Special Devotee Participatory Pujas in the Sahasra Chandi Mahayagna

EXPLANATION BY AASThana ACHARYa SHRI SHANMUKHA SIVACHARYaR

Vinayaka, Vatuka, Kanyaka, Suvasini and Dhampathy Puja are essential parts of Chandi Yagna. When we perform Sahasra Chandi, it is customary to have 100 devotees for each of these pujas. These categories are traditionally based on the principle that Devi is there in every living being with Her Shaktis or Powers. By invoking Her presence in people based on gender and age, specific Shakti of Devi expressed as that category’s natural characteristics is highlighted for our worship. The Divine Mother is satisfied even by our mere assumptions of Her manifestations - bhaavana maatra santhusta hridayaayai nama: as stated in the Lalita Ashtottara Namavali.

In each category of the puja, divine presence will be invoked by the Acharya in each of the ~100 devotees and they will be seated to receive the puja offered by other devotees to the invoked divinity in them. To facilitate all the devotees in the congregation to participate, along with the above prayers, SSVT is organizing special prayers to parent(s) by their children. Also, to offer gratitude to the divine sakthis in the form of women, Sahasranama Archana will be performed by one thousand (Sahasra) women and girls aged 10 or more.

Sponsorship is NOT REQUIRED for DEVOTEES TO BE SEATED AS Vinayaka, Vatuka, Kanyaka, Suvasini, or Dhampathy, but prior registration is required. Devotees who want to PERFORM THE PUJA TO Vinayaka, Vatuka, Kanyaka, Suvasini and Dhampathy CAN SPONSOR THE EVENT. During this symbolic worship, the prayers are performed for the benefit of the entire Universe; in the process, both the devotees seated for the puja and those who perform the puja to them are all specially blessed by Devi. Since there are limited seats available, devotees wanting to participate for being seated in the puja have to register in SSVT web site. All the pujas registrations are based on first come first served basis.

There are some essential steps to be followed by those who have registered to be seated for the puja. They need to take Mangala snana (auspicious head-to-toe bath preferably sesame oil bath) in the morning of the puja and wear the new vastrams (traditional) given by the temple. Kanyakas are also requested to come in the traditional attire, the dress materials for them will be given during the event. Registered participants can pick up their vastrams few days in advance of the event and will be announced later. All are requested to report at the prescribed time.

VINAYAKA Puja
(young unmarried boys)

Vinayaka Puja is carried out to invoke Lord Ganesha’s blessings and remove all obstacles. Ganesha represents mooladhara Shakti; he is present around Saptha Mata (the seven divine mothers). Hence when we do Kanyaka and Suvasini Pujas it is customary to start with Ganesha Puja. He is present in the Mooladhara- the source of all knowledge and energies in each of us. Shakthi - the divine energy - is known as Para or Shanta. When Ganesha is invoked in children, their whole being gets purified and energized, just as a blank check gets value when it is filled up and signed by the owner.

VATUKA Puja
(young unmarried boys)

Vatukar means small child. Sometimes referred to as Vatuka Bairavar. Vatukar is the child of Saptha Matas. Vatuka Bairavar is the deity who saves his devotees from all sorts of misfortunes and calamities. He has the shakti for protecting us and thus when we do Vatuka Puja, all are protected.

KANYAKA Puja
Kanyakas are girls aged 10 or less

Devi in different forms are invoked in these young girls. “Striyas Samastas Sakalaa Jagathsu tvayaikaya pooritam ambayaitath - Devi is the sole divine energy who is present in the form of women in the entire universe” says Durga Sapatashati. Hence when the ladies are happy, the entire universe will be happy. Goddess Baala, who is in the form of young girl, gives strength and Her presence is specially invoked in Kanyakas. Kanyakas are then considered as the manifestation of the natural force of creation in the universe.
MAATHAA AND PITHAA Puja

SATURDAY, August 3, 2019 from 12:00 noon to 12:30 pm – Reporting time 11 am

Pujas are performed TO the parent/parents BY their daughters and sons. Our Sanathana Dharma says — ‘Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava’ — instructing ‘us to look upon our parents as God’. Sons and daughters perform puja to their parent/parents and go around them and do the namaskaram as Lord Ganesha did to Parvathi and Parameswara.

SSVT requests children and parent(s) to register their children for Maatha and Pitha Puja to register using the following link: https://ssvt.org/2019SCYMathaandPithaPuja.asp. The mother and the girls over 10 can also be registered for performing Lalitha Sahasranama Archana.

SUVASINI Puja

Married women of childbearing age

SUNDAY, August 4, 2019 from 11 am to 12 noon – Reporting time 10 am.

‘vas’ – is to stay or reside, like we call the cloth that stays on our body as vastram. Suvasini is one in whom “the presence of the divine mother’s energy is higher”. As young girls grow into young women, they get the strength (Shakti) to bear child and so the Divine Mother is worshipped in each and every woman who are blessed potentially to be a mother. This is important as only because of mothers, each species gets a new life in this world. So, to express our gratitude for this source of energy, we offer this special prayer to the maathru bhava — the motherhood in the form of Suvasini.

SSVT requests the married women in child bearing age and would like to be seated for Suvasni puja to register using the following link: https://ssvt.org/2019SCYSuvasiniPuja.asp. These women can also be registered for performing Lalitha Sahasranama Archana.

LALITA SAHASRANAMA Puja

by Sahasra (1000) women and girls aged 10 or more

SUNDAY, August 4, 2019 from 3:30 PM to 5:30 pm. Reporting time 2:30 pm

When 1000 women get together at one place and do puja the whole universe is energized as such a gathering facilitates greater manifestation of Devi’s presence. Satham, Sahasram refer to large numbers and in such a gathering, thousand is just a term suggesting ‘many’. We invoke the divine sakthi by chanting the name “Om Devyai Namaha”. When puja is performed to these blessed women they all become Suvasinis (the divine ones manifesting the presence of Devi and thus the puja is actually performed to the Divine Mother which makes her more happy [Lalita sahasranama calls Devi as Suvasini archana preeta]. This auspicious prayer enhances the qualities of women by which the family is blessed with peace and happiness and positively influencing the other members of the family.

SSVT requests women and girls aged 10 and above to register for performing Lalitha Sahasranama Archana using the following link: https://ssvt.org/2019SCYSahasranamaPuja.asp.

DAMPATHY Puja

Married couple

SATURDAY, August 10, 2019 from 11 am to 12 noon – reporting time 10 am

In Sanathana Dharma, Dhampathy, a couple, are looked upon as Divine Couple namely, Saraswathi and Brahma, Lakshmi and Narayana, and Parvathi and Parameswara. Mahakavi Kalidasa has expressed “vāgarthāviva saṁprktau vāgarthapratipattaye / jagataḥ pitarau vande pārvatīparameśvarau” (I adore the Parents of Universe, pArvati - Parameshvara, who are indissolubly cleaved together like sound and sense, sentence and meaning has to be together). This strongly suggests that only when husband and wife are being one, harmony in life & family peace can be obtained and maintained. Children see only their parents and learn. We worship the Divine Couple — Ishwara and His Devi — as dhampathies who have lived a full span of life together to get their blessings particularly to have a long happy married life.

SSVT requests the dhamapthies who would like to be seated for Dhampathy puja to register using the following link: https://ssvt.org/2019SCYDampathyPuja.asp. These women can also be registered for performing Lalitha Sahasranama Archana.

From Sunday July 28th onwards Sri Shanmukha Sivachariar, along with other learned Acharyas from India and other countries will join our Temple Acharyas in celebrating the Final Pujas and Homas to conclude the Sri Sahasra Chandi Mahayagna Mahotsavam.

Please join us with family and friends!!