



# Chinmaya-Tej

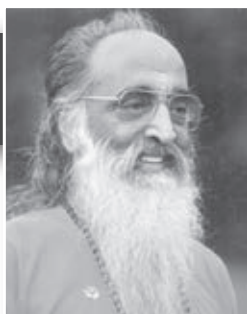
July/August 2014  
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CHINMAYA MISSION SAN JOSE PUBLICATION

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide to individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become a positive contributor to the society.



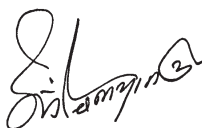
Chinmaya Lahari

## GURU:

An Embodiment of the Ideal

To a seeker of Truth, a *Guru* is absolutely unavoidable, like a *Śiva-linga* is to a devotee of Lord Siva. To the student of Vedanta, the *Guru* is the embodiment of his goal. Just as the *bhakta* sees no stone, but his beloved Siva alone in the linga, a true disciple sees no faults in his *Guru*. To the *śiṣya*, his *Guru* is nothing but pure Consciousness, absolute Bliss and eternal Wisdom. Anyone who can elicit such a total feeling of faith and devotion continuously in us is our *Guru*. You should never expect that a great *Guru*, by his touch, would convert you and transform you to Godhood. If you wait for such a dream — *Guru* to come to you, you shall wait in vain.

To a *Vedantin*, the real *Guru* is the pure intellect within. The purified, deeply aspiring mind is the disciple. This is represented for us in the unforgettable scene in our Bhagavad *Gita*, where between the two opposing forces, in a chariot, the absolute Teacher is preaching the *Gita* to the eternal disciple, Arjuna. When a pure mind is aghast at the negativities arrayed against the comparatively smaller forces of positivity, in sheer despair it surrenders completely to the pure intellect, the Lord Krishna within. We must make an earnest attempt, and in faith, wait for the critical hour when our minds glide to the voiceless state of true *vaṭragya* — the true Arjuna *sthiti* (state).



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## FROM THE EDITORS DESK

Tej, is a bi-monthly publication of Chinmaya Mission San Jose.

Our new facility — Chinmaya Sandeepany — was completed in June 2013 thanks to the strong support of all our members and benefactors. The facility was inaugurated by Swami Tejomayananda, the head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide, with a Yagna and festivities.

Chinmaya-Tej is mailed to all Sponsors and Chinmaya Mission San Jose Members, and is also available for viewing on [cmsj.org](http://cmsj.org). If you're a member and you don't receive your issue of Chinmaya-Tej, please send us an email with your address, using the contact information below. The website also includes information on events and regular updates.

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## CHINMAYA TEJ EDITORIAL STAFF

**EDITOR** *Uma Jeyarasasingam / [umakj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:umakj@sbcglobal.net)*

**CO-EDITOR** *Rohini Joshi*

**ELECTRONIC EDITORIAL ADVISOR** *Satish Joshi*

**CONTRIBUTORS** *Dr. N.b. Patil, Swami Prabhavananda,  
Christopher Isherwood, Brni. Arpita Chaitanya,  
Swami Tejomayananda*

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# PUJYA GURUDEV A LIVING JESUS

*In the Hindu scriptures it is said that it is easier to describe Brahman, which is truly indescribable, than to describe a realized soul, a knower of Brahman. As such, we will each see him according to our own personal nature and faith. Having been brought up as a Catholic, it was the life and divine images of Jesus which my heart and mind had been steeped in since childhood. From the first miraculous moment that he walked into my life, therefore, Pujya Gurudev appeared to me to be the very image of the living Jesus. Again and again, the words of the Gospels and an understanding of their true meaning would spontaneously spring into my mind in Gurudev's presence as I saw them come alive in him, just as the first Christian disciples saw the Hebrew Scriptures fulfilled in Jesus. I'm sure it was no mere coincidence then that the Master who came to me bore even such a striking physical resemblance to Jesus, as many non-Christians have also acknowledged.*



## “OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

It was in a small Christian chapel, in fact, that I saw Gurudev for the first time in 1978 and was magnetized the moment I lay eyes on him! Informed by a friend of Gurudev’s lectures on the *Bhagavad Geeta*, I went to hear what he had to say. Although I had already been deeply involved in the devotional aspects of Hinduism, I was very suspicious of another Indian Swami and afraid I might get sucked into a fanatic religious cult. I went to the *Geeta* talk with a mixture of curiosity and hopefulness, yet apprehension. But as I sat in the front of the chapel at American University in Washington, D.C., the moment finally came — I turned to watch Gurudev enter from the back of the chapel, and my mind stood still in wonder as I saw the most majestic being with an almost visible aura of



power and light, walking slowly and gracefully like a king up the centre aisle! As I gazed at his long beard and brilliant, flowing robes, it was as if Jesus had suddenly walked into my life, living and breathing, as I’d so often wished!

Gurudev reached the front row of the chapel where two little children came up to greet him and he spontaneously stooped down to speak to the children and embrace them. It struck me as utterly amazing that an internationally known speaker about to give a public speech could be so simple and unselfconscious. Immediately the

Gospel passage came to my mind of when Jesus’ disciples had tried to prevent a group of village children from gathering around him; Jesus had rebuked his disciples saying: *“Suffer (allow) the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God. Verily, unless you turn and become like one of these, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God... And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.”* (MARK 10:13-16).

As we all know, Gurudev had the most profound love and concern for children and his identification with them in their company was total. He himself was always spontaneous and childlike and he encouraged us to develop the same qualities of simplicity and pure-heartedness. He had little patience for our adult, egoistic inhibitions and false sophistication that kept us from living in the simple truth of the Self (the Kingdom of God)!

## “FRIENDS...”

As Gurudev continued his way up to the dais, I waited with bated breath to hear the words he would speak. I remember him picking up his pointer and saying in the most deep, sonorous voice I’d ever heard — “Friends,

this is not a lecture. It is a discussion between you and I...". I cannot adequately describe the effect that these simple words and the rest of his talk had on me, for I did in fact experience it as an intimate conversation with a friend going on inside my heart, and not as a lecture happening outside of me! The very quality of his voice reverberated unmistakably from the depths of his own spiritual experience, having true power to effect a change in my thinking. As if he knew each one of us intimately, I felt him there inside my mind lifting me out of confusion and despair. Sometime later I realized that this is exactly what the Gospel writer meant about Jesus when he said: "*he spoke as one with authority, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees (the religious authorities) do*" (MATT. 7:29). Without the true authority of spiritual experience behind one's words, even the most eloquent sermon merely bangs against the listener's ears with no real effect; but listening to Gurudev was an entirely different experience from any I'd known before. It was the unforgettable turning point of my life.

### "MY LORD AND MY GOD"

A year after meeting Gurudev, I attended my first Spiritual Camp at Olivet, Michigan. My trust in him and understanding of who and what he was only slowly evolving as my Christian background made it very difficult to overcome the taboo of seeing God in any human form other than Christ's. However, the divinity that flowed through all his words and actions, and his power to effect internal change in my life was undeniable. Due to overwhelming shyness (he would have called it only "ego"!), I had been unable to approach Gurudev or to talk to him personally throughout the length of the Camp, though I longed very much to do so. However, at the completion of his final talk, when Gurudev stood up to leave the stage there was a spontaneous rush of devotees towards his feet. I too was overcome with emotion and gratitude and found myself running forward, prostrating at his feet for the first time. As I did, the words of the "doubting" disciple, Thomas, cried out in my own mind with sudden recognition and profound adoration: "*My Lord, and my God!!*"

(JOHN 20:25-28). Thomas, too, had at first doubted the reports of Jesus' Resurrection until he appeared to the disciples at Jerusalem and told Thomas to put his fingers into the very wounds on his crucified body,







saying “Be not unbelieving but believing,” As Thomas touched the wounds, the reality of Jesus’ Resurrection was revealed to him, changing his life forever.

It was a shocking revelation to me, as it must have been for Thomas and the other disciples, that God could so completely manifest through a human being as to become really inseparable. Yet Jesus had earlier told them clearly: “*Have I yet been with you so long Phillip and still you do not recognize Me? Because you have seen Me, you have seen the Father... I and my Father are one.*” (JOHN 13:7-9). So the ancient Upanishads declare: “The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman” (*Brahmavit Brahmaiva bharati*). Gurudev was the living proof of this!

### THE RISEN MASTER

The image of the risen Christ was even more vividly impressed on me at a Spiritual Camp outside of Chicago around 1980. As I came into a room where devotees had just offered *Pada-Puja* (worship of the Guru’s Feet that represent Truth) to Gurudev after his meal, my mind was stunned when I looked and saw the centre of gurudev’s hands, feet and forehead marked with the sacred red *kumkum* powder — in the exact places as Christ’s wounds of crucifixion. It was the Resurrected Christ sitting right before us!

I suddenly realized how true this was: that even though Gurudev had not died *physically* — he had *spiritually* died to the body and mind long ago, having crucified his identification with them and been resurrected into the Eternal Life of the Spirit, ascended to “the Father in Heaven”, the Pure Infinite Consciousness! And whereas the most fortunate of Jesus’ disciples were blessed to see their Risen Master only a few times at most, here was Gurudev walking, talking, living and eating with us, day in and day out! But were our spiritual eyes opened enough to recognize who and what he was? Mine certainly had not been. It would take a very long time for the meaning of all this to sink into my understanding.

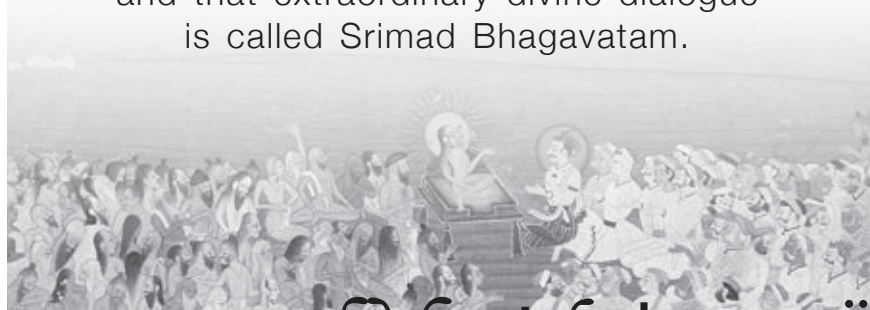
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BRNI. ARPITA CHAITANYA  
(from *Tapovan Prasad*, May 2002)

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For seven days and seven nights Suka Deva answered all the questions asked by Parikshit and that extraordinary divine dialogue is called Srimad Bhagavatam.



## essence of bhagavatam = ii

Anything to any person belonging to Bhagavan is called *bhagavata*. This book, which reveals the nature of God, is also called *Bhagavatam*. The devotee, whose heart is filled with love for God, and who realizes the nature of God, is also known as a *bhagavata*. Any spiritual means that we practise to gain this wisdom, to gain this love, is also called *bhagavata dharma*, because it leads us to that Bhagavan, who is the source of all the glories and fortunes that we can think of, in terms of knowledge, wisdom, goodness, righteousness, dispassion, lordship and so on.

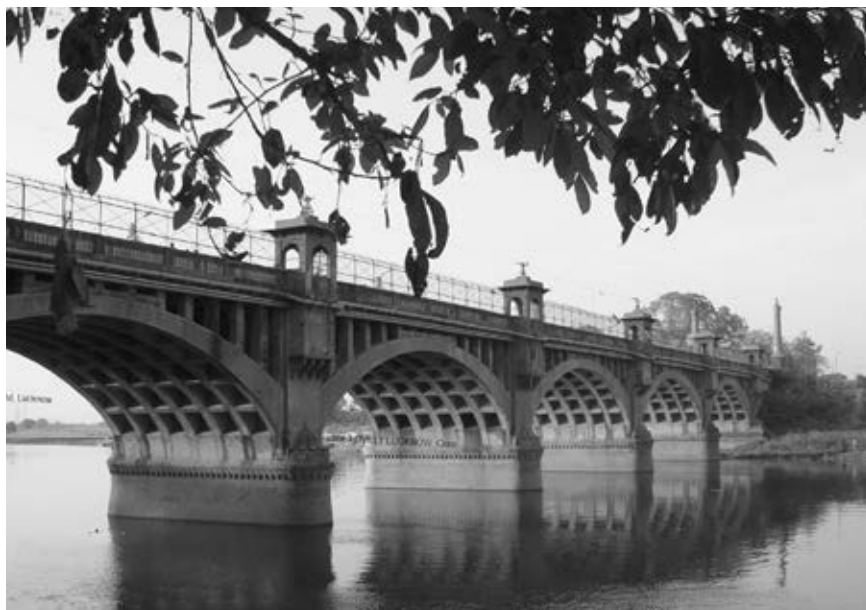
Raja Parikshit listened to the *Bhagavatam* in seven days. Like Parakshit, we must also live our lives intelligently, examining everything and learning the right lessons from our experiences. Grey hair and old age alone are not sure signs of wisdom. Wisdom depends upon what lessons we learn from life. Experiences are very strange teachers; they give us the test first and then teach the lessons. Freedom is given to us, but we must have the maturity and balance of mind to learn the right lessons, like Parikshit.

The *Bhagavatam* is a big book, but its theme is very simple and profound — the realization of Absolute Truth or, in other words, filling the heart with divine, ecstatic love for God. Raja Parikshit wanted to know that in which lies the welfare and well-being of all. The answer is the *Bhagavatam*. The puranas have their own style of dealing with this theme through stories. Stories are sometimes historical facts and sometimes symbolic. The conversational style of the teacher and disciple keeps up the interest. There is entertainment and also enlightenment.

## THE MEANING OF NAIMISHARANYA

Conducting *yajnas* was the favorite pastime of the *Rishis* in the olden days, just as attending parties is our favorite hobby today. Sometimes they used to have *yajnas* for a special purpose, like world peace and prosperity. There used to be many intervals in these *yajnas*, during which they used to invite a prominent exponent of *pauranic* literature and ask him questions, resulting in very interesting sessions. Bhagavan Vedavyasa Rishi had a disciple called Romaharshana, whose son Soota was a veritable storehouse of *pauranic* literature.

Once upon a time, many *Rishis* went to Brahmaji, the Creator, and asked him about an appropriate and effective place where they could conduct *yajna*. Brahmaji gave them a discus, a wheel, which kept spinning continuously, and said that they should take that wheel and go from place to place. Wherever the wheel stopped moving, that would be the appropriate place to conduct the *yajna*. So the *Rishis* took that wheel and chose the place where it stopped rotating the forest of Naimisha, which was near the present-day Lucknow or Kanpur. This story is very symbolic. The discus is our own mind, which is constantly in movement. Even a restless mind comes to rest in some places, in the vicinity of some people, where it becomes very calm and quiet, effortlessly. Such a place is best suited for all our spiritual practices. If your mind is very peaceful as you read this, then we are in Naimisharanya; it is not just a geographical location.



## THE QUESTIONS IN THE QUEST

In Naimisharanya, the *Rishis* posed a few questions to Soota which can be summarized into three: What is that in which lies the absolute good of all beings? What are the various incarnations of the Lord and what is their purpose, especially that of Lord Krishna? When the Lord, who takes an incarnation to establish *dharma* and righteousness here, withdraws his form, then what happens to *dharma*, where does it seek refuge? The entire *Bhagavatam* is an answer to these questions.

Soota was very pleased with the questions and explained how such a question was asked earlier by Raja Parikshit to Sukadev and how it was answered. In the *Bhagavatam*, whenever a question is asked, the guru always refers to earlier instances of such a question being asked. One of the reasons is to show that it is an eternal question, not asked for the first time. Many people have a feeling that they are the most intelligent people, original thinkers, and no one had thought of the question earlier. The guru removes any such ego and arrogance on the part of the seeker. Another reason is to set at ease people who have questions in their minds, but hesitate to ask, because they feel shy or feel that others may laugh at them. Finally, the teacher also need not feel very proud that he is the only one answering such a question, there were great teachers earlier, from where he learnt to answer in all humility. Even in the research work today, we find that people quote earlier work done in the field. In legal and constitutional matters too, precedence has to be cited.

## THE ABSOLUTE GOOD FOR ALL

Some people feel that there is no such thing as an absolute good. Everything is relative; what is good for one person may be bad for the other person, sugar which may be good for a normal person, is poison for a diabetic. Absolute good means something, which is desired by all beings without any exception, at all times, in all places and circumstances, unconditionally. That alone is called absolute good. At the physical level, good health is something desired by all. Even those who indulge in unhealthy habits like drinking or smoking, desire to have good health. At the mental level, everyone wants peace and joy. At all times and in all places we want to be healthy, peaceful, joyous. No one says that in the morning I wish to be healthy and peaceful, not so in the evening, or in India I wish it but not so in Philippines. At the intellectual level, we want clarity about everything. Spiritually, we expect only goodness, peace, love and harmony everywhere. Even though wars are being fought, there is no dearth of peace talks. Without peace, there is no prosperity or happiness. That is the absolute good, which all of us try to find.

The first question was, ‘What is that in which lies the absolute good of all beings?’ Actually, the absolute good lies in gaining Self-knowledge or Knowledge of the Truth, which releases us from all our entanglements and bondages. I have to understand who I am, the nature of my equipment and the purpose it is meant to achieve. This Knowledge alone leads to Liberation — *jnaanenaiva tu kaivalyam*. That alone is considered to be vidyaa or knowledge, which leads us to Liberation — *saa vidyaa yaa vimuktaye*. Liberation from what? When we say bondage, generally it is not understood properly; bondage is experienced by us in the form of *shoka* (grief), *moha* (delusion) and *bhaya* (fear). Each of these three refers to a specific period of time. We always grieve over the past. Fear is about the future, hence we consult astrologers, palmists, numerologists and even swamis and sanyasis! After all, only two things can happen, either what you expect or what you don’t expect! In the present point of time we are generally deluded and confused. In English grammar, all the three periods of time are indicated by the word ‘tense’ — past tense, present tense and future tense. Whether you think of the past, present or future, you are tense. Moksha means freedom from this tension, it is not just going to another world; wherever you go, you have to come back to the earth. This Liberation alone is the absolute good for all beings.

## THE STORY OF PURANJANA

The beauty of *Bhagavatam* is that everything is explained through stories. Here is a story, part of which is historical and the rest allegorical. The symbolism is explained quite clearly. We will see only the relevant portions of the story. Once upon a time there lived a king called Prachinabarhi. He was very very fond of performing rituals and *yajnas*. They were mostly *rajasic* in nature, with animal sacrifices etc. We are actually supposed to sacrifice our animalism, but it is misunderstood and animals are killed. Strangely, he had children who were very spiritual. Naradamuni gave them spiritual knowledge. They became enlightened and never came back to rule over the kingdom. However, the father continued with the rituals. Naradamuni’s heart melted in compassion and he visited Prachinabarhi. Being received with great reverence, Naradamuni said, “You have been performing so many rituals, have you ever thought about what is life? Do you know that all the animals you have sacrificed are waiting for your death, up in the sky?” With his divine powers Narada showed him all those animals waiting. The vision scared the king and he wanted to find a way out. Generally we are very smug and superior, thinking we know everything; especially when we are young, we fail to listen to anyone. But when the mind is stunned with fear, it sometimes becomes receptive. Seeing that his mind had become receptive, Narada narrated a story.

Once upon a time, there was a king called Puranjana. He had a wise friend whose name was Avijnatanama, meaning ‘unknown name’. He was always with the king, but being preoccupied with his activities the king did not pay much attention to his friend. The king was searching for a good place to establish his kingdom. He happened to find a beautiful city with nine gates. As he was admiring it, a young and beautiful woman came out, with ten friends and some assistants. A five-hooded snake protected her. The king was fascinated by this strange sight and asked, “Devi who are you, and where do you hail from?” She cut short such queries and came straight to the point. If the king liked her and wanted to marry her, she was willing. So they got married and happily established a kingdom. Enchanted by her beauty, the king’s attachment to her grew to such an extent that when she laughed, he also laughed; if she became quiet, he also became quiet; if she was unhappy, he also became unhappy; if she drank, he also drank; if she danced he also danced; if she slept, he also slept. In her presence he lost all his power and did whatever she did.

Eventually, a Gandharva Raja, with his followers and chieftains, attacked the city, destroyed it and set fire to it. Worried sick about his wife and with his last thoughts centered on her, King Puranjana perished in the fire. After some time, he was reborn as the princess of Vidarbha and was married to a king called Malayadhwaja, who was a spiritual person. When he grew old, he retired to the forest to live in austerity and meditation. She followed him as a devoted wife. When finally Malayadhwaja died, she started weeping bitterly over him. At that time a brahman came along and consoled her by reminding her of her previous birth as Puranjana and introduced himself as Ajnatanama, his friend. Though he was available always, King Puranjana ignored him and became attached to the young woman and the pleasures of life. All the time thinking of her, he had become a woman in the next life. Again, attached to the king, her husband in this life, he would be reborn in the same way — tossed from life to life. Avijnatanama exhorted her to think about who she really was. After further discussion and instructions, she became enlightened.



## THE SYMBOLISM OF THE STORY

Then Narada explained the symbolism of the story. “King Puranjana is the soul, the *Purusha*, called Atman. A *jeeva* takes on different bodies, even those of animals. The human body, the city of nine gates, is the most evolved; hence raja Puranjana chose it. Two eyes, two ears, two openings in the nostrils, one mouth, the genital organ and anus, are the nine gates of this body. The beautiful woman is *buddhi*, the intellect. It is accompanied by the five organs of action and the five organs of knowledge. The five hooded snake symbolizes the *pancha pran*as, which govern all our physiological functions and hence protect our *buddhi*. Like Puranjana, we also get identified with our *buddhi* and the thoughts which arise — with the thought of anger we become angry, when the thought is peaceful, we feel peaceful. The mind-intellect gets attached to objects and we think of them constantly. As you think, so you become. A man thinking of a woman all the time is born as woman in the next life and vice versa. These days they don't even wait for the next birth!

Initially Puranjana was alone, free, roaming about and very happy -*sacchidananda swaroopa*. Somewhere along he got attached and the problems began. Thus Narada Muni explains it all to Prachinabarhi. We are free till we choose to take up a project or a relationship etc. Even afterwards, as long as we remember our free nature, there is absolutely no problem. An actor, knowingly takes up the different roles of a gambler, a smuggler, a beggar, a thief, a policemen etc., plays the role and then drops it. Then there is no problem. But if we forget and get totally involved, thinking, ‘this is I, this is mine,’ we get completely caught up and lose our perspective on life.

This story tells us that we have been given this equipment of the body, with all the sense organs, mind and intellect. They must be utilized to reach the right destination. The vehicle must be kept in good condition. The body is a wonderful vehicle, a great asset; if it is not used properly, it becomes a liability. A motorcycle is a powerful vehicle, but if something goes wrong with it and you have to drag it along, it becomes a big liability. Further, the driver should be alert and efficient. A good vehicle in the hands of a bad driver is a catastrophe.

It is important to choose the right destination. All of us want to climb the ladder of success, but the sad part is that often we climb up the ladder to the very top and find out that our ladder was leaning against the wrong wall! So we have to think clearly first and make up our minds about what is the field in which we want success. Understanding all these points through Narada Muni Prachinabarhi became enlightened.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FINAL THOUGHT

Raja Parikshit had asked Sukadev what a dying person should do, what he should remember. The answer was that he must concentrate and absorb the mind in the Lord alone. If the mind is absorbed in Truth, Happiness, Knowledge — the nature of the Lord, at the time of death, the mind becomes one with him. Sri Krishna also says the same thing in the *Bhagavad Geeta* (Ch. 8, 5), 'He, who remembers Me alone at the time of death, becomes one with Me, he becomes liberated.' However, don't think that it is enough to remember God at the time of death alone. Any moment may be the last moment; any day can be the seventh day; any breath may be the last. So always remember the Lord. Only he who has remembered Him all through his life can remember Him on the deathbed, while departing from this world.

Sukadev told Raja Parikshit about King Khatwanga; even the gods in heaven used to seek his help. Pleased with him, once the gods offered him a boon. His only wish was to know how long he would live and being told that only two hours remained, he sat in meditation and absorbed his mind in the Lord till the last breath. How was it possible? He must have been doing it everyday, like bathing, eating or sleeping. He did not ask for an extension, did not get scared. We must also take time to think of the Lord daily — worship, meditate, study the scriptures. Just as we save money in the bank for a rainy day, we must pray and build up our account with the Lord. *Naam dhan aka khajaana badhaate chalo, Krishna Govinda Gopala gate challo*. He comes to your rescue in times of confusion and crisis. Only if you live remembering the Lord, you can remember Him at the time of death. If you have made something a 'member' of your brain, then alone can you 're-member'; only if you have 'collected' first, you can 'recollect' later. Only if you have 'cognised', you can 'recognise'. How can you recognize a person you have never met?

## IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION WITH GOD

People ask if it is necessary to sit in front of an altar to worship God, as they remember Him while doing their work. If you can remember Him while doing your daily duties, it is great, but it is no substitute for sitting down in front of an altar and praying. Suppose you visit a person and he doesn't sit down and talk to you, but continues with his work and moves around, giving you only a part of his attention, how would you feel? Won't you feel like getting up and going away? If he sat down and talked to you exclusively for even five minutes and then continued his work, you won't mind it so much.



Avijnatanama, the friend, is God Himself. He is always with us. Sometimes He appears as our conscience, but we don't listen to it. Still that Paramatma doesn't leave us. Life after life, wherever we are. He is with us as a friend, He is with us all the time. The *Geeta* says that he who knows Me to be his friend, attains peace.

The secret of changing your entire life is to change your life everyday, to divinese your activities. If you take care of this moment, this day, your whole life will be taken care of. When you think of the life you have lived so far, you will remember only the moments — moments of great sorrow or moments of joy, moments of great success or moments that turned your life in a new direction. It is the moments you will remember, not months, days and years.

That is what Narada Muni says, “Do not waste even a moment of time, every moment is precious.” Everyday, spare a few minutes to be with the Lord exclusively and thus divinese your entire life. In this lies the good of all beings.



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SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA  
(from *Tapovan Prasad*, May 2005)

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# ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

TRANSLATED BY

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA AND CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

Some say this Atman  
Is slain, and others  
Call It the slayer:  
They know nothing.  
How can it slay  
Or who shall slay it?

Know this Atman  
Unborn, undying,  
Never ceasing,  
Never beginning,  
Deathless, birthless,  
Unchanging for ever.  
How can It die  
The death of the body?

Knowing it birthless  
Knowing it deathless,  
Knowing it endless,  
For ever unchanging,  
Dream not you do  
The deed of the killer,  
Dream not the power  
Is yours to command it.

Worn-out garments  
Are shed by the body:  
Worn-out bodies  
Are shed by the dweller  
Within the body.  
New bodies are donned  
By the dweller, like garments.

Not wounded by weapons,  
Not burned by fire,  
Not dried by the wind,  
Not wetted by water:  
Such is the Atman.

Not dried, not wetted,  
Not burned, not wounded,  
Innermost element,  
Everywhere, always,  
Being of beings,  
Changeless, eternal  
For ever and ever.



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FROM BOOK 2, THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

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*Jnanesvar, a great  
13th century saint of  
Maharashtra, laid the  
foundation of the Bhagavad  
Dharma in this land.*

*A galaxy of saints appeared  
in the centuries that followed  
and Saint Tukaram contributed  
the kalasa (the ornamental  
metallic top) of the edifice  
of Bhagavad Dharma.*



ART BY CHANDRA SEKHAR

# Sant Jnaneshwar

It is said, Jnaneswar rachila para; *tuka jhalase kalasa*. Jnanadev constructed the plinth and Tukaram fixed the *kalasa*. The teachings of these saints shaped the religious life in Maharashtra and brought it to the people.

Jnanadev, as Jnanesvar was popularly called, was born in Alandi, a small town near Pune, in 1275 (Shrawan Vadya 8, Shake 1197). His parents were Vittalpant and Rukmini. Vittalpant belonged to the family of Kulkarnis of Apegaon. During a pilgrimage to Alandi, Vittalpant lived in the Siddavana in seclusion.

## DIVINE ORDERS

Siddhopant of Alandi was drawn towards this young man due to his saintly and meditative temperament. He offered his daughter in marriage to him. Vittalpant had not thought of marriage till then and declined the offer.

That night Panduranga, the supreme deity of Pandarpur, appeared in Vittalpant's dream and advised him to marry Rukmini. Vittalpant then accepted the proposal.

After the marriage, the couple went to Apegaon. Vittalpant's aged parents were very happy to have their son return home after a long time, bringing a daughter-in-law. Vittalpant, however, became more and more contemplative and averse to family life.

## INITIATION INTO SANNYAS

One day he told Rukmini that he was going for a dip in the Ganges and left for Kasi. Rukmini thought that he had gone to bathe in the Godavari which ran past Apegaon. When he did not return Rukmini became anxious.

In Kasi, Vittalpant came to Swami Ramanand and prayed for initiation into *sannyas*. He told Swami Ramanand that he had no relatives and had a strong desire to become a *sannyasin*. Seeing his fervor, Swami Ramanand initiated him and accepted him as his disciple.

Rumours reached Apegaon and Alandi that Vittalpant had become a *sannyasin*. This was a bolt from the blue for Rukmini. It took some time for her to adjust to the situation. She decided to spend all her time in worship and reading of the scriptures. After some days Siddhopant came to Apegaon and took her to Alandi.

## TRUTH REVEALED

Swami Ramanand was on pilgrimage and came to Alandi. He stayed in a temple on the bank of the Indrayani. Rukmini after a dip in the river went to the temple, and seeing the sage, bowed down before him.

Seeing the *saubhgya tilak* on her forehead, the sage blessed her, saying putravati bhava (may you have offspring)! There was a sad smile on Rukmini's face. The sage asked her about her sad smile. She narrated her story of abandonment.

The sage, on hearing the description of her husband, remembered Vittalpant. The sage terminated his pilgrimage and returned to Kasi and interrogated Vittalpant and was convinced that he was Rukmini's husband. He rebuked him for telling a lie and ordered him home to lead a householder's life. Vittalpant had to obey.

## FAMILY OSTRACISED

To return to a householder's life after undergoing the ritual of *sannyas* is regarded a great sin. Such a person is called *arudhapatita*. The community ostracized the couple and they had to lead a totally secluded life on the outskirts of the township.

The reunion of the husband and wife was fruitful and three sons and a daughter came into the family, over a period of ten years. The eldest son was Nivrutti. *Jnanesvar* was two years younger and Sopan two years younger than *Jnanesvar*. Muktai was the youngest. The children were very intelligent and of divine temperament.



In order to expiate the sin of *arudhapatitva*, Vittalpant proceeded on a parikrama of Brahmagiri, near Tryanmakesvar. This was a hard thing to do. The mountain was surrounded by dense forests.

### ENLIGHTENED IN SEVEN DAYS

Once the children had to run for their life when a tiger appeared before them. Nivritti lost the way and entered a cave where he found Gahaninath in deep meditation. When Gahaninath opened his eyes, he found Nivrittinath before him.

The sage was pleased to see all the signs of a spiritual aspirant in him and initiated him as his disciple. In seven days Nivrittinath reached the acme of spiritual experience and returned to the family. The parents were glad to have their son back.

Now Vittalpant wanted his sons invested with the sacred thread so that they may study the *Vedas*. He had already taught them lore, other than the *Vedas*. As the family was ostracised, no brahmin was prepared to officiate as a priest for the thread ceremony.

### DEATH OF PARENTS

Vittalpant entreated all the elderly brahmins in the community, but to no avail. They said death was the only punishment for the sin of *arudhapatitva*. He decided to end his life so that the children should not suffer on his account. One night the couple left their hut for Prayag, where they threw themselves into the confluence.

### HELPLESS PANDITS

*Jñanesvar* suggested to his elder brother that they go to Paithan. The great pundits at Paithan would surely find an authority for their admission to brahminhood. They undertook the long journey and came to Paithan.

Some pundits in Paithan wanted to help these bright children but were at their wits' end to find the scriptural authority for investiture with the sacred thread of children of a father who accepted the life of a householder after *sannyas*.

## THE POWER OF FAITH

Some lesser *pundits* derided these children for their faith in the divinity of every living creature. One such *pundit* said to *Jnanesvar*, “You say God resides in every being. Here is a buffalo. Can it show the signs of a brahmin?” *Jnanesvar*, it is said, calmly went to the buffalo and patted its head. The buffalo began to recite the first hymn of the *Rig Veda*.

Amazed at the power of *Jnanesvar*, the people prostrated before the children. It was pointless to invest these children with the sacred thread. They were great indeed.

## COMMENTARY ON GEETA

On their return journey they decided to stay at Nevase, a small town near Ahmednagar. Nivritti asked *Jnanesvar* to comment on the Geeta in Marathi, so as to enable the common man to understand it. *Jnanesvar* agreed, and there, in a Siva temple, reclining against a granite pillar, narrated the Geeta to the listeners who assembled there in the evening.

One Sacchidananda, a dead son of a mother, who was revived by the grace of *Jnanesvar*, wrote down the narration by *Jnanesvar*. This is a beautiful composition in chaste Marathi of the 13th century, full of similes, metaphors and illustrations.

Throughout the centuries no poet in Marathi could excel *Jnanesvar* in language, philosophy and wisdom. *Jnanesvar* has acknowledged that he interpreted the Geeta as per the commentaries of earlier acharyas, meaning thereby Acharya Sankara and Ramanuja. The 700 stanzas of the Geeta have been commented upon in about 9000 verses.

## AMRITA ANUBHAVA

Later, *Jnanesvar* compiled another monograph, titled *Amrita Anubhava* — the experience of immortality. He also composed 65 stanzas in answer to a letter from Changdev, the well-known Hatha yogi of his day. All these were produced by *Jnanesvar* in a short life span of 21 years.

## SANJIVAN SAMADHI

Now a sense of fulfillment overcame him and he decided to take leave of this mortal world. He decided to enter into a living *samadhi* — *sanjivan samadhi*. He apprised his elder brother of his intention. All the brothers and their sister were overcome with emotion.

However, none could prevail upon *Jnanesvar*, who selected the day and time to enter *samadhi*. The news went round and devotees and saints gathered at Alandi.

### SAMADHI OF JNANESVAR

Namadev who was present on the occasion has beautifully described this event in his *abhangas*. A cavern was swept clean and decorated with leaves and flowers. At the appointed time, Nivrutti ushered his brother to the pedestal in the cavern.

*Jnanesvar* sat on it in peace. Nivruttinath slowly retreated from the cavern. A stone slab was placed at the opening. (This pillar is seen today and is known as *Paisacha Khamb*).

All the assembled saints broke down. But this was a joyous occasion. So they soon joined in the sankirtans. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with ecstasy.

The *samadhi* is near the Siddhesvar temple at Alandi. All the *warkaris* believe in the living presence of *Jnanesvar* at the *samadhi*. To them, *Jnanesvar* is verily *Mauli*, the mother. A visit to the *samadhi* clears all obstacles in the path of spiritual upliftment.

*Jnanadev Tukaram, Jnanadev Tukaram* — this tune is often sung by *warkaris* when they are on a move. The rhythm of life goes on forever.



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DR. N.B. PATIL  
(from *Tapovan Prasad*, May 2002)

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# Bhakti Rasamrutam

(The sweet essence of Devotion)



Swaranjali, Chinmaya Youth Choir, has produced 10 CDs containing 100 Bhajans, glorifying the Lord in many Indian Languages. The Bhajans are rendered by 15 students of Swaranjali, with devotion, an offering to the Lord as their contribution to the New Building Project.

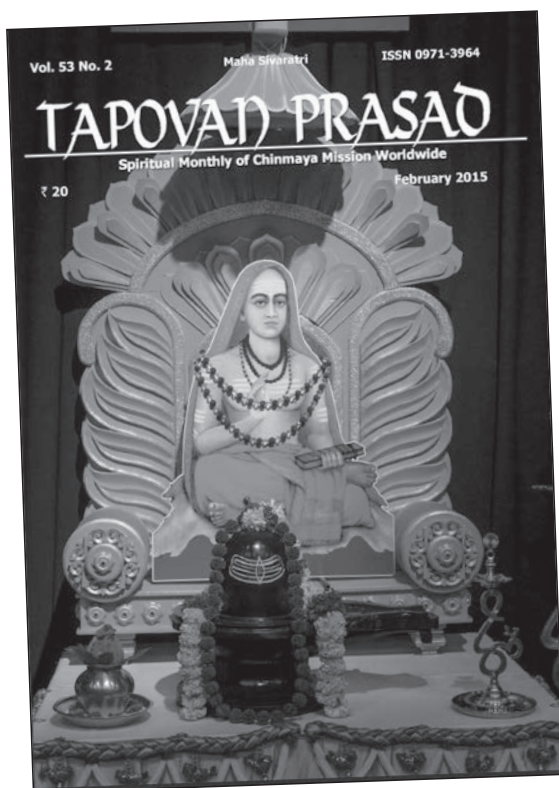
Choir participants who sang on the Bhaktirasamrutam album were trained by Prema Sriram, Jaya Krishnan and Jayshree Ramkumar. The CD is entitled, Bhakti Rasamrutam, the sweet essence of Devotion.

All details on this CD are posted on our web-site, [cmsj.org](http://cmsj.org).

This is a rare gift which is very inspirational and uplifting.

The proceeds from the CDs will add to our Fund-raising efforts. Thanks to all who contributed their time and talents to the production of the CD.

# TAPOVAN PRASAD



## A MONTHLY SPIRITUAL OF CHINMAYA MISSION WORLDWIDE

Published by Chinmaya Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

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# Community Outreach Program

## SEVA OPPORTUNITIES

### CHINMAYA MISSION SAN JOSE

#### SAN JOSE

Are You Willing to Volunteer or Just Sponsor the Program?

If yes, please call Krishna Bhamre: (408) 733-4612

or e-mail [sbhamre@yahoo.com](mailto:sbhamre@yahoo.com)

We need VOLUNTEERS for preparing and serving Hot Meals for the Homeless. Lunch bags are prepared by Yuva Kendra volunteers on the last Sunday of the month at Bala Vihar locations for approximately 150 homeless people.

All Youth volunteers should contact:

Jayaram Reddy([jreddy80@gmail.com](mailto:jreddy80@gmail.com)) for more details.

Meals For The Homeless Program: Served at San Jose's Emergency Housing Consortium at Orchard Drive off Curtner Avenue (Adult & Youth Volunteers & Sponsors).

#### FREMONT

Fremont BV sponsors Sandwiches For The Needy. On the 2nd Saturday/Washington High School in Fremont. Parents of Bala Vihar and the kids prepare 70 Sandwiches, bag them and provide chips, fruit and juice.

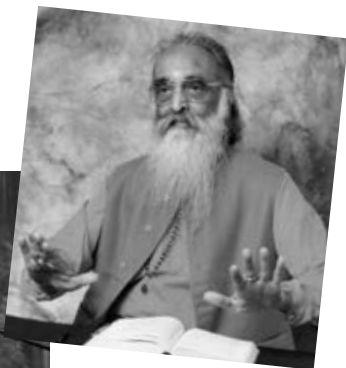
The Sandwiches are delivered to the Tricity Homeless Coalition, where they are served to adults and children. The Shelter is located on 588 Brown Road, Fremont, CA. In addition, last Christmas, Fremont Bala Vihar donated new blankets, sweaters, sweat shirts, and infant warm clothes etc. to the homeless at the shelter.

# CHINMAYA STUDY GROUPS

1. Self Unfoldment
2. Tattva bodh
3. Bhaja Govindam
4. Atma bodh
5. Manah Shodhanam
6. Upadesa Saram
7. Narada Bhakti Sutra
8. Meditation and Life
9. Bhagavad Gita Introduction – Ch.1 & 2
10. Jnanasarah
11. Kenopanishad
12. Gita, Ch. 3 – 6
13. Dyanaswaroopam
14. Kaivalya Upanishad
15. Gita, Ch. 7 – 9
16. Isavasya Upanishad
17. Gita, Ch. 10 – 12
18. Bhakti Sudha
19. Gita, Ch. 13 – 15
20. Mundaka Upanishad
21. Gita, Ch. 16 – 18
22. Sat Darshan
23. Vivekachoodamani

*Vedanta Study Groups held in the Bay Area are listed in this issue of Chinmaya Tej  
and you may contact them if you wish to join a Study Group.*

# A D U L T CLASSES



## FREMONT

### **SATURDAYS**

2pm-3pm: Video discourses on Bhagavad Gita, Ch 10  
by Swami Chinmayananda

## SAN RAMON

### **SATURDAYS**

4:30-6:00pm: Video discourses on Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 3 & 4

## SAN JOSE

### **SATURDAYS**

1:50pm – 2:50pm: Video discourses Bhagavad Geeta, Ch. 2  
By Swami Chinmayananda

### **SUNDAYS**

9:05am – 10:15am: Video discourses on Bhagavad Geeta, Ch. 2  
By Swami Chinmayananda

10:30am – 11:30am: Video discourses on Rama Charita Manas  
By Swami Tejomayananda

1:50pm – 2:50pm: Video discourses on Rama Charita Manas  
By Swami Tejomayananda

## Shiva Abhisheka & Puja

at Chinmaya Sandeepany / San Jose

Conducted By Mission Members

Every 2nd Monday of the month - 7:30-8:30 pm

# LANGUAGE & BALA VIHAR/YUVA KENDRA CLASSES



We have over 2100 children enrolled in our program, from our three centers, since enrollment started 1980 school year. I wish to thank all the volunteer Teachers, Co-Teachers and Youth Helpers teaching and assisting in the different classes. It takes more than teachers to organize these programs at Chinmaya/Sandeepany, Fremont Washington High, and California High School. Parent Volunteers and CMSJ Volunteers organize setting up, Book-Store, Snacks, Lecture Halls etc.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS TO EVERY ONE  
OF THE MANY DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS.**

Adult video courses are also offered during Bala Vihar sessions.

The Parking Lot is on Hickerson Drive, and you can walk from the parking lot to the class-rooms.

We are currently using 25 classrooms in several sessions.

I appreciate all the efforts of the parents, some of you are driving your children from as far North as Redwood City to San Jose. You will find it very rewarding as you see your children grow up with Hindu Heritage, moulding them into young adults.

We want the best for our children. All parents will receive email announcements with regard to changes.

For each location, an in-depth schedule is posted on [www.cmsj.org](http://www.cmsj.org), or call the contact listed.

## FREMONT

Contact: Lakshmi Prakash / (510) 490-1266  
Washington High School  
38442, Fremont Blvd., Fremont, CA 94536  
12:30pm -4:00pm — *Bala Vihar* classes

## SAN JOSE

Contact: Uma / (650) 969-4389  
Chinmaya Sandeepany  
10160 Clayton Road, San Jose

### **SATURDAYS**

12:30pm -1:30pm — *Gita Chanting*, language classes  
1:45pm - 2:55pm — *Bala Vihar*, KG - 8th Grade  
3:00pm - 4:00pm — *Vedic Math*, *Hindi* classes (Intermediate & Advanced)

### **SUNDAYS**

8:00am - 9:00am — *Gita Chanting*, *Hindi* classes, *Yoga*  
9:15am - 10:15am — *Bala Vihar*/Yuva Kendra 6th - 12th Grade  
10:45am - 11:55am — *Bala Vihar*, Grade KG - 5th Grade,  
language classes, *Gita/Vedic Chanting*  
12:30pm - 1:30pm — *Gita Chanting*, language classes  
1:45pm - 2:55pm — *Bala Vihar*, Grade KG - 8th Grade  
3:00pm - 4:00pm — *Hindi* classes  
2:00pm - 4:00pm — *Swaranjali* (EVERY WEEK)

## SAN RAMON

Contact: Meena Kapadia / (925) 680-7037  
California High School  
9870 Broadmoor Drive, San Ramon, CA 94583  
2:00pm -6:00pm — *Bala Vihar* classes

## GITA CHANTING CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

**SAN JOSE** Chinmaya Sandeepany

Every Saturday & Sunday / Contact: (650) 949-4389

**FREMONT** Washington High School

Every Saturday / Contact: (510) 490-1266

**SAN RAMON** California High School

Every Saturday 3:15pm - 4:15pm / Contact: (510) 490-1266



# VEDANTA STUDY GROUPS

Adult Sessions

## CONCORD

**BHAGAVAD GITA CH. 18**, Sevak: Vipin Kapadia

Time: 7:30 pm (Wed.)    Contact: Meena Kapadia (925) 680-7037

## CUPERTINO

**Atma Bodh**, Sevak: Ram Mohan

Time: 7:30pm (Thurs)    Contact Ram Mohan (408-255-4431)

## EVERGREEN

**Tattvabodha**, Sevika: Venkatesh Srinivasan

Time: 8:00 pm (Fri.)    Contact: Bipin Thakkar, (408) 274-7575

## FREMONT

**Atma Bodha**, Sevika: Lakshmi Prakash

Time: 6:30 am (Sun.)    Contact: Hetal Hansoty (510) 707-1788

## FREMONT (WHS)

**Vedanta Sara**, Sevak: Lakshmi Prakash

Time: 3:15 - 4:15 pm (Bala Vihar Time)

## FREMONT

**Jnana Sarah**, Sevika: Priya Batheja

Time: 6:30 am (Sun.)    Contact: Priya Batheja (510) 490-1926

## FOSTER CITY

**Bhagavad Gita**, Ch. 8, Sevak: Jayarami Reddy

Time: 7:30 pm (Fri.)    Contact: Jyoti Asundi (650) 358-4010

## LOS ALTOS

**Bhagavad Gita Ch. 4**, Sevika: Uma Jeyarasasingam

Time: 7:30 pm (Thurs.)    Contact: Ruchita Parat (650) 858-1209

## LOS GATOS

**Drg Drshya Viveka**, Sevak: Sandeep Tiwari

Time: 8:00 pm (Fri.)    Contact: Sandeep Tiwari (408) 234-7815

## MILPITAS

**Vivekachudamani**, Sevak: Uma Jeyarasasingam

Time: 7:30 pm (Tues)    Contact: Suma Venkatesh (408) 263-2961

## MOUNTAIN HOUSE

**Tattva Bodha**, Sevika: Padmaja Joshi

Time: 9:00 a.m. (Sun)    Contact: Padmaja Joshi (209) 830-1295

## SAN RAMON

**Bhagavad Gita Ch 9**, Sevika: Bela Pandya

Time: 7:00 pm (Wed.)    Contact: Sireesha Balabadra (925) 804-6102

## SAN RAMON CAL HI

**Bhagavad Gita Ch 15**, Sevak: Meena Kapadia

Time: 3:15 pm (Sat)    Contact: Meena Kapadia (925) 680-7037

## SARATOGA

**Bhagavad Gita Ch. 2**, Sevika: Kalpana Jaswa

Time: 7:30 pm (Thurs.)    Contact: Kalpana Jaswa (408) 741-4920

## WEST SAN JOSE

**Bhagavad Gita Ch. 7**, Sevak: Krishna Kumari Reddy

Time: 8:00 pm (Wed.)    Contact: Krishna Kumari Reddy (408) 806-2876

## WALNUT CREEK

**Bhagavad Gita Ch. 14**, Sevak: Vipin Kapadia

Time: 9:30 am (Sun.)    Contact: Rakesh Bhutani (925) 933-2650

## SKYPE (ID:PADMAPATRA):

**Kathopanishad**, Sevak: Padmaja Joshi

Time: 5 pm (Sun.)    Contact: Lakshmy Prakash (510) 797-1788

Classes held weekly unless otherwise stated.



# SWARANJALI YOUTH CHOIR

*Those who are interested in joining the choir as a vocalist or musicians  
please be in touch with the contact for each event.*

## SAN JOSE

*Choir sessions are held every Sunday between 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.*

VENUE: Chinmaya Sandeepany / San Jose

TEACHERS: Prema Sriram, Jaya Krishnan

CONTACT: Prema Sriram: NANSUK@aol.com

## SAN RAMON

*Choir sessions are held once every two weeks, Saturdays at 2:00pm - 3:00pm*

VENUE: California High School  
9870 Broadmoor Drive, San Ramon, CA 94583

TEACHER: Shrividhya

CONTACT: Shrividhya: 925-236-2653 / gurucharan11@hotmail.com

## FREMONT

*Choir sessions are held weekly on Saturdays, 12 noon - 1:00 pm*

VENUE: Washington High School / Fremont

TEACHERS: Natana Valiveti and Rajashri Iyengar

CONTACT: Natana: natana@yahoo.com

# Just for Kids!

## Parents...

This is a monthly magazine published by Central Chinmaya Mission, Mumbai for Children. It is packed with stories, puzzles, arts and craft ideas, children's contributions of essays, riddles, games, and much more. You can subscribe to it directly. The annual subscription is \$30 and you will receive it monthly by air. We suggest that you subscribe in your child's name so your child will have the pleasure of receiving his or her own magazine from India.

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Mumbai 400 072, India



# Swami Tejomayananda

## ITINERARY LATE SUMMER 2014

DATE	LOCATION / EVENT	PHONE
29 Jul - 03 Aug	Trinidad Chinmaya Mission 1 Swami Chinmayananda Dr. Calcutta # 1 Mc Bean, Couva Trinidad, West Indies	(1-868) 636-1067 (1-868) 709-5006
5 Aug - 19 Aug	London Chinmaya Mission Egerton Gardens Hendon, London NW4 4BA UK	(44-208) 203-6288
11 Aug - 18 Aug	Reserved	
19 Aug - 27 Aug	Coimbatore Chinmaya Gardens Coimbatore 641 114 Tamil Nadu, India Dharma Sevak Course	(91-422) 261-5446
Aug 27	Conclusion of Vedanta Course in Tamil	
28 Aug - 6 Sept	Central Chinmaya Mission Trust Saki Vihar Rd. Powai, Mumbai 400 072 16th Vedanta Course Inauguration	(91-22) 2857-8647
Aug. 29	Ganesha Chaturthi	

“Can you pluck a jasmine flower from  
J.A.S.M.I.N.E?

Words can never reach reality.

You repeat the names  
Om or Krishna or Shiva.

Now, go to seek and  
discover the ‘thing’ so named.”

SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

## JOIN THE CHINMAYA FAMILY AS A SPONSOR:

We invite you to join our Sponsorship program so that you can help us to promote, sustain and continue to teach adults and children, alike, the Hindu Dharma which is our Heritage. Chinmaya Mission began its service to the Hindu Community some 20 years ago in the Bay Area. We are funded by public contributions. Your contribution, as a Sponsor, goes towards the operation of Sandeepany. Many families who are taking part in the various classes that we offer to adults and children, have enrolled themselves as Sponsors. They enjoy many benefits and become an integral part of the spiritual family at Sandeepany. Sponsorship is an annual contribution of \$500 per family. The donation is tax deductible and can also be paid bi-annually, quarterly or monthly.

### OUR SPONSORS RECEIVE

- All classes offered at Sandeepany Schools for adults and children.
- The journal, *MANANAM* and the bi-monthly newsletters, *Chinmaya Tej* and the *CMW Newsletter*.
- Invitations to attend Weekend Retreats held periodically at Sandeepany.

### UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTIONS

Your contributions to United Way can now be designated to  
Chinmaya Mission San Jose (United Way I.D. No 212100).

The Mission is enrolled to receive such contributions  
with the United Way Agency in Santa Clara.

CHINMAYA FAMILY WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



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### DIRECTIONS TO SANDEEPANY SAN JOSE

#### IF TRAVELLING SOUTH ON 101

Follow US-101 S to E Capitol Expy in San Jose.  
Take the Capitol Expressway exit from I-680 N.  
Follow E Capitol Expy and Story Rd to 10160 Clayton Rd

#### IF TRAVELLING SOUTH ON 280

Follow South 280 to E Capitol Expressway in San Jose.  
Take the exit for Capitol Expressway from I-680 N.  
Follow E Capitol Expy and Story Rd to 10160 Clayton Rd

#### IF TRAVELLING SOUTH ON 880

Take US-101 S to E Capitol Expy in San Jose.  
Take exit for Capitol Expressway from I-680 N.  
Follow E Capitol Expy and Story Rd to 10160 Clayton Rd.

#### IF TRAVELLING SOUTH ON 280

Take the 280 exit to San Jose. Get off at the Meridian North Exit.  
Go to Park Ave. and make a right turn to 10160 Clayton Rd.

#### IF TRAVELLING SOUTH ON 680

Take the exit for Capitol Expressway from I-680 N.  
Follow E Capitol Expy and Story Rd to 10160 Clayton Rd