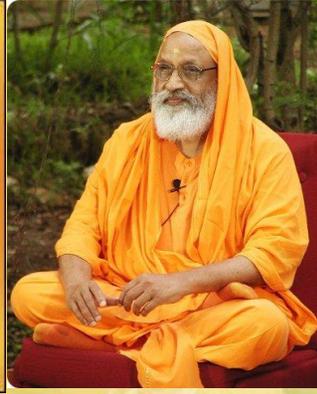
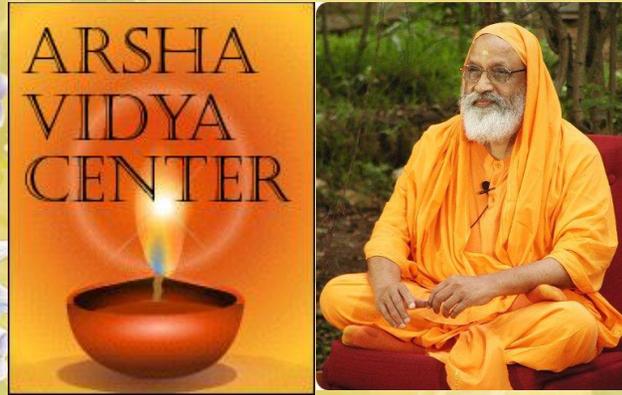


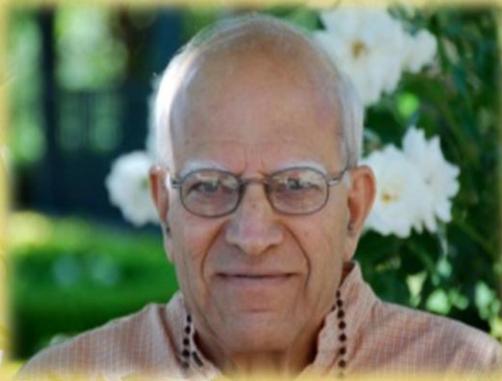
Arsha Vidya Center



Ārsha Vidyā (Knowledge of the Ṛṣis) Center, aims to bring through live teaching, the sacred, authentic and traditional texts of Vedānta to the Bay Area.

Vedānta is part of the Vedas, aimed at mature minds that seek unconditional freedom from limitations. Says Śrī Vyāsa in the very first verse of the epic Brahma Sūtras: अथातो ब्रह्म जिज्ञासा, translated as, 'After seeing that the commonly known methods of attaining happiness, such as money, friends, fame etc. are not lasting, may a thinking person inquire, with the help of a knowledgeable teacher, the possibility of gaining absolute freedom, here and now, not hereafter'.

This involves unfolding the unchanging and free nature of a person by an informed, skilled teacher who has undergone the discipline of learning Vedānta directly from his or her guru, and can show this to a mature, peaceful student, willing to learn.



Śrī Vijay Kapoor, Our Resident Teacher

Śrī Vijay Kapoor took Pūjya Swami Dayananda Saraswati as his guru at a family camp the very first year Swamiji came to the US. Later, Śrī Kapoor was one of the pioneers to establish the 3 year course taught by Pūjya Swamiji in Piercy, California, started in 1979. To attend this course, he left his job from marketing management in Hewlett-Packard and moved his entire family to live in Piercy. Śrī Vijay Kapoor serves on the board of directors and officers of the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam.

After his graduation from the Piercy course in 1982, Śrī Kapoor resumed his work at HP, and also started teaching Vedānta in the San Francisco Bay Area. He took early retirement in the year 2000 to devote his time to the study and teaching of Vedānta and Sanskrit. Later, Śrī Kapoor established the Arsha Vidya Center (AVC), with a goal to systematically unfold the meaning of Vedāntic texts to deserving students in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Ārsha Vidyā, in Śrī Vijay Kapoor's words

Gītā (2-29) states: आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चित् एनम्..., I too was joyously stunned when Pūjya Swami Dayanandaji revealed to me my nature as a timeless, self-existing, person. That it was even possible was amazing, and it of course changed my life, fulfilling it. I resolved to study Vedānta thoroughly, and for that I am deeply indebted to my wife, who altered her life to support my yearning. For the next 3 years in the Piercy āśrama, Swamiji taught us the principal Upaniṣads, Bhagavad Gītā, Vyāsa's Brahma Sūtras, Vālmiki's Rāmayaṇa, numerous other scriptural texts, and of course Sanskrit. Living close to a Vedāntic master, one learnt how to shape one's life to assimilate this vision.

After graduation Swamiji encouraged me to teach. I did, starting in 1983 at my home, and later formed Arsha Vidya Center, a place to hold weekly classes to teach this valuable knowledge given to us by the Ṛṣis. As often stated in the śāstras (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1-2-12 – तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेव अभिगच्छेत् श्रोत्रियम् ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्), the only way to gain a clear vision of oneself is through a teacher, and not through reading books. Only through a systematic, dedicated set of classes a teacher is able to unlock the subtle truths of the śāstras.

I gain just as much, if not more, than the students. I feel that students can relate to me – I have studied the śāstras, and yet I am a householder, like them. Encouraging to me is that many gurus were householders too (e.g. Ramakrishna Paramahansa). This is the lineage of teaching – गुरु शिष्य परम्परा।

सदाशिव समारम्भाम्



शङ्कराचार्य मध्यमाम्



अस्मदाचार्य पर्यन्ताम्



वन्दे गुरु परम्पराम्

Pūjya Swami Dayanandaji, is one of the greatest living scholars of Vedānta and Sanskrit, a great visionary and powerful thinker, writer, a unifier and social activist – history will recognize him as a modern day Śaṅkara. The clarity of his vision of the timeless, complete self, his logic to support this vision, his uncommon communication skills (“There is not one God, there is only God”) his mastery of the śāstras, and his compassion for the students sets him apart in the land of Mahātmās.

Through conceiving and leading a movement called the Acarya Sabha, Swamiji has gained success in unifying the diverse strands of Hinduism, just as Ādi Śaṅkara did. He also founded AIM for Seva, an India-wide movement for educating the poor in remote villages.

All that said, Swamiji is at his best when teaching this sacred knowledge. The impact of Swamiji’s teaching is to appreciate the immediacy (साक्षात् अपरोक्षात्) of the vision of oneness.

Swamiji has conducted eight 3-year courses, and those are still continuing. Swamiji has given sannyāsa to over 180 students, and most of them are spiritual pioneers in their communities.



Some, such as Swami Parmarthanandaji, prefer to teach tirelessly (in Chennai, India) without an āśrama, and yet command major impact in the community.



Swami Veditatmanandaji has a similar large following in Gujarat, although he prefers to be based in an āśrama in Ahmedabad. He has authored many Vedāntic texts in English and Gujarati, and travels to give discourses in many parts of India. We are very fortunate to have this Mahātma as a visiting scholar every year in the Bay Area.



Swami Tattvavidanandaji has a teaching center in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh. He teaches several classes a day to students and the general public, besides being the author of more than 30 books in English and Telugu. We are equally fortunate that Swami Tattvavidanandaji visits us every year to teach.

Classes Taught by Śrī Vijay Kapoor

Texts covered

Śrī Rudram

Tattvabodhaḥ

Īśāvāsyopaniṣad

Introduction to Gītā

Gītā (ch 13,15) in depth

Kenopaniṣad

Kāthopaniṣad with Śāṅkara Bhāṣya

Muṇḍakopaniṣad with Śāṅkara Bhāṣya

Dṛk Dṛśya Viveka

Pañcadaśī chapter 1

Talks on Gāyatri Mantra, Omkāra

Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotram with Mānasollāsa

Viṣṇu Sahasranāma

Other Activities of AVC

Recordings of classes and discourses

Sanskrit Classes

Children's classes

Gītā Home Study groups

Celebration of special occasions

Annual visits of Swamijis to the Bay Area

Annual trip to the āśrama in Saylorsburg, PA

Annual trip to the āśrama in Rishikesh, India



Please visit AVC website, www.ArshaVidyaCenter.org, for all information and updates

<https://www.facebook.com/ArshaVidyaCenter>