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Editor **G.L. ANAND**
Assistant Editor **P. RAJESH**

E-mail: subscriptions@sssbpt.org
editor@sssbpt.org
For Audio Visual /

Book Orders: orders@sssbpt.org
ISD Code : 0091

STD Code : 08555

Telephone : 287375

Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust Telefax : 287390

General enquiry : 287164

Sri Sathya Sai University -

Administrative Office : 287191 / 287239

Sri Sathya Sai Higher

Secondary School : 289289

Sri Sathya Sai

Primary School : 287237

SSSIHMS, Prasanthigram,

Puttaparthi : 287388

SSSIHMS, Whitefield,

Bengaluru : 080 28411500

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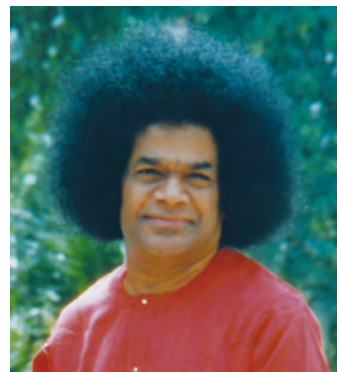
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*"There have been many mighty
kings, who were the masters of great
wealth, power and pelf. They ruled
over mighty kingdoms. Where
are they now and what did they
experience? They tried to attain
bliss in these mundane objects but
all in vain. Bliss is present only on
spiritual path, nowhere else."*



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Forthcoming Festivals at Prasanthi Nilayam



5th October - 11th October ... Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna

12th November 6 p.m.

to 13th November 6 p.m.Global Akhanda Bhajan

18th NovemberRathotsavam

19th NovemberLadies Day

**22nd November35th Convocation of
Sri Sathya Sai Institute
of Higher Learning**

**23rd November91st Birthday of
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

25th DecemberChristmas

AVATAR VANI

REMOVAL OF IMMORALITY IS THE ONLY WAY TO IMMORTALITY

*One may be the master of all forms of knowledge,
 One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,
 One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,
 One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,
 One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,
 One may count the countless stars in the sky,
 One may tell the names of different living creatures on the earth,
 One may be an expert in eight steps of yoga,
 One may reach even the moon,
 But, is there anyone who can control the body, mind and senses,
 turn the vision inward
 And achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind?*

(Telugu Poem)

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

(Telugu Poem)

CONSIDER FAITH AS YOUR LIFE-BREATH

Embodiments of Love!

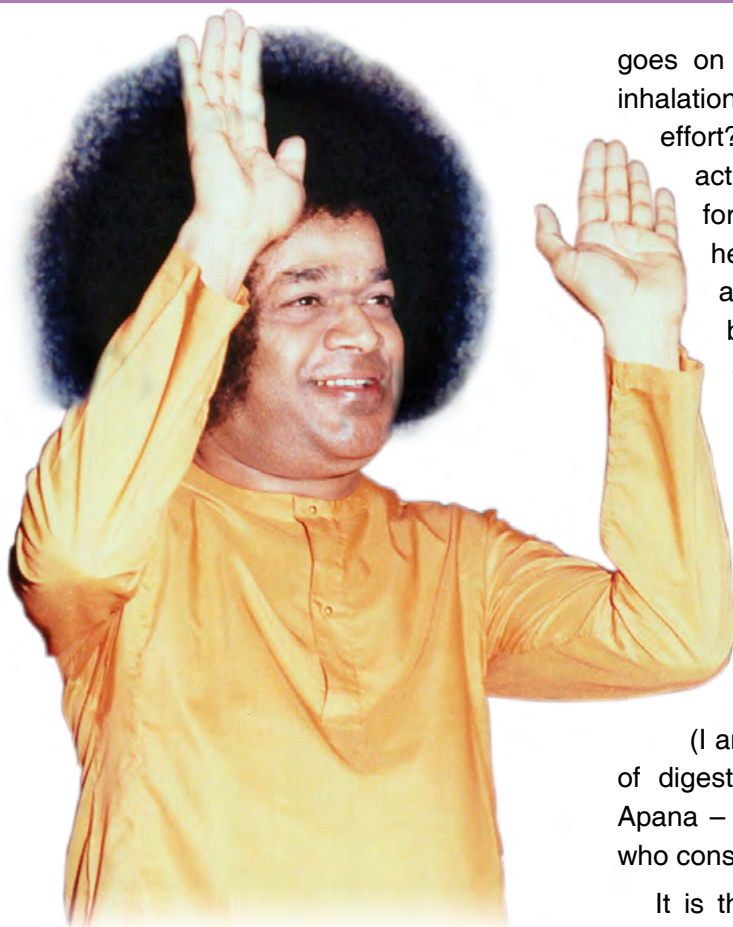
BODY IS GIVEN TO MAN TO perform actions. As the Gita says: *KarmanyevadhikarastheMaPhaleshu Kadachana* (your right is on actions only, not the fruits thereof). It is the duty of man to perform actions. Duty is very important. Your responsibility is only to perform your duty; you have no authority on rights. When you discharge your duty sincerely, you will get the rights automatically. But man today

forgets his duty and craves for authority. So, take care of your responsibility. If you perform your responsibility earnestly, you will get the rights naturally.

Perform Actions without Desire for Fruits

When there is downpour of rain, rivers flow naturally. Without rain, how do you expect the rivers to flow? Pray for the rain; you need not pray for the rivers to flow. Likewise, when you do your duty, you will





certainly get the reward of your actions. So, perform actions without any desire for fruits. What for? *Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke* (man in the world is bound by action). Human society is bound by Karma (action). You have to perform actions right from the time of rising from the bed in the morning till going to sleep at night. This Karma does not mean discharging duty alone. In fact, man cannot live without action even for a moment. But Karma does not mean merely those actions which you perform with your hands and legs. Your blood circulation and breathing also denote Karma. What efforts do you make for inhalation and exhalation? You may be in waking state, in sleep state or in dream state; you may be in a state of anger, you may be walking, you may be doing anything, your inhalation and exhalation

goes on naturally. Will any fool say that inhalation and exhalation are because of his effort? You make some effort for certain actions but what efforts do you make for respiration or beating of your heart? It is not in your hands. These are natural actions which happen by God's Will. The food that you eat gets digested. Who gave you that power of digestion? This is also done by God. Lord Krishna declares in the Bhagavadgita:

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva
Praninam Dehamasrita
Pranapana Samayukta
P a c h a m y a n n a m
Chaturvidham.*

(I am present in all beings in the form of digestive fire. United with Prana and Apana – inhalation and exhalation – it is I who consume the four kinds of food.)

It is the digestive power gifted to man by God, which digests all the four types of food eaten by him. But man out of his ego claims that it is he who has accomplished a particular task and achieved success by his efforts. However, this does not mean that man should not make efforts to perform any task. For all worldly and mundane chores effort is necessary. But what effort do you make for Atmic, sacred, spiritual, inner and mystic activities? Who is the doer? It is Isa, Girisa, Naresa, Paresa, Bilvesha.

God is the only Doer

Who is Isa? The one endowed with all Aiswarya (wealth) is Isa. What do you mean by Aiswarya? Aiswarya signifies all the wealth whether it is materialistic, scientific, ethical or spiritual. He is the source and master of all the different forms of wealth. Who is Girisa? What is Giri? Many Bharatiyas know.



They visit Tirupati and offer their hair. But what will happen out of that? Do you think God wants your useless hair? With all high desires, you offer your worthless hair and pray to God! You pray to God in that vile way! This is not the significance of offering hair in Tirupati. Our head is the Giri (mountain) of our body. In this head, Tamoguna performs its bestial dance. What is Tamoguna? What is its nature and form? Tamoguna signifies black colour, darkness and ignorance. This darkness enters human head. Offer this darkness to God to manifest white, pious, Sattwic (serene) quality. Offering worthless hair to God is meaningless. This is how our age-old good traditions have been distorted.

The third is Naresa, the master of mankind. What is meant by Nara? 'Na' means not, 'Ra' means ignorant. One who is not ignorant is Nara. Man is not ignorant; he is not sinner either. The next one is Paresa. What do you mean by Paresa? Para means limitless, above everything. So, Paresa is one who is vast, infinite and beyond all definitions. The next is Bilvesha, Lord Siva who is worshipped with Bilva leaves. There are three Bilva leaves on a single stalk. While worshipping Lord Siva we recite this Mantra: *Tridalam Trigunakaram* (one Bilva leaf with three petals). The three leaves represent the three Gunas (attributes). Heart is the basis of these three attributes. Offer your three qualities wholeheartedly to

First and foremost, man should develop self-confidence. Self-confidence leads to self-satisfaction. When you have self-satisfaction, you will do self-sacrifice. Where there is self-sacrifice, there will be Self-realisation. Self-confidence is the foundation; self-satisfaction is the wall, self-sacrifice is the roof, Self-realisation is life. Hence, develop self-confidence in the first instance.

God. This is the inner significance of the worship of Lord Siva.

Acquire Practical Education

Man does perform actions. What are the results of these actions? You can see yourself that all of them are temporary.

Oh man! You struggle hard in life merely for the sake

of filling your belly. You acquire myriad types of knowledge from various fields. Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness have you achieved by spending all the time from dawn to dusk in acquiring worldly knowledge and earning wealth while forgetting God.

(Telugu Poem)

You acquire education. But what do you learn? All your learning is worldly and materialistic. Why should you use your intelligence to learn about material things? You make so many calculations, you do so much work with computer. Having studied thus, you consider yourself highly intelligent. But as it is said in Telugu, "Even a Dhobi (washerman) is superior to an educated man". How? Suppose you give your clothes to a Dhobi and write in a notebook – two pants, two shirts, two handkerchiefs and a towel. The washerman carries with him a large number of clothes of many people, but he does not write it down. After washing the clothes, he will return the clothes of all his customers correctly. So, what a lot of difference is there between your education and that of the washerman! What you acquire is bookish knowledge. Bookish knowledge is temporary.

Oh man! Do not feel proud of your education. If you do not offer your salutations to God and do not think of Him with devotion, all your education will become useless. (Telugu Poem)

The learning that is permanent will be imprinted on your heart. But your education is only for a living. It is not for the bliss of the Self.

You can Experience Bliss only on Spiritual Path

Man makes efforts, struggles hard to attain bliss. He tries to acquire it from worldly objects. He yearns and pines for bliss. But he does not realise that he himself is the very form of bliss. Bliss is within him and he searches it outside. What a foolishness it is! For this he strains himself sacrificing even his food and sleep. At the end, what is it that he experiences? Man is deluded that there is happiness in education or wealth. There is no happiness in them.

There have been many mighty kings, who were the masters of great wealth, power and pelf. They ruled over mighty kingdoms. Where are they now and what did they experience? They tried to attain bliss in these mundane objects but all in vain. Bliss is present only on spiritual path, nowhere else. Man should perform all actions to please God. We read many texts, we go to meet many noble souls, we do so many spiritual practices, but there is no result at all. Why? Because we are heroes in speech and zeros in practice.

At one time, the deer in a forest had a conference. All the deer gathered there. There the head deer, the president of the conference, got up and said, "We should pass a resolution. The main point of this resolution is that we are in no way inferior

to dogs. We can run faster than dogs. Dogs are non-vegetarian, but we are vegetarian. The strength that we have in our legs is not present in the legs of dogs. We lead a sacred life. After our death, saints make use of our skin to do penance. But will anyone make use of a dog's skin? Does the dog possess that strength, that sanctity? Dogs cannot run as fast as we can. So, with all our strength and power, why should we be afraid of dogs?" This was the central point for discussion. After discussion, they resolved that they should not be afraid of dogs. All the deer joined and expressed their agreement. After thorough discussion, they passed the resolution that from that day onward they would not be afraid of dogs. Having resolved thus, they felt blissful and happy. At that time, a hunter was passing through the forest along with his dogs. Suddenly, one of his dogs barked. On listening to the barking of the dog, all the deer started running. In a moment, the entire dais became empty. Where have the deer gone? What happened to the resolution? Why do they have fear? This is the state of affairs in the world today. There are so many conferences, so many meetings, so many resolutions, but in practical field it is a big zero. The spiritual field should not be like that. *The proper study of mankind is man.* There should be perfect harmony between thought, word and action. This is the first step on the spiritual path.

What is the second step? Each one should enquire, "Who am I"? One should say, I am man. Should he be satisfied with that? No! When you say, "I am man" it is only half the truth. What is the other half? The other half is, "I am not an animal". Always repeat I am man, not animal. I am man, not animal. When we join these two halves, we



have full truth. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). It is only one that exists, not the second. Truth is one, not two.

Know who you are

When you get bad thoughts, you should immediately start enquiring, what are human values and what are animal qualities? You should enquire, am I the body? Am I the mind? Am I the senses? Am I the intellect? Am I the inner instrument? Put these questions to yourself. You say, this is my handkerchief. So, handkerchief is separate from you. You say, "This is my body". When you say, "my body", you are separate from the body. When you say, "my mind", the mind is separate from you. Then you should question yourself, who am I?

In this way, when we question ourselves in ordinary matters in daily life, we will be

God is one and He is present in everyone. What is the way to God? First and foremost, try to know what is the best way.

The best way is removal of immorality. In fact, removal of immorality is the only way to immortality. Not only this. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all because God is present in everyone.

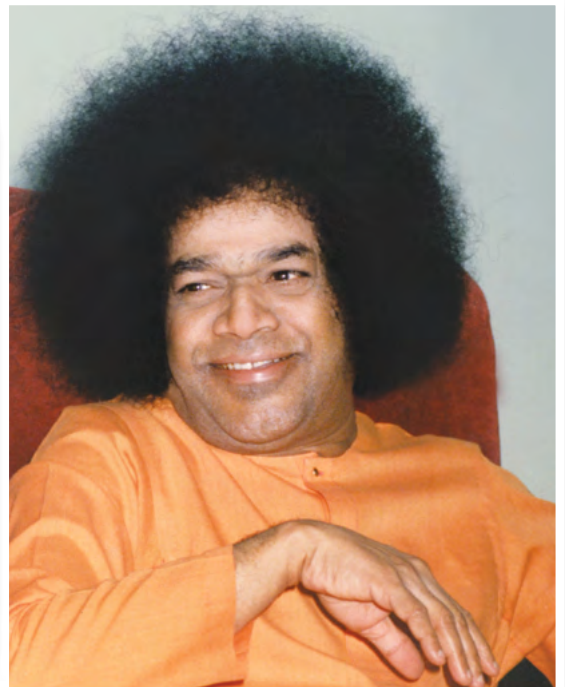
able to understand the eternal truth, that is Divinity. When you understand, I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the senses, then who are you? You should say, I am I. *Tattwamasi* (That thou Art) is non-duality. But when you say, *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am

Brahman), it is not non-duality because I and Brahman are two. Two is not truth. That is dualism. So, you should say, "I am I". That is non-dualism, meaning you are you.

Body is like a water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the mind, don't follow the body, follow the conscience. That is the spiritual practice you should do. Follow your Hridaya on the path of spirituality. Hridaya does not mean physical heart. It is spiritual heart. Where is it located? It is present everywhere.

God is in Search of a True Devotee

What do you mean by body? *Deho Devalaya Proktho Jivo Deva Sanathana* (the body is a temple and the Indweller is God). Body is the temple of God. What



type of temple is it? It is a moving temple. Wherever your body moves, there is God. So, where is God? He is everywhere. You cannot say God is here and not there. The Bhagavadgita also declares: *Sarvatah*

Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Srutimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Wherever your feet go, there is God. God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. As your vision is narrow, you are not able to understand this truth.

You say that you are put to suffering by the world. But it is not the world which is putting you to suffering; rather, you are making the world suffer. The Bible also propounds this truth. It is said that the devotees are in search of God. This is not correct. What is the necessity for a devotee to search for God when He is everywhere? Where do you search for God who is present at all places? This is not right. In fact, God is in search of a devotee. Where is a real and true devotee with steady faith? When we enquire like this, we find that it is, in fact, God who is in search of a true devotee. To say that the devotee is in search of God is untruth; it is false. So, we need not search for God. He is the indweller of your heart. He is all-pervasive. He is present within you, around you, below you, above you. *Antarbahischa Tatsarvam Vyapya Narayana Sthita* (That all-pervasive God is present within and without).

In fact, you are also God. It is not enough if you think that you are God. You should develop divine feelings and perform divine actions. If you say, "I am God" and indulge in demonic acts, then your saying is meaningless. Always remind yourself, I am man, not animal. Anger, jealousy, hatred, greed are animal qualities. Truth, compassion, love, sacrifice are human qualities. Develop human qualities. Then only can you call yourself Manava (man).

The word Manava has three letters Ma, Na, Va. Ma means ignorance, Na means without and Va means one who conducts himself. So, Manava means the one who conducts himself without ignorance. That is the true meaning of the word Manava. If you lead your life in the light of this truth, God will be with you, in you, around you and will protect you in all situations. Having been born as a human being, you should never lead the life of an animal.

The Goal of Human Life is to Know God

Man performs spiritual practices to remove animal qualities from his mind. What do you mean by spirituality? To root out animal qualities within you is true spirituality. All spiritual practices like Japa, Dhyana, Yajna (chanting, meditation, sacrifice) are useless when there are animal qualities within you. So, you should imbibe sacred human values. A vessel with a number of holes will remain empty in spite of heavy rain.

What is this body? It is a perishable leather bag with nine holes but not like a resplendent diamond. No fragrance but only foul smell emanates from it every moment. It is made up of flesh, blood, bones and faecal matter. Should we develop attachment with this body?

(Telugu Poem)

This body is bound to perish. The life span of man is said to be hundred years, but nobody can be sure when the end will approach, in boyhood, youth or old age, in town, forest or water. Death is certain. Man should know God so long as he has the body. This sacred human life is gifted to man only to realise divinity. Man can make his life worthwhile by developing divine qualities.



What are the divine qualities? *Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam* (God is attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Not only this, other attributes of Divinity are: *Sabda Brahmapramayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Sreemayi* (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, perfection, delusion and wealth). Out of so many divine qualities of God, do we have even one? You don't need to put into practice all that is said. Practise at least one teaching of Swami. But you listen and go.

Once a sculptor brought three idols in King Bhojaraja's court. Bhojaraja said to his minister, "Minister, judge which is the best of the three". The minister pierced an iron rod into the ear of one idol. The iron rod came out through the other ear. This idol was kept aside by the minister. He examined the second idol. When the rod was put into one ear, it came out through the mouth. The same reply ensued. Now the minister put the third idol to test. The iron rod went into the ear but did not come out. The minister said, "Oh king, this idol is most valuable". "What is the reason?" asked the king. The minister said, "The first idol represents a person who hears with one ear but lets out information through the other. This is not good. The second idol symbolises a person who listens with one ear but leaves out the information through the mouth. No value. On the contrary, the third idol stands for a person who receives the information through the ear and treasures it in his heart".

So, whatever good thing you hear, treasure it in your heart. If you put it in your

It is said that the devotees are in search of God. This is not correct. What is the necessity for a devotee to search for God when He is everywhere? Where do you search for God who is present at all places? This is not right. In fact, God is in search of a devotee. Where is a real and true devotee with steady faith? When we enquire like this, we find that it is, in fact, God who is in search of a true devotee.

heart, it may develop at one time or the other. It is like the negative of a photograph. When you have negative with you, you can make any number of copies at any time. What you take into your head, it is like a Polaroid picture. You cannot make any copies out of it. Keep good things safe in your heart like a negative so that you can put it into practice. Many teachers teach spirituality to devotees in many different ways leading to confusion to everybody. They teach for their selfish ends and to earn name and fame, not for the welfare of society. Aspirants who put in great efforts to learn spirituality should not be misled.

Self-confidence is the Basis of Self-realisation

God is one and He is present in everyone. What is the way to God? First and foremost, try to know what is the best way. The best way is removal of immorality. In fact, removal of immorality is the only way to immortality. Not only this. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all because God is present in everyone.

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CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SAI SWARANJALI: A MUSIC CONCERT

*S*HOWCASING THE TEACHINGS and message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, a soul-stirring devotional music concert “Sai Swaranjali”



Devotional music concert by Sai Youth of Haryana and Chandigarh.

(a musical offering to Sai) was presented by Sai Youth of Haryana and Chandigarh on 7th August 2016. Beginning their programme with a song dedicated to the goddess of learning Sharada, “Sharada Jai Hans Vahini” (hail goddess Sharada who rides on swan), the singers melodiously rendered a Kabir and a Mira composition and an array of devotional songs suffusing the entire milieu with devotional fervour. They concluded their presentation with popular Qawali of Amir Khusrau “Chhaap Tilak Sab Chheeni Re” (all religious symbols are taken away).

70TH YEAR OF BHARAT'S INDEPENDENCE

On the joyous occasion of 70th year of Bharat's Independence, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

presented a programme of patriotic songs on 15th August 2016. Spirited rendition of patriotic songs like “Vande Mataram” (salutations to Mother India), “Vo Bharat



Presentation of patriotic songs by the Institute students on the 70th Independence Day of Bharat.

Desh Hai Mera” (that is my country Bharat), “Sarfroshi Ki Tamanna Ab Hamaare Dil Mein Hai” (we have the desire to sacrifice ourselves for Bharat), “Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo” (Oh my countrymen) not only revived the old memories of India's Freedom Struggle, but also surcharged the entire milieu with patriotic fervour. Patriotic poems in the golden voice of Bhagavan and tunes of patriotic songs on the Institute band added to the richness and value of the programme.

SRI KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI

The sacred festival of Sri Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 25th August 2016 with great devotion and piety. Soulful recital of Bhajans by the Nadaswaram students' band of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

augured the morning programme which began at 8.20 a.m. A devotional music offering was thereafter made by the Institute students which enthralled the devotees for nearly one hour with an array of devotional songs and Stotras dedicated to Lord Krishna. This was followed by a beautiful dance by the



Depiction of the Leelas of Sri Krishna in a dance number by the students.

students of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam portraying a few Leelas of Sri Krishna. A grand procession of beautifully bedecked cows then entered Sai



Fully bedecked cows in Sai Kulwant Hall.

Kulwant Hall led by Nadaswaram musicians and Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students. The procession also included calves, pigeons, a peacock and fawns. The Institute students then started Bhajans and senior Ashram functionaries fed the cows. Simultaneously, a video clip of Bhagavan feeding Sai Geeta and cows was screened which revived old memories of the celebration of Gokulashtami in the Divine

Presence of Bhagavan. The cows were worshipped and Arati was offered to them, after which the procession returned to Sri Sathya Sai Gokulam. A scintillating dance presentation depicting significant incidents from the life of Sri Krishna was thereafter presented by the Prasanthi Dance Group, comprising former students of Bhagavan. Screening of a video clip of a Sri Krishna Janmashtami Discourse of Bhagavan followed next.

In His Discourse, Bhagavan narrated some of the Leelas of Lord Krishna which made His Divinity manifest. Referring to Krishna as the Avatar of Love, Bhagavan observed that man should adhere to the path of love shown by Krishna and share it with one and all. Bhagavan explained that devotion to God was the essence of love which could take man to the heart of God. He exhorted the devotees to chant the Name of God with faith and devotion since there was no better way for liberation in this Kali Yuga. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai". Bhajans followed next which concluded with Arati at 10.10 a.m., bringing the programme of Sri Krishna Janmashtami to a happy conclusion.

PILGRIMAGE OF VISAKHAPATNAM DEVOTEES

More than 1,200 devotees came from Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam for two days from 24th to 25th August 2016. On 25th August 2016, Bal Vikas children and youth of Visakhapatnam presented a musical dance drama entitled "Shubhodayam" (auspicious morning) which showcased how the teachings of Bhagavan were reforming

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From our Archives

PERFORM ALL ACTIONS WITH DIVINE FEELINGS

ERADICATING ANIMAL QUALITIES IS TRUE SADHANA

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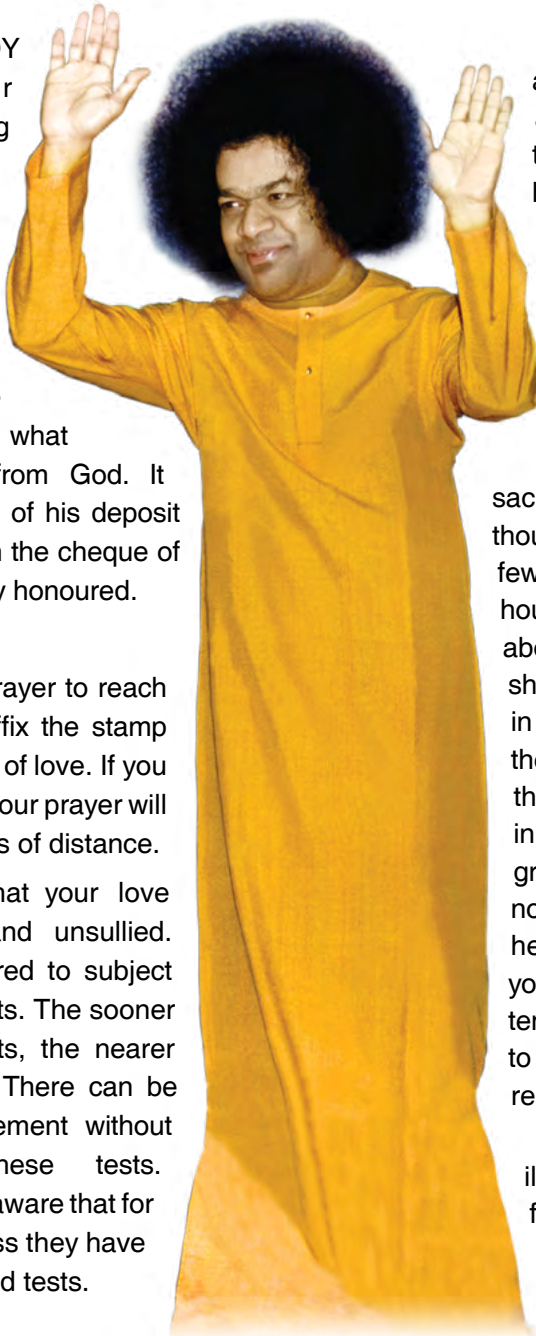
OD IS READY
to offer
anything

you want. But you must be eligible to receive it, like a depositor who can withdraw money up to the amount of his deposit. The same rule applies to what man can receive from God. It depends on the size of his deposit with the Divine. Then the cheque of his prayer will be duly honoured.

Power of Faith

To enable your prayer to reach God, you have to affix the stamp of faith and address of love. If you have faith and love, your prayer will reach God regardless of distance.

You must see that your love for God is pure and unsullied. You must be prepared to subject yourself to God's tests. The sooner you pass these tests, the nearer will you get to God. There can be no spiritual advancement without going through these tests. Students should be aware that for going to a higher class they have to pass the prescribed tests.



In life, you are tested as to how much you are attached to the ephemeral things of the world and how much you yearn for the Divine. If your love for God is a tiny fraction of your love for mundane things, how do you expect God to shower His grace on you?

How much more sacred it would be if men thought about God even for a few moments out of the many hours they waste on thinking about worldly things? People should develop their faith in this truth. Whatever faith they have in themselves, that faith they should have in God. That is the mark of greatness. One who has no faith in himself, how can he have faith in God? Turn your faith away from the temporal and the transient to the unchanging eternal reality.

The power of faith is illustrated in an incident from the life of Christ. Once a blind man approached Jesus and

prayed: "Lord! Restore my sight". Jesus asked him: "Do you believe that I can restore your sight"? "Yes, Lord!" "If that is so, then open your eyes and see," said Jesus. The blind man opened his eyes and got his sight. Likewise, people pray to Swami to give something or the other. Do you believe that I have the power to give what you seek? My response is dependent on your faith.

Even a person like Swami Vivekananda had doubts about Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa's saintliness. There have always been doubting Thomases. To test Ramakrishna's aversion to wealth and possessions, Vivekananda once kept some coins under the bed of Ramakrishna. The moment he reclined on his bed, Ramakrishna felt as if he was lying on a bed of thorns. Immediately, Vivekananda realised how baseless were his doubts. He felt that to rise to the height of the great souls, he himself should elevate his soul. People today are like a man on the ground who wishes to see the pilot of a plane moving in the sky. The only way he can see the pilot is to get into the plane himself. To experience God, you have to aspire for a vision of God. That is the way to lead an ideal and blissful life.

Man today practises meditation and performs Japa, but along with them animal qualities are also allowed to grow. As long as these qualities remain, the observance of spiritual practices is worthless. All such practices amount to practising deception on the Divine itself. Therefore, true Sadhana (spiritual practice) means getting rid of all of one's animal qualities such as cruelty, wickedness, etc. Two qualities make a man alien to God: Asuya and Ahamkara (envy and egoism). Envy and egoism are two pests which destroy the tree of life. They deprive man of his essential human nature. Due

to these bad qualities, people get divorced from the company of the good.

Significance of Ganesh Festival

Ganapati festival is an occasion for people to purify their minds. People generally tend to see in others the faults which they themselves have. Thereby they try to cover up their own defects by attributing the same defects to others. This is a bad quality. A man can improve only by recognising his faults and not by seeing the same faults in others. You must see what is good in others and look at your own defects. Only such a person can improve. Man does violence to his human nature by ignoring his defects and magnifying the faults of others. This trait is widely prevalent among students today. Students should aim at achieving harmony in thought, word and deed.

Students! You should realise that for every action there is a consequence. The results of each action depend on the nature of the action, just as the nature of the tree depends on the seed which is sowed. The consequences of one's actions are inescapable and it was for this reason that Emperor Manu laid down that all should observe Dharma. The consequences of actions may appear sooner or later but they are bound to occur. Students like to worship Ganapati. They pray to Ganesh to confer on them Buddhi (intelligence) and Siddhi (the capacity to realise their aspirations).

In the name Ganapati, 'Ga' stands for Guna (virtue) and 'Na' for Vijnana. When 'Ga' and 'Na' are joined, we have the combination of Vijnana (worldly wisdom) and Prajnana (spiritual wisdom). It is out of the combination of Vijnana and Prajnana that Sujnana (supreme knowledge) emerges. Sujnana is the distinguishing mark of a true man. Ajnana is the sign of ignorance.

Ganapati is the Lord of Vijnana and Prajnana (worldly knowledge and spiritual wisdom). Therefore, when a devotee prays to Ganesh, he asks for the conferment of Vijnana, Prajnana and Sujnana.

Education today lacks all the three types of knowledge – Vijnana, Prajnana and Sujnana. You have only bookish knowledge and superficial knowledge. They are of temporary value, perhaps no farther than the examinations! If the value of education is to last all through life, students have to cultivate faith in God. They should realise that when they constantly think of God and perform all actions with divine feelings, they will experience the full blossoming of their human qualities. Consider every action as dedicated to God. You cannot avoid actions. You must transform work into worship. You have to perform work in this spirit. You cannot substitute prayer for work. You have to combine both work and worship.

The Vinayaka principle, however, has only one meaning, which is relevant to everyone irrespective of whether he is a believer or a non-believer. Vinayaka means that he is totally the master of himself. He has no master above him; he does not depend on anyone. He is also called Ganapati. This term also means that he is the master of the intellect and discrimination power in man. He possesses great intelligence and knowledge. Such knowledge issues from a pure and sacred mind. This knowledge leads to Vijnana. Because he is the master of Buddhi and Siddhi, he is described as the Lord of Buddhi and Siddhi. Buddhi and Siddhi are referred to as the consorts of Vinayaka.

Another name for Vinayaka is Vighneswara. Easwara is one who is

In the name Ganapati, 'Ga' stands for Guna (virtue) and 'Na' for Vijnana (wisdom). When 'Ga' and 'Na' are joined, we have the combination of Vijnana (worldly wisdom) and Prajnana (spiritual wisdom). It is out of the combination of Vijnana and Prajnana that Sujnana (supreme knowledge) emerges. Sujnana is the distinguishing mark of a true man.

endowed with every conceivable form of wealth: riches, knowledge, health, bliss, beauty, etc. Vighneswara is the promoter of all these forms of wealth and removes all obstacles. He confers all these forms of wealth on those who worship him. Vinayaka is described as *Prathama Vandana* (the first deity who should be worshipped). As all people in the world desire wealth and prosperity, everyone offers the first place for worship to Vighneswara.

There are some inner secrets that should be noted in the worship of Ganesh. Bharatiyas make some special preparations to Ganesh as food offerings. These preparations are made entirely by using steam instead of heat from a burning stove. Combining rice flour with jaggery and Til (sesame) seeds, balls are prepared which are cooked in steam. In Ayurveda, this edible is accorded a high place for its curative properties. Jaggery is a remedy for various ailments. Til seeds serve to purify arteries and help to improve vision. The inner meaning of all this is that the food offerings to Ganesh have health giving properties. It should be noted that edibles cooked in steam are easy to digest. In the



idlis (rice cakes) are offered to heart patients the very next day after surgery. Oily preparations are not given. Idlis are given because they are easily digested.

The Vinayaka principle, in short, symbolises health, bliss, peace, wisdom, prosperity and many other things. Unfortunately, this truth is not recognised by most people. People are content to offer some kind of mechanical worship to any odd figure made of clay and add to the pollution around them. What should be offered to God are things which will please Him. This is what Parvati enjoined on Nandiswara. She

told him: "Offer to my son what will please him and what is most pleasing to you".

It is only when the inner meaning of various aspects relating to the Divine are understood that worship can be offered to the Divine meaningfully. Unfortunately, as only the superficial and worldly meanings of the scriptural texts are expounded these days, man's devotion is growing weaker continually. It is essential for everyone to understand the inner meaning of the Vedantic texts.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Ganesh Chaturthi Discourses.

...continued from page 10

There are many such subtle truths, but these easy paths are not being taught today. That is why devotees are confused. They have lost their confidence altogether. Confusion also gives rise to doubts. Because of doubts faith declines. There is no scope for doubts in spirituality. So, never allow the doubts to shake your faith. Consider Viswas (faith) as your Swas (life-breath). As man becomes a dead body without breath, he is spiritually dead without faith.

First and foremost, man should develop self-confidence. Self-confidence leads to self-satisfaction. When you have self-

satisfaction, you will do self-sacrifice. Where there is self-sacrifice, there will be Self-realisation. Self-confidence is the foundation, self-satisfaction is the wall, self-sacrifice is the roof, Self-realisation is life. Hence, develop self-confidence in the first instance. Self-confidence is the basis of love. You cannot achieve anything without love.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...")

– Bhagavan's Divine Discourse at Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 10th April 1993.

...continued from page 12

the villagers and bringing about a qualitative change in their life through the inculcation of virtues of truth, righteousness, self-sacrifice and goodness. Simple story, noble theme and colourful dances of the children made the drama an impressive and engrossing presentation. Bhajans by the students followed next which concluded with the Bhajan "Govinda Hare Gopala Hare" in the golden voice of Bhagavan.



Drama by the Bal Vikas children and youth of Visakhapatnam.

A MYSTERIOUS OPERATION

Nanduri Somayajulu

Mysterious are the ways of Bhagavan Baba. We are incapable of analysing His miracles. We can only bow before Him with utmost gratitude and devotion for all His love and compassion to humanity. He remains eternal in our hearts to inspire and uplift us in this mundane world of turbulence and turmoil.

LIKE ALL AVATARS OF yesteryears, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba lives eternally in His stories of love, compassion and innumerable miracles. One such story concerns Sri Tangavelu of Tamil Nadu, who lived in Switzerland for about fifteen years. As I personally knew him, I deem it appropriate to relate his story as he narrated to me and many other Sai devotees in Switzerland. One Dr. Hagmann, a German doctor of Jewish origin, migrated to Bombay (Mumbai) in India around 1950. He employed Tangavelu as a personal cook. After about fifteen years' stay in Mumbai, Dr. Hagmann came to Bern, Switzerland along with Tangavelu to spend his retirement. In 1970, Tangavelu had a health problem, diagnosed as cancer in stomach. The doctors in Bern did not give him much hope of recovery. Tangavelu expressed his desire to go to his son in Tamil Nadu. On his way, he met some friends in Mumbai, who happened to be Sai devotees. As doctors in Mumbai also confirmed the

diagnosis of cancer, the Sai friends advised him to go to Puttaparthi, on the way to Chennai and seek the blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. At that time, Tangavelu had absolutely no idea of Bhagavan Baba, nor of the location of Puttaparthi. Anyway, he arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam, when the canteen staff provided him some accommodation, having realised his medical condition.

Tangavelu was suffering from fever and pain. He sat in the Darshan line. Baba came to him, stared at him very intensely and put His right hand on his head.

Tangavelu had a feeling that an intense energy was passing through his body. But by the evening, the fever went up and the pain grew severe. Tangavelu was bedridden for three days and went for Darshan on the fourth day. Baba again came to him and put His right hand on his head as a measure of grace and blessing. By the evening, the pain in the stomach and the fever went up. Tangavelu remained in bed for another three days and went for Darshan on the fourth day. Like this, three times it happened. Every time Baba put His hand on Tangavelu's head, his condition became worse instead of getting better. So, after three times of experience, Tangavelu decided to leave Prasanthi Nilayam quietly without informing anyone in the Ashram. But something prompted him to go for a last Darshan before leaving Parthi.

So, he went and sat in the Darshan line in a corner, not to be visible to Baba. But Baba came promptly to him, stared at him

and said in Tamil, "Don't run away. I am in the process of curing you". Tangavelu was surprised that Baba was not leaving him though he was trying to avoid Him. He decided to stay back. On that very night, a strange thing happened in Tangavelu's room. He was in a semiconscious dreamy state, when in the mid of night a strangely dressed person came to him and meddled with his stomach with a long and sharp knife. Tangavelu did not suffer any pain and had a comfortable and sound sleep in the rest of the night. But in the morning, when he woke up, he found to his utter shock that his bedsheet was smeared with blood and that there was a small lump of flesh lying on the bed. He also found that there was a scar on his stomach as if someone had operated upon him and stitched the wound. The canteen staff who came to see him also observed the same. Tangavelu felt normal after the "operation", took bath and went for the morning Darshan. Baba came to him and told smilingly in Tamil, "Now you are cured. Stay in the Ashram for a few more days, take rest and go to your son". Baba also gave him a small Vibhuti container, unique, beautiful and special in design. Tangavelu prostrated before Baba with immense gratitude for curing his cancer. After a few days, he went to his son in Tamil Nadu, stayed for a few months and returned to Bern via Mumbai to join Dr. Hagmann as his cook. The doctors both in Mumbai and Bern examined Tangavelu and found that he was completely cured of cancer. They also noticed the scar of operation on his stomach.

The author met Tangavelu for the first time in 1980. He would regularly attend Sai Bhajans at our place in Bern. He would always recollect and narrate the

story of the "Mystery Operation", with immense gratitude to Baba. He would also show the scar on his stomach to all of us. In 1983, Dr. Hagmann passed away. As Tangavelu was getting old, he decided to finally leave Switzerland, go to his son in India and to spend the rest of his old age there. Before leaving Switzerland, he was kind enough to gift away to our family the beautiful Vibhuti container that Baba gave to him sometime in late sixty's. This sacred Vibhuti container is still with us even to this day after 45 years. A picture of the Vibhuti container is reproduced below.



Mysterious are the ways of Bhagavan Baba. We are incapable of analysing His miracles. We can only bow before Him with utmost gratitude and devotion for all His love and compassion to humanity at large. He remains eternal in our hearts to inspire and uplift us in this mundane world of turbulence and turmoil.

– The author belonging to Indian Postal Service worked as First Secretary in a U.N. Specialised Agency in Bern, Switzerland.

BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA: THE EMBODIMENT OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Dr. Sahida Sharma

DR. JOHN HISLOP ONCE ASKED Swami, “Swami, if one is totally devoted to God, to Yourself as the manifestation of God, and thinks of You only, sees You in every place, the scriptures say that is enough. Is that true, Swami”? Swami replied, “Absolutely true. You give your mind to Me, you think of Me always, you love Me, you are devoted to Me; Hislop, nothing else needs to be done. That is all that needs to be done. Everything else happens automatically”. What a profound statement!

Harmonise the Cells in God Consciousness

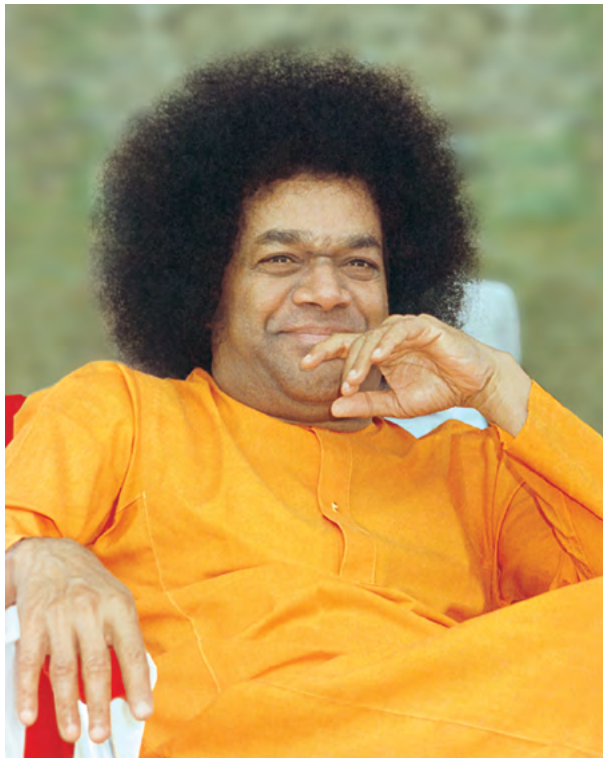
There are many examples from the scriptures and from the past which explain this. Once the queens of Lord Krishna asked Him as to why Draupadi received His full

attention whenever she called out to Him. Hearing this, the Lord asked His queens to accompany Him to Draupadi who at that time was drying her thick, long tresses on the terrace. The Lord then suggested to His queens to help Draupadi plait her hair. What did the queens discover? To their utter amazement, every strand of her hair was chanting Krishna, Krishna continuously.

This shows that Draupadi was chanting Krishna, Krishna incessantly and her mind dwelled on Krishna. Whatever is in the mind seeps into the body. That is how every strand of her hair chanted Krishna, Krishna. What absolute devotion!

In the recent past, Swami Rama gives in his book “Living with the Himalayan Masters”

the story about a lady from Kanpur who on her death bed chanted the Name of the Lord incessantly, forgetting everything else so much so that the walls of the room continuously echoed with the chant. Even after she died and many days after her body was removed from the room, the walls continued to echo the chant. Amazing! If the inanimate walls



can continue to echo the chant even in the absence of the one who is chanting, the body cells can obviously chant.

There is still another example of integrated personality. We all know about Mirabai. She was a saint par excellence and always remained immersed in Krishna consciousness, as a result of which her consciousness had gone beyond the diversity of forms and had tapped the underlying unity which is absolute pure consciousness, absolute oneness without a second. Let us remind ourselves here that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is that pure consciousness, the Krishna consciousness. Swami often declared "I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am I." The pure consciousness forms the basis for the entire creation.

When Mira was offered poison, it turned into nectar as she gulped it. How did that happen? For Mira everything was pure consciousness and at the level of pure consciousness there exists no difference. Poison, nectar, body, mind all are one and the same pure consciousness. Poison loses its identity as poison, body loses its identity as body. All are one pure unified consciousness. So who is to harm whom?

We know that the basic building unit of our body is the cell. The cells unite to form tissues which in turn unite to form organs. The organs then unite to form the organ system. There goes a saying that united we stand, divided we fall. When all the cells in the body harmonise in God consciousness, the body becomes very strong. Because of the harmony at the cellular level, the body's immunity becomes strong and invincible. No foreign body can disrupt the body's functioning, which means an end to illness. No viral and bacterial attacks, no antibiotics!

But before we say no to antibiotics, we must ensure that all our cells are chanting the Name of God! There can be no cancer since cancer occurs when a cell breaks away from harmony, does not obey the command of the body's common intelligence and starts multiplying randomly at its own sweet will.

Experiencing Unity in Diversity is True Spirituality

When the mind dwells on God completely, free from all doubts, it becomes immune to the invasion of any negative thoughts and emotions. Therefore, it becomes free from mental and emotional illness of any type. When the mind is free from illness, the body is automatically free from it because whatever is in the mind seeps into the body sooner or later. This is the immediate benefit of chanting God's Name incessantly with absolute faith and devotion.

To experience unity in diversity is the essence of spirituality. Unity in diversity can be realised only when we are successful in integrating our body, mind and soul and in helping ordinary men and women achieve this. This was the mission of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. What a phenomenal ambition, what magnanimity! Only God can have it.

In His immense compassion, Swami established educational institutions where both teacher and taught get the unique opportunity to integrate their body, mind and soul by being devoted to Him, the embodiment of unity, the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient Lord. Swami Himself laid down the daily schedule followed at these educational institutions.

In Swami's educational institutions, the day begins at dawn with chanting of

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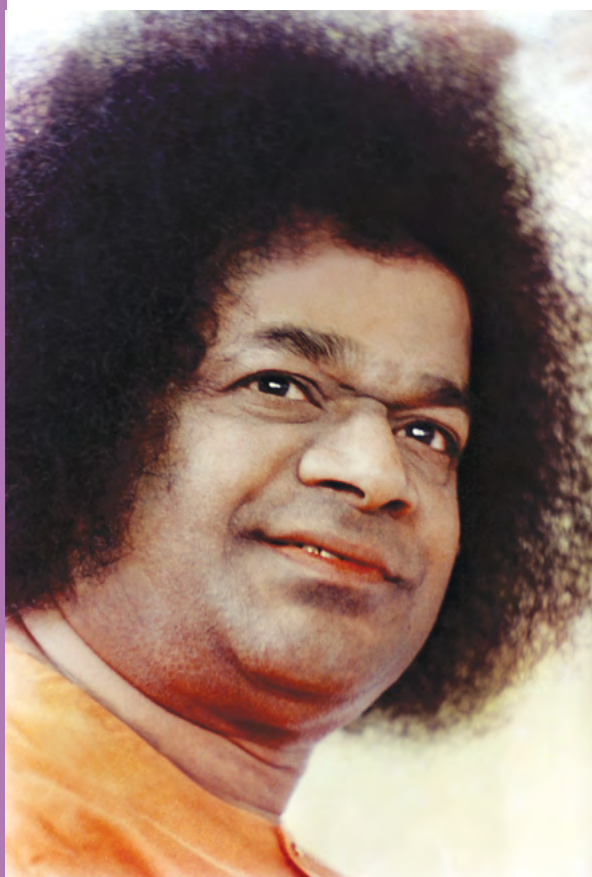




DR. K. SANKARASUBRAMANIAN

THE GOOD OLD DAYS AT BRINDAVAN

OUR SCRIPTURES SAY THAT amongst all the creatures in this world, human birth is the rarest. In my opinion, the most blessed are those who have had the opportunity to study in



study in Sri Sathya Sai College at Brindavan, Bengaluru.

During those wonderful days in 1970's, we would spend most of our time in the physical presence of Bhagavan and imbibe rare lessons about life and divinity in His close proximity. Every movement and every word of His used to be true education for us. In fact, Swami's oft repeated statement "My Life is My Message" was practically observed by us. We shall be ever grateful to Bhagavan for having given us this rare privilege.

Bhagavan was more than a parent to us. He provided us with everything we needed. The casual conversation which He used to have with us while resting in one of the rooms in His bungalow, used to be full of lessons for life – worldly as well as spiritual. In our daily life when we commit mistakes, we correct ourselves only after we experience the ill-effects of the same. But here we were, in the company of the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Lord who used to tell us collectively – and sometimes individually to those who were fortunate enough – about the mistakes that we were committing. We were made aware of our faults immediately rather than having to wait for the effect to correct ourselves.

Bhagavan's devotees know that He knows everything. But, it makes a great impact when we personally experience His omniscience even in seemingly trivial matters. There is an ocean of difference between 'knowing' and 'experiencing'. Bhagavan would reveal His omniscience to us on many occasions in a very casual way. Here is a simple example. Each day, a large bundle of letters would be delivered by the postman and they would be placed

Sri Sathya Sai institutions. I consider myself most fortunate that I got an opportunity to



near His sofa. Bhagavan used to ask one of the students to pick up a sealed envelope; He would say what it contained inside and also the actual contents of the letter within, the name of the person who wrote it and the place from where it had come. He would then ask the student to open and read the same. Needless to say, it would be just as He had foretold.

This is how I experienced His omniscience once. In a university practical examination when I was getting erratic experimental outputs and there was hardly any time left for repeating the experiment, I called out 'Sai Ram!' loudly in my mind and entered some arbitrary value that occurred to me at that time. After performing the calculations with the assumed value, I submitted my paper and walked out of the laboratory very dejected. In an hour when we assembled before Bhagavan, He came near me with a twinkle in His eyes enquiring "Have you scored 100%?" I was taken aback. Later, I found it was true.

Even though He was playing and singing with us, He kept us conscious of the fact that He is the Lord Supreme – through our own personal experiences as well as the experiences of others narrated in His Presence in the evenings when we gathered around Him.

With all the thrilling experiences of the joy of spending time in the living presence of Bhagavan, there also used to be some agonisingly prolonged periods of time when Bhagavan would seem upset with all of us in the hostel and would neither look at us nor talk to anyone of us. Those were the days when intense self-introspection used to take place in the hearts and minds of all the students. This was the technique He adopted to mould us and to perform

mass cleansing in all of us. He would then choose the hour and the way to 'break the ice'. When He would explain to us about our blunders and the reasons for which He kept Himself away (physically) from us, every one of us would be in tears. It used to be an ineffable avalanche of pure delight in all of us when He would pardon us all. And, as if to compensate us for the days of silence, He would come to our hostel and dine with us.

A very significant event took place during the Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality held at Ooty in May 1975 for the students of Sathya Sai colleges. Bhagavan created a medallion containing the map of India embossed in gold, completely filled with inscriptions in Sanskrit - minute letters which could be seen only with the help of a magnifying glass. Bhagavan announced to the surprise of all those assembled there that it contained information about the names of Sai students who would be carrying out the Mission of Sai in their respective places of work in the country. This Sai Avatar has a Mission and He is certain to achieve it. He has been preparing His army through His educational institutions. Each year sees a battalion marching out into the world.

One final word of caution to all my Sai brothers and sisters. Let us not think of ourselves as important persons in the Mission of Sai lest we should lose the minimum qualification for the same. Let us be grateful every moment of our life for what He has given us and continue to pray that He may give us many more opportunities to be of service in His Mission.

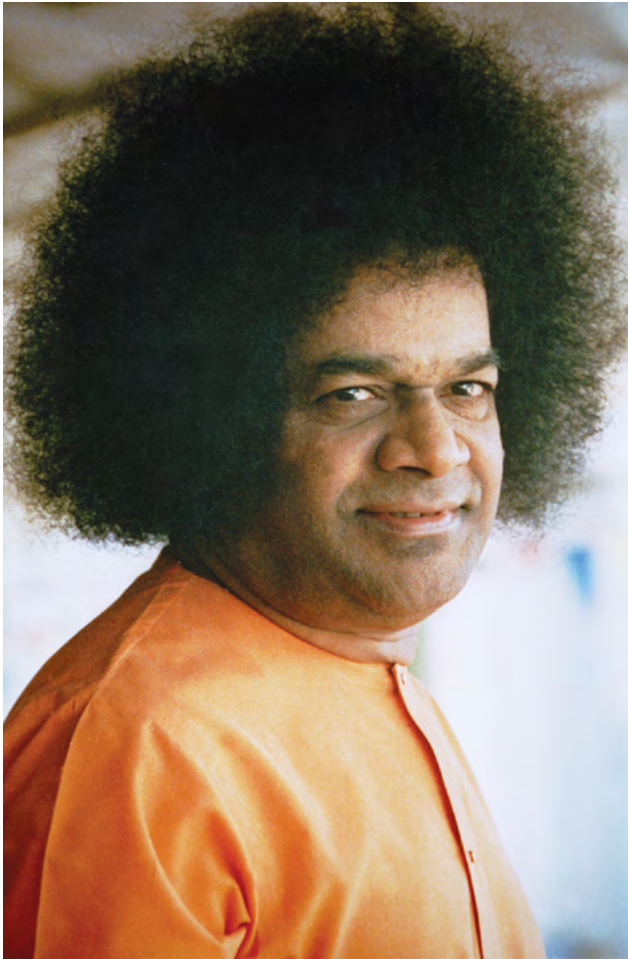
– The author did his B.Sc. from Bhagavan's college at Brindavan and later taught at Prasanthi Nilayam from 1979 to 1989. He holds the record of being the first Ph.D. (1987) of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.



BAL VIKAS INCULCATES GOOD THOUGHTS AND HABITS

Arathi Sai Padma

*D*IVINE GRACE IS LIKE SUNSHINE which gives illumination to all alike. Those who keep their doors open



can bask in sunlight. So also those who keep their hearts open, have faith and devotion, can reap the benefit of Divine grace.

By the grace of our Divine Lord, I was indeed blessed to become a petal in His Divine garden of Bal Vikas. The most fascinating part which made me go to Bal Vikas class was the stories that were told by my Guru. So, in the beginning just for the purpose of listening to stories, I used to wait to go to my Bal Vikas class. But as time passed, I realised that Bal Vikas was meant to inculcate good thoughts and to understand one's Self, and the stories and the Gita were only a means to this end. In other words, it was a thread to reach the Divine Himself and the stories, the Stotras, the hymns were only a path to reach and understand Him. Today in a world where we live just for the sake of materialistic happiness, Bal Vikas has helped me to understand that Divinity exists in all living beings. All are equal in the eyes of God; there is no distinction on the basis of colour, class, creed, religion and the like. We are all one and Bal Vikas is the pathfinder that helps us to know the Divine Path through the journey of life. Though the path of life is full of pebbles and stones, Bal Vikas helps us to come out in the world as individuals of strong character and know our true inner Self.

– From “Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas: The Path Divine”.

Valuable Maxims

Given below are two declarations of Bhagavan. Contemplate on them and search the following words in the given word maze:

Power, repair, ancient, highway, creed, religion, lamp, humanity, immeasurable, inexplicable, unfathomable, intensive, measurement, enquiry, beyond, meticulous.

1. I have come to repair the ancient highway to God. I have not come on behalf of any sect or creed or religion. I have come to light the lamp of love in the hearts of all humanity.

2. My power is immeasurable, my truth is inexplicable, unfathomable. I am beyond the reach of the most intensive enquiry and the most meticulous measurement.

I	M	M	E	A	S	U	R	A	B	L	E	D	L	A	M	P	M
N	A	H	I	G	H	W	A	Y	V	I	S	I	T	N	H	I	E
B	L	O	R	K	P	U	P	A	L	M	I	N	G	C	U	N	T
E	U	N	F	A	T	H	O	M	A	B	L	E	O	I	M	E	I
Y	N	E	T	W	R	E	W	R	L	I	N	E	V	E	A	X	C
O	B	L	I	S	E	R	E	L	I	G	I	O	N	N	N	P	U
N	H	E	D	C	P	H	R	E	S	I	D	E	N	T	I	L	L
D	E	M	A	N	A	T	E	D	A	P	T	D	O	C	T	I	O
U	N	S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R	E	S	T	O	R	Y	C	U
I	V	E	R	C	R	E	E	D	O	L	T	M	T	A	H	A	S
M	E	A	S	U	R	E	M	E	N	T	R	A	G	C	O	B	M
I	S	I	N	T	E	N	S	I	V	E	A	N	Y	O	G	L	E
T	Y	S	E	N	Q	U	I	R	Y	P	E	C	I	A	L	E	S

Swami's Tips to Students

Students! Boys and Girls! Together with academic education you have to acquire wisdom and sense of right and wrong. Knowledge without wisdom, scholarship without determination, music without melody, learning without humility, a society without discipline, friendship without gratitude, speech without truth – all these are utterly useless. Hence, everyone should seek to follow the correct path. There is no sense of respect for people in society. Gratitude is absent. Scholars are without discretion. The educated lack humility. Humility is the hallmark of true education. Humility does not mean moving about with a bowed head. It calls for respect to humanness. It is beastly to go about causing fear in others. Humans should be free from fear. Both fear and frightening are animal qualities. Men must be fearless.

Nandanar's Devotion

NANDANAR IS WELL KNOWN in Tamil Nadu as a great devotee of Lord Siva. He performed his duties earnestly while chanting the Name of Siva and singing his glories. He had a great desire to have the Darshan of the Lord in Chidambaram to his hearts' content. But he was a Harijan (low caste), and according to the custom of those days Harijans were not allowed to enter the temples as they were considered untouchables.

Nandanar worked as a labourer on a farmer's land. Though the farmer knew that Nandanar was a devotee of Lord Siva, as he was always engaged in chanting his name and doing Kirtan, he was surprised at the depth of his devotion.

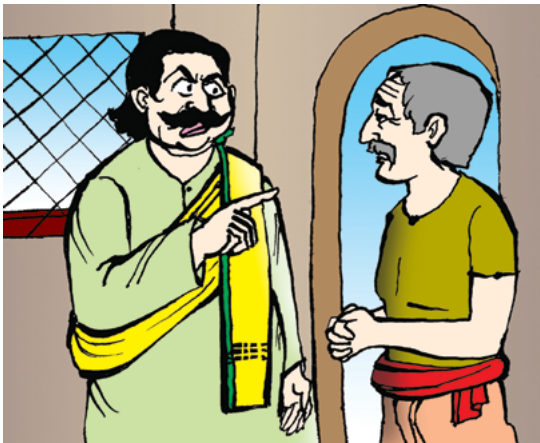
Once the farmer questioned Nandanar, "Oh madcap! What for should persons like you and me worship God, chant His

Name and sing His glories? All this is the preserve of the persons of higher castes. If we lead our life raising the crops, that is enough". Nandanar said, "Oh master! All are the children of God and all are equal. The division into castes has been done by some people for the functioning of society. But God loves everyone equally".

Nandanar's determination to have the Darshan of Lord Siva in Chidambaram became firm in due course of time. As the festival of Nataraja drew near, he expressed this wish of his to the farmer. The farmer chided Nandanar and said, "Oh foolish fellow! Do you know how much work you have at hand? Crop in ten acres of land has to be reaped, the paddy has to be put in bags and taken home. The festival begins in two days. After finishing this work, go wherever you like".

Nandanar was lost in worry. He thought, "What is all this! When will I be able to reap ten acres of crop? When can I put the paddy in bags and take them home? This work cannot be finished even in ten days. Then when will I go to Chidambaram"? He prayed to Iswara, "Oh God! Now You are my only refuge. How will I be able to embark on my journey to Chidambaram tomorrow? You only see what can be done". He spent the whole night in prayer without food and sleep.

God is the lover of feelings of His devotees' heart. One hundred persons came from somewhere, reaped the harvest,



The farmer ordered Nandanar to concentrate on the work in the field without wasting time in worship of God.

put the grain in bags and deposited them in the house of the farmer. By next morning, they finished all the work. Nandanar did not know them; he had never seen them before. In surprise he said to himself, "Who are they all and where have they come from? What for have they helped me?" Thinking in this way, he thanked the Lord and said, "Oh Iswara! All this is only Your Leela. It is You who have come in so many forms". Jumping in joy, he sang this song happily.

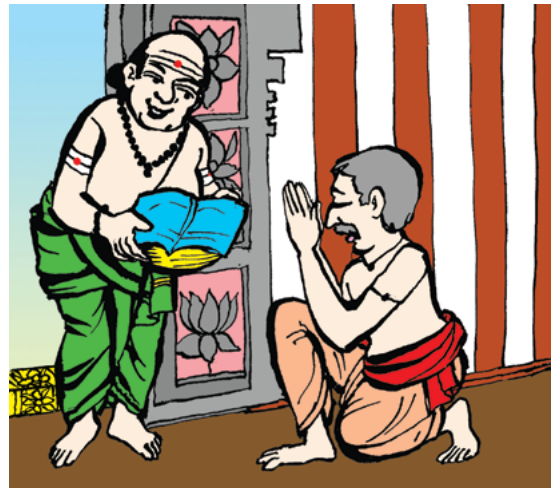
When the farmer saw the entire work finished in the morning, he thumped Nandanar's back in praise and said, "My dear! You can now go to Chidambaram for the Darshan of Iswara".

Walking on foot, Nandanar somehow reached Chidambaram. Yearning for the Darshan of the Lord, he lay down near the temple and prayed to him, "Oh Iswara! I have come to You after walking a long distance. This body is like a water bubble and the mind is like a mad monkey. I have come to You with these ephemeral limbs. I do not know when the end will come. The rest is in Your hand. Do whatever You think is right". Saying this he surrendered himself to the Lord.

Iswara appeared in the dream of the chief priest of the Nataraja temple that night and commanded him, "My dear! A dear devotee

of mine is lying near the door of the temple. Wake him up, offer him food and bring him to me with due respect".

Next day was the festival. Thousands of devotees thronged the temple of the Lord. As told by Iswara, the chief priest saw Nandanar lying near the door of the temple. After waking him up, he offered him food



The chief priest offered food to Nandanar and took him to sanctum sanctorum with due respect.

and took him to the sanctum sanctorum. Opening his eyes fully, Nandanar looked at Lord Nataraja. The Lord at once smiled, and Nandanar merged in the smile of the Lord.

God does not want any offerings or worship. Caste and clan are not important. God only sees devotion and surrender. He is the servitor of His devotees.

...continued from page 20

Omkaram and Suprabhatam. This chanting at Brahmamuhurtam (early morning hours) helps one to gradually progress from duality to oneness. The chanting of Suprabhatam is to awaken the Sai consciousness, the underlying unified consciousness present within all. In fact, the entire schedule of the

institutions helps the students to experience unity in diversity and Sai consciousness if taken with the right spirit and fervour.

– Dr. Sahida Sharma is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry, Anantapur Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.



NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

GERMANY

FROM 6TH TO 8TH MAY 2016, about 80 SSIO members and office bearers from southern Germany gathered at Wartaweil, near Lake Ammersee, for a regional retreat on the theme, “Human Values – Our Inner Treasure”. The group divided into three focus groups to concentrate on the major aspects of the theme. In the “Love in Action” group, participants put the five human values into practice through a service activity. The volunteers composed a musical programme and presented a concert in a nearby shelter for the physically challenged, with the help of youth who enthusiastically accompanied them with musical instruments. The “Human Values and Vedanta” study group deliberated on the philosophy of Vedanta and discussed human values, as found in Vedanta, along with the practice of human values in daily life. Lastly, the study group, “Human Values in Nature”, held a workshop on how the five human values could be experienced in Nature. Swami’s quotes on Nature were discussed, including His reference to Nature as “God’s garment”. The participants appreciated how Nature gave an example by providing selfless service to everyone. The third day ended with a musical programme featuring devotional songs from different faiths.

The Whitsun Meeting, coinciding with the Christian festival of Pentecost, which started at a regional level more than 20 years ago, has now grown to a national annual festival. Held at Sternwede in northern Germany, this spring time event attracts Sathya Sai



Volunteers involved in service activity during the Whitsun Meeting.

followers from all over Germany. In an interview in the 1990s, Swami was apprised of this location in the countryside, and He blessed it as a meeting place for spiritual aspirants. This year, 86 people attended the three-day-festival, from 13th to 16th May 2016, on the theme, “Peace in me – Peace in you – Peace in the World”. A huge, colourfully decorated maypole formed a centrepiece for all the activities. Each day started with scriptural recitations and devotional singing inside a prayer hall, after which numerous activities took place throughout the day. In the evening, the lively glow of a bonfire and melodious and soothing music filled the air. The highlight of the event was a discussion on peace, wherein participants shared personal experiences about finding peace in their lives.

ITALY

Sathya Sai volunteers from the Triveneto region served Easter dinner to the homeless in Verona on 27th March 2016, at a location known as Amici di Paolo Favale (Friends of Paolo Favale). With the cooperation



Easter dinner to homeless people in Italy.

of professional caterers from Milan, 20 volunteers from the Sathya Sai Centres of Conegliano, Mestre, Bolzano and Verona participated in this service opportunity. Awnings and gazebos were erected on a green grassy area for the event, and bright sun enlivened the grounds and lifted everyone's spirits. This year, more than 100 guests were offered a rich variety of dishes in celebration of the holy festival of Easter. After dinner, participants broke a mega Easter egg and SSIO members sang and danced to the accompaniment of guitars. Sathya Sai volunteers have been serving breakfast to the homeless at this location for many years.

Several years ago, the Sathya Sai Centre of Bologna began working with a group of volunteers led by Don Giovanni Nicolini, parish priest of St. Anthony of Padua's Church at La Dozza, near Bologna. The volunteers supported an initiative, known as Piano Freddo (Cold Weather Plan), to provide local refugees and homeless people with shelter and hot meals during the chilly winter months of December through March. Members of the Sathya Sai Centre of Bologna have been serving dinner to more than 200 people on the second Saturday of each month, with the help of 15 volunteers from the parish.

NEW ZEALAND

An Interfaith Friendship Programme was inaugurated at the Trinity Methodist Church in Auckland on 11th April 2016. Its goal was to develop an Interfaith Friendship Group (IFG), which would organise community projects to serve the needy and promote human values in society. Six months previously, the concept, based on Malaysia's Friendship Group for Inter Religious Service, had been brought forward during a meeting



Interfaith Friendship Programme in New Zealand.

of various local faith groups, with the approval of the Auckland Interfaith Council. The inaugural programme in April included six speakers from different faiths and the SSIO in an interfaith discussion titled, "The Role of Faiths in Creating National Unity and a Caring Society". A brochure, with quotes from different faiths, was distributed at the event to underscore the fact that Truth is one and indivisible. The event was attended by 129 people, including 37 SSIO members. Leaders of Maori, Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu and Zoroastrian faith groups committed to joining hands to serve the needy and the underprivileged, to elevate the awareness of human values, and to promote respect for parents, elders, children, and the environment – for nation building and societal transformation. The

vision for joint action moved members of a local Anglican Church, the Muslim Shia community, a representative of the Baha'i faith, and the National President of the Auckland Interfaith Council to write letters of appreciation to the SSIO of New Zealand, thanking it for developing the joint initiative. The first joint service project by faith groups, in partnership with the local interfaith council and community agencies, is planned to be held on 4th September 2016.

OMAN

Since 2003, Sathya Sai volunteers in conjunction with the Ministry of Education of the Sultanate of Oman have been organising an annual essay writing and poster making competition on human



Poster making competition on human values, Oman.

values themes, involving various schools in Oman. The project, titled "SAI – Times of Oman's Spreading the Light through Human Values Open Essay and Poster Competition", is supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). As in previous years, the competition took place in three phases. The first phase, held on 9th April 2016 at the Indian School in Al Ghubra, was intended for schools in

the Muscat Governorate. Students from Omani Arabic-speaking schools, including private, international, and special education schools in the Governorate, participated in this competition. The Director General for Curriculum Development of the Ministry of Education inaugurated the competition in the presence of school principals, teachers and corporate guests. The second phase of the competition took place on 16th April 2016, for the Indian Schools at Sohar, Nizwa and Ibri, which are located in different Governorates. At each of the three schools, senior education officials from the respective Governorates and the national Ministry of Education officiated and expressed their appreciation for the work accomplished in promoting human values education. The results of the competitions were published on 19th May 2016 in the country's leading English language newspaper, The Times of Oman.

SOUTH AFRICA

On 24th April 2016, more than 10,000 Sathya Sai devotees flocked to Chatsworth Stadium in Durban, South Africa, to participate in a Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana



Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsava in South Africa.

JAPAN

Mahotsava event. The day commenced with the procession of a golden chariot, following the tradition of Prasanthi Nilayam. After the opening ceremonies, distinguished guests shared messages of love. The Guest of Honour, Sri Senzo Mchunu, Premier of the province of Kwa Zulu-Natal, referred to the white dress of SSIO members as signifying purity and goodness. In an inspiring speech, he encouraged everyone to internalise this goodness and let it thrive in the local communities. Sri Anil Kumar translated a video discourse of Baba, transporting the audience back to the Prasanthi Nilayam of olden days, and shared his experiences with Swami. The SSIO National Council President urged everyone to engage in selfless service, and the Central Coordinator reminded the audience that there was no difference between God and love, and all creation was immersed in love. The Chair of SSIO Zone 9A, Sri Ramesh Hathiramani, requested everyone to spiritualise their lives by chanting the name of the Lord and singing His glory so that it resonated in the heart all day. Participants also viewed an inspiring video message from Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of Prasanthi Council, urging each person to act as a beacon of light and love by continuing to maintain Sathya Sai's legacy of medicare, sociocare and educare in local communities.

Amidst inspiring talks and soul-stirring Bhajans, the august assembly was treated to beautiful skits and dances by Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) and Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) children and youth. The youth also recited beautiful poetry written as offerings of love to Sathya Sai Baba. The National Ladies Forum hosted an exhibition showcasing their work. The memorable event received good coverage in local press and news media.

On 14th April 2016, a strong earthquake of magnitude 6.5 rattled the Kumamoto area of Kyushu, followed by a second quake of magnitude 7.3 on 16th April 2016. The two earthquakes caused the death of at least 49 people and injuries to about 3,000 others. Severe damage occurred in the affected areas, with numerous structures collapsing and catching fire. More than 44,000 people were evacuated from their homes. Shortly thereafter, the SSIO of China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan joined relief efforts by the authorities to assist



Assistance to victims of earthquake in Japan.

communities that had been devastated by the earthquakes. On 2nd May 2016, Sathya Sai volunteers of Japan visited five evacuation shelters in Kumamoto – in Mashikimachi, Kashimamachi and Nishiharamura, and distributed free-standing tents, tent flooring coated with aluminium film, sweets, juice, fruit, blue sheets, towels, packing tape, and other items. Food, water and daily necessities were provided to approximately 100 evacuees, mostly elderly, at the Kashima Higashi Elementary School. The offerings were particularly welcomed by the seniors, as the shelter lacked such

amenities. On 3rd May 2016, Sathya Sai volunteers supplied electric fans and other equipment to a small isolated community of elders in Kosobu, Shiranuhimachi, in Uki-city. Sathya Sai volunteers also distributed free-standing tents, tent floors coated with aluminium film, toilet rolls, adult diapers, sanitary napkins, wet wipes, hand sanitisers, and isotonic powder to evacuees taking refuge at the Chouyou civic gymnasium in Minami-Aso village. Free-standing tents were likewise distributed to 10 people at the Ezu 7th Community Centre in Shimomuta, Ezumachi, Kumamoto city. These people had taken up living in a parking lot, as many houses in the area had collapsed. Tents, bedding, and portable toilets were distributed to residents of Ezu 3rd Community. On 5th May 2016, the SSIO distributed 108 pots of Udon noodles, four laundry machines, 120 “long-life” steamed rice packages, 10 waterproof tarpaulin sheets, 48 bottles of green tea, an electric rice cooker, a clothes rack, and 36 two-litre bottles of mineral water to local residents. On 7th May 2016, 60 meals were offered to refugees, in continuation of humanitarian relief services.

HUNGARY

In early 2016, members of the Sathya Sai Centres of Budapest and Nyíregyháza collected clothing, shoes, hygiene products, toys, books and food for distribution to needy families at a homeless shelter. On 23rd April 2016, 25 Sathya Sai volunteers from several parts of Hungary came together in the city of Nyíregyháza, in the eastern part of Hungary for distributing the large amount of collected material to single mothers at a facility operated by the Red Cross. The mothers and their children expressed



Distribution of articles of daily need to single mothers in Hungary.

gratitude for the assistance received. The Red Cross later wrote a letter of gratitude to the Nyíregyháza Sathya Sai Centre in commendation of its dedication in serving the residents of the shelter.

SRI LANKA

A six-kilometre Walk for Values was organised in Colombo on the morning of 24th April 2016 in observance of Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsava. Many Sathya Sai Youth and members of the SSIO of Sri Lanka joined a large contingent of Sai Spiritual Education students to promote awareness of the universal human values



Walk for Values in Sri Lanka.

expounded by Swami for the transformation of the human heart. All 350 participants were divided into groups named after the five human values and carried placards displaying the values and related messages promoting righteous living. Devotional songs were sung with joy and fervour along the way, uplifting the spirits of walkers and observers alike. On the same day, about 170 members of the SSIO of Sri Lanka also walked through different communities in Akkaraipattu, in the eastern part of Sri Lanka, singing devotional songs. In addition, SSIO members unveiled a newly-constructed 12-foot-high Sarva Dharma monument at the Sathya Sai Centre of Vavuniya.

ISRAEL

On 11th and 12th March 2016, the SSIO of Israel sponsored a Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) training course in Kfar Monash for about 50 Israeli and Nepalese people of various faiths. George Bebedelis, Director of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Southern Europe (ISSE SE),

of truth and love, and a global overview of Sathya Sai Education. Approximately half the participants were members of the North and the Tel Aviv Sathya Sai Centres of Israel. The other half were community members interested in education in human values and affiliates from the Theosophical Society of Israel, who offer after-school programmes in relaxation and meditation for children with special needs. Each participant received a certificate along with an Educare brochure translated into Hebrew. The attendees enthusiastically looked forward to continuing the training with the overarching goal of teaching SSEHV to educators, parents and children in Israel. A follow-up meeting on deepening the knowledge from this training programme was planned for implementing the values of truth and love in Israel.

– Sathya Sai International Organisation

BHARAT

Gujarat: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Ahmedabad organised its 5th Bheema Ratha Santhi Mahotsava, a spiritual re-marriage ceremony for the married couples aged 70 years and above, on 4th and 5th June 2016. There were 9 couples hailing from different parts of the State such as Ahmedabad, Valsad, Bilimora, Vadodara, Mehsana / Visnagar and Nadiad. All were Swami's devotees for past many years. Till date 129 couples have participated in this unique function at Ahmedabad under the auspices of the Sai Organisation of Gujarat State.

The programme started with Ganesh Puja and Graha Santhi rituals at 8.45 a.m. on 4th June 2016. In the evening, the couples were offered articles for marriage including clothes and ornaments. The head priest explained the significance of Bheema



A training programme on human values and educare.

and Suzanne Carerini, staff trainer from Switzerland, conducted the training, which included an introduction to Sathya Sai Educare, an in-depth study of the values

Ratha Santhi to the participants. A short Bhajan session was held next followed by a speech by State President Sri Manohar Trikannad on the Sai Organisation's history and its Seva activities.

The second day's programme commenced with a marriage procession to the venue of Bheema Ratha Santhi ceremony at Bharti Prarthana Bhavan, Gulbai Tekra, Ahmedabad. It was fun and frolic throughout the two-kilometre route to the ceremony hall which included a spirited Garba dance by the participants in the marriage procession as well as the couples.

At the venue, the couples were provided with traditional Puja items and the ceremony started with Veda chanting by four priests at 10.00 a.m. Mangalya Dharana was completed at 11.30 a.m. followed by lunch. A team of 30 Seva Dal volunteers and about 100 relatives of the couples attended the ceremony.

Karnataka: The diamond jubilee of Sri Sathya Sai School, Jayalakshmiapuram, Mysuru was celebrated on 9th May 2016. Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Swamiji, pontiff of Suttur Mutt, inaugurated the diamond jubilee celebrations and opening ceremony of the new block of the school by unveiling the tablet in the presence of Sri K. Anand, Director of Primary and Secondary

Education, Karnataka and other dignitaries which included Trustees of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri K. Chakravarthi, Sri R.J. Rathnakar and Sri Naganand, Karnataka State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Sri Nagesh Dhakappa and Mysuru district president, Sri K.V. Muthalik. A galaxy of speakers addressed the gathering and appreciated the work being done by the school.

CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION TO SSSIHMS

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS), Prasanthigram was conferred accreditation by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) for quality patient care on 10th August 2016. With this, Swami's hospital has joined the elite group of healthcare institutions across India, which are accredited with NABH. Further, this is the only totally free hospital to receive this recognition.

Sri Thrimurthy, the Principal of the school, proposed the vote of thanks with gratitude and great pleasure. After Bhajan and Arati to Swami, a sumptuous lunch was served to all.

Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital

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Book Review

SAI BRAHMAN



SAI BRAHMAN

A.V. Krishna Murthy

₹ 35.00, pp. 166

THE BOOK IS AN INTERPRETATION of evolution of spiritual seekers on the journey towards the goal of life, described in four steps. After logically asserting the concept that Bhagavan Baba is none other than the Supreme Almighty God, the Para Brahman, the author deals with four steps in Sadhana in terms of Avatar Sai, Ishta Devata Sai (Sai, the chosen deity), Sarva Vyapi Sai (all-pervasive Sai) and Sai Brahman (the Supreme Sai).

Sri A.V. Krishna Murthy who served for long as an important office bearer in Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation and as a seasoned professional who served as Dean, Engineering Department of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, cites his own valuable experiences and direct

observations of Bhagavan in support of his pragmatic reasoning on the subject.

While making a correlation between the Upanishadic concept of oneness of the Creator, creation (Jagat) and the created being (Jiva) with those of Sadhana (practice), worship and Jijnasa (inspiration), the author cites pertinent terms and quotes from the Bhagavadgita and from the teachings of Adi Sankara.

Definitions pertaining to the Parabrahman, Avyaktam, the primordial nature, significance of Gayatri, the Turiya state, the formidable state of the three Gunas, namely, the Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, the knowledge of which is essential for any sincere Sadhaka, are elaborated.

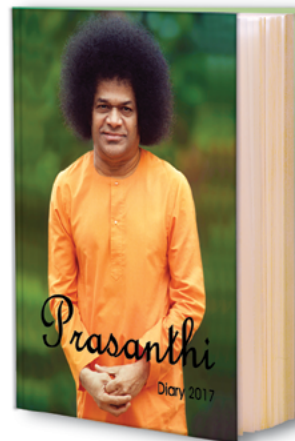
Baba had nurtured Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation with necessary means and mechanism to launch individuals on the path to the discovery of Divinity within. He showed to posterity the methods of expression of Divinity through the unique channels of selfless love and service.

One of the most wonderful creations of Swami is the multitude of students emerging out of His educational institutions. Personally, Bhagavan had spent a great deal of time with students and shaped most of them into instruments of Divinity; comparable to the seeds of previous Kalpa, says the author. The book provides some useful hints for all sincere spiritual seekers.

– P.P.S. Sarma

PRASANTHI - DIARY 2017

We are happy to announce that the eagerly awaited Bhagavan's diary 'Prasanthi 2017' is available for sale. It contains information on Bhagavan's divine life and His Mission apart from many significant aspects of Prasanthi Nilayam, the Abode of Peace. **Specifications:** size 14.7 x 20.6 cms, shrink wrapped, multicolour wrapper with gold foiling, art work, spot lamination and knurling, with curved stitch-binding. Total pages 422; 34 pages are in imported art paper in multicolour with beautiful photos of Bhagavan, Mandir, Maha Samadhi. The 2 colour diary pages have a treasure of over 300 sayings of Bhagavan. **Sale Price Rs 120/- (Packing and postage are extra).**



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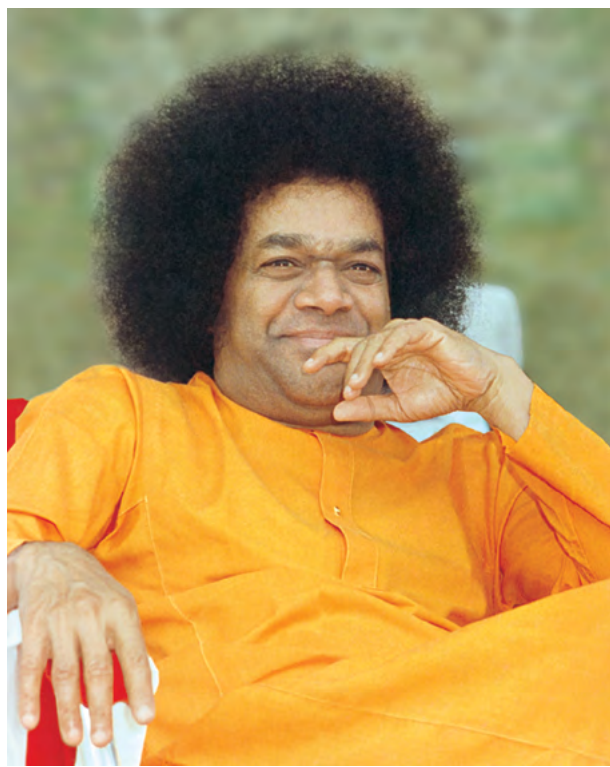
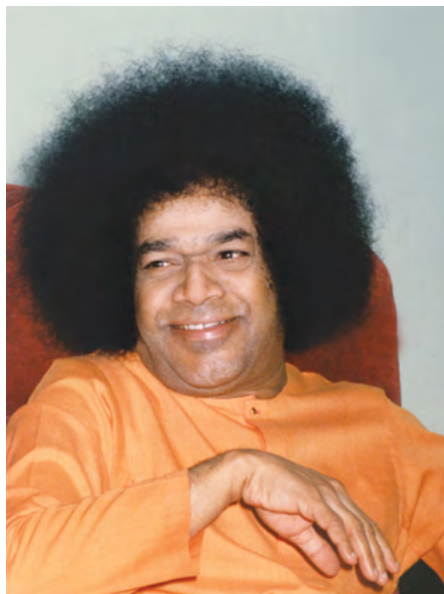
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About SSSSTPD

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 Bhagavan 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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Dance presentation on Sri Krishna Janmashtami.



Bal Vikas children showcasing a tribal dance in the dance drama "Shubodayam".



Bhajan tunes by Nadaswaram band of students.

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