

Nov Dec 03



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Sathya Sam

Newsletter, USA

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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 prayer, meditation, and other spiritual exercises that lead mankind Godward. They must demonstrate the joy derivable from devotional singing and repetition of the Lord's Name, and the peace that one can draw from good company. They must render service to the helpless, the sick, the distressed, the illiterate, and the needy. Their service should not be exhibitionistic; it must seek no reward, not even gratitude or thanks from the recipients.

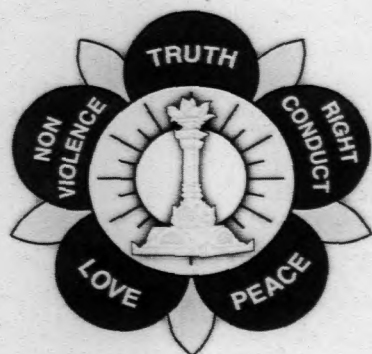
*—Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VII, ch. 36*

*We honor the 78th birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba,
November 23, 2003, along with Christmas and the New Year.*

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

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

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—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message



People need not be unduly concerned about the portents of the New Year. There are, however, indications that some big changes may occur in the political sphere. Internal conflicts may increase. There will be no shortage of food. There may be floods in some parts of the world and cyclones in some areas. By developing faith in God, some of these calamities may be averted or their ravages mitigated. ... The New Year portends nothing to be feared by the common people. For those in high offices and for politicians, however, there are indications of conflicts of their own making. Those who discharge their duties in a spirit of dedication have nothing to fear. Regard every moment as new. Live in the present. Have good thoughts and do good deeds. Act according to the dictates of your conscience. The secret of happiness lies within you, not outside.

—Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sanathana Sarathi, April 1996

Sri Sathya Sai Baba: India's National Treasure

A Gift to the World

My ancestors left India over 150 years ago for Guyana; family members have not returned to visit India since then, due to our colonial conditioning to western values, images of beauty, and standards of excellence. We preferred instead to visit London, Paris, Switzerland, Vienna, Toronto, and the U.S.—all modern centers of civilization. I never thought I would ever visit India with my family, because of images projected in the western media of it being “backward, poor, and dirty.” We came to visit India mainly because of Sai Baba.

To my surprise, I loved India from my very first visit. The moment I touched Indian soil upon landing at Delhi, I became instantly aware of its beauty and powerful vibrations—the happy insight dawned on me and infused my consciousness instantly under the full moon that this was the land of Lord Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramakrishna,

Ramana Maharshi, and others—spiritual giants of the human race.

His inspiration and transformation of the hearts of men, women, and students to engage in service to their communities all over India and the world is phenomenal.

Even more recently have I become aware of the great spiritual legacy of India through Sai Baba. As a Christian, I did not know much about Indian spiritual-cultural-philosophical traditions and its classic literature. After 35 years in Canada, England, and the U.S., and 20 years in the West Indies,

I was a stranger to Indian thought in any field and considered western thinking as the highest form of excellence—until I began reading Sai Baba's discourses on Indian culture and spirituality, and His amazing wisdom in commentaries on the *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas*, and the *Ramayana*.

Now I see clearly the rampant alienation in western culture: the lack of an integral vision of human identity, the fragmentation and compartmentalization of western thinking; the trivial pursuit of happiness in gadgets, designer items, money, and status symbols—in the absence of true happiness;

the collapse of human values in education; the loss of moral vision, compass, and heritage; the loss of ideals to live by; the epidemic of broken marriages, community, self concept, and identity.

Sai Baba has restored to me:

- The essentials of a meaningful life.
- A vocabulary infused with values and ethics that I never had, even as a university professor for 25 years.
- An integral vision of human identity, as opposed to western psychology's fragmented view of the human personality, without considering soul, conscience, values, character, and consciousness as central concepts.
- Awareness of the unity of all faiths, that all religions are facets of the same truth.
- The urgent global need to infuse education with human values.
- The critical goal to translate love of God into service to society—in Sai Baba's words: *From service emanates a lucid understanding of the meaning and purpose of human existence, and Love all, serve all.*
- The essentials of inner peace and happiness: Baba says, *The mansion of happiness is built on the virtue of love. All sublime virtues have their origin in love. Understanding is the foundation of love. Inner peace is essential for happiness. Happiness is an interval between two sorrows; therefore, happiness is not the goal of human existence.*

I have never come across such wisdom in all my studies at McGill University, the University of Toronto, or Johns Hopkins

University. Sai Baba's teachings on leadership, education, human personality, ethics, stress management, technological change, culture, and management are awe inspiring. I have used His teachings in the books I have published, in my lectures at the university, and at international conferences.

Sai Baba's educational institutions are models of academic excellence, a fact recently noted by the last Prime Minister of India; His hospitals are temples of healing and architectural wonders of the world; His gift of pure water to Indian cities and villages is the grace of sublime love. But more than these, His inspiration and transformation of the hearts of men, women, and students to engage in service to their communities all over India and the world is phenomenal. Perhaps the greatest miracle performed by Sai Baba is the miracle of transformation—moral transformation of our vision, values, character, and behavior: *What we need in the information age is not more information but transformation of character—the moral center and foundation of the personality.*

Nowadays I pray to be reborn in India to learn Sanskrit, Indian spiritual traditions, and Indian culture, classical music, philosophy, and literature, which through Sai Baba I have discovered to be gems of wisdom. Sai Baba's revival of Indian culture and spirituality is a gift to the world. Now in 165 countries in the world, Sai Baba devotees not only know the Indian classics but also journey to India annually to the world's spiritual center of gravity, Prasanthi Nilayam.

The world now admires and practices Indian spiritual traditions coupled with all

other global spiritual traditions, creating a moral transformation on the planet. Sai Baba not only preaches the unity of all faiths, He is the only spiritual leader on the planet who celebrates the birthdays of all the founders of all religions and who gives discourses on their teachings. He is the only leader who focuses on the common building blocks, values, moral vision, moral literacy, unity in diversity, and the common attributes of God from all spiritual paths in His discourses. His *ashram* is the United Nations of all faiths, where the global challenge for harmony, peace, unity, cross-cultural understanding, and moral excellence is translated into action.

For Sai Baba, leadership is idealism in action. He has initiated a global spiritual

movement to meet the challenges of life, peace, human dignity, unity, morality, and the quest for human excellence, to guide our choices in life.

Because of Sai Baba, I am a better Christian, my friend is a better Buddhist, my uncle is a better Moslem, and my students are better human beings—all with new moral vision, awareness, inner peace, and cross-cultural understanding.

With love,

—Dr. Y. Sankar

Professor of Management,
Dalhousie University, Canada

Every religion is a lamp that illumines the path to truth; every religion traverses the region of righteousness. Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, and let the glory of God be sung in all languages and in a variety of tunes. This should be the ideal: respect the differences between the faiths and recognize them as valid, as long as they do not extinguish the flame of unity.

What the world needs today is neither a new order, nor a new education, nor a new system, nor a new religion. The remedy lies in a new mind, in a heart filled with holiness. Holiness must take root and grow in the minds and hearts of youth everywhere. The good and Godly must endeavor to promote this task as the one great spiritual work they have to undertake.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sanathana Sarathi, December 1981

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

Sathya Sai Speaks, December 24, 1972

Birthday Spark

Tap the Wellspring of Joy with Constant Spiritual Practice

This day, November 23rd, 1961, is significant in more ways than one. It not only marks the birth of this Avatar, but the previous Sai Avatar was also inaugurated on a Thursday, the day after the full moon of the month of *Kaarthika*. Today also is the day after the *Kaarthika* full moon, and a Thursday.

You are all lucky that you could come to Prasanthi Nilayam from great distances and have *darshan* (audience) on this auspicious day, but the joy you get today is only a reminder of the eternal full joy that is in store for you and, in fact, for all mankind. That joy is your birthright. This momentary bliss is but a drop of that ocean; to get the whole ocean, you must dedicate yourself to continuous and conscious *sadhana* (spiritual practice). The symbol on the Prasanthi flag, the same symbol shown by the concrete pillar in front of the *Nilayam*, has therefore to be clearly understood by every one of you. Conquer lust, anger, and hatred; roam in the expanse of an equal and impartial love to all

created things, and then you are fit for *yoga* (inner communion with Divinity), which will open the petals of your heart. Then from the fragrance and beauty of that lotus will emerge the flame of *jnana* (spiritual wisdom), illumining *maya* (worldly illusion) into destruction, until you and the *jyothi* (flame) become one.

When you approach near, the pillar appears in all its majesty, in all its overwhelming size. Suppose it appears small; what does that mean? Not that it is small, but that you are afar! Remember, the sun and the moon appear huge, larger by far than the stars, because they are near and the stars are far. Approach the Lord and realize Him as big; do not stand afar and pointlessly claim that He is small!

Your Birthright: Eternal Joy

Incarnation is for the sake of fostering *dharma* (righteousness), for demarcating and directing it, and for showing humanity the true path of desireless activity. That is the



Sarvadharm Sthupa, the concrete pillar in front of Baba's residence.

one task I am engaged in through various channels. Instead of reforming you without your knowledge, it is better to reform you with your own cooperation and knowledge. So I reveal to you My glory, off and on, to a little extent, through what you call miracles. I do not engage in them for name and fame; I am miraculous by My very nature! Every moment of Mine is a *mahaathmya*, a miracle!

These [miracles] are beyond your understanding, your art and skill, and your intelligence. I must save every one of you; even if you say nay and move away,

I shall do it. Those who have strayed away from Me must return to the fold sooner or later, for I will not allow them to be distant for long. I shall drag them toward Me, for that is My basic nature—love and mercy.

Today, at this meeting, as members of this gathering, you are all overwhelmed with joy; I can see that. But this is momentary; this will not last. You are all entitled to broader realms of joy, deeper springs of joy, and joy that is eternal. Your real *dharma*, the purpose for which you have taken human birth, is to earn and enjoy the bliss that no external contact can change or diminish. To earn it is quite easy; it can be done by anyone who just sits calmly and examines himself and his mind, unaffected by likes and dislikes. Then he discovers that life is a dream, and that he has a calm refuge of peace inside his own heart. He learns to dive into its cool depths, forgetting and

ignoring the repeated pushing of luck, both good and ill.

Use Time Well to Become a *Paramahamsa**

The doctor first diagnoses the disease, and then he prescribes the course of treatment. So too, you must submit yourself to the diagnosis of your illness, misery, travail,

and pain. Investigate fearlessly and with care, and you will find that while your basic nature is bliss (*ananda*), you have falsely identified yourself with the

temporary, the frivolous, and the paltry; that attachment brings about all the sorrow. You have to realize that both joy and sorrow are passing phases, like white or dark clouds across the blue sky, and you have to learn to treat both prosperity and adversity with equanimity.

If only time is well used, the *paamara* (ignorant) can become the *paramahamsa* (sages of the highest order) and the *paramahamsa* can also be transfused into the *paramaathma* (the universal substance and substratum).

Just as fish can live only when immersed in water, so too can humans live only when immersed in *ananda* (bliss). You must have *ananda* not only at home, in society, and in the world, but more than all, in the heart. As a matter of fact, the *ananda* in the heart produces *ananda* everywhere; the heart is the

* Realized soul

wellspring of joy. That spring has to be tapped by constant meditation, recitation [of the divine name], and the intermittent dwelling on the glory, grace, and inexhaustible manifestations of the Lord: *smarana* (remembering), *chethana* (holding in consciousness), and *manana* (ruminating). Hold fast to the goal; the *bhaktha* (devotee) should never turn back. Never give way to doubt or despair.

One's Duty to Pray

A person driving a car concentrates on the road, being eager to save him or herself and others from an accident. Fear induces single-mindedness in this case. Love is a greater force, however, for bestowing concentration. If you have steady and resolute love, your concentration becomes intense and unshakable. Faith develops into love, and love results in concentration. Under such conditions, prayer is possible and begins to yield fruit. Pray, using the Name as a symbol of the Lord. Pray, keeping all the waves of the mind stilled. Pray, as the performance of a duty for your very real existence, as the only justification for your coming into the world as a human being.

"Mine" and "yours": these attitudes are only for identification. They are not real; they

are temporary. "His"—that is the real truth, the eternal. The headmaster of a school is temporarily in charge of the school's furniture, but he has to hand over these items when he transfers or retires. Treat all things with which you are endowed, just as the headmaster treats the school's furniture. Be ever aware that the final checkup is imminent. Wait for that moment with joy. Be ready. Have your accounts up to date, and the balance calculated, ready to hand over. Treat all things entrusted to you with care and diligence.

Narayana is the Lord of the water (*naaram* means water), but of which water is He Lord? He resides in the heart, and His presence, when recognized, melts even the stoniest heart, and water emanates from the eye as tears of joy, gratitude, and fullness! His presence is said to have been recognized by a person when one becomes suffused by sympathy—becoming sad when another is sad and joyful when another is filled with joy. Narayana is He who brings the tears of joy to the eyes! That is the function of your tear glands: to express internal joy, not to weep like a fool or coward.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Birthday Discourse, November 23, 1961

Pray intensely and with faith. Then grace will be showered on you. When the heart is soaked in love, it cannot be contaminated by egoism and evil consequences.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VII

A Glimpse Into Divinity

Developing the Relationship Between the Individual and the Lord

During my visit of 1983, Swami gave me this experience during *darshan*. One morning, I was sitting just as I had so many times before when He walked by with His usual majesty, grace, and power. On this particular day, as I gazed upon His loveliness, all of a sudden He gave me a glimpse into His divinity. In that instant I could see that He was on such an incredible level that He was almost unapproachable, and nothing could ever really touch Him or affect Him.

In that moment, I could see that He was almost indiscernible and unknowable. Indian culture is rich in the tradition of saints and highly advanced souls who have fully realized their oneness with God. To become a realized soul is itself the pinnacle of human evolution. To give an example, it is said that Christ, as He evolved during His earthly career, became what many consider to be a realized soul, so one can appreciate how advanced this stage must be.

When I looked upon Sai Baba it was obvious that He was far beyond this stage of realization, and that as a complete Avatar He never had to aspire for anything. There was never a time that He was not fully aware of Himself as God. In other words, an Avatar descends into a human body for the upliftment of humanity, whereas *rishis*,

saints, and even those who attain realization, ascend from different degrees of humanness through their efforts and spiritual practices into higher levels of spirituality. Sai Baba never had to acquire anything; He was in and of Himself always the totality of all existence as Lord. This was a phenomenal and most amazing experience for me. I could see in that moment how His mystery was beyond comprehension and understanding. Yet, as I watched Him, He just walked by and gave *darshan* (to see a holy being) as usual, and it was a most astounding experience.

The more I pondered this, the more it began to bother me, and I began to think, What the heck is going on around here? Nobody is ever going to really get to know Him. For, although He is in a human form and pretends to ask questions such as, *What is your name? Where are you from?* and other simple congenialities, this is so we can have some kind of contact with Him that we can relate to. During this particular *darshan*, He appeared so far beyond human and so unapproachable that I felt this huge distance between Him and myself.

Over the next few days, the more I thought about this, the more it bothered me. I asked myself, "What am I doing here, and how will anybody ever get to know Him? He

is just too beyond anything and everything.” This continued to bother me over the next several days.

A few days later, He called me in for a private interview. He took me into the small interview room, where it was just the two of us. He sat in His chair and I sat next to Him on the floor. As soon as He looked at me, I knew that He knew exactly what I was thinking.

He looked at me and said, *What?* And I said, “Swami, You are too beyond. How does anybody get to know You?” Then with an almost puzzled look on His face, again He looked at me and said, *What?* So I said again, “Swami, Your divinity is so great, how can anybody comprehend You or even approach You?”

He then hit me playfully on the head and said, *Hey, don't think like that. This is wrong thinking. Think that you and Swami are friends. This is best. We are friends. From friendship and this approach, you will get to know Me.*

When He said this there was so much love in the room that I just felt like I wanted to stay there forever. In that one instant, He assuaged my doubt and my concern with love. Then He said again, *Don't think like that; this is not good. We're friends. This is best.* He then talked to me about other things in my life, gave me some *vibuthi* (holy ash), and I went outside.

After this incident I started slowly to look at Him in a different way. One may understand God in the deepest esoteric sense or in the depths of scripture, but when one is back home and can't pay the rent, and in need of a friend, all that esoteric learning fades from center stage. More often than not, we don't need God as the superhuman

Creator that we can't relate to. We need the friend who helps us day in, day out, dealing with the most mundane problems of life.

When we can feel that presence all the time, then certainly the relationship between the

Lord and the devotee can slowly grow and develop, and over time deepen one's sense of faith and trust in Him. From Swami's words to me, it appears that from a sense of friendship, one can gradually develop an understanding and inner connection.

It is as if Swami was saying, paraphrasing the words of Albert Camus, “Don't walk in front of Me; I may not follow. Don't walk behind Me; you may not be able to follow. Just walk beside Me and be My friend.”

—Michael Hollander
Montvale, New Jersey



Sai Service Opportunites:

Focus on Region 7

All service should be regarded as an offering to God, and every opportunity to serve should be welcomed as a gift from God. ... This kind of selfless, spiritually-oriented service is needed today. In a world riddled with conflict and chaos, this will provide a climate of serene peace. Regard yourselves as brothers and sisters in a family. Then, do not stop there; go beyond kinship to spiritual unity. You must march from awareness of the physical, to higher wisdom, to the state of divine bliss. Shed completely selfishness and self-interest, and enter upon service activities as the highest purpose of life. Service must become your life breath. You must become ideal volunteers and set an example for the world.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, November 19, 1987

“Love all, serve all” and “Help ever, hurt never” are two of Swami’s often-quoted sayings, yet service sometimes takes a second seat to a Center’s devotional activities. Pondering this paradox, I observed that most regional events also highlight devotion. Service, I realized, needed its own forum. This led to the initiation of a regional function dedicated entirely to promoting service in all its forms. Following the format of the international service conferences at Prasanthi Nilayam, I envisioned an event networking the region and its Centers in a web of service possibilities.

In February, the regional officers unanimously approved a day-long “First Regional Sai Seva Conference,” to be held Saturday, May 31, 2003, with the theme of “Enlightenment Through Selfless Service.” Thereafter, a core team of 12

organizers began working on food, parking, decorations, and a program that would be original and memorable.

With Baba’s grace, the National Semiconductor Corporation donated the use of a hall in Santa Clara, California. Bob Bozzani, Chairman of the Sathya Sai Book Center of America (in Tustin, California), and his wife Barbara, Editor of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, agreed to be the main speakers. Thirty people volunteered to help on-site during the event.

On May 31, 200 adults and 40 children arrived for eight hours focused on service. After devotional singing, the audience heard soul-stirring talks by the Bozzanis. Bob cited his work at the Book Center as an example of how his life is totally devoted to Swami. Barbara told how Baba had specifically instructed her to publish the

Sathya Sai Newsletter and how close she feels to Him whenever she works on it.

Following the speakers, young adults and others from the Santa Cruz, California, Sai Center put on a short drama ("Good Actions Create Good Results") on the theme of service and its positive impact on our lives. The Bay Area Young Adults gave a multimedia presentation on their activities, most notably the Kaiser and Ashland projects, which began as computer training classes for economically challenged youth and later expanded to include street and park cleanups. Plans were also underway for a free medical clinic to open in September 2003.

After lunch, regional leaders participated in a panel discussion that allowed audience members to voice opinions and suggestions. All attendees greeted proposals for special service activities enthusiastically, such as blood drives, resume-writing workshops, and medical supply collections for Baba's Super Specialty Hospitals.

Children's Presentation

Finally came a presentation by children of the Sai Spiritual Education classes, Groups 1, 2, and 3, who had been attending their own service conference in an adjoining room. The idea for this separate conference had come about after we realized that some families might not be able to attend due to difficulties in obtaining childcare services. As with all of Swami's projects, no sooner was the problem defined than the solution offered itself: a children's conference could take place concurrently that would not only help the parents but also foster service awareness at an early age so it could take firmer root.

During their presentation, the children shared some of the things they had learned that day, including their experiences with a module called Mind Coach, which helped them examine their

thoughts, discriminate truth from fiction, and eliminate negative self-talk. To the great delight of all, the youngsters shared how they had personally transformed negative thinking into positive thoughts.

The adult conference also featured exhibits focused on service activities in the region. Conference attendees could help themselves to an assortment of printed handouts stacked on ten tables arranged around the hall, job-fair style. Each of these "booths" also included a display, with posters and photographs highlighting the area's main types of service projects—such as nursing home service, meals for the homeless, and blood donation drives. Every booth also had a list of Centers engaged in the highlighted activity. During the event, people flocked to the service booths, interacting with the one or two volunteers per booth responsible for answering questions and providing information about the locations and frequency of the various service activities.

From start to finish, Swami's wonderful energy was evident during the conference, spreading through every smile and gesture. We were inspired by the talks and presentations and educated by the exhibits. The event concluded with all the adults joining the children in singing "Baba, Won't You Take My Monkey Mind."

—Alfred C. Brinnand

Regional Service Coordinator, Region 7

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 e-mail her at jnwechsler@southlandtech.net.

When we compare the life and teachings of Jesus Christ with those of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we find many interesting similarities.

At the birth of Jesus there were “signs from heaven.” Although this may be symbolic, the three wise men were probably led, as Paramahansa Yogananda points out in his book, *Man’s Eternal Quest*, not by a star shining brightly in the heavens, but by the star of wisdom, or the third eye, also known as the “Star of David.” Before the birth of Bhagavan Baba, signs appeared in His home—such as objects moving by themselves and musical instruments playing by themselves.

Jesus was born in a manger. Baba was born in a humble home in a tiny village named Puttaparthi, almost unknown to the outside world.

Both Jesus and Baba taught religion at an early age. Both saved the sick, raised the



Statue of Jesus at the Hillview Stadium
in Prasanthi Nilayam

Baba & Jesus

THEIR LIVES AND TEACHINGS

dead, and set an example to humankind through *dharmic* or virtuous living. Both were always giving and never taking for themselves. At the age of twelve, Jesus’ parents found Him arguing with the priests. Baba also corrected the pundits early on.

As a young man, Jesus was supposedly tempted by the devil. This symbolism shows how the *sadhaka* or spiritual seeker must eliminate desires. Jesus’ replies to the devil, or His own conscience, are interesting. The devil said, “If You are God’s son, turn

this stone into bread.” Jesus replied, “The scriptures say that, ‘Man cannot live by bread alone.’ ” This means that we cannot live a material life without spirituality. Baba tells us that to discover the *Atmic* reality or inner divinity, we must eliminate desires. He also says, *People’s lives should not be a wasteful round of eating, drinking, and sleeping. You*

have the Atma as your reality, so you must learn to become aware of that unfailing source of bliss.

The devil then showed Jesus various kingdoms of the world and offered them to Him if Jesus would worship him. Jesus answered, "It is said in the scriptures, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.' " Here Jesus spurns wordly wealth in favor of spirituality. Swami says, *Do not fritter away the days in attaining possessions, which are often impediments in the spiritual journey of life. Money comes and goes; morality comes and grows. Money is not true wealth; it loses value; it bloats the ego and hardens the heart. If it does not circulate, it destroys health, as does blood.*

The devil then said, "If you are God's son, throw yourself down from here, for don't the scriptures say, 'God will order His angels to take care of you,' and 'They will hold you up with His hands, so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones'?" Jesus answered, "The scriptures also say, 'You must not put the Lord your God to test.' " Baba answered Narasimaiah, a man who wished to submit Swami to scientific tests, in a similar manner. We also find that we cannot compel Swami to do our will. Even when He grants a boon, it is usually after we have suffered greatly beforehand.

When the devil stopped tempting Jesus, it is said that He was charged with the Holy Spirit. In other words, He had overcome the state of body consciousness and raised it from the state of "I am in the Light," to one of "The Light is in me." He then returned to Nazareth and read the scroll that said, "The

spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has chosen me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed, and to announce the year when the Lord will save His people." At this stage it may be said that Jesus realized that He was one with God: "The Father and I are one," or "I am the Light."

All that Jesus went through to attain realization was not necessary for Baba, as Baba is the Avatar—born with all knowledge and wisdom, and in fact the giver of all these things. Baba's mission is nonetheless precisely the same as that of Jesus. He has come, He says, to raise the consciousness of humanity, so that we can realize the *Atma*. This is what is meant by "proclaiming liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed," and even to "raise the dead," as we are the living dead until we realize the *Atma*.

After Jesus gained realization, the miracles began—casting out an evil spirit from a man who was possessed, curing a woman of fever, various cures, and ridding some persons of demons. The "demon" can be construed as the ego, and the "fever" as the passions—all of which we must destroy. All the miracles that Jesus performed have been performed by Baba, and many more besides, but we must look for the spiritual symbolism in these miracles.

Jesus then left Capernaum to preach the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He preached, "The Kingdom of God is within you," and "Seek ye first the Kingdom

of God, and all these things will be added unto you." Baba says, *The same God shines through everyone, whatever be the creed, color, tribe, or territory. The selfsame current animates all bulbs. The Divine animates and activates all.* He also says, *Be attached under all conditions to the source, substance, and sum of all power—the Lord—and then you can draw from that source all the power that you need. This attachment is called bhakthi (devotion).*

Jesus healed a leper with His touch; when the news of this spread, many people gathered around Him. Such miracles were used by Jesus to attract people to Him, so that He could give them the teachings of truth. Baba has used miracles for the same reason—so that He can give us what He has come to give. Jesus told the leper not to tell anyone of the cure but to go and sacrifice to God. Baba says that we must not place too much importance on the miracles, and that they are used by Him to attract us, so that we will want to follow the spiritual path.

When Jesus with His disciples ate at the home of Eli, a tax collector, some of those present asked the disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and outcasts?" Jesus replied, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I have not come to call the respectable people

to repent, but the outcasts." Baba answered Dr. V.K. Gokak in similar terms when He was asked why He had a number of evil people around Him. Swami replied, *They have more need of Me than you do.*

Jesus preached, "Love your enemies. Do good unto those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who ill treat you. If anyone hits you on one cheek, let him hit you on the other one too, and if someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well."

Baba says, *Do not lose your temper in any situation. Respect everyone, whatever their status. Then the quality of universal love will*

develop within you.

Jesus said, "Love your enemies and do good to them; lend and expect nothing in return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the most high God. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful, for He is good to the ungrateful and the wicked."

Baba says, *Those who are my servants are full of love. They always stand by dharma or righteousness. They speak the truth. Their hearts melt with mercy. They are devoid of wrong conduct. They avoid sin; they will renounce everything gladly. They act in moderation. They are engaged in doing good to others. They are not selfish. They are not worried by doubts. They do not lend their ears*

to flattery. They are eager to listen to the praise of others.

Jesus said, "Do not judge others, and others will not judge you; do not condemn others, and others will not condemn you. Forgive others, and God will forgive you. Give to others, and God will give to you."

Baba tells us, *When you point a finger at another, three fingers point back at you.* He also tells us, *See the faults of others as minor and the smallest fault in yourself as large—and eliminate it.* He says further, *Love is Selflessness, and Self is Lovelessness.*

Jesus told the parable of the farmer who sowed the seeds: "Some fell along the path, where they were stepped on and the birds ate them up. Some fell on rocky ground, and when the plants sprouted they dried up, because the soil had no moisture. Some of the seeds fell among thorns, which grew up with the plant and choked them. And some fell in good soil; the plants grew and bore grain, one hundred grains each."

He explained this parable as follows: "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you, but to the rest it comes by means of parables, for they may look but not see, and listen but not understand. ... The seeds are the words of God. The seeds that fell along the path stand for those who hear, but the devil comes and takes the message away from their hearts to keep them from believing and being saved. The seeds that fell on the rocky ground stand for those who hear the message and receive it gladly, but it does not sink deep into them; they believe only for a while and fall away when the time of testing comes. The seeds

that fell among thorns stand for those who hear, but the worries and riches and pleasures of this life crowd in and choke them, and then the fruit never ripens. The seeds that fell in good soil stand for those who hear the message and retain it in a good and obedient heart and persist until it bears fruit."

Baba says: *There are three types of men; the nasthikas (atheists or nonbelievers); the asthikas (believers) who believe in a Will behind all that they see and experience, and who bow to and seek to explore that Will, so that they may adhere to it and not run counter to it; and the yasthikas, who have realized that the objective world has only relative value, not an absolute value. The latter two will not blame anyone, even the Lord, for their ills. As long as a son is a minor, he is not entitled to a share of the parental property; similarly, so long as you are a minor in spiritual practice, not fully grown up and able to look after your destiny, for that long you will have to suffer and struggle. Again, if you say, "I, I, I, I," then you are left alone and you stumble and fall. But if you say, "Not I, but You," then all things will be added unto you.*

A man named Jairus asked Jesus to save his twelve-year-old daughter, who was dying, and before Jesus arrived, a servant came to tell Him that the daughter had died.

Jesus said, "Don't be afraid. Only have faith, and she will be well." When they arrived at Jairus' house, everyone was weeping. Jesus said, "Don't cry. The child is not dead; she is only sleeping." He took her by the hand and said, "Get up, child," and she got up.

We have a similar incident when Swami said to Mrs. Elsie Cowan, *Walter lives, after*

he had died, and then Baba went to the hospital and raised him from the dead. Similarly, after Radhakrishna lay dead for several days, Swami brought him back to life and told him to get his affairs in order. Swami said He brought Radhakrishna back to life because he had two wives, and if he had died without a will, Swami would have had to divide the estate, and the families would have accused Him of partiality.

Another time, Jesus multiplied five loaves and five fishes to feed a multitude. While I do not believe for one moment that it was fishes that He multiplied, because I do not believe He would have killed any living creature, I do believe that He multiplied food. Baba has also done this on many occasions. He breaks a coconut, sprinkles the water on the food, and the servings never end—or He taps the empty pots with a stick, and they fill with rice, *sambar*, *chutney*, or the like.

Jesus said, “No one hides a lamp under a bowl; instead he puts it on a lamp stand, so that people may see the light as they come in. Your eyes are like a lamp for the body. When your eyes are clear, your whole body is full of light. But when your eyes are bad, your whole body will be in darkness. If then your whole body is full of light with no part

of it in darkness, it will be bright all around, as when a lamp shines on you with its brightness.”

Swami, in His discourses on the Light Meditation, after outlining the method of meditation says, *Do this every day, without*

Jesus said, “*Dont cry. The child is not dead; she is only sleeping.*” He took her by the hand and said, “*Get up, child,*” and she got up.

We have a similar incident when Swami said to Mrs. Elsie Cowan, *Walter lives*, after he had died and then went to the hospital and raised him from the dead.

break, for as long as you enjoy it; do it deeply and systematically, and a time will come when you can no more relish dark evil thoughts. . . . Stay on that thrill, witnessing light, being light, everywhere for all. If you are used to adoring God in any form, visualize that form in the light. For the light is God. God is light. When light meets light, it is all light. There is no boundary between your light and His light. They merge and

they fulfill.

Criticizing the Pharisees (the teachers of the Law) for their hypocrisy, Jesus said, “How terrible for you teachers of the Law! You have kept the key that opens the door to the house of knowledge, yet you yourselves will not go in, and you stop those who do try to go in.”

Swami has said, *Jesus was a reformer who was not understood by the churches at that time.* As far as I can determine, Swami has never criticized any church, temple, mosque, or synagogue, nor has He ever criticized any religion. He says that we should stay with our religion and that we will understand it better after coming to Him.

Jesus said, "Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The equivalent of this in Baba's language has already been given, but it is interesting to read the interpretation of "The Word" and "The Mouth of God" as explained by Paramahansa Yogananda in *Man's Eternal Quest*, where he says that "The Word" is the cosmic vibration and "The Mouth of God" is the medulla oblongata in the posterior part of the brain, tapering into the spinal cord. This vital spot in the human body is the divine entrance (mouth of God) for "The Word" or *aum*, the cosmic vibratory energy by which creation is sustained.

Preaching to the sick people among the Essenes, Jesus put forth the simple laws of nature, advising them how to eat for health. According to the *Essene Gospel of Peace* (often used as a naturopath's guide), Jesus said, "For the power of God's angels enters into you with living food, which the Lord gives you from His Royal Table.... But I do say unto you, kill neither man nor beasts, nor yet the food that goes into your mouth.

"For if you eat living food, the same will quicken you, but if you kill your food, the dead food will kill you also. For life comes only from life and from death comes always death. And everything that kills your bodies kills your souls also. And your bodies become what your foods are, even as your spirits, likewise, become what your thoughts are. Therefore, eat not anything that fire, frost, or water has destroyed. For burned, frozen, and rotted foods will burn, freeze, and rot your bodies also."

Recently Swami gave a discourse on *sathwic* food and also emphasized the need for us to eat uncooked foods. The medical world is also slowly coming to the conclusion that raw foods are the answer to good health and that cooked foods are the cause of most illnesses, including cancer.

Jesus also advised the Essenes not to overeat. In fact he told them, "Eat only twice a day, once at midday and once in the evening at sunset." Swami has also stated that *[most people] eat about three times as much as really needed, and should eat less.*

Swami, in a discourse said, *What or Who is God? When the answer to this question is sought, one discovers that God is the glory immanent in nature. Nature must indeed be laughing at the sterile frenzies, the endless pursuits, the countless miseries that man submits himself to in his search for achieving the unachievable! Man must search in nature for the sacred lesson it holds for him; then he can understand how deep, how everlasting the meanings are that it can convey. The earth rotates on its axis at a speed of a thousand miles an hour. Consequently, we have the alternation of day and night, which helps us to live on this globe. Besides, it moves around the sun at the rate of sixty-six thousand miles an hour, causing the seasons, which bring rains for the crops and vegetation that sustain human life. The earth does not profit in the least by these rotations, but man exists and prospers on account of them. Mother Earth thus teaches her children this lesson of service and self-sacrifice.*

—Excerpted, with permission, from
The Grace of Sai by R. Lowenberg

Speak Softly and Sweetly

Speak softly and sweetly;
This is the way to God.
Help ever, Hurt never.
God is always here,
Surrounding us,
In us,
In every fiber of our being.
We are His temple;
Spoil it not
With foul thoughts,
With foul deeds.
Thought, word, deed—
All must agree;
If they do,
The rest comes easily.
As the sun shines brightly,
We must too;
We are the candles whose flames light the earth.
Live your life thinking of others,
With exemplary actions so that others may follow.



—Nathaneal Schwass

Age 13, at the time of this writing, Atascadero, California

A Matter of Time

Recharging the Spiritual Battery

In the Spring of 2002, after much inner reflection on my life and the world around me, I wondered if it was time for me to return to Puttaparthi to once again be in the presence of our Lord. I wrote a short letter to Swami and asked Him, in prayer, if indeed it was the right time for me to go to the Abode of Highest Peace and once again volunteer in the Super Specialty Hospital. Two years previously I went to Parthi for the first time to experience Sai Baba and worked in the hospital. My experiences there were life altering, and two years later I yearned for renewal.

A few days had passed since I had both prayed and sent a letter to Swami for His blessing or a mere sign as to whether I should make travel preparations. I was in the kitchen one morning doing dishes when I began to hear a strange noise coming from the next room. It was a rather loud "tick-tock-tick-tock," as though a clock had suddenly been placed in my living room. Baffled, I followed the sound into the other room. The noise took me to a large bookcase filled with unpacked boxes from moving and a few books placed haphazardly on the shelf. I reached behind a few items at eye level and was astonished to find a small battery-



operated alarm clock. It was not my usual alarm clock. It was the clock I had purchased in Puttaparthi during my previous trip to replace the travel alarm clock that had broken during the flight. I recalled that about three months after my return in 2000, the AA battery had died. After putting the clock into storage with the dead battery still inside, I had all but forgotten about the alarm clock.

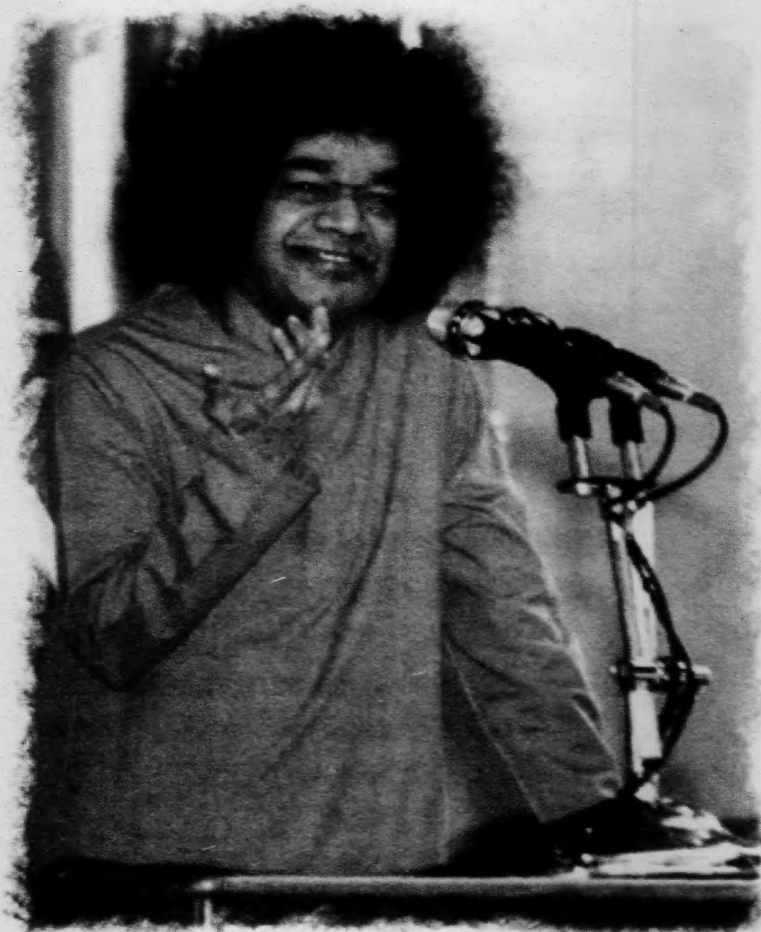
I was dumbstruck! Not only was the clock working perfectly fine, but it was ticking very loudly. One would not have been able to sleep with this clock's noise. Then I remembered my query. "Is it *time* for me to return to Prasanthi Nilayam?" A few moments passed, and then the clock quieted down and resumed ticking at its normal volume.

A short time later all the travel plans fell into place, and I was off once again to see His Form. I needed renewal, to be recharged in India. Interestingly enough, the battery did die the morning my flight left North America. I put in a new battery, both figuratively and literally, once I arrived in Puttaparthi.

—Sarah ten Bensel
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Why Do We Celebrate?

When you celebrate Christmas, you should celebrate also your own birth, and the fact that you are here on earth in this form. Christmas should be a time of self-examination.



Christ came 2,000 years ago to awaken humanity to the Truth.

Today the Sai Avatar is here with the same message. It is such an opportunity that you have, yet so few of you are taking advantage of it. How many have really become awakened? How many have actually changed their lifestyle as a result of My teachings? How many of you are motivated by love in all that you do? The Lord cannot be deceived.

My children, awaken before it is too late. This present life comes and goes, and time passes ever more quickly. What are you doing as each day passes? Are you really changing your way of life and moving away from earthbound darkness into the light, toward God?

Celebrate Christmas; celebrate your own presence on earth; then come to terms with the truth of who you really are.

Celebrate the wonderful opportunity that lies ahead in the light of that understanding, and start afresh on a new path. This is the path that will lead you out of the wilderness and back to God, where liberation and the total merging of the soul with God brings Divine Bliss.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Christmas: A Joyous Celebration of Love and Peace

Compiled by: Sathya Sai Baba Centers of Northern California and Nevada

Seeing God in All

A Step Beyond His Form

The desire to be close to Baba's physical form fills many of us, and last summer I traveled with a group to Prasanthi Nilayam to fulfill this desire. The morning we received Bhagavan's last *darshan* before our departure, I sat and reflected on our great fortune. We often sat close to Him during *darshan* and He gave special attention to our group when He took our letters and asked where we came from. He said, *Very happy*, and I felt deep joy, because I had prayed for whatever would give the Lord happiness. But some people in the group felt disappointed. Many had prayed for an interview with Baba. Many had hoped it would take place, and some even expected it to happen.

One can never know and fully understand divine will, and much of our work is to surrender to His will and realize that He always knows what is best for us. Still, we naturally yearn for contact with the enticing physical form and long to look into His eyes and hear the sweet voice as our souls seek to return Home and merge into Him. Swami reminds us more and more that we must not limit Him to the physical body. He is present in all people, in all things, and is the motivator and doer of all events.

We go through different stages on the spiritual path. Worshipping the divine form leads us to see and experience divinity in ourselves. Sathya Sai Baba reflects all the goodness, truth, and beauty inside of us. But like a mother who weans a child from her breast to make the child independent, Swami is gently weaning us away from His beautiful form. He stopped allowing people to touch His feet, saying that we are divine too.

One man who lives at the ashram stopped going to *darshan*. Instead, he decided to cultivate a direct contact with God within himself and to stop depending on the form. This step of detaching from Sai's physical form is one we must all take eventually.

A friend who had an interview with Baba years ago noticed this weaning process. He said, "Swami used to take many people in for interviews but now takes only a few. He once spent a long time allowing us to see His form during *darshan*, while now *darshan* lasts only a few minutes." My friend loves nature and said that he experiences Baba more directly on hikes than at the ashram. I've had similar experiences, when feeling one with nature has filled me with divine joy and peace. I've felt not only that Baba was walking with me,

but He was inside and all around me. During *bhajans* (devotional singing) at our center, I also experience His presence very profoundly. *Wherever My name is sung, I am there*, He says. Baba reminds us that His physical body will be with us only a few more years. Like the caring mother, He prepares us for this inevitability. He takes us by the hand and gently leads the way to detachment from the physical illusion.

As I sat at Sathya Sai Baba's feet on the morning of that last *darshan*, my mind and all of my senses were focused intently on God. God emerged from the voices singing His praises. Even though I felt the knees and elbows poking into me from the Indian women sitting tightly around me, I felt no

irritation. I understood that we were all motivated by the yearning to draw closer to God and to unite with Him. Deep gratitude to Swami lifted me up, and my heart expanded to encompass the whole of the *mandir* (temple) and all of the sounds and people in it. He led me from the experience of unity and sharing with my small group to a greater level of expansion. I felt that He was whispering silently to all of us on the gentle breeze wafting through the *mandir*: *Grow. Grow, my children. Grow.*

—Debra Moffitt,
Switzerland

*This article appeared in the Swiss Sai Bulletin
in November 2002.*

you

can achieve anything in life if you strengthen your faith in God. In fact, you will become God yourself. You are not different from God. Understand this truth and attain oneness.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Mahashivarathri, March 12, 2002

I

am neither Guru nor God. I am you. You are I. That is the truth. There is no distinction. That which appears so is the delusion. You are the waves; I am the ocean. Know this and be free. Be Divine.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Prasanthi Nilayam, July 19, 1990

Listen to the Master of the Universe

Transform Yourselves into Ideal Human Beings

Who makes the sun rise in the morning and set in the evening with utmost regularity every day? Why do the stars glitter only at night and hide themselves during the day? How is it that the wind, without taking rest even for a moment, blows incessantly, and sustains the living beings? Who makes the rivers flow perennially, making pleasant sounds ripple and gurgle? Who is the cause of delusion in creation? How is it that you find differences based on money, religion, community, and nationality? Who is the Master, and under whose sovereignty are all these marvels taking place? Come, listen to His words and obey His command. (Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love! Every person and every living being aspires to attain peace and happiness. Everyone seeks to know the objective of life, but most have not succeeded in their endeavor. Only one in a million will persist with strong determination and will not give up until the goal is realized. Ordinary mortals will not make enough effort along these lines, believing that the goal is beyond their reach. They spend their lives pursuing physical and ephemeral pleasures, under the delusion that food, clothing, and shelter are the three main objectives of human life. Their life centers around their wives and children, and they fail to realize that there is a higher purpose in life.

Importance of Steady Faith

People pursue various paths to experience everlasting bliss. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* presents the analogy of a bird in this context. The head of the bird symbolizes *sraddha* (steadfast faith). The right and left wings are *ritham* (absolute, unchanging) and *sathyam* (truth) respectively. The body stands

for *mahattattwam* (the supreme principle) and the tail, *yoga* (union).

What is *ritham*? *Ritham* remains unchanged in all three periods of time—past, present, and future. *Sraddha* is extremely important. With steadfastness, wisdom is won. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna said, “One with steady faith can attain Me.” He further declared, “I am the very embodiment of steadfastness.” One without steadfast faith cannot accomplish even a small task. Especially in the field of spirituality, *sraddha* is most essential. Strong and unwavering faith leads to *sraddha*. The *Upanishads* have expounded the principle of *sraddha* in varied ways: The wisdom attained through steadfast faith is *tharakam* (liberation), while lack of steadfastness is *marakam* (bondage). This eternal principle of liberation must be understood, practiced, and propagated; this is the fundamental teaching of the *Taittiriya Upanishad*.

Embodiments of Love! The *Taittiriya Upanishad* emphasizes the need to develop steadfastness in all facets of life. In

spirituality, *sraddha* is the liberation *mantra*; it is eternal and immortal. People can attain wisdom only by purifying the heart through developing the five aspects, namely, *sraddha* (faith), *sathyam* (truth), *ritham* (the unchanging absolute), *yogam* (union), and *mahattattwam* (the supreme principle or first cause). Wisdom or *jnana* is not textbook knowledge; the experience of nondualism is wisdom. Even apparent dualism has an underlying principle of nondualism. This is the fundamental truth taught by the *Taittiriya Upanishad*.

The Wisdom of Ubhaya Bharati

When Adi Sankara was on his victory march, he met a great scholar called Mandana Mishra in northern India and entered into a scholarly debate with him. Ubhaya Bharati, the wife of Mandana Mishra, was also a great scholar, well versed in the principles of *ritham*, *sathyam*, *mahattattwam*, and so on. Mandana Mishra vowed to become a *sanyasi* (a renunciant) if he were to be defeated in the debate.

Sankara chose Ubhaya Bharati to be the adjudicator of the contest. As the debate progressed, she listened to the arguments and counter-arguments with utmost concentration. She was impartial in her judgment and declared Adi Sankara to be the winner. Being one of wisdom, she did not feel dejected that her husband had been defeated in the debate. In accordance with the terms and conditions of the debate, Mandana Mishra became a *sanyasi*. Ubhaya Bharati, being his better half, followed suit. Both husband and wife renounced the world and

propagated the path of wisdom. Human life has no value if one does not acquire wisdom.

Ego Clouds Our Wisdom

It is said that food is Brahma, its essence is Vishnu, and the one who partakes of it is Maheswara. These three correspond to body, mind, and action, respectively. Those whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in complete harmony are indeed noble. Oneness of thought, word, and deed is *ritham* (absolute truth) and represents the Holy Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara. Hence, everyone must strive for the purity of these three.

Take for instance a glass chimney placed over a lamp. After some time, a thin layer of soot accumulates on the glass. Consequently, the light becomes dim. Only when you clean the glass can you see the light clearly. This is what you are supposed to do. The soot that you find over the glass is like the ego that envelops the mind. Because of ego, you cannot visualize the divine flame of wisdom.

How does ego enter the mind? It enters the mind when you give up the path of truth. You become egoistic when you do not know your true Self and develop worldly thoughts and feelings. In order to drive away ego, you have to keep your worldly thoughts and feelings under control. One cannot acquire wisdom without getting rid of ego. To gain the vision of the effulgent light of the *Atma*, one must remove the soot of ego that covers the mind. This was the teaching of Ubhaya Bharati. Eventually, she toured the length and breadth of India, preaching and propagating the path of wisdom.

She took up residence in a hermitage on the banks of the river Ganges, imparting spiritual teachings to women. Many women became her disciples, and every morning, they bathed in the Ganges. On the way, there lived a renunciant known as a *Brahmajnani* (a wise and holy man). Truly, he was a renunciant and one of wisdom, but he was very much attached to a small earthen water pot. One day, he was lying down using the pot as a pillow, lest somebody steal it. Ubhaya Bharati, on her way to the Ganges with her disciples, observed this and remarked, "Though he is one of wisdom, he still has a small defect. Despite renouncing the world, he is attached to the pot that he uses as his pillow."

The *sanyasi* overheard her words and became angry. As Ubhaya Bharati and her disciples made their way back from the Ganges, he threw the pot onto the road, just to show his lack of attachment. Seeing this, Ubhaya Bharati said, "I thought there was only one defect in him—attachment, but now I realize that he has another defect also—ego. How can one with ego and attachment be a *jnani* (one of wisdom)?" This was an eye-opener for the *sanyasi*.

Wisdom and Virtues of Women

Women are by nature the embodiments of *vijnana* (knowledge and discrimination), *sujnana* (high levels of consciousness), and *prajnana* (ultimate wisdom). They are the repositories of all virtues. But due to the impact of the [present] Kali Age, women are looked down upon. This is a grave error. They must be treated with due respect. Today women compete with men to take up jobs

but should take care of their home needs before doing so.

If women go out for jobs, who will take care of the homes? If husband and wife both go to the office, who will run the household? If women go out to teach other children, who will teach their children? If women go to work like men, who will cook the family's food? Earning money may solve some financial problems, but how will it resolve domestic problems? Women can work and earn money, but they cannot lead a happy life if they neglect their home." (Telugu Poem)

If women go out and earn money, some financial constraints may be overcome, but many problems will crop up on the home front. Women are the personifications of courage and determination. They put up with all hardships with fortitude and safeguard the honor of their family. They live up to the reputation of a *grihini* (housewife).

Truth and Wisdom

One must follow the path of truth to acquire wisdom. It is said, *speak truth, speak pleasantly, and do not speak unpalatable truth*. These three correspond respectively to moral, righteous, and spiritual values. Everything is contained in truth. You don't need to visit temples in search of God. Truth is verily God, all-pervasive. Truth confers plenty and prosperity on all. Hence, follow the path of truth. Practice righteousness. Acquire wisdom.

For all this spiritual practice, partaking of proper food is the first step. Purify food by offering it to God. *Annam Brahma*: consider food to be the actual form of Brahma. *Raso Vishnuhu*: the essence of food

that spreads to all parts of the body is the embodiment of Vishnu. *Bhokta Devo Maheshwara*: the partaker of food is the very embodiment of the Shiva principle. When one develops such sacred feelings, one becomes Shiva Himself.

Shiva and Parvati

Shiva symbolizes complete sacrifice and renunciation. In this world every person has *dehabhimana* (body attachment), but Shiva has absolutely no body attachment. He has only *atma-bhimana* (love for the Self).

He has abundant hair with the moon adorning His head, the cool water of the Ganges flowing between His matted locks, the radiant eye of wisdom in the center of His forehead, and a purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a blackberry. He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt, and His entire body is smeared with vibhuthi (holy ash). His forehead is adorned with a kumkum dot; His ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel nut; diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from His ears, and His entire swarthy body glows with divine effulgence. (Telugu Poem)

Once, Parvati approached Lord Shiva and expressed her desire to have a house built for them. She said, "Oh Lord, You go from house to house begging for alms and are not concerned with providing a dwelling for us. Without a proper shelter, how can we live together?"

Shiva pacified her, saying, "Parvati! What is the use of building a house? Rats will make it their home even before we enter it. In order to control the rats, we will need to have a cat. Then we will have to buy a cow to provide milk for the cat. In this manner, our requirements will multiply and we will lose our peace of mind. Hence, do not entertain such desires."

Shiva has no body attachment. He is the personification of renunciation. Total renunciation leads one to wisdom. This is the teaching of Lord Shiva to humankind.

Truth confers plenty and prosperity on all. Hence, follow the path of truth. Practice righteousness. Acquire wisdom.

What is wisdom? Purity of thought, word, and deed is true wisdom. Your body, mind, and actions must be pure. On this basis it is said, "The proper study of mankind is man," meaning that the unity of thought, word, and deed is true humanness. This principle is simple and easy to practice, but no one is making any effort to do so. Though the Ganges flows nearby, people do not take a dip in it and cleanse their body. People do not make use of the conveniences available to them. This is utter laziness and a sign of *thamo guna* (the lazy, indolent quality). You have to get rid of this animal quality, develop humanness, and rise to the level of the Divine.

Eat Sacred Food for Purity of Heart

Embodiments of Love! Strive to attain purity of heart. Let this be your foremost endeavor. With purity of heart, you can

achieve anything. In order to attain purity of heart, you have to partake of sacred food. The one who cooks the food should have sacred feelings. In olden days, orthodox Brahmins used to insist on partaking of food prepared only by their wives, because housewives prayed fervently for the well being of the entire family while preparing food. On the other hand, if you employ cooks, God only knows with what feelings they prepare the food! The unsacred thoughts of the cook enter the food, which in turn poison your mind. *Annam Brahma*: food is God. Hence, it should be prepared with sacred feelings. Mere physical cleanliness will not suffice; the mind must also be pure.

See to it also that the vegetables used for preparing food are procured in a righteous manner. For example, the husband brings home vegetables from the market. He might have misused his position of authority and taken them without paying for them, or the vendors themselves might have procured the vegetables by unfair means. If you eat such vegetables, your mind gets polluted. You do not realize that the food you eat is responsible for the actions you perform. Unsacred food makes you do unsacred deeds.

Embodiments of Love! Eat your food only after praying and offering it to God. Only then does the food become sanctified and illumine your intellect.

Once there lived a *sanyasi* (renunciant) in a hermitage near Sivananda's *ashram*. The renunciant was a pious soul. One day an aged

businessman donated money to prepare food for those dwelling in the *ashram*, on the eleventh day after the demise of his young wife. The businessman, being rich, somehow had enticed the girl's father with money in order to marry his young daughter. She spent her time languishing over her unhappy fate in the businessman's house. Disgusted and disheartened, one day she jumped into the Ganges and ended her life.



Lord Shiva

The businessman performed the obituary rites on the eleventh day. The *ashram* customarily did not accept cooked food, so the businessman donated the required amount of money for preparing the *ashramites'* food. The pure-hearted *sanyasi* partook of the food along with other inmates of the *ashram*, but his sleep was disturbed that night. He kept seeing a young girl in his dreams and thought to himself, "I never had any such thought, nor do I have a craving for sensual pleasures. Why then, do I get such

bad dreams?" He had the same vision even in his meditation.

The renunciant went to his guru, known as Satchidanandam, and explained his predicament: "Swami, why am I having such unsacred visions?" The guru told him not to worry. He sent for the businessman, spoke to him, and found out the reason behind his wife's untimely death. He understood that she was appearing in the dream of the *sanyasi* because he partook of the food prepared as part of her obituary rites. From that day forward, the *sanyasi* stopped eating cooked food and lived entirely on fruits and milk.

A car needs fuel to run. In the same way, the body requires food to sustain it. One has to eat some kind of food. If you get bad dreams and bad visions during meditation, it is the result of unsacred food. You have to inquire before cooking whether the provisions have been obtained through sacred means. Only then does the food become fit for consumption.

The Food Prayer

Before partaking of food, you should pray: *Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir, Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam, Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam, Brahma Karma Samadhina.* (God is the offering, the food, the ritual, and the one who makes the offering to the fire, which is also God. The one who sees God in every action merges

with God.) If you pray with sacred feelings, the food gets sanctified.

Intellect vs. Intelligence

At one time, King Vikramaditya held a conference and posed this question, "Which is greater, *buddhi* (intellect) or *medhas* (intelligence)?" The participants replied that intelligence is greater, but Vikramaditya did not agree. He declared that *buddhi* is greater because it is more sacred and contains the knowledge of the Self. Intellect transcends both the mind and the senses.

*Strive to attain purity of heart.
Let this be your foremost endeavor.
With purity of heart, you can
achieve anything.*

Embodiments of Love! Before partaking of food, chant this sacred mantra, so that no unsacredness can enter your heart: *Annam Brahma; Raso Vishnuhu; Bhokta Devo Maheshwara.* (Food is Brahma; its essence is Vishnu; the one who partakes of it is Maheshwara.) These three correspond to body, mind, and action, respectively. Purity of thought, word, and deed is true wisdom. You need not undertake any other spiritual practice than this. People undertake various spiritual practices that confer only temporary satisfaction. On the other hand, when you have purity of thought, word, and deed, you will experience eternal happiness.

Embodiments of Love! *Ritham* is that which is changeless in the three periods of time—past, present, and future. *Ritham* is true wisdom. That which undergoes change is *marakam*, and that which is changeless is called *tharakam*.

Understand the principle of tharakam with the grace of the sadguru (the true guru), and discover the difference between the eternal and the ephemeral. Know the secret of tharakam (soham—I am God), which the jivatma (individual soul) repeats without ceasing in all the three states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. (Telugu Song)

No matter what religion or community you belong to, you must understand this liberation mantra (sohum). Today people call themselves devotees, but their actions do not match their claim. Their thoughts, words, and deeds are filled with untruth and unrighteousness. Their love is tainted with selfishness and self-interest. They pose themselves as devotees but go around in the world indulging in all sorts of evil deeds. Externally, they appear pious, but inwardly they are filled with evil propensities. They ruin their lives for the sake of money. Beware of such people and keep them at a distance. It is a sin even to look at their faces.

Some devotees said to Me, “Swami, we want to attend Your birthday celebration, but we are unable to get leave, so we have decided to apply for sick leave and come.” I told them, “That is not the right thing to do. It does not matter if you are unable to come, but do not tell an untruth.” Observe *sathya vratam* (the vow of truth). Only then can you have the vision of the Lord of the universe. You can purify yourselves through prayer. Wisdom

will dawn on you through prayer, and that prayer is: *Annam Brahma, Raso Vishnuhu, Bhokta Devo Maheshwara*. No other spiritual practice is required.

Develop Friendship with God

Nine paths of devotion have been prescribed for spiritual aspirants. They are: listening, singing, contemplating on and repeating the names of Vishnu, serving the

I am the embodiment of eternal bliss. What type of bliss? It is not something that others give. I don't wait for others to give Me bliss. My bliss originates from within.

Lord's lotus feet, salutations, worship, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender. You should develop friendship with God. If God is your friend, the whole world will be under your

control. But today, unfortunately, people are losing their friendship with God. It is not easy to attain friendship with God, but you have to make every effort in this direction. Once you develop friendship with God, you have to take full advantage of it through spiritual practices. Do not waste time in idle talk.

Embodiments of Love! Speak the truth always. This is what you must learn today. Truth is the basis of your life. Truth is verily God. Hence, never stray away from the path of truth.

Students! Having pursued your education here and having listened to Swami's teachings, you should transform yourselves into ideal human beings. People from far-off lands wait for a chance to come here. Having been blessed with the sacred opportunity of constantly living in the

Divine Presence, make full use of it. Never use harsh words. Never speak untruths. Sometimes, telling the truth may lead to danger. In such a situation, speak neither truth nor untruth; remain silent. You should tran-scend the dualities of truth and untruth.

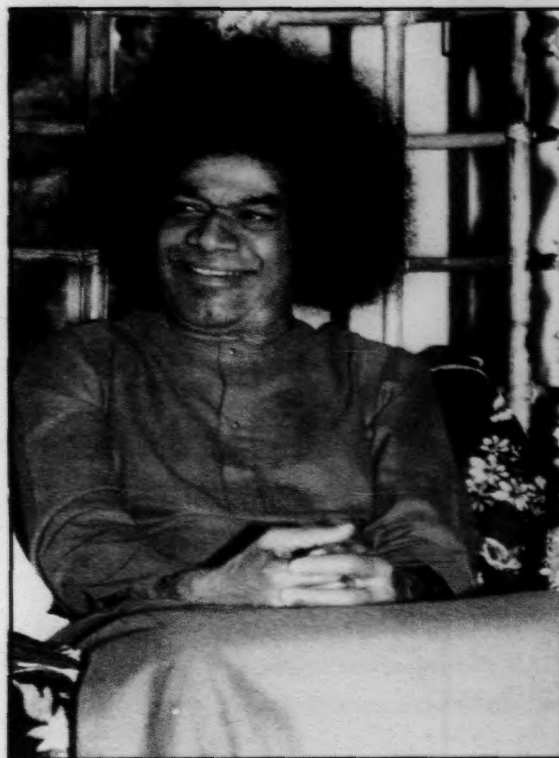
As you are all in the prime of your youth, this is the best time to embark on the sacred path. Start early, drive slowly, reach safely.

The Birthday

I am not at all interested in celebrating My birthdays. Devotees wanted to arrange various programs on this occasion, but I did not permit them. As many of you have gathered here, this meeting is taking place, otherwise I have no interest even in this meeting. To Me, every day is a festival day. I am always blissful. I am the embodiment of eternal bliss. What type of bliss? It is not something that others give. I don't wait for others to give Me bliss. My bliss originates from within.

God is the embodiment of eternal bliss; He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pairs of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal

indicated by the great saying, *Tat Twam Asi* (That Thou Art); eternal, pure, and unchanging; the witness of all functions of the intellect; beyond all mental conditions and the three *gunas* of *sattwa* (serenity/purity), *rājas* (passion/activity) and *thamas* (dullness/indolence).



Whatever I say, whatever I do, is good for you, not for Me. I have come for your sake. Hence, make full use of Me.

.....

ready, provided you develop sacred thoughts and lead a divine life.

Sometimes, I do not talk to you. You think, "We might have committed some mistake. That is why Swami is not talking to us." But truly speaking, it is not my nature to

I Have Come for Your Sake

I am beyond all attributes. Believe it or not, I am bliss personified. If you think otherwise, the defect lies in you. Whatever I do is for your own good, for your welfare, and for your happiness. Lead a blissful and unblemished life. This is what I desire from you. I have no worries or suffering at any point of time. Why should I worry when I have everything? I have no desires. Whatever I say, whatever I do, is good for you, not for me. I have come for your sake. Hence, make full use of me. I am always

look for defects in others. My vision is highly sacred. I always see good in you. The bad you see is your own imagination. Because there is bad in you, you see bad in others. But to me, even bad appears as good. Hence, do not entertain any doubts regarding Swami. One with doubts will perish. Have firm faith.

Harmony and Unwavering Steadfastness

Embodiments of Love! Welcome your guests and give them due respect. Give your love to all. Feed the hungry. Only then can you have peace of mind. Harmonize your thought, word, and deed. There is no greater wisdom than this. Practice *ritham* (that which is changeless in the three periods of time—past, present, and future). This is the path of *tharakam* (liberation). If you waver from time to time, you are most unfortunate.

Waywardness is the nature of a monkey mind. You, however, belong to humankind. Having been born as a human being, you should develop steadiness of mind. The human being is symbolic of liberation, *tharakam*. The monkey mind stands for bondage or *marakam*.

Embodiments of Love! On this birthday, you must learn something very important: do not waste your time in idle talk. Time, once lost, cannot be regained. Consider truth as God. There is no *dharma* greater than adherence to truth. Hence, follow the path of truth and practice righteousness.

—Sathya Sai Baba

November 23, 2002

Shirdi Baba used to ask for two rupees from devotees who came to him. The two rupees symbolized steadfast faith (sraddha) and devotion (bhakthi). These are the two qualities he expected from devotees. The combination of the two is essential for spiritual progress. Only then will bliss emerge like a plant from a seed.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, July 30, 1996

Announcements

Sathya Sai International Center and School for Human Values

There is a newly developed Newsletter from India, to tell of the work being done at the **Sathya Sai International Center and School for Human Values** in New Delhi, India. It was started when five members of the Committee of Management visited Sathya Sai Baba in Puttaparthi, July 2003, and received divine guidance regarding fulfilling the mission of the International Center and School. The Center is seen as an important part of the overall vision of transforming human consciousness. The Center has global implications and reaches out to all nations, all peoples, and all professions.



Maulana Waheeduddin Khan, a noted Islamic scholar, delivered an emotionally-charged speech entitled, "India: the Potential Spiritual Superpower." In his address, he stated, "Turning this potential into actuality will require a long and sincere effort. It is a struggle involving four phases: "First we have to build individual minds. Then we have to build a spiritual society. After that we have to fashion a nation based on peace, nonviolence, and spiritual values. Finally, by changing itself, India can change the whole world."

Mr. Khan went on to say, "We can make a start by establishing an international university for spiritual studies. The students can be sent out as ambassadors of peace, harmony, and goodwill. In the process, a world based on peace and spirituality will gradually be brought into existence."

—Lt. General, Dr. M. L. Chibber
India

Sathya Sai International Center and School for Human Values

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Tel: 24354569, 24363221 - Telefax: 24353221 - E-mail: sschool@tatanova.com

Announcements

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Sai Ram. I am sending you this message from Prasanthi Nilayam, which should have been posted on the *ashram* website: www.srisathyasai.org.in. This information should enable you to respond to any inquiries from devotees.

—Michael Goldstein, MD
Prasanthi Nilayam, India

Dear Devotees:

During the past few days many rumors have been flying across the world relating to our beloved Swami. All these rumors are based on the fact that Swami has been giving *darshan* recently by moving in a golf cart. People seem to forget that since He came back from Brindavan (in July, 2003), Swami has been using the golf cart. The difference is that He is using it a bit more often, as many devotees have requested Him to do.

The *darshan* style has changed temporarily, but otherwise Swami is attending to work as usual. In fact He is meeting with *ashram* staff, hospital staff, and university staff as always; Sathya Sai Baba is receiving reports and giving guidance as required. As if this were not enough, He is reassuring everyone, including the doctors, that He is just fine. In fact, Swami narrated how there was a rumor that He had suffered a heart attack, and how the doctors rushed from Bangalore to attend to Him. As Bhagavan narrated this incident, He laughed heartily.

Dear Devotees, please do not believe in rumors! They are spread by people who mistakenly think they are doing service, but are in fact doing disservice by creating unwarranted anxiety, something that Swami totally disapproves of. Many things happen in the life of an Avatar that we mortals simply cannot fathom. But this we must always remember:

He who has come has come with a mission and will not handicap Himself. If He can control the universe, He surely can manage Himself. If we shower our love on Swami as He showers it on us, there can never be an occasion for Him to have any problems.

—Prasanthi Nilayam

Announcements

He Is Coming to You—Soon!

Having the Lord's darshan and listening to His divine message has always been one of our fondest dreams. In the distant future we will be able to live this dream, irrespective of the physical distance between Him and us. The inauguration of the new Sri Sathya Sai Information Technology Center by Swami, on the 14th of August, was the first step towards realizing this dream.

Located in the first floor of the old shopping complex, adjacent to Prashanti Digital Studio, this IT center will serve as the origination point for live video and audio web streaming to bring the Lord and His message to devotees, during major festivals, worldwide.

The Sri Sathya Sai Information Technology Center was set up by the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, with active support from the TVS Group of companies, a leading automobile and electronics manufacturer in India.

Primarily, this center will act as a central hub, facilitating connectivity between various Sri Sathya Sai Institutions for information exchange and knowledge sharing. Through the videoconferencing facility, doctors in the Sri Sathya Sai Hospitals in Prasanthi Nilayam and Bangalore can discuss complicated surgical procedures and treatment protocols for rare cases. Moreover, students in all campuses of the University can access information from other libraries, attend virtual classrooms with experts on the other end, and conduct collaborative research. All this is made possible with the SAI Wide Area Network, a heterogeneous network platform consisting of a 2MBPS fiber optic backbone and a V-SAT back up that connects the Institutions.

On the 14th of August, Swami arrived at the I.T. Center at 7:30 a.m. and was welcomed with Vedic chanting by students from the University. He lit the lamp to mark the inauguration of the center and proceeded to bless the various sections of the center. Sri Venu Srinivasan (Chairman, TVS Motors) and Sri Gopal Srinivasan (Chairman, TVS Electronics) explained the various facilities at the center to Bhagawan, such as the server rooms, development area, and conference room. Bhagawan then viewed a presentation on the role of the center, which is to bring in "Transformation Through Information."

This was followed by a live videoconferencing demonstration between the cardiac surgeons and cardiologists of the two Super Specialty Hospitals in Prasanthi Nilayam and Bangalore. Bhagawan watched doctors from the two hospitals discuss the surgical and medical aspects of a rare cardiac case, while the doctors felt blessed to have Swami's presence during this discussion. The doctors were able not only to discuss the rare case, but also receive *darshan* of their Lord. Indeed, this was a promise of purposes to be achieved and blessings to be received in the upcoming days!

—Prasanthi News, Vol. PDS/01, August 31, 2003

Announcement & Subscription Information

Did You Know?

The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, founded by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, has been published for 28 years. Swami told this editor to take over that sacred responsibility from the previous editor when that gentleman's work and family schedule became too demanding. Our beloved Swami set the subscription price and gave this publication His name. Sathya Sai Baba often tells us what kind of articles, announcements, and other items should be included in these pages. Our Lord is very "hands on" as an advisor and mentor of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*. With guidance like that, how can we not succeed?

Do you have any idea how thrilled we are to receive a request to send the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* tapes to a blind person? The tapes are always free to the blind, but we are also recipients of the gift by knowing that another of God's children is learning more about God.

In the coming years, we have many plans for making this *Newsletter* more interesting and a vital part of your reading schedule. We are so fortunate to work with a staff of bright and dedicated *bhaktas* (devotees) to bring the "magazine" (that is what Baba calls it) to you bimonthly (every other month). We don't look for praise, yet if you have any suggestions or critiques, we want to hear from you. We don't know all our subscribers by name, but please believe that we love you—we really do. *Sai Ram*.

—Barbara Bozzani

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

Please send a check or money order to: Sathya Sai Book Center of America,
305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108 USA

- ☐ *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* (bimonthly), \$6.00 per year in the USA, \$8.00 to addresses in Mexico and Canada, and \$16.00 to all other countries.
- ☐ Audio Cassette Tapes of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* are available in the USA only. Six tapes per year, subscription is \$18.00.
- ☐ I am blind and would like to receive the cassette tapes at no charge.

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<i>An Eastern View of Jesus Christ</i> , Divine Discourses of Sathya Sai Baba, compiled by Lee Hewlett & K. Nataraj	BW-003 \$6.30
<i>Education in Human Values</i> , by Lorraine Burrows	BI-018 \$3.00
<i>Faith in God</i> , Sai Baba's quotes on "Faith in God," compiled by Vijay and Neal Amin	BI-019 \$5.00
<i>Finding God</i> , by Charles Penn	BW-065 \$7.00
<i>First Pilgrimage to Sathya Sai Baba</i> , by Dara Irani	BW-070 \$5.00
<i>Five Upanishads: Taaittiriya, Aitareya, Kena, Prashna, and Mundaka</i> , by Camille Svensson	BW-067 \$4.00
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<i>Greatest Adventure</i> , by Dr. V. N. Murthy	BI-026 \$5.00
<i>I, We, & He</i> , by Indulal Shah	BI-039 \$7.00
<i>In His Image: Exploring Today's Spirituality</i> , by Madeleine Guillemin	BI-083 \$6.00
<i>Inner Views and Insights</i> , by Howard Murphet	BW-154 \$9.00
<i>Inspired Medicine</i> , compiled and edited by Judy Warner	BW-074 \$13.00
<i>Journey to Sai Baba: Visitor's Guide</i> , by Valmai Worthington	BW-072 \$8.00
<i>A Journey to Shanti</i> . This book is 10 in. x 13 in. with colorful pictures on each page	BW-073 \$33.00

For those who would like to have a free, more complete list of available books by and about Sathya Sai Baba, please contact the Sathya Sai Book Center at the address, telephone, or fax numbers above.

Temple of Healing

Health Care for All

Health care has improved steadily over the years for the rich and well-to-do and evolved into a full-blown industry, with the physician considered as the provider and the patient the consumer. The explosion of technology, managed care agencies, and for-profit corporations trying to run the hospitals have escalated health care costs and made it inaccessible to large segments of the population. This crisis is not limited to the United States and other industrial nations. Third world countries are deeply affected, where the middle class and poor cannot even fathom the option of tertiary care. Heart attack victims may die without access to a physician. India has universal health care, but less than 1% of the population can afford private, quality care or procedures such as cardiac bypass.

Like a shining star in the darkest of nights, the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Science in the remote village of Puttaparthi, India, is a refreshing sight. Equipped with the latest technology and catering to the poor and the disadvantaged, this hospital provides services such as open heart surgery and advanced neurological procedures to all—totally free of cost, without geographical restrictions, and irrespective of religion, race, caste, or creed.

When thinking of a hospital for the poor and needy, one visualizes a noisy setup in an ancient, poorly maintained, nondescript building crowded with an overworked staff,

whose patience is running thin. But the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Science is far from that. It is a massive architectural marvel, well planned and constructed. It looks more like a palace than a hospital, with clean, wide hallways, spacious patient wards, and well-equipped operating rooms and laboratories. The hospital has state-of-the-art technology, such as CT scanning, MRI, echocardiogram, and lithriptor equipment. During its first ten years, more than 11,000 cardiac surgeries, 12,000 cardiac catheterizations, 300 pacemaker implantations, 16,000 urologic procedures including kidney transplants, and about 17,000 cataract surgeries and corneal transplants.

All these procedures are performed free of cost to the patient—with no insurance forms, deductibles, or threatening letters from the business office to collect bills. Sixty percent of the physicians are volunteers, including retired professors from university hospitals all over India, and practicing physicians from abroad, including the USA. Almost half of the non-clinical staff are also volunteers. Many are retired officials who were once highly placed in the government and private sectors.

This magnificent hospital was conceived, completed, and commissioned by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and solely funded by the Sri Sathya Sai International Trust. Sri Sathya Sai Baba, of Southern India, is considered to be one of the world's greatest spiritual leaders, and is worshipped by many as *Bhagavan* or the

Divine Incarnation. His millions of followers hail from all over the world. In fact, the United States has one of the world's largest Sathya Sai organizations. The International Trust is funded solely by unsolicited voluntary donations. The Trust has also built and maintained educational facilities and water supply projects in poverty- and drought-stricken areas.

Physicians of all specialties from the USA volunteer at the Institute of Higher Medical Sciences. I had the unique privilege of volunteering at that hospital during the summer of 2000. I was impressed by the quality of the medical equipment, as well as the personnel providing care to the patients. With the elimination of economic motivations, I found the doctor-patient relationship to be one of compassion and genuine concern. Here, patient care is the prime focus, with no DRG guidelines or HMO nurse dictating what tests to order, what treatments are allowable, or how long the patient can stay in the hospital. Instead, health care of the highest standard is delivered—the way medicine was intended to be practiced by our forefathers. An aura of divine bliss prevails in every corner of the Institute, from the top of the central rotunda to the gleaming marble floors—and in every person, from the staff to the patients and their families.



Super Specialty Hospital in Bangalore

In the words of Dr. Mitchell Krucoff, a volunteering physician from the United States and a senior cardiologist at Duke University, "Among the patients and families, many of whom have never seen a plumbing fixture, much less a digital cardiac lab, there was no fear, no anxiety, and none of the depression that we commonly encounter

on rounds in the USA. Patients and their families clearly know that, physically and spiritually, they are in God's Hospital. Every nurse and doctor has had the experience of caring for a patient who was so sick that he or she ab-

solutely should have died but didn't."

Encouraged by the success of the first tertiary care hospital, a second, larger super specialty hospital has been built in Bangalore, a thriving metropolitan area about 150 miles away from the first hospital. The Bangalore hospital provides a broader variety of services and a greater number of specialists—including maternity and child health, orthopedics, ear-nose-and-throat care, plastic surgery, urology, and cardiothoracic surgery. All services are provided free to all patrons, under the blessings and guidance of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

—Sivaprasad D. Madduri, M.D.
Poplar Bluff, Missouri



BIRTHDAY SALUTATIONS

Beholden are we, O Lord,
for all that You have given us.

Hearts full of happiness we derive,
in chanting Your sacred names.

Antharyamin (Inner Director) You are,
and the air around is sweet with Your love.

Godliness we experience,
by singing in praise Your glory and grandeur—

Any time and all the time,
and anywhere and everywhere.

Wary are we in clasping Your divine feet,
as we bathe in joyous tears.

Avatar of this Kali Yuga are You,
O Bhagawan, O Lord Supreme.

None else but You can protect us—
thus saith Sai, “Why fear when I am here?”

Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, and Ahimsa—
what wonders You are draped in, Swami!

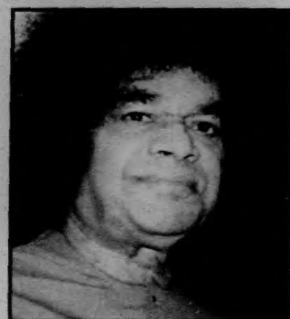
Atttributes are many for us to enumerate,
yet You stand singularly in our hearts.

Intuitively we bow down before You,
O Lord, in reverence amidst joy and pain.

Ageless are You, O Bhagawan, even as the years roll by.
We pray You, bless us all on this auspicious day.

This day we rededicate ourselves to uphold
Your principles, and forge ahead—with Your

78 years on planet earth—to reach the goals You set for us.



—Mr. T. Krishnaswamy, Chennai, India

Nine Point Code of Conduct

Center members [and other devotees] are expected to do their best to practice the Nine-Point Code of Conduct in order to be examples of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings.

- Daily meditation and prayer.
- Group devotional singing or prayer with family members once a week.
- Participation in Sai Spiritual Education by children of the family.
- Participation in community service work and other programs of the Sai Organization.
- Regular attendance at the Sathya Sai Baba Center's devotional meetings.
- Regular study of Sathya Sai Baba literature.
- The use of soft, loving speech with everyone.
- Not speaking ill of others, especially in their absence.
- Practice placing a ceiling on desires. Consciously and continuously strive to eliminate the tendency to waste time, money, food and energy; utilize the time saved for service to mankind.

*Established by the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America,
and approved by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

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