

शुभमस्तु
Subhamastu

अविघ्नमस्तु
Avighnamastu

विजयोस्तु
Vijayostu

आलय



संदेशः

[Aalaya Sandeshaha]
Sri Venkateswara Temple Newsletter

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Dear devotees,

I would like to thank one and all for your support of the temple. There seems to be good response to voluntary donation instead of fixed prices for Ganesh pooja. We discussed this issue in Board meeting and also I talked to others and obtained valuable feed back.

One thing I heard loud and clear is, that, it is more beneficial for every one to know more details of our financial situation. That will help all of us to collectively plan contributions to cover expenditures. We need several big donors and all levels of donors. If I itemize the expenses, it will be a long laundry list, sure to bore people.

Total expenditures come to 260,000 to 300,000 a year.

1. 200,000 constitutes regular payments like loan payment, Priest salaries, insurance, electricity and payroll tax.
2. Other expenditures are below 10,000 dollars and above 1000. Website maintenance is the least at 120 dollars.

The building is more than 5 years old. We are encountering repair works. May be 20,000 in escrow for unexpected repairs. Simple projection indicates that 10,000 a year by 30 donors will take care of all expenses. Or, 10,000 by 15 donors and 5k by 30 donors will amount to the same. We can have a list of donors that may like to be big sponsors for a special event.

Looking at coming religious events, a major event is "Devi Navaraavri" (nine night celebration of Devi), starting on "Paadyami" (first day) in "Aaswayuja" month. There is an elaborate description of preparation of the pooja, but I will highlight the pooja details.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mahesh Maruvada
President, STHS

Kanya pooja (pooja of unmarried girls)

Daily pooja of either one kumari or nine kumaris is done by giving clothes, jewelry, and good food. It needs to be done as per one's capability. One-year old girl is "kumari," two-year old is Rohini, three-year old girl is "Trimurthi," four-year old is "Kalyani," five-year old is "Kaalika," six-year old is Subhadra, seven-year old is "Chandika," eight-year old is "Saambhavi," nine-year old is "Durga," ten-year old is "Suprabha." After 10 years old, the girl is not eligible for pooja. While performing each Kumarika, exact name has to be mentioned because each Kumarika blesses in different ways. By performing these poojas, sorrow and poverty will end. Enemies will vanish. Health, wealth and strength are possessed. Home will be pleasant and loving.

Some specific Kumari pooja results are: Pooja of "Kalyani" gives education, humble nature, power, and happiness. Hence, she is called "Sarva Kaamadaamba" (Devi that fulfills all desires). Pooja of "Rohini" results in eradication of ill health. Pooja of "Kaalika" eliminates enemies. Pooja of "Chandika" gives wealth and Riches. "Saambhavi" removes sorrow and poverty. "Durga" destroys the most evil enemy. "Subhadra" pooja blesses all desires. During pooja "sri" mantra, or for devi mantra, add "sri" and "ye" devi. One example is:

यादेवि सर्व भूतेषु दयारूपेण संस्थिताः। YAdEvi sarva BUtEShu dayArUpENa saMsthitAH|

नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमोनमः ॥ namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namOnamaH ॥

Devi Naamam – Parama Pavitram

Out of all sentences, chanting Vishnu Naamam is great. Chanting that thousand times is equal to chanting Shiva naamam once. Chanting Devi naamam is superior to Shiva naamam thousand times.

It is Saratkaala celebration time from Aaswiyuja Paadyami (1st day of the first fortnight of month Aaswiyuja) to Purnima (full moon day). Because from Paadyami to Navami is celebrated as Devi Navaratri with finale on Dasami. People who perform Chandi Homam, will start on Paadyami and end with Poornaahuti on the Pournami. During Navaraatris, Kalasa pooja, Kumari Pooja, Sahasra Naamaavali, Sri chakra araadhana, Saptasati paaraayana are most important. Parameswara is the head of anaadi vidya, and Devi is known as Aadi Sakti. Because she changes evil minds with her ferocious as well as calm and beautiful appearances, she is "Sri chakra devataa murti jagadamba". The hands that pray and speech that chants Lalitha Sahasra Naamam, are blessed. When "Sakti" is around, "Paramaatma (Shiva)" is capable of managing "Srushti". With out Sakti, he is motionless. That is why Hari, Hara, Brahma, and others pray Sakti. Indra and others praised Sri Durga Devi in a sloka which means—

"By thinking of Durga, fears of several nature will disappear. Peace and harmony are restored. Durga, with her compassion, and love, ends sorrows and poverty".

Who is Durga?

The *Parabrahmam* that is the origin of the whole *srushti*, is absolutely unknown, unimaginable, beyond definition, beyond name and shape and indefinable. That unique force is given the appearance of “*Aadi Sakti*”. The formless *parabrahmam* and the *Paraasakti* are the first pair. The Aadi Sakti, that is called Pradhaanam, Aditi, Chaitanya Swaroopini, Gaayatri is the origin of the whole *srushti*. All the forces and plans to build universe arose from the Aadi Sakti, hence she is called “Jaganmaata”. There are many ways of praying the Sakti, from “Parama Saatwika” to extreme “Taamasa”. Those Upaasakas call this Sakti by several names-- Lalita, Durga, Chandi, Kaali, Baala, Raaja Rajeswari, Kaameswari, Bagala, Chinnamasta, Taara. In Puraanaas it was mentioned that because Paraasakti is the origin and attained different forms to perform divine acts, she is called by a name according to the situation.

Sapta Maatrukas (Seven Feminine Forces)

When Devi went to war, against Sambhu, Gods gave their powers to her – from brahma “Brahmini”, from Shiva “Maaheswari”, from Kumaraswami “Kaumaari”, from Vishnu “Vaishnavi”, from “Yagna Varaaha Moorthi” “Vaaraahi”, From Nrisimha “Naarasimhi”, From Indra “Indri”. All their weapons reached “Candikaa Devi”, and these are called “*Sapta Maatrukas*”.

Nava Durgas

Durga Devi is worshipped in nine forms. 1. Saakha Putri, 2. Brahmachaarini, 3. Chandra Ghantaa, 4. Kooshmaandaa, 5. Skanda Maataa, 6. Kaatyayani, 7. Kaalaraatri, 8. Mahaa Gouri, 9. Siddhida.

Why worship Durga Devi?

“Duh” (evil mind), “Ga” (go past). Driving out evil mind in devotees and help them get over difficulties is the power of “Sakti Swaroopini” Sridevi, the Trisatyatmika, in her Mahalakshmi roopa, fought for eight days and killed Mahishaasura on Navami (9th day) , as “Lalitaambika” she killed “Bhandaasura” on Navami. Hence 10th day is celebrated as “Vijaya Dasami” with great joy and activities.

सर्व मंगळ मांजळ्ये शिवे सर्वार्थ साधके | sarva maMgaLa mAMjaLyE SivE sarvArtha sAdhakE |

शरण्ये त्रयंबके देवी नारायणि नमोस्तुते || SaraNyE trayaMbakE dEvi nArAyaNi namOstute ||

[Dr. Rama Mulukutla's translation to one of the discourses of paramaguru Sri Shambhavi Dhanamjaya Swamiji.]

Sri Shambhavi Dhanamjaya Swamiji's discourse on education

A person without education is considered a strange animal in olden times, but in modern times there is a need to change somewhat that context. The educated man is behaving worse than the strange animals. Many decades ago people with education were very respected, but nowadays, the educated people are thinking meanly and acting as devils more than the uneducated. The very educated people are acting without responsibility and increasing unrest & lack of peace in society.

To make a person a better human being, attain divinity, & increase culture (samskar) a good education is not only important, but unavoidable. In old Gurukulasa peaceful atmosphere, a healthy loving teacher-student relationship, systematic education with discipline used to make the students not only well educated, but after finishing the education the students were able to face the obstacles of life with self confidence & mental toughness. Thus they were not only able to lead peaceful life but helped in promoting peace in society.

In Traithriyopanishad Sikshavali, the graduation speech given by the teacher addressing his students explains how the ideal Gurukula education helps in mirroring the Hindu life style. The student was advised how to put in action in life, the lessons he learned in gurukula, how to use them to shape the goals of life, how to lead a cultured life & how to lead a life with Dharma upholding the various values.

These are the following gems imparted to departing students which will be discussed in future issues. 1. Satyam vada, Dharmam chara. (Speak Truth, uphold Dharma) 2. Mathrudevo Bhava, Pithrudevo Bhava, Acharyadevo Bhava, Athithidevo Bhava, (mother, father, teacher & guest are divinity personified). 3. Sat Guru is Margadarsi (the one who paves the way) 4. How to behave with learned & enlightened people 5. Significance of donations (Dana) 6. Behavior & performance 7. Blame & Accusations 8. Prasthan Trayam (Three different ways to salvation once You start taking the steps)

*** Om Tat Sat ***