

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

Dedicated with Love and Devotion to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



“Living the Human Values”

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SAI'S MESSAGE



THE HUMAN QUALITIES

TRUTH WILL REVEAL ITSELF when the heart is saturated in love. Man's nature is fundamentally truth; his breath is fundamentally love; his blood is fundamentally tolerance. . . . Peace and joy emanate from the heart, not the head. The heart teaches compassion, awe, reverence, humility, equanimity, sympathy – qualities that bind men in love and turn them toward righteousness and the source and sustenance of the universe, namely, God. . . .

You are contemporaries of the Avatar come to guard and guide; you have the capacity to catch the message and channel it into action and acivity. Make the most of this chance!

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks (SSS) 10:19, July 1970

Image: theprasanthireporter.org

Pathway to Liberation

Lead a Life Based on the Human Values

The following transcript is of a talk given by Dr Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, Prasanthi Council, on December 31, 2011 (New Year's Eve in western countries), at the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center of Arcadia, California, USA. In it, Dr Reddy explains the meaning, stanza by stanza, of a nine-verse song composed and sung by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

WITH LOVE and gratitude I offer myself at the divine lotus feet of our omnipresent, loving and dearest Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Dear sisters and brothers, loving Sai Ram to all of you.

The year 2011 is finishing in about one-and-a-half hours, and then we start 2012. Marking the transition to a new year is very traditional, but Swami says every moment is new, every second is new. This is an occasion to celebrate and sing his glories. Thinking about him is the best way to welcome the new year.

Actually, Swami says that the day we spend singing his glories, remembering him and telling his story, is the real day. All other days are wasted. So we are happy that we are gathered to sing his glories and spend this time together.

We are the most blessed and fortunate humans in history because we were the contemporaries of the Avatar. We had wonderful *darshan* (sight) of God. In prior *yugas* (ages), people had to put their heads down and their feet up and for years practice great austerities (*tapas*) and penance for a single glimpse of God. Druva did penance for many years for one glimpse of Vishnu. Shabari waited years and years for one glimpse of Sri Rama. We had the unique opportunity to experience so many *darshans* of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

His *darshan* alone will wipe away our sins. Swami wants us to go beyond his physical form. Having intense love for him is enough. In fact, just viewing his picture, his photograph, is equal to having his *darshan*.

We are really lucky to have heard his name and to have seen him. Most of all we are fortunate to have heard his wonderful, nectarine message, because Swami's every word is the essence of the sacred scriptures. Rohan, in his introduction, was kind to say that I am going to give a New Year's message. I cannot give a New Year's message. Only Swami gives such a message. Like a little baby repeats its mother's words in a limited vocabulary, I only repeat what I have learned at the divine lotus feet. He is the source of all knowledge. He is everything. We are nothing but puppets playing our role according to the strings he pulls.

We should always remember that *Hari Bhokta*, *Hari Kartha* (God is the doer, and God is the enjoyer). We should always remember this, because sometimes the little "I" takes over and deludes us. We should always pray, "Lord, please don't delude me with your world-bewitching *maya* (delusion). Please always let me remember that you are everything. You are the doer. You are the enjoyer." For that, we need his divine grace. As I said, we are all very fortunate and lucky to have seen him and heard him.

This 2011 was a momentous year. We have enjoyed his unparalleled, beautiful form and divine nectarine words. All of us received his blessings in different ways. It was really painful when he left his physical form, but Swami has weaned us like a Divine Mother. His love is that of thousands of mothers. They sang the beautiful song, "Mother, O Mother, Sai Ma." When the mother weans the baby from the milk, it is painful to the baby and

also to the mother, but the baby has to be weaned in order to grow. It must leave the mother's milk and go on to food and grow up.

Similarly, Swami has given us so much nourishing milk. He has weaned us from it. The process is painful, but he is with us forever. He has assured us, "*Mi intane ventane juntane kantane untanu*. I am there with you, inside you, beside you, above you, below you." He is omnipresent.

Manifestations of His Omnipresence

More and more people are experiencing his glory in so many ways since he left his body. In the last week of December 2011, there was a manifestation of *vibhuti* (sacred ash) and *amrit* (nectar) on Swami's picture in Bangkok, Thailand. *Vibhuti* and *amrit* likewise came from a photo in a calendar in a home in Kuwait, and the devotee gave a small quantity of the *amrit* to us. We also came to know that *vibhuti* and *amrit* were emanating from the pictures in a home of a long-time devotee of Swami in Chennai.

We heard that even in this country, in St. Louis, in Connecticut, and in many other places, manifestations are occurring. A devotee from England was sitting next to me during birthday celebrations last year and he shared an interesting miracle that occurred in Prasanthi Nilayam. He had a nine-stones ring, from which two stones had been missing for a long time. For three years he had been asking Swami (before his physical departure) to replace the two stones in his ring.



To his surprise, the two missing stones miraculously appeared in his ring during the *bhajans* (group devotional singing) while he was sitting in front of the Mahasamadhi (place of interment of Bhagavan's physical form). The omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent Bhagavan Baba continues to demonstrate these miracles.

Bhagavan is also guiding people from the Mahasamadhi. A devotee from Germany was chosen to be the conductor of the international Christmas choir this year. She said she was nervous because all these years a senior devotee, Sylvia Alden from America, had been conducting the choir. She was very nervous. She surrendered to Swami, and from that moment she felt that every minute

Swami was guiding her. After the program, everyone said that this year's choir was one of the best Christmas choirs they had heard in Prasanthi Nilayam. Thus we know that Bhagavan is always guiding the devotees.

Not only is he guiding people, but also he is protecting and curing people. A few months ago, Mr Nari Chugani, Chairman of Zone 5, visited our Arcadia center and shared his experiences. He shared that his wife had severe pain in her shoulder for more than six months. She consulted a chiropractor and an orthopedic surgeon. We also gave her some advice, but nothing was helping her.

One day she prayed to Swami, "I can't take it any more. I can't sleep. My life is miserable." On November 23, 2011, in the

early morning, around 4.00 am, Swami appeared in her dream and did surgery on her shoulder. It was very painful, she said. All this happened in her dream. In the morning when she woke up, to her amazement, the pain was gone. This incident proves that Swami is still here taking care of us, guiding us, and healing us. We must always remember that he is with us all the time.

How Can We Express Our Gratitude?

Swami's Song Instructs Us to Practice the Values

In this new year, how can we express our gratitude to him? We can express our gratitude by practicing his teachings. Swami says, “If you really love me, practice my teachings.” So, this evening we’ll go over the song, “*Sathya dharmamu shanti premalato, ni nitya jivana yatra saginchu*,” which is a song Swami himself wrote. Swami composed it and Swami himself sang it. There are nine stanzas in this song.

This song is appropriate for the new year, because it describes how we should lead our life based on the human values. Everybody makes resolutions on New Year’s Day. They say, “From tomorrow, I won’t do that.” Then they break the resolution. In this beautiful song, Swami gives us the quintessence of Vedanta and how to reach the goal of life.

Keep the Human Values as Your Companions and Guides

Stanza 1:

O Jiva (embodied soul)! Carry on your daily life’s pilgrimage with truth (*sathya*), righteousness (*dharma*), peace (*shanti*), and love (*prema*) as your companions/guides.

*(Sathya dharmamu shanti premalato
Ni nitya jivana yatra saginchu.
Jiva...)*

Man’s duty is to put forth effort after effort; success or failure depends on God’s will.

*(Yatna prayatnamu manava dharmamu
Jayapa jayamulu daiva dinamu.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: This stanza encapsulates the essence of the song. Swami tells us that our **life is a pilgrimage, and we should complete our pilgrimage on the basis of *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *shanti* (peace), and *prema* (love).**

“*Nitya jivana yatra*”: we must accomplish our daily journey, our life’s pilgrimage, through practicing the values of truth, righteousness, peace, and love.

Then he says, very beautifully, “*Yatna prayatnamu manava dharma*”: **our duty is to put forth effort and sincere effort.** We should work really hard in everything we do.

Last week we were discussing Bhagavan’s message in the book, *Prema Vahini*, in our study circle. Swami talks about three kinds of spiritual aspirants: first, those who don’t want to undertake any activity, because they

This song is appropriate . . .
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are worried about the many difficulties and problems they must face.

The second group would say, “Okay, let us do this. It is a good project.” But then, in the middle of it, they would get depressed, dejected, and give up when obstacles and troubles challenge them.

The highest are those who, having taken up the work, persevere with steadfastness and complete the work. (*Prema Vahini*, ch 10, p 28) That is why Swami says, “**Effort and sincere effort is our duty.**”

But we need to remember, “*Jayapa jayamulu daiva dhinamu*” – **success or failure is in God’s hands**. Some people think that surrender means Swami will take care of the effort also. Swami did not say that we should surrender our effort; he said only to surrender the results of our effort. We must do the sincere effort and surrender the results into his hands.

I would like to share an incident that happened about fifteen years ago. Swami materialized a little silver tin filled with *vibhuti* and gave it to my wife, Hyma. She used the *vibhuti*, and in a year, the tin was empty. During our next visit to Prasanthi Nilayam Swami called us for an interview. Hyma said, “Swami, the *vibhuti* is over.”

Swami looked at the tin and said, “Keep it.” He didn’t do anything.

She was disappointed, and then she accepted it. After three days, again Swami called us and asked Hyma for the *vibhuti* container. She replied meekly, “I don’t have it with me.”

He chided her, saying that she should be always ready. Then our compassionate Lord materialized a bigger container, overflowing with *vibhuti*, and gave it to her.

The lesson is that we should not give up, and we should always be ready for God. That is why even Jesus said, “*Ask, and it shall be given.*” Go on asking. Swami says that he is our own mother and father. “*Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*” (Holy Bible, Matthew 7:7) You should go on knocking till he opens. He is so kind. But we need to have intense faith. He wants to see how much sincerity we have and how earnest our prayers are. That is why we should continue our efforts.

Carry Out Your Duties, Contemplating on God with Devotion

Stanza 2:

King Janaka was able to attain the almost unattainable – *moksha* (liberation) – by carrying out his daily duties, while duly contemplating on God, with devotion.

*(Bhaktitoda bhagavantuni dalachuchu
Nitya dharmamulu nirvarthinchina
Ati Janakunaku Raja yogamuna
Andarani mokshambu pondane.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: In this stanza Bhagavan gives the example of King Janaka, the father of Mother Sita. Janaka is also called *Videha*, one who doesn't have body consciousness. Swami says Janaka attained the highest – *moksha*, liberation. We all want to attain *moksha*. Swami says it is very simple. He give us a solution on how to attain *moksha*. He tells us Janaka is the example of what to do: he did his daily duties, remembering God always, with devotion.

Bhagavan Baba says the mind should be saturated with God's thoughts. The hands should do God's work. That is why Swami advises, "Head in the forest, hands in society." If we do that, he says, the result is assured.

Krishna tells me I am too critical of the way people handle a casual e-mail. But I said to him, "Every work must be done to perfection. Swami didn't say to do your best only in the big things." Every little act must be done to our best ability. We don't need to be a king like Janaka. Swami Vivekananda said that a cobbler who makes the best pair of shoes is as great as the king who rules the kingdom.

Whatever work we do, we should do to the best of our abilities. Swami says even drinking a glass of water and serving food must be done well. One time I was eating

with Swami, and my bracelet was touching the plate and making noise.

I didn't realize that, but Swami was sensitive to it and hinted to me, "*Don't*," meaning I should push up the bracelet. So, every little act we should do with total awareness. This rule applies to any duty, whether one is a janitor or a king. Whatever work we do, Swami expects us to do the best.

Sage Kaushika

There is a story in the epic Mahabharata about a butcher named Dharmavyadha. Once, a great sage named Kaushika, who was well versed in the Vedas, was sitting under a tree reciting Vedas. A bird on the branch of a tree defecated on his head. Kaushika got angry and stared at the bird. Because he had so much power from penance, the bird dropped dead. He thought, my God, I didn't know I had so much power. That is how the ego enters into us.

Then he went to a nearby village for alms, as monks do. He came to a home where the lady of the house was serving her husband. He called out, "Mother, I want alms." The lady replied, "Yes, yes. I am coming." But she didn't come right away. She took some time because she was serving her husband, massaging his feet and feeding him. After a while, she came to the monk and gave him alms. He got angry and shouted at her, "You made me wait for so long. Who do you think I am?" The lady was pious and pure. She said, "Do you think I am like the bird on the tree? No, I am not a bird."

“Whatever work God has given you,
do to the best of your ability.
That is real *dharma*.”

The sage was shocked. Her remark indicated that she knew what had happened to the bird in the forest. Kaushika said, “Mother, how did you know?” The lady replied, “When I am serving my husband, I am serving God. There is no difference. I am doing my duty to God. It is not your *dharma* to get upset.”

The sage replied humbly, “Mother, you are pure, and you opened my eyes. Please give me some *upadesha* (spiritual instruction).” Then she said, “I won’t give you *upadesha*. Go to Mithila and meet a butcher by the name of Dharmavyadha. He will give you *upadesha*.” Mithila is where Janaka lived, and Dharmavyadha was a meat vendor and a butcher there.

The sage went to Mithila and found the meat vendor. Dharmavyadha was cutting meat and selling it to the people. The sage thought, what kind of a man is this? As the sage Kaushika was an orthodox Brahmin, he couldn’t stand the sight of meat, much less the sight of someone selling it. He decided, however, to wait for the butcher.

Finally, the butcher said, “Oh, that lady sent you.” The sage was perplexed as to how this butcher knew what had happened in the remote village and the reason for his arrival in Mithila. Sage Kaushika then concluded

that even though Dharmavyadha was a meat vendor, he must be a great soul. He waited until the butcher closed his shop. Then the butcher invited the sage to his house and paid his respects to this Brahmin, washing his feet and feeding him.

Sage Kaushika asked, “Sir, please tell me, what is *dharma*?” The butcher replied, “Whatever work God has given you, do to the best of your ability. That is real *dharma*.” Then he described how one should conduct oneself without jealousy, without elation at praise or depression at criticism, and without being affected by profit and loss. In this way he taught the Brahmin *Brahma jnana* (divine wisdom).

This story demonstrates that whatever work we do, small or big, we need to do it with utmost perfection and with God in our hearts. If we do that, Swami says, like Janaka we will also get *moksha*. Swami said, “**Constantly remembering God, do your work to the best of your ability, and you will get *moksha*.**”

Instructions for Attaining Divine Bliss

Stanza 3:

Cultivate the field of your hearts. With your mind as the plow, good qualities as the bullocks, and discrimination as the whip, plow the extensive lands of your hearts.

*(Hridaya bhumulu sagucheyandi
Mi manasu madakaga gunamule yeddu
Vivekamanu chalakolamu tisi
Vishalamagu mi hridayamu dunnudu.
Sathya...)*

Stanza 4:

Manly courage is the good manure, and the streams of love are the seeds to be sown; devotion is the rain. Remove the weeds of unwanted ideas/emotions, and reap the rich harvest of *Brahma ananda* (divine bliss).

*Manavad dhaiyame manchi yeruvuga
Premadharale panta vittuluga
Bhakthe varshamu bhavame kalupulu
Brahma anandame pandedi panti.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: Previously, in Stanza 2, Swami described how we can attain *moksha* (liberation). In Stanzas 3 and 4, he discusses *Brahmananda* (divine bliss). We all want little pleasures. But *Brahmananda* is the highest. How do we get *Brahmananda*?

Swami said two things. He gave a beautiful metaphor: **the heart is like land, like a field. The plow is our mind. The good virtues that we develop are like the bullocks. The whip is discrimination.** Swami wants us to distinguish between fundamental discrimination and individual discrimination.

Whatever we do, we must ask ourselves, **“Is this good; is it for the highest good of society and for everybody, or is it for my own good?”** That is fundamental discrimination.

The Katha Upanishad talks about two paths, the *sreyomarga* (path of ultimate fulfillment) and the *preyomarga* (path of pleasure). *Shreyomarga* means leading a life of virtues based on fundamental discrimination. *Preyomarga* is the path of individual discrimination – following what is pleasing to the senses and to the mind but which leads us away from the spiritual path. We need to follow the *shreyomarga* for the ultimate good.

What is the manure in the plowed field of our hearts? It is courage. Sometimes we get discouraged upon meeting obstacles and troubles. We should have the courage that we will achieve divine grace. And what are the seeds? Swami says love is the seed, and the rain is devotion.

So, if we want a good harvest we must have all these constituents. The whole harvest is *Brahmananda* (divine bliss). If we want *Brahmananda*, we need to plow our heart with the help of the mind and good virtues, using the whip of fundamental discrimination, the manure of courage, and the seeds of love. The rain of devotion will cause the seeds to sprout. Then we will get *Brahmananda*.

Carry Out Your Duties While Continuously Contemplating God

Stanza 5:

Do not lose hold of *prakriti dharma* (natural duty). Karma yoga sanctifies your life. The secret of human birth is *smarana* (continuous contemplation of God). *Sadhana* (spiritual effort) is the hallmark of devotees.

Swami was the best example: . . . he spent every minute of his time for the welfare of humanity – serving, guiding, and protecting . . .

*(Prakruti dharmamu pattu vidakandi
Karma yogame janma dharmambu
Smarane manava janmarahasyamu
Sadhane bhakthula saralakshanamu.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: In this stanza Swami is again telling us that we should do our *dharma*. *Prakriti*, our nature itself, is *dharma*. We all have duties as a householder, a husband, a wife; in the workplace as a boss or an employee; or in the organization as an officer or a devotee. Whatever is our *dharma*, we must do that.

Swami says, “*Karma yogame janma dharmambu*,” i.e., **we must do our karma or action as our obligation**. From the time we are born till our last breath, we have to do our duties.

That is why even Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says, “**In these three worlds, I do not have any work to do, but to set an example, I do work** (*Na me partha asthi karthavyam trishu lokeshu kinchana. Na anavaptam avaptavyam vartha eva cha karmani*).”

Swami was the best example of this. To his last days, even though he was in a wheelchair, he spent every minute of his

time for the welfare of humanity – serving, guiding, and protecting everyone.

I remember a few years ago he had a hip fracture. We were there with Swami. He had a bundle of letters. He read them, answered them, and showered his blessings in response to them. He set an example for us, showing us how to do work as *nishkama karma* (selflessly, action without desire). We must do our work without expecting the results.

He says, “**Remembrance of God is the secret of life** (*Smarani manava janma rahasyam*).” Like Prahlada, we also should constantly remember God. Another example is Hanuman. Even though he was always doing the Lord’s work, every hair of his body was constantly repeating *Rama, Rama, Rama*. That is real *sadhana*. Remembering the Lord always and doing his work is the real *sadhana*. We should have that intensity. We should have this earnest feeling, that we want to do His work.

Do Not Blame Karma; Hold On to His Feet

Stanza 6:

Do not say that pains and pleasures are our fate (*karma*). Only the lack of will and effort, on our part, results in our suffering. If you worship the divine lotus feet with

dedication/determination, He will be the pilot to take us to the other shore of the river of samsara (worldly life).

*(Kashta sukhamulu karma lanakandi
Mana ishtalopame kashta maunandi
Pattu vidaka aa padamu kolichina
Gattu jerchuta tana paniyenu.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: In this life, we all experience *kashta sukham* – pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow, loss and gain. Swami says we should not blame karma for this. Our likes and dislikes are responsible for our pain or pleasure. The objects by themselves are neither good nor bad; it is our attitude toward them that makes the difference. For example, some people like sweets and others do not like to eat sweets. Our likes and dislikes judge something as good or bad. That is why Baba says that we should not blame karma.

So, we need to go beyond likes and dislikes. The best way to get above all this is by “*Pattu vidaka aa padamu kolichina*,” that is, just to hold on to his feet. Then he will take us across the ocean of *samsara*. Swami’s first message was “*Manasa Bhajare*” – **“Hold on to the divine Guru’s feet in your heart. He will take you across the ocean of *samsara*.”** We should never leave his feet. He assured us that he will take us across.

Compassionate Sai Will Not Leave Your Heart

Stanza 7:

Sai will not leave your heart. He will never desert you. He will take care of you at all

times. Sai is compassion. Compassion itself is Sai. Seek and wait for his compassion.

*(Yedanu vidadu yeda bayaledu
Mimmeluchuntu ye velanu Sai
Karunaye athadu athade karunani
Karunakai kachi pondandi.
Sathya . . .)*

Commentary: If we remember this stanza, we will never be unhappy or depressed. Baba says, **“I will never leave your heart.”**

Swami himself is telling us that he will not leave us. **“I will never leave your heart, and I will never leave you. Once you are mine, even though you may want to leave me, I won’t let you go.”** He is telling us this so forcefully: “*Yedanu vidadu yeda bayaledu mimmeluchuntu ye velanu Sai (I will always protect you, whether you are in the sky or on the earth, in a forest, or in a town, or in a village).*” Let us always remember his assurance: **“I will never leave your heart; I will never leave you; I will always take care of you wherever you are.”** He has promised this.

But there is a condition: “*Karunakai kachi pondandi (I will never leave you, but you have to wait for my grace).*” We may pray for anything. He will respond, but he will make us wait. He will accomplish the task in his own time.

We get so impatient. In June, Swami told the parents of a girl that she would get married in December. The family members, everybody, were ready in December. They were ready with the jewelry and everything. But December came and went – no marriage. The next December came – again, no

marriage. They were all disgusted, including the girl. It is unfortunate that they left Swami.

Then the girl came to America and, after eighteen years, she got married in December. Swami kept his word, but she had to wait for eighteen years. People don't want to wait. That is why Swami's great mantra is "Wait. Wait. Wait." We need to have the patience to wait.

God's Name Is the Best *Sadhana*

Stanza 8:

Why do you hanker after *ashta siddhis* (the power of eight-fold miracles), which but bind you with illusory ambitions. In the dense jungle of this life, only God's name is the bright daylight.

*(Ashta siddhula sadhanendulaku
Adi vatti Brahma latho kattiveyunuga
Dattamaina ee jivitavilo
Vatti namame pattapagalau.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: In this stanza, Swami is describing the best and simplest *sadhana* (spiritual practice). People go to *hatha yoga*, *kriya yoga*, this yoga, and that yoga. Swami says we don't need to do all that. Just remembering his name and repeating "Sai, Sai," will take us to the goal. Swami says that even if we are beyond the seven seas, he will come running to us. We just need to say with a longing heart, "Swami, I want you."

With sincerity, if we cry out for him, ask for him, he will come. Swami says we don't need to do any *sadhana* or any meditation. He says, "Vatti namame" – just repeating his name will take us across.

The forest may be a thick forest or a dark forest, but even if we have a little candle, with the help of the light, every few feet we go, we can see the next step. One step at a time, the candle will take us through the entire forest. Similarly, the name of God is as powerful.

"Just repeat my name, and you will cross this dark forest of *samsara*." That is what he assures us. All we need do is remember to chant "Sai, Sai."

Don't Give Up Your Faith and Devotion to God

Stanza 9:

Don't give up your first hold. Hold fast to your initial attitude of devotion. Don't give up the thought of God, even though you are afflicted by ever so many difficulties or sufferings.

*(Modati pattunu vidava bokandi
Adipattulone bhakthi pattandi
Yenni bhadhala pondina Bhagavat
Chintana matramu vidakandi.
Sathya...)*

Commentary: This last stanza is very important. Baba says, "You have come to me and taken hold of me." This is what we have done, isn't it? We all went to Swami. **"Having taken hold of me, don't let go."** Swami says that people after a while get disappointed, distracted by other people, other *gurus* (teachers), other things, and they leave. Having come to him, we should hold on to him.

But he didn't say that our life would be easy. **"You'll have a lot of troubles, travails,**

tribulations, sorrows. But never forget me.” The travail is temporary. The tests are temporary. He will give the tests, but he says, **“Don’t leave me. You have come to me; hold on to me. I will take care.”**

We should have the complete conviction and commitment that we have come to Swami, and he will never leave us. He will be with us. He will protect us.

However, as a part of life, we have to go through trials and tribulations. Yet we should never forget him. We should remember him always, pray to him constantly. He listens to every prayer, but he will answer in his own sweet time. We need to have patience and steadfastness.

Call on His Name: SAI

We are so lucky that we are here on the evening of December 31 to sing his glories. We could be having a social party like everyone else, but we have come here to sing and talk about his glories. We have put God first. We need to give importance to God.

SAI – Swami first, All others next, I last. His very name, *SAI*, conveys this important message. We should give highest

importance to Swami and his name, his glory, and his message.

When we call his name, “*Sai Baba*,” we need to remember that Swami is our Mother and Father. Today, somebody sang the beautiful song “O Mother, O Mother. When there is despair and trouble, we call on your name, and you come running.”

We need to call out to him with that sincerity and that yearning. Then he will come. I would like to emphasize again that to attain **SAI**, we need to do three things: **S is service; A is adoration; I is illumination.** This means *karma* (action), *bhakti* (devotion), and *jnana* (wisdom). We need to do selfless service. We need to sing his glory, remembering Sai’s wonderful *leelas* (divine sport). And we need to do self-inquiry. Then we will realize that **SAI – Sai And I – are one.**

I pray to Swami to bless us that we welcome the New Year with dedication and determination to remember him and do his work. *Jai Sai Ram.* Thank you.

—Dr Narendranath Reddy
Arcadia, California

Many goals . . . can be reached only by the descent of divine grace and power from above. Complete surrender of the ego to that power will bring it down and fill you with itself.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (SSS 6:8, Mar 17, 1966)

“Your Mother Is Also Here”

DURING THE 1970s and 1980s I was blessed by Sathya Sai Baba’s grace to stay in Prasanthi Nilayam for long visits, often with the added blessing of engaging in service at the ashram. The gratitude I have for those precious times is beyond words.

In an interview in the late 1980s, Baba mentioned to me about staying on and working there for a longer period. I wanted this with all my heart and had only one concern to express to Swami. I was concerned about my mother, who was getting on in years and living on her own in New York City. I was able to say, “Swami, my mother is there.”

He replied, “***Your mother is also here.***”

I then asked our Divine Mother, “Will You take care of her, Swami?” Swami lovingly answered, “***Yes, I will take care of her now, and later you will take care of her.***”

I did not know the meaning these words would have in the years to come.

During earlier visits Baba sometimes asked, “How is your mother?” I love to remember him saying, “***She is very good.***”



There was a time when Baba said that he would see my mother in New York! His words have many levels of meaning, but they especially applied to a time when my mom wrote to him about a difficult family situation. On the evening she mailed the letter in New York, Baba came in her dream and spoke to her, directly answering her concern. In this way he gave her peace of mind and the blessing of ***darshan*** (vision of a holy being) as well.

On another occasion he said to me, “It is good that you take care of your mother. It is what you should do.”

We so often see the ways that Baba touches our families. At first my mother’s interest in Swami came from my experiences and the changes she witnessed in me.

After learning more about him, her respect, trust, and love grew. Baba has his own personal, direct connection with each and every precious soul, which has always been and always will be.

By 1991, the symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease, in addition to other health problems, meant that my mother – always energetic, brilliant, and beautiful – could no longer live on her own.

Baba’s words were there for me to hold on to throughout the years that followed and through the inevitable changes this illness brought. His words were my guidance, support, and comfort. By his grace, I was blessed to be with my mom and take care of her in her home.

Decisions had to be made every step of the way. Our family is small, and I turned to Baba continuously and relied on his invisible presence and guidance. At times it was an uphill battle with medical professionals.

Confirmation of his guiding hand often came in unexpected ways that showed he was with us. When the cardiologist said that my mother’s heart function had improved, he added, “You don’t understand; that just doesn’t happen at this stage.” God’s love heals hearts.

Also, a wonderful physical therapist worked with my mother over a period of five years and has remained a friend. It meant a lot that the therapist spoke about my mother as a “model case” to her colleagues, because Mom did so well.

A deep sadness can come with seeing how Alzheimer’s disease affects the ones we love. Visits and phone calls from devotees and friends mean a lot; every kindness helps. I was rarely able to attend Sai Center meetings, but when I played and sang *bhajans* (devotional songs) at home, my mother enjoyed them as much as I did. They brightened everything.

Baba’s love was with us, always the greatest assurance of his presence. Just a few days before her passing in 2001, at the age of 90, my mom was still able to enjoy playing her piano at home. That is His Grace. I now cherish Baba’s words from long ago, “**Your mother is also here.**” They mean more than ever, so many years later.

—Faith Jill Hollander
New York, New York

In the 1970s and 80s Faith served as a Prasanthi Nilayam Seva Dal (service volunteer), President of the Manhattan Center, SSEHV/Bal Vikas (Sai Education) Teacher, and Co-Chairman of the National Bhajan Committee, appointed by Dr John Hislop. She currently serves as the Education Coordinator of the Manhattan Center.

Recognize the Meaning and Value of Humanness

Adhere to the Values for the Sake of Society

IF YOU LACK A PURE MIND AND GOOD CHARACTER,
How do you expect Sai, the bestower of peace, love, happiness
and prosperity, to appreciate you? How do you expect Prema
Sai to treat you as his own? (TELUGU POEM)

HUMAN LIFE IS ONE of compassion.

Time is sacred.

The heart is pure.

The mind is nectarous.

Having been blessed with such a sacred human birth, what is man supposed to do? What is the foundation on which the mansion of life is to be built?

Every person aspires for peace and happiness. How can one lead a peaceful life? It is possible only by putting human values into practice. Human values need not be acquired from the outside; they are latent in everyone. If such values are forgotten how can one progress in life? First and foremost, one should inquire into the purpose of one's birth.

You Are Not Serving Others

Human life is based on equality, unity, fraternity, and nobility (*samata, samaikyata, saubhratrutvam, and saujanyam*). These virtues constitute the foundation of the mansion of life. Life is meaningless if even one of them is absent. Everyone must cultivate and safeguard these four virtues.

First of all, man should recognize the meaning of humanness. Truth fosters

morality (*neeti*); righteousness confers reputation (*khyati*); renunciation (*tyaga*) is the light of life (*jyoti*), and humanity is the combination of these three – morality, reputation, and light (*neeti, khyati, and jyoti*). But man today neglects the principles of truth, righteousness, and renunciation. He must adhere to these principles, not for the sake of society but for his own redemption.

If you expect to be respected by all, you have to develop self-respect, which is the basis of human life. One who lacks self-respect cannot command respect from others. First and foremost, one must respect others and share one's love with others wholeheartedly. This is one's primary duty. Man is not merely an individual (*vyashti jivi*); he is part and parcel of society (*samashti jivi*). *Vyashti* relates to the individual (*jivudu*), *samashti* relates to God (*devudu*).

Man has to travel from the level of individual to the level of society. What is the path prescribed for this? First, man must recognize the common principle of the light of life (*jivana jyoti*) that is present in all. The principle of equality (*samatvam*) can be experienced and practiced only when man understands the principle of unity (*ekatvam*).

Love is the fundamental basis for truth and righteousness.

Love is God; truth is God; righteousness is God.

The service activities we undertake are for experiencing unity in society. It is a great mistake if you think you are serving others. In fact, you should not consider anyone as an “other,” for all are embodiments of divinity. But man does not make efforts to realize this truth. Hence, he is subjected to difficulties.

Once man realizes that God is all-pervasive, he will be free from suffering. In order to get rid of suffering, man must practice the principle of unity in society. Once he understands the principle of unity, he can attain the cosmic principle.

Give Up Body Attachment

Every individual is endowed with a physical body. Nature is like a mirror. What you see in this mirror is only your reflection and nothing else. Today, man is leading a life of selfishness and self-interest. Selfishness is rampant in society. Body attachment (*deha-bhimanam*) is on the rise, while love for one’s motherland (*desha-bhimanam*) is on the decline. Even spiritual aspirants and noble souls with pure hearts are unable to give up body attachment. So long as there is body attachment (*deha-bhimanam*), one cannot develop love for God (*daiva-bhimanam*).

The body, made up of the five elements, is weak and bound to disintegrate, and even though a 100-year lifespan is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted. One may leave the mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth, or old age. Death is certain, so before the body perishes, one should make efforts to know one’s true nature.

(TELUGU POEM)

The body is given for knowing your true Self. It is foolish to waste your time and energy in worldly pursuits. If you know your true Self, you will know everything else.

Embodiments of love! All that you see in the external world, from microcosm to macrocosm, is present in you. The mountains, oceans, cities, villages, and so on, are present in your heart. All beings are in you. You are the basis of everything. Such being the case, what is it you want to see in the external world? How foolish it is on your part to get carried away by the reflection outside while ignoring the reality within!

Let truth and righteousness be reflected in your word and deed, respectively. The harmony of truth, righteousness, and love will lead to peace.

Practice the Human Values

Know the human values in the first instance. The first among them is **truth**. Truth is changeless and beyond time and space. There is nothing like American truth, Russian truth, Indian truth, or Pakistani truth. Truth is one and the same, for all countries at all times. You are the embodiment of truth. Truth is God. So, make efforts to understand truth.

Speak truth, speak pleasantly, and do not speak unpalatable truth. (Sathyam bruyat; priyam bruyat; na bruyat).
(SANSKRIT VERSE)

Having forgotten this eternal principle of truth, man goes in search of ephemeral things. Adherence to truth is *neeti* (morality), which is nothing but proper conduct:

There is no dharma greater than adherence to truth (Sathyannasti paro dharmaha). (SANSKRIT VERSE)

Sathya and *dharma* together will confer peace. One who adheres to truth and righteousness will always remain peaceful. One need not search for peace outside:

*Where there is truth, there is peace.
Where there is peace, there is nonviolence.*

We refer to the human values as *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* (**truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence**). In fact, love is the fundamental basis for truth and righteousness. Love is God; truth is God; righteousness is God.

One bereft of these principles is but a living corpse. The five human values can be compared to the five life principles (*pranas*) present in us. If one does not speak truth, one life principle is lost. Unrighteous conduct amounts to losing a second life principle. Similarly, other life principles may be lost. Thus, all your efforts should be directed toward safeguarding these life principles, which are divine in nature.

What Is in Your Heart Is Reflected Outside

There is divinity in humanity – understand this! Today every field of human activity is polluted. Once man purifies his heart, he will find purity everywhere. The world outside is just a reflection of your heart. If you fill your heart with love, you will experience love everywhere. If there is hatred in your heart, the same is reflected outside.

Please turn to page 22 . . .

The Birth of God Intoxication

TRUTH'S PURE WORDS held the key to the door of your heart.
Deep faith emerged from the other side of that door.

Startled, you asked,

"Where have these words been all my life?"

You'd been searching for them, not knowing you were searching.

You found something you never knew you were looking for.

With ripeness, the words found you!

Deep blissful love followed faith through the doorway
and blossomed out of control.

You could hardly contain yourself.

Your heart grew so large you thought it might burst!

In self-preservation, you let the bliss spill onto others;

In love, you longed to share it.

Maybe your overflowing cup could top-off what appeared

As partially-filled or empty ones.

But that didn't happen.

No one seemed to understand.

They saw that you were happy.

That made them feel happy for you,

But not for themselves.

This frustrating phenomenon, the inability to transfer and share

This love for God as everyone and everything,

Was very disheartening,

Especially for those closest to you.

A flash of fear raised momentary doubt, suggesting you cool this love.

It paused you to question,

Is this really worthwhile –

Possible separation from kith and kin?

But this love was so strong, so pleasurable, so enticing,
and most of all, so **you** –

And you'd been waiting for it for so long,

That it erupted, quickly regenerating itself beyond what it was
in the first place.

*Like a burgeoning, spiritual puppy love, you'd lie awake
at night in joyfulness
Or sleep as sound as a baby –
Didn't care whether you ate, or not;
The same smile graced your lips
And your heart.*

*The lenses of love made the whole world a place of
beauty, goodness, and happiness.
Isn't this the way life should be lived?
Isn't this the bliss that is our birthright, as we've been told?
As "the ant is enraptured and drawn to the sugar,"
The "iron filings longing for the magnet,"
Love, the ultimate force,
Took you away from everything that you thought
was important and left you
With the nothing that is everything.*

*Close your eyes.
Fill yourself with this magical divine pudding,
And like Mother Kausalya,
Give birth to the Rama inside you, the real you.
After the birth, you might find yourself in a green, green garden,
Filled with jasmine and lilacs,
Alive with butterflies and birdsongs.
While breathing in and out billowing clouds of bliss
from the sky inside you,
A final desire rises and floats through the window
Of the vacant factory in your mind:
To become the prayer,
Samasta Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu.
May all the worlds live in comfort and happiness!*

*—Gary Kauftheil
Mullica Hill, New Jersey*

Your confidence is your God, so develop unwavering confidence in the Self.

Whatever you see, hear, and experience outside is only the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner being. All the good and bad that you come across in the external world are only your own reflections.

So, do not point an accusing finger at others. The whole world depends on man's behavior. If man is good, the world will be.

You think that profanity is all around you, but this is a mistaken notion. In fact, the profanity in you is reflected outside. If your feelings are demonic, you will find the same all around you. If your feelings are divine, you will find divinity everywhere.

Embodiments of love! Your heart is full of love. The yearning for God that emanates from your heart is love. Let truth and righteousness be reflected in your word and deed, respectively. The harmony of truth, righteousness, and love will lead to peace.

Your breathing process – *Soham* ("I am He") – reminds you of your reality 21,600 times a day. Of what use is your education if you are unable to remember the truth taught to you so many times, day in and day out?

You may listen to any number of sermons, study any number of sacred texts, visit any number of noble souls, but all these will prove futile if you forget the principle of truth that your inner voice teaches.

Buddha renounced all palatial comforts and took to a life of renunciation (*sanyasa*). He wandered in the forests, listened to the

teachings of noble souls, and studied holy texts, but none of these gave him satisfaction. Ultimately, he realized that his heart was the true holy text given by God and that God was his true friend. He discarded all books and stopped visiting noble souls. He turned inward and inquired into the truth. Ignoring the holy text (the heart) and forgetting the true friend (God), man goes hither and thither in search of peace.

Pure Vision, Pure Speech

First, make sacred use of the eyes given by God. Only then will your life be sanctified. He alone is a true human being who has a good mind and whose behavior is exemplary. All your spiritual pursuits will be of little consequence if your vision is sullied.

Your eye (*netra*) is the scripture (*shastra*) given by God. Understand this scripture and conduct yourself accordingly. Once you have control over your vision, you will have control over your speech.

Speak only truth; there is nothing greater than truth. Pure vision and pure speech (*samyak drishti* and *samyak vak*) will lead to pure hearing and pure feeling (*samyak sravanam* and *samyak bhavam*).

The youth in particular should exercise control over their vision. A human being becomes God (*manava* becomes *Madhava*), once he understands the importance of human values and puts them into practice.

The youth of today are the future emancipators of the country. So, they should develop steadiness of mind and self-confidence:

Where there is confidence, there is love; where there is love, there is truth; where there is truth, there is peace; where there is peace, there is bliss; where there is bliss, there is God.

Without confidence you can never attain divinity. Your confidence is your God, so, develop unwavering confidence in the Self. Self-confidence and self-respect will lead to Atmic bliss and the vision of the Self.

You are all seated in this magnificent hall that has many supporting pillars, enjoying its beauty. Without a strong foundation, this hall would not be possible. Likewise, Self-confidence is the foundation for the mansion of life. Once you have Self-confidence, you can raise the walls of self-satisfaction, over which you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice and lead a life of Self-realization. Hence, lay the foundation of Self-confidence strong and sturdy.



Truth Is the Basis of Every Culture

The culture of Bharat (India) proclaims, **“Speak truth; follow righteousness”** (*Sathyam vada, dharmam chara*). Not only Indian culture, the culture of all countries proclaims this same truth. Truth is the basis of every culture. Do not give scope for any differences based on culture.

The whole world is like a mansion, and various countries are like different rooms in it. So, do not divide humanity based

on nationality. Because of such division, humanness is on the decline. Sai devotees should not entertain any such differences. All should stand united.

Names, forms, and complexions may be different, but humanity is one race. God is one. All human beings belong to one family.

*Cows are many, but milk is one.
Beings are many, but Indweller is one.
Castes are many, but humanity is one.
Flowers are many, but worship is one.
Paths are many, but God is one.*

You should give up all differences based on caste, religion, and nationality and develop the spirit of love. Young men and women should work for the progress of the country. The country will prosper only when the youth develop sound character. Human life is based on character.

Today, many are heroes in precept and zeroes in practice. Your actions should be in harmony with your words. Develop sacred feelings. Only then can you perform sacred activities. Devotion does not mean merely performing rituals such as worship. Any work done with pure and selfless love is devotion.

Embodiments of love! Right from today, let your lives be suffused with love. Let your hands undertake deeds that are beneficial to society at large. Let your thoughts be centered on the principle of love. You should rise from the level of the individual to the level of society (from *vyashti* to *samashti*), and ultimately merge in God (*parameshti*).

In this physical and ephemeral world, all one sees is restlessness. At times the physical body may be subjected to diseases; one should not get unduly perturbed. The body comes and goes; it is a storehouse of dirt and prone to diseases. It cannot cross the ocean of worldly life (*samsara*).

*O mind! Do not be under the delusion
that the body is permanent. Take
refuge instead at the Divine Lotus Feet.*

(TELUGU POEM)

Greatness Lies in Practice, Not Preaching

One should not be unduly attached to the physical body, but it has to be taken care of properly. Sometimes you are afflicted with diseases because of negligence on your part. I take the sufferings of devotees because of my love for them. The suffering disappears in the same way it appears.

Here is a small example. A young boy was suffering a great deal because of mumps (swollen glands). The doctor said it would take a minimum of 20 to 25 days for the condition to pass. The boy was crying bitterly, unable to bear the severe pain. I called him inside and consoled him, saying, “*When Swami is with you, why do you cry?*” I materialized a sweet for him and made him eat it. I took his pain upon myself. For any other person, the pain would have been unbearable.

Srinivasan was very worried about conducting this conference while Swami was undergoing so much pain. Because the swelling was between the two jaws, it was not

possible to eat or speak. What does it matter if the body is not given food for a few days? I did not have any concern about it. I told the organizers to go ahead with the conference.

Srinivasan asked, “Swami, how are you going to deliver the inaugural address?” I said, “*I feel the pain if I think that this is my body. But this is not my body; it is yours.*” All your bodies are mine, so I take your suffering upon myself. That is my duty. This is not my body, so I am not concerned about it. Not only now but at any point of time, I do not have any concern about any suffering. I practice whatever I preach. That is why I say, “*My life is my message.*”

It is not possible for all to understand and realize my divinity. I do not want to say it in public. I do not indulge in advertisement. All that is mine is yours, and vice-versa. I have no desires at all. All my desires are meant to give you happiness. Greatness does not lie in preaching; it lies in practice. A true teacher (*acharya*) is one who practices and then preaches. That is what I am doing.

Follow the Path of Truth

Youth – men and women! Understand your true nature. Follow the path of truth. Truth (*Sathyam*) is the name of this body. Develop this truth in you. Truth is God; love is God; live in love.

When you follow the path of truth and love, you will certainly attain bliss. Some people put blame on me, ignoring their own defects. This is a great mistake. There are no defects in me whatsoever. I am like a pure mirror. There is no scope for even a trace of impurity in me. You see the reflection of your own feelings in me. Purify your hearts. Only then can you understand the truth.

Embodiments of love! Today we have inaugurated this (international service) conference. Many more programs are to follow, so I bring my discourse to a close in order to give sufficient time for other programs. I am prepared to spend any length of time to give you necessary guidelines.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Inaugural Address, International Seva Conference, Prasanthi Nilayam, July 21, 2002 (SSS 35:10, “Service Activities for Unity in Society”)

The mind can act as a bridge leading man from the tangible to the intangible, from the personal to the impersonal. Cleanse the mind and mold it into an instrument for loving thoughts, for expansive hearts. Cleanse the tongue and use it for fostering fearlessness and friendship. Cleanse the hands; let them desist from injury and violence. Let them help and lead, heal and guide. This is the highest sadhana.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (endnote, SSS 10:7, discourse of Mar 6, 1970)

Life Is a Game - Play It!

The game of life itself is God's gift to us; how we play it is our offering to him.

Human life is God's gift. Make proper use of it by rendering service to society.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (SSS 33:07, April 5, 2000)

"LIFE IS A GAME; PLAY IT," said Sathya Sai Baba, many a time, and, "Human life is God's gift." Thus, life is God's gift to us, and how we play it is our gift to him!

His gift is always perfect, because it is given with perfect love. It is noteworthy to remember that Swami did not say, "Life is a game; win it," or "Life is a game; conquer it." Since giving is proof of having, we, as embodiments of the Divine Atma, having received fully the gift of divine and eternal life, must give fully. Swami knows that winning or losing are ultimately in his hands. We have only the right to play, and to play fully.

To understand "life is a game" is to remember that life is a team sport. We as the players can exist only in relation to those around us; there is no room for separate egoism in the team effort. One player not giving fully can hold back the team from reaching its potential, and another player, if overbearing, can prevent the team from utilizing its collective wisdom.

We must have four qualities to **PLAY** this game in the way Swami would want us

to, and these are: **P** (participation), **L** (love), **A** (awareness), and **Y** (yearning).

P – Participation

To play the game, we must participate fully. To participate fully is to embrace whatever comes our way. To give ourselves fully to the unfoldment of the Divine Will is the only joy and peace that can be fully given and received. Doing so unites us with His glory, for giving is proof of having. Without giving everything we have in the playing, we can never discover who we are. If we think we can, it will prove to be merely an intellectual speculation.

Full participation is the name of the game. Often we hold back because we are afraid of the outcome being undesirable. Doubt is not a characteristic of a devotee – confidence is! Fear is not an attribute of love – courage is!

The real miracle of our lives is that we are chosen to participate in His work. When Mr Srinivasan, President of the All-India Sathya Sai Service Organization, organized a 10-day

conference on the Ramayana epic in Prasanthi Nilayam a few years ago, Swami showered all the participants except Mr Srinivasan with gifts and blessings.

Mr Srinivasan then felt very bad, not knowing if he had made Swami upset with an unconscious error. The next day in the darshan line, Swami came to Mr Srinivasan and said, ***"Using you to do my work was your reward!"***

How true! We miss the joy – we miss the opportunity to empower ourselves with this joy – because we forget that all that happens to us as players in the Divine Game is Divine Will, and thus we fail to align our personality with His Intention. The strength of our willingness to PARTICIPATE need not come from our intention but from surrendering to His Will.

L – Love

The text, *A Course in Miracles*, points out that our relationship with God is not reciprocal, for although the divine love may be the same in him and us, we cannot say we are on a completely equal basis, for God created us, while we cannot create him back.

An analogy would be that as humans, our parents gave us birth, and we birth our children and pass on the gifts we inherited from our parents. Only in creating forward is the glory, the legacy increased. But if we love our children and they only love us back, the legacy ends there.

In giving himself unconditionally to us, Swami has given us (his children) the function of "giving of ourselves unconditionally." We



can create the divine gifts of love, joy, and happiness because these are his gifts to us, which, having fully, we must extend fully to all.

Sri Ram Dass (the American-born Richard Alpert), in his movie, *Fierce Grace*, in talking about his guru, Sri Maharaji Neem Karoli Baba, said, "The thing that attracts me most to my guru is not the fact that he loves me unconditionally, but that, sitting under his light, I can love everyone unconditionally."

Every action we do, every experience we experience, and every relationship we maintain are for this purpose and this purpose

alone: to manifest (create forward) His LOVE! Be assured that we can never add to Swami. He is *paripurna* – already complete, full. We can only add to his glory.

A – Awareness

When we work on long-term Sai projects, we may be tempted to become discouraged or bored with the routine aspects of the service. But just think – we have earned a spot in the work of the Sai organization worldwide, which is our beloved Bhagavan’s “face” in the world.

We must have done something right in this life or in the past for this good fortune, and, even so, no amount of our effort would have guaranteed this blessing to us, without His grace – for how else would we even have gotten this privilege?

It reminds me of the lowly squirrel in the Ramayana story, whose small contribution helped to build the gigantic causeway from the mainland to Lanka. It also reminds me of the story of Druva, the young boy who, after long and severe penance, earned a permanent seat on the lap of God – in space, as the “pole star.”

Awareness of this privilege inspires in me two responses – confidence and gratitude – confidence that our teamwork and its results will undoubtedly be a proof of Bhagavan’s glory, and gratitude that I am a small part of it. Gratitude must translate into responsibility to do His work according to His teachings, fully expressed and experienced.

I do not like to think of this as a duty; duty may bring a sense of obligation and expectation, while to me, responsibility connotes a sense of love and integrity. We are enthusiastic and committed to do His work, simply because we cannot contain our love! We give all we have, because our love knows not how to do otherwise.

Rick Warren, a Christian author, in his book, *A Purpose-Driven Life*, says, “If you know how to love God, you can milk a cow to His glory!”

In showing our love and enthusiasm for doing His work, there is no greater or smaller task; every part is essential for the whole to run smoothly. Our destiny lies not in the size of the role we play but rather in the way we play it. How well we play our roles depends on how AWARE we are of His glory in everything we see and do.

Y – Yearning

The grace we receive from the Lord is in direct proportion to the intense yearning we have for Him. More often than not, we get so caught up in the details of doing things that we forget the joy of being. To yearn to understand our being is to realize we are spiritual beings having a human experience and to use every experience (including the experience of working in a Sai organization project) to experience our spiritual Self.

If we accomplish just this in this process, nothing more is expected of us, because, according to Swami, the biggest, most

important service we can render in this world is to enlighten ourselves!

Often we are more focused on the details of carrying out the service or on accomplishing a stated goal within the project that we exclude our selves from being touched by the experiences we are witnessing during the course of the service project. But if in the process we are not transformed, we can be sure that we will not transform anyone else.

Let us pay as much attention, if not more, to the way we deliver our service work and teamwork, as we pay to the goal of delivering the final product. Let us not lose our yearning to experience Him, on account of any distractions that arise in the course of our voluntary Sai projects. The very process is the game we are supposed to PLAY!

These are the reminders I use to sustain my love for His work. The thing that attracts me most to Swami is not that he has the ability to know what is in my heart, but that

he cares enough to know what is in my heart. Every time I do one more task similar to the ones performed many times already, I marvel at Swami's enthusiasm and compassion in repeating for our benefit the same stories and messages for 70-plus years.

When results do not turn out the way I expected and I feel discouraged or troubled, I remind myself that Swami gave so unconditionally, year after year, decade after decade, knowing that the majority of us were not ready to receive what he had come to give – liberation itself. He not only showed compassion for our limitations but also engaged fully with us in taking care of our petty problems.

In fulfilling my responsibilities, I want to play my part in the game fully and joyfully, with Him in my heart and as my Guide, and in the results I want to remember His Will. Thank you, Swami, for this privilege.

—Radha Babu Reddy
Nashville, Tennessee

Do not serve for the sake of reward, attracting attention, or earning gratitude, or from a sense of pride at your own superiority in skill, wealth, status, or authority. Serve because you are urged by love. When you succeed, ascribe the success to the grace of God who urged you on, as love within you. When you fail, ascribe the failure to your own inadequacy, insincerity, of ignorance.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba (SSS 6:8, end quote following discourse of Mar 17, 1966)

Stepping Stones toward Human Values: the Subvalues (Part 2 of 2 on the Five Human Values)

SATHYA SAI BABA HAS LIKENED the five human values (*sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* – or as often translated in English: *truth*, *right conduct*, *peace*, *love*, and *nonviolence*) to the five basic elements of the human personality. He has often said that without these basic human values, human life would degenerate itself into something useless and worthless.

On November 22, 1990, in Prasanthi Nilayam, Swami repeated these words: *“These values are the walls supporting the edifice of sanathana dharma (the universal path to God).”*

We can begin to see why he has placed such great emphasis on the five human values, stressing their deeper meaning. Let us review some of the conclusions reached in Part I of this article (“Why the Five Human Values?” *Sathya Sai Newsletter USA*, May-June 2012).

The five basic human values – *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* – have an underlying thread that emphasizes their connectedness – that we are all One, the One that is latent within us and pertains to our pure thoughts, pure words, and pure deeds.

(The most astounding thing has just occurred. Please read the Addendum at the end of this article.)

Whether it is from the words of the Vedas, or the words and actions of Mother Teresa, Sathya Sai Baba, Leo Tostoy, Martin Luther King Jr, Jesus, and all who knew the divinity of the five human values, we hear the same theme. We know that **truth** is unchanging!

For us, in this time of birth in the human body, Sathya Sai Baba has come to help us on our journey. Sai recognizes that we may not easily grasp the depth of the basic five values. So, because of his love for all of us, he has presented us with an ingenious program that will help us along the way. He has offered us stepping stones to having a better understanding, via the **subvalues**.

There have been many Sai Education books printed, in which lists of subvalues are delineated under each of the five basic human values. Surprisingly, one discovers that many times a subvalue will be listed under more than one basic value. This may be confusing. Perhaps Swami’s words in this regard would be helpful:

The subvalues are similar, not separate, and they are interdependent — all leading to the depth of meaning of the five human values.

The five human values are all facets of the foundational humanness. They grow together. They are interdependent. They are not separable. Dharma is love in action; love thrives on inner peace, on the absence of inner conflicts. How can one have peace when he revels in violence of speech and action? (Sathya Sai Baba, SSS 17:31, 31 Dec 1984, “Be Human; Become Human”)

We may extend this explanation to the subvalues, too. Following up on Sai’s declaration, let us pursue the practice of these pure subvalues with the knowledge that they are interdependent and relate to each of the five basic values.

We Must Practice the Subvalues

We may have read the story of Benjamin Franklin and how he made a commitment to practice subvalues one at a time.* Why? He felt it would improve his character, make him a better person. This task was not easy. Sometimes he would have to work on a single virtue for many weeks at a time before he felt it had become part of his character. Some

months later, he would discover a failure or lapse and so once again would start over again. He did not give up.

Perhaps all of us can start practicing the subvalues. Let us be willing to experiment in a similar way to Franklin. Let this be our offering to Sathya Sai Baba for all that he has given us. Here are some suggestions for putting the subvalues into practice:

1. Choose one subvalue.
2. Keep a Values Notebook.
3. Record how you met your accomplishments each day.
4. When you feel you have met your goal, work with a different subvalue.

Here are a few subvalues and their definitions:

Service: selflessly serving others for the good of others from one’s heart

Forbearance: refraining from anger, quieting mental distress

*Story is recounted in *Sai Baba’s Mahavakya on Leadership: A Book for Youth, Parents and Teachers* by Lt Gen (Retd) Dr M L Chibber.

Virtue: conforming to a standard of right

Healthy Living: enjoying health and vigor of body, mind, and spirit

Humility: showing lack of egoism or self-importance

Inquiry: searching through self-awareness

Justice: prevailing in what is just, impartial, and fair, based on truth

Integrity: living in according with the laws of nature and the rules of right action

Equanimity: bearing success and defeat equally

Respect: showing consideration for nature, the earth, and all beings and things

Truthfulness: expressing truth in one's thoughts, words, and actions

Unity: being aware that all beings are one, parts working together as one unit

Please note that I have not categorized any of the subvalues under a particular basic value. Discover for yourself under which main value each subvalue might appear. I am sure you will conclude that each may fit under more than one – or even all – and that the subvalues are similar, not separate, and

they are interdependent – all leading to the depth of meaning of the five human values.

A Few Additional Subvalues

Kindness

Forgiveness

Surrender

Determination

Patience

Helpfulness

Loyalty

Duty

Sense-Control

Appreciation

Morality

Perseverance

Ceiling on Desires

Compassion

Responsibility

Harmlessness

We could list many additional subvalues but must remember that it is **only through practice** that our journey as a human being will be completed.

Only when a seed is planted in the soil and watered can it sprout and grow from a sapling into a big tree. If the seed is kept in a tin and watered, it will only rot. Likewise, with human values, it is only when they are implanted in a heart that is sacred and spiritual and nurtured there, that they will flourish and shine in all their splendor. (Sathya Sai Baba, SSS 25:14, 22 May 1992, "From Knowledge to Wisdom")

In conclusion, I wish to thank Swami for showing us the road to reach the true meaning of *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema*, and *ahimsa*. Let his simplest messages resound through us:

Help Ever, Hurt Never

Love All, Serve All

Do Good, See Good, Be Good

Love and Blessings to All,

—Bea Flaig
Tucson, Arizona

ADDENDUM

It was January 4, 2012, at 3.00 pm. I was about to scribe one of Sathya Sai Baba's quotes on the value of *prema* (love) when I realized a break was needed. I had to stretch, walk a bit, and continue reading more of a book I had started three months ago – *War and Peace*, by Leo Tolstoy. I had already read some hundreds of pages of the tome, but there were many more to complete, and I felt committed to seeing it through to the last page. Why this prologue to a miracle about to happen? You be the judge.

I started to read. In the scene, Prince Andrew had been quite seriously wounded during the Russian war with the French. He had been moved from Moscow and was lying on a hospital bed, fading in and out of consciousness. Prince Andrew was thinking about love:

Not love which loves for something, for some quality, for some purpose, or for some reason, but the love which I – while dying – first experienced when I saw my enemy and yet loved him.

I experienced the feeling of love which is the very essence of the soul and does not require an object. Now again I feel that bliss, to love one's neighbor, to love one's enemies, to love everything, to love God in all his manifestations. . . . When loving with human love, one may pass from love to hatred, but divine love cannot change. . . . It is the very essence of the soul.

—Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*

I felt Swami's presence that afternoon, assuring me that divine love cannot change, that *prema* is indeed the essence of the soul.

When there is love in the heart, all that you utter will be truth. Love in speech is truth. Love in action is dharma. Love in thought is peace. Love in understanding is ahimsa. So, love is the underlying principle of truth, righteousness, peace, and nonviolence. (Sathya Sai Baba, Discourse on Human Values and Education, 26 July 1999)

—Bea Flaig
Tucson, Arizona



“Love the Love: Tribute to Sathya Sai Baba by Dana Gillespie”

Concert Series Travels to Houston, Texas

Reprinted from *Indo American News*, May 3, 2012.



HOUSTON: On April 28th, at the Unity Church in Houston, famed British blues vocalist, Dana Gillespie, performed in concert a loving tribute to Sathya Sai Baba, a revered spiritual leader and teacher. Over 900 people gathered to attend the concert titled, “Love the Love,” to commemorate the first anniversary of the passing of Sathya Sai Baba. For His numerous devotees, the event was not just a memorial service or a tribute; it was an outpouring of thanks for Baba’s grace in every aspect of their lives and a celebration of the universal spiritual

values that have imbued their hearts and minds with joy and love.

The program began with introductory remarks by Alex Grana, President of Sai Region 10.* Master of Ceremonies Miya Shay (reporter on KTRK 13’s Eyewitness News) ably provided an overview of the program. City Councilman Mike Laster presented a proclamation on behalf of Mayor Annise Parker and the Houston City Council declaring April 24th Universal Love and Unity Day in commemoration of the passing of Sathya Sai Baba and to express the

* USA Sai Organization Region 10

city's appreciation for the Sai Organization. Julia Laskowski and John Hardesty rendered a few songs expressing themes of unity and love in the opening act.

Finally, the moment that the entire audience had been waiting for arrived – the entrance of Dana Gillespie on stage. Dressed elegantly in a black velvet jacket and jeans, wearing masses of colorful bangles on her hands, Gillespie won over the audience right away with a beautiful smile and a couple of sweet introductory remarks. Gillespie began her performance by a melodious Ganesha invocation, a prayer for auspicious beginnings. The note-perfect “Vinayaka Vinayaka” immediately engaged and elevated the audience; all it took was a minute gesture from Gillespie to get the audience to sing louder – such was her command over the stage.

This command, over the music and over the audience, was evident time and again through the concert; the audience smiled and swayed with Gillespie as one mesmerized multitude. The next number, “*Om Shakti*,” spoke to the unity of all religions.

The amazing power of Gillespie's compelling vocals and the perfect harmony provided by her accompanying musicians created a vibrant energy that was as tangible as it was joyous. The subsequent numbers – “Guardian Blue Angel,” “All is One,” “Big Daddy Blues,” and “Your Love is True” – were scintillating harmonies that throbbed with intensity. It was in these numbers with their mellifluous blend of notes and words, in the combination of pathos and hope that Gillespie showed her mastery over the blues.

If these numbers were classic blues rhythms, the audience also received ample opportunities to appreciate the global nature of Gillespie's repertoire. “Move Your Body Close to Me” was a soulful number that drew inspiration from the Indian *ghazal*.^{*} Like the blues lyrics that seemingly talked about worldly matters but hid deeper, esoteric connotations of the divine, her fusion numbers embodied tantalizing combinations of east and west, of the physical and spiritual. Thus, while “Move Your Body Close to Me” could be construed as physical love, Gillespie infused into it the evocative pathos of the *ghazal*, personifying the yearning of the soul for its eternal destination.

“For a prayer to work, it has to come from the heart of hearts,” said Gillespie as she proceeded to the next number, “A Light in my Heart of Hearts.” The chant-like beat of this sufi-inspired number served as the perfect showcase for the musicians who shone with a harmonious, unified performance. The tabla player, in particular, enhanced the pulsating rhythm of this number with his brilliant percussion. “Unify” and “Strange are the Ways of Love” truly demonstrated the power of music to unite people; the audience sat transfixed as Gillespie sang of the indomitable spirit of man and the power of love to bring hope in the darkest of moments. “Shower the Rose Petals” invoked fond reminiscences among devotees of Sai Baba at His darshans in India; it ended with the Sanskrit chant “*Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*.” Inspired by the ancient Hindu texts

^{*} A devotional poetic form based on rhyming couplets and a refrain.

^{**} A form of Sufi devotional music.



From left: Raghu Amara, President, North Houston Sai Center, Ajit Paralkar, President, South Houston Sai Center, Chris Brown, Chief Deputy City Controller, Mike Laster, District J Council Member, Alex Grana, President, Sai Region 10 with a proclamation from the office of the Mayor, City of Houston. Photos: Prafull Kumar

called the Upanishads, “The Whole Universe” plucked at the heartstrings of the audience.

The highlight of the evening was the eponymous “Love the Love,” inspired by the Indian *qawwali*** and composed with noted Indian singer Pankaj Udhas. “Love the Love” exhorts the listener to love nature, to love all of creation and to love oneself. Set to a catchy beat, this number causes an almost instantaneous urge to dance in the listener; however, a careful

examination of the lyrics reveals a profound message that exemplifies Baba’s teachings. By popular demand, Gillespie had to provide a second rendition of the song; the second time, the audience clapped with gusto while a few members of the audience swayed in ecstasy, such was the uplifting experience of her performance.

To call Gillespie a blues singer would be limiting her to a single genre; her music is truly

global and eclectic. Her repertoire embraces a wide variety of styles; the undertones of Indian classical music and its derivatives add a dimension that is as thrilling as it is captivating. The beauty of her music is its all-encompassing appeal; it is in the soul-stirring melodies as much as it is in the simplicity and sincerity of her lyrics. Along with Gillespie, the listener makes the journey into the darkest recesses of the heart only to be blinded at the end by a flash of light that is drenched with hope and love. She demonstrated just how seasoned of a musician she was both through her command over the stage and her almost-instantaneous rapport with the audience – no mean feat given that there were close to a thousand people in the audience.

Gillespie interspersed her songs with brief narratives about her experiences with Sai Baba; with humor and humility, she described her many interactions with her spiritual leader and the exhilaration of performing at His birthday celebrations for many years. While her experiences resonated with devotees in the audience, her reiteration of Baba's message of universal love needed no context; her heartfelt exhortation that we need to recognize that all religions are the same earned unanimous affirmation from the audience.

More than the music it was the vibrations of love that captured the audience. Expressions of elation and bliss were writ large on the faces of the audience as they reluctantly left the auditorium to partake of refreshments. Asked



how they felt, often-repeated adjectives were *awesome*, *fantastic*, *amazing*, etc.

One person remarked that the performance was “surreal” while another said it was “absolutely beautiful.” One devotee who has heard Gillespie perform at Baba's birthday events mentioned that

she creates a heart-to-heart connection. A fan of Gillespie for the last thirty years flew in from Arizona just to listen to her; several other blues fans and music lovers in the area came to listen to the music, and left uplifted by the message. The program ended with a vote of thanks by Vinod Patel, Vice President of Sai Region 10. A post concert music event by a talented group of young musicians, held in the arena outside the church, was a fitting conclusion to the evening.

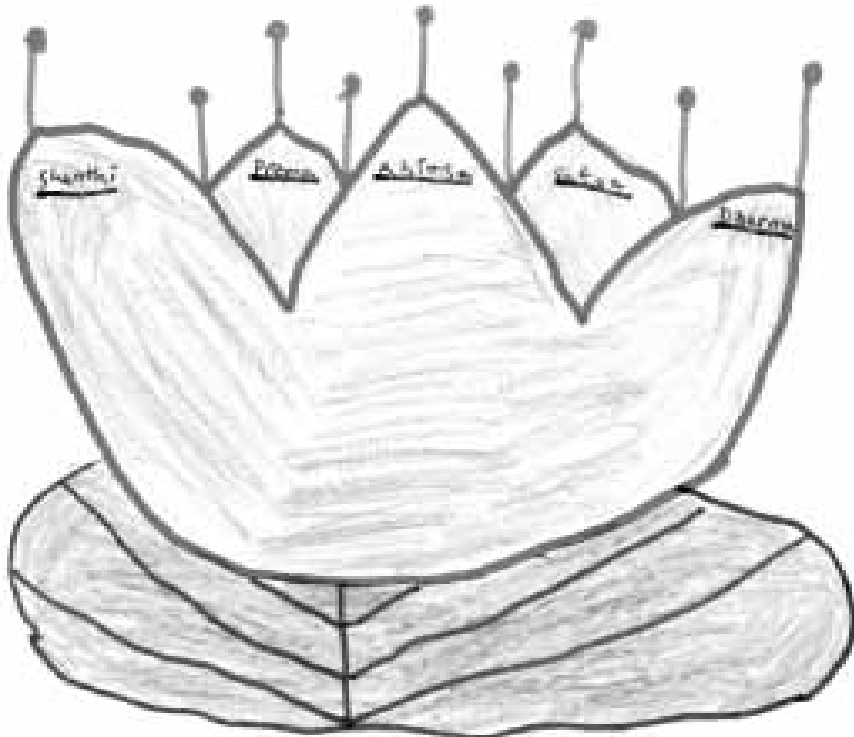
Gillespie also took her Love the Love tour to the University of Texas at Austin, Texas Southern University, and the Rothko Chapel in Houston.

“Love the Love” was organized by the Sathya Sai Organization (www.sathyasai.org), a network of groups (“Sai Centers”), which facilitate service, devotional and educational activities along with living the spiritual ideals as instructed by Sathya Sai Baba. Sai Centers welcome people of all faiths while providing a place to study and practice the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba. For more information about Sai Centers in Houston, visit www.saicenterofhouston.org.

—*Indo American News*

www.indoamerican-news.com/?p=6796
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The Five Human Values: Experience, Learn, Apply



Experience. Learn. Apply.

What did I experience? I experienced pure joy in the struggle to reach Baba and the desire to become Baba's instrument.

What did I learn? I learned some spiritual verses. I learned the five human values. I learned how to control my anger. I learned how to be passionate. I learned how to be kind. I learned Baba's sayings.

What did I apply? I applied peace and kindness. I am keeping away from bad company. I have been more passionate. I have controlled my anger.

—Snigdha Paidikondala
SSE Group 2 Student, Columbus, Ohio

USA Event & Conference Dates – 2012

Regional retreat updates and information may also be viewed at the official Sai website:

<http://us.sathyasai.org/> or <http://us.sathyasai.org/infoconf.htm>.

Region 6 (Pacific Northwest) (www.saicenters.info/saiusaregion6/): **Sept 1–3** (Sat–Mon), Labor Day Weekend, at Silver Falls State Park in Oregon. Theme: “Love of Conscience” Speakers: Rita & Robert Bruce. Registrar: Deepak Vishwanathan, (214) 693-4033 or dvishwanathan@gmail.com.

Region 7 (Northern California and Northern Nevada) (www.region7saicenters.org/omsairam/):

- **July 7** (Sat, 9.30a–12.30p), workshop with Dr Sue Evans, “Spiritual Self-Confidence,” at Divine Science Community Center, 1540 Hicks Ave, San Jose CA 95125. Contact: Suzanne Slyman, suzslyman@gmail.com.
- **Sept 15–16** (Sat–Sun), weekend retreat for spiritual renewal at Walker Creek Ranch, Marshall CA 94940. Theme: “Our Life is HIS Message – Live in Love.” Speakers: P V Shankar, Michael McCarty, and Berniece Mead. Info and registration: www.region7saicenters.org. Contact: Suzanne Slyman, suzslyman@gmail.com.

Region 8 (Southern California, Hawaii, Las Vegas NV): (www.region8saicenters.org)

- **July 22** (Sat, 9.30a–12.30p), bimonthly regional devotional meeting with guest artist Siva Prasad, “The Whistle Wizard/Human Flute,” at Hoover Middle School, 3503 Country Club Drive, Lakewood CA 90272. After a performance in July 2010, Swami said to Siva Prasad, “*You used this rare human skill to invoke God and spread devotion in this world. Take it globally to our centers.*” Contact: Dr C Chandradas (661) 341-1046 or M Srinivas (805) 523-8348.
- **Aug 25** (Sat, 2.00–5.00p), guest speaker Sri V Srinivasan, President, All-India Sri Sathya Sai Organization and member of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, at the Double Tree Hilton, 100 The City Drive, Anaheim CA 92868. Contact: Dr C Chandradas (661) 341-1046 or M Srinivas (805) 523-8348.

Region 9 (Southwest):

- **Aug 31–Sept 3 (Fri–Mon), New Mexico** “Land of Enchantment” Retreat at Bodhi Manda Zen Center, Jemez Springs, NM. Theme: “*Your Life Is My Message!*” Speakers: Dr Choudary Voleti, Jack Feely, The Bailey Family. Contact: Elaine Hausman, 505-660-0283, ehausman@rockridge.biz.
- **Sept 21–Sept 23 (Fri–Sun), Colorado** Retreat at Highlands Presbyterian Camp, Allenspark, CO. Theme: “I Am Love, Serving All.” Speakers: Shama and Cass Smith from Encinitas CA; Bharat Datt from Ontario, Canada; Isha Aran (Young Adult) from Denver CO. Contact: Terri Dodd, 303-220-7870, or Ernie Duff, ernstduff@yahoo.com.

Region 10 (South Central) (www.sairegion10.org/index.php/home): **Aug 31–Sep 2**, Labor Day Retreat at Camp Young Judea, Wimberley TX (outside Austin). Speakers: Dr Michael Goldstein, Dr Samuel and Mrs Sharon Sandweiss. Parallel SSE Weekend Camp for children at Camp Young Judea; speaker: Srinivas Raghavan.

USA Young Adults: Aug 10–12, Young Adult Nat’l Leadership Conference (for regional YA reps and advisors, and national Sai organization leaders), in Dallas TX. Attendance by invitation only.

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***Sathya Sai Newsletter USA* online archives (1976–2010):**

<http://us.sathyasai.org/ssn/index.htm> (NOTE: now updated to 2010)

Recent Arrivals

Sai Darshan Vol 2, by Seema M Dewan. In this volume, the author has transcribed 108 messages divinely inspired by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba through her inner voice. Each message offers words of wisdom, covering many aspects of spiritual growth. Soft cover, 292 pages. BI-494 \$5.00

Sai Baba My Pilot, by Capt V K Sharma, recounts the author's experiences as an airline pilot and the memorable days of piloting the plane with Swami aboard. He has been guided on his spiritual journey ever since 1973 by Baba's grace. BI-501 \$15.00

Functions at Prasanthi Nilayam and Their Significance, compiled by Suresh C Bhatnagar and offered to Swami on his 77th birthday, is an exposition on all the festivals and events that occur throughout the year in Prasanthi Nilayam, with quotes and commentary from Swami detailing their inner meaning and purpose. BI-206 \$9.00

HIStory: As Told by Himself (Pertaining to His Younger Days) is a compilation of discourses given by Swami, relating the stories of his youth. BI-160 \$4.00

The River Flows: Letters to Rhutu, by Purandar Amin, might well be titled *Letters to Our Children*, representing the universal wish of spiritually-minded parents to lovingly direct their children's minds toward the ultimate truth. The author does this in a most thoughtful and practical way through this series of letters scribed to his daughter and bound into an elegantly-designed book as a wedding present. BI-382 \$9.00

Wisdom of Sai Women, by Sue Evans, Lyn Kriegler, and Kirsten Pruzan Mikkelsen, features 18 interviews of Sai women from around the world. They share stories of their lives, stories about Swami, and the wisdom they have received from walking the spiritual path. Soft cover, 226 pages. BI-493 \$5.00