

*In This Issue We Explore
Brotherhood of Man, Worldwide Service,
Lord Jesus, Motherhood, and More Service*

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

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

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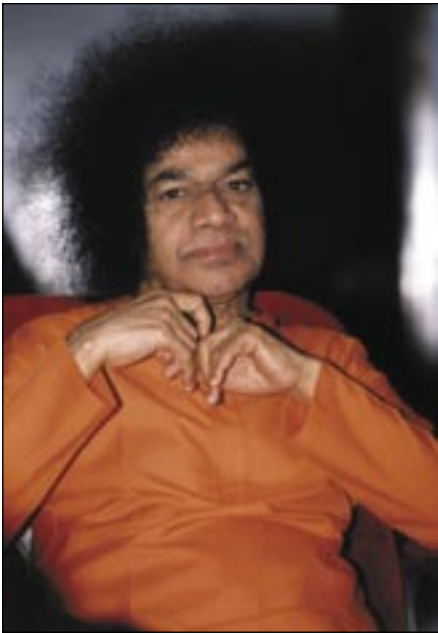


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—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message

I too have taken some vows. One of the vows of Sai is that I shall never go back on my promise. Once I give my promise to people,



I will never forsake them or distance them from myself, even though they may work against me or disobey my command. This is the nature of my love. Many people have received this promise from Swami and are enjoying peace and happiness. Some of them have acted treacherously and tried to harm Swami, but Swami never harmed or hated them. I have never hated anyone. I do not know what hatred is. Hatred is, in fact, a perversion of the mind.

I wish that no one should come to harm, so why should anyone have feelings of hatred toward Swami? Such feelings are only the consequence of the samskaras (accumulated tendencies) of a person's previous births. No one can escape the consequences of his or her deeds. Come what may, everyone has to reap the consequences of his or her evil deeds. Only those who cultivate the feelings of love can understand its sweetness and power.

Swami has no enemy in the world. All are my friends. I am even a friend of those who dislike me.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sai Organizations Respond Worldwide

Disaster Relief Efforts for Southern Asia

In the following letter of January 5, 2005, Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chair of the Prasanthi Council, described the initial steps taken by members of the global Sai Organizations in response to the devastation during and after the major earthquake and tsunami in Southern Asia of December 26, 2004. By the time this issue goes to press, much more aid will have progressed through the combined efforts of Sai devotees.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sai Ram! For those who have perished, let us pray for their souls. For those who are suffering, let us pray and take action to alleviate their pain. For ourselves, let us pray that the Divine Indweller will show us the way and enable us to do what we must do. For the Sai Organization, let us pray that we will all become united in a spirit of love and face this world catastrophe with courage, determination, and discrimination.

Work Done and in Progress

The Sri Sathya Sai International Medical Committee of the Prasanthi Council, working under the leadership of its Chairman, Dr. Narendra Reddy, has sent task forces of personnel with the necessary skills to assess the needs of victims and our own resources to address those needs.

In Indonesia, a task force of Sai devotee physicians and Sai workers have gone to three stricken sites, including Banda Aceh. These devotees are distributing food, water, clothes, medicines, and other needed materials to the victims of the disaster. Substantial funds from the Sathya Sai Society Earthquake Relief Fund have been dispersed to Indonesia.

In Sri Lanka, Dr. Upadhyay from UK, a member of the Sai International Medical committee, has already visited Sri Lanka, made an assessment of conditions there, and will be returning with a medical team soon. In addition, Dr. Brahma Sharma, President of the USA Sai Medical Committee, is leading a task force of Sai devotee physicians and Sai workers who will arrive in Sri Lanka by January 9. Substantial funds from the Sathya Sai Society Earthquake Relief fund have been dispersed to Sri Lanka.

In Thailand, Lorraine Burrows, of the Sathya Sai Institute, with a group of Sai devotees from the Sai Institute and the Sai Organization of Thailand have gone to Phuket to give assistance to the victims of the disaster. The Zone Chairman has communicated with the Deputy Central Coordinator of Thailand to arrange assistance by transferring funds to the Thai Sai Organization from the Earthquake Relief Fund.

In India, we have communicated to Bhagavan Baba that we stand ready with personnel and resources to render whatever assistance He may deem appropriate.

Work Planned

Task forces have gone to Indonesia to Banda Aceh and two other stricken areas in that country nearest to the epicenter of the earthquake. A team of medical personnel and volunteers from Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia are going to establish medical and rehabilitation camps. Likewise, in Sri Lanka, a task force will perform the same function. These task forces and the medical and rehabilitation camps will not be merely a brief encounter where goods are distributed and the sick are treated. It will be an ongoing interaction. In the acute phase we are treating illness and distributing goods and materials that meet the needs for survival in the ravaged environment. Then, having met the immediate needs, we plan to maintain a presence of helpful Sai workers to assist in the rebuilding of the homes, the rehabilitation of the community, and, finally, the achievement of self-sufficiency.

The theme of our 80th Birthday efforts—Service to Individual, Service to Community, and Service to Humanity—is dramatically unfolding as a result of this unprecedented disaster. Men and women, governments, and organizations from everywhere are extending their helping hands to the victims of this catastrophe. Individual victims are treated and communities are being restored. These efforts, engaged in by our Sai Organization, and all of the multitudes of selfless workers from all over the world, demonstrate the love and compassion that is our true nature. Thus the innate divinity of man is manifested.

Lovingly, in the Service of Sai,

Michael Goldstein, M.D.
Chair, Prasanthi Council

Wholeheartedly offer service to anyone in need and experience the bliss that results.

Every one of you must become a servant, eager to give help to those who need it. When the helper becomes the leader, the world will prosper. Only a servant can grow into a master. Of course, you have to totally eliminate the ego. Service helps you to remove the ego. So do not pay heed to what others might say when you engage in service activities. Let compassion and sacrifice be your two eyes, let egolessness be your breath, and love, your tongue. Let peace reverberate in your ears. These are the five vital elements you have to live upon. God will not ask you what service you did. He will ask with what motive you did it. What was the intention that prompted it?

Sathya Sai Baba

Sanathana Sarathi, December 1981

Jesus: Our Holy Brother

The Deeper Meaning of Easter

Easter is an event celebrated by Christians around the world through participation in sunrise services, choir singing, sermons, and Easter egg hunts. Easter, along with Christmas, is one of the most celebrated of Christian holidays.

What is Easter's deeper meaning? You already know that Christmas commemorates the birth of Jesus and that Easter memorializes His death, but why would His death be accompanied by so much festive celebration?

The Bible, a Christian's primary source of information on Jesus' life, contains only a handful of facts relating to Jesus' childhood and young adulthood. However, Baba has said that from the beginning, Jesus was a pure, selfless, and constantly loving person who unselfishly dedicated His every action to the good of the world.

Baba also said that early in His life, Jesus announced, "I am God's Messenger; I have come as a servant to all of God's children." Jesus saw the divinity in every person. He knew that to serve God in each individual was to serve society, and to serve society was to serve God directly. This stage of Jesus' life

corresponds to the state in Hindu philosophy called dualism, where one serves as God's obedient messenger. During this stage, God and His messenger are two separate entities, and life is seen as a play with two principal characters: God and His messenger.

After selflessly serving humanity for some years, Jesus came to realize that He was something far beyond the body—far beyond physical life or death. Jesus realized Himself to be the child of immortality, the Son of God. As the Son of God, Jesus was now no longer just the servant of God; He identified Himself fully as belonging to God's holy family and saw all beings as members of that one holy family. In other words, He became "Christed," or fully identified with all of God's creation and God's happiness—forever like unto Himself and eternally one with Him. At this stage Jesus embodied the authority of God, and God's divine qualities manifested through Him for the benefit of all humanity. This stage correlates with the state in Hindu philosophy called qualified nondualism.

Baba says that as Jesus' spiritual growth continued, He came to a point where He could no longer distinguish between Himself

and God and was finally able to declare, “I and My Father are One.” He had entered the state in Hindu philosophy called *adwaita*, or full nondualism, where He could no longer see where His personal qualities ended and where God’s qualities began. The Bible describes this state as being “filled with the Holy Ghost.” During this time, Jesus lovingly went through the actions of outwardly serving God in all humanity, while inwardly existing in a perfect state of unity and oneness with God.

Jesus’ life was filled with many ideal examples of service to humankind. He healed the sick, caused the lame to walk, restored sight to the blind, cured lepers, calmed the storm so others would not be frightened, and walked on water. On several occasions He fed thousands after blessing only a small handful of food, and He resurrected [at least] three people from death.

Jesus treated all alike—the young, old, sick, and poor. He regarded each as equal sons and daughters of God. He lived His life—in thought, word, and deed—as a perfect example of love in action. Jesus’ teachings empowered the lower classes and the working people by assuring them that they did not have to go through the temple priests to approach God. He taught them that God would be pleased by their pure and loving hearts, and by their treating each other with love, forgiveness, and tolerance.

Jesus also chastised the priests and criticized others who took advantage of people and abused their power. He told the common people that they did not have to pay bribes to the priests, or sacrifice animals, or follow elaborate, highly-structured rituals

in order to gain God’s favor. In this way, by following and teaching the truth, those in positions of power came to fear Jesus. In reality, only a small handful of Jesus’ own faithful followers understood even a little of what He came to teach and demonstrate through His selfless life.

Most people of the time misunderstood who Jesus was and could not fully comprehend the gift He came to bring. The priests felt that Jesus threatened their authority. The Romans, who were in power at the time, feared that with Jesus’ growing popularity, He might someday become a political rival. A number of young Jewish men hoped that Jesus would become a powerful military leader to help them throw off Roman rule.

By bringing false witnesses against Him, the priests arranged to have the pious and loving Jesus arrested. By this time Jesus commanded great power but resisted them not. When He was given an opportunity to speak in His own defense, He remained silent. At the insistence of a corrupted priesthood, Jesus was sentenced to death. The obedient Roman soldiers carried out the orders for His crucifixion and nailed Him to a cross alongside two thieves who were being punished for crimes against the state. When one of the criminals recognized that Jesus was a righteous man, Jesus told him that because he had seen truly, he would live in heaven with Jesus.

Baba also has said that while Jesus’ body was dying on the cross, He heard God’s voice saying, “All of life is one, my dear son. Be alike to everyone.” Jesus gave up the body on the cross on the day that we celebrate as Good



Friday. When dead, Jesus' body was taken from the cross and laid in a tomb.

Three days later, on the day that we celebrate as Easter Sunday, Jesus arose from the dead and showed Himself to family members and friends. Over a period of many days He walked and talked among His followers. He showed His wounds to His disciples, interacted with them, and answered their questions to prove that He was real and that He was not just a vision or a dream. Thus, in His resurrection, He proved to them, and to us, that light truly triumphs over darkness, that truth outlives illusion, and that even death holds no power over the sons and daughters of God.

Jesus demonstrated that not only is it impossible to kill God's Son, which we all

collectively are, but that in truth, neither can God's Son be changed in any way by sin, evil, malice, fear, or death. Jesus remains a savior today because He made a clear distinction of the truth that is still obscure to many. He saw the false without accepting it as true. In his life, Jesus recognized the road of love and truth before Him and followed it. In so doing, He cleared a path so that the rest of us could more easily walk the same road.

Easter is primarily what we call a "Christian" holiday. Baba, however, tells us that there is only one religion, the religion of love; there is only one race, the race of humanity; and there is only one language, the language of divine love in our hearts.

Jesus is the Christ, along with all the rest of us. The difference between most of us and

Jesus is that Jesus realized the true nature of His being; the rest of us for the most part have not yet done so. Baba has said that Jesus lived for the divine glory of this sacred planet, that His actions were for those around Him, and that nothing was too precious for Him to give up for His brothers and sisters. Jesus sacrificed His own blood for the good of humanity.

Baba tells us that we too must strive to understand the greater truth, to learn to see all things as one, and to expand our outlook. We must also develop broad and loving hearts so that selfishness can disappear. We must put divine understanding into daily practice so that we bring our lives into the greater truth and realize godliness. Nothing we do or experience can change the basic nature of our

being, which is eternal love. We must forget our dreams of sin and guilt and instead share in the resurrection of God's Son. *A Course in Miracles*, which is a work inspired by Jesus' love, says:

"The end of the world is not its destruction but its translation into heaven."

Let each of us today ask God for His holy blessing that we may learn from this Master, this brother Jesus, that we too may walk in the way of God's love, God's light, God's peace, and God's truth; that we too may look beyond this dream of sin, fear, sickness, and death, and share in the resurrection and transformation of God's Son, which we all are.

—**Kay Brooks**
Angleton, Texas

You need not glorify God, for that may keep you at a distance from Him. God is not new. He was there before your birth and He exists eternally. Where is the need to glorify Him? You must consider Him as your old friend. When you acquire friendship newly with a person, you speak to him formally and respectfully. When he becomes an old acquaintance, you can take liberties with him. Consider God also as an old friend, so that you can enjoy the liberty and feel kinship with Him!

—**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**
Thought for the Day, March 11, 2004

EHV in the Navajo Classroom

“Give them a lot of support, discipline, and love....”

During World War II, my father served in the United States Air Force and was stationed in the South Pacific. He experienced horrific things during his tour of duty, including the agonizing recovery of his colleagues’ burned bodies in the aftermath of downed airplanes.

When I was about twelve, during a moment of somber reflection, he made a recommendation to me. “Japanese forces were heavily bombing our troops. For certain we were all going to die and most likely lose the war. Then, something happened and the tide turned! We were told that our nation’s Navajo Indians, using their own native tongue, were successfully transmitting strategic battle plans to our overseas troops. It was an unbreakable code. They became known as the “Code Talkers.”

“I feel the Navajo played a significant role in saving this country,” he continued. “If you ever have a chance to do something for the Navajo people, please do it!” My father passed away from lymphoma in 1992.

The opportunity to honor my father’s wishes came in the summer of 2003. Having received comprehensive training and practicum application of Education in Human Values (EHV) in the Thailand Institute and Sathya Sai School with Dr.

Art-Ong Jumsai from 2001-2002, I was enthusiastic about applying what I’d learned once I’d returned to the United States. Swami, however, had put Sai Schools on hold in America, so I was more than curious what my next step would be. At one point, I was looking through the classified “Help Wanted” section of the newspaper when Sai Baba interrupted me telepathically: *You don’t need to look in the paper; I’m sending you a project.* I never looked in the classifieds again, knowing I had the top employment agent in the cosmos! Beyond being just a job, I knew this project would be *dharmic*, that is, appropriate for my life path and spiritual growth.

In a whirlwind of events, I received an e-mail from the principal of an alternative school on a Navajo reservation followed by a telephone call during which I was essentially hired, based only on my resume and transcripts. I literally flew through the district and state education red tape, including the required battery of state competency exams. August of 2003 found me reviewing textbooks and preparing language arts lesson plans for my Navajo students.

I instantly fell in love with them. Most of them were very naughty—dropouts, expulsions, teen parents, and in and out of jail—yet I saw in them a basic sincerity that

touched me deeply. They had severe home-life problems, as do many of our youth on the planet at this time! I noticed parallels between the Navajo and the Thai students I had worked with: both groups had been abandoned, neglected, and disenfranchised.

I longingly recalled how the Thai students lived at the Sri Sathya Sai boarding school 24 hours a day in a spiritually-infused environment. How lucky they were! I fervently wished for my Navajo students to have the same opportunity!

Baba caught my thoughts and interjected into mine, *Your classroom will provide the essential climate for their transformation.* I wistfully longed for

the same confidence in myself that He had in me! I begged Him to help me; this was uncharted territory, and each day I was putting one foot in front of the other. I had to trust! I had no choice. Teacher turnover was high, and I could see why!

Fraught with overwhelming personal problems, the students had such high absenteeism that they would fail trimester after trimester and have to retake them repeatedly. One day, after what I regarded as an unsuccessful grammar lesson, amid feelings of inadequacy and incompetence, I sincerely pleaded with Baba, “What am I doing wrong? They don’t seem to be getting it!”

Immediately, He responded, *That’s not the main reason you are here!* What?

Was I hearing correctly? After all, the goal was graduation—wasn’t it? *Give them a lot of support, discipline, and love. With this foundation, gradually they will be able to learn academics.* This was a major breakthrough for me. What a tremendous relief! What I was doing peripherally, almost subconsciously because it was natural for me, now shifted to become my conscious, primary focus—of building a classroom climate of acceptance and love!

Baba caught my thoughts and interjected into mine, “*Your classroom will provide the essential climate for their transformation.*”

Because of the invaluable Thailand Institute intensive training, augmented by personal *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) and continuous “checking in” internally with Baba, the work took on an effortless quality. There were severe discipline issues, to be sure; however, I found that taking problems to the heart before speaking or taking action spiritualized the situation. Weaving EHV—values, mores, and guiding principles—into daily academic lesson plans came naturally.

Students were asked to reflect deeply on literature themes concerning “conflict resolution” [a skill taught in many classrooms and group counseling settings] and the implementing of noble virtues. I found that the students were quick to express what was in their conscience—which was right, good, and *dharmic*! Educare was alive and kicking! Sai Baba has said repeatedly that EHV is not about curriculum, nor can it be taught; it must be experienced, and drawn out from

within! Truly, He is ushering in a renaissance in education.

As I began to connect at this intentionally deeper level with the students, the light in their beautiful brown eyes at last began to dance. We all laughed more and, true to Baba's wisdom, their writing improved, their test scores came up, and they reluctantly left for summer vacation!

"So what are you going to do this summer, Ms. Rousseau?" asked my jail-bird student. I answered, "I'll be missing you!" This student, who had been arrested for punching a police officer, tossed me an orange and walked out the door smiling.

All classroom teachers were asked to award both the top and the most-improved students from each class. Additionally, I had personal pep talks with each of them before they left for the summer. It was an honor that

the students voted me their favorite female teacher at the school; however, receiving the attached handwritten note from one of my students, who had lost a lot of time staying home with her sick grandmother, was the true award! It was my confirmation that love, indeed, is the transformational balm for aching hearts. In honoring my promise to my father, I never dreamed that the personal rewards could be so sweet.

Share your light every day in many little ways. Kindness and loving outreach is the work of ushering in the Golden Age.

—**Barbara Rousseau**
Mancos, Colorado

(Nothing in the letter below has been edited. The name was deleted to protect confidentiality. This student failed my class due to absenteeism. She and I agreed at the end of the year that we would give it another go come fall. —BR)

Thankx Ms Rousseau Thank you for all you have done! This is your prize for being #1 I'm going to tell you wonderful things you did for me. You always put a smile on my face plus even on cloudy days you teach us so many ways maybe for some of us find better ways. You have a kind heart even from the start make no one tear it apart I'm gotta tell you now I'm not a person I used to be but even better you show me not to give up but to get back up Thanks just to let you know I never got tired of your class Hopefully I'll come back. Ms Rousseau your friend until the end. I won't forget about you...

USA Sathya Sai Education in Human Values

Staff Training for Purdue University Extension Summer Youth Program

On June 2, 2004, a team from the advisory Board to the USA Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Foundation (SSEHV) conducted a training geared toward serving a summer youth program of Purdue University Extension. The program is called Freedom through the Arts and the training resulted from a referral by a St. Louis SSEHV community program.

This SSEHV community program, hosted at various St. Louis Neighborhood Houses, has been running for two years, after extensive training of their administration and staff. It serves approximately 350 city youth who attend year-round after-school programs in five neighborhood centers throughout the city.

More than twenty staff participants were trained this past June, including Purdue University employees, community activists,

program directors, teachers, parents, and volunteers. The participants gained working knowledge of the Community SSEHV program, with a goal of enabling them to introduce Human Values in the upcoming summer program, which was to serve a group of fifty Indianapolis elementary-grade children from various ethnic backgrounds. The summer program began in July 2004 and ran for five weeks, five days a week.

The SSEHV training for the summer Freedom Through the Arts program was well received by all the participants, who expressed great appreciation for this introduction to the profound dimensions of human values in the lives of children.

—Bea Flaig

Chair, SSEHV Advisory Board
to the SSEHV Foundation
Tucson, Arizona

Seeking Sai Devotees

The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program incorporates five basic values that are taught without any specific political [or religious] orientation. The five values are Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love, and Nonviolence. SSEHV-USA is seeking Sai devotees who are professionals working with students in elementary schools, secondary schools, or post-secondary settings. If you want to know more, please contact Bea Flaig, 520-577-7196 or e-mail FlaigSai@aol.com.

Bhajan Hall

Sweet Memories Inspire Surrender

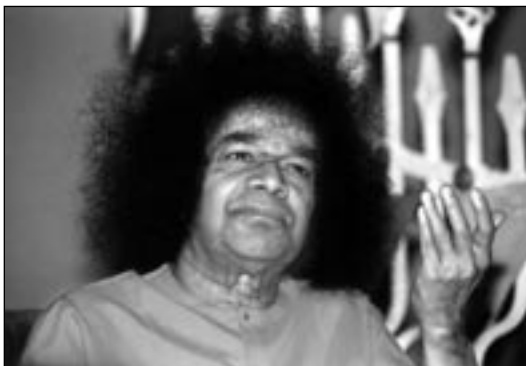
The memory is strong, and to this day it makes my hair stand on end: the rhythmic beat of the *tabla* (drum), the beautiful melody of the harmonium, the powerful words strung together to make a *bhajan* (devotional song), and most of all, the feeling of being immersed in it all while seeing the Lord of the universe swaying in His chair, tapping His hand to the beat of the music. For more than five years, I lived this experience countless times in the *bhajan* hall at Prasanthi Nilayam. Now at times I forget how special the experience was, but oh, if only I had the words to describe how I feel when I remember...

These days at 5:30 p.m., I no longer watch the shadows growing longer in the sunset as the evening *bhajans* in Prasanthi come to a close. Instead, I typically immerse myself in mundane actions taken without thought. I fulfill my daily obligations and, in my free time, relax by doing the same things everyone else does.

Ten years have gone by since I left Prasanthi Nilayam, yet every time I visit a Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center, it feels like I am home once again. Recollections of the past invoke

a sublime contentment within me—I have been to heaven! What more could I want?

As the years roll by, I am beginning to understand that it is not enough to have experienced bliss, but that I must



share it with others. I must rise above the mundane, spread Swami's love, and let this body become His instrument, doing what He deems best. How and in what capacity I will be His instrument I do not know, but it is my

duty to make myself ready by following His teachings to the best of my ability and surrendering my shortcomings and abilities to Him.

His will always prevails. We are immensely fortunate to be aware of Him and His teachings. It is my sincere and heartfelt prayer that every one of us be able to serve Him and play a role in fulfilling the mission of His earthly sojourn.

—Gopi Manthripragada

Chicago, Illinois
(Fifth-year medical student
at the time of this writing and
former student in Swami's school)

Develop the Spirit of Brotherhood

Manifest the Ideal of Love in the World

*This land of Bharat (India) has given birth to many noble women,
such as Savitri, who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati,
who extinguished a wildfire with the power of truth;
Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of a blazing fire unscathed;
and Damayanti, who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the
power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and
prosperity and became the teacher of all nations of the world
because of such women of virtue.*

(Telugu Poem)

Human life is meant to demonstrate an ideal to the world. Humankind is endowed with infinite powers. However, people lead lives of ignorance, unaware of their innate powers. Though everyone is endowed with divine powers, only a few are able to manifest them. In all the others, these powers remain hidden. Everyone should make efforts to realize their inherent divinity. Various people appear and behave as if they were ordinary humans, despite being ones with infinite divine powers. Janaki-Ramaiah (Swami's younger brother) was one of such divine power. He was younger than this body by two-and-a-half years. He was an expert in the field of politics and would mince no words in expressing his opinion. At times, I used to caution him, "Ramaiah, you do not know the abilities of others. Do not use harsh words. Speak with restraint." He might have used harsh words when the situation demanded, but he was always tender-hearted.

Ideal Brotherly Love

When Lakshmana (one of Rama's brothers) fainted on the battlefield, Rama lamented thus, "If I were to search the world, I might find another wife like Sita, another mother like Kausalya, but not another brother like Lakshmana." In this manner, Rama was deeply touched by the fraternal love of Lakshmana and extolled his qualities. The world has many such families where the parents, brothers, and sisters have demonstrated great ideals. You don't need to doubt whether such ideal brothers exist even today. They do exist. There may be temporary differences of opinion, but they always maintain love for each other.

Every person must necessarily make efforts to realize the principle of the *Atma* (divine inner reality), which is present in all. The sweetness of the *Atmic* experience is unparalleled. In the spiritual field, what

one must attain is the experience of *Atmic* bliss. He who realizes the inherent divinity in humanity is a true human being. The *Atma* has no specific form. It is full of love and bliss. This has to be realized and experienced by every individual. One may know the nature of an individual, but it is not possible to understand and estimate the nature of the *Atma*. In order to understand the principle of *Atma*, you have to emulate the ideals that were demonstrated by Rama and His brothers.

One day, as the brothers were playing a game, Bharata came running, sat on the lap of Mother Kausalya, and complained, “Mother, whenever I am about to lose the game, Rama manages to lose and makes me the winner.” Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrugna would tell their mothers that it was their great good fortune that they had Rama as their elder brother. They would praise Rama, saying that He was full of love, and nowhere could they find a brother like Him. They always sought to be in the company of Rama and to serve Him. Among them was such unity and love. They enjoyed an intimate and inseparable relationship. Even today, there are many such brothers and sisters in the world. However, the situation of the world is such that people are not encouraged to practice the brotherhood of man.

Our [Sri Sathya Sai] institutions should demonstrate the ideal of brotherhood and show the way to the rest of the world. You

call each other brothers and sisters. Mere verbal expression will not suffice; it needs to be reflected in your conduct. While in exile, Rama was rarely separated from Lakshmana for even a moment. He would ask Sita with concern about Lakshmana’s whereabouts whenever he was not found by His side. In this manner, Rama taught the ideal of brotherhood by His example.

The Hallmark of a True Student

.....
What is the hallmark of a true student? Those are noble ones whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in perfect harmony.

Today students busily acquire education with the sole purpose of occupying high positions in society. They are not prepared to share their love with their

fellowmen and demonstrate the ideal of brotherhood. The need of the hour is to practice the ideal of brotherhood. Brothers should lead their lives in an ideal manner. Bodies may be different, but their life principle must be one and the same. There is no dearth of such ideal brothers in this land of Bharat. There are some, however, who are not able to translate their sacred feelings into action and set an ideal for others. Only when we share our love with our fellow beings can we experience divinity.

What is the hallmark of a true student? Those are noble ones whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in perfect harmony. It is said: The proper study of mankind is man. However, today we do not find true qualities in mankind. People may show respect toward each other outwardly, but

they do not experience true love, unity, and happiness inwardly. They say that they belong to mankind, but in reality they have monkey minds.

True Humanness

What is true humanness? You should treat your fellow men as your own brothers. You deserve to be called a human being only when you cultivate the spirit of unity. Where there is no unity, there you find enmity and hatred.

Consequently, the principle of love is lost altogether. Your foremost duty is to share your love with others. Only then can you realize the ideal known as

*Your foremost duty is to share
your love with others.
Only then can you realize the ideal
known as Brotherhood of Man and
Fatherhood of God.*

.....
Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. Unfortunately, such idealism is not found today. You may not believe in the fatherhood of God, but you must have faith in the brotherhood of man; you must practice it and experience bliss therefrom. Our country, Bharat, will regain its pristine glory only when its people achieve such unity. There should be unity and love not only among brothers but also between husband and wife.

Today you have heard that a doctor from Singapore, Dr. Pillai, wants to establish an institution in memory of his late wife. Dr. Pillai has been a devotee of Swami for the past 20 years. His wife was also a highly virtuous lady. She always had a smiling countenance and always spoke softly and sweetly. This country has many such noble women. It is

because of such women that the country is full of auspiciousness, plenty, and prosperity. Likewise, many such devotees express their love in an unostentatious manner.

The country of Bharat is highly sacred. People from India are flocking to foreign countries with the false hope that they will find happiness elsewhere. The happiness that you do not find here cannot be found anywhere in the world. As the saying goes, "That which is not found in Bharat does not exist anywhere else in the world."

The very reason that Bharat has been able to live in peace and amity with the rest of the world for the past thousands of years is that the Bharatiyas (Indians) share their love with others and maintain brotherly relationships. In fact, they have lived up to the ideal of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. In spite of many foreign invasions, the love and unity of Bharatiyas has not diminished a bit. At times you may find infighting, but this is only a passing cloud. The sweet fragrance of love exists in everyone's heart.

Conquer the World with Love

There is no point in speaking sweetly if there is no sweetness in your heart. Sweetness in speech and bitterness in the heart is not the quality of a human being. You should exhibit sweetness in thought, word, and deed; this is the true sign of a human being. You should fill your life with love. There is nothing superior

to love in this world. The human instrument is considered to be most sacred because it contains the unique quality of love. However, you remain unable to realize the value of your human birth. God incarnates in human form in order to spread the message of love. Once you have love in your heart, you can conquer the whole world. Love is in you, but you are unable to express it in the proper way.

Students! You read a number of books. You also study history. However, do you imbibe the history of Rama? Have you understood the strong bond of love that existed between Rama, Lakshmana, B h a r a t a , and Satrugna? First and foremost, develop the spirit of brotherhood. Even when you come across a bitter rival, address him as a brother and speak to him with love. When you address him as a brother, his heart will melt and hatred will disappear at once. You can conquer the whole world with the weapon of love. There is nothing that you cannot achieve with the power of love. Today, however, people waste this noble quality of love in worldly pursuits. Such has become the prevailing taste, without realizing that love is divine. The *Gopikas* (cowherd maids) realized this truth. That is why they prayed to Lord Krishna thus:

Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of our loveless hearts. Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow. (Telugu song)

The power of love is unmatched. When you fill your hearts with love, all people will become your brothers and sisters. You will have no enemies at all!

Let the Stream of Love Flow from Heart to Heart

Embodiments of Love! Truly speaking, you are the very embodiments of love. Let the stream of love flow from one heart to another. Consider love as your very life. This is your foremost duty. You may search anywhere in the world, but you cannot find anything greater than love. Here is an example:

So many of you have gathered here today! What is the reason? It is Swami's love that has attracted all of you. Love is the divine magnetic power present in man. In all the sacred epics, such as the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavata*, you find the underlying theme of love. Once you cultivate love, you do not need to acquire any other property. You can attain God only through love. Divinity cannot be attained by any other means. Love is the magnetic power that can transform even your bitter enemy into a dearest friend.

Students, develop love! This is more important than your worldly education. Love is life. Not merely that; love is light. It illumines your path and helps you reach the goal, making the journey of life safe and secure. When you carry the light of love within you, you will never encounter

*Once you cultivate love,
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darkness. Fill your heart with love. Love is God. Live in love. This is what you must learn. Today people merely utter the words, “Love is God,” but they do not actually live in love. This should not be the case. Your life should be suffused with love.

Embodiments of Love! You have heard the talks given by C. Sreenivas, and the present and former Vice-Chancellors. They spoke with love in their hearts and emphasized the need to cultivate love. They are, in fact, ringing the bells of love in your heart, but you don’t seem to pay attention. Once you hear the bells of love, you cannot waste even a moment. Dedicate your whole life to the cause of love and ultimately merge in love.

Love Is the True Education

Students! You may acquire various types of knowledge and travel across the globe, but in spite of all your worldly achievements, you may not be able to understand the principle of love. Once you experience the taste of love, you will see the world in its real form. Therefore, become truly the embodiments of love. Let love flow incessantly from your heart. Immerse yourself in the flow of love. Out of love will emerge both truth and righteousness. *Speak truth; practice righteousness.* (Vedic dictum) Truth and righteousness are the two pillars that the mansion of human life rests upon. Love gives rise to these two principles.

There is no knowledge greater than the knowledge of love. You may read a number of *pustakas* (books), but love cannot be acquired from such books. What is the use of reading *pustakas* when your *mastaka* (head)

is filled with dirt? It is because of such dirt that you become an animal without a sense of discrimination.

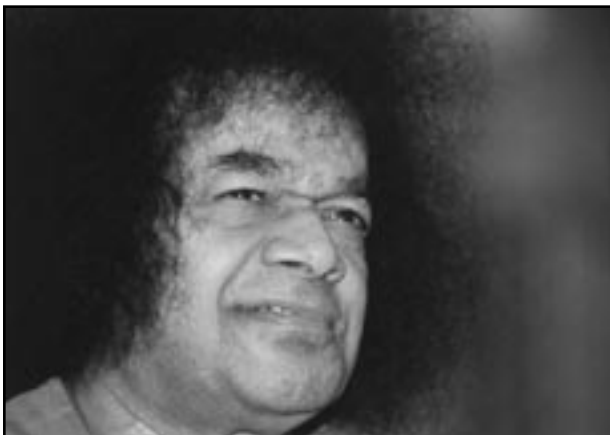
Adore love. Live in love. There is no greater education than this. Traverse the path of love. Partake of the food of love. It is not enough if you merely partake of love, you should also assimilate and digest love. Only then will the essence of love spread to every cell of your body and suffuse you with immense strength and wisdom.

Students! Today’s education is leading people to agitation. True education lies in assimilating and digesting the principle of love. You are the embodiments of love. You are filled with love. You may not know this, but I can see love in you from top to toe. In the future, the principles of the *Ramayana* will be manifested in a glorious manner. The *Ramayana* will fill your lives with love and make you forget yourselves. Let your love be directed toward Rama. *Rama + ayana* (journey) is *Ramayana*.

Students! I hope I am not causing any inconvenience to you by speaking at length. In fact, it should not trouble you at all. You cannot find the love that Swami showers on you anywhere else. Day after day, I will fill your hearts with more and more love. I have no other work. My only job is to fill your hearts with love.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

October 17, 2003



Young people who are capable of making sacrifices are very essential today. We should encourage them to proclaim to the world the omnipresence of divinity. It is necessary to have young people who can fight with courage in situations arising from injustice, unkindness, and cruelty. They should not only strive for worldly and material benefits, but also for the ethical and spiritual ideals of life. They should be prepared to give up imitation and selfish ideas, and serve the community in a selfless manner. They must, through their experience, proclaim to others that inner divinity is the most important thing in life.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day – April 11, 2004

The Voice

“Something stirred deep inside me.”

I will never forget that spring day in 1972. I had gone with my mother to a function where a very holy saint was giving a discourse. Upon arriving, we found the huge place completely packed with more than 100,000 people, so we had to be seated very far from the speakers’ podium. All I could see of the saint, who had just arrived, was a bright orange speck of His robe, and a crown of hair creating a halo around His face. As I craned my neck to avoid the strong rays of the sun, that “speck of orange” suddenly flashed like a hundred suns in my face, and I was dazzled. Then my heart almost missed a beat as the loudspeaker crackled and I heard the voice. . . .

That voice reverberated within my entire being, filling it with pure *amritha*, nectar of the gods. It seemed like the voice of God Himself. *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho*, He sang melodiously . . . with *prema* (love) being the first word I heard from Him. It entered my soul like lightning, and my whole being drifted into the realm of complete silence. I had no idea what the face above the orange robe looked like, but it really didn’t matter. Somehow I knew that whoever He was, He was divine. Deep inside me something whispered that He was the One I had been ardently searching for in temples and churches, ever since I was twelve years old, and for who knows how many lifetimes.

Soon the discourse was over, and most of the people left, but my mother and I were still waiting on the wide-open lawn for our driver to come and pick us up. Still immersed in the sound of that voice, I wandered off some distance from where my mother sat, to be by myself. It was dusk, and as I felt a cool breeze on my face, the air seemed charged with an unusual energy.

Standing in silent reverie, enjoying the balmy evening air, I heard a soft sound. A bit surprised, I turned around and saw an elderly lady bending down, looking at the muddy grass. I thought she needed some assistance, so I asked, “Auntie, can I help you up?” To which she replied, “No, no child, here take, take! There is *vibuthi* (holy ash) coming out of the ground!” *Vibuthi*, what is that? I wondered. There was an excited urgency in her voice.

Not wishing to be disrespectful of an elderly lady’s wishes, I hesitatingly bent down and started digging with my fingers into the muddy ground where she had pointed. Half a minute later, hoping she would be satisfied, I stood up. To my utter amazement, she had disappeared! I looked around the wide open lawn and realized no one was there. I stood there, bewildered, holding a handful of strange-looking grey ash mixed with grass.

By then night had fallen. I stood alone in the dark, not knowing what to do with

this grey ash in my hand, puzzling over the elderly woman's disappearance. I could not even see my mother anymore, and I felt a bit frightened. Shuddering, I decided that perhaps it would be best to throw away the strange powder that seemed to be dancing in my hand. What was it anyway? Just as I lifted my hand to throw it down, I saw someone walking toward me.

Thinking it was probably the same elderly lady, I heaved a sigh of relief. When she came nearer, however, I recognized her as Bharany auntie, my school friend's mother. She asked, "What are you doing here? Did you come to see Sai Baba? Why are you standing here alone?" That was the first time I heard the hallowed name "Sai Baba." At last I knew the name that belonged to the haunting voice.

"Yes," I replied. "We came here to see Him. My mother is sitting near the podium, and we're waiting for the driver to come; he's late."

"Oh," she said, and came closer to where I stood. She leaned toward me, and in a voice full of wonderment, as if telling a precious secret, she said, "You know, *beta* (child), four or five people have found *vibuthi* here in the ground!" Oh, I thought, that same word again. Slowly putting my hand forward, I opened my palm and asked her, "Is this it?"

I will never forget the expression on her face. One hand flew to her cheek and the other to her mouth, and her eyes opened wide in complete awe and amazement. She looked first at the *vibuthi*, then at my face, and again at the *vibuthi*.

"How did you get this?" She became very excited and began hugging me. I told

her about the elderly lady. Her eyes widened into more amazement and then into pure joy as a flow of tears began to roll down her cheeks. She declared, "You have no idea how blessed you are! That was Sai Baba Himself! He came in the form of the elderly lady to give you His *vibuthi*."

Something stirred deep inside me. Had it really been Sai Baba in the form of that woman? If so, who was He really, and why did He do that? Why me? Why had His voice touched me so deeply? Was I supposed to do something in response? I felt an urgent desire to find out more about this Sai Baba, who had for some reason selected us out of so many thousands to receive His divinely manifested gift on that blessed day.

In the days that followed, thoughts about Sai Baba began taking a special place in my heart, and I found myself wondering about Him often. I was aware of His love and grace surrounding me, and it felt boundless.

One evening His voice seemed to echo an answer within my soul:

*I am the Buddha,
I am the Christ,
I am Krishna,
I am Allah, the Almighty.
Know Me dear soul,
For I am the One,
One with you . . .
Verily I say unto you,
The Kingdom of God is within you!*

—Mira Sai
San Jose, California

All the World Is a Stage

Play Your Part in the Drama of Love

The whole world is a drama. Every individual is an actor; God is the director. Only the director controls all the acting and the actors. Whatever may take place, every event is only a manifestation of the Divine.

Every human being is a spark of the Divine, and love is each one's natural trait. Realizing and expressing this is the goal of every living being and animal. Therefore in this drama of love, we are all actors searching for love. In this drama, love leads to transformation. Love is introduced by information, so everyone should receive information about love, which in turn will lead to transformation. Love is the natural quality of each being. Unfortunately this quality of love has been forgotten.

Your Role Is to Express Love

Humanity has responsibilities, but human beings have forgotten this aspect of their role. In this drama, people should play their role well. If not, they will lose their reputation and respect. Everyone is a spark of the Divine, so all should [play their part by] expressing the divine quality of love.

Here is a *chinna katha*, a small story: Once there was a kind man full of love swimming in a river. As there had been a heavy downpour, the water was flowing very intensely.

..... Suddenly the man saw a scorpion. He picked it up gently and placed it in the palm of his hand. As it is the nature of the scorpion to bite, it bit the man and

he dropped it back into the river. However, since he could not bear to see the scorpion drowning, he again lifted up the insect to save it. Again he was bitten. A cowherd boy came up to him and asked, "Why do you try and save the scorpion, when its nature is to bite?" The kind man replied, "Its nature may be to bite, but my nature is to love; I am a human being, and my nature is to give love. Why should I go against my nature?" See that you never betray your nature.

All of life is a drama of love. At any point in the drama, never forget to love. One's entire life should be full of love; in fact, the meaning of life is love. Love is essential for life. Once the Gopikas (cowherd maids) prayed to Krishna:

"In this dry and parched land, in order to grow the saplings of love, send rains of love

and let rivers of love flow, so that we may reap the harvest of love.”

Human life is of truth and love. Never abandon love at any point. Have determination, and love will emerge naturally. Earlier today the ladies sang, “I am God.” All are forms of God; everything is the form of God. God has infinite forms.

Life is temporary, momentary, and ephemeral. From birth to death we want bliss. A boy is happy if he passes and moves up to the next class. How long does that happiness last? Then he desires a college degree. He becomes happy, but then he wants to be a post-graduate. He gets it and is happy again, but for how long? Next, he gets a job. Then he wants a wife. After getting one he is happy, but for how long? Then he wants children. He goes on struggling for happiness until he retires. Then he wishes for peace. Thus happiness comes and goes—it is impermanent. Anything impermanent is not *atmic* (of divine nature).

What Is Truth?

What is truth? None [of this world] is truth. The whole world is of the mind. Today all have become accustomed to behaving in an artificial manner. People are attracted by such falsehood. The only true love is divine love; all other love is artificial. For example, many people pray only during difficulties. When they don’t have difficulties, they forget God. Supposing you drop a handkerchief and someone picks it up for you. You say, “Thanks,” but it is an artificial thanks.

One should spend one’s life in gratitude. That is one’s role in the drama. God is the

director, and the nature of the director is love. This drama is an expression of truth and love. It should not only be an expression, but a propagation of love.

All this is a dream. There once was a man who had a son whom he could not take care of, so he left home and tried to earn some money. In the meantime, the son died. The man did not know of the death of his son. One day he had a dream that he was a very rich man, and he had five sons, servants, and everything. When he awoke and went to his wife, she informed him of the loss of their only son. Now he thought, Should I cry due to the poverty I’m suffering and the loss of my son, or for the loss of my dream?

What is truth? I am the truth. You may observe, “In the waking state I have problems, and in the dream state I have no problems.” Both are false. The truth is God, and I am God. A life lived in truth is bliss, and when you express love it is truth. Life should be full of love. You are the very form of bliss: *supreme bliss, nondual, one, eternal, pure, unsullied, the eternal witness, beyond comprehension, attributeless*. (Sanskrit verse)

Sai is the supreme preceptor. God is the eternal witness, but such divinity is forgotten today while people struggle after fleeting things.

Who is near to God? The one who follows God’s commands and attributes is near to God. The secret of being a true human being is having full faith in God.

Man Is a Cinema

What is *manava* (a human being)? The word for *man* is *manaci*. *Ma-na-ci* is the

embodiment of love. If we reverse the letters *ma-na-ci*, the word becomes *ci-na-ma*. Today man is a cinema. He is artificial and not heartfelt. If he follows the commands of God, then everything will follow. A heart without love is poison. You may smile and say “hello,” but if it is not from the heart, it is not genuine or true. You pray, “I want bliss, grace, and love.” All these are artificial utterances. The correct goal is in the prayer, “God, I want You.”

Suppose you have lots of gold; you can buy anything. Without God, however, everything is nothing. Listening and experiencing this truth is happiness.

We should have true and eternal love: Start the day with love. Spend the day with love. [End the day with love.] This is the way to God. Instead people start and end with sadness and crying.

The past is past and it never returns. Yesterday cannot return. Tomorrow is uncertain. Today is the present, and not an ordinary present, but omnipresent.

Both waking and dreaming are of the mind. Don't follow the mind, it is a mad monkey. The body is like a water bubble; don't follow it, it is not reliable.

How to Experience God?

Work can be transformed into worship. Do all acts, whether as service or in business, as acts to please God. You are wrong in saying that you are doing the work. You plan a house. The idea came from the heart. All that comes from the heart is divine. You are not the doer. God is the doer.



When you are hungry, you satisfy your hunger. When you love a child, it is for your own satisfaction that you kiss him. All that people do is for their own satisfaction. This truth is not recognized. One

should perform all acts only for God.

A doctor uses a scalpel to perform an operation. Who did the operation, the scalpel? No! The doctor performed it, using a scalpel as the instrument. The body is inert and you are its master; make proper use of the instrument.

It is your good fortune to play in the drama designed by God. It is not possible for all to act in the play. Even in a play, a selection process takes place whereby every role is assigned. Today there is no selection, only election. What happens in an election? You are not a candidate, where you have to give a vote to get a vote. In selection, God is [pre-established] in you as conscience. If we are in

God's selection, then we are most privileged to listen to Him. That is the goal of life.

Love Is Sweetness

Love is most important; there is nothing beyond love. Everything is love, so live in love. Be happy; serve and worship God. Then you gain eternal bliss. No one should put on a castor-oil face. Smile, because Baba likes to see smiling faces. There are many ways to express a smile. One is just to smile. The other is loud laughter. Do not laugh loudly. The language of God is silence. Be pure and steady. When the heart is full of love, there is sweetness. (Swami sang, "Lord, your love gets sweeter and sweeter as the days go by....") You cannot get such sweetness anywhere else except from God. One should recognize this.

Put into practice all that is learned in the texts, or else your study becomes useless. All acts must be done through the body. In a glass there is water. That glass is only a container. Without the glass you cannot drink the water. Similarly the body is like a glass full of divine love, so drink it.

Jayadeva prayed, "O tongue, a tongue that knows the taste and talk of God is the only worthwhile tongue. O tongue, no one has your quality. No one has such patience. How carefully and peacefully you move among your enemies (the thirty-two sharp teeth). You know the taste of both sweet and bitter things. You accept the sweet and spit out the bitter."

Thus the tongue has the sacred quality of discrimination. It discriminates what is good and bad, what should enter in or be kept out.

It has no associates and no visitors—not like some people, who creep from house to house like rats and cats. The tongue should not accuse others or spend time in falsehood.

Let only the name of God dance on the tongue. The tongue is a *nataki*; it dances. What is *nataki*? It is *maya*, illusion. *Nataki* dances throughout. How to control *nataki*? Reverse it to *kirtanam* (singing the glory of God). Singing the glory of God with love is the only way to control [the dance of illusion]—not by force but by one's "source." This is the role in the drama that will provide you with an excellent reputation.

Your Great Good Fortune

You should deserve God's love. When you are not accepted by God, you are cheap. God's love is immense, like a divine mother's love. So through your conduct and the following of His commands, He will submit Himself to you. God creates the devotee, and the devotee also attracts God. Without the devotee there is no God.

The unity of God with devotees is the human quality. When we take birth, we cry, "*Koham? Koham?* Who am I?" When we die we should have the answer: "*Soham—I am He.*" In an exam when you write the correct answers you will get good results. So learn well, pass the grades, and get the degrees. Then God will claim, "You are mine." God proclaims this as your good fortune. To safeguard this fortune, think of God and continue singing His name with love.

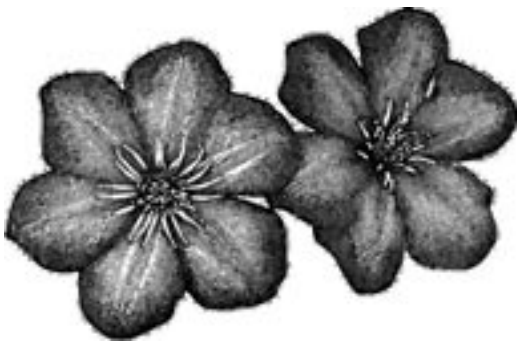
—Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Kodaikanal, April 6, 1996

The Search for the Beloved Mother

Oh, Mother, why have you abandoned me?
You are all I have; why are you not here?
Where can I go? To whom can I turn?
Without your protection, I'm enveloped in fear.

I am the least, the last on the list,
The one who can't measure up to the rest;
Not talented nor pretty nor elegantly dressed,
Oh, why did you birth me and leave me unblessed?

The night is so dark, and the time is so long;
For one so flawed, what hope can there be?
Shall I perish unwanted, unloved, and forlorn,
With the overwhelming desire my mother to see?



Time passes by, but my goal does not change.
Must this search be continued my whole life through?
For moments, sometimes, someone has cared,
But friends and years dwindle down to a few.

It is never too late, though, for I have found Her at last!
She will stay by my side, however worthless I appear.
She is my protector, my beloved faithful friend,
And, miracle of miracles, She wants me always near.

No words can be said, no pictures be painted
That can portray the bliss of this loving tie.
With a Mother so beautiful, could it be that so am I?
Omniscient, omnipresent, is my Mother Sai.

She loves me, She invites me to be with Her always;
In fact, She tells me that She has ever been mine.
Can it be that no ugly, unloved child ever existed?
My Mother says that I have always been, like Her, Divine.

So I will be happy, I will be good,
I will serve others, as Mother says I should.
All are my brothers and sisters, and I will love them and myself!
My Mother is God, and Her children are Herself.

—Joy Thomas
In Memoriam

Holy Days for India and the USA, March-May 2005

March 9, Wednesday	<i>Maha Shivarathri</i> , a day to pay homage to Lord Shiva
March 25, Friday	"Good Friday," commemorating Jesus' being put on the cross
March 27, Sunday	Easter Sunday, celebrating Jesus' victory over death
April 8, Friday	<i>Buddha Purnima</i> , in recognition of Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism, born in India as Prince Siddhartha
April 9, Saturday	<i>Ugadi</i> , Telugu New Year: "Happy, holy <i>Ugadi</i> to everyone."
April 18, Monday	<i>Sri Rama Navami</i> , commemorating the birthday of Lord Rama
May 6, Friday	Easwaramma Day, honoring the mother of Sri Sathya Sai Baba
May 8, Sunday	Mother's Day, USA, paying homage to our mothers and all ladies who have cared for us

Retreat: A Weekend of Sai-Lence, March 25-27, 2005

A retreat to clear the mind and senses at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center, Little Rock, Arkansas. Cost is \$96.00 per person and \$40.00 per child 1-6 years old for lodging at the 4-H Center, and \$72 per person, \$20.00 per child for attendees providing their own accomodations.

Contact: Pranav at 501-352-9458 (ssssdlr@yahoo.com) for information

Cynthia at 501-960-0958 (rovnaghicynthia@uams.edu) for reservations

Online: <http://silentretreat.karoot.com> for program, maps, and more information

Payment: Checks should be made payable to "Shiva Duvvuru"

103 Charleston Lane, Little Rock, AR 72223 (501-868-4929)

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The Love of a Million Mothers

An Example of Sai's Omniscience

Allow me to share with you an example of the omniscience of Lord Sai. Sometimes after giving *darshan* (opportunity to see a holy person) Swami used to come out and talk informally to His students and others gathered there sitting by the temple. In fact, up until several years ago this occurred on a near-daily basis.

Sometimes Baba would comment to His students that before they came to Him, they only knew the love of a single mother, and that His love was like that of a thousand mothers. Everybody would agree. I have written a fair amount of poetry over the years, and one afternoon I was working on a poem. In this particular piece I wrote about how Sai Baba says His love is like that of a thousand mothers, but the sentiment of the poem was that His love extended far beyond that—more like the love of a million mothers. I just left it like that, went on to do some other writing, and never showed or discussed the poem with anyone else.

A week or so later I was sitting near some of the college boys when Swami came out and started speaking with them. At this moment He began telling one boy how His love was like that of a thousand mothers. Just as He said this, He corrected Himself, looked over to where I was sitting, smiled, and said, *No. My love is more like that of a million mothers!* He then simply went on talking with the boys, without anyone else knowing what had transpired between us.

At that moment He once again showed me His omniscience and that my sentiment was correct—His love was like the love of a million mothers—and I felt a wave of bliss and love. It is moments like these that are so subtle and poignant—moments that one can hold very dear and treasure for a lifetime.

—Michael Hollander
Montvale, New Jersey



*Friday, May 6 is Easwaramma Day.
Sunday, May 8 is Mother's Day.*

Children's Corner

Mother's Day

**Being very nice to your
mother is pleasing to the Lord.**



—Illustration by June Nissinen

Many students do not heed the words of their mother, which is a grave mistake. Mothers speak from the heart, wishing the welfare of their children. You should understand their feelings and give due respect to their words. If you ignore the teachings of your mother, you cannot make progress in life. Obey the commands of your parents. You will certainly be blessed with all types of education and strength. ... Discharge your duty sincerely. Never disregard the words of your parents. Follow them with love and sanctify your life.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Thought for the Day, May 6, 2003

Spreading His Message

The Digital Dimension - Sai Global Harmony

It is said that things happen only when *samayam* (time) and *sandarpam* (circumstances) are right. Swami had been approached many years ago by some people from America about starting a radio station in the ashram. We don't know the outcome of the discussion, except that no radio station began at that time. Then, one afternoon in September, 2001, four people came from Bangalore for *darshan*. These people were granted an interview. A few days later, Bhagavan Baba announced that one of those who had come was Dr. Samara, Chairman of the WorldSpace Corporation, and that he had offered free a radio channel on his satellite, Asiastar, for digital broadcast of Swami's message, 24 hours a day. It happened just like that—no one here had asked for it or even dreamed about it, and yet it happened because its time had come.

Swami was to inaugurate the broadcast service on the morning of November 23, 2001 during the birthday celebrations, which was fine, except that no one here knew anything about broadcasting, much less digital radio broadcasting via satellite. We had to learn it all in less than two months! In this way He always tests us. As He says, *Test is taste for God!* A radio team was hurriedly formed with just two people and hardly any equipment. Those who live in Prashanti, however, learn how to improvise at the last minute. Thus RADIO SAI GLOBAL HARMONY went on the air for the first time, upon Bhagavan's pressing a button in Sai Kulwant Hall during the birthday celebrations. A big board in the

hall lit up, serving as a symbolic inauguration. Instantly we relayed a cell-phone message from the *mandir* to Melbourne in Australia. We had two cell phones ready, just in case one of them failed. Staff in the Melbourne uplink station of WorldSpace switched on the computer, which began sending a prerecorded, seven-minute program to the satellite. That broadcast was picked up by a receiver we had set up in the *mandir*, and this signal was fed to the public address system. Thanks to all this, those assembled in the hall heard the inaugural program. We had arrived!

This great milestone was child's play, however, compared to the challenge we now faced of staying on the air 24/7. In those days, we did not have a studio for recording or even proper microphones. We managed to surmount the seemingly impossible and celebrated our 100th day with a marathon 20-hour program, entitled "*Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram*," covering Swami's entire life. Swami heard a part of it on the radio installed in His chamber—the African trip portion, to be precise!

In the summer of 2002, Swami brought some of His other instruments into play. One of these was Mr. Gopal Srinivasan, Director, TVS Electronics, a leading hardware manufacturing company in India. Brother Gopal was not only an ardent Sai devotee but also an audio-video buff with a keen desire to make available his knowledge and resources for the benefit of Swami's mission. Soon, with Swami's blessing, Gopal and his dynamic team swung into action. While Bhagavan was away for the summer

in Brindavan, carpenters, electricians, air-conditioning mechanics, sound engineers, and so on transformed the old EHV Building into not just a modern but a dream studio! We, who had labored earlier with only one computer and two tie-clip mikes, were knocked out flat.

So as of August 29, 2002, we had the Prasanthi Digital Studio—with wonderful air-conditioning and facilities. But we could not relax! Swami's 2002 birthday was fast approaching, and we planned to broadcast live for the first time on that occasion, which was also Radio Sai's first anniversary! We had little idea of the complexities involved. Gopal and his team worked closely with us, along with Mr. Venugopal's team from WorldSpace, and Mr. Madhava Murthy's team from S.N. Informatics—with whose help we run the Radio Sai website and our audio download-with-streaming service.

The morning of November 22, we produced a successful trial “live” broadcast, but that afternoon, while going live with the Convocation function, the broadcast had hiccups. A sleepless night followed, with phone calls flying hither and yon—from Prasanthi to Bangalore, from Bangalore to Melbourne, and elsewhere. Early on birthday morning, we assembled in the *mandir*, using the *bhajan* hall as a temporary studio. We still were experiencing hiccups. Swami was due shortly, yet we still did not know what the problem was, much less the way of fixing it. We just prayed. Swami came, gave *darshan*, ascended the dais, and began speaking. The broadcast went through perfectly, without a single problem. Truly, it was miraculous. The world did not know how thrilled we were!

More miracles followed and are still

happening. Radio Sai now has two satellites—Asiastar and Afristar—beaming Swami's Message to Europe, Asia, and Africa. For the American continent, where the WorldSpace digital signal cannot be received, and for others who do not have satellite radio access, we have a web radio at www.radiosai.org. In effect, you can listen to Radio Sai anywhere in the world!

On *Sivarathri* 2004, by Swami's grace, the studio, along with TVS Electronics, brought Swami's message live to millions of people in India via the Sanskar television channel, which also carries videos of the latest events at Prasanthi Nilayam and other select footage of Bhagavan three days a week. We hear that things come to a standstill in devotees' homes when these programs air. Now other popular TV firms are vying to telecast Swami's message on their channels too. Recently, TVS Electronics helped the studio create a new facility exclusively for video recording, editing, and live broadcasting of events from Prasanthi Nilayam. Several other projects are in the pipeline, aimed at taking Swami's message of love to every nook and cranny of the world by His 80th birthday.

Blessed are all of us here on the SGH Team, who have been given a chance to be associated with all these momentous events. We offer our reverential and most grateful salutations to our Beloved Swami for blessing all of us in this manner and giving us all a chance to serve the world in many different ways, using the tools of modern technology.

—**Sai Global Harmony Team**

Abridged from *Heart to Heart*, the Sai Global Harmony monthly e-journal,
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Southern California

Buddha Purnima Celebration

Last year, on May 6, 2004, the festival of Buddha Purnima* was observed with piety and loving devotion at the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center of Arcadia, California. The altar of Lord Sai Buddha was beautifully decorated with exquisite flowers. The program commenced with a Sinhalese song describing the glory of the city of Anuradhapura,† the ancient capital of Sri Lanka, along with a procession of devotees carrying lit lamps to the altar. The program continued with communal chanting of the Buddha Gayatri and a recounting of the life and teachings of Lord Buddha.

Various songs depicted the love and compassion of Lord Buddha for all humanity, who helps to rid humankind of its evil tendencies and floods the human heart with pure joy. The Buddha's teachings on *metta* (loving kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (altruistic joy), and *upekkha* (equanimity) were presented in the light of Bhagavan's discourses on the occasion of Buddha Purnima. Over 124 devotees attended this joyous celebration.

Easwaramma Day Service Project

On May 6, 2004, in commemoration of Easwaramma Day,‡ the Sathya Sai Baba Centers of Arcadia and Glendale came together to prepare and serve a midday meal to homeless individuals and families. Twenty-four volunteers gathered at the Pasadena Union Station Shelter, an institution that serves meals to people who live on the streets. This Easwaramma Day service project has been carried out annually for the past 20 years. This year the Union Station shelter requested an Indian meal. The tables were decorated with colorful fresh flower bouquets and laid with dinnerware. Over 125 needy men, women, and children of all ages received a hearty meal. As they departed, each individual received a gift packet of a hat, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, socks, hand towel, and Band-Aids.

**Buddha Purnima* or *Wesak* is observed on a full moon in spring. The day is associated with Gautama Buddha's birth, death, and enlightenment.

† Anuradhapura is a sacred city, a significant Buddhist monastic and temple center in ancient times.

‡ Easwaramma Day honors Easwaramma, the mother of the present body of Sai Baba.

Serving Sai on the Streets of Dallas

Thousands of people—men, women, children, and seniors—are shelterless in the metropolitan Dallas area. They live on the streets, sleeping in abandoned cars, on makeshift cardboard “mattresses,” and under lonely bridges. Their backgrounds are as individual as each personality: some are ex-criminals; others are drug addicts, veterans, or people with disabilities or mental illness. Some have slid to the streets after losing their jobs, unable to afford rent. Regardless of what circumstances each has faced, they are now grimly united by a common experience: bitterly cold winter nights and blisteringly hot summer days spent huddled away from the public eye; perpetual, gnawing pangs of hunger receiving little satiation; the shock after a restless sleep of finding meager personal possessions stolen again and again. Above all, the homeless population suffers from an intrinsic sense of rejection by society.

Shelterless Service, an initiative of our Dallas, Texas Sai Center, is targeted to this population. The goal of the project is not only to meet the immediate needs of the homeless by distributing food, clothing, and other material comforts, but to give them

long-term assistance and to shower love on them. To do this, we strive to serve ourselves, cultivating the divine love within, in the process of connecting with our street-bound brothers and sisters.

Our project began about three years ago as a Christmas season distribution of 300 blankets. However, by the end of last year, we realized that a blanket once a year was not enough. In response to numerous pleas from the homeless, we expanded our service to meet the multiple needs of 70 homeless people nightly.

We now have about 45 volunteers deeply committed to the project. Some devotees prepare soup, while others supply hot or cold drinks (depending on the season), pastries, nutrition bars, bread, and fruit. In winter, our members also provide blankets or contribute new or used coats, sweaters, sweat suits, and warm pants in sizes requested by the homeless. Most of the volunteers, however, go out on the streets in teams of four to six people.

Each night, the team on duty travels downtown, its members carrying our dear Lord’s name on their lips and in their hearts. They seek out the homeless in the back streets

of downtown, under abandoned bridges, and in parking lots. Whatever the location, our volunteers lovingly and compassionately distribute the donated offerings, as well as respond to the yearning of these people for permanent places to live.

Our ultimate aim is to help get them off the streets. Recently, one of our teams moved a shelterless person into a nursing home. Our Bible stories made such an impact on another that he went back to his family. The teams have also provided job search skills and resources, compiled resumes, filled out job applications, and given interview tips. We know of at least one man who used the team-prepared resume to get a job. If through these efforts we help one or two people, we believe we are making a difference and bringing about personal transformation.

As we interact with the homeless, we try to build their self-confidence. We want to leave the mark of unconditional love on them, to form a heart-to-heart connection. Our volunteers have reached out to and befriended some of the regulars in the homeless crowd, holding ongoing conversations with them. If a person is noticed as absent, one of the volunteers will ask, "How is Morris?" or "How is Larry doing?" Through this humble project,

Swami has truly inspired us with the spirit of closeness and brotherhood.

While we serve, Swami constantly manifests His divine presence in myriad ways, gracing this project on several occasions. Often the finite quantity of soup, hot chocolate, or orange juice somehow satisfies a seemingly endless stream of people and is exhausted to exactly the last drop only after



the last person is served. One night, devotees carried three blankets downtown and yet, through Swami's miracle, ended up distributing four blankets to suffering people. Sometimes the homeless accept

the food and kind words with such beaming, glorious smiles, or offer us their own hard-earned grapes or watermelon so lovingly, that His presence is instantly felt. Such responses have led us to realize that Swami is in everyone; His love is everywhere.

—Texas Service Volunteers
Dallas, Texas

Sathya Sai Book Center of America

305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108

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

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