

SATHYA SAI  
THE  
**ETERNAL**  
COMPANION



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 10  
OCTOBER 2024



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



Embodiments of Love! Your entire life is based on love. Without love, you cannot exist even for a moment. Hence, develop love, considering it as the very form of God. Today marks the culmination of Navaratri festival. The worship of Divine Mother is meant to destroy evil qualities and foster virtues in you. The more you distance yourself from evil, the nearer you will be to the principle of love. You don't need to make any efforts to acquire love. The moment you eschew evil, love will automatically enter your heart.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
October 5, 2003



DEDICATED WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE TO  
**BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA**





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publisher at [info@sathyasai.org](mailto:info@sathyasai.org)

Editor: Dr. Narendranath Reddy  
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# THE RELIGION OF LOVE

*“There Is only one Religion, the Religion of Love  
There Is only one Caste, the Caste of Humanity.  
There Is only one Language, the Language of the Heart  
There Is only one God, and He is Omnipresent.”*

**Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

The world today has many conflicts because people do not understand this profound message, especially the truth that there is only one God who is worshiped in many names and forms. **The underlying principle of all religions and faiths is love, which transcends all barriers of ethnicity, nationality, and creed.** But sadly, this has been forgotten.

Over the centuries, religions and faith traditions have been caught up in various dogmas, doctrines, and rituals. They were lost in the details, forgetting the big picture of the underlying unity of all faiths. This even led to many wars being fought, and, in the name of religion, bigotry, fanaticism, sectarianism, and hypocrisy are practiced. Thus, the very purpose of religion, which is the realization of Truth, is pushed into oblivion, and we are caught up in unnecessary distractions that lead us astray.

But all these pitfalls should not get us disheartened. **Why fear when Sai is here as an eternal companion to rescue us?** Those are Swami’s own words in a letter to Smt. Subbamma which has been included in this issue. In fact, from time to time, great incarnations like Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Lord Jesus, the Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna, Shirdi Sai, and, of course, our own Swami have come to teach the path of love, which leads us out of ignorance and misery. Their teachings and presence also give us hope and inspire us in our spiritual journey, lifting our spirits and motivating us to continue on the path of love.

## **Purpose Behind the Divine Descent**

Every year, the 20th of October is celebrated as ‘Avatar Declaration Day’ by the devotees and followers of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba around the world. This is the day

when, in His infinite kindness and compassion, Swami declared that He is Sai Baba come again after the Shirdi Avatar. He also proclaimed His divine mission and reassured the devotees of His protection.

Avatarhood represents the descent of God for the ascent of man. Supreme God head descends as an avatar in a beautiful human form with a sweet name to convey the eternal message of divine love to humanity. In the historic letter He wrote on 25th May 1947, Swami says that He has come to bestow bliss on all beings and transform those who stray away from the right path, bringing them back again to goodness and saving them. On other occasions, Swami has declared that He has come for *Vedasam-rakshana* (to protect, preserve, and propagate the Vedas), *Vidwatposhana* (nurturing the wise and spiritual people), and to teach man the universality and oneness of all religions. Swami conveys all these messages by example through His own life.

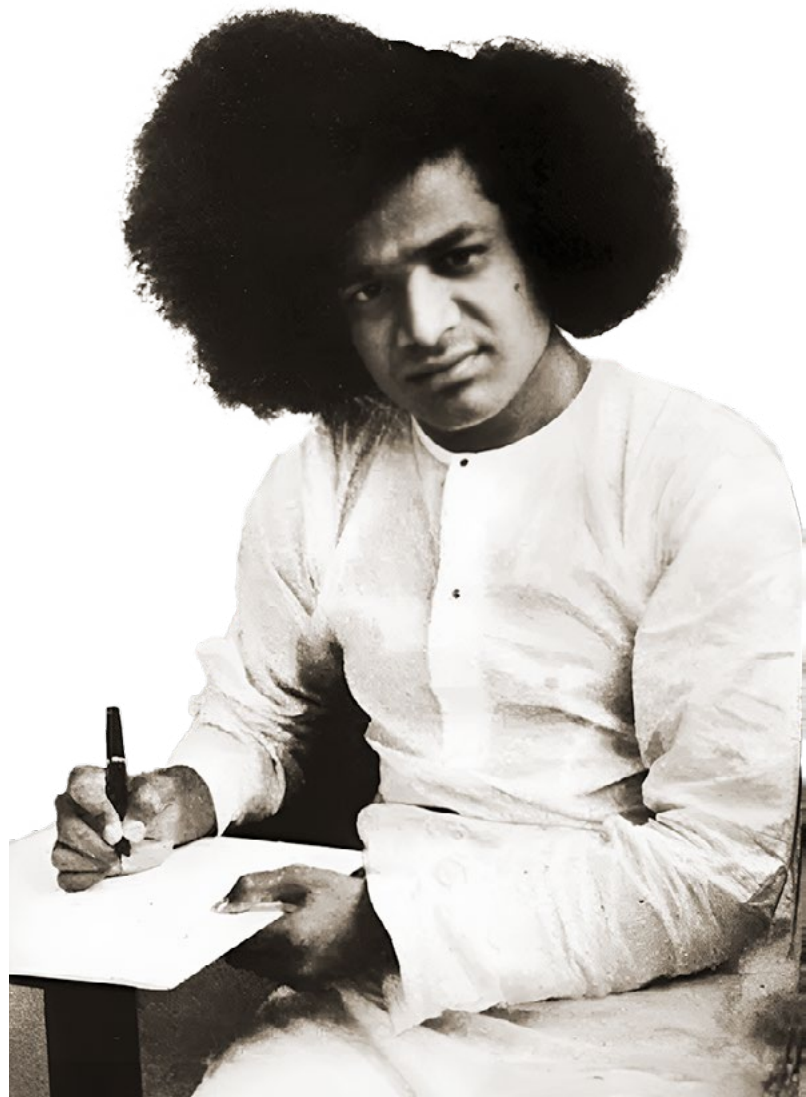
### Oneness According to Bharatiya Scriptures

Our focus on diversity rather than unity is the cause for forgetting the truth that there is only one religion—that of Love. **The Rig Veda, the foremost and the most ancient among the Vedas, declares *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahuda Vadanti* (The Truth is One, though the Wise call it by different names).** This is akin to water being called by various names, including H<sub>2</sub>O, aqua, *tanni*, *neeru*, *pani*, etc. The Vedas also talk about the aphorism *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, the entire world being part of the same family. That is why the universal prayer taught from time immemorial is *Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu*. Swami emphasized that this prayer must be sung in all Sathya Sai Centers and meetings. **It prays for the welfare of not just all humanity but also for animals, birds, plants,**

**planets, stars, and galaxies.** That is the broad vision—to see only oneness in all existence without any division whatsoever.

The Purusha Suktam, an important hymn in the Vedas, describes the entire universe as the manifestation of divinity. **But God is much more than just the universe. Precisely, only one-fourth of God manifests as the universe, while three-fourth lies beyond.**

**Swami says that He has come to bestow bliss on all beings and transform those who stray away from the right path, bringing them back again to goodness and saving them.**



# “Seeing only oneness—Atma, Brahman, God, Consciousness—is possible only through love and service.”

One particular verse in the Bhagavad Gita (4.11) proclaims further the oneness of all ‘Gods’ and ‘Paths.’

*ye yatha mam prapadyante  
thams tathaiva bhajamyaham  
mama vartmanuvartante  
manushyah partha sarvashah*

*(In whatever way people surrender  
unto Me, I reciprocate accordingly.  
Everyone follows My path, knowingly  
or unknowingly, O son of Pritha.)*

This gives the wonderful message not to condemn different traditions or paths and to give up the ‘holier than thou’ attitude. Lord Krishna also states in another verse (Bhagavad Gita 6.30)

*yo mam pashyati sarvatra  
sarvam cha mayi pashyati  
tasyaham na pranashyami  
sa cha me na pranashyati*

*(For those who see Me everywhere and  
see all things in Me, I am never lost, nor  
are they ever lost to Me.)*

This shows that seeing the underlying oneness is the greatest spiritual practice. In fact, in yet another verse (Bhagavad Gita 18.20), Lord Krishna says,

*sarva-bhuteshu yenaikam  
bhavam avyayam ikshate  
avibhaktam vibhakteshu  
taj-jnanam viddhi sattvikam*

*(Understand that knowledge is the  
goodness by which a person sees one  
undivided imperishable reality within  
all diverse living beings.)*

**The wise one sees unity in diversity, while the ignoramus sees diversity in oneness.**

Other Indian scriptures, too, are replete with statements that emphasize this oneness. One such proclamation says:

*Akasat patitam toyam  
yatha gacchati sagaram  
Sarvadeva namaskaram  
kesavam pratigacchati  
Sarvadeva tirasskaram  
kesavam pratigacchati*

*(As all the raindrops falling from the sky  
ultimately reach the ocean, the worship  
of any god ultimately reaches the one  
Supreme Being. Similarly, censuring of  
any aspect of the divine also ultimately  
reaches the Supreme Being.)*

So, whenever we adore anyone or anything, we are adoring God. If we genuinely love Swami, we must respect and love all names, forms, and beings, for all are Him. This is verily the profound message Swami gives in His discourse on May 17, 1968, “This is a human form in which every divine entity, every divine principle, that is to say, all the names and forms ascribed by man to God, are manifest.”

That is why whenever devotees have yearned for Him sincerely and called for His help anywhere in the world, at any time, He has responded readily. The fact that He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient becomes clear from the experiences of Mr. Rajesh Thapa, Dr. Suresh Govind, and Ms. Anvitha, published in this issue. Swami has also given *darshan* as Ganesha, Shiva, Rama, Krishna, Jesus, etc., to many devo-



tees as their *ishtadevata* (chosen deity). In fact, a few devotees have experienced that He is not just *Sarva Devata Swaroompa* (embodiment of all forms of godhead) but *Sarva Devatatheeta Swaroompa* (embodiment of that which is beyond all godheads). This further confirms that there is only one God who is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient.

### Oneness According to Other Scriptures

The Jewish scripture, Torah, contains the Shema, the central prayer in Judaism, which is also considered the primary confession in the Jewish faith: **“Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad!”** which means, “Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one!” Islam also proclaims, **“La ilaha illa Allah,”** which means, “There is one God—Allah.” While these are statements of Truth, the problem arises when followers of different faiths make their own interpretation of the scriptures based on their personal dogmas and doctrines.

That is why Jesus came to teach the path of love when the temples of God degenerated into houses of business. He emphasized that mere mechanical repetition of the scriptures wasn't sufficient. One must focus on their essence, which is love. Hence, **He declared, “The greatest commandment is to love**

**thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength.”** Equally important is the second commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself. Vedanta clearly answers why one should do this by declaring that the other person is none other than oneself!

Lord Buddha came when people were caught up in rituals, forgetting the spirit behind them. The true spirit behind the ritual is what makes it spiritual. Love for all and sacrifice of evil qualities are essential in all rituals. This is the true significance of ‘animal sacrifice’—the sacrifice of one's ‘animal qualities.’ **That is why Buddha preached the path of Ahimsa or nonviolence in His infinite compassion and advised all to stop animal sacrifices.**

### Oneness According to Modern Masters

In recent times, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a great saint and incarnation, showed man how to practice spirituality and realize God. **He taught that anyone could see God if one had intense hunger and love for God.** He emphatically told his young disciple, Narendranath, that he saw God clearer than anyone else and even spoke to God! Born in the 19th century, he demonstrated that one could see and experience God by practicing any religion. He practiced Christianity, entirely focusing on Christ. Then, he



practiced Islam with a one-pointed focus on Allah. He also worshiped various Indian gods and goddesses. In each case, he experienced the same ultimate bliss and attained the vision of God. **He thus demonstrated that all forms of God are the same and emphasized the harmony of all religions.**

Swami Vivekananda, who witnessed his Master undertaking such intense spiritual practices, was naturally influenced by Him. It is, therefore, not surprising that he began his historic speech on September 11, 1893, at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago with “Sisters and Brothers of America...” In this landmark address, he emphasized universal tolerance because all paths lead to the same goal, just as all rivers merge into the ocean. He concluded by saying, “I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.” **Swami Vivekananda had followers from all faiths because people witnessed his universal vision and large-heartedness.**

Next came Sai Baba of Shirdi. At a time when there was conflict between the Hindus and Muslims, He advocated the harmony of religions. Without identifying Himself as either Muslim or Hindu, Baba chanted the names of both Allah and Rama with equal fervor. He celebrated both Ramzan and Rama Navami, the holy festivals of Muslims and Hindus, to foster amity and love among the Hindus and Muslims.

### **Simplicity and Clarity of Swami’s Message**

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the Avatar of the Kali Age, put all these teachings into a simple, pithy statement, **“There is only one religion, the religion of Love.”** He emphasizes that it is not enough just to have tolerance among religions; one has to bring



about harmony between religions, learning from the best of each religion. In addition to supporting Hindu temples, He inaugurated a mosque for the Muslims of Puttaparthi in the early days. He always encourages the celebration of all religious festivals, Hindu festivals like Rama Navami and Dasera, and holy events of other world religions, including Yom Kippur, Buddha Poornima, Ramzan, and Nowruz (Parsi New Year). **All festivals are celebrated with the same enthusiasm by the devotees of Sai because all religions teach the same principle of love.** During Sai meetings and conferences, the Sarvadharmā prayer is sung as part of the program, which adores all names of God, including Narayana, Buddha, Jesus, Allah, Vinayaka, Skanda, Sun, Fire, Ahura Mazda, Jehovah, Rudra, Vishnu, Divine Mother, and also includes the formless aspect of God, namely Brahman and Satchitananda (existence, knowledge, and bliss).

Swami emphasizes the need to see unity among diversity, which will help us live in peace and joy. To see the underlying unity in the apparent diversity, He says,

*Nations are many, but Earth is one;  
Beings are many, but Breath is one;  
Pots are many, but Clay is one;  
Flowers are many, but Worship is one;  
Stars are many, but Sky is one;  
Oceans are many, but Water is one;  
Religions are many, but God is one;  
Jewels are many, but Gold is one.*

### **Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO)–Swami’s Torchbearer**

Swami also encourages interfaith dialogues and conferences, which were conducted under His guidance in Prasanthi Nilayam and continue to be held all over the world today. There have been many successful and impactful multi-faith gatherings in North

America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

**The SSSIO participated in the Parliament of Religions in 2018 in Toronto, Canada.** The organization members gave talks, participated in a panel discussion, performed a drama, and displayed an exhibition where Swami’s message that all masters proclaim the same Truth was reinforced. At this event, the SSSIO embraced all views of all faiths as long as they were based on love. However, other faith proponents, though tolerant of all religions and faiths, primarily emphasized their own path and practices! This was a striking difference between Swami’s messengers and the others. In practice, the SSSIO embodied Swami’s proclamation that all paths lead to the same goal.

**During the various interfaith meetings conducted by the SSSIO around the world, SSSIO emphasizes multi-faith prayers and**



invites various faith leaders to discuss the best practices of each faith to celebrate the common thread of love.

When Baba returned from East Africa after visiting Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, the devotees celebrated this 'overseas visit.' Swami said during His discourse, "*Your material eyes see countries as different; in reality, all countries are limbs of one organism; all bodies are activated by the same Principle. For God, the universe is the mansion. Each nation is a room, a hall, in that mansion. So, when I move from one room to another and come back, why do you indulge in all this commotion and celebration? I do not feel that I had been to another mansion; it was all so familiar to Me. You should not also emphasize the apparent distinction; for the Divine, all are the same.*"

### Practical Tips for The Aspirant

To see this underlying unity in diversity, Swami gives a few tips, **the foremost of which is the practice of unconditional, selfless, and pure love.** *Adveshta Sarva Bhootanam*, says Sri Krishna and Sai Krishna, exhorting us to hate no being. 'Hatred' cannot be a part of the vocabulary of the lover of God. We must nurture love as embodied by the various Masters over the ages. Following them, we, too, become harbingers of peace and harmony. This love cannot be intellectual and esoteric. It should be practiced so that people experience it. **Such love in action is service. All the Masters have empha-**

**sized service.** Lord Jesus said, "When you serve the least of your brethren, you serve Me." Service of fellow beings is one of the mandates of Islam. The Buddha emphasized treating all beings with love and compassion. Swami simply says, "*Manava Seva is Madhava Seva,*" meaning that service to man is service to God. He further simplifies it by saying, "*Help Ever, Hurt Never.*"

**We help (and hurt) through our thoughts, words, and deeds. So, we should be careful on all three fronts.** One can provide food, water, shelter, education, medi-

cal aid, etc., to people in need. But even speaking kind words and spreading loving thoughts are also acts of service. Another common teaching across all faiths is the golden rule of 'do unto others as you would have others do unto you.' If everyone practices this golden rule, all will be happy and peaceful.

**Seeing only oneness—Atma, Brahman, God, Consciousness—is possible only through love and service.** This love and service will also sound the death knell to bigotry, fanaticism, sectarianism, and hypocrisy while ushering in the golden age of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, where the whole world lives as one family.

Let us pray to our Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who has laid down the royal path of love, to guide us in being devout followers of this religion of love.

Jai Sai Ram.





# Love God Wholeheartedly

## Part 3

### CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE...

*This is the final part of the discourse delivered on November 24, 1998. Bhagawan continues to answer questions raised by the delegates and officers of the overseas Sathya Sai Centers. He exhorts one and all to work in unity and love.*

**Fifth Question:** *How will the debts (consequences) of one's actions be removed?*

Some consider the results of actions (*karmas*) as some kind of debt. If you want to be free from the fruits of *karma*, no matter what kind of *karma* it is, no matter how unbearable, tough, or painful the outcome is, you can be protected with the medicine of "love." **There is nothing greater than love. If you pray with all your heart, you will surely get results.** However, some people pray, sitting in the prayer (*puja*) room and chanting, 'Sai Ram, Sai Ram'. But the mind starts wandering about the washerman and whether he brought back the clothes after washing. While doing Japa, why should the mind wander, thinking

about the washerman? Some other person sits to do *japa* (repetition of God's name) and meditation. He then sees the smoke from the kitchen and calls his wife to check if the food is getting burnt. How does this sort of *sadhana* (spiritual practice) become devotion to God? You are doing all these practices with a wavering mind. **Do it with a steady mind, and the results will surely follow.**

You may undertake any type of spiritual practice but love with all your heart. With love, all diseases get cured, and all suffering can be overcome. All worries will be gone. First, you should develop love. How to increase the love? If you think God is the embodiment of love, love will increase. But how can we develop love if we think of God with some other feeling? Love is the perfect medicine for this. What happens if a plant is put in a small metal container without soil and watered? It will rot. The tree should be planted in the ground and watered. Similarly, it is not possible to place God's form and name anywhere. **Plant the name and form of God in the soil called the heart and water it with love. It will surely grow.** So, there is no need to do any special *sadhana* or spiritual practice.

*The sixth question is very strange: We keep the pictures of Rama, Krishna, Allah, Eshwara or Shiva, and Jesus in our puja (prayer) room. We also place Swami's picture between them. They are asking, is this wrong?*

If you have firm faith that God is all forms, why should you be afraid to keep any picture? You may worship Rama, Eswara, Jesus, Allah, Zoroaster, or Sai with the feeling that all are one. Let me give an example. Many varieties of sweets are made in India (Bharat), like *Godhuma halwa*, *badam kheer*, *gulab jamun*, *jilebi*, *laddu*, and *Mysore pak*. Though the names and forms of these sweets are different,



the sugar is the same in all of them. **You may worship Rama, Sai, Vishnu, Allah, or Jesus. Keep in mind that the same divinity is in all of them.** Cultivate that feeling of oneness. When you cultivate such a feeling that all are one, these outward differences will not bother you at all. If you don't like the pictures of other gods, then keep the ones you like. If you do not like the pictures of Sai Baba or Rama, you may remove them. **Pictures are not important. Praying with love is!**

Occasionally, I tell this story to our children (students). A student was appearing for exams. He was not good in mathematics. The math examination was scheduled for the next day. He worshipped Swami. He failed the mathematics exam that day. As he failed in mathematics, he took out Swami's picture and threw it in the cupboard. On the next day, he had the second mathematics exam. That day, he placed Lord Rama's picture on the altar and worshipped. He did not do well in the exam, even on the second day. On the third day, he had to appear for another subject, accounting. How can a person who doesn't know mathematics fare well in accounting? Again, he did not do well in the exam. So, He removed Rama's picture and put it away in the cupboard.

Wondering which God he should worship, he concluded that the feminine aspect of God as a divine mother (Goddess) is more compassionate than the masculine form of God. He replaced the picture of Lord Rama with that of the divine mother, worshipped her, and went to the exam. This time, he did not understand even the questions in the exam paper. Frustrated, he returned home and removed the picture of the divine mother. The next day, he placed Lord Vinayaka's picture and began his worship by lighting an incense stick. He noticed the fragrant smoke from the incense stick was going into the cupboard, where he had placed the pictures of all the gods and goddesses he removed. Observing that the incense he offered to Lord Vinayaka was being accepted by the other deities in the cupboard, he was so incensed that he took all the pictures of Swami, Rama, and the divine mother and bundled them up in a cloth so they could not smell the incense.

Then Sai Baba appeared to him and said, "You covered the pictures to prevent the incense fragrance from reaching the Gods. It is not the pictures that will help you. There is no benefit if you consider them only as a picture. **You may worship a picture as**

**God, but not God as a picture.** "Until now, you were considering God as a picture. But today, you believed the picture was the real form, God Himself, when you tied them in the cloth. Hence, I appeared immediately before you. You are doing all the worship to the pictures. Do not consider God as a picture. **Consider the picture as God Himself, the real form. Only then will all your wishes be fulfilled.**" Many people today consider God's picture simply as a picture. Study well, immerse yourself in your studies, and you will surely pass the exams."

Likewise, it does not matter what form you worship or what name you chant. All names and all forms are one and the same. All are forms of the divine. If you do not find anyone to worship, then worship your parents. They are also divine forms.

*Mathru Devo Bhava*

*(Mother is God)*

*Pithru Devo Bhava*

*(Father is God)*

*Acharya Devo Bhava*

*(Guru/Teacher is God)*

*Atithi Devo Bhava*

*(Guest is God)*

In such a situation, why should you doubt different forms of God? Do not give room for any doubts about God. **God is God. So, do not criticize the names and forms of God. So put any picture, chant any name. God is one. Keep this truth in your heart.** Do not change the pictures, seeing differences. Do whatever worship pleases you. That is the true path.

**Seventh Question:** *Swami! Among the worldly spiritual practices (sadhana) we follow, which sadhana pleases you?*

Whatever *sadhana* we undertake, we want to please Swami. Which *sadhana* pleases Swami? The delegate says he







would do the kind of *sadhana* that pleases Swami. There is only one answer to this. I don't need anything. Have faith that all human beings are divine manifestations. Have faith that divinity exists in all. That is what I love and like very much. What gives you happiness do to others. What you like, also do to others. But it is not good to harm others for the sake of your happiness.

I have been saying it over and over many times, **'Help ever, Hurt never.'** That is dear to Me. Keep on helping others. Do not hurt anyone or cause harm. **Also, do not foster any ill feelings toward others. Even if they insult or hate you, you keep loving them. That is Swami's main objective.** There are so many people in the world but not everyone worships Me. They worship Me sometimes and criticize me at other times. It does not make any difference to Me. I will continue to love everyone. Their love is theirs, just as their sickness is theirs and their disease is their own. One's *karma* is

one's own; they reap the results based on their actions, but it doesn't affect Me. **If not today, then someday, each one must bear the consequences of their actions.**

*Who can foretell how and  
what the future unfolds  
One will certainly have to  
experience it  
Lord Rama Himself cried  
like an ordinary man  
at the loss of Sita, His consort  
The noble Pandava clan of the  
yore dwelt in the forest  
Sustaining on wild root tubers  
and leaves gathered in the wild  
Who can tell what is in the destiny  
and what the future holds?*

(Telugu poem)

**If you do good, you will surely reap only good. If you do bad deeds, in return, you will get bad results.** Remember this and think whether a deed is good or bad. I do not hate anyone. I do not doubt anyone. I believe even those who don't have faith in Me. That is My nature. I believe in those even if they don't believe in Me. They think, "I don't believe in Swami. Why does Swami believe in me?" They think that Swami does not know that they do not have faith in Swami. But, My faith (belief) in others is always the same.

All are one and the same to me. I desire that everyone should be happy. That is what I desire. But it depends on your capacity. As I said before, after all, water is colorless. It assumes the color of the bottle in which it is poured. So, good or bad are all within you; I do not have either: they shall never enter Me. **I always wish, "Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu."** **May all the worlds be happy.** Everyone should be well. Even if you hate Me, I will love you. That is My nature. This is divine quality. You criticize Me today and worship Me tomorrow, or you worship

“

You should become an ideal person, assisting the development and progress of Sathya Sai institutions and improving the nation.



Me today and criticize Me tomorrow. All this is due to the fickle mind, the wavering mind of an inebriated being. That is its characteristic.

One talks in a particular way when one is drunk and talks in a different way when one is sober. So, it is caused by worldly desires. Since you are completely immersed in worldly desires, your mind vacillates from one state to another. **But he who has pure love remains the same, unaffected, under all circumstances. Even if he forgets Me, I will not forget him. I will always be with him, by him, in him, around and above him.** Such people are very fortunate and have very sacred hearts. They are born thus due to the good merits acquired over many births, not just from this birth alone. This good fortune is the fruition of the good merits of many births.

You don't have to think about what is dear to Swami and what He dislikes. I like anything that you do from the heart. I want only the purity of your heart. **You may undertake any service activity with pure**

**love if you have complete faith in Swami and obey Swami's command.** I never say anything bad to anyone. Whatever I say is for your own good. Whatever I say, whatever I do, is good for you, not for Me. I do not have any work of My own. Everything is your work. I do only your work from dawn to dusk. So don't think that I do not have love for you. But a few fortunate ones get the chance to serve and be in the holy presence of the divine. They have good fortune. But do not be jealous that others have good fortune while you do not. **The most incurable disease of all is jealousy.** Cancer has medicine, but jealousy has no medicine. Cancer can be canceled, but jealousy has no cure. Jealousy will frustrate and depress anyone, bringing them down so much that they perish.

### Engage Every Part of Your Body in Sacred Activities

Embodiments of Love! The members of the Sai Organization should broaden their hearts without giving room to envy and ego by considering everyone as brothers and sisters and performing service joyfully.

You want to bring many changes to the education system today. Education is essential. It can neither be stolen by thieves nor burnt by fire nor diminished by sharing with others. Education and knowledge always foster growth. Share this supreme education with the world and try to implement it. **Teach good virtues to all children. "Son! Do not study for money only. You may have money today, but it may be gone tomorrow. Money comes and goes.** Today's friend can turn into your enemy tomorrow. One may be strong today but become weak tomorrow. But you never lose character. Cultivate lasting virtues and foster sacred qualities. With your good character, enter society and help everyone.

Why are these hands given to you? Do you know why the hand was given? Not just to eat. It is given to perform charity and help others. **Charity is the ornament for the hand.** Do you know why the voice is given? Not to sing movie songs! Not to hurl abuses or blame at others but to chant the name of God. Chanting the divine name is verily like wearing a beautiful necklace. **So, wear the necklace of chanting the divine name, and sanctify your voice with the**

**holy name.** Do you know why intelligence is given? Is it to become arrogant? No, no. It is given only to think about how we should contemplate the divine, attain the divine, and experience the divine. Therefore, every limb of the human body should be engaged in sacred activities.

### **Happiness is Union with God**

Embodiments of Love! Delegates from 180 countries, especially office bearers and those in prominent positions in the organizations, have assembled here. You can lead and guide thousands of people when you follow the right path. One person can do good to many. You must be very careful in this regard. If one office bearer becomes bad, many can become bad and go astray. Be good because you are in a responsible position. You should lead a good life, do good deeds, think good, and follow the right path. Then, everyone will be inspired to follow you on the ideal path. It is of no use if you start teaching people without practicing the teachings. Even if you don't follow all of them, at least practice one or two ideals; that is enough. I don't expect you to follow everything. **You should become an ideal person, assisting**

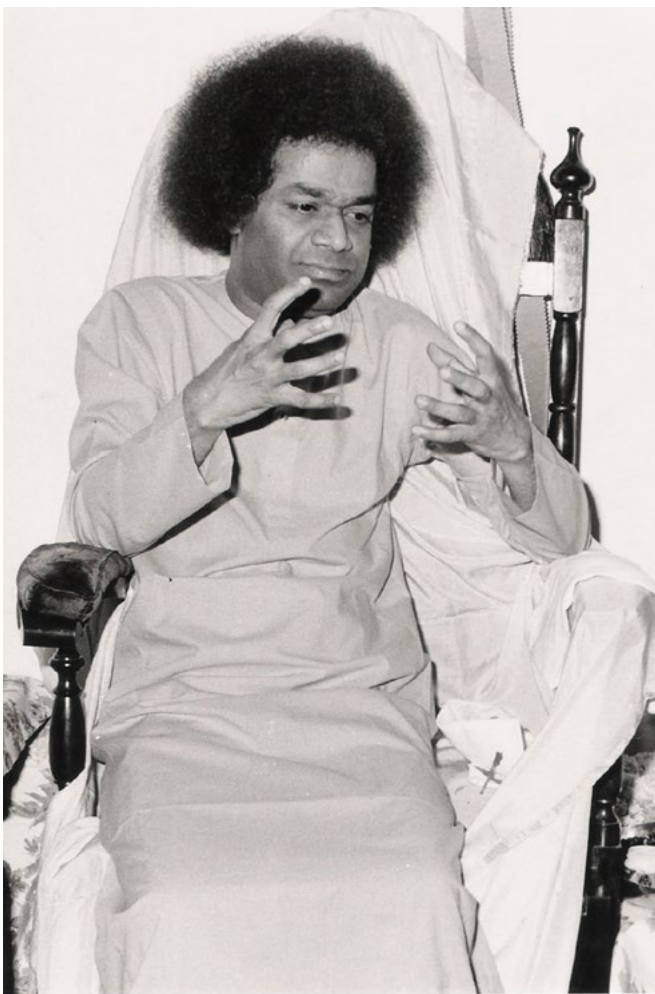


**‘Hello,’ ‘Sairam’ should not be said mechanically. Say it with happiness, and speak happily and wholeheartedly with a smile.**

**the development and progress of Sathya Sai institutions and improving the nation.**

I do not desire to enhance My reputation. I do not require a greater name or fame. I don't long for them, but if I do, the world will comply.

Swami's hand always gives and gives; it never takes except for one thing. I will accept one thing and only one thing. That is love, love, and love; your love. I do not want anything else. I don't expect anything. I will give you whatever you ask, and however



much you ask. But I will ask for only one thing. That is love. Give love and take everything.

You should work well together within the education system. Organization members from each country should discuss this among themselves. They need not wait for orders to come from some other place. If you all work together, the system will flourish. What more do I need when you live like brothers and sisters in your countries, without differences, without jealousy, and without fighting each other? **What can be more joyful than when you unite with Swami in your thoughts and spirit and work through the will of Swami? Happiness is union with God. Work with this divine thought;** that is true happiness.

True happiness is not just being happy with material things of the world. So, no matter what differences of opinion you have or hatred you might have, you should work together in harmony. Do not encourage groupism, such as one group versus another. **You may think that you are just hurting someone. No, no. You are hurting Me.** So, I am happy when everyone lives in unity. Everyone should cultivate love without any hatred. You should swallow your hatred. Do not exhibit hatred and hate others. After you leave this place, with unity, you should approach everyone and greet even those who may hate you, calling them brothers with love. **This is the true penance. This is true meditation. This is real Japa. This is true Sadhana.**

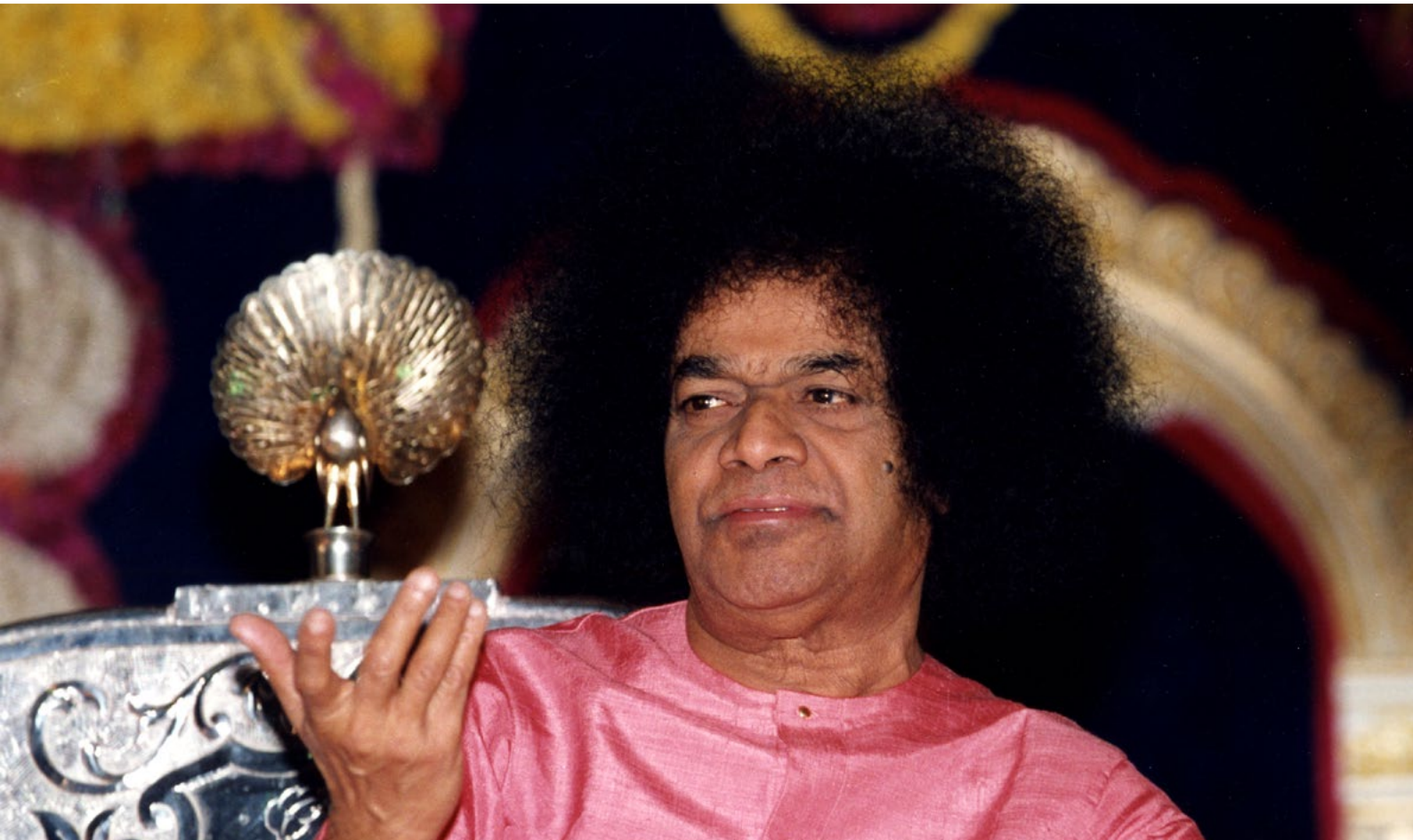
**One should give and take love for love's sake. Give love and receive love. If you develop love this way, the whole country will be happy.** We can experience joy that has not been experienced hitherto in any other *yuga* (era). All of you should be united like brothers and sisters and spread love worldwide. Though you greet each other by saying, 'brother, brother,' 'hello, hello,' Sai Ram, Sai Ram,' it is clear that there are differences when you say it. **'Hello,' 'Sairam' should not be said mechanically. Say it with happiness, and speak happily and wholeheartedly with a smile.** Even your laughter should not be like the artificial laughter in a movie. Laugh wholeheartedly. "Brother, past is past. Forget the past. Do not worry about the future. The present is very important. This is omnipresent." Greet each other in this manner. Develop this unity. There is immense strength in unity. There is no strength in being apart. You will only ruin yourself. **Where there is love, there is unity.**

For three days, you had deliberations, discussing many issues. Get rid of all these differences today. Be clean like a well-washed pearl, and be happy. Go back happily. This was a big workshop, where you arrived in a car called your body. The nuts, bolts, and springs in this car were all damaged. You came here and got everything fixed. You should also get the car repainted in this workshop. **When you return to your country, others should praise you by looking at the manner in which you talk and how much you have changed since visiting Puttaparthi. They should be amazed to see that you lead an ideal life.** You should thus give happiness to the world. You should achieve that ideal. I might be confusing you by saying a lot. But I say it with love to make you a better person. You should become a better person and make others better.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
November 24, 1998



# God's Delays Are Not Denials



**IT ALL HAPPENED WHEN I WAS STUDYING FOR MY DEGREE AT TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN COLLEGE,** Kuala Lumpur. Unlike others, I used to sit in the back row of my class, away from the commanding gaze of lecturers and was too shy to come forward to participate in activities. One day, I reluctantly joined my friends, who persuaded me to attend a talk on Hinduism at my college by a senior leader from the Sathya Sai Organization. I was comfortably sitting

at the back of the auditorium, where I was silently plotting my escape as soon as the talk commenced. However, the charisma of the speaker, the humorous anecdotes, and the simple manner of conveying a deep complex subject mesmerized me. He had an aura of positivity, which was inspiring. This deepened my curiosity to find out more about where he came from. One thing led to another, and on a Vinayaka Chaturthi day, I found myself at the Bangsar Sai Center for the first time, singing *bhajans* along with other devotees. That was how Bhagawan, in His unique, mysterious way, pulled me into His fold.

I was also attracted to His devotees in this Sai Center. They also reflected the same aura of positivity, which encouraged me to frequent the center more often. I was very impressed with the energy, dynamism, and overall commitment of the members of this Center. However, at that time, I was not really attracted to Swami. I was only curious about Him because of the devotion and reverence He commanded from these beautiful people.

### Travel to See Sathya Sai Baba

It was this curiosity that led me to answer, "Bangalore," when my father, who worked in an airline, asked me whether I wished to travel on a free ticket to any place I wanted, a privilege reserved for airline employees. From Bangalore, I took my first 6-hour bus journey and landed in Prasanthi Nilayam in 1986.

Before leaving Malaysia, the Bangsar Sai Center President gave me some books he had written, to get them blessed by Swami. By His grace, I was seated in the very first row during my first-ever *darshan*. All this was very new to me and I had no clue about what happens during these sessions. As Swami arrived, walking gently on the sand, I saw

people offering letters to Him, touching His feet, and craning their necks to see Him for an extra moment! I was lost in thinking how I should address Him.

"Devotees have told me to address Him as Swami. But His name is Sai Baba. Should I call Him 'Sai' or 'Baba' or the complete 'Sai Baba'? Maybe it is best that I address Him by His full name, Sathya Sai Baba..."

Though I had decided to call Him by His name and mentally even rehearsed it a few times, when He finally came near me, I got on my knees and spontaneously said, "Swami, here are books from Malaysia. The author wanted me to get them blessed by You..."

"I know... I know..." He said and placed His hand on the books I was holding. **Automatically, I bowed down and touched His feet to receive my first *padanamaskar*.** Swami then moved on.

### What is an Interview?

After that, somehow, I found myself seated in the first row for the next 3-4 *darshan* sessions, even when we went by the general token lines. So, every day, I would be blessed to receive *padanamaskar*. Seeing my good fortune, three Malaysian ladies who had come earlier to Prasanthi Nilayam came over to me and said, "Swami seems to bless you daily. Why don't you ask Him for an interview?"

"What is an interview?" I asked

"Swami will take us into a separate room and materialize rings and chains for us!"

"Oh! He gives them to everybody?"

"Not everybody, but the chance of getting them from Him is high during an interview."

"So, what should I ask?"

"Ask Swami for an interview, and He will probably ask how many are there in the group. Say four... it's four of us."

I reluctantly agreed, dismissing the possibility that this would ever take place.

Then, I went to give the books to the administrators of the University. They asked me if I was here for the first time. I said yes.

They then asked a volunteer (*sevadal*) to escort me and give me a guided tour of the University Administrative Block, the stadium, Swami's pet elephant Sai Gita, the planetarium, etc. I assumed that this was a courtesy extended to all visitors. Only much later did I realize that this was also due to His divine grace.

Then, slowly, the Master scriptwriter unfolded His play.

A gentleman of Chinese origin, we will call him Chan, wearing a red T-shirt with the words "Drink Anchor Beer" approached me. I began chatting with him and learned that he was also a first-timer at the place. He had come as a tourist and simply wanted to know "what on earth was happening here?"

Then, I narrated what the Malaysian ladies told me and urged him to ask for an interview.

He replied, "What is an interview?"

I took the opportunity to educate him and told him that in such situations, Swami would give him chains and rings. I added, "When He asks how many people are there, say it's five of us. I shall do the same if I get the chance..."

The deal was made. It was all so casual, never realizing what was to happen. I never, for one moment, thought that the divine, in His own way, was orchestrating a deep, incisive surgery on my ego for my spiritual advancement.

### **An Interview is an Inner View**

It was a Sunday, and it appeared that the whole world had come for *darshan*. There

was not an inch of space available because, taking advantage of the Sunday, an overwhelming crowd had come to feast their eyes on their beloved Lord. I guess my luck ran out that day for this particular *darshan* as I got a seat at the back of Sai Kulwant hall, with my back leaning against the compound wall and a sea of humanity separating me from Swami.

Suddenly, my eyes fell on Chan seated precisely in the first row.

The stage was set. Swami appeared. There was a hushed silence. Every neck was craning to get a glimpse of Him as He walked past. From where I was seated, Swami appeared small and distant.

Then Swami suddenly stopped where Chan was seated. I heard Swami ask, "*How many?*"

I heard him reply, "Five."

Swami said, "*Come.*"

Then, Chan stood up and started waving to me! I waved back and stood up, making my way toward the front. As I was walking, saying, "Sairam! Swami is calling Malaysia," the sea of humanity in front of me parted as the Red Sea parted for Moses!

I am quite tall, and Swami also saw me walking. Swami was now signing someone's book, but I knew He saw me getting up. I reached the elevated dais area, and with a few more steps, I would be in the world's most desired 'heaven,' the interview room. Chan had already happily sailed into the interview room.

For some reason, which I still do not know, something made me turn back to see Swami. What made me turn? Who made me turn, and why? Till today my mind cannot fathom this.

Swami was standing only a few meters away. Simultaneously, as I turned back to see Swami, He lifted his gaze from the book





to stare at me. No other director could have planned this drama with such incredible timing and synchronous movement other than the divine director Himself.

Our eyes met. The pin-drop silence in the hall was shattered by Swami's question,

*"Hey, you! Where are you going?"*

"Swami, interview..."

*"Not you! Sit down."*

I took one step forward and said, "...five... group of five...Malaysia," referring to His conversation with Chan. I was now deeply troubled and feeling very embarrassed.

Swami said sharply, *"...Not all Malaysians get an interview. Sit down!"*

I thought that Swami was not aware of my conversation and the deal with Chan. So I tried explaining, "Swami, that man said five... I am one of..."

*"SIT DOWN!"* interrupted Swami.

The whole hall witnessed this dress-down. The Malaysian ladies who got up to go for

the interview, after witnessing the calamity befalling me, quietly sat down in their respective places.

I took two more steps toward Swami, thinking of explaining myself.

*"SIT DOWN,"* Swami said and His eyes seemed ablaze now. A few volunteers quickly rushed to escort me to my place. I sat down in the space vacated by Chan in the first row.

The humiliation I felt at that moment was so painful that I wished the earth would swallow me up! As I sat and tried to analyze what had happened, a thousand thoughts flooded my mind. Why me? I did not deserve this. I never wanted an interview. Swami had seen me getting up. But why pull me to the front and 'smash' me in front of thousands? Why Swami? Why? That, too, was my first visit. Uncontrollable tears kept gushing from my eyes. The pain got aggravated when devotees sitting near me tried comforting me. It was like oil being poured over fire.

But that was it. Chan from our 'Group of Five' went in alone.

Many long minutes passed, and then, the *bhajans* began. That was when Chan walked out of the interview room. His face seemed red, and profuse tears were running down his cheeks. Something had obviously happened inside! A few minutes later, Swami came out and walked straight to me.

*“When are you leaving?”*

*“Swami, this Wednesday...Three more days...”*

*“Ah! You have got time. Why do you worry?”*

He was trying to comfort me, but I was beyond consolation. In fact, it took me a couple of years to share this whole episode with my family back in Malaysia.

The next day, when I met Chan, he was a completely transformed being, as evidenced by what he was wearing and how he spoke with love and humility. I marveled at his transformation. I, too, had a transformation.

**I felt that spirituality is not for the casual and the complacent.** The surgical incision



Swami did was painful, but the experience **empowered me to have a deeper and more serious perspective on spirituality.** I felt my inhibitions were stripped. I decided I would simply plunge into the activities of the Sai Center.

That gift of an interview indeed had provided Chan with an inner view, while the denial of the same interview gave me an inner view also.

### **Interview at Last**

After that ‘interview-denial,’ I plunged into different activities at my Sai Center. Strangely, the more active I became at the Sai Center, the more my love for Swami grew. Sai activities became an obsession. Though I was a research student completing my master’s and PhD at different Universities, 80% of my time was spent at the Sai Center.

My father was worried. So were many of my relatives. Their advice to me was the same, “Stop spending so much time in this Sai Center. Focus on your education and career...”

I did not mind their well-intentioned advice. But I was helpless. The love I felt toward Swami and His work was simply unstoppable.

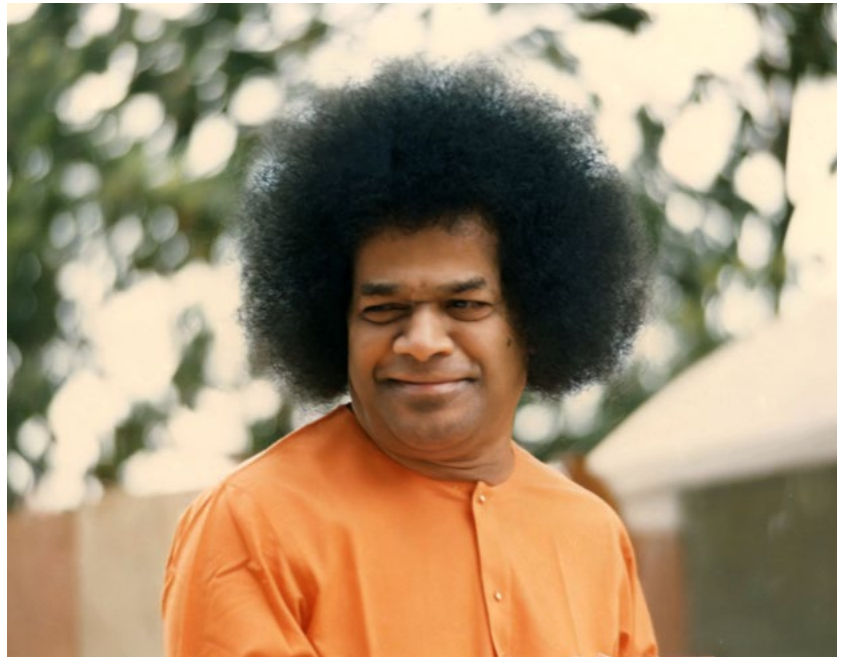
Swami had told me during that first trip that I ‘had time’ (to get an interview). That time turned out to be 12 years! Yes, I got my first interview, along with my wife, after 12 long years! During this time period, one of the activities I was deeply involved in was scripting dramas to be presented to Swami in Prasanthi Nilayam. I was blessed to be involved in 12 drama productions, all of which Swami watched and enjoyed.

Swami took me and my wife into the inner interview room. When I saw Him there, so close and available to me, I broke down. I began shedding profuse tears. **I felt like a river that had reached the sea. Love**

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**Devotion means placing Swami as the ideal and ensuring that every action we take pleases Him.**

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emanated in surging waves from my heart, and as I laid my head on His lap, I cried happy tears like I had never done in my life before.

“Ay! My gown is getting wet!” Swami said.

I was unable to speak, and my wife spoke on my behalf.

“Swami, he loves you a lot...”

Swami smiled. He patted me on my head. I felt salvation. I felt blessed. But every interview is an inner view. **Swami is a perfectionist and is constantly striving for our evolution.**

He said, “*Emotion is one thing. Devotion is another. Emotion is important, but devotion is most important.*”

I understood that while emotions overwhelm us momentarily, devotion is a life-long commitment. **Devotion means placing Swami as the ideal and ensuring that every action we take pleases Him.** That is the message of my first interview with Swami, which I carry in my heart to this day—*Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham*.

**Dr. Suresh Govind**   
MALAYSIA



**Dr. Suresh Govind** is a former professor and Head of the Department of Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya. He has received many awards, including the prestigious Malaysian Toray Science Award. Dr. Suresh Govind has served in the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) for over three decades in various positions, including the National Council President of Malaysia. Dr. Suresh Govind serves as a member of the Prasanthi Council, chair of the Sri Sathya Sai Scriptural Studies Committee of the SSSIO, and leads the SAI 100 program, which has picked up momentum in several countries.

A glowing, wireframe lotus flower is the central focus, radiating light in shades of purple, pink, and yellow. It is set against a magical forest background with a waterfall, mossy rocks, and a stream. The scene is filled with soft, ethereal light and floating particles.

# The Many Miracles of Sathya Sai



## **THE FIRST TIME I HEARD OF BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA WAS IN THE LATE 1970S**

while in college. Unfortunately, I did not take Him seriously and even made fun of Him, influenced by what I read in the newspapers about fake Babas who had cheated their followers. I thought Sathya Sai, too, was one of them. Additionally, His claim of being God in the Kali Yuga was impossible for me to comprehend.

### **Why Fear When I Am Here**

In the 1950s and 1960s, I grew up in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Brunei as my father was a soldier in the 6th QEO Gurkha Rifles of the British Army. My mother was a school-teacher in the same battalion. Sometimes, when I played with my friends, there would be situations where we would need help solving problems or issues. I would remark, "Why fear when I am here?" to make the mood lighter. I felt proud for coming up with a catchy phrase without realizing that I was actually using Swami's assurance to His devotees!

From childhood, I have been keen on serving the community and wanted to become a doctor. But, considering the age limit, other technical challenges, and course prerequisites, I could not get into a medical college. My mother advised me to take up teaching as a profession and apply for British Army schools as she had. Though that was the last thing I wanted to do, I eventually took up teaching as a career and developed a passion for the profession. In 1987, I was selected for a teaching post in a British Army school in Hong Kong.

My experience with accepting Swami was similar to my choosing a career in teaching, although much later in life. Considering Him God was the last thing I wanted to do, though my parents had accepted Him as such.

## **Swami's Master Plan Unfolds**

In December 1989, I got married to Sarita. She had faith in Swami as she witnessed Swami's miracles first-hand at her own home in India as a child. So, before she flew to Hong Kong to start our life together, my father gifted her a large picture of Swami. But I did not allow my wife to place that picture in our shrine!

In 1992, after a brief stint at the British Army School in Brunei, I was promoted and posted in Hong Kong, where my college friend, Urmila, became my colleague. She was a follower of Baba and encouraged me to read books on Swami. She even lent me some books from her collection. As I read these books, my antipathy toward Him turned to curiosity, and I gradually gained faith. We also started experiencing His miracles at home. Over time, with a small group of friends, we started holding Sai *bhajans* weekly. Urmila was instrumental in not only introducing us to Swami but also teaching us bhajans and sacred chants.

### **Swami Grants Darshan in Hong Kong**

One of the many miracles we experienced was in 1995 when our eldest son, Amodh, suffered from a very high fever of 103-104°F for several days. He was just over three years old, and the medicines were not working at all. One night, my wife woke me up at 2 AM, very worried about Amodh's condition. I promised to take him to the doctor the next morning, but she continued her prayers, holding on to Swami.

The next morning, we were in for a pleasant surprise. Amodh had no fever; he had fully recovered and was playing by himself.

**Pointing to Swami's photo, the three-year-old child told us that Sathya Sai Baba had come out from there at night and gave him a spoonful of water to drink.** "Sai Baba went to each and every room in the house. Then, He returned to the bedroom and went back into the same photo on the wall..."

## Swami can give darshan to His devotees in any country, even far away, at any time.

How could a child make up such a story and narrate what happened in such detail?

**We realized that it was our compassionate Bhagawan who came, gave *darshan*, and cured our son of a high fever.**

### Swami's Blessings can do Wonders

I always wanted a daughter, but when my wife gave birth to two sons in 1991 and 1992, I lost all hope. Then, in 1994, when we were living in Hong Kong, my wife became pregnant for the third time. One day, Urmila, my college friend and colleague, visited us at home with a handkerchief, which Swami had blessed. She knew we wanted a daughter. So, she asked my wife to rub the handkerchief on her belly and told her that Swami's blessings could do wonders. But we had our doubts and were not confident it would help.

Dispelling all doubts, lo and behold, our daughter, Surina, was born in September of that year to our greatest joy but much to the surprise of the doctor and the medical staff. The nurses then shared the reason for their surprise with my wife, that the doctor had told them in confidence much earlier in her pregnancy that it was going to be a boy this time, too. **We not only thanked Swami but also realized that Swami knows our innermost thoughts and desires and that His blessings can do wonders.**

### When Swami calls us, He makes the Impossible Possible

In 2002, my mother was ill with heart problems, and my wife, Sarita, traveled with my youngest son, Ajitesh, from Brunei to Nepal to take my mother to the Super Specialty

Hospital in Puttaparthi. Sarita and Ajitesh traveled with my parents to Puttaparthi for the first time. The doctors in Super Specialty did all the necessary tests the same day and were surprised to see that my mother was able to endure such a long journey with only 15% of her heart working. My family was blessed to have Swami's *darshan* before returning to Nepal. **We realized when Swami calls you, the impossible becomes possible.**

The same year, I had a strong desire to visit Puttaparthi, but a few days before I went to Nepal, I discovered that direct flights to Bangalore by the then Royal Nepal Airlines



were discontinued. Although disappointed, I was determined to reach Puttaparthi via any flight. But to my great and pleasant surprise, on reaching Kathmandu, I found that Royal Nepal Airlines had just resumed direct flights to Bangalore. This was convenient for me because I was traveling alone and for the first time to Puttaparthi. I spent a few days in Puttaparthi and had Swami's *darshan* before flying back to Kathmandu. After reaching Kathmandu, I was further surprised to find out that Royal Nepal Airlines had decided to stop direct flights to Bangalore once again. **This was when I realized when Swami calls you, He makes all the arrangements.**

### Swami Feeds Birds in Brunei

We were in Brunei in 2009. My 17-year-old second son, Ishan, was visiting us from his boarding school for the weekend. As he was getting ready for breakfast, from the corner of his eyes, he saw someone standing on the porch outside our living room. As he turned around to see who it was, he saw Swami in His orange robe, standing and feeding the birds with rice grains, which we did every morning at the same spot. Just as Ishan called out Swami's name, He disappeared. When we all came running into the living room, Ishan described in detail what he saw.

Who says that one has to travel to some place to 'see' Swami? **Swami can give *darshan* to His devotees in any country, even far away, at any time.**

### Swami's Protection is Forever

In 2017, I retired from the British Army school in Brunei and, by Swami's grace, opened a restaurant in Kuala Belait, Brunei. On December 1, 2020, we drove from Kuala Belait to the capital city of Bandar Seri Begawan, about 110 kilometers away. I always play Sai *bhajans* in the car and usually drive very fast because, otherwise, I would feel sleepy.

So, I was driving around 160-170 km per hour on the highway. Halfway along the journey, I heard a slight popping sound behind me on the right-hand side of the car, but I continued driving. Suddenly, it struck me that, perhaps, one of the tires had punctured. So, I stopped my car on the side of the highway to check the tires, and to my horror, I saw that the rear tire was not only punctured but completely shredded. I wondered how my car did not go out of control, overturn, or even wobble at such high speed! It was the Sai *bhajans* that had miraculously drawn Sai's grace!

**As he turned around to see who it was, he saw Swami in His orange robe, standing and feeding the birds with rice grains.**

My next problem was getting the spare tire out because it was kept under the floor in the rear of the Toyota Innova I was driving. My poor eyesight made it difficult to insert the retrieving rod into a groove in a small hole. As I was struggling, suddenly, a van stopped behind us. The Indonesian driver and his friend got out and offered to help, saying that he saw us stranded and took a U-turn to come and help us! **As he changed the tire, my wife noticed his van's number plate (KH 7830), which surprisingly had the same digits as our vehicle (KJ 3087) but in a different sequence!** After he had changed the tire, we offered them some money, which they refused. My wife then offered some

grapes, which they happily accepted. They told us they visit Kuala Belait twice weekly to deliver orders. We invited them to have free lunch at our restaurant during their next visit and noted their phone number. Though we sent them several messages via WhatsApp, inviting them to lunch at our restaurant, they never responded. And, to this day, Sarita and I wonder if it was Shirdi Sai Baba and Swami who came to our rescue that day in the form of the two Indonesian gentlemen.

### Gold Chain Lost in Brunei Found in Nepal

In August 2019, Sarita had to travel from Brunei to Dharamshala, India, via New Delhi because her mother was seriously ill. On the day of her flight, Sarita decided to remove her gold necklace which was presented to her by my mother after our wedding. She kept it in a container on the dresser. After several weeks, she returned to Brunei and wanted to wear the necklace, but it was nowhere to be found! She and my daughter, Surina, both searched for it everywhere but in vain. Sarita finally decided to seek Swami's help through prayer and picking a 'Yes-No'

chits, as many Sai devotees do when in a difficult or unfortunate situation. Swami's answer to her was that the necklace would be found which set her mind to rest.

Two years later, in December 2021, Sarita went to Kathmandu to get some important documents we needed in Brunei. One day, she decided to sort out some of our suitcases and found a box in one of the suitcases. When she opened the box, she discovered a small yellow jewelry purse. In Brunei, all jewelry shops pack the jewelry when we purchase it in small purses with the shop's name clearly printed on it. But this purse had no typical branding with the shop's name. **She curiously opened it to see what was inside. To her utter amazement, it was the gold necklace that was missing in Brunei!**

How could a gold necklace lost in Brunei be found in Kathmandu? I believe it was exactly like how my faith, which was lost in my head, was found in my heart, through Swami's unconditional love and grace.

Mr. Rajesh Thapa  
SPAIN 



*Mr. Rajesh Thapa completed his Bachelor of Science at St Joseph's College in Darjeeling, India, in 1979. Then he returned to Kathmandu, Nepal, where he worked in various jobs. He completed a Bachelor of Education in 1984 and joined a British Army school in Hong Kong in 1987. In 1995 he moved to another British Army school in Brunei as Deputy Headteacher. In 2017, he retired and opened a Nepali restaurant in Kuala Belait, Brunei, with his wife, Sarita. In March 2023, they closed the restaurant and moved to Spain, where they are members of Sri Sathya Sai Centre in Madrid.*



# Calling for Your Articles, Poems, Audios, Videos!



Anything that is associated with 'His' Story alone is worthwhile to preserve as 'History'. We are all blessed to have experienced the love and grace of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and continue to experience the same in our daily lives. That is why Swami is our Eternal Companion.

The editorial team of the 'Sathya Sai–The Eternal Companion' magazine warmly welcomes articles and poems based on authentic personal experiences with the Avatar of the Age, our beloved Bhagawan. You may send in your contributions as a document, audio file, or video file. Apart from being published in the magazine (if selected), these contributions may also be published in the SSSIO's digital media channels. All of these contributions will be safely stored for posterity in the SSSIO's digital archives by the SSSIO Archive Committee.

It is time to open up your hearts and share the treasures gathered from Swami. These treasures only grow by sharing.

Please upload materials at: <https://sathyas.ai/upload>

# Why Fear When Dear Sai is Here?

Venkatagiri Town Palace  
November 8, 1962

Vijayamma,

Receiving your sweet letter evoked in Me both compassion and happiness.

As it is said,

*"Samsara sarpa drashtanaam yeka maevahi bhaeshajam  
Sarvada sarva kaaleshu sarvathra Hari chinthanam"*

(For the one bitten by the snake called the mundane world, there is only one medicine that is efficacious. It is the recitation of the name of God at all times and at all places.)

Having the right medicine for that snake bite within reach, alas, why this worry! It is like someone who went all the way to Golkonda (a renowned fort) in search of a pebble.

Why do you get disheartened at such small things? Do not give any scope for losing peace. Achieve peace through the repetition of the name of Sai. Bring that Sai into your cool mind. Like a drowning boat, why do you fear while this endearing Sai is there as a companion to rescue you? For Sai, your happiness is everything. Sai will soon give you supreme peace and happiness. Come near and wait for the shower of My compassion. It takes a few seconds to even close and open your eyes. You need to have patience and forbearance to get rid of hypocrisy and negativity. Because I do not have enough time I am ending the letter quickly. I will talk to you when I come to Madras (Chennai today).

With Blessings,

The indweller of your heart,

*Baba*



# LOVE IN ACTION



## ARGENTINA Sharing the Sweetness of Divinity

In a discourse delivered during the Summer Course in 1977, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, *“If an ant locates sugar in some place, that ant is not going immediately to eat the sugar and fill its stomach in a selfish manner. This ant, which has located the sugar, will go around and collect ten more ants, and all of them together will go and eat that sugar. Look at the broadminded nature of even a small creature like the ant. See, how selfless the ant is and how it tries to help other ants.”*

Having found the sweetest and most loving being, our dear Swami, it is incumbent upon devotees to share the message and love of the Avatar of the Age, which will benefit everyone. One such happy event occurred in the city of Mendoza in Argentina on July 6 from 4 to 7 pm. **Everyone was infused with divine love as they attended a meeting titled “A Path of Peace, Love, and Happiness.”** This was a public meeting on the life and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

More than 300 people attended the event, including 11 members of the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization. Swami divinely orchestrated the entire event through the National Council of the SSSIO of Argentina. Most of the attendees were from the Cuyo region, which includes the provinces of San Luis, San Juan, and Mendoza. The event was broadcast on radio, local television, and social networks.

Sharing their rich experiences with Sathya Sai Baba, Mr. Claudio María Domínguez, a renowned communicator and journalist, and Mr. Leonardo Gutter, Chairman of Sri Sathya Sai



World Foundation, conveyed the essence of Swami’s teachings. This inspired people to ask for many books and photographs on Swami, and *vibuthi*. The attendees were touched and inspired by the divine love and eternal message of our Lord Sai.

The meeting was extended beyond the scheduled time to allow further dialogue between speakers and the audience. After the meeting ended, there was a debriefing session where an evaluation was made of the preparation process and the event itself. **All SSSIO members unanimously felt that the time was ripe to intensify the efforts to spread Swami’s message as people were searching for true spirituality.** News of the event spread far and wide through social media networks.



## HONG KONG

### The Gift of Time for Elder Care Home

Giving is not restricted to material objects alone. The gift of time and energy is very valuable and also highly appreciated! On July 27, 2024, eight Sai Young Adults (YAs) visited a home for the elderly in Shek Kip Mei (Hong Kong), volunteering their time to serve and spread divine love and happiness.

The day began with light stretching as well as relaxation and breathing exercises suited for the elderly. Then, the YAs choreographed a sitting dance for them. They provided each resident with toothpaste, towels, and tissues.



They also prepared egg-free and low-sugar cupcakes for the elderly to relish. After the service was completed, **many of the YAs discovered that seeing a smile on the face of the elderly through sharing love one-to-one and heart-to-heart was very gratifying.**



## SRI LANKA

### Providing Medical Care at the Esala Festival

The Esala Perahera festival is celebrated annually in Sri Lanka. This year, it was celebrated from August 11 to 21. This 10-day celebration honors the Sacred Tooth Relic (of Lord Buddha) and the four 'guardian' deities: Lord Natha, Lord Vishnu, Lord Kataragama, and Goddess Pattini.

During the festival, the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) of Sri Lanka held a free medical camp, supported by a team of eight doctors, six paramedics, and 15 volunteers. Over the three days of the camp, more than 720 people were treated for a wide range of illnesses. The team provided effective and compassionate care for respiratory infections, gastrointestinal illnesses, urinary tract infections, allergies, eye and skin infections, asthma, diabetes mellitus, thyroid disorders, and cardiovascular diseases. The camp also addressed the treatment of joint and muscle pains and emergency cases like diabetic ketoacidosis and chest pain in patients with a suspected cardiac history. **The SSSIO Sri Lanka**



**remains committed to this sacred service, embodying the values of love, compassion, and selflessness.**

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

# Lost and Found

**AS THE EMBODIMENT OF LOVE, SRI SATHYA SAI BABA IS MORE THAN A GURU OR GOD FOR ME.**

He is a friend who has my best interests at heart and a guide to motivate me toward the path of right living (*dharma*). Regardless of my situation or the circumstances around me, I've always believed and witnessed Swami's magic in leading me through any hindrance. In 2010, I was blessed to see Swami in His beautiful form before He took Mahasamadhi in 2011. Though I was only five years old then, I can still picture looking at Swami giving *darshan* in Kulwant Hall. **His orange robe and loving smile still live in my head and heart.** I did not realize it then, but I was blessed to see God! I know that now because **although He left His physical form, Swami always protects me.** I just need to recognize this fact with gratitude.

.....  
**“I am fortunate to know Swami in this lifetime and even more blessed to grow up in His garden as an SSE student.”**

### **The Special Boat Ride**

During Christmas 2019, our SSE (Sai Spiritual Education) teacher at the Glendale Sai Center, in California, USA, Mr. Srinivas Manthripragada, reached out to my younger sister and I to participate in a Christmas play at Prasanthi Nilayam. Considering it a wonderful opportunity to express our love and gratitude to Swami, we readily agreed and enthusiastically prepared for the play with other actors. Thanks to Swami, the play went well. It was a great joy to offer Swami such a memorable performance.

While returning to America, I was flying with my mother and sister as my father had to leave a week prior for work. During our trip, we had an eight-hour layover in Bangkok, Thailand. Instead of sitting idle at the airport, we decided to fulfill our sightseeing aspirations by taking a day trip through Bangkok, visiting the city's key attractions. So, we negotiated with a travel agency at the airport that organized a driver to take us around the city to visit two Buddha temples and then go on a fun boat ride on the Chao Phraya River. They drove us around and waited with the vehicle until we finished sightseeing. When we arrived at the boat ride, we hopped on the boat at a dock by the entrance of the attraction. As we all sat peacefully in the boat, the helmsman calmly began rowing. The boat picked up more people along the way. It was a

beautiful experience to be in nature on this 'hop-on, hop-off' boat. We got the opportunity to witness the vibrant Thai culture during this pleasant trip.

### **Lost in Bangkok!**

We were so mesmerized by this experience that we stayed on the boat for a very long time. Eventually, the helmsman dropped us off at a dock, which we thought was the same place we had boarded. But we were actually on the other side of the river! After wandering around and searching for our taxi driver, we realized that we were lost.

Instantly, panic set in, my adrenaline started rushing, and my heart started pounding. We had a flight to catch, and our luggage was in the taxi we had hired. We could not take any other taxi to the airport! My mom, sister, and I tried asking for help, but no one spoke English. We thought we could call the driver as we had his phone number, but there was no signal. It was pure stress that the three of us were experiencing.

For about twenty minutes, we were frantically trying to figure out how to locate the taxi in this foreign country. Walking up to a row of shops, we went down the line, asking each shop owner for help. However, each response was either “no” or “what?” About halfway through the row of shops, we started to lose hope because no one seemed to understand what we were asking.



From left to right, author Anvitha Marlapati and Swetha Palakur in a play during the 2019 Christmas Program at Prasanthi Nilayam

In desperation, we started praying to Swami for help.

### **Sathya Sai, The Eternal Companion**

Within a few minutes, to our surprise, we heard the chant, “Om, Om, Om.” We had no clue where the sound was coming from, but we started following it until we realized that there was a loudspeaker at the last shop at the end of the row, playing “Om, Om, Om.” And right there, in front of us, was the beautiful form of our dear Swami! There was a picture of Swami right next to an idol of Lord Ganesha. **Immediately, we all felt relieved that Swami was with us.**

We asked the shopkeeper if he could help us. Since our phones had no signal, he took the driver’s phone number from us and immediately dialed him, giving him directions to where we were. Within ten minutes, the driver pulled up in front of the shop, and we safely made it to the airport to board our flight to Los Angeles. All the way to the airport, **we thought**

**about Swami’s timely response and rescue, thanking Him with gratitude.**

### **Swami is Just a Prayer Away**

Stuck in Bangkok, I was sure we would miss our flight. We were all by ourselves with nobody to help us. But when we called on Swami for help, everything was quickly sorted out! **Swami definitely takes more than a thousand steps toward us when we take one step toward Him.**

I have learned now that Swami is everywhere. He is omnipresent. **No matter where I go, He will always be there to protect me, guide me, and show me the way.** It is up to me to connect with Swami and keep Him in my heart for He is forever my guardian. **I am fortunate to know Swami in this lifetime and even more blessed to grow up in His garden as an SSE student.**

I pray to Swami for the continued opportunity to participate in His mission of spreading love and serving others.

**Ms. Anvitha Marlapati**   
USA



*Ms. Anvitha Marlapati was born in a family dedicated to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. She resides in California and is a student at the University of California, Berkeley. She attended Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) in Southern California and regularly attended the Arcadia Center. Anvitha participated in many SSSIO–USA pilgrimage trips to India. In 2019, she had the opportunity to participate in a Christmas play offered by Sai devotees from the USA. Inspired by Swami’s mission of “Love All, Serve All,” Anvitha sincerely practices Swami’s teachings and participates in the activities of the SSSIO.*



# Popping Seeds

Ms. Patty DiFazio, USA

Karmas are like little seeds  
Stored in a silo by the barn  
Many seasons of grain are stored  
From the many crops grown on the farm.

Old seeds are like our past karmas  
We can't control what we get  
The new crop is strong and healthy  
Good karmas; good pay back; we're all set.

Every action creates a reaction  
But this body has got to act  
Better to garner good karmas  
Than bad. We agree that that's a fact.

So round and round on the wheel we go  
Samsaras keep us spinning  
We can't seem to jump off the wheel  
Even if we are winning.

Pop the karmic seeds my friend  
Like mustard seeds in oil  
Pop them so they won't germinate  
To another life of toil.  
Pop them with the oil of knowledge  
The Truth about the Self.  
The Truth will set you free my friend  
You've gained the ultimate wealth.



# *from the* International Sai Young Adults



The SSSIO International Sai Young Adults (YA) Leaders Retreat of 2024, themed “Make your Role Roar,” took place from July 26 to 29, 2024, in the vibrant city of Athens, Greece. **Approximately 55 YA leaders participated, representing 25 countries**, including Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, Hong Kong SAR, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and the USA. All attendees shared a common desire to come closer to Swami and connect with other YAs who share the same love for Him.

On the first day, the retreat started with a beautiful Omkar and energetic bhajans, followed by a warm welcome by Ms. Vahinie Pillay (International YA Coordinator) and Ms. Shruthi Vijayakumar (Deputy International YA Coordinator), who recounted the wonderful episode in which Swami blessed the entire retreat program with the manifestation of His sacred Vibhuti at the altar of Ms. Vahinie Pillay.

The program started with a creative activity called “The Hat Exercise,” where the YA’s creative skills were put to the test with a twist. Participants were instructed to create their hats by exploring the responsibilities that they most identify themselves with, in a creative way. They were tasked with creating hats using materials such as cardboard, markers, and colors and writing on them the qualities or roles that define them in their daily lives. At the end of the activity, they offered the hats to Swami, symbolically surrendering all their responsibilities at the lotus feet of Swami, asking Him to guard and guide them every step of the way.



Following Ms. Vahinie, Ms. Shruthi and Ms. Ingrid introduced the key objectives of the YA program and the various subcommittees. They emphasized how all the YA programs nurture collaboration, unity, simplicity, inclusion, and relevance by setting the right examples for all the YAs to follow.

The day progressed with Leadership Session 1, focusing on connection and Self-confidence, led by Ms. Sai Usha Haridas, International YA Advisor. **She guided the YAs in exploring the meaning of leadership, identifying their audience, understanding the significance of leadership, and highlighting the importance of Swami's teachings on Self-confidence and its essential role in life.** Swami emphasizes that without Self-confidence, no one can achieve their goal, underscoring the necessity of a direct connection with Him to cultivate Self-confidence and effective leadership.

In the evening, a fun quiz called "Saipar-dize" was organized. Two teams—men and ladies—answered general knowledge questions about bhajans and Swami's life. The night was special and enjoyable, ending with some YAs sharing reflections regarding the day's events.

Day two started early with Veda chanting and devotional singing by the seashore. Following a delicious lunch, Ms.



Padmashree and Ms. Namratha led the second session, "Leading by Example in Our Own Lives." During this session, the YAs reflected on the significance of being strong leaders by example and discussed the challenges they encounter and strategies for effectively dealing with them. The day's activities wrapped up with a game night, where the groups collaborated to uncover a hidden phrase.

Day three started with powerful chants and mesmerizing bhajans by the YAs, followed by exercises led separately for men and ladies. After a hearty breakfast, Leadership Session 3, titled "Leading in the Organization—Challenges," took centerstage, delving deep into the challenges YAs face in their leadership roles within the SSSIO. As the team collaborated, a wealth of innovative ideas emerged from the environment of active listening and the sharing of effective practices.

A pivotal moment of the day unfolded during a group meeting, where YAs candidly addressed pressing issues impacting their performance, including family dynamics, work challenges, strategies for motivating today's YAs, communication barriers, and fostering relationships with elders. **This vital dialogue sparked a flurry of ideas aimed at enhancing the Organization in their respective countries, regions, and zones, empowering YA lead-**



**ers to inspire young people to connect with Swami through motivation and exemplary leadership.**

The YAs seized a remarkable opportunity to share their expertise, skills, and insights during the dynamic ‘unconferencing’ session, expertly facilitated by Mr. Sree and Ms. Smiriti. During the event, around 15 engaging sessions unfolded, each tailored to ignite curiosity and foster learning. Topics ranged from innovative problem-solving techniques to the soulful experience of learning Spanish bhajans and from expressive movement and drawing to meditation practices. YAs also had the chance to immerse themselves in the vibrant rhythms of bhangra, a traditional dance from North India, and deepen their connection to Swami through soulful bhajans. This unique format allowed every YA to choose sessions that resonated with their interests, creating a rich tapestry of shared knowledge and experiences that empowered them to learn, connect, and grow together.

On the fourth and final day of the retreat, the atmosphere was charged with anticipation as the day began with uplifting devotional songs and a hearty breakfast. The pivotal strategy session, “Our Future—How Do We Get There?” kicked off, bringing together YAs in zone-specific groups. They

delved into critical discussions about their unique needs, the resources required, and how YA leaders can leverage international initiatives for mutual benefit. Participants shared inspiring case studies from other countries that have successfully rolled out impactful service activities alongside innovative strategies to energize the YAs to engage in community service and study Swami’s teachings.

The retreat culminated in a vibrant, joyful Sai party, a celebration filled with singing, dancing, and laughter that showcased the richness of their diverse cultures and languages worldwide. Heartfelt gratitude was extended to everyone who contributed to the success of the retreat and to each participant for creating unforgettable memories.

As the retreat ended, YAs shared one memorable personal takeaway thought. Here are some of their heartfelt reflections:

“The profound vibration of connection to Swami, the love and unity of everyone as one family. The disciplined environment made me feel truly blessed to be in Swami’s presence.”

“I am filled with deep gratitude for the chance to connect with individuals from around the globe—people from countries I’ve only learned about in school. The



retreat was genuinely inspiring, and I left feeling more grounded and centered.”

“The insights and takeaways from this retreat have deepened my understanding of leadership, self-confidence, and surrender to Swami. It provided a moment of reflection on how I exercise my leadership role and target areas for improvement. **On a personal level, I feel re-energized, reconnected, and charged with a renewed sense of purpose. I find myself drawing closer to Swami each day, guided by His messages of ‘Love All, Serve All’ and ‘Help Ever, Hurt Never,’ which resonate with me in every conversation and action.**”

“It was fascinating to learn how passionate young adults from different parts of the world are spreading Swami’s message within their communities.”

“I truly enjoyed the breakout sessions, the ‘unconferencing’ format, and the strategy discussions.”

In conclusion, the SSSIO International Sai Young Adults Leaders Retreat 2024 was a transformative experience that fostered unity, creativity, and leadership among the participants. Through engaging activities, insightful discussions, and heartfelt connections, the YAs left Athens not only with new skills and strategies but also with a deeper connection to Swami and a shared vision for the future. **The retreat served as a powerful reminder of the impact that dedicated young leaders can have in their communities and the importance of collaboration and support within the Sai community worldwide.**



# YOUNG ADULTS RETREAT COL MBIA

On June 8, 9, and 10, 2024, a Sai Young Adults (YAs) Retreat was held in Santa Veronica, in Colombia's Atlantic province. Around 54 YAs from Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador attended the retreat, among whom five were new to Swami. The national retreat was attended by Mr. Sergio Espindola, the Chair of Zone 2B (South America), Mrs. Maria Cecilia Villamizar, the Central Coordinator of Region 22 (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela), Mrs. Ada Espindola and Mr. Marcelo Berenstein, Zone 2B YA Advisors, Brian Jaramillo, the Zone 2B YA Coordinator, Ms. Zaky Nader and Ms. Eliana Ramon, the President and Vice-President of the National Council of Colombia, as well as the National YA Co-Coordinators of Colombia.

The retreat began with a welcome, offering, and presentation by Ms. Zaky Nader and Ms. Eliana Ramon. The program included Omkar, morning meditation,

devotional singing, talks, discussion circles, gender-segregated sea swimming, a bonfire, circular dance, and an eco-park excursion. During registration, the YAs signed up to participate in the discussions from the following focus areas: "Managing Emotions and Connecting with God in Daily Life," "Sai Emotional Survival Kit," "Ethical and Spiritual Dilemmas: How to Face Them from Sai Baba's Teachings," and "Spiritual Realization: A Challenge in Today's Society."

A bonfire with devotional singing, along with two sessions of Omkar chanting and morning meditation, was organized by the seaside. Furthermore, the retreat included a cultural event in which everyone was invited to sing and dance to the reverential song "Four Elements."

On June 10, the YAs were divided into three groups led by Ms. Ada Espindola, Mr. Marcelo Berenstein, and Mr. Sergio Espin-



dola. During these study circles, some YAs opened their hearts and shared the challenges they faced in their lives.

The retreat concluded with an excursion to the eco-park Ciénaga de Mallorquín,

located at Barranquilla's northernmost tip. This retreat was a special occasion to energize, motivate, and share experiences in a safe space with other Sai YAs.



**Ms. Shalani Kumaran**  
UK



## Returning the Favor

As I prepared for the leaders' retreat in Athens, Greece, a question weighed heavily on my mind: "Swami, I have been part of the YA community for a long time, holding numerous leadership roles. Now, as my term with the YA Editorial team ends, I wonder what purpose I have in attending this retreat. Why have you chosen me for this experience when I will no longer hold a leadership position?"

Despite my hope for an answer, I found no answers in the initial days of the retreat. Sessions came and went, yet the same questions echoed in my mind: What am I doing here? What is in store for me next? What do you want me to do, Swami? The silence felt deafening.

On the third day, we gathered with the YAs of our zone to discuss how to reconnect with fellow YAs, the challenges we face in our respective countries, and the pivotal moments that define our leadership within the organization. As each participant began sharing, I felt Swami's presence guiding me, channeling emotions I had never fully expressed. Stepping out of my comfort zone, I spoke about how my journey as a leader had transformed me into a stronger, more resilient, and grounded individual. **With every word, I realized how grateful I was for the rewarding and challenging moments that shaped my leadership experience. Swami had molded me, testing my limits, breaking me down, and then lifting me up to strive for more.**

At that moment, a voice within me resonated: "I have shaped you into a great leader; now it is your turn to return the favor." Confused, I pondered, "Return the favor to whom?"

On the fourth day, we gathered again, concentrating on how we could enhance our leadership abilities and inspire the next generation of YA leaders in our respective countries and zones. It was in this session that I gained clarity: Swami's next mission for me is to nurture and guide emerging leaders by sharing the skills He has bestowed upon me. **I am called upon to impart my experience and learnings to these new leaders, just as He has shaped me, teaching them not only the keys to successful leadership but also the importance of embodying humility, resilience, and strength.** In today's context, leadership has often become



a mere title, frequently linked to entitlement rather than the genuine responsibility and service it should represent.

As I reflect on my contributions to the YA column in the Eternal Companion magazine, I see how this platform has been instrumental in shaping my leadership identity. I am immensely grateful for the guidance and support I have received from Swami, which has empowered me to embrace my role with passion and commitment. With renewed clarity and purpose, I am excited to embark on this next chapter of my journey, ready to inspire and uplift those who will follow us in carrying the torch.



## Ocean of Music

*"Life is a song-sing it."*


–Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Ocean of Music subcommittee has offered a garland of melodies at the Divine lotus feet of our beloved Bhagawan. The latest album is now available on all our media platforms, and can be accessed on [Deezer](#), [iTunes](#), [Spotify](#), [SoundCloud](#), and [YouTube](#).

Follow the @saiyoungadults accounts on social media

 Facebook  Instagram  Telegram  Threads  X (Twitter)

 Spotify

 Mailing List



**Sai Young Adults**

<https://sathyasai.org/ya>

[yacoordinator@sathyasai.org](mailto:yacoordinator@sathyasai.org)



*Sathya Sai School*

# Bahía de Caraquez Ecuador

Nobody would have imagined that 1998, with its disastrous earthquakes and El Niño-generated storms, would be a good year for the coastal city of Bahía de Caraquez in the Ecuadorian province of Manabí in South America. When these disasters struck, volunteers from the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) plunged into service and relief work in the affected areas. During the course of service, they were inspired to do something for the affected children as part of their long-term efforts for rehabilitation and a return to normalcy. That selfless thought was the seed for a Sathya Sai School in Ecuador.

## Power Of Selfless Thought

The pure thoughts of the South American devotees began to take shape in a most miraculous manner. A suitable plot of land was identified for the school, but the landowner wanted a price 60 times higher than what the devotees had planned to invest! Unable to pay that ludicrously high amount, **they decided to let go—and let God take over!**



In February 1999, several devotees from Ecuador traveled to India to have Swami's *darshan* and seek blessings for procuring the land. Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says that a pure thought from a pure heart is more effective than a *mantra*. When the devotees returned, they were in for a pleasant 'surprise.' The landowner came to offer the land, totally free of cost, as a donation for noble work! He had just recovered from a severe health crisis after undergoing multiple open-heart surgeries. This experience actually 'opened' his heart to consider this donation more as an opportunity to serve rather than a monetary gift. **The devotees were overjoyed with this miraculous transformation of the heart and Swami's blessings.**

### The Divine Assurance

In September 2000, the devotees were back to see Swami again. On September 26, as Swami gracefully glided into the hall granting *darshan*, Mr. Alfredo Harmsen got up on his knees. Swami walked straight to him. Stuttering, he asked, "Swami, would You... You bless...bless the Sai School Project in Bahía?"

"Eh?"

"Swami, would You bless the Sai School Project in Bahía?" he repeated, taking a bit more courage this time.

"Where?"

"In Bahía, Ecuador, Swami."

Swami then said in a very firm and clear voice, "*Do it. I bless.*"

Swami then waved His right hand and materialized *vibhuti* for the devotees. The project had been blessed, nay, commanded by the Avatar of the Age.

### The Divine Word Bears Fruit

Architect Fernando Hinojosa, who started planning the school's construction in December 2000, stated that it was the first time that he had carried out a project inspired by divine love. The drawings and plans were drawn up based on the five human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Nonviolence.

As of 2024, the school has completed 24 years of educating children from 4 to 17 years old. There are 430 students, with about 30 children in each class, and more than two dozen teachers with master's degrees. **Needless to say, the school ranks high in academic achievement. But what impresses the parents and community the most is the students' adherence to human values and participation in regular community service activities.** The school provides education completely free of charge.



The Sathya Sai School is part of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Trust of Ecuador. It is supported mostly by modest contributions from parents, scholarships by sponsors, monthly contributions from companies, and other donors. The supporters feel inspired by the school's environment and provide heartfelt support.

Listed below is an abbreviated timeline of the school's achievements over the past 24 years:

**1998**

Sathya Sai devotees rendered service in Bahía de Caraquez, which was affected by El Niño and an earthquake ('severe' category) and were inspired to provide long-term assistance to the local children.

**1999**

The landowner miraculously donates the land (which he originally intended to sell for 60 times the price) to build a school.

**2000**

Swami blessed the school project on September 26 with His loving prophetic words, *"Do it, I Bless."*

**2001**

The Sathya Sai School at Bahía de Caraquez began with students starting at the kindergarten level, with plans to add a new higher grade each year.

**2011**

The Sathya Sai School at Bahía de Caraquez became a high school with the addition of Grade 8 to the program.

**2014**

The school became fiscal-missionary (a private school that receives government support for resources, including teachers) after an agreement with the Ministry of Education of the Government of Ecuador.

**2019**

The Directors of the Sathya Sai School were invited to join the National Values Education Board, a legal, civil society institution created to promote education in human values in Ecuador.

**The 1st International Meeting on Education in Human Values was held in Guayaquil** thanks to the collaboration between the National Board of Education with Values, the Sathya Sai School of Bahía de Caraquez, the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (ISSEHV) of Ecuador, and the Ministry of Education of Ecuador.

**2020**

During the year, 14 Open Classes of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Program and 10 Meditation Master Classes were held, resulting in more than 70,000 views.

**The 2nd International Meeting on Education in Human Values** was held online in collaboration with the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (ISSEHV) of Colombia and the Ecuadorian Pedagogy Network.



## 2021

The ISSEVH of Mexico also joined the collaborative team to conduct the “3rd International Meeting on Education in Human Values–Integral Education for Childhood,” which garnered 130,000 views. Later in the year, the 4th international meeting was also held.

## 2022

The Sathya Sai School of Bahía de Caraquez won first place among 50 schools at the 1st International Meeting of Educational Innovation.’ The Ministry of Education organized the meeting in coordination with the Private Technical University of Loja to learn about trends, practices, and innovative educational initiatives from Ecuador and other countries.

## 2023

The 7th International Meeting on Integral Education in Human Values with the theme “Mainstreaming Values for Conscious Citizenship” was held. The Ministry of Education of Ecuador offered to co-organize this event and invited the Ministries of Education of Colombia and Mexico to participate.

## 2024

A meditation room (80% complete) is under construction and will be used for meditation, yoga, workshops, and teacher meetings.

The 8th International Meeting on Integral Education in Human Values, with the theme “Linking Hearts at School to Live in Peace,” was held from September 16 to 18, 2024. Ecuador’s Minister of Education was a speaker at this event.



# LOVE IS GOD



- Poem -

Grace me  
On my dearest Swami,  
I mistakenly waited for you,  
not realising you were here all along.  
My existence bears witness,  
that I have already beheld you,  
my dearest Baba.  
You are everywhere already,  
to grace me.  
I love you Swami,  
I accept you as one with me,  
and I lay my life for you, lord.  
I live to sing your name,  
and to show others your love,  
I shall forever follow your path  
of love my Baba.  
Om Sri Sairam

Aadhi M | Group 3 | USA



# Upcoming SSSIO Events

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

Date of Event	Day(s)	Festival/Event
October 12-13, 2024	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
November 9-10, 2024	Saturday-Sunday	Worldwide Akhanda Bhajan
November 23, 2024	Saturday	99th Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba
December 14-15, 2024	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
December 25, 2024	Wednesday	Christmas



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The Divine comes as Avatar to proclaim the pure, unsullied, and unconditional love of devotees towards God. People may consider that the Avatar's activities include punishment of the wicked, protection of the good, weeding out of unrighteousness and restoration of righteousness. This is how they may look at the Avatar's doings. But that is not the way the Lord sees things. There is nothing bad in God's view. Hence there should be no hatred or ill-will towards any being. It is only when you love all, that you can be said to love God.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
June 12, 1974



**sathyasai.org**

Love All • Serve All  
Help Ever • Hurt Never

