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Sanathana Sarathi

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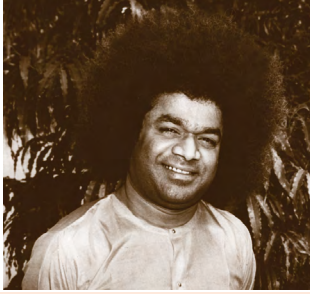
Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsavam



Sanathana Sarathi

Devoted to the Moral and Spiritual Uplift of Humanity through

SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA



"Students today waste a lot of money. They should realise that their parents undergo a lot of hardship to earn money. They toil hard and sometimes even forego their food to save some money in order to send it to you."

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PREMASWARUPULARA!

MAN ALWAYS WANTS TO BE LOVED; NO ONE EVER wants to be hated because love is the real nature of man, not hatred. We feel blissful when we receive love and feel miserable when we are hated. In our times, God came down on earth in the human form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and showed to man the path of love to enable him to realise his true identity and experience bliss.

Bhagavan declared, "It is to teach mankind the truth of Divine Love that Love itself incarnated on earth in human form." Man should therefore lead his life in the light of this truth and make his life divine. Bhagavan practised what He preached. His entire life is a saga of love. He gave love to millions of people. His love transcended all barriers of caste, creed, race, religion, nationality and language. He loved all – rich and poor, learned scholars and illiterate masses, young and old, men and women and people from all walks of life and every strata of society. He gave to all of them the love of a thousand mothers. His love was pure, unconditional and selfless; there was not even an iota of selfishness in His love. Selfishness destroys the purity of love. Pure love makes a man divine. On the other hand, man loses his humanness when he loses love. He actually dehumanises himself when he preaches and practises hatred.

Love is the most powerful uniting force; it unites people of all cultures, faiths and nationalities. Man can bring heaven on earth if he follows the path of pure and selfless love shown by Bhagavan. On the contrary, he will create hell if he preaches and practises hatred, selfishness and greed. "Devoid of Prema, the world will become a cauldron of misery," Bhagavan cautioned man. Man should therefore use his discrimination to follow the path exemplified by Bhagavan and make this world a paradise of bliss where everyone gives and receives pure love and none practises and preaches hatred. For the devotees of Bhagavan, it would be their greatest tribute to Bhagavan on the occasion of Aradhana Mahotsavam to rededicate themselves to the path of love shown by Him.

In every Discourse, Bhagavan addressed His devotees as Premaswarupulara (embodiments of love), not once but several times. Bhagavan gave His first Discourse during Dasara celebrations on Vijaya Dasami Day in 1953. He blessed us with His last Discourse on 22nd November 2010. During these 57 years, Bhagavan delivered thousands of Discourses, in which He called His devotees Premaswarupulara thousands of times. Obviously, He wanted us to become embodiments of love like Him. Are we?

– Editor

AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
18TH JULY 1996

DO NOT WASTE NATURAL RESOURCES

The education which helps you only to eke out a livelihood, how can it develop moral and spiritual outlook? In fact, it destroys man's innate natural values. Oh students! Do not forget this truth.

(Telugu Poem)

MISUSE OF MONEY IS EVIL



TRUE EDUCATION IS THAT which promotes moral, ethical and spiritual wealth of man. But students today are forgetting this ethical and sacred education and trying to acquire the education which merely helps them to fill their belly.

As is the Action, so is the Result

Right from an ant to Brahma, everything is God's creation. When we look at God's most beautiful, wonderful and sublime creation, we are filled with bliss. Human beings in this world are constituted by five elements, five life principles, five sheaths and five senses. They are endowed with all types of powers. From morning till night, whatever man requires in this world for his happiness has been provided by God. There is nothing that is not available in this world. God has created everything from dust to diamonds and provided all types of comforts and conveniences for man's happiness in life. He has given all freedom to man and has put the entire creation at

his disposal. In this universe and in this manifest world, man can enjoy everything without any fear and fulfil his desires without any limit. He has freedom to follow any path and perform any action.

Man has been given every right to enjoy God's creation; he does not need God's permission for this. However, God has

God's creation is very sacred. You should not pollute it. How sacred are the five elements given by God!

But today the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink and the sound we hear, everything is polluted. All these sacred elements have been made unsacred by man.

That is why the world today is afflicted with so many diseases. He is a true human being who makes sacred use of the five elements.

Never waste natural resources.



prescribed one rule. You may do whatever you want, but you have to face the consequences of your actions, whether they are good or bad, sacred or unsacred. This is the law of creation. Keeping this law in view, man should decide what path he should follow and what type of actions he should perform. As you sow, so shall you reap. Similarly, as is the action, so is the result.

Don't build castles in the air, thinking I will do this, I will do that and I will do many more things. Whatever is the type of seed that you have sown earlier, you will receive the same type of fruit. How is it possible to reap a fruit different from the seed you have sown?

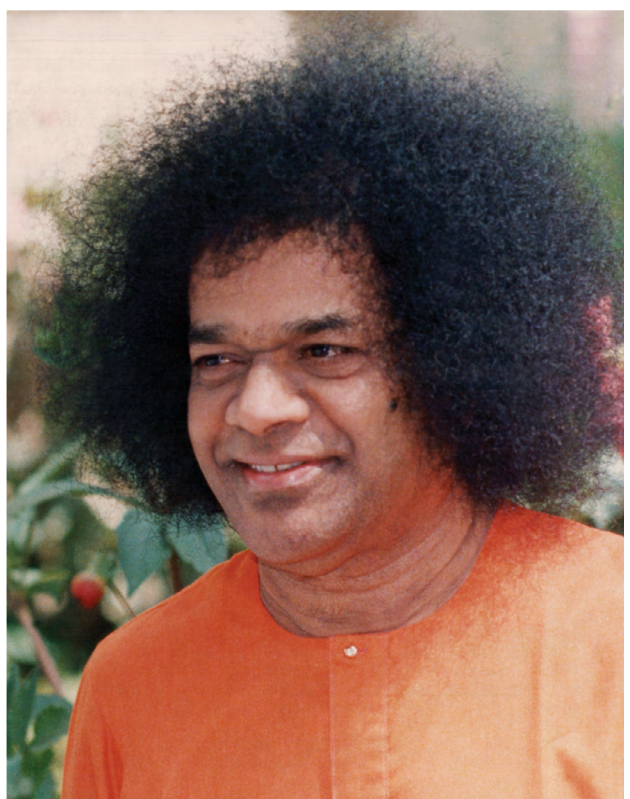
(Telugu Poem)

It is for you to decide what is good and what is bad. God does not interfere in this. He has given you the freedom to decide.

People sow bitter seeds and expect sweet fruits later. As a result, when they have to eat the bitter fruits, they argue and blame Me for their suffering.

(Telugu Poem)

When people have to undergo suffering as a result of their bad actions, they blame God. How can you blame God when God has given you the independence to choose what is good and what is



Students today waste a lot of money. They should realise that their parents undergo a lot of hardship to earn money. They toil hard and sometimes even forego their food to save some money in order to send it to you. There may be some parents who are well-to-do; I am not talking about them. But parents who are not so well-to-do struggle hard to keep you happy and comfortable. So, consider each paisa that you receive from your parents like a drop of their blood. Never waste money. If you waste money, it amounts to wasting the blood of your parents.



bad? When you exercise your freedom of choice, you should use your discrimination to decide what is good and what is bad.

When man emerges from the womb of his mother, one does not find any garland around his neck. There are no jewels made of pearls nor are there glittering gold ornaments. There are no necklaces studded with precious stones like emeralds and diamonds. But there is one garland around his neck. Brahma strings together the consequences of his past deeds into a heavy garland and puts it around his neck at the time of his birth.

(Telugu Poem)

God does not interfere in your freedom whether you do good or bad. But you cannot escape the consequences of your actions. This is the law stipulated by God. Only those who understand this truth and act accordingly can derive happiness in life. Even before performing a small action, man should keep in mind moral, spiritual and ethical values and use his power of discrimination to decide whether to perform that action or not.

Perform Meritorious Deeds

Once there lived a wealthy man with his old parents. In this modern age, people do not treat their parents with due respect. Some of them think it proper to send them to an old age home when they grow old. This wealthy man and his wife also thought in the same manner. They constructed a small room in the verandah and asked their parents to stay there as they considered

it a big botheration to accommodate them inside their house. In due course of time, a son was born to the wealthy man. This boy used to be with his grandparents right from morning till night, listening to moral stories and sacred teachings. The wealthy man tried to prevent his son from going to his grandparents because he thought, "What will happen to my son if he always listened to moral stories from his grandparents?" Everyday he provided food in an earthen plate to his parents without bothering to enquire about their well-being. All this was being observed by this tender-hearted boy. He thought to himself, "Whose property is this in which my parents are living and enjoying all comforts and conveniences? It is only the property of my grandparents. It is only due to my grandparents that my parents have a name in society. How unjust it is that they are ill-treating my grandparents in spite of enjoying all their property!"

In order to teach a lesson to his parents, this small boy one day took away the earthen plate and hid it somewhere. Next day, his parents were searching for the earthen plate in order to serve food to the old parents. "Mother and father, what are you searching for?" asked the boy. "We are unable to trace the earthen plate in which we serve food to your grandparents," they replied. Picking up courage, the boy said, "You don't need to search for it; I myself have hidden it somewhere." Then the father of the boy asked him angrily, "Why have you done this?" The boy replied, "I have done this so that I can serve food to you in the same plate when you grow old!"



See for yourself the result of a bad action. You will be treated by your children in the same manner as you treat your parents now. If you deceive your friend, you will also be deceived. If you respect your brothers, they will also respect you. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as are the feelings, so is the result). You cannot escape the consequences of your actions.

God has created this beautiful world and given man all the freedom to enjoy His creation. He has endowed him with all types of powers. God does not interfere in what you do. You can do whatever you want to do. However, if you keep in mind that you have to face the consequences of your actions, you will not resort to wicked and sinful deeds. You will sanctify your time by performing good and meritorious deeds.

Education is Meant to Serve Society

Modern education lacks moral, ethical and spiritual values. Students today have no understanding of what morality is. Ethical values have been fully smothered today. Nobody knows where spirituality has gone; people just don't bother about it. In such a situation, what benefit can you derive from the pursuit of modern education? Education today only helps you to secure a job and earn a living; it does not foster virtues. Why should you pursue the education which does not inculcate virtues in you?

Give up the madness that education is meant to acquire degrees. Get rid of your slavish mentality. Pursue your education keeping in mind the welfare

and prosperity of your motherland.

(Telugu Poem)

You should understand the truth that education is meant to serve society. We are born in society, brought up in society and ultimately end our life in society. What is it that you want to achieve, forgetting society which has done so much for you? Dedicate all your education, intelligence and energy to the service of society.

Man today is developing cunningness instead of intelligence. Such cunningness is the greatest enemy of man. You should try to put all your powers to proper use. You know the types of difficulties that society is facing today. Today society is in a state of great decline. People who resort to falsehood, injustice, unrighteous conduct are occupying high positions. There is no place for people who adhere to truth, righteousness and sacrifice in modern society. However, it is only a temporary setback for good people. God will certainly reward them ultimately. Therefore, you should never give up truth and righteousness. This is the teaching of the Vedas which propound the principle, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Those who give up truth and righteousness, take to the path of injustice and unrighteousness will certainly face its consequences.

Oh man, do not take pride in your beauty, youth and physical strength. Very soon, you will become old. Your hair will turn grey, your skin will develop wrinkles and your vision will be blurred. Children will make fun of you, calling



you an old monkey. You are no better than a leather puppet. Try to understand the mystery behind this puppet show.

(Telugu Song)

What is this beauty? What is this youth? They are ephemeral like passing clouds. Getting carried away by youth and beauty is like trying to cross a river in a boat made of stone. You are sure to be drowned if you travel in a boat made of stone. Rather, you should use the boat of Divine Name, which is sure to take you across the ocean of Samsara (worldly life). You should lead your life holding on to the principles of truth, righteousness and human values, and respecting parents, teachers and elders.

Children today do not know what it means to respect elders. If you hear a father and a son talking to each other, you will wonder whether they are really father and son. Children lack love and respect that they should accord to their parents. If the son is sitting on a sofa, he does not get up as a mark of respect when his father comes to him. On the other hand, he even questions him rudely, "Why have you come here?" Is this the respect children should show towards their parents? If you treat your parents in such a disrespectful manner, how will your children respect you in future? As is the food, so is the belch. As is the flour, so is the cake. You should learn to respect your elders right from your tender age. Do not become arrogant just because you are educated. True education is that which annihilates ego and jealousy. Do not give room to pomp and show. Lead

your life with humility and obedience and earn the respect of others. I often tell our students, "Your food, your blood, your head and your Duddu (money) are the gifts of your parents. Therefore, first of all, show gratitude to your parents." Revere your parents even before God because it is they who gave you birth and brought you up.

God creates soil and water, but it is the potter who makes pots and plates by mixing both. Similarly, God has created Jada and Chaitanya (matter and life principle). But it is your parents who combine both and give you a form. Therefore, it is the parents who have given you this body. That is why, our scriptures propound the principle, *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere your mother and father as God). Parents are no less than God. There may be a wicked son, but there can be no wicked mother. Your parents bring you up with great love. You should always remember their love and lead your life in a righteous manner.

Lead a Sacred Life

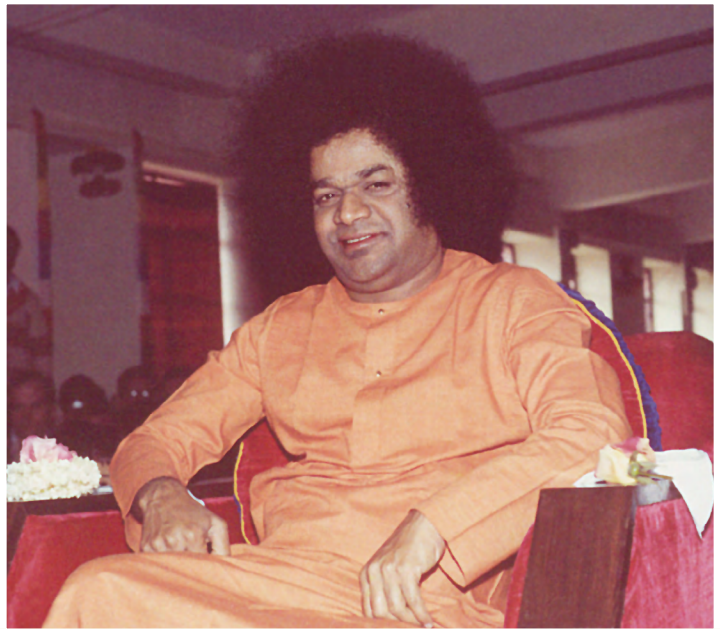
Look at this world. How beautiful it is! Having been born in such a beautiful world and having been endowed with such a beautiful body, what a shame it is if you harbour wicked feelings! Take, for example, the human body. How beautifully has God made this human body with various limbs in proper proportion! Our body's height, weight, etc., everything is arranged in a befitting manner. There are 600 million people in this world today. Do you find any two individuals resembling each other in



every respect? Everybody has his own unique form. How mysterious is God's creation! If twins are born to a mother, even they do not look alike in all respects. There will be some difference between them. I challenge you to bring two individuals who look alike in all respects. I will give you whatever you want. You need not go that far. Look at that neem tree which is full of leaves. Each leaf is different from the other.

This is the mysterious and wonderful creation of God. How shameful it is if you conduct yourself with wicked feelings being a part of such beautiful and wonderful creation of God! As you live in the sacred creation of God, you should also have sacred feelings. Nobody knows when this body will perish.

The body which is made up of five elements is weak and is bound to disintegrate. Though hundred years of life-span is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted. One may leave one's mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth



You should learn to respect your elders right from your tender age. Do not become arrogant just because you are educated. True education is that which annihilates ego and jealousy. Do not give room to pomp and show. Lead your life with humility and obedience and earn the respect of others. I often tell our students, “Your food, your blood, your head and your Duddu (money) are the gifts of your parents. Therefore, first of all, show your gratitude to your parents.” Revere your parents even before God because it is they who gave you birth and brought you up.



or old age. Death is certain. Hence, before the body perishes, man should make efforts to know his true nature.

(Telugu Poem)



Before your life comes to an end, you should realise, who you are. Wherever you see, people ask others, "Who are you, who are you?" But they do not put that question to themselves, "Who am I?" What is the use of knowing everything when you do not know who you are. Body is like a water bubble. You are not the body. Mind is like a mad monkey. You are not the mind. Then, who are you? You are the master of the body and mind. In spite of being the master, if you do not realise this truth, how can you claim yourself to be the master? The term master is used to describe a person holding a position of authority. There are many masters like postmaster, stationmaster, etc. Some people address Me as Divine Master. Truly speaking, the word master should not be used for God because God is the servant of all. Everything is done by God. Such being the case, it is not proper to call Him master. He has a master-plan, but He is not the master. You should follow the master-plan of God.

Make Proper Use of Natural Resources

God's creation is very sacred. You should not pollute it. How sacred are the five elements given by God! But today the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink and the sound we hear, everything is polluted. All these sacred elements have been made unsacred by man. That is why the world today is afflicted with so many diseases. He is a true human being who makes sacred use of the five elements. Never waste natural resources.

A small incident happened some time ago. While conversing with Me in

the interview room, Siva Sankar Sai, the warden of our senior boys hostel, said, "Swami, Your eyes have become red." I replied, "That is due to My own mistake. I do not waste water like you people. When you wash your face, you leave the tap open continuously. While you apply soap to your face, you waste a lot of water by leaving the tap open. But I do not do like that. I open the tap only when it is necessary and close it immediately. After applying soap to My face, I opened My eyes to open the tap. In the process, a small amount of soap entered My eyes and hence My eyes became red." I do not waste even a drop of water because water is God. Air is also a form of God. That is why I switch off the fan immediately when it is not required. Some people keep the light on throughout the night even if it is not required. But I switch on the light when it is necessary and at once switch it off when it is not needed. This is not miserliness. I am not a miser. I am the embodiment of sacrifice. But I don't like to waste anything. Use everything as much as it is necessary. But people today are misusing the five elements.

Never Waste Money

There is another point I want to tell our students. Students today waste a lot of money. They should realise that their parents undergo a lot of hardship to earn money. They toil hard and sometimes even forego their food to save some money in order to send it to you. There may be some parents who are well-to-do; I am not talking about them. But parents who are not so well-to-do struggle hard to keep you



happy and comfortable. So, consider each paisa that you receive from your parents like a drop of their blood. Never waste money. If you waste money, it amounts to wasting the blood of your parents. Take as much money as is necessary. Do not be a spendthrift.

But how much money students spend today! It is not a practice in our Institute, but in outside institutions, a lot of money is spent by students in college elections. One wonders whether it is a college election or an Assembly election! What is the term of a union leader? Should one spend so much money to get elected as an office bearer of a students union for such a short term? Not only that. When the students go on a picnic, they waste a lot of money. They arrange dinners in high class hotels. Chi! Chi! Chi! What a shame! Such misuse of money is very bad. You should give some thought to the financial condition of your parents and your own future. You should not spend money as you please, just because parents have sent it to you. That is why I always emphasise the practice of ceiling on desires. *Don't waste time. Time waste is life waste. Don't waste food. Food is God. Don't waste money. Misuse of money is evil. Don't waste energy. Energy is God.* You see, hear, speak, smell and perform all actions only due to the divine energy of God. You should not waste your divine energy by misusing your senses. If you put this divine energy to sacred use, you can attain the sacredness of divinity. But if you waste this energy, you will be a victim of many diseases.

Modern education lacks moral, ethical and spiritual values. Students today have no understanding of what morality is. Ethical values have been fully smothered today. Nobody knows where spirituality has gone; people just don't bother about it. In such a situation, what benefit can you derive from the pursuit of modern education? Education today only helps you to secure a job and earn a living; it does not foster virtues. Why should you pursue the education which does not inculcate virtues in you?



Make Sacred Use of your Senses

You can see for yourself, sacredness is the root cause of this body's energy. Do you know how old is this body? It is seventy years and six months old. But how energetic I am! Even now I can run very fast and stand first in the running race. Even a sixteen-year-old young boy cannot do as much work as I do. I do a lot of work. Everyday I receive bundles of letters by hand and by post. After the Bhajan is over, I go back and read all those letters. I know the contents of each letter, yet for the satisfaction of devotees, I read them. Till the time I come out again at 3.45 p.m., I read these letters. How is My eyesight? I can see things clearly even from a long distance. This is not Divine power; this is My natural power. It is My purity that is responsible for this. I have no defects like



short-sightedness and long-sightedness. I can read even very small letters. You can estimate the power of My ears when I tell you that I can hear even the sound of the footsteps of an ant. All My senses are perfect. I feel very sorry when I see small children wearing spectacles. Small children of six, ten and sixteen years of age are wearing spectacles today. What is the reason? The defect lies in their blood. You can live long if you make proper use of your senses. Therefore, develop sacredness. I can do much more work than a young boy can do because I am endowed with such great power due to the sacred use of my senses. That is not Divine power or something that I have acquired. It is My natural power.

You will be surprised to know what I eat. I eat Ragi Sankati in the morning. But you eat various items like Korma, Burma, etc. I wonder how you people eat and digest those things. No doubt, youngsters should eat well and maintain their body. But you should not eat in excess. Today people don't observe any time for food nor do they give any proper interval between one meal and the other. They keep eating something or the other all the time. They have their lunch in the afternoon and dinner at night; in between they keep stuffing their belly with snacks and drinks. You should enquire what is to be eaten and what is not to be eaten. Do not eat everything, everywhere. Observe proper discipline with regard to your eating habits. One day, I will speak to you about proper food habits. *As is the food, so is the head.* Food, head and God are interrelated.

Never Read Bad Books

Don't waste your time. Study well. Some boys read bad novels keeping them inside their textbooks. To others, they appear to be reading textbooks. But they conceal their novels in between textbooks. When someone comes near them, they at once hide them. Never read such bad books. As is the Pustaka (book), so is the Mastaka (head). Today there are many bad books in the market. People indulge in such evil practice of writing bad books only for the sake of money. They write them because there are people to buy them. They will not write if you don't buy them. Therefore, never read bad books, never join bad company, never wear inappropriate dress.

I have seen some people wearing black and red shirts in Madras (Chennai). In fact, it looks like a carpet. Even animals will run away out of fear seeing such a dress. How elegant is pure white dress! How blissful it is to wear it! Even our boys wear black pant and black shirt while travelling in a bus or a train. They say, "Swami, we wear such dress only when we travel." People may think, these boys are going to Sabarimala, seeing their dress. Do not wear such clothes. Wear only good and neat dress. Your body, mind and also the dress should be neat and clean. Develop purity in this manner.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Ranga Vitthala Panduranga Vitthala...*")

– From Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 18th July 1996.



CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

DANCE PERFORMANCE DEDICATED TO LORD SIVA



AS PART OF SIVARATHRI celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam, a group of postgraduate students of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a dance programme entitled “Sivoham” on 23rd February 2012 dedicated to Lord Siva, invoking his grace. While the dancers performed the dance set to thrilling music,



“Sivoham”, a dance dedicated to Lord Siva.

the singers recited selected verses of Sri Rudram and Siva Panchakshari Stotra. Besides, there was a meaningful commentary in Telugu and English which described the glory of Lord Siva as depicted by dancers in their dance and singers in their verses. The programme which started at 5.20 p.m. came to a close at 5.45 p.m.,

after which there was a brief Bhajan session which culminated in the Bhajan, “Ganga Jata Dhara Gowri Sankara” in Bhagavan’s voice. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

PILGRIMAGE OF ADILABAD DISTRICT DEVOTEES

More than 1,600 devotees came from Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam and presented cultural and music programmes during the course of their pilgrimage.

The first programme was a musical dance drama which was presented on 25th February 2012. The programme began at 5.15 p.m. with a song and dance dedicated to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to invoke His blessings. What followed this was a beautiful mix of dialogues, dances, Burra Katha, poetry and group songs, describing

the glory and teachings of Bhagavan. Depiction of video clippings relevant to the description of the story of the drama enhanced its value. As the singers sang the concluding song expressing their love and devotion to Bhagavan, the devotees in the hall waved small heart-shaped placards with the lettering, “We Love You,





A dance performance by Adilabad district devotees.

Swami" which created an aura of devotion in the entire milieu. At the end of the drama, 108 devotees came in front of the Samadhi of Bhagavan with lighted candles and lamps in their hands and offered salutations to Bhagavan. The drama was followed by Bhajans. Meanwhile, clothes were presented to the participants and Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.30 p.m.

Adilabad devotees presented their second programme on 26th February 2012. The programme comprising beautiful group and solo songs by ladies and gents singers enthralled the devotees for nearly one hour. Each song was preceded by a commentary and followed by video presentation of earlier programmes performed by Adilabad devotees in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The programme which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close at 5.50 p.m. At the conclusion of the programme, clothes were presented to the participants. This was followed by a brief Bhajan session which concluded with the Bhajan, "Shyama Sundara Madana Mohana Mor Mukuta Dhari" in Bhagavan's

voice. The programme concluded with Arati at 6.00 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

HOLI FESTIVAL

The sacred festival of Holi was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 9th March 2012 with gaiety, piety and solemnity. More than 800 devotees came from Bihar and Jharkhand to celebrate it in

the sacred precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam. They made two musical presentations in Sai Kulwant Hall on this occasion.

The first programme was a musical concert presented on 8th March 2012 by Kum. A. Jyotsna. Starting her presentation at 5.00 p.m. with a prayer song to Lord Ganesh, "Vakra Tunda Maha Kaya" (Oh Lord Ganesha, of curved trunk, large body), the eminent singer enthralled the devotees with soul-stirring songs which included songs dedicated to Bhagavan, Holi songs and popular devotional songs. She brought her presentation to a close with a composition of Annamacharya, "Nigama Nigamaantha" (You Transcend the Vedas) at 5.50 p.m. This was followed by Bhajans which were also led by the singers of Bihar and Jharkhand. Meanwhile, Kum. Jyotsna and her accompanying artistes were honoured with clothes. The Bhajan session concluded with the Bhajan, "Sivaya Parameswaraya" in the golden voice of Bhagavan. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.15 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.



On the day of Holi, 9th March 2012, also there was a devotional music concert which was presented by a reputed singer Dr. Krishna Kumar Mishra and his troupe. Starting his concert at 5.00 p.m. with a composition of saint poet Tulsi Das in praise of Lord Ganesh, the singer next presented a song dedicated to Bhagavan as the Sadguru of all mankind. He followed it up with two popular compositions of Saint Kabir and another of Tulsi Das, and concluded his concert with rendition of three Holi songs suffusing the entire hall with joyous Holi spirit. At the conclusion of the concert, Dr. Mishra and his accompanying artistes were honoured with shawls, and Prasadam was distributed to all. In a brief Bhajan session that followed, the Bhajans were led by Bihar and Jharkhand singers, both ladies and gents. The programme came to a close at about 6.00 p.m., marking the conclusion of Holi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam.

UGADI FESTIVAL

Devotional fervour and piety marked the celebration of Ugadi festival at Prasanthi Nilayam. The celebrations were held both in the morning and evening on 23rd March 2012 in Sai Kulwant Hall which was befittingly decorated with colourful buntings and beautifully designed paper hangings with pictures of mangoes signifying auspicious arrival of new crops. There were exquisite decorations on the Samadhi of Bhagavan with fresh flowers of various hues.

The morning programme began with Veda chanting at 8.00 a.m. which was followed by almanac reading, a customary Ugadi ritual. An erudite scholar, Sri Kuppa Siva Subrahmanya Avadhani explained the meaning and significance of the New Year named “Nandana” and exhorted one and all to follow the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to lead a noble life for the welfare of the entire mankind. The devotees in the hall listened to the talk of the distinguished scholar with great devotion. At the conclusion of this talk, the scholar was honoured with a shawl and gifts were offered to him. This was followed by devotional songs by Institute students. The programme appropriately concluded with an excerpt from a Ugadi Discourse of Bhagavan in which He exhorted the devotees to chant the Divine Name, cultivate noble feelings and make their life sacred and sublime. At the end of the Discourse, Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram” which the entire gathering followed in chorus. There was a Bhajan session after this. The morning programme came to a close with Arati at 9.45 a.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

The evening programme started at 5.30 p.m. with a talk by a learned scholar Sri V.S.R. Murthy on the spiritual significance of Ugadi who exhorted one and all to leave old, unsacred thoughts and feelings and enshrine new sacred thoughts and feelings in their hearts. This, he felt, was the best

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A SOUL'S SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO BELOVED BABA

Kaya Gūnata

One day, an elderly lady who knew nothing about Baba came for healing. After the healing, she asked me who "that man" was in the picture on the wall? When I asked why she was enquiring, she told me that during the healing "that man" had come out of the picture with His orange robe and crown of hair, walked to her, touched her and went back and disappeared in the picture frame.

THE WRITER OF THIS ARTICLE – who was born in a Muslim family in Turkey in 1927 – wants to show how the Divine hand is in everything, that we are not the doers as we think we are, and that we all are governed by God's Will.

It all started in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India. In 1962, I went to Kolkata for business purposes. During my stay in Kolkata, I came across a well-known Guru who foretold about my future, saying that after staying for three years in Kolkata I would go back to London and after a short while my spiritual work would start there. There would be healing, hospital work, education, etc.

Vision of Shirdi Sai Baba in London

As it was foretold, in 1965 I had to leave India for London. Around 1974, a craving for spiritual matters started. A periodical

called "Psychic News" was the cause for the spiritual work to commence. An advertisement requiring sitters for a Home Circle persuaded me to apply and become a member. During the work in the Circle, as was previously told, I became a clairvoyant and was able to see the spirits during the seances.

One important event taking place during every seance, although did not have much significance at that time, was an Entity showing himself all the time, sitting on a stone with crossed legs, with a cloth wrapped around his head and watching me. The same visits continued almost everyday regularly to my house also. After two years, he made himself known as Shirdi Sai Baba, whom I knew nothing about. But at that time, Peggy Mason had started writing articles about Sathya Sai Baba in "Psychic News" which said that He was the reincarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba. In this way, I was introduced to Sathya Sai Baba.

Friendship with Victor Krishna Kanu

After seven years of ardent work, I left the Home Circle in 1981, and was told to start giving spiritual healing. The same year, one early morning before dawn, I



woke up and opened my eyes to see a well-built tall African wearing a black suit standing by my bed side. Without any fear, I said, "Who are you?" The man replied in a loud voice: "Victor Kanu!" and disappeared.

(Today is Saturday, 3rd September 2011. I started writing this article early this morning. At about 7.30 p.m., when I was doing my daily meditation, the phone rang several times persistently. During meditation, I was told "sad news," and when I answered the phone, the sad news of Victor Kanu's passing away in Sierra Leone, Freetown was given to me from London. May his soul rest in peace!)

Following Victor's visit to my bedroom, I made enquiries regarding Victor Kanu but they all resulted in vain. Two months later, a friend rang to inform me about a Bhajan gathering in Victor Kanu's house in South London. After all, Victor Kanu was not a figment of my imagination! Another two months passed, and a gentleman whose name was Lucas Rally, whom I had met at S.A.G.B. (Spiritual Association of Great Britain), asked me if I would like to attend a Sai Baba gathering in his house. There were about 20 people

but the last couple that arrived were Victor and Genoveva Kanu. Victor looked exactly the same, even the suit he was wearing was the same as seen by me in bedroom. After introduction, explaining the incident that had taken place, I asked Victor if he remembered anything. His reply was that he did not know anything! (a Leela of Swami!) But he continued to say, "Last night during meditation, I was told that in this gathering there would be a new person whom I didn't know and I would be working with him in the future. You are the only new person I don't know."

Victor and I became close friends. After a few months, Victor rang me and said that we must meet to discuss something important. When he and I met, it was a Friday evening. He told me that we were asked to go to Prasanthi Nilayam for the

Bal Vikas Seminar that was going to take place there. He asked me to be ready to leave for Prasanthi Nilayam coming Thursday, and we did so.

My First Visit to Prasanthi Nilayam

This was my first visit to Puttaparthi and I was a stranger to everything. Victor was a very sincere and good teacher

I went to the office where the application was made and enquired about it. But there wasn't any trace of our application. There was no registration or any record of our file nor any indication where it was sent. After a week or so, the file was returned directly to my home address, which was also indicated as the Centre's address, from the Ministry of Interior with a letter saying our application had been approved by the Ministry. The authorities said what happened was very unusual and they could not understand it. But we did! It was the Leela of the Divine Hand to keep the name of "Sai Baba" there!



to me. In those days, there was only one Round Building in Prasanthi Nilayam and the Mandir. The Darshan area in front of the Mandir was all sand and there were not so many people.

Victor and I performed all the rituals that morning, Omkaram, Sankirtan, etc. And finally we sat on the sand opposite the Ganesha statue which was in front of the Mandir in those days. The dawn was just breaking when Swami came out of His room in the Mandir, and holding His orange robe, walked towards where we were sitting. He came straight to us. Victor got up and the people next to me were trying to touch His Feet. I was so excited, I did not know what to do! He looked straight at me smiling, and with a very soft voice, said, "So you have come!" and walked away. Next day, Victor and I were told to sit in the verandah in front of Baba's room. In those days, there was no one sitting in the verandah.

We attended the Bal Vikas Seminar with Baba with a small group of people, mostly Indian lady teachers, Baba talking to us everyday in Telugu, and Prof. Kasturi and Prof. Gokak doing the translations into English.

During one morning Darshan in the verandah, Baba said to Victor and myself, "After the Darshan, I am going to Brindavan. Don't tell anyone, just get your cases and follow Me in a taxi!" But when we went out, there was a long queue of taxis with devotees in it waiting for Baba to come! (*a Leela of Baba!*)

In Brindavan, we were also asked to attend the meetings every evening from 8.00 to 9.00 p.m. in Baba's house where Baba had His students and a few guests only. It was wonderful to be almost next to Baba where He used to sit in His rocking chair, playing on the cymbals while Bhajans were being sung.

One evening, He called me to His room and gave me a private interview. After holding my hands and looking into my eyes for a long time, He said, "I have been coming to you as Shirdi Sai Baba for a long time. Shirdi Baba and Myself are the same. Carry on with your healing, I am always with you ...!" This interview took me back to the years in the Home Circle when Shirdi Sai Baba used to come without me even knowing who he was! After returning to London years passed by, during which time Victor started EHV programmes and I carried on with spiritual healing.

So in 1987, I suddenly, with no special reason at all, sold my house, left my job, etc., decided to return to Turkey. And if I remember right, in that year Victor and Genoveva were also told by Baba to go to Zambia and start a school there. Victor and Genoveva gave me a farewell lunch, and I left London for Istanbul, Turkey. (*yet another Leela of Baba!*)

In Istanbul, thanks to Swami's Divine blessings, my spiritual work started very quickly. I converted one of the rooms in my home into a Puja room complete with Baba's Chair, as in Puttaparthi, on a dais and with life-size pictures of Sathya Sai



Baba and Shirdi Sai Baba on the wall. With five friends, we started a Study Circle at my home, and sang Bhajans by listening to a tape-recorder one day a week and also cooked food in my small kitchen and distributed it by car door to door to families in a very poor area. As we had language problem with the devotees in Istanbul, I used to translate Sai literature and we used to conduct studies on the translated materials in our Study Circle.

In Kodaikanal with Baba

With Swami's grace, the number of devotees started to increase. During this time, in association with another devotee who was an English teacher, I started translating Dr. Hislop's book, "Conversations with Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba," and a few of the Sathya Sai Speaks books (old series). When Dr. Hislop's book was finished, I felt the need to go to Puttaparthi and have the book blessed by Baba. I flew to Bangalore (now Bengaluru) and found out that Baba was in Brindavan and was leaving for Kodaikanal at 4.00 a.m. next day. I asked the taxi man, whom I knew for a long time, to get me a taxi. But he told me that not a single taxi was left; they were all booked. It was next morning at 3.00 a.m. when he knocked at my room door in Rama Hotel to tell me that he had arranged a place for me in a car with an Australian lady and her son. We had a wonderful trip with a long convoy of cars behind Swami's car and being stopped frequently by the village people who were on the roadside waiting for Baba.

We spent the night in Ooty where Baba had a small Ashram. Early in the morning before dawn, we all gathered in the small hall where Baba was staying. It was all packed. As I squeezed in, the gate was closed behind me. It was a wonderful feeling to see Baba walking around and blessing us. I was holding the book in my hand with the hope that Baba would bless it. But the place was so packed, I got disheartened. Suddenly, Baba started making His way through the crowd towards where I was standing, put His Hand on the book which I was holding, and blessed it. What an exciting moment that was (*or should we rather say, another Leela of His!*)

Kodaikanal was beautiful, and it was wonderful to be so near to Baba. One morning, when Baba was giving Darshan, He approached Joy Thomas, the author of several books on Baba, who then used to sit in a wheelchair. He told her to get up and go to the interview room. When she got up from the wheelchair and walked along the long road to the interview room building, it was heartening to see the devotees' excitement who were witnessing Swami's miracle.

Sai Baba Centres in Turkey

In 1990, we made two pilgrimages to Puttaparthi with a group of 18 devotees. Baba gave us an interview and during the interview, He blessed me and asked me to start a Sai Centre in Istanbul. On our return, we immediately prepared a bylaw for the Centre, naming it as "Sai Baba Dernegi."



When I submitted the application, the authorities asked me to change the name "Sai Baba" which they said would be definitely rejected by the Ministry of Interior. But I told them, the application would go as it was and we would make the changes in case we were refused. Three months passed by without any news from the authorities. I went to the office where the application was made and enquired about it. But there wasn't any trace of our application. There was no registration or any record of our file nor any indication where it was sent. After a week or so, the file was returned directly to my home address, which was also indicated as the Centre's address, from the Ministry of Interior with a letter saying our application had been approved by the Ministry. The authorities said what happened was very unusual and they could not understand it. But we did! It was the Leela of the Divine Hand to keep the name of "Sai Baba" there! So, having the Centre registered and affiliated to the International Sai Organisation, we started regular weekly programmes of Bhajan singing, study circle, translating Sai literature into Turkish, running a well-organised kitchen to feed the poor, running a health centre, conducting Bal Vikas classes for the primary school children after school and at weekends, and also meeting their parents once a week. Baba enabled us to do all this without any difficulties. We are all very grateful to Him for extending His helping hand to us.

In time, a second Sai Centre was formed in Istanbul, and these two Centres

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have now been carrying on with spiritual, Seva and education work as much as Baba allows us to do.

Over the years, while doing translation of Sai literature and giving healing to people almost everyday, I feel Baba's presence all the time, and I feel that I am in His Divine Presence 24 hours everyday. Through this work, lots of people have come to know of Baba and His Divine power, as well as His teachings. For example, one day, an elderly lady who knew nothing about Baba came for healing. After the healing, she asked me who "that man" was in the picture on the wall? When I asked why she was enquiring, she told me that during the healing, "that man" had come out of the picture with His orange robe and crown of hair, walked to her, touched her and went back and disappeared in the picture frame. *(Still, another Leela of Baba showing His Omnipresence!)*

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FAITH AND LOVE ARE THE BEST HEALERS

Dr. A.N. Safaya

I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO talk and write about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on various occasions, at various places and to various audiences. Yet writing for this issue of *Sanathana Sarathi*, I must say that I miss the magnetic physical presence of Swami. He will always be with us with His omnipresence, but it is His physical presence that I miss.

Living in a place like Delhi with its glittering lights, I had seldom thought I would ever be of any service to God. But Bhagavan Baba, the Avatar of the Age, had His own plans and it was His sheer Leela that I ended up serving in His super speciality hospital. A doctor by profession, I was trained to trust only scientific enquiry. So, anything which could not stand the test of science became a myth to me. And then came into my life Bhagavan Baba, who step by step made me realise the inherent truth in spirituality and religion, for which scientific enquiry was useless.

Love, the Ultimate Principle of Clinical Administration

Not only did I learn to understand the inherent truth of life, but also at a physical level, Bhagavan Baba became my guide and taught me the basic principles of human administration, financial

administration, material administration and ultimate principle of clinical administration, which is love. This unconditional love is unfortunately missing in the medical profession the world over technically and professionally. There is no curriculum in the medical colleges in the world where human relations is being dealt with respect to the treatment of a human being. It was only Bhagavan Baba who articulated this principle of universal love, which has taken

This is the age of rampant commercialisation of the medical profession. The insurance companies, technical instrument syndicates and other such organisations have the medical profession in their clutches. The chances for humanity to have faith in medical science as a treating profession are very low. It is, therefore, essential that the model given by Bhagavan Baba be replicated at many places elsewhere in the world, so that similarly the path of love shown by Swami could be practised anywhere and in any branch of life.



shape in His temples of healing and I would call them the laboratories of healing with love.

These hospitals are not only technically good from the point of view of equipment, from the point of view of the building, from the point of view of the personnel, and the free medical care being provided to the patients, but they are also singular in the way the patients are dealt with because all the staff try to follow the path enunciated by Bhagavan, which is of loving care.

Bhagavan Baba is a phenomenon, a mysterious phenomenon; nobody can know or can ever endeavour to know Him. Nobody can interpret His ways. We can only weakly and meekly try to understand Him and try to make out whatever He says to us. It was this quality of the mystery of Bhagavan that attracted me towards Him right in the beginning.

I did not know anything about Bhagavan Baba till 1970. I had been on an official trip to Iraq and when I returned to Delhi, my friend named Somnath called me to his house for dinner. He had two beautiful pictures of Siva and Sakti side by side in his drawing room. In between these two pictures, I noticed that he had put the photograph of somebody with profuse hair. He looked like a hippie, and out came from my mouth, "Somnath, you have put a photo of a hippie here! What has happened to you?" He got nonplussed, particularly his old parents, and they looked at me as if I had said something blasphemous. I realised my mistake and apologised to them. Somnath told me that the photo was

of a person who is God Himself. "You can see Siva and Sakti in Him if you have the power and faith in you," he said. When I asked him what He was called, he replied, "He is called Sathya Sai Baba." He gave me a book in Hindi about Baba, 'Sathyam Sivam Sundaram,' the first part.

I took this book home, and next day I started reading it, casually turning the pages here and there and then I got greatly interested in the book. That was the attraction, that was the mystique and that was the mystery in Swami that attracted me. By the time I finished the book, I realised that I had missed my lectures. I was then a faculty in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. I even forgot to have my meals as the book kept me glued to it. That is how I got introduced to Bhagavan Baba.

I started going to Bhajans and made enquiries about the Sai Organisation and gradually became involved to such an extent that I even forgot what my motivation was while working at AIIMS, in the department of anatomy, in those days. In 1975, I became the in-charge of the hospitals of AIIMS. It was then that it dawned on me that this book had come to me, this awakening had come to me, in order to utilise its teachings in the hospital. In AIIMS also I tried to humanise as much as possible. I had not come in contact with Swami at that time. Mystery has always attracted me. I belong to an orthodox and ritualistic family of Kashmir and questions about who is God and what is God, what is behind all this would assail me often. From



early in the childhood, I was told fascinating stories from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas. I would feel that all this could not be untrue; there must be some truth somewhere. The moment I read 'Sathyam Sivam Sundaram,' I got the impression that here was a person who could tell me everything. And I became His servant forever.

How Swami Developed my Faith

I came to Puttaparthi for the first time in 1983. Swami granted me interviews and He knew that I was the Medical Superintendent of AIIMS. But He never talked to me about it. Very meticulously, He developed faith in me. As a scientific person trained in completely scientific way of medicine, I had started disbelieving the stories of the Puranas, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana I had heard in my childhood. They seemed too fantastic to be true. My faith had dropped to the minimum. But as I started going for Swami's Bhajans, things began changing. We had adopted a village called Sultanpur. We used to give free treatment to the patients there and slowly my faith started developing. How Swami did that, only He knows.

When Bhagavan conceived the idea of establishing a super speciality hospital, I don't know how He chose me. One day before the super speciality hospital of Puttaparthi was to be opened, the operation theatre was not ready in the sense that the colony count was very high. I became very nervous and lost all my wits. It must have been around 9.00 p.m. when my wife came and was surprised to see me distraught

as I rarely become emotional. She told me to have faith in Swami. She said that it was Swami who had done all this, and He would solve this small problem also. "Don't worry. Have faith in Him", she said. It was Swami speaking to me through her. I slept a little. Early in the morning, I rushed back to the hospital to know the result of the culture. It was absolutely negative and with clean conscience we could operate. Swami ensured that it happened.

Five operations were performed and all the five healed up quickly, better than the international average for such operations. This is how my faith got strengthened. I ultimately came to the conclusion that if there is a God, then Swami is the God. He is to be followed impeccably, He is to be followed without any contradiction, He is to be followed without any doubt. When that happens, things start happening on their own. Then it is not you who are doing, but He who is doing and He takes over.

Miraculous Cures with Bhagavan's Blessings

Once we had to perform a very difficult operation. The patient was a close relation of the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He had a heart attack. Angiography was done and it was decided that he should undergo coronary bypass surgery. But in London, where he was staying, the hospitals refused to do a bypass surgery because his lungs were weak, he was a chain smoker and he had other ailments. This gentleman was brought by the Chief Minister to Bhagavan's feet, and he told Bhagavan, "For this patient, You are the



only refuge.” Bhagavan said yes, and asked me to deal with the situation. I called the best heart surgeon available at that time, Prof. Venugopal from New Delhi. The patient had something wrong with his abdomen also, which we did not know at that time. I called the professor and head of the department of surgery from AIIMS also, and they all flew down here. It was a great opportunity for them and they were just waiting for Swami’s command. They came and examined the patient. He had very bad lungs and cancer of the colon. His appendix was bad, and he had bad coronaries. We all were in a fix. So, we asked Bhagavan what to do.

Bhagavan said that two surgeons should operate. One will operate on the abdomen, and the other will operate on the heart. I was exasperated because the patient had very bad lungs. As he was a great drinker also, his liver must also have been compromised. But Bhagavan’s command was there and the surgeons started operating. Believe me, the operations were successful. Three operations were conducted, one on the heart, the other on the colon and third on the appendix which was removed. The patient recovered remarkably well. He then left smoking, left drinking, and became a good person also in the process. He got a lesson of his life. This case has been medically documented. This is what faith can do. The faith of the doctors in Bhagavan, the blessings of Bhagavan and least ego on the part of surgeons and treating physicians worked wonders.

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The Miracle of Vibhuti

There was another case, which is a personal experience. My mother-in-law suddenly fell ill. I got the message in Puttaparthi. I told my in-laws to shift her to AIIMS. I made some phone calls, and she got admitted. I told Bhagavan that I had to go to Delhi as my wife’s mother was not well. Bhagavan gave me permission to go, infused courage in me and told me that all would be well.

My wife and I both went and saw her in the hospital. Her abdomen had swollen up, and a knot had developed in her large intestine. That knot was not resolving and a surgery was needed. She was severely diabetic and a risk for surgery. The head of the department of surgery was my erstwhile colleague. He said, it was very difficult to do the operation and he asked us to be prepared for anything.

My wife had more faith in Bhagavan. She rubbed Vibhuti on her mother’s abdomen



and with Bhagavan's grace the knot was resolved. My mother-in-law passed large amounts of stools, and when the surgeon came in the morning rounds to see how to plan a surgery, he found a perfectly normal patient. He said there was nothing wrong and was curious to know what happened. My wife said that she rubbed Vibhuti of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He was surprised, cut off the visit and went out of the room.

The next day, unfortunately, the same malady appeared again. Again the abdomen got swollen up. The surgeon said, "See, I told you, these things won't work, a surgery has to be done." I said, "If it has to be done, then why don't you do it?" He said, from the risk point of view it was not advisable and all that. My wife took some Vibhuti and again rubbed it on the swelling. The swelling came down the second time and then she did not have any trouble after that. "Something has to be thought about this Vibhuti; it is really working," the surgeon said, "It is better than surgery."

But the surgeon wanted to be sure. "No, no, I will send her for sigmoidoscopy and X-ray examination", he said. I told him, he should do it by all means. She came out, perfectly all right. "Misdiagnosis probably," is what the radiologist said.

The surgeon then became a devotee of Bhagavan. Then it was not only because of Dr. A.N. Safaya, Swami became a household name at AIIMS because of such things. Many doctors were sceptical about

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free high-tech medical care, but they saw it turned into a reality in Puttaparthi. So many doctors started travelling to Puttaparthi to offer their services in Bhagavan's hospital. These cases are in the form of medical records in the hospitals concerned, which anyone can go and check. It is not any imagination or sycophancy on my part. There are innumerable examples, but I quoted these incidents because they are recorded.

He is Always with us

This is how Bhagavan developed faith, and this is what is lacking currently in the world. In the medical profession, many things can be done. But, unfortunately, faith



in God and faith in love have disappeared. That faith has to be recreated. That was the whole idea of establishing the two super speciality hospitals, which proved that even at a high degree of medical specialisation, it was possible to give free high-tech treatment with love. This is my journey to Swami and journey to Divinity step by step. If you walk one step, Swami will walk 10 steps towards you. I was fortunate to serve Bhagavan for 21 years. These 21 years of closeness with Bhagavan, working with Bhagavan were like walking on the edge of the sword. You cannot afford to make a mistake. There is nothing like 99.9 per cent with Bhagavan. It has to be 100 per cent. There can be no compromise.

The whole concept of medicine is borne out of love, because you love a patient, and that is healing. Not because he has money, not because he is a rich man. This is the age of rampant commercialisation of the medical profession. The insurance companies, technical instrumentsyndicates and other such organisations have the medical profession in their clutches. The chances for humanity to have faith in medical science as a treating profession are very low. It is, therefore, essential that the model given by Bhagavan Baba be replicated at many places elsewhere in the world, so that similarly the path of love shown by Swami could be practised anywhere and in any branch of life.

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As I have been distributing Vibhuti to people coming for healing, they have been so happy with it and have always been asking for more. Some of them have also been telling me how they saw Baba in their dreams.

Pilgrimages to Prasanthi Nilayam

As Swami's teachings started spreading among people in Turkey, we were blessed with a few occasions whereby we had the chance to take people to Prasanthi Nilayam. As part of the pilgrimage for the Middle East Region 94 in 2010, we as a group of around 40 people from Turkey visited Prasanthi Nilayam, chanting Turkish hymns in Swami's Divine Presence. It was an exhilarating experience. Then

in 2011, the pilgrimage was repeated by paying homage to Baba's Maha Samadhi, this time staging a performance by the whirling dervishes of Turkey which was overwhelmingly successful.

Up to now, over 50 books on Sai literature, mainly consisting of the Divine Discourses and Vahinis of Swami have been translated into Turkish and published. These are not sold but are distributed free of charge to those who are interested. More and more people in Turkey are now getting to know of Baba and His Divine Work.

As for me, I have been very grateful to the Divine Support that has always been given by Baba, and pray to Him for granting me whatever He deems to be most suitable on this soul's journey to Him.



From our Archives

RAMA IS DHARMA PERSONIFIED

Sweeter than sugar, tastier than curd, sweeter indeed than honey is the Name of Rama. Constant repetition of this sweet Name gives one the taste of divine nectar itself. Therefore, one should contemplate on the Name of Rama incessantly.

(Telugu Poem)

RAMA ENLIGHTENS EVERY SPIRITUAL SEEKER



RAMA IS A NAME THAT IS sweeter than all the sweet things in Nature imbibed alone or together. It can never cloy on the tongue or mind. It has vast mysterious mystic potentialities to elevate man. So, one must endeavour to keep the mind ever dwelling on it.

The Ramayana is another Version of the Vedas

The story of Rama, the Ramayana, is but another version of the Vedas. In fact, it is said that the Vedas incarnated as the Ramayana in order to help in the destruction of evil and the revival of righteous living, tasks which the Lord took upon Himself during His human career as Rama. He put on the vesture of manhood in order to establish and exemplify Dharma. *Ramo Vighrahan Dharma* (Rama is Dharma personified) is how the Ramayana described Him.

In the Ramayana, Rama symbolises Rig Veda which promotes the performance of Yajnas and Yagas. Lakshmana is

the personification of Yajur Veda which contains Mantras that are chanted during the performance of Yajnas and Yagas. When Rama was away in the forest, Bharata left Ayodhya and stayed in Nandigrama chanting His Divine Name all the 24 hours of the day. Hence, he

It is your good fortune that you are able to listen to the sacred story of Rama and sing His glory. God shines effulgently in the universe and so does the universe in God. The relationship between God and the universe is intimate and inseparable. The universe is full of living beings. Each being is the embodiment of Rama. Do not confine Rama to a particular name and form. All the beings are His forms. Rama means the one who delights. He is present in all.





Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna were the four sons of Dasaratha. Merely knowing this physical relationship will not suffice. Who is Dasaratha? Dasaratha is one who controls the chariot of the human body consisting of ten senses (five senses of perception and five senses of action). In fact, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna were not born to Dasaratha and his three wives like mere mortals. They were Chaitanya Swarupas (embodiments of divine consciousness).



symbolises Sama Veda. Satrugna was the one who annihilated Satrus (enemies). He protected the good and the pious, and followed the commands of his brothers. He is the embodiment of Atharvana Veda. The essence of Atharvana Veda lies in destroying wickedness and fostering sacred thoughts and actions. The Ramayana is the Veda and the Veda is the Ramayana. The Veda is not different from the Ramayana. True humanness lies in understanding this intimate relationship between the two.

Lord Vishnu Incarnated as Rama

The story of Rama is the cream of the Vedas, a veritable ocean of milk. Valmiki has named each section of the epic, "Kanda", a name which means a length of sugarcane. However crooked the cane may be, every slice is as sweet as every other. Similarly, whatever the situation depicted or emotion delineated, whether coronation or exile, victory or defeat, heroism or dispiritedness, love or hate, joy or grief, the epic is equally sweet and charming. There are two predominant Rasas or streams of emotion in the Rama story, the stream of Karuna (compassion) as Rama and the stream of Prema (love) as Lakshmana. It is the mergence of these two that evokes Ananda (bliss). Ananda is the very Swabhava (nature) of Rama. He is Bhagavan Himself, though Valmiki has not explicitly declared it anywhere. He refers to Rama as equal in valour to Vishnu, but not as Vishnu Himself. It is only through the mouths of Rama's own sons that the mystery is revealed.



Rama and His Brothers Set the Highest Ideals of Self-sacrifice

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Due to the effect of Kali Age, there is no unity and love among brothers today. They quarrel with each other and make their life miserable. On the contrary, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna had total unity among themselves. They never quarrelled, and tried to make each other happy. They delighted others also by their unity. Even while playing games in their childhood, each one aspired for the happiness of the other. All the four brothers were ready to sacrifice their desires and aspirations for the sake of each other. In this way, they set the highest ideals of self-sacrifice to the world.

Rama was the embodiment of steady adherence to Sathya and Dharma. Only those who are saturated in Rama Bhakti (devotion) can dive into that glory. He is the grand ideal, upon whom you can contemplate. By doing so, you can imbibe and develop His virtues, slowly and silently. Rama's glory shines brilliantly even after all these centuries. It will shine as resplendently for ages to come. Rama means, He who pleases. Nothing pleases man more than his Atma, which is an eternal unfailing source of joy. One must prefer the awareness of the Atma and the bliss that its awareness confers to all other minor momentary joys.

The Ramayana Teaches the Highest Principles of Morality

The Birthday of Rama is celebrated in order to remember the ideals He stood for. We have to ponder over the ideals set before us by Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna. It is your good fortune that you are able to listen to the sacred story of Rama and sing His glory. God shines effulgently in the universe and so does the universe in God. The relationship between God and the universe is intimate and inseparable. The universe is full of living beings. Each being is the embodiment of Rama. Do not confine Rama to a particular name and form. All the beings are His forms. Rama means the one who delights. He is present in all.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Sri Rama Navami Discourses.





MOTHER SAI AND I

LOVE WALKING ON TWO FEET... floating slowly towards me time and again over the past thirty years. What more could any aspirant ask for in the quest for Divinity? To be in the physical presence of the Divine when He willed His descent on earth must have been my fervent prayer in previous births. Reflecting on my encounters and experiences with our most loving Mother Sai, I hesitate and ponder as to where I should begin. How can I even begin to fathom and explain the beautiful melodies which this loving Lord continues to stir on my heart strings? At thy Lotus Feet Beloved Mother Sai, I humbly offer this article.

Born in a Muslim home and brought up under Islamic tradition and guidance, I began searching and questioning the meaning and purpose of life at the young age of 16. Having started reading the works of many great spiritual masters, the mystical men of Islam, Sufism and the teachings of the Holy Quran, the spiritual quest intensified. Through reading, meditation and prayer, I beseeched the

Almighty Allah to show me the way and enable enlightenment.

Quest for Truth

Even then, dear Mother Sai had already begun to engineer and reconstruct the thinking of this “hungry for God” youth named Fize. But God, as a man! Never, in my thinking. But I had asked Almighty Allah for enlightenment and revelation of truth. Over the succeeding years, it was necessary to reflect on previous levels of ignorance of the eternal truth – that of the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God. This merciful Sai Allah was slowly beginning to remove my existing veil of ignorance.

Swami says, “There is only one God and He is omnipresent.” Having at last found this truth implanted in my consciousness, the next endeavour was to translate it into everyday living. There was now a feeling that the soul’s fulfilment was imminent. After much study and discussion of Swami’s teachings, a decision was made to visit Swami in Puttaparthi. There was an



urgent need to prove the validity of all that was read and heard about Sai.

In 1981, I made the first trip to the abode of Swami along with a group of other spiritual aspirants. We arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of Guru Purnima. Celebrations were being held in the Poornachandra Hall. This was our first Darshan of Bhagavan. For the next thirty days, we watched Him receive letters, materialise Vibhuti, produce items out of thin air and repeatedly bless and provide guidance to devotees. With every passing day, my doubts were being dispelled and replaced by indescribable feelings of joy, wonder and bliss. I felt I had come home. Peace and happiness were now a growing phenomenon. Life had undergone a dramatic change. Sai Allah had touched and transformed me with His healing love.

Why Fear when Sai is Here?

My first interview was in October 1983 following a very serious car accident in Trinidad in which some of us almost died. The first thing our merciful Lord said to me in that interview was, "It was I who saved you from that accident." Over the following years and many experiences later, it is possible to say that this cup has truly overflowed through the grace of Sai.

Once in the Palika Bazaar, New Delhi, on our way back home from Puttaparthi, I lost a pouch containing our passports and money while my mother and I were shopping. Frantic searches proved fruitless. In my desperation, I held on to a pendant Swami had materialised for me on

The future of the world lies in the hands of parents and teachers. To bring about peace in the world, we must first bring it about in ourselves. We must all become change agents, manifesting the values of Sai. Of all the acquisitions in the world, character is most important. If you have character, all else will be added on to you. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the example you want others to be." What does Swami really want from us? "Be like a beacon in the sky radiating love and light. That is what you can do for Swami."

that trip, and started chanting His Name repeatedly. After some time, I opened my eyes and saw a little boy of about seven years dressed in white coming towards me. As he approached me, he held out his hands and asked if this pouch belonged to me. As I took and checked it, everything was there including our passports and all the money. When I looked up to thank him, he was nowhere to be seen. I gazed in awe, bursting into tears and fell on my knees and thanked our Mother Sai for loving us so much. Why fear when Sai is here?

Mother Sai has been the anchor in the stormiest of times. He has the love of a thousand mothers and will never let us down. His words are truth. Many a time, we may feel that He is not heeding us or



that He is taking too long to resolve some issues or problems which we may be encountering. He may, at times, give us answers which we cannot understand. But we must develop utmost faith in Swami. Trust in Him and know that all things happen in accordance with His divine plan. He has promised to protect us like the eyelids protect the eyes.

Divine Guidance on Marriage and Children

During our first interview, Swami told me about marriage. He said, "Let parents decide and I will bless." That was in 1983. Eight years later and with my parent's blessings, the marriage took place on 24th November 1991. On 16th December 1991, Swami granted what may be called the "wedding interview." God always keeps His promise. As we sat in the inner interview room, Swami took the wedding rings and placing His hands on them, said, "I bless, I bless, I bless." Looking directly into my eyes, He asked, "How many children do you want?" I blurted out, "Swami, I want a boy first." He said, "Why do you want a boy? Girls are better. Girls take better care of parents; they have more consideration and are caring." I then swallowed my pride and said, "Swami, let it be Your Will." It happened that two girls came. Swami told me, smilingly, in a subsequent interview, I gave you very good children." Today my daughters are 17 and 18 years of age and are very active, dedicated and committed young adults in the Sai Organisation. At their schools, they are considered good role models which is undoubtedly the result

of Swami's blessings and the Education in Human Values (EHV) Programme.

Mother Sai Instils Confidence in me

Initially, I had great fear of public speaking. I suffered from this fear tremendously. It was difficult to speak in front of a crowd due to this fear. Self-confidence, self-belief and self-esteem were lacking. I remember when for the first time I was asked to deliver a message on Sai. There was much fear and tension. I sweated profusely; beads of perspiration drenched my entire body. I got bad migraine headaches and my heart pounded. I prayed to Mother Sai for respite and guidance. At that point, in one interview Swami told me emphatically, "You must have confidence in yourself." His words were like a bolt of lightning that drove away the fear and filled my being with confidence. The grace of Sai was to fill and have my cup overflowing in another motherly act of His. Seated in the inner interview room, Swami looked at me and said, "You must speak on Sai experience and morality." I said, "Swami I do not use any written material and my eyes are sometimes closed." Swami reached out and lovingly pinched me on my cheek. Rotating both hands in a huge arc, He looked deep in my eyes and commanded, "You go and speak; I will be there inside you."

Thereafter, the fear started subsiding and was replaced with surety, confidence and self-belief, and I spoke comfortably. Today with Swami's grace, I have delivered over 2,000 messages on Sai's teachings in the Caribbean, India, U.K., U.S.A.,



Canada and South America. Every time, I am asked to deliver a message on Sai, I pray to Him to always speak through me and to make me His powerful instrument to share His love through His words.

The Atma is Eternal

I was very much attached to the beautiful form of my Beloved Swami. This Beloved Lord who had held my hand and lifted me

out of dark despair, who guided and loved me unconditionally decided to leave His physical body on 24th April 2011. In Sai's presence, I felt all powerful and was able to climb any mountain and overcome any obstacle. He was just a plane ride away and within easy reach. The eighteen plus hours' journey from Trinidad to Puttaparthi was joyously accomplished thirty times to witness His Divine Mahimas.

I reflected and pondered as to why our Lord chose to remove His form from this earth. We now had to bear this great loss. When I broke this news to my wife, she was also stunned. We all went to our prayer room. Silence pervaded our very beings. No words were needed. Did we understand His divine play? Could we truly say that all He had taught us would

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automatically give us comfort at that time? The full impact of what had happened did not become a reality to me until many weeks later. I began to understand that Swami was telling me that there was no birth and death. The Atma is eternal and undying. The body is what is born and so must exit this physical world. Swami chose to come in human form, to give us the bliss of His Darshan

and transform us with His Divine Love. Mankind has been changed forever. What now is our tribute to Him?

Our Duty

Many times I wonder, where I would have been had it not been for Mother Sai's grace, protection and guidance. In one interview, I asked Swami, "What service should I do?" He said, "Teach the children, help the old people and visit the hospitals." He said in another interview when I was a young adult, "You have too many friends. Make God your only friend. Mother will leave you, friends will leave you but Sai will never leave you." I have been an SSE teacher for the past thirty years.

Sharing and spreading this divine love through the many avenues afforded by the

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OMNIPOTENT SAVIOUR

Major General S.P. Mahadevan

ON 24TH APRIL 2011, OUR Most Beloved and Most Revered Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba decided to leave His human body. The reason to leave so soon is best known to Him only, though millions of devotees all over the world including old devotees like me were hoping and praying that He should stay on in this world for some more years to continue to give us His Darshan and blessings. But He willed it not to be so.

Omniscient Lord Sai

24th April is an important day and an unforgettable date for me because on 24th April 1986, our merciful, generous and kind-hearted Sai Bhagavan saved me from a massive heart attack (myocardial infarction) I had suffered in Hyderabad after attending an All India Conference of Chairmen of Public Service Commissions presided over by the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi. In the month of April, Hyderabad city can be hot, humid, dry and dusty. May be due to the heat of Hyderabad or due to the heated arguments we had in the conference, I had a blackout and heart attack at 2.10 p.m. My wife who was sitting next to me cried and prayed in front of Sai Bhagavan's photo. Within a few minutes, I regained consciousness by the grace of all-merciful Lord Sai.

Exactly at 2.10 p.m. on 24th April 1986, the omniscient and omnipotent Lord Sai

told Sri Kutumba Rao, the then Secretary of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and Swami Karunyananda who were with Him in His room upstairs of Prasanthi Mandir, "General Mahadevan had a heart attack just now in Hyderabad and I have saved him." Having said that to them Bhagavan waved His Divine hand, materialised Vibhuti Prasadam, put it in an envelope and sent it to me all the way to the military hospital in Secunderabad where I was admitted after the attack. He also sent a beautiful letter written in very fine English through the Trust Convener of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Sathya Murthy together with a basket of citrus fruits, which are supposed to be good for a heart patient and were not

The Omnipotent God has been saving me from dangers, difficulties, diseases and near death situations.

He saved me from Pakistan army bullets in Kashmir war and Bangladesh war, from Chinese mortar bombardment in 1963 and from foreign mercenaries machine gunfire in 1962 when I was part of U.N. Peace Keeping Force in Congo (Africa). He also miraculously saved me from helicopter crashes, car accidents and snow avalanches when I was General Officer, commanding a mountain division in snow-covered areas of Ladakh in Kashmir on Indo-Tibetan border.



available in Secunderabad in summer. In that letter, Bhagavan had written, "My dear son, blessings to you and your wife. Why fear when I am near? I am in you, with you, above you, below you, all around you. Will give you Darshan soon. With love." Neither while travelling 32 km in the open ambulance, nor when I was in the Intensive Care Unit of the military hospital I had any fear of death because I had full faith in Almighty Bhagavan Baba and His ability to save me. During the 21 days I was in the Intensive Care Unit of the military hospital, I never smelt phenyl or dettol but only fine fragrance of Sai Vibhuti. During those three weeks in I.C.U., merciful Bhagavan used to appear in my dream and assured me that He would not allow me to die.

Bhagavan's Surprise Visit

On the 22nd day, I was discharged from the military hospital and left for Madras (Chennai). When I arrived in Chennai, I came to know that Bhagavan had come to Kodaikanal. I immediately wanted to go to Kodaikanal to be of some service to Bhagavan. My wife advised me to consult my cardiologist about going to Kodaikanal. My cardiologist Dr. Lakshmikanthan took my E.C.G. and echocardiogram, after which he shook his head and said, "Sorry sir, you cannot go to Kodaikanal which is a cold and high altitude hill station. If anything happens to you there, I will not be responsible." I felt bad and sad that I would not go to see Bhagavan.

Our all-knowing God Sai has said, "If you take one step towards Me, I will take ten steps towards you." True to His saying,

Bhagavan noticed that I was in the habit of being hasty. So, He advised me to avoid "hurry, worry and curry." By following Bhagavan's divine advice in my life, I am still going strong, not out, at the ripe age of 86. Bhagavan advised me to follow the "4 Fs – follow the Master, face the devil, fight to the end and finish the game." I tried to follow this advice of His to the maximum both in my army career and in civil life.

Bhagavan came one day all the way to Chennai without any previous notice to bless this humble soldier devotee. That morning I was in my night dress, reading the morning newspaper and my wife was talking to the lady next door about servant problem when our Bhagavan's maroon coloured Mercedes Benz car came and halted in front of our gate. My wife shouted, "Swami has come." Our gate was locked. I threw the newspaper away and took the gate key. As I was about to descend the steps to open the gate, Bhagavan shouted, "Don't come down the steps. You are a heart patient. Throw the key. I will open the gate and come in." I threw the key to my wife who opened the gate and Bhagavan came in. As soon as Bhagavan came inside our house, the ever-merciful God Sai placed His Divine Hand on my chest and said, "I have come all the way to Chennai to save you from having a second



heart attack.” Having spent about one hour in our humble house, blessing me, my wife and children, the generous Sai Bhagavan asked me to get into His car and took me with Him to Sundaram Sai Mandir. There He made me sit on a chair next to Him and announced to all the devotees assembled there, “I came to bless General Mahadevan; you are all lucky to get this extra Darshan.” Immediately after that, He left. That is all-loving God Sai who goes out of the way to bless and protect His devotees.

Bhagavan as Loving Father, Mother, Guru and God

Merciful and loving God Sai has been mother, father, Guru and God to me. Omniscient God Sai knew that I was worshipping him as Sai Ma. He told me on many occasions that your Sai Ma would never let you down if you continue to have faith in Sai Ma because Sai Ma is in you, with you, above you, below you and all around you. Out of infinite love, mercy and kindness, Bhagavan visited our official and rented houses sixteen times and blessed my family, relatives and friends. He also graciously performed house warming ceremony of our new house in Bengaluru on 18th June 1980 and visited it four times. During His visit to our house in Bengaluru in 2005, Bhagavan said that He would come again. Perhaps He would come now one of these days in His cosmic form.

Bhagavan has been a loving and affectionate father to me. In one of the numerous interviews I was lucky to get, Bhagavan noticed that I had not shaved

properly that day with my normal shaving set. He went into His bathroom and brought out His own shaving set with cartridges and gave to me for shaving from that day onwards. On many occasions, Bhagavan gave me opportunities to have breakfast, lunch and dinner with Him at Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan, Ooty, Kodaikanal, Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai. He gave me numerous gifts including four watches, six rings and three lockets with His portraits.

As Guru, Bhagavan gave many practical and pragmatic teachings about my personal life and official life. Bhagavan noticed that I was in the habit of being hasty. So, He advised me to avoid “hurry, worry and curry.” By following Bhagavan’s divine advice in my life, I am still going strong, not out, at the ripe age of 86. Bhagavan advised me to follow the “4 Fs – follow the Master, face the devil, fight to the end and finish the game.” I tried to follow this advice of His to the maximum both in my army career and in civil life. Bhagavan’s advice “Help Ever Hurt Never” and “Love All Serve All” was practised by me as Chairman, Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission in dealing with disciplinary cases and in selecting men and women for appointments in government jobs. Bhagavan’s advice “Think good, speak good and do good, that is the way to God” was practised by me as the State President of Sai Seva Organisation for 15 years and as Central Coordinator in Sai Organisation for Southern States. Bhagavan advised



me to do Namasmarana, and so I chant Gayatri Mantra in the morning, and the rest of the day and night, I chant Sai Gayatri.

I firmly believed and I still believe that our Beloved Bhagavan is the incarnation of all-powerful God and Poornavator. Time and again, Bhagavan has been proving to me that He is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent God. The Omnipotent God has been saving me from dangers, difficulties, diseases and near death situations. He saved me from Pakistan army bullets in Kashmir war and Bangladesh war, from Chinese mortar bombardment in 1963 and from foreign

mercenaries machine gunfire in 1962 when I was part of U.N. Peace Keeping Force in Congo (Africa). He also miraculously saved me from helicopter crashes, car accidents and snow avalanches when I was General Officer, commanding a mountain division in snow-covered areas of Ladakh in Kashmir on Indo-Tibetan border. One may wonder why our Beloved Bhagavan has been so very kind, merciful, generous and loving towards an ordinary soldier devotee like me. Perhaps this is because I surrendered my mind, heart, body and soul at His Divine Lotus Feet as He is the sole refuge of those who surrender to Him.

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Sai Organisation with Swami as our Divine Charioteer is now our duty. "Service to man is service to God," should become our reality. "Hands that help are holier than lips that pray," should be reaffirmed. And where does it start? As Swami directs, family Satsang. It is the vital forum for inculcating human values in the lives of our children so that they can become exemplary citizens and ambassadors of His divine teachings.

The future of the world lies in the hands of parents and teachers. To bring about peace in the world, we must first bring it about in ourselves. We must all become change agents, manifesting the values of Sai. Of all the acquisitions in the world, character is most important. If you have character, all else will be added on to you. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the example

you want others to be." What does Swami really want from us? "Be like a beacon in the sky radiating love and light. That is what you can do for Swami."

As we celebrate and commemorate Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi Day, let us all remind ourselves that our mission has begun. As Sai has said, "I will protect you like the eyelids protect the eyes." "Be about My work, My beloved Bhaktas. Your breath will carry the scent of the blossoms of heaven, your examples will be that of angels, your joy will be My joy." May Lord Sai ever guide our footsteps! May the power of Sai ever protect us! May the love of Sai ever comfort us and may the loving Lord Sai ever keep us in the palm of His Hand!



SHOWER OF SWAMI'S SWEET SURPRISES

MY FIRST VISIT TO Prasanthi Nilayam in 1966 was momentous and memorable. But not being a person of religious disposition, I could not claim the visit to invoke any spiritual import. Still, within the next five months I was impelled to go there three times, which I subsequently realised was due to Bhagavan's divine magnetic attraction and incomparable platonic love. Every time I went, He used to say on seeing me, "Hey Rowdy! When did you come?" That rewarding pleasant experience enticed me to His Lotus Feet.

Swami's Surprise Visit to my House

In 1968 when Baba visited Hyderabad, He stayed there for a week. Two days before He was to return to Puttaparthi, a list of eight names was finalised whose houses Baba wished to visit. I was then

with Him. He told Prasadaraao, "You inform them secretly and individually that Swami will be visiting their houses some time tomorrow. Do not give any indication of time. Tell them that Swami's visit is only to sanctify their houses and bless their family members. Let them avoid informing their relatives and friends. It is only in their interest. More number of people they inform, more number of people will blame them for not informing." Swami made an exception in the case of Dr. Pishvekar, a Maharashtrian, who was working as a research scientist in a multinational company. He and His wife were ardent devotees of Shirdi Sai Baba. Swami called him and said, "I know you will be busy in the afternoon in your factory. I will visit your house at 10.30 a.m." "It is very kind of You, Swami; that time will suit me admirably," said Pishvekar touching His feet.



That afternoon, Pishvekar and his wife met me and my wife, and requested importunately that both of us go over to their house next day by 8.30 a.m. to guide them in the traditional ways of decoration, welcoming Swami, garlanding, preparation of special dishes, Arati, etc. Since we were close friends, we agreed to stay there till 10.20 a.m. and leave since it would be embarrassing for us to be there during Swami's

visit. Accordingly, when we were about to leave their house at 10.20 a.m., there was a telephone call for Pishvekar enquiring whether I was there. After confirming, Dr. Pishvekar gave me the receiver. It was from my well-wisher and State President, Prasadarao. He said admonishingly, "Where were you since morning, bloody fool! You rush to your home. Swami is coming there by 11 o'clock. Hurry up."

Astonished at the sudden message of Swami, we started forthwith on my scooter. What! With the peak hour for traffic and consistent intermittent jams at junctions and



Swami stretched His hand towards me and said, "Poor fellow! Having called you, I don't want to disappoint you." When I did not come forward, Swami wrapped the Linga in the handkerchief, leaving aside the plate, walked up to me and put it in my shirt pocket. Bewildered, I shouted, "Swami! I don't want it. I don't know how to worship it." He came to me, laid His hand on my shoulder and said, "Be calm. Lingam is Sivam. Sivam is Mangalam (auspiciousness). You need not do any Puja. Daily in the morning, you bathe it well with two spoons of water and drink it. It will bestow on you long life, good health and prosperity."



irresistible volley of silly questions of my nagging wife from the pillion seat as to why like other devotees I did not pray to Swami to visit our house and fix up a time and with all the breakneck speed at my command, I could reach our house before 11 a.m. just in time to open the door for receiving Swami who had alighted from the car just then. More or less, all three of us entered my house simultaneously.

However, Swami had overtaken us inside the house, walking with agility surveying our small two-room tenement. In the dining room, there was a small niche duly decorated, where my wife performed Puja. Swami pulled for Himself a chair and sat in front of it and commanded both of us to sit at His feet. We obeyed implicitly, with nothing ready to offer our Divine guest.

I made bold to say apologetically, "Swami! I didn't dare to invite You to this small cottage of mine." Swami said, "This is big enough for Me. I am not Sai Geeta. I have visited smaller places. If you call all



your friends and relatives, it will be small. That is why I didn't tell you in advance." My wife was about to get up, saying that she would bring some snacks from the kitchen. Swami said, "I have eaten enough of what you prepared in Pishvekar's house." I informed Swami that the government had allotted that house to me on hire purchase. I will shortly make some extensions to make it a little more roomy. Standing up, Swami said, "Then I will come with advance intimation." After we had Padanamaskar, Swami asked my wife to get a tumbler of drinking water. She brought a silver tumbler full of water. Swami dipped His fingers in the water and said, "Distribute this with a spoon to all your friends and relatives." After receiving a simple and silent Arati, He got into His car and drove away.

The Eventful Night of Sivarathri 1969

In the year 1969, I went to Parthi along with my wife for Sivarathri. During Bhajan after Swami's repeated hiccups and sipping a flask full of warm water, which was a tormenting scene for the devotees, a Sphatika (crystal) Linga emanated out of His mouth amidst thunderous clapping. From the platform of the then existing Santhi Vedika in front of the Mandir, He showed it to all, holding it in between His thumb and forefinger. It was about three inches long and one-and-a-half inches wide, in oval shape.

He then sat down, with His elbow resting erect on the table and His chin in the cup of His palm of the right hand. Bhajan was in full swing. We were waiting for Swami to return to His residence in Mandir. He

continued to sit in that position and went into what was reported to be a trance, leaving the body cold, motionless, pulseless and breathless. After 15 minutes, when they found Prof. Kasturi, Sri Raja Reddy and Dr. Seetharamaiah panicky, some ladies started wailing aloud. Prof. Kasturi prayed to the gathering to continue Bhajan. After 45 minutes, during which there was more pandemonium than Bhajan, He regained His consciousness, stood up and walked to His residence amidst continuous applause.

My Discomfiture and Divine Grace

In those days, there were no rooms or bathing facilities in the Ashram. There were four or five thatched hutments outside the Ashram, where enclosures were made with mats of coconut leaves with a cloth hanging at the entrance, serving as bathrooms. A bucket of warm water was given for a quarter of a rupee. There would be washermen waiting to collect the soiled linen and get them back next day after washing and ironing.

After the eventful night, next morning I went to my usual hut, discarded the soiled clothes, handed over to the washerman and had my bath. I donned fresh clothes and while I was walking out of the hut in a hurry, I skidded and fell flat on the slushy soil, dirtying the back of my shirt and pant. I went back to the hut and searched for the washerman to collect my discarded clothes to wear since I could not go to the Ashram with those dirty clothes. The washerman was reported to have gone for washing. I was nonplussed and with no choice I



wound a towel around the waist and with banian on ran to the Ashram. As my ill-luck would have it, my wife locked the common suitcase and went away to the ladies side. Swami started His Discourse. I sat hiding myself behind a bush.

The Discourse followed by Bhajan and Arati were over after an hour. I was anxiously waiting for my wife to return for more than fifteen minutes. There was

no sign of her. Evidently, she had gone to have her leisurely breakfast. Right at that time, a Veda Pathasala student spotted me and asked me to go to Swami's room as He wanted me. Cursing my wife and her breakfast, I started feverishly searching for someone known to me to borrow some clothes. Suddenly, my eyes fell on a shirt peeping out of the holdall of my friend Lakshmana Rao, President of our Samithi. When I pulled it out, it came along with the pyjama. At that time, the wife of Lakshmana Rao saw my plight. Her husband had gone to the canteen. Meanwhile, another student came with a message from Swami to come at once. Despite her protestations that

We were waiting for Swami to return to His residence in Mandir. He continued to sit in that position and went into what was reported to be a trance, leaving the body cold, motionless, pulseless and breathless. After 15 minutes, when they found Prof. Kasturi, Sri Raja Reddy and Dr. Seetharamaiah panicky, some ladies started wailing aloud. Prof. Kasturi prayed to the gathering to continue Bhajan. After 45 minutes, during which there was more pandemonium than Bhajan, He regained His consciousness, stood up and walked to His residence amidst continuous applause.

they were soiled clothes, I wore those oversized clothes and ran to Swami's room, forgetting even to comb my hair.

When I entered the interview room, to my consternation I found eight VIPs, who were familiar to me and to whom Swami was showing the sacred Linga of the previous night. It was placed on a white handkerchief in a silver plate. They were touching

the silver plate and offering their obeisance. Turning towards me, He exclaimed, "What Ramana! Look at these people. How well they are dressed! What has happened to you? Why this dishevelled hair and shabby clothes! You look like a circus buffoon!"

Since it was too long a story to narrate, I silently stood, crestfallen. Swami continued His harangue, "Chi! Chi! Chi! You go and stand in the corner. I wanted to show you the last night's sacred Linga. That is why I sent for you." I could see all those there looking at me with disgust. After a while, He happened to soften and asked, "Do you want to see it?" "No Swami," I told Him the truth. Then Swami stretched His hand



towards me and said, "Poor fellow! Having called you, I don't want to disappoint you." When I did not come forward, Swami wrapped the Linga in the handkerchief, leaving aside the plate, walked up to me and put it in my shirt pocket. Bewildered, I shouted, "Swami! I don't want it. I don't know how to worship it." He came to me, laid His hand on my shoulder and said, "Be calm. Lingam is Sivam. Sivam is Mangalam (auspiciousness). You need not do any Puja. Daily in the morning, you bathe it well with two spoons of water and drink it. It will bestow on you long life, good health and prosperity."

I bent down on my knees and touched His feet and muttered, "Swami! I will go out and change my clothes." Swami, with a winsome smile and blessing me with His hand on my head said, 'go'. While I was opening the door, I heard Swami telling them, "Poor fellow! He fell down..." I came out freely breathing and reconstructing the way He had dramatised the event with His natural sense of humour and immensity of love. After I changed into my own clothes, I secretly hid the Linga under the clothes in my suitcase. I didn't tell my wife about it since she was prone to get excited and make an exhibition of it.

Grand Function of Trilingabhishekam

In October 1971, Swami came to Hyderabad and laid the foundation of Sivam on 25th October. On that day, at that site with Bhagavan's suggestion and blessings and in His Divine Presence, a unique function called "Trilingabhishekam" was organised. Three of us from Hyderabad,

namely, Desikachari, Prasadarao and myself were the recipients of Lingas materialised by Him in 1968, 1970 and 1969 respectively. He directed us to bring the Lingas from our houses, place them in a silver plate and jointly perform Puja in His Divine Presence. The function was a glorious extravaganza conceived by Him, where a marathon number of 5,000 people were fed sumptuously. On that occasion, Swami graciously presented to all three of us silver plates and other silver articles for our daily Puja. My parents also were there, having come from Kakinada at His behest.

Another Visit of Swami to my House

A day before Bhagavan was to leave for Parthi, Dr. Bhagavantam invited Him to His residence for lunch. It was a fabulous twenty-course lunch. At 2 'o clock after lunch, just before getting into the car, Swami called me and with His hand on my shoulder whispered into my ear, "I am coming to your house for dinner at 8 p.m. Since your parents also are here, they will also share the Ananda! I think you can arrange. This is the advance intimation I promised. Make it simple and limited to your family members."

The shower of His kindness was so sudden, I blabbered, "Very kind of You, Swami. I will arrange. Kindly permit me to invite the eight students, including my two sons, accompanying You and some important people of our Organisation." The all-knowing Swami said, "You arrange it

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Effulgence of Divine Glory

ICE-AXE BLESSED BY BABA SAVED MY LIFE



AT THAT TIME, I WAS preparing to go on a pilgrimage to the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, one of the most difficult treks in the Himalayas. When I went to meet Baba, I took my high-altitude equipment with me, including ropes, rock clamps, and my trusted ice-axe, an indispensable tool for negotiating precipitous icy terrain in the high mountains.

Baba graciously enquired after my welfare and I said that I would like Him to bless my adventure. My hostess suggested I give my ice-axe to be blessed. He smiled, took it and began to ask some searching questions about the composition of the steel used in its making. His students who were there knew more about it than I did. Suddenly, He produced Vibhuti from thin air – without the circular movements of the palm that I had seen in public – and proceeded to rub it with great intensity on one side – the pick side of the ice-axe. Then with an air of finality He said, “You will be successful,” and handed back the ice-axe.

I do not know what constitutes a miracle, but I do know that a month later, on 26th July, while climbing into the Sanctuary, the pick of the ice-axe saved my life. Traversing some tricky wet slabs of rock-cut croppings above the Rishi Ganga gorge at Rhamani, I was aided by two excellent Garhwali porters. They were so skilful and daring that they disdained to use any rope and would cross the wet slabs sloping over the edge of the gorge on their bare feet. They would go ahead fixing the rope, then sit on their haunches and wait for me with all my climbing regalia to haul myself up.

We began going up a narrow earth gully, which was particularly slippery and treacherous. There were no reliable footholds anywhere and we had to make them as we went. I looked back into the yawning chasm that led a thousand feet straight down into the huge gorge carved out by the rushing river below.

I kicked a toehold in the damp earth and reaching up, whacked the pick of the ice-axe into the earth above. To my dismay, the six-inch pick clanged



against rock after it had gone in only three inches, not enough to hold any weight. At the same moment, the earth under my toehold crumbled away and I felt myself sinking gently with the earth until I was dangling above the gorge supported only by the pick of the axe. For one agonising moment, my full weight came on the axe; my thoughts were more of self-disgust at my incompetence than the fear of hurtling down a thousand feet to certain death.

Somehow, those three inches of steel did not slice through the soft earth but held me long enough for the porters to back down and grab me. After a few more close shaves, we were successful and reached our holy destination – the Nanda Devi Sanctuary – on the sacred day of Guru Purnima. There were other hair-raising incidents on our return trip, but thanks to Baba's grace, we came through all right and I am alive today to narrate the story.

– Excerpted from *"Sri Sathya Sai Baba: A Life"* by Bill Aitken as reported in *"Sathyam Sivam Sundaram - 5"* by Sri B.N. Narasimha Murthy.

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on the terrace. It will accommodate about 50 people. It will be a moonlight dinner." I touched His feet and He blessed me with His hand on my head.

With the help of my brothers and Seva Dal brethren, the terrace was well lit and decorated. Swami arrived punctually at 8 p.m. and directed all the invitees to go to the terrace and be seated, while He went into the ground floor rooms where about 20 of our family members were seated in a disciplined and orderly manner. He told them that He would come again after dinner. By Baba's infinite grace, it was a simple delightful moonlight dinner, with all homemade preparations. My mother and wife served Swami. 48 people, most of

them from our Organisation, were seated on the terrace squatting. Swami was in a hilarious mood talking and joking with them. At 8.30 p.m., He asked my father, mother and wife to go down and wait. Swami sat there till 9.05 p.m. He then made a kind and unforgettable announcement, "I know your hands have got dried up, sitting without washing. After I go down, all of you go down, wash your hands and straightaway go and sit in your vehicles. There is no place in the ground floor to wait. That is why I spent an hour with you all here."

Swami was kind enough to spend another 20 minutes with our family members, and gave Padanamaskar and blessings before He got into the car.



ON MY FIRST TRIP TO INDIA TO have the Darshan of our Beloved Bhagavan, I was in Madras, now called Chennai. I wanted to know Him. I always thought that if I had lived two thousand years ago, I would have travelled to meet Jesus. After hearing about Swami, I said to myself that I had to know Him. So, I came to India. He was on a tour and was going to arrive that day at Sundaram, Chennai. So, there I was with at least 50,000 people. No one knew when He was arriving. But suddenly my heart started

see the cultural programme. When Swami sat down in His chair, I thought it was a good opportunity to introduce myself. So, I stood up and went up to Him. No one stopped me. I reached Swami and gave Him my visiting card. Swami looked at me and accepted the card. He smiled, clasped my hand and told me, "You are very lucky."

Yes, dear brothers and sisters, I am very lucky, and so are all of you. We just have to be aware and fill ourselves with Ananda. We must take full advantage of this opportunity and intensify our Sadhana.

Leonardo Gutter

ROYAL PATH TO GOD

Let's all become torch-bearers of His Immortal Love. Then we will all do our part to achieve His wish that all the worlds should live in peace and happiness. Samasta Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu. May we all become the best expression of His Message! May we all become pure channels of His Infinite and Divine Love!

to beat fast. I thought I had some heart problem. And at that very moment, Swami arrived. Since that day, before He came to give Darshan, my heart would start beating fast. I realised that my heart recognised Him before my mind. That is why Swami said that we must follow our heart; it will lead us always to the Truth.

Always Remember God

On that trip, I was one day in Abbotsbury, and there was a public meeting. I had the opportunity to be seated no more than 10 or 20 metres from where Swami was to

The most important of all the spiritual practices is to remember God. Remember Him all day long, as many times as possible. Then we will be living in constant Divine Presence.

Please dear brothers and sisters, realise that we have a problem with the glasses through which we see the world. Let's throw away the bad glasses and from today onward use Swami's glasses, the glasses of love. Let's see the world with the eyes of Swami. When we wear Sai glasses, we will not be able to criticise



anyone, because we will feel that everyone is doing his best, with the best motivation. Let us see the world only with the eyes of Swami, let us feel and think only love. This is the Royal Path to God.

Eternal Bond

We can do lots of service; we can meditate for hours. We can do Pranayama, chant Mantras. But unless we understand and put into practice the most fundamental teaching of Swami, we will not advance. We have to add the Sai quality to all those activities. To intensify our Sadhana means to be more loving. With the “eyes of Sai” we will see all as one, we will see all as Sai, we will stop criticising our fellow beings and feel that we are all one.

It is important to be aware what it means to be His devotees. Many, many lives ago, He made a sacred bonding ceremony with our souls. He took us in His fold and said, “Yes. I will protect you, I will guide you, I will be always with you.” This promise and bond is not just for this life; it is forever, eternal, until we awaken and realise that we are one with Him. Now it is our turn to accept Him, to become His devotees. The real devotee is not the one who loves God. This really does not matter so much, for it could be very emotional and superficial feeling. The real devotee is the one who lives in such a way that he becomes deserving of God’s love. Each one of us has received the Divine Touch and a Divine Call. This is the biggest miracle of Sai.

Wonderful things are happening all over the world. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai

Baba is changing the hearts and minds of people everywhere, many of whom were not on the spiritual path. In this process of personal transformation, they change their perspectives and values, and they become more concerned with the needs of their fellow human beings. They start to offer service to those in need and begin performing personal Sadhana. This is happening on a global basis, and it is the most wonderful miracle of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He is changing the lives of millions and millions of people all over the world.

Sai is an infinite force and source of love, which is guiding millions and millions of people all over the world to become better persons, to embark on the process of self-transformation. Most of them never came to India to be in His Divine Presence, but they feel His Presence in their lives, His protection and guidance. These people, as we all did, are receiving the Divine Touch.

Source of Divine Energy

Once, when the Sai movement started to grow in Brazil, there was another spiritual movement that became worried and jealous. They decided to send one of their leaders to Prasanthi Nilayam. That person is very famous in Brazil and has spiritual Siddhis like being able to see auras. So he was sent to see Bhagavan and prove that Bhagavan was not what He proclaimed to be. When he came back to Brazil, he gave his first speech in a meeting, with five thousand people attending it. He said that angels surrounded the whole Ashram. He said that a spiritual light descended on



everyone, cleansing them and filling all with Divine love when Swami came out for Darshan. He saw what most of us don't see and, being a true spiritual aspirant, said the truth about Swami.

I would like to share another story, a Sai devotee, a brother who used to stay here six months every year, and was seated in the verandah, once took a photograph of Bhagavan. He developed the film and saw something extraordinary in the photograph. He had the opportunity to show it to Swami and he asked Him what was that appeared in the photograph. Swami told Him that in His grace He had let him take a photograph of the Divine Energy emanating from Him all the time. I have one copy of this photograph in my house. And let me tell you that it is wonderful. From Swami's body, rays of different colours were irradiating, some in the form of spirals of Divine Energy. Suspended in the middle of the air were also words of light. You know when Swami moved His hand in the air like writing something, well there were words of light floating in front of Him. With our eyes, we were only able to see the physical form; we were not able to see the Divine Energy emanating from Him all the time. Our physical eyes cannot see the incredible spiritual power that resides here in Prasanthi Nilayam. This divine power is here now and will remain here forever. Please dear brothers and sisters, don't ever stop coming to Prasanthi Nilayam. Continue to fill yourselves with this incredible Divine Energy.

We may ask ourselves whether anything has changed with the absence of

Wonderful things are happening all over the world. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is changing the hearts and minds of people everywhere, many of whom were not on the spiritual path. In this process of personal transformation, they change their perspectives and values, and they become more concerned with the needs of their fellow human beings. They start to offer service to those in need and begin performing personal Sadhana. This is happening on a global basis, and it is the most wonderful miracle of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

the physical form of Bhagavan. Let me tell you: everything has changed and nothing has changed. Now we have to move from the form to the formless. But please don't forget that His form is very alive in our hearts. It is imprinted there, and gives us Darshan. We have just to go within instead of outside to have Darshan.

Also, and this is very important, the divine energy embodied in that beautiful form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is eternal and has not gone anywhere; it is everywhere. That omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Divine Energy which manifested in our lives is completely alive; it is eternal. It continues to guide us, protect us, and manifest in so many forms in our lives. It is still listening to our prayer



and answering it, it is helping us wherever we are. This is will never stop.

Let us Become Pure Channels of Bhagavan's Divine Love

Let me tell you something very important. The Sai Organisation is the expression of the Will of Bhagavan. There is no such thing as Indian Organisation or International Organisation, we are all one. It is one in spirit and in action. We are united by the love of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and our desire is to serve in His Mission. When Bhagavan formed the Prasanthi Council, He gave its members a Divine Command: "Go to every corner of the world and spread My Message." Let us share the joy that Sai gave us with one and all. Let us share His Message of spiritual redemption with all. Let us be willing to offer ourselves fully at His Divine Lotus Feet. Let us all become torch-bearers of His Immortal Love. Then we will all do our part to achieve His wish that all the worlds should live in peace and happiness.

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Aradhana (worship) of Bhagavan, who gave the message of unity and spirituality to mankind.

This was followed by a devotional music concert by Smt. Nithya Santhoshini, a renowned singer. Beginning her concert at about 6 o'clock, the distinguished singer suffused the entire milieu with devotional fervour by singing popular devotional songs which included "Allah Tero Naam,

It is important to be aware what it means to be His devotees. Many, many lives ago, He made a sacred bonding ceremony with our souls.

He took us in His fold and said, "Yes. I will protect you, I will guide you, I will be always with you."

This promise and bond is not just for this life; it is forever, eternal, until we awaken and realise that we are one with Him. Now it is our turn to accept Him, to become His devotees.

Samasta Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu. May we all become the best expression of His Message! May we all become pure channels of His Infinite and Divine Love!

The sun may fade from the sky one day, but the fame and glory of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba will never fade; it will shine brighter and brighter forever!

Ishwar Tero Naam," "Sai Baba Bolo, Sai Baba Bolo," "Atma Rama Ananda Ramana," "Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye." At the conclusion of her programme, the singer and her accompanying artistes were honoured with clothes and gifts. This was followed by Bhajans. Meanwhile, Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a close with Arati at 7.10 p.m.



Compassionate Eyes

*Every time I come for Darshan
every time He passes by
every time I have the good fortune
of being in His proximity
the foremost yearning
and desire in the heart
is that His eyes speak to me.*

*Those magnetic loving compassionate
all-knowing eyes
convey to me as only God can
what I might most need
at that point of time.*

*Perhaps love
or courage and strength
or self-confidence
or to carry on nevertheless
or health which might be wanting.*

*Those beautiful eyes
sometimes seem to say
What are you waiting for
Why are you hesitant
Jump into the ocean of abundant love
Swim to your heart's content
and dive deep into them
to discover the invaluable treasures
the joy of which
you cannot even comprehend
till you experience it.*

*At times
the motherly comfort in His eyes
makes you forget
all your travails and troubles
and gives you a sense of equipoise
that He will take care.*

– Vijay Yadalam



THE ROBE..

Shitu Chudasama

IF I WERE EVER ASKED, WHAT is the greatest miracle that I have ever seen Bhagavan perform in my lifetime, it would have to be the unfolding, blossoming and spiritual transformation of Sai Youth. Though they are separated by land, sky, oceans and countries, yet Bhagavan continues to touch their lives in a myriad of wonderful and unique ways. This I have seen with my own eyes as I have travelled from one zone to another of the International Sai Organisation. Generally, man travels from church to temple, from synagogue to mosque in search of God. However, during my travels, I can truthfully say that I have seen God in the eyes of these young persons.

The Vital Role of Youth

Throughout the centuries, youth have been at the centre of the most important movements in history, and signify a key engine of human development and a source that does not deplete. Youth have been main agents of change in communities. If you go from one nation to another, you will find that young people have bonded together, come together, acted, responded and have been able to shape communities, nations and ideologies. Swami has said that youth have the potential to inspire and make a difference and have the power to guide others. He has further said that the future of any nation depends on her youth. He had long ago emphasised that

the imagination, ideals, and energies of young men and women were vital for the future development and continuance of the Sathya Sai Organisation. That is why He gave them so much of His time and attention over the years. It is therefore important that we invest in the capabilities of youth and involve them in the decision making process. These are two important musts.

Down through the ages, God has spoken to His devotees in many ways, through thunder, burning bushes, angelic messengers, prophets and divine incarnations. There is also a story in the



Once in a meeting with Bhagavan, He asked me, “Who was with you before your birth? Who will be with you after death? In the beginning, there is God and at the end there is only God...

God has no beginning and no end, He is beyond birth and death. He is in you, with you, above you, below you. He is Eternal!” Swami gave a lifetime of service to mankind. We the youth of the International Sai Organisation must promise to continue His work and spread His message during our lifetime. Our lives will then become His message.



Bible about God speaking to Elijah through a whisper. Though Swami is physically no longer with us, we must remember that He continues to speak to us, guide us and teach us. We merely have to go within. It is in the stillness of our hearts and minds that we will hear His voice. We must never forget that the work which He has started through us will always continue. We must remember that Swami works through us in two ways, the work He does in us and the work He does through us. In Swami's unique style, the work He does in us always results in the work He does through us. This work He does through us accomplishes one central thing. It makes us divine. Therefore, we must all be confident that He who began the good work in us will continue that work so that He may do even more good work through us, and we may become a bright shining light for His good purpose.

The Power of the Robe

Something most profound and significant took place during the World Youth Conference in 2007. Those of you who were present would have witnessed the wonderful sight of Bhagavan distributing hundreds and thousands of His sacred orange robes to many of the 6,000 youth delegates who had assembled from all over the world for the Youth Conference. It was a beautiful sight for all to behold. The power of these robes should never be underestimated. It reminds me of a story in the Bible – Luke, Chapter 8:

A man named Jairus had invited Jesus to his home. As Jesus was on his way, a woman who had been ill for twelve years, and who could not be cured came up



Since the last World Youth Conference in 2007, the International Youth Council has been extremely busy, building a solid structure for the youth, a programme of activities and more importantly supporting the elders with all the existing projects and activities of the Sai Organisation. Bhagavan planted the seed and our elders nurtured this seed into a big strong tree. Now the youth must prune and look after this tree so that all future generations can take comfort and refuge under this tree. What is this tree? It is our Sai Organisation, the sacred organisation that bears the name of Divinity.



behind Jesus and touched the edge of his robe, and immediately she was cured.

“Who touched me”? Jesus asked, “Someone touched me; I know that because the power has gone out from me.”

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told him why she had touched his robe and how she had been instantly healed. Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

Just a mere touch of the hem of Jesus' robe could heal a person. You can all imagine the power of Bhagavan's Divine robe.



Swami will Guide

After the World Youth Conference in 2007, I had the good fortune of thanking Bhagavan for everything that He had done for the youth. My wife and I also thanked Him for the robes, to which Swami replied, "Tell the youth to keep the robe in their prayer room or under their pillow." He continued in a deep and mystical way, "Tell them that Swami will guide." He also went on to say that even those youth who had not received a robe would also be guided and looked after by Him. Those sacred robes have gone all over the world. This has resulted in many wonderful and breathtaking miracles and monumental achievements of the youth.

One of these wonderful events took place last July at Prasanthi Nilayam. With Bhagavan's grace and blessings, 440 outstanding and accomplished youth leaders gathered from around the world for this important and historic World Youth Conference to take Swami's Divine Mission to new and greater heights. Youth leaders from over 85 countries, many of whom have held several positions in the Sai Organisation, many of whom hold senior jobs in multinational industries, many of whom are leaders in their own right and well accomplished in their chosen careers, and many of whom have been active participants in the Youth Programme, all gathered to plan and progress the activities of the International Youth Programme to

its next natural phase. Furthermore, the youth promised Swami that they would never stop and continue to serve in the Organisation until their last breath. This is the promise made to Bhagavan.

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We must always remember that Swami will always be there to guide us. Once in a meeting with Bhagavan, He asked me, "Who was with you before your birth? Who will be with you after death? In the beginning, there is God and at the end there is only God...God has no beginning and no end, He is beyond birth and death. He is in you, with you, above you, below you. He is Eternal!" Swami gave a lifetime of service to mankind. We the youth of the International Sai Organisation must promise to continue His work and spread His message during our lifetime. Our lives will then become His message.

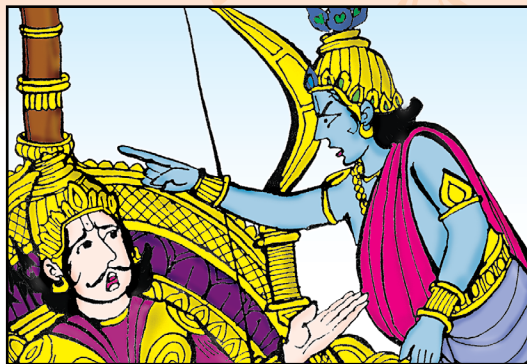
Expansion of love is life; contraction of love is death. All are children of God.
All are sparks of the Divine.

— Baba

Arjuna's Pride

Chinna Katha

THOSE WERE THE DAYS OF Mahabharata war. At the end of the 9th day of the war, Arjuna returned with Krishna from the battlefield filled with excitement of victory. On that day, ego entered his mind and he considered Krishna merely a charioteer of his chariot and himself as the cause of the victory. Krishna stopped the chariot near the camp of Arjuna and asked him, "Brother-in-law, get down from the chariot." As is the common practice these days that the driver of the car gets down from the car first and opens the door of the car to enable the owner to get down from it, Arjuna wanted Krishna to observe the same decorum and get down first. He asked Him with pride and impertinence, "Brother-in-law, You should get down first." In reply, Krishna said to him, "Brother-in-law, you get down and go inside." But Arjuna was stubborn and said to Krishna, "You get down first and I will get down after that only." Then Krishna sternly commanded Arjuna, "No, no. You have to get down first." In this way, there were arguments and counter arguments between Arjuna and Krishna for some time. In the end, Arjuna unwillingly got down from the chariot fearing what Krishna might do if he did not obey Him. Krishna then ordered him to go inside. Arjuna was surprised and did not understand why Krishna was ordering him so forcefully like that. As Arjuna went inside, Krishna jumped down from the chariot. As soon



When Krishna sternly ordered Arjuna to get down, he was left with no alternative but to get down from the chariot first.

as He did so, the chariot was engulfed in flames and reduced to ashes. Then Arjuna asked Krishna, "What is all this?" Krishna said to Arjuna, smilingly, "It is for the same reason that I asked you to get down from the chariot first, though you were not willing to do so. In today's war, Bhishma attacked you with fierce fiery weapons. In order to protect you, I suppressed these under My feet. If I had got down from the chariot before you, you would have been burned down along with the chariot."

Thinking of the dreadful consequence if he had not got down from the chariot first, Arjuna was filled with repentance. Such is the veil of delusion which covers up the divinity inherent in man and inflates his ego. Reposing his full faith in Krishna, Arjuna worshipped Him with great devotion. Lord Krishna, therefore, was always with him and protected him. We can attain the grace of the Lord by following His command.



NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

FIJI



FROM 16TH TO 28TH October 2011, Dr. Nandanachandran, National Medical Coordinator, Sai Medical Unit, Australia along with a medical team visited Suva, Fiji to conduct



Thirteen major operations were performed in the neurosurgical camp in Suva, Fiji.

an annual neurosurgical camp. Over 110 patients including 24 children were lovingly provided free neurological consultations at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital. Thirteen major operations were performed to treat various disorders including brain tumours and abscesses. Lumbar and cervical Laminectomies were also done. Local doctors and nurses were given hands-on training by the visiting team. Dr. Nandanachandran gave a lecture at the Suva Private Hospital addressing the doctors and the staff. The Minister for Health, Government of Fiji, expressed

appreciation for the work done by the visiting neurosurgical team.

THAILAND

On 18th December 2011, over 70 Sathya Sai volunteers including Sathya Sai youth and SSE children visited the Good Shepherd Sisters Home as part of their annual Christmas service activities. The home shelters about 100 needy children (girls) and a few small babies. Sathya Sai youth organised games for the children and performed instrumental carols. The SSE children sang Christmas carols, and the children from the Good Shepherd Sisters Home joined the celebrations by presenting several dances. Sathya Sai volunteers served the children a sumptuous homemade dinner, and necessary staples



Sai devotees played games with inmates of a home for needy children and served meals to them.

such as rice, sugar, coffee, milk and cookies were distributed.

On 24th December 2011, Christmas was celebrated at Sai Prashanti Centre



in Bangkok, attended by about 80 people, including 30 children. The programme began with Veda chanting, followed by Bhajans and carols. SSE Children were thrilled to have a visit from Santa Claus, who distributed gifts. The guest speaker, Sri S.S. Naganand, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust gave an inspiring talk, sharing Bhagavan's love and His teachings. Rajdamnern Sathya Sai Centre in Bangkok celebrated Christmas on 25th December 2011, with about 30 children from nearby slums taking part in the celebrations. Sathya Sai youth planned games for the children and distributed prizes.

Rayong province is located on the coast approximately 200 kilometres southeast of Bangkok. On 11th September 2011, staff and children of the Sathya Sai School, along with more than 50 Sathya Sai volunteers from Rayong and Bangkok, took part in a beach-cleaning service project.

UNITED KINGDOM

About 150 medical professionals attended the U.K.'s First Sai Ideal Healthcare Conference, held on 17th September 2011 at the Henley Business School, University of Reading. The conference was inaugurated with prayer invoking Bhagavan's blessings. In his welcome address, Dr. Puvanachandra, Consultant Ophthalmologist, highlighted Bhagavan's emphasis on the importance of practising the principles of Sai Ideal Healthcare in one's personal and professional life. His talk was followed by seven short presentations by senior medical



A section of the participants in the First Sai Ideal Healthcare Conference.

professionals and consultants who shared the happiness and joy they experienced while practising Bhagavan's healthcare guidelines in their daily professional duties.

During the afternoon session, all delegates were requested to utilise the opportunity to serve at the Sathya Sai Medical Institutions in Puttaparthi and Whitefield, India. A detailed presentation on international Sai medical camps was given, followed by sharing of heartwarming experiences of Bhagavan's grace and love, which had brought about miraculous healings and transformations even in remote parts of the world. The conference concluded with an inspiring talk by Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai International Medical Committee, and Chairman, Prasanthi Council, via live video link. Dr. Reddy stated that Bhagavan's global healthcare mission will continue to carry out His Divine Message of Universal Love with unabated enthusiasm and vigour. He also talked about many ongoing healthcare service projects in various countries of the world that are conducted on the principles of Sai Ideal Healthcare. A souvenir titled "Experiencing Kinship through Healthcare" was released on this occasion.



U. S. A.

Sathya Sai devotees from all 10 regions of the country, consisting of over 200 Sathya Sai Centres celebrated Bhagavan's 86th Birthday. Some of the celebrations were held on a regional basis with over 750 Sathya Sai devotees participating while others celebrated individually at



Devotees attending Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebrations.

their own Sathya Sai Centres. Auditoriums with beautifully decorated altars were filled to capacity by devotees participating in the celebrations. The programmes in general included Veda chanting, prayers to Bhagavan, inspiring presentations and talks on Bhagavan's teachings and sharing of experiences and Bhagavan's Divine Love by devotees including SSE children, Sathya Sai youth and alumni of Bhagavan's institutions. As a part of the celebrations, devotees shared Bhagavan's Divine Love with the community through a variety of heartwarming service projects that included various services offered to the needy, such as preparing and serving sumptuous meals, distributing non-perishable food items, winter coats, comforters, pillows, blankets, bedsheets,

hand-knitted scarves and hats, shoes, clothing, cleaning supplies, diapers and baby bottles; distributing gifts at hospitals, visiting nursing homes, lovingly offering free haircuts, administering free flu shots, distributing over-the-counter medicines, providing physical wellness checks and conducting tree-planting activities and gift drives. Envirocare initiatives encouraging energy-saving, bio-degradable composting and the practice of human values in environmental affairs were also enthusiastically undertaken.

The city of Oxnard, about 100 km northwest of Los Angeles, is an important agricultural centre, with its distinction as the strawberry and lima bean capital of California. A significant farm worker population and others in this area have income levels well below the recognised poverty line. On 16th October 2011, an annual free medical, dental and vision screening camp with food distribution was organised in Oxnard, with more than 60 medical professionals spanning 10 medical specialities and about 200



Over 660 needy persons were offered loving medical services in Oxnard.

volunteers rendering loving service to over 660 needy people. Medical screening tests included over 100 mammograms and Pap smear tests and more than 450 blood tests. Medical services offered to all who came for assistance included consultations in internal medicine, paediatrics, speciality medical services, dental and vision services, psychological assistance and nutrition education. The Lions Club Friends in Sight distributed over 360 pairs of eye glasses, and groceries were distributed to over 425 families, with each family receiving about 11 kg of non-perishable food items, including rice, beans, sugar, flour, cooking oil and cereals. People attending the camp were pleased with the services and expressed their gratitude. A 56-year-old lady, while expressing her gratitude for the loving services rendered at the camp, commented, "Race doesn't matter; religion doesn't matter; colour doesn't matter. We are one family."

FRANCE

Over the past two decades, seminars on Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) have been organised periodically. During May and October 2011, two such seminars were held which were attended by about 60 people from Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland and France. A team of trainers from the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, South Europe (ISSE-SE) and the European Sathya Sai Educare (ESSE) Institute took part in these seminars. The items discussed included "Teachers as Exemplars of the Human

Values Programme," "Unity of Head, Heart and Hand (3HV)," "Ceiling on Desires," "Unity of Faiths," and "Selfless Service through Offering Service to the Needy."

GERMANY

A public meeting was held on 23rd November 2011 at the town hall of Mainz to celebrate Bhagavan's 86th Birthday. On this occasion, a two-hour talk was given on "Sathya Sai Baba: Life, Teachings and Works." The programme, organised by the



"A Musical Journey through World's Religions" formed part of Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebration held at Mainz, Germany.

Sathya Sai Baba Organisation of Germany in collaboration with the local wing of the Indo-German Society included a musical journey through world's religions and a short talk by a former student of Bhagavan's school. At the end of the programme, the film, "His Work," was presented. All the delegates appreciated the programme, as well as the display of Sai literature and other media by the German Sathya Sai Book Centre.



NETHERLANDS

On 19th November 2011, Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebrations were organised in the city of Houten, with about 400 devotees attending. The festivities included Veda chanting, devotional singing, a National Sai Choir and sharing by devotees of their divine experiences.



Bhagavan's 86th Birthday was celebrated in the city of Houten on 19th November 2011.

Several devotees, including Sathya Sai youth, rendered loving service in organising these celebrations. Devotees from all parts of the country gathered to offer in unison their love and devotion to Bhagavan.

BELGIUM

Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations took place in the town of Overijse on 27th November 2011. The proceedings began with the reading of a message received by Charles Penn in 1979 from Bhagavan, followed by singing of uplifting Bhajans by all devotees and a study circle focusing on self-enquiry and sharing. The Belgian Sai Choir presented 18 songs, including an adapted version of a popular operatic aria by Italian composer, Giuseppe Verdi, retitled "Baba Nabucco." The peaceful



Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebrations held in the town of Overijse.

ambience reflected the love and unity felt throughout the celebrations.

SAUDI ARABIA

Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations were organised on 23rd November 2011 and 8th December 2011. On 23rd November, about 60 people attended the celebrations held at Riyadh Sai Centre. The proceedings included Sri Rudram chanting, a special Bhajan session, a birthday song and cake cutting. On 8th December, special celebrations were organised in a villa on the outskirts of Riyadh, attended by about



Devotees participating in Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebrations in Riyadh.

150 people. The stage for the celebrations included a replica of Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi. The programme began with an invocation dance, followed by soul-stirring rendition of Sarva Dharma (multifaith) devotional songs. A play titled, "The One in Many," by the devotees, including Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) children, highlighted Bhagavan's teaching that God is all names and all forms. The programme ended with a musical offering by children at the Maha Samadhi, followed by Mangal Arati.

– Sri Sathya Sai International Organisation

B H A R A T

Andhra Pradesh: With the help of local youth, Nellore Samithi Seva Dal volunteers cleaned in Karrikedu village an abandoned well on 2nd February 2012, chlorinated it, removed the garbage neatly and brought the well to regular use by the villagers.

Kadapa district Sai Organisation started mobile health services on 26th February 2012 at Kamalapuram. Initially started with antenatal check-ups and dental specialities, the mobile medical unit examined 78 dental patients and gave medicines to them. The unit also examined 10 pregnant women and gave one month full course medicines, such as iron, calcium, vitamin B-complex, etc., to them.

Two new Sai Mandirs were inaugurated, one at Gajuwaka, and the other at Rukminipuram in Visakhapatnam district on 4th March 2012 by the State President, Sri S.G. Chalam.

Haryana and Chandigarh: The First Sai Youth Conference jointly organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations of Punjab and Haryana and Chandigarh was held on 4th and 5th February 2012 at Shahbad Markanda, Kurukshetra district, Haryana, wherein over 1,000 persons including 545 youth delegates (290 boys and 255 girls) came to participate. The conference was preceded by a grand rally which passed through the bazaars and streets of the town from 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on 4th



Delegates and devotees participating in the deliberations of the First Sai Youth Conference of Punjab and Haryana and Chandigarh.

February 2012. Besides the delegates and devotees, students of various schools and colleges took part in this rally, which included a palanquin with the photo of Shirdi Sai Baba and a chariot with the photo of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Throughout the rally, the delegates and students carrying placards of Bhagavan's sayings sang melodious Bhajans and recited Vedic hymns. The residents of the town enthusiastically welcomed the rally and offered refreshments to the participants



at various points. Eight eminent speakers addressed the delegates during these two days. They included Sri K. Anil Kumar, a faculty member of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri Ashok Yadav, Director General Agriculture, Haryana and Smt. Anu Sachdeva from Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Besides these illuminating talks, there was a Bhajan Sandhya (an evening of Bhajans) and a cultural programme by Sai Youth. State Youth Coordinators of the two participating States presented reports of the activities of their respective Youth Wings during the course of the deliberations, and a number of resolutions were passed at the conclusion of the conference.

Odisha: The 36th State Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, Odisha was held at Sai Sreenivas Mandap, Bolangir in an atmosphere of love, devotion and discipline. A total of 1,830 delegates across Odisha (1,357 gents and 473 ladies) participated enthusiastically in the deliberations.

A grand rally with Bhagavan enshrined in a beautifully decorated chariot was taken through the town amidst singing of Bhajans and chanting of Vedic hymns.



A section of the participants in the 36th State Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Odisha.

Cultural programmes and devotional songs were presented by the Bal Vikas students and the Sai Symphony team of the State respectively. The highlight of the conference was the 11 important topics chosen for group discussions. The views expressed in the group discussions have been considered carefully by the Organisation to form part of the State conference resolutions.

Tamil Nadu: The first State-level competitions of Tamil Nadu for Bal Vikas students in story telling, elocution, Veda chanting, Bhajan singing, group singing, instrumental music, etc., were conducted at Salem on 25th December 2011, in which over 450 Bal Vikas students from all over the State came to participate. More than 800 Bal Vikas Gurus and over 300 Seva Dal volunteers helped in organising this event. There were 72 judges who evaluated the performance of the students and selected the winners. Sai Youth of Salem made effective use of information technology software to conduct the entire programme in a smooth manner. The efforts of the entire team were crowned with Swami's abundant blessings in the form of Vibhuti that materialised on Swami's photo kept at the entrance of the competition venue.

West Bengal: As part of Bhagavan's 86th Birthday celebrations, 50 insecticides treated mosquito bed nets were prepared by the Seva Dal volunteers. These were distributed to the beneficiaries of Sri Sathya Sai National Narayana Seva Programme in villages to combat malaria and other vector-borne diseases.



Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School (Boys Wing)

(Affiliated to C.B.S.E. New Delhi)

Prasanthi Nilayam – 515134, Anantapur Dist., Andhra Pradesh
Ph.: 08555-289289, Website: ssshss.org.in, E-mail: ssshss@gmail.com

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates (preferably men) by sending their bio-data with academic qualifications and experience particulars to work in Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School (boys wing) Prasanthi Nilayam for the following posts. A recent passport size colour photo is to be attached. Phone number and E-mail address can also be provided. Fluency in English is required.

1. Postgraduate teacher in Mathematics
2. Postgraduate teacher in Commerce / Accountancy
3. Postgraduate teacher in English

Qualifications required for the posts: A postgraduate degree with second class and teachers training degree done in English Medium.

Or

A Postgraduate degree with first class and 3 years experience in the above mentioned subjects done in English Medium.

Pay scale Rs.: 18,030 – 43,630

The last date for the receipt of application is 20-04-2012.

The selected candidates will be called for an interview at a short notice.

– Principal

Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital

Prasanthi Nilayam – 515134, Email: hrmgh@sssihms.org.in
Ph.: 08555-287256, Fax: 08555-289409

Applications are invited for the following post:

Consultant in the Department of General Surgery:

Qualification: M.S. / DNB in General Surgery, preferably with minimum eight years of experience in the Department of General Surgery.

Apply to the Medical Superintendent, Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, Prasanthi Nilayam, with full bio-data and a photograph immediately.

– Medical Superintendent

SRI SATHYA SAI ARADHANA MAHOTSAVAM

Programme for 23rd-25th April 2012 at Prasanthi Nilayam

Monday, 23rd April

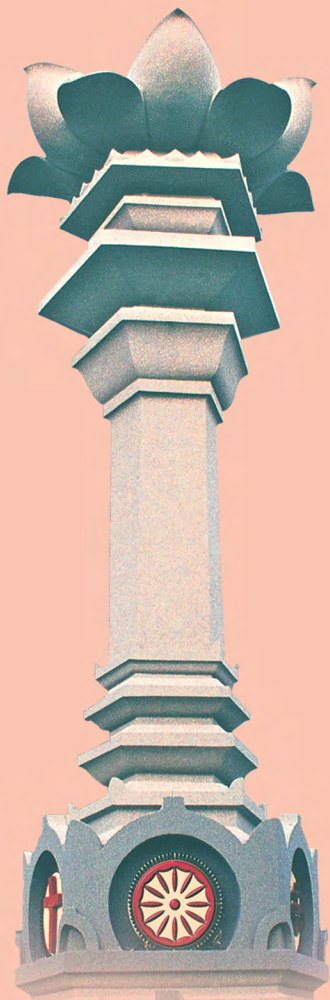
- 08:00 a.m. Veda Recitation
09:00 a.m. Colloquium on “Experiencing the Divine – from the Form to the Formless”
Lighting the Lamp
Welcome
09:05 a.m. Introduction of the Theme and Address by Dr. Samuel Sandweiss
09:30 a.m. Address by Swami Shuddhananda of the Yogoda Society
10:00 a.m. Bhajan
10:30 a.m. Mangal Arati
05:00 p.m. Address by Sri Jayaraman of the Ramanashram
05:30 p.m. Cultural Programme
06:15 p.m. Bhajan
06:45 p.m. Mangal Arati

Tuesday, 24th April

- 08:00 a.m. Veda Recitation
08:20 a.m. “Guru Vandana” by University students
08:50 a.m. Address by Trustee
09:00 a.m. Release of Book on Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
09:05 a.m. Introductory remarks by the author Padma Shri Dr. G. Venkataraman
09:10 a.m. Address by Sri E.S.L. Narasimhan, Governor of Andhra Pradesh
Bhajan
Mangal Arati
05:00 p.m. Cultural Programme
06:30 p.m. Bhajan
06:45 p.m. Mangal Arati

Wednesday, 25th April

- 08:00 a.m. Veda Recitation
09:00 a.m. Bhajan
09:30 a.m. Mangal Arati
05:00 p.m. Veda Recitation
05:20 p.m. Talk by a student of the University
05:40 p.m. Address by Dr. G. Venkataraman
06:00 p.m. Cultural Programme
06:45 p.m. Bhajan
07:00 p.m. Mangal Arati



Reach God through Love

To realise the Divine, love is the easiest path. Just as you can see the moon only with the light of the moon, God who is the embodiment of love can be reached only through love. Regard love as your life-breath. Love was the first quality to emerge in the creative process. All other qualities came after it. Therefore, fill your heart with love and base your life on it.

– Baba

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