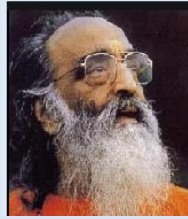




CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies

Monthly Newsletter – April 2023



Chinmaya

Wisdom Quote

Scriptures are not mere books for intellectual studies. We must learn to assimilate these ideas and come to live them. – Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Gurudev's Message



Lets us be Hindus

[First talk by H H Swami Chinmayananda on December 23, 1951]

A Hindu swami to talk. A Hindu temple for the background. A crowded hall of Hindus audience, and the subject for discussion: "Let us be Hindus." Strange! It sounds like a ridiculous paradox and a meaningless contradiction. I can very well see that you are surprised at the audacity of this sadhu.

It has become a new fashion with the educated Hindu to turn up his nose and sneer in contempt at the very mention of his religion in any discussion. Personally, I too belong in my sympathies to these critics of our religion. But when this thoughtless team begins to declare we would benefit ourselves socially and nationally by running away from our sacred religion, I pause to reconsider my own stand.

At the present state of moral, ethical, and cultural degradation in our country, to totally dispose of religion would be making our dash to ruin the quicker. However decadent our religion may be, it is far better than having none at all. My proposal is that the wise thing would be for us to try and bring about a renaissance of Hinduism so that under its greatness-proved through many centuries-we may come to grow in to the very heights of culture and civilization that was our in the historical past.

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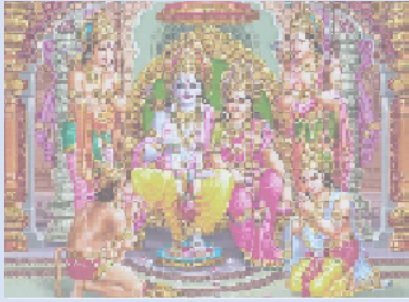
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[Badri Expansion](#)

Upcoming Events -

- **Vishnu Sahasranamam:** 4/2 @ 9:15 am
 - At Badri Shrine
- **Rama Navami BV Celebration:** 4/2
 - At Badri Shrine during concluding prayers
- **Monthly Bhajan:** 2/8 @ 6 – 7:30 pm
 - Host: Smt. Gayathri Muthuswamy
 - 4026 Thatcher Dr Aurora IL 60594
 - RSVP @ 630.788.7519
- **Hanuman Jayanthi BV Celebration:** 4/9
 - At Badri Shrine during concluding prayers
- **Ramayana Saptah:** 4/22 – 4/29
 - At Badri Shrine – Entire day programs
- **Group Vedic Chanting** - 3/30 @ 9:00 am
 - At Badri Shrine



Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

Based on Ramacharithmanas by Gowami Thulasidas

Discourses by: **Swami Shantananda**

Save the date: April 22-29, 2023 @ Badri

Highlights from Previous Month

The month of March is always special for all as Spring starts during this month. The colorful festival of Holi is also celebrated during this month and after the cold winter, we get to step out at Badri for the first time of the year, to celebrate the 'Holika dahan'. We also had the regular monthly events of Bhajan Sandhya, Group chanting of Vishnu Sahasranamam and end of the month Vedic Chanting at our Shrine. The month also concluded with a Pooja and chanting from Ramacharithmanas to mark the occasion of Rama Navami.

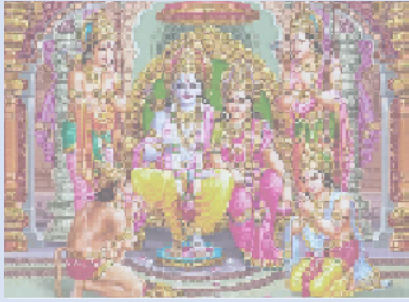
1. Bhajan Sandhya

The March month's Bhajan Sandhya was hosted by Smt Jyoti & Shri Naishad Shah's family at their home. 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. Vishnu Sahasranamam Chanting

On the first Sunday of the month, the practice of chanting Vishnu Sahasranamam continued this month too. There was a good participation and the chanting reverberated through the shrine as everyone chanted in unison at the same pace. The session concluded with the chanting of Narayana Suktam. The interest shown by devotees in participating in this monthly chanting is also increasing.



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3. Monthly Vedic Chanting

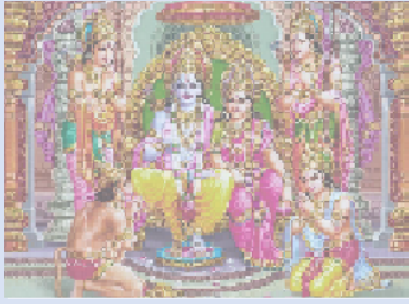
The practice of conducting group chanting of Vedic mantras at our Badri shrine has gained a lot of attention and the participants for both chanting and listening are increasing. This month we had a big group of children leading the chanting. Any willing to join the chanting or listen to the chanting of the Vedic mantras can join the group on the last Sunday or the date specified in the 'Upcoming Events' section of this Newsletter.



3. Holi Celebration

This year, the Holi celebration and its corresponding Balavihar programs were on the same day i.e. Sunday, 12th March. After the regular Balavihar and Study Group sessions were concluded, there were cultural programs at the Shrine as a part of the extended concluding sessions. This was followed by an elaborate and relishing prasadam lunch. Everyone then stepped out for the 'Holika Dahan' and playing with colors. This was also a way of welcoming Spring, that was a few days away.





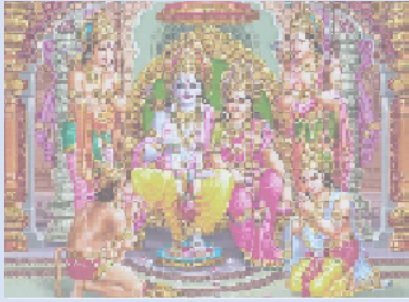
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4. Rama Navami Puja

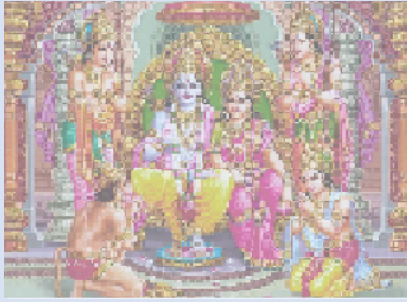
Towards the conclusion of the month, Rama Navami was celebrated on Thursday, 30th March. The evening started with a puja for Lord Ram followed by the energetic chanting of Rama Ashtothara by our children. This was followed by a melodious rendition of the Ramacharithamanas, the section that describes the birth of Lord Ram. Accompanied by the beat of the Tabla, it was a mesmerizing few minutes and it only added to the eagerness of the upcoming Ramayana Saptah. Our Swamiji then explained a few sections of the Ramacharithamanas and expounded on the greatness of both Sant Thulasidas ji and Lord Ram. The evening ended with serving of prasadam dinner that included several sweets to remind everyone of the occasion.



5. Stuti Vandana Medal Distribution

During this month the bi-annual distribution of Stuti Vandana medals was also conducted and all the children who completed various items listed in both Stuti Vandana 1 & 2 were felicitated during the Balavihar concluding session. Stuti Vandana is a great program to help children learn all the Slokas, various mantras and some Suktams too.





Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

Based on Ramacharithamahas by Gowami Thulasidas

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Badri Weekly Class Schedule

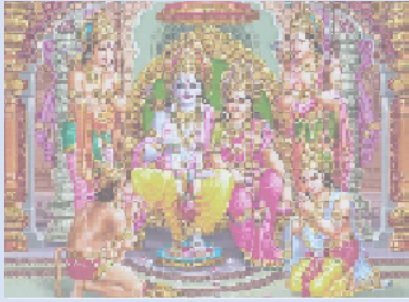
Chinmaya Mission Chicago Badri		Weekly Class Schedule					
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Geeta Chanting	9:15 – 9:45 am 12:00 – 12:30 pm	7:00 – 8:00 pm *					
Sanskrit Classes	7:15 – 8:30 pm *	6:00 – 7:00 pm *			7:00 – 8:00 pm *		
Stuti Vandana			6:00 – 6:30 pm * 6:30 – 7:00 pm *				
Swaranjali (Bhajans)	12:30 – 1:00 pm			7:00 – 8:00 pm *			
Vedic Chanting	9:15 – 9:45 am 7:30 – 8:00 pm *				7:30 – 8:00 pm * 8:00 – 9:00 pm *		
Vishnu Sahasranamam	6:00 – 7:00 pm *						
Yoga							9:30 – 10:30 am

* - Online Classes – Please check website for details – <http://mychinmaya.org>

Contacts		Please check website for registration and zoom information	
Geeta Chanting	Ramesh Turuvekere : rameshr@gmail.com Sudha Gouthama : sudhagouth@yahoo.com	http://mychinmaya.org/gita-chanting	
Sanskrit	Venkat Palli : vsp410@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/sanskrit-classes/	
Stuti Vandana	Suchi Achar : suchiram@hotmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/stuti-vandana/	
Swaranjali (Bhajans)	Pavithra Anand : pavithra.anand@gmail.com Raman Mahadevan : ramdevan23@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/swaranjali-2/	
Vedic Chanting	Sunil Narayanan : pnsunil@outlook.com Sashi Narasimhan : laksharag@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/vedic-chanting/	
Vishnu Sahasranamam	Sudha Gouthama : sudhagouth@yahoo.com Sini Narayanan : sini_athul@yahoo.com Venkat Palli : vsp410@gmail.com		
Yoga	Shila Sanghani : shilaom@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/yoga-meditation/	

Swami Sharananandaji's Weekly Program Schedule

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



Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

Based on Ramacharithamahas by Gowami Thulasidas

Discourses by: **Swami Shantananda**

Save the date: April 22-29, 2023 @ Badri

In HIS Loving Memory –

Once, a 'secular' minded journalist, who was known to show Hinduism in poor light, asked a question to Gurudev:

Q [Journalist]: "Who is the founder of Islam?"

A [Gurudev]: "Prophet Mohammad."

Q: "Who is the founder of Christianity?"

A: "Jesus Christ."

Q: "Who is the founder of Hinduism?"

Thinking that Swamiji has no answer, the lady journalist proceeded, "There is no founder and hence, Hinduism is not a religion or Dharma at all."

Then, Gurudev said, "You are right. Hinduism is not a religion. It is a Science."

She did not understand that. Gurudev put some more questions to her.

Q: "Who is the founder of Physics?"

Ans: "No one person."

Q: "Who is the founder of Chemistry?"

Ans: "No one person."

Q: "Who is the founder of Biology?"

Ans: "No single person. Many many persons, from time to time, contributed to the wealth of knowledge of any Science."

Gurudev continued: "Hindu Dharma is a Science, developed over the centuries, contributed by saints and sages for giving right direction to the society by their own research and experiences
"Islam has only one book -Quran. Christianity has only one book -Bible. But for Hinduism, I can take you to a library and show you hundreds of books. Because Hinduism is a scientific religion-called Sanatana Dharma."

Gems from Balavihar

From Vishwamitra –

Over the last 4 weeks we discussed -

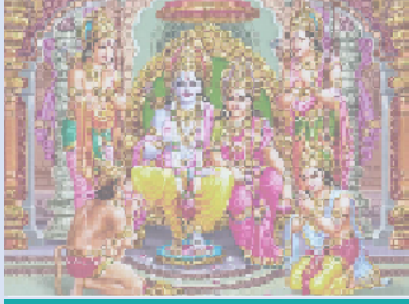
- Symbolism of Lord Shiva
- Sruti, Smrti, Dharma
- What is dharma, components of dharma ?
- What are values ?

Last week we had active discussions on dharma via the 4 corners game/debate.

Today our focus was on values Dhriti, (Fortitude) and Ksama (Forgiveness)

We will continue to cover other values in future classes.

Our every session starts with Daily Prayers, Bhagavad Gita chapter 3 (selected verses) and Tapovana satakam chanting.



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CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

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*Vedas are instructions on how to live life.
Ramayana shows us how to emulate those
instructions in everyday living.
- Swami Chinmayananda*



Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

*Based on
Ramcharitmanas by Goswami Tulsidas*

Discourses by
Swami Shantananda



President, Chinmaya Mission West

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, April 22, 2023 - Saturday, April 29, 2023

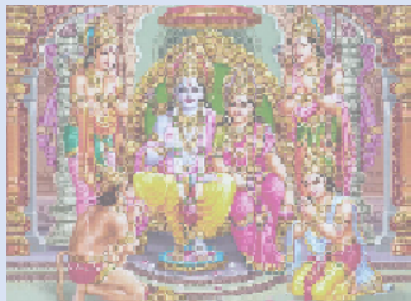
Daily Sri Rama Katha ✦ Discourses ✦ Daily Sri Rama Puja ✦ Parayana

Celebrations: Sri Rama Janma ✦ Sita Vivah ✦ Sri Rama Rajyabhishekam

Accommodations & Meals will be provided at nominal cost for stay on campus

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Shanker Pillai (630) 886 6442 • Suresh Kumar (630) 362 0104 • Abhijit Joshi (312) 296 1477
Kaushik Joshi (630) 886 7489 • Ashok Dholakia (708) 602 3901 • Deepak Chande (708) 253 3570



Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

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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
- [Puja Vidhanam Course](#)
 - 1 month in-person/ English
 - Swami Sharadananda Sarasvathi
 - Basic and Advanced level courses available
 - 12 Aug – 10 Sept 2023 @ Adi Shankara Nilayam

30th Chinmaya Aradhana Mahasamadhi Camp 2023

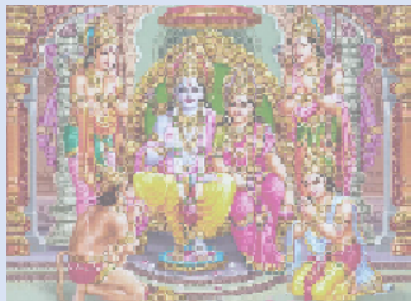
With the grace of Puja Gurudev, this year Chinmaya Mission West is bringing together entire Chinmaya family in-person for Puja Gurudev's "**30th Chinmaya Aradhana Mahasamadhi Camp 2023**".

The 30th Chinmaya Aradhana Mahasamadhi Camp 2023 will be hosted by Chinmaya Mission Chicago at the Waterford Banquet & Conference Center, 933 S. Riverside Dr. Elmhurst, IL 60126 from **29th July to 3rd August 2023**. Hotel rooms are available and registration of the 30th MSC will open soon. This camp will be led and conducted by Swami Swaroopananda, Global Head, Chinmaya Mission.

Please save the date and spread the word to all members of your center and community. Details are coming soon.

Hari om

In His Service
(Chinmaya Mission West)



Sampoorna Ramayana Saptah

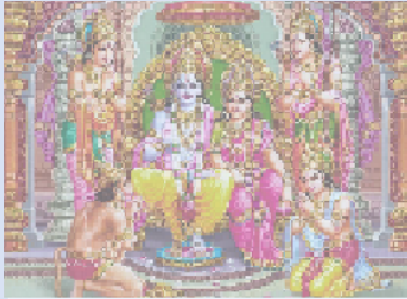
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Badri Expansion – Models & Plans



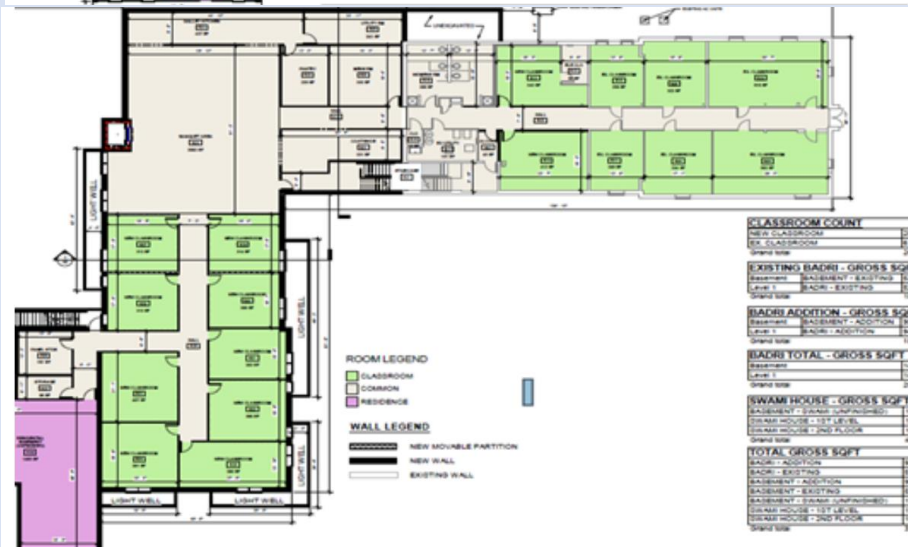


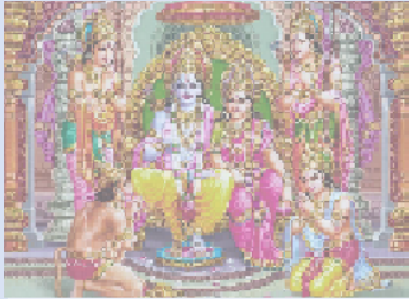
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Gurudev's Message Continued...

No doubt, in India Hinduism has come to mean nothing more than bundle of sacred superstitions, or a certain way of dressing, cooking, eating, talking and so on. Our gods have fallen to the mortal level of administration officers at whose alters the faithful Hindu might pray and get special permits of the things he desires; that is, if he pays the required fee to the priest!

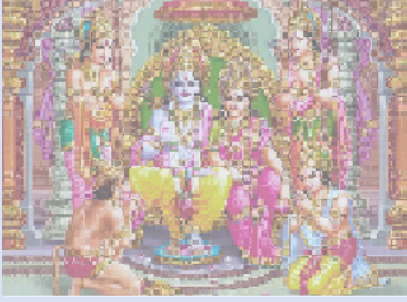
This degradation is not the product of any accidental and sudden historical upheaval. For two hundred years Hinduism has remained an encouragement of the rich. Once upon a time, the learned philosophers were rightly the advisers of the state. But then the quality of the adviser-class [Brahmana] and the ruler-class [Kshatriya] deteriorated. By slowly putrefying themselves in the leprous warmth of luxury and power, they have taken us to the regrettable stage in which we find ourselves now. The general cry of the educated class is really against this un-religion. However, it is only the thoughtless, uninformed leaders who call this Hinduism.

Certainly, if Hinduism can breed for us only heartless lalas [shopkeepers], corrupt babus [clerks], cowardly men, loveless masters, faithless servants; if Hinduism can give us only a state of social living in which each man is put against his brother; if Hinduism can give us only starvation, nakedness, and destitution; if Hinduism can encourage us only to plunder, to loot, and to steal; if Hinduism can preach to us only intolerance, fanaticism, hardheartedness, and cruelty; then I too cry, "Down, Down"; with that Hinduism.

And yet the above is a realistic picture of the sad condition and plight into which the Hindu people as a nation have allowed themselves to fall. This is the tragic picture of the great Hindu disaster in present-day India.

But Hinduism is not this external show that we have learned to parade about in our daily life. Hinduism is a science of perfection. There is in it an answer to every individual, social, national, or international problem. But unfortunately the religion, which we have come to follow blindly, is not the grand true Hinduism. It is only the treacherous scheme thrust upon us sometime in the past by the selfish, arrogant; power mad priest caste whose intention was to make us slaves of their plans and our own passions. The present day Hindu ignoramuses prove the tragic success of these religious saboteurs. With their guidance we overlook the fundamental tenets in sacred scriptures that are the very backbone of Hinduism. True Hinduism is the Sanatana Dharma [Eternal Truth] of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads declare in unmistakable terms that in reality, man-at the peak of his achievement- is God himself. He is advised to live his day to day experiences in life in such a systematic and scientific way that, hour by hour, consciously cleansing himself of all the encrustation of imperfections that have gathered to conceal the beauty and divinity of the true eternal personality in him. The methods by which an individual can consciously purify and evolve by his self-effort to regain the status of his True Nature are the content of Hinduism. Hinduism in its vast amphitheater has preserved and worshiped, under the camouflage of the heavy descriptions contained in the Puranas, shastras [scriptures], and their commentaries of thousand different interpretations. This overgrowth has so effectively come to



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conceal that real beauty and grandeur of the tiny Temple of Truth that today the college-educated illiterates, in their ignorance of the language and style of the ancient Sanskrit writers, miss the Temple amidst its own festoons!

To inquire into the very textbooks of our religion with a view to knowing what Hinduism has to teach, and how its message can be used to save us as we face the problems of our daily lives, is the aim of the One hundred days' Upanishad Gnana Yagna, which is now proposed to commence on December 31, 1951, here in Poona.

Religion becomes dead and ineffectual if the seekers are not ready to live its ideals. For that matter, is there any philosophy – political, social, or cultural – which can take us to its promised land of success, without our following its principles in our day – to – day living?

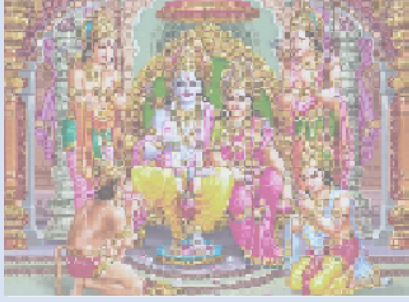
However great our culture might have been in the past, that dead glory, reported in the pages of history books, is not going to help us in our present trials. If the barbarous cavemen of the unexplored jungles want to become as civilized as the men of modern nations, they cannot achieve this total revolution through mere discourses, or even through an exhaustive study of the literature describing the ways of the modern civilized nations. They will have to know and then live the civilized values of life. A mere knowing of it will not help them. They can claim the blessings of their knowledge only if they are ready to live what they know. In order to live as civilized men, they will have to renounce completely their ways of uncivilized thinking and acting.

In fact, without renunciation no progress is ever possible. We must renounce the thrills of our childhood games in order to grow to be young men of noble actions. Again, unless we renounce our youthful spirit, we cannot come to the reverence of old age.

Unless we are ready to renounce the low animal values of material life and replace them with the noble values of the truly religious life, we cannot hope to gain the blessings of religion. A study of a cookbook, however thorough it might be, will not satisfy our hunger. No matter how long we meditate upon and repeat the name of the medicine, we cannot get the cure we need until we actually take the medicine. Similarly, the blessings of religion can be ours only when we are ready to live the recommended values. To condemn unpracticed religion is as meaningless as those cavemen sitting around their open fire, and querulously decrying advanced civilization.

During these one hundred days of the Upanishad Gnana Yagna, we shall be trying to discover the Eternal Happiness and Bliss that is the succulent essence of all true religions. In light of the principles of Truth declared in the Upanishads, we shall be trying to get at the scientific significance of the various practices that are considered part of our religion. In a spirit of communal living for these one hundred days we shall come to discover the science of perfection, the true essence of Hinduism.

Let us know what Hinduism is! Let us take an honest oath for ourselves, not only for our own sake, but for the sake of the entire world; that we shall, when once we are convinced of the validity of the Eternal



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Truth, try honestly to live as consistently as possible the values advocated by this ancient and sacred religion.

Let us be Hindus, and thus build up a true Hindustan (Home of the Hindus) peopled with thousands of Shankaras, hundreds of Buddhas, and dozens of Vivekanandas!

Om ! Om ! Om !

-Hari Om-