

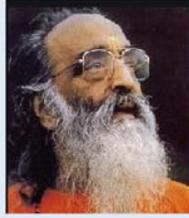


# CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

## BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies



Monthly Newsletter – January 2022

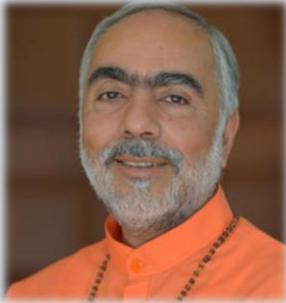


# Chinmaya

### Wisdom Quote

“Actions are the louder expression of thought. The quality of thought is ordered by the nature of our inner belief and faith.” – **Swami Chinmayananda**

### Swamiji’s Message



#### **The Magic of Willpower: How to Change the Course of Your Life**

Human beings are the most advanced of all the species on earth. Possessing an intellect, we have the ability to ponder over, communicate, and comprehend issues. We also have the prowess to tackle the circumstances life throws at us. We can let harsh times overwhelm us or take what comes our way with a pinch of salt. Accepting it all, we can steer through life with our knowledge and experience. At such moments, we tend to question the true existence of destiny and ask, “Are we bound by a pre-existing template of fate that we can reshape at will?”

When confronted with life’s striking lessons, our complex minds help question the challenges ahead. In such moments, we explore the freedom to alter the outcome of our present experience, and develop the muscle to alter what doesn’t benefit us. So what must we take into account before delivering an action that is potent enough to bring a change that works to our benefit? Here are three ways to change the course of our lives for the better: – – **Pujya Swami Swaroopandanda**

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***Let Lord Badri Narayana and Gurudev bless all for a year filled with peace, happiness, and fulfilment.***

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Upcoming Events -

- **New Year Puja and Bhajans** – 1/1 @ 6 - 8 pm At Badri Shrine and on YouTube
- **Monthly Bhajan** [Virtual]: 1/8 @ 6 – 7:30 pm hosted by Reema & Sumit Seth’s family – Available on Zoom only
- **Monthly Vedic Chanting** – 1/29 @ 5 – 6:15 pm at Badri Shrine and YouTube

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

### Highlights from Previous Month

The month of December had the major event 'Annual Fundraiser Banquet' which was once again a virtual event due to the ongoing pandemic and we also continued our tradition of conducting the Gita Chanting competition for children and adults. This competition was also conducted virtually over Zoom. We also celebrated Tapovan jayanthi/ Geeta Jayanthi on 18<sup>th</sup> December by chanting all the 18 chapters from Bhagavad Gita at the Shrine and via Zoom. The Banquet had a very encouraging participation from all devotees of Lord Badri Narayana and the event also generated a record amount of donations. Our regular monthly events continued with an enthusiastic participation from children and adults equally as the tasks are for HIM. We did not have the usual Monthly Vedic Group chanting at Badri shrine as the schedule coincided with the Christmas and New Year eve long weekend.

#### **1. Bhajan Sandhya**

The monthly Bhajan Sandhya, was this time held on 11<sup>th</sup> December at Sunitha Nair's home at 6 pm. Continuing the tradition of this event, all the stotrams were chanted by Bala Vihar children and for the Bhajans, we had a wide variety of singers including the host family. The vibrant evening ended with the chanting of Nirvana Shatakam followed by a few minutes of silence and Aarthi.



#### **2. Gita Chanting Competition**

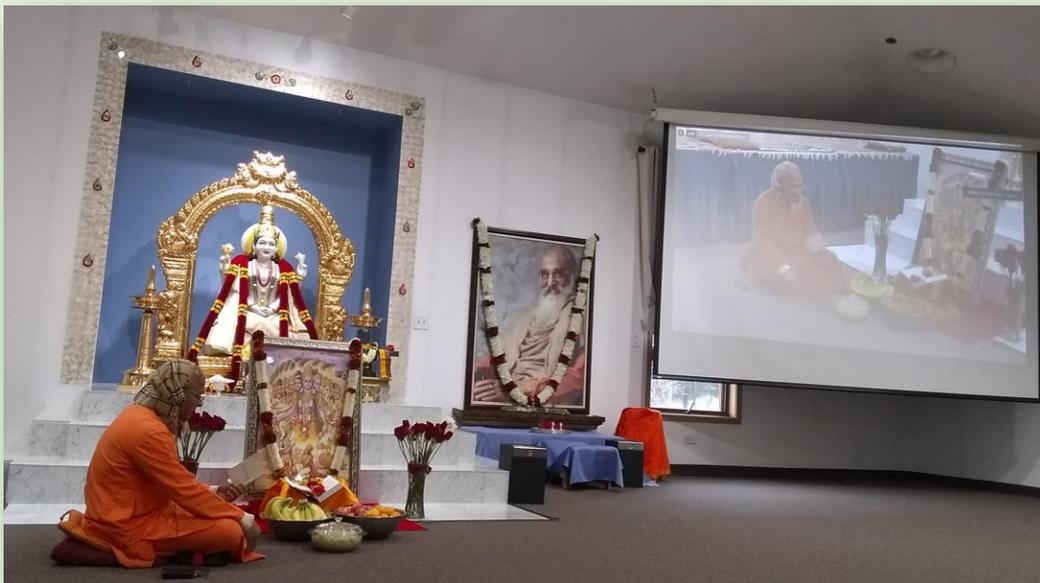
Chinmaya Mission Chicago continued the long tradition of conducting the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the two Gita Chanting competitions during the year. This was on 11<sup>th</sup> December from 1 – 3:30 pm over Zoom. This time the participants had to memorize 15 verses from 39 – 53 of chapter 18. They were grouped under different age categories starting from A to G, with A being Pre-KG and KG children and G being Adults. The results of the competition can be seen by [clicking here](#)



### 3. Tapovan Jayanthi/ Geeta Jayanthi

([2021 Tapovan Jayanti and Geeta Jayanti Celebrations](#))

The Tapovan Jayanthi & Geeta Jayanthi was celebrated on 18<sup>th</sup> December by chanting all the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad Geeta. The chanters were pre-assigned sections from the Geeta and the chanting started at 8:30 am with a bhajan, chanting of Guru Stotram and the Geeta Dhyana Shloka. With the starting of verse 1 chanting from Chapter 1, all the way till the last verse of Chapter 18, all the chanters maintained the same rhythm and pace enriching the experience. The celebration ended with an engrossing talk by our Swamiji.



#### 4. Annual Fundraiser Banquet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6j3IZ71ZiE>

This year as per our tradition, we celebrated Deepavali with a Lakshmi Puja followed by our Swamiji's address and an array of cultural programs. Lakshmi Ashtothara was chanted as a part of the Puja and a melodious bhajan was also sung. The entire program was live telecast on the Chicago Chinmaya Mission YouTube channel and a recording of the same is available. Dinner was also served for the in-person participants at Badri and the evening ended with fireworks for children on Badri lawns.



#### 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)

#### In HIS Loving Memory –

**Pujya Gurudev** had a great sense of humor. He would come out with several witty sentences within the span of one satsang. Behind the humor was always a spiritual thought. One felt so happy just being in his presence. Once a young doctor, who had just joined the medical profession, came to get his copy of Bhagwad Gita signed by Gurudev, and Gurudev wrote out a prescription for him: **“Read two stanzas of the Bhagwad Gita three times a day, for three months. If symptoms persist, repeat the dose!!”** This prescription applies to each one of us.

### Updates from around the world -

- [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
- [Swadhyaya Series of Self Learning](#) – Online learning with access to materials for a lifetime
- [Face Life : Camp for Children](#) – Jan 3 – Jan 8, 2022 @ 5:15 am – 6:45 am CST
  - Daily sessions including Story session with Pujya Swami Swaroopananda followed by lively Bhajans and Art & Craft sessions.
- [Hindu Spiritual Care](#) – Intro to Spiritual Care – Course to train Spiritual Care providers – Registration required – Starting on 1/22/2022 – Online classes
- [Talks on Narada Bhakthi Sutra](#) – Jan 2 – Jan 31 @ 8 – 8:30 am CST
  - Talks in English by Pujya Guruji Swami Terjomayananda on YouTube Chinmaya Channel
- [Home Study Vedanta Courses](#) - @ Chinmaya International Foundation
  - Foundation Vedanta Course
  - Advanced Vedanta Course
  - Bhagavad Geeta
  - Upanishads
  - Master Geeta Master Life
  - Make it Happen
  - Sanskrit Learning – Beginner & Advanced
  - Vedic Mathematics

### Swami Sharananandaji's Weekly Program Schedule

| Program Name                                | Details                  |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Saddarshanam</b>                         | Sunday/ 8:30 – 9:15 am   |
| <b>Bhagavad Gita – Chapter-wise Summary</b> | Sunday / 9:30 – 10:00 am |
| <b>Viveka Choodamani</b>                    | Tuesday/ 7 –8 pm         |
| <b>Mandukya Upanishad</b>                   | Wed/ 7 – 8:15 pm         |
| <b>Drik Drishya Viveka</b>                  | Saturday/ 8 – 9 am       |

**The three ways to change the course of our lives for the better****The Power of Choice**

As human beings, we possess the liberty to choose between things that best align with our personal or professional goals. Therefore, our intellect is perceived as a boon, unlike animals, who thrive on instinct and cannot lead lives based on the possibility of informed choices. Once their basic needs are met, they continue to live a satisfied life. But as humans, we are able to doubt and hence, challenge the status quo in order to apply the intelligence bestowed upon us. We also exercise our power of choice to make decisions on a daily basis. To fulfill our perceived needs, we combine intellect with effort in the right direction, to pave the way for creating success and satisfaction. To achieve such levels of excellence requires a good measure of daily and consistent motivational planning.

**Where There is a Will, There is a Way**

Planning and preparation take us a certain distance towards our goals. But what happens when we encounter change? In the event of a sudden change, we require more than our usual reserve of habitual strength. This is where willpower plays an important role. In life's journey, if 'intellect' is the rudder of the aircraft, then 'willpower' is the engine that helps our dreams to accelerate, gain momentum and gear for a powerful takeoff. Therefore, willpower is imperative in the play of destiny. A strong willpower is enough to move mountains. Then no goal is too big or intimidating to achieve. But when we fail to act upon it, we tend to live unremarkable lives.

**Awareness is the Key to Succeeding at Life**

Even when backed by the right knowledge and willpower, success and peace of mind are not always a guaranteed result of the effort applied. For a positive outcome, it is imperative to be aware of our thoughts and actions. While oscillating between change and our resistance to it, we need to remain a witness to our thoughts too. It is only when we are fully alert, available and attentive in the present moment that our willpower can truly help us push past upheavals. When we perceive the subtle, underlying phenomena that impacts our world, we develop an acute awareness that cuts through the fog of doubt like a blade, delivering the clarity to proceed. Our goals become clearer, the journey to reach the desired destination smoother, and all this is achieved with a minimum loss of time and energy.

Although misfortunes are a part and parcel of life, inner attentiveness neutralizes the results of undesirable actions from the past. The path of understanding life's journey opens up when the feeling of entanglement with the effects of past actions disappears with time. Come what may, the spirit to keep going continues, when one is aligned with the objective, while possessing the strength and willpower to remain untouched by challenging moments. Indeed, the stimulation of one's intellect, willpower and spiritual awareness opens up to a wider field of love. - **Pujya Swami Swaroopananda**

Certificate in Hindu Chaplaincy – from CVV



**CHINMAYA**  
VISHWAVIDYAPEETH  
DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY

# Hindu Chaplaincy

## Certificate Programme

**First  
of its kind  
course to train  
Spiritual Care  
Providers**



- Provide spiritual care for people facing distress and loss
- Serve in hospitals, hospice, colleges, schools, military, etc.
- Volunteer in interfaith and other community settings
- Serve in India and abroad

**Mode**  
Online and on-campus options

**This course is recognised by**  

**Association of Professional Chaplains (USA)**

**For details**  
 [www.cvv.ac.in](http://www.cvv.ac.in)  
 [chaplaincy@cvv.ac.in](mailto:chaplaincy@cvv.ac.in)

**Starts  
January 2022**



**CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO**  
A School of Vedantic Studies  
BADRI • YAMUNOTRI • GANGOTRI



**Online Monthly Devi Satsang with**

**Swami Sharananandaji**

*Bhagavan Adi Shankaracharya's*

***Sadhana Panchakam***

**Third Thursday of every month 10-11am on Zoom**

Register at <https://bit.ly/2ZwTo4x> or email Vidya - [pvidya@hotmail.com](mailto:pvidya@hotmail.com)  
 More info: <http://mychinmaya.org>



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