

# bhakti patra



**HINDU TEMPLE OF TRISTATES**  
390 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605



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**APRIL**

**MATA KI CHOWKI & HANUMAN JAYANTI**

**MAY**

**HANUMAN CHALISA**

**JULY**

**GURU PURNIMA**

**AUGUST**

**JANMASHTAMI/ RAKSHA BANDHAN**

**SEPTEMBER**

**GANESH CHATURTHI**

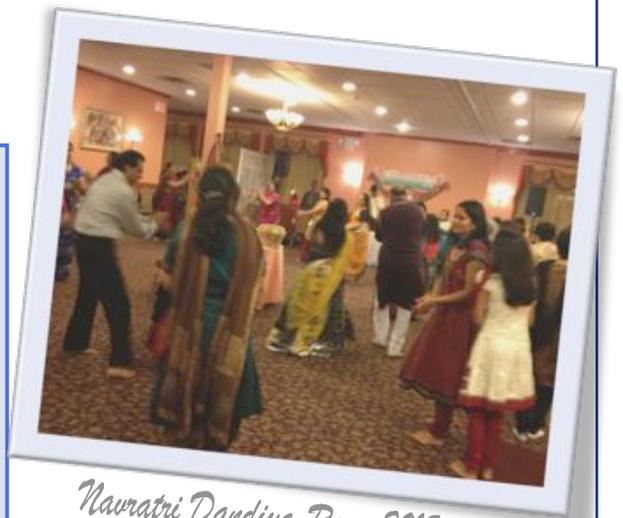
**OCTOBER**

**DUSSERA**

**NOVEMBER**

**DIWALI**

<http://www.hindutempleoftristates.com>



*Navratri Dandiya Raas 2012*



**More information about the Temple inside!**



# dhyan yatra

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda, was born as **Narendra Nath Datta** on January 12, 1863 on the most auspicious day of Hindu calendar, Makarsamkranti. As a young boy, he was very compassionate and fearless. At a very young age itself, he questioned the discrimination towards fellow beings and was fascinated by the wandering ascetics and monks.

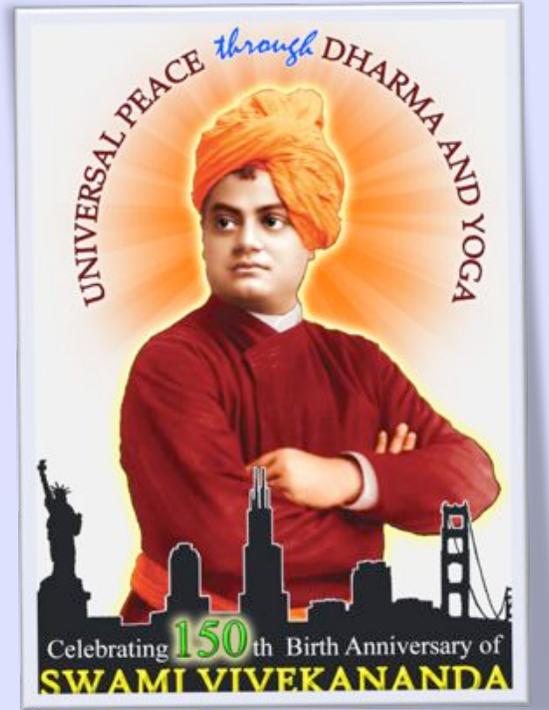
As he was growing up, his wish to experience God became intense and in search for the right person to help him experience God, he became the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. After his meditation at Kanyakumari he had realized that Religion was not the cause of India's downfall. He believed that Hinduism stabilized our culture and preserved the Hindus from total disintegration. No amount of poverty could take away a Hindu's faith in dharma. He envisioned India's rise through Hinduism and hence he took up the mission of teaching the religion of Vedanta, a religion of peace, tolerance and acceptance, to the Western world. During his address in the parliament of World Religions, he politely and profoundly emphasized he represent the most ancient order of monks in the world, Hinduism as the mother of all religions, the antiquity of "Sanatana Dharma" and its unity based on diversity. The papers reported him as the cyclonic monk from India. In 1893 Prof. Wright of Harvard University sponsored Vivekananda to parliament of World Religions by writing a note "To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine!" such was the impression he had given to people he came across. While lecturing in the Western World, in November 1895, he met Margaret Elizabeth Noble, an Irish lady, who would later become Sister Nivedita. Another person, John D Rockefeller, a billionaire, changed his mind and became one of the largest philanthropists in the world after his meeting with Swamiji's in Chicago after the Parliament of Religion.

Swamiji believed that the ancient wisdom must be made accessible to the illiterate and the educated alike. One thing became clear to Swamiji: to carry out his plans for the spread of education and for the uplift of the poor masses, and also of women, an efficient organization of dedicated people was needed. He also felt that no philosophy or religion could be understood if the stomach was empty and the body sick. Hence he founded Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 in Calcutta, the organ for social service with the slogan "Siva Jnane Jiva Sewa"- "serving every being as the full manifestation of God." The ideals of Ramakrishna Mission are based on karma yoga.

Swamiji believed that the resurrection of India's glory could be accomplished with the help of science and technology. The method of science based upon reasoning, experimentation, observation and verification would enable Indians to understand rationally the nature of the physical universe. He was also successful in conveying the people of the West that the sickness and health of India were the concern of the whole world. His high regard for technological innovation inspired Jamsetji Tata to set up a research and educational institution when they had travelled together from Yokohama to Chicago on Vivekananda's first visit to the West in 1893.

The IIS (Indian Institute of Science) was established in 1899. His message to the youth is "arises, awake, stop not until the goal is reached" -

*Contributed by Jayasree Nair*



Answers to Quiz:

1. A 2. B 3. C 4. A 5. B 6. D 7. A 8. B 9. D 10. B

# HINDU SYMBOLS

1. **Om (Aum)** – the most important Hindu symbol, often used as the emblem of Hinduism (see above).
2. **Hands in prayer** – a sign of respect for the sacred, that which is dear to the heart (see above).
3. **Lotus (padma)** – symbol of purity/transcendence. Growing out of the mud, it is beautiful, and though resting on water, it does not touch it.
4. **Conchshell** – used during arati: one of the four symbols of Vishnu. The others are the lotus, club and disc.
5. **Swastika** – an ancient solar sign considered to invoke auspiciousness.
6. **Trident (trishul)** – the symbol of Shiva; often carried by Shaivite *sannyasis* (renunciates).
7. **Kalasha** – coconut circled by mango leaves on a pot. Often used in rituals such as the fire sacrifice.
8. **Cow** – symbol of purity, motherhood and *ahimsa* (non-violence).
9. **Lotus feet (of guru or deity)** – touching the feet of superiors shows an attitude of submission and service.



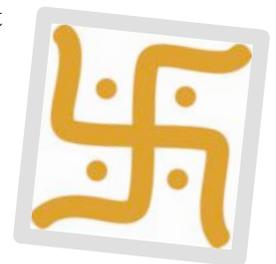
Hinduism is rich in symbolism. Many acts of worship, such as *puja*, are symbolic, a form of visualisation in which worshippers simulate activities normally performed on higher planes of existence. Thus the scope of symbolism is broad and includes physical acts such as offering *pranam* (obeisances) with folded hands. Such physical gestures tend to induce the appropriate mood and awareness within the practitioner. Many symbols are considered auspicious, embodying the notion of inner purity. Sacred emblems are displayed in the home or temple to invoke good fortune. The most popular symbols are listed on the right.



Aum, also written "Om" and called *pranava*, is the most important Hindu symbol. Its prolonged intonation is associated with the primeval sound through which the universe was created. It is thought to contain all things. It consists of three syllables — a-u-m — which are sounded progressively from the throat to the lips. The three sounds are considered to symbolise many items, but perhaps most importantly the three states of consciousness — waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. The entire symbol represents the fourth state, which is the awareness of one's own spiritual identity. Aum is the most important *mula* (root) mantra and is thus chanted at the beginning of many prayers, *mantras*, and rituals.

Second in importance only to the Om, the Swastika, holds a great religious significance for the Hindus. Swastika is not a syllable or a letter, but a pictorial character in the shape of a cross with branches bent at right angles and facing in a clockwise direction. A must for all religious celebrations and festivals, Swastika symbolizes the eternal nature of the Brahman, for it points in all directions, thus representing the omnipresence of the Absolute.

The term 'Swastika' is believed to be a fusion of the two Sanskrit words 'Su' (good) and 'Asati' (to exist), which when combined means 'May Good Prevail'. Historians say Swastika could have represented a real structure and that in ancient times forts were built for defense reasons in a shape closely resembling the Swastika. For its protective power this shape began to be sanctified.



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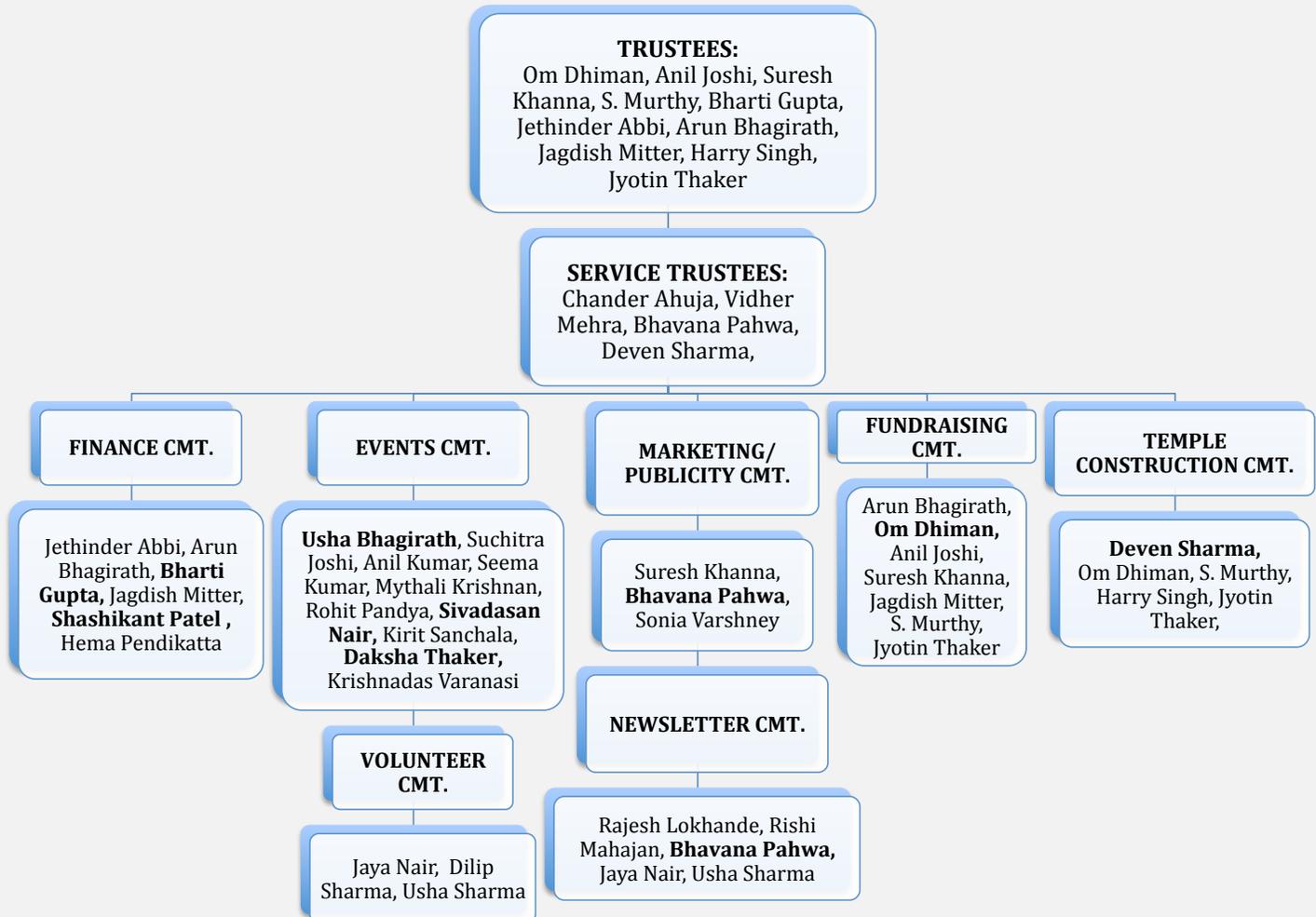


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## HINDU TEMPLE OF TRISTATES ORGANIZATION CHART (Names Listed Alphabetically)



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The Hindu Temple of Tristates is YOUR Temple – we invite you to bring your perspective of Hinduism along with your talents and energy and make this Temple a real symbol of our richly diverse community.

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- \*CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
- \*EVENT PLANNING
- \*NEWSLETTER ARTICLES
- \*PUBLICITY/ PR
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE:  
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# HINDU TEMPLE OF TRISTATES

390 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605



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The Hindu Temple of Tristates thanks you for your support and generosity.

Mail this form with your check to: Hindu Temple of Tristates 77 Knollwood Rd, White Plains, NY 10607

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<http://www.hindutempleoftristates.com>

Editorial Cmt.: Dr. Bhavana Pahwa, Mr. Sivadasan Nair, Dr. Jaya Nair, Ms. Usha Sharma



# A MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES

## Hindu Temple Construction Plan Update

Construction of a Hindu temple in White Plains NY is planned to begin in September 2013. A two-acre, picturesque, site on route 127 also called North Street, in White Plains has been purchased.

Temple management committee has engaged the firm of Benowitz Shah Architects to plan the temple site, design the building and finally help in its construction. Since taking over the project, architect Ms. Dipti Shah, R.A., AIA has aggressively moved forward to finalize the temple site plan with the help of the Mr. Deven Sharma R.A. AIA and the firm of Hudson Engineering & Consulting, PC. The site plan includes building layout, parking plan, and storm water drainage system.

Main temple building design plan includes a two-storey structure of total area of approximately 13,000 sq feet, with each floor approximately 6,500 sq feet. Main entrance to the temple will be at first floor, which will be at ground level. Ground floor will include an elevator and a staircase to go to the upper temple floor. It will also include a kitchen, large dining room or class room, wash room, room for shoes, rest rooms, utility room, pundits room, a bathroom, etc. Upper floor will have the main temple with deities and large hall for prayers and gatherings. It will have high ceilings, floor through windows, skylights, and traditional temple décor.

A separate building for a Hindu community center is in consideration behind the temple after the temple building is constructed and is in use.

These plans were informally presented to the Commissioner of Department of Public Works for the City of White Plains. The commissioner has agreed to the site plan proposed and has given the go ahead to formally present the plans to the City Mayor's Office. The architects hope to get the site plans fully approved by the City by May/June 2013. A more detailed building construction plan is being prepared and will be presented to the City in the summer 2013 for approval.

We expect to receive the final work permit from the Dept of Buildings in July/August, at which time construction of Temple will begin.

*Sincerely*

*Trustees*

*Hindu Temple of Tristates*

Trustees	
Dr. Om Dhiman (Ph: 914-490-2284)	Dr. Anil Joshi (Ph: 914-289-7425)
Dr. Suresh Khanna (Ph: 914-672-0054)	Dr. S.Murthy (Ph: 914-907-2329)
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Mr. Vidher Mehra	Ms. Bhavana Pahwa

Hindu Temple of Tri-State Inc. Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2012		
	Dec 31, 12	Dec 31, 11
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Checking/Savings</b>		
10060 · Chase - Saving	0.00	238.25
10100 · HSBC - 7817	194,155.72	63,824.29
10200 · HSBC - 3570	3,663.87	3,663.87
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>197,819.59</b>	<b>67,726.41</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>197,819.59</b>	<b>67,726.41</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
15700 · Land - Operating	816,901.41	813,209.78
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>816,901.41</b>	<b>813,209.78</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,014,721.00</b>	<b>880,936.19</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
<b>Equity</b>		
32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	880,936.19	257,509.11
Net Income	133,784.81	623,427.08
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>1,014,721.00</b>	<b>880,936.19</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>1,014,721.00</b>	<b>880,936.19</b>

# baal patra



## FACTS ABOUT HINDU PRACTICES

<http://kids.baps.org/thingstoknow/hinduism/index.htm>

### DO YOU KNOW ...

#### WHY WE DO AARATI

Towards the end of every ritualistic pooja or bhajan of the Lord or to welcome an honored guest or saint, we perform the aarati. We have seen and participated in this ritual from our childhood. Let us find out why we do the aarati?

Having worshipped the Lord - performing abhisheka, decorating the image and offering fruits and delicacies, we see the beauty of the Lord in all His glory. Our minds are focused on each limb of the Lord as the lamp lights it up. It is akin to silent open-eyed meditation on His beauty. The singing, clapping, ringing of the bell etc. denote the joy and auspiciousness, which accompanies the vision of the Lord.

Aarati is often performed with camphor. This holds a spiritual significance. Camphor when lit, burns itself out completely without leaving a trace. It represents our inherent tendencies (*vaasanas*). When lit by the fire of knowledge which illumines the Lord (Truth), our *vaasanas* thereafter burn themselves out completely, not leaving a trace of ego which creates in us a sense of individuality that keeps us separate from the Lord. Also while camphor burns to reveal the glory of Lord, it emits a pleasant perfume even while it sacrifices itself. In our spiritual progress, even as we serve the guru and society, we should willingly sacrifice ourselves and all we have, to spread the "perfume" of love to all. We often wait a long while to see the illumined Lord but when the aarati is actually performed, our eyes close automatically as if to look within. This is to signify that each of us is a temple of the Lord.

Just as the priest reveals the form of the Lord clearly with the *aarati* flame, so too the guru reveals to us the divinity within each of us with the help of the "flame" of knowledge (or the light of spiritual knowledge). At the end of the *aarati*, we place our hands over the flame and then touch our eyes and the top of the head. It means - may the light that illuminated the Lord light up my vision; may my vision be divine and my thoughts noble and beautiful.

The philosophical meaning of *aarati* extends further. The sun, moon, stars, lightning and fire are the natural sources of light. The Lord is the source of this wonderous phenomenon of the universe. It is due to Him alone that all else exist and shine. As we light up the Lord with the flame of the *aarati*, we turn our attention to the very source of all light, which symbolizes knowledge and life. Also the sun is the presiding deity of the intellect, the moon, that of the mind, and fire, that of speech. The Lord is the supreme consciousness that illuminates all of them. Without Him, the intellect cannot think, nor can the mind feel nor the tongue speaks. The Lord is beyond the mind, intellect and speech. How can this finite equipment illuminate the Lord? Therefore, as we perform the aarati we *chant*;

***Na tatra suryo bhaati na chandra taarakam  
Nemaa vidyuto bhaanti kutoyamagnib  
Tameva bhaantam anubhaati sarvam  
Tasya bhasa sarvam idam vibhaati***

*He is there where the sun does not shine, Nor the moon, stars and lightning. Then what to talk of this small flame (in my hand), Everything (in the universe) shines only after the Lord, and by His light alone are we all illumined.*



## FACTS ABOUT HINDU PRACTICES CONTD...

### DO YOU KNOW ...

### Why we light a lamp?

In almost every Indian home a lamp is lit daily before the altar of the Lord. In some houses it is lit at dawn, in some, twice a day – at dawn and dusk – and in a few it is maintained continuously (akhanda deepa). All auspicious functions commence with the lighting of the lamp, which is often maintained right through the occasion.

Light symbolizes knowledge, and darkness, ignorance. The Lord is the "Knowledge Principle" (chaitanya) who is the source, the enlivener and the illuminator of all knowledge. Hence light is worshiped as the Lord himself.

Knowledge removes ignorance just as light removes darkness. Also knowledge is a lasting inner wealth by which all outer achievement can be accomplished. Hence we light the lamp to bow down to knowledge as the greatest of all forms of wealth

Why not light a bulb or tube light? That too would remove darkness. But the traditional oil lamp has a further spiritual significance. The oil or ghee in the lamp symbolizes our *vaasanas* or negative tendencies and the wick, the ego. When lit by spiritual knowledge, the *vaasanas* get slowly exhausted and the ego too finally perishes. The flame of a lamp always burns upwards. Similarly we should acquire such knowledge as to take us towards higher ideals.

**Whilst lighting the lamp we thus pray:**

Deepajyothi parabrahma, Deepa sarva tamopahaha  
Deepena saadhyate saram, Sandhyaa deepo namostutea

*I prostrate to the dawn/dusk lamp; whose light is the Knowledge Principle (the Supreme Lord), which removes the darkness of ignorance and by which all can be achieved in life.*

### Why do we do Pradakshina (circumambulate)?

We cannot draw a circle without a center point. The Lord is the center, source and essence of our lives. Recognizing Him as the focal point in our lives, we go about doing our daily chores. This is the significance of *pradakshina*.

Also every point on the circumference of a circle is equidistant from the center. This means that wherever or whoever we may be, we are equally close to the Lord. His grace flows towards us without partiality.

#### **Why is pradakshina done only in a clockwise manner?**

The reason is not, as a person said, to avoid a traffic jam! As we do *pradakshina*, the Lord is always on our right. In India the right side symbolizes auspiciousness. So as we circumambulate the sanctum sanctorum we remind ourselves to lead an auspicious life of righteousness, with the Lord who is the indispensable source of help and strength, as our guide – the "right hand".

Indian scriptures enjoin – *matrudevo bhava, pitrudevo bhava, acharyadevo bhava*. May you consider your parents and teachers as you would the Lord. With this in mind we also do pradakshina around our parents and divine personages.

After the completion of traditional worship (pooja), we customarily do pradakshina around ourselves. In this way we recognize and remember the supreme divinity within us, which alone is idolized in the form of the Lord that we worship outside.



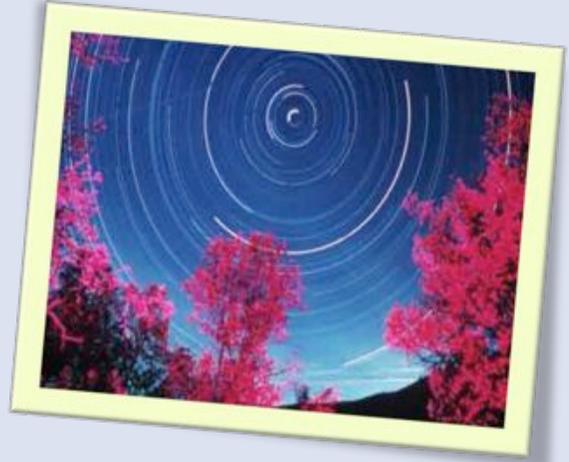
## FACTS ABOUT HINDU PRACTICES CONTD...

### DO YOU KNOW ...

#### Number of Pradakshinas:

For each deity, the minimum number of Pradakshinas to be done is specified.

1. Ganesh: 1
2. Shiva: 2
3. Vishnu: 3
4. Ayyappa: 4
5. Subrahmanya (Karthikeya): 5
6. Durga: 6
7. Peepal Tree: 7



Doing Pradakshina 21 times to any deity is sanctified.

#### Mantra when doing Pradakshina:

"Yaani kaani cha paapaani Janmaantara krtaani cha Taani taani  
vinashyanti Pradakshina pade pade."

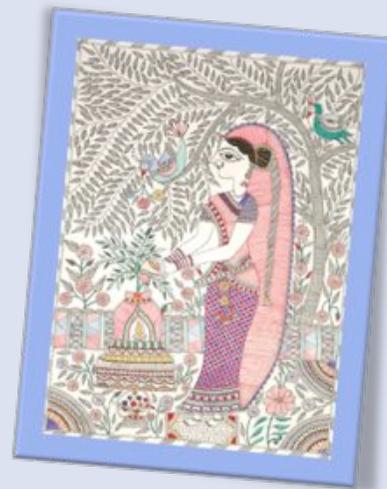
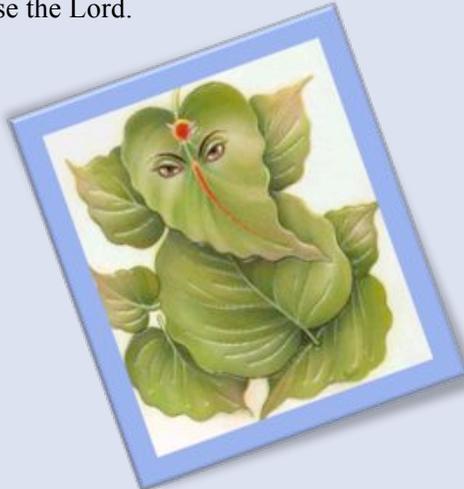
#### Meaning:

All the sins committed by an individual from innumerable past births are destroyed by each step taken whilst doing pradakshina.

#### Why do we regard trees and plants as sacred?

The Lord, the life in us, pervades all living beings, be they plants or animals. Hence, they are all regarded as sacred. Human life on earth depends on plants and trees. They give us the vital factors that make life possible on earth: food, oxygen, clothing, shelter, medicines etc.

Hence, in India, we are taught to regard trees and plants as sacred. Indians scriptures tell us to plant ten trees if, for any reason, we have to cut one. We are advised to use parts of trees and plants only as much as is needed for food, fuel, shelter etc. we are also urged to apologies to a plant or tree before cutting it to avoid incurring a specific sin named soona trees and plants like tulasi, peepal etc., which have tremendous beneficial qualities, are worshipped till today. It is believed that divine beings manifest as trees and plants, and many people worship them to fulfill their desires or to please the Lord.





## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA QUIZ

Choose answers to all the questions and check your answers with the correct ones below. Good luck!

1. In which city Swami Vivekananda was born?  
 OA. Calcutta     OB. Delhi     OC. Mumbai     OD. Chennai
2. A street in USA has been named after swami Vivekananda "honorary Swami Vivekananda way", name the city?  
 OA. Los angeles     OB. Chicago     OC. New York     OD. London
3. Who was Swami Vivekananda's Guru?  
 OA. Sarada Devi     OB. Bhuvanewari Devi     OC. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa  
 OD. Mahatma Gandhi
4. Swami Vivekananda was born on this auspicious day of Hindu calendar:  
 OA. Makar Samkranti     OB. Vijaya Dasami     OC. Ugadi     OD. Holi
5. Swami Vivekananda meditated at this place for 2 days:  
 OA. Prayag     OB. Kanyakumari     OC. Varanasi     OD. Dakshineswar
6. When did Swamiji addressed the Parliament of World Religions:  
 OA. Jan 12,1863     OB. July 4, 1903     OC. Aug 15, 1947     OD. Sept 11, 1893.
7. "To ask for your credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine in the heavens."  
 Who wrote this about Swamiji?  
 OA. Prof. John Henry Wright     OB. Paul Deussen     OC. Margaret Elizabeth Noble  
 OD. Max Müller
8. In November 1895, Swamiji met Margaret Elizabeth Noble, an Irish lady, who later became Swamiji's closest disciples:  
 OA. Annie Besant     OB. Sister Nivedita     OC. Sarada Devi     OD. Sister Christine
9. Swamiji influenced this person to establish Indian Institute of Science:  
 OA. H J Bhabha     OB. C.V Raman     OC. JC Bose     OD. Jamsetji Tata
10. Swamiji's birthday is observed as national \_\_\_\_\_ day in India:  
 OA. Monk     OB. Youth     OC. Spiritual     OD. Children's



# HINDU TEMPLE OF TRISTATES

390 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605



ALL OF US TOGETHER  
IN A PLACE OF OUR  
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**CONSTRUCTION  
STARTING 2013**

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