



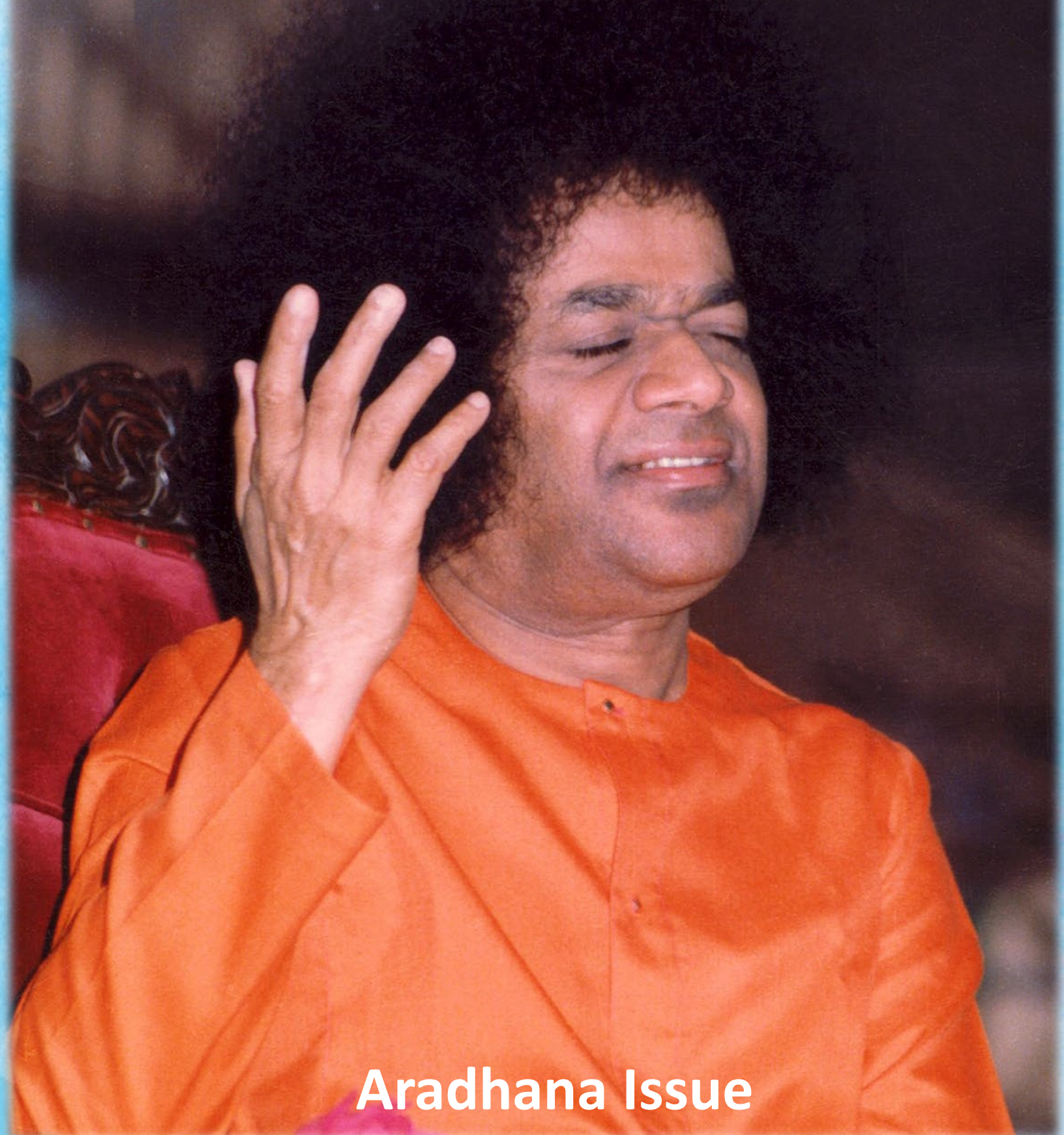
# SAILIGHTS



Magazine of the Sri Sathya Sai Global Council, Zone 1

April 24, 2023

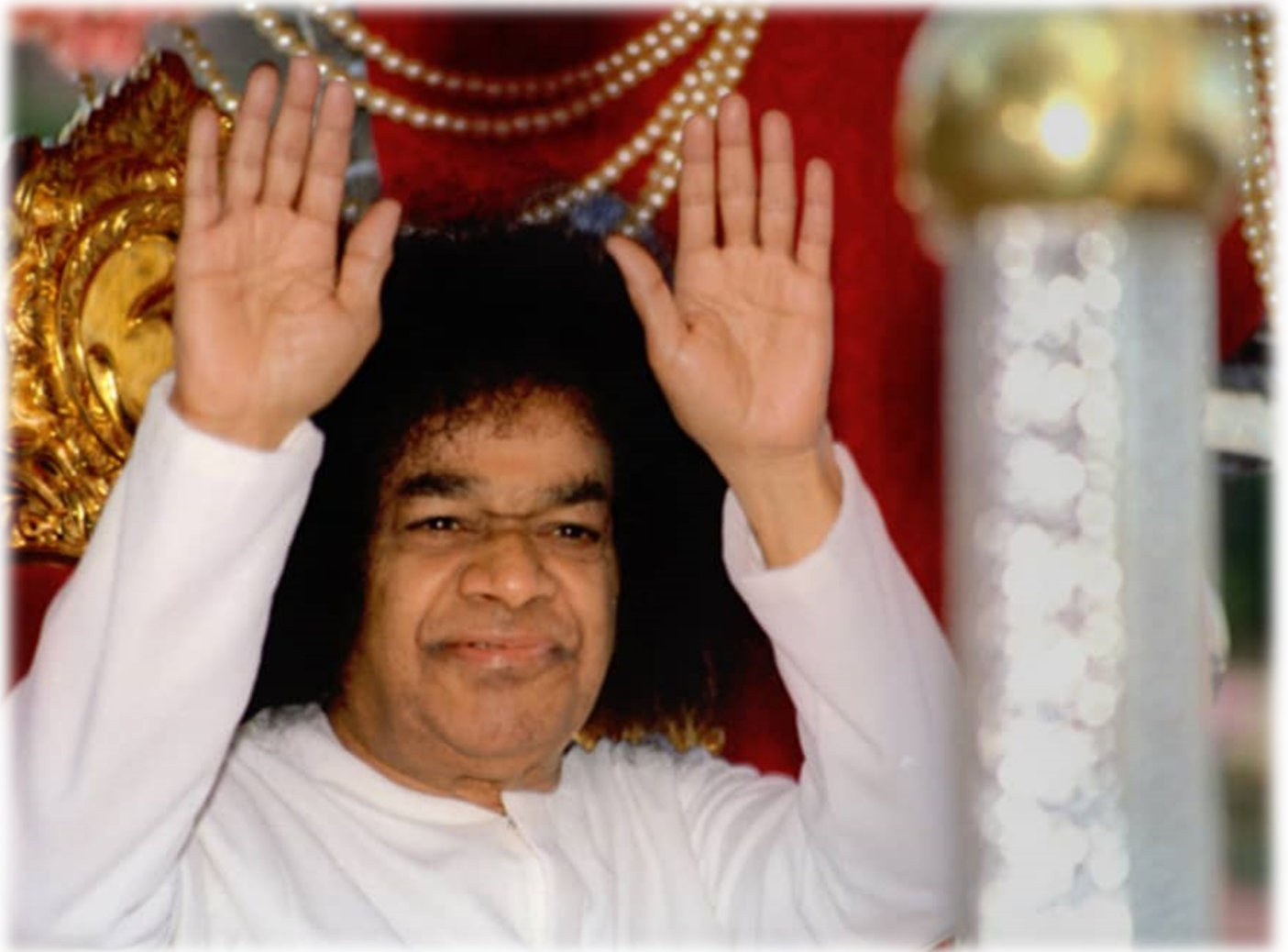
Volume 5



Aradhana Issue

# SAILIGHTS

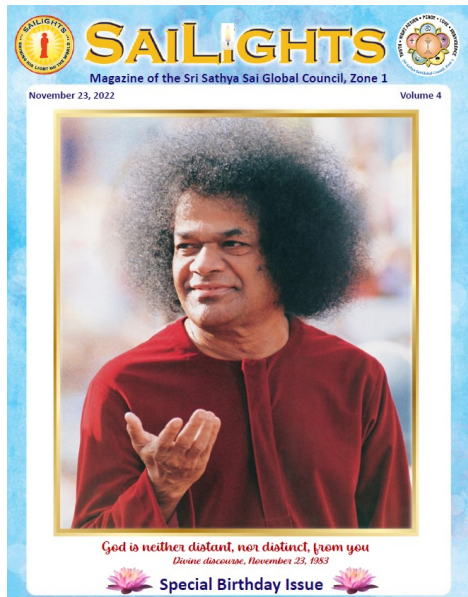
Offered with Love and Reverence at the Lotus Feet of our Dear Lord  
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
on the Occasion of Aradhana Day



**"Where there is faith, there is love; where there is love, there is peace; where there is peace, there is truth; where there is truth, there is God; where there is God, there is bliss. "**

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

# Note from SaiLights Team



Volume 4 Offered at the Divine Lotus Feet on November 23, 2022

Dear Sai Brothers and Sisters,

By the Grace of Swami, we are most happy to bring you Volume 5 of *SaiLights*, the magazine of Zone 1, Sri Sathya Sai Global Council. The present *Aradhana* issue is being offered to Swami, with love and gratitude, on *Aradhana* Day, April 24, 2023.

- ♥ The last few months have seen a lot of activity in Zone 1. Do read Brother Axay's succinct summary on page 5!
- ♥ The first four months of the year are also a time of celebration, marking major festivals or important events across multiple faiths. Volume 5 is thus festival-themed, with articles on *Maha Shivaratri*, *Ramanavami*, Hanuman, Easter, *Ramadan*, and *Aradhana* Day.
- ♥ In keeping with the Festivals theme, Volume 5 features pictures of *rangolis* (festive Indian floor designs) whose colors and patterns represent the beauty and joy of these occasions and the beauty of the world that God has given us.

- ♥ How did Swami enter your life? Please see our fellow devotees' inspiring responses to this question, on p. 81; and don't miss the Sai-themed Quiz where you may test your own knowledge of all things Swami. Good luck!

We have been greatly blessed to offer every issue of *SaiLights* to date at the *Maha Samadhi* in Prasanthi Nilayam, and pray for Swami's kind acceptance once again of Volume 5 at His Lotus Feet.

Loving Sairams from  
The *SaiLights* Team



# SAILIGHTS

## Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Message from Zone 1 Chair</b> .....  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Aradhana</b> .....   | <b>8</b>  |
| Quiz on Swami and His Teachings .....   | 12        |
| <b>Featured Theme: A Glimpse of Festivals Celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam, Jan-Apr.</b> ..... | <b>13</b> |
| – Why did Swami celebrate Religious Festivals? .....  | 14        |
| – Maha Sivarathri .....   | 16        |
| – Ramanavami .....  | 20        |
| – Hanuman Jayanti .....   | 25        |
| – Ramadan .....   | 30        |
| – Easter .....  | 34        |
| <b>Center Highlights</b> .....  | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Zonal Highlights</b> .....   | <b>59</b> |
| – A Little Help For Turkey’s Earthquake Victims .....   | 60        |
| – An Outpouring of Love - Turkey Earthquake Disaster Relief .....                             | 61        |
| – Zone 1—West Indies Medical Camp .....   | 63        |
| – Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Educare: Lamps of Love .....                                       | 65        |
| – Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Application Course .....                             | 68        |
| – Young Adults Retreat .....  | 71        |
| – Cultural Integration Committee Update .....   | 72        |
| <b>Sai Nuggets</b> .....  | <b>74</b> |
| – A Sai Pearl: <i>What Makes Us Human?</i> - Prasanthi Babu .....                             | 75        |
| – Spiritual GPS: How to Meditate on Name and Form .....                                       | 76        |
| – Asked...and Answered by Swami: Why is God like the Electric Current? .....                  | 78        |
| – Life is a Game: Play it! .....  | 79        |
| <b>Devotee Experiences: "How Swami Entered My Life"</b> .....                                 | <b>81</b> |
| Quiz on Swami and His Teachings –Solutions.....   | 93        |
| <b>Media Links</b> .....  | <b>97</b> |

# Message from Zone 1 Chair



## Om Sai Ram!

With Swami's Grace, the Sri Sathya Sai Global Council (SSSGC) has been busy carrying on Swami's mission of fostering the practice of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Non-violence through the spiritual endeavors of Service, Devotion, and Education. A very brief outline of some activities include:

- ◆ **A Zone-wide online conference** - The Way Forward: Unity, Purity, and Divinity was held on February 4, 2023, where the national officers and zonal committee chairs introduced themselves and presented updates regarding their activities. Our new Zone 1 Website was also demonstrated and launched during this event.
- ◆ **The Humanitarian Committee** has been involved, along with several centers and nations, with providing support for Ukrainian refugees, Sri Lankan Crisis victims, and the earthquake victims of Syria and Turkey.
- ◆ **Centers and Regions** have been very active on the service front, providing food hampers to the needy, serving sandwiches and hot meals, conducting medical camps; and providing groceries, hot meals, supplies and medications to flooding victims; undertaking quarterly food drives and medical camps, tree planting and park cleaning events, senior home visits, and tutoring seva and EHV classes in collaboration with the Sri Sathya Sai Program for Awareness of Human Values and Educare (SSSPAVE) team.
- ◆ **On the Devotional side**, Christmas celebrations were conducted throughout centers alongside the beautiful global Christmas program presented in a loving, elegant fashion at Prasanthi Nilayam. Sivarathri celebrations were conducted across the Zone with many centers and regions focusing on the divine throughout the entire night singing rapturous bhajans. The Ladies wing held their first



Zone-Wide Retreat on April 15-16. The Sri Sathya Sai Education Program (SSSEP) committee paired with the SSSPAVE committee to offer the second 10-week formal course, titled SSS Human Values: Practical Application.

- ◆ **The Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Educare Wing** has been inspiring the children and parents with their Teacher of Truth and Harmonious Homes series of publications. Mini retreats were held for coordinators and teachers, field trips for children and of course in person and online weekly classes.
- ◆ **The Young Adults (YA)**, many of whom are serving in leadership roles in all aspects of the SSSGC, continue to help with the planning and successful completion of activities in all wings. The USA completed a National YA retreat on February 17-19, 2023.

**Looking forward.** Our connection to Prasanthi Nilayam continues to be reinforced through many site visits planned for the summer including the culmination of the SSS Youth Leadership Program, the USA Pilgrimage, the SSS Center Leaders Conference, the SSS Networking Event, and the SSSGC Guru Purnima Medical Camp. Our Social Media presence continues to develop with the addition of our Zone 1 Podcast Channel and Smule channel.

# Message from Zone 1 Chair



Swami announced during the Dasara festival in 1961 that He was launching an organization. We are forever grateful to our dear Bhagawan for granting us the privilege to be a part of that legacy that continues to be rooted in Prasanthi Nilayam. We pray that more and more of the world, inspired through our loving thoughts, words, and deeds joins together with us in Unity to continue this great *Avataric* Mission of Self-Transformation.



-----  
Dr. Axay Shanti Kalathia

SSSGC, Zone 1 Chair

<https://www.sssgc-zone1.org/>

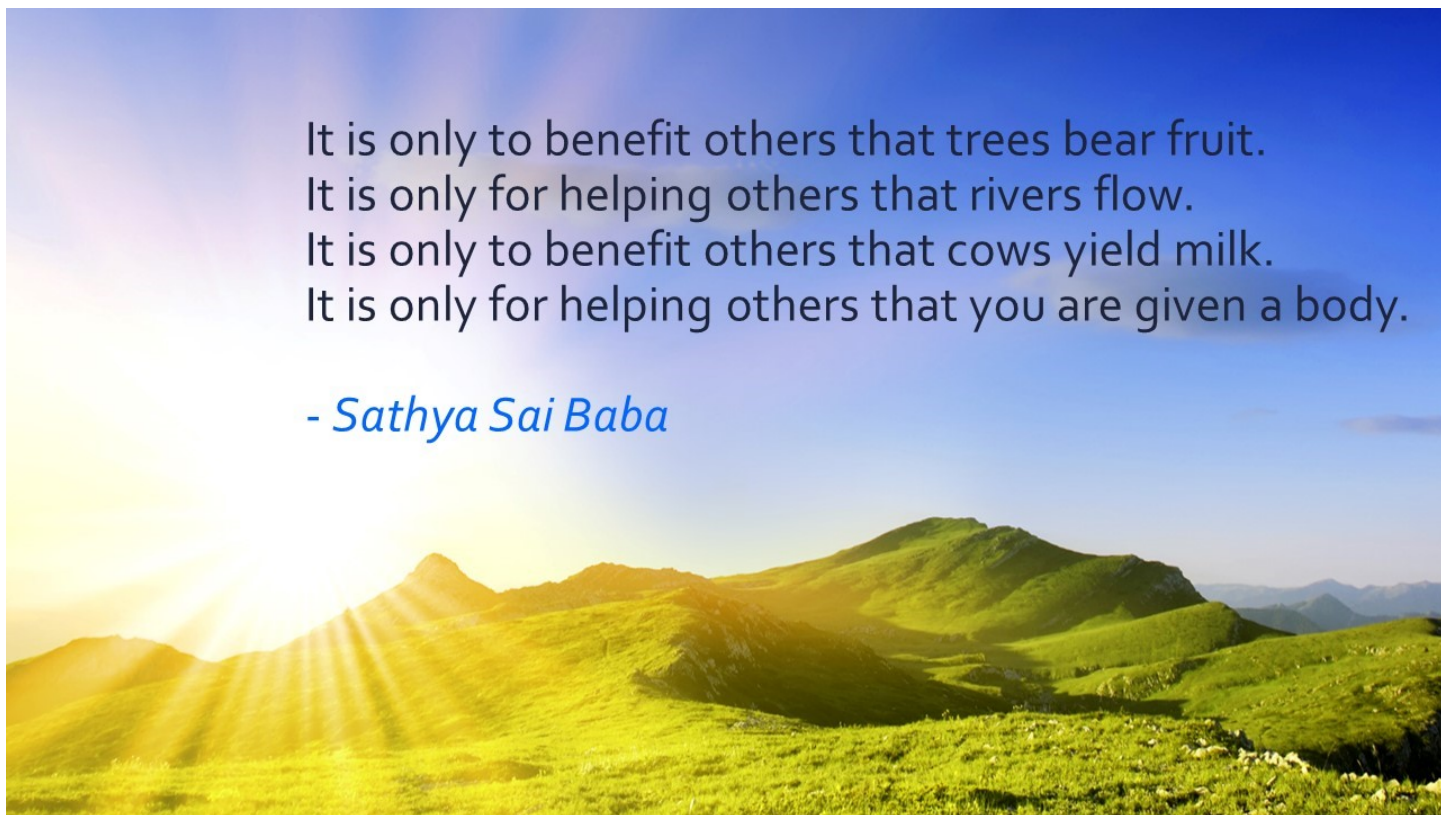
<https://www.srisathyaiglobalcouncil.org/>

<https://www.sssmediacentre.org/#/>

---

It is only to benefit others that trees bear fruit.  
It is only for helping others that rivers flow.  
It is only to benefit others that cows yield milk.  
It is only for helping others that you are given a body.

- *Sathya Sai Baba*



# Aradhana



# Aradhana

## Aradhana Day

As we honor our dear Swami on Aradhana Day in commemoration of His Maha Samadhi on April 24, 2011, let us review what Swami has said is the purpose of the Avatar, as well as some of His important teachings.

### Transformation is the Avatar's purpose

“From time to time, in these Yugas, God was appearing as an Avatar for the purpose of showing the divinity that is contained in human beings, and for setting an exemplary life as an example. It has been said that God takes a human form so that he is accessible to human beings and gives them happiness. The birds and animals are experiencing the limitations which have been laid out for them. A human birth is the most sacred one among the 84 lakhs of different *jivas* in this creation. To attain such a sacred birth is a great fortune indeed. Man has a special distinctiveness.



We must see and understand the difference between birds and animals, on the one hand, and man on the other hand. Animals are born with cruelty as their nature, and they also spend their lives with cruelty. We may give a lot of training to the animal, but it is impossible to bring about a lasting change in its habits. It may conduct itself according to the training during the period of the training, but it will not give up its cruelty. Man is not like that. Even though he may be born with cruelty, he can get rid of it by an attempt or Sadhana. It becomes clear that what does not and cannot achieve refinement is an animal, and what can achieve refinement is man. To facilitate such refinement and transformation in human beings, God takes birth in human form from time to time. This refinement can be brought about by different methods at different periods of time. In the *Kritha* Yuga, the method was Dhyana; in the *Thretha* Yuga, the method was *Yagna*; in the *Dwapara* Yuga, it was Archana; and in the Kali Yuga, prominence is given to Namasmarana. These are the royal paths available to human beings for changing themselves.”

*Summer Showers 1978 – Chapter 2 – God comes in human form to help men change themselves for the better.*

### How to be grateful to Swami?

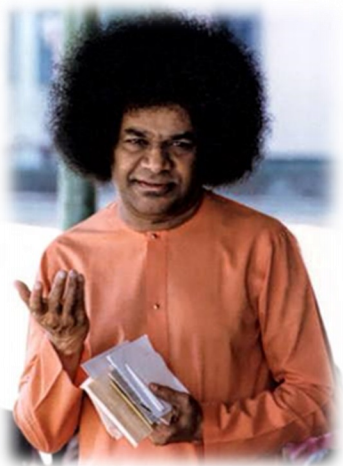
“Selfishness has become the motivating force for all activities of man today. His mind is filled with all types of desires, and violence has become the way of life. He is wasting his life, not knowing its purpose. He is straying away from the path of *dharma* (right action) and *prema* (love). Desires of man are crossing all limits and are ultimately leading him to misery. Man is in a state of confusion because he is unable to comprehend the true objective of life.

I have been giving discourses for the past sixty years, but you are not making any effort to put into practice even a few of the teachings. Students are like gold. Their hearts are suffused with sacred feelings. Their behavior should also be in accordance with their feelings. Man will be ruined if his behavior is not on the right lines. Not only students, but teachers and administrators are also not coming up to expectations. The situation is the same in the case of *samithis* and Organizations.

# Aradhana



No doubt, devotees have immense love for Swami, but the same love is not expressed in the form of gratitude and *sadhana* (spiritual practice). It is rather surprising, even to Me, that for the past few days I did not feel like speaking at all. Since there was no marked change in you, I thought there was no point in continuing to speak to you. Hence, I decided to confine Myself to a few words.



What do you expect Me to speak? I have already taught all that ought to be taught. There is nothing more to convey. I am pained to see that all My teachings have gone for waste and all My sweet words have become tasteless to you.

Today, ego is on the rise in devotees. They are becoming more and more ostentatious. They pose as great persons before the world, thereby setting a wrong ideal to others. The knowledge acquired and the experience gained by them are not being put to any good use. They are not able to recognize that their ego will lead them to their downfall. They are not following the ideals set before them by Swami and are also not grateful for the love and grace showered on them by Me."

*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 32(1999) – Chap 22 – Follow Divine Commands*

## Importance of character

"There are many "educated" people in the world today. But, what are they engaged in? I do not find educated people engaged in service to society today. Nevertheless, the educational institutions in the world are turning out more and more such "educated" people. The education that these people acquire is only secular education and not spiritual education. In fact, spiritual education is the only true education, which will establish the existence of God.



Secular education enables one to secure employment and eke out a living thereby. It is for the physical sustenance of the person concerned and their family. As the saying goes, "The end of education is character." Devoid of character, all other possessions are useless. Unfortunately, today, character building has been relegated to the background. It is the last priority.

Of what use it is to pursue such education that does not confer character on a person? Modern education may help one to gain control over men and matter, but it utterly fails in uplifting one's own self. There must be unity between one's inner feelings and outward actions. The harmony between thought, word, and deed is of utmost importance. Education should enable one to cultivate good qualities, character, and devotion. When there is unity between thought, word, and deed one can acquire purity and realize Divinity."

*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 38 (2005) – Chapter 19 – Truth and righteousness are the foundation for true education*

# Aradhana



## Service to humanity

"True service has twin benefits: it makes you blissful and gives happiness to others. What is the use of education if it does not confer joy on others and bliss on you?"

Service is the life breath of the Sathya Sai Organization. Remember the truth that you are born to serve society. Make no distinction whatsoever in rendering service. Serve your parents, brothers, friends, and even beggars alike. Divine grace will flow in abundance only when you serve with the spirit of humility and equality.

Service is the easiest path to attain divine grace. Offer service and receive the love of God. Love and service are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of love and service divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be, be it in the forest or in the sky, village or city, river or mountain cliff.

God has created man in His own image so that man's conduct should be in consonance with His command. You should not cause harm to anyone, for God exists in all. Always speak with a smile on your lips. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly."

*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 32 (1999) – Chapter 24 – Human Values and Service*

## How to serve Swami's Organization?

"Seeing these volunteer badges that I have brought for distribution you feel happy that you are soon to be decorated, and perhaps you hope, by means of this badge, to exercise authority over others and escape heavy work during this Birthday Festival. I am not giving these badges to endow you with authority or confer leisure on you, or because it is customary on such occasions to have some women and men moving about with badges. This will impose heavier work on you, but, if you look upon it as work, then you have no right to receive these badges. It entitles you to welcome and serve your kith and kin who are arriving at this place from all parts of the world. The badge should not burden you with the weight of conceit; it should not make you feel superior, as if yours is the upper hand and the recipient of your service has the lower hand. It is not a boon that you drop into his hand but an offering that you dedicate at his feet. It is the expression of kinship between your nature and the nature of those whom you serve. In the Principle of the Self (*Atma thathwa*), he and you are the same; he and you are but two waves of the selfsame sea.



# Aradhana



Take this badge as a call to *sadhana*, as an introduction to a spiritual adventure, an exercise in the practice of prema. The Vedas teach you that which deserves to be learnt; the *Shastras* lay down disciplines that help shape man into Madhava; and *sadhana* brings into you the awareness of that which will give a new and truer meaning to every act of yours. I am eager that you must all get to know this, and so I am leading you into the *sadhana*. A mother cannot ignore the health and progress of the children. Though they may neglect her advice, she will be eager to correct them and lead them into proper habits."



*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 5 (1965) – Chapter 54 – The Badge: a call to sadhana*

*This article was prepared by Kasi Sridharan, SaiLights contributor.*



---

*"Prayer is bringing your wishes and worries to God;  
faith is leaving them there."*

*- Sathya Sai Baba*

# Quiz on Swami and His Teachings



## 1. According to Swami:

- Which *Sadhana* (spiritual effort) is particularly efficacious in the Kali Yuga?
- Who is the Mother of the Vedas?
- How should one spend every day?
- What is the root cause of all sorrow and suffering of man?
- When can you hear the voice of God?

## 2. In what year:

- was Swami born?
- did Swami declare Himself as the Sai Avatar?
- was Prasanthi Nilayam inaugurated?
- did Swami construct the first Super Specialty Hospital?
- did Swami give up His Avataric Form?

## 3. Fill in the blanks:

- 1 Work is \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ is God
- 2 There is only one religion, the \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 There is only one caste, the caste of \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Why fear when \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I have come to \_\_\_\_\_ in your hearts
- 5 The end of \_\_\_\_\_ is character
- 6 Prasanthi Nilayam means: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Love must express itself as \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 God is the \_\_\_\_\_; you are but the \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_; that is enough
- 10 God is all N \_\_\_\_\_ and all F \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. True or False:

Young Sathya ...

- was very naughty
- helped his mother by shooing away beggars
- cooked meals for his grandfather
- performed miracles for classmates
- composed and acted in plays

Swami...

- rode on a Golden Chariot on Guru Poornima
- said His students were His only property
- wrote all the Vahinis
- was the first "Poorna" Avatar
- says it is okay to worry as long as you pray

## 5. What are the:

- 3 Hs?
- 3 Ps?
- 4 Fs?
- 5 Ds?
- 6 Enemies?

## 6. Expand these acronyms:

- ABC
- COD
- EHV
- SAI
- WATCH

## 7. Who was:

- Pedda Venkappa Raju
- Karnam Subbamma
- Kondama Raju
- Professor Kasturi
- Professor Gokak

## 8. What is the meaning of:

- *Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam / Dustara Bhava Sagara Taranam*
- *Satyam Gnyanam Anantam Brahma*
- *Ahamkaara*
- *Bal Vikas*
- *Mee kanta inta venta janta eppudu vuntaanu*

## 9. Can you name:

- The Nine Point Code of Conduct?
- The Nine Forms of Devotion?
- The 15 Vahinis?

# A Glimpse of Festivals Celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam, Jan-Apr.



- \* Why did Swami celebrate Religious Festivals?
- \* Shivarathri
- \* Ramanavami
- \* Hanuman Jayanthi
- \* Ramadan
- \* Easter

# A Glimpse of Festivals Celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam, Jan-Apr.

## Why did Swami celebrate Religious Festivals?

This Section of *SaiLights*, Volume 5, explores the theme of *Festivals celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam*, presenting a series of enlightening excerpts of Swami's speeches and other Sai publications. This article introduces the Section, by asking why Swami made such a point of celebrating religious festivals during His *Avataric* tenure.

Not only at Deepavali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, but during all festivals Prasanthi Nilayam glows with colorful lights, beautiful decorations, an abundance of flowers, and heartfelt renditions of prayers and songs glorifying God. Indeed, religious festivals dominate the Prasanthi calendar. Why did Swami celebrate so many religious festivals throughout the year?

Swami attached great importance to the celebration of festivals, beginning with *Makara Sankranti* in January and ending with Christmas in December. And He paid meticulous attention to every one of these events. He would select the Vedic prayers for the festivals; guide and oversee the rituals conducted by revered priests from various holy temples; and instruct students on dramas they were to perform, wanting every detail to be true to the sacred stories being told. Festivals would often go into three or four days, all present feeling utterly blessed to witness the grand celebrations and see Swami presiding over the auspicious events.

**Inner significance.** Swami expressed concern that no earnest effort was being made to understand the inner meaning of festivals, and underscored their profound significance. "Holy days were intended to celebrate the birthdays of Avatars and saints, and to mark the destruction of evil forces. The ancients observed these festivals to honor the memory of great souls and recall how demonic forces were vanquished". Swami said that "festivals were also designed to reveal the greatness and integrity of Indian culture". Thus at every festival Swami would go

to great lengths to explain its spiritual significance and purpose, as well as its messages for mankind.



**Focus on God, not food.** Given all these sacred underpinnings, Swami said, festivals served to "raise humanity to a higher level of consciousness and conduct...and provided an opportunity for man to turn his vision Godward." He called for devotees to "sanctify every holy festival by dedicating themselves to the chanting of God's name and to other spiritual activities". Swami underscored that festivals were not intended for feasting and pompous celebrations, rather for concentration on devotional activities.

"Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish; let the glory of God be sung in all languages in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognize them as valid so far as they do not extinguish the flame of unity."

*Sathya Sai Baba, speaking to a large gathering in Nairobi, Kenya on July 4, 1968*

**Unity in diversity.** True to Swami's emphasis on the unity of all religions, celebration of festivals in Prasanthi Nilayam has not been limited to any one religion or deity. Swami has celebrated the festivals of all faiths, and devotees from various cultures and religious backgrounds have all equally been able to mark their holy occasions in His Divine presence. In

# A Glimpse of Festivals Celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam, Jan-Apr.

the same spirit, a wide range of Hindu festivals from various parts of India, as well as Ramadan, Christmas, and Buddha Poornima have all been observed by Swami.

—SaiLights Team



Sources: *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, 1988,* and *Sri Sathya Speaks, Volume 27, 1994*

" I observe many of you are getting active to procure from Bangalore or Anantapur, in time for the Poornahuti, articles like sandalwood, gold, precious stones, etc. to be put into the sacrificial fire when the final invocation is made. I am not permitting anybody to do that. It is easy to throw away a few rupees and purchase a few material objects...and throw them into the fire and go about saying that you have done a great big act of sacrifice. I am going to set you a more difficult task...

...I want that you should all, when the valedictory offering is offered into the fire, stand up and reverentially offer into the same fire every one of the bad qualities that you have—the faults, the failings, the temptations, the transgressions. Search for these today, unearth them from their hidden places, bring them with you here tomorrow, nicely packed, and with one final heave of mental exertion, throw them in when the flames of Poornahuti rise aloft. That is the share you have to secure in this sacrifice (Yajna). That, nothing more and nothing less."

--Divine Discourse October 7, 1962, penultimate day of the 1st Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna in Prasanthi Nilayam

Note: The "Festivals" articles that follow have been prepared by Kasi Sridharan, SaiLights contributor.



# Swami Explains Shivaratri!



# Swami Explains Shivaratri!



## Auspiciousness of Shivarathri

Shivarathri is an auspicious night. Swami has explained it thus: "Man is endowed with infinite potencies. All that you experience by way of seeing, hearing and the like are reflections of the inner being. The significance of this experience must be properly understood. You experience the night every day. These are ordinary nights. They are nights of darkness. But Shivarathri is an auspicious night. How is it auspicious? There are sixteen aspects for the mind. The moon is the presiding deity for the mind. Of the sixteen phases of the moon, in the fourteenth day of Margashersha month (lunar calendar), fifteen of the phases are absent. On this day it is possible to get full control of one's mental faculties. Hence it is considered an auspicious day."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 29(1996)– Chap 5– Spiritual significance of Shivarathri*

## The First Mahashivathri

What happened on the original Mahashivarathri night? Ghandikota Subramanya Sastri (the composer of Sai Gayatri) explains it. "Once upon a time, long, long ago, the Gods, Brahma and Narayana, were extremely jealous of each other and argued aloud that each was superior to the other. They had come to the stage of a trial of arms, when between them a brilliant Lingam of Light appeared! Stunned by the splendor, they agreed that He between them is superior to the other, who is able first to see the beginning below or the end above of that magnificent Lingam. Brahma rode on His Hamsa [swan] and flew above; He could not see the crown of the Lingam however high He rose. Vishnu took the form of Varaha [boar] and dug into the nether regions but could not delve into the base of that Lingam.

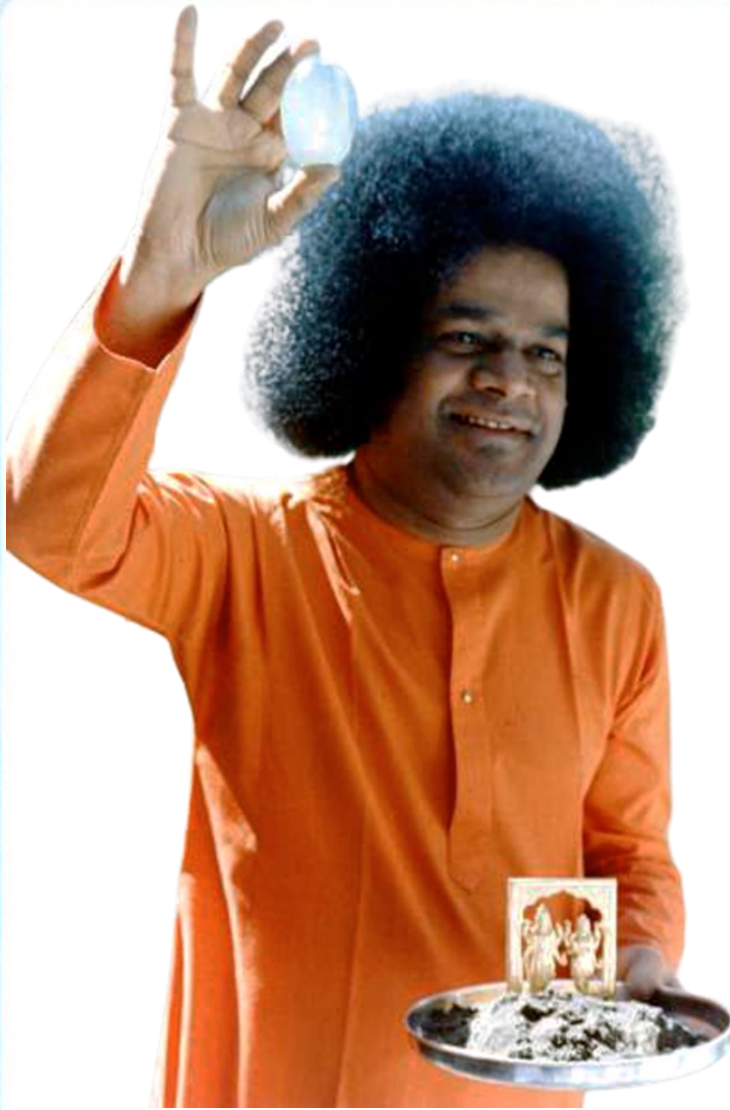
When they returned to earth, a Voice from the Lingam asked them whether they had succeeded in their quest. Brahma uttered a lie and declared He had seen the crown! Narayana was about to concede victory to



Brahma, when the Voice intercepted Him and Siva manifested Himself from the Lingam, with the full Divinely Equipped Form, described as "Hiranyabaahave, hiranya varnaaya, hiranya roopaaya" in the scriptures. He punished Brahma for his audacity and the falsehood. He authorized Narayana to correct wrong and promote right. The Lingam that manifested on this occasion is known as Jyothirlingam; altogether, 12 such lingams have appeared, according to tradition".

*- Radio Sai - the Telugu article by Ghandikota Subramanya Sastri published in Sanathana Sarathi*

# Swami Explains Shivaratri!



## Bhagavan's Divine Manifestation of the Linga

"On Mahashivarathri day of February 6th, 1970, morning at 11 a.m., Baba proceeded to the Auditorium, for performing the Abhishekam for the Shirdi Sai Baba idol. During the Bhajan, Baba gave the gathering the unique chance of witnessing the creation of a nine-jewelled locket for Sai Baba's silver idol, and when He placed it on the forehead, between the eyebrows, it stuck! Then He poured from a wooden pot an unbroken stream of sacred ash on the idol, precious stones too falling from the pot, when His palm drew the sacred substance (both sacred ash and precious stones) created by His touch.

Then, Baba delivered His Divine Discourse. In the Sanskrit Verse which was the prologue to His speech, Baba disclosed His identity: 'Naham manushyo (I am neither a human being) na cha deva yakshah (nor a god or superman), na Brahmana kshatriya vaisya sudra (nor am I a member of any one of the four castes) na bramhachari, na grhee, vanashthah (nor can you label Me as belonging to any of the four stages or Ashramas laid down by Sanathana Dharma), aham sathyabodhaka (I am the Teacher of Truth,) Sathyam Sivam Sundaram! My Reality is Truth Goodness Beauty!' He said, 'Sai Bhaktas (devotees) have to be pioneers in a new revolution, a transformation of character and endeavour; so, they have to fill themselves with Love so that the shower of unselfish universal Love can scotch the flames of anger, hatred, fear and anxiety that are consuming the world today.

Sometimes, despair clouds the vision and people get panicky about the future of this country. But, I assure you that the country will not come to harm, either through internal or, external danger for, it is Bharath, (Bha meaning Bhagavan, God and Rathi meaning Attachment), the Land where the people are attached to God, and whom God loves.'

After the Discourse which lasted for one hour, Bhagavan sang a few Namavalis (bhajans) and enthralled the huge gathering. Meanwhile, the first indications of the emergence of the Lingam (symbol of the Formless All Formful God, Siva) from His Abdomen became apparent, and Baba sat in the silver chair. The gathering sang in chorus, in anxious expectation of the Miracle, the uplifting song, 'Om Sivaya, Om Sivaya.' About fifteen minutes later, a heavy oval Linga, glowing with divine effulgence, composed of a substance very much akin to opal came up and manifested its splendor to the vast multitude, uplifting them in a wave of adoration and bliss."

- 1970 issue of *Sanathana Sarathi*

# Swami Explains Shivaratri!



## Sadhana (Spiritual effort) on Shivarathri night

What can be achieved through Sadhana on Mahashivarathri night? Our beloved Bhagavan explains in simple words:

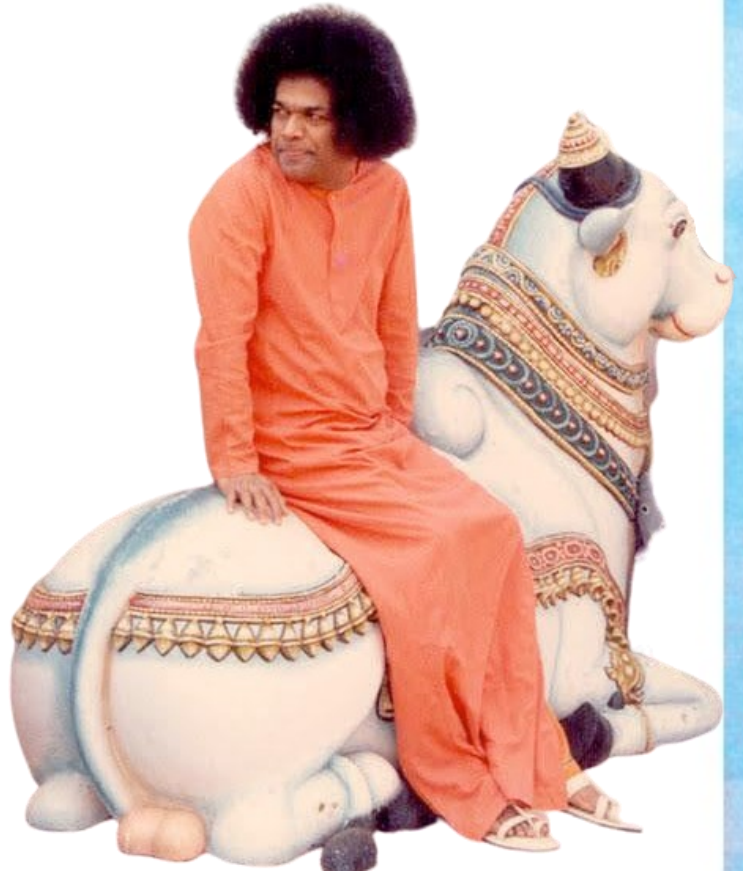
“The Moon has 16 kalas (fractions of Divine Glory), and each night, during the dark fortnight, one fraction is reduced, until the entire Moon is annihilated on New Moon night. From then on, each night, a fraction is added, until the Moon is full circle on Full Moon Night. The Chandra (Moon) is the presiding deity of the mind, the mind waxes and wanes, like the Moon. Chandramaa-manaso jaathah - Out of the manas of the Purusha (Supreme Being), the Moon was born. It must be remembered that the chief aim of all sadhana (spiritual striving) is to eliminate the mind, to become a-manaska. Then only can Maya (illusion) be cut asunder, and the Reality revealed.

During the dark fortnight of the month, sadhana must be done to eliminate each day a fraction of the mind, for, every day, a fraction of the Moon too is being taken out of cognizance. On the night of *Chathurdasi*, the 14th day, the night of Shiva, only a fraction remains. If some special effort is made that night, through more intensive and vigilant *sadhana*, like puja or *japam* or *dhyaana* or (ritual worship, one-pointed repetition and holy names, and meditation), success is ensured. Shiva alone must be meditated upon that night without the mind straying towards thoughts of sleep or food. This must be done every month; once a year, on MahaShivarathri, a special spurt of spiritual activity is recommended, so that what is shavam (corpse) can become *Shivam* (God), by the perpetual awareness of its Divine Indweller”.

- *Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 9 (1969) – Chapter 3 – Mahashivarathri*

"It is not this night alone that you should spend in the thought of Shiva; your whole life must be lived in the constant presence of the Lord. Endeavour - that is the main thing; that is the inescapable consummation for all mortals. Even those who deny God will have to tread the pilgrim road, melting their hearts out in tears of travail. If you make the slightest effort to move along the Path of your own liberation, the Lord will help you a hundred-fold. That is the hope that Maha Shivaratri conveys to you."

*Divine Discourse, February 1969*



# Ramanavami



# Ramanavami



## Purpose of the Rama Avatar

In the ThrethaYuga, God appeared as a human being in the form of Rama; and by using his own family as an example, he tried to set up an ideal dharmic conduct characteristic of that age. At that time, it was also established that Rama was the embodiment of Love and Lakshmana was the embodiment of compassion, and that it was the confluence of Dharma and compassion that makes a good human being. This is true dharma. We are believing that rituals constitute dharma. It is not our daily practices or rituals that constitute true dharma. It is the compassion that is generated in a pure heart that constitutes the base of true dharma. This is also the most important basic quality of a human being. One must make an attempt to follow the dictates of one's own conscience. By such conduct and example, Ramachandra (Rama) corrected all of humanity.

*Summer Showers 1978 – "God comes in human form to help men change themselves for the better"*

## Who is Rama?

Rama is the indweller in every body. He is the source of bliss (the Atma Rama) in every individual. His blessings, upsurging from the inner spring, can confer peace and bliss. He is the very embodiment of dharma of all the codes of morality that hold mankind together in love and unity. The Ramayana, the story of Rama, teaches two lessons: the value of detachment and the need to become aware of the Divine in every being. Faith in God and detachment from objective pursuits are the keys for human liberation.



*Ramakatha Rasavahini Vol 1*

## The Power of Rama's Name

Rama's name is the life-giving essence of the two great mantras. The term "Rama" has another esoteric significance. It consists of three syllables: Ra + A + Ma. Ra signifies Agni (the Fire-god). A represents Surya (the Sun-god). Ma represents Chandra (the Moon-god). The combination of the three letters constitutes the Rama Name. Ra, representing the Fire-god, burns away all sins; A, representing the Sun-god, dispels the darkness of ignorance; and Ma, representing the Moon-god, cools one's temper and produces tranquility. The name Rama has the triple power of washing away one's sins, removing one's ignorance, and calming one's mind. How is the profound meaning of this sacred name to be imparted to mankind? This can be done only by the Divine coming in human form and demonstrating to mankind the power of the Divine. Rama's name signifies the harmony in thought, word and deed. Rama demonstrated this harmony by his thoughts, words, and deeds. The Rama Principle embodies numerous powers and potencies. The Ramayana is not a sacred text to be used only for ritualistic reading (parayanam). The Rama Principle is all-pervading like the Cosmic Spirit. In olden times people used to say that their inner secrets are known only to the Indwelling Rama Spirit (Atma-Rama). The Self is called "Rama". Rama means "one who pleases". How can you give a specific form to one who pleases or delights?

*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31 (1998) – Chapter 9 – Potency of Rama's Name*

# Ramanavami



## Swami explains how to celebrate Rama's life

*(Excerpts from the Video of Divine Discourse on May 20, 1996, during the Summer Course in Indian Culture & Spirituality in Brindavan).*



The Ramayana has been described as the story of a man who is an example of idealness. One must discover and find out for oneself whether those ideals of Rama are within him or not. Ramayana speaks of individual responsibilities, family obligations and social responsibilities, and establishes the truth that the unity of all these is Ramatatwa (Rama principle). Though thousands of years passed, Ramayana is happening every moment even to this day.

The nature of Rama is most essential for every individual. Every individual must believe that they are Rama, who is the very embodiment of idealism. That Atma that gives bliss is the form of Rama. In this world, there is no one without a heart that is after bliss. Therefore, in the spiritual path, if we investigate, Rama is not a separate individual. Dasharatha means this body which is the chariot for the ten senses. The five cognitive senses and five senses of action together form this body. The four sons represent the four objectives of life Dharma, Artha, Kama-Moksha (Righteousness, wealth, desire and Liberation). Ravana was after Artha, Kama and Moksha giving up Dharma. Ravana was highly educated and knew 64 forms of knowledge and Rama knew only 35. But Rama practiced all he learned, and Ravana didn't.

There is always a conflict between righteousness (truth) and unrighteousness (falsehood). It is out of love that righteousness springs.

Therefore, the embodiment of Sathya and Dharma is verily the embodiment of love. It is only man that goes astray from Dharma. We must gather that which is forgotten. The piety must be protected. The man behaves like an animal and demon. Let us not think Ramayana is merely history. We must consider it as the very life-principle in every individual. First we should know this and after that you can conduct yourself accordingly. We must understand the principle of Rama and practice it. In spite of doing all sadhana, if there is no change in the human mind all that is useless. We must believe that the mind is the cause. For that, the Divine Name is the basis.



# Ramanavami



Swami materialized Rama era mother Sita's Brooch and a Medallion that showed how Rama looked like before His coronation.

In the year 1999, Swami took the devotees to the hill-top bungalow blessing devotees with many photographs with Him. Later, He materialized a diamond Brooch (Mother Sita's) in the shape of rose with two leaves. He showed it around to all the devotees and wore it in His robe near His heart. During lunch, Swami had the Brooch wrapped up in a handkerchief and all the devotees saw it again and before long, this shining object disappeared. Another day, Swami asked a senior devotee to speak and when the talk was going on, rain poured down. Swami paused the talk and asked the students to sing the bhajans. When one student sang Rama bhajan, Swami materialized a medallion with Rama in it with his bow and described it as how Rama appeared before He was about to be coronated.

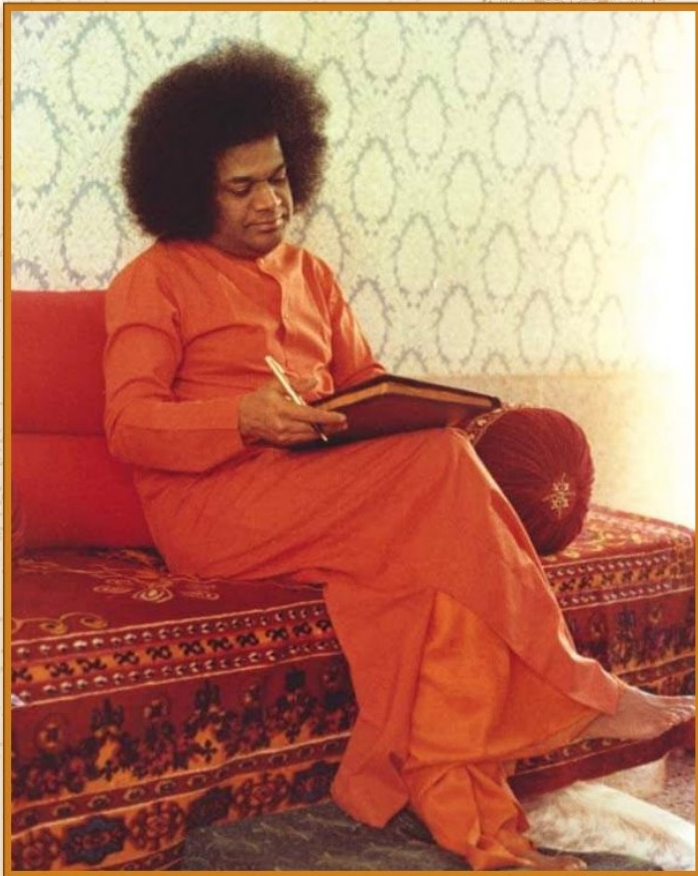


## Conclusion

It is not enough merely to celebrate Rama Navami as the birthday of Sri Rama. You should understand the purpose of His birth and practice the ideals He demonstrated. Rama Kalyana does not mean the marriage of Rama and Sita at the physical level. Rama Kalyana is Atma Kalyana; it signifies the merging of Atma (individual soul) with Paramatma (universal soul). The is not the story of an individual. Rama symbolizes the cosmic and universal spirit.

*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 38 (2005) – Chapter 10 – Ramayana- a Sacred Way of Life*

# Ramanavami

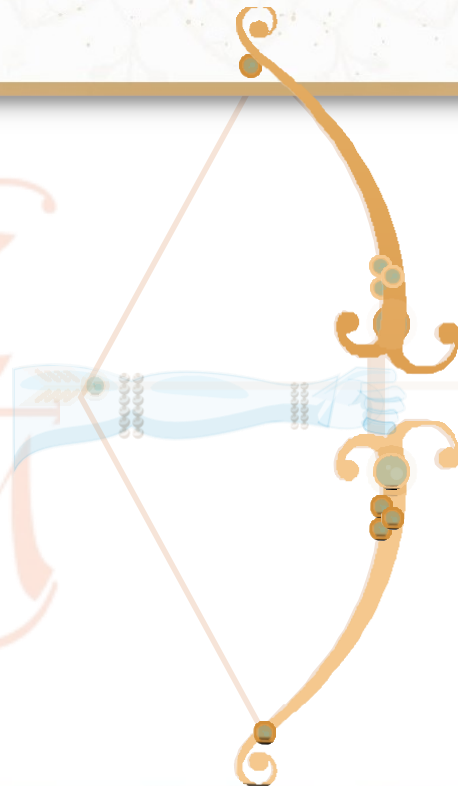


**The name Rama is the essence of scriptures (Vedas); Lord Rama's story is an ocean of milk, pure and potent. Ramayana, the epic describing Lord Rama's incarnation is a sacred text, reverently recited by the scholar as well as the ignorant, the millionaire as well as the pauper. Lord Rama's name cleanses all evil and transforms the sinner; It reveals the charming form represented by the name. Ramayana must be read not as a record of a human career but as a narrative of the advent and activities of an Incarnation of God (Avatar). You must endeavour with determination to realise through your own experience the Ideals revealed in that narrative.**

*Sri Sathya Sai*

**Ramakatha Rasavahini, Chapter I**

Jai  
SHREE  
RAM





# Hanuman Jayanthi



## Who is Hanuman?

"Hanuman was a dauntless hero who by his sweet and persuasive words promoted friendship between Sri Rama and Sugreeva. He was tranquil, valorous, and virtuous. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and proficient in many languages. He was a master even of the Paisachi language (the language of evil spirits). Sanskrit is the mother of all languages. It was esteemed as the language of the Gods in ancient times."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 28 (1995) – Chapter 26: Hanuman: the ideal for mankind*

## Hanuman's Qualities

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qD25L46DTQM>

"Hanuman succeeded in coordinating his thought, word, and act. Therefore, he had the unique distinction of being great in physical strength, mental stability, and virtuous character. He shines as an invaluable gem among the personalities of the Ramayana. He was also a great scholar who had mastered, of all things, the nine schools of grammar! He knew the four Vedas (sacred scriptures of the Hindus) and the six Shasthras (spiritual sciences)". The Geetha says that a scholar is "one who sees the same Divine force motivating everyone" - Pandithah Samadharsinaha.

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 13 (1975-77) – Chapter 28 - Hanuman*

## Hanuman's Devotion

"Hanuman was always engaged in the contemplation of Rama. Every hair on his body chanted the name of Rama. Hanuman is adored by devotees as an example of total devotion to the Lord. When some had doubts whether Hanuman could leap over the ocean to search for Seetha in Lanka, Hanuman told them that Rama had given him the task and He would also give him the strength to accomplish it. This absolute faith was the cause of his success. When people entertain doubts as to their capacity to carry out the tasks assigned to them by the Divine, they will be weak and powerless. Hence, to accomplish anything, firm faith is essential. Doubts have to be expelled. Everything that happens should be accepted as for one's own good. That is the means to qualify for God's grace. To go on speculating over Swami's words is an insane exercise. Hanuman exemplified complete freedom from doubts. He had only two desires. To be dear and near to Rama. Hanuman intensely yearned to be always near to Rama. He had no use for any object, however



# Hanuman Jayanthi



valuable, which did not proclaim the name of Rama. He threw away the pearl necklace presented to him by Seetha because the pearls did not recite Rama's name. (Swami sang a ballad, in which Rama praised Hanuman as the greatest of devotees and embraced him). Rama declared, "Hanuman! No material object is fit enough to be given to you as a present. You live in the world of the Spirit. You have no attachment to the things of the world. May you be present wherever My glory is sung." Hanuman was intoxicated by his devotion to Rama and was always in a state of ecstasy in chanting Rama's name. He was all humility in the presence of Rama.

He was utterly fearless before Ravana. Before the Divine he was a suppliant. Before a Rakshasa he was a hero. Hanuman knew how to conduct himself in any situation. He was supremely intelligent. He stands out as an ideal for mankind."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 28(1995) – Chapter 26 – Hanuman; the ideal for mankind*



## Hanuman's Humility

"There are in the world today millions of people who recite the Lord's Name. But while reciting the name, they do not realize the greatness and glory of the Divine name. When Hanuman entered Lanka, the land of Rakshasas, the first friendly person he encountered was Vibheeshana. All the Rakshasas in Lanka, who had not seen a monkey, were curious to know all about the simian visitor. They asked him, "Who are you? Wherefrom have you come and at whose behest? How did you enter Lanka?" Hanuman was unruffled. He told them, "I am the servant of the Lord Kosala, Sri

Rama", even though he himself was very powerful. This means also that in any situation one should remain calm and unperturbed. How is this tranquility to be secured? When the heart is pure, peace is assured. Without purity of the heart, peace is unattainable. Even if one appears to be at peace, it is only a pretense.

When one has both purity of heart and peace of mind, one can achieve anything. There are three P's. The first 'P' stands for purity. The second 'P' for patience. The third 'P' stands for perseverance. When these are present, one can acquire the grace of Sri Rama. This was amply demonstrated by Hanuman. But Vibheeshana was full of anguish. He told Hanuman: "Oh Hanuman! How lucky you are, how meritorious, to earn the company of Ramachandra! I have not had that good fortune. I have been meditating on Rama's name for many years. But so far I have not got the Darshan of Rama. You have not only enjoyed the company of the Lord, but you are privileged to carry out the commands of Rama. Please tell me how I can secure such a blessing." Hanuman replied, "Vibheeshana! It is not enough if you merely recite the name of Rama. You have to carry out the injunctions of Rama and engage yourself in the service of Rama. Only then will you experience the power of Rama within you." From that moment on, Vibheeshana resolved to participate in the service of Rama."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 28 (1995) - Chapter 26 – Hanuman: the ideal for mankind*

# Hanuman Jayanthi



## Hanuman's Valor

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7ut\\_Ho5Ayl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7ut_Ho5Ayl)

### The Story of "Bhajan Hanuman" in Prasanthi Nilayam

"At the Northern Gate of Prasanthi Nilayam, Swami has installed three Hanuman statues. While every stone and statue, every tree and temple in Prasanthi has been placed by the Divine Masterplan, still, for every facet of this plan to unfold, the Lord picks His instruments. And the chosen instrument for this sacred shrine was Sri Subramaniam Chettiyar.

He came to Bhagavan in 1944 when Swami Himself was only 18 years old. In 1983, Sri Chettiyar experienced heart pain and was able to overcome that ordeal only by incessant chanting and writing of the name of Bhagavan in a note book again and again. He thought to himself, how nice it would be if everyone practiced this. Thus, as divinely ordained, the dissemination of this practice became his life's sadhana (spiritual practice). That is when he took Bhagavan's blessings and formed the "Sri Sai Rama Koti Naama Likhita Yagna Committee". This Committee distributed ruled notebooks free of cost to many devotees to write the name of Bhagavan. Sri Chettiyar prayed to Swami to accept the Likhita Japa. In 1983, nine crores of written books were submitted to the Divine Lotus Feet. In 1986, 60 crores of written names of Bhagavan were received. Finally, the Committee resolved to strive for the lofty target of 108 crores of Sai Nama to be offered to Sai Rama in 1995. This sadhana went international.

The Committee reached the target on time. Sri Chettiyar prayed again to Swami and requested for a statue to be erected on this occasion. Swami smiled and said this statue should be Bhajan Hanuman posture, asking who else can appreciate the name of Rama? Finally, an underground vault was created to store these written names below the statue of Bhajan Hanuman. On August 31, 1995, this Bhajan Hanuman majestically sitting in a bhajan posture above the underground vault where the names of Sai Rama was stored was erected. In 1996, on Swami's 70th birthday, there were 700 crores of names of Rama submitted. On that auspicious day, Bhagavan poured into the sacred pit gold, silver, diamonds, Navaratnam, turmeric, vermilion, yellow rice, and other holy items, and finally placed a sacred yantra, a mystical copper plate, which was worshipped for 48 days. After installing the



# Hanuman Jayanthi



yantra, Swami Himself gently pushed the Hanuman statue into position. Now, this Bhajan Hanuman is sitting on top of the vault where 700 crores of His Divine Lord's name were placed."

*Source – Reproduced from Prasanthi Chronicles Number 10*

## Hilltop Hanuman: Miracle For All To See

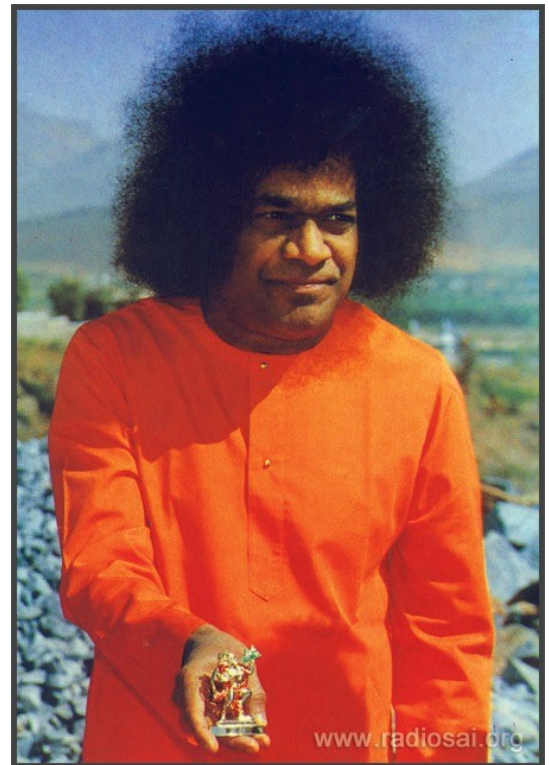
Swami directed Shri Shilpi Subramaniam, the Sculptor who built most of the statues in Puttaparthi, and Shri Jayakumar and Shri Thillainayagam, the Engineers working in Puttaparthi, to build a 65 feet statue of Hanuman on a hilltop in Puttaparthi. Today, when we enter Puttaparthi, this marvelous structure is visible from every part of the town. Swami personally selected a drawing of Hanuman carrying the Sanjeevini hill as the correct design, and later materialized a statue of Hanuman as the model for building the superstructure. To the utter surprise of the Engineers, Swami's materialized statue resolved many of the structural engineering challenges involved in balancing the weight of this gigantic structure. The 900 ton superstructure carried the Hanuman statue weighing 20 tons, with the Sanjeevini Hill in one hand and the tail up and ready for flight. Despite the enormous weight of these structures, Swami rejected the suggestions by some to reduce the statue's height to under 65 feet and to make it a hollow structure. He personally selected a place where, to the pleasant surprise of the Engineers, they found a solid horizontal granite base below the rocks apt for construction of the statue. Swami also directed the engineers to build a pedestal below the statue so that the full Hanuman would be visible to even those on top of the hill. All the materials needed for this structure were purchased in just 2 days as opposed to the normal waiting period of 4-5 months.

With the grace of Swami, Larsen & Toubro's Group General Manager, Shri A Ramakrishnan, agreed to design and help erect the Hanuman statue. During construction, the scaffolding tilted and fell but the statue was unaffected and no one was injured. Later, Swami revealed that Hanuman Himself had held up the scaffolding, preventing it from collapsing to the ground. On February 19, 1990, Swami performed the Bhoomi Puja and the Hanuman statue was ready in time for Swami's 65th birthday on November 23, 1990. To everyone's joy, Swami dedicated this statue to the devotees.

The videos noted below offer more information on all the miracles that happened during the construction of the Hanuman statue:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLIg5oVzVK4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izGV2aWIL3U>



# Ramadan



# Ramadan



## Swami's Words on Ramadan

### Swami explains the celebration of Ramadan

Swami, in His Telugu discourse, which was understood by all the Muslims who were present at the time, said that Ramadan was the month when the Holy Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It was a Divine Communication, a *Bhagavad Vani*, reaching him through waves or *Tarangas* of Divine Vibrations. The Vedas too were revealed in the same manner by God to the *Rishis* (sages). The Bible, the *Zenda Vesta* (Zorostran scripture), and the other great scriptures of other religions also had similar Divine Inspiration as the reason for their validity. Since the Quran originated from God, Baba declared, it could not be changed or modified to suit present-day conditions. The Quran, according to Baba, contained expositions of the five vital principles or *pancha prana* (five life-breaths) of human life: mercy, truth, sacrifice, love, and tolerance. These principles were basic to the good life emphasized in all religious texts of humanity. If people assimilated the truths declared in the Quran they could live in full concord with all others. Swami underscored that no religion condones violence or falsehood.

### How does fasting during Ramadan help?

Baba said that fasting was laid down during Ramadan to make people experience the benefits of sense control and to cleanse the spirit and passions of man, so that they may be rendered fit to approach God. Fasting is also referred to as *Upavas*; Baba said that *Upa* means 'near' and *vas* means 'living'. So, *Upavas* means living very near God. The Ramadan fast was intended to enable Muslims to set aside all sensory desires and to spend an entire month in the Holy Presence of God. As one gets the cool heartening breeze when one approaches the air-conditioner or fan, so too when man approaches God, his sorrows vanish, and his good tendencies flourish by His Grace. Baba added that, during this month of God, Muslims were expected to cultivate all the Godly qualities, including charity, unity, love, service, detachment, and tolerance. They had to practice these virtues not only at home, but also outside the home.



Swami also said that fasting from sunrise to sunset entailed not merely abstaining from food and drink, but also mastery of the more difficult disciplines of giving up violence, falsehood, anger, envy, and the maligning of others. He noted that one may have to face ridicule and persecution, obstructions and troubles when one

# Ramadan



aimed to lead a good, holy life. Prophet Muhammad was persecuted thus and he had to leave Mecca for Medina. Great persons have suffered voluntarily for the sake of their beneficent beliefs. Swami said that, despite hurdles and handicaps, Prophet Muhammad did not give up his conviction; He declared that there was only One God and that His Name was Allah. He commanded his disciples to serve mankind, and to treat all as fellow beings, children of the same God. Baba called upon Muslims to study the Gift of God to man, namely the Quran, whose teachings were valid for all time because they were universal and basic.

## Swami dedicates a Mosque for Muslims

The village of Puttaparthi in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh, India, had a population of about 3000 at the time, out of which a small minority of 300 were Muslims. Baba found that the Muslims of Puttaparthi had to trek about four miles to Bukkapatnam every time they wanted to pray in a mosque, since they did not have a place of worship in their own village. He called together the local Muslims, mostly poor agricultural laborers and artisans, and very graciously consulted them on their needs in this regard. Baba, in His infinite compassion, built a mosque for them in the village, truly an architectural gem, charming, simple, and spacious. The mosque was completed and consecrated in time for the Ramadan festival that year. While dedicating the mosque, Swami noted that Puttaparthi, His Birthplace, had become a holy place for millions all over the world. Prasanthi Nilayam (Abode of Supreme Peace) and Residence of Baba, was also situated there. Indeed, this place was the hub of the worldwide Sai Revolution (through the revival and promotion of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love).

Baba welcomed the Muslims into the Prasanthi Nilayam area when they prayed for permission to sing the pre-dawn Ramadan hymns (*salaat*) before the commencement of the daily fast. Another act of Grace was Bhagavan's visit to the Mosque on the Festival Day of *Id*. A large assemblage of Indian and foreign devotees and villagers of all faiths were present to share in the joy that Bhagavan showered on the Muslims that day, when He visited the Mosque. Sri. G. Fakhruddin, the Convenor of the village Mosque committee, while welcoming Swami, said that the Muslims of Puttaparthi were both humbled by and happy about the gift of a Mosque from Bhagavan. Sri Fakhruddin said that the Light and Love that shone in and through the founders of all religions were physically present in Sathya Sai Baba. He expressed eternal gratitude to Him for showing the Muslims the Pathway to God and for reinforcing their belief in the universal aspects of all religions.

August 1978



Sri Sathya Sai with Muslim devotees at the inauguration of the mosque at Puttaparthi

# Ramadan



## Swami's Teachings helped Muslims better understand the Quran

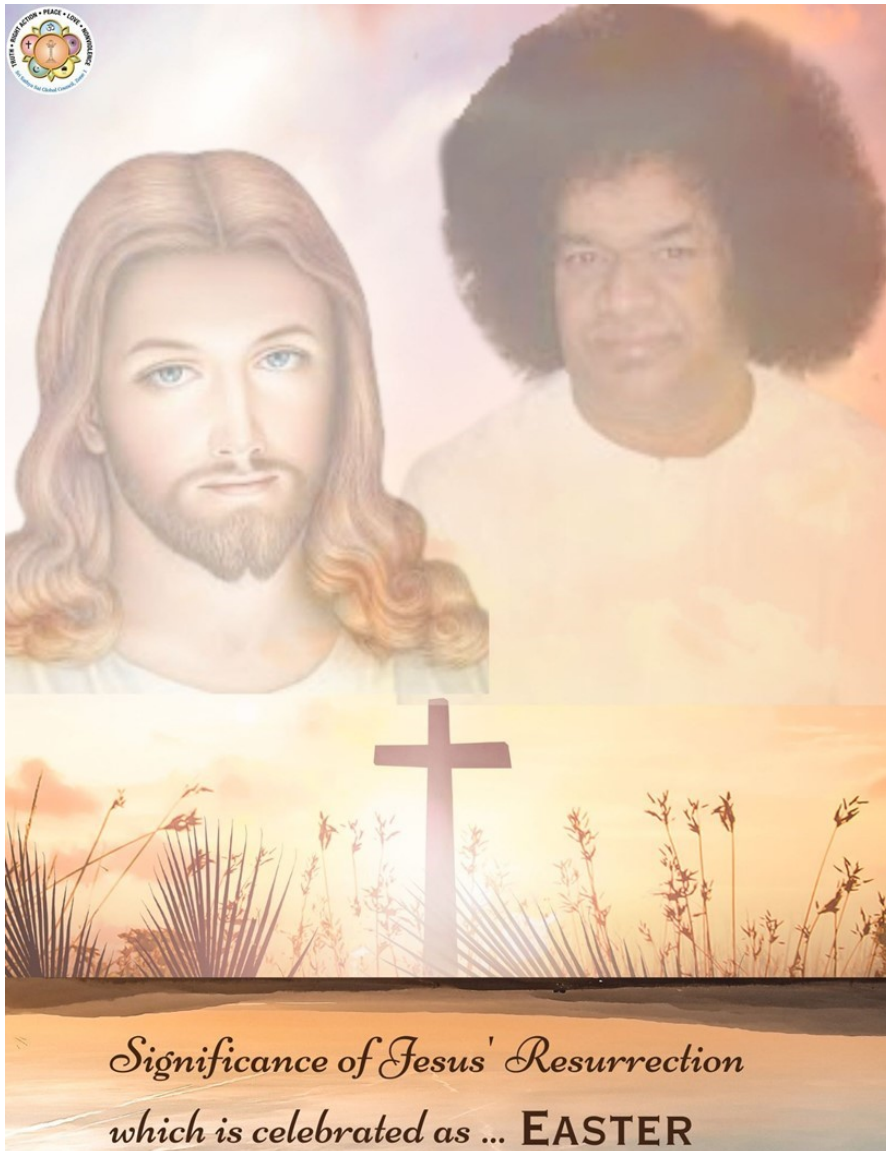
Prof. S. Bashiruddin, Head of the Department of Communication and Journalism, Osmania University, spoke on the Universality of the Message of Baba. He compared it with the tenets of Islam and said that the teachings of Baba had helped him to understand the Quran better, and to become a better and more sincere Muslim. The Quran demanded practice of the Brotherhood of Man, and tolerance of all other faiths under the Divine Message of God. Baba taught that whatever the faith, creed, or language underlying them, all forms of worship reach the same God. Baba encouraged the devotees to strengthen their devotion to God and do loving service to mankind, and said that that was the reason why He had granted that beautiful mosque to the village of Puttaparthi. Sri Bashiruddin said that *Id* means 'joy' and that he felt that the Muslims of Puttaparthi, and the area around, felt happiest on that *Id* Festival Day, as they had the Light of God shining on them within the mosque in the physical Form of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He declared that Baba had had strengthened his faith in Allah when he had faced a personal crisis a few years earlier. He said that the Life of Baba was His Message to mankind. Baba was the embodiment of infinite Mercy, Wisdom, and Power.

At the end of His Discourse, Baba created out of His Will (*Sankalpa*) seven silver lockets, each with the Arabic Inscription 'Allah' and gave them to the Convenor, to be distributed among the members of the Mosque Committee. Baba was cheered with great devotion by all the villagers, while the Muslims sang Telugu and Urdu poems praising His Love and Compassion towards all mankind.

*Source: Sanathana Sarathi, Published in 1978*



# Significance of Jesus' Resurrection



# Significance of Jesus' Resurrection



## Significance of Jesus' Resurrection which is celebrated as Easter

### The Most Important Holy Day

Christians all trace their inspiration and origin to Jesus Christ. April is the holy month of Easter, when more than two billion Christians, distributed literally in every country and region of the present-day world, congregate and rejoice because “He rose”. Be it Catholics, Protestants, Anglicans, Lutherans, followers of orthodox churches or any other category of Christians, every believer in Christ at this time relives the events that happened in the life of Jesus more than two thousand years ago and draws comfort from the fact that *“He reigns and brings Peace!” (John 14:27). He/she feels secure because He is “the Power of the powerful”, (Psalm 62:11, Rev 5:13) and adores Him with all devotion because “He is Holy, Righteous, Mighty, and Pure.” (Leviticus 11:45).*

“What is the resurrection, really? It is the revelation of the divinity inherent in man. That is the result of contact with the Godhead; that can come only after years of contrition, which serves to remove the evil from the heart of man.”

– Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 4(1964) – Chapter 13 –  
*Fragrance with Grace*

Easter is the most important holy day in the Christian calendar as it signifies the glory and power of the Divine Jesus overcoming the death of His body, by resurrecting on the third day after His crucifixion. It follows Lent, which is a period of 40 days marked by acts of penance and fasting. The week leading up to Easter is known as the Holy Week, which commemorates Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples, and Good Friday, which is the day of His crucifixion, which celebrates His great act of sacrifice on the cross for the benefit of humanity.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has beautifully taught that the essence of the teachings of Jesus and His life are that of Love, Selflessness, and Sacrifice.

### Incarnation of God as Man

To elevate man, to raise the level of his consciousness, He has to incarnate as man. He has to speak to them in their own style and language, He has to teach them the methods that they can adopt and practise. Birds and beasts need no Divine Incarnation to guide them, for they have no inclination to stray away from their dharma. Man alone forgets or ignores the goal of life.



Mary Magdalene recognizes Jesus outside the Tomb

– 25 December 1978 Prasanthi Nilayam Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 14 (1978 - 80)

### The Significance of the Cross

Only that person who has realized, “I am not the body, I am not the mind; I am God verily”, is a real Jnani. When you say, “This is my body”, who are you? To whom are you referring? The expression ‘my body’ connotes that you are separate from the body. When you say, “This is my mind”, the mind is separate from

# Significance of Jesus' Resurrection



you. Similarly, when you say, "This is my Buddhi (intellect)", it means the Buddhi is separate from you. In all these expressions, what is that 'My'? That 'My' is 'I'. This 'I' is what was referred to by Jesus Christ as the ego that has to be cut. That is the real significance of the cross. You cut the ego.

- "Install God in the Altar of Your Sacred Heart", Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 42, December 25, 2009

## The Example of Jesus

Jesus was a Master, born with a purpose, the mission of restoring love, charity and compassion in the hearts of men. He had no attachment to the self; He never paid heed to sorrow or pain, joy or gain. He had a heart that responded to the call of anguish, the cry for peace and brotherhood. He went about the land preaching the lesson of love and poured out His life as a sacrifice for the upliftment of humanity.

- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 14 Ch. 16

Jesus taught simple practical lessons in spiritual advancement for the good of mankind; He manifested Divine Powers to instil faith in the validity of His teachings; He marked out the path that can confer on men the sweet nectar of Ananda (Bliss). He exhorted people by precept and example to cultivate the virtues of charity, compassion, forbearance, love and faith. These are not separate and distinct qualities, they are only the many facets of the Divine Man, which he has to recognize and develop.

- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 11 Ch. 54

Jesus was honored by the populace as Christ, for they found in his thoughts, words and deeds, no trace of ego. He had no envy or hatred, and was full of love and charity, humility and sympathy.

- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 14 Ch. 16



Cross manifested by Swami for John  
Source: Hislop

You work as a messenger or servant; later, you worship, as a son does his father, and finally, you achieve the wisdom that You and He are One. That is the spiritual journey of which Jesus has shown the way in clear terms. He announced very early in life that he had come to illumine the spiritual path. Even as a bud, he emitted fragrance. He had the light in him, or else how can the tiny glow-worm light a lamp?

25 December 1978,  
Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 14 (1978 - 80)

## Live in Love

Love alone can reveal the Divinity latent in all. Love is God. Live in love. Love lives by giving and forgiving; self lives by getting and forgetting. Love is selflessness; selfishness is lovelessness. Do not waste your life pursuing the narrow interests of the self. Love! Love! Become what you truly are— the embodiments of love. No matter how others treat you or what they think of you, do not worry. Follow Jesus Christ.

- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 14 Ch. 45

## Who was Jesus?

When **Jesus** was born three wise men followed a star to reach his place of birth. Seeing the newborn babe they bowed to the divine child in their hearts. Before leaving, each of them spoke about the child as follows to the parents. One sage told Mary: "He loveth God." The second sage said: "God loveth him." The third man said: "He is God." What is the inner significance of these three pronouncements about **Jesus**? The first statement

# Significance of Jesus' Resurrection



that "He loveth God" contains the implication that **Jesus** is a messenger of God. A messenger can love his master, but the master may not so easily love his messenger. The second statement declared that "God loves him (**Jesus**)."  
Why? Because he is the son of God. The third statement "He is God" bears out what **Jesus** said: "I and my Father are One." It means that as the Son of God he is entitled to acquire his Father's place. The unity of Father and Son was proclaimed by the third sage.

## Conclusion - Be Like Jesus

"When you become all-embracing infinite Love, the Divine will manifest in and through you. Try to be like Jesus. Jesus was a person whose only joy was in spreading Divine Love, offering Divine Love, receiving Divine Love and living on Divine Love.

*- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 14(1978-80) – Chapter 45 – The way of Jesus*

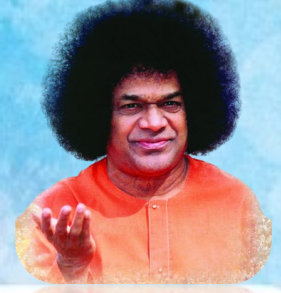


# Center Highlights





# Center Highlights



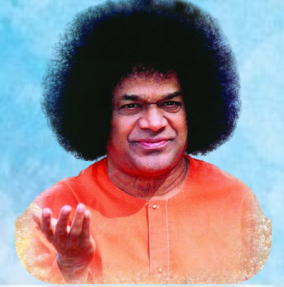
Om Sri Sai Ram

This section presents summary highlights of the activities of Zone 1 Centers in the areas of Service, Devotion, and Sri Sathya Sai Educare (SSSE). The highlights are presented mainly in tabular form, with additional narrative information for selected other centers, in line with information provided.

- ♥ **For many Centers, Swami's Birthday provided the occasion for in-person meetings after a 2-3 year hiatus** in the wake of the Covid pandemic. For others, the occasion was New Year's or Maha Shivarathri. Devotees embraced these occasions wholeheartedly to meet in person and offer prayers and robust programs--featuring talks, dramas, and powerful bhajans--to Swami in a spirit of deep devotion and renewed commitment. Other devotional highlights include well-participated Study Circles (focusing on both *Vahinis* and Swami speeches) and attention to chanting Vedic prayers (many Centers chanted the Rudram and Lingashtakam for Maha Shivaratri).
  - ♥ **Centers' service activities appear to be fully back as well**, with many Centers enjoying strong participation in supporting the needs of shelters for the homeless, be it to serve hot meals and canned/packed foods or to put together hygiene or winter care packages for those in need. Support for the very young took the form of soft baby hats knitted with love and diaper drives particularly crucial where supplies have been short. Devotees also reacted quickly and with compassion to February's major earthquake in Turkey and Syria (See pages 60-62).
  - ♥ **Centers' SSSE children have been impressive all around**, with a strong presence in all Center devotion and service activities, particularly on special occasions. *Vedas/slokas* chanting has been important, apart from the bread-and-butter focus on human values. Older students are being encouraged to explore deeper spiritual topics, studying more advanced texts such as Swami's *Rama Katha Rasa Vahini*. Centers are also benefiting from Zone 1's parent- and teacher- initiatives, which recognize that successful education requires the active engagement of children, teachers, and parents alike.
  - ♥ **Young Adults play an important, across-the-board role in most Centers**, participating in all the wings and supporting and mentoring older SSSE children in particular as they transition to young adulthood.
-



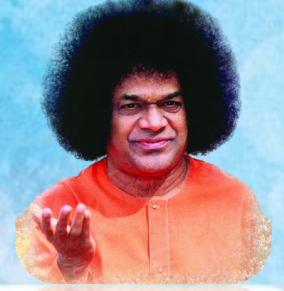
# Center Highlights



| <u>Service</u>   | <u>Devotion</u>  | <u>SSSE</u>  | <u>YA</u>  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Baltimore</b>   |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Food/baby diaper drive</li> <li>♥ Turkey/Syria earthquake relief</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ In-person Birthday program after 2 years; SSSE/YA programs, bhajans</li> <li>♥ Weekly Study Circles - Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 1</li> <li>♥ Celebrated Shivaratri, 12-hr bhajans</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Active participation in all special occasion programs</li> <li>♥ Age-appropriate classes covering values and sub-values; including <i>Rama Katha Rasa Vahini (Gr 3)</i>, <i>Dhyana Vahini (Gr 4)</i></li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Brown bags for soup kitchen</li> <li>♥ Active participation in Shivaratri, other festivals</li> </ul> |
| <b>Delaware</b>  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Monthly soup kitchen (see SSSE also)</li> <li>♥ Hot meals cooked and delivered to homeless shelter of 25 people</li> <li>♥ Christmas - cooked / celebrated with shelter residents, distributed toiletries, SSSE-made holiday cards</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Combine SSSE sandwich preparation + parents' bhajans and study circle</li> <li>♥ 2x month Study Circle - Sathya Sai Speaks + Swami's Messages for organization members</li> <li>♥ New Year bhajans at local temple; Shivaratri - bhajans, Lingashtakam</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Monthly (50) sandwich preparation + trail mix delivery to soup kitchen</li> <li>♥ 2x month SSSE classes + bhajans</li> <li>♥ Swami's Birthday celebrations - enacted play 'Swami's Birthday Wish'</li> </ul>                              |  |
| <b>Flushing</b>  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Hot food for 150 street poor persons each week; food + grocery, etc - other charities</li> <li>♥ 97 fully equipped school bags (August)</li> <li>♥ Holiday drive- 250 sets new clothes; hygiene kits + winter accessory sets for 4 charities</li> <li>♥ Aradhana Day breakfast service</li> <li>♥ Ronald McDonald brunch service for hospitalized children</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ 25 new devotees</li> <li>♥ Study Circles on Sathya Sai Vahini</li> <li>♥ Celebrated Shivaratri, 12-hr bhajans</li> <li>♥ Celebrated Akhnda bhajans (multiple prayers chanted to foster world peace +Swami's Birthday (SSSE play, guest speaker, prayers, bhajans, cake!)</li> <li>♥ celebrated all festivals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Many new families, Sai Picnic</li> <li>♥ Veda classes- Rudram</li> <li>♥ Service activities -weekly + Christmas; carol singing</li> <li>♥ Gr 4 support for younger children</li> <li>♥ Swami B'day drama - Mahishasura Mardini</li> </ul> |  |



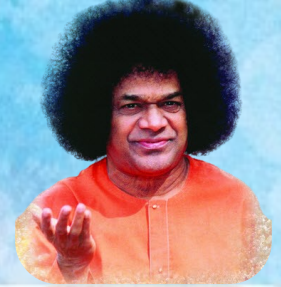
# Center Highlights



| <u>Service</u>   | <u>Devotion</u>   | <u>SSSE</u>   | <u>YA</u>   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Indianapolis</b>  |   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Monthly soup kitchen</li> <li>♥ 200 sack lunches (SSSE)</li> <li>♥ SSSE kids participate in Soup kitchen; lunches</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Weekly bhajans</li> <li>♥ Special occasions music programs</li> <li>♥ Celebrated 6-hr Shivaratri bhajans</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Vibrant SSSE program - 40 children</li> <li>♥ New singing/ instrumental opportunity for children</li> <li>♥ SSSE participation in Akhanda bhajans, Shivaratri bhajans</li> <li>♥ Learning Slokas/ Vedas (Ganesh Atharvashirsha, Narayana Suktam)</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Jersey City</b>   |   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ 180 Hot meals cooked &amp; served at 5 shelters</li> <li>♥ Meals for homeless at temple, church</li> <li>♥ Since pandemic, serve tribal community. Distribution of grocery bags</li> <li>♥ Collect baked goods to give homeless centers</li> <li>♥ Multi-item donation drive (4x/yr) winter items donation (1x/yr)</li> <li>♥ Supplies for Turkey/</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Resumed Study Circles after Covid era; "Forgive/ Forget", 7 Deadly Sins</li> <li>♥ Improving bhajans (sign-up process, pairs-singing so more people can sing)</li> <li>♥ YAs lead special occasion programs</li> <li>♥ Team up with other NJ centers for major events</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ 18 SSSE children, including one in "Sai Nursery"</li> <li>♥ Theme for year: taking responsibility for our thoughts, words, deeds - parents report results (packing own bags for school, taking out trash, cooking a meal (older kids), folding laundry)</li> <li>♥ In Covid aftermath, Gr 3-4 led sessions on death, acceptance, faith vs effort</li> <li>♥ Bhajan learning, performing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Vibrant YA grp leads devotion-al music programs for special occasions</li> <li>♥ Teaching bhajans</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Loudoun</b>   |   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Turkey/Syria earthquake relief- clothes/ medicines collection</li> <li>♥ Distribute toys to children in community shelters during Christmas</li> <li>♥ Monthly Narayana Seva - Dinner for poor in two community shelters</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Christmas-English bhajans</li> <li>♥ New Year's Eve bhajans (w/ NGO grp); <i>Sankranthi</i></li> <li>♥ Chinese New Year</li> <li>♥ Shivaratri bhajans (Vedas chanting). Non-center participants also attended</li> <li>♥ Lingashtakam, Hanuman Chalisa chanting (Ramanavami)</li> <li>♥ Study Circle- Prema Vahini; Sai 108 Names</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Christmas- SSSE+YA - spreading love, singing carols (senior place, highly appreciated)</li> <li>♥ Chinese NewYear significance</li> <li>♥ Shivaratri bhajans, many new SSSE students</li> <li>♥ Bhajan Workshop training</li> <li>♥ SSSE Gurus took part in Monthly Regional sharing + training events (Meeting of Minds, Lamps of Love)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ All around support, leadership encouraged</li> <li>♥ 1st USA YA National mini-retreat</li> <li>♥ Christmas celebrations</li> <li>♥ Sankranti significance</li> <li>♥ Shivaratri</li> </ul> |



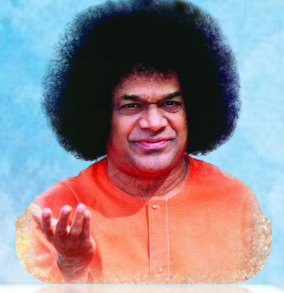
# Center Highlights



| <u>Service</u>   | <u>Devotion</u>  | <u>SSSE</u>  | <u>YA</u>   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Orlando</b>   |  |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Orlando Rescue Mission for women and children (faith-based) -timely services to meet physical needs of homeless (sugar, oils, cereals, shoes, dresses, blankets)</li> <li>♥ Russell Home for Atypical Children - the only private nonprofit for severely disabled children; project donates paper/ toiletry supplies, canned food, other priority needs</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Christmas program- seeing divinity in all, following the example of Christ; joyful carols and bhajans</li> <li>♥ Celebrate New Year with 3-hr devotional singing &amp; namasmarana</li> <li>♥ 3-hr devotional singing for Shivaratri +chanted Rudram and played videos of Swami</li> <li>♥ In-person <i>Samarpan</i>: how conquer 9 enemies of man, endure pleasure-pain cycle</li> </ul> |  |   |
| <b>South Bethesda</b>  |  |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Center clusters serve local communities food (cooked + fresh), supplies</li> <li>♥ "Knots of Love" ladies knit baby hats, donate to 2 DC, NY hospitals (100 hats to each)</li> <li>♥ Longfellow Elementary School- stock pantry; work with kids; YAs regularly post Swami quote on entrance board</li> <li>♥ Hot cooked +fresh food for poor at local shelters</li> <li>♥ Turkey/Syria earthquake - blankets, sleeping bags, over-the-counter meds and clothes for victims (multi-center activity)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Eminent speakers for special occasions</li> <li>♥ 97th Birthday-ladies' play ('Urmila: The Unsung Heroine of the Ramayana'); talk; YA music; bhajans</li> <li>♥ Study Circle: Dhyana Vahini - active participation, life application focus</li> <li>♥ 1x month - SSSE parenting workshop</li> <li>♥ Strong bhajans (SSSE, YA)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ 40 children participate in SSSE, bhajans (+ play instruments), service</li> <li>♥ Topics covered (spring): service- G1, ceiling on desires- G2, Swami's life - G3 girls, Five Ds - G3 boys, practicing spirituality - G4 girls, Rama Katha Rasa Vahini - G4 boys</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Active YA group participate in all center activities</li> <li>♥ Graduates of Center SSSE</li> <li>♥ Many area YAs lead by example, supporting Center with Vedas/slokas teaching, singing, and playing instruments</li> </ul> |



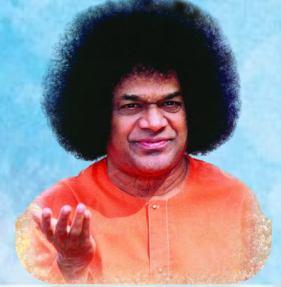
# Center Highlights



| <u>Service</u>  | <u>Devotion</u>   | <u>SSSE</u>  | <u>YA</u>   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Monthly Food hampers for needy families</li> <li>♥ Feeding of homeless persons-Trinidad streets</li> <li>♥ Feeding of stray animals</li> <li>♥ Eco-<i>Sadhana</i> -reuse of discarded materials, etc</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Launched an SSSGC Sai Center at Latchmi Narayan temple (February 2023)</li> <li>♥ <i>Sankranthi</i> celebrations</li> <li>♥ Monthly Study Circle led by YA</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Month-long online SSSEHV (Education in Human Values) summer camp</li> <li>♥ Ongoing recycling project</li> <li>♥ Back-to-school supplies for needy children (textbooks, stationery, uniforms)</li> <li>♥ Book drive, new clothes for needy children</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Study Circle lead</li> </ul> |
| <b>West Palm Beach</b>  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Monthly Park cleanup, SSSE children participate (raises awareness)</li> <li>♥ Monthly food service (prepared and served) at homeless shelters</li> <li>♥ Monthly delivery of canned food to area Food Warehouse</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Celebrated Swami's Birthday, Shivaratri (bhajans, prayers, Sai ashtotram recitation)</li> <li>♥ Weekly sessions include bhajans, study circles (with special guest), <i>darshan</i> video</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Gr 1-2 - lessons from nature / controlling pollution, showing gratitude to Nature</li> <li>♥ Shiva family living in harmony, chanting <i>Lingashtakam, Asatho Ma Sadgamaya</i>.</li> <li>♥ Food lesson; 'Brahmarpanam'</li> <li>♥ Children choose a particular <i>sadhana</i>, practice e.g., prayer</li> <li>♥ Reflections on life lessons from Nature (art, essay)</li> </ul> |   |



# Center Highlights



## A New Undertaking by North Carolina's Asheville Group - by Swami's Grace

**A new idea: a Public Meeting.** In February 2023, the Asheville Group hosted a Public Meeting at the Elk Haven Wellness Center in Brevard, NC. Our intention was to find a new location for our meetings that would be convenient for the majority of our members. In the process of our search, Baba planted the seed in our minds, to make our first gathering in our new location a *Public Meeting*. We decided on the greater Asheville area for our meetings. Twenty posters were hung in public places likely to be frequented by spiritual seekers.

**Introducing newcomers to Sai.** Our meeting was in two parts-- (i) an introduction to Sai through the video "Who Is Sai Baba?", followed by a PowerPoint presentation explaining the purpose of our organization, Baba's main teachings, and questions and answers; and (ii) a Study Circle, followed by Baba chanting the *Gayatri Mantra*, *Jyothi* (Light) Meditation, several English Bhajans, Universal Prayers, *Vibhuti* (Holy ash) Prayer, and distribution of *Vibhuti*. Afterwards, everyone gathered for *Prasad* (sanctified offering). This session provided newcomers an opportunity to understand and experience our weekly meetings' format. Even though our attendants were strangers and came from diverse backgrounds, one could feel the connectivity, love, and enthusiasm. A handout of our contact information and websites for additional information was distributed. Attendees were also given the opportunity to borrow books from our lending library.

**Baba's hand.** From the start and throughout the planning process, Baba's hand could be seen. He directed us to a beautiful facility that would be convenient for most of our members, moreover with abundant parking. The Wellness Center, which offers numerous healing modalities such as acupuncture, spiritual counseling, and yoga, exudes a gentle, loving energy. The large sun-filled room given to us includes a large screen television, podium, a long narrow table perfect for the altar, and forty upholstered armless chairs. We were even given a key to the facility after just one meeting!

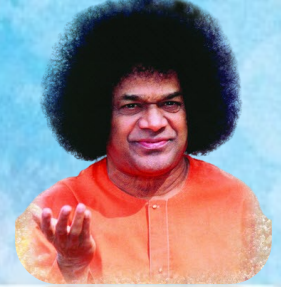
Swami blessed us in so many other ways. The Regional Media Team was very helpful with designing the posters and other support. A dear friend and minister, new to Sai Baba but with solid film expertise, offered help with our presentation. And, we were gifted a box of Baba books from a spiritual book store in which we had placed a poster. Expect the unexpected!

Clearly, Baba had directed and guided our endeavors. We were delighted to welcome nine visitors to our meeting in addition to the eight members in our group. At the next meeting, three visitors returned and expressed an interest in continuing with our group. We are grateful to our beloved Lord for giving us the opportunity, through this initiative, to experience His Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Love. We placed our small humble offering at His feet. We leave the outcome to Him.

*Jayne and Stan Wetschler*  
*Asheville, N.C. Group*



# Center Highlights



## Additional Sai Center Activities At-A-Glance

### Baltimore Sai Center, Maryland

- ♥ The Center's 97th Birthday celebrations comprised a cultural program offered by SSSE children, an interactive session with Young Adults (YAs), Center bhajans, and a cake-cutting ceremony. The SSSE groups highlight important teachings of Swami through plays and skits: "Time Waste is Life Waste"; "Offer Your Thoughts, Desires, Burdens, and Actions to Swami"; "Not Speaking Ill of Others"; and "Three Questions". YAs presented an interactive session on an ethical dilemma, prompting good discussion across the audience on the subject.
- ♥ Weekly Study Circles have focused on Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 1. Some recent takeaways follow:
  - God is the moving spirit in each of us; therefore we are an embodiment of Bliss
  - Love and Self-Inquiry are two important tools in Spiritual Sadhana
  - Everyone should charge their spiritual battery through *satsang* (holy company) and *namasmarana*
  - Recitation of "Om" makes all animal instincts flee
  - Remembering God's Name in the Kali Yuga is also very powerful and can eliminate a person's *vasanas* (bad tendencies).

### Fort Wayne Sai Center, Indiana

- ♥ Fort Wayne Sai Center started the *Sravanam, Mananam, Nidhidhyasanam* virtual *satsang* every Thursday evening for 30 minutes, as one initiative in the runup to Swami's centenary celebrations. Devotees listen to Swami's discourses and discuss the emerging themes. It is open to all in Region 5.

### Loudoun Sai Center, Virginia

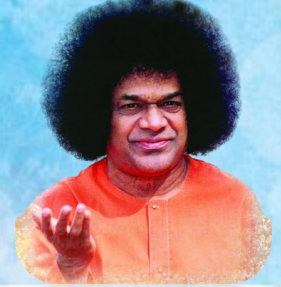
- ♥ Center members got the opportunity to be part of RadioSai (Prasanthi Nilayam), National USA, and our own Center bhajans, with participation by adults, Young Adults, and SSSE children
- ♥ In a Center-wide service activity, SSSE children and their parents and Center members packed and delivered sandwiches for a community shelter lunch, and prepared and delivered brown bags for a community school lunch. All enjoyed the experience of coming together as one family to serve the community in the name of Swami.

### Raleigh Sai Center, North Carolina

- ♥ Group 4 students of the Raleigh Center participated in cooking meals for a homeless women's shelter, as part of an SSSE course focusing on Right Action. All students helped get the ingredients together; some went to a Guru's home and prepared a healthy meal of vegetarian chili, spinach salad, rolls, and fruit; and some took responsibility for loading the car and transporting the food. The activity promoted team work and cooperation, learning of new skills, and having fun. Most importantly, the 40 women whom the students served, with warmth and humility, appreciated the effort--and the meal!



# Center Highlights



- ♥ The Center joined hands with National Youth in observing Mahashivaratri. The 12-hour, spiritually uplifting program featured Rudram chanting, Lingashtakam, SSSE bhajans, and bhajans by seniors, adults, and National Young Adults. Omkaram, Suprabhatam, and a unison Shiva medley made for an energizing finish, concluding with Arati and closing prayers.

## Scarsdale Sai Center, New York

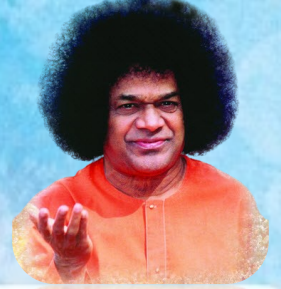
- ♥ **Street Narayan Seva:** Recently, a group of devotees came together from **Scarsdale, NY** and **Norwalk, CT** and joined in Swami's Love to coordinate a Seva Project for poor people (Narayanans) on the street, many of them living on the streets of Hempstead, NY where homelessness has been on the rise. Many of the people who received the blankets sleep, in the cold winter, outside a supermarket store after it closes in the evening. This handful of devotees inspired by Swami to spread His Love through Seva for those in need.
- ♥ The devotees lovingly put together hygiene kits (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, paper-roll, shampoo, socks, snacks, and other essential items) which were transported to Hempstead, NY by Sai devotees in New York. The items were distributed and well appreciated by the people who got them locally. As access to shelters here is limited to legal residents, many illegal residents have no secure place to live or access to regular meals and work, and appreciate anything we can do to help them.
- ♥ The collaboration across two states has highly inspired the team involved to do more such service whenever there is a local need identified. It has also taught us a big lesson: to always have Gratitude to Swami for Everything He provides. We thank Swami for this opportunity!

## Tustin Sai Center, California

- ♥ Weekly bhajans, prayers and satsangs have been a cherished tradition at the Tustin Sai Center for more than 45 years.
- ♥ The Covid pandemic halted in-person activities, but the Center continued its activities uninterrupted, online, recognizing the importance of the weekly spiritual connection for Sai devotees. Children's Bal Vikas classes continued online; service activities, including medical camps and weekly breakfasts for a women's shelter, were also maintained, with attention to social distancing and related protocols.
- ♥ The connection with Prasanthi Nilayam was of great importance, as the Sri Sathya Sai Media Centre enabled devotees to benefit from talks and other programs by Swami's students and others, and also participate in Global Akhanda Bhajans along with the rest of the world.
- ♥ Mahashivaratri in February 2023 marked the grand reopening of the Center's in-person activities, featuring a talk by a Swami student, Vedam chanting, and all-night bhajans.
- ♥ Building on the growing devotion experienced during the pandemic, devotees of the Tustin Center are full of gratitude to Swami, eager to connect again in person to sing His Glory and serve the community.

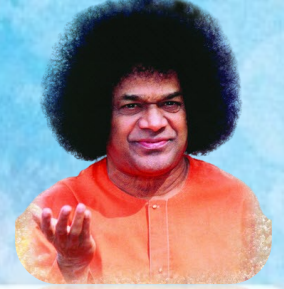


# Center Highlights



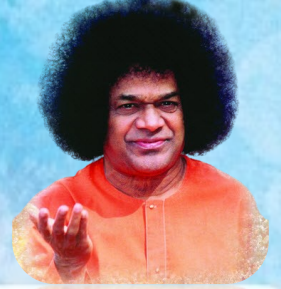


# Center Highlights



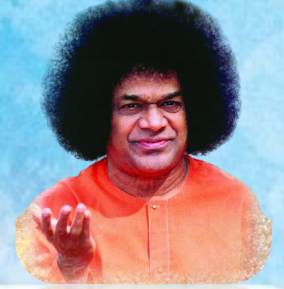


# Center Highlights



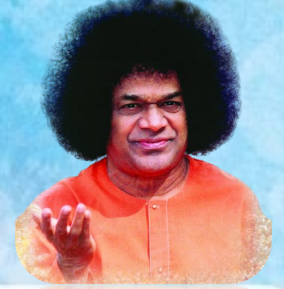


# Center Highlights



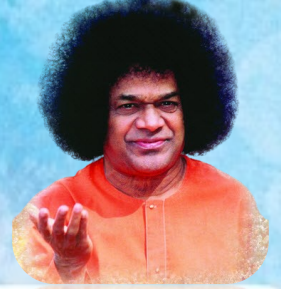


# Center Highlights



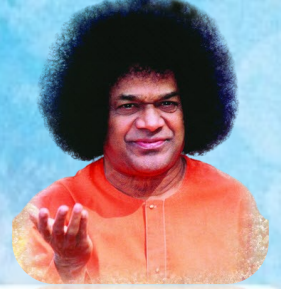


# Center Highlights



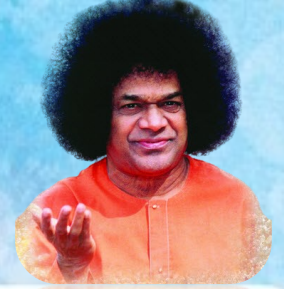


# Center Highlights



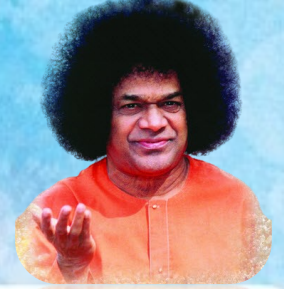


# Center Highlights



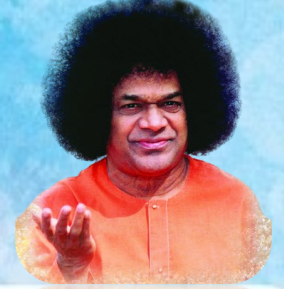


# Center Highlights



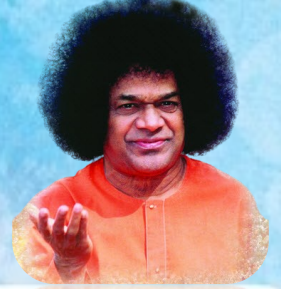


# Center Highlights



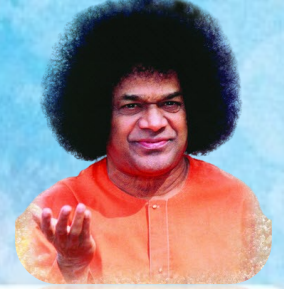


# Center Highlights





# Center Highlights



# Zonal Highlights

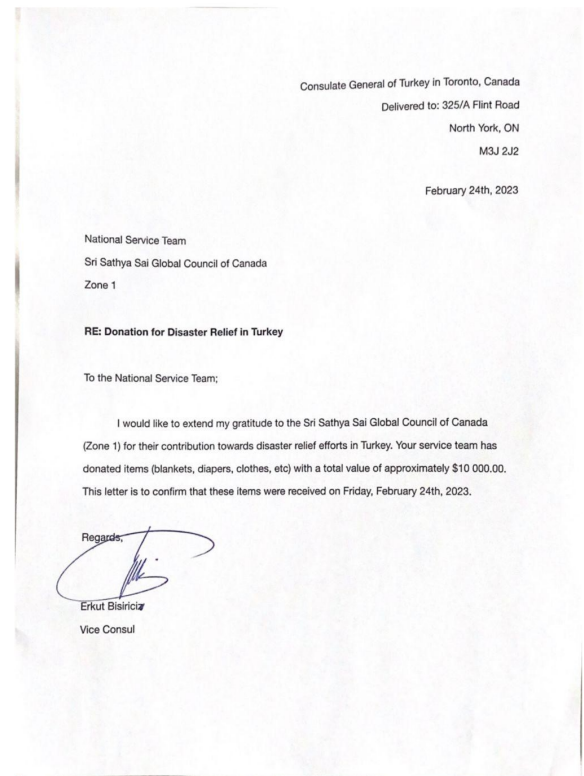


- ◆ **A Little Help For Turkey's Earthquake Victims**
- ◆ **An Outpouring of Love - Turkey Earthquake Disaster Relief**
- ◆ **SSSGC, Zone 1- West Indies, Medical Camp**
- ◆ **Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Educare: Lamps of Love**
- ◆ **Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Applications Course**
- ◆ **Young Adults Retreat**
- ◆ **Cultural Integration Committee Update**

# A Little Help For Turkey's Earthquake Victims

## A Little Help for Turkey's Earthquake Victims

In light of the recent earthquake in Turkey, the Service team of Sri Sathya Sai Global Council of Canada, Zone 1 arranged a donation drive on Shivaratri day. We collected new winter clothes, jackets, blankets, sleeping bags, hats and other necessities that are currently scarce in the disaster zone. Devotees across Zone 1 were incredibly generous and even donated items beyond what was requested, such as socks, diapers, and baby clothes. When the Service team delivered the donations to the Vice Consul of the Turkish Consulate General in Toronto, Canada, he was appreciative of our efforts. As Swami always reminds us, we must help ever, hurt never.



Om Sri Sai Ram.

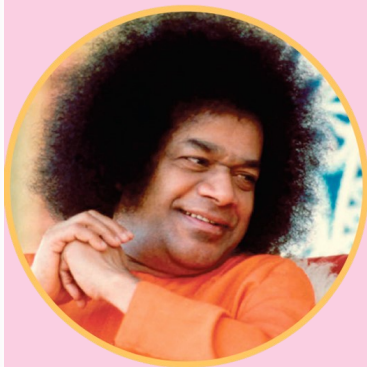
*Service team of Sri Sathya Sai Global Council of Canada, Zone 1*

# An Outpouring of Love - Turkey Earthquake Disaster Relief

## A DESIRE TO SERVE

As disaster struck Turkey and Syria on February 6, 2023, many nations and communities initiated relief activities for the needy. As members of Sri Sathya Sai Center of South Bethesda, we wanted to do our part, however little, in alleviating the pain and suffering of thousands of people left without shelter by the earthquake. We reached out to the Turkish Embassy in Washington DC and received a list of items needed urgently, along with very specific requirements for packaging the items individually in clear plastic bags.

Quickly, the word was spread across the service coordinators of Region 2 of Sri Sathya Sai Global Council, Zone 1, USA. Training of Incoming Officers was scheduled for Saturday in New Jersey. Members all over the region lovingly sent critically needed items. The officers carried them to New Jersey and arrangements were made to deliver them to us. With commitment and enthusiasm, members of South Bethesda repacked and sorted the items per the requirements of the Turkish Embassy. Every item had to be packed individually in clear plastic wrap and sorted for delivery due the next day.



## Swami's Ever-Present Hand!

At every step, a new challenge awaited. Given the limited time, our faith in Swami was the only recourse. I could not in any store get the clear plastic bags needed to carry the items to the Embassy. Just then, I received an Amazon package from an unknown sender that I believed contained some medicines. As I opened the box...Surprise!! The box contained two rolls of large size clear plastic bags!!!

## LOVE IN ACTION

As we were sorting them, I was overwhelmed by the love and care with which the devotees had donated the items. We decided to deliver them to the Embassy with just as much love and care to make sure they reached the needy. The Embassy was updating the requirements continuously based on ground conditions in the affected areas. Items not conforming to the requirements were not being accepted since the Embassy was to bear the expenses for air cargo.



# An Outpouring of Love - Turkey Earthquake Disaster Relief

On Monday, the Service Coordinator from our neighboring Loudoun Center joined us, inspiring us with his service. We decided to haul the items to the Embassy in a truck. Very meticulously, all the bags were loaded in the truck. We prayed to Swami and remembered how enthusiastically He had flagged off the trucks for the Puttaparthi Gram Seva (village service).

## MORE PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED

As we arrived at the Turkish Embassy, we were put in a long queue of cars that were loaded with items for donation. I could see cars full of bags, but the volunteers were accepting only one or two items and very politely rejecting most of them. Since we had a truck full of bags, I started praying to Swami. Soon those prayers were answered, and we were greeted by the volunteers at the Embassy and after a quick check, they routed us inside the Embassy compound. Two inspectors got into the truck and started checking every bag. With Swami's grace, they agreed to accept not just per the revised appeal list, but almost everything in the truck! I knew it was Swami who was working through those volunteers who graciously accepted our offerings. A long chain of volunteers at the Embassy, mostly college students, emptied the entire truck in less than 10 minutes. They transferred the bags into large cardboard boxes and sent them on for electronic scan. An officer was gracious enough to explain to me that, after the scan, the boxes would be carried to the airplane departing that very night.

## OUR INTENTION, HIS GRACE

We believe the supplies reached Turkey on Tuesday morning, even before we had our morning tea. And yes, the unused rolls of clear plastic bags disappeared last night. I am so grateful to have witnessed such overflowing love from Swami's devotees and to have experienced so much of His Grace at every step

*Angira Ajit Desai,  
Service Coordinator, Sri Sathya Sai Center of South Bethesda  
SSSGC Zone 1, USA, Region 2*



# SSSGC, Zone 1- West Indies, Medical Camp



## SRI SATHYA SAI GLOBAL COUNCIL

### ZONE 1 - WEST INDIES

In commemoration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 97<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary, the Sri Sathya Sai Global Council of Zone 1, West Indies (SSSGC-WI) hosted a **Medical Camp** in Gasparillo, a town in southwest Trinidad. The camp was held at the **Gasparillo Mosque**, 32 Bonne Aventure Road, Gasparillo, on Sunday November 20, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**A collaborative effort.** To help address the medical needs of the local community, the SSSGC-WI conducted the medical camp in close collaboration with the Diabetes Association of Trinidad and Tobago, the Trinidad and Tobago Medical Association, the Reform Community Development Council, and the Gasparillo Mosque.



**Free, wide-ranging services.** More than 250 patients benefited from the camp's wide-ranging services, provided free of charge and most importantly with love:

- ◆ Dental Screening
- ◆ Blood Glucose Testing
- ◆ Blood Pressure Testing
- ◆ Pap Smears
- ◆ Vision Screening
- ◆ Holistic Counseling
- ◆ Administering of the Influenza vaccine
- ◆ Colorectal Cancer Screening
- ◆ Other services: (Consultation with General Practitioners and Medical Consultants, Fitness Tests, and Cancer Education by Medical Professionals).

Medications including pain relief supplies provided free of cost to all who needed them.

**Service with Love.** More than 60 volunteers supported the medical camp, upholding the goal of loving service to mankind, as taught by Swami. In addition to medical services, the camp treated all participants to a hearty breakfast, sumptuous lunch, fresh fruits, and healthy drinks--including not only water but also freshly squeezed fruit punch and sugar cane juice!

It was indeed a blessed day, not only for the patients but also for the volunteers and organizers--a day spent putting into practice Swami's dictum of Love All, Serve All!

Jai Sai Ram

# SSSGC, Zone 1- West Indies, Medical Camp



# Sri Sathya Sai Educare - Lamps of Love



## What is the “Lamps of Love” program?

The "Lamps of Love" program envisages a series of mini-retreats across all regions of the United States, and is designed to support teachers in the Sri Sathya Sai Educare (SSSE) program. "Lamps of Love" is so called because, as Swami says:

"Teachers are beacons of Light in Idealism. It is only when the light of the teacher shines effulgently that the light among students can shine. The light from a teacher can light several lamps."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 27 (July 1994) – Chapter 20 – Spiritual Orientation to education*



Educare, Swami says, is "that type of learning that brings out the purity latent in the Heart, confers Bliss, and allows one to spread joy and happiness among others. Education is associated with knowledge pertaining to the ephemeral world, and can at best lead only to worldly pleasure that is invariably transient. Educare, on the other hand, confers inward Bliss, which is eternal in nature. The (spiritual) Heart is the fountainhead of all Bliss. All the powers and the potentialities present in the external world are already present in your heart. Unaware of the immense power within, man today is preoccupied with exploring the outer world."

*- Summer Showers 2000 – Chapter 1 – Seek Educare instead of just education*

## What is the purpose of the “Lamps of Love” program?

"Lamps of Love" is rolled out as an enREACHment program to reach the young hearts and to fulfill Swami's expectations through Love and Sacrifice. The Lamps of Love program is customized for each region on a topic chosen by the region itself. This program encourages more teachers to participate and learn from and inspire each other. The teachers in all the regions commit their time to enrich themselves and consider this program as a continuing education for their efforts to prepare their weekly lesson plans. This program replaces the annual national enrichment program rolled out in 2021.

## What do teachers do?

The teachers trained under the Lamps of Love program are “Teachers of Truth”, undertaking an important mission of inculcating the values taught by Swami in young minds throughout the world. They must equip themselves with the invaluable wisdom shared by Swami, update their knowledge regularly while understanding the children's needs, lead an ideal and purposeful life daily, and through these efforts, inspire the children to become persons of great character and role models in society.

"I am neither man nor God nor an aerial spirit; I am neither a Brahmin, nor a Kshathriya, nor a Vaishya, nor a Sudhra; I cannot be described as Brahmachari or a householder, or a recluse or a monk; describe me as a Teacher of Truth, as Sathyam (Truth), Shivam (Goodness) and Sundaram (Beauty)."

*-Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 10 (1970)*

This Lamps of Love program emphasizes the two fundamental truths “God Exists” and “Man is Divine” that are

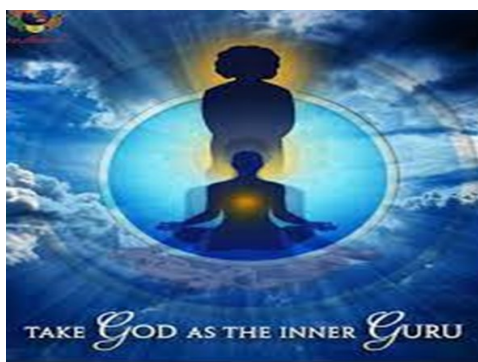
# Sri Sathya Sai Educare - Lamps of Love



the basis of the Bal Vikas/SSSE programs. The teachers' role is to help the children bring out the divinity in them. The lessons taught in the class are spiritual, as well as practical for the children to follow. The teachers should know their students/parents, be aware of happenings in the world, and be fully conversant with the teachings of Swami. The teachers should be able to teach the awareness that God is everything, everywhere, all the time, and should build up their ability to experience divinity every day. They should also be able to bring awareness of the duties, disciplines, and responsibilities with reference to the family, the school, the community, nature, and finally God. The teachers should be able to



teach purity of intention in a way that their inner Godliness can be seen, by becoming transparent. The teachers also must be able to promote the conviction that human values work toward betterment of character. The teachers should become the role model for the children. It is the attention and commitment from the children that transfers into action/engagement by the children. For that purpose, the teachers should maintain a perfect balance of being cordial and friendly, while remaining a Teacher of Truth. The teachers should be aware that every child is on the path to becoming a divine being. The teachers should drive home the point that Educare is about converting the teachings of Swami into actionable activities in day-to-day life.



The teachers are to make the children understand that the real world exists within the spiritual realm, and that the character one demonstrates in the class should be maintained in the outside world as well. The teachers are encouraged to prepare their lessons from a) an excerpt from a speech by Swami (audio, video, or transcript), b) or an inspirational story, or c) issues/problems children that may raise either directly or indirectly. Every lesson should have a foundation that highlights one point in building the character of the children.

The teachers are given specific articles/discourses asking them to extract one-sentence lesson ideas that can be matched with values/sub-values and a complete lesson plan. This guidance helps teachers formulate spiritual principles, matching values/sub-values, stories, affirmations, and life applications.

## Conclusion

Zone 1's "Lamps of Love" program is aimed at bolstering SSSE teachers' efforts to design and conduct SSSE classes that respond to Swami's vision for Bal Vikas and Educare, as articulated by Him. The program recognizes the crucial role of teachers as "Teachers of Truth", guiding children to develop a strong foundation in human values and building a strong character, in line with Swami's expectations.

*This article was prepared by Kasi Sridharan, SaiLights contributor.*

# Sri Sathya Sai Educare - Lamps of Love



## The Bal Vikas Program

“*Bal Vikas* is the primary basis of the great Movement to restore Dharma in the world. The elders are far-gone, and it is difficult to expect transformation of their habits and attitudes. Children must be led into good ways of living, simplicity and humility, and disciplined methods of life. The parents must be persuaded lovingly, and through the examples of bright, cheerful, and cooperating children from the *Bal Vikas* classes, to send their own children to the classes as well. As you know, you cannot draw children to your side if you hold a stick in your hand. You will have to hold some sweets, instead. So, the Gurus must be embodiments of Love and Patience.

The ideal of the *Bal Vikas* program is the raising up of a generation of boys and girls who have a clean and clear Consciousness filled with noble ideals. The actual syllabus is not so important as the creation of the atmosphere where these habits and ideals can grow and fructify.

The home too must feel the transformation in child behavior. It may be advisable to gather the mothers of the children, once a month or more frequently, and give them guidelines on childcare and the higher ideals of family and social life. You can suggest to them ways and means of following up the effect of *Bal Vikas*, and while allowing maximum freedom to the child, hold harmful tendencies in check and promote beneficial ways of moving with elders and the other members of the family.

*Bal Vikas* classes present problems of other types, which must be solved with greater discrimination and deeper Love. Meet these problems with a desire to serve the children better and longer; then they will solve themselves easily. For, *Bal Vikas* is devised not merely for the education of the children. It educates the Gurus equally, if not more. It elevates and sublimates the thoughts and emotions of the Gurus, far better than any other Sadhana can. Remember that as Gurus you have a Guru, guiding you and overseeing your Seva. So, you too are pupils. You learn the lessons of equality, equanimity, and self-less Love while a Guru.

In the *Bal Vikas* Classes, you must endeavor to have children from various faiths, so that friendship will grow into understanding and understanding into Love. Do not talk about the various religions in the beginning and stress on the similarities that you have noted. That will only create confusion in the tender minds, which do not recognize or seek differences or even similarities. Tell them stories from the scriptures of all religions and let them feel that the saints and seers of all lands are good, great, blessed by God, and God-fearing.

More than all, the Guru must be equipped with *Sahana*—a calm and quiet temper, prepared to meet without a ruffle the buffeting of the environment. When someone inquires whether you have a calm temper, do not get enraged! Some people get angrier and angrier when they are asked thus. Even when you have to speak harshly to a child or parent, because all other means of bringing a point home have failed, let your heart be soft; let it not be hardened by prejudice or hatred.”

*-Excerpts from Swami’s discourse in Bal Vikas Training Camp as published in Sanathana Sarathi 1978*

# Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Application Course

## Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Application Course

With Swami's Grace, the course commenced on October 15, 2022, with 115 registrants, and successfully ended on February 25, 2023. We received many positive comments/feedback from the participants in each session. The successful course participants will receive their course completion e-certificates that will be offered at the Mahasamadhi in July 2023.

This course comprised three segments and was designed to refine our understanding of who we are and how we should interact with others in all aspects of our lives. Each segment emphasized interactive group discussions guided by practical questions relevant to our daily challenges and struggles. There were nine guest speakers, and in their session, they shared a 25-minute presentation and then guided the group discussion.

### First segment: Applying the five human values at home

Brother Fize Mohammed was the inaugural speaker who commenced his session with our beloved Swami's golden quote that Human values are not something that you need to acquire anew. They are born with you and are innate in you. As they are hidden within, you are unaware of them. Just as valuable ornaments are hidden in an iron safe, within man's body lie valuable jewels of human values. You must protect these properly. They are covered by the doors of the heart. You must earn the key of Love for it. When the safe vault of the heart is opened by the key of love, the valuable qualities of human values emerge.<sup>1</sup>

Our second guest speaker, Brother Aruno Uthayan, focused on "*Grihasta Dharma*" and elaborated with another golden quote of Swami: *The home where the husband and wife are leading their lives in the shade of great ideals, where together they sing the glory of the Name of the Lord and spend themselves in good deeds, where truth, peace, and love reign, where regular reading of holy books is done, where the senses are under control, and where there is equal treatment for all creation prompted by the knowledge of the basic unity of all creation - such a home is certainly Heaven on Earth.*<sup>2</sup>

Our third guest speaker, Sister Aru Narla, beautifully explained that our children and parents are divine, and emphasized the importance of intertwining three generations together with love and care. She cited a beautiful quote by Swami that stressed the importance of paying loving attention to tender children: *Older people are like old trees; they cannot be bent in the direction which is good for them. But, these tender saplings can be trained to grow straight and strong. So, I wish to declare that the first duty of every adult, son and daughter of this country, is to pay loving attention to the children. Every child is born not only with a stomach that has to be catered to, it is also endowed with two hands that can work and produce the food for the stomach. The hands have to be given strength and skill; they have to learn the lesson of self-reliance. They should never be lazy or slothful. Then, there can be no deficiency in food and no problem of underfeeding. Children have to learn the lesson of self-reliance.*<sup>3</sup>

---

1 SSS, Vol 33, Disc. 16, September 26, 2000.

2 Dharma Vahini, Chapter 4

3 SSS, Vol 14 Disc. 24, May 13, 1979

# Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Application Course



## Second segment: Applying the five human values in our work environment

Each of us spends a substantial amount of time either studying toward a career goal or working to support ourselves and our families. These environments greatly influence all aspects of our lives.

Our fourth guest speaker, Dr. P.V. Shankar, provided a few golden rules to follow at work:

- Evaluate any action at work prior to carrying out the task.
- Do not go to work just for the paycheck.
- Be a team player. Care and share.
- Follow your conscience.
- Do not blame others for your mistakes.
- Have faith. God will guide and help.

Our fifth guest speaker, Brother Gene Massey, enlightened his audience on how human values could transform the workplace into a joyful experience through managing expectations and serving others. He focused on bringing back the Golden Age of Human Values by changing the heart of all mankind. He addressed many interesting questions raised by the younger generation:

- Why are people at work sometimes unpleasant?
- How do we find peace at work?
- How to turn the workplace into a temple for God's work?
- How do we see the divinity in everyone?
- What do we do when people are not acting Divine?
- How can I be loving and kind to everyone?
- How can we serve without attachment?
- How do we let God take over if things are not working?

Our sixth guest speaker, Brother Girish Jandhyala, introduced a new approach and rationalized that one can implement human values by understanding the three boxes of life – box of control, box of influence, and box of concern. The box of control is the smallest box, implying that there are many things in life over which one may have very little control. Therefore, the box of control should be filled conscientiously. Only 15 percent of workplace problems are caused by internal factors within our control, while external factors cause 85 percent of the problems.

## Third segment: Applying human values in the community

The first two segments of the course set the foundation for the third: practicing human values in the community –by refining our thoughts, words, and actions. Only those who apply the principles of Love All Serve All are fit for leadership in the community. The third segment explored the importance of character building as well as the importance of self-analysis and being a role model.



# Sri Sathya Sai Human Values: Practical Application Course



Our seventh guest speaker, Brother Abhimanyu Kaul, discussed practicing human values to know one's true Self. Specifically, he mentioned that the harmony of the head, heart, and hands takes us back to our true Selves. To properly use discrimination, we must first learn how to quiet our minds, then listen to our hearts, before we use our hands to implement. By developing this 'pause' in our lives, we no longer will make decisions instinctively (lower level) but make decisions intuitively (from divine consciousness), and so we become one with divinity.

Our eighth guest speaker, Brother Ketan Kharod, awakened us to the importance of getting to know our neighbors and being an example for those in our communities by proactively reaching out. Even though we all have busy lives, we should develop relationships with those in our community to exemplify Love All Serve All. When we put human values into practice, people will remember how we made them feel and will want to be part of this community where kindness is shared. Brother Ketan provided some valuable tips on how to practically apply the human value of dharma (right action):

- Dharma is love in action - for example, showing up by lending a listening ear, a shoulder to lean (or cry) on, or a helping hand, and showing compassion, in any form, to those in need.
- Dharma means protecting others, especially those marginalized by their status.
- Dharma is having unity in thought, word, and deed. That's why "thoughts and prayers," while potentially comforting, are not enough. Dharma requires deeds too.

Our ninth guest speaker, Brother Sainath Vadathirthanathan, inspired us with his selfless service and focused mainly on applying human values in our daily lives. He beautifully explained why we should know which human value to implement before making any decisions in critical moments. He lovingly shared Swami's quote: *Always keep the welfare of society in mind. Don't consider your fellow men as 'others'. Share your love with all; Live in amity and develop unity. Only through love can you win the hearts of others and transform them. Hence, the need of the hour is to cultivate love and share it with others.*<sup>4</sup>

Each of us has a valuable role to play at home, at work, and in the community. This course explored the practical application of the five human values of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love, and Non-Violence and taught us to use them to guide our thoughts, words, and deeds. Swami taught us to avoid compartmentalizing our lives into the spiritual and the mundane. Every aspect of our lives is our personal spiritual arena designed for our development, which certainly applies to our duties at home and work and our interactions with the community in which we live.

Thank you Swami for your blessings and guidance throughout this course.

Jai Sai Ram,  
Sri Sathya Sai Educational Program (SSSEP)  
and  
Sri Sathya Sai Program for Awareness of Human Values and Educare (SSSPAVE)

# Young Adults Retreat



## Divine Satsang: Young Adults Mini Retreat

It was a blessing and joy to have been able to attend the 2023 National YA Mini-Retreat + ARRYA hosted by the Raleigh Sai Center in February. This was my first ever YA Retreat. I am usually one to process impending trips or something new with some degree of anxiety. What I experienced at the Retreat, instead, was a divine Satsang filled with love and life lessons.

The themes of the Retreat were the following:

- Who am I? (Are you the Atma? Are you the body? Are you somewhere in between?)
- Where am I? (What life experiences have led you to where you are now?)
- Is that enough? (How do you make decisions? How improve, going forward?)

The Retreat consisted of (i) service activities (creating affirmation and healing cards for patients in hospital, putting together hygiene care packages for women's and men's homeless shelters); (ii) a cooking workshop on our first night (creating from scratch 108 delicious ragi laddus); (iii) a fantastic panel ("Evolution of a Sai YA Panel") that was led by current and former YAs, (iv) three separate workshops each focused on individual parts of the theme, (v) a Tai Chi workshop led by Dr. Andrew DeMil, (vi) a painting workshop by our Advisor Geeta Reid, (vii) and at least four wonderful bhajan sessions (including Shivaratri) over three days and so much more.

To be surrounded by so many wonderful souls filled my heart with joy and peace. I saw and experienced, first hand, selfless love and kindness in practice. The volunteers from the Raleigh Sai Center gave up much of their time and energy. They housed YAs traveling from all over the country; drove YAs to and from the activities; and fed us delicious food. Support came also from our YA Advisors, Representatives and teams who planned this Retreat over many months. The effort(s) that they put into the Retreat was awe-inspiring and attested to their divine, selfless love. It was "Love All, Serve All" and "Help Ever, Hurt Never" put into practice, by all.

Swami tells us the importance of *Satsang*. *There is a special energy and vibration(s) that we feel when we are surrounded by godly beings engaged in godly work. Imagine this divine atmosphere non-stop for three days! Swami brought each and every one of those attendees to the Retreat. I heard this from a blessed soul regarding the Retreat. "We are doing Swami's work and Swami will give us the energy."*

I felt a certain sadness towards the end of a retreat which had exposed me to so many wonderful souls practicing and living Swami's message of divine, selfless love. The time spent together over those three days allowed for honest conversations. I will not forget the kindness of all those with whom I was able to share this divine experience. Since then, I have been asking myself, how can I recreate the experience? Where can I feel the same energy? How can I always be connected to that divine *Satsang*?

I dearly thank Mother Sai for a heavenly experience and blessing that I hope never to forget.  
Jai Sai Ram.

# Cultural Integration Committee Update



## Cultural Integration Committee Update

*Karen Pasternak, Andrew DeMil & Girish Jandhyala*

### Cultural Integration:

*Explore commonalities and differences with Eastern vs Western cultures with regards to speech, customs, rituals and norms so that each can understand other better to further enhance quality of interactions and communication at center events, community service events, and any other community wide interactions.*

Thanks once again to all those who reached out to us with your inputs, we reviewed your feedback and have taken the next step on creating a compelling future state as intended by our Swami for all of us on the subject of Cultural Integration.

We are working on creating an e-learning/study video with elders and expert guests from different walks of lives from our Zone to participate in a dialogue to explore the topic and discuss the deeper nuances within the topic. The plan is to make this video available for all the members to watch and brainstorm around, and possibly use it as a guide for study circle material.

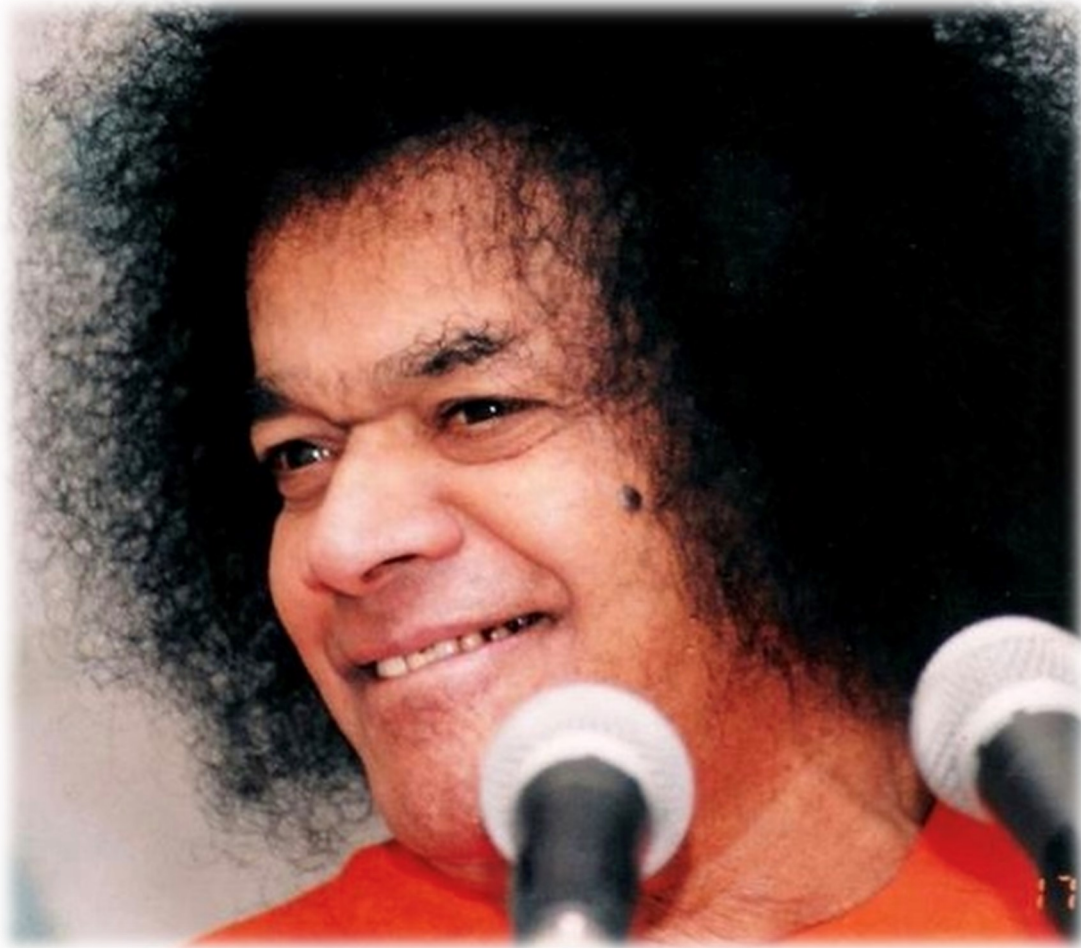
We look forward to updating SailLights readers on the progress being made, in the next issue.



# Sai Nuggets



# Sai Nuggets



- ◆ **A Sai Pearl: What Makes Us Human?**
- ◆ **Spiritual GPS – How to Meditate on Name and Form**
- ◆ **Asked...and Answered by Swami**
- ◆ **Life is a Game: Play It! – Crossword**

# A Sai Pearl: What Makes Us Human?

## What Makes Us Human?

*Prasanthi Babu, Sri Sathya Sai Center of Loudoun*

*What makes us human?*

*Viewing the beauty in everything makes us human*

*Acting with empathy towards others makes us human*

*Loving unconditionally makes us human*

*Understanding and respecting differences makes us human*

*Empowering the less fortunate makes us human*

*Striving to be a better person makes us human*

*It is VALUES that make us human!*



**Swami's Sri Sathya Sai Education / Bal Vikas Program  
Becoming Better "Human" Beings**



# Spiritual GPS - Good Practices for Sadhana - How to Meditate

## How to Meditate on Name and Form



### Swami Says

**Meditation on the Lord's Name and Form is the best spiritual practice for beginners. I advise you all to take it up!**



♥ **Choose a Name and Form.** Repetition of the Name and meditation are means by which you can make the Lord assume the Form you choose and the Name you fancy. Therefore, do not change these two; stick to the ones that please you most.

Do not be under the impression that I will be angry with you if you do not accept Me as the Form for meditation! I am not concerned at all; you have perfect freedom to select the Name and Form that give you the necessary encouragement.

- Swami

♥ **When you sit for meditation, recite a few verses on the glory of God,** so that the thoughts that are scattered could be collected.

♥ **While repeating the Name, draw before the mind's eye the Form** that that Name represents.

**When your mind wanders away from the Name, take it on to the picture of the Form.** When it wanders away from the picture, lead it on to the Name. Let it dwell either on that sweetness or this. Treated thus, it can be easily tamed.

♥ **Do not get discouraged that you are not able to concentrate for long; practice!** As with riding a bicycle, practice will equip you with a concentration that will sustain you in the densest of surroundings and the most difficult situations. When you meditate, the mind often runs after some-thing else, it takes another road. You have then to plug that outlet by means of the Name and the Form and see that the even flow of your thoughts toward the Lord is not interrupted; if it happens again, use the Name and the Form again, quickly. Do not allow the mind to go beyond the twin bunds, this side Name and that side Form! Then it will not stray into a third place.

### Try, try until you succeed!

When you learn to ride a bicycle, you do not get the skill of keeping the balance immediately. You push the cycle along to an open *maidan* and hop and skip, leaning now to one side and now to the other and even fall with the cycle upon you on many an attempt, before you are able to ride with skill and never again to worry about the balance. Automatically, you are able to make the necessary adjustments to correct the balance, is it not? After getting this skill, you can ride through the narrow streets and lanes, and you do not need an open road. You can negotiate your vehicle through the most crowded thoroughfares!



- Swami



# Spiritual GPS - Good Practices for Sadhana - How to Meditate



- ♥ **Within a few days, you will fall in line and taste the joy of concentration.** After about 10 or 15 minutes in the initial stages and longer after some time of this meditation, have some inward contemplation on the peace and contentment you had during the meditation; that is to say, bring back into your memory the joy you experienced. This will help your faith and earnestness.
- ♥ **Do not get up suddenly; loosen the limbs slowly, deliberately, gradually, and then enter upon your usual duties.** Taste the fruits of meditation and learn to relish them; that is what I mean by this process of repeated reflection. Be careful about your physical health also. Satisfy the demands of nature; the car must be given the petrol that it needs. Otherwise, your head might reel and your eyes might get blurred through sheer exhaustion!

Source: Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 1, February 23, 1958



# Asked....and Answered by Swami

## Why is God like the electric current?



"No one yet knows the mystery of the electric current, why it behaves so, what is the exact nature of its origin and flow; but, yet it is manipulated into a thousand uses and it is manifesting through a thousand appliances and instruments."

So too, God is present everywhere; but we can understand only that part of Him that manifests before our cognition. Ordinary people will swear that the earth does not move at all; it is held forth in poetry as a symbol of stability. But, it has two motions, both unbelievably fast! It rotates on its own axis at a speed which exceeds a thousand miles per hour; even while rotating so, the earth moves around the Sun at an astonishing rate of speed! But, do we notice it while it happens?

### **God is a reality, ever present in us and in every being.**

But we miss Him, as we miss the movement of the earth. We have to infer God through proofs and evidences of His Providence, His Grace, His Majesty, and His Glory, just as we infer the movements of the earth, the Moon, and the Stars, by watching the sky, the seasons, and the precise process-ion of day and night. We cannot describe God in the vocabulary learnt upon the earth.

### **We have to experience the Bliss of realizing Him as the core of our being.**

Man is endowed with a sense of wonder and awe, the sense which makes him either a *Karma Yogi* (a participant), *Jnana Yogi* (an inquirer into the mystery) or *Bhakthi Yogi* (a devout adorer). When he suppresses or ignores or bypasses this sense of wonder, he gets involved in the physical world, physical needs, and physical pursuits. He starts worshipping Mammon and he strays away from the good, the just, and the beautiful. He barter the Chalice of Bliss for a mouthful of dust."

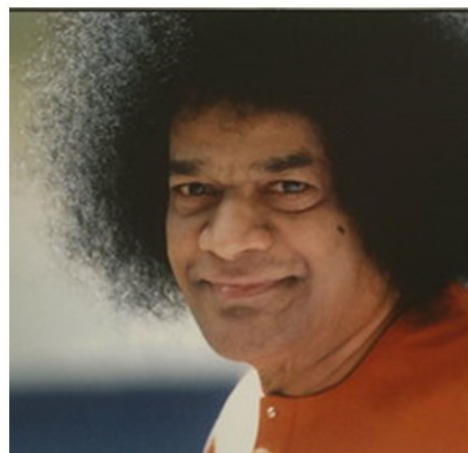
*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, 4/1/1974*



---

**"God can do anything. He has all power in the palm of His Hand. My Body, like all other bodies, is a temporary habitation; but, My Power is eternal, all-pervasive, ever-dominant."**

*— Sathya Sai Baba*



# Life is a Game: Play it!



## Sarvadharmha Prayer Puzzle

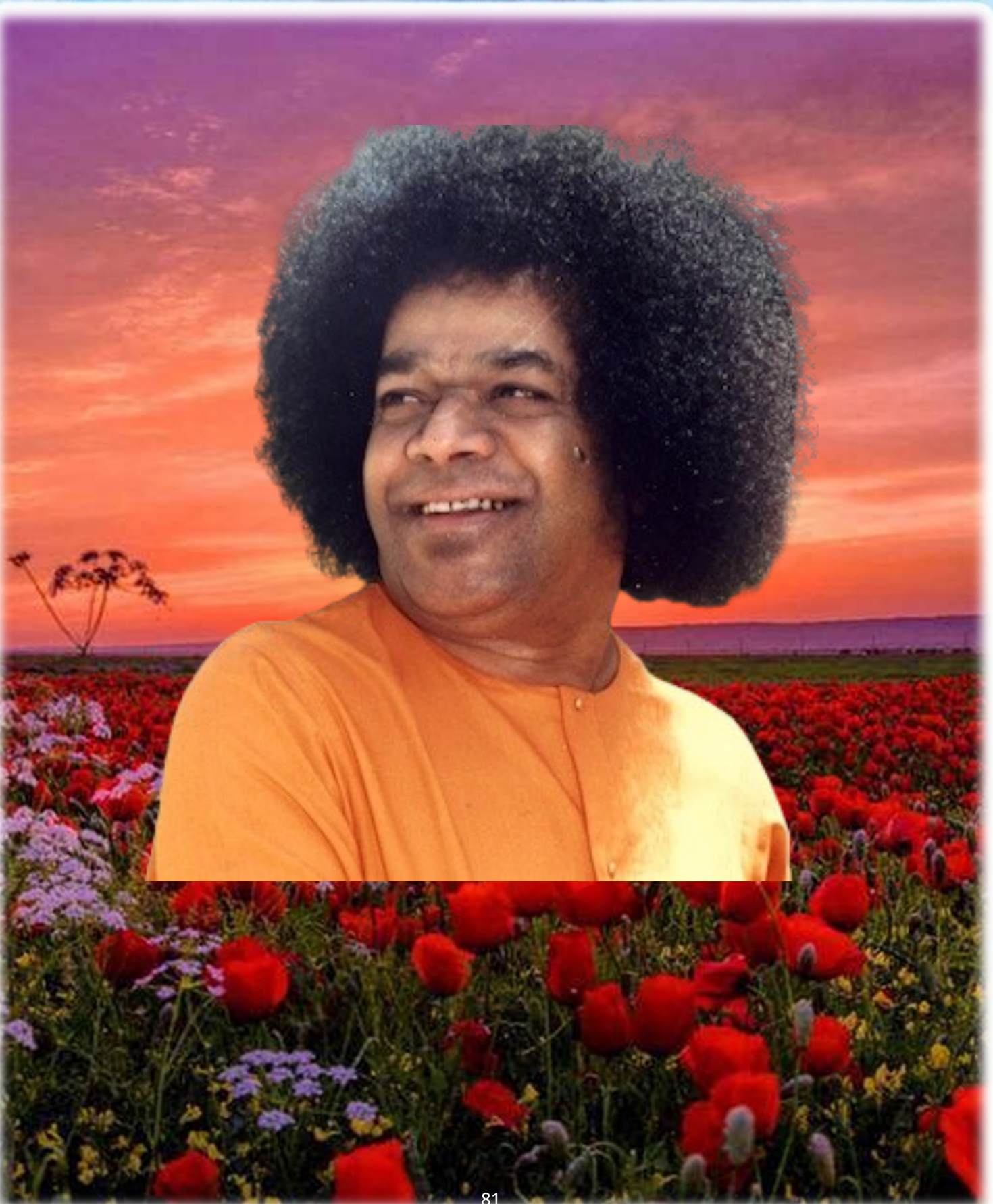
Find the names from the Sarvadharmha prayer



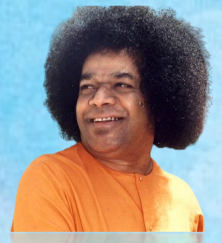
# Devotee Experiences



# How Swami Entered My Life



# How Swami Entered My Life



## WHAT A JOY I FOUND IN THEE, DEAR LORD SAI

*Kanaga Ranganathan*

In a restless state, I searched everywhere but found Thee not,  
A yearning filled my heart, the lures of life had lost their charm,  
My vision went beyond my family to a nameless one, so elusive,  
Is this a distant dream? Is this a reality far beyond our grasp?  
Life with its kind gift of a loving spouse and four dear children,  
Life endowed with a comfortable abode, sufficient funds to last,  
Jobs and friends enduring in a warm bond, all these sufficed not,  
Yet with a glow inside, burning bright, undimmed, I searched far.

A ray of hope at last! I found a tape of Thy speech and singing,  
Thy words of divine wisdom and the heart-melting sweet voice,  
Led me further and farther in my search, to find many books,  
Books, authored by devotees, dwelling on Thy divine splendor,  
Thy miraculous manifestations, Thy wondrous cures to heal,  
And above all Thy glorious teachings to direct us to the sacred,  
I reveled, we all reveled at Thy subtle Presence in our lives,  
With two years of readiness, it was time to be in thy Presence.

At last with hearts filled with joy, we travelled far to His abode,  
The sacred abode of peace and bliss, that sacred spot of divinity,  
A place of beauty and order, a place of sacred silence and serenity,  
We sat in a meditative mood, the entire place filled with longing,  
In that silence, men and women, birds and trees paused quietly,  
All waited, the sun shining above, did he stop to see this sight?  
Time stood still, babes sat still in mothers' laps, trees quit blowing,  
The Lord of Lords came, smiling sweetly, blazing like a million suns.

With a smile here, a touch there, a pat on the head, letters taken,  
With a divine radiance that swept and enfolded all those present,  
With an aura of divine splendor stretching for miles far and wide,  
With the divine energy, the basis of all creation, touching all there  
Awakening the dormant souls gathered there with sacred yearnings,  
Our Lord weaved His way in and out amongst the crowd, loving all,  
In the enfolding silence, we all sat enraptured drinking deep the joy,  
The bliss from the majestic splendor of the Lord, then He was gone.



Continued on next page...

# How Swami Entered My Life



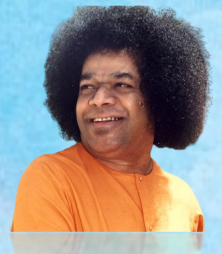
What a Joy I Found in Thee, Dear Lord Sai (continued)

Content to have found Thee at last, filled with Thy divine blessings,  
We went home, renewed and refreshed, to an inner search within,  
Sai Centers beckoned us weekly, study circles enlivened our search,  
We sang Thy glory along with others and lost ourselves in Thy grace,  
Our way of life changed, Thy pictures adorned our humble homes,  
Service to God is service to humanity, we tried to follow the dictum,  
Our companions were those who fondly greeted us with 'Sai Ram',  
A metamorphosis had taken place, old order yielded to a new way.

Though we sang Thy glory, never wavered in the pursuit of Sai path,  
Yet felt Thy wisdom elude us, I felt exhausted with my silent search,  
I could not rest unless I found Thee in my heart, in my own depth,  
You chose to withdraw Your form to enable us to find Thee formless  
I held fast to Thee to unburden my bondage, to save me from sin,  
I surrendered to Thee to lay my burden at Thy twain feet forever,  
I intend to hold tight to Thy sacred, subtle Presence, never to let go,  
I remain content to lie now and always in the shade of Thy eternity.



# How Swami Entered My Life



## How I Came to Swami's Fold

Maya Virani

Sathya Sai Center of South Bethesda

We lived in Long Island, New York. My family had been invited to a Thanksgiving dinner. Although we had known the host for many years, this was the first time we were celebrating this holiday together. One of the guests and I connected instantly and she insisted that we visit her in Connecticut. My husband had studied and lived in CT for many years and there were several friends that we regularly visited. I told her that I would call her the next time we were in town.

A month later we were in CT for the holidays. Despite the fact that we were there for ten days or so, it never occurred to me to get in touch with her. On the day of our return, I suddenly thought of calling her to wish her a happy new year. One thing led to another and a couple of hours later we found ourselves at her house.

She casually mentioned that when their home was being built there were many places where *vibhuti* had manifested. We were not devotees at that time and we paid no heed. I saw a lot of artworks in her basement and inquired as to who had done all this beautiful work. Her answer was "my children". I accepted it, not having met them. She referred to a daughter of hers who was in Puttaparthi at the time, volunteering at the hospital. This was all Greek and Latin to me since I had never heard of Parthi, the hospital etc. However, it seemed to me that her daughter was an adult and yet the sketches were from young children and it was highly unlikely that she had kept those for so many years in the basement.

That was the first time I heard of Bal Vikas or Sri Sathya Sai Education. I heard some details about the program and instantly I was all ears! For some time, I had been looking to enroll my kids in a spiritual program where they would learn values and maybe even Indian culture. It did not matter to me at all who was teaching it and who had designed the program

and what the lesson plans were. I knew absolutely nothing about Swami but that was of no consequence at all. I was very excited that I had found the very thing I was looking for!

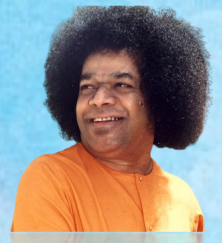


In those days, there was no Google to help us find the closest center. The host had a directory of the Sai centers in the area. He found one but it was quite a hike and I quickly lost interest. As we were about to leave, he suddenly went back in and referred to the directory once again. He mentioned that there was indeed a small center not far from where I lived. I was elated and rushed to write down all the information.

I had decided to call that number the next day to get additional information. We had been away for a few weeks and I was exhausted on our return. However, something kept prompting me to make that call immediately, which I did.

I learned that there were two teachers who had received their training but they did not have a single student. What's the big deal? I thought. I said that I would bring them the students (how arrogant of me!) if they would be willing to start a class.

# How Swami Entered My Life



We had never met and I guess they wanted to gauge who I was and where I was coming from. They were meeting the next evening and invited me to a study circle (I had no idea what that was) followed by some bhajans. I instantly agreed.

In all honesty, I attended the session with a condition. I had never heard about a study circle and I was perfectly fine learning about it; but the bhajans were a different story. I had always enjoyed listening to bhajans and I had decided that if there was at least one familiar bhajan I heard that evening, then I would return to the center again, otherwise I would just chalk it to a new experience and forget all about it. They sang “*Ananda Sagara Muralidhara*” which was a bhajan I loved.



You probably know how it ended since I am still around! It is impossible to fathom how Swami’s plan unfolds. The center that I attended in NY was very small, with barely a handful of devotees; we were the only Indian family who attended. Today, I attend the South Bethesda Center, a center with more than 250 devotees from different faiths. I have been fortunate to participate actively in every wing of the center’s activities for so many years now, with Swami deeply ingrained in my and my family’s lives. The journey has been beautiful; and Swami has walked with us every step of the way.

## Slow and Steady

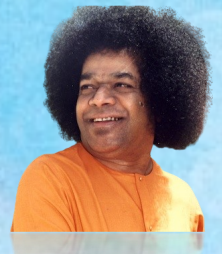
*Pradeep Kamath*

I came into the Sai fold gradually, over a period of almost two decades. In the mid 1960s, a relative of ours, upon hearing of a boy in a remote village of Andhra Pradesh who wore a robe, spoke words of wisdom and performed miracles, reached Puttaparthi and returned with a fascinating report. My father then embarked upon the same trip, which in those days involved fording rivers, trudging through fields and riding in bullock carts. When he returned a week or so later, after an interview in which Swami worked his usual magic, he too was a transformed man. Both my parents then proceeded to the place, taking along yours truly and a nephew five years my junior. On that visit, three of the four managed to enter the interview room, but I missed the meeting because I was playing outside.

My turn came at age seventeen, when in an intimate interview Swami lavished affection on me but said, “You will not follow me now, but you will follow me later.” Thus it transpired that at age thirty, when I was in search of something real in a world that seemed neither real nor unreal but surreal, Swami granted me four ninety-minute interviews in which He answered many of my questions and showed me how to begin my search.

My induction into the Sai fold thus began with information, which begat inspiration, which in time became an initiation that came with some instruction. The rest, as they say, is transformation, a slow process that is very much a work in progress.

# How Swami Entered My Life



## Nowhere to Now Here - A Sai Student's Journey

Sharmila Sanka

Alumnus, Sri Sathya Sai University

As a teenager, I thought people were crazy to call Sri Sathya Sai Baba "God". But one day, my brother-in-law brought me an application form to apply at Sri Sathya Sai University, Anantapur Campus. He said, "Your life will be blessed if you become a Sathya Sai student." I agreed after hearing the great culture of the educational Institutions there and because that was the only option to continue in English medium since there were no such colleges in my home town at that time. My traditional dad would agree to send me only to Baba's traditional Women's College. I said "Baba! If you are really God, you would give me admission. If I don't get admission in Anantapur, it means I don't need to believe you to be God." The big day arrived, and I went to Puttaparthi for the first time. Swami was at Whitefield, Brindavan. I prayed to Baba to give His blessings prior to my test. I stepped out on the road to go to the test center, and a small boy suddenly stopped in front of me and put a card in my hand. I was astonished that It was Baba's picture with the words, "WHY FEAR WHEN I AM HERE?" I was overjoyed; the first tears of joy for Baba ran down my cheeks. I felt Baba was blessing and reassuring me. I wrote the entrance test with confidence in my heart. The night before my result was announced, for the first time, I dreamt of Baba overtaking me in a red car. It might be that he overtook my doubt, and ignorance. I woke up in the morning and my heart was filled with a never-felt-before feeling. That morning, I was amazed to find my name on the results list. That very moment changed my life. A few weeks later, I, as a student, had my first beautiful darshan in Parthi and conveyed my thanks and gratitude to Him for leading me in my journey towards Him from Nowhere to Now Here.



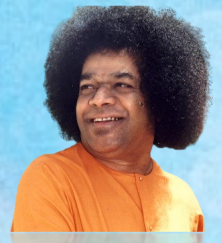
## Swami Entered My Life Before My Birth

Roohi Sanka, SSSE Group 4

Indianapolis Sai Center

Swami has always been a significant part of my life. I have grown up with Him, thanks to my family. My mother, a student of Sathya Sai Baba's college, always played bhajans and shlokas (prayers) in the mornings before school. They became ingrained in my memory and subconsciously provided me with a closer connection to Swami. But even before then, Swami had entered my life – before birth – and the positive impact of His presence has been everlasting. My parents would always sing bhajans to me, even when I was in the womb. This is something I do not remember, of course; but I feel it within as I sit in front of Swami's photo, singing my favorite bhajans. My love for bhajans brings me closer to Swami, and I feel blessed to be able to ask Him for advice, comfort, or help as a dear friend. My love for music feels like a physical manifestation of my connection to Swami, something that has been timeless and undying all throughout my life, and which has, moreover, provided me with so much in life.

# How Swami Entered My Life



**Veni, Vidi, Vicit**  
**(I came, I saw, He conquered)**  
*Sandhya Rao, Rochester, NY*

I am taking a page from a Sai student, who once beautifully described how Swami came into their life through the famous Latin phrase “*Veni, Vidi, Vicit*”, translated as “I came, I saw, and He conquered.” These exact sentiments chronicle how Dear Swami came and transformed my life. The spiritual journey started in the 1980s for me as a young Balvikas student attending Sai *Satsang* and actively participating in service. I can so vividly remember the day I first entered the Sai Center with my parents. I was completely mesmerized by Swami’s lovely photo and the melodious Bhajans. I came, I saw, and I also heard! It was an instant feeling of comfort suffused with warm love and quite frankly, I hadn’t experienced anything like that before. Being a voracious reader, I would often take home many Sai books to read. The more I read about Swami and His special love for all beings, the more I wanted to serve!

I saw Dear Swami for the first time in 1982 in Prasanthi Nilayam; His special, unconditional love conquered and changed me. The connection to Swami became deeper and stronger over the years. With Swami’s infinite grace, He has protected and guided my life with His blessings, providing advice through personal interactions and interviews. For these, and for being that constant teacher, mother, father, and true friend, I am most grateful.

I would like to kindly share a small snippet of my initial, captivating Parthi experiences with Dear Swami, in which He showered the love of a thousand mothers. As a young girl, I would often help make pizza on Sundays in the one bakery they had in Parthi in those days. In addition, I would take an active part in the South Indian canteen making balls of ladoos and rolling out *chapathis*. *Serving and connecting with devotees from Parthi and all over the world was always a sheer delight. I recall one summer when a*

small group of Nepalese devotees (who incidentally had never seen Swami) and myself helped to deep-clean the kitchen of the South Indian Canteen, late night, so it would be spic-and-span tidy for the next day. We did this for a stretch of 10 days and though it was hard, grueling work and even meant missing the coveted Swami *darshans*, we were relentless in our seva because we sang Bhajans to Swami which filled our hearts. One day before we were all about to leave, we sat for *darshan*, and Swami gracefully walked out with the instrumental music playing in the background. Our yearning hearts were pining for Swami and wishing He would come and bless us.



Swami conquered our group and myself with His genuine love. He came right over and materialized *vibhuthi* for us and expressed His joy of seeing us practice selfless service. I was on cloud nine taking it all in and receiving Holy *padanamaskars* (touching the Holy Feet in prayer). When I look at my spiritual journey of how Swami came into my life, I can see how this growing faith in Beloved Swami brought me closer to Him. It was indeed a wonderful blessing to be able to visit Prasanthi Nilayam every year to see and serve our Sai Maa.

# How Swami Entered My Life



## How did Swami enter my life?

*Amit Palicha*

After I lost my dad at a young age, in Tanzania, my mom was looking for spiritual answers and in that process, Swami willed that on one fine day, we walk by the place where the Sai Center was meeting. Once I entered, what attracted me the most was Swami's Face in the Picture at the altar. I vividly remember even today, all of a sudden becoming very much at ease and comfortable with Him looking at me. This did not feel like attending just another temple. We attended weekly regular bhajans.

The most transformative moment was when I tested Swami. One hot day, and starting to walk to the center, I told her: "They are saying He is God. If He is God, let Him send a taxi, so I don't have to walk in this hot sun." My mom told me we should not talk like this. He is in India but He can hear everything we speak. As we walked to the end of our block, a white taxi pulled over in front of us! My jaw dropped as I saw the driver raising his hand for us to get in. I was in utter shock. My mom refused and did not want to take the favor but he strongly insisted. Then, we went with him to the center and he did not accept any money. My faith in Swami set in deeply. He is the most powerful Omnipresent God. I thank Him for Everything.

---

## How Swami Entered My Life

*Deepa Malavalli*

An unforgettable event that initiated my bond with Swami took place on my 6th birthday. Before my birthday, I told my mother that I would like to have a birthday party. My mother replied that I was too old for a birthday party. Somehow, I believed her and thought that I would really become older when I turned 6.

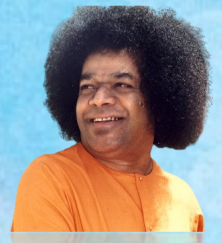


Much to my delight, my parents did arrange a birthday party, and some kids from the neighborhood came to the celebration. I was very happy to be with my friends. One girl narrated what she and her family had experienced in Prashanti Nilayam. She had been there with her parents and her sister, who had a growth problem. I do not remember the details of her story; however, when she mentioned the name Sathya Sai Baba, I felt a bright light within.

The feeling was so strong that I walked away from the group of kids and stood alone in another part of our garden and looked into the sky in silence. Then moments later, Baba appeared before me smiling. I looked at him and uttered a deep "Yes". It came from the depths of my soul. Then I said, "I want to know You and Your mission." This communication occurred in silence.

Indeed, on my 6th birthday, I became instantly older, yet not so much in age but in maturity and awareness. Ever since that day, I have always felt that Baba is my Divine Father. I have had many wonderful experiences in connection with Baba, but the initial meeting with Him on my 6th birthday was the most wonderful, everlasting, and vivid one of all.

# How Swami Entered My Life



Darshan. Although, I loved the idea of having Swami's Darshan more than anything,

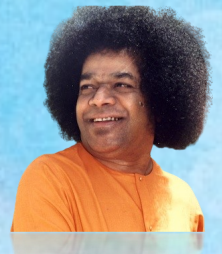
I wasn't too keen on rushing things and risking the chance of missing the plane. And my dad is one of those who loves traveling by train to Parthi, like he always does till today, insisted that we take the train to Parthi and be back in Hyderabad on time to catch my plane. All the travel arrangements have been made and we were almost ready to get on the train. That's when the twist came, when my dad called up people in the ashram in Parthi, they said that Swami's not in Parthi and will only return the following month. My father was very much pained to hear this as his dear daughter was going to miss His Darshan. But then our Lord who is always watching over us made sure that didn't happen. Like in Swami's usual style wherein He likes to stir things up before He bestows on us His grace, we got a call from the Ashram that evening to inform us that Swami preponed his return date and that He will be back in Parthi the same evening we boarded the train. Our joy knew no bounds when we heard this news. The next morning, my eyes saw my Sai Maa for the first-time donning orange colored robe and sitting calmly on His majestic throne inside the Bhajan mandir. This is when I laid my eyes on Him for the first time and it was beyond mesmerizing and till today, I cannot forget the magnitude of inner silence that I'd felt when He laid eyes on me. Those moments were heavenly beautiful and the contentment and gratification I'd felt seeing Him through His photographs all around my home felt like a miniscule in comparison with His real Darshan. I also got a chance to speak to Swami that day. This to how Swami entered my life and till today, I continue to draw strength from moments spent with Divinity.

## How did Swami enter my life?

*Chandrakala Puligilla*

One may have many worldly achievements but none of them match with the fact that we saw God walking on this Earth. And we have every reason in the world to follow His message. It was in late 1980s when Swami came into my life and was taken into Him right from the day, I laid my eyes on His photograph. As an obedient middle schooler, I always included him in my decisions and used to give Him Mangala Harathi every day without a miss. However, I never got a chance to have His real physical Darshan and never felt particularly inclined to having one. In contrast, my whole family used to visit Parthi to have His Darshan and I had always been busy with my schoolwork. A decade later, it was in the month of May when Sun was blazing hot, I had only one day left in India before I go back abroad, and my dad insisted that it's high time for me to have His

# How Swami Entered My Life



## How Swami Entered My Life

*Sister Brintha Thananjayan*

*Morningside SaiCenter, Toronto.*

*My humble pranams at the lotus feet of my dear Swami.*

Thank you Swami for prompting me to share my story in your magazine! The name of this magazine says it all: '*SaiLights*'.

Swami came into my life when I needed Him the most. He came to show me the light every step of my way.

During the time of civil war in Sri Lanka, my sister and I, then teenagers, went to Colombo (West coast of Sri Lanka) from Jaffna (the northern part of Sri Lanka) in order to complete our education. Admissions were not granted immediately at schools, and the only school willing to take on new students in the middle of an academic year was Salvamangayar Kalaham.

Without any hesitation I joined the school. I think that was the best decision that I ever made, because that is where I was drawn towards my dearest Sai Ma. Everything attracted me, from the bhajan hall to the picture in the altar where all bhajans would take place after school. This gave me a sense of peace

which I cannot explain to this day. For a teenager who had relocated due to war, was homesick and missing her parents and sibling, and was at the same time eager to excel in her new studies, Swami entered into my life as my Mother, Father, Guru and Friend.

I wanted to know more about this 'Person' because I had previously heard about Sai Baba but never believed in Him; nor had I been interested in learning more about Him.

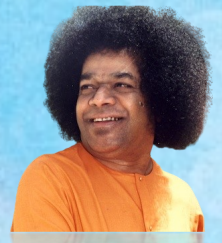
I believe He separated me from my parents as a way to introduce Himself to me and allow me to know of Him and His love and to feel His divinity and His presence.

I felt that I could look at Swami's altar picture all day. Every time I stepped into the school for the after-hour class, I made sure to stop by at the hall to listen to a bhajan or two. I was drawn towards Him and the bhajans and my thirst to know more about Him increased.

When I was looking to read some books about Him, our family friends visited. They were Godparents to my mother. To my surprise they had books in their hand that had a cover picture of Swami. I asked them "Do you believe in Sai Baba?" They said, "Swami is everything to us!". At that time, not knowing I would eventually become just like them, I nodded my head with surprise. I got all the information from them about Bhajans and requested them to lend me the book and promised them I would return it carefully.

I was drawn towards His teachings, and the dreams that I had and the conversations I had with Swami in the dreams, all made me surrender at His Lotus Feet. Not only did the school allow me to continue my education without interruption, it also unveiled to me my spiritual Guru and took me to the next level of spirituality.

# How Swami Entered My Life



Three decades later, I fondly remember those days and am grateful to my dearest Lord for giving me the chance to get to know Him and to experience His divinity and love. I am grateful for the heart-to-heart connection I have with Swami. I am grateful to Swami for the opportunity He has given me, to be an office bearer in His Center.

I am ever grateful for everything He has taught me and made me go through, and for all the blessings in my life.

## How did Swami enter my life?

*M. Sai Bikkineni*

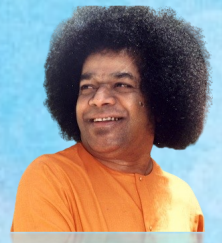
When I was a few months old, my grandpa wanted to take me to Puttaparthi for an initiation into education ceremony. However, we missed it as my mom thought it was too early to make an international trip. For my first birthday, my grandpa insisted that we go to Puttaparthi because we knew Swami would bless all birthday babies with yellow rice, and my family members really wanted that for me. However, we missed out on that too.

Two months later, Swami left His physical body and I never got to have Swami's Darshan. We finally made a trip in June 2011 and apparently I was happy being seated in Sai Kulwant Hall, enjoying bhajans to the fullest. Knowing all this made me really curious about Swami. I spend a lot of time watching His Darshan videos on RadioSai and that makes me happy.

While I clearly missed out on the great privilege of seeing Swami, I have been able to see Swami's Hand in my life. I did start going to our local Sai Center from the time I was one-week old (I was the youngest member of the center at that time) and I've been a part of the Balvikas program at our Center since I was 5 years old, learning about His life and His message till today. I always look forward to listening to stories and games our Gurus bring every week to us, and also to veda chanting and learning bhajans. I would like to thank Swami for entering my life and blessing me with this gift, and I hope and pray with all my mind and heart that I can live up to Swami's Message and make Him proud.



# How Swami Entered My Life



## My amazing Baba and I

*Praasa Palakollu*

*SSE Student*

I can't even express in words how much Swami means to me. Swami is the light of my life. He makes me feel cherished, loved, and happy. When I am going through a rough time and I feel as if no one is there for me, I always know that Swami is. He goes through unimaginable things for me and sometimes I do not even realize it. Anytime I need Swami, He comes and listens to me. He treats me like bangaram. Swami plays a very big role in my life. He is the reason I'm alive and I am thankful for that everyday. When my mom was pregnant with me, He told her, "I am going to give you bangaaram (gold)". Now that I think about it, I realize that everything that makes me who I am today, is all Swami. I pray to Swami for everything - for example, doing well on a test, or making sure my competition goes well. Even if something goes wrong, I know that everything will be okay and that is because of Baba. Baba always answers my prayers in different ways. I have never had an encounter where Swami did not answer my prayers.

I feel as though Baba is such a blessing for me. Whenever I am in a negative situation, he turns it into a positive situation. He knows exactly what I need and when I need it. Swami is like magic. He shows up exactly when you need him and sometimes you don't even ask for it. When I fall back, I know that Swami is there to catch me. I cherish You, Baba and love You. Thank you Swami, thank you.



# Quiz on Swami and His Teachings - Solutions



## 1. According to Swami:

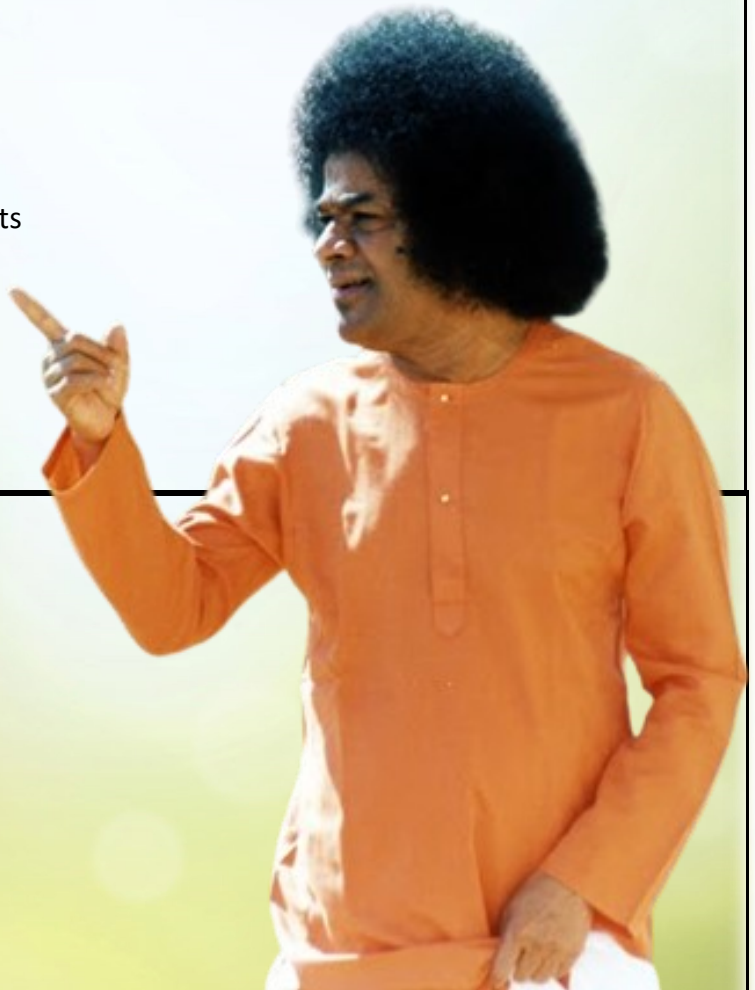
- Which *Sadhana* (spiritual effort) is particularly efficacious in the Kali Yuga? **Namasmarana**
- Who is the Mother of the Vedas? **Gayatri**
- How should one spend every day? **"Start the day with Love, fill the day with Love, spend the day with Love, end the day with Love"**
- What is the root cause of all sorrow and suffering of man? **Ignorance of his true Nature**
- When can you hear the voice of God? **In the depths of silence**

## 2. In what year:

- was Swami born? **1926**
- did He declare Himself as the Sai Avatar? **1940**
- was Prasanthi Nilayam inaugurated? **1950**
- did Swami inaugurate the 1st Super Specialty Hospital? **1991**
- did Swami give up His Avataric Form? **2011**

## 3. Fill in the blanks:

- 1 Work is **Worship**; Duty is God
- 2 There is only one religion, the **Religion of Love**
- 3 There is only one caste, the caste of **humanity**
- 3 Why fear **when I am here?**
- 4 I have come to **Light the Lamp of Love** in your hearts
- 5 The end of **Education** is character
- 6 Prasanthi Nilayam means **Abode of Supreme Peace**
7. Love must express itself as **Service**
- 8 God is the **Doer**; you are but the **instrument**
- 9 **Love all beings**; that is enough
- 10 God is all **Names** and all **Forms**



## 4. True or False:

Young Sathya ...

- was very naughty **False**
- helped his mother by shooing away beggars **False**
- cooked meals for his grandfather **True**
- performed miracles for classmates **True**
- composed and acted in plays **True**

Swami...

- rode on a Golden Chariot on Guru Poornima **False**
- said His students were His only property **True**
- wrote all the Vahinis **True**
- was the first "*Poorna*" Avatar **False**
- says it is okay to worry as long as you pray **False**

# Quiz on Swami and His Teachings - Solutions



## 5. What are the:

- 3 Hs? Head, Heart, and Hand
- 3 Ps? Purity, Patience, Perseverance
- 4 Fs? Follow the Master, Face the Devil, Fight to the End, and Finish the Game
- 5 Ds? Dedication, Devotion, Discipline, Discrimination, and Determination
- 6 Enemies? *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (jealousy)

## 6. Expand these acronyms:

- ABC Always Be Careful
- COD Ceiling on Desires
- EHV Education in Human Values
- SAI Service, Adoration, Illumination
- WATCH Watch your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character, Heart

## 7. Who was:

- Pedda Venkappa Raju Swami's father
- Karnam Subbamma A great devotee who cared for Swami after He left His parents
- Kondama Raju Swami's grandfather
- Professor Kasturi Swami's biographer, one of His earliest, most ardent devotees
- Professor Gokak First Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

## 8. What is the meaning of:

- *Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam / Dustara Bhava Sagara Taranam*  
Meditate on the Feet of the Guru in thy mind, which will take you across the turbulent sea of Samsara / worldly existence
- *Satyam Gnyanam Anantam Brahma*
- *Ahamkaara* Ego (the feeling that "I" am the Doer)
- *Bal Vikas* Blossoming of the child
- *Mee kanta inta venta janta eppudu vuntaanu*  
In your eyes, in your home, I will be there along with you ...Forever.

## 9. Can you name:

The Nine Forms of Devotion? *Sravanam* (listen-ing), *Kirtanam* (singing), *Smaranam* (contem-plateing on the Lord), *Padasevanam* (serving His Lotus Feet), *Vandanam* (salutation), *Archanam* (worship), *Dasyam* (servitude), *Sneham* (friend-ship), *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender).

The 15 Vahinis?

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Bhagavata Vahini      | Prema Vahini           |
| Dhyana Vahini         | Rama Katha Rasa Vahini |
| Dharma Vahini         | Sandeha Nivarini       |
| Gita Vahini           | Sathya Vahini          |
| Jnana Vahini          | Sathya Sai Vahini      |
| Leela Kaivalya Vahini | Sutra Vahini           |
| Prasanthi Vahini      | Vidya Vahini           |
| Prasnothara Vahini    |                        |

## Nine Point Code of Conduct:

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has given us the 9 Point Code of Conduct for our spiritual and personal development.

1. Daily meditation and prayer (according to one's own religious practice).
2. Devotional singing / prayer with members of the family once a week.
3. Participation in Sai Spiritual Education (Bal Vikas Program) by children of the family.
4. Participation in community service and other programs of the Organization.
5. Attendance at least once a month in group devotional singing organized by the Sai Centre.
6. Regular study of Sai literature and literature of all the great religions and saints.
7. Speaking softly and lovingly with everyone.
8. Not indulging in talking ill of others, especially in their absence.
9. Putting into practice the principle of 'Ceiling on Desires' and striving continuously to eliminate the tendency to waste time, money, food and energy – and utilizing any savings thereby generated for the service of mankind.

# Life is a Game: Play it! - Solutions

## Sarvadharmha Prayer Puzzle

Names from the Sarvadharmha prayer



Source: Sri Sathya Sai Media Center

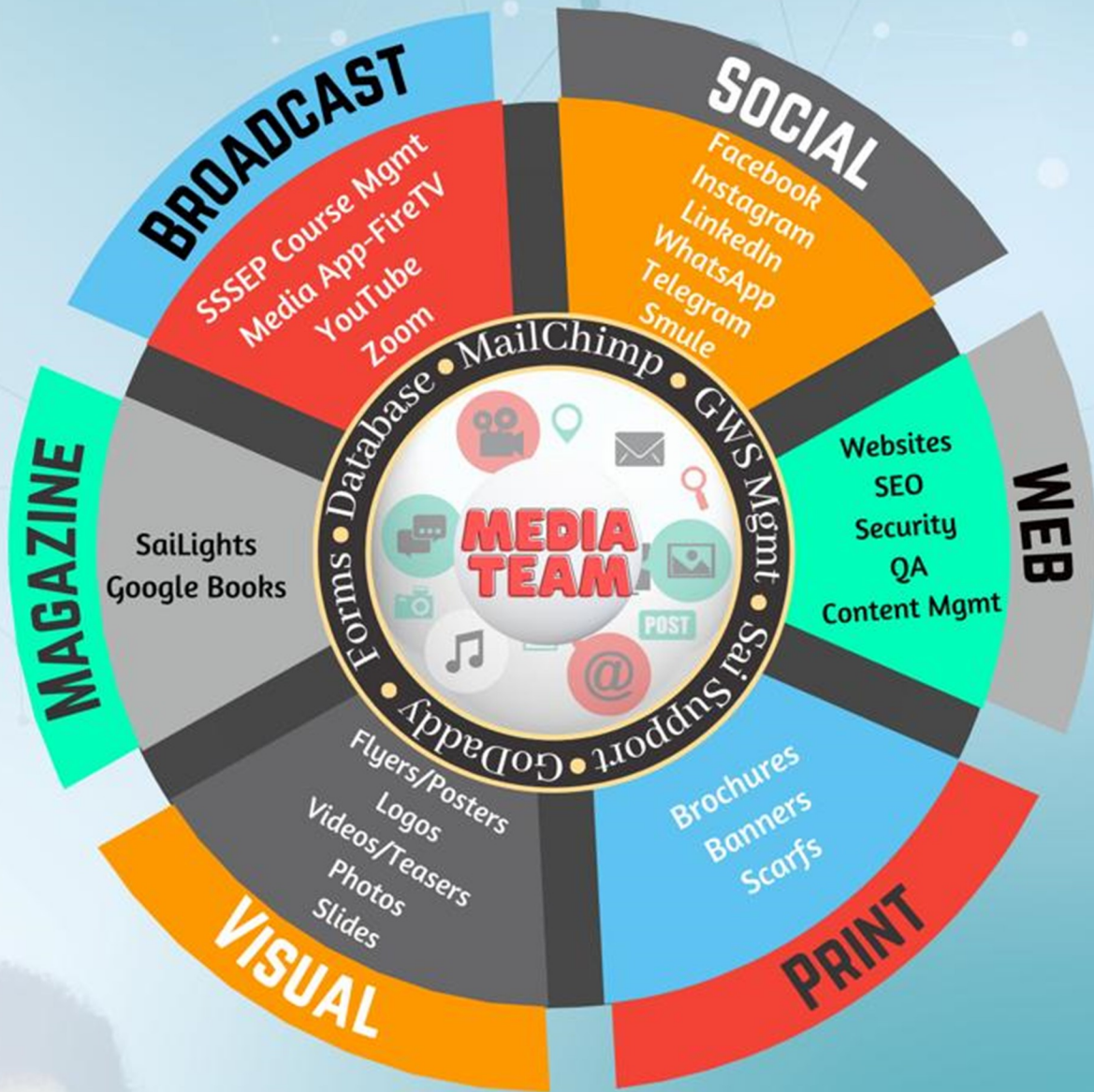
<https://www.sssmediacentre.org/#/article-detail-page-1/61cd3610a9f9c429134aa553>

# Media Links



# Media Links

## SSSGC ZONE 1 - MEDIA TEAM



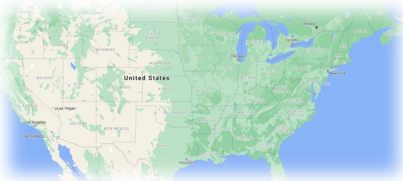
# Media Links

## SRI SATHYA SAI GLOBAL COUNCIL

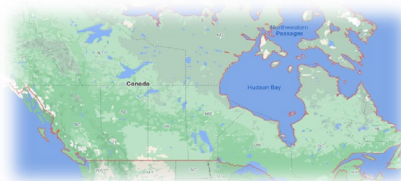
### Zone 1 - USA, Canada, West Indies

Please do visit the SSSGC, Zone 1 official websites for the latest announcements and relevant registration and informational documents and videos:

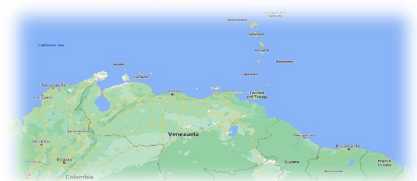
### Zone 1



### USA



### Canada



### West Indies

### Subscribe



Telegram



Facebook



Mailing List



YouTube

With all our love



Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu