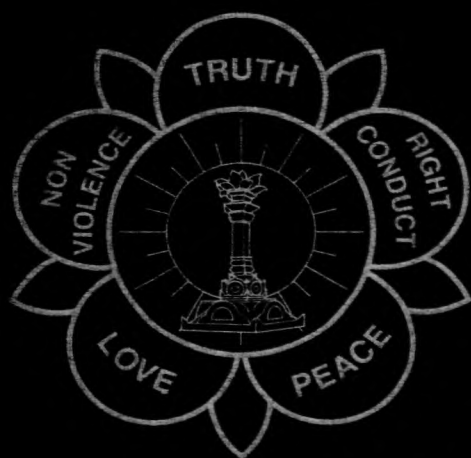




SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, USA

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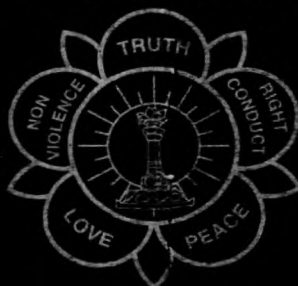
December, January, February

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 of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization depicts
the five qualities from which all human values emanate.*



The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* welcomes photographs, drawings and literary contributions. Sorry, but we are unable to return any items which are sent to us, so please keep a copy for your files. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing for publication. Kindly send any material to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, c/o Sathya Sai Book Center of America, 305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108, or fax to: (909) 337-5270.**

—Barbara Bozzani, Editor



This statement has been manipulated and tangled into a conundrum. The statement of Christ is simple, "He who sent me among you will come again," and He pointed to a lamb. The lamb is merely a symbol, a sign. It stands for the sound Ba-

Ba; the announcement was of the advent of Baba. "His name will be Truth," Jesus Christ declared. "Sathya" means Truth. He will wear a robe of red, a blood red robe." (Here, Baba pointed to the robe He was wearing). He will be short with a crown [of hair]. The lamb is the sign and symbol of Love. Christ did not declare that He will come again, He said, "He who made me will come again." That Ba-Ba is this Baba, and Sai, the short, curly-hair-crowned, red-robed Baba is come. He is not only in this form, but he is in every one of you, as the Dweller in the heart. He is here, short, with the robe the color of the blood that fills the heart. . . .

This is the inner mystery of incarnation. God incarnating in all. All is One, and One is All.

There is only one God; He is omnipresent. There is only one re-ligion, the religion of Love. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VIII, Chapter 30

Swami's Call to Action

The Lord has said that it will surely come to pass. And so it must. And so it will. His golden age is fast taking form.

Despite decades of Sathya Sai Baba's presence weighing overwhelmingly in favor of faith, old habits of fear gathered over countless lifetimes have spawned its families of doubts.

Will this new time really come about? How will it happen? Do I have a role to play? If so, where do I begin? What do I do? How can I be an instrument on so grand a level?

It is far easier to continue our rituals and pilgrimages, our *bhajans* and meditations—worthy practices all—than to undertake the difficult task of rigorously putting his teachings to work in our daily lives. Doing this means that we have caught the true meaning of spirituality by making the time he grants us here, useful to others and thereby pleasing to him. Lip service is easy and common. The gap between the spoken word and the practiced teaching is frequently found to be too vast a chasm to breach. Bhagavan's words are clear and simple; they cannot in any way be found wanting. Though wreathed in praise, they are found challenging and are largely left untried. Yet tried they will be, for that is his will. It is for us to put aside doubts and questions and go to work. There is so much work for each of us to do.

In the late 1960's and the early 1970's, Prasanthi Nilayam was a very small place. It was difficult to get to. The roads and the facilities at the ashram were minimal. The *mandir* (temple) was small and *bhajans* were

sung downstairs. Those few seekers whose great good fortune brought them to Baba's presence, found Swami easily accessible and wondrous beyond imagining. His love, his bliss, his miracles were shared by all. It was almost too good to be true. It was not possible to deny this transcendent, holy experience. Nevertheless, there were those who found it most difficult to believe Swami when he told of what would happen in this tiny village in the years to come. It was hard to imagine this remote place filled with devotees from all parts of the globe coming to the spiritual capitol of the world. It was difficult to imagine that Bhagavan would be hard to see, that he would be a speck of orange in the distance. That seemed too unlikely to happen in such an inaccessible country setting. There were those who doubted that such things could come to pass. Miracles, yes, pure love, yes, but the heart center of the world? That was too much to believe. Yet, he said it would happen; and happen it did!

There are many who find it impossible to accept that this earth is in the process of transformation into a golden age. It is too much to believe. One only has to read the newspapers, watch television, and experience the seemingly universal selfishness to find talk of a golden age to be well-meaning but clearly impossible. Yet, he has said it will happen, and happen it will. We are a part of the plan, if we so choose. While in the midst of the confusion of change, it is hard to see the larger design. It will be more apparent as the years pass, and we will wonder how we could have overlooked so many obvious signs.

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so instantly shared as the information revolution shapes his new world. Just recently, an estimated two billion TV viewers watched World Cup Soccer, 1998. The day will come when his *darshan*, his discourses will uplift, guide, and inspire billions all over this planet as we share his experience of oneness, and the goal of purity, unity, divinity. Never before have such unprecedented opportunities and challenges been accessible to us all as we contract into a global community.

Could anyone other than Sai have foreseen the changes of the last nine years? Here are a few of the more evident changes:

- Communism came to an end in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.
- Economic reform and free elections have taken place in most of those countries.

are dangerously exploiting our natural resources. Swami says that we are wielding an ax at the branch of the tree upon which we are seated! The hope here is that economic interdependence will be the great force for peace and prosperity in the future.

The focus is on global corporations which can only do business in a stable and peaceful environment. Certainly, Swami has placed great emphasis on his MBA programs. World leadership will most assuredly come from this direction. Here in the United States, for example, there are major universities offering a Global, Professional MBA program. Teaching and exchanging links are being established with schools all over the world. This emphasis will expand greatly in the next few years. Swami tells us, if business people live up to right principles, corruption in government will end in a moment. Business people,

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Studying the French Revolution at school, it was hard to understand how the ruling classes failed to see the dangers all around them. Even the writings of the great thinkers of the time went unnoticed. Being totally self-absorbed, change seemed impossible to them. Then, the revolution took place, guillotining many prominent individuals as well as the entire system in this seriously selfish and abusive society.

As we move on to the twenty-first century, we tend not to recognize the extraordinary changes that have taken place in the last nine years, events that were unthinkable a few years earlier. These changes are the harbingers of a new time, a new consciousness fast-forming. Never before in history has so much taken place in so short a time.

Never before have communications been so instantly shared as the information revolution shapes his new world. Just recently, an estimated two billion TV viewers watched World Cup Soccer, 1998. The day will come when his *darshan*, his discourses will uplift, guide, and inspire billions all over this planet as we share his experience of oneness, and the goal of purity, unity, divinity. Never before have such unprecedented opportunities and challenges been accessible to us all as we contract into a global community.

Could anyone other than Sai have foreseen the changes of the last nine years? Here are a few of the more evident changes:

- Communism came to an end in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.
- Economic reform and free elections have taken place in most of those countries.

- The Berlin Wall was demolished, and Germany was no longer divided.
- World economic markets have opened up in India and China and many smaller countries.
- South Africa has put an end to Apartheid.
- Latin America has undergone great reforms.

What lies ahead in the twenty-first century are the problems of a society undergoing the turmoil of change. Certainly, though conditions have improved, there are worldwide concerns centering on the fears of countries feeling threatened by possible loss of their national, religious, and cultural identity, as well as their economic and political power. On this overpopulated, polluted planet, we are dangerously exploiting our natural resources. Swami says that we are wielding an ax at the branch of the tree upon which we are seated! The hope here is that economic interdependence will be the great force for peace and prosperity in the future.

The focus is on global corporations which can only do business in a stable and peaceful environment. Certainly, Swami has placed great emphasis on his MBA programs. World leadership will most assuredly come from this direction. Here in the United States, for example, there are major universities offering a Global, Professional MBA program. Teaching and exchanging links are being established with schools all over the world. This emphasis will expand greatly in the next few years. Swami tells us, if business people live up to right principles, corruption in government will end in a moment. Business people,

he tells us, can even reform the governments and promote world progress:

Service to society is everyone's primary duty. Business people must develop a moral approach, and right means for earning wealth and utilize it for the benefit of society. Those of us who work in the field of business must put these teachings into practice with full faith that he will help.

Love all, Bhagavan tells us. It sounds so very easy and right and desirable. But our experience is that other people are seldom as lovable as we feel they should be. And we wonder if we are ourselves very lovable. Jesus taught, as does Sai, the redemption of life through love. The Lord's presence at this time grants us the example, the means of loving. Even though we may be completely dissatisfied with most of our fellow beings as we think they are, Swami shows us how to accomplish this, and it is our grace to apply his teachings. At the very least, we must keep out of the way of difficult people as best we can, never doing them any harm. But far more than this needs to be done.

Phyllis Krystal in her book, *Sai Baba, The Ultimate Experience*, tells of her being on a plane that was hijacked by two men who were pouring alcohol on the floor in preparation for setting the plane on fire. Disaster was immanent. She writes:

"I heard His voice inside my head telling me to send love to the hijackers, and I had replied that I would direct His love to them if He would pour it into me." Swami did just that and He later said that the plane was saved because it had been filled with His love."

He hears us. He is always with us and will not fail us. We must consciously make use of his presence and ask! Ask the Lord to do for you everyday what you cannot as yet do for yourself. For example, we can say: "Lord, please help and send your love through me to these people, for I cannot do it without you." As millions and millions of us throughout the world use his limitless power, transformation will take place. More and more people will be surrounded by his love. Some countries, Russia, Croatia, Ireland and others, are sending Baba's love at a specific time of day, once a week. In Russia, the time is 7:00 p.m. every Thursday. All countries can do the same to let this all-encompassing love flow freely everywhere. Let each one of us remember to ask his help daily. What was done on one airplane can be done on one globe. It is time for all of us to begin.

Serve all, Bhagavan tells us and extraordinary work has been done in India and in so many countries of the world. *Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray*, is his reminder to all. Compassion means action in order to relieve the suffering. Verbal sympathy is not enough. The key is in the quality of the action. Community service is certainly expanding but the spiritual understanding seems not to be. Even in Sai groups, we frequently tend to do things in a routine and mechanical way. Personalities often prevail, and purity is lost. Ego operation dissolves cooperation and what is left is an artificial shell. Without humility, it is not service. We forget his instructions and the uniqueness of Sai seva:



Please turn to page 30

Love in Our Hearts

Guru Poornima Discourse

A deep inquiry will reveal that, in this world, nothing equals love, be they acts of charity or performance of *yagna* (sacred rituals), penance, or adherence to truth and ancient culture.

Divine and Worldly Love

Embodiments of Love! The main aim of human life is to acquire the knowledge of the Self. This is the true goal of life. Human life will find fulfillment if this goal is attained. The ability to distinguish between that which is transitory, the ability to control the internal and external senses, yearning for liberation, and the path of inquiry—all these four auspicious qualities depend on devotion. The word *bhakti* (devotion) is derived from the root word *bhaj* which means pure, unsullied and selfless love toward God. In this world, no other virtue is greater than love. Love is truth, love is righteousness, and love is wealth. This world has originated from love, is sustained by love, and ultimately merges in love. Every atom has its origin in love.

There are innumerable powers, such as: atomic power, magnetic power, etc., but the power of love transcends them all. Life bereft of faith and love is meaningless and useless. Love is life for humankind; love is everything in this world. It is from love that the five elements have emerged. It is love that shines brilliantly in every individual. But people are not able to comprehend the significance of love, so they attribute physical relationships to it. The love of a mother toward her child is affection. The love that exists between wife and husband is infatuation. The love that exists among friends and relatives is attachment. The love toward material objects is

desire. Love in totality, directed toward God is known as *bhakti*. It is the only love that encompasses and permeates the entire world. None can exist without love even for a moment, be they human beings, animals, birds or insects. This love is the very form of God. But today, people are misusing this sacred love by diverting it toward the ephemeral world. Never underestimate the power of love. Our ancient rishis and sages, lead lives of solitude in dense forests. Because of the power of their love, they could live in harmony even with the wild animals. There is nothing that love cannot achieve in this world. It can even melt the hardest of rocks. When the principle of love in every human being is unified, it becomes cosmic love. Do you want to quench your thirst for love? Yearn for God's grace and worship him. In order to experience bliss, develop love more and more. The more you develop love, the more you will experience bliss. Bliss cannot be attained without love. In fact, it is love that takes the form of bliss.

King Hiranyakasipu made every attempt to wean Prahlada, his son, away from the godward path. But never did Prahlada give up chanting the divine name of Narayana (God). One day, Hiranyakasipu called Prahlada and asked him, "Son, what is it that you have learned so far?" In reply, Prahlada sang a verse in praise of Narayana. Then he said, "Father, continuous repetition of Lord Narayana's name is my penance. Love for Lord Narayana is my wealth. There is nothing greater than this. Love is everything."

Like Prahlada, you too should always chant the divine name. Saints like Jayadeva, Gauranga,

Thukaram, and Ramakrishna Paramahansa prayed to the Lord fervently and yearned for his love. Cry for the Lord, just as [the saints] Sakkubhai and Meera did, unable to bear the pangs of separation. They could have his vision and earn his grace only due to such intense yearning. But, due to the impact of the Kali Age (the most difficult of all eras; this is the age of Kali) people want to attain divine grace without making any effort. Wickedness, misery, and violence are on the rise because love for God is waning. Transform all your wicked qualities like jealousy and anger into love. Whatever happens in this world, consider it as an act of love.

The Creator

God is the creator of this world. He is the presiding deity of action. You cannot have a table unless there is a carpenter to make it. You cannot construct a house unless there is a builder. Likewise, for everything there is a creator. All that you see, mobile and immobile, is the creation of God. That is the reason he is extolled as the deity of action; he presides over every activity.

Today, spiritual aspirants undertake various types of spiritual exercises (*sadhana*) such as meditation, penance, yoga, and chanting Vedic hymns. Love should be the undercurrent of all these spiritual exercises, or else it will be a sheer waste of time. No benefit accrues from chanting mantras if they are not coupled with the feeling of love. The Vedas declare: "Neither wealth, nor progeny, nor good deeds can confer immortality." It can be attained only through sacrifice. Immortality is nothing but love. Love is nectarine. It is infinite and all bliss. Nowadays, people are not making any effort to understand this principle of love. It is only the power of love that can nullify a curse or a sin. It is only love that can

remove all bitter feelings and enhance the sweetness of life.

Every human being is expected to be a friend and well-wisher of the world. But such feelings of friendship and love are lacking in people today. Just as a honeybee sucks nectar from a bitter flower, so also, man should be able to see good even in bad. You should be able to draw the water of happiness even from the well of misery. That is the true quality of love. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Pleasure and pain coexist in God's creation. Take for instance, how God has made the human body. The bright and beautiful face has pitch dark hair above it. But in fact, that adds to the beauty of the face. Likewise, pleasure has value only when pain is associated with it. Good and bad coexist in everything. But today, people are not attracted by good; they see only bad in everything.

The Speed of Love

Every action is under the control of God. Earth revolves around itself at the rate of eighteen and one-half miles per second. It takes one year for the earth to revolve around the sun. Light travels at an incredible speed of 186,234 miles per second. It takes 22,000 crores (22,000 x ten million) years for the light to go around the universe. According to ancient texts, the entire universe is the very form of Vishnu (another name for God). Even if man were to travel at the speed of light, it will take 22,000 crores (22,000 x ten million) years for him to circumambulate Lord Vishnu. Who can live for such a long period of time? Due to the evil effects of the Kali Age, man is not able to live for even a hundred years, let alone 22,000 crores of years! But is it possible to go around God, in the form of the universe, in one second! It is love that makes it possible. The

speed of love is such that it can circumambulate the universe in one second. The speed of light may be estimated, but not the speed of love. People have put barriers around such transcendental and infinite love and are using it for trivial purposes. This is the reason that the world has become chaotic. People may attribute various reasons for the lack of peace and security. But the main reason is that people are not able to develop love within. They are not making any effort to realize the presence of the infinite, immortal and nectarine love within. Let your thoughts, words and deeds be suffused with love. Let your life be filled with love. Nothing else is required to have the vision of the Divine. Love is God, live in love.

How do We Find Love?

Today, love finds no place in the human heart, as it has become a den of desires. Where there is faith, there is love. So develop faith in God. Yesterday, someone asked me how to develop faith? I replied, "Faith is the way of life." It is but natural to humanity. The feeling of "I am" signifies faith. "I am," means I exist. "I am" denotes faith. Without faith in your existence, you cannot live even for a moment in the world. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is God.

Truth, sacrifice and righteousness constitutes humanness. Truth is morality, righteousness is the code of conduct, and sacrifice is reputation. The combination of all these is the human race. One cannot be called a human being on the basis of form. One has to adhere to truth, uphold righteousness and develop the spirit of sacrifice. [Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba then recited this Telugu poem:]

Visualize the unity among all beings and conduct yourself with compassion in your heart.

*With intense yearning
contemplate on God at least once.*

Only then, can you have the vision of God. God does exist, but he cannot be seen by the naked eye. He can be seen only when you get rid of worldly delusions. What is the state of human beings today?

They are overjoyed when they have wealth,

And grief-stricken when they lose it.

*They indulge in pomp and show, and
lose everything in the process.*

*People conceive of dubious ways and
means.*

*Just as the earth revolves around
the sun.*

They revolve around money.

—Telugu Poem

Divine grace is the true wealth. Acquire that, and you will have acquired everything. Character is important, not wealth. But people are wasting their lives hankering after wealth. No doubt money is necessary, but it should be within certain limits. Spend your time in serving others. Love your fellow beings. Surrender yourself to God. Nothing surpasses divine love. The entire world is permeated with love. The Vedas declare: "God is all-pervasive. All names and forms are his." Names and forms may vary, but the *Atma* (the indwelling divinity) is the same in all." Recognize the unity of all beings. That will result in universal love. The world is a mansion

belonging to the caste of humanity. Unity should prevail in such a mansion.

Guru Poornima

Today is *Guru Poornima*, July 28, 1999. What is its significance? The trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are within us. That is why I often say you are not one, but three. This is the meaning of the three words *Bhur*, *Bhuvah*, *Suvaha* in the *Gayathri* Mantra. *Bhur* means *Bhuloka* (Earth). The earth is made up of materials. Therefore, the human body, which is also made up of materials, is called *Bhuloka*. This can also be referred to as materialization. *Bhuvaha* means life force (*prana*). It is this life force that makes the body move. It is known as vibration. *Suvaha* means wisdom. This is known as radiation. The Vedas declare: *Prajnanam Brahma*. This *prajnana* is nothing but radiation. A human being is a combination of materialization, vibration and radiation. You don't need to search for God outside. Turn your vision inward; there you will find God.

This is a full moon day. The Vedas say: "The moon is the presiding deity of the mind." That day is *poornima* (full moon) in the true sense of the term, when the mind is filled with pure love. Let your mind shine brilliantly like the moon on a full moon day. This is possible only when you fill your mind with love.

Currency for the Divine Bank

Embodiments of love! Nowadays, we find people depositing their money in banks. Likewise, deposit the power of your senses, your mind, and the wisdom in the bank of God. They will never diminish or decay; they will continue to grow forever and will be returned to you in times of need. Sustain and safeguard sacred love.

Never give scope for hatred. Consider that whatever happens is good for you. You might have seen in newspapers that the Indian army had a confrontation at the border. But whatever has happened is good for India in the sense that the Chinese, the Americans, and the Russians have become more friendly, and India has earned a good reputation in the international community. It is the peace-loving nature of India that has made this possible.

Arms and India

Once, when I went to Bombay, [Mr.] Munshi, then head of the *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan*, convened a conference of intellectuals. He requested me to address them. One person from the audience asked me, "Swami, America and Russia are manufacturing more and more weapons, but India is lagging far behind in this respect. Should not India, also, manufacture weapons?" I told him, "Dear one, what Bharat (India) needs today is not weaponry and warfare. It needs to uphold righteousness (*dharma*). If you protect *dharma*, in return *dharma* will protect you. We should not waste money in manufacturing weapons. Some countries are spending a lot of money on defense and, as a result, the people of those countries are suffering for want of proper food. Only divine love and grace, not weapons, can protect the nation.

You might have read in the *Mahabharata* that Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva implicitly obeyed the commands of Dharmaraja, the embodiment of *dharma*. Likewise, India, America and Russia can be compared to Dharmaraja, Arjuna and Bhima, respectively. Just as Arjuna, and Bhima, obeyed Dharmaraja, so, also, America and Russia will emulate India, provided India upholds *dharma*. What India

needs to possess are the weapons of righteousness and truth. Both are inherent in the principle of love. Just as a gigantic tree emerges out of a small seed, the entire universe has originated from love. The power of love can transform earth into sky, and sky into earth.

The Power of Music

Embodiments of love! In this world, you can achieve anything with love. I am the best example of this. Love is my greatest property. I love everybody, but I do not desire anything except love. Here is a small example: Many students are coming here for studies. But this education is not doing any good to the world. All the subjects like physics, botany, chemistry, etc., will only help to eke out a livelihood. But none of them can attract the human heart as music does. Even God is attracted by music. Once, Narada asked Vishnu, "Swami, you have various branch offices like Vaikunta, Kailasa and Swarga. But I want to know the address of your head office, so that I can contact you without delay." Vishnu said, "You will find me installed wherever my devotees sing my glory." That is why God is extolled as *Ganapriya* and *Ganalola* (lover of music). So I wanted to start a music college here. I did not tell anybody about this. I usually do not tell what my plans are. It is certain that whatever I will, happens.

Last week, a devotee by name of Puri, from Indonesia, came here and prayed to me that I should start a music college for which, he said, he would donate 100 million rupees. The culture of Bharat is contained in music. Modern music, too, is essential. In addition to that, street players singing the stories of God have to be encouraged. Music plays a vital role in fostering Indian culture. The construction of this college will commence in

the next month, *Sravana* (corresponds to August). The current month is *Ashada* (corresponds to July), in which, according to the elders, no new construction is to be taken up. That is the reason I postponed the commencement of construction until next month.

Instances of Divine Will

Once, when I was in Bangalore, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, [Mr.] Patel, came to see me and said, "Swami, you have constructed a super specialty hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam which is of immense benefit to the poor. But diseases are common for both the rich and the poor, urban and rural. It will be of great help to the people of the city of Bangalore, if you would be kind enough to establish another super specialty hospital there." I just smiled and did not say anything. The very next week, the Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, the Revenue Minister, and many other dignitaries, came here with the documents concerning the registration of 70 acres of land. This plot is situated adjacent to the Information and Technology Park. They are supplying water and electricity. If you are prepared to undertake noble tasks, the whole world will support you. An American devotee by name of Sinclair has come forward to donate a few crores of rupees for this hospital. Previously, he had given a few crores of rupees for the super specialty hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam. I have not told anyone about this project, otherwise, there would have been a shower of gold.

God Gives Spontaneously

There are many people of sacrifice in this world. But I did not ask anyone. If only I ask, there will be a shower of money. I do not like to become cheap by asking. One should never give scope for doubt whether the good task under-

taken will find fruition or not. Many more things are going to happen in the future.

Fill your hearts with love. There is no wealth, no righteousness, no meditation, greater than love. I expect all of you to live in unity like brothers and sisters. If you become the embodiment of love, you will become divine. The knower of *Brahman* (the Universal Absolute) will become *Brahman*.

Students are the long journey passengers traveling on the train of society. All the elders are bound to get down soon. So it is the paramount duty of students to develop sacred love. The main education offered in our institute is love alone. Do not love God for the sake of worldly desires. Love Him with a spiritual outlook. *Gopikas* (milk maids) prayed to Krishna:

*Let us listen to the melody of your
divine music*

*So the seeds of love will germinate
in the fields of our hearts,
Which have become barren, due to the
absence of love.
Let there be a rain of love in our
hearts,
And let the river of love flow incessantly
through it.*

—Telugu Poem

I am giving you all free education and free medical care, in return, you have to give me only one thing—that is love. Develop love. That is all I want from you. I want you to take a vow that you will lead a life suffused with love from today onwards.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Guru Poornima, July 28, 1999

Prasanthi Nilayam



O Blessed One

*I saw a Miracle today,
with my own two eyes.
His radiant Light all aflame,
the body, a mere disguise.
I drank a Love so sweet, so pure,
God's own perfect bliss.
There is no greater, deeper Joy
in all the world than this.*

—L. Marsh

Duxbury, Massachusetts

Let there Be Music

The Sathya Sai Universal Symphony Orchestra

Imagine going to work where all your co-workers are Baba devotees and Swami himself presides over the workplace! This was the experience that 41 professional musicians from 18 countries had when they collaborated on a program of Western classical music for *Guru Poornima* on July 28, 1999. Musicians from Europe, North America, and Asia came together as the Sathya Sai Universal Symphony Orchestra for a two-week musical intensive led by Italian conductor, Giuseppe Savazzi. The concert was an excellent example of unity in diversity in action. Through the common language of music, all cultural and language differences were transcended as the musicians worked together to provide a high quality performance for the large assembly of people. [The hall holds thousands; the evening of the concert, it was packed.]

Rehearsals began in the North Indian Canteen, but Swami quickly invited us to rehearse in the Poornachandra Auditorium. Construction on the *mandir* (temple), in preparation for Swami's 75th birthday celebration in the year 2000, provided an interesting background of clanking and the sound of jack-hammers during our rehearsals. At our first rehearsal in the Poornachandra, Baba came out to speak with the musicians, asking where we were from and what instruments we played. During later rehearsals, he could be seen peeking through the curtains. It was quite a thrill to be playing in his divine presence. Swami's grace seemed never ending as he took care of our

every need. He even arranged special mealtimes to accommodate our long morning rehearsals.

On the evening of the performance, the musicians gathered backstage beforehand and were greeted by Swami saying, *Very happy, very happy*. Our hearts were full as we were able to offer our devotion through our music to Swami that night. One musician commented, "I always dedicate every performance to Swami, but tonight I was able to do it in person."

The program began with an arrangement of the *Sarva Dharma* prayer, and *Om Tat Sat*, led by a solo flute that reminded all of the cowherd, Sai Krishna. The arrangements—*Om Tat Sat*, *Ganesha Sharanam* and *Arathi*—by Alberto Vindrola were accompanied by three tabla players from the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Paul Erhard provided a commentary between musical selections that drew parallels between the music and familiar themes of Indian spirituality. Luciano Condino provided a lively rendition of the "Mercadante Flute Concerto" and Bach's "Badinerie." Other selections included Brahms' "Hungarian Dance No.5," the third movement of "Brandenburg No.2," Strauss "Polkas," Larsson's "Trombone Concerto," and "Pomp and Circumstance" by Elgar. After *Arathi*, Baba joined the musicians on stage for two encores. He distributed white shawls to all the musicians.

The Sathya Sai Universal Symphony Orchestra first performed in 1995 for the Sathya Sai Music Festival for Global Unity. The orchestra returned the following year to perform a con-

cert for *Guru Poornima*. This year's performance was the third. It is hoped that this international celebration will attract more professional musicians from around the world.

With Swami's grace, the orchestra will continue to foster global harmonies for peace and

India has recognized the salutary effect of music on the mind; its potency to restore calm and equanimity, to still the waves of agitation and worry. Music is the instrument by which passions are sublimated, emotions are tamed, impulses are directed to higher purposes.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. V, Chapter 46

The Gift of Giving Comes from Within

We're waking up from a world that has downplayed miraculous and mysterious occurrences, and reduced them to meaningless chance.

Life is not just a chance event in which we use our logic and ego to survive as best we can. It is a spiritual journey filled with mystery and magic that comes about by our transforming ourselves from the inside out.

Our "inner critic" can be a very destructive part of ourselves. "As you think, so shall you be," is not just a pithy little homily out of the *Bible*; it's the way the universe works. By reconnecting with God, we begin co-creating our lives and living constructively, realizing that we are what we do.

If we give gifts of the heart, like kindness and forgiveness; if we give gifts of

happiness through music. Interested professional musicians should contact Giuseppe Savazzi, Torino, Italy. Mr. Savazzi's telephone and fax number is: 0039 011 812 59 71.

—**Elli Erhard**, Violinist
Prasanthi Nilayam

the mind, like dreams and principles; if we give gifts of the spirit, like beauty and faith; if we give words, like encouragement; and if we give the gift of time, like patience—then, we *are being* what we do.

Emerson said it well: "Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only true gift is a portion of thyself."

Transforming ourselves from the inside out is when we take attention off ourselves and, instead, serve the needs of others. Most of us do just that, and isn't it miraculous and mysterious that we are capable of so much love? Isn't it just a blast? [Helping others] brings home the message that our lives, on earth, certainly have great significance!

—**Winnie Bolton**
Mount Angel, Oregon

What Every Parent Should Know

Education in Human Values for Parents

Baba has said that parents are the first teachers. He emphasizes the development of human values in all walks of life, especially within the family. These concepts were the basis for the first **International Sri Sathya Sai Seminar on Education in Human Values for Parents** held July 24-27, 1999, in Prasanthi Nilayam at the divine lotus feet. Other concepts emphasized during the conference included the importance of the prenatal period in the emotional and spiritual development of the infant. Delegates also heard the importance of the first five years of life in all aspects of the child's development, and the importance of parents fully living the human values as examples for the children. About 150 delegates from 63 countries gathered for the workshop a few days prior to *Guru Poornima*, approximately 15 from the USA. After returning to their respective home countries, delegates are to train others to facilitate parenting in Sathya Sai EHV work-shops with Sai devotees who are, or will become, parents. This effort will be co-ordinated in the USA by the Sathya Sai EHV Advisory Board.

The International Seminar was facilitated by the Institutes for Sathya Sai Education in Thailand and Australia. Dr. Pal Dhal of Australia was the principle workshop presenter during the three three days, using the material in his and his wife's book, *Dynamic Parenting, Education in Human Values for Parents*, based on the teachings of our dear Swami. Drs. T. Judo and Art-Ong Jumsai of Thailand gave informative and inspirational talks on the role of values in marriage and child rearing. Australian delegates

served selflessly during the three days, seeing that the participants were comfortable.

Dr. Jumsai shared that Swami had asked, referring to conference delegates, *Why are these people here?* He then answered His own question, *They are here to see Swami.* And that we were! While we learned much from the conference to share with fellow devotees in future training sessions, we were thrilled with the attention and grace Swami bestowed on us during our stay. It was special grace for my wife and I, our young adult son, and our daughter to all attend together.

Swami's attention to the conference and the delegates, during the three days, indicated the importance he places on the unfolding of human values in the home and for the family. On the second afternoon, preferential seating was given to the delegates in the Sai Kulwant Hall close to Swami during the delivery of his valedictory discourse. It was wonderful to be close enough to see the expressions on his face, and to experience his eyes focused directly on us frequently during the discourse. That evening, the delegates were told by Dr. Jumsai that he had asked Swami if we could have *padnamaskar* (touching the feet of a holy being) and Swami agreed! The next morning Baba, walked through the lines of delegates, taking letters, allowing us to touch his feet, speaking with some, materializing *vibhuti* (holy ash) for a few. He, also, materialized a ring for the Australian coordinator.

Hopefully, the valedictory discourse of July 26, 1999 will be published for mailing later. [Yes

it is, see page 15 of this issue.] I close this article with excerpts of our dear Lord's words:

Make use of your education for the welfare of society and the nation. Share your knowledge with others. It is not necessary that you become a teacher to do so. There may be a few poor students in your locality. Conduct special classes for them in the evenings.

Today, people fight for money and property from dawn to dusk. They take to corrupt ways to earn even a single rupee. One should not live for the sake of money. It is better to die, rather than lead a life just for the sake of money. If you have money in excess, help others, provide free education and free medical care for the poor. . . .

It is only sacrifice that confers immortality. Participate in every good work according to your capacity. Select a few deserving students and give them free education. Education is not for worldly progress; it is to set an ideal. Experience happiness and share it with others. All elders, educators, the rich, and the students should come together and strive for progress in the field of education. . . .

Teachers! You have participated in this conference for the past three days. All of you have noble ideas, but you have to think of a proper way to implement them. Understand that character is important, not money.

—Tom Scovill
Mount Shasta, California



Students today, without developing good qualities, are wasting their lives by bad associations and giving free rein to their energies. Character alone is enduring. Students are going astray because their virtues are not cultivated. Who is responsible for this? In the home, the parents are responsible; in the schools and colleges, the teachers are guilty. Outside, the governments which have failed to provide a proper system of education, and the administrators who have not recognized their obligation to train young people along the right lines are to blame. The responsibility rests on all of them and not on any one single agency.

In homes, the parents should teach the children to cultivate good qualities and noble ideals. Bookish knowledge is not enough; it is superficial and not practical. Students, also, need general knowledge and common sense. The teachers, for their part, should impart to the students knowledge and skills which enable them to lead ideal lives. . . .

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sanathana Sarathi, July, 1994
National Bal Vikas Conference

Human Values for Parents

Valedictory Discourse, First Seminar on Parenting

What can the evil effects of the Kali Age do to a person whose heart is filled with compassion, whose every utterance is truth, and whose body is dedicated for the service of others?

Parents and Teachers

People should fill their hearts with compassion, always speak the truth and dedicate themselves for the well-being of society. The thoughts, words and deeds of people should always be sacred. The heart should not be polluted by desire and anger, the tongue not tainted by untruth, and the body not blemished by acts of violence—these are true human values. It is because of the lack of these human values that the country is facing hardships today. Parents and the teachers should take note of the fact that only the students can restore the pristine glory of Bharat (India), which once was the treasure house of spirituality, but has now become the abode of worldly and ephemeral pleasures. Just as the parents are saddened seeing their children lagging behind in their studies, so also, Mother India feels sad seeing her children lacking moral and ethical values. You have to remember that all those whom you revere as ideal citizens and noble souls were once students themselves. Never forget that students of today are the future citizens and leaders of their country.

The value of an individual depends on his or her culture. The real meaning of the word culture lies in giving up bad thoughts, bad actions, and cultivating sacred thoughts and noble deeds. The country is not a mere piece of land—it is an assemblage of citizens. For the country to progress,

the citizens must cultivate moral, ethical and spiritual values. It is not possible for citizens and leaders to cultivate these values unless they practice them from childhood. Life becomes meaningless if one does not take to righteous actions from an early age. Modern students are not able to refine their lives. So the parents and the teachers should play an active role in shaping the lives of the students. First and foremost, they have to inquire as to how students can get rid of their evil tendencies. Just as a boulder becomes worthy of adoration and respect when it is carved into a beautiful idol, so also, students will become ideal citizens if they are brought up in the right environment. Teachers and parents are responsible for the good and bad in students. But unfortunately, they have not understood their role in shaping the lives of the students.

Two Aspects of Education

What is *vidya*? It is derived from the root word *vid*, meaning to know. *Vidya* is called education in English. The term education has its origin in the Latin word “educare,” which means to elicit [or draw forth.] Educare has two aspects, the worldly and the spiritual. Worldly education brings out the latent knowledge pertaining to the physical world. Spiritual education brings out the inherent divinity in human beings. So both worldly and spiritual education are essential, without which human life has no value. But spirituality finds no place in the modern educational system. Only worldly education is given prominence. Just as two wings are essential for a bird to soar high in the sky, and two wheels for a cart to move, so

also, the two types of education are needed for humanity to attain the goal of life. Spiritual education is for life; whereas, worldly education is for a living. Only when people are equipped with these two aspects of education, can they be deserving of respect and adoration in society. Possession of these two aspects of education will bring not only respect and adulation, but also self-satisfaction. Worldly education, which relates to the head, is ephemeral. Reading, writing, eking out a livelihood, and attaining name and fame—all these result from worldly education. Worldly education makes a person great; whereas, spiritual education makes a person good. Spiritual education relates to the heart, the origin of sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance and love. Today, parents expect their children to go in for higher studies, amass wealth, and become great, but very few want their children to be good. Goodness is long-lasting, but greatness is temporary. Goodness forms the basis for spiritual life. There are millions and millions of people who have become great by amassing wealth, but what is their contribution to the welfare of society? Absolutely nil! So strive to be good, not great.

Modern students are traveling across the globe for material education without realizing the fact that the heart, the source of true education, is within. True education is that which makes people ideal. Parents are the first teachers. They should show their children the way to goodness. People cannot become good by merely being highly educated. Worldly education confers only *artha* (wealth) and *swartha* (selfishness). Such education is responsible for the downfall of humanity. Worldly education is information oriented, while spiritual education is transformation oriented. Information education makes people computers, whereas transformation education

makes people composers. People should become composers, not computers.

At the present time, moral, ethical and spiritual values are on the decline. Modern students have no trace of these values in them. They have no respect for their parents and society. How can they expect to be respected by their children? Our ancient culture exhorts: revere your mother, father and teacher as God. Respect and be respected. Practice before you preach. A composer is one who practices what he or she preaches.

Ashram Education

In the *Mahabharata*, there was a king named Dushyantha. Having been born and brought up in a palace, he was after worldly and material pursuits. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanvashram (hermitage of the sage Kanva) was a repository of moral, spiritual and ethical values. This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and ashram education. Ashram education inculcates all noble values in students. Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received an ideal education right from his childhood. This enabled him to lead a life of peace and security. That is why it is said, start early, drive slowly and arrive safely.

Life Principles

The five human values—truth (*sathya*), right conduct (*dharma*), peace (*shanti*), love (*prema*) and nonviolence (*ahimsa*)—are the five life principles of mankind. A true human being is one who practices the five human values. Today, people do not speak the truth, being apprehensive of the consequences; they do not practice righteousness or *dharma* as they do not know what it really means.

Don't Give Up . . .

Under any circumstances, never give up human values. Losing any of the five human values amounts to committing suicide. If you do not speak the truth, you lose one of your life principles. Truth is your *Atma* (the indwelling Divine). So until you breathe your last, uphold truth. The culture of India teaches all to speak the truth and follow righteousness. These values are the same for one and all. People all over the world are praying for peace. How can peace be attained? It is only through the practice of truth and right conduct. People are leading lives bereft of truth and right conduct, resulting in a lack of peace, which has led to the absence of love. The absence of these four values compel people to resort to violence. Violence is rampant everywhere, be it home, market place, or factory. People, bereft of these five principles, have become walking corpses. Life has to be infused into people today, for which faith in God is essential. Where there is faith, there is love. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is God. Where there is God, there is bliss. Human life has to begin with faith and end with bliss.

Even parents and children, husband and wife lack faith in each other. The love they exhibit is only artificial. Under such circumstances, how can love prevail? One should have heartfelt faith in order to experience true love. Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly. Fill your heart with compassion. When the heart is filled with love all actions will be suffused with love.

In his talk, Dr. Jumsai, referred to EHV as 3HV. The first H stands for heart, the second for head, and the third for hand. The harmony of heart, head and hand symbolizes the true human life. They are noble souls whose thoughts, words

and deeds are in perfect harmony. They are wicked ones whose thoughts, words and deeds are at variance. The heart should be filled with compassion. When there is love in the heart, all that you utter will be truth. Love in speech is truth. Love in action, is right conduct. Love in thought, is peace. Love in understanding, is nonviolence. Love is the underlying principle of the values: truth, righteousness, peace and nonviolence.

Relationship Between . . .

In olden days the teachers were called *acharyas*, meaning those who practice what they preach. These days, the teachers cannot be called *acharyas*, because they do not practice what they preach. Modern teachers are experts in giving platform speeches, whereas, the *acharyas* of ancient times were proficient in practical science. How can students heed advice of teachers if the teachers themselves do not practice what they preach? If a cow is grazing in a field, can we expect the calf to remain a mere mere witness? The calf naturally follows the cow. The relationship between the teacher and the student should be like that of cow and calf. It means the teachers should treat the students as their own children. One does not find such relationships between teacher and student. Both teachers and students have become money-minded. As a result, students do not respect teachers, and teachers do not have love for the students.

Elevation not Agitation

In many of the educational institutions, seats are allotted to those who can pay large sums of money. The quota system has corrupted the field of education. To stop this unholy trend, education should be offered free of cost. Everyone has an equal right to education; it is the gift of God. No one has the right to sell it. As the government is

also encouraging the commercial education institutions, the educational system has become totally corrupted. Education should lead to elevation, not agitation. Money can buy admission, attendance, marks and even degrees for that matter. The medical seats are readily offered to candidates who pay a sum of two to three-million rupees. In order to earn money they pay to get a medical seat, and then the doctors charge exorbitant fees from the patients. The same is the case with engineering. Even for admission in first standard, some institutions are charging twenty to twenty-five thousand rupees. Modern education has made people beggars. One should be a bigger, not a beggar. I am not saying this out of a sense of pride, but the Sathya Sai Institute is the only institution offering free education. Jumsai said that more and more institutions [like this] should be established. It is a matter of pleasure, but care has to be taken to see that education is offered totally free of cost. Only then can we shape students into ideal citizens. Teachers should share all their knowledge with the students wholeheartedly. They must practice before they preach. This is what I expect from the teachers. The education that is acquired by paying large amounts as a donation is no education at all. Only people having "black money" will resort to such illegal means to acquire degrees. "Do nation," that is the real donation. Use education for the welfare of society and the nation.

Share your knowledge with others. It is not necessary that you should become a teacher to do so. There may be a few poor students in your locality. Conduct special classes for them in the evenings. Today people fight for money and property right from dawn to dusk. They take to corrupt ways to earn even a single rupee. One

should not live just for the sake of money. It is better to die rather than to lead a life just for the sake of money. If you have money in excess, help others, provide free education and free medical care to the poor.

In Africa

In Zambia, Africa, there is a devotee by the name of Victor Kanu. He is here right now. He has established a Sathya Sai Educational Institution in Zambia. Many poor children are studying there. Both he and his wife are teaching the children with all love and care. (At this juncture Bhagavan asked Mr. Victor Kanu, sitting nearby, as to how many children are studying in their school. Mr. Kanu said that 520 children are there). They are imparting Swami's teachings and human values to all the students. Very soon they are going to add a college in Zambia.

Name and Fame

There are many affluent people in the world, but they do not have the spirit of sacrifice to help such sacred institutions. Some of them do contribute a small amount, and then they want name and fame. They expect their names to appear in letters of gold. Sathya Sai Institutions are not for name and fame.

I would like to narrate a small incident in this regard. At a particular place, when I was about to give a discourse, one person switched off the fan. I asked him, "Why did you switch off the fan? We need it now. It is very hot in here." That person replied that it was he who donated the fan, his name was written on the fan blades, and unless it was switched off, his name would not be visible.



Please turn to page 34



The devotees of the United States of America thank Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for incarnating on November 23, 1926, so that we may have the profound privilege of knowing Him and following His teachings.

Prove Your Omnipresence

It was after my second visit with Sai Baba, in the fall of 1992, that I experienced great difficulty inwardly upon my return home. Being with him stirred up lots of things, and that stirring brought me to a place where I felt that I was to simply sit back and “Be” and to dive deep into self-inquiry.

During this time, I found myself going over to the Sathya Sai Baba Center in Benicia, California in the middle of the week. This was the center that I frequented on Sundays. The lovely people whose home the Sathya Sai Baba Center was in, were what I called my “Baba Mamas.” They are very dear to me, and they helped me a great deal when this mystery called Sai Baba came into my awareness.

I connected with Prasuna over the phone, and asked if I could simply go upstairs into Baba’s room and be alone. She was very happy to have me do that. “Sure,” she said, “Go upstairs and take as long as you wish.” This was a new experience for me because I had always been in that room with many others. Therefore, it was very special to go up and walk into the room and be “hit” with the magnificent picture of our Swami. He was sitting in his chair, smiling—oh, such a smile—radiating so much beauty and power. Immediately, I went on my knees; my heart was aching to open. This was one of those acute changing or transforming periods for me. It was a deeply emotional experience.

You see, my life for more than 20 years had been a simple prayer, “Thy will, not mine, be done.” I only asked for the gifts of the spirit, to be opened and strengthened and made steadfast in faith, courage and love. As I began to pray and become quiet within, I found myself drawn to the

golden sandals laid at the hem of Swami’s robe. I moved over to place myself right in front of his chair, and I reached out and touched the sandals. I didn’t know if it was all right to do that, but something moved me to touch them. As I began to move back to the center of the room, I became aware of two quotations from the *Holy Bible* that said, “Put Me to the test,” and “Prove Me, sayeth the Lord.” Before I knew it, I heard my voice speaking directly to his picture demanding, “Prove your omnipresence!”

Because I had experienced a spiritual life that was inward—an inner journey to the Lord of the universe, the formless One, a relationship of prayer and meditation based on the inner revelation of a great presence of love, intelligence, and the one power that exists—the fact that God was appearing in this form was confusing to me. Yet, in my heart, it felt correct.

After that thought, I felt lighter and complete with my prayer. I got up and returned home to find a message on the answering machine. It was a dear friend—whom I hadn’t heard from for a while—sharing the news that her husband was in the hospital. He had one failed operation, and the corrective surgery was to take place in the next hour. She left the number of his hospital room and asked me to call him as soon as possible. Before dialing the number, I sat in front of the phone asking Baba to guide my call to my friend, Art. When Art answered, I heard myself say, “Art, this is Linda, would you simply follow what I have to tell you?” He acknowledged that he would. I said, “Art, there is a great light of love right within you, the same light that is within the doctor. Would you focus on that with your eyes

closed and softly inhale *Sai Ram** and exhale *Sai Ram* as you keep your focus on the loving light.” He was very receptive, and said he would do that.

We hung up, and within an hour the phone rang. It was Art’s wife calling with much excitement in her voice. She said that Art had been wheeled into the operating room about 45 minutes after we had talked.

He had a detached retina [in his eye] that could not be corrected during the first surgery. They were going back to try another corrective procedure, but the prognosis was not hopeful. That was why she had called in the first place.

Art said, “After you called, I did exactly what you said, looked toward the one light and uttered *Sai Ram* over and over. As I was being wheeled to the operating room, all of a sudden, I felt something strange taking place in my eye. As we stopped, I asked the doctor to come look at my eye. As he began to examine my eye, he started to smile, and broke into laughter. “My God!” he

said, “The thing has reattached itself completely. Go to your room, put your clothes on and go home!”

As I spoke to Art later, both he and I were certain that he had experienced a miracle, and that it was a result of the prayer we had prayed and focused on the light of God’s love and the name *Sai Ram*.

As a result of this happening, all doubt was wiped from my mind. I knew that he had met me at the level that I needed, and he had satisfied the yearning to “know him aright.” And “to know him aright” was to know that he is the One, the Omnipresent One, with whom I had been communing in this lifetime. The yearning to live at One with him was being met by his form coming into view.

Great gratitude and love to this Omnipresent One, Sathya Sai Baba. *Sai Ram*.

—Linda Gallagher
Martinez, California



I have come to light the lamp of love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added luster.

The seeker has to be very vigilant about his point of view, the objects he wishes to visualize, the things he longs to rest his eyes on. For it is vision (drishti) that determines attachment, passion, sorrow and happiness.

You are the noblest beings yet created, so you have to develop a vision that sees no high or low, that sees all the embodiments of divinity are not different from one another.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Thought for the Day
Prasanthi Nilayam

**Sai Ram* is a blessing that Baba’s devotees share with one another as a salutation, to say, “hellow,” or “goodbye,” or to wish God’s blessings to each other. It is often used as a prayer.

Love and Unity at Christmas

A Christmas in Prasanthi Nilayam

Dearest Lord, how can we thank you for the glorious Christmas you gave us? How special it was for us to be able to celebrate the real spirit of Christ with you in Prasanthi Nilayam. As you said in your Christmas discourse, *We have a holy day, not a holiday*. Last year, 1998, devotees from nations all around the world including Russia, Croatia, Romania, Hungary, Argentina, USA, Malaysia, Uganda, South Africa, Japan and other countries were present to express their joy and love of God.

There are so many opportunities to be involved at Christmas. You can sing in the main choir, the children's choir, be a volunteer (*seva dal*), make decorations, help with the children's choir. For the production, there are props, lights, scenery, costumes, childcare and assisting with the play. All of these are necessary contributions for the Christmas program to succeed. It's amazing, no matter what the challenges, everything pulls together. Why? Because Swami is the doer. Yes, you make the effort. If you've ever been part of the Christmas program, you know that despite all obstacles, it always comes together beautifully.

When Swami was presented with the program for Christmas, he said, *Very, very, very, very, very happy*, and a happy time it was. The overall feeling of the Christmas program that year, was one of love and unity.

In part, the reason for that was the work of the 300 *seva dals* who kept everything going smoothly in a disciplined but loving manner. Those volunteers worked at many tasks including the morning gathering for *Satsang*, (meeting

with good company) helping in the Poornachandra Auditorium and wherever possible, doing errands, coming to the rescue in the Western canteen by preparing vegetables and cleaning up.

The festivities got under way at 10:00 a.m., on December 15. "*Satsang* is everyone's forum," said the leader. Besides singing devotional songs, carols, and original joyful rounds, we heard heartfelt and proficient performances from a family of singers from America, a Russian opera singer, and an American singer/songwriter, and Argentinian guitarists and singers.

The childcare volunteers sometimes spent as much as seven hours a day with the children. It was a job which required patience, energy, skill, keeping the children quiet and occupied, and acting as parent and confidant. Swami was obviously pleased with the children's discipline. He went backstage a number of times to see them. The children were not only quiet and respectful, but deeply moved. A six-year-old, who cried when she saw Swami giving *darshan* backstage, later told the adult who was holding her, "When Swami gave *darshan* behind the stage, I saw the light in my heart."

A new feature that year was the formation of a design team that drew up plans—for scenery, costumes and props—and implemented them with unity. The design team was from Malaysia, Australia, Israel, Italy, Argentina and Yugoslavia. The coordinator of the team said, "There was no communication barrier among people from different countries. With gestures, love and humor, we understood each other. It was as if we have known each other

for years.” He went on to tell me that the first day they did not start with a prayer, and there were poor communications. From then on, they did three *Oms*, a *Ganesha bhajan* and dedicated their work to God. “Once the work is spiritualized,” he said, “it becomes an offering, and then everyone works together very well.”

To see this design team at work was quite an education. For example, drawings of all the animal heads were placed on the wall. First, wire was used to make the shape of the animal head, then papier-mache was put over the wire. Then, cloth and/or paint were added. The prop team made a weeping willow tree that, at the end of the play, grew into a tall Christmas tree complete with lights. It was clear that Swami had brought together a lot of talent. Swami’s hands were everywhere. For instance, six angel costumes were brought from Germany for a different play. However, the play that was chosen had exactly six angels, and those “angels” used the costumes.

The day before the performance, a completely new lighting console was delivered and put into action. There was also a more advanced and proficient sound system. This team worked around the clock; also assisting, were the Anantapur College women. The head of the sound and light department said, “There is far more cooperation and teamwork this year, and we’re enjoying the work, too.”

On December 23, Swami gave out 96 white saris to the children’s choir, program choir and some production people. As another example of love, unity, and Christmas spirit, a woman gave her place to an artist who desperately wanted to receive a sari from Swami.

The Christmas Program took place after the afternoon *darshan* on December 24. We heard the choir of over 300 voices singing a

spirited collection of songs from different cultures with an emphasis on African-American spirituals and urban gospel music. Included in the program were a Zulu song from Africa, French and Spanish songs, and some rousing gospel numbers, along with, “Oh Happy Day,” “Swing Low,” and “Lift Him Up.” This was followed by 20 minutes of *bhajans* led by the choir. Swami was happy and he said to the choir leader, *Very, very nice!*

At 6:00 p.m., the evening program began with an absolutely adorable children’s choir. Eighty-three children from different countries, ages six to 14—all dressed in white choir robes with red bows, and carrying hearts made for Swami. They sang with spirit and sweetness, songs such as: “Oh Come Let Us Adore Him” and “Super Duper Christmas.” They ended with “This Little Light of Mine,” waving their flashlight candles in the air like the lyrics say, “This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.”

The annual Christmas play presented by the children had some new features. The play was more in the style of an American musical, with little dialogue and mostly songs. All the narrators, except one, were children, not adults as in past years. The children also sang their parts along with the adults. The choir did an excellent job as the emphasis of the show was on the music. The tone of unity was helped by the attitude of the play’s director. He told me he had his badge changed from reading, “Play Director” to “Play Coordinator,” because he knows Baba is the real director. Everything was done calmly, with no sense of rush or worry.

The play entitled, “The Joy of the Lord,” began with the six angels in heaven saying that today is Christmas and everyone should be happy. But they noticed a man who was very sad,

so they decide to go and try to cheer him up. The angels realize that they cannot be seen or heard, so they find some children—whom they hear singing in praise of the Lord—to help them. We then saw a group of six-year-old girls who were absolutely lovable, singing “God Loves the Little Ones Like Me, Me, Me.” The children expressed their love to the sad man, trying to make him happy. When the sad man tells the children that no one has ever loved him, they realized that was his problem. They sang, “God Loves You, and I Love You,” and assured him that God loves us when we’re happy, sad, good, or bad. The sad man was not convinced. He thought that if he were someone else, maybe then, God would love him. This was followed by a rousing number when the children—some dressed in the animal costumes—came on stage and sang:

*If I were a butterfly
I'd thank you Lord for making my wings
And if I were a robin in a tree
I'd thank you Lord that I could sing.
If I were a fish in the sea
I'd wiggle my tail, and giggle with glee
But I just thank you Father for making me
for making me, me, me
Chorus: For you gave me a heart and you
gave me a smile
You gave me yourself and you made me
your child
I just thank you Father for making me,
me, me.*

There was also an elephant, kangaroo, octopus, crocodile, worm and bear. The sad man began to soften. He was told about the spirit of Jesus, how God is always with us, that God

created us and will take care of us. They sang, “The Joy of the Lord is My Strength,” and, at last, the sad man experienced love. As Swami told us in his Christmas discourse, *By love you can transform anybody*. The children told the sad man, “Jesus said, ‘He who has sent me will come again, and His name will be Truth’ . . . He is here with us now . . . You can see Him . . . Nothing can compare to His wonderful beauty. We call him Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.”

The audience was thrilled with this proclamation and cheered. A beautiful video projection of Swami giving Christmas *darshan* on the balcony was superimposed on the backdrop, as the cast gathered on stage for the finale. In the spirit of unity, they sang “Make Us One.” Our beloved Swami came on stage, and handed out dhotis [for the boys] and saris [for the girls] in the play. Then, to thrill us all, he manifested a gold chain for one of the boys.

On Christmas morning, red and silver sparkling hearts, green and gold wreaths rimmed the mandir’s balcony. Red velvet curtains adorned with golden angels, balls and bows were tastefully placed on windows, as well as on candy cane pillars. The holiest of mornings was to begin. The public was seated, waiting for the arrival of the *nagasankirtan* singers led by six angels with golden wings, followed by the children and choir carrying lanterns and candles. Then he came in white, our beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We sang, “Joy to the World, the Lord has Come,” as he gave us his blessing.

Swami cut the Christmas cake presented by the Christmas committee. Written on the cake were the words “We are One.” Swami looked and smiled ever so sweetly and said, *Not we, All is One*.

—Judy Warner Scher
Faber, Virginia

Nonviolence and the Individual

The sun shines on all of us equally. But how much more beautiful it is, if we are aware of it. Baba loves us all equally; he cannot do otherwise, it is his nature. But how much more meaningful it is, if we are aware of his love.

I have never written an article in my life. Yet the *Sathya Sai Newsletter's* appeal for articles on nonviolence has pulled at my heart. I have known Baba, as far as it is possible to know him, since a crisis in my life at age 30. As I write this, I have just turned 52.

I had lost everything and was flying home to Hawaii in total defeat. I was flying blind with no plans, no wife, no house, no job and an enormous baggage of sorrow. During the long flight, I fell into a deep sleep and dreamed that I was flying high in a very blue sky. A voice called out to me "Michael," and as I turned, there was God with his arms open to me. As I flew into his arms, he embraced me and whispered in the sweetest voice I have ever heard, "Michael, I love you; I have always loved you." I cried until I thought something would break and awoke with tears running down my face.

When I arrived in Hawaii, I called an old friend, and she invited me over for a group meeting she was hosting. They were going to show a movie about the Avatar, Sathya Sai Baba, from India. I immediately scoffed at the idea thinking, "Yet another Indian with bare feet. Whatever happened to the Western saints?" However, since she mentioned there would be a buffet, and since I had nothing to eat and no money to buy food, I agreed to go.

When I arrived at her beautiful house, there were a lot of "Sai Rams" (a greeting shared with

other devotees), and people in beads and saris. The food, however, was fantastic. As we began to eat, they started the video. I almost dropped my plate as I leaped up and pointed, "Who's that?" My friend smiled and said, "That is Sathya Sai Baba." I was overwhelmed. He was the image of my loving God in the dream, on the airplane.

You'd think that with such a start, I would have reached a reasonable state of sainthood by now. Everyone I knew in that Sai Center has been to India several times. All have had interviews and personal advice from Baba. Twenty-two long years have gone by, and I have never been there—never even come close.

My Baba comes to me in fits and starts. I can't seem to acquire the smooth, steady performance of my colleagues. It's a struggle for me. Everyday I want to do good, be good. My heart is capable of it, but my will is like sand cascading through open fingers. I have done horrible things in my life, yet he forgives me over and over. I try to forget about him, to make him leave me alone. When he does, I realize, yet again, how helpless I am without him, and beg to be helped back to him. That's when Baba whispers to me, "I never left you." Ah, the madness of it! Ah the Godness of it!

This brings me to the point of this article on nonviolence. Until recently, I have always thought that nonviolence was to "Help Ever, Hurt Never" to others. Now I know that, for me, nonviolence applies to myself.

The recent article about the golden lingam really set off my yo-yo relationship with Baba. It was quoted that Baba said, *Everyone who witnessed the event of the golden lingam will*

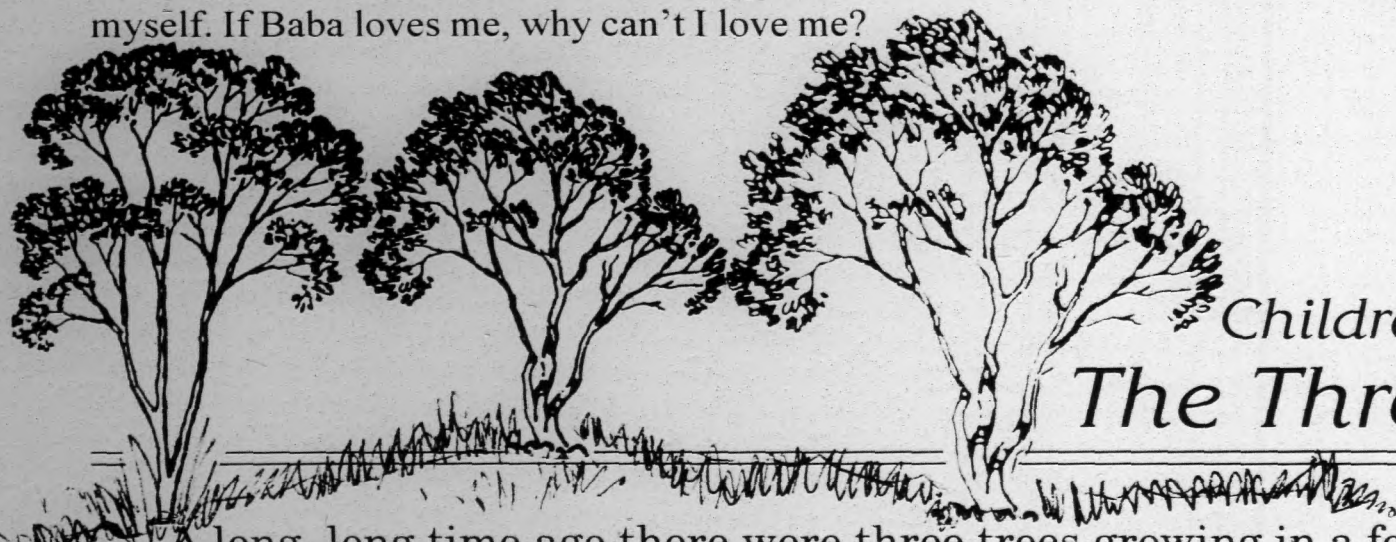
break the cycle of birth and death. All those people, all those very lucky people, and I wasn't there. And yet, it has to be fair, so it follows that there must be something wrong with me, for I didn't deserve to be there. The self-loathing began to spiral downward into familiar darkness.

No. Not this time. Nonviolence applies to myself. If Baba loves me, why can't I love me?

He sees all, knows all. If Baba sees worth in me, then it must exist, and beating myself up won't help me find that self-worth. With Baba's grace I will take firm steps in this direction.

All paths are different. Mine sure is. Love to you and to me. Love to us all.

—**Michael Azevedo**
Kula, Hawaii



Children's Corner: *The Three Trees*

A long, long time ago there were three trees growing in a forest on top of a hill. One day, they were talking of their hopes and dreams when the first tree said, "Someday I would like to become a treasure chest filled with gold, silver and precious gems. I would like to be decorated with intricate carvings for everyone to see the beauty in me." Then, the second tree said, "Someday, I hope to be a mighty ship, so I can take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the far corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of my strong hull." Finally, the third tree said, "I want to grow up to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. When people see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, they will think of the heavens and God, and how close I am to reaching Him. I will be the greatest tree of all time, and people will remember me."

After a few years of praying for their dreams to come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one of them came to the first tree he said, "This looks like a strong tree; I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter." He began cutting it down. The tree was happy because it thought that the carpenter would make it into a treasure chest.

Seeing the second tree, one of the other woodsmen said, "This looks like a strong tree, I should be able to sell it to the shipyard." The second tree was happy because it thought that it was on its way to becoming a mighty ship.

When the woodsman came upon the third tree, the tree was fearful that its dreams would not come true, if it was cut down. The woodsman said, "I don't need anything special to be made from my tree, so I'll leave this one." And he left the third tree in the forest.

When the first tree arrived at the carpenter's shop, it was made into a feed box for animals. It was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at all what the tree had prayed for. The second tree was cut, and made into a small fishing boat. Its dreams of becoming a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end. The third tree was cut and left by itself for a long time. The years went by, and the trees forgot about their dreams.

One evening, a husband and his wife, who were expecting a child, were traveling to a far off city to pay their taxes. They had no place to stay, so they went to sleep in a barn where the woman gave birth to a baby boy. They had no crib for the child, so they put the baby in the hay in the feed box that had been made from the first tree. The father, who was a carpenter, wished that he could have made a proper crib for his son, but the manger would have to do. The tree could sense the importance of this event, and it knew that it held a great treasure.

Some years later, a group of men got into a small boat made from the second tree. One of the men went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose, and the tree did not think that it was strong enough to keep the men safely afloat. The men in the boat awakened the sleeping man. He stood up and addressed the storm saying, "Peace, peace," and the storm calmed. At that time, the tree realized that it had carried the King of kings in its boat.

Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was made into a large cross, and the cross was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who was carrying it. When they came to a stop, the man was put on the cross. It was mounted on top of a hill where the man was crucified.

The following Sunday, the tree realized that it had been strong enough to stand at the top of the hill and be as close to God as possible. For Jesus had been crucified on it.

The story teaches that when things don't seem to be going the way you would wish, always know that God has a plan for you. If you place your trust in Him, He will give you great gifts. Each of the trees got what it wanted, but not in the way it had imagined.

—Anonymous

An Edited Version via Internet

Announcements

A Busy November:

Akhanda Bhajans

This year *Akhanda Bhajans* will be held starting **Saturday, November 13 at 6:00 p.m. until Sunday, November 14 at 6:00 p.m.** This 24-hours of devotional singing is done by followers of Sathya Sai Baba throughout the world. The singing and prayers are dedicated to the highest good of all beings and for world peace.

Attention Young Adults

Young adults, ages 16 to 30, from around the world will meet for the second **Sathya Sai Young Adult International Conference in Prasanthi Nilayam on November 18, 20 and 21.** Please be there in time to **register on the 16th.**

Ladies' Day

The tradition of honoring all women everywhere will continue this year. **Ladies' Day is to be held on Friday, November 19.** Female devotees, young and old, this is an auspicious time to be in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Birthday

Does anyone need to be reminded that **Swami's 74th birthday will be celebrated on November 23?** This is a time to express our gratitude for having the Avatar here on earth.

More to Come:

Taking Care of Those in Need

Not only has our dear Lord recently established a home for elderly, destitute persons in Whitefield, India, but **there will be another Sathya Sai Super Specialty Hospital in the Bangalore area.** These two boons to humanity are given through the loving care of the Avatar.

Sathya Sai Orchestra

Attention! Calling all professional musicians. if you are interested in participating in the Sathya Sai Universal Symphony Orchestra, contact: Giuseppe Savazzi in Torino, Italy. Mr. Savazzi's telephone and fax number is 0039 011 812 59 71.

To Remind People Everywhere

Are you remembering to pray for good and *dharmic* world leaders? Swami said that if we do this, he will send them!

For Those Who Read Chinese

A Chinese edition of *Sanathana Sarathi*, the monthly periodical from India, is now available. The subscription for that publication is as follows:

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Are You Renewing Your Subscription?

The cost of the *Sanathana Sarathi*, the monthly publication from India, has increased to \$11.00 a year for air mail to the United States.

- It is not the size of the service that matters, but the manner in which it is done. The motive must be pure and unselfish.
- Don't let what you can't do, stop you from doing what you can.
- Ask what the need is, and how your life can be useful to others by serving. A leader must be a servant first.
- When service is done with love, others will respect the work being done. The formal action itself does not count. It is the love alone that counts. Swami tells us: *If there is no love in the heart, there is no use in doing anything whatsoever.*
- Keep on silently repeating the name of the Lord and never worry about the results. The results are entirely his.
- Remember the Lord's words before moving into action: *The uniqueness of the Sai Seva Organization consists in the fact that it regards seva as a form of service to the Divinity that is in each being. The bliss that is derived from such service is incomparable. It is a spiritual experience.*

July, 1997, saw the first World Youth Conference in Prasanthi Nilayam. Swami's four discourses sounded the divine call to the soon to be leaders of his golden age. At this time, the youth program is still in its infancy, with a few countries leading the way. Generally speaking, most youths have yet to catch the fire and understand the grace that is theirs, if they choose. Never before in history has such an opportunity been given. Those who understand are the torchbearers leading

the way with lives of dedication to the fulfillment of Bhagavan Baba's mission here. They are placing his work above all else. They are ready to lead self-effacing, simple lives. Determined to control their senses and develop divine qualities, they seek the sacred path of sacrifice. New ways will open for them. The role of youths (ages 16 to 30) is an essential element in the transformation of society.

Swami has said: *You must try to attract young people to the service organization.* The purpose here is not to preach to them, but, with all humility, to set the example of service to society cheerfully done as Swami instructs. If we work properly, the newcomers will experience the true meaning of service. It is for Sai youth to invite their friends and acquaintances and then to work hard with love. Some of the newcomers may be drawn to ask about Swami. That is in the Lord's hands.

At the present time, most young adult activities reflect the established patterns of devotional singing (*bhajan*), study circle and service. This should change. Most important is to reach out into their communities and be good examples and leaders, putting aside petty, personality distractions. There are those who have done that, and their work should be replicated everywhere for, it is impressive. When newcomers are given the example of service done by their peers with love and dedication, they become eager to serve again and to share in the good work and the good company. Such experiences are not easily available to most youth today.

My work with disadvantaged high school students, over the years, has convinced me that regardless of the handicaps of their envi-

ronments, all respond to noble and loving ideals. It is for this reason that a program of one-to-one mentoring can be a most effective activity. The Young Adult program throughout the world needs to focus steadily on these efforts. The youth organization is not intended as an occasional, drop in when convenient, experience. It requires commitment.

An important part of the program should include the careful learning and the dedicated teaching of the Education in Human Values program as well as Leadership Training. Some giant steps have been taken in Sathya Sai EHV (Education in Human Values) in several countries, but the significant expansion is yet to come. This should be a major goal of youth everywhere. Swami has given instructions to share and spread his message:

Let each one catch a hundred and the message will grow and multiply. May your service fire the imagination of others with an awareness to redeem themselves. Let hard work speak in the language of dedication, and let it begin now.

Some years ago, a young editor of the New York Times attended the bimonthly classes that I give here in New York to talk about Sathya Sai Baba and his teachings. She was seriously interested, came regularly, and in time, asked what the Sathya Sai Baba Centers were like. I described the experience, and she asked to go. Several weeks later, we attended on a guest night. After the meeting, we talked, and I asked her how she liked it. "It was beautiful, such nice people. I loved it. You know," she added, "I've never been to a Hindu ritual before." She did not return.

Many years ago, Phyllis Krystal was part of an interview during which Swami's in-

structions provided strong and clear guidance for overseas centers. In a recent issue of the Sai Students Bulletin, USA, she describes that interview:

"As we were gathered awaiting Baba's entrance, he came gliding into the hall with a sprightly step and looked around us with a wide smile. Then, he startled us by announcing, 'You all think that Swami is the Avatar only of India.' After a significant pause, he continued, 'That is incorrect. Swami is the Avatar of the whole world,' and named many different countries in quick succession. Then, came the most meaningful and memorable advice, 'Do not take Swami's teaching and try to graft it onto a tree in your own country. Instead, take the seed of the teachings, and plant the seed in the soil of your country, so that it will grow into your own tree.'"

Mrs. Krystal continued, "As I visit many different countries, I have been made acutely aware that this most important directive given personally by Baba all those years ago, has not been followed. I have observed that in the majority of centers worldwide, the Indian way is still being duplicated. It is the correct way for India, but it limits the reach of Baba's wonderful message in other countries. Many people could benefit from this universal teaching, but do not feel comfortable with the Indian format. Many are afraid that it may constitute a cult and so avoid contact with it because they consider it to be foreign to their own culture. In all these years, no solution has been found to make the center activities more appealing. . . ."

The time has now come to develop additional Sai Centers with the focus on reaching out to the people in our different

cultures. Swami's message is universal, and it must be universally accessible to all. One such center has just been formed here in New York City. Here are some of its features:

At the beginning of the meeting someone will give a basic introduction to Sathya Sai Baba, his life and his works. There are always newcomers who want to know. Interestingly, longtime devotees also appreciate these introductions in which different speakers present in their own style.

Each meeting focuses on one aspect of Sai's universal teachings. These topics are announced in advance, for example: What is spirituality? What is the purpose of life? What does Swami mean by selfless service, the body, the senses, the mind?

There is a speaker for each meeting who presents the teachings; then study circles with a question and answer period can follow. At times, there will be a panel to answer questions. Emphasis is on the practical application of his teachings in daily life.

In our center, an artist has painted beautiful canvasses with the symbols of the five major religions in this country, and these are displayed on easels. Quotations—based on the topic of the meeting—from each religion are placed below the symbols; this gives effective evidence of the unity of faiths. The room is set up with one photograph of Swami and a candle.

Following the main topic of the meeting, one person gives a brief presentation of per-

sonal transformation as a result of putting Sai teachings into practice.

The devotional singing that follows is entirely in English and Spanish, the two main languages here. *Bhajan* style, unison singing, gospel singing—all forms are welcome.

A brief silent period and a prayer close the meeting. All are made to feel welcome and to ask questions of those of us who have had the opportunity to experience Sathya Sai Baba and his works.

Most important is the open, friendly, loving way of receiving the guests so that they feel comfortable and at home. As our center programs change, His universal teachings will become increasingly accessible to those who are not now aware of them.

*This is the time for each one of us to
care, to work, and to share*

*Sai's love with all. It is His grace
to us.*

*With single-minded dedication, this
new Sai breed*

*Shall serve as One, together, that His
mission succeed.*

*Bhagavan's call to commitment is
strong and sublime.*

*O warriors of the heart, herald now
His golden time.*

—Hal Honig, New York, New York

What are the reasons for the treacherous, cruel acts in this world? They are the decline of selfless service, the increase of meaningless feelings, and the multiplication of senseless desires.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Vision of Sai II, p 227

Implementing Baba's Message

After the 73rd birthday celebration in 1998, I had pondered how to implement Baba's message to chairpersons and other devotees.

At that birthday celebration, Baba had invited the chairpersons of all Sathya Sai Centers throughout the world to attend a convention, the first of its kind. Chairpersons from 180 countries attended. They all occupy exalted positions in their centers, and as such, Baba has placed the highest responsibility on their shoulders. He asked them, in his valedictory discourse, to manifest his message by living their lives accordingly. Such exemplary lives speak louder than innumerable descriptive words. There was no doubt that Baba gave his message, through them, to all center members in loud and clear words.

We are all aware that Baba's work is increasing, by leaps and bounds, everyday. That being the case, Baba expects each and every member to set an ideal image of his teachings by very firmly practicing what was discussed during the four-day convention. He did not spare the words in emphasizing this point, especially in the closing address to the delegates when Swami poured out his heart, asking them to be undivided in all center activities.

Even with the best of intentions, many good things are heard and soon forgotten. Therefore, I would like to suggest how we might remind ourselves of Baba's directions. By reading the following summation of Baba's message, at the start of each Sai Center meeting, we will be reminded of his words and divine presence.

We, the members of the Sai Centers will consciously and resolutely follow the instructions

given by our beloved Baba at the First Overseas Convention of Chairpersons of Sathya Sai Baba Centers:

1. We will develop broad vision and will not have any differences, jealousy, in-fights, hatred or ego among ourselves.

2. We will conduct ourselves as brothers and sisters and will always immerse ourselves in doing service.

3. We will all be united under any circumstances and will conduct center business with love, as love brings unity.

4. We will give and take love for love's sake.

5. We will do center work with complete harmony in thought, word and deed.

6. We will always smile and speak kindly.

7. We will develop unity, as there is immense strength in unity. With unity, not only for ourselves but also our nation will develop *dharma* or righteousness.

8. We will engage our limbs and senses in sacred activities, foster a sense of service among ourselves and entertain noble thoughts.

9. We will exert all effort to bring about a transformation in the educational system, as it is essential. We will help children to develop good, strong characters, good values, and sacred virtues that will not desert them.

10. We will be good, see good, and set an ideal. We will enter society with noble virtues and help everyone. We will practice at least one or two of Sathya Sai Baba's concepts.

—**Mohan Champaneri**
San Diego, California

Participate and Help

The culture of Bharat (India) declares: "Immortality can be attained only through sacrifice, neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it." All the activities and rituals you undertake must be for the welfare of society. All your children must be dedicated to the emancipation of the country. It is only sacrifice that confers immortality. Participate in every good work according to your capacity. Select a few deserving students and give them free education. Education is not for worldly progress. It is to set an ideal. Experience happiness, and share it with others. All the elders, the educationists, the rich and the students should come together and strive for progress in the field of education. Just as the thread that binds flowers of different hues to make a garland, likewise the feelings of love and sacrifice should bring you all together. The flowers may fade away, but the thread remains changeless. Your bodies can be compared to flowers. With the passage of time, the child becomes a man, man becomes a father, and father becomes a grandfather. But the feeling of love is changeless; it is true and eternal.

Even the animals render help to others, but not human beings. The cow partakes of grass and yields milk. People partake of sacred milk but indulge in wicked deeds. The spirit of sacrifice that is found even in a cow is not found in humanity today. What is the use of all the acquired education if a person cannot give up their evil qualities? [Baba recited this Telugu poem]:

*All worldly education will only lead
people to vain argumentation,
but not total wisdom.*

*It cannot help you to escape
from the clutches of death.*

*So acquire that knowledge
which will make you immortal.*

Education should enable us to cultivate sacred qualities. Worldly education is negative and spiritual education is positive. What is the use of having a bulb without electricity? Secular knowledge is like the bulb, and spiritual knowledge is the electricity. Both are essential for the progress of humanity and the world at large. Make proper use of the knowledge you have acquired. Parents should take an active interest in the education of their children. Never desire that your child will become a great person, instead pray that he or she will become a good person. Students should have good character.

Good and Great

If one goes through the sacred texts of the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavata* and the *Mahabharata*, one understands the evil effects of desire (*kama*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*). In the *Ramayana*, Rama symbolized goodness, whereas Ravana, greatness. Though Rama and Ravana were equally proficient in all forms of knowledge, Ravana could not make proper use of his knowledge as he had no control over his senses. On the other hand, Rama exercised control over his senses and sacrificed everything for the sake of truth. The *Ramayana* is known as *Ramacharita* (the story of Rama) and the story of Ravana is known as *Kamacharita* (desire).

The *Bhagavata* speaks of the consequences one has to face if one becomes a victim of anger. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were all-powerful, but ultimately perished because of their anger toward God. Hiranyakasipu was a great scientist. Today, human beings have traveled to the moon, whereas, Hiranyakasipu could even reach the stars, but he was ruined by his anger.

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children, share your textbooks with them. Only then will the feeling of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God develop.

As I have told you earlier, "educare" has two aspects: one is outward activity (*pravritti*), and the other is inward detachment (*nivritti*). God is the *Hridayavasi* (indwelling Divinity). So all that originates from the heart is essentially divine. Let all your thoughts, words, and deeds originate from your heart. You must do good, be good and see good. This is the way to God. Accept both pleasure and pain as gifts of God. In order to get cured of malaria, one has to swallow a bitter mixture. Likewise, one has to face hardships in order to attain happiness. That is why it is said, "Pleasure is an interval between two pains." Light has no value if there is no darkness. Likewise, pleasure has no value without pain.

sin. Then, you will become a demon. Fear of sin, and love for God are very essential. If you have these two, you will be successful in all your endeavors. Consider good work as God's work.

Give up the hankering to go abroad after you complete your studies. Serve your motherland. Lord Rama said, mother and motherland are greater than heaven. Work for your Motherland and serve the poor. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all, but serve only when it is necessary. You are born to experience love. Your life is full of love. [Some of] you are not able to understand this principle of love. There is nothing greater than love in this world. Love is God. God is love, so live in love.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**

Discourse for the First SSS Seminar on
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changeless. Your bodies can be compared to flowers. With the passage of time, the child becomes a man, man becomes a father, and father becomes a grandfather. But the feeling of love is changeless; it is true and eternal.

Even the animals render help to others, but not human beings. The cow partakes of grass and yields milk. People partake of sacred milk but indulge in wicked deeds. The spirit of sacrifice that is found even in a cow is not found in humanity today. What is the use of all the acquired education if a person cannot give up their evil qualities? [Baba recited this Telugu poem]:

*All worldly education will only lead
people to vain argumentation,
but not total wisdom.*

*It cannot help you to escape
from the clutches of death.*

*So acquire that knowledge
which will make you immortal.*

bharata, one understands the evil effects of desire (*kama*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*). In the *Ramayana*, Rama symbolized goodness, whereas Ravana, greatness. Though Rama and Ravana were equally proficient in all forms of knowledge, Ravana could not make proper use of his knowledge as he had no control over his senses. On the other hand, Rama exercised control over his senses and sacrificed everything for the sake of truth. The *Ramayana* is known as *Ramacharita* (the story of Rama) and the story of Ravana is known as *Kamacharita* (desire).

The *Bhagavata* speaks of the consequences one has to face if one becomes a victim of anger. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were all-powerful, but ultimately perished because of their anger toward God. Hiranyakasipu was a great scientist. Today, human beings have traveled to the moon, whereas, Hiranyakasipu could even reach the stars, but he was ruined by his anger.

In the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana and Dussassana symbolize greed, which is a negative power. On the other hand, the Pandavas stand for the positive power. They adhered to *dharma* under all circumstances. Similarly, in the *Bhagavata*, Hiranyakasipu symbolizes negative power, and Prahlada, positive power. Thus, wherever you look, you find positive and negative, as good and bad coexist. Accept the good and give up the bad, then you earn a good name.

Conclusion

Teachers! You have participated in this conference for the past three days. All of you have noble ideas, but you have to think of a proper way to implement them. Understand that character is important, not money.

Students! I want you to become ideal leaders. Make use of your education to serve the poor. Conduct free tuition classes for poor children; share your textbooks with them. Only then will the feeling of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God develop.

As I have told you earlier, “educare” has two aspects: one is outward activity (*pravritti*), and the other is inward detachment (*nivritti*). God is the *Hridayavasi* (indwelling Divinity). So all that originates from the heart is essentially divine. Let all your thoughts, words, and deeds originate from your heart. You must do good, be good and see good. This is the way to God. Accept both pleasure and pain as gifts of God. In order to get cured of malaria, one has to swallow a bitter mixture. Likewise, one has to face hardships in order to attain happiness. That is why it is said, “Pleasure is an interval between two pains.” Light has no value if there is no darkness. Likewise, pleasure has no value without pain.

Students! To the extent possible, serve society. Of course, you need to take up jobs and earn your livelihood. But do not be avaricious for money. Be satisfied with what you get.

Alexander the Great conquered many kingdoms and seized a lot of wealth. When his end approached, he realized that he could not take even a single penny with him. He requested his ministers to keep his two hands raised above the head during the final journey, so that the people would understand that even the mighty emperor, Alexander, had to leave the world empty-handed. Likewise, everyone has to leave this world empty-handed. Even a millionaire can partake of only food; he cannot sustain himself by eating gold. So be satisfied with the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter. Do your jobs properly and undertake service activities in your leisure time. Develop faith in God. If you do not have faith in God, you will not have fear of sin. Then, you will become a demon. Fear of sin, and love for God are very essential. If you have these two, you will be successful in all your endeavors. Consider good work as God’s work.

Give up the hankering to go abroad after you complete your studies. Serve your motherland. Lord Rama said, mother and motherland are greater than heaven. Work for your Motherland and serve the poor. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all, but serve only when it is necessary. You are born to experience love. Your life is full of love. [Some of] you are not able to understand this principle of love. There is nothing greater than love in this world. Love is God. God is love, so live in love.

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Between God and God's words there is an inexticable connection. God and His utterances are not different things; they are one and the same.

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