to practice goodness independent of the reactions, responses and experiences of other people.

-Swami Tejomayananda

