

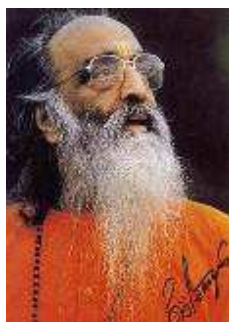


Chinmaya Pradipika

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



July 2012, No. 3



The Master Speaks:

An intelligent choice of thoughts changes the character pattern in us, placing thus the entire destiny of our life in our own hands.

Swami Chinmayananda

From the Team of Chinmaya Pradīpikā

This quarter was abuzz with activities in many areas. The highlight was **Pūjya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's** visit to San Diego on June 18-20, 2012. Also in June we had the Bala Vihar Annual program and the graduation of Bala Vihar seniors to CHYKs.

In addition, we got the building permit for **Chinmaya Jyoti** and will commence the grading work for **Saṁskṛti Nilayam** in July 2012. You will also find capsule descriptions of many other activities in this quarter's *Pradīpikā*.

Our Beloved Guruji comes to San Diego

Contributors: *Raja Reddy, Nagesh Nookala, David & Lynne Brown*

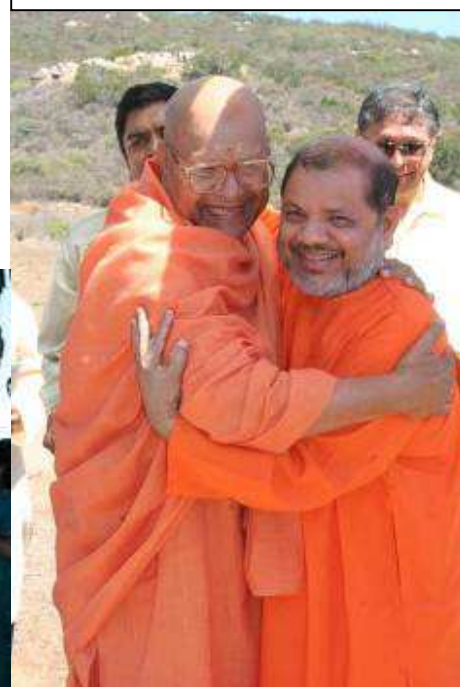
In May 2012, Smt. Lakshmiiji announced that **Pūjya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda** will be arriving in San Diego on June 18-20. Everyone was thrilled and excited. We were eagerly waiting for that day to come. What a blessing to have *Guruji* come to San Diego!

On Tuesday, June 19, **Pūjya Guruji** visited **Chinmaya Jyoti**. We were also fortunate to have **Swami Keshawananda** from Dwaraka Math bless the occasion. **Chinmaya Jyoti** was filled with a festive atmosphere and we had many families



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including newly registered families at the site. Children lined up on either side of the path, singing *bhajans* while eagerly waiting for *Guruji* to arrive. *Guruji* was welcomed to Chinmaya Jyoti with the chanting of *Gurustotram*, and everyone followed him to the construction site of *Saṁskṛti Nilayam*.

A week earlier, at an auspicious time on the early morning of June 11th, **Pandit Ravichandran** performed a *Vāstu pūjā* and *Śānti pūjā* at the future location of *Saṁskṛti Nilayam*. The bulldozers ceremoniously began digging after chanting of *mantra*-s on that day.



When *Guruji* visited the site, after the chanting of the *Santi Mantra*, he blessed the bricks that are to be used in the actual construction. With his blessings, *Pūjya Guruji* renewed our enthusiasm for construction of our own *ashrama* by next year.

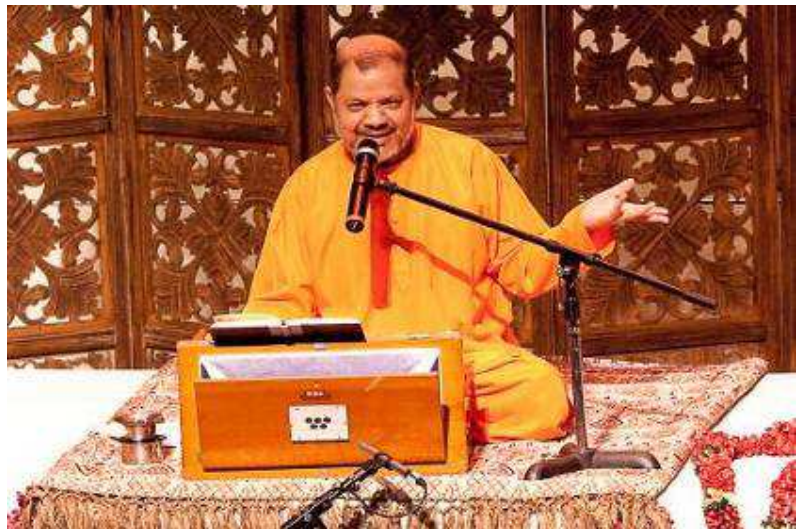




A musical discourse by *Pūjya Guruji* was held in the evening on June 19th, as a fundraiser for Chinmaya **Jyoti**. The stage was adorned with a life size smiling image of *Gurudev* on one side and Lord *Gaṇeśa* on the other. The musical discourse was a time of wonderful *satsaṅga* and *Guruji* soaked us in divine music. The audience sang along some *bhajans* with *Guruji*, creating great energy.

“*Guruji*’s *kīrtana*-s in praise of *Guru* and the Lord transported me into a different world. It was a double treat hearing the *bhajans* of great *bhāva* along with the explanation of *kīrtana*-s. The *dhārā* of *bhakti* allowed us all to float in joy. It was as if time itself had stopped,” reflected **Raja Reddy**.

At the end of the program, the CMSD Band led the audience in *Tvam hi no netā tvam hi no dātā...* Audience members rose up en masse and marched with enthusiasm singing the wonderful



Prārthanā Gītā composed by *Pūjya Guruji*. What a fitting tribute to *Gurudev* and his messenger, our *Guruji*, from all of us here in San Diego!



Guruji met with CMSD *sevak-s* and *sevikā-s* on the morning of June 20th and addressed a variety of topics. He spoke about the importance of *sevā* and one of the key questions he wanted us to ask ourselves was "Why am I doing this *sevā*?" He explained that the purpose of performing *sevā* is for one's personal growth, to purify the mind, and to attain the highest. *Guruji* asked everyone to do their best and leave the rest, explaining by breaking into a favorite *bhajan*; 'Koi vando koi nindo'.

"It is always an honor for us to have great *mahātmā-s* in our midst; who teach us not just with words but their actions. The practicality of scriptures is revealed through them. So every time I spend time with such *mahātmā-s*, it renews my commitment to my *dharma* and inspires me to follow the scriptures. What an honor to learn from such a *mahātmā* as *Guruji*!" commented **Nagesh Nookala**.

The informal, impromptu *satsang-s* with *Guruji* were available to all those that came to Chinmaya Nivas. With children, *Guruji* was quick to make them laugh at stories or have them solve riddles. The children did not want to leave his side. On the other hand when speaking with adults *Guruji* would explain an idea thoroughly, simply and succinctly.

"Among the many memorable moments of *Guruji*'s recent visit to San Diego, one occurred during *satsanga*. One of the young adults present asked *Guruji* how he would define or describe what makes a person successful in life. *Guruji* replied that a successful person loves everyone and sees everyone as being part of, or unified with, the One. *Guruji* radiates beautifully this unconditional love that includes everyone and sees all people as unified. Our desire to bask in the presence of this love is but one reason we all felt tearful at his leaving. Also memorable is the loving kindness with which we were received by all the San Diego Mission members – reflecting both the teaching and the Teacher," expressed **David and Lynne Brown**.

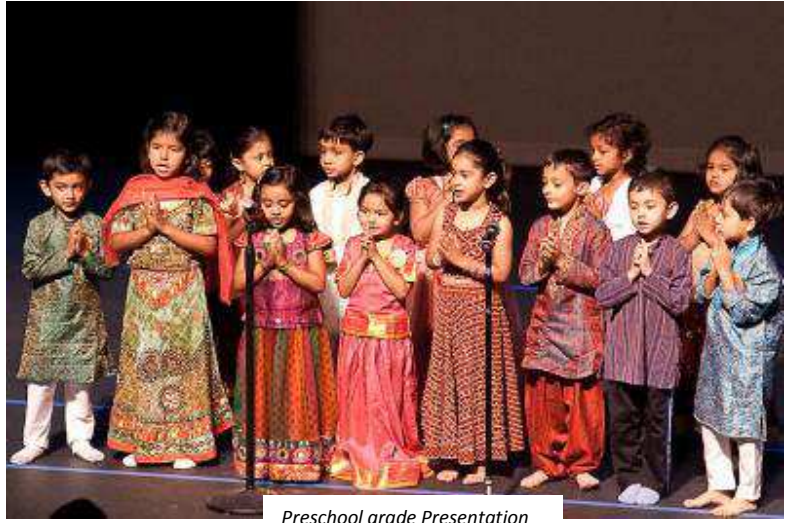


Annual Day: a wonderful ending to an inspiring year

Contributors-Mallika Sridhar, Lalitha Kumar and Sumathi Iyengar

The Annual Day program is traditionally eagerly awaited by parents and grandparents as it is the culmination of the Bala Vihar school year where students present short snippets of what they learned throughout the school year. On June 10, the JCC auditorium was packed as the Annual Day program began. The program started with a welcome speech by **Sri. Sukumarji** and **Smt. Lakshmi** followed by an invocation prayer by Chinmaya Dhvani, and ended with the CHYK initiation of the graduates of the BV Class of 2012.

Mallika Sridhar expressed that the entire program clearly showed the concept of the transformation from devotion to knowledge. The transition from devotion to knowledge was beautifully shown as the presentation started from symbolism of different Gods and Goddesses, by our very young children, to the ABCs of Vedanta, and ended in the explanation of the key concepts of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The clear understanding of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by our 3rd and 4th graders was well depicted by entertaining the audience with interactive questions. “The Churning of the Milky Ocean” skit by our 5th graders, with eye-catching colorful props, showed the value of humility and surrender unto the Lord.



Preschool grade Presentation



Second grade presentation

knowledge made him the embodiment of a *sthita prajña*. The teachings of the *Vibhīṣaṇa Gītā*, the essence of *dharma* values that are to be remembered and practiced, were expressed through the explanation of the chariot of *Dharma*. The 8th graders followed up on the theme of *dharma* with a depiction of the *yakṣa praśna* incident from the *Mahābhārata*.

The final message of the program, which was presented by the highschoolers, was about the knowledge of detachment, wisdom, equanimity of mind through self-control, and faith in the Lord.”

Lalitha Kumar observed how this was brought out effectively in the plays staged by emphasizing concepts of vegetarianism, community service with *sevā bhāva*, qualities of a person of steady wisdom, to name a few. The Obama family was a popular point

The 24 Gurus expounded the teaching of *Dattātraya*, whose complete devotion to spiritual knowledge made him the embodiment of a *sthita prajña*. The teachings of the *Vibhīṣaṇa Gītā*, the essence of *dharma* values that are to be remembered and practiced, were expressed through the explanation of the chariot of *Dharma*. The 8th graders followed up on the theme of *dharma* with a depiction of the *yakṣa praśna* incident from the *Mahābhārata*.

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Fourth grade presentation

of reference to show that the essence of *Vedānta* is common amongst all cultures and levels and the message was well received by the audience.

“For those of us who have been watching these children the last decade, it was heartening to see the mental growth and verbalization skills they have gained over the years along with the creativity shown in depicting practice of values,”

Sumathi Iyengar said, “As a new Bala Vihar parent, it was a thrilling experience for me to see all the children put up such an ace performance with just over one hour of class each Sunday for ten months. My personal favorite of all performances was that of the 6th graders on *Guru-Upamam* (led by Smt. Faith Prasad and Sri Raja Kalva). The students stood in a row, and crisply presented one or more virtues they could learn from elements in Mother Nature; that is, how these elements can be Gurus in themselves when observed in a subtle manner.”



The *Bala Vihar* program was followed by the CHYK initiation, where the four graduates, **Mayanka Barath, Harini Bhat, Dheeraj Navani, and Hinal Parikh** were ceremoniously sent off to the awaiting CHYK's, Mili



Navani and Akil Rajaratnam. Smt. Lakshmiiji announced that **Hinal Parikh** (seen in picture above) had been selected to receive the **Bala Vihar Award of Excellence** to be presented by *Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda* during his visit later in the month.

The perfect attendance awards were presented to those students who had not missed any Bala Vihar classes. The students proudly came up to accept their awards from their respective class teachers. As they lined the stage, Lakshmiiji acknowledged the parents of these students for their commitment to Bala Vihar.

Smt. Anu Rajasekaran voiced the feelings of most parents in the audience with a heartfelt speech commending Smt. Lakshmi and Sri. Srinivas Sukumar for their ardent work and tireless efforts in founding and running the Bala Vihar program in such a top-notch manner here in San Diego.



CMSD BalaVihar Sevaks and Sevikas

Bala Vihar 2011-2012 Graduation

On June 9th, CMSD members gathered at Chinmaya Nivas to celebrate the graduation of our four 12th grade students, **Mayanka Barath**, **Harini Bhat**, **Dheeraj Navani** and **Hinal Parikh**. As families and friends watched, the four seniors performed *Guru Pādukā Pūjā*, guided by Lakshmi aunty. After the *pūjā*, the convocation address and instruction from *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* was recited. Lakshmi aunty explained the context of this instruction in ancient times, where students would receive the instruction from their gurus at the end of their training in the *gurukula*. BV teachers read aloud in English the solemn and deep meaning of the convocation address which embodies the core of Vedic *dharma*. Graduation certificates and mementoes were handed out to the students by their teachers. Following the ceremonies, guests gathered in the backyard under tents on a bright sunny morning and were served a sumptuous lunch by the families of graduating seniors.

Impressions at the graduation ceremony:



Parents:

Pooja Navani: "...I find that after attending BV, my children are more confident about who they are and about doing the right thing - such as changing from being non-vegetarian to vegetarian..."

Raj Rajasekaran: "...With Mayanka leaving for college, there will be of course a feeling of emptiness in the house, but we have complete confidence that she can face any situation in college. Credit for giving her that confidence has to go to Chinmaya mission, Lakshmi and Sukumarji, and her teachers in BV..."



Venkataramana Bhat: "... I have seen so much growth in Harini during the last few years she has been in BV. BV has helped her a great deal academically in addition to enhancing her self-confidence. She also looks forward to the Thursday evening study group at UCSD offered by Sukumarji. I really appreciate Chinmaya mission, her teachers and particularly Lakshmi and Sukumarji for contributing to Harini's growth"



Teachers:

Lakshmi Sukumar: “This is among the most affectionate group of graduating seniors I have had... they have also taken the lessons from BV to heart and it is such a pleasure to see them grow and graduate. Dheeraj is a man of few words, but he makes them count! I remember his role as *Hastāmālaka* in the play “*Ādi Śaṅkara*” in 2005, and also his presence in the Piercy camp. Mayanka is soft and affectionate! She has been part of Chinmaya Dhvani for many years and has helped mentor many of the younger children. Hinal has been a model BV student! She has participated in almost every community event we have had, has worked with our younger kids, and has had only 7 or so absences in 9 years! Harini has really blossomed in the last couple of years.. She is active in the CHYK study group. She is a deep and expressive thinker, and serious about learning and wanting to clarify so many things for her own understanding...”

Gopal Racherla: “.. I had the pleasure of teaching this class last year. Harini is a quiet and deep thinker. Her essays are reflective of her good understanding of all the subjects taught in Bala Vihar. Dheeraj is a man of few words. Whenever he does speak, he displays a deep understanding of things discussed in class. Hinal is very empathetic and effusive and a role model Balavihar student. She is very diligent and actively participates and leads in many Chinmaya Mission, Yuva Sevak and Balavihar activities. Mayanka is very expressive and is able to lucidly express verbally in the class and also in written essays in class...”

Rajasekar Vaidyanathan: “It has been a pleasure to have been your teacher this year, previously in 10th grade, and also in 5th grade in 2004. It is great to have grown with you over the years. Congratulations to all of you, and wish you happiness and success...”

Chinmaya Jayanti Celebrations

The 96th birth anniversary of *Pūjya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda Sarasvati* was celebrated at Chinmaya Nivas on the evening of May 8th. About fifty CMSD family members attended the event to express their gratitude to *Pūjya Gurudev* for the opportunity of being and serving in Chinmaya mission. **Lakshmi** and **Sukumarji** led the gathering in performing the *Guru Pādukā Pūjā* followed by *ārati* and partaking of *prasāda*.

“Earth Day” Presentation by Yuva Sevaks

Each year, our high school students coordinate a special activity or presentation to celebrate Earth Day. This year, our **Yuva Sevaks**, led by **CHYKS Akil** and **Mili**, conducted an internet survey of the CMSD members about their living habits at home that pertain to resource usage and conservation. The results from the survey were presented to the membership on Earth Day, April 22nd.

The survey questions covered topics ranging from water, electricity, paper and plastic usage, to car driving and carpooling habits, to recycling and composting. The Yuva Sevaks found that our membership is quite progressive in some areas such as use of CFL bulbs, turning off lights in a timely fashion and so on. On the other hand, we could do better in areas such as car-pooling and kitchen scrap composting. The survey results and presentation raised the awareness of eco-friendly options we have in our day-to-day living, and should inspire each member to find new ways to minimize his or her impact on mother earth.

Finally, the Yuva Sevaks also presented options for members to purchase earth friendly products through Amazon. A fraction of the proceeds will go towards the building of Chinmaya Jyoti.



Class Presentations on Festivals

Third Grade Presentation- Celebrating *Rāmanavami* as a family

By Bhuvana Ramanathan Garcia

Rama's birth--what a joyous occasion! We have all grown up with *Rāmāyaṇa* --the story is near and dear to all our hearts but seeing the actual story come to life by our 3rd graders every year is such a delight! This year was extra special because the actual *Rāmanavami* day was on Sunday, April 1st.



I was glad to have the camera to hide behind, so I could hide my tears.

On the drive home, I was thinking of how sentimental I am getting as I age--when I overheard my kids' conversation. They were talking about the roles they had for the *Rāmanavami* play when they were in 3rd grade. One recollected her costume and laughed. One remembered her lines! One talked about how cute a certain *Rāma* was. One mentioned that when she was in 3rd grade we went to India during *Rāmanavami*, so she missed her class play. These events are all engraved in our children's memory.

The 3rd grade class, under the guidance of *sevikas*, Sridevi Akkala and Indu Manikam, gave a wonderful performance of the birth of *Rāma*. Chinmaya Dhvani set the mood with *Sri Rāma bhajans*. Right after the divine birth, they sang *Rāma Janma Chaupāi*--a beautiful, soothing song, which really takes us to a state of bliss. The ultimate highlight was with the whole 3rd grade class and the assembly chanting *Nāma Rāmāyaṇa* together. During this chant the young *Rāma* put his hands in prayer position of his own accord! It was truly divine! Later during *Janma dinam idam* song the four sons of *Dasaratha* spontaneously started dancing and clapping to the beat. What a sight! I was



These plays really bring to life what the kids are learning in Bala Vihar class. They endear the characters to us all. They also strengthen the bonds of our CMSD family. We all grow as one family. What a wonderful tradition to celebrate our love of *Rāma* every year!

Mothers' Day at CMSD

On May 13, 2012, CMSD families convened in the JCC gymnasium after an abbreviated Bala Vihar session to celebrate Mother's day. While mothers sat on chairs in neat rows, children assembled at their mother's feet with the accessories for *pūjā*, and fathers fussed around with cameras to gather memories!

Chinmaya Dhvani opened the ceremony by invoking blessings of Lord *Gaṇeśa* and the Universal mother. **Lakshmi** then explained the symbolism of worshipping our own mother as a representation of the Universal



mother who provides for our sustenance. The puja then commenced with the washing of Mother's feet, and then flowers were offered to Her with the chanting of *Mātru stavanam*, a composition by our *Pūjya Guruji* Swami Tejomayananda. The *Mahālakṣmī aṣṭakam* was also chanted, and mothers offered *prasāda* to their children. Finally, several children came up to the stage and spoke with feeling about how much their mothers and grandmothers meant to them. The gathering in the gymnasium came to a close with many friends and family exchanging heartfelt wishes, and there were

prostrations and hugs to mothers, leaving many an eye wet with emotion. Everyone lined up in the courtyard where fathers served mothers and children with a sumptuous catered lunch - a fitting conclusion to the celebrations.

CMSD On-Going Events

Monthly *Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyana*

Host families:

April 2012- *Monika and Sunil Verma*

May 2012- *Swaroop & Raja Kalva*

June 2012- *Smita & Ashok Bhatia*



The Bhatia Family hosting Sundarakanda Parayana

Chinmaya Ślokāñjali

10 children participated in the 4th *Chinmaya Ślokāñjali* competition held on April 14th at Chinmaya Nivas. This program was introduced at CMSD on May 8, 2011. To date, 17 children have enrolled. Of these, 8 children have completed Level 1, three of whom have moved on to various stages of Level 2, well ahead of schedule. The most amazing aspect of this self-paced *Śloka* competition is the ability of the children- from the youngest to oldest- to memorize and chant/sing the various *Śloka*-s and *Vedic mantra*-s exactly the way they are taught! It is a reminder to all of us that this is the age when *Medhā Śakti* is greatest and children who take advantage of it will succeed in anything they attempt! Keep it up!

Chinmaya Ślokāñjali- Level I- Winners:

Ketki Chakradeo, Aditi Puttur, Amogh Kaushik, Rachana Halker, Sahithy Alla, Surabhi Kulkarni, Vijay Tatavarthi, and Sanil Gandhi were awarded their winning cups by **Pūjya Guruji** on June 19, 2012 at the JCC.



Ketki Chakradeo receiving Chinmaya Ślokāñjali cup from Guruji



Surabhi Kulkarni receiving Chinmaya Ślokāñjali cup from Guruji

Eleventh Annual Bhagavad Gītā chanting competition



Seen here are participants Aditi Adapala, Samitha Senthilkumar, Aniket Chakradeo, Ketki Chakradeo and Ved Joshi

The **Eleventh Annual Bhagavad Gītā chanting competition** was held on May 5th at Chinmaya Nivas. Eighteen participants took part in the contest, which included six adults. They chanted verses from Chapter XI. If the chapter on *Viśvarūpa Darśana* of the Lord was awe-inspiring, the chanting and the *bhāva* of the participants were equally impressive.

The winners *Aniket Chakradeo, Ketki Chakradeo, Aditi Puttur, Solana Garcia* and *Ravi S. Rangarajan* received their awards from **Pūjya Guruji** on June 19, 2012.



CMSD in the community

Conscious Management workshop with *Rudite Emir*

Over 35 people met at UCSD on April 28th to attend the workshop "**Conscious Management - Inner Mastery, Outer success**" by **Rudite Emir**, one of *Gurudev's* earliest disciples in Chinmaya Mission West. Rudite's clear approach to achieve individual fulfillment incorporated lessons from both eastern and western thinkers concerned about happy and successful living. The workshop also provided insightful break-out sessions to help each attendee understand themselves and chart their own growth road-map.

The participants had an overwhelmingly positive experience at the workshop. Here is a sampling of their impressions and take-home messages:



“Be in awareness, get energized with clear intention, introspect regularly, and understand paradigms.”

“Simple and profound teaching from someone, who exemplifies how it is to be practiced.”

“Thank you for this wonderful experience. I would not think of a better way to spend a Saturday. This workshop re-centered my mind on *Vedānta* and the concepts of creativity, to have the fortitude to endure and overcome adversity, and simply enjoy a day with kind people. I feel humbled and inspired to realize my goals and to cherish the perspective of being sincere and kind.”

“Clear intentions are first step towards opportunity.”

“This workshop reminded me of the visions I have for my future and helped me gain some clarity on the things I hope to achieve.”

“I liked the exercises that were incorporated into the learning. It helped me understand.”

“Have a five year plan with higher goal in life with clear intention and focus.” -

Rahul

“Be aware of your inner thoughts, watch them and have clear intentions to master yourself.” - *Amit*

“Things I learned: a. Clear intention b. Mindfulness c. Be aware without attaching.” - *Nagesh*



Chinmaya Dhvani Offers Bhajans at Shri Mandir

“Chinmaya Dhvani led by **Mrs. Lakshmi Sukumar** performed *bhajans* at Shri Mandir on May 6th at 5.30pm. It was a unique presentation in that many of the songs sung were composed by *devotees* of Chinmaya Mission. The *bhajans* commenced with the chanting of OM followed by *Gaṇeśa vandana*. Also included were songs on *Guru*, *Devi* other deities, and *Rāma Stuti*. The session concluded with the chanting of the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The devotees at the temple including the chief priest were immersed in devotional bliss and listened with rapt attention. At the conclusion the priest blessed the Chinmaya Dhvani group and expressed his desire to have more such *bhajans* in the future. He also brought to everyone's attention the invaluable contribution made by *Pūjya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda* to the world community.”

-Smt. Uma Venugopal



“On a sunny Sunday afternoon, I had the wonderful opportunity of listening to Chinmaya Dhvani perform in the Shri Mandir. Shri Mandir always invokes a spiritual calmness in me when I walk in. It was exhilarating to add to that the wonderful melodies of the Dhvani group. The *bhajans* included a moving salutation to the Guru “*Guru brahma rūpa jāno, Siva ka svarūpa māno*”. I was also thrilled to hear my favorite song, “*cilaṅga kaṭṭi oḍi oḍi vāyo...*”, that never fails to get my heart skipping with joy. The final piece, the chanting of the *Gita*, was the ultimate offering we can make to our *Pūjya Gurudev*.”

We also had a membership table outside the Mandir explaining the various activities of CMSD to the temple visitors. I can't wait for the next time we will perform in the Mandir. Hope to see more of you there.”

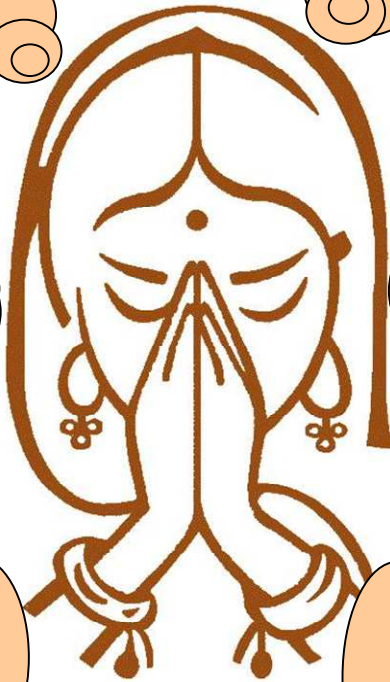
- Radhachandran Padmanabhan

Our Bala Vihar Graduates Speak

This is what our graduates say about their Bala Vihar experience...

"...I really learned a lot—not only about my culture but I was also constantly reminded of the right values and the right attitude such as kindness and consideration to others. I look up to Lakshmi Aunty and Sukumar Uncle as role models. I know by coming to Balavihar my perspective of situations has become much more positive - Dheeraj

The knowledge I have acquired from Balavihar will allow me to face the world. It has guided me in the right direction, and helped me realize my purpose in life. Because of Chinmaya Mission and the wisdom I have obtained from it, I have become a confident and optimistic person. ..Initiated as a CHYK, I will be able to continue to learn and become a better person. -Hinal



These past nine years, Chinmaya Mission has given me guidance and has been my moral compass, enabling me to be a positive contributor to society. With good faith in the values instilled in me by my parents, gurus, and all those who have fostered my growth over the last 17 years, I am ready to face any challenge. - Mayanka

Through Chinmaya Mission I have connected with something in myself that I cannot even begin to describe. I feel now that it is my responsibility to myself to see this spiritual journey I am on to the end and share it with all who want to be a part of it. It has been such a blessing to be taught by all of the Chinmaya mission teachers and to share memories with the entire Chinmaya family. - Harini

Reflections at the conclusion of the “Self Unfoldment” Study group in Rancho Bernardo – April 2012

Sanjay Bapat: "...The beauty of "Self-Unfoldment" was that it brought the *Sanātana dharma* to me at a level that I could understand and relate to. It provided me the philosophy in bite-size chunks that I could chew on, experiment with in my day-to-day life, see the results and understand the immense potential of these seemingly simple ideas.

...The first of many ideas that helped me was about having the right goal. This book made me understand that working towards self-realization is the noblest goal for a human being. It also made the goal less abstract by giving direction.. It definitely made me take my life out of the cruise control mode and strive to work out a path to get to this goal. I know I have a long way to go, but, better late than never.....

The study of the book in form of the study group helped tremendously – we had great guides who helped clarify some of the subtleties – we had a great group that was curious as well as open-minded that enabled us to look at the ideas from different viewpoints....."

Amit Chakradeo: "...I think of myself as a skeptic. I do not engage actively in *pūjā* or rituals, nor do I frequently visit temples. But *Gurudev's* message is appealing to me, and I feel that his arguments and examples are very analytical. The text "Self Unfoldment" is a great introduction to the concepts and terminology of *Vedānta*, which are generally not well understood. The concepts are introduced in small chapters that can be digested easily.

...For me personally, the early chapters on Freedom, Happiness, Action, BMI and Values were easier to grasp, and the ideas were immediately applicable in my life. It is so liberating to detach oneself and think of WHY one is feeling anxious! Similarly the concept of non-duality is a game changer. If we are able to reflect on this idea every day, it will allow us to have more empathy for others. The concepts in the later chapters lay down the path and practice to grow into self-realization. For me it will take some more readings and a lot more practice....

Overall, I greatly enjoyed the privilege of joining this study group and will greatly miss our regular meetings and discussions.

Ravi Kulkarni: "...Two of the key ideas I learned from "Self Unfoldment" were:

- a) The concept of I: Who am I and what is real? I found it beneficial to accept the word of scripture and Master that I am of the nature of *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*, rather than harboring doubts based on limited experience. This allowed me to move ahead and I hope to gain conviction with more study and reflection.
- b) *Mahāvākya*-s: In particular I am drawn towards "*Aham brahmāsmi*" - I am *Brahman* - which states one's true nature. The justification for being good and doing good for me is so that I can honor and respect the truth in this statement. I hope to grow and experience that truth eventually.
I admit that in my current state I am still looking for answers. But I realize that in this path, after one acquires some knowledge, one has to reflect and put that into practice to allow the knowledge to solidify and grow. “

Bala Vihar

Kṛṣṇa Līlā- Diorama by BV students in Grade 2



Hanumān Flower Project by BV students in Grade 4



From the pot of Devotion blossoms the flower of Hanumān with the eight-petals of buddhi, balam, yaśa, dhairyam, nirbhayatvam, arogatā, ajāḍyam and vāḱpaṭutvam.

Bala Vihar Children with Pūjya Guruji



*Do something and allow something to happen.
Balance the two.*
- **Swami Tejomayananda**

