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FEBRUARY 2012



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Vol.: 55 Issue No. 2 Date of Publication: 1st February

FEBRUARY 2012

© Sri Sathya Sai
Sadhana Trust, Publications Division
Prasanthi Nilayam

Printed by **K.S. RAJAN**
Published by **K.S. RAJAN**

On behalf of the owner, Sri Sathya Sai
Sadhana Trust, Publications Division,
Prasanthi Nilayam 515134, Anantapur
District (A.P.)

And Printed at M/s Rajhans Enterprises,
136, 4th Main Road, Industrial Town,
Rajaji Nagar, Bengaluru 560044,
Karnataka

And Published at Sri Sathya Sai
Sadhana Trust, Publications Division,
Prasanthi Nilayam 515134, Anantapur
Dist., Andhra Pradesh.

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CAN \$22, AUS \$26

Telugu India: ₹ 60 (12 issues)

Other Countries: ₹ 550 or £9
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Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications
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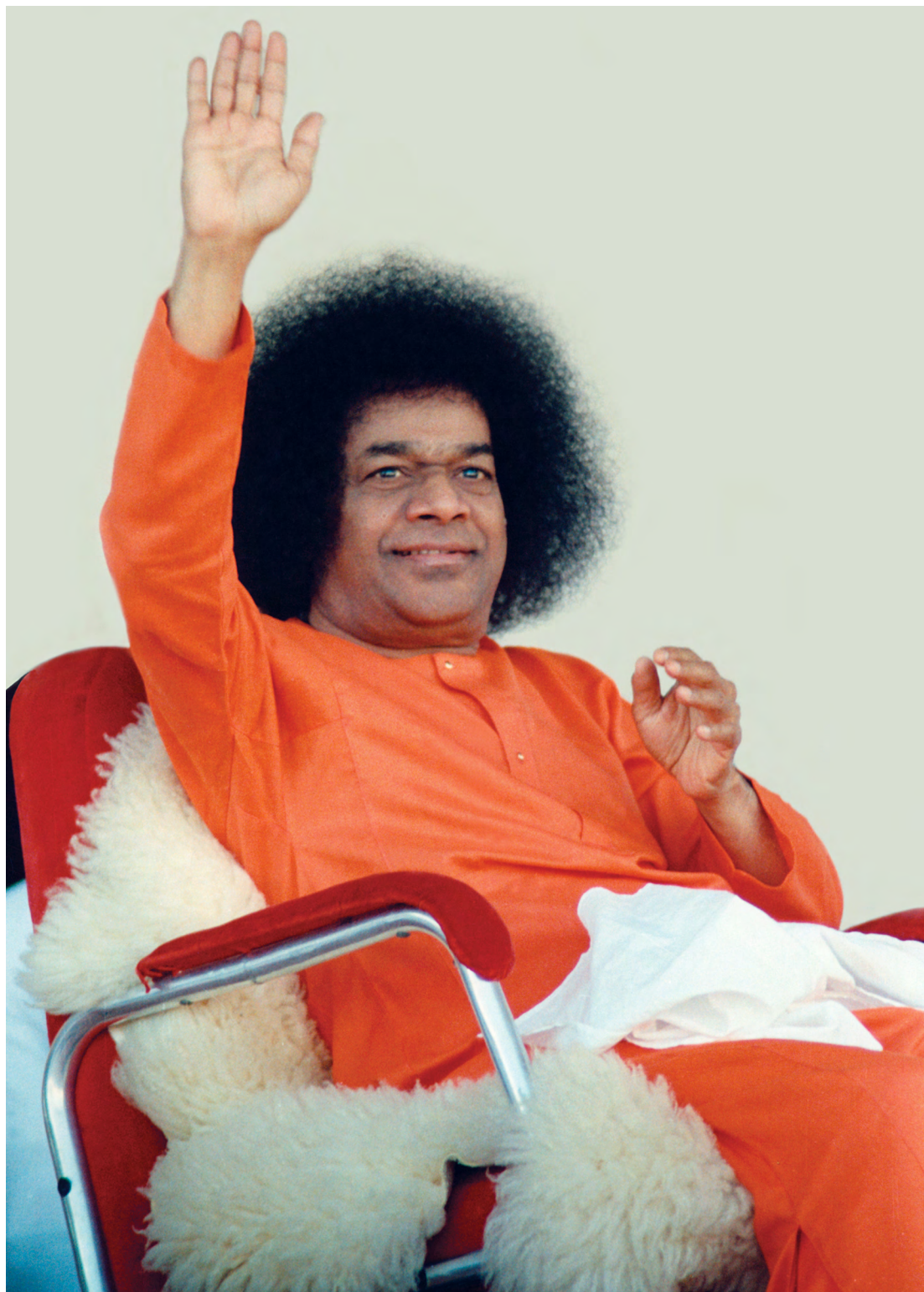
*"Young age is like a delicious fruit.
You should offer this sweet and
delicious fruit to God. It is not
possible to worship God after your
retirement in old age when your
body becomes weak, sense organs lose
their power and mind becomes feeble.
Start early, drive slowly, reach
safely. Start praying to God right
from the early age."*

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Anniversary**



AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
16TH JULY 1996

DEVELOP VIRTUES AND CONTEMPLATE ON GOD

One without virtues is not a human being in the true sense of the term. Understand that virtuous children are the true wealth of a nation.

(Telugu Poem)

THERE IS NO LIGHT BRIGHTER THAN THAT OF LOVE

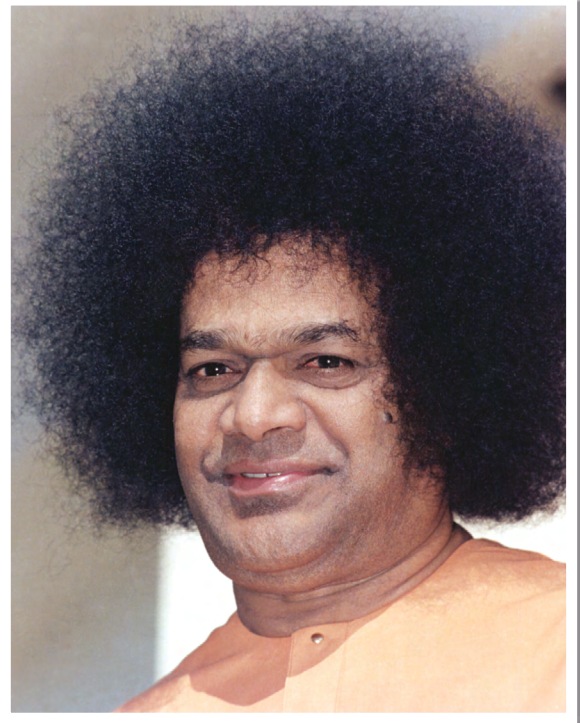
Students!



THE PEOPLE OF BHARAT have been worshipping God by performing sacred practices like lighting lamps, burning incense sticks, making sacred food offerings, etc.,

before idols of deities in accordance with ancient Indian culture. But, unfortunately, modern boys and girls have forgotten such sacred traditions and are deluded to think that they can derive fulfilment from mundane pursuits. They have lost the power of discrimination and do not know

All of you belong to the same Sai Organisation. You are studying in Sai educational institutions. You are growing in Sai's love. Not only here, wherever you go, manifest this principle of love. Propagate love by your example. The behaviour, discipline and manners that you have learnt here should follow you like your shadow wherever you go. You are a good boy or a good man only when you have good behaviour and good manners.



what the priorities of their life are. They are neglecting their duties and taking to wrong path.

Sanctify Food by Offering it to God

People who follow the canons of Indian culture partake of food as Prasadam (sanctified food) only after offering it to God with chanting of Mantras like Pranaya Swaha, Apanaya Swaha, Vyanaya Swaha, Udanaya Swaha and Samanaya Swaha (hail the five life principles – Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana). By partaking of sanctified food in this manner, we develop good thoughts, good feelings, good qualities and good conduct. The food we eat should have Patra Suddhi, Paka Suddhi and Padartha Suddhi (purity of vessel, cooking process and ingredients). But it is very difficult to know if the food has all the three qualities. Therefore, when you offer it to God by chanting Brahmaarpanam Mantra, it is sanctified and acquires all these qualities.

Brahmaarpanam Brahma Havir

Brahmagno Brahmanahutam

Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam

Brahma Karma Samadhina.

(Brahman is the ladle as well as the oblation. He is the sacrificial fire as also the sacrificer. And finally, Brahman is the goal of one who is engaged in the act of sacrifice.) Before offering to God, it is merely a food item. Once it is offered to God, it becomes free from all impurities and gets transformed into Prasadam. By eating such sacred food, one will not acquire any mental impurities.

We offer food to God on a clean plantain leaf. But today we have to enquire what type of food is offered and to whom. Human body is the plantain leaf, the heart of man is the sacred vessel and virtues, sacred feelings and good conduct are like the sacred food items. But to whom are these being offered? These are being offered to demons of evil qualities, wicked feelings such as anger, hatred and jealousy. The food that is eaten and left over by these demons of hatred, anger and jealousy is being offered to God. That is why people today are the victims of restlessness, difficulties, sorrows and misery. You should get rid of your evil qualities and offer your virtues to God with the prayer: Oh God, You are the resident of my heart and You are the embodiment of love, kindness and compassion. Here I offer the sweet pudding of my virtues; please accept.

Start Worshipping God at Young Age

Young age is like a delicious fruit. You should offer this sweet and delicious fruit to God. It is not possible to worship God after your retirement in old age when your body becomes weak, sense organs lose their power and mind becomes feeble. *Start early, drive slowly, reach safely.* Start praying to God right from the early age. If you do not undertake sacred actions when your physical and mental faculties are strong, then when will you perform them? What can you do when the sense organs have lost all their power?

At the time when the messengers of Yama (god of death) put the noose around your neck and start dragging



you away, saying, come, let us go.

*At the time when your relations tell
your family members to take you out
of the house, saying your end has
approached.*

*And at the time when your wife and
children start weeping and wailing,
How can you chant the Name of Hari at
that time?* (Telugu Poem)

Is it possible to do any Sadhana at that stage? No, no. It is very essential for you to contemplate on God, think of Him wholeheartedly and redeem your life at this young age itself when your sense organs are quite strong. Why don't you worship God when your physical organs and mental faculties are full of verve and vigour?

*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)

How can you think of God when you become a decrepit old man? You should offer the fragrant flowers of your mind and heart to God with total faith at young age when your body is strong and sense organs are powerful. This is the true Naivedyam (food offering) that you have to offer to God. But people today do not make such offerings. When their senses become weak after indulging in all sorts of

God is the embodiment of love.

***You can experience Him only
through love. You don't require a
torchlight, a hurricane lantern or a
petromax lamp to see the shining
moon; you can see it with the help
of its own light. Likewise, if you
want to see the embodiment of
love, it is possible to see Him only
through love.***



sensual pleasures, they offer them to God like offering leftover food. As the proverb goes, it is like saying, "I offer to Krishna all the flour that has got blown away by the wind." What else is left with you to offer to God when the power of all your senses is drained out and you have lost your physical and mental strength? Therefore, you should serve God when the power of your body, mind and intellect is intact. But if you lose all your strength in pursuit of sensual pleasures in young age, then what service can you render to God?

Students!

First of all, you should understand that this age is divine and sublime. If you don't take to spirituality now, it is not possible to do so in old age. A child first crawls using his hands and feet. As he grows up, he starts walking on two feet. When he becomes old, he will walk on three feet, meaning he will need the support of a walking stick. Man should serve and worship God when he is walking on two feet; he should not postpone it to old age when he is virtually



walking on three feet. Just as two feet support the entire body, all the powers of a human being depend on Sathya (truth) and Dharma (righteousness). You should follow Sathya and Dharma and contemplate on God who is the embodiment of Sathya and Dharma. In old age, you need the support of one more leg in the form of walking stick. At that age, your body becomes so weak that you will not have the strength to hold even the stick. What can you do at that age? Therefore, make the best use of the young age without wasting even a single moment. *Time is God. Time waste is life waste. Don't waste time.*

Do not Misuse your Tongue

Boys and girls today waste a lot of time. They misuse time by indulging in vain gossip. They do not entertain good feelings and don't speak good words. What sort of words they speak and what type of songs they sing! You do not know how disgusting it is to listen to the words and songs of boys and girls in the outside world. It is only in Prasanthi Nilayam that boys and girls participate in Bhajans and sing the glory of God "Rama, Krishna, Govinda" and thus spend their time blissfully. Elsewhere, boys and girls do not know the value of singing the Divine Name. They sing meaningless songs like "Chal Chal Re Naujavan, Chod De Re Mere Kan" (Oh young man, march ahead and leave my ears). Is there any meaning in it? There are some other songs which are very funny like "Dadada Dadada Dada Dada." What is this Dadada? What a shame to sing such songs! Has the tongue been given to sing such songs? Do you

know what for the tongue has been given? It is only to make the Divine Name dance on it. We are misusing such a sacred tongue. Chaitanya extolled the greatness of tongue.

Oh tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred. Speak the truth in the most pleasing manner. Chant the Divine Names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly. This is your foremost duty. (Sanskrit Verse)

The tongue has many great qualities. It is the knower of taste. It should speak truth in a pleasing manner. It should utter only soft and sweet words. Why should you utter unsacred words with such a sacred tongue? Unfortunately, people today make the tongue unsacred by speaking unsacred words. It is necessary for students to have control over their tongue. You should use your tongue to sing the glory of God which melts the heart, attracts the mind and makes one forget oneself. When someone is singing the glories of God, everyone will enjoy his singing and will be swaying his head to the tune even without his knowledge, be he an atheist or a theist or an atheistic-theist. Once Radha sang:

I don't know where You are and what prevents You from coming here. Oh Krishna! Why do You separate me from You? Don't you have compassion on this servant of Yours? (Telugu Song)

When Radha was singing thus, all the women of Repalle were lost in bliss and even the vessels of water they were carrying fell down. Radha complained to



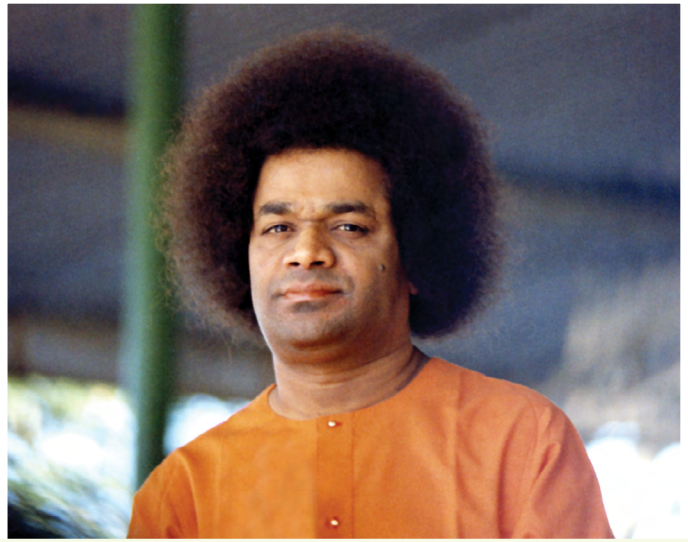
Krishna: What is the purpose of my living?

I have no refuge other than You. Oh Krishna, I am carrying on this burden of life only for Your sake. My mind becomes restless if I don't see Your smiling face. At least appear to me in my dreams. I cannot live without You even for a moment. (Telugu Song)

People used to pray to God in those days with such intense craving and yearning. When they sang the Name of Krishna, they felt as though their burdens were removed. It is only such intense prayer which can move and melt the heart of Krishna. But today there is no 'devotion', it is all 'deep ocean.' People say divine, divine. But there is nothing divine about them, it is only deep wine. You should sanctify your time by contemplating on God and singing His nectarine Name.

Victory Lies in Unity

What is the purpose of singing Bhajans? When people come together and sing the glory of God in one voice, it has tremendous power. Group singing was started by Guru Nanak with the main purpose of bringing unity in diversity. Singing in chorus has



Just as two feet support the entire body, all the powers of a human being depend on Sathya (truth) and Dharma (righteousness). You should follow Sathya and Dharma and contemplate on God who is the embodiment of Sathya and Dharma. In old age, you need the support of one more leg in the form of walking stick. At that age, your body becomes so weak that you will not have the strength to hold even the stick. What can you do at that age? Therefore, make the best use of the young age without wasting even a single moment.



much more effect than individual singing. You should follow our ancient culture and offer the sacred feelings of your heart to God. God is the embodiment of love. You can experience Him only through love. You don't require a torchlight, a hurricane



lantern or a petromax lamp to see the shining moon; you can see it with the help of its own light. Likewise, if you want to see the embodiment of love, it is possible to see Him only through love. There is no light brighter than that of love in this world.

The Bhagavata describes the stories of Lord Krishna in great detail. The stories of the Lord destroy all sins.

The stories of the Lord are amazing,

They purify the lives of people in all the three worlds,

They are like the sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage,

They are like a good friend who helps you in times of need,

They are like a shelter for the sages and seers doing penance in the forest.

(Telugu Poem)

Consider love as your mother and truth as your father, compassion as your sister and bliss as your brother. When you have such eternal relations, why do you develop unnecessary worldly relationships?

You can see for yourself that there is great strength in unity. Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva were five brothers; they could attain victory only because they were united. Likewise, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna maintained unity under all circumstances. Unity gives victory. On the other hand, there was no unity between Vali and Sugriva. What was the result? Though Vali was endowed with enormous power, he ultimately met his doom. Similarly, there was no unity between

the three brothers – Ravana, Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna. Due to lack of unity between them, Vibhishana had to leave his brothers. Ultimately, Ravana lost his kingdom and everything due to lack of unity. We can achieve anything with unity. There are five fingers in the hand. When these five fingers are together, we can perform any task. First and foremost, make efforts to maintain unity.

Students!

All of you belong to the same Sai Organisation. You are studying in Sai educational institutions. You are growing in Sai's love. Not only here, wherever you go, manifest this principle of love. Propagate love by your example. The behaviour, discipline and manners that you have learnt here should follow you like your shadow wherever you go. You are a good boy or a good man only when you have good behaviour and good manners. You can be called a devotee only when you perform your duty wholeheartedly. Do your duty sincerely. Only then can you become a true devotee. On the other hand, if you perform worship to idols neglecting your duty, how can it be called devotion? *Duty is God. Work is worship.* Students should not become lazy. First learn your lessons in the class. Use only your spare time in sports and entertainment. Contemplate on God and experience bliss. As food is necessary for the body, so is Bhajan for the mind. The body is like a cart and the mind is the horse that pulls it. You decorate the body with cosmetics and good dress, but you don't



give proper food to the mind. What is the use of decorating the cart without feeding the horse? Such a cart is fit only to be placed in a museum. That's all. Therefore, first and foremost, make the horse strong. That is to say, you have to strengthen the mind. What is meant by strengthening the mind? You should develop good thoughts, good feelings, good qualities and good behaviour.

In the Mahabharata war, when Krishna took Arjuna's chariot to the middle of battlefield, Arjuna looked at the army of the Kauravas, turned to Krishna and said with folded hands:

Oh Krishna, how can I bear the sight of killing my own friends, relatives and the children of my preceptors? On thinking about the slaying of so many of my kith and kin, my head is reeling. Let us go back home without wasting time here.

(Telugu Poem)

Arjuna lost the strength of his mind as he was overcome with the feeling of attachment. He started saying, "Na Varu, Na Varu" (my people, my people). 'Na' actually means 'no'. He said, "Oh Krishna, how can I fight against my own elders, friends, relations and preceptors?" Due to his attachment, he became despondent and did not want to fight. Then Krishna scolded him, saying, "Don't you have shame? You spoke like a big hero prior to coming here. But after entering the battlefield, you have become a coward. Do

you remember, what you said to Me when I was going to the Kaurava court on My peace mission?"

Will the narrow-minded Kauravas give up all the differences and make friendship with us?

Can the north and south poles meet together?

Instead of wasting time, why don't You tell them that we are ready for the battle?

Giving a good counsel to the wicked people is like throwing jasmine flowers into fire.

Let us stop all this talk of peace.

(Telugu Poem)

Did you not say all this? You told Me at that time, "Why are You delaying the commencement of the battle? Let us stop this talk of peace treaty. We are ready for the battle. Now, how is it that your heart is filled with attachment?" Attachment is the cause of man's downfall. You may have attachment, but only up to a certain limit.

Having come here at young age and lived in such a sacred environment, you should develop good qualities, good thoughts and good behaviour.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "Govinda Gopala Prabhu Giridhari...")

– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 16th July 1996.



SPECTACULAR DISPLAY OF COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE



THE ANNUAL SPORTS AND Cultural Meet 2012 of Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions was held on 11th January 2012. The venue of the Sports Meet was Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium which was beautifully decorated for the important event. While giant size photos of Bhagavan along with His important messages as also the flags of various countries adorned the periphery of the stadium, there was elaborate decoration of fresh flowers on the Santhi Vedika where an elegant chair was placed for Swami. LED screens were also installed in the stadium to enable the spectators to watch the proceedings with convenience.

The sprawling stadium started reverberating with Vedic chants at about 7.45 a.m. on the pleasantly sunny morning of 11th January 2012. As Bhagavan's open car with a beautiful photograph of Bhagavan led by a squad of motorbike riders reached the northern end of the stadium at 8.00 a.m., the brass band of Anantapur Campus of the Institute played welcome notes. The procession then moved towards Santhi Vedika led by the brass band of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus and a slow marching squad carrying flags. The flag bearing squad made a canopy of flags as Bhagavan's car reached in front of Santhi Vedika. Before the start of the programme, the Vice Chancellor and other

senior officers of the Institute came to Santhi Vedika and offered their salutations to Bhagavan while a group of students carrying Poornakumbham chanted Vedic hymns.

Grand March Past

The programme began at 8.15 a.m. with a grand March Past by the contingents of students representing Bhagavan's various educational institutions. It included the



A smartly marching contingent of students offering salute to Bhagavan at Santhi Vedika.

contingents of the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School, Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Easwaramma English Medium School, Sri Sathya Sai Arts and Science College, Anantapur, Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music and campuses of the Institute at Anantapur, Brindavan and Prasanthi Nilayam. As the colourfully dressed squads marched towards Santhi Vedika, the brass bands of Prasanthi



Nilayam and Anantapur campuses provided the marching tunes. On reaching Santhi Vedika, they offered salute to Bhagavan.

At the conclusion of the March Past, Institute flag was ceremoniously hoisted, customary oath was administered to the participants in the sports and cultural events and sports torch was lit which was carried by a mascot in the form of a Nandi (Siva's bull) to the hilltop where the sports urn was lighted. Meanwhile white pigeons and bunches of balloons were released from Santhi Vedika.

Daring Feats of Prasanthi Nilayam Students

Sports events began with a spectacular display by the students of Prasanthi Nilayam. At the outset, they brought in the performing area a beautiful giant structure containing a replica of the Institute emblem with two swans, one on each side. Meanwhile, there was a display of aerobatics of remote-controlled planes in the sky which were monitored on the ground by the students. The first sports item of the Prasanthi Nilayam



Prasanthi Nilayam students demonstrating various yogasanas in front of Santhi Vedika.

students was display of yogasanas which showed their dexterity and agility. This was followed by a dance with yellow and green flags by a group of students to the tune of Chinese drums. Display of martial arts with Nunchakus followed this which showcased their courage and confidence in handling this traditional weapon with deftness. Bhangra dance was another item which delighted one and all. Thereafter, the students performed wonderful feats of Karate and displayed great skill in handling sticks in self-defence. Their last item was breathtakingly daring motorbike stunts. They criss-crossed each other at high speed, drove bikes while standing on them, playing guitar and climbing a ladder.



Motorbike stunts of Prasanthi Nilayam students displayed their courage and confidence.

However, it were their ramp jumps which showed their daredevilry, particularly the ones through a ring of fire and sheet of glass. At the conclusion of their sports events, the students assembled before Santhi Vedika and offered their salutations to Bhagavan.

Beautiful Display by Anantapur Campus Students

The students of Anantapur Campus of the Institute made their presentation after



Students of Anantapur Campus of the Institute performing Dervish dance.

this. Their first item was Dervish dance of Turkey in traditional dress of Dervishes donning a large white gown and supporting a big cap on head. They performed the dance with graceful twirling movement to the tune of a sweet song. Next dance they performed was an Egyptian Sufi dance also with twirling movements, making wonderful patterns. Next, they displayed their skill and balance on roller skates, making beautiful formations. Their last item was rhythmic dance with colourful rings in hands which formed beautiful patterns as they made synchronised movements. At the end of this excellent display, they made their final formation in front of Santhi Vedika and offered their reverential Pranams to Bhagavan. The morning programme came to a close with Arati at 10.15 a.m.

Colourful Display by Primary School Students

The afternoon programme of Sports and Cultural Meet started at 4.00 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan's car in the Hill View Stadium escorted by a squad of motorbike riders. The students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School, Prasanthi Nilayam

were the first to make their presentation. The theme of their presentation "Sai is Everywhere Now and Forever" was displayed on a giant hoarding which they placed in the performing area. They started their presentation with a beautiful dance to the tune of a Telugu song set to thrilling music. They followed it up with another dance with colourful flowers in hand. In their next dance, they showed the flapping of wings of birds accompanied by twitter



The dance of Primary School students as birds charmed all spectators in Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium.

of birds on the public address system. Their sunflower dance which followed this was equally charming. Finally, they made beautiful formations with red fans as they moved gracefully to the tune of sweet music.



A beautiful formation of Primary School students with colourful fans in their hands.



Krishna Leela by the Students of Easwaramma English Medium School

The students of Easwaramma English Medium School began their presentation with a butterfly dance and followed it with another dance with boys in fancy dress. But their most outstanding item was Krishna Leela which showcased childhood pranks of Krishna like dance with cowherds, stealing of butter and dance on the hood of serpent Kaliya. Finally, they made a



The students of Easwaramma English Medium School making a chariot in their innovative display.

beautiful formation of Krishna holding the reins of horses and leading the chariot of Arjuna in the Mahabharata war which earned great admiration of the audience.

Talented Presentation by the Students of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences

In their short presentation, the students of College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield (Bengaluru) displayed two items, both of which showed their talented perfection. Their first item demonstrated their skill and courage in the art of Karate which included breaking of

tiles and even fire-lit tiles with hand. Their last item showed beautiful formations with colourful ribbons and also the one that



The students of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences making a formation with cloths of various colours.

stood out in their performance making the formation of the word LOVE with long sheets of cloth.

Brilliant Display by Brindavan Campus Students

The final presentation of the Sports and Cultural Meet was made by the students of Brindavan Campus of the Institute. They began their presentation with display of yoga postures with prayer



Brindavan Campus students gave a skilful demonstration of various games.

to sun god and followed it up with games of volleyball, football and basketball. Though they showed great skill and dexterity in all the games, their basketball performance stood out as they made the ball dance on their fingers and dunked it in the basket after getting elevation from a ramp. Synchronised movement of wheels by gymnasts was their next item which displayed their perfect balance and great manoeuvring skill. A game of cricket and formations with LED lights on the chests of students were displayed next. Their final item was a display of fire drill which was surely a most outstanding show. Holding the blazing torches in hand, the students made many formations which included



The words "Sai Ram" made with blazing torches by the students of Brindavan Campus.

'Swastik', 'Sudarshan Chakra,' 'We Love You' and 'Sai Ram.' The programme concluded with Arati at 6.40 p.m. after this wonderful display of Brindavan Campus students.

Valedictory Function

The valedictory function of the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2012 of Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions was held on the auspicious day of Makara Sankranti, 15th

January 2012. The morning programme began at 9.00 a.m. with a grand procession which marched from Bhagavan's abode to Sai Kulwant Hall, where a special dais was set up and a beautiful chair was placed for the Divine Chancellor of the Institute, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The procession was led by the brass band of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus and followed by the flag bearing squad and Veda chanting group of students.

After the arrival of the procession in Sai Kulwant Hall, five speakers addressed the gathering. Introducing the speakers, Sri Sanjay Sahni, Director, Brindavan Campus of the Institute remarked that Sankranti signified not only the beginning of the northward journey of the sun but also the journey of man towards divinity. The first speaker of the programme was Dr. Naren Ramji, Registrar of the Institute. Referring to the recently concluded Sports and Cultural Meet, Dr. Ramji observed that the excellent performance of the students in all the events clearly showed the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. He expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for making sports an important part of Sri Sathya Sai System of Integral Education. After this, there were short speeches by four students from the three campuses of the Institute and Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam. They narrated interesting anecdotes and revealed how Bhagavan's energy worked through them to give the best performance in the sports events. After these speeches, the Vice Chancellor of the Institute gave away





Primary School students receiving a trophy from the Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

trophies to the educational institutions and prizes to individual winners of the sports and cultural events. The students representing the educational institutions and winners of individual events came one by one, offered their salutations to Bhagavan, received the trophies and prizes from the Vice Chancellor and posed for a photo with the chair of Bhagavan.

Audio excerpts from Bhagavan's Divine Discourse followed this which were heard by the entire gathering with rapt attention. In His Discourse, Bhagavan said that the mind of man was very powerful and it was the cause of his bondage as well as liberation. He exhorted the students to control the mind, imbibe virtues and develop character. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin," which the entire gathering in the hall followed in chorus.

After the Discourse of Bhagavan, brass band of Anantapur Campus played a couple of tunes. This was followed by a brief Bhajan session which concluded

with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" in Bhagavan's voice. The morning programme came to a close with Arati at 10.45 a.m. after distribution of Prasadam.

CULTURAL AND MUSIC PROGRAMMES

My Life is My Message: A Shadow Play

As part of the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2012 of Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions, the students of Brindavan Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning performed a most enchanting and beautiful shadow play entitled "My Life is My Message" in Sai Kulwant Hall on 12th January 2012. A giant screen was set up in the performing area of the hall on which were depicted various scenes from Bhagavan's life as enacted by the students behind the screen. Close circuit TVs and large size LED screens were set up in the hall to enable the devotees in all parts of the hall to conveniently watch the play.

The play started at 6.00 p.m. with a dance of Siva and scenes of creation of the universe. The students then made a formation showing Divine Mother Easwaramma drawing water from the village well when a ball of light from heaven entered her womb. Thereafter, the students made many wonderful formations depicting various incidents from the life of Bhagavan which included Bhagavan making the letters Sai Baba in Telugu with jasmine flowers, Bhagavan showing Himself in place of Linga in Virupaksha temple in



Hampi, throwing away His school bag and singing the first Bhajan, “Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam,” Sarva Dharma (all faith) Stupa, symbols of all faith and scene



A Sri Sathya Sai Water Project scene displayed by the students of Brindavan Campus of the Institute in their shadow play “My Life is My Message.”

of crucifixion of Jesus, Super Speciality Hospital, Water Project, Narayana Seva, Administrative building of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Grama Seva and finally Bhagavan giving a Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall and concluding it with the Bhajan, “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin.” Excellent commentary which described each scene added great value to the play. This was followed by screening of a video clipping which showed Bhagavan blessing devotees in the hall. The students enacted all these scenes with such agility and perfection that the play was over in nearly 30 minutes.

The play was followed by Bhajans which concluded with the Bhajan, “Govinda Gopala Prabhu Giridhari” in Bhagavan’s golden voice. Meanwhile, Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a close with Arati at about 7.00 p.m.

God is Good Hold on to Him: A Drama

The students of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam performed this drama on 13th January 2012. Beginning the drama with a prayer song at 5.30 p.m., the students depicted through the story of a young man Viswas how man sometimes loses faith in God when he is confronted with insurmountable problems in life and starts questioning even God. He forgets that God always protects His devotees who repose faith in Him and hold on to Him. Various episodes from the



A scene from the drama “God is Good Hold on to Him” performed by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam.

scriptures showcasing how Krishna helped Sudama, Shirdi Sai Baba saved Shama, Rama and Lakshmana came to the rescue of Bhadrachalam Ramdas and Rama saved Sita from the clutches of Ravana illustrated this truth. Faith of Viswas in God was ultimately restored when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba responded to his prayers and saved the life of his father. Beautiful songs, good dances, excellent acting of the students and fabulous sets made the drama a superb presentation. The drama



was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.40 p.m.

Excellent Music Presentations

Two music programmes were presented on 14th January 2012 as part of the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2012 of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The first programme entitled “Thyagaraja Aradhana” was a vocal music presentation made by the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music,



Thyagaraja Aradhana by the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music was a soul-stirring music presentation.

Prasanthi Nilayam. A portrait of legendary composer Thyagaraja and a beautiful idol of Lord Rama, the deity he worshipped, appropriately formed the backdrop of the presentation which began at 4.45 p.m. with “Sri Ganapatinee Sevimpā,” a prayer to Lord Ganesh. The students followed it up with Pancharatna Kritis (five great musical compositions of Thyagaraja) which included “Jagadanandakaraka” (bestower of joy to the world), “Sadhinchane O Manasa” (Oh mind! He has achieved his objective). Thereafter, they sang a Hindustani number “Jagat Prabhu Ramachandra” (Rama, the Lord of the universe) and concluded

their programme with “Jaya Mangalam, Nitya Subha Mangalam” (May there ever be auspicious prosperity). The entire presentation was marked by perfection of Raga and Tala (tune and beat) and kept the audience spellbound for nearly one hour.

The second programme was presented by the students of Anantapur Campus of the Institute who set up a temple of exquisite beauty as the backdrop of their presentation. The brass band group together with Nadaswaram group of students made a thrilling fusion music presentation comprising Stotras (verses), a Carnatic music composition, a couple of devotional songs and a western music composition. Starting with the Stotras “Vakratunda”, a prayer to Lord Ganesh and “Santhakaram”, a prayer to Lord Vishnu, the students followed it up with a Carnatic music presentation “Raghuvamsa Sudha” and a western music composition “Heal the World.” They concluded with two devotional songs “Jaya Ho Sai Ram” and “Humko Tumse Pyar Kitna.” In the end,



The students of Anantapur Campus of the Institute made a thrilling fusion music presentation on the eve of Makara Sankranti.

groups of students came with traditional lamps in hand to worship Bhagavan while the music played “Asato Ma Sadgamaya...” (lead me from untruth to truth). After this excellent instrumental music presentation, the students of Anantapur Campus sang Bhajans from a new audio CD which was released. The programme came to close with Arati at 6.45 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam.

Gautam Buddha: A Drama

The illustrious life of Gautam Buddha was portrayed in this drama enacted by the students of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute on 15th January 2012, the final day of the celebrations of Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2012 of the Institute. Starting their presentation at 5.20 p.m., the students enacted the main incidents of Buddha's life from his birth as son of King Suddhodana, his encounter with reality of life on seeing a sick man, an old man and a dead body, his transformation of Angulimal, his victory over Mara and his intense penance to know the truth which led him to enlightenment and attain the



The life and teachings of Gautam Buddha were depicted in the drama “Gautam Buddha” performed by the students of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute.

state of Buddha (the enlightened one). Good acting and dances of the students, meaningful commentary and efficient stage management made the drama a successful presentation. This was followed by Bhajans which ended with the Bhajan, “Rama Kodanda Rama” in Bhagavan's melodious voice. Arati was offered at 7.00 p.m., marking the conclusion of the grand celebrations of Sports and Cultural Meet of the Institute.

Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital

Prasanthi Nilayam -515134

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Applications are invited for the following posts

Consultant / Senior Resident – Department of Anaesthesiology:

Qualification: MD / DNB / Diploma in Anaesthesia, preferably with minimum 3 years of experience in the Department of Anaesthesiology.

Consultant / Senior Resident in the Department of OBGY

Qualification: MBBS + MD / DGO preferably with minimum 3 years of experience in the Department of OBGY.

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

– Medical Superintendent

From our Archives

SACREDNESS OF SIVARATHRI LIES IN REALISING ONENESS WITH THE DIVINE

DEVOTE SIVARATHRI NIGHT TO ADORATION OF GOD



SIVARATHRI IS THE Rathri (night) of Sivam (auspiciousness). It is an auspicious night because the mind can be made to lose its hold on man by devoting the night to prayer.

Sivarathri Signifies Auspiciousness

The moon is the presiding deity of the mind, according to the scriptures. The mind is kindred to the moon as the eyes are to the sun. What is the significance of night? Night is another word for darkness. Siva means auspiciousness. So, Sivarathri speaks of an auspiciousness which is inherent in darkness. It refers to the wisdom which exists in the midst of ignorance. Ignorance and wisdom are not two different things; they are basically the same. They are associated with Dvaita (duality); they are the opposite polarities of the same underlying principle.

Sivarathri is when one tries to establish friendship between mind and God. Sivarathri makes one aware of the fact that the same divinity is all-pervasive and is to be found everywhere. It is said that Siva lives in Kailasa. But, where is Kailasa? Kailasa is our own joy, our own bliss. It

means that Easwara lives in the Kailasa of delight. If we can develop that sense of joy and delight in our mind, that itself is Kailasa. How can one get this joy? It comes when we develop purity, steadiness and sacredness. Then your heart itself will be Kailasa and Siva will be there in the sanctum sanctorum of your heart, within the temple which is your body. Sivarathri is prescribed for the fourteenth night of the dark half of the month, the night previous to the new moon when the moon suffers from total blackout. The moon and the mind which it rules over are drastically reduced

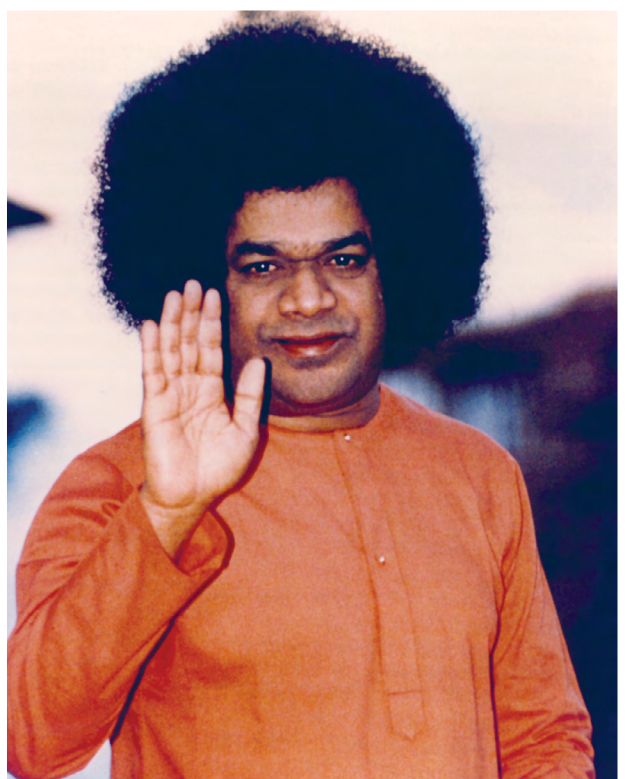
The ancient sages understood the unique value of Bharatiya culture and bequeathed it as a precious legacy to the world. Holy days like Sivarathri are marked out in order to impress upon man his duty to impose a 'fast' on the senses and a 'vigil' on his intelligence to keep away polluting impulses and inclinations. This is the day when Siva consumed deadly poison that threatened to destroy the world and saved mankind from perdition.



on the fourteenth night. When the night is devoted to vigilant adoration of God, the remnant of the wayward mind is overcome and victory ensured. This month's Sivarathri is holier than the rest and so, it is called Mahasivarathri.

Chandrama Manaso Jataha (the moon was born out of the mind of the Supreme Being). The moon has sixteen Kalas (splendours). Likewise, the mind has sixteen Kalas. On Sivarathri night, fifteen of the moon's sixteen Kalas are invisible, and only one Kala can be seen. The mind also is in the same state. If during Sivarathri one meditates on God, one can achieve nearness to the Divine. Supreme sacredness of Sivarathri consists in realising oneness with the Divine through meditation on God.

Control of the mind and senses is the primary requisite for realising the Divine and attaining liberation. But control of the mind and senses is not easy. Even an evolved person like Arjuna confessed to Lord Krishna that sense control was extremely difficult. The sages knew this well from their own experience. Hence, they suggested that even if control of the senses was not possible all the time, it should be practised on sacred days like Sivarathri. If one has nothing to do, the mind wanders in all directions. So, the sages prescribed



It is said that Siva lives in Kailasa. But, where is Kailasa? Kailasa is our own joy, our own bliss. It means that Easwara lives in the Kailasa of delight. If we can develop that sense of joy and delight in our mind, that itself is Kailasa. How can one get this joy? It comes when we develop purity, steadiness and sacredness.



continuous absorption in thoughts of God on Sivarathri night. Repetition of the name of God and meditation on His glories would keep the mind away from other trivialities and promote control of the senses.



Impose Fast on Senses and Vigil on Mind

Modern intellectuals look upon Sivarathri only as a night when they should try to keep awake. They do not see the need to observe it as a pure and holy day to be dedicated to thoughts of God. As keeping awake the whole night is their sole idea of Sivarathri, they try to spend it seeing three film shows or playing cards with their friends or playing dice with their kith and kin the whole night. Keeping awake in this manner, they come home in the morning to have a hearty meal. Is this the way to observe Sivarathri? Not at all. It is a distortion of what should be a sacred occasion for contemplating on God. What kind of vigil is it in which there is no purity of mind and no meditation on God? The stork that stands on one leg waiting to catch a fish cannot be regarded as doing penance. The drunken sot who is oblivious to the world cannot be equated with one who is absorbed in the Divine. The man who gives up eating after a tiff with the wife cannot be described as observing a fast.

The vigil on Sivarathri night means concentrating one's thoughts on the sacred, the pure, the beautiful and glorious form of the Divine. The ancient sages understood the unique value of Bharatiya culture and bequeathed it as a precious legacy to the world. Holy days like Sivarathri are marked out in order to impress upon man his duty to impose a 'fast' on the senses and a 'vigil' on his intelligence to keep away polluting impulses and inclinations. This is the day when Siva consumed deadly poison that

threatened to destroy the world and saved mankind from perdition.

Turn the Mind Godward

There is no use in just thinking of Sivarathri once a year. Every minute, every day, every night, you should think of divinity and sanctify your time, for the time principle, truly speaking, is Siva. You yourself are Siva. Try to understand and recognise this principle of Siva Tattwa (Siva principle) which is your own reality. When we speak of Sivarathri, we refer to the night that is associated with Siva. The Siva principle is totally free from anything that is inauspicious or unholy in any circumstances.

The mind of man has to undergo transformation. It must promote liberation, not bondage. It must turn Godward and inward, not worldward and outward. Then only can attempts at economic, political and social transformation succeed in uplifting man's destiny. The mind plays many tricks to please you and give you a great opinion about yourselves. It revels in hypocrisy, riding on two horses at the same time. You may prostrate before Swami and declare that you have surrendered. But, once you are away, you may behave otherwise and allow faith to fade away. Even the thought that you have not benefited from the Puja or Japa you do should not pollute your faith. To practise Sadhana is your duty, your innermost urge, your genuine activity. Leave the rest to the Will of God. This must be your resolve on holy Sivarathri.

— Excerpted from **Sivarathri Discourses of Bhagavan.**



CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

PILGRIMAGE OF ODISHA DEVOTEES

MORE THAN 3,000 DEVOTEES came from all parts of Odisha on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 26th to 28th December 2011. During the course of this pilgrimage, they presented music and cultural programmes in Sai Kulwant Hall on 27th and 28th December 2011.

Jagannatha Leelamrutham: An Odissi Dance Drama

This beautiful dance drama was presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Mandir, Bhadrak on 27th December 2011. Starting their programme at 5.00 p.m., the students presented a thrilling dance, portraying various mythological



The students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Mandir, Bhadrak performed a beautiful Odissi dance drama.

episodes. Good costumes and make-up, excellent acting of the children and enchanting music made the dance drama an excellent presentation.

Farishte Hain Sai Gaganke: A Drama

This was followed by a drama entitled “Farishte Hain Sai Gaganke” (we are the angels of Sai’s firmament) presented by Sai Youth of Odisha. Based on the actual happenings in a village Samsaraa,



The drama “Farishte Hain Sai Gaganke” enacted by Sai Youth of Odisha was based on a real life story.

the drama depicted how acrimony, hatred and conflict between two warring groups of people in a village gave place to peace, harmony and brotherhood when Sai Youth started working in Bhagavan’s housing project in the village with unconditional love in their heart and Bhagavan’s Divine Message of “Love All Serve All” on their lips. Simple

and realistic story, good acting of the youth and lofty theme of the transformation of a village made the drama an impressive presentation.



A Patriotic Song and Group Dance

The last item of the programme was a patriotic song composed by a great poet of Odisha, Radhanath Ray which described India as a lotus flower embodying purity and perfection and Odisha as one of the petals of this lotus. Set to thrilling music, the song along with group dance was presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Balasore. During the performance of the dance by the students, the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall waved tricolours, suffusing the entire milieu with patriotic fervour. At the conclusion of the programme, clothes were presented to the students and youth. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.15 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

Sai Symphony: A Devotional Music Presentation

On 28th December 2011, the devotees of Odisha presented a programme of devotional songs to the delight of the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. Beginning their programme with chanting of selected Sanskrit verses from sacred texts, the singers both ladies and gents, enthralled the devotees with a beautiful selection of solo and group songs which included many popular compositions like "Madhura Mohana Ghanashyama (enchanting form of Sai)," Baje Muraliya Baje (the divine music of Krishna's flute)," and devotional songs dedicated to Bhagavan such as "Dehi Padam" (grant us the love of Your Lotus Feet), "Bhajore Parama Naam Sri Sai" (chant the Divine Name of Sai) and

"Mere Sai Ko Salaam" (salutations to Beloved Sai). The entire programme was a sumptuous treat of melodious songs and sweet devotional music. At the conclusion of the programme, clothes were presented to the singers and musicians. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme which started at 5.00 p.m. came to a close with Arati at 6.15 p.m.

PILGRIMAGE OF RAJASTHAN DEVOTEES

A group of over 200 devotees including Sai Youth and Bal Vikas students came from all parts of Rajasthan on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam for three days, from 27th to 29th December 2011. On 29th December 2011, the youth and Bal Vikas students of Rajasthan performed a drama entitled "Amritputra Swami Vivekananda" (Vivekananda, the son of immortality) which depicted how by the benign influence of Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, restless, puzzled and impatient young man Narendra was transformed into a spiritual



A scene from the drama performed by the youth and Bal Vikas students of Rajasthan on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

giant and became Swami Vivekananda who showed the path of spirituality and service to mankind. The drama portrayed the life story of Swami Vivekananda and highlighted his immortal teachings through various incidents of his life. At the conclusion of the drama, clothes were presented to the cast. This was followed by Bhajans led by Institute students, which concluded with the Bhajan, "Govinda Krishna Jai" in Bhagavan's voice. The programme which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close with Arati at 6.10 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

PILGRIMAGE OF HARYANA DEVOTEES

The teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the unity of all faiths were brought alive through a drama entitled "Sarva Dharma Swaroopa Sai" (Sai, the embodiment of all faiths) presented on 30th December 2011 in Sai Kulwant Hall by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Jagriti Vidya Mandir, Darwa, district Yamuna Nagar (Haryana) during the course of

their pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam. The drama depicted how Bal Vikas classes were inculcating in students the lofty principles of "Love All Serve All" and respect for all religions. As the first scene of the drama opened, a Bal Vikas Guru was shown interacting with Bal Vikas students about their preparations for celebrating the holy festival of Christmas. The subsequent scenes revealed how the Guru through her sacrifice brought about unity between two warring groups of different religions in the village and taught this practical lesson of unity of all religions to her students by her example. The drama which began at 5.00 p.m. with a prayer song came to a close at 5.45 p.m. with the Bhajan, "Sarva Dharma Swaroopa Sai." The drama effectively showcased the teachings of Bhagavan through a simple story and superb acting of the students. At the conclusion of the drama, clothes were presented to the participating students. This was followed by Bhajans. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

COMMEMORATING 30 YEARS OF SRI SATHYA SAI PRIMARY SCHOOL

In commemoration of 30 glorious years (1980-2011) of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School, a group of more than 150 of its alumni came from different parts of the world to offer their gratitude and pay their reverential tributes to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who nurtured and inspired them in their formative



The drama "Sarva Dharma Swaroopa Sai" was enacted by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Jagriti Vidya Mandir, Darwa, district Yamuna Nagar.





More than 150 alumni of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School came to Prasanthi Nilayam and presented an enrapturing programme to commemorate 30 years of the school.

years. On 31st December 2011, they made a presentation in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme began at 5.15 p.m. with an introductory speech by Smt. Anamika Aravind, who expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan for showering His immense love on her and other primary school children. She then announced that the alumni had brought out a book entitled “Love Everafter” containing life-changing interactions of the alumni with Bhagavan. Thereafter, Primary School children brought the copies of the book and offered at the Samadhi of Bhagavan. Meanwhile, the group sang two songs dedicated to Bhagavan.

Smt. Aravind then introduced the first speaker of the programme, Smt. Sai Geetha, who was a student of Bhagavan from 1983 to 1993. Smt. Sai Geetha in her speech narrated a number of experiences and reminisced how Bhagavan involved Himself in the day-to-day life of the students and gave them the love of a thousand mothers. The memories of Bhagavan’s loving care, she said, were unforgettable

and were treasured by all His students. After this speech, the group sang two more songs, “O Maa Sai Maa” and “Why Fear When I am Here.” This was followed by a talk by another alumnus, Sri Partish Dubey who was Bhagavan’s student from 1978 to 1995. Expressing gratitude to Bhagavan for showering His love

and blessings on the students, Sri Dubey stated that everything we got in life is by Bhagavan’s grace only. He narrated a number of incidents to highlight how Bhagavan imparted spiritual lessons to the students and inculcated values in them in His own unique way.

After this speech, the group sang a Hindi song, “Teri Hai Zameen Tera Aasmaan” (both the earth and sky are Your gift) and followed it up with a Telugu song, “Sai Mata Biddalam Andaram” (we are the children of Mother Sai) and concluded their programme with an English song, “We Have a Great Big Wonderful Lord.” This was followed by Bhajans which were also led by the alumni. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.55 p.m.

NEW YEAR 2012 ALUMNI PROGRAMME

As in the previous years, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and the alumni of Sri Sathya Sai



educational institutions celebrated New Year Day 2012 also as an expression of gratitude to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Band Music Presentation

On the morning of 1st January 2012, the brass band of the Institute offered musical tributes to Bhagavan by rendering some excellent compositions on the themes of unity, peace and love for God. Starting their programme at 9.00 a.m., they brought it to a close at 9.30 a.m. with a composition dedicated to Lord Siva. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The morning programme concluded with Arati at 9.55 a.m.

Prema Bandham

The evening programme was presented by the alumni of Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions. The programme comprising talks, brass band music and devotional songs by the alumni began at 5.00 p.m. with an introductory speech by one of the alumni. Speaking about the annual event “Prema Bandham” (bond of love) of the alumni who had come from across the globe to celebrate it in the sacred precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam, the speaker observed that more than 550 of them had gathered here to recharge their spiritual batteries and to reconnect with the haven of peace. Meanwhile, the alumni made some offerings at Bhagavan’s Samadhi which included the

New Year cake, a copy of their magazine “Vidyullekha” and a new CD of Bhajans in the series, “The Bridge Across Time.”

This was followed by a talk by Sri T.N. Giridhar, a student of M.B.A. 1992 batch. Reminiscing the intimate talks the students used to have with Bhagavan in those days, the speaker observed that Bhagavan never missed any opportunity to impart spiritual lessons to the students. Narrating some of his experiences of Bhagavan’s Divinity, the speaker said that whatever Bhagavan



A band music presentation being made by the alumni of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

said to a student, it was good for him. After this talk, the alumni brass band played some scintillating numbers conducted by bandmasters of yesteryears, each of them conducting a different number to the delight of the audience. After this beautiful band music presentation, there was a talk by another alumnus, Sri C.V. Subhash who narrated how blissful were the experiences of Bhagavan’s interactions with students who cherish those memories of the precious moments spent as students of Bhagavan. This was followed



by a vocal music presentation by the alumni interspersed with interesting and illuminating commentary by Sri Abhimanyu Kaul who compered this programme. Starting with heartfelt prayer song, “Aao Sai Aao Pyare Ab Na Der Karo” (Oh Beloved Lord Sai, come, do not delay), the singers presented a rich variety of songs which included “Jai Maa Jai Maa Jai Jai Sai Maa” (hail Mother Sai), “Why Fear When I am Here,” “Charon Dishaon Se Hum Aaye Hain Tere Dwar” (we have come to Your abode from all the four directions), and concluded it with soulful rendition of the evergreen song, “Humko Tumse Pyar Kitna...” (Oh Lord Sai, You know how much we love You). The concluding song was “Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam” in Bhagavan’s golden voice. The programme came to a close with Arati at 7.20 p.m.

ALL INDIA BAL VIKAS CONVENTION

An All India Convention of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Group III students and Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas alumni was held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 7th and 8th January 2012, in which more than 2,000 Bal Vikas students, Gurus and alumni from all over India came to participate. The morning sessions of the convention were held in Poornachandra Auditorium while the afternoon sessions were conducted in Sai Kulwant Hall.

The morning session on 7th January 2012 commenced in Poornachandra Auditorium at 10.30 a.m. with lighting of sacred lamp amidst Veda chanting by

Dr. Keki Mistry, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Maharashtra and Goa. In his inaugural address, Dr. Mistry observed that Bal Vikas started by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in 1969 had now become a worldwide movement which was transforming the lives of millions of students by inculcating values in them and by putting them on the path of Self-realisation. This was followed by two inspiring theme songs by the delegates, “Akhand Jyot Jalao” (light the eternal lamp) and “Sai Kiran Jalate Chal” (go on spreading Sai’s light) and an equally inspiring speech by an alumnus of Bal Vikas. The last item of the morning programme was a talk by Sri Sanjay Sahni, Director, Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Narrating the story of the education of child Prahlada, who received spiritual education from Narada while he was in his mother’s womb, Sri Sahni said that it was this life-transforming spiritual education that Bhagavan Baba had arranged to impart to students through Bal Vikas which the modern system of education lacked.

The proceedings of the afternoon session of the convention started in Sai Kulwant Hall at 5.00 p.m. with a theme talk by a Bal Vikas student who expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for gifting Bal Vikas to children to lead a fruitful and ideal life. This was followed by an instrumental music presentation, “Naada Laya” by delegates from Kerala. The inspiring group songs rendered in the morning session of the convention in Poornachandra Auditorium were then repeated by all the delegates to



the delight of the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. This was followed by two talks by students who shared their experiences of Bal Vikas with the audience and underlined the importance of Bal Vikas which was the most precious gift to children by none other than God Himself to lead them on the noble path.

Two devotional music presentations by alumni delegates followed these talks. The first presentation was a vocal music concert "Sri Sathya Sai Mahima" by the alumni delegates of Maharashtra and Karnataka who enthralled the audience by rendering three inspiring songs. The last item of the programme was a soul-stirring musical presentation by a delegate Smt. Jyoti who kept the audience spellbound for nearly 20 minutes by rendering classical Bhajans. These musical presentations were followed by Bhajans. Meanwhile, clothes were presented to all the participants and Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.30 p.m.

The morning session on 8th January 2012 began in Poornachandra Auditorium with Veda chanting. After this, the delegates sang two groups songs, reverberating the entire auditorium by their soulful rendition. The songs were: "Antar Jyoti Jalao Man Mein" (Oh Lord! Light the lamp of divinity in my inner being) and "Sai, the Lord of our Hearts." Thereafter, there were two talks by Bal Vikas students. Explaining the influence of Bal Vikas on their lives, the students narrated how it moulded the lives of the students and helped them lead

worthy lives by developing virtues and self-confidence in them. This was followed by a talk by Dr. Shashank Shah, a Post-Doctoral Fellow of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Dwelling on the terms Karma (righteous action), Janma (human birth), Dharma (righteousness) and Brahman (Supreme Being), Dr. Shah said that man could make his life worthwhile and attain the Supreme Being by inculcating virtues, adhering to the path of Dharma and doing good to others.

The afternoon programme began in Sai Kulwant Hall at 5.00 p.m. with an introductory talk by a Bal Vikas student followed by two group songs which the students earlier sang in the morning session in Poornachandra Auditorium. Thereafter, there were two talks by Bal Vikas students who spoke about the significance of Bal Vikas in inculcating values in students and leading them on the path of spirituality and service to mankind. After this, a book entitled, "Blossoming Human Excellence" containing the articles of Bal Vikas students was released and the logo of Bal Vikas was unveiled. Felicitation of some outstanding Bal Vikas alumni followed this. These alumni had not only excelled in their profession but were also taking part in the service activities of the Sai Organisation at the places and countries of their work. They came one by one and received trophies amidst joyous applause of appreciation of the students and devotees. After this, a tiny tot Bal Vikas student Satyajit from Kerala delighted one and all by giving a confident speech, chanting Vedic hymns and singing



a Bhajan. Thereafter, an excerpt from a Discourse of Bhagavan on the significance of Bal Vikas was played which provided the grand finale of the Bal Vikas Convention.

The last item of the programme was an instrumental music presentation



Bal Vikas students of Tamil Nadu made a thrilling instrumental music presentation "Akhandya Jyoti."

"Akhandya Jyoti" by the delegates of Tamil Nadu. Starting their presentation at about 6.00 p.m., they kept the audience spellbound for nearly 30 minutes by their thrilling performance, which attracted loud prolonged applause of appreciation of the devotees and students. At the conclusion of this presentation, clothes were presented to the participants. This was followed by Bhajan and distribution of Prasadam. The last Bhajan was "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" in Bhagavan's voice. This excellent programme of Bal Vikas Convention concluded with Arati at 6.50 p.m.

AUSTRALIA DREAMING: A PRESENTATION BY CHILDREN OF AUSTRALIA

A group of children from Australia presented a cultural programme in Sai

Kulwant Hall on 9th January 2012. The programme entitled "Australia Dreaming" comprised devotional songs and a drama based on an aboriginal dream story from the natives of South-eastern Australia. The programme began at 5.00 p.m. with an introductory speech by Smt. Sheila Nagaratnam who told about the backdrop of the pilgrimage and Bhagavan's instructions to her in an interview many years ago. This was followed by chanting of Om and prayer to Lord Ganesh. Thereafter, the



The programme "Australia Dreaming" comprising a drama and devotional songs was presented by children from Australia.

children rendered three devotional songs, "Twameva Mathacha Pitha Twameva" (Oh Lord! You alone are my father and mother), "Daya Karo Daya Karo Daya Karo Bhagavan" (Oh Bhagavan! Have mercy on me) and "The Glory, Nirvana-Eternal Nirvana." After this, the children enacted the dream story about the origin of the Kangaroo pouch, featuring traditional aboriginal dances accompanied by the drone of the didgeridoo (an indigenous wind instrument) and the rhythm of clapsticks. At the conclusion of this drama, the children sang a famous Australian song, "I am Australia" which highlighted unity in diversity and rich spirituality of the traditional people of Australia. At the end of

this beautiful presentation by the children, clothes were presented to them. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

As part of Chinese New Year celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam, ceremonial chanting of sacred Buddhist Mantras was conducted for world peace on 23rd January 2012. More than 300 Buddhist devotees came from overseas countries to participate in these celebrations. Besides, 36 Buddhist monks from a Tibetan monastery participated in it and chanted sacred Buddhist Mantras in Sai Kulwant Hall which was beautifully decorated with festoons and flowers.

Before commencing the chanting of sacred Buddhist Mantras, the Tibetan monks offered Katas (silk scarves) at the Samadhi of Bhagavan as a mark of reverence. They also made other traditional offerings at the Samadhi. Thereafter, the monks chanted sacred Buddhist Mantras which included Short Mantra of Chenrezig,

“Om Mani Padme Hum,” Medicine Buddha Mantra, Green Tara Mantra, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Eternal Prayer, Extensive Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha Mantra, Mantra of Transcendental Wisdom and Long Dharani of Chenrezig. The chanting of the Mantras concluded with the recitation of Gayatri Mantra. The chanting that started at about 5.00 p.m. came to a close at 6.45 p.m. with prayer for universal peace. The melodious



Buddhist Mantras were chanted in Sai Kulwant Hall to celebrate Chinese New Year 2012.

and soulful chanting of the Mantras set to sweet music saturated the entire milieu with spiritual vibrations and filled the hearts of devotees with bliss. At the conclusion of these sacred chants, the monks as well as the ladies who participated in chanting were honoured with clothes and gifts. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam to all. The programme came to a close with Arati at 7.00 p.m.

When the Name is pronounced by the tongue, and the image is adored by the mind, these should not degenerate into mechanical routine; the meaning of the Name and the content of the Form must, at the same time, inspire and illumine the consciousness. Escape the routine; involve yourselves in the attitude of worship, deeply and sincerely. That is the way to earn peace and contentment, for which all human activity ought to be dedicated and directed.

— Baba

Effulgence of Divine Glory

THE DOUBLE HALO

WHEN AFTER LUNCH BABA went to a room on the men's side, I noticed and followed Him, as did the other men. Baba took an easy chair against the inner wall of the room; the rest of us sat in front of Him, and a conversation started. At the first opportunity, I began with my deplorable custom of questioning Baba. Because I see Him as no other than the direct personification of Divinity, I am intensely one-pointed towards Him and especially so when speaking with Him. Questions and answers were traded back and forth between us for a while, and my attention was riveted on Baba. I soon noticed something which to me was extraordinary in the extreme. A golden light encircled His head. It was not like the halo seen in artist's drawings. The strong golden light – as if one were looking at a sheet of pure gold that was illuminated in some fashion or other – came from His scalp, up through the hair, and extended about 12 inches from His head. The edge of the light was not even, but was somewhat irregular. When He moved His head, the halo of gold moved with the head, and this natural movement revealed a second

extraordinary situation. Against the wall, behind Baba's head, there was a round disc of gold, the diameter of which appeared to be somewhat smaller than the halo. This circle of gold was quite even around its edges, but the truly amazing feature was that it remained stationary – when Baba moved His head, this second and perfectly round disc of gold remained on the wall without in any way moving. Needless to say, my gaze was absolutely glued to Swamiji. During this time, I continued my questions and He answered.

After I had asked Baba a final question, there was a brief silence. Then one of the men said, "Hislop, why are you staring like that at Swami?" Without turning away from Baba, I explained. Baba then said, "What Hislop sees is correct." The questioner then said, "Well, how is it that we do not see it?" Baba replied, "It is always there. Anyone can see it at any time. Only an intensity of interest is required."

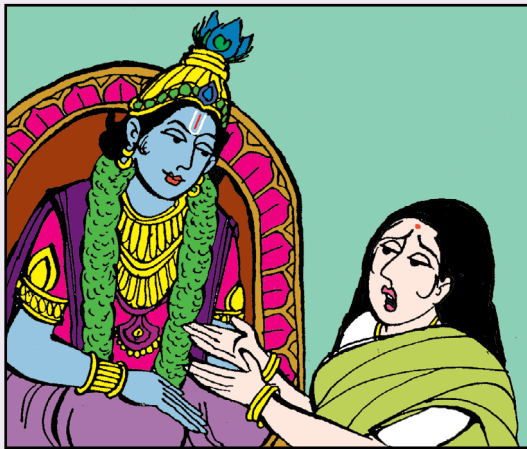
Baba's visit with us was then concluded. He arose and left the room. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to ask about the stationary golden circle, and to this day I have no information or understanding about it.

– Excerpted from "My Baba and I" by Dr. John S. Hislop



God Protects His Devotees

AT THE PEAK OF THE Mahabharata war, Bhishma undertook a vow to kill all the Pandavas. As the vow of Bhishma was immutable, Draupadi was drowned



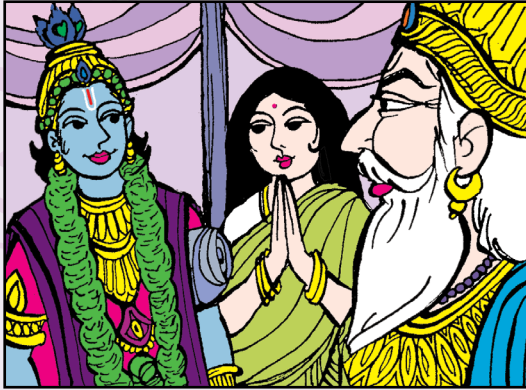
In response to the earnest prayer of Draupadi, Krishna came to meet her and told her to follow His command in order to protect her husbands.

in sorrow when she heard this. She was horrified to think, what her fate would be next day. Thinking that prayer to Krishna was the only way, she prayed to Him earnestly. When Krishna came to meet her that night, she fell at His feet and cried her heart out. Krishna said to her, "Bhishma is a great devotee. His vow is unalterable. He is not an ordinary human being. Though he has undertaken this vow, his mind does not accept that he should kill the Pandavas who are following the path of Dharma. He

has neither eaten food nor drunk water at night. Poor fellow, as he is not able to sleep, he is pacing to and fro in his camp. I shall tell you a way; do as I tell you. You go forward and I will walk behind you." In this way, both of them went towards the camp of Bhishma. As they neared the camp of Bhishma, Krishna said to Draupadi, "Leave your shoes and go ahead." She did as commanded by Krishna who bent down, lifted her shoes, wrapped them in His garment and held them under His armpit. Lost as he was in his thoughts, Bhishma did not notice the entry of Draupadi. She immediately fell at the feet of Bhishma. As per his natural tendency, Bhishma blessed her, saying, "May you live as Deergha Sumangali" (married woman with her husband alive). He did not know that the woman who had fallen at his feet was Draupadi. Then Draupadi said to him, "Oh grandsire! I have come to you only for this blessing."

Bhishma was now placed in a dilemma. "What is the vow that I undertook yesterday? And what is the blessing that I have now given to Draupadi?" He reflected on the present situation, called Draupadi near him and asked, "Who is the one who gave you this idea?" Meanwhile, Krishna entered the tent holding the shoes of Draupadi under His armpit. Then Bhishma said to Krishna,





Filled with bliss, Bhishma praised Krishna and said to Him, "Oh Lord! By Your divine play, you protect Your devotees. There is none equal to You."

"Oh Lord! Who can understand Your divine play? By Your divine play, You protect Your devotees. People use various contrivances to put others in trouble. But You adopt various means to protect Your devotees. None can equal You." Bhishma was filled with bliss on bestowing his blessing on Draupadi. Now he felt hungry and said to

Krishna, "Have you brought something to eat? Give me a little of what eatables You have with You."

Krishna then placed on the ground from His armpit Draupadi's shoes which He had wrapped in His garment. Bhishma asked Him, "Why are You carrying these shoes?" Krishna said to him, "You were lost in your thoughts, and were pacing the ground to and fro in your tent. A woman's sandals would make noise of "Kir Kir" when she walked. Hearing this sound, you could have noticed Draupadi. I held her sandals under My armpit so that she could enter your tent without any noise." Shedding copious tears, Bhishma said to Krishna with great devotion, "God can even carry the sandals of His devotees to protect them! Oh Krishna, You are matchless. You have no equal." Krishna was ready to do any petty act to protect His devotees, the Pandavas.

Signs of Success in Meditation

You sit in meditation for ten minutes after the evening Bhajan session; so far, so good. But, let Me ask, when you rise after ten minutes and move about, do you see everyone in a clearer light as endowed with divinity? If not, meditation is a waste of time. Do you love more, do you talk less, do you serve others more earnestly? These are the signs of success in meditation. Your progress must be authenticated by your character and behaviour. Meditation must transmute your attitude towards beings and things; else it is a hoax.

— Baba



Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music

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Admissions Notice

Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music at Prasanthi Nilayam offers Diploma Course in Music for **men students**. The admissions will be made for the Academic Year commencing from 1st June 2012.

Diploma Course (Full-time): Duration: 3 years: (Carnatic, Hindustani) Vocal, Veena, Mridangam, Sitar, and Tabla.

Eligibility: Candidates should have passed 10th Standard of study and also a Course in Music equivalent to Foundation Course in Music from any recognised College/Institution and be between 16 and 23 years of age.

Application forms will be available from **2nd January to 29th February 2012**. Admissions will be on the basis of Aptitude Test and Interview which will be held in April 2012, at Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh.

Interested candidates may apply to the Registrar, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam – 515134, Anantapur District, A.P. along with Indian Postal Order or Bank Draft for Rs 50/- drawn in favour of **Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, payable at Prasanthi Nilayam / Puttaparthi**. The name and complete postal address should be clearly stated in Block letters on the reverse of the IPO/DD and also in the requisition letter. Alternatively, candidates may send their request to the email Id viz., musicadmissions@sssihl.edu.in for application form and Information Handbook.

– Registrar

Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School

Prasanthi Nilayam - 515134, (A.P.)

ADMISSION NOTICE 2012-2013

Admission to Class I (Boys & Girls) and Class XI (Boys & Girls, only few seats for girls) of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Vidyagiri, Prasanthi Nilayam - 515134, Anantapur Dist., (A.P.), will take place in June 2012. It is an English Medium, wholly residential school. Prospectus and Admission Forms can be obtained from the Principal from 01-01-2012 by paying Rs.100/- either by cash or through Demand Draft drawn on **State Bank of India, Puttaparthi Branch (code no:2786)** in favour of **Principal, Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School**, with a Self Addressed cover (size 15 cm x 24 cm).

Last date for issuing the forms is 15th February 2012 and the last date for receiving the filled in forms at this office is on or before 1st March 2012.

Only students coming from English medium classes should apply.

Age limit for I std. in between 5 ½ years and 6 ½ years as **on 30-09-2012**.

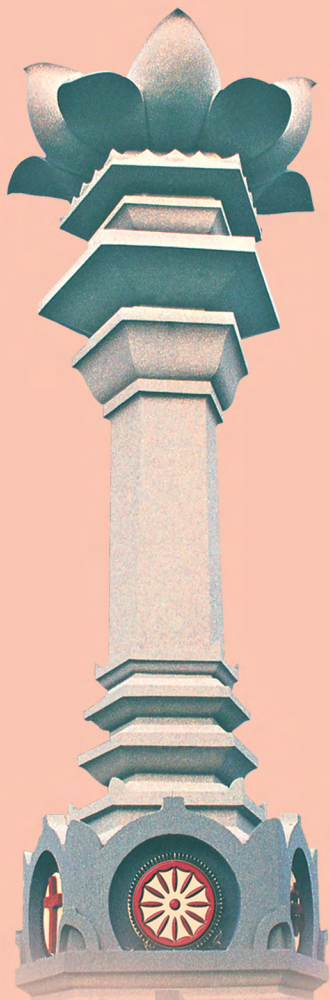
Age limit for XI std. should be below 16 ½ years as **on 30-09-2012**

Phone: 08555-289289

E-mail Address: ssshss@gmail.com, Website: ssshss.org.in

Note: Admissions for I Std. will be under “RTE Act 2009” by Random method.

– Principal



Warmth in Prayer Melts My Heart

You may say that progress is possible only through My grace. Though My heart is soft as butter, it melts only when there is some warmth in your prayer. Unless you make some disciplined effort, some Sadhana, grace cannot descend on you. The yearning, the agony of unfulfilled aim, that is the warmth that melts My heart. That is the anguish that wins grace.

– Baba

Annual Subscription English (12 issues)
India ₹ 75. Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka
₹ 600. Other Countries ₹ 850 or US \$19
or UK £13 or €13, CAN \$22, AUS \$26.
Acceptable for 1, 2 or 3 years.

Printed by K.S. RAJAN Published by K.S. RAJAN On behalf of the owner Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications Division, Prasanthi Nilayam 515134, Anantapur District (A.P.) And Printed at M/s Rajhans Enterprises, 136, 4th Main Road, Industrial Town, Rajaji Nagar, Bengaluru - 560044, Karnataka And published at Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications Division, Prasanthi Nilayam 515134, Anantapur Dist., Andhra Pradesh.

Editor: G.L. ANAND