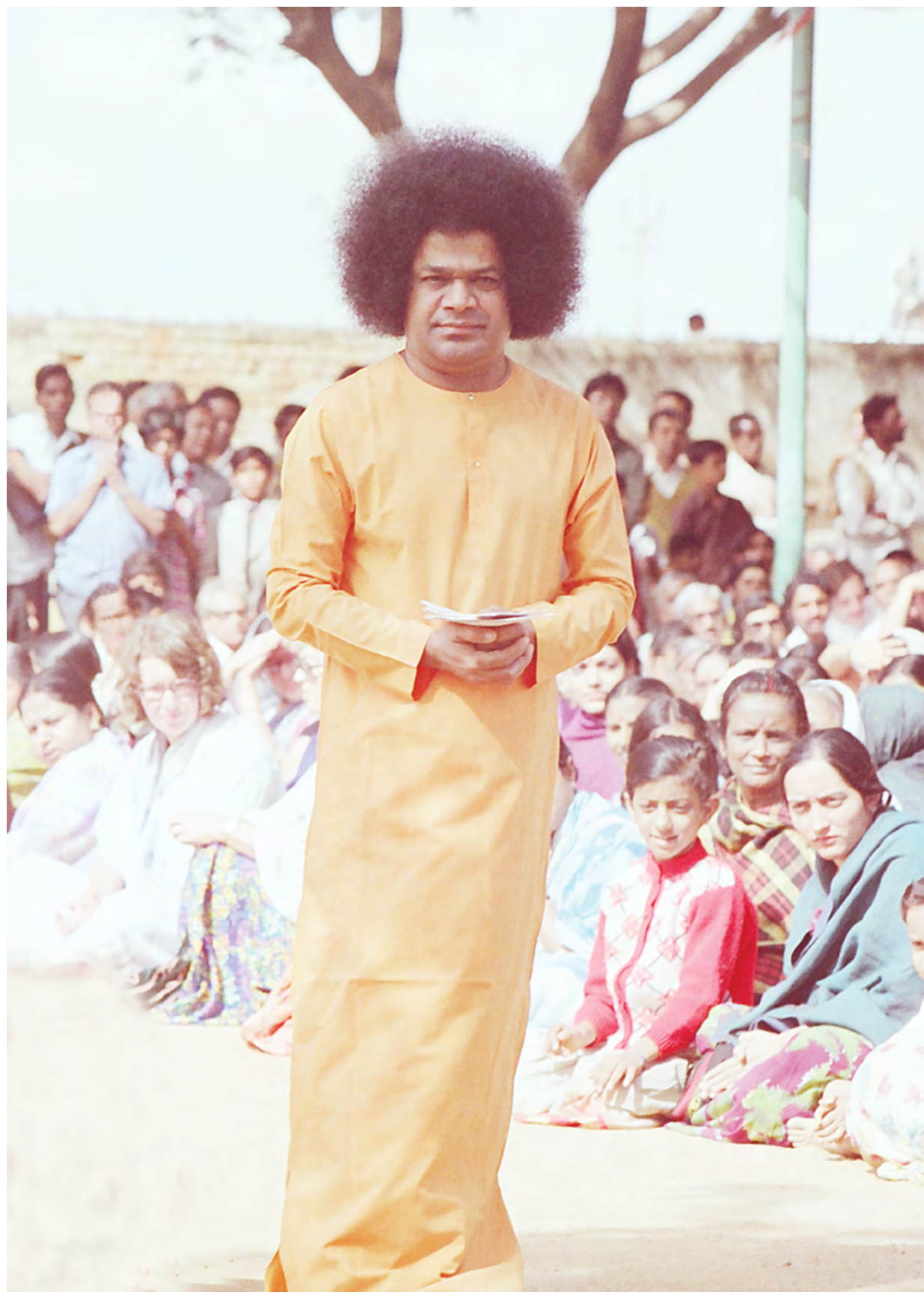


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*"There are many pots filled with water.
There is only one moon, but it is reflected
in all of them. Bodies are like vessels,
mind is like water. There is the reflection of
Atma Tattwa (Atmic principle) in it.
There is one sun which causes activity in the
entire world. There is no separate sun for
America or for India. Similarly, there is
one Atma which is present in all."*



CONTENTS

- 4 **Realise the Oneness of the Atmic Principle**
Bhagavan's Discourse: 28th April 1997
- 11 **Holy and Merry Christmas at Prasanthi Nilayam**
A Report
- 14 **Atmic Bliss Constitutes True Freedom**
From our Archives
- 16 **My Journey to Sai**
C. Prusty
- 19 **Darshan on the Way to Badrinath**
Effulgence of Divine Glory
- 21 **Divine Master Plan**
Alumni Forum
- 25 **Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam**
A Report
- 28 **News from Sai Centres**

*"Sanathana Sarathi" wishes
devotees a holy and prosperous New Year*

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AVATAR VANI

REALISE THE ONENESS OF THE ATMIC PRINCIPLE

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all;
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;
You become prosperous when you control your desires;
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

PERFORM ALL ACTIONS WITH DIVINE FEELINGS

Embodiments of Divine Love!

A MAN WITH EGO CANNOT ATTAIN anybody's love. Ego is very harmful.

An egoistic man loses the love of even his wife and children. In this vast world of infinite number of beings, where is the scope for man to develop ego?

Give up Ego and Anger

When you look at the map of the world, your own country B h a r a t appears to be small and within Bharat, the State of Tamil Nadu is very small,



and in the State of Tamil Nadu, Kodaikanal is a tiny place. Your house in Kodaikanal is quite small; and you are only one among all in the house. It is ignorance to have ego. *Ekatma Sarva Bhutantaratma* (one Atma dwells in all beings).

From another point of view, if you enquire you will realise that the whole world is in you. A scope to exhibit your ego crops up only when there is the second person. *Ekam*

*S a t h
V i p r a h
B a h u d h a
V a d a n t i* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). When you realise that

all are one and you are just one of the vast number of beings, where is the scope for developing ego? Is your ego due to your position, education, wealth or property? Any number of people are better off than you in many respects. In whichever way you look at, ego is the result of delusion and ignorance. When you give up ego, the whole world will love you. So, if you wish to be loved by all, you must leave your ego.

As long as you have anger, you cannot be happy at all. You will be happy and blissful only when you get rid of anger. Anger is a great enemy of man.

One with anger will not be successful in any of his endeavours.

He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by one and all.

His own people will abandon him.

He will lose all wealth and respect.

His anger will ruin him completely.

(Telugu Poem)

Having anger within yourself, you cannot experience happiness and bliss. How can you sleep peacefully when a snake is slithering in the house? How can you be peaceful when anger permeates your entire being? One bout of anger drains away the energy gained in three months; it pollutes and heats the blood which takes three months to regain normal state. Anger makes a man physically and mentally weak. Therefore, give no scope to anger. When anger is subdued, it is an indication that your Sadhana is on the right path.

Limit your Desires and Leave Greed

As long as man has desires, he cannot be truly rich or wealthy. He should put a limit to his desires. Who is the richest man? He who has contentment is the richest man. Who is the poorest man? The man with

Engage yourself in sacred actions to make human life fulfilling. Devotion is not just singing Bhajans. Bhajans are necessary, but only up to a certain stage. You should merge in love with God. I and you should become one. There is no second entity at all.

many desires is the poorest. Of course, one has to have some desires in order to achieve certain good things in life. The country is facing all types of problems because of the limitless desires of people. Desires are like forest fire; the more it spreads, the more it burns with added vigour. What kind of desire one should have? One should have desire for mental peace, good health and knowledge about the infinite principle. Householders should have such desires which are suitable to their stage of life. Goddess of wealth Lakshmi will then enter their house. A great devotee Ramdas sang:

Do not ask, oh mind, do not ask. The more you ask, the more you will be neglected. God will certainly grant you what you deserve without your asking. Did He not grant the wish of Sabari, who never asked? Did He not redeem Jatayu, who never asked but sacrificed his life for His cause? (Telugu Poem)

God gives without your asking. Neither Sabari nor Jatayu asked Rama for anything. But He granted them supreme state of salvation. A greedy man has no happiness. Man can experience all kinds of happiness when he conquers his greed.

A miser may have everything in life but he cannot derive any happiness from all that he possesses. Here is a small story. Once



there were two brothers who lived together. One was a great miser, and the other was a greater miser. They were so miserly that they did not enjoy anything they had. One day, they received the news that one of their close relatives in a nearby village had died. The elder brother decided to go there out of compulsion. He preferred to walk rather than spend money on a bus ticket. He got up early, lit the oil lamp to get ready and proceeded on his journey. When the younger brother saw the lighted lamp, he at once put it off lest it should consume oil. As he was groping in the dark, he was bitten by a scorpion; and he wreathed in pain.

Half an hour later there was a knock on the door. Seeing his brother standing at the door, the younger miser asked him, "Brother, why have you come back"? The elder miser replied, "I returned to ask you whether or not the lamp was put out". "Brother, what have you done? The soles of your sandals would be worn out by coming and going," the younger brother expressed his worry. "Do you think I don't have even that much intelligence? I kept my sandals under my armpit while covering the distance," replied the elder miser. By developing excessive greed and miserliness, they could not experience peace and happiness in life.

Recognise the Importance of Practice

Sacrifice is very important in the life of man. There is no higher quality than sacrifice. *Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaike Amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). You can live without many things, but not without breath. But if you inhale, you must also exhale. After eating food, if you do not excrete, you will fall sick. Blood must circulate continuously or it will lead to clots.

Blood and money must remain in circulation. Stagnant water becomes infested with worms. Money should be utilised properly. If you go on accumulating and don't spend it, it is like burying it under earth. Man should give up ego, conquer anger, limit desires and get rid of greed. These four checks are very important, especially for spiritual aspirants.

Mere Japa (repetition of God's Name) and Tapa (penance) do not constitute Sadhana. These are useless without mental transformation. *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man).

What is a good action? An action guided by discrimination between the eternal and the ephemeral is a good action. All powers are inherent in man. There is power of light in his eyes. Human body is like an electric generator. There are battery cells in the body. Man is endowed with great magnetic power. But he is not able to recognise his powers. If he did, he would recognise himself. If one knows oneself, one attains bliss. You ask others, who you are and where you have come from. Rather try to know who you are, where you have come from. If you think, you are a doctor, a businessman or a professor; this is not the truth about you. This is your profession, not your reality. You say, I am an Indian. That is your nationality, not your reality. All these epithets refer to external, worldly things. If someone asks, "Who are you"?, you should reply, "I am the Atma". Man reads various types of sacred texts to know himself. He interacts with noble persons, but what is the use? There is no spiritual progress. If you recite all the 700 Slokas (verses) of the Gita, what you get is throat pain, nothing else. You may read the Ramayana and the Bhagavadgita. But



without practice, nothing is gained. You should put into practice at least a bit of what you read and hear.

Will the darkness in the world be dispelled by the message of light?

Can the disease be cured by merely listening to the efficacy of medicine?

Can the poor get rid of poverty by listening to the principles of economics?

Can hunger be satiated by mere repetition of the names of various delicious dishes?

No. You can attain bliss only when you put your knowledge into practice.

(Telugu Poem)

Just by hearing, you won't gain anything. For a cashier in a bank, will the money serve his own purpose? All powers are available

are you? These are your instruments and you are the master. If you fail to recognise that you are the master and choose to be their slave, you will never reach the goal. Become the master and you achieve everything. Realising these as your instruments is all that is Sadhana. Keep the body and all these instruments in good condition with proper food and clothing.

Open the heart and shut the mouth. Today we open our mouth and close our heart. We waste our time in too much talking. All this is of no use. The heart is very valuable. So, open the gates of the heart. It requires no Sadhana. *Deho Devalaya Proktho Jivo Deva Sanathana* (the body is a temple and the indweller is God). Recognise that the



You see so many bulbs are glowing here. What is responsible for the bulbs to glow? Is it the electric current or the wire? When you enquire, you come to know that all are important. Consider truth as the electric current, peace as the bulb, righteousness as the wire and love as the light that emanates. If you want to have the light of love, you should have the bulb of peace, the wire of righteousness and the current of truth. Then all become one.

within ourselves, but we are unable to utilise them. You say mine, mine. Who are you? When you know yourself, you will know what is yours. First know, who you are. This is the teaching of all noble souls.

Open the Heart and Shut the Mouth

You say, my body, my mind, my Buddhi (intellect), my Chitta (mind-stuff), then who

body is a temple of God, and God resides in your heart. Develop this awareness. Many people in the pretext of devotion neglect the upkeep of body. It is not correct. When the body becomes weak, the mind also becomes weak. Keep body, mind, intellect and Chitta in good condition to attain success in

Sadhana. Here is a small example. In the bedroom, you have a bed, a pillow, a ceiling fan and an air-conditioner. What is the use of all these if you are unable to sleep? What is the use of having the mind, intellect and Chitta if you are not able to attain peace? Why has God given them to you? God has given them to you to attain peace. When you realise that you are the Atma, you will know who you are. People think that the mind and intellect are the controlling factors; but heart is the real controller. When one looks outward, one has no peace; outside there are only pieces. Physically and materially man has made a lot of progress, but morally and spiritually, he is on the downward path. What is the reason? Selfishness is the root cause of all this. There is selfishness in everything we talk about and in everything we do. Man today has become a slave of selfishness.

Man should leave selfishness and connect with God. Salokya (perception), Sameepya (proximity), Sarupya (identity), Sayujya (merger) are the four stages of Sadhana. Equality, love, unity and brotherhood are essential to attain these. With the attitude of seeing differences everywhere, how can he acquire this spirit of unity? You attain bliss by realising the oneness of the Atmic principle.

Man is Repository of all Powers

The same five basic elements are present in all bodies. There is no sixth element. From qualified non-dualism, we must advance to non-dualism. This is a beneficial perspective. Names and forms may be different but the five elements are the same in everybody. There is no difference whatsoever. *Sarva Jiva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God) and *Sarva*

Jiva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati (whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God). According to Vedanta, every action has its Karma Phala (fruit or consequence). There can be no action without a good or bad result. It may come immediately or after many days, many months or even many births. For example, if you are slicing a fruit and cut your finger, bleeding starts instantly. So, you get the result immediately. When you sow a seed, it takes four or five days to sprout, five or six years to grow into a tree, three more years to bear fruit, and a few more days for the fruit to ripen. You eat in the morning, but it takes a few hours to digest. Every action has a consequence though we do not know when and where it will happen.

Consequence of action is inevitable. What type of action should we do? We should do actions with divine feelings. Then we will attain divine bliss. Mundane actions performed with worldly feelings will yield mundane results which are impermanent. Adi Sankara said that man should not forget God, and should discard temporal things. Temporal things give only temporary satisfaction, but divine feelings, thoughts and deeds lead to eternal bliss.

A young man may exult at his own beauty and muscle power, but how long will they last? Lightning gives a flash of brilliant light, but immediately darkness follows. Adi Sankara therefore cautioned man:

*Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam,
Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam.*

(Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny and youth; the tide of time may destroy them in a moment.)

Everything has reaction, reflection and resound. If you say Om standing in front of a hall, you get the resound at once. The



air compressed in a harmonium produces various sounds Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni. But their root is one sound, that is Omkar. Every sound originated from Omkar. There is Divine principle in one and all. In the Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna says, *Beejam Maam Sarva Bhutanam Viddhi* (know Me as the seed of all living beings). If you plant a mango seed, you will get a mango tree. Every tree has many branches, each branch has many fruits and the same type of seeds exist in all fruits. Where did the seeds come from? *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). God is the one seed, universe is the tree, nations are the branches and sub-branches. All the beings are the fruits; in every being God is present as the Atma in the form of seed.

There is only one Atmic principle and it is present in every being. Without knowing this, we resort to hating others. When this truth of oneness is recognised, we will not entertain perverted feelings of hating others. There are many powers within us, such as magnetic power, electric power, fire power, laser power, etc. The body is like a generator, the eyes are the bulbs, the ears are the loud speakers, the heart is the main switch and the mind is the wire. When you put off the main switch, everything goes off. So, always keep the main switch on. Similarly, consider God as the life-breath, who is the indweller. There is no need to search for Sathya (truth), Dharma (righteousness) and Santhi (peace) anywhere. You see so many bulbs are glowing here. What is responsible for the bulbs to glow? Is it the electric current or the wire? When you enquire, you come to know that all are important. Consider truth as the electric current, peace as the bulb, righteousness as the wire and love as the

light that emanates. If you want to have the light of love, you should have the bulb of peace, the wire of righteousness and the current of truth. Then all become one. *Ekatma Sarva Bhutantaratma* (one Atma dwells in all beings).

Vedanta teaches many easy paths for man's salvation, yet people do not have interest in Vedanta because they don't understand it. If you develop interest in it, you will make spiritual progress. If you have interest, a spark can be developed into a fire. But on the contrary, if you have no interest, the spark will be put off in the first instance only.

Embodiments of Divine Love!

Develop sincere interest. Whatever you do in any field, moral, spiritual or worldly, perform it with interest. Only then can you get the reward. Without interest, you cannot achieve anything. In matters relating to God, there should be greater interest. Recognise the intimate relation between the body and God. Body is a limb of society. Society is a limb of Nature and Nature is a limb of God. Who is the source? God is the source. God is the basis of the principle of unity. All organs should work in unity.

Suppose the eye sees a fruit on a tree and the mind desires to have it, the fruit won't fall by itself. The legs must walk towards it and the hand and fingers should pluck it. Even then your wish is not fulfilled. You must put it into the mouth, eat it and taste it. Then the stomach should digest it and send the essence to all the limbs of the body. You get correct result only when all the organs do their duty sincerely. Each organ has its specific duty. All limbs are important. Even if one limb is weak, we become unhappy. When God has given such a comfortable



and ideal life, we should use this life to attain fulfilment.

All Work is God's Work

True devotees show gratitude to God, saying,

Oh Lord! I offer to You the heart You have given me. What else is there with me to offer at Your Lotus Feet in worship? Please accept this with my humble salutations. (Telugu Poem)

This is true surrender, sacrifice, devotion and fulfilment. There is nothing higher and more valuable than this. Diamond and gold ornaments are considered valuable. But who has given value to them? It is man alone. Man is much more valuable than all the wealth in the world. In a scenario where man's value is decreasing, how should he redeem his value? Man must decrease his desires in order to increase his value.

God and world can be compared to the two ends of the see-saw. If you move towards God, the world is distanced. If you move towards the world, God is distanced. You must use your power of discrimination and move towards God in order to realise your full power and value.

The Bhagavadgita, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bible, the Quran are only guideposts; they show the divine goal. Making use of them, you have to walk the path yourself. There is no use if you keep on chanting Kodaikanal, Kodaikanal. You will have to travel to reach there. It is no use saying, potato-chapathi, potato-chapathi ten times unless you take it in your hand and eat it. Do contemplation and practice to derive bliss. It is not mere talking that is important, action is important. Today people only teach, they don't put what they teach

into practice. We read the Ramayana. But how many people follow the command of their father? Very few. Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavadgita, "Those who think of Me under all circumstances, will surely attain Me". But you think of God only when you are in trouble. This is part-time devotion. With part-time devotion, you will get only part-time fulfilment. You must think of God at all times and in all situations. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God). Consider your house work as God's work, your business as God's work. All work is God's work. It is a very easy path. God is not asking you to do any penance.

People today are living in darkness, making their lives miserable. Engage yourself in sacred actions to make human life fulfilling. Devotion is not just singing Bhajans. Bhajans are necessary, but only up to a certain stage. You should merge in love with God. I and you should become one. There is no second entity at all. *Ekameva Adviteyam Brahma* (God is one without a second).

There are many pots filled with water. There is only one moon, but it is reflected in all of them. Bodies are like vessels, mind is like water. There is the reflection of Atma Tattwa (Atmic principle) in it. There is one sun which causes activity in the entire world. There is no separate sun for America or for India. Similarly, there is one Atma which is present in all. Understand this secret. Understand this Divine principle properly.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Bhavabhaya Harana Vandita Charana...*")

– Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 28th April 1997.



HOLY AND MERRY CHRISTMAS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

PURITY, PIETY AND GAIETY marked the celebration of Christmas at Prasanthi Nilayam, where about 1,500 devotees came from more than 50 countries of the world to celebrate it in its sacred precincts with unity and love. The theme of this year's celebrations was "I and My Father are One". The entire township of Prasanthi Nilayam bore a festive look with traditional Christmas decorations which included Christmas trees, stars, banners and flowers. The decorations in Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of the celebrations, presented an enchanting look with beautiful cloth hangings and giant size illuminated portraits of Jesus Christ. Colourful illumination of Yajur Mandir, the abode of Bhagavan, and other buildings at night was a spectacle of great attraction for devotees.

The first presentation of Christmas was a soulful devotional music offering comprising Christmas carols and devotional songs on 24th December 2015 by the International Christmas Choir represented by more than 470 singers and musicians, both ladies and gents, from about 50 countries.

Beginning their programme with a prayer to Lord Ganesh "Jaya Jaya Ganaraya", the singers sang in all 18 songs suffusing the entire milieu with devotional fervour and true Christmas spirit. They concluded their programme with the song composed by Bhagavan Himself "Love is My Form, Truth is My Breath, Bliss is My Food".

The holy Christmas morning was made holier when overseas devotees sang the glory of Lord Jesus and Bhagavan Baba in



Christmas carols in Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of 25th December.

Sai Kulwant Hall from 6.15 a.m. to 7.00 a.m. on 25th December 2015. With their hearts filled with deep devotion, the devotees presented ten Christmas carols which included "Our Father who Art in Heaven", "Mary's Boy Child", "O Come ye Faithful", "Silent Night Holy Night", "Joy to the World" and "Seek Ye First".

The next programme in Sai Kulwant Hall began at 8.00 a.m. with Veda chanting which was followed by a devotional music presentation by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School and Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The programme began at 8.20 a.m. with joyous instrumental



Christmas carols and devotional songs by International Christmas Choir.

music presentation of Christmas carols on violin by Primary School students. This was followed by Christmas carols by the Institute band group. Thereafter, the Institute students presented an enrapturing programme of devotional songs and

of Bhagavan by following the ideals set by Him and valuable lessons taught by Him. The second speaker was Sri Jan Floris, Central Coordinator, Region 7 of Sathya Sai International Organisation. Dwelling on the spiritual lessons learnt by him after he came to Bhagavan at the age of 45, the learned speaker narrated how Bhagavan helped and guided him in his personal and professional life.

These talks were followed by a drama "The Christmas Gift" performed by Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) students from U.K. and various other countries. Through a simple but imaginative story of Michael Mouse who could not arrange any gift like others for the Divine Baby Jesus and ultimately offered the unique gift of offering



Christmas carols by Institute students.

Christmas carols accompanied by a very educative and illuminating dialogue which showcased the significance of Christmas celebrations and the glory of Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Baba. The numbers sang by the students included "We Wish you a Merry Christmas", "O Sing for Joy to God our Strength", "Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart", "Jingle Bell Jingle Bell". As the students sang these songs, four students in the costume of Santa Claus went round the entire hall distributing chocolates and spreading joy.

The programme in the afternoon began with inspiring talks of two speakers who were introduced by Sri John Behner. The first speaker was Ms. Loraine Burrows, an eminent educationist serving at present in Sathya Sai School, Thailand. Narrating some of her wonderful experiences of Bhagavan's Divinity, the distinguished speaker exhorted the devotees to make their life the message



A scene from the drama "The Christmas Gift".

himself to the Lord by blocking a hole in the wall to prevent cold wind from affecting the baby, the drama taught that man should offer himself to God and surrender totally to Him to redeem his life.

Bhagavan's Divine Discourse followed next, in which He said that man should never leave Sathya and Dharma even in the face of grave difficulties. Jesus, He said, underwent enormous suffering but still his heart was full of love and compassion.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan "Love is My Form Truth is My Breath".

The final session of the grand Christmas celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam began with a traditional Christmas procession of children at 5.00 p.m. on 26th December 2015. Dressed in glittering costumes, 60 children from 20 countries came from Yajur Mandir to Sai Kulwant Hall in this beautiful procession. Thanksgiving speech of Sri Tom Lahey, Chairman, International Christmas Committee followed next, in which he offered grateful thanks to devotees from overseas countries, Ashram staff and Seva Dal volunteers for their help and cooperation which made the Christmas programme a grand success. Referring to Bhagavan's saying, 'love is giving and forgiving and self is getting and forgetting', Sri Lahey observed that Jesus and Bhagavan Baba exemplified giving love to one and all.

The grand finale of the Christmas celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam was



Christmas carols by International Children's Choir.

provided by the soulful presentation of Christmas carols by the International Children's Choir which consisted of 60 children from 20 countries. Beginning with chanting of Omkar and Gayatri Mantra three times, the children sang in all 14 hymns in adoration of Lord Jesus which included "Little Jesus Sweetly Sleep", "Hark! How the Bells", "A Virgin Most Pure", "Shepherds in the Field Abiding", "Ding Dong Merrily on High" and "Deck the Halls". The entire presentation showcased undiminished Divine Glory of the Lord, immersing all hearts in total bliss, thus bringing to an end glorious Christmas celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

– The Bible
Luke 6. 47-49

From our Archives

ATMIC BLISS CONSTITUTES TRUE FREEDOM

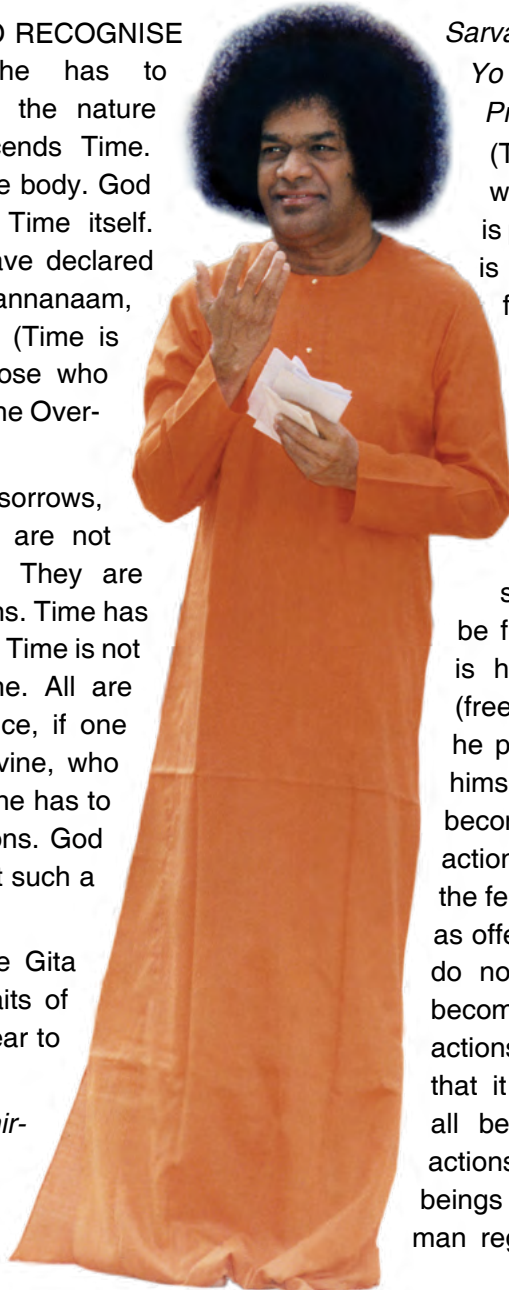
INNER PURITY IS VITAL FOR A SPIRITUAL ASPIRANT

FOR MAN TO RECOGNISE Brahman, he has to comprehend the nature of that which transcends Time. Time is consuming the body. God is the Consumer of Time itself. Hence, the Vedas have declared that Kala-Kalaprapannanaam, Kalah Kim Karishyati (Time is powerless against those who have taken refuge in the Over-Lord of Time).

Man's joys and sorrows, happiness or misery are not dependent on Time. They are based on man's actions. Time has no relations or friends. Time is not subordinate to anyone. All are subject to Time. Hence, if one has to realise the Divine, who is the Lord of Time, one has to carry out His injunctions. God looks with love only at such a person.

In this context, the Gita has described the traits of the devotee who is dear to the Lord:

*Anapekshah Shuchir-Dakshah,
U d h a s e e n o
Gatavyathah,*



*Sarvarambha Parityagee,
Yo Madbhaktah Sa Me Priyah.*

(That devotee is dear to me who is free from desire, who is pure in body and mind, who is resolute, unconcerned, free from sorrow and has renounced all sense of doership).

True Meaning of Desireless Action

Anapekshah: In this world, man, with his body, senses and mind cannot be free from desires. But how is he to become Anapeksha (free from expectation)? When he performs actions, regarding himself as the doer, the actions become fetters that bind him. All action which are performed with the feeling that they are intended as offerings to please the Divine, do not lead to bondage. They become Anapeksha (desireless actions). One has to recognise that it is the Divine principle in all beings which is getting all actions done through human beings as instruments. As long as man regards himself as the doer

and enjoyer, he cannot escape from the consequences of his actions.

When a man regards a certain piece of land as his, the crops grown on it will belong to him. The Gita teaches that when actions are done as offerings to God, they become “desireless” actions. Man has taken birth to perform his duties and not to enjoy power or assert his rights. When one’s duty is performed, the right comes of its own accord. Men today fight for their rights and forget their duties. Hence, discharge of duty comes first. It is through duty that man realises God.

Inner Purity is Vital for all Aspirants

Shuchih: This refers to purity. It is not enough if the body is clean. Inner purity is essential. The latter, in fact, is more essential than the former. For the proper enjoyment of all things, purity of mind is essential. Whatever sacred acts you may do in the external world, if you have no purity of mind and heart, all of them are valueless. The food cooked in an untinned vessel will be spoilt even if all the ingredients are good. Likewise, in the vessel of the heart, the inside must be purified by Prema (love). Then, all that one consumes will be wholesome. Hence, purity is vital for all aspirants; without it, all man’s actions get tainted. Actions done with an impure heart can only produce undesirable results. Whatever good results you want to secure in the external world, inner purity is the basis.

Dakshah: This refers to the determination that is needed to accomplish anything. One must have the fortitude and resoluteness to achieve one’s purpose, whatever might be the obstacles in the way. To accomplish any sacred task one has to possess determination. Dakshah signifies this quality of unwavering determination in the devotee.

Udhaseenah: One who is unaffected by whatever happens. This means that man should be totally free from selfishness. He must consider the performance of his duties as the sole purpose of his existence. The human body is the result of past actions. Man is bound to the world by his actions. The body is the primary requisite for the performance of Dharma (right action). Indifferent to fame or blame, not seeking power or position, one should perform one’s duties selflessly. Do not be swayed by any consideration other than your duty. Whether it be in a political organisation or in regard to a personal matter, or in relation to national issues, you should act according to the dictates of your conscience without any other concern. One can become a courageous leader only if one performs his duties in this spirit. All actions must be done in a spirit of service. Only one who serves is fit to become a leader. The man who seeks a position, can he be pure-hearted? No. Forgetting power and position, concentrating only on one’s duties, men should engage themselves in action. This is the true import of Udhaseenah.

Act in the Present to Get Rid of Mental Anguish

Gathavyathah: Vyathah refers to anguish in the mind. Falling a prey to mental anguish, man is totally confused. Man has a tendency to brood over the past. Of what use is it to worry about what has happened? Nor should one worry about the future which is unknown and uncertain. Bear in mind only the present. This is the way to get rid of mental anguish – Gathavyathah. The present is the product of the past and the

MY JOURNEY TO SAI

C. Prusty

Swami said, "You have not brought Jagannath; you have brought only idols". Then with a benign smile pointing to Himself, He declared, "Jagannath is here"! My hair stands on end with thrill even now when I think of that moment. He indeed is Jagannath – the Lord of the universe, who has so compassionately donned a human frame so that we can touch Him, feel Him, experience Him and love Him to our heart's content.

MY MOTHER WAS A STAUNCH devotee of Lord Venkateswara of Tirupati. Due to her prompting, I remember visiting Tirupati quite a few times in the '70s. I held my mother in high esteem and her word was law for me. As per her wish, Lord Venkateswara adorned the altar in our home after my marriage. My devotion to Lord Venkateswara was sincere and steady.

Sai Comes in my Life

My first visit to Puttaparthi happened in 1979. Before I come to that, I must share something about my college days that set the stage for this chapter of my life. It was sometime in 1977-78 that one morning Sri Biswanath Pradhan, my dear friend from college days, met me at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (where I was working) on some official work. After we concluded the discussion on factory matters, Sri Pradhan suddenly asked, "Prusty, have you heard of Sai Baba"? I instantly dismissed the idea and said, "I don't know him and I

am not interested. For me my God is Lord Venkateswara of Tirupati. That is what my mother has told me. I am sorry. I do not want to be pulled into any other God or Guru". But Sri Pradhan persisted. He went on to narrate how Sai Baba is a Divine Being and how Sai Bhajans fill you with peace and bliss, and so on. Before we parted, he placed in my hand a photo of Baba. Well, with great reluctance I accepted the photo only because Pradhan was a good friend. Out of respect for him, I placed that photo of Baba in a corner of our altar at home.

Again, because of his invitation I attended Sai Bhajan sessions off and on. The Pradhan of college days, who used to splurge his time and money in entertainment and social life, was now a completely changed man. His house was nothing short of a temple; the drawing room had no furniture, just a mat and huge pictures of Baba. He would also spend all his free time outside office hours in meditation. This 180 degree transformation in him was quite a shock for me. Looking at



how tremendously Pradhan had changed for the better I was inclined to wonder if there was indeed something special about Sai Baba.

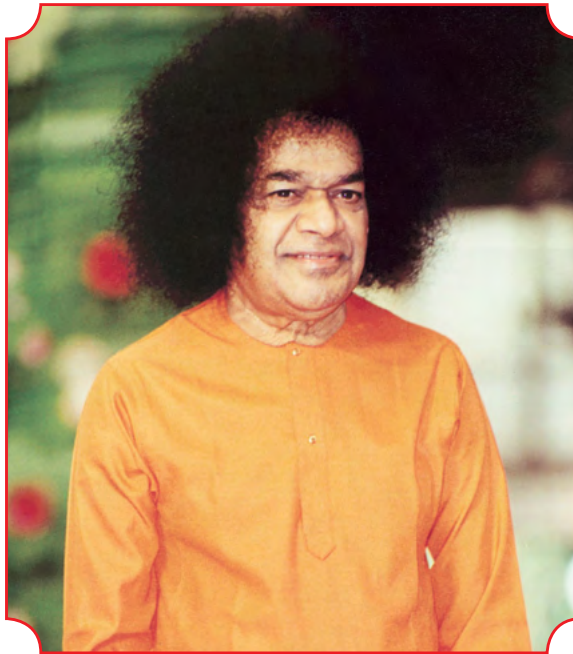
Vision of the Cosmic Form

During this time, I saw manifestations of Vibhuti and nectar in a devotee's house in our township. It was too incredible. Coincidentally, his name too was

Vibhuti Raju. One day he told me that he was planning a South India trip with a group of people in a mini-bus. I was not keen to be part of this as I had seen most of the places listed in his itinerary but when he mentioned he was going to halt at Puttaparthi too, I became interested. By now I was curious to see who this Sai Baba was. It was with this group that I first came to Puttaparthi.

It was the last day of Dasara celebrations, the Vijaya Dasami of 1979. Poornachandra Auditorium was overflowing with devotees. I could barely manage to enter the hall. Even though I got in with a lot of difficulty, nothing was visible to me because in front of me were tall people. Finally, I thought of a plan. I went and stood right at the end of the hall, my back to the wall. Now I could stand and see the proceedings and no one complained. Soon the Poornahuti ceremonies of Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna began.

Being new to everything, I was only trying to observe and grasp what was going on. There were many offerings into the



fire. Swami waved His hand over the flames when something from His hand fell into the sacrificial pit. After the final offering of oblations into the fire, Swami raised both His hands and turned to the gents and ladies side in benediction. What I saw then completely stupefied me. It was not His hands any more. I was actually seeing in His hands

the various forms of gods and goddesses – Rama, Krishna, Venkateswara, Siva and so on. It was a Viswarupa Darshan (vision of the Cosmic Form)! I stood there transfixed. It was so incredible!

After Bhagavan left the stage, I asked a person beside me as to what he saw in Baba's hands. The man replied, "Just the hands, what else"? This only confirmed to me further the enigmatic Divinity of Sai Baba. In fact, I became so convinced that He is indeed the Ultimate Reality that immediately afterwards I told my wife, "I have found my God. There is no need to go anywhere else from now on. There is nothing left to achieve. Baba is my everything. I am fulfilled".

Lord Jagannath is Here!

It was during this time that I had begun constructing a house of my own in Odisha, in a nearby city, 40 km away. The next time I visited Puttaparthi, I brought the sand of river Chitravathi to place in the foundation of my house. The coming up of this house was



itself a miracle. While I started experiencing the invisible hand of Sai in everything that I did, the visible signs of His grace were the Vibhuti and nectar that flowed from His pictures in my house. I knew I was comfortably and securely placed under His care. My eldest son joined His college for his B.Sc. in 1987. From then on my connection with Prasanthi Nilayam became even stronger. While His blessings continued in different ways, one unforgettable episode unfolded in the summer of 1992.

Sri K.C. Choudhury, a senior member of our Sai Samithi, had a divine inspiration one day to offer to Bhagavan the sacred idols of the Trinity that adorn every house in Odisha – Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Mother Subhadra. It was a lofty thought and I was happy to be part of the team that had been formed to execute this. The first task was to locate a neem tree that would be apt for making the idols. The idols of these gods at the hallowed shrine at Puri are always made of neem wood. I searched the entire HAL township looking for the right tree. Quite interestingly, my search ended in my own yard. Ours was a spacious house with a garden on three sides and right in the front was a neem tree which unusually had grown like a straight pillar for the first 25 feet. While we had always wondered at its uniqueness, little did we know that this was actually a divine blessing waiting to reveal itself.

On the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami in 1992, the tree was felled amidst Bhajans and Vedic chants. The sculptor too was a Sai devotee who undertook the work with rigorous austerities and completed it by September 1992. The idols were then brought in a grand procession from his house to the Sai temple of our township.

Soon a team of 33 Sai devotees started for Prasanthi Nilayam carrying the Trinity to place them at Bhagavan's Lotus Feet.

After reaching Prasanthi Nilayam, we placed the statues in a ground floor room and prayed to Bhagavan for an audience. The first three days went in prayer with no response from Him. Some of the team members returned because they could not wait longer. On the fourth day, Bhagavan called us in. Eighteen of us were with Him that morning in the interview room. It was a red-letter day of my life – 11th September 1992. Later, Bhagavan called just four of us, the principal members of the team, to Poornachandra Auditorium. When we submitted our prayer again to Bhagavan, He asked, "What have you brought"? "Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Mother Subhadra, Swami," I replied.

Swami said, "You have not brought Jagannath; you have brought only idols". Then with a benign smile pointing to Himself, He declared, "Jagannath is here"! My hair stands on end with thrill even now when I think of that moment. He indeed is Jagannath – the Lord of the universe, who has so compassionately donned a human frame so that we can touch Him, feel Him, experience Him and love Him to our heart's content.

Bhagavan then permitted these idols to be permanently placed in the Sanathana Samskruti Museum. Till this day, devotees have Darshan of this sacred Trinity in this beautiful edifice that looks like a glorious Sanathana Dharma temple from a distance.

– **Sri C. Prusty is a senior engineer serving in Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam.**



Effulgence of Divine Glory

DARSHAN ON THE WAY TO BADRINATH

I N APRIL 1966, I WISHED TO make a pilgrimage to the holy shrine at Badrinath, along with my father and a family group. I first went to Puttaparthi and prayed for Bhagavan's permission and blessings to undertake the trip. Bhagavan very kindly gave His permission and said that His grace would be with me during the whole journey to Badri and that He would give me Darshan there.

Our journey from Delhi to Badrinath was to be in two cars which we had taken from Delhi. Up to Rishikesh, the road was good and on plain level. Beyond, it was a narrow and perilous Ghat road on which only one-way traffic was permitted in those days and that too in convoys. Neither I nor the drivers from Delhi were conversant with the details of these restrictions and the formalities to be observed.

The first day after leaving Rishikesh, we could travel in a convoy only up to Srinagar and we had to halt there for the night. Very foolishly, we thought that if we left Srinagar very early next morning before any traffic commenced, we would be able to cover the distance to Joshimath before noon that day without having to go in the slow-moving convoy which would take the whole day to reach that place. With this idea, we left Srinagar at about 6.00 a.m. and drove on towards Joshimath. We found no other vehicle anywhere on the road.

At two or three places where there were checkposts, the guards showed some hand signals as though telling us to stop and shouted something in Hindi, but our drivers drove on without stopping. In my defective understanding of the Hindi language, I thought the guards and our drivers had merely exchanged some pleasantries.

At about 8.30 a.m., when we had covered some 50 km from Srinagar, we reached a very small hamlet where we found a barricade set up across the road, which, we later understood, had been put up expressly to stop our cars. A number of policemen were also there. The moment our cars came to a halt the officer-in-charge, a Sub-Inspector, came and enquired whether we had a special permit to use the vehicles on the road on that day, and why we had not stopped at the previous checkposts despite having been specially told by the concerned guards to do so. Fortunately for me, the Sub-Inspector knew English. I explained to him that, being unacquainted with Hindi, we did not understand correctly what the guards had said and that we did not also know that any permit was needed to use the road on that day.

I had with me a letter given to me by the Central Minister of State for Defence to the officer commanding the Army Division at Joshimath, requesting the officer to extend all assistance to me. I showed that letter

to the Sub-Inspector and he was satisfied about our bonafides. He explained to me, quite politely, that the road was officially closed to all traffic for the whole of that day and only vehicles with special permits were allowed to ply. Not even convoy traffic was permitted. This was because the Joshimath-Badrinath section of the road was to be formally inaugurated the next morning by the Central Defence Minister and security arrangements, etc., were in progress. On being asked who was the authority to grant a special permit, he said that it should have been obtained from the District Magistrate at Srinagar before we left that place and that the only other officer who had the power to issue one was the Superintendent of Police, then at Chamoli, about 60 km away towards Joshimath. The Sub-Inspector also told us very courteously that we had to get down from the cars and spend the rest of the day as also the whole night at that place, because he had no authority to let us use the road even for going back to Srinagar as that would also be violating the rules. He was genuinely sorry for our plight but entirely powerless to help us out of it.

There was no evidence of any clean place in or around the hamlet, nor of the dirtiest tea shop. The prospect before us was of spending the whole day and the cold night without any food and a roof over our heads. It was an ugly and unnerving situation. My thoughts then very naturally went to Bhagavan; I sent Him a mental S.O.S. for His help! And it came soon enough, in a most extraordinary manner. The Sub-Inspector had specifically told me that no senior police officer could be expected to come that way that day, as everyone in the force was busily engaged

in connection with the arrangements for the Defence Minister's inauguration ceremony. But, suddenly, almost at the split second of my thought of Baba, there was heard the sound of an automobile coming towards the hamlet from the Joshimath side. In a minute, a jeep was seen, literally flying. It came to a screeching halt near the barricade. The Sub-Inspector and all the policemen rushed to it, saluted and stood to attention around it. A smart, tall officer jumped off the jeep. The Sub-Inspector had a few words with him and then brought him along to me and introduced him as the Superintendent of Police – the very officer authorised to grant the special permit! The 'Superintendent' talked to me as if he was apologising for the delay in his arrival and the inconvenience it had caused me. The permit had to be issued in printed form which was available only in his office at Chamoli, and the office seal had to be affixed to it. But that Superintendent waived all these formalities. He wrote out a special permit on an ordinary piece of paper, allowing our two cars to proceed on that road right up to Badrinath on that day itself.

He frankly told me that he had absolutely no programme at all to come to that spot on that day, but had a sudden prompting to come. After handing the permit to me, he said he had to hurry back to Chamoli, got into the jeep and was off, even before I could speak a word of my profound gratitude. For a moment I stood dumbfounded, staring at the jeep disappearing far off. Then I recollected: Did not the Lord in Puttaparthi assure me, I will give you Darshan there!

– **From the article of Justice V. Balakrishna Eradi in "Miracles of Divine Love, Vol. 1".**

ALUMNI FORUM

V. PRAVEEN

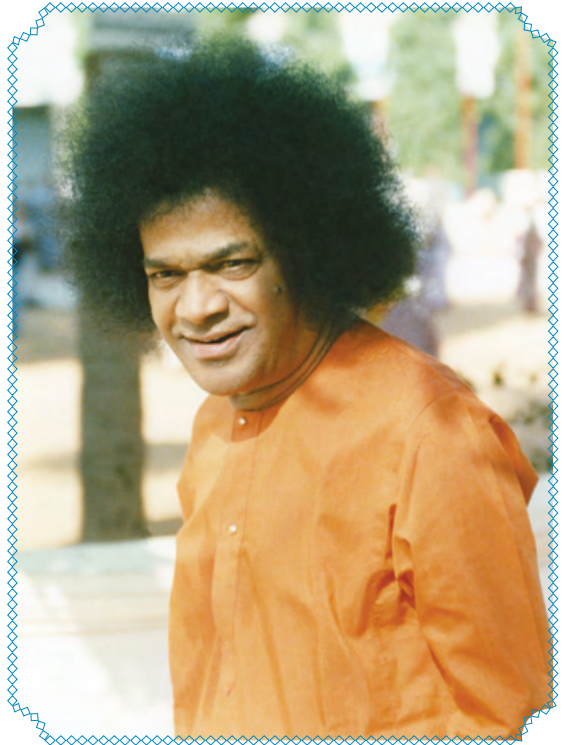
DIVINE MASTER PLAN

NOTHING HAPPENS IN THIS world without God's Will. The Divine Master Plan unfolds in a most dramatic way, leaving ordinary mortals baffled, and at the same time achieving what is seemingly impossible. Swami in His infinite love makes us part of His Divine Plan and gives us an opportunity to grow in our faith and also progress in our journey to reach Him.

The Divine Master Plan Unfolds

I was fortunate that Swami chose me as a part of His Divine Mission and story. After completing my B.Sc. (Bioscience), I asked Swami about the next step. Swami said that I should do Management. I studied hard during the winter vacation and also summer vacation and appeared for M.B.A. entrance exam. In the interview, the Vice Chancellor said that since I got gold medal in B.Sc., the Institute would like me to do Ph.D. and not lose me to M.B.A. The interview panel was in no mood to listen. When I communicated this to Swami, He just smiled and said, "Do M.Sc". In my short-sightedness, I was not aware of His Divine Master Plan and felt how V.C. could disobey Swami's command. As the time passed, I forgot about this and finished M.Sc.

In July 2001, after summer vacation, Swami asked a couple of us to do Ph.D. While we were taking Padanamaskar, He said, "This is temporary; I will give you some other work later". Those days Ph.D.



boys got a lot of chances to serve VIPs. So, we thought that Swami must be referring to that. We had spent just 15 days into research and Swami sent word for us. When we reached the interview room, He said, "I want to send you to U.S. for management training. Will you go"? When we said yes to the Divine command, Swami wanted us to get the approval of our parents. Obviously, it was yes from them also. We were a little unhappy to leave Swami's physical proximity. So, to pacify us, He said, it was only for three months. This increased to six months by next day.

Swami asked us to write a 'small' exam in Bangalore (Bengaluru). When we spoke to the elders who were coordinating our preparations, we came to know that it was GRE and TOEFL. For a person who was not thinking of any other option other than serving Swami, these words were very alien. Swami offered us a sumptuous breakfast in the Mandir and sent us by the 8 a.m. bus to Bengaluru. We were accommodated in Sri Sathya Sai Gokulam and were instructed to go to Time Coaching Centre for our GRE preparation. When we reached the coaching centre, the counsellor asked us about our plan for U.S. When we said that we intended to go for the Fall Session, he said that we could not join their coaching centre as GRE preparation required a minimum of three months of preparation and three months of self-study and mock exams. Not knowing what to do, we asked them the procedure for taking the exams. They wanted us to show our passports. When we told them that we did not have them, they laughed.

We went to the passport office to apply for Tatkal (instant) passport. On applying, we tried to explain the urgency, but we were told we had to wait for 15 days for passport. But Swami had other plans. The passport officer who was handling our files was being transferred to Singapore and he thought that Baba had done so much for Karnataka by building the hospital, so, he wanted to do a little for Baba before he left office. He fast tracked the passport and gave it to us at 4 p.m., a record six hours from time of application. The police verification was done 10 years later when the passports were renewed!!

GRE Examination in Five Days

We reached the Time Coaching Centre later next day with passports to their surprise. By now, they had seen the power of Sai. So,

they said, we could use their coaching centre but they would not enrol us due to fear of losing their reputation. On 5th August, we got the date for GRE exam as 10th August exactly five days to write the exam. We bought GRE books and took first mock test with disastrous results. For next four days we locked ourselves in the room and tried reading through voluminous GRE books. For a bioscience student, mathematics is a difficult proposition but Swami had already made me relearn it during the preparation for M.B.A. exam!! We ate very little food but found it very hard to just go through the books, leave alone mastering them. On the fateful day, with trepidation we reached the exam hall and could not believe our eyes when the results were popped up on the screen. Swami cleared the GRE for us!!

TOEFL was even more dangerous for me, as my typing skills were very nascent to the extent of thinking why can't these guys put ABCD in one line!! I had to write a 1,000 words essay online. Swami did a miracle again as we got news from the university that since we had studied through English medium all our life, we were exempted from taking TOEFL.

After we reached Parthi, Swami called us in along with some elders and remarked that I sent these boys to study but they were only busy eating food! He asked for a weighing scale and personally checked my weight. I had put on five kg in five days!! (I am still struggling to shed the divine weight after years of exercising!!)

Nothing is Impossible When Swami Wills

On 15th August, on Swami's command, we filled up the application forms which came by snail mail and sent it back by snail mail to Loma Linda University in California



which was the university chosen by Swami out of the big list of universities. The same Vice Chancellor who denied me M.B.A. seat gave a recommendation letter for this course. Swami though Divine respects the administrative system He has created. He could have forced the university to give me M.B.A. seat but He wanted to respect the words of V.C. who told me to do Ph.D.

Though the admissions for Fall Session were closed by July, Swami worked a miracle again. The university accepted our applications and the admission committee met as a special case and selected us. Loma Linda University is a Seventh Day Adventist University which believes in vegetarian food. So, only vegetarian restaurants are on the campus, solving a big puzzle of availability of vegetarian food for us in U.S.

On 1st September 2001, on Swami's command we applied for visa through an agent in Bengaluru as per the prevailing procedure for visa. The applications were sent to Chennai and we got 12th September 2001 as the date of interview. Swami had meanwhile increased the duration of the course from six months to one year. But the course for which we enrolled was two years Master's Course in Public Health with Health Care Administration Major. Swami blessed us and sent us for visa interview to Chennai. We reached Chennai in the evening on 9th September. As we were watching news, the twin towers in U.S. were crumbling. The embassy was closed for the next day and we got a slot for interview on 13th. The mood in the embassy was of fear and anger. We were rejected as we did not have scholarship from the university and neither did we produce our family financial status. By then Swami had made His plan of sending us to U.S. known to the entire

world. He had announced this many times in public Discourses which were carried by Sanathana Sarathi to the world. We wanted to run away to avoid the bad publicity. When Swami was informed of our predicament, He laughed and said that they would get the visa at 3 p.m.

Next day through Karnataka Government contacts we got an appointment with marketing head of U.S. Embassy. He regretted saying that we should have come to him directly and now it was impossible to reverse the decision of visa office for the next six months. We tried to get the recommendation of Tamil Nadu Government with no results. At this point, the U.S. embassy officials contacted the Chief Secretary to Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for a meeting to increase security around their installation. His first words were: Give visa to Sathya Sai people and meet me. For the first time, visa was delivered by embassy officials by hand at 3 p.m. on 17th September 2001 in our hotel room. For Sai 'impossible' has no existence!!

We had booking from Singapore to Los Angeles on the same day. So, we hurriedly assembled our suitcases and left for the airport. But our bookings to Singapore were not confirmed. Mysterious are Sai's ways. One of the Sai Organisation members happened to be the personal physician of the Singapore Airlines Chairman. So, we got a faxed ticket and we were to collect the original ticket on the same flight we were to board (those days online ticket booking was not available). The airlines counter upgraded us to business class on seeing the ticket endorsed by the Chairman.

When we went to join the university after reaching Los Angeles, our academic



counsellor told us that it was a two years course. But with Swami's grace, the university allowed us to graduate in the same year before even we completed the course work. Swami sent us graduation suits specially ordered for us. We reached Puttaparthi after completing our course work on 16th September 2002, one day before one year. When we reached Puttaparthi, Swami was waiting for us in the portico. He received us, saying, "I told you that you will be back in one year".

Through this entire journey, Swami gave us impossible circumstances and made

everything possible in His own Divine style, giving us the message that with Sai there is nothing impossible. With Sai we are heroes and without Sai we are zeroes. 0's have value only when there is '1' in the front. So, if we put Sai in our front as our engine, we don't need to worry about our journey. He is our destination, He is our journey, He is our engine and He is our Sarathi!!

– The author is serving in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield (Bengaluru) as Special Assistant to the Director.

...continued from page 15

parent of the future. When you act properly in the present, the future will take care of itself. Do what is appropriate for the present moment. If there are no expectations, there will be no disappointments.

Sarvarambha Parityagee: This means do not give room to ostentation in any of your undertakings. The world today is immersed in ostentation and egoism. What does it matter whether the world praises or decries you? For instance, why should a devotee show off his devotion to earn the approbation of others? His devotion must be for pleasing the Lord and not for earning the approval of the world. In the spiritual path, what matters is the inner joy you experience. That is the key to self-satisfaction. Sarvarambha Parityagee means one who does not entertain the feelings of doership in one's undertakings.

Thus, it is only the devotee who has these six qualities that is dear to the Lord. It is such a devotee whom the Lord loves. On

the other hand, six enemies of man ruin his life. They are: lust, anger, delusion, greed, pride and envy.

Embodiments of Love!

The New Year comes regularly year after year. But do you have any new thoughts? You do not shed your old, mistaken ideas. They should be given up, yielding place to new, sacred and sublime thoughts. Of what use is it to celebrate New Year days if you do not change your old ways of thinking and behaving? Make proper use of time which is both precious and sacred. Do not indulge in useless gossip. Develop good qualities like compassion, love and sympathy. Act as your own monitor and correct yourself by self-punishment. By this simple method, you can control your wandering mind and your anger. Moreover, place your reliance on God.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's New Year Discourses.



CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

10TH WORLD CONFERENCE

AFTER THE INAUGURATION of the 10th World Conference in the Institute Auditorium on the morning of 25th November 2015 (as reported in the previous issue), three speakers addressed the gathering and shared their personal experiences of transformation through love. They were: Dr. Phil Gosselin from U.S.A., judge Isabella Chu from Hong Kong and Sri Kevin Francis from Australia. The morning session concluded with a live music performance by devotees from the Dominican Republic.

In the afternoon, nine concurrent workshops were conducted during two sessions, held in Sri Sathya Sai Indoor Stadium, which deliberated on various aspects of spirituality, ideal leadership, personal Sadhana and activities of Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO). The topics chosen allowed the delegates to delve deep into the conference theme, its relevance in daily life and practical applications.



Delegates interacting with each other in a workshop.

The programme on 26th November 2015 began with soulful rendition of devotional songs and the theme song, "Love is the Source, Path and Goal". In his Keynote Address, Dr. William Harvey, a member of the Prasanthi Council, reminded delegates of the immense power of Bhagavan's Name and stressed that Sathya Sai Centres should represent the universality of Baba's teachings. This was followed by talks by four speakers. First, Ms. Kayoko Hira from Japan spoke about how Bhagavan, the fountainhead of love, transformed her life. Ms. Raksha Mahtani from Spain then shared inspiring stories from her experiences in teaching human values to young children. The third speaker was Dr. Veeru Mudigonda from the U.K. who underlined the importance of faith and exhorted everyone to follow the Master and His divine commands. The last speaker Sri Sergio Espindola from Brazil, urged all spiritual aspirants to try to merge with God in this very life.

A Question and Answer Session followed next, in which the members of the Prasanthi Council and the directors of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation provided valuable insights and guidance on spiritual, practical and organisational matters while answering the questions of the delegates. A short video clip of Bhagavan's Discourse then reminded the delegates that there was no spiritual practice higher than selfless service. Delegates from Brazil presented joyful Portuguese devotional songs and Russian devotees presented three skits on love and service. In the afternoon, delegates divided themselves into groups and participated in

nine workshops on the various topics of the conference.

Sathya Sai International Youth Leadership Programme

A graduation ceremony was held on 27th November 2015 in the Institute Auditorium,

Sathya Sai Centre, Leadership in the SSIO, Educational Programmes, Role of Women in SSIO, Role of Youth in SSIO, Balancing Family, Career and the SSIO, Public Outreach, Effective and Loving Communication in the SSIO and Selfless Service.

Music and Cultural Programmes

On the sidelines of the 10th World Conference, some excellent music and cultural programmes were offered by students and delegates from various countries in the evening in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first programme on 25th November 2015 was a Thai traditional dance on the life of



Youth leadership programme in the Institute Auditorium.

wherein 43 youth from 34 countries were recognised for Youth Leadership Course. The SSIYLP was developed in 2014 to provide standardised leadership training to youth based on Bhagavan's teachings. Areas of focus of the course included Bhagavan Baba's life and His teachings, overview and functions of the SSIO, Bhagavan's teachings on leadership, challenges faced by youth, loving communication, team dynamics and project management.

Conference Resolutions

On the afternoon of 27th November 2015, Conference Resolutions were presented in Sai Kulwant Hall. These action items, recommendations and directions will help not only Sathya Sai devotees, but all spiritual aspirants and newcomers to realise the full potential of the Sathya Sai Avatar's teachings and divine guidance. The Conference Resolutions were developed for the following nine seminal areas: Ideal



Thai traditional dance on the life of Buddha.

Lord Buddha which was presented by the students of Sathya Sai School, Thailand.



The presentation Whirling Dervishes conveyed man's journey to perfection.

This beautiful dance of students was followed by a Whirling Dervishes

presentation known as Sema which depicted man's mystical journey of spiritual ascent. The meditational dance presented by the devotees of Turkey to the accompaniment of soulful music by a group of musicians on traditional instruments was a sublime spectacle of supreme tranquillity which transported one and all to a higher plane.

The first programme on 26th November

three excellent sessions of devotional songs in their native languages. The three groups of musicians and singers in their native costumes rendering soulful devotional songs presented a picture of purity and elegance.

PILGRIMAGE OF SRIKAKULAM DEVOTEES

More than 1,200 devotees including students came from Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh on a two-day pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 12th to 13th December 2015. On both the days, they led Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall, and on 13th December 2015, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Ramakrishnapuram, Srikakulam performed a dance drama entitled "Prema Batalo Sai Tarakalu"



A scene from the drama "Swami is the Safest Place".

2015 was a drama entitled "Swami is the Safest Place". Presented by the devotees from Mexico and Central American countries, the drama showed how harmony could be established in a family even if one of its members was a devotee of Swami having firm faith in His Divinity.

The Dominican Republic, Brazil and Azerbaijan followed up next presenting



A dance performance by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Srikakulam.



Devotional songs by devotees of Azerbaijan.

(Sai's children on the path of love). Based on the teachings of Bhagavan, the drama underlined the importance of the path of love for the redemption of man and peace and happiness in the world. A variety of melodious songs and dances of the children added richness to the drama.

NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

U. S. A.

THE SATHYA SAI International Organisation (SSIO) of the Mid-Atlantic Region, U.S.A., celebrated its 50th anniversary during its 40th Annual Regional Retreat, held from 22nd to 25th May 2015 at Camp Westmont, Pennsylvania.



Annual Retreat of Mid-Atlantic Region, U.S.A.

More than 840 Sathya Sai Organisation members enjoyed the retreat during the U.S.A.'s Memorial Day holiday weekend. The beautiful altar transported one back to Prasanthi Nilayam. Besides a beautiful mural painted by SSE children, an exhibition on the history of the Sathya Sai Organisation in Zone 1 was held on this occasion. The programme included cultural presentations by children and youth, melodious Bhajans and engaging workshops. Dr. Dalton Amorim of Brazil shared his life-transforming experiences with Bhagavan and exhorted everyone to become beacon of light and spread love amongst all. Dr. Shashank Shah delighted participants with an in-depth look at Bhagavan's life, giving inspiring

examples of His love for animals, students and humanity.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

The 1st of July 2015 marked a historic premiere for the SSIO of Trinidad and Tobago, the first graduation ceremony of the West Indies' first Sathya Sai School – the Sathya Sai Garden of Blooms Early Childhood Care and Education Centre in Longdenville, Trinidad. About 70 people, including 17 new students, celebrated the graduation of the school's first three students. The programme opened with the first graduate's grandfather presenting the national flag to the school's administrator. Following the national anthem and other presentations, certificates were awarded to the graduating students by the SSIO Central Coordinator of the countries of West Indies. Sharing of their experiences by the three young graduates provided the most captivating part of the ceremony; they spoke of their transformation due to the school's emphasis on the five human values as well as their overall enjoyable school experience. The students presented multi-faith and values-oriented songs and other performances, inspiring and impressing the guests and parents.

On 5th July 2015, members of the Pasea Sathya Sai Centre in Trinidad and Tobago distributed grocery hampers and personal care products to 568 needy families living in the depressed Sea Lots area on the outskirts of the capital city, Port-of-Spain. Sathya Sai volunteers also distributed 1,300 meals of curried peas and potatoes, tortilla,



Sathya Sai volunteers at work.

and curried mango. Starting as early as 3 a.m., the volunteers packed the grocery hampers, toiletries and meals into trucks for distribution. A convoy of eight buses carrying approximately 200 volunteers, plus four trucks carrying food and supplies, arrived at Sea Lots by early morning, where volunteers from other Sathya Sai Centres helped them with the distribution. In addition, Sathya Sai volunteers also handed out beautiful cards with inspiring messages from Bhagavan, bringing tears of joy to the recipients.

AUSTRIA

On 30th and 31st May 2015, SSIO members organised a human values festival in Brixlegg Tirol, Austria. On the first day, the festival started with human values songs



Happy participants in human values festival.

and the introduction of the SSIO, followed by a presentation on manifesting human values at work and in daily life. Well received by the public, one of the guests said, "This is for life; it is good to bring alive the old values". The next day, participants sang spiritual songs and participated in study circles. Afterward, Sai volunteers donated the decorations for the festival to a home for the elderly, after the event concluded.

CUBA

The SSIO in Cuba participated in a public meeting on 21st June 2015 for the first time, which attracted about 300 people. The Indian Ambassador to Cuba, who had attended Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations



Music programme at public meeting in Cuba.

the previous year, invited SSIO members to sing Bhajans in public and to participate in yoga classes. The public applauded the Bhajans heartily, evincing the universal appeal and sweetness of singing the Lord's glory.

HONDURAS

On 13th June 2015, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, SSIO members attended a workshop led by senior SSIO officers. Through a study circle and other activities, participants studied the essence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, how to put them into practice, and the importance of practising them daily.

CANADA

On 14th and 15th July 2015, the Canadian Institute of Sathya Sai Education conducted its 2nd Annual Camp at the Sathya Sai School of Canada in Toronto. This two-day summer camp for Sathya Sai children as well as children from the wider community integrated the values of respect, tolerance, team work and compassion into popular and enjoyable games and activities. The 2015 summer camp provided a vibrant, energetic and intellectually stimulating summer programme to 16 children in the age group 7 to 11. Seven Sathya Sai youth facilitated the camp activities and organised sports and games to teach the importance of cooperation, concentration, discipline and teamwork. The children demonstrated knowledge and familiarity with the five human values of love, peace, truth, right conduct and non-violence.

NICARAGUA

On 4th July 2015, 13 Sathya Sai Organisation members participated in a workshop titled "Understanding the Blessing Sai Has Given Us" at the Las Mercedes Hotel in Managua, Nicaragua. The workshop focused on the purpose of the SSIO and the guidelines that Bhagavan had approved at the 9th World Conference in 2010, which were adopted in 2012 at the Latin American



Participants in the workshop on "Understanding the Blessing Sai Has Given Us".

Congress in Mexico. The group formulated a plan to advance the Divine Mission, and everyone present agreed to work towards achieving the goals of the SSIO with renewed dedication and positive attitude. A participant offered her home for weekly meetings, including study circles, meditation and Bhajans.

EL SALVADOR

On 21st June 2015, Sathya Sai youth from El Salvador organised a retreat for 16 children at a farmhouse in San Salvador. The children received human values education and played values-based games amidst trees and natural surroundings. The event was so successful that SSIO members



Silent sitting in a retreat for children.

decided to organise a monthly retreat for children and adults on the last Sunday of every month, during which attending families could also share a lunch after the conclusion of devotional and educational activities.

—Sathya Sai International Organisation

BHARAT

Himachal Pradesh: In pursuance of 90th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Himachal Pradesh organised 90 hours Akhanda Bhajan at Anand Vilas, Shimla from 30th

September to 4th October 2015, in which devotees from all over Himachal Pradesh came to participate. Thrill of Bhajan and serenity of location uplifted the devotees and made them merge in the thought of Sai continuously for hours together. After surcharging the entire milieu with divine vibrations for 90 hours, the Bhajan concluded with Arati at 12.00 noon on 4th October 2015.

Jammu and Kashmir: A medical camp was held on 31st August 2015 in village Tikrikhanni, Jammu, wherein more than 60 patients were examined and the required medical advice and medicines were provided free of cost to them. Some of



Medical camp in a village in Jammu.

the patients having dental problem were advised to attend the dental clinic at Lale-Da-Bagh, Jammu where dental check-up and treatment would be provided to them free of cost by the Sai Organisation.

Manipur: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Manipur observed Global Blood Donation Day on 20th September 2015 at the Blood Bank of Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Imphal, Manipur. The programme of blood donation started at 10.10 a.m. and concluded at 1.00 p.m. Altogether 12 ladies and 35 gents contributed 47 units of liquid love to the RIMS hospital. The hospital authorities were very much pleased at this selfless service of the Sai Organisation.



Blood donation camp in Manipur.

Punjab: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Punjab organised a Disaster Management Camp in Patiala. Volunteers from Haryana, Punjab, students of SSVM High School, Patiala and disaster management volunteers from local D.C. office, Patiala participated in the camp. Volunteers were trained by Sri Thyagarajan (National Coordinator) in various Disaster Management techniques. This camp was followed by a five-day Disaster Management Camp for Jammu and Kashmir Police in Srinagar.

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Kapurthala organised a medical camp for orthopaedic, gynae and general patients. 552 people were the beneficiaries.

Tamil Nadu: Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 90th Birthday was celebrated at Sundaram, which was beautifully decorated in intricate designs. Lit up with beautiful lights it shone with regal majesty on all the ten days of celebrations from 14th to 23rd November 2015. The programmes conducted during these celebrations included Sahasranama Archana (recitation of one thousand Names of Bhagavan), video shows of Bhagavan's Humanitarian Work, Bhajans by alumni of Bhagavan's institutions, Narayana Seva and music concerts by eminent musicians





90th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan at Sundaram, Chennai.

like saxophone maestro Kadri Gopalnath and violin exponent Smt. Kanyakumari.

Unprecedentedly heavy rains in Tamil Nadu flooded its many areas affecting life and property of a large number of people. In this grim situation, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Tamil Nadu, lost no time in sending truckloads of relief material besides providing Disaster Management Teams for rescue and relief operations, priority being rescuing the afflicted from isolated areas, providing them with immediate necessities.

Sai Youth of Chennai flung into action within hours after the calamity struck Chennai. A core team quickly surveyed the affected areas and another team started a kitchen which began serving nearly 2,000 food packets every session. A team of doctors and paramedics also made their way through the deluge to deep interior areas and administered medicines. Sundaram, the abode of Bhagavan, was converted into a service centre where about 27,000 gift



Gift packets in Sundaram for distribution.

packets containing 30 essential items were prepared and distributed to needy families.

Derision and denunciation follow the footsteps of the great in all ages. They haunt them like the shadow which cannot be avoided. His own disciples turned against Jesus, even those who adored him and hung on his words. They did evil to him who did them good. But, Jesus wished well for those who insulted and injured him. This is a lesson badly needed today. No one should count the harm inflicted on him and plan revenge. He must on the other hand return love for hatred, fraternity for enmity. To behave otherwise is a sign of weakness, of want of courage, of lack of faith in human goodness. Jesus won in this holy struggle. On this day, we must cultivate in ourselves that conviction and that courage.

– Baba

Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School

Prasanthi Nilayam – 515134, (A.P.)

ADMISSION NOTICE 2016-2017

Admissions to Class I (Boys and Girls) and Class XI (Boys and Girls) of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Vidya Giri, Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh - 515134 for academic Year 2016-2017 will take place in June 2016.

The medium of instruction will be English and the school will be wholly residential school. Admission criteria for Class I **: Age Limit 5½ years to 6½ years as on 30th September 2016. (Duplicate copy of Date of Birth certificate – “issued by competent authority” shall be produced). The Date of Birth should be between 30-03-2010 and 30-03-2011.

** Selection through RTE method

Admission criteria for Class XI: Only English Medium students are eligible to apply.

Prospectus and Application forms can be obtained from 1st January 2016 onwards till 31st January 2016 either from the office of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam, Puttaparthi by cash ₹100/- (or) can be downloaded from our website: www.ssshss.edu.in

The last date for submission of filled in application form will be 20-02-2016. The downloaded filled in application should be sent along with a Demand Draft drawn in favour of “Principal, Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School” on State Bank of India, Puttaparthi Branch (Code no.: 2786) for the value of ₹100/- with self-addressed envelope (size: 15 cm x 24 cm). E-mail: ssshss@gmail.com. Phone No: 08555-289289.

– Principal

SATHYA SAI MIRPURI COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Vidyagiri, Prasanthi Nilayam – 515 134, Dist. Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

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Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schooling: passed Std. VIII Age: between 14 to 18 years 	Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schooling: passed Std. X Qualification: Foundation Course (or equivalent) in Music from a recognized College / Institution Age: between 16 to 20 years

Applications: **1 January 2016 to 29 February 2016.**

Admissions Tests & Interviews: **April 2016** at Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh.

Candidates may apply to the Registrar, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam – 515 134, Anantapur District, A.P. along with an Indian Postal Order / Bank Draft for ₹50/- drawn in favour of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, payable at SBI, 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 email their request to musicadmissions@sssihl.edu.in for the application form and Admissions Handbook.



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- At the Bachelor's degree, candidates should have scored a minimum of 50% marks in General English, and a minimum of 60% marks (aggregate) in all subjects combined.

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All programmes have additional requirements apart from the ones listed above. For complete details of Eligibility Criteria for each programme, kindly visit the **Admissions section** of sssihl.edu.in

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* leading to M.Sc. in Biosciences

- B.Sc. in Food and Nutritional Sciences
(leading to a postgraduate programme)

- B.Com. (Hons.)
- B.A.
- B.B.A.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- M.A. in English Language & Literature
- M.Sc. in Biosciences
- M.Sc. in Food and Nutritional Sciences

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMMES

- M.B.A.
- B.Ed.
- M.Ed.

PROGRAMMES FOR MEN

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- B.Sc. (Hons.) in: Mathematics / Physics / Chemistry / Biosciences (leading to postgraduate programmes in respective disciplines)
- B.Sc. (Hons.) in Economics
- B.A. (Hons.) in Economics
- B.Com. (Hons.)
- Integrated M.C.A.
- B.B.A.
- B.A.

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- M.A. in Economics
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- M.Sc. in Chemistry
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- M.Sc. in Physics
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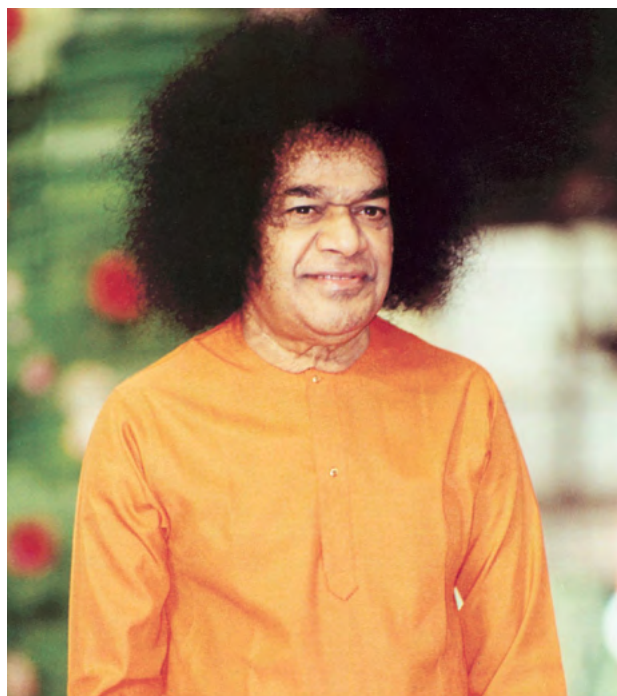
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On 1st January, 2009, Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust (SSSST) commenced operations with four divisions; the Bhakta Sahayak divisions (one in Prasanthi Nilayam, Puttaparthi and another in Brindavan, Bangalore), the Publications division, and the Media division.

The Publications Division (SSSSTPD) caters to:

- 1) The publication and distribution of spiritual, religious, and educational Sai Literature and the production and distribution of audio and visual multimedia, photographs, calendars, and diaries, educational software etc for the benefit of visiting pilgrims and devotees all over the world. All the literature and publications are based on the teachings, philosophy, message, and values of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
- 2) The publication and distribution of Bhagawan Baba's monthly spiritual journal - Sanathana Sarathi - in English and Telugu languages. Since 2011, e-version of the magazine is also released simultaneously and is available in the popular Interactive PDF format on www.sanathanasarathi.org.
- 3) Maintaining a reporting channel, which covers all the major activities taking place in Prasanthi Nilayam, and publishing an e-newsletter 'Sai Spiritual Showers' - for free distribution.
- 4) Organising and conducting seminars and conferences on spirituality, religion, education, and human values.
- 5) Providing library and Reading room for visiting devotees, with a very large collection of various spiritual and religious books.

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Violin recital by the students Sri Sathya Sai Primary School on Christmas morning.



Christmas carols on band by students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.



Music programme by Brazilian devotees.

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Happiness is Union with God

In the depth of Santhi (peace), there exists Prakanthi (supreme splendour). In this Prakanthi, one can experience Param Jyoti (Divine effulgence). Param Jyoti in the form of Atma Jyoti (the light of the Atma) is within you. That is the light of non-duality and eternity. That is the light of immortality. That is the light of the Self. As you possess that light within yourselves, why should you be afraid of anything else? Why should you worry? Be happy. Where is happiness? How to experience it? Union with God is happiness.

– Baba

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