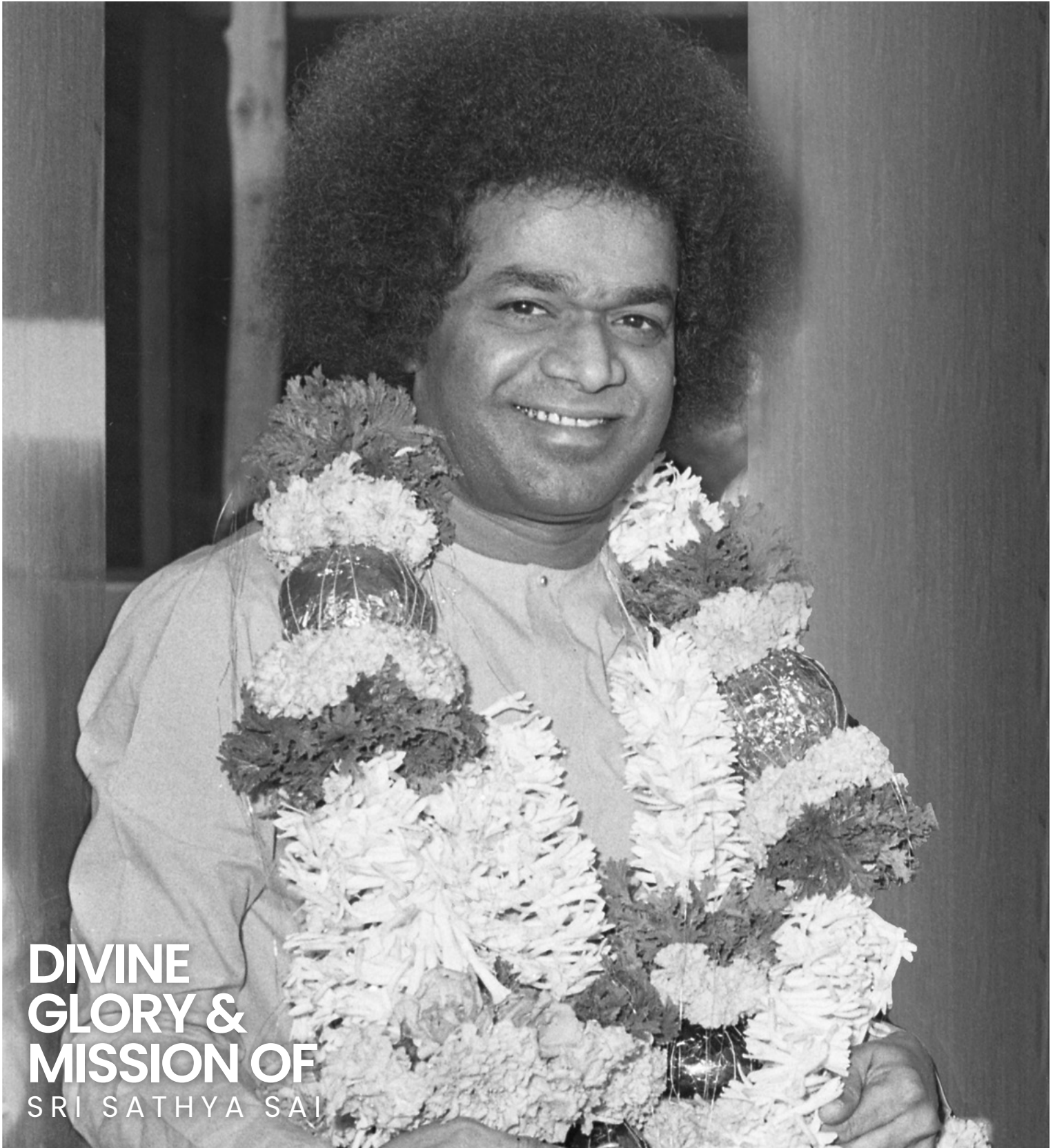


SATHYA SAI  
THE  
**ETERNAL**  
COMPANION



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4  
APRIL 2023



**DIVINE  
GLORY &  
MISSION OF**  
SRI SATHYA SAI



People talk of the sacrifice of Christ as evidenced by His crucifixion. Let us pay attention to the sacrifice Jesus made while free, out of his own volition. He sacrificed his happiness, prosperity, comfort, safety, and position; he braved the enmity of the powerful. He refused to yield or compromise. He renounced the 'ego', which is the toughest thing to get rid of. Honor Him for these. He willingly sacrificed the desires with which the body torments man; this sacrifice is greater than the sacrifice of the body under duress.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
December 24, 1972

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DEDICATED WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE TO

**BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA**





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# ARADHANA— WORSHIP

This month, we observe Easter on April 9 and Aradhana Mahotsavam on April 24. Both occasions remind us of the message of love and sacrifice by Lord Jesus Christ and Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for the upliftment and redemption of humanity. It was a unique event on April 24, 2011, when Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba left His physical form on the auspicious Easter Sunday. In 2011, traditional Easter and orthodox Easter coincided on the same day, a Sai-incidence. This shows that love and sacrifice are supreme.

Just as Jesus continued to teach and minister to His disciples after the resurrection, **Swami continues to guide and protect us as our Eternal Companion after transitioning from form to formless.**

## How Can We Express Gratitude to God?

Through *Aradhana* (worship) we express our gratitude to God. We owe everything—our body, mind, and possessions—to the Lord. These are all the gifts of God. In return, we can offer love and purity as an expression of gratitude. Lord Krishna says in Chapter 9, Sloka 26 of the Bhagavad Gita, “If one offers to Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, with purity, love, and devotion, I will accept it.”

Therefore, it is essential to have pure heart and intense love. Swami often emphasized

that God looks at the quality, not the quantity of the offering.

**Divine love is the foundation of all *Aradhana*. Swami said Love is the Source, path, and goal of life.**

In the discourse of November 23, 1994, on His Birthday, Swami exhorted us,

**“What is My directive? What is it that will please Me? What is that I desire? Only one thing: Love, Love, Love. That is Sai’s most potent weapon.”**

Jesus asked, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” He recognized the contribution of an old woman who placed two pence in the offerings box at the temple of Jerusalem. Calling His disciples, He said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave part of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, offered everything—all she had to live on.” It is the qualities and love of the devotee that touches the Lord.

On May 17, 1968, Swami said that following His instructions is enough and is more fruitful than all the austerities, *japa*, and meditation we do to reach the goal of life. **His teachings should be followed implicitly, immediately, and completely.** Swami spoke about *Aradhana*, or worship, in a divine discourse on July 20, 1996, where



He went in-depth about the types of *Aradhana* (ways to worship God).

### Types of Aradhana

Swami described four types of *Aradhana*—*Sathyavati* (Truth-based), *Angavati* (Manifestation-based), *Anyavati* (Symbol-based), and *Nidnavati* (Slow, steady and sure).

The first is ***Sathyavati Aradhana***. In this, the devotee worships God with the faith that He is immanent in every particle of the universe, just as butter is present in every drop of milk.

The next is ***Angavati Aradhana***. Those who follow this path consider each of the five elements, namely, ether, air, fire, water, and earth, as the manifestation of God and worship them. These five elements are represented in the human body as *shabda*, *sparsha*, *rupa*, *rasa*, and *gandha* (hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell), respectively.

The third path is ***Anyavati Aradhana***. People who follow this path ascribe various names and forms with specific attributes to God. They worship God with attributes like love, mercy, and compassion and reach the ultimate goal.

The fourth type of worship is ***Nidnavati Aradhana***. People who perform this *sadhana* (spiritual practice) follow nine paths of devotion:

- *Shravanam* (listening)
- *Kirtanam* (singing)
- *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on Vishnu)
- *Padasevanam* (serving His Lotus Feet)
- *Vandanam* (salutation)
- *Archanam* (worship)
- *Dasyam* (servitude)
- *Sneham* (friendship)
- *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender)

By following these nine paths of devotion, devotees can contemplate on God and

attain the goal of life. There are as many paths as there are beings. We can follow any of these paths with intensity, sincerity, and clarity to reach the goal.

On many occasions, in His discourses, Swami beautifully described the flowers of worship that God likes. He says:

*Puvvulanni Thecchi Pooja Chesina,  
Mechchu-konadu Thaanu  
Puchchu-konadu  
Hrudaya Kamalamivva Sadayudai  
Grahiyinchu Sathya Sai, Shanti  
Prema Dayi.*

(Telugu Poem)

**You may bring any number and variety of flowers. Neither will I accept nor will I be pleased by them. But I will happily accept the flower of your heart and grant you peace and love.** Swami also enumerated the eight flowers of devotion that one can offer to please God.

### The Eight Flowers of Devotion to Be Offered

1. Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*)
2. Sense Control (*Indriya Nigraham*)
3. Compassion For All Beings (*Sarva Bhootha Daya*)
4. Forbearance (*Kshama*)
5. Peace (*Shanti*)
6. Penance (*Thapas*)
7. Meditation (*Dhyana*)
8. Truth (*Sathya*)

Let us briefly discuss these eight flowers, which God is pleased to accept.

**Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*):** Lord Buddha says, *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma—Ahimsa* is the highest *Dharma* (right conduct). Nonviolence is not just avoiding physical violence. It goes beyond that to the level of words and thoughts. **It has to be practiced in thought, word, and deed.** It begins with not hurting anyone physically. The next

stage is not hurting anyone with words. Sometimes verbal abuse can cause more harm than physical injury. People carry anger and resentment for a lifetime and sometimes for generations. The highest level of practice is to not hurt even in thoughts. Thoughts are very powerful, and they travel fast. They can uplift or cause harm. That is why Swami encouraged people to have good thoughts by singing the name and glory of God even while walking in the streets (*Nagar Sankirtan*). Prayers like 'Samasta Loka Sukhino Bhavantu' (May all the world be happy) embrace everything in the universe, with love including galaxies, stars, planets, animals, plants, and human beings.

**Sense Control (*Indriya Nigraham*):** For a spiritual seeker, the fundamental practice is to control the senses. It is said in the Brahma Sutras (Vedantic treatise) that **the person in search of the knowledge of Brahman (Ultimate Reality) first needs to practice control of the senses and the mind.** So, even for a wise man, Lord Krishna says, the senses are turbulent and disturb him. Like a tortoise that withdraws its limbs within the shell when it comes across noxious stimuli, a wise man withdraws his senses from distractions and temptations. That is why Swami exhorts us to bend the body, mend the senses and end the mind. But, controlling the senses outside and contemplating on sense objects inside is being a hypocrite.

Suppressing the senses could be risky as, after a while, they explode. It is more critical to direct the senses for the right and sacred purposes. Sense control is then automatically achieved. Swami says to use senses to see, hear, think, speak, and do only good. **Emphasizing the importance of sense control during the discourse on His 69th Birthday, Swami said, "Today, as an offering to Swami, give up eating meat, consuming liquor, and smoking.**

***By renouncing these three, you will benefit yourselves as well as society and the nation."***

**Compassion for All Beings (*Sarva Bhootha Daya*):** Lord Krishna says that one who considers the pain and suffering of others as one's own and tries to alleviate them is the greatest Yogi. One of the greatest examples of the practice of compassion is Lord Buddha. He denounced animal sacrifice. **Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba showed compassion not only to human beings and animals but also to trees and so-called inanimate objects.** Once, when cement walls were being built in the ashram, someone was spraying water on the cement with force. Swami sent a message that the walls should be watered gently! Even inanimate objects are permeated with consciousness. So, we must ensure that we tread softly and revere everything and everyone. The great master Sri Ramakrishna was so connected with the universal consciousness, that he identified himself even with the grass! One day, when a man was walking on grass, Sri Ramakrishna felt his chest hurting, as if the man was walking on his chest.

**Forbearance (*Kshama*):** Swami says that the greatest virtue for a spiritual seeker is the practice of forbearance. He gives the example of the Lord Jesus. When Jesus was crucified, instead of cursing those persecuting him, He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Swami was the greatest example of forbearance when He was subjected to torture and sorcery in His childhood by those who mistook His behavior to be caused by demonic forces. Without a complaint, He exhibited fortitude and patience. **In His discourse on May 25, 2000, Swami extolled *Kshama* as the grandest and noblest virtue.** Forbearance helps us develop the courage to face troubles with





determination and live in bliss despite challenges.

**Peace (*Shanti*):** In his letter to the Church at Phillippe, Saint Paul mentions, “Peace that passeth all understanding.” Swami calls this peace *Prasanthi*; It is not an ordinary peace but supreme peace unaffected by any situation, event, or person. Swami also shows us how to have such peace. **When we say, “I want peace,” Swami says to remove the ‘I’ or ego and the ‘want’ or desires.** Then, you are automatically left with supreme peace! This is at the individual level. At the worldly level, Swami says,

*“Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in character. Where there is beauty in character, there is harmony in the home. Where there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation. Where there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world.”*

**Penance (*Thapas*):** The spiritual seeker is expected to undertake austerities and lead a disciplined life. This is a long-standing tradition among many faiths. For instance, Muslims fast for 30 days during Ramadan, Christians fast for 40 days during Lent,

and Hindus observe fasts on various occasions, including Maha Shivaratri. **But the real penance for this age, Swami says, is to practice *Trikarana Suddhi* (unity and purity of thought, word, and deed).** What we think we should say, and what we say we should do. Whenever there is no harmony in thought, word, and deed, it will lead to agitation. Lord Krishna also clearly describes *Thapas* at the body, mind, and word levels in Chapter 17 of the Bhagavad Gita.

**Meditation (*Dhyana*):** This is an essential spiritual practice, and Swami has elaborated on it in His book, ‘*Dhyana Vahini*.’ Swami says that everything we do should be done as meditation. But Swami knows our mind is turbulent, fickle, and wavering. So, to control the mind, one should constantly practice and observe detachment from the external, sensory world. **Swami was benevolent in saying that even if we are able to concentrate on God for 11 seconds, He will appear before us. Before meditating, we must prepare ourselves by practicing control of the body, senses, mind, and breath.**

**Truth (Sathya):** The final flower of worship is Truth. Swami says God is Truth, and Truth is God. His name itself is 'Sathya.' Even before He declared Himself as Sathya Sai Baba, His given name at birth was Sathyanarayana. Swami says where there is Truth, there is God. One should adhere to truth and honor the given word at all costs. To uphold the path of Truth, Rama relinquished the kingdom and was exiled to the forest, honoring his father's words. The noble king Harishchandra gave away his kingdom and renounced his family, to honor the promise he has given and adhere to truth. Every word Swami says is a *mantra*, and it is always true. Whether it was the establishment of hospitals or various service projects, **His words always became a reality.** In His infinite compassion, Swami kept the promises He gave devotees, blessing them by appearing at the last moments of their life.

Our heart gets purified when we worship the Lord by offering these eight flowers. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God! Swami says that purity leads to divinity. **Once we experience divinity, we reach the final stage, the goal of Aradhana, where we realize the Truth.** We see unity in diversity and oneness in creation. We see that every moment and every atom is permeated by the divine—*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*.

## Experience Bliss Through Aradhana

We then live in the bliss of the Self. This bliss is beyond the comprehension of the mind and expression by words. **As the Taittiriya Upanishad says, "This bliss is many times more than the ordinary happiness we enjoy at the physical level (Manushyananda),** which is the happiness of a youthful person, who has all physical beauty, strength, who is intellectual with noble character, and who has all the wealth and power in the world. If *Manushyananda* is one unit of happiness, then *Atmananda* is described to be  $10^{18}$  units, quintillion times greater!

When we do *Aradhana* sincerely with devotion and dedication, we not only experience *Atmananda* (bliss of the Self) but also see the oneness, namely unity in diversity. This is *Jnana* (supreme wisdom); as the scriptures proclaim—*Advaita darshanam jnanam* (seeing oneness is wisdom).

Swami, in His infinite love and compassion, has prescribed many methods of *Aradhana* to spiritual seekers depending on their level of understanding and spiritual progress. **A combination of any/all of these paths will lead us to the goal of Self Realization with His grace and our sincere efforts.**

Jai Sai Ram.

Since I move freely among them, talking and singing, even intellectuals are unable to grasp My Truth, My Power, My Glory, or My real Task as Avatar. I can solve any problem, however knotty. I am beyond the reach of the most intensive inquiry and the most meticulous measurement. Only those who have recognized My Love and experienced that Love can assert that they have glimpsed My Reality. For, the Path of Love is the Royal Road that leads mankind to Me.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
June 19, 1974





# Action and Result

*One cannot reap good by doing bad.  
By doing good, one will not encounter harm.  
By planting the lime seedling, can one get a  
mango fruit?  
Can one expect to get a lemon by planting a  
mango seedling?*

(Telugu Poem)

Students! Whatever seed we sow emerges as a plant, gradually grows into a tree, and gives us fruits of the same kind. This is the law of nature and it is the secret of creation. This is an irrefutable truth that does not change. Whatever the seed, the plant it gives rise to will be the same. So too, there is a result for every type of action that man does.



# “When we make a small offering to God with devotion, we become eligible to receive from Him in abundance in return

This is how one gets the result according to his actions. **Everyone should try to perform good actions and thereby get good results.** But today, man behaves as described in the following Sanskrit verse.

*Punyasya phalamichhanti  
Punyam na ichhanti maanavaah  
Na papa phalamichhanti  
Paapam kurvanti yatnatah  
(People aspire for the result of meritorious deeds but do not want to do good actions. They do not want the results of sinful deeds but do sinful actions.)*

This is not just one's fault. The worldly nature also influences and leads one to such actions. Being unable to bear the suffering, difficulties, and sorrows, one pleads to God, saying, 'Oh! God! Why are you testing me like this!'

God grants you neither happiness nor sorrow. The happiness and sufferings you experience are the results of your actions but not His *prasad* (blessings). God is only an eternal witness, and He is just like a postman. Whatever letter is addressed to you, the postman hands over that envelope or postcard to you, and if you get a money order, he gives the money to you. On opening the letter, it is you who receives and experiences the happiness or sorrow contained in it, not the postman.

Similarly, it is you who experiences the results of good and bad you do, and God is not making you experience them. But still, there is an aspect of special grace. **If you pray to God with sacred feelings and a pure heart and act unselfishly, God will**

**specially be with you to intervene and help you.**

But there is a root cause for one's happiness and sorrow. God bestows the results taking into consideration of one's good and bad actions in earlier births or in other situations.

## **God's Nature is to Test His Devotees**

A few minutes ago, the 12<sup>th</sup> grade students shared the episode of how Duryodhana subjected Draupadi to so much suffering and insulted her trying to disrobe her by pulling her sari in the front of a full assembly. Then Draupadi prayed to God intensely, saying, 'Keshava, Madhava, Madhusudana, Narayana', various epithets of Lord Krishna. Who is Keshava? There are the syllables of K+A+Eesa. 'K' denotes Brahma 'A' denotes Vishnu, and 'Eesa' denotes Maheswara. The combination of all three Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara is Kesava; He is the form of the Trinity. Paarasaraa (Vyasa) interprets the word Keshava as the one who has beautiful thick curly hair.

Krishna heard her prayer. He wondered on what basis could He respond to her prayer. He critically reflected on Draupadi's meritorious actions. Then He recalled that one day during the festival of Sankranti, the Gopikas (cowherd girls of Brindavan), Draupadi, and His consorts (Sathyabhama, Rukmini, and Jambavathi) were enjoying His company. As is customary during the festival occasion, everyone was enjoying eating the sugarcane. Krishna found an opportunity, and with an intention of testing their devotion, He intentionally cut his

thumb, pretending as if it was accidental from peeling the sugarcane.

**It is God's nature to subject His devotees to tests. It is His taste to test. But He showers grace, too, on those who pass the test.** Even to join the primary grade in the school, the child has to take an entrance examination. These tests are not given for fun or out of dislike or hatred towards the child but to determine the child's eligibility. Similarly, God, out of His unlimited Love and compassion, tests people in order to bestow His grace on them.

When Krishna's thumb was bleeding from the cut, everyone near and dear, including Draupadi, Satyabhama, Rukmini, and Jambavathi, witnessed this in horror. Satyabhama summoned one of the maid-servants to bring a cloth to dress the thumb to stop bleeding. Meanwhile, Rukmini herself rushed out to personally bring a cloth.

Draupadi too saw the incident and instinctively tore out the end of her saree and used it to dress the wound. Witnessing this, Satyabhama and Rukmini glanced at each other with disbelief and an expression of regret for not having the presence of mind like Draupadi. "Alas! We do not have such love; we only longed for His companionship and did not show such concern about His welfare." They felt ashamed and acknowledged the merits of Draupadi's dedication and devotion.

Sri Krishna took note of all this. Reflecting on this event, He decided to help Draupadi as a reward. In this material world, too, we need to give something to receive something. If we go to a shop to buy a handkerchief, the shopkeeper gives it to us when we pay ten rupees for it. It is a similar relationship between the devotee and God.

### **Desire-free Devotion Earns Abundance of God's Grace**

**If you make even a small offering to God,  
He will repay you in countless ways.**

When Kuchela, a childhood friend of Sri Krishna, offered to Lord Krishna, a handful of parched rice, Krishna blessed him with an enormous amount of wealth in return. When Sathyabhama (consort of Lord Krishna) sold away Krishna to Narada in a public auction, Rukmini, the devoted wife (*pathivratha*) of Sri Krishna, bought Him back by offering a single leaf of the *Tulasi* (a sacred plant) with devotion, earnestly praying thus:

"If the pronouncement is true that you will be pleased and become the possession of one who offers You, even a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or a little water with devotion then, the *Tulasi* leaf will outweigh You."

What is this leaf? It is the '*maredu (bilva)*' a trifoliate leaf used for worship, representing the body with three attributes, *Satwa* (equanimity, balance, purity), *Rajas* (passion, emotion, extrovert qualities), and *Thamas* (sloth, dullness, inertia). The flower is the flower of our pure heart. It should be sacred and filled with the fragrance of goodness. The fruit is the fruit of the mind and in this fruit, there is sweet juice. The mind does not recognize this sweetness, as the tree cannot taste the sweetness of its own fruit. The creeper does not know the sweetness of the honey that is in its flower. Likewise, people leading a materialistic life cannot enjoy the sweetness contained in spiritual texts.

Rukmini offered the sacred leaf. By that devoted offering of the sacred *Tulasi* leaf, the weight of God, who is the Master of the entire universe, could be balanced. Rukmini always prayed to Krishna without any motive or desire.

Similarly, Draupadi also served Krishna without desires and expectations. In her distress of humiliation, she prayed only to Krishna closing her eyes and saying 'Keshava, Madhava' even though her five husbands, who are valiant warriors, were present in the court. Many heroic and wise



“*God is not for any one particular race, nation, or individual. He has come to uplift the entire universe. Whosoever does whatever action, He gives the results and rewards accordingly.*”

people were in that assembly, but none could aid her. She prayed to Krishna with full devotion and faith that **He is the only savior.**

The sacrifice she made by spontaneously tearing the end of her saree to dress Krishna's bleeding thumb turned out to be the blessing of receiving the unending sari from the Lord that protected her modesty and avoided the humiliation of being disrobed in the full court. **So, when we make a small offering to God with devotion, we become eligible to receive from Him in abundance in return.**

### **Only God's Grace Helps to Escape Past Karma**

*We cannot escape the result of our past deeds. But, with god's grace, we can escape the consequence of any action (karma). One has to experience the result of one's actions.*

*Is it possible to escape the result of our deeds?*

*One may read the great scriptures or worship the family deities, or one may go to the forest and do meditations,*

*Is it possible to escape the result of our deeds?*

*Whether we dip the vessel in a small pond or in an ocean the amount of water we collect is the same.*

*Even though we want to collect more, we cannot.*

*Is it possible to escape the result of our deeds?*

(Telugu Poem)

**We get the water according to the capacity of the vessel. It is God's special grace to make the vessel bigger. Without His grace, nothing can be accomplished.**

*Having physical and mental strength is of no use*

*if we do not have God's grace and the strength of righteousness.*

*What happened to Karna at the end? Do not forget this truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

### **A Lesson for Arjuna**

Karna (the great hero in Mahabharata Epic) had physical strength. He was intelligent, and he had all sorts of weapons with him. But he did not have the grace of God. What is the reason? He, by his association with bad people, developed evil thoughts and became one of the four evil characters in Mahabharata.

By joining Duryodhana, Dusshasana, and Shakuni, Karna became the fourth one in the evil force. So, we should never join bad company. If we join, we too get evil thoughts. Then we do bad deeds. **So, the company which we join is very important. 'Tell me your company. I shall tell you what you are,' is the adage.**

By nature, Karna is a righteous person. We have to analyze his character. Karna was defeated on the battlefield. Yet, Krishna wanted to make Arjuna recognize Karna's strength. What is the reason?

Arjuna had an ego that there is no one else as learned in the art of archery like him. He was also proud that Krishna was his dear friend and fulfilled his wishes. To shatter

“*Every individual should undertake good actions and enjoy bliss. He should be in good company and in a good place. This should be the goal for everyone.*”

Arjuna's ego with a subtle lesson, Krishna accompanied him in the battleground.

Krishna, dressed in brahmin attire, went to Karna, who was down on the battleground and in a grave condition. Krishna approached him and said, 'Oh Karna! You are legendary in giving to charity. I plan on performing a celebration at my house. I realize that it is inappropriate to ask you at this awkward moment. But having no other recourse, I came to you.' Karna, though in a difficult situation on the battlefield, told Krishna to ask what he wanted.

Krishna replied that he needed a little gold. Karna said, 'Oh Brahmin, go to my house and tell my wife that I asked her to give you gold, and she will give it to you.' But Krishna said that he did not want to go around asking others, rather wanted to get it directly from Karna himself.

Karna closed his eyes for a moment and wondered what he should do! Where can he get the gold in the midst of a battlefield? Then he remembered that he had two gold fillings in his teeth. It was a standard dental practice in ancient times to repair teeth with gold fillings.

Karna said, "O Brahmin! Go ahead and take those two teeth." Krishna, in the disguise of the Brahmin, said 'how is it possible for me to take them? If I have to take them, I will be harming you, and also, it would not be considered truly a charity made by you; I won't touch your teeth.'

Then Karna asked the brahmin to fetch two stones. When the stones were brought, Karna knocked off his two teeth with gold fillings, took them out dripping with

blood, and offered them to the brahmin. The brahmin now refused to touch them, saying, 'how can I touch those which are smeared with blood? Especially since I am a brahmin.'

Immediately Karna struck and pierced the ground with his arrow and water, verily, Ganga came out from the earth. Karna washed the gold teeth and gave those to the brahmin. Krishna gave a glance at Arjuna, and Arjuna, having understood the lesson, bent his head down with shame and humility.

Arjuna sought Krishna's forgiveness and said that he had never witnessed such intense devotion to God and such resolve to sacrifice as Karna and that he lacked such noble qualities.

Then Krishna explained, "Do you know who Karna is? He is your eldest brother. He is elder to Dharmaraja." Arjuna felt bad and said, "Krishna! Why did you not tell me earlier? I caused much suffering to my brother." So, Karna is older than Dharmaja.

**So, the ancient path of *dharma* (right action) was such that one should be prepared to readily give anything to God.** Every action has a result, and every action is like a seed. Each seed becomes a tree. So, we should undertake sacred actions.

### **Bad Actions Will Not Confer Good Results**

Results follow actions, and they are just in accordance with the actions. **So before undertaking an action, one should think with discrimination and decide whether those actions are good or bad.**



Today, we act and talk as we please without thinking. In the end, we get depressed when we look at the results.

In this world, every act is worldly action only.

When it rains, does it benefit only a particular person? No. Rain showers come down for the sake of everyone to quench the thirst of everyone and give coolness to all.

Cool breeze, too, is not for any particular person. Breeze is for all beings. All five elements are for the protection of all beings and are not limited to benefit just one person.

In the same way, **God is not for any one particular race, nation, or individual. He has come to uplift the entire universe. Whosoever does whatever action, He gives the results and rewards accordingly.**

Before undertaking any action, we should take time to think and do good ones only. We should see that by our actions, no one is hurt, and no harm comes to anyone. Such actions are not possible in this world as long as there is body consciousness. Only the one without body consciousness can do good actions.

We get sorrow as per our own perception of nature. As long as one has body consciousness, nature remains, leading to sorrow. When one loses body consciousness, nature disappears along with our sorrows.

In the wakeful state, there is body consciousness. We see nature. We enjoy happiness. In a deep sleep state, we do not have body consciousness, and we do not see nature. Then there is no sorrow. Only in the sleeping state, do we not have pain or pleasure.

**By constant contemplation of God, we should reduce body attachment. Then worldly feelings also decrease gradually. When these are completely gone, sorrow**

**will be removed.** Sorrow and happiness do not come if we ask for them.

Will the wildfire burn only the neem trees and spare the mango trees? No. It burns all. So, only when we leave off attachment to the body, pain and pleasure too will not be there.

The mansions we see in the dream are not truly there when we wake up. Therefore, Upanishads say,

*“Uttishtatha, Jagratha,  
praapyavaraannibodhatha”*

(Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached).

‘Oh! Man! Remain in the true wisdom. Realize Truth. Though you are the embodiment of Truth, not being able to realize this, you are searching for Truth, thinking that it is somewhere else.

This is not somewhere outside you. You are verily that *Satchitananda* (Being, Awareness, and Bliss).

Take, for example, there is a King, a President, or a Prime minister. In a sleeping state, they do not have the feeling that ‘I am so and so.’ But when they wake from sleep, they are able to say I am a King, a President, or a Prime minister.’

**Similarly, when one is in the sleep of ignorance, one does not realize that the individual is the embodiment of *Satchitananda*. You wake up from that sleep and get awakened to wisdom. Then you can realize that you are the embodiment of *Satchitananda*.**

As long as you are asleep, you do not know who you are. After you wake up, you realize your name, form, and the place where you are.

Presently you are in a sleeping state. This sleep is ignorance. That is the reason you are not able to realize your true *Satchitananda* form.

## Wake Up and Realize Your True Nature

In your dream, you feel that you are bitten by a serpent. You shout that snake bit you. Suppose you apply medicine when you wake up, will that remove the suffering that you experienced in the dream? Once you wake up, that suffering is gone. As long as you are asleep, that fear of snake bothers you. When you wake up, there is no fear. There is not even a sign of a snake bite. Our life today is in ignorance like sleep. That is, we are attached to the body and to the material world. This world is not permanent and there is no happiness here. This is like a long sleep. We experience sufferings in this sleep. What is the medicine for this? What is the solution? It is only waking up from this sleep. All these are related to attachment to the body. **As we reduce this attachment, bliss increases. So, everyone who wants to enjoy bliss should reduce body attachment. Attachment enhances ego.**

Ego arises in us either by our holding good positions, wealth, or strength. As we grow in wisdom, this ego should be decreased. When the clouds are full of water, clouds become heavy and come down. When the tree bears a lot of fruits, the branches bend down. [Similarly, humility is the hallmark of goodness.]

### Develop Self-Confidence

On what does today's man depend? Introspecting, we will realize that a small bird sitting on the branch of a tree is not afraid even when the branch shakes. What is the reason? It knows that it can rely upon the strength of its own wings. Whatever may happen to the branch, it does not worry. It depends on its own wings and faith and sits

on the branch fearlessly. However, this faith doesn't exist in today's man. He is afraid of the suffering and difficulties of this world. He does not have Self-confidence. That is the reason for his fear.

Man does not have even as much Self-confidence that the bird has. He gets depressed even for small difficulties. He is not able to forbear and tolerate.

Birds and animals lead a life that is very natural to them. Therefore, they boldly achieve their work and forge forward.

**Today's man depends upon the strength of his intelligence and physical power. He does not depend upon the strength of his own inner Self (Atma). One can achieve anything if one has Self-confidence.**

The power of wealth is like passing clouds that come and go. The power of your own kith and kin is also not permanent. As long as you have money, they are with you. After it is gone, do they respect you? All strengths will be there when you have the strength of Self-confidence. So, live on the strength of Self-confidence and confidence in God. Have faith in the Self and do all actions. As are the actions, so are the results. You belch according to what you eat. The bread is according to the flour.

**Every individual should undertake good actions and enjoy bliss. He should be in good company and in a good place. This should be the goal for everyone.** If you want good results, it is not possible by doing bad actions. Do Good.

Make every effort to go close to divinity. Every step you take should take you near to God. Then only we can be victorious.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
June 30, 1996









# Love & Service

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

APRIL 20-23, 2023

*“Your countries are different but you are all in the same auditorium. How easily such a large world has been brought into this auditorium! God’s Vishwaviraata Swaroopa (Cosmic Form) means that everyone and everything in the world is God. Understanding this inner meaning—that is the reason for Sathya Sai Organizations.”*

Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
November 19, 1975

The 10th Sathya Sai World Conference was held in 2015 in conjunction with the 90th Birthday Celebrations of our beloved Swami. Eight years have passed since and the world around us has changed a lot! Even as we emerge from an epic pandemic of fear, it is time to rebuild and renovate, rejoice and rejuvenate. And for that, we need to stand united against the eternal evil forces of Desire (*Kama*), Anger (*Krodha*), Greed (*Lobha*), Infatuation (*Moha*), Pride (*Mada*) and Jealousy (*Matsarya*) and proceed together towards our sole goal of Self-Realization.

It is with great humility, love and dedication that the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) announces a milestone event of unity in that direction—The Sri Sathya Sai International Conference. With the theme **“Love and Service—Spreading the Glory of His Divine Mission,”** the Conference will bring together over 400 delegates from across Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, Central America and South America for three



days culminating with a grand celebration of the Aradhana Mahotsavam (April 24, 2023) on the fourth day.

This historic conference follows the Sri Sathya Sai International Medical Conference held in October 2009 in the United States of America which received immense blessings and compliments from Swami that He conveyed through the trustees of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and Brother Satyajit. Indicative of the ever-expanding mission of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the Conference includes, among its attendees, the heads and pontiffs of different religions who have been inspired by the life and teachings of Sathya Sai.





With gratitude and delight, we would also like to share that the venue for this conference has been a gift of love from Bhagawan–Sai Prema Nilayam in Riverside, California! In sync with the objectives of the conference, the venue too has been rebuilt and renovated so that all of us can rejoice and rejuvenate!

The Sathya Sai Society, which was formed on October 22, 1968 with the blessings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, acquired this holy site on the Avatarhood Declaration Day, October 20, 2021. For 18 months since, hundreds of devotees have poured

in their loving service and dedication in Swami's mandir which now welcomes the delegates and participants of the Conference with open arms.

Please note that the event is open to everyone but advance registration is required. There is no registration fee, and meals will be provided free of charge. Please contact us at [2023conference@sathyasai.org](mailto:2023conference@sathyasai.org) if you need help with accommodation or wish to share a room during the event.

The following is provided to assist you in preparing for the upcoming Conference:

- [Conference Program](#) 
- [General Information](#) 
- [FAQs](#) 
- [Information on Airports, Hotels, and Transportation](#) 

**Please feel free to invite your family, friends, colleagues, and all devotees to join us and send them the links given above.**

Meanwhile, please send questions regarding travel, logistics, program, or participation to [2023conference@sathyasai.org](mailto:2023conference@sathyasai.org).

Thank you for your participation, and we look forward to seeing you soon.



# Seva Saves

**IT WAS 10:50 AM, JULY 29, 1990. THE DOOR OF THE INTERVIEW ROOM IN PRASANTHI NILAYAM OPENED,** and Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba beckoned Captain Oberoi, the officer in charge of Sathya Sai Airport, seated in the veranda, and said, *“Krishnamurthy has met with a bad accident. It happened near Chikkaballapur as he was coming here.”*

The shocked devotee listened to Swami describe everything that happened to his dear friend in detail. Swami said the vehicle had flipped over four times and landed on its side. But Swami made sure everyone was safe despite the deep ditches on either side of the road and oncoming traffic. The vehicle’s roof had been torn apart, but nobody was seriously injured.

Then, Swami spoke about other things before letting Captain Oberoi leave the interview room.

## **A Postponed Visit**

Those were the good old days when Swami would entrust me with many tasks. He would get sarees, white cloth pieces, and many other items purchased from Madras (Chennai) for distribution to devotees. I was given the opportunity to get samples for Him to make the selection. On July 29, 1990, accompanied by my wife and a good friend, I was on my way to Puttaparthi with a suitcase full of items for Swami’s selection.

I was at the wheel of a Maruti Omni van, about 7 kilometers from the town of Chikkaballapur. Suddenly, a buffalo ran across the van’s path out of nowhere, and I instinctively slammed on the brakes. The impact was such that the van flipped over four times before coming to a halt, landing back on its wheels! The



**It is not a coincidence that the word 'SEVA' and 'SAVE' are anagrams of each other. The seva (service) we render comes back to us and saves us in times of difficulties.**

rest was precisely as Swami narrated to my friend, Captain Oberoi. I had broken my collarbone, but I was not in pain. The suitcase full of samples for Swami was safe in the van while my suitcase was open, with the contents scattered all over the road. Since the van was no longer drivable, gathering our belongings, I made alternate arrangements to return to Madras via Bangalore (Bengaluru). At Bangalore, our relatives insisted that we get examined by a doctor but I refused because we were doing Swami's work and were under His care. Unaware of the divine drama of the all-knowing Lord being played in the interview room and not wanting to communicate anything negative, I sent a telegram to Swami informing Him that I could not make it to Puttaparthi and that I would be coming soon.

Three weeks later, we were in Puttaparthi. Captain Oberoi accosted me and, seemingly anxious, asked, "How are you? Hope you have recovered from the accident..." I wondered how he knew, and he soon shared how Swami had revealed everything in detail within a few minutes of the accident! I sat on the mandir's veranda, awaiting Swami's *darshan*. As soon as He came out of the interview room, Swami looked at me compassionately and raised his eyebrows to ask how I was doing. I nodded to indicate I was fine with no pain, despite a broken collarbone. He smiled and moved on to give *darshan*.

Swami was leaving for the Brindavan Ashram, Whitefield, in Bangalore the following day. He asked me to accompany Him—45 Japanese delegates had arrived, and Swami wanted me to address them. I usually talked about the scriptures, especially the Bhagavatam, quoting Sanskrit verses and texts extensively. Knowing this, Swami told me not to discuss Sanskrit material in my talk, saying, "*Speak about your car accident!*"

### **SEVA Will SAVE You**

I needed no further prodding. With humility, gratitude, and love pouring out, I shared the experience of the accident which happened a few weeks before and how Swami had saved me. At this point, Swami stopped me, called me close to Him, and said, "*I did not come there. I did not save you.*"

"What are you saying, Swami? After everything you have revealed, how can I tell them that You did not save me?"

"*But that is the Truth!*" Swami retorted

"Then who saved me, Swami?"

With an understanding and a compassionate look, Swami revealed,

"*Whenever you serve people, especially the poor, they express their gratitude and say 'Thanks' to you. But instead of accepting those expressions of gratitude, you tell them just to 'Thank the Lord,' saying that Swami did everything. You accumulated merit for all that. As per your prarabdha*

I wonder how many such unknown miracles are happening world-wide by Swami's boundless grace and compassion! I am sure they will number in millions that we are not aware.

*karma (results of one's past actions), you should be dead. But I encashed your accumulated merit so that you can live. But I did not do anything; I am a mere custodian."*

It is not a coincidence that the word 'SEVA' and 'SAVE' are anagrams of each other. **The seva (service) we render comes back to us and saves us in times of difficulties.** That is the power and blessings of service.

### How Should We Do Seva?

Serving others is something that I learned directly from Swami, for He exemplified it throughout His life in matters small and big. My accident was a lesson to me, clarifying why *seva* must be done. But even years before, Swami had shown me how it should be done. This is an incident from the early 1980s before the Sai Shruti mandir was built in Swami's Ashram Kodaikanal. Swami was then staying in the guest house of Sri V. Srinivasan's father-in-law. His typical schedule consisted of *darshan* and interviews in the morning, which ended by 9:30 AM, after which Swami would go to His room, only to come out around 11:30 AM.

One day Swami went into His room, and we were all relaxing. I was also lying down on a sofa and resting. Suddenly, at 10:00 AM, Swami came out and said, "*Put on your shirt; let us go out.*"

Within minutes, Sri V. Srinivasan, an ardent devotee of Swami, and I were sitting with Swami in the car. Radhakrishna, another ardent devotee, was at the wheel while I sat with Swami in the back seat. There was pin-drop silence before I took the courage to ask, "Where should we go, Swami?"

"Just take the road to Bangalore," was His terse reply.

After we drove for a few kilometers, Swami asked to stop the car. He got down and began to walk fast. I got down quickly and followed behind Him with His slippers. Fortunately, He accepted the slippers, wore them, and kept walking. I continued to follow Him as the other two waited in the car. Swami kept walking down the road and began to descend the hilly incline.

"Be careful, Swami," I ventured to say.

"*You take care. You are not even wearing footwear,*" He replied lovingly.

As we descended the slope, I saw broken liquor bottles along the way and asked Swami whether we should go in the other direction. He agreed, and we continued going down but in a different direction. However, I was still worried. There was no proper pathway, and it was a wild, overgrown hillside. I wondered what to do if we encountered any wildlife like a fox, dog, or snake; I was unprepared to fend them off. We descended about 150 feet, reaching the flat ground; Swami asked me to let go of His hand. Putting His hands on His hip, reflecting, He stood there with His eyes closed. I stood there with Him, my eyes wide open, looking in all directions to ensure no animal or insect approached Swami.

Three minutes passed.

"Swami..." I said hesitantly. He stood still with eyes closed.

"Swami..." I said again meekly. Still no response.

"SWAMI..." I was pretty loud this time.

“Emi (what)?” He asked, opening His eyes.  
“Shall we go back?”  
“Yes. Let us go back now.”

We began the 150 feet return up the slope. When we reached the top, the car was nowhere in sight, and I panicked.

“Ay! The car is on the other side of the road, don’t worry,” Swami said. We reached the car and drove back.

The next day, Kodaikanal witnessed torrential rainfall. *Darshan* had to be canceled, and we remained indoors. As we sat at Swami’s feet, I once again ventured to ask, “Swami, why did you do what you did yesterday?”

“Do you see how it is raining today? There is a village on the slope of the hill near where I stood yesterday. Its base is all clay. The pouring rain would have washed it away, endangering the lives of a thousand villagers and hundreds of domestic animals. I reinforced the base, and the village is safe now.”

We all sat in absolute silence at this revelation. Sure enough, after two days, many villagers came to express gratitude to Swami for their good fortune in escaping all the damage from the torrential downpour! **They had no idea that Swami had blessed and protected them from destruction by His visit the previous day itself!**

And that is how service should be rendered—without publicity, display, or informing the recipient. **The left hand should not know about the help rendered by the right hand!** In this case, Swami lovingly made us aware of His service to the village people. I wonder how many such unknown miracles are happening worldwide by Swami’s boundless grace and compassion! I am sure they will number in millions that we are not aware.

May we follow Swami’s example and sanctify our lives through loving, selfless service to everyone.

Sri T.G. Krishnamurthy   
INDIA



*Sri T.G. Krishnamurthy has served as the President of the Tamil Nadu chamber of commerce, honorary secretary and correspondent of Sri Thyagaraya educational institutions. He has served in the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization India as the District President of Chennai in 1976, member of the State trust in 1978, State trust convener in 1982 and as the State President of Tamil Nadu in 1995. Bhagawan on numerous occasions has blessed him to speak to devotees at Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan, Ooty, Kodaikanal and Chennai in His Divine Presence. He is also the author of the book “The Divine Path to the Wisdom of Sai”.*



# Resilience Comes from Surrender

Resilience is “the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.” However, resilience is not short-term, nor does it happen quickly. For us, Sathya Sai Baba’s glorious drama placed us squarely into the fire of two major life crises. Events were about to unfold that would permanently change our lives and expand our consciousness and hearts in a way beyond our comprehension. In retrospect, events that appeared tragic, frightening, and overwhelming served to grind our lives into dust and shift us into a new paradigm. **Thus, Baba set the stage for us to hear His call.**

In March 1999, my husband Stan and I were skiing in Vail, Colorado. Stan, a physician practicing internal medicine, was attending a continuing medical education course. Unfortunately, he felt he was getting the flu while we were there. Flu-like symptoms, combined with specific physical changes in his body, were a red flag that something serious was happening.

## The First Test for Stan

After a complete checkup when we returned home, we were shocked to learn Stan had Stage 4 colon cancer with metastases to the liver. Following major surgery, the prognosis was still very poor. We became vegetarians, started daily meditation, and tried to eliminate as much stress as possible. During the next two years, Stan received ongoing chemotherapy. He looked great. He exercised regularly and worked full-time in the office and at the hospitals. We thought we had dodged a bullet.

But during a routine checkup in January 2001, five tumors were discovered in his lungs. Only experimental trial chemotherapy was offered as treatment. He might survive nine months with chemotherapy but become very sick during treatment. With-

**“He gives everyone the strength to hang on, to have resilience over time, and the vision to see all of life’s dramas as merely passing clouds.”**

out chemotherapy, he might live just two months. The thoracic surgeon stated he could easily remove the tumors as they were peripheral. Stan thought he probably had micro-seeding throughout his body and did not want to go through the pain of surgery.

With death knocking at the door, I earnestly prayed to God for help and guidance. We were directed to an institute in Puerto Rico to learn about a diet of raw, vegetable foods. We would later learn it was the *Sattvic* diet that Baba recommends. We also attended a conference where Carolyn Myss, author, lecturer, and medical intuitive, spoke. [We would eventually learn she is a Sai devotee].

During a break, while browsing through books on various topics, my intuition directed me to Dr. Sandweiss’ book, ‘The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist.’ While reading this book in a hotel room, I smelled a distinct, smoky scent. **Later, I would learn it was the smell of Vibhuti. We were struck by the same familiar scent when we returned home and entered our house!** These experiences prompted me to order more books about Baba and visit the Pittsburgh Sai Center in Pennsylvania.

After speaking with Dr. Brahma Sharma, the Center president at the time, we were convinced Baba was calling us. I thought we should go to see Baba in India immediately. Surely, He could perform surgery and remove these tumors, or cancel cancer, as He had done for others we read about. Dr. Sharma assured us that Baba works through doctors and advised us to have the tumors removed in Pittsburgh; we should then go to the *ashram*. After only eight weeks on the raw diet, the PET (positron emission tomography) scan showed one tumor had almost disappeared, and the other four showed less image intensity on the PET scan! Stan felt confident his body was no longer prone to cancer and decided to have the tumors surgically removed.

### **We Meet the Divine ‘Director’**

The surgery was done in May 2001, and we had our first *Darshan* in August 2001. **Our family witnessed numerous miracles during our visit, convincing us Baba was indeed God. He was ours, and we were His. We completely surrendered our lives to Baba.** Our beloved Swami canceled cancer, which was a pending death sentence. Stan remains in excellent health today by His Grace, full of energy and vitality at 80!

The Pittsburgh Sai Center literally became our home. It was the framework and focus of our lives until 2016 when Baba guided us to relocate to the mountains in western North Carolina. Our greatest joy during those years was the blessing of our Sai family.

Shortly after we moved in the fall of 2016, our mountaintop residence became

the home of the Asheville Sai Center. In November 2017, Stan and I were scheduled to speak at the Atlanta Sai Center. Days before the occasion, Baba had a change of plans. Once again, the Divine Director raised the curtain for a new drama to unfold like no other we could have ever fathomed. This crisis was a test—it was also every parent’s worst nightmare.

### **The Second Test Involves Our Son, Matt**

It was 10 pm. Stan and I were in bed reading when the phone rang. Our youngest son, Dane, was calling from California, where he and his older brother Matthew (Matt) lived. “Mom, Dad! Matt had a surfing accident. He has a spinal cord injury and is paralyzed from the neck down. He is going into surgery in the next ten minutes.” Time stopped for me. Stan kept asking for details. “Where is he? Who is the surgeon, and what are his credentials?” I wanted to get on the next flight, but it was impossible. There were no flights to San Francisco until the next morning. As my eyes filled with tears and my anxiety began to rise rapidly, Stan stayed calm. His demeanor was steady and composed. He told me, “If I can get through metastatic cancer and survive, we will all get through this. **It is all part of Baba’s play, and I assure you, everything will be okay,** Jayne. There is a reason for this too.”

When we arrived the next day at the UCSF (University of California, San Francisco) hospital, the “Harvard of the West,” we would learn in detail what had happened to our son. The documentary on the event, made some years later, does not even begin to capture the many miracles that took place with **Baba’s perfect**

**timing!** Matthew was surfing in the Pacific Ocean late afternoon on an overcast day. His last memory was floating face down in the ocean. He couldn’t move his body. He was completely paralyzed. Realizing he was going to die, he screamed at the ocean for help. Matt described the incident, saying, “The movie stopped, and then there was darkness.” From the shore, a surfer from Australia eventually spotted what he thought was a garbage bag floating on the ocean. He swam a distance to retrieve it, only to discover what appeared to be a dead body.

This stranger who rescued Matt was tall, physically fit, and had the strength to pull Matt’s 6’4” body of dead weight to the shore. A Stanford-trained nurse “happened” to be on the beach, who quickly performed CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation). Another nurse called an ambulance. Further down the shoreline, a Stanford-trained physician, who had not planned to go surfing that day, saw the commotion, ran to help, and took over to perform CPR. It appeared at that time Matt had been dead for 10 minutes, for he was pulseless, ashen grey as a corpse, and lifeless. CPR continued for at least an additional 15 minutes; just as the EMT service arrived and were about to use the defibrillator, a pulse was detected as he coughed up all the water in his lungs. He was transported to the hospital, where he was found to be a quadriplegic secondary due to a severe cervical spinal cord injury. By Swami’s grace, he had a neurosurgical procedure within 3 hours. Furthermore, he happened to have the good fortune to be the first person to benefit from a new interventional procedure based on animal research that subsequently become part



of the standard of care in treating such injuries.

When we walked into the intensive care unit the day after the surgery, though Matt was smiling and laughing, he was completely paralyzed. Many friends and colleagues surrounded him, and I found it challenging to get to his bed. Our son was in excruciating pain. He described the sensation as though his body was burning and a truck was sitting on his chest. The only place we could touch him was on the top of his head or his shoulder.

### Living in Bliss Through Life's Challenges

Surprisingly, Matt was joyous throughout the weeks he spent in intensive care. This spirit of joy continued throughout the following weeks of rehabilitation therapy. The doctors told us he would walk again, perhaps in six or seven months. They were optimistic because the spinal cord had not been severed. Two weeks after the accident, as Matt sat in a wheelchair like a rag doll, barely able to hold a spoon, he said, "Mom, I am going to walk out of here." I wanted to believe him desperately, but his appearance told me it wasn't likely.

He had been an elite athlete before the accident. Matt received a Jeep Chrysler award for skiing and also won an Iron Man Triathlon while in medical school. He had just completed his residency at Stanford and was working as an Emergency Room (ER) physician. He previously worked one shift at the hospital, where he was now a patient. Matt knew the human body well and was determined to recover fully from his back injury. He worked hard while going through physiotherapy, determined to walk out. He was also an artist, so he converted his hospital room into an

**“Resilience had quietly and gently woven itself into the fabric of our lives, a serene acceptance of things that happen as ordained by God for our ultimate good.”**

art studio. His relentless determination, combined with his joyous spirit, was an inspiration to all. The accident happened on November 17. Matt walked out of the hospital on crutches six weeks later!

During physical therapy over the next year, Matt told Stan and me that the happiest time in his life was when he was completely paralyzed. **He saw himself in the middle of a web of love. Everyone was connected to him and each other. He described himself as being in a state of 'bliss,'** a word that was not common in his vocabulary. Matt had a high IQ before the accident; after that, his IQ was even higher!

Matt continued to paint over the next year. His paintings sold in galleries on the West Coast for thousands of dollars, which generated income until he could return to practicing medicine. In less than one year after his brush with death, Matt returned to work as an ER physician.

### Swami's Grace Overcomes All Adversities

Immediately following the accident, we were by Matt's side every day. I observed I had not cried about our son's tragedy. I

asked Stan if I could be in shock because I wasn't feeling anything but complete happiness with every slight improvement Matt had made. Stan said he felt exactly the same way—centered, peaceful, and filled with joy with each minor sign of progress. **It was clear that Baba's Grace had removed all our fear and worry.**

The following days, weeks, and months were filled with more miracles. Baba made His love and presence known to us in a heightened state of Constant Integrated Awareness. Resilience had quietly and gently woven itself into the fabric of our lives, a serene acceptance of things that happen as ordained by God for our ultimate good.

I have reflected upon a quote from Swami that spoke to us so eloquently, **"I will take everything from you until you want nothing but me."** These two significant crises we experienced felt like we were losing everything, including precious life itself, with Stan two months away from death and the near-death drowning of our son. Without Swami's Grace, the outcome of these events would have been entirely

different and for the worst. These dramatic miracles, combined with a life filled with peace, joy, and laughter no matter what appears to be happening, are cherished gifts He has given us.

### **Surrender Only to God**

Part of resilience is knowing we are never alone. **Baba is our nearest and dearest friend.** He knows our soul, and tests are inevitable to measure our progress. We navigated these difficult situations with faith, perseverance, and the security of Baba's love. He gave us signs of His presence along the way, from dreams and physical manifestations to synchronistic events and appearances of angels in the sky. The challenges became less daunting, knowing we were actors on the stage of His divine drama. What appears to be real is an illusion. **With complete surrender and a lifetime commitment to our beloved Baba, He gives everyone the strength to hang on, to have resilience over time, and the vision to see all of life's dramas as merely passing clouds.**

Mrs. Jayne Wetschler   
USA



*Mrs. Jayne Wetschler is an interior designer by profession who has served as an SSE Teacher, Service Coordinator, Vice-President, and President at the Pittsburgh Sai Center, USA, spanning 15 years. Her deep interest in spirituality, nutrition, and the interconnection of the body, mind, and spirit has shifted her focus from designing home interiors to re-designing one's 'inner 'space.' Along with her husband, Dr. Stan Wetschler, she conducts Health and Wellness Programs and Workshops for people of all ages, especially cancer patients.*







# *I Will Never Forget You*

To Srimati Subbamma

I was glad to receive your letter and was overjoyed to hear that your son's marriage is settled. Even though you didn't come for the Birthday, it is good to hear that you are all happy. I am satisfied that you keep Me in your mind. Wherever you are, I will be happy if you are all well. How can I be far away from you when I am always residing in your hearts with Name and Form? How can you be distant from me? Between a devotee and God, there is no near or far. I will be near you, and you will be near Me. All of you come for a visit to Puttaparthi after the function.

The function will be celebrated with gaiety and happiness all-round. Convey my blessings to the couple for long life, health, wealth, and children and grandchildren; and with devotion (*bhakti*), knowledge (*jnana*), dispassion (*vairagya*), peace (*shanti*), happiness (*santhosham*), comforts (*saukhyam*), with Sathya Sai as the resident of their hearts and receive the grace of God.

Let your husband and children know that I enquired about them. The marriage event of your son is a very happy occasion.

I will never forget you. I have not forgotten, nor will I ever forget you. This is the truth. Who else do I have other than my devotees? My devotees are the source of all my happiness. There is no happiness for Me if devotees themselves forget.

Thus, With Blessings

*Baba Garu*



# LOVE IN ACTION



## CZECH REPUBLIC Serving Mother Nature

Five SSSIO volunteers in the Czech Republic mowed and cleared grass and debris in an idyllic part of the country identified by the local association which manages the wetlands. Removing such biomass reduces the risk of fire, improves the flow of water, and promotes biodiversity by creating spaces for newer species of vegetation to grow. The volunteers undertook this service on October 22, 2022 as an offering of love and gratitude to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the auspicious occasion of Avatarhood Declaration Day.



## MEXICO Celebrating Reyes Magos Day with Children

Reyes Magos (three wise men) Day commemorates the adoration of the Child Jesus by the three kings who recognized His divinity. It also represents the closing of the Christmas season, where children traditionally receive gifts from the “three wise men.” On January 21, 2023, twenty SSSIO volunteers from the Iztapalapa Community Center in Mexico City **delighted 130 children by distributing toys, sweatshirts, and sweets.** Not only did the children appreciate the gifts, but they also had fun breaking three piñatas full of fruit and candies.



The volunteers were truly wise, for they realized that service to man is service to God and that a smile on a child’s face is a smile on the Lord’s face.

See more stories of loving service by volunteers from around the world at the Sri Sathya Sai Universe website:  
<https://saiuniverse.sathyasai.org>





## NEW ZEALAND Humanitarian Relief

Record-breaking rainfall on January 27, 2023, caused heavy flooding resulting in loss of life and significant damage to property and infrastructure in Auckland, New Zealand. In response to the crisis, SSSIO volunteers in the Northern Region provided help at three locations in Auckland. **They delivered pillows, towels, non-perishable food, and bedsheets to the local Recreation Center**, a vital hub for those seeking shelter. The SSSIO volunteers also worked closely with the National Emergency Management Agency and local Civil Defense authorities to support the relief operations as needed.



## PERU Medical Camp

On October 16, 2022, SSSIO volunteers in Peru commemorated Avatar Declaration Day by organizing a medical camp for the impoverished residents of Cerro San Francisco, located half an hour (by car) south of the capital, Lima. The volunteers **provided loving healthcare services, including general medical care, dental care, and counseling** to 56 residents.



## USA Spreading the Warmth of Love

On September 29, 2022, Hurricane Ian, a Category 4 hurricane, devastated parts of Florida. In late November, **several volunteers from the southeast region of SSSIO USA delivered much-needed relief supplies for the survivors of the hurricane** at Leigh Acres. The volunteers assessed the damage and immediate needs of the communities and collaborated with local partners to assist the victims. SSSIO volunteers also brought holiday cheer to the local children in December by distributing toys and non-perishable supplies.



SSSIO volunteers always recognize the importance of sustained and impactful service delivered with love.





# SATHYA SAI SCHOOL KISAJU

## 1998

Sri Sathya Sai Baba blesses a group of teachers from Kenya, attending the “EHV World Conference” with His divine words, *“Next year, there will be a school in Kenya.”*

## 1999

A 50-acre plot was procured in Kisaju, and the ground-breaking ceremony was conducted.

## 2000

Sri Sathya Sai Education Trust, Kenya, is registered, and school construction is completed after Swami blesses the architectural drawings.

## 2001

Sathya Sai School at Kisaju is registered, and the first batch of 32 students enter Grades 1 and 2.

## 2002

First Annual SSEHV seminar is conducted for Government School Teachers from Isinya District.



SSEHV Seminars







## 2003

School officials and teachers visit India to meet the Founder, Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

## 2007

Kisaju school is recognized as a full-fledged primary school catering to Grades 1 through 8

## 2010

Augustonyi Moi, a student from the 2009 class, secured top rank in Board Examination.

## 2012

Inauguration of new auditorium

## 2013

SSEHV induction course for teachers conducted

## 2015

Secondary School Ground Breaking ceremony on advent of Swami's 90th Birthday.

## 2018

Grand celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's visit to East Africa. Visit by Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, SSSIO, and Senior Officers. Inauguration of new facilities at the Secondary School.



Secondary School Ground Breaking





# My Eternal Companion

**FROM A VERY EARLY AGE, I WAS ATTRACTED TO SEEKING GOD'S COMPANY**, although I did not know it then. I often found refuge in holy places, and I would sneak out of my house to go to churches to listen to Evangelists or Christians praying or singing. Sometimes, I opened the doors of my home to Jehovah's Witnesses, who narrated amazing entertaining stories from the Bible. I was fascinated by the different paths to get in touch with heaven.

At school, when I was about 5 or 6 years old, during recess, I would run to a little chapel and sit in the front row, with my legs dangling because they couldn't touch the ground, while I ate my snack. The place gave me much peace and happiness, sitting alone quietly in silence. Time passed quickly there, and it seemed that the bell signaling the end of recess rang too soon. **I realize today that I felt good because I was with Him, totally with Him, residing fully in His presence, in Him.**

## **When I Call on God, He Always Answers**

**I instinctively and spontaneously asked God for help when I needed it.** On one occasion, my little dog got sick and started to convulse. My mother had left the house, and my siblings and I were alone with the animal. The only thing I could think of was to bring down a picture of the Child Jesus and ask for help because I didn't know what else to do. He responded, and the little animal stopped convulsing and relaxed completely. Soon after, my mother returned, and everything was back to normal. **This was perhaps the first time I experienced the immediate response of God to my prayer.** However, there was no mystery in this, as I did not doubt that God would respond the instant I called Him.

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**“Not once has He failed to answer my call to help people or animals in distress. He dwells in my heart, and there is no distance between us.”**

### **There is No Request He Cannot Fulfil**

I faced a challenging time when I was about 30 years old. One day I prayed intensely and asked God for something I had never thought of before. I asked God that I wanted Him close, so close that I could see and hear Him, that I needed Him to appear in physical form because He has the power to do anything.

A few days later, one of my assistants at work left a flyer with a talk by Swami on my desk. The brochure was among a mountain of documents for me to sign. When I found it, my heart began to beat fast. I read it avidly, sensing something important and sacred was hidden in those pages. When I finished, I asked her, **“Is Sathya Sai Jesus? She replied, “That is for you to find out; I can’t tell you anything else.”**

My curiosity grew and seeing my interest and enthusiasm, my assistant brought me a book which she also left among my papers the next day. It was Bhagavata Vahini, written by Swami. I was truly delighted to read it, but I could not understand much of it, to my regret. After rereading the first six pages several times, I gave up and gave it back to her saying, “I tried to read it, but I could not get past the first few pages, as I could not understand anything!” My ego was crushed because until then,

I had consistently scored high marks at school and university, and my professional career was flourishing. So, what was it that I still could not understand? However, I felt **God had answered me, and ‘that Person in India’ was the answer to my prayers. I could now see and hear God as I had prayed and longed for.**

Slowly but surely, my life began to change. Over the years, I witnessed countless “miracles,” and I share a few.

### **The Miracles of Vibhuti**

One day one of my employees was using a pressure cooker in the kitchen when it exploded. The pressure cooker’s lid broke the kitchen ceiling, and my employee’s neck was burned. When I arrived, I saw that she had huge blisters and was in intense pain. I just said, “Swami!” Without a second thought, I put *Vibhuti* on her neck. When I took away my hand, there was not a single lesion noticed on her skin.

On another occasion, at a friend’s farm, one of her dogs ran amok and broke through a window, shattering the glass. The dog started bleeding from a deep gash over his nose. Again, without thinking, I said, “Swami!” I ran to my room, brought *Vibhuti*, and gently placed it on the wound. Immediately, the bleeding stopped, and the little dog recovered.

Recently, one of my grandchildren, a little boy under two, received multiple mosquito bites, which led to inflammation of his whole face. Since he is allergic, he was restless and upset with itchy skin. I applied *Vibhuti*, and gradually the redness faded away. The next day there were only slight traces, and soon he recovered completely. On countless occasions, Swami had responded immediately when I applied *Vibhuti*, so I always carry it with me as my first aid. **Not once has He failed to answer my call to help people or animals in distress. He dwells in my heart, and there is no distance between us**, no delay in His response, as confirmed by the divine episode below.

### Divine Vision

Several years ago, I had a little dog who became ill, and the veterinarian said she had to undergo surgery to remove a tumor. One day, I dropped her off for surgery, and while waiting at a traffic light, I prayed, "Swami, please don't let Jackie suffer. She is an extraordinary little animal; please help her." At that instant, I mentally saw an image of Swami entering the surgery room and taking Jackie away. As the traffic light changed and I started my car, my mobile phone rang. The vet called to inform me that the moment he put the dog on the surgery table, she passed away before putting her under anesthesia. I was overwhelmed with mixed feelings of sadness at her departure while deep gratitude for Swami flooded my heart with reverence. Once again, my prayers had been answered.

### His Visiting Card

Swami told us that His miracles are *visiting cards* that inspire us to ask Him for what He has truly come to give. From the depths of my heart, I have asked Him with sincerity to be my companion on my path of awakening until I attained liberation. I know He heard this prayer, and His answer

was prompt. Each of our spiritual journey is unique, so I can only speak of how He has lovingly guided me. Every experience I have had has been meaningful. **Swami is undoubtedly by my side in every step I take.** So, I have studied His teachings and practiced them as best I can, learning Vedic *mantras*, meditating, sharing my learnings, and understanding with others.

### Study Circles

Study Circles have had the most influence on me. For almost three decades, I have coordinated Study Circles on Swami's teachings and scriptures from various faiths. I have learned the importance of listening respectfully to the questions and comments of others. I have developed humility and patience. Above all, I am grateful for the precious inner peace that manifests as my consciousness, with a sense of expansion that often accompanies me throughout the day.

### Sathya Sai—My Eternal Companion

Many texts have inspired me and even provoked tears of gratitude as I gradually discovered and understood what seemed unattainable to me. Among these texts, I pay special reverence to Yoga Vasishtha, which I started reading many years ago, as it is one of the works Swami recommends to help us achieve liberation. **It has become my guidebook par excellence.** Each story, each explanation, has an indelible effect on my heart.

We live our daily lives more "consciously aware of Consciousness" with fewer distractions. When *Maya* gets stronger, we begin to "slip into the silence of Consciousness" (for us, it is like surrendering without forcing anything), which inspires us to continue our practice with determination.

**Swami's quote "Source not Force" always accompanies me, and when my *Vasanas* get in the way, I remember that they are also part of Consciousness, for nothing**



exists without His will. Then I relax, quiet my mind, and think of this teaching of *Vasishtha*: "Infinite Consciousness is immediate, the closest thing to myself, my own Self."

My understanding has been expanding. I am integrating the teachings to the extent that in everyday life, instead of judging or being uncomfortable, I often observe and understand that nothing in the manifest world is devoid of Consciousness. If everything is Pure Consciousness, why would anything bother me? It is only my ego that gets uncomfortable, so I smile and observe until I can let it go. **The challenges and obstacles I encounter are also a tremendous gift because I discover the attachments or aversions that distract me. Again, I smile, calm down and keep letting go.**

**Only a Sadguru can guide us from unreal to real, darkness to Light, and death to Immortality.** All along the way, I have prayed, sung, meditated, and enjoyed many miracles, but most importantly, I have been awakened little by little through His teachings and guidance! I know that one day, by His grace, I will achieve the final goal. **Thus, I am led on my path by the hand of my beloved Sathya Sai**, filled with gratitude and love toward Him. He is my Eternal Companion.

If your path is different, follow it with all sincerity since all spiritual paths lead to the same ultimate goal. **Trust Him, knowing that everything is as it should be by His grace.**

Ms. Esther Cristina Puentes  
COLOMBIA



*Ms. Esther Cristina Puentes hails from Colombia, South America. She graduated as a psychologist from the Catholic University of Colombia and later obtained her diploma in Management from the University of the Andes. She also graduated as a Vedic Master from the Chopra Centre University in San Diego, California. She is an Executive Mentor and Certified Coach of the International Coach Federation in the USA. Esthercris has over 30 years of experience as an executive trainer for multinational companies.*

*She met Sri Sathya Sai Baba in 1993 and was immediately inspired by His profound teachings, which she practices in her personal and professional life. She has held various positions in the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization of Colombia, including the Central Coordinator of Region 22, Zone 2B. Esthercris is a founding member of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values of Colombia, established in 1989.*

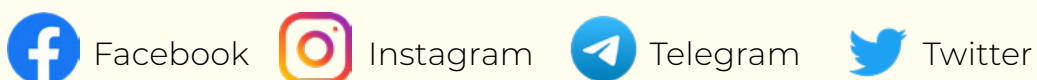
# Loving the Planet



The **Serve the Planet** subcommittee conducted an online workshop titled Loving the Planet. The objective was to explore how man can show their love and gratitude to Mother Earth selflessly every day. The workshop took place on February 25 and 26, with about 50 people participating interactively and enthusiastically. There were many insightful questions, including how to prevent water wastage when waiting for hot water in the shower, buying sustainable clothes for religious holidays or celebrations, and the most sustainable fiber when purchasing clothes.

The subcommittee will host a follow-up session in May to continue the conversation on living eco-friendly lives and how to have a close and integral relationship with nature.

Follow the @saiyoungadults accounts on social media



**Sai Young Adults**  
<https://sathyasai.org/ya>  
[yacoordinator@sathyasai.org](mailto:yacoordinator@sathyasai.org)



# AROUND THE WORLD

## Activities from Malaysia and Madagascar

The Sai Young Adults of **Malaysia** collaborated with the National Blood Bank of Malaysia and the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization of Malaysia (SSSIOM) to conduct one of the largest blood donation drives across the country. In conjunction with the national *Thaipusam* 2023 celebration, the blood drive was held across six of the Malaysian states of Selangor, Penang, Perak, Malacca, Johor, and Kedah.

*Thaipusam* is a Hindu festival and a national holiday celebrated in Malaysia primarily by the Tamil-speaking community. During the festival, devotees perform many acts of penance and sacrifice for the deity, Murugan. Leveraging on this spirit of sacrifice, the Young Adults inspired hundreds of blood donors during February 4–6, 2023.

A total of 2,557 pints of blood were collected, with over 400 people enthusiastically participating in this noble service.

The Young Adults of the Sri Sathya Sai Centre in Antananarivo, the capital city of **Madagascar**, held a tree planting event on February 12, 2023. Forty-two volunteers took part in the activity at Fanenana. The EDAEN Biec Madagasikara (an NGO that aims to promote sustainable development and environmental protection through the development of ecotourism and promoting handicrafts by local artisans) collaborated with the SSSIO.

Two hundred saplings of Moringa, Eucalyptus, and other tree species were planted. Everyone prayed to Bhagawan for His blessings to get favorable weather conditions to help the plants take root and grow. It was a celebration of the harmony between humanity and nature.





# Aradhana Mahotsavam

## A Special Reflection

April 24, 2011. A dreary day in the humid heat of India. Vivid in my memory, a day none can forget. With a slow internet connection, we waited with bated breath. A sunken feeling, not knowing what to expect. That's not possible; our hearts resisted. But reality dawned in front of our eyes. The official announcement wanted us to call it all lies. My grandpa and I hugged and cried for a while, reflecting on the glorious earthly sojourn of our beloved Swami. **"The Life that once saved my life has gone," said my grandpa.** The day Swami decided to leave His physical frame, so dearly loved by millions across the globe. Twelve years later, that day still feels surreal. Many times, **I catch myself questioning, "Did the Avatar of this Kali age really walk in front of us?"** Each time I have such a bizarre random thought of a sound saying, "*Bangaru* (Dear one), I'm still with you," from a gentle, soft inner voice.

While 'the Life' did discard His physical form, we have had twelve years to embrace a different norm. His Love makes us feel empowered all at once; His presence gives us inner steel-like strength; His benediction makes us feel supreme protection.

Sorry, Grandpa, you have always been right. But in this case, I'd have to disagree. If we keep getting these reminder messages from Him, it all just means, He ain't gone anywhere, am I right?



By Ms. Madhuri Manohar (UK) in commemoration of Aradhana Mahotsavam

It's been twelve long years since You went **away**,  
Yet, I find myself thinking of Your form, each time I **pray**.

I wake up each morning, imagining Your form being in **front**,  
**I am with you**, He says, to help with problems to **confront**.

A bit of Your Vibhuti before I rush outside the **door**,  
**Work is worship**, He says, as I think of today's **chore**.

As I get ready to fume in frustration over the missed **bus**,  
**Anger is the greatest enemy**, He says, before I make a **fuss**.

I enter the workplace, some faces with energy so **hostile**,  
**No castor oil face**, He says, as I say hello with a big wide **smile**.

A range of people with different voices, all wanting it their **way**,  
**Speak obligingly**, He says, as I try to be kind with what I **convey**.

It's too hard for me to get this work done, I lament in **pain**,  
**Self-confidence is the key to success**, He says, as I try once **again**.

Shivering in fear of reactions of the leadership **terror**,  
**Speak the truth**, He says, as I boldly own up to my **error**.

Why is everyone not so bright, with only I am knowing the **best**,  
**Banish the ego**, He says, as I remember what's my life's real **quest**.

I will finish this Ph.D. and get a high-paying job, with plenty of **bonuses**,  
**Education is for life**, not living, He says, making me think of my **purpose**.

My pricey bag and branded shoes, perfectly arranged just to **flaunt**,  
**Put a ceiling on desires**, He says, as I realize not my need, just my **want**.

Everyone around me makes big plans for life, making me feel far **behind**.  
**Be simple and sincere**, He says; I leave it to Him for life to be **designed**.

I wonder, at times, will my kids know of Him, at least a **fraction**?  
**Make your life my message**, He says, as I show them in **action**.

Problems in life seem like they are piling up, and with each passing **day**,  
**Love my uncertainty**, He says; I just surrender, and they just go **away**.

# Care for the Environment

The evergreen leaves swayed on tree branches.  
Fleecy clouds wandered across the blue azure canvas.  
I leisurely strolled through the verdant Botanic Gardens.  
I sat underneath a humongous tree enjoying my free time.  
“Today is the perfect day!” I excitedly thought.  
Suddenly I heard whispers coming from the tree.  
“G-day, Human,” the mysterious voice muttered,  
“I am a tree, the mystical tree of these Gardens!”  
I was in utter shock! How could a tree ever talk?  
This mystical tree continued to explain,  
“I need your help to clean up the environment.”  
Closing my eyes and turning back in time,  
I remembered my goal to “Keep a Clean Scene!”  
Instantly I nodded as the tree picked me up in its arms.  
I felt like I was in a fairy tale!  
“You can start from here,” mumbled the tree,  
As it abruptly disappeared.  
Immediately I noticed objects that I had not seen  
while strolling, litter!  
I rushed to grab as many items as possible. An hour later,  
the area was the tidiest place on earth!  
I took a deep breath and reminded myself,  
“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”  
Sai Baba will definitely be proud.



Sarva B. | Trinidad and Tobago





# Nature is God



Swami, thank you for being the Sun in my life, for unconditionally showering love energy and making me blossom into a fragrant and colorful flower in your garden. Give me the strength and wisdom to live my life as your message.

Swami, I count my blessings daily for all the grace you shower in abundance on me and my family. Thanks for being my bright shining Sun!

Sarvaantharrvani M. | Group 2 | USA

The world should improve. Sometimes I think, why is there crime in the world? People litter, pollute and abuse animals. We can stop this not only in Trinidad but in the whole world. Stop crime by taking your education. Don't follow friends who have bad intentions. Stop abusing animals and love them. They are just like us who need love and care. Stop polluting by picking up trash. Reuse, reduce and recycle. Do these things for a path to a better tomorrow.

Theodore D. | Trinidad and Tobago



Vedant M. | Group 3 | USA

# Upcoming SSSIO Online Events

SSSIO has been conducting online events to share Swami's love, message, and works with everyone around the world. Hundreds of thousands of people have been reached through these events streamed on the [sathyasai.org/live](https://sathyasai.org/live) page.

Please visit [sathyasai.org/events/worldwide](https://sathyasai.org/events/worldwide) for further details on scheduled events, local dates and timings.

Date of Online Event	Day(s)	Festival/Event
April 15-16, 2023	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
April 23, 2023	Sunday	Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsavam
May 5, 2023	Saturday	Buddha Poonima
June 16-17, 2023	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri



[Streaming on sathyasai.org/live](https://sathyasai.org/live)



Stay in touch with SSSIO news and activities, by visiting the SSSIO websites and following/subscribing to the various communications channels below. **Click on each icon or name to visit the site.**



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Email



Eternal Companion email list



- [Sri Sathya Sai International Organization](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Universe](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Humanitarian Relief](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Young Adults](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Education](#)
- [Healthy Living](#)



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What does *Aradhana* (Divine Adoration) mean? It is not mere offering of worship with the paraphernalia of rituals. *Aradhana* is unification of the Hearts. To attain Oneness through Unity is *Aradhana*. To experience the Bliss of the Self is *Aradhana*. Recognizing unity in Diversity is *Aradhana*.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

May 22, 1993

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**sathyasai.org**

Love All • Serve All  
Help Ever • Hurt Never