

# Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

*One can understand Me as I am, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only by devotional service.  
And when one is in full consciousness of Me by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God*  
Chapter 18, Verse 55; Bhagavad Gita

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 24: November 2015

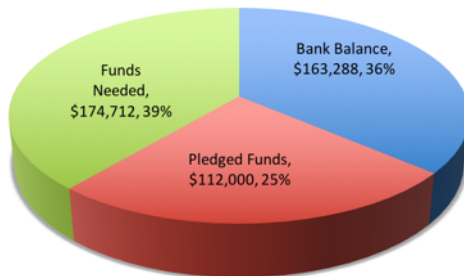
## Sanatan Hindu Sanskar Kendra

PO Box 80362, Lafayette, Louisiana - 70598  
110, Hapsburg Lane, Lafayette, Louisiana - 70506  
Email: [shskendra@gmail.com](mailto:shskendra@gmail.com), Website: [sanatanlft.org](http://sanatanlft.org)

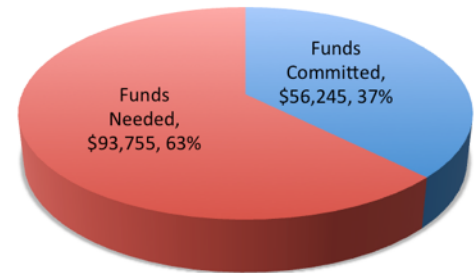


### Temple - Fundraising Campaign

Estimated Construction Cost : \$450,000



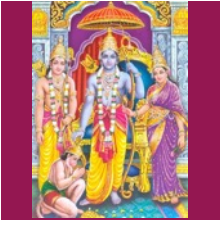
Estimated Operating Cost : \$150,000



Sponsor Category	Sponsorship	Sponsors Needed	Committed
Deity Sponsor (Ganesha, Radhe Krishna, Durga, Balaji, Shiva, Hanuman, Padmavati)	\$15,000	21	3
Utsav Moorties	\$5000	24	0
Annadanam Sponsor	\$5000	1	0
Pranapratishtha (Non-life Member)	\$2500	33	0
Pranapratishtha (Life Member)	\$1116		0
Decorations (Ornaments, Garlands, Diyas, etc.,)	\$1000	9	0

Yearly Contribution	Sponsors Needed	Committed
\$10,000	6	3
\$5000	8	2
\$2000	8	0
\$1000	12	4
\$500	15	0
Dollar-a-day	20	13
\$100	75	75

Sita Ram



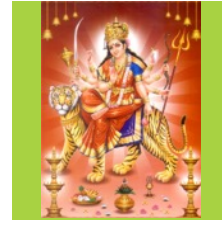
Ganesh



Krishna



Durga



Shiva



## Guru - Part I

by Swami Sivananda

### Introduction

The Guru is God Himself manifesting in a personal form to guide the aspirant. Grace of God takes the form of the Guru. To see the Guru is to see God. The Guru is united with God. He inspires devotion in others. His presence purifies all.

The Guru is verily a link between the individual and the immortal. He is a being who has raised himself from *this* into *That*, and thus has free and unhampered access into both the realms. He stands, as it were, upon the threshold of immortality; and, bending down he raises the struggling individuals with his one hand, and with the other lifts them up into the *empyrean* of everlasting joy and infinite Truth-Consciousness.

### The Sadguru

To be a Guru, one must have a command from God.

Mere study of books cannot make one a Guru. One who has studied the Vedas, and who has direct knowledge of the Atman (Self) through Anubhava (experience), can alone be enrolled as a Guru. A Jivanmukta or liberated sage is the real Guru or spiritual preceptor. He is the Sadguru. He is identical with Brahman or the Supreme Self. He is a Knower of Brahman.

A Sadguru is endowed with countless Siddhis (psychic powers). He possesses all divine Aisvarya (powers), all the wealth of the Lord.

Possession of Siddhis, however, is not the test to declare the greatness of a sage or to prove that he has attained Self-realisation. Sadgurus generally do not exhibit any miracle or Siddhi.

Sometimes, however, they may do so in order to convince the aspirants of the existence of superphysical things, give them encouragement, and instill faith in their hearts.

The Sadguru is Brahman Himself. He is an ocean of bliss, knowledge, and mercy. He is the captain of your soul. He is the fountain of joy. He removes all your troubles, sorrows, and obstacles. He shows you the right divine path.

...Continued on Page 4

## Nov & Dec 2015 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

21 Saturday	Devutthana Ekadashi
22 Sunday	Gauna Devutthana Ekadashi, Tulasi Vivah
25 Wednesday	Kartika Poornima
06 Sunday	Utpanna Ekadashi
15 Tuesday	Vivah Panchami
21 Monday	Mokshada Ekadashi, Gita Jayanti
24 Thursday	Margashirsha Poornima, Dattatreya Jayanti

For more details please refer [DrikPanchang.com](http://DrikPanchang.com)



## Mokshada Ekadashi Vrat

Monday, December 21st, 2015

On 22nd, Parana Time = 7:04 to 9:05

## Year-end Donation Appeal

Dear Friends,

Our organization, SHSK made a considerable progress in 2015 with the help of our community members. The trustees and many volunteers are making plans to build a temple structure in 2016.

Now, year-end is nearing. We are bombarded by requests for donations. Many answer those solicitations, happily giving to their favorite charities. This year-end generosity also might pay off at tax time, as long as you know and follow the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) rules on tax deductions for donations.

Many of our members may also in the process of year-end tax planning. Please consider year-end donation to SHSK as part of your year-end tax planning. Also donating appreciated assets such as securities, real-estate, collectibles and artwork may realize a much more favorable result for tax purpose.

Some of us may not be able to itemize for tax purpose, because IRS allowed standard deductions amount is greater than our total itemized deductions. (2015 standard deduction amount is \$12,400 for married filing jointly.) In this case you may want to consider paying two years property taxes, donations, etc., in one year to maximize the total itemized deductions. For example, if you are planning to donate \$1,000/year, donate \$2,000 in every other year. For property taxes, pay 2015 taxes in early January 2016 and 2016 taxes at end of December 2016.

Please note donations must be made by the end of the tax year for which you want to claim the tax deduction and SHSK is an "IRS-qualified" charity.

Should you have any questions on tax deductions for donations, please feel free to call me at 337-857-1995.

Sincerely,

*Ravi C. Vallalar*

Treasurer



Find us on Facebook and get SHSK updates



Subscribe to SHSK channel on youtube and listen to devotional playlists.



## Vaikunta Ekadashi

When Heaven's Doors Open Wide



To those with a pure heart, the gates of Vishnu's spiritual world are always open. But on a precious few days, it is said, that passage is open to all, allowing devotees to more easily reach Vaikunta, the abode of Lord Vishnu, Supreme God to hundreds of millions of Hindus. This is the essence of Vaikunta Ekadashi, a festival marked by fasting, devotion and pilgrimage to famous temples, when devotees draws closer to God in a most personal way.

### Who is Lord Vishnu?

In the Vaishnava sect of Hinduism Vishnu is the Supreme God, venerated as the all-pervading essence of all beings, the master of time, the One who supports, sustains and governs the universe and all elements within it. In the sacred *Puranas*, Vishnu is described as the color of dark blue clouds, having four arms, holding a lotus, mace, conch and a chakra. Through the ages, He manifests in several forms, or avatars, such as Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, to guide humans on the path of dharma. Vishnu's constant companion is the Goddess Lakshmi. He represents the potential and She the wealth of potential brought to fruition.



### What is Vaikunta Ekadashi?

*Ekadashi* is the eleventh lunar day of every fortnight. Of the two dozen *ekadashis* in a year, Vaikunta Ekadashi reigns supreme. It is known as Mokshada, "bestowing liberation." On this day, the doors to Vishnu's divine abode, called Vaikunta, are open wide to all who seek salvation, moksha. This occurs in the bright fortnight of December/January, the Hindu month of Mrigashira. According to mythology, devas and demons churned the Ocean of Milk for 1,000 years and, *amrita*, the nectar of immortality, appeared on this day.



### What do Hindus do on Vaikunta Ekadashi?

Devotees maintain a total or partial fast and observe *mauna*, silence, while remembering Vishnu in prayer. While many Hindus fast on all *ekadashis*, Vaikunta Ekadashi is observed with utmost diligence and self-restraint. A common observance is to consume only water or milk.

### What are the temple observances?

Devotees flock to Vishnu shrines, especially famous ones such as the Venkateshwara temples in Tirupati and Pittsburg, and the Ranganathar temple in Srirangam. In Srirangam the festival spans 21 days



divided into morning and night observances. Lord Vishnu, adorned in diamond-studded armor, is brought to a 1,000-pillared hall through the northern gate, called *swarga vaasal*, "heaven's entrance," which is opened only this one time each year.

### What else is celebrated around this time?

In the northern hemisphere, winter solstice occurs in this month, heralding longer, warmer days and agrarian prosperity. This transition to the year's fortuitous half is celebrated with beautiful patterns, called *rangoli*, drawn with colored rice flour on the floor outside homes. Hindus believe that at this time the divine celestials are most attentive to the pleas of mankind. Devotees rise early, perform ablutions and, throughout the month, visit temples with prayers in heart and gifts in hand.

-Hinduism Today



## Does Religious Fasting Make Sense?

Fasting in Hinduism indicates the denial of the physical needs of the body for the sake of spiritual gains. According to scripture, fasting helps create an attunement with the Absolute by establishing a



harm o n i o u s relationship between the body and the soul. By fasting, the devout exercise control over their rioting senses and desires. It is a sacrifice made to the Self, by the self.

By turning within in meditation, they rein in the mind. Since the body is mostly composed of fluids, it is influenced by the phases of the moon, as is the mind. The rishis, ancient Hindu scientists, established these connections and recommended fasting and meditation based on the moon cycle, such as on *Ekadashi*. This causes a natural slow down of the system and the opportunity to reconnect with one's deeper being.

Fasting breaks life's repetitious regimen and brings clarity, empowering the individual to resume normal activities with greater vigor and conviction.

## Language Classes through SHSK

The greatest and most powerful gift a parent can give their children is to pass their language and culture. Literacy in the mother tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage. The mother tongue plays a very important role in developing thoughts, shaping experiences, exploring customs, and articulating values.

Encouraging young children to learn their Mother Tongue would help them to develop confidence, self-esteem and their unique identity in the global world. With this as the mission a group of SHSK volunteers came forward to start teaching Telugu and Tamil Languages to children in Lafayette. Few classes have already gone through the past couple of weeks and children seems to enjoy their language classes. If you are interested to know more about the classes please contact the respective coordinators.

MANA BADI - Telugu Classes

Kiran Yerasi - 270.320.5906  
dockiranmai@yahoo.co.in

VALLUVAR THAMIZH PALLI - Tamil Classes

Senthil Thavamani - 337.857.0765  
tsenthil@hotmail.com





NAVRATRI Celebrations organized by SHSK and Lafayette Gujarat Samaj on October 17th, 2015

## Guru - Part I

... Continued from page 2

He tears your veil of ignorance. He makes you immortal and divine. He transmutes your lower, diabolical nature. He gives you the rope of knowledge, and takes you up when you are drowning in this ocean of Samsara (cycle of birth and death). Do not consider him to be only a man. If you take him as a man, you are a beast. Worship your Guru and bow to him with reverence.

Guru is God. A word from him is a word from God. He need not teach anything. Even his presence or company is elevating, inspiring, and stirring. His very company is self-illumination. Living in his company is spiritual education. Read the Granth-saheb (the holy scripture of the Sikh religion). You will come to know the greatness of the Guru.

Man can learn only from man, and hence God teaches through a human body. In your Guru, you have your human ideal of perfection. He is the pattern into which you wish to mould yourself. Your mind will readily be convinced that such a great soul, is fit to be worshipped and revered.

Guru is the Moksha-dvara (door to liberation). He is the gateway to the transcendental Truth-Consciousness. But, it is the aspirant who has to enter through it. The, Guru is a help, but the actual task of practical Sadhana (spiritual practice) falls on the aspirant himself.



### The Need For A Guru

For a beginner in the spiritual path, a Guru is necessary. To light a candle, you need a burning candle. Even an illumined soul alone can enlighten another soul.

Some do meditation for some years independently. Later on, they actually feel the necessity of a Guru. They come across some obstacles in the way. They are unable to know how to obviate these impediments or stumbling blocks. Then they begin to search for a Master.

Only the man who has already been to Badrinath will be able to tell you the road. In the case of the

spiritual path, it is still more difficult to find your way. The mind will mislead you very often. The Guru will be able to remove pitfalls and obstacles, and lead you along the right path. He will tell you: "This road leads you to Moksha (liberation); this one leads to bondage". Without this guidance, you might want to go to Badrinath, but find yourself in Delhi!

.....[www.dlshq.org](http://www.dlshq.org)

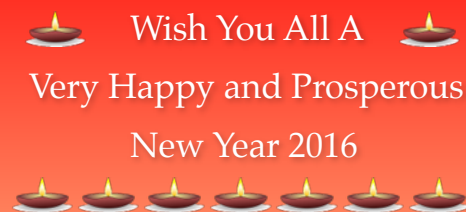
### Amazon Smile

When you buy your everyday needs from Amazon, they donate 0.5% of your purchase to a charitable organization of your choice.

Follow [this link](#) to find out how to add SHSK as your charitable organization.

Please buy from [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to make this happen.

Be part of SHSK Divine Journey



Wish You All A  
Very Happy and Prosperous  
New Year 2016

Thank you for your support and blessings.

Srinivasan Ambatipati, Editor