

GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS

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The visit of great souls like our HH Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji can often be filled with many unexpected and pleasant surprises. For those of us living in the twin cities of Bloomington-Normal in Central Illinois, which is located about 200 miles from the camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, this surprise came in a quickly planned visit by HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji. Just a few short days before the camp in Lake Geneva was about to begin, His Holiness decided that Bloomington-Normal, rather than the camp, would be the location for the auspicious holy day of *Guru Pu:rnima*, which is also known as *Vya:sa Pu:rnima*. As this change was very sudden, we barely had enough time to pull everyone and everything together. But, through Swamiji's blessings and God's Grace, the auspicious occasion brought us all together for a beautiful celebration of worship and learning under the guidance of HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji.

After a grand and successful completion of the camp, Sri Jeeyar Swamiji and his group of learned priests and respected volunteers left immediately for Bloomington on July 12th, in spite of the fatigue that must have affected them from all the deep discussions and very little sleep. HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji

was received by an enthusiastic crowd of devotees. The atmosphere was filled with the chanting of "*Jai Sriman Narayana*" by all including



People listening to HH, about Guru

residents of neighboring states.

Following day marked the occasion of the holy *Guru Pu:rnima*. In the morning, the *Thi:rttha Gho:shthi* was conducted by the *Acharya* with special chantings for the day. HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji appeared glowing, with the traditional 12 *U:rdhwapundrams*. His refulgence and disposition reminded every one's mind that he is none else than *Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja:cha:rya* reborn to save all of us. The merciful looks of HH Sri Swamiji captivated every devotees' mind.

HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji took a moment to explain his own lineage of teachers, the *Guru Parampara*, and about a unique *Guru* and an event that took place in the life of HH Sri Pedda Jeeyar Swamiji. His



Holiness also introduced



A view of the assembled devotees

the congregation to Dr. Srimathi Renuka Tamirisa of Houston, who is a direct relation to this great soul, U. Ve. Sri Ramanujacharyulu Swamy. One could only marvel at HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji's indebtedness to his teachers, and what great souls they truly must have been.

Within minutes of the completion of the *Thi:rttha Go:shthi*, HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji left for a nearby community center, where dedicated priests and devotees had prepared a lovely altar for him to conduct the *Guru Pu:rnima* proceedings. HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji was received with flower petals, which were offered to his lotus feet while he walked towards the hall and sat upon the dias. HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji's priests led the other priests in ancient Vedic chants while lamps were lit to begin the celebration and to hear about the significance of this holy day for Gurus from **our Guru** himself.

HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji opened the celebration with the *slo:kam - lakshmi: na:ttha sama:rambha:m,*

na:ttha ya:muna madhyama:m, asmada:cha:rya paryantha:m, vande: guruparampara:m - "I offer obeisances to the lineage of teachers, which begins with **Sri:man Na:ra:yana**, consort of *Lakshmi:*, has the great teachers *Na:tthamuni* and *Ya:muna:cha:rya* in the middle, and concludes with my own Guru." He then proceeded to give an inspiring discourse on the significance of this auspicious day.



HH Sri Swamiji blessing with discourse

Sa:sthras describe *Guru Pu:rnima* as the day when the Lord goes into a mystical sleep, called *Yo:ga Nidra*, in order to meditate upon ways to help all souls and guide us in the proper direction. One such way is to share the Eternal Truths of the *Ve:das* with



Devotees listening to Gurupurnima Message from HH



everyone. So, the ultimate Guru is **Sri:man Na:ra:yana** Himself, who incarnated later as **Sri: Krishna** to become the first Guru on this Earth. The great sage **Vya:sa** was one great guru who took the message of **Ve:das** and divided them into Four parts and a whole host of supporting scriptures. This knowledge came to be passed from one generation to the next in an unbroken chain of teachers. Our **A:cha:ryas** are our immediate link in this chain to the ultimate Guru, Lord **Krishna**. Consequently, learning from a Guru and seeking God's Mercy through him is a surest way for our prayers to reach the Lord. Following the lecture, HH Sri Swamiji led the congregation in a solemn prayer to the first Guru, Lord **Krishna**, explaining in detail the beautiful meaning contained in each step of the worship.



HH distributing Sri Krishna Prathimas



HH giving discourse

The entire experience was spiritually inspiring and each person left with the feeling of the Divine in his/her heart. What made such a momentous event all the more unforgettable was that it took place virtually unplanned. So, we all knew that it could have only come about through the the blessings of Sri Jeeyar Swamiji and the Grace of God.



HH explaining Sri Krishna Puja

Jai Srimannarayana !

The DVD copies of the Puja that was conducted for Guru Purnima by His Holiness are now available for a suggested donation of \$10

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