

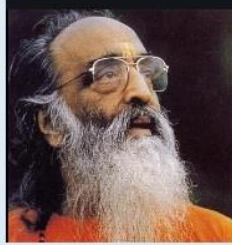


CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies



Monthly Newsletter – July 2021



Chinmaya

Wisdom Quote

“Work without faith and prayer is like an artificial flower without fragrance.” – Swami Chinmayananda

Swamiji’s Message



All the scriptures and spiritual teachers univocally declare that work done as the worship of the Lord will purify the mind, which in turn will help the person to discover his/her True Divine Self. But the problem is how to convert all the actions as the offering to Him? Will it just happen by the action of pronouncing at the top of our voice that “Oh Lord! Please accept this piece of work done by me as the worship to Thee” or it is merely a matter of faith on the part of the person doing the work.

In Shrimad Bhagavad Geeta, [3:10] Lord has clearly told that all actions big or small, only happen because of the blessings of the total Cosmic Power. Any action that is done with this understanding makes the action “Yagna Karma i.e God dedicated action”. In other words, Work becomes Worship only when we have this knowledge. In essence, first when we do actions with the understanding that all actions are possible because of the very Life principle (Divine) in us, then the actions become Worship. Such actions become the Wish fulfilling tree. Everything will just happen in our life without any struggle. Also, it has the power to take us towards the highest. – Swami Sharanananda

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Upcoming Events -

- **Monthly Bhajan** [Virtual]: 7/10 @ 6 pm at the residence of Suchi and Ram Achar – Available on Zoom and YouTube*
- **Monthly Vedic Group Chanting** @ Badri Shrine: 7/31 @ 5 – 6:30 pm – Available on YouTube*
- **Gurupurnima Celebration** – Guru Paduka Pooja: 7/24 @ 6:30 pm – Available on YouTube* & Zoom
- **Annual Vedic Heritage Summer Camp** [Online]: 8/4 – 8/13 @ 10 am – 12 noon & 1 – 2 pm

*[Chinmaya Mission Chicago YouTube Channel](#) [Subscribe]

Highlights from Previous Month

Our main event during the month of June was the **Bala Vihar Graduation**, which is the ceremony when the group of graduating students transition from Bala Vihar to become CHYK members. The details of the event is elaborated in the 'Balavihar' section of this newsletter. We will provide reflections from some of our graduating students in this newsletter and carry the rest in the upcoming months on a rotation basis.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ty03aBeAqwY>



Prarthana Prashanth:

1. *When did you start or at what age did you start coming to CM Balavihar?*
I started CM Balavihar when I was in 3rd grade.
2. *What inspired you to continue the BV classes till 12th grade?*
BV not only does a great job unpacking the many values and teachings of the Hindu scriptures, but also makes an effort to show students how those lessons can be applied to our current lives. It has really helped me stay grounded and make good decisions. Knowing that BV would always teach me something new each week, I looked forward to every week's class.
3. *Will you be continuing as a CHYK member in the future?*
Yes! I look forward to being a CHYK member in the coming years.

Nikhil Sivakumar:

1. *When did you start or at what age did you start coming to CM Balavihar?*
I started CM Balavihar when I was 6 years old and in 1st grade.
2. *Why did you come to BV?*
My parents enrolled me.
3. *What inspired you to continue the BV classes till 12th grade?*
It was a family activity every weekend.
4. *Did you at any time contemplate quitting BV?*
I wanted to break for my school chess tournaments and watching some soccer games; but didn't think of quitting BV.
5. *How do you think attending the mission BV classes and all the other activities at the mission shaped your thoughts while growing up?*
Made me to think independently and appreciate what you already have.
6. *Will you be continuing as a CHYK member in the future?*
Haven't decided yet.

Monthly Saturday Events at Badri Center:

1. Bhajan Sandhya:

Bhajan Sandhya was conducted on 12th June at the residence of **Smt. Lakshmi and Shri Shashi Narasimhan**. This event is conducted on every second Saturday of the month.



2. Vedic Chanting at Badri:

Monthly Vedic Chanting at the Badri Shrine has been initiated and is to be held every last Saturday of the month. During this month the chanting of Sri Rudra and Chamakam along with several other Suktams and Shanthi Mantrams was held on June 21st at the Badri shrine. This will be continued every month on the last Saturday at the Badri shrine at 5 pm and will be for a total duration of one and half hours. This chanting will also be telecast live on the Chinmaya

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YzfhYUU9IE>



Guruji's Birthday/ Paduka Pooja – Wednesday, 30 June 2021 at 6:30 pm

A section of devotees assembled at Badri Shrine and celebrated **Guruji's Birthday** by performing Guru Paduka Pooja led by our Swami Sharanananda ji. This was followed by the rendering of a soulful bhajan by the Swaranjali Group led by Smt Pavithra Anand. The occasion was also coinciding with the **18th anniversary of the Swaranjali group** at Badri. The Bhajan was composed by Guruji himself. Our Swamiji also spoke about the uniqueness of Guruji Swami Tejomayananda ji as to how he is a towering master of Gyana, Bhakthi and Karma marga. The celebration was concluded by taking the Pledge and singing the Aarthi.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXx2ee-l-N8>

Balavihar Corner

Highlight of Previous Month

On June 10th, we celebrated our **Balavihar Graduation**. The graduating students shared their insightful thoughts about their time at Balavihar, Chinmaya Mission Badri, some joined before they started going to school, and some joined later. One word was resonating in all their experiences at Badri and that was “**Enriching**”. They all emphasized as their journey at Balavihar comes to an end, they are not leaving what they learnt but rather taking it all with them. The memories, the life lessons, and the bonds that made this class a family away from family will stay with them for rest of their lives. Class expressed their gratitude for not any gift item but rather a gift of wisdom to the future. Learnings at Balavihar have prepared them for bigger picture of life.

Ceremony started with graduates singing **Swaraswati bhajan** to seek blessings. Graduates chanted **Shisyashana** portion of **Taitrya Upanishad** which is like a convocation address where teacher tells students about virtues to cultivate and ideals to foster build a noble character. This Upanishad elaborates rules of conduct throughout the various stages of life.

Our resident **Swami Sharanananda ji** congratulated graduating class and blessed them with valuable advice to rise above ‘I’ and ‘my’. **Swami Ishwarananda**, resident Acharya Los Angeles Chinmaya Mission, emphasized knowledge can be gained by reading books, passing exams but wisdom and life lessons is gained by observations and experiences. He highlighted unpleasant experiences teach us more than pleasant experiences. He encouraged graduates not to be afraid to deal with failures and uncertainty and urged them to be bold to face challenges in life. He reiterated to accept what is relevant and leave what is irrelevant. He continued to highlight spiritual learning help one with inner growth and professional learning help outside. Both combined helps make one complete. He stressed Hinduism is not about renunciation, it is about completeness of the personality. One must be externally prosperous and internally progressive. When knowledge of spirituality and professionalism come together, a person becomes complete.

We were fortune to have **Shri Avatans Kumar**, a linguist who writes frequently on Hinduism, Indian Tradition, language, culture, and current affairs, as chief guest of the ceremony.

Here are some thoughts shared by our graduates.

Sumit Basti: Looking back his 14 years at mission, he shared how much he loved coming to Balavihar each Sunday, how much he loved course material, interactions with teachers and food served after classes. He feels he is privileged to be empowered with the knowledge, weaponry, and tactics to win wars caused by our mindset. He believes Balavihar teachings equip us with tools to help make ourselves the best version of ourselves.

Anjana Bharadwaj: She was introduced to mission with Geeta chanting events. She learnt about Lord Krishna’s wisdom from Geeta and tries to apply those in her daily life. These lessons help her navigate through stressful and difficult times. She looks forward to taking her learnings and exemplify in solving daily life challenges.

Nikhi Dharmavaram: He shared how his learnings help him understand outward appearance body may not give us the complete picture.

Nandini Gupta: She thanked Balavihar for teaching her importance of spirituality and how it can be a guiding factor in life. Insight to Hinduism and Vedanta have taught her how to cope with stress, find meaning in daily routine, connect with purpose of life and Bhagawan.

Learning at Balavihar has given her a strong foundation. It has also helped her understand values and encourage her to implement learning in daily life.

Vivek Ily: He thanked mission for teaching him a lifestyle that is sustainable, useful, easy to follow. It has taught him to detach from material objects and results of action. He also emphasized, attachment hinders us from progressing spiritually and keeps us engaged in materialistic world.

Rhea Joshi: Mission has succeeded in ingraining values of integrity, objectivity and kindness that will continue to help her make right decisions in college and beyond.

Arohi Mehta: While reflecting on her Balavihar experiences, conversations she had, morals she has developed, she asserted learnings in Balavihar have taught her to value every accomplishment and failure.

Prarthana Prasanth: She recalled her very first day memory of walking into Dakshhaji's classroom and senior year balavihar experiences. Every Sunday morning class has taught her something new and she remains forever grateful for those learnings. Mission teachings has helped her stay grounded during ups and downs of teenage life. Opportunities to sing, dance and chant with fellow Balavihar friends have taught her lifelong lessons like teamwork, flexibility, and confidence. Watching all dedicated volunteers has shown the power of service in uplifting the community.

Anirudh Raghuvir: He acknowledged how Balavihar learning was unconsciously instilling basic knowledge of Sanatan dharma starting from early on and in more advanced classes were built on values taught in earlier years and helped understand more abstract concepts. He values Bhagabat Gita is a timeless blueprint for our lives. He trusts foundation values like working for higher purpose seeing God in all others will stay with him forever.

Milind Sagaram: He firmly believes Balavihar has ingrained values like gratitude, humility, and honesty. He thanked all who has made it possible.

Gowri Salem: Balavihar has taught her a lot about Hinduism values. Materialistic world around us is often opposed to what scriptures tell us. She shared materialistic world makes it difficult to follow values without power of Satsang and guidance of role models. Learnings at mission helped her create a sense of identity and self-aware of actions, words, and thoughts. She expressed gratitude for getting range of eye opening and humbling opportunities though mission.

Nikhil Shivkumar: He reflected on his experiences and asserted how supportive mission community was whether his ideas were good or bad. Mentors always encouraged him to focus on positive aspects of life and learn from each experience.

Shri Ankur Gupta, Nandini Gupta's dad addressed the gathering on behalf of graduating students' parents. **Shri Sridhar Andurkar** addressed and congratulated graduates on behalf of all sevaks.

Program was concluded with **Abhinaya Ramakrishnan** welcoming freshly minted graduates to **CHYK** (Chinmaya Yuva Kendra), the next chapter of their spiritual journey.

The magnificent MCs for the graduation ceremony were **Shruthi Panse** and **Pranav Vishwanath** belonging to Bala Vihar Class 2022.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ty03aBeAqwY>

In HIS Loving Memory –

It was the year 1989 and the organization I was working for, Zenith was being acquired by Goldstar. It was around the time my children were graduating from high school and there was a need for additional resources and time to be spent. As a result of the company acquisition, along with so many others, the team that I was managing was asked to leave. With the looming uncertainty of losing my job looking inevitable at work, and the demanding situation at home, I was feeling very desperate and despondent. That night I received a call from Gurudev enquiring how were things. Not having anyone else to talk to that night, I poured out all my anxieties to Gurudev. HE quoted Verse #40 from Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gita and told me that Lord Krishna has declared that he who serves others, will only have good things coming his way in life. HE said, "Those who serve others will not suffer in life. Go to work tomorrow and nothing will happen."

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते । न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥

śhrī bhagavān uvācha

pārtha naiveha nāmutra vināśhas tasya vidyate

na hi kalyāṇa-kṛit kaśhchid durgatiṁ tāta gachchhati

Gurudev said, "**This is a guarantee from KRISHNA**" and repeated the second line once again ***na hi kalyāṇa-kṛit kaśhchid durgatiṁ tāta gachchhati***

The next day I went to work and found my entire department empty. As I sat at my desk with apprehension, the president of our division called me to his room. As I went in, he greeted and told me that I must be aware of what is going on. He then paused said, "You have been moved to Motorola [*Mobile division was acquired by Goldstar*] as a lateral transfer to manage a similar team and all your employment terms & conditions including the compensation package will remain the same. You can start from today.

This has been one of the greatest lessons in life that has helped me tide over several such situations later in life. **The LORD speaks to us through the Bhagavad Gita – Shri Shanker Pillai**

Badri Programs

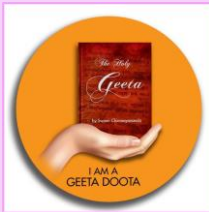
<https://mychinmaya.org/virtual-satsanga-and-e-study-groups/>

- **Swaranjali** (For Balavihar Children)
- **Stuti Vandana** (For Balavihar Children)
- **Geeta Chanting** (For Everyone)
- **Vedic Chanting** (For Everyone)
- **Sri Rudram Chanting** (For Everyone)
- **Sanskrit language** classes (For Everyone)
- **Adult Study Groups** (Registration required)
- **Vishnu Sahasranamam** (For Everyone)
- **ACT/ SAT Classes** (Registration required)

Updates from around the world -

- [Vedanta Sadhaka Course](#) (1 year) - Starting on 15 Oct 2021 [In Person]
 - This is offered at Chinmaya International Foundation for anyone between 35 – 65 years of age.
- [Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Family Camp](#) - July 29 - Aug 3, 2021 [Virtual]
 - For the 2nd year in succession, the Mahasamadhi Camp will be virtual this year too.
- [Mantra Sadhana Retreat](#) – Nov 7, 2021 – Jan 1, 2022 [In Person]
 - Eight weeks of Japa/ Purascharana under the guidance of Swamini Vimalananda ji.
- [Guided Meditation based on Nirvana Shatakam](#) – Starting on September 4, 2021 by Pujya Swami Swaroopananda
 - Every Saturday for 60 mins that includes 30 mins discourse, 15 mins meditation and 15 mins of Q&A
- [Valmiki Ramayana](#) – June 5, 2021– Mar 22, 2022 [Virtual] – Swami Ramakrishnananda
 - Discourse and Analysis of Ramayana in three parts with the fragrance of Kamban and Kalidasan
- [Chinmaya Naada Bindu Gurukul – Stotram Chanting](#): 6 – 31 July [Online]
 - Guru Ashtakam, Guru Paduka Stotram & Thotakashtakam – 3 days a week (Wed. Fri & Sun) – 8:30 – 9 am CST
- [Chinmaya Naada Bindu Gurukul – Learn Vedic Chanting](#): 7 July – 6 Aug 2021 [Online]
 - Purusha Suktam – 3 days a week (Tue, Thu & Sat) – 8:30 – 9 am CST

Geeta Doota Program



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Swami Sharananandaji's Weekly Program Schedule

Program Name	Details
Saddarshanam	Sunday/ 8 – 8:45 am
Bhagavad Gita – Chapter-wise Summary	Sunday / 9 – 9:30 am
Viveka Choodamani	Tuesday/ 7 – 8 pm
Mandukya Upanishad	Wed/ 7 – 8:15 pm
Tattvabodha	Saturday/ 8 – 9 am
Stories from Mahabharata	Saturday/ 10 – 11 am

Attention Balavihar Children:

You can contribute articles or sketches/ paintings or YouTube links of any Bhajans/ Chanting that will be published in this Newsletter. Email your contributions to cmc.publicity20@gmail.com by mentioning 'Newsletter' in the email subject.

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 CHINMAYA MISSION NW INDIANA ♦ CHINMAYA MISSION AUSTIN

jointly present

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Love, Learning, and Laughter

AUGUST 4 - 13, 2021

CAMP SCHEDULE & ACTIVITIES

10 am - Noon	Yoga, Bhajans & Lessons / Values from Bhagavatam
Noon - 1 pm	Lunch Break
1 pm - 2 pm	Vedic Chanting, Games, and STEAM (Science, Tech., Engg., Arts, & Math) Workshops <i>(Classes taught by sevaks/ sevikas/ youth volunteers)</i>

CAMP FACULTY

- Swami Sharanananda - CM Chicago • Brahmachari Hari Chaitanya - CM Dallas
- Brahmacharini Akalka - CM Trinidad & Tobago • Brahmacharini Shuchita Chaitanya - CM Austin
- Brahmacharini Krithika Chaitanya - CM Trinidad & Tobago • Brahmacharini Stuti Chaitanya - CM Columbus
- Smt. Nirmita Dholakia - CM Chicago/ NorthWest Indiana • Smt. Geeta Raghu - CM Atlanta
- Sri Dhiren Khatri - CM Chicago

Register at www.mychinmaya.org/camp
FEES: \$100 per child (Small Class Sizes)

Suchi Achar (630) 204 1805 Rajul Bhalala (847) 302 2383 Sarvesh Sharma (214) 235 8409
 Deepak Chande (708) 253 3570 Rita Patel (773) 339 7482 Padmini Makkam (219) 808 3431