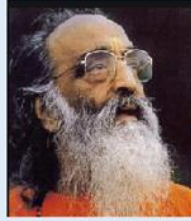




# CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

**BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies**

Monthly Newsletter – December 2022



# Chinmaya

## Wisdom Quote

It is our bounden duty to do everything to make children grow into beautiful beings. – **Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda.**

## Swamiji's Message

### Children & The Role of Parents – Swami Aparijithananda



When do children grow into beautiful beings? Only when we inculcate the eternal values in them. In this regard, parents have a very big role to play.

Lord Krishna visited Queen Gandhari to console her after the Kurukshetra battle. Unable to control her emotions, she accused Him, “Though you are God, how could you be so partial? You supported the Pandavas but could not save at least one son out of the hundred sons I bore.”

Krishna replied, “Amma, I am not responsible for the death of your children. You alone are.”

Completely taken aback, Gandhari replied, “Krishna, how can you be so hard-hearted to accuse me thus?”

Krishna replied, “You gave birth to a hundred sons, but did you ever cast your loving glance on at least one of them? You chose to remain blindfolded. You could not see for yourself how your sons were faring. Mother is the first teacher and the preacher. A mother is an embodiment of all virtues – be it love, sacrifice, patience, compassion or forgiveness. Being in the company of such a mother, children learn all the noble virtues of life. Hence a mother is irreplaceable. ”

“Just think over the situation for yourself. The Kauravas grew up amidst a blind father and a blindfolded mother. Hence, they had none to love them, to discipline them and to correct them. No wonder why they grew up with all vices of life.

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### Upcoming Events -

- **Monthly Bhajan:** 12/2 @ 6 – 7:30 pm
  - Hosted by Sudha & Ravi Yalamanchi
  - In-person @ Badri Shrine
- **Monthly Group Vedic Chanting**
  - 12/18, 9:00 – 9:55 am @ Badri Shrine
- **Gita Jayanthi** – 12/3 @ Badri Shrine/ 8:30 am
- **Annual Banquet** – 12/4 @ 6 pm/ Waterford
- **Gita Chanting Competition**
  - On 12/10 at 1 pm @ Badri

## Highlights from Previous Month

The month of November is usually an eventless month with no festival-based celebrations, or any other planned events scheduled. Most of the people will be busy preparing for the Annual Banquet coming up the following month. We had our scheduled Bhajan Sandhya on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday hosted by Sujatha and Gyana Patnaik's family, and it was at our Badri shrine. We concluded the month with the monthly Group Vedic Chanting at the shrine of Lord Badri Narayana. There are a growing number of people expressing interest not only in chanting but also in listening to the hour-long chanting.

### **1. Bhajan Sandhya**

The November month's Bhajan Sandhya was hosted by Smt Sujatha & Shri Gyana Patnaik family at our Badri Shrine. The participants chanted all the slokas as a group and well participated in the Bhajans. The event was well attended and concluded with the distribution of prasadam dinner.



### **2. Monthly Vedic Chanting**

The practice of conducting group chanting of Vedic mantras at our Badri shrine is gaining attention and the participants for both chanting and listening is increasing. This month also participants of the Badri Vedic Chanting group gathered at the Shrine on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

Any willing to join the chanting or listen to the chanting of the Vedic mantras can join the chanting team on the last Sunday or the date specified in the 'Upcoming Events' section of this Newsletter.



*Swamiji talks about the 'Geetopadesham' picture that adorns the walls of most homes and the one we are all most familiar with. Swamiji draws a beautiful comparison between the parts of that picture with our life. And this is how it goes.*

- **Kurukshetra battlefield** - Our Life (we usually say every day of our life is always a battle)
- **Two armies on both sides** - Dharma (Right deeds) and Adharma (wrong deeds)
- **Chariot** - Our body
- **5 White horses** - Five senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue & skin)
- **Reins holding the 5 horses** - Our Mind
- **Lord Krishna** - Our Intellect (The difference between our mind and intellect is, mind is emotional while our intellect is rational)
- **Arjuna** - Our Jiva atma (the owner of the chariot)

'When the Jiva, follows what the Intellect and picks the side of Dharma to overcome Adharma, then we win the battles of our life.'" This highest level message is embedded in this picture and this important message is brought to us by our Gurudev through his commentary. Nowhere else such a powerful message related to our life is conveyed through a picture. This common picture symbolizing Bhagavad Gita conveys the core message in such a simple way.

## Badri Programs

<https://mychinmaya.org/activities/weekly-activities/>

- **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 –

Gurudev could apply his sense of humor on himself. After Gurudev had inaugurated the Chinmaya Mission Hospital in Bangalore in 1970, the next year, he got his first heart attack and was admitted into the same hospital. He remarked: *“Earlier I had inaugurated the outpatients ward of the hospital. Now I am inaugurating the inpatients ward.”*

## Value Points from Study Group Discussions

### **Bhaja Govindam** (Study Group)

Our Swamiji visited our Study Group and clarified some of our questions. One of the detailed clarification was on the term ‘**Prathipaksha Bhavana**’. It was discussed that this is an ability we build to view anything from an opposing perspective. This is to be used as a tool to curtail our desires and have a better understanding over things that are otherwise shaded with ignorance.

## Swami Sharananandaji’s Weekly Program Schedule

Program Name	Details
<b>Saddarshanam (on Zoom)</b>	Sunday/ 8:00 – 8:45 am
<b>Bhagavad Gita Discourse (In-person at Shrine)</b>	Sunday / 10 – 10:30 am
<b>Viveka Choodamani (on Zoom)</b>	Tuesday/ 7 – 8 pm
<b>Mandukya Upanishad (on Zoom)</b>	Wed/ 7 – 8:15 pm
<b>Drik Drishya Viveka (on Zoom)</b>	Saturday/ 8 – 9 am



### Updates from around the world -

- [Swadhyaya Series of Self Learning](#) – Online learning with access to materials for a lifetime
- [CIF – Courses](#) available this month
  - Online mode only
  - Registration required

### Gems from Balavihar

**From Sri Rama** - Parikshit meets Sukadeva: why Parikshit did a bad act of putting a snake around the rishi? King Parikshit did a bad act because he was not on guard.

King Parkshit welcomed the curse of Sringi. Why? Because the king realized that he had committed a sin, and the curse was result of his bad action.

Varaha Avatara: why did Bhagavan take the form of a Varaha? Bhagavan takes different forms, different avatars to help the situations. Bhu, Mother Earth, was under water. The boar has a very good sense of smell. Bhagavan took the form of a Varaha so that He can smell and locate Bhu.

What is pralaya? Pralaya is dissolution. After creation, dissolution follows with time

### Swamiji's Message Continued...

And what about Pandavas? Kunti, from the moment of her husband's death, brought up her sons with great care and affection. She was with them whether it be in the palace, in the forest or in the House of Wax. The Pandavas would never do anything without the blessings or permission of their mother. Well-groomed by their virtuous and devoted mother, Pandavas grew up as embodiments of all virtues."

"Amma, your sons are indeed the most unfortunate ones because they could not enjoy their mother's most affectionate glance and her tender care. How could they grow into disciplined, dutiful, and righteous heroes?"

Gandhari realized the truth in Krishna's words. But it was too late...

Other than the parents, even the teachers and professors in the schools and the colleges can play a vital role in molding the character of the modern youth.

Sadhu Vaswani was a popular professor and his students adored him. They were deeply devoted to him.

One day he took them out on an excursion. There were some labourers engaged in the work of construction of a building. They had taken off their shoes. The students wished to

have some fun. So they took away the shoes of the labourers and hid them behind the bushes. They thought it would be fun to watch the labourers search for their lost shoes.

Prof Vaswani learnt this and he said to the students, "Come, I shall show you how to have better fun."

He asked the students to keep the shoes in their proper places and insert one rupee coin in every shoe. "Then watch the faces of the workers when they wear the shoes, and you will have the greatest fun of life."

The students followed the directions. When the labourers came and found one rupee coin in their torn, tattered shoes, they could not believe their eyes! They felt excited and astonished beyond words.

As the students watched the happy faces of the worker, they said to each other, "Surely, there is greater fun in loving, in giving, than in teasing."

Blessed indeed are they who, at a very young age, grow up under the protection and guidance of virtuous and noble ones.

Even when he was a small boy, Swami Rama was living with his Master in the Himalayas.

Children are selfish by nature. They do not want to give anything to others. The little boy was trained by his Master to reverse this tendency.

In the mountains, they used to take only one meal a day. The boy was given one chappati, some vegetables, and a glass of milk. One day, when it was almost one o'clock he washed his hands, sat down, and the food was given to him. He said his prayers and was about to start eating when his Master came in and said, "Wait!"

The boy looked at the Master wanting to know the reason.

The Master said, "An old Swami has come. He is hungry and you must give him your food."

"No," the boy argued, "I am not going to, even if he is a Swami. I am also hungry and I will not get any food until tomorrow."

The Master said, "You won't die. Give it to him. But don't give it just because I am ordering you. Give it as an offering of love."

The boy was adamant. He said, "I am hungry. How can I feel love towards someone who is eating my food?"

When the Master could not convince him to offer his food to the Swami he finally said, "I order you to offer your food!"

The Swami came in. He was an old man with a white beard. With only a blanket, a walking stick, and wooden sandals, he travelled all alone in the mountains. The Master said to him, "I am so glad that you have come. Will you bless this child for me?"

But the boy said, "I don't need your blessing. I need food. I am hungry."

The Master said, "If you lose control in this weak moment, you will lose the battle of life. Please offer your food to the Swami. First give him water and then wash his feet."

The boy did as he was told, but he did not like it, nor did he understand the meaning of it. He helped the Swami wash his feet and then he asked him to sit down and then he gave his food. Later it was found out that the Swami had not had any food for four days.

He took the food and said, "God bless you! You will never feel hunger until the food comes before you. This is my blessing to you."

Swami Rama recollects this incident and says, "His voice still echoes in my ears. From that very day, I have been free from that urge which had so often led me to childish cravings."

Recent research has shown that children who are trained in noble virtues grow up to be successful in their family, social and professional lives.

Munshi Premchand, a famous writer in Hindi literature, had two sons. They were studying in Allahabad, while he and his wife lived in a small town towards the northern side of Allahabad.

One day, Premchand and his wife had to go by train southward on a visit to another town and they had to pass through Allahabad. He wrote to his sons to come and meet them at the station on that particular date.

The train halted at the station and the parents stood at the door of the carriage. They saw their sons hurrying towards them. The elder one touched the feet of both the parents before talking to them, while the younger son just talked. The parents enquired about their health and studies. Both of them said that everything was fine.

As the train was about to start, once again the elder one bent and touched the feet of his parents while the younger one just waved his hands.

The couple continued their journey on the train. Premchand's wife was talking about their sons and was very happy over the meeting. She saw to her surprise that her husband was rather unusually silent and moody. She asked him, "My dear, what is the matter? Why are you so serious and silent all of a sudden instead of being happy?"

Premchand replied, "You don't seem to have observed properly. Are you satisfied with the behaviour of our second son?"

"Oh! What is the matter? I don't find anything wrong with him. He is just young, full of fun and frolic."

"No, no. The elder one paid his respects to us reverentially by touching our feet twice while the other one, despite seeing his elder brother, did not care at all to do likewise!"

"Why do you take this seriously?" said his wife. "After all he is young. He must have felt shy to touch our feet in front of so many people. He must have paid his respects mentally. He will learn and improve in course of time."

But Premchand could not come to a compromise and said, "My dear, good habits reveal one's true nature and bent of mind. Right from boyhood days, children must cultivate good habits. Those gestures should be spontaneous. I do not know what is in store for him in the future."

The father's words proved to be true. In course of time, the elder son, by virtue of his diligence and good habits, passed the B.A degree Examination, went to London and obtained the Bar-at-law degree. On returning to India he practised as a barrister for only two or three years and became the Judge of Allahabad court. He was very much respected for his manners and sense of courtesy.

The younger son could not fare well and had to discontinue his studies. He became a clerk in the Court of Allahabad. While the elder one received salutations from everyone, the younger one had to salute everyone!

It is well said, "Strive not to be a success, but of value; because you are only as good as your values."

-Hari Om-