

**PLEASE NOTE THE SCHEDULES**

Monday Through Thursday: 9 am to 12 noon
and 6 pm to 8 pm
Friday, Weekends & Holidays: 9 am to 8 pm

PASCHIMAVANI

DIRECTIONS

From Freeway 580 in Livermore:
Exit North Vasco Road, left on Scenic Ave,
Left on Arrowhead Avenue

NEWS FROM THE HINDU COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER, LIVERMORE

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.livermoretemple.org>

SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

OM NAMAH SHIVAYA

TELEPHONE (925) 449-6255 FAX (925) 455-0404

OM NAMO NARAYANAYA

HCCC CHAIRPERSON'S COLUMN

Dear Devotees:

Welcome to the Vasanta edition of Paschima Vani. HCCC, a non profit organization, continued its deep-rooted democratic traditions, as it underwent a "Change of Guards " with the election of new officers to the Board of Directors (BoD) and members of the Executive Committee (EC). These elections were conducted by the independent Election Committee and the results were announced in February. The new incoming elected EC members are: Madan Arora, Manashi Bagchi, Srinivasa Gopireddy, Kala Iyer, Guruswamy Ramadoss, HK Narayan, Archana Ranganathan, Srinivas Pyda, Anand Gundu, and Srinivasa Reddy Malireddy. The new incoming BOD Members are: Vinay Kallesh, Srinivasa Malladi and Kamala Shankar. Following this, an internal election was held within the BoD to elect a Chairperson, President & Corporate Secretary. In late March the transfer of responsibilities from the old team to the new team was completed.

Our thanks to the scores of outgoing officials (BoD & EC) who put in considerable hours in these positions, working tirelessly, day and night. Thank you, Sridar Poothari, Sreeram Madhabushi, Kathyayini Satya, Suresh Upadhyayula, Bala Mani and Lingagoud Memula .

In early March, HCCC held a Fund Raising drive for various planned capital projects that includes infrastructure development, by organizing a musical concert by renowned Indian Musician Padmashree Hariharan at Hayward. There were dozens and dozens of volunteers both from HCCC and other San Francisco Bay Area non- profit organizations who worked behind the scenes to make this musical program a very well attended and a very successful event. Our thanks to all of you and the volunteers in making this event a great success. Going forward, we plan more of these events, with refinements to the processes based on feedback received.

HCCC awards grants to other non-profit organizations on an ongoing annual basis. These are targeted to organizations that apply to HCCC and are selected for Grant in Aid awards. In a recent awards ceremony, we heard from the representatives of these recipient organizations. We were touched by the needs of some segments of the society around us that need an extra hand or betterment in their day to day life. Most of these recipient organizations came locally from the Livermore area and some from the greater Bay Area.

Some of the recent issues that the new team would be tackling are as follows:

- * The recent hacking of the IT website for the temple. Though considered a minor incursion, we are working hard to thwart these kinds of dastardly attacks in the future.
- * Demographic data indicate that a majority of the Hindu population in the San Francisco Bay Area reside in the South Bay. HCCC is trying to see how best to enhance the religious service needs of these South Bay Hindus.
- * Continue to revitalize the HCCC's infrastructure to meet devotee amenities – in terms of dining areas, offices, parking, etc.
- * Hiring of staff on an ongoing basis in many departments
- * Continue to impart to our Youth the values and teachings of Hinduism and its importance in their lives through Spirituality.
- * Give back to the community in which we exist.

We are thankful to all those devotees who come and patronize this temple and to those who put in their valuable hours as volunteers. After all, this is a non-profit organization that is managed by devotees for the benefit of devotees.

May the Lord guide us in every endeavor that we all undertake.

Krishna Chander (Chairman of the Board) Ben Venktash (President, Executive Committee)

PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

| DATE/DAY | EVENTS | TIME | ACTIVITIES |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 1st Sun | Sri Ramam Navam Panguni Uttiram Poornima | 6:30 PM | Weekend Function Details on page 4 Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana |
| April 4th Wed | Swati | 6:30PM | Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka |
| April 6th Fri | Sankatahara Chathurthi | 6:30PM | Ganesha Abhisheka |
| April 7th Sat | 1st Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 12:00Noon | Swarna Alamkara for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji |
| April 12th Thur | Sravana | 6:30PM | Balaji Sahasranama Archana |
| April 13th Frid | Ekadasi | 6:30PM | Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka |
| April 14th Sat | 2nd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 11:00AM | Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Sevai for Lord Balaji |
| | Ayyappa Pooja | 6:30PM | Ayyappa Abhisheka and Bhajans |
| | Pradosham | 6:30PM 6:30PM | Shiva Abhisheka Panchanga Sravanam in Tamil |
| April 15th Sun | 3rd Sunday of the Month | 11:00AM | Bilwa Dala Archana for Lord Shiva |
| | Vishu & Tamil New Year | 12:30PM | Panchanga Sravanam in Tamil (Weekend Function) |
| | Masa Shivaratri | 6:30PM | 108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Shiva |
| April 19th Thur | Akshya Tritiya | 6:30PM | Chandana Abhisheka for Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy |
| | krittika | 6:30PM | Kartikeya Abhisheka and Archana |
| April 20th Frid | Rohini | 6:30PM | Sri Krishna Pooja |
| April 21st Sat | 3rd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 11:00AM | Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji |
| | Adi Shankara Jayanthi | 6:30PM | Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada Archana |
| April 22nd Sun | Sashti | 9:30AM 10:30AM 10:30AM | Kartikeya Abhisheka Chandana Alamkaram and kartikeya SNA* Chanting Skanda Shasti kavacham for 36 times |
| | Sri Ramanuja Jayanthi | 6:30PM | Sri Ramanuja Satmura |
| April 23rd Mon | Punarvasu | 6:30PM | Sri Rama Abhisheka |
| April 25th Wed | Vasavi Jayanthi | 6:30PM | Sri Kanyaka parameshwari Pooja |
| April 27th Fri | Ekadasi | 6:30PM | Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka |
| April 28th Sat | 4th Saturday of the Month | 12:00Noon | Pushpa Seva for Balaji |
| April 29th Sun | Vasavi Jayanthi | 11:30AM | Vasavi Jayanthi weekend Function in Temple |
| | Pradosham | 6:30PM | Shiva Abhisheka |
| April 30th Mon | Narasimha Jayanthi | 5:00PM 7:00PM 8:30PM | Sri Narasimha Swamy Moola Mantra Homa Sri Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka and SNA* Ekanta Seva |
| May 1st Tue | Poornima | 6:30PM | Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana |
| May 2nd Wed | Swati | 6:30PM | Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka |
| May 5th Sat | 1st Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 12:00Noon | Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji |
| | Samkatahara Chathurthi | 6:30PM | Ganesha Abhisheka |

PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

| DATE/DAY | EVENTS | TIME | ACTIVITIES |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 6th Sun | Meenakshi kalyanam | | Meenakshi kalyanam, Details on page 4 |
| May 9th Wed | Sravana | 6:30PM | Balaji Sahasranama Archana |
| May 12th Sat | 2nd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 10:00AM | Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Sevai for Lord Balaji as per Tirumala Temple Details on page 4 |
| May 14th Mon | Hanuman Jayanthi Pradosham & Masa Shivaratri | 6:30PM | 108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Shiva |
| May 16th Wed | Krittika | 6:30PM | Karthikeya Abhisheka and Archana |
| May 17th Thur | Rohini | 6:30PM | Sri Krishna Pooja |
| May 19th Sat | 3rd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 11:00AM | Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji |
| May 20th Sun | 3rd Sunday of the Month Punarvasu | 11:00AM 6:30PM | Bilwa Dala Archana for Lord Shiva Sri Rama Abhisheka |
| May 21st Mon | Sashti | 6:30PM | Karthikeya Sahasranama Archana |
| May 26th Sat | 4th Saturday of the Month | 12:00Noon | Pushpa seva for Balaji |
| May 27th Sun | Ekadasi | 6:30PM | Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka |
| May 28th Mon | Memorial day Pradosham | Temple Opens from 9:00AM to 8:00PM (Weekend Timings) 6:30PM | Shiva Abhisheka |
| May 29th Tue | Swati | 6:30PM | Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka |
| May 30th Wed | Vaikasi Vishakam | 5:30PM 6:30PM | Shankha Pooja Shankha Abhisheka for Karthikeya Swamy |
| June 2nd Sat | Poornima 1st Saturday of the Month | 6:30PM 11:00AM 12:00Noon | Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji |
| June 4th Mon | Samkatakara Chathurthi | 6:30PM | Ganesha Abhisheka |
| June 5th Tue | Sravana | 6:30PM | Balaji Sahasranama Archana |
| June 9th Sat | 2nd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 11:00AM | Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Sevai for Lord Balaji as per Tirumala Temple |
| June 11th Mon | Ekadasi | 6:30PM | Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka |
| June 12th Tue | Pradosham | 6:30PM | Shiva Abhisheka |
| June 13th Wed | Masa Shivaratri Krittika | 6:30PM 6:30PM | 108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Shiva Karthikeya Abhisheka and Archana |
| June 14th Thur | Rohini | 6:30PM | Sri Krishna Pooja |
| June 16th Sat | 3rd Saturday of the Month | 11:00AM 11:00AM | Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji |
| June 17th Sun | Punarvasu 3rd Sunday of the Month | 6:30PM 11:00AM | Sri Rama Abhisheka Bilwa Dala Archana for Lord Shiva |
| June 20th Wed | Sashti | 6:30PM | Karthikeya Sahasranama Archana |
| June 23rd Sat | 4th Saturday of the Month | 12:00Noon | Pushpa seva for Balaji |
| June 25th Mon | Swathi Ekadasi | 6:30PM 6:30PM | Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka |
| June 27th Wed | Pradosham | 6:30PM | Shiva Abhisheka |
| June 28th Thur | Jyeshtha Abhisheka for Balaji | | Jyeshtha Abhisheka Homa Jyeshtha Abhisheka For Lord Balaji |
| June 29th Fri | Poornima | 6:30PM | Sri Lalita Sahasranama parayana |

Sri Rama Navami Celebrations (Weekend Function)

| DATE/DAY | TIME | EVENTS |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 1st Sun | 8:00AM | Suprabatham for Shiva Balaji & Sri Rama |
| | 8:30AM | Abhisheka for Shiva, Ganesha, Karthikeya and Anjaneya |
| | 10:00AM | Sita- Rama Edurukolu Utsavam |
| | 11:00AM | Sita Rama Kalyanam |
| | 12:00Noon | Sumuhurtam |
| | 1:00PM | Akshataropanam & Asheervachanam |
| | 1:30PM | Sri Rama Sankeertanam |
| | 3:00PM | Sri Rama Pattabhishekam |
| | 6:30PM | Hanumantha Vahana Utsavam with Rama Sankeerthana Chakka Bhajana |
| | 7:30PM | Maha Mangalal Arathi |
| 8:00PM | Ekanta Seva | |

MEENAKSHI SUNDARSHWARA THIRUKALYANAM

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------|
| May 6th Sun | 8:00AM | Suprabhatam |
| | 8:30AM | Abhishekam Ganesha/Shiva/Haniman/ Durga |
| | 11:00AM | Shiva Parvathi Utsava Murthy |
| | 12:00NOON | Alankaram |
| | 12:45PM | Seer Giving Ceremony |
| | 1:00PM | Unjal Ceremonies |
| | 3:00PM | Meenakshi Kannika Danam by Balaji |
| | 3:30PM | Homam |
| | 5:30PM | Rishabha Vahana Thiruveedhi Utsavam |
| | 7:00PM | Thiru Kalyana Bhojanam |

CULTURAL UPDATE:

The cultural team conducted the annual Arudara Natyanjali festival keeping in lines with the well known Chidambaram festival. Over 77 students & teachers from various bay area schools participated and made the function a great success.

Following our commitment to involve all bay area art & cultural associations, Shiva-Vishnu temple conducted the first Purandara Dasa Aradhana. Kannada Koota, South India Fine Arts (SIFA) joint hands with HCCC and celebrate songs and music of this Sangeetha Pitama "Sri. Purandara Dasa". Sri B.V. Jagdeesh, Smt. Anu Jagdeesh and family were guest of honor of this occasion.

The cultural team plans to conduct other cultural events like Tamil Composers day, Annamacharya Day, Swathi Thirunal Day, Rabindra Sangeeth and other classical music and dance from the North India through rest of this year.

RELIGIOUS COOK WANTED

HCCC Livermore Temple is currently looking for Religious Hindu Cooks to hire as a part time and full time employers. People who are qualified and interested can contact Dharwar Achar at 925 525 0914 or Prasuna Reddy at 925 698 0501.

PANGUNI UTTHIRAM

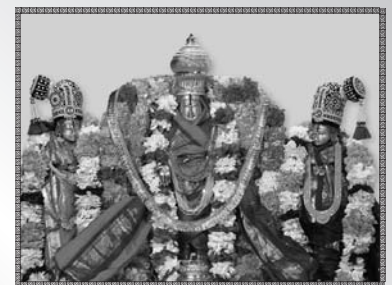
| DATE/DAY | TIME | EVENTS |
|----------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| April 1st Sun | 5:00 PM | Maha Lakshmi Asthanam |
| | 6:00 PM | Gadya traya Parayanam |
| | 7:00 PM | Maha Lakshmi Utsavam |
| | | Sethi Seva |

HANUMAN JAYANTHI

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------|
| May 12th Sat | 8:00AM | Suprabatham |
| | 9:00AM | Balaji Abhisheka |
| | 10:00AM | Tomala Seva |
| | 11:00AM | SundaraKanda Homam |
| | 6:30PM | Hanuman Abhisheka |
| | 7:30PM | Sahasra Nagavalli and Sahasra kadali Phala Archana |
| | 8:30PM | Ekanta Seva |

YOUTH & EDUCATION EVENT UPDATE

Y&E program MathaPitha conducted during Shiva Bhramhothsavam was a grand success, over 150 children and youth participated. Y&E program "Rama Bakthas" during Ramanavami was a great success. Over 80 CHILDREN Sang glory of Sri Rama. During both these programs volunteers decorated the Assembly Hall with a serene back drop which gave a spiritual positive energy.



ARUDRA NATYANJALI



ONE TRUTH, MANY EXPRESSIONS

By Prof. V. Krishnamurthy

The concept of God, gods and goddesses, and Godhead in Hinduism is too complicated to admit of any naïve explanation. Every physical expression amenable to sense perception is nothing but an expression of the Divine. That is, it comes from God. Since everything is God, you cannot ascribe an individual name and form to it. The Upanishads speak of it as 'that' in the neuter gender. This is the God, or more precisely, the Godhead of Hinduism. It is the source of all energy, and of all power, not only in Nature but in all beings, including humans.

QUESTION: But if this is the Ultimate Godhead of Hinduism why do we have practices in Hinduism like image worship, for example, which totally contradict the concept that God is nameless and formless?

Exactly. God is nameless and formless. Here we come to the uniqueness of Hinduism. No name or form will describe Him (Her? It?) fully. Therefore, say the vedas, all names and forms are His. An image is only symbolic of this statement, that all names and forms are His. Hinduism carries this rationale to its logical conclusion and hence it is that we find a plethora of gods and goddesses in the framework of Hinduism. If we mistake them to be distinct divinities, each powerful in its own realm and warring with others for supremacy, as an unwary reader of the Puranas may be led to believe, then we have missed the central teaching of Hinduism: *ekam sat viprA bhavanti* -- There is only one Truth; the wise speak of it in several ways. Since Godhead transcends all human descriptions the concept becomes so sophisticated and complex that the ordinary mortal needs something concrete to cling to. This is where a human form, an image or an idol enters the picture.

QUESTION: But the practice of deity worship through idols and images seems to throw to the winds the majestic concept of Impersonality so emphatically asserted in the Upanishads. How can this be explained?

It must be admitted that all worship is image worship. Primitive man made a scrawl of a head on a rock and called it God. Civilized man shuts his eyes and imagines an anthropomorphic image with arms and legs and calls it God. Both are images. The difference is not one of kind but of degree. Hinduism has the courage to say so and also has the humanity to admit within its fold even those who cannot rise above grossly concrete representations of God. An illiterate commoner and an intellectual scholar require different concepts of God or Divinity to satisfy them. So Hinduism declares that each can worship Divinity in whatever form that suits the competence and stage of spiritual evolution of the worshipper.

QUESTION: Granting that there is a point for image worship, is it still not ridiculous to have thousands of deities supposedly enshrined in the innumerable temples, each claiming the status of the Absolute Supreme?

The doctrine of *Ishta-devataa* (favourite divinity) has now to be mentioned. In Hinduism one may choose the deity that satisfies one's spiritual longing and make that the object of one's adoration, love and worship. Since each name and form of God is a pointer to something that is beyond and since each is at the same time a representative of some aspect or manifestation of the Supreme Reality, it is the entire array of all names and forms of God that will perhaps point to the fullness that is God. But it is advisable for each individual to concentrate on, and have a special place for, one particular manifestation or form of God and this would be his *Ishta-devataa*, favourite deity. Even a person who has realised the Brahman as the Ultimate Reality that pervades everything, does not reject image worship. For him all deities are alike. He is not averse to worshipping or meditating on any particular form of the Absolute.

Every variation of the *Ishta-devataa* worship currently in vogue can be traced to one or other of six traditions – namely, Ganapati or Vighneshvara; Soorya or the Sun-God, along with the other eight *graha-devatas*; Vishnu, along with his various incarnations, the foremost of them being Rama and Krishna; Ambika, the Mother Goddess in Her three manifestations Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati; Siva, mostly in the form of the un-anthropomorphic *linga*; and Subrahmanya, the six-faced deity, also called Murugan in the southern parts of India. In addition the choice of the favourite deity, instead of being an academic exercise, became a choice of one among the thousands of temples all over the country and the deity chosen may very well be the particular deity enshrined in that particular temple, with a specific name and form, though belonging to one of the six streams of divinities mentioned above. Thus arose the concept of each family having a *kula-devataa* (family deity) and this is sacredly revered as a legacy from generation to generation among the male descendents of the same family. It is this variety that gives richness to Hinduism and it is this possibility, of 'to each according to his need and capacity' that brings together under the one banner of Hinduism people with varying practices, attitudes and states of evolution.

QUESTION: When one goes through the various Puranas, why don't we find a single uniform hierarchy of all these deities?

Yes, it is very common in Hindu scriptures to glorify different divinities in different contexts. Each time a divinity is glorified they talk about it as the highest Transcendental Supreme; not only that, the other divinities without exception are said to be subservient to the divinity under consideration. It is difficult for a newcomer to Hindu thought to subscribe to this because he thinks of it as a confused hierarchy. Naturally he may misunderstand the whole presentation and think it is partisan. There is only one hypothesis by which one can clear oneself of this misunderstanding. And that is the hypothesis which Hinduism declares from the mountain tops every time it has an opportunity. There is only one Godhead

whatsoever. There is no hierarchy in the worldly sense of the word. Each manifestation or presentation of that Godhead, as per the context, is to be considered supreme, for the period of that context. It may be Vinayaka who is considered supreme or it may be Subrahmanya in another Purana or Upanishad, and in another, Mother Goddess may be considered the supreme Godhead. Mother Goddess as the Gayatri is the Parashakti, non-different from the absolute Brahman. She is the Umaa of Kenopanishad. She is the Devaatma-shakti of Svetasvatara-upanishad. She is the Paraa-prakriti of Bhagavad-Gita. In another context, say the Ramayana, Lord Rama may be considered as the Absolute Brahman. The right understanding would be to consider all divinities to be so many presentations of the same one Godhead about which the entire gamut of scriptures talk in so many varied ways.

For several centuries there has existed an internal dissension (which is happily disappearing now amidst the modern onslaught of anti-religious attitudes) within Hinduism, particularly among the orthodox wing, about which name or what God is ultimate - Siva or Vishnu. The vedic literature does not distinguish between the worship of Siva or Vishnu. If we carefully go through the rituals which are totally veda-based, the names Vishnu and Siva would occur almost indiscriminately without any connotation of the differences we attribute to the forms denoted by the two names today. Whether it is Siva or Vishnu it refers only to the Supreme God -- this is the intent of the vedas. 'He is Brahma, He is Siva, He is Vishnu, He is Indra, He is the Imperishable, He is the Transcendental Supreme', says the Narayanopanishad part of the Yajur-veda. This teaching of non-difference is important for the proper understanding of Hinduism. So long as you think it is Siva or Vishnu and not the Transcendental Supreme you have not got the purport of the vedas. References to this identity among the literature composed by devotees of Siva are innumerable; but this is not surprising since most of the devotees of Siva also appreciate the non-dualist philosophy. But references to the identity of all names of God are also available in Vaishnava literature; here is a sample. Nammalvar, the Tamil Saint-poet, who is the foremost of the twelve Alvars and whose contribution of 1352 poems to the four thousand prabandhams of Vaishnava canon is considered as the Tamil Veda, writes:

Even if we scrutinise hard and discuss it further, the concepts of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva -- after all the verbal exchanges, are tantamount to only one God of which these three are the names. (Tamil: tiruvAymozhi 1-1-5.).

Thus God is One, in spite of His many names and forms. Many youngsters who have been influenced by the organization of religions in the western world constantly express doubts about the rationale of the multiplicity of gods and goddesses in the Hindu religious ethos. It is only when there is multiplicity, diversity and variety there is life, there is challenge, there is employment. The challenge may be demanding but Hinduism has not only perfected it but also enjoys it as is evident from the endless festivals and colourful celebrations with a convenient mixture of devotion and extravagance, connected with the temples all over India. The many names and forms of God suit the multifarious tastes of people and their different levels of spiritual evolution. Multiplicity is for enjoyment and the one-ness at the back, at the base, at the bottom, is for Peace. While oneness is primary, its manifested plurality is secondary. The one-ness is in spite of the visible external multiplicity. When a Hindu worships the Sun as the Sun-God, what he is worshipping is not the physical star called the sun, but the Absolute supreme in its manifestation as the Sun. A Purana dedicated to Siva may extol Siva as the highest God, the transcendental Supreme and a Vishnu Purana may say the same thing about Vishnu. There is no contradiction meant, implied or slurred over. When Hinduism says that all names and forms are those of God it means it.

All religions talk of the Transcendence of God Almighty. Hinduism adds to this the important factor of Immanence to that God Almighty. This is another of the most distinguishing features of Hindu thought. The one message that the Upanishads are never tired of repeating is: Man is essentially divine. Not only man's core essence is divine but the same divinity is immanent in everything in the universe. Thus it is not enough to say God is everywhere. The truth is: God is the only thing everywhere. In other words, what we see, hear, or smell, or touch or taste is all nothing but Divinity. It is this conviction that is the consummation of all spiritual quest.

QUESTION: Does it mean then that good and bad people have both God immanent in them? Should we not postulate some 'degrees' of immanence?

No. God is EQUALLY immanent in every one and everything. But in the case of conscious entities like ourselves, the goodness or badness depends on the quality of the outer covering that is made up, particularly of the mind and its accumulated tendencies, called Vasanas. It is the mind that is the villain of the piece.

In conclusion, since the permanent residence of God is in one's own heart, (Gita 18 – 61) every time a Hindu worships outwardly, he creates an idol or a picture for the God of his choice, or the God that suits the occasion, invokes God in that idol or picture from his heart and worships it in all the external forms he likes. This method of Puja (worship) is recommended to give devotion a concrete focus. Mark that it is God that is worshipped in the form of the idol and not the idol as God. So long as you think it is an idol you have not got it. People who do not believe in God find excuses to find fault with the worship of God through idols and appear to be 'more loyal' than the religious, by propagating the argument that God is formless and so should not be worshipped through idols. God can take any form and so the form of the idol is good enough for us to worship God. It is the Infinite Absolute Brahman, the all-knowing all-permanent Soul of our souls that is invoked into the form of the idol that is before us. 'Him the Sun cannot light, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor lightning, nor what we call fire; through Him all of them shine, and through His expression, everything is expressed' (Mundaka upanishad, II-2-10). This upanishadic passage is one among the many that are recited at Arti time, at the conclusion of a Puja performed in the vedic tradition.

SRI RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATION

March 26th and on April 1st (weekend function)



SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

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PASCHIMAVANTI

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