



# Parmarth News

H.H. PUJYA SWAMI CHIDANAND SARASWATIJI

Newsletter

July, 2012



**Featuring**

Yatra to Uttarkashi and Gangotri, Ganga Action Parivar Events, and H.H. the Dalai Lama



# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi



From June 2nd to 5th, Pujya Swamiji, sevaks from Parmarth and other devotees went on yatra to Gangotri, the sacred source of Mother Ganga. On the way up to Gangotri, the group stopped in a beautiful place along the banks of Bhagirathi in Uttarkashi.



# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi - Uttarkashi Plantation & Ganga Aarti in Gangotri



Of course, Pujya Swamiji is like Gangaji, in that He keeps flowing in order to serve all, never thinking of Himself first but always of others. Thus, the trip to Uttarkashi and Gangotri was not just a divine yatra for all, but an opportunity to serve these areas as well.

On the morning of the 3rd, before leaving Uttarkashi, a special tree plantation was held at the camping ground.

That night in Gangotri, a special Ganga Aarti ceremony was held at the banks of Bhagirathi.



# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi - Gangotri Clean-Up and Tree Plantation



On the morning of the 4th, Ganga Action Parivar sevaks and local volunteers and pilgrims gathered at Bhagirathi to do a clean-up of Her banks, particularly focusing on the main bathing ghats in Gangotri which are often littered with all sorts of plastic and polythene, including leftover religious waste.



After the clean-up, GAP proceeded to any area of Gangotri to plant another set of trees. This was actually the beginning of a massive tree plantation program which is happening in Gangotri in order to beautify and restore the environment there. Soon, 11,000 trees will be planted in Gangotri!



# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi - Meetings with the DFO and Local Pandits



While in Uttarkashi on the 2nd and 3rd, Pujya Swamiji also met with the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Dr. IP Singhji and his other forest officials. Together they planned for about 25,000 trees to be planted there in Uttarkashi.



Pujya Swamiji also met with local pandits in Gangotri who live and serve around the Gangotri Temple. He discussed with them the “New Face of Gangotri” plan for a clean and green Gangotri, encouraging and inspiring them to all play the role they can to support this effort.



# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi - Uttarkashi Tree Plantation Inauguration

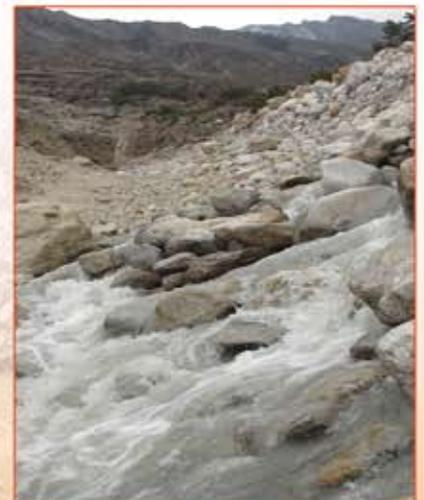


On the way back down from Gangotri, some GAP team members also stopped in Uttarkashi once again for yet another tree plantation. This was the inaugural tree plantation for the tree plantation program which is now beginning in Uttarkashi, in which over 25,000 trees will soon be planted in and around the city.

# Yatra to Gangotri and Uttarkashi - Trek to Gaumukh



On the 4th, some members of the yatra group made the beautiful hike to Gaumukh Glacier, the source of Gangaji from which She emerges.



# Russian Environmentalists Visit Parmarth

On May 3rd, after working together at a two-day conference in Delhi on how to restore Yamuna, and after seeing the dire conditions of the river, Ganga Action Parivar invited Russian environmentalist Renad Vladimirovich Zakharchuk to Parmarth Niketan along with renowned Indian environmental expert Dr. K.D.Gupta to meet with Pujya Swamiji to discuss these plans further.

After conducting a survey of the 22-km stretch of Yamuna in Delhi, the Russian team has identified the Shahdra and Noida sections as areas which need special attention. Pujya Swamiji invited Zakharchuk's team to be an important part of GAP, working together to put forth a full "Ground Plan to Grand Plan" for Yamuna and Ganga. While at Parmarth, the Russian team discussed



and encouraged the use of their latest and most effective wastewater management technologies in India, as well as many other important plans including bringing eco-friendly "green" crematoriums to the banks of Yamuna.



# Hon'ble Shri Balmiki Prasad Singhji



At the end of March, the Governor of Sikkim, Hon'ble Shri Balmiki Prasad Singhji visited Parmarth Niketan to perform a special puja in memory of his beloved wife. Shri Singhji comes annually to perform this puja here at the banks of Mother Ganga.



# Hon'ble Shri Balmiki Prasad Singhji



# Buddha Purnima



**Dr. B.K. Modiji, Pujya Swamiji  
and Ven. Sumedha Thero**



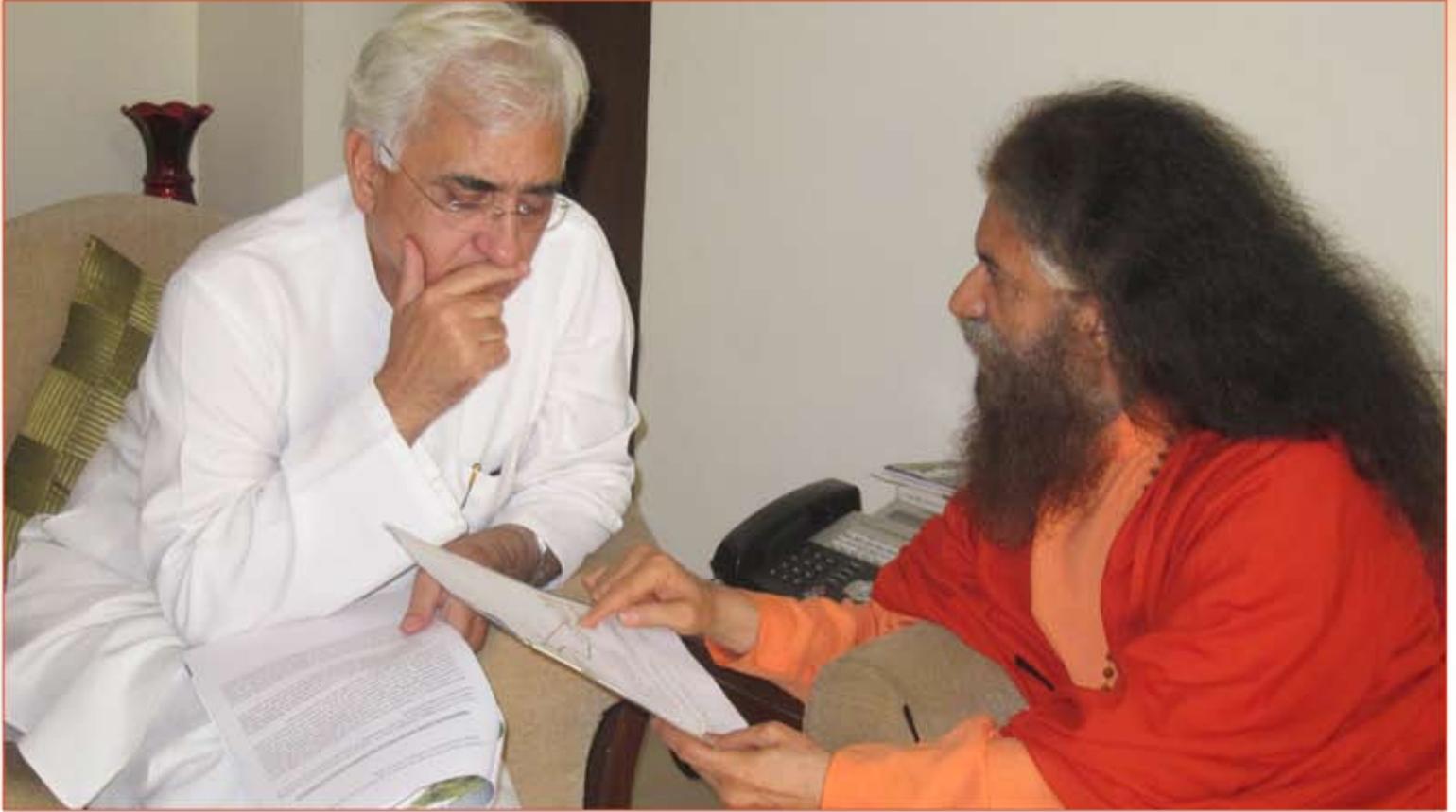
**Pujya Swamiji and Shri Salman Khurshidji**

On the 5th of May, the sacred day of Buddha Purnima, Dr. B.K. Modiji, renowned industrialist and patron of the Maha-Bodhi society, had a special event at his Delhi home, which has now been turned into a beautiful Buddha Mansion.

While there, Pujya Swamiji also spoke with Shri Salman Khurshidji, the Cabinet Minister of the Ministry of Law and Justice, about the work being done to restore Ganga and planned for a longer meeting the next day.



# Shri Salman Khurshidji



On May 6th, Pujya Swamiji and Shri Salman Khurshid, the Cabinet Minister of the Ministry of Law and Justice, met to discuss the many legal aspects of the issues facing Ganga, such as hydropower development, and to find how a balance can be struck between the people, the government and the industries. Shri Salman Khurshid expressed his full commitment to assisting the cause of protecting and preserving Ganga.

# Ganga White Paper Meeting

A workshop was held at Parmarth Niketan on May 18th to discuss a new Ganga white paper which is being written by Ganga Action Parivar. Experts from all different fields gathered together to help write the Ganga white paper together, brainstorming ideas for the paper and suggesting what improvements can be made. This workshop was led by Pujya Swamiji, esteemed environmental activist and scientist Dr. Vandana Shivaji and Dr. BD Tripathiji, member of the National River Ganga Basin Authority.

The workshop was very productive and greatly helped to move the Ganga white paper to the next step. When this paper is finished, it will be presented to the Prime Minister of India as well as other members of the Central and State governments.



# Dr. VK Saraswatji

On May 19th, Dr. VK Saraswatji, known throughout India as the “Missile Man” and Director General of the Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), visited Parmarth Niketan for the Ganga Aarti and to have Pujya Swamiji’s darshan.

Pujya Swamiji and Dr. Saraswatji discussed at length the great efforts that are being made to restore and protect Ganga and Her tributaries. Dr. Saraswatji was so impressed with Ganga Action Parivar’s 6T’s Program that he offered to help with the toilets and organized for the local heads of DRDO and FICCI to come to the ashram. This has led to the partnership between Ganga Action Parivar, DRDO and FICCI to build eco-friendly bio-digester toilets.



## Seva & Sanskaras



Each month, numerous activities take place at Parmarth Niketan demonstrating the meaning of Parmarth: “An Abode Dedicated to the Welfare of All.” Health care camps, conferences, environmental projects and other seva activities are ongoing.

Individuals and families also regularly come to Parmarth to perform sacred rites ceremonies (sanskaras), such as mundan (first hair cut), sacred weddings, and the final ash immersion puja. To see how these events are performed at Parmarth, please [click here](#).

So many people come to Parmarth to perform these sanskaras or to perform seva (selfless service) for the rishikumars of our gurukul or the wandering sadhus or the children in our free schools and other projects, it is impossible to list them all. On the following pages are some of those who have come during this recent time period.

# Tree Conference



In our quest to make Uttarakhand a model “green” State, a tree conference was held at Parmarth on the 20th May. Graced by the presence of Pujya Swamiji, top experts in the field came together, including Pujya Acharya Balkrishnanji, Jagat Singh Choudharyji “Jangli”, Dr. H. Bishtji, Dr. K. Chauhanji, Dr D. Purohitji, Dr V.P. Bhattji, Dr. M. Panwarji, Prof. R. Shankarji, Dr. R.Rastogiji and Shri P. Vastaji.

These experts, who have been involved in conservation, ecological restoration, and education work in various areas across the state, came together to discuss and develop action plans for tree plantation in identified areas, including Gangotri, Tehri, Rishikesh and Haridwar. As the rainy season draws near, we look forward to seeing lots of lovely green saplings being planted along the banks of our Mother Ganga!

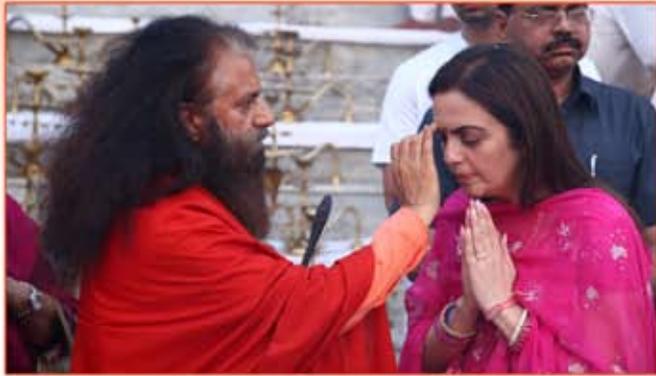


**Pujya Acharya Balkrishnanji**



**Environmental expert Shri Jagat Singh Choudharyji (“Jangliji”)**

# Nita Ambaniji

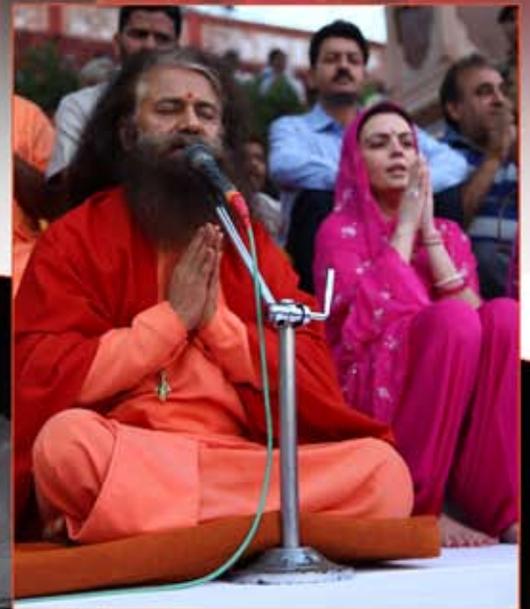


On May 22 Smt. Nita Ambaniji visited Parmarth Niketan along with her mother, sisters and close friends. They specifically came to Parmarth all the way from Mumbai just for the Ganga Aarti and to have Pujya Swamiji's darshan.





# Nita Ambaniji





**Pujya Swamiji sitting with  
Smt. Uma Bharatiji**



**Pujya Swamiji speaking with  
Shri Murli Manohar Joshi**



Pujya Swamiji traveled to Varanasi on May 30th for the opening of the Ganga Research Institute, organized by Justice Shri Giridhar Malaviyaji and Professor U.K. Chaudhreyji.

While there He also blessed the memorial service for late Shri Deen Dayal Jalanji who had been a pillar of devotion and service to the community for his whole life and who had recently left his body in Rishikesh. At the memorial service, Pujya Swamiji blessed young Bhagirath, the son of Shri Kishan Jalan and grandson of Late Shri Deen Dayalji, and told him that now Ganga needs him. Pujya Swamiji inspired him that he needs to truly become Bhagirath and save Ganga. Bhagirath pledged that he would serve Mother Ganga to the greatest of his capacity.



**Pujya Swamiji with Shri Murli Manohar Joshiji, Smt. Uma Bharti  
Justice Giridhar Malviyaji, Shri Govindacharyaji and Bhagirath**



**Pujya Swamiji discussing ways to preserve  
and protect Gangaji with famous singer  
Shri Manoj Tiwari**



**Pujya Swamiji inspiring and blessing  
young Bhagirath**

# Ganga Dussehra



Parmarth Niketan celebrated Ganga Dussehra this year on May 31st. As part of the tradition of this holiday, Gangaji's murti was taken to the banks of Gangaji Herself and wrapped collectively by the crowd with 108 saris.

After the Ganga Aarti, Shri Pravin Togadiaji, head of the VHP, spoke to the Aarti crowd, and Pujya Swamiji led the thousands gathered to take a pledge together to help protect and restore Gangaji.



**Shri Pravin Togadiaji, head of the VHP, speaking after the Ganga Aarti**



# Sanyas Diksha of Sadhvi Adityananda



On June 4th, in Gangotri, Brahmacharini Sandy, an American-born sevak who had been serving in ashrams in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh who had come to live and serve permanently at Parmarth, was given sanyas diksha by Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati. The name Sadhvi Adityananda Saraswati was bestowed upon her.

# Smt. Sheila Dikshitji, CM of Delhi



On June 9th, Pujya Swamiji met with the Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dikshitji, to discuss the efforts to clean, restore and protect the river Yamuna in its 22-kilometer stretch through Delhi.

# Ganga Interfaith Meeting, Delhi



Pujya Swamiji also graced an interfaith meeting on Gangaji in Delhi on the 9th of June at IIT-Delhi, organized by Dr. Samit Ahujaji. Prominent spiritual leaders from many different faiths were in attendance, including Shri Maulana Ahmed Umar Ilyasi, Pujya Acharya Lokesh Muniji, Pujya Sant Seechewalji, and Swami Gyanswaroop Sanandji. Other important experts on Gangaji were all in attendance, including Dr. Vinod Tareji.

Pujya Swamiji and all the leaders present are working to make the upcoming Kumbh Mela, which will be held in January 2013 in Allahabad, a time for all faiths and leaders to join hands and come together to help restore Ganga and the environment, providing a large platform to create environmental awareness in the entire world.

# H.H. the Dalai Lama

From June 10-11, Pujya Swamiji travelled to Dharmasala with Dr. B.K. Modiji to visit H.H. the Dalai Lama. Pujya Swamiji began the visit by first going to a home for elderly Tibetans. The Dalai Lama Foundation runs these centers in various places, with the main center being in Dharmashala. The 150 residents was overjoyed to meet Pujya Swamiji, and Pujya Swamiji invited them all to come home to Parmarth at any time.

Pujya Swamiji and Dr. Modiji then had a long meeting with H.H. the Dalai Lama in which they discussed many points including plans for a special program in the 2013 Kumbha Mela.

While in Dharmashala, Pujya Swamiji also met with Pujya Shri Karmapaji.



# H.H. the Dalai Lama



Pujya Swamiji presenting Gangajal to the Dalai Lama



Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Shri Karmapaji

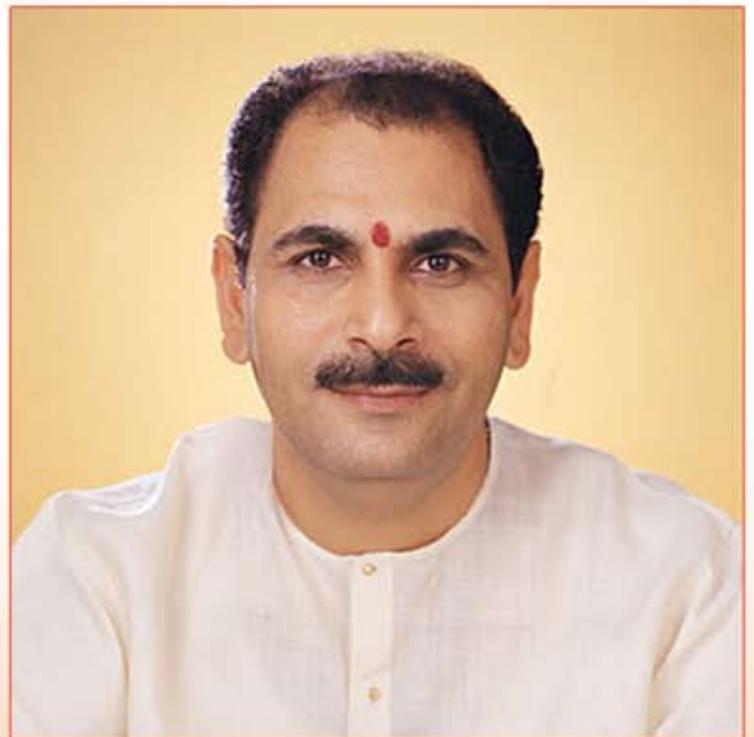


# Shri Sudhanshuji



On his way back down from his Char Dham yatra, Shri Sudhanshuji visited Rishikesh and gave a divine satsang on the banks of Mother Ganga. Other esteemed guests came to join Shri Sudanshuji, including Shri Harish Rawatji.

While at Parmarth, Shri Sudhanshuji also attended the evening Ganga Aarti that night.

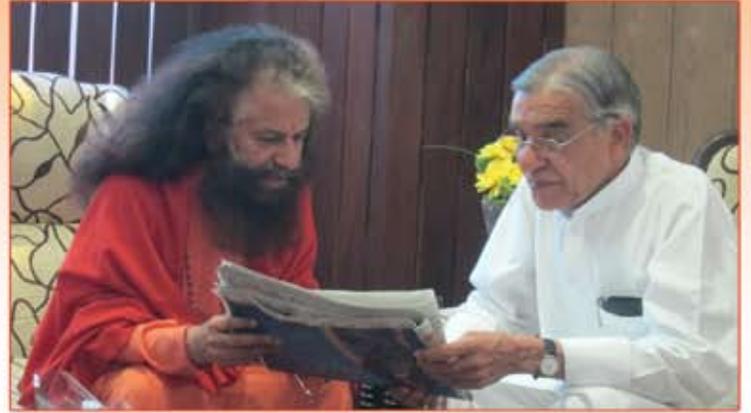


**Shri Sundhanshuji**

# Shri Pawan Kumar Bansalji



On June 12th, Pujya Swamiji met with Shri Pawan Kumar Bansalji, the Minister of Water Resources. Shri Bansalji had come to Parmarth for the Ganga Aarti earlier, but Pujya Swamiji at that time had been in Delhi. So, when Pujya Swamiji came back from Delhi, they were able to meet at the Dehradun airport!



Pujya Swamiji discussed with him all the various work and efforts that are being made to restore and protect Ganga and Her tributaries, and Shri Bansalji said he would take Pujya Swamiji's suggestions and plans to the Prime Minister.



# Respected Shri Muniyappaji

On June 13th, Respected Shri Muniyappaji, the Union Minister of State for Indian Railways, came to Rishikesh to have the darshan of Ma Ganga and to participate in the World Peace yagna at Parmarth.

While at Parmarth, Shri Muniyappaji met with Pujya Swamiji and great plans were made. One such plan discussed is to create a new train line which will run from Rishikesh to Ganga Sagar, called the Jal Ganga Express, that will truly be like a Ganga museum. The train will show passengers

the history and heritage of Ma Ganga, as well as raise awareness about the issues facing Her and all of India's rivers in each state and their solutions.

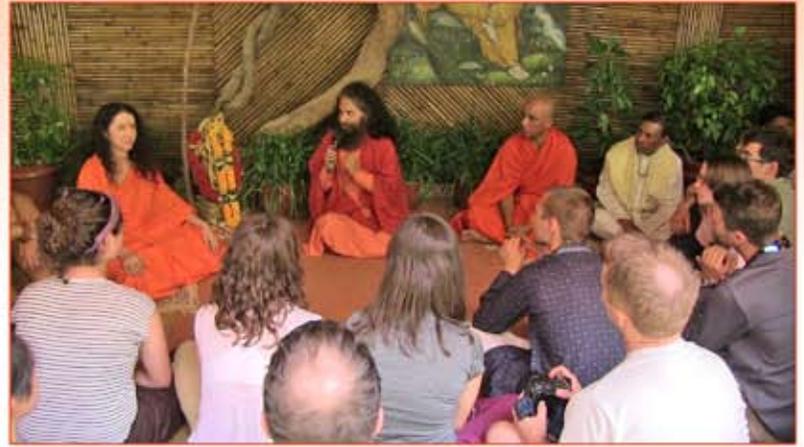
Pujya Swamiji and Shri Muniyappaji also discussed plans for a Green Railway line, beginning with the trains which will head to Allahabad for the Kumbha Mela in 2013, and then spreading all across the nation.

Respected Shri Muniyappaji was deeply impressed by the dedication Pujya Swamiji and Ganga Action Parivar has towards cleaning and restoring Ganga and the environment. Shri Muniyappaji whole-heartedly agreed that he would do what he could to help this cause, including speaking with top officials and leaders to help advocate for this environmental movement.



# Group from St. Mary's College, Maryland

Also on June 13th, a group from St. Mary's College of Maryland came to Parmarth on their way to Badrinath and Kedarnath. Pujya Swamiji spoke with them and inspired them to do their part in restoring the environment of these sacred areas, encouraging them to collect trash on their way there. Ganga Action Parivar even provided the team with bags for this trash collecting!



**Pujya Swamiji with the students from St. Mary's College of Maryland**

# Respected DFO Dr. IP Singhji



On June 14th, the Respected DFO Dr. IP Singhji whom Pujya Swamiji had met with previously in Dehradun came to Parmarth to meet with Pujya Swamiji and the GAP team to further discuss plans for the massive tree plantation program Ganga Action Parivar is undertaking.





# Mahayagna



From June 13-14th, a massive Mahayagna was held at Parmarth by Pujya Shree Bindu Madhava Swamiji Maharaj of Karnataka, along with dozens of respected pandits and brahmins from his ashram.



# Mahayagna



# Veerpur Tree Plantation Inauguration

On June 17th, tree planting began in Veerpur! Preparation for tree plantations has been well underway here, with soil being tested and pits for trees being dug at local parks, villager's homes and at the Parmarth Gurukul. Soon 1,000 trees will be planted in this area of Veerpur, providing shade and fruit to the people displaced by the Tehri Dam.



Preparation of land and pits is also underway in Haridwar, Rishikesh, Uttarkashi and Gangotri. Saplings of fruit trees, shady trees, and flowering trees will all be ready to be planted after the first shower of the monsoon season, so that all the lovely young saplings receive all the water they need in their initial stage. With the rainy

season drawing near, the trees part of our 3T's Program is coming into full bloom!

In Ganga Action's efforts to completely clean and restore the environment, eco-friendly bags were handed out to all the villagers who attended this inaugural ceremony. These reusable bags can be used as an alternative to plastic or polythene bags, which litter our Earth and clog our rivers, when one goes to the market or for any other purpose.



Pujya Swamiji and \_\_\_\_\_ present eco-friendly bags to the villagers, as alternatives to polythene



# World Heritage Site Conference



From June 20-21, a conference to discuss the plan of proposing the Upper Ganga region as a UNESCO World Heritage Site was held at Parmarth Niketan, and to create definite action items to move this idea forward.

On the 20th, eminent spiritual and social leaders gathered at Parmarth to bless the conference, including Maulana Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasiji, President of the All India Organization of Imams



of Mosques, and renowned environmental activist Shri Sundarlal Bahugunaji.



The meeting began with the blessings of Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sant Balbir Singh Seechewalji. Many eminent experts also attended the meeting.

# World Heritage Site Conference

Reasons were discussed as to why this region should be declared a World Heritage Site, such as the need to preserve and protect the aस्था - or faith - Indians have in their Mother Ganga. Every day, Ganga is celebrated and Ganga Aarti is sung on Her banks, and millions of people from around the world have come to Her banks every year for millennia to seek peace, solace, and connection with the Divine. In addition, there is a need to protect the irreplaceable biodiversity of the region and the Himalayas, which are unparalleled throughout the world, and the unique qualities of Gangajal (the waters of Ganga), which have the extraordinary ability to self-heal.

The meeting was very successful and productive, and Ganga Action thanks the committee members for their pledge, goodwill, and whole-hearted support of Mother Ganga as new members of Ganga Action.



# MP Smt. Kshatriyajji and MP Shri Singhji



On June 21st members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Parliament of India attended the Parmarth Ganga Aarti led by Prof. Alka Balram Kshatriyajji, Chairman of the Committee and Rajya Sabha MP from Ahmedabad, and Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singhji, a current Lok Sabha MP from Vaishali, Bihar and former Central Minister of Rural Development). Several other MPs as well as top officers also attended the Aarti with them.



# Beginners' Yoga Course



A beginners' yoga course was held here at Parmarth from June 10th to 22nd. Participants in the course learned the basics of yogasana as well as meditation, Vedic chanting, and yogic philosophy.

# Kotdwara Tree Plantation



Ganga Action Parivar joined the National Forest Student (NFS) organisation, led by Dr Kishore Chauhanji for a tree plantation event at Sidh Bali Mandir in Kotdwara. Students from Govt. PG College and Ganga Parivar Sevaks prepared tree holes and planted the first set of amla trees. Pujya Swamiji sent a special message for

this occasion which highlighted the importance of joining education with the environment, with plans for GAP to join with NFS and plant trees. Specifically, once the monsoon season commences, approximately 2000 trees will be planted all over Kotdwara!



# Rishikesh Tree Plantation & Clean-Up



On July 2nd, Ganga Action Parivar Sevaks (GPS) participated in a clean-up program in Rishikesh. More than 20 sevaks cleared out polythene and other rubbish from an area of Rajaji National Park behind Parmarth Niketan Ashram. On starting the clean-up, the forest floor was covered with all different coloured polythene bags and rubbish. Once the work was over, everyone could

see a massive improvement! A large sign was placed on the roadside instructing people to use the dustbin that was recently installed on-site by Ganga Action Parivar.

The area that was cleared today is the future location of one of GAP's many tree plantations.



# Ganga Event in Delhi with Pujya Sri Shankaracharyaji

Numerous saints, political leaders, environmentalists and activists gathered at Rajghat in Delhi to raise awareness and advocate on the plight to restore Mother Ganga and Her tributaries, including Pujya Shankaracharya Swami Swaroopanand Saraswatiji, Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Pujya Swami Avimukteshwaranandji, Acharya Pramod Krishnamji, Shri Rajendra Singhji, Shri Digvijay Singhji (Congress), Sadhvi Uma Bhartiji (BJP), Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotrajji (BJP), and members of the Samajwadi and BKU parties. Various celebrities also came to support the cause and show their reverence to Mother Ganga. Thousands of members of the public also came to the event in support of the important cause.

At Jantar Mantar, various leaders spoke about the critical situation Ganga now faces due to over-pollution of Her waters dangerously coupled with low-flows due to over-extraction by dams and canals. Speakers called upon the Government of India to act immediately and effectively to restore and protect the national river. Ganga activists urged governing officials to critically reconsider the effects of over 300 hundred hydro

power projects proposed on the Upper Ganga Region.

This event was unique and inspiring as it brought together various sectors of the society, including political, spiritual, environmental and social leaders, for the common and crucial cause of restoring and protecting Mother Ganga and Her tributaries.



**Pujya Swami Avimukteshwaranandji, Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Acharya Pramod Krishnamji**



**Pujya Swami Avimukteshwaranandji, Pujya Swamiji and Shri Rajendra Singhji (the "Waterman")**

# Divine Message from Pujya Swamiji

## Krishna Janmasthanmi

Krishna Janmasthanmi is the celebration of the day that Bhagwan Krishna incarnated in human form upon the Earth. It is celebrated at midnight on the eighth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhadrapada (August-September).

The day is celebrated by worshipping Bhagwan Krishna, fasting and chanting devotional kirtan and bhajans until past midnight.

The Bhagavad Gita says that whenever there is darkness in the world, whenever strife and ignorance prevail, the Lord incarnates to shine His divine light on the darkness. He grabs hold of the faltering world, preventing it from drifting too far astray.

However, the Lord does not simply incarnate, give wisdom and depart. Rather, His divine light, His divine message and His divine grace continue to shine, on and on, upon all future generations. His wisdom is such that, once given, it is timeless and eternal, infinite and universal. Lord Krishna's message in the Bhagavad Gita and the message of His entire life are not meant merely for those who lived 5000 years ago in the lands of Mathura, Vrindavan, Kurukshetra and Dwarka. Rather, the messages are as timeless as His presence and grace.

As we celebrate the divine anniversary of the date He came forth into this world in human form, we must ask ourselves, "Why did He incarnate?" What were the messages of Lord Krishna's life? What darkness did He come to dispel? In what ocean of ignorance were we drowning, from which He came to save us?

Most Indians, and now many Westerners as well,



are familiar with the Bhagavad Gita. We know that Lord Krishna's verbal message to Arjun on the battlefield was "Stand up. Do your duty."

However, there are many other important messages in the Gita and also invaluable lessons and divine teachings embedded in the very life He lived. At this holy time of Janmasthanmi, let us examine and take to heart these messages. We must remember that Bhagwan Krishna incarnated FOR US. He incarnated to remove our veil of ignorance and darkness. It is our duty to Him to take His message to heart and let it uplift, inspire

# Divine Message from Pujya Swamiji

and transform us.

## *Never Lose Your Song:*

One of the most beautiful lessons of Bhagwan Krishna's life is: never lose yourself due to external circumstances, never lose your smile, never lose your song... Bhagwan Krishna's life was full of trials and tribulations, beginning on the day when He took birth in a locked jail cell and ending in the jungle shot by a hunter's arrow. However, throughout it all – through the innumerable challenges wrought upon Him – He always maintained His divine smile. He always played His divine flute. Even after His physical flute was left with Radhaji, the song of Krishna's flute was always on, wherever He went. The song emanated from His very being. He never once said, "I'm in a bad mood today so I will not play my flute." No. Regardless of what the external world brought and wrought, the Song was on. This is a beautiful message for our own lives.

So frequently we let small, small things upset us and ruin our day. However, to truly be Krishna devotees means that we should try, as much as possible, to follow His divine example. After all, it is for us that He incarnated on Earth and gave His beautiful, divine messages.

Therefore, whenever failure, frustration or fury stares us in the face and we are tempted to let it ruin our mood and our day, let us always remember the sound of Lord Krishna's ever-present flute. Let us try to emulate His divine example and let our own song and our smile also be ever-present.

## *The Lord Unlocks All Locks in Our Life*

Bhagwan Krishna came to Earth in the darkness

of night, into the locked confines of a jail cell where His mother and father were being held prisoners, due to His evil uncle Kansa. However, at the moment of His appearance (in the form of a human infant) all the guards fell asleep, the chains were broken, and the barred doors gently opened. Thus Vasudeva (Krishna's father) safely and easily carried baby Krishna across the flowing Yamuna to Gokul.

There is a beautiful message here, even from the first moment of the Lord's life. We may be living in the darkness of midnight; we may be bound and chained by so many attachments, temptations, anger, grudges, pains and by the binding force of maya. We may feel ourselves locked into the prison of our own bodies, the prison of duality. However, as soon as we let the Lord live in our own hearts, all darkness fades, all chains are broken and all prison doors open freely. Wherever the Lord is, there are no locks.

Also, we can see that the door to the Lord – from any direction, inside or outside – is always open. The only lock is the lock of our own ignorance and our own illusions. As soon as that ignorance is dispelled, as soon as we see His glowing form, all the doors in this life and in all lives open to us.

## *Bliss All the Time*

Beginning with His appearance in a jail and the immediate rush to whisk Him away to a new family, across Yamunaji in Gokul, the Lord was not given an "easy" childhood.

On the sixth day of the Lord's life, Putna (the demoness) made Him drink poison from her breast. In His third month of life a bullock cart fell on Him. Then, when He was four, huge trees fell on

Him.

Until the age of eleven, He was in Vrindavan and Govardhan. The people of Govardhan worshipped Indra, singing his praises and making daily offerings to him. However, Bhagwan Krishna admonished them and said that they should worship Govardhan instead, since it was Govardhan who gave them land, water, grass for their cows. Yet, the people were afraid. Indra threatened to wreak havoc upon their lives if they ceased his worship. As Indra pummeled the beautiful land of Govardhan with rain, hail, thunder and lightening, the Lord held up the mountain of Govardhan over the heads of the people, protecting them from the violent storm. However, as He held up this mountain on the tip of His finger, for days and days as Indra grew more and more furious, He never became angry, nor frustrated, nor disheartened. No. He was always smiling, even in the midst of the torrential storm.

A few short years later, He was forced to kill His uncle, and He had to flee His home in Mathura, barefoot to Junagar, with nothing but a small pitambar. For years, then, this King of all Kings lived in a simple ashram, doing seva for the saints with no facilities, no amenities and no comfort. He had no coat for winter, no umbrella for the rains...

Yet, wherever He went, wherever He was, He was always blissful, always joyful, always shining His divine light upon others.

We, on the other hand, may get stuck in one traffic jam and our days are ruined. We have one business failure and we feel dejected and broken. We become afflicted with disease and we lose our faith in God.

So, what is the Lord teaching us? If He chose His birth and He chose the course of His life on Earth, why did He choose a life full of obstacles, turmoil, trials and tribulations? Why, if He could have lived His entire life as a king, did He spend so many years living in the jungle?

He did this to show us that the real palace is the palace of our heart. When our hearts are full of God, then we live constantly in the most beautiful Golden Palace, regardless of where our bodies may be. He chose this life to teach us that regardless of what insults are hurled at us or what obstacles we face, we must remain immersed in Divine Connection. Then we will not become depressed or frustrated. His life teaches us that we cannot change what happens – it happens for various reasons – but we CAN change our reaction to it. The message of His life is “adapt and adjust.” Move forward. We cannot stop the wind from blowing, but we can change the direction of our sails, so that instead of capsizing our boat, we use the wind to take us to our destination.

#### *Seeing Bhagwan Krishna everywhere*

A very important message from Bhagwan Krishna's life is to see him everywhere, in everyone, all the time. He is embodied in every form and in all forms. In Lord Krishna's childhood, he gave Mother Yasoda the darshan of the entire world in his mouth. Everything was shown to her in Lord Krishna's mouth. When we sit in our puja, in our worship/meditation we look at God's divine image and we see everything in Him. However, we must go further than just seeing everything in God. We must also see God in everything! When we look at a poor child, or when we look at an old widow, or when we look in the face of our enemy, we must see God. Then we will truly

have learned the message of Bhagwan Krishna's teachings.

### *Fearlessness*

One of the most important messages that Bhagwan Krishna gives to Arjuna is Abhayam, be fearless. Arjuna was afraid of battle, afraid of killing his relatives and loved ones. In our lives also we are paralyzed by fear. Omnipresent fear is one of the most insidious obstacles to our peace, happiness and progress in life.

When I say fear, I don't necessarily mean terror. But, rather I mean all that makes us anxious, nervous, tense and in need of controlling our surroundings. The root of fear is distrust. We have been betrayed, injured and abused. We decide that the world and those around us cannot be trusted. In this way, we lose that faith which is so crucial.

What is the answer? The answer to fear is to firmly root ourselves in God (by whatever name, whatever form you choose). When we realize that God is always with us, always for us, we will never be afraid regardless of the circumstances.

Sure, our family and friends may betray us. They may injure us. But, if we give ourselves to God, if we make our relationship with Him our first priority then we will never be broken inside; we will always be cared for.

*There is a story of a very powerful king. This king prided himself on being generous and caring for all his subjects. He would often boast that no one in his kingdom was hungry or cold or impoverished. Once, a holy man came to see the king. The king told the holy man how he provided for everyone in the kingdom so well. The holy man asked the king to come for a walk. While they walked in the forest, the saint picked up a large rock by the side of a stream.*

*"Break the rock," he ordered the king. The king looked surprised but immediately told his servant to smash the rock. As the rock broke open they saw a small frog, living peacefully in the nutrient-rich water which had gathered inside the rock. "Have you provided this as well?" the holy man asked the king. The king realized that he could not possibly provide something as perfect, as intricate as this food and shelter for the frog. He realized that it is really God who provides for all His subjects.*

We must realize that if God can provide for even the smallest insects, He certainly will provide for us.

*I heard a beautiful story of a young boy on a ship. The ship was trapped in a large storm and waves rocked the boat furiously. The passengers screamed and cried and held each other for dear life. In the midst of this terror sat a very young boy, calm, composed and angelic. When asked why he did not cry he answered, "My mother is here, so I know everything will be all right." This feeling we must cultivate. If God is here, if God is with us all the time, then everything will always be all right.*

We take out millions of dollars (or pounds or rupees...) of insurance to protect our homes, our property, our cars. But, what about our lives? Who will protect our lives? We must remember our Divine Insurance Company. We must place all of our faith in Him. He will never betray us, and we will rest assured knowing that we are in the best of hands.

We must realize that we are God's children. Just as a child is never afraid when his mother is near, so we must never fear. Fear immobilizes us. It freezes us. It prevents us from thinking clearly. Most of all, it serves no purpose. No tragedy has ever been prevented by fear. No catastrophe has ever been averted by anxiety. No. Calm, serene,

wise understanding of the situation coupled with undying faith is what is needed. Let us renew our faith in the Supreme. Let us give away our fears, our anxieties. Let us put all our insurance in the Divine Insurance Company. Let us realize that everything is just as it is supposed to be. We are in the lap of our Mother. How can anything go wrong?

### *Surrender to the Divine*

The teachings of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita are not applicable merely to life on a battlefield, when war is imminent. Rather the true battlefield is within us constantly, and war is being waged every day. Through His teaching to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Bhagwan Shri Krishna gives us lessons for our lives. The Gita is a divine “Map of Life” for it shows us clearly both the destination and also the clearest and best path to reach there. Just as the GPS system in our cars is always there to show us the path and to quickly tell us if we’ve gone astray, so the Bhagavad Gita is like the GPS system for our lives. Wherever we want to go, whatever we want to achieve, we simply need to turn to the Gita for the instructions of how to reach our goal.

However, in order for the GPS system in the car to start working, after we have entered the destination address, we must push the “accept” button. This button activates the guided instructions; without it the instructions will not begin and we will not be guided to our destination. Similarly in our lives, we must accept His message and surrender, constantly, over and over again, to His Divine Will. It is surrender and only surrender that allows divine grace to work in our lives. It is surrender, and only surrender, that brings Lord Krishna’s presence into our lives.

But, how to surrender? There is a beautiful mantra we chant which is wonderful for cultivating a spirit of surrender: It is as follows:

*Kaayena vaachaa manasendriyairvaa  
buddhyaatmanaavaa prakriteh svabhaavaat  
Karomi yadyat sakalam parasmai  
naaraayanaayeti samarpayaami*

This means, “Oh Lord...whatever I have done, whatever actions I have performed through my speech, through my mind (anything I’ve thought), through my intellect (anything I’ve planned, achieved or understood), through my hands or body or through any of my senses, therefore anything at all I have performed, perceived or thought, it is all due to Your divine grace and I lay it all humbly at Your holy feet.”

By chanting this mantra, sincerely, deeply and devotionally every night, we remove any vestiges of ego or attachment which may still be lingering, clinging and preventing us from truly surrendering and therefore finding peace and divine connection.

On this beautiful and divine day of Janmasthanmi let us offer to Him not only our prayers, our puja and our aarti, but let us offer our lives at His holy feet. Let us surrender completely to His Divine Will. This will bring great peace, purity and divinity into our own lives.

# Special Announcements | Ganga Action Parivar

*“Clean Ganga, Green Ganga. Serve Ganga, Save Ganga.”*



Officially launched in April of 2010 by the hands of Pujya Swamiji, H.H. the Dalai Lama and numerous other saints and dignitaries, Ganga Action Parivar is a global family of professionals, environmental engineers, scientists, activists, government leaders and devoted volunteers from all across the world dedicated to serving Mother Ganga. It is a sincere effort to provide effective and sustainable solutions for the millions of people whose lives depends on the purity of the river.

GAP is working in numerous areas - from “Grand Plan” scale to “Ground Plan” scale - to address the many issues that face Ganga and her tributaries, such as creating solid waste and wastewater management programs, building toilets, planting trees, cleaning and beautifying holy pilgrimage sites, spreading awareness on how to be eco-friendly, creating alternative environmentally-friendly energy plans, and so much more. GAP’s projects have been blessed and supported by saints, scholars, yogis, economists, scientists, environmentalists and agriculturalists, among many others.

Log-on to **[www.gangaaction.com](http://www.gangaaction.com)** to learn more about Ganga, about the issues, and about the programs and projects GAP is working on. Interact and share your ideas, and find out how you can truly help no matter where you are in the world! Together as a family, we can restore, protect and maintain a free-flowing and unpolluted Ganga!

# Special Announcements | Volunteer with us!

Parmarth Niketan is happy to announce a 3-month (minimum) residential service program for those interested in engaging themselves in seva (selfless service)!

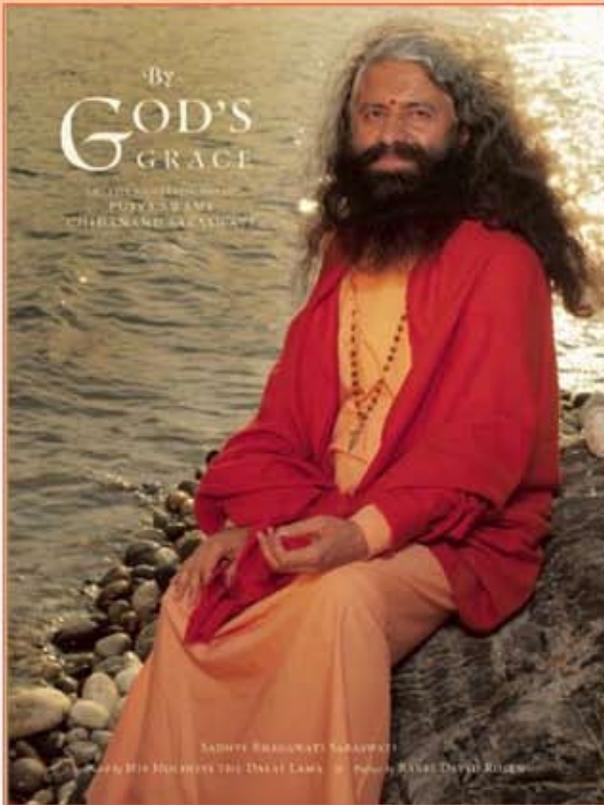
Volunteer in Parmarth and Ganga Action Parivar's numerous projects to restore and protect Ma Ganga, save the girl child, help animals, and much more. As our projects grow, so has our need for professional, inspiring, and productive volunteers who can work with us in our mission to achieve a greener, cleaner, and safer tomorrow for all humanity.

If you would like to get involved and volunteer in any one of our projects, please download our Volunteer Application Packet and send us your application.

*[Click here to download the Volunteer Application Packet.](#)*



# Special Announcements | Release of *By God's Grace*



A gorgeous coffee table biography of Pujya Swamiji has been published entitled *By God's Grace*. Upon its release, this book held the **NUMBER ONE** position as a best-seller in Amazon.com's **Hinduism** section, out of a total of over 17,000 books!

It is a nearly 300 page coffee table book filled with exquisite photos of Ganga, the Himalayas, and all of the saints and world leaders with whom Pujya Swamiji has spent the first 60 years of His life. However, it is more than just a beautiful beautiful book. It also tells the inspiring, uplifting and transformative stories of Pujya Swamiji's whole life — from meeting His Guru at the tender age of eight, to His youth filled with intense sadhana in the Himalayan forests and jungles, including standing on one leg for 11 hours a day.

*By God's Grace* then goes on to beautifully describe Pujya Swamiji's arrival into Rishikesh and choice to stay there, followed by the history of His life at Parmarth Niketan, first as a young student and then as head of one of India's largest spiritual institutions. You will read about His travels around the world, touching and teaching people of all religions, all cultures and all walks of life. The book further details Pujya Swamiji's unparalleled projects and achievements

including the eleven volume Encyclopedia of Hinduism, the construction of three ashrams in the sacred land of Lake Mansarovar and Mt. Kailash in Tibet, widespread tsunami relief work and now an unprecedented project to clean, preserve and protect the 2500 kilometer divine Ganga.

Lastly, even though for those blessed to know Him, we all understand that His life is His message, the book also includes special “teaching” sections in between the chronological chapters. Each special teaching spread takes one of Pujya Swamiji's most fundamental teachings and shares it, in His own words, through His own voice, on gorgeously illustrated pages.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written the foreword and shares His own thoughts and experiences with Pujya Swamiji.

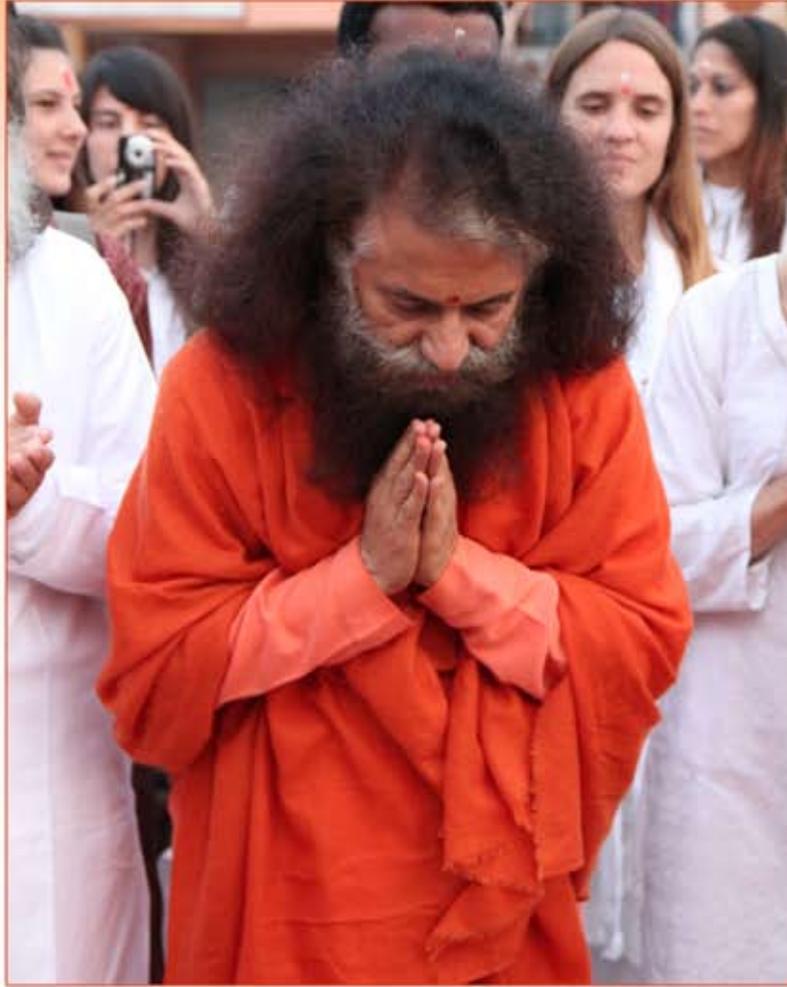
This book is perfect for personal reading and for gracing the top of your coffee table, and it is also the perfect gift for any friend or loved one who, whether they know Pujya Swamiji personally or not, is looking for a glimpse into the life of one of history's truest, wisest, deepest, funniest and most down-to-earth spiritual leaders.

Laugh, cry, look at yourself and your life in a brand new way.



*Please visit [www.bygodsgracebook.org](http://www.bygodsgracebook.org) for more information about the book and information on how to order.*

# Pujya Swamiji's Itinerary



## September

1-27 Rishikesh

*Please click [here](#) to stay informed about Pujya Swamiji's complete itinerary as it is updated.*



# Links

Please visit us on the web for videos and music from Parmarth Niketan, as well as information on upcoming programs and seva opportunities.



# Links

Thanks to Eros Entertainment,  
you can now watch videos of Pujya Swamiji online!  
Click on the videos below to watch...



A Divine Life - Pujya Swamiji's  
60th Birthday Film



Pujya Swamiji at  
Shree Ram Mandir



Guru Purnima 2011



Peace Through  
Nonviolence



Sadhvi Bhagawati:  
Power of Thought



Power of Prayer &  
Divine Connection

...and click here to see even more videos online!

