

# PRATISHTHA MAHOTSAV

MAY 29 - 30, 1999

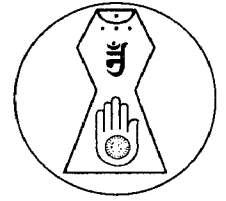


**Souvenir**

**Jain Dehrasar at:  
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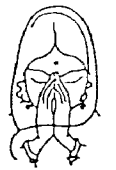
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# MAHA MANTRA NAMOKAR



NAMO ARIHANTANAM  
NAMO SIDDHANAM  
NAMO AYRAIYANAM  
NAMO UVAJJHAYANAM  
NAMO LOE SAVVA-SAHUNAM  
ESO PANCH NAMUKKARO  
SAVVA-PAVAPPANASANO  
MANGALANANCH SAVVESIM  
PADHAMAM HAVAI MANGALAM

Obeisance to the Arihantas - perfected souls - Godmen  
Obeisance to the Siddhas - liberated bodiless souls  
Obeisance to the Acharyas - heads of congregations  
Obeisance to the Upadhyayas - ascetic teachers  
Obeisance to the Sadhus - all ascetic aspirants  
This five-fold obeisance mantra  
Destroys all demerit  
And of all auspicious recitations  
Is the first and foremost

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Please treat this Souvenir Issue with respect and save from aasatana

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MUKTABEN GHELANI



The goal of all religions is the same,  
but the language of the teachers differs.

The goal is to kill the false "I" so that the real "I" the Lord,  
will reign.





# JAIN CENTER OF GREATER ST. LOUIS



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May 29, 1999

Jai Jinendra!

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Jain Center of Greater St. Louis, I welcome each of you to this auspicious event of Pratishtha Mahotsav.

By the grace of Lord Simandharswami and with the brotherly cooperation of the Board of Trustees as well as the members of the Hindu Temple of St. Louis, under the leadership and guidance of Dr. G. V. Naidu, our combined vision of having a place of worship to propagate India's religious diversity and traditions is being realized. This Temple is a unique experience for our city and idealizes peaceful coexistence.

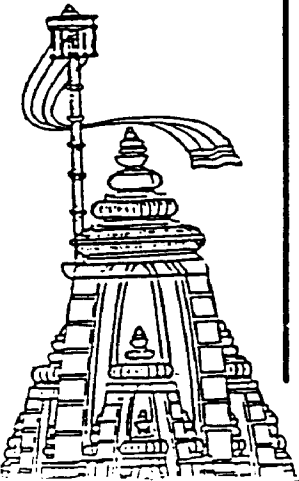
Today, this Holy Tirth opens with the installment of the deities of Lord Mahavira and Lord Parshvanath. Our Center will also commemorate a Gnyan Bhandar. This day of the Kumbh Sthapna and Pratishtha Mahotsav will remain in our memory forever.

The devotion and the determination for the past 12 years of the Jain Center members of St. Louis, as well as the enthusiastic support which has come from across North America, has been inspiring and stimulating. The love, the faith, and the devotion which you bring to this endeavor light our hearts. Your pilgrimage to our city to help us in celebrating this joyous occasion will result in lasting relationships between members of our various Centers.

During the World Religions Conference in 1893, Virchand Gandhi first presented Jainism to the world. Today, our Holy Tirth continues this legacy of preserving the core of our identity by being a place of worship for now and for future generations.

*Blessed are those who give without remembering and receive without forgetting.*

Shirish Ghelani  
President, Executive Committee



**With Best Compliments  
and Wishes  
to the  
Jain Center of Greater St. Louis  
on the Auspicious Occasion  
of  
Pratishtha Mahotsav  
from  
Drs. Bharat K. & Meenal B. Shah  
Drs. Sandip P. & Pauravi S. Vasavada  
Milind B. Shah**

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## **Jain Center of Greater St. Louis — In Retrospect**

As we reflect on the past 12 years, we recall several memories and milestones since the inception of our Jain Center. The Center was founded in October 1986 under the spiritual guidance and blessings of Acharya Sushil Muni and Amrendra Muni. During all these years our Center remained very active in organizing several projects and activities to promote the practice and doctrines of Jainism, to preserve the Jain way of life, and to promote fellowship among all those who are interested in understanding the principles of Jainism.

Every year, our Center targeted and implemented a major project and achieved a new milestone. To name a few: the Center organized monthly programs which included prayers, discussions, youth activities and religious discourses; and invited distinguished leaders and scholars including Jain acharyas, monks and sadhvijis. We started the 8-day celebration of the Paryushana/Daslakshana festival including Ghee-boli (fund raising ceremony), provided Jain literature including a collection/distribution of several books and video/audio cassettes in our mobile library, and started separate pathshala classes for our youth members. We conducted several youth activities including hosting of the first-ever JAINA regional summer youth camp, participated in the "Community in Partnership" program with the local Salvation Army, and visited other Jain Centers and temples ("Sangh-yatra"). Other major projects undertaken included a scholarship program for 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade local Jain youths, and the Center's publications which included the first "Pratikraman" book in English, the Prayer book, and the membership directory.

Since 1988, the Center and our members have been actively involved in the construction of the joint Hindu/Jain Temple. We are very pleased that we will soon have a designated place of worship (Jain Dehrasar) within the Hindu Temple of St. Louis. The construction of our Jain Dehrasar has been a most vital project and a key milestone for our Center. More importantly, it is a long-cherished dream come true for our members.

Let us all come together on this Memorial Day weekend of 1999 and celebrate this most auspicious and once-in-a-lifetime event of Pratishtha Mahotsav (installation ceremony of

Jain Tirthankars' idols) as well as the inauguration of our Jain Dehrasar.

Jai Jinendra

The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis

### **Presidents of Jain Center of Greater St. Louis**

**Shirish Ghelani**  
(1999)

**Dinesh Shah**  
(1998)

**Kirit Shah**  
(1996-1997)

**Satish Nayak**  
(1994-1995)

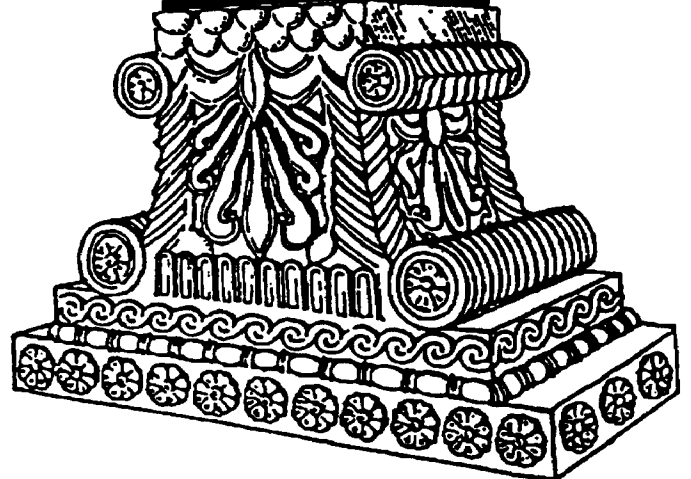
**Dipak Kapadia**  
(1992-1993)

**Prakash Jain**  
(1991)

**Kirit Shah**  
(1991)

**Milan Kapadia**  
(1990)

**Surendra Singhvi**  
(1986-1990)



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Sri Padmavatidevi Prasanna

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ಶ್ರೀ ದೇವೇಂದ್ರಕೀರ್ತಿ ಭಟ್ಟಾರಕ  
ಪಟ್ಟಾಚಾರ್ಯವರ್ಯ ಮಹಾಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳವರು  
ಶ್ರೀ ಹೊಂಬುಜ ಜೈನ ಮಠ  
ಅಂಚೆ ಕಛೇರಿ : ಹೊಂಬುಜ - ೫೭೭೪೩೬  
ಓವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ( ಭಾರತ )



April 22, 1999

### Blessings

We are extremely happy to know that a new Jain temple is built at St. Louis, MO, USA and the 'Pratishtha Ceremony' of the Jain idols — Lord Supreme Bhagawan Sri Parshwanath Swamy and Bhagawan Sri Mahaveera Swamy will be held on 29th and 30th May, 99.

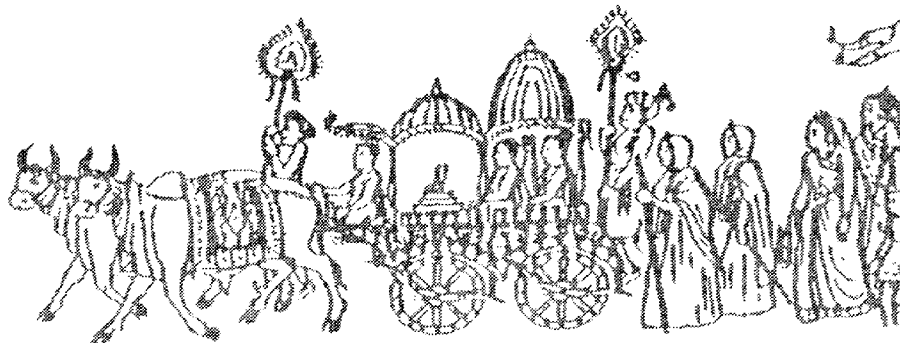
Temple is the center of our religious activities. It is from the temple that the religious, moral and spiritual energies required by the living beings in general and by the human beings in particular are generated. These religious, moral and spiritual energies enlighten every soul and take it in the path of liberation. For Jains, temple is the replica of 'Samavasharan' itself.

We appreciate the efforts of Jains and Hindus for their efforts in building a common temple for the followers of both the religions. This shows their religious tolerance — a great spiritual and moral value of our ancient India saints and seers.

We do pray Lord Supreme Bhagawan Parshwanatha Swamy and Bhagawan Sri Maheveera Swamy for the grand success of the Pratishtha Ceremony and also for the long, healthy, wealthy and peaceful life for everybody.

With Blessings,

**H.H.SRI DEVENDRAKEERTY SWAMIGI.**



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My Dear President, Directors, Members,  
and Young Jains of Greater St. Louis Center,

May 29, 1999

Jai Jinendra!

I want to bless you and thank you for the information of the Pratishtha Mahotsav of Bhagwan Mahavir and Bhagwan Parshvanath at the Hindu Temple of St. Louis, and for inviting me to participate in this auspicious event.

This is a holy occasion for all the Jains and all peace-loving aspirants, for this Temple welcomes all and is an inspiration to all. People of all walks of life, without 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 Ahimsa and peaceful co-existence with all living beings.

Vardhaman Mahavira 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 the Jain teaching is an answer and a healing bond for mankind.

Through patience 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 succeeding generations 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 the influence of our ancestors and parents. So, in the same way, by being models, we will be able to influence future generations.

Let us tap the power of our senses, mind, heart and soul by nourishing our body with vegetarian food; enlightening our mind with creative ideas; enriching our heart with love and reverence for life; and illuminating our soul with wisdom and self-realization.

May my blessings be with all of you as you follow the path of loving compassion, anekantavada, and ahimsa for personal transformation and world peace.

Love and Blessings,

*Chitrabhanu*



## *Founder*

His Holiness Pujya  
Shree Chitrabhanuji

## *Directors*

Jivan Proctor  
Pramoda Chitrabhanu  
Barry Wolfe  
Devendra Peer



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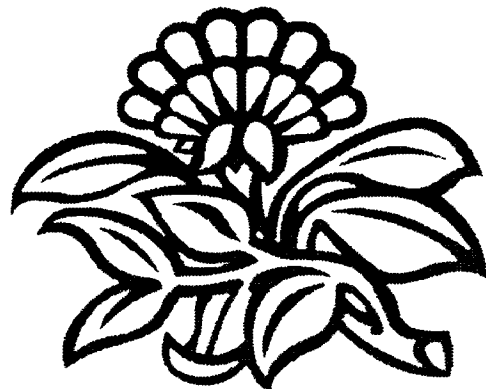
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# Pratishtha Mahotsav

Bhagwan Mahavir Swami  
and  
Bhagwan Parshvanath Swami

## Summary of Major Programs

### Saturday, May 29

9:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

2:30 - 5:15 p.m.

5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

8:00 - 10:30 p.m.

Registration

Kumbh Sthapna

Welcome / Message

Parshwanath Pooja

Swami Vatsalya Lunch

Panch Kalyanak Pooja

Shanti Kalash

Coin Ceremony

Swami Vatsalya Dinner

Cultural Program

### Sunday, May 30

7:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

12:39 - 1:30 p.m.

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Parshvanath Pooja

Mahavir Swami Pooja

**Pratishtha and Pooja**

Swami Vatsalya Lunch

Laghu Shanti Pooja

Samapti

## Special Programs

### Monday, May 31

9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Swadhyaya

Light Lunch



## **Jain Dehrasar — Construction and Installation of Idols**

### **Special Acknowledgment**

The following members made significant contributions toward the dream of Jain Dehrasar at The Hindu Temple of St. Louis. We acknowledge their timely service and devotion for the construction of the Temple and installation of murtis of Bhagwan Parshvanath and Bhagwan Mahavir Swami on behalf of the Jain Center of Greater St. Louis.

**Shree Anilbhai Shah (Surat)**, brother of Mr. Suresh D. Shah was instrumental in recommending the architect **Mr. Raj Sompura** for the design and construction of marble "Gabhara". Mr. Sompura took the responsibility of supervising the construction work and shipment of the same in Bombay. Mr. Anil Shah made several trips for construction services, sending "Mukut" (the Crown) for idols and obtaining several pooja items for the center.

**Shree Gyan Chandra Khinduka (Jaipur)**, brother of Dr. Shanti Kumar Khinduka coordinated the construction and shipment of murtis of Bhagwan Parshvanath and Bhagwan Mahavir Swami.

**Shree Mukesh Ghelani (Bombay)**, brother of Mr. Shirish Ghelani acted as our export agent for shipping and billing purposes. He also helped

us in getting pooja items, packaging them and assuring safe and timely shipment to St. Louis.

The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis is deeply indebted to these above mentioned individuals and their families for their contributions.

Finally, we would like to thank **Mr. Jiwan Singla** and **Hasmukh Mehta**, both from St. Louis, MO, for spending many hours with shilpis in putting together the Dehrasar Temple in a short time. The team of **Ganpathi Sthapati** and associate under the supervision of **Mr. S. Shivakumar** did an excellent job of completing the Dehrasar. Helping in the construction of the Jain Dehrasar were **Mr. M. Munuswamy, K. Chandrshekar, M. Panneerselum, G. Durai, G. Manishekaran and T. Rengaswamy**, all visiting shilpis from India.

Thank you all for your support. The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis shall remain grateful to you all for your contributions and commitment to this memorable project.

Jai Jinendra

The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis

May 14, 1999

**With Best Wishes  
and  
Congratulations  
for  
Pratishtha Mahotsav  
from  
Trends Motel  
and  
Nagin Patel and  
Family**

**With Best Compliments  
To  
Jain Center  
of Greater St. Louis  
On The Occasion of  
Pratishtha Mahotsav  
from  
Gujarati Samaj  
of St. Louis**



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Tansukh & Bharati Salagia  
Vasant & Shobha Chheda

## **Special Donations / Recognition**

- ◆ ***Sunil & Manju Mehta from San Francisco, CA*** for the generous donation of all marble floor tiles installed in our Jain Dehrasar
- ◆ ***Vasantha & Mala Kumaraiah of Chicago*** for sponsoring lunch on Saturday, May 29th, 1999
- ◆ ***Seema Enterprises*** for the donation of the groceries for all meals
- ◆ ***Hindu Temple & Gujarati Samaj of St. Louis*** for food preparation and help for all meals



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# Idols at The Jain Dehrasar

Dilip Sheth

## Tirthankara Mahavira

The lifestyle of Mahavira begins with a series of dreams seen by his mother, and witnessing these dreams indicated that she would give birth to a Tirthankara or a universal monarch.

Mahavira was born in 599 BC in the kingdom of Vaishali, Magadha region of India. His father, King Siddhartha and mother, Trishala named him Vardhamana, meaning the one whose birth offers universal prosperity and happiness to all living beings. His numerous marvels and saintliness were evidenced in the early childhood acts of non-violence and bravery, hence appropriately given the name, Mahavira, meaning "the Great Hero". The history notes that Mahavira honored a request from his parents and later married to a princess, Yashoda, and that they had a beautiful daughter called Priyadarshana.

At the age of 30 years, Mahavira left his family and abandoned the worldly life to seek enlightenment. After exactly 12 years, 6 months and 15 days of ascetic path and penance in the forest, Mahavira attained enlightenment at the age of 42 while he was sitting under a tree at the banks of a river, Rjukula. Having reached this stage of omniscience (total knowledge) Mahavira began preaching and teaching the path of peace, purity and happiness using language of the masses, called Ardha Magadhi, the language in which the earliest Jain scriptures were recorded. For the next 30 years, Mahavira preached a path, which could remove the sufferings of humankind and lead to spiritual perfection.

At the age of 72, in the year 527 BC, Mahavira delivered his last sermon at Pavapuri (Bihar), India, where his soul left the body and attained nirvana. The Tattvartha Sutra records that he left 14,000 monks, 36,000 nuns and 159,000 shravaks (male lay followers) and 318,000 shravikas (women lay followers). Lord Mahavira taught us that Ahimsa (non-violence) is the highest religion and that everyone should show love and compassion for all living beings, while becoming tolerant towards the perverse views. As we know, Mahatma Gandhi called Mahavira 'the incarnation of non-violence'. Today, 2,500 years later, his life and teachings continue to provide instruction and inspiration for Jains in their daily life.

The idol of Tirthankara Mahavira is

decorated from a Svetamber tradition point of view.



## Tirthankara Parshvanath

Parshvanath was the 23rd Tirthankar, born about 250 years before Mahavira, in 775 BC at Benaras (Varanasi), India, in royal family of King Ashvasen and queen Vamadevi. In his very young age Parshva became omniscient, all-knowing and all-seeing, though yet embodied but perfect in spirituality.

Lord Parshvanath began to preach four-fold path of restraint of Truth, Non-violence, Non-stealing and Non-possession, until he reached the age of 100 years. After having preached extensively, he came to the hill of Sammeda Sikharji, where he ended his journey and entered into the last stage of Shukladhyana thereby attaining nirvana. It is claimed that Lord Parshvanath systemized the Jain religion by dividing its followers into four categories: Sramana (monks), Sramani (nuns), Sravak (male laity) and Sravika (female laity). The Sammeda Sikharji hill today is a center of Jain pilgrimage and is called the Hill of Parshvanath.

The idol of Tirthankara Parshvanath represents a Digamber tradition point of view.



# Jainism - The Ultimate Destination

Rajni Shah

Jain religion and its practices comprise of a number of terminologies being commonly used, but their meaning and implication need to be understood also in the context of today's science.

Begin with the word '**Jain.**' A soul who has conquered inner enemies, like love and hate, attachment and aversion, pleasure and pain, and is relieved from all karmic bondages is called the conqueror or JIN. A JIN or JINESHWAR is also called 'Arihant' ('Ari' means inner enemies and 'hant' means destroyed) or 'Vitaraga' (who has no attachment or raag). **The followers of JIN are called Jains.** Jains are also called 'Shravak and Shravika', which mean one who listens to and practices teachings of JIN for ultimate salvation. Here one important thing to note is that Jain teerthankers do not have attachment or aversion, and therefore, they are neither pleased nor displeased with our prayers and therefore do not give blessings or curses. The question would be 'Why do we pray to them then?' We pray to acquire their virtues and qualities to be one like themselves. Teerthanker do not preach to surrender to them, instead they say '**Do what I did. Follow my path**' and one day you too will become liberated from all karmas. The message is very clearly given '**Worship God & Become God**'.

The teerthanker in Jain Darshan is not born as a teerthanker. He is born just like a human being. Then, he initiates a Diksha, i.e., Sansar tyaga and after many years of tapa, meditation and penance, he attains Omniscience, i.e., kevalgyan. He then establishes the fourfold order (Sadhu, Sadhavi, Shravak and Shravika) which is called the 'chaturvidh sangh'. This fourfold order is also called a 'mobile teerth'. Since he establishes this teerth, he is designated a '**Teerthanker**'.

Another word '**Chovisi**' means in a given time-frame of millions of years, there are always 24 independent souls who conquer their inner enemies and become teerthanker one after another. Over and above, there are many other souls who also liberate themselves, but they are not regarded as Arihants or Teerthankers. The 24th and last of the present time-frame is Shri Mahaveer Swami who was born 2,500 years ago. There were innumerable such time-frames in the past; and in every time-frame, there were 24 teerthankers, and in the future there will be innumerable time-frames with 24 teerthankers in every time-frame. Thus, Shri Mahaveer Swami was not a founder of the Jain religion, but a propagator of the then existing religious order. He followed the well-established creed of his predecessor, the 23rd

teerthanker, Shri Parshwanath. Looking at this beginning less time-frame, Jain religion originates from time immemorial. Even in Rigveda and Hindu scriptures, we find prayers made to the first Jain teerthanker (Shri Adinath or Adishwar) of the present time-frame.

There is a word '**Navakarsi**' which means not to eat or drink (even water) before sunrise. Another word '**Chauvihar**' means not to eat or drink (even water) after sunset. Science has today proved that digestion is always excellent in the presence of solar energy, and that a late night dinner causes indigestion, constipation and other health problems. Here is an interesting story. Once, a King complained to a Jain Sadhu that SUN gives energy and life to us, yet why do you not consider SUN as a GOD. Sadhu replied that we Jains respect and have the highest reverence for SUN, and that is the reason, when sun goes away in the evening, we miss the SUN so much, and as a mark of reverence and in separation, we even stop eating and drinking, until the SUN comes back in the morning. Today, how many Jains practice this ritual is indeed a matter of concern.

From a nonviolence standpoint, we are expected to drink only boiled (and then cooled) water, and not out of the water tap without boiling. The side effect of this ritual is also linked strongly to science, health and ecology. It is a pity, we have too many excuses and pretexts to follow this.

**Samayak** means to sit 48 minutes out of the whole day to get away from worldly affairs and attachments and experience the state of Samadhi. **Pratikraman** means to sit every day for 48 minutes each after sunset and before sunrise to recite scriptural sutras to repent for all sins done during the entire day/night. This is something like laundry, washing away the dirt attached to the soul.

Now comes the word '**Pachhakhan**'. Out of 24 hours, the total time we spend in eating is hardly about two hours, meaning thereby, for almost 22 hours we are in a state of non-eating or partial Upavas. This 'Pachhakhan' means to take a vow not to eat or drink for a fixed time of 3-4-5 or any hours during day time and for 12 hours at sunset. This ritual reduces the influx of karma. **Michhami Dukkadam** stands for asking forgiveness from everyone for any hurt or pain caused knowingly at any time. This quality has purifying and philosophical significance. It reduces the burden of karma.

**Gochari** means Jain Sadhu or Sadhavi visits Jain houses to collect their food. 'GO' means a cow, and 'Chari' means to graze. Here, one more facet of

Jain Sadhu or Sadhavi that he or she does not cook or keep any food with them. For their lunch and dinner (before sunset), both times they visit Jain houses. They leave sansar, take diksha, always walk barefooted, never use any vehicles, keep no belongings, do not touch women or a woman sadhavi does not touch men and maintain celibacy in thought, word and action. They walk from one place to another for their lifetime to pursue their spiritual path toward liberation and during the course of travel, they propagate the Jain religion. Such rigorous rituals for a Sadhu are not found in any religion.

All living beings can be categorized from one to five senses; skin (touch), tongue (eat), nose (smell), eyes (see), and ears (listen). Let us examine these sensory organs one by one.

Vegetables, trees, earth, water, air, fire	one sense	<b>skin</b>
Worms, leaches, etc.	two senses	<b>skin and tongue</b>
Ants, pests, lice, etc.	three senses	<b>skin, tongue, nose</b>
Butterflies, cockroaches, flies, bees, etc.	four senses	<b>skin, tongue, nose, eye</b>
Humans, animals, heavenly & hellish	five senses	<b>skin, tongue, nose, eye, ear</b>

Our religion portrays a truly enlightened perspective of equality of souls, irrespective of differing of physical forms, ranging from human beings to animals and even microscopic living organisms. All living beings are equal and at the same base - Jains respect all life. One-sense living beings cannot even move according to their wishes, while living beings with two-senses to five-senses are able to move of their own wishes. The higher number of senses a living being has, the higher is the level of knowledge, senses and development. Therefore, whenever we want to eat and feed ourselves, it is with this point of view that our religion preaches that we eat food which is derived from one-sense living beings like grains, vegetables, etc. We do not eat non-vegetarian food or any other food which is derived from living beings with two to five senses.

Then, there is another word **Upvasa** or fasting, which is found in every religion. 'Up' means 'near' and 'Vas' means to stay. Thus, 'Upvasa' means to stay near the soul and not give any food or drink to the body. The Jain's way of fasting, strictly not eating or drinking anything is also unparalleled when compared to any religion of the world. Recently, our Sadhu had observed continuously 365 days of fasting in Bangalore, India. We have a unique custom of celebrating their festivals not by eating, but by observing fast for one or more days, not comparable with any other religion. Jain religion and its

principles are based on a path of spiritual progress coupled with scientific reasons for good health and ecology systems which are being proclaimed and proved by science.

Right faith and right knowledge are required for right conduct, and all three are interdependent. This threefold trinity discipline helps us to realize our own intrinsic purity. By right conduct only, we can eliminate conflicts and confusions and can establish our connection with the liberated souls through our character, commitment and conviction.

Our religion has another striking difference for consumption of foods. The Jain's way of practicing vegetarianism is a healthy way of living. Our religion tells us not to eat potato, onion, etc., which are grown under the ground. The reason is too many living cells compared to other vegetables grown above the ground, like okra, cucumber, etc. Upon inserting a needle into a potato and taking it out immediately, science has found under a microscope, 256 living cells on the tip of the needle. So, counting on this number, one potato may have more than a million lives. A larger number of living cells can be proved by another practical example. All those vegetables grown above the ground like okra, cucumber, etc. go bad within a couple of weeks, while in the case of potato, onion, etc., they do not go bad even after a couple of months due to a larger number of living cells in them. Moreover, consumption of items grown under the ground is not good from a health point of view. The religious principle here is - Just to feed the stomach or body, why kill so many living beings, when other vegetables grown above the ground are available. This thinking of Jain religion reflects its steadfast and uncommon approach to nonviolence. But again, the number of practicing Jains is indeed a matter of question and concern.

To sum up, Jain religion is not a sect, but is a way of living an excellent life without any distinction of class, color or creed. Everyone can follow it. Jainism always strives for the realization of the highest perfection of a person which in its original purity is free from all pain and bondages of birth and death.

According to the theory of Karma, the present is the product of the past, but we must remember, the present is also the seed of the future. If yesterday is a canceled check, tomorrow is a promissory note, but today is ready **CASH**. Let us use the present time to scale down our vices, scale up our virtues and to make an elixir of life to lead us to spiritual perfection.

**My best wishes to St. Louis Jain Sangh for 'pratishtha mahotsav' and this event to be a good beginning toward the realization of the ultimate goal of life.**

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## પ્રભુ મહાવીરને લખેલો પત્ર

ન્યુજર્સીમાં કાલ્ડવેલના દેરાસરમાં દર મહિને રવિવારે સવારે ૮.૩૦ થી ૧૦.૦૦ ભક્તામર સ્તોત્ર અને સમુહ સામાયિક થાય છે. લગભગ ૨૦૦ જેટલા ભાઈ - બેનો ઉત્સાહથી ભાગ લે છે. આ વર્ષે સામાયિકના સ્વાધ્યાયમાં ભગવાન મહાવીરના ૨૭ ભવોનું ચરિત્ર ચાલે છે. આજે ૨૬મો ભવ પુરો કર્યો અને ૨૭મા ભવની કથા શરૂ થઈ.

પ્રભુ મહાવીર દેવલોકમાંથી અવીને દેવાનંદાની કુક્ષિમાં ગર્ભ રૂપે આવ્યા. ૮૨ દિવસ પછી મહાવીર પ્રભુનો ગર્ભ રૂપાંતરિત થયો ત્રિશલા માતાની કુક્ષિમાં..... અને ૯ ૧/૨ મહિના પસાર થયા. થોડા જ સમયમાં ત્રિશલા માતા પ્રભુને જન્મ આપશે. આ પળે સામાયિકમાં બેઠેલા સર્વ ભાઈ બેનો, એ ભાવના ભાવે છે કે પ્રત્યેકના હૃદયમાં ભગવાન મહાવીર અવીને આવ્યા છે. આ સમયે - જન્મ પહેલા - મહાવીર પ્રભુને લખાયેલો પત્ર વાંચી સંભળાવવામાં આવે છે..... અવધિજ્ઞાનના ઉપયોગથી ભગવાન પત્રની વિગત સાંભળે છે..

પત્ર

હે પ્રભુ ! આજના સામાયિકમાં આપના અવન કલ્યાણકની વાત સાંભળી અમારા હૈયામાં ભાવનાની ભરતી આવી છે. પ્રભુ અમે જાણે એ અનુભવ કરીએ છીએ કે અમારા હૃદયમાં આપ અવીને પધાર્યા છો. પ્રભુ! આપની સમક્ષ મસ્તક ઝુકાવી, આપની મંજુરી મેળવી, આપની સમક્ષ આ પત્ર વાંચવામાં આવે છે, તો સાંભળો.

પ્રભુ! આ જીવે તો ૮૪ લાખ જીવાયોનિમાં અનંતકેરા કર્યા. રાહ બદલ્યા, રાહી બદલ્યા પણ હજુ મંજીલ પ્રાપ્ત થઈ નથી. પ્રભુ ! આપના પૂર્વ ભવોની મહાયાત્રા અદ્ભુત છે. પ્રભુ ! અત્યારે નજર સામે આપનો પ્રથમ ભવ દેખાય છે. અનંતા વર્ષો પહેલા આપ એક નગરના નયસાર નામે ભલા ભોળા, એક મુખી હતા. આપના પરદા સામે એ પ્રસંગ આજે પણ એટલો જ સ્પષ્ટ દેખાય છે. જંગલમાં ભુલા પડેલા, ભુખ તરસથી પીડાતા સાધુઓને આપે ભોજન આપ્યું. અને જંગલમાંથી બહાર નીકળવાનો માર્ગ બતાવ્યો. સાધુ મહાત્મા આપની સરળતા અને નિખાલસતા જોઈને પ્રભાવિત થયા અને આપને નવકારમંત્ર આપ્યો. અત્યંત ભાવપુર્વક, ગ્રાહક દષ્ટિથી, આપે નવકારમંત્રને ગ્રહણ કર્યો અને ખાલી હૃદયમાં ભરી દીધો. આપે તેને જીવન મંત્ર બનાવ્યો. હૃદયની ધરતીમાં ધર્મનું બીજ વવાયું અને તેમાંથી અંકુરો ફુટ્યો. આપને સમ્યગ્દર્શન પ્રાપ્ત થયું.

પ્રભુ ! પ્રશ્ન થાય છે કે અમારા જીવે પણ મહાત્મા અને ગુરૂ પાસેથી અનેક મંત્રો લીધા અને લાખોવાર ગણ્યા પણ સમ્યગ્દર્શન કેમ પ્રગટ્યું નહિ? પ્રભુ! હવે સમજાય છે કે મંત્ર સ્વીકારતી વખતે અમારું હૃદય નયસાર જેવું નિખાલસ અને ખાલી ન હતું. પરિણામે અહંકાર અને કષાયોથી ભરેલા હૃદયે સ્વીકારેલા મંત્રો કંઈ જ અસર ન કરી શક્યા.

પ્રભુ નયસાર બનીને આપે સમગ્ર જગતને અદ્ભુત પ્રેરણા આપી કે હે માનવ! તુ સરળ બનીને સહજભાવે યથાશક્તિ સેવા કર. બદલામાં કોઈજ અપેક્ષા ન રાખતો. ગુરૂ પાસેથી જે કંઈ મળે તે, ગ્રાહકતાથી, બાલ સહજતાથી સ્વીકાર કરજે.

પ્રભુ ! મરીચિના ભવને જોતા અમને થાય છે કે મરીચિ જેવા મહાન જ્ઞાની, મુની બન્યા અને હજારોને ધર્મ પમાડ્યો. પરંતુ અસાધારણ અને અસહ્ય ગરમીના એ દિવસોમાં ભર બપોરે, ખુલ્લા પગે વિહાર કરતા કરતા, ગરમી સહન ન કરી શક્યા અને ઈંદ્રીયોથી પરાજિત થયા. જૈન સંઘ અને સાધુ સમાજથી જુદા પડીને ત્રિદંડીનો વેશ લીધો. એ તો ઠીક પણ દાદા, તીર્થંકર આદિનાથ ભગવાન પાસેથી જાણ્યું કે મરીચિ ૨૪મા તીર્થંકર થવાના છે ત્યારે મરીચિનો અહંકાર સીમા ઓળંગી ગયો. કુળનું અભિમાન કર્યું અને નીચ ગોત્ર કર્મ બાંધ્યું.

પ્રભુ ! આ દશ્ય જોઈને અમને પણ થાય છે કે અમારો જીવ કેટ કેટલીવાર અહંકારની ભરતીમાં ભીંસાયો હશે. ધન સંપત્તિ, કે પદવી જરાક કંઈક વધ્યું અને અમારો અહંકાર ગેસના ફુગ્ગાની જેમ ફુલાતો ગયો. કર્મ પ્રકૃતિએ મરીચિ જેવા મહાન આત્માને ન છોડ્યો તો અમારી શું હાલત થશે? પ્રભુ ! મરીચિ બનીને આપે જગતને એ પ્રેરણા આપી કે પુણ્યના ઉદયથી ઉચ્ચ કુળ કે ઉચ્ચ જ્ઞાન પ્રાપ્ત કરો તો અહંકાર ન કરશો.

પ્રભુ ! વિશ્વભુતિના ભવને યાદ કરું છું ત્યારે એ પ્રસંગ મારી નજર સામે દેખાય છે. માસક્ષમણને પારણે માસક્ષમણ કરનારા મહામુનિ વિશ્વભુતિ રાજમાર્ગ પર ચાલ્યા જાય છે. કાકાનો દિકરો વિશાખાનંદી મહેલના ઝરૂખામાં બેઠેલો છે. રસ્તામાં ચાલતી એક ગાયની અડકેટમાં આવતા વિશ્વભુતિ મુનિ જમીન પર પડે છે. ઝરૂખામાં બેઠેલો વિશાખાનંદી, આ દશ્ય જોઈને મહેલું મારે છે. હે.. વિશ્વભુતિ, માત્ર એક મુકકો મારીને કોઠાના વૃક્ષના ફળો તોડનારી તારી તાકાત ક્યાં ચાલી ગઈ? મહાતપસ્વી વિશ્વભુતિનો શ્વાસ આ શબ્દો સાંભળતા રૂંધાય છે. હાથની બે મુઠ્ઠીઓ વળે છે. અહંકાર

છંછેડાય છે. ચિનગારીથી પ્રગટેલી અહંકારની આગ, જવાળામુખી બને છે. અને વિશ્વભૂતિ નિર્દોષ ગાયને બે શિંગડાથી પકડીને આકાશમાં ઉછાળે છે, અને શક્તિનું પ્રદર્શન કરે છે. તે જ પળે, કરેલી તમામ તપશ્ચર્યાનું લીલામ થઈ જાય છે.

પ્રભુ ! આ દૃશ્ય જોઈને થાય છે કે વિશ્વભૂતિતો મહાન જ્ઞાની અને મહા તપસ્વી હતા પરંતુ અમારા જીવે તો આસક્તીની ઘણી ગાયોને અહંકારના આકાશમાં ઉછાળી છે, અને કરેલી તપશ્ચર્યા ઉપર પાણી ફેરવ્યું છે. પ્રભુ વિશ્વભૂતિ બનીને આપે સમગ્ર વિશ્વને પ્રેરણા આપી. હે આત્મા ! તપસ્વી બનીને સ્વાત્માનું દર્શન કરજે પરંતુ શક્તિનું પ્રદર્શન ન કરતો.

પ્રભુ ! આપના ત્રિપૃષ્ઠવાસુદેવના ભવનો એ પ્રસંગ અમારી આંખોના પડદા ઉપર દેખાય છે. ત્રણ ત્રણ ખંડના માલિક વાસુદેવને સત્તાનો અહંકાર સતાવી ગયો. પેલા શૈયા પાલકે સંગીત બધે ન કરાવીને ત્રિપૃષ્ઠનો અહંકાર છંછેડ્યો. સત્તાનો મદ હદ વટાવી ગયો. પેલા શૈયાપાલકના કાનમાં, ભર સભામાં, ઉકળતુ સીસુ રેડાવીને તેને મૃત્યુની ખાઈમાં ધકેલી દીધો. સત્તાની ખુમારીએ પાગલ બનીને વિકરાળ સ્વરૂપ લીધું. કર્મ પ્રકૃતિએ કેવી સજા ફટકારી? સમગ્ર જીવન દરમ્યાન કરેલી હિંસા અને કુરતાનું પરિણામ શું આવ્યું? બે-બે વખત નારકીના અસહ્ય દુઃખો વેઠવા પડ્યા. પ્રભુ ! અમારા જીવે પણ ઘણાના કાનમાં ઉકળતા શબ્દો રેડ્યા છે. કોને ખબર ! જીવે કેવા કર્મો બાંધ્યા હશે. પરંતુ ત્રિપૃષ્ઠ બનીને આપે જગતને દિવ્ય સંદેશ આપ્યો કે મળેલી સત્તા અને સંપત્તિનો દુરુપયોગ ન કરશો, નહિ તો કર્મ સત્તા છોડશે નહિ.

૨૫ મા નંદનમુનિના ભવમાં તો આપે કમાલ કરી નાંખી. પૂર્વભવમાં પાળેલો સંયમ, આરાધનાનું બળ, ઉચ્ચ તપશ્ચર્યા, શાસ્ત્રોનો અભ્યાસ અને વિશેષ કરીને આપના રોમ રોમમાં નૃત્ય કરતો સૌ જીવો પ્રત્યેનો અનુકંપા ભાવ... આ બધાના પરિણામે આપ અધ્યાત્મના ઉચ્ચ શિખરને સ્પર્શ્યો, અને કર્મ શત્રુઓના ભૂકકા બોલાવ્યા.

"સવિ જીવ કરું શાસન રસી" આપના હૃદયની પ્રત્યેક ધડકનમાંથી વહેતા આ સંગીતથી તીર્થંકર નામ કર્મ આપના ચરણો સમક્ષ નાચી ઉઠ્યું અને નિકાચીત બની ગયું. એકેન્દ્રિયથી પંચેન્દ્રિય સુધીના સર્વ સુક્ષ્મ અને સ્થૂલ જીવો પ્રત્યે આપે અનુકંપાનું ઝરણું વહેતું કર્યું. આપે એક હાથે તાળી વગાડી. અનાહતનો અંતરનાદ સાંભળ્યો. અમૃતનો સ્વાદ ચાખ્યો. આપના પ્રત્યેક શ્વાસમાંથી જિનશાસનની સુગંધ મહેકી અને આપ મુક્તિપંથના મુસાફર મટીને માલિક બની ગયા.

જેની મર્યાદા છે અને જેની સીમા છે એવા રાગને છોડીને અમર્યાદિત અને અસીમ એવા વાત્સલ્યને આપે અપનાવ્યો. આપ રાગનું આંગણુ છોડીને શુદ્ધ અને નિર્મળ પ્રેમના આકાશ નીચે આવીને ઊભા રહ્યા. પ્રભુ ! કલ્પના ન હતી કે બે બે વખત નારકીની ઊંડી ખાઈમાં પટકાઈને, અસહ્ય દુઃખો સહન કરનારો જીવ, પુરૂષાર્થ, શ્રદ્ધા, સમર્પણ, સાધનાના અને આરાધના ના બળે, જીવનનું સર્વોત્તમ શિખર સર કરનારો શેરપા બની જશે.

આપ મહાજ્ઞાની, મહા તપસ્વી, અને મહાત્યાગી બન્યા એટલું જ નહિ પણ મહા-વીર બન્યા. પ્રેમની ગંગા, ચારિત્રની યમુના અને જ્ઞાનની સરસ્વતીનો ત્રિવેણી સંગમ આપની ચેતનાને વિશુદ્ધ કરી ગયો. નંદનમુનિ બનીને આપે જગતના સર્વ જીવોને ઉત્તમ પ્રેરણા પહોંચાડી. તેનો સાર એક જ છે કે

**ધર્મનું જન્મસ્થાન બુદ્ધિ નથી પણ હૃદય છે. સંકલ્પ નથી પણ સમર્પણ છે.**

**સંઘર્ષ નથી પણ સંવાદ છે. ઈન્કાર નથી પણ સ્વીકાર છે.**

પ્રભુ આપના પૂર્વ ભવોનું ચરિત્ર એક વાત સાબિત કરે છે.

કર્મને બાંધનારો આત્મા છે. કર્મને ભોગવનારો આત્મા છે. કર્મને તોડનારો પણ આત્મા જ છે. બાંધનારા કર્મ કરતા બાંધનારો અને તોડનારો આત્મા ચઢિયાતો છે.

કાળા માથાનો માનવી ભૂલો કરે છે પરંતુ ભૂલોથી હતાશ થવાને બદલે, જાગૃત બની, હિંમતવર બની, પુરૂષાર્થ અને ધર્મના બળે, સંયમ અને સાધનાના બળે પહાડ જેટલા બધાયેલા કર્મોને રાઈ જેટલા નાના કરી શકવાને સમર્થ છે. પ્રભુ આપનો આ અંતિમ ભવ છે. આપના જન્મથી નિર્વાણ સુધીની પવિત્ર યાત્રા અમે જોવા અને માણવા જાગૃત પણે રાહ જોઈ રહ્યા છીએ. **છેલ્લે એક નમ્ર વિનંતી :**

દેવાનંદા ને છોડીને આપ ચાલ્યા ગયા પણ અમને છોડીને ન જશો. ત્રિશલામાતા જેવું સદ્ભાગ્ય અમને પ્રાપ્ત થાય તેવી અમારી પ્રાર્થના છે. પ્રભુ ! અવીને આપ અમારા હૃદયમાં આવ્યા તો જન્મ પણ અમારા હૃદયમાં જ થવો જોઈએ.

પ્રભુ ! પત્ર લખવામાં કંઈ અવિનય થયો હોય તો ક્ષમા કરશો.

આતુર નયને, અમે અમારા હૃદયમાં, આપના જન્મની રાહ જોઈ રહ્યા છીએ.....

ચંદ્રકાન્ત મહેતા

રવિવાર, માર્ચ ૧૪ ૧૯૯૯

**With Best Wishes to**  
**Jain Center of Greater St. Louis**  
**For a Successful Pratishtha Mahotsav**



Surendra & Sushila Singhvi (Dayton, OH) and their family members:

Sandeep, Shraddha & Diya Singhvi (Dayton, OH)

Seema, Sunit, Sarina & Sahil Jain (Chicago, IL)

**Thoughts to Ponder**

People are unreasonable, illogical, self-centered  
Love them anyway  
If you do good, some people will accuse you of selfish motives  
Do good anyway  
If you are successful, you will win false friends and real enemies  
Try to be successful anyway  
The good you do will be forgotten tomorrow  
Do it anyway  
Honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable  
Be honest and frank anyway  
What you spend years building can be destroyed overnight  
Build anyway  
Give the world the best you have and chances are you will be kicked  
Give it anyway

## Pratishtha Mahotsav — A Milestone

Surendra Singhvi

Since 1988, the center has been actively involved in the temple project and we are pleased that the center has a separate worship room in the Hindu Temple. Considering our membership and financial resources, this was the best strategy to achieve our goal of having a place to worship. As we celebrate the Pratishtha Mahotsav, the following suggestions are made for our center's progress in the next millennium:

1. Practice Jain principles at home and at work. Minimize AGED = Anger, Greed, Ego, Deceit.
2. Participate in the center's activities and bring a non-Jain friend to a program when outside speakers are involved.
3. Encourage our youths to get involved in the center and assume more responsibilities.
4. Promote non-violence (Ahimsa) and vegetarianism in the home, Jain Center, nation and world
5. Organize one or more programs each year in cooperation with other organizations with similar missions.
6. Sponsor each year one religious trip to other Jain Centers with temples such as Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Pittsburgh,

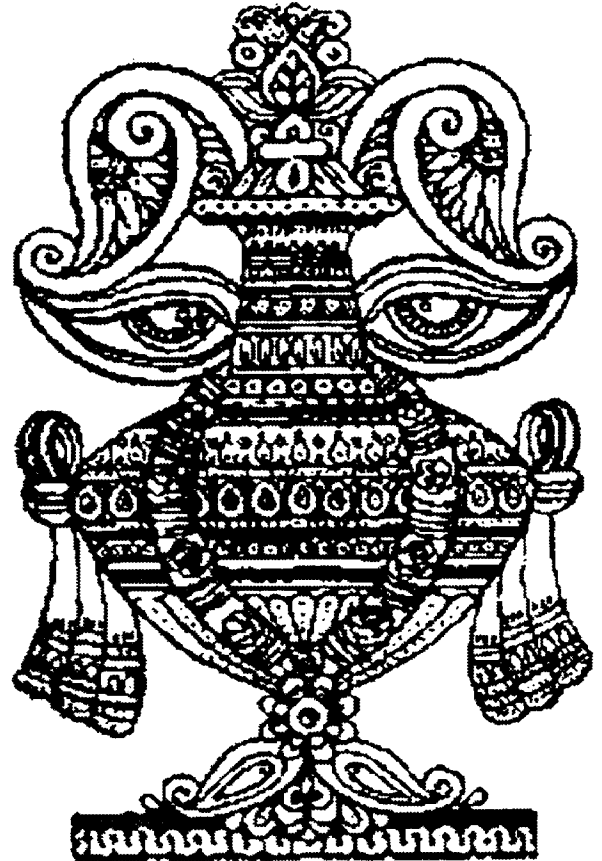
Siddhachalam, etc.

7. Expand the center's library and make resources available to members and non-members
8. Explore and possibly offer an introductory course on Jainism in one of the local universities.
9. Arrange Swadhya and Samayik programs on a monthly basis.

These suggestions can be achieved if we all pledge to invest an average of 3% of our time (i.e. 3% of 168 hours per week=5 hours per week). We hope the members continue to get actively involved over the next 12-1/2 years for the benefit of their own souls, youth and community.

The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis was established in 1986 to promote the Jain principles among Jain and non-Jain families. Once Henry Ford said "Bringing together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; and working together is success." The Center during the past 12 years brought people together, kept them together and encouraged them to work together to achieve its objectives.

Congratulations  
and Best Wishes  
to  
the Jain Center  
of Greater St. Louis  
on this auspicious  
occasion of  
Pratishtha Mahotsav  
from  
Comfort Inn  
and  
Mahendra & Bharati  
Gandhi & Family



*Congratulations and Best Wishes  
to*

*The Jain Center of Greater St. Louis  
on this auspicious occasion of  
Pratishtha Mahotsav*



*Best compliments  
From*



*The Jain Center of Cincinnati-Dayton*

**Congratulations  
&**

**Best Wishes**

**from**



**Nitika D. Mehta, D.D.S.  
General Dentistry**

**4 Executive Drive, Suite #5  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208**

**Phone: 618-632-9582**



**Jai Jinendra.  
Congratulations & Best  
Wishes to the**



**Jain Center of Greater St. Louis  
for the opening of our  
Jain Dehrasar  
within the  
Hindu Temple**



*"No culture can live, if it  
attempts to be exclusive."*

*-- Mahatma Gandhi*

**Prakash & Jayshree Sheth  
Vihar & Ronak**



## Library is a Part of Tirth

Bharat Shah

A Tirthanker becomes a Kevali (omniscient) after shedding four ghati Karmas. He/she establishes a four-fold religious order consisting of: sadhus (monks), sadhvis (nuns), shravaks (laymen), and shravikas (laywomen). Sadhus, sadhavis, shravaks, and shravikas are called a Jangam (mobile) Tirth. Temples, which are established by shravaks, shravikas, and householders, are called Sthavar (stationary) Tirths. People pay obeisance to both the Jangan and Sthavar Tirths.

Lord Mahavira's mobile Tirth consisted of 14,000 sadhus, 36,000 sadhavis, 159,000 shravaks, and 318,000 shravikas. There were 700 Kevalis, 500 Manhparyayajnanies, and 1,300 Avadhijnanies. The mobile Tirth also included 300 people who had mastered all the fourteen Purvas, 1,400 people who had mastered all the Vads, and 300 people who possessed Vaikrayalabdhi. A person who can perceive thought-forms of others is called a Manhparyayajnani. A person who can perceive things that are out of the normal range of senses is called an Avadhijnani. A Vaikrayalabdhi possessor is one who can change his/her body form.

Lord Mahavira assigned the highest priority to jnana (knowledge) over all the other religious

activities. A person cannot loosen the Mithyatva (false belief, ignorance) without knowledge. The Mithyatva is a very tough wall on the soul's path of purification and liberation. Without knowledge a person cannot observe Ahimsa (nonviolence) properly and cannot know what is the cause of suffering, unhappiness, disgrace, blindness, poverty, etc.

The mobile Tirth is the greatest resource for jnana (knowledge) for householders. Living in North America, the mobile Tirth is scarce. Our main source for knowledge is the library. The library is a stationary or a mobile Tirth. We should pay obeisance to this Tirth by accepting Swadhyay as one of the highest priorities in our daily activities.

Allowing others to read our books will result in the sharing of knowledge. The sharing will shed the Antaray (obstructive) Karmas and Knowledge Obscuring (Jnanavaraniya) Karmas. Creating an obstruction when another is gaining jnana will contract both the Antaray and Jnanavaraniya Karmas.

Jnana is the foundation of faith and liberation. Therefore, one should continuously strive to acquire jnana.

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## Ahimsa in the Real World

Ronak Sheth (Pathsala Student)

One of the main principles of Jainism that is taught to youths today is Ahimsa, or Non-Violence. This fundamental principle of Jainism has helped me mature as a person during my many years of involvement with the Jain Center of Greater St. Louis. Through the teachings of Jainism, I have learned to be non-violent in thought, speech, and action. In order to be non-violent in thought, I always think positive. No matter what situation I am faced with, I always look for brightness. By having non-violent thoughts, my mind is always focused and able to think clearly. My non-violence in speech is reflected not only by my positive attitude, but also by my ability to communicate. By learning to be peaceful in speech, I get along with others more easily and my ability to make friends is facilitated. My non-violence in thought and speech ultimately reflects in my non-violence in

actions. In Jainism, this component of Ahimsa is stressed heavily. The first step I learned from Jainism to be less violent in action was to become a vegetarian. By not eating meat, I am not supporting the killing of animals for food. In addition to this, my soul remains as pure as possible. My non-violence in action is also reflected in my temper. When I become angry at something or someone, I do not take it out by fighting or hitting others. Jainism has taught me other, more effective means of solving problems that do not result in violence. Throughout my involvement in Jainism, I have learned many valuable principles. The principle of Ahimsa has been most useful for me in my everyday life. By being non-violent in thought, speech and action, my life has become less stressful and my soul more purified. Through Jainism, I have learned to apply Ahimsa to the real world.

## **The Vow of Truth**

Priyank Shah

The five main vows of Jainism are very important in that they help us in following our religion. These include: Ahimsa (non-violence), Brahmacharya (celibacy), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), Asteya (non-stealing), and Satya (truth). While it is easy to say that the meaning of these vows are absolute, putting them into practice in our everyday lives is a much harder task. While Brahmacharya and Asteya appear to be clear-cut issues, Ahimsa, Aparigraha and Satya tend to cause confusion.

The vow of Satya demands that a person abstain from lying in any form. Truth is a resolution taken to avoid falsehood and deception. We can argue that there are absolute truths, but even to these there are many perceptions. This vow is the concept of Syadvad which means the partial truth or truth relative to various viewpoints. For example, the ever-popular phrase “a glass which is half empty or

half full” describes truth on both sides, but the perceptions are different. The term Satya Anuvrat can thus be considered another facet of the concept of Ahimsa because “the truth hurts.” There are five transgressions to the partial vow of truth. They are 1) misleading precepts, 2) revealing confidential, personal statements, 3) exposing other’s intentions, 4) spreading rumors and gossip, and 5) acquiring other’s possessions by betraying their trust. This vow of truth gives a person the freedom of saying the right thing and refraining from exposing lies. A person may lie to protect a friend or relative. In the end, though, both culprits suffer the consequences. All of this lying causes a person to gain more and more bad karma. The five vows are interrelated and how you behave with one affects the other. Jains and all people who follow these vows can learn to lessen bad karma by accepting numerous viewpoints.

**IAI JINENDRA**

**WITH BEST WISHES TO OUR TEMPLE**

**THE JAIN CENTER OF GREATER ST. LOUIS**

**THE SHAH FAMILY:**

**KEVAL  
PRIYANK  
SHAILESH  
&  
KALPNA**

***With Best Compliments To  
THE JAIN CENTER  
OF GREATER ST. LOUIS***

**On The Occasion Of  
PRATISHTHA MAHOTSAV**

**Ramanbhai, Laxmiben,  
Hitesh, Shilpa, Yogesh  
Patel**

## માનવ અને મંદિર

વિશ્વમાં કોઈપણ માનવજાતી એવી નહિ હોય કે જેણે મંદિર જેવું કશુંજ બનાવ્યું ન હોય.

માણસને ઈશ્વરતત્ત્વની ખોજ હંમેશ રહી છે. ઈશ્વર નિરાકાર હોવા છતાં એને આકાર આપી પોતપોતાની સંસ્કૃતિ અનુસાર માનવ મંદિરોમાં પોતાની માન્યતા અનુસાર મુરતિ, પ્રતિમા પ્રતિસ્થાપે છે. પછી ભલેને માનવ પહાડ પર, પૃથ્વી પર, વનમાં, ઉપવનમાં, કે નિકુંજમાં, ગમે ત્યાં વસ્યો હોય. જ્યાં જ્યાં એ વસ્યો ત્યાં ત્યાં એ મંદિર જેવું કશુંક બનાવ્યા વિના રહી શક્યો નથી.

જાનવર અને માનવની વચ્ચેનો તફાવત શું? માનવ એટલે મંદિર બનાવનારું પ્રાણી. ઘર તો જાનવર પણ બનાવે છે. પરમાત્માનું ઘર માત્ર માનવજ બનાવે છે.

મંદિરમાં કોઈપણ જાતનાં ઊંચ નીચનાં ભેદો નથી હોતા. ભગવાન સમક્ષ જ્યારે માનવ દર્શન કરવા ઊભા રહે છે ત્યારે એને એના જ્ઞાનને, સંપત્તિને કે રૂપને બતાવવાનું નથી હોતું. મંદિરના દ્વાર હંમેશા દરેક વ્યક્તિ માટે ખુલ્લા હોય છે. ભલે એ ગરીબ કે તવંગર હોય, ભગવાનના દરબારમાં હંમેશા સમાનતા જોવા મળે છે.

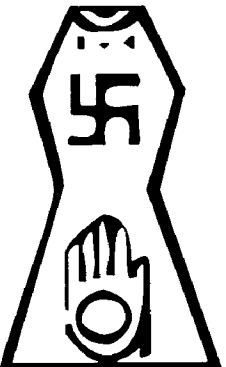
મન જ્યારે જ્યારે અજ્ઞાંત થાય છે ત્યારે માનવ પોતાના મનની શાંતી માટે ભટકતો હોય છે. પોતાના મનનાં દુઃખો, સુખો, ભગવાન પાસે રજુ કરતાં ખચકાતો નથી. શુદ્ધ મનથી કરેલો પશ્ચાત્તાપ માનવને ફરી માનવ બનાવવા માટેની શક્તિ આપે છે.

જ્યારે વિદેશમાં આવ્યા ત્યારે, નવું સહેર, નવી વ્યક્તિઓ, નવો દેશ, આ બધાંમાં માનવ મુંઝવણ અનુભવતો હોય, અને મનની એકલતા હોય ત્યારે એને જરૂર વિચાર આવે કે એક મંદિર હોય તો કેવું!

મંદિરમાં ભગવાનના દર્શનથી એનામાં સમ્યગ્ જ્ઞાન, દર્શન, ચરિત્રની પ્રેરણા મળે છે. સાચા મનથી, દિલથી, જો ભક્તિ કરીએ તો ખરેખર એ ભક્તિ આપણને સાચો માર્ગ બતાવે છે અને જ્ઞાન આપે છે સાચે સાચું જીવન જીવવાની એક પ્રેરણા આપે છે.

આજે આપણે ત્યાં એક સુંદર દહેરાસર બની રહ્યું છે, સૌનો આનંદ, ઉમંગ, ઉમળકો હેયામાં થનગનાટ ઉત્પન્ન કરી રહ્યો છે, જે દર્શાવે છે કે, આ મંદિર એક સુંદર પવિત્ર જગ્યા, પવિત્ર પ્રતિક, મનને સ્વચ્છ બનાવનાર, આ મંદિર સૌના હૃદયમાં વસે અને સૌના દિલમાં ચૈત્રીભાવનું પવિત્ર ઝરણું હંમેશા વહ્યા કરે એવી ભાવના રહે.

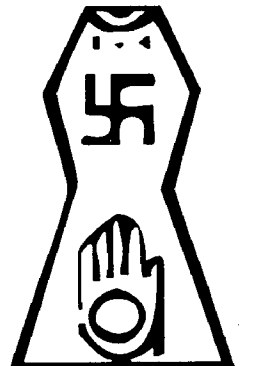
મિલન કાપડીયા



### સોનલવાણી..... સંદેશ

એટલા નરમ ના થાઓ કે...  
એટલા ગરમ ના થાઓ કે...  
એટલા ભોળા ના થાઓ કે...  
એટલા અતડા પણ ના થાઓ કે...  
એટલા ગંભીર ના બનો કે...  
એટલા છીછરા ના બનો કે...  
એટલા મોંઘા ના બનો કે...  
એટલા સસ્તા પણ ના બનો કે...  
એટલા ભૌતિક સુખમાં વ્યસ્ત ન બનો કે...  
હંમેશા મધ્ય બિંદુ બનો...

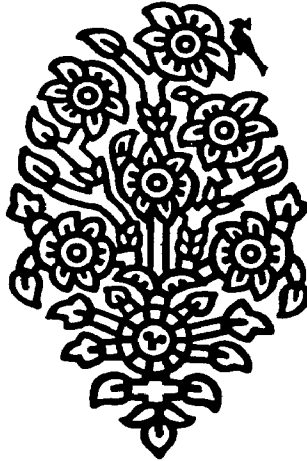
લોકો તમને ખાઈ જાય  
લોકો તમને અડી પણ ન શકે  
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લોકો તમને બોલાવી પણ ના શકે  
લોકો તમને ન્યાય આપ્યા કરે  
આત્મા પણ ભુલાઈ જાય  
જેથી મોક્ષ હાથવેંતમાં



***With Best Wishes to  
The Jain Center  
of Greater St. Louis  
on the Occasion of  
Pratishtha Mahotsav***

***from . . .***

***Columbia Firestone  
Columbia, Illinois***



***Dewan & Nalini Prasad  
Family***

## What is Paryushan?

Ankoo Shah (Pathshala Student)

Paryushan is the biggest event on the Jain calendar. It lasts about 8 - 10 days in August or September. The minimum duration of paryushan is regarded to be seventy days. For this minimum duration, paryushan must be initiated by panchami of the shulka phase of the Bhadrapada month. During Paryushan Jains reflect upon their actions throughout the past year. Paryushan is concluded with a three hour prayer called Pratikraman. Pratikraman is a Jain ritual.

Paryushan's origin is related to the staying of the monks in one place for the wet or monsoon season. In real terminology this stay is termed "chaturmaasa" because the wet season is for four months. In the scriptures it is described that Lord Mahavira used to start Paryushan on

Bhadrapada Shukla panchami. Digambaras and Svetambaras are Jain subjects attempting to get everyone to use the same date when paryushan starts.

To conclude Paryushan there is a three hour prayer called Pratikraman. It means turning back. Pratikraman includes Samayika, prayers to the 5 supremes, 24 Jinas and the 4 magnalas, including the Dharma as presented to the ancient masters. We also pray to the Master Guru, reflect on vratas and past transgressions, Kayotsarga, and pratyakhyan.

At the end of Pratikraman the people request each other for forgiveness for all offenses committed during the last year.

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*"Jain spirituality teaches us that happiness or unhappiness is centered in the soul and not in worldly objects. Pleasure and pain are self-created."*

*"Karma is the root of birth and death. The cycle of birth and death is the sole cause of misery. Misery is gone in the case of a man who has no delusion, while delusion is gone in the case of a man who has no desire; desire is gone in the case of a man who has no greed, while greed is gone in the case of a man who has no attachments."*

*"Karma itself is competent to produce its fruit and due course of time there is no need of god or other external power for its fruition."*

*"Moksa, according to Jainism, means a complete perfection and purification of the soul."*

*"A liberated soul is really free from all sorts of impurities and from the cycle of birth and death."*

*"Jainism believes that every individual soul has the potentialities of Godhood and the soul can attain it."*

*"Thus emancipation according to Jainism is nothing but realization of one's real nature."*

*"The mission of Jainism is the realization of*

*the self through the self."*

*"The spiritual journey of soul starts from impure state of the soul and ends with the pure state of the soul."*

*"The nature of soul is equanimity. The ultimate end of soul is also equanimity."*

All of these quotes were from Sagarmal Jain's fantastic book Jaina Sadhana.

Quotations collected by Somil Ghelani  
(Pathshala Student)

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*"He who is not affected by worldly life, just as the lotus leaf is unspoiled by the muddy water."*  
- Uttaraadhyayan Sutra

*"Limiting our possessions to the level of decency includes limiting our desires for more."*  
- Gerard A. Vanderhaar

*"A biased person tries to justify whatever he has already accepted while an unbiased person accepts what is logically justified."*  
- Acharya Gunaratna Suri

Quotations collected by Rahul Vora  
(Pathshala Student)

# **Jainism**

## **Dipak Kapadia**

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of the world. Though a religion of small minority, Jainism is not the religion of particular race, caste or community. People from all the four classified castes of ancient India-Brahmin, Kshtriya, Vaishya and Shudra have followed Jainism. In the practice of Jainism, there is nothing that would bar a person from following Jainism. Hence Jainism is a universal religion.

The followers of Jainism are called Jainas. The word “Jaina” is derived from the sanskrit word “Jina”. Jina means the conqueror or victorious - those souls who have conquered all their passions and have attained liberation. A Jina who leads and guides his followers is called Tirthankara. According to Jainism, time is cyclic. One cycle of time, consisting of six parts of ascendance and six parts of descendance of cycle. There are twenty-four such Tirthankaras. In the present cycle of time, the first Tirthankara is Bhagavan Adinatha and the last Tirthankara is Bhagavan Mahavira.

Jainism is founded on three basic principles: AHIMSA — NON-VIOLENCE, SANYAM — SELF-CONTROL and TAP — PENANCE. Ahimsa or non-violence should be practiced in thought, action and speech. Sanyam or self-control means proper control of action, speech and thought. It also means acting with due consideration of other person’s feelings. And Tap or penance means austerity. This is self-control by way of fasting, meditation, study, etc. This control is aimed to lift the soul above the pleasure and pains of our life. Ahimsa - non-injury towards all living beings, is the cornerstone of Jainism. Jains believe in reincarnation based on cause and effect laws of karma. One’s own efforts attains the salvation. All souls are alike, none is superior or inferior. A Jain’s aim in this life is for liberation and achievement of nirvana, a state of eternal bliss and knowledge.

According to Jainism, the laws of Karma lead us to believe in the theory of rebirth. With the laws of karma, Jainism explains why there are sorrows and joys, happiness and unhappiness, prosperity and adversity in the world. Why is one person rich and another poor? In accordance with Jainism there are eight types of karma and whatever happens to any living being at any time is due to the nature and intensity of relevant karma. These eight types of karma are:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Jnaanvarniya    | regarding knowledge                                 |
| 2. Darshanavarniya | regarding faith                                     |
| 3. Vedaniya        | regarding experience                                |
| 4. Mohaniya        | regarding attachment                                |
| 5. Aayu            | regarding life and age                              |
| 6. Nama            | regarding different physical and other attributes   |
| 7. Gotra           | regarding family ties                               |
| 8. Antraya         | regarding obstacles in different activities of life |

Of all these karma it is most difficult to conquer the fourth karma of attachment because of its association with anger, greed, ego, infatuations, deceit, etc. To attain Nirvana one must free oneself from the bondage of karma. This could be attained by adopting the right path of liberation and following the path guided by Jainism, three guiding lights “three jewels of Jainism” right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. In order to acquire the above mentioned “jewels” one must follow the proper code of conduct. The code of conduct for Jains consists of the following five vows:

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Ahimsa       | Non-violence            |
| 2. Satya        | Speaking truth          |
| 3. Asteya       | Refraining from theft   |
| 4. Brahmacharya | Purity of body and mind |
| 5. Aparigraha   | Non-possessiveness      |

Jainas are expected to fulfill their responsibility towards their family, society and



country. For this purpose, the Jain sages have designed six essentials or activities which a Jain is expected to perform every day. The six daily activities of a household are:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Samayik      | Stay in equanimity                               |
| 2. Chauvisantho | Worship of Supreme Souls                         |
| 3. Vandana      | Homage to Monk                                   |
| 4. Pratikraman  | Go back and review daily activities              |
| 5. Kayotsarga   | Meditation on self                               |
| 6. Pacchakhan   | Take a vow or renunciation of certain activities |

### Classifications in Jainism:

Like many other great religions of the world, Jainism has also been divided into Svetambaras and Digambaras. Svetambaras are further subdivided into Deravasi — temple-goers and one who worships idols, Sthanakvasi — those who believes in private worship and do not worship idols and have no temples, and a small group of Terapanthi sect which is also non-idolatrous. All Jainas, whether Svetambaras or Digambaras, worship 24 Tirthankaras.

Paryushana — one of the most important Jain festivals, the last eight days of the Jain year are known as Paryushana. Paryushana is also known as “Festival of Forgiveness”. Every year Jainas do an annual rite on the last day of Paryushana called Samvatsary Pratikraman. Paryushana means “to stay near” and Pratikraman means “going back”. Both these phrases refer to the “Atma” — soul. During these eight days we try to take our soul towards compassion, peace, equanimity and forgiveness,

and keep it there. During these days we repent and ask for forgiveness for any wrongdoings, and try to forgive wrong doings of others. Only when we come out of our negative mind can we forgive. We forgive not for outward show but for our own self, for cleansing our own consciousness. These days also remind us right from wrong so that one can attempt to prevent those wrong doings from happening again.

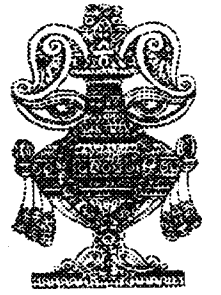
### Anekantvada:

Many of Jainism's principles and teachings are very important to the present day turmoil in the world. One such principle is Anekantvad. This doctrine is also known as the theory of Relativity or Philosophy of Non-absolutism. The principle teaches us how to realize truth in its varied aspects. Bhagvan Mahavira has said that every substance has infinite attributes and different attributes may be seen through different angles. Thus, anekantvad teaches us that we should not impose our own thoughts or views on others, but try to reconcile with the thoughts or viewpoints of others. Practicing this principle may help remove our selfish and partial outlook. This may make us more tolerant in our outlook and attitude towards others. Anekantvad shows us how to respect the candid opinions of others, it establishes unity in diversity, it promises reconciliation of conflicting statements, thoughts, religions, etc. Thus anekantvad can be a great instrument to peaceful co-existence and unity in the world

Let us end with one of the daily prayers of Jainism: I forgive all the living beings and let all the living beings forgive me. I have amity with all and enmity with none.



स्वार्थेति सव्वजीवे, सव्वे जीवा खसंतु मे ।  
सिद्धी मे सव्वधूपसु, देरं सज्जं व देण्हं । ।



# **Jainism within the College Campus**

Pooja Kapadia

This is an essay I wrote two years ago before I left for college.

“As I enter the college world, I start a new chapter in my life; one that will consist of many obstacles and challenges. In college I will come upon many different experiences that will test me both as a person and a member of society. All that I have done in the past is wiped away and I begin with a clean slate. When I go to college I will not take with me the activities and the grades I once had, but I will take the values and morals I grew up with. As I was growing up, a strong emphasis was put on the Jain religion. But rather than religion being a myriad of rituals and temple meetings, religion has become a way of life for me. My parents have taught me that I can depend on the Jain religion to help me get through the many speed bumps of life. As I start college, my way of life will remain the same and I will never forget my culture and who I am.

The past year I have thought a lot about what college will be like. For example will I be able to practice Jainism, keep alive my Indian culture, and most importantly stay myself. The answers are still to come. I am fortunate enough to go to a college where there is a large Indian population and some Jains. However, there is not a formal organization for Jain youths, meaning I will have to take initiatives myself in order to continue Jainism in college. Many claim that it is hard to keep alive religious practices when college comes around, but I disagree. The opportunity is always there for one to practice Jainism if there is a will to do so.

While growing up, I have come to depend on Jainism to give me inner strength and will continue this when I go to college. Like all Jains, reciting the Namokar Mantra is second nature to me. This is one way that I will continue to practice Jainism while I am at school. Every time I recite the Namokar

Mantra I think about trying to conquer my inner enemies. These are anger, greed, ego, and deceit (AGED). I recite the Namokar Mantra before going to bed, in the morning, before meals, and before leaving the house. College years are very stressful, and I know reciting the Namokar Mantra will continue to give me peace of mind.

The college campus is a cosmopolitan atmosphere filled with different cultures and viewpoints. One of the most important Jain principles that will need to be exercised in college is respecting other viewpoints, Anekantavad. This principle can be put into perspective in so many different ways in just our daily life rather than our spiritual life. For example, working out the living arrangements will take a lot of cooperation from both roommates. After coming from different backgrounds, even little things such as study habits and sleeping hours will be a real test of respecting others viewpoints. On a more religious level the college campus is composed of several different religious groups and the respect for other religions must always exist in order for forward progression on both an individual level and societal level.

Perhaps the most difficult part of practicing Jainism within the college campus is the rituals and temple visits. While in St. Louis, it is easy to attend Pathshala, monthly meetings, and go to the temple. While in college, it is hard to attend Jain meetings for the local Jain Center as well as a simple visit to the temple. Celebrating holidays such as Paryushana, Nirvan Day, and Mahavir Jayanti will not happen, however one can do this on an individual level. I plan on taking the English Pratikraman Book with me and doing Pratikraman on Samvatsari. Other rituals such as Snatra Pooja and Sapna Day will not be there. But just because rituals cannot be practiced does not mean that Jainism will not live on. I will do my share by continuing the meditation and yoga I have

learned. I will also continue to expand my knowledge on Jainism by reading articles in Jain Digest and Jain Study Circular. My college also gives the opportunity to learn more about the Jain religion by offering seminars and classes.

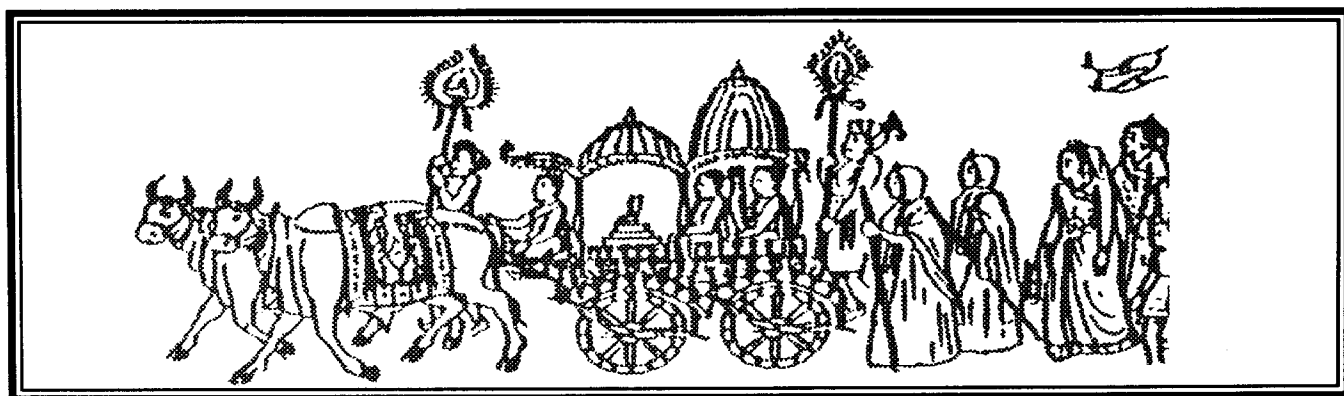
Practicing Jainism within the college campus is something that must be done on the individual level. Keeping up Jainism is feasible if one makes the correct effort to do so. I consider Jainism a way of life and I can continue to do the little things in my life the Jain way at college. The five basic principles will always remain part of any practicing Jain's life whether it is on a college campus or anywhere in the world. One can continue being a vegetarian and practice Ahimsa. Other Jain principles such as: Truth (Satya), Non-stealing (Asteya), Celibacy (Bramacharya), and Non-possessiveness (Aparigrah) can also be practiced. Jainism has taught me to "live and let live." But more importantly, Jainism has taught me to "live and help live." I know that I will continue my community service efforts and my constant commitment to helping others when I go to college. I am proud to be a Jain and I will continue to have that same pride within the college campus. "Jainism is not a sect or just one more conflicting ideology — it is a way of thinking and living." - Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanu."

Now, after experiencing two years at college and two years away from home, I have a new perspective on Jainism on the college campus. While at college I never had the problem of practicing Jainism. It was different

because I did not have monthly Jain Center meetings to attend or Pathshala classes. However, I still had the opportunity to recite the Namokar Mantra and read books on Jainism. I also had the opportunity to discuss Jainism and my way of life with fellow Jains and people of other religions. In fact my Jewish roommate and I always compared and contrasted our respective religions. When I was asked to explain Jainism to her, I learned more and understood myself better. In high school whenever I had to make decisions, I always had my parents to call upon. Now I have to make decisions on my own. Sometimes they are simple and other times the choices I make will effect me in the long run.

If I am not sure whether I am doing the right thing, I always look to see that I am following the five basic principles of Jainism.

Before I left for college, I always wondered whether I would be able to practice Jainism, keep alive the Indian culture and stay myself. The answers to these questions turned out just the way I wanted. Jainism and the Indian culture are still an integral part of my life and this has helped me remain the person I have always been. Sure I have grown and matured, but my way of life has not changed. No one should question the power of Jainism and the strength Jainism gives you. Jainism will always be with me and will be with everyone if the effort to practice the religion on an individual level is made. Just as I thought before I left for college, it is feasible to maintain Jainism anywhere and everywhere if you have the will to do so.



## Into a Room

Vihar Sheth

Beginning the college experience is like walking through a door into a room. This is no ordinary room though, it is filled with opportunities, opportunities that exist to help you grow and learn to understand the differences that bring people together . . . and tear them apart. In the time you spend at a university, you will be exposed to a more diverse crowd than at any other time in your life. I can't say this for certain though, considering that I'm still in college, but as I look at others, both younger and older, I find that their environment doesn't have nearly the diversity found presently in my life. Adults have found their own niche in life and youngsters are forced into theirs. At college, with no parental control and no forced design, you are allowed to run free . . . and make all the mistakes and discoveries one could ever imagine in a lifetime.

Enter Jainism - That is if you choose to let it follow you into that room, through that door. The philosophy known to many of you as Jainism can either endure as a guide or subsist as a hindrance as you assimilate into the role of a college student. As the unknown layers of your life unfold, you and your peers grow witness to an evolution of character and development only equaled by the lightning-fast maturation of an infant child. Many teenagers feel confusion and uncertainty as they age into adulthood. Whether they fight inner battles of self-worth or toy with sexual orientation and foreign substances, teenagers are ceaselessly looking for level ground to stand on, to feel comfortable with the way they look in the mirror and how they feel about themselves inside.

You will discover as you get to school whether

Jainism is or isn't for you. My personal experiences have revealed to me that the ethical component of Jainism was far more important to me than the spiritual. Jainism is often referred to as a Way of Life, and to me, it was exactly this that I wanted to extract from the Jain philosophy. I wanted to figure out how I should live my life day to day and how to be as whole and honest as possible while still being successful. The principles of Jainism helped me formulate a strategy to use in every aspect of my life, from the food I eat to my interaction with other people. I'm a vegetarian not because Jainism says to be, but because Jainism gave me the opportunity to discover that I thought eating meat was ethically wrong. The ethics of Jainism rest in my subconscious and they assist me in making decisions. The tolerance Jainism taught gave me the power to be patient and accepting of new ideas and alternative ways of life . . . even if they disagree with Jainism.

I can honestly say that I don't know exactly what the Jain faith was supposed to teach me. What I can tell you is that the ideals of Jainism, combined with my experiences afforded me the competence to write my own doctrine, my own dogma. This is what I live by. It is not my place to tell you what you should do with your life as you grow old but Jainism made me a better person. It taught me how to make educated decisions, resist passing judgement, and create a life worth living. Let it come through the door with you as you enter that room of immense possibilities and you will discover who you are and what you need to live the life that will make you happy.

---

*"Harmlessness is the only religion."*

- Unknown

*"Anger, if not restrained, is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it."*

- Seneca

*"Truth, self-control, asceticism, generosity, non-injury, constancy in virtue — these are the means of success, not caste or family."*

- Mahabharata

*"Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without."*

- Buddha

*"He who harms animals has not understood or renounced deeds of sin . . . Those whose minds are at peace and who are free from passions do not desire to live at the expense of others."*

- Acharanga Sutra

Quotations collected by Nishant Shah  
(Pathshala Student)



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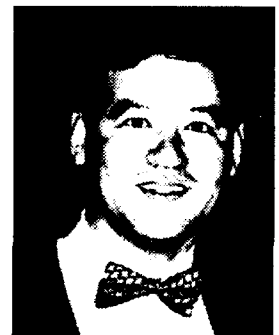
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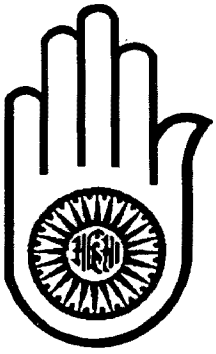


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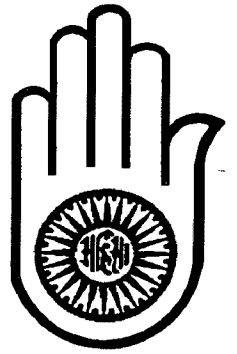
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