

The Chatti Ceremony.



This very important ceremony is performed to appease Mother Shashti. Many people feel that this is an unnecessary prayer but I beg to differ.

Shashti Devi is the sixth expansion of Mother Durga which gives Mata her name Shashti, which means sixth. Mother Shashti is also one of the sixteen matrikas (little mother). Being a Matri shakti (The force of the Divine Mother), Mata protects all children with a mother's affectionate heart. Mata is the bestower of children and grandchildren in all three worlds and the godmother of all. Mata remains near every child in the form of an aged yogini. Her worship is prevalent everywhere and is conducted throughout the twelve months of the year. After the birth of a child Mata's auspicious worship is performed on the sixth day. The munis also bow down to Mata with reverence and visit Mata's temples regularly.

The Divine Mother, in her form as Shashti Devi, is worshipped and glorified and her blessings are invoked so that the child will follow a spiritual path and be blessed with divine qualities, good health, good character and freedom from disease. Also Shashti Devi is responsible for the development of the child. Women worship Shashti Devi to receive offspring or for the well-being of their children.

Chatti means 6th, thus this prayer is observed on the 6th day from the child's birth-day. Why pray to Mother Shashti or Mother Earth??? Well Mata is the ruler/presiding deity of this planet thus she is know by many names like Bhudevi, Dharti-devi, Bhumi-devi and so forth. She is no ordinary personality. She is the Wife of Lord Varaha Himself. Who is Lord Varaha??? Well He is the boar incarnation of Lord Krsna, thus non-different from Lord Krsna. Thus Mother Earth or Bhudevi is actually Lakshmi-devi and thus Srimati Radharani. Let me give an example. If I visit your home and I enter your home without permission,

will you be happy with that? Well I hope not. You will only allow me to enter your home if you know me. In the same way without asking permission from Mother Earth (this is her domain, her place) for any prayer how can that prayer be accepted? You must receive her blessings and permission to perform any prayer. Otherwise that prayer would not yield the desired results.

By performing the Chatti ceremony one is acknowledging to Shashti Devi/Mother Earth of Her elevated position and seeking Her blessings for the new born, that this child will grow up to be a Putra/Putri (a spiritual child) with divine qualities.

What happens when a baby is born and what are the procedures with regards to prayers etc??? One should remember that Lord Vishnu prayers are never stopped. So yes the family can still perform their prayers. Only the mother cannot perform any puja for a period of 10 days. But she need not worry as whatever her husband does half of his spiritual merits goes to her. But remember excluding the mother, the father and the family still continue with the daily prayers like lighting of the lamp, offering Surya Jal etc. This is verified by the Lord himself in the Garuda Purana, Preta Kanda, Chapter 29 verses 9, 11& 12 "In impurity accruing from birth, the rules are less strict. The mother is purified after 10 days and the father just after taking a bath. In birth the relatives incur no impurity. Impurity attaches to parents alone. Primarily, it is the mother who becomes impure. The Father is purified by the touch of water alone. In birth or death O' Garuda, impurity lasts only for 10 days."

According to the Yajnavalkya Smriti, the mother is untouchable for ten days on the birth of a child, but the father and family when they take a bath are cleansed.

I have heard from many that many traditional rites are followed but are not supported by our shastras... Please my fellow Hindus if a person can't prove via shastras what he/she is saying then what is said should humbly be discarded.

I have also heard from many that they seen many Hindu families offer meat in this auspicious prayers... This is a misconception and thus incorrect and not followed... All the preparations for the Puja must be strictly vegetarian, because this contributes positively to the physical, emotional, hygienic and clean conditions to be offered as Prasad. The environment for the newly born child must be totally satwic (clean) and free from any un-satwic elements like alcohol and all non-vegetarian food. We are inviting our most honoured Mother to the prayers hence utmost cleanliness and respect should be observed...

Mother Shashti's Puja is generally held on the sixth (6th) day after birth, preferably later after lunch after 15h00 or in the evening approximately 18h00...

The Puja Proper: -

Print the picture of Mata at the beginning of this article and laminate/frame it...

At the place of the prayer, place a Lord Ganesh murti and the picture above of Mother Shashti. Firstly offer an agarbatti, lamp or flower (or all three) to Shree Ganeshji (turn

seven times clockwise around the murti), and pray to Shree Ganeshji to remove all obstacles in the path of this most auspicious prayer.

Shashti Devi is now offered worship. Pray to the picture of Mother Shashti asking Mata to please accept your prayers.

Now chant the following: -

1) Om swagatam su swagatam – Om Shashti devi yai namah aavaahayaamee sthapayamee... (Swagatam means O Mother Shashti I welcome you.)

Then offer flower or flower petals.

2) Om idam pushpam – Om Shashti devi yai namah. (Pushpam = flowers)

Then offer incense

3) Om tato dhoopam aghraa-payaami – Om Shashti devi yai namah. (Dhoopam =incense)

Then offer lamp

4) Om prat-yaksha deepam darshayaami – Om Shashti devi yai namah. (Deepam = lamp)

You offer the above items by turning the items seven times around the picture.

5) Om naivedyam samar-payaami – Om Shashti devi yai namah

Offer cut fruit or sweets like gulab jamum, jalebi, and so forth)

(Naivedyam = food)

You can also place a small lota (cup/chumbu) of milk next to the picture of Ma Shashti...

6) Offer prayers for forgiveness

Om yaani kaani cha paa-paani janmaan-tara kritaa-nee cha, taani sar-vaani vinash-yanti pra-dak-shinaa pade pade //

Then offer your personal prayers to Mother Shashti. Pray to Mata for the child's good health, good character and freedom from disease and Ma being so merciful will grant what you desire.

NEXT... Fill sand in a wide dish. Smoothen and make a well in the middle. If possible sprinkle some Gobar (Cow-dung) on the sand. Place 9 betel leaves around the well. Then mother sits down with baby on the lap. The mother fills the centre with milk and then she dots the Betel leaves with Sindoor. Thereafter she places a little of the satwic prepared food in the center of the thari (plate). Everyone should pray to Mother Shashti/ Earth to protect the child and request Mata for good health, good character and freedom from disease for the newborn. SEE NEXT PAGE FOR THE CHATTI SET ON A TRAY.

The following is traditional and if you want to perform this its left to you I am just covering all my angles for this prayer... The Mother then covers baby with blanket

making sure the baby's eyes are not exposed. The bua (aunt) burns a lamp three times and the mother has to put off the lamp each time with her archara. The fourth time the lamp is burnt it is left on. (Now uncover the baby) A spoon is placed over it to make kajal. The kajal is then applied on the mother and child eyes...



After this the mother has to eat a little food with her baby on the lap. Then the mother hands over her baby to a family member while she completes eating her food.

Chatti puja prayer list

Kindly see the attached for the Puja

Print and laminate the picture of Mother Shasti - attached.

Lord Ganesh murti or picture.

3 agarbatti sticks

one clay lamp with ghee and wick in it

Flowers

cut fruits or sweets like gulab jamun or jalebi.

Small lota of milk

Fill sand in a wide flatish tray. Smoothen and make a well in the middle. Place 9 betel leaves (points of the betel leaves facing the middle of the well) around the well.

Small packet red sindhur.

Another clay lamp with a block of camphor

one teaspoon

One box matches.

All the veg foods that is cooked put into little containers on a tray

Final Question: - Can one perform the Chatti Puja on Ekadashi?

Yes you can as long as Non-grain foods are prepared... You should remember that Mother Shashti/ Mother Dharti also fasts on this day from grains... and the prashad offered to the guests has to be also Ekadashi prashad...

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