

ŚRÎ SÂI LEELA

Śrî Shirdi Sai Bâbâ Temple

1449 & 1451 Abers Creek Road, Monroeville, PA 15146

Mailing: PO Box 507, Monroeville, PA 15146-0507

Phone: 412-374-9244 Fax: 412-374-0940 Website: <http://www.baba.org>

February 2016

“However distant my people may be, I draw them to me just as we pull a bird to us with a string tied to its foot. .”- Śrî Sâi Bâbâ.”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - February 2016

PUSHYAM TILL FEB 8TH MAGHAM

Pushya Sukla Trayodasi - Pradosham

Feb 5 Fri 10am & 6.30 pm Ekavara Rudra Abhishekam \$36
Siva Archana \$18

Feb 6 Sat SANI Pradosham

10.00 am Saniswara (taila) Abhishekam \$54
11.00 am Saniswara Homam \$126
01.00pm Sri Sai Satyanarayana Vratam \$54

Feb 7 Sun Pushya Krishna Chaturdasi -Masa Sivaratri

10.00am 360 Rudra Abhishekam \$108
11.00am Sri Rudra Homam \$126

Feb 8 Mon Pushya Amavasya

8.00am Deva Rishi Pitru tarpanam \$21

Feb 8th Magha Masam Starts

Feb 12 Fri Magha Sukla Panchami - Vasantha Panchami

10.00am Saraswathi Puja \$21
11.00am Saraswathi Homam \$126

Feb 13 Sat Kumbha Sankramanam

05.00am Veda Patanam \$21

Feb 14 Sun Magha Sukla Saptami - RADHA SAPTAMI

Feb 18 Thur Bhishma Ekadasi - Antharvedi Theertham

10.00am Vishnu Sahasranama Homam \$126

Feb 19 Fri Magha Sukla Trayodasi -PRADOSHAM

06.30 pm Ekavara Rudra Abhishekam \$36
Siva Archana \$18

Feb 21 Sun Magha Sukla Poornima

09.30 am Sai Moola Vighraha Abhishekam \$54
10.00 am Sri Sai Rudra Yagnam \$126
11.00 am Sri Sai Satyanarayana Vratam \$54
Sri Sai Archana \$11 / Sahasranamam \$21
Flower Service \$36 / 7.00pm Jyoti Arati \$108

Feb 26 Fri Magha Krishna (Sankatahara) Chaturthi

10:00 am Ganapathi Abhishekam \$54
11:00 am Ganapathi Homam \$126
06:30 pm “GA” kara Sahasram \$36

HAPPY RADHA SAPTAMI

Sunday Feb 14th , 2015



Radha Saptami marks the seventh day following the Sun's northerly movement (Uttarayana) of vernal equinox starting from Capricorn (Makara). It is symbolically represented in the form of the Sun God Surya turning his Ratha (Chariot) drawn by seven horses, with Arua as the charioteer, towards the northern hemisphere, in a north-easterly direction. The symbolic significance of the ratha and the seven horses reigned to it is that it represents the seven colours of the rainbow. The seven horses are also said to represent the seven days of a week starting with Sunday, the day of Sun god Surya. The chariot has 12 wheels, which represents the 12 signs (each of 30 degrees) of the Zodiac (360 degrees) and constituting a full year, named Samvatsara. The Sun's own house is Leo (Simha) and he moves from one house to the next every month and the total cycle takes 365 days to complete. The Radha Saptami festival seeks the benevolent cosmic spread of energy and light from the Sun God.

Radha Saptami also marks the gradual increase in temperature across South India and awaits the arrival of spring, which is later heralded by the festival of Ugadi or the Hindu lunar New Year day in the month of Chaitra.

Radha Saptami also marks the birth of Surya to sage

HINDU CALENDAR

Current Year of the Earth: 1,955,885,2015

Name of the Year: Sri Manmadha

Ayanam: Dakshina/Uttaraayanam ; **Rutuvu:** Hemantha

Masa: Pushyam till Feb 8th

Current Year after Rama's Birth: 14,601,202

Krishna's Niryanam (Kali Yuga): 5116

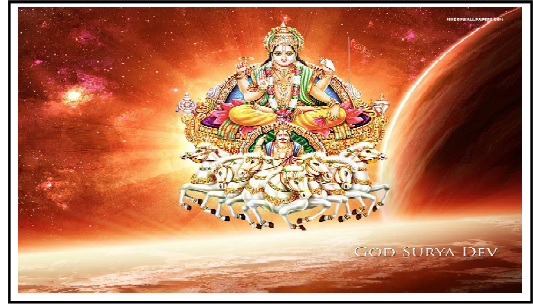
Gregorian Calendar A.D. 2016

Kashyapa and his wife Aditi and hence celebrated as Surya Jayanti (the Sun-god's birthday). A legend is narrated by the Kamboj empire's King Yashovarman, a noble king who had no heir to rule his kingdom. On his special prayers to God, he was blessed with a son. The king's vows did not end with this, as his son was terminally ill. A saint who visited the king advised that his son should perform the Ratha Saptami pooja (worship) with reverence to rid of his past sins. Once the King's son performed this, his health was restored and he ruled his kingdom well. It is also said that sage Bhishma breathed his last breath fourth day after the Rathasaptahmi day on ekaadashi.

God Vishnu in his form as Surya (the Sun-God) is usually worshipped on this day. Usually, Rathasaptami begins in households with a purification bath (bathing is also done in a river or sea) by holding several Ekka (Calotropis Gigantea) leaves on their head while bathing and chanting a verse which is supposed to invoke the benevolence of the Lord in all that one indulges in during the rest of the year. Argyam or (Tharpanam) (water held in the palms) is offered to the Sun God on this day while chanting hymns are performed to the Sun God. It also involves doing a puja with the ritual Naivedhya (food offering to God), and offering of flowers and fruits. Important prayers offered to the Sun god on this occasion are the Adityahridayam, Gayathri, Suryashtakam, Surya Sahasram namam. The preferred time for the pooja is within one hour after sunrise. In places like Mysore and Melkote, ceremonial processions carry the Surya Mandala - the icon of Surya.

Ekka leaves (in Kannada), are also known as Arka (in Sanskrit, meaning a ray or flash of lightning) leaves, Jilledu in Telugu, Erukku in Tamil and Calotropis Gigantea (bowstring hemp) in English. Arka is also a synonym for Surya or Sun. Its significance to Sun God could be compared to the significance of Tulsi (Ocimum tenuiflorum) leaves to Vishnu. Arka leaves are also used for worship of god Ganesha known by the name Arka Ganesha and also for Hanuman worship. Its stems, called samidha (sacrificial offerings of wood) are used for the Yagna ritual as a sacrificial offering to a ritual fire. Its shape is said to represent the shoulders and chariot of Sun God. Its use during the ritualistic ceremonious bath involves placement of seven leaves - one on the head, two on the shoulders, two on the knees and two on the feet.[4] On this day, in South India, Rangoli is drawn with coloured rice powder depicting a chariot and seven horses as symbolic of the Ratha Saptami. Cowdung cake is also burnt at the centre of this depiction and milk boiled on the fire is offered to the Sun God. In some of the important Vaishnavite

temples such as the Tirumala, Srirangam, Srirangapattana and Melukote, Ratha Saptami is one of the important festivals of the year.



SUN (Baba's elucidation)

In the worship of *Surya/Aditya*) or Sun God, certain mantras are used invoking the different attributes of the deity. Among them are: *himagnaya na-maha* (prostration to the dispeller of snow), *tamagnaya nam-aha* (prostration to the destroyer of darkness), *kraghnaya namaha* (prostration to the destroyer of the un-grateful). The last chanting needs some explanation. The Vedas have declared that the Sun emerged from the eyes of a Cosmic Person called the *vira purusha*. The radiance of the Sun illumines the eyes. The inner meaning of **destroyer of the ungrateful** is that the Sun-god withdraws the power of sight from an ungrateful person. More than the sense of sight, such a person is deprived of the real **enlightenment**. Every person should, therefore, cherish the sense of **gratitude**.

The Sun has two vital properties: light and heat. The atman too has two aspects: svarupam and svabhavam - 'it-ness' and the effect of 'it-ness'. The innate truth or svarupam is known as *dharma*, and the it quality or svabha-vam is *dharma*. He who is aware of dharma is said to have attained *dharma-bhuta janam* i.e. the transformation resulting from the knowledge of atma-sva-bhavam. The sublimation resulting from the knowledge of the essence or it-ness or svarupam of the atman is *dharma-bhuta janam*. The svarupam of the atman is *au* (the atomic); its Dharma or quality is splendor. The Atman is described as *vibhu*.

**Subtler than the subtlest anu
Vaster than the vastest mahat
Witnessing all everywhere**

Atman is Brahman, Brahman is Atman

This subtlest anu, atman, is in all things and its quality is, therefore, evident everywhere. It occupies all, but it cannot be occupied by any other. The atman principle, the Brahman principle is immanent in all things in the universe, but nothing can penetrate It. Since the anu, or the atman which has that form, is in all things, it is clear that all things are atman. There is nothing devoid of this anu force, and the quality of anu is cognizable in all things as the Dharma. So,

Dharmi or atman is omnipresent. The human body is no exception to this, and we are, thus, the embodiment of atman, of the atmic energy.

Holding up a silver tumbler in His hand, Sai Baba said: To know this as *silver tumbler* is knowledge of Dharma or knowledge of the effect; to know this silver is knowledge of Dharmi. This handkerchief too has the anu characteristic. Burn it, and the resulting ash has atoms. Anu persists even when the substance takes another form. That is the reason why atman is announced as the Eternal Truth of the Vedas.

The body is composed of many substances but every substance is essentially anu in structure. Appearance and nomenclature may change through childhood, boyhood, adolescence, youth, middle-age, and senescence, but the Dharmi, the Brahman reality, shine in native splendor without being affected in the least. Ignoring this one Reality, the Truth, man is fully involved in illusory tangles.

The solar rays absorb water from the oceans, and convert it into clouds and then into rain. These rain-drops reach the oceans in the form of streams and rivers. Likewise, we must **transform the knowledge gathered by our senses into wisdom and use it for the good of all.**

The Sun teaches us that when one is oneself, there will be no exhaustion or elation, no disgust or pride. The task of Surya is not something imposed from outside and taken up under compulsion. That is why it is performed smoothly and systematically. He is also exhorting mankind to **use the time that He creates and allots, fully and fruitfully;** not merely for living comfortably and safely, but for living a moral and elevating life, worthy of the destiny that is man's. Now you can realize why the Gita was first taught by the Lord to the Sun. He is the great *karma yogi*, the *nishkama karma yogi*.

The Festival of Chariot (Ratha Saptami)

A chariot festival is common for all temples. The chariot is bedecked with flowers and festoons, and the Utsava Murtis are installed in the high seat of the chariot. The chariot is tugged along by the devotees by the ropes tied to it. Some of the temple chariots are so huge and heavy that they require the pulling of hundreds of devotees. The chariot is pulled along the four streets around the temple to the accompaniment of vedic chanting and Nada-swaram. The car is periodically stopped for Archanas. This is also an occasion for the devotees - who for some reason or other are unable to go to the temple - to have the glimpse of the Deity and get the blessings. The whole town wears an air of festivity on this day.

A chariot festival is held on this day. The colossal chariot will be gorgeously decorated with flags and festoons, stalwart

bands of men will draw the chariot to the music of blowpipe and conches, acrobats dance in groups chanting minstrels. Thousands crowd around the holy chariot and line the streets. Their attention is necessarily drawn towards the entertainments provided, but they feel the happiest when they fold their palms and bow before the Idol installed in the chariot.

The car which you carry has to be treated thus. Instead, men are wildly milling in dreary circles, from births to deaths, pulled by wishes and pulled by needs. No milestones on the pilgrim road are crossed, no bridges are negotiated, and no progress is registered. The very process of journey is ignored. One yearns to escape the consequences of birth and aftermath of death and desires peace and joy. This is possible only when one identifies with the Atma and earns a reward for one's activities of mind and body.

Symbolically, the body itself is a chariot and intelligence is its charioteer. Desires are the roads through which the chariot is drawn by the rope of sensual attachment. Moksha (liberation) is the goal and Mula Virat Swarupa (the primal all-pervasive Divinity) is the Master of the Chariot.

The Sruti reveals the benefit of taking bath with arka leaf and berry (regu fruit) preferably in a holy river on the day of Ratha Saptami. The following episodes (*Vedasara Ratnavali* by Brahmasri Uppaluru Gapati Sastri Garu, 1985) are interesting.

Kasyapa Prajapati had two wives Kadruva and Suparni. Once they had a contest as to who was more beautiful. It was agreed that the loser will be a slave to the other. Kadruva won the contest, but told Suparni that she would be released from the bondage if she brought Somalatha (the Soma plant) from the heaven. Trishup and Jagati Chandasas, the two older brothers went to the heaven in search of Somalatha and were defeated by the guards Svannadhis. The third son Gayatri Chandas was however successful in bringing the plant. Suparni was thus released of her bondage. Now, Gayatri became proud of his achievement and was duly punished for his pride by Vashakara, a divine entity. The essence of Gayatri's body fell into equal halves on the earth and on the animals. Thus Aja (the goat) is the essence of Gayatri Chandas (spiritual science or breakthrough as in a scientist's laboratory).

Arka Tree Development: This is described in the namakam, *rudro va yesha agnihi*. Once Angirasa's saints earned their entry into heaven by their yajas. As they approached the heaven, they poured boiling ghee (clarified butter) from the mud pot (called Mahavira) on the goat Aja. In great pain, the goat shed its skin which grew into an Arka tree. Thus, Arka tree is the essence of Gayatri Chandas; it is charged

with the mantras of ghee and as it emanated from Aja, the Gayatri itself, the tree is worthy of worship.

Creation of the Berry: Once, the Soma creeper was crushed to obtain Soma Rasa (juice). By his unusual powers (Indra Samarthya), Indra expressed his sense capacity through the essence of Soma Rasa in ten different ways. He then spat three times to create the date-fruit, the small berry and the bigger berry. The fruit of berry tree which was created out of Indra's sense capacity increases the acuity of our senses.

Berry taken from the Arka leaf on Ratha Saptami day provides light particles all over the body, increases the complexion and enhances the power of senses as effectively as the Gayatri Chandas.

Sri Aaruna Ketuka Savitru Surya Narayana Yagnam

Sunday Feb 14th - Sunday Feb 21st

*** Whole Yagna sponsors **receive gold pendent and blessed shawl** (\$504) ***

** 1 day yagna sponsors **receive a silver pendent** (\$126) (Japa Homa Tarpana, abhishekam) **

9.30am Surya Archana/ Aditya Hrudaya Parayan

10am Surya Homam - For Good Health (\$126)

Poornahuthi on Sunday (Feb 21st)

Trucha Arghaya Purvaka SURYANAMASKARAS

9.30am Sunday Feb 14th - All are welcome!



Puja Sponsorsip form

Puja Sponsored: _____ **Date:** _____

Method of donation: Check No: _____ CC: _____ Exp: _____ Cvc: _____

Sig: _____

Name: _____ **Add:** _____ **City:** _____ **ST** _____ **Zip:** _____

Ph: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Gotram: _____

Name _____ **Star** _____

1. _____

3. _____

Name _____ **Star** _____

2. _____

4. _____



SURRENDER COMPLETELY TO BABA

All human beings are the beautiful flowers raised in the garden of God. He is their Protector. Baba used to tell that He incarnated on the Earth to promote our material and spiritual well-being. Hence, whatever actions or duties we perform, they should be offered to Baba in word, spirit and deed. This is known as complete surrender. Every minute we need to meditate on Baba in our heart. If we could put into practice Baba's words, He would definitely make a place for us in His heart. We have to believe in Baba as our everything and live in His light.

On one occasion, a Swami from Alandi approached Baba with a severe ear-ache and sought His blessings. In spite of undergoing an operation, he found no relief. Baba blessed him assuring, "Allah Achha karega", that God would cure him'. Keeping faith in Baba's words, he returned to Pune and within a week the pain miraculously cured. It is all due to his complete surrender and faith that his ear ache vanished by the Grace of Baba. Whatever work we do, we should think of Baba and feel that it is Baba who works through us. There should be no feeling of "I" or "mine", except a conscious feeling that it is done as per His Will. Then, there is no possibility of making a mistake. Moreover, the ego sense that "I am doing" would get erased. We have to seek His protection by our total surrender to Him.