Fifteen Church Members Receive Confirmation at Chidambaram
Category : March 1981
Published by Anonymous on Mar. 01, 1981

# Fifteen Church Members Receive Confirmation at Chidambaram

## Ceremonies Held in South India Before Siva Nataraja at Saivism's Most Sacred Sanctuary

Among the many blessings received by the pilgrims traveling with Gurudeva on the 1981 India Odyssey the most particularly meaningful for fifteen Preparatory Members among them was the confirmation ceremony held for them on February 1, 1981, at the Chidambaram temple, the most holy of all Siva temples. The newly confirmed members are: Kanda Aran, Gayatri Ananta Devi, Adiyan Haran, Nitya Nadesan, Jothi and Ramya Kumara, Ravi Peruman, Deva Rajan, Aran Sendan, Deva and Amala Seyon, Lila Shaktidevi, Prashad Shanmuga, Indivar Sivanathan and Dr. Devananda Tandavan.

In the American Church system, which is followed by most of the religions in the United States, members will study the beliefs of their sect and the system of their particular church in depth and then after passing tests on these matters be "confirmed" in their membership which gives them full and unrestricted participation in the church and in turn commits their church to helping them in their religious life.

At the end of the confirmation ceremony, Gurudeva explained the significance of the event: "This confirmation ceremony is a symbol that all of you have your minds fully permeated with the Saivite Catechism of Saiva Siddhanta Church, and that you are fully in accord with these beliefs and that your will is fully behind the Saiva Siddhanta Church's Paramparai and mission. This ceremony indicated that you have accepted me as your Guru, and that I have in turn accepted you and am bringing you into the Sri Subramuniya Gotra. This means that your children and their children for generations far into the future will be in the Sri Subramuniya Gotra and will follow the Sat Gurus of this Order."

These pilgrims had studied very hard during the trip to qualify for the confirmation. Each was required by Gurudeva to meet high standards and to pass tests of character, learning, memorization and more. The ceremony itself began as all recited the Confirmation Pledge while seated with Gurudeva in the beautifully carved chariot hall. There followed four hours of puja, from the Sahasranama Archanai or chanting of the 1008 names of Siva in the inner mandapam, to Veda Parayana which is recitation of the Vedas and then a fabulous abhishekam to both the crystal lingam and a 9-inch Nataraja carved out of solid ruby. These two images date back to the days of Pazangali, Tirumular and Vyagrapada. It was a wonderfully auspicious step for these fifteen pilgrims who are now staunch and full members of Saiva Siddhanta Church.

Article copyright Himalayan Academy.