



SATHYA SAI Newsletter

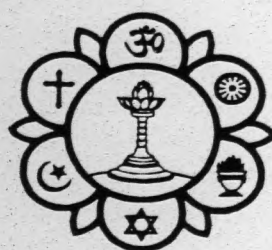
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SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

This publication is dedicated with love and devotion
to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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The Sarva Dharma symbol, the logo of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization, represents the unity of all religions.

Photographs, drawings, and literary contributions are always welcomed by the **Sathya Sai Newsletter**. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing material for publication. Send all literary contributions to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter**, P.O. Box 3779, Arcadia, California 91066-3779.



Sathya Sai Baba at the time of His Birthday, 1992.

Develop Prema (Love) towards the Lord, the Parama-Prema (Highest Love) of which He is the embodiment. Never give room for doubts and hesitations, for questions to test the Lord's Prema. My troubles have not ended; why? Why is it that He did not speak to me? How is it I did not get a room for staying here? Why did He not call me?" you whine! Do not think that I do not care for you or that I do not know you. I may not talk to you, but, do not be under the impression that I have no prema. As a matter of fact, it is to give you the chance of darshan (to see a holy person) that I move along the verandah from this room to that. Whatever I do, it is for you, not for me. For what is it that can be called mine? Only you.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol IV, Chap. 19

Four by Six

In the past, part of the program for Sathya Sai Baba Centers in America was a brief talk at each Center meeting on one single point of Baba's teachings. The talks were to be delivered in turn by each Center member.

However, misunderstandings about this program persisted in some of the Centers. Complaints came to me, such as, "Why force us to become public speakers?" Some of us are too shy to get up and say anything." "Some of us do not have good voices." "This type of distraction should not be brought into the Centers," etc., etc.

Our American Sathya Sai Baba Centers have always had a dual purpose:

(A) Our members meet each week with like-minded, pure-hearted, pure-minded fellow devotees, and then return to another week in the world, but with renewed strength and renewed inspiration to lead a spiritual life even while engaged in worldly work.

(B) The companion purpose of our Sai Centers has always been that the face of the Sai teachings may be visible to people in the community through the actions and words of devotees, NOT that devotees are to give speeches about Sai's teachings to groups of people or to anybody at all. Instead, each Sai devotee should be able to answer a question about Sathya Sai Baba, easily and comfortably and with joy, not with hesitancy and reluctance because of not knowing what to say or how to say it.

That was the purpose of having a brief talk by a devotee at each Center meet-

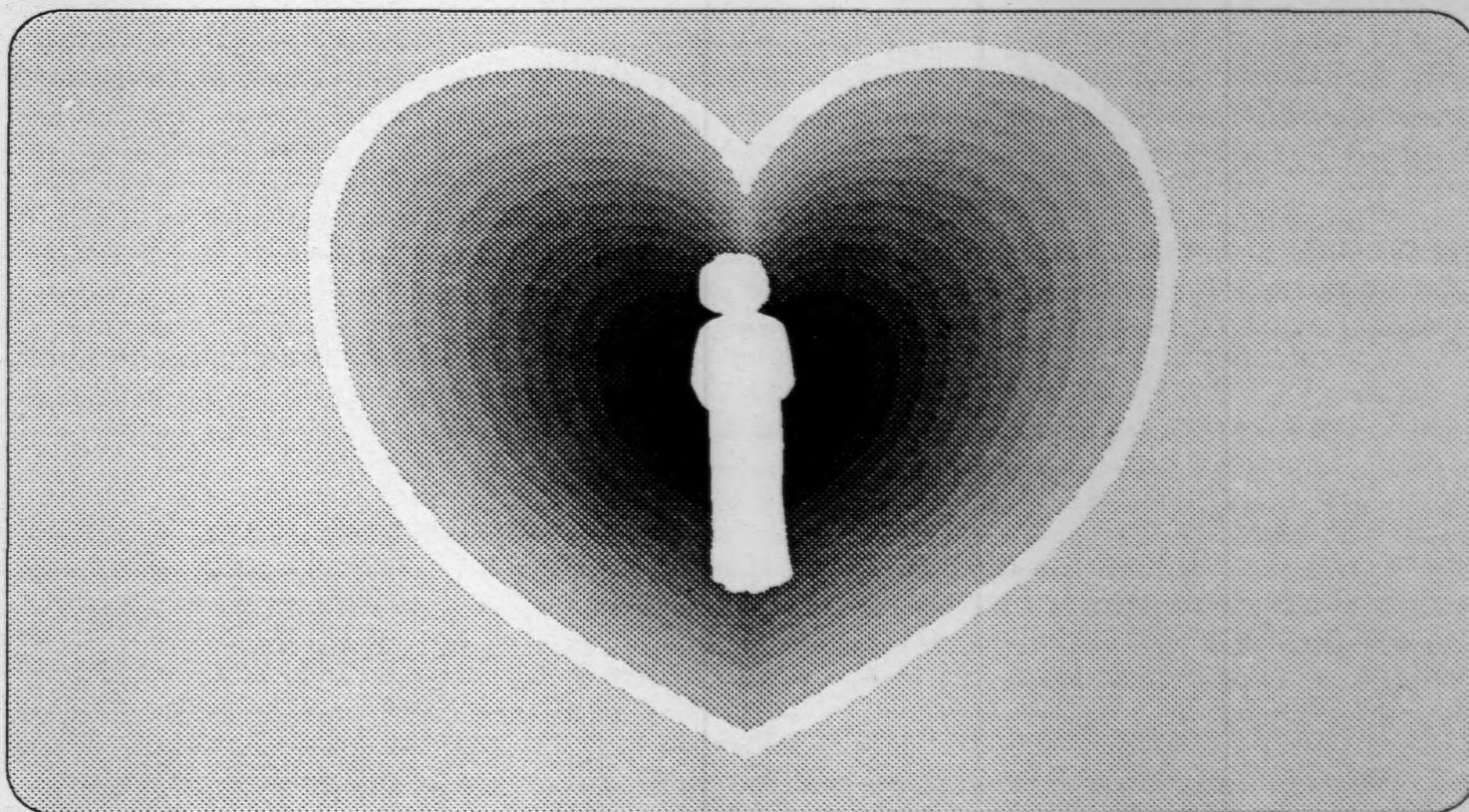
ing. It was to give that devotee, and the listeners (who themselves will also be giving a brief talk) relaxed practice in answering questions about Sai Baba and about His teachings, such as:

Who is this Sai and what does he stand for? Why do you bother to study Sai and go to these meetings? What does He say about war and all the starvation, misery and violent crime in His own country if He is God, as you claim? What does He say about love and hatred? I hear about mind control—what does He say about that, and how to [control ones own mind]? Does He teach how to get wealth and the things I want? Why do the millions of people you mention become disciples and why do they love Him? What does He say about divorce? Control of desires—what is that and why? What is meant by self-inquiry? What is He talking about when He says the word liberation? What does "God Realization" mean? I get tired—what does He say about energy? Does He have any particular ideas about food and health? Is there any way to avoid sorrow and all the troubles that seem to hit everybody? Why worship God—where is the proof that God exists? What is meant by *maya*, renouncement, intuition? Please explain what *karma* means? When you talk about ignorance—ignorance of what? What do you mean? Could you explain meditation to me? And so on. . .

The problems with the brief talks are:

(A) How does one LEARN answers?

(B) How does one SAY the answers? How to say the answer is half of what



that it has an immediate and profound impact. At that moment, stop and write down what Swami said on the 4" by 6" pad, tearing the sheet off the pad and placing it to one side. As you continue to make these vitally significant notes, each of which is a sentence or a paragraph of one statement by Bhagavan Baba which carries great enlightenment, great clear seeing, great significance to you as an individual person, they will accumulate day by day.

(III) Now each and every morning, before you start the day's activities, read some of your notes. Two or three would be enough. These divine statements of Truth by the Lord Himself will enter your heart and mind when you read them, and will remain in the background of your mind during the day. Without any expenditure of energy, you will be

which have a magnificent meaning to you in particular. Because, as you read and reread your 4" by 6" notes, you can shuffle the separate sheets of paper around, grouping and regrouping them and discarding the notes which are found to have only minor significance as you read them, ponder on them and reread them.

(V) In this way, when it is your turn to give a brief talk, you will need only to look through a few of your 4" by 6" notes, pick out the one you want to deal with, do a little more study to find additional statements by Bhagavan Baba along the same line, and you will then not only have the practice of saying a great Truth from Swami out loud for the others at the meeting, but you will also do a great service for the other Center members by calling their attention to the Truth you

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with like-minded, pure-hearted, pure-minded fellow devotees, and then return to another week in the world, but with renewed strength and renewed inspiration to lead a spiritual life even while engaged in worldly work.

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voice: Control of desires—what is that and why? What is meant by self-inquiry? What is He talking about when He says the word liberation? What does "God Realization" mean? I get tired—what does He say about energy? Does He have any particular ideas about food and health? Is there any way to avoid sorrow and all the troubles that seem to hit everybody? Why worship God—where is the proof that God exists? What is meant by *maya*, renouncement, intuition? Please explain what *karma* means? When you talk about ignorance—ignorance of what? What do you mean? Could you explain meditation to me? And so on. . .

The problems with the brief talks are:

- (A) How does one LEARN answers?
- (B) How does one SAY the answers? How to say the answer is half of what

the brief talk is all about; how to say it comes easily with practice. The other half is finding the correct answers to questions about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and His teachings.

How to find the answers? It is not at all hard. Instead, it is very simple. Here is how:

(I) Buy a few 4" by 6" pads of paper at the stationery store. I assume that you devote some small amount of time, no matter how limited, each evening for the study of what Bhagavan Baba says in His discourses and writings about ourselves and what all this world and life is about.

(II) When you read, you will come upon certain things said by Baba that strike into you like a sharp arrow. He will convey a certain aspect of Absolute Truth, or contemporary truth, or something that applies so directly to yourself that it has an immediate and profound impact. At that moment, stop and write down what Swami said on the 4" by 6" pad, tearing the sheet off the pad and placing it to one side. As you continue to make these vitally significant notes, each of which is a sentence or a paragraph of one statement by Bhagavan Baba which carries great enlightenment, great clear seeing, great significance to you as an individual person, they will accumulate day by day.

(III) Now each and every morning, before you start the day's activities, read some of your notes. Two or three would be enough. These divine statements of Truth by the Lord Himself will enter your heart and mind when you read them, and will remain in the background of your mind during the day. Without any expenditure of energy, you will be

considering these deep insights into life and yourself as expounded and pointed out to your sharp intelligence, and they will, of their own volition, deepen and expand your understanding. Moreover, as you continue this practice you will find that you will have a correct answer for almost any question raised about Swami, His teachings and the meaning to the world of His *Avathara*.

(IV) Now, a great danger! Be careful, be selective. Write down on your 4" by 6" pad only when a statement by Bhagavan Baba hits you sharp and hard. Otherwise, you will end up by transferring almost the entire book from its printed pages to your written pages. Inevitably, you will fall victim to impulse and make too many notes. But this will not give you trouble if you hold to the "great significant principle" to guide you in accumulating those statements by Baba which have a magnificent meaning to you in particular. Because, as you read and reread your 4" by 6" notes, you can shuffle the separate sheets of paper around, grouping and regrouping them and discarding the notes which are found to have only minor significance as you read them, ponder on them and reread them.

(V) In this way, when it is your turn to give a brief talk, you will need only to look through a few of your 4" by 6" notes, pick out the one you want to deal with, do a little more study to find additional statements by Bhagavan Baba along the same line, and you will then not only have the practice of saying a great Truth from Swami out loud for the others at the meeting, but you will also do a great service for the other Center members by calling their attention to the Truth you

have uncovered and in which you have found great and significant meaning. Everyone will be glad. Everyone will be happy at the Sai meeting.

(VI) Now, what remains? Only to DO it. Start the practice and keep it up. Your effort will be more than repaid by the joy of understanding and by the self-confidence which will arise and grow along with the practice of writing down the statements of Baba which are truly and unmistakably significant to your very own life, and to your very own search for God and Truth.

Swami says in one of His statements, which I read and reread as I go through my stack of 4" by 6" notes, "There are three causes of man's sorrow: Untruth (i.e. impermanence, unreality), Nescience (i.e. laziness, darkness and inertia), and the idea of Mortality."

Laziness, darkness and inertia are a supreme danger to us if we long to be happy and free of sorrow. Why yield to the handicap of laziness, darkness and inertia? Nobody is forcing us to do so. If you like the practice described in the above paragraphs, then put inertia aside, start the work today and continue, despite the negative pull of nescience. The practice will be easy and most rewarding.

Special Note: At the beginning of this article are listed a few of the questions which people [often] ask. Sometimes a question will arise and you will have to give the simple answer, "I don't know," but not often, if you will work at the practice described. I intentionally included a couple of the semi-hostile questions which, although infrequent, will come up. Such questions will be enjoyable, not troublesome, if you will search out the answers beforehand. Whenever a doubt comes to your mind, welcome it and write it down on your 4" by 6" pad. Then as you continue your study, watch for anything Swami has to say which relates to one of your doubts. Write down the saying and contemplate on it. Before long, you will find the answers. Then it will be a rewarding experience to smile and in a friendly voice give the correct answer.

The famous *Blitz* interview gives some good examples of difficult questions and how they were answered. I recommend the study of the interview: it was published in the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* [and is repeated below] and was widely published in India.

—J. S. Hislop, Ed. D., Past President
Sathya Sai Baba Council of USA



We are of the opinion that the following series of questions posed by the Editor of Blitz news magazine, to Sathya Sai Baba over a decade ago is still relevant and of interest to Sathya Sai Newsletter readers. This extensive interview was granted by Baba to the Senior Editor, Mr. R. K. Karanjia, in September 1976, and was first printed in the Newsletter in 1981-1982, courtesy of Blitz Publications, Bombay, India.

—Editor, Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

Questions and Answers

Q: At the outset, Swamiji, we would like to know something about your triple incarnation—past, present and future—that is, from Shirdi Sai Baba to Sathya Sai Baba and the Prema Baba to come, according to your prophecy.

Baba: First, you must grasp the complete oneness of the three incarnations of contemporary times with those of the past like Rama and Krishna. When people cannot understand the present, how can they comprehend the past?

Every incarnation is full and complete in relation to the time, the environment and the task. There is no distinction between the various appearances of God as Rama, Krishna or Sai.

Rama came to feed the roots of Truth and Righteousness; Krishna followed to foster the plant of Peace and Love. Now these sacred principles are in danger of wholesale destruction by reason of human weakness under the onslaught of evil forces. They are overcoming the good, the spiritual and the Divine in man. That is why the present Avatar has come invested with the totality of Cosmic Power to save *Dharma* (righteousness) from anti-*Dharma*.

Why God Takes Human Form

Q: By the present Avatar, you mean Sai Baba?

Baba: Yes, I incarnate from age to age, time to time, to save *Dharma* from anti-*Dharma*. Whenever strife, discord and disharmony overwhelm the world, God incarnates in human form to show

mankind the way to love, harmony and peace.

Q: That is understandable. But skeptics wonder why God should assume human form?

Baba: Because that is the only way to incarnate the God within man. The Avatar takes the human form and behaves in a human way so that humanity can feel kinship with Divinity. At the same time he rises to godly heights so that mankind also can aspire to reach God. The realization of the indwelling God as the motivator of life is the task for which Avatars come in human form.

Previous Avatars like Rama and Krishna had to destroy a few individuals who could be identified as enemies of the godly way of life and thus restore the *Dharmic* path. Today, however, wickedness has tainted so many that humanity itself stands under the threat of destruction. Therefore, in my present Avatar, I have come armed with the fullness of the power of formless God to correct mankind, raise human consciousness and put people back on the right path of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love to Divinity.

Message Of Triple incarnation

Q: Why does this task have to be divided into three separate incarnations of the Shirdi, Sathya and Prema Babas?

Baba: They are not separate. I have already mentioned the complete oneness of the three in the final objective of the mission. I will give you an example:

Take a kilo of *gur* (a sweet substance). The whole of it tastes sweet. Next break it into small pieces; each of them is sweet. Finally break them further into small grains. You find the same sweetness in them. So the difference is one of quantity; the quality remains the same. It is the same with the Avatars. Their tasks and powers, requisite to them, differ according to the time, the situation and the environment. But they belong to, and derive from one and the same *Dharma Swarupa* or Divine Body.

Let us take the example of fruit: it begins with the seed which grows into the tree and from it comes the fruit. Work can be compared to the seed, worship to the tree and wisdom to the fruit.

The previous Avatar, Shirdi Baba, laid the base for secular integration and gave mankind the message, "Duty is work." The mission of the present Avatar is to make everybody realize, "The same God or Divinity resides in everyone." People should respect, love and help each other irrespective of color or creed. Thus all work can become a way of worship. Finally, Prema Sai, the third Avatar, will promote the evangel news, "That not only does God reside in everybody, but everybody is God." That will be the final wisdom which will enable every man and woman to go to God.

The three Avatars carry the triple message of Work, Worship and Wisdom.

Man Must Develop Into Mankind

Q: So that is the holy mission and divine purpose of this triple incarnation?

Baba: To unite all mankind into one caste or family in the establishment of

unity; that is *Atmic* realization for every man or woman, which is the basis on which the entire Cosmic Design rests. Once this is realized, the common Divine Heritage that binds man to man and man to God will become apparent, and Love shall prevail as the guiding light of the universe.

In the first place, man has to develop into mankind in the fullness of its integrated potential. At present mankind, as such, is absent in the world. There is no synthesis between thought, word and deed. Man today thinks one thing, says something different, and acts quite the contrary. So what we have is the individual man, confused, confounded and bombarded with contradictory thoughts. What we do not see is mankind in him motivated by good thoughts, good words and good deeds. We have to make him realize God within him to develop a synthesis correlating thought, word and deed.

Evangel Of Love And Devotion

Once this primary lesson is taught in the family, the school, the college, the society, the cities, the states, the nations of the world, then man will become conscious of the fact that all mankind belongs to one family. As Christ preached, "All are one, be alike to every one." The vital issue is the Oneness: one caste, one class, one creed of humanity. This can be achieved only by the surrender of one's self or ego to pure, selfless, universal love and devotion. Love is the basis, the common denominator, and devotion, the divine spark, the cementing, unifying, integrating factor between man and man, and man and God.

Let me give you an illustration. (Baba spreads His handkerchief on the ground between us). Here is a piece of cloth. As you see, it is all made of threads. Pull out the threads separately and the cloth becomes weak. Put them together and it is firm and strong. It is the same with mankind. Love binds it like a billion threads in cloth, and devotion reunites it with God.

I, therefore, embody love, and use it as my instrument to regenerate man and create the brotherhood of mankind with the help of the latter's devotion. I always say, "Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. End the day with love. This is the quickest way, the surest path to God." "Life is love, enjoy it." "Life is a challenge, meet it." "Life is a song, sing it." "Life is a dream, realize it." "Life is a game, play it."

Shirdi Baba Incarnate

Q: Did Shirdi Baba actually claim that he would be born [again] eight years after his death in 1918?

Baba: Yes, he did. This has been recorded by Kaka Dikshit as well as a number of other devotees who were with Shirdi Baba.

Q: What makes you so sure that you are Shirdi Baba incarnate?

Baba: The knowledge of my own authentic experience, of course. Since no one who knew Shirdi Baba is alive today, there is no evidence except my own knowledge and experience. The very fact that I announced that I had been Shirdi Baba when I was only 10, and, when nobody in this part of the South had known or even heard of Shirdi Baba, confirms this.

Q: The existing situation driven by evil forces to destruction, as you have correctly analyzed it, appears to suggest the inevitability of another Mahabharata-type War. Does this mean that the salvation for which you are working can be consummated only after a destructive war?

Baba: The evil must and shall be removed before such a catastrophe takes place. There will be minor wars and skirmishes, of course; these cannot be helped in the existing state of affairs. The Mahabharata War was a different issue altogether. Lord Krishna decreed it and, in fact, led Arjuna to the battlefield in order to rid the world of evil men and ungodly forces.

Today, as I told you, the evil is so widespread that humanity itself would be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust in the event of a World War. It is to prevent such a catastrophe that this Avatar has come to raise human consciousness above the existing syndrome of anger, hate, violence and war and save the world from disaster. This can be achieved only by the reestablishment of the brotherhood of mankind through the teachings of the *Vedas*, *Shastras* (ancient scriptures) and all religions with their evangel of *Dharma* to liberate the human race from the chains of *Karma* (dedicated human activity, action, duty).

I always say, "Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all languages in a variety of tunes." That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognize them as valid so far as they do not extinguish the flame of Unity.

God Is Man Minus Desire

Q: From what Baba has said, it seems there is not much difference or dichotomy between God and man. Am I right?

Baba: Quite right, God is man and man is God. All of us have something of God, the divine spark, within us. All men are Divine like myself, but with the Spirit embodied in human flesh and bone.

The only difference is that they are unaware of this Godhood. They have come into this *karmic* prison through the mistakes of many lives. I have taken this mortal form through my own free will. They are bound to the body, while I am free of this bondage. The main difference is that they are shoved hither and thither by desire, but I have no desire except the supreme one to make them desireless.

Take paddy or rice by way of an illustration. Every grain of rice is enclosed in a husk. You have to remove the husk to get the grain of rice. Husk and rice, both come from the same seed. Rice is the equivalent of God in man, while the husk can be compared to desire which reduces God to man. Therefore, my formula for Self-Realization is:

LIFE + DESIRE = MAN

LIFE - DESIRE = GOD

Q: In what way can life without desire make Gods of men?

Baba: Life without desire means the realization of the pure, genuine Self that is *Atma*. When bound to desire, the Self degenerates into selfishness. *Atma*

turns into ego. The way of Self—Realization is to cleanse the Self of this ego of selfishness. Then you reach a state of consciousness beyond the mind or intellect revealing the true Self that is God.

The mind is like a cloth that covers and stifles consciousness, the threads of which are desires. If we give up the desires, the threads fall and the cloth disappears revealing our true nature. This is what *Vedanta* means when it enjoins that one must get rid of the ego to realize the true Self.

Q: You mean that the mind of man as such creates the block between man and God?

Baba: Yes. One must make a distinction between the mind that is the ego, and the real Self that is consciousness. The latter helps us to cross the frontiers of the ego-mind and become aware of oneself as the witness of Truth. Normally, the scientist of the mind looks outside to what can be perceived by the senses existing in the world of the mind to ask, "What is this?" The scientist of consciousness on the other hand, always looks inside to that which is beyond the senses or the grasp of the mind to ask, "What is that?"

One has, therefore, to rise beyond the mind to consciousness to achieve Self-Realization. To gain the infinite, universal *Atma*, the embodied self must break out of the puny, finite little prison of individuality. Desire belongs to the senses, the brain, the mind; once you become free of it, you realize the Self, *Atma*, consciousness, enlightenment, and become one with the Cosmic Power. Self-Realization is God Realization. Thus man reaches God.

Symbol Of Love And Divinity

Q: What is the significance of the *vibhuti* (holy ash) and the trinkets that you materialize and gift to people? Is there any need for a Godman to demonstrate such miracles which any magician can conjure?

Baba: So far as I am concerned this is evidence of my Divinity. It is not by any means an exhibition of Divinity. All performances of magic, as you know, are done for the sake of income. Those are tricks of the magician's trade. They constitute a kind of legalized cheating, the transfer of an object from one place to another by a trick of the hand which goes unnoticed. They involve no *siddhi* (occult power) or miraculous power. What I do is quite a different act of creation. It is neither magic, nor is it *siddhi* power. For one thing, I seek no return. For another, I do not cheat people by transferring objects, but I create them. Again, I do so not because of any need or desire of exhibition of my powers. For me this is the kind of visiting card to convince people of my love for them and secure their devotion in return. Since love is formless, I do materialization as evidence of my love. It is merely a symbol.

Talisman Of Protection

Q: Still I do not understand why you should materialize rings, bracelets, watches and those kind of trinkets?

Baba: Most people desire talismans symbolic of my protection, so I provide them. When they are in trouble they

feel the grip of the ring, bracelet or watch to remember me and call me to their rescue so that I can help them. On the other hand, if I give them something that they cannot wear, they are likely to store it and forget about it.

The main thing is that these trinkets or talisman, by whatever name you call them, give people a sense of security and protection they need in time of trouble or crisis and create a symbolic link covering the long distances between them and myself. When the devotees need me, these objects flash the message as if by wireless and I instantly come to their rescue.

Q: I am sorry to be so persistent, Swamiji, but isn't the gift of an Omega or HMT watch an act of cheating the company or breach of its patent?

Baba: I assure you there is no such thing. It would be cheating the company or breaching the patent if it was a case of transfer of the watch from one place or the other. But I do not transfer, I totally create. Whatever I will instantly materializes. I know of no company that has complained about any breach of patent.

Significance Of Vibhuti

Q: What about *vibhuti* materialized by you? We would like to know its relevance because your critics are trying to discredit you by sending around magicians who produce exact replicas of *vibhuti*.

Baba: What I materialize is a manifestation of Divinity with a potent significance as well as symbolization. It is symbolic of the cosmic, immortal and infinite nature of all forms of God, *Atma* or

the Spirit, that is what is left when everything worldly, transient and changeable has burnt away.

I have spoken to you of the imperative of a desireless life. After Shiva had burnt the God of Desire, Kama, into a heap of ashes, he adorned himself with the ash to shine as the conqueror of desire. When Kama was destroyed Prema reigned as the Goddess of Love. Such is the significance of ash.

In the first place, it is symbolic of the life-death cycle in which everything ultimately reduces itself to ash. "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou returnest." Ash or dust is the final condition of things. It cannot undergo any further change. In the spiritual context, it constitutes a warning to the receiver to give up desire, to burn all passions, attachments and temptations, and makes one pure in thought, word and deed. It is in order to press home this lesson that I materialize ash for those who come to me with love and devotion. Like the other materializations, it also acts as a talisman healing the sick and giving protection to those who need it. It is the symbol of Divinity, quite different from the magician's trickery mentioned by you.

Miracles Of Healing

Q: You are believed to have performed miraculous cures to the extent of resurrecting the dead. There are cases where you reportedly have saved people from drowning and other accidents in distant places. Medical experts have attested to remote controlled surgical operations performed by you. How do you manage these?

Baba: By my own *sankalpa*, that is, divine will and power. As an Avatar this power is intrinsic, inherent, total and natural to my will and decision. I need no mantra (mystical formulae), no *sadhana* (spiritual practice), no *tantra* (sacred writings) and no *yatra* (pilgrimage) to perform the so-called miracles which are natural to my state. My powers are simply the expression or assertion of the reality of Godliness which merges me with everything, everywhere, at all times and places. The miracles belong to the boundless power of God.

Now coming to the main points of your question, this healing phenomenon has a dual aspect. I can cure, save, even resurrect people, provided they are in a spiritually receptive condition. It is like the positive and negative currents of electricity. My capacity to heal can be compared to the positive current. Your devotion to me is the negative current. Once the two come together, the devotion provides what is called the miracle of healing.

It is man's mind that is really responsible for his illness or health. He, himself, is the cause or motivator of either. So when it comes to healing or curing, the necessary faith has to be created within his mind for the purpose. All I do is to invest him with the confidence, will and power to cure himself. It is my abounding love reciprocated by the intensity of the devotees' faith in me that produced the desired result.

Q: So these are not *siddhic* powers or magical tricks, as your critics suggest?

Baba: They are neither magical tricks nor *siddhi* powers. These can come to everybody with the appropriate discipline and yoga exercises, but my

powers to protect, heal and save people and materialize objects, originate in God and can be used only by an Avatar. They are in no way designed, disciplined or developed, but flow from Cosmic Power.

Q: Some say that you command invisible Spirits which can transfer objects from one place to another on your orders?

Baba: There is no need for me to command invisible Spirits since my own Divine Will materializes the objects. I am everything, everywhere, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and, so whatever I will instantly happens. Like the qualities of truth, love and peace, these are things that generate the *Atmic* (Godly) or Cosmic forces of the universe.

Indwelling God

Q: Your followers at home as well as abroad claim positive evidence of the presence of Baba in their innermost hearts. Some have written of you as their indwelling God. What is the explanation of this phenomenon?

Baba: This is the grace begotten of my love for them, reciprocated by their devotion. After all, as I repeatedly say, we all belong to the same Divine Principle. The Godliness which is present in everybody in the form of a little spark exists in me as the full flame. It is my mission to develop every little spark of God in everyone to the fullness of the Divine flame.

The first imperative of this development is that the receiver of the grace also provides from his or her side the devotion necessary to the consummation. Those who carry the presence of Baba in

their hearts like an indwelling God belong to these kinds of devotees. They come to me, see me and hear me, experience my love for them and receive it with devotion. Thus, they become part of me and my Divinity.

To the doubting or confused ones, I give this illustration. Those who want to secure pearls from the sea have to dive deep to fetch them. It does not help them to dabble among the shallow waves near the shore and say that the sea has no pearls and all stories about them are false. Likewise, if a person wants to secure the love and grace of this Avatar, he must also dive deep and get submerged in Sai Baba. Then only, will he become one with me and carry me in his innermost heart.

Q: The critics of Swamiji ask why Sai Baba does not help people in distress by bringing rains in times of drought or creating food where there is famine by means of his *Sankalpa Shakti*? Cannot an Avatar help humanity to control the natural forces and prevent calamities like earthquakes, floods, droughts, famine and epidemics?

Baba: This is precisely what I am doing by incarnating the in-dwelling God in man to overcome such calamities. There are two ways in which an Avatar can help people: an instant solution, as against a long-term one.

Any instant solution would go against the fundamental quality of nature itself as well as the *karmic* law of cause and effect. Most people live in the material world of their desires and egos which is governed by this law. They reap the fruits of their actions. This brings about their evolution or devolution. This solu-

tion can be ruled out because it totally negates the natural laws.

The other and more effective alternative presents a long-term solution whereby the Avatar leads the people themselves to a higher level of consciousness to enable them to understand the truth of spiritual laws so that they may turn towards righteousness and steadfastly work for better conditions. This will relate them back to nature and the *karmic* law of causation. They would then transcend the cycle of cause and effect in which today they are involved as victims and thereby command and control the natural forces to be able to avert the calamities you mention.

Raising Man To God

Q: You mean that you are presently raising the consciousness of mankind to a Godlike condition to enable them to command their own destiny?

Baba: Exactly. They would become shareholders of my *Sankalpa Shakti*. I have to work through them, rouse the indwelling God in them and evolve them to a higher reality in order to enable them to master the natural laws and forces. If I cure everything instantly leaving the people at their present level of consciousness, they would soon mess up things and be at one another's throats again with the result that the same chaotic situation would develop in the world.

Suffering and misery are the inescapable acts of the cosmic drama. God does not decree these calamities, but man invites them by way of retribution for his own evil deeds. This is corrective punishment which induces mankind to give up the wrong path and return to the

right path so that he may experience the Godlike condition of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, that is, an existence of Being, Wisdom and Bliss. All this is part of the grand synthesis in which the negatives serve to glorify the positives. Thus, death glorifies immortality; ignorance glorifies wisdom; misery glorifies bliss; night glorifies dawn.

So finally, if the Avatar brings the calamities mentioned by you to an immediate end, which I can do when there is a great need, the whole drama of creation with its *karmic*, universal, inescapable law will collapse. Remember calamities occur not because of what God has made of man, but really because of what man has made of man. Therefore, man has to be unmade and remade with his ego destroyed and replaced by a transcendent consciousness, so that he may rise above the *karmic* to command.

Q: Have you succeeded in bringing about this synthesis, Swamiji, particularly with the wealthy and powerful classes?

Baba: I have not reached them all as a class, but to the extent that I am able to contact them individually, the results are encouraging. The wealthy and powerful, of course, present a difficult problem in the matter of transformation. They need a special approach. The poorer people, on the other hand, are very cooperative. They understand, appreciate and help my plans and ideas.

Q: What is your solution to this escalating conflict between wealth and power on one side, and poverty and weakness on the other?

Baba: The transformation of both into a single cooperative brotherhood on

terms of equality without competition or conflict. This can result only from truth and love. The main issue is to fuse the two classes into one single class. The problem, however, is one of bringing them together on a common base or platform.

Wealthy people are isolated in a certain state or condition. The poor also are similarly isolated in another state or condition. How do we bring them together?

I do so in many subtle ways by breaking the barriers of wealth and poverty and creating a feeling of equality and oneness between the poor and the rich. In this ashram [Prasanthi Nilayam], you find them living and working together, even performing menial labor on terms of complete equality. Here there are no distinctions whatsoever, nor any special facilities for the rich. They live, eat, work, worship and sleep like the poor. All live like a community of workers to share the common austerities of the ashram.

Peace Of Mind Beyond Wealth

Despite our rigorous discipline, industrialists and businessmen want to come here. Why? Because they secure peace of mind beyond physical comfort which no wealth or power on earth can purchase or provide. Thus, we open to them a wonderful new world of spiritual treasures and they must sacrifice material wants and comforts. My mission is to show them the way to the peace of mind which everybody, poor and rich alike, desires. In that process of spiritual evolution, the seeker learns that this blissful

state cannot be purchased for money in a shop or gifted to one by anybody but oneself. It can come only from the universal source of Divinity, the indwelling God that embraces poor and rich alike.

This concept creates a common fellowship, a brotherhood of give and take between the wealthy and the poor. Those who have too much are obliged to give up their unnecessary wants, while those who have too little get their needs fulfilled.

After all, in spiritual terms, all mankind belongs to one and the same class, caste and religion. The Divine principle in each of them is derived from one and the same God. This fundamental oneness has to be made manifest to them through direct contact with spiritual realities, and the persuasive, expanding power of love until they become part of the universal religion of Work, Worship and Wisdom.

No Grace Without Sacrifice

Q: All this would be simple and welcome evangel for the poor since they lose nothing and gain everything from your philosophy, but what about the rich who would have to lose all if they followed [this line of thinking]?

Baba: That is the crux of the problem. They simply have to surrender, submerge their false values if they want my grace. So long as people continue to be slaves of materialistic definitions of wealth and poverty, there can be no solution. I, therefore, try to convert their minds and hearts to spiritual values and truths. After all, who is the richest man? One who has the largest wants and,

therefore, troubles and worries, or one who is satisfied with the barest necessities of life and, therefore, is more or less desireless and comparatively happy? Judging from this criterion of happiness, the poor are spiritually rich while the rich are spiritually poor. It is not material but spiritual satisfaction that ultimately makes life worth living.

As I have said before, "Life without desire brings Divinity to mankind; those who seek my grace must shed desire and greed." Riches provide a fatal temptation. They are the source and cause of human bondage. The desire to raise the standard of life can never be satisfied. Desire leads to the multiplication of wants and consequent troubles and frustrations.

The solution lies in our emphasis on quality, the standard of high thinking and simple living. The mind is the horse, the body the cart; to achieve mental peace, you must put the horse of high thinking before the cart of physical comfort.

Q: This is sound philosophy but how do you implement it into action?

Baba: The rich as well as the poor come to Sai Baba to seek love, peace and liberation from their problems or troubles. My prescription to them is absolute selflessness and desirelessness.

To the poor, this is a natural state or condition. So my love flows to them to embrace their devotion. Thus they obtain my grace.

The rich, on the other hand, cannot secure this grace without surrendering their materialistic outlook and selfish attachments. So it becomes obligatory for them to sacrifice material greed to re-

ceive spiritual grace. I tell them, "Ego lives by getting and forgetting. Love lives by giving and forgiving." In this way, I change their mental attitude. I transform their monkey-minds into loving, giving and forgiving minds.

Monkey-mind Bondage

Q: Monkey-minds, Baba! What do you mean?

Baba: It is a kind of mentality that is used by the peasants to trap and destroy monkeys. When the peasant wants to catch a monkey, he uses a big pot with a narrow mouth as a trap. Inside the pot he puts edibles which the monkey loves. The monkey finds the pot and puts its paw inside to grasp as much of the stuff as he can hold. Once it does so, the monkey is unable to pull out its paw from the small mouth of the pot. It imagines that someone inside the pot is holding its paw, so it struggles and attempts to run away with the pot, only to fail and get trapped. No one is holding the monkey, it has trapped itself because of its greed. If only it would let the stuff go, it would be free of the bondage.

In the same way, I tell the rich people that man is tempted by the wealth, pleasures and desires of the world. When he gets lost in such attachment and suffers the consequences of greed, he thinks that something is binding him down, capturing him, destroying him. He does not realize that he himself is responsible for this bondage. The moment he gives up material wealth and desires, he will be free. I make him realize his bondage to the monkey-mind and liberate himself.



Spiritual Trusteeship

Q: Baba seems to be prescribing a kind of spiritual socialism based on the conversion of wealth into a trusteeship for the removal of poverty?

Baba: Yes, a trusteeship based on love, cooperation and brotherhood. What else can one do? The change must evolve from the heart, it cannot be imposed from outside. All material doctrines have failed to bring about any real transformation. There is no equality anywhere. Only spiritual transformation to a desireless mentality can put through the imperative revolution in human consciousness from which the desired changes can accrue.

We need to transform society from false to real values. We have to convince people that the idea of high living is wrong. It must be replaced with a high standard of living and thinking based on humility, morality, compassion and detachment, as against the existing greed

for competitive luxury and conspicuous consumption. People have to be convinced that the only way to rouse the latent Divinity in them is to master desires and conquer greed for pleasure and luxury, instead of being a slave to false materialistic values.

There should be no difference among the devotees and the Sai Organization. There should be no scramble for power or position. What matters is the purity, intensity and sincerity of the devotion and the spirit of selfless sacrifice in which each devotee renders service to the needy and the suffering.

Swami is always with you, in you and around you. When all differences are eradicated and devotees in the Sai Organization conduct themselves with selfless devotion; you will all realize that Swami and you are One.

Answers by—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Questions by—Mr. R. K. Karanjia

To be continued in the next issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter*.

Young Adults

In the summer of 1992 I had the very unique opportunity to take eleven college women to India for Baba's summer course. This course was an orientation program for the freshmen men and women who joined Swami's college, the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. From the beginning, I prepared the girls for the unexpected. Baba, in His merciful way, would take care of us, but I still told them at our first meeting, "If Swami wants us to sit under a tree, we will sit under a tree." they all agreed.

It was a challenging trip for me because I had never traveled alone, and I not only had to take care of myself but eleven young women. But with Swami's devotees helping us at Bombay and Bangalore airports, we reached our destination safely.

The girls, through their writing, expressed their feelings about being accepted by the Anantapur women students. It meant a great deal to them; they put their best effort forward to be accepted by the other students. When Swami's college girls left, we said good-bye to them with hugs, tears and smiles. Swami told us, "You see me three hours everyday. Print that in your heart . . ." I think we did!

As a group they did a wonderful job. They were all in one large room, and no one fought. They shared everything; helped one another with their saris, did each other's hair, etc. The greatest feat of all was working without a mirror, hair dryer or iron. It was like one big "slumber party," and they loved every minute

of it. Sai Baba said good-bye to us very sweetly when we left. He threw candies to us and each girl received three to four candies, which is very unusual.

We are now back into our daily hectic college lives, but this trip will have a lasting impression on all of us for years to come.

—Sunita Wadhwani
Group Leader

Life is a combination of strange turns and angles. Just when I believed that I was settled in my lifestyle, something dramatic occurred which caused a complete change in my life.

That dramatic occasion was the 1992 Summer Courses on Indian Culture and Spirituality. I will admit, I left Whitefield depressed and somewhat disappointed that we had not received a group interview; I did not want to leave Swami without a direct word from Him to me. Now, after plenty of contemplation I understand why He did what He did.

As all His actions bear some indirect significance He was, teaching me not to rely on His physical form but to realize just how much He had given me. I returned home all alone yet felt Swami's presence with me throughout the long journey and even now. Our group chaperone, Mrs. Sunita Wadhwani, who knew how much I wanted to stay at Whitefield, advised me to ask Swami to "Come with me"; She said, "If the seat next to you on the plane is empty, He is listening to your prayers." As Swami always answers our fervent please, so He responded to mine, and to my surprise and

delight all the seats next to me throughout my Bombay-New York journey were empty. The infinite power of Baba came across to me during this journey.

—**Sandhya Nankani**

Barnard College, Columbia Univ.

. . . And so on May 14, all of us boarded the plane to Bombay, and then to Bangalore. The first four days were days of terror; Swami gave us tests—one after another—tests of patience, tolerance, devotion, desire and most of all, tests of our love for Him. We survived each one of these tests by His grace, and on May 19, we finally got our passes to attend the summer course, which was to start the next day. . . .

Swami taught me about the five human values.* He made life seem like a gift, something to nurture. These lessons make the world seem to be a better place. His presence and love seem to be ever—pervading and ever growing. As to all the doubts I had, Swami took care of every single one!

*The five values are: Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Nonviolence.

—**Pia Awal**

Rishi Valley School, India

. . . Upon arrival in Bangalore, five days before the summer course was supposed to begin, we had no accommodation or passes to attend the course. For the first two days we actually had to commute to Brindavan from Bangalore because Swami had not even acknowledged us. However, we were not easily discouraged. At first, we were given a place to stay about a mile away from the gates of the *ashram* and directly across the sand from Swami's home

In order to move closer spiritually, as well as physically, we had to first learn what Swami expects from His students. In His very first discourse, He said, "Students should have sense control. If you are a slave to the senses, you are a slave to the world. Among students today there is no self-confidence, no spiritual confidence. Only when these are gained, can there be progress in the country." Students should strive for high marks, but not selfishly. They should stay away from narrow-minded feelings and develop broad feelings. They should be like lions, courageous and protective leaders in society. Baba also said that youth causes students to be full of ego and pride. They entertain vain and useless talk. In addition to cultivating broad feelings and sense control, they should control their desires and develop humility and faith in God. "The backbone of education is purity of heart." If the heart is not pure, education is useless. Bad feelings such as anger, desire, and maliciousness will grow in the heart. "Purity of heart is necessary to understand the principle of *Atma*." Baba dwelled on the subject of good company. . . .

Now that we have learned what Swami expects, it is our duty to try and implement it in our own lives. Reaching Swami's expectations is facilitated by physical discipline. He said, "Study to be steady." Physical stability confers mental stability. From the administrators of His colleges and our own keen observations, we gleaned a glimpse of the life of an Anantapur college student. They must remain quiet whenever possible, walk in straight lines, take only cold water baths, eat on the floor, and wear saris at all times. To gain the privileges

of a college student, we had to adapt to their lifestyle, which we did for the duration of our stay. Accustomed to physical and mental freedom, discipline was difficult for us at first, but we gradually transformed ourselves. With each step of our own, we were rewarded tenfold. First, we were allowed to walk with the college girls, then eat with them, sit among them, talk to them. On the final day, there was no physical distinction between our group and the Anantapur college girls because Swami had given us all identical saris to wear in the closing procession.

—**Reshma Wadhvani**
Yale Univ., Connecticut

During *darshan*, even my monkey—mind which flickers as a flame in the wind, became still as all thoughts, dreams, desires disappeared and I became focused on Him. Such is His power.

—**Roshan Ramnathan**
Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania

When sitting in a *darshan* line for the first time, I was excited and very curious to see Baba. I thought that something would happen to me. I would be in awe or feel something out of this world. On the contrary, when Baba finally came out nothing stirred within me. Instead, what I saw was a man who looked very thin and fragile. Then as He came closer, I could feel the love that was generating from His devotees and how His smile made the whole *ashram* smile. . . .

Baba, through His talks, helped me understand that faith and devotion was not just doing puja. It is something that comes from the heart, pure and full of love.

—**Neelu Muluchandani**
Connecticut College, Conn.

During the evenings we would have a period of devotional songs by Swami's college boys. Shortly after, Baba would give a discourse. This was the best part of the day.

Every word that Swami spoke was like tasting a sweet drop of *amrit* (nectar). He mainly spoke about the essence of Indian culture and spirituality, human values, the sacred scriptures, the relationship between individual and society and more. A couple of times I remember my view of Swami getting blurry because the tears of joy would fill my eyes.

—**Lalitha Subramanyam**
Stony Brook College, NY

There are great times in our lives when waves of joy leave an indelible mark in our memories. With the grace of Bhagavan, such an opportunity was bestowed upon us as we blissfully attended this year's summer course at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Brindavan Campus. . . .

Baba, in His unique way reached out touching certain depths within each student to console, enlighten, love and receive the spirit of true living. This, I believe will remain as a storehouse of strength for our future.

—**Sudha R. Medepalli**
Loyola Marymount Univ.

One thing that Sathya Sai Baba taught me during the summer course was to surrender all worries or petty troubles at His lotus feet. Since we came expecting an interview, He decided not to give it to us, so that our egos would be crushed. In my opinion, if we had received everything that we asked for without any turmoil, we would have returned with swollen heads. That is why

we prayed when we were unsure of receiving the passes which permitted us to attend the course. There is a quote from Swami which best describes my stay in Brindavan, "It is like baking a cake. I stir, I knead, I pound, I twist, I bake you. I drown you in tears, I scorch you in sobs. I make you sweet and crisp, an offering worthy of God." This is exactly what occurred. In the end, I was confident enough to walk out into the world and practice all that was taught.

—Anjali Nankani
New York Univ.

I feel extremely blessed for all we received. One of the many gifts I attained was discipline. The trip was a true test of my faith, and I feel I have strengthened it. During the trip, and even now, I feel the constant presence of Baba.

—Shalini Sharma
Barnard College, Columbia Univ.

When I first got to India I was expecting some awe inspiring, spiritual awakening to automatically happen with lightning speed. As a Westerner I had read about many religions and phi-

losophies, and India seemed like the place where it all happens. I was certain I would find my spirituality. Obviously it didn't happen in one moment and being an impatient person, I thought it would. But it all became clearer; I opened up more and more each day. Swami doesn't just give things away, He makes you work hard for it. But as I now know, the lessons are really learned and appreciated that way.

—Sherry Joseph
Parsons School of Design

Baba has really taught me to appreciate everything I have. I've always been thankful for what I have but I wanted more. However, when we got to India, we had no luxuries at all, but yet, I was happy. I have learned to live with less luxury. I think Baba did this so I could learn to let go of things, not to have as much attachment or desire, which was hard for me at first. Now I understand why this is important for my spiritual progress.

—Shalini Mirpuri
Loyola Marymount Univ.



You tell me that you have read the Bhagavatha Vahini and all the other Vahinis that I have written for you. Good! But let me ask you, have you put even a single direction given in them into daily practice? Question yourself calmly and decide to benefit by practicing the processes mentioned in them. This is the proper plan of study: Reading, Reflection and Regular Application in life. Study is Work. Inquiry into the value and applicability of what is studied is Worship. The experience of the validity and value of the practice is Wisdom.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IX, Chap. IX

Working With God and For God

On the 23rd of November, the occasion of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday, the multitudes assembled at Prasanthi Nilayam to acknowledge His Divinity. Each year, each Birthday Celebration is unique, magnificent and inspiring. Always Swami uses this time to further the Divine Mission. He gives us the opportunity to gather together in His Presence to discern that work which must be done and to go forward, hand-in-hand, united by His Love.

On this Birthday, as always, several important events converged. We had the good fortune to witness the convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Education. The President of India inaugurated the opening of the nephrology-urology wing of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medicine. More than 200 people from Sai Organizations all over the world attended a conference for the officers of the International Sai Organizations.

During the convocation ceremony, the fortunate young men and women who received degrees from Swami's educational institutions recited their pledge to go into the world and uphold the noble ideals that they learned and practiced under the Divine Tutelage. Their sweet, innocent, yet determined faces personified hope for mankind. The President of India addressed the students and the great assembly of devotees at the University Stadium. Then the ceremony culminated with Swami's Divine Discourse.

The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medicine has made another major ad-

vance. On the 22nd of November, the nephrology-urology wing of the hospital commenced service. The inauguration performed by Swami was attended by the President of India. The ongoing heart surgery being performed by nationally acclaimed physicians utilizing the most advanced technology continues with great results. All medical care including surgery, hospitalization and medication is given free of charge. Suddenly, poor Indian villages have access to highly specialized modern health care which formerly had been reserved only for wealthy and powerful people.

During the four days preceding the 67th Birthday, office bearers of the Central Councils and Regional Coordinating Committees of the International Sai Organizations attended a conference in Prasanthi Nilayam. The purpose of the conference was given in the general agenda. "This conference will provide an opportunity to gain insight and inspiration as we view how the Divine Message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is flourishing in different cultures all over the world. We will determine acceptable parameters for cultural variation in our programs and explore the manner in which we, as an organization, should relate to our respective societies." The agenda of the international conference will be discussed at the forthcoming regional conferences that will take place in the USA in March-May, 1993. The conference was enlightening for all as we observed how Swami has planted the seeds of spirituality in different cultures. In some countries, the seeds have sprouted into great trees whose branches

reach over the entire nation. In other countries, the seeds have given rise to beautiful, exotic flowers. But in all countries, despite the differences in form, size, and strength of the Sai Organizations, one could discern love for God, dedication to serve our fellow man, and commitment to live by the universal human values. The greatest joy was experienced by all who attended when Swami gathered the conference participants in

There is much work to do, many lessons to be learned and challenges to be met. We should always examine ourselves honestly and thoroughly, but we should never become cynical or discouraged.

the *mandir* and gave His *Darshan*, His Love, and His Enlightening Words.

In this Divine Discourse to international office bearers, Swami made it very clear that the purpose of the Sai Organization is to transform society and to help us lead ideal, happy lives by teaching us "to love all and serve all" of our brothers and sisters. Swami said that we are all messengers of God and children of the same mother. He said that when we achieve unity in our thoughts, words, and deeds the "whole world will become a Sai Organization". He instructed the office bearers to teach and demonstrate love instead of exercising power and authority. He compared the Sai Organization to a machine. Every part has equal importance because even if the smallest part is missing, the entire machine may not function. Swami told us that many devotees are good and active, but that we are making mistakes

through our ignorance of the spiritual path. We are not understanding "what is to be done and how it is to be done".

Swami lovingly cares for us and attends to our needs. He has gently admonished us for our ignorance and advised us to address our deficiencies. We must use the precious time of the forthcoming USA Regional Conferences to deepen our understanding of spiritual-

ity so that we will emerge with a sense of what to do and how to do it. We must understand Swami's teachings and relate them to all aspects of our lives, to every conscious moment. Always, we should have God in our minds and hearts.

Thus we would know what is to be done and how to do it by listening to the "inner voice" to which all men and women have access.

We will introduce an educational program at the Regional Conferences that will help us to understand and experience Swami's teachings. This program will enable us to share how we have incorporated and experienced Swami's teachings in our everyday lives. In order to be spiritually valid, our educational programs must touch our hearts, not merely fill our minds. They must inspire, not merely inculcate.

There will be regional conferences in all nine of the USA regions beginning in March, 1993 and concluding in May. The purpose of these conferences will be to illuminate the spiritual path. We will explore the spiritual path and determine how to avoid the diversions that lead us astray as individuals and as an organi-

zation. In the light of guidance that Swami has given, we will review the administration, rules, regulations, protocol and programs in our Sai Centers. We will eliminate rigid dogma, but retain discipline and order as we create an environment where everyone, including newcomers, have "the feeling that we are working with God and for God". We will introduce a new Sai Educational Program. We will select the members and officers of the Regional Coordinating Committees in all nine regions. This will enable us to select the members and officers of the Central Council. All office bearers may serve two consecutive two year terms.

This time and location of the nine Regional Conferences is given here:

Region	Date	Location
Northwest	Mar. 6-7	Portland
Mid-Atlantic	Mar. 13-14	New York
Southwest	Mar. 20-21	Phoenix
Northeast	Mar. 27-28	Newburgh, NY
S. Cal.	Apr. 17-18	Los Angeles
Southeast	May 15-16	Atlanta
N. Cal.	May 22-23	San Francisco
Central N. & S combined	May. 29-30	St. Louis

Swami has given His Guidance. He instructs us to be more tolerant. He has indicated that superficial aspects of the Sai Center appearance and programs may differ as long as the principles are unaltered and the practices are pure. He instructs us to accommodate all people, but not to compromise our ideals or dis-

card rules that are necessary to preserve order, harmony and authenticity. He has reaffirmed the importance of understanding the Divine Message. He has stated that the Sai Organization must always be mindful of three points:

1. There should be no involvement with money; and no distinctions made on the basis of race, religion or nationality.

2. There is only one God. (We must understand the implications of this statement.)

3. We must live according to the universal human values.

There is much work to do, many lessons to be learned, and challenges to be met. As a spiritual organization, we should always examine ourselves honestly and thoroughly, but we should never become cynical or discouraged. The goodness, love, service, and dedication exemplified by so many devotees prove that—at least in some small measure—we have earned the Grace of our beloved Bhagavan Baba who has said:

"To promote the awareness of Divinity in human beings, thereby building a genuine sense of brotherhood among all people, should be our primary aim."

"All of you should take a vow to continue developing this service organization. Take all people into the fold. Consider everyone as a child of God. Whomsoever you serve, think that you are serving your own brothers and sisters. Only then will God manifest in you."

—Michael Goldstein, M.D.

We've moved! After all these years the *Newsletter* has a new home. Please note that our address is: *Sathya Sai Newsletter*, P.O.Box 3779 Arcadia, California 91066--3779 Fax (818) 813-4858

Central Council

Holds Meeting in Atlanta

On October 10 and 11, 1992, the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of the USA met at the home of Cosby Powell. All but two of the 21 members, as well as Central Coordinators, Michael Goldstein and Bill Harvey, were present. President, Dave Lambert, and Vice President, Mike Hebel, presided over the meeting.

Devotion Wing

Each day opened and closed with one-half-hour of devotion, led by National Devotion Coordinator, Anne Sohani. Anne did a great job of arranging devotional sessions that included songs, prayers, and readings from several different religious backgrounds. The first morning we heard a beautiful English version of "Sathya Sai Suprabhatham." We saw, first-hand, how our devotional meetings could display the unity of all religions in a meaningful, uplifting fashion.

Throughout the two-day meeting, there was much discussion about devotion in Sathya Sai Baba Centers, and what the future Sai Center might look like. It was decided that we actually have two distinct problems, which have to be handled separately. First, there is the question of how to introduce Sathya Sai Baba to newcomers. We believe that He is Divine, and many newcomers have trouble with this. Second, there is the problem of cultural relevancy: how do we adapt Sathya Sai Baba's teachings and our devotional meetings to the western world? It was mentioned that centers are already free to develop their own format and content for devotional meetings and have already

done so. This is proper, as long as they follow Swami's teachings and the principles espoused in the *Center Guidelines*. One goal is to clarify and deepen our understanding of the adaptation of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings in the western world.

Ultimately, a *Guide to Devotion for Sathya Sai Baba Centers in the USA*, will emerge. It would be similar in nature to the almost completed guide prepared by the service wing. The Sai Organization in the USA is evolving to the point where we have the *Center Guidelines* (published last April), which provide the general principles for centers to follow, and a guide for each wing. The guidelines for each wing of the organization will provide members with additional information and give Center Coordinators for that wing help in carrying out their duties.

Service Wing

National Service Coordinator, David Gries, discussed the service questionnaire filled out by the center members last spring. He presented a draft of a 40-page *Guide to Service in American Sathya Sai Baba Centers*, developed by the Service Committee. The guide incorporates information from the questionnaire and is designed to inform members of Swami's concept of selfless service as a spiritual activity. It will be a help to centers and to Service Coordinators in their activities. Hopefully, the *Service Guide* will be ready for distribution in the spring of 1993.

The Mid Atlantic and Northeastern Regions held a joint mini-conference on service this fall. It was quite successful,

and regional mini-conferences on service may be planned for other regions.

The Central Council took 45-minutes for a service activity, with the help of Wayne Crowder, Vice President of the Southeastern Region. Making 880 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for distribution to the hungry, while singing devotional songs, provided a welcome break from discussions and left everyone with a good feeling.

Education Wing

National Education Coordinator, Ronne Marantz, presented a report of the Education Committee, which represented the consensus of some 200 devotees who took part in education meetings held throughout the U.S. last summer. The report contained an action plan and guidelines for education. It included creation of a Curriculum Development Committee for *Bal Vikas* (children's education division), and expansion of the current *Sai World, A Newsletter for Children and Youth* (was formerly *Sathya Sai Newsletter for Children, Youths and Young Adults*). These plans were approved.

Ronne was asked to see whether her report could be reworked and consolidated into a *Guide to Education in American Sathya Sai Baba Centers*, along the lines of the almost completed *Guide to Service*.

Saturday evening, Ronne Marantz led the Central Council in an interesting, informative *Bal Vikas* lesson, with songs, stories, prayers, and activities. So the Central Council participated in activities of all three wings at this meeting--Devotion, Service and Education. Not only did this make the meeting interesting, it also helped us learn more about the three wings.

Regional Reports

The nine Regional Presidents gave brief reports on activities in their regions. Among the challenges they said they were facing were: assimilating new members, finding good service projects, inspiring members to take part in service activities, balancing eastern and western cultures and keeping harmony and unity in the centers. At the same time, they noticed the following trends: more service activities, growth in membership, growth in *Bal Vikas*, increasing demand for a Young Adult program, and progress in learning to work together and maintain harmony.

The Regional Presidents said that the organizational structure (put in place in spring 1991) was still being well received. However, center members want more communication and information about activities in Prasanthi Nilayam, more frequent personal contact with officers, more news about Swami and His directives, and more clarification of guidelines.

Reports of Other Committees

Did you know that some devotional songs are copyrighted and require permission to copy and sing them? In fact, we expressly do not have permission for the song, "We Are One In The Spirit," and we should eliminate it from our song books (PLEASE DO SO!) Copyrighting protects melodies and words from change and illegal use by others. A copyright lasts 28 years and can be renewed for another 28. Therefore, songs over 56 years old can be used without infringing on a copyright. This information came from Perry Smith, chair of the Copyright Committee. In the future, this committee may develop a list of

songs that can be used, search for authors of songs (the origins of many English devotional songs are unknown), and obtain copyright license agreements.

The National Conference Committee Chairman, Michael Hebel, recommended that there not be a National Conference for Central Council members this year, 1993. Any work that needs to be done can be accomplished at the local level with less cost, more efficiency, and more center members can be included.

Similarly, Dixie Cooper reported for the National Theme Committee that extensive polling found no consensus for a national theme, and we do not need one.

Sue Edmiston, Chairperson of the Retreat/Conference Money Practices Committee, reported that all regions are following the same guidelines and that there are no problems.

Hal Honig, Chairman for the Newcomer Welcoming Committee will work with Sam Sandweiss and Anne Sohani to explore ways to clarify and deepen our understanding of Baba's teachings at the center level.

Dhan Chettri, Chairperson of the Regional Newsletter Committee, reported that six of the nine regions have a newsletter, and that a few Sai Centers, also, have their own. The object of these newsletters is to publicize local events and local announcements. Generally, they also contain quotations from Baba. However, personal details of individuals, articles and announcements of nonofficial functions are not to be included.

Other Discussions

Frequently, the idea of selling watches, T-shirts and other trinkets at Sathya Sai

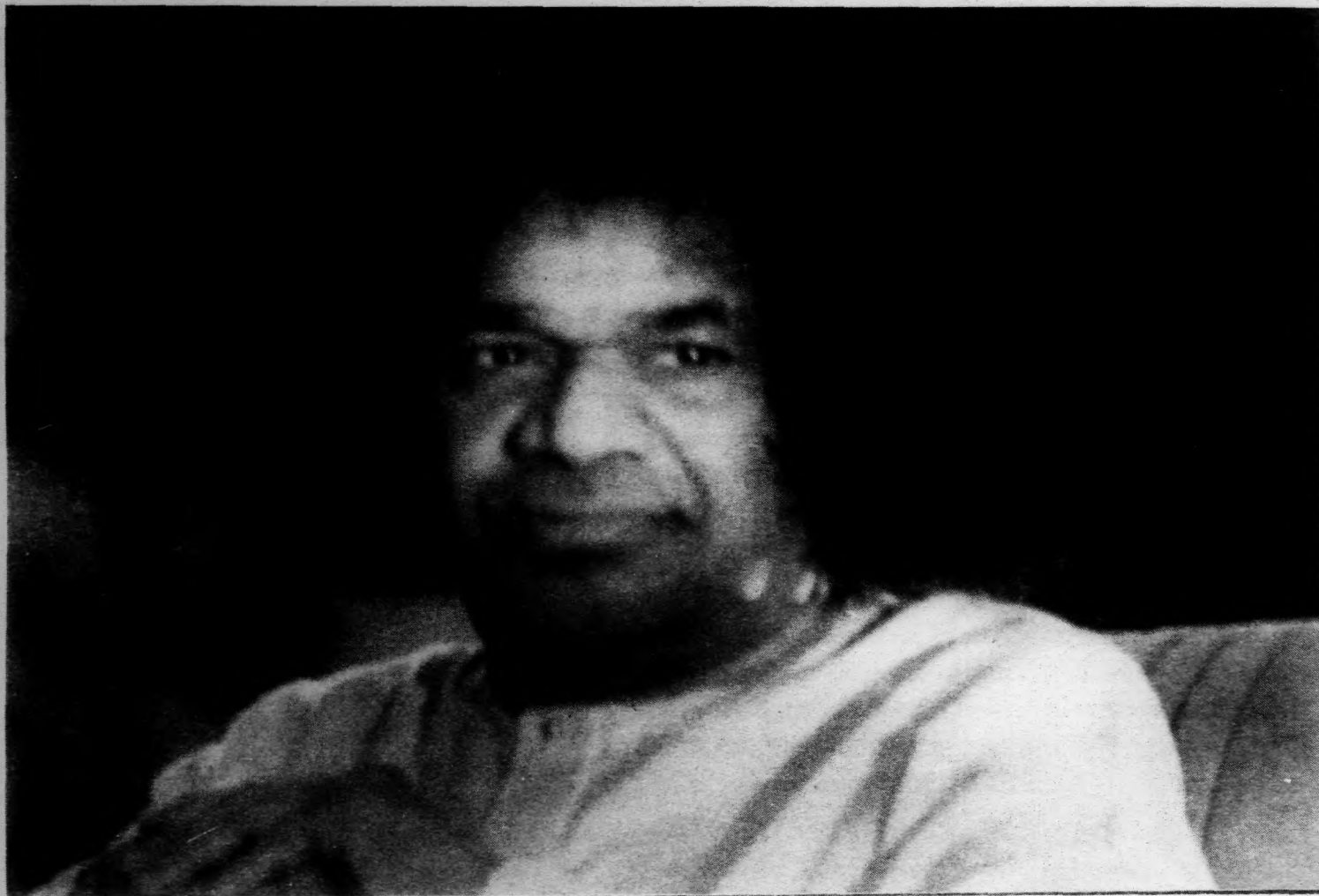
Baba Centers and Retreats arises. It is recommended that only items sold by the Sathya Sai Book Center of America in Tustin, Calif. or Birth Day Publishing be sold. In this way centers and retreats do not become market places.

Bob Bozzani reported on the Sathya Sai Book Center, and Barbara Bozzani reported on the *Sathya Sai Newsletter*. Baba's books are being shipped all over the world in ever increasing numbers from the Book Center. Similarly, subscriptions for the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* continue to increase.

New developments are as follows: Photo selection in the Book Center may become smaller. The Central Coordinators will be creating a Publications Committee to oversee selection of material. Some books are now in big print for the sight impaired, and some books are available on audio cassette tapes. Also, the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* has begun to put the *Newsletter* on cassette tapes.

Michael Goldstein discussed plans for constructing a state-of-the-art archive as an adjunct to the Spiritual Museum in Prasanthi Nilayam. Everything Sathya Sai Baba has said, written or acted out would be computerized and cataloged. This includes videos, audio cassettes, books and photographs. The archive would preserve a record of Sathya Sai Baba for researchers and scholars. Plans are just beginning to be developed for this important archive.

Michael Goldstein reported that Swami continues to put great emphasis on the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medicine Hospital. Over 600 heart surgeries have been completed [as of October 1992]. The Urology Wing is now open, and nurses training is about to begin. Soon, arrangements will be made to accommodate



"There is no charge for medicine, hospital services, food or room."

qualified western devotees who want to be on the staff. When asked what was the most important thing to say about the hospital, Swami replied, "Tell them there is no charge for medicine, hospital services, food or room."

Sam Sandweiss told us that a professional film crew from the Netherlands is producing a documentary video on Sathya Sai baba. A number of churches in the Netherlands are sponsering this not-for-profit group. Sathya Sai Baba has given the crew excellent opportunities for video taping. Sam expected the first showing to be in the Netherlands in about March 1993, provided Sathya Sai Baba gives final permission.

The participants in the Central Council meeting felt uplifted by the meeting. The success of the meeting, it was felt, came from three sources. First, of course, is Baba's Grace. It is He alone who decides what should be done, where it should be done, when it should be done, and by whom, and we only act our part. Second is all the work performed during the year, not only by the Central Council members but by many other devotees as well. Third is the sense of purpose and unity that prevailed at the meeting. We thank Swami for giving us this chance to serve Him in this fashion.

--David Gries
National Service Coordinator

Of Good Report

Whatever has a form and name, definite and distinct, has also a cause, a creator, a maker. Every deed involves a doer. But there are among men both optimists and pessimists, the hopefuls and the depressed. The optimists keep their eyes always on higher values; the pessimists slide down into dispiritedness and despair. During nights, the optimists look up at the starlight; the pessimists look down and grumble at the darkness around them. The optimists draw confidence and courage from the twinkling of a myriad lights on high. The optimists have eyes only for the flower on the rose plant. The pessimists see only the thorns underneath the flower. So, fear of thorns results in rough handling, and the petals of the lovely rose fall off.

Seeing a glass half—filled with water, the optimist is glad that it is half—full; while the pessimist is sad that it is half—empty. Though both statements are correct, the optimists hope to fill the other half, too, while the pessimists give up in despair. The one has faith, the other has no faith to sustain him. So, we must develop faith by steady effort. . . . Plunge into the problems of society; take up the burden of the family and advance the interests of your country. Shine as examples of loving service.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, Chapter 19

Howard Goldberg of the Associated Press recently reported, under the title, "Economic Optimism Outpacing Old Pessimism," that:

"Economic optimism has begun to outpace pessimism as substantial numbers of Americans gain hope from falling interest

rates and the election of a new president, according to an Associated Press poll. The poll of 1,002 adults found 47% feel more hopeful, compared with 28% who feel less hopeful, since Bill Clinton's election. Even one in five Republicans feels more hopeful since Clinton won.

"Overall, 29% believe the economy is improving, up from 5% in a comparable poll a year ago. The percentage of those who think the economy is getting worse fell to 27% from 69%.

"Optimism about the nation's economy is lower among women than men. A majority of men, 53% said they expect to have more money in their household next year, compared with this year. But, only 44% of women have the same hope. Overall, 48% of Americans expect their personal finances to improve, and only 23% expect to have less money. The rest expect little change."

Above all, at this moment, it is urgent that everyone should inquire into the true, the pure, and the permanent, for there is at present a delusion about values. Even the leaders of peoples are embracing the false hypothesis that happiness can be achieved by means of wealth or health, or housing or clothing, or the cultivation of skills in handicraft and manufacture. The bird sits upon the bough that sways in the storm, confident of its wings, not confident of the bough on which it sits. So you, too, should feel strong because of the wings, the wings of faith and devotion, not because of the bough of the objective world whereon you have perched.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. III, Chapter 33

Compiled by—**Joy Thomas**

Sai Conferences

Date and Region	Cost	Theme
May 7-9 Northeastern Region Region #1	Adults \$68.00 Young Adults \$51.00 Children 5-11 \$34.00 Children under 5 free	"Unity in Diversity"
May 28-31 Memorial Day Weekend Central Regions North & South Regions #4 & 5	Cost not established	"Love All, Serve All"
May 29-31 Memorial Day Weekend Pacific Region South Region #8	Cost not established	Not established
May 28-31 Memorial Day Weekend Mid Atlantic & Northeastern Regions #1 & 2	Cost not established	Not established
May 28-30 (not Monday) Memorial Day Weekend South Western Region Region #9	1st Adult \$45.00 Spouse/children \$25.00	"Serve All, Be Nothing"
July 2-4 Pacific Region South Region #8	Adults \$75.00-\$120.00 Children reduced rates	"Sing Out His Praise"
September 4-6 Labor Day weekend North Central Region Region #5	Cost not established	Not established

"They put up with many inconveniences and did not ask for any [better] facilities. . . This kind of accomodative spirit and readiness to bear discomfort and difficulty cannot be found in any other organization or in any other gathering.

--Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, Chap. 9

Retreats for 1993

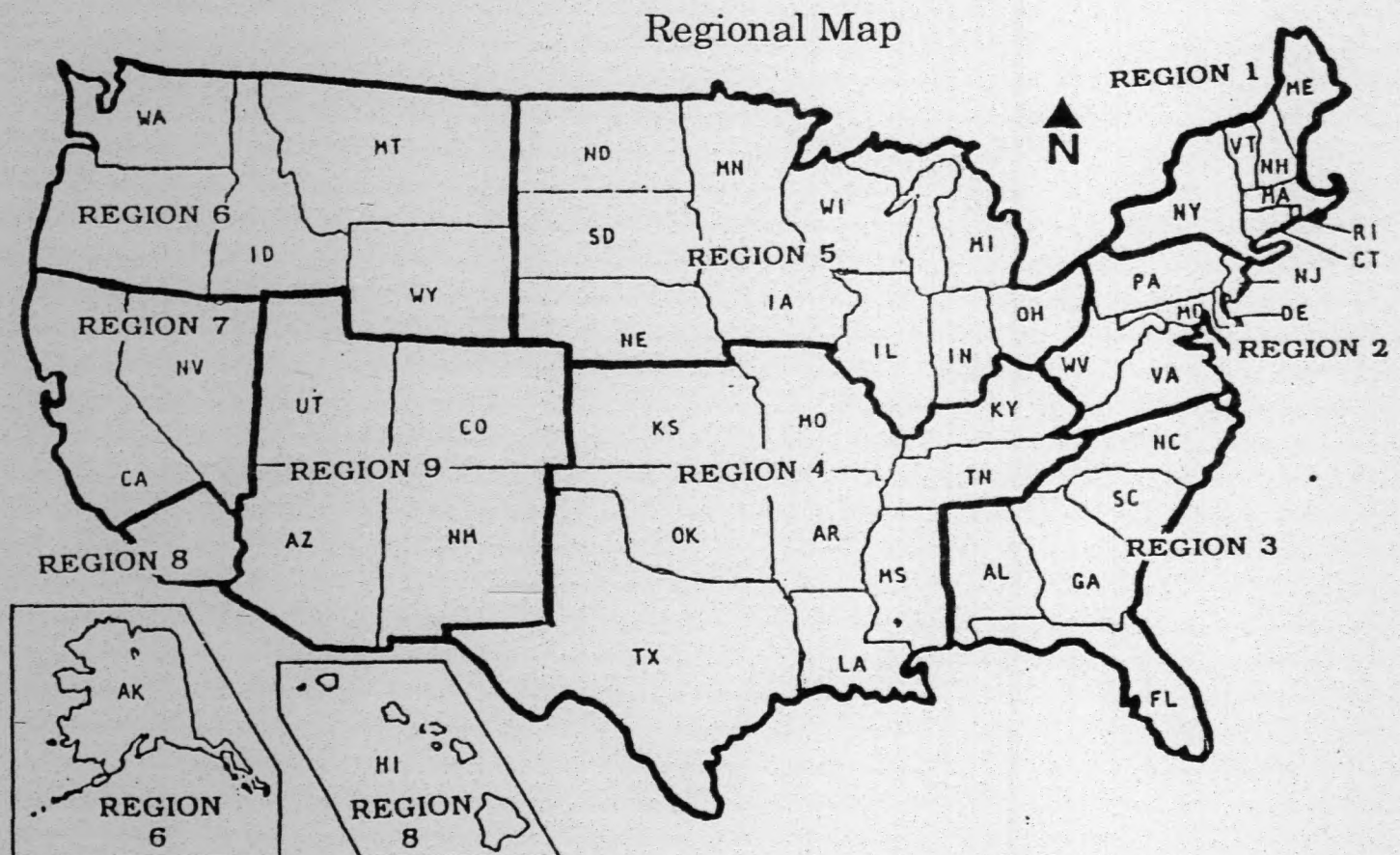
Location	Information
Moodus, Connecticut	Kevin Nelson 385 Crestwood Drive Cheshire, CT 06410 (203) 250-7155
Camp Wyman Eureka, Missouri near St. Louis	Chakraverty Raghavan 12404 Bernice Lane Maryland Heights, MO 63043 (314) 469-3804
Cottontail Ranch, Malibu Canyon near Los Angeles, California north of Malibu	Raye & Joy Thomas 10320 Frontier Trail Cherry Valley, CA 92223 (714) 845-7379
Pine Forest Poconos, Pennsylvania	Ragen Ghayal 5 Foxcroft Drive Marlboro, NJ 07746 (908) 536-5775
Sky Y Camp Prescott, Arizona	Nula Falvey 717 West Virginia Phoenix, AZ 85007 (602) 258-3876
Casa de Maria Montecito California near Santa Barbara	Diane Dudley 1344 Madona Rd. #137 San Luis Obispo, CA 93405 (805) 541-1334
Camp Ohiyesa Holly, Michigan	Dr. Siva Gopal 2647 West Case Road Columbus, OH 43235 (614) 457-9291

"There are organizations in which the young and the old render different types of social service. But only in the Sathya Sai Organizations can you find all the people rendering service in a completely selfless spirit."

--Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai speaks, Vol. XI, Chap. 9

Date and Region	Cost	Theme
September 3-6 Labor Day weekend South Western Region Region #9	Adults \$75.00 (sorry no facilities for children)	"Faith in Sai, The Sure Path to Enlightenment"
September 17-19 Northern California & Nevada Region #7	Cost not established	Not established
September 24-26 Pacific Region South Region #8	Adults \$65.00 Children 3-17 \$15.00 Maximum price per family \$150.00	"God Seeing God"
October 22-24 Pacific Region North Region #6	Adults, approx. \$95.00 Children's rates available	Not established

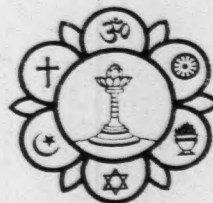


Location	Information
Bodhi Mandala Jemez Springs, New Mexico near Albuquerque	Michael Chavez 1524 Central S. E. Albuquerque, NM 87106 (505) 265-0930 (after 5pm) (505) 247-4379 (day)
Camp La Honda, YMCA Camp in the Santa Cruz Mountains between San Francisco & Santa Cruz, California	Kathy & Charlie Townsend 38667 Dow Court Fremont, CA 94536 (510) 793-2458 (after 6pm)
Cedar Glen near Julian in San Diego County, California	Joanne Santangelo 4633 Brighton Ave. San Diego, CA 92107 (619) 224-8471
Silver Creek Falls near Portland, Oregon	Robert Whaley 18561 Kristi Way Lake Oswego, OR 97035 (503) 620- 7570

Explanation of Regional Map

Region 1--Northeastern Region
Region 2--Mid-Atlantic Region
Region 3--Southeastern Region
Region 4--South Central Region
Region 5--North Central Region

Region 6--Pacific Region North
Region 7--Northern California,
Nevada Region
Region 8--Pacific Region South
Region 9--Southwestern Region



Have good activities and good companionship, that will help very much in spiritual sadhana (spiritual practice). The proper atmosphere is essential for the aspirant. That is why aspirants used to dwell in ashrams maintained by sages.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, Chap. XV

Dates To Remember In 1993

Mark Your Calendar

Feb. 19, Friday, Mahashivaratri is observed during the new moon, symbolizing a renaissance and rededication of spiritual life.

March 24, Wednesday, Yugadi is Telugu, Lunar New Year

April 1, Thursday, Sri Rama Navami is the day to honor the birth of Avatar, Rama.

May 6, Thursday, Easwaramma Day is recognized as the time to pay homage to the memory of the mother of Sathya Sai Baba.

July 3, Saturday, Guru Poornima is a time to pay respect to the spiritual preceptor.

July 18, Sunday, Handicapped Day is a time for helping the handicapped and to remember that they need help throughout the year.

August 10, Tuesday, Sri Krishna Jayanti gives recognition of the birth of the Avatar, Krishna.

September 9, Thursday, Onam is a sacred observance by the people of Kerala to commemorate the sacrifice of Emperor Bali.

September 19, Sunday, Ganesha Chaturthi honors Lord Ganesha who is the remover of all obstacles and ignorance.

September 19, Sunday, Blood Donation Day to remember to give blood at your local hospital, Red Cross, or blood bank.

October 24, Sunday, Dasara or Vijaya Dasami is a celebration of the victory of good over evil.

November 6-7, Saturday and Sunday, Akhanda Bhajan is a continuous 24 hours of devotional singing dedicated to world peace and is celebrated in Sai Centers around the world. Begins at 6:00 PM, Sat. and ends at 6:00 PM on Sun.

November 13, Saturday, Deepavali or Diwali is a festival of lights commemorating the victory of righteousness over wicked forces.

November 23, Tuesday, the 68th Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

December 9, Thursday, Hanukkah is the beginning of the Jewish holy days proclaiming victory over the oppressor.

December 25, Saturday, Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

—Central Office of Sri Sathya Sai Organizations
Prasanthi Nilayam, India



Overseas Office Bearers' Retreat

November 19 - 21, 1992

On the morning of November 19, a small gathering (less than two-hundred participants) assembled in Prasanthi Nilayam for the opening of the conference for overseas officers of the Sri Sathya Sai Organizations. The delegates present represented 110 countries.

It was clear from the very first talk by World Chairman, Indulal Shah, that Baba expected His organization to play a highly significant role in His mission. Mr. Shah quoted Swami's words: *"Formerly I said my life is my message. Now, your life is my message."* The chairman went on to say that the first duty of the organization is to help all devotees in their daily spiritual practice through the three wings of devotion, education and service. Every individual has the goal of peace and happiness, and the organization must help each one reach that goal. It acts as a liaison between Baba and the devotees, enabling them to link up with Baba's two most important teachings: Unity of Faith, and the Five Human Values. Unity of Faith will lead to the Religion of Love. At the Fourth World Conference, Swami spoke of the integration of the community. Now the goal is the integration of the world. First, we achieve harmony in ourselves, then our families, then our centers, then our communities and eventually the world. Selfless service is one of the most important functions of our centers.

Mr. G. V. Satyanarayana then spoke of the early days of the organization when Baba said, "I have given my name to the organization. The rest is up to

you." Both speakers emphasized the importance of faith as the first step.

Dr. Michael Goldstein spoke of the organization as a place that provides spiritual shelter to all devotees—long term, as well as new. Indeed, through the conference, there was strong emphasis on the need to serve newcomers in our centers, to integrate our centers with the culture of the countries which they serve. Dr. William Harvey reminded us of Baba's mission—to re-establish *dharma* in the world and emphasized the importance of being consistent in thought, word and deed.

Speakers from the different regions of the world told us of the spread of Baba's message through centers, books, videos and radio programs. The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program has integrated into schools in Argentina, among other countries. Extensive service activities have grown out of disasters in different areas of South America and Europe. The centers in Europe have conducted seminars in former communist countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia. A Sai Center is currently being formed in St. Petersburg. Participating in the conference was a Croatian group that included both Serbian and Croatian delegates. A representative from the Mid-east reported that there are 80,000 devotees in Iran. A speaker from Mauritius informed us that the total population of that island country was about the same as the city of Bombay, and that half the population were Sai devotees!

These are only a few high points from the many inspiring talks about Sai activities throughout the world. All the speakers had much to say about the growth of Baba's educational programs and Sai service projects. There was a remarkable feeling of warmth and cohesiveness among the delegates, many of them struggling with English or communicating through translators.

On the morning of the twentieth, the delegates met according to their Organizational Wing [Spiritual, Education and Service] and spoke of their common problems and goals. The high point of the conference, however, was the discourse Swami gave to the delegates that afternoon in the *mandir* [see discourse page 38]. He overwhelmed us with His love and affection, making us laugh while absorbing the important lessons. With many of His little stories, He emphasized the importance of being consistent in thought, word and deed—that is the source of peace, prosperity and happiness. He reminded us that we are servants, that all are servants, God being the only Master. He also said that service is the highest *sadhana*, that every person's service is important to the organization, no matter how small or large it appears, that our organization is unique in promoting unity in diversity, that all are one regardless of differences in nationality and religion, that we must develop this kind of love out of our love for Swami and that He will bless us.

On the last day of the conference, Chairman Shah responded to questions handed to him from the coordinators of the ten world regions. Following are some of Mr. Shah's answers:

- There is no rule about the language in which *bhajans* are sung, as long as you understand what you are singing.
- There are no required rituals. All are optional, but the meaning of the procedures and rituals should be clear to everyone. Also, do not do *arathi* unless you understand it.
- No healing is allowed at Sai Centers. It is not part of the purpose of Swami's organization.
- Officers should only guide, not rule. Also, if an officer is not effective, he should be replaced.
- No money is to be spent on center flowers or altar arrangements. [Baba is very vehement about this.]
- No outside speakers are allowed at Sai meetings—only organization members.
- *Seva* (service) should begin at home. If there is fighting in the family, the children are not being raised properly; do not go outside home to do service. Baba said, "It may be good work, but not God work." Whatever little work we do is God's work if our ideals are high and we are consistent in thought, word and deed.
- Miracles in homes or centers are for those present. Don't publicize them.
- No gurus or anyone else carries Swami's message. He does NOT speak through anyone. Do not bring "inner messages" into the organization. Abide by the rules.
- It is better to make service a Sai activity than to be joining with other organizations in their service.
- The Sai Organization must give work of some kind to EVERY devotee.
- When asked, how to talk to family members who do not believe in Swami, Mr. Shah said that they will see the

change in you if you live by Baba's teachings. Also, your spiritual practice will change the vibration in the house to one of love. The others will automatically change.

Swami told Mr. Shah to tell organization members, "My divine will is with you."

All aspects of work must be integrated with spiritual practice. This is practical

spirituality. Your love for *seva* will increase as you do it. The Sai devotee can move faster toward Divinity, because Baba swallows our ego, jealousy and anger. But Mr. Shah urged us, "Don't make Him keep doing it!"

—Mimi Goldberg,
Devotion Coordinator
Mid-Atlantic Region



Remain the Witness

The years go by, and still . . .

knowing You, life is ever new.

The days pass . . .

some with joy, some with sadness.

Yet, Your lessons remain the same,

"To be the witness."

The hours pass one after the other . . .

some slow, some fast.

Yet, Your omniscience is ever around us.

The minutes and the seconds flash by

comprising the days, months and years.

Still, the message remains the same,

"Put into practice what you have learned here."

—Michael Hollander
Fort Lee, New Jersey

Children's Corner

The Winning Smile

Once it happened that Krishna, Balarama and Satyaki, who were little boys at the time, scarcely four or five years old, strayed into a thick jungle. Darkness fell and there was no way to reach the *gokulam* (where the cattle are kept)! Of course, as you must have guessed already, it was a stratagem of Krishna; even at that age he would do nothing without a deep purpose behind it and the purpose would invariably be teaching someone a good lesson. They decided to spend the night just where they were, but Krishna put fright into them with his descriptions of ghosts, ghouls, and demons roaming in search of human prey. He proposed that two shall sleep for three hours at a stretch, while the other one kept watch.

It was Krishna's duty to keep awake and be on the lookout from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.; Satyaki was to be vigilant from 10:00 to 1:00 a.m.; and Balarama was to start his part of the duty at 1:00 and keep on until 4:00. Satyaki began his watch at 10:00 while Balarama and Krishna laid on beds of dried leaves and slept soundly. Meanwhile, a demon actually did present himself before little Satyaki. He fell upon the boy, who resisted heroically, dealing and receiving hammer-strokes with fists,

with a good deal of clawing and biting in between.

The demon had to retreat at last, leaving Satyaki badly mauled, but safe. The two brothers were sound asleep as they had not been disturbed in the least by the noise of the encounter. Satyaki had met blow with blow, and dealt injury for injury. At 1:00 a.m. he awakened Balarama and stretched his body on the heap of leaves as if nothing had happened. The demon invited Balarama, also, for combat and had to retreat humiliated, because Balarama was as fierce as he, and his blows were even more terrible than Satyaki's. Balarama curled himself into the bed at 4:00 a.m., the auspicious hour when gods are to be propitiated, until dawn.

The demon came roaring like a wounded tiger and advanced ferociously at the divine, little boy. Krishna turned his sweet, charming face to him and rewarded him with a lovely smile. That smile disarmed the demon. The longer he came under its influence, the weaker became his vengeance and venom. At last, the demon became as docile as a lamb. When the other two awakened, they were surprised at the victory that Krishna had won by the weapon of love. You cannot destroy



Diane Wells '95

Illustration by
-Diane Wells

anger by anger, cruelty by cruelty,
hatred by hatred. Anger can be sub-
dued only by forbearance; cruelty can

be overcome by nonviolence; hatred
yields only to charity and compassion.

Excerpted from *Chinna Katha*

Divine Discourse

The greatest love that we experienced took place in the *mandir*. Baba had called the foreign delegates in for a discourse. All the doors and windows were shut. The reverence and adoration of the group, and the joy and humor with which Swami reciprocated was incredible to behold. With the doors and windows closed, the love that Swami poured forth seemed to fill the *mandir* until we were virtually swimming in it. As the discourse began, I was struggling with the acoustics, Swami speaking over the translator, the heat and other discomforts, but as Baba spoke they all disappeared. There was only Swami. I understood every word He said. It was like He and I were one. It was blissful.

--An Officer

Sathya Sai Baba Council of USA



Embodiments of Love, Every man is living a life of self interest, a selfish life. He does not think of the welfare of society and does not have God as his life's objective. Man is a part of society and should not be narrow minded.

Every individual has to recognize the purpose of starting an organization. An organization [like this] is not formed to earn name and fame and make man selfish. It is not meant to claim one's own self as greater than others. Individual greatness is expressed in two ways. One, is to live for undertaking sacred tasks and to help others; this kind of life has to be adored. The other, is to publicize oneself by doing wrong deeds. In the world, the good man lives for an ideal, *adarsh*, while the bad man acts and lives for *akarsha*, that is attracting attention.

In Hindu mythology, the names of Sri Rama and Ravana are well known. Likewise, in the Christian religion, the names of Jesus and Judas are equally known. When Rama's name is mentioned, He receives respect and acclaim, but the name of Ravana is treated with contempt. When one thinks of Lord Jesus, His great-

ness commands all respect, but Judas stands as a symbol of wickedness and is remembered as a traitor.

This organization was started to enable man to lead an ideal life and to bring about a transformation in society. There are two factors that can ruin an individual. The first thing is ego, and the other jealousy. Jealousy is a pest and ego, a harmful insect. Both can kill a plant. In the tree of human life, jealousy works from inside and the human quality is hidden. Therefore, in our Organization, we should be far away from ego and jealousy and cultivate a broad mind. An individual with such bad qualities ruins himself and puts society to shame. To every extent possible, we should make an effort to reduce ego and jealousy.

Every individual is a servant. There is no master among us. To illustrate this, there is a small story. A king was talking with an old friend. He said that he, the king, was a master. The entire country was his and its citizens his servants. He did not need any money, and all authority was vested in him. He did not have to yield to anyone for anything. He was not

a servant to anyone. Hearing all this, his old friend laughed and said, "Oh King, you are mistaken! From a king to a pauper, from an illiterate to a saint, all are servants [there are] no masters. God is the one and only master. If you think that you are the supreme Lord, you are wrong. It is a sign of foolishness. You and I and everyone else are all servants." Hearing this, the king asked his old friend, "Can you prove all this before our people? I shall give you two days time. Ask the people and elicit from them whether I am the master or the servant. If you do not prove what you say, I will send you out of my country." The friend said, "O, King! You can do what you like, but what I say is true. Whether you believe it or not, whether you keep me in your kingdom or not, truth will never change. Truth is one, not two." The king gave his friend two days time for his search. He failed to find anyone who thought that the King was a servant, and so the King asked him to leave. The friend was walking with a third leg, his walking stick. As the king commanded him to go and as he was moving away, the old friend dropped his walking stick and said, "Alas, O King, I cannot bend. There are no servants around, and without the walking stick, I cannot go forward, even one step. I am feeling so bad, and I do not know how to move." Seeing the helplessness of his old friend, the king said, "Do not worry, my friend, I will help you." And saying this, the king picked up the walking stick and gave it to him. The friend collected his walking stick and exclaimed, "Well, sir! You are my servant now. At a time of difficulty, you helped me. Help is service. With all ego, you had stated that you are not a servant to anyone. To a helpless one like me, you

gave a walking stick. Now, I am the master, and you are the servant."

Knowingly or otherwise, everyone in the world is a servant, and no one is a master. How long can you render service? How long can you be a servant? In the world, everyone has a desire and tries to accomplish it. One loves another only in expectation of something in return. In this world, there is no one who loves another without expecting something in return. A man who expects something in return is a servant. The Lord, alone, loves without expecting any return. Therefore, He alone is the Master. All men are servants. The world is like a stage. All men are actors. Only God is the Director.

Considering yourself a master and exulting about the authority of your power and wealth is wrong. You should be aware that you are bound to serve, and not to lead the life of a master.

Bliss emanates from *seva bhava* (spirit of service) and not from *adhipara bhava* (feeling of supremacy). Wealth and power cannot appease one's hunger. It is only food that will satisfy hunger. Wealth cannot endow one with beauty. Only virtue gives one beauty.

We must try to understand the source of peace, prosperity and happiness. There is a small example of this. Three individuals are living in a house: the father, the mother and the son. When all three members live in perfect harmony in the house, there cannot be a higher heaven on earth. But, if there is even a slight difference of opinion among them, there cannot be a worse hell than that house. Similarly, the body is a house where the three people are thought, word and deed. When all the individuals live together in harmony in the body, there is bliss. On the other hand,

when there is diversity in thought, word and deed, there cannot be a worse hell than that. Therefore, the most essential thing in life is unity of these three. This is the real Divinity. Out of this unity, you will reach purity, and this purity will take you to Divinity. In spiritual parlance, this is known as *thriputi* or trinity. It is not only in our spiritual, worldly and social life that this assumes importance. In our entire life this unity in word, deed and thought must be cultivated, as it is only then we can experience genuine peace. For man today, peace is very essential.

These organizations were formed to confer peace. They were not established for Sai's name and fame. The objective is to make everyone happy. There are many organizations in the world, but the Sai Organizations should not be like the others. We should work in unity. All are brothers and sisters. Remember the dictum of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. This is not properly done in society. The attitude that "I am the coordinator. I know more; do not talk!" should be given up. You are just a coordinator for name's sake only. All are servants. You are a servant of a master, that's all, a servant master. When the master servant leads, others follow. If he sits and does nothing, saying that he is a master, no one will follow him. A coordinator should first lead and work with humility. Then he will earn the right to tell others [what to do.] Without doing anything yourself, you have no right to tell others; when you have no right, others will not respect you. To earn real respect, you should do what you say. First Be, second, Do and third, Tell. Without the first Be and second Do, you cannot merely Tell.

In our organization, all are working hard. But, on the spiritual path, they are unable to know the procedure—what is to be done, how is it to be done? These should be clear. All are good, but they have no opportunity to know the spiritual path. All have enthusiasm, but to be happy you need to have the feeling that you are working with God and for God. Happiness is union with God. There is nothing without God. Whatever you do, you should feel that it is God's work. God is acting through this body; He is acting through this mind; He is working through these hands. If you work with this feeling, there is no chance for any ego to arise. The body is only the negative connection; it is lifeless—just matter. The mind is a bundle of desires—just imagination. You are not just imagination. You are not the body. You are the *Atma*. Think like this: "I am the *Atma*; I am the *Atma*." then you can work to any extent. You should not feel that you are serving anyone else. You should feel: "Whatever I do, I am doing for myself, myself, myself." This is because you are everywhere. You should have the feeling that the same *Atma* is in all. You should have single-mindedness. You may call any name—Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah—all are One. Though the names and forms are different, you should know that Divinity is One. With that feeling, you should enter into service. We should never exercise authority or power. We should demonstrate love and teach it. When you start exercising authority, differences will arise. Sometimes you may have to change the tone of your words and raise your voice, but do not change the heart. There is a connection between love and love, and between heart and heart. This is what Swami says sometimes when students do not behave. Swami first tells

them softly, "*Bangaru* (golden one), don't do that, don't do that." If they still do not behave, Swami raises His voice, "DON'T DO IT!" His voice changes, but Swami's heart does not change. That, you should also demonstrate. You should never give scope to hatred. If the voice changes, sometimes there is a purpose behind it. Keeping the purpose in mind, you should go forward.

In this world, peace is needed very much. Embodiments of Divine Love, *seva* is *sadhana* (spiritual practice), not service. Actually speaking, spiritual practice is not merely doing meditation and *japa* (repeating the Lord's name). The noblest and most sacred short-cut is service. You sit in meditation, but can you concentrate for a second? You do *japa*, but can you concentrate for a moment? It has become a daily routine. This is not right. Instead of wasting time like that, go into society and serve. While serving, serve with love then you will feel that you are serving the Lord. In service, you get away from ego. All should have a feeling of brotherhood. What is your wealth? It is the wealth of love. That is the real wealth. Money comes and goes, but the wealth of love comes and grows. It does not go. You have to recognize this truth. To do social service, one has to get rid of selfishness and develop spiritual awareness.

One individual cannot correct the world. Many should join together to ensure security. For example, look at these five fingers. Can any one finger alone do anything? No, no. Impossible. When all five fingers join together, they can work. Look at the handkerchief. You can pick it up when all the fingers join together. A single finger cannot even lift a handkerchief. When all the fingers join, there is

value. Therefore, the Sai Organization, Sai Seva Dal, Sai Seva Samithi, Sai Study Circle, Sai Bal Vikas, all Sai Organizations should join together. That is oneness. Each one has to do his duty. When everyone does his own duty without giving thought to big or small, there will be prosperity.

There is a small example for this. Today, you have rockets driven by atomic power. There are so many instruments in the rocket. We think of a rocket as a giant machine. But in this rocket, there are bolts, nuts, wires, screws, pins, all fixed at appropriate positions. In this big machine, if a screw or a pin goes out of action, you cannot say what will happen to the rocket. Even a single pin is important. Without it, the rocket may crash and burn to ashes. Similarly, in the organization, all are mighty and powerful. We should not have differences like big and small. An organization is like a machine. Each one has to discharge his own duty. One may be a screw, another a bolt or a nut, but all are needed for this machine. This is unity in diversity. When there is this unity, we can achieve and accomplish anything. This is a cloth [Swami holds up His handkerchief]. It is very difficult to tear it. What is the reason? The reason is that the threads are woven together. It is strong, because it is well knit. If you remove the threads one-by-one, you can break them easily. When they are all joined together, they are strong, very strong. When the individuals are separated, there is no strength in the organization. When all stand united, it will be powerful. Strength lies in unity. Unity ensures welfare. Unity fosters theistic spirit. Unity is the prosperity of a nation. The prosperity of a nation does not come from the heavens. It

comes from the unity of individuals. All should work in unity.

You have a lot of love for Swami, but you do not follow Him. What is the use? When you love Swami, you should follow what He says. Some of you may know, or may not know, the *Bhagavad Gita* and Arjuna. Arjuna was a very clever man. His knowledge was very great. He argued with Krishna repeatedly. For two chapters in the *Gita*, Arjuna went on arguing with Krishna. Krishna was listening. Arjuna was tired and exhausted. Then Krishna asked, "Arjuna, have you finally finished? May I speak now?" "Yes, Swami," he said. Krishna told Arjuna, "This is all a waste of time. Your knowledge is not in perfect balance. When the balance is imperfect, mankind cannot develop. You are not "skilling" knowledge, but "killing" it. Better you should be skilled in your knowledge, then there will be balance in life.

Today life has lost all balance. When there is no balance in life, knowledge is killed. So, first we should skill our knowledge. What is meant by skilling knowledge? To move on the sacred path is skilling. See no evil, see what is good. That is skilling knowledge. Likewise, hear no evil, hear what is good. Speak no evil, say what is good. Do no evil, do what is good. That is skilling knowledge. Bad looking, bad talking, bad hearing, bad thoughts, bad work—all this is killing knowledge. Knowingly or otherwise, we are killing our knowledge—not skilling it. Krishna said, "Arjuna, stop your talk. Follow what I say" Arjuna joined both his hands and said, "Whatever You say, whatever You do, it is good for me. I will follow You." Then Krishna took him to the noblest heights. We should not discriminate

about God's commands—good or bad, right or wrong—because God's commands are selfless, but you do not understand them. When you do good work, that is your profit. When you do bad work, that is your loss. Your good or bad work does not give profit or loss to Swami. Both profit and loss go to you alone. For Swami, there is no profit or loss. I am always happy. If you want to be happy like this, follow Swami, meaning that you should follow the rules and regulations of the organization. Then mentally, physically and socially, there will be peace and security.

Embodiments of Divine Love, past is past. It cannot come back. The future is not yours yet. Do not brood over the future. Live in the present. This is not an ordinary present. It is omnipresent. The past is in the present. Future is also in the present. Be happy and do good. Think of the present. Thinking of the future or the past is a waste of time. He said this; you said that. Do not think that way. Past is past. There should be no hatred because of harsh words. You should forget all that. When you say, "Hello, hello," what is the use? Hello comes out of the hollow within. When you are hollow inside, keeping all the hatred inside, what is the use of saying hello? Say "Hello" whole-heartedly. That is uniting your thoughts, words and deeds. If you did that, then the entire world would be in your hands.

The whole world is here. What is the reason? It is Swami's love that is responsible. What Swami says, Swami does. It is this nature that draws everyone here from all over the world. Similarly, you are all messengers of God. If you have unity of these three [thought, word, deed] the whole world will become a Sai Organiza-

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Embodiments of Divine Love, you are working together and trying for the welfare of the world. This is real *seva* rendered to one's country. You can all do that which cannot be accomplished by a Prime Minister or a President. That which is done by government is fragmented. That which is done through love brings unity. We should work for the welfare of all countries. Our motto should be, *Loka Samashta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all mankind live in happiness and peace). This is our objective. The reason is this: Nations are many, but the earth is one. Stars are many, but the sky is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. With this spirit, you should work. This is the truth of unity in diversity. I am here; you are there; but

shed. That is the uniqueness of the Sai Organization. That is Sai's love. You should develop that love. Where else will you see this unity in diversity? Only in Prasanthi Nilayam. She comes from Iran and she comes from Iraq. Iran and Iraq are rivals. But here, both live together. That is love. When we develop this love, the whole world will be one. Everything should be done through love, through love, through love. Start the day with love, fill the day with love, spend the day with love, end the day with love. That is the way to God. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. This is the first message and also the last message. Healthy life, happy life, peaceful life, divine life. I will bless you. I love you.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Message Delivered to Overseas Office
Bearers in Prasanthi Nilayam Mandir
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tion. One cannot always oblige, but one can speak obligingly.

Make friendships by speaking soft, sweet words. Because of previous bad actions, some may have pride and jealousy, but these feelings should not exist. The feeling that he is a German, he is an American, he is an Australian, he is a Hindu, he is a Christian—all these differences must not be there. Jesus said, "All are one, my dear son. Be alike to everyone." So all are one. It is only the one that manifests into many. This oneness is present in everyone. Here is the number one, and here is the number nine. Ask yourself which is bigger—one or nine? Ask yourself. For the worldly aspect, nine is bigger than one. But in spirituality, number one is bigger. How? One, plus one, plus one, plus one, plus one. . . equals nine. Without number one, there can be no number nine. Do not pride yourself that nine is the biggest number. Nine is big in quantity, but one is the biggest in quality. Without quality, quantity is of no use.

Embodiments of Divine Love, you are working together and trying for the welfare of the world. This is real *seva* rendered to one's country. You can all do that which cannot be accomplished by a Prime Minister or a President. That which is done by government is fragmented. That which is done through love brings unity. We should work for the welfare of all countries. Our motto should be, *Loka Samashta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all mankind live in happiness and peace). This is our objective. The reason is this: Nations are many, but the earth is one. Stars are many, but the sky is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. With this spirit, you should work. This is the truth of unity in diversity. I am here; you are there; but

our breath is one and the same. When breath is one, birth, also, should be one. With this spiritual love, you should develop the organization and foster the spirit of service. Many are working wholeheartedly, but there are some mistakes because of ignorance. Your love for Swami will give you enough strength. That comes first. Do not worry about it, and go forward. That is important. That gives you victory in all possible ways. A spiritual life is the noblest of all. In no other field, will you have this bliss and happiness.

There are many spiritual organizations in the world, but there is a lot of difference between them and the Sai Organization. Here all should be one, like children of the same mother. That is the greatness of the Sai Organization. A German may not like a Chinese. A Chinese may not like an American. But in Prasanthi Nilayam Germans, Chinese, Russians all live in one shed. That is the uniqueness of the Sai Organization. That is Sai's love. You should develop that love. Where else will you see this unity in diversity? Only in Prasanthi Nilayam. She comes from Iran and she comes from Iraq. Iran and Iraq are rivals. But here, both live together. That is love. When we develop this love, the whole world will be one. Everything should be done through love, through love, through love. Start the day with love, fill the day with love, spend the day with love, end the day with love. That is the way to God. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. This is the first message and also the last message. Healthy life, happy life, peaceful life, divine life. I will bless you. I love you.

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