



SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

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MESSAGE

MANKIND CAN BE HAPPY, PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS ONLY THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF UNITY; IF MAN'S THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ATTITUDES RUN ALONG THE BY-LANES OF DISTINCTION AND DIFFERENCE, HIS HAPPINESS IS DESTROYED BY FEAR, SUSPICION, PRIDE, HATRED AND GREED. PEACE IS BEYOND REACH. CONSIDER THE ONE INDIVISIBLE OCEAN AS YOUR GOAL AND GAIN. THEN, WHAT DOES IT MATTER, WHICH CURRENT FLOWS WHERE? THE GULF STREAM, THE ARCTIC STREAM, ALL MERGE IN THE SELF-SAME EXPANSE. PEOPLE MAY BE ADOPTING THE BHAKTHI PATH, OR THE JNANA PATH OR THE ISLAMIC OR CHRISTIAN PATHS; THEY ALL REACH AT LAST THE SAME OCEAN OF DIVINE GRACE. THERE, ALL DISTINCTIONS DISAPPEAR AND BECOME INVALID. ALL LABELS AND IDENTIFICATION DROP OFF BY THEMSELVES. NAMES AND FORMS TO WHICH EACH TINY LITTLE RIVER WAS ATTACHED FADE AWAY, WHEN THE WATERS MERGE IN THE OCEAN. KEEP THE CALL OF THE OCEAN EVER ECHOING IN THE EAR. THAT IS THE INNER SADHANA FOR EVERYONE, UNTIL HE REACHES THE ONE.

WITH BLESSINGS,

SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

(from Sri Sathya Sai Seva Dal Magazine, No. 1, 1977)

QUOTATIONS ON DHARMA FROM THE TEACHINGS OF SATHYA SAI BABA

Every single unselfish act which prepares the ground for the merging of the Soul with the Over-Soul, which broadens the vision towards the basic Brahman immanent everywhere is a Dharmic act. Whatever is done in an attitude of dedication and surrender is a component of the Dharma which leads to Realization.

* * *

And what is Dharma? Practicing what you preach, doing as you say it has to be done, keeping precept and practice in line. Earn virtuously, yearn piously; live in the fear of God; live for reaching God - that is Dharma.

* * *

Strict adherence to Truth and practice of Dharma may entail great hardships, but having in view the bliss that awaits you in the end, you have to put up with all that and bear them gladly. Only the intelligent can save themselves by knowing the truth. The rest will be bound.

* * *

God is the embodiment of Dharma; His Grace is won by Dharma; He is ever fostering Dharma; He is ever establishing Dharma; He is Dharma Itself.

* * *

There is not one Dharma for Indians and another for Westerners. Dharma is universal. There is a test that may be applied to any action and you may thereby determine if that action is according to Dharma. The test is, let not that which you do harm or injure another. This flows from the recognition that Light, which is God, is the same in any form. Dharma enables you to come to the conclusion, to the recognition that anything that is bad for another form is also bad for you. The test for Dharmic action is stated very clearly in the Christian religion: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

* * *

The Upanishads say that thunder teaches Da da dha ... daya to the ogres, dama to the gods, and dharma to men. Now, since man is all three - part ogre, part god, and part man - he must practice all three himself: Daya (be kind to all), Dama (be master of your mind and your senses), and Dharma (be constantly alert on the path of right). That is the advice given from the sky in the voice of Thunder.

* * *

Name and fame, honor and dishonor, vice and wickedness, good and bad, are all equal and uniform for both men and women. There is no such thing as woman alone being bound and men being free; both are equally bound by the rules of Dharma.

SAI FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

"NEW" ORGANIZATION - On January 22, 1978, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba formed the Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas, to coordinate and supervise the activities of the Sathya Sai Centers in North and South America. The Council is an autonomous organization responsible solely and directly to Bhagavan, in cooperation with the World-Wide Sai Organizations.

The new organization replaces the Central Committee while retaining its basic structure and rules, and expanding and updating its activities. With Baba's blessings, the guidelines formulated for Sathya Sai Baba Centers have been adopted by the Council of the Americas, and all centers accredited by the Central Committee are automatically accredited by the new Council. All Sathya Sai Baba Centers in North and South America are under the sole jurisdiction of the Council of the Americas, excepting centers in Canada and the West Indies, which may temporarily affiliate with the Council of the Americas until they make other arrangements, and centers in Continental Western Europe may choose to affiliate with either the Council of the Americas or the World Council in Bombay, according to the structure that best fits their needs.

The names and addresses of the members of the Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas are listed on page 7. An updated list of accredited Sai Baba Centers will be published in the near future.

Some of the "new" efforts of the Council of the Americas will be as follows:

Information - The Council will publish in the coming months:

- (1) A new directory of centers, including the meeting times of each group.
- (2) A new edition of "Preparation for the Presence", a booklet of advice and rules of conduct for Western visitors to Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan, will be printed and distributed to Sai Centers; the book is also being printed by the Brindavan Press for distribution in the Ashram.
- (3) An informal pamphlet for Westerners planning a first visit to India.
- (4) A monthly "Bulletin" with information for and about Sai Centers, prepared by the Center Presidents themselves.

Council Meeting - Members of the Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas will hold their annual meeting in Southern California on the weekend of July 8th, 1978. Questions for the Council meeting and suggested topics for inclusion on the agenda may be submitted by any Center or interested individual to P.O. Box 668, Soquel, CA, 95073

Bhajans - Although most centers have expressed a strong wish to run their bhajan meetings according to the pattern of Prasanthi Nilayam, in some areas there has been a great interest in developing English bhajans, especially where members have difficulty in learning Indian bhajans or feel they need to express their devotion in a manner

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more closely identified with their own (Western) culture. In response to this, the Bhajan Committee is now compiling a list of English bhajans that might fill this need.

Communication - A questionnaire has been sent to all Sathya Sai Baba Centers seeking information that will help the Council to fill the needs of the centers, and to give it personal feedback on a number of questions. The responses of the centers will be discussed at the next meeting of the Council officers and at the general Council meeting this spring. The Council will send to all centers a recap of the responses of all centers as well as an individual responses to questions raised by each center. Because of the large number of centers, it will take one or two months from the time all questionnaires are received to complete this mailing. The Council requests all centers to keep it informed of the activities, changes and growth of the center.

Regional Directors - Council Members appointed as Regional Directors have the responsibility to maintain personal contact with centers in their area, and to act as a link to the rest of the Council.

Regional Activities - through which devotees from all centers in a large area may work together, have been growing steadily and Regional Directors will be working with Center Presidents to expand on such activities, including regional meetings, retreats, festivals, 6-12 hour bhajans, etc.

Bhagavan stated that he expects the Council of the Americas and the accredited Sathya Sai Baba Centers to achieve the status of an ideal Sai Organization, in accordance with the spirit of his teachings, and it is our hope that a harmonious effort by all of us will bring about a visit by Baba to the West at the earliest possible date.

The general address for the Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas is P.O. Box 668, Soquel, California, 95073.

Change of Address: Please note that all mail for the Credentials Committee and for Dr. J.S. Hislop, President of the Council of the Americas, should be sent to A.P. 126, El Sauzal, Baja California, Mexico. Postage for Mexico is the same for mail within the U.S.

NEW CASSETTES - Available from the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center of Hollywood, 7911 Willoughby Ave., Los Angeles, CA, 90046:

SC-004 (Stereo) 108 Names of God Dedicated to Sathya Sai Baba and Bhajans sung by Calcutta Devotees. 42 minutes, \$4.00.

C-033 Bhajan Learning Scales and Exercises. Class conducted by Lakshmi Shankar. 48 minutes, \$4.00.

C-034 Sathya Sai Baba Discourse on Christmas, 1977 and English Bhajan, 60 minutes, \$4.00.

NEW BOOKS - Available from the Sathya Sai Baba Book Center of America, P.O. Box 278, Tustin, CA, 92680: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations, Psychological Evaluations of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Centers, Bombay, and Bal Vikas Primer (available after May 1)

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MIDWEST REGIONAL RETREAT - From 6 p.m. Friday, May 19th to 2 p.m. Sunday May 21 at the Pine Creek United Methodist Camp near Lafayette, Indiana, the Midwestern Centers will hold their first Regional Retreat. The cost of the weekend for food and lodging will be \$18 per person, payable upon arrival. Participants will bring their own bedding and personal items. Registration will be closed by May 1st. If you wish more information, please write to the Conference Coordinating Committee, c/o Marjorie Robinson, 631 Rochdale Circle, Lombard, IL 60148, or phone (312)629-4079 or (312)529-3529.

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RETREAT - A West Coast retreat and 12-hour bha-jan will be held at the Cottontail Ranch, Woodland Hills, CA. (off Malibu Canyon Road), from Friday May 12th, 6 p.m. to Sunday May 14th, 2 p.m. Maps and information etc. are available from the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Chula Vista, 237 "I" Street, Chula Vista, CA 92010.

BHAJAN COLUMN:

At age 14 Sathyanarayana Raju declared to his family, "'I am no longer your Sathya. I am Sai.' The sister-in-law came from the kitchen and peeped out; she was almost blinded by the splendor of the halo that she saw around Sai Baba's head! Baba addressed her 'I am going. I don't belong to you: Maya (illusion) has gone; My devotees are calling me; I have My Work. I cannot stay any longer.' So saying, He turned and left." (Sathya Sai Baba, p. 52)

After leaving His family, Baba went to a garden where devotees began to gather around Him. The first bhajan He taught them was "Manasa Bhajore":

Manasa Bhajore Guru Charanam
Dustara Bhavasagara Tharanam
Guru Maharaj Guru Jai Jai
Sayinatha Sadguru Jai Jai

Om Namah Shivaya (3x) Shivaya Nama Om
Arunachala Shiva (3x) Aruna Shiva Om
Om karam Baba (3x) Om Namō Baba

Worship in your mind the Feet of
the Guru, for it is difficult to
cross the ocean of life and death
Victory to the Supreme Guru,
Victory to Lord Sai, our Guru.
Surrender to Lord Shiva, Shiva of
Arunachala Mountain, Surrender to
Baba Who is the form of OM.

In 1976 at the Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam, Baba said,

"The very first lesson I gave when I declared My Identity at Uravakonda was: 'Manasa Bhajore Guru Charanam, Dustara Bhavasagara Tharanam.' That is to say, first know that you are in 'bhavasagaram'; this cycle of birth and death; then resolve on 'tharanam', crossing it; then fix on a Guru or the Name and Form of God which appeals to you; lastly, dwell on His Glory, do Bhajan, but do it with all your mind. He who is deluded by the relative reality is the Samsari; he who is aware that it is only relatively real is the sadhata.

"Let your whole life be a bhajan. Believe that God is everywhere at all times and derive strength, comfort and joy, singing in your heart, in His presence, the Glory of God. Let melody and harmony surge up from your hearts and let all take delight in the love that you express through that song."

ORGANIZATION AND DEVOTION:

It is sometimes asked why a movement based on universal love and devotion needs an organization in order to flourish; and, if such an organization is needed, why there must be rules, policies, officers, guidelines, etc., all of which can create confusion, division, and personality conflicts where once there was just devotion and love. Baba's teachings answer these questions and perhaps can set the tone for His ideal organization. According to Sai's teachings, from the utterly pure, perfect and impersonal Divine, humans take form as individual beings in order to enact the drama of life on an illusory world stage. Forgetting our true nature, we struggle to regain our Divine stature and fulfill the Supreme Will by merging in it. As part of our human struggle, all the illusions and delusions of birth and death, necessities of dharma, the joys and sorrows of our personal lives - all of these become the means by which we learn to transcend the mean and petty and aspire to the highest consciousness of love. The world serves as each individual's schooling, guiding us towards the higher life to the extent that we allow the Divine Will to manifest in our lives.

When the Divine takes form as a world teacher to extend, so to speak, a helping hand to spiritual aspirants and to reestablish in the world the Eternal Truth of life, he uses many means to make his message known to mankind. Sathya Sai Baba, discarding publicity, advertisement, missionary activities, and other efforts that might associate spirituality with the worldly marketplace, has taken the role of personal teacher and guide to the millions that look to Him as their very own breath and seek to practice, even in the smallest way, His teachings and message.

In order to extend that message and to insure that it reaches the ears of the world untarnished by misinterpretation and undiluted by methods and means that do not meet the Sai standard of high character and purpose, Sathya Sai Baba has founded and blessed organizations based on his teachings and message, with goals and activities that may inspire individuals throughout the world to strive for perfection, selfless love and realization in this human birth. In a sense, the organization itself is like an individual devotee, which by its dharmic and loving service may be a light unto the world. Unlike the human devotee, however - who comes onto the spiritual path with many years of wrong habits and attitudes that must be purified before the inner light can shine brightly - the Sai Organization springs directly from Sai with His guidance and advice; the imperfections in the organization will come only if the individual members bring such faults into the organization. Because the organization operates in the everyday world and is made up of devotees of every type and background, it uses the format common to all such organizations, the structure necessary to carry out its task (just as the spirit takes on a human form in order to realize its goal). Here the Divine and the human must merge so that the structure, rules, restrictions and guidelines will be used in such a way that the Sai message and teachings will radiate in disciplined adherence to the injunctions of Sai in a spirit of harmony and love. In this way, the Sai Organization will be a meeting ground where individuals of different backgrounds can

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meet and sow the seeds of unity and devotion in mankind.

Surrounded as we are by a world full of organizations based on power, money, publicity, politics, and other base motives, the Sai organization seeks only the transformation of the human into the Divine through the vehicle of love supported by pure character and selfless motives. Each of us in the Sai Organization, regardless of his or her position or role, is just another individual struggling on the path of devotion, trying to overcome personal weaknesses with the garce of Bhagavan and the efforts of sadhana. It is our hope that in these organizations our Divine birth (as an organization) and our human path can merge in service to mankind and that our energies will not be lost in minor confusion over organizational matters, but channeled directly towards the Divine goal Sai has set before us.

Richard Bayer, Editor

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF MEMBERS OF THE SATHYA SAI BABA COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS:

Officers:

President- J.S. Hislop, P.O. Box 47-B, San Ysidro, CA, 92173

Vice President for Communication and Administration- Richard H. Bayer,
5370 McKinley Way, Felton, CA, 95018; (408)335-4817 - home,
(408)476-5636 - office.

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(602)959-3364.

Elsie Cowan, P.O. Box 278, Tustin, CA, 92680; (714)836-4392.

William Clegern, 17 McDivitt Dr., Manchester, CT, 06040; (203)643-5709.

Michael Goldstein, 3070 Roycove, Covina, CA 91724; (213)331-3886- home,
(213)579-0103- office.

Phillip Gosselin, West Lane, Pound Ridge, NY, 10576; (914)764-4467-home,
(800)221-5814- office.

Donald Heath, 380 Ivy St., San Francisco, CA, 94102; (415)626-8921.

Terry Payne, 46-245 Haiku Rd., Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744; (808)235-6174.

Analisa Rajagopal, P.O. Box 744, Ojai, CA, 93023; (805)646-3259.

Duane Robinson, 631 Rochdale Circle, Lombard, IL 60148; (312)629-4079.

Samuel Sandweiss, 767 Amiford Dr., San Diego, CA 92107; (714)224-7586 -
home, (714)296-3194 - office.

Larry Smith, 237 'i' St., Chula Vista, CA, 92010; (714)426-8603.

Anne Gregory Sohani, 563 Decatur St., Brooklyn, NY 11233;
(212)455-7972- home, (212)636-8283- office.

David Thomas, Crows Nest, Prices Neck, Newport, RI, 02840;
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