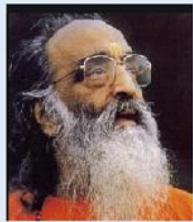




# CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

## BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies

Monthly Newsletter – April 2022



# Chinmaya

### Wisdom Quote

*What we have is a gift from Him. What we do with what we have is our gift to Him.* - **Swami Chinmayananda.**

### Swamiji's Message



#### Time – The Mighty Devourer

We human beings are strange. It is common knowledge and we know that anyone who is born is going to die. Yet we live under the strong illusion that the day is far away. We refuse to appreciate the play of Time.

#### The Time Factor

Our life span perishes continuously, as we see, day by day, youth disappears.

The days gone by will not return. Time devours the whole world. Material prosperity and worldly wealth are as fickle as the waves of the tidewaters. Our life is like a flash of lightning. Therefore, I have surrendered to You. Please protect me.

Just like a person watching a thief taking away his belongings, we watch as time is slipping from our hands. Our life span is continuously reducing, not only every day, but every moment. The youth that we are so proud of and glorify, as though it is permanent, also disappears.

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#### Upcoming Events -

- **Monthly Bhajan [Virtual]:** 4/9 @ 6 – 7:30 pm
  - Hosted by Gayathri Muthusami's Family – Available on Zoom only
- **Rama Navami** – 4/10 @ 11:00 am @ Badri
  - Available in-person only
  - Rama Puja at the Shrine by Swamiji
  - Cultural Programs by Bala Vihar children
- **Geeta Chanting Competition** – 4/23 @ 1 pm
- **Vedic Chanting** – 4/30, Sunday
  - 9:00 – 10:00 am
  - Monthly Group Chanting @ Badri Shrine
  - Only in-person participation available

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

## Badri re-opens on 10<sup>th</sup> April on Rama Navami day. Bala Vihar classes and Study Group sessions will be held in-person going forward.

### Highlights from Previous Month

The month of March, which brings with it the pleasant Spring, had some major events that brought together everyone to Badri and was very engaging. They were Maha Shivarathri Balavihar children's celebration and the festival of Holi. The month's activities began with the cultural programs of our Balavihar children, followed by our Bhajan Sandhya program. We also had our Holi celebration on 19<sup>th</sup> March at our Shrine which included Holika Dahan and cultural programs. Our regular monthly events continued with an enthusiastic participation from children and adults equally as the tasks are for HIM.

#### 1. Bhajan Sandhya

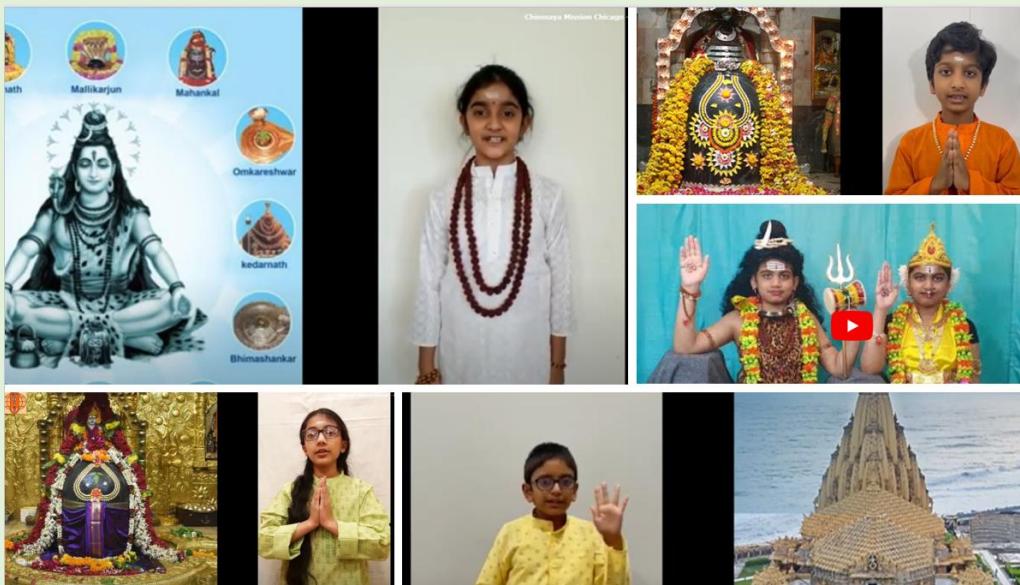
The monthly Bhajan Sandhya, was this time held on 12<sup>th</sup> March at Akhila and Venkat Palli's home at 6 pm. The host family had invited several families over for the evening and though the event was on Zoom, the participation at the Palli residence reminded us all of the pre-pandemic arrangement. Going by 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 who had joined the host family. The vibrant evening ended with the chanting of Nirvana Shatakam followed by a few minutes of silence and Aarthi.



## 2. Maha Shivarathri – Balavihar Cultural Programs

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sASEGqPNKlw>)

After celebrating the Maha Shivarathri at the Shrine on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> Feb, we have the cultural programs by the Balavihar children on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> March. A great compilation of the children's recording along with a rendition from our Swaranjali group was played after the Balavihar and Study Group sessions were completed.



## 3. Holi Festival Celebration

The Holi festival was celebrated this year at Badri shrine as an in-person event. This is after it was pushed to a remote celebration the last two years due to the pandemic. The event started with the popular Holika Dahan. There was a light drizzle but that did not deter a group of more than 100 devotees from participating in the ritual. After a prayer by Swamiji and the chanting of Achyuthashtakam everyone went around the fire offering roasted corn and rice puffs. Everyone then moved into the Shrine to listen to Swamiji's

talk on Holi and watch a recording of some songs and dances. The celebration ended with distribution of a variety of snacks and playing with colors, which is the mark of Holi festival. The large turnout of devotees was also an indication of the eagerness for everyone to return to the pre-pandemic ways and start conducting all sessions in-person.



## Tribute to Dr Ramamurthy



It is with overwhelming sadness that we announce the departure of our revered and beloved Dr. Ramamurthy. He passed away yesterday, reaching the abode of Puja Gurudev. Our sincere prayers and condolences to both of his sons, Santosh and Vasnath and their families, at this period of bereavement.

Dr. Ramamurthy was a founding member of Chinmaya Mission Chicago and our Badri center. In this context, we should also mention with gratitude, his beloved wife, late, Dr. Lalitha Ramamurthy who initiated our Balavihar classes, following Puja Gurudev's visit in 1979. Her commitment and dedication laid the foundation for our Balavihar program, structuring its syllabus and conducting our children's classes every week.

**[Dr Ramamurthy holding a camera along with Gurudev in 1991]**

Dr. Ramamurthy was a man of many interests, well read and knowledgeable in many fields of our performing arts, music, culture and traditions. His depth of knowledge, interest and appreciation of Indian Classical Music, is well known to all of us. He was a role model for us for his integrity of character, high principles and values. We have seen his excellence, not only as a professional in the field of medicine, but also in his lofty convictions and sincere practice of all our religious traditions as well as spiritual studies.

He was a large hearted personality, always willing to offer a helping hand- as described by Lord Krishna Himself, "Adveshta Sarvabhootanam, Maitra, Karuna Eva Cha ..." – malice towards none, friendly and compassionate to all..". Dr. Ramamurthy's continued support for the Mission's growth and development was invaluable and he will be remembered as one of our most generous and devout benefactors.

In memory of Puja Gurudev, we offer our respect to Subrahmanyam Ramamurthy and he will remain forever in our thoughts, with love and reverence, from all of us.

Om Namo Narayanaya!



## 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 –

A young lady once asked **Gurudev**: “Swamiji, whatever you teach is there in the books. Then what do I need a guru for?” **Gurudev** smiled and replied: “Why don’t you ask this question to the books?”

Books may be there. But teachers are required to explain them and clarify doubts.

## Updates from around the world -

- **Swadhyaya Series of Self Learning** – Online learning with access to materials for a lifetime
- **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
- **Kathopanishad with Shankara Bhashya** – Online Camp from Chinmaya International Foundation
  - Camp Starts 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022
  - Every month 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> week – Tuesday to Saturday 8:30 – 9:30 am CST
  - 60 sessions/ 6 months/ 1 hour each session
  - Facilitated by **Br. Ved Chaitanya**

### Swami Sharananandaji's Weekly Program Schedule

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

### Badri Re-Opening Announcement & Rama Navami

**CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO**  
Badri - A School of Vedantic Studies  
215000 Kingsley Hwy Willowbrook, IL 60527 • [www.ayachinmaya.org](http://www.ayachinmaya.org)

On the Auspicious Day of

# **SHRI RAMANAVAMI**

SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2022

**RESUMING IN-PERSON BALA VIHAR &  
ADULT STUDY GROUP CLASSES**

SHISHU VIHAR/BALA VIHAR CLASSES : 10 AM -11 AM  
 SWAMIJI'S DISCOURSE : 10 AM - 11 AM  
 ASHTOTTARA NAMAVALI/ARCHANA : 11 AM - 11:30 AM  
 BALA VIHAR CULTURAL PROGRAM : 11:30 AM - 12 NOON  
 PRASADAM LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

GIRIJA SIVAKUMAR: 630-781-9639 \* SHANKER PILLAI: 630-556-6442

## Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's Message contd...

Material prosperity and worldly wealth are as fickle as the waves of the tidewaters. Our life is like a flash of lightning, shining bright and then gone in a fraction of a second! The lightning momentarily illuminates everything and then there is darkness again.

We know we are going to die someday, but we do not know our lifespan. Let us assume a person's lifespan is 80 years. When he is a year old, we celebrate his birthday and the years roll by. At the 50-year mark, we may ponder for a moment on whether we are growing or reducing in years – depending on which side we are looking from! From a lifespan of 80, 50 years have already gone. The countdown has started. Then, when we turn 60, only 20 years remain, but we are not aware of it!

We believe we will die some day in the future, but even as we watch, we are dying every moment! We relegate this fact to fate and have no control over it. However, we must appreciate the Lord's generosity and compassion. He has graced all human beings with a most special gift. Without exception, each day, on waking up, we have 24 hours before us, irrespective of whether we are rich or poor, educated or illiterate, man or woman, young or old.

Moreover, Bhagavan has not stipulated how we should spend those 24 hours. He has given us full freedom. Some, who may be referred to as the descendants of Kumbhakarna, spend their time mostly sleeping, or fulfilling various desires, without realizing how much trouble they may be causing to others while acquiring something for themselves. A few sensible people do think about this and understand that money lost may come back, but time gone never returns. They understand the great wealth of time they have been gifted with. In the transactional world, 'time is money' is a well-known expression. Many professionals, management gurus, lawyers and so on swear by this. Given this scenario, what are you doing with the wealth of time at your disposal? Are you under the illusion that you still have much more time left?

### Little Time!

The illusion that 'there is still time', keeps us bound to this world and we often miss the most important things in life. Therefore, we end up being preoccupied and busy with urgent things or catching up with pending items of daily routine and consequently miss some critical aspects of life and put them on the backburner.

Time does not wait. Bhagavan says, "I have not waited for anybody – be it a raja, maharaja, Mr. World or Ms. Universe, a sannyasi or a sadhu."

Some say, "I am so busy that I don't even have time to die!"

But Death says, "Don't worry. I have plenty of time!"

No matter how long your lifespan, when your time is up, nothing can stop death. From the Puranas and Vedas, we learn that the long lifespans of Indra and other gods as well as of Brahmaji also come to an end.

Slowly, the body gets emaciated; we are seeing it. All that denotes youth also disappears. Days that are gone do not come back. Time is money, but we spend all our time in earning mere money and miss the real wealth! Someone aptly said, "The love of wealth has taken away the wealth of love from man's

life." We spend all our time in earning material wealth and destroy our health in the process. Later, to regain that health, we spend all the wealth that we have earned!

What can be more surprising than this, that even after seeing everyone around us dying each day, man still lives with the hope that death will not touch him! The point to note is that one should not become depressed by thinking of death all the time, but must know how much importance to give to worldly achievements. Yes, it is important to earn through right means, to utilize one's wealth for right causes and not just for indulgence. But to earn, enjoy and share wealth is not the final goal. We have to grow out of that stage too.

How would a fifteen-year-old look if he carries around the teddy bear, he played with as a toddler? We have to understand that worldly things perish and can never give us everlasting peace, satisfaction and happiness. We must worship the Lord and gain the real wealth of life – our own Self.

#### Seek and Surrender

A true devotee prays at all times: "Bhagavan I have understood, I cannot live beyond my lifespan, nor can I depend on worldly wealth. I cannot depend on people, though I love and serve them. I can only depend on You. Everything is an illusion; therefore, please protect me. O Lord, I have surrendered to You now. I have heard that You have never turned away anyone seeking Your shelter and You never look at their past records, whatever it may be!"

In the Gita, Shri Krishna also states – Abandon all varieties of dharmas of the body, mind and intellect; simply surrender unto Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sinful reactions; do not fear.

Understand that the world we see is impermanent, the only permanent factor is the Lord. So if we run after the impermanent alone, the permanent, is lost and the non-permanent, does not remain in any case. Therefore, we get nothing!

There is little time. Let us not waste it. Seek, seek only the permanent.

- Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

*[This article appeared in **Sikkim Express** newspaper on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022]*

- Hari Om –