

We have an amazing array of speakers for our 2020 virtual Navaratri retreat and we are grateful to each of them for agreeing to speak at our retreat. You can learn more about each of them here and we truly hope you will join us for an immersive Devi Retreat.

Day 1 Saturday 10/17: Sri Vivek Gupta, Vedanta Teacher, Niagara Falls, Canada



In 2005 Vivekji was accepted to the intensive residential Vedanta Course at Chinmaya Mission's Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in India. While there he studied and lived under the guidance of Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda for over two years.

Vivekji makes Vedanta relevant, relatable and reachable. He has been invited to speak at an array of community groups, academic forums, professional associations, medical departments, and corporations around the world including, the Office of the Pentagon in Washington, Regional Mental Health Care Hospital in London, Carnegie Melon, London Police and Microsoft.

Pujya Swami Tejomayananda has continuously blessed Vivekji with greater responsibilities: in 2008 as the Resident Teacher of Chinmaya Mission Niagara, in 2011 as the Deputy Director of Chinmaya Yuva Kendra West, and in 2013 as the Visiting Teacher of Chinmaya Mission Pittsburgh.

Day 2 Sunday 10/18: Smt. Vilasini Balakrishnan, Vedanta Teacher Chinmaya Govardhan, Jacksonville, FL



Vilasiniji met Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda while studying abroad in India as a college student. She began her Vedanta sadhana in 1975 and graduated from the Mission's two-year Vedanta course at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Mumbai. She has served Chinmaya Mission in Flint, Chicago, Boston, and the Bay Area, where she has taught Vedanta, Bala Vihar, and study groups. She has also conducted many Devi retreats across the country. She currently serves as the Bala Vihar Director for CMWRC and also serves on the Board of CMW.

Vilasiniji had the great blessing to serve as Pujya Gurudev's secretary, traveling with Gurudev to all his Yagnas, videotaping his talks and performing secretarial duties.

Vilasiniji, brings a natural wisdom and compassion to her classes and loves sharing the science of happiness that is Vedanta. Currently, Vilasiniji and her husband Sureshji live in Jacksonville Florida and teach Vedanta study courses at Chinmaya Govardhan in Jacksonville.

Day 3 Monday 10/19: Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar, Vedanta Teacher San Diego, CA



Lakshmi is a senior member of Chinmaya Mission and an ardent follower of Pujya Gurudev. She has presented seminars and workshops on Hinduism and Hindu Culture since 1991 at many schools, interfaith events and at the Cupertino School district. She was also invited to present at the Hindu-Catholic Dialogue at LMU. She presently oversees the children's and adult programs at Chinmaya Mission San Diego, teaches *Bhagavad Gita* for adults and conducts summer camps for children.

Day 4 Tuesday 10/20: Smt. Medha Bhagawat, CMWRC, Washington, D.C.



Medhaji was introduced to Chinmaya Mission by her parents who were devotees of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda since the 1970s. Medhaji and her husband Aravindji have been actively serving Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC) since they moved to Maryland in 1988.

Medhaji made it a priority to attend Pujya Gurudev's camps from 1989-1993 and has continued her spiritual development with Swami Tejomayananda and other spiritual masters. Under the guidance of Swami Dheeranandaji and Vilasiniji, Medhaji has been actively involved in leading and supporting the various activities of CMWRC.

Medhaji and Aravindji both retired early from their active scientific careers in 2017 and embarked on the next phase of their lives by joining Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai to formally study Vedanta in a 2 year long residential course. They returned last year to continue to serve CMWRC. Currently, Medhaji conducts several Devi groups at Chinmayam and Chinmaya Somnath.

Day 6 Thursday 10/22: Brni. Suchitha Chaitanya, Vedanta Teacher, Austin, TX



Brahmacharini Shuchita is the resident spiritual guide of Chinmaya Mission Austin. Shuchitaji graduated from Austin College with a degree in Spanish & Biology, and then completed a Masters of Public Health from University of Texas School of Public Health, Houston. She has worked in the research and teaching fields. Shuchitaji started in Chinmaya Mission as a Bala Vihar student in Orlando, and was a CHYK member in Houston and Dallas. She has organized and conducted camps and retreats for various age groups including college students, and young professionals. Shuchitaji joined the 17th Vedanta Course in 2017 under the tutelage of Swami Bodhatmanandaji and was given Brahmacharya diksha in 2019 during Navaratri. She joined the Chinmaya Austin family soon after, and is immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve Pujya Gurudev through conducting classes and spreading the joy and knowledge of Vedanta.

**Day 7 Friday 10/23 Swamini Samprathishtananda, Chinmaya Gardens,
Coimbatore India**



Swamini Samprathishthanandaji has a degree in Economics, and is an MBA Gold medalist and a CA Rank holder. She was a teacher at Chinmaya International Residential School before she chose to join the Vedanta Course. With a heart filled with devotion for Pujya Gurudev and Pujya Guruji, right from her childhood days, she had the blessing of joining the Vedanta Course in 2005 – 07 with Pujya Guruji himself as her Acharya. After the course she was posted to Chinmaya Mission, Pondicherry as the Acharya. She is now posted at Chinmaya Garden. She was the Acharya of the third Tamil / English Vedanta Course conducted at Sandeepany Vidya Mandir, Chinmaya Gardens from August 2017 to September 2019.

She effortlessly charms people with her intellectual talks. The way she cites day to day examples and anecdotes, from Gurudev's and Guruji's lives, to illustrate her points makes her most endearing to us. She is an expert in conducting corporate workshops as well as children camps which is a reflection of her versatile teaching skills. Her friendly nature, her charming smile, her intellectual speech, her unconditional love, her firm devotion for Pujya Gurudev and her ability to see nothing but goodness in others leaves us spellbound.

Day 8 Saturday 10/24 Swamini Vimalananda, Chinmaya Gardens, Coimbatore, India



Swamini Vimalananda is a brilliant disciple of Pujya Gurudev. Swaminiji had her early education in Mumbai and graduated with honors from the J. J. College of Architecture with a B. Arch. Degree. She has traveled widely and has conducted many Jnana Yagnas (spiritual discourses) in English, Hindi and Gujarati. She has also conducted camps for children, youth and elders all over the world. Her simple style of talking has captivated the intellectual and faithful alike.

Swamini Vimalananda has given talks in over 2000 schools, colleges and other institutions on various spiritual, cultural and socially relevant topics. She has also given talks on various management topics to corporate bodies and management institutions and addressed audiences at various international conferences. Swaminiji visited CMWRC in 2016 to conduct the Devi retreat along with Vivek ji and Vilasiniji. Her inspiring style of talking is strict and endearing at the same time and serves as a wake up to call to sadhaks to pursue a spiritual life.

Swaminiji has authored many books including the very popular book 'In Indian Culture – Why do We?' and 'Meditation Techniques-15 Portals to the Supreme'. She is currently in charge of Chinmaya Mission, Coimbatore and is one of the Directors of Chinmaya International Residential School.

Day 9 Sunday 10/25 Swami Ishwarananda – Resident Acharya CMLA, Los Angeles, CA



Swami Ishwarananda started as a youth with Chinmaya Mission, Bangalore. Under the guidance of Swami Brahmananda and inspiration from Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, he joined the Brahmachari Course in Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai in 1991. Since then, he has served various Chinmaya Mission Centers. He was the resident Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, LA until 2001 when he became the Acharya of Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai to oversee and teach Brahmachari courses from 2002 - 2004. Swamiji currently serves as the Resident Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Los Angeles.

Swamiji is a dynamic speaker and has given talks on Vedanta, stress management, management techniques and other related fields. He has authored highly acclaimed books: 'Conscious Living', 'Silent Search', 'Dew Drops', 'Life of I' and 'Darkness to Light, Contemplative Talks'. Swamiji has led many yatras to sacred places around the world including multiple yatras to holy Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar. Swamiji has conducted several retreats in CMWRC, most recently Swamiji conducted the Life of I retreat at CMWRC in 2019. Swamiji has composed a beautiful composition on Devi which will be offered by a classical musician, every evening of the CMWRC Navratri retreat this year.

Day 10 Monday 10/26 Swami Dheerananda, Resident Acharya CMWRC, Washington D.C.



Swami Dheerananda hails from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India. Responding to the call of the Master he underwent the Brahmachari Training Course at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai, India from 1984-1986 under the instruction of Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda.

Swami Dheerananda served Chinmaya Mission in India conducting Jnana Yajnas until 1989 when Pujya Gurudev appointed him to be the Resident Acharya at the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC). Since 1989 Swami Dheerananda has been serving the United States and Canada.

Swami Dheerananda is the last disciple directly initiated by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda into Sanyas on May 23, 1993. In 1993, Swamiji addressed the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and was given a standing ovation by the distinguished audience.

Today, Swamiji oversees and guides all activities of CMWRC, and personally presides over 3 Bala Vihar sessions, adult Gita classes at the Silver Spring chapter (Chinmayam), conducts Thursday Vedanta classes, and CMWRC childrens summer camps in Maryland and Northern Virginia. Swamiji is an amazing orator and has an excellent sense of humor and participants in Swamiji's Jnana Yagnas thoroughly enjoy every minute of Swamiji's talks and are always very inspired by them.