

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

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

Sai's Message: The Most Desirable Education.....	Sri Sathya Sai Baba	2
Krishna's Birthday	S. Choudhuri	3
New Life on Krishna's Birthday	S. Iswara Aajul	4
Invitations to the Lord.....	Many Devotees	7
An Invitation to Baba (Music)	Mala Saxena and Sara Bongo	18
What Is True Education?	Sri Sathya Sai Baba	20
Installing Love.....	Anonymous	27
The Ganesha Principle	Sri Sathya Sai Baba	29
Subscription Information	Sai Volunteers	30
Bouquet of Eight Flowers: Region 9 Youth Service Projects	Sudarshan Iyer	31
Children's Corner: True Devotion	<i>Chinna Katha</i> ; Illustration by Ashwini Jambotkar	32
Significance of <i>Guru Purnima</i>	Sri Sathya Sai Baba	34
Books: New Arrivals	Sathya Sai Book Center Volunteers	36



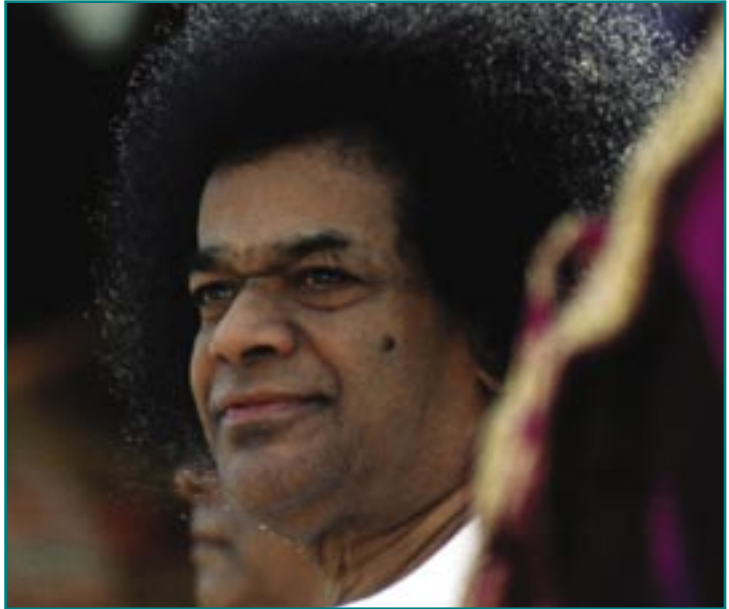
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—Editor

Sai's Message

The Most Desirable Education

The most desirable subject for study is the secret of the soul, which is immortal. Do not be satisfied with an education



that helps you only to eke out a livelihood during your sojourn on earth. Even birds and beasts eke out their livelihood somehow. You, however, have come to the world as humans to manifest fully your special human endowment of intelligence and intuition. Prasanthi Nilayam (Sai Baba's main ashram) is seeking to realize this goal through the (Sri Sathya Sai) schools, colleges, and universities.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Krishna's Birthday

Festival of Janma Ashtami

The festival of *Janma Ashtami* is celebrated to honor the advent of Sri Krishna, the *Poorna Avatar* of the *Dwapara Yuga* (an era 5,000 years ago), the age that preceded the present *Kali Yuga* (this present age). *Poorna Avatar* means the descent of divinity in human form, complete with all sixteen divine attributes. Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the *Poorna Avatar* of this *Kali Yuga*. *Janma Ashtami* means “birth on the eighth day of the lunar fortnight.” Sri Baba has declared that according to the Indian calendar, Krishna was born on the eighth day of the dark moon fortnight called *Bahula*, in the month called *Sravana* (July-August), in the year *Srimukha*. The principal constellation at that time was *Rohini* (five stars surrounding Aldebaran, in the Western constellation Taurus). Swami said further that although the Christian calendar did not exist at that time, if one were to reconstruct it backwards, one would conclude that Krishna was born on July 20, 3228 B.C., at 3:00 a.m. This incredibly accurate information was given by Baba during the summer school of 1976. For example, in 2006, *Janma Ashtami* falls on August 20, marking the celebration of Krishna's 5,234th birthday.

Bhagavan has declared that the purpose of His advent in the present *Kali Yuga* is the same as Krishna's in the *Dwapara Yuga*. In fact, Swami quoted the same immortal verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* to announce the purpose of His advent on the occasion of His 43rd birthday, as the one uttered by Krishna 5,234 years ago on the Kurukshetra battlefield—namely, that whenever righteousness is in danger of extinction, divinity descends to the human level to protect the righteous, to destroy evil, and to reestablish the path of *dharma* on a firm footing.

Looking at the present condition of the world, it is appropriate to conclude that righteousness is eroding fast. Sri Krishna came in the *Dwapara Yuga* to set the world on the right track through His personal example of love (*prema*) and truth (*sathya*). Sri Sathya Sai Baba is now engaged in fulfilling the same objective by establishing His personal example for the world to follow—for Sri Krishna and Sri Sathya Sai are indeed the same.

—S. Choudhuri

New Life on Krishna's Birthday

"My whole being was drawn up into a great light..."

Festival time is always enchanting. The *mandir* is decorated with abundant flowers, and Swami often blesses His devotees with the opportunity to hear His beautiful voice. Krishna's birthday in 1999 was no exception, and I was very thankful for the opportunity to visit India at that time.

I planned to take lodging in one of the sheds so that I could focus on Sai Baba without distraction. Thus, when the accommodations office told me to wait until 9:00 a.m. to share a room with another American woman, I protested, saying, "I just want to stay in the shed." He asked me to meet her, and he said that if it didn't feel right after I met her, then I could go to a shed.

Of course, Swami was orchestrating everything perfectly. As soon as I saw Jeanne, I knew she would be a significant person in my life. She was a healer who had studied with NASA physicist Barbara Brennan for five years. I should have been suspicious when she said that she had been praying to Swami for the opportunity to serve someone in one of His hospitals.

On the day of Krishna's birthday I was very ill with dysentery. I didn't think that I could make it to Sai Kulwant Hall, but I felt so alone lying in bed, with everyone else in the ashram attending the discourse, that I

decided to attempt it. In fact, I did make it to the hall. It was packed with about 20,000 people, but I noticed an empty spot close to the front. An empty spot in the packed hall seemed in itself very strange, but I made my way to it and was allowed to sit there. I felt extremely nauseous and ill.

As soon as the introductory speaker began to talk, I fell over into the mysterious empty space next to me. I was aware of traveling down a tunnel with a light at the end of it. The awareness that I was dying startled me, but I was too weak to do anything about it. The empty space allowed me to lie down, and it afforded air circulation. No one else entered it, as though it were a death zone.

Curiously, the speaker told a story about a young boy whose time it was to die, but he made it to the Shiva temple and Shiva extended his life. He said not to ask Swami for anything today, no matter what happened. Thus, I focused on my third eye and repeated a mantra in order to merge at the time of passing. Women behind me were saying prayers over me. They were comforting and beautiful.

At this point Swami began His discourse. During the course of His talk He asked, *Why do you want that God in form?* I knew He was talking to me, so mentally I replied,

“That God in form makes me happy.” Out loud He went on, *Happy! Happy! Why do you want to be happy? Why do you seek that experience?* I thought, “I am dying, and He wants to discuss philosophy? What about loving words and shows of affection? Well, God is paradoxical.”

The next thing I recall is a *seva dal* (volunteer) telling me to get out of the hall, which was empty except for me. I made it outside the gate of the *mandir* near the bookstore before I either fainted or died briefly. When I became conscious, I was surrounded by a crowd of concerned devotees. I didn’t know who I was or where I was. In fact, I was dissolving into a great light, and it required all my determination to remain conscious. Finally, someone said, “Doctor?” I was still terribly ill, so I replied, “Doctor.”

By the time I was on a stretcher en route to the hospital, I remembered my mantra and again began focusing on my third eye. As I said it, my whole being was drawn up into a great light and I passed into a very different state of consciousness. Since it was afternoon in India, it was early morning in the USA. My mother reported that she awoke from sleep around this time to see my spirit in her bedroom. Somehow, she said that she knew I

had died of dysentery, so she screamed, and I disappeared from her room. You can imagine how surprised she was when I contacted her later, upon my return to the USA. It turned out that Shiva had other plans for me than respite with Yama (the God of death).

I regained consciousness at the hospital. The nausea was completely gone, but I was so

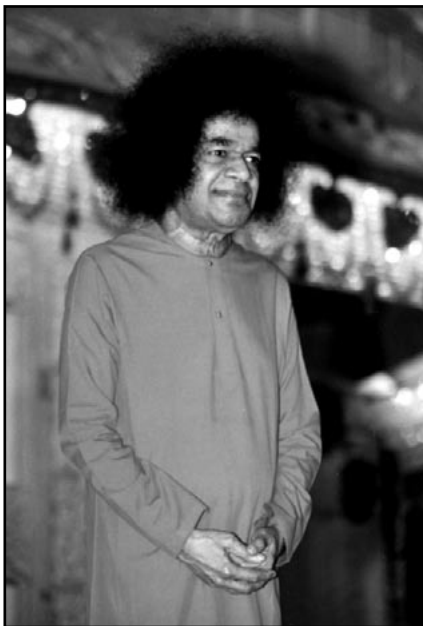
weak that I could not open my eyes. I was admitted and put on an I.V. The hospital contacted Jeanne and asked her to care for me, thus fulfilling her prayer to Swami to be allowed to help someone in one of His hospitals. When she arrived, she offered to give me an energy healing, which I accepted.

As she put her hands near me she said, “There is no way that you are sick, as you have the most tremendous energy field imaginable.”

I replied, “I feel it, too. I think it is Sai Baba. I can feel myself floating on a vast sea of stillness, as though my soul is resting on the spirit of God.”

She went ahead with the healing. She said that I felt ungrounded, and she touched my feet. I had felt ungrounded for some time before my trip to India, so Jeanne’s perception was accurate.

As she touched me, I inwardly saw a cloud of gray smoke rise and evaporate,



taking the ungrounded feelings with it. Those feelings have never returned.

The presence of the vast sea of stillness remained with me after I left the hospital. One day Jeanne and I were walking in the ashram, and it looked as if a terrible downpour would occur at any moment. She said, "Let's run, or we'll get soaked." I replied that there would be a short rain in six minutes. Jeanne is a Ph.D. and inquisitive by nature, so we waited under a shelter and timed the rain, which occurred in exactly six minutes and amounted to a few sprinkles.

Jeanne was taken aback, and she asked me how I knew what would happen. I told her that the presence of the vast sea of silence had opened me, and that everything seemed like a part of me now. She said that she never wanted to hear me whine again about not being close enough to Sai Baba.

One evening I was sitting in Sai Kulwant Hall after *darshan*, praying for people who were sick or injured. My mind focused on a lady in a wheelchair, whom I had met earlier at the ashram; immediately I felt the energy of the vast sea of silence leave me. At that instant, Swami came out and looked at the lady in the wheelchair for several minutes. I spoke with her about a week later. She said that her condition had completely turned around and that, for the first time in years, she believed that healing was possible. Rejoicing that He loves us, I agreed with her, although I never told her why.

—S. Iswara Aajul

The person who has gained awareness through the purification of the mind and the clarification of the intellect (buddhi) will have the unchanging bliss of mergence in the supreme Atma. Only that person can become omniscient who is ever in the region of the undecaying (akshaya) and merged in the imperishable (akshara) Supreme Vastness (Parabrahma), the highest Atma. When one is aware that All is He, that there is nothing without or outside, one becomes All or Brahman. Rid of the impact of the body-sense-reason complex, the realized person is saturated with the bliss of authentic reality. The particularized self shares the consciousness (chaithanya) of the Universal, and it can only merge in that Supreme Atma (Paramatma), the Supreme Consciousness.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

From "Swaapyayaath: The Individual Merges in Universal Brahman"

Sutra Vahini, p. 53

Invitations to the Lord

To Come to America

We are pledged to print your invitations.

The Dearest Swami:

With hearts flooded with love, may we pray that You visit the USA? Spiritually, You and we are one, but the physical plane in which we live most of the time yields immense bliss when we have Your *darshan* (blessing of seeing a holy being), *sparshan* (blessing of touching a holy person), and *sambhashan* (blessing of conversing with or listening to a holy being). On behalf of ourselves and on behalf of Your other devotees, we sincerely pray for the grace of Your visit to the USA.

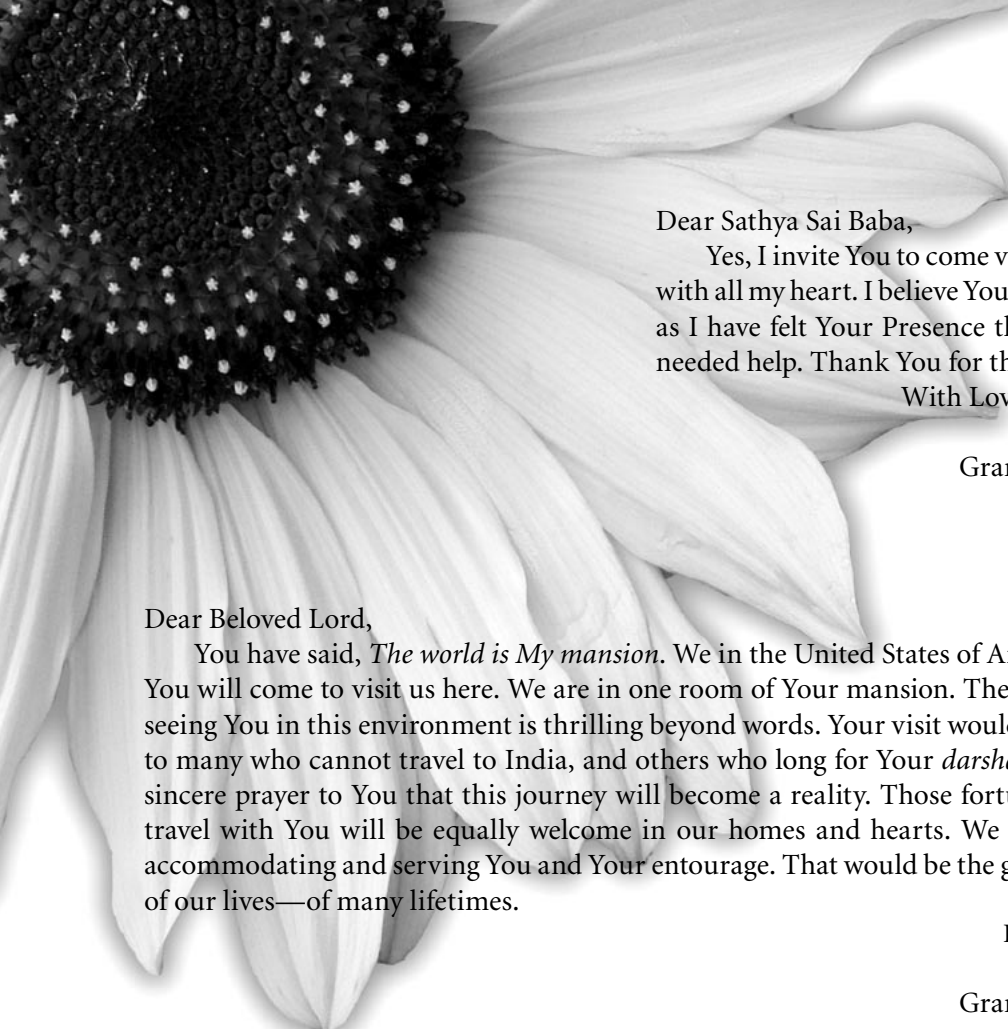
With *pranams* at Your Lotus Feet, we are:
Usha Mehta, Hina Malani, and Jashwant Mehta
Danville, California



Our Dearest Swami,

At Your Lotus Feet we place a prayer that You visit us here in the USA in the very near future. What a wonderful day that would be, when we devotees could have Your *darshan* on this soil—a day that we will never forget. It would be remembered for generations to come. To us the USA is as dear as India. Please bless this land by putting Your Divine Feet on it. Light the lamp of Divine Light here. To think of having *darshan* in our homes and serving You would be our greatest privilege. We may lack merit for this opportunity, but You are an ocean of mercy and compassion. Please listen to the yearning of all of our hearts and accept this humble invitation.

Renu and Sudershan Vadehra
Hopewell Junction, New York



Dear Sathya Sai Baba,

Yes, I invite You to come visit us in Oregon with all my heart. I believe You know how I feel, as I have felt Your Presence the many times I needed help. Thank You for the guidance.

With Love, Your devotee,

George Cristy

Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Beloved Lord,

You have said, *The world is My mansion*. We in the United States of America pray that You will come to visit us here. We are in one room of Your mansion. The very thought of seeing You in this environment is thrilling beyond words. Your visit would mean so much to many who cannot travel to India, and others who long for Your *darshan*. We send our sincere prayer to You that this journey will become a reality. Those fortunate souls who travel with You will be equally welcome in our homes and hearts. We look forward to accommodating and serving You and Your entourage. That would be the greatest privilege of our lives—of many lifetimes.

In Loving Service,

Sally Kimball

Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Beloved Swami,

Swami, You have often said that You reside in our hearts. All our hearts in the United States of America humbly pray that You will come here and give us divine *darshan*.

The thought of seeing You here is like a plant that has been deprived of water, which then comes to life after receiving water. Your visit will quench our thirst and also the thirst of those who have known about You but for some reason have not been able to go to Puttaparthi. All will be in so much in bliss to receive Your *darshan*. We will look forward to serving You and whoever comes with You, Swami. We will be very happy and privileged for many, many lifetimes.

Sharad & Kusum Naik

Atlanta, Georgia

A Prayer from Your Devotees in America

We pray that You will come to us in America, our beloved Swami. We know that You reside in all places at all times, but we wish to see Your beloved form and hear Your honeyed words in our own wide land.

You belong to us Swami, as we belong to You. Come visit Your children in this golden land, where You have put us to do Your work by Your grace. Come to bless Your devotees, and come to bless those who do not yet sing Your glory. Cast Your divine light across this blessed land and awaken here the yearning for universal light and love without boundaries. Inspire this nation's people to rise up to greater love and higher understanding. Show us how to serve with greater compassion. Let all see and know of the Glory now come.

Come, Swami, for the children, the poor, and the forgotten ones, who will never be able to travel to visit You in India. Come for those who follow the path of *dharma*, and come also for those lost in confusion and despair. Come for the devotees and come also for the nonbelievers.

Allow us, Your children, to serve You and Your fellow travelers, our most beloved Lord. Allow us this service as we offer to You the results. Surely, Your divine mission shall succeed and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed by Your advent. Come and help us to inspire the people of America to greater love and higher understanding. For Yours is the power and the glory forever.

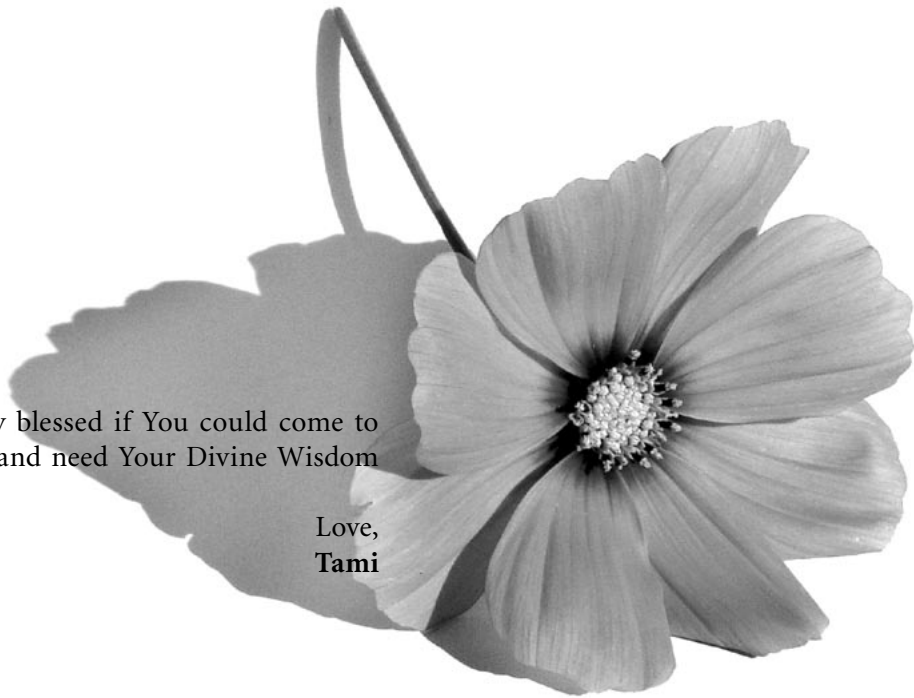
Jon and Rose Roof
Tucson, Arizona



Dear Beloved Lord,

Bless this country with Thy presence. Grant this land that we love Thy *darshan*. We dream of the day when we can view Thy presence here in these United States. Thy sweetness will perfume this air we breathe; Thy light will dispel the darkness encroaching. To hear the sweet sound of Thy voice is our dream. Grant the imperfection of this land Thy perfection, to show it the way. We who are unable to travel to India hunger for Thy *darshan*. Permit these bodies the blessing of experiencing Thy form with all our senses. Thou hast called us to assist in Thy rebuilding of this Earth. Thy Divine Presence would assist us immeasurably here in this land!

Leonard and Edith Bischel
Tempe, Arizona



Dear Baba,

We would be very blessed if You could come to America. We are lost and need Your Divine Wisdom and Love.

Love,
Tami

Dear Swami,

Please come to the United States of America now and bless all the people here, the animals, and the environment. We desperately need You. Turn the minds of everyone toward God. Our country is falling apart due to greed, lust for power, corruption, and lack of integrity, love, and peace. Only You can save this country and the world. If You come here, the entire country will be blessed. Through the media the whole world will see You, and the consciousness of the entire planet will be uplifted. Please come, Swami, please come quickly. Bless us with Your Infinite Love, Bliss, and Peace, and save us and thus the world. With all my heart, I am begging You, Swami, please come to America now.

Love,
Sarala Devi

A Plea: To His Divine Grace, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Avatar of the Kali Yuga,

We most humbly beseech You on behalf of all beings everywhere to grant us a global *darshan* of cosmic proportions, so that by Your loving glance and divine grace the transformation of the Universal Consciousness will be initiated, thereby ushering in the Golden Age. *Loka samastha sukino bhavanthu* (May all the beings everywhere be happy).

Yours forever,
Jack and Nancye Elliott Leonard
Ettersburg, California

Dear Beloved Sai Baba,

You are the most precious being in my life, in my existence, and I desire to share You with my fellow men, women, and children of the United States of America.

Allow me personally to ask and invite You to please visit us all in the USA, and share Your love, wisdom, knowledge, grace, and the unlimited ALLNESS that You are with each and every person here. Although I reside in Cleveland, Ohio and would love for You to come to this city, and You are most welcome to stay in my home, I welcome Your visiting any location, or many locations, anywhere in the USA. I know that the touch of Your Blessed Lotus Feet upon the ground of this country would serve as an immeasurable blessing to all citizens and visitors of the USA, and the entire North American continent. It would do unlimited good by increasing the consciousness of everyone to realize: we are all One; God is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and omniloving; and we are all here to LOVE ALL and SERVE ALL.

I know that You are omnipresent, and therefore You, dear beloved Baba, are already in the hearts and in every cell of each of us in the USA, and in everyone in the world. It is my prayer and most intense desire that every being in the USA, and in the world, consciously, emphatically, know this, and live with this truth affecting and motivating their every thought, word, and action. Your physical presence in the USA, in the form of Sai Baba, would speed the rapidly developing consciousness that is bringing the New Golden Age to each of us and turning the world into a planet of peace. I intensely desire for every being that is here to experience this peace on earth.

Thank You, sincerely, in advance, for Your visit to the USA, and for all the love, wisdom, knowledge, truth, abundance, grace, and allness that You have brought us. And thank you for the insight to dedicate our every thought, word, and action to You, dear Lord, and for the blessing of the Oneness of which we are all a part. Thank You, dear beloved Baba.

Lovingly and committedly Yours,

James A. Roth
Cleveland, Ohio



Dear Sai Baba,

It's very difficult for many of us to come to Your country to be able to be in Your Holy Presence. But if You could come to the United States, we would all come to see You! We love You and need Your blessings.

In high expectations and with a smile,
Alecia Rue

Om Sri Sai Ram! The Embodiment of Love! Lord of the universe!

Universal consciousness, manifested in the human form of Sri Sathya Sai Baba!

I humbly request Your *darshan* in the United States of America. Please come and give us Your *darshan*. In the formless, I know You are always with me. You are in every cell of my body. You live in my heart. I see You in all beings. What must I do to have You visit this nation? With every breath I take, I give You my love. I am so very grateful to be here at the same time as You. You have told us so many times, *Why fear when I am here*. Please come here and remove the fears of so many people. Please give us Your *darshan*. Om Sri Sai Ram!

Your humble servant and devotee,

Caroline Darimont

Dear Lord,

You have asked that American devotees invite You to visit the United States.* We do not presume to know the deeper meaning behind that request. We do know that we need to do much more to have You in our hearts always.

You are our loving father and mother. You realize how easy it is for us to fill these hearts and minds with the transient, temporal things of this existence. We know You are always asking for us to wake up, lovingly calling us to allow You to become firmly seated in our spiritual hearts before it is too late. We know You love all Your children very much, and want us to be guided by You in our every thought, word, and deed as we go about completing our lives on earth.

Please come to America in Your physical form if that is Your will, and instruct us all how best to receive and honor You during that visit. Whether You come physically, or not, we know You are everywhere. You are with us, anyway, and we are comforted by that. Help us, now, to completely surrender within, so that we will be saturated with Your Divine Love, and our lives will be Your example.

John and Wen Jen Wood

Ledyard, Connecticut

*Dear Devotees, It is well-known that our Beloved Swami directs the divine drama in mysterious ways, always for the highest good of the greatest number of souls. Please know that He did not request that devotees invite Him to the U.S. He did however suggest that we publish any invitations that we receive! —Editor

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba,

Mi Amado Señor, Las palabras no pueden expresar el sentir que Tu evocas en mí, no sólo por saber que la invitada fui yo, y en Tu Perfecto Juego nos haces sentir ahora como posibles anfitriones. La creación entera, y en este caso América, Te necesita. Tu sola presencia, en este continente cambiaría el karma de todos nosotros. Ven a esta parte de América y dános la bendición de estar contigo personalmente. Te amamos. Gracias por escogernos,

*Tu hija,
Maria*

Translation:

My Beloved Lord, Words cannot express the feeling that You evoke in me, not only to know that You have called me and in Your perfect play You have made us feel that now we will have the possibility of hosting You. All of creation and in this case America needs You, for only Your Presence in this continent can change all our karma. Come to our America and grant us the blessing of being in Your Holy Presence. We love You; thank You for honoring us in this way.

Your daughter,
Maria

Dear Sai Baba,

I would love for You to come to America and share with us all of Your divine love and teachings. We need all Your light at this time.

With love,
Elizabeth Villavicencio

Dear Sai Baba,

We love You and want You to join us here in America.

Thank you,
Jackie Anaya



Beloved Lord Sai,

We have been told You have given permission for Your devotees in America to write to You and invite You to come here.* What a blessing that would be! It would be our dearest privilege to serve You in any way You might wish us to.

Some of us have had many opportunities to visit You at Prasanthi Nilayam, but there are many who want to go there and cannot. There are also all those who have not yet heard of You, and by this means they would not only come to know of You but also have Your *darshan*. The joy of these people could surely turn this country to a more spiritual path.

There is much suffering in this, the richest country in the world, by children, the poor, and the elderly. We have misused the resources with which You have blessed this country. Our mistakes are many and affect not only the U.S. but the rest of the world.

Your devotees here in America have faith that a visit from You could, if it is Your will, change all of this and help to bring an end to the suffering of many. What a blessing it would be for us and indeed for the whole world.

We love You, Swami, and long for Your presence. Please answer our prayers and come to America in Your Sai form. This is our most heartfelt prayer.

Ginny Rhinehart

Dear Beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba,

You have asked us to request You to come to the United States.* At this time it seems imperative that You make Your Presence known in this country. The United States has a foundation based on good principles and values. We are a generous country, but we seem to have lost our way in the heat of rampant materialism. Our hearts are polluted with unhealthy desires, and our consciences seem to be lost in a veil of deep sleep. As well, the USA is a large and diverse country in the midst of many troubling conflicts based on race, religion, and politics. It seems as though the only way to change this cruel and unholy atmosphere of hatred and distrust is for Your Divine Presence and love to enter our hearts. We pray that Your physical presence would give us the incentive and ability to throw off the negativity and allow Your Divine Love to flow through this great nation once again. We are, indeed, a sleeping giant, and with Your guidance, what wonders of love and service we could achieve! We sincerely request that You visit our great nation and grace us with Your Divine Love. We pray that Your Divine Love touches everyone and every nation in the world.

Meryle and Jay Borden
Portland, Connecticut

* Please see the note on page 12.

Dear Baba,

In these trying times in America, a spiritual healing is needed. We turn to You, seeking wisdom and guidance. Your presence in America is imperative, right now. Please come!

Heather Jenkins

Phoenix, Arizona

Beloved Sai Baba,

I most humbly invite You to please grace us with a visit to the U.S.A. Please come in whatever form or manner You deem best. A visit from You would be awesome and wonderful beyond words!

With All My Love, an aspiring devotee,

Jean Timm

Medford, Oregon

Dear Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba,

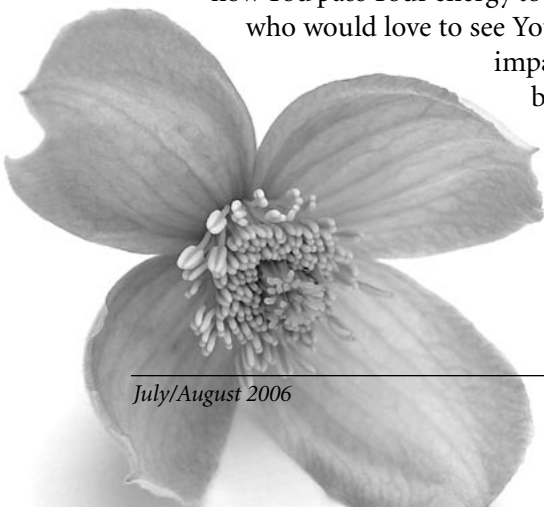
I am among millions of people in the United States who learned that You would like to be invited to the United States.* Baba, we utter “*Sai Ram*” several times. Whenever we say *Sai Ram*, we mentally invite You to come to us. Even in India millions have not had the good fortune of seeing You, but as a resident and a citizen of the U.S., I would like You to know that You are always welcome in our homes and Centers, and are considered a permanent guest.

Though You are always in our hearts, Your physical *darshan* would impart a valuable energy. You Yourself have pointed out the importance of the gift of *darshan*. The opportunity to see a holy being cannot be underestimated. That is why millions flock to see the Pope. For us, You are our Pope and above all the *Bhagavan* (Lord).

You have said, *My energy goes out as I pass by you. Rest assured, whatever My eyes see becomes vitalized and transmuted.* How many disabled people long to see You but never get the opportunity. Physical impairment is a great misfortune for many people, and I wonder how You pass Your energy to those souls. In our own home we have a family member who would love to see You in Your physical form but cannot because of such an impairment. I know Your physical presence would be a great blessing for her and many others with similar problems, so please come if You can.

N. Shanmugha Sundaram and Indira Sundaram

Mesa, Arizona



Dear Swami,

You shower Your Grace in many, many ways. I am very happy in this. Please listen to my words again. You have already heard them in this heart. My brothers and sisters in the United States are extending a call for us to write invitations for Swami to travel and come to America. I am happy in this also. Perhaps we should inquire in ourselves as to what is pleasing and proper to do in this circumstance and then act accordingly.

These are some of Your teachings that seem to apply: Rama lifted the bow of Shiva, which weighed many thousands of tons. His Holy Feet needed a firm and solid foundation for this. Lakshmana assisted Him in this task by stabilizing the earth, and Rama Himself said that proper planning and preparation need to be done before a large task is undertaken. Little Druva went to the forest and did penance and had the Lord appear to him. The Lord instructed Druva that he must have complete harmony and unity of his thoughts, words, and actions, and then the Lord would grant his request.

Swami, hear our prayer: Help us to learn the value and worth of a full and proper foundation, one that is worthy and able to support Your Divine Feet. It seems to me that we need a spiritual, mental, emotional, cultural, and physical foundation, as a proper way to invite and receive Your Holy Presence. If a building is attempted with an improper or weak foundation, will the result be strong and lasting, or a calamity? The answer is obvious. Guide us in these ways, O Lord, and keep us in the practice of Your teachings.

Of course, You are omnipresent and are not limited or confined to a particular form or place. The eternal *Atma* in all beings is part of Your Divine Being. I know this in my heart and in the hearts of others. However, You know the hearts of all, Swami, and know of the Love and yearning therein. We yearn for Your Divine Presence and *darshan* in this land and in many lands across the world. Keep us dedicated to our task of preparing a superb foundation for Your worldwide travel. Keep us in Your Love, O Lord. Bless us in Love. We are Love, seeking Love Divine. Surely You will test our foundation when it is properly prepared—test it with Your Holy Feet. Can those Divine Feet resist that which is properly and lovingly prepared for Them? Lead us, guide us. Keep us in the ways of Truth. Love shall be visiting Love. I have faith.

Your Friend Respectfully,
Michael Grau
Hemet, California

Dear Devotees: In a personal note to this editor, Mr. Grau, our brother in Sai, apologized for making so many mistakes in his typing because, as he told us, he is blind! Although we corrected those few typos, I'm certain I can speak for all Sai devotees when I say, Brother Grau, we all admire your strength of character and your eloquent love for Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. —Editor



An Invitation to Baba

Dear Baba, come to the U.S., come to us,
Red carpet awaits You, velvet and plush,
The joyful news that our Sai is coming,
Has all the devoted dancing and singing.

Candles in our hearts are finally lit,
So happy to sign this invite and submit,
The world was going east, now come to the west,
Say “Yes,” Baba, to our humble request.

Blessings like waves will sweep the air,
Sai Ma, embrace us in Your peace-loving care,
And bring auspiciousness to this beautiful land,
Where all races in one deemed unity stand.

The Oneness of all faiths that is concealed,
Through Your Divine Form it must be revealed,
We look up each night for the guiding Star,
The moon smiles brighter than ever, O Avatar!

When would it be, we’re anticipating!!!
Where would it be, we’re speculating!!!!
You promised long ago, now let’s not fuss,
Dear Swami, come to U.S., come to us.

Mala Saxena
Stony Brook, New York

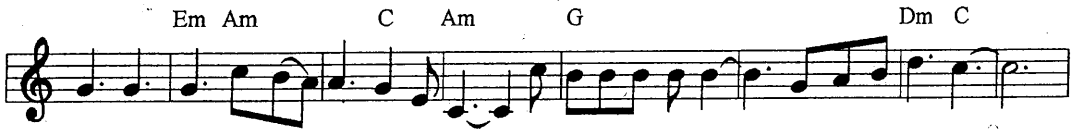
An Invitation To Baba

Mala Saxena

Sara Bongo



Dear Ba-ba - come to the U S, come to us. Red 'car-pet a-waits You, vel-vet and plush The



joy-ful news that our Sai is com-ing Has all the de-vot-ed - danc-ing and sing-ing,

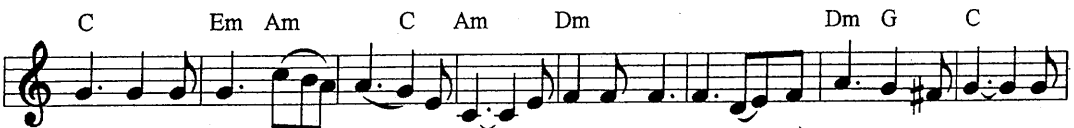
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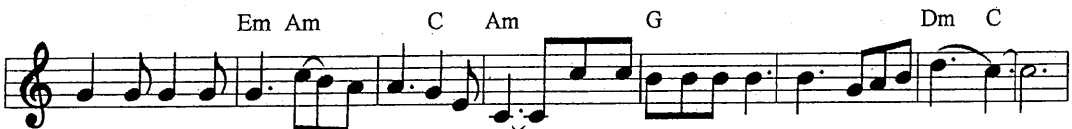
Can-dies in our hearts. are fi-nal-ly lit, So hap-py to sign this in-vite and sub-mit, The



world was go-ing east, now come to the west, Say "Yes," Ba-ba to our hum-ble re-quest



Bless-ings like waves will - sweep - the air Sai Ma em-brace us in - Your Peace-lov-ing care - And

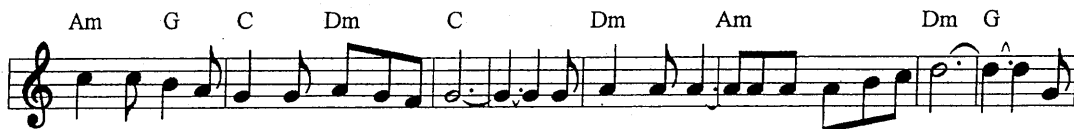


bring aus-pi-cious-ness to - this beau-ti-ful land, Where all ra-ces in one deemed u-ni-ty stand -

REFRAIN:



Can-dles in our hearts. are fi-nal-ly lit, - So hap-py to sign this in-vite and sub-mit, - The



world was go-ing east, now come to the west, Say "Yes," Ba-ba to our hum-ble re-quest - The



One-ness of all faiths that - is - con-cealed Through Your Di-vine Form it - must be re-vealed, We



look up each night for - the gui-ding - Star, - The moon smiles bright-er than e-ver, O - Av - a - tar!

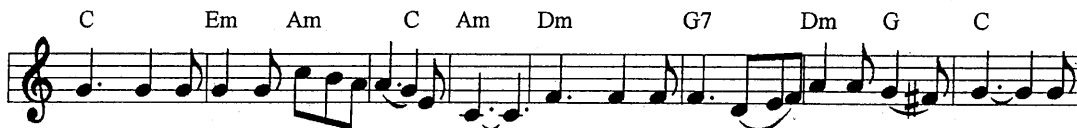
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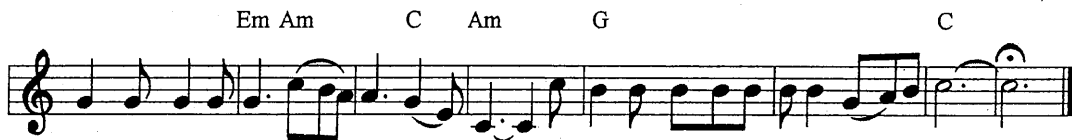
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When would it be we're an-tic-i-pa - ting!!! - Where would it be we're - spe-cu-la - ting!!!! You



pro-mised long a - go now - let's not - fuss Dear Swa-mi come to the U S come - to us!!! -

What is True Education?

Follow Your Spiritual Heart

During his childhood, man develops absorbing interest in play with other children. In youth and middle age, he entangles himself in worldly matters, deeply engrossed in earning money. Finally in old age, he craves for this and that, without contemplating on God even at that ripe age. Thus, he wastes his precious human birth. (TELUGU POEM)

In this world, there are millions of educated people. From children to learned old men, everyone is interested in reading books and acquiring knowledge. But in what way are they benefited by the acquisition of bookish knowledge? Such education can only help them to eke out a livelihood. From paupers to millionaires, people want their children to be well educated. Parents are prepared to spend or borrow any amount of money—even beyond their means—to provide quality education to their children. In spite of the fact that the parents face many hardships to educate their children, the children do not show any gratitude toward their benefactors. They do not introspect, “Who is responsible for all my development? Who has made me what I am today?”

Under these circumstances, we need to enquire into the true purpose of education. One may study a number of books and master various branches of knowledge, but does this bring peace and tranquility? All the

knowledge that we acquire from books can take care of only our physical needs.

The fact is, true knowledge is latent in everyone. Women do not lag behind men in academic excellence. People believe that education confers them with respect and esteem, but they lack true wisdom in spite of their high academic achievements.

Nowadays parents want their children to pursue solely job-oriented education. But what is the use of an education that does not bring about transformation? Neither are the children benefited, nor are they able to render any help to their parents.

Humility is the Hallmark of Education

Modern man develops ego on account of his educational achievements, but humility is the true hallmark of education. If a man lacks *viveka* (discrimination) and *vinaya* (humility), all his education is of no value. You should understand that your education is meant for the welfare and progress of society.

In what way is society benefited by educated people? Actually, you learn many things from society and derive benefit from it [constantly]. But the power of discrimination, which is found even in uneducated people, is lacking in today's so-called educated people. When this is the true state of affairs, why should the educated get inflated with ego?

One sees scarcely any humility among students today. They show no respect toward elders and do not realize their responsibilities toward society. What is the use of merely acquiring bookish knowledge if one does not respect elders and serve society? Leading such a life is not true to one's nature, and walking, talking, reading, writing—everything becomes an affectation. If this is the result of academic education, why should one go to college at all?

Every student must enquire of himself, "What am I doing in the college? What am I supposed to do?" Only when students conduct such self-enquiry can they understand the true meaning of education. Mere bookish knowledge is not true education but merely a transfer of contents from *pustaka* (books) to *mastaka* (head) and vice-versa. People become entangled between *pustaka* and *mastaka* without understanding the true meaning of education. They waste time pursuing bookish knowledge instead of acquiring practical knowledge. No doubt

much information can be found in *pustaka*, but what purpose can it serve if the *mastaka* is filled with filth? You can never achieve the desired results from such an education.

People spend thousands of rupees for acquiring academic education, but what role do these educated people end up playing in society? Do they contribute to peace

in society? Do they work to bring about transformation in individuals? No. In fact, they are unable to inculcate discipline even in their own children. Most children pretend to be well behaved and

humble in the presence of their parents, but they behave like rowdies once they step out of the house.

Acquire Atmic Knowledge

Students should strive to earn a good name in society. Today's education makes students materialistic. It does not prepare them to turn inward and listen to their inner voice. What is the use of pursuing such an education? Instead, students should acquire *Atma prabodha* (Atmic knowledge). That is true education. Without awareness of the Self, other knowledge is useless. People are interested in exercising their influence and power but not in making efforts to cleanse their mind and heart. This is the result of modern education. People learn to talk sweetly but do not translate their words into action.



Mere bookish knowledge is not true education but merely a transfer of contents from pustaka (books) to mastaka (head) and vice versa.

Embodiments of Love! Learning the contents of books merely by rote is unimportant. You should instead imbibe the *gandha* (essence) of all *granthas* (texts), which is true education. People read numerous books, but what is the use? They merely quote what others have said. Is this what you think you are supposed to learn? You should listen instead to the prompting of your inner voice and share it with others, but scarcely anybody thinks along these lines these days.

Embodiments of Love! You must put into practice at least one or two principles of what you have learned, and thereby set an example to others. Learned scholars are many, but do they practice what they have learned? They appear to be “chief” (people of eminence), but they are “cheap” in their behavior.

The end of education is character; we should consider character as our very life-breath. Education without character is useless, like half-cooked rice. We should practice at least one or two principles and only then venture to preach to others.

There are three important principles in every human being: *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect), and *Atma* (Self). What is the nature of Self? It is all-pervasive. True education is that which originates from the heart. The reference in this context is to the spiritual heart, not the physical. Many noble souls are setting ideals to society by translating

their knowledge into action. If you do not act in a principled manner, all your education becomes useless. It is what you practice that matters, not what you speak. Wherever you may go, your behavior should be exemplary. That is what pleases Me.

Happiness is union with God. You are not ordinary mortals. All are essentially divine. In order to realize your true nature, you must practice what you preach. Only then can you experience bliss. Verily, bliss is the true nature of man. Why should you give up that

which is natural to you and lead an artificial life?

Wherever you look, in colleges and schools, students lack practical knowledge. They give importance only to bookish knowledge and become “books” themselves.

Look to Your Spiritual Heart

True education originates from the heart. The heart is very important for human existence. When a child is born, the first thing that people observe is the heartbeat. You should rely more on your spiritual heart than on the physical heart. Conscience is another name for the spiritual heart. Keep your heart pure. That should be your main endeavor. Whatever is done with love and purity of heart will confer bliss on you. Bliss is latent in everyone, but people remain



True education is that which originates from the heart—the spiritual heart, not the physical.... Conscience is another name for the spiritual heart.

unaware of this truth. You should make every effort to manifest your innate bliss.

What is the nature of this bliss? *Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam.* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss; He is wisdom absolute, beyond the pair of opposites.) Bliss transcends duality. As long as one is immersed in duality, one cannot experience bliss.

Unity, Purity, and Divinity

First of all, one needs to understand the principle of unity. Unity leads to purity, and purity leads to divinity. A true human being is one who strives for unity, purity, and divinity. Otherwise, he is no better than birds and animals. First, purify your senses and develop unity. Consider all as your brothers and sisters, and live in harmony.

In public meetings, we hear the speakers addressing people as brothers and sisters, but do they really mean what they say? Do you find unity among brothers and sisters today? No. True

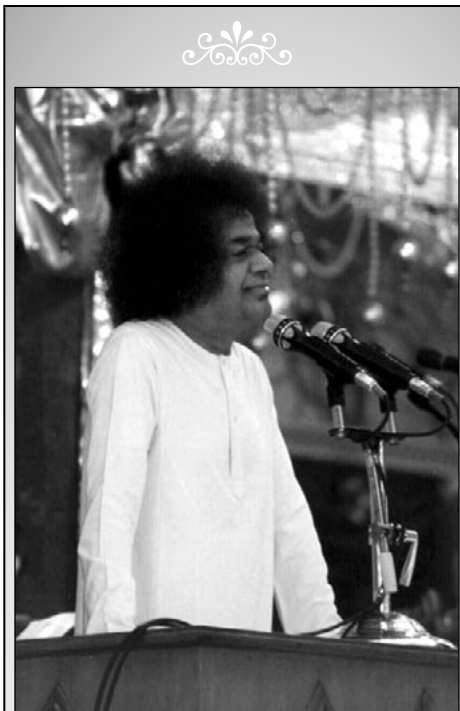
happiness lies in unity. Human life can be compared to a tree. Our relations are like branches and sub-branches. Contemplation of God is like a flower from which you get the fruit of bliss.

Students! You can certainly acquire secular knowledge, but do not rest content with only that. Turn inward and acquire spiritual knowledge as well. Only then can you attain peace.

Embodiments of Love! Love is the essence of education. Bereft of love, education is artificial. Therefore, develop love first. Understand that the indweller is the same, though bodies are different. Hold on to this fundamental principle and experience *ananda* (bliss).

So many of you have assembled here. Everyone's attention is focused on Swami. In the same manner, let your mind be focused on divinity always. Contemplate on God. Serve your fellow men.

If a person who has been starving for ten days is served a sumptuous feast, you can well imagine the joy he experiences. When all the tanks and lakes are dried to a trickle,



*Unity leads to purity, and
purity leads to divinity. A
true human being is one who
strives for unity, purity, and
divinity.*

you can imagine the joy that a continuous downpour brings with it. Similarly, serve those who are in desperate need of your help. Give them happiness. You can attain divinity only through service. Human life is most precious, but man is behaving like an animal and thus wasting his life.

Students! Being *vidyarthi* (true seekers of wisdom), you should endeavor to acquire true *vidya* (higher knowledge). There is no point in merely perusing through books without understanding the true meaning of *vidya*. Always contemplate the fundamental principle of life: beings are many, but the divine principle is one and the same. Therefore, recognize the principle of divinity that is present in all in the form of *Atma*. *Atma* is the *adhara* (support) and the body is the *adheya* (supported). Consider *Atma* as the basis of your life, and everything else will be taken care of.

Everyone can have the vision of the *Atma*. All are endowed with such power. Enquire into yourself what you have achieved by reading volumes and volumes of books. You have become hard-hearted. If this is the result of your education, why should you study at all?

Life is Meaningless without Love

First of all, develop love. When you have love in you, everyone will become your friend. If your heart is not suffused

with love, your life will be artificial. Life is meaningless without love. If all share their love with their neighbor, there will be no room for hatred. Share your love with everyone and live like brothers and sisters. Today we find conflicts and differences even among brothers and sisters, because they lack proper understanding.

People do not understand the true meaning of love. Their love is tainted with physical and worldly feelings. When you understand the principle of love and develop love-to-love in your

relationships, all will become one. The Veda says, *Sahasra seersha Purushaha* (All heads, eyes, and feet are His). Once you understand the principle of the oneness that is present in all, you can live in tune with the true spirit of brotherhood.

Live and Work in Harmony

A hand has five fingers, each of which has a specific assigned duty, working in harmony. One time an argument ensued among the five fingers of the hand as to which finger among them was the greatest. The thumb claimed, "It is not possible to undertake any work without me, so I am the greatest."

Then the index finger smiled and said, "Look here, oh thumb! How can you perform any task without my support? Moreover, I am used as a pointer to identify individuals. Therefore, I am greater than you."



*Always contemplate the
fundamental principle of life:
beings are many, but the divine
principle is one and the same.*

The middle finger intervened, saying, “There is no point to your claims. I am the tallest among all the fingers. Two of you on one side and two on the other are serving me as *aides-de-camp*. Thus, I am the greatest.”

Then the ring-finger said, “Your ignorance is comical. Don’t you know that people adorn me with golden rings studded with precious stones such as diamonds, emeralds, topaz, and so on? Hence, I am your king.”

Lastly, the little finger said, “I always lead from the front when it comes to teaching a lesson to someone or punishing the guilty. Clearly, I am your leader, and you must follow me.”

As the fingers argued among themselves in this manner, the heart intervened and said, “Oh, you ignorant ones! Each of you is as important as the other. You cannot perform any task if you do not have unity and harmony among you. In fact, you represent the five human values, which are like the five life-breaths of a human being.”

Hearing these words of wisdom, the five fingers realized their mistake and bent their heads in shame.

Deep enquiry reveals that the heart is the greatest of all. The body, mind, and intellect are merely instruments. One should follow the advice of the heart in all one’s endeavors. Understand that all are one and that each one is equally important. Do not become egoistic, thinking that you alone are most

important. Do not waste your precious time in vain argumentation. Be friendly with all and face the challenges of life with unity and harmony.

Live as One

Students! You must lead your lives in an ideal manner. In fact, all ideals are latent in

you and cannot be learned from books. The principle of “I” is common in all. If someone asks, “Who is Sai Baba?” I respond saying, “I.” If someone asks, “Who is the Vice Chancellor?” he will

say, “I.” The single letter “I” represents the principle of *Atma*. The Veda declares, *Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma* (God is one without a second). True spirituality lies in knowing your true Self, but you remain unable to know your true Self because you identify yourself with the body. Identification with the body gives rise to ego. One with ego cannot know reality. Your welfare and also that of others will be ensured when you have a firm conviction that all are one. Develop such a spirit of unity. You cannot expect divinity to manifest in you unless you cultivate such unity.

The Veda has exhorted:

Let us all move together, let us all grow together. Let us all stay united and share our knowledge. Let us live together with friendship and harmony.

(TELUGU POEM)



Your welfare and also that of others will be ensured when you have a firm conviction that all are one. Develop such a spirit of unity.

Some students do not share even their textbooks with others. How can they attain happiness, being so self-centered and narrow-minded? You should all stand united. Where there is unity, there is bliss.

Embodiments of Love! You must learn only one thing: develop love. The same principle of love is present in you, in Me, and in everyone. I see only love in others, so all are one for Me. You too should develop such feelings of love and equality. All are one; be alike to everyone. This is what you must learn.

Embodiments of Love! Along with the acquisition of secular knowledge, make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. Only then can you achieve unity and harmony.

Take for instance this rose flower. It consists of a number of petals. Likewise, your heart can be compared to a flower, and virtues are like its petals. The petals of a rose may fade and fall away by the next day, but the flower of the heart remains ever fresh, symbolizing the principle of oneness.

People worship the *navagrahas* (nine planets) to invoke their blessings. You might have observed that the nine planets have perfect unity and harmony. (Bhagavan, with a wave of his hand, materialized a gold ring studded with nine different gems.) Here you see a *navaratna* ring. Whoever wears this ring will be protected by the *navagrahas* wherever he goes.

Develop unity. Be courageous and develop the necessary strength to face the vicissitudes of life. Whatever you have learned here, let it be imprinted in your heart. Only then can you attain peace, and only then will your education become meaningful.

Embodiments of Love! I shower My love and blessings on one and all. Be always united and spend your time in bliss. Make your parents happy. Your body was given to you by your parents. Thus, first of all, express your gratitude to them for this gift. Only then can you find fulfillment in life.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Educare Conference, August 17, 2005

Once the Truth of the Indwelling Spirit is recognized, there dawns the awareness that the world is one family. One is then filled with Divine Love, which becomes the driving force for all of one's actions. Man turns away from the pursuit of endless desires to the search for peace and equanimity. By converting the love for material things into Love of God one experiences the Divine. This experience is not something beyond man. It is, in fact, a part of the inherent nature of man. It is the secret of his humanness and his Divinity.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Message on "Unity is Divinity," October 30-31, 1983

Installing LOVE

Customer: Well, I'm not very technical, but I think I'm ready to install LOVE. What do I do first?

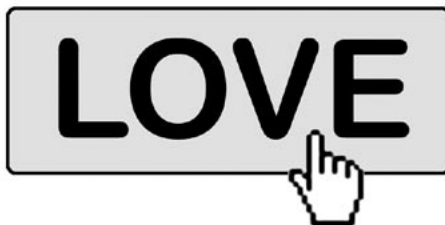
Tech Support: The first step is to open your HEART. Have you located your HEART, ma'am?

Customer: Yes, but I have several other programs running right now. Is it okay to install while they are running?

Tech Support: What programs are running, ma'am?

Customer: Let's see... I have PAST-HURT.EXE, LOW-ESTEEM.EXE, GRUDGE.EXE, and RESENTMENT.COM running now.

Tech Support: No problem. LOVE will gradually erase PAST-HURT.EXE from your current operating system, so it will no longer disrupt other programs. LOVE will eventually overwrite LOW-ESTEEM.EXE with a module of its own called HIGH-ESTEEM.EXE. However, you have to completely turn off GRUDGE.EXE, RESENTMENT.COM. Those programs prevent LOVE from being properly installed. Can you turn those off, ma'am?



Customer: I don't know how to turn them off. Can you tell me how?

Tech Support: My pleasure. Go to your Start menu and invoke FORGIVENESS.EXE. Do this as many times as necessary until it's erased the programs you don't want.

Customer: Okay, now LOVE has started installing itself automatically. Is that normal?

Tech Support: Yes. You should receive a message that says it will reinstall for the life of your HEART. Do you see that message?

Customer: Yes, I do. Is it completely installed?

Tech Support: Yes, but remember that you have only the base program. You need to begin connecting to other HEARTs in order to get the upgrades.

Customer: Oops. I have an error message already. What should I do?

Tech Support: What does the message say?

Customer: It says "ERROR 412: PROGRAM NOT RUN ON INTERNAL COMPONENTS." What does that mean?



Tech Support: Don't worry, ma'am, that's a common problem. It means that the LOVE program is set up to run on external HEARTs but has not yet been run on your HEART. It is one of those complicated programming things, but in nontechnical terms it means you have to "LOVE" your own machine before it can "LOVE" others.

Customer: So what should I do?

Tech Support: Can you pull up the folder called "SELF-ACCEPTANCE"?

Customer: Yes, I have it.

Tech Support: Excellent. You're getting good at this. Now, click on the following files and then copy

them to the "MYHEART" directory: FORGIVENESS.DOC, REALIZE-WORTH.TXT, and APPRECIATION.DOC. The system will overwrite any conflicting files and begin patching any faulty programming. Also, you need to delete SELF-CRITIC.EXE from all directories, and then empty your recycle bin afterward to make sure it is completely gone and never comes back.

Customer: Got it. Hey! My HEART is filling up with new files. SMILE.MPG is playing on my monitor right now and it shows that PEACE.EXE, and CONTENTMENT.COM are copying themselves all over my HEART. Is this normal?

Tech Support: Sometimes. For others it takes a while, but eventually everything gets downloaded at the proper time. So, LOVE is installed and running. You should be able to handle it from here. Ah, one more thing.

Customer: Yes?

Tech Support: LOVE is freeware. Be sure to give it and its various modules to everybody you meet. They will in turn share it with other people and they will return some similarly cool modules back to you.

Customer: I will! Thanks for your help!

—Anonymous

The Ganesha Principle

The world has many exemplary leaders, but none like *Vinayaka*. He is also called *Vigneshwara* (remover of obstacles) because he is regarded as the presiding deity over obstacles. Even as *Yama* presides over births and deaths, the grace of Ganapathi removes all obstacles. *Ganapathi* means the Lord of the *Ganas* (celestial armies). He is the Lord of Sound and has the form of *Om* (Pranava). What is the esoteric meaning of Ganesha's elephant head? The elephant is noted for its acute intelligence. Ganesha's elephant head symbolizes sharpness of intellect and the highest power of discrimination.

Because of the purity of His intellect, *Vinayaka* is also called the giver of *Buddhi* (intellect). He responds to the prayers of devotees and hence He is known as *Siddhi Vinayaka* (the *Vinayaka*, or exalted leader, who grants what is sought). Once the great sage Vyasa embarked upon writing the *Mahabharata*.^{*} Because of the immensity of the task of writing down millions of

verses, Vyasa sought the help of Brihaspati, the preceptor of the *Devas*, for a suitable scribe. Brihaspati told Vyasa that no one but

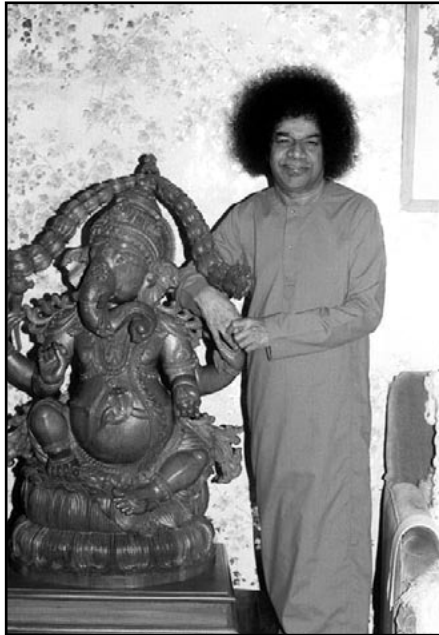
Vinayaka could carry out the work. Vyasa appealed to *Vinayaka* for aid, stipulating that everything that was written had to be understood by the scribe.

Ganesha, in turn, laid down a condition that Vyasa should not pause in dictating the verses, so that the stylus with which He would be inscribing the verses on palm leaves would have no rest. *Vinayaka* had the ability to record the entire *Mahabharata*

[without pausing to understand the sage's teachings], because He was the embodiment of all knowledge. Vyasa accomplished his prodigious task with Ganesha's aid.^{**}

^{*}The *Mahabharata* is the world's longest literary epic poem, containing among other sections, the *Bhagavad Gita* and stories of the Krishna avatar.

^{**}It is said that in order to uphold His word not to interrupt Vyasa's dictation of the *Mahabharata*, Ganesha had to break off one of His tusks to use as a pen, when his stylus broke. Another of Ganesha's names, *Ekadanta*, means "one-tusked."



The mouse, a clever and lively creature, is Ganesha's vehicle. As a symbol it means that we should be clever and diligent in our actions. There is special significance in placing *Vigneshwara* in the forefront before embarking on any undertaking.

In a forest, when an elephant moves through the jungle, it clears the way for others to follow. Likewise, by invoking Ganesha, the path is cleared for our undertakings. The elephant's foot is so large that when it moves it can stamp out the footprints of any other animal. Here, again, the symbolic meaning is that all obstacles in the way will be removed when Ganesha is accorded the place of honor. The journey of life is made smoother and happier by the grace of Ganesha.

On *Vinayaka Chaturthi* day, students place books in front of the Ganesha idol and offer worship. They pray to the deity to illumine their minds. Hence Ganesha is known as "*Buddhi Pradayaka*," one who grants intelligence. No one should regard

Ganesha as uncouth because of his elephant head and His immense belly. *Vinayaka* is a deity who encompasses the universe within Himself. He is a deity of infinite potency.

Vigneshwara is described as one wearing a white cloth. His body is ash-grey. He is depicted as having four arms and a cheerful countenance. The white cloth signifies purity of mind and heart. By worshipping Him, you must endeavor to achieve similar purity. *Vinayaka* always appears serene and calm. By His grace, the devotee must seek to achieve similar equanimity, whatever may be the ups and downs in life.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Vinayaka Chaturthi, September 9, 1989

Ganesha Chaturthi (Vinayaka Chaturthi) is a ten-day celebration honoring the Remover of Obstacles and the Master of all the five senses, five elements, and five *kosas* or housings of the soul. August 2 marks its beginning this year.

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A Bouquet of Eight Flowers

Service Projects by the Youth of Region 9

We, the children of the Scottsdale Arizona *Bal Vikas* (Sai Spiritual Education) of Region 9, USA, offered a bouquet of eight flowers (*ashta pushpa*) at the Lotus Feet of our beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. These eight flowers, in the form of various activities, celebrated 80 years of our Sai's Divine Advent.

1. As our first activity, we performed *Laksha Archana* on the 6th of March, 2005. While chanting Swami's 1008 names, we offered rice and concentrated on His Divine Form for at least a few repetitions of the names. This was an exercise to integrate thought, word, and deed. The sanctified rice was later cooked and distributed in one of our other service projects.

2. Our second project was to set plants in the ground beside a desert nature trail. This happened on April 2nd. We planted 80 cacti, one for every year of Swami's life.

3. From serving Mother Earth, we went to serve the elderly people at a retirement home on April 9th. We conducted games and entertained them for one hour. This helped them get some physical exercise.

4. Our next activity was cooking and serving food at a homeless shelter on April 30th. We used the sanctified rice from the *Laksha Archana*, then cooked additional

dishes to provide a complete meal for the people.

5. After we finished serving food at the homeless shelter, our next activity was to celebrate Easwaramma Day (honoring the mother of Swami's physical form) on May 8th with the elderly people. All of us sang devotional songs of Swami's glory. Then, after the program, we honored the mothers and grandmothers present and gave them 80 bouquets.

6. For our sixth service project, on June 18th we prepared 80 food baskets containing essentials and imperishable food items, and delivered them to a food bank. The baskets were to be given away to the disabled, ill, and elderly.

7. Our next project involved food service. We all prepared sandwiches on July 2nd, to be distributed the next morning at a homeless shelter, along with oatmeal, fruit, juice, and coffee.

8. Our eighth and final project was a spiritual picnic at a *gurdwara* (Sikh temple) on September 18th. We learned about the Sikh religion and participated in their prayer service. Later we helped cook and serve a luncheon.

—Sudarshan Iyer

SSE Group III, Scottsdale, Arizona

Children's Corner

True Devotion

The devoted Draupadi was Krishna's friend and adopted sister. Rukmini was the goddess Lakshmi in human form; she was Lord Krishna's first wife and queen. Sathyabhama was Krishna's second queen and an incarnation of Bhudevi, the earth goddess. Their relationship symbolizes Krishna or Vishnu as Savior of the earth.

**Once Sathyabhama and Rukmini questioned Lord Krishna,
"Why do you always make so much of the devotion of Draupadi?
Is she that great?"**

The Lord replied with a smile, "I shall let you know by and by."

One day, Draupadi came to visit her dear brother Krishna and was given a suite of rooms. Krishna called Sathyabhama and Rukmini and said, "Let us go to Draupadi's apartment."

Draupadi welcomed them with love and excitement. She had just taken an oil bath, and her long tresses were hanging loose. She was combing her hair. The Lord looked at His queens and said, "Look! My sister seems to find it difficult to comb her long tresses. Why don't you both help her?"

Sathyabhama and Rukmini readily agreed. Draupadi's tresses were parted; one half was combed out by Sathyabhama and the other by Rukmini. While they were combing, they heard from every hair, "Krishna!" "Krishna!" in a soft tone.



Sathyabhama and Rukmini were surprised. They looked at Krishna as if to say they finally understood Draupadi's great devotion. Krishna sat still, enjoying the scene.

True devotion is silent and avoids display.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba, *Chinna Katha*

—Ashwini Jambotkar, Illustration



Significance of Guru Purnima

Guru Purnima, an occasion for cleansing the mind to make it pure with love, takes place this year on July 11, 2006. Its annual observance symbolizes removal of darkness from the mind by the master teacher.

What is the significance of *Guru Purnima*? *Guru* (teacher, master) is one who illumines the path to divinity. *Purnima* stands for the cool light of the full moon. The full moon stands for a mind with total illumination—spotless and blemishless. If there is even a trace of blemish in the mind, it will lead to darkness and cannot give you total bliss. ...

What is it that you are supposed to know on this day of *Guru Purnima*? You must understand that God is in you, with you, around you, above you, below you. In fact, you are God. Recognize this truth in the first place. ...

Starting today, make your hearts sacred. Just as you wave away the mosquitoes that bite you, brush aside any difficulties that

assail you. Do not be depressed by sorrow or be elated by happiness. Develop equanimity and strive to attain divinity. ...

*Starting today, make your
hearts sacred. Just as you wave
away the mosquitoes that bite
you, brush aside any difficulties
that assail you.*

There is only one guru. There cannot be two gurus—inner guru and outer guru. Guru is one who treads along the path of truth. He is truth himself.

*Guru Brahma
Guru Vishnu Guru*

Devo Maheshwara; Guru Sakshat Param Brahma. Thasmai Sri Gurave Namaha. (Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheshwara. Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman. Therefore, salutations to the Guru.)

You are the embodiment of the Divine Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara (Shiva). Hence, the Guru is not separate from you. ... There cannot be any bad qualities in God, so you should lead a pure, steady, and selfless life. [From this *Guru Purnima*

onward, adopt pure vision, pure speech, and pure action:] see good, speak good, and do good. You should be an ideal to everybody. No benefit accrues from worship if you do not purify your heart.

You are worshipping Swami and have been visiting Swami for a number of years, but is there any transformation in you? You are coming and going without any aim. Such people need not come here at all.

Wherever you are, do your *sadhana* (spiritual exercise). When you come here, you should imbibe divine feelings and become divine. Gradually reduce your attachment to the world. The world will not go with you when you die; you cannot even

take away a fistful of dust. You can take only the virtues you have cultivated.

Respect your teachers, elders, and parents. *Matru Devo bhava, pitru Devo bhava, acharya Devo bhava, atithi Devo bhava.*



The world will not go with you when you die; you cannot even take away a fistful of dust. You can take only the virtues you have cultivated.

(Revere your mother, father, teacher, and guest as God.) Consider everyone as God. There is God even in a dog. Have faith that God is all-pervasive. There is no greater *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) than this. When people develop such faith, the whole nation will be blessed with plenty, prosperity, and all auspicious-

ness. Fill your heart with divine feelings. This is what you must learn today.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba
July 24, 2002



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