

Nina Foundation : Foundation Day - Darshan Visit
9th March 2014
A Report

Each Foundation Day celebrated on 9th March is always significantly special to all at Nina Foundation. Many are silently grateful to late Dr. Nina Doshi, in whose memory this day is celebrated. So it is very, very special. This year too, a spiritual outing was very well organised by Bhavna, Madhu, Anu and Pooja for friends with Spinal Injury, those of Nina Foundation, Sharan and also of Paraplegic Foundation. Dr. Ketna Mehta, Dhaval Mehta, Dr. Dhruv Mehta, Anupama Ganesh and Vidya Shenoy represented Nina Foundation. Also present were our special guests-Nivedita Ben Sheth, Sarojben Mehta, Yoginiben Desai, Devyaniben Vora and Sarojben Barasare, all charming ladies of AIWC (*Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad*) Santacruz (E) Branch who made it possible for a start-up to an OPD for needy SCIs every Wednesday from 2.30pm-5.00pm by giving us a place to do so. Thank you, all behenas!

A special bond seems to exist between Nina Foundation and Swaminarayan Mandir! Last year we went to Nerul's Swaminarayan Mandir in Navi Mumbai! Shri Swami Narayan ki Jai! The weather was just right for over 87 visitors to take advantage of this darshan. Guests that included all SCI friends accompanied by their family members, friends or escorts, Trustees of Nina Foundation looked more than happy as they finished their magnificent *darshan*.

Our special gratitude to Shaileshbhai Yagnik and Trustees of the Temple for being instruments of Swaminarayan Himself who made such flawless, well-

timed, wonderful arrangements and such thoughtful accessibility ramps at such a short notice! Their personal care and sensitivity accounted for our visit to be organized with detailed effort. Divine Grace to all those, who executed the blessed plans in spite of it being a Sentimental Sunday as over 3000 *bhaktas* had converged for Guru Swami's *satsang* there. Bless you all!

In the Swaminarayan Mandir, all met at Swaminarayan Mandir, Dadar in Mumbai where they were taken to the Neelkanth Mandir. Ever-ready-to-help Shaileshbhai with his 'soldiers' warmly welcomed each one with a lot of love.

This year, the honours of introductions were given to 3 young devotees who are getting trained in the study of Swaminarayans *sampraday*. They introduced us all to the Guru Parampara. history of the Swaminarayan Mandir and how it has grown so wonderfully only with the Divine Plan. These *balaks* explained of how anything is possible with Faith and persistence even if there is no money per se. Thereafter, Vidya was invited to anchor the morning happenings.

She began with invocations to the Vedavyas and the Gurus followed by asking for Grace of Parampujya Swamiji and Shastri Maharaj. Thereafter she welcomed one and all with special mention of AIWC (*Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad*) Santacruz (E) Branch with whose magnanimity, Nina Foundation has been able to see its vision of a Rehab Centre taking shape. No doubt this is a scratch not even a dent in the framework vision. But, in times to come, this WILL happen! Remember, Faith CAN move mountains!

Vidya took the course of *Pravachan* in Hindi, if you can call it so, to a different level. She dwelt on the 2 words 'Swami' and 'Narayan'. She explained that *SWAMI* means the Lord and if the word is split into two: *SWA+MI*= means the Self. In humour she added that since we reside in Maharashtra, 'MI' in Marathi also means 'I'!! She said 'Narayan' as *NAR+AYAN*, i.e. 'Nar' as man, 'AYAN' as the one who sleeps on water. She referred that in the Bhagwad Gita, 'Narayan' is Sri Krishna, the Supreme Being, *VISHNU* the Preserver. And *Purushottam* and *Nar*, deemed to be Arjuna. She also referred to the scripture, *BhagwatPurana*, which takes 'Narayan' to be the Supreme pilot or engine driver in our lives.

To give hope and strengthen aspirations of our SCI friends, she stated ALL can become a *Purushottam*, the Supreme Being by using our mind as a potent tool to create strength and Happiness in our lives and that of others. To enable us to live life as each successive day assuming it is the last day of our lives. It is only when we build our self-confidence that we can AIM HIGH, DREAM BIG and MAKE IT A REALITY. She gave a close-at-hand example of Ketna, of how she converted her worst moment of disaster in her life to a cause for others who undergo the same pain, both physically and mentally. That is when Ketna saw the dire need of VISION OF LIVING WELL FOR OTHER SCIs. Then, she dwelt on the beauty of life, she watched the flowers bloom in her mind's eye and wanted to be its scent, to spread this in others' lives that which she continues to do. Ketna, we are very proud of you and please do remember that we do support your dreams in any way we can. Implying that even a ray of hope can bloom a bouquet.

She enthused all by saying to become a *Purushottam Narayan*, one has to remove the 6 inimical traits of pride, attachment, lust, greed, anger and hatred, offer a clean slate to the Lord, ask Him to hold our hand in His, and write the course of our lives for us. That is to surrender unconditionally at the feet of the Lord. She quoted Mahatma Gandhi when she referred to his belief that thoughts become words, in turn to become action, in turn, habits that go to form character and lastly, destiny. In the modern day reference, she quoted US President Obama's dictum "Yes, we can". She said how in this "we", we should make the Lord a part of us, eventually.

Thereafter, Vidya called upon our melodious singers, Bijal to sing *ShyamTujheMilneko* and Gauri to sing bhajan *Jag me sunder hai do nam*. Needless to say it was so beautiful to hear them both on an auspicious day in the Mandir.

Time to give a vote of thanks to one and all and time to do *Abhishekh*! Ladies always come first, so was it this time around too! So one and all got the privilege of doing so. How blessed! Our photographer, Jaisukhbhai, took a picture of all, so that each one is given his gift of a 'proof' of them having being in touch with God at close quarters! Thank you, Jaisukhbhai, you are special to us too! By the way, Jaisukhbhai, no event is complete without you! As each one was leaving to go to another section of the Temple, blessed threads were tied on the wrist and each one's forehead was marked with a kumkumtika and rice grain by *balikas* and lastly beautiful photos, CDs and Prasad boxes were given to one and all.

Once all were gathered to take the *darshan* of the

***Murthies*, a final round of *SamudayikNamajapam* was conducted by Vidya who invoked Krishna's Divine Grace on one and all. As food boxes were to be distributed to all devotees, she ended the fantastic morning of the Founder's Day of Nina Foundation by reciting mantra for food to be blessed and that all the food would be '*prasad*', thereafter.**

All good things come to an end, and so did this morning's outing of a special *darshan*.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Why don't we carry him in our hearts ALWAYS, that one day HE becomes us?

YES! From *NAR* can't we become *NARAYAN*?

May the Lord Bless one and all!

VidyaShenoy