

Chinmaya Mission Templestowe Sunday Program Newsletter



Term 3, 2022 - Issue 7

What's in this issue?

- ◆ Tribute to Swamini Vinayanandaji: passed on from the body on 5 Sept '22
- ◆ Main events covered in Term 3
- ◆ Shishuvihar's: focus for the term was Lord Ram & Lord Krishna.
- ◆ Balvihar 1 (prep-year 2): continuation of the Ramayana with the focus being the ability to identify the difference between good values and bad values in each character within the story.
- ◆ Balvihar 2 (year 3 & 4): continued on the journey of Bala Bhagavatam & learning about the cycle of 'giving and getting'.
- ◆ Balvihar 3 (year 5 & 6): commenced a new text, "Symbolism in Hinduism."
- ◆ JC 1 (year 7-9): focus for this term was the invocation prayer "Om Sahanavavatu...." & the meaning.
- ◆ JC 2 (year 10-12): NEW class (JC class has been split into 2 classes), focusing the text "Storm to Perform" by Swami Swaroopananda
- ◆ Adult classes: completed chapter 16 of Bhagavad Geeta (Daivasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga).
- ◆ Some key dates & contact persons: see last page
- ◆ Some great links from the Chinmaya Missions YouTube Channel (see last page)

Tribute to Swamini Vinayanandaji



Swamini Vinayanandaji touched the hearts of many of us in many facets of our lives. She dedicated many years of her mortal life to the Chinmaya Mission, for which we are eternally grateful for.

Below are some beautiful tributes from some devotees who had the opportunity to meet Swaminiji.

"Swamini Vinayananda affectionately known as "Maa" was the embodiment of love and grace. Maa embraced a new culture, learned Vedanta and Sanskrit with the dedication which exemplifies the qualities we need to inculcate as true seekers of truth.

Satsang with Maa was a truly uplifting and enriching experience. Maa would drive up to country Victoria with boxes and boxes of teaching material and her Veena so that she could reach out to people in the most impactful way. Maa touched the hearts of many with her love and compassion. She gave her all in serving others. She would always inquire about everyone's wellbeing by saying "How are you dear heart?" or "How are you beautiful" – reminding us of our inner beauty.

They say "Love conquers all" and I saw that statement come alive in Maa's life. She lived and taught the knowledge of Advaita while emphasising on the importance of following ones duties. Maa always taught us to be grateful for the abundance in our lives. Maa lived by her teachings and even during her illness she was in total acceptance of her condition and expressed gratitude for God's grace and His healing power.

The legacy of her teachings and her love will live forever in our hearts.”

-From Ruchika-

Darling heart

“Darling heart, how are you beautiful?” These are the words that will always echo in my mind when I think of our dear Ma. These words and those big warm hugs, transport me to a place of acceptance and love, which was what Ma was all about. In the past few weeks I have been re-reading my journal that I started when I was a CHYK, under Ma’s encouragement, full of parables, poems, and prose that Ma lovingly photocopied for us. Ma opened my eyes to see divinity everywhere, and these writings, penned by great saints from all religions and walks of life, captured the essence of divinity. Ma guided me to see the divine, especially in nature. Whether it was a walk along the Yarra in Warrandyte or a trek around Uluru, Ma brought my attention to the oneness in everything around us. The love that flowed out from her towards all, was testament to her wisdom of seeing the one in everything. I will always be grateful to Ma for guiding, encouraging, correcting and loving me.”

-From Serina -

Swamini Ma, known for her welcoming smiles, warm hugs and blessings has been one of the most beautiful souls I’ve met. Between 2013 and 2021, I’ve only had limited opportunities to see Ma but her love was always felt. It was in 2021, that my heart was longing to meet her given the long no see during the pandemic. Few days later, I heard about Swaminiji’s illness and had frequent thoughts of her while prayers continued.

Thanks to Pujya Swamiji’s visit in Jan22, got to see Ma and had the opportunity to spend a bit more time. Ma being Ma, always never expected anything from anyone. One of the instances, we were having a chat with Ma at the Dham backyard and out of respect and love, some of us preferred to stand, some asked her where she would like to be seated for lunch etc etc. Ma waited patiently and found an opportunity to tell us, “dear sweethearts, Im not used to any special treatments. I’d just like to spend time with all of you.” Ma in all humility always said “I’m no realised being, I’m too on this journey like you are”.

In April, we wanted to have Ma be with us for Gurudev Jayanthi at the Dham. Ma kindly wanted us to wait until she had her appointment with the oncologist. Post the visit, I called Ma and she sounded so cheerful as always. I asked Ma if everything was ok with the doc visit and she said to me that it was no good news but readily said she will be there for Gurudev Jayanthi. Ma drove all the way from Castlemaine despite keeping not so well and covid once again getting to its peak. In Ma’s own sweet way, she gave her all to each one who sought her blessings on the day. Ma’s satsang and the words “Be a hose pipe of love in every situation” was stuck in my head.

Post this, I looked forward to going and meeting Ma in Castlemaine. A few of us made it and had the most wonderful time being with Ma. Ma as always greeted each one of us with bear hugs, biggest loving smiles and called out each of us with our names, including the children. We had fun and were inspired to listen to her stories of how she was inspired to join Chinmaya Mission, her love for Gurudev and her very special car Shakthi. Ma inspires! She drove Shakthi, despite the car wanting to give up each time just to start more classes in Melbourne. We lunched together, watched a couple of comedy videos she

wanted to show us, clicked some memorable pictures, walked us through her beautiful Garden and blessed the children with some goodies that she had bought knowing they were coming. What a beautiful soul, not an iota of her being sick was made felt this whole time. Just as cheerful as ever until we realised she needed to rest.

As we returned, Ma wrote a beautiful note to each of us thanking us for visiting her and hoping we are all fine given she contracted covid. As I mentioned to Ma that we were all more worried for her, Ma replied "Going well so far! All care in place dear heart! We are all precious and equal in His sight. The rain and sun fall on all beings equally. You are all equally dear to me. Take care!! Love Swamini xxxxx".

As things got worse for her, she only inspired us even more. It was heart warming to see Ma plan her funeral and be ready to leave. She made every little arrangement herself, be it the selection of verses to be read, songs to be played, pictures to be screened, people to be contacted etc. She is living Vedanta to me. She is that Brahman who had come to show me how to be in difficult times. As i pray and wish everything best for Ma, my heart knows she is one with Gurudev and the purpose for which she came has been fulfilled ! May Gurudev and Ma, guide and bless us all towards our journey to ourselves. Jai Ma!

-From Shireesha -

Events covered this term

- ◆ Gurudev Mahasamadhi (3 Aug)
- ◆ Krishna Janmasthanmi (20 Aug)
- ◆ Paduka Pooja (27 Aug)
- ◆ Sunday family Ganesh clay making activity & lunch (28 Aug)
- ◆ Ganesh Chaturthi/Visarjan - "Ganpati Bappa Moriya!" (4 Sept)



Shishuvihar class

Another magnificent term filled with excitement. This term our lesson plan was focused on Lord Ram and Lord Krishna.

We sang bhajans, enjoyed our activities and shared many stories of why Lord Ram was sent to the forest for 14 years. Who took mata Sita and mostly how the monkeys helped Lord Ram get Sita mata back. Children enacted role of monkey's and build the bridge, they learnt the magic of why the rocks did not sink and while our little shishu's were building their own little bridge they traced Lord Ram's name too, just like the monkeys did. They also enjoyed the archery activity in class and while chanting "Jai shree Ram", they kept asking for turns.

We also introduced Lord Krishna this term, we chanted the mantra "Vasude Vashutham" and to our surprise many shishu's memorised it. Parents were also amazed to see how fast the kids had memorised the mantra and the Sanskrit alphabets.

We shared many Krishna stories like how magical is Krishna's flute, Krishna came for us and how Krishna was born in the jail. Children knew Krishna's mother is Yashoda maa, but now they also know Krishna's mother is Devki maa and that she gave birth to him.

The role of Vasudev carrying baby Krishna across to Nand baba's house, crossing the high tide river was enacted by the teacher while all children chanted "Jai shree Krishna".



The learning was conducted by visual learning, games, activities and role playing which was enjoyed by the shishu's. Our classes are always filled with utmost energy as children and parents participated in all activities, games, chanting mantra and singing bhajans. Parents have shared how shishu's look forward to coming to class every week and during the week ask if they can go to Shishu class.



In the last class we ended with Krishna dancing on Kalia snake, in the pictures the shishu's are dancing on pretend kalia (five diff scarves) with parents too.

Balvihar class 1 (Prep to Year 2)

This term our youngest Balavihars continued their exploration of the Ramayana. Our focus for this term was to identify and see the difference between good values and bad values in each character we met in our stories and to learn how to implement good thinking and actions in all aspects of our life.

We met evil king Ravana for the first time when he forcefully took Sita away on his chariot. We explored the traits he showed of greed and anger and (metaphorically and literally) destroyed these traits with all our might. We compared these traits with Rama's love, courage and compassion in the search for Sita. We too join Rama and Lakshmana on their search for Sita and meet one of our most beloved people! Shri Hanuman introduces himself as son of Vayu, minister for Sugriva and devoted messenger of Shri Ram! We leap with joy, with big smiles across our face knowing that Hanuman is on our side in this search for Sita! We explored the meaning and importance of his qualities including intelligence (*buddhi*) and strength (*balam*) in the hope that we too, will remain as devoted, courageous, and joyous as he is.
Om Shri Hanumate, Shri Rama Dutaye Namaha!



Learn to bring your mind where your hands are working - Swami Chinmayananda

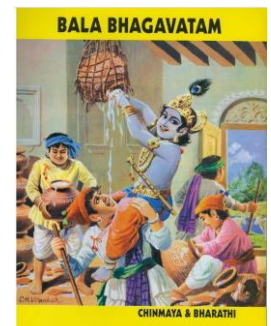
Balvihar class 2 (Year 3 & 4)

We continued to enjoy and learn from Bala Bhagvatam. The children were fascinated to hear the stories about Sati, Dhruva, King Prithu and many more. They learnt how having a firm resolve can help to accomplish anything in life (like Dhruva).

While hearing the stories about King Prithu, children enjoyed making their own crown with their own pattern and acted out like a responsible King. Through King Prithu's story we learned about a cycle of '**giving and getting**'. He taught the people in his kingdom to work hard together after mother Earth had stopped producing/giving as people had become lazy and stopped working. King Prithu was so pleased with mother earth that he embraced her and adopted her as his daughter and hence she is also known as "Prithvi" (Daughter of Prithu). Also, by accepting Lord as our ferryman and seeing unity in diversity (the One in all), we can escape from the six ferocious sharks of lust, anger, greed, pride, delusion, and jealousy.

It was wonderful to get some time outside under the umbrella of open sky to play some games and activities.

We sang devotional bhajans for our dear Lord Ganesha and cute little Krishna and continued to enjoy learning and chanting beautiful Guru Stotram.



Wisdom is the antidote for all confusions, solace for all fears - Swami Chinmayananda

Balvihar class 3 (Year 5 & 6)

This term we started a new text "Symbolism in Hinduism." Through this text our goal was to point out to the children, the ideal that idols represent, explain symbolism of the Hindu deities: Ganesha, Lord Shiva,

Lord Vishnu, Goddesses, Shri Krishna, and Shri Rama & also explain the significance of traditional religious festivals attributed to the above deities and celebrate them.

At the start we tried to understand the need for symbols – to make communication easy and effective; hence symbols are also used in religion. Children put together their ideas on paper to create their own license plates (a symbol) representing something that is significant to them. They appreciated that symbols in religion help us practice seeing the Lord in at least one image (a symbol, a deity) and then how to slowly expand our vision to understand that God is all-pervading. How the use of symbols for worship, Upasana is meant to making our minds single-pointed, whereby we gain the same qualities of the ideal we revere.

We brainstormed on what the symbolism is behind the various names of Ganeshji, His large ears, four hands, trunk, tusk, belly and modakas and were lucky to be able to understand that, while making our very own Ganesha with clay.

Junior chyk class 1 (Year 7 to 9)

This term was filled with deep learning and incredible insights, with our main focus for this term being the invocation prayer, “Om Sahanavavatu....”. It was chanted at the start of every class so that the students can tune their minds to each other. We dived deep into the meaning of this chant as it has been done in classes for years, but few of us know the true meaning behind it. When we can chant the prayer and know the meaning, the benefits of the prayer can be multiplied. In short, the prayer translates to, “May the Lord protect us, may we enjoy the fruit of knowledge, may we put forth the right efforts for learning, may our intellect be bright and may we not dislike each other.”

Occasionally, the two JC classes merged, this was a great opportunity for the teenagers to learn and bond with each other. Our younger JC’s reminded the older ones to not take life’s happenings too seriously and the older one’s give them an idea of the challenges they may come across in the future.

Junior chyk class 2 (Year 10 to 12)

This term with the Senior JCs we have been working through the text, “Storm to Perform” by Swami Swaroopananda. This beautiful text has helped us to learn how to not only face the inevitable challenges of life but how to thrive and grow along the way.

Adult class

This term the adult class completed chapter 16 of Bhagavad Geeta (Daivasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga).

In this chapter, the entire mankind, of all times and of all ages, has been classified under three types

1. the divinely good (devas)
2. the diabolically fallen (asuras) and
3. the incorrigibly indifferent (rakshasas)

The group watched Gurudev's discourses on the chapter and discussed what are the divine qualities (such as fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness etc) a seeker must practice and cultivate.

The demonic qualities such as hypocrisy, harshness, anger, arrogance are some of the qualities which

must be aware and warded off. The chapter also provided a deeper insight into the effects and the attributes of a person exhibiting these tendencies which will serve as a guideline for seekers to identify within themselves and then accordingly take corrective actions. Bhagwan has categorically mentioned that Lust (Kama), Anger (Krodha) and Greed (Lobha) are the three main gateways that makes an individual's life hellish (current existence as well as future births).

Upon the conclusion of the chapter the class recited Geeta Aarti that describe her attributes so beautifully. Singing this beautiful Aarti completes our Bhagavad Geeta offerings and we intend to continue the practice after concluding every chapter.

Now we have begun chapter 17 which is "Shraddha Traya Vibhaga Yoga" (The three-fold faith). Faith in this chapter has been defined as the expression of a person's nature in the field of action. It further explains how the three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas & Tamas) or temperaments are expressed in our daily lives (e.g. food intake, actions, austerities, charities, etc). It is imperative to understand our nature, as our nature ultimately directs our faith and consequent actions that reinforce our faith.



- Paduka Pooja: 24 Sept '22
- Term 4 2022 Sunday classes begin: 9 Oct '22
- Diwali celebration: 22 Oct '22, 5.30-9.30pm @Nossal High School, Berwick (register at <https://www.chinmaya.com.au/>, Events | What's On)



- Sunday program class co-ordinator: please contact Madhavi on 0409 230 831 for questions relating to the Sunday classes.
- Sunday program newsletter co-ordinator: please contact suenetanagar@yahoo.com if you would like event dates or links of interest to next terms newsletter.