

!!! Jai Jinendra !!!!

Jain Center of Southern California

***Celebrating 10th Anniversary of
Jain Bhavan***



Paryushan 2054/1998



The Jain Center of Southern California

8072 Commonwealth Avenue, Buena Park, California 90621
(714) 670-0890

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

FROM

**SHREENI
NIRAV & SHWETA SHAH**

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I pray daily and practice to do good karmas.
- Ruchir Shah (10)

Dedications

To Our Unsung Heroes

Dedicated to all the volunteers...the unsung heroes...who have served the community and Jain Center and never worried about recognition, but served out of love, duty and responsibility towards the community.

The list of such volunteers and their efforts would be endless...such a list would include a young five year old cleaning the Jain Bhavan...or a sixty five year old senior taking care of the boiled water for tapasvis...or a professional who contributes as asked.

We all know such volunteers...as an individual we may not know all of them but we always see those who make the Jain Center what it is today...and many of them have not been specially recognized by the community at large...but we should whenever the opportunity arises.

Let us express our gratitude to them...let us help them...let us imitate them...let us make them our heroes...let them know that they have earned a place in our heart and mind...appreciate what they have done...what they continue to do...thus, they will not be forgotten for they truly represent our culture at its best.

Preface

Jai Jinendra:

From the humble beginning of Jain Center of Southern California in 1979, our own Jain Bhavan was built in 1988. Since then the Jain Bhavan has become an active place for our community. So much so that we are already developing plans for its expansion.

This souvenir commemorates the 10th anniversary of Jain Bhavan. The souvenir is divided into focused sections beginning with our mission, our President's message and blessings from Jain dignitaries. It is then followed by a brief historical background of start of Jain Center and leads the reader through the growth years. The expansion plans and general layout are also presented.

One of our major focus is educational programs. The program structure, teacher list and coordinating reports give an overview of our educational program.

Jain Center serves our community through a variety of outreach programs. These include activities for members of all ages, supporting special needs and medical camps. Several members have also offered their personal perspectives on the impact of Jain Center in their life.

During early 1998, the Pathshala (JCYC) students participated in a Jain Federation (JAINA) national essay competition on subjects related to Jainism. Key phrases from these essays are extracted and displayed at the bottom of each page with writer's name and age.

Several community members provided information for this souvenir, reviewed the drafts and assisted in its preparation. The information providers are listed with the articles. In addition, the subcommittee is thankful to Shefali and Nishali Mehta, Aakash Shah, Ankit Shah, Hemali S. Shah, Kevin Shah, Pina Shah, Priya and Puja Sheth, Neil Vadecha, Mahendra Desai, Chandrakant Parekh, Sushama Parekh, Kishor Sanghvi, Yogesh J. Shah, Vijay Sheth and Jiten Vasa for their assistance in preparing the souvenir.

Foremost, we are grateful to our advertisers in defraying the cost of preparation. Finally, thanks are due to Mr. Dilip Kothari for accommodating our schedule and printing the souvenir in a timely manner.

May Mahair Swami bless all. Jai Jinendra.

Dhiren Mehta Vipul Shah Vipin Vadecha
10th Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir Committee



The Jain Center of Southern California

8072 Commonwealth Avenue • Buena Park, California 90621 • (714) 670-0890

Our Mission

Jai Jinendra:

We are a strong and growing organization of over 750 Jain families calling Southern California our home. We are closely connected with the Jain Religious Order in India and abroad, Jain Associations in North America, other Religious Organizations, and several affiliated organizations.

The mission of Jain Center of Southern California is to:

- Be a place of worship for Jain community and people of all faiths
- Instill Jain values in our lives and promote them in the larger society of North America
- Pass the torch of Jainism to the next generation
- Invite Jain religious leaders and scholars for discourses on Jain teaching
- Conduct educational and social activities for members of all ages such as children, youth, adult and seniors
- Conduct community outreach programs to help Jains and others in their personal needs.
- Provide support and extend help to Jains and others affected by natural disasters

We continually strive to achieve higher spiritual attainment and promote our values to others by setting the right examples by our thoughts, words and deeds. We gain strength from our seniors and see the promise of future in our children.

Jain Center of Southern California



Standing, L to R: Vipul Shah, Dhiren Mehta, Rasik Shah, Vipin Vadecha, Harish Khona
Seated, L to R: Hemant Gandhi, Shashi Jogani, Tejas Mehta, Kantilal Shah, Pratibha Desai, Navin Gangar

1998 Executive Members

President

Kantilal Shah
949-831-8687

Vice President

Dhiren Mehta
714-826-3579

Secretary

Navin Gangar
714-283-0323

Treasurer

Hemant Gandhi
949-857-2718

Public Relations

Tejas Mehta
714-491-4000

Directors

Pradip Dalal
909-595-8676

Pratibha Desai
714-996-9494

Shashikant Jogani
818-247-9809

Harish Khona
714-579-3356

Gordhan Patel
562-947-8405

Rasik Shah
714-670-7854

Vipul Shah
562-809-1878

Yogi Shah
909-860-5792

Vipin Vadecha
909-861-2677

President's Message

The Jain Center of Southern California was formed in 1979. Right from the start, our community had an overwhelming desire to have our own Jain Bhavan to practice the religion. Pujya Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and Acharya Shushil Kumarji provided encouragement and inspiration. With hard work, perseverance, and resources, the doors of Jain Bhavan opened in 1988. This year we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of its inauguration.

The community has initiated and attained several milestones during the last 10 years.

- Community has grown to more than 750 families
- Organized the North American Jain Federation and hosted its First Convention
- Established Jain Pathshala, now serving over 250 children in learning Jain religion and languages.
- Established adult classes to foster greater understanding of Jain religion
- Invited several religious leaders and scholars to promote Jain philosophy
- Initiated community outreach programs, such as medical expos, youth programs, senior association, and support for special need groups
- Supported humanitarian causes in India and USA
- Established the library at Jain Center. We will house the JAINA National Library here for better utilization

These activities have been possible because of dedication and hard work of many volunteers. They have contributed immensely in the success of Jain Center and our community. I especially congratulate all teachers who devote their precious time and energy to teach our children the principles of Jainism and help them understand our culture.

The growth and success of activities have resulted in greater participation of Jain families at our Center and we have outgrown our present facilities. Consequently, ***there is an urgent need to expand our current facilities and the Derasar area. The preliminary plans for the proposed expansion are presented in this souvenir.*** Substantial community support is needed to fulfill our growing needs and carry out this Expansion Project.

My best wishes to Jain Center, all our members and particularly to those making all the efforts to make our dream come true. Thank you. May Mahavir Swami bless all. Jai Jinendra.

Kantilal Shah

Past Executive Committee Members

POSITION	1980	1981	1982
President	Mahendra Khandhar	Mahendra Khandhar	Kalyanji Mota
Vice President	Lalit Shah	Lalit Shah	Yogesh Shah
Secretary	Kalyanji Mota	Kalyanji Mota	Rajen Mehta
Treasurer	Surendra Patel	Surendra Patel	Shirish Seth
Public Relations	Rajul Mehta	Rajul Mehta	Girish Shah
Members-at-Large	Manda Shah Savita Mehta Mohan Patel Yoogesh Shah	Niru Kothari Shireesh Seth Dr. Dinesh Shah Mahesh Shah	Dinesh Gala Inder Jain Kalpana Shah Ramesh Shah
Ex-Officio			Mahendra Khandhar Lalit Shah

POSITION	1983	1984	1985
President	Kalyanji Mota	Shirish Seth	Shirish Seth
Vice President	Yogesh Shah	Dr. Manibhai Mehta	Dr. Manibhai Mehta
Secretary	Rajen Mehta	Ramesh Shah	Ramesh Shah
Treasurer	Shirish Seth	Chandrakant Shah	Chandrakant Shah
Public Relations	Girish Shah	Dr. Jiten Vasa	Dr. Jiten Vasa
Members-at-Large	Satish K. Jain Dr. Manilal Mehta Dr. Chunilal Shah Praksh Shah	Tarun Jogani Mahendra Khandhar Dr. Chunilal Shah Prakash Shah	Chandrakant Parekh Dinkar Shah Jitu Shah Kanti Shah
Ex-Officio	Mahendra Khandhar Lalit Shah	Kalyanji Mota Lalit Shah	Kalyanji Mota Lalit Shah

POSITION	1986	1987	1988
President	Dr. Manibhai Mehta	Dr. Manibhai Mehta	Dr. Manibhai Mehta
Vice President	Chandrakant Parekh	Chandrakant Parekh	Chandrakant Parekh
Secretary	Kalpana Shah	Kalpana Shah	Navnit Shah
Treasurer	Rasik Sheth	Rasik Sheth	Dinesh Shah
Public Relations	Jawahar Shah	Jawahar Shah	Rajul Mehta
Members-at-Large	Dinkar Shah Jitu Shah Kanti Shah Parul Shah	Ramesh Kothari Dinesh Shah Girish Shah Dr. Kishori Shah	Prakash Gandhi Girish Jogani Girish Shah Dr. Kishori Shah
Ex-Officio	Shirish Seth	Shirish Seth	Shirish Seth

Past Executive Committee Members

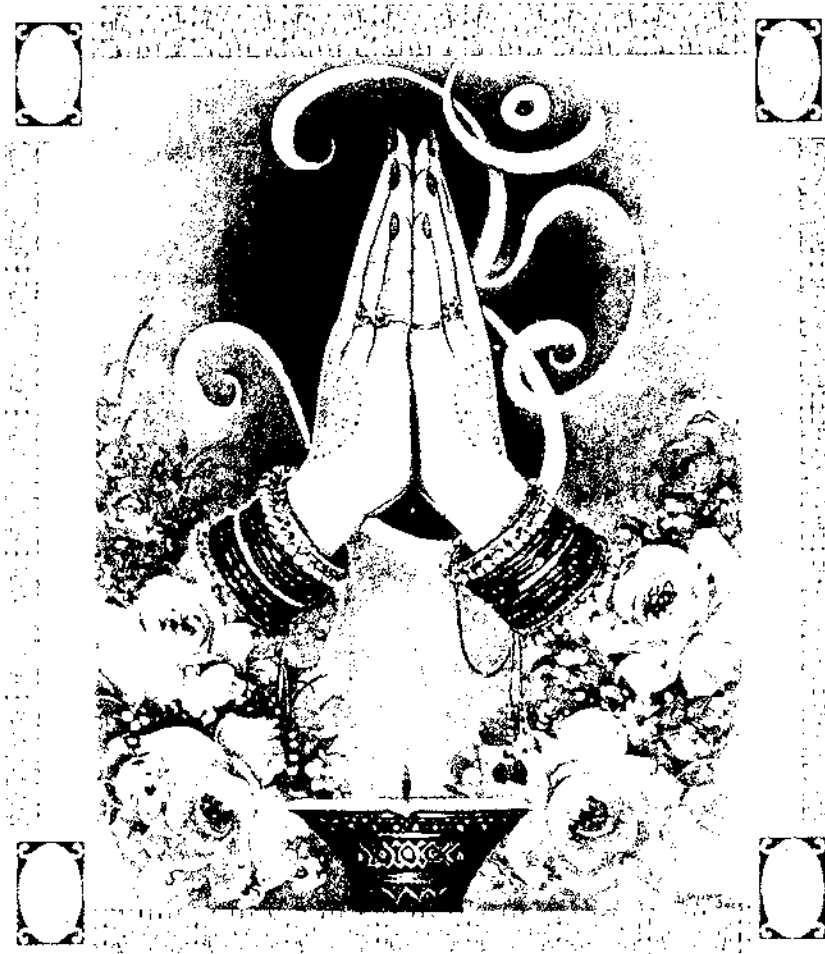
POSITION	1989	1990	1991
President	Dr. Manibhai Mehta	Navnit Shah	Navnit Shah
Vice President	Chandrakant Parekh	Girish Jogani	Girish Jogani
Secretary	Navnit Shah	Ramesh Jhaveri	Ramesh Jhaveri
Treasurer	Dinesh Shah	Dinesh Shah	Dinesh Shah
Public Relations	Rajul Mehta	Bakul Shah	Bakul Shah
Members-at-Large	Prakash Gandhi Girish Jogani Jayshree Palkhiwala Dr. Hiten Shah	Prakash Gandhi Jayshree Palkhiwala Bharati Shah Dr. Hiten Shah	Girish Shah Dr. Niranjan Shah Rajendra Shah Pallavi Sheth
Ex-Officio	Shirish Seth	Dr. Manibhai Mehta	Dr. Manibhai Mehta

POSITION	1992	1993	1994*
President	Girish Shah	Girish Shah	Hasendra Shah
Vice President	Harkishan Vasa	Harkishan Vasa	Virendra Shah
Secretary	Piyush Shah	Kishor Sanghvi	Kishor Sanghvi
Treasurer	Yogesh J. Shah	Yogesh J. Shah	Dinesh Shah
Public Relations	Bakul Shah	Sunil Shah	Dr. Nitin Shah
Members-at-Large	Dr. Niranjan Shah Rajendra Shah Yogesh Shah Pallavi Mehta	Ranjan Dedhia Bakul Shah Bharat Shah Madhuri Shah	Ranjan Dedhia Mahendra Khandhar Dr. Manibhai Mehta Kalyanji Mota Bharat Shah Girish C. Shah Madhuri Shah Navnit Shah Yogesh Shah Shirish Seth
Ex-Officio	Navnit Shah	Navnit Shah	

POSITION	1995	1996	1997
President	Hasendra Shah	Virendra Shah	Virendra Shah
Vice President	Virendra Shah	Sumati Shah	Sumati Shah
Secretary	Kishor Sanghvi	Ramesh Khandhar	Ramesh Khandhar
Treasurer	Dinesh Shah	Harshad Kothari	Harshad Kothari
Public Relations	Dr. Nitin Shah	Hemen Shah	Hemen Shah
Directors	Ramesh Kothari Pratibha Mehta Tejas Mehta Vinod Mehta Navin Sanghvi Hemen Shah Ilaben Shah Kantilal Shah Madhuri Shah Sumati Shah	Shailesh Desai Saroj Dholakia Ramesh Kothari Tejas Mehta Navin Sanghvi Ilaben Shah Kantilal Shah Prafula Shah Yogesh Shah Harshida Vasa	Shailesh Desai Shashikant Jogani Gordhanbhai Patel Kantilal Shah Prafula Shah Viren Shah Yogesh Shah Devika Udani Vipin Vadecha Harshida Vasa

*Jain Center was incorporated in July 1994 and Executive Committee was expanded to 15 board members.

JAI JINENDRA



**PUJA – PRIYA
MINA – VIJAY SHETH**

DIAMPOIL, INC.

DIAMONDS

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Blessings and Best Wishes

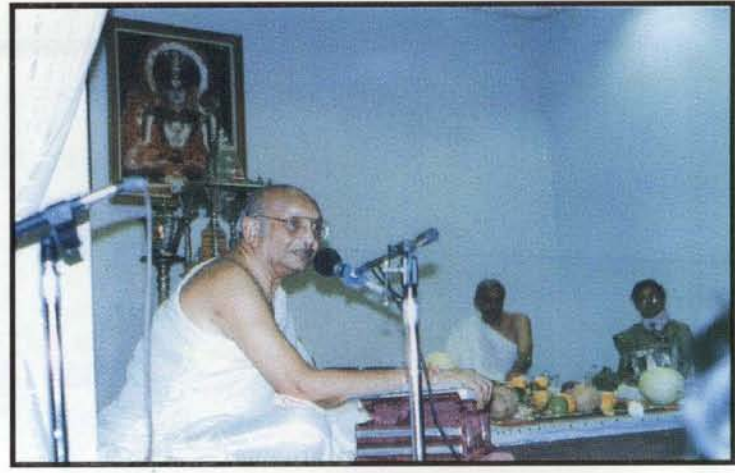
from

Religious Leaders
and Dignitaries

Jain Center of Southern California
Paryushana 1998



Puja Sunandaben Vohora



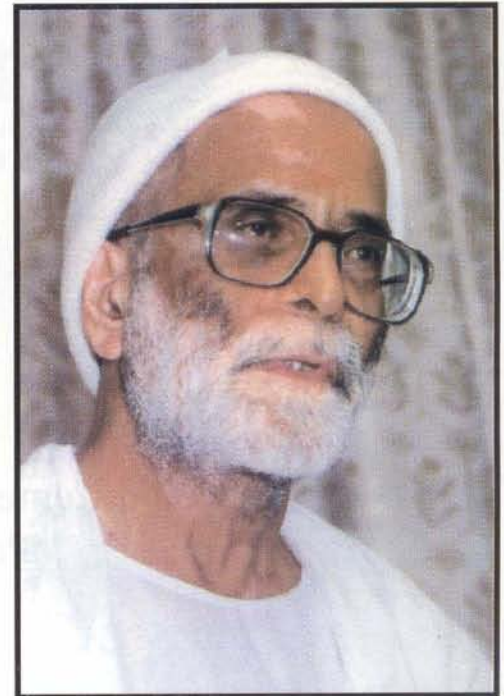
Dharmaruragi Babubhai Kadiwala



Acharya Sushilmuniji



*Puja Gurudev Chitabhanuji and
Dr. Shantibhai Patel*



*Puja Shree Atmanandji
(Dr. Soneji)*



Pandit Hukamchand Bharil

Siddhachalam
65 Mud Pond Road
Blairstown, New Jersey

July 12, 1998

My dear Members of Jain Society of Southern California,

I am very pleased to send my blessings, congratulations and best wishes on this auspicious occasion of the completion of ten (10) years of Jain Bhavan of the Jain Center of Southern California. This accomplishment is a blessing to all Jains in California and around the world

Our Guruji, the late Acharya Shree Sushil Kumarji Maharaj, always wanted that in every major city of the United States there be a place of worship for all Jains, and your organization has been very active for the last decade in propagating the message of Ahimsa, Anekantavada, and Environmental Protection, the three pillars of Jainism. Your organization's efforts for promoting and teaching Jain values to our children are highly commendable.

Through your tireless efforts over the last 10 years, you have been able to bring Jain values to our young ones, who in turn will influence the next generation. In this way, the Jain way of life and peaceful coexistence will go on and grow in years to come.

I feel very happy that Jain Bhavan will continue to propagate the message of non-violence for years to come and our dreams are becoming a reality in America.

Once again, I give my blessings to all of you on this remarkable achievement, and may Jain Bhavan continue to make a difference in the world by spreading Lord Mahavir's message of Ahimsa.

With Blessings

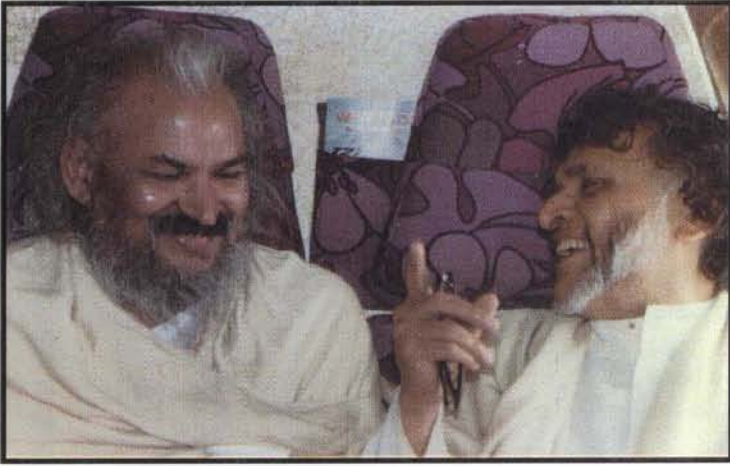
Amrender Muniji



Pujya Bandhu Triputi Maharaj



Pandit Dhirajlal Mehta



*Acharya Sushilmunij and
Gurudev Chitrabhanuji*



Dr. Kumarpalbhai Desai



Acharya Chandanaji



*Pujya Samaniji
Madhupragnaji and Charitrapragnaji*

JMIC

Jain Meditation International Center

401 East 86 Street • #20A • New York New York 10028 • 212-362-6483 • 212-534-6090

TAX EXEMPT # M-75-ED-1739 NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Founder

His Holiness Puja
Shree Chitrabhanuji

July 1, 1998

Directors

Jivan Proctor
Pramoda Chitrabhanu
Barry Wolfe
Devendra Peer

My dear Members of Jain Center of Southern California,

Jai Jinendra!

This is a holy occasion for all the Jains and all peace-loving aspirants who are completing ten successful years of the Temple's anniversary.

This Temple is a living example of your hard work and peaceful cooperation. This Temple welcomes all and is an inspiration to all: People of all walks of life, without any discrimination of caste or creed, man or woman, young or old, rich or poor, can come and pray peacefully to get in touch with their inner beauty.

When a world is torn in war and violence, we are blessed to have this rich heritage of nonviolence and peaceful co-existence with all living beings.

Vardhaman Mahavir lighted the lamps of **ahimsa, anekantavada, aparigraha, law of karma and self-realization**. Now it is our privilege to go on pouring the oil of service in these lamps to keep illuminating the path of love, peace, understanding and simplicity.

The greed of man and the ego of politicians, the narrow-mindedness of parochialism and fanaticism of fundamentalists have driven people to war and violence. War and violence are dehumanizing and, because of war and violence, millions of people are being killed and billions are suffering agonizing pain and torture -- but Jain teaching is an answer and a healing bond for mankind.



Jain International Meditation Center

E-1, Queen's View, - 28-30 Walkeshwar Road, Mumbai - 400 006, India
Phone : 368 6887 • Tel. / Fax : 367 3355

**With Best Compliments
to
Jain Center of Southern California
from**

**Shashikant J. Jogani
Renuka S. Jogani
Pooja & Pratik**

Tel: (818) 502-0329

**Best Wishes from
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**I will expand Jainism in future by reading and learning more about it.
- Payal Shah (9)**

JMIC

Jain Meditation International Center

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TAX EXEMPT # M-75-ED-1739 NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Founder

His Holiness Pujya
Shree Chitrabhanuji

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Jivan Proctor
Pramoda Chitrabhanu
Barry Wolfe
Devendra Peer

Jain Center of Southern California
Page Two

July 1, 1998

Through practice and expression, we bring to life this teaching of sacredness of all life forms which influence our surroundings and the growing generation. They in turn influence others and that generation will influence their coming generation. In this way, the teaching and heritage of Peaceful Liberators will go on and grow forever. We are what we are as vegetarians and believers in Reverence for Life because of our ancestors' and parents' influence. So, in the same way, by being models, we will be able to influence the future generation.

I feel happy to see the dream which I had envisioned in meditation -- that Jaina Dharma would dawn in America -- has become a reality with all of your help of committed dedication, untiring hard work and generosity.

I send my blessings to all of you and wish success in the celebration of the grand occasion which starts in July. Let us follow the path of loving compassion, *anekantavada*, for world peace and personal transformation.

Love and Blessings,

Chitrabhanu



Jain International Meditation Center

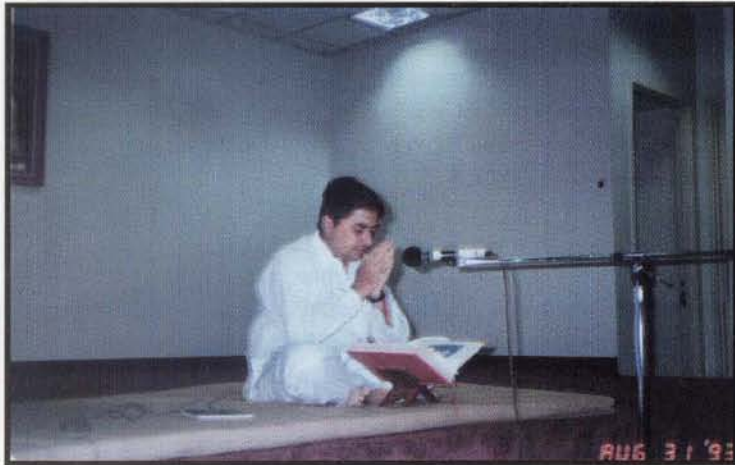
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Phone : 368 6887 • Tel. / Fax : 367 3355



*Shree Niranjambhai Sheth
and Dr. Shantibhai Patel*



*Pujya Bandhu Triputi with Acharya Sushilmuniji
and Amarender Muniji*



Shree Rajendrabhai Kamdar



*Pujya Ladakchandbhai Vora
(Bapuji)*



Pujya Kanakvijayji Maharaj Saheb



Professor Prataprai and Sumitraben Toliya

Blessings to Jain Center of Southern California

**Acharya Shree Chandanaji (Veerayatan)
and Sadhvi Shree Shubhamji (Chicago)**

Dear Members:

We have visited the Jain Center many times in the ten years of its existence and we believe that everything that it has to offer is really wonderful.

We are aware that the Jain Center offers evolution and growth of the Jain community in Southern California, information on the history and major milestones of Jain Bhavan, educational activities, community outreach programs, the personal perspectives of the members of the community, and much more. All of this is great and is very beneficial to the Jain community.

This month (July 1998) Shilapiji from Veerayatan, India visited your center and was very pleased to see the educational activities run by your society. The library that you are creating at the Jain Center will be very helpful in the educational process of the members of the community. The education available to the members, the brighter the future of the Jain community will be.

We wish you all the best.

Shubhamji

ભાવે ભાવના ભાવીએ , ભાવે દીજે દાન .
ભાવે જિનવર પૂજિએ , ભાવે કેવલજ્ઞાન .

JAI JINENDRA

from

LILABEN & CHANDULAL SHAH & FAMILY

***Mansukh, Nalini, Chhaya, Samir, Nikhil
Sumati, Bharati, Niraj, Shaival
Kirit, Nayana, Vaishalee, Mona, Paras***

With Best Compliments

from

ORNA GEMS

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The Seven Sins

wealth without works, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, and politics without principle.

- Mahatma Gandhi

શુભ - સંદેશ

પંડીત શ્રી ધિરજલાલ ડાહ્યાલાલ મહેતા

શ્રી લોસ એંજલસના જૈન સંઘના ધર્માનુરાગી સમસ્ત ભાઈ-બહેનો,

આપણા જિનાલયમાં પ્રભુની પ્રતિષ્ઠા થયાને ૧૦ વર્ષ પૂર્ણ થાય છે. તે જાણીને ઘણો જ આનંદ વ્યક્ત કરું છું.

“ જિનાલય ” એ ધર્મ કરવાનું પરમ સાધન છે. તેના માધ્યમથી જૈન સંઘની અંદર એકતા થાય છે. પરસ્પર મૈત્રીભાવ અને ભાતૃભાવ વધે છે. બાળકો અને ઓછા જ્ઞાનવાળા જીવો પણ ધર્મ કરવાની પ્રેરણા પામે છે. તેમાં ઉજવાતા ઉત્સવોથી જૈન સમાજના તમામ નર-નારીઓ હર્ષ અને આનંદના ફેલે ચડે છે. ભાવનામાં લીન થાય છે. તીર્થંકર નામકર્મ જેવા પુણ્યને ઉપાર્જન કરે છે. સ્વાધ્યાય કરવાનું પણ આ જ પવિત્ર સ્થાન છે. ત્યાંનાં વાસિત પવિત્ર પરમાણુઓ જ આત્માને પવિત્ર કરે છે.

જુગારખાનામાં દરરોજ જતો માણસ જુગાર રમવા પ્રેરાય છે. દારૂના પીઠે વારંવાર જતો માણસ દારૂ પીવાની લતે ચડે છે. આવા અનુભવો જગત સમક્ષ છે જ. તો શુભ નિમિત્તો આ આત્માને દુકા સમયમાં કે લાંબા સમયે પણ શુભ બનાવે જ. શુભાશુભ નિમિત્ત પ્રમાણે જ આત્મદ્રવ્ય પરિણામ પામે છે. ભુતકાળમાં જેટલા આત્માઓએ કલ્યાણ સાધ્યું છે તે સર્વેએ તીર્થંકરાદિ મહાત્માઓની વાણી સાંભળવા દ્વારા સાધ્યું છે.

આપણા જૈન સંઘે પાશ્ચિમાત્ય સંસ્કૃતિ વાળા દેશમાં પણ અધ્યાત્મની સંસ્કૃતિનો વારસો ટકાવનારૂં અને તે માર્ગને વેગ આપનારૂં આલું પરમપવિત્ર સ્થાન ઉભું કર્યું છે અને તેને નિર્વિદ્ધે દશ વર્ષ પૂર્ણ થયાં છે. દિન-પ્રતિદિન તેમાં વૃદ્ધિ થઈ છે. તે જાણીને કોને આનંદ ન થાય ? બાળકોની પાઠશાળાના કેટલા સુંદર પદ્ધતિસર ક્લાસો ચાલે છે ? પ્રૌઢ સ્ત્રી-પુરૂષોના ક્લાસમાં પણ મોટી એવી સંખ્યા લાભ લે છે. સાધુ-સંતોનાં તથા જૈન ધર્મના અભ્યાસી વક્તાઓ ના પ્રવચન ગોઠવાય છે. અનુકુળતા મુજબ દેરાસરમાં સ્નાત્ર મહોત્સવ, પૂજાઓ, તથા સિદ્ધચક્ર પૂજન જેવા મોટા પ્રસંગો રચાય છે.

ચાલું દિવસોમાં પણ રાત્રિક્લાસમાં ફોલ ભરચક રહે છે. આ બધું શું સુચવે છે ? ધર્મનો પ્રેમ, શાસનની ભક્તિ, દિન-પ્રતિદિન વધી જ છે.

આ “ જિનાલય ” ફોવાથી આ સ્થાનમાં માત્ર જિનેશ્વર પરમાત્મા ની જ મૂર્તિ બીરાજમાન કરાય છે. દેવ-દેવીઓની મૂર્તિ પણ શાસનરક્ષક તરીકે મુકાય છે. તેથી બીજા કોઈની મૂર્તિ આ સ્થાનમાં શોભાસ્યદ નથી. વીતરાગ પરમાત્માની સમાન અન્ય કોઈ વ્યક્તિ નથી. તેઓની પૂજા આપણા આત્માને વીતરાગ બનાવવા માટે કરાય છે.

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આપણા શ્રી સંઘે અથાગ પ્રયત્ન કરીને આ જિનાલયને મોટું કરવા આજુ-બાજુની વધારે જગ્યા લીધી છે. અને તેને વિકસાવવાનું છે તે જ સૂચવે છે કે શ્રી જૈન સંઘની અભ્યુદય થઈ રહ્યો છે. શાસનદેવો આ સંઘને પરીક્ષા રીતે અવશ્ય સહાય કરે જ છે. અને ભવિષ્યમાં પણ કરશે જ. જૈન સંઘના સમસ્ત ભાઈ-બહેનોમાં જે નિર્મળ-પવિત્ર-શુદ્ધ ભાવના છે, તેને કાયમ આ માધ્યમ દ્વારા સિંચન મળ્યા જ કરે. અને એ ભાવના કર્મોનો ક્ષય કરવામાં અતિ ઉત્તમ સાધન બને એવી આશા રાખું છું.

આપણા સંઘમાં અનુભવી-પીઠ કાર્યકરો છે. નિર્મળ ભાવના છે. કાર્ય કરવાની સુઝ અને ખંત છે. પરસ્પર મળી જવાની સ્વભાવ છે. ન ગમતું જતું કરવાની ટેવ છે. આવા સંસ્કારો જ જૈન સંઘને ઉચે લાવે છે.

અંતમા- વિપરીત સંસ્કાર વાળા દેશમાં રહેવા છતાં ત્યાંની સંસ્કૃતિની અસર નીચે ન દબાતા ભારતભૂમિની સંસ્કૃતિના બીજતુલ્ય આવા ધર્મસ્થાનોના પાયા નાખ્યા છે. અને દશ વર્ષમાં તેમાં અનેક ગણો વધારો કર્યો છે. તેનાં કુલ-કુળ રૂપે તેનો અનેક ગણો વધારો થાય. અને સૈંકડો તથા હજારો વર્ષ આ જૈન સંઘ તથા તેની ઉત્તરોત્તર પેઢીઓ અનંતકલ્યાણી બને. સૌ આત્માનું કિંત સાધે. એજ આશા.

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What is religion? To me, religion is a way of life. Jainism, my religion, is the way of my life.
- Nikita Shah (13)



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Founded 1981

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July 7, 1998

Dear Members of Jain Center of Southern California:

Jai Jinendra!

On behalf of myself and all Jains across North America, it is a pleasure to extend warm greetings to every one participating in celebration of 10th year of Jain Bhavan.

This is a very auspicious occasion in the history of Jain Center of Southern California.

It is indeed a pleasure and a matter of pride for me to congratulate all those who so generously donated their time, talent and treasure to bring your Center at present status.

Please accept my sincere best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable event.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dhiraj Shah
President, JAINA

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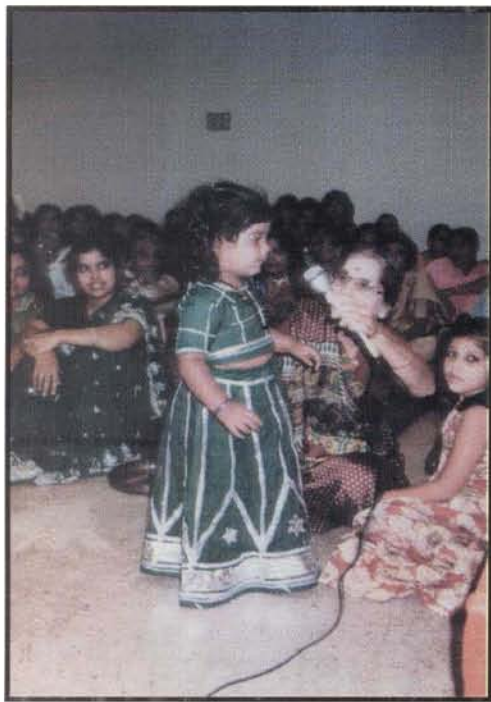
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In Jainism Ahimsa means not only physical injury to living things but also not to hurt anyone mentally.
That's why Jainism fascinates me. - Mansi Shah (8)

A Living & Illustrious History

From Formatting Years
Through Realization of Dream
to Embarking on Expansion

Jain Center of Southern California
Paryushana 1998



Children



Paryshana Celebration Supan



*Children's Program
Early Days*



Paryushana Celebration Supan



*Children's Program
Early Days*



Arti/General Body Meeting - 1980

The Formatting Years: 1979 - 1981

Shree Mahendrabhai Khandhar

Until late 1960's, the number of Indians and Jains in the US were relatively few and limited to those who came for higher education and then established here. They practiced Jainism and Paryushana individually or in small groups, based on their family traditions and upbringing. There was little organized effort or established Jain Centers / Societies.

Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji came to USA in 1972, while late Acharya Sushilkumarji came in 1975. Both of them organized international institutions of Jain Meditation (IJMC) and Mahavir Mission (IMJM) respectively. With their inspiration and guidance, establishment of Jain temples began around 1980 across the US.

In the Los Angeles area, there were about 200 Jain families during the mid - 70's. Most of them followed Jain rituals in small groups, utilizing house-temple. Lalit C. Shah first conceived the idea of organizing Jain Center at local level (in LA/So Cal area) as well as at national level (in North America). Working hard, several informal community meetings ensued to discuss the local Jain Center over a period of 12 months, with particular attention to goals, constitution, organization, activities, location and finance. Finally, the **Jain Center of Southern California was born on September 15, 1979.**

The following are highlights and summary of the First Administration of Jain Center of So Cal, from Sep 15, 1979 through Dec 31, 1981.

1. It was agreed & firmly established that:

- all work will be voluntary
- Jain Center will have a broad base of Southern California (rather than Los Angeles only)
- Jain Center will conduct its activities without any considerations of Jain sects
- all its meetings (including dinner) will be free & open to all (member or not)
- all its transactions will be fair, open & audited
- all committee members and account books will be accessible to all members at any time
- a newsletter will communicate with the members regarding news/upcoming events/summary of past events/religious articles/prayers/children's corner/donations listing
- Jain Center will have monthly/bimonthly meetings with an invited speaker from US/India as well as local experts
- Jain Center meetings will have devotional songs & children's items

(continued on next page)

Being a Jain and practicing Jainism brings true inner peace inside me.

- Priya Sheth (15)

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated. Vivisection is the blackest of all the black crimes that man is at present committing against God and His fair creation"

-Mahatma Gandhi

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2. Initial membership was about 250 with life membership of about 100. The attendance ranged from 200-300 during normal general body meeting to 800-1000 during Paryushana & Mahavir Jayanti.
3. In absence of Jain Bhavan, the meetings were held at various Indian community centers around Los Angeles.
4. Children's activities such as classes, camps, books etc. were considered and discussed. Two children camps were organized during 1980 & 1981 Christmas time, one in cooperation with Northern California and the other in cooperation with Acharya Sushil Muniji in Lake Arrowhead. The plans for classes were being formulated.
5. Started Mahila Mandal (now Mahavir Mandal) that organized and conducted regular Snatra Poojas, worships and other rituals.
6. Record breaking penances of Sol Bhatthu (16-day fasts) and Atthais (8-day fasts) as well as many smaller ones took place during Paryushana and added to the religious fervor and exuberance of the community. The tradition of Samuh Kshamapana and Parna started which helped consolidate the community religious spirit.
7. Began to investigate, evaluate and recommend a suitable site for our Jain Center temple/Bhavan. Visited several existing buildings and vacant lots. With Lord Mahavir's blessings, the successive Administrations fulfilled the dream beyond anybody's imagination. Today, we have a wonderful Jain Bhavan with plans for expansion in every direction and sphere.
8. Initiated to develop, discuss and implement the idea of organizing the national federation of all Jain Societies/Centers in US/Canada. Dialogs continued for almost a year and culminated in the first ever and formative convention in Los Angeles in 1981. About 15 Jain organizations participated. The Federation of Jain Associations of North America was adopted as its name. It is gratifying that from that humble beginning, JAINA has grown into 54 member organizations with international stature and progressively successful biennial conventions. (see more under JAINA in Community Outreach Programs)
9. The scaled wooden model of Shatrunjay (Palitana) on display at 1901 World Fair in Philadelphia was now part of a hotel in Las Vegas. We initiated discussions with the hotel management to donate the wooden model to Jain Center. The negotiations continued in subsequent years with successful donation of the model to the Jain Center in 1988 and final transfer to Los Angeles in 1995.

It is interesting to know that humans have the strength and the power to complete every task their minds desire. - Soham Shah (11)

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The Planning Years: 1982 - 1983

Shree Kalyanjibhai Mota

1982 was the third year since the Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) was formed. The excitement was already building for our own Jain Bhavan. Subsequently, members keenly interested for the Jain Bhavan gathered in presence of Gurdev Chitrabhanu and made commitments pledging over \$80,000 to jump start the project.

Building Plans: We reached a significant milestone at this gathering for several reasons. The large pledges enabled the Executive Committee to set the target of about \$250,000 to have our own Jain Bhavan. The community committed to build Jain Bhavan free and clear from any debt. The Building Committee began working to develop plans and locate a suitable place that could accommodate our changing needs.

Educational Activities: While the Building Committee was busy, the bigger task was to visualize, plan and develop the religious, cultural and social activities to fully utilize the Jain Bhavan and to pass the rich religious and cultural values to our children. The plans for Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) were developed and children's classes started. Since its inception, attendance in the religious as well as language classes increased significantly. These activities enabled our children to perform at many of our temple events. The off-site religious camps became exciting and successful for children as well as teachers.

Religious and Community Activities: The Mahavir Mandal that started in 1980 was progressing in conducting various types of Poojas. The community provided full support to flourish their activities. Religious discourses and Swadhyays were conducted at various member homes and community centers. Every year attendance during Paryushana increased since the birth of JCSC, and Tapscharya by adults as well as children began to rise.

Children activities - social, cultural as well as religious - were integrated during the lectures of numerous dignitaries. Variety of social events such as community picnic and dandiya ras were planned to develop closeness in the community.

The Executive Committee members represented several areas of the Los Angeles basin and various parts of India. They all felt their participation fulfilling and rewarding.

Jains should be represented in the encyclopedia, like its' neighbors Buddhism and Hinduism.
- Mansi Shah (16)



Jain Bhavan 1988



Jain Bhavan 1988



*Khat Muhurt
Dr. Chunibhai and Ilaben Shah*



Overflowing Audience in Main Hall – Jain Bhavan 1988



Ground Breaking

The Planning Years Continue: 1984 - 1985

Shree Shirishbhai Seth

The years 1984 and 1985 were full of excitement and marked with many noteworthy activities and accomplishments.

Building Site Acquired: The most significant accomplishment was the acquisition of building site at 8072 Commonwealth Avenue in Buena Park. Since its formation in 1982, the Building Committee was hard at work on two fronts: fund raising and screening potential buildings and sites for our JAIN BHAVAN. These efforts began to pay off in 1985. During the Mahavir Jayanti celebration, we proudly announced that the Center was in the process of acquiring the site to build our Jain Bhavan.

The Building Committee invited community inputs and began to develop designs for our own place of worship. The emphasis was to build a center that can maintain our religious heritage as well as provide a place to nurture community activities to foster goodwill among members and Jain community at large.

JCYC Formed: Another notable accomplishment was the formal establishment of the Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) in 1984, although it was informally started in 1982. Then in 1985, the Jain Center and JCYC regularized the Pathshala with once-a-month classes. Hardly anyone at the time envisioned the phenomenal growth of JCYC. This truly turned out to be a remarkable achievement.

Community Volunteering: The hard work and dedication of many individuals contributed to the success and achievements in 1984 and 1985. It is gratifying to witness the tremendous support our Jain Center garnered from the beginning during the planning years and set on a path of continued progress.

We can't eat or kill any animals, or germs or hurt anyone by our mind, speech, or body.
- Sonal Shah (11)



Ladies in the Procession



Dhwaj Ceremony on Opening Day



Children with Gurudev Chitrabhanu



Gurudev Chitrabhanu Blessing a Child



Children Dancing

Realization of Dream: 1986 - 1989

Shree Manibhai Mehta

The community support was so good that in about six months we were able to start realizing our dream of Jain Bhavan. Moral support from the committee members and the whole community made it possible to carry out the difficult year of construction and also achieve the fund raising goals.

Ground Breaking: The Building Khatmuhurat was performed on March 6th 1987 by Dr. Chunibhai & Ilaben Shah. The construction started in June 1987 and the work was completed in April 1988. Jain Bhavan is an outstanding facility with custom design to fulfill the requirements of religious, cultural and social needs of our community. The donations came from every member of the community enabling us to pay most of the \$1 million cost. We also received monetary and in-kind assistance from non-Jain friends. We are thankful to all of them.

Grand Opening: The Jain Bhavan was formally opened on July 2nd 1988. This was the first Jain temple in North America built from ground up with marble Gabhara specially carved in India. We are thankful to Shree U. N. Mehta, Shree Arvindbhai Sheth of Shankheshwar Pedhi, Dr. Kumarpal Desai, and Shree Shrenikbhai of Anandji Kalyanji Pedhi for their help in getting all the marble work done and donated to our Center. The Jain Bhavan inauguration ceremonies included Murti Sthapana with a procession followed by Siddhachakra Poojan and Bhaktamar Poojan.

Wooden Temple: For the 1901 World Fair in Philadelphia, a special scaled wooden model of Shatrunjay (Palitana) Temple was carved and shipped to USA. Over the period of some 75 years, the ownership changed many hands and finally rested with a hotel in Las Vegas. We continued the negotiations (which were started in 1981) with the owners for a more fitting public display of the temple in Southern California. It is gratifying to note that the owners finally donated the temple free to our Center in 1988. It was stored in Las Vegas for us.

Growth of Community: During 1986-89 the Jain community saw phenomenal growth. More members started attending functions partly due to having our own place of worship. All were very happy with the growth and progress of our Center. Jain youth programs were conducted regularly. Pathshala membership increased significantly. Adult Swadhyay class on Sunday was started. The evening Swadhyays on Mondays and Thursdays continued. We retained the services of a part-time attendant for temple.

Jain Bhavan reached the debt-free status in December 1989.

A Jain philosophy is that if you cannot create a life, you have no right to destroy it.
- Sunny Shah (14)



Procession Motorcade



Procession Motorcade



Procession Motorcade



Procession Led by Gurudev Chitrabhanu



Celebration of Auspicious Grand Opening of Jain Bhavan

The Growth Years: 1990 - 1991

Shree Navnitbhai Shah

The community participation in our Jain Center activities continued to outpace our ability to meet the demand. Several community outreach initiatives were started during 1990-1991.

The first Share and Care Clothes Drive was held to send the clothes to the poor and needy in India. Large amounts of clothes were collected, segregated, packed and shipped to India.

The first medical expo was started on April 21, 1991 jointly with the Jain Social Group of Los Angeles. Hundreds of participants were given complimentary medical check-ups that included over 25 medical professionals and disciplines.

Extensive Tapasyas: Celebrated the first Mas Khaman tapasya (30-day fast) by Lalitbhai P. Shah. The number of Atthais (8-day fasts) increased sharply, particularly among the youth.

More Pratistha: The Mangal Kalynak Pratistha of Jin Shashan Dev Ghantakaran Mahavir, and Jin Shashan Devi Padmavati was successfully organized on July 1, 1990.

The Samuh Manglik was started on Indian New Year's Day on October 19, 1990, and the Jain Bhavan was kept open in the mornings of Diwali and New Year's Day.

The Gabhara marble work was completed and Adhar Abhishek Pooja was performed on June 29, 1991 in the presence of Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji and Swasti Shree Charukirti Bhattarakji.

To expand the Jain Bhavan facilities, JCSC initiated inquiries to acquire the vacant lot next to the Jain Bhavan.

I have respect for my Jain religion.
- Vishwa Shah (8)



Auspicious Entry on Opening Day



General Body Meeting



Celebration Procession



Arti - Mangal Divo



Murti Sthapana Celebration



Mulnayak (Mahavir Swami) in Procession

Phenomenal Growth Continues: 1992 - 1993

Shree Girishbhai C. Shah

During 1992 our community grew rapidly. We were mailing about 700 mailers. The hall became crowded for about 1200 people attending Mahavir Janma Kalyanak during the Paryushana. We had outgrown our current facilities in less than five years since the opening of Jain Bhavan doors. We also started plans to incorporate our Jain Center.

Next Door Land Acquired: Our big achievement was the acquisition of the next door land. With the blessing of Lord Mahavir we made it possible. The Kumbh Ceremony was performed in the presence of Pujya Shree Atmanandji (Dr. Soneji) on August 22, 1993.

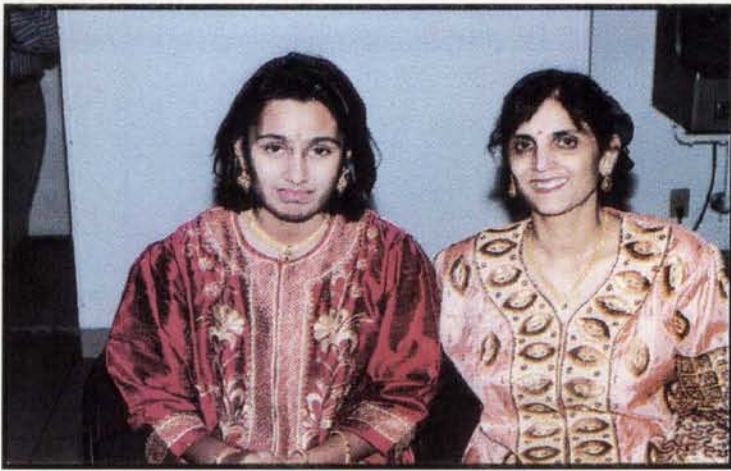
Paryushana and Das Laxna Parva: The Siddhachakra Poojan and 108 Arhant Abhishek Poojan at our Jain Bhavan were performed by Shree Babubhai Kadiwala and his talented group of musicians during Memorial Day weekend in 1992. Paryushana was celebrated with Sadhvi Shree Vibhaji & Sadhvi Shree Yashaji from Veerayatan. Das Laxna Parva was celebrated with Shree Rajendrabhai Kamdar from Rajkot. The 1993 Paryushana was celebrated with late Shree Charukirti Bhattarakji from Mudbidri, Karnataka. Two young Shamanji from Ladnu, Rajasthan taught Preksha Dhyana during Das Laxna Parva.

Ahimsa Day: The first Ahimsa Day was celebrated on October 2, 1993 with a Pictorial Exhibition of Mahatma Gandhi's life provided by Shree Jagannathbhai Desai. The Mayor of City of Buena Park attended the Exhibition.

During 1993, the planning for next year's Jain Art Exhibition at LA County Museum of Art started. During summer several dignitaries and scholars visited our Jain Center.

Educational Activities: The JCYC classes for over 70 children were scheduled for twice a month all year round. The simultaneous adult class continued with about 30 people attending. As we grew, we needed more teachers and volunteers. The JCYC Winter Camp was a good incentive for the children to attend the classes. The children were learning Jain Philosophy and Gujarati language.

Jains don't believe in one God, they believe that God is our guide to Moksha and we are the followers. - Vrinda Shah (11)



Tapasvis Following Parna After Sol Bhatthu



Tapasvis at Samuh Parna



Tapasvis Recognized in 1991



Gurudev Chitrabhanu Blessing Tapasvi



Young Tapasvis - 1991



1995 Tapasvis During Recognition Ceremony

The Community Outreach Years: 1994 - 95

Shree Hasendrabhai Shah

The community growth continued and by 1994 we faced unique challenge due to increased demands and expectations as a result of increased Jain population and participation. To serve the community in its varied needs and to generate enthusiasm with wider participation, the committee members began planning for future activities. Expansion was conceived collectively and executed as teamwork.

Incorporation of Jain Center was a priority as the community had grown in size and the assets had increased substantially. This was essential to provide stability, continuity and for the risk management of the liabilities. The process was started in 1993. Jain Center became a tax exempt, non-profit California Corporation on July 10, 1994.

The Jain Art Exhibition - "The Peaceful Liberators" The first of its kind exhibition by Los Angeles County Museum of Arts took place from October 1994 to January 1995. It was an unparalleled event in the Western World. Our community worked hard to see that it was a great success. It was well received among the art critics, students, educators and was well attended not only by Jains or Indians but also Americans.

The Carved Wooden Temple It was donated to our Center in 1988 and was stored in Las Vegas for us. With the help of Prof. Bhagwan Sinh and many others, the temple finally came to Jain Center. When restored, it will symbolize the spirit of Jainism.

Paryushana and Das Laxana Parva 1994 - These were celebrated with Samaniji Madhurpragnaji and Charitrapragnaji. Jain discourses and meditation for five to six weeks touched many and in different ways. Many youngsters were able to learn about Jainism from Samaniji and more so they were able to see glimpses of how a monk would conduct his/her life under Jain Major Vows. The children's program during this Paryushana was one of the best of all time.

Paryushana and Das Laxana Parva 1995 - Paryushana was celebrated with Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji. It was time for fund raising drive for the expansion of Jain Bhavan. With blessings of Mahavir Swami, a quarter million dollars were pledged in one hour. Ahimsa Awareness group was formed. Das-Laxana Parva was celebrated with Shree Rajendrabhai Kamdar.

Educational: The JCYC activities continued to grow. A group for youth over 16, named Jain Association of Young Adults (JAYA), was formed in 1994. In 1994 our youth showed their organizational and leadership skills by bidding to host the Young Jains Association (YJA) biennial national convention. JAYA plays a unique role in our community.

Jainism applies to your everyday life. So practice it however you can.
- Sagar Shah (9)

With Best Wishes and Compliments from

Natwarlal Shah

Rashmi Shah

Virendra Shah

Jayesh Shah

Yogesh Mehta

Ketan Vora

and staff of

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The Community Empowerment years: 1996-97

Shree Virendrabhai Shah

There was hardly a week without some activity at our Jain Center. The response and participation by the community was very high. Consequently, the Jain Center visiting hours were expanded to all day on weekends. Furthermore, the Center made the hall and the sound system available free of charge to our members to conduct Prarthana on a death in the family.

Our Sangh helped in the Murti Sthapana in San Diego and San Fernando Valley, participated in JAINA convention in Toronto and the YJA convention in San Francisco. Other highlights were formations of Jain Senior Association and Ahimsa Awareness Group. Jain Center celebrated the 25th Year of Gurudev Chitrabhanu's Dharma Yatra to North America. Our community is indebted to Gurudev who has been instrumental for the tremendous growth of our Sangh. We were fortunate to have Gurudev present in person to show our gratitude and honor him during June 30th 1996 Dhvaj Rohan ceremony.

Educational Activities: The enrollment in JCYC class and adult Swadhyay continued to grow. Mummy-and-me class for 5 to 7 years, once-a-month class for young adults, Hindi language class, conversational Gujarati class, and the quarterly 1-day Shibir on the Nav Tatvas were added. Curriculum for the JCYC students was reviewed.

Building Expansion Project and Acquisitions: The planning for the expansion continued with selection of an architect and successful zoning change application to City of Buena Park. The next door Post Office Bldg. was acquired in July 97. An additional parcel of approx. 12,000 sq. ft. was also acquired for parking purposes.

Paryushana and Daslaxna Parva - 1996: These Mahaparva were celebrated in the presence of Dr. Kumarpal Desai and Shri Shashikant Sheth, respectively. Activities included the Kalpasutra and Barsa Sutra Vanchan in the morning, religious discourses in the evening, Mahavir Janma Vanchan, Swapna Ceremony, cultural program by youth, Samvatsari Pratikraman, Samuh Parna and tapasvi bahuman. We had record monetary contributions for Building Expansion, Jivdaya, Share & Care project, Ahimsha resource book, The Glory of Jainism book, and Paryushana bolis.

Paryushana and Daslaxna Parva - 1997: These Mahaparva were celebrated in the presence of Pujya Sunandaben Vohora and Shri Jagdishchandra Doshi, respectively. In addition to usual activities, unique programs included Samuh Aarti, Samuh Samayak, Rangoli, Chhatra installation ceremony, and musical programs by Kalyanji & Anandji Group, Pareshbhai Shah of San Diego and Hansaben Nagda. The community attendance exceeded 2,000 with the donations crossing the 6-digit mark. First ever Jain Center directory was published.

(continued on next page)

An individual who follows the principals laid by jina is called a Jain. The path to achieve salvation is called Jainism. - Sahil Shah (8)

To remove all hostility and malice from the mind and never to let them creep back again, only forgiveness in such a pure form can make the soul advance spiritually.

With Best Compliments

from

**NICOLE, MONIQUE,
PRAKASH & KAREN SHETH**

MONIQUE DIAMONDS

650 S. Hill St., Suite MR21,
Los Angeles, Ca.90014
Tel: (213) 489-1996
Fax: (213) 489-7278

Dignitary and Scholar Visits: Jain Center was fortunate to host many dignitaries including Pandit Dhirajlal Mehta, Pujya Sunandaben Vohora, Dr. Kumarpal Desai, Acharya Chandanaji with Sadhvi Shubhamji and Sadhvi Vibhaji, Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Dr. Hukamchand Bharil, Shri Kirtichandraji, Charukirti Bhattarakji, Saman Shrutpragnaji and Ashwinpragnaji, Shri Rajendrabhai Kamdar, Shashikantbhai Sheth, Pravinbhai Doshi, Subhasbhai Sheth, Jagdishchandra Doshi, Alex Pacheco and Ms. Rae Sikora.

Facility Improvements: These included exterior paint, landscaping, bulletin boards, fence work, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, chandeliers, fans, clocks, stage and temple curtains, auto lighting, faucets, hand dryers, shelving, new public phone, room partitions, additional chairs / tables / utensils / cabinets and a copier.

While the physical improvements were made to our facilities, various changes to administrative and operational procedures were also implemented.

Jainism's motto is try to prevent violence. Violence can occur by just thinking or talking about it.
- Sejal Shah (16)



Dhwaj Ceremony on 10th Anniversary



Dhwaj Ceremony on 10th Anniversary



Siddhchakra Poojan on 10th Anniversary



*Jain Center
Derasar with Marble Gabhara*

The Expansion Years: 1998 - cont'd

Shree Kantilal Shah

The current year is full of excitement and enthusiasm as we embark upon expanding our horizons and build a larger Jain Center for multitude of activities we conduct.

The Center conducts Paryushana, Das Laxna Parva, Tirthankar Kalyanaks, Pathshala (religious) classes, language classes, JCYC graduation, winter camp, poojas, ayambils, medical expo, Ahimsa awareness, community outreach programs, and many special events.

In addition, we are blessed with visits by numerous religious monks, scholars and educators to give insightful discourses on Jain religion and its role in our day-to-day life. Shree Chimanbhai Mody, Dr. Hukamchand Bharil, Sadhvi Shree Shilapiji, Shree Narendrabhai (Nandubhai) who performed Siddhachakra Poojan, Pujya Atmanandji (Dr. Soneji) and Pujya Sunandaben Vohora have already visited us during 1998.

This year Paryushana and Das Laxna Parva will be celebrated from August 19 through September 5, 1998. The dignitaries visiting us during those auspicious days include Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and Pundit Dhirajbhai Mehta, respectively.

We need larger facilities to accommodate large number of members to take advantage of all these activities and dignitary visits. The Jain Center expansion plans include larger Derasar, larger meeting hall, more study rooms for Pathshala, larger kitchen and increased parking facilities. The plans would maximize use of the available space. We will also erect our beautiful wooden replica of the Palitana Temple.

The recently acquired "Post Office Building" is already used for JCYC classes and is being established as an educational / study section. Following the educational conference in Boston, our education team is working to prepare an expanded curriculum for studying our Jain religion, philosophy and understanding our culture and value in life.

We are working to accommodate the JAINA national library, which will be transferred to us from Texas. It will give an easier access to the Jain texts and literature for study and understanding our Jain religion.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, coordinators, teachers, volunteers, well wishers, and silent supporters, let me express our renewed confidence in our community and youth to utilize the expanded facilities, to enjoy and cultivate greater awareness of Jainism and to have a deeper sense of belonging to our Jain Center.

Thank you, Jai Jinendra.

Humans can do anything they decide to achieve.

- Krupa Shah (12)

With Best Wishes

Rasik Shah

Account Representative

License# 0738799



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To

Jain Community of Southern California

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A Glimpse of the Future

Jain Center of Southern California
Paryushana 1998

Congratulations to
JAIN CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
on their 10th Anniversary

from

Dhiren, Rajul
Shefali, Nishali, Manali
Mehta

4980 Ariano Drive
Cypress, CA 90630
714-826-3579

With Best Compliments

To

Jain Center of Southern California

from

Vipin, Jyoti, Mona, and Neil Vadecha

21803 Paint Brush Lane
Diamond Bar, CA 91765
909-861-2677

Jainism teaches total self-control.
- Shrivani Kamdar (15)

Jain Bhavan Expansion Project

INTRODUCTION

With a sense of great pride and accomplishment, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Jain Bhavan. Our Jain Bhavan was the first custom designed facility in North America to meet the religious, cultural and social needs of the Jain community. It has been a showcase of community spirit, dedication and cooperation amongst the Jain community of Southern California. It has fulfilled the needs for both, young and adults, to have a sense of belonging in the preservation of Jain religion and our cultural heritage.

Since 1988, our Jain Bhavan has been fully utilized for the intended activities. For the past 10 years, the Jain Bhavan has been a focal point for religious, educational, cultural, community service, and outreach activities. Over the years, the requirements as well as the size of our community have increased steadily, and we now need to re-plan our facilities to fulfill the added needs of our expanded community.

Our goal is to integrate the existing Jain Bhavan and the adjoining two properties and develop into a multi-purpose Jain Bhavan Complex which will fulfill the needs of our community for next 15 years. In brief, our plan is to renovate and enlarge the existing Derasar; build a large meeting hall, a dining hall, and adequate number of Swadhay and Pathshala rooms; and provide for adequate parking.

In addition, we will include the priceless wooden replica of the famous Palitana Jain temple, a museum, and the JAINA National Library - a very valuable resource for scholars and students of Jainism. These amenities will propel our Jain Bhavan into a prominent destination of international repute for pilgrimage, tourism, and scholarly pursuits.

(Continued on next page)

A good thing to know about predestination is that you and only you have the power to change your future or destiny. - Payal Vasa (16)

With Best Compliments
to
Jain Center of Southern California
from

Chunilal Shah, M. D.
(Family Physician)

11530 La Mirada Blvd.,
La Mirada, CA 90638

Tel: (562) 947-1619
Fax: (562) 947-5969

Ilaben Shah
Ajit Shah, M. D.
Ajay Shah

I will try my best to be a good Jain.
Ayushee Aithal (8)

PROPOSED PLAN

The proposed Jain Bhavan Complex will have three functional areas as follows:

1. A Religious Complex which will include the Derasar and Gyan Mandir. It will be located in the existing Jain Bhavan building which will be renovated.
2. A Cultural Complex which will include a large meeting hall, the wooden temple, a museum, and an underground parking facility. It will be located in a new building to be erected next to the existing Jain Bhavan facility.
3. Atma Sadhana Kendra which will include facilities for Swadhyay and Pathshala activities and National Jain Library. It will be located in the existing Post Office Building which will be renovated.

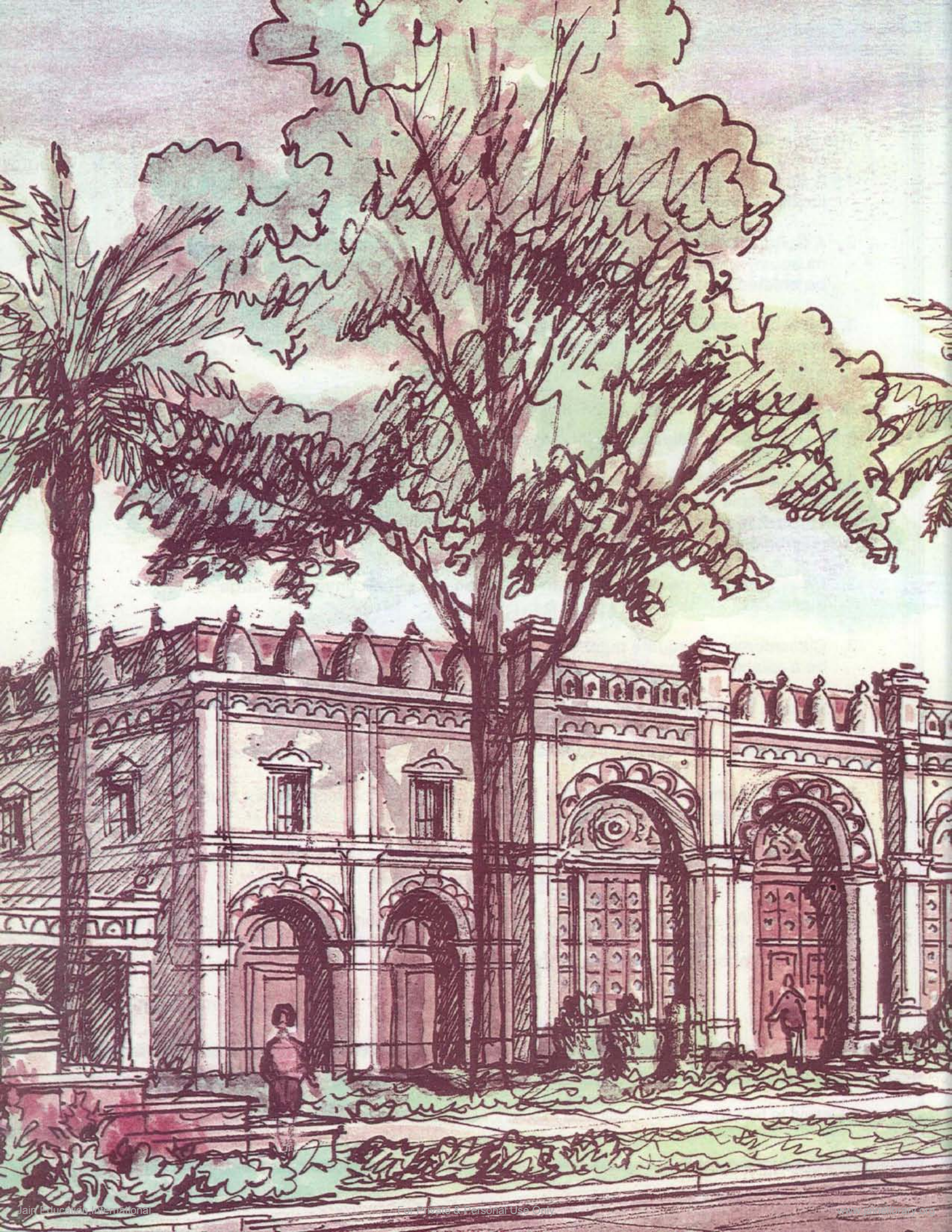
PROPOSED FACILITIES/AMENITIES

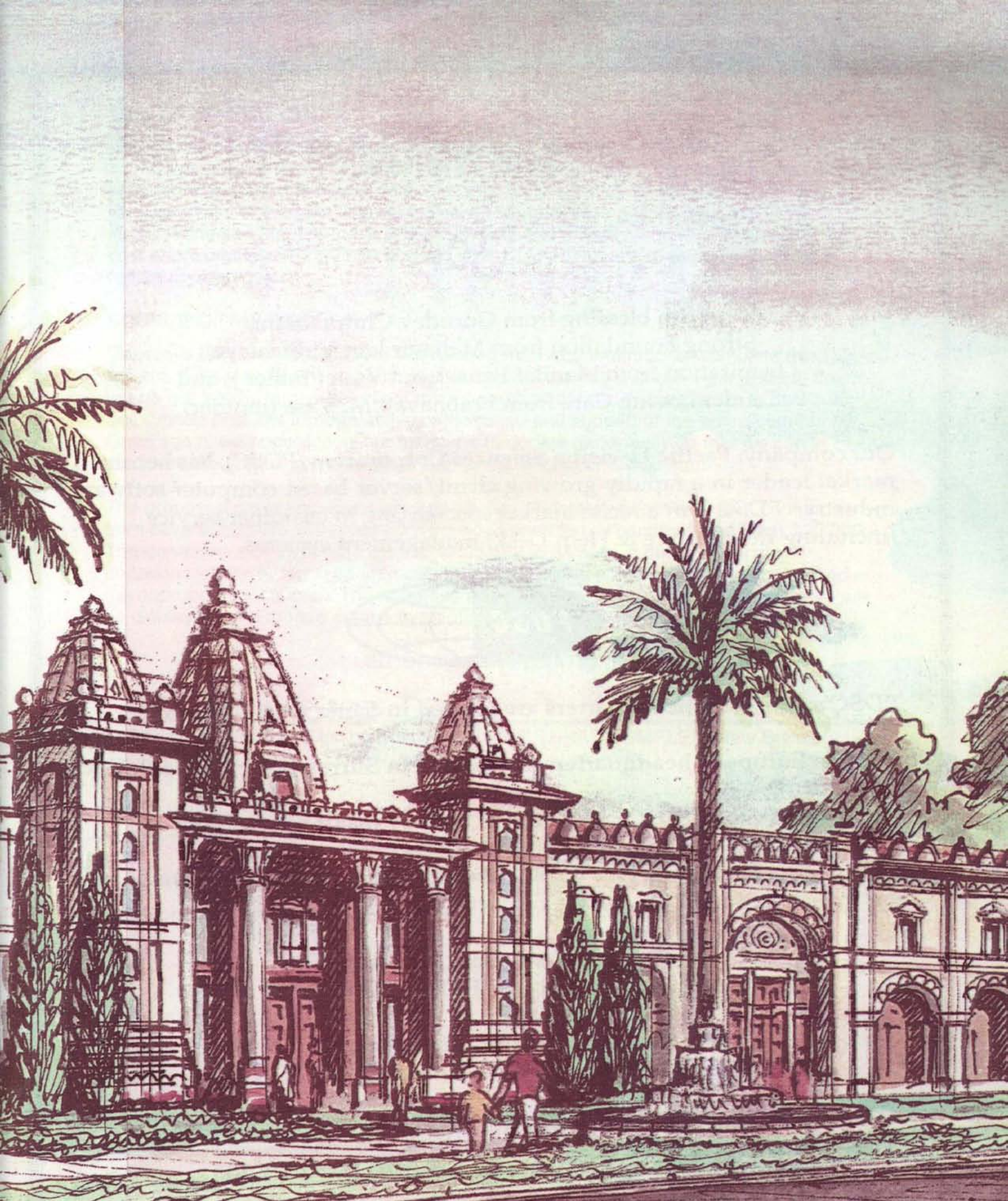
Following major facilities will be included in the proposed Jain Bhavan Complex.

1. Derasar: The existing Derasar will be renovated and expanded to accommodate more people during pujas and other religious ceremonies. Addition of a bhumati and a dome are under consideration. Outside appearance will be renovated to resemble a temple.
2. Meeting Hall: A new hall (8,000 to 10,000 sq. ft.) will accommodate large audiences.
3. Classrooms: Adequate number of properly-sized and properly-equipped rooms will be available to support Pathshala and Swadhyay activities.
4. Kitchen: Nearly twice the size of the existing facility will be provided.
5. Restrooms: Adequate restrooms and shower (for Pooja) facilities will be provided.
6. Wooden Temple: The temple (20' x 20' x 35' high) will be a prominent feature of the entry foyer and it will be integrated with an adjoining museum.
7. JAINA National Library: An expanded library will house a collection of over 8000 books, audio and video tapes, and CDs being assigned to our Center.
8. Parking: An underground parking facility will provide parking and may be used as a play area for children or additional dining area. Additional parking will be available on a neighborhood lot owned by the Jain Center.

(Continued on next page)

I intend to be a true Jain by being kind to others, and always being truthful and giving respect to my parents and to elders. - Sonali Vasa (9)





Jain Center of Southern California

Rendering of Jain Bhavan Expansion

Best Wishes



With blessing from Gurudev Chitrabhanu,
Strong Foundation from Mahavir Jain Vidhyalaya,
Inspiration from Manilal Panachand Vasa (father), and
Tender Loving Care from Prabhavati M. Vasa (mother)

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Harkishan (Hark) M. Vasa
President & C.E.O. of PDSC

12341 Newport Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92705
Office: (714) 832- 2200 Home: (714) 771 - 7860

With Best Compliments from the Vasa family:
Harkishan, Kusum, Anita, and Sarita Vasa

COST AND SCHEDULE

Building and Fund Raising Committees set up by the Board of Directors are coordinating the efforts of the Jain Bhavan Expansion Project. An architect has been selected and briefed to develop the plans for an integrated Jain Bhavan Complex. Brief overview of the plan is provided here. Members are encouraged to provide suggestions and input to the Building Committee in a timely manner. The project will cost approximately \$2,000,000 and will take 12 to 18 months to complete pending regulatory approvals.

SOURCE OF FUNDING

Generous financial contributions are needed from ALL members to complete this major project. This is a Jain heritage project which will benefit the present generation, and it will be our legacy for the benefit of the future generations. Our progress to date has been made possible through active participation and support of the entire community. Once again, we appeal to all our members to donate generously so that we can complete the project in a timely manner for the benefit of the community.

The proposed major donations are listed below. For large donations, joint contributions from several families are acceptable provided each family contributes at least \$25,000. The donations can be spread over a period of 2 to 3 years, if desired. All major donations will be recognized on nicely designed marble plaques which will be placed at the appropriate locations. The names of all the donors contributing \$1,001 or more will be displayed on a marble plaque to be placed in the entry foyer of the new building.

LIST OF MAJOR DONATIONS

LOCATION & PLEDGE		LOCATION & PLEDGE	
RELIGIOUS COMPLEX (Existing Building)		CULTURAL COMPLEX (New Building)	
Library (in present hall)	\$41,000	Land	\$211,000
		Building	\$125,000
ATMA SADHANA KENDRA		Meeting Hall	\$100,000
(Post Office Building)		Wooden Temple	\$151,000
Land	\$151,000	Museum	\$75,000
Building	\$125,000	Atithi Bhavan I	\$75,000
Study Rooms 1-2-3-4 (each)	\$31,000	Atithi Bhavan II	\$61,000
		Swadhyay Rooms 1-2-3-4 (each)	\$51,000
		New Dining Hall	\$75,000
		New Audio-Video System	\$61,000
		Parking Structure	\$101,000
		Elevator	\$51,000

Treat animals as if they are your friends.
- Rohan Vora (9)

Jai Jinendra

Best Wishes

From

Dr. Manibhai & Savitaben Mehta

Minesh Mehta

Dr. Ashish & Asha Mehta

Karina & Shaina

11403 Tortuga Street, Cypress, CA Tel: (714) 898-3156

**With Best Compliments
to Jain Center**

From

Dr. Jayesh Shah

Ramila Shah

Jigar, Akash, & Avni

536 N. Alta-Vista, Monrovia, CA 91016

Tel: 626-357-9888

Jainism teaches us to care for other living things. One has to follow 'Live and let live'.

- Arati Kothari (8)

Educational Programs



Jain Center of Southern California
Paryushana 1998

સંસ્કાર સમૃદ્ધિના અંકુરા

અતિ સંતોષકારક આનંદની વાત છે કે “જૈના” દ્વારા નિયોજીત ‘નિબંધ હરિદાઈ ૯૮’ માં આપણા જૈન સેન્ટર ના ઘણા વિદ્યાર્થીઓ એ ઉમંગભેર ભાગ લીધો. તેમના આ નિબંધોમાથી કુલની પાંખડી રૂપ એક એક સુવાક્ય ૧૦ વર્ષની પુણીકૃતિ ના સુવેનીયરમાં પાને પાને અંકિત કરતા આનંદ થાય છે.

નિબંધ માં તેઓની સરળ શૈલી, ઉત્કૃષ્ટ ભાવ, ધર્મ પ્રત્યેની લાગણી અને નિર્ણયતા, તેમની કમજોરી નો એકરાર, તેમની શક્તિઓની સભાનતા, તેમની દ્રષ્ટિકોણ, તેમની ધર્મમાં ભિંજવવાની ભાવના અને ધર્મને આગળ લઈ જવાની કટિબદ્ધતા, તેમના હૈયાનો ઉમંગ, તેમનો ધર્મ પ્રત્યેનો ઉત્સાહ ખરેખર પ્રશંસનીય છે.

તેમના પોતાના પહેલાના આગવા ધર્મ સંસ્કારો, તેમના કુટુંબ તથા માતા-પિતાની અમુલ્ય કેળવણી, જૈન સેન્ટર માં પાઠશાળા ની વ્યવસ્થા અને પાઠશાળાના શિક્ષકોની ખંતભરી શિક્ષણ આપવાની પ્રવૃત્તિઓએ આ વિદ્યાર્થીઓને સંસ્કાર સમૃદ્ધિના અંકુરા રૂપ બનાવ્યા છે. આ સંસ્કાર સમૃદ્ધિ ના અંકુરાઓ પરિપક્વ થઈ નજીકના ભવિષ્યમાં મોક્ષ સુખના પરમ આનંદ ને પ્રાપ્ત કરવાની અભિલાષા કરે છે. તે પુર્ણ થાય તેવી પરમ કૃપાળુ પ્રભુ પાસે પ્રાર્થના અને શુભકામનાઓ સાથે જય જિનેન્દ્ર.

Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC)

Past and Present

by Shree Saileshbhai Jain

Jain families in LA area felt a need to educate their children in Jain religion. Very early classes were organized in 1982 at Rajulben and Rajenbhai Mehta's residence. Fifty to eighty children attended the Sunday classes. Later, classes were shifted to Sarlaben and Divyakantbhai's residence, before the Jain Center was built. Niranjambhai Shah, Girishbhai C. Shah and Mahendrabhai Khandhar taught religion at this early stage.

Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) was established, and children had their own president of the group. Piyush Mehta, Amit Kothari and Ajit Shah were amongst few of the children who served as the presidents of JCYC during these years.

Girishbhai C. Shah and Mahendrabhai Khandhar continued to teach (until 1994) religion when classes were shifted to the Jain Center in 1988. Adult classes were started at the Center for the parents. Girishbhai B. Shah has been teaching the adult classes. Saileshbhai Jain joined the team in late 1988 to teach Gujarati. Bindiben Doshi helped Saileshbhai with Gujarati classes. Geetaben Shah joined the team to teach one of the two Gujarati classes. Surendrabhai Jain taught Hindi at the center. This year Biren Mehta started religion classes for eighteen and older (college) youth. Pravinbhai Mehta joined him to help conduct the class. Savitaben Mehta started "Stutra" class this year. Our latest addition to our education system is English classes for our senior members.

Saileshbhai Jain started coordinating extra curricular activities for children at the Center. These activities included election of the JCYC president and the committee, picnic in the park and on the beach, roller skating, roller blading, ice skating, and visit to area theme parks. Children visited Christian Church, Jewish Temple, Buddhist Temple and Hindu Temple. Representatives from other religions were also invited to address our children at the Center. Informative seminars were held to improve life skills. Debates and discussions with religion background were introduced to provoke thought process of children. Forums were arranged for teenage children as well parents of the teenage children to improve understanding between the generations.

(Continued on next page)

Souls live forever while in the birth and rebirth cycles and also while in Moksha.

Akash Shah (10)



*Winter Camp - 97
Student Volunteer Team*



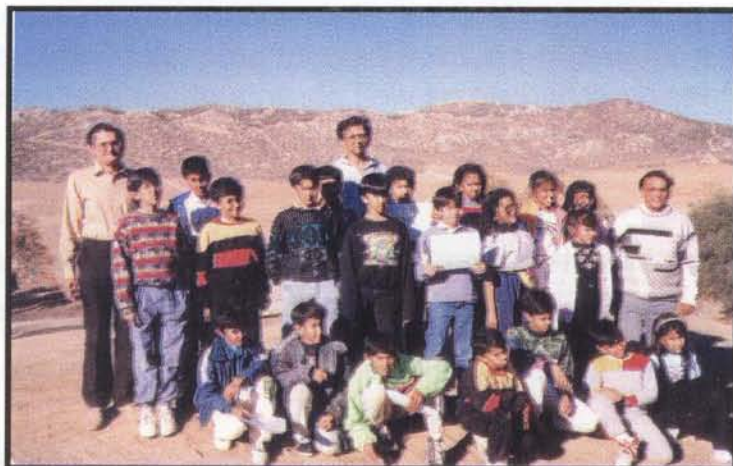
JCYC Graduation - 98



JCYC Early Years



JCYC Winter Camp - 96



Early Years - Winter Camp

Winter camp for children has been a regular annual event. Sixty to eighty children participate in the winter camps. Best part of the camp children enjoy is the opportunity to be with their friends and make new friends. They have ample free time besides religious studies to have fun at the camp. Evenings are filled with entertainment programs performed and arranged entirely by children. They wish the camp were for a week instead of three nights!

Girishbhai Shah was JCYC coordinator in the beginning years. Kalyanjibhai Mota and Pallaviben Gala followed Girishbhai C. Shah as coordinators for a brief period. Sailesbhai Jain was appointed as the JCYC coordinator in 1995 and continues to serve at present.

Participation of students at the Center has exploded in recent years. More than 250 students registered for the classes last year, and more than forty teachers gave their time to teach them. Majority of the children are under eleven years of age. However, there is a significant number of teenagers, which includes children over sixteen. It is an important fact that we have been able to attract older children to our Center. The older children are very involved in the Jain Center activities. They volunteer at events like medical camp and major event dinners. Last year they introduced temple cleanup, which shows that they take pride in their Center.

Recently JCYC committee arranged a "Fun and Game Day" for children of all ages. They helped younger children with creative painting on T-shirts. Children have been participating in the stage performances during special occasions like Paryushana and JCYC graduation. Our present JCYC presidents are Suken Jain and Karishma Shah. They have inspired their committee and other JCYC children to perform at levels above their past performances, and set a challenge to the future JCYC leaders. Our JCYC presidents, after the Center was built, include Suketu Khandhar, Rajiv Gala, Kamal Shah, Preeti Dudhekar, Sunita Mehta, Shayna Parekh, Mansi Shah and Kevin Shah.

Religious studies and language classes have become more fun for the children at the Center. Our children's knowledge of Jain philosophy is commendable. Recent essay competition on their understanding of Jain religion revealed their true potential. Everybody must read these essays. Knowledge of our native language amongst our children was best demonstrated recently in the stage drama during the JCYC Graduation Day.

(Continued on next page)

At Pathshala we learn Jainism. We also learn to tell the truth. We learn to respect others .
At Pathshala we learn to say Jai Jinendra. - Amy Shah (8)



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Equally we must appreciate the great effort provided by our teachers. We are very fortunate to have a dedicated team of teachers and volunteers. They have given their valuable time for our children, without any expectations in return. They feel rewarded when they see smiling faces of happy children. Their enthusiasm is contagious. More and more people are coming forward to be part of this incredible experience. Least we can do is to get to know these volunteers, and spend some time with our children at home to help with homework to make their job easy.

Our Center has come a long way, and stands the best in the nation. Credit is equally shared by our children as well as our volunteers, present and past. However, we shall not gloat in our glory. We shall not let our guards down. We still have a long way to go. With your support, we will continue our effort to make every improvement possible.

I will always remember my ultimate goal in life, which is total salvation.
- Anand Shah (15)

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I feel sorry for the animals that are eaten by the people. They don't deserve to die.
Animals have feelings too. - Paras Shah (9)

JCYC Class Structure - 1997-98

Students: 250

Teachers: 43

Other volunteers 20

Frequency of classes: Every other Sunday

Time: Sunday 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM and snack

Number of students in each Pathshala level and Teachers:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Age group</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
1	16	5 & 6	Poorvi Parekh, Parents
2	16	6 & 7	Chetna Savla, Parents
3	31	7 & 8	Dhiraj Dedhia
4	24	8 & 9	Smita Doshi, Urvashi Shah
5	27	9, 10 & 11	Suryakant Savla
6	28	10, 11 & 12	Prakash Gandhi, Naresh Mehta
7	19	11, 12 & 13	Yogesh Shah, Kavita Sanghvi
8	22	12, 13 & 14	Rajni Mody, Nitin Shah
9	22	14 & 15	Hasendra Shah, Bina Shah
10	21	16 & 17	Pallavi Gala, Ramesh Parekh
11	8	18 thru 24	Biren Mehta, Pravin Mehta
*	100	Adults	Girish B. Shah
*	20	7 & older	Savita Mehta, Padma Shah

Reserve backup Teachers: Amita Desai, Hasmita Parekh, Dipika Shah, Ramesh Khandhar,
Mahendra Khandhar, Girish C. Shah, Rashmi Shroff

Pathshala Coordinator: Shailesh Desai

Number of students in each Gujarati class and Teachers:

1	26	7, 8 & 9	Neetu Kothari, Chhaya Shah
2	21	10 thru 16	Jyoti Dedhia, Darshana Shah
3	32	7 thru 12	Pratibha Desai, Darshini Althal
4	35	8 thru 14	Jayana Shah, Pragna Solanki
5	20	10 thru 14	Usha Mehta, Rekha Doshi
6	15	10 thru 16	Sanyukta Sheth, Shardaben Turakhia (Ba)
7	12	12 thru 16	Pallavi Doshi, Rajeshvari Shah
8	18	13 thru 17	Dinesh Shah, Satish Shah

Reserve backup Teachers: Geeta Shah, Pratibha Mehta, Bina Shah

Gujrati Coordinator: Jayana Shah

Number of students in Hindi class, and Teachers:

1	19	7 thru 20	Surekha Chaplot, Sachi Jain, Heena Vyas
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Reserve backup Teachers: Sudha Jain, Indu Jain

Number of students in Adult English class, and Teachers:

1	8	All ages	Ramesh Jhaveri, Babubhai Shah
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Reserve backup Teachers: Heena Vyas

Other Volunteers: Registration: Jyoti Vadecha, Snack: Dhiren Mehta, Awards: Sunil Shah,
News Letter: Tejas Mehta, Performing Art: Prafulla Shah, Creative Art: Sachi Jain,
Curriculum: Vijay Sheth, Advisors: Virendra Shah, Sumati Shah, Shayana Parekh & others,
General Coordinator: Sailes Jain

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**In Jainism Gods are looked upon as roll models.
- Nikita Shah (11)**

JCYC Pathshala Teacher

by Pallaviben Gala

Our Pathshala has come a long way from its humble beginning of one class for students of all ages at a private home in 1982. We now have a variety of classes, designed for various age, ability, and needs of the students. On the 10th Anniversary of our Deraser, the Pathshala program is thankful for the constant support of subsequent Administrations and dedication of the teachers.

It has been the goal of JCSC to provide a wide range of opportunities for the students who want to learn about the Jain religion. Students are introduced to Jain studies starting with Navkar Mantra and names of the Tirthankars. They then go on to learn about the basic Jain principles like Ahimsa, Karma, Soul and Body. They also continue to learn more prayers. This is followed by the entry into the area of nine reals and 12 bhavnas, which they explore at increasingly higher levels as they advance. All along, the emphasis is on understanding the philosophy and applications in daily life in America.

The teachers work diligently to spark children's interest in Jainism. They spend time making sure that the students understand the concepts they are teaching. A variety of teaching methods is employed. Innovative hands-on projects work wonderfully for Pathshala-I students, whereas games and overhead projections interest Patshala-II students. The older students benefit from in-depth discussions of Jain principles as they relate to current events. The teachers strongly believe that for our next generation to follow and practice Jainism, it is essential that the students understand the fundamentals well.

As we identify new needs, we start a fresh class. That is how we started the Mommy-and-me, Teen discussion, and the Sutra classes. The Young Adults class got started for the same reason. The Pathshala remains dynamic and progressive in keeping up with the changing needs of the student body.

The results have been extraordinary. We now have about 250 students in 12 classes. They are learning about Jain religion from fundamentals to fine details. It is very rewarding for teachers and parents to see the children learn and apply Jain principles in their daily lives. The phenomenal growth and organized functioning of Pathshala has made JCSC truly the trailblazer in the field of Jain education in North America.

Ahimsa is a principle that Jains teach and practice not only towards human beings but towards all nature. Jains have compassion for all forms of life. - Shreyans Parekh (11)

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Jain religion says Jainism means understanding the nature of our soul.
- Nirvi Shah (8)

JCYC Presidents on 10th Anniversary

by Suken Jain & Karishma Shah

On a typical Sunday morning we wake up early and get ready for Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) class. We take the ride to Jain Center for Pathshala class. There we learn and talk about our Jain religion and how it affects our lives.

So far in our young lives, religion has played a significant role. It has not just been something that we do once every other week, but something that affects our lives daily. We have learned about things we should do, and how to follow our religion. After the religion class, we go to our language class. There, we learn one of two languages: Gujarati or Hindi. We learn the languages of the homeland of our parents and ancestors, and that helps us overcome the communication barriers between us and our elders.

After our classes we enjoy our snack, then spend time with our friends. We also have our event which we hold about once a month. Being around these people, we have developed friendships like no other. We have made and kept these friends and enjoy coming to temple and meeting all our friends. Being involved at Jain Center has given us a great feeling.

There is nothing like helping those in our community. There is nothing so satisfying than seeing a child's face light up from something you have done. It is even more so when you do something for many of them. We wish everybody would see this and suggest that you take up the opportunity.

Jainism fascinates me because it is based on Ahimsa.

- Forum Shah (9)

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Anybody who makes fun of you and you feel like kicking them or punching them, instead you could ignore and pretend that was a bird that was humming. - Ravi Shah (10)

Jain Pathshala Teachers Conference

by Pallaviben Gala

The Jain Pathshala Teachers' Conference for 1998 was held in Boston during May 23-25, 1998. This was the first such conference held in North America. Jain Center of Southern California was represented by our JCYC coordinator and JCYC committee member, teachers and parent volunteers. They included Sailes Jain, Virendra Shah, Vijay Sheth, Dhiraj Dedhia, Chetna Savla, Smita Doshi, Amita Desai, Shayna Parekh, and Pallavi Gala.

The goal of this conference was to come up with a standard curriculum for all the Pathshalas in Northern America. During the first general session, Pathshala coordinators from different centers gave an overview of educational and other activities going on at their centers.

The most well received presentation was made by our own teachers - Smita Doshi and Amita Desai. They showed using presentations and examples the innovative techniques of teaching complex Jain principles to youngsters. Their presentation was simply awesome and left audience wanting for more.

In summary, this meeting allowed us to network with Pathshalas coordinators and teachers at other centers. It gave us an opportunity to share what we are doing about Jain education here in Los Angeles area, and learn about successful programs at their centers.

The interest that the young people showed in study of Jainism was quite impressive indeed. Seeing their zeal, dedication and the ability to stay focused left the adults feeling quite confident about the future of Jainism in America.

I am proud to be a Jain and be able to follow the stuff that is good and stop the bad stuff.
- Darshak Shah (13)

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Jainism fascinates me because it is most gentle, nature-friendly and a non-violence based religion.
- Shrenik Shah (8)

JCYC Camp Report

by Bansari Shah

Almost every year there is a JCYC camp. 1995 camp was a great way to end the year. There were classes, talent shows, snowball fights, and much more during the four-day camp to keep the children busy. Adults from Jain Center volunteered to teach the classes and chaperon the children.

There were eight sessions of religious classes during the first three days. The Pathshala classes from Jain Center were divided into two groups. Group I was made of Pathshala I and II. Group II included Pathshala III and some students from Pathshala II. Group I studied about samayika, equanimity, pratikraman, destiny, 24 Tirthankaras, Navkar Mantra, Paryushana, knowledge and conduct. Group II studied about destiny, samayika, discernment, equanimity, theory of karma, rational perception, pratikramana, knowledge and conduct. A lot of hard work and dedication was put into these subjects by both students and teachers.

Every night the participants entertained others by performing skits, plays, dances, games, etc. Each individual was able to keep busy. Despite the number of activities, the snowball fights were the most popular at the camp.

On the third day, all participated in a three hour hike. This was a simultaneous activity with visitors day, where parents could come and see how their child is doing. Many of the parents participated in the hike. The hike seemed to help the bond between adults and children. With plenty of snow around, the hikes turned into snow ball fights. Even the adults got into the snow fights. It was one of the most exciting, yet relaxing events held at camp.

Everyone received three meals a day. The kids were happy since it was all non-Indian food, from pizza, spaghetti and lasagna to tostadas and burritos. Snacks were provided when one was hungry during a break. Sounds delicious, eh?

There was a test on the last day of camp. Most found the test not too hard, yet not too easy. A ceremony was held to honor those who did well on the test, and did some good deeds during the camp. Overall, the camp participants did a great job. The adults provided all kinds of help with lots of love and concern. Everyone had fun, learned quite a bit of religion and participated in other activities held by the volunteers. What a great way to end 1995 and a fantastic way to begin 1996.

We Jains are self reliant. We have vows rather than commandments. Nobody forces us to follow the spiritual path. - Anjuman Shah (8)

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I have great pride in myself. I feel great and happy to be Jain.
- Rohan Sheth (10)

Gujarati Classes

by Jayanaben Shah

Student 1: That was a hard test. I wish I had started the Gujarati class when you did. Then I would be able to read and write like you.

Student 2: Yes, that's true. Now I am glad my parents pursued me to come here ten years ago.

When parents hear words like these, one can be proud that we are passing on our culture, our language, and our heritage to our children. When teachers hear words like these, one can be proud that slowly but surely, we are making a difference in these students' lives.

These classes were pioneered ten years ago when the Jain Center first opened by Gitaben Shah and Shardaben Turakhia (Ba). The vision at the time was to give our children, who were born and raised in the United States, an opportunity to learn our language and communicate with their elders. In the last ten years, we have seen them not only accomplishing these goals, but also learning and enjoying a little of our history, culture, and rituals. Coming to the Jain Center has given them the feeling of belonging to something that they can inherit from their parents and can pass on to their own children.

Not only have Gujarati classes exceeded their goals, but they have grown from one class - two teachers, and 15 students to eight different classes, 16 teachers and over 225 students. The classes include: Beginner I and II; Intermediate I and II; Advanced I, II, and III; and Conversational.

The Conversational class is just an example of how we create new classes depending on the needs of the children. Since there were some teenagers who were interested in learning conversational skills, this class was started. Advanced III is another class which does not focus only on reading and writing. In fact, we teach them more about Gujarati culture, such as the significance of different festivals, the Indian national anthem, and our costumes.

All in all, the Gujarati classes have been a huge success and will continue getting better with continual support.

I try to be positive always. When I hear my parents say something I do as I'm told.
- Akash Shah (11)

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I find fascinating that for every deed that you do, you get a specific karma.
- Pinita Shah (14)

Hindi Classes

by Sachiben Jain

Hindi classes were started after having success with Gujarati classes. Surendra Jain was the first Hindi teacher. He taught for two years. At that time the classes were discontinued due to lack of interest.

Few years later there was a renewed interest and classes were started again. Surekha Chaplot and Sachi Jain have been teaching Hindi for the last two and a half years with help from Heena Vyas, Sudha Jain, Indu Jain and others. The first year we taught vowels, consonants and mantras. The second year we added grammar and short stories. This year we added a conversation class.

Our work is particularly challenging because we have children from ages 7 through 17 and at different proficiency levels all in the same class. We cannot split the classes because we have limited number of teachers and students.

We asked the students the reasons why they wanted to learn Hindi? The following are the two main reasons:

1. So they can communicate with their grandparents and other relatives when they visit India.
2. So they can understand Hindi movies.

As interest develops we will get better organized and learn from the experience and success of our fellow Gujarati teachers. Teaching is extremely rewarding most of the time and frustrating sometime. We encourage everybody to volunteer to teach and share our experience. The rewards are worth a lot more than the effort we put in. We will always cherish the love and respect we have received from our students.

Jainism fascinates me because I don't think bad thoughts and say bad words.
- Mehul Parikh (10)

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What hits me the most, is Jainism's compassion for all life.
- Tanvi Vyas (15)

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“જૈન ભવન માં સ્વાધ્યાય ને લગતી પ્રવૃત્તિનો પરિચય ”

પરમ કૃપાળુ ભગવંતની કૃપાથી ૧૯૮૮ માં જૈન ભવનનું સ્વપ્ન આપણા જૈન સમાજ માટે સાકાર થયું. સર્વના પુણ્યોદયના કારણે ધર્મ અભિલાષાની પ્રગતિ માટેનું આ પ્રથમ સોપાન.

આપણા બાળકો આપણી સંસ્કૃતિ અને ધર્મની ભાવનાથી ભિંજાય તે અપેક્ષાથી બાળકોને પ્રાથમિક જ્ઞાન મળે તે માટે પાઠશાળાના વર્ગો ૧૯૮૨ માં શરૂ થયા હતા.

પૂજ્ય શ્રી સુનંદાબેનને તેમની લોસ એંજલસ ની યાત્રા દરમિયાન એમ લાગ્યું કે બાળકોનાં વર્ગો ચાલે છે, અને માતા-પિતા તેમના બાળકોને વર્ગમાં મૂકી પોતાની અન્ય પ્રવૃત્તિ માટે ચાલ્યા જાય છે તેના કરતા માતા-પિતા પોતે જ આવા સુંદર વ્યવસ્થાવાળા આપણા ‘જૈન ભવન’ નો લાભ લે અને તેમના માટે પણ અભ્યાસ ની વ્યવસ્થા કરી હોય તો કાંઈ ખોટું નથી. વળી જ્યારે બાળકો પાઠશાળામાં શીખે અને તેમને કાંઈ પ્રશ્નો હોય તો ઘરે જઈ માતા-પિતા ને પૂછે ત્યારે સારી રીતે અને સાચી રીતે સંતોષકારક જવાબ આપવાની જવાબદારી માતા-પિતા ની છે અને તે માટે તેમણે પણ તૈયાર થવું જોઈએ. આવા ઉમદા હેતુથી, ૧૯૮૯ માં મોટાઓ (adult) માટે આવા વર્ગની શરૂઆત કરવા માટે પૂ. બેને ત્રણ અભ્યાસુ બેનોને તેની જવાબદારી સોંપી તેનું મંગળાચરણ કરાવ્યું.

૧૫-૨૦ ની સંખ્યાથી શરૂ થયેલા વર્ગમાં આજે દશ વર્ષ બાદ ૧૦૦ ઉપરાંત ભાઈ-બહેનો સુંદર અભ્યાસ કરી રહ્યા છે. ધર્મ અને અધ્યાત્મનો રસાસ્વાદ માણી રહ્યા છે.

શરૂઆતમાં જૈન દર્શનના તત્ત્વોનો પરિચય થાય તે આશયથી પૂ. કલાપૂર્ણસૂરીજી મહારાજ સાહેબ ના “સચિત્ર નવતત્ત્વ નો સરળ પરિચય ” નામનાં પુસ્તક નો આધાર લીધેલ. ત્યારબાદ પૂ. બેને કશ્મીથી પોતે તે પુસ્તકનાં આધારે પોતાની આગવી શૈલીમાં અને સરળતાથી સમજી શકાય તે રીતે સંપાદન કરી “ નવતત્ત્વનો સરળ પરિચય ” પુસ્તક લખ્યું અને વર્ગમાં તેનાં આધારે કરી નવે તત્ત્વો નો અભ્યાસ વ્યવસ્થિત અને પદ્ધતિસર શરૂ કર્યો. જે પુસ્તક અત્યાર સુધીમાં બે વાર પુનરાવર્તનને પામ્યું છે.

પ્રાથમિક વિચારણા વખતે આ અભ્યાસમાં ત્રણ વિષયો રાખેલ :

(૧) જૈન દર્શનનો પરિચય

(૨) સૂત્રો, તેના અર્થ અને સમજણ (જે માટે પંડીતજી શ્રી ધીરજલાલ મહેતા- ની કેસેટોની સહાય લેવામાં આવેલ)

(૩) જૈન દર્શનમાં આવતા દ્રષ્ટાંતો અને કથાઓ દ્વારા સિદ્ધાંતો સમજવા.

I pray everybody gets moksha, everybody has equanimity and contentment. I pray for peace in the world. - Amman Desai (8)

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**Ahimsa also means not to think bad. When you think bad you are still doing mental violence.
- Mona Shah (11)**

આ રીતે સમગ્રતયા જૈન દર્શન નો અભ્યાસ (comprehensive study) કરવાનો લાભ ધણા ભાઈ - બહેનોએ છેલ્લા દશેક વર્ષ માં લીધેલ છે.

આ અભ્યાસ દરમ્યાન નીચે જણાવ્યા પ્રમાણેનાં ત્રણ મુદ્દાઓ નો વિચાર કેન્દ્રમાં રાખી તે બાબતે પ્રયત્ન કરવામાં આવેલ.

- (૧) પરમોપકારી ભગવાન શ્રી મહાવીર સ્વામીએ પ્રણેતા સિધ્ધાંત ને બરાબર સમજવા.
- (૨) જૈન દર્શન વિષે નો ખ્યાલ (concept) બરાબર સ્પષ્ટ થવો જોઈએ.
- (૩) જૈન પારિભાષિક શબ્દોથી પરિચિત થવું જરૂરી છે.

આ મુદ્દાઓની ચકાસણી માટે લગભગ દરેક સૂત્ર/પાઠ પૂરો થાય ત્યારે ટેસ્ટ લેવાતી અને તેમાં પણ ધણા ઉત્સાહથી ભાઈ-બહેનો એ ભાગ લીધેલ.ત્યાર બાદ જ્યારે પુસ્તકનો અભ્યાસ પૂરો કર્યો ત્યારે સમગ્ર પુસ્તક નો ટેસ્ટ ૫ જુન ૧૯૯૪ માં લીધેલ. તેમાં ૯૨ પ્રશ્નો પુછવામાં આવ્યા હતા. તેના પરિણામ ઉપરથી એમ લાગે છે કે મહદઅંશે ઉપરના ત્રણ મુદ્દાઓ/આકાંક્ષાઓમાં સારી રીતે સફળતા પ્રાપ્ત થયેલ અને તે ભાગ લેનારા ભાઈ-બહેનોની ધગશ, ખંત, જિજ્ઞાસા અને પુરૂષાર્થને આભારી છે. તે માટે તેમને જેટલા ધન્યવાદ આપીએ તેટલા ઓછા છે.

આજે પણ સમગ્ર રાષ્ટ્ર માં જૈન સેન્ટર ઓફ સધર્ન કેલીફોર્નીયા નાં જૈન દર્શનના અભ્યાસ માટેના પ્રયત્નો પ્રત્યે માનની લાગણી જોવા મળે છે તેનું કારણ તેમાં ભાગ લેનારા ભાઈ-બહેનો નો પુરૂષાર્થ જ છે.

૧૯૯૬ માં સમગ્રપણે અને સધર્ન અભ્યાસના હેતુથી ચાર શિબિરો નવતત્વના વિષયો પર યોજેલ.જેમાં ૨૫૦ ભાઈ બહેનો એ ઉત્સાહપૂર્વક ભાગ લીધેલ. Slide presentation વિષયને સરળતા,વિસ્તાર અને સ્પષ્ટતાથી સમજવા માટે ઘણું ઉપયોગી નિવડેલ.

અત્યારે રવિવારના સ્વાધ્યાયમાં પૂજ્ય દીપરત્ન સાગરજી મહારાજ સાહેબે લખેલ પૂજ્ય ઉમાસ્વાતિ મહારાજ સાહેબનાં “તત્વાર્થ સૂત્ર ”ની અભિનવટીકા નો પહેલો અધ્યાય પૂરો કરી, બીજા અધ્યાય નો અભ્યાસ ચાલી રહ્યો છે.

નવા ભાઈ-બહેનોને મદદરૂપ થવાના હેતુથી, “નવ તત્વનો સરળ પરિચય” entry level/review તરીકે દર બુધવારે સાંજે ૮ થી ૧૦ થોડા સમય માટે લીધેલ.

તે સિવાય છેલ્લા ૧૫ વર્ષ થયા દર સોમવારે રાતના ૮-૩૦ થી ૧૦ સુધી સ્વાધ્યાય ચાલે છે તેમાં ૩૦-૩૫ ભાઈ-બહેનો નિયમિત ભાગ લે છે. અત્યાર સુધીમાં “દ્રવ્ય સંગ્રહ ” અને “તત્વજ્ઞાન તરંગીણી ” નો સુંદર અભ્યાસ પૂરો કર્યો છે અને હાલમાં પૂ. ગુણભદ્રાચાર્ય ના “ આત્માનુશાસન ” નો અભ્યાસ ચાલે છે.

Jainism has had a deep and profound impact on my life and the way that I lead it. It is the mold for my moral character. - Chaitali Gala (17)

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Lord Mahavir taught us that each soul is independent and equal. Also, each soul is capable of
being God itself. - Nayatri Shroff (8)

૧૯૮૨ થી ૬૨ ગુરુવારે સાંજે ૮ થી ૧૦ સુધી સ્વાધ્યાય ચાલે છે. તેમાં અત્યાર સુધીમાં “આત્મસિધ્ધિ” અને “આનંદધન ચોવીશી” નો અભ્યાસ પુરો કર્યા પછી “સમયસાર” નો અભ્યાસ ચાલે છે.

જૈન સેન્ટર સમાજના વધુ સભ્યો આવી પ્રવૃત્તિઓનો વધુને વધુ લાભ લે, અને તે, સભ્યોને પોતાને માટે, તેમના કુટુંબ માટે તેમજ સમગ્ર સમાજ માટે લાભદાયી નિવડે તેવી આશા પ્રગટ કરે છે.

I hope that I will expand and promote Jainism in the future and hard obstacles will creep away from me. - Dipam Doshi (12)

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For one thing, when I practiced Jainism it makes me feel happy and a bit satisfied. It makes me feel right and sure of myself. - Shانهi Shah (11)

Swadhyay in Diamond Bar / Walnut area

Shree Rameshbhai Khandhar and Yogeshbhai J. Shah

These classes were started in early 1996 following a JCYC winter camp. Rameshbhai Khandhar initiated a discussion about winter camp experiences with some of the friends at a get-together. This was followed by questions about Jainism, Karmas and how it affected us. The discussion took a new turn as more people joined in this interesting and fascinating exchange of ideas. After an educational and enjoyable discussion, many participants liked the idea to have a Swadhyay on regular basis.

Yogeshbhai J. Shah called several area families to discuss possible class, time and place, and decided to put it in action. These efforts resulted in a regular Swadhyay in Diamond Bar/Walnut area.

First swadhyay was held at a Jain family home in Diamond Bar in January 1996. The topic was "27 questions of Gandhiji to Shrimad Rajchandra". Everyone agreed to meet at 10:30 AM on every other Sunday for two hours, when there is no JCYC class at Jain Bhavan. The first swadhyay was attended by about eight adults. The attendance grew to about 25 to 30 adults as more people learned about it. After "Gandhiji's questions" were completed in about three months, everyone was ready to study Atma-Siddhi which contains the essence of Jainism. The book "I am soul" by Pujya Tarulatabai Mahasatiji is used as a reference book to study Atma-Siddhi.

Later, Dilipbhai Shah joined the swadhyay and taught the participants interesting topics like, the meaning of Namokar Mantra, Siddha-Chakra, etc. Both Rameshbhai and Dilipbhai have been adding Jain stories at the end of each swadhyay session and making the discussions more interesting for everyone.

These swadhyays are held at different Jain family homes. Yogeshbhai J. Shah maintains the class schedule. Usually the classes are suspended during summer or when Jain dignitaries from India are invited at our Center for discourses and shibir.

For more information on this swadhyay, please contact Yogeshbhai J. Shah at 909-861-3557 or Rameshbhai Khandhar at 909-598-1777.

In my opinion it is more important to let Jainism reflect through your every day actions in life. - Deepa Shah (15)

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**College is the transition from adolescence to true adulthood and I have to use Jainism
to ensure that it is a smooth one. - Maulik Shah (17)**

Young Adult Swadhyay

by Biren Mehta

It's been a common trend at our temple for youth to attend Pathshala classes until the ripe age of sixteen or so. For many years the older high school and young college students have limited their visits to only major celebrations such as Mahavir Jayanti. There has been a gap in the spread of ages that attend the Derasar regularly. Many young adults do not see a reason to come because there is no regular meeting or a group of their peers.

In an effort to unify young Jain adults, mainly college students and high school seniors, the Jain Study Group was formed in late 1997. The group meets once a month at Jain Bhavan and the participation is restricted to students of age eighteen and above. The first meeting was a workshop explaining the importance of Jain religion in the lives of young adults. Binders with some introductory material were distributed at that meeting. It was attended by about 25 students.

Often, it is difficult for us to learn about spiritual theories because of the language barrier. The idea behind the Jain Study Group is to provide young adults with the opportunity to enhance their understanding of these concepts in English. One of the first steps in the process of developing a new class was to find out the interest level about certain topics. In order to make the two-hour sessions effective, it was necessary to emphasize practical concepts about each topic. For example, when discussing karma theory, we spend an hour discussing the mechanism of how it works, and then during the second hour we discuss how our daily action attract the karmic matter. The goal is to leave the class with ideas that will be thought about on a regular basis while performing routine activities. The Group's focus is on the concerns and issues facing young Jain adults living in Western society. It is meant to be interactive; a forum where we can share and explore the perspective of our peers.

In recent months the lecture topics have been: The purpose of life, the effect of addictions, and the karma theory. Following the lecture, we discuss various topics that have a practical impact on our lives. The discussions have ranged from personal issues such as practicing Jainism in our everyday lives to political issues like euthanasia and capital punishment.

Jainism is very clear and to the point in its teachings.

- Hemali Shah (15)

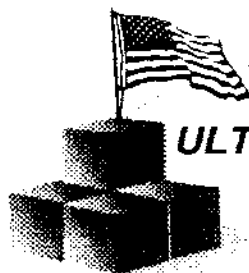
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English Classes for Senior Citizens

by Shree Sailesbhai Jain

Jain Center has a large population of senior citizens. They participate and enjoy many activities at our center. Many of them feel that they are missing out on few other pleasures of life because they do not know English.

One important pleasure they miss is the communication with their grand children, even though we at Jain Center are making progress in teaching our children our languages. Second important factor is that they are hesitant to go out to market or in public because they can not communicate in English.

Jain Center has started English classes for senior citizens, and others who want to learn to communicate in English. Shree Ramesh Jhaveri volunteered to teach the class. Shree Babubhai Shah joined in the teaching duties as the classes continued.

We started with four students, and reached to ten students. We are getting calls from people who are interested in teaching the class. We will have more teachers as they become available. We expect more students to join the class.

In the future I will become a teacher at the Jain center and I will try to become the president of Jain center. - Sunil Parekh (11)

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Jain teachings have taught me not to look at a problem or a suggestion at one angle, you should look at them with different points of views too. - Puja Sheth (13)

A Good Deed Worth Mentioning
Jain Center Clean Up Day
by Suken Jain

On Sunday, July 27, 1997, JCYC held it's first Jain Center Clean Up Day. Planned by the JCYC committee, youth and adults came out to do all they could to clean up our place of worship. The Jain Center takes pride in the services of our volunteers and requests others to join in this worthy cause to enhance the beauty of our "second home".

The work that needed to be done included cleaning the fans, TVs, kitchen, pooja room, side storage area in pooja room, shoe racks, silver lamp, white boards, office, polishing rails, removing tape in halls, shower rooms, bathrooms, guest room and arranging chairs. At first, doubts of finishing the tasks arose, but volunteers kept coming in throughout the day and the task began to look attainable.

This event began at ten in the morning and lasted until six in the evening. Some people stayed for the whole day and others were there for part of the time. Most of the volunteers were children. There were about 45 children volunteers from ages 7 to 22. They were split in groups and put in a lot of hard work, while using team work. There were about 15 adults, and they put in their share of hard labor too.

The planning and spirit of participation made the event very successful. All of the planned work was completed. After adding it all up, there were over 300 man hours put into this event. The volunteers were rewarded with candy, and a lunch of Jain pizza and soda. Starting with this program, we have come up with a system to make this a regular event with less work.

We plan to have two to three clean up days per year so we can keep our place of worship clean. Look for these opportunities in the coming months and plan on joining us in sharing the tasks.

I, along with the rest of JCYC committee and others, would like to thank all who came out and gave their time and effort.

I finally felt that internal happiness is within myself. I felt the difference between my body and soul and found it is not necessary to eat for the soul to survive. - Bansari Shah (14)

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I am fascinated by the principles of Jainism which stands for everything that is right faith,
knowledge and conduct. - Siddharth Dangi (9)

Maintaining And Representing Our Religious And Cultural Identity As Jains In North America

by Chandrakant J. Parekh

The celebration of the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the Jain Center of Southern California in 1998 is a fitting tribute and a major testament to the challenge of *Maintaining And Representing Our Religious And Cultural Identity As Jains In North America*. This topic is also the subject of the 1998 JAINA National Essay Competition. Both of these events are of great significance to me. Ten years ago, I had the privilege of serving as a Vice President in the Executive Committee led by Dr. Manibhai Mehta which oversaw the planning, construction and inauguration of the Jain Center. Ten years later, I have the honor of serving as one of the three judges, with Dr. Bruce Costain (Balbhadra) from Toronto, Canada and Dr. Dilip Shah from Oakbrook, Illinois, to review 123 essays submitted by the Jain youths from all over the United States and Canada.

Our Jain Center was the first custom designed facility in North America to meet the religious, cultural and social needs of a Jain community. For the past 10 years, our Jain Center has been a focal point for religious, educational, cultural, community service, and outreach activities. These activities and the size of our community have increased steadily, and we now need to re-plan our facilities to fulfill the demands of our expanded community. Once again, I have the privilege of serving as a member of the Jain Center Building Committee and our goal is to integrate and develop the existing Jain Bhavan and the adjoining properties into a multi-use Jain Bhavan Complex. The facilities being planned will include a religious complex with an enlarged Derasar and Gyan Mandir (JAINA National Library), a cultural complex with a large meeting hall, the wooden replica of the Palitana temple, a museum and underground parking, and an Atma Sadhana Kendra complex for Swadhaya and Pathshala activities. These amenities will once again help us to reinforce our commitment to represent and preserve our religious and cultural identity well into the future.

As mentioned earlier, 123 youths ranging in age from 5 to 19 years rose to the challenge of expressing their ideas and commitments in an essay competition on the topic of *Maintaining And Representing Our Religious And Cultural Identity As Jains In North America*. As a testimonial to the success of our Pathshala program, the bulk of the essays, a total of 101 entries, were submitted from the Jain Center of Southern California. The essays were categorized under four age groups (5-10 years, 11-14 years, 15-18 years, and 19 year and above), and were assessed for richness of content, clearness of presentation, quality of language, and details of the personal practice and a personal plan. While the first, second, and third place winners will be recognized in each of the four age categories, in my estimation all of the 123 participants are winners. These youths candidly expressed their thoughts and shared their feelings about being a Jain (a great sense of pride and joy), their understanding of the Jain religion (remarkably good and detailed knowledge), their personal practice (strong ethics and awareness about Ahimsa and vegetarianism), and their personal plan (unwavering commitment to uphold and promote the Jain principles). Having had the privilege of reviewing all these essays, I feel very confident that the future of Jainism in North America is well assured into the next millennium.

**Congratulations to
Jain Center on their 10th Anniversary
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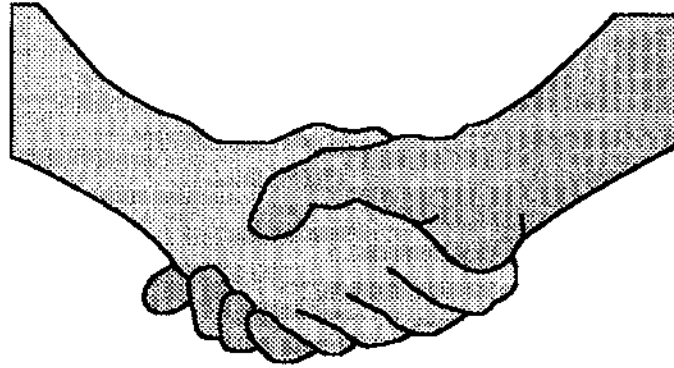
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My answer to being vegetarian is that I respect animals and I don't think it is fair to kill them for a temporary pleasure to my tongue. - Nikhil Vasa (13)

Community Outreach Programs



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Paryushana 1998

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I think that Jainism is truly the way of life which will help me to stay on the right path and show others to do the same. - Ronak Jhaveri (13)

Jain Association of Young Adults (JAYA)

by Neha Shah

Jai Jinendra! My name is Neha and I have been the president of the youth group, JAYA, at the Jain Center of Southern California for the past two years. We have established a volunteer service program where youths assist doctors at the annual medical expo and serve food during Jain Center regular programs.

JAYA publishes a youth newsletter *Jiva* in which we address religious and social issues that Jain youth experience. The newsletter also has a "Dear Jiva" section where youths ask questions and express their opinions on issues.

JAYA held numerous activities that enabled Jain youths to interact with each other. We organized many forums where religious, social and first generation adjustment issues were discussed. Religious awareness was created for Jainism and other religions. The youth group visited a Buddhist temple and learned the principles of Buddhism. This activity made the youths realize the many similarities between Jainism and Buddhism.

We put together a youth program at Jain Center during Mahavir Jayanti. We held a fashion show that modeled Western and Indian clothes that were made of animal-free products. Along with the fashion show many youth girls took a trip to the Newport Beach Fashion Island Mall where they were made aware of make-up products that were cruelty-free.

We also held two successful bonfires at the beach where youths came together for a casual social purpose. Lastly, we held three banquets where youths from all over came together to enjoy music, dancing and food. We continue to strive to balance the religious and social aspects of activities for the Jain youths of Southern California. As a result, awareness of religion developed, understanding of our society and culture enhanced and more importantly a sense of connection occurred among the youths.

Without Jainism in my life, I would be a lost soul. To me being a Jain is a privilege.

- Sonal Sheth (13)



Children Dance at Mahavir Jayanti



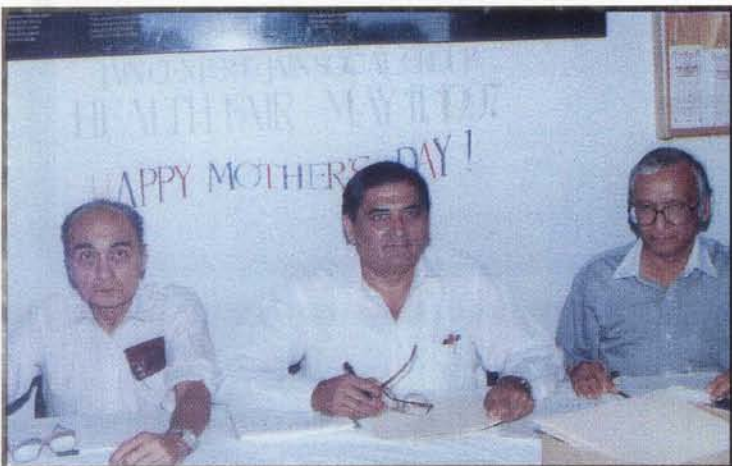
Children Dance at Mahavir Jayanti



Children in a Play



Physicians at Medical Expo



Registration Desk at Medical Expo



Participants at 1998 YJA Convention

3rd Biennial YJA Convention - "Back to Basics"

by Mona Vadecha, YJA Western Regional Coordinator & Director of Events

The 3rd Biennial Young Jains of America (YJA) convention was held during July 2 to 5, 1998 in Houston, Texas. YJA and the Houston Convention Committee worked together to ensure that the convention is a successful educational and social experience for all the participants. There were 725 youth in attendance from all around North America, approximately 80 of whom were from the Los Angeles area.

The convention was held at the beautiful Del Lago Resort Hotel, where large convention facilities were available. Distinguished dignitaries and professors from around the world were invited to discuss Jainism and related philosophical issues with the youth. Invited speakers included: Benjamin Zephaniah, Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji, Sadhvi Shilapji, Balabhadraji (Bruce Costain), Dr. Cromwell Crawford, and Professor Janice Leoshko. Benjamin Zephaniah, a renowned African poet and professor, was the keynote speaker, and he was able to bring the crowd to its feet with his passionate speech about our need to go back to the "Basic Good" of society.

There were also a great number of youth that participated as presenters or moderators for workshops at the convention. Among them were several youth from the Los Angeles area, specifically--Sarita Vasa, Neil Vadecha, Nimesh Desai, and Niraj Shah. The topics they covered ranged from the application of Aparigraha (limiting the possessions) to our daily lives to the ethical implications of new biotechnological procedures. The information and enthusiasm of the youth moderators were impressive.

In addition to educational seminars and discussions, there were many opportunities for social interaction at the convention. A social activity was planned for each night of the convention. On first night, there were ice-breaker. On the next night, there was a garba/raas, and on the final night, there was a formal dinner and dance. These activities allowed the participants to relax and gave them the opportunity to get to know others. The convention ended on Sunday with a tour of the Jain Society of Houston and some good homemade food (yum yum!!!).

All convention participants went home with something --- be it a new understanding of Jain principles or a new friend with whom they will stay in touch over the years. Hopefully future YJA conventions will be greeted with as much enthusiasm as this convention. It is this strong support, from both the youth and adults in our community, that will ensure the growth of Jainism in the Western world.

Violence is not needed in life.

- Amy Shah (12)



Mahavir Mandal



Mahavir Mandal Performing Pooja



Ladies at Bhavna Bhakti



Late Shree U.N. Mehta and Wife Addressing the Audience



Patient at Bidada Medical Camp



Single Indian Friends on an Outing

શ્રી મહાવીર સ્વામીને નમઃ

શ્રી જૈન મહાવીર મંડળ

ભારતીય સંસ્કૃતિ અને સંસ્કારોમાં ધર્મભાવના અને સમાજ શ્રેયસ્કર ભાવના પરાપૂર્વથી આત્મસાત્ થયેલી છે. આ પાવનકારી ધર્મ ભાવનાઓ આપણાં જૈન ભાઈ-બહેનોમાં પ્રસરાવવા પરસ્પરના સહકારથી ધાર્મિક કાર્યો કરવા તથા સમાજ સેવા કલ્યાણના ઉદાત્ત કાર્યો કરવાના શુભ આશયથી આ મહાવીર મહિલા મંડળની સ્થાપના ૧૯૮૦ માં કરવામાં આવી હતી. આ મંડળની સ્થાપના કરી ત્યારે દેરાસર ન હતું અને ત્યારે મંડળની બહેનો ઘરે પૂજા ભણાવવા જતી હતી. એક બીજાના સહકારથી સામુહિક, ધાર્મિક અને સામાજિક પ્રવૃત્તિઓ કરી શકે એવા ઉદ્દેશથી આ સંસ્થાની સ્થાપના કરવામાં આવી હતી. આ મંડળ પાપાપગલી કરતા કરતા આજે ૧૯ માં વર્ષમાં પ્રવેશ્યું છે. જે ઉમંગથી આ મંડળની સ્થાપના કરવામાં આવી હતી તેને સાંગોપાંગ પાર પાડવામાં ધર્મપ્રિય સેવાભાવી સભ્ય બેનો છેલ્લા ૧૯ વર્ષથી નિષ્ઠા અને નિષ્કામ ભાવે જે કાર્ય કરી રહ્યા છે, તેનું મૂલ્ય આંકી શકાય તેમ નથી. આ મંડળ ના સ્થાપનાર વસંતબેન શાહ અત્યારે તન, મન, ધનથી નિષ્કામ ભાવે આ મંડળનું સંચાલન કરી રહ્યા છે. આ મંડળની પ્રવૃત્તિઓ બે પ્રકારની છે - ધાર્મિક અને સામાજિક.

ધાર્મિક પ્રવૃત્તિઓ : આ મંડળ આખા વર્ષ દરમિયાન ૫૦ થી ૬૦ ભગવાનની પુજાઓ ભણાવે છે. સ્નાત્ર તથા પૂજા રાગ રાગીણી સાથે, અર્થ સભર, દુહા સહીત ભાવ થી ભણાવે છે. જેમકે પંચકલ્યાણક, નવપદજીની, અંતરાય કર્મ નિવારણ, વેદનીય કર્મ, નવાણું પ્રકારી, સત્તર ભેદી, વિ. તેજ પ્રમાણે અમારી બહેનો મહાવીર સ્વામી, પાર્શ્વનાથ પ્રભુ અને આદિનાથ પ્રભુના કલ્યાણક પ્રસંગોના આબેહુબ મહોત્સવો ઉજવે છે. લોસ એંજલસના પરામાં બધેજ પૂજા ભણાવવા જાય છે. તેમજ ગૌતમ સ્વામીની પૂજા પણ ભણાવે છે. ભક્તામર સ્વાધ્યાય, સિમંધર સ્વામી અને ગૌતમ સ્વામી ના એકાસણા, આયંબિલ વિ. ખૂબ ઉત્સાહથી ક્રિયા સહિત કરાવવામાં આવે છે. સહુના સંગઠનથી છેલ્લા ૧૯ વરસથી ઇશ્વર કૃપા અને વડીલોની સદ્ભાવનાથી સામુહિક સામાયિક, જાપ સફળતાપૂર્વક અખુટ શ્રદ્ધાથી ચાલી રહ્યાં છે. સભ્ય બેનો ૫૦ છે.

આ મંડળની અન્ય પ્રવૃત્તિઓમાં અમારી નાની બહેનો, વહુ દિકરીઓ અને પ્રૌઢ બહેનોની ખૂબજ જરૂર છે. જો નાની ઉંમરની બહેનો આવે તો મંડળ પોતાના કાર્યક્રમો આપી શકે. દર મહિને દેરાસરમાં સ્નાત્ર પૂજા ભણાય તો આપણા સંઘ તથા શહેર માટે માંગલિક છે. ૧૯૯૯ માં સ્નાત્ર પૂજા ભણાવવાના ક્લાસ શરૂ કરવાના છે. મહિને એકવાર સ્નાત્ર પૂજા શરૂ થી શીખવવામાં આવશે. નાની બહેનો, વહુ દિકરીઓ અને માતા તથા સાસુ વહુઓ મેંબર થઈ આ સંસ્થાને સાથ, સહકાર અને પ્રોત્સાહન આપે એવી અભિલાષા છે. ભાવનામાં પણ કાર્યક્રમ આપવા માટે અમે તૈયાર કરીશું.

જય જીનેંદ્ર

શ્રી વસંતબેન શાહ

I think Jainism is the best culture and I really watch out for other human beings and living creatures. - Nishita Doshi (11)

The time will come when men will look on the murder of animals as they now look on the murder of men. — Leonardo da Vinci

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Jain Seniors Association

by Shree Rashmibhai Shah

Our Jain community has grown significantly and the Jain Center has undertaken numerous projects to better serve the special needs of our children, teens and young adults. Similar intentions led to the creation of the Jain Seniors Association (JSA) which is now in its third year.

The membership has grown to 65 individuals and families, all of whom pay nominal dues to be part of this organization. There is an executive committee which in consultation with its members, decides upon the programs for the group and arranges six to eight events a year. Programs address not only the religious but also social needs of this specific group.

The organization provides members with an opportunity to spend time together and share with each other their unique experiences of past and present. The events are well advertised and coordinated. The full participation of most members reflects upon the dedication and good heartedness of our committee members and volunteers who contribute time, money, and energy to make every event a memorable one.

Chaitya-Paripati, Diwali, Rangoli competition, picnics, and sight seeing tours are just a few of the events that have been arranged in the past. Our bus journeys are always sold out in advance. Chaitya-Paripati has become so popular that we are not able to accept all the invitations that are extended to us.

JSA members would like to thank all those Jain families who not only invited us to their homes and made elaborate arrangements at their own expense to entertain everybody, but also made generous donations to our Jain Center.

Quite a few of our seniors have no social outings with their peers and are non-drivers. Thus they depend upon other organizations like JSA, SAHARA, AISA etc. to see and visit new places. More events such as those mentioned above need to be arranged to give them relief from their dull and dependent routine lives. We are also looking into the possibility of availing a vehicle to provide transportation to those elders who are unable to participate in various activities sponsored by our Jain Center. If you wish to make a donation towards this, please let us know and together, we can go much farther to serve our seniors. One thing that we cherish most is our Indian cultural heritage, and this has taught us to give our utmost love and respect to our elders.

When I have a bad dream, I always count Navkar Mantra which gives me security.

- Chandani Shah (9)

Congratulations To Jain Center Of Southern California

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I always tell the truth at home and at school. Sometimes it gets me in trouble but I think that
telling the truth is better. - Neil Solanki (8)

Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)

Jain Center of Southern California was the main force behind bringing all Jains together in North America and made possible the formation of JAINA. The hard work and dialog with all the then established Jain Centers continued for almost a year and culminated in the first ever and formative convention of JAINA in Los Angeles in 1981.

This was possible because of blessings of Acharya Sushil Muniji & Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, guidance from Prof. Padmanabh Jaini, enthusiastic support of our members, and spirit of cooperation by all Jain Societies/Centers.

About 15 organizations across North America participated in the formation of the federation, although not all could attend the first convention hosted by our Jain Center in Los Angeles. The constitution was adopted with the objectives and working of the management. It was decided to hold biennial convention with the election of the new committee. Our then-VP Lalit C. Shah was elected as the First President. The name of the organization was agreed to be Federation of Jain Associations in North America or JAINA in short.

The 9th (most recent) JAINA convention with Dr. Manibhai Mehta of our Jain Center as JAINA president was held in Toronto in 1997 and was attended by over 7000 members. All across North America Jains are getting together and keeping their identity and teaching main principles of Jainism - Ahimsa, Anekantvad and being vegetarian. JAINA has done humanitarian and social work in India and other countries. The educational activities of JAINA are helping all Jain Centers to provide material for classes and help in setting the curriculum.

The JAINA library with over 8000 books and many Audio / Video cassettes will move to Los Angeles in late 1998.

It is gratifying that because of hard work and dedication of the successive Committees, and Administrations, today JAINA has grown to about 54 member Societies/Centers with international stature, excellent link with India, humanitarian activities, children's education and progressively successful geographically dispersed nine biennial conventions.

A classroom is where everyone learns, the student and the teacher.
- Kaanan Shah (12)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



Kumudchandra Balubhai Shah
(12/16/29-5/7/98)



Dr. Sheela Nitin Shah
(2/14/53-3/23/90)

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS
FROM

Mrs. Rasilaben Kumudchandra Shah
Dr. Nitin Kumudchandra Shah and
Hiten Nitin Shah

Another theme of Jainism is that of self discipline.
- Reena Shah (12)

Medical Expo

by Dr. Nitin Shah

The first health camp or medical expo was held in April of 1991 at the initiation and recommendation of Jain Social group - LA. About 20 medical and paramedical professionals started the medical expo at the Jain Center. Ever since that humble beginning, the expo has become an annual event.

The health camp is jointly sponsored by Jain Center of Southern California and Jain Social Group of Los Angeles. It takes place at Jain Bhavan in Buena Park. The whole Center is converted into a clinic. Almost all the major medical services are covered at this expo. The scope of the expo has been expanded every year to accommodate growing community needs.

The medical expo lasts from about 10 AM to 4 PM on a Sunday. The atmosphere is like a big get-together where everybody from seniors to children have something to look forward to. They may be there for check up or to help in many different ways or just to have fun visiting friends. Whatever the case may be people turn out in big numbers on that day at Jain Center. The number of people taking advantage of these services has gone from 100 in 1991 to nearly 300 in 1998.

Over last eight years there has been phenomenal growth in the health camp. Over 100 professionals donated the time at the last medical expo held on April 19th 1998. Over 25 medical specialties are represented at the medical expo. The attendees are examined and obtain guidance from physicians on their health concerns. The expo is primarily a preventive measure and helps diagnose potential health problems. The patients are advised to follow through to take proper care of their condition.

In addition to several physicians, medical technologists, and volunteers, several professional organizations provide their services during the medical expo. These include Irish Cantor Center for Breast Imaging and Mobile Mammography of UCLA, Indo-American Association of Medical Laboratory Professionals, Kaiser Permanente, Marquette Electronics, Mission City Community Network, Secure Horizons, UCI Medical Center, Van Nuys Laboratories, and others.

(continued on next page)

Jainism enriches my life and gives me the key to unlock the mysterious doors of life.

- Bansari Sheth (13)

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My answer to being vegetarian is that I respect animals and I don't think it is fair to kill them for a temporary pleasure to my tongue. - Nikhil Vasa (13)

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Flu Vaccinations

Flu vaccinations were administered for the first time at the Jain Center during October - November of 1995. About 100 people took advantage of this free service. Since then it has become an annual event. In 1997, Dr. Nitin Shah administered flu vaccinations to approximately 300 people which also included a few non-Indian senior citizens from the Buena Park area. The vaccinations are provided by Orange County Health Department. This annual event is of great benefit not only to our community but also for all the senior citizens living in the city of Buena Park and the neighboring communities.



I will tell myself everyday that "I shouldn't be attached to anything in life because what am I going to take with me when I die or leave Earth." - Rachana Shah (13)

Shree Bidada Sarvodaya Trust

Non-Profit Charitable Organization

Bidada Hospital
Village Bidada, Mandvi, Dist. Kutch, Gujarat
India 370435; Tel: (028348) 4444

Maru Hospital
286-B, Dr. Ambedkar Road, Parel,
Mumbai - 400012;
Tel: 4146111, 4146122; Fax: 4154444

Congratulations on the Tenth Anniversary of Jain Center of Southern California

**Bidada Sarvodaya Trust Thanks All the Board of Directors and
Members of Jain Center of Southern California for Participating in
the Medical Camp.**

- Eye Camp
- Medical Camps
- Dental Camp
- Surgical Camps

<http://www.Bidada.com>

Please support the humanitarian work carried out by the Trust. During the past 24 years, more than 1.25 million patients have been treated during the medical and surgical camps, thanks to people like you. Your contributions make our work possible.

Join us as a physician or volunteer in the next medical camp, held every January.

Your contributions could save someone from blindness, suffering from heart illness or any other diseases, some of which if left untreated could result into death.

For further information contact:

Dr. Manibhai Mehta 714-898-3156
Popat Savla 818-792-6992
Ramesh Shah 909-861-0736

Navin Gangar 714-283-0323
Vijay Chheda 714-573-1324

Send your tax deductible contributions to help the sick and needy.

Make checks payable to Jain Center of Southern California, ref: Medical Camp.
Mail to: Dr. Manibhai Mehta, 11403 Tortuga St., Cypress, CA 90630

Jainism teaches total self-control.
- Shrivan Kamdar (15)

Medical Camp - Bidada, India

Shree Navin Gangar

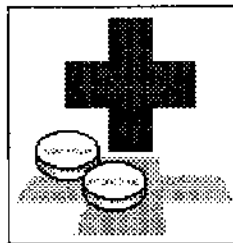
One must see in person to believe the dedication and hard work of the volunteers of the Bidada Medical Camp. We consider ourselves fortunate to be associated with such a noble and humanitarian work. The Bidada hospital is entering its 25th year of medical services to the sick and needy people in the district of Kutchh (Gujarat), Rajasthan, and other parts of the country. The hospital started with the eye and dental camps. It is located about 800 miles northwest of Mumbai. Bidada, though a village of approximately 5000 people, provides one of the best medical facilities in entire Kutchh.

The hospital was built in 1985 with 40 beds taking care of eye, dental, general check up, pathology facility, x-ray facility and two surgery units. Bidada hospital has been treating and examining patients from 18 different medical faculties. Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) got involved with this humanitarian project eight years ago.

A major medical camp is organized during the month of January each year at which approximately 13,000 patients are examined. Patients needing major surgeries are referred to hospitals in Mumbai. Several more special surgical camps are organized by the hospital during the year. In the last 24 years, 1.3 million patients have been examined and 34,000 patients have been operated at Bidada hospital. Approximately 2,955 patients have been called to Mumbai for major operations.

Members of Jain Center of Southern California have supported the activities of the Bidada Trust since 1991. Many members have visited the facilities as well as personally participated with their professional medical services at these camps. The Trust congratulates the Jain Center on its 10th anniversary.

We herewith give thanks to the Jain Center of Southern California for helping the Trust in every way possible and we hope the Jain Center of Southern California will continue to support the Trust's medical activities in the future.



I will be talking about Jainism because I am Jain and if you are not, I hope, you will be Jain in couple of weeks or months. - Neel Shah (10)

*Best Compliments
to
Jain Center*

From

Hersh – Sheel

&

Nishith and Mina Choksi

*Congratulations
On The Tenth Anniversary*

*Wishing Jain Center Continued Growth and Success
With Best Compliments from*

Rasik & Manjula Sheth
Nilesh, Purvi, Palak, Nirali

And

Hitesh, Kajal, Mitali, Samir & Komal Sheth

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As for the promotion of Jainism, my practices will be and should be self-promoting. I pray God to
give me sense to pursue the path set by them. - Hirav Gandhi (9)

Share and Care of Greater Los Angeles Approaching 10th Anniversary

by Maltiben Maheta and Virendrabhai Shah

It all began in 1989 with Irvine High School students donating 65 pounds of used clothes for the poor and needy people in India. The clothes were shipped to India, through Share and Care foundation of New York / New Jersey (NY/NJ). After founding a Los Angeles chapter the following year, more clothes were shipped directly to India with assistance from kind folks in NY/NJ.

The first direct shipment from Los Angeles to India consisted of 3,000 pounds of clothes. Most of the clothes were collected by twelve volunteer families in their garages for six to eight months, before bringing them to Jain Bhavan in February - March 1990. Additional support came from other local Indian organizations such as Kannada Association, Maharashtra Mandal, Sindhi Association, Swaminarayan Group and Gujarati Society Norwalk Temple in collecting clothes. Major participation for packing the clothes in boxes for shipment always came from the young generation of JCYC at Jain Center.

Few years ago our Center used to send 100 to 200 cartons weighting 2000 to 3000 Lbs. However due to generosity of many community members, Jain Center has sent 3 full 40 ft. Containers, which can accommodate 750 to 1,000 cartons and approximately 25,000 lbs., during the last 3 years. The annual cost of shipment has been \$2,000 to \$2,500. There are many community members who have generously donated funds towards these costs.

Recently a 40 ft. container full of clothes for the poor and needy victims of storm in Kutchh was sent to a Charity Trust in Rajkot. The message for assistance to Jain and other communities is being spread for making one single large shipment per year, to enhance the efficiency in getting the clothes to their intended destination.

Collection drive, fund raising, documentation and liaison with overseas organizations are keys to success of this program. We are thankful to all the community members who have contributed funds, time and efforts without which this undertaking would not have been possible. Our Center maintains a separate fund for all the contributions received for this particular purpose.

The future plans call for providing scholarship for students in India. It would provide money for tuition, books, and clothes. Anyone interested in this worthy cause, please contact:

Virendrabhai Shah @ (310) 715-3030

Maltiben Maheta @ (949) 551-4569

Maheshbhai Maheta @ (949) 551-4569

I really love Jainism. I enjoy it.
- Nitya Shroff (13)

Essence of humanity is knowledge, essence of knowledge is rationalism and essence of rationalism is good conduct.
Remember, only good conduct gives rise to peace and equanimity.

Acharya Kundkund

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from

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The Peaceful Liberators - Jain Art from India

by Shree Hasendrabhai Shah

"A beautiful new exhibition that opened Sunday at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), a group of more than twenty compelling sculptures are unlike any I've seen before. In fact they may have no counterpart anywhere in art world", commented Christopher Knight, Art Critic for Los Angeles Times. He continued its praise by adding, "The Peaceful Liberators ranks among the most significant shows the museum has organized in several seasons."

The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India, a major exhibition was organized by Los Angeles County Museum of Art from November 6 1994 to January 22 1995. The exhibition consisted of about one hundred fifty (150) aesthetically and historically significant works of art related to Jain religion. There were wood, metal, and stone sculptures, monumental textile paintings, illuminated manuscripts, folio and several symbolic objects. Each art piece was unique and one of a kind with no comparison. Words cannot describe the serene beauty and awesome impact of this art exhibition.

Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, senior curator of Indian and Southeast Asian Art was instrumental along with his colleagues to envision this project. It took a lot of effort and persistence to make it happen.

The rich heritage and principles of Jainism were presented in a manner which would appeal equally to any lay person who was totally unknown to this philosophy as to any Jain. Educational services, lectures, guided tours were rated very highly. Introductory video provided an overview about the Jain religion. Classical dance performance and documentary films were added attractions of the exhibition.

Jain community and Jain Center of Southern California cooperated and worked with LACMA to publicize and promote this historic event. Approximately 50,000 visitors took advantage of the exhibition. Among the visitors, 73% had a college degree and about 63% were seeing Jain Art for the first time. The exhibition made many people and educators aware of the Jain Philosophy and Jain Art. It made all Jains very proud of our rich cultural heritage and religion.

Some comments from visitors describe the true spirit and impact of exhibition.... Excellent....Supremely informative to those without previous information....Well done....Thorough and informative....Peaceful-beautiful....Look forward to more exhibitions that will give an opportunity to share one of the world's great cultures.

Trying is the opposite of meditation. Relax completely and dissolve all your thoughts, that is the real technique of meditation. - Ankit Vasa (12)

Jain Social Group - Los Angeles

by Dhirenbhai Mehta

The Jain Social Group (JSG), Los Angeles is a dynamic and active organization in our community. With a modest beginning of 35 member families in 1984, the membership has grown to over 125 Jain families. The members have been active participants in Jain Center since its inception.

JSG-LA has been more than just a vehicle to having active social lives. It serves as an integration and the backbone of the Jain community in the metropolitan Los Angeles. JSG-LA has organized activities such as entertainment programs, overnight picnics, talent shows, dayaro, day cruise, camping, picnics and dramas. We have initiated and co-sponsored medical expos at the Jain Center and contributed to worthy causes here and abroad.

JSG-LA is part of an international organization with over 175 chapters and more than 75,000 members worldwide on six continents. In addition to most of the chapters being in India, there are about 20 overseas chapters.

The major objectives of JSG are to:

- Promote fellowship and fraternity among the members of Jain community, strive for their progress and prosperity, and foster unity among all Jains.
- Organize conferences and joint programs of JSG with other social, cultural, and religious organizations
- Arrange meetings with visiting dignitaries

The membership in JSG is open to all Jains. The Jain Center and JSG-LA have worked together for the benefit of the entire Jain community. We congratulate the Jain Center on the 10th anniversary of Jain Bhavan and look forward to many more years of cooperative activities.

Jainism is more careful about other living beings and is based on principles of non-violence. - Rapiir Dedhia (8)

Ahimsa Awariness Group - Live and Help to Let Live

By Kalpanaben Shah

Inspired by Pramodaben Chitrabhanuji, this group was founded approximately five years ago to spread the message of non-violence.

Ahimsa Awariness (A/A) group has two primary goals. One is to raise public awareness of products such as cosmetics, clothing, jewelry, food items and others that are prepared from animal products or prepared by testing on animals. They bring great pain, and possibly death to the animals. Second goal is to inform the public about alternate products of equal or better quality that are available and where to find them. The choice should be to live and help to let live by promoting a cruelty-free lifestyle.

To further the cause of Ahimsa, A/A group has held seminars, workshops, field trips, video shows, fashion shows and arranged lectures. Believe it or not, today we see the great impact on Jain community in Los Angeles. We no longer use Varakh (thin silver topping) for pooja in the temple. A woman wearing a silk sari, previously a common and popular practice, is now a rare occurrence.

Talking about young Jains, some of them have progressed far more than their parents. Girls do not wear silk or do not use cosmetics that has been tested on animals. Needless to say they do not wear leather goods and have become vegetarian. Also they have refused to dissect animals or insects for science projects in schools and have been using alternative options. Today's young Jains are clear about not taking alcohol.

We have successfully planted the seeds in young people's lives for their future that should not involve direct violence (Himsa). They have realized that going to see a circus is no fun for them because the animals are caged and punished when they do not perform well. This is an indirect way of promoting suffering to living-beings. The world is full of greed, hatred, violence and war. We want the world to be a safer, happier and peaceful place for us and future generations. So we must strive to live a life that involves the least violence.

Unless we as consumers stop buying the products with animal ingredients, the manufacturers will go on producing them. When there is a demand, there will always be a supply. If one person makes a change in lifestyle, it will make a difference. Each drop adds to make an ocean, so why not make a difference by becoming that drop! Why not be the voice for voiceless, defenseless, innocent animals!

I love to be Jain. I love my family being Jain very much.

- Gautam Savla (9)

Best Wishes to The Jain Center

From

Sachin Jhaveri

&

Saloni Jhaveri

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(213) 892-0191

With Best Compliments

To

Jain Center of Southern California

From

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Rajul / Rajen Mehta

Sachin Mehta

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Everyone has and equal chance at reading his or her soul of Karma, anyone can become God.
- Neil Doshi (14)

SAHARA - South Asian Helpline & Referral Agency

by Rajulben R. Mehta

Since its establishment in 1991, SAHARA has evolved into an innovative, dynamic, non-profit organization serving the South Asian residents of Southern California. SAHARA is committed to serve the growing community of South Asian residents with information, referrals, and support services.

Activities guided entirely by a volunteer executive board, SAHARA provides:

- *Telephone consultation and information*
- *Counseling services and peer support group*
- *Medical care*
- *Legal services*
- *Information on state and local financial assistance programs*
- *Shelters for victims of family violence*
- *Shelters for homeless*

SAHARA Youth Chapter was established in 1992 to provide help and guidance to South Asian youth.

A special SAHARA Senior Chapter to serve senior citizens/residents of South Asian community in Southern California was formed in 1993. Volunteers organize events and seminars to help members make necessary adjustments to local culture and deal with changes in their daily life. Activities include:

- *Periodic health fairs for South Asian senior citizens*
- *Educational seminars to promote public awareness on issues relevant to the South Asian community*
- *Recreational activities like Diwali program and summer outings*

SAHARA staff consists of volunteer - professionals of South Asian origin. Many of our Jain Center members are serving on the committee. The volunteers devote time and effort in the success of SAHARA. It has become a role model for other Indian community groups. SAHARA is spreading its wings far and wide. In 1996 a Senior Chapter was established in San Diego.

Call SAHARA at 562-402-4132 to join the volunteer team, be a service provider, provide financial help or suggest additional service ideas. Our 24 hour toll-free Helpline is 1-888-SAHARA2

Being a Jain has played an important role in my life. I am more in control of myself.

- Aakash Desai (11)

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I have to keep my will power and be strong to say no to any things that my conscious would say no
to. - Deven Vyas (9)

Single Indian Friends

by Veenaben Sheth

Single Indian Friends (SIF) is an organization created for singles, divorcees and widows over the age of thirty. The group was established in October 1995 and was formed with the idea of providing moral support and social activities for people who are alone. The group is not a match-making service; it instead aims to furnish a network for people without family support to help each other.

When tragedy strikes, your life can suddenly take a complete one hundred and eighty-degree turn. It can hit a person extremely hard, especially when the lifestyle in this country is such that one is left alone in all aspects of living. Raising children, taking care of the household, managing financial/business matters, and facing our society all by one's self can be a tremendous task. I didn't know how hard it was until I had to go through it myself. It is especially difficult to deal with such adversity in an Indian society, where anything out of the ordinary seems to be looked down upon.

Through my experience of living alone, I saw that there was a definite need for some sort of group where South Asian people in similar positions can come together and provide each other with support through shared experiences. Therefore, with the help of other interested parties, first SIF meeting was arranged. Response for the group was great and we have held regular monthly meetings ever since. Over the past two years, we have held several group discussions and organized many events including - picnics, sightseeing tours, walks, temple trips, dinner and dancing.

After living in this country for so many years, we all need to understand and adjust to the changing times of our generation. People don't always have the opportunity to lead "regular" lives - happily married with kids and a white picket fence. Jainism teaches us to help others and to incorporate a multiplicity of viewpoints. Therefore, we should understand the tribulations of divorcees and single parents by putting ourselves in their shoes.

We should be more conscious of the problems that such families and individuals face. While everybody is more than willing to attend someone's funeral or pooja, we need to realize that everyday life is the place where these people really need our help and support. By merely overcoming fears and uncomfortability, you can really brighten someone's day with just a simple phone call. Thanks for recognizing SIF and I request people to search and offer other avenues to help people if they see a need that hasn't been addressed.

We have a lot of prayers that give me peace of mind.

- Mili Shah (10)

Tapovan Sanskarpith of Puja Chandrasekhar Maharaj

Sanskarpith is located in Koba near Ahmedabad and serves under the guidance and leadership of Puja Chandrasekhar Maharaj. This is a unique Jain educational institution, which trains and educates the Jain teachings along with the modern education.

For overall mental and physical growth of the students, the curriculum includes humanitarian & patriotic teachings, karate, yoga, skating, horse riding, gymnastic, and athletics. Students learn computers and English language from the 5th grade. Tapovan does not receive any government grant or assistance and is run through contributions and donations.

Every year it incurs a deficit of Rs. 4,000 (approximately \$100) per student. To continuously run and expand its activities to produce "Future Jain Leaders and Shravaks", it needs contributions and help from the worldwide Jain communities. Jain Center maintains a separate fund for all the contributions, which it forwards directly to Tapovan. Please contact Dr. Dinesh M. Shah @ 213-258-4010 for further information.

JIVDAYA

"Anukampa"- Compassion does it comes naturally to Jains? History can attest to the fact that Jains have always been involved in "Jivdaya" more than any other community. Our community here in Los Angeles has kept up the tradition. During the last few years our Center has contributed funds to over 50 animal welfare institutions both in USA and India (Panjarapols).

In 1996 our Center sent over Rs. 165,000 to Indian Panjarapols. Last year we sent Rs. 500,000 to India and approximately \$ 2,000 to US organizations. Our Center investigates the works of the recipient institutions to ascertain their merits. We are thankful to all the community members who have generously contributed. Our sincere thanks to Mahavir Mandal who is always on the forefront for the collection drives. Jain Center maintains a separate fund for all the contributions and spends exclusively for this cause. Please contact Virendra Shah @ 310-326-5685 for further information.

I use Jainism teachings and principles before doing something like making important decision.
- Tejal Kothari (12)

Personal Perspectives

Members Express the Impact
of Jain Center in Their Lives

Jain Center of Southern California
Paryushana 1998

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Saurin Gandhi, age 8

Jain Center gives me a chance to visit a nice and peaceful place where I can come and worship God. Jain Center affects my life by teaching me prayers and religious things about our Jain religion and our 24 Tirthankars.

Jain Center affects my life by making me learn lots of things about non-violence and lots of things about the evils of egoism. Jain Center also helps me learn my mother tongue - Gujarati and new stories about religious people. Jain Center lets me participate in cultural and religious functions. Jain Center makes me learn lots about respecting elders and bowing down to elderly people. Jain Center tells us to not eat meat or use anything from killing of animals and other living things. Jain Center makes us learn whenever we enter the temple and meet other Jain friends, it is good to greet with 'Jai Jinendra.' Jain Center affects my life by making me learn not to be destructive. Jain Center lets me make new friends and lets me meet lots of other people, including relatives and friends.

My great-grandfather donated a large amount of money towards the building of a temple in Bombay, India. So I am very proud and happy to be a part of that family and to be a Jain. We are Life Members of the Jain Center and I am happy to see that the Jain Center is becoming bigger here in Los Angeles and one of the best in the U.S.

One thing that Jain religion says is that if we do everything good we can also be God.
-Ayesha Khetani (9)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Pooja Savla, age 10

I go to the Jain Center of Southern California in Buena Park. I am very fortunate for being born in a Jain family and to have a Jain temple nearby.

The Jain temple provides the necessary environment for spiritual up-lifting just as the school provides for education. Attending Jain classes, I have expanded my knowledge about true meaning of Jainism. Jain Center has taught me how to apply non-violence, speak the truth and practice aparigraha (limit possessions) in everyday life.

Going to temple during Paryushana Parva encouraged me to do ekasana (eat only one time in a day) and upvas (fasting). I enjoyed listening to pravachans by various Jain scholars. It gave me a totally different perspective about Jainism. Because of Jain Center, I was able to participate in cultural programs.

Jain Center gave me an opportunity to meet Jain friends and exchange ideas about practicing Jainism. Jain Center gave me opportunities to celebrate festivals such as Mahavir Jayanti, Paryushana and Diwali. Jain Center has really helped me to stay as a Jain, even though I was born in America.

I wish every Jain kid in America can be fortunate to have a Jain Center like I do.

Jainism is my identity.
Tejas Gala (10)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Priyanka Doshi, age 13

Jain Center has impacted my life in many ways. I learned in depth about my culture and religion from attending Gujarati and Pathshala classes. My parents taught me a lot about our ancestors and Jain religion but going to Jain Center has helped me appreciate this and made my beliefs stronger.

It was very hard for me to adjust as a Jain in this country with so many different cultures and totally different beliefs. Going to Jain Center has helped me cope with my uncertain feelings. I have made lots of friends who were going through the same feelings. Sharing my feelings with them and the teachers made me proud of my culture and gave me support that I am not alone. Most Americans do not understand my views and feelings, but I can share these with my friends at Jain Center. Before I started going to the Jain Center couple years ago, I was afraid to tell my American friends that I am a vegetarian, as I did not want to be different, but today I proudly brag that I am a vegetarian.

Overall, I am glad that we have this magnificent Jain Center in Southern California.

I am a Jain, and I will be for the rest of my life.
Manisha Parekh (15)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Neil Doshi, age 14

Jainism, because of its rarity in America, is a difficult religion to truly follow without guidance. Therefore, being a young Jain in America, I feel very privileged to have the Jain Center of Southern California so close to me. Jain Bhavan has helped mold me into the Jain that I am today and has built pride for Jainism in me. Without Jain Bhavan, I would be a spiritually lost person with an identity of being Jain, but no strong knowledge of it.

From the Jain Center's opening in 1988, my family and I have been quite active with it. We go there regularly for Sunday classes and special occasions. When I started to go to the Jain temple in order to learn more about my religion, my views on life have changed. I have been able to find explanations for all my problems and have, since then, become a strong vegetarian and now vegan. Every time problems in my life occur, I can find understanding in it through my knowledge of Jainism that I learned from going to classes. I feel proud that I am a Jain, and I owe that to having such a strong influence like my Jain Bhavan close to me.

The good thing isn't as much the actual temple, but the people and the community of Jain people that have sprouted because of it. The people that come to Jain temple all have a common bond, and we can relate to each other. I have found that the people that are part of the community surrounding the Jain temple are the most genuine and nicest people I have met. With the leadership of the Jain community in Southern California, our Jain Bhavan has become one that stands out from the others in North America for its good aspects.

Sometimes, I take my temple for granted, but when I think about it, I really feel very privileged. I have the chance to follow an ancient and wonderful religion with understanding because I have a Jain temple near me. Most places don't have a Jain temple or even a strong Jain community, and I feel lucky to have this opportunity.

Jainism is my religion and I am proud of it. I have been Jain ever since I was born and I am still glad to be one. - Pooja Jhobalia (13)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Priya Sheth, age 15

Since my childhood, religion has been a part of my life and through the years Jain Temple has allowed me to extend my knowledge about the Jain Religion and make it part of my daily life. Even before the temple was built, my parents took me to an activity center where Jain functions were held.

My religious studies started out simple with my parents making me recite the Namokar Mantra. Soon I was able to say it all on my own and I used to recite it every morning and night. However, after attending Dharam and Gujarati classes at the temple, I have learned a lot about religion and language through the hard work of my teachers and parents. I know that I have a lot more to learn, but going to Pathshala classes at temple has opened my eyes to Jainism and many of its' vast topics and practices.

Jain center opened many doors to religion for me. Pathshala introduced me not only to prayers but also to nine reals, theory of karma, the 4 passions, stories of Gods, meditation and much more. Going to temple once every two weeks allowed me to learn about Jainism and made my beliefs stronger because I knew the reasons behind them. Jain Center is responsible for a lot of the knowledge which has helped me so much in life.

The teachings at Jain Bhavan have benefited me mentally and spiritually. Recently, I have started to deal with situations better by trying not to get angry at others and trying to forgive people. This gives me more peace of mind but it definitely needs much more practice. One aspect of Jainism that has really been helpful to me is multiplicity of views. I find this a very important part of Jainism and it is really helpful in life for me because I am able to look at situations from different points of views and understand other peoples' perspectives.

However, after learning principles of Jainism the hard part is to put these teachings in practice. Temple has helped us do this. When the Samanijis came here, we were able to "see" many Jain principles in practice especially when they stayed at our home. I observed how they lived on minimal requirements and still be so happy. While here, they taught me many things such as yoga, meditation, and other principles.

(continued on next page)

I will try my best to be a good Jain.
- Ayushee Aithal (8)

(Personal Perspective - Priya Sheth - continued from previous page)

Temple has also let me participate in Pooja's, Samayik, and Pratikraman. Shibirs and other activities at the Jain Center have also motivated me and allowed me to learn about religion.

After having gone to temple I have learned and understood why I should not use animal products. I have stopped using silk, leather, animal tested products, or anything else which causes harm to animals. I know why I should not eat potatoes and onions but I have not yet stopped. Hopefully in the future I will be able to stop.

My Gujarati and Dharam classes in particular have helped me greatly when I go to India and also in daily life situations. In Dharam class, we discuss everyday life topics and their relation to Jainism. Gujarati class was also beneficial to me, especially when I went to India. It feels good to be able to talk with family there with a common language. When I learn more Gujarati, I will be able to understand Jain books written in Gujarati and this will be advantageous to me.

Going to Jain temple has made me the person I am today. Many of Jain religious principles and teachings are now part of my daily life. Jain Center has opened my eyes to the vastness of Jainism and its' many topics. I am glad to be a Jain and I am looking forward to attending Jain Center regularly in the future.

I am fascinated by the principles of Jainism which stands for everything that is right faith, knowledge and conduct. - Siddharth Dangi (9)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Amrish Parekh, age 17

The Jain Bhavan has done many things to my life, so many that I do not believe I can put them into words. The Jain Bhavan has given me the opportunity to learn a great amount of information concerning Jainism which consequently allowed me to gain the important knowledge to know who I am, and where I am from.

I attend our Jain Bhavan every other Sunday to learn more about our religion. However, this is not the only reason I go. I go to see new friends, people who have the same interests and background as I do. The Bhavan is a place where I can meet my friends while learning about our religion, and the combination of both made going to the Bhavan not only fun, but inspiring also.

The Bhavan inspired me to become a new person, a person that would not only be able to learn about my religion, but also to live my religion. It gave me a place of being, a place where I knew I had friends, and a place where I could spiritually be happy. It no longer was a dull and boring place where I would just sit in a class all day, but is now a place where I can talk to my friends and play some football in the parking lot. People that I met from the Bhavan became my closest and dearest friends.

Without our Jain Bhavan, my basis of Jainism and cultural identity would not exist because I would have no place to explore my religious beliefs. I am very grateful that I live so close to such a place. The people and ethics of the Jain Bhavan changed my life and gave me a sense of belonging.

I would like to practice more Jainism which will take me closer to my goal-moksha.

- Bijal Mehta (11)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Digish Shah, age 17

On July 2nd, 1988, my dad woke me up early out of bed. I was about seven years old then, and I didn't really know what was going on. I asked my father what the matter was, and he told me that the new "Jain Center" had opened and that it could be like a "second home" to me. Still not knowing exactly what that meant, I got out of bed and simply followed him.

Since that day, the first thing that truly made the Jain Center of Southern California a part of my life was the religious classes (JCYC) that were being held there. In the beginning, I would hesitantly pack my notebooks and go, but as time passed, I found that JCYC was a great place for learning. Jainism and its fundamentals were taught to me, from the basics to the applications in life; the Gujarati language was brought to my attention, from the alphabet to putting words together and understanding them; periodically, JCYC would organize skits and dramas, and I took an active part in almost all of them. As I have grown throughout the years, the JCYC itself has grown, from being a loose collection of seminars to becoming one of the most organized councils of the Jain Center.

And while I was attending JCYC, I was meeting new people. I remember the first person I had met through the Jain Center. . . We used to dislike each other! But as the years went by, we became really good friends - and I've met and made friends with many other wonderful people. Working on dramas or presentations, cooperating on the youth councils, or just "hanging-out" in the parking lot - wherever I was at Jain Center, it provided to me an excellent place to meet friends who I will cherish for a lifetime.

Ten years after that day in July of 1988, now that I'm seventeen years-old, I know exactly what my father was talking about. In a way, the Jain Center has grown to be my "second home." I always felt like I was part of the Jain "family". . . I grew-up with those people, I took parts in the "family" events, and I've come to know many friends whom I may call my own "brothers" and "sisters." For that, the Jain Center has played a positive role in my life- it was the only educational center where I could learn about my religion, it was the only religious haven where I could experience events such as Paryushana with other people, it was the only theater where it was possible to perform Jain-related presentations and skits- but most importantly, it was and will continue to be my "second home."

I have plans to practice and promote Jainism in the future. I plan to overcome all the obstacles in the way. -Suken Jain (16)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Ankit Shah, age 18

When I look back ten years it seems far away. I have matured so much throughout the ten years since the opening of the Jain Center.

The Jain Center is family to me. I have learned so much about myself. Without the Jain Center I would not have all the good morals that I have now. Personally, I am not a very religious person. That doesn't mean I didn't receive any religious teaching. The Jain Center taught me my culture and religion. It is so important to me.

When people ask me, who I am I am proud to say "Jain". I may not follow the strict Jain ways, but I do understand the principles of Jainism. The knowledge that I have gained through JCYC and JAYA taught me, why we do what Jains do.

Personally, I have learned that Jainism teaches ways to reach happiness.

In Jainism it is the belief that one creates his own destiny. You and only you have the power to change your destiny. - Neera Jhaveri (16)

*"From Local Get-Together to Community Center:
The Jain Center of Southern California"*

By: Shayna Parekh

My earliest memories of Jain Center and Pathsala classes include waking early on a Sunday morning and getting together with peers at a local house. Uncles and aunts in the community would get together to host such classes, and a few local families would participate.

To say that ten years has changed the Jain Center of Southern California would simply understate the degree to which the Center has flourished and prospered. The physical and spiritual changes which the Center has undergone in ten years have manifested themselves in the sheer number of families now involved with the Center, the variety of Pathsala and language classes offered and most importantly, the manner in which the Center's youth organizations have touched the lives of Jain youth in Southern California and beyond.

I have had the unique experience of being involved with the Center since its conception. As a 6 year old kid attending Pathsala classes at the local homes, my only motivation for going was knowing that at the end of the morning, I would be rewarded with a snack. Now however, as a college student, I have completed the Pathsala and language classes and my motivation to continue being involved with the Center comes from the strong friendships forged through years of attending classes as well as knowing that I am now looked upon as a role model for younger students.

The Jain Center Youth Council is one of Jain Center of Southern California's premier youth organizations. Led by our director, Sailes Jain, we have provided the Center's youth with literally hundreds of activities throughout the years. Being the Council's President in 1996 allowed me to work with the community's finest, bringing to our members a winter camp, trips to amusement parks, educational seminars as well as fun seasonal activities. The one underlying message in all of the Center's activities is that Jainism is a way of life and it is this message, which has penetrated the lives and beliefs of all those involved with the Center.

Noteworthy of being its greatest accomplishment, the Jain Center of Southern California has positively impacted the lives of hundreds of youth in Southern California during these ten years. It is truly an honor being a member of the Jain community and being able to work so closely with the Jain Center of Southern California.

No spiritual teacher or blessings will destroy karmas. That is the reason for injustice. No luck is involved. You are the maker of your own luck. -Karishma Shah (14)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Sejal Devendra Shah, age 17

I am glad that I had the opportunity to go to JCYC classes because I feel much better knowing that I have learned something new about my culture. I have been going to JCYC classes for two years and I have picked up so much new information. I feel special about myself because I can pass my knowledge to someone else. I did not go to Jain Center that often and by going to class I am able to go and say my prayer in the Mandir.

By taking Pathshala class as one of my subjects, I was able to learn many prayers, learned right from wrong, my favorite non-violence and many more. Violence starts from within and gives negative vibration, which is stored in the brain. This gives off bad habits. When the individual is able to change the habits, then the person can feel non-violence, *Ahimsa*. Instead of feeling hate, the person can feel love.

I was amazed that I was able to write and understand many things in Gujarati. This shows that with good concentration, anything is possible. Writing in Gujarati is not hard, but as my teacher would say, "Practice is always the best thing to do."

In addition all the teachers did a great job. They never got tired of student asking questions. They made the classes more interesting and enjoyable.

I am proud to be a Jain. Jainism is about self-realization.
- Paras Mehta (9)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Sunita Mehta, age 19

In the last ten years that Jain Center has been here, I have learnt what it means to be Jain. Over these years, Jain Center has provided many programs for Jains of all ages, and ten years later, is continuing to form new and productive ways to help the Jain community.

As a nine year old, when the Jain Center first opened, I was given the opportunity to learn really important things about myself. Jain Center provided religion classes that informed me thoroughly about Jainism, and its many aspects. I soon learned about our Indian culture, by taking Gujarati and Hindi language classes that were provided.

Today, Jain Center is available for any motivated Jain willing to help himself or herself through prayer and doing pooja, as I have observed on many Saturday and Sunday mornings. Thanks to Jain Center, I have learnt how to live in America as an Indian, and further more, as a Jain.

I congratulate Jain Center and the many people who have helped it grow, on its ten year anniversary.

I am fascinated by Jainism because it has taught me to recognize my soul (atma).

- Adit Mehta (9)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Prakash and Kinna Gandhi

Jain center has been a special blessing for our family. It is an excellent vehicle to learn about the best religion of the world, no doubt. Vegetarianism and non-violence is of paramount importance to me and without JCSC it would be impossible.

I feel a deep sense of pride when I see my kids going around the ants and bugs on the ground so they do not step on it. It gives me a sight of relief to know that when they go away from house to explore their independence, eating meat products and poultry or seafood will not be a part of that experience.

Among many activities in JCSC, I highly value religious classes for kids and adults. We all have learned a lot and kids practice a lot. We feel that they are on a right path. Year round visits from dignitaries and their lectures about many aspects of our religion are invaluable to us. We enjoy all rituals and Paryushana activities. JCSC has given us a place to identify with and has given us an opportunity to make many friends. It's a place for social gathering as well, which is important to our kids. Because of this, our kids will not get lost or confused and seeds of moral and religious values planted in their mind will grow when they are adults and away from JCSC. The positive influence of JCSC atmosphere will make it easier for them as well as us to make right choices in life.

Jain center has made a tremendous positive impact and we all feel fortunate to be a part of it.

Jainism is a very fascinating religion. Because of the interesting rituals, ceremonies, theories, and stories. - Parag Parekh (11)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Bharti C. Shah

In the past ten years, the Jain Temple has dramatically affected and changed my life. The Jain Center has enabled my family to understand and practice our Jain religion. Though we are so far from India, it feels good to know that our religion, morals, and traditions are still being practiced and taught to our children.

Tapasya is so hard to our body, but Jain Center has given us that inner strength and happiness which makes so called tough Tapasya a piece of cake. We have good thoughts, and feelings when we visit our temple. The temple gives me a peace of mind and fulfillment. Due to the enormous Jain activities, we are able to understand our religion and are able to console others in need.

The Jain Center has allowed my children to understand the Jain religion and have compassion for others. JCYC has given my children a sense of value, commitment, and discipline. Different activities such as JCYC, swadhyay, and lectures have given us a better understanding of Jain philosophy. The Jain Center has given me a sense of belonging to the Derasar and to the Jain community.

Overall, in the last ten years the Jain Center has provided a means for young and adults to participate in social, educational, and religious activities and remain involved in their Jain community.

Congratulations to the Jain Center of Southern California.

Jainism makes me who I am. It makes me realize why I am here and what I need to do.
Being Jain helps me be a better person. - Natasha Gandhi (15)

*Personal Perspectives of Members on
Impact of Jain Center in Their Lives*

Ramesh P. Kothari

On our arrival from Cincinnati in 1982 we knew very few of our Jain families. The Jain Center had many activities even without the building of our own at that time. We got involved in activities of the Jain Center including children, swadhyayas, shibirs, Mahila Mandal poojas, Paryushana, ayembils and more. The activities were held at homes and Community Center Buildings that took extra efforts to get the facilities to match our festival dates. We found that as we participated in more and more activities of our Center, we felt more at home in our newly built Center and began to know more Jain families.

I have seen Paryushana Tapasvis continue to grow from just a few adults to over 100 during last few years. I am impressed with how our Young Adults who have soared the ranks of Tapasvis in large numbers during Paryushanas. The dedication of the Executive Committee members, pathshala teachers and other elders in volunteering their time, talent, and other resources have inspired me to be part of our growth in some small way. This participation has made us feel more at home in our large community.

The level of current activities and participation of the various groups at our Center would have been impossible for me to imagine when we arrived in Los Angeles in 1982. I remember Sunday school class of six or so in a home compared to over 250 students now. I also know of the weekly swadhyays of just few people in homes to over 100 adults now on Sundays at our Center. I also remember having our functions in other local community center halls with limits of 200 or 300 before our own hall became our permanent place of gathering for over 1000 in recent years .

I am thankful to all members of the Jain Center to be part of our large family. I wish continued success in our new building construction and other activities sponsored by our Jain Center.

The concept of Moksha fascinates me. I cannot imagine a place that is so pure neither I can think how it would feel to have eternal happiness. - Vidhi Doshi (11)

ધર્મનો પ્રભાવ

મારા સ્વ.પતિશ્રી તથા હું જન્મસંસ્કારથી શ્વેતાંબર જૈન ધર્મી છીએ. ભારતથી અમે ઈ.સ. ૧૯૯૦ માં ન્યુયોર્ક આવ્યા અને ત્યાં પણ જૈન દેરાસર માં સેવા પૂજા માટે અવારનવાર જતા અને ઈ.સ. ૧૯૯૧ માં લોસ એંજલસ આવ્યા ત્યારથી બ્યુનાપાર્ક જૈન ભવનમાં દર્શનાર્થે જવા લાગ્યા. શરૂઆતમાં જ મહિલા મંડળનાં પ્રમુખ શ્રીમતી વસંતબેન શાહની પ્રેરણાથી હું મહિલા મંડળ માં જોડાઈ. મહિલા મંડળના બહેનો સાથે અમે પણ દેરાસરમાં અથવા ઘરે કોઈ પણ સારા-નરસા પ્રસંગો માટે પૂજા ભણાવવા જતા. સ્વાધ્યાયનાં વર્ગો દ્વારા તથા વેકેશનમાં ગોઠવવામાં આવતાં અનેક પ્રવક્તાઓના પ્રવચનો દ્વારા ધર્મની શ્રદ્ધા દૃઢ થઈ અને ધર્મ વિષે વધુ જ્ઞાન મળ્યું. દેરાસરનાં કાર્યક્રમોમાં યથાશક્તિ સેવા આપવાની તક અમે ઝડપી લેતાં અને ઘરે પણ મંદિર બનાવીને પૂજાપાઠ તથા સામાયિક-પ્રતિક્રમણ કરવાનાં ચાલ્યુ રાખ્યા.

આ બધી પ્રવૃત્તિનાં પરિણામે અમને જૈન ધર્મનાં ઘણા ઊંડા જ્ઞાનની પ્રાપ્તિ થઈ. મારા સ્વર્ગસ્થ પતિશ્રી કુમુદચંદ્ર શાહ શરૂઆતથી સૌમ્ય અને શાંત પ્રકૃતિના હતા, પણ હું ઊગ્ર સ્વભાવની હતી. પણ ધર્મ તથા સત્સંગનાં પ્રભાવથી મારી ઊગ્રતા ઓસરી ગઈ અને હું શાંત તથા સ્વસ્થ થવા લાગી. માનસિક શાંતિ તથા પ્રસન્નતાના અનુભવ મારા જીવનામાં જાગવા લાગ્યો. તાજેતરમાં મારા પતિશ્રીનું કેન્સરને કારણે અવસાન થયું ત્યારે પણ ધર્મ અને સત્સંગનાં પ્રભાવે પ્રભુ કૃપાથી હું તથા મારા સંતાન સ્વસ્થ રહી શક્યા. ભગવાનની અસીમ કૃપાથી મારા સ્વ. પતિશ્રીએ પણ કેન્સર જેવી બીમારીને કર્મની અનિવાર્ય ગણી ખુબ જ શાંતિથી ચિરવિદાય લિધી. મને વિશ્વાસ છે કે અમારા જેવા જ બીજા કુટુંબોને પણ આવા અનુભવો થયા હશે.

પરદેશમાં આવી રીતે જૈન સેંટર ઊભું કરી અને આટલી બધી પ્રવૃત્તિઓ કરવી, આટલા સંતો-સાધવીઓના સત્સંગનો લાભ મળવો એ બદલ આપણે સૌએ ખુબજ ગૌરવ લેવા જેવું છે. મને ખાતરી છે કે આપણા જૈન ભવનનો વિકાસ આવી જ રીતે વધતો રહેશે અને આપણી ઊગતી પેઢીને આ દ્વારા ધર્મનું જ્ઞાન મળતું રહેશે અને આપણા સંસ્કારો જળવાઈ રહેશે.

ધર્મનો પ્રકાશ, ભગવાનની કૃપા, આપણાં સૌના જીવનને અજવાળે એ જ પ્રાર્થના.

જય જીનેન્દ.

રસિલાબેન કુમુદચંદ્ર શાહ

Jainism is a very extraordinary religion. Jainism is very logical and scientific.

- Sheila Doshi (12)

॥ જય જિનેન્દ્ર ॥

સને ૧૯૮૭-૮૭ માં ડૉ. શ્રી ચુનીલાલભાઈ શાહે દેરાસરનું ખાત મુર્દત કર્યું હતું ત્યારે અમે લોસ એન્જલસ માં જ રહેતા હતા અને ત્યાર થી આજ સુધી, આપણાં જૈન ભવન માં ખુબ જ પ્રશંસનીય ઉત્તરોત્તર પ્રગતી થતી રહી છે. આ પ્રગતી જોઈને મનને શાંતી મળે છે કે આપણા ભારતદેશની ભુમીથી આપણે ફજારો માઈલો દુર પરદેશની ઘરતી પર રહીએ છતાં આપણે ભારત દેશમાં જ રહેતા હોઈએ અને આપણા બધાજ જૈન તહેવારો ત્યાં ઉજવતાં હોઈએ એ રીતે સ્નાત્ર પુજાઓ, અને બીજી પુજાઓ ભારત કરતાં સારી રીતે કરતાં હોઈએ છીએ. આપણા ધર્મ અને સંસ્કારનો દારસો, સમજીને, સંચવાય છે.

જૈન કુટુંબો ને એક બીજાને ફળવા-મળવાનો સમય બગાડ્યાં વગર સારા સંબંધો બંધાય છે અને સંચવાય છે. ભવિષ્યમાં આપણા બાળકોને પોતાના selection માટે તકલીફ નહીં પડે અને કદાચ વધારે સરળતાથી એક બીજાના contact માં આવી સંબંધો બાંધશે અથવા develope કરશે.

છેલ્લાં ૨-૩ વર્ષમાં આપણે ત્યા Senior નું Association શરૂ થયું છે. બધાનોજ સહકાર સારો છે ને બધાજ પ્રોગ્રામો સારા થાય છે. આવા સારા પ્રોગ્રામો માટે અને અનેક વક્તાઓના વાંચનનો લાભ મેળવી શકીએ તેના માટે મારી આપને એક નમ્ર વિનંતી છે કે જો શક્ય હોય તો, જે લોકો ઉમરના હિસાબે અથવા drive ન કરી શકતા હોય તેના માટે, Ride ની વ્યવસ્થા જો થઈ શકે તો ઘણા સીનીયરો લાભ લઈ શકશે. બીજી એક વિનંતી છે કે સીનીયરોને પ્રોગ્રામો જાણવાની ઇતેજારી હોય છે તેથી જો news letter માં ગુજરાતી message / લખાણ હોવું આવશ્યક છે તેથી જો શક્ય હોય તો આ બંન્ને બાબતો માટે વિચારણા કરી ઘટતું કરશોજી.

આપણે સર્વે સભ્યો, દરેક કાર્યક્રમ ને સંપથી સહકાર આપીએ તો આપણા center ની ખુબજ પ્રશંસનીય પ્રગતી થશે અને સોનામાં સુગંધ લાવશે અને ચાર ચાંદ લાગશે.

નિર્મલાબેન મેહતા

Jainism makes so much sense, it has logic to it and no missing gaps.

- Michelle Gandhi (12)

વીરઃ સર્વ સુરા સુરેન્દ્ર મહિતો, વીરંબુધા સંશ્રિતાઃ ।
વીરેણાભિક્તઃ સ્વકર્મ નિચયો, વીરાય નિત્યં નમઃ ॥

મારા દિકરા અને દિકરી અમેરીકામાં રહેતાં હતાં. તેમણે અમને સને ૧૯૭૯ ની સાલમાં અમેરીકા બોલાવ્યાં તે વખતે હું અને મારા પત્નિ પહેલી વાર અમેરીકા આવ્યાં. પરીવારને મળવાનો અને અમેરીકા જોવાનો બહુજ ઉમંગ હતો. પરીવાર સાથે અમેરીકા જોવામાં અને સંબંધીઓને ફળવામળવામાં બે માસ પસાર થઈ ગયા. પરીવારની મરજી તેમની સાથે અમને અમેરીકામાં રાખવાની હતી. પરંતુ છોકરાઓ તેમના કામે જતા રહે, અને બાળકો શાળાએ જાય પછી ઘરમાં પ્રવૃત્તિ વિના અમને એકલવાયું લાગવા માંડ્યું. પાડોશી કોઈ ગુજરાતી ભાષા સમજે નહીં અને અમે અંગ્રેજી સમજીએ નહીં તેથી મુઝવણ થવા લાગી. ઉમંગ ઓસરી ગયો અને અમને ઈન્ડિયા યાદ આવવા લાગ્યું અને અમે ઈન્ડિયા જતા રહ્યા.

તે દરમિયાન અહીં સધર્ન કેલીફોર્નીયા જૈન સેન્ટરની સ્થાપના થઈ. સને ૧૯૮૮ ની સાલમાં જૈન સેન્ટરે દેરાસરનું મકાન ફોલ વીગેરે બનાવ્યું. દેરાસરમાં ભગવાનની પ્રતિષ્ઠા કરવાની હતી તે પહેલાં છોકરાઓએ અમને અમેરીકા બોલાવ્યા. દેરાસરમાં ભગવાનની પ્રતિષ્ઠા વિધી સહીત બહુજ ધામધુમથી કરવામાં આવી અમને બહુજ આનંદ આવ્યો. પછી વારંવાર શની રવીવારે દેરાસરમાં ભગવાનનાં દર્શન પૂજન માટે અને ફોલમાં થતાં વ્યાખ્યાનોમાં સાંભળવાં જવાનું થવાં માંડ્યું. તે દરમિયાન ઘણા નવા ભાઈ, બહેનો સાથે પરિચય થવા લાગ્યો. ઘણી નવી ઓળખાણો થઈ. એક બીજા સાથે સંબંધો બંધાયા અને મિત્રતાની માયા બંધાઈ. ફેવાની વાતો કરી દિલ ફળવું કરી આનંદ મેળવવા લાગ્યા. પછી કાયમના માટે પરીવારની સાથે અમેરીકામાં રહેવાનું નક્કી કર્યું.

બાળકો આનંદ પ્રમોદ સાથે ગુજરાતી ભાષા શીખે અને ધાર્મિક જ્ઞાન મેળવે તથા તેમનો જીવન વિકાસ થાય તેવી શિક્ષણ પ્રવૃત્તિ, પ્રભુ ભક્તિમાં ભાવ જાગે, સાચી શાંતી મળે અને આત્મકલ્યાણ થાય તેવી અધ્યાત્મિક પ્રવૃત્તિઓ સેન્ટરે શરૂ કરી છે. તેમાં ઘણા ભાઈ બહેનો ભાગ લે છે. ઘણા ભાઈ બહેનો સ્વૈચ્છિક સેવા આપી પ્રેમથી ભણાવે છે. જૈન સેન્ટરે દશ વરસના ગાળામાં ઘણી પ્રગતી કરી છે. આ બધું સેન્ટરના નિષ્ઠાવાન અને પ્રમાણિક કાર્યકરોનો અનેરો ઉમંગ અને ઉત્સાહ, કામ કરવાની તીવ્ર ધગશ, સ્વાર્થ વગર સેવા કરવાની ભાવના, વિનય અને વિવેકથી બધાં પ્રત્યે વાત્સલ્ય ભર્યું વર્તન અને સંસ્થાને વિકાસ પંથે લઈ જવાની ઉચી ભાવનાને આભારી છે.

ખરેખર સિનિયરો માટે તો આ સંસ્થા સખત ગરમીથી તાપમાં કંટાળેલા અને ચાલતાં થાકેલા પ્રથીકને વડના ઝાડની શિતળ છાયામાં આરામ કરવા બેસવાથી જે શિતળતાની તૃપ્તિ થાય છે તેવી વડની શિતળ છાયાસમી ઉપકારી બની છે.

ચંદુલાલ છગનલાલ શાહના જય જીનેન્દ્ર

I represent Jainism by being proud that I am a Jain, and telling my friends about my religion. - Kushali Gala (14)

॥ જય જિનેન્દ્ર ॥

આપણા જૈન સેન્ટર ની સ્થાપનાને દશ વર્ષ પુરા થયા તેની જાણ તો આપ સર્વને છે જ. આ જૈન સેન્ટર ને લીધે ઘણા ભાવિક જીવોને ધર્મ આરાધના માટે તથા અધ્યાત્મ જ્ઞાન માટેની અનુકુળતા રહે છે.

હું ઈન્ડિયાથી અહીં આવતા પહેલા વિચારતો હતો કે અમેરીકામાં ધર્મ આરાધના નહીં થઈ શકે. અને આ કારણસર પુજ્ય સાધુ ભગવંતો પણ અહીં આવવા માટે ના કહેતા હશે, છતાં હું અહીં આવ્યો. પરંતુ અહીં આવ્યા પછી મને પણ આપણા જૈન સેન્ટરને લીધે ધર્મ આરાધના તથા અધ્યાત્મ જ્ઞાન માટેની અનુકુળતા રહે છે. ખાસતી અહીં મને તત્વજ્ઞાનની જાણકારી માટે ખુબજ સારી તક મળી છે જેથી હું ખુબજ પ્રભાવીત થયો છું. આવી રીતે ઈન્ડિઆમાં શીખવવામાં આવતું નથી. બાળકોને પણ આ જૈન સેન્ટર ધાર્મિક, ગુજરાતી વિગેરે શીખવે છે. આવી આપણા જૈન સેન્ટરની પ્રવૃત્તિથી મારા હૈયામાં જે આનંદની લાગણી ઉભરાયી રહી છે તેને શબ્દોમાં વર્ણવી શકું તેમ નથી.

વિશેષમાં મારે માટે એક ખુબજ મહત્વની હકીકત તો એ છે કે હું ચાલી શક્તો ન હતો તે આ જૈન સેન્ટરને લીધે ચાલવા માટે નવા પગ આવી ગયા છે તેમ કહું તો અસ્થાને નહીં ગણાય. વળી મારી આ તકલીફ દુર થતાં હું તંદુરસ્ત થઈ ગયો અને તે તંદુરસ્તીને કારણે જ મહાપૂજાન વિધિ, અઢાર અભિષેકની વિધિ વિગેરે શીખી શક્યો છું અને તેનો લાભ પણ આપી શકું છું.

આ દેશમાં આવા જૈન સેન્ટરો ખુબજ ફાલે-ફૂલે તેવી શાસન દેવને પ્રાર્થના કરું છું.

લી. સંઘસેવક

દલસુખભાઈ મંગળદાસ શાહના જય જિનેન્દ્ર

Life in any way, shape or form is too precious to be wasted. We have not given life to other living things so we have no right to take life away from them. - Anshul Gandhi (12)

॥ જય જિનેન્દ્ર ॥

જૈન ભવનને દશ વરસ થઈ ગયા. દશ વરસમાં જૈન ભવનને ઘણી પ્રગતી કરી. વિરેદભાઈ પછી કાંતીભાઈ જેવા જવાબદાર અને બાકોશ માણસોએ સંચાલન કર્યું. કમીટી મેમ્બરોએ પણ કાયમાં સુકાન પકડી કામ કર્યું. જૈન ભવન ઘણા પ્રોગ્રામ બનાવ્યા.

જૈન શાળામાં ૨૫૦ જેટલા બાળકો ભણે છે. હું પણ છ વરસથી મંડળમાં મેંબર છું. પુજામાં અને પ્રવચનમાં રસ લઉં છું. જૈન ભવનમાં ગુજરાતી અને ઇંગ્લીશ ના ક્લાસ ચાલે છે. ઘણા લોકો લાભ લઈ રહ્યા છે.

જૈન ભવન દર્શન કરવાનું મન થાય એવું અદ્ભુત સ્થળ છે. ત્યાં બેસીએ એટલે શાંતી લાગે. જુદા જુદા વ્યક્તિઓ પ્રવચન માટે આવે છે. આ વખતે પણ ઘણા આવશે. શ્રી ચીત્રભાનુજી પર્યુષણમાં પધારવાના છે. બધા જૈન ભવનને પોતાનું સમજીને કામ કરે છે. ઘણા પ્રસંગો ઉજવે છે, જેવા કે પર્યુષણ, દીવાળી, મહાવીર જન્મ કલ્યાણક. સાથે સ્વામી વાત્સલ્ય પણ કોય. જૈન ભવનમાંથી જાણે ધરે જવાનું મનજ ન થાય.

વસંતબેન જેવા દેરાસરનું ગર્વ અનુભવે છે. મંડળ પાછળ તેવીનો ઘણો ફાળો છે. જૈન ભવન એક રમણીય મંદીર છે જેમાં મહાવીર ભગવાન, કૃષ્ણભદ્ર ભગવાન, પાર્શ્વનાથ ભગવાન, ઘંટાકર્ણ મહાવીર અને પદ્માવતી દેવી ની મુર્તીઓ છે. કમીટી મેંબર ખૂબ મહેનત કરી રહ્યા છે. જૈન ભવન આગળને આગળ વધે તેવી પ્રાર્થના છે. જૈન ભવન સમાજનું પ્રતીક કહેવાય.

સ્નેહલતાબેન વશા

I want to follow all the principles of Jainism and be a better human being so that I can reach the next level up and attain 'Moksha'. - Saurin Gandhi (8)



सं गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्
Walk Together, Talk Together, Act With One Mind.

Take time to think,
it is the source of power.
Take time to play,
it is the secret of perpetual youth.
Take time to read,
it is the fountain of wisdom.
Take time to love and to be loved,
it is the God-given privilege.
Take time to be friendly,
it is the road to happiness.
Take time to laugh,
it is the music of the soul.
Take time to give,
it is too short a day to be selfish.
Take time to enjoy your family,
they are the jewels of your life...

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We have to get rid of good and bad karmas to achieve salvation. We Jains are born for a reason.
I may not know the reason, but it will soon arise. - Palak Shah (12)

પૂજ્ય માતાને લાખ લાખ વંદન



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