

# S.V. Temple Newsletter



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# Ekadasi—Meaning and Significance

Hindu Lunar year consists of 12 lunar months in which each month consists of 30 lunar dates known as *Tithis*. Based on the movement and position of the moon with respect to the Sun, the 30 *tithis* are grouped into 2 fortnights (pakshas= 15 tithis each). The waning phase (from Full Moon to New Moon) is called Krishna Paksha and the waxing phase (from New Moon to Full Moon) is called Shukla Paksha. So, simply, a *tithi* is defined as the phase of the moon on a given time of the year. Each *tithi* is given a name starting from Krishna pratipada (day 1) to Amavasya (day 15) in Krishna Paksha and from Shukla pratipada (day 1) to Pournami (day 15) in Shukla Paksha. Considering this, each tithi occurs twice (once in each fortnight) in every month of a lunar calendar. Of all the tithis, Ekadasi is considered as an important day for all the Hindus.

Ekadasi is a Sanskrit word which refers to “the eleventh day”. So, like every tithi (day) in a lunar month, Ekadasi also has Sukla Ekadasi and Krishna Ekadasi. Both the Ekadasis are very special and dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The importance and observance of Ekadasi was narrated to Arjuna by Lord Krishna himself during the Maha Bharatha time. The purpose of Ekadasi is to attain liberation and get rid of all sins by increasing our love for Lord Sri Krishna and all of His forms and thereby attain liberation. This day has been set as an auspicious day for all Hindus, mostly for the people who believe in Lord Sri Hari; because it is believed that the doors of Sri Vaikuntha are left open for His darshanam on this day. Thus the whole day is especially dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is known as “the day of Lord Vishnu” or “Hari Vasara”.

Another special feature of Ekadasi, as most people know is – fasting, abstinence from regular food. Lord Sri Krishna says that if a person fasts on Ekadasi, “I shall destroy all his sins”. That means one can qualify for Moksham (salvation) by pleasing Lord Vishnu through fasting on the Ekadasi days. Fasting on Ekadasi days means that the individual refrains from eating grains and pulses and spends the day reciting the name of Lord Vishnu in the form of listening or chanting or performing pooja and bhajans. People, who observe Ekadasi fast, take milk products, some vegetables, and fruits on this day. This continues till the end of the day and gets a break from fasting only on the next day on *Dwaadashi tithi* after taking bath, offering prayers to Lord Vishnu, lighting the lamp and then by offering food to a Brahmin. This complete process is called “Ekadasi Vrat”. It is strongly believed that one who performs this Ekadasi Vrat is qualified for a place in Sri Vaikunatam, which is the abode of Lord Vishnu. Thus, Ekadasi tithi has become a special day in the Traditional Hindu Calendars.



Of all the Ekadasis, the Dhanurmasa Shukla Ekadasi which came into being the first Ekadasi also called Vaikuntha Ekadasi has got much importance. As the Vaikuntha Dwaram or Vaikuntha Vaasal “The Gates of Heaven” are believed to be kept open, temples erect a special entrance called “Vaikuntha Dwara Darshanam” for the devotees to walk through on this particular day. It is strongly believed that any person who passes through this entrance on this particular day attains Moksha (salvation). In the Mahabharata, during the Kurukshetra war, the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna, the Bhagavat Geetha is said to have taken place on this Vaikuntha Ekadasi day. In India, in the temples like those at Srirangam, Tirupathi, Mannargudi - the Vaikuntha Ekadasi is celebrated as a big festival for few days.



As per the legend, Ekadasi was the name of the Goddess that arose from Lord Vishnu. When once Lord Vishnu was in Yoga Nidra (sleep/trance), a demon named Murdanav challenged Lord Vishnu for a duel. As Lord Vishnu was in Yoga Nidra, a damsel appeared from his Ekadash Indris (eleven senses). Murdanav was so attracted to the damsel and became so passionate to marry her. But, the damsel had a condition that he should first have a duel with her. Murdanav agreed to that. In the duel, the damsel defeated the demon and finally killed him. Lord Vishnu became happy with her divine act and was pleased by the firm dedication of the damsel. Granting her a boon, Lord Vishnu said that she will be named as Ekadasi, as she appeared from the Ekadash Indris of Him. Goddess Ekadasi told Lord Vishnu that she wants people to observe Ekadasi Vrat and get freed from all evils and sins. Lord Vishnu blessed her and said that if anyone would fast on Ekadasi, he/she would get Moksha (salvation).

Once during Tapobhumi Naimisharanya Tirth, 88000 rishi pungavas were seated along with Veda Vyas Mahamuni and Sutha Mahamuni. Every one asked Sutha Mahamuni, “What is the remedy to get rid of all sorrows and sins in the coming generations?” Then Sutha mahamuni hearing their request, with the blessings of Veda Vyas Bhagavan, started narrating the story and importance of Ekadasi for the wellbeing of humanity. Sutha Mahamuni continued narrating the names of 26 names of Ekadasis and said that by just listening to all the names of 26 Ekadasis, all sins are washed away. Of all these 26 Ekadasis, the first the Dhanurmasa Shukla Ekadasi, otherwise called “Vaikuntha Ekadasi” is the most popular one.

So, as per the Hindu traditional calendar, the fast of Ekadasi occurs twice (Krishna Ekadasi and Shukla Ekadasi) every month. Considering this fact, there are 24 Ekadasis in 12 months. And when it comes to a leap year, there is an extra month (Purushottam or Adhika Maas). Thus two more Ekadasis are added; in total there are 26 Ekadasis in a leap year for which each Ekadashi has its presiding deity.

## S.V. Temple Future Plans



All of our Mulavirats ( stone idols) including Sri Venkateswara swamy( Balaji) , MahaLakshmi, Andaal, Garuda, Ramanuja, Dasavatharamas, Navagrahams, Jaya and Vijaya were sculpted by TTD (Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam, Tirupathi, India) Silpis and are very beautiful and magnificent. Madhu and Jyothsna Reddy have visited TTD silpa kalasala (school for Silpis) in January 2014 and did vighraha puja to all vighrahams and sent them all to Mahabalipuram for final finishing touches. We are expecting them to be shipped and be in Minneapolis by end of the year. Management is planning to remodel inside of the temple and install these vighrahams by May/ June 2015 and the auspicious date for PRANAPRATHISTHA will be announced to all devotees very soon. Pictures of all Mulavirats are in temple for our devotees to see and enjoy. Temple Management has found an architect/ Silpi who will come from India to work with local team to complete the process of remodeling for final installation of all vighrahams.

Madhu and Jyothsna Reddy have also visited Chinna Jiyyar Swamy in Hyderabad during this time and received his blessings for this great cause.

Temple will need to raise funds to start the renovating process of temple to receive and install all these vighrahams with the help of our community. Management is planning to arrange some fund raising events for this occasion and hoping every-

one in our community will participate and be blessed by Sri Venkateswaraswamy (Balaji).

Temple management has sponsored a priest cook for temple kitchen who will be managing kitchen, making all prasadam for the temple.

They have started Annadanam scheme at the temple to serve food on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and during temple events. Please visit temple website for more details and if interested please contact the management.

Temple Bylaws are being reviewed by our temple lawyer and will be released to public very soon.

## Upcoming Events and Festivals

Date	Event
August 8	Varalakshmi Vratam
August 9	Temple Anniversary
August 10	Sravana Pournami/Raksha Bandhan
August 17	Sri Krishna Ashtami
August 29	Vinayaka Chaturdhi/ Vinayaka Chavithi
September 6	Onam
September 24	Sarannavarathri Begins
September 30	Saraswathi Puja & Cultural Events
October 1	Durga Ashtami/ Batukamma Festival
October 2	Maharnavami
October 3	Dusahra/ Vijaya Dasami & Musical Concert
October 20-23	Dhan Teras, Dhana Trayodasi, Naraka Chaturdasi, Diwali
October 24	Karthika Masam Begins / Gujarat New Year
November 6	Karthika Pournami
November 15	Goda Kalyanam (Temple Fund Raising Event)
December 16	Dhanurmasam Begins
December 30	Vaikuntha Ekadasi

# 2014 School Class Timings & Holidays

Sunday Class Schedule	
9.00 am – 10.00 am	YOGA class for adults and kids
10.00 am – 10.15 am	ASSEMBLY (Prayer and Announcements)
10.15 am – 11.00 am	LANGUAGE classes
11.00 am – 11.15 am	SNACK time
11.15 am – 12.00 pm	Culture Class
11.15 am – 12.00 pm	Music Class
2013-2014 School Holidays	
November 30, 2014	Thanks Giving Day Break
December 21-28, 2014	Winter Break

## S.V. Temple School (SVTS)

The SV Temple School was started in March 2009 on Ugadi Day with just few students. Since then, the school strength has increased year by year. SVTS is successfully teaching Telugu, Hindi, Music, Indian culture, Yoga and Meditation classes. For the registration and enrollment details of the school year 2014-2015, visit the SV Temple website, [www.svtemplemn.org](http://www.svtemplemn.org). The school open house is on September 7<sup>th</sup>, Sunday at 10 am and all the classes will commence on sept.14<sup>th</sup>. Also for the school year 2014-2015 SVTS included Annamacharya Keertanas as a part of Music class and has been added in the school curriculum. (Annamacharya Keertana classes will be moved from Friday to Sunday during this school year). SVTS is thankful to all our volunteer teachers who have given their time for the noble cause of keeping our traditions and languages going for generations. The school is looking for more volunteer teachers who can help with teaching all subjects as a primary or back up teacher. SVTS is also looking for volunteers to help at school front desk. **Gita discourses will be held once a week on Sundays.**

Enrollment for 2014-2015 school years is in the process. Seats are limited. If interested, please download application forms and submit them with payment. For more details and information, contact SVTS.



# Priest Sri Komanduri Seshadri Iyyengar

Priest **Sri Komanduri Seshadri Iyyengar** was born in Hyderabad, India. At the age of twelve he was enrolled in Pancharatra Agama Kalaashaala (founded by Sri Sri Sri Tridandi Srimannarayana Chinna Jeeyar Swamy) at Jaggayapeta, A.P. During this school time he learnt Thiruvaaaraadhana, Brahmastavam, etc. He also learnt Vaidika Smartham under the guidance of Sriman Paravastu Seshacharya a well-known priest at TTD. Later Seshadri joined Osmania University, and completed his Doctorate Degree, in the subject of TIRUPPAVAI. He is also experienced in jyothishyam; he learnt this from a famous Astrologist Sriman Komanduri Partha Sarathy Iyyengar. Sri Seshadri worked as a Priest and Purohit at Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple Hyderabad. During his work at Sri Venkateswara Temple, he performed marriages, Gruhapravesams, Sudarsana Homams and Sri Satya Narayana Swamy vrathams. He speaks Telugu, Sanskrit, Hindi, and English fluently and has working knowledge in Tamil.



## Cultural Events since November 2013

Below is the recap of the cultural/religious events that took place since November 2013. We thank all the volunteers and organizers who made all these events a great success. We are looking forward to your support in the coming years.

1. **Diwali Celebrations** — November 2-3 2013. As every year, this year also SV Temple organized fireworks and food along with 5 days of Visesh Lakshmi Puja. More than 500 families, with great delight took part in the worship and celebrations of Diwali festival. Many devotees from nearby cities also visited the temple on these festival days.
2. **Diwali Cultural Talent Show** — November 16, 2013. Kalanjali – Cultural wing of SV Temple coordinated a talent show for Diwali. The performances varied from comedy acts to music (vocal and instrumental) and dance (classical and non-classical) performances, thus bringing the Indian community together.
3. **Karthika Pournami** — November 16, 2013. Rites like Sri Satyanarayana Swami Vratam and Maha Lakshmi Deepa Puja took place in the temple. Every year in Karthika masam, essentially on Mondays, temple priests perform Sri Rudraabhishekam to Lord Shiva.
4. **Vaikuntha Ekadasi** — January 11, 2014. Temple priests did Tiruvaaraadhana and Srivari kunta perumal Aradhana, while devotees recited Vishnu Sahasranama Parayana.
5. **Goda Kalyanam** — January 12, 2014. Tiruppavai and Urutya pradarshana by Godha Kavuthuvam.
6. **Sankranthi /Pongal** — January 13–16, 2014. As Dhanurmasam begins from here; starting with the event Bhogi pallu for kids on Bhogi, the celebrations went through three successive evenings Sankranthi, ending with Sri Satyanarayana Swami vratam on Kanuma day. People offered special prayers and traditional delicacies in the temple.

## Cultural Events since November 2013 (Contd.)

7. **Bheeshma Ekadasi** — February 9, 2014. Sponsored by JET (Jeeyar Educational Trust) chapter in MN.
8. **Maha Shiva Rathri Celebrations** — February 27-28, 2014. As every year, this year also Maha Rudraabhishekam was performed, along with Shiva archanas in the temple. The devotees of Sri Satya Sai Baba group took the initiative of doing bhajans during the auspicious night of Shivarathri starting from evening to the next day morning with much religious fervor.
9. **Natya Manjari Dance Competition** — March 22, 2014. On the occasion of Hindu New Year there was a free-admission event called “Natya Manjari” in SV Temple which was organized by Kalanjali group. This is a dance competition where all kinds of dances are encouraged.
10. **Ugadi/ Gudi Padwa New year** — March 31, 2014. Religious rituals like Kalasaaraadhana, Ashta Lakshmi Pooja, Panchanga Sravanam by priests took place in the temple premises welcoming “Jaya” nama samvatsaram.
11. **Nadotsavam 2014** — April 4-6, 2014. For all the Carnatic Music lovers of Minnesota, there was a Grand Music fest celebrated in SV Temple for 3 days with competitions and concerts in Carnatic Music. In the mornings, Devotional and Carnatic contests were held for kids and adults of all ages from 5- 50 at different levels and in the evenings, there were concerts by various great singers from India and USA. Final winners of every category at every level were given awards on the final day of this grand event. This year SV Temple proudly presented us the opportunity to meet the Big B of Carnatic Music Dr. M Balamurali Krishna. The Indian Music Community of Minnesota is very fortunate to have him as the chief guest and tuned in to music. It was a great privilege to celebrate Nadotsavam 2014 in the presence of Dr. Balamurali Krishna. As part of Nadotsavam 2014, SV Temple arranged concert by Sri M. Balamurali Krishna on April 5<sup>th</sup> at Olson Middle School, Bloomington. He was accompanied by Sri Balaji Chandran (Ghatam), Sri VVS Murali (Violin), Tanjavor Sri Muruga Bhupathi (Mridangam), Sriram Natarajan (Kanjira), Trivendrum Sri Krishna Kumar; Apart from this, the concert also included performances by Ganapathy Tukaram Maharaj, Carnatic Brothers K.N. Shashikiran and P. Ganesh and Smt. Nirmala Rajasekhar. Balamurali Krishna handed over the prizes to all the winners of Carnatic star/Bhakthi star 2014. SV Temple was always thankful to all the volunteers who helped in making Nadotsavam 2014 a grand success. This great grand event was brought to us by Atikramya ‘layers of Trust’ and Reddy Foundation, Minneapolis, USA.
12. **Sri Rama Navami Celebrations** — April 8, 2014. Sri Seetha Rama Kalyanam was in the evening.
13. **Tamil New Year Celebrations** — April 14, 2014.
14. **Sri Ramanuja Jayanthi** — May 3, 2014. Lord’s Procession and later followed by Sangeetha seva, bhajans, Neelattam and Sahasra Dhara.
15. **Sri Annamayya Jayanthi** — May 17, 2014. Srivari Vasantotsavam and Tiruveedhi seva (procession) Vishwakshena Aaraadhana and Sri Venkateswara Swamy Unjal seva, while the devotees sung Annamayya songs / Sankeertanas continuously for about 2 hours which was coordinated by temple volunteers. Trophies were given to all the participants. Finally it ended up with vedapara-



## Cultural Events since November 2013 (Contd.)

yana Vinnapam and sattumarai.

16. **Sri Hanumat Jayanthi** — May 23, 2014. Hanumat abhishekam, Aaku Pooja, Vada maala samarpana and after that devotees chanted Hanuman Chalisa parayan 11 times.
17. **SV Temple School Anniversary and Carnival** — June 7, 2014. There were splendid celebrations of SV Temple School annual day for the year 2013-2014. Every class got an opportunity to show their talent, specifically what they have learned during the school year. SVTS is thankful to all the volunteers, teachers, parents and children who actively took part in this event to make it a grand success like every year.
18. **Sri Nammazvar Jayanthi** — June 14, 2014.

## Comments and Articles

We are inviting all readers, devotees, followers, students, teachers, and writers, etc. to submit devotional stories, essays, and experiences to S.V. Temple Newsletter Editor. After newsletter committee's review, selected articles will be published in the upcoming issues of the newsletter. Editor of the newsletter will have all the rights to modify the articles to address language, grammar, and space-constraint issues. Since the audience of this newsletter come from various age groups, we request you to send articles that everybody can understand. Make sure that your articles are helpful in educating the readers in devotional field and encourage them to follow *dharma*. Also, you can send comments on the published articles and ideas for new articles that you want to see. You can email your articles to Uma Vempati and Gayathri Vempati at [news@svtemplemn.org](mailto:news@svtemplemn.org).





Namami Narayana Pada Pankajam  
Karomi Narayana Pujanam Sada!  
Vadami Narayana Nama Nirmalam  
Smarami Narayana Tattvamaha Avyayam!!

(The above sloka was taken from Mukunda Maala. The sloka explains the three fold worship of Srimannarayana—through manas, vak, and kayam (mind, speech, and body)).

At every moment, I bow down to the lotus feet of Narayana, I always perform worship to lord Narayana, I recite the pure name of Narayana, and reflect on the infallible truth of Narayana.

### **Thanks from S.V. Temple:**

S.V. Temple earnestly thank all the generous donors, wonderful devotees, learned priests and dedicated volunteers that help to make our Temple a marvelous place of worship.

### **Temple Hours:**

The temple is open weekdays from 9:30 AM to Noon & 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM  
Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM

Please visit [www.svtemplemn.org](http://www.svtemplemn.org) for updates and details.

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