



*Sri:mathe: Ra:ma:nuja:ya Namaha*

*Sri:man Na:ra:yana is quite the ' No-rest ' Being, because, despite our constantly finding creative ways to ignore or avoid Him, the Lord is relentless in finding all the more creative ways to bring His Compassion and Grace to us. One such way is to send the de:vathas to roam the earth to bestow His Blessings upon everything and everyone. Our sa:sthras teach us that this sacred time occurs during the month of November, which in the Ve:dic calendar is called Ka:rthi:ka Ma:sam.*

*Our cover this month depicts the mood of this month, in which the Lord awakens from His Yogic Sleep and thinks about a myriad of ways to bring His Grace to this world. The de:vathas are seen roaming all about, and the people, in accordance with the dicatates of sa:sthra, light lamps to guide the de:vathas on their path.*

*In scenes akin to Christmas here in the USA, temples and homes throughout India are decorated every evening with small oil lamps to show the people's support and cooperation with the de:vathas such that all the world can be rejuvenated and renewed with the Lord's Grace.*

*It is said that during this time Nature itself is recharged through the sway of the Lord's Blessings, so it becomes a benefit for the people to spend time in natural settings. So, vana-bho:janams, picnic-like festivals and family outdoor gatherings are common occurences during this pleasant month, and food is cooked in the open air using firewood such that it too can be recharged with the Lord's Compassionate Grace. Along with all of the various forms of plant life, the Sami tree and the Aswattha tree are particularly worshipped this month, as these are recognized to be the very incarnation of*



*Goddess Lakshmi and Her Consort Na:ra:yana, respectively.*

*It is little wonder, then, that this amazing month also marks the holy appearance days of a number of great souls. In addition to those discussed in this month's issue, the ascent of the star Kriththika during this month marks the appearance day of the great Thirumangai A:lwa:r. His birth star falls on 7.12.2003.*

*Sri Thirumangai A:lwa:r started out life as a rich and powerful chieftain, until his love for the devout Kumudavalli made him dedicate himself to feeding numbers of devotees every day for one year. Running out of money to pursue this promise, and also finding the need to restore the ancient temple at Srirangam, Thirumangai, as he was known, took to the life of a robber, engaging in adventurous raids on rich people in much the same way and notoriety as Robin Hood. It would be the Lord's Own intervention in redeeming him of this life that would transform Thirumangai Mannan into Thirumangai A:lwa:r. For many devotees, the devotional outpourings of this great A:lwa:r are an inspiration, as, they are filled with His wonder as how the Lord bestowed His Grace on him, despite all of his human weaknesses.*

*With the guidance of our HH Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji, who is a beacon light to all the world, let us seek to light the lamps of Love, Goodness and Faith in our own hearts such that we too can become simple lamps to the de:vathas, our good actions and well-wishing approach towards our fellow living beings being the guide and encouragement for Sriman Na:ra:yana's Blessings to be bestowed upon the entire world.*

*Jai Srimannarayana !*