

Nov Dec 02



HAPPY

ॐ
Sathya ॐ
Newsletter, USA

Where Do We Find Joy ?

He who has subdued his mind will be the same in good times and in bad. Grief and joy are but aberrations of the mind. It is only when the mind is associated with the senses and the body that it is affected, agitated, and modified. When one takes an intoxicant, one is not aware of pain, is it not so? How does this happen? The mind is then detached from the body, so it is not bothered by physical pain or discomfort. Similarly, the Jnani too has immersed his mind in the Atma (the Divinity within each of us); he can establish mental peace and quiet by disciplining the mind.*

The Jnani gets full bliss from his own Atma; he does not seek bliss anywhere outside himself. In fact, he will have no desire or plan to find joy in anything external. He is satisfied with the inner joy he gets. The greatness of a Jnani is beyond description, even beyond the imagination. . . .

The thief who has robbed us of the precious gem "Atma is no other than the mind; so if the robber is caught, threatened, and punished, the gem can be regained. The possessor of the gem is immediately honored by being installed as Brahman (the eternal absolute consciousness).

—Sathya Sai Baba

Jnana Vahini, pp 11-13

(Page numbers may vary with different printings)

* Jnani is a person who identifies with the basic truths of the universe; one who has reached the summit of spirituality; one who has knowledge of the Absolute.

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

*This publication is dedicated with Love and Devotion to
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Sai's Message.....	Sathya Sai Baba	2
Recasting Our Destiny.....	Sastry V. Pappu	3
Childhood Memories.....	Sathya Sai Baba	4
Spiritual Testament of Mario Mazzoleni.....	Mario Mazzoleni	9
We Ask—Swami Answers.....	Sathya Sai Baba	11
A Christmas Message.....	Sathya Sai Baba	14
Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva.....	Judith Wechsler	17
There Is Only One Language.....	Richard Selby	26
I Will Allow: Affirmations.....	Little Dove	27
Children's Corner.....	Bal Vikas Magazine	28
Sathya Sai Baba Announces His Mission.....	Sathya Sai Baba	29
Some Important Lessons.....	Jonathan Roof	33
Birthday Montage.....		35
Sathya Sai Book Center of America.....	Book Center Volunteers	36



Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA welcomes photographs, drawings, and literary contributions. We are unable to return any of these items, so please keep a copy for your files. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing all materials for publication. Kindly send any of the above items to: *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* c/o Sathya Sai Book Center of America, 305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108. Phone 714-669-0522. Fax 714-669-9138.

—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

SUL'S Message

Earlier Swami mentioned a devotee who was praying to God for peace and bliss. However, modern man has limitless desires. Though he may have plenty, still he wants more. What is the use of having plenty if it is not put to good and sacred use? Sacred use does not mean giving money indiscriminately to anyone who asks. You should help only deserving people.



Observing your giving nature, many people may run after you. If you give to everyone without discrimination that becomes a misuse of money, and it is a mistake to do so. You should discern if the cause is good or bad, right or wrong, and give only for good causes. Then the purpose is fulfilled...

In my view, you should never give any scope for doubts. By the remembrance of God, all doubts will be cleared away. Some doubts come and go; they are like passing clouds. You should not be mindful of these passing clouds.

You may face some difficulties, losses, and sorrows in life, but you should not worry about them. Consider that they are good for you. When you have difficulties say, "This is good for me. This is good for me. God has given these troubles and difficulties for my own good." Do not be troubled or disappointed. Your disappointment is an appointment for me. If you develop these good feelings, you will have bliss. If you can experience depression from disappointment, even God will not come close to you. If you consider disappointment as a gift from God, then He will come to you and relieve you of your difficulties.

Some people have many doubts. This is because of their ignorance. You have to blame yourself—not others. You should not accuse or criticize anybody. You should always be blissful. Every Sai devotee should lead a blissful life.

—Sathya Sai Baba
July 27, 2002

Recasting Our Destiny

WRAP Up Your Life in the Divine

Twenty-three years ago, on a crisp January morning in Brindavan, I was ushered into the physical presence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Thereafter, I had the privilege of interacting with Swami almost daily for about seven years from 1979 onward, doing work on His various projects. I haven't seen Him physically for the last fifteen years, but I know He is always with me, because of the opportunities to serve that have come my way.

The following portrays my understanding of our duty as Sai devotees and the significance of living His message. It took me 23 years to arrive at these conclusions—better late than never. I am grateful to Swami for His grace all these years. I penned these thoughts very recently:

Are we making the best use of the privilege of having been drawn to Him, and

thus getting an incredible opportunity to dwell and meditate on the nature of that unsullied energy called the Divine or *Brahman*, to advance and to lead a righteous and spiritual life?

One can recast one's destiny, with the right kind of action, prayer, and wisdom functioning in unison—not only for achieving better results during the present life, but also during possible future lives, about which no mortal being can say anything with certainty. Therefore, the best course available to us is to start early and continue the journey, in the present life, on the divine highway of right action. In other words, we need to try hard and WRAP it up now in the present life, itself. Remember, the letters in WRAP stand for *Wisdom, Right Action, and Prayer*.

—Sastry V. Pappu
Wichita, Kansas

Utilize the chance of associating with me as much as possible, and endeavor as quickly and as best you can, to follow the directions that I have been giving. Obeying my instructions is enough: it will benefit you more than the most rigorous ascetism. Practice these things—truth, righteousness, peace, and love—which are dear to me. Resolve to keep these ideals before you always, in all your thoughts, words, and deeds. That can confer on you the bonus of mergence in the Supreme Substance of Divinity.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations,
Mumbai, May 17, 1968

Childhood Memories

Bhagavan's Early Years

When you give up ego, you become dear to one and all. Grief will not touch you if you get rid of anger. Freedom from desires brings peace. You will be happy and blissful if you have no greed.

Embodiments of love! In the world, ego is a demonic quality. An egoistic person loses the love of even his or her spouse and children. As long as one has anger, one cannot escape from misery. A person who has many desires can never be peaceful. Similarly, a greedy person can have no happiness.

All Are My Friends

Restraint of the mind is essential for everyone from the common person to the celestial beings. Without discipline, one cannot accomplish even a trivial task, however powerful one might be. Even though God is omnipotent and omnipresent, He too adheres to certain rules and regulations when He takes human form, for He behaves in a restrained manner and thereby strives toward the uplift of humanity. Avatars like Rama and Krishna exercised considerable restraint while performing their duties.

Rama took three vows: His first vow was to have only one wife. The second was to hit the target with one arrow, and the third, not to break a promise once made. He never broke these vows. Lord Krishna too took three vows: First, I will incarnate again to reestablish righteousness. Second, I will look after the welfare of my

devotees. Third, I will grant liberation if you surrender to me.

I too have taken some vows. One of the vows of Sai is that I shall never go back on my promise. Once I give my promise to someone, I will never forsake them or distance them from myself, even though they may work against me or disobey my command. This is the nature of my love. There are many people who received this promise from Swami and are enjoying peace and happiness. Some of them were treacherous and tried to harm Swami, but Swami never harmed or hated them. I have never hated anyone. I do not know what hatred is. Hatred is, in fact, a perversion of the mind. I wish for no one to come to harm. Why then do some people have feelings of hatred toward Swami? It is a consequence of their *samskaras* (inherent tendencies) from previous births. No one¹ can escape the consequences of their deeds. Come what may, everyone has to reap the consequences of his or her evil deeds. Only those who feel love can understand the sweetness and power of love. Swami has no enemy in the world. All are my friends. I am a friend even of those who deny my friendship.

Power of Devotion and Surrender

The *Vedas* say: *The knower of Brahman (God) becomes verily Brahman.* You become what you think or contemplate. [Charles] Darwin was a great scientist. He was known for his good qualities and broad-mindedness. Henslow was his favorite teacher and friend.

Darwin religiously followed Henslow's teachings and imbibed his manners and personality traits. Consequently, he started looking like Henslow. At one time, some of their friends saw both the preceptor and the



These are glimpses of my love. It is beyond anybody's perception to understand the nature of my love, equanimity, and Divinity. My love is infinite. It cannot be described in words.

disciple together at one place. They could not make out who was Darwin and who was Henslow. You read in the *Bhagavata* that Prahlada was the son of a demon, but because he contemplated the name of Lord Hari constantly, his face reflected the brilliance of Lord Hari. Ratnakara was a ruthless outlaw. Inspired by the teachings of the seven *rishis* (sages), he started chanting the name of Lord Rama. Consequently, his face reflected the effulgence of Lord Rama. You worship Rama as the creator, sustainer, and redeemer of the world. At the same time, you recognize the heights reached by Ratnakara—who later came to be known as Valmiki—as the foremost poet and the author of the great epic, *Ramayana*. In fact, the power of devotion and surrender is so great

that it is difficult to describe. No one can estimate the sweetness of love, so never hate anyone.

Anger, hatred, and jealousy are demonic qualities. These qualities should be annihilated and human values should be cultivated. *Sathya* and *dhanna* are primary human values. That is why the *Vedas* proclaim:

There is no dharma greater than truth, and. Speak the truth and adhere to righteousness. You should follow this command of the Vedas. Today people disregard sathya and dharma and take to the path of untruth and unrighteousness,

thereby destroying their humanness. First and foremost, practice *sathya* and *dharmā*. It is impossible to describe the power of *sathya* and *dharmā*. All of creation emerged from truth and ultimately merges into truth. The *Vedas* therefore exhort people to imbibe this quality of *sathya*. Truth is a *sathwic* (pure) quality. Let this quality find a place in your heart. Contrary to purity, modern people fill their hearts with negative qualities. Can such people be called human beings in the real sense of the term? In this context, I relate to you certain incidents of my childhood days.

Childhood Days of Swami

When I was a young boy, many children aged five to seven years used to come to me to play and sing *bhajans*. I used such

occasions to teach them the canons of righteous conduct. I would tell them, "Your mother gave birth to you, bearing all the difficulties and discomfort. She nourished you in her womb for nine long months. Your father brought you up against all odds. So love your parents. That is your foremost duty. Adhere to truth under all circumstances. Do not try to cover up your faults due to the fear that your parents will reprimand you. Do not tell lies. Let your parents rebuke you or even beat you. It does not matter. Speak only the truth." The power of truth surpasses the power of an atom bomb or hydrogen bomb. There is no greater weapon than truth. But you should know how truth should be uttered: speak truth in such a way that it is pleasing and does not annoy others. You should not utter harsh words.

When the children grew a little older and entered their seventh or eighth year, they asked Swami questions about right conduct, I told them to eschew anger, hatred, jealousy, and ostentation. Naturally, children relish food, and some try to steal whenever they find some dish of their liking. I used to tell them, "Don't steal anything. In case you genuinely need food, a book, or a pen, ask your classmates for them, but never take anything without their knowledge."

In those days, there were many Muslims in this village. They used to celebrate *Moharram**. Some Hindus too used to join them. I used to tell the children, "Morality is more important than the mode of worship or religion. Morality is our life-force. Hence,

* Moharram is the celebration of the first month of the new year in the Muslim calendar.

forget the religious differences and make friends with everybody. You too should participate in this festival." One boy said, "Raju, I belong to the Brahmin community. My parents will not permit me to participate in the celebration of *Moharram*." I said, "You are a human being. You belong to the human race. Your caste is the caste of humanity. Your religion is the religion of humanity. Keep this in your mind."

When the parents learned that I was telling their children to give up the differences of caste and religion they started quarreling with me, "Raju, why do you spoil our children by telling them that they should not make distinctions on the basis of caste or religion? Is it fair on your part?" I told them firmly, "In this world, there is no greater religion than the religion of love." I was not afraid of anything. Why should truth be afraid of anything? By adhering to truth one can achieve anything.

One day, the children had a discussion, "Raju is telling us many good things. Are we putting into practice at least one of them?" they questioned each other. One boy said, "I am trying my best to speak the truth under all circumstances." Another boy said, "God is my beloved. He is my mother, He is my father, and He is my life." His name was Kesanna. He was the son of Buggapalli Acchamma, who used to eke out a livelihood by selling *beedis* (hand-rolled cigarettes) in a small kiosk. "It is not possible to put into practice all the teachings of Raju, but I feel happy to listen to His words," said another boy. "So sweet are Raju's words. How can we refrain from listening to Him? Raju is very

dear to me," another boy commented. "Do you think you are the only one who loves Raju? Don't we love Him too?" other children questioned him. In this way, the children showed their love for me and my teachings,

Subbamma Realizes Swami's Divinity

One day, we all visited Karanam Subbamma's house. She was a pious lady with a broad mind.

"Raju, you have brought all these children, but I haven't prepared any food for you. Come again tomorrow, and I will have something ready for you to eat,"

she said. The next day, she prepared *sambhar* (a spicy sauce) and rice, thinking that I would enjoy it. I had told the children to behave well since she belonged to the Brahmin community, and it was not so easy for her to give up differences of caste or religion. She brought rice and *sambhar* in a vessel and served food into the hands of the children. They all had a hearty meal.

She knew that I would not allow her to feed me first, and that I would be satisfied only when the other children had been served, so she served them first. Afterward, only a small quantity of rice was left. She felt bad about not being able to feed me properly and put the small remaining amount of rice into my mouth with her own hands.

"Why did she serve food into our hands and then feed Raju by hand?" the children

started whispering. I said, "Subbamma, your act has annoyed the children." She turned to the children and said, "I love you all equally, but Raju feels satisfied only when all of you are fed first, so I served food to you first. In the end, only a small quantity of rice was left, barely a morsel, so instead of serving it into His hand, I placed the rice in His mouth.

Raju feels satisfied only when everyone else is satisfied. That is His nature. There is not a trace of selfishness in Him. You all should emulate Him. Give up selfishness and self-interest and

There is immense happiness in unity, but today unity and love are absent in educated people while jealousy and hatred are on the rise. People quarrel with each other even over insignificant matters.

nurture love. You should believe that your happiness lies in the happiness of your

fellow human beings. Only then will you prosper and become an example for others."

Then she said, "Raju, I am going to prepare lemon rice tonight; kindly go out and get me some curry leaves." Under that pretext, she sent me out. I was then eight years old. Even though I was older than the other children, I was the shortest of them all, but I could climb trees well. I climbed up a tree and plucked a branch of curry leaves as requested by Subbamma. Do you know why she sent me out? She wanted to talk to the children about me.

In my absence she told them, "Children, do you know how fortunate you are to have the friendship of Raju? He is not an ordinary boy. One day, He will become the king of kings and the emperor of emperors. You just follow His command. Whatever the issue,

do not disobey Him. If you do so, all the gods will be angry with you. Derive happiness by making Him happy. He won't express His unhappiness, but you will have to face the consequences if you do anything wrong. Therefore, conduct yourselves in such a way that He never feels dissatisfied."

Subbamma's husband had a second wife called Kamalamma. She said to Subbamma, "Sister, how can these children understand the philosophy you are teaching them?" Subbamma replied, "This is not philosophy at all. I am simply telling the children how to conduct themselves in day-to-day life. I have no children, so I treat them as my own children. They are companions of Raju, who is my very life."

One day, Subbamma prepared *vadas* (a fried snack) in her house. As there were not enough *vadas* to distribute to all the children, she wanted to give them only to me. She went out to the terrace and called to me through a window, as my house was adjacent to hers. "Raju, Raju, come here at once!" I ran to her. She handed over a small packet through the window. I said, "Subbamma, it is not fair that you give something to me alone. When you give, give to all the children." "Forgive me, Raju; from tomorrow on, I will give to everyone equally," she said. Swami kept those *vadas* till evening and gave all the children equal portions.

Do you know why Swami is telling all this? These are glimpses of my love. It is beyond anybody's perception to understand the nature of my love, equanimity, and

Divinity. My love is infinite. It cannot be described in words; it is inexplicable. Some people misunderstand Swami's love and ruin their lives. Swami wants everybody to be happy. *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the beings in all the worlds be happy.) No one should undergo any suffering; that is my wish.

Swami's School Days

You all know Gunda Sathyanarayana of Bukkapatnam, who visits this place often. He is here now. He was my classmate. Look at him. (Swami gestured to Sathyanarayana to come to the dais. Surprised by the sudden invitation, Sri Sathyanarayana faltered as he moved up to the platform and prostrated before Swami. The audience applauded loudly when Swami lovingly introduced His childhood friend and asked him to speak. Sri Sathyanarayana described how Swami had showered His love and affection on him since their childhood days. Later, Swami continued His discourse.)

Some other boys and I used to go to school in Bukkapatnam. We were studying in 5th standard. My family was very poor; other children of this village were also poor. Mother Easwaramma used to prepare *ragi* balls. Making a small pit in the *ragi* balls, she used to stuff them with ground-nut chutney. In those days, there were no tiffin carriers or boxes. The food was packed in a cloth, which I carried on my back on the way to Bukkapatnam.

We would run to the nearby water tank as soon as the lunch bell rang at 12:00 noon.

continued on page 21

Spiritual Testament of Mario Mazzoleni

A Life Fulfilled

Mario Mazzoleni, ex-Catholic priest and author of *A Catholic Priest Meets Sai Baba* and *The Wish-Fulfilling Tree*, left his body at Prasanthi Nilayam on September 24, 2001, at 3:30 p.m., in the Super Specialty Hospital. The following morning, Swami granted his widow an interview, and gave her a white *dhoti** for use as a shroud. The funeral ceremony took place on the banks of the Chitravati River on September 25, to the chanting of Western devotees. Here is the spiritual testament of Mario Mazzoleni, originally given in Italian to Italian devotees. The words that Mario spoke on his deathbed are translated as follows:

"My life has been rich in dramatic high spots, which is why I have often liked to say to my friends that in this one existence, it has seemed that I have lived several lifetimes. During all the years marked by these experiences, I have always felt a deep urge to find an answer to the many 'whys.'

"My thirst for knowledge was completely quenched by my meeting Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I am positive that I had always sought Him, ever since I was an infant, and even when I knew nothing of His existence. In fact, the greatest regret of my life has been to have passed so many years without meeting Him. However, God's grace comes

*A straight piece of fabric often used as a man's garment when wrapped around the waist.

when one has earned it. The Divine Presence of Sai Baba is, without a doubt, the most important occurrence in the cosmos for thousands of years. I am happy to have sacrificed my entire career, my reputation, and my life itself in this cause. This event induces me to express even more strongly the feeling of gratitude that I have toward my parents, whom now I am able to see once more. Divine Compassion was pleased to spare them the great pain of seeing their son, the priest, rejected and condemned by that same institution that had welcomed him as its minister. What that human condemnation took away from me was infinitely less than what I gained by knowing Sai Baba, and by consecrating all my energies to Him. I am saddened by the thought that some people may have suffered because of my faith, and I humbly beg forgiveness from all those who may have been scandalized by my words or by my actions.

"But my dear brothers and sisters who are reading this, if you have not yet understood the immense value of that which is glittering before you, make haste to discover it. The time of the Avatar is limited, and once the chance is lost, it will be lost for all time.

"My meeting with the Divine Personage of Sai Baba has signified for me the synthesis for all Truth contained in all Holy writings of

all religions. Do not think that I have lost my faith in Jesus or my love of Him. Right now, I love Him more than ever, as I love Buddha, Krishna, Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi, and so many others, and naturally, above all, Sai Baba. Those who have condemned me as faithless have failed to understand that my life's work has not been to be faithful to one religion more than to another, but to be faithful to that which is transmitted by all religions: Truth and Love.

If you ever wish to accord me a favor, you can still do so: be filled with joy as you salute my mortal remains, for your joy will

accelerate my progress toward the Light. Mark this day as a celebration, not as a sad day that you would like to forget as quickly as possible. If you send me your joy, I guarantee that in return for your emotion, you will experience an even more intense joy. Light increases as it passes through mirrors, while darkness veils the mirrors themselves. Accept all the Light that God sends you and be happy, as I was during my life, and as I am, even more so, now.

—Your Brother, Mario Mazzoleni

Man should leave the world better than when he came into it. He must leave full of gratitude for the chance given to him to see God in everything he touched, heard, smelled, and tasted. He must remember the Lord with his last breath....

To have that, a lifetime of practice is needed. When you are engaged in various duties and obligations of the world, never allow your attention to stray away from God—the goal. Cultivate the habit of remembering the Lord with every breath; then only can you remember Him with the last breath....

You do not realize your good luck in having me as your guide. I shall not rest until I have transformed all of you.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse, October 23, 1963

Death is but a passage from one life to the next; it is the change from old clothes to new, as [stated in the] Bhagavad Gita.... Some people refuse to believe in a previous life because they cannot remember the events of that life. But those people cannot even remember what they did five or ten years ago, though they are certain that they were alive at that time. So why do they expect to remember a past life?

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VI

We Ask — Swami Answers

This is a new column that will appear in each issue of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA. We have found that our readers like to know Swami's answers to frequently-asked questions. We hope that our Newsletter friends and Sai devotees everywhere find this question-and-answer section worthwhile in every way—interesting, enlightening, and spiritually uplifting.

—Editor

Q What is the sole objective of Sai Organizations?

A: The sole objective of all the Sathya Sai Organizations is to enable people to discover their innate divinity and regain their self-confidence and faith in God. The power and strength derived in the self from faith in God will be enduring and ever sustaining. The objective of the Sai Organizations is to make people aware of this truth and to live in that awareness.

Truth (God) is one. The same *Paramatman* is referred to by different names, such as Rama, Krishna, Christ, Allah, and so on. This is the cardinal principle on which Sathya Sai Organizations work. The unity of all faiths is the main plank of Sai Organizations. All our 18 *Puranas* (scriptures) dwell on one single theme—that we have no right to find fault with others [or their religious beliefs]. Never entertain malice (hatred) toward anyone; the same God is inherent in all beings.

—*Seva Dal*, April 1983, p. 4

Q What is the purpose of the Sathya Sai Seva (service) Organization, Swami?

A: This organization is intended to broaden your love, to channel your activities through devoted service. It has not been devised to parade devotion, to collect devotees, or to canvas support for some new-fangled breed. It is dedicated to the great task of progressively aiding people to realize their reality and merge therein.

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. III, p. 44

Q Is one of the objectives of the Sathya Sai Organization to promote and spread the name of Sai?

A: The organizations named after me are not to be used for publicizing my name or creating a new cult around my worship. They must try to spread interest in *japa* (repetition of a divine name), *dhyana* (meditation), and other *sadhanas* (spiritual disciplines) that lead people Godward. They must demonstrate the joy derived from *bhajan* (devotional singing) and *namasmarana* (continual remembrance or repetition of a divine name), the *shanti* (peace) that one can draw from *satsang* (spiritual fellowship). They must render service to the helpless, the sick, the

distressed, the illiterate, and the needy. Their service should not be for purposes of exhibition; it must seek no reward, not even gratitude or thanks from the recipients. Service is spiritual practice, not a pastime of the rich and well-placed.

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VI, p. 128

.....
Q What can the Sai Organizations achieve as a group, Swami?

: A: What a single individual cannot accomplish, a well-knit group or society can achieve. We find social living contributes to increased happiness and more efficient effort even among birds and beasts. Even ants have learned the immense benefits that can be derived from group activity and social organization. Monkeys also live in groups for greater security and happier lives. Through a sense of unity, willingness to sacrifice, and the softness of compassion, all objectives can be gained. So the Sathya Sai Organization must move forward with heartfelt enthusiasm in the field of service.

—*Sanathana Sarathi*, Dec. 1981

A person walking alone feels tired and miserable at the end of five miles, but walking with ten others as a group they find the five miles a happy jaunt. They arrive refreshed and strong.

—*Sanathana Sarathi*, Dec. 1981, p. 289

.....
Q How has the Sai Organization benefited humankind?

: A: The task before humanity is to plant the seeds of truth, righteousness, peace and love in hearts made ready for their reception; to foster the saplings and watch over them with

love and care until they grow into trees, yielding a rich harvest of sweet fruits; and to enable all to share in that sustaining repast. Sages who succeeded in this beneficial culturing process have laid down the means and methods, the steps and pitfalls, the helps and hindrances, that people must consider while engaged in this task, and millions have benefited by their counsel. Never before has this become an organized movement in which all of humanity was involved. Unless it becomes so, there can be no liberation from fear, anxiety, and injustice.

—*Sanathana Sarathi*, June 1976, p. 91

Need for Rules and Regulations

.....
Q Since the Sathya Sai Organization is a spiritual body, are rules and regulations necessary?

• A: A spiritual organization is really above all rules and regulations; the realm of the *Atrna* (indwelling Divinity) is beyond the limits of regulations. In this sense, rules are either meaningless or superfluous in Sathya Sai Organizations. Nevertheless, to satisfy the law of the land regarding associations of this kind, some rules have to be adopted. For example, who may be the members of these organizations, and what are their qualifications? Of course, the members must be eager aspirants for spiritual progress. They must have full faith in the name that the organization bears and in spreading that name in the manner suited to its message and majesty. Besides, the members must

have won recognition as good persons. Those are all the qualifications needed; nothing else counts.

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VI, p. 29

Q What is the reason for and the benefit of the rules and regulations?

A: In order to help the *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) to attain this result (achievement of the knowledge of the *Atma* as one's real core), it is necessary to impose some hard rules and limitations. An illness cannot be conquered by mere drugs alone; a tight regimen of food, drink, and habits is also to be prescribed and followed. All are 'ill' with *bhavaroga* (the affliction of worldly existence), in a perpetual journey from birth to death and death to birth. Repetition of the [Divine] name is the drug, but this must be accompanied by a regimen of disciplinary limits and laws. *There can be no spiritual progress without regulated, disciplined lives.* A song is pleasant to the ear only the melody is consistent and timing proper—a *raga* and a system of *tala*. So, even for your spiritual *sadhana* through these service units, some rules of discipline are essential, and they have to be strictly observed. You should not deviate from them.

—*Sanathana Sarathi*, January 1978, p. 258

Q Why are there so many restrictions in our organization, Swami?

A: The restrictions, rules, and self-controls are the royal roads leading to the goal of self-realization. They are not just to bind you, to limit or control you. Everyone has an *Atma*, but the mind wanders and gets

agitated. These rules must be adhered to, to control such wanderings of the mind. A tiny sapling must be protected from animals by a fence, but when it becomes a tree, the same animals that tried to destroy or eat it will come for refuge and shelter under the tree. Rules are protective fences for our minds.

—*Seva Dal* Feb. 1981, p. 8

Q Are not the rules and regulations an impediment to the free expression of my spiritual practice?

A: Do not fret against the rules and regulations that the organization imposes on you; they are laid down for your own good. Regulation is of the very essence of creation. The oceans observe their limits; wind and fire respect limits and bounds. The human body has to maintain warmth up to 98.4 degrees in order to be free from fever. The heart has to beat a definite number of times a minute; breathing has to be done 21,600 times a day. How then can the organization escape the prescription of certain rules and regulations?

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. X, p. 45

Please know that the page numbers given as references for Bhagavan's answers may vary from edition to edition. We have tried to be accurate, but be aware that many of these books have been reprinted, which means that some statements will be found on other pages in the volumes indicated.

A Christmas Message

The meaning of *Avatar* is: To save humanity, or the embodiment of God. Because of His infinite love, affection, and compassion, He comes down to the level of people, as an *Avatar*, to arouse the divine consciousness of humanity. He makes people aware of Himself when He finds them desperately searching for the meaning of life.

Concentrated Effort

For you to reach the highest goal—of merging with the Absolute—this chance has been granted to you as the reward of merit acquired over many previous lives. A bird needs two wings to fly; a cart needs two wheels to be pulled along. To journey toward the ultimate goal, humanity needs to study and be steadfast, [through] *vidya* and *thapas* (wisdom and sacrifice). The *Bhagavad Gita* declares that among all studies, the study of the *Atma* (indwelling Divinity) is the holiest and is known as *Atma vidya* or *Brahma vidya*. *Vidya* shows the way; *thapas* takes you to the goal. These two are the two eyes that fulfill one's purpose.

The farmer has to concentrate his plowing and sowing efforts during certain favorable seasons. He cannot afford to count the cost or calculate the trouble. Rain or shine, night or day, he has to labor, so that he can reap the harvest. Similarly, for students, this is the period of life when you must be active and alert. Your future is shaped by what you do now. This is the most fundamental stage of life, when you prepare your minds to meet life's challenges and your intelligence to solve its riddles.

You are called *vidyarthi*, seekers of intelligence and wisdom. Unfortunately, most

students seek not *vidya* (subjective enlightenment) but *vishaya* (objective pleasure). Both *guru* and *sisya* (teacher and student) have fallen from the ideal. The pupil's role is that of the actor, and the teacher's role is the director. The pupil should be like Arjuna, the wielder of the bow; the teacher should be like Krishna, the unselfish wielder of skills.

God alone is the true guru; others can at best be teachers or instructors. The guru, out of His infinite compassion and wisdom, counsels and guides students toward the most beneficent path. The pupil, out of his infinite devotion, follows the path and attains the goal. Arjuna said, after listening to the Lord's counsel, "I shall act according to your words." All you students should be like Arjuna. Only then will you attain a life of peace and joy in this warring world of misery, and demonstrate in your lives the excellence of *Bharatiya* (Indian) tradition and culture.

Eternal Power

God is eternal power—omnipotent and omniscient. He is both cause and consequence—the potter, the clay, and the pot. Without God, there can be no universe; He willed it, and the universe happened. It is His play, the manifestation of His power. People

embody His will, His power, and His wisdom, but people are unaware of this glory. The cloud of ignorance veils the truth. God sends sages, saints, and prophets to unveil the truth. He appears as an *Avatar* to awaken and liberate all people who are willing to accept.

Jesus Never Wavered

Two thousand years ago, when narrow pride and thick ignorance defiled humanity, Jesus came as the embodiment of love and compassion. He lived among the people, holding forth the highest ideals of life. You must pay attention to the lessons He elaborated during the various stages of His life. "I am the messenger of God," Jesus declared. Each individual has to accept the role [of messenger] and live as an example of divine love and charity. The guru must act as the alarm clock and awaken the sleeper to his duty to himself, just as the *Upanishads* proclaim, "Arise! Awaken! Bear witness to the God within, in every thought, word, and deed."

As Christmas day is celebrated, bring to mind the words Jesus uttered, the advice He offered, the warnings He gave—and decide henceforth to direct your daily lives along the path He laid down. His words must be imprinted on your heart; you must resolve to practice all that Jesus taught.

Truth Is Revealed

Two points of view are locked in a continual struggle for acceptance—the spiritual and the worldly, reality and appearance. After this discourse is over, while going back to your room, you imagine

that you see a snake on the road. In reality it is only a length of rope. It appears to be a snake, and you feel a sense of terror, but your terror does not change the rope into a snake. When you turn on a flashlight, you discover that your fear was misplaced and that the rope was always just a rope. The universe is what appears to be so; reality is Divinity. When the light of wisdom shines, truth is revealed. The universe is enveloped in Divinity; that is its vesture. Jesus declared, "Death is the dress of life."

Jesus knew that God wills all, so even on the cross when He suffered agony, He bore no ill will toward anyone. He often said, "All are one; be alike to everyone." Practice this attitude in your daily lives. It may be difficult to develop unwavering faith in this great truth, but one must persevere.

The Mind

The mind, as Arjuna complained, hops back and forth from belief to doubt, from one conclusion to its opposite, causing turmoil and confusion. There is one method by which the mind can be conquered: when placed at the lotus feet of the Lord, the mind becomes inactive and harmless. In order to offer the mind entirely to the Lord, deep detachment from worldly desires is necessary; superficial devotion or shallow steadfastness cannot succeed.

The Body

One of the purposes and privileges of this [student] stage of life is to cultivate detachment, to subdue the vagaries of the mind, and to manifest the Divinity that is

latent in you. Divinity, when expressed in action, blossoms into loving service to your fellow beings. It renders the heart pure—free from pride and greed.

As a young man, Jesus wandered purposefully in lonely places for twelve long years, engaging Himself in study, spiritual exercises, and meditation on God. Of course, one must protect and preserve the body, which is a divine gift. The body is a boat equipped with instruments by which humanity can cross the sea of perpetual change and reach Divinity. This goal of life has to be reached before the body-boat develops leaks and disintegrates through illness, sloth, and the onset of senility. Physical, mental, and spiritual health has to be fostered through vigilant care. Nevertheless, one must be ever ready to cast the body away in defense of righteousness and for God. Keep Jesus as your ideal in this endeavor.



and the formula that is held holy; between the various do's and don'ts that have to be scrupulously followed, and the underlying truth. In the *Vedic* faith also, one finds today this conflict between the upholders of ancient tradition and the promoters of deeper understanding. The latter have also based their teachings on the *Vedas*.

The best way to resolve these confusions and conflicts that hamper moral, ethical, material, technological, and spiritual progress is for people to live fully spiritual lives—as they ought to. Then they can rise to the height of the Divinity within, which is the true reality. This is the one, eternal, universal teaching. The thoughts that the intellect frames must be reflected in the mind and translated into action. Thought, word, and deed must be coordinated; they must fulfill one another. The characteristic of a holy person is: one mind, one word, and one act. The three are one—not different.

The Philosophy

Jesus exhorted everyone to observe the basic, valid teachings of the ancient scriptures and to derive peace and joy therefrom. However, the Jewish people held the rituals and regulations laid down by the prophets in the scriptural texts as valid for all time. Therefore, they held the teachings of Jesus as wrong. They were not moved by personal hatred toward Jesus.

This problem arises in every age—the conflict between the letter and the spirit; between the doctrines that are held sacred

To Celebrate Christmas

Christmas means the mass held on the birthday of Christ. It is fundamentally a sacred, religious rite. To treat the day as a festival only for drinking, dancing, or eating is wrong. Christmas day should be spent in prayer—not merely this day, but cultivate the *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) of prayer as a habitual way of life.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Excerpted from: Christmas Discourse 1981

SERVICE

OPPORTUNITIES



Make no distinctions whatsoever in rendering service. Serve your parents, brothers, friends, and even beggars alike. Divine grace will flow in abundance only when you serve with the spirit of humility and equality. Service is the easiest path to attain divine grace. Offer service and receive the love of God. Love and service are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of love and service, divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 32, Part 2, Ch. 9

Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva: Village Service by Sai

The extensive personal involvement of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in the Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva project has made it unique among the *grama seva* (village service) programs carried out by the Sai Organization since the mid-1980s.

During the October 2001 school vacation break, He sent thousands of students from the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and the Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School to 600 villages and five large towns in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh state. Over the two-week break, the boys went in 50 vehicles to distribute blessed food prepared by the Anantapur college girls, as well as clothing to every person in the targeted area.

The following are excerpts from a series of presentations on the project, which were given by Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning professors and students:

"How did this all begin? Bhagavan expressed His immense pain over a seemingly trivial article that appeared in some column, tucked away in a newspaper. Possibly it would have missed anybody else's eye, but not that of Bhagavārṣ. What was this article about? It concerned a mother and her children in a remote village. They were so poor that she was unable to feed her own children. Unable to bear the suffering, the mother fed poison to her children and consumed the same poison herself. Bhagavan was so moved by

this that He raised these questions while addressing the gathering in Sai Kulwant Hall: *How can such an incident occur in this sacred land? . . . Have the people in this land become so callous, so cruel, that they would allow a mother and her children to die so helplessly?* Bhagavan was choked with emotion. At that instant He resolved to deliver support to all the helpless and poor people in the villages."

Baba's Guidance

"For *Grama Seva*, Bhagavan set all the goals clearly for us. He had told us every house without fail should get blessed food and a set of clothing at their doorstep before their lunchtime. That became our vision statement."

"He told us why He was providing clothing and food and not something else. He said that food is needed to foster the body, while clothes are needed to protect us from inclement weather. Thus these are the two most important things anyone needs. He was giving the villagers what they needed most."

"Swami also explained to us how the food became *prasadam* (a sacred offering). He said, *The food was cooked with the constant chanting of God's name, transported with the chanting of God's name, given with God's name, and received with God's name. Thus the food was prasadam.*"

"It was Bhagavan who took care of the minutest details. When we went for service, Swami said, *Serve with love and humility during the distribution.*"

"What made the wheel really move was Bhagavan's involvement and guidance—His omnipresence. Not a single vehicle broke down during the two weeks. Because of Him, the schedule was never broken."

"At day's end, when we came back from service, we all rushed to Bhagavan, and the feedback flowed not from us to Him but from

Him to us. Truly, Bhagavan was the Force behind our work."

Planning and Organization

"It [*Grama Seva*] set the benchmark that humanity could strive for and achieve, not because of our efficiency to plan and execute, but because of its effectiveness in transforming the hearts of people and infusing in them a spirit of love and faith in God."

"We thought that an adaptive structure of organization would be most appropriate, but the real lessons in adaptiveness came from Bhagavan Himself. He scaled up the whole project, which went from reaching a few thousand people in a cluster of villages to covering five large towns with a population of 150,000 to 200,000 in a single day. We did this with the same manpower, the same resources, and the same infrastructure, without compromising even a small amount of quality! Sometimes, we used to sit back and wonder how we did it all. Perhaps it was the dedication, cooperation, and discipline of all those who participated in *Grama Seva*. The discipline did not come from force—it came from the Source."

Distribution

"Bhagavan told us that before we started distribution of the blessed food, all of us were to go around singing devotional songs and chanting *Vedic* hymns in the streets. Just imagine hundreds of youths singing with all their hearts about the glory of God. What an impact it had! It caused subtle changes in the environment. The villagers themselves used to come and join us. We sang for no more negativity, no more despair or despondency. There was only love."

"When we tried to reach a cluster of villages in Hindupur, the river was overflowing, rising a few feet above the bridge. We could see people

waiting for us on the opposite bank. It was so close, yet so far. Keeping Bhagavan's vision in mind, we traveled 25 miles, four hours of arduous driving on bumpy village roads. Finally, when we reached our destination, we were greeted with a bumper harvest of love and joy. '*Bhagavan Sai Baba Ki Jai* (Victory to Bhagavan Sai Baba)! *Bhagavan Sai Baba Ki Jaif* They came toward us as if we were one family, in one home."

"We had gone to a particular village in Kadri, and while coming back, we saw a young man coming from the fields. We stopped and asked him whether he had received Bhagavan's blessed

sent blessed food for you. Please do take it.' When she heard his words, she broke down and then explained why. It had been two whole days since she had her last meal, and she had been praying fervently to Bhagavan to save her from this situation. As usual, Bhagavan had responded in His own inimitable way. To her, the food was a divine assurance that Bhagavan was always there with her, and that He would care whether anyone else did or not."

"What Bhagavan did for the villagers was to sow in their hearts the seeds of confidence—the confidence that He's always there with them, that

"Swami would be there waiting for us. He would shower us with His smiles and love.

Truly, weariness or sleep never came close to us because it was the love of the Lord that was operating through us."

food. He said, 'No,' and took a few steps back, saying not to touch him or come close to him because he belonged to the most deprived section of society and lived in a separate place. The brothers, however, went close to him and offered the food and clothing with all their love and affection. One of them put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said, 'Bhagavan Baba says that we are all children of the same God. Then in that respect, are we not brothers?' The young man could not hide his tears, and he left saying, 'Yes, Yes, Sai Baba is God. Sai Baba is God.'"

"Once when an elderly devotee of Bhagavan's was distributing, we came across a lone hut in the fields. It was in a dilapidated condition, but Bhagavan had given explicit instructions that not a single household was to be left without distribution, so the devotee went up to the hut. There he found an old lady crouched in a corner. Going up to her, he said, 'Mother, Bhagavan has

He will always look after their welfare, and that they need not feel neglected or deprived. In short, it was an exchange of love between hearts that left all of us transformed and inspired."

"When we returned after a weary day of *Grama Seva*, we would have smiles on our faces and enthusiasm and satisfaction in our hearts because we had passed the day in the service of the Lord. Swami was there waiting for us. He would shower us with His smiles and love. Truly, weariness or sleep never came near us because the love of the Lord was operating through us."

Lessons of *Grama Seva*

"During those memorable days of *Grama Seva*, we learned to serve, for the one who wishes to serve has to knock at the door, and the door opens. But if one truly loves, the door is always open. During those days of *Grama Seva*, we learned to love. We learned to love every symbol of humanity the way He loves us."

"It has shown us that service to man is truly service to God, that any act of giving serves to further our progress toward Him. For life, as Bhagavan says, is but a journey—a journey from I to We to He."

"We learned the important power of the name of the Lord. It infused us; it energized us when



"We had gone there to help them.
In fact, we were receiving so much
more help from them! We saw that love
begets love. Try and give so much love
to somebody, and He gives so much
back to you."

we were tired; it inspired us to do better. Most important, it divinized the entire effort."

"When we were on our way to the village of Virampalli, suddenly our convoy had to stop. There was no road, just a stony path so narrow that no vehicle could pass over it. As we got down and pondered what our next move should be, some of the villagers approached us. When they learned of our problem, they did not waste any time. They brought their bullock carts, put the blessed food and clothing in the carts, and took it to the villages. We had gone there to help

them, but in fact we received so much more help from them! We saw that love begets love. Try and give so much love to somebody, and He gives so much back to you."

Underlying Messages

Quality, Not Just Quantity: "In a project, no detail is worth omitting. Nothing can be called insignificant. In Bhagavan's own words, *It is the quality of action performed that matters far more than its quantity.*"

"It does not matter how much we do. It does matter how we do it. This brings me to the next point—to serve with love, which means reaching out to one and all."

Action Without Expecting Rewards: "The second lesson that *Grama Seva* has to offer is that of *nishkamakarma* (action without desire for its fruit), which anyone can do, since action is common to each one of us. When we offer an action without any expectation of reward, it becomes pious. Consequently, we are already on our way to salvation."

He Is The Doer: "It was not we who were working. It was Bhagavan who was working for Himself and for those whom He considered so close to Him."

"We were but instruments in His hands. ... Truly, we were channels of His peace, because He was the giver and He was the receiver. It was from Love to Love, with Love, by Love, and for Love.

All articles and photographs on group and individual service are welcome. Send contributions to the Service Opportunities editor, Judith Wechsler, 2965 Hopkins Road, Rocky Mount, VA 24151, or email her^at jnwechsler@southlandtech.net.

Childhood Memories

continued from page 8

It was not possible to unpack the food immediately, as it would get stuck to the cloth, so we kept the pack in water for some time before unpacking it. As soon as we started eating the food, the school bell would ring again, signaling the end of the lunch period.

One of the children was the son of a wealthy man. He was an intelligent student. He used to bring rice and *sambhar*. He would distribute the food he had brought among the children, and I would distribute the *ragi* balls. That is how we enjoyed unity both in eating and playing. There is immense happiness in unity, but today unity and love are absent in educated people; instead, jealousy and hatred are on the rise. People quarrel with each other even over insignificant matters. I used to teach the children not to fight under any circumstances.

During my stay in the Bukkapatnam school, I composed many poems, including a poem about the town of Bukkapatnam:

Captivating is the river Chitravathi, encircling the land with full flow, and yonder the rising range of hills guards the land like a fortress. Studded in this landscape is the town of Bukkapatnam. Like the crown jewel of Bukkaraya's glory, at the center dwells Mother Chitravathi Devi, and there close by lies my Puttaparthi.

When Swami composed such songs and taught them to the children, they felt very happy. They wondered at my composing skills and asked, "Raju, how did you acquire these

poetic talents?" In the Bukkapatnam school, prayer was held in the morning. The headmaster asked Swami to compose songs for the morning prayer. (Swami sang the prayer song He used to sing during those days.)

Even in those days of my childhood, I preached the unity of all religions. The villagers of Puttaparthi used to call me a *Vedanti* (one endowed with knowledge of the *Vedas*).

Later, when I was studying in Ura-vakonda, I had to share the desk in my class with two other students. I used to sit in the middle, flanked by Ramesh and Suresh on either side. They were very dull students. It was next to impossible for them to get even one mark out of a hundred, so I used to help them. In those days, there was a mandatory examination called the E.S.L.C. Suresh and Ramesh were gripped with fear when they heard about the test. All the time they beseeched Swami, "Raju, you are our savior." I told them, "Don't be afraid. Be bold." Even in those days, I used to infuse courage in children.

In the examination hall, the proctors supplied the blank papers. The examinees were not allowed to carry any piece of paper. The teachers screened the children thoroughly, as they suspected some students might keep notes in their pockets or write them on their palms. Meanwhile, one teacher came and said to the other teacher, "Kondappa, who do you think these students are? They belong to Raju's group. They will not resort to any copying in the examination." The other teacher said, "I know. It is evident from the brilliance of His face."

We all went into the hall. That was our first examination. As our numbers were not in sequence, the three of us sat in three different places in the hall, far away from each other. Ramesh and Suresh lost all hope. I told them, "I will write your answer sheets also. Don't panic; do as I say. I will enact a drama, as I am the director of the cosmic drama. Don't you think I can bail you out?"

. First, I wrote down the answers with great speed and folded the paper properly, after writing my name and number. I set these papers aside. Then I wrote out the answers in Ramesh's handwriting, and noted his name and number. In the same way, I answered all the questions in Suresh's handwriting. I kept all these three sets of answer sheets with me. Meanwhile, the bell rang. The proctors were in a hurry to collect the papers, Ramesh and Suresh were waiting for me. I told them to go on out of the hall. They went out without turning in their papers, and I put all three sets of papers on the table of the examiner. Results were announced after one week. Only we three secured one hundred percent marks. "Very, very, very good," were the comments of our headmaster. Ramesh and Suresh expressed their gratitude, saying. "Raju, we got first class because of you only."

Revelations Of Divinity

A 70-year-old man named Subbarayudu used to visit the temple of Sathyabhama regularly. He would wash his feet and sit on the raised surface there. One day, I was passing that way. "Raju, Raju, come here," he called. When I went near him and asked

him what he wanted, he said, "I am a hefty man. Come sit on my lap and relax for some time. It is broad enough." "What benefit do you derive from me sitting on your lap?" I asked. "I cannot explain it," he said. "The benefit is infinite and magnificent. Raju, you are the light of this village of Puttaparthi. In the future, your glory will reach every nook and cranny of the world."

The words uttered by him on that day have become a reality today. The name and fame of Raju and the glory of this village Puttaparthi have reached everywhere, not only in this country but throughout the entire world. In those days, it was a tough task to reach this place even for wayfarers. This tiny hamlet has now attained a highly significant position on the world map. Subbarayudu predicted that this village would have a glorious future. He had no children. He embraced me warmly and said, "Raju, how fortunate I am to get this opportunity of embracing you." He felt very happy. "But your father and I are not on speaking terms, so your father may not be pleased if he finds out that I have spoken to you. Don't tell him," he requested of me. "There is no harm in mentioning it," I said. "I will speak the truth, My father is a good man."

When I reached home, the father of this body questioned me, "Why did you speak to Subbarayudu? He is my foe." "He may be a foe to you but not to me," I answered, "and that is why I spoke to him." I folded my hands with respect and said, "Elderly people like you should never hate anybody. Give up hatred, join hands with others, and work for the development of this village." He was not

convinced and again asked me, "What did he speak to you about?" "He said that this village would illumine the entire world because of my presence and glory," I replied. "What is this glory that Subbarayudu is describing so greatly?" He was sarcastic in his remarks.

I left that place, brought back flowers filling both hands and asked him, "Do you know who I am?"

"I am Sai; know the truth. Give up attachment and futile attempts [to limit me]. The worldly link between you and me is severed. No one can restrain me, however mighty he may be."

Saying this, I scattered the flowers on the floor. The flowers formed themselves into Telugu letters, spelling *Sri Sathya Sai Baba*.

From then onward, the father of this body was respectful in his dealings with me. In this way, I used to teach not only children but also elders. I taught women and youth also. I instructed the youth to give importance to character. They should not have evil feelings, which are like poison. I taught great truths even to small children.

There was a noble person named Sathyanarayana. He had a small shop in Bukkapatnam. One day, he saw my torn shirt. In those days, the price of both shirt and shorts was nine *paise* (pennies) only. He brought out cloth for a shirt and shorts and

said, "Raju, you should not object if I give you this pair of clothes with great love. You get them sewn." "If you want to maintain a close friendship with me permanently, you should not offer them to me. I won't touch them," I said.

To date I have never desired anything. I have not touched even a single *paisa* of anyone. Things come to me on their own, unasked, whenever the necessity arises. I have never stretched my hand out to anyone, from my childhood until now, and this will also be the norm in the future. I feel happy in giving and not in receiving.

also be the norm in the future. I feel happy in giving and not in receiving. Some people may criticize me out of jealousy if they don't get their desires fulfilled according to their expectations. If they criticize out loud, their accusations get scattered in the air. If they do it silently, they become the recipients of that criticism and not Swami; it will never reach me. I don't hate, criticize, or ridicule anyone. I speak lovingly even to those who mocked me in my childhood days.

Swami Keeps His Word

One day, Subbamma came to me and said jovially. "Raju, you are giving many good and useful pieces of advice to innumerable people. My husband is on the wrong path. Why don't You set him straight?"



"I will do so if you don't object," I told her. Her husband used to sit near a *tulsi* (holy basil) plant in front of his house every evening. I composed a song with a pleasing tune. I taught the song to some children and asked them to walk by Subbamma's husband, singing:

"Don't run after bad women. You will become a vile fellow; it is for certain. People of your community will excommunicate you; relatives will drive you away. Friends will slap you in the face with their sandals."

Subamma's husband got annoyed when he saw the children passing that way singing this song. He went inside. Later, he sent for the children. "I wonder who wrote this song for you?" he asked them. "Raju wrote it," the frightened children blurted out.

He knew that I was behind the drama and that no one else could have done it. The next day he called me, offered me some mangoes, and said, "Raju, please don't teach such songs to the children." I said, "Sir, you are the head of this village. You are not supposed to do such things."

He promised that he would behave better in the future. I too gave my word to him that I would not trouble him any more. Subbamma came to know of this and felt very happy. Thus, I brought about transformation in elders in those childhood days.

After the demise of her husband, Subbamma dedicated her life to Swami. She was in Swami's service till she breathed her last. It is essential for you to know how devoted she was to me. She used to provide free food to devotees. One day, we were traveling in a bullock cart. "Subbamma, what do you want?" I asked

her. She looked around and checked that no one else was near. Then she said, "Swami, I don't want anything, but when I breathe my last, please sanctify my life by pouring water into my mouth

with Your hands." I promised that I would fulfill her desire.

One day, I had to go to Chennai in a hurry, as desired by some devotees. I had to stay there for ten days. It was during the war, and air-raid sirens sounded once an hour. People could not go into the streets, so Swami could not return to Puttaparthi. Meanwhile, Subbamma fell seriously ill and was taken to Bukkapatnam. There she died. Her relatives began making sarcastic remarks, such as, "Sai Baba gave His word to her that He would pour water into her mouth at her last moments. Did He come? Where has He gone?"

During my return journey, I stopped at the cremation ground, as it was on the way. I saw some people there. The logs of wood were ready for the cremation. "Who is about to be cremated?" I asked them. Washerman

*Make love your life's breath.
Without love, you are like the
walking dead. Whatever the
situation, do not abandon love.
With love, you can conquer
the whole world. ,*

Subbanna was there. He said, "Swami, Subbamma died." "Is that so! When did she die?" I inquired. "Three days ago, Swami," he replied.

I went to the house where her body was. Her relatives were about to carry her for the cremation. Her sister saw me and started wailing, "Baba, she longed for Your arrival. She yearned that You would pour water into her mouth before she breathed her last, and she died with that disappointment." I told her that there was no possibility for such an eventuality and asked her to fetch water in a tumbler. I put a *tulsi* leaf in the water and removed the cloth from her face. Ants were crawling over her body, as three days had already elapsed. "Subbamma," I called her. Immediately she opened her eyes. She held my hand and wept. "Subbamma, look here," I said. I wiped the tears from her face with a towel. "Now close your eyes peacefully," I told her. I poured the sacred water into her mouth and kept my promise.

Eradicating Differences

Subbamma always tried to protect me from wicked people. Washerman Subbanna was a very strong man. The other Subbanna of Chandrappa was seven feet tall. Subbamma ordered that one of these two should be with me at all times. She told them, "Swami might go to the river at any time. He is very young. He cannot walk the distance, so one of you should carry Him on your shoulders." She used to make various arrangements for my comfort. Being a highly virtuous woman, she used to do everything in the way that pleased Swami most.

One day, a *Harijan** by the name of Ganganna invited me to his house at mealtime. He is still alive at 90 years old now, and his son works in our administrative office. I told Subbamma that I was going to Ganganna's house for a meal. She said that she would accompany me. "I am going to a *Harijan's* house. You can't come," I said. "Swami, when You are going, why shouldn't I come. I know no fear. I will go with You," she said.

We ate at Ganganna's house. Ganganna was afraid when he saw her, as she belonged to the Brahmin community. I told him, "You should not feel like that. Give up the differences of caste and religion. Live happily with the spirit of unity." From those early days, I promoted unity among different castes and religions. I can go on telling about my childhood for any length of time.

Children should nurture good qualities and give up bad qualities like anger, ostentation, and jealousy, without allowing the ego to grow. Cultivate love. Make love your life's breath. Without love, you are like the walking dead. Whatever the situation, do not abandon love. With love, you can conquer the whole world.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Prasanthi Nilayam
November 23, 1968

* A *Harijan* is a member of the group formerly known as untouchables, a term used by Mohandas K. Gandhi, meaning "child of God." [Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary].

There Is Only One Language

There is only one religion, the religion of love. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one language, the language of the heart. There is only one God and He is omnipresent.

—Sathya Sai Baba

India, Prasanthi Nilayam, and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba are all halfway around the world and some 12,000 miles from the foothills of Southern California, yet Baba's presence extends beyond space and time. With Sri Sathya Sai Baba, I am constantly aware that anything is possible.

Wilson Baga and Sarah Comstock, both travelers on the spiritual path, can attest to the omnipotence of God's love and the breadth of His reach, having found themselves blessed in a most unexpected way. The occasion was Rama's birthday, *Rama Navami*, Sunday, April 21, 2002. A celebration had been organized at Wilson's home—a place that has been blessed with the appearance of *vibhuthi* (holy ash) on a multitude of pictures and other items. This special day was set aside for singing the praises of Rama, who alone was able to lift and string the sacred bow of Shiva and who conquered ferocious demons including the villainous Ravana.

The time after *bhajans* (devotional songs) was devoted to relaxing and enjoying a quiet sharing of food. A feeling of oneness with God embraced the surroundings and filled everyone's hearts with love. An ample supply of fruits, breads, pastas, juices, and desserts added to this feeling of love. Sarah, a follower of Baba for some fifteen years,

began preparing food to present to those gathered. "Oh!" she thought, recalling the many inexplicable and personal demonstrations of God's love that she has experienced. "Swami's love is so immense. Swami's grace and compassion are such wonderful gifts for us to experience." Wilson stood close by, deep in his own meditation and prayer. "Oh, Baba," he prayed. "This is such a wonderful day. We all feel so close to You, and we feel Your presence. May we see one of Your miracles? Swami, it is only through Your miracles that we may know Your presence. We need a miracle."

At that very moment, Sarah, while cutting through a watermelon, suddenly recoiled. "This watermelon isn't right!" she exclaimed, and as she spoke, the entire watermelon opened. There on the inside were watermelon hearts of all sizes—perfectly-shaped hearts that fit like a jigsaw puzzle, even into the rind itself. Sarah, unable to contain herself, began to cry. Others flocked to see the small hearts, medium hearts, and large watermelon hearts—all sizes. God's love, omnipresence, and infinite capacity for miracles were demonstrated all at once in the most unexpected way.

God's presence—whether in the form of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, Shirdi Baba, or Sathya Sai

Baba—is here for us all. As we let His love and grace flow within, we can see so clearly: *There is only one language, the language of the heart.* This miracle of the heart not only occurred at the Rama birthday celebration of April 21, 2002 but also

happened again in Wilson Baga's Hollywood home on May 29, 2002.

(Written with the permission of Wilson Baga and Sarah Comstock.)

Richard Selby
South Pasadena, California

I Will Allow: Affirmations

I zwill allow myseCfto e?(perience the joy of just being,

I zwill allow myself to eiqperience life and its challenges zvithout-planning each step of the way, and letting myself live in the moment,

I zwill allow myself to feel and eT^perience the inner tqwvAng that the challenge that has arrived is what I need for that moment in time, to help me on my spiritual journey to Qod.

I zwill allow myself to feel and e^erience the inner tqiowing that all my needs zwill be talqpi care of as life's challenges come to me,

I zwill allow myself to flow through life like the river of light that I am.

—Little Dove
Cottonwood, Arizona

Children's Corner

What is the most valuable possession?



These two boys are named Samuel (on the left) and Patrick (on the right). They are about the same age. They go to school together and live in the same neighborhood. Patrick has lots of toys; his friend, Samuel, has no toys but enjoys nature. Sam takes walks in the woods, watches the animals, feeds the squirrels, makes up his own games, and helps his mother around the house. Most of all, Sam thinks of God. He enjoys devotional songs and attends SSEHV (Sathya Sai Education in Human Values) classes.



Patrick worries that someone may steal or break his toys. He likes to buy more toys but then soon becomes bored with them. Patrick is thinking about the toys he hopes to get for Christmas. Samuel is going to help his parents at a *Grama Qeva* project on Christmas (see page 17 for more about *Grama Qeva*).

These may seem to be pretty obvious questions, but be really honest in answering them:

- * Who do you think is happier and more content?
- * Girls and boys, which of the two boys would you prefer to be like?
- * You can discuss these ideas with your parents or friends.

Sathya Sai Baba Announces His Mission

Sathya Sai Baba first spoke these words, November 23, 1968. Since that time, His message has become a classic among devotees and those looking for spiritual solace. Many have read and reread this Divine Discourse; many first heard Baba's words spoken by Professor N. Kasturi on an old 33 1/3 recording.

The Sathya Sai Newsletter staff think that these sacred words bear repeating at this holy time of year, when we acknowledge the birth of Christ and of the Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of evildoers, and for establishing righteousness on a firm footing, I incarnate from age to age. Whenever disharmony overwhelms the world, the Lord will incarnate in human form to establish the modes of earning *prasanthi*, or peace, and to reeducate the human community in the paths of peace. At the present time, strife and discord have robbed peace and unity from the family, the school, the community, the society, the villages, the cities, and the states. The arrival of the Lord is also anxiously awaited by saints and sages. *Sadhus* (virtuous people) prayed, and I have come.

My main tasks are fostering of the *Vedas* and fostering of devotees. Your virtue, your self-control, your detachment, your faith, your steadfastness—these are the signs by which people read of my glory.

You can lay claim to being a devotee only when you have placed yourself in my hands fully and completely with no trace of ego. You can enjoy bliss through the experience the *Avatar* confers. The *Avatar* behaves in a human way so that humanity can feel a kinship, but rises into His superhuman heights so that humanity can aspire to reach the heights, and through that aspiration can actually reach Him.

Realizing the Lord within you as the motivator is the task for which He comes in human form. *Avatars* like Rama and Krishna had to kill one or more individuals who could be identified as enemies of the *dharma* (virtuous) way of life and thus restore the practice of virtue.

Nowadays there is no one fully good, so who deserves the protection of God? All are tainted by wickedness, so who will survive if the *Avatar* decides to uproot it? Therefore I have come to correct the *buddhi*, the intelligence, by various means. I have to counsel, help, command, condemn, and stand by as a friend and well-wisher to all, so that all may give up evil propensities, and recognizing the straight path, tread it, and reach the goal.

I have to reveal to the people the worth of the *Vedas*, the *Sastras*, and other spiritual texts that lay down the norm. If you accept me and say yes, I, too, respond and say yes, yes, yes. If you deny and say no, I also echo no. Come, examine, experience, have faith, That is the method of utilizing me.

I do not speak about Sai Baba in any of my discourses, but I bear the name. *Avatar of Sai Baba*. I do not appreciate the least bit of distinction between the various appearances of God—Sai, Rama, Krishna,

k

and so on. I do not proclaim that this one is more important or that another is less important. Continue your worship of your chosen God along the lines already familiar to you. Then you will find that you are coming nearer and nearer to me, for all names are mine and all forms are mine. There is no need to abandon your chosen God and adopt a new one after you have seen me and heard me.

Every step in the career of the *Avatar* is predetermined. Rama came to feed the roots of *sathya* (truth), and *dharma* (righteousness). Krishna came to foster *santhi* (peace) and *prema* (love). Now all these four are in danger of being dried up, which is why the present *Avatar* has come. The *dharma* that has fled to the forests must be led back into the villages and towns, and the *anti-dharma* that is ruining the religious in towns must be driven into the jungle.

Come just one step toward me; I shall take a hundred steps toward you. Shed just one tear; I shall wipe a hundred from your eyes. I bless only thus: May your *ananda* (bliss) grow. I have come to give you the key of the treasure of *ananda*, to tell you how to tap that spring, for you have forgotten the way to blessedness. If you waste this chance of saving yourselves, that is simply your fate.

You have come to get from me tinsel and trash, petty little cures and promotions, and worldly joys and comforts. Very few of you desire to get from me the thing that I have come to give you—namely, liberation itself. Even among these few, those who stick to the path of *sadhana* (spiritual practice) and succeed are but a handful.

Your worldly intelligence cannot fathom the ways of God. He cannot be recognized by mere cleverness of intelligence. You may benefit from God, but you cannot explain Him. Your explanations are merely guesses, attempts to clothe your ignorance in pompous expression.

Bring something into your daily practice as evidence of your having heard the secrets of higher life from me. Show that you have greater brotherliness. Speak with more sweetness and self-control. Bear defeat as well as victory with calm resignation. I am always aware of the future and the past, as well as the present, of every one of you, so I am not moved merely by mercy. Since I know your past, your backgrounds, my reaction varies. Your circumstances are the consequences of evil deliberately done in previous births, so I allow your suffering to continue, often modified by some little compensation. I do not cause either joy or grief. You are the designer of both these chains that bind you; I am *ananda-swarupa* (divine bliss personified).

Come, take *ananda* from me. Dwell in that *ananda* and be full of *santhi* (peace). My acts are the foundations upon which I am building my work, the task for which I have come. All the miraculous acts that you observe are to be interpreted thus. The foundation for a dam requires a variety of materials. Without these it will not last and hold back the waters. When the Lord is incarnate, the event has to be used in various ways by people for their uplift.

The Lord has no intention to publicize Himself. I do not need publicity, nor does any

other *Avatar* of the Lord. What are you daring to publicize? Me? What do you know about me? You speak one thing about me today and another tomorrow. Your faith has not become unshakable. You praise me when things go well and blame me when things go wrong. When you undertake publicity, you descend to the level of those who compete in collecting clientele by decrying others and extolling themselves. Where money is calculated, garnered, or exhibited to demonstrate one's achievements, I will not be present. I come only where sincerity, faith, and surrender are valued. Only inferior minds will revel in publicity and self-aggrandizement. These have no relevance in the case of *Avatars*, who need no advertisement. The establishment of *dharma* (righteousness)—that is my aim. The teaching of *dharma*, the spread of *dharma*—that is my objective. These miracles, as you call them, are just a few means toward that end.

Some of you remark that Ramakrishna Paramahansa instructed that *siddhis* (yogic powers) are obstructions in the path of the *sadhaka* (spiritual seeker). Yes, *siddhis* may lead the *sadhaka* astray. Without being involved in them, he has to keep straight on. His ego will bring him down if he yields to the temptation of demonstrating his yogic powers. This is the correct advice, which every aspirant should heed. The mistake lies in equating me with the *sadhaka* such as the one whom Ramakrishna wanted to help, guide, and warn. These powers are simply in the nature of the *Avatar*. The creation of things with the intent to protect and to give joy is a spontaneous and lasting creation,

preservation, and dissolution that can be accomplished only by the Almighty and no one else.

Cynics carp without knowledge. If they learn the *Sastras* (scriptures) or cultivate direct experience, they can understand me. Your innate laziness prevents you from the spiritual exercise necessary to discover the nature of God. This laziness should go. It has to be driven out of people's natures in whatever shape it appears. That is my mission. My task is not merely to cure, console, and remove individual misery; it is something far more important. The removal of misery and distress is incidental to my mission. My main task is the reestablishment of the *Vedas* and *Sastras* and revealing the knowledge about them to all peoples. This task will succeed. It will not be limited. It will not be slowed down. When the Lord decides and wills, His divine will cannot be hindered.

You must have heard people say that [my acts] are all magic, but the manifestation of divine power must not be interpreted in terms of magic. Magicians ply their tricks for earning a living, worldly fame, and wealth. Such tricks are based on falsehood, and magicians thrive on deceit, but this body can never stoop to such a low level. This body has come through the Lord's resolve, which was always intended to uphold *sathya* (truth),
Divine resolve is always true resolve,

Remember, there is nothing that divine power cannot accomplish. It can transmute earth into sky, and sky into earth. To doubt this is to prove that you are too weak to grasp great things and the grandeur of the universe.

I have come to instruct all in the essence of the *Vedas*, to shower this precious gift on all, to protect and preserve *sanathana dharma*, the ancient wisdom.

My mission is to spread happiness, so I am always ready to come among you—not once, but twice, thrice, or as often as you want me.

Many of you probably think that since people from all parts of India, and even from foreign countries outside India, come to Puttaparthi, they must be pouring their contributions into the coffers of the Nilayam. But let me declare the truth. I do not take anything from anyone except their love and devotion. This has been my consistent practice for these many years. People who come here give me only their wealth of faith, devotion, and love. That is all.

Many of you come to me with health problems and mental worries of some sort or the other. These are merely the baits that have brought you here; their main purpose is to bring you grace and to strengthen your faith in the Divine. Problems and worries are actually to be welcomed, as they teach you the lessons of humility and reverence. Running after

external things produces all this discontent. That type of desire has no end. Once you become a slave to the senses, they will not let go their grip until you are dead. They

foster an unquenchable thirst, but I call you to me and even grant worldly boons so that you may turn Godward.

No *Avatar* has acted like this before, going among the masses, counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, and directing them along the paths of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, and *prema*. My activities and movements will never be altered, whoever may pass whatever opinion on them. I shall not modify my plans for the establishment of righteousness, my discourses, or any of my movements. I have stuck to this determination for many years, and I am engaged in the task for which I have come, which is to inculcate faith in the path of *prasanthi* (ultimate peace). I shall not stop or retract a step.

Not even the greatest scientist can understand me by means of laboratory knowledge. I am always full of bliss. Whatever may happen, nothing can come in the way of my smile. That is why I am able

continued on page 34



*/ know the agitations
and aspirations of
your heart, but you do
not know my heart. I
react to the pain that
you suffer and the joy
that you feel, for I am
in your heart. I am the
dweller in the temple
of every, heart.*

Some Important Lessons

From the International Service Conference

On the morning of July 23, 2002, I was returning to my room after attending *darshan* (opportunity to view a holy person, in this case, Sai Baba) at Prasanthi Nilayam. It was the final day of the Sri Sathya Sai International Service

Conference, which would conclude that morning. Swami's valedictory discourse was scheduled for the afternoon. As I approached the Ganesha garden near Roundhouse #1,

I was suddenly aware that I knew exactly what Swami wanted me to do for a new service project. The thought was particularly strong in detail regarding what would be required and the immediacy of getting started. I was surprised by the inspiration because I had not been seriously considering doing anything like this any time soon. On returning to my room, I discovered that my wife had just had a similar experience of knowing what she should do. The coincidence seemed very peculiar. We had never before had similar thoughts on the subject, at the same time. However, after we traded stories, we let the matter drop.

After Swami's valedictory discourse that afternoon, we returned to the room and remarked on the contents of the talk, especially since it contained few if any direct

references to service. This was most notable, because in the prior day's discourse (of July 22nd) Swami had said, "Tomorrow I will tell you what to do." We had expected to hear Swami's direct instructions on service during

His valedictory talk.

Sitting on my bed that evening, I

pondered the day's events. Suddenly it hit me that Swami had, in fact, told us exactly what to do and on the day He

said He would. His

answer had not come through specific instructions in a discourse or in pronouncements from the organization. Sai Baba's instructions had come by direct mail—from the heart. As He said in one talk, "When you have the mountain here, why do you run about asking others what to do?" Swami's instructions to me and my wife had come that morning through the inspirations we felt so strongly and noted to each other,

In checking with others over the next days, I discovered that many had similar inspirations on the 22nd. Those I spoke with had felt specific and particular projects come into their hearts. Unfortunately, many let the ideas slip away, not recognizing the source or remembering Swami's words,

Reflecting on this experience, I believe that several lessons were provided to the

His answer had not come through specific instructions in a discourse

or in pronouncements from the organization. Sai Baba's

instructions had come by direct mail—from the heart.

attendees of the International Service Conference. One was that we must listen closely and not prejudge how we will learn our lessons. Also, Swami guides each of us internally and in such a manner and time that we must make decisions for ourselves. Performance of duty is not coerced by organizational imperatives or even by divine commands. It must arise out of our own heartfelt inspiration to serve others. While the organization may provide tools, resources,

and suitable opportunities, we must ultimately find within our own hearts the best way to express our talents and skills. Our service is a direct expression of our own divinity and is offered to God as an expression of our personal vision of the unity of all people and our willingness to make that vision a reality. It is the only true gift we can offer God.

—Jonathan Roof
Tucson, Arizona

Baba Announces His Mission

continued from page 32

to impart joy to you and make your burdens lighter.

I never exult when I am extolled or shrink when I am reviled. Few have realized my purpose and significance, but I am not worried. When qualities that are not in me are attributed to me, why should I worry? When qualities that are in me are mentioned, why should I exult? For me it is *always yes, yes, yes*.

If you will give up all and surrender to the Lord, He will guard you and guide you. The Lord has come for this very task. He is declaring that He will do so, and that it is the very task that has brought Him here. I know the agitations and aspirations of your heart, but you do not know my heart. I react to the pain that you suffer and the joy that you feel, for I am in your heart. I am the dweller in the temple of every heart.

Do not lose contact and company [with the Divine], for it is only when a lump of coal comes into contact with live embers that it also becomes a live ember. Cultivate

nearness to me within the heart, and you will be rewarded. Then you too will acquire a fraction of supreme love. This is a great opportunity. This opportunity will not come your way again. Be aware of that. If you cannot and do not cross the sea of grief now, taking hold of this chance, when again can you get such a chance? Be confident that you will all be liberated, and know that you are saved.

Go and tell all that you have come to Puttaparthi and that you have found here the secret of liberation. Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life will be happy for all and full of joy, and that the golden age will recur. Let me assure you that this *dharma swarupa*, this divine body, has not come in vain. It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon humanity.

—Sathya Sai Baba
November 23, 1968





Embodiments of Love! The Divine has no special day earmarked as birthday. The day when you cultivate holy thoughts, attitudes and modes of behavior in your hearts, the day when you decide upon some activity of pure unselfish service—that is the day of birth of the Divine for you. From that day you can celebrate the birthday as a festival.

*—Sathya Sai Baba
November 23, 1981*

Sathya Sai Book Center of America

305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108

Phone: (714) 669-0522 Fax: (714) 669-9138

Book Center hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 to 4:00, Saturday 12:00 to 3:00

Dear Friends:

Some of you may not know of the background of the Sathya Sai Book Center, so we would like to share its evolution with you.

The Sathya Sai Book Center of America and the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, serve under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Baba Society, a public, nonprofit foundation, established by Walter and Elsie Cowan in the early 1970s. The "First Sunday Meetings" that are open to the public every month are also a part of the Sathya Sai Baba Society. At those meetings, guest speakers share what they have learned from Baba, their spiritual experiences deriving from contact with Sai Baba and/or His teachings, and how those experiences have changed their lives.

As a nonprofit foundation, the Sathya Sai Society does not solicit donations, and it operates within the philosophy of "no-profit-no-loss." The First Sunday Meetings are held in an auditorium with an average of three hundred guests in attendance each month. The meetings are free to one and all. We've heard good reports of how devotees and non-devotees have enjoyed these afternoons of sharing. Join us when you can; call the Book Center for more information.

The purpose of the Sathya Sai Book Center is to make available books that contain the discourses and the writings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba; those volumes are filled with the wisdom that transcends time, place, circumstances, and gender. The Book Center also has available a certain number of books written about Sai Baba, whose authors recount the interesting and fascinating experiences they have had as a result of being in Baba's orbit.

In keeping with all other services rendered by the Sai Organizations—and those in Baba's *ashram*, Prasanthi Nilayam, including the canteens, stores, and book trust—the Sathya Sai Book Center of America is staffed completely by volunteers and sells books at the lowest prices possible, without incentive to make a profit or solicit donations. The unpaid volunteers desire only to provide this service to those who are interested in knowing more about Sri Sathya Sai Baba and His teachings.

The Vahinis

The *Vahinis* are a series of books containing the spiritual wisdom of the ages written by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sai Baba honors all religions, and He has written about a variety of subjects from a spiritual point of view: righteousness, meditation, wisdom, peace, divine love, and the ancient Vedic teachings such as the *Bhagavad Githa*, the *Upanisads*, the story of Rama and more. In these texts, Baba has gifted us with modern day implications of these ancient wisdoms, and has made His words within reach of our understanding.*

Bhagavata Vahini This is an epic of the Mahabaratha War which was a war of righteousness against evil forces. Baba explains that this war represents the inner turmoil that we all experience. He indicates how the inner battle can be won, and we emerge victorious.

Dharma Vahini In this volume, Sathya Sai Baba clearly explains how to live in a *dharmic* (righteous) manner. The moral codes are outlined for men, women, and even children. The codes of conduct are applicable no matter what a person's status, or situation in life.

Dhyana Vahini Here Baba counsels, consoles, and encourages the faltering spiritual seeker to march forward and attain the goal of living a joyful life of high standards and good values.

Githa Vahini This stream of divine teachings was given by the Avatar, Krishna, to His devotee, Arjuna, just before the launching of the Mahabaratha War. The war, as mentioned above, was a very real battle, but it is also symptomatic of today's complex life-style. Baba teaches that the inner war is caused by lack of control over the senses, mind, and desires. He describes methods for winning self-control over negative characteristics and thus attaining inner peace.**



* While Baba has written these books within the understanding of most of us, there remain many Sanskrit words and phrases that are not always explained by the translator. Because of this, we suggest the small *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* available at the Book Center for \$3.00 plus tax and shipping.

** For a complete list of the *Vahinis*, and *Sathya Sai Speaks*, and other books about Baba, please contact the Sathya Sai Book Center for a free catalog. The address, phone and fax numbers are always on the last one or two pages of each issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*.

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

P. O. Box 660908

Arcadia, California

91066-0908

Nonprofit Org.

U.S. Postage

Paid

Arcadia, CA

Permit No. 71

DATED MATERIAL



© **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA**—Printed under the auspices
of the **Sathya Sai Book Center of America**. All rights reserved.
Reproduction, in whole or in part without written permission is Prohibited.

AddVH