



Chinmaya Mission San Jose

e-Newsletter

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Sri Rama Navami Update

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Panchavati and Ayodhya; renunciate and king; we got a glimpse of both these aspects of Lord Rama's life on April 6th, at Sandeepany ashram in San Jose. Sinewy branches, flowing vines, colorful flowers and trailing leaves decorated one level of the altar. You could almost see and hear the sights and sounds of the forest where this dutiful son had made his home for fourteen years! Lord Shiva, serene and benevolent, whom Shri Rama worshipped for absolution, was there as part of this forest scene, completely at home in the rustic surroundings.



One step below, the setting was completely different. Here was a huge picture of Lord Rama's Pattabhishekam – his coronation-bright, colorful and ceremonious. Flanked by his beautiful queen and loyal brother, Lord Rama is depicted as the beloved king of Ayodhya. Trays of special offerings, sweetmeats, flowers, lamps, incense, devotees dressed in festive clothes, songs and music by our Dhvani children...this was a celebration of Raja Rama!



Starting with soul stirring songs in different languages about the glories of Lord Rama, the Ramanavami celebrations continued with a beautiful puja performed by Pandit Ravichandran. Following the kalasha puja, everyone participated in chanting the hundred and eight names of the Lord. After arathi, as always, there was a feast at the end!



The celebrations reminded us to live our lives trying to emulate this Purushottam – the peerless one – who accepted the harsh life of the forest and the comforts of his palace with equanimity, who won the hearts and minds of everyone who was fortunate enough to have touched him, who lived his life as the ideal son, husband, brother and ruler even though it brought him much pain, who inspired boundless devotion in Hanuman and countless others and whose epic story is as relevant today as it was when it was first conceived.



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