

ॐ श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

**JAGADGURU SRI JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIJI**  
**AN OFFERING**

**P.R.KANNAN, M.Tech.**

**Navi Mumbai**

**Released during**

**the SAHASRADINA SATHABHISHEKAM CELEBRATIONS of**

**Jagadguru Sri JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIJI**

**Sankaracharya of Moolamnaya Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham**

**Kanchipuram**

**August 2016**

भक्तिर्ज्ञानं विनीतिः शमदमसहितं मानसं तुष्टियुक्तं  
प्रज्ञा विद्येति सर्वं शुभगुणविभवा ऐहिकामुष्मिकाश्च ।  
प्राप्ताः श्रीकामकोटीमठ-विमलगुरोर्यस्य पादार्चनान्मे  
तस्य श्री पादपद्मे भवतु कृतिरियं पुष्पमालासमाना ॥

May this garland of flowers adorn the lotus feet of the ever-pure Guru of Sri Kamakoti Matham, whose worship has bestowed on me devotion, supreme experience, humility, control of sense organs and thought, contented mind, awareness, knowledge and all glorious and auspicious qualities for life here and hereafter.

Acknowledgements:

This compilation derives information from many sources including, chiefly

'Kanchi Kosh' published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004 by Kanchi Kamakoti Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji Peetarohana Swarna Jayanti Mahotsav Trust,

'Sri Jayendra Vijayam' (in Tamil) – parts 1 and 2 by Sri M.Jaya Senthilnathan, published by Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, and

'Jayendra Vani' – Vol. I and II published in 2003 by Kanchi Kamakoti Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji Peetarohana Swarna Jayanti Mahotsav Trust.

The author expresses his gratitude for all the assistance obtained in putting together this compilation.

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P.R.Kannan of Navi Mumbai, our Srimatham's very dear disciple, has been rendering valuable service by translating many books from Itihasas, Puranas and Smritis into Tamil and English as instructed by Sri Acharya Swamiji and publishing them in Internet and many spiritual magazines. Many of his books have been printed and are being distributed to devotees free of cost with the blessings of Sri Acharya Swamiji from time to time. Kannan is now publishing this book "SRI JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIGAL - AN OFFERING" in English, explaining the greatness of Sri Acharya Swamiji. It contains many wonderful pieces of information about Sri Periyaval. Everyone should read such books and develop Guru bhakti and practise high values in life.

We pray to Sri Maha Tripurasundari sametha Sri Chandramouliswara and bless that P.R.Kannan's service of translating and publishing spiritual books should glow further and further.

Narayana Smriti

Durmukha- Sravana- Krishna- Ekadasi

Yatrasthanam: Vijayawada

Date: 29-08-2016



His Holiness Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetadhipathi

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நமது ஶ்ரீமடத்தின் அத்யந்த பிரிய சிஷ்யரான நவி மும்பை ஶ்ரீ பி.ஆர்.கண்ணன் அவர்கள், ஶ்ரீஆசார்யாளின் ஆக்ஷேப்படி, பல இதிஹாஸ, புராண, ஸ்ம்ருதி நூல்களை, தமிழிலும் ஆங்கிலத்திலும் மொழிபெயர்த்து, இணையதளம் மற்றும் பல ஆன்மீக நாளிதழ்களில் வெளியிட்டு அரிய சேவை செய்துவருகின்றார். பல நூல்கள் அச்சிடப்பட்டு ஆஸ்திக அன்பர்களுக்கு இலவசமாக அவ்வப்பொழுது ஶ்ரீஆசார்யாள் ஆசியுடன் வழங்கப்பட்டு வருகின்றன. ஶ்ரீ ஆசார்யாளின் பெருமைகளை விளக்கும் "SRI JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIGAL - AN OFFERING" என்ற இந்த நூலை தற்பொழுது ஆங்கிலத்தில் வெளியிடுகின்றார். அதில் ஶ்ரீபெரியவாள் அவர்களைப் பற்றிய பல அற்புதமான தகவல்கள் உள்ளன. அனைவரும் இம்மாதிரியான நூல்களைப் படித்து குருபக்தியை வளர்த்துக்கொண்டு உன்னதமான வாழ்க்கையை கடைப்பிடிக்கவேண்டும்.

ஶ்ரீ பி.ஆர்.கண்ணன் அவர்கள் பல ஆன்மீக நூல்களை மொழிபெயர்த்து வெளியிட்டுவரும் இப்பணியானது மேன்மேலும் சிறந்துவிளங்க ஶ்ரீமஹாதிரிபுரகந்தரி சமேத ஶ்ரீசந்திரமௌளீஸ்வரரைப் பிரார்த்தித்து ஆசீர்வதிக்கின்றோம்.

நாராயணஸ்ம்ருதி:

துர்முக- ச்ராவண- க்ருஷ்ண- ஏகாதசி

யாத்ராஸ்தானம்: விஜயவாடா

தேதி: 29-08-2016

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. Swasti Vachanam; Stotras	6
2. Swamiji the Inspiring Humanist	23
3. Subramanian to Sankaracharya	35

4. Srimatham	46
5. Renaissance of Hindu Religion and Culture	
- Ancient Lore	53
- Places of Worship	69
- Social Services	91
6. Swamiji the World Teacher	104
Appendix	
1. Adi Sankaracharya	130
2. Guru Parampara	139
3. Punya Bhumi	143
4. Bala Swamiji's Tributes	149

## स्वस्तिवाचनम् - गुरुवन्दनम्

श्रीकाञ्चीकामकोटि पीठाधिपति  
जगद्गुरु श्री शङ्कराचार्य श्रीचरणयोः प्रणामाः ।

श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः ।

श्री महात्रिपुरसुन्दरीसमेत श्री चन्द्रमौलीश्वराय नमः ।

स्वस्ति श्रीमद्-अखिल-भूमण्डलालङ्कार- त्रयस्त्रिंशत्कोटि-देवतासेवित- श्रीकामाक्षीदेवीसनाथ- श्रीमद्-  
एकाम्रनाथ- श्रीमहादेवीसनाथ- श्रीहस्तिगिरिनाथ- साक्षात्कार- परमाधिष्ठान- सत्यव्रतनामाङ्कित-  
काञ्चीदिव्यक्षेत्रे शारदामठ-सुस्थितानां अतुलित सुधारस-माधुर्य- कमलासन कामिनी- धम्मिल्ल  
संफुल्ल- मल्लिका मालिका निष्यन्द मकरन्दझरी- सौवस्तिक- वाङ् निगुंफ विजृम्भणानन्द- तुन्दिलित  
मनीषि-मण्डलानां अनवरताद्वैत- विद्या-विनोद-रसिकानां निरन्तरालङ्कृतीकृत शान्ति-दान्ति-भूम्रां  
सकल भुवनचक्र प्रतिष्ठापक श्रीचक्रप्रतिष्ठा विख्यात यशोऽलङ्कृतानां निखिल पाषण्ड षण्ड  
कण्टकोद्धटनेन विशदीकृत वेद वेदान्तमार्ग षण्मत प्रतिष्ठापकाचार्याणां श्रीमत्-परमहंस-  
परिव्राजकाचार्यवर्य श्रीजगद्गुरु श्रीमत्-शङ्कर भगवत्-पादाचार्याणां अधिष्ठाने सिंहासनाभिषिक्त  
श्रीमत्-चन्द्रशेखरेन्द्रसरस्वती संयमीन्द्राणां अन्तेवासिवर्य श्रीमत्-जयेन्द्रसरस्वती श्रीपादानां  
तदन्तेवासिवर्य श्रीमत्-शङ्करविजयेन्द्रसरस्वती श्रीपादानांच चरणनलिनयोः सप्रश्रयं साञ्जलिबद्धं च  
नमस्कुर्मः ।

Swasti Vachanam – Guru Vandanam

Obeisance at the holy feet of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peethadhipati

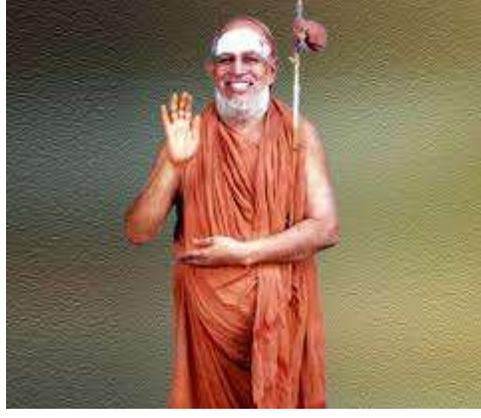
Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya

Obeisance to Gurus

Obeisance to Sri Chandramouliswara and Sri Maha Tripurasundari

The divine town of Kanchipuram is an ornament to all the auspicious worlds; it is adored by the thirtythree crores of Devatas; the visible abode of Sri Kamakshi Devi and Sri Ekamranatha, also of Sri Mahadevi and Sri Hastigirinatha; and named as Satyavrata. Here in Sarada Matham are seated Srimad Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Sri Jagadguru Srimad Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya, who is surrounded by wise persons immersed in the bliss of flow of words like streams of nectar, of unparalleled sweetness, dripping from garland of blooming jasmine at the crown of Devi seated in Kamalāsana; who is ever in the bliss of the realisation of Advaita; who is ever high, with the ornaments of the virtues of self-control of body and mind; who is decorated with the fame from installation of Srichakra, which bestows stability to all the chakras of worlds; who established Shanmatha (six philosophies of six Devatas for worship) on the path laid down by Veda and Vedanta, thus clearing the path free of the thorns of non-believers of Vedas; coronated in his throne are Jagadguru Srimad Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sripada; his disciple Srimad Jayendra Saraswathi Sripada; his successive disciple Srimad Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Sripada. At the lotus feet of these Gurus we prostrate with all humility, with folded hands.

परम पूज्य श्री जयेन्द्र सरस्वती स्वामिनः तोटकाष्टकम्  
Totakashtakam on Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji



विदिताखिल शास्त्रसुधाजलधे

कथिताखिल वेद पुराणमते ।

हृदये कलये शिवदं चरणं

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (१)

Ocean of all known Sastras, master of all Vedas and Puranas expounded, I meditate in my heart on your auspicious Feet. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (1)

युववत्सरभूत यतीन्द्रविभो

तमनाशकजात जयेन्द्रगुरो ।

जनिमोहनिरासन दक्षनिधे

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (२)

O Supreme among Sanyasis, who appeared on earth in 'Yuva' year; O Sri Jayendra Guru, you are born to eradicate darkness (of ignorance); O Treasure of mastery in destruction of delusion of people, O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (2)

भगवद्गुरु शंकर एव भवान्

जनपापनिरासन लोकगुरो ।

परिपालय दीनमिमं कृपया

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (३)

O Guru of the entire world, you are none other than Sankara Bhagavatpada Guru; you destroy the sins of people. Please protect this poor me out of compassion. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (3)

विविधागमदर्शनरक्ष गुरो

बहुधा श्रुति शास्त्र प्रचारक ते ।

परतत्त्व विचारण चारुमते

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (४)

O Guru, you are the protector of the various Agamas and philosophies and the propagator of Vedas and Sastras through many ways. You are the master of exquisite analysis of the Supreme Principle. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (4)

विजिताखिल शत्रुसमूह यते

करुणामृतपूरित वीक्ष गुरो ।

वरदाभय दर्शक पद्म करे

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (५)

O Guru, you are the Sanyasi who wins over all the multitudes of enemies by your mere look exuding the nectar of compassion. You show with your lotus hands the gestures of boon and freedom from fear. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (5)

गुरु चन्द्रशेखर पाद नते

गुरुमार्ग जनावन कार्यरते ।

निज मानस तत्त्व सुधा रमते

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (६)

You worship the feet of Guru Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi. You are ever engaged in activities of protecting the people following the path of the Guru. You are immersed in the bliss of nectar of Brahman in which your own mind abides. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge.

(6)

वरशंकर पीठ विभूषक ते

गुण निर्जित गोद्विज भूमिपते ।

वरशंकर विजय सुतीर्थ गुरो

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (७)

You are an ornament to the seat (Peetham) of the great Sankaracharya. By your virtues you have conquered the earth and specially the cows and brahmanas. (Cows and brahmanas are the prime instrument of yagnas, which please Devas and enable the advent of rain and prosperity to all people). You are the Guru of the exalted Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge. (7)

शिव पावनपूजनलीन मते

ललिता परदेविस्वरूप गुरो ।

प्रविवेक विराग विशोकप्रदं

जय इन्द्र देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ (८)

O Guru, you are keen in performing the sacred and purifying Pooja of Siva. You are the very incarnation of Supreme Devi Sri Lalita. O Sri Jayendra Guru, give me refuge, which grants discrimination, dispassion and freedom from grief. (8)

श्रीतोटकाष्टकं श्रेष्ठं

रविना दम्भबुद्धिना ।

श्रीजयेन्द्रगुरुप्रीत्यै

रचितोऽयं गुणाञ्जलिः ॥ (९)

May this great Totakashtakam, an offering on virtues, by Ravi of little intellect, be pleasing to Sri Jayendra Guru. (9)

## STOTRAS

परित्यज्य मौनं वटाधः स्थितिं च

ब्रजन् भारतस्य प्रदेशात् प्रदेशम् ।  
मधुस्यन्दिवाचा जनान्धर्ममार्गे  
नयन् श्रीजयेन्द्रो गुरुर्भाति चित्ते ॥

Pujya Guru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, who deserted silence at the foot of the banyan tree and, travelling to different areas of the vast Bharata Desa, has been leading people on to the path of Dharma through his honey-soaked words, shines brilliantly in my mind.

तेजसा भासयन्सर्वान् दिवाकर इवापरः ।  
देशकालश्याधीशो जयेन्द्रः श्रेयसेऽस्तु नः ॥

May Sri Jayendra, who sheds brilliance on all, like Surya incarnate, and who is the lord of time and place, bestow the supreme good on us.

वाणी प्रसाद-मधुरा हृदयं सदयं सुधामयी वीक्षा ।  
हस्तौ वितरण-चतुरौ प्रणमद्वित-चिन्तकस्य गुरोः ॥

Of the Guru, Sri Jayendra Saraswathi, who wishes well for the worshipper; the speech is sweet with kindness; heart is compassionate; vision is nectarine; hands are masters in giving.

वर्षिष्ठो वपुषा प्रेम्णा यविष्ठो दयया लघुः ।  
गुरुर्लोकहितासक्त्या विचित्राचरितो गुरुः ॥

Guru, though old in age, is young in love, and quick in compassion; attached to the well-being of the world, Guru's conduct is curious.

तैलबिन्दुर्जल इव यस्य धीर्-विश्वगाहिनी ।  
विवित्सया तलगता स चोदयति नो धियः ॥

Guru's intellect dives into the entire world like a drop of oil in waters. Having all knowledge in his palm, he inspires our intellects to desire for knowledge.

वदनं प्रसादसदनं सदयं हृदयं सुधामुचो वाचः ।  
करणं परोपकरणं येषां केषां न ते वन्द्याः ॥

The face is the abode of kindness; heart is full of compassion; words drip with nectar; actions help others. Those who are not like our Guru are not fit to be worshipped.

जयन्ति श्रीजयेन्द्राः सततं श्रीविजयानुगताः ।  
शिष्याणां जयवर्धकाः शताभिषेके महे हृष्टाः ॥

Sri Jayendra Saraswathi, always followed by Sri Vijayendra Saraswathi (or victory), bestows ever increasing success on disciples. He basks in the glory of Sathabhisheka.

सद्धर्म दीपमुकुरौ कलिकल्मषघ्नौ  
स्वस्ति-स्मिताङ्कुरधरौ विजयावतारौ ।  
दाक्षिण्य-मङ्गलपरौ यमिनां वरेण्यौ  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, who are mirrors for the lamp of virtuous dharma, who destroy the evil of Kaliyuga, who bear the sprout of the sprightly smile of well-being, who are victory incarnate, who are full of kindness and auspiciousness and who are the best among the self-controlled.

काञ्च्यां शिवाशिव-करुणा-कटाक्षैः  
नित्यं विभाविततनू तदुपायभूतौ ।  
श्रीतेऽध्वनि प्रणयितां दधतौ समेषां  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, whose forms always shine from the compassionate sidelong glances of Devi and Siva of Kanchi, who are the means of attaining those sidelong glances and who guide the desires of the worshippers along glorious path.

श्रीचन्द्रशेखर-पदाम्बुज-चञ्चरीकौ  
तद्योग-भावितमनो-वचन-प्रसारौ ।  
विश्वार्थतां प्रथयितुं सततप्रयत्नौ  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, who are bees at the lotus feet of Sri Chandrasekhara (Lord Siva or their Guru), who propagate the ideas and words arising in

them owing to their association with the Guru (or Lord) and who always strive for spreading nobility in the world.

वाण्यां ययोर्द्रवति दीनजनानुकम्पा-  
सिन्धुर्दृशोश्च जगदुद्धृति- सौम्यभावः ।  
त्यक्त-प्रपञ्च-निचयावपि सत्प्रपञ्चौ  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, in whose words the ocean of compassion towards the poor and the miserable people gushes out, in whose eyes the benign vision of rescuing the world from misery exudes, and who, though they have abandoned all the mass of mundane matters, are themselves manifestations of goodness.

काञ्ची क्वपीठमहिता ननु कामकोटिः  
क्वासौ च हिन्दुमहितो निमिपालदेशः ।  
किन्तूभयं युगपदेव कृतार्थयन्तौ  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, who bestow grace simultaneously on the famed Kamakoti Peetha in Kanchi as well as the entire glorious Hindu land including the distant Nepal.

त्रय्यामनारतरतौ तृषितौ षडङ्गे  
षड्दर्शनाम्बुधि-विहारपरायणौ च ।  
सत्काव्य-भूरिरसिकौ कविकोविदाद्यौ  
नित्यं नमामि विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रपादौ ॥

I always worship the feet of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, who are continuously immersed in Trayi (Vedas), who thirst after Shadangas (the six Angas of Veda), who are ever keen on navigating in the ocean of the six Darsanas (philosophies, the last of which is Vedanta), who very much enjoy good epics and who are the first among master poets.

हैमाचले विलसितो ननु विश्वविद्या

सद्गुण्यं विबुधवाचि धृताभिमानः ।  
तद्पादपद्म-रसपानक-मत्तभृङ्गो  
राजेन्द्रमिश्र उभयस्तवनं विधत्ते ॥

This Stotra on both the Acharyas has been composed by Rajendra Misra, who is in the university in the Himalayan area of Shimla, who loves the words of the wise Gurus, and who is the bee keenly drinking the nectar of their lotus feet.

सद्गुणस्तवनं प्रीत्या विजयेन्द्र-जयेन्द्रयोः ।  
भवेद्भूत्यै रसज्ञानां त्रिवेणीकविनाकृतम् ॥

May this Stotra describing the virtues of Sri Jayendra and Sri Vijayendra, composed lovingly by the poet of Triveni, bestow prosperity on men with feeling of devotion.



j\_nam4.pdf

परमपूज्य श्रीजयेन्द्रसरस्वतीस्वामिनःविरचितं

## श्री आदिशङ्करभगवत्पादस्तोत्रम्

सर्वं शास्त्रार्थसारं यत्कृपालेशतः स्फुरेत् ।

तं वन्दे भगवत्पादं कामकोट्यधिपं गुरुम् ॥

I bow to Sri Adisankara Bhagavatpada, the head of Kamakti Peetham, by whose little grace the essence of all Sastras sprouts in mind automatically.

कामाक्षीकरुणारूपं कामकोटिजगद्गुरुम् ।

चिन्मूर्तिं कलये चित्ते शङ्कराचार्यमव्ययम् ॥

I meditate in my mind on Sri Adi Sankaracharya, who is of the form of compassion of Kamakshi, who is Jagadguru of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, who is Consciousness incarnate and who is changeless.

## श्रीकामाक्षी पञ्चरत्नम्

कामाक्षीं करुणापाङ्गलेशतो मुक्तिदायिनीम् ।

चित्तशान्तिप्रदां वन्दे कामकोटिविहारिणीम् ॥

I bow to Kamakshi, who grants Mukti (Liberation) by a little sidelong glance, who confers peace of mind and who sports in Kamakoti.

काञ्चीमध्यगतां देवीं सर्वदेवनुतां भजे ।

यत्प्रदक्षिणमार्गेषु सर्वदेवोत्सवा रताः ॥

I worship Kamakshi Devi, having abode in the middle of Kanchipuram, who is adored by all Devas and in whose paths of movement around her temple, the Utsavas for all Devas are celebrated.

श्रीचक्रमध्यगे देशे विलाकाशगतं महः ।

त्रिकोणे बैन्दवे पीठे कामाक्ष्याख्यं विराजते ॥

The brilliant Light called Kamakshi shines in Bilakasa (cave-space) in the middle of Srichakra, in the seat of Bindu in trikona (triangle in Srichakra).

सप्तमोक्षपुरीमुख्ये काञ्चीति प्रथिते पुरे ।

ओड्याणपीठ मध्यस्थां कामाक्षीं प्रणमाम्यहम् ॥

I pay obeisance to Kamakshi, seated in Odyana Pitha in the city of Kanchi, known famously as the most important of the seven Mokshapuris. (The seven Mokshapuris are: Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Kashi, Ujjain, Dwaraka and Kanchi).

सर्वत्र सर्वदेवास्तु वराभयकराः स्थिताः ।

त्वदीयौ देवि कामाक्षि पादावेवानुगृह्णतः ॥

All Devas in all places are seen showing their hands in Vara (boon-giving) and Abhaya (freeing from fear) poses. In your case, Devi Kamakshi, your feet themselves confer all blessings.

कामाक्षीपञ्चरत्नाख्यं स्तोत्रं यस्य गले स्थितम् ।

कामाक्षीकृपया सद्यो लभते स परां गतिम् ॥

One, in whose throat this stotram called Kamakshi Pancharatnam is seated, attains the Supreme State immediately by the grace of Kamakshi.

## **Stotra on Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji**

**(Add 'Apara Karuna Sindhum' Stotram)**

**SONGS BY SRI JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIJI**

தாளம்: ஆதி ராகம்: மிஸ்ரபீலா  
பல்லவி:  
பஜரே குருநாதம் மானஸ பஜரே குருநாதம்

பஸ்ம ருத்ராஷாதி அலங்க்ருத சரீரம்  
பில்வமாலாதி அலங்க்ருத சிரஸ்கம் (பஜரே)

மந்த்ர மகாமணி மந்த்ர ஸ்வரூபம்  
ப்ரணவ பயோதர ப்ரணவ ஸ்வரூபம் (பஜரே)

மந்தஹாஸ முகம் மந்தாஷு வீஷுணம்  
ராஜாதிராஜம் ஜகத்குருரூபம்  
ராஜாதிராஜம் காமகோடிரூபம்  
ஜகத்குருரூபம் காமகோடிரூபம் (பஜரே)

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தாளம்: ஆதி ராகம்: ஸிந்துபைரவி  
மெட்டு: வெங்கடாசல நிலையம்

சந்த்ரசேகர நிலையம் காஞ்சீபுர வாஸம்  
பக்தஜனதஷ்டம் புதஜனஸேவிதம் (சந்த்ரசேகர)

அம்புஜஸமநேத்ரம் அகணிதகுணசீலம்  
பக்தஜனஸேவிதம் சந்த்ரசேகரம் (சந்த்ரசேகர)

கலவையில் ஸன்யாஸம் காஞ்சியில் ிரீபீடம்  
காஷாயதண்டமாத்ரம் யதிவரச்ரேஷ்டம்  
(சந்த்ரசேகர)

யக்ஞஸம்ரசுஷணதஷ்டம் வைராக்யதாயகம்  
ஜயேந்த்ர விஜயேந்த்ர கான விலோலம்  
(சந்த்ரசேகர)

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தாளம்: ஆதி ராகம்: ஹிந்துஸ்தானி காபி

ப்ரணதோத்தாரணா கருணைக்கடல் சங்கரா

ப்ரணதோத்தாரணா பக்தன்மீது கருணைபுரி  
ஸத்குணானந்தரங்கனா ஆனந்தகுரு மஹேசா  
(ப்ரண)

நிகமோத்தாரணா அகணிதமஹிமநா  
மங்களதாயகனா ஆனந்தகுரு நடேசா (ப்ரண)

அணோரணீயனா மஹதோமஹீயனா  
ஜகத்குருபுங்கவனா ஆனந்தகுரு நடேசா (ப்ரண)

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தாளம்: ஆதி ராகம்: ஆபேரி

பல்லவி:  
எப்படிப்பாடினரோ குருநாதனை  
அப்படிப்பாட நான் ஆசைகொண்டேன் குருவே (எப்படி)

அனுபல்லவி  
தோடகரும் பத்மபாதரும் ஸுரேச்வராசார்யரும்  
ஹஸ்தாமலகாசார்யரும் சங்கர குருநாதனை (எப்படி)

சரணம்  
காலடியில் உதித்து கால்நடையாய் நடந்து  
காசிமுதல் காஞ்சிவரை காமகோடிபீடமமைத்து  
வேற்றுமையில் ஒற்றுமை சொன்ன வேதாந்த வித்தகரை  
வேதனைகளைத் தீர்த்து வைக்கும் ஸத்குருநாதனை (எப்படி)

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மெட்டு: வள்ளிக்கணவன் பேரை

காமகோடி பீடமடி காமாஷியின் பீடமடி  
சந்திரசேகரமர்ந்த பீடமடி சகியே சங்கரரின் பீடமடி

தானதர்மம் செய்யும் பீடம் ஏழைகளைக் காக்கும் பீடம்  
ஜயவிஜயேந்திரர் பீடமடி சகியே பக்தி வளர்க்கும் பீடமடி

காமக்ரோதம் நீக்கும் பீடம் கோயில்களைக் காக்கும் பீடம்  
முதியொரைக் காக்கும் பீடமடி சகியே மோகம் போக்கும் பீடமடி

கலைகளை வளர்க்கும் பீடம் கவலையெல்லாம் போக்கும் பீடம்  
மேருவைப் பூஜிக்கும் பீடமடி சகியே சிவனைப் பூஜிக்கும் பீடமடி

அத்வைதம் சொல்லும் பீடம் ஆத்மாவை விளக்கும் பீடம்  
சாசுஷாத்காரமளிக்கும் பீடமடி சகியே சாதனை விளக்கும் பீடமடி

நீதியை விளக்கும் பீடம் நேர்மையாயிருக்கும் பீடம்  
நிந்தனை பொறுக்கும் பீடமடி சகியே நித்யானந்த ஸ்வரூபமடி

வேதாந்தம் சொல்லும் பீடம் வேதனை போக்கும் பீடம்  
வேதார்த்தம் சொல்லும் பீடமடி சகியே வேதாந்த பீடமடி

குருக்களின் பாரம்பரியம் குறைகளைப் போக்கும் பீடம்  
கோவிந்தனைப் பாடும் பீடமடி சகியே கோபம் போக்கும் பீடமடி

ஜனனத்தை அழிக்கும் பீடம் ஜடத்தைப் போக்கும் பீடம்  
ஞானபோத பீடமடி சகியே ஜகத்குரு பீடமடி

குருவின் சரணம் போற்றி குரு உபதேசம் பெற்று  
சித்தம் சுத்தமாக்கி சகியே குருவருள் பெற்றிடுவோம்

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## **SWAMIJI THE INSPIRING HUMANIST**

The venerated Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, established by Adi Sankara, who adorned it as the first Sankaracharya, has seen an unbroken lineage of 70 distinguished Peethadhipatis in the last 2500 years. The Guru parampara is presented in a table elsewhere in the book. Following in the footsteps of Parama Pujya Mahaswamiji, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji, the 68<sup>th</sup> Sankaracharya of the Peetham, our beloved and respected 'Periyaval', Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji has been at the helm for the last over 62 years. The traditions of the Peetham require the would-be Acharya to be a brilliant brahmachari from a respected brahmana family of Rigvedic descent, well versed in Vedas and Sastras, and imbued with Daivi Sampat (divine wealth) with universal vision of wellbeing. Initiated into Sanyasa ashrama by his Guru, Sri Mahaswamiji, an illustrious soul (worshipped by many as "Walking God"), in these hallowed traditions, Sri Acharya Swamiji has, for the last so many years, continuously held the luminous torch of the Peetham aloft and has been a bulwark of Sanatana dharma against vagaries of modern materialism, consumerism, ignorance of indigenous way of life and disdain for age-old values.

### **Simplicity and Accessibility**

A multifaceted personality, simplicity personified- that is our Swamiji in a nutshell. His one trait, which none, who has had his fleeting darshan even once, will miss is his geniality and the infectious and bewitching smile on his lustrous face. He is ever accessible to the common man, not just for a quick darshan and receiving of Prasadam, but even for a detailed and friendly chat, whatever may be the subject. His simplicity of expression and clarity of views are amazing. He is equally at home with not just languages like Samskrit and Tamil, but also Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and English. The subjects discussed vary from scholarly Sastrartha, clearing of some fundamental doubt in Sastra and ritual observance at home, in a temple etc. to family issues, human relationships, prayer for education, marriage, progeny etc. Swamiji's reaching out with compassion, succour and aid to the millions of poor and needy is too well known to be reiterated. He is bubbling with happiness and enthusiasm in the company of common devotees. He is at once comfortable with an aged Kashmiri Vedic

Scholar with whom he converses in Samskrit. He offers sugar candy to a small three year old that prostrates before him. He blesses a young couple and simultaneously provides solace to someone who is in tears. He answers the questions of the press with aplomb. He advises the members of a trust about a temple design. He keenly discusses social and psychological issues with a doctor, who runs a help-line for people prone to suicides. He is equally comfortable talking to the Rashtrapathi, cabinet ministers and the King of Nepal.

A common devotee's experience would run like this: "As you watch his day unfold from 5:30 am in the morning, you are amazed at his pace. In a typical 18 to 20 hour day he is engaged in a multitude of activities. Through all this his indomitable spirit and optimism always stand out. As you stand in a corner watching him you wonder what attracts so many people to him. He makes eye contact quickly to make you comfortable. He has a smile for you and listens to whatever you have to say with keen attention. When people pour their hearts out to him, you can see his compassion as he blesses them whole-heartedly. He does not perform any miracles. He does not give any talismans or magical remedies to anyone. He does not claim extra-ordinary powers. (In his humility he refers to himself as an ordinary head of a Matham, fortunate to bear Adi Sankara's name). He just hands a little kumkum, vibhuti, sugar candy & sometimes fruits. You try to fathom this relationship that he has with millions of his devotees. You are surprised by your own thoughts as a metaphor strikes you. It is verily the relationship between the child and its mother. Just as the child keeps going back to its mother because of the unconditional love and care she gives her, these devotees throng to Swamiji because they know that he has their well being in his heart. The power of his love and compassion will dissolve all their miseries and take them on the path of Dharma. You now approach him to offer your respects before you leave. He looks you in the eye and smiles. And asks, "Did you find what you wanted?"

Maha Swamiji once said to a devotee: "When I am talking with you, if others come for darshan, I stop my talk with you and start talking with others. When I keep talking for long like this, the queue of devotees waiting for darshan lengthens. But 'Pudu Periyaval' (Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji) is 'Dasavadhani' (one who does ten different things simultaneously). He gives Prasadam to devotees and simultaneously answers questions put by some devotees. I am unable to do this." Maha Swamiji thus praised, in his own sweet self-effacing way, the abilities of Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji. On another occasion, when people

approached him for blessings before starting any new venture, Maha Swamiji asked them to go to Pudu Periyaval and seek his blessings. He said: "Pudu Periyaval is Ganapathi Amsa. You hand over at least a rupee in his hand and receive it back with his blessings. You will not face any obstacles."

## **Guru Bhakti**

The first thing that comes shining through all that you hear and read about Sri Swamiji is his devotion to his Guru, Parama Pujya Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji. The revered Paramacharya would often say that he himself was the "Iccha Sakthi" and his disciple was the "Kriya Sakthi". This was with reference to how his devoted disciple carried out his every wish. Soon after his becoming Peethadhipati, Sri Acharya Swamiji wrote a treatise on Brahma Sutra Bhashya, titled 'Gurupriya', as desired by his Guru. 'Gurupriya' has been hailed by scholars as a superlative commentary clarifying the truths of Sankara Bhashya. Known for clarity, cogency and brevity, it is intended to serve as a refresher to the serious student engaged in manana, contemplation.

Sri Acharya Swamiji has become the prime mover over the years in projects that have far - reaching impact in the areas of social welfare, health, child care, orphanages, old age homes, sanitation, rehabilitation of the handicapped, and village crafts and education. (See separate section on these institutions and activities). The number of organisations that Sri Swamiji started in various centres in order to give a concrete shape to the welfare projects exceeds 400. What wins him the admiration of many is the fact that he maintains the age-old traditions of the Matham. So the Poojas continue along with activities to preserve the Vedas, revival of old temples and consecrating new ones, and social welfare projects.

An instance of Sri Acharya Swamiji's Guru bhakti serves as a guide to all of us. A devotee had a unique experience of overhearing a conversation between Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya and Sri Acharya Swamiji. Both Acharyas were camping in a village called Pileru in Andhra Pradesh on their way back from Satara. When the devotee arrived on the scene, Maha Swamiji was heard talking to Sri Swamiji:

"In the 1920s, a number of persons from our Matham joined us on our Yatra to Kashi. The king of Kashi was very hospitable. On our way back, in Visakhapattinam, we faced shortage of

groceries for food. But the Andhra people made it up. When we reached Rameswaram, the difficulties mounted. We had to sell off all the golden articles from the Matham. Do you know the price of gold in those days? It was Rs.15/- per sovereign (8 gms.). Later Thanjavur people replaced all the gold. By the way, there is a Dhara Patram for the Lord's Abhishekam. It is pure gold.. You know? .. Is it there?

"It is safe", replied Sri Acharya swamiji. The conversation continued..

"Do you know Ramaswamy Sastrigal of Kumbakonam?"

"Yes, I know."

"I am now talking about his grandfather. You know what he did.. He put up a poster in the Kumbakonam Matham. You know what it read.. 'Do not give loan to this Matham. It will not be returned.'" Saying so, Maha Swamiji laughed aloud. He continued..

"If our Matham has got name and fame now, people think it is owing to me. It is not so; it is all the fortune gifted by Kalavai Periyaval! I know nothing about money; not familiar with cheque, draft etc. I keep enquiring with devotees who come, and get to know many things. When I tell others about what I learn thus, they think I am a great scholar!

We have brought a new boy (Bala Swamiji). He should not feel monetary problem."

"Oh, yes. Prices have gone up. A coconut costs five rupees. Mere postal expenses of the Matham come to about a lakh of rupees", said Sri Acharya Swamiji.

"Do not curtail that. See how much the foreigners, particularly the 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna' people spend on our religion, how much they work!"

"Whatever you say, I shall act accordingly", affirmed Sri Acharya Swamiji.

The devotee, who overheard this conversation, was thrilled. Who else other than the Acharyas could have blessed him with such an opportunity!

## **Vedas and Sastras**

Sri Acharya Swamiji has been keen on continuing and expanding the work of preservation of Vedas including discovery of rare Sakhas (branches) started by his Guru. Veda Parayana is conducted in the Matham premises every day in the evening. There are several trusts that operate under the direction of the Kamakoti Peetham, which focus on spreading Vedic education, supporting and rewarding scholars and encouraging scholastic research work in relation to Hindu religion and philosophy. Veda Rakshana Nidhi trust ([www.vrnt.org](http://www.vrnt.org)), the

foremost of such institutions, has been rendering yeoman service in this field. Running and aiding Veda Pathasalas, conducting examinations and awarding certificates and merit prizes, giving stipends to students for higher Vedic studies and conducting seminars and Veda Parayanams are the major activities of this Trust. Students and teachers are drawn not only from Tamil Nadu but also from other States including Kerala, A.P., Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Veda Dharma Sastra Paripalana Sabha is very active in conducting discourses and also examinations. Under the personal instructions of Sri Acharya Swamiji, this Sabha has recently completed the stupendous task of publishing 'Smritimuktaphalam' (known generally as Vaidyanatha Dikshtiyam), a Nibandhana text, detailing the Dharma Sastra provisions in original Sanskrit verses with Tamil translation and running into six Kandas and seven volumes. The Sraadh Kandam of this celebrated text in Tamil translation, together with a short summary in English was released during Sri Swamiji's visit to Mumbai in November 2015.

Advaita Sabha is engaged in spreading awareness of Adi Sankara's Advaita tatva among the general public, encouraging deep study of Advaita texts of scholars, and conducting Vakyartha Sadas and examinations in Sankara Bhashyas. Veda Sastra Pandita Raksha Sabha that gives a monthly pension of Rs 1000 to 250 Vedic pundits, Veda Pata Nidhi Trust that serves the cause of Vedic scholars with humble means and Dharma Paripalana Sabhas that organise seminars and conferences on Vedic Studies are a few other examples.

Sri Acharya Swamiji's Anugraha Bhashanas are eagerly looked forward to. Even abstruse subjects like Vivekachudamani and Bhagavad Gita become easily intelligible when explained by the Guru. He makes the most difficult principle from Brahma Sutras interesting and easy to understand, by citing examples from man's daily experiences in life as well as ancient stories from our rich literary heritage. There is practically no subject in Sanatana Dharma, be it Vedas, Upanishads, Darsanas, Advaita Vedanta, Smritis, Dharma Sastras, Itihasas or Puranas, which has not been touched by him in his discourses, delivered in several languages. Sri Swamiji's lucid TV discourses and question-answer sessions have kindled the keen interest of youngsters.

With the blessings of Sri Swamiji, periodic seminars on Kashmiri Culture and traditions have been held in Kanchipuram and in cities of Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi where considerable Kashmiri Pandit population is located. Sri Acharya Swamiji encourages scholars to do research in the ancient books of religion and spirituality, fine arts, sculpture etc., reprint and popularise the classical works, and publish new books providing fresh insights. Taking the guidance of Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and assistance of very senior Kashmir Pandit scholars of the region, efforts are on to collect old manuscripts and books for reprinting. It is pertinent to mention that Sri Swamiji released two books “Lougakshi Grihya Sutra” and “Vaidika Mantra Kalpa Lata, also called as Kashmirika Mantra Kalpadruma” in October 2011 and April 2012 in Jammu, printed with support from Venkateswara Vedic University.

Research in traditional practices in temples, fine arts etc. and popularising them with modern tools of communication also receive Sri Swamiji’s keen appreciation. Sri Swamiji happily blesses all new constructive efforts and gives ‘Srimukham’ (benedictory message) for all publications on Sanatana Dharma after perusal.

### **Temples and Poojas**

Sri Acharya Swamiji must have performed several thousand Kumbhabhishekams in all these years. Many of them have been for some of the oldest temples in the country. His view is that it is more important to revive and look after existing temples than create new ones. He also points out the role of the temple as a centre of economic and social activity in any community. He established a temple in Gangtok in Sikkim close to the national border in order to give protection to our motherland and the jawans guarding the boundary. He personally went there to inaugurate the temple. He insisted on giving Prasad to devotees himself in that bone-piercing cold. Such is his love for the common man.

It is also to be noted that Shri Acharya Swamiji was one of the key initiators of the current yearly Sindhu Pujan in Ladakh region conducted during Guru Purnima, in which the representatives of many religions meet in peace and offer their respects to the River Sindhu. Sri Swamiji has also constructed a temple for Devi Saraswati in the late eighties in Ramban, which lies in between Srinagar and Jammu.

Innumerable are the Ati Rudram and Sahasra Chandi Homams and Poojas presided over by Sri Acharya Swamiji in various places in the country. When there has been no rain, Varuna Japam has been performed as instructed by Sri Swamiji at many places to great success. In recent years Viswa Santhi Homams for universal peace have been performed in many centres including Srinagar in Kashmir, Sikkim and Guwahati. These Homams have featured programmes for many days covering many homams, Veda Parayanas, reading of ancient texts like Srimad Ramayanam, Srimad Bhagavatham, Sri Devi Bhagavatham etc., discourses on many topics of Sanatana Dharma, cultural programmes etc. and have helped in reaching many long-forgotten facets of Sanatana Dharma to large populations in the area.

### **Education and Training**

The Deemed University at Enathur near Kanchipuram is the monumental testimony of Sri Acharya Swamiji's determination to provide value education to one and all in all modern branches of learning including engineering, technology and management. Emphasis on Information Technology is given in consideration of the demands of the present times. A giant statue of Adi Sankara welcomes the visitor to this campus. The library here is very huge and is engaged in microfilming and preserving ancient texts in palm leaf and other records. Sri Swamiji's dream of turning this institution into a Ghatikasthanam (educational centre of repute in olden times) is in the process of becoming a reality. The Sankara Colleges, the special Girls' hostel in Kanchipuram, The Oorapakkam Model Oriental School, Sankara schools in Chennai and various cities, the Ayurveda colleges, the colleges of sculpture and the schools of Devaram are all pointers to Sri Swamiji's commitment to the educational development of the weaker sections of society. It is noteworthy that in response to needs of modern times, Sri Swamiji has innovated by combining Vedic education with secular study in schools. The Sankara Schools in Tambaram near Chennai and in Bengaluru and the SIES School in Nerul, Navi Mumbai are of this special category.

Jana Kalyan movement started under Sri Swamiji's direction and guidance is constantly working towards providing vocational skill development and improving self-employment support for men and women from the economically backward classes in many places in the country. Sri Swamiji has always emphasised the true value of cottage industries.

## **Healthcare**

The Sankara Netralaya, Chennai, the Sankar Deva Netralaya, Guwahati, Eye Hospital at Madhubani, Bihar, The Sankara Eye Society, Coimbatore and Guntur, the Kanchi Kamakoti CHILDS Trust Hospital, Chennai, the Kanchi Sankara Hospital, Chennai, the Jain Dharmasala in Chennai for Cancer patients, Kanchi Sankara Medical Centre, Kolkatta and the Hindu Mission Hospitals all over the country are but a few examples of institutions that serve the poor and the needy. These organisations are expressions of Sri Swamiji's infinite compassion for the suffering millions of our country.

## **Caring for the old, the destitute and the physically challenged**

While Sri Swamiji is keen to invest in resources for the young who are the future of our country, his heart melts for the old and the infirm who have no one to look after them. The old age homes run under the auspices of the Kanchi Matham, in Kalahasti, Kanchipuram, and Kashi are but a few of the many facilities created under his guidance for the old people. In Nazareth Peth near Chennai, the Matham has an outstanding institution operating for the physically challenged.

## **Rehabilitation**

Whenever Sri Swamiji happened to be in any district headquarters, he invariably visited the Central Jail there, spoke words of comfort and consolation to the convicts and distributed Prasad to them. When any natural calamity occurs in any corner of the country, Swamiji insists on not just planning and reaching succour and aid to the distressed people, but on personally visiting and supervising the relief and rehabilitation efforts, and blessing those in misery . He visited the earthquake-affected areas in Latur in Maharashtra and Bhuj in Gujarat. During the Bhuj earthquake he travelled nearly 800 kilometres every day for a week, stopping at various places to provide solace and courage to the disaster-stricken people and organised reconstruction of pucca dwellings for the poor. Similarly he extended a lot of timely assistance to the unfortunate victims of the recent flash floods in Uttarakhand and earthquakes in Sikkim and Nepal.

## **Modern Approach**

For 62 long years, Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji has been demonstrating to the outside world the how and why of strict adherence to Sanatana Dharma through his own example. While following the tenets of his Sanyasa asrama very much on the lines of the Rishis of ancient yugas, he has kept himself abreast of the latest advancements in science and technology, archaeology, space research, atomic power, and social and economic changes in the society in India and even in countries abroad. His bold initiatives in all human endeavours in keeping with modern requirements are built on solid foundations laid down by Adi Sankara and his venerable Guru in their interpretations of Vedas and Sastras. His genius has been in adapting tools of modern technology, travel and communication to reach out to people without diluting the core values. Sri Acharya Swamiji is keen to participate as much in Veda Sastra Vidvat Sadas as in scientific exhibitions and multi religious meets.

### **Universality**

Sri Acharya Swamiji's simplicity (Soulabhya) and concern for the most ordinary problems of common man irrespective of religion, caste and community have earned the admiration and respect of one and all. No problem is too trivial for his personal attention. He insists on visiting Dalit colonies during his visits to cities and meeting and encouraging the downtrodden. Sri Swamiji put in tremendous personal efforts to find a solution of the tangled Ram Janmabhumi issue, acceptable to all parties; he established peace and harmony in the warring groups. His close friends and admirers include not just the heads of Hindu Mathams and temple administrations, but also the chief representatives of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism etc. His patriotic fervour and enthusiasm for the country is infectious. (It is a moving sight to see him stand in attention and sing the national anthem in public functions).

**“That I have been there for 50 years is of no consequence. What is more important is what has been done for our people”-** so said Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, on commencement of the Peetharohana Swarna Jayanthi Mahotsav in 2003. Similarly he accepted the idea of the Vajra Mahotsava (commencement of 80 years) celebrations in 2014 on one condition. He said: **“Feed the poor. Look after the needy. Educate the illiterate. Empower them to earn their daily wages and lead a life of dignity. Every morsel of food they eat from your efforts is your Bhiksha Vandanam to me.”** This

eloquent statement brings out the essence of the Acharya. Sri Swamiji is the first and the only Acharya to have travelled across the country three times, covering nearly a million kilometres, mostly on foot. He took to modes of transport other than on foot with due consideration of advice tendered to him by security agencies and of urge to save time and meet as many devotees as possible. Even at the ripe old age of 80, Sri Swamiji never tires of travelling. He often says that a Sanyasi should not stay too long in one place. An invitation to perform Kumbhabhishekam of a temple in some remote place is a good enough excuse for Sri Swamiji to go, bless and guide the people there and in many places en route. He participates in Kumbh Melas and festivities where masses congregate. His Vijaya Yatras (tours of triumph) are all woven around this unique concern. He has visited all the important places of worship in India (i.e.) 51 Sakthi Peethas, 7 Moksha Puris, Dwadasa Jyotirlinga Kshethras and has bathed in all the 7 Sacred rivers. His peregrinations take him to the remotest nook and corner of not just Bharat, but also of neighbouring countries including Nepal, Sikkim, China and Bangladesh. Sri Swamiji is thus verily a religious/ cultural ambassador. He is the only saint to have been invited by the Chinese Government to visit China. He was accorded the honour of a State Guest during his brief halt in China on his way to Kailas- Manasarovar. At his instance Pratishtha of the idol of Adi Sankara was performed in Manasarovar during his visit. He is the only Sankaracharya after Adi Sankara to have visited Kailas- Manasarovar. He has travelled to Amarnath and the Sindhu River. He was invited by the Bangladesh Government and he visited Dhaka. The Prime Minister and the cabinet called on him and paid their respects. The road leading to the Dhakeswari Temple has been named after him. The government also sanctioned and released through his hands 1 crore Takka for the renovation of the Dhakeswari Temple. He had the idol of Adi Sankara erected and consecrated in all the 12 Jyotirlinga kshetras. He leaves no stone unturned in efforts at forging unity and harmony among the people of our vast country with many varying traditions and habits. He always drives home the underlying spiritual principle of Advaitic unity in cosmic creation. **He says: "If Iswara appears in front of me I shall not ask for wealth, fame or immortality. I shall ask for the ability to get into other people's hearts and remove their sorrow and tears."**

When Sri Acharya Swamiji was performing Chaturmasyam in Paithan in Maharashtra in 1984, a proposal to erect a statue of Sri Adi Sankara in the local Sant Eknath Samadhi Mandir came up. The whole town supported this idea, but one doctor opposed it. As Swamiji was keen to

enlist the cooperation of everyone, the idea was dropped. When the time came for Swamiji to leave Paithan after spending three months there, the doctor said to him: “Maharaj, I have troubled you much. Please don't curse me.” Swamiji smiled and said: “Doctor, I did not experience any trouble. The talk of curse is completely wrong. Even if you cut this body into several pieces, each piece will only bless you. I have worn this saffron cloth not for cursing anybody, but for seeing Narayana in everybody.” The offshoot of this expression of compassion was that the same doctor changed his mind, got the statue of Adi Sankara installed in the same place and invited Sri Swamiji to come and inaugurate it.

### **Bala Swamiji's Tributes**

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji initiated his successor Acharya into Sanyasa asrama on May 29, 1983. The excerpts from speeches delivered on various occasions about his Guru Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji by Pujya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, the 70<sup>th</sup> Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, popularly called 'Bala Periyaval' (Bala Swamiji) are given elsewhere. He says: “Words fail me to express the great qualities of my Guru that I have observed at very close quarters.... His Holiness is most simple, with an ever smiling face and easily approachable (Soulabhyam) to one and all. He is a walking encyclopaedia. 'Gurupriya' on the subject of Vedanta (Brahma Sutras) authored by him is in a class by itself. He is a respecter of good things wherever they are and would not fail to recognise and reward. His skill of management is a textbook for students of management studies. His compassion knows no bounds. His interest in Veda and Veda Vidyarthi is beyond words. He has been encouraging Vedic scholars by rewarding them and encouraging them to study Veda Bhashyam, the study of which is waning nowadays. His Guru bhakti is well known. Whatever his Guru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji wished to be done during his time, the present Periyaval has fulfilled them without fail. His assessments of situation, judgment of person, and predictions have never failed. He is a role model to be followed. The respect and regard shown by other religious leaders is a proof of his greatness. His deep-rooted conviction in our tradition and culture and his encouragement for scientific advancement in terms of use to propagate our culture makes him a great bridge between the old and the new. His dealing with the press, his interviews and opinions are acclaimed worldwide.

Last but not the least, is his view of social reformation. Hinduism in the past was individual oriented. It stressed the upliftment of the individual in the spiritual field to attain the position of no return (i.e.) without rebirth. The credit for bringing Hinduism to the doors of the society for everyone's upliftment through the movement of Jana Kalyan and Jana Jagran goes to him. His attempts to make people realise the importance of service to the communities, society and to the nation by taking to heart that MANAVA SEVA IS MAHESWARA SEVA, is the crown of his services.

His vision has never been narrow or restricted to any particular area, but to the world in general and the nation in particular. His thought and activities have always been for national integration.”

Do we need to say anything further?

## **SUBRAMANIAN TO SANKARACHARYA**

### **Bharata Desa, the Guru of the universe**

Our Bharata Desa has been the fountainhead of a great civilization. It is a great fortune of the people of this country that they have inherited a great culture, rich moral values and very many diverse languages and literature. In spite of adverse challenges it has faced, our ancient cultural tradition nurtured by selfless seers and protected by great sacrifice of very many men and women of this land has survived. In this Punya Bhoomi of ours, where numerous rishis, saints and jnanis traversed the length and breadth of this land on foot, each handful of dust is as worthy as sandal powder, each village a ground of penance and meditation. It has holy rivers like the Ganga, and Bhagavan's Avatara Sthalas. In almost every village there is a temple with some hoary history behind it. These temples were the pivot of life. They reflect our tradition in which philosophy, religion and ethics are not merely abstract principles detracted from real life, but they are its very core, shaping all aspects of life both mundane and spiritual. This is the uniqueness of our Bharatiya tradition.

The Southern part of Bharat is glorified as very sacred as it has many wonderful temples of limitless splendour; Nayanmars and Alvars have enjoyed and sung the glory of Bhagavan; the tradition of Gnana has grown and come down to us from ancient times. This is why Sekkizhar has called this part as 'the South, which did severe penance' in his Periya Puranam. In this Southern part, ruled by the three great dynasties (Chola, Chera and Pandya), Thanjavur district is unique in greatness. It is this Thanjavur land, which is extolled due to the river Kaveri, hailed as one of the seven holiest rivers in Bharat and which has the distinction of 'not failing even if the heavens fail' and which is reverentially called 'Ponni' in Tamil (river of gold); it has kshetras equal in merit to Kashi – like Tiruvaiyaru, Tiruvidaimarudur, Mayiladithurai,

Svetharanyam (Tiruvenkadu), Srivanchiyam (Chayavanam); it has Tiruvarur, which bestows Mukthi on those who are born there. This area known as Cholamandalam in earlier times is famed as the rice bowl of the South. This Thanjavur district, which has the distinction of nurturing great followers of dharma, including yagas as well as public services like Annadanam etc., added to its glory by bestowing a Gnanaguru on this world.

### **The greatly fortunate Mahadeva Iyer**

There is a village known as Sattanur on the banks of river Vennar in Thanjavur district. Here in a Vadama brahmana family with long and glorious lineage of Ausatya gotram and Rigveda, was born Panchapagesa Iyer. To this Panchapagesa Iyer and his wife Yogambal was born a son called Mahadeva Iyer. It is indeed interesting to note that a Yoga Guru, who was going to adorn the Yogalinga Peetham (Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham) later, was born to Mahadeva Iyer, who was born to Yogambal!

Mahadeva Iyer developed knowledge of Samskrit as well as English as per the practice prevalent then. He took over the administration of Amara Bharati Pariksha Samiti, an organization started with the blessings of Sri Paramacharya, to propagate and popularize Samskrit. He worked in the 'Loco' division of Southern Railway. He lived in 'Adichapuram' Samskrit. He worked in the 'Loco' division of Southern Railway. He lived in 'Adichapuram' (Adittan Uditta Puram- town where Aditya, Sun dawned). Though employed, he did not leave his family tradition; he performed Siva Pooja with prescribed rituals. On every Ekadasi day, there used to be bhajans and Ramayana Pravachan in his house. He had excellent culture, sweet words, humility and devotion to Acharya. He married Parvathi Ammal, daughter of Nemmeli Atmanatha Iyer of Mannargudi. They had two male and two female issues. After ten years of marriage, Parvathi Ammal attained Bhgavan's lotus feet unexpectedly. Mahadeva Iyer was shocked. To add to his sorrow, three of his children passed away in quick succession. His misery knew no bounds. He consoled himself with the thought of having to protect the one female child still with him. After some time elapsed this way, the need arose for a life companion to rear the child and look after the family. On 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1933, Mahadeva Iyer married Saraswathi following Vedic practice. Saraswathi was the daughter of Ramamritha Iyer of the village of 'IRUL NEEKKI', located nearby.

### **'IRUL NEEKKI' provided by 'IRUL NEEKKI'**

'IRUL NEEKKI' (remover of darkness) is a nice village. In the north flows the river Harischandra, bearing the name of the great king whose name is synonymous with Truth. Nice fields and coconut groves dot the surroundings everywhere. Kailasanatha temple on the east, Lakshmi-Narayana temple on the west and temples of Grama Devatas on the north and south adorn this place. There is also the legend that during his exile in the forest Sri Rama came here. Many Agnihotris lived here. Mahadeva Iyer, eager to have a male issue, worshipped his family deity with devotion and discipline and performed Anna danam. With Bhagavan being compassionate in granting the wishes of his devotees, Saraswathi Ammal was soon in the family way.

When Mahadeva Iyer was working in Villupuram, a Sanyasi visited him one day in his house. Iyer extended courtesies to him. The happy Sanyasi prescribed certain regulations in order to remove the deficiencies coming down from the past in the family history and to get a good male child. Saraswathi Ammal strictly followed these instructions; she took bath early in the morning and worshipped Bhagavan. She prayed to Gomata with calf and fed her with grass. Mahadeva Iyer overcame the obstacles in getting a good male child by planting and rearing coconut palms on the banks of the tank in the Siva temple.

### **Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1935**

This was the sacred day for this world; the day when our Guru Jagadguru Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji incarnated on this earth as 'IRUL NEEKKI' (remover of darkness) to remove the darkness of ignorance of the world. The bright speck of Gnana descended on earth at 7 p.m. in the night on Thursday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the Tamil month of Adi (18.7.1935), on Tritiya of Krishnapaksha during the time of Sravishta (Avittam) star and Siddhayoga.

Mahadeva Iyer had gone to the head office in Tiruchirappalli on official duty that day; he went to Srirangam to have the Lord's darshan that evening. He reached Chakratirtha inside the

temple precincts in order to perform Sandhyavandanam. But he could not get the required Vibhuti; he managed with 'Vari Pundram' (wearing streaks of water instead of Vibhuti) and then had darshan of Sri Ranganatha. He then went to Tiruvanaikka during his return and offered worship to Jambukeswara and Akhilandeswari. No Gurukkal (Archaka) could be seen in both the Sannidhis. It was 7.30 p.m. Without getting Vibhuti anywhere, he left for Villupuram by train.

It was while he was having darshan of the Lord in Jambukeswaram (Tiruvanaikka) that in Irul Neekki a male child was born to him by the grace of Akhilandeswari. Who can decipher the seeming coincidence! As he had contracted Sutakam (impurity on childbirth), he could not lay hands on Vibhuti at that time! Whatever happens to anyone anywhere - is it not due to the will of the Lord!

There was another aspect of wonder in the birth. The child was born with both palms joined in the direction of the earth. People were surprised at this. Mahadeva Iyer's joy on knowing about the birth of the male child was indeed boundless. There was no chance for him to know at that time of the form of incarnation of Gnana that the child would take in the years to come. While on this, we may consider these facts: Mahadeva is Lord Siva, the form of Gnana. Sastra says: 'Gnanam-icchet-Maheswarat', i.e. one should seek Gnanam from Maheswara. Saraswathi is the mother incarnate of Gnana. The child born to these two can only be Gnana incarnate! This is what actually came to the fore in later years.

The child, who was going to be Gnana in human form later, was named appropriately as Subramanian, one of the names of Muruga, the Gnanapanditha. When the child became one year old, Mahadeva Iyer celebrated the first birthday with devotion by performing worship with Abhisheka with eleven Rudra chants and eleven materials in the adjacent Vinayaka temple.

The child was five years old in 1940. He was initiated into learning in the Vedic tradition through appropriate rituals. Mahadeva Iyer then put him in an elementary school in Bhimanayakan Thoppu in Villupuram. When Subramanian was in his eighth year, on Sri Sankara Jayanthi day on the 9<sup>th</sup> May, 1943 (26<sup>th</sup> day of Chitra in Subhanu year), Upanayanam and Brahmopadesam were performed as per Vedic traditions for the boy. In the same Muhurtham that day, Mahadeva Iyer celebrated the marriage of Lakshmi, his daughter through first wife. Two sons were born to him later, Viswanathan and Ramakrishnan.

## **Vedic Study**

Mahadeva Iyer was greatly devoted to Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji (Sri Paramacharya). In 1928, when Sri Paramacharya camped in Villupuram for 12 days, Mahadeva Iyer would go to Srimatham every day in the evening after the day's work was over and after performing Sandhyavandanam; he would delight in having darshan of the Pooja of Sri Chandramouliswara and listening to the discourse of Sri Paramacharya.

When Subramanian was eight, his father started to organize his Vedic learning. He decided to entrust the boy to the charge of Brahmasri Kunju Sastrigal (alias Krishnamurthy sastrigal), who was the younger brother of Sri Paramacharya in his Poorvasrama and who taught Rigveda in the Rig Veda Pathasala in Tiruvidaimarudur, run under the auspices of Srimatham. He thought of seeking the blessing of Sri Paramacharya before taking this step.

Sri Paramacharya, who was on tour in the Chola land, travelled back towards Kanchipuram with a view to performing the Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Kamakshi Devi. He camped at Villupuram for a day en route. Mahadeva Iyer met him and sought his blessings and permission to put his son in the Veda Pathasala in Tiruvidaimarudur. Sri Paramacharya instructed that Vedic study of the boy could be initiated in Kanchipuram in the divine presence of Sri Kamakshi Devi in an auspicious manner during Kumbhabhishekam, when a number of Vidvans including the Tiruvidaimarudur Sastrigal would go over there. Mahadeva Iyer, who accordingly arrived at Kanchipuram with his son Subramanian, was delighted to witness Poojas in Yagasala.

It was Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1944 (22<sup>nd</sup> of Thai month of Subhanu year). Good Muhurtha day. Vedic study of Subramanian was started in the Sannidhi of Sri Chandramouliswara in Kanchipuram with the blessings of Sri Paramacharya. What a coincidence that in the very presence of that great soul, to whom this child was later going to become disciple for life, Vedic studies of the child commenced! Study continued for two days.

On Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1944 (25<sup>th</sup> of Thai of Subhanu), Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Kamakshi temple was celebrated grandly. Mahadeva Iyer returned with his son to Villupuram thereafter. Brahmasri Kunju Sastrigal, on his way back from Tirupati, came to Villupuram and took his disciple Subramanian with him to Tiruvidaimarudur.

Subramanian stayed in Tiruvidaimarudur for six years and completed study of Rigveda. During this time Brahmasri Krishnamurthy Sastrigal taught the boy the subtleties of Dharma Sastras. Wealth of Veda and Vedic life came together to the boy. The young mind, which was to strive for the upliftment of Vedic life in the land in later years, learnt all aspects very well from the teacher with great devotion and love. Subramanian secured the first prize in the examination of Veda and Dharma Sastra held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1946.

### **Sri Paramacharya's Decision**

Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya, the nourishing fountain of Gnana, the embodiment of tapas, decided to select a successor as the head of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and train him in his own lifetime. He sought to find a suitable youth for this purpose. As per regulations of Srimatham, the youth should be a brahmachari (celibate) of Rigvedic descent, have studied Rigveda, be keenly interested in conduct and rituals as laid down and be from a good family. Gurunatha contemplated seriously to find someone with all these qualifications. The thought of Subramanian arose in his mind at that time.

When Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada, the ocean of Advaita Gnana, was ascending the Sarvagna Peetham in Kanchipuram with the grace of Sri Kamakshi, a Tamil (Dravida) brahmana came there for debate. Bhagavatpada defeated him in the debate. History records that however, pleased with the boy's intellectual attainments, Bhagavatpada praised him and appointed him as his successor to lead Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. In accordance with such a tradition, our Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya thought of Subramanian, the gift of Irul Neekki, who had just completed Vedic study in Tiruvidaimarudur.

In the year 1948 when Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya had camped in Valavanur near Villupuram, on the day of the auspicious Makara Sankranthi, Sri C.S.Viswanatha Iyer, the

Manager of Srimatham and Brahmasri Krishna Sastrigal of Mayiladuthurai visited Sri Mahadeva Iyer at his residence. Their arrival as bearers of an important message indeed laid the foundation for the salvation of the world. Sri Krishna Sastrigal spoke: "Sri Paramacharya wishes to select a suitable successor and train the incumbent himself; he considers your son Subramanian as possessing all the necessary qualifications for this purpose. You and your family should agree to this, considering the welfare of the world; we have come only for this." Mahadeva Iyer was overcome by shock for a second. The next second his mind was vacillating with agitation between the order of the Guru and his inability to come to an immediate decision. He said he would let them know of his decision after consulting his family and his son Subramanian.

After a day or two, Mahadeva Iyer and his family arrived at the conclusion that it was their duty to obey the order of Sri Paramacharya. Subramanian said firmly in agreement that he accepts this message as the order of Gurunatha and Iswara. Though Mahadeva Iyer was happy at the ripeness of the boy's mind even at the age of thirteen, was he also not swayed by the grief of separation from his son? Victory was for Gnana. Mahadeva Iyer conveyed his decision to Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya. Subramanian was then sent from Tiruvidaimarudur to Jagadguru Vidyasthanam in Tiruvanaikka in order to continue with Vedic studies. Mahadeva Iyer also came to Tiruchi on transfer from Villupuram. It was testing time. Mahadeva Iyer suddenly lost his daughter Lakshmi and her child. He was very much aggrieved at this quick succession of miserable events.

### **The Gnani in making in Vidyasthanam**

As he had completed study of Rigveda Samhita in Tiruvidaimarudur, Subramanian continued to study Padam, Kramam, Ghanam etc. of Rigveda and Upanishads of different Veda Sakhas (branches) in Jagadguru Vidyasthanam with devotion and discipline. He had his boarding and lodging in the residence of Brahmasri Balakrishna Sastrigal and pursued his studies in the Vidyasthanam. He also studied Veda under Brahmasri Sivaramakrishna Sastrigal and Kavyas (Epics) under Brahmasri Balakrishna Sastrigal.

In the year 1950, Srimatham had camped in Tuthukudi near Nannilam in Thanjavur district. On receipt of instructions from Sri Paramacharya, Mahadeva Iyer went there with his son. Many important persons from different localities had assembled for darshan. It was then that in the presence of so many persons, Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya publicly made the announcement of his decision to appoint Sri Subramanian as his successor. The delight of the audience was boundless! They were gratified at the fortune, so to say, of getting the benefit of possessing their ears!

Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya made the necessary arrangements on behalf of Srimatham to teach Subramanian the necessary Upanishads etc. suited for the post of Acharya. Brahmasri Krishna Sastrigal taught Aitareya Upanishad of Rigveda; Brahmasri Viraswami Sastrigal, Taitriya Upanishad of Yajurveda; Brahmasri Subramania sastrigal, Chandogya Upanishad of Samaveda; Brahmasri Allur Parasurama Ghanapathigal, Upanishads like Brihadaranyakam, Isavasyam etc. of Sukla Yajurveda. This training continued till March of 1954.

### **Bharata Desa Yatra prior to Anointment**

Mahadeva Iyer desired to tour Bharata desa with his son before change of Asrama of the latter, expected soon. Sri Paramacharya blessed this effort. Iyer took two months' leave and started the tour with Subramanian. They had darshan at many kshetras including Madurai, Tirunelveli, Papanasam, Tirukkutram, Palani, Rameswaram, Dhanushkoti, Kanyakumari, Bengaluru, Nashik, Panchavati, Pandharpur, Pune, Mumbai, Narmada river shore, Agra, Mathura, Delhi, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kanpur, Allahabad, Kashi, Gaya, Kolkata etc. This sacred tour of Bharata desa acted as the catalyst for the ripening of mind of Subramanian and the harbinger of his future tours of the land.

### **Compassionate Jayendra in Kamakoti Peetham**

Sri Paramacharya then decided to initiate Sri Subramanian into Sanyasa asrama with the necessary rituals and instructions. Mahadeva Iyer completed Yatra danam, Sankalpam and Devata Poojas as per Vedic rules in Tiruchirappalli and reached Kanchipuram with his family.

Appropriate Vedic rituals were conducted suitably in Kanchipuram from 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1954. Sri Paramacharya was then in the Matham in Chinna Kanchipuram. Sri Subramanian went to Tirupati with his father and had darshan of Lord Venkatesa, their family deity. While returning, he went to Kalavai and worshipped at the Adhishtanams of two of the earlier Acharyas and then at the Adhishtanam of another Acharya at Ambikapuram (Keezhambi) near Kanchipuram.

Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1954 (Vijaya year, Panguni 9<sup>th</sup>) is a special day in the history of Srimatham; a day on which one more fragrant flower was added to the 'Kamakoti' garland. Early in the morning that day Sri Subramanian took as Prasadam the sacred earth at the foot of the Asvatha tree on the banks of the Ananthasagara tank and proceeded to Srimatham, where he offered Pooja to the idol of Sri Sureswaracharya. He then went to Sri Kamakshi temple, where he worshipped Ambika and Adi Sankara, the founder of Srimatham. He had darshan at Kumarakottam and the Aamra vriksha (mango tree) at the Ekamreswara temple. He prayed to Sri Tripurasundari sametha Sri Chandramouliswara, the primal deity of Srimatham. He performed the 'Poorvanga' rituals of offerings to Devas, Rishis and Pitrus as per Vedic rules.

Having spent the entire previous night seated in silent contemplation with no sleep, as required by tradition, Sri Subramanian proceeded now to Mukthi Mandapam on the banks of the glorious Sarvatirtha tank and awaited the arrival of his Gurunatha. Kanchipuram wore a festive, celebratory look. Thousands of devotees assembled in Kanchipuram to witness the Mahopadesa event.

9 a.m.... Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya started from Srimatham. With eight Dandi Sanyasis following and surrounded by crowds of devotees, he reached the Mukthi Mandapam. Masses of devotees were seen on all sides, hiding the steps of the tank.

10 a.m.... Followed by Vedic pundits, Sri Subramanian got down to the Sarvatirtha tank, stood in waist-deep water and renounced all worldly ties. Rituals were gone through; Sri Paramacharya offered him the saffron apparel. He then taught the Mahavakya to Sri

Subramanian in the Sannidhi of Sri Visveswara there and accepted him as his chief disciple and successor and gave him the Diksha nama of 'Jayendra Saraswathi'.

The titles (Yoga pattas) for the Peethadhipatis are said to be ten- Vana, Aranya, Bharati, Saraswathi, Puri, Tirtha, Ashrama, Giri, Parvata and Sagara. Adi Sankara defeated Devi Saraswathi in debate and got the title of Saraswathi. It is also said that Indra became angry when Aswini Devas relieved Mandana Mishra of his dire sickness and that Indra gave his own title to Sankara later, on realising his greatness. Hence, the Peethadhipatis of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham are accorded the title of Indrasaraswathi.

The 19 year old Sri Subramanian now became the 69<sup>th</sup> head of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and was called Sri Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji. The festivities of Mahopadesa came to an end. Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya, followed by his chief disciple, then reached Srimatham via Lingappier Street with the traditional musical instruments and Srimatham honours in attendance. The crowd of devotees seemed like a big ocean wave. Those who had darshan of the two holy personages together melted in devotion.

In the Sannidhi of Sri Chandramouliswara in Srimatham Sri Paramacharya blessed his chief disciple and successor Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji with a Rudraksha mala, a sphatika (crystal) mala and Pitambaram (shawl) which he had received from Tirupati Devasthanam. The Nitya Pooja in Srimatham was over by 3 p.m. that day. By the time Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya finished giving Prasadam to the devotees and disciples, it was 3 a.m. the next day; imagine how many people would have come to Srimatham on the occasion!

From that day Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji, the 68<sup>th</sup> head of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, came to be known fondly as Sri Periyaval/ Sri Maha Periyaval; Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, the 69<sup>th</sup> head of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham as Sri Pudu Periyaval. After getting into Sanyasa asrama, Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji stayed in Kanchi Srimatham and learnt the Prasthanas Traya Bhashyas from his Gurunatha. (Prasthanas Traya refers to the three fundamental texts of Sanatana Dharma - Upanishdas, Vyasa's Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita. The Bhashyas are commentaries on these texts by Adi Sankaracharya, through which he reestablished and propagated Advaita Siddhanta). Sri Acharya Swamiji also picked up the rituals connected with the Nitya pooja of Sri Tripurasundari sametha Sri Chandramouliswara

and the traditions of Srimatham. He spent fifteen years studying Vyakarana, Mimamsa, Nyaya Sastras etc. from Panditaraja Sri V.Subramania Sastrigal, Sastra Ratnakara Mandalika Sri Venkata Sastrigal, Sri N. Ramakrishna Sastrigal, Sri Ranganatha Sastrigal, Mudikondan Sri Srinivasa Sastrigal, Sri Ramamurthy Sastrigal, Sri S.R.Krishnamurthy Sastrigal and Pratyankarai Sri Subramania Sastrigal. At the same time he served his Gurunatha ceaselessly. Along with his Guru he went on a tour starting from Rameswaram extending upto Andhra Pradesh.

A few years passed. Having found that Sri Pudu Periyaval had gained complete mastery over Srimatham administration and traditions and rituals of Nitya Pooja, Sri Paramacharya entrusted all the responsibilities of Srimatham to him and immersed himself in tapas. Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji accepted the instruction of his Gurunatha in all humility and seriousness and has been fully guiding all the work of Srimatham ever since.

Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya stayed in Kalavai for some time. Later he stayed for a long time in Sivaasthanam in Kanchipuram (Tenambakkam), performed tapas and blessed the visitors. Thereafter he undertook a tour of north India. A large number of devotees had the good fortune of having darshan of his golden red lotus feet. There is not even an iota of doubt that Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya, the flame of Sivagnana and Advaitagnana, the very pinnacle of the sacred Vedas, who lived a life of tapas and was hailed by the entire world, has indeed been guiding all of us on the right path with utmost compassion, while in flesh and blood earlier and now from the Adhishthanam in Srimatham in Kanchipuram.

Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, who was trained by his Gurunatha for about sixteen years, started on his first independent tour in 1970 with full blessings of Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya. From then onwards upto now, he has toured almost all the nooks and corners of Bharata Desa and initiated countless public service activities.

The 'birudavali' of Srimatham refers to the Sankaracharya as Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya. 'Hansa' or the mythical swan has the rare ability of separating milk from water and drinking milk alone. So also, the Acharya performs the seemingly impossible

task of separating Parabrahmam from Samsara, where the two are intertwined closely, and immerses himself in the bliss of Parabrahmam. He is therefore 'Paramahansa'. Sanyasis are prohibited from staying in one place for long in order to avoid attachment to place and people. As they keep moving about constantly, they are known as 'Parivrajakas'. The greatest of such Parivrajaka Acharyas is 'Parivrajakacharyavarya'.

## **SRIMATHAM**

### **KANCHIPURAM**

The Brahmanda Purana says that Kashi and Kanchi are the two eyes of Siva. Kanchi is one of the seven Mokshapuris (sacred cities by living in which or by death wherein, man gets emancipation from birth and death). The other four such sacred places are Ayodhya, Mathura, Kashi, Haridwar (all in UP), Avantika (Ujjain) in M.P. and Dwaraka in Gujarat. Kanchi is the only Mokshapuri in South India. Ayodhya, Mathura and Dwaraka are considered very sacred for devotees of Vishnu, while Kashi and Avantika are holy for devotees of Siva. Haridwar is sacred to Saivites and Saktas also. Kanchi is however considered a sacred centre for devotees of Siva, Vishnu and Sakti alike. History has it that Kanchi was considered a holy spot for Buddhists and Jains as well.

A verse in the Vamana Purana points to Kanchi as a city of fame. Kanchi is cited as a celebrated city of old, in a Samskrit verse by the great Samskrit poet, Kalidasa. Kanchi is described as a holy centre of pilgrimage in the Umasamhita. A verse in it speaks of Sage Vyasa going on pilgrimage to Kanchi. The Markandeya Purana refers to sages residing in Kanchi for performing penance. A verse in the Teerthayatra prakarana of the 10<sup>th</sup> kanda of the Bhagavata Purana refers to the Kamakotipuri Kanchi, the southern Mokshapuri.

Five important sacred places of Siva worship in South India are collectively called "Panchabhuta- Kshetras" associated with the five Mahabhutas, Prthvi (Earth), Apa (Water), Vayu (Air), Tejas (Fire) and Akasa (Ether). Kanchi is the Prthvi-kshetra. Tiruvanaikoil (near Tiruchirapalli) is Apa-kshetra. Tiruvannamalai is Tejas-kshetra and Chidambaram is Akasa-

kshetra. Kalahasti (in Andhra Pradesh) is Vayu-kshetra. In consonance with Kanchi being regarded as Prithvi (Earth) kshetra, the Siva-linga in the Ekamranatha temple - the principal Siva temple of Kanchipuram - is of sand and enclosed in a metallic cover.

Agama texts like the 'Sukshma Agama', 'Karuna Agama' etc. use the word 'Kamakoshta', when indicating the place of Devi (the sanctum) in Siva temples. Works of Silpa-Sastra, such as 'Manasara', refer to Kamakoshta, when dealing with the construction of Devi shrines.

Tantra Sastra texts speak of Kanchi as one of the foremost Sakti-Peethas of our country. The Mahalakshmi-Tantra informs of three Peethas as the foremost of the 108 Sakti-Peethas of the country. One of them is the Kamaraja Peetha at Kanchi, the other two being at Jalandhara and Kamarupa. Saubhagya Chintamani, another Tantric work points to Kanchi as the abode of the 'Akasa-Peetha' of Devi.

The word 'Kanchi' signifies a girdle, i.e. a belt-like, metallic ornament, worn by women, around the waist, just above the hips. Kanchi city is regarded as the 'Navel of the Earth'. The Kanchi Mahatmya Purana refers to Kanchi city as such. 'Kamakshi Vilasam', a section of the Markandeya Purana points to Kanchi as the 'Nabhasthanam', navel of the Universe. The 'Kanchipuranam', written in Tamil, by Sivajnana Munivar refers to the ether in the bila (cave), inside the temple of Sri Kamakshi, as 'the atmosphere pervading the navel of Mother Earth encircled by the sea. The 'Meru Tantra' too also speaks of Kanchi as 'the Navel of the Earth'.

Adi Sankara has been intimately associated with Kanchi. According to biographies of Sankara, he remodelled the city of Kanchi with the assistance of the local ruler and got the temples of Ekamranatha, Kamakshi and Varadaraja reconstructed. He ascended the Sarvajna Peetham at Kanchi and consecrated the Srichakra in front of Devi Kamakshi. He finally established a Matham at Kanchi where he spent his last years, founded a line of ascetic preceptors to be in charge of the Matham by initiating a young boy into the ascetic order and nominating him as his successor Acharya. This Matham is the seat of the famous Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. Adi Sankara attained siddhi (eternal bliss) in the city of Kanchi. A special shrine commemorating this is found in the Kamakshi temple to the northeast of the sanctum.

### **Kanchi- the home of poets and scholars**

References to Vidyanaraya, the sage founder of Vijayanagar empire, of having undergone a course of studies under Sri Vidyatirtha, Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham are available. Great scholars in Samskrit flourished in Kanchi from very early times. The first well-known Pallava ruler Simha Vishnu is said to have brought the Samskrit poet Bharavi to his court. Muka Sankara, the 20th Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, has composed 500 divine Samskrit verses on Devi Kamakshi, under the title 'Mukapanchasati', which is very popular. Mahendra I, the Pallava king, himself an erudite scholar, is the author of the celebrated Samskrit farce, 'Mattavilasa Prahasana'. Dandin, author of the Samskrit rhetoric 'Kavyadarsa', has adorned the court of Rajasimha Pallava who ruled at Kanchi from 685 to 705 A.D. Mayura Kavi, is said to have composed the poem, 'Suryasatakam', of 100 verses at Kanchi. Dharmapala, a native of Kanchi has been a preceptor at the Nalanda University. Amongst the great Tamil poets who have been associated with Kanchipuram, Kacchiyappa Sivacharya, a priest of the Kandakottam temple at Kanchi for a long period, has been the author of Kandapuramam in Tamil (1625 A.D.), following the Skanda Puranam in Samskrit. Parimelazhakar (not the commentator of Tirukkural) a Vaishnavite scholar of Kanchi, has written a commentary on 'Paripadal', a work of the Sangam age. Another famous poet of 17th century, who had been a native of Kanchi, is Sivaprakasa. Some of his well-known works are 'Prabhulingaleelai', 'Siddhanta-sikamani,' 'Vedantachudamani' and a Tamil translation of Sankaracharya's 'Vivekachudamani'.

Kanchi city has flourished as a centre of literary eminence and was well known for institutions called Ghatikas for advanced study of Vedas and Sastras. Epigraphical information reveals that all the different sakhas (branches) of Vedas and all Sastras were taught to thousands of students in the Ghatikas. Many stone inscriptions found in different temples in various places in South India point to the popularity of these Ghatikas.

### **Temples in Kanchi**

Perhaps nowhere else in India can one see such a large number of temples as in Kanchi. According to reliable traditional and literary sources of information, there existed 108 Siva temples, 24 Vishnu temples and a good number of temples of Ganesa. The only temple dedicated to Devi Parvati is the temple of Sri Kamakshi. Among the existing temples of Lord

Siva the most important and the largest is the temple of Ekamranatha. There is a special temple for Subrahmanya (Kumara or Murugan), known as 'Kumara Kottam'.

In the temple of Sri Kamakshi, the space in which the Garbhagriha stands is known as 'Gayatri Mantapam'. It is interesting to note the absence of a mulavighraha and separate garbha griha of Devi in all Siva temples in Kanchipuram. This is as per a tradition emanating from a certain Puranic story. Devi Kamakshi, pleased with the penance of Manmatha, who had been burnt to ashes earlier by Siva, attracted into her 'Bilakasa' (cave-space) all the powers of Sakthi enshrined in all the Devi shrines in the country. Later, in response to Brahma's prayer, Kamakshi ordained that all Siva shrines, except those in Kanchi city, would again have shrines of Sakthi. Kanchi therefore earned the name of 'Sivajitkshetra', the sacred place where Siva had been conquered. The main gopurams (towers) of almost all temples of Kanchi also face the Kamakshi temple. Below the main idol of Sri Kamakshi is the Bilakasa (cave space), which represents the original abode of Devi. Srichakra was established in front of Devi by Sri Adi Sankara in order to control her furiousness as advised by sage Durvasa. The Adhishtanam of Sri Adi Sankara is located in the second Prakara of the temple.

The Siva linga in the famous Siva temple of Ekamranatha derives his name from the single old and sturdy mango tree in the temple precincts. The tree symbolises Vedas and Siva made his original appearance in the sand Linga at the foot of this tree, created by Sri Kamakshi. Celebration of marriage of Ekamreswara with Kamakshi is observed in the temple during the annual Brahmotsavam.

The Varadaraja temple in Kanchipuram is quite famous. The garbhagriha of the Lord is on the top of a rock called Hastagiri (Elephant rock), so called because of its shape. The vimana above the sanctum is called 'Punyakoti Vimanam'.

### **Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham**

There are some very ancient and important monastic religious institutions in Kanchi. The foremost among these is the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, founded by Adi Sankaracharya. According to traditional information and as per the conclusions of research scholars, supported by details found in the chronicles of most of the Sankarite institutions in the country,

this Matham was established in 482 B.C. Parama Pujya Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji, hailed as 'Walking God' and 'Paramacharya', who attained Siddhi in 1994, was the 68th Acharya of this Peetham. Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji is the current presiding Acharya. His disciple and successor designate is Pujya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji. A large concourse of devotees from all over the country gathers at this Matham every day for witnessing the Pujas and for having darshan of the Acharyas and the Adhishtanam of Mahaswami, the 68<sup>th</sup> Sankaracharya, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji.

One feels the intense spirituality and power inherent in a place where religion and culture are embedded on a strong base, as one enters Srimatham. The rituals at the Matham even today enable a committed devotee to experience the cosmic unity and universality of Sanatana Dharma. Sri Matham is full of activities from 'Ushah Kalam' (early morning). Devotional songs and Nadaswaram in the early hours greet the devotees with a religious fervour. A large number of devotees can be seen doing pradakshina (going round) to Sri Mahaswamiji's Brindavan.

Devotees gather in front of the door to Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji's private enclosure to have the "Viswaroopa Darsanam" which normally is at about 5.30 a.m. when Swamiji gives darshan to devotees for a very short time and blesses them. As the day brightens, the number swells. After the darshan of Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji, the devotees move towards Sri Maha Swamiji's Brindavan and then for Sri Bala Periyaval, Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji's darshan. Occasional Upanayanams, Sashtiabdapoorti, Satabishekam, etc., that some devotees perform at the Sri Matham 'Dhyana Mandapam' create a festive atmosphere.

Pujas and other rituals are the regular features followed strictly in accordance with the Vaidika sastra. The daily Pujas are generally conducted by Sri Bala Swamiji, which include Trikala Puja starting with Go – Puja and Gaja – Puja. The daily Trikala Puja is performed to Sri Chandramouleswara with Rudrabishekam to the "Yoga Linga". This Sivalinga was brought by Sri Adi Sankara from Kailas 2500 years ago and is being worshipped since then. As per tradition the daily Puja to the Yoga Linga has to be performed by Sri Acharya Swamiji personally. Devotees witness the daily Puja in large numbers; some also perform Pada Puja during that time. Guru is greater than Bhagavan. Just as Bhagavan's lotus feet are worshipped for obtaining desired fruit in this world as well as in the hereafter, Guru's lotus feet

(Padas) and Padukas are also adored. The Puja performed to Guru's Padas or Padukas is Padapuja. Here Puja is offered to the Padukas of Sri Adi Sankara.

Bhikshavandanam is offered by devotees every day towards the close of the Puja. Nothing equals in merit the act of feeding a Sanyasi and Gnani. Bhikshavandanam is offer of Bhiksha (food in alms) to him and praying for acceptance. Also, Nithya Puja at the Adhistanam is a regular feature, when Sri Acharya Swamiji himself performs Deeparadhana and offers worship. This is attended by a number of devotees. Tirtha Prasadam is distributed after Pujas are over. Every evening at 6.00 p.m. "Deepa Namaskaram" is performed in the presence of Sri Swamiji. This is followed by drum beat and the traditional display of the Chamaram by the temple elephant.

In addition to the Trikala Puja, special Pujas, including abishekam, are conducted on Fridays, Pournami, Pradosham, Sivarathri, Sri Rama Navami, Vinayaka Chaturthi, Narasimha Jayanthi, Deepavali, Sankara Jayanthi, Karthigai Mondays and Gokulashtami. Kanya Puja on Tuesdays and Suvasini Puja on Fridays are also performed. During Navarathri, Navavarana Puja, homam and abishekam are performed three times a day. During the month of Margazhi (Dhanur Masa) special Pujas are conducted throughout the month. Dhanur Masa Puja starts early in the morning at 4.30 a.m.

Every Thursday, Guruvara Sadas, known as Veda Sadas, takes place at Sri Matham. The Sadas is also conducted for every Anusham, Avittam (Sravishta) and Uthiradam (Uthirashadha) stars, which are the birth stars of Maha Swamiji, Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji and Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji respectively and also on the Aradhana day of Maha Swamiji. Eminent scholars take part in the sadas on "Advaita Vedanta Vichara" on Avitta Nakshatram day and "Sastra Vakyam" on Uthirada Nakshatram day. Vedic scholars are honoured with shawl, gold coin, titles etc. The Jayanthis of the three Acharyas and the Aradhana day of Maha Swamiji are celebrated in Srimatham on a grand scale with homams, cultural events etc.

Vyasa Puja and Chaturmasya Vratam are the most important events when devotees from all over the country come in large numbers to actively take part and pay respects to the Acharyas. During Chaturmasya period, Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji conducts "Bhashya Patham" to sanyasins and pandits. In addition, music concerts, debates, discourses, seminars

and workshops are conducted at Sri Matham regularly and vidvans are honoured with shawl, gold coin, titles etc.

The Acharyas devote considerable time from morning to late night every day, listening to the woes and prayers of devotees seeking redress for their sufferings and grievances. They give individual attention to each devotee, make enquiries and bless them. One can see great satisfaction and happiness on the face of the devotees as soon as they have the opportunity to pay their respects to the Acharyas and receive prasadam from them.

Amidst darshan to devotees, the Acharyas find time to meet religious and social workers, who come from various places to seek advice, guidance and blessings on temple construction, renovation, kumbabishekam and other temple related issues. Many matters related to religion and society, including Vedic rescensions, Veda Pathasalas, Gosalas, publication of books, conduct of homams, pujas, pilgrimages etc., encouragement and training of youth etc. are discussed threadbare during such meetings. Then there are VIPs and foreigners eager to meet the Acharyas and receive their blessings.

Another important Matham in Kanchipuram is Sri Upanishad Brahmendra Matham, named after an ascetic, Upanishad Brahmendra, commentator of 108 upanishads.

## **Renaissance of Hindu Religion and Culture**

### **ANCIENT LORE**

Vedas are the divine basis of Sanatana Dharma. Vedas have prescribed how an individual can regulate life in an orderly manner to make it purposeful, peaceful and blissful. Vedas urge every individual to perform Karma (actions) for one's spiritual wellbeing and also for the welfare of the society at large. Thus Dharma, according to Vedas, is that which fosters both Individual and social welfare. Vedas are sounds, hailed as the very breath of Parameswara. They are 'Apourusheya', not of human origin. They were picked up from Space by highly sensitive and dedicated Rishis of yore during periods of deep concentration. They have all along been transmitted to successive generations of disciples by selfless Gurus through word of mouth purely for 'Lokasangraha' (welfare of the world). Known as 'Srutis', they have come down to us from times immemorial with their pronunciation, intonation etc. intact through rigorous training and careful monitoring. It is a pity that we have lost many of the Vedic Sakhas (branches) over time. Parama Pujya Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji, in line with the hoary tradition of the Kanchi Matham, has been paying special attention to ensure preservation of available Sakhas of Vedas for posterity by opening and maintaining Veda Pathasalas and supporting Vedic teachers and students. Efforts are constantly on to locate, identify, preserve and spread rare Sakhas wherever they may be found. For instance, in November 1974, when Sri Swamiji camped in Bhuvaneshwar, he discussed with important people of the locality a plan to increase the number of Pandits in Orissa, which is the home of

Atharva Veda. A lot of encouragement is similarly given by the Acharya to the study of Veda Bhashyam, Vedangas, Upavedas, Darsanas, Dharma Sastra, Samskrit etc.

A summary of the important activities of Srimatham in pursuit of the above objectives under the benign guidance of Jagadguru Sri Swamiji is given below.

### **Srimatham Branches**

Branches of Srimatham in various places in the country play a leading role in the spread of awareness and preservation of Sanatana Dharma.

1. Rameswaram
2. Kanyakumari
3. Brahmadesam (Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu)
4. Madurai
5. Ilayathangudi (Thanjavur district) (Adhishthanam)
6. Kulithalai (Tiruchi district)
7. Nerur(Tiruchi district)(Adhishthanam)
8. Salem
9. Coimbatore
10. Pudukkottai
11. Thanjavur
12. Kumbakonam
13. Irulneekki (Thanjavur district)
14. Sirkali (Birthplace of Saint Tirugnanasambandar)
15. Tiruvidaimarudur (Thanjavur district)
16. Tiruvanaikka (near Tiruchi)
17. Villupuram
18. Vadamampulam (Adhishthanam)
19. Kanchipuram (Vishnu Kanchipuram)
20. Ambi (Adhishthanam)
21. Kalavai (Adhishthanam)
22. Chennai – Mambalam
23. Chennai – Tiruvetteswaranpettai

24. Chennai – Tiruvotriyur (Adhishtanam)
25. Vaideeswarankoil (Thanjavur district)
26. Srisaillam
27. Vijayawada
28. Visakhapatnam
29. Yelur
30. Masulipatnam
31. Secunderabad
32. Tiruvananthapuram
33. Bengaluru
34. Puri
35. Kolkata
36. Mumbai
37. Kashi
38. Gaya
39. Triyambakam (Maharashtra)
40. Haridwar

In most of these places Sri Adi Sankara's image has been installed; facilities have been provided for performance of sraadhams, and stay of sanyasis.

### **Veda Pathasalas**

Sri Kanchi Matham has established Veda Pathasalas in certain centres that are run by local trusts. In these Pathasalas young men are trained in Veda recitation and performance of various religious rites for householders. A trust has been registered at Kanchipuram for providing financial assistance to Vedic Pandits. Provision of financial assistance to the extent of Rs. 1000/- per month to 250 selected scholars commenced from January 2000. Free food and accommodation are provided to the students. Places where such Veda Pathasalas are located:

Tamil Nadu

1. Kanchipuram (also Kalavai, Vedal)

2. Poondamalli (Nazarathpettai)
3. Villupuram
4. Tiruvidaimarudur
5. Kumbakonam
6. Tiruvanaikka
7. Rameswaram
8. Polur
9. Brahmadesam (Tirunelveli district)
10. Salem
11. Coimbatore
12. Irulneekki (Thanjavur district) (birthplace of Sri JayendraSaraswathiSwamiji)
13. Athur (Chingleput district)

#### Karnataka

14. Hospet
15. Kollur

#### Kerala

16. Chavannur (Tantra Vidya Peetham: Tantrics in Kerala are taught Tantra and Jaiminiya Samaveda).

#### Andhra Pradesh

17. Hyderabad (Veda Bhavan)
18. Srisailam
19. Vijayawada
20. Masulipatnam (Rig &Yajur Veda Pathasalas)
21. Yelur

#### Madhya Pradesh

22. Chitrakoot

#### Gujarat

23. Dwaraka (Samaveda Pathasala)

Odisha

24. Puri (Atharvana Veda Pathasala)

Bengal

25. Kolkata (Veda Bhavan- Sama Veda Pathasala)

Bihar

26. Mandarhill (Samaveda Pathasala)

Uttar Pradesh

27. Kashi (Varanasi- SuklaYajur Veda Pathsalas)

28. Ayodhya

Chandigarh

Nepal

Veda Pathasalas in Nepal and Rameswaram are being run on the principle of reciprocity in running the administration. Nepal government runs the Rameswaram Veda Pathasala, while Srimatham runs the Nepal Pathasala; this is a glowing example of integration among nations.

### **Veda Rakshana Nidhi Trust**

Under the close guidance of Sri Acharya Swamiji, this Trust works for preservation of the ancient teaching methods of Vedas and promotion of Vedic culture, including spreading of knowledge of Vedas and Vedic principles. Great importance is given to pronunciation, punctuation and enunciation during chanting of Vedas.

Programmes run by the Trust include:

Running/ aiding Veda Pathasalas.

Aid to students and teachers under Niyamadhyayana scheme (here the father teaches his son, both living together).

Encouraging Vedic Pundits to start Veda Pathasalas for rare Veda Sakhas (branches).

Conducting Veda Parayanas and Seminars on Vedic studies.

Conducting Varshika (annual) and Poorthi (completion) examinations and giving incentives to teachers including special awards, and graded awards to students.

Encouraging students by giving stipend for higher studies in Vedas and Vedangas.

The Trust actively seeks and collects donations from the public towards running the programmes.

### **Kalavai Brindavana Trust**

This Trust was established in memory of the Guru and Paramaguru of Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya. The Adhishthanams of these two Peethadhipathis are located in Kalavai. The office of this Trust is in Kumbakonam. Services of the Trust include running of Veda Pathasalas, award of scholarships to Samskrit students and assistance to students of Karmakanda Prayogam.

### **Shashtyabdapoorthi Trust**

This Trust was established to commemorate the Shashtyabdapoorthi of Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya for the purpose of training students in Veda Bhashyam. Examinations in Veda Bhashyam are conducted every year, and certificates and cash awards are given to successful students.

There are many other similar trusts run by Sri Acharya Swamiji for advancing the study of Vedas and Sastras and supporting scholars in these fields.

### **Veda Dharma Sastra Paripalana Sabha**

This Sabha aims at primarily encouraging and developing Niyama Adhyayana (Study as per rules) of Vedas while staying in Gurukulam, spreading knowledge of Vedas and Dharma Sastras among the public and collecting funds from brahmanas for looking after brahmana upadhyayas (traditional teachers) and brahmana students of Vedas, Veda Bhashyas

(commentaries on Vedas), Grihyasutras and Dharma Sastras; giving honoraria to students who pass the examinations and Guru dakshina to teachers.

The Sabha is headquartered in Kumbakonam. Activities of the Sabha include conducting Veda Dharma Sastra Sadas (Experts' debate), and lectures on Vedas and Smritis particularly for the common public. Examinations in Vedas including Prayoga and Dharma Sastras are also conducted.

Honouring of Vedic scholars is a continuous process in Srimatham. During his camp for two months in July-September 1980 at Ahmedabad, Sri Swamiji paid a visit to the ashram of Gangeshwar Anandagathaji, who had the distinction of compiling all the four Vedas in a single volume. Sri Swamiji honoured him.

Sri Acharya Swamiji inaugurated the Veda Sastra Pandita Raksha Sabha in Mumbai on February 7, 2000. A lifelong monthly pension of Rs.1000/- per month was announced for 250 scholars and the first disbursement of pension was given to 22 scholars. Such activities have been undertaken in many parts of the country.

Veda Dharma Sastra Paripalana Sabha has recently rendered the yeoman service of reprinting a highly valued massive seven-volume authoritative compendium, Nibandhanagrantha of Dharma Sastras by Sri Vaidyanatha Dikshitar with fresh Tamil translation. This reference text known as 'Smritimuktaphalam' (also as Sri Vaidyanatha Dikshitiyam) is hailed as a highly useful summary of various Smritis by different Rishis, presented in elegant and simple language (Sanskrit slokas with Tamil translation).

In order to know the importance of our Achaaram and Anushtanams, and to pursue and follow them during our day to day mechanical life, Sri Acharya Swamiji has recently instructed that visesha upanyasams (special lectures) be conducted in apartments in city locations, rural belts and less populated villages to develop affinity for Swadharma. These upanyasams are receiving good reception among the public.

## **Advaita Sabha**

Advaita Sabha aims at propagating Advaita philosophy and its greatness, and encouraging more students and scholars to master this philosophy. The Sabha conducts Vakyartha Sadas and lectures on Upanishad and Brahmasutra Bhashyas (commentaries) and Prakarana Granthas (Explanatory texts) twice in a year. Examinations are also conducted and awards and scholarships given. Scholars are honoured. Rare books in Samskrit are published.

Many Vidvat Sadas proceedings are held in different parts of the country on a regular basis. It has been a regular practice to conduct Veda Sastra Vidvat Sadas, Agnihotra Sadas, Panchanga Sadas etc. during Chaturmasyam period every year and honour Vidvans.

### **Sri Adi Sankara Advaita Research Centre**

This was established in Chennai primarily for publishing the works of Sri Adi Sankara. A quarterly magazine in English titled 'Brahma Vidya' for propagation of Advaita Vedanta is published by the Centre. Research in Vedas and Sastras with special emphasis on Sri Adi Sankara's Advaita Vedanta is conducted. The Centre also runs Veda Pathasalas and offers scholarships to students of Vedas and Sastras.

### **Spread of Samskrit Language**

Amarabharathi Pariksha Samithi has been established in Chennai for propagating Samskrit among the public. Samskrit is taught, examinations are conducted and certificates given.

The scheme of 'Learning Samskrit by correspondence', operated by the Samskrit Education Society, helps many people to learn the language from home. The Society has published a number of books for this purpose including grammar, dictionary etc. They are publishing a monthly journal titled 'Samskritasri'. They conduct graded examinations and award certificates. The Society has its office in Chennai.

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji has been looking forward to every opportunity during his nation-wide tours to encourage study of Samskrit. During his visit to Mysore in his early years, on November 6, 1971, he visited the office of the Samskrit daily called Sudharma and gave his blessings. Sudharma is the only Samskrit daily in India. Sri Swamiji bestowed the title of 'Vanibhushana' on the editor Sri K.M. Varadaraja Iyenagar and 'Sahitya Vallabha' on Sri R.S. Narayanacharya.

On December 12, 1982, Samskrit Day was celebrated in Chennai in Siva Vishnu Temple. Sri Swamiji participated in it and spoke on the greatness of Samskrit. He released the Samskrit translation of the works of the great Tamil poet Bharatiyar. He honoured the translator Sri Ramadesikan.

The year 2000 was designated as the year of Samskrit by the Government of India. During his Vijayayatra to Mumbai in February 2000, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited an educational institution and expressed happiness at the keenness of students in study of Samskrit. The programmes included sloka recitation, talks, a short skit on Gitopadesam and Antakshari – all in Samskrit.

### **Agama Silpa Sadas**

Ensuring proper methods of worship, which are different in different temples, necessitates a proper study of the ancient texts known as Agamas, which provide details of these. Agamas detail the methods of worship of Siva, Vishnu and Sakthi and are closely linked with the Vedas. India being a large country, art forms like dance, drama, music and architectural styles are also many and variegated in different regions of the country. Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji has taken steps to further these art forms in a manner that each region will witness progress in each of these forms peculiar to it. Agama SilpaSadas is held every year in the presence of Sri Swamiji for preserving and revitalising ancient Indian wisdom, enshrined in Agamas, Silpa Sastra (sculpture), fine arts etc., which is ingrained in our Bharatiya culture.

Experts in different fields of arts are invited to expound on various aspects so as to make those in the field and the public aware of subtleties and participate in the growth of the fine arts. Practical performances of these arts are also held. Masters are honoured. This service of preserving ancient arts has been hailed by one and all. A sabha called 'Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha Vyasa Bharata Kalaadi Sadas Samajam' has been established for work in this field with the blessings of Sri Swamiji. An Agama Pathasala is being run in Allur (Thanjavur district) under the auspices of this Samajam.

In fulfilment of the aim of preparing textbooks on religious topics for school students, this Samajam has published with the blessings of Sri Swamiji, Tamil books titled 'Aravazhi Vachakam' (Book of Path of Dharma) - parts 1, 2 and 3 for young children. The Samajam has also similarly published books titled 'Golden Reader' – parts 1, 2 and 3 in English. The Samajam owns a building in Chennai, which is used for religious purposes.

In recent years Srimatham has published 'Balabodha Sangraham' in seven parts in Samskrit and Tamil to serve as non-detailed textbook for Vedic students. Authored by Sri Kumbakonam Swamiji, these books cover various facets of Sanatana Dharma including Vedas, Sastras, Advaita Vedanta, Samskrit literature and poets. These books have also been translated into English for wider reading.

Srimatham organises training programs at Kanchipuram from time to time for explaining puja rituals, traditionally performed in Grama Devata temples by pujaris. These rituals are different for each of the Grama Devatas. Sri Swamiji persuades the pujaris who attend the camp to maintain the sanctity of the temples by performing proper pujas. Pujaris who give training are honoured.

### **World Hindu Council**

Advaita accommodates Visishtadvaita and Dvaita as steps in the ultimate realisation of Truth. Jagadguru Sri Acharya swamiji, in keeping with the Advaitic traditions of the Peetham, has always encouraged followers of all Sampradayas to adhere to their respective traditions and to develop bhakti to the Lord and love of humanity. As early as in December 1971, Sri Swamiji camped in Udupi. Udupi, the famous seat of Krishna temple has 8 Mathams established by Sri Madhvacharya. The heads of all the eight Mathams sat together with Sri Swamiji and conversed and exchanged honours. Sri Acharya Swamiji, Sri Pejavar Math Swamiji and Baleguduru Swamiji participated in the Vishwa Hindu Parishad meet held in December 1971 and all of them addressed the meet. Similarly in April 1972, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited the Vanamamalai Matham and was received warmly by the junior Jeer and conducted to the Senior Jeer's place. The Senior Jeer welcomed Sri Swamiji with tears of joy. Sri Swamiji honoured the Senior Jeer with a nice shawl and the Jeer reciprocated.

World Hindu Council was started by Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji in 1976 with the intent of strengthening unity among Hindus spread across the world and enabling Hindus to develop good knowledge of religious ideas and practise the values of life taught in religion. The Council was headed by the noted scholar Sri T.M.P.Mahadevan. During February 1976, Sri Swamiji organised the first World Hindu Conference in Chennai on a very grand scale. This conference was held with the objective of uniting the representatives of Hindus all over the world and providing an opportunity to them to establish contact with each other. Nearly 1000

representatives from Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji islands, South Africa and Indonesia and from several parts of India and 700 members of Hindu religious forum participated in the conference. Lectures delivered in the conference touched on various subjects: Hindu religious thoughts in the five great Tamil epics, Saiva siddhantam, Vishnu bhakti, Hindu religious thoughts in Sangam literature, Hindu religion in stone inscriptions, code of conduct as spoken in Satakams, Hindu religion which has spread all over the world and Pranavam. There was also an exhibition on religion. Cultural events like 'Villuppattu', 'Karagattam', bhajans etc. were held in the nights.

In his benedictory address, Sri Swamiji emphasized the need to have study of religion as part of school syllabus for all students and outlined schemes for inculcating religious feelings in young minds. He also highlighted the following: the greatness of temples and the way they have been built, the greatness of Siva Lingam, the temples of village deities (Gramadevatas)- their origin and growth, the part played by temples in the society and the services rendered by them.

A big World Religion and Philosophy and Cultural Conference was held next in Madurai from March 30 to April 5, 1977. The object of the conference was to explain to the people the basic concepts in the religions of the world so as to encourage general appreciation of the values in different faith systems and cessation of hostile feeling towards other religions. Representatives of religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Ancient Greek and Egyptian religions, Confucius Zen Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Judaism and Jainism participated. The conference was inaugurated by the king of Nepal. Representatives had come from various countries of the world including Italy, Switzerland, Hawaii, Japan, East Germany, West Germany, Czechoslovakia, Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Africa, etc. The symbol of the conference was a figure of Lotus with several petals, on which was written 'World Religion'. World Hindu Council has been organizing such conferences continuously ever since.

### **Hindu Religious Forum (Hindu Samaya Manram)**

This organization was instituted by Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji for the purpose of spreading the way of bhakti and knowledge of religion among the public and serving their social and religious needs, and seeking to improve the society through temple renovation etc.

and thus nourishing Hindu religion. The headquarters of this organization is in Kanchipuram. This organization is continuously engaged in all the above activities through its over 375 branches in Tamil Nadu and other States with the cooperation of the public. This organization has as its subsidiaries separate bodies specially working for students, children and women. Some of the specific activities of the organization include: cleaning up temples, teaching poor students, distribution of Prasadam to patients in hospitals, implementing 'Handful of rice scheme', publishing and distributing bhakti literature on special occasions, conducting classes on religion and morals for teachers, conducting competitions for children, students and teachers and giving prizes, conducting stotra and 'Tirumurai' (works of Saivite saint Nayanmars) classes for children, cremation of Hindu orphan dead bodies and assisting people on festival days. An Annual conference of the organization is held in the presence of Sri Acharya Swamiji. Permanent exhibitions instilling Daiva bhakti, Guru bhakti and Desa bhakti in the youth have been set up at many centres.

Moral instruction booklets in Tamil on subjects like 'Aathichudi', 'Kondraivendan', 'BalaRamayanam' etc. with meaning are printed and distributed to schools and other organizations by Srimatham through Hindu Religious Forum. Special Moral Instruction camps for school teachers are held during summer holidays for a week every year. The subjects covered include temple worship, basic religious and moral principles, meditation etc. Summer camps are also held for school students to promote religious and moral awareness and practice. Such camps are also held for college graduates.

People are encouraged to write names of Gods like Rama and Siva in notebooks and send to Srimatham. This practice is specially popularized among school children. Those who write are given Prasadam, pictures of Gods and other publications. Refresher courses are held frequently for the benefit of temple priests and 'Oduvars' and also Pujaris of small village temples and certificates awarded. Hindu religious instructors visit prisons and guide prisoners to reform through change of heart by spreading awareness of religious principles. Books and other publications are also distributed in prisons on behalf of Srimatham.

Sri Swamiji thought that in the World Children's Year nominated by United Nations in 1979 such initiatives should be undertaken which would contribute towards their development and bring out the best in them. With this in view he gave the motto "A capable child is the wealth of

the country”, planned several activities and had them carried out by the Hindu Religions Forum.

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sri Paramacharya’s Peetharohanam was celebrated in December 1982 on behalf of the Chennai Hindu Religious Forum. In his benedictory address on the concluding day, Sri Swamiji said, “Generally for persons like us, there are two types of responsibilities- one as a Sanyasi and the other as a Mathadhipathi. When I ascended the Peetham, Sri Paramacharya told me: “You have to treat the pleasure and pain of life with equanimity.” Gurubhakti cannot be isolated from life. There is no bigger gratitude to be paid than Gurubhakti. Sri Paramacharya is in our hearts and showering his grace on us. No one can have a life without a Guru. There is no comparison to Guru. Adi Sankara is a Jyoti that is incomparable. He says: We can, by touch of Philosopher’s Stone, turn iron into gold, but such gold cannot be used for converting another piece of iron into gold. Guru is not like that. He is like a unique philosopher’s stone, which is capable of converting his disciple, who is iron, into another philosopher’s stone, namely another Guru. That is the greatness of Guru’s grace. Coral is precious. Our Periyaval is for us a Coral. We shall not only follow his teachings, but always remember him.”

On May 2, 1993, Kanakabhishekam for Mahaswami Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi was performed by Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji at the Kanchi Matham in a grand manner. Many such Kanakabhishekams were performed earlier for Sri Mahaswamiji on many occasions.

Similarly many are the Kanakabhishekams performed for Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji at the holy hands of Sri Bala Swamiji. One such Kanakabhishekam in the early days was celebrated on Sri Swamiji’s 53<sup>rd</sup> Jayanti Day, on August 10, 1987. After darshan of Sri Paramacharya, Sri Swamiji proceeded to Sri Kamakshi Temple at the head of a large procession chanting slogans of ‘Hara Hara Sankara, Jaya Jaya Sankara’. He performed Sahasra Kalaha Abhishekam to Sri Kamakshi with his own hands. On return to Srimatham he performed the usual Sri Chandramouliswara Puja. Thereafter, Sri Swamiji was courteously taken to Sri Kamakshi temple amidst a large crowd with Sri Bala Swamiji at the lead. The Kanakabhishekam was performed in the Navaratri Mandapam. The crowd was so large that the security personnel had a tough time controlling them. First, Kalasabhishekam from the Ayushya Homam was performed. After change of dress Sri Swamiji sat on a golden seat in a

special silver plated chair. Sri Bala Swamiji decorated Sri Swamiji with a special Rudraksha mala with a large gem-studded pendant. He performed archana on Sri Swamiji's head with gold coins and flowers alternately. He then placed a golden Kiritam (crown) on Sri Swamiji's head. Thousands of people who witnessed the Kanakabhishekam shed tears of joy. Prasadams from many temples were offered to Sri Swamiji. Honours from many Aadinams and other organisations were offered. Sri Swamiji blessed the gathering.

On the same day in the evening, a public meeting was held in Sri Kachapeswara temple. Two books were released on this occasion. One was a beautiful commentary on Sri Abhirami Andadi by Kanchipuram Aadinam. The second was on Srimatham and its various services compiled by Sri Jaya Senthilnathan. Two more books were also released on the occasion. One was in Tamil titled "Kanakabhishekams for Sri Kanchi Swamiji". The second was a question-answer book on Hinduism. On July 17, 1993, Kanakabhishekam was performed by devotees of Puducheri with 108 Bilva leaves in gold.

### **Cow Protection**

Cow protection is a very important feature of Hinduism. Cows are worshipped as God's visible forms. 'Gosalas' are run under the encouragement of Srimatham in many places in Tamil Nadu and other States. Animal feed and other articles are voluntarily offered by people in such centres.

### **Books**

Sri Acharya Grantha Prakasana Samithi and other such organizations publish books in Tamil, Samskrit and English on life histories, stotras and other works of Adi Sankara and other Gurus. 'Voice of God', which contains the teachings of Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya, has been published in English and many Indian languages by Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Trust. "Srimad Appayya Dikshita Granthavali Prakasana Samithi", functioning in Hyderabad now, has published many works of Sri Appayya Dikshita in fulfilment of Sri Acharya Swamiji's wishes. About ten publications of 'Granthavali Series' have come out.

## **Magazines**

The following are the magazines dedicated to the nourishment of Hinduism, published with the blessings of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji:

1. Dilip – Mumbai – English
2. Kamakoti Pradipam – Kanchipuram – Tamil
3. 'Nalla Maanavan' (Good Student) – Salem – Tamil
4. Kamakoti – Puradattur – Telugu
5. Kamakoti Prabha – Bengaluru – Kannada
6. Guruvayurappan – Guruvayur – Malayalam
7. Kamakoti Vani – Bengaluru – English
8. Voice of Kamakoti – Chennai – English

## **Other Activities**

Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai are two poems of intense devotion addressed to Sri Vishnu and Sri Siva, sung by saints Andal and Manikkavachakar. They are commonly chanted in Tamil Nadu in the month of Margazhi (Dec.-Jan.) by all people. Srimatham has been holding competitions for school students in reciting Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai and writing the meanings of the poems. Prizes are awarded.

An instance of how Sri Swamiji attracts funds and how he utilizes them for the revival of Vedas as well as fulfillment of social needs can be cited. During his camp for two months in July-September 1980 at Ahmedabad, a Veda Sastra conference was held at the instance of Sri Swamiji. The highlight of the conference was the Bhagavatha Purana Pravachanam by Sri Dongre Maharaj in the presence of Sri Swamiji. Sri Dongre Maharaj is revered by people of Maharashtra as the heir to Sri Sukabrahmam's legacy, a great Bhagavatha, a Tapasvi, greatly devoted to Sri Swamiji and Srimatham. He used to deliver his discourses continuously for 4-5 hours without even sipping water in between and lakhs of people used to listen to him. He gave as offering to Sri Swamiji the amount of Rs.52,000/- received during the Upanyasam. Sri Swamiji utilised this amount for establishing a Samaveda Pathashala in Adayapulam, the birthplace of Sri Appayya Dikshitar. The Pathashala continues to be run even today. Further, with the contribution made by Sri Dongre Maharaj, Annadanam is being done in Kanchipuram.

Again, Sri Dongre Maharaj donated to Sri Swamiji at Rajkot a sum of Rs.1,11,000/- to be used for Annadanam for Sadhus. Sri Swamiji accepted the offer and made arrangements for Annadanam to be regularly made in Kurukshetra.

Research on Kampuchean discoveries of ancient temple architecture, stone inscriptions in Samskrit, sculptures etc. has been going on under Sri Acharya Swamiji's guidance. Books have been published bringing out the significance of such historical finds with particular reference to the spread of Hinduism all over the globe in ancient times.

Sri Swamiji established the Karnataka Sangita Seva Trust, which took over the birth places of the Carnatic music Trinity in Tiruvarur and raised memorials and has been conducting music festival there every year. He has arranged to conduct many programmes of music, dance and drama in Srimatham and many other centres on innumerable occasions. Such programmes are a regular feature during Navaratri, Chaturmasyam, Jayanthi celebrations etc. The artistes are all duly honoured. Experts are given titles.

The golden jubilee celebrations of the Peetharohanam of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji in 2003 spanned many cities and encompassed many functions. Atirudram, SahasraChandi, Maharudram, SathaChandi, Nava Chandi, Veda Samhita Homams, special yagas and Ghana and Jata Veda Parayanams were some of the highlights. Veda Agama Vidvat Sadas was held in some places. Bhajana Sangamam and an international conference on Mahabharata were held in Chennai. Hospitals were started in some places. Special cover was released by the department of Posts. Many masters in various fields of human endeavour were honoured. 141 Dandi Sanyasis, 167 Vedic Pandits, 55 Saiva Siddhantis, 13 Oduvars, 9 BhajanaSampradaya experts and people dedicated to fine arts, education, social work, poetry, temple service, Siddha Vaidyam etc. were recipients of these honours. A special documentary and books on Sri Swamiji were released. Swarna Padabhishekam with 108 gold coins was performed to Sri Swamiji.

Similar grand celebrations were held at many places during Sri Acharya Swamiji's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in 2010. Sahasradina Sathabhishekam celebrations are now being held from July 2014 onwards. Apart from various Homams, Pujas etc. many rare books have been brought out during this period.

Internet service is being used by Srimatham to disseminate religious and spiritual information, apart from news, tour programmes etc. A number of valuable books in various languages are also available in the website. The websites are: [www.kamakoti.org](http://www.kamakoti.org), [www.viprayuva.org](http://www.viprayuva.org).

## **Renaissance of Hindu Religion and Culture**

### **PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Temples and temple worship form the bedrock of our religion and culture. In villages and towns, temples, apart from being the place of worship and attainment of divine grace and peace of mind, are also the nucleus of assembly and interaction of people. Our country abounds in temples built by kings in earlier times. Research in temple archaeology has thrown light on the history and culture of the region. It is a pity that some very beautiful temples, tucked in remote villages, have decayed over long periods of disuse and neglect. Parama Pujya Sri Acharya Swamiji has driven home that renovation of such temples is more urgent and important than construction of new temples. Sri Swamiji has taken steps to start and run schools imparting training in the intricacies of repairing and renovating the old magnificent temples. He has felt that the Hindu Religious Endowment Department should function as an independent organisation in order that temples are well maintained. He has organised collection of funds from the public and arranged for reconstruction and renovation of dilapidated temples. Many are the Kumbhabhishekams performed in this way under his stewardship in temples. In many temples flower gardens and nurseries for Bilva, Tulasi etc. have been raised as instructed by Sri Swamiji.

Yantra plates and Ashtabandhanam (the special preparation for installation of idols over the base), required during Kumbhabhishekam, are prepared and kept in Pooja and distributed free of cost by Srimatham to temple authorities. Assistance is routed through 'Kshetra Paripalana Sangam', instituted for fulfilling these aims. This Sangam also provides financial assistance to temples lacking means for lighting lamps twice in a day and preparing 'Naivedyam' once a day.

Measures are also taken for worship to be conducted regularly by competent priests through various trusts established for the purpose. Training temple priests, the Oduvars who sing praise of the Lord, and pipers, drummers and others, who are in daily attendance during the periods of worship, also forms part of these measures. Sri Swamiji has also been always enlightening the society on the various tenets of our religion and the important role of temples through discourses and publication of religious materials. The efforts for the upkeep and renovation of temples that adorn our country from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Dwaraka to Kamrup help keep Sri Swamiji in contact with all sections of society spread over our vast land.

Constant efforts are also being made for locating long-lost Adhishthanams of earlier Acharyas of the exalted Guru Parampara of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. Once they are located and identified, steps are taken to construct a suitable Brindavanam at the location and arrange regular Poojas and Aradhanas so that people can offer worship.

New temples, Mandapas, Memorials etc. are also undertaken as necessary, taking into consideration the wishes and needs of the local people.

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji has been visiting places where important religious festivals are celebrated and people congregate in large numbers. He has participated in many Kumbha Melas, Ardha Kumbha Melas and Mahamagham festivals.

### **Devasthanams, Mandapas, Memorials**

Devasthanams under the administrative control of Srimatham:

1. Sri Kamakshi Amman Devasthanam, Kanchipuram
2. Sri Bangaru Kamakshi Ambal Devasthanam, Thanjavur

3. Sri Panchamukheswara Swamy Devasthanam, Tiruvanaikkaval
4. Sri Viswanatha Swamy Devasthanam, Tiruvidaimarudur
5. Sri Venkatesa Perumal Devasthanam, Tiruvidaimarudur

On behalf of Srimatham, mandapams, memorials, sthupis etc. have been raised in the following places:

1. Villupuram – The house in which Sri Maha Swamiji was born was converted into Sankara Matham with Paduka Pratishta. Veda Pathasala is also run.
2. Tirupati – Sri Adi Sankara Mandapam (opposite Swami Pushkarini)
3. Kanyakumari – Sri Adi Sankara Paduka Mandapam
4. Tiruvananthapuram (Karamanai) – Sri Adi Sankara Paduka Mandapam & Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Keerthi Mandapam
5. Kaladi (Kerala – Sri Adi Sankara's Avatara Sthala) – Sri Adi Sankara Keerthi Sthambha
6. Nepal – Sri Adi Sankara Mandapam (on the way to Pasupatinath Temple)
7. Badrinath - Sri Adi Sankara Mandapam
8. Kashi – Stones with inscriptions of stotras of Sri Adi Sankara have been installed in eight locations
9. Sirkali – House in which saint Sri Tirugnanasambandar was born is converted into Memorial for public to offer worship
10. Rishikesh - Sri Adi Sankara Mandapam
11. Haridwar, Kurukshetra, Somnath, Ujjain, Omkareswar, Avuttanaganath, Sri Vaidyanath, Ghrushneswar, Bhimasankar, Kolhapur (Mahalakshmi Temple), Tirunelveli, Chidambaram, Thrissur, Rishikesh (Lakshman Jhula) - Sri Adi Sankara Mandapam

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji was the first ever Sankaracharya after Sri Adi Sankara to visit Manasarovar and Kailash in 1998; there he installed the idol of Adi Sankara. He had the unique distinction in being honoured by both Nepal and Chinese Governments. In known history, he is the only Sankaracharya to visit Dhaka in Bangladesh in June 2000. By way of honouring his visit, the entrance to Sri Dhakeswari Temple was named "Sankaracharya Gate"

and the main entrance to the complex 'Jayendra Arch'. He is again the first Sankaracharya to have darshan of the ice Lingam at Amarnath cave; he also searched out the Sindhu river and took holy bath.

Sri Swamiji was also instrumental in erecting idols of Sri Adi Sankara in all twelve Jyotirlinga kshetras. He also offered golden Dharapatram in all these twelve kshetras. Coming to new temples, some of the notable ones erected are for Sri Kamakshi and Sri Subramanya (Uttara Swamimalai) at Delhi, Sri Kamakshi temples at Coimbatore and Salem, Sri Subramanya temple at Secunderabad and Sri Hanuman and Sri Kamakshi temples in Navi Mumbai. Another interesting new temple that has come up is the Ekkavan Sakthi Peet in Ambaji (Gujarat) where all the 51 Sakti Peethams have been represented. At Guwahati (Assam), Sri Purva Tiruapati Balaji Mandir has come up. The main deity, Sri Venkateswara, is an eleven feet high icon - a replica of Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala (Tirupati) in Andhra Pradesh. Similarly, a temple for Sri Balaji was constructed at Ponda, Goa. Sri Ganga Matha temple was constructed in Haridwar. Temples for Adi Sankara, Jayadeva and Chaitanya built in architectural styles of Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Bengal in the same precincts came up in Puri.

A work of art showing Sri Swamiji's deep devotion to his Guru- a grand Mani Mandapam at Orikkai near Kanchipuram to commemorate Parama Pujya Sri Paramacharya's hallowed memory- has been erected. Kumbhabhishekam was performed on January 28, 2011. It is a magnificent structure, all in granite, comparable to the edifices conceived and executed by the Tamil kings in earlier times. It is a temple, 150 ft long, 52 ft wide on a two-acre plot of land on the banks of the river Palar. It has a 100 ft Vimana of 80 tonne weight, 100 pillared hall, Paduka Mandapam and Rudraksha Mandapam beside the Garbha griha housing the enchanting idol and Padukas of Sri Maha Swamiji. The exquisite artistry and devotion that went into it is seen clearly in the lifelike figures of elephants with chains complete with links, and figures carved on the pillars. The stone lion at the entrance has a rolling spherical stone in its mouth; you cannot take it out. There are two imposing wheels on the sides. The motif of Pradosha Tandava of Lord Nataraja on the outside wall near Garbha griha is beautiful.

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji paid visits to Sabarimala temple in Kerala and Sri Saradamba Temple in Sringeri.

Further details of some representative temples erected as instructed by Sri Acharya Swamiji and some of the holy places Sri Acharya Swamiji visited during his Vijaya Yatras are covered in the following narration.

### **Kailas – Manasarovar**

Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji was invited by the Chinese Government to visit Mt. Kailas and accordingly the Nepal Royal Family alongwith the Indian Government took part in organising this momentous trip. Sri Acharya Swamiji went to Nepal on June 15, 1998, alongwith very close devotees of the Kanchi Matham. In Nepal, King Birendra accorded a grand reception at the Royal Palace andorganised Sri Swamiji's visits within Nepal including Pasupathinath temple, Guhyeshwari temple, Muktinath temple etc.

The Chinese Government treated Sri Swamiji as a VVIP. The Chinese External Affairs Dept. received Sri Swamiji and the team at Hilsa (Border between Nepal and Tibet) on July 07,1998. After spending the night at Taklakot and passing through Rakshasathal, where Ravana is said to have performed Siva Puja, the entourage reached the banks of Lake Manasarovar on July 08. The whole area was cordoned off so that Sri Swamiji could spend the whole of next day without any disturbance.

The next day was Guru Purnima day, which is specially important in the life of a sanyasi. Sri Swamiji took the sacred dip in the Lake Manasarovar and performed Vyasa Pooja on the banks of Manasarovar overlooking the Mt. Kailas.He installed the idols of Sri Adi Sankara at the foot of the mountain at two places – one at the place of commencement of the Parikrama and the other at the place of concluding the Parikrama, at a height of 14000 ft. above MSL. For the first time in the history of Communist China, the visit of a religious leader was shown in the State Television Network.

After having performed the Vyasa Pooja there, Sri Acharya Swamiji got back to Nepal and immediately from there to Hyderabad, where he took the Chaturmasya Sankalpam.

The memorable words of Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji on the occasion: "It was truly Bhagavat Sankalpam (divine will) that our Chinese visas were delayed for more than a fortnight so that we could all be there at Kailas- Manasarovar on the auspicious Guru Purnima Day, which was incidentally a Thursday too".

## **Amarnath**

Sri Acharya Swamiji had darshan at the famous Amarnath cave on June 28, 2001. The temple is accessed after climbing some 200 steps. In the cave Sri Amarnath Siva, the Lingam entirely of ice, stands over 'Avudaiyar' of ice. On the right of the Lingam, two ice blocks representing Devi Parvathi and Ganapathi are seen. Sri Swamiji performed Sri Rudra Trisati Puja with natural Bilva leaves and also those of gold and silver. He also placed a mercury Lingam of 4 inch height on the Avudaiyar and worshipped. The gold and silver Bilva leaves were offered to the temple.

## **Nepal**

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji spent the month of May 1974 in Nepal at the invitation of the Royal Government of Nepal who treated Sri Swamiji as a state guest. At Peerganj at the Nepal border, officials of the Nepal Government and thousands of children holding lamps in their hands accorded a loving welcome to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji referred to the importance of Nepal in his speech. Janakapur which was ruled by Janaka; Viratanagaram which gave refuge to the Pandavas; Gandaki river from which Salagramam, the stone representing Mahavishnu is collected; Guheswari Peetham, which is one of the Saktipeethams; Pasupatinatha, bestowing his grace with five faces - all these are in Nepal, which is the only Hindu kingdom in the world. After Sri Adi Sankara's visit to Nepal about 2500 years ago, Sri Swamiji was the first Sankaracharya to visit Nepal. On May 4 1974, Sri Swamiji offered to Sri Pasupatinath a zari shawl and a garland of gold Bilvas. Sri Swamiji also performed special Abhishekam to Sri Guhyeswari. On May 7, in the open air theatre reception accorded to Sri Swamiji, Santana Dharma Seva Samiti, Brihat Adhyatmita Parishad, Veda Vedanga Vidyalaya, Geeta Govinda Ashram, Matrubhumi Seva Sangam, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Samskrit wing of the Indian embassy participated. On May 8, Sri Paramacharya's Jayanti day, special Abhishekam was performed to Sri Pasupatinatha, who was decorated with gold Bilva leaves. It has been the tradition that the priest for the temple is always selected from South India. As suggested by Sri Swamiji, the king of Nepal installed the idol of Sri Adi Sankara at the entrance to the Pasupatinatha temple. Further, as desired by Sri Swamiji, a decorative arch called Sankar Dwar was built at Mirganj border with the words "Welcome to

Nepal, the only Hindu kingdom in the world". This Arch was declared open by Sri Swamiji during his subsequent visit in 1988.

## **Dhaka**

Dhaka in Bangladesh is named after Sri Dhakeswari, one of the 51 Sakti Peethas. On June 25, 2000, Sri Acharya Swamiji had darshan at Sri Dhakeswari temple. He is the first Sankaracharya after Sri Adi Sankara to have visited this temple. On this occasion, the Bangladesh government donated a sum of a crore of Bangladeshi Rupees for renovation of the temple.

Sri Swamiji also visited Sri Siddheswari temple, Sri Lakshmi Narayana temple and Sri Rama Sita Mandir.

## **Kaladi**

The Adi Sankara Keerti Stambha was a project initiated by Sri Swamiji in order to commemorate the memory and life history and the great ideals of Sri Adi Sankara at Kaladi, his birthplace. This Keerti Stambha, 125 foot tall, has comfortable steps arranged in a circular fashion. As one walks up, he can enjoy the beautiful paintings on both sides depicting the life history of Sri Adi Sankara. Padukas of Sri Adi Sankara are installed here for worship. Sannidhis for Ganapati, Siva, Devi, Subramanya, Vishnu and Surya, the six deities whose worship was codified by Sri Adi Sankara as Shanmathasthapaka, are there in this memorial. This Stambha serves as a beautiful guide to the general public on the great legacy of Sri Adi Sankara. This was inaugurated on May 12, 1978, the Sankara Jayanthi Day in a grand function in which 108 Dandi Sanyasis and 32 elephants came in procession. Sri Swamiji was very pleased with the Keerti Stambha and honoured all those who helped in creating it.

## **Badrinath**

During his early Vijaya Yatra in September 1973, Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji had darshan at Haridwar, Rishikesh and Badrinath. On the Haridwar- Badri route, the first important place

Sri Swamiji visited is Pyasi, the place of penance of Vyasa Bhagavan. Then there are five Prayag Sthalas on this route. Sri Swamiji took holy bath and performed Pooja in these places. They are:

1. Deva Prayag, the place of confluence of rivers Bhagirathi and Alakananda. This is one of the 108 Vaishnava Divya Desams.
2. Rudra Prayag, the place of confluence of river Mandakini flowing from Rudra in Kedar and Alakananda. It is said that Narada practised music here.
3. Karna Prayag, the place of confluence of rivers Pinda and Alakananda. The Pandavas performed Tarpanam for Karna here.
4. Nanda Prayag, the place of confluence of river Nanda, flowing from the place where a king named Nanda performed Tapas and Alakananda.
5. Vishnu Prayag, the place of confluence of rivers Vishnu Ganga and Alakananda.

In order to enable all those who bathe in the five Prayag sthalas to have darshan of Sri Adi Sankara, idols of Sri Adi Sankara have been installed at all the five places. Recently, renovation work was carried out at the behest of Sri Swamiji at the ancient Rama Mandir in Deva Prayag. This temple is built near the place where Sri Rama had his bath in the Ganga. A silver umbrella was presented to the deity on this occasion as a white umbrella signifies kingship of the entire earth.

Next is Srinagar, around forty kilometres from Deva Prayag, a hill station with facilities. The temple of Kamaleshwar here is the place where Maha Vishnu performed archana with flowers. There is a Swayambhu Linga and a big Nandi made of wood. Sri Swamiji had darshan at Joshi Mutt, the place of Jyoti Matham established by Adi Sankara. This is the place where Vyasa Bhagavan is said to have given darshan to Adi Sankara. There is a famous Narasimha temple here. Sri Swamiji walked bare-footed for most of the distance during this difficult yatra to Badrinath.

In Badrinath, Sri Swamiji went in a procession to Srimatham. Seeing the Nara and Narayana mountains enroute, Sri Swamiji bathed in Tapta Kundam, and then had darshan of Sri Badrinarayana at the temple. Garuda gives darshan in the front mandapam. There are

Sannidhis for Vishnu (Nara and Narayana), Siva, Hanuman, Ganapathi and Mahalakshmi inside. He conducted a Mahabhishekam to Badri Narayana and Mahalakshmi. He offered a zari shawl and a gold chain to the deity and a shawl to Shri Adi Sankara's murthi. Puja here is traditionally performed by Raval, Nambudri brahmachari from Kerala. Puja is performed by the Archaka for six months and by Devas for six months during winter, when the temple is closed. It is a belief that during those six months, sage Narada performs puja on behalf of Devas. To symbolise this, an idol of Narada is kept in the Garbha Griha. During this yatra, Border Security Force men rendered unforgettable help. They were with the Yatra day and night. With a view to inspiring a feeling of bravery in the soldiers, Hanuman Chalisa was distributed among them. Sri Swamiji visited Badrinath again three times during Vijaya yatras.

There are four other Badri Kshetras nearby.

1. Yoga or Dhyana Badri, also called Pandukeshwar because the Padavas had darshan of the lord here, on their way to Swarga. When Badrinath shrine is closed during winter, the Utsavamurthi is kept in this place.
2. Narasimha Badri
3. Vriddha Badri
4. Bhavishya Badri

## **Kedarnath**

In June 1985, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited Kedarnath, one of the twelve Jyotirlinga Sthalas. After finishing puja at Devaprayag and Rudraprayag, Sri Swamiji reached Gowrikund on June 1. He had darshan at Kedarnath on June 2 and decorated Sri Kedareswara Linga with silver Vibhuti plate and a zari shawl. Sri Swamiji's visit was engraved in a stone panel, fixed in the temple. Sri Adi Sankara had installed in Kedarnath one of the five Sphatikalingas he had brought from Kailasa. With passage of time, the Sphatikalinga was lost. During his visit, Sri Swamiji installed a Sphatikalingam in Kedarnath. He also got marble figures installed depicting the various events in Sri Adi Sankara's life including his obtaining Sphatikalingas from Siva in Kailasa. He also placed the works of Sri Adi Sankara in a box and had it kept in the temple. He further got the stotras of Sri Adi Sankara engraved on a six-foot tall marble slab and had it fixed in the Sannidhi of Sri Adi Sankara which is outside the main temple. He

got Tirugnana Sambandar's Devaram verses on Kedarnath printed, framed and hung in the temple. Sri Swamiji made arrangements for extending financial assistance to the Saraswati Shishu Mangar School being run in Agastya Muni temple here in order that at least some children in that area may learn Devaram in Tamil.

### **Shri Kamakshi Temple, Kanchipuram**

The Maha Kumbhabhishekam celebration on April 5, 1976 was a grand affair. Sri Acharya Swamiji performed the Kalashabhishekam to the Vimanam and completed the rituals. He also performed Kumbhabhishekam to the Vimanam of Sri AdiSankaracharya temple in the premises. Many discourses and music concerts were held during those days. On the night of the Kumbhabhishekam day, Sri Kamakshi was taken in a procession in a decorated silver car through the four Rajavithis and it was a great sight.

Sri Swamiji then took up the project of providing gold covering to the five-tier Moolasthanam Vimanam. Golden cover and golden Sahasramala for Sri Kamakshi, diamond studded gold cover for Srichakram and gold Prabha for Sri Adi Sankara were all dedicated on this occasion. Marble slabs holding engravings of stotras like Soundaryalahari, Muka Panchasati and Abhirami Andadi were erected on the walls. On completion of this task Sri Swamiji performed the Kumbhabhishekam on February 1, 1979. On the same day Mahakumbhabhishekam was performed for Sri Ekamreswara temple also on completion of renovation. On this occasion, grand processions of Panchmurthis and Silver Rathams amid Vedaparayanam and Tirumurai Parayanam were held. Religious discourses and Agama Silpa Sadas were conducted in addition to cultural events.

On September 6, 1984 the golden Ratham for Sri Kamakshi was inaugurated. Devi, majestically seated in the golden Ratham, was taken around the four Rajavithis. During the 6th Aaradhana function of Jagadguru Sri Mahaswami on January 3, 2000, a 3 kg. Silver kavacham was offered to the "Tapas" Kamakshi. 32 Vedic Scholars were honoured with "Vastram", Gold Coin and Umbrella. A publication "Devotees & Maha Periyaval" was released.

As desired by Sri Maha Swamiji, only ghee lamps are lit now, twenty-four hours of the day in the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Sri Kamakshi Amman Temple at Kanchipuram.

Golden kavacham was offered to Sri Adi Sankara idol. Tirumangalyam in golden thread was offered to Sri Kamakshi. Golden Bilvadala garland and Rudraksham were offered to Sri Ekamreswara on July 26, 2002. A golden chariot for Sri Ekamreswara is presently under preparation.

## **Prayag**

Sri Acharya Swamiji performed the Mahakumbhabhishekam of the Adi Sankara Temple in Prayag on March 13, 1986. The rivers flowing in Bharat are all revered as religious symbols. Bathing in these rivers, specially in their confluence places is a remedy for our sins. Triveni Sangamam is the place where the rivers Ganga, Yamuna and the subterranean Saraswati meet. Prayag, or Allahabad is Trivenikshetram where lakhs of people come from all over the country and take holy bath. This is also the place where Adi Sankara and Kumarila Bhatta met and debated. In order to enable devotees to have darshan of Adi Sankaracharya, after completing their holy bath in Sangamam, this temple for Adi Sankara was built at the instructions of Sri Swamiji, at a cost of Rs. seventy lakhs. At the first level, Shri Kamakshi's idol is installed centrally and the idols of Ganga, Meenakshi, Kali, Yamuna, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Annapurni, Vaishnavi, Gayatri, Sarada, Mahavishnu, Ganapathi, Durga, and Mahishasuramardini are mounted all around. At the second level, Tirupati Sri Venkatesa Swami has been installed at the centre and the idols of Narasimha, Vasudeva, Varaha, Dasavathara murtis, Badri Narayana, Hayagriva, Anjaneya, Sitarama, Guruvayurappan, Suryanarayana, Venugopala, Gajendramoksham and 108 Salagramas are mounted all around. At the third level, Sahasralinga murthi (a huge Siva Linga idol having 1008 small Sivalingas in it) is installed centrally and 108 Sivalingas, different forms of Siva, Dakshinamurthy, Lingodbhava, Brahma, Somasundara and Chandrashekhara are mounted all around. In the internal walls of the Prakaram, events connected with Sri Adi Sankara's avatara and Srimad Ramayanam have been depicted. Chaturveda Parayanam, Veda Sastra Sammelanam, Annadanam etc. formed part of the celebrations.

On January 8, 1971, Sri Swamiji had Ganga Snanam at Allahabad. Out of the sand he had collected earlier at Agnitirtham at Rameswaram in 1963, Sri Swamiji made a Siva Lingam and immersed the same in the Ganga river. On that day, Bhogi day, he also had bath in Saraswati

Kundam and performed puja. The next day, Makara Sankranti day, Sri Swamiji had Triveni Sangama Snanam. He blessed the people along with a Swamiji of Jyotirmatham. On January 16, he went to Someswara on the other bank of river Ganga and had darshan. He also had darshan of Alopi Devi. He gave a benedictory address to people in Geeta Bhavanam.

## **Kashi**

Sri Acharya Swamiji camped in Kashi during the period of January-March 1974. He performed the Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Kamakotiswara temple on January 28 on the banks of river Ganga. At the entrance to this temple there are two scenes sculpted, Ramapattabhishekam and Adi Sankara with his four disciples. There is a marble idol of Rajarajeswari. The temple is of the Chola style. The Moolamurthi is of Sri Kamakotiswara. There are Sannidhis for Vishnu, Parvati Devi, Surya, Ganapathi, Subramaniam, Ganga Devi, Sastha and Navagrahas. Sri Swamiji honoured Sri Ganapati Stapati, who had constructed the temple with the title of Silpa Kalanidhi. Sri Swamiji camped in Kashi Raja's palace and also in the Srimatham at Hanuman Ghat. Sri Swamiji took holy bath in many Ghats including Dashashwamedha Ghat and had darshan of Kashi Viswanatha and Annapoorni. He also visited the Benaras Hindu University.

In March 1985, Sri Swamiji again visited Kashi, bathed in different ghats and had darshan at several temples. He also undertook the Panchakrosa yatra. This yatra commences with bathing in Manikarnika ghat and having darshan of Dundi Vinayaka, Annapoorni, Viswanatha, Gnana Vadasi Vinayaka, Gnanakoopam, Visalakshi, Dharmeswara, Bhadharghat Vinayaka, Bimakoondi and Adhikeshwaram and returning to the camp on the same evening. Sri Swamiji offered golden Dharapatram to Sri Viswanatha.

On May 27, 1998, Sri Acharya Swamiji performed Maha Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Vagdevi temple here. Built on the style of architecture of the times of Bhojaraja, this temple was constructed by Srimatham at the request of the Maharaja of Kashi.

## **Puri**

Sri Acharya Swamiji camped in Puri in December 1974 in Swarga Dwar Mandapam and Jagannath Bhavan. A huge Sankara Mandapam has been built by Sri Swamiji near Swarga Dwar Mandapam. At the centre of this Sankara Mandapam is a temple for Sri Adi Sankara in Tamil Nadu style and on either side there are temples for Jayadeva and Chaitanya in Oriya and Bengal styles. Sri Swamiji had darshan at the famous Jagannath temple.

### **Uttara Swamimalai Temple, New Delhi**

Patterned after the famous Swamimalai temple in Thanjavur district, this temple is built on top of a hill in R.K.Puram, New Delhi. The sculptures are of the Chola, Pandya and Hoysala type. It has inner corridors (Prakarams). At the southern side of the temple is a three-tier Rajagopuram built in Pandyan style. The Moola murthi of Swaminatha has been shaped from granite stone, taken from the hills near Tamraparani river. It can be said that in the last three hundred years, this is the only temple built entirely with granite stone in the 9<sup>th</sup> century style. The temple was constructed over a period of eight years at a cost of Rs. fifteen lakhs. The foundation stone for the temple had been laid by the Sankaracharya of Jyotishpeetham on April 26, 1970. At around midnight on June 5, 1973, Mantra yantra Pratishtha for all the murthis was done by Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji. The next day, the Sankarachrya of Puri Matham visited the temple. On June 7, 1973 the Maha Kumbhabhishekam of the temple was performed according to Vedic tradition. Sri Swamiji addressed the large gathering of thousands and explained the greatness of the Hindu tradition. Shri Swamiji honoured Shri R.Venkataraman, who was the President of Shri Swaminatha Swami Seva Samajam (who later became the president of India) in charge of the project with the title of Satseva Ratna. Shri Ganapathy Sthapathi, who was in charge of all sculptural work, was also honoured with the title of Silpa Kala Ratna.

### **Chidambaram**

There is a saying that for Saivites, mere reference to temple would indicate the Nataraja Temple at Chidambaram alone. This is the kshetra dedicated to Akasa, among the five Panchbhuta Sthalas. Akasa being the subtlest of the five elements and it being related to

Chidakasa in the heart, this temple is considered to be the heart of the earth. 'Kunchita Padam' of Sri Nataraja is the centre of the earth. On June 21, 1970 Sri Acharya Swamiji offered diamond cover for Sri Nataraja's Kunchita Padam. Sri Swamiji carried the diamond cover in a grand procession before offering it to the lord. The weight of the diamond cover is 596 grams. In this, 536 diamonds, 390 greenstones and 27 Maragatha stones have been fixed and its value then was about Rs. 3 lakhs. On that day, Sri Swamiji also had darshan of Sri Govindaraja in the Nataraja temple and of Sri Thillai Kali, whose temple is nearby. He also went to Chidambara Sabha Samskrit Vidyalaya and enjoyed listening to the Vedaparayanam of the students.

On July 10, 1972, Sri Swamiji again visited the Nataraja temple on the auspicious Tiruvadira day and offered a diamond Abhaya Hastam to Sri Nataraja on behalf of Srimatham. Sri Swamiji also had darshan of the Abhishekam of Sphatika Lingam and Ratna Sabhapati. It is to be noted that out of the five Sphatika Lingams brought by Sri Adi Sankara from Kailasa, one of them, Varalingam is in the Chidambaram temple. On this occasion, Sri Swamiji blessed a devotee who was growing Bilva nursery and supplying them to all Shiva temples as instructed by him earlier. In November 1976, during Sri Swamiji's visit to the Nataraja temple, he inaugurated the project of making a diamond crown to the Lord. In January 1988, Sri Swamiji visited Sri Nataraja temple again and offered the diamond Kiritam (crown) to the Lord. He also installed the idol of Adi Sankara in the Sannidhi of Sri Sivakamasundari.

On May 1, 2015, both Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji and Pujya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamiji attended the grand Kumbhabhishekam performed after extensive renovation for which Srimatham had raised funds.

### **Uttara Chidambaram, Satara**

A beautiful temple for Lord Nataraja has been built in Satara as instructed by Sri Paramacharya during his camp there in 1981. This temple has been modelled on the lines of the famous Nataraja temple in Chidambaram. In June 1985, Sri Acharya Swamiji reached Satara and performed Maha Kubhabhishekam of this Uttara Chidambaram temple. This was a grand festival. The temple offers a great opportunity for those in the northern parts of India to have darshan of Sri Nataraja. On the parapet of the Chitsabha Mandapam, elegant stone

sculpture panels depicting the 64 karanas of Bharatanatyam have been displayed. Each karana panel has the Samskrit sloka describing the dance pose. This is a rare, interesting and educative feature in this temple. The temple celebrates Ardra Darsanam and all other festivals of the Chidambaram temple in a grand manner.

## **Guwahati**

On June 4, 1998, Sri Acharya Swamiji, along with his junior Acharya, performed the Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Purba Tirupati Balaji Mandir in Guwahati. The temple has shrines for Sri Venkateswara, Sri Ganesa, Sri Padmavathi and Sri Vijaya Durga. The Rajagopuram is 76 feet tall; the idol of Sri Balaji is 11 ft. tall. The temple is a boon to those people here, who cannot, for various reasons, go all the way to Tirupati for worship.

Sri Acharya Swamiji visited the North-eastern states- Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram in 1998. He worshipped Devi Tripurasundari while in Udaipur in Tripura. He also went to Sibsagar and worshipped Lord Siva. On May 12, 1999, Sri Swamiji inaugurated Sri Adi Sankara's idol in the precincts of the famous Kamakhya Mandir in Assam.

## **Narmada**

In April 1973, Sri Acharya Swamiji camped on the banks of the holy river Narmada. First he stayed in a village named Burman, which is the place where Lord Brahma had performed Yaga. He then proceeded to several places on the riverbank namely Devri, Surki, Sagar, Pali, Hadda, Lalitpur and Dalbahar. Apart from taking bath in the sacred river, Sri Swamiji spent some time in meditation. During this part of the yatra, it was very hot with extremely hot winds. It was only Sri Swamiji's tapas that enabled the safe progress of the yatra.

## **Tiruvanaikka (Tiruchi)**

Renovation of 'Tiruneetran Madil': There is a unique and noteworthy legend associated with the northern boundary wall on the west of the Tiruvanaikka temple. This 8000 ft long 'madil' (boundary wall) was constructed by Lord Siva himself, who appeared in the form of Siddha

and gave away only 'Tiruneeru' (Vibhuti) as wages to workers. Hence this wall came to be known as 'Tiruneetran Madil'. Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji inaugurated the renovation of this wall in July 1970. His Anugraha bhashanam at that time:

"The Gopurams of the temple, the wide corridors (Prakaras), beautiful sculpted pillars etc. are symbols of devoted service. They proclaim the devotion to our religion of those who constructed them. Devotees should offer money, materials or labour and complete the present task (of renovation). This is the duty of everyone."

Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada has installed 'Yantras' in many sthalas to attract the special grace of Iswara. In that process it is said that he installed the Vighneswara idol in front of Sri Akhilandeswari in Tiruvanaikka (Jambukeswaram) and also fixed Srichakras as Tatankas (ear-studs) in the ears of the Devi. Renovation, restoration of Tatankas and performance of Maha Kumbhabhishekam in this temple have been carried out by the successive Acharyas of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham ever since.

Kumbhabhishekam was performed by Sri Acharya Swamiji on July 4, 1970. Seven Gopurams including Rajagopuram, Mallappa Gopuram, Karthikai Gopuram, Aravitta Gopuram, Sankareswara Gopuram, Manimandapa Gopuram and Sundarapandiya Gopuram and the two Vimanams of Swami and Ambal had been renovated now.

Mahabhishekams were performed in a grand manner for Sri Jambukeswara and Sri Akhilandeswari. Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji performed Abhishekam for Sri Akhilandeswari and decorated her with a necklace of 108 sovereigns of gold with a pendant of lotus at the centre, donated by the public.

## **Ambaji**

Of the 51 Saktipeethams in Bharat, Ambaji is famous as the Hridayapeetham. It is believed that the place where Dakshayani's heart fell down was Ambaji. The main worship is for the yantra in the Ambaji Temple. Shri Acharya Swamiji had darshan of Ambaji on July 22, 1980. At the instance of Sri Swamiji, all the 51 Saktipeethams were later represented in 51 images and Sannidhis in this temple complex. The temple has since turned into a big tourist attraction.

## **Guruvayur**

In November 1970 the outer parts of the famous Krishna Temple in Guruvayur had been burnt down in a fire accident. Sri Acharya Swamiji came over on May 1, 1971 to inaugurate the restoration work. Sri Swamiji was given a ceremonial welcome in front of the Renovation office with a set of 33 caparisoned elephants standing majestically. Sri Swamiji's subsequent darshan at the temple was emotional. He came out and laid the foundation stone for the temple renovation work between 4 and 5 a.m. in accordance with Sastras. Navaratnas (nine gems) were kept, covered with a gold plate; foundation stone was laid on top and finished with sandal paste amid loud chant of God's names of Guruvayurappa, Narayana and Krishna. Firecrackers emitted loud noise. Then there was a music recital by Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar.

In the evening a large crowd had gathered. Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji gave Anugraha bhashanam. He mentioned that when he read in the newspapers about the fire accident in the temple, his eyes became wet and his heart melted. But having noticed now people's devotion and enthusiasm to complete the renovation work quickly, Sri Swamiji felt somewhat relieved. He blessed that the effort should bear quick fruit. Those who listened to Sri Swamiji had tears rolling down their eyes.

## **Mumbai**

On February 9, 2000, Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji performed Maha Kumbhabhishekam to the imposing 33- feet Bhakta Anjaneya at the SIES academic complex in Nerul, Navi Mumbai. The idol, carved from a single granite stone, stands on a lotus pedestal of 6 feet. Sri Swamiji adorned the idol with 'Silver Kavacham' weighing 400 kg on December 29, 2000. After completion of Vimanam, the total height of the shrine has since risen to 61 feet. A prominent road in the vicinity was named 'Srimad Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Marg'; the renaming ceremony was done at the hands of Sri Swamiji. He performed the Maha Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Marubai Gavdevi Mandir at

Matunga, Mumbai on February 11, 2000. The village deity of Matunga, Adya Gram Devata, Marubai is believed to be 300 years old. Sri Swamiji offered golden crown to Devi Marubai.

On March 18, 2000, Sri Swamiji blessed the diamond jubilee celebration at Sankara Mattham, Matunga, Mumbai. He performed the Kumbhabhishekam here on April 29, 2002. During the Kumbhabhishekam of the Subramania temple at Chembur, Mumbai held during March 2000, Sri Swamiji decorated the deity with a diamond spear ('Vaira Vel'), donated by the public. Sri Swamiji has been participating in all the Kumbhabhishekams of this temple right from the first one held on January 24, 1980. Sri Swamiji adorned the murthis of Sri Guruvayurappan and Sri Ayyappan in this temple complex with diamond crowns on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2001.

Sri Swamiji visited the famous Siddhivinayak temple in Prabhadevi on February 22, 2000 and adorned Sri Ganapathi with a pearl mala. In his subsequent visit on June 28, 2002, he inaugurated the new website of the temple. He paid a visit to Sri Mahalakshmi temple on February 25, 2000 and adorned the three Devis, Mahalakshmi, Mahakali and Mahasaraswathi with gold Crowns and other ornaments. In his subsequent visit on April 29, 2002, Sri Swamiji decorated the Gopurams of the temple with gold covering. A Maha Kumbhabhishekam was held for the first time on the occasion.

### **Naimisaranyam**

In November 1973, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited Naimisaranyam, the holy place on the bank of Gomathi river, where Suta Pouranika gave Upadesa of Bhagavan Vedavyasa's 18 Mahapuranas to the Rishis Sounaka and others. Sri Swamiji took holy bath in the most important tirtha, namely Chakratirtham and had darshan of Vyasashakti. Later he took bath in Sarvatirtham, where all the holy tirthas had been brought for the sake of Dadhichi Rishi.

### **Ayodhya**

In December 1973, Sri Acharya Swamiji took holy bath in Sarayu river and visited all the temples in Ayodhya. The Ram Janmabhumi temple was specially opened for Swamiji during

that time. Sri Swamiji conducted a Vidwat Sadas and also inaugurated a Shukla Yajurveda Pathashala.

### **Dharmasthala**

In the course of his early Vijaya yatra, Sri Acharya Swamiji camped in Dharmasthala, the sacred Shiva sthala in Dakshina Kannada in November 1971; the Lord here is Sri Manjunatha. Pothis belonging to Madhwa Sampradayam perform puja in this temple. The Annadanam performed in this temple to all yattris, irrespective of their number is justly famous. The traditional trustee of the temple is Sri Virendra Hegde who is a Jain. People consider Sri Hegde as Sri Manjunatha in human form. That is why people having any kind of dispute come to this temple, place their dispute before Hegde and accept whatever decision he gives, treating his words as divine. This practice is still prevalent here. Sri Swamiji offered a golden Bilva garland to the Lord. He also honoured Sri Hegde with Ahimsa Silk shawl.

### **Kurukshetra**

Sri Acharya Swamiji camped at Kurukshetra from June 27 to June 30, 1973. He formally declared open a large tank called Brahmasaras. The Haryana government has provided nice stone steps of red colour on all the four sides of this tank, which is the largest in the whole of India. Sri Swamiji bathed in the tank.

A temple for Sri Adi Sankara and Gita Ratha Mandapam were also constructed.

### **Sukrathal**

In November 1973, on his return from Badrinath, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited the famous temple in Sukrathal. This ancient temple is said to be the place where Sukabrahmam gave the famous discourse of Srimad Bhagavatham to King Parikshit for seven days.

### **Dhanushkoti / Rameswaram**

On February 10, 1977 Sri Acharya Swamiji performed Kumbhabhishekam to the Vimanam of Shodasa Vinayaka Temple which had been constructed in Sri Sankara Matham. On February 14, Sri Swamiji went to Dhanushkoti and had Sethu Snanam. It was Maha Sivaratri Day on February 16. Sri Swamiji performed nightlong Chandramouliswara pooja four times in the four Yamas. In the third Yama, considered special being Lingodbhava Kalam, Sri Swamiji went to the temple and performed 1008 Kalasa Sankabhishekam to Sri Ramanatha Swamy with his own hands. It was a grand sight. During the camp at Rameswaram, there were several important events- Maharudram, Satachandi, tests in Vedas, Sahasrabhojanam, Sammelanam of Agnihotris, etc.

### **Talakaveri**

The place of confluence of rivers Kaveri, Kannika and Sujoti in Mercara area in Karnataka is called "Bhagamandala" where Bhaganda Maharishi worshipped. As per tradition, Sri Acharya Swamiji stayed here first, worshipped Sri Bhagandeshwara and then went to Talakaveri, the place of origin of the sacred river Kaveri. He performed Tula snanam after due sankalpam and then Kaveri puja on Nov.14 and 15, 1971. He returned to Bhagamandala and camped there for five days while having holy bath in Trivenisangamam. Enroute to Talakaveri, Sri Swamiji had darshan of Sri Omkareshwar at Mercara. At the public reception given to Swamiji at the Town Hall, General Cariappa joined and welcomed Sri Swamiji.

### **Tirupati**

Sri Acharya Swamiji has paid innumerable visits to the Tirupati Venkateswara temple and made many offerings on different occasions. He goes there and prays before starting any new welfare project. Diamond crown, diamond yagnopavita, golden Abhayahasta, diamond garland, golden Paduka etc. are some of the offerings made by Sri Swamiji.

A devotee has recorded his experience in moving terms of having accompanied Sri Swamiji in prayer before the Lord at Tirupati for four hours from 1.30 a.m. to 5.30 a.m. Sri Swamiji was continuously in deep meditation, occasionally shedding tears of devotion. This was the

preparation and blessing for the devotee before starting a Trust for looking after cancer patients.

### **Sidhpur**

In October 1980 Sri Acharya Swamiji came to Sidhpur in Gujarat, known as Matru Gaya and Karma Bhumi. This place is noted for performing Pitru karyas for mother, similar to Gaya in Bihar. As is well known, Saraswati is a subterranean river which surfaces on earth at very few places; this sacred place is one of them. Sri Swamiji had holy bath in this river.

### **Sirkali**

In November 1976, Sri Acharya Swamiji visited Sirkali en route to Rameswaram. Sirkali is the birthplace of saint Tirugnanasambandar. During his visit to this place, the descendants of the saint met Sri Swamiji and offered to hand over to Srimatham the house in which the saint was born. Sri Swamiji accepted the gift and got the building renovated to appear like a Vimana. On February 26, 1999, the memorial was inaugurated by Sri Acharya Swamiji in a grand function. Sixtyfour Oduvars were honoured. A beautiful painting of the saint, kept in a room, is worshipped. Old copper inscriptions and lamp have also been kept. The life history of the saint is shown in colourful murals. Sri Swamiji arranged for conduct of pujas to the lord and the saint and also organised a Devara Pathashala there.

### **Thanjavur**

In September 1984, the thousandth year of Raja Raja Chola, who constructed the Thanjavur Big Temple (Brihadiswara temple) was celebrated. The then Prime Minister attended the function. Sri Acharya Swamiji had prepared a gold crown weighing 300 grams for the statue of Sri Raja Raja Chola. It was placed on the statue on this occasion. To ensure proper conduct of pujas in the temple Sri Swamiji made arrangements for a permanent trust. More than 80 stone inscriptions of the king were collected and a book was published on this occasion, titled "Stone inscriptions of Siva Pada Sekaran".

Mention may also be made of some of the other new temples and important renovation works in temples undertaken under the inspiration of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji. These include:

1. Ratham in Sri Varadarajaswamy Temple in Kanchipuram.
2. Temple for saint Nandanar in Adanur, Tamil Nadu.
3. Rajagopuram (part) in Srirangam Temple.
4. Silver spear ('Vel') for Murugan and Silver kavachm for Vinayaka at Palani.
5. Golden Bilvadala and Rudraksha in golden thread for Arunachaleswara and Tirumangalyam for Ambal in Tiruvannamalai.
6. Tirumangalyam in golden thread to Devi Minakshi in Madurai.
7. Pearl garland for Vinayaka in Pillaiyarpatti in Tamil Nadu.
8. Idols of 63 Saivaite Nayanmars in Jalakantheswara Temple in Adayapalam in Tamil Nadu.
9. Abhishekam of Siva in Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Tamil Nadu with 108 pots of Ganga water and Annabhishekam with 100 bags of rice on Aippasi Pournami day.
10. Panchaloha idols of the four great Saivaite Nayanmars were given to the Maha Mariamman Temple in Kualalampur, Malaysia.

## **Renaissance of Hindu Religion and Culture**

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

In keeping with the tradition of outreach of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, the present Acharya, Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji has been constantly initiating various welfare measures for the benefit of mankind, particularly for the development of the poor. These can be broadly categorized as Vidya – Education and Vaidya - Medical.

#### **Vidya(Education)**

Of all the Ghatikas (an institution where scholars and students strive for knowledge) in South India, the one which existed in Kanchipuram was reputed for high standard of education during the days of the Pallavas. The Ghatika in Kanchi, the capital city of the Pallavas, seems to have existed even earlier than 350 A.D.

Coming to the present days, the number of newly constructed buildings at Enathur, near Kanchipuram, and the institutions functioning there make it seem that the ancient Ghatikasthan which flourished there centuries ago, has been revived by Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji. In fact, a Ghatikasthan - residential complex where the teachers and the taught live together learning the Vedas - has also come up near the Vishwa Maha Vidyalaya at Enathur.

These achievements are the result of the efforts of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham to integrate ancient wisdom and modern technology. The Peetham chalked out a strategy that includes some major IT initiatives. In a move that surprised the corporate world, the Peetham took the initiative for Govt. of India's Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) to be set up at a cost of Rs. 55 crores (Phase 1) in an area of 25 acres strategically located on the Bengaluru highway near Kanchipuram. Subsequently, a housing complex with a training centre and hostels is expected to come up in an area of 210 acres.

“Our primary objective is not to promote computer education. Our aim is to stop people from going abroad.” says Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji. “The deemed university has already prevented over 1000 students from going abroad,” the senior Acharya adds. “The Peetham is currently contemplating the introduction of courses in religion and temple management, apart from charity management with exposure to laws regarding registration, urban land ceiling and foreign exchange regulations,” says the younger Acharya Sri Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji. Referring to the Peetham’s foray into fields outside religion, he adds: “The Peetham has always been engaged in these things. Since the environment has turned harsh, we felt the need to take up additional responsibilities. In fact, educating people and providing knowledge is an integral part of a religion,” the Acharya explains. “So tomorrow, if there are opportunities for the people in biotechnology or in any other field, we will venture into that.” The Kanchi Peetham strongly feels that an integration of science and culture can actually be beneficial to the country. Sri Vijayendra Swamiji quotes the example of how micro-filming helps in the maintenance and preservation of invaluable manuscripts. Adds Sri Jayendra Swamiji: “Our university curriculum also ensures that students imbibe discipline and Indian culture apart from academics.”

Simultaneously the Peetham also continues its traditional work. It is presently in the process of conceptualising a Vedic Centre of Higher Studies at a cost of Rs. 100 crore. To be designed on the lines of the IITs, with student scholarships, the centre will undertake research to understand the thoughts and messages of the sages and Rishis for the common people, explains the younger Acharya.

The Acharyas feel there is no dearth of adequate manpower. The Peetham has donned the role of a co-ordinator by providing opportunities to service-minded people and giving them a free hand. It has roped in industry experts, former government officials, bureaucrats and

technocrats, apart from senior citizens. With VRS schemes being a major hit, the Peetham now expects more volunteers to join up. For all its projects the Peetham believes in involving resident Indians first, then NRIs and finally the MNCs.

Activities focus on strengthening Deva bhakti (reverence for god) and Desa bhakti (patriotism). Obviously, it is seeking to tap the spirit of Desa bhakti among the non-resident Indians to fund its activities. "The NRIs have traditionally been neglected. We are involving them in a big way in all our activities," says the younger Acharya. The Peetham is now in constant touch with the NRIs through various fora, including the Kanchi NRI Centre. Things have become easier, with the availability of an extensive NRI database.

The Peetham is propagating the philosophy of 'one temple, one village, one student' among the NRIs -adoption of a temple for maintenance and renovation (rather than building a new temple); adoption of a village to provide basic amenities and finally sponsoring the educational needs of a student.

The initiatives of the Peetham are aimed at strengthening the family system. "While senior citizens and grandparents will be retained for the Peetham's service activities, the second generation is being encouraged to pursue business at the IT Park. Finally, the third generation would be retained by providing quality education in Kanchi itself," adds Sri Vijayendra Swamiji. The Peetham's activities seem to be surely intended at uniting the three generations in 'Nagareshu Kanchi'.

If Kanchipuram develops into a culture and knowledge centre as the Acharyas envisage, it can help decongest the city of Chennai. A Rs 60 crore Kanchi broadgauge rail link has already been commissioned. Also, if National Highway 4 is brought under the prime minister's road development programme, Kanchipuram might soon become the 'Nagareshu Kanchi' (city of cities) of the Acharyas' dreams.

Further specifics:

- The dream of Sri Acharya Swamiji, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Vishwa Maha Vidyalaya at Enathur, near Kanchi, founded in 1993, now a Deemed University, is the foremost centre of learning, catering to the needs of modern day education in all its aspects such as Arts, Sciences, Engineering, Computer Applications and Business

Management at the graduate and post graduate levels. It also has a unique Bachelor of Samskrit and Applied Sciences (BSAS) degree which bundles Samskrit and computer education. An imposing idol of Adi Sankara, 60 ft tall and weighing 200 tonnes, installed on a high Peetham, adds to the majesty and lofty standards of the university.

- The Chandrasekharendra Saraswati International library and Research Centre at Enathur. The imposing structure, constructed on the principles of the traditional "Vasthu Sastra" is a three storeyed building with four wings and a huge canopy in the form of Sri Chakra. The library which has the objective of collecting books, rare manuscripts and other documents will serve as a storehouse of knowledge to help promote research in various subjects like Vedanta, Nyaya, Astrology, Mantrasastra, Tantras, etc. With about two lakh books and manuscripts on all subjects in many languages, palm leaf manuscripts collected, classified and digitized, and audio and video tapes on religious and cultural subjects, it serves as a major research centre. This library is continuously in the process of building its infrastructure towards this end. While books in Indian languages are available in good measure, those in languages of other eastern countries are planned to be acquired. This library is intended to function as a reference library of all languages and cultures of South India and South East Asia. Residential complex for scholars who come from various places to do research work is under way.
- An Engineering College at Enathur attached to the Vishwa Maha Vidyalaya.
- An Arts and Science College at Enathur affiliated to University of Madras wherein many students of the backward classes study.
- An Ayurvedic College at Chennai, devoted to Indian medicines and preparing students for a degree is functioning under the auspices of the University at Enathur. It also has a hospital. The poor peasants who live in the nearby villages have been trained in preparing the Ayurvedic medicines from the herbs. These medicines are sold out to the public and the money so generated goes to these peasants.
- Sankara Schools which impart modern education with a traditional flavour.
- Oriental Schools located in almost all districts of Tamil Nadu having classes from Kindergarten to Std. XII.
- Schools preparing students for CBSE syllabus examinations and simultaneously imparting education of Vedas/ Stotras are run at Chennai, Bengaluru and Mumbai. This has been a very successful venture.

- Residential schools run by one such Trust serve the mentally and physically challenged children in Kanchipuram, Kalavai and Haridwar.
- An Industrial Training Institute in Coimbatore provides training in skills and entrepreneurship.
- In Madhubani (Bihar), a remote and backward area on the Indo-Nepal border, where there is very little industrial activity, an Industrial Training Institute has been started. This allows the villagers there to learn skills and earn a living.
- Veda Pathasalas and Agama Pathasalas located in most of the districts in Tamil Nadu and other places imparting religious teaching. In addition to Vidyarthi from India, the Pathasalas have enrolled Vidyarthi from Sri Lanka who study the scriptures.
- Silpa Pathasala at Kanchipuram gives a fillip to the study of temple architecture and sculpture. Emphasis is on practical training in Silpa Sastra including drawings.
- Moral instruction classes are conducted during vacations for college and school students. Special camps are arranged during summer vacation in Chennai and other centres.
- Tiruppavai – Tiruvembavai competitions. Under the auspices of Srimatham, booklets of Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai are distributed in many places in Tamil Nadu; competitions are held in the Tamil month of Margazhi and prizes awarded. Hindu Religious endowments board also helps in this effort.
- Tamil Writers' Forum and Tamil Poets' Forum have been set up to encourage the growth of Tamil language.
- A National Eminence Award has been instituted by the South Indian Education Society, Mumbai. This is an annual award given around the Aradhana Festival of Sri Maha Swamiji, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, to outstanding personalities in four fields: Science, Community service with emphasis on rural development, Public service and Dharma Pracharam. The Award carries a citation, a silver scroll and a cash award of Rs.2.5 lakhs. This Award is being bestowed on eminent persons every year from 1999.
- Kanchi Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati National Eminence Award in fine arts, also instituted by S.I.E.S., Mumbai, carries a cash prize of Rs. 1.00 lakh, Silver Lamp and citation.

Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji has established many hospitals all over the country for providing relief to poor people in sickness. The Kanchi Sankara Matham supports 44 medical hospitals. These hospitals are equipped with modern facilities and free treatment is given to poor patients. Medical services are also being provided in 15 centres besides the main hospitals.

To name a few of the hospitals:

- Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji started a free Ayurvedic Dispensary and later a Leprosy Hospital at Kumbakonam in 1916.
- The Kanchi Peetham enlisted the support of financial institutions like ICICI and IDBI and acquired control of the ailing CHILDS' Trust Hospital in Chennai.
- Kanchi Kamakoti Sankara Hospital and Sri Jayendra Saraswati Institute of Medical Sciences.
- Hindu Mission Hospitals and Health Services are located at Ambasamudram, Brahma Desam, Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Kanchipuram, Krishnagiri, Kumbakonam, Madurai, Salem, Tambaram, Tirunelveli, Thanjavur, Thiruvananthapuram, Tuticorin, Tiruchi, Vellore etc. Some of them are functioning as Ayurvedic clinics.
- Sankara Nethralaya in Chennai, enjoying high reputation for specialized eyecare.
- The Jain Dharmasala in Chennai for cancer patients.
- The Kanchi Sankara Medical Centre at Lake Gardens, Kolkata.
- The Kanchi Sankara Eye Society, Coimbatore.
- Sri Kanchi Sankara Health and Education Foundation, Guwahati. The Sankaradeva Netralaya is the best hospital for eye care in the North Eastern states. This was started soon after Swamiji was apprised, during his visit to the Northeast, of the difficulties faced by people there in having to travel long distances for eye treatment.
- An Eye Hospital at Madhubani, Bihar, near the Nepal border:
- A General Hospital on the way to Badrinath in the Himalayas (Rathura). This was also started after representations were made by the locals to Sri Swamiji during his VijayaYatra.
- A chain of rural health hospitals in Tamil Nadu.
- Eye camps are arranged at convenient centres and at suitable times for examining poor people with eye troubles. A team of expert and experienced ophthalmic surgeons render free service. Such free eye camps are an annual feature at Kanchipuram and patients

needing surgery are taken to Coimbatore for necessary treatment and further follow-up to ensure that the treatment is effective.

- Mega Medical university is in making in Odisha State.
- Medical college and hospital are being established in Nepal.

At the instance of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji, the gardens of many temples in South India are cultivated to grow many herbs used in Ayurvedic medicines. There is need to grow much more of them in large quantities to serve in bio-medical research to develop effective drugs for AIDS, cancer, hepatitis, leprosy etc., diseases that threaten the health of many in major parts of rural India and the world. A cancer research centre, utilising the Himalayan herbs available in places in northern districts of Uttar Pradesh and Sikkim is an immediate need. Setting up a cancer research centre and hospital at a suitable place is under the consideration of the compassionate Acharya.

Also, setting up small dispensaries in rural centres will bring inexpensive medical relief to the rural folk and tribals, who cannot afford the costly medical treatment in hospitals in the cities and major towns. This is a stupendous task and would involve a lot of monetary and manpower input and guidance. A start on these lines has already been made by the Acharyas and with sustained action, it is expected that the entire country can be covered in a decade.

### **Other Social and Humanitarian Services**

Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji's compassion for the poor and the lower classes of society is well known. The following are some illustrative activities born of this compassion.

- Nithya Annadanam (free food) to about 125 pilgrims is provided every day at Sri Kamakshi Amman Temple at Kanchipuram.
- Old Vedic scholars are given a monthly stipend of Rs. 1,000/-.
- Kanchi Moodoor Archakas Welfare Trust, Chennai works for the welfare of temple priests. Priests and pujaris of temples with a very meagre income are provided with monthly financial aid. This includes those of small village temples too.

- The Matham has opened Go-salas (shelter for-cows) in many districts in Tamil Nadu and in North India. In addition to feeding the animals, required medical attention is also provided to the cows.
- Providing solace and decent living for the aged and the destitute, who have no support, has always been the concern of the Acharya, and with this in mind, several old age homes are maintained by the Matham in some places in Tamil Nadu, Kalahasti in Andhra Pradesh, Varanasi in U.P. and Chitrakoot in M.P., each having about 80 to 100 inmates. Destitute homes are functioning at places like Kalavai in North Arcot district, Kalahasti in Andhra Pradesh and at Kanchipuram.
- A hostel is run for destitute girl children. Women's self help groups have been established to carry out economic activities under the Kanchi Health and Education Society. Destitute women are given training for self-employment through the Jana Kalyan district unit.
- The Home for the disabled run by the Matham not only provides a home for the handicapped, but also runs a school for inmates and training is given in developing skills. Two such homes are maintained- one at Haridwar and the other at Kanchipuram.
- Handicapped persons are provided with tri-cycles, artificial limbs and such other supporting implements.
- Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Rural Development Trust and several such other organisations take care of rural and neglected areas. Unemployed youth are provided with the means for starting some craft to earn their livelihood. Poor people are given sewing machines as a self-employment measure.
- Jana Kalyan movement was started by Sri Swamiji in October 1987 after undertaking penance in the Sannidhi of Lord Venkateswara in Tirupati. The aim of the movement is to weld the people of Bharat into one nation through social welfare measures and to awaken them from the slumber into which they have fallen. The movement under his direction and guidance is constantly working towards providing vocational skill development and improving self-employment opportunities for men and women from the economically backward classes. Sri Swamiji has always emphasised the true value of cottage industries.
- Financial assistance and aid by way of providing dhotis/sarees and Mangalyam are given for marriages of poor girls.

- A watershed near the entrance of the Matham provides drinking water and buttermilk to the thirsty throughout the year.
- Poor feeding is carried out everyday at Kanchi and in all important cities.
- Many acres of land have been donated to Dalits.
- Orphanages are run in selected places for upbringing of orphaned children.
- Flood, famine, cyclone, earthquake etc. in any part of the world moves the Acharya Swamiji to urgent action. Assistance to the victims is rendered speedily. Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji personally visits the affected areas most times in order to offer solace and organise relief. In the aftermath of Gujarat Earthquake, two villages were adopted and totally reconstructed. That Sri Swamiji was one of the earliest to reach disaster-hit sites – Latur in Maharashtra and Bhuj in Gujarat- personally with tangible help and moral support, is little known to people. In Gujarat he travelled nearly 800 kilometres each day for a week, stopping at various places to provide courage and solace to the disaster stricken people.
- Many drinking water wells, under the Jeevan Dhara Well Scheme and a number of public utilities under the centrally-sponsored Health Scheme have been constructed in and around Kanchipuram.
- Environment protection. Our land abounds in rivers, perennial or otherwise, which provide water for agricultural and drinking purposes. There are forests where trees and plants are in existence for many centuries. Many animals and birds have these as their homes. It is well known that in our country, trees and rivers are considered sacred. Of late, pollution of rivers due to various reasons and destruction of forests for timber on a large scale have risen to alarming proportions causing environmental degradation, considerably affecting our society. Sri Acharya Swamiji has taken steps to make people aware of the pride of place that water sources and trees occupy in our scriptures and books on herbal medicines, and the need to preserve their purity and their natural state.
- Sri Acharya Swamiji has always been visiting prisons in towns and cities and offering solace and guidance for turning over a new leaf to the prisoners. The prisoners are all moved to tears on the realisation that Sankaracharya himself came in person and consoled and advised them. They feel very gratified and reformed. As an instance, mention can be made of Sri Swamiji's visit in his early days to the central prison in Vellore on January 1, 1971, the New Year Day during one of his early Vijaya Yatras. He blessed

the prisoners and told them to undertake reform of the mind, develop faith in Bhagavan and live life as good persons after release from jail. Sri Swamiji distributed sweet rice to the prisoners numbering more than a thousand.

### **Handful of Rice Scheme (Pidiyarisi Scheme)**

Under this Scheme, every family keeps aside a handful of rice every day; this is collected, cooked, offered to the Lord in temple and distributed among the poor and school children. This scheme is in operation in many towns in Tamil Nadu including Chennai and Coimbatore. In New Delhi the Hindu Religious Organisation distributes wheat flour instead of rice. Other organizations have also been enlisted in this effort.

### **Free Upanayanams**

Children from poor families are given free upanayanam as per Sastras. Many Sabhas hold Samashti Upanayanam in many places all over India with the blessings of Sri Acharya Swamiji.

### **Kannikadana Trust**

As per instructions of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji, this Trust offers financial assistance to poor families for conducting marriages of girls as per Sastras. This Trust operates from Chennai. Mangalya and new clothes are offered.

### **Distribution of Prasadam in Hospitals**

Holy Prasadam and religious publications are distributed under the auspices of Srimatham to patients in hospitals. This service is being carried out in many centres in Tamil Nadu and New Delhi; Srimatham sends Prasadam to these centres regularly. During Deepavali sweets are distributed to patients in hospitals in Chennai. As an instance of Sri Swamiji's early exhortation in this regard, mention can be made of his address at the public meeting at Vellore on Jaunuary 1, 1971, when he advised Rotary Club, Lions' Club and other such service organisations to visit hospitals and console the patients and give them Prasadam from Srimatham.

## **Jivatma Kainkaryam**

Sabhas bearing the above name, operating from Kanchipuram and Kumbakonam, are engaged in the noble act of cremating/ helping to cremate Hindu orphan dead bodies and assisting in performance of last rites. (This service is equivalent in merit to performing Aswamedhayaga, as expounded by Jagadguru Sri Paramacharya). Trusts for this purpose are working in Chennai and a few other centres.

## **Facilities for Aparakriyas and Sraadhams**

Facilities by way of accommodation, utensils and other support have been made available in many places, functioning under the name of Gnanavapi etc. including Chennai, Madurai, Salem, Kolkata, Mumbai etc.

On December 28, 2000, Aparakriya Centre 'Sayujyam' was inaugurated by Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji in Navi Mumbai. It has 12 rooms and a large assembly hall and a well, supplying water throughout the year.

## **Further aspects**

1984 was the year of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji's golden jubilee. Sri Swamiji arranged to celebrate it by taking up and executing several service oriented schemes such as:

1. Renovation of not less than 50 temples
2. Providing financial assistance to temples for daily pujas
3. To honour 50 pandits of Vedas and Sastras and help them financially
4. To publish 50 Stotras of AdiSankara with meanings in Tamil and English
5. To award scholarships to 50 students who take up higher studies in Samskrit or Philosophy
6. To plant Bilva trees in temples
7. To build hospitals for the benefit of the poor and the economically backward
8. To put up Go- Salas and take due care of them
9. To open schools which will conduct classes in Stotras

## 10. To conduct competitions in schools and colleges and distribute prizes

The above schemes were implemented through generous funds received from the public. The golden jubilee celebrations were held on February 24, 1985 by Sri Sankara Bhaktajana Sabha at Kanchipuram. A free medical check up camp was organised with the help of a medical team from Coimbatore. 100 doctors and 10 pharmaceutical companies cooperated in this and free medical check up of 3000 poor people was done and medicines given free. Similar educational and medical help schemes were executed successfully during all the subsequent celebrations including Shastiyabda poorthi, golden jubilee of ascension to Peetham and 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Presently during the Sathabhishekam celebrations many such programmes have been implemented.

At Vedal near Kanchipuram, a 60 ft high idol of Lord Siva and a building housing the artefacts used by Sri Maha Swamiji, rare musical instruments and exhibits detailing the stories from Mahabharata and Ramayana have been put up. The houses in which the Carnatic music Trinity were born in Tiruvarur in Tamil Nadu have been renovated and daily poojas, and music and dance classes organised. Annual festivals for the Trinity are being celebrated. Assistance to musicians in distress is being provided.

At Irulneekki, the birthplace of Sri Acharya Swamiji, many social welfare programmes were put in place. Apart from Veda Pathasala teaching Rik and Yajur Vedas, medical centre for free medical aid, TV viewing facility, improvement in water supply, renovation of temples and running them under the aegis of Srimatham, construction of houses for the poor and extending technical assistance and issue of implements for simple professional activities have all changed the face of this little village.

Assistance by way of providing self-employment tools like sewing machines, cycle rickshaws, iron boxes, Idli makers etc. is constantly being given to the needy and economically backward sections of society.

As an instance of Jagadguru Sri Acharya Swamiji's quick and concerned response to situations of man-made human misery, mention may be made of his sending a donation of Rs.25,000/- in November 1984 for helping Sikhs and Hindus affected in the fighting in Punjab. Further, he arranged to send food grains for the poor and the homeless in Punjab.

Sri Swamiji is keen to encourage public welfare activities of individuals too. On June 30, 1977, during his camp at Salem, Sri Swamiji declared open a hall named Jayendra hall. This hall had been built by the Geeta Dharma Trust run by one Sri V. Ramakrishnan, who was carrying out several social services through the Trust.

Facilities including financial assistance were extended to a Islamic poet Mohammed Ali, who was a leprosy patient.

Sankara Voluntary Service has been set up in many places to render social services.

The above compilation is by no means complete; it is only indicative. The services rendered by Srimatham in religious, educational, medical, social and other spheres are innumerable. The Acharyas of Srimatham keep travelling all over the country, spreading the message of Sanatana Dharma and instituting mechanisms for such services. The aim is to inculcate the awareness that if we protect Dharma, Dharma will protect us. All the projects and activities of the Matham under the guidance and blessings of the Acharyas have attracted the attention of philanthropists, institutions, journals etc. all over the world. Sri Acharya Swamiji expects every Indian to take part in this noble venture. Those who wish to join the effort may contact Srimatham for details.

## **SWAMIJI THE WORLD TEACHER**

### **Teachings of Jagadguru Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji**

#### **Narayana Smriti**

Messages from Sri Matham, known as Srimukham, are ended with “Ithi Narayana Smriti: kriyate”, meaning “Narayana is remembered”. For Sanyasis, remembering Narayana is very important. At the time of entering into Sanyasa ashrama, the Salagrama of Vishnu is kept on Sanyasi’s head and abhishekam performed. Thereafter he becomes Narayana himself. He always thinks of Narayana and aims at attainment of moksha (liberation) by praying to Narayana as ordained in Sastras: “Moksham ichhet Janardanat”. The Sanyasi invokes Narayana when people perform obeisance to him.

#### **Hinduism**

Hindu religion has its base in the Vedas. It has been in existence from the origin of the world. This was not founded by anyone. Hinduism is a way of life. It is also known by the name of ‘Dharma’. Dharma never dies; so also Hindu religion.

Hinduism has four essential basic characteristics.

1) The worship of Brahman in Nirguna form and worship of Bhagavan in Saguna form and idol worship. Idols are worshipped in temples where divine presence or Saannidhya, and divine power are invoked in them through various rituals and chanting of mantras. The Garbhagriha or sanctum sanctorum in the temple is the place where we offer our worship not in large

groups but we individually communicate with Bhagavan in the idol. The various rituals performed in the temple during the day like Abhisheka, Archana, Karpuraharathi, Neivedyam, distribution of Prasadam and so on and the prayers of the devotees who congregate in large numbers strengthen the divine power. The feeling of bhakti is enhanced when many upacharas are offered such as playing of musical instruments, umbrella, chaamara, and so on.

2) Wearing a mark on our forehead. Wearing Vibhuti or Bhasma reminds us of the pure white form of Paramatmaswarupa. It also denotes the ultimate state of everything when it is completely burnt. When everything else is burnt, ultimately Iswara alone remains. Since vibhuti is prepared from cowdung, which is obtained from the rear part of the cow where Lakshmi resides, wearing vibhuti is also a mark of wealth. Similarly, kumkum, red in colour, prepared from turmeric by adding lime juice, ghee etc, reminds us of Lakshmi who is also of red colour. Again, kumkum is also a symbol of wealth. Wearing Gopichandana reminds us of gopis and Krishna and the need for us to surrender to the Lord like gopis did. The wearing of carbon black mark on the forehead by Madhvas reminds us that when a thing is burnt or destroyed, it gets charred and becomes black, which is Vishnu's colour. The whole world is pervaded by Vishnu.

3) Belief and the theory of Karma and past and future births. The Atman never perishes; it is only the body which perishes. The Atman is changeless and eternal. The Jivatma takes various bodies in accordance with the fruits of its actions until it realises its true nature viz., the changeless and eternal Atman. When the realisation dawns, the Sanchita (accumulated in previous births) and Agami (yet to happen) karmas will be destroyed. The Prarabdha (that which has started to bear fruit in this birth) karma can be destroyed only after experiencing its consequences; but in the presence of Atmagnana, the body alone will undergo the effects; the mind will be immersed in Atmananda.

4) Cremation of ordinary men and burial of great men. When the body is cremated, the Jivatma goes over to another body and enjoys the fruits of past Karma in that body. This cycle continues till Atman is realised. In the case of Sanyasis and Gnaniis, their bodies are buried; the bodies mix with the five Mahabhutas from which they had come into existence through combination. These Mahatmas do not have rebirth and they merge with Bhagavan.

## **Religion**

I once asked for the meaning of the word 'Religion' from some very knowledgeable people. I was told that the word 'Religion' means 'joining it again' or 'tying it again'. The words 'joining' and 'again' are significant and pregnant with meaning. Man, who was one with God in the beginning, separates from him either because of his ignorance or his 'Karma'. He thinks that he is operating independently. To remove this feeling of 'separateness' and rejoin him with God and to reintroduce to him his original and natural qualities is the purpose of religion. Even if every religion looks different, the purpose of all religions is the same.

## **Advaitam**

In our Vedic Sanatana Dharma, the main doctrine is that the Supreme reality is one. The one reality is called the Atman. This Atman has apparently split into two in the form of the Jivatma and Paramatma. When a person says 'I have eaten this mango and I am feeling happy', he is speaking in reality, not of the body but of the Jivatma which is experiencing the happiness. The Paramatma is only one. He is present everywhere. He is the ocean of compassion and mercy. He is the unbounded reservoir of knowledge. Since it is difficult for us to perceive him, pray to him and sing songs in his glory, we need to give him some shape and form. That is how we have the concept of Idol worship. Worship of the idol is different from experiencing the state of the Paramatman. Experiencing that state is the goal of human life. It is about that state that all great saints have sung. A well known phrase goes, "Those who have seen it do not speak about it and those who speak about it have not seen it." The state to be experienced is different from the Sadhana or the means to experience it. This is what is signified in the Upanishads by the term Anubhuti, or Anubhava or experience. Take the example of the sugar candy. Everyone knows that it is sweet. But only if you eat it, you can experience its sweetness. Sadhana is required to experience the Paramatma. Paramatma is there in everyone and hence it can be experienced.

Paramatma comes to us in the form of Parameswara and Parvati, or Narayana and Lakshmi and so on to bestow upon us his grace. He comes in the form of avatara to set things right.

We cannot describe his real Swarupa, but we have to experience it. Our Puranas, our cultural traditions, etc. are there to tell us how to attain him while Vedanta and the Upanishads are there to tell us about the goal to be attained. We have to streamline our life as laid down in Sastras, so as to take the right path and attain the goal. It is because of Advaita attitude that Hindus do not see any difference between Saivism and Vaishnavam. Adi Sankara brought out the basic unity between all sects. He saved Hinduism from decay. The Advaita philosophy becomes the most appropriate for promoting national integration.

With the aid of several forms and by repeating several names we worship Iswara, who has neither form nor name. When we reach the end of this path, forms, shapes and names disappear. When the Jivatma has reached the state of oneness with the Ultimate, there is no more the need for form or name. It is this ultimate state which is the zenith of 'bhakti'.

Advaita is the mental attitude of seeing the same Atman in everything, but when it comes to action one should not practise Advaitam - भावाद्वैतं सदा कुर्यात् क्रियाद्वैतं न कर्हिचित् । There is an interesting story to explain this. A Guru taught his disciples about the realization of the Atma swarupa, the one Atman which alone could give peace and tranquility. One day when the disciples were walking on the road, a mad elephant was coming towards them. All the disciples ran helter-skelter, but one disciple stood alone bravely in front of the elephant. Even when the mahout asked him to go away, he did not listen. He thought that everything was Bhagavan including elephant and the mahout. He thought he was practising the teaching of his Guru. The elephant now lifted him with its trunk and threw him aside. In the process, he sustained injuries. When the Guru came to know of this, he called the disciple and told him. "No doubt it is true that Atman is there in everything. But that does not make everything equivalent to Atman. The Atman was there in the elephant and also in the mahout. When the mahout asked you to go away, why did you not listen to him? The Atman is something to be experienced and not exhibited in action in this manner."

## **Guru**

Guru sishya parampara is a special feature of Hinduism. At the beginning of creation, Lord Dakshinamurti himself was the guru. The four sages Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumara were his disciples, who listened to his silent teachings. Then we have Lord

Krishna expounding the Gita to Arjuna and through him to the whole world. Hence Krishna is called “Jagadguru” or world teacher. Then we have Adi Sankara who was himself an incarnation of Siva; he was Jagadguru and taught the whole of humanity. In Hinduism in order to approach Bhagavan a guru is definitely needed. The Ultimate truth cannot be realised without the aid of a form. It is for this reason that Bhagavan has come to us in the form of Gurunatha. One cannot go to Bhagavan direct; this is because in case the devotee gets derailed from his path or encounters any difficulties, nobody would be there to guide him or put him on to the proper path. So whether one fixes his mind on Bhagavan in Akhanda Sachidhananda swarupa form or Nirguna form, or whether one approaches him in his Saguna form, whenever one encounters any difficulties, the Guru is there to guide him on to the right path. Adi Sankara sings in Bhaja Govindam:

गुरुचरणाम्बुजनिर्भरभक्तः संसारादचिराद्भव मुक्तः ।

सेन्द्रियमानसनियमादेवं द्रक्ष्यसि निजहृदयस्थं देवम् ॥

“If you practise devotion at the lotus feet of the Guru, you will get liberation from bondage of Samsara. The effort required to be made is control of senses and mind with discipline and offering of worship. The result is Atma Darshan in one’s own heart.” When you light a lamp you not only remove darkness, you also begin to see things that become visible because of the light. Thus the light of knowledge removes the darkness of ignorance. And makes it possible to see the Ultimate Truth.

There is a story about Dattatreya who is worshipped by many in Maharashtra. There was a great guru who had many disciples. When the Guru contracted leprosy all disciples but one left him. This lone disciple was worried about his Guru’s disease. As instructed by a divine voice, the Guru planned to go to Varanasi and take bath in Ganga and have darshan of Lord Viswanatha. The disciple accompanied the Guru to Varanasi. One evening on the banks of River Ganga, Dattatreya, the single form of Trimurtis Brahma Vishnu and Siva, appeared before the disciple and offered him a boon. The disciple prayed for his Guru’s good health. When he informed the Guru of this, he became angry for having asked for a boon of simple bodily comfort. The next day Dattatreya appeared again in front of the disciple. He told the Lord that his Guru does not wish for bodily comfort. When Dattatreya asked him about what his Guru actually wanted, the disciple asked him to appear before his Guru and ask him directly about it. That was the time when Bhagavan said that his Guru needed to do some

more penance to have his darshan. This is the fruit of sincere service to Guru. When the Guru did not have Bhagavan's Darshan, the disciple was able to have it.

## **Scriptures**

The main scriptural works (or Dharma granthas) of Hindu dharma are 18 in number, namely the four Vedas, the four Upavedas, the six Veda-angas, Meemamsa Sastra, Nyaya Sastra, the Puranas and Dharma Sastra.

## **Vedas**

Vedas are endless in the form of sound. The word 'Veda' is etymologically derived from the root 'vid' – to know. It enables us to realise knowledge, which transcends our intellect. In other words not merely the present day material knowledge of the world, but the knowledge which transcends it – both are contained in the Vedas. Details of karma and upasana, wherein we have an enunciation of the rules and regulations relating to different forms of yagna, havan etc., techniques of worship, meditation etc., the relation between the individual soul and the Paramatma, and indeed the entire gamut of actions which a human being has to do right from birth till death are described in great detail in the Vedas.

The Vedas have not been written by anyone. They are superhuman, 'Apourusheya' and they constitute knowledge from the divine. The Vedic sounds are always there in space. At the beginning of creation, the revelation of Rigveda took place to Sage Agni, that of Yajurveda to Sage Vayu, that of Samaveda to Sage Aditya, and that of Atharvaveda to Sage Angiras. Very great Maharishis by virtue of the power which they had acquired due to intense tapas were able to tune their ears and listen to the Vedic sounds or mantras; they taught them to their disciples. The Vedas have been preserved over the ages through transmission by word of mouth in Guru-sishya parampara. Some foreigners as well as people with other affiliations have tried to establish that the Maharishis had composed the Vedas and taught them to their disciples; but this is an utter myth, far removed from reality.

Swami Vidyanaraya has written an exposition of the meaning of the Vedas, which is the only exposition in accordance with the Sastras and based on the Indian tradition and culture. An

elaboration of the Vedas is contained in the Brahmanas. Eighteen great Maharishis have also written commentaries on the Vedas, which are known as Smritis. The word 'Smriti' means 'to remember'. Those texts wherein the Maharishis have captured the sounds of the Vedic mantras and put them down in writing in the form of sutras or small aphorisms for the welfare of humanity are known as Smritis. By the study of Vedas, one can ennoble life and lead it towards the highest goal, viz. Self-Realisation. It has been ordained that Vedas have to be studied निष्कारणेन, without motive. While chanting Vedic mantras, it is essential to chant with proper accent and intonation of the swaras. We find in the Vedas that while chanting the mantra इन्द्रशत्रो वर्धस्व-- , the intention was to pray for the birth of a son to fight and subjugate Indra. But because of wrong accent and intonation, a son was born, who was killed by Indra. Chanting of Vedas with proper accent and intonation of swaras will lead to success in all our endeavours and overall welfare of humanity.

Sage Veda Vyasa collected, classified and presented this sound-lore in the form of the four Vedas, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. Initially Rigveda had 21 sakhas or rescensions; Yajurveda had 109 (Krishna Yajurveda, 64 and Sukla Yajurveda, 45); Samaveda had 1000; Atharvaveda had 50. The total was 1180. Regrettably the available Sakhas as of today are only 10: Rig, 1; Yajur, 4 Sama: 3, Atharva, 2. It is our bounden duty to ensure that Vedas are handed down to succeeding generations in their pure original form. Adhikaris should therefore learn Vedas properly from a Guru and continue to recite them. It is equally necessary to study and preserve for posterity the six Vedangas, known as 'Shadangas', viz. 'Siksha' (Phonetics), 'Vyakarana' (Linguistics), 'Chandas' (Metre), 'Nirukta' (Ephistonology of words), 'Jyotisha' (Astrology) and 'Kalpa' (Srouta Sutra procedure for rituals in Yagnas with their meaning). Similarly care should be taken to safeguard the four Upavedas, viz. Ayurveda (Upaveda of Rigveda), Dhanurveda (Upaveda of Yajurveda), Gandharvaveda (Upaveda of Samaveda) and Arthasatra (Upaveda of Atharvaveda).

## **Gayatri**

The Gayatri mantra contains the essence of three Vedas.

त्रिभ्य एव तु वेदेभ्यः पादं पादमुद्दुहम् ।

गायन्तं त्रायते यस्माद्-गायत्रीत्यभिधीयते ।

Gayatri is a mantra which protects those who recite it or sing it. Singing means chanting with love and devotion or sraddha. Gayatri is celebrated as the mother of all the Vedas: गायत्री छन्दसां माता "Gayatri chandasaam matha". The body of the human being is like a temple where Bhagavan resides; this is true specially for the brahmana. The brahmanas' bodies should be kept very pure because they are expected to protect the Vedic mantras. So they should not allow anything impure to get into their system. The brahmana's body has been given to him not to enable him to enjoy life, but to protect the Vedas. If we protect the fire of Mantra sakti, it will protect us throughout life and grant us prosperity. It is the Gayatri mantra which gives power to the other mantras; if this is not chanted properly, the other mantras will not have any power. It is said that if a person fails to perform Gayatri japa for three generations, he would cease to be a brahmana; he will only be a brahmabandhu, relative of a brahmana. Similar degradation is posited in the case of kshatriyas and vaisyas also. Gayatri mantra should be chanted with great concentration and meditation on Brahman during Sandhya vandhanam, three times a day. It is said that even in Mahabharata war, when they could not secure water, the Pandavas offered Arghya with the dust in battle field without fail and in proper time. Gayatri mantra is a medicine for curing all diseases afflicting the inner body. Though Bhagavan incarnates in various forms, incarnation in the form of mother is most affable for us. Gayatri is that mother. If the children do Gayatri japa regularly and with faith they would be improving their spiritual, mental and intellectual powers (Atma Sakti, Mano Sakti and Buddhi Sakti) automatically; they will have sharpened intellects. It is of no use at all to spend a lot of money on the Upanayanam celebration without following it up with proper performance of Sandhyavandanam and Samidadhanam.

## **Bhagavad Gita**

Bhagavad Gita represents the essence of all Hindu scriptures and philosophy. Unlike Rama Gita, Uddhava Gita, Gopika Gita, Sruti Gita etc., Bhagavad Gita, instead of being called Krishna Gita, has got this name because Krishna had appeared in his full majesty as

Bhagavan and given the Upadesas. Krishna had exhibited his full powers as Bhagavan on many occasions during his sojourn on earth. In Bhagavad Gita we find that Krishna has shown his Viswarupa form to Arjuna. Arjuna was stricken with fear when he saw it. Krishna then says,

मयैवेते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन्

“I have already killed your enemies; you are only the apparent cause for their death.” Thus, here also we find Krishna exhibiting his full powers as Bhagavan. Another speciality about Bhagavad Gita is: unlike a normal upadesa given by a teacher to his disciple in a calm and quiet place, the Gitopadesa is given at a place where lakhs of people are arrayed against one another in a battlefield. This upadesa was not for a particular individual named Arjuna, but for the whole of humanity. Bhagavad Gita contains the essence of all Sastras and indicates the way of life, which everyone should follow and the method for attaining the knowledge which will lead to the complete removal of sorrow and suffering. It gives the Gnanopadesa for organizing the life in the right way, which will conduce to universal happiness and peace. In the very first sloka of Bhagavad Gita, Dhritarashtra enquires about his sons calling them his own, ‘Maamakaa:’ and the Pandavas as ‘Pandava:’ as if they were not related to him. The main message of Gita is that the sense of ego or Ahankara should be cast off and the real Self should be realized. Once we realize that the Jivatma and the Paramatma are one and the same Atma, all our sufferings and sorrows will come to an end. That is why Krishna said right at the beginning of his upadesa: “Asochyan anvasochastvam”- you are grieving over those that should not be grieved over, meaning that it is the physical body which dies; one should not grieve over that. The real Atman cannot be destroyed. The same message is emphasized at the end of Gitopadesa,

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

“Abandoning all other constraints, take refuge in me and I shall relieve you from all sins. Grieve not.”

**Bhakti**

Human birth is very rare and difficult of attainment- 'जन्तूनां नरजन्मदुर्लभम्'- 'Jantunaam narajanma durlabham'. It is only humans who have the capacity to recite and hear the Lord's names and have Darshan of the Lord. If the human being does not speak out the Lord's name through his mouth, he would possibly be born as a dumb person in his next birth. Similarly, if he does not use his ears, eyes and legs to have darshan of the Lord, to hear his Lilas and to go to the temple, he will possibly be born blind, deaf and lame in the next birth. In Kali yuga, Bhakti is the only means for realizing Bhagavan- 'Bhaktireva kalou yuge'. The grace of Bhagavan can make a dumb man a poet and a lame person to climb the mountain.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् । यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्दमाधवम् ॥

Repeating the sacred names of Iswara, Nama Japa, and singing his names, Nama Sankirtana are the easiest means in Kali yuga to realise him. Adi Sankara says that the goal of human life is awareness of one's true nature- 'Swaswarupaavabodha'. Bhakti is the means for this- स्वस्वरूपानुसन्धानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते.

Adi Sankara nicely explains in Sivanandalahari that Bhakti is that state of mind, in which mind withdraws itself from all other things and fixes itself constantly at the feet of Pasupati, the lord of all creatures.

अंकोलं निजबीजसन्ततिर्-अयस्कान्तोपलं सूचिका

साध्वी नैजविभुं लता क्षितिरुहं सिन्धुस्सरिद्वल्लभम् ।

प्राप्नोतीह यथा तथा पशुपतेः पादारविन्दद्वयं

चेतोवृत्तिर्-उपेत्य तिष्ठति सदा सा भक्तिर्-इत्युच्यते ॥

It is said that the seeds of the Ankola tree fall down from the tree when it becomes dark and they go and attach themselves to the tree again when there is sunrise and in course of time, become part of the tree once again. Just like the seeds of the Ankola tree, we are all Amsas or the parts of Paramatman only. We Jivatmas have come from Paramatman; we fall down from him owing to ignorance, which is darkness. Again, when knowledge or light comes of our oneness with Bhagavan, we wake up and attach ourselves to him.

The attraction between a magnet and an iron needle symbolises the second stage of Bhakti. The moment the Lord comes in our mind, we get his grace. Just like the magnet, Bhagavan attracts us towards himself and bestows his grace on us. Like the iron needle, our minds will also be attracted by Bhagavan and will hold fast to him.

The third example given for Bhakti is that a chaste woman does not do anything without the thought of her husband. Similarly, the true devotee does not do anything without the thought of Bhagavan. Our actions may go on as before, but our minds should be immersed in Bhagavan all the time.

The next example given by Adi Sankara is that of a creeper entwined around a tree. The creeper which is meandering on the ground ultimately searches for a tree to serve as its support and it starts entwining itself around it in such a criss-cross manner that it is difficult to separate it from the tree. If the creeper does not have the support of the tree, it will perish. We should attach ourselves to Bhagavan in the same way and carry on our lives with his support.

And as the next example the river which merges in the ocean is mentioned. All rivers, when they get merged in the ocean, lose their individual name and colours and acquire the one common name viz., the ocean. Similarly, we also approach Bhagavan in various ways and in various forms but our ultimate aim is to get merged in Bhagavan only, losing our individual identity of name and form.

For fixing our mind on Bhagavan, two examples are given. The first one is that of a baby monkey and its mother. When mother monkey jumps from one tree to another, the baby clasps its mother so tightly that it has no fear of falling down. In the same way if we firmly attach ourselves to Bhagavan, wherever we may be, we shall not be subjected to any suffering. The example is also significant in that our mind is also like a monkey which jumps from one object to another all the time. If the mind is fixed in the lotus feet of Bhagavan it becomes steady. The second example is that of cat and its kitten. In case the cat smells any danger to its kitten, it will lift the kitten by its mouth and carry it away to a safer place. In the same way, if the devotee is likely to get into difficulty, the lord takes full care of him and takes him away to a safer place. If a devotee thinks of the lotus feet of the lord all the time, the responsibility of devotee's welfare is carried wholly by Bhagavan. In the Bhramara-Keetanyaya, the wasp catches hold of a small worm, puts it inside in a mud cell and goes on

stinging it frequently. After some time, out of a sense of fear, the worm or 'keeta' itself becomes a wasp or 'bhramara'. In the same way, if we get Bhagavan's grace frequently, ultimately we shall also be blessed with Bhagavan's swarupa. We should therefore recite the Lord's name and think of Bhagavan as much as possible with Trikaranasuddhi. i.e. with purity of mind, speech and body. Bhakti does not recognize any barriers of gender or caste. Out of the sixty three Nayanmars there are persons belonging to different castes and there are women too.

When we perform Archana to the deity, we can use even an ordinary flower or the simple grass. But it has to be offered with devotion, dedication and faith. Only then such offerings will gain the power of grace. There is no need to change our worship from one form to another. Everyone should have 'Ishta Devata'. Worship of idols has the power to give us peace of mind.

While developing Bhakti towards Bhagavan, we should make efforts to lead a life with strict adherence to moral values. We should function in such a way that we do not cause any suffering to others and we acquire for our use only what we need, and not more. When we show devotion towards Bhagavan thinking of Bhagavan's good qualities, we obtain his grace. We then not only lead a good worldly life, but we are also able to attain a good state in the hereafter. Bhagavan is there to give us an assurance of freedom from fear and bless us with suitable boon. "Vara abhaya pradaanaat..." Bhagavan has also got a very broad mind "Oudaaryat". He also frees all his devotees from all the sins "Agha soshanaat". As Bhagavan is there in everyone's heart, when we show Bhakti towards him, we should think of him as abiding in our body and not think of body as something sinful. Even Devas or Gandharvas or Apsaras, who are born as humans, animals, birds or insects, following some curse, get redemption through Bhakti to Bhagavan. Gajendra attained the grace of Bhagavan through intense Bhakti. Jatayu was also similarly blessed by Rama. Bhagavan is love incarnate. It is only love of Bhagavan without any expectation of any result which is everlasting; which will not decay. Love of materials is bound to decay after sometime. It is this type of love which should be nurtured and expanded. If this is done, the whole world can be woven together by this bond of love.

## Nine Gates

The human body is like a city with nine gates, the gates being the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, the mouth and the two organs of excretion. In the case of the human body, unlike a house or a fort, these gates are always open. They never remain closed generally. The Pranasakti can go out through any one of these gates. When that happens, they say that the man is dead. Even if you close the gates of the eyes or the ears or the mouth, the man can still live. But only if the Pranasakti goes away death takes place. At the time of birth, there is a conglomeration of the Panchabhutas or the five elements in the human body and these nine gates come into existence. The Pranasakti makes them active and man starts living. Bhagavad Gita says:

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।

नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥

You can control the gates such as the eyes, the ears and the mouth by controlling our mind and you can thereby get peace and tranquillity. The Atman resides in this body happily without doing anything, without participating in any activity and without impelling any activity. Controlling of the mind and controlling the sense organs with the mind is what is done in Dhyana or meditation. When the mind is controlled, you can recite Bhagavan's name with your mouth; you can then see Bhagavan with your eyes. Hence everyone should control the mind and use the sense organs in the right way so that it conduces to peace and tranquillity. If we dedicate all the five sense organs to Bhagavan and act, everything will turn out to be for our good. It is for helping in this control that 'Vratas', 'Upavasas' (fasts) etc. have been prescribed. Even if they are not the direct means for spiritual evolution, they are good traditional aids. If the senses are not controlled and used for worldly pleasures, the next birth will not be human birth. Our minds are like mirrors. If you wish to see the image of Bhagavan in that mirror, the back of the mirror must be coated with bhakti, purity and discipline. It is not enough if we think of Bhagavan only in times of difficulties. Bhakti to Iswara is indispensable for human birth. Unlike the other yugas, it is easier to attain Bhagavan in Kali yuga. Even a person, who has committed the worst sins, can obtain Bhagavan's grace if his heart melts for Bhagavan.

## Temple

Though Bhagavan exists everywhere, we human beings need a special place for offering worship. If we keep a piece of cloth in the sun, it does not catch fire by itself. But if we place a lens and focus the sun's heat waves on the piece of cloth, we find after some time that the cloth catches fire. In the same way, in order to get the grace of the omnipresent lord, we have to build temples where we can focus the power of the lord on a consecrated idol for our reaping the benefit in an easy way. Agama Sastras guide us on construction of temple. The piece of stone chiselled by the sculptor becomes invested with divinity after Kumbhabhishekam is performed. When we start performing Abhisheka, Archana, Deepaharathi etc., for the deity, it acquires further divine power and Chaitanya. As we perceive divinity in the idols we perform many Upacharas.

The Puja we do in our homes is for our own welfare. The Puja done in the temple is for the good of the whole of society. In order to attract people's attention, there is so much of fanfare and sounding of musical instruments in the temple. When a huge temple bell is rung at the temple for Puja, the evil spirits will run away and all inauspicious sounds will also be stifled. The deity is taken out in a procession during festival days and there is display of fireworks and so on. The idol with divinity which we see in our temples is an object of beauty and worthy of meditation. When we bow before the idol we never think it is only a piece of stone, but that the deity in the idol is the protector and root cause of the whole world. Thus, the temples help to increase the devotion of a person to Bhagavan and this devotion helps him to overcome or at least reduce his sufferings. Offer of prayers by even the most ordinary people helps in attaining peace of mind.

The best medicine for removing human misery is to have unshakeable faith in the grace of Bhagavan. Bhakti alone is capable of giving the strength of mind which is needed to overcome and reduce our sufferings. Worship of Bhagavan is like a protective shield to minimise the fruits of bad karmas. Temples are but the agencies to nurture and develop this Bhakti. The offering of neivedyam to Bhagavan and offering of money in hundis kept at the temples are all but a token of our gratitude to Bhagavan for what he has given to us. In olden days, people never used to have their food in their homes unless they heard the temple bell ringing at the time of the morning, noon, evening and night pujas to the Lord. Since temple is the place of divinity, we have to observe certain rules laid down in the Sastras while visiting temples. We should maintain bodily as well as inner purity and preserve the sanctity of the temples.

In temples managed by the Hindu Religious Endowment Board as well as in temples managed by Trustees, religious songs and Devaram and Tiruvachakam should be taught at least one day in a week. The practice of using temple walls for advertisement should be banned. If Tirukkural and other moral sayings are written on the temple walls, people will benefit by it.

## **Agamas**

Agama sastras have been written by various Maharishis. We have 28 Saiva agamas; among Vaishnava agamas Pancharatra and Vaikhanasa are illustrious. The agamas are divided into four portions viz., Charya, Kriya, Yoga and Gnana. The Charya part explains the different modes in which an individual can worship Bhagavan. The Kriya part deals with installation of idols in temples, their consecration, the methods of worship of deities and so on. The Yoga part teaches how the individual soul should meditate on ultimate reality and get merged in the Atman. The Gnana part describes the ultimate state that is attained as result of such meditation.

## **Saints**

If one gets stuck in slush, it is only those who are outside the slush who can pull him out. In the same manner, those who encounter and experience sufferings in life can get relief only from great persons who have come out of worldly sorrow and misery, or through the grace of Iswara.

## **Sanskrit**

Speech is the means of conveying the thoughts and feelings from one person's mind to another person. Subtle bhavas (ideas) can be understood only from the manifested sounds and expressed through words formed from the letters of the alphabet of a language. Sanskrit is such a language with a comprehensive alphabet starting from अ and ending with क्ष and it enables one to attain good samskaras (latent impressions). The word Sanskrit means,

“Samskriyate anena iti Samskrutam” (It purifies; hence it is Samskrit). Philologists say that all sounds expressed in the course of speech are contained within the letters from ‘अ’ to ‘क्ष’. It is not that the language of Samskrit is only pure, but even the person who reads it will get mental purity (hridya suddhi). This is the extra benefit that one gets by reading Samskrit. Good samskaras (mental modes) and good bhavas (feelings) are the result of learning the Samskrit language. Learning Samskrit is not at all difficult as many people think. All that is required for learning the language is sraddha or devoted attention.

Further, the Samskrit language is ‘Parabrahmaswarupa tulya’ (equal to the form of Parabrahman). It is the language suited for the worship of Saguna form of Parabrahma, whether it is Siva, Vishnu, Ganesa, Saraswati and so on. Ordinary people who find it difficult to meditate on the Nirguna form of Bhagavan have to worship only Saakaara, the Saguna form of Bhagavan. Samskrit is eminently fit for this purpose. Since it is Parabrahmaswarupa tulya it is also omnipresent. Just as Paramatma has taken various Saakaara forms, the Samskrit language which is similar to Paramatma has taken various Saakaara forms through various regional languages. Many institutions in India are conducting courses including through correspondence, and examinations in Samskrit. Many Germans, Russians and Americans know Samskrit very well. Samskrit is the ancient language of Bharat and it was spoken vastly by people in ancient days. People took keen interest in the preservation and development of the language and its literature. One would find that chanting slokas in Samskrit increases bhakti, if practised with sraddha. Everyone should make a sincere attempt to learn the language and also recite Samskrit slokas at the time of offering prayers to Bhagavan.

## **Puranas**

The word Purana signifies, ‘Pura api nava’, meaning though it is old, it is new. Though the stories in Puranas are very old, the ideas they teach us are relevant at all times. The Puranas are like the magnifying lens of the Vedas. They teach us through stories many principles of morality and ethics and give guidelines for good conduct in family, social, economic and political life. They also teach spiritual matters relating to Atman. The Vedas contain many injunctions such as ‘Satyam vada’, Speak the truth. But we are not able to grasp it fully. The

moment we read the story of Harischandra, the Vedic injunction translates into reality in our minds. Similarly the Vedas say 'Pitru devo bhava', 'worship your father as god'. The moment we read the Ramayana, the picture becomes clearer to us. If we read the life history of people who were benefitted by performing good karmas, we are inspired to follow them. Similarly, by reading the stories of people who came to grief because of their evil karmas, we realise that we should eschew evil actions; this enables us to improve our daily lives. Puranas are known as "Kaanta Samhita" as they cajole us like a wife and lead us onto the good path, avoiding the evil path. The emphasis is always on the pursuit of Swadharma by each individual. Mere reading of the Puranas or the Gita or any other sacred book will not give us Moksha. What is required is that everyone should practise the teachings contained and dharmas expounded therein. There are many dharmas which have been expounded in Puranas such as collective dharma (Samashti dharma), individual dharma (Vyashti Dharma), common dharma (Sadharana dharma) and dharma for conducting our lives (Acharaneeya dharma). We should pay attention to all these and practise them in our life. Bhakti can be practised later. Duties towards mother, father, Guru and Sishya should be discharged. If the duties towards parents are discharged, there is no need even to worship any deity. The Kali yuga story of Pundalika who kept Panduranga standing on a brick at Pandharpur is proof that service rendered to parents can enrich us with wonderful boons. We can even have darshan of Iswara by the worship of parents. In the same manner, the wholehearted service rendered to Gurunatha can also enable one to have darshan of Iswara.

## **Rameswara**

Analysing the word Rameswara, Saivites thought the word is formed with 'Tatpurusha samasa' (a particular kind of compound word in Samskrit grammar); the word would accordingly mean 'रामस्य ईश्वरः रामेश्वरः', 'Rameswara is the Iswara (Lord) of Rama'. Vaishnavites said the word is formed with 'Bahuvrihi samasa'; this would give the meaning of 'रामः ईश्वरः यस्य सः रामेश्वरः', 'He for whom Rama is Iswara'. Devas approached Vishnu in Vaikuntha and prayed for clarification. Vishnu said: 'Where is the need for any doubt? The samasa is 'Tatpurusha samasa' only. For me also, Siva is Iswara.' Doubting whether Vishnu had said so out of his innate humility, Devas then went to Kailasa and beseeched Siva to explain. Siva said: 'Of course, the samasa is Bahuvrihi. It means the person for whom Rama

is Iswara.' This led to further confusion in the minds of Devas. They thought that both Siva and Vishnu said out of a sense of humility that the other is superior. Hence they went to Brahma for a dispassionate opinion. Brahma said: 'Of course the samasa is 'Karmadharaya', which would mean 'रामश्चासौ ईश्वरश्च रामेश्वरः', one who is both Rama and Iswara.' This meant that both Rama and Iswara (Vishnu and Siva) represented the same ultimate reality or Paramatman. By whichever path we worship Bhagavan, whatever may be the forms of Bhagavan we worship, we are offering worship to the same Paramatman only.

## **Mahabharata**

Mahabharata proclaims that Dharma will win ultimately and Adharma will be defeated. People in ancient India believed that religious merit would accrue by studying Mahabharata. Some people think that if Mahabharata book is kept at home, there will be fights in the family; this is wrong. By keeping Mahabharata book at home and reading it with reverence, unity will reign in the family. There will be happiness. Peace, unity and prosperity will dawn in the country. Mahabharata is indeed an epic for the whole world.

## **Truth**

Smriti says: सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम् ।

प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयात् एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

One should always speak truth which is pleasant and should not speak truth which is unpleasant. Even if pleasant, we should never speak untruth. This is eternal Dharma. Smritis explain dharmas and also tell us regarding emergency (Aapat) dharmas which we can practise only on certain defined tough occasions. We find in Kumara Sambhavam that when Parameswara himself came in the form of a Brahmachari to test Parvati's sincerity when she was doing tapas, he said many things which were apparently very disparaging of Siva. When this continued, Parvati told him in a fit of anger, "If you want to speak the truth and say right things you can remain here. If you want to speak something which is not right, you better go out". If one speaks the truth or the right thing, it is good to listen to it. But if a person speaks

untruth or Adharma, then the sin is committed not only by him but also the person who listens to him.

### **Ahankara (Ego) and Mamakara (Mine-ness)**

However great and famed one might become in life, he should not become boastful and arrogant. Eschewing ego we should show respect to others and relate to them with humility. Life should be marked by cultured behaviour and good conduct. Pride, arrogance and such other bad traits should be given up. Even bhakti will be rewarding only if there is humility. If bad traits get firm hold, even deep devotion cannot yield good fruits. It is only bhakti which is practised without ego and arrogance and with humility that will earn for us the grace of Iswara and bless us with what is good in life.

त्यक्तव्यो ममकारः यदि न शक्यते त्यक्तुम् । कर्तव्यो ममकारः तदपि सर्वत्र ॥

The sense of possession should be abandoned. If not possible, it should be extended from a narrow base to the whole world. That is why it is said:

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

Only when we extend the sense of belonging to the whole world, the true sense of equality will permeate all human beings in the world.

### **Purity of food**

Chandogya Upanishad states: आहारशुद्धौ सत्वशुद्धिः; pure food results in purity of mind. Whatever food we may take, we should first offer it to Bhagavan, the creator of all beings; this is Neivedyam. During harvesting of food grains, and milling them subsequently we cause violence to them. While cooking the food grains, we subject them to heat and cause greater violence. In order to atone for this sin, we should first offer the food which is prepared as Naivedyam to Bhagavan. The food becomes Prasadam after offering to Bhagavan and thus getting purified.

In earlier times, cow dung was used as manure in the field; the cow being a saatvik animal, the foodgrains produced with cow dung as manure were also pure and they gave us only pure thoughts. Sastras lay down restrictions on preparation and consumption of food. If we follow those restrictions, we will be able to attain purity in mind. It is always the best practice to cook the food oneself and eat, instead of consuming food cooked by some outsider. I can illustrate this by a small experience I had in the course of my journey through the Vindhya forest in Madhya Pradesh. During my journey, police constables used to accompany us in every state. These constables used to prepare their own roti and eat. This happened in all the camps where we stayed. They used to refuse any rotis offered by us or others. After crossing Madhya Pradesh as we entered the U.P forests, the U.P police constables had come to take charge from the M.P police. For some distance, the constables from the both the states were together. Suddenly in the night, when some wild animals appeared on the way, one U.P Police constable started waving his stick in an effort to beat the animals. The M.P policeman who saw this told him: "Remember the personage with whom you are going. You are going with Swamiji, so don't beat the animals. Just drive them away. Let there be good feelings towards the animals." This admonition shall remain evergreen in my memory for years to come. This type of pure thought could arise in the mind of the M.P constable only because he had taken food prepared by himself. It is therefore upto us to see that the food is prepared in a pure manner and we eat only saatvik food so that we can have pure, noble and high thoughts all the time.

## **Dharma and Rama**

"Vedokhilo Dharma moolam", the root of all dharmas is Veda. The teachings of the Vedas are enshrined in the Ramayana. Rama treads the path of Dharma steadfastly; "Ramo vigrahavan Dharma:"- Rama is the personification of Dharma. Those, who contemplate on Rama and do constant and faithful Japa of Rama nama, will become free from all desires and enticements and will not swerve from the path of Dharma. When a child goes away to a far off place, generally the mother gives eatables in a packet. But what did Kousalya do? She gave Rama this blessing alone when he was leaving for the forest:

यं पालयसि धर्मं त्वं धृत्या च नियमेन च ।

स वै राघवशार्दूल धर्मस्त्वां-अभिरक्षतु ॥

This shows that Rama pursued Dharma with Dhruti and Niyama (determination and discipline). He practised Dharma without getting upset by anybody's ridicule or without getting deflected by anybody's counter persuasion. As Rama practised Dharma steadfastly, Dharma also protected him "Dharmo rakshati rakshita:" For instance, Lakshmana tried to dissuade Rama from going to the forest in the beginning:

स हि धर्मो मम द्वेष्यः प्रसङ्गाद्यस्य मुह्यसि

"All your sufferings are due only to Dharma you pursuing. Therefore leave it off." But Rama was not prepared to forsake Dharma. Dharma protected Rama in the forest in spite of many difficulties which he faced. As Ravana followed the path of Adharma, not even one of his ten heads could be protected; his army could not come to his rescue and save him. If a person practises Dharma, not only does Dharma protect him but Dharma makes the whole world protect him. In the Anargha Raghava drama, it is said:

यान्ति न्यायप्रवृत्तस्य तिर्यञ्चोऽपि सहायताम् ।

अपन्थानं तु गच्छन्तं सोदरोऽपि विमुञ्चति ॥

"One who walks the path of morality is even helped by the animals; one who walks the path of Adharma is abandoned by even his own brother." Monkeys helped Rama as he followed dharma; Jatayu came to the help of Sita. Ravana's own brother Vibhishana forsook Ravana as he followed Adharma. By remembering Rama's name constantly Hanuman crossed ocean; though he faced many difficulties, he succeeded in his mission of finding Sita.

Rama and Lakshmana were born to two different mothers, but they were united in love. Vali and Sugriva were born to the same mother, but they were inimical to each other. We should live like Rama and Lakshmana. Just as the river is of use to everyone, we should also lead a life that is useful to everyone.

It is only for doing good things that we have to make effort and learn. Bad thoughts have a way of entering everyone's mind. If bad company is avoided from the early years of life, our actions will be on right lines and make us fit to be recipients of Iswara's grace. If the food we take is good and if our association is with good people, our minds will always be filled with good thoughts. Good objectives and perseverance combined with the grace of Iswara will

certainly help us to achieve our goal. We should not become victims of defeatist mentality even before we commence our efforts.

When it rains you need a roof over your head that does not leak. If you have to go out, you need a raincoat or an umbrella to minimise your getting wet. You can't stop the rain, but you can protect yourself or minimise getting wet. Prayers and service to others are the two things that will keep us going during times of difficulties. When we render social service, we should not do it in expectation of something in return. We should develop the thought 'My duty is to render service and leave it at that.' When we try to do something good, there will be many obstacles. We should not mind them. We should not get discouraged but continue to do good things.

It is 'Sakthi' which enables man to function. It is of the form of life (Prana Sakthi) which activates man. It is this power which is worshipped as Parasakthi. Parasakthi spreads her grace, taking different forms. In our land women should be held in honour as symbols of all that is auspicious.

### **Protection of Cow**

The dust of cow's feet removes sins. Pancha gavyam – cow's milk, curd, ghee, urine and cowdung – is capable of freeing one from all diseases. Cowdung is a good natural fertiliser and also fuel for villagers. Cow's milk is next only to mother's milk. One should not sell cow, which does not yield milk. To kill cow, not yielding milk, is akin to killing aged mother. The central and state governments should prohibit transport and slaughter of cows. They should punish those who kill cows.

### **Death and after**

Death is a certainty for every living creature. No one can escape it. However it is possible to avert the agony that is experienced when life leaves the body. It is for this that we have been given three commandments: take at least a drop of Ganga water daily, read at least a small portion of Bhagavad Gita daily, and pray to Iswara at least once a day. With good thoughts all

the time and thinking of Iswara all the time, if we live a good and disciplined life, we will certainly have a peaceful departure from this world.

After death, man goes to three different worlds depending upon his karmas. One, who establishes schools, sets up places for free distribution of food, builds temples, establishes Mathams and serves the poor people and thus does karma according to dharma, goes to Chandraloka with the blessings of the Pitrus and enjoys happiness in Chandraloka. He who does yagnas like Vajapeya or Somayaga goes to Swargaloka and enjoys happiness there. But both these categories of persons stay there in the other worlds for some time enjoying happiness, but again they come back to the earth. Those who worship Saguna Brahman go to Brahmhaloka after death, they do not return to the earth afterwards to take birth, but they attain Brahma-jnana there itself and finally attain liberation. Those who do sinful actions here go to Yamaloka after death to reap the consequences of those sinful actions and return to the earth again for taking birth.

## **Sraaddhas**

Every individual has three types of bodies. The gross body or the physical body, the subtle body and the causal body. The idea of the subtle body and performing Sraaddha, tarpanam etc. for the subtle body is something basic to Hinduism only. If the samskaras in the present birth are done properly, the subtle body will get a satisfactory form according to the fruits of the karma done. But if Samskaras are not done properly, both the gross body and subtle body will suffer. Whatever we offer during Sraaddham or tarpanam is taken by Pitru devatas and transferred to Pitrus in whatever form they maybe. The offering goes to the Pitrus whether they are in the form of animals or men or Devas and in whatever form they need. Thus it is through the Pitru devatas that we get the blessings of our ancestors. Vedas enjoin that we must perform Deva karyas as well as Pitru karyas properly. The etymology of the word Sraaddha is "Sraddhaya diyate iti Sraaddha" meaning that which is offered with sraddha or faith or devotion. Some people think that offering of pinda at Brahma kapala in the course of Badrinath yatra and similarly at the Akshaya vata or the banyan tree at Gaya, relieves one of the duty of performing Sraaddha subsequently. This is not true. Offering Pinda at these places is no doubt special and extolled in Puranas. However, one should continue to perform Sraddhas and tarpanas as usual till he dies. Till one attains Brahma gnana all actions

enjoined by Vedas must necessarily be performed. Till that stage the world is real and all the worldly actions should be performed without fail. Hence Pitru karyas are a must till the end of one's life.

### **Alone for Tapas**

For Tapas or meditation, it is necessary that the individual should sit alone and do it. Company of others will cause distraction. When it comes to studies, two people can get together, because one can discuss with the other, clarify doubts and understand things in proper perspective. While travelling, or performing good deeds for the society, it is better that more than two people get together. In the case of travel this is to ensure safety and security. In the case of Dharmic activities, this will help in achieving the highest good for the maximum people.

### **Charity**

We should always give charity for good causes. By curtailing personal needs, we should save enough for giving charity. Care should be taken to give charity for the right cause at the right time and at the right place. Charity should be given whole heartedly without expectation of any result.

When it comes to acceptance of charity, one should be very careful. You should never accept a gift unless you actually need it. Thoughtless acceptance of gift will promote only greed in the mind.

### **Music leads to Moksha**

वीणावादनतत्त्वतः श्रुतिजातिविचारतः तालश्च अप्रयत्नेन मोक्षमार्गः ॥

There are many means for attaining Moksha (Liberation); music is one of them. We have the musical tradition enshrined in the Gandharvaveda, the upaveda of Samaveda. Thus it is seen that even the Vedas and upavedas advocate worship of Bhagavan through the medium of music. It is not the rap or pop or jazz music that is prevalent today, but it is the traditional

music through bhakti, which has been used for worship right from the Vedic times. If upasana (worship) is done with music in the proper form, Bhagavan's grace will automatically descend on us.

## **Education**

Education is a continuous process. There is nothing like an end to education. Studying good books on spiritual, moral and religious subjects will improve one's character. It will give him immense benefit in the long run. The more one reads such literature, the better his life will become. Reading about the lives of great men and the experiences they had and deriving inspiration from them to mould our lives on the right lines is a great achievement. At the same time remember that mere book knowledge is not useful. That education, which is useful for life and which can enhance our knowledge and elevate us, is true education. Education should be capable of nurturing good qualities and right conduct. Countless are the Maharishis and Gnanis who had lived the right way and elevated themselves and others. They had realised that worldly life is ephemeral, that Atma is eternal; they used this knowledge in their lives. What should be obtained through education is realisation of the great truth that Atma is indestructible.

I have an appeal to poets, writers and teachers. Each one of you is like a farmer. The young mind of your student is the land you will plough. It is your responsibility to make that land fertile and get a good crop. Sow in their minds the greatness of Hindu Dharma. Help them understand our values through the stories from our Puranas. Nurture good values and discipline in their minds. It is your good work that will ensure a great crop for the future of our country.

## **Time and money**

Time is golden. If we remain lazy and do nothing, the time that has passed will not come back. Even if it is a minute, we should spend it for a good cause. The life we lead should be fruitful and meaningful.

Real socialism can be brought about only by avoiding luxury and living a simple life. It is simple life that is good for everyone; everyone will be happy and there will be enough wealth in the country for all. Even if it is one paisa, it should be saved and used for a good purpose.

### **Four mothers**

Of those to be worshipped, namely the mother, the father, the Guru and Iswara, the mother has been accorded the first place. We have the duty to serve and worship four mothers. The first mother of a person is the one who has given birth to him, given life to him, has nurtured him and brought him up by teaching the right way of living. The Vedas say, “Matru devo bhava”; even between father and mother, the role of mother has been given greater prominence. One should always take care of his parents and protect them.

The second mother one should adore is Gomata or cow-mother. Cow’s milk is next to mother’s milk. All the cow’s products including urine and cow dung are useful and healthy.

The third mother is our country, the mother India. Unity in diversity is the hallmark of Indian culture and civilisation. In our country, the food habits, the languages spoken, the way people dress etc. vary from region to region. But we are aware that all of us are Bharatiyas and, as such, we have learnt to live united. All of us should cultivate Desabhakti (devotion to our country) along with devotion to Bhagavan and live as responsible citizens.

The fourth mother that we should adore is the mother of the whole world, Jaganmata or Rajarajeswari who is embodiment of all Sakti. Without her Sakti, nothing can be done. All the four mothers should be worshipped.

### **Ten Commandments**

1. On getting up from bed every morning, meditate on Bhagawan and pray for at least two minutes.
2. Wear tilakam (mark) on forehead.
3. Pray to Bhagawan that the day should pass well.

4. Meditate on all holy rivers, Gomata, Chiranjivis, Sapta Kannikas etc. for at least one minute.
5. Go to the nearest temple and offer prayers at least once in a week on Friday.
6. Treat neighbours with love.
7. Before having food, serve food to animals or birds.
8. Give at least a small amount in charity every day.
9. Before going to sleep, ponder over all the good and bad things that were done that day.
10. Chant Bhagawan's name 108 times before going to sleep.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **ADI SANKARACHARYA**

#### **Life of Adi Sankara**

	<b>Kali</b>	<b>B.C.</b>
Birth of Sri Sankara at Kalady on Visakha Sukla		
Panchami (cyclic year 'Nandana')	2593	509
Upanayana of Sankara	2598	504
The beginning of his 8th year he lost his father Sivaguru	2601	501
Completed study of the four Vedas and Vedangas	2601	501
Got permission of his mother to enter the holy order of Sanyasa (Kartika Sukla Ekadasi, cyclic year 'Pilava')	2602	500
Initiated by Govinda Bhagavatpadacharya into Krama Sanyasa at Amaranantha on the banks of the Narmada river. (Phalguna Suddha Dvitiya of the cyclic year 'Subhakrit')	2603	499
Student of philosophical systems under Govinda Bhagavatpadacharya.	2603	499
Visited his Paramaguru, Gaudapadacharya who was aged		

120 years by that time at Badarikasrama on the Himalayas and stayed there for four years to study further, under the direct guidance of the Paramaguru.	2605	497
By the order of his Paramaguru, Sankara wrote a Bhashya on Gaudapada karikas and sixteen Bhashyas on Prastana . Traya etc., in this span of four years	2605 -2610	497-492
Initiation of Vishnu Sarma into sanyasa by Sankara. He was his co-student at Kalady and followed him in all his activities. His turiya-asrama name is "Chitsukhacharya" (He was the author of 'Brihat Sankara Vijaya', the first biography of Sankara, now irretrievably lost.)	2605	497
Death of Sankara's mother Aryamba (cyclic year 'Plavanga')	2609	492
Niryana of Govinda Bhagavatpada, the Guru of Sankara (Kartika Purnima, cyclic year 'Plavanga')	2608	492
Initiation of 'Sanandana' into Sanyasa order. His Sanyasa name is Padmapadacharya.	2608	492
Sankara's visit to Prayaga to propagate the Advaita Philosophy (Magha, Bahula Amavasya)	2609	493
The brahmana who was suffering from leprosy and cured by Sankara at Prayaga was his 3rd disciple. His name is Udanka.	2609	493
The fourth disciple, the dumb man was the son of Prabhakaradhavarin, by name Prithvidhara. His sanyasa name given by Sankara is 'Hastamalakacharya'.	2610	492
Prabhakaradhavarin, father of Prithvidhara also took the order of sanyasa.	2610	492
Sankara in his 16th year met Kumarila Bhatta for the first and the last time in Ruddhapura near Prayaga, during the		

act of latter's self-immolation. Kumarila Bhatta was older than Sankara by 48 years. (cyclic year 'Kilaka')	2610	492
The Great Pandit Mandana Misra was an independent brahmana Chief. He was a Kanojiya Gauda brahmana. He was the disciple of Kumarila Bhatta and a staunch adherent of Karmakanda of the Vedas (Purva Mimamsa). After a long debate, Mandana Misra became the disciple of Sri Sankara. Leaving his grihasta asrama he became a Sanyasin. His sanyasa name is 'Suresvaracharya' (cyclic year 'Sadharana').	2611	491
Sri Sankara founded the 'Dwaraka Matham' with 'Hastamalaka' as its 1st Peethadhipati. (Magha Sukla Saptami of the cyclic year Sadharama)	2611	491
Sankara visited Nepal and refuted the Buddhists.	2614	488
Founded 'Jyotir Matham' (Joshi Matham) in the Himalayas with Totakacharya as its 1st Peethadhipati. (Pushya Suddha Purnima, of the cyclic year 'Rakshasu')	2616	486
Sankara founded the 'Govardhana Matham' of Puri (Jagannath) with Padmapadacharya as its 1st Peethadhipati (Vaisakha Sukla Dasami, of the cyclic year 'Nala').	2617	484
The Sarada Matham at Sringeri was founded with Sureshwaracharya as its 1st Peethadhipati. (Akshaya Purnima of the year 'Pingala')	2618	484
The Kamakoti Peetham at Kanchi was founded with Adi Sankara himself as its 1st Acharya. (Vaisakha Purnima of the year 'Siddharthin')	2620	482
Brahmibhava of Sri Sankara in his 32nd year at Kanchi on Vaisakha Sukla Ekadasi.	2625	476

## **Highlights of Sankara's Teachings and Contributions**

Adi Sankaracharya, an incarnation of Lord Siva, fought many faiths not founded in the right intent of Vedas and reestablished Advaita Vedanta on a reasoned, firm footing. To this end, he wrote many books, which are generally divided into three categories: Bhashya granthas, or commentaries for the Uttama Adhikari, the learned scholar; Prakarana granthas, or explanatory texts for the Madhyama Adhikari, the middle level aspirant; Stotras, or devotional hymns in praise of Gods for the Samanya Adhikari, the common man.

What is that bliss by realising which, all misery is left far behind? Sri Sankara says: "One's own self is Sukham or bliss. One's own self is all. One's own self is Brahman. Brahman alone is all that we perceive. Everything is the effect of Brahman. The cause itself is the effect. The effect is non-different from the cause. Everything is 'Sam' or bliss. Let this 'Sam' or bliss be enjoyed, in all our experiences. Let it be enjoyed as one's own inner self or Atman." In the world everything external to the self is dear for the reason that it is related to the self. The self alone is ultimately dear to everyone. Realisation of the self as non-different from Brahman is Supreme Bliss. The methods of Bhakthi, Upasana and ethical virtues, and the conflicting paths of Tantra, Aachara, Yoga and Samadhi, all these get absorbed in the indivisible (Advaitic) Bliss of the non-dual Atman just as rivers flowing east, south, west and north get merged in one ocean. That Supreme Bliss is the goal of all these paths. The teachings of the Bhagavatpada, as well as the teachings of other Acharyas, prescribe that the Dharmas mentioned in the Vedas should be practised by men in accordance with their respective Varnas and Ashramas. The Varnashrama Dharmas have been ordained by Sastras, not merely to foster among men an attitude of mutual helpfulness or only to promote the general cooperative material well-being of society. They have been prescribed for self-purification which they bring about by developing peace, an essential means to liberation, and which cannot be otherwise experienced.

Expounding the truths enshrined in the Upanishads through his Bhashyas, in a language which is profoundly sublime and yet transparently simple, the ascetic that was Sri Sankara traversed the whole of the Bharata Bhumi on foot, from Rameswaram in the South to the Himalayas in the North. He carried out Digvijaya of the entire Bharatabhumi three times.

Rivers and sacred spots, villages and towns and temples have all been sanctified by him, and their spirituality augmented by his yantras and mantras and the invocations he made. Generally speaking, there is no holy spot in India, whose sanctity has not been heightened by his association. Even now, in every part of the country, it is common to see people speak with pride that the temple in their place had been sanctified by Sri Sankaracharya and made famous by the Yantra he established. In all regions, where Vedic studies were prevalent, there is no spot where Sri Sankara's Bhashyas have not been studied with devotion by those who sought Liberation, following the Guru-sishya sampradaya.

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada taught us the truth that all the deities we traditionally worship are but the manifestations of the One Supreme Paramatma. He established the worship of the deities of Siva, Vishnu, Ambika, Surya, Vinayaka and Subrahmanya, all sanctified in the Vedas, and each having a specific Gayatri Mantra. If worshipped with devotion, all of them will enable us to attain the Paramatma, proclaimed by the Vedas as Brahman. In that way he established the practical interpretation of the Gita teaching and came to be known as Shanmata-sthapakacharya. He travelled in all the 56 kingdoms of this country, where the Vedas were prevalent, and proclaimed the Advaitic principle of oneness of God. Like the same God who is within us and within everything we perceive, the seer, the seen and the seeing (drashta, drisyam and drishti) are all aspects of the same Paramatma.

In darkness, a rope is mistaken for a snake. But when examined with a light, we will find that the supposed snake is only a rope. The superimposed snake disappears, when light (knowledge) is thrown on it. Even for an illusion, there must be a basis in reality, the basis in the above example being the rope. All illusion will be superimposed on truth, and conversely what remains after the illusion is dispelled is the truth. When a person wakes up from a dream, everything seen and felt in the dream disappears, and what remains is only the dreamer. It means that we project ourselves into the objects of our dream. When the dream passes away on the dawn of awakening, we realise that there is nothing outside us. Similarly, the reflection in a mirror has no substance, but is only an appearance of what already exists. When we realise, with the aid of Gnana, that God is the only ultimate Truth and everything else is illusion, then anger, desire, hatred, pain, grief and other emotions will not affect us. We begin to dwell in the fullness of Supreme Bliss

It is due to Sri Bhagavatpada and his compositions in praise of the different manifestations of Paramatma that a new life has come to be breathed into temple worship and the festivals associated with temples. Had it not been for him, the observance of such festivals like Janmashtami, Vinayaka Chaturthi, Sri Rama Navami and Sivaratri in our homes would have ceased owing to the spread of atheism. Our elders, who profited from the teachings of Bhagavatpada, adhered to the various religious observances. It is their abundant faith that is responsible for the continuance of these observances even today.

## **Sankara's works at a Glance**

### **DEVOTIONAL HYMNS**

#### **1. Ganesa**

Ganesa Bhujangam, Sri Ganesa Pancharatnam, Varada Ganesa Stotram, Ganesa Ashtakam.

#### **2. Subrahmanya**

Subrahmanya Bhujangam

#### **3. Parameswara**

Ardhanariswara Stotram, Dasa sloki Stuti, Dakshinamurthy ashtakam,

Dakshinamurthy Stotram, Dakshinamurthy varna mala Stotram, Dwadasa linga Stotram, Kala Bhairava Ashtakam, Sri Mruthyunjaya manasika puja Stotram,

Siva Aparadha kshamapana Stotram, Sivanandha lahari, Siva bhujanga Stotram,

Siva kesadi padantha varnana Stotram, Siva manasa puja, Siva namavali ashtakam, Siva padadi ksantha varnana Stotram, Siva panchakshara Stotram,

Siva pancakshara nakshathra mala, Suvarna mala Stuti, Uma Maheswara Stotram, Vedasara Siva Stotram, Sivashtakam

#### 4. Devi

Annapurna (Amba) ashtakam, Ananda Lahari, Annapurna Stotram, Annapurna Stuti  
Amba Ashtakam, Amba Pancharatnam, Bhagavathi manasa puja, Bhavani Ashtakam  
Bhavani bhujangam, Bhramaramba ashtakam, Devi bhujanga Stotram  
Devi chathus shastyupachara puja Stotram, Devi Pancharatnam  
Devi Aparadha kshamapana Stotram, Durga Aparadha bhajana Stotram, Gowri Dasakam  
Hara Gowri ashtakam, Kali Aparadha bhajana Stotram, Kalyana vrishti Stotram  
Kama bhujanga prayatham, Kama bimbashakam, Kanakadhara Stotram  
Sri Lalitha pancha Ratnam, Manthra muthrika pushpa mala sthavam, Mathru panchakam  
Mathruka pushpa mala Stuti, Minakshi Stotram, Minakshi pancha Ratnam  
Navaratna malika, Rajarajeswari Ashtakam, Sarada bhujanga prayatha ashtakam  
Soundarya lahari, Syamala navarathna malika Stotram, Tripura sundari ashtakam  
Tripura sundari manasa puja Stotram, Tripura sundari veda pada Stotram

#### 5. Maha Vishnu

Achuthashtakam, Bhagavan manasa pooja, Bhaja Govindam, Dasavatara Stotram  
Govindashtakam, Hari mide Stotram, Hari namavali Stotram, Hari saranashtakam  
Sri Vishnu bhujanga prayatha Stotram, Jagannathashtakam, Krishnashtakam  
Lakshminrisimha Pancharatnam, Narayana Stotram, Pandurangashtakam  
Rama bhujanga prayatha Stotram, Ranganathashtakam  
Lakshminrisimha Karuna rasa Stotram  
Sankata nasana lakshmi nrusimha karavalamba (karunarasa) Stotram  
Shatpadi Stotram, Vishnu bhujanga prayatha, Vishnu padadi ksantha Stotram

#### 6. Maha Lakshmi

Kanakadhara Stotram

#### 7. Hanuman

Hanumath Pancharatnam

### KSHETRAS

## **8. Kasi Kshethra**

Kasi panchakam, Kasi Stotram, Manikarnika Ashtakam

## **9. Jyothir Linga Kshethras**

Dwadasa Jyotir linga Stotram

## **RIVERS**

### **10.Ganga**

Gangashtakam, Ganga Stotram

### **11.Narmada**

Narmadashtakam

### **12.Yamuna**

Yamunashtakam

### **13.Miscellaneous**

Kalyana vrushti, Navarathna malika, Pushkarashtakam

## **ADVAITA VEDANTA GRANTHAS**

### **14.Prakarana granthas**

Advaita anubhuthi, Agnana bodhini [prose], Amaru shatakam, Anatmasri vikarhana  
Aparokshanubhuthi, Atma-anatma vivekam [prose], Atma bodham,  
Atmagnana upadesana vidhi / Druk darsana vivekam,  
Atma panchakam / Atma shatkam/ Advaita panchakam, Atma puja / para puja,  
Bala bodha sangraham, Bodha saram, Bhramanana vali mala,  
Bhramanu chinthana / Atma chintana, Dhyana ashtakam, Gnana ganga satakam  
Guru ashtakam, Jivanmuktanandha lahari / Kevaloham,  
Koupina panchakam / Yathi panchakam, Mani ratna mala, Manisha panchakam

Maya panchakam, Matha amnaya, Nirguna manasa puja  
Nirvana dasakam / sidhantha bindhu, Nirvana manjari, Nirvana shatkam / Atma shatkam  
Panchikaranam [prose], Prabodha sudhakara, Prashnothra ratna malika  
Prapancha sara tantram, Pratha smarana Stotram, Proudhanubhuthi  
Sadachara santhanam, Sadhana panchakam / upadesa panchakam  
Sankara smriti, Sanyasa paddhati [prose], Sara tatva upadesam, Charpata pancharika  
Sarva siddhanta sangraham, Sarva vedantha sidhantha sara sangraham  
Svatma nirupanam, Svratma prakasikam, Svarupanu santhanam astakam/ Vijnana sowka  
Tatva bodham, Tatva upadesam, Upadesa sahasri, Vakya sitha, Vakya vrithi  
Vakya vruthi (laghu), Vedanta kesari / Satasluki, Viveka chudamani, Yeka sloki  
Yoga tharavali

### **15. Bhashya Granthas (Commentaries)**

Vishnu Sahasranamam

Lalitha Trisathi

Yoga sutras

Bhagawad Gita

Principal Upanishads (Isa, Kena, Katha, Mundaka, Aitareya, Chandogya,  
Brihadaranyaka, Taitriya, Mandukya, Prasna, Svetasvatara)

Brahma Sutras

## APPENDIX 2

### GURU PARAMPARA - The Acharyas of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham

Sl. No	Name	Place of Birth	Place of Attainment of Siddhi	Year of Siddhi	Duration as Peethadhipathi	Achievements
1.	Sri. Sankara Bhagavatpada	Kaladi	Kanchi	477B.C.		Ascended Sarvagna peetham and established Moolamnaya Kamakoti Peetham at Kanchi .
2.	Sri. Sureswaracharya	Kashmir	Kanchi	407 B.C.	70 years	Known as Mandana Mishra in his purvashrama. He was defeated in debate by Adi Sankara. Author of Vartika on Sankara's Upanishad bhashyas. Being the first Acharya of the Sringeri Peetham, was nominated as the guide to Sri Sarvagatmanendra Saraswati.
3.	Sri. Sarvajnatmanendra Saraswati	Brahmadesam	Kanchi	364 B.C.	112 years	As a lad of seven, he debated with Adi Sankara before the latter's ascension of Sarvagna Peetham. Impressed by his brilliance, Adi Sankara appointed him the first Acharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. He authored 'Sankshepa Saairaka', treatise of 1267 verses on Sankara's Brahma Sutra Bhashya.
4.	Sri. Satya Bodhendra Saraswati	Amaravathi Tira	Kanchi	268 B.C.	63 years	Fought the Sankhyas, Buddhas and Jinas. Author of Padaka-Sata, explanatory treatise on Shankara Bhashya.
5.	Sri. Jnananandendra Saraswati	Mangalam near Lalgudi	Kanchi	205 B.C.	63 years	Author of commentary "Chandrika" on Sri Sureswaracharya's Naishkarmya Siddhi.
6.	Sri. Suddhanandendra Saraswati	Vedaranya	Kanchi	124 B.C.	81years	-
7.	Sri. Ananda Jnanendra Saraswati I	Chera country	Sri Saila	55 B.C.	69 years	Author of commentaries on Sankara Bhashyas and Sureswaracharya's Vartikas.
8.	Sri . Kaivalya Ananda Yogendra Saraswati	Tirupati	Punyarasa, Kanchi	28 A.D.	83 years	-
9.	Sri. Kripa Sankarendra Saraswati	Andhra Desa	Vindhya Mountains	69 A.D.	41 years	Eradicated degenerate obscene practices and prepared ground for the growth of the path of Bhakti.
10.	Sri. Sureswarendra Saraswati	Mahabaleswar	Kanchi	127 A.D.	58 years	-
11.	Sri. Sivananda Chidghanendra Saraswati	Karnataka	Vridhachala	172 A.D.	45 years	-
12.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati I	Near Palar	Seshachala	235 A.D.	63 years	Engaged in a special type of yoga.

13.	Sri. Satchidghanendra Saraswati	Near Gadilam	Kanchi	272 AD	37 years	On attainment of siddhi, his mortal frame got transformed into a linga at Kanchi.
14.	Sri. Vidyaghanendra Saraswati I	Andhra Desa	Agastya Parvata	317 A.D.	45 years	Adept in Mantra Sastra.
15.	Sri Gangadharendra Saraswati I	Kanchi	Agastya Parvata	329 A.D.	12 years	-
16.	Sri. Ujjvala Sankarendra Saraswati	Tapati Tira	Kashmir	367 A.D.	38 years	Drove Jainas beyond the river Sindhu.
17.	Sri. Sadasivendra Saraswati	Kashmir	Trayamabak	375 A.D.	8 years	-
18.	Sri. Yogatilaka Surendra Saraswati	Maharashtra	Ujjain	385 A.D.	10 years	Vanquished the notorious Charuvaka Durdivi in debate.
19.	Sri. Marthanda Vidyaghanendra Saraswati	Maharashtra	Godavari Tira	398 A.D.	13 years	-
20.	Sri. Muka Sankarendra Saraswati	Kanchi	Godavari	437 A.D.	39 years	A deaf mute from birth, gained the power of speech through the grace of Kamakshi and wrote the lyrical Muka Panchasati. Also known as Muka Sankara. Adored by kings of Ujjain and Kashmir.
21.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati II	Konkan	Kasi	447 A.D.	10 years	-
22.	Sri Paripurna Bodhendra Saraswati I	Ratangiri	Jagannatha	481 A.D.	34 years	-
23.	Sri. Satchitsukhendra Saraswati	Srikakulam	Jagannatha	512 A.D.	31 years	-
24.	Sri Chitsukhendra Saraswati I	Konkan	Ratangiri	527 A.D.	15 years	-
25.	Sri Satchidanandaghanendra Saraswati	Srimushnam	Gokarna	548 A.D.	21 years	Extensively toured all over India thrice. Great yogi. At Siddhi, turned into a Linga at Gokarna.
26.	Sri. Prajnaghanendra Saraswati	Pinakini river side	Kanchi	565 AD.	17 years	-
27.	Sri. Chidvilasendra Saraswati	Hastigiri	Kanchi	577 A.D.	12 years	-
28.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati I	Mithila	Kanchi	601 AD	24 years	-
29.	Sri. Purnabhodhendra Saraswati I	Andhra Desa	Kanchi	618 A.D.	17 years	-
30.	Sri Bhodhendra Saraswati I	Andhra Desa	Kanchi	655 A.D.	37 years	-
31.	Sri. Brahmananda Ghanendra Saraswati I	Gadilam	Kanchi	668 A.D.	13 years	Authority on Six Darshanas. Venerated by the King of Kashmir and poet Bhavabhuti.
32.	Sri. Chidanandaghanendra Saraswati	Andhra Desa	Kanchi	672 A.D.	4 years	A great yogi, subsisted only on dry leaves.
33.	Sri. Satchidanandendra Saraswati	Do	Kanchi	692 A.D.	20 years	Versatile linguist. Renovated Matham at Kanchi
34.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati III	Vegavati side	Kanchi	710 A.D.	18 years	Toured extensively.
35.	Sri. Chitsukhendra Saraswati II	Vedachala	Sahaya Mountains	737 A.D.	27 years	-
36.	Sri. Chitsukhanandendra Saraswati	Palar side	Kanchi	758 A.D.	21 years	-
37.	Sri. Vidyaghanendra Saraswati II	Not Known	Chidambaram	788 A.D.	30 years	-
38.	Sri. Abhinava Sankarendra Saraswati	Chidambaram	Himalayas	840 A.D.	52 years	Great dialectician in philosophy. Defeated Vakpati Bhatta. Ascended Sarvagna Peetham in Kashmir.
39.	Sri Satchidvilasendra Saraswati	Maharashtra	Kanchi	873 A.D.	33 years	-
40.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati II	Karnataka	Kanchi	915 A.D.	42 years	-
41.	Sri. Gangadharendra Saraswati II	Bhima river side	Kanchi	950 A.D.	35 years	Restored vision of the blind poet Rajasekhara.

42.	Sri. Brahamananda Ghanendra Saraswati II	Karnataka	Kanchi	978 A.D.	28 years	-
43.	Sri. Ananda Ghanendra Saraswati II	Tungabhadra	Kanchi	1014 A.D.	36 years	-
44.	Sri. Purnabodhendhra Saraswati II	Karnataka	Kanchi	1040 A.D.	26 years	-
45.	Sri. Paramasivendra Saraswati I	Do	Kanchi	1061 A.D.	21 years	-
46.	Sri. Sandranandabodhendhra Saraswati	Do	Arunachala	1098 A.D.	37 years	Author of "Katha-Sarith-Sagara", was presented with a pearl palanquin by King Bhoja of Dhara.
47.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati IV	Kundi river side	Arunachala	1166 A.D.	68 years	Defeated Hemacharya, a great Jain teacher. Celebrated by Jayadeva in his Bhakti Kalpalatika. Adored by King of Kashmir.
48.	Sri. Advaitananda Bodhendhra Saraswati	Pinakini	Chidambaram	1200 A.D.	34 years	Defeated in argument Sri Harsha, author of Kandana khanda khadya and Naishadha, and also Abhinava Gupta. Author of advaitic texts.
49.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati III	Chayavanam	Gadilam	1247 A.D.	47 years	-
50.	Sri. Chandrachudendra Saraswati I	Not Known	Gadilam	1297 A.D.	50 years	Devotee of Parasakti, offered one crore of oblations in a Homa for Paradevata.
51.	Sri. Vidyateerthendra Saraswati	Bilvaranya	Himalayas	1385 A.D.	88 years	Preceptor of Vidyaranya Swami, commentator of Vedas, Vedanta Desika and Bharati Krishna Tirtha.
52.	Sri. Sankaranandendra Saraswati	Madhyarjuna	Kanchi	1417 A.D.	32 years	Founded eight new Advaita Mathas in Karnataka. Author of Dipikas on Upanishads and commentary on Gita. Combated aggression of Vaishnava and Madhva sectarians.
53.	Sri. Pumananda Sadasivendra Saraswati	Nagarayana	Kanchi	1498 A.D.	81 years	Accorded royal honours by the King of Nepal.
54.	Sri. Vyasachala Mahadevendra Saraswati	Kanchi	Vyasachala	1507 A.D.	9 years	Author of the famous "Vyasachaliya Sankara Vijayam"
55.	Sri. Chandrachudendra Saraswati II	Asmala	Kanchi	1524 A.D.	17 years	-
56.	Sri. Sarvajna Sadasiva Bodhendhra Saraswati	Pennar side	Rameswaram	1539 A.D.	15 years	-
57.	Sri. Paramasivendra Saraswati II	Pampatira	Svetarayana	1586 A.D.	47 years	Guru of the great Sadashiva Brahmendra. The author of Guru Ratna Malika. Wrote commentary on Siva Gita.
58.	Sri. Atma Bodhendhra Saraswati	Vridhachalam	Gadilam	1638 A.D.	52 years	Author of Bhashya on "Sri Rudram".
59.	Sri. Bhagavannama Bodhendhra Saraswati	Kanchi	Govindapura m	1692 A.D.	54 years	Established Nama Siddhanta. Author of several books on efficacy of Namasankirtanam. Forerunner of Bhajana Sampradaya. Performed Tatanka Prathishtha at Jambukeswaram. His adhishtanam at Govindapuram in Tamilnadu is full of chaitanyam.
60.	Sri. Advaitatma Prakasendra Saraswati	Vasistha river side	Kil Ambi	1704 A.D.	12 years	-
61.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati IV	Not Known	Tiruvottriyur	1746 A.D.	42 years	-
62.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati V	Not Known	Kumbakonam	1783 A.D.	37 years	Shifted Matham from Kanchipuram to Kumbakonam in view of hostilities in Kanchi area. Author of the mellifluous Siva Ashtapadi (Siva Gitimala).
63.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati V	Kumbhakonam	Kumbakonam	1814 A.D.	31 years	Great yogi.
64.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati VI	Not known	Kumbakonam	1850 A.D.	36 years	Descendant of the great Govinda Dikshita in Poorvashrama. Adept in Mantra Sastra.
65.	Sri. Sudarsana Mahadevendra Saraswati	Madhyarjuna	Elaiyattankudi	1891 A.D.	41 years	-
66.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra	Udayambakka	Kalavai	1907 A.D.	16 years	-

	Saraswati VII	m				
67.	Sri. Mahadevendra Saraswati VI	Tiruvisanallur	Kalavai	1907 A.D.	7 days	-
68.	Sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati VIII	Villupuram	Kanchi	1994 A.D.	87 years	Known as Paramacharya, Mahaswami and walking God, lived almost a hundred years. Travelled throughout the country on foot or palanquin. Started wearing khadi. Created many trusts for achieving the objectives of the Peetham. His foremost concern was preservation of Vedas, tradition and dharma. Great scholar and teacher of Vedanta Sastras and dharma. His erudite speeches can be seen in "Deivathin kural" (Voice of god).
69.	Sri Jayendra Saraswati (Present Acharya)	Irulneekki				Known for erudition, ceaseless activity and boundless love for common man. Toured the country extensively many times. Made the Peetham into a bee-hive of socio-religious renaissance. The only Sankaracharya to visit Manasarovar and Kailash, and Dhaka in Bangladesh. Installed Adi Sankara's idol in Manasarovar and the 12 Jyotirlinga kshetras and many other holy places.
70.	Sri. Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati (Present Acharya)	Thandalam				Deeply concerned about the worsening moral and ethical values of the youth, he has initiated a number of measures to draw the youth and train them in all these aspects along with modern education.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **PUNYA BHUMI**

(These points were conveyed by Pujya Bala Swamiji and recorded by an old scholar Shri Vaikunthanath Upadhyaya of Varanasi who had the fortune of accompanying the Acharya during his yatras in north India & Nepal during early nineties. The material was printed in Hindi in Delhi by a devotee many years ago. )

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The basic support of Sanatana Dharma and Sri Adi Sankaracharya's principles is primarily the brahmana group of society, as told by Bhagavan Sri Krishna himself in Sri Bhagavadgita. For the protection of dharma, good conduct and character of the entire humankind, it is primarily the brahmana who is the capable and responsible medium through the power of his mind and intellect.

Owing to historical reasons, inexorable flow of time, the consumerist tendency of the human mind and extensive spread of materialism, unexpected changes have happened in the character, conduct and ordinary behaviour of the brahmana caste in individual and group levels in the past few years, particularly in the present times, resulting in a blow to the well being of the entire mankind. Owing to the determination of permitted and prohibited acts for brahmanas through systems of government in the process of human development through centuries, there has been a very close cause – and - result relationship of the high and low nature of the brahmana's conduct and behaviour with the conduct and behaviour of the general public.

In consideration of the above facts and, being anxious over the fall in the conduct and outlook of the brahmana community in the last fifty-sixty years, Parama Pujya Acharya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji and Bala Acharya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji have instituted many steps for removal of defects prevalent in the brahmana community in order to control this trend, to increase awareness and sense of responsibility in brahmanas with respect to the defects in the present era and to bring the conduct and behaviour of this preeminent group of the nation to the right path. Description of some of those steps is given below:

1. Free Upanayanam of deserving boys in 8-12 age group. The maximum age for upanayanam is fixed at 16 years in the Sastras. After 16 years, this samskara loses its meaning and effectiveness. It will be appropriate to mention here that people financially strong should not only bear the expenses for conducting this samskara for their children, but also donate extra money so that the organisers of this samskara can meet the expenses of upanayanam of financially weak brahmanas' children, resulting in the availability of this facility to weak brahmanas free of cost.
2. To make such new brahmacharis proficient in basic Vedic study and other rituals- learning Sri Rudram, Chamakam, different Suktas and simple and easy-to-memorise portions of one's own branch of Vedas and compulsory observance of Sandhyavandanam and other essential rituals.
3. After completing the processes mentioned in items 1 and 2 above, teaching of Samskrit. Samskrit is the mother of all languages and is such a medium which contains exhaustive fund of knowledge of Vedas, Sastras, Itihasas, Puranas and Mahakavyas. Students do not face any problem in learning different languages in a young age. In fact, for each and every boy and girl in India, it is essential to learn the Devabhasha (divine language) Samskrit, Rashtrabhasha (national language) Hindi, world language English and mother tongue.
4. Arranging classes of classical music for students of schools and colleges (boys and girls).
5. Arranging religious classes so that the students may memorise the verses etc. for worship of different gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Illustrative examples included in these verses will be Sivanandalahari, Soundaryalahari, Bhajagovindam plus stotras and bhajans in different regional languages like those of Alwars and Nayanmars in south India, Sant Gnaneswar in Maharashtra, and Mirabai and Jayadeva in north India.

6. Arranging bhajan classes where the children will learn the different singing styles of Ashtapadi of Sri Jayadeva, kirtans of Sant Tyagaraja and religious bhakti music composed by other scholars.
7. To run a centre where children will learn making of yagnopavitas (sacred threads) and use of takli and charkha for making thread from cotton.
8. To prepare good cassettes which detail Sandhyavandanam, Aupasanam and other essential daily rituals prescribed for brahmana community so that the cassettes can be played on such occasions like upanayanam etc.
9. Printing, publishing and distribution of books detailing Vedic mantras and rules of observing rituals mentioned in item 8 above and stotras and bhajans mentioned in item 5 above and making these books available to the general public free of cost or at very low prices.
10. Training children in mantras and rules of observance of different auspicious, religious samskaras like Punyahavachanam, Abdapurthi, Aksharabhyasam, upanayanam etc. It must be remembered that forty samskaras, commencing from Garbhadhanam, Pumsavanam and Seemantham and going upto Antyeshti (Post-death), are compulsory for every brahmana. Though it is not easy for the youngsters to learn the procedures of important samskaras like marriage, yagnas etc., it is certainly possible for them to memorise the mantras and learn the procedures for performing ordinary samskaras.
11. Teaching the procedure for preparing Vibhuti, kumkum etc. at home.
12. Teaching the rules of performing rituals like Panchayatana Pooja as laid down in Sastras and about the materials required for such rituals.
13. Teaching the youngsters on the right eating habits, the need for eating saatvic food, avoiding food from restaurants as far as possible, economy in expenditure (the old saying, 'simple living and high thinking' refers), cultivating the habit of savings, the basics of banking etc. In short, living lofty life with minimum comforts without acquiring wealth greatly in excess of one's own mundane necessities.
14. Cultivating good and time-honoured habits- like development of feeling of oneness, compassion and benevolence towards diseased, handicapped and deprived people and providing economic assistance in the service of people.
15. Arranging voluntary social service in hospitals and health centres, serving the diseased and persons awaiting death, organising help at the time of death. In our Indian tradition

and culture, organising help in the final rites of dead persons in the neighbourhood is reckoned to be the highest service.

16. Organising classes for teaching English, simple mathematics, social science, history and geography so that the youngsters can become the best and capable citizens of the nation. These classes should be organised free of cost for economically disadvantaged members (brahmanas) and where possible, these classes should be organised for the general public also by levying very little fees.
17. Organising free hostels for brahmana children in classes 6 to 10 and providing simple dwelling, food and pure and healthy environment. They should be kept away from sensuous entertainment as students desiring acquisition of knowledge should live simple, hard, pure and ordinary life in our tradition. Our aim should be as in the proverb, 'Live to eat or eat to live?' It should be compulsory for students living in such hostels that they perform acts of daily purification, do rites like Sandhyavandanam thrice a day, perform Agnikarya (Samidadhanam) in morning and evening, wear simple dress free from show and engage in such conduct, by which the youngsters develop into ideal men, worthy of emulation as envisaged in our ancient culture and civilisation.
18. Establishing old age homes for aged, weak and deprived members of the brahmana community. In this matter also the brahmanas, who are economically strong, should donate somewhat more than they spend on their own personal needs so that the expenses on weak and disadvantaged brahmanas can also be met. Here also the principle enunciated in item 17 above will be applicable.  
Such old people can live in these old age homes who have spent their mundane lives completely in their homes; but whose ardent desire in the evening of their lives after taking retirement from service is that they should get an environment in which they could spend peaceful and satisfied lives in their last days free from difficulties and pressures and perform some religious activities and ordinary individual observances.
19. Establishing hospitals and clinics in different centres where modern, ordinary as well as most modern treatment could be made available free of cost to weaker sections of the brahmana community as needed during illness. These efforts also include making available economic assistance to those existing hospitals which are in need of guidance and financial and other assistance.

20. Establishing Veda Pathasalas for imparting Vedic education as per established practice to individuals/ students who are eligible to receive such traditional Vedic education.
21. Setting up centres in different places, mostly in cities and towns, where the residents of those places could perform Aparakriyas (post death rites) for their dead forefathers. Nowadays it is almost impossible in most cities for middle and economically weak classes of people to perform, as per prescribed procedures, such obligatory samskaras in their own residences like flats. People feel the crying need for such specially designated places.

Efforts are also needed in the direction of providing facilities to the brahmana community by way of specially designated centres for performing sraaddhas for their forefathers as per prescribed procedures, and availability of different materials required and Purohits for performing sraaddhas and assistance in preparation of food etc.

Aachaaram (conduct as per tradition) and proper environment are very essential in Aparakriyas and annual sraaddhas and it is very difficult to meet these two requirements in one's own individual residence.

22. Organising tours for students in schools and colleges to factories, industrial establishments, trade centres and commercial offices and religious and holy places situated in different parts of the country. Bearing the expenses on such tours in society as a whole.
23. Imparting to men and women of the brahmana community, knowledge of rules of performing vratas, rituals, Deepa puja etc., chanting of stotras in the places of worship at homes in morning and evening and procedures of performing different Pujas.
24. Habit of wearing traditional Vedic apparel after bath and visiting nearby temple once in the morning or evening as per convenience should be inculcated in religious minded men and women of brahmana community. Habit of regularly going to temple should be inculcated even in small children. Habits formed in childhood continue till end of life. While visiting temple, purity of mind, words and actions should be maintained. By chanting stotras on the way to the temple, while in the temple and on the way back home, this type of mental

attitude will be formed, which will pave the way for easily obtaining the grace of Iswara. This is also the most crucial purpose of forming the habit of going to temple.

25. Adopting the principles and traditions of Dharma sastras in the matter of naming the newborn child. In our society it has been the very ancient and time-honoured practice to name the newborn baby (male or female) after the names of gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon. The main thought behind this is that the number of times the names of such children are uttered, uttering the names of Iswara, gods and goddesses that many times will automatically take place, resulting in acquisition of merit. In addition there is also the practice in most families of giving a special name to children for religious and spiritual pursuits, this name being that of the (paternal) grandfather or grandmother. For mundane purposes like use in school and service, there is also the practice of giving the child a worldly name, which does not violate the provisions of Dharma sastras.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **BALA SWAMI'S TRIBUTES**

#### **About His Guru - Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji**

- Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji

*The following are the excerpts from the lectures given on various occasions about his Guru Parama Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji by Pujya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamiji.*

In every one's, life one day will be a turning point and most memorable day. In my life, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1983, is a red letter day. On that day, I was initiated to Sanyasa by Jagadguru His Holiness Sn Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji. I felt blessed as my divine Guru took me into his fold and nurtured me as a bird would its chicken. I look back to that date and the entire years of my close association with my Guru. I was drawn to him like iron filings to a magnet. Words fail me to express the great qualities of my guru that I have observed at very close quarters. I distinctly remember the words of Paramacharya. They are still ringing in my ears "What your guru has done for Srimatham cannot be done by anyone else." (*Avar Srimatathukku Seidhullathu Yenda..... Seiya Mudhiyadhu*).

My Guru is a multifaceted person. There is a sloka by Vallabhacharya in praise of Sri Krishna. His thought wondering in the sweetness of each part of the physical body of Sri Krishna, his expression fails him; he throws up his hands and tells, why go on detailing each part; the whole body is the personification of sweetness.

*Adharam Madhuram Vadanam Madhuram Nayanam Madhuram Hasitham Madhuram Hridayam Madhuram Gamanam Madhuram Madhuradhi Patherakhilam Madhuram.*

It will be like that, if I enumerate each quality of my Guru as he is the embodiment of all the good qualities. Yet I venture to present the qualities that make my Guru a universally unique person.

For the high exalted position he holds as the Peethadhipathi of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham established by Sri Adi Sankara Baghavatpada 2510 years ago, His Holiness is most simple, with an ever smiling face, and easily approachable (Sowlabhyam) by one and all. He gives a patient hearing to the problems in the lives of his devotees, suggests solutions with parikaras (expiations), and blesses them. He gives darshan without bothering about his own inconvenience. He never allows anyone who has come to him to go disappointed. One of the many names of god is Achyuta, meaning that he would not let slip out of his hands those who have come to his fold.

His Holiness is a walking encyclopedia. There is no subject under the sun unknown to him. He is a respecter of good things wherever they are and would not fail to recognize and reward. His skill of management is a textbook for students of management studies. His meticulous planning and careful implementation is a lesson to be followed. His quick decision-making without procrastination is a virtue by itself. Sluggishness and slackness do not find a place in his dictionary. He always engages the right person to do the right job to get the right result. His compassion knows no bounds.

Adi Sankara had said that Vedas should be studied daily “Vedo Nithyam Adhiyatham”. His interest in Veda and Veda Vidyarthi is beyond words. His enquiries with Pathasala students about their studies, comforts, and requirements provide good encouragement for their greater involvement in the studies. He has been encouraging Vedic scholars by rewarding them and encouraging them to study Veda bhashyam, the study of which is waning nowadays.

He follows in letter and spirit the dictum of Sri Adi Sankara. Adi Sankara was engaged in unifying all the forces of his period. Periyaval is the central force in unifying the various factions and establishing firmly the unity in diversity in the country. After Adi Sankara, Periyaval alone in this Peetam has gone to Kailas and established the statue of Adi Sankara at the foot of Mount Kailas. He has visited all the places of worship in India (i.e.,) 51 Sakthi

Peethas, 7 Moksha Puris, Dwadasa Jyotirlinga Kshethras and has bathed in all the 7 Sacred rivers in addition to all the other sacred rivers.

His Guru bhakti is well known. Whatever His guru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji wished to be done during his time, the present Priyaval has fulfilled them without fail.

Gurupriya on the subject of Vedanta authored by him is in a class by itself.

His assessment of situation, judgment of person and predictions have never failed.

He is a role model to be followed. The respect and regard shown by other religious leaders is a proof of his greatness.

His deep-rooted conviction in our tradition and culture and his encouragement for the scientific advancement for use to propagate our culture makes him a great bridge between the old and the new.

His dealing with the press, His interviews and opinions are acclaimed worldwide.

Last but not the least, is His view of Social reformation. Hinduism in the past was individual oriented. It stressed the upliftment of the individual in the spiritual field to attain the position of no return (i.e.,) without rebirth. The credit for bringing Hinduism to the doors of the society for mass upliftment through the movement of Jana Kalyan and Jana Jagran goes to Him. His attempt to make people realise the importance of service to the communities, society and to the nation by taking to heart that MANAVA SEVA IS MAHESWARA SEVA, is the crown of His services.

His vision has never been narrow or restricted to any particular area but to the world in general and the nation in particular. His thought and activities have always been for national integration.

ॐ तत् सत्

