

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

The Blessed Christ said: "Abide in me, and I am in you. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The voice of Jesus is immortal. His call is the call of the Spirit. Those that will heed his clarion call shall find supreme fulfillment in the realization of the Spirit.

The Lord dwells in the heart of everyone, but few care to be aware of this incomparable blessing, and instead allow themselves to be afflicted by the urges of their lower nature, deceptions of the external world, and dictates of the little self. The proud ego, wallowing in self-righteousness, the vanity-ridden mind, strutting about with its intellectual postulations, the impure heart, corroded by passion and greed, selfishness and self-pity, prevent the awareness of the presence of the Lord within, and perpetuate one's suffering and ignorance. Therefore, one is asked to abide in the Lord, for only then would one know that the Lord dwells in him.

HOLY ASPIRATION

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Does it mean asking for riches, material possessions? No. It means asking for the knowledge of the Divine, purity of heart, faith, devotion, balance of mind, holy aspiration, and all other means that are required for the attainment of God. Material possessions cannot satisfy the hunger of the soul. Selfish desires have no place in the

spiritual path. Desire can never be satisfied by feeding it in the mundane plane, just as fire is never quenched by adding more fuel into it.

One could abide in the Lord only when the heart is free from impure desires, only when the lower nature has been disciplined and subjugated to the higher dictate of spiritual aspiration. It is this aspiration, this asking and seeking and knocking, that would enable man to realize the presence of the Lord in him. So, the primary demand is for right aspiration.

SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATION

Just as one cannot offer a soiled, stale flower in worship, just as one is not supposed to enter a temple or a church in an impure condition, with an impure mind, so also, one cannot abide in the Lord unless there is the utmost effort at self-purification, self-discipline. To know that the Lord dwells within oneself, this condition has to be met, implicit faith in the Divine has got to be cultivated, sacred aspiration has to be carefully nurtured, and then everything else will automatically come by itself, the state of the mind then being not capable of desiring anything that is not conducive to one's spiritual progress or the welfare of the world.

It is in this context that Jesus has asked the aspirant to desire anything that he will, and that shall be given him. It is only he who practices the teaching of Jesus that is capable of asking the Lord what is best for him and the world, and therefore: "If ye abide in me,

and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Only such a person can do maximum good to the world, himself having no selfish desire, and his heart being purified by the awareness of the presence of the Lord in him and all around. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The true devotees of the Lord only can serve the world best, not the selfish, scheming shibboleths of materialistic doctrines, who live for the fulfillment of personal vanity and self-interest, in various degrees, equating self-associated idealism with the principles of social and national ideals, even if that might run contrary to the interests of the people.

CAUTION AGAINST SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

The spiritual aspirant has, therefore, to particularly guard himself from self-righteousness and also the dogmatic belief that what is applicable to him should also be applicable to others, what is good for him should also be good for another. He should not be like those that justify self-righteousness in the name of patriotism or international outlook, or preach the cardinal principles of inter-state relations and cultured behaviour, while being unrealistic in the assessment of the needs of the hour and of personal responsibility. Vain-glorious loyalty to mundane, totalitarian creeds, at the cost of others, should find no place in the spiritual aspirant.

What is good for the individual as a personal idealism, for the sake of endurance and spiritual discipline, cannot be justified as an essential canon for the masses. Certain particular aspects of individual idealism, when applied on a national scale, may as well destroy the nation. When Jesus asked to turn the other cheek when hit upon one, it was meant for the spiritual aspirant, since forgive-

ness and endurance are the creeds of divine life, but it was the same meek, tolerant, forgiving Jesus who had rushed in with a whip to chase out the money-exchangers, so as to curb what was basically against the interest of the common people.

REALISTIC PERSPECTIVE

One could personally practice self-restraint and bear violence upon oneself as a spiritual discipline, but it would be criminal to employ the same principle when the same person has to guard his family and house from a band of robbers, for example. It should not be forgotten that one without a realistic perspective and decisive mind, wedded to impractical idealism, can do more harm to others in the process of trying to do good, which may as well be a sneaking effort at upholding personal vanity and self-righteousness. The principles of inter-communal and international relations are equally applicable in this context.

Right understanding, objective judgment, realistic assessments are as much necessary for the spiritual aspirant as with anybody else. He has to deny himself first, not only in the worldly sense, but he has to eschew his self-justifying pride and spiritual vanity. He has to suffer for the sake of others, for truth and justice, and not live only for his personal evolution.

CALL OF JESUS

The aspirant lives not for himself, but in the service of his fellow-beings, and in the process, does not mind undergoing any hardship. He does not mind suffering for the sake of upholding the principles that are generally thought to be good and meant for common good, that have been handed down to him by sages and seers through ages, the

time-tested worthiness of which has always been proved. No one can realize the Lord unless one is prepared to deny oneself the ease of complacent living, the ease of siding with the might instead of the right, the ease of just drifting along. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up the cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life, for my sake shall find it."

This is the spirit of Christmas, this is the call of Jesus who came to this earth as an Avatar of God, to uphold Dharma, to crusade against untruth and inequity, religious hypocrisy and sectarian dogmatism, tyranny and oppression, malice and lust for power.

He did not indicate any irresponsible philosophizing and timid idealizing, when wickedness and injustice had to be encountered. His was the most optimistic and upright gospel. The spirit of his teaching, pure and simple, straight and full of humanity, unpretentious and without confabulation still lives in the hearts of many people here and there. That many more may truly imbibe the spirit of, and practice, his gospel, rather than give a token, formal avowal, or be satisfied by the merely routine process of sermon-giving and church-going, is my fervent prayer.

May the blessings of the Christ be upon all humanity.

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S ESSAY COMPETITIONS—2009

It is for the information of the Readers that Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is conducting an annual Essay Competition in sacred memory of **Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj**, as follows:—

BHAVAN'S SWAMI SIVANANDA MEMORIAL ESSAY COMPETITION—2009

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FOR AGE-GROUP: 20-30 years; **Prizes :** Rs. 1000/-, Rs. 700/-, Rs. 300/-

MEDIUM: **Hindi**

LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF ESSAY—31st January 2010

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3. Prize Winners cannot contest for the same competition for the next three years.
4. The decision of Judges will be final.
5. The Address for correspondence:—

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—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

CHRIST-LIFE IS TO BE LIVED BY EACH OF US

(*Sri Swami Chidananda*)

Every process of thought has its root in the activity of the mind, and because the mind is active there arise feelings, emotions and all types of wrong perception. Therefore, we should try to stop the activity of the mind. Every thought that is held gains strength and creates in the mind a tendency for the repetition of that thought. If you think a thought, the natural tendency of the mind is to think it again. Any thought deliberately held in the mind at once demands repetition and whatever thoughts you think, they tend to become manifest as actions. If you hold a compassionate thought, it somehow or other makes you do a compassionate deed. If you hold a sensual, gluttonous thought, it forces you to perform a sensual or gluttonous activity. If you hold an angry thought, it will want you to do a harsh action. Every thought tends to make the individual perform a corresponding type of action.

That is also the habit of action. Action once done tends to repeat itself. So actions, if repeated, become a habit in man. Unconsciously you begin to follow that particular type of action. Habit is the third phase which takes place by holding a particular type of thought, and by your habits your character becomes affected. Character moulds your destiny. So from thoughts actions arise, from actions habits, from habits character, and from character destiny. Thus we see the importance of holding to the right type of thought and the necessity to carefully remove all thoughts that are inimical to progress, inimical to inner unfoldment. Let us consider here one good trait, say contentment, that will help us in our progress.

Santosh or contentment is a conception that is rather difficult to be properly understood. *Santosh* means contentment, a habit of contentment and cheerfulness, and this is a virtue which is very highly lauded. Contentment is a continued feast. It is said that a king was always so full of worry, troubles and anxiety about his kingdom and his duties as a king that he said that if he could find a man who is absolutely cheerful, he would pay anything to that man. He sent some messengers to find out a really happy man and the messengers went out in search of a happy man and at last they could find a shepherd who was always singing joyously as though he was full of happiness, and the messengers promptly brought him to the king. In answer to the question of the king as to how he was able to keep himself happy, the shepherd replied: "I am satisfied with two loaves of bread a day. I do not want anything more." The secret of his happiness was that he was contented with what little he got. Thus contentment is a very great virtue, and it is very difficult to understand what contentment is. It is generally argued that contentment would put a stop to all progress. Only when man has got greater and greater ambitions, will he be able to do further actions and make further progress. What is progress? Such progress will only bind us more and more. A thinking man will understand that this world is mere valueless husk to be rejected and therefore to a seeker the true sense of value is different. The seeker says that in the pleasures of the world does not lie the realisation of his real nature. The grandeur of Self-realisation cannot be found in all the pleasures of the world. The answer given by Nachiketas

gives us the true sense of value. What is worthwhile and what is not worthwhile, we should know. Is it permanent, is it lasting? That was the question that Nachiketas put. He said, "I do not want that which lasts for two days and then passes away. I want that which is eternal." That is the criterion which the seeker has and when you do so, all the pleasures of the world fail. Everything is perishable.

Be absolutely contented with whatever God has given you. Why has God given me this kind of nose? Never think about what is not yours. Take a keen joy in having what you have. It is the greatest trick of the mind to keep you ever in want and sorrow. You always brood over what you have not got and what other persons have got. A territory chief-tain thinks that he should become a king. A King wants to become an emperor; an emperor wants to conquer the whole world. The beggarliness of the mind can never be satisfied. The world-ruler thinks that he must become the Lord of the heavens, Indra. Then he will think something else. So, from the highest Brahma, who is the Lord of creation, there is only dissatisfaction, but a man who is wearing rags, if he is contented, he is happy. So be contented in whatever position He has placed you. Whatever abilities, whatever talents and whatever wealth you possess, whatever daily needs you get, be contented. Then you hold the key to all happiness and all peace.

Another important factor is that when you get happiness, then all rivalry goes away. Otherwise you will think, 'That man has got that which I have not got.' This kind of jealousy is created in your mind, which becomes the cause for your sorrow. But when contentment is there, you are happy. The spirit of rivalry goes away. Out of rivalry comes jealousy, envy, competition, hostility, and if you cannot get what the other has got, you at least try to deprive him of what he has got and bring him to your own level. Human jealousy is such that if you cannot rise to another

man's level, you want to pull down another man's level. Such thoughts and actions come due to absence of contentment. So, contentment gives a wonderful purifying effect to the mind. The mind is rid of hostility, pettiness, and the reaction which contentment has upon the mind tends to purify the mind. Have serenity which is the essential prerequisite for steadyng the mind.

Christ is to be lived by each of us. His glorious life is for the Being and the Doing of it in and through our self even as He was and as He did. A great Christian mystic said, 'If you would obtain the Kingdom of Heaven of Light, Bliss and Immortality then you have to be Christ-like in your life and actions.' The direct and clear declaration of the Saviour Himself is no less emphatic on this point; for we have it from His own blessed lips: "Not everyone who saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven". And this Will of the Divine Father is personified in the Divine Being of Jesus. To imitate Christ, to follow Him, to mould ourselves in His image and to carry out every one of His sublime admonitions in our life and actions is to do the Will of the Father in the most complete and most effective way. If you sincerely wish to belong to Christ, to be one of the holy circle of His Own, this path is the only way, for the Lord has said: "He who doth the Will of God is my brother, my sister, my mother." So the greatest value, the real meaning and deepest significance of Christ's Life to us is the Being and the Doing of It, viz., in your being as He was and in your doing as He did.

To bring about this transformation the Saviour has Himself given valuable clues, and we have only to discern them from His words and deeds. Recall the incident of the cleaning of the Temple and the visit of Jesus to the house of the tax-gatherer in Jericho, who resolved to atone for his past and to amply amend it by his changed mode of life. This, then, is the teaching, the true secret of spiritual transformation. First, cleanse the in-

ner nature thoroughly. Cleanse the temple of your heart of all base elements, all cruelty, jealousy, deceit, bargaining spirit and worldliness. Make it a real house of God. These done, enter resolutely upon a changed course of life. Turn a new leaf completely. Salvation is yours for you have attained freedom from sin and thus qualified yourself for higher spiritual values and happiness. This very law of Spiritual Life Christ expressed in a yet fuller and direct manner when he expounded the spiritual practices to Necodemus, and again when he suffered little children to come to Him declaring, "Unless you become like little children you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Yes, you have to be born again to become pure, innocent, egoless and contented like little children. Then and then alone will the gates of the realm of radiant bliss swing open to you. But, remember, the change should be real, deep and complete, not mere outward change in profession and superficial conduct. You must become a totally 'different person', an entirely new person. The old self must vanish in toto.

Christ, in His own simple person as Jesus, typifies this sublime child,—the simple, pure, innocent, egoless, contented child,—of the Father. His trust in the Father is complete. He is the beloved Son of whom the Father is well pleased. To become like Him you have to follow Him! This is the Call of the Christ-spirit to man. The Lord saith to us now, today, even as He did in those blessed days to Philip of Bethseda, the two thrilling words, 'Follow Me'. This is to be, not in the sense of the mere imitation of the superficial details of His life, but in His ascent on the radiant inner Path of goodness, love, compassion, contentment and utter self-effacement. And for those blessed ones who are prepared to follow Him, Christ has shown the Way by the three special commandments: (1) To the Pharisee who asks, 'Master which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' (2) Through those memorable words during those tragic last moments of His freedom as they walk up to

the fateful garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, saith the Lord, "God is one. Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength." (3) "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "And again, I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

O Mankind! What have you done to this priceless parting appeal of Jesus? O Men of nations, O Men of different races, where now is that Love that Christ left to you as His sublime heritage? To what dark regions have you relegated the peerless treasure of His love. From whence is this heritage of hatred and rapine that you have fatally embraced in the blindness of your spirit? You have crucified the gentle Jesus in the Golgotha of your greed-filled hearts! All seems to be bleak. But, No! As long as there are even a handful who would joyously 'Follow Him', so long does hope shine bright upon the horizon of man's future. For through them will the Christ-spirit revive and enlighten the earth. There will be the Resurrection of the spirit amidst modern mankind. Through the faithful few will the blessings of the Christ-Consciousness be showered upon mankind.

Christ is but His teachings. Christ is embodied in His precepts. He who lives these precepts fulfils the main duty of his life, the sole purpose of his existence. Mere admiration, adoration and glorification of the Christ personality and ideal, devoid of an earnest, active and practical imitation will never do. The life of such a Great One is to be lived again by us, and thus and thus alone do you fulfill yourself in His Spirit.

May the world heed His Commandments, His Call! May one and all arise and follow Him! May the gentle Shepherd strengthen us and lead us safely from darkness and sorrow into eternal Light and Bliss Everlasting, is my earnest prayer to the All-Merciful Lord on the eve of this Christmas! Glory, glory be to Lord Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

(Christmas Eve, 1997)

There is a coming into being which is known as the birth of a human individual in this world. There is another kind of coming which is the descent of an incarnation. Both are certain types of coming, but they are totally different in their structural pattern and the purpose for which they manifest themselves.

The human individual at the time of birth is wrenched out of the forces of nature, cut off from the vital powers of the cosmos, and cast into the wilderness of individual existence with a centralised affirming ego called the personality consciousness. This is a human being coming into the world; but the incarnation is a different thing altogether. It is not something cast out from the forces of nature, but a coagulated form, a concentrated essence, as it were, of the potentials of cosmic powers manifesting themselves on the earth plane for achieving a specific purpose.

The kind of incarnation will be appropriate to the kind of mission with which it comes. In Christian theology it is held that the incarnation can be only one. The son of God, come as Jesus Christ, is heaven descending in its totality, once and for all. But Eastern traditions feel that the infinitude of the presence of God can manifest an infinitude of rays as the sun does in the sky; and the intensity with which it manifests itself will depend upon the reason why it manifests itself.

The coming of Christ is the occasion of our sacred observance today. A great radiance congealed itself, descended from heaven, as it were, whereby the One whom we call the Father in heaven projected Him-

self upon this earth into this world of humanity with the entire force of God Himself, and the incarnation lives veritably like God Himself. An incarnation has no friends, has no relatives, has no belongings, has nothing to call one's own. The incarnation stands by itself as God stands by Himself. God does not require friends. He does not need relatives. He has nothing to call his own. He possesses only Himself.

The representation of such a God in this world is also a practically lonely individual. The word 'lonely' has to be used with great caution. It is spiritually alone to itself, and even socially it is alone. The incarnation does not mix with people, though it redeems people. It sheds light on all people and redresses the sorrows of people without any implements in its hands. It has no instruments of action, the modus operandi of work being the incarnation's personality itself, as the sun shining in the sky has no instruments to act. There are no kinds of apparatus that the sun employs in order to shine and shed heat upon the earth. The very existence of the sun is identical with heat and light.

So is the case with a divine incarnation. Its existence itself is power. The power here is not an outcome of social approbation as is the case with centres of political power. The authority which the incarnation wields is not received by votes of people. It is given to it at the time of its coming.

Human beings when they are born do not manifest themselves as rich people, as powerful individuals. A child that is born is not a powerful child. It is as good as any other

child. A king's child and a beggar's child have no distinction as far as their human nature is concerned.

No child is born as a king; no child is born as a beggar. Social conditions determine the further developments of the experiences of a child that is born: But in the case of an incarnation, social conditions do not determine it. On the other hand, the reverse is the case. The incarnation determines the social conditions around that personality.

There is a practical revolutionary activity taking place around the incarnation. When the sun heats up and sheds light, a tremendous activity is set into motion on the earth plane automatically. See what happens in the early morn when the sun rises. Everything wakes up into life. Even the leaves of the tree smile in the joy of witnessing this great force of life rising in the east. There is no announcement necessary for the rising of the sun. The enunciation of the coming of Christ is the declaration of the occasion of the manifestation of God for announcing Himself in His own creation, which forgets its own father.

Social conditions do not condition the operations of the incarnation. I have to repeat that the incarnation's personality determines the social conditions around. Incarnations come like whirlwinds, like strong movements of a gust of air, and sweep everything away in the direction they need. From where do they get this power? A single individual looking like a human being, as is the case with Jesus Christ, a frail physical personality yields such an authority and power. From where does that power come? It comes from every corner of creation. Like vassals paying tribute to a King, the quarters of space from all sides pay homage to this individual.

The incarnation has the capacity to summon the angels of the cosmos. On one occasion Christ made a statement: "Do you not think that if I want, the Father in heaven

will send legions of angels for my protection? But, Thy will be done."

Because all the angels of the heavens in all the levels of being are ready to manifest themselves for the sake of the work of this incarnation, we call him the son of Man, or sometimes we call him the son of God. He is the son of God because he manifested himself from God's bosom. All the eternal potential of God is present in the incarnation. Also, he is the son of Man. When we write 'son of Man', we always use a capital M meaning not ordinary man. He is not the son of one particular man, but man-as-such.

It is the cry of humanity that summons God in the form of the incarnation. When the need is felt, it is responded to properly by God. There should be such an utter upheaval in the field of human life to the extent of opposing everything that is divine and godly. Everything becomes mechanistic; everything becomes a routine. Prayer becomes a machine. God becomes merely a concept, and religion becomes a stereotyped moving on the beaten track on the road. The spirit which is God gets lost when the machine of religiousness takes hold of humanity, and God comes to relieve people from this entanglement in a movement contrary to the requirements of God.

The power of the incarnation is the power of God. There is a very marked and unfortunate difference between a human being and a divine being. The incarnation sees from every direction, whereas the human being sees only in one direction. There are two eyes for a human being, and the human being can see only what is in front. The human being cannot see what is behind or on the sides, but the incarnation has all eyes. Any event is an occurrence taking place due to its presence. Any wind that blows anywhere, in any direction, is due to the action of the sun in the sky. If a wave arises on the surface of the ocean, and the wind blows, clouds gather, and it rains, it is the work of the sun in the sky.

This is all-action taking place. God's action is Total Action, and also is the case with the action of an incarnation.

There is nothing which Jesus Christ did not do to glorify God in this world. Every one of his actions, every word that he spoke and every gesture were totally new to the human mind. He was a great example of a person who was entirely misunderstood, as we all are likely to misunderstand God Himself.

The greater we are, the less we are appreciated by the world, and the less also we need the world. These are certain things which we have to bear in mind when we try to imbibe into our own mind the characteristics of divine incarnations. They are incapable of human understanding. We say, "It passeth understanding." Understanding is an instrument of the human psyche, which concocts a kind of synthesis of sensory perceptions and imagines that it knows all things. What the human being knows is phenomena, a network of appearances, but what the incarnation sees is the true noumenon, God descended. The incarnation beholds God everywhere, but the human being beholds only objects of sense everywhere. The human being sees only opposition everywhere; the incarnation sees only the position of God everywhere. The human being sees only the passage of time everywhere; the incarnation sees eternity everywhere. This is the difference between the incarnation and a human being.

The creation of God is a dramatic display of God's joy and beauty. The world of God which He has created is not a curse or an imprecation cast on human beings. There is a divine element present in everything that God touched in His creative act.

From the human point of view, from the standpoint of empirical perception, everything is invested with the instinct of death and destruction; but from the point of view of the divine incarnation, God's presence in things,

everything is a movement of eternity—timelessness operating everywhere.

Ugliness is what human beings see in the world; beauty is what the divine incarnation sees. There is a great difference between seeing God everywhere, and seeing your opponent everywhere. Jesus Christ had no opponents. He had only to see people who are miserable due to their ignorance. He came to free them from this ignorance by his noble teachings, which did not enter into the brains of people at that time.

Many things can be said about the circumstances of the coming of Christ. Whatever is written in the gospels is known to us, but we can infer several other things also, which are not written in the gospels, from the conditions prevailing at that time and the impact of his life upon the world as a whole.

He lived for a few years, but he is remembered for an endless number of years in the world. As long as the sun and the moon shine in the sky, the name of Christ will be remembered by people because of the wonder that he worked, the miracle that he performed in the name of God. When eternity enters the time process, everything that happens in the world looks like a miracle, as if iron gets transmuted into gold. He could do that if water could turn into wine, and a dead person could be alive, and a sick one could be made healthy and hale, and the breath of God could be breathed into the mortality of the suffering individual. This is what an incarnation does. God's fingers operating through the events of the world are the incarnations.

Here is an occasion for us, as is the case every year during the time of Christmas, to bring into our memories our great divine heritage which we have brought with us, with which we have to live when we are alive in the world, and which we have to take with us when we depart from this world. God be with us. Hari Om Tat Sat

TAKING REFUGE MEANS TAKING REFUGE

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

Nothing in this world goes absolutely smoothly, and that is certainly true of the spiritual life. One of the most common difficulties is when we reach a plateau, a plateau that sometimes lasts much longer than weeks or months. Perhaps years. We wonder what has happened to us. Sometimes it turns out that it was absolutely normal. It was just a very long period of settling and preparing to move on. But often it is because we refuse to move on.

In what way do we refuse to move on? We all know that the spiritual life is about wearing away the ego. We are already what we are seeking, but our consciousness is filled with a sense of separation that doesn't allow the bliss of our own self—which has no separation—to fill it. We forget that. We think that the spiritual life is about doing our spiritual practices. Our attention is on our practices, not on either God, which is our goal, nor on the ego, which is blocking it.

Therefore, Lord Krishna in the sixth chapter of the Gita, told Arjuna that the key is practice and dispassion. Practice of the presence of God, dispassion for the ego. But where does the ego hide finally? It hides finally in the fact that we won't give it up. This is why Gurudev used to say that obedience is better than reverence. We will offer all sorts of

reverence to the guru, do anything for the guru, but in actual fact we won't give him our life. We won't give him our implicit obedience, let alone search out his will for us even when it is not expressed.

This is how we foolishly treat God as well. We will leave everything for God, give up family, position, money, everything, but still, we won't give Him our identity. We won't give everything. We hold back final control of our own life. In the final analysis our attitude is, "If it doesn't suit me, I'll do something else. I will go somewhere else."

This attitude, if it is there, needs to be recognised because Lord Krishna said that no one crosses this ocean of *samsara* unless they take refuge in Him alone. Taking refuge means taking refuge! It means that we give up depending upon ourselves, we give up that last bit of self-determination and take refuge in God alone. When we are able to do that with all sincerity, then we come into God's active stream.

God is not something static, rather He is full of life and dynamism. When we enter that flow, our spiritual life becomes progressive again—and keeps on being progressive as long as we don't retreat and grab control again.

Lemon, ginger, chillies or tamarind causes your mouth to water instantly. These are stomachic appetizers. Even so scriptures, company of sages, Kirtans and bhajans, Satsangas, Japa Malas and Ashrams are all spiritual appetizers. They goad you to sit, contemplate and meditate.

—Swami Sivananda

LUST AND PASSION

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

[Continued from the previous issue]

PASSION

Any strong desire is passion.

Passion is an intense or overpowering feeling, such that the mind is as if passively swayed by it. Any intense or inordinate, continuous affection or impulse as the passions of love, pride, jealousy, avarice, etc., specifically, ardent affection for one of the opposite sex, is passion. Amorous feeling is passion. A fit of intense and furious anger is also passion.

Passion is an emotion by which the intellect is swayed. The object of strong desire is passion. We say: 'Music becomes a passion with Ram.'

Passion is an enemy of peace, devotion and wisdom. If you do not have victory over passion, it will annihilate your happiness, health and peace.

He who is ruled by passion is the worst of slaves. Passion is like a convulsive fit. It is a momentary excitement. It weakens you after enjoyment.

Passion is like an unruly horse. Govern it through prudence, dispassion and discrimination and grow wiser and better. Deliver yourself from passion and you will be free.

Destroy your ruling passion, your master passion first. Then all other passions can be easily annihilated.

A dictator or king rules the people, but passion rules the dictator or the king. A sage

or a Yogi alone is a master of the passion. He alone is ever happy, blissful and peaceful.

Your headstrong passion shuts the door of the illimitable kingdom of Bliss. Slay this passion and enter the domain of Bliss.

The strongest of animal passions is that with which you cling to life mundane.

Have passion for God-realisation. This will kill all animal passions.

CONQUEST OF PASSION

In the broad sense, passion means any strong desire. There is passion for service of country in patriots. There is passion in first class aspirants for God-realisation. In some people there is a strong passion for novel-reading. There is passion for reading religious books. But generally in common parlance, passion means lust or a strong sexual appetite. This is a physical craving for sexual or carnal gratification. When any sexual act is repeated very often, the desire becomes very keen and strong. The sexual instinct or the reproductive instinct in a man involuntarily prompts him for sexual acts for the preservation of his species.

Passion is a Vritti or modification that arises from the mind-lake when the Rajo-Guna predominates. It is an effect or product of Avidya (ignorance). It is a negative Vikara (impurity) in the mind. Atman is ever pure. Atman is Vimala or Nirmala or Nirvikara (free from impurity). It is Nitya-Suddha (eter-

nally pure). Avidya Sakti (force of ignorance) has taken the form of passion for keeping up the Lila of the Lord (Divine sport). You will find in the 'Chandipath' or 'Durga-sapta-sati': "Ya devee sarva-bhuteshu kamarupena samsthita, namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namah—I bow to that Devi who has taken the form of passion in all these beings."

Passion is in a seed-state in young boys and girls. It does not give them any trouble. Just as the tree is latent in the seed, so also, passion is in seed-state in the minds of children. In old men and women passion gets suppressed. It cannot do any havoc. It is only in young men and women who have reached adolescence that this passion becomes troublesome. Men and women become slaves of passion. They become helpless.

Rajasic food such as meat, fish, eggs, Rajasic dress and Rajasic way of living—scents, novel-reading, cinemas, talk on sensual things, bad company, liquors, intox-

cants of all descriptions, tobacco, etc., excite passion. It is very difficult to understand, even by the so-called educated person, the fact that there is supersensual happiness in Atman which is independent of sensual objects.

They experience the Atmic bliss daily during deep sleep. They rest in their own Self daily at night. They crave for it. They cannot remain without it. They prepare nice bedding and pillows to enjoy the bliss of Atman where the Indriyas do not play; where the mind gets rest and the two currents of attractions and repulsions do not operate. They say every morning: "I had a sound sleep last night. I enjoyed it. I did not know anything. There was no disturbance. I went to bed at night and got up only at seven in the morning." Yet, they forget everything. Such is the force of Maya or Avidya. Mysterious is Maya! It hurls down a man into an abyss of darkness. Man again starts his sensual life from the morning. There is no end.

(To be continued)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Kindly send all remittances by Indian Postal Order (IPO), Bank Drafts or Cheques in favour of "**The Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, Uttarakhand**". The Bank Drafts/Banker cheques, shall be payable at the following Scheduled Banks of "**Rishikesh**":

"State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Punjab and Sind Bank, Union Bank of India, State Bank of Patiala, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Canara Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of India, Bank of Baroda."

- * Please always write the purpose of remittance, full postal address and Telephone Number.
- * Personal Cheque can be sent, if the remittance is more than Rs. 200/-.
- * **As far as possible try to avoid remittances through Money Order.** The Money Orders are forwarded electronically and does not contain purpose of remittance made by devotees or any other messages. Therefore if the remittances are made by Money Order, please send a separate letter indicating M.O. number and the purpose of remittance.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life

FOUNDATION OF YOGA AND REALISATION

FIRST FULFIL DUTIES

A batch of visitors had arrived. The Master was asking several Ashramites to attend to the affairs connected with their lodging, etc.

Someone said that the aspirant who had the key of a particular room was meditating in his room.

"What meditation is this? He must first fulfil his duties and then meditate. He should have kept the keys outside and then shut himself up. Look how many people are inconvenienced now. How can God be pleased with his meditation when he keeps His devotees waiting outside?"

ON CHARITY

Sri Rajagopala Iyer, who was from South India, was narrating to the Master the activities of Sri Ram Ram Ram, an old schoolmate of the Master, who was now a retired surgeon. He was a widely travelled man with a number of foreign degrees and a lot of money.

"Swamiji, nowadays he has more or less retired."

"What is there in retiring now? Has he established some hospital or clinic for the sake of suffering humanity?"

"No, Swamiji, he had done a lot of service while he was in the army."

"But none of a permanent value. He must now do something that will make his name immortal. He has earned a lot. He must now invest a portion of the money in charity. The idea of doing something substantial for the good of humanity never strikes many people."

"Please ask him on my behalf to construct a ward in his name in the local hospital and provide for a few beds also. This will be a great blessing to humanity. He can himself serve there as long as he wishes. Even after his lifetime the ward will always proclaim his name and philanthropy."

"What is the use of money unless every pie is directed to some good cause?"

Then the talk turned to his personal affairs.

"He spends a lot of money, but he himself leads a very simple life."

"H'm! This is a marvellous and unique trait that he has kept up—Indian simplicity even after his European tours and luxurious life," complimented the Master.

"He has a cook, Swamiji, but in those parts the cooks hardly stay on."

"He should pay the cook well and give him the same kind of food that he himself takes, if not better. Then no cook will leave him. It depends upon the treatment. One should make the servants feel that they are part of the family"

"I clearly see my life to be this speeding arrow going unerringly in the direction of the Supreme Goal, which is nothing less than Brahmanhood, God-experience.

—*Swami Chidananda*

CHIDANANDA—THE SPIRITUAL STAR*

Prof. V.D. Randev

A star of spirituality appeared at Mangalore (India) on 24th September 1916 who had the aura of humanity, humility and divinity and is known in the world as Swami Chidananda. From the very early years, he had the quest for the life spiritual and wanted to know the answers of "Who am I? From where have I come and where have I to go?" In the search of answers to these questions, he came to Rishikesh in 1943 and met Gurudev Swami Sivananda. In him, he found his Master, his Lord and his Saviour.

Chidananda not only heard Sivananda, read his books, but observed him minutely, followed his spiritual instructions literally and drank Sivananda, digested Sivananda and thus became Sivananda. His breath was Sivananda, his thought was Sivananda, his gospel was Sivananda, and as a result of this unstinted devotion to his Guru and God, he became the beacon light of divinity and the embodiment of humility and humanity. For him, the same God resides in all beings and everywhere.

Some years ago, a Christmas retreat was being held in Sivananda Ashram. A catholic nun from Ireland who was visiting India for the first time was also present in the audience. Swami Chidananda entered the hall with his usual grace and took his seat. The nun was watching Swamiji entering the hall and taking his allotted seat, but after a few moments, she began to cry. The organizers and the persons sitting nearby asked her, "What is the matter? Why are you crying?" She composed herself, looked up with her face filled with emotion and said, "I feel like I

have just seen Jesus in this Swami." Like this Chidananda was Jesus to Christians, Wahe Guru to Sikhs, Prophet to Muslims and Lord Krishna to Hindus.

Gurudev Swami Sivananda was one of the greatest saints of the 20th century. He wrote more than 300 books on various facets of spirituality, religion and ethics; whosoever read his books and articles was bewitched by his musical and magical words. By the year 1950, his spiritual message went to the four corners of the world, and as a result of that many devotees from different countries invited him to bless them in person. In this long list of invitations, there was a request from the United States in the year 1959. The Holy Master, instead of going himself, selected Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj for this yeoman's task of disseminating the message of Divine Life, because the Master saw in him all the qualities of an ideal monk. When Swami Chidananda put his foot on that land, the first question which he was asked was, "Swamiji, we are in the think-land whereas you are coming from the think-land; please tell us how to have peace of mind. We have all the things except this."

Swamiji replied, "I have nothing to say of my own. Whatever I will say are the words of my Master, My Lord and My God. I am simply his flute and his most humble servant." See the egolessness, humility and Gurubhakti in him! Chidananda who was the Master of Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Hatha Yoga and was chosen from the long list of spiritual jewels of that time to go as a spiritual ambassa-

*Lecture delivered on 16th August, 2009 in the Spiritual Conference held at Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India on the eve of the 1st Punyatithi Aradhana of Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

dor abroad—not even an iota of pride was in him! He is humble like a blade of grass.

Then dealing with the subject Swamiji said, "The folly of present day mankind is that man thinks that by having things (objects) of the world, he will have peace of mind and happiness. But these worldly longings and belongings have not given him peace. In the quest of these objects, man has lost the real object of life and that is why he doesn't have peace of mind. There is no objection in the use of what God has given you. But you have to restrain and contain yourself from blind indulgence. Man confuses enjoyment with happiness. But enjoyment is just like the moon. To the ordinary man it seems that the moon has light. In reality, it has no light. It is simply an illusion. Peace will come when you know yourself. But this self will be known by the Self only. The present day man is carried away by careers and cocktails and thus gets stuck in the rat-race of materialism. Spirituality tells you to have the courage to step out of it.

"If you want to have peace, follow your heart and not the dictates of the mind. The inner voice is just like mail from God. Listen to that. Money has a place and importance in the world, but don't keep it at the top. Peace is distinct from the fulfillment of desires. Man cannot quantify and qualify these desires. That is why present day man is fully exhausted, frustrated and broken due the glitter of Maya. The result is that all the time he grumbles fumbles and tumbles. He may be having plenty but still feels empty. So, if you want to have peace, control the mind's indiscriminate craving for worldly objects. The gateway to peace of mind is to stop the mad race after worldly objects, the desire to have more and more and the attachment to 'me, my and mine'. Sit in silence for some time. Silence is Brahman. Have 'Me time', This is also called the 'Virgin time'. Be with yourself only. Taste the fruit of this silence. It is ecstasy. Have positive ideas and feel the presence of God filling you all around. Because peace is one of the attributes of God, so be with Him and merge in peace."

Swamiji further explained that man himself is responsible for all his ailments. "You have to be kind to yourself. 'Charity begins at home' is a very old English proverb. Adopt it in your life. You have to be kind to yourself. Lord Krishna says in Chapter 6 Verse 5 of the Bhagavad Gita, "Arjuna. You are your own friend and your own enemy." There are two kinds of enemies: (a) outer enemies (b) inner enemies like greed, lust, envy, hatred etc. They dwell in us and destroy our peace of mind. So, destroy these inner enemies with knowledge, love, service, purity and sharing. Don't cooperate with the mind. Whenever it goes astray, bring it back. Train it with the twig of *Titiksha*. Man is very hard to others, but very liberal to his mind. He follows its dictates like a purchased slave. Be hard to it. Mind and senses are not your friends but are the doubtful attributes of your personality. They are treacherous. If you don't control them, if you don't enslave them—they will enslave you. This is the secret of peace of mind. Come out of the pleasure zone and enter the peace zone. Leave the self-seeking pursuits and embrace the soul-seeking ventures. Don't misunderstand your mind. It is just like a key. The key is the same for closing and opening the lock. It is the turning of the key in a specific direction which matters.

"If you want to have peace of mind, don't throw the pebbles of wishful thinking in the pool of your mind and thus, you will have peace of mind. Always keep peace of mind at the top of your priorities in life. It is never costly to have peace of mind.

"Gurudev has given the sermon of Be Good, Do Good which can also be called '*Dwadash Akshar Mantra*' as there are twelve letters in this dictum. Purity of life is the soul of sadhana. With purity, holiness and divinity will come; otherwise all our achievements will be shrouded by hollowness."

Swamiji used to say

(Even if it is right but is not approved in the social context, don't do it, don't do it, don't do it!)

"Do good is the proof of our being human. It is the diet of your soul. When it is said, 'Help others', our attention should be on the word 'help' and not on 'others'. Don't expect anything from anybody for doing good. In the New Testament of The Bible in Luke it is stated that one day Christ was healing the people who came to Him. He cured them one by one and they all went without a word of gratitude. Luke was observing it. He said 'Master, how stupid they are! After getting healed, they did not even say a word of gratitude.' Christ smiled and said 'The world is like that, but we have to do our duty.' And he continued healing the congregation. But understand that doing good never goes waste. God returns goodness with grandness. There is a story of a farmer who heard the cries of a drowning boy in a nearby muddy pool. He went to the site and pulled out the boy, washed him and gave him food and clothes according to his resources. The next day, the farmer saw a well-dressed man coming to him. When the man came near, he said, 'I am the father of that boy whom you saved yesterday. I am very thankful to you.' While saying this, he offered him a big amount of money out of gratitude for his help. The farmer gracefully declined the offer and said, 'Sir, God gave me an opportunity to serve someone. I am very thankful to Him.' The gentleman was very much pleased but he still wanted to help that farmer and offered him to educate his son who was standing nearby. The farmer agreed to this. This young boy was educated by that gentleman and he became Alexander Fleming who discovered penicillin, the savior of humanity from many diseases. So, God returns goodness with grandness."

Today, the world is observing the first anniversary of the Mahasamadhi of Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj lovingly known as Saint Francis of India. We should all ponder over the clarion call of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in which he asserted that the greatest need of humanity is spirituality by which the minds of the people will be cleaned and their hearts corrected. Spirituality should be the cen-

ter of our faith and actions. If the 20th century was the century of science, let the 21st century be the century of Spirituality by which man will have his spiritual recovery and divine discovery. As a result of which humanity will develop, blossom and flourish and have peace of mind and this world will thus become a livable, lovable global village where 'Be Good, Do Good', 'Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize' will not simply be words but a way of life,

We all are very thankful and express our gratitude to the people of Malaysia whose DLS President, Rev. H.H. Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj is presiding over this afternoon session of the Conference; because Revered Swamiji: we sent Kuppuswamy to Malaysia and you gave us Sivananda; we sent you a job seeking young man, and you gave us a monk; we sent you a doctor of the body and you gave us the doctor of the soul. For all this the whole fraternity of The Divine Life Society thanks the people of Malaysia from the core of their hearts. With these lines in Hindi which are the harbingers of mental peace, I shall close my talk.

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Do not do such actions in the dark of
the night,
That you have to hide your face during the
light of the day.
And do not do such actions in the light
of the day,

Which, during the solitude of the night, will
not let sleep come to you.

Do not do such actions in life that will
bring shame on your father in heaven

Hari Om

Children's Page

DO YOU GET ANGRY?

(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)

A Sadhu was taking bath in a river. At that moment a Chandal also started taking bath near by. The Sadhu noticed that due to his taking bath, water was splashing and falling over his (Sadhu's) body. He was filled with anger. He came out of the river and started rebuking that man.

After a little while the Chandal also came out of the river after taking bath. He bowed down before him and begged his pardon but the Sadhu's anger was not appeased. He started thrashing him. Without reacting and uttering a word, the Chandal tolerated the thrashing. After thrashing him, the Sadhu entered the river again and said angrily, "I will have to take bath again. The touch of this Chandal has defiled me."

The Chandal also entered the river and started taking bath at some distance from the Sadhu. The Sadhu shouted "You are imitating me."

The Chandal said, "No Sir, the fact is quite otherwise. I have also been defiled. The Chandal of anger sitting in your heart has touched me."

The Sadhu felt ashamed like anything. He could not utter a word.

Dear children, the days when Chandals were considered unholy are gone, but anger is, truly, a very unholy feeling. It is greater than a Chandal. You can call it a Mahachandal. We should try to keep away from it. Do you get angry? Well, whenever you get angry, ponder for a moment—"Had I not been angry, what would I have lost?" You will realise that you lose nothing by not indulging in anger but when you are angry, you do lose. You lose your happiness and deprive others also of theirs. When you are possessed by anger you are not able to do even half of the work, which you can do when you are happy and not angry.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

With effect from 28.09.2009, Vijaya Dasami Day, the Rates of Audio CDs, Audio CDs (Twin), Video CDs and DVDs are revised as under.

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|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. Audio CDs | Rs. 50/- each |
| 2. Audio CDs (Twin) | Rs. 90/- each |
| 3. Video CDs | Rs. 60/- each |
| 4. Video CDs (Twin) | Rs. 110/- each |
| 5. DVDs | Rs. 60/- each |

—The Divine Life Society

Yoga in Daily**BHAKTI YOGA***(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)**[Continued from the previous issue]***MYSTERIOUS HELP FROM
THE LORD TO BHAKTAS**

O faithless ones! Just hear the life-history of Roopkala Bhagavan of Ayodhya and the soldier-Bhakta of Punjab. Roopkala Bhagavan was a famous Bhakta in Ayodhya. It was he who started the All-India-Kirtan. He died a few years ago. He was a native of Chapra near Benares. He was the Inspector of Schools. He was a sincere devotee of Sri Rama. One day he was absorbed in meditation. He did not visit a school for inspection. Lord Rama Himself assumed the form of the inspector through his Yoga-Maya-Sakti, inspected the school boys, signed in the register and disappeared. When the inspector came to the school next morning, the teachers said that he was present all along in the school the previous day and showed him his signature in the register. He was very much astonished. This one evidence gave him much encouragement. He instantaneously resigned his post and went to Ayodhya to spend the rest of his life in communion with Lord Rama. Have you not heard of a recent Punjab incident? A soldier, a sincere

Rama-Bhakta, was on patrol duty at night. One night a fine Kirtan-party was moving about quite close to the soldier. The soldier was much moved by deep devotion, left his duty and joined the Kirtan-party. He enjoyed the Kirtan to his heart's content. In the depth of higher emotions, he entered into Bhava-Samadhi, the ecstatic state of Bhaktas. When he returned at 6 a.m. he enquired the Subedar-Major whether anything happened during his absence. The Subedar said, "Nothing happened. I saw you always on the patrol duty." The Bhakta soldier was extremely surprised to hear the statement of the Subedar. He thought it was all the Grace of Rama. Rama Himself took charge of patrol duty to protect His devotee. He assumed the form of the soldier. When the Bhakta came to know of this incident, he immediately resigned his post and went to Ayodhya to spend his whole life in devotion. My dear brother, do not become a sceptic. If you are sincere in your devotion, you will have Darshan of God face to face this very moment.

(To be continued)

The world is one, knowledge is one, the aim of humanity is one, and we need not dub ourselves as religionists, creedists, philosophers, spiritualists, Mahatmas, Sadhakas, etc.

* * *

The term 'God' is not a concoction of the theological brain; it is a scientific fact.

—Swami Krishnananda

NEWS AND REPORTS

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the profound Blessings of Sri Gurudev, the Divine Life Society Headquarters continues rendering its humble service through Sivananda Home, situated in Tapovan near Laxman Jhula. It provides medical facilities for homeless people who have become ill and are in need of in-patient treatment.

As four they had come, four friends all the way from Ferozabad, to have a dip in the sacred water of Holy Mother Ganga. But things can turn different all of a sudden; in one second, one's life may be completely upside down. One of the friends named Kamal Bhaiyya, upon entering the river, slipped and fell over a rock. His head got hurt and he was not able to come out of the water at all. With the excuse of getting help and medicine for their fellow man, all the three friends left, never to come back. Not as a lotus, but with both the arms and legs dimpled in the cold water, he remained for hours and hours, constantly praying to the Lord for a sign of His mercy, for a sign of not being forgotten, for a trace of His presence, a whisper of His voice. And Lo! It had to be about five hours, according to

his reconstruction, when four Sadhu Babas came to his rescue. With great difficulty they managed to bring him to the bank and arranged for admission in Sivananda Home. Upon arrival, the patient was in a kind of mental shock, and due to the hypothermia his hands and feet were without sensation and had turned into a kind of spastic condition. After investigation, the consulted Doctor started medication and by His benediction the patient is improving gradually.

Om Sri Sadgurudevaya Namah.
Om Sri Shankaracharyayaya
Namah.

Om Sri Gangamatre Namah.

*"There are many things in life
That we cannot understand,
But we must trust God's judgment,
And be guided by His hand.
And all who have God's blessing
Can rest safely in His Care.
For He promises "Safe passage",
On the wings of Faith and Prayer"*

(Helen Steiner Rice)

“Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Serve the sick. This is Divine Life.” (*Swami Sivananda*)

THE INAUGURATION OF SIVANANDA ARCHIVE

With a view to accomplishing Holy Master Sri Swami Sivananda's Noble and Glorious mission of dissemination of spiritual knowledge, the Sivananda Archive Project was commenced in February 2009. It was a venture to gather, preserve and make available to all, the Complete Life and Works of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. The Ninestars group of Chennai was assigned this arduous task. By the grace of Lord Almighty and benedictions of the Holy Master, the project was completed successfully by them.

On the auspicious occasion of Sri Skanda Shashthi i.e. 24th October 2009, the Sivananda Archive was inaugurated at the Sivananda Archive Hall by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji. In this Archive, all the books,

letters, manuscripts and photographs of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivananda will be preserved to make them available for all generations to come. During the night Satsanga, the Master DVD containing in digitalized format of all the works and photographs of the Holy Master was offered at His Holy Feet in the Samadhi Shrine and the Ninestar Technology staff members (the expertise behind the Sivananda Archives project) were honoured by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji and H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji. The inauguration of the archives and offering of the DVD made this year's Skanda Shashthi Day the most significant and memorable day in the annals of the Divine Life Society.

ANNOUNCEMENT

DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, WEST BENGAL—SADHANA SHIBIR

The Annual Sadhana Shibir of The Divine Life Society West Bengal, will be held from 27th to 31st January, 2010 at Manav Seva Trust Complex, Hamiragachhi, Railway Station-Malia, West Bengal.

Participant fee Rs. 300/- per person.

The last date for enrollment is 31st December 2009. The enrollment form has to be sent to Sri Bijoy Swain, 4C Meher Ali Mondal Street, Mominpur, KOLKATA-700 027, West Bengal.

For enrollment and information please contact:

Sri C.B. Sehgal 09830144147, Sri Nitual Parekh 09830040730, Sri Bijoy Swain 09339392845, Dr. P.K. Samantaray 09002080514.

All devotees are requested to participate.

—The Divine Life Society

When consciousness expands into the truth of Pure Being, the world discloses its eternal nature of Pure Consciousness alone. —*Swami Krishnananda*

INAUGURATION OF SWAMI SIVANANDA STUDY CENTRE AT THE M.S.UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

In pursuit of its noble objective of dissemination of spiritual and cultural knowledge of Bharatvarsha and to benefit the young population of India in their formative years, The Divine Life Society is making foray into Indian Universities. The Society had mooted the proposal through D.L.S. Baroda Branch to set up the Chair at The M.S. University, Baroda in loving memory of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. The University officials reciprocated in a befitting manner. This led to the establishment of Swami Sivananda Study Centre in Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of India at The Faculty of Arts, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat.

The University was established in 1949 under the patronage of the visionary king of Baroda state after whom it is named. It is an English medium University in the state with a unitary and residential status. From those early days, functions of the University are seen as imparting and disseminating knowledge, creating and extending knowledge. The University caters to the educational needs of more than 37,000 students through a variety of courses in different disciplines under the auspices of 13 faculties. The UGC has recognised several departments as centres for advanced studies and granted accreditation to the University through its National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The students actively participate in Sports, NCC, NSS, Cultural and Academic activities and win many laurels. As a tradition and practice, the University organises seminars, workshops and conferences at State, National and International levels.

The inauguration of the "Swami Sivananda Study Centre" was done at Semi-

nar Hall of The Faculty of Arts on 3.11.09 by Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President of The Divine Life Society Headquarters by lighting the lamp and sharing the words of wisdom and blessings. The Vice-Chancellor of the University Prof. Ramesh K.Goyal reminisced the magnanimous contribution to the Nation by the University in the field of science and philosophy by the likes of Dr.Venkatraman, Sri Aurobindo, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Shri Mota. The Vice-Chancellor respectfully hailed the contribution made by The Divine Life Society and assured that it would be used in the most appropriate manner. Saints from Headquarters, faculty members, scholars and invited members of Vadodara DLS Branch attended the programme.

The objectives of the Centre include Dissemination of spiritual and cultural knowledge, Promotion of unity of religions and ideal of brotherhood among mankind, Training in Yoga and Vedanta and presenting an integrated view of life for students by harmonising spiritual, secular and scientific endeavours. The Vice-Chancellor will be the Chairperson, Dr. Nitin Vyas, Head of The Faculty of Arts will be Member Secretary and Dr.Jayant Dave, Member of Board of Management residing in Vadodara will be Joint Member Secretary of the Centre. The Centre commenced its activities by arranging the discourses on 'Eternal Message of Indian Scriptures to Mankind' by Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary of The Divine Life Society, as a part of the inaugural function.

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI PADMANABHANANDAJI MAHARAJ

Dr. (Mrs.) Shail Dubey, a senior doctor of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Hospital, Varanasi, constructed a small cottage at this Hospital and dedicated it to Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. The cottage was named 'Sant Atithi Niwas'. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji was invited by Brahmachari Panudaji of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram to formally inaugurate the same and stay there a day or two. Sri Swamiji visited the Ashram on September 29, 2009 and inaugurated the cottage. The Divine Life Society Varanasi also organised jointly with Shree Shree Ma's Ashram a Satsanga in the Prayer Hall, which Sri Swamiji attended.

On October 1, Swamiji left Varanasi for Anandashram in Kanhagad to participate in the 1st Punyatithi Aradhana of Parama Pujya Sri Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj. He attended the function and spoke on 'Spiritual Sadhana'. Sri Swamiji then proceeded to Pullam Pettah, a village in Kadappa District,

Andhra Pradesh, where the 36th All Andhra Pradesh Conference is proposed to be held. Swamiji had discussions with the organizers of the Conference.

On October 6, Sri Swamiji proceeded to Chennai, and with the officials of the University of Madras he talked about creating an Endowment in the Philosophy Department in the name of Worshipful Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. These were preliminary discussions, and Swamiji drew up a broad outline for the Endowment.

Dr. Karunanidhi, Professor and Head of the Psychology Department requested Swamiji to address the students. Accordingly Sri Swamiji delivered a lecture on 'The Role of Indian Psychology for Mental Wellbeing'. Postgraduate students, research scholars and faculty members attended the lecture in the University Lecture Hall. It was followed by a question and answer session. Swamiji returned to the Headquarters on October 8, 2009.

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. Sri SWAMI PADMANABHANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The Divine Life Society Branches of Gujarat organised a three day Sadhana Shibir from 30th October to 1st November 2009 at Rajkot. H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj (President), H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj (General Secretary), Sri Swami Tyagavairagyanandaji Maharaj (Trustee) and Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj participated in the Shibir. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji spoke on all the three days on Sadhana as visualized by Gurudev. He also guided the participants during the question and answer session on the last day. Over 500 delegates from Gujarat participated

in the Shibir. During the programme, the Gurjar Divya Jeevan Sangh released several books of Pujya Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Prior to the Shibir a Youth Camp had been conducted in which over 500 students participated. Both the Shibir and the Youth Camp helped to spread the message of Gurudev.

From Rajkot Sri Swami and Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj proceeded to Vadodara. The Vadodara Branch was started by worshipful Gurudev on 1st November 1950. Therefore the Branch organised a Diamond Jubilee Celebration and the one year

long celebration was commenced on 1st November 2009. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji, Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji, Sri Swami Tyagavairagyanandaji and Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji all spoke in the Satsanga organised at Vadodara Branch Satsanga Hall.

The next day the Branch organised a Dharma Sammelan at C.C. Mehta Auditorium in the M.S. University campus. Saints from different religions, viz., Jainism, Christianity, Islam and Sanatana Dharma delivered lectures on "The Role of Spirituality in Personal, Social and National Life". Sri Swamiji spoke on Sanatana Dharma. The function was attended by a large number of devotees of the different faiths.

On 3rd November Sri Swamiji and Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj visited the Shram Mandir (Leprosy Colony) at Sindhora and conducted a brief Satsanga in the colony. In the afternoon Sri Swamiji visited the Homoeopathic College at Sevasi. He gave a talk on "The Relevance of Ancient Indian Culture in Modern Times". Students and faculty members of the College attended the programme.

With the kind cooperation of the Faculty of Arts of the M.S. University Baroda, the Di-

vine Life Society has established a "Swami Sivananda Study Centre" at the Faculty of Arts at this University. The "Study Centre" was formally inaugurated by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, and Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj delivered the first lecture on "The Eternal Message of Indian Scriptures to Mankind". Hon. Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ramesh K. Goyal was the chief guest. Dr. Nitin Vyas, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, delivered the welcome address. The programme was attended by students and faculty members of M.S. University, Baroda and members of the D.L.S. Branch, Vadodara.

The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd., observe every year a 'Vigilance Awareness Week' to mitigate the menace of corruption and to inculcate value culture in the society. The General Manager Sri S.D. Mathur of ONGC in Dehra Doon invited Sri Swamiji to deliver a lecture on "The Role of Spirituality to Inculcate Ethical Values in Society". Accordingly Sri Swamiji visited ONGC on 6th November 2009 and gave an interactive lecture. It was well received. The General Manager and officers of ONGC thanked Sri Swamiji and the Divine Life Society.

If our belief in the omnipresence of God is a living faith, a principle upon which we live our life, then safeguarded by this faith and conviction, we shall never dream of thinking anything unworthy of His inner indwelling presence, never dream of uttering anything unworthy about Him, never ever engage in any action that is unworthy of His divine presence. Rather, naturally, spontaneously, irresistibly, inevitably, your life will become divine. Your life will become one of virtue, humility, simplicity, having a spirit of service and practising the presence of God within and without.

—*Swami Chidananda*

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THE DIVINE LIFE

DECEMBER 2009

ANNOUNCEMENT

YOUTH CAMP AT THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY BRANCH-CHANDIGARH



The Divine Life Society Chandigarh Branch organised its First Youth Camp for School children on 11th November, 2009. Sixty-six students from 9th and 10th Standards of the Tribune Public School, age group between 13 – 16 years participated in this day long camp.

All the children arrived at 9.00am, accompanied by the Vice-Principal & two other teachers of the School. They were welcomed by Dr. (Mrs.) Ramneek Sharma, Secretary of the Branch who introduced them to all the Executive members of DLS, Chandigarh Branch.

The day long camp was in four sessions.



The Programme started with prayer. Prof. Deveshwar explained the importance of prayer to the children.

The first session was on Yogasana. Prof. Deveshwar and Sri Sandeep, Yogacharya of the Branch conducted the session. The importance of Yogasana in students' life was explained to the Students, followed by demonstration of all 12 postures of Surya Namaskar. The students were then guided to perform the Surya Namaskar. This session lasted for about an hour.



The second session was on Ethical Values and it was conducted by Dr. Vibha and Prof Deveshwar. A small game was included for active and attentive participation of the children. The outcome of the game gave a practical and first hand experience of vanity of gossip rumours. This was followed by two short stories with children coming up with many ideas drawn from the narration. These stories were aimed at drawing virtues and imbibing them in their day to day lives—all pointing to the main theme of the camp “BE GOOD and DO GOOD”.

The third session was conducted by Ramesh Didi involving deep breathing, Om Chanting and filling oneself with all the posi-

tive cosmic energy available in the environs and passing on the 'Energy' to the needy, sick and disturbed. This session was appreciated and enjoyed by the children.

The fourth session was a Quiz programme conducted by Dr. Ramneek Sharma. A questionnaire was prepared keeping in view the age and level of education of the participants. The students were divided into 11 groups—six in each group and they were asked questions on Religion and Spirituality and General knowledge. There was active participation of the children in the Quiz

programme. Sri F. Lal Kansalji functioned as the facilitator and moderator.

All participants were given Jnana Prasad. The teachers were impressed by the quiet, Spiritual and clean environs of the Ashram. They were also happy that the programme went on very well and all the children were benefited. They requested for more such programmes.

This programme has helped to create interest in the children towards ethics, values and Spirituality. —**The Divine Life Society**

IN MEMORIAM



We announce with deep sorrow the sad news of the passing away of Revered Prof. Sri Vasudev Randevji of Rewari at 6.45 a.m. on 11th November 2009. Sri Randevji was born on 25th November 1938. He mastered different subjects and was a scholar in History, Political Science, Philosophy, Education and Law. He served initially as Lecturer in the R.B. College of Education, Rewari and later at H.R. Saraswati College, Charkhi Dadri in Haryana.

Prof. Randev came in contact with Sivananda Ashram in 1968. He used to say that this was the most important event in his life and that it completely transformed him. From a scholar of secular subjects he became a seeker of the ultimate Truth. As a devotee at the feet of Gurudev he came in contact with Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj and other saints of the Ashram who honed his personality into that of a saintly man. Prof. Randev was whole-heartedly involved in the activities of the Divine Life Society. As he himself grew, his commitment to the holy Ashram also increased and he became an integral part of the Society. He served the Divine Life Society as a Member of the Board of Management and in the Faculty of the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, etc. Slowly his engagements with the world shrunk and his spiritual pursuit expanded. He used to attend all the main programmes of the Divine Life Society at Headquarters and also at State level. The lectures he delivered and the articles he wrote encapsulated Gurudev's teachings.

Prof. Randev was an epitome of simplicity, sincerity and devotion. He practised Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions to the letter and spirit, and they were the essence of his life. In addition to his Seva for the Holy Ashram he also carried out a number of Welfare Programmes for the people in Rewari. The services he rendered to the Society will be remembered for a long time.

We offer prayers to Worshipful Gurudev and Lord Viswanath for Satgati and Parama Shanti of the departed Soul.

Om Tat Sat. Om Shantih.

—***The Divine Life Society***

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

Ahiwara (Chhattisgarh): During the month of October 2009, the Branch held daily Satsanga and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa on Ekadasis. It organised special Puja on Dipavali.

Ambala (Haryana): The Branch had daily Satsanga with special Japa-kirtan on different deities also. The monthly programme of video Satsanga was on 11th October. It also organised special programmes on Sivananda Jayanti, Chidananda Jayanti and on 9th October on the visit of Revered Swami Dharmanishthanandaji. It continued its social service through two Homoeopathic clinics and providing drinking water.

Badakuanl (Orissa): The Branch conducted Puja in the morning followed by recitations, and in the evening along with Bhajan-kirtan. The weekly Paduka Puja and Satsanga were on Thursdays. The programmes on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti were morning prayer session, Paduka Puja, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana and Mahamantra Kirtan for one hour in the forenoon session, and special Satsangas in the evening. The Branch also organised Paduka Puja and Bhagavad Gita Parayana on two other days.

Badhiausta (Orissa): The weekly Satsanga was on Sundays. The Branch organised mobile Satsangas in five different villages—on 5th September 500 devotees joined the programme of Paduka Puja, 108 times recitation of Sri Hanuman Chalisa and a spiritual talk; and on 24th October the programmes included Paduka Puja, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana and a discourse. There were special Satsangas and distribution of free medicines on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti. It also organised 24-hour Akhanda Sankirtan, Paduka Puja and Nagar Sankirtan Yatra on 29th October.

Balangir (Orissa): The Branch organised on Sri Guru Purnima, Paduka Puja, Bhajan-kirtan, distribution of food to inmates of all the three orphanages and Prasad-sevan by the devotees. Though 70 devotees participated in the First

Punyatithi programmes at the Headquarters, it also held Paduka Puja, a discourse and Narayana Seva of the hospital patients on that-day. On Sivananda Jayanti, Revered Baba Sri Chaitanya Charan Dasji gave a talk which was followed by Bhajan-kirtan and Prasad Sevan.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch conducted on Thursdays Paduka Puja and Satsanga, and on Fridays recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama and Sri Lalita-sahasranama Stotras, and Devi Puja. It also had Svadhyaya on the First Sunday, 3-hour Akhanda Kirtan on the third and devotional music on the fourth Sunday. It organised on the first Punyatithi talks on Swamiji Maharaj in the morning as well as evening session, Narayana Seva to the inhabitants of an orphanage and Prasad Sevan in the morning and Video show in the evening. On Sivananda Jayanti, three senior devotees narrated their personal experiences and reminiscences about Gurudev. Chidananda Jayanti was observed with three talks and Seva at the Government Leprosarium. During Navaratri devotional music and Svadhyaya of "God as Mother" were the main programmes.

Barbil (Orissa): The Branch conducted Satsanga on Thursdays and Mondays. Special Programmes on Sivananda Jayanti were Paduka Puja, Gita Path and evening Satsanga, and on Chidananda Jayanti morning meditation, Paduka Puja, Gita Path and Satsanga in the evening. 415 patients got free treatment at Sivananda Homoeopathic Dispensary during September.

Bargarh (Orissa): The daily activities were 2-time Puja, Homoeopathic Dispensary, Yogasana class, meditation and Svadhyaya. Other activities were Paduka Puja on Thursdays, weekly Satsanga on Saturdays and serially Gita Path on Sundays. On Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti programmes were morning prayer, Prabhat Pheri, Mahamrityunjaya Japa, Narayana Seva and discourses by Revered Sri Swami Sivananda-Gurusevanandaji.

Baripada (Orissa): The Branch conducted Paduka Puja on Sundays and the monthly Sadhana Day on 4th October. Required medicines were provided to 65 patients of a leprosy colony.

Bellary (Karnataka): The Branch had daily Puja and Satsanga on Sundays. It held special programmes on Sivananda Jayanti, Chidananda Jayanti, consecration Day of Sri Vinayaka and another religious day.

Bhongir (A.P.): In addition to the daily Puja and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, the Branch held special Satsanga on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti.

Bhubaneswar (Orissa): The Branch organised 17-day spiritual programmes from Sivananda Jayanti and concluding on Chidananda Jayanti. The daily programmes were morning prayer-meditation, Paduka Puja, Bhajan-kirtan, and 2-hour discourses in the evening by Revered Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji, Revered Sri Swami Sadanandaji, Prof. Hrudananda Roy and other eminent speakers, Yogasana, special Puja, etc. On the two Jayantis the additional programmes were Nagar Kirtan, recitation of hymns and Bhagavad Gita, Havan, Narayana Seva, Sadhu Seva, distribution of fruits, biscuits and medicines to poor patients, feeding students of the school for Deaf and Dumb and Physically Handicapped. On Chidananda Jayanti, clothings were given to 75 destitutes and the regular monthly activity of two and half hour Akhand Kirtan were the additional features. The Branch also released three books and one pamphlet and held a special programme of prize distribution to winners of essay competition and chanting of Bhagavad Gita and The Universal Prayer. Revered Gajapati Maharaj Sri Dibya Singh Debji gave away the prizes and delivered an inspiring talk. It had also organised various programmes on the First Punyatithi, Sri Krishna Jayanti, and 10-days programmes from Sri Guru Purnima to Aradhana Day.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, daily 2-hour Satsanga, with Svadhyaya, Matri-Satsanga on 13th and 24th Oc-

tober, Paduka Puja and Bhajan-Kirtan on Sivananda Day, and Havan on Chidananda Day. It organised special Puja, special decoration and Bhajan-kirtan on Dipavali. It continued Yogasana class, Sivananda Library and financial aid to needy students.

Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh): The Branch held regularly weekly Satsanga, as well as mobile Satsanga. It conducted Paduka Puja and special Satsanga on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti.

Brahmapur (Orissa): The regular activities of the Branch were 3-hour weekly Satsanga on Sundays, mobile Satsanga on Saturdays, Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day, Parayana of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram daily, of Srimad Bhagavad Gita on Ekadasis, and of Sri Sundarakanda on the Sankranti Day. It organised monthlong Path of Sri Ramacharita Manas from 4th October, and 12-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra on Purnima.

Burla (Orissa): In addition to the regular Satsanga on all the Sundays and Mondays, the Branch held spiritual programmes on Sri Krishna Jayanti, the First Punyatithi, Sri Ganesha Chaturthi, Srimad Bhagavat Jayanti, Sivananda Jayanti, and Chidananda Jayanti. It conducted daily special Puja with Sri Lalitambika Sahasranama Archana during Navaratri.

Chandigarh: Regular Activities: Daily evening Satsanga, Sunday morning Satsanga with emphasis on Svadhyaya, feeding 300 poor people on all Sundays, free medical consultation and medicines to poor patients on Sundays, daily Yogasana class.

Special Activities: (1) Meditation and Yoga Shibir for 5-days from October 2 to 6 by Revered Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji. (2) Dipavali: special Satsanga, decoration of the Ashram premises with lamps and candles. (3) 12-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra on October 23-24.

Chatrapur (Orissa): In addition to the daily Satsanga, the Branch held weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, two mobile Satsangas and a special

Satsanga on 22nd September, and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankranti. The programmes on Sivananda Jayanti included early morning Nagar Kirtan, Paduka Puja with one lakh Archana by 53 devotees, Kirtan, recitation, Jnana Prasad distribution and a talk on Gurudev's life. On Chidananda Jayanti also similar programmes with a talk on Swamiji's life took place both in the morning and also in the evening Satsanga. It distributed sweets and leaflets to school children.

Chennai, Anna Nagar (Tamil Nadu): The Branch held a special public programme on 25th October.

Faridpur (U.P.): The Branch holds daily monthly Parayana of Sri Ramacharita Manas with concluding Havan on Purnima all round the year. In its weekly Satsanga, Svadhyaya of "Sadhana" and a talk on Sri Ramayana by Pt. Brijesh Pathak are the highlights.

Gudur (A.P.): The Sunday Satsanga includes spiritual discourses also. The Branch distributed fruits and bread to poor patients of local Government Hospital.

Jaipur Malviya Nagar (Rajasthan): The Branch held daily Yogasana class in the morning and Satsanga in the evening. Its weekly Satsanga and Havan were on Saturdays and Narayana Seva on Tuesdays. It organised on Sivananda Jayanti Paduka Puja in the morning and discourses by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji and Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji. During Navaratri, it conducted daily Bhajans and Bhandara on Maha Ashtami.

Jaipur Raja Park (Rajasthan): Regular Activities: Daily morning Sri Devi Bhagavata Katha; daily evening Satsanga with Mahamrityunjaya Japa for 1½ hours on Thursdays and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays and on 6th October; weekly Satsanga and Havan on Sunday morning; Matri-Satsanga on Mondays; Swami Sivananda Homoeopathic Clinic—1,232 patients treated free during October; daily Yogasana class; distribution of Rs. 150/- per month to 26 poor widows; daily Narayana Seva to about 300 poor people; distribution of dry ration to

a leprosy colony; scholarships to 80 poor students; and Swami Sivananda Library.

Special Activities (1) Maha Rasa Purnima: Sri Sundarakanda Parayana, Bhajan-Kirtan, Prasad. (2) Kartika Katha: monthlong Narayana Katha. (3) Dipavali: Special decoration of the temple, Annakshetra, special Satsanga, Katha, Arati, Prasad.

Jeypore (Orissa): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Sundays and mobile Satsanga on Thursdays. Sivananda Jayanti 10-hour programme included early morning prayer-meditation, Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, Havan, Bhajan-Kirtan, Svadhyaya, Puja, Arati, distribution of food packets to 21 destitutes, Jnana Prasad and Prasad Sevan. Similar programmes were arranged with 80 participants and food packets distributed to 25 destitutes.

Kakching (Manipur): The Branch organised on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti Satsanga, Bhajan-Kirtan, Bhagavad Gita Path and talks by Sri Naorem Pratap Singhji, a direct disciple of Gurudev, on the lives and teachings of Gurudev and Swamiji.

Kantabanji (Orissa): The Branch held Satsanga on Sundays with Svadhyaya of Bhagavad Gita—each devotee participating in Svadhyaya.

Khatiguda (Orissa): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, one mobile Satsanga, Ekadasi Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, and the monthly Sadhana Day with 12-hour Akhanda Chanting of Mahamantra.

Khurja (U.P.): The Branch had Satsanga with Svadhyaya on Mondays, Matri-Sankirtan on Ekadasis, meditation class on Sundays, and Yogasana class for men in the morning and for women in the evening. It held special Satsanga on Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti. It renders social service through Homoeopathic Dispensary and aid to poor.

Nalgonda (A.P.): The Branch conducted daily evening Satsanga with Svadhyaya of Bhagavad Gita and Sri Ramayana, and daily 1½

hour morning Satsanga with Parayana of 108 names of Sri Laxmi Devi and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram. It organised on the First Punyatithi, Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti special Satsanga in the evening and distribution of fruits and biscuits to inpatients of Government Hospital and to the poor.

Nayagarh (Orissa): The weekly Satsanga was on Wednesdays. The Branch organised special programmes under the guidance of Revered Swami Dharamaprkashanandaji as follows: on the First Punyatithi, Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti morning prayer-meditation, Paduka Puja, Svadhyaya, Narayana Seva and special evening Satsanga. Sri Krishna Jayanti: Puja with one-lakh Archana, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana, Havan, and in the evening Bhajan-kirtan, Abhisheka, midnight Arati, etc.

New Delhi, Vasant Vihar: The Branch had on Sundays Satsanga with meditation and special features of Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the first Sunday, special Prasad Sevan on the second, Svadhyaya and group discussion on Gurudev's teachings on the third, and a spiritual talk on the fourth Sunday.

Nimapara (Orissa): In addition to the daily one hour Mahamantra Kirtan and reading of one Chapter of Srimad Bhagavatam, the Branch conducted Paduka Puja in the morning and Satsanga on Thursdays, and one mobile Satsanga. It organised daily special mobile Satsanga at residence of different devotees for 17 days from September 8 to 24. On Sivananda Jayanti the programmes were morning prayer-meditation, Paduka Puja with one lakh Archana, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, Bhajan-Kirtan, Narayana Seva. On Chidananda Jayanti Paduka Puja with one lakh Archana, Nagar Kirtan Yatra, talks on Swamiji's life and teachings, Narayana Seva, distribution of fruits and cakes to hospital patients. It also organised special programmes and Puja on Sri Krishna Jayanti and Sri Durga Ashtami.

Phulbani (Orissa): In addition to 2-time Puja the Branch held weekly Satsanga on Sundays, and mobile Satsanga on Thursdays. On Sivananda Jayanti Paduka Puja with one lakh

Archana was followed by Narayana Seva and on Chidananda Jayanti, in addition to similar programmes Nagar Kirtan with 70 devotees.

Rourkela (Orissa): The Branch started from 24th September 2009, Annapurna Annakshetra after 12-hour Mahamantra Japa, Parayana of Srimad Bhagavatam, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama, Sri Siva-sahasranama, Sri Gopal Sahasranama, Sri Lalita-sahasranama, Yajna, other spiritual activities and Narayana Seva.

Rourkela, Steel Township (Orissa): The Branch held weekly mobile Satsanga and the monthly Sadhana Day. It organised special programmes on Sri Krishna Jayanti, the First Punyatithi, and special daily Satsanga week from August 6 to 12. Revered Swami Brahmasakshatkaranandaji gave discourses on 'Bhaja Govindam' from Sept. 13 to 20. On Chidananda Jayanti the 8-hour programmes included morning meditation, Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, a talk by Swamiji, Narayan Seva, Prasad Sevan.

Salipur (Orissa): Daily programme: Prayer-meditation, Puja, 'Om Namah Sivaya' Kirtan for 1 hour, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa for one hour, recitations in the morning, and Puja, Bhajan-kirtan, Parayana and meditation, one-hour study class, Svadhyaya of "Sadhana". The weekly Satsanga was on Sundays, Parayana of Sri Siva-Sahasranama on Mondays, of Sri Sundarakanda on 5th September, of Srimad Bhagavad Gita on the 6th. Special Activities: (1) Sivananda Jayanti: Paduka Puja, 'Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra Japa for one hour, evening Satsanga with a talk on the life and teachings of Gurudev. (2) Sri Vamana Jayanti: Puja, Svadhyaya. (3) Srimad Bhagavat Jayanti: special Satsanga with a talk on Srimad Bhagavatam. (4) Mobile Satsanga: in a nearby village on 21st September. (5) Yoga Training: on 1st, 8th and 15th September in a local college—participants 106, 100 and 251. Swami Sivananda Charitable Hospital treated 183 patients during the month.

South Balandia (Orissa): In addition to 2-time Puja, the Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Fridays, special Satsanga on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day, and Paduka Puja and 3-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra on Sankranti day. It held a special 3-hour Mahamantra Sankirtan and Prasad Sevan by the 120 participants. It organised Srimad Bhagavata Katha for 7 days from October 27 to November 3.

Sunabeda (Orissa): The Branch held bi-weekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays with a detailed study of Swamiji Maharaj's writings. It arranged special Satsangas on the visit of Revered Swami Rameswaranandaji on 17th August and on 13th September with another Swamiji. On Sri Krishna Jayanti, it had 9-hour programme of Puja, Japa, recitation, etc. On the First Punyatithi, the programmes were Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, Havan, Narayana Seva of 200 destitutes and Prasad distribution to all the students of a school. Programmes on Sivananda Jayanti were Paduka Puja, Havan, Bhajan-kirtan, etc, and on Chidananda Jayanti a special Satsanga. It also organised programmes on Sri Ganesha Chaturthi, Rishi Panchami, Sri Radha Ashtami and Sri Vijaya Dasami. On Rasa Purnima, the initiation day of many devotees, Paduka Puja, Havan and Kirtan in the forenoon session and a special Satsanga in the evening were organised with deep devotion of the devotees.

Sunabeda, Ladies Branch (Orissa): Regular activities: Daily morning Puja, Bhagavata

Path and Japa; and in the evening one hour Mahamantra Sankirtan followed by Gita Path; bi-weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays and Saturdays, Bala (Children's) Satsanga on Sundays; Narayana Seva on Tuesdays; and Paduka Puja, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana on Ekadasi; and 12-hour Japa on every 28th. Special Activities: Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti: early morning prayer-meditation, Havan, Paduka Puja and special Satsanga. Navaratri: Daily Puja, etc.

Vadodara (Gujarat): The Branch had Satsanga on Thursdays and group discussion on Isopanishad on Sundays. On Sivananda Jayanti and Chidananda Jayanti Mantra Japa and Paduka Puja were done. It arranged Garba on Sri Durga Ashtami. It continued distribution of medicines to the poor patients of the Government Hospital, Homoeopathic and Ayurvedic clinics and acupressure treatment.

Varanasi (U.P.): The Branch held fortnightly Satsanga on October 11 and 25, and mobile Satsanga on 4th October.

Warangal (A.P.): The Branch organised Paduka Puja, special Satsanga, Bhajan-kirtan and a spiritual talk on Sivananda Jayanti, and Paduka Puja, special Satsanga Bhajan-kirtan and Mahaprasad on Chidananda Jayanti. It held on the Punyatithi of H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj a special Satsanga with talks on Swamiji. It supplied one quintal rice and 5 Kg. Tur Dal to the school for blind.

REPORTS FROM D.L.S. BRANCHES CORRIGENDUM

In November 2009 Issue, Report mentioned as for Sunabeda (Orissa) is actually for Sunabeda, Ladies Branch (Orissa). We regret the omission of the words "Ladies Branch". It may kindly be read as for "Sunabeda, Ladies Branch (Orissa)" In place of "Sunabeda (Orissa)".

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S ESSAY COMPETITIONS—2009

It is for the information of the Readers that Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is conducting an annual Essay Competition in sacred memory of **Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj**, as follows:—

BHAVAN'S SWAMI SIVANANDA MEMORIAL ESSAY COMPETITION—2009

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FOR AGE-GROUP: 20-30 years; Prizes : Rs. 1000/-, Rs. 700/-, Rs. 300/-

MEDIUM: **Hindi**

LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF ESSAY—**31st January 2010**

Requirements

1. Limit: 2000 words. Type-written Essay in duplicate
2. Full name and Residential Address of the participant, Age certificate, small photograph, Phone No. / Fax / e-mail, etc.
3. Prize Winners cannot contest for the same competition for the next three years.
4. The decision of Judges will be final.
5. The Address for correspondence:—

Prof. S.A. Upadhyaya, Project Officer, Bhavan's Essay Competitions, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kulapati Munshi Marg, Chowpatty, Mumbai—400 007

E-mail: brbhavan@bom7.vsnl.net.in web-site: <http://www.bhavans.info>

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY