

Gurunathan Thunai

Gnananada Seva Samajam has been active in Canada since 60's or 70's. Pada Pooja to Guruji and Swami's Padukas on the auspicious day of Full Moon (Pournami) has been practiced in Canada by Smt. Vijaya and Shri P.S. Narayanan. They have been spreading Nama Sankeerthanam in Canada through bhajans and Radha Kalyanam. Others who have been instrumental along with them are Smt. Shanta and Shri Krishnamurthy as well as Prof. Lakshminaraya and his wife. We are fortunate enough to continue the services rendered by these devotees of Swami and Guruji.

We have been doing abishekham to Guruji's Padukas with Dinasari Vazhipaadu and chanting of Lalitha Sahasranama since 2005. On September 16, 2006 Vijaya Mami gave us Guruji's paadukas which were given to them by Guruji at Sant Gnaneshwar's samadi in Alandi.

In September 2009, the thought of performing Radha Kalyanam came to our mind. With blessing from H.H Namaji we approached Shri Nagaraja Bhagavathar in Buffalo, New York to perform the Radha Kalyanam. We had attended a few Radha Kalyanams/Seetha Kalyanams performed by Shri Nagaraja Bhagavathar and arranged by Smt Mythli and Shri Bhaskaran whose families have been doing Radha Kalyanams in India.

Shri Nagaraja Bhagavathar follows the Pudukottai Paadathi in performing Radha Kalyanam. With Guruji's blessing we decided to perform the Radha Kalyanam on September 5 and 6, 2009. During the third week of August 2009, we received a call from Nagaraja Bhagavathar that he was unable to come and perform the Radha Kalyanam due to unforeseen reasons. We called Daya and Ravi in Washington who had promised to drive down to Canada to participate in the Radha Kalyanam along with Shri Ramcumar who leads the Second Sunday bhajans in Washington. Daya advised me to speak to H.H. Namaji. She also said, Pichumani Bhagavathar from India was visiting his son in US and we could probably ask him to come and perform the Radha Kalyanam in Canada.

We immediately called H.H. Namaji to seek his advice and he said Swamiyai Vennduvom, ellam nallapadiyaga nadakkum. In other words, he did not want us to cancel or reschedule the program. We then contacted Satish, Pichumani Bhagavathar's son. When we spoke to Mama about performing the Radha Kalyanam in Canada, he mentioned, he was performing Radha Kalyanam on the same days in California, and hence was unable to do so.

We then contacted Nagaraja Bhagavathar again who asked us to contact Shri Venkatesan, who has been assisting him in performing Radha Kalyanam for quite some time. He also mentioned that he would guide Shri Venkatesan and send all the required things for Radha Kalyanam through him – including the ural and ulakkai for Muthu Kuthal. When we contacted Shri Venkatesan, he mentioned he has not performed a Radha Kalyanam on his own ever. He was a little reluctant and said, Divyanamam can be managed but Radha Kalyanam?? – He then said he would do his best with the blessings from Radha and Krishna.

We were a little relaxed and called Daya and Ravi to advise them of the progress and find out their plans of coming to Canada. We were shocked to hear that both Daya and Ravi met with a major accident. Given their health conditions they are unable to travel by car for 10 hours and participate in the Radha Kalyanam. We thought Ramcumar may also not come as we had only met him once at Daya's place. He was willing to come to Canada only because of Daya and Ravi. Daya assured us that Ramcumar will definitely come and participate in the Radha Kalyanam. We called Ramcumar to request him once again

to come and also apprise him of the situation. Ramcumar also said, he can sing and manage Divyanaman along with Venkatesan Mama but Radha Kalyanam?? ; he was afraid of. We just sat in the pooja room and cried to Guruji – why did he give us the thought of performing the Radha Kalyanam and why should he give the all these hurdles?? He should show us the path through in this difficult situation.

We just left everything to Guruji and prayed to him to guide us through the event. We could feel Guruji's presence in the Divyanamam and Radha Kalyanam celebrations as everything went off so perfect, no confusion anywhere in what to do next. During Divyanamam each and every soul present in the hall danced and enjoyed the divine bliss. Radha Kalyanam was also enjoyed by all in the same manner and the event was attended by almost 400 people. Everyone had only one thing to say, they had never enjoyed such divinity and that most of them were witnessing this for the first time. Everyone had praises for Venkatesan Mama and Ramcumar who conducted the event. Ramcumar was accompanied by his brother Balaji who was very helpful in the administration of the whole event. The way Ramcumar and Balaji moved with us, we felt we knew them for ages. This was an unforgettable experience.

In July/August 2010, Kalli Mama and Saraswati Mami along with Mahadevan Mama and Muthuswamy Mama came with Namaji's Padukas and performed Divyanamam and Radha Kalyanam in Canada. This was a completely different experience for all of devotees here. They explained each and every process and conducted the event – a detailed report of H.H. Namaji's Paduka digvijayam in Tamil was published in the 2010 Souvenir. Guruji showed his presence and showered his blessings to everyone. Everyone was all in praise and in awe and started asking if this will be done every year.

With Guruji's blessings we contacted Nagaraja Bhagavathar in Buffalo and organized the Divyanamam and Radha Kalyanam in 2011. For this year, we have organized the event on May 26th and 27th, 2012.

We also have a small group of us practicing and performing the Dhakshina Sampradaya Bhajans and Abhangs every third Sunday of the month.

We pray Swami and Guruji to guide us through each and every step in our lives.

Radhe Krishna!
Gnanananda Seva Samajam, Canada Chapter