

Swami Nityananda Giri

Swami Nityananda Giri (known as Sundaresan and called at Thapovanam as “Yogi Swamigal” prior to initiation to Sannyasa) was born in Madras in 1929 to a pious Brahmin couple, Sri Ramasubbu Iyer and Smt. Meenakshi Ammal. After taking a postgraduate degree in Chemical Engineering, he was in cement industry planning, constructing and running a cement factory in Andhra Pradesh. He severed his worldly connections in 1963 and took up intense spiritual sadhana. He came to Sadguru Gnanananda in 1971 and was accepted by Him as a Brahmachari disciple on *Thai Poosam Day*. He received direct guidance from Him and studied Vedanta under Swami Vidyananda Giri. He was also staying at the retreat centre of Sri Gnanananda Pranava Nilayam in Yercaud Hills in Salem district.

He was called back to Thapovanam in July 1973 and had the privilege to compile the teachings of the great sage under his personal direction. The book “*Gnana Inba Veli*” was released on Chitra Poornima Day in 1974.

After the Mahasamadhi of Sadguru Gnanananda, in January 1974, he was requested to actively help in the constitution of a Religious Trust and in other organizational matters. He set up puja routines in the Samadhi Shrine of Grace and Mani Mandapa Shrine. He took an active part, along with other Sannyasins in continuing the devotional routines of the ashram, Sri Gnanananda Thapovanam and organizing the annual Aradhana Festival.

He helped Sri Swami Vidyananda Giri in bringing out the publications on Vedanta text by the Sannyasins of Thapovanam.

On the request of the prominent devotees of the ashram, a Charitable Trust, Sri Gnanananda Niketan was constituted on Chitra Poornima Day in 1986, with Sri Swami Vidyananda Giri as its President and Swami Nityananda Giri as Managing Trustee. The objectives of the Trust were to provide accommodation and food for Sannyasins, Brahmacharis and spiritual seekers, extent other facilities like library, etc. And bring out publications.

All these services have been properly organized and several publications have been brought out in English, Tamil and Sanskrit.

The book “*Sri Gnanananda Darsanam*” (Tamil) authored by him gives a very good account of the life and teachings of Sadguru Gnanananda and detailed explanation of the significance of the daily routines of the ashram including the *Pada Puja*.

Swami Nityananda Giri is well versed in Vedanta and continues the tradition of teaching the scriptures after the lifetime of Sri Swami Vidyananda Giri. He is very much interested in mysticism from all traditions. He was often invited to participate in inter-religious and inter-monastic dialogues around the world. He has travelled widely lecturing on Vedanta and Yoga.