



SATHYA SAI Newsletter

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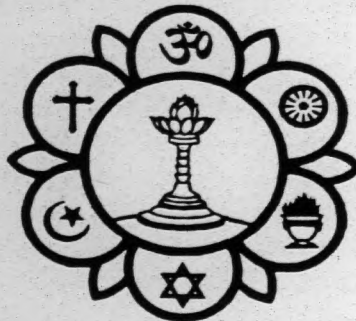
SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

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.



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

No matter where you go, always do your duty as you see it, and know that I will be there inside you, guiding you every step of the way. In the years to come, you will experience me in many different manifestations of my form. You are my very own, dearer than dear to me. I will protect you like the eyelid protects the eye. You already have me, and I have you. I will never leave you, and you can never leave me. From this point on, do not hanker after anything. Do your duty with unwavering love, (prema) seeing all as God. Be patient; in time everything will be given to you. Be happy; there is no need to worry about anything. Whatever is experienced, whatever happens, know that this Avatar, through his Divine Will (Sankalpa), has made it so. There is no force on earth which can delay the mission for which this Avatar has come, by even one instant. You are all sacred souls, and all have parts to play in the unfolding drama of the Golden Age, which is sure to come.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Baba's message at the end of
Summer Course in Ooty, 1976

Questions and Answers

This is the conclusion of an interview given by Sathya Sai Baba to R. K. Karanjia, Senior Editor of *Blitz*, a news magazine. It is reprinted courtesy of *Blitz Publications*, Bombay, India.

Sai Path to Dharma

Q: I take it that the various educational and social service organizations run by Baba, some 3,000 in all, are designed to create the cadre necessary for bringing about the desired socioeconomic changes by means of love and persuasion?

Baba: They are designed to put the new generation on the Sai path of truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence. Their motto, "Work is Worship, and Duty is God," seeks to bring in the social order related to *Sathya*, truth, and *Dharma*, right action.

Q: India has been described as a rich country of poor people. We have the wealth of the whole world locked up in the bosom of our good earth, and yet, the people remain economically poor and backward. Have you any solution to rehabilitate our economy?

Baba: Your analysis is correct. The solution to the problem you have posed lies in hard work and increased production on a cooperative basis. To achieve this, one has to rid the people of the diseases of individuality, greed, and selfishness. Every individual must be taught to think and work in the broader concept of society and its needs. Once that is done, there will be less talk, more work. (For more of Baba's comments on talking, see page 16 of this issue.)

Here again, it is the spiritual path that can save this country and the world from the wrongs of a materialistic order. What we need is a synthesis of the spiritual and material aspects of life. That would provide mankind with the social conscience and cooperative spirit imperative to the creation of national wealth and prosperity through selfless, cooperative labor.

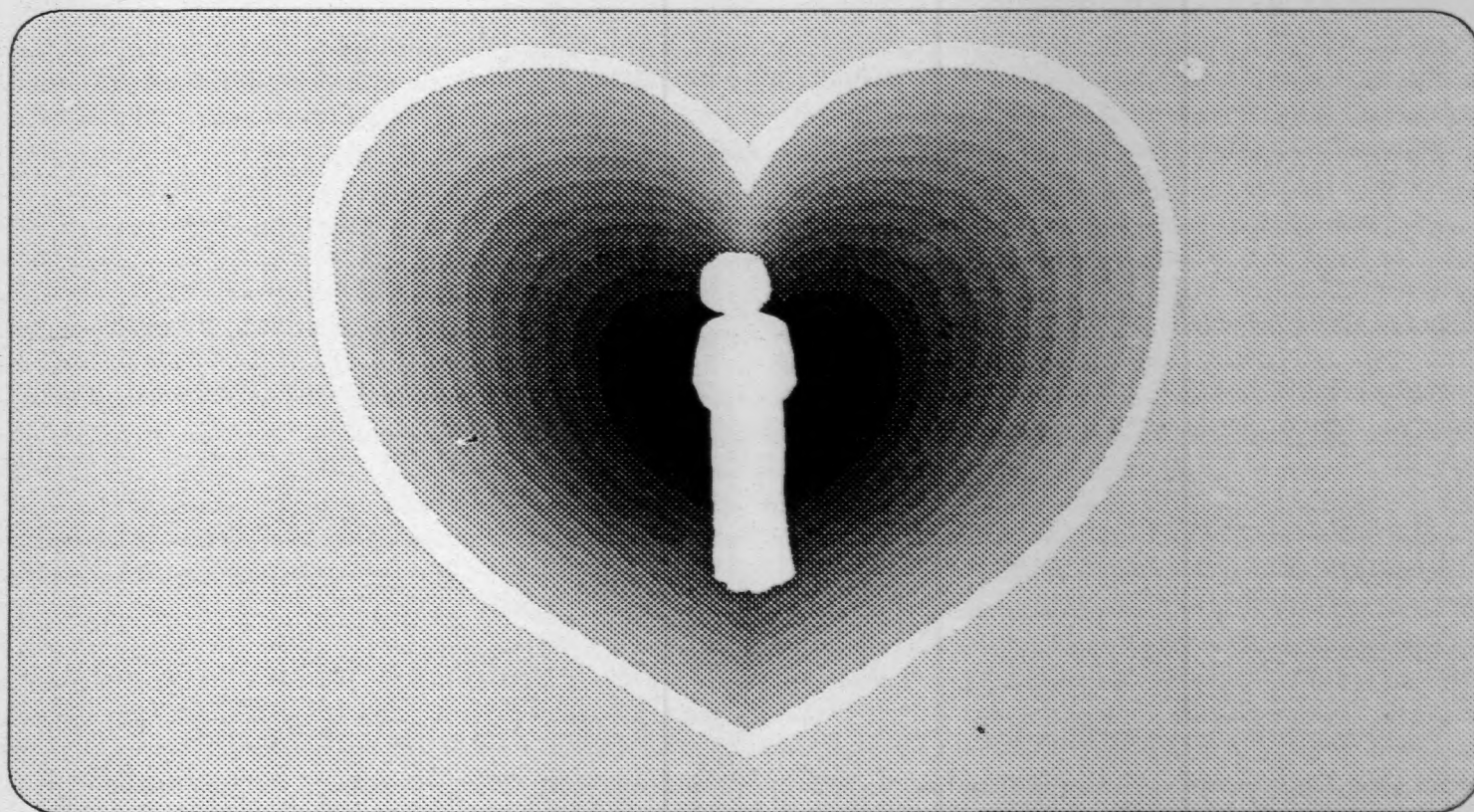
Q: Very good counsel, Swamiji, but the trouble is that all the wealth created by labor appears to find its way into the pockets of a rich and powerful minority. Have you a spiritual prescription for this inequality?

Desire Must Be Equalized

Baba: There is no doubt that the distribution is not taking place properly. The existing doctrines of equality, socialism, etc., have not succeeded in achieving equality in distribution of wealth and property. The difficulty is that you can equalize wealth, land, and property by legalization, but can the law bring about equality in the desires of the people? This requires the healing touch of spirituality.

To begin with, one has to cure desire and its evil consequences. We must persuade the rich that desire and its fulfillment in materialistic wants is an aspect of the monkey-mind which can only harm them and put them under bondage. That alone will solve the problem of inequality and maldistribution.

Q: To conclude this section, Swamiji, would you sum up the main causes of



reduced to the minimum needs comes to the rescue as the only possible way of restoring the social and economic balance. Curb your desires, reduce your wants, live in spiritual austerity, and the available material will be sufficient for all humanity. More than that, the tensions of a competitive, socioeconomic system will be dissolved, and peace of mind will be restored.

Life is like a journey in a vehicle between birth and death. The body is the vehicle in which you are motoring toward death. The less luggage you carry, the better. Why encumber yourself with worldly riches and material comforts, when you may have to change your course or even meet with some accident and, in any case, at the end of the journey you will have to leave behind all your possessions except your *Atma* (Indwelling Divinity)? Would it not be bet-

objects and the whole point of materialization, as I have already explained, lies in their permanence. That is why rings or watches become more serviceable as talismans for means of contact and communication between the Avatar and His devotees.

The point they are trying to make, is that big objects like pumpkins cannot be transferred while small ones like rings can be. But, as I have repeatedly said, I do not transfer things by sleight of hand. I create them by way of talismans.

Now, coming to your question about a ring or watch with a distinct mark to prove that it is my own creation, would you like me to materialize something for you?

The Om Ring

Q: Yes, Swamiji, I certainly would.

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Q: To conclude this section, Swamiji, would you sum up the main causes of

India's social and economic backwardness?

Baba: From a purely worldly viewpoint, it is a question of supply and demand. Because of the overpowering material values of our society, the demand is growing larger and larger, while the supply remains the same or decreases. The solution, obviously, is to increase the supply or decrease the demand. Then, of course, there is the problem of growing population. This triangular issue of economic imbalance needs to be spiritualized if an effective solution is to be found.

Less Luggage: Better Journey

It is here that our insistence on a desireless life in which human wants are reduced to the minimum needs comes to the rescue as the only possible way of restoring the social and economic balance. Curb your desires, reduce your wants, live in spiritual austerity, and the available material will be sufficient for all humanity. More than that, the tensions of a competitive, socioeconomic system will be dissolved, and peace of mind will be restored.

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ter to attend to the immortal spirit rather than waste time, which is running out, on gaining wealth and securing comforts? This is the logic of spirituality with which I seek to change the attitude of people.

Why No Pumpkins or Cucumbers?

Q: Baba has already clarified most of the issues raised by critics. Some, however, remain unanswered. There are those who ask why you do not materialize a pumpkin, cucumber, or watch with a distinct mark to prove that it is your creation and not a transfer of somebody else's manufacture?

Baba: Pumpkins and cucumbers can be materialized as easily as rings or other objects. But these are perishable objects and the whole point of materialization, as I have already explained, lies in their permanence. That is why rings or watches become more serviceable as talismans for means of contact and communication between the Avatar and His devotees.

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The Om Ring

Q: Yes, Swamiji, I certainly would.

Baba waved His hand in the air to produce a silver ring bearing the inscription Om in the center with *Sai Ram* marks on the sides and held my right hand to gently put it on the third finger. It was an exact fit and it was precisely what I wanted from Baba.

Q: Thank you, Baba, you have answered the question beautifully. Now to the unanswered point regarding the bogus Sai Krishna exposed by the committee as a fraud and a cheat? He alleges that the boy had your patronage. (The *Sathya Sai Newsletter* is not familiar with this situation of the boy and/or the committee.)

Baba: I can assure you there is absolutely no connection between him and myself. His people have several times attempted to arrange a meeting between us, but we have refused their requests. Of course, thousands of people, as you saw this morning, come here for *darshan* (to see a holy being). There are others, also, who masquerade as my disciples or make money using my name. As this happens not only here, but in other states and even abroad, we cannot do anything about it. They expose themselves sooner or later, as did this person. I have absolutely no connection or relationship with such people.

Q: The committee wanted to investigate your miracles scientifically under controlled conditions, as they put it. You rejected the proposal. Would you like to comment on this controversy?

Baba: How can science, which is bound to a physical and materialistic outlook, investigate transcendental phenomena beyond its scope, reach, or comprehension? This is a fallacy on the face

of it. One belongs to the material and the other to the spiritual plane.

Science must confine its inquiry only to things belonging to the human senses, while the spiritual transcends the senses. If you want to understand the nature of spiritual power, you can do so only through the path of spirituality, not science. What science has been able to unravel is merely a fraction of the cosmic phenomena; it tends, however, to exaggerate its contribution.

Glowworm in Sunlight

Q: That is true, Swamiji, but science is developing all the time so that the metaphysics of yesterday becomes the physics of today.

Baba: Quite right, but it is still blind to the vast and invisible world of consciousness. The very fact that science is changing all the time proves its incapacity to investigate the ultimate and absolute Truth. Some time ago, scientists maintained that the atom could not be broken, but they succeeded in breaking it. They are still ignorant about the realities of the pranic force behind the atom and the least of its components.

Science is a mere glowworm in the light and splendor of the sun. It is true that it can research, discover, and gather a lot of information about nature and its material functions and use it for the development of worldly things. Spirituality, on the other hand, reigns over the cosmic field where science has no place. That is why some discoveries of science are useful, while others can be disastrous.

continued on page 26

How the Lord Transforms

He Guides

Two-and-a-half years have passed since His guidance resolved a serious moral dilemma. The growing number of hungry and homeless people begging on the streets of this city left me feeling helpless, sad, and guilty. His guidance changed all that very quickly. Never, ever, leaving home without carrying food to give, has become for me a way of life that immediately began to eliminate the problem. To each needy person, I say "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" This has become a habit as ingrained as saying "Good morning" and "How are you?" but with vastly different and surprising results. I sought relief from a disturbing problem. What I received was a profound, gradual, ongoing character transformation. It did not come from the deeper study of the Lord's teachings or from some miraculous revelation. It came almost imperceptibly, like the growth of a child. It came as His sure and unfailing grace comes when we listen and apply His instruction and example. In this case, it came through the daily, steady practice of giving food to the hungry. It happened like this:

He Blesses

The first morning that I prepared sandwiches was most unusual. There were simply no homeless people around, none on the streets, none in the subway, and not even one person during my lunch hour. I began to wonder if I had exaggerated the problem. This was not at all what I expected. By midafternoon, I was so perplexed that I decided to take

a walk around the office block. There was no one. As I was about to reenter my building, I caught sight of the first person with a paper cup in his hand, and I went up to him and said, "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" His clear eyes held mine with a strong and steady gaze. He spoke very slowly and distinctly, with a long pause between each of his four words: "Thank.....you.....very.....much," he said, smiled and took the sandwich and cookies. Although his words were common enough, the cadence and feeling with which they were spoken stunned me. "Thank.....you.....very.....much" were the last four words that my mother spoke before she died. Her words were spoken with the same slow cadence. I could not help but feel strongly that this was His clear confirmation and blessing. It has proven to be just that. From that point on, with each sandwich given, I have combined the service with the saying of His name and the seeing of His form. The food I give is His food and it is given to Him whom I see before me. Before speaking, I say silently within, "Swami," and only then out loud, "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" The results are unfailing. Although on a rare occasion the food is refused, there is never any unpleasantness but, rather, a dependable sweetness that is very uplifting. The Lord's presence, the Lord's example, has inspired the giving of the food, and the act of giving the food, has strengthened my practice of *Namasmarana*, saying His name. The practice of one, supports the practice of the other for they are One. He is One and there is no other.

He Opens Wide the Doors

I am learning that it is not possible to love God without loving and serving Him in other people, and serving other people binds us closer to Him for the nature of love is expansion. The simple act of giving food daily did just that.

Very close to my apartment in New York City, clusters of homeless live in cardboard boxes. The local residents feel resentful for they look dirty and smell bad. The commercial interests complain that they ruin tourist business. The newspapers report that many are mentally unstable, alcoholics, drug addicts. Most people keep a distance from them, fearful that they may be dangerous. I had always avoided these temporary communities. The police continually move them from one place to another. They are society's throw-aways. Gradually, I came to know several of the homeless on the streets by name. "Pop" introduces me as his "Sandwich Man," and the name has stuck. Although the turnover in the groups is high, there are a few who are less transient. Over a period of time, all of them have taught me a great deal. I do not want to glamorize their serious plight but only to look at what has been gained from the experience. This is what I have learned:

They are so grateful for any simple act of kindness. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me this opportunity to serve.

They remind me how very little we really need to survive. I am determined to diminish my desires and to be thankful for what I have been given.

They are lost and confused. They remind me to make ever greater efforts to fulfill the potential that He has given

me. Saint Francis said, "While we have, let us do good." I must use His precious time to benefit society.

They live one day at a time. Their concern is now. I remind myself that the past is dust, and the future is a product of today's right action. Dedicating to Him what I think, say, and do today is all that matters. Remembering that, all is well.

They share generously with each other. It has frequently happened that one person will say, "Others have not had food and are needier. Give it to them." Selfishness is reduced by the shared common experience. I try to remember to give more generously, for what I have is not mine but His.

They teach me humility for they are constant reminders that I have much good to learn from all others.

They are aware of other forms of life. When I said that I had too much bread for the number of people, Rahim answered, "Don't worry about too much bread. We will give it to the birds—they eat too." I appreciate the reminder.

They need love for survival as urgently as they need food. One day, when I ran out of food, I avoided walking near them. A woman from the group ran across the street to ask why I hadn't come by. I explained why. She said, "Even if you don't have food, come by. Good people are important." I am reminded that we do not live by bread alone.

They teach me that giving isn't work; it isn't an obligation; it is grace. It is the highest form of happiness.

He Increases the Supply

In order to save both time and money, I began to buy food supplies in bulk. That simplified everything. One day, a sandwich fell out of my shoulder bag when I had a business meeting at an excellent midtown restaurant. The manager wondered why I carried them. The answer led to my asking what the restaurant did with leftover food. "We aren't allowed to keep it," she said, "so we give some to the staff and throw the rest out." I asked if the owners would consider giving the food to me for distribution to the homeless. It took several weeks of discussion before it was agreed to allow me to distribute leftover food. In the year and a half since then, I pick it up four or five nights a week. Although initially hesitant, the restaurant staff has become enthusiastic about their participation. After a while, the staff became aware of how the food was being used, and I could always count on a smiling, cheerful greeting. "We couldn't find your phone number yesterday, and we all felt so badly that so much food went to waste," the manager said after the first few months. Clearly, there has been a change of consciousness on the part of the entire staff of the restaurant. They are all happy to be part of a group that helps others. Their happiness shows.

With a greater supply of food, help was needed in the distribution and that, too, developed easily and quickly. An elevator operator in my building, who lives in another part of the city, asked if he and his father could help give out food. They now do that regularly. "We were concerned about doing this at first," Albert said, "but after just a few times, we knew that was a very good thing to do.

There are so many out there who are hungry, and children, too. When I went on vacation, I felt that something important was missing from my life. It's such a wonderful thing for us."

Then came the surprise of a national TV Christmas interview (MacNeil, Lehrer, Christmas Eve 1991) on this homeless service that I had initiated. As a result, others have started to do the same thing both here and elsewhere. How widespread the service is I cannot tell, nor is it so important. It is the love with which it is done that matters. It is the giving of the Lord's love that counts. I remember Jesus' words in the gospel of Saint Matthew: "Whatsoever you do unto the least of these, you do unto me."

He Banishes Fear: "Why Fear, When I am Here?"

Tests and trials are not what we seek, yet we welcome the passing grade. As we take one step up, His hand helps us to take the next one. Step by step, He uses experience to teach, to uplift, to transform us.

Knowing the city well, I am naturally careful of where I go and when, and I have always been quick to take any detour to avoid a questionable situation. I accepted the fact that my more-cautious-than-courageous nature would never change. Then, an experience on a New York subway early on an April Sunday evening showed me that He had guided me up an important step. I was returning home from a visit in Brooklyn, and the subway car was not crowded. Seated opposite me were five tourists from the Midwest, three adults and two children. From their conversation, this was clearly

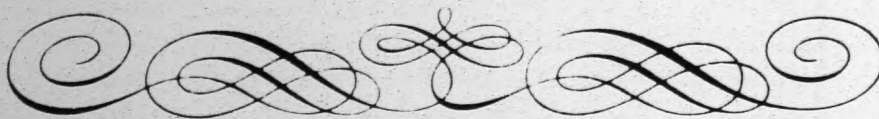
their first ride on the New York subway system. They noted that the door to the next car was broken, so there was no access from one car to the next. This was a big adventure for them. The children were excited and the adults apprehensive. At the next stop, the attention of all the passengers was drawn to the far end of the car where a man entered. He was tall and powerful looking with disheveled hair, dirty clothes, and erratic movements. Dragging behind him two large, black, plastic, garbage bags, he looked wild. His voice was loud and threatening as he demanded money. The tourists opposite were terrified. Their worst nightmare was being enacted before them. Friends had warned them of the dangers of visiting New York and here they were, trapped and menaced. Why hadn't they listened? The man came closer, his voice louder and more abusive. People gave money. He moved slowly down the car. My first reaction was not very different from the tourists opposite me. But it was short-lived. Immediately, the flash of fear disappeared, and I heard myself saying silently, "Swami, please help. Swami, please help," over and over again. Then I found myself getting up from my seat and as the man approached, I took several steps

toward him, looked at him, and then actually heard myself say what I always say: Swami (spoken silently within), "Would you like to have a sandwich?" He just stared at me, eye to eye, and then in the smallest voice imaginable, he said, "I'm....so....hungry" and he took the sandwich and the cookies from my hand and sat down next to where I had been sitting. He ate the food so quickly, with such intensity that there was no doubt of the need. I was seated next to him when he finished. He then turned to me, his eyes no longer wild, but gentle, and he very softly whispered, "Thank you."

The train pulled in to the first stop in Manhattan. The five tourists raced for the salvation of the open doors. The man slowly followed, dragging his garbage bags behind him. The doors closed, and I returned home enriched by the experience God had given me, with the clear evidence that all transformations are possible and are His grace.

His guidance taken and applied
Seeds courage and strength inside
The Lord's presence dissolves fear
Steady practice brings Him near.

—Hal Honig
New York, New York



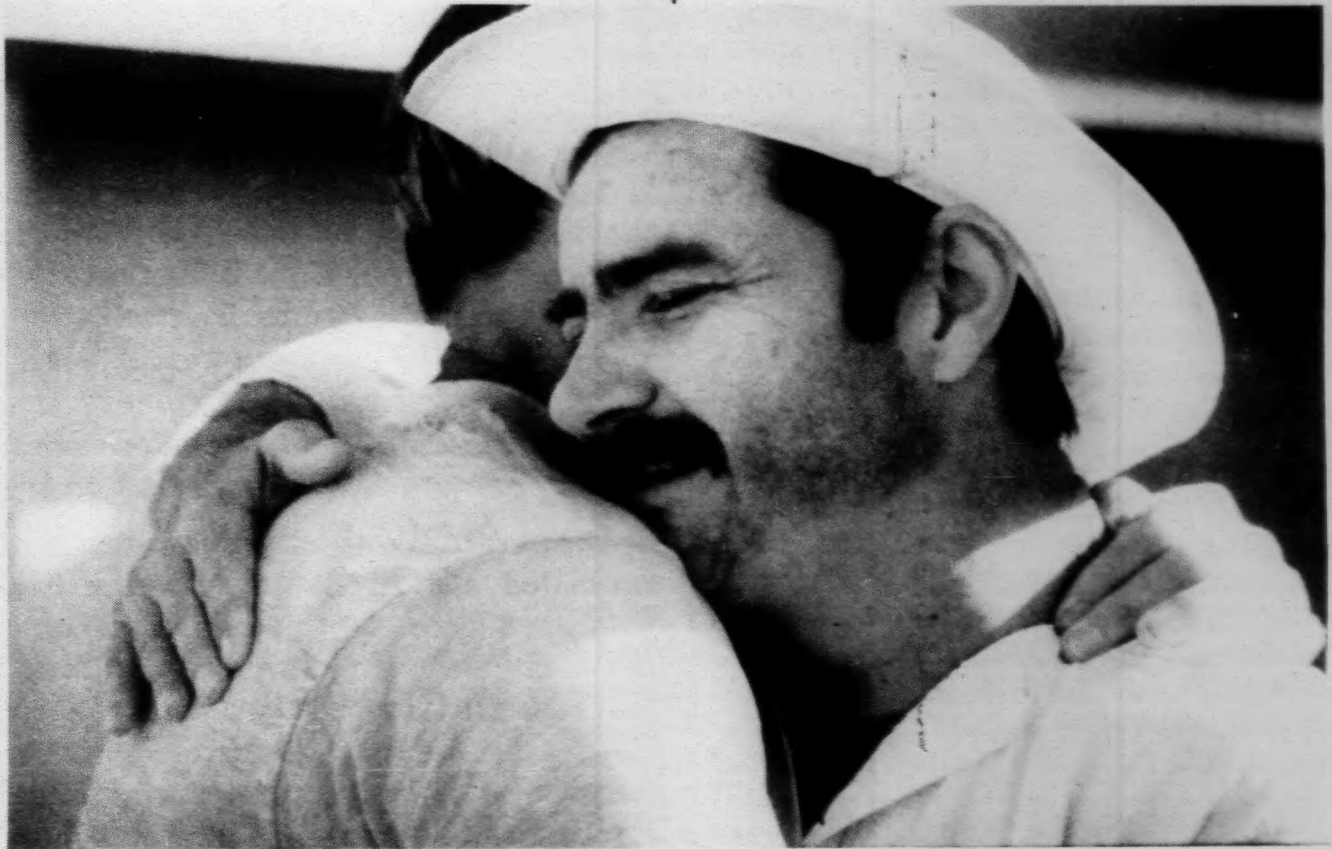
Man is fundamentally Divine, and so, naturally, the more he manifests the divine attributes of love, justice, truth, and peace, the more bliss (ananda) he is able to enjoy and impart. The less he manifests them, the more ashamed he ought to be that he is living counter to his heritage.

—Sathya Sai Baba
July 5, 1989, Saying of the Day
Prasanthi Nilayam

A Deeper Purpose

It was my husband Ron's first treatment with chemotherapy for a rare type of tumor, which the medical world had seen only twice before. It took an extreme life-threatening ordeal for us to move beyond

I photographed Ron through the various phases of his illness. It became a way to cope with my own pain. He looked so sweet through the lens. His eyes showed the painful reminders of



Baba says, "Spirituality is growing from I to we"

the narrow focus of our lives. In less than six months, we would go further—we would cross the world to see a holy man in South India for further inspiration.

His words would reveal a deeper purpose to our lives, "*Spirituality is growing from I to we.*" One of the characteristics of an individual is that he cannot be alone, separate from the rest. Like a drop of oil on water, he reaches out and seeks other "Ts" in order to become "we."

bad news from doctors, and the strain of too many chemicals flowing through his veins. Ron's last chemotherapy session fell on his birthday in October. Radiation became the last option. It didn't work.

Four months later, we landed in the city of lights—Bombay, India. In the morning, I left our first-class hotel for a stroll down Juhu Beach. I was the only visitor on the beach, the only foreigner. Camels pranced on the sand, and donkeys wearing garlands of exotic flowers

added to the carnival atmosphere. Only through an act of faith and will power, did we finish our journey.

Dizzy from the effects of morphine, Ron managed another plane ride to Bangalore, and then a 100-mile bumpy ride to our destination, Puttaparthi, a tiny village that took us back in time.

The ashram's name is Prasanthi Nilayam, Abode of Highest Peace. In spite of the thousands who had arrived at the same time we did, the ashram operated smoothly and efficiently by volunteers, many of whom are longtime followers of Sai Baba. He says, *"Realize the might of your will. The individual is intimately related to society, and so his restlessness affects society, too. The individual will is ultimately responsible for the welfare and well-being of the world."*

We had gone there, not to escape from the comforts of home, but to find higher self-realization in a land that had not been seduced into the illusions provided by the materialistic world. Ron often said that skyscrapers are a product of man, while trees are a product of God.

That afternoon began the routine we would follow for the next six weeks. In the late afternoon, the men and women gathered outside the temple for *darshan*, or sight of a holy man. We were led in rows of 100 inside the temple walls, men and women seated separately. And then Baba glided into the sunlight and greeted the students from His university. We had come so far, through so much pain, and when I saw Baba, the tears came—teach me, show me.

In the days that followed, I met men and women from all over the world. Soon many came to our room to help

ease Ron's pain. There was the chiropractor from San Francisco, the light healer from Hawaii, loving support from Sam and Jenny, and a guardian angel from Australia. Another visitor at the ashram said, "It is much easier to listen for bad things—that's the way we are trained. But close your ears to those things, and just listen for the good, and don't try to correct other people."

Between caring for Ron, I took long walks along the Chitravathi River and watched women beating laundry against the rocks. Along with a new friend from Holland, I visited Baba's museum which is a tribute to religions from all over the world. *"Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, and let the glory of God be sung in all languages and in a variety of tunes. . . ."*

Desperate for an interview with Baba, I cancelled our flight back to the States. Two days later, we were called to the temple, along with three other Atlantans. The message was clear: Don't worry, think of God, and the path is made clearer for those who travel to Prasanthi Nilayam. Egoism and Divinity are incompatible—an egoist can never aspire for the life divine.

Later, although I didn't attribute Ron's death to be a simple consequence of his illness, I felt the need to know the spiritual interpretation of his death. During our interview, Baba told Ron, *"Cancer cancelled."* Of course, we thought Ron would be healed.

The pain of the cancer was alleviated for about five months after our trip, but then came back with a viciousness that was unimaginable. The cancer spread from his neck into his tongue, gums, and other parts. We tried everything, from homeopathy to other alternative reme-

dies. We always referred back to Baba's words, "*Cancer cancelled.*" We thought this meant Ron would find a method or the spiritual guidance to heal himself. Baba had also made Ron a talisman with an Om sign. When He had put it around Ron's wrist He said, "*Don't worry, think of God.*" So, how did the two messages come together?

The day of Ron's memorial service, I wore that bracelet. It went from being a man's size to fitting my wrist perfectly. The next day it cracked. A few days later, it broke in two.

One Saturday morning, I felt that I was communicating with Ron. I asked him what Baba meant by "*Cancer cancelled.*" Ron told me that while in Puttaparthi, he conversed daily with Baba in his dreams. Ron always wanted to serve Baba in some capacity, and he asked how this could be facilitated. It was agreed that Ron would die at the appropriate time, that all the karma associated with the cancer was cancelled, and that he would serve Baba in his next transition. Ron told me that he was moving very quickly. Then, I asked him



"I photographed Ron through various phases of his illness."

about the bracelet. He told me that the energy in the bracelet was no longer needed; that I needed something else. Our conversation continued on a more personal note. I feel that this experience helped answer questions and remove fear. The karma which had resulted in cancer had been cancelled, and I knew that Ron was at peace.

—Linda Schaefer
Atlanta, Georgia



Wisdom can dawn only when a devotee's thoughts, words, and deeds are dedicated to God. God loves those who love their fellow beings. So, one has to install God in the heart and undertake the task of fulfilling the duties He has laid down for them. This is the lesson that true education instills.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Excerpted from a letter to a devotee

Young Adults

A Victory Garden for Baba

We reap what we sow, of this we are assured by the scriptures. A little over a decade ago, the *Bal Vikas* program was introduced to the United States. It nourished the seeds of truth, right action, peace, love and nonviolence in the hearts and minds of the children of Sai devotees. Those seeds are now beginning to bear fruit, and this article is about one "garden" in particular.

The *Bal Vikas* program aims to heighten a child's spiritual awareness, and this is done through Swami's grace. After graduating from *Bal Vikas*, a teenager can join one of the growing number of Sai Centers. The centers provide opportunities to increase the amount of service and devotion that an individual can offer to the Lord, thus continuing the spiritual evolution that began earlier. However, this is not what generally happens. Instead, many of the Sai community's young adults enter college and the workplace, and eventually become entangled in worldly matters. Years later, these young adults may resume their spiritual journeys, but only after many of their most creative and critical years have already passed.

This is a shame, because young adults have a very unique spending power that can work wonders for the Sai community. It's not money, it's the energy and enthusiasm of youth. It's creative energy that can help in the planning of devotional service activities. It's boundless enthusiasm that can provide the hands and hearts to perform those activities. But there's a problem. Something is pre-

venting these young adults from assimilating into the Sai Organization. It has only been recently that measures have been taken to try to solve this problem.

In 1992, the National Committee for Sai Education sponsored three Regional Conferences to discuss various topics related to this country's *Bal Vikas* program. Each of these meetings had a subcommittee which addressed the issue of a Young Adults' program. Reports from these subcommittees were compiled into a proposal for a National Young Adults' program.

Now, about the "victory garden" mentioned earlier. Young Adult programs have been thriving in Malaysia and Great Britain for many years. Momentum has been building to implement a program in the United States as well. Attempts have been made to organize groups of young adults, but these have usually been limited to a few places and situations. During the spring and summer of 1992, the young adults in Tustin, California, discussed among themselves the possibility of starting a Young Adults' program. Armed with a proposal based on two reports of the National Committee for Sai Education, Tustin's young adults secured the approval of center officers and started a program in September.

At first, there was some apprehension over the fact that the program had started without any official sanctioning from either the National Committee or Swami, Himself. But the conditions ap-

peared favorable, and we didn't want to miss our opportunity. Having started "early," we knew that we would have to "drive slowly," if we hoped to reach our goal "safely."

Tustin's Young Adults' program looks very much like a Sai Center within a Sai Center. The format for the meetings is derived from observations of typical Sai meetings. We start with devotional songs and follow with a study circle. Starting with devotional singing prevents the latecomers from causing a distraction during the study circle.

The study circles have been remarkably successful. During the course of the discussion, the adult advisors act as facilitators. They do not preach to the young adults, nor do they try too hard to teach us anything in particular. Instead, the participants teach each other, using language that they understand.

Following the study circle is a guest speaker. The very first speaker was an officer from the Central Council who advised us on what a Young Adults' program could do, and what types of hurdles we might face. We have also had our own members speak to the group about experiences during visits to Puttaparthi. The meeting closes with the *sarvadharmha* prayer and *arati*.

One of the goals of the Young Adults' program is to ease the transition of young people into the Sai Centers. Tustin's young adults have actively participated in the service projects sponsored by the center. This includes work at the soup kitchens with the not-so-young adult members of the center, as well as at events such as Handicapped Day. We have also started our own service project in which we make monthly

visits to a convalescent home to entertain the patients.

The young adults have also been called upon to help with other center activities. Last summer, a group of us helped clean the Sathya Sai Book Center. In November, a group of young adults decorated and helped set up the hall used for *Akhanda Bhajans*. Starting in January, 1993, a young adult will speak at the center's monthly meetings in addition to the regularly scheduled guest speaker. Our newest undertaking is the production of a *Bal Vikas* show for Children's Day in May, and we hope to sponsor a summer event for *Bal Vikas* children as well.

It should be pointed out that all of these wonderful things have happened in only the first five months of the program. Though we try to "drive slowly," it seems that Swami has equipped us with incredibly powerful engines. His love fuels these engines, and by His grace, we have had few or no traffic problems on our journey.

At one of the three national conferences, the Coordinator of the National Committee for Sai Education likened today's parents and *Bal Vikas* teachers to farmers. The seeds they sow will be reaped decades later. The Young Adult and *Bal Vikas* students whom we nurture today, will grow up to be the devotees who carry out the Divine Mission in the Golden Age of the Prema Sai Incarnation.

If you are a young adult and you think that a Young Adults' program is needed in your area, then you should raise this possibility with the Education Coordinator and President of your Sai Center. The national program has not yet been implemented, and there are still some

organizational issues that have to be sorted out. Things may not go as smoothly as you had hoped, but you should persevere.

In the months to come, you can turn to the pages of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* to find out more about what your brothers and sisters across this nation are up to. Contributing editors have been se-

lected to write and solicit articles of interest to young adults. I eagerly await the next issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* to hear from a fellow young adult where other victory gardens are being cultivated.

—Pravin Wagh
Anaheim, California

Om

In the beginning
there was omnipresent God.
There was nothing else.
So what did He make us from? —
If God is the vine,
and we are flittering leaves;
are we not one plant?
The tree grows and buds.
Who told it how to flourish?
A cell multiplies, moves, lives,
molding itself in a womb.
The earth spins and flies;
the sun shines, and a stream flows
without being told how.
Why fret? You know what to do.
The energy that creates,
lives in all things, forever.
Love is unity. Live love.



—James R. Todd, Jr.
Navato, California

The poet is the person who commands, who lays down the law, the ancient, the timeless—that is what the Vedas, declare. So, these poets, too, have to place the rules of right conduct before people and warn them in time when they go astray. They should not themselves stray, while professing to show others the path.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IV

Of Good Report

An article entitled "The Kindness Revolution" appeared in the Ladies Home Journal of March, 1993. The lead paragraph reads:

"It all started in California, naturally. In 1983, San Francisco artist Anne Herbert decided that doing unexpected favors for strangers could help make the world a better place. Her idea to engage in 'Random Acts of Kindness' started popping up in newspapers, on billboards, pins, and bumper stickers. Soon there were reports of people doing such things as paying the toll for cars behind them at toll plazas, or fixing up elderly couples' rundown houses. Last year, a group of 'kindness practioners' got together to share their stories."

The stories include one about a boy who had saved his money for months in order to buy an expensive baseball mitt. When he finally came to the store with his shoebox full of nickels, quarters and dimes, the total came to \$19.95. The manager, realizing that the actual price of the mitt, which was \$79.95, had become slightly smudged, and that a desperately hopeful seven-year-old could easily imagine it to be \$19.95. The shopkeeper smiled, wrapped the mitt and gave it to the boy.

Others tell of the "coffee angel" who prepaid for the next 20 customers who ordered coffee at a small restaurant

which caters to working people; the kind fellow-workers who kept fresh flowers on the desk of a depressed employee, and the San Francisco market owner who regularly takes over for frightened motorists as they attempt to drive up and over the very steep hill on which his store is located.

Our Baba says, *"I have told you often that besides revering your parents, your teachers and your elders, you also have to revere your deeds. Deeds elevate us or drag us down; they chain us to both birth and death, or they deliver us from the chain. They result in joy or grief, prosperity or poverty, gain or loss, pleasure or pain. You must realize that your enthusiasm or despair, success or failure, are but the consequences of your actions. . . . In every deed or act, God is present as the Invisible Motivator; in every minute thing that you handle or manipulate, God is present as the Inner Core. So, always try to elevate yourselves by doing good, speaking good, seeking good and having the good of others in mind."* [Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. X, chap. 25]

Doesn't the article elsewhere in this issue, entitled "How the Lord Transforms," along with these stories and Baba's words, make you want to join the Kindness Revolution?

—Joy Thomas
Cherry Valley, California

Acquire the wealth of devotion, fortitude, and peace before venturing to advise others how to acquire them.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VI

Sai Talks About Talking

The doer of virtuous deeds commands respect and reputation. Thus, one should engage himself in the performance of action that will benefit all. God's grace is the greatest wealth. To consider the amassing of money, gold, or other material objects as symbols of wealth and social prestige is incorrect. The goal of life, instead, should be the acquisition of the divine wealth of God's grace.

Real eloquence consists in the exercise of restraint over speech. Excessive talking, use of abusive and obscene lan-

guage, and losing of one's temper while speaking are some of the blunders that the tongue is bound to commit if it's

engaged in constant chatter. The tongue is really meant for chanting the various divinely potent names of the Lord.

Of the five sensory organs, the tongue is the most important. It has a dual role to play, unlike the eye, the ear, the nose, and the skin, which have only the single functions of seeing, hearing, smelling, and touching, respectively. The tongue has not only the capacity to taste, but also the power of speech. . . .

The wound caused by a slip of the foot may be healed by medication, but the damage caused by a slip of the tongue may be irreparable. That is why the tongue must be carefully controlled at all times.

Man should be courageous. Lack of courage leads to doubts, despair, dejection,

and depression. A person with a faultless and blemishless character shall never behave like a frightened, trembling sheep. Therefore, developing intellectual integrity and strength of conviction, man should proceed and conquer the evils and temptations of the world.

Forbearance, the paragon of virtues, makes a man remain unruffled by the vicissitudes of life. Neither elated by a happy turn of events nor dejected on the occurrence of a tragedy, a man with forbearance

The wound caused by a slip of the foot may be healed by medication, but the damage caused by a slip of the tongue may be irreparable.

itude is unperturbed by the ups and downs in the endless drama of life. Such a person endowed with inner tranquility and peace of mind is unmoved by agitation, and has steady wisdom, as portrayed in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

In the Buddha's time, there was a particular village headman who despised the holy man and his teachings. He heard that the Buddha and his disciples were coming to the village. The tyrannical leader ordered all the villagers to shut the doors of their houses and to refrain from giving alms to them. While the villagers followed his orders, the headman himself stood near the entrance to his own house.

Arriving with his followers, the Buddha went to the headman's house to ask for alms. The latter lost his temper and



Sri Sathya Sai Baba during darshan.

Words can confer strength; they can drain it off. Words can gain friends; they can turn them into enemies. They can elevate or lower the individual. One must learn the habit of making one's words sweet, soft, and pleasant. A person is judged by his words. Words can inflict damage in other ways, too. Whenever we speak disparagingly, sarcastically, or hatefully of others, those words are recorded in our own mind as if on tape. When we record another's words on our mental tape, those words last even after the speaker has passed away. In the same way, even after we pass away, the impressions and impacts of evil thoughts, spiteful words, and wicked plots survive our physical disappearance. Never, therefore, use or listen to words that ridicule, scandalize, or hurt others.

hurled abuse upon abuse at the Buddha in the most uncivil language. Just as he was about to hit the sage, the Buddha smiled and said, "I have a thought. Suppose you give me alms which I do not accept. What will you do then?" The haughty leader answered, "I will take them back." Hearing this, the Buddha said in the most polite manner, "You have offered me insult and calumny. I do not accept them; you must, therefore, take them back." The headman became silent and hung his head in shame and remorse.

A little forbearance and patience on our part will make the abusive epithets of our enemies boomerang back on them, just as a registered letter goes to its sender if it is returned by the addressee.

—Sathya Sai Baba

*Excerpted from, Summer Showers
in Brindavan, 1979, chap. 28*

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, chap. 24

Sai's Lessons From Kodaikanal

All Sai Baba devotees, at least once in their lifetime, should go to Kodaikanal, in Southern India, where Baba takes up His residence in the springtime.

I have noticed that when Swami is at Prasanthi Nilayam, He seems like Shiva. At Brindavan, Baba seems more like Krishna. But, when He goes to the cool mountains of Kodaikanal, I see Baba more as the Lord of the Universe on a holiday. Time spent at this mountain area provides devotees with many opportunities to receive Baba's grace in great measure. We are able to more intimately experience His unique divinity and love.

During *darshan* at Prasanthi Nilayam in November, before Swami's 65th birthday, we chair ladies sat about 30 rows back from Baba as He walked among the devotees. Talking to Him, giving letters, having *padanamaskar* (to touch the feet of a holy being), or receiving holy ash was out of the question. Of course, just being in His presence is, in itself, a great blessing, but it is our human nature to want to be closer. In the mountains, the crowds surrounding Baba are much smaller and His very closeness is so sweet and powerful. For instance, the first day, Swami walked slowly while talking, blessing, granting *padanamaskar*, and manifesting holy ash for many devotees. When He reached me, He stopped and just stood for a while, looking deeply into my eyes, and finally said, "Very happy, very happy, very happy." Three times! The love radiating from Him was almost too sweet to bear! I was so overwhelmed to have Him bless me

with so much attention! What had I done to deserve such grace?

This was my fifth trip to India to see Sai Baba, and it proved to be the greatest learning experience for me yet in surrender, detachment, the concept of time, fearlessness, gratitude, and love. Transformation is the gift Baba wants from us, and He helped me in daily lessons to realize the very meaning of transformation. A lesson in surrender came when six of us, with all our luggage, crowded into one small taxi and took off from Bangalore to the mountains. With so many devotees following Baba, we wondered what accommodations we might find there. I was able to totally surrender to Baba's will about housing over the next few weeks. We had a lovely room in Kodaikanal. Others scurried to find rooms and were being told, "No rooms available," but a friend was able to find perfect reservations for us. Total surrender makes life so easy! Swami tells us to give up desires and attachments. It is amazing how desires and attachments just naturally disappear when you feel yourself surrendering totally to the Divine.

The next lesson I had was in conquering fear. Ordinarily, just the prospect of traveling for eight hours over rough, narrow, mountain roads that wind steeply up and down, with hairpin turns and no guard rails, would leave me petrified with fear. So I clung to Baba's statement, "Why fear when I am here?" and decided to ignore the cars and buses speeding toward us, seemingly on the wrong side of the road, and kept repeat-

ing "Om Sai Ram." The mountain scenery was gorgeous, and since I chose not to waste energy on worry and fear, I enjoyed a beautiful and thrilling experience on the drive to Kodaikanal.

A lesson in detachment was given to me just before I left the States. Our eldest daughter, Sandy, from Wisconsin, called to say that she was coming for a visit during spring break. For 43 years I have always been available to all my children whenever they beckoned, but now I heard myself saying, "Sandy, I won't be here when you come because I'll be with Sai Baba in Southern India at that time. Please come anyway and visit with the rest of the family." She understood and accepted, but I still felt a little guilty for a while! This was a big lesson in detachment, with more to follow. While in India, our house in Atlanta was burglarized, and we were relieved of a number of valuable material possessions. My husband thought I would be very upset when I returned, as indeed I would have been two years earlier. But thanks to Baba's teachings, I took the loss much more philosophically than I could have in the past. We even decided that we should get rid of other things in order to further simplify our life-style. The burglary taught a beautiful lesson in detachment!

On that trip, Swami taught me more about His concept of time. In January, 1990, the Atlanta group had an interview with Baba at Brindavan. At that interview He told me that He would talk to me privately, "*later*." I was elated and expected that we would be speaking alone in a few minutes in the smaller

room. To my great surprise, Swami concluded the group interview shortly thereafter and ignored me completely. Sixteen months later in Kodaikanal, Baba called me for a private interview, where He blessed me with His most tender smile, manifested holy ash, and asked if I would like to have a sweet. I said, "Oh Swami, that would be wonderful!" Baba then materialized a huge piece of hard crystal candy and popped it into my mouth Himself. My mouth was so full of candy that I was speechless for a time. He took this opportunity to give me much personal advice and answered several questions. I suddenly realized that I had just had my "*. . . will talk to you privately, later*" interview, 16 months later! "Later" can mean 16 months or 16 years to Baba if He so wills it.

On reflection, I realized He had given me another lesson in detachment, and taught me to accept His will in everything. Swami is the sole director of this fascinating play we call life. I'm learning to just flow each day with the Divine Order and to know that all will be for my highest good in the long run. During that interview, I kept thanking Baba for His many blessings bestowed upon my family. He looked at me with such kindness and said, "*Why are you thanking me? You don't have to thank me, I am your Mother!*" What unconditional love He gives to us all! One can't help but feel complete gratitude. The infinite love we feel in His presence, and whenever our thoughts turn to Him, is proof enough of His continuing pure grace.

—Rosemary "Rusty" Bralley
Atlanta Georgia

Dear Young Readers,

Did you see what Gumby and Pokey were doing on the other page?

Did you read the sayings that were formed in the shape of Baba's hair?

If we take the words that Baba teaches us, and if we look at the picture, can we make up a story about what is happening in the picture?

I'm sure that each of you can make up your own story from the good values that Baba teaches.

Can you tell some one in your home a story from the picture?

Here are the sayings again:

- Put away desires and be free.
- Desire only God.
- Love God, serve others.
- Love God as a friend.
- See God in everyone.
- Don't worry, be happy, our Baba loves us so.
Illusions are many, but underneath them all,
there's one reality
that you and I are one,
that God is Love and Love is God and
God and man are one.
Don't worry, be happy, our Baba loves us so.
- There is only one religion-Love (*Prema*).
- You are Divine.
- The entire world is the form of God.
- See God in all.
- We are one family.
- Love God as a friend.
- Respect ever, criticize never.
- Love, love, love.
- Help ever, hurt never.
- Bliss is God; love all, serve all.
- You are all mine.
- Embodiments of love, you are Me.

Have a wonderful time making up a story with your family!

In Search of Spiritual Balance

Since I am going through some difficult personal problems right now, I am finding it virtually impossible to make time for service, other than the daily work I do on my lengthy prayer list. One day, however, I happened to remember something Baba said: *"Even if you are unable or unwilling to do service to others, at least if you desist from causing harm, that is meritorious service indeed!"* (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, chap. 28).

I had always thought of myself as a reasonably harmless person, but I decided to examine my daily life to see if there were things I could do, or stop doing, to increase my harmlessness still further. The list I made included such things as being on time, making more of an effort to replace criticism with encouragement, and even pruning my trees and shrubs at the best time of year (in mid-winter, when they are half-asleep and it doesn't hurt them as much).

I had no sooner finished that list than I was reminded that I should be as

harmless to myself as I was to others. I then made a second list, which included such things as: taking better care of my health, and not allowing others to take unfair advantage of me, not to waste my time on trivia, or allow others to talk me into doing things I know to be wrong.

I have mentioned my daily work on my prayer list almost apologetically, but a few days after I wrote that, I ran across the following sentence in one of Baba's discourses: *"Prayer is a more powerful force than military reinforcements; if made with a sincere heart it will certainly be answered."* (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. III, chap. 29, p.131). Baba wanted me to know that He considers prayer at least as important as outward service. I realized the truth of the advice a great Christian leader once gave:

"Work as if everything were up to you.
Pray as if everything were up to God."

—Linda Darnall
Dallas, Texas



Vocal spiritual exercises, too, have to be engaged in. Avoid talking too much, desist from false statements, do not take delight in backbiting and in scandal mongering. Never speak harshly, speak soft and sweet, speak with memory of God ever in the background of the mind. Of the three spiritual exercises, physical, mental, and vocal, if one is absent, the effulgence of the Soul (Atmajyothi) cannot radiate light. The lamp, the wick, and the oil are all essential for a light. The body is the lamp, the mind is the oil, and the tongue is the wick. All three must be in good trim.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Geetha Vahini, page 221

Knocking at the Door

"Knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and ye shall receive." This is our promise from God, the law of cause and effect.

How often have you been in a situation where you needed help and just the right person was there? Knock, God is there; He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. Therefore, He can appear anywhere and in any person or form, even as the voice within. There is no door, situation, or obstacle He cannot change. He knows the needs of all those in His creation at each and every moment.

We are a new Sathya Sai Baba Center in Tucson, Arizona, and our first official function was to sponsor a *Sadhana* Camp. What is a *Sadhana* Camp? Let us share with you some of the details.

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Books and Publication Trust in Prasanthi Nilayam publishes a series of booklets which includes one on holding that kind of a camp or conference. The guidelines for the *Sadhana* Camp as outlined in the booklet are: "In spiritual pursuits, collective activities have much importance. Through such activities, devotees get encouragement, required guidance, and inspiration. As such, *Sadhana* Camps ought to be organized at least once in three months to achieve fulfillment. A place somewhat away from the town, such as: a temple, school building, or any public place that can be gotten easily may be selected for holding the *Sadhana* Camp. All the devotees should reach that place, preferably with their families, in the morning. The convenor of the

local Sai Center would do well to arrange for transport of the devotees. Preferably, each devotee should carry along his lunch, or else necessary arrangements may be made at the venue to prepare simple food. . . ."

We, the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Southeast Tucson, sent out many invitations to Sai devotees inviting them to attend. We also asked three out-of-town devotees to be guest speakers. One accepted, one was a "maybe," and the third one could not attend. At our meeting a week before the camp, we agreed that if there wasn't a better response, we would contact the out-of-town guests and suggest that they not come.

We of so little faith! Who is the doer and who is the instrument? We knocked and Sai Baba responded in abundance. First, we received a call from Michael Chavez, the President of the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Sai Center. He said he would come to sing and speak, and could he also bring a guest, a lady from Russia, Maria "Mosha" Stetnoy who is the President of the Sathya Sai Baba Center in Moscow; she also wanted to speak. They both came and blessed our city of Tucson with their presence.

Dixie Cooper, Southwest Regional President, confirmed that she would come and help us officially open our new center. Ann and Ken Cady, two longtime Baba devotees and members of the center, returned from India with a full-length, framed picture of our beloved Lord in a white gown. It adorned the altar which was decorated to perfection. Another member and longtime devotee,



Russian guest, Maria "Mosha" Stetnoy, (forth from the left, back row) with new Sai friends at opening of Southeast Tucson Center.

Sandra Cousins, had also returned from India just in time to be a guest speaker. (Her son, Sebastian, is an American who has been attending school in Prasanthi Nilayam for the past two years.) The number of participants began to increase.

In response to an opening question, Mosha Stetnoy gave two wonderful experiences: First, she told the group that when she arrived in Washington D.C., she did not know a single person living there. Wanting to contact a Sai Center, she looked in the telephone directory but no number was listed. She didn't know what to do. Then, while Mosha was walking, she noticed an Indian lady tending some flowers in a garden. Mosha hesitated, then decided to ask for help. Keep in mind that this was the first per-

son she had approached on the subject of Sathya Sai Baba and where there might be a Sai Center.

The lady said, "Yes, I know of Sathya Sai Baba and the Sai Center meets in my home." The lady also informed Mosha that it was very unusual for her to be away from her house and out in a place where anyone would see her.

Mosha's second experience involved an article written in St. Petersburg, Russia. It appeared in the April, 1992, *Sanathana Sarathi*. Mosha explained how her trip to India and the article answered a request which was made to Sathya Sai Baba. She said, "A group traveled from Moscow to India to receive Baba's *darshan*. While there, we decided to write a letter asking Baba for permission to start a Sai Center in Mos-

cow. Baba came up to us, but He did not take our letter. After we returned to Moscow, we learned that a video of Baba had been shown on national television. The Sai Center in St. Petersburg had aired it, but I was told that the credit was mysteriously given to the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Moscow, rather than the center in St. Petersburg. I also learned that the day the program was shown happened to be the very same day we had presented our letter to Baba." It would appear that Baba's answer was a decisive, "Yes, there can be a Sathya Sai Baba Center in Moscow."

The *Sadhana* Camp turned out to be a huge success. Pat Patterson, the President of our center, filled the role of convenor, and she served by keeping the camp activities moving on schedule. Dixie Cooper welcomed our new center

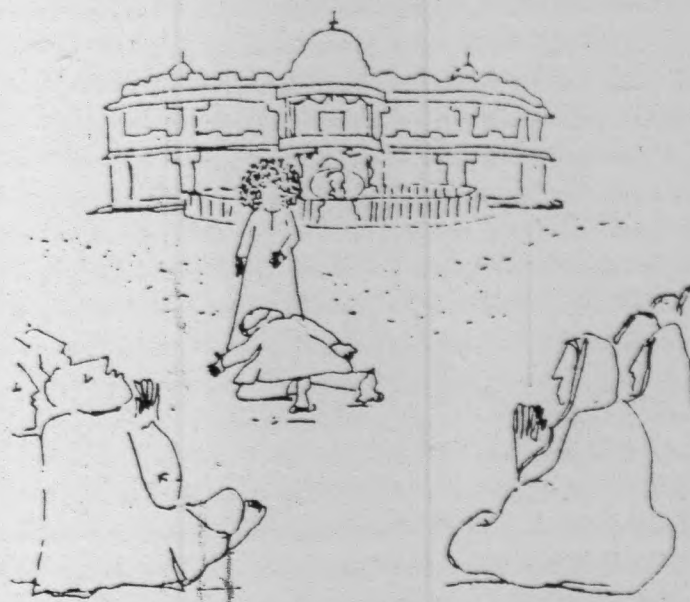
into the family of brothers and sisters who make up the Sai Organization in the United States and the world; it was truly an international event.

Being able to *receive* was one of the most powerful messages given during this *Sadhana* Camp. We concentrate so much energy on serving and giving to others that we often overlook the importance of receiving. Baba says, "*I give you what you want, so you will want what I have come to give.*" If one opens up and learns to receive Baba's love and grace, the giving of love to others will become automatic. All in all, Baba provided a turnout that exceeded our expectations. "Ask and ye shall receive."

—Ken Patterson
Tucson, Arizona

Darshan

I saw God this morning
Peeped Him through the
tangled throng of heads
Spied Him half-hidden 'tween
mandir arches and veranda men
Backline buried, huddled
in a bursting bundle of desire
I glimpsed Him
The Lord has shown Himself to me
My mind unhinges,
loosens its grip upon my heart
With spirits soaring,
tears of joy make jeweled rainbow prisms
of the dawning sun.



—Jack O. Scher
December 21, 1992

As I have said before, the committee or group are like the Telegu men who go to the cinema to see a Tamil film. They will see only the dancing, the fighting and violence, the heroes and villains, the star with a beautiful face, and these kinds of superficial things. But they will lose the subtler aspects, such as the music and the poetry, the plot, the dialogue, the jokes, and the like.

Wrong Spiritual Approach

However, as I have said again and again, those who want to understand me are welcome here. It is the spirit of the investigation that is important. Foreign parapsychologists have come here and examined me in such a positive and constructive spirit. You have seen their reports. They do not write letters or make public demands.

The committee's approach was improper; that is why I rejected it. If it were not so, they would have been welcome. I do not call people here so that they may bow to a god. I want them to come, see, hear, study, observe, experience, and realize Baba. Only then will they understand me and appreciate the Avatar.

Q: The committee maintains that according to science, "nothing can be created out of nothing." You have evidently negated this law of science with a transcendental formula for controlling cosmic energy and producing paranormal power. Can you explain this mystery?

"What I Will, Happens"

Baba: The formula that nothing can be created out of nothing is appropriate

to the limited field and dimensions of science. It does not at all apply to the transcendental field and dimensions of spirituality. In the latter field, anything can be created by the Supreme Will. All that exists can be made to disappear, and what does not exist can be made to appear.

Our history and tradition, scriptures as well as literature, are full of such incidents which they call miracles. The material laws and formulas simply do not apply to Divinity. For me, this is not a matter of any mystery or mystique. What I will, happens; what I order, materializes.

Q: There are those who appear to ridicule your statement that "there is God in us all." They ask, "Is this not pure escapism? How can God be so unsure of Himself?" Your answer, please.

God Exists in Everybody

Baba: Their questions contradict the very basis of Indian philosophy as well as that of most religions. All our scriptures assert that God is present in everyone. According to Vivekananda (the founder of the Ramakrishna Order), "God is present in all." The only thing that is manifest and common to the whole world, and in fact, governs and directs the entire universe, is Divinity. Nothing else really exists except Divinity.

Mine is no escapism but the fundamental and eternal Truth. I say so, not because I am unsure of my own Divinity, but it is my confidence in its absolute and total authenticity that makes me affirm this fact. It is the scientists who are so unsure of themselves that they indulge in escapist theories.

For example, they say that the moon is lifeless. Simultaneously, they maintain that all matter consists of moving atoms. Now, isn't the moon also a conglomerate of the same moving atoms? Then, how can it be lifeless? There is no matter which does not consist of atoms, electrons, neutrons, and protons, which are all constantly moving. This energy, too, is God.

So, also, there is no human being in whom there is not Divinity. To say that there is no God in man is like saying that there is no atom in the moon or any large lump of matter. The omnipresence of God has been described in our ancient texts in this way: "God is a small particle in the smallest of particles and a large mass in the largest of masses." In this context, how can one say that God is not in man?

No Preference for Wealth or Power

Q: Another pertinent issue raised by your critics is that you show a preference for wealthy and powerful people as opposed to the poor and the weak in the matter of divine gifts, miracle cures, and individual *darshan*. Is this true? If so, why?

Baba: This is wrong. I never see or make any distinction between the rich and the poor. I only look at them from the viewpoint of their devotion, their desires, the sacrifice they are willing to make, and their troubles. You were here this morning and saw hundreds of people, a few rich, the majority poor. Did you find me making any distinction? All those I brought with me here to this room were poor and weak, sick or trou-

bled. In my view, those who appear to the world as wealthy or powerful persons, really bring to me their troubled hearts and sick minds. I cure them by asking them to surrender their faith in material wealth and power to gain spiritual peace and grace.

The Godward Path

Q: What, finally, is the sum of Sathya Sai Baba's mission?

Baba: God-realization through self-realization.

Mr. R. K. Karanjia continues: In this series of interviews, Baba has shown the Godward path to the realization of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, that is, Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss Absolute. According to Baba, this highest state of consciousness or enlightenment is possible for every man or woman to achieve. Once he or she is liberated from the ego-bondage of body and mind, the True Self, *Jivatma*, can be realized. *Jivatma* is the abode of the Indwelling God in man. It is the embodied essence of *Paramatma*, the Cosmic Spirit.

The Avatar's mission, according to Baba, is to help mankind dissolve the barrier of the ego and the mind with it, so that the embodied *Jivatma* can merge with the universal *Paramatma*, the mighty ocean of nectar divine, as He describes it, to raise mankind to a race of Godmen and Godwomen.

With the Sai philosophy of pure, spiritual love, Baba seeks to resolve the universal problem of man's alienation from himself and others, from God, and from nature.

Evolution to Higher Consciousness

Ruth Nanda Anshen, publisher of the well-known *Religious Perspectives* books, notes this alienation as the most serious crisis of our apocalyptic era. She writes, "The crisis of man's separation from man and of man's separation from God is caused by the failure to love" and holds it responsible for "the darkness and cold, the frozen spiritual misery of recent times." She evokes the image of *homo cum Deo* (man with God) to call for "a new formula for man's collaboration with the creative process and the only One who is able to protect man from the terror of existence."

Sathya Sai Baba provides the desired formula: Only evolution to a higher plane of consciousness can save man from this terror, this darkness and cold, this frozen spiritual misery.

The formula arises from Baba's expertise in the science of consciousness and knowledge of the cosmic dimensions of the nature of reality. Science, of course, scoffs at Baba's emphasis on spirituality. Yet, the noblest of them authenticate the latter's supremacy.

If God Can be in a Rock. . .

A noted geologist who heads the Geology Department of a major university was witness to one of Baba's materializations. Baba picked up a rough piece of granite to ask the scientist what it contained. The geologist mentioned some minerals. Baba insisted, "I don't mean those, but something deeper. He continued, "Well molecules, atoms, electrons, protons. . ." Baba wasn't satisfied, "No,

no, no, go deeper still." The geologist professed his ignorance.

Then Baba took the rock, blew on it, and gave it back to the geologist. The geologist was flabbergasted, for the rock had been transformed into a statue of Krishna playing the divine flute. Baba admonished him, "You see, beyond your atoms and all, God was in the rock. God is sweetness and joy. Break off Krishna's foot and taste it."

The geologist found no difficulty in breaking the statue and tasting the foot. It was candy with a sweetness all its own. No wonder Howard Murphet, one of Baba's biographers, has said, "Science gives but the first word; the last word is known only to the great spiritual scientists like Sai Baba."

. . . Then Why Not in Man?

If Baba can transform rock into God—and we have the geologist's word for it—then why not the human being already charged with the divine afflatus or divinely imparted knowledge? Apart from his own prodigious spiritual image which encompasses millions of devotees, Baba uses the 3,000 and more Sai spiritual, educational, and social service institutions throughout the country to spread His evangel with the objective of transforming the common people into a race of enlightened Godmen and Godwomen.

However controversial some of Baba's claims may be, the integrated system of education and social service evolved by Him constitutes a model of its kind. It helps us to understand and to evolve man's nature. Here, the Sai philosophy with its five pillars of truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence is not only being taught but realized through

the transmission of knowledge, skill, balance, and vision to thousands of students and workers. Thus, Baba plans His spiritual empire of love and cooperation. There is no expectation of any return for Himself. "Come to me with empty hands, and I will fill them with my love and grace."

Self-realization is God-realization

This suffices to introduce the last installment of the interview to the reader.

Q: From what Baba has hitherto said, it appears that your mission is to enable mankind to rediscover and incarnate their lost godliness. Am I right?

Baba: You are right. When man turns inward to realize his true Self, then God will become manifest to him. Self-realization is God-realization. In simple words, it is the realization that you are not just a mind and a body with physical organs, but there is within you a Self—the *Atma* that is God—distinct from these perishable things. This Self is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. The comprehension of this truth puts you on the correct path to God-realization.

Atma as Social Integer— Summary by R. K. Karanjia

Baba, you have got it right. This is the function of the individual as well as the society. Every member must be enabled to realize this *Atmic* truth which embraces and integrates the whole world. It is not castes, classes, groups, families, and communities which bind humanity together, but the fact that all mankind

belongs to one and the same *Atma* that is God.

This single factor puts "mankind" back into man to make him a socially conscious human being. As the *Sastras* say, "The world is one family." This unity which derives from God can be experienced by everyone through recognition of the supremacy of the common denominator of the Self or *Atma* in every single individual.

Terror of Nuclear War

Q: So, your objective can be summed up as a brotherhood of humanity to be achieved through the doctrine of love?

Baba: Yes, what else can save the world from thermonuclear fires? Everything points to the terror of that conflagration coming; my mission is to preempt the fires by reestablishing right action (*dharma*) and the spiritual law of one God, one religion, one language, embracing one humanity.

I preach one religion of love for all, which alone can integrate the human race into a brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. I know only one language of the heart beyond the mind or intellect, which relates man to man and mankind to God, thereby creating mutual understanding, cooperation, and community life in peace and harmony. On this basis, I want to build one humanity without any caste, or other barriers, in a universal empire of love which would enable my devotees to feel the whole world as their own family.

Q: Well said, Baba, but wouldn't this *dharma* with its Hindu orientation conflict with the established religions?

Baba: No, it will not do anything of the kind because my objective is the establishment of *Sanathana Dharma* which believes in one God as taught by the founders of all religions. So, no one has to give up his religion or deity, but, through them, worship the one God in all. I have come not to disturb or destroy but to confirm and vindicate everyone in his own faith.

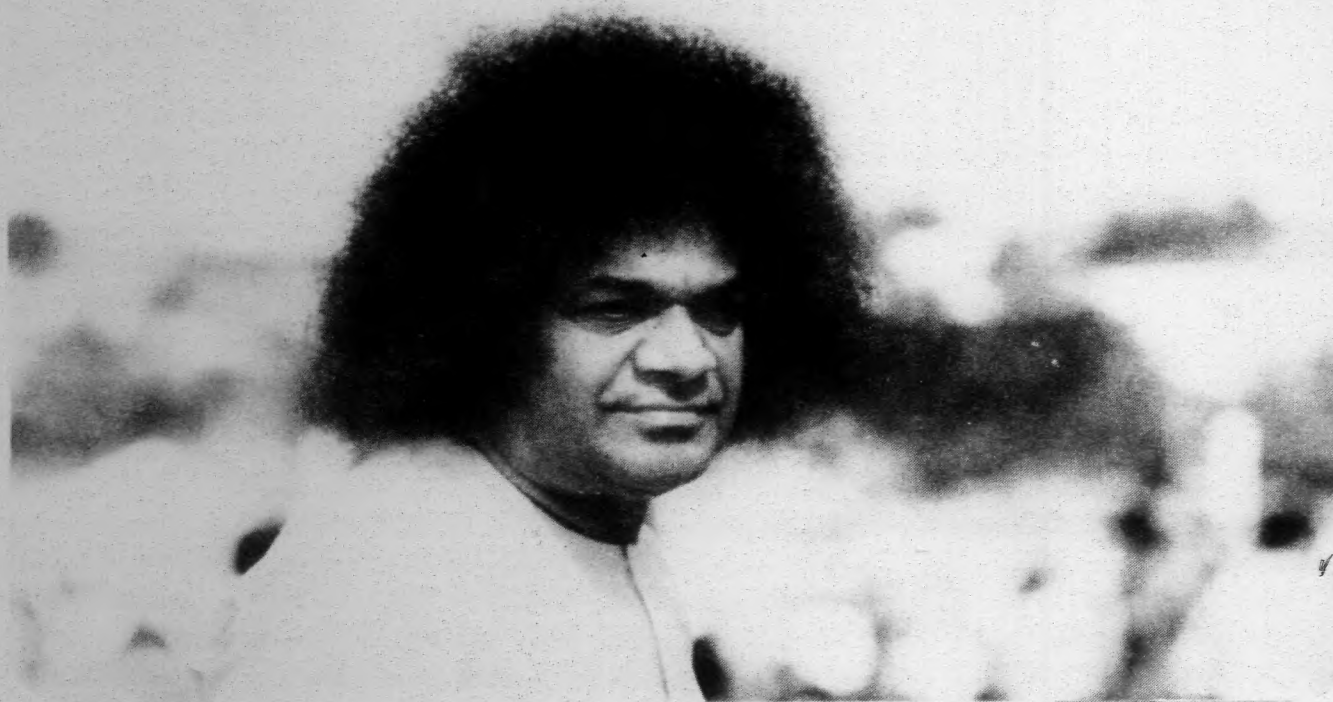
Dharmic Way to Peace

Q: But how will that prevent a nuclear holocaust?

Baba: By removing all causes, sources, barriers, and provocations of class, caste, creed, color, and race, and replacing the existing hate and violence with love and nonviolence. I expect to provide humanity with an evangel of peaceful cooperation to replace the present escalation to death by co-destruction.

R. K. Karanjia: Thank you, Swamiji. I am all the more grateful to you because I really did not expect you to answer the whole long list of my questions.

Questions—R. K. Karanjia
Answers—Sathya Sai Baba



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The past is p̄ast, begin life anew tomorrow. Revere the world as Divine, do not underestimate it as unholy. All that is seen and heard is God.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, chap. 20

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The spoken word though it may be short and appears to be only a sound, has in it the power of an atomic bomb. When a word of bliss (ananda) is spoken to a person sunk in despair, it charges him with elephantine strength.

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Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, chap. 24

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Announcements

Changes

Two of the dates that were published in the last *Sathya Sai Newsletter* (spring 1993) under "Dates to Remember in 1993," have been changed.

Onam, the sacred observance that commemorates the sacrifice of Emperor Bali, will, this year, be observed on Monday, August 30.

Blood Donation Day is to be observed Sunday, September 12.

An Addition

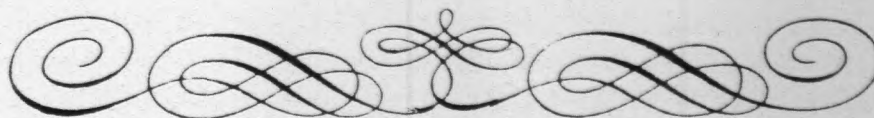
There is an additional Sai Conference/Retreat for 1993.

Date and Region: September 15-17, Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern Regions #1 and #2. **Theme:** "A Weekend of Silence." **Cost:** \$75.00 Adults (sorry, no accommodations for children). **Location:** St. Mary's Villa, Sloatsburg, New York. **Information/Reservations:** Mimi Goldberg, 21 Donbrook Rd., Pound Ridge, NY 10576, phone (914) 764-5760 or Suman Govindan (203) 966-8851.

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For a list of books and other items, contact the Sathya Sai Book Center at the above address and request their catalog.

New Book

Life is a Dream, Realize it! by Joy Thomas. In this, the third book in which the author has chronicled her experiences with Sathya Sai Baba, each incident is related with a correlative divine quotation. These have been selected from Baba's sayings, writings, and discourses to provide the reader with a review of the teachings of the Avatar in regard to *dharmic* activity in the world, as well as to the dreamlike nature of this earthly sojourn.

207 pages \$7.50

Classics by & About Sathya Sai Baba

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Sathya Sai Speaks Three decades of discourses by Sathya Sai Baba

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Summer Showers Discourses by Sathya Sai Baba given to college students.

<i>Summer Showers in Brindavan</i> , 1972	\$3.00
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The Vahinis A series of books written by Sathya Sai Baba. This collection of 15 volumes contains the wisdom that has prevailed throughout the ages.

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