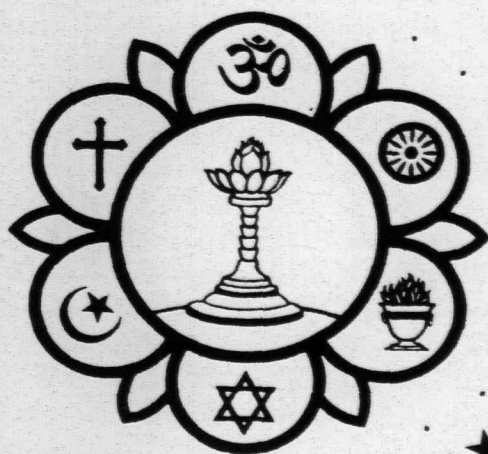




SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, USA

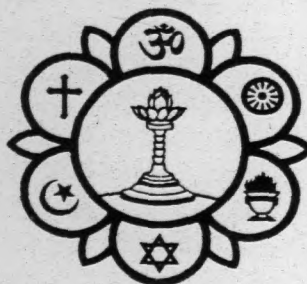
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Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

*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,
depicts the unity of all religions.***



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Sai's Message *Wonderful Changes*



Great understanding is emerging in the hearts of my beloveds. In time, the coldest hearts will once again flow in truth and light. A great unity of light is forming in all countries gathering a band of light bearers. Wonderful changes are taking place. We are one, have no fear, be happy.

—Sathya Sai Baba
*Sathya Sai Baba and the
Universal Reality of Mankind
by Mata Betty*

Baba's Birthday Message

On the day of Baba's 70th birthday, there was a parade led by Swami's elephant, Sai Gita, and a pageant of flags carried by a representative of each of the 137 countries in attendance. The crowd was estimated to be over 2,000,000 in Hillview Stadium. The President of India was a guest speaker; officials of the Sai Organization gave inspiring talks. The following is the Divine Discourse that we had anxiously waited for, and was presented by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba:

—Editor

*Brighter than the sun,
Whiter than the snow,
Subtler than space
Is the Self that is present in all beings.
Without It, nothing exists.
It is consciousness;
It is present in all beings.
You are the Brahman;*
Brahman is in you.*

What more can I say to this august assembly of good and pious people?

Truth

Embodiments of Love! It is truth that is the basis of this manifest universe. There is no universe without truth. Everything has manifested from truth. It is from Truth that everything is born. There is no space in this universe where the glory of truth is not made evident. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, experience this pure unsullied, eternal truth.

Fame and fortune emerge from truth, only. The *Vedas*, *Upanishad* and all other sacred texts have other sacred other texts have also originated from truth. Truth is the abode of God. One cannot conceive of Truth without God,

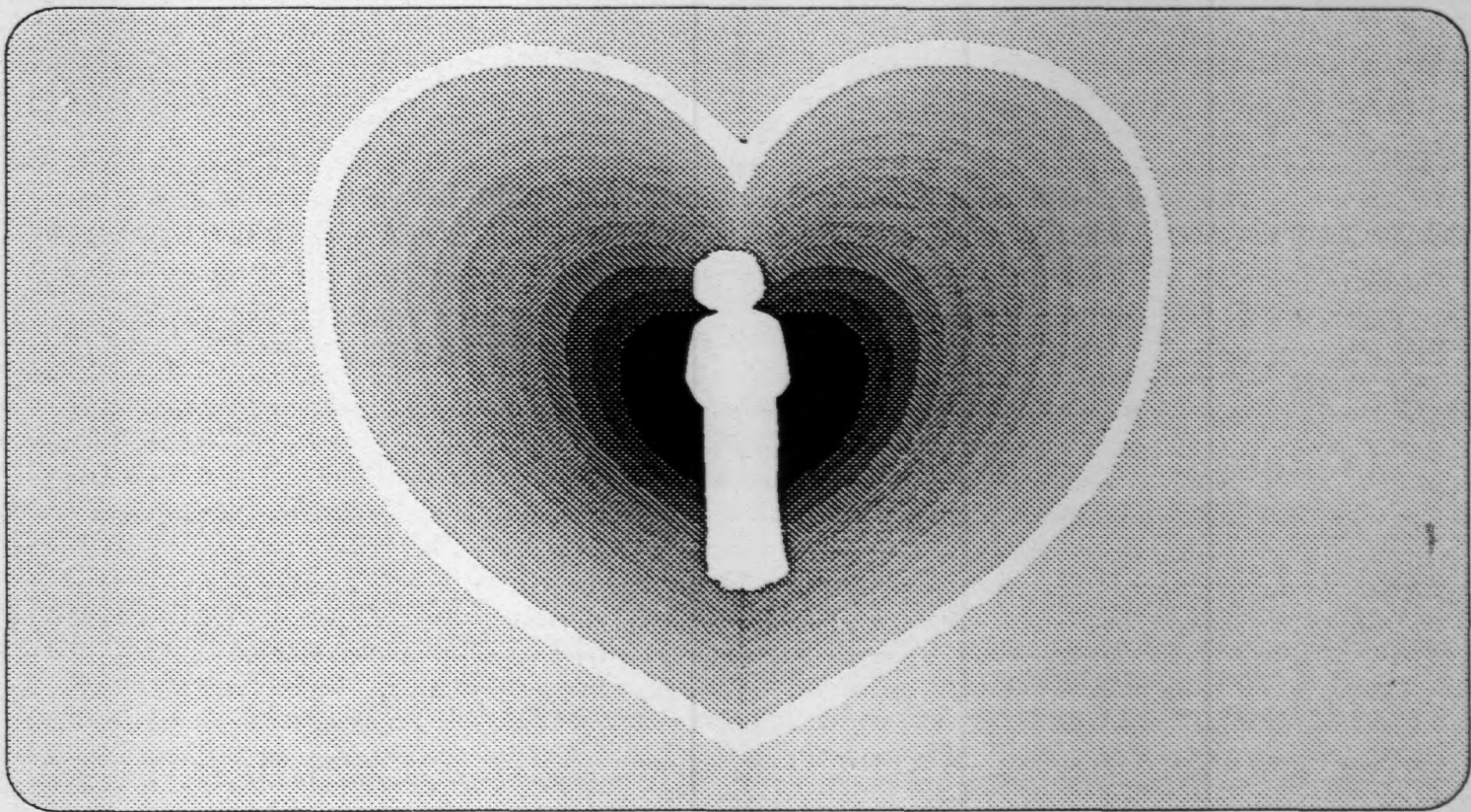
nor God without truth. Then who is God? God is truth. The *Upanishads* declare "God is sweet." Just as sugar is present in sugarcane, and butter is present in milk, so also, God is present in every cell and atom throughout the universe. Even though it is difficult to have the direct perception of God, one can feel His presence all around, like the sweetness in sugarcane, the sour taste in lime, the bitter taste in neem, and the hot taste in red chillies.

One is delighted by seeing a mountain. One gets exhilarated by watching the flow of water in a river. One feels a sense of joy on seeing the waves on the ocean. All these are only facets of Divinity. There is effulgence—there are stars shining brightly in the sky; there is the sun which is resplendent; there are revolving planets; there are clouds that thunder—all these are visible manifestations of God. If we understand the nature of the sparks in fire, we will understand the nature of fire.

Understanding God

We shall be able to understand God when we appreciate the manifestation

**Bhraman* is the Creator, the universal absolute that is unchanging and eternally true. It is not possible to explain it in words.



everyone to first know who they are. Who is this person? Is one to be identified as the son or daughter of so and so? Is one to be identified by their name? Is one to be identified by their profession? Is one to be identified by their nationality? No! These identifications only help with one's dealings in day-to-day life. The body is the field (*kshetra*). The indweller is the knower of the field (*kshetrajna*). Knowledge about the indweller amounts to knowledge of the Self.

The body consists of five elements, God manifests Himself in the form of attributes. Indians visualize God as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. In reality, this trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara have no form. No one has ever seen or experienced them, but they are

Next, it is the responsibility of the father to take care of the child and help him to grow, so the father is regarded as Vishnu, the sustainer and the protector. That is why it is said that mother and father represent Brahma and Vishnu respectively. They are the reflections of Divinity.

Then comes Maheswara, it is said that he confers boons on all those who pray to him. He cannot say "No" to anyone. Such an embodiment of truth cannot be hidden anywhere, nor can it be changed, even though one may try.

Thamo guna is the basis for understanding the nature of Shiva. What is *thamo guna*? It is commonly said that a person in whom *thamo guna* is predominant wastes his time in eating, drinking

• The three *gunas* or attributes are: *Sathwa* which is steady, pure, unselfish. *Rajas* which is active passionate, craves adventure. And *Thamo* which is dull, stupid, inactive.

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of His power and glory all around us. Once we understand the nature and characteristics of a drop of water, we can very well understand the nature and characteristics of water flowing in a river. In the same manner, the principle of Divinity can be understood only when one is able to understand the principle of humanity.

The Trinity and Three Gunas

Though people engage themselves in their obligatory work right from the time they get up until they go to bed, still they are not able to understand their true innate nature. They consider themselves to be only a conglomeration of body, mind and senses. The body, mind and senses are only instruments. You are their master and you are beyond the body, mind and senses. Therefore, *Vedanta* exhorts everyone to first know who they are. Who is this person? Is one to be identified as the son or daughter of so and so? Is one to be identified by their name? Is one to be identified by their profession? Is one to be identified by their nationality? No! These identifications only help with one's dealings in day-to-day life. The body is the field (*kshetra*). The indweller is the knower of the field (*kshetrajna*). Knowledge about the indweller amounts to knowledge of the Self.

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in the human body in the form of three attributes of *sathwa guna*, *raja guna* and *thamo guna*. • Therefore, these three attributes or *gunas* are only the manifestations of Divinity present within you. Brahma is the creator, but nobody is able to delve into the mystery of His creation. This is something which you cannot see, nor can you hear, nor can you comprehend or understand.

Parents, Trinity & Attributes

In order to understand the principle of Divinity, you should first start with your mother. Mother also creates. It is a mother who has given birth to all of us. That is why it is said, "Mother should be given the position of Brahma" (*Mathru Devo Bhava*). One should respect her, serve her, and have full faith in her. This is the symbol of our faith in Brahma.

Next, it is the responsibility of the father to take care of the child and help him to grow, so the father is regarded as Vishnu, the sustainer and the protector. That is why it is said that mother and father represent Brahma and Vishnu respectively. They are the reflections of Divinity.

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and sleeping. This is not the true meaning of *thamo guna*. In this world that is created by Brahma and sustained by Vishnu, it is Shiva who sets man in the right course making him aware of his innate Divinity.

Therefore, the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara is present in every human being in the form of the three characteristics or *gunas*—*sathwa*, *rajas* and *thamas*. In this context it is said, "Divinity which is all pervasive manifests itself in the form of these three attributes."

When we can clearly understand the principle behind the three attributes, we can also experience the three facets of Divinity. God is not present in any foreign land; He is present in one's own Self. Sin is not present in any foreign land; it is attached to one's actions. Therefore, it is only an illusion to travel around investigating and proclaiming that one is engaged in the search for truth. How can a person who is not able to know himself ever hope to know God? Everyone today wants to know everything about the world. They are making trips to the moon; they reach for the stars; they make the five elements work for them. They are able to know all these things, but they are not able to know themselves. Once a person knows his or her true inner Self, they will know everything.

Knowing the Self

Now, the question is how to know this Self? The process of knowing one's Self is also called conscience. Making one's conscience the basis, if one tries to experience its vibrations, then it will be a real search for Truth. But today, peo-

ple follow either the body or the mind. Therefore, they are put to all types of suffering, troubles and anxieties. One should not follow the mind; the mind is a mad monkey. One who relies on it has to face multifarious problems. The body is like a water bubble. Each bubble comes out of the water; and ultimately, all the bubbles become unified. So, all bodies are like water bubbles, and they should one day become unified into Divinity.

The infinite ocean gives rise to innumerable waves. One wave does not look like the other wave. They appear different from each other, but the water contained in all the waves is one and the same. In order to appreciate this oneness, the *Upanishads* proclaim, "Truth is one; sages call it by many names"

People need not exert themselves to know Divinity. For this, we can illustrate one example from the *Ramayana*. It is not easy to worship God. It is not easy to have faith in Him, but it is easy to criticize Him. So one has to go through this difficult path of spiritual discipline (*sadhana*) with faith and hard work to ultimately reach the truth. Without proper practice and hard work, you cannot understand Divinity. By merely asking sugarcane, you do not get sweet jaggery. You have to crush the sugarcane and process the juice to get the sugar. God is in you, so you have to search within yourself to find Him.

Rama's Obedience

Rama told Sita, "You don't know whether God listens to your prayers or not, and also, you do not know the will of God. Under these circumstances, how can you know what pleases God and act accordingly? It is impossible. So, how can

you receive the grace of God? Parents are our living Gods. If we try to know their hopes and aspirations, and make every effort to fulfill them, then we shall earn their grace. It is only an illusion to ignore one's parents who are the living Gods and try to win the grace of the invisible God. Your mother is the reflection of Brahma. Your father is the reflection of Vishnu. Both are right in front of you, but instead of trying to win their grace, you are trying to win the grace of that God who is not visible, and whom you cannot easily reach. Therefore, you must respect your parents and always obey their commands.

Rama had broken the bow of Lord Shiva. Immediately, King Janaka came near to him and said, "O Rama! I had made a promise that I would give my daughter, Sita, in marriage to that person who will be able to break this bow of Shiva. Now that you have broken the bow, I offer Sita to you." But Rama did not agree. He said that without the permission of his parents he would not even look upon the face of Sita. Rama said, "I have received all these—my blood, my food, my head and my riches—as gifts from my parents, only. Therefore, I will follow the directions of my parents and act as per their command. Hearing Rama's reply, Emperor Janaka invited the parents of Rama, Emperor Dasarath and Queen Kausalya, and with their consent, performed the marriage of Sita with Rama.

When Rama was spending his days in the forest, going through a very difficult time, his brother Bharata went to the forest with all his retinue. Sage Vashista accompanied them and said, "Rama, without you, Ayodhya seems to me like a

forest and we don't want Ayodhya without you. We can't remain away from you, please come back and rule the kingdom." Rama replied, "Sage Vashista, excuse me if I am defying the commands of my guru, but I have to carry out the commands of my father. He wanted me to spend 14 years in the forest. Whatever may be the circumstances, I have to carry out his orders. If I do not fulfill the command of my father, I will have lost all moral values."

So moral values are most important, and they give light to our lives and our nation. This is the essence of all of our teachings. We must make an attempt to know the significance of the light of life. So Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara have no bodies. The forms that you see are all derived from the artists' imagination.

God's Form & Our Own Divinity

God assumes His form based on the feeling of the devotee. Water has no form, but it takes the form of the container in which it is held. If the container is a tumbler, water takes the form of a tumbler. If it is in a glass, water takes the form of the glass. Air has no form, but if present in a balloon, it takes the shape of the balloon. If air is in a football, it takes that shape. God has no form, but based on the "container" in which God is said to be held, God assumes that name and form.

The principle behind the five elements is also the principle of Divinity. Even people have the five elements in them, so the essence of the five elements expresses itself in you as the very process of breathing. I am not different from you. I am you, and you are I. This truth

is expressed in our breathing.

When you inhale, you say, "sooo," which means Divinity; and when you exhale, you say "hummm" that is the "I" principle in you. So with every inhalation and exhalation, you assert, "I am God, I am God, I am God." Each day of your life, you repeat this mantra 21,600 times. But you are not able to recognize this Divinity which is in such close proximity to you. So, you search everywhere to experience Divinity. Consequently, you must make every effort to know the Divinity that is present within you. Do not take the wrong path.

People believe that *raja guna* expresses qualities like anger and envy, but that is not correct. *Raja guna* stands for protection. It establishes high ideals. Today, we are going by worldly feelings and worldly interpretations, so we are not able to arrive at the right meaning.

Lust, Anger and Greed

For the people of Bharat (India), the classics—*Ramayana*, *Bhagavatha* and *Mahabharata*—are most important. These three holy texts speak of the deleterious effects of the qualities of lust, anger and greed (*kama*, *krodha* and *lobha*) on human beings.

In the *Ramayana*, Ravana was very powerful, but he also did great penance. There were none who could beat him in either his physical or his intellectual strengths. But such a powerful being as Ravana became a prey to lust. If we analyze the whole of the *Ramayana*, we will find that it teaches the lesson that lust ruins a person. Ravana was strong in all respects. But just as a small hole in a beautiful golden pot drains out all the liquid that it contains, it was the lust of

Ravana that ultimately caused his doom.

When we mention the name Ravana, we are referring to a person who is very wicked, a demon. When we mention the name of Rama, we refer to a person who is very noble, and whom we want to worship. How is it that we differentiate between these names? It is the conduct of the different persons which makes us think that one is wicked and the other is noble.

Rama stands for Truth; Rama had three characteristics:

- He was engaged in the service and the welfare of mankind.
- He taught that spiritual wisdom is most important in the universe.
- He had also shown perfect equanimity towards all.

Those are the reasons why he is regarded as God. By contrast, Ravana had ego. He thought that he was most powerful, and that there were none to challenge him. Thus, his ego and arrogance brought him to ruin.

In the *Bhagavatha*, Hiranyakashipu should be regarded as the greatest scientist. The modern scientists have discovered in recent times the nature of the five elements, but thousands of years before, Hiranyakashipu had perfect control over the five elements. He made many investigations. He could even reach the stars. But it was his anger toward God that led to his doom.

In the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana considered himself to be superior, so when the Pandava brothers asked him to give up at least five villages, he would not even give an inch of land. Because of this excessive greed, he was then doomed.

Thus lust, anger and greed are demonic qualities in you. But by realizing

the oneness of *sathwa*, *thamo* and *rajas gunas*, you can destroy those demonic qualities.

Devotion to Mother & Motherland

Embodiments of Love! Just as Brahma is the creator of the universe, so also, our mothers are the creators of us all.

We should, therefore, respect our mothers. One's own country is also called the "motherland." For this reason, Rama said, "Mother and motherland are greater than heaven." It is our duty to respect our mothers and our motherland. This is not only a duty, this is our goal in life. But today, possibly because of the attitude of the students or the result of their evil company, a tendency is fast developing to put more faith in the foreign countries and forget one's own country. Go to any country you like, undertake any job of your choice and earn money, but never forget your motherland. One who cannot speak well of his motherland and mother tongue, is as bad as a living corpse.

One day, after the victory in war, Sugreeva approached Rama and requested him to occupy the throne of Sri Lanka (The island of Sri Lanka, also known as Ceylon, is located in the Indian Ocean). His brother, Bharata, was already the King of Ayodhya. Lakshmana, another brother of Rama, agreed, saying, "Swami, Lanka is prosperous with wealth and gold. Already, the people of Sri Lanka have surrendered to you, so you should rule Sri Lanka." Rama then replied, "O madman, simply because a lady is strong and healthy and is beautiful, should I call her my mother? Just because my mother is weak, ugly and helpless, should I

neglect her? Even if she is unhealthy and weak, my mother is always my mother. Therefore, whatever may be the circumstances, I should love my motherland first. Whatever may be the condition of my mother, my country is my mother."

Imbibe Noble Ideals

Therefore, the students of today, in order to promote moral values, should imbibe all the noble ideals that they have received from the past, and by putting them into practice, should set right the standard of excellence. Ancient sages gave these sacred values an exalted position. They did not have an iota of selfishness in them. They had broad mindedness. The *Vedas* declared that just as the world is vast, our hearts should also be broad, and accordingly, the love that springs from these hearts should be all-embracing. Only then, will the idea of the whole world being one family, become a reality. That is what the *Vedas* said in the first instance.

*Let us move together,
Let us grow together,
Let us together
promote the knowledge
that we have acquired.
Let us not have any
conflict or malice that
disrupts this togetherness.*

Lastly, this verse ends with the words, *shanti, shanti, shanti* (peace, peace, peace), chanted three times. Why is *shanti* chanted three times? First, there is *shanti* at the level of the physical body, the next *shanti* is at the mental plane, and finally *shanti* at the *Atmic* (soul, the Divine) level. One should have peace in all three levels—the physical, the mental and the spiritual.

The whole world is one body (*deha*). The reflection of this body is the nation (*desha*). Therefore, every nation—and for that matter, everyone in this world—should live in peace. Thus, the prayer begins, “May all the worlds be happy. . .” (*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu. . .*) Even though we are so blessed with such a sacred heritage, today we have forgotten it, and we’re running after selfish pursuits. In the process, we have forgotten the teachings of the *Vedas*.

How to Begin

Embodiments of Love! You need not do any spiritual discipline (*sadhana*); you need not go on any pilgrimage; you need not do any worship. First, learn to respect your parents. Your happiness lies in the respect and regard that you show to your parents. Love them, serve them, follow their commands. If you do not like their suggestions, try to explain and convince them. Never develop the ego that your parents are illiterate or ignorant, and that you alone are intelligent and educated. After all, what is the value of your education?

*Even with education, a foolish person
Does not know his own true Self.
No matter how well-educated,
A mean person
Never changes his meanness.
All this education leads one to
Arguments and differences,
But it does not provide
The complete knowledge of Self.
You face death
Despite all the education
You have acquired.
You should learn the true education
Which confers immortality upon you.*

All the secular, physical, worldly knowledge (bookish knowledge) that you have acquired is only for your living, but not for your life. So, our lives are like a bird with two wings of love and service. Just as a bird soars up in the sky with the help of its wings, so too, you should attain noble heights by using your wings of love and service. If you lose one of the wings, you cannot reach the goal.

The strings of a veena are separate, but the veena is one. Similarly, this whole country is a veena, and the different faiths coexist. If any one of these strings is not tuned properly, then the veena produces a sound which is not pleasing to the ears. Therefore, we should wish for the well-being of all faiths. We should imbibe the good that exists in every faith.

We should engage ourselves in the service of society, but what sort of service are we doing today? We call it social service, but all the while we are interested in ourselves. We are born in society; we cannot live for a moment without society. Our well-being, our prosperity depends on the society, so service to society is service to one’s own self. When one says, “I am serving society.” That denotes a sense of ego. If you do not do service, the loss is yours, not society’s. If you serve, the gain is yours, but not society’s. So the loss and gain are yours only. Therefore, the youth should understand this principle of equanimity. What is the status of youth? It is that stage in life which comes and goes in the middle. It was not there in the beginning; it won’t last until the end. It comes in the middle just like the passing clouds. This stage of youth is a golden and a most sacred period in life.

Please turn to page 24

70th Birthday

He has made it so easy to see who He is,

He has removed the veil and shown Himself so clear.

As all look at the sheer grandeur:

*The discipline of the bhakta,**

The pure magnitude of it all,

The exquisite charm and infinite beauty,

*The international flavor and Atmic** explosion.*

He has made it so easy:

How He moves and never has missed a beat,

How He smiles and never once tasted defeat,

How He glides and never once had to think,

How He loves and entices us to surrender at His feet.

He has made it so easy:

Watch Him and see the Cosmos,

Examine Him and see the planets changing,

Know Him and understand life's meaning, and

Have Him and have everything.

On the 70th Birthday—to see God—has been so very easy.

—Michael Hollander
Montvale, New Jersey

* *Bhakta* is a person who is full of divine love and devotion to God.

** *Atmic* or *Atma* is one's true divinity, the soul which is the reality within the sheath of the body, the spark of God within.

Happenings During the Celebration

Divinity in Action

It was as if Swami's hand lifted us into the air as our charter flight left New York City. We felt His divine grace all the way to Puttaparthi. We sang *bhajans*, watched Sai videos, and shared stories. Even the Ganesha statue on the plane drank milk when it was fed! Before we knew it, we were in Puttaparthi.

The Giving

Swami is always giving, never taking. At our first *darshan*, sweets were distributed to everyone under the new pavilion in front of the *mandir* (temple). The giving continued—one day it was saris and purses to the teachers, and another day it was apples and nine-point code of conduct cards to those of us present in the pavilion. The rooms and food were free for everyone, from November 15 through the 24th. In addition, 70 cows were given to 70 farm families. The gifts were flowing from Swami like the pure water from the Water Project.

Entertainment for All

During this time, there were daily cultural programs, and Baba's divine discourses. Famous musicians and singers from India performed. Swami materialized sparkling necklaces for two of the performers.

World Conference

The Sixth World Conference was held from November 18th to the 22nd (see page 28 for more details). At the time of the Second World Conference in 1975,

there were 600 Sai Centers in 45 countries. In 1995, there were 1,700 Sai Centers in 137 countries including China, Korea, Croatia, Iran and Iraq. About 5,000 delegates attended this last conference of the 20th century.

Subcommittees were formed under the Spiritual, Educational, and Service Wings of the Sai Organization. At the opening of the Sixth World Conference, one of the speakers quoted Swami by saying that "Most devotees underestimate the importance of the Sathya Sai Baba Centers. It is the highest of the world's spiritual schools. If these centers were not in existence today, the world would be in utter ruin." "The Sai Organization is a movement away from the body and toward selflessness," said another speaker.

Divine Discourses

Swami said, "*Human life is rare, but even more rare is membership in the Sai Organization. One should say, 'I am the Sai Organization,' not 'I am a member...' Sai first and self last. We must believe and accept the Sai Organization as sadhana (spiritual discipline) in our journey to the godhead. This necessitates interaction with the community.*"

In one of His many discourses, Swami said that when the conscience is not clear, we are troubled. "*There is no better work than the Sathya Sai Organization,*" He said, "*In no other organization can you see such projects as the Drinking Water Project. The Sai Organization*

is focused, so we can share this divine love with everybody." He went on to say, *"Many work in the organization, but without unity. If there is no unity, there is enmity. Sai Centers with full harmony are rare. We must seek Sai and give up arguments. With unity comes Divinity."* In one discourse, He directed us to, *"Bring your doubts about the organization to me. Bhagavan will take away all doubts."*

As devotees, it is our goal to make the Sai Organization a true reflection of His love. Swami can carry out His mission without any assistance, but He is giving us an opportunity for spiritual transformation and self-realization.

The Water Project

Swami's mind works with lightning speed, and He is a perfectionist, always raising our standards. The Drinking Water Project is an example. Sri P. V. Narashimha Rao, Prime Minister of India, inaugurated the Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project. For two years, the Indian government had promised water to the state of Andhra Pradesh, but could not initiate the project. On November 23, 1994, Swami willed the project to happen. He did so with love as He pointed out to us in a discourse. People believed Him, but could not conceive of such a huge undertaking. Now, one year later, it is a reality. *"Love is the key,"* Swami said. *"Rivers are many, water is one. This is truth. You thirst for God, drink this pure water and you will be blissful."*

Ladies Day

For the first time in the history of an Avatar, a day was designated to hon-

or women. November 19, was "Ladies Day." It began with a procession of women following Swami into the Poorna Chandra Auditorium. We sang in many languages, *"Like the rivers we flow, like the sun we shine. In harmony of His love divine. Daughters of the earth unite."*

In His divine discourse that day, Baba said the following about women: *"Women are architects of the world. In all creation, women are very superior. Wherever a woman is worshipped, there are present all forms of Divinity. Woman is the Lakshmi, the wife, the head of the house, the half of a man. These are very significant titles and are eternal for all time. Men should respect women. When women shed tears, the house goes to ruin. Look at the house. It takes the shape of the woman in it. . . . Women are the embodiments of sacrifice. They will go to any length of sacrifice for the sake of their children. Men do not have this sense of sacrifice. Women are the very embodiments of devotion."*

The Mother

"The mother, not the father, pushes a child on the right path. Even in ancient days, the first guru of a child was the mother. The mother has first place. It is she who carries the child for nine months and goes through pain to give birth. If one is not the recipient of a mother's grace, one's life is affected. She is the very foundation. 'Amma' (mother) is a child's very first word. The mother has the authority. It is she who shows the father. This is an ancient tradition. Do not hurt the mother. If she is hurt, no one prospers."

"Mothers are full of compassion. If women are good, then everyone is good."

Today, it is difficult to get good company. Tell me your company, and I'll tell you who you are. You take on the qualities of that company. However, women need to lessen their talk nowadays. They don't know how to acquire peace inside. If women imbibe good qualities, men will too. Man is conquering the world but not himself. You cannot achieve anything outside yourself, unless you control what is in you. Our actions are all thoughts. Our thoughts are the mind. What is the cause of the mind? If the thoughts are pure, everything outside is pure. You must encourage the human values of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Nonviolence.

Love is the Answer

"What is Sathya (Truth)? It is those words spoken from the heart. The heart is full of love whatever you do, Prema (Love) is the very foundation. You must foster love. Anger squeezes out the love like a saw that cuts down the life of man. Jealousy and anger are diseases that have spread through the whole world. The only medicine is the thought of God. You have to strive for this. There is no easier path than this. And it is only if the woman is good that the child will be good. Then, nature will prosper. The world is in chaos today. It is necessary to increase the sense of peace and harmony. The home is the very basis for this. If there is no peace in the home, there is none in the town, the state, or the world.

"Today there is confusion. Husbands and wives are fighting. It is harmony and love between men and women that brings peace in the family. It is the parents' fault if children don't go the right way. We have to see good in others. If

you look for bad, you see bad. One only sees faults in others today. Such people can be likened to dogs. Don't be dogs. If women take the right path, so also, will men. She is the leader. If she has good thoughts, she can change the man. Today, women must be courageous, choose the path of truth, and bring peace and harmony to the nation."

Service, Service, Service

There were many opportunities to do service at the ashram: Canteens for food, both Indian and Western, were available in a variety of locations. A comprehensive medical camp with 40 medical doctors was set up along with tents for Homeopathy and Ayurvedic medicine. There were also opportunities to serve in security, registration, and making banners of various countries for the 70th birthday procession.

The Hospital

A number of speakers talked about the new Super Specialty Hospital. One doctor said he had been asked if he'd seen any big miracles there. He replied, "What greater miracle is there than this institute itself? In barely six months it was built, and two cardiac surgeries were performed. I was there, but how it happened I do not know!" Infection and mortality rates are some of the lowest in the world at this hospital. It is setting an international standard. Other doctors are visiting from around the world. Here, it is difficult to tell who is the attendant and who is the patient because of the love and devotion that is exhibited. Swami said, "Patients have never seen such a hospital. It is so beautiful, they forget their diseases." All medical care there is free.

He also said, "Doctors should not study for money. Money comes and goes. Morality comes and grows."

1996, Year of Truth

When we think we have heard everything, Swami instills in us new ideas, making us go deeper into spiritual knowledge. From now until the year 2000, Baba's 75th Birthday, each year will focus on one of the five values. 1996 is the Year of Truth. Baba talked much about truth. He said, "Anger, jealousy, and greed are diseases responsible for our miseries today. We say, 'Someone said something to me, and I'm angry!'" Swami says, "Let them say anything. Be fair and patient. This cures the disease. Anger, greed, and jealousy cut the life span short. Attachment also shortens life. If you hold a handkerchief up for a long time, you feel pain. Drop it and feel relief. From attachment we say, 'I love you. I love you.' We don't know the true meaning of love. 'I love you' has no meaning. It is only attachment. Love of family and wealth is only temporary. It cannot be called love. Love originates from the heart. That is divine love, and such love is rare today. Man wants to be happy. Divine love is nearer than your mother. Man has forgotten this love. Love is the name of God. Live in love. Love is Divine. This is Truth. Truth is God."

"Everything is a worry today. Why worry? What is the shape of worry? When you know God, all anxieties go away, everything is bliss. Worry is a mental illness and leads to physical disease."

Know Yourself

Baba asked, "What is the use of doing anything when you don't know your-

self? You are God. You are beyond misery. . . . Follow the conscience. There are two forms of 'I,' 'I am', and the 'eye.' 'Eye' is the body. 'I' is the Self, Atma (the indwelling Divinity). You say 'I,' but is it the body or the spiritual Self? 'I' is not the body. 'I' is not my hand, not my mind, not my kerchief." (Here Swami picked up His handkerchief and raised it into the air.) "We should inquire like this, only then, will you have a true vision of Self." Swami then said loudly in English, "I want quality, not quantity!"

Watching the Avatar

Baba presented some of His discourses in the dazzling, enchanted, dream-like mandir in the new pavilion from which hang large chandeliers. At one point, He looked up at all the lights and said, "So many bulbs here. I'm like a bulb. The current is one, that is unity in Divinity." He continued, "Beings are many, breath is one. Cloth is different, yarn is one. Jewelry is many, gold is one. Nations are many, heart is one. This is the one divine principle."

Next, Swami held up a beautiful pink flower and said, "Here is a flower. You can see the flower, but you cannot see the fragrance. Think of the body as a flower and Divinity as the fragrance. When truth is full of love, human values manifest. The reason we do not comprehend the feeling of Divinity is due to body attachment. The body is only an instrument. The mind should be cool as moonlight, the heart soft as butter, and words sweet as nectar. Today, we use harsh words. Instead, we need to use 'heart' words. Sweetness is unity in Divinity."

"If we see bad and good, this is not truth (for it represents two). Truth is one

and the same, not two. Truth is beyond time and space. Experience this. When a mother serves food we say, 'Thank you'. (implying there are two beings). But truth is one, not two. So in the Sai Organization, do not use the words 'thank you.' Duality is not truth. 'I am God' is not truth. It is two, not one. 'I am I.' 'God is God.' This is Truth.

"To put Truth into action, we must practice. All that we do is a result of practice. Today, we don't think of the conscience, only the senses. That is not Truth. Truth is only from the heart. Heart is compassion. Practice this love. It is not selfish. Self lives by getting and forgetting. Love lives by giving and forgiving. Where there is love, there is no hatred. To do this, you need self-confidence and faith. If you do not have faith in yourself, what do you have? Self-realization depends on self-confidence."

About Food

Baba also spoke about food. He said, "Bad habits spoil company. One who smokes, drinks alcohol, and eats the flesh ruins himself and his family." He said, "Eating animal food gives a person animal qualities. As is the food, so is the head. Even as you eat flesh, they kill more. Give it up immediately. Help ever, hurt never."

New Meaning

Swami gave us new meaning to His name, SAI. "S = Spiritual Transformation. A = Association (keeping good company). I = Individual Transformation. Then the whole world will be happy. And the way to do this is through S = Seva or service. A = Adoration, devotion and love, and I = Illumination or spiritual inqui-

ry. Sai teaches these three." He said, "If any of these is missing, it is not Sai. Sai is the combination of all three."

One of the cultural programs was presented by devotees from Greece. Swami gave them an interview last summer and talked about Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander the Great. The play was based on the stories of these great philosophers. After the play, the Sai choir, a group of people from different countries, performed. They sang "Let the heavens be reflected on the earth, Lord, so that the earth may turn into heaven." Dancers from Germany dressed as *gopis* in the magical evening performance.

Swami's Students

One night, Swami's students performed a play at the stadium. The play was written and directed by Baba and was entitled, "Sai Glory." In a collection of episodes, Swami brought together the essence of His discourses during the birthday. In one scene, a young boy is found to need heart surgery or he will die, but his father is a school clerk with little money. The hospital would charge 30,000 rupees. The father is in anguish, but the boy says cheerfully, "Father, do not cry. So long as I am happy, what is the importance if it is a short or long life?" (In all His discourses, Swami talked about the importance of being happy.) At the same time in another scene, a village Muslim is making a pilgrimage, and he nearly dies from a lack of water. Swami's students who have stayed in the village save him with water from the Drinking Water Project. In a third scene a Buddhist is looking for enlightenment. All major religions were

brought into the play, and in the end, the group of people find themselves at Prasanthi Nilayam receiving Swami's *darshan*. The boy is cured by Swami and doesn't need surgery at the Super Speciality Hospital. After the play, Baba materialized a beautiful sparkling necklace for the boy who played the part.

And Of Course, the Birthday

On November 23, we watched the grand parade of flags from 137 countries. There were bands and pageantry. Sai Gita, Baba's elephant, led the procession. Then came Swami, riding in a silver chariot, wearing a white robe. He was radiant and happy, waving blessings to all the devotees. On the stage, Sri Shankar Dayal Sharma, President of India, sat beside Baba. A helicopter dropped confetti, streamers, and flower petals over the crowd. It was estimated that over 2,000,000 people attended. In the evening, the new sound and light stage was lit for performers from India and England.

Dana Gillespie sang "Sai, We Sigh for You," "Big Daddy Blues," and "Happy Birthday Baba." There were brilliant fireworks in the sky. The administration building and the spiritual museum on the hill, were lit like white jewels against the dark sky. Swami gently swayed on the *jhoola* (swing). He wore a deep red robe.

Throughout the birthday celebration, many people commented on how happy Baba looked. Indeed, He radiated happiness. In a discourse He said, "*People say 'Happy Birthday Swami.' I am always happy. No need to wish happiness. Bhagavan knows happiness. Bhagavan is happiness itself. Follow your conscience. This is the path to bliss.*"

Love's Energy

The energy of love has been released on to the planet. The manifested God is no other than Sathya Sai Baba. Prasanthi Nilayam is a mini universe, a confluence of many cultures. Never before has this happened in the history of the world.

People are groping in the dark, searching for peace and enlightenment. They see in Swami new hope for life, so they are flocking to the Lord in dramatically increasing numbers. We are blessed that He has given us the wisdom to recognize His Divinity and to be in direct contact with Him. Swami said, "*The People who are coming to Prasanthi Nilayam are willing to undergo discomfort because of their intense devotion.*"

There is no publicity or advertising. People are coming like rivers searching for their source. Swami's greatest miracle is the transformation He is bringing about in millions of people all over the world. The 21st century will be the Golden Era. Here in Prasanthi Nilayam, we see an example of what the world will be like at that time. Different races, ages and religions unified under the divine Master. We have returned home from the 70th birthday, transformed. We are not the same as when we went.

If we do not live in bliss and happiness now, we may never have another chance in the life of an Avatar. Swami asks us for intense devotion. Only then can we please Him. Our lives must be His message.

If we love Baba and want to feel His love for us, we must work to transform ourselves. He tells us. "*Love is God. Live in love.*" Sincere devotion is the only way to Swami's heart.

—Cathy Daub
Medford, New Jersey

“Patience, Patience”

Last year, I was sitting in the cafeteria at Brindavan when a middle-aged woman stormed in, obviously upset. She sat down at the table next to mine, and cried out to her companions, “Why doesn’t someone write a book about how it is **now** to visit Sai Baba instead of those books written 20 years ago, about the many interviews those people had? I’ve come here three times in the past two years, and Sai Baba hasn’t even looked at me or taken my letters. The only thing those early books do is totally mislead people about what to expect.”

After eavesdropping on this woman’s conversation, I reluctantly had to inwardly agree that, yes, things are different at the ashram than they were 20 years ago; and, yes, there are more people—many, many, more people—vying for Sai’s attention, for a look, a glance, and that most coveted of all, an interview!

But as I sat there reflecting on what she had said—and I could understand her frustration—I realized that she hadn’t recognized what is the same, what hasn’t changed. What has not changed is Sai Baba, Himself. The power, the beauty, the magnificence have not changed. The Messenger has not changed, nor has His message of seeking Divinity within oneself and, thereby, realizing a life of bliss and peace.

In fact, He has become stronger with age—if that is possible. When one looks at the faces of religious figures throughout history, one can see the intensifying of those kingly qualities in those who had truly trodden the path of *dharma* (righteousness). And Sai Baba is so much more than they! Here is the Master of the Universe. What good is it to read His books and not understanding His message? If one believes in His omniscience, His omnipresence, then He is

with you no matter where you are. When Swami says, “*No one comes whom I have not called*,” that is the truth. Of the five billion people on earth, think of the enormous gift of knowing about the Avatar, let alone being called into His presence.

Did she not heed the stories of so many devotees who told her that part of coming to see the Avatar was the possibility, nay the certainty, that she would be put in the cauldron to be melted down and remade closer to God’s image? Was she not prepared to do battle with the ego demons that were keeping her from her True Self, the divine *Atma* in the core of her being? Did she not hear Sai Baba, as He daily passed people on the *darshan* line saying, “*Patience, patience?*” Did she not realize that every word Swami utters is usually a message for all? Was she holding Him to a timetable of her own?

This expectation for Sai Baba to accommodate some inner vision was particularly tested at the time of the 70th birthday. For those devotees who had never been to India before, it was an astonishing experience. The crowds, the logistics of feeding the multitudes, the dust, the heat, the smells, the distance from the devotee to Sai Baba in the stadium—all these and more, tested the fortitude and devotion of the most earnest spiritual seeker.

But not to realize that Sai Baba knows the heart of each and every devotee is not to understand His Divinity. He is in your heart, always. Whatever you think, whatever you feel, He knows. You are His. Does a mother not know her child? Does God not know His devotees? Those who went to the birthday to seek His glory, must have found some of their own in the process. It takes patience, patience.

—Lila Youngs
Ojai, California

On Sai Retreats

Bonding

A primary motivation for gathering together in Sai's name is to retreat from the hubbub, to quiet ourselves. First, we bond into a unit with chants and songs. Then, we remember His teachings, and renew our dedication to follow them. We focus on Him, evoke His presence, bask in it. We are uplifted. That initial bonding between us, brings forth some sort of higher process or inner process of deepening contact with Him and of work by Him upon us. In unseen and immeasurable ways, it seems to occur at these gatherings. It is perceived more by some than by others, but it does occur nevertheless.

Some retreats last only two hours—our weekly Sai Center meetings.

Some retreats last only half a day—our monthly or quarterly *satsangs* (spending time with good company).

Some retreats last a full day—our annual celebrations.

Some are day-long *satsangs*.

Some retreats last a full weekend—our annual events and conferences.

However, they all begin with *Om* and sacred songs to rein in our minds, regroup us in our hearts, to bond us into a unit, and set us all in a projected direction, so that we flow together as one. Latecomers generally arrive “ungathered,” agitated by traffic and rushed, jarring the bond and fragmenting the energy. “Early leavers” leave a hole, a sense of loss and “spilled” energy.

Even in business meetings we see this, or club meetings, or therapy groups.

People gather for a common goal. Someone says an invocation, or tells a joke, or leads a patriotic song. With this prayer, laughter or music, bonding among the members has occurred. Then discussion begins, a latecomer crashes in and has to be filled-in while others wait. He or she brings a different energy, a tension, a subtle antipathy that does not quite resonate with everyone else. We all know the discomfort of inadvertent tardiness, that feeling of being an intruder, an outsider. After that group has bonded, we are outsiders!

Swami expects of us “discipline, duty, devotion.” If we are self-disciplined enough to see and follow through on our duty, then devotion is released. Self-discipline enables us to determine which retreats are appropriate for us to join. So those who, by constraints of conflicting responsibilities, cannot arrive on time and stay the full two hours, might consider foregoing the weekly center meetings. Those who cannot afford a full afternoon, could choose to forgo that *satsang* and stay with the shorter Sai Center meetings.

Those who can only attend one-day, could realize that the weekend retreat is not for them and instead, mark all the single-day *satsangs* on their calendars. It is not a matter of rules; it is a matter of consideration for others and of self-discipline. Perhaps it is in appreciation of our primary *dharma* (duties, right actions) which take priority over our retreat *dharma*.

If we wish to attend an adult retreat of any length which we determine to be not age-appropriate for our children, then we could choose one of the following alternatives:

- Seek out the children's specially designed retreats.

- Find the same baby-sitter who looks after the children when we go on vacation, to a concert, a ball game, etc.

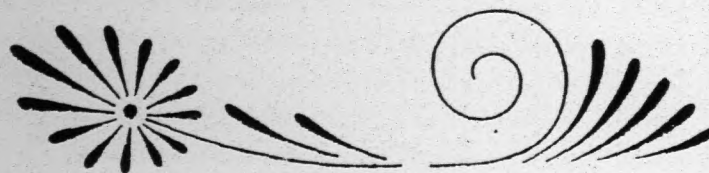
- Remember, when we desire to share the retreat's spiritual benefits with our children, that the greatest spiritual benefit to a child might be an inspired par-

ent, or the example of kindled love and *dharma* in that parent.

- Remember that a rested and uplifted parent might provide better parenting, and that the adult retreat for "adults only" might be just what the doctor ordered.

Whether we arrive late, leave early or attend the full session, our regard and respect for one another can be maintained as a loving welcome and a joyous reunion.

—Susie Salguero
Ojai, California



Faith and Courage

Even when uttering trivial things about yourself,

Lay your hand on your heart.

By laying your hand on your heart and saying "I,"

you are not referring to the body,

but to the spirit, the very Self, the Atma.

When someone affirms with conviction

that he or she has no fear, whatever the difficulties

and misfortunes, he or she is revealing self-confidence,

then the faith is in his or her own Spirit.

That is the basis of courage.

—Printed Courtesy of
Bal Vikas Magazine for Children
Ages 1 to 99, No. 3, Italy

Baba's Surprise Blessing

Annual Texas Retreat

The Texas Sathya Sai Baba Centers held their annual regional retreat over the Labor Day weekend in September, at Harambe Oaks Ranch, a guest ranch about 25 miles west of San Marcos. The assembly was hosted by members of the Austin, Texas Center who worked with great devotion as they faced a task made more formidable because this was the first conference they had sponsored, and their membership was not large. The facilities were superior at the Ranch. The Austin group did an outstanding job—arranging the program, serving the group of 315 with excellent food, constructing a tastefully adorned altar, decorating the auditorium with artfully drawn, large wall decals illustrating the symbols for the *Sarva Dharma** logo and *Om*, maintaining a smoothly running sound system, and facilitating devotional singing through the innovative use of projection equipment that allowed all to easily read the *bhajan* words from the wall on either side of the altar.

As it happened, that was also an inaugural conference for our two resource speakers, Rita and Robert Bruce, who have, for many years, given talks about their experiences with Sathya Sai Baba. All seemed to agree that the weekend was a great success. The spirit of unity and devotion was felt by both adults and children.

At the conclusion of the conference, about 6:00 p.m. Sunday, volunteers from

various Sai Centers performed initial clean up duties, but the major job remained for the members of the Austin Center. Although tired, the host group packed up all their equipment, checked the cabins, and carefully cleaned the main lodge before leaving that night.

The Big "Mess"

Although this was not within the plan of the Austin Center, it appears that the events of the weekend conference were not truly over on Sunday night. The operators of Harambe Oaks Ranch later reported that on Monday morning, they were very surprised—and quite a bit perturbed—to discover a problem at the big lodge where the main events of the program had been held. The entry porch and the first floor lounge were covered with a uniform layer of whitish "dust." They had never before seen anything resembling it, although the road, about 200 feet away at the foot of the hill, can be rather dusty at times. Ms. Judy Rinker, one of the Ranch owners, said that they could not blame the Sai Baba group for the problem, because she had checked the lodge herself shortly after the last of the Austin members left and found things in order. Thus, she was very much at a loss the next morning to account for the "big mess" that had to be cleaned up.

But it was the pattern of the deposit that was especially difficult to explain! Finding the porch to be thoroughly covered with dust did not seem too strange,

**Sarva Dharma* is the symbol of the Sathya Sai Baba Organization. It depicts the unity of the world religions. See the cover of this issue.

but the steps leading to and away from it had remained clear. Furthermore, the inside presented another puzzle. Although the door from the lounge to the outside was closed, the Harambe workers found that no surface in the lounge was untouched by the fine ash-like deposit, including the floor, the shelves, and all the chairs and couches. At the same time, ash was not found in the adjacent room, even though no physical barrier separated the two rooms which adjoin one another at a wide, rectangular arch.

It took many hours for members of the ranch staff to clean the lodge with a combination of brooms and vacuum cleaners, an undertaking that they chose to postpone until Wednesday because of the magnitude of the job.

At that point, no Sai Baba devotee was aware of the remarkable display of unexplained dust that had descended upon selected portions of the lodge at the Harambe Oaks Ranch. Information about the strange phenomenon was acquired only because of another unusual happening. It appeared that Joe and Dipti Patel of the Austin Center realized after they arrived home, that they must have left one picture of Sai Baba at the chapel on the Ranch grounds. Consequently, the next Saturday, the Patels



Aware of Baba's unusual *leelas*, they speculated . . .

returned to claim their picture. As they were driving the miles to the ranch, Joe and Dipti deliberated about why they had been so careless as to leave one of Sai Baba's pictures behind. Being aware of Baba's unusual *leelas* (divine play), they speculated, that perhaps there was some hidden purpose behind their forgetfulness. Upon talking to the ranch owners, they learned about the difficulty the staff had in cleaning up the strange dust.

Ms. Rinker was most surprised at the great excitement her story elicited from the Patels, and was amazed that they were immediately ready to offer an explanation. It was then that she learned that the deposit she sighted, even at a distance, as she approached the Great Oak Lodge, must not have been ordinary dust. Instead of being a curse, the strange phenomenon appeared to have an auspicious blessing from Sathya Sai Baba, a Holy Man, whom she knew next to nothing about. She was interested to hear about the *vibhuti*, that among Hindus is regarded as a sacred ash and that frequently is produced from nowhere by Sai Baba to give to His devotees as His momenta or "calling card." Sometimes this happens even at remote sites (apparently including her own ranch). Although incredulous, Judy Rinker was fascinated and admitted that not only had she never before seen such a collection of dust at the lodge, she was totally unable to explain the peculiar pattern of the fine deposit.

As a member of the Houston Center, I was unaware of this extraordinary follow-up to the conference I had attended until receiving a letter from an Austin friend. Although I was very impressed, I retained enough of the curi-

osity instilled by my training as a Biophysicist to want to confirm the details so enthusiastically reported to me. Thus, I spoke by phone and also wrote to one of the owners of the Ranch. Not only did Ms. Rinker from the ranch concur with the information as described above, after reading the initial version of this account, but she added a final remarkable postscript.

"Several days after the Labor Day weekend, the staff was sitting at a picnic table outdoors. Everything had been cleaned, and the grounds and dining area had been completely picked up. Then, I happened to look down near the table and there was a Sai Baba packet with his picture on the outside. I reached down and gingerly picked it up and opened it. Inside were ashes. We all would swear that there had been no packet there previous to my discovering that particular one!"

I am fully ready to agree with the concluding comment in the letter from the Austin devotee who first alerted me to this special happening, "Isn't that a great Baba story?!"

The event, indeed, seems worth sharing with a larger audience.

—Allen T. Ansevin, Ph.D.
Houston, Texas Sai Center

People always become good or bad by the company they keep. If therefore, we get into sacred company, we will acquire sacred qualities. . . .

If dust comes in contact with wind, it will go high up even though it has no wings to fly. The same dust flows to the lowest depths when it comes in contact with water. Thus, the company we keep determines whether we go up or down. Good company results in a calm and peaceful life.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse in 1978

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osity instilled by my training as a Biophysicist to want to confirm the details so enthusiastically reported to me. Thus, I spoke by phone and also wrote to one of the owners of the Ranch. Not only did Ms. Rinker from the ranch concur with the information as described above, after reading the initial version of this account, but she added a final remarkable postscript.

"Several days after the Labor Day weekend, the staff was sitting at a picnic table outdoors. Everything had been cleaned, and the grounds and dining area had been completely picked up. Then, I happened to look down near the table and there was a Sai Baba packet with his picture on the outside. I reached down and gingerly picked it up and opened it. Inside were ashes. We all would swear that there had been no packet there previous to my discovering that particular one!"

I am fully ready to agree with the concluding comment in the letter from the Austin devotee who first alerted me to this special happening, "Isn't that a great Baba story?!"

The event, indeed, seems worth sharing with a larger audience.

—Allen T. Ansevin, Ph.D.
Houston, Texas Sai Center

People always become good or bad by the company they keep. If therefore, we get into sacred company, we will acquire sacred qualities. . . .

If dust comes in contact with wind, it will go high up even though it has no wings to fly. The same dust flows to the lowest depths when it comes in contact with water. Thus, the company we keep determines whether we go up or down. Good company results in a calm and peaceful life.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse in 1978

Sai Conferences and Retreats for 1996

<i>Date and Region</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Information</i>
<i>May 17-19 Pacific Region South Region #8</i>	<i>Pilgrim Pines 39570 Glen Road Yucaipa, California (near Redlands)</i>	<i>Harshad Patel 1118 East Colorado Blvd. Glendale, CA 91205 (818) 952-9600, fax(818) 952-9600</i>
<i>May 24-27 Memorial Day weekend Mid-Atlantic Region #2</i>	<i>Camp Akiba Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania</i>	<i>Rajen Ghayal 5 Foxcroft Drive Marlboro, NJ 07746 (908) 536-5775</i>
<i>May 24-27 Memorial Day weekend Northeast Region #1</i>	<i>Russell Sage College Troy, New York (near Albany)</i>	<i>Peter Goldberg 398 Wilton Road West Ridgefield, CT 06877 (203) 438-7511, fax(914) 764-1008</i>
<i>May 24-27 Memorial Day weekend South Central Region #4</i>	<i>Camp Wyman Eureka, Missouri (near St. Louis)</i>	<i>Venu Gopal 811 Lakeshore Drive O'Fallon, IL 62269 (618) 624-5892</i>
<i>May 24-27 Memorial Day weekend Southwest Region #9</i>	<i>Camp Charles Pearlstein 3400 Copper Basin Rd. Prescott, Arizona</i>	<i>Nula Falvey 717 West Virginia Phoenix, AZ 85007 (602) 258-6470, fax(602) 258-0677</i>
<i>July 4-7 Independence Day weekend Pacific Region North Region #6</i>	<i>Enchanted Acres 1151 Summit Loop Rd. Grants Pass, Oregon</i>	<i>Wilma Bronkey or anyone 1151 Summit Loop Rd. Grants Pass, OR 97527 (503) 479-9066, fax(541) 479-2997</i>

<i>July 5-7 Independence Day weekend Pacific Region South Region #8</i>	<i>Casa de Maria Montecito, California (near Santa Barbara)</i>	<i>Susie Salguero P. O. Box 1283 Ojai, CA 93024 (805) 646-4932</i>
<i>August 30-September 2 Labor Day weekend Southwest Region #9</i>	<i>Bodhi Mandala Jemez Springs, New Mexico (near Albuquerque)</i>	<i>Elaine Hausman 18 Rockridge Road Cerrillos, NM 87010 (505) 471-4441, fax(505) 473-7980</i>
<i>August 30-September 2 Labor Day weekend South Central Region #4</i>	<i>Austin, Texas (location not established at the time of publication)</i>	<i>K. C. Chennappan 11915 Stonehollow Dr., Apt. 928 Austin, TX 78758 (512) 835-6568</i>
<i>August 30-September 2 Labor Day weekend North Central Region #5</i>	<i>Camp Hastings Chicago, Illinois</i>	<i>D. K. Majundar 511 North Grant Street Westmont, IL 60559 (708) 968-0889</i>
<i>September 20-22 Northern California & Nevada Region #7</i>	<i>Camp La Honda Santa Cruz Mnts., California (between San Francisco & Santa Cruz)</i>	<i>Suzy Mendenhall 6060 Nice Terrace Fremont, CA 94555 (510) 494-0999</i>
<i>October 4-6 Pacific Region South Region #8</i>	<i>Cedar Glen, California (near Julian in San Diego County)</i>	<i>Joanne Santangelo 4588 "A" West Point Loma Blvd. San Diego, CA 92107 (619) 224-8471</i>
<i>October 25-27 Pacific Region North Region #6</i>	<i>Silver Creek Falls Conference Center, Oregon (near Salem)</i>	<i>Lana Steele 1402 22nd Street N.E., Apt. 531 Auburn, WA 98002 (206) 235-9041</i>

This is the time when one should equip oneself fully with sacred ideals for life's long journey.

The "I" and the "Eye"

You speak of birthday. You say, "my birthday." Who am I? Without putting this question to yourselves, the results are that you are identifying with the body. When you are having a pain in the stomach, you refer to your stomach as, "my stomach." In the same fashion, you say, "my senses, my mind, my intelligence." If all these things are mine, then who am I? When you say, "my kerchief," you mean that this kerchief is separate from you. So also, when you say "my birthday," it means that you are separate and distinct from the body. Therefore, body, mind, senses, intellect—all these are instruments. You are the master of all these. You are the real "I." You should recognize this "I".

There is the one single-letter "I", and there is one three-lettered "eye." They are pronounced alike. The three-lettered "eye" refers to your body with all its three attributes. The one-lettered "I" refers to the *Atma*. Try to know the single-lettered "I", then there will be no need to know about the three-lettered "eye". The whole animate and inanimate world is God. There is no giving or taking from God, it all comes from your heart.

Render Service

Embodiments of Love! In this conference, delegates from various countries have participated. What is the ideal of this conference? It is that we should render service. Wherever there is need, we should dedicate our body, mind, wealth

and everything for the service of mankind. Without being a servant, you cannot become a leader. Consider yourselves to be servants—not masters.

Our ancients prayed for the rivers to be full and to provide water for the fields. What we should pray for is not the river, but for the rains. When the rain comes, the rivers will fill. Considering society to be God, if we serve society, it will be service to God, and all of your desires will be fulfilled.

No Birthday Ornaments

Today is the 70th birthday of this body. What you should remember here is that Swami does not need anything. He does not expect anything from you, not even a small piece of cloth. Devotees, because of their devotion, want to bring many things to Swami and to serve Swami. Swami is yours. He is not separate from you. You are not separate from Swami. This is the intimate, inseparable relationship between you and me. You should serve the backward areas and villages of the country.

Some bring jewels to Swami. Why do you bring all the jewels to me and hide the real beauty? You go on decorating; you go on garlanding every idol and hide the real beauty of the idol. What is the real ornament for God? Bliss is the real ornament, all others are artificial. It is the natural form that lends beauty. Never bring such things as jewels in the future, do not even entertain such thoughts. Those who have brought them should not think otherwise. All the jewels that you have brought here should be put to auction right now, and the money derived should be spent for the Water Project, for the welfare of the peo-

ple. These things should not even be brought to Prashanthi Nilayam. I have never asked you for anything. However, I will be happy if you render service to mankind by any means. Spend your money for selfless service. Wherever there is a water shortage, try to remove that shortage. Whenever there is need for education and health care, spend your money there in a rightful way. Do good for the society, but not for any individual. India is a collective entity. Whatever we do, it should be for the collective good. We should keep in mind the welfare of the society, but not the welfare of the individual as our goal. An individual cannot become a society, so we should make an effort to serve a large number of people within society.

Drinking Water Project

Today, besides these ornaments, you have also brought money. This money is to be utilized to complete the leftover work of the Drinking Water Project which envisions providing for the whole of Anantapur District. All problems of Rayalaseema (a very poor area) should be eradicated completely. This is an area which is almost a desert. Water is not available there, so how can one think of planting anything? Without trees, life will not survive. The oxygen provided by the trees constitutes our life-breath. The carbon dioxide released by us is consumed by the trees. This cycle is essential for the survival of our lives. Without vegetation, people cannot survive. For mankind, water is life. In recognition of this truth, I have been planning for many years. For health, the heart is important; for education, the head is important; and for the body, water is important. All

these three should be offered free. These are the gifts of God. They should not be sold as business items.

Just as oil is the life of a lamp, so also, love is the life of mankind. A lamp without oil and a life without love bring only darkness. Along with your own happiness, all people should be made to feel happy. Keeping this in view, engage yourselves in service.

Serve the Organization & Society

Embodiments of Love! God resides in you as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara representing the three attributes of *sathwa*, *rajas* and *thamas*. Leaving the God that is within your reach, you are running around, looking for Him elsewhere. The God within you is definitely within your reach. Then, where lies the problem? I am holding this kerchief in my hand. I am big, and the kerchief is so small. So also, when you are holding God inside you, you are mighty, and God is so small. When you are so big, your behavior also should be majestic and do great deeds.

Therefore, from this day on, our organization should expand and spread all over the world. Forgetting our individual differences, we should strive for the welfare of the society. In whichever village, region or country we are, we should participate in service activities. The participants of 137 countries are here. So many people have gathered, and how much work are we able to do? The output of work in relation to our numbers speaks of our quality.

There are poor people in every country. Such poor people are Narayanas (gods). Serve them. Everyone is ready to serve the rich. The poor and needy

are the embodiments of God who need service. Therefore, plant such noble ideas in the field of your heart, let them grow into trees. Under the cool shade of those trees, spend your days happily. This is the only birthday gift Swami wants. You should be happy. You should be ideal examples to others. When you return to your individual countries after this conference, each day improve and expand our organization. Only then, can you call yourselves devotees.

Conclusion

Do not hurt or misuse the principles of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara within you. Doing that, you will be committing a sin. Therefore, respect your mother, father and teacher as Bhrama, Vishnu and Maheswara, being aware that the God you adore, the God you love is within you as Eternal Truth, so you should lead sacred lives. God is *Sathyam*, *Sivam*, *Sundaram*. *Sathyam* is truth; *Sivam* is auspiciousness, and *Sundaram* is beauty. Plato, the Greek philosopher, said, "Goodness is God's truth and beauty." Nurture these sacred feelings in your heart. Dedicate your body to the service of humanity, and preserve the sanctity and greatness of your nation.

There should be a perennial flow of water in Rayalaseema 365 days a year. Rayalaseema, a land of stones and rocks, is the poorest of the five provinces of Andhra Pradesh. It should be a land of diamonds and gems. This is the collective responsibility of all, not of one individual. Can you make a garland with just one flower? Therefore, each of you should become a flower in the garland. Then, I will be the thread that passes through all these flowers and holds the

garland together. What is the use of the thread without the flowers?

Consider yourselves to be the children of God. You are all one human race. Do not give room to differences on the basis of caste, creed or faith. Each of you belongs to the one human race. We should imbibe the spirit of one caste of humanity, one religion of love, and one language of the heart. Let it be any language, it does not matter. In Telugu you refer to water as *neeru*; Tamilians call it *thanni*; in Hindi they say *pani*; in English it is water; and in Sanskrit it is *vari*. The names are different, but water is the same. So also, Divinity is one. Develop faith; do not hate any religion. The followers of all faiths should behave like brothers and sisters. Inculcate lofty ideals in your lives and make Swami happy.

Many foreigners greeted me in the morning by saying, "Happy Birthday," "Happy Birthday." I am always happy. I wish to be happy. True happiness lies in union with God, so if you want to be happy, be united with God.

Beginning today, carve out a new path in your life. Live in cooperation, coordination and unity with happiness. Recognize the one divine principle in all. That is real bliss. The happiness you obtain from material things is not real happiness, it is like the passing clouds that come and go. You should strive for the happiness which is permanent, and divine love is the only path to attain that.

—Sathya Sai Baba

70th Birthday Discourse November 23, 1995
Hillview Stadium, Prasanthi Nilayam

Swami concluded His discourse with the devotional song, "*Prema muditha manasa kalo...*" (A heart filled with love)

Children's-Corner
Who is He?



Who is He? I asked,
This being called God.
Is He bearded and white
With a staff and a rod?

Perhaps He is blue
With a trident and three eyes.
Could He be yellow,
Meditative and wise?

Is He the Sun?
Burning brilliant and hot,
As the Indians believed,
While the Spaniards did not.

Could God be a woman?
Or a short, sweet man,
With a big, bushy Afro,
And the Universe in His hand?

—**Ruth Upton**, Tucson, Arizona
The Author was 16 at the time this was written

Sixth World Conference

The theme of the Sixth World Conference was **Individual Spiritual Transformation; Selfless Love in Thought, Word and Deed**. The overseas Sathya Sai Organizations convened at Prasanthi Nilayam from the 18th to the 22nd of November, 1995. More than 5,000 delegates from 137 countries attended. The conference agenda reminded the delegates that Sai's mission is the spiritual regeneration of mankind.

Mr. Indulal Shah, International Chairman of the Sathya Sai Organization, in his opening address, urged members of the organization to work on their own personal transformations in order to be examples for society.

In His inaugural discourse, Baba said *"The chief aim of the organization is to eliminate the bestial nature of man and to awaken Divinity. . . . One purpose of the conference is for devotees to develop wisdom, and to destroy greed, anger and intellectual poverty."* He said, *"Great persons do disciplined spiritual practices (tapas) to forget their worldly attitudes and awaken Divinity within themselves. Harmony between thought, word and deed is tapas. . . . The organization is for quality, not quantity. The growth in the organization is worthless without the growth of equanimity. The essence of the organization is to develop love."*

In His birthday discourse, Baba referred to the organization saying, *"After returning home, you should foster the growth of the organization. The growth must be steady, regular and rapid."*

Speaking to the USA delegation, Dr. Michael Goldstein, Deputy Interna-

tional Chairman and Regional Coordinator for the USA, urged the development of the Sai Organization through depth of understanding, discipline, ability to perform, and personal commitment. He praised those countries where organizational unity was the core of the devotees' lives.

The conference was organized in 12 committees, four committees for each of the following: Spiritual, Educational and Service Wings. The 15 worldwide geographical regions of the Sai Organization named 9 delegates to each committee. Delegates not appointed to a committee were free to participate, or not participate, in any of the committees they chose. The committees were:

Spiritual Wing

1. Public interactions through devotional singing, meditation and public meetings
2. Spirituality and religion: implications and practical applications
3. Study circles: how to make them relevant and interesting with the objective of understanding Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings.
4. Sai Center administration: duties & responsibilities of officers to provide orientation to newcomers

Educational Wing

5. Sathya Sai spiritual education of human values for children
6. Sathya Sai Human Values (EHV) program for adults
7. Implementation of the EHV program in educational institutions

8. Programs for youth in spiritual transformation & future leadership

Service Wing

9. Service programs within Sai Centers and in support of the Spiritual and Educational Wings
10. Fostering increased participation of devotees in service activities
11. Service programs as part of the Sai movement for the elevation of human values
12. Involvement of community in service programs to benefit the needy

Emphasis on Universality of Sai's Message

A delegate from New York, remarked that the conference was not about new directions, but it was to clarify what Swami has always intended to do. This seemed to be true in several ways. First, the committees were guided by a "White Paper" outlining specific issues for each committee to address. Second, each of the committees had members who had done marvelous work spreading Sai's message. Third, some delegates experienced personal, spiritual transformations which enabled them to bring greater understanding to their work in the organization.

The tone of the White Paper for all the committees, was set by these introductory remarks for the Spiritual Wing:

"The universality of Baba's message must be emphasized in all our programs. Hence, the spiritual activities must be compatible with the culture of the community in which they are carried out. However, the fundamental teachings of Bhagavan Baba must be preserved intact. The program format and setting

should be sensitive to the multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic composition of the local areas wherein the Sai Center is located. Devotional songs should include a judicious mix of Prasanthi styled *bhajans* and devotional songs reflective of the local society."

The White Paper's outline was supplemented and expanded in the committees by the considerable insights and experiences of the delegates. The committees made written reports to the Convener suggesting "Action Plans" for the next five years. Then, the officers of the overseas Sai Organizations met in the Poorna Chandra Auditorium to comment on the work of each of the committees.

The committees were unanimous in calling for formal training of leaders and teachers in the organization, and for a clearinghouse for the exchange of information, ideas and educational materials. Another theme that was foreshadowed in the White Paper was a call for practices to conform more closely to the customs of local communities.

After the close of the conference, a report entitled, "Decisions and Recommendations," was issued to Regional Coordinators. Dr. Michael Goldstein said that, of all the World Conference reports yet created, this report most faithfully and fully reflects the committees' fine work.

Dr. L. Singh of South Africa, Convener of Committee #2, praised the conference as being better organized than earlier conferences, and being representative of devotees all around the world. He remarked enthusiastically, "The universal nature of Sai's teachings is catching on. He said, "The flow of knowledge and information was profound. People

who never met before, found that they had independently discovered similar ideas and approaches."

Spiritual Organization not a New Religion

The subject of committee #2, Spirituality and Religion, was pivotal to re-orientation of the overseas Sai Organizations. Faithful to the guidance of the White Paper, the committee focused on the universalization of Sathya Sai Baba Centers being spiritual rather than religious. The committee concluded that meetings, should be held in a wholesome, neutral atmosphere, not a place of worship for any particular religion. At the meetings there should be only one photograph of Swami displayed. Sayings from various religions may be posted around the room. Devotional songs should be predominantly in the local language. Sai's teachings, not the name and form, should be promoted. The center members should encourage understanding of all religions and of the unity of all religions. The teaching of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values should reach the wider community, reflecting a universal image. All major religious festivals of the country should be celebrated. In summation, we should project ourselves as a universal, spiritual body.

The universalization of the Sai Organization was a premise for several committees' discussions of bringing Swami's message, especially human values, to the public. The committee members found that devotees had already done some very effective work in human values programs around the world.

Because of the need to work with a variety of institutions in one's own

country, it may sometimes be difficult to present Swami's teachings in connection with the Sai name. However, Swami has said that wherever Education in Human Values is conducted, it must use Sai's name. Devotees report that, where Sai's name is not connected to the program, others may take the ideas and market them as their own.

Putting Programs into Practical Use

An American woman, who is a college teacher, persuaded the university administration to allow her to teach a nondenominational course in human values for college credit. Most of the course required the students to discuss and discern the values that are important in their own lives. Near the end of the course, the instructor suggested Sai's teachings as a more comprehensive model for understanding the importance of human values.

Another American devotee, who was already working in the prison system, started teaching human values to the prisoners. Early in the course, he invited fellow devotee, Jack Hawley—author of *Reawakening the Spirit Within* a book on righteousness in business management—to instruct a class. The prisoners, whom one might expect to be hardened cynics, were deeply moved by the course. The devotee who taught the course was astonished and inspired by his experience.

A Swedish school teacher and devotee reported that she had been spreading Sai's teachings about meditation and human values for several years. She always mentions to the students that she has a great teacher in India, and that

she is conveying his teachings. The audience hears Sai's name in that context only. The connection to Swami may remain subliminal for many of the students, but the connection is always explicitly made. Starting very simply with the teaching of meditation, she has let Swami guide her. One thing led gradually to another until, in August 1995, she was able to open an elementary school with 22 students and a professional staff. The students and their parents were attracted mainly by the EHV element in both the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities.

Bal Vikas Procedures Discussed

The *Bal Vikas* (program for children of devotees) Committee felt that love and devotion to Swami should be fundamental to all *Bal Vikas* classes.

A devotee and teacher from the state of Washington, reported that the discussions of the *Bal Vikas* subcommittee were based on the following quotation from Sathya Sai Baba, by whose grace the teachers from so many countries around the world were able to convene and learn from each other:

"Bal Vikas are essential to the movement to restore righteousness to the

world, and to raise a generation who have a clean and clear conscience. The syllabus is not as important as the creation of an atmosphere where noble habits and ideals can grow and fructify."

The *Bal Vikas* classes should emphasize the five human values—truth, righteousness, inner peace, divine love and nonviolence—along with the unity of all faiths. The basis for teaching unity in diversity should be the culture in which the children live. All religions should be taught, in order to give the children a broader base of knowledge. We should emphasize the tools and patterns that will enable the children to live righteous lives. The committee recommended to the Central Council that we have a core syllabus for all countries, but that the detailed syllabi will be tailored to each individual culture.

Successful Completion

The **Sixth World Conference** provided wonderful examples of the spread of Sai's message and His love; it inspired the participants to be better devotees of God and to do more selfless service in their homelands.

—Jesse Moorman, Esq.
Prasanthi Nilayam, India

There is a demand that different wings of the Sathya Sai Organizations should be allowed to function independently. This is not a proper approach. The different Sai Organizations should function in friendly cooperation with each other. It is like the five fingers of a hand. If you cut off one finger from the others, what do you have?

All our organizations should learn to function in coordination with each other. Like the rivers which have joined the ocean, they become one under the banner of the International Sai Movement.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse, 1980 World Conference

Dates to Remember in 1996

Mark Your Calendar

This list of holy days is given to us by the Central Office at Prasanthi Nilayam and also includes some dates that may be of special significance to Sai devotees in the United States:

February 17, Saturday, *Mahashivaratri* is observed during the new moon, symbolizing a renaissance and rededication to spiritual life.

March 20, Wednesday, *Ugadi* is the Telugu, Lunar New Year.

March 28, Thursday, *Rama Navami* is the day to honor the Avatar, Rama.

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

July 21, Sunday, *Global Handicapped Day* is a time for helping the handicapped and to remember that they could use our help throughout the year.

July 30, Tuesday, *Guru Poornima* is a time to pay respect to one's spiritual preceptor, guide or teacher.

September 5, Thursday, *Krishna Jayanti* honors the birth of the Avatar, Krishna.

September 16, Monday, *Ganesha Chaturthi* honors Ganesha who is the remover of all obstacles and ignorance.

September 22, Sunday, *Blood Donation Day* Remember to give blood at your local hospital, Red Cross, or blood bank, **only with the permission of your doctor.**

September 24, Tuesday, *Onam*

October 21, Monday, *Dasara or Vijaya Dasami* is a celebration of the victory of good over evil.

November 2 and 3, 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, Saturday and ends at 6:00 PM, Sunday.

November 10, Sunday, *Deepavali* The festival of lights commemorating the victory of righteousness over wickedness.

November 23, Monday, the 71st Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

December 25, Wednesday, Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

—Central Office
Prasanthi Nilayam

Announcements

Public Meetings

There will be two Public Meetings this spring, one in Los Angeles, California and the other in New York City. These meetings will provide opportunities to invite those who might be interested in knowing more about Sathya Sai Baba. There will be no charge, nor will any donations be accepted. Check with your Sathya Sai Baba Center for more information.

Los Angeles Public Meeting, Sunday afternoon (exact hour has not been established), **March 24, 1996 at the Wilshire Ebell Theater**, 4401 West 8th Street, Los Angeles, California.

New York Public Meeting, Sunday afternoon (exact hour has not been established), **April 14, 1996 at the Town Hall** 123 West 43rd Street, New York City.

Large Print Books

The Sathya Sai Book Center of America has a limited selection of **large print** books. Please contact the **Book Center** for titles and prices: **305 West First Street, Tustin, CA 92680, phone (714) 669-0522 or fax (714) 669-9138.**

About Your Newsletter. . .

We are fortunate to have many talented volunteers who work on the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*. One who deserves **honorable mention** is a young adult, Pravin Wagh. He created the cover for the 70th birthday issue, and the design received a great deal of favorable comment. Pravin, you've made us very happy.

The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* Staff try to serve our readers in every way possible. However, please know that **it is not possible for us to return photos, drawings or literary contributions** that are sent to this *Newsletter* office. We treasure your contributions. Sometimes there is a long lapse of time before we use them. Remember to keep a copy for your own files, and please continue sending your fine work.

Young Adult Workshops

General and Dr. (Mrs.) Chibber will be coming from India in May, to begin a series of workshops on Leadership for Young Adults (ages 17-30). These workshops will be sponsored by the Central Council. It will be an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with like-minded people, and hone some important skills.

General Chibber has written, ***Sai Baba's Mahavakya on Leadership, A Book for Youth, Parents and Teachers***, which has been approved by Sai Baba. In the coming weeks, your Sai Center will have more details.

—Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA Staff

Deeper Meanings

Baba has said that no act or work of His is without significance. Often, in joking fashion, He will appear to tease an individual by twisting the emphasis on a word. In an interview, on being asked what his profession was, an individual responded that he was a lawyer. Quickly came the response from Swami, "**Lawyer or Liar**"? Amusing, but a definite warning to those who will listen that one must be especially vigilant to hold to the path of truth.

Swami can take words that we use so casually in our everyday conversations and in His inimitable fashion, show us how meaningful those words can be:

Puttaparthi when visiting the ashram to see Swami, He tells us that if we leave our egos behind and come to Him with empty hearts, He can fill them with the love He has come to give. So when visiting, we should, "**put apart the I.**"

Properties are not "**proper ties.**"

Parents are given that name because it is through them that we have the wonderful chance of life on earth. For the sacrifices they have made for us, we must "**pay rent**" to them.

Communist When a question was asked of the problems in Communist controlled countries, Baba's response was, "not Communist, **come u next.**"

People exclaim, "I want **peace.**" Baba says, "Eliminate the **I (ego)** and the **want (desires)** and what is left is peace. **Peace** is inside, **pieces** are outside."

"**Doctors** need more **patience**, not **patients.**"

"Do not clamor for an **interview.** Search instead for the **inner view.**"

"Why do you seek **diamonds** to give you joy? Seek instead, the state of **die mind** which will give you pure and lasting joy."

"Modern **technology** is more aptly named modern **tricknology.**"

"**Knowledge** must be developed into **skill**, or it degenerates into **kill.**"

"**Heart** is on the inside. **Art** is on the outside. **Heart** is from God. **Art** is of the world."

"**Television** is **telepoison.**"

"**Study** to be **steady.**"

"**Rest** is **rust.**"

"We don't need the **Encyclopedia**; we have **Sai-clopedia.**"

Compiled by—**Suman Govindan**
New Canaan, Connecticut

A Letter and Announcements

from Dr. Goldstein

In Prasanthi Nilayam, from November 14 to 24, a series of brilliant and unique events, precedents, and joyful experiences uplifted all who were present. The mini-epoch began with performances by the greatest musical artists in India. Swami inaugurated the life-giving Water Project, the Sixth World Conference, the Convocation of the University, and the Birthday Celebrations. Multitudes of devotees assembled for His *darshan*. Great personages, like the Prime Minister and the President of India, attended and added the prestige of their respective offices to the homage that the world placed at the divine lotus feet of our beloved Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

As always, Swami inspired and uplifted, taught and guided, gave everything to all and accepted nothing for Himself. With each word, precious jewels of spiritual insight were made accessible to all of the ardent aspirants gathered before Him. Swami exhorted us to display the beauty of these jewels by exemplifying the nobility of His teachings. Spirituality, is incorporating the Divine Message into our lives so that it is always evident, no matter where we are, no matter what we are doing.

Swami's Guidance

Swami deepened our understanding of nature: the nature of Sai, the nature of spirituality, the nature of the Sai Organization, the nature of our human lives.

The Nature of Sai

Swami referred to the inner significance of His name:

“S” stands for Service, the path of action.

“A” stands for Adoration, the path of devotion.

“I” stands for Illusion, the path of knowledge.

Swami said that He does not keep, want or need anything for Himself. He showed that His gown has no pockets.

Baba demonstrated that the excellent results of the Water Project have brought competing parties within the government of India together. He said that selfless work, good work will bring people together.

Nature of Spirituality

Sathya Sai Baba said that we are not understanding the changeless, imperishable spirit within us. We are carried away by worldly pleasures. He instructed us not to turn our vision outward, but rather to turn it inward. He advised us to reduce our desires. He said, “*As your desires decline, so does your spirituality grow.*”

Baba explained that the conscious state is experienced through the senses. He went on to explain what we experience through the senses is not the truth. What we experience from the heart, or the conscience is the truth.

He explained that spirituality is the process in which the truth is derived from consciousness to the conscience and

finally to the conscious state. Then the truth must become imbued in our daily lives.

The Nature of the International Sri Sathya Sai Organizations

Swami said, *"Members of the Sai Organization should have minds that are cool like the moon, words that are sweet like nectar, and hearts that are soft like butter."*

In commending the selfless service rendered by the *seva dals* (volunteers) in Prasanthi, Swami instructed us to avoid distinctions between workers and officers, between servants and masters. He said, *"We are all servants. God alone is Master."*

Baba said, *"You can have transformation only after you have information. The Sai Organization was started with the purpose of passing on information of the Atmic Principle."*

Swami said that the main purpose of the organization is to render service. We have to understand the basic truth that we have been gifted with a body to render selfless service.

Nature of Human Life

Baba instructed, *"All the energy that pervades the universe is also latent in the human being. It is shameful for a man who has been endowed with such enormous energy to consider himself helpless and weak. Human life is really wonderful and full of bliss."*

"Love all the nations of the world. They are only rooms in God's mansion."

World Conference

The purpose of the 6th World Conference, as given by Swami, has been

to rid ourselves of the three diseases that are responsible for man's miseries: greed, anger and intellectual poverty.

The 6th World Conference of the Sri Sathya Sai Organizations was a great success, a "Sai Success." The process was pure, the atmosphere was charged with love, and the interactions were characterized by amicability and cooperation. Coming from different countries and different cultures, the delegates transcended their differences and worked together as a family. That was the success. That was Swami's grace.

The decisions and recommendations have been divided into three parts: Divine Directives, Principle Resolutions, and Other Resolutions. We will adopt the Divine Directives and discuss the Principle Resolutions and the Other Resolutions in the American Sai Program. Our decisions and resolutions will be reflected in new guidelines for the USA Sathya Sai Baba Organization.

Addenda to the Decisions and Recommendations of the World Conference

Swami met with the International Central Coordinators acknowledged and advised that there will be a new symbol with the five values written in English, replacing the religious symbol (replacing the *Sarva Dharma* logo which displayed the symbols of the six basic world religions on a six petaled lotus, see front cover of this issue). The prototype will be presented to Swami for His approval and blessings on this next *Guru Poornima* (the end of July). Then it will be sent to the Sai Centers worldwide.

All Sai Center programs will become more sensitive to the language, history,

traditions and the religions of their country. We will not become associated or attached to other humanitarian organizations. We will strive to forge our own path, find our own opportunities to serve, so that we can maintain the consistency of our activities with the teachings and guidance of our beloved Swami.

USA Sai Organization

1. Public Interaction

The purpose of public interaction is not to proselytize the divine personality of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, but rather to propagate His divine teachings; not to advertise that God walks the face of the earth, but rather to demonstrate the effect of His presence; not to increase the quantity of the organization, but rather to increase the quality of humanity.

There will be large public meetings in Los Angeles and New York City on March 24 and April 14 respectively; they will be sponsored by the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of the USA. Justice P. N. Bhagavati, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India and currently Vice-Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, will be coming from India in March and will be the primary speaker. In Los Angeles, the meeting will be held at the Wilshire Ebell Theater, and in New York City at the Town Hall. Further details as well as the manner in which all Sai Centers in the area can support the event will be disseminated by the Southern California and Mid-Atlantic Regional Coordinating Committees.

2. Selection of Young Adult Committee

Regarding youth, Swami has said, *"This stage of youth is golden and a most*

sacred period in life. This is the stage when one should equip oneself fully with sacred ideals for life's long journey."

The Young Adult Program requires our consideration and effort. All Sai Centers should identify those Sai devotees, ages 17 to 30, who wish to participate in the Sathya Sai Baba Young Adult Program. Sai Center Presidents should present this list to the Presidents of their Regions. The young adult men and the young adult women should each nominate a young adult man and woman as representatives, as well as, an adult man and an adult woman as coordinators for their region. These nominations must be approved by the officers of that region. The National USA Sathya Sai Baba Young Adult Committee will include these representatives and these coordinators, and will be chaired by Dr. William Harvey. Those regions that have none or very few young adults at present, may join with an adjacent region in order to participate. These steps should be completed by **March 15**, so that the committee will be established prior to the first meeting of the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of USA.

3. Young Adult Leadership Workshops

General and Dr. (Mrs.) Chibber will be coming from India in May to begin a series of workshops in many USA regions on Leadership for Young Adults. These workshops are sponsored by the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of USA. It would be ideal to have the initial structure of the USA Sathya Sai Baba Young Adult Committee in place prior to the workshops. The workshops would then be an excellent inaugural activity for this important branch of the Sathya Sai Baba

Organization in America.

4. English Devotional Songs—A Project

In order to encourage more English devotional songs, the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of USA will sponsor the production of English devotional song tapes and books for our Sai Centers. Currently, many Sai Centers have excellent English devotional song books; this project will provide additional resources. Vijay Amin, President of the Northeast Region, will be responsible for the project. He will be sending books containing over 300 English devotional songs to the past and present Central Council members and Regional Devotional Coordinators. They will be asked to review the books and rate the songs with which they are familiar. Subsequently, we will produce professional quality tapes and books that will be distributed to all American Sai Centers.

5. Agenda for Sai Centers and the New Regional Coordinating Committees

All Sai Centers must look at their programs objectively and determine if the programs are compatible with American society. All should work together to gradually approach an ideal balance in the content of the Sai Center programs. English *bhajan* (devotional songs) materials will be sent to all centers for their consideration.

All Sathya Sai Baba Centers should review the recommendations of the 6th World Council. That which has been

given directly by Swami will be adopted without change. The rest of the decisions and recommendations will be discussed, and the suitability to your region will be determined. The presidents of each Sai Center should be prepared to present the views of the members of his or her Regional Coordinating Committee. The first meeting of the Regional Coordinating Committees should review all of the World Conference recommendations and arrive at a view that represents the region.

The first meeting of the Central Council will deal with the results of these deliberations. New guidelines for the USA Sathya Sai Baba Centers, incorporating the recent guidance given by Swami and the recommendations of the World Conference, will be produced before the end of 1996.

As spiritual aspirants, we try to quiet the mind, to rise above and detach ourselves from the endless stream of counterproductive thoughts and desires. In the Sai Organization, we must rise above and detach ourselves from jealousy and conflict. Let us not become confused or confounded by bureaucratic detail. We do not want to become merely masters of procedure. We want to proceed and succeed in following the Master. We don't want to merely master the contents of spiritual books. We want to follow the teaching of the Master who inspired the books.

In the Service of Sai
—Michael G. Goldstein, M.D.

The kind of service and sacrifice which the Sai Organizations are rendering is indescribable. The basis of all that, is the love that prevails among the members.

—Sathya Sai Baba
1980 World Conference

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You are trying, through various means, to live the ideals of Sai and to spread the love that Sai evokes in you. How far have these efforts succeeded? How have they helped to identify the humanness of mankind? Along with the process of listening to the exposition of ideals and of the message, they have to be practiced in daily life. Only then can you declare that you have grasped the meaning and purpose of this conference. . . .

The question may be raised whether our organization is free from the taint of selfishness, you are not without it, for you are humans. But you should endeavor ceaselessly to get rid of it and its attendant evils. . . . Those who have the Atma as their basis should never slide into this weakness.

Everyone must become the embodiment of love. Love can be expressed only as love, through love. Lovelessness is at the root of the anarchy that stalks the world today.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. XI, Chapter 8

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Sai's Message on Our Organization

The Sai Organization has to exemplify and promote unity in diversity. The very purpose with which the organization was formed was to emphasize unity. The essence of all religions, the goal of all paths, the destination of all spiritual effort is universal, eternal faith. It is like the ocean; particular creeds are rivers that flow into it. It is the air on which all humanity lives.

In our organization, there must be a constant attempt to cultivate love which transcends caste, creed, race and class distinctions. The sense of equality is its special feature. It is not enough to undertake moral and spiritual teachings. Emphasis on the Atma (the divinity which lies within everyone) and the awareness of the oneness of the Atma is a must. . . .

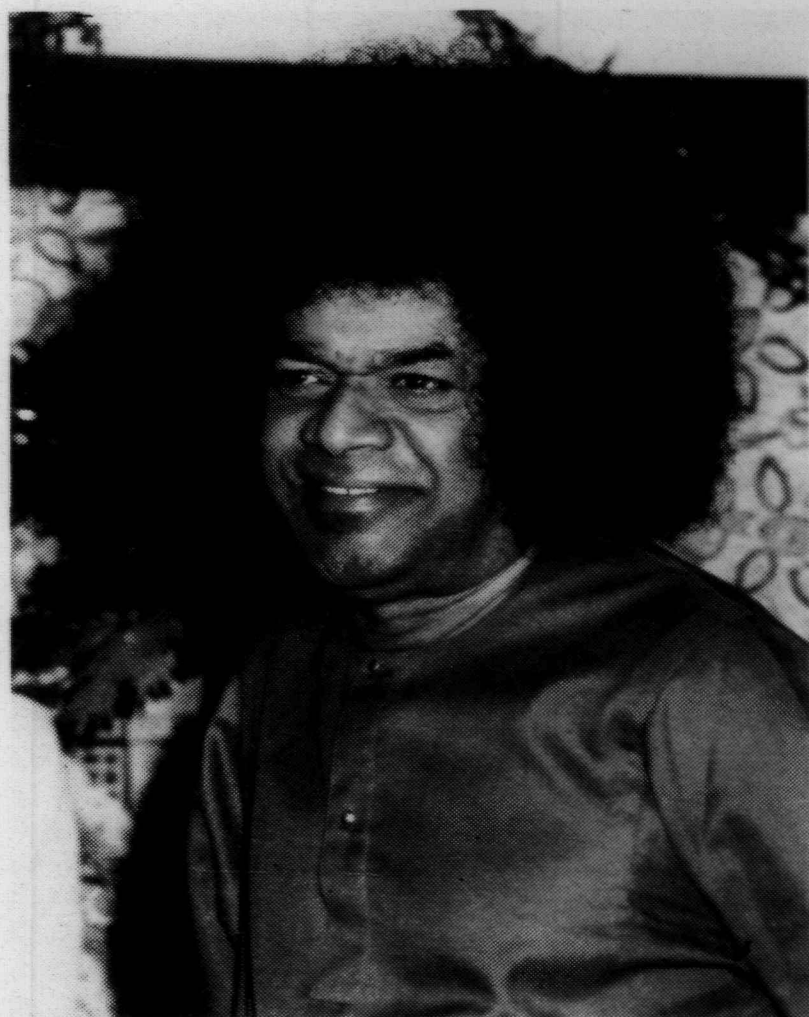
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Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. XI, Chapter 8



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New Books

Sai Spiritual Education Teachers Manual

This book was written by and for *Bal Vikas* teachers. It explains how the educational program for children, as inspired by Sathya Sai Baba, works and how to teach it. Baba said, "*This book is very important.*" \$10.00, order # BC-008

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Manual

This manual has been published by the Central Council for use in the United States. It can be used as a learning tool for anyone who wants to understand how the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program functions. \$5.00, order # C-007

Homage to the Divine Legend

Published by members of the Council of Management of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam. It is presented as a large booklet with some dazzling color photos of Baba, and many of His profound sayings. Limited supply, \$3.00, order #BC-36

Sri Sathya Sai Organization Activities Booklet

This booklet outlines the Sai Organization in countries around the world and many of their service activities. Limited supply, \$3.50, order # BC-009

Reconnecting the Love Energy—Don't By-Pass Your Heart

By Phyllis Krystal, Sai Baba says that if enough individuals open their hearts the world will change. This book describes how each of us can accomplish our part by allowing the love to flow from our hearts to all whom we meet. \$7.50, order#BW-126

Journey to Sathya Sai Baba—A Visitor's Guide

By Valmai Worthington, This guidebook goes beyond providing answers to questions about accommodations, food, dress, etc. It also covers customs, behaviors and the subtle issues of spiritual awakening. \$7.00, order # BW-072

Some books in **large print** are available, please contact the Book Center for more information.

Sathya Sai Speaks Three decades of discourses by Sathya Sai Baba

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<i>Summer Course, Indian Culture & Spirituality</i> , 1990	3.25

The Vahinis A series of books written by Sathya Sai Baba. This collection of volumes contains the wisdom that has prevailed throughout the ages.

<i>Bhagavatha Vahini</i> (on the life of Sri Krishna)	\$3.25
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