

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

Dedicated with Love and Devotion to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



“Divine Amrit”

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SAI'S MESSAGE

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ATTAINING THE SWEETNESS OF BLISS AND LOVE



By imbibing the teachings of the stories of the Lord (“the Bhagavatha”), your quality of ignorant inertia and dullness (thamo guna) will be raised into the quality of feverish and restless activity (rajo guna) and [then] purified into the quality of poise and serenity (satva guna).

It is like fruit growing by the combined influence of the earth and sun—first into full sourness, then into partial sweetness, and finally, complete sweetness, in three stages.

Man, too, by the twin forces of grace from without and yearning from within, grows into the complete sweetness of bliss and love.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks (SSS) 6:17, July 2, 1966

He Is With Us Always, Part 2

The Source of All Wisdom, All Knowledge, All Love

This transcript is Part 2 of a talk given by Dr Narendranath Reddy on May 8, 2011, to Sai devotees of USA Region 8 (Pacific South), at Sanathana Dharma Temple, Norwalk, California. Part 1 appeared in the September/October 2011 edition of this publication.

Swami says his life is his message, and his message is love. That is why Swami says:

God is love. Live in love. Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. End the day with love. This is the way to God.

Swami has showered love on all of us. Otherwise, on a beautiful Sunday afternoon, Mother's Day, why would so many people come here? We come because we love Swami, and he loves us very much.

Swami's bountiful love flows to everyone without distinction. We think somebody is close to Swami and somebody else is not, but I can say confidently from my heart that Swami loves all. Not only all people, he loves all beings. One time when I was in Prasanthi Nilayam, Swami was standing and talking to the students when a nice butterfly came and touched Swami's feet and fluttered away. Swami said, "Look, look. That butterfly wanted to have my *padnamaskar* (blessing of touching his feet)."

His love goes to all, even to inanimate objects. One time in Brindavan there was a stone on the path where Swami was walking. People didn't realize the stone was there,

and Swami's foot hit the stone and started bleeding. People became very upset and picked up the stone, angry with it and about to throw it. But Swami said, "Wait, wait. It wanted to have my *padnamaskar* and my blessings." His love flowed even to the stone. Swami says that everything is permeated by his love, by his love only.

The Divine Physician

We have all experienced many instances of his saving grace. In 1996 my father had an acute back problem. He was disabled and bedridden. We consulted various specialists. My son-in-law, a neuroradiologist, concluded that my father had a disc herniation pressing on the nerves, which could cause paralysis. All the consultants were of the same opinion: "He needs surgery right away." I said, "I won't do anything without asking Swami."

I spoke to Swami and told him of the situation and what the consultants were recommending.

Swami replied, "*You are a fool. Why do you consult all these doctors? You doctors are worse than regular patients.*" Then Swami materialized *vibhuti* (sacred ash). "*Just rub it on him. It will be all right.*"

Lo and behold, within a few weeks, my father was back to normal. About the same time, I had a 46-year-old female patient with the identical problem as my father. This patient underwent surgery as recommended, but unfortunately, after the surgery she became completely disabled and could not return to work. My father, who was 70-plus years, returned to normal, while this 46-year-old woman became completely disabled. This demonstrates that Swami, the divine physician, is better than a neurosurgeon and an orthopedic surgeon.

Swami has cured many people. Miracles galore have transpired. Swami has made the lame walk and the blind see. He has even raised the dead. We have seen that happen, even in Southern California, with Walter Cowan and Kuppam Radha Krishna Setty. There are many other instances in which people were dead and Swami raised them.

In another medical case, several years ago Dr Samuel Sandweiss sent a twelve-year-old boy to me for a second opinion. This boy had a thyroid nodule. After a biopsy, surgery was recommended. I saw the report and concurred that surgery was indicated. I had just returned from Prasanthi Nilayam a few days prior and I had some *vibhuti* from Swami. I gave it to the boy and said, “Just take this *vibhuti*, so the surgery will go well.”

I did not hear from them for six months. After six months the father came to see me. I asked, “What happened to your son?” I was worried that something had happened to the boy during surgery, because the father came alone. He said, “Dr Reddy, I am returning to

India because my assignment is finished. My son took the *vibhuti* you gave him, every day. The day before the scheduled surgery, they repeated the ultrasound. The ultrasound was normal. The nodule had disappeared. He didn’t need surgery.” Swami had canceled the cancer! Swami takes care of everything. He tends to our major crises and our minor problems too.

Divine Sport in Kodaikanal

In 1994, we were blessed to be with Swami in Kodaikanal. We ate with Swami, and he took care of everybody’s needs. There was a western person who could not eat spicy food and Swami said, “*Give her a sandwich.*” Swami also said, “*This man is from Guntur. He likes pickles, so give him lots of hot pickle.*” And he looked at me and sweetly said, “*Narendra likes lots of sweets, so give him sweets.*” In this way, he tended to each person. That is our Divine Mother’s love.

In Kodaikanal, during that same trip, we went on a picnic with Swami. He took the students and some of the guests, and from a bougainvillea vine Swami plucked two plums. How incredible—plums from a bougainvillea vine! There are photographs of Swami holding these plums next to that bougainvillea vine. Swami then gave the plums to two students. At the time, the thought came to me, I wish I had one, but I couldn’t say that to Swami. The thought passed, and I didn’t say anything.

The next morning when we got up, two plums were on our nightstand. I ate one and gave the other to my wife. I inquired from our

hosts as to who sent the plums, but no one knew where the plums came from.

After we returned from Kodaikanal, Swami asked me to give a talk, and I began speaking about Vedantic philosophy. Swami said, “*Stop your Vedanta. Tell your experiences.*” So, I told this plum story, and Swami said, “*Good.*” In this way, Swami confirmed that he had put the plums on the nightstand. This amazing incident shows his omniscience and compassion.

Swami is the embodiment of love. He showers love equally on all, as I said, including a stone and a butterfly. At one moment Swami would be interacting with dignitaries like the President of the country or the Prime Minister. In the next moment he would be interacting with the primary school children, talking to them, playing with them, and squeezing their cheeks. His love flows to all. That is why people are attracted to him, from the poorest of the poor and the most ignorant, to the most erudite and the most royal. His love is the greatest magnet. It attracts us all.

The Whole World's Love for Swami

Last year, with Swami's blessings and guidance, Dr Goldstein and I went around the world attending Pre-World Conferences, sharing Swami's message and his love. We went to all the continents—Japan, Argentina,

Mexico, Italy, Germany, Russia, UK, and other places. I learned quickly that we went there not so much to teach Swami's message as to learn how people love Swami. In fact we were learning more than we were teaching. We witnessed how people love Swami all over the world. I remember when we went to Venice, Italy, the town of canals. They have a Sai Center there, where I shared Swami's stories.

After the session, an 85-year-old lady, an Italian woman, approached me and said, “Dr Reddy, I was touched by your stories, but I have one question. I never went to Puttaparthi, but whenever I think about Swami, everything is taken care of. I just think about him, and my wishes are

fulfilled. He gives me messages. Now, do you think I should go to Puttaparthi?”

I replied, “Blessed are those who have seen and have believed in him. But more blessed are those who have not seen yet who have believed.”

There are millions like this Italian devotee. For example, in Argentina and Russia, most people cannot afford to travel to India. These people love Swami intensely. It is heartwarming to see.

Ever since April 24, 2011, Easter Sunday, when Swami left his mortal coil and took *maha samadhi* (shedding of the physical body), we have seen an overwhelming

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outpouring of love from people around the world.

Prior to that, Swami was in the hospital for about four weeks, during which time people around the world focused intensely on Swami. Prior to this, people had been praying to Swami, “Swami, cure me, give me health, give me wealth, take care of my children, take care of my grandchildren, marriage,” and so on. But this time, amazingly, all devotees were united with only one thought: “Swami, when will you get better? We need you, Swami. Please come back.” That was their only prayer.

A couple of weeks ago when I went to see Swami in the hospital, I told him, “Swami, you love us so much. The whole world loves you. And they need you. They love you. Please come back, Swami.” I prayed very intensely.

Swami acknowledged with a smile. But he has his own will, his own *sankalpa*. He decided to leave, and he acknowledged the love of the devotees with a smile when I prayed to him.

After the *Maha Samadhi*

Innumerable people were lined up after Swami took *maha samadhi*. The dignitaries came, including the Prime Minister of India, the President of the Congress, the chief ministers, and various governors. Renowned musicians and famous sportsmen came. Saints from different religious organizations also attended. And many hundreds of thousands of devotees were lined up for miles to have the *darshan* of the Lord.

It was touching to see how people love Swami. They felt lost without Swami. People were sobbing and crying. Some people were fainting. People had the feeling, as the song goes, “How can we live without you? You are our heart and soul.” It is good to shed tears for God. That is why Sri Ramakrishna said, “People shed a jug full of tears for wife, children, wealth, name, and fame. Who cries for God? If you really cry for God, those are holy tears.”

But Swami doesn’t want us to go on crying. We have to move forward now and do his work. Swami has said in the past that wherever his glory is sung, he manifests. Now he says, wherever his work is done, he manifests. So we have to do his work.

Though his physical form is gone, he is not gone. When my wife and I were in Prasanthi Nilayam, we could feel Swami talking to us through the *samadhi* (burial spot).

The Shirdi avatar declared, “I will speak through my *samadhi*. My bones will speak to you, and I will bless you.” We can feel Swami’s presence even now in Prasanthi Nilayam. He walked among us. He laughed with us, sang with us, blessed us. Every stone, every dust particle, is saturated with his love. So it is always good to go to Prasanthi Nilayam.

On May 4, they held a special function in Prasanthi Nilayam. Some of the elders spoke, and the whole of Sai Kulwant Hall was full to the last inch. I had thought only a few people would be there, but people are feeling the presence of Swami and receiving his love. I was amazed. The whole hall was full because people still feel his presence. We

should have that faith. Swami was with us. He is with us. And he will be with us.

But now we have to go inward. As Swami himself said, “SAI BABA: *See Always Inside— Being, Awareness, Bliss, Atma.*” But we are not listening. People who want to know this truth should read the *Bhagavatha Vahini*, which Swami himself wrote. In the tenth chapter, “Mystery of Krishna,” Swami describes what took place after Krishna left the mortal coil—how the whole of Dwaraka was and how the Pandavas were. Eventually they realized that their problem was that they were not going within.

Arjuna, the greatest warrior, who could kill hundreds of thousands of people, could not even attack tribal men and protect the women after Krishna left. Then he realized that when Krishna was gone, Arjuna’s power was gone.

But Swami says a beautiful thing: the problem with Arjuna was that he always thought of Krishna as outside. He didn’t take Krishna inside. Always try to internalize the Lord, because he is with us, inside us, outside us, above us, and below us. We should have that conviction.

The Inner Swami

In 1996 at Krishnastami (Krishna’s birthday festival), Swami asked me to give

a talk in Kulwant Hall. I bowed to Swami, took *padnamaskar*, and said, “Swami, please speak through me.” Swami answered, “No.” I was taken aback.

Then he explained, “*I won’t interfere with the Inner Swami.*”

So, Swami himself gave importance to the Inner Swami. He also underscored that

importance in the song he composed, “*Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam . . .*”: “worship the feet of the Lord in your mind and heart.”

I asked Swami, “Is it really as effective to worship your feet in the heart as to physically touch them?”

He said, “*Yes, definitely yes! If you do so with love and conviction, if you*

worship the feet of your guru in your heart, it will have as much benefit.”

But we need to do it with conviction. We need to make Sai a part of our heart and soul. Then we will have that experience. When we do that, as Swami says, “*Sai and I are one.*” We become one. There is no difference between Sai and I.

Many years ago I was riding with Swami in the car. People were throwing flowers on the car, as usual, and calling out, “*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ki Jai.*”

We were nearing the ashram, and a fragile, elderly lady was there throwing flowers also. She was fragile. She was trying

As Swami
himself said:

“SAI BABA: *See
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to throw flowers on Swami's car, but not being strong enough, the flowers were falling back on her instead of on Swami's car.

Swami asked, "Narendra, did you see that?"

"Yes, Swami," I answered.

Swami said, "*This lady with so much devotion wanted to throw a flower, but it fell on herself. Without her knowledge, she did the right thing. She was worshipping the Divine. She didn't know Swami is inside her.*" He was telling us that we should understand this. We need to see Swami inside.

The Right Time

The first time I saw Swami was at the age of five. But the first time I really had interaction with Swami was years later. I had been a devotee of Shirdi Baba from childhood. Subsequently, I came to Swami and realized that both are one. When Swami called me in for an interview for the first time, I complained to him, "Swami, why did you make me wait all these years to know that both of you (Shirdi Sai and Sathya Sai) are the same?"

Then Swami gave three nice examples of how everything and everyone has a right time. He gave these three examples, one by one:

First, Swami said:

You are a doctor. When does the doctor operate on the cataract? Only when it is mature, when the time is right.

Then he said:

When the fruit is ripe, when it falls, it is sweet. When it is unripe, if you take it, you waste it.

And then:

When a wound is healing, a scab forms. It heals by itself and the scab falls off. But if you remove the scab before it is time, it bleeds. In the same way, this is the right time for you to come to me.

During that interview I also asked, "Swami, when I do worship, I first put flowers on Shirdi Baba. Then only do I put them on your picture. Is this OK?" It seems silly now, but at that time I was new to Swami.

Swami answered, "*Nothing wrong. You can put flowers on your own head.*"

I thought Swami was teasing me. But after a while in contemplation, I realized that Swami was offering a profound truth: *Yes, see the divinity within yourself.*

Even though he makes what seems like a passing comment, he wants us to understand a deeper truth. We need to make sure that we see divinity not only outside us but inside and everywhere. We need to experience that divinity.

Going Forward, Everything Will Continue

We need to go forward. People are having doubts. Swami's physical form is no longer there. Lots of people are wondering, will the programs continue? Yes. Actually the senior leaders in the Indian Organization and in the International Organization met. We agreed that the programs will continue as usual. The only difference is that they will continue with more intensity, with more love

and more enthusiasm, with all of us united to accomplish Swami's work.

We need to be more intense because he is with us. He is seeing us with a thousand eyes, not just two eyes. He is seeing us, watching us all the time. So we need to do his work with even more enthusiasm, even more love.

When I was there in March, I asked Swami about May 17 and 18 (the expected Buddha Purnima celebration), and Swami blessed those dates. Now more than 800 Buddhist devotees from over eight countries are going on pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam for Buddha Purnima.

We also prayed to Swami about the plans for the Young Adult conference on youth leadership, which was scheduled for July 13 and 14. Swami blessed the plans. So we will continue with that.

Also, on July 23 and 24, 2011, an International Orthopedic Conference will take place in Prasanthi Nilayam. World-renowned orthopedic specialists will explore cutting-edge technologies and ideal health care. Yes. Everything will continue.

Just before I left the USA, the USA youth requested me to seek Swami's approval for a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam this August. They suggested a few dates. I showed these to Swami and said, "They want to come

in August—the first, second, or third week. You choose the time."

Swami replied, "*No, not then. Let them come for birthday* (November 23)." So, he invited them to come for his birthday. This is most unique. The other plans he approved, but he invited the USA youth to come for his birthday this year, instead of the dates they

had chosen. So he is still present there! Otherwise he would not have said that. The USA youth really are blessed people to be invited for the birthday.

Day before yesterday, which was May 6, devotees from all over the world celebrated Easwaramma Day with lots of love. They distributed food and clothing to the needy. Clearly, Swami's works go on and will continue to go

on. This is a quantum leap. There will be a new chapter. Now we are in that quantum leap.

People wonder why and how Swami's mission will go on. The mission of Jesus increased after he was gone. The same thing happened with Buddha and with Shirdi Baba. Now the mission of this present avatar, unparalleled in history, will also increase. During the lifetime of the Sathya Sai avatar, devotees from more than 170 countries visited the holy land of Prasanthi Nilayam. The Sathya Sai Organization is already present in 125 countries with more than two

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thousand centers. This was so at the time of the Avatar's *samadhi*. We can imagine what will happen in the future by his blessings and guidance.

We should have the conviction that things will move on. We need to go forward. We cannot get stagnant or stuck in one place. We must not get stuck only in rituals and *bhajans*. Yes, these are good, but we need to do his work.

What is his work? Love all and serve all. Swami's life was our example. Look at all the humanitarian projects he did—the medical institutions, the educational institutions, the social-service projects. He was always ready to serve the needy. His heart went out to them.

We need to love and serve others the way he loved and served us. That is our obligation. That is our duty. We need to move forward. We need to go forward.

Move On to the Ultimate Goal

Swami related a nice story that illustrates how we need to go forward and not get stuck. There was a woodcutter, a poor man who couldn't make both ends meet. He couldn't support the family. A saint was going by, giving *upadesha*, mantra initiation, to everybody. So this man wanted a mantra

to solve his problems. He said, "Sir, give me a mantra so that I can make more money."

The saint replied, "Go forward."

This poor man was disappointed. He had expected the saint to give him a mantra to make more money, but instead he had said only, "Go forward." The poor man told his wife, "The saint said only 'Go forward.'"

His wife was wise. *WIFE*, they say, is "Wisdom Invited For Ever." She gave him advice. "The Swami said to go forward. So, next time in the forest, go forward a few yards."

He went forward and found sandalwood trees instead of the regular wood. He cut the sandalwood and was very happy. He made lots of money.

"I am happy now; I have made enough money,"

thought the woodcutter.

But his wife said, "You are a fool. Continue to go forward."

The next day the woodcutter went forward and found copper mines. Mining copper, he made much more money. Then he went forward again and came to silver mines. Then, Swami says, gold mines. Finally, diamond mines. This means "die mind," the final goal.

We need to move on until we reach that ultimate goal. That is why Swami says:

Arise! Awake!

Stop not till the goal is reached!

The goal for all of us, Swami says, is one: to realize that we are *amritasyaputra*, children of immortality.

We Are Children of Immortality

What is the goal? The goal for all of us, Swami says, is one: to realize that we are *amritasyaputra*, children of immortality.

Swami says that this is the degree we should get, not an MA degree. He says, “*MA plus D is MAD. BA plus D is BAD. MBA is Member of Bad Association.*”

The real degree we should strive for is *amritasyaputra*. We are the children of immortality. How can we be the children of immortality? Swami says the way is simple:

Remove immorality and the way opens to immortality. So always think good, see good, do good, be good. This is the way to God.

So I pray to Swami to bless us all with determination and dedication, so that we may reach that goal in this very lifetime. Thank you for your patience and your kind attention.

—**Dr Narendranath Reddy**

Chair, Sri Sathya Sai

International Medical Committee;

Director, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

All of you are devotees, but for want of proper advice you are confused and feel depressed. On account of this confusion and depression you develop doubts. Sai does not ask you to renounce the world. But in what way should you live in the world? You should enjoy the world with a spiritual outlook. You should realize that you have come down from the Atma (divine inner reality) to the realm of nature. Today the reverse view prevails among sadhaks (spiritual aspirants). They wrongly think that they are proceeding from nature to the Spirit. You have emerged from the Atma and not evolved from nature. You are the children of immortality. You are sparks of the Divine. (SSS 23:8, April 29, 1990)

When an iron filing comes in contact with a magnet, the iron filing also gets the properties of a magnet. Likewise, the knower of Brahman (the Universal Absolute) becomes Brahman. You are all children of immortality, you are eternal. The relationship between you and God is eternal. The body changes through many births, but the mind and deeds continue from birth to birth. Just as an accountant totals the accounts of the day and carries the balance over onto the next day, our mind follows to the next life. You should be able to control the mind by controlling the senses; then you can merge in truth and experience oneness with God. (Thought for the Day, May 1, 2008)

—**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

Fill Your Hearts with Love

Practice the Love Principle

Whether one is a great scholar or a ruler living in a mansion, or a hero who has won great victories, or a destitute groveling in poverty, without love in one's heart, one is nothing. A devotee with love is more worthy of veneration. Of what use are men who can make the stones sing in joy, men who can play with the heads of the enemy, men who can wield power over the land, if they have no awareness of the wail of the oppressed. When will they respond to the cries of the poor? (TELUGU POEM)

Embodiments of love! The cosmos is filled with love. Love is righteousness. Love is truth. The universe is based on love. Lost in the transient pleasures of worldly life, man forgets this supreme love principle.

What is the reason? Selfishness has grown and selflessness has declined. Narrow-mindedness is widespread. Broadness of heart is on the wane. Desires have increased. Ideals are vanishing. Human life is dominated by selfishness and self-interest.

The ancient sages enthroned *tyaga* (inward renunciation) on the highest pedestal. They adored righteousness. Today these sublime ideals are forgotten in [this country]. As a consequence the country is racked by every kind of trouble.

A heart without love is a cemetery. Love demonstrates the existence of the Divine: it is all-pervasive. It is the basis for human unity. Only when selfishness goes and faith in the Divine grows will human unity be achieved. Hence, every human being should fill his

heart with love. God is love; love is God. Love is linked to love. When one is full of love, he is fit for oneness with God.

It is most vital for everyone to recognize and practice this love principle. At all times love has existed among the good and the bad, in the forest or in a palace, in attachment or in separation, in one's conduct as well as in one's speech, in the mind as well as in action. It is all-pervasive.

The Power of Love

The most powerful weapon to destroy the forces of evil rampant in the world today is love. Unfortunately men are not pursuing the right path to acquire this sacred love. Love is the seed of love. It is also the branches, the flowers, and the fruit. To enjoy the fruit of love, one has to practice love.

Instead of seeking to know the true nature of love, man is engaged in the pursuit of wealth and power. No doubt wealth and power are necessary, but only within limits. The vast ocean, when it swells beyond its

bounds, is censured for its misbehavior. The human body and mind will be healthy only when food is consumed within limits. Excessive eating causes various disorders.

Everything in the world is governed by the bounds set for it. However, love has no limits. "Love is beyond the power of words," declares the sage Narada.

The flow of love is life-giving water for everyone. How is this love to be secured? Not by chanting the Lord's name (*japa*), or by meditation (*dhyana*), or by studying the scriptures. God does not dwell in the Vedas or the Puranas. God dwells in the heart and should be sought there.

People should close their mouth and open their heart. Then they will experience divine bliss. Today love has been almost totally banished. Where love should prevail, hatred has taken its place. Petty jealousy has usurped the place of compassion. Man can experience true happiness only

when the appropriate qualities reside in their allotted places.

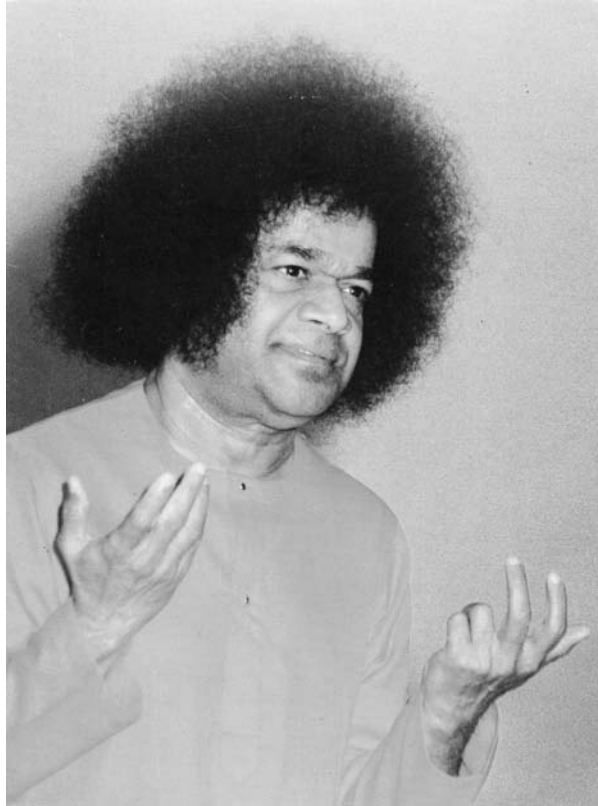
Transform your entire life into a saga of love. You will then lack nothing to make you happy. All wealth and position will be added unto you. Love conquers all.

Total Surrender

What is the nature of this love? When praying to God, you should have a feeling of total surrender. If you are really keen about realizing God, if you are hungering and thirsting for God, then you should cultivate this all-absorbing love. Mere expression of desire is not enough. You should endeavor to experience union with the Divine. If your heart is full of selfishness, how can you experience

the Divine merely by a wish?

There is love of sorts today. It is related to body consciousness and not to the Self that is love's basis. Spiritual love begins with the



concept of *Dasoham* (I am your servant) and culminates in the concept of *Soham* (He and I are one). Without the feeling of *Dasoham*, you cannot experience the feeling of *Soham*. *Soham* is the expression of divine oneness: “The *Atma* and I are one.” That *Atma* is God. That is love. That is truth. That is righteousness.

Men have been concerned with the four goals of human life—righteousness, wealth, desire, and liberation (the *purushartas*—*dharma*, *arta*, *kama*, and *moksha*). But there is a fifth goal: love. Only when love is achieved will the world become an earthly paradise.

Where love prevails, there will be no room for hatred or envy. Love can have no truck with evil thoughts and actions. Love should be steadfast and unwavering. If one goes on hopping from one Swami to another, from one form of worship to another, he will never experience love of the Divine. “One word, one path”—that should be the aim.

Thousands of people have gathered here. What has brought them together here? Love is the main cause. Without love, few of you would have come from such distant places. How does this love express itself? It is a process of give and take. You have to receive God’s love, and you have to offer your love. But both are one and the same love. God’s love is reflected in your bodies. That is the meaning of the declaration [in the Bhagavad Gita], “*A fragment of mine is present in everyone in the cosmos.*”

Use Love to Benefit Others

The divine element in you should not be misused. It should be used for the benefit of

others. The divine principle of love is being treated in narrow terms. From ancient times the sages welcomed the principle of love with open arms. Narada declared, “Having gained divine love (*parama prema*), a person becomes perfect, immortal, and content. (*Ya-labdva puman siddho bhavati, amrito bhavati, tripto bhavati.*)”

Sage Narada considered divine love as supreme, over all things. Just as without sugar no sweet will have sweetness, without love nothing in life can have any value. Your heart is inherently filled with love. But you are ignoring this plenitude and going after the trivial. Your real sustenance will come from this divine love and not from other petty pleasures.

Every cell in the human body is filled with divine love, and this microcosmic love fills the entire cosmos.

Investment in Devotion

You have no need to go in search of love elsewhere. It is all within you. A man makes every effort to accumulate wealth. An equal effort is needed to acquire the wealth of love. Men today invest their assets of love in pitiful ventures. Instead they should invest all their love in the divine bank of devotion. This deposit is not only safe but will yield you increasing returns in terms of bliss.

Your heart is the bank where your love for God should be deposited. Deposits elsewhere are insecure. Deposits of money may be in danger of being lost. But the deposit in your heart is immune from any kind of theft or loss. Make your deposit safe

by “insuring” it within your heart. There it is totally safe, though it has no bolts, doors, or locks.

This love has been characterized as *Amrita-swarupa* (the form of eternal nectar). Nectar pleases only the palate. But divine love confers eternal bliss, which is sweeter than nectar. Everyone should resolve to acquire this nectarean love.

Today your foremost duty is to enthrone *tyaga* (inward renunciation, leaving of worldly desires). Only when such renunciation reigns will love come into its own. All your latent potential will then manifest itself, and you will succeed in all your legitimate undertakings. When love becomes the ruling principle, sorrow and disappointment will disappear. That was why the Vedas declared that such renunciation alone is the key to immortal bliss.

*God is love. How can you hope to
realize God without love?*

(TELUGU POEM)

How to manifest the love that is within you? You have to engage your hands in clapping as you chant the names of Rama, Krishna, and others. Recite the names of the Lord with your mouth.

If you really desire to experience God, then like Prahlada, you must remember the name of the Lord always: “*Om Namo Narayanaya*.” Like Radha and Meera, sing the praises of the Lord. Like Jayadeva, Gauranga, and Tukaram, worship the Lord. Like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, shed tears in devotion before the figure of the Lord. Then you will experience the Lord.

People shed tears over petty things but do not shed a single tear for the Lord. There are two kinds of tears—tears of joy and tears of sorrow. What you have to shed for God are tears of joy.

Power of the Lord’s Name

When Krishna was being weighed in a balance, all the jewels of Sathyabama could not balance His weight. Rukmini then came and declared that the mere chanting of the name of Krishna would be equal to His weight. And then by the additional offer of even a leaf, a flower, or a little water, the scales would be tilted against Krishna.

So saying, she placed a *tulasi* (holy basil) leaf on the scale, and lo! it went down. The *tulasi* leaf carried the full weight of Rukmini’s boundless love for Krishna. All the jewels of Sathyabama were of no avail. But Rukmini’s invoking the name of Krishna and offering a *tulasi* leaf with a love-filled heart tilted the scales against Krishna.

Such is the power of the Lord’s name and a love-filled offering to the Lord. The Lord is not swayed by wealth or scholarship, power or position. Love alone can move him.

If you wish to sway the Lord, you must offer love and love alone. Today, unfortunately, love has become scarce. Even material love is disappearing. But God’s love is boundless. In whatever manner you may love him, he responds in equal measure. But without love, you have no right to seek his love.

Filled with bad feelings and thoughts, if you pray to the pure and unsullied Lord, how

do you expect to win his grace? If you remain pure at least in your shrine, you may acquire some fragment of divine love. There are any number of able exponents of spirituality. But of what use are their discourses if they do not practice what they preach?

Manifest Your Love

Embodiments of the Divine! If you are really filled with devotion, manifest your love for God, who is the very embodiment of love. If you genuinely hunger and thirst for God, partake of divine love to appease your hunger and quench your thirst. Divine love is the only panacea for all your troubles and miseries arising from insatiable desires and frustrated ambitions. God's love is like a lighthouse beacon. It shows you the right path. Divert the boat of your life toward the lighthouse of divine love. You are then bound to gain the shore of bliss.

You do not need any special type of penance or meditation. Meditate on love. Fill your mind with love. Even while attending to your daily chores, regard them all as offerings to the Divine. God is omnipresent. See God in everything and every being. Let love grow in your hearts like the waxing moon. Divine love will not wane like the moon. Let such steadfast love be enshrined in your heart. As Tukaram said, "Rama in the heart and work in the hand (*Dil me Ram, hat me kam*)."

The duty of everyone from today onward is to cultivate true, unsullied love. With love of God you can secure anything. Without that love, you will only be steeped in misery.

Do Not Divorce Yourself from Nature

Let the Buddhist prayer be your guide: First, take refuge in your intellect—*Buddham Sharanam Gachami*. Divert that intellect to the service of society—*Sangam Sharanam Gachami*. Then you will find refuge in bliss—*Anandam Sharanam Gachami*.

Do not divorce yourself from nature: "The cosmos is permeated by the Divine" (*Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagath*). Hence, recognize the Divine even in your enemy. His heart is bound to change.

When you love even the one who has harmed you, he is also bound to change. Do not allow your love to be affected in any way. When people pray to God, sometimes doubts may arise as to whether and how the Lord will respond. Such doubts arose even in the mind of Radha. But all doubts disappeared when she realized that the whole universe was the mansion of God and there was no need to keep any door open or closed. All that was needed was complete surrender to God. The mystic significance of the songs of saints and devotees such as Radha and Meera should be rightly understood. (Bhagavan sang a Meera bhajan, "*Chalo re man*," to explain the esoteric meaning of the song.)

Sing the Glories of God

God is moved by the devotee's heartfelt song. He becomes one with the devotee. No other form of worship has the same effect on God. It is enough if you do the singing within yourself. (Bhagavan sang the opening lines of another song, "*Rama nanu kapadu*,"

to demonstrate how a melodious prayer can move anyone's heart.)

Make music your passport to merger with the Divine. Music is a gift of God. Only the gifted ones can sing sweetly, appealingly, and delightfully. [We have here M.S. Subbalakshmi. From her early years, she dedicated herself to music, which filled her heart.] This kind of soulful music cannot be acquired by anybody. It can come only through God's grace.

When you sing in public, you can give delight to many. But if you cannot do so, you can sing to yourself. It will delight your heart and sweeten it. Immerse yourself in all work with love.

Whatever you do, consider it as a gift from God. When you have malaria, you have to take a bitter quinine mixture. But that is the medicine for your ailment. Likewise, when adversity confronts you, treat it as a kind of medicine for your good. Gold has to be melted and beaten to make it into a jewel. A diamond must be cut to make it more brilliant. Likewise, troubles in life serve to refine a person. Love should enable you to welcome even hardships as meant for your own good.

Today this body enters on its 71st year. This body is made up of the five elements and is essentially impermanent. Do not attach much importance to the body. Take to heart the love principle that is being conveyed to you. My entire life is filled with love. I have never put anyone at any time to any kind of suffering. I have never done any harm to anyone. I have hated no one.

I have no aversion to anybody. What is the reason? It is my love that is transforming others. I am now 71. But no one can know what accounts for my condition. I may act as if I am angry on some occasions, only the anger does not stem from the heart but is confined to the tongue. From head to foot I am filled only with love. It is this love that has attracted the whole world.

I do not desire anything. I have three P's: One is purity; second is patience; third is perseverance. These three have secured the world's regard. No invitations were issued to those who have gathered here. Swami's love alone attracted them all like a magnet.

Some may ask why they are not attracted to Swami if that magnet is so powerful. The reason is that these persons are like rusted iron, which no magnet can attract. Let them remove the rust and dust, and they will be drawn to the magnet. Their hatred and desires, their envy and greed, are the rust and dust covering them. If you cleanse yourselves of these, wherever you are, you will be mine, and I will be yours. The hapless and the forlorn, wherever they may be, are the concern of Sai.

Promote sacred love in your hearts. That love will not only redeem your lives but will promote the well being of all around you. You need not offer anything except love. In Prasanthi Nilayam no offerings are permitted. Only love is allowed entry.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks (SSS) 29:52, Nov 23, 1996

A Taste of God

God Is Sweet!

Since Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's passing I have been contemplating whether to share a sacred experience that for years I safeguarded and shared only with a few devotees. I hope by sharing about this unique gift—yet another example of his love—many hearts will be further strengthened and delighted.

For many years I had explored a variety of spiritual teachings and teachers; however, I had remained unaware of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Of course he chose the appropriate time, and in 1995 he revealed himself through a dream. Soon after, I decided to visit India for the first time. Before my trip I quite spontaneously told a friend, "If I get a chance to speak with Sai Baba, I will ask him for a taste of God." But on that trip he gloriously "ignored" me! I returned somewhat disappointed. After a year that brought several dreams of Swami, I planned to return to Prasanthi and stay for three months, although previously I had vowed never to return there! I set off for India in October 1996 from San Francisco.

The San Francisco group was granted an interview on October 12. During the interview, as Swami was asking others what they wanted, I without being asked said, "Baba, I want to get in touch with my inner self." At the time I was not that familiar with

his teachings (or Hindu spirituality), which emphasize awareness of the God within us. My understanding of the Self or Higher Self stemmed from other works I had studied.

Swami looked at me and uttered a phrase in a language unknown to me. In hindsight, it did not seem to have been Telugu. I looked at him askance, and he repeated the same phrase, looking at me. I was bewildered and briefly looked at others in the room for any clues. Swami repeated it a third time and said gently, "I will bless."

Soon after the interview I noticed my mouth was very sweet and attributed it to the *vibhuti* (holy ash) that Swami had given to the ladies in the room. I checked with each, and they each described a different taste—but not sweet. At the time I was sharing a room in the South buildings with an elderly Indian lady. On hearing of this, she commented, "Swami gave you Shiva's nectar. It will stay a long time."

I had only an elementary knowledge of traditional Hindu gods and their attributes. But I was excited and very happy. I attempted to "test" the validity and strength of "the taste" by gargling with a strong commercial mouthwash (very bitter!) and drinking several black coffees—yet it persisted!

Throughout my stay, the sweet taste would manifest most of the time, particularly during *darshans* (opportunities to see Bhagavan) as Swami entered the hall, when its flow became incredibly intense. And to this day in 2011, it remains with me.

I will not attempt here to interpret the transformational effect at a deeper level, or subsequent incidents, or to offer any intellectual analysis of this experience. My life did not change in any dramatic way at the everyday level, and I have had my fair share of difficulties due to karmic processes and choices made. Needless to say, this episode is not only testament to Swami's omniscience (hearing that I had wished for "a taste of God" the year prior to the interview) but a unique instance to share with all—of his love



and his divinity, beyond the materialization of objects or physical healings that we have become familiar with over the decades.

—Maryam Smith
Oakland, California

God is sweetness; he is bliss incarnate. For even the little sweetness that material objects give, he is the cause. Without his sweetness, even the temporary sweetness and joy derived from worldly objects and materialistic pursuits will taste bitter. The wise understand this and associate themselves with the great ones who have tasted the divine sweetness, in a spirit of humility and reverence. Develop unwavering love for God and do not be affected by derision or praise, by wind or sun or rain, by honor or dishonor. This one-pointed journey to the goal will set you free.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Prasanthi Vahini

Nectar of Grace

Sai's Sweet Response

This occurred in the early 1980s in Prasanthi Nilayam. Just a small number of women devotees including myself were seated on the southern, back verandah of the temple (*mandir*). It was beautifully quiet.

I had been reading from N. Kasturi's book, *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*, (Sri Sathya Sai Baba's biography) and ruminating over stories I loved of Sai Baba manifesting *amrit* (divine nectar).

As I closed my eyes and went within, I began speaking with Sai in my heart, saying, "Swami, that must have been so sweet, in the early days, when in the interview room you would materialize a small golden spoon and a small vessel of *amrit*, and then proceed to drip the *amrit* on each devotees' tongue!"

I was in bliss thinking of this sweet interaction between the Lord and his devotees, when I heard Sai inside say, "Tilt your head up."

I looked around the verandah quickly to see if anyone was watching, because they might think it strange if I suddenly tilted up my head. But all the women around me were focused quietly within. So, I lifted my head back and then heard Sai say, "Open your mouth." I did, and—amazingly—felt the *drip, drip, drip* of *amrit* on my tongue.

There is no mistaking the sweetness of *amrit* (which has been called the "nectar of the gods" or "nectar of immortality"), and it is wonderful to feel the sweetness of our loving Sai always with us, listening to our inner dialogue with him.

God is Omnipresent!

God is Love!

God is Almighty!

Submitted with love,

—**Suzanne Jansen**

Idyllwild, California

The story of the Lord's adventures is all nectar. It has no other component, content, or taste. Everyone can drink their fill from any part of that ocean of nectar, just as sugar is sweet irrespective of whether it is eaten during the day or night, for it is day or night only for the person who eats, not for the sugar. Sugar behaves uniformly always. So too, the love of God and the love for God are both eternally sweet and pure, whatever the method of accepting or attaining them. The same sweetness exists, everywhere, at all times, in every particle.

—**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**
Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1

Stories of *Amrit*

From Sathyam Sivam Sundaram, Part 1

Sai Baba had gone to Madras and had given the blessed pleasure of his presence to thousands there. He also went as far as Masulipatam. Wherever he went he granted people peace of mind and spiritual advice, and assured them that he would guide and guard them. One day while on the sands of the seashore near Masulipatam, Baba walked straight into the sea! The devotees were some time in realizing the situation.

Then they heard a voice and turned toward the waves. They saw a vision of the Lord on the serpent Sesha, reclining on the waves! Within a moment, Baba was by their side. They were struck by the fact that his clothes were not wet at all. Another day he walked toward the sea, up to the very edge, and threw a silver cup far into the waves. Everyone wondered why.

In an instant the cup came back and was deposited near them by a wave. Sai Baba lifted it up, along with the “salt water” it contained; he poured the water onto the palms of the devotees, a few drops for each to be swallowed religiously. Each one found it to be fragrant and sweet beyond compare! The sea had offered him the “nectar of immortality,” just as years later it placed round his feet a garland of pearls.

People who witnessed these miracles and partook of the nectar are now at Prasanthi Nilayam, his place of “Tranquil Peace” at Puttaparthi, and are ardent devotees of the Lord.

—Ch 6, “Sai Baba Again”

During the evening of the heavenly eleventh day of the moon, He has for many years been regularly “taking” divine nectar for distribution among the devotees while in the midst of prayers or discourses on the river bed or seashore. For example, on December 21, 1958, during Baba’s Kerala tour, he went to the Kovalam Beach, seven miles from the town of Trivandrum, accompanied by many devotees. At a quiet spot on the seashore, a mile away from the bathing area, Baba sat with the devotees around him and sang a few songs, which were followed by a prayer session. During the session, Baba “took” from the sands a bewitching sandalwood image of Lord Krishna playing the flute, and after a few minutes he “took” a gold ring with the Krishna motif embossed on it!

Everyone expected that Baba would distribute *amrita*, “nectar of immortality,” “taken” by him from nowhere. They were

not disappointed, for even as the devotees sang, the fragrance of the nectar was wafted in the still night air, and no one knew from where! Baba's palms became sticky, as if saturated with syrup, even while beating time for the songs. Then all knew that the fragrance was emanating from those palms. He held his palms together and pointed them at a silver vessel. Thick ambrosial "honey" flowed into it from his hand! He distributed the nectar himself to all present, including some fishermen who had joined the group. The sweetness and scent of the nectar were incomparably strange and outside the experience of everyone.

—Ch 7, "Prasanthi Nilayam"

At Thippegonadanahalli, the lake near Bangalore, some devotees had enjoyed a quiet morning with Baba. After a long discussion on the doctrine of rebirth and the nature of the soul, Baba materialized a small, silver, screw-top vessel full of *amrita* and distributed it to the group. He then gave the container to a man and his wife who were shortly leaving for England. When He noticed the disappointment of the couple at receiving only an empty vessel, he took it from them, and without even the "wave of the hand," gave it back. It was full of the precious nectar!

—Ch 9, "The Wave of the Hand"

—**N Kasturi**

Excerpts from *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*,
Part 1, © 1969 (American edition, ©1989)



Nectar is described by the scriptures as extremely sweet. But nectar nowhere approaches the sweetness of love. As compared to love, nectar appears insipid. The uniqueness of such love is beyond the comprehension of ordinary people. Such love arises only when you churn the ocean of bliss. Hence, all our actions should be based on love. But in this mundane world, love assumes external forms. When pure gold is given to the goldsmith for making a jewel, he mixes copper and other metals with it, and thereby its value is reduced. Likewise, because pure love is mixed with worldly attachments, it gets tainted. But when such tainted love is directed toward selfless service, it gets purified.

—**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**
November 24, 1990

The Secret of Immortality

How to Gain the Real Heavenly Nectar

The body is a chalice wherein you collect the nectar of divine grace. That is the prime purpose for which it has been gifted to you. For, without a cup or chalice, a casket or jug, how can the nectar be taken? “*Raso vai sah*,” say the Vedas: “He (God) is sweet nectar, no less.” And when his grace is showered, the body is thrilled. The body has to be kept ever clean and pure, unaffected by dirt, disease, distress, or defeatism. . . .

You have precious gems of wisdom within your hearts that require excavation in order to be of any benefit. Intelligence is the instrument you must use to gain them. At the very start, you will encounter a boulder barring your way—body consciousness, ego. Then you run into desires, which are loose rocks that also have to be dug out and set aside. Then you come to a bed of sand—good thoughts, good words, and good deeds; when this stratum is reached, you are nearing success.

If you keep on in *satsang* (keeping company with the Divine) every day, your heart will maintain its purity unimpaired, but if you seek such *satsang* only off and on, it will be difficult to win grace or particles of it, for the vessel will be tarnished and untidy. Even in your own households, you must have

noticed that a vessel in daily use is bright and clean, but vessels stored and used only now and then will have to be scrubbed with great vigor to become bright. (SSS 13:15, July 7, 1975)

Churning of the Ocean of Milk

The festival of Mukkoti Ekadashi, is also known as Vaikuntha Ekadashi (day sacred to Lord Vishnu). The two speakers who addressed you described the traditional legend of the churning of the ocean of milk, with all the details found in the Bhagavatha—the ocean of milk, Lord Vishnu’s incarnation as a tortoise (the Kurma avatar), the Mandara mountain, the venomous serpent Vasuki, the demons and celestials (*asuras* and *suras*), and the various things that got churned up from the ocean, culminating in the *amrit* (nectar that grants immortality)! That legend has great value for you, because you too have to churn the ocean of your heart and win the nectar for yourself. The legend is only a reminder, a cue, a call.

The heart full of the quality of purity and poise (*satva guna*) is the ocean of milk. The steady contemplation of the Divine, either as your own reality or as the ideal to be reached, is the Mandara mountain, placed in the ocean as the churning rod.

... Continued on page 28

Sathya Sai Speaks

*Have you heard our Baba speak
At public meetings anywhere?
He never calls it speech,
Nor will you name it so!
He does not raise his voice, harangue,
Or rouse the mob or rail or flail;
He does not hesitate; he will not calculate,
Hum and haw and pause and ponder,
Making you wonder why you came!
He does not waver, wander,
Collecting thoughts, contriving notes;
He does not waste a moment, decorating thoughts
In showy lace and frills, clothing borrowed texts
In shimmering gauze. He is no orator—pompous, proud,
Clamouring for claps, publicity-mad!
He will not circumambulate, declaim . . . or, even . . . “speak”!
He is the rain-cloud, bringing Life
To the parched ones here below!
He “talks” . . . he “talks” to you, and you,
and every single you that has gathered there.
To every single Arjuna, with heavy heart and empty hand,
Afraid to fight the battle of life on to victory.
You feel he has come for you, to you.
You see him, silently looking around!
The searchlight eye full circle swings!
How lucky, you are there!
He smiles; he wins you by that smile!
You scarce can take your eyes from off that face,
So alluring, so divine!
You scarce can pull your heart from off his grip;
The clasp is cool comfort! The silence deepens . . .*

*Though thousands have been squatting, waiting,
For hours and hours . . .*

Himalayan stillness, twilight calm!

“Premaswaruplara! . . .”

The golden hour has come! Heaven’s gate ajar!

His voice is sweet as honey

Hived by heavenly bees from Parijatha trees!*

His call is clarion clear!

O! ’Tis thrilling, ’tis filling rapture in the soul,

Flowing like the Ganga, freeing the bound;

Yielding rich reaping, for just ploughing and sowing;

*Welling and swelling like Gersoppa Falls**;*

Yielding vast power, for just wheeling and wiring!

His talk is a cascade, so limpid and pure,

Teaching, never preaching, unraveling all knots,

Stilling the questionings ere they emerge in mind;

Defining, refining, consoling the pining,

Commanding, yea, demanding the bending of pride;

Sparing no one, be he ruling or serving;

Chiding, reprimanding the fool, and fanatic;

Joking and coaxing, poking fun at all hoaxing;

Quoting from what He said in the past ages,

Detailing facts of His incarnating.

Resplendent poetry, spontaneous, sublime,

Painting pictures of transcendent Truth;

Parable, proverb, scintillating bright,

Tinkling, twinkling, tintinnabulating lilt;

Every hour a minute, every minute a second;

Every word a mantra, every phrase a Sutra;

A Gayatri, a sentence; Upanishad, a speech!

For He is no well or tank or river!

His is the ocean of Wisdom Divine!

* Night-blooming jasmine, considered a sacred plant that was produced originally by the churning of the ocean of milk

** 830-ft. scenic waterfalls in Karnataka state

*Oh! His words shower mercy, like morning dew
On every heart-bud awakening from dreaming.
He is feeding your roots and speeding the sap,
Sprouting the buds, painting the petals;
Perfuming them well, inviting the bees,
Ripening the pods, with each word of His!*

*There! The meaning of His word, a tiny seed,
Drops on your rock-like heart! And wonder of wonders!
It germinates there! . . . sprouts and puts forth leaves!
The silken half-blind baby-roots do run about,
Tickling the stone, jabbing, pleading for suckling!
Succeeding at last, it grows; and, growing into a tree,
Your rock is broken into clay!*

*His talk, you will find, is cooling, not freezing;
Warming, not burning; raining, not flooding;
Healing the ailing and hearts bewailing;
Soothing, not searing; no toxin, but tonic;
Balming and calming; all fact and no fiction!
Every sentence spreads joy and scorches gloom,
Impelling attention, compelling assent;
Dispelling dejection, repelling sloth;
Attracting you nearer, detaching from bonds;
Infusing courage, and fusing creeds;
Imposing no doctrine, composing all feuds;
Informing (so charming!), never harming, disarming!*

*Sifting the responding, lifting the desponding.
Stressing on “doing, behaving, and living,”
Appealing for “feeling, believing, and acting.”
Calling all listening, to spurn imitating,
Vainly disputing, blind leading the blind;
Knocking at paradise through power and pelf,
Or boasting of branches of family tree,
And seeking for peace, in earning and spending
And wanting and panting and hoarding and guarding.*

*As you hear Him talking, you quietly resolve
To take a step forward on the pilgrim road,*



*Unfold your wings and soar into the sky!
You feel you are a Lion, cheated into bleating!
A diamond, set in dirty lead!
Engaging in no fray, enraging no foe,
He is welcoming all who are thirsty or starving,
Or limping, or blinking, or climbing and sliding,
Raising the stooping, embracing the drooping,
Assuaging pain, assuring His Grace;
He reminds us all of the road we have missed.
He describes the joy of the journey's end.
He opens our eyes; He strengthens our limbs;
He heartens the struggling, groping his way;
Awakening the sleeping, making the sitting stand,
The standing to walk, the walking to reach!
Proclaiming, revealing, announcing to all,
Asserting His coming for our burden assuming,
Redeeming the wayward, the downcast, diseased;
Underlining the Truth, undermining the false.*

*Ah! What is this? What luck! What grace!
Even as He talks, "it" blossoms into song.
Oh! Captivating song! He teaches us to pray,
Tranquilizing all the furious waves;
Steeling the nerves and strengthening the will;
Attuning our soul to Dharma! Sathya! Prema!*

*And when it stops
And you open your eyes,
You find them full of tears!
Your neighbor weeps like child for mother,
But why? Look up and see: He has left the dais!
Be proud you had the chance. From this moment,
Know you are bound to be an ascending,
attempting, adventurous soul;
Arjuna, resuming arms for the fray,
With Krishna leading the horses aright—
How lucky you heard Him talk!*

—N. KASTURI

(Poem read in the Holy Presence on October 16, 1958)

Vasuki, the serpent that was wound round the churning rod as a rope, is the gang of the senses, emitting poisonous fumes during the process of churning and nearly frightening the demons who held its head. The rope is held by the good and bad impulses, and they both struggle in the churning process, eager for the results that each has set its heart on.

The grace of God is the tortoise incarnation, for the Lord himself comes to the rescue once he knows that you are earnestly seeking the secret of immortality: He comes, silently and unobserved, as the tortoise did, holding the *manana* (reflection, rumination) process unimpaired and serving as the steady base of all spiritual practice.

Many things emerge from the mind when churned, but the wise wait patiently for the appearance of the guarantor of immortality (the true nectar) and seize upon it with avidity. That is the lesson of the legend. It is a summary of *Atmavidya*, the science of Self-realization

The Lord is of the nature of bliss (*anandamaya*); he is also divine bliss itself (*ananda*), which is to be tasted through [steadily dwelling on] the Divine Name. . . .

Today is the day when during the churning of the ocean, nectar (*amrit*) emerged and was distributed to the gods—for the gods themselves had slid into the calamity of losing their immortality!

Man too is the child of immortality, which is why he cannot force upon himself

the conviction that he will die. He sees his neighbor die but believes that he will somehow escape it. The man of realization (*jnani*), however, is ever ready to cast off this encumbrance and escape from the prison of name and form. . . .

Today being Vaikunta Ekadashi, many of you expect me to go to the Chitravathi riverbed and create nectar and give it to all. . . You have earned the nectar of my words, to treasure in your minds and act upon. This is the real Heavenly Nectar! Know its worth; do not allow it to be wasted. Garner it to become godly. (SSS 05:01, Jan 13, 1965)

Win the Flow of Nectar from the Heart

Today being Vaikunta Ekadhashi, many of you are yearning to get nectar (*amrit*) from me. But, of what benefit is it merely to swallow a few drops of nectar created by me? Only when the *satvic* (good) quality wins, subduing the *rajasic* and the *thamasic* (excessive and deficient) qualities in the battles between them that go on in every heart, does *amrit* arise therein!

The *amrit* that confers immortality is the *amrit* one wins through one's own *sadhana* (spiritual discipline). The word "upward vision" (*urdva-drishti*) is used in the study of meditation to indicate an exercise in which the two eyes are directed together, upward to a point between the eyebrows. *Urdva* means upward and *drishti* means look; the term refers not to a physical exercise but to a general, continuous, uninterrupted effort of the mind to avoid lower desires and to uplift itself to higher values.

Such an effort will win *amrit*; the nectar will flow from the spring of the heart! “*Amrit*” means immortal. It does not follow that he who takes in *amrit* will live eternally; even *avatars* (divine incarnations) cast off the body when their task is accomplished.

To imbibe *amrit* means fixing the mind on Reality, becoming aware of the Imperishable Entity that one is, and merging the consciousness in it.

Remember the demons Ravana and Kumbakarna, who went through extreme austerities for thousands of years. God manifested himself before them and granted them the boons they prayed for. But since their austerities did not win for them purity and cleanliness, virtue and humility, they continued as ever—monsters of violence and wickedness. They had no trace of the *satvic* (quality of equipoise and purity) in their make-up. They had the grace of God in such large measure: God appeared, inquired, and granted. But they behaved even worse than before! They denied by their lives the divine grace they had won.

So, too, if *amrit* is given, one has to live up to that status, the status of having acquired the grace of God. . . . When you have filled your heart with sympathy for the distressed, the Lord will shower his grace. . . .

If you have no steadfastness and no depth of faith, you can have no grace. . . . This warning itself is the *amrit* for you today! . . .

Endeavor to earn grace by observing the discipline that I am keen you should follow:

- Give up the old worldly ways of earning and spending, saving and accumulating, with greed, lust, malice, and pride.
- So rearrange your lives that I will be pleased with you.
- Do not waste time in idle gossip; speak softly; speak as little as possible: speak sweetly.
- Serve all as brothers and sisters, with adoration to the Sai in them.
- Engage in *sadhana*; move forward step-by-step as befits persons striving to realize their own liberation.

(SSS 8:01, Jan 11, 1968)

Partaking of the *amrit* created by me is only the first step in this process for you: it does not mean much if you do not take the second step and the third and march on toward Self-realization. You must have faith in the discipline laid down . . . and in the ultimate divine basis of all creation.

Get convinced that the world can give you only fleeting joy, and that grief is but the obverse of joy. Strive now, from this very moment, for time is rushing like a swift torrent. Develop the joy that will not decline, the joy that will ever be full. Be true to yourself. Be bold, be sincere.

(SSS 1:35, Dec 28, 1960)

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Samadhi Dreams

In mid-June 2011, two weeks before traveling to Prasanthi Nilayam, I came across my journal entry of October 24, 2010. It was an early morning dream, and I had scribbled above it “Vision”:

I am sitting in the front row of the mandir . . . suddenly a shift of scene . . . like an old movie . . . black-and-white but yellowing. Baba’s parents are there, facing the audience. Baba is not physically present. *Bhajans* (devotional songs) are in progress. I know that Baba has shifted time. Behind His parents, hands folded in *namaste* . . . disembodied hands . . . moving in rhythm with the devotional music. A young woman rises from the dead . . . levitates . . . worshipping. I realize that the persons around me are not seeing the vision . . . they seem to be sleeping.

At the time I could not find a particular meaning in the dream. I now recognize myself as the one “sleeping.” Exactly six months later, the dream might have made sense—had I only remembered it then, but it was not to surface and be understood for yet another two months. Then I could appreciate some meanings in the scenes of the dream—the “time shift” to Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s Mahasamadhi on April 24, 2011; the appearance of his deceased parents; the adoration of one beyond the veil; the

folded hands in *namaste* (Baba’s gesture); the disembodied hands swaying with the devotional music.

During my stay at the ashram, I read a book by Kamath and Kher, *Sai Baba of Shirdi: A Unique Saint*, in which Shirdi Baba’s promise is quoted:

“My bones will assure you from the grave. My tomb will communicate with you and sway with him who surrenders to the spirit (in it).”

I read these words on my birthday, July 10, 2011. The previous year, on the very same date, I had sung to Sai Baba as a member of the USA Pilgrimage Choir and watched him materialize a gold chain for one of the USA bhajan singers. According to “Mother” (of Sri Aurobindo’s ashram), our birthdays are potential days of grace. Her statement was certainly borne out by my experiences.

This year, on Guru Purnima, July 15, 2011, I watched the unveiling of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s *samadhi* from the Poornachandra Hall. When Sai Baba’s picture appeared large on the screen, tears welled up; they were neither of loss nor sorrow but felt like those that had arisen often and involuntarily when he had passed by and his glance had touched something indefinable in the region of the heart. He was continuing to give *darshan* from the subtle realm!



Moments of sadness had come up during my first few days at the ashram, and this was mirrored in the reaction of other devotees as they walked by the gate that he had so faithfully passed through for so many decades. Their hands would touch their chests and their eyes often became wet. The house he had lived in vibrated his energy; the marble tiles held and reflected the holiness of his feet. The white *samadhi* emanated silence and peace; it was the same feeling that had called me to India this time.

During my time there, the overall atmosphere in Sai Kulwant Hall was more reverent, in the absence of devotees' frantic

attempts to get closer to his physical form. The *bhajans* projected the same strong devotional surge as if he had just entered the hall physically. The presence of fewer people also allowed for more personal and private space and a deeper silence within. (This description does not reflect, however, the crowded and at times chaotic scene on Guru Purnima during the initial approach to the *samadhi* by thousands of devotees.)

At the same time, Baba's picture above his *samadhi* is a serious one; it appears to communicate that spiritual entertainment is a thing of the past and there is no more time to waste.

On July 2, 2011, the day after my arrival, I awoke with the following dream message:

“First, He tells you who He is. Then He tells you who you are not. Then He tells you who you are.”

Even though dreams are personal, the message may apply to others as well. He has shown time and again who HE IS; hopefully I have gained some insight into who I am *not*; now I have to learn who I AM.

During a previous stay at the ashram, in November 2009, I had read *Mother: Story of Her Life*, by George Van Vrekhem. He quotes her as follows:

Physical nearness to Divinity can be a severe ordeal for the *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant): it may raise vital demands, leave him satisfied with outer relation without

making serious effort for inner union, or it becomes for him something mechanical, ordinary, and familiar—and for an inner purpose, quite ineffective. (p. 284)

People have made an image of their needs and desires Universal forces then falter through these formations Unfortunately these people cling to the physical presence. Physical presence is a symbol, in fact, that they have little contact with the actual conscious energy. (p. 295)

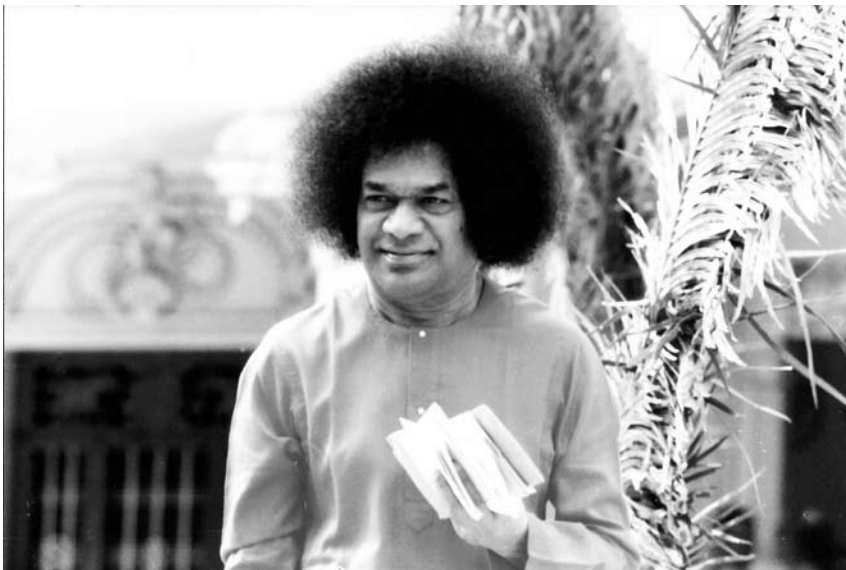
Sai Baba’s now invisible omnipresence has created the space and demand for me to move closer to my Self. I gratefully appreciate that even his Mahasamadhi included his timing—as all he has ever done during his physical appearance on earth was and continues to be for the benefit of humankind.

As my forehead touches
Your white marble Samadhi
let me slip through the opening
You have created with your physical absence
into Your eternal formless Presence.

—**Monika Blodgett**, July 21, 2011
Orcas Island, Washington State



Swami's Most Precious Gift



Never give up the organization. Regard it as your life breath. This is real penance. Having this firm resolve, become exemplary leaders. This is my sole desire. Swami's love will accompany you everywhere.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (Nov 24, 1990)

Many of us have read about Sri Sathya Sai Baba's love manifesting with an act of creation into a physical talisman such as a watch, ring, or necklace. Some of us are fortunate to have known of family or friends to whom he has given such a sacred gift. Some of us even had the good fortune to have personally received such a gift. This type of gift by Swami, which he affectionately termed a "calling card," was both a spontaneous

manifestation of his love as well as a potent tool specific for the recipient in his or her spiritual journey. We treasure these precious gifts. We follow the instructions that may have accompanied some of the gifts, such as touching the talisman during despair, or performing a daily ritual with the talisman. No one would dream of casting aside such a gift or leaving it in a dresser drawer, never to be utilized. No one would rest with a clear conscience when choosing to ignore

the instructions given by Swami regarding such a gift.

The advent of the Sathya Sai Avatar was for the purpose of lifting all of us back into a complete awareness of our divinity. He demonstrated by example how we should be thinking, speaking, and acting. His every living minute was devoted to the fulfillment of this mission of upholding *dharma* (righteous living).

Every word spoken by the Sathya Sai avatar had deep, deep significance. Every passing or “casual” comment contained the deepest truth and teaching. Every single action of Swami was right action, completely appropriate to time, place, and circumstance. Every project he inspired and brought to fruition was for the benefit of humanity at many, many levels. When even his smallest gesture was laden with the deepest meaning, how potent, precious, and significant then must be his act of creation known as the Sathya Sai Organization?

No other Avatar has formally started an organization during his physical lifespan. Swami personally started the Sathya Sai Organization, as he has done with any other monumental project—with direct, continual guidance from its onset and with complete attention to every detail. The rules, regulations, and directives have come from or through him only. His organization is a gift to humanity for its salvation. This universal gift should be cherished no less than any personal talisman he has created for us. It is no less powerful, no less beneficial than any of his other manifestations or projects.

There is no more powerful a vehicle for transformation of the individual, the community, the nation, and the world than the Sathya Sai Organization. We all need to honor Sathya Sai’s words and deeds by actively participating in all facets of his organization. Ignoring his organization is no different than casually tossing aside any other gift he has manifested for our benefit.

—Axay Kalathia MD

Region 3 President

Sathya Sai Organization of the USA

Remember also that the development of this organization will bring peace and tranquility to a world torn by chaos.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (Nov 21, 1970)

The whole world itself will be transformed into a Sathya Sai Organization, and Sathya Sai will be installed in the hearts of one and all.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (Nov 20, 1998)

Dr Victor Kanu Lived for God

Pioneer in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values

DR VICTOR KRISHNA KANU merged in the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on September 3, 2011. His love for Bhagavan Baba can be appreciated through his inspiring words, dedication to service, and his pure, selfless love. Dr Kanu will always be remembered as a pioneer of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values. He is an inspiration to Sathya Sai educators worldwide.

Dr Kanu implicitly followed Bhagavan's every command and surrendered to Swami completely. With unwavering support from his noble wife, Mrs Genevieve Kanu, he sold all of his properties in London to establish the Sathya Sai Schools in Africa. He happily sacrificed to help his fellow Africans, with the firm conviction that everything is ordained by God. He served Swami through the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization in various capacities. He was the Central Coordinator of Africa and the Director of The African Institute of Sathya Sai Education.

In July 2008, during the Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference in Prasanthi Nilayam, Dr Goldstein and I submitted the conference program for Bhagavan's approval and guidance. Dr Kanu was included in the

list of speakers, but we were not sure if Dr Kanu could speak because of his poor health. Swami graciously blessed the program and insisted that Dr Kanu speak in His Divine presence. At the conclusion of Dr Kanu's talk at the conference, Swami blessed him lovingly and profusely.

Dr Kanu firmly believed that the Sathya Sai Model of Education would lead to the realization of the divinity within us and thus usher in the Golden Age. He was convinced that only the Sathya Sai Education model and the students of the Sri Sathya Sai University and institutions could transform the world through the human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence. With Swami's blessings and guidance, Dr Kanu replicated the Sathya Sai Education model in Africa, enabling students everywhere to reflect Baba's life and teachings of love and truth.

In June 2010, Dr Kanu was admitted to the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences at Prasanthigram, for treatment of his heart condition. Bhagavan, in his infinite compassion, blessed Dr Kanu while he was in the hospital. Shortly after being discharged, Dr Kanu returned to Africa to continue to serve in the divine mission with heightened enthusiasm and vigor.



Dr Victor Kanu was a valued member of the Education Committee of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation. During the meeting of the Education Committee in Prasanthi Nilayam in July 2011, Dr Kanu echoed his sincere conviction that all the institutions, organizations, and establishments started by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba should be treated with utmost respect and reverence. Dr Kanu emphasized the importance of all officers and devotees of the Sai Organization working in harmony, unity, and love in the divine mission.

In addition to Dr Kanu's leadership in education, he participated actively in many humanitarian works of the Sai Organization. He helped coordinate the provision of food, clothing, and medical relief to the needy. He was also instrumental in the Sainet project, providing life-saving, insecticide-treated mosquito nets in malaria-endemic areas of Africa. In a one-year follow up, there was a 50 percent reduction in the incidence of

malaria in the African villages where the Sainets were distributed.

Dr Kanu is an exemplary devotee who loved and served Sri Sathya Sai Baba till his last breath. Dr Kanu left his body while visiting Sierra Leone to oversee construction of a Sathya Sai Centre. Indeed, it is a divine blessing to merge with Him while doing His work. Dr Kanu will be remembered with reverence in the annals of Sai history for his more than three decades of loving service conducted with dedication, devotion, and determination.

With loving regards,

—**Narendranath Reddy**

Director, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

The life story of Dr Victor "Krishna" Kanu, "Baba's Fantastic Flute," including video footage from interviews with Dr Kanu, was recently posted as a *radiosai.org* feature article. The six-part article may be accessed at http://media.radiosai.org/Journals/Vol_09/01OCT11/kanu1.htm. —Ed.

You Are My World, Sai

*You are my world, dear Sai,
You are everything to me.*

*You are the source of my existence,
And make me feel your presence even in silence.*

*You walked into my dreams to answer my fears,
And made me realize the value of tears.*

*You gave me love to share with others,
And wisdom to feel the presence of Mother.*

*You gave me strength to enjoy every moment in your fold,
And courage to accept things I cannot mold.*

*Weak says "I am strong" in your presence,
And darkness bows to light in reverence.*

*You make me smile when I am down,
And brought faith in me that you are always around.*

*You are my leader who showed me the path of success,
And gave confidence to keep up in distress.*

*You are there for me in everything I do,
And make me feel your love in each and every move.*

*I surrender my life to you,
And promise never to give up faith in you.*

—Pranavi Tella
Columbia, Missouri
Region 4 Female YA Representative

RESOLUTIONS from the Sri Sathya Sai World Conference of Young Adults, July 13–14, 2011



THE SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE of Sai Young Adults was held in Prasanthi Nilayam on July 13–14, 2011. The delegation included 440 officers and former officers of the Young Adult movement, from 75 countries. In the 2007 World Conference of Young Adults, the resolutions included the adoption of an ongoing “Sadhana Program.” The young adults have perpetuated this lofty program. It is ongoing. They have been dedicated and consistent in applying themselves to the divine instructions given by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, himself, as to how they should conduct their lives. Spiritual progress is clearly evident among the young adults as a result of their dedication. The resolutions of the Sai Young Adult World Conference of 2011 are as follows:

Resolution I: Purity and Practicality

Continuation and Enhancement of the Young Adult *Sadhana* Program Initiated at World Conference of Young Adults, 2007

WHEREAS a Sai Ideal Leader is an exemplar of the divine teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in order to become an exemplar, one must engage in the spiritual practices (*sadhana*) recommended by Bhagavan.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Young Adult *Sadhana* Program, in which young adults have been engaged since the 2007 Young Adult World Conference, will be perpetuated. Further, additional spiritual programs and practices consistent with Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings will be adopted, which will enhance the *sadhana* program.

WHEREAS Sai Young Adults recognize that progress on the spiritual path requires diligence and vigilance, Sai Young Adults must diligently and consistently engage in those practices recommended by our Beloved Sri Sathya Sai Baba for their own spiritual progress.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that Sai Young Adults be always vigilant in order to avoid those worldly propensities that would deter them from applying themselves to the spiritual purpose of human life as taught by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. They must be practical but pure, determined but selfless. They must let His Will prevail over their own willfulness!

Resolution II: Practical Immersion to Sai Spiritual Conversion

Becoming the “Lord’s Apprentice”

WHEREAS the Young Adult Apprenticeship Program means practical immersion in the management of the organization, doing so results in spiritual benefits for both the server and the served.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that subsequent to November 23, 2011, those young adults currently serving as Zonal Young Adult representatives in the Young Adult World Council will continue in their current positions and will each be attached to their respective Zonal Chairs as apprentices in the management of their respective zones. They will have duties assigned to them by their Zone Chair and the Prasanthi Council member responsible for their zone. They

will confer with their Zone Chair and their Prasanthi Council member on a regular basis. They will make every effort to attend and participate in zonal activities in their respective zones.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that commencing Guru Purnima 2012, Young Adult apprentices will be attached to each of the National Central Council Presidents in each zone, in addition to the zonal young adult apprentices. These apprentices will relate to their respective Central Council Presidents just as the zonal young adult apprentices will relate to their respective zone chairs. The selection of the national apprentices will be accomplished, and the duties and terms of reference of their office will be developed by the Prasanthi Council, zone chairs, and zonal young adult apprentices during Mahashivarathri 2012. They will commence their duties shortly thereafter.

WHEREAS the Young Adult Apprenticeship Program will evolve and progress, new opportunities for Sai Young Adult active participation in the management of the International Sai Organizations will arise.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the roles of the Sai Young Adult Apprentices will be considered and implemented wherever possible and practical. That is, apprenticeships will be considered that will enable Sai Young Adults to assist in the duties of the officers in various other capacities and positions.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that with “heads in the forest and hands in society,” the Sai

Young Adults will strive to infuse the Sai Organization with an innocence and purity still unblemished by worldly events and interactions that may transpire over the forthcoming years. This purity, love, and wisdom, resulting from their stage in life and their *sadhana* as Sai devotees, will substantially accelerate the spiritual progress of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization. Let this noble and uplifting Sai work commence!

Resolution III: Plan for Supervision of the International Sai Young Adult Program

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the International Youth Council and International Youth Coordinator will continue to oversee the activities of the Young Adult members of the International Sai Organizations. They will meet with the Prasanthi Council every Birthday (November). In addition, a meeting at Guru Purnima (July) will be convened for those who are able to attend.

Resolution IV: Young Adult World Conference, 2015

WHEREAS the Sai Young Adults have demonstrated their extraordinary love for Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, our Beloved

Swami; they have abundantly demonstrated their Sai dedication and love in the Young Adult Conferences of 2007 and 2011, where their precocious Sai wisdom was also evident.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Young Adult “Apprenticeship Program” will commence November 2011 at the zonal level and be in full effect at the national level subsequent to Mahashivarathri 2012.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the next Young Adult World Conference will take place in Prasanthi Nilayam, in November 2015, date forthcoming.

Let us pray that the Sai Young Adults will continue to bring more and more Sai light into the world. Let them forge the path for the next generation of Sai Young Adults and for the multitudes of generations that will surely follow thereafter. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, our Beloved Swami, will bestow his divine grace on all people now and forever who genuinely strive to realize the light of selfless love.

Lovingly in the Service of Sai,

—**Michael Goldstein**
Chairman, Prasanthi Council



Birthday Gift for Baba

S wami's 85th birthday celebrations started early on November 23, 2010, at our home in Simi Valley.

Early morning, our four-year-old daughter, Diya, came running down the stairs saying excitedly, "Appa, Appa! It's Baba's birthday today!"

I joyfully countered with, "Yes, Diya. So what gift are you giving Baba today?"

She responded immediately by placing her right hand on her chest, saying, "Appa, my heart!"

Before I could react and compliment her on her wonderful answer, she was gone—not back upstairs to brush her teeth but to where we keep our stationery. She hurriedly pulled out a 3 x 5 yellow sticky-note pad, some little blue sticky reference tags, and a ballpoint pen.

Like any good parent, I immediately admonished her, saying that she knows better and that she should brush her teeth first before doing anything else.

But Diya was in no mood to listen. She was on a mission.

"Appa, I am doing something for Baba!" she replied rather impatiently. And off she went to her child-size, multicolored plastic table and chair.

Five minutes later she accosted me on the sofa, made me sit next to her and said, "Appa, I made a book for Baba!"

Diya had scribbled on every single sticky-note page with her artwork or random letters and numbers. To make her "book" look more authentic, Diya had attached small blue reference tags to every page, just like her Appa did for his Baba books!

"So, Diya, what does your book say?"

After showing me the "cover page"—her drawing of Baba's face with a road and clouds—Diya flipped to the first page and started running her index finger across each imaginary line, and without any hesitation whatsoever, started "translating" what she had scribbled—line by line, page by page. Not knowing what to expect and not wanting to interrupt her by getting up to retrieve the video camera to capture the moment, I grabbed a nearby piece of paper and pencil and hurriedly started writing down what she was saying:

He loves you.

He cares about you.

He is everywhere.

He is with you always.

He is God.

He takes care of you.
He is love.
He is a chair.
He is a table.
He is everything.
He is God.
He loves you so much.
He loves you every day.
We are blessing you all the day with
[your] picture.
We pray to you.
We care about you.
We love you so much.
We wish we could live in heaven with
you.
We wish . . .
Baba . . . Have a great day.
Baba . . . Hope you see all the gods—
Krishna, Ganesha, Lakshmini, and
Lakshmi.
Hope you had a good day in heaven.
I wish I could live in heaven next to your
house.
I wish it could happen but I am not
God. . . .
I love you so much and pray to you
everyday.

Not wanting
to interrupt her . . . ,
I grabbed a nearby piece
of paper and pencil and
hurriedly started writing
down what she was
saying

I love Jayji sooooo much!*

*Thank you, Baba, for making everything
so beautiful!*

I couldn't wait—I rushed upstairs and
shared this extraordinary experience with
my wife, Surekha. Her reaction was the
same as mine—stunned with silence and
disbelief. We both ended up giving Diya a
long and silent hug.

—Vasant Mantrhipragada
Simi Valley, California

**Jayji: Telugu word for God,
commonly used by children*

Feelings

A Poem with Movements

Sometimes I feel happy, (make a happy face)



And sometimes I feel sad. (make a sad face)



I can feel so angry . . . (cross your arms)



And oh, so upset! (stomp your foot)

But then I think of Baba . . .
(put hands together showing respect)

And how much He loves me;
(point to yourself)

Then I feel so very good . . .
(hug yourself)



And happy as can be!
(hold your arms up high)



—From USA Region 5 (North Central) SSE Database, <http://sse001.saimedia.org/Poems/>

Announcements

PRASANTHI COUNCIL and SRI SATHYA SAI WORLD FOUNDATION:

Sai Pilgrimages to Prasanthi Nilayam

Dear Brothers and Sisters, *Sai Ram!*

The International Sri Sathya Sai Organization, with the grace of our Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, is flourishing. It is nourishing his devotees with the love and wisdom replete in his message and his divine omnipresence, for all people everywhere. Men and women of goodwill and strong faith come forth and find what they are seeking in the devotional, educational, and spiritual activities of the Sai organizations in their native lands. From all corners of the earth, they come forth.

Our worldly residence houses our physical beings, our minds and bodies, and our human presence on earth in our respective societies and communities. Our spiritual residence is our spiritual heart, the home of our Divine Indweller, the source of love and inspiration, and one with our true Self. While the Lord is omnipresent, he resided in Prasanthi Nilayam for his sojourn on earth when he walked among us. Prasanthi Nilayam has been the residence of Divinity, complete and effulgent, splendid, beautiful, and loving. He resided in our midst. His residence in Prasanthi Nilayam confers upon the ashram a blessed quality. That quality enhances our opportunity to realize our own spiritual heart. Hence, the advantage in engaging in spiritual pilgrimages to our “spiritual home away from home,” Prasanthi Nilayam.

We are in the process of implementing a Sai Pilgrimage program now and will seek the cooperation of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust in providing properly for the devotees and spiritual aspirants. We hope to provide the pilgrims opportunities to hear talks given by learned elders, to engage in service activities whenever possible, and to present cultural events if they are suitable.

Let all members in all Sai Centers in all countries confer and consider making pilgrimages to Prasanthi Nilayam, the worldly residence of our Beloved Swami. Let all Central Councils confer with their respective Central Coordinators and Zone Chairmen regarding the prospect of Sai Pilgrimages to Prasanthi Nilayam.

Presence to Omnipresence! Our beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Our beloved Swami, concluded his earthly sojourn. He permitted his physical presence to conclude, culminating in the transition from temporal physical presence on earth, here and now, to Divine Omnipresence, everywhere and forever. Hence, we are all compelled to deepen our spiritual commitment and

find him in our own spiritual hearts. By and large, judging by their actions and demeanor, our brothers and sisters are feeling his divine omnipresence everywhere.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba taught us that divinity is consciousness, and consciousness is selfless love. As divinity is forever, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is forever a divine form and personality selected by Divinity Itself, to teach and inspire us. We are his devotees for all our lives. Others will come in the decades, centuries, and millennia to come, and they will revere him and follow his instructions for all humanity. We in the Sri Sathya Sai Organizations will cherish our memories of him, abide by our lessons learned from Him, savor and perpetuate our inspirations derived from him, and live our human lives in worthiness of the divine grace received from him, for the rest of our lives.

Lovingly in the service of Sai,

—**Michael Goldstein**

Chairman, Prasanthi Council

Change in Chairmanship of International Sai Organization, Zone 1

As of October 6, 2011, Dr David Gries stepped down as Chair of Zone 1 of the International Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization to concentrate on other responsibilities, such as maintaining various Sai websites and overseeing the managing of the International Sai Organization's web servers in Washington.

Dr Gries has been webmaster of www.sathyasai.org since 1996, when he gave Swami a proposal for it and Sai said, "Do it. Do it!" This website provides links to all components of the International Sai Organization worldwide. Dr Gries subsequently developed the website and later expanded it to include saicast.org and sssbpt.info. The saicast.org website features streaming videos of selected events and programs filmed at Prasanthi Nilayam since 2000, service projects in India and elsewhere, and archival films on Sri Sathya Sai Baba from earlier years; some videos are available for download. The sssbpt.info webpage is a section of sssbpt.org, the website for the Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Books & Publications Division (formerly Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust). The sssbpt.info page houses the search engine that provides access to the collected discourses and writings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in particular, the extensive *Sathya Sai Speaks* series consisting of 42 volumes to date, the *Summer Showers* series of discourses delivered during various Summer Courses during the 1970s and 1990s, and the *Vahini* series of writings on key spiritual themes—all available in downloadable PDFs.

In addition to continuing as a member of the USA Central Council, Dr Gries will continue to work on International Guidelines and on the Publications Committee of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation. He's not going away! However, at this transition point we will take the liberty of remembering some of his previous work, which includes serving as the first president of Northeast Region, 1990–1996; serving as the first U.S. National Service Coordinator, 1990–1996, during which time he was responsible for developing the Service Guidelines and the 1995 TEHEHN ('The Earth: Help Ever, Hurt Never) project (see us.sathyasai.org/tehehn.html on the Internet for those helpful monthly sheets on possible Sai Center projects); and compiling (along with his wife, Elaine Gries) the *Index of Sathya Sai Speaks*, at a time when the *Sathya Sai Speaks* series consisted of only ten volumes.

Dr Phil Gosselin will serve as the new Zone 1 Chair (Zone 1 includes Canada, Israel, USA, and West Indies). At least for the near term, Dr Gosselin will also continue his current duties as USA Central Coordinator. Dr Gosselin is one of the founding members of the USA Sai Council named by Swami in 1975, and he has decades of experience within the National and International Sai Organizations.

At this time we thank Dr Gries for his past and ongoing service, and we offer our congratulations and support to Dr Gosselin as the new Zone 1 Chair.

New Chairman, Publications and Media Committee, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

Dear Brothers and Sisters, *Sai Ram!*

I am writing to advise you that Vijay Desai has elected to step down as Chairman of the Publications and Media Committee so that he will be able to attend to some family health issues and also continue to write additional books. As you all know, he has written five excellent books on Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings.

Dr Bill Harvey, member of Prasanthi Council and currently a member of the Publications and Media Committee, will assume the chairmanship of the Publications and Media Committee.

I can assure you that Vijay will always be available to us for his advice and assistance on matters apart from the Publications and Media Committee work.

Lovingly in Sai,

Michael G Goldstein, MD

Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

***Sathya Sai Newsletter USA* Past Issue Archive Now Available Online**



An archive of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter USA* was recently established as part of the USA Sai Organization website at: us.sathyasai.org/. The initial scope of the archive includes all available back issues of the magazine, from its inception in June of 1976 through mid-2007, with issues through 2009 to be posted soon. The back issue postings will be maintained to within about two years of current publication dates. The archive is intended to be useful for a number of purposes, including scholarly research on the history of the Sathya Sai Organization activities in the United States.

This electronic archive was made possible in part through an unexpected play of events that took place in 2007, when a major information publisher that supplies research databases to libraries contacted us and requested to include the *Sathya Sai Newsletter USA* in a collection of nontraditional religious periodicals published in the USA. This collection was to be in the form of microfilm. We agreed to supply our archive and promptly shipped off to New York the physical copies of all the past issues that we could locate. The company then photographed each page for the microfilm archive. For any issues that appeared to have just one existing or locate-able copy, we provided a photocopy instead of our only archive copy. Afterward, the company returned the physical copies to us, along with copies of the microfilm reels.

In early 2011, after initial discussions about posting an online archive of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter USA* to the USA Sai Organization website, we arranged to have our microfilm copies converted to web-searchable PDFs of each issue. The need for such an accessible archive had been highlighted during 2010, with the request by Sri Indulal Shah for a summary of the service activities of the Sai organization internationally over the past 45 years. (The results of Dr Shah's project, which took place in advance of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 85th Birthday celebrations are now available as the *Compendium: Sri Sathya Sai Organizations Worldwide, 1965–2010*—see page 48.)

To access the past issue archive go to: us.sathyasai.org/. On the home page, click the link about the archive in the list of Announcements at the top of the page, or go directly to the archive at: <http://us.sathyasai.org/ssn/>. Many thanks to Steve Alderson, webmaster of the USA portion of the International Sai Organization website, who developed the archive page and meticulously posted and checked each link.

—Corinn Codye Kintz, Co-editor, *Sathya Sai Newsletter USA*

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Recent Arrivals

Compendium: Sri Sathya Sai Organizations Worldwide (1965–2010), compiled by Sri Indulal Shah, was released on September 1, 2011. The *Compendium*, consisting of a book and six DVDs, represents a virtual encyclopedia of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's mission to date, focusing on the international Sri Sathya Sai Organization's (SSSO) groundbreaking work in educare, medicare, and sociocare around the globe. The *Compendium* project received Bhagavan Baba's blessings on March 1, 2011, and records the collective work undertaken by the SSSO over the past 45 years, in India and 135 other countries, through text, images, presentations, and audiovisuals. Numerous inspiring articles, poems, and books are collected here, along with Bhagavan's divine messages and a full account of Bhagavan's 85th birthday celebration. As such, this work symbolizes Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's divine legacy and also his directive of divine love and service to society.

The *Compendium* has been collected and compiled by Sri Indulal Shah, Trustee of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and Advisor to the Sathya Sai Service Organizations outside of India. He has remained a dedicated instrument of Bhagavan for nearly five decades and held a ringside seat throughout the development of the Sai institutions.

This magnificent compendium is now available through the Sathya Sai Book Center of America. Copies may also be procured from the Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Trust in India, which may be e-mailed at: ihs99999@gmail.com.

Compendium set (1 book and 6 DVDs)

BI-475 \$60.00

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 42 Discourses of Bhagavan Baba given in 2009, featuring 18 invaluable discourses by Baba, emphasizing the importance of festivals, upholding morality at the individual and social levels, the origin of the mind and its power, the misuse of cell phones, and many other topics.

BA-042 \$6.00

Viswavyapi – 2012 Diary, a diary for 2012.

BI-900 \$9.00