

Nachiketanjali

...an offering



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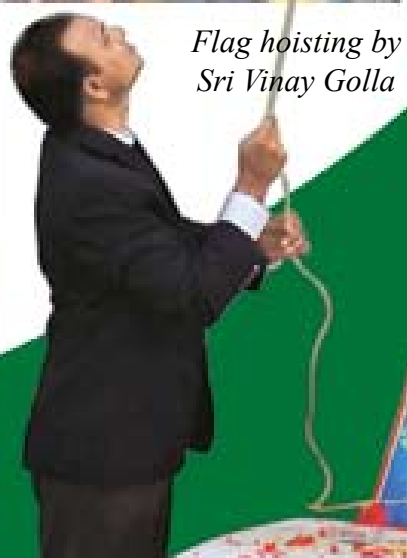
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REPUBLIC DAY & ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATIONS



*Patriotic dances and skits by
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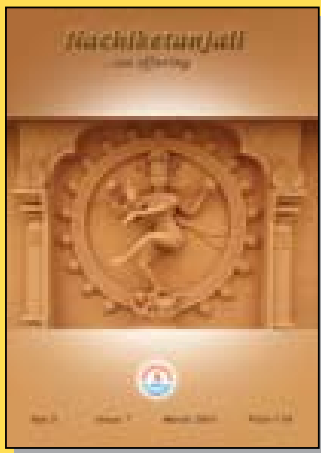


*Flag hoisting by
Sri Vinay Golla*

Contents

	Editorial	2	The hardest times to choose love	20	
	Pushpadanta	3	Changing Values	21	
	We are all born with a mission	4	A flower that withered...	22	
	Sri Ramakrishna's Amrita Dhara	6	Unwrap and peek within!	23	
	Irony? Serendipity? Magic?	8	Prayer	24	
	Egg shaped Mirror	9	Earth, teach me to remember	24	
	Vivekanjali	10	Shrifal - Coconut shell craft	25	
	The Need to Lead	10	I miss being a child	26	
	In Whatever Form	12	Not the joke that made me crack	27	
	And I Begin to Live	13	My journey with Tapovan	27	
	Om ... Namah ... Shivaya!	14	Sanskrit Lesson - Thirty five	29	
	The Gita - an ideal teacher	15	Ashram News	30	
	Come one, Come all...	16	Events and Celebrations	32	
	Yaganti	18	How you can help	35	

Cover story



Nataraja is Shiva in the form of the 'Lord of Dance'. He represents the combined might of the dynamic universal energy and the awakened Saguna Brahman. His dance is the dance of creation and evolution and indicates the perfect balance between life and death.

(Nataraja on the cover page and Trishul on the back cover are a part of 'Maa Yoga Shakti Peetam' of Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram)

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Editorial

Tame that fourth monkey



The three wise monkeys and the associated proverb 'See no evil', 'Hear no evil' and 'Speak no evil' are known throughout Asia and in the Western world. Pictures or figures of these three monkeys have occupied a place in almost every household and many of us would have been charmed by these monkeys in our childhood. But it is not that we are always cognizant of the fourth monkey – THOUGHT – which is in fact the leader of the band.

If the fourth monkey 'Think no evil' had taken the first place, the other three monkeys would have successfully influenced us to follow the good advice. Thought is the real culprit behind all our problems. If we think of God, God we are! But if we think of the demon, then demon we are! As you think so you become!

It is the nature of the human mind that has been branded as the monkey-mind. It is the tendency of the mind to swing from one thought to another in a fraction of a second, just like the monkey that swings from one branch to the other. Our mind is sometimes like the mad monkey always chattering, always flustered and always fretting!

It is not that we see, hear or speak only through our sense organs. In reality, they only play the role of transmitting the waves of vision, sound and speech to and from our mind. We often find ourselves reading a book and though our eyes scan page after page, we suddenly become aware that we don't remember what we have read. The reason, our mind was not involved in the act and the content is not registered in the mind. Our eyes tried to transmit the waves of sight but the mind did not receive them as it was preoccupied elsewhere. So it is with our hearing and speaking. Once the leader is in control and taught to behave itself, then all the other three monkeys will follow suit and eventually we will lead a peaceful life, as our thoughts, words and deeds would be in harmony.

Then why not tame this fourth monkey through silence, meditation and prayer? It will stop screaming, screeching and chattering endlessly, for it is given a task to perform.

- Subhadra K.

Pushpadanta

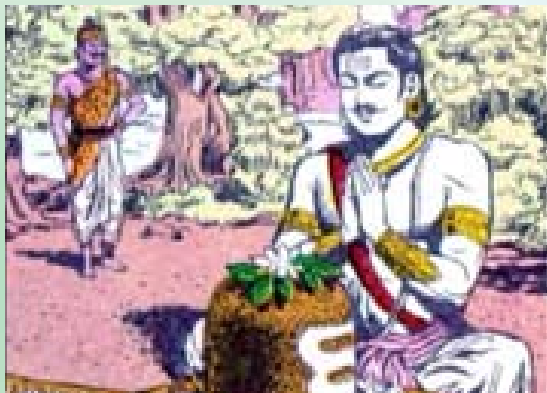


According to the legends there lived a *Gandharva* named Pushpadanta. *Gandharvas* are celestial musicians who reside in *Swarga* (heaven) and perform at Indra's court. Pushpadanta was an ardent follower of Lord Shiva. He loved flowers very much. Once, when he passed by King Chitraratha's royal gardens, he saw that they were adorned with many beautiful flowers. King Chitraratha was also a devotee of Shiva and it was his routine that everyday he offered the flowers of his garden to Lord Shiva. Pushpadanta could not resist the beauty of these flowers and picked them from the garden. But that was not enough. Soon Pushpadanta started stealing flowers everyday. Consequently, King Chitraratha was left with no flowers to offer to Lord Shiva.

The king was unable to figure out how his flowers disappeared everyday, as Pushpadanta had Divine powers and could be invisible. At the end, the king ordered that the *Bilva* leaves

be spread around the garden. *Bilva* leaves are considered sacred and are a favourite of Shiva. Pushpadanta unknowingly stepped on the *Bilva* leaves. Lord Shiva became furious and He punished Pushpadanta by taking away his Divine powers. When Pushpadanta realized his mistake he decided to seek Lord Shiva's forgiveness. In order to do so he composed a long *Stotra* describing the greatness of Shiva. Shiva became pleased and returned him his powers. This *stotra* came to be known as the '*Shiva Mahima Stotra*'.

After some time Pushpadanta grew very proud and arrogant of the many *Shlokas* he had written and which even the mighty Lord Shiva admired. He boasted about the greatness of his *Shlokas* to everyone. This annoyed Lord Shiva and He decided to teach the arrogant musician a lesson. He went to Pushpadanta and told him to go to any of His temples and peek inside Nandi's mouth. Curious, Pushpadanta did as he was told and peeked inside Nandi's mouth. He was surprised to find his entire *Stotra* engraved on the teeth inside Nandi's mouth. Then Shiva explained to Pushpadanta that he was not the author of anything, that the entire *Stotra* had been written a long time ago and Pushpadanta was merely an instrument through which the *Stotra* was released into the universe. Pushpadanta realized his mistake and became a humble and wiser being.



Source: The Shiva Experience



We are all born with a mission...

Dear Sadhakas! We all know that life is not all about living in contentment but true life is living with a mission. Else, life simply passes with years but years never with life. It appears as if they are like day and night, they seem to be together but never together... like two parallel tracks, together but still apart. Life is not all about years that we live, but the life that we live in the years. Similarly, mission is not all about life that we enjoy and get entertained but a life that we encounter while treading the spiritual path.

Dear Sadhakas! We are all born with a mission, but at the same time, we lose our mission when we step into the world of our own expectations. Yet, Divine Mother makes it a point that we should not miss our mission in life and life in mission. But unfortunately, we get intertwined in the world of our own expectation and never in our mission.

Dear Sadhakas! I know a person who challenges the world but accepts everything like a spiritual soul, who mesmerizes the world but humbly submits himself to the service of Divine Mother, who holds high every small creature and the highest expression of Divinity but keeps himself low and meekly! Dear One, I know such souls are rare to find in the world but never impossible to find within. Please listen carefully, it is just a matter of challenging the world within... and I can promise

you that, you shall encounter the rare one within...! You are capable of doing anything and everything, you are capable of making anything and everything, you are capable of seeing anything and everything and you are capable of experiencing anything and everything but do you think that you are giving hundred percent to your mission? Tell me, how many times your mission got defeated?

Dear Sadhakas! Great souls might get defeated a hundred times but they never allow their mission to get defeated. For them, the mission is more important than their personal life and therefore, that makes them different from others. Remember one thing, that we are all born with a mission but we should never die without fulfilling our mission... because our very life lies in the mission and mission in life.

Dear Sadhakas! Next time when you come across your mission think that you are a blessed soul, because it is easy to find our place, our abode but very difficult to find out our own mission. Therefore, no matter how much time it takes to know what our mission is, we should unceasingly march on the path of spirituality to find out our mission.



- Swami Nachiketananda Puri





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SHAMBHU CHARAN MALICK



A man cannot realize GOD unless he renounces everything mentally. Birds and wandering monks do not make provision for the morrow. Indeed those who depend wholly on God are provided with everything they need. This was also verified in Sri Ramakrishna's life: "The Divine Mother showed me in a vision the five suppliers of my needs: first Mathur Babu, second, Shambhu Mallick, whom I had not then met. I had a vision of a fair-skinned man with a cap on his head. Many days later, when I first met Shambu, I recalled that vision; I realized that it was he whom I had seen in that ecstatic state". After Mathur's passing away in 1871, Shambhu took the responsibility of being Sri Ramakrishna's supplier.

Shambu Mallick's father's name was Sanatan Mallick, and their home was in the Sinduriapati section of Calcutta. He also had a garden house in Dakshineswar. He was married to a devout woman. They had no children. He was well known for his generosity and noble character. He was a good devotee as well as a karma yogi, and Sri Ramakrishna's influence made him even more unattached and unselfish. He thought that the main purpose of human life was to offer everything one had to God and to help the poor. He had a catholic view of religions.

He used to read the bible to Sri Ramakrishna, and in this way



He thought that the main purpose of human life was to offer everything one had to God and to help the poor. He had a catholic view of religions. He used to read the bible to Sri Ramakrishna, and in this way the Master learned about Christ and Christianity.

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Shambhu's wife was also devoted to Sri Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi. He bought a piece of land near the temple garden and built a small cottage for Sarada Devi, so She can be comfortable. As Shambhu's love and devotion for Sri Ramakrishna increased, he started to call Him Guruji. But Sri Ramakrishna could not bear to be addressed as Guru, Father, or Master, because these terms generally inflate a person's ego and bind them. Nevertheless, he continued to address Sri Ramakrishna that way.

One day Shambhu found out that the Master was not feeling well and bought some pomegranates and offered them to the Master thinking that they would be good for Him. Sri Ramakrishna accepted the gift to fulfill the desire of the devotee, but as He turned to leave He could not find the gate. He began roaming around Shambhu's garden like a drunkard. Shambhu noticed it and brought the Master inside. Sri Ramakrishna then returned the pomegranates to Shambhu and became normal again. Explaining to Shambhu, the Master said that if He carried anything with Him or hoarded anything, His mind became confused and His nervous



system recoiled. Shambhu was amazed to hear of the Master's renunciation. One day Shambhu expressed a desire to the Master that he may spend all his money for building hospitals, roads and digging wells. Sri Ramakrishna said, "you can do all these things in a spirit of detachment. Whatever you may do, you must always remember that the aim of this life of yours is the attainment of God and not the building of hospitals and dispensaries. After realizing God, one feels that He is the doer and we are His instruments. Then why should we forget Him and destroy ourselves by being involved in too many activities? After realizing Him, one may through His grace, become His instrument in building hospitals and roads."

Shambhu served both the Master and Holy Mother for four years but he gradually became bedridden with diabetes. The Master went with Hriday to see him while he was ill and found that he was quite cheerful and had no fear of death. Several years later, while talking about Shambhu, Master said to His devotees: "God's devotees have nothing to fear. They are His own. He always stands by them".

**Source: 'They Lived with God'
by Swami Chetanananda**

*We are extremely
thankful to a volunteer
of Nachiketa Tapovan
for donating Rs. 1 Lakh
towards 'Sponsor a Child
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TRUE EDUCATION

Today's technology is giving you a comfortable and luxurious life, but not a happy and harmonious life. During Rama's period, people never locked their homes and they lived in harmony. The education which they received was about life and not for only livelihood. The root cause of today's problems in society lies in our education system. The education which you are pursuing today in schools and colleges doesn't give you the strength to withstand the difficulties you face. The aim of today's education is only livelihood but not the life.

The need of the hour is to take the right step to bring back the glory of India. It doesn't happen only through technological development. Rather, every individual has to develop one's own character. Youth needs to discover their inner strength.

**Paramahansa
Swami Shivananda Puri**



Irony? Serendipity? Magic?

OR A BIT OF EACH?

I had just walked into the business lounge between flights. I placed my bags and went to get something to eat and when I got back, the lady sitting in the seat in front of mine started a conversation.

She was 60 something, apparently unlettered, a simple woman from Pakistan going to meet her children in Sydney. A mother who would have laboured for the better part of her life to bring up her children. And apparently had done a fine job of it because she had a business class ticket, which her children had sent her so that she could spend time with them.

We smiled at each other and she asked me what time it was and showed me her boarding pass to know if it was time for her to leave. She spoke in Punjabi. When I responded to her in fluent Punjabi, her warmth flooded the whole space and she immediately addressed me as '*puttar*' (son) and thanked God that she had finally met a 'Pakistani' with whom she could talk with, in her 'mother tongue'...

As we continued to talk and I helped her to find out what time her flight would start boarding (the gates had already opened while she chatted happily with me in Punjabi) her warmth overflowed, she insisted that I finish my snack before checking for her flight, every few words were interspersed with word '*mera puttar*' (my son) and I could not help but respond to her warmth.

Once she left for her boarding gate, I wondered whether she had found it easily, whether she would meet another fellow 'Pakistani' to help her with communicating in this foreign land, I even ventured out to see if she was around so that I could help this 'new mother' to her gate.



As I wondered about this incident, I couldn't help but see the irony in the whole story... I am an Indian. And she is a Pakistani. But she had spontaneously 'adopted' me as a son. What is the difference? We were once the same nation. We look alike. We talk the same language. We eat the same kind of food. We're similar in every way, except that over the years the political divide has become so great that there is hardly a chance that it can be bridged... it may be bridged between individuals but between nations...? For nations, it may be a naive idea, even though it would be the best thing to happen to both nations and her people.

I did not, however, miss the magic and the serendipity in the moment either. It was truly wonderful talking with this stranger in Punjabi. It was lovely to have received her warmth. And the fact that such incidents make us 'hope' for a better future. They make us believe in the beauty and purity in the world. They have a way of feeding that which is 'appropriate' in the world. And above all, make us believe in the magic that surrounds us every moment. The magic, which is this life, we have.

- Gautam Vir



EGG SHAPED MIRROR

The story so far (a synopsis of 'The Beginning'):

The all-seeing Mirror wanted to FEEL what it is to see everything. So it created Minis – mirror balls painted over in different colors – and dropped them to roam freely on a massive Billiards table. The Minis at first did not know that they were mirrors beneath, but one of them figured it out after much chipping and trying. By discovering this, they could now feel what it was to be a mirror.

Not much later, a new paint ball was born in the world of Minis on the Big Billiards Table. Let's call him Wally. Wally was just like any other Mini on the table - painted on the outside and shining like a mirror inside. But there was one difference: he was not exactly like other balls - he was not fully round, being shaped more like an egg! This made him wobble wherever he rolled.

Wally didn't really notice this difference when he was very young. He was busy playing with other young Minis and exploring the big table learning something new every day. However, one day he was in a rolling race with his best friend Daisy and realized that he was not rolling in a straight line like her! He kept rolling in smaller and smaller circles. He understood that this was because he was not a perfect circle. He felt really bad because that made him lose the race.

Daisy was a wise Mini. She asked him why he was so sad.

"I'm so upset with the big Mirror in the sky! Everyone says that Mirror knows everything and made us all. Then why did It not make me perfect round like you all? This is so unfair!" Wally wailed.

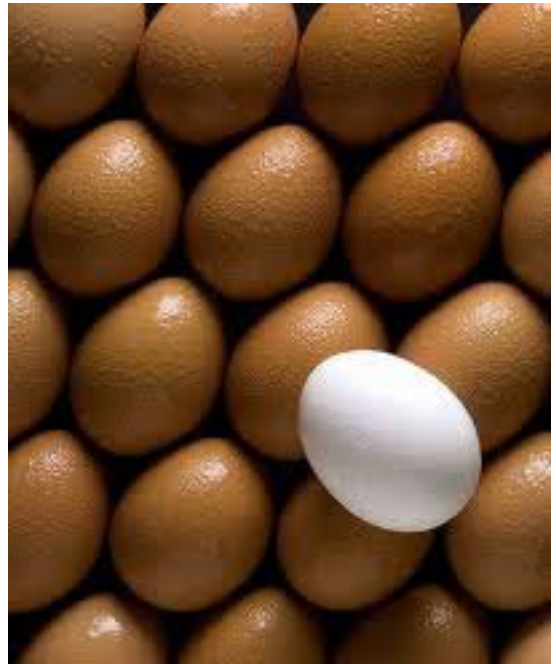
Daisy thought about it and asked Wally.

"Wally, why do you think we are here on the table?"

"To roll and play and do stuff."

"Yes, but what do you plan to learn by doing all this stuff?"

"Well, the Wise Old Pink Mini says that it is for learning that we are mirrors, like the Big Mirror.



But I don't care anymore for a Mirror that couldn't make me round," he said rather angrily.

"How will we find out that we are mirrors inside?" Daisy persisted.

"By trying different ways of peeling the paint off. Playing, rolling, wandering, talking, and so on," Wally had read his books well.

"Don't you think that being not-so-round makes you try out ways of peeling off paint that I can't do?" Daisy asked.

"Yes...you can't wobble or tilt in an odd way like I do," Wally was beginning to see the point.

"Well then, may be you are made to be not-so-round because that helps you feel like a Mirror faster than the rest of us! That should make you special and happy!"

Wally had a big smile on his face.

"Ok, not happy or sad anymore. I understand that being round or not-round are all just different ways to do the same thing. That's all!

- Vishy P.





To His disciples in Madras

(24th January, 1894)



My idea is to bring to the door of the meanest, the poorest, the noble ideas that the human race has developed both in and out of India, and let them think for themselves. Whether there should be caste or not, whether women should be perfectly free or not, does not concern me. "Liberty of thought and action is the only condition of life, of growth and well-being." Where it does not exist, the man, the race, the nation must go down.

Caste or no caste, creed or no creed, any man, or class, or caste, or nation, or institution which bars the power of free thought and action of an individual — even so long as that power does not injure others — is devilish and must go down.

My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate. Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now, and then decide. **We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will be done by nature according to her laws.** Work hard, be steady, and have faith in the Lord. Set to work, I am coming sooner or later.

Keep the motto before you — "Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion".

From the collection of Frank Parlato Jr.



The Need to Lead

Politics is a dirty word today. It is a verbal abuse, a symbol of evil, a filthy gutter of hopelessness that none of us want to go and clean up. Why should we? Our lives are moving along just fine, aren't they?

It wouldn't be too much of an understatement if I were to say that this is the sentiment of the whole planet, right now. There are so many things going terribly wrong out there that it's virtually impossible to keep count, let alone counter.

We always find a convenient direction to point our outbursts in- "...those damned politicians." And we walk on nonchalantly, shrugging our shoulders. I'm not pointing fingers at anyone. I'm saying 'we', me included.

I like to consider myself a socially aware citizen, like most of you. I like to partake in strong social discussions on the virtual platform and in real-life scenarios, like most of you. But I am also guilty of not looking up from my daily life, when the outside world needs me the most, like most of you.

I *would* like to do good for society, I *would* like to take up the onus of changing the world, I *would* like to lead us all unto a better tomorrow. But I'm too busy right now. I've got meetings scheduled, plans to keep up, phone calls to make, bills to pay and so much more. So I push it all for tomorrow; not tomorrow morning, but a more distant, abstract, indefinite 'tomorrow'. I do this, just like most of you.

We're all in this together. So let's for once, just stop and take the blame.

I have reached a point, personally, where I have stopped blaming politicians. I am almost unpatriotically apathetic; because I've long



Saving a billion-strong nation and a 7-billion strong planet is too far-fetched an idea- when we cannot save ourselves, when we cannot change, cannot control our own selves.

There's so much to do, so much that can be done, and so many places to start from that we cannot have a prescribed solution. I, least of all, cannot fill it in here as a conclusion to this article. All we can have is a little spark that we believe in and keep fueling on. So that one day, it leads us to the light.

I have my own journey to walk on, and you have yours. I don't know who you are, reading this and I don't know what you are destined to do. But sooner or later, we shall cross paths. Because if we begin taking responsibility, if we begin to believe in our power to change the whole world- little by little, day by day, one by one, in our own way- we are in this together. For worse, or for better.

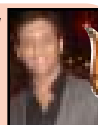
That's exactly what leadership is about, isn't it? Knowing the way, and then showing the way. Being the leader you are today, and then inspiring the leaders of tomorrow.

This is our answer. This is where change begins. This is where a brighter tomorrow rises. From you. From me.

So when do you want to start?

- Avinash Agarwal

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since given up on them. When I read the paper every morning, I see a big joke splashed across the front page- with old women wearing saris to conceal their many bundles of black cash and gleaming gold necklaces, and old men joining hands in a *Namaste* to cover their blood stained hands. This is what I see. And so I frankly do not care anymore. I have never cast a vote in my life. And I don't plan to, for a long, long time. Do you?

Because you see, the dark curtain of hopelessness we see outside is a reflection of our own shortcomings; it is of our own making. It shouts out blatantly to us, reminding us of all the times we said '*chaltahai, just this one time*' or '*it doesn't even matter*' or '*that doesn't concern me*'.

And that's exactly where it all begins. From there, it's one big, vicious circle. When I reach such times where there seems to be no end to the darkness, I like to reach out to the illustrious teachers from our past. And here is what one of them said.

"Stand up! Be bold. Be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your shoulders. And know that you are the creator of your destiny".

— Swami Vivekananda





In Whatever Form

A TRIBUTE TO ANNAMACHARYA

Every so often, I like to remember, dust-off and re-touch a distant memory, much as one would open an antique chest of precious old *sarees*, feel their softness, air them out and put them safely back in.

I am seven years old, it's another typical Bangalore morning - fresh and crisp, and I am suspended in that delicious, mysterious state between sleep and wakefulness. Sounds and smells slowly seep into my consciousness: the sharp sizzle of boiling water percolating through the stainless steel coffee filter, the tantalizing aroma of my grandmother's *rasam*, the gentle clinking of pots and ladles as she works her culinary magic to feed and nourish us, and the pure, resonant voice of M.S Subbulakshmi pouring out of the tape recorder, drifting in the air and lingering long after the tape stops playing...

A particularly beautiful *Krithi*, I remember from the vast repertoire of M.S Subbulakshmi's songs that were such a staple in our house is a composition by Annamacharya, the great poet-saint of the 15th century. The *Krithi* beginning "*Enthamathramuna*" roughly transliterated "Whatsoever be your form" is a paean to Lord Vishnu and in typical Hindu fashion goes on to emphasize His universality by extolling Him as the embodiment of multiple Divine forms.

Whether as a serious student of *Carnatic* music or as an enthusiastic *Rasika*, the *Krithis* of Annamacharya are part of one's singing or listening repertoire alongside other compositions by luminaries like Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Purandaradasa, to name only a few.

Born in Tallapaka village (about 500 km from Hyderabad and 75 km from Cuddapah town) near Tirupati, the boy who would grow up to become one of the greatest Telugu hymnographers was named "Annamayya" after Lord Vishnu. "*Annam*", a Sanskrit word commonly denoting



rice but more broadly used to denote food itself, appears in the iconic Vishnusahasranama stotram- (Literally, "Hymn of a 1000 names of Vishnu"). As Adi Sankaracharya explains in his commentary on the hymn, Lord Vishnu is "*Annam*". In a dual sense- He is both the "eater" (He devours the universe during *pralaya*- the great deluge) and the "eaten" (for the enlightened seeker, He provides spiritual nourishment).

Annamacharya belonged to the sect of Vaishnavas, specifically the Vishishtadvaita sect who believe that Lord Vishnu is the all-pervading Divine being of the Universe. To the already existing theological framework of *Vaishnavism*, Annamacharya brought his own special humanistic interpretation. His gospel of Universal brotherhood was expressed in lyrics of transcendent beauty. Annamacharya's Vishnu is not the exclusive deity of a defined sect or religion, he is untouched by trappings of caste and creed. Instead, his Lord Vishnu is the glorious "Supreme Spirit", the "Divine father of all beings" and we are all His children. At this time, now more than ever, the truth of this concept becomes all the more poignant. There is no place in this world then, for anger and hatred, violence and war. It is time now for love and peace, understanding and harmony. This message of universal love and tolerance was Annamacharya's greatest legacy, his medium was his music, and it is by embracing the spirit of this message in our daily lives that we can best pay tribute to one of the greatest poet-saints of all time.



In the first stanza of the *krithi* “*Enthamathramuna*”, Annamacharya extols Lord Vishnu thus “O Lord, you become whatever one thinks of you, you are the same Lord in whatever form one worships you.” Particularly notable is the fact that Annamacharya, being a householder himself, drew upon simple, everyday examples to illustrate esoteric truths that might otherwise be difficult to grasp. In this song, he uses a pithy and practical metaphor by drawing on the versatility of a humble kitchen staple- the ubiquitous and sustaining flour. “One can make it whatever one chooses”, sings Annamacharya, referring to flour. “The size of the pancake depends on the quantity of flour used.” An interpretation of this could be that our perception of the Divine is limited only by the extent of our spiritual stamina and seeking. Whether we hedge our bets and place our faith in a beloved personal God or a universal life force, every route is unique. Each path to self-realization is valid.

Stanzas 2 and 3 contain a spiritual checklist of sorts. Annamacharya lists the various names of Lord Vishnu attributed to Him by his interestingly diverse cohort of worshippers. “The Vaishnavas adoringly call you Vishnu” - sings the saint. “Those who profess a knowledge of Vedanta call you *Parabrahman*. Devout *Saivaites* think of you as Shiva. The *Kapalikas* sing your praises as Adibhairava. The *Sakteyas* worship you as Goddess *Sakthi*. Thus, different devotees visualize you differently”. And now, gently, unobtrusively and lyrically, Annamacharya slips in two lines of such depth and meaning that one has to stop and ponder their significance. “To those that show you little regard”, says the poet-saint, “You look small. To those that are enlightened / think nobly of you, You appear lofty.” Isn’t this a stunning and sophisticated illustration of spiritual relativism?

In the concluding stanza, he continues the earlier theme. “The weakness does not lie with you. You are like a lotus in the pond that rises and falls with the level of the water. The waters of the river Ganga alone are to be found in all the wells by the riverside.” And then comes the beautiful last line of the composition. In its eloquence, simplicity and truth, it needs no further elaboration. “You hold us under your sway, O Lord of Venkatadri. I surrender myself to you and this to me, is the Ultimate reality.”

- Jayasri Srinivasan

(Previously published for Mahanandi)



And I Begin to Live

Once again...

with open arms welcoming all nutty gritty with smile and happiness...

stretching myself to get the highest...

allowing to experience enriching stages of life...

Welcoming the overwhelming realm of life...

along with blessed and beautiful souls...

learning, laughing and crying together...

... to have lost in this beautiful world

In presence of bliss and blessings...

much more and beyond...

experiencing this naked life...

in fathom of how it actually was...

In presence of Divinity each moment...

in complete ecstasy and love...

where the world dissolves itself...

from there I started again...

At this last layer of life...

where truth unfolds itself...

showing how beautiful it is today and it always was...

at this moment I started to live again...

- Suruchi Singh



Om ... Namah ... Shivaya!

Lord Shiva took the form of Linga on the day of *Magha Bahula Chaturdasi* which is celebrated all over the world as *Mahashivaratri*. Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma asked Lord Shiva to enlighten them on the significance of *Shiva Panchakshari Mantra*.

“Om or the *Pranava* is a combination of the energies of Shiva and Shakthi. From this *Pranava* sprouted the *Panchakshari* ‘*Namah Shivaya*’ and from the *Panchakshari* emanated the ‘*Tripada Gayathri Mantra*’. The Vedas came from the *Gayatri*, and crores of mantras resulted from the Vedas. *Japa* on the *Panchakshari Mantra* is highly beneficial,” said Lord Shiva and initiated Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma with the *Panchakshari Mantra*. In return, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma sang the ‘*Shiva Shadakshari Stuti*’ to Lord Shiva as an offering of *Gurudakshina*. The *Stuti* is as follows.

Omkaram tu parambrahma –
sarvamOmkara sambhavam
AkArOkaramAmthAya –
Om *kArAya namO namaha*

Namasthe dEva dEvEsa –
namasthe Parameshwara
Namasthe VrishabhArUda –
Na *kArAya namO namaha*

MahAdEvam mahAtmAnam –
mahApAthaka nAsanam
MahAnatavaram vandE –
Ma *kArAya namO namaha*

Shivam shAntam jagannAtham –
lOkAnugraha kAraam
ShivamEka padam dEvam –
Shi *kArAya namO namaha*

VAhanam vrushabhO yasya –
vAsuki kantabhUshanam

VAmE shakthidharam dEvam –
Va *kArAya namO namaha*

Yatra yatra sthithO dEvaha –
sarvavyApi mahEshwaraha
Yalingam pUjayE nityam –
Ya *kArAya namO namaha*

On hearing this *Stuthi* Lord Shiva blessed them profusely and said He would grant *Moksha* to those who chanted this *stuthi* with utmost devotion at the time of *Lingodbhava* on the day of *Mahashivaratri*.

Source: Maha Shiva Puranam





The Gita

An Ideal Teacher



Recently in Sanskrit class at school, I was reading this beautiful *shloka* from chapter 2 of the Bhagavad Gita and I thought of sharing it with all of you. It reads,

**“karmanyevAdhikAraste mA phaleshu kadAcana
mA karmaphalahEturbhoor mAtesangostuakarmani”**

This means that you only have rights over your action or duty but not on the fruit (result). It also says that, don't let the fruit be your motive and do not be attached to inaction.

In simple words, we should do our karma (work) with full devotion and not for the sake of the result, as we have no right over it. This is true because if we do our work with full devotion, the result will surely be good. This is the same concept as is used in the movie, “3 Idiots”, where he says “Go behind excellence, success will automatically follow you”. But this *shloka* is applicable everywhere and not just for success in life.

Moving on to the next part of the meaning, we see that Lord Krishna has foreseen the next question of an average man, and advised us not to let the fruit be our motive for action. And the Almighty also says that we must not be attached to inaction. For example, you can't say, 'if I get a prize only, I will participate in this competition' or 'because I won't get a prize, I won't participate'.

Recently, my mother told me to study for a spell bee competition. I overconfidently replied, “I don't need to.” Then she told me that when I do something, I should

always put my 100% into it. I quote from Swami Vivekananda, “Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life. Dream of it; think of it; live on that idea. Let the brain, body, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea and leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success.” In the same way, when we put our best into something, the result is inevitable. In the present scenario, where we have a lot of competition, even if we don't win everything, but still do our best, we gain something very useful - we are happy with ourselves. This leads to self confidence, which leads to more participation and in turn, slowly, to success.

Well, that's all I can tell you about the *Shloka*. How any of you put it to good use is up to you. So, I have to get going, because I have to study for that competition. Let's put in the best and see what comes out of it.

100%, here I come.



Rohan Govind N.

8th Class, GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai



Come one, Come all

Divine Love is here to serve you

A dry leaf was swept over by the wind of Grace to fall gently on two struggling worms that needed protection. A leaf dried of individuality that is silent as Love, speaks as Love, and moves as Love. Selfless, simple and happy to serve. The dry leaf as described in *Ashtavakra Gita* is the eternal loving and living cosmic energy in the form of our very own Paramahansa Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj we lovingly call Swamiji.

His Holiness Sri Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj of Vasishtha Guha, Himalayas, was born on 6 May, 1928, in Tiruvayur (the land of five rivers), Tamil Nadu, India. Swamiji is the disciple of Param Poojya Sri Swami Purushottamananda Puri Maharaj of Vasishtha Guha, Himalayas. Swami Purushottamananda Ji was the disciple of Swami Brahmananda Puri Maharaj, the spiritual son and first disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Swamiji spends half a year at Ramanasramam and the other at Vasishtha Guha and other places in North India. He has shared his wisdom with mankind in the form of the most beautiful treasures that can be found in this link: <http://www.scribd.com/vedavita>

Swamiji is a scholar par excellence in Vedic scriptures as well as in the Puranic texts. His deep knowledge and lucid exposition of Srimad Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita and Ashtavakra Gita have made him a popular guide to spiritual aspirants. His simplicity, transparent deep faith in the Divine force and absolute surrender to the Supreme has made him an ideal combination of *Jnana* and *Bhakti*.

And so it happened one day. Love whistled and our feet responded. We walked into Room # A1 at Ramanasramam at Tiruvannamalai with empty hands, heads filled with screaming desires, and the need to have Swamiji's Darshan. "I was anticipating your visit because of which I

kept this book for you. You have been sent by your Guru, Paramahansa Swami Virajeshwara Saraswati Maharaj from Anusoni." The book was one of Swamiji's many treasures called *Gems from Ashtavakra Gita*. We seemed to have followed an unspoken instruction. God waits on us at every nook and cranny; He comes to us in different forms to keep us perennially hungry for the Truth.

Since Love knows no rules or gives no room for thoughts, we chatted to Swamiji clumsily with no fear or hesitation. We told him, "Swamiji, we love Bhagawan Ramana so much. Why did it take us so long to come to Arunachala? A secret childhood need to visit Tiruvannamalai was granted only now!" Before he could comfort us with an appropriate response, we said, "Swamiji, you are God." Quick as only God can be, he shot back, "You are dreaming, wake up." We struggled to keep pace but found an answer, "Well, you are God in the dream if you will. How does it stop you from being God?" He laughed it off and cleverly changed the subject.

His genius puns and delicious stories held our attention but more importantly, he entered our hearts to stay. We remember having left his place happy and light. As things unfold in the most magical way, we came back to be with Swamiji for a week against his usual "I need a lot of rest. Please come later as I will not be in a position to talk to people." This one week was enough to experience Swamiji's mercy on us. He accepted us with all our rough edges, million *Vasanas* and the horrendous inner enemies. He gave us a place under his Wings of Love, promising we would be safe, a promise that was given without the aid of language. He knew we had spent many quiet weekends with our Guru Maharaj, Swami Virajeshwara Garu at Hamsa Ashram. After all, it is THE ONE LOVE that serves as many.



Sri Swami Shantananda Puri

All enlightened beings, *Jivanmuktas*, are worthy of our love. They live and talk of the Truth; they effortlessly turn us inward to who we really are. They are indeed Love in motion, the cosmic energy in forms. They are here to serve us.

Swamiji works on our hearts so subtly that we often miss it. He patiently reminds us that all we need to do is remember the Lord and see Him in every form. "The living and loving cosmic energy runs through each and every being and even through inanimate things in the exact same way as the same current flows through bulbs of different shapes and sizes." We remember having cried to him, "Swamiji, when will our *Vasanas* leave us?" He consoled us, "Your *Vasanas* do not exist. These hurdles are just products of your imagination. If you let go of them in the mind, you really are free. *Nityoham shuddhoham buddhoham muktoham*."

"How do we get *Vairagya* or detachment?"

"Forget about detachment. Attach yourself to Bhagawan, the Divine Mother, or your chosen form, and you will see that detachment happens without effort."

"Swamiji, are we all destined to take the path of self enquiry?"

"Bhagawan Ramana supports you in whatever path you follow. People speak about self enquiry but they forget that Bhagawan Ramana encouraged us to do the easier of the two: surrender."

What is singularly special about Swami Shantanandaji? The freedom and closeness he has allowed us is the grandest generosity you will never see again. Where else can you walk in the door of a *Jivanmukta*, sit through the day, unburden every woe that troubles your heart, cry your eyes out, and laugh with him as if he is just any of us? We tell on his time assuming Divine beings don't need rest but never has he told anyone to leave.

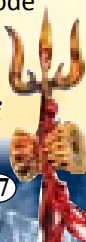
A miracle is not just limited to an event in the empirical world. The real miracle is the seed of Love sown by Swamiji in your heart after which all that it cries helplessly for is the death of the ego.

A million books in a million lifetimes cannot give us the clarity, conviction and confidence, and here in Swami Shantanandaji's presence, hearts are poured with the unasked gift of Divine Love silently; how can one not feel gratitude and a sense of surrender?

A miracle is not just limited to an event in the empirical world. The real miracle is the seed of Love sown by Swamiji in your heart after which all that it cries helplessly for is the death of the ego. The real miracle is that whilst nothing changes on the surface, the dynamite of Love shatters your ghost desires and stubborn attachments. The real miracle is when you see Love in every inch of everything and everyone, just everywhere. The real miracle is when you realise you are that very Love yourself.

Love is the only reason we live for. Love is our true nature. Love is surrender. Love is the abode of God. Love is God. Love is Arunachala. Love is the death of the ego.

- Anisha & Abir Bordoloi





Pushkarini:

The water flows into the Pushkarini from the bottom of the hill through the mouth of Nandi. Devotees have a holy dip in this Pushkarini before paying tributes to Lord Uma Maheshwara. It is said that Sage Agastya bathed in this Pushkarini thus sanctifying it.



Uma Maheshwara Temple:

The temple is surrounded by huge rocky hills on all three sides. This is a 15th century temple built according to Vaishnavite traditions by King Harihara Bukka Rayalu of the Sangama Dynasty of the Vijayanagar Empire. According to Legend, Sage Agastya wanted to build a temple for Lord Venkateshwara on this site. However, the statue that was made could not be installed as the toe nail of the idol was broken. The sage was upset over this and performed a penance for Lord Shiva. When Lord Shiva appeared, He said that He would reside there as it resembles Kailash. Agastya then requested Lord Shiva to give the devotees a form of Lord Uma Maheshwara in a single stone, which Lord Shiva obliged. It is only at Yaganti that we see a stone with Lord Shiva and His consort Parvathi, in the place of a Shivalinga.

YAGANTI

A Pictorial Story

Yaganti is a famous Shaiva Kshetra in the district of Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh. It is a spiritual place known for its Pushkarini, Uma Maheshwara temple, a growing Nandi and a series of cave temples.



Lord Uma Maheshwara inside the Garbha Griha



Basavanna



Cave Temples:

Agastya Cave or the Rokkala Cave- This is the cave where Sage Agastya performed his penance and has a steep climb. There is a Shivalinga inside this cave which is worshipped by devotees.

Venkateshwara Cave:

The damaged idol of Lord Venkateshwara is present in this cave. According to another story it was this idol that had to be consecrated at Tirumala but as the toe of the idol was broken and not suitable for consecration, it could not be shifted. This cave has scenic beauty all around.



Basavanna or the Growing Nandi:

The Nandi idol in front of the temple is continuously increasing in size. The fact that earlier people used to do circumambulation around the Nandi which is now highly impossible is proof enough for the growing size. A pillar has been removed to accommodate the growing size of the Nandi. Sri Potuluri Veera Brahmendra Swamy in his Kala Gnaanam, has predicted that Basavanna or the stone Nandi will come alive and shout when Kaliyuga ends. The cave in which he wrote part of his prophecy forms a part of Yaganti Kshetra.

Source: Kshetra Puranam

THE HARDEST TIMES TO CHOOSE LOVE

The hardest times to choose love are the very times when you can most grow spiritually. In fact, they are the only times you can grow spiritually! When you are angry, jealous, impatient or holding a grudge, a part of your personality that has no interest in love is active in you. It is not interested in other people. It is not even interested in you. It is interested only in what it desires in order to make it feel safe and valuable, for example: winning a power struggle, being right, making someone wrong, having its needs met first, eating when your body does not need food. These are all experiences of the frightened parts of your personality, and the list of what these parts want is as long as it is familiar. The worst thing they do, though, is prevent you from choosing love.

The loving parts of your personality have no trouble loving. That is all they do. You experience the loving parts as gratitude, appreciation, caring, patience, contentment and awe of life. They are polar opposites of the frightened parts of your personality. They are interested in other people. They love other people. They are interested in you, and they love you, too. When you experience a loving part of your personality, you love other people and yourself.

The question is: How can you have the experiences of a loving part of your personality when a frightened part of your personality is active? The first step is to distinguish the loving

parts of your personality that are active from the frightened parts of your personality that are active—in other words, to learn to distinguish love from fear in you. The second step is to choose love, no matter what. When you choose love again and again, even when the frightened parts of your personality are active (for example, you are angry, jealous, in despair, etc.), the frightened parts lose their power. They still come, and they still hurt, and they still have no interest in other people or you, but they no longer control you.

Each time you choose not to act on a frightened part of your personality, you create authentic power—and you grow spiritually. The frightened parts of your personality come less frequently and with less intensity, and the loving parts fill more and more of your consciousness. Eventually the frightened parts of your personality lose their sway over you entirely, and only the loving parts remain. When this happens, jealousy, resentment, inferiority and superiority, are no longer obstacles to your spiritual growth. They are opportunities for it! They are broad avenues that lead to exactly where you want to go, to fulfillment and joy, awareness and freedom—if you choose to take them. The hardest times to choose love become the very times that you can most grow spiritually. In fact, they are the only times you can grow spiritually!

Source: *Seat of the Soul* by Gary Zukav



Changing Values

When we were born we were like a plain paper with no impressions or writings. Though the stage is vulnerable, we start growing. Day by day, we learn few things and develop skills; without our knowledge a few impressions leave deep marks on our minds that never tend to change and would remain with us till we breathe our last. Generally we call these as values. Values are those ideals that we believe in. The real problem crops up when the very fabric of these values are ridiculed or questioned, and puts us in a state of vacillation. One such incident recently happened; the situation was simple but slowly started growing on my mind and created a flurry of queries. It instigated me to look at this society with a different view altogether for a moment.

Of late, a census official came to my house to enquire about members of my family and occupation. She enquired one thing apart from noting down details of the family and that led to a string of questions. Her question was “Who is the head of the family?” Without mincing words my reply was “My father is the head of the family.” Next question came in a jiffy: “Is he earning still?” My reply was, “No, he retired long back”. Then she asked, “Who is the earning member?” “I am”, was my immediate answer. Then she coolly concluded thus: “Your father is not the head of the family and it is you.” The reason quoted was that I was the earning member of the family and since it’s a joint family, my parents are staying along with us.

What she wrote in her report may be helpful for statistical purpose. But her conclusion and comments showcase the changing trends of the present society. Is the earning capacity the lone criteria or yardstick to decide who should head the family? We respect our parents not for their earning capacity but for their ability to hold the family together against all sorts of hardships. Family includes different age groups with difference in opinions. Bonding and living together comes through the parents and the



values we believe in, making this group of people a beautiful family. A good family constitutes a good society.

We are taught that parents are God “Maatru Devo Bhava” and “Pitru Devo Bhava”. It is the bounden duty of the children to take care of their parents unconditionally. We hold high and always revere the deeds of Sravan Kumara or Lord Rama for obeying the orders of parents and sing paeans about them. Many of us seem to be taking these invaluable examples, just for mere reading and not for making our lives better. Mushrooming of Old Age Homes, growing day-to-day property disputes, non-resolution of trivial issues, uncompromising nature and conflicts in opinion are all blots on our society. Learning things for a better career is imperative but not at the cost of making life money centric. A good living brings in individual success and a good family makes a better society.

Let us value our elders not on the basis of what they do today but for their experience; for their abilities called life skills, that shaped us. After all, what we are today is because of their bringing up, their sweat, their sacrifices, their time, and belief in us. A product enjoys its good will because of its brand value, so do we.

- Koti Rajasekhar M.



A flower that withered without a blossom

The December 16, 2012 gang-rape of a 23-year old woman in Delhi shook the conscience of the nation. People rose up in arms against the apathetic administration. What followed thereafter were angry protests, the rightful anger of the people being suppressed in all wrongful means with no one to lend an ear to those expressing anguish and making suggestions for improvement, the Prime Minister speaking up late and asking 'theek hai?' ('Ok?') at the end of his 'consolatory speech', a self-styled guru of the believers pointing out that the incident occurred because the girl did not plead with the rapists to let her go home, politicians speaking and whining in different voices, fast track courts coming up and significantly, the Government appointing a three-member Committee headed by Justice J.S.Verma to present a roadmap of the steps to be taken to tackle sexual offences. The Committee has on January 23, 2013 made recommendations for amendments in the law to deal with offences against women with an iron hand. Some of the recommendations are as under:

Key Recommendations¹

- ◆ Maximum punishment for rape remains life imprisonment. But redefine rape in the Indian Penal Code by including specific unnatural acts. Intentional touching will constitute sexual assault attracting up to five years rigorous imprisonment or fine or both. Provisions proposed to tackle assault with intent to disrobe and voyeurism.
- ◆ Review the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act immediately. The Committee has linked the special powers granted to the armed forces under this Act to the safety of women in conflict areas.
- ◆ Create new constitutional authority to ensure education and non-discrimination for women and children.
- ◆ Check khap panchayats.



- ◆ Insulate law enforcement agencies from political or other extraneous influence.
- ◆ Appoint retired judges on ad hoc basis to address backlog of cases.

It is now to be seen to what extent and at what pace the government implements them. As the entire nation grieves with the family of the girl, it is time for us to introspect. No law can be successful without the cooperation of the people. We have to understand that women deserve respect rightfully; and by giving them their due we are not doing any charity. She performs many jobs, most of them unnoticed and unrewarded. Should she not be loved and respected in return?

When we are ready to pray to Mother Goddess and even carry on rituals in Her honour, why not revert to our culture and see Her everywhere? After all, girls add colour and bring in light into our homes and hearths!

- Yashasvi Singh

Email: yashasvi.nliu@gmail.com



Source: The Indian Express dated January 24, 2013



UNWRAP AND PEEK WITHIN!

The post has arrived ... Nachiketanjali is in your hands ... You try to remove the wrapper and pull out the Magazine. But how many of you know that the person who has made that wrapper has a long story to tell? His heart overflows with love and warmth as he prints those wrappers. You need not be affluent to share the outpouring love.

That stream of love flowed all the way to Nachiketa Tapovan to meet Swamiji. Love manifested in the form of multiple bunches of keychains made with personal care. Pictures of Trinity on some and Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham on others were beautifully printed on the keychains. These were tokens of love. A mere glance at those tokens brought a tear to many an eye for it was not what they saw through their physical eye; it was the loving gesture of the person who had brought them, that melted their hearts.



Swamiji was deeply moved when he saw someone follow his principle of SILENT WORK. The next couple of hours had everyone glued to their seats as Sri S. Prakash narrated his tale, which brought tears to Swamiji's eyes.

Life was not easy for Prakashji. His father being a drunkard had deserted the family. This had a great impact on him and at the tender age of 12, he took an oath that he would never touch alcohol in his life. He missed the opportunity of receiving



education as he had to shoulder the responsibility of his siblings. He never went to school. It was only after getting them all married and well settled that he decided to marry at a very late age. Though he was not educated, he started a printing press of his own. "I never went to school and so I couldn't read, but in those days when there was no advanced technology, the print always came in reverse. As time progressed I learnt to read, though in reverse" he explains to his passionate listeners.



Sri Prakash

He gets a very meager income from his press but that didn't deter him from doing noble acts. He could still do charity from that little money that he earned. Paying room rent and running the house with a minimum monthly income of Rs 7,000/- was not easy. Yet every penny saved was spent in helping the needy. Many organizations benefitted through his charitable deeds. At the age of 70 he might look tired having borne the brunt of life but the childlike smile on his face reflects his passionate heart and his love for humanity.

It was Divine will that Prakashji was chosen for printing the wrappers of Nachiketanjali for it is those wrappers that unravel the many inspiring messages in Nachiketanjali. God focused His light in search of eligible souls to do HIS work and a beam fell on Prakashji.

"Hats off to his passion and dedication! There are many pure souls who have inspired me in my life and Sri Prakashji is one such soul..." Swamiji's poignant voice trails off as he quotes Sri Prakashji in all his ensuing talks.

- A Volunteer of Nachiketa Tapovan



Prayer

Prayers are extremely powerful when said with honest intentions and lovingness. I am praying for those who are victimised in all and any ways, as well as the criminals who perpetrate vicious acts on other humans on a daily basis. I am trying to understand the mind of these people, but every time I do, I come up with nothing. I cannot understand, I cannot accept. I cannot judge, I cannot get angry, because anger is a very mild emotional response to some of these vicious cruel inhuman acts. I am trying to make sense out of so much of nonsense, and it seems to me the hardest thing to do. So I am trying the next best thing: PRAYING... for the souls of these victims and for those who perpetrate these atrocious acts that are not human, not animal... not understandable, not condonable, not explainable either. I am PRAYING for all of us who have both the qualities for being saints as well as for being criminals, at any point of our lives; to call upon our saintly qualities to be more active. I try not to read newspapers, I try not to hear the news, I try not to comment, but deep inside me I am feeling this acute sadness at the whole thing. So I am PRAYING, with honest intentions and all the lovingness I can muster in my heart.

- Mallika Sastry Chandrasekhar
(In response to the Delhi crime)



Earth, teach me to remember

Earth teach me stillness, as the grasses are stilled with light.

Earth teach me suffering, as old stones suffer with memory.

Earth teach me humility, as blossoms are humble with beginning.

Earth Teach me caring, as the mother who secures her young.

Earth teach me courage, as the tree which stands alone.

Earth teach me limitation, as the ant which crawls on the ground.

Earth teach me freedom, as the eagle which soars in the sky.

Earth teach me resignation, as the leaves which die in the fall.

Earth teach me regeneration, as the seed which rises in the spring.

Earth teach me to forget myself, as melted snow forgets its life.

Earth teach me to remember kindness, as dry fields weep in the rain.

- John Yellow Lark



Shrifal - Coconut shell craft



Coconut is the most auspicious fruit offered to God. But once the inside is eaten, the shell is thrown away.

We can make good use of the shell by making a beautiful craft.

Things needed:

1. Coconut Shell (without the kernel)
2. Sand paper (thick quality)
3. Old Cloth
4. Used news paper
5. Varnish
6. Turpentine
7. Flat Paint Brush
8. Gold Paint (any type)
9. Cotton thread (white/coloured)
10. Small wooden buttons (for base/bell)
11. Fevibond

Method:

Rub the coconut shell inside and outside with sand paper till smooth.

Spread old newspaper to collect the dust and wipe the shell with an old cloth.

When smooth, apply varnish, first on the inside of the shell & then outside. Leave it to dry. Apply 3-4 coats of varnish. Leave it to dry after each coat.

If you choose gold finish, apply a coat of gold and then 2 coats of varnish.

Fig-1 BOWL:

By making a stand for coconut by attaching 3 pegs, it can be used as a bowl to contain chocolates, stationery and flowers for God

Fig 2 BOWL WITH PEDESTAL:

While placing the big coconut shell on the smaller one, wind a little cotton thread in between (to provide more surface) the two shells and use Fevibond to stick them all.

Fig 3 - BELL:

Coconut shell can be painted golden color and hung open side down with a thread with a bead or small brass bell dangling on the other end.

Fig 4 CANDLE HOLDER:

Three holes are drilled along the rim with the help of a drilling machine, thread or wire is passed into them to hang as a holder for candles or plants.

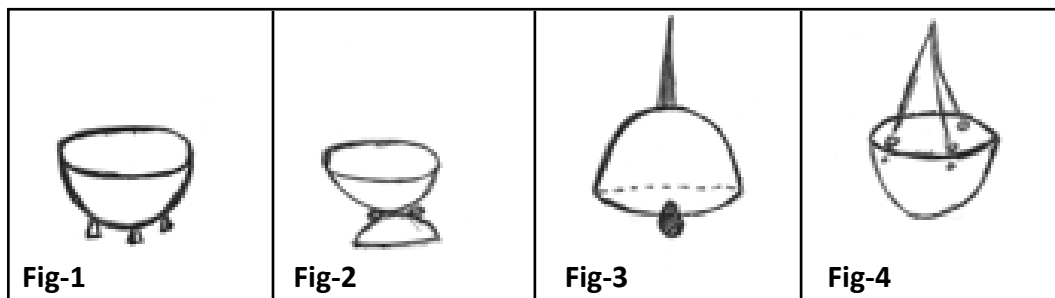
Idea 5 - 2 coconut shells can be used as measuring scale (as in olden days) and tied on both the ends of a stick

Note: Readers are welcome to share their ideas on this or any other crafts made with recycled material.

Let us Go Green

U, ME, ALL

- Mamta Agarwal





I miss being a child



It is often said that childhood is the best time of our life. We were often told that we shouldn't rush it or miss it since childhood never comes back. Today as a teenager I understand the meaning of these words because I miss it.

I miss being a child.

I miss thinking that movies were real and that the tooth fairy exists. I miss waiting for Christmas so Santa would come and being afraid of the night. I miss giggling and laughing without a care in the world. I miss watching cartoon network. I miss thinking that America was another planet and people died only when they got old. I miss the innocence and naïveté that comes with being a child.

I miss being a child.

As children we are not exposed to much of the world. Our world consists of our home, school and maybe the park. Our parents, teachers and friends make up most of our world. We don't know that a great, big world exists or that there are scientific discoveries and technological advances being made every day. We are unaware of the wars that are being fought and the battles that are not. We don't know what poverty, hunger or sadness is.

I miss being a child.

It is often said that "ignorance is bliss". This is one thought that I would have to agree with. I agree with it because knowledge brings with it a lot of other emotions. As children, we aren't aware of any divisions. We don't understand regions, religions, caste or creed and the best part is we don't even care. But as we grow

older, we start to understand the concept of nations, states, religion and caste and this brings the concept of property, possession, 'mine' and 'yours' into our lives.

I miss being a child.

We begin to understand the way our bodies work and that the computer is not a magic box. We know that the stars are only balls of gas and not crystals in the sky. This knowledge brings us down to the earth and takes away the wonder from our eyes and I believe that wonder is a very important part of childhood.

I miss being a child.



Somewhere down the line we realize that life is not a happy game and that we need to struggle to achieve what we want, that we will be judged and criticized for what we do, that we have to prove ourselves to the world for no apparent reason. We begin to care less about pleasing Santa and the tooth fairy and more

about pleasing our friends.

I miss being a child.

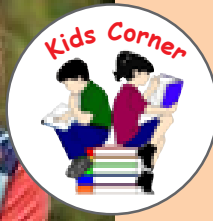
So yes, I believe that childhood is the golden period of life. It is a time of innocence, naïveté, wonder and niceness. A time when joy is boundless, laughter limitless and love unconditional.

So let the children be just that, children, for as long as the world allows them to be.

I miss being a child.

- Pavani M.





My journey with Tapovan

Not the joke that made me crack

See people laugh at your joke
 Watch the sweet infective disease poke
 As they roll with joyful tears
 Feel a fantastic glow for years

I hear a giggle and then a chuckle
 A few guffaws and some cackles
 Not the joke that made me crack
 But the way the people laugh

Howling and tittering some do
 Snorting and sniggering like they have no clue
 Not the joke that made me crack
 But the way the people laugh

Chuckling and chortling without breath
 Cachinnating and roaring to their death
 Not the joke that made me crack
 But the way the people laugh

After the braying and belly dancing
 Come the shrieking and snickering
 I crack so hard after they all stop
 Even with the silence atop

All the surprised eyes on me
 Questioning about what's so funny
 Not the joke that made me crack
 But the way the people laugh

- Shreya Srinath

Class IX, Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School
 Adyar, Chennai

I am a poor child. I came to know that some people are conducting a free school under a tree near my house. They started teaching us after the classes are done. We used to get 2 biscuit packets and classes were held till 12 o'clock. After that we used to go home. Swamiji and his friends worked very hard to construct a building to teach us. Swamiji also participated in the building work; like carrying bricks, cement and sand. We told him that we also wanted to do some work, but Swamiji refused and he said that we are small children to do all this work. "After studies you will be in a position, at that time you can help other people and on that day we will be happy" he said. After 1 or 2 years our school became popular. We learnt many things. We had dances, music, games etc. Swamiji is a very good and kind person.

About Swamiji we can tell many things. After 5 to 6 years, we missed the happiness, enjoyment and everything else because Swamiji went to another place to build one temple and Ashram for poor people like us. It is very good but we are missing Swamiji very much. Swamiji looked after us like his children. In our School many people are very good, kind and peaceful like Vasuma, Soujamma, Rupamma, and Hariniamma. We also like to help them in their good work by helping poor people and definitely we will do it.



Girija

7th Class,
 Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir





Turn around their future!

For ₹ 1 Lakh

Your donation will last a lifetime

Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund

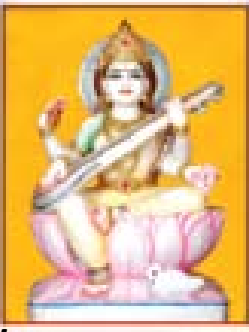
Nachiketa Tapovan runs a free Vidya Mandir for 230 children from poor families. They receive all-round, holistic academic education in English medium (LKG to 10th std.), including **arts, crafts, spiritual and culture lessons.**

Sponsoring a child is a great opportunity to help protect a child in need whilst seeing in return the real effect that your support has. Make a difference in a child's life- the chance to form a lasting, meaningful relationship with a child. All your kindness will add up to a bright future.

- ✓ *Nachiketa Tapovan is working hard to build a CORPUS fund to meet the ongoing expenses and expansion needs at a consistent pace. Donating to a Corpus Fund is a great way to sustain our efforts.*
- ✓ *Interest accruing from the investment made out of the Corpus donations, is only used without touching the principal itself. This way your DONATION remains forever, strengthening the cause and the organization.*
- ✓ *Being a charitable institution, we earn an interest of 9.25% annually from a Govt Bank. The annual interest on 1 Lakh will fully support one child's education for one year.*
- ✓ *Your donation will come a long way by meeting our expenses that include Teacher's Salaries, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Salaries for support and administration staff, Field trips and Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.*
- ✓ *At present, we only have 26 corpus sponsorships, help us reach all of our 230 children!*
- ✓ *Bring hope and light into their lives – as a group or individual or in the name of a loved one.*
- ✓ *Donors receive annual report card and are welcome to interact with our children.*
- ✓ **We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on our recognition board in the school.**



Students of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



इवलदेरगो इइइठ = थोन्पु रिह

Krupalu Ogeti, Samskrita Bharati, Hyderabad

email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net

Future Tense

Let us turn our attention to future. Let us imagine a beautiful Bharat. There...

सर्वः जनः सज्जनः **भविष्यति** जनः आरोग्यकरं भोजनं **खादियति** सनातनधर्मं **आचरियति** शुद्धं जलं **पास्यति** सर्वः नेता प्रजाहितं **चिन्तयिष्यति** संस्कृतं पुनः पुरातनवैभवं **प्राप्स्यति** सर्वः जनः संस्कृतं **ज्ञास्यति** सर्वा अपि महिला भिक्षुकं रिक्तहस्तं न **प्रेषयिष्यति** अवश्यं किमपि **दास्यति** कोऽपि पुत्रस्य मरणं न **द्रक्ष्यति** मार्गे अपघातपीडितं जनं (man bitten by accident) न कोऽपि **त्यक्ष्यति** सर्वः गोरक्षां **करिष्यति** अन्यस्य उपकारं कदापि न **विस्मरिष्यति** सर्वा अपि महिला वस्त्रं सम्यक् **धरिष्यति** देवः भूलोकं **आगमिष्यति** जनः पुनः पाश्चात्यसंस्कृत्यां न **पतिष्यति**

I hope you realize सर्वः जनः means 'everybody'. Thus all these sentences are in singular only. For your ready reference, the present tense forms of the bold-faced words are given below:

भवति, खादति, आचरति, पिबति, चिन्तयति, प्राप्नोति, जानाति, प्रेषयति, ददाति, पश्यति, त्यजति, करोति, विस्मरति, धरति, आगच्छति, पतति

Let us look at a few sentences in plural. In place of सर्वः जनः we use सर्वे.

सर्वेऽपि रामायणं **पठिष्यन्ति** बालाः पञ्चवर्षपर्यन्तं गृहे **क्रीडिष्यन्ति** ततः परम् एव पाठशालां **गमिष्यन्ति** सर्वे सत्यम् एव **वदिष्यन्ति** सर्वाणि अपत्यानि - पुत्राः, पुत्र्यः च - मातरं पितरं च **श्रोष्यन्ति** सर्वेऽपि प्रायश्चित्तम् **करिष्यन्ति**, तथा पापानि **प्रक्षालयिष्यन्ति** प्रातः ब्राह्मीमुहूर्ते **उत्थास्यन्ति** सर्वे अधः सुखम् (comfortably) **उपवेश्यन्ति**, भोजनं करिष्यन्ति पुनः विश्वे शान्तिं **स्थापयिष्यन्ति** सर्वे पुनः भारतं विश्वगुरुस्थानं **नेष्यन्ति**

You should be able to guess their present tense forms to be the following:

पठन्ति, क्रीडन्ति, गच्छन्ति, वदन्ति, शृण्वन्ति, कुर्वन्ति, प्रक्षालयन्ति, उत्तिष्ठन्ति, उपविशन्ति, स्थापयन्ति, नयन्ति

The first person forms are as in the present tense. Here are a few examples:

पठिष्याति, पठिष्यन्ति - पठिष्यामि, पठिष्यामः

वदिष्यति, वदिष्यन्ति - वदिष्यामि, वदिष्यामः

द्रक्ष्यति, द्रक्ष्यन्ति - द्रक्ष्यामि, द्रक्ष्यामः

दास्यति, दास्यन्ति - दास्यामि, दास्यामः

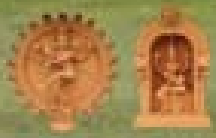
करिष्यति, करिष्यन्ति - करिष्यामि, करिष्यामः

Translate the following into Samskritam:

1. He will go home.
2. She will take the letter.
3. I will remember.
4. (The) Boy will come home.
5. Who (singular) will do this work?
6. We will give money.
7. They will leave India.
8. Leaf will fall.
9. Girl will drink milk.
10. Women will read Saundaryalahari.
11. Teacher will tell boy.
12. Son will eat at home.
13. Who (plural) will bring fruits?

१. पठिष्यामि
२. पठिष्यामि
३. पठिष्यामि
४. पठिष्यामि
५. पठिष्यामि
६. पठिष्यामि
७. पठिष्यामि
८. पठिष्यामि
९. पठिष्यामि
१०. पठिष्यामि
११. पठिष्यामि
१२. पठिष्यामि
१३. पठिष्यामि

The answers for the above:



A three day **Orientation workshop for Teachers and Concentration and Memory Development workshop** for the children of **NICE** organization at Mynampadu village, in Guntur district was held by Swamiji and Mataji from 1st - 3rd January 2013. Around 167 students and 16 teachers participated in the workshop. Surya Namaskar, Maha Chaitanya Kriya and Concentration and Memory Development activities were the main features of the workshop.



Yoga Session at NICE



Swamiji talking to students of NICE Organization

Teachers workshop



Mataji talking to the trainees

Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri has started '**Acharya Prashikshan**' – Teacher Training program at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram, Kodgal village, Jadcherla, from January 5th 2013. The program which will continue till May 2013 is highly beneficial to girls from the local tribes as they are likely to get instant employment.

Republic day Celebrations

Republic day was celebrated on 26th January, 2013, at the Ashram by the volunteers, teachers and students of Veda Vyasa Vidya Mandir with a patriotic spirit.



Republic Day Celebrations





LEARN TO LIVE

Personality Development Camp for Children

Meditation



Creativity



Yogasana



Residential Summer Camp

21st-28th April, 2013

Age Limit : 13-15 years

Reporting time: 21st April, 2013 by 4:00 p.m.

Venue: Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram, Kodgal Village,
Jadcherla Mandal, Mahaboobnagar Dist.

Pranayama



Public Speaking



Power of Prayer



Caring and sharing



First come First serve

Last date for Registration 14th April, 2013

Registration forms are available at

Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram

Kodgal Village,
Ph : 8008882828

Nachiketa Tapovan

70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur,
Hyderabad. Ph: 9849168937

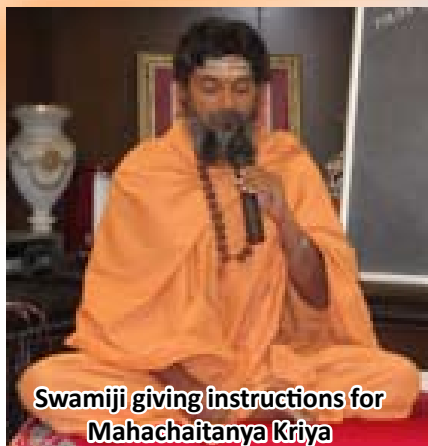


Events & Celebrations

On 02/01/2013 a quiz competition was held for 7, 8, & 9 class students by our young volunteer Master Rohan on questions related to Science, Maths, and General Knowledge. He was assisted by teachers N. Jyothi and Ujwala Tara and the winners were awarded with prizes.

On 10/01/2013 primary class children from Bachpan School, Kondapur came to Tapovan to interact with our children of classes L.K.G. and U.K.G. and entertained them with their lovely songs. We thank them for donating a sum of Rs. 5502/- to our Vidya Mandir.

On 11/01/2013 Maha Chaitanya Kriya workshop was held at Smt. Vasundhara's house by Swamiji for all Vidyamandir volunteers, teachers, and students of classes 7, 8, & 9. Swamiji and Mataji taught techniques of Maha Chaitanya Kriya to all the participants and insisted that it should be practiced at the beginning of every class to reap the desired benefits. After the session many of them narrated how they got benefitted from the very first session which is proof enough for their intense participation.



Swamiji giving instructions for Mahachaitanya Kriya



Teachers and Students of Vidya Mandir



Children enjoying the cricket set gifted by Val & Terry Leievers from UK

On 12/01/2013 Swami Vivekananda's 150th Birthday was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan. Skits, dances, songs, and sayings were presented by Vidya Mandir children followed by lunch, sponsored by a donor.



All religions are one

On 16th January 2013 a satsang was held by Swamiji and Mataji at a volunteer's house in Banjara Hills. Swamiji addressed the gathering and requested that mothers should take great care in bringing up their children and give them a strong foundation of moral and ethical values. This would help avoid the hideous acts that are happening in today's world. He stressed on the fact that all of us should feel responsible for the happenings. His talks were followed by a session of Maha Chaitanya Kriya which had a great response.



Satsang by Swamiji

Around 178 patients were given free treatment in our Sanjeevani - a free dispensary in the month of January, 2013. We thank Dr. Sudhakar Reddy, Dr. Amulya, Dr. Surekha and Dr. Ranga Rao for rendering their services to a noble cause.

Nachiketa Tapovan celebrated its Annual Day along with Republic Day on 26th January 2013. Sri Vinay Golla, Vice President, Strategic Marketing Team, Infotech Enterprises was our chief guest. Accompanied by his wife and parents, he graced the occasion and enjoyed all the performances of our children.

Vidya Mandir children performed dances which were choreographed by themselves and also presented various skits and speeches. Tiny tots from U.K.G, I and II grades enthralled the audience with their recitation of rhymes from 'Karadi Path' way of learning. Boys from 7, 8 and 9 grades performed a patriotic dance which was wonderfully choreographed by a volunteer.

Our chief guest enlightened the audience with his impressive speech and gave away certificates for the toppers of the academic year. Lunch was served at the end of the celebrations. We thank Sri Vinay Golla and family for spending precious moments with our children and volunteers.



Chief Guest Sri Vinay Golla talking to the students

A satsang was held by Swamiji and Mataji on 28th January 2013 at the house of Smt and Sri Srihariraju in Trimulgherry. Swamiji spoke on important aspects related to spirituality laying stress on Self-motivation. His talks were followed by a session of Maha Chaitanya Kriya which had a tremendous impact on the participants. They had a good interaction with Swamiji and Mataji at the end of the program.





FREE SUMMER CAMP

Character Development Camp for Children

Nachiketa Tapovan's Summer Camp will be held
from 5th-12th May, 2013 for the 14th year.

Time: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Age Limit : 12-15 years

Last date for Registration 30th April, 2013

This program helps your children learn

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| ★ Positive Thinking | ★ Self Confidence | ★ Creativity |
| ★ Decision Making | ★ Yogasanas | ★ Pranayama |
| ★ Meditation | ★ Power of Prayer | ★ Values |

First come First serve

Registration forms are now available at the Venue:

Nachiketa Tapovan, # 70, Phase-1, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad

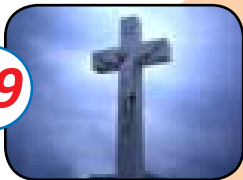
For details call : 9849168937

10



Shivaratri

29



Good Friday

26



Holi

27



Ayyappa Jayanti

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Anna daanam maha daanam; vidya daanam mahattaram.

Annena kshanika trupthihi yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.

Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 230 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted Well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

Donations towards operation costs

Sponsor a Teacher (Dance & Music)	₹ 5000/Month
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 5700/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4700/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Sponsor a Festival in temple	₹ 3000

*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 50,000/-
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 10,000/-

* With the accrued annual interest the following will be achieved every year, respectively.

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for the whole school for one day annually.
- Snacks for the whole school for one day annually.

Donations within India- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". The donations in India are exempt under the U/s 80G of IT Act, 1961. PAN No. AAATN2406K

Donations can be also directed through bank account as below

Bank Name	: Bank of Baroda
Branch Name	: Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 18090100004093
IFSC Code	: BARBOJUBILE

(Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")

Overseas Donations- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". Nachiketa Tapovan has permission to receive donations from abroad under FCRA act

Bank Information

Bank Name	: State Bank of India
Branch Name & Code	: Kavuri Hills-12655
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 30953215793
IFS Code	: SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	: SBININBB214

(Note: IFS code contains the number "zeros" not letters "O")

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

WITHIN INDIA

Single copy	₹ 10
1 year	₹ 100
3 years	₹ 280
5 years	₹ 450

OVERSEAS

1 year	₹ 1500 (only in INR)
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NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...

We convey our thanks to all the participants of WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs. 14,715/- in the month of January and saved Mother Earth by recycling about 2266 kg of plastic and paper waste material.



Invitation



We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations

Shivaratri

10th March, 2013



At **Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram**

Kodgal Village, Jadcherla, Mahaboobnagar Dist.

SHIVARATRI PROGRAM DETAILS

Time	Program
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Bhajan
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Cultural Programs
9:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Yagna
10:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Mantra Deeksha / Pravachan
11:00 pm - 12:00 pm	Samoochik Japa
12:00 am	Lingodhbhava
12:00 am - 2:00 am	Abhishekam
2:00 am - 2:30 am	Divya Pravachan
2:30 am - 3:00 am	Theerth Prasad Distribution
3:00 am - 3:30 am	Bhajan
3:30 am - 4:00 am	Cultural Programs
4:00 am - 4:30 am	Veda Parayana
4:30 am - 5:00 am	Harathi



Sri Ramakrishna Birthday

13th March 2013 (as per *Thithi*)

At Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram

Kodgal Village, Jadcherla,
Mahaboobnagar Dist.

Holi

26th March 2013

at 3:30 pm

At Nachiketa Tapovan

70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad.



IT IS A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

A man goes out on the beach and sees that it is covered with starfish that have washed up in the tide. A little boy is walking along, picking them up and throwing them back into the water.

“What are you doing, son?” the man asks. “You see how many starfish there are? You’ll never make a difference.”

The boy paused thoughtfully, and picked up another starfish and threw it into the ocean.

“It sure made a difference to that one,” he said.

-Hawaiian parable





Shiva's Trishul or trident represents the three gunas – Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. Lord Shiva wields the world through these three gunas. In human body, the Trishul represents the place where the three main nadis, or energy channels (ida, pingala & sushumna) meet at the brow or Ajna chakra.