

Transcript of Video Message by
Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, Prasanthi Council
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With love, reverence and gratitude I offer my prayerful Pranams at the divine lotus feet of our dearest, loving and omnipresent Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Dear brothers and sisters - loving Sai Rams to all of you. I wish all of you a happy and holy holiday season and New Year 2019 filled with love, joy and peace. This is a time of celebration. Many of us share our love and gratitude with our family and friends during this season. Let us remember the most precious gift we all have received – that is, being the contemporaries of the Avatar of the age, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He is the incarnation of love. He is love walking on two legs. He is our eternal companion, protecting us, guarding us and guiding us wherever we are, at all times. That is His unconditional love. All names and forms attributed by man to God are manifest in His human form.

At this time, let us remember and reflect on two profound revelations Swami made during two of His divine discourses during Christmas. The first revelation was on 24th December 1972. Swami said that Jesus was the embodiment of love, sacrifice and forgiveness. Jesus said in a simple statement, "the One who has sent me will come again" and pointed to a lamb. The lamb is a symbol and sign of love. The lamb also makes the sound "baa-baa" which is announcing the advent of Baba. Jesus said, "His name will be Truth" – which is Sathya, and "He will be short with a crown of hair and wearing a red robe." Swami said, "that Baa-Baa is this Baba – Sai". What a joyous revelation and a blessing to all of us!

And the second revelation was in the Christmas discourse given on 25th December 1998. Swami said: when anybody asks you about Sathya Sai Baba, sing this song which conveys the whole message, which is "Love is my form, Truth is my breath, Bliss is my food. My life is my message, expansion is my life. No reason for love, no season for love, no birth, no death." So, Swami's form is love.

When we have received this precious gift, how do we express our gratitude to Swami? it is done by implicitly following His teachings. I know that the New Year is coming, and many people want to make many resolutions. At this time, I would like to share some of the simple, yet practical and powerful messages Swami gave – which all of us can practise in our daily lives.

Number 1: Swami said always have a positive attitude. He advised us, "Think good, think no evil. See good, see no evil. Hear good, hear no evil. Speak good, speak no evil. Do good, do no evil. This is the way to God." This is the way we can develop purity of heart. Purity is enlightenment.

The second profound and practical message is the power of Love. Swami said, "God is Love, Love is God. Live in Love." So, He exhorts, "Start the day with love, Fill the day with love, Spend the day with love and End the day with love. This is the way to God."

Swami's infinite love transcends the barriers of space, time, race and religion. Now, we see Swami touching the lives of millions of people around the world and we see more and more new devotees coming through the portals of Prasanthi Nilayam and many Sathya Sai centres around the world. During the recent 93rd Birthday celebrations in Prasanthi Nilayam, the Sai Kulwant Hall was not only full, but it was overflowing – and the devotees had to be seated in nearby Poornachandra auditorium. Devotees all over the world gloriously celebrated His Birthday, sharing His love, His message, and His works.

And the highlights of these various, beautiful works done by the Sathya Sai devotees is summarised in the 2017–2018 SSIO Annual Report which was offered at the Mahasamadhi of Swami during the 93rd Birthday celebration in Prasanthi Nilayam.

One of the blessings we received was the manifestation of vibhuti on many pages of the Annual Report, thus showering His love on all the members of the organisation and the selfless service done. People expressed gratitude to Swami for the love they have received.

Swami visited East Africa in 1968, visiting the countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. During this time, in July of 1968, Swami spent about ten days in these countries, showering His love, His blessings and His nectarine message on not only the devotees, but also the local tribal people. He extended His love to animals, plants, forests, and waterfalls and the whole of nature, the whole of creation. Our brothers and sisters in East Africa held a golden jubilee celebration of this visit in a glorious manner.

Swami says, "Nature is the vesture of God. Nature is the manifestation of God." So, we need to revere nature. But man, in his ignorance and because of his selfishness, greed and excessive desire, is abusing nature. The price we pay for this is Climate Change, Global Warming, loss of biodiversity and environmental pollution which is causing many health problems. How to address this issue?

To serve the planet and protect the planet, we arranged the first "Go-Green Conference" in Prasanthi Nilayam in July of this year. More than 1,000 delegates from 78 countries participated. Many resolutions were passed after extensive deliberations by environmental scientists, subject matter experts and policy makers on how to address this problem. Now, these resolutions are being implemented by members of the Organisation all over the world to have a better planet and a better future.

Swami says the best way to spread His message is by being exemplars of His teachings. Taking this to heart, the young adults started a leadership programme in 2015. The programme started in 2015 is based on Swami's life, His message and His

works. Now, more than 1,000 graduates from 60 countries have come out of this programme and are taking an active role in the Sathya Sai International Organisation, serving in the Divine Mission.

Swami says there is only one religion – the religion of love and emphasized the unity of faiths and harmony of religions. The 125th Anniversary of the Parliament of World Religions was held in Toronto, Canada on November 1-7 of this year, and the theme was, "The Power of Love and Inclusion." There were more than 8,000 delegates who participated from 80 countries and about 220 faiths were represented. The Sathya Sai International Organisation hosted a panel discussion, exhibition booth, Young Adults choir, and also a children's play sharing Swami's message, His love, and humanitarian works which were very well received.

While doing all these good works, let us constantly remember that the goal and purpose of human life and the Sathya Sai Organisation is to make us realise our innate divinity. That is: we are the embodiments of the divine Atma. We are embodiments of divine love.

So, keeping this in mind, we have various national and regional retreats. We have started a new initiative – an annual Summer Spiritual Retreat in Prasanthi Nilayam starting July 2019. We'll be having talks, workshops and various spiritual practices focusing on the inward journey and how to intensify our effort to reach this goal.

In addition, we have started plans and preparations for the 11th World Conference to be held during Swami's 95th Birthday celebrations, followed by the Young Adults Festival to be held in July of 2021.

Another important offering we want to make during Swami's 95th birthday celebrations is the adoption of 95 communities, globally. I am very happy to share with you that by this 93rd Birthday celebration itself, we have already adopted 93 communities. It is very wonderful to see the enthusiasm of our Sai brothers and sisters to serve their communities.

In conclusion, let us rejoice in our Lord Sai, let us march forward with intensity and one-pointedness and with unity and love. I pray to Swami to shower on every one of us His love and bless us with a long, healthy, happy, peaceful and divine life.

Jai Sai Ram