

Chinmaya Vani

Chinmaya Mission Orlando
Newsletter



Newsletter - January 2010

Chinmaya Mission Orlando - www.chinmayaorlando.org

"A bud abandons itself to become a flower; a flower gives up its soft petals and enchanting fragrance to reach the higher status of a fruit. Every abandonment of action should similarly lift us up into a nobler status in evolution. Our duties are never to be abandoned, but our clinging attachments to actions and their fruits must be relinquished."

- Swami Chinmayananda

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Blessed Self, Hari Om

The whole world is an expression of Divine glory. Every moment is a New Divine moment. As Gurudev said "Renewal of one self is the Real New Year". Let us renew ourselves in "His" remembrance, let us purify our minds, let us work in Yagna spirit together in the spirit of Love, Harmony and Sacrifice.

The "Anna Kshetra" is ready, by the blessings of Lord and Sri Gurudev. May God bless us all to work together in Yagna spirit and purify our minds. May we never forget "Him". Let this new moment of New Year be in Love, Peace and Harmony.

In "His" Service

Love,
Dr. Shailaja Nadkarni
President,
Chinmaya Mission Orlando

Mahashivaratri 2010

Mahashivaratri is one of the most auspicious days; Shiva means auspiciousness. The night of Shivaratri symbolizes the darkness of ignorance. Shiva is the Ocean of Knowledge who leads humankind to knowledge. The devotee, who utters the names of Lord Shiva during Shivaratri, with perfect devotion and concentration, is freed from all sins. He is liberated from the wheel of births and deaths. May Lord Shiva bless us all on the occasion of Mahashivaratri and lead us to bliss.



This year Mahashivaratri will be observed on Friday, February 12th 2010 at Chinmaya Mission Orlando. The auspiciousness and purity which comes to our hearts by just remembering the Lord is beyond intellectual imagination.

More details about the Mahashivaratri 2010 schedule will be made available soon.

Upcoming Events

Event	Date/Time	Venue
Mahashivaratri Observance	Friday, Feb 12th 2010	Chinmaya Mission Orlando
Dining Hall Inaguration	Sunday, Feb 28th 2010 (10:30am)	Chinmaya Mission Orlando
Holi Celebration	Sunday, March 28th 2010 (After classes)	Chinmaya Mission Orlando
Hanuman Jayanti (108 times chanting of Hanuman Chalisa)	Saturday, April 3rd 2010	Chinmaya Mission Orlando
Gita Chanting Competition - Chapter 11	Sunday, April 11th 2010	Chinmaya Mission Orlando

Update on Dining Hall Construction

By Lord Shiva's grace and Gurudev's blessings, our large, new and beautiful dining hall is almost complete as we near the final permitting processes and take possession. The entire Chinmaya family joins with gratitude in the celebration of this accomplishment as a deserving gift to our Balvihar children. Our kids deserve this wonderful effort, and we thank our parents, volunteers and donors for making this and future projects possible. This well-planned, 4000 sq. ft. dining hall (with a complete commercial kitchen) will make our campus more functional and productive – and very enjoyable for years to come.



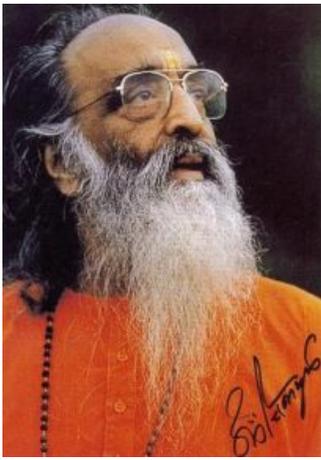
We have taken this opportunity to spruce up the existing complex. The exteriors of both buildings have undergone some minor repairs and have been re-painted. The main Kaivalya hall and other sections of the Kaivalya buildings have been re-painted, and an attempt has been made to clean out old landscaping and overgrowth.

Phase II plans for Kaivalya hall extension, 14 classrooms, library and larger Swamiji quarters are underway (hoping to start later this year). The new addition will enhance our ability to share the wonderful teachings of Vedanta, with proper Ashram facilities envisioned by our Guruji. The new construction will make the current retention pond much smaller, surrounded by a beautiful garden!

With confidence in our Chinmaya family, we move ahead with our future growth for generations to come

Time - Swami Chinmayananda [*Excerpts from Gurudev's writings*]

Time never stops – it ever flows: the future rushes towards us to become the present, and moment by moment it merges with the entire past. In this river of time you and I stand, work and achieve. With eyes fixed on the Goal, to strive on in the present becoming the architect of the future, is “creative living”. In this we employ Time. We are masters of Time.



To live weeping for the past, wasting the present moments, shuddering with imaginary fears for the future is self destructive, "suicidal living". In this time employs us. We then become slaves of Time. The present alone is the only time when we can work and achieve, grin and gather, give and serve. In the "past" we can now do nothing; in the "future" again, we can now accomplish nothing. In the "dead" moments of the past, and in the "unborn" moments of future, we can never act. These living "present" moments are the only fields to be hammered at and wherein are all the glories of life, all the gains in existence. Time is fleeting. The "now" alone is the only auspicious occasion to initiate our new plans. Delays are always dangerous, useless, and barren. TODAY is the only day to attempt any great and worthy purpose. Opportunity comes to all of us; the diligent catch hold of it; the foolish let it pass. Therefore let us be smart and awake to recognize our opportunity to serve, and while it is within our reach, let us seize it and make it yield to us the results we demand.

TODAY belongs to us. YESTERDAY was. TOMORROW will be. Everyday is bursting with opportunities for us to do and to serve, to act and to express, to love and live. We must make use of these lush chances and diligently make our life rich, fruitful and useful for others at all times. When we have such a team of even a few courageous and honest servants of God, the Nation is made, the world is saved.

What we have is a "gift" from God; but what we do with what we have is our "gift" to Narayana. Surrender to Him all your regrets and fears, and work with blind audacity for Truth in Truth, with Truth.

Questions & Answers with Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Students of Chinmaya Mission Orlando aged 7-8 years who are in the Saints and Sages class had some questions to our Pujya Guruji. Guruji took time off from his busy schedule to give beautiful answers to these interesting questions by email from Mysore, India.

Abhay Tak: When are you coming to Chinmaya Mission in Orlando? Did you play any musical instruments? Were you naughty as a child? Do you play any sports?

Answer: I shall be coming to Chinmaya Mission Orlando in 2011. I play on Harmonium. In my childhood I was not naughty but a bit stubborn and I was not a sports person.

Tanay Poddar: When are you going to visit? How do you communicate with God? How did you become a Swami? Do you know all the prayers? When were your brothers and sisters born? Do you know the Chinmaya Mission Pledge?

Answer: I communicate with God through prayers. Poojya Gurudev initiated me in to Sanyas and gave me name Swami Tejomayananda. That's how I became a Swami. I know some prayers of course and Chinmaya Mission Pledge also.

Aritra Biswas: These are the questions I would like to ask Swami Tejomayananda: What else do you do on the computer besides communicating.

Answer: I do not know anything about computers. Someone else does that job for me.

Pranav Gupta: Dear Guruji, As a leader of all the missions, You face hard things. How do you keep on going without quitting?

Answer: It is only devotion to God and Pujya Gurudev that gives strength to face hard things.

Kashyap Sreeram: How was your childhood? Are you still composing songs and writing books? Why did you become a Swami? What are your favorite foods? How many countries did you go to? How many childhood friends do you still have? What do you do during your free time?

Answer: My childhood was very good because of loving parents, brothers and sisters. Even now I compose songs and write books. I became a Swami to know about God. I like simple non-spicy vegetarian food. I must have visited about 30 countries. Very few of my childhood friends meet me. In my free time I listen to music. That is my hobby.

Pranav Abbaraju: Why did Gurudev name you Swami Tejomayananda? Why do like children so much? When do you meditate in the day? As a child how much pooja did you do everyday? How did you get vairagya at a young age?

Answer: I like children because they remind me of purity and divinity. I do my pooja and meditations in the morning. It is only by God's grace I got little Vairagya.

Shivani Patel: How old are you? Where do you live? When are you coming to Tapovan?

Answer: Now I am 60 years old. I live in Mumbai, India.

Narenkumar Thirmiya: Dear Gurudev, How are you doing? I would like to ask you something, What color do you like? What sport do you like? What are your hobbies? Have you gone to Chennai? I like the birthday song "Janmadina midam!" I like Tapovan, I learn a lot of new things there. Thanks, Narenkumar.

Answer: I like Orange colour and I love Game of Cricket. My hobbies are music and cooking. Yes I have gone to Chennai.

Sravani Thupili: Dear Swami Tejomayananda, What is your favorite quality and why? When you were a kid, how did India look, Can you please explain? What is your favorite color and tree?

Answer: My favourite quality is humility. Because through humility alone you can gain knowledge and not by arrogance. India is always been beautiful for me. I like banyan tree - it represents deep rooted Faith.

Priyanka Chandra: Dear Guruji. How many Incarnations does Shiva have? What are their names? I've read a little about you and I want to know ? Did you enjoy singing while you were growing up? Also, What was your favorite subject in school? Mine is Math and Science. What do you think about world peace? Well.. That's pretty much it.

Answer: There are many incarnations of Lord Shiva. Two of them are very famous

1. Lord Dakshina Murthy
2. Adi Shankaracharya

My favourite subject in school was Literature. We all must work for world peace. Thats all I can say.

Divya Mehta: Dear Swami Tejomayananda ji, Hari OM and Pranam!! am a student from Chinmaya mission Orlando saints and Sages class and I have studied about you, I have a couple of questions: What was it like to be Swami Chinmayananda's companion? How do you like being the head of Chinmaya mission?

Answer: To be with Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda was a rare privilege and a source of Joy. I learnt a lot just being with him. I feel humble to be the head of the Mission. I invoke Pujya Gurudev's blessings to fulfill my duties and responsibilities.

Thanks to the teachers of Saints and Sages class - Bhavana Madapura and Sadhana Shukla for facilitating this fascinating conversation.

Enchanting Tales

Remove Negativities

There was a man whose socks would start stinking at the end of the day. His wife would always complain about the stench and ask him to remove the socks even before entering the house. This man was forgetful and always evaded all her instructions. This issue was always a source of argument amongst the two. One day, they had to go to a party in the evening. The wife told the man that she would come to the party directly from work. She specifically asked him to wear a new pair of socks before coming to the party.

In the evening, at the party, while everyone was greeting them, she kept giving him scornful looks. When there was none around she shot her first question "Did you change your socks?". The man replied in the affirmative. She declined to believe him and accused him of lying because there was a powerful stench from him . He kept insisting that he remembered her instruction and did wear a new pair. Seeing her growing so angry, he said, "I know that you wouldn't believe me, that's why i tucked my old pair of socks in the pocket to show you as proof". Saying so, he removed the stinking pair from his pocket.



Moral: The idea of the story is very simple. We meticulously attend satsangs, read some scriptures, do some service, visit temples etc but we do not try to get rid of our negative virtues. There is no use of learning so much Vedanta if we carry the stink of our negativities all the time just like the man who changed his socks, yet, carried the stench of the old ones with him. The first step for us in the spiritual journey is to develop positive qualities called Daivi Sampat in the 16th Chapter of the Bhagavad Geeta.

Why do we do what we do ?

Why do we do Pradakshina (circumambulate)?

We cannot draw a circle without a center point. The Lord is the center, source and essence of our lives. Recognizing Him as the focal point in our lives, we go about doing our daily chores. This is the significance of Pradakshina.

Also every point on the circumference of a circle is equidistant from the center. This means that wherever or whoever we may be, we are equally close to the Lord. His grace flows towards us without partiality.



Also the Pradakshina is done in a clockwise manner. The reason is not, as a person said, to avoid a traffic jam! As we do Pradakshina, the Lord is always on our right. In India the right side symbolizes auspiciousness. So as we circumambulate the sanctum sanctorum we remind ourselves to lead an auspicious life of righteousness, with the Lord who is the indispensable source of help and strength, as our guide - the "right hand".

Indian scriptures enjoin - Matrudevo bhava, Pitru devo bhava, Acharyadevo bhava. May you consider your parents and teachers as you would the Lord. With this in mind we also do pradakshina around our parents and divine personages.

After the completion of traditional worship (pooja), we customarily do pradakshina around ourselves. In this way we recognize and remember the supreme divinity within us, which alone is idolized in the form of the Lord that we worship outside.

Divine Chants

Prayer to recite before eating

**Brahmaarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnau Brahmanaa Hutam
Brahmaiva Tena Gantavyam
Brahma Karma Samaadhinaha**



Sanskrit to English Translation

Brahma- Brahman; arpanam- the means of offering; havir- oblation; brahmagnau- unto the fire that is Brahman; brahmanaa- by brahman; hutam- is offered; eva- indeed; tena- by him; gantavyam- to be reached; brahma-karma-samadhina- who is abiding in Brahman

Brief explanation

Meaning: A process of offering is Brahman (Brahman = The holy or sacred power that is the source and sustainer of the universe), the act of offering is Brahman, the instrument of offering is Brahman, the fire to which the offering is made is also Brahman. For such a one who abides

in Brahman, by him alone Brahman is reached. This is 24th verse from the 4th chapter of Bhagavad Geeta.

Delicious Living - Vegetable Cutlets by Sumitha Nambiar

Vegetable cutlets: Total time: Approximately 30 minutes

Ingredients :

1 medium sized packet of Publix mixed vegetables
1 small boiled potato - mashed
4-5 slices of Publix bakery wheat bread
1/2 bunch of coriander leaves chopped
3 green chillies
1 inch of ginger grated
2 cloves of garlic
1/4 tsp turmeric powder
1/2 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp dhania powder
Salt to taste
Rava (or, if you prefer, use bread crumbs)
Oil - Olive or Vegetable

Procedure:



Cook the vegetable mix with turmeric powder, ginger, garlic, green chillies and salt for 5-7 minutes. Add a few drops of water, if required, to cook the vegetables. All vegetables should be dry, with no water remaining. Pulse the mixture in the food processor.

Pour the mixture into a mixing bowl. Add the chopped coriander, mashed potato, chilli powder and dhania powder and mix well. Add the bread slices, one at a time and mix them into the mixture until the mixture gets a firm consistency. Shape the cutlets as per the desired size.

Coat them with rava (or bread crumbs).

Add some oil to a frying pan or tava and heat on medium heat. Shallow fry the cutlets until they are brown on both sides. Serve with green chutney or ketchup and enjoy.

"Teach a child and the posterity is taught" by Sivaprasad Tallapragada

Family and community networks profoundly influence one's values and attitudes. Joint families of olden times were like microcosms of an entire world. They were the first training grounds where the people learnt cultural values and spiritual wisdom. Joint family living taught one how to take collective responsibility. One for all and all for one; the spirit of "Sahana Vavatu...".

The learnings are through percept, without compulsion but with conviction. The teaching method was through personal examples. Over the years, the family structures changed due to various reasons and joint families gave place to nuclear families. As a result, the value systems suffered a beating and made parenting a great challenge. Fortunately, for the children as also the parents, Chinmaya missions are teaching the right value systems which they are otherwise getting deprived of.

During the last four months, being in Orlando, myself and my wife had the privilege of meeting the mission members on many occasions and quite often attended the study groups, discourses and prayer sessions. Prior to our visit to Orlando, we had no direct interaction with the working of a Chinmaya mission. Our stay in Orlando gave us an opportunity to understand the spirit of the mission in inculcating the principles of Sanatana dharma in the members.

Some of the Balavihar children that I met here, seemed to have realized the fact "Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam"- Yoga is



dexterity in action. They are surely prepared to handle differing cultures without conflict. They are equally at ease singing “Suddha Brahma Paratpara Rama” or a Beate’s number!

All the mission activities such as teaching, serving food, cleaning etc, are carried out by the sevaks with the motto “Yogastah kuru karmani”-Work in congruence with the inner self.

The magnitude of any task does not seem to be unnerving for the mission as some of the members seem to be guided by Krishna’s advice to Arjuna: “Nimitta maatram bhava savya saachin”- Only be instrumental

Two months hence we will be going back to India. The lesson that we have learnt during our short association with the mission is that each and every one should strive to be “Physically fit, mentally alert and spiritually alive”.

May the Antaryami bless us to be so!

Word Search Puzzle

Find the following hidden words in the puzzle

Shivratri

Shiva

Mahashivratri

Parvati

Phalgun

Fourteen

Ignorance

Fear

Knowledge

Trishul

Nandi

Kailash

Mahadev

Auspicious

R	R	S	R	H	U	I	M	L	A	A	A	V
I	S	A	T	N	I	U	T	A	A	V	L	A
H	R	R	N	E	O	S	R	A	I	T	E	N
A	E	T	T	E	D	U	I	H	V	R	C	O
A	A	C	A	T	A	O	S	R	K	R	N	A
I	R	T	A	R	V	I	H	S	A	H	A	M
F	A	A	A	U	V	C	U	A	I	A	R	P
R	I	R	E	O	R	I	L	S	L	L	O	E
A	H	A	G	F	D	P	H	I	A	A	N	A
R	T	K	S	N	G	S	A	S	S	H	G	L
I	P	H	A	L	G	U	N	G	H	A	I	E
P	V	N	M	A	H	A	D	E	V	L	N	E
K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	L	I	V	L

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