

Appendix B - Radhakrishna-Aai

Shirdi Che Sai Baba - Dr. Keshav Bhagwant Gavankar

APPENDIX-B

RADHAKRISHNA-AAI

Sunderabai Kshirsagar first came Shirdi from Pandharpur with Baba's devotee Nanasaheb Chandorkar. She became devout follower Baba. surrendered to Him with and heart. She would continuously chant God's name, 'Radha-Krishna' ceaselessly much so, that started knowing by the name 'RadhaKrishna-Aai' (Aai means Mother). They almost forgot her real and inspired others to so.

She was a young widow. She would never show her face to Baba. She never climbed the stairs of Dwarkamai. Baba would sleep in the Chawadi alternate days. Only on those days she would go Dwarkamai to place a lighted rock-oil lamp (Kandil) on the stairs and return. She used to wear only white saris, which Baba used to provide her. He also used to send some eatables (Part alms and Naivedyam received) to her at the hand of Madhavrao Deshpande. Baba had told him (Madhavrao) that she was there with Him in some previous birth.

Under RadhaKrishna-Aai's management, offering Aarti to Baba was started as a regular ritual. Aarti would be offered three times a day. 'Kakad-Aarati' dawn, afternoon Aarti and Shejarati at night. At the time of Aarti, devotees would hold umbrella, fan and other such things in honour Baba. (Chhatra, Chamar, Chavari, etc,) RadhaKrishna-Aai did immense efforts change the face and ambience of Shirdi. Shirdi village transformed into Shirdi-Sansthan. Fakir-like humble appearance Shirdi was changed and it shone with a new splendour. She got the Chawadi decorated with glass candleholders, chandeliers, mirrors and photo frames. When Baba would be on His way Chawadi, there would be music, a horse (it was named Shamsundar) and a palanquin. The devotees would accompany Baba singing Bhajans (devotional songs). She used to send rolled 'Betel-leaves' (Govind-Vida) everyday to Baba. Baba would eat smashed Vida sent by her. She believed that Baba was Krishna. So she started 'Gokul-Ashtami' (Birthday of God Krishna) Festival in Shirdi. She was a Krishna devotee. She had a small idol of Krishna. It made up some metal. She used to carry it with her all the time. She would not leave it even for a second. She might be Radha in her previous birth. Devotees of Baba used to serve her too. She was young in age, but all would respect her and act as per her wish and instruction.

Before Radhakrishna-Aai came to Shirdi, Kondaji Lalbhai Shaikh, a Muslim, used to provide betel-leaves to Baba. Since she came, she would look after Baba's needs. She would do all sorts of work. Some are given below:

She would clean the surroundings of Dwarkamai and sweep all the roads, which Baba used.

She would bring butter, cashew, almonds, laddu, roti, milk and yogurt etc. for Baba as breakfast.

She would keep hot water ready for Him to clean the teeth in the morning.

For lunch, she would send rawa-halwa, Payasam (Khir) and Pakodas together with subji, chatni, etc. in silver plates.

In the evening again she would send different eatables and drinking water in silver jug with spout (Zari).

She brought all silver utensils needed for Baba's worship, big bowl (Ghangal) for His bath and a few other things like glasses trays, perfume bottles and rose-water sprinklers.

She brought soft mattresses, pillows etc for Baba to sit and sleep on.

Baba used to go to Chawadi on alternate days. She started a custom of daily procession from Dwarkamai to Chawadi. A palanquin, a chariot (on every Thursday) were included in the procession by her suggestion.

With the help of PurandareKaka, she got some arches set on the way by which Baba would pass. The arches were then covered with some creeper plants as decoration and making shade on the way.

She adorned Dwarkamai with beautiful curtains.

She designated some people to accompany the procession as Bhaladar and Chopdar. She decided and made the uniforms for them. She bought silver sticks to be held by them while walking by the side of Baba.

She arranged, petromax lamps which were necessary for the procession.

In these and many other ways RadhaKrishna-Aai added to the splendour of Baba. With the help of Baba's close devotees she implemented the process of making Shirdi a 'Sansthan'. Her stay in Shirdi was not more than nine years or so. But in that short span of time she brought about many good changes in Shirdi. Her life is nothing less than the 'Radha-Vilas' for Lord Krishna.

Quick links to read more about Radhakrishna Maai

The Early Life Of RadhaKrishna Maai

RadhaKrishna Maai's Advent In Shirdi

Services of RadhaKrishna Maai In Shirdi

Yogic Powers of RadhaKrishna Maai

Demise Of RadhaKrishna Maai

END OF APPENDIX B

© Author – Dr. Keshav Bhagwant Gavankar (Annasahib Gavankar) – Explicit Rights To Publish To Shirdi Sai Baba Books.com (Member of SaiYugNetwork.com)

Source: <https://shirdisaibababooks.com/shirdi-che-sai-baba-in-english/>