

# Proceedings

of the

## 10<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONFERENCE

10<sup>th</sup> World CONFERENCE  
LOVE is the Source ♥ the Path ♥ the Goal

*Love is*

*the Source ♥ the Path ♥ the Goal*

*Dedicated*

AT THE DIVINE LOTUS FEET OF



BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA



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# Foreword

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is an embodiment of Love who showers His Love on all His creation, transcending time, space, gender, race and religion. He exhorts: **“God is Love; Live in Love”**. He advises us to start the day with love, spend the day with love, and end the day with love—to realise divinity. He says that the best way to love God is to Love All and Serve All.

Bhagawan Baba also tells us that selfless service is the single most efficient and universal tool for understanding, experiencing, and expressing Divine Love. In grateful commemoration of the 90th year of advent of Lord Sathya Sai, the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO) held the 10th World Conference, with the theme: *Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal*.

Two study circle guides, one on Love and another on Service, containing excerpts from Swami’s discourses, were released for in-depth study by Sathya Sai devotees all over the world. The second step was a series of uplifting pre-world conferences held in 16 countries—representing 11 zones of the SSIO. The grand finale was the 10th World Conference, held on the 25th to 27th November in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL), Prasanthi Nilayam campus. The University Auditorium hosted about 900 delegates from approximately 80 countries from all corners of the world.

The programme included talks by members of Prasanthi Council, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, and many others from different countries, cultures, professions, and backgrounds. The focus was on the role of the SSIO, personal *sadhana*, Bhagawan’s teachings, and stories of personal transformation that moved many to tears of joy. The programme also included live musical performances, short skits, and an upbeat theme song which was composed and produced especially for the 10th World Conference.

The SSIO is happy to present a summary of the proceedings of the 10th World Conference for the enjoyment and benefit of the reader.

May Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba bless us and guide us in our spiritual journey from Untruth to Truth, from Darkness to Light, from Death to Immortality.

Jai Sai Ram.

Narendranath Reddy, M.D.  
Chairman, Prasanthi Council

# Resolutions





We are pleased to offer **32 items in the Conference Resolutions** at the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Baba. These action items, recommendations & directions will help not only Sathya Sai devotees, but all spiritual aspirants and newcomers to realise the full potential of the Sathya Sai Avatar's teachings and Divine Guidance.

## 1 IDEAL SATHYA SAI CENTRE

*The Sathya Sai Centre is the nucleus of the SSIO. The function of Centres is to help office-bearers, devotees and new-comers realise their innate divinity, following Baba's teachings.*

- 1 Centres need to host activities to intensify personal Sadhana.
- 2 Centres need to conduct study circles to deepen the understanding of Bhagawan's teachings.
- 3 Centres need to reflect the universality of Sathya Sai's message through appropriate music and devotional singing.

## 2 LEADERSHIP IN THE SSIO

*Leaders of the SSIO should be exemplars of Sathya Sai's teachings. They should practice the human values and lead by personal example.*

- 4 Officers should conduct regular meetings with members to increase awareness of SSIO structures and its activities globally.
- 5 Delegates should present reports in their respective centres of the inspirational stories and projects from the conference and workshops to motivate others and offer opportunities.
- 6 SSIO leadership should conduct comprehensive training of Centre officers.
- 7 Ideal Sai leader should possess the following attributes: **Ability** (skills to perform the task), **Availability** (time and interest) & **Affability** (cheerful with a positive attitude).

## 3 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

*Sathya Sai educational programmes spread Swami's eternal and universal message to the young and the old, in many lands and cultures, to people of diverse faiths and backgrounds. It unites all, under the common umbrella of the 5 human values – supported by Love.*

- 8 ISSEs and Sathya Sai Schools should make greater use of technology for public outreach, educational videos and sharing of resources.
- 9 Educational material in human values and other SSE resources should be translated into more languages for local use.
- 10 The education committee of the SSIO should assist in developing and offering parenting programmes for Sathya Sai Schools, as well as SSE and SSEHV communities.

## 4 ROLE OF WOMEN IN SSIO

*Women are the pillars of society. Their role is often overlooked or not understood properly. Swami has reminded us to give prominent attention to the role of women, for the highest good of all.*

- 11 All family members should recognise and respect women.
- 12 Women should identify ways to build self-confidence and be exemplars of Sai Teachings to inspire children and others to become good citizens.
- 13 Women should participate in various seva activities such as hospital visits, food for the needy, etc.
- 14 Women should take up the role of SSE teachers as recommended by Baba.
- 15 SSIO should encourage and support women to take up leadership roles at all levels of the Organisation.

## 5 ROLE OF YOUTH IN SSIO

*The youth are the future of the world. Bhagawan put a lot of emphasis on developing the youth at an early age, so that they can become men & women of exemplary character.*

- 16** Youth are our future leaders. Youth should be empowered to shoulder more responsibilities and encouraged to participate in the Sathya Sai International Youth Leadership Programme, which should also be replicated at national and local levels.
- 17** SSIO should encourage the youth to contribute in their areas of expertise through their knowledge and talents.
- 18** Youth should conduct more retreats where they will deepen their understanding of Bhagawan's teachings and also address the challenges faced in practical situations.

## 6 BALANCING FAMILY, CAREER & SSIO

*Practice Swami's advice of "head in the forest and hands in the society" for inner peace and harmony to cope with the challenges of modern society.*

- 19** SSIO members should give priority to Swami and His work and dedicate all actions as an offering to God. We should conduct a daily audit of our activities to ensure there is no wastage of time, energy or resources.
- 20** SSIO members should try to see God in all aspects of their life – family, work and SSIO.
- 21** SSIO members should always remember that Swami is the doer and that He has given us a blessed opportunity to be an instrument of His.

## 7 PUBLIC OUTREACH

*This is an important initiative of the SSIO in sharing Bhagawan's teachings with one and all. Baba directed the SSIO and all His devotees to spread His message and help others move forward on their spiritual journey.*

- 22** There is a need for more interfaith activities, e.g. devotional singing, seminars, service activities, drama festivals, choirs and orchestras that reflect the rich tapestry of faiths.
- 23** The SSIO should hold effective public meetings to share Swami's message and His love with local communities on a regular basis. New-comers should be welcomed and given information about SSIO activities.
- 24** The SSIO should more actively engage with communities at the local, national and international levels to serve their practical needs. Online videos and public meetings are strongly recommended for enhancing community participation.
- 25** The SSIO should promote Walk for Values, where it is accepted by the community. This is a fun-filled community activity, which promotes human values in a subtle way.

## 8 EFFECTIVE & LOVING COMMUNICATION IN THE SSIO

*It is important to communicate with love based on Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, including email communication.*

- 26** SSIO officers should remember that when we speak to others, we are speaking to God, the Sai within. We should practice active listening.
- 27** We should respect other person's opinion and practice "first understanding and then adjustment". Personal communications are preferred to emails for resolving difference of opinions.
- 28** Important news and information should be shared with internal and external groups in a timely manner with good audio-visual materials. SSIO should document and publicise centre, regional and national activities in a professional manner so that they are suitable for sharing with the general public.

## 9 SELFLESS SERVICE

*Selfless Service is the core element of all SSIO activities.*

- 29** Healthcare, education, and other committee should share their best practices of local, national and global service initiatives to motivate others.
- 30** Disaster Relief teams should conduct ongoing training programmes for disaster relief management and maintain certification efforts.
- 31** Sathya Sai Centres should increase efforts to protect Mother Earth by bringing more go-green practices (recycle, reuse, reduce) at the Centre and all SSIO events, and by encouraging group prayers.
- 32** SSIO should create a database of skilled and interested volunteers at local, national and global level for the different service initiatives.





KEYNOTE *Speeches*  
.....  
Featured talks by Senior SSIO Leaders



**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY  
CHAIRMAN, PRASANTHI COUNCIL**

**W**ith love, gratitude and reverence, I offer myself at the divine lotus feet of our dearest, sweetest, omnipresent, loving Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Respected trustees of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, dear delegates and brothers and sisters, loving Sai Ram to all of you on this beautiful morning.

I am very grateful to Bhagawan for bringing all of us from 80 countries together in this Abode of Supreme Peace. This very special venue gives me fond memories. It reminds me of the many beautiful, nectarine, divine discourses Bhagawan gave here. I particularly remember one of His discourses on Manasu Marmam (Mind and its Se-

crets). This series of discourses is very important for a sadhaka (spiritual aspirant). He also spoke on the Bhagavad Gita and on various spiritual topics. This indeed is the holiest of holy abodes and it is wonderful that we are here to attend this Conference.

It is a great joy to recall those beautiful moments with Swami. This morning, He showered us with His love in the form of rain. Now sunshine has appeared to show us the sun of wisdom. So, we are blessed with both prema (love) and jnana (wisdom). Swami said that everything ends in supreme knowledge. We feel His divine presence here. Jesus said, "Wherever my devotees are gathered in my name, I am present." Similarly, Swami is here with us today. He is our eternal

companion. Let us not forget that. We need to remind ourselves that He was, is, and will be with us forever.

I want to first thank the respected Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar, and the Director of the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the SSSIHL for their support in making this venue available for this conference. They are examples of loving hospitality. These senior leaders in the field of education exemplify Love All, Serve All; Help Ever, Hurt Never, and we deeply appreciate it.

We also appreciate the support of the members of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust for providing accommodation and the beautiful mahaprasadam (sanctified food). They served *upma* (Indian delicacy) for breakfast

one day, for thousands of devotees. It was divine grace that made this possible and the food was saturated with divine love, making it a wonderful mahaprasadam. We also enjoyed the beautiful cultural programmes.

Every programme was excellent, but the climax was the world-class Sai Symphony Orchestra. I have received many complimentary e-mails from various parts of the world about the glorious, spiritually charged celebrations of Swami's 90th Birthday.

This cultural event gives us two messages: the first message is about unity: that we are all one, although we hail from different parts of the world. The other message is love, where adoration of Bhagawan is expressed as the beautiful synthesis and harmony of eastern and western music.

Swami's golden chariot was positioned at the stadium on the morning of Bhagawan's birthday. As I looked around, I saw members of the Central Trust, leaders from the International Organisation, leaders from the Indian Organisation, and representatives from the Educational Institutes and the Medical Institute.

For me, the golden chariot procession of Bhagawan symbolises the oneness of all of us. We are all one, instead of being separate – Indian Organisation, International Organisation, Central Trust, and Educational and Medical Institute. We are all one. This is the message that Swami emphasised: Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man.

I welcome all the delegates from 80 countries assembled today. You have spent a lot of time,

energy, and resources. It is wonderful to see all of you. Let us make the best use of this golden opportunity to be part of the glorious celebration of the 90th Birthday.

I would like you, the delegates and officers of the Organisation, to know that the International Events Committee has been planning this Conference for the past 12 months. Since Swami's last Birthday, we have been planning the Tenth World Conference with the theme: 'Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal'.

The first message is about unity: that we are all one; the other message is love...

Almost every fortnight, SSIO officers and members from all over the world—Australia, USA, Germany, Italy, Middle East, Malaysia, and many other countries, totalling about 100 people – came together to plan various aspects of this Conference.

This shows our unity and our love for Swami. I would say we are all Sivarathri people, as those in Australia joined the conference at 3 AM, and for devotees in Malaysia the time was 2 AM. Such commitment shows their dedication, love and sacrifice for Bhagawan, which touched my heart. I feel that all of us are united in our efforts to please God.

I would like to appreciate the wonderful service provided by the team of SSIO volunteers in charge of accommodation. The team put enormous effort in cleaning the rooms, repairing the plumbing and other fixtures, and furnishing them with new mattresses and bed sheets. I could feel their love in their dedicated efforts to make the delegates comfortable.

Also, for the first time in the history of the World Conference, the registration was done electronically. Each delegate was given the opportunity to join four of the nine workshops, and we had to match about 900 delegates with their choice of sessions. This is no easy task. For this task, we set up a special IT group, which did an excellent job.

We also thank the team of SSIO volunteers in charge of food for arranging meals and refreshments for all the delegates. Their dedication and planning was amazing. The Media Committee did a good job of communicating the activities and the proceedings of the World Conference daily, to the devotees around the world. They also helped to design and make the banners, audio-visual presentations and other items.

Two publications were distributed during this event. The first publication, Divine Nectar contains only Swami's words and as we all know, every word of Swami's is a mantra.

Swami's every sentence is a sutra and every discourse is a Veda. These discourses in the Divine Nectar are all landmark discourses of Bhagawan.

For example, Swami, in His infinite compassion revealed His Divine Mission and His Divinity in the discourse given in 1968 in the First World Conference, and in His letter written in 1947 to His brother, where He talked about His Mission and tasks. Furthermore, Swami lent His name to the Organisation, so it is vital that we take our membership in His Organisation very seriously.

The roles and responsibilities of the members and officers of the Organisation are covered in another landmark discourse that we have included.

Similarly, we have included discourses on many aspects of the divine mission: how to spread the Education in Human Values Programme; how to deliver ideal health care with love and compassion; the role of women in the Organisation, in the community and in the home; the role of youth and the role of selfless service; and how and where to serve. Finally, the most important parts of the book are discourses on how to practise sadhana (spiritual practices).

Whether we are officers, members, educators, or healthcare professionals, we are all in this Organisation to intensify our personal sadhana to reach the goal of realising our innate divinity.

One of Swami's discourses is about forbearance. Swami says that forbearance is truth; forbearance is strength; forbearance is power. When we drink the divine nectar contained in these inspiring discourses, we become immortal. So, if we want immortality, let us dive deep and practise it's message in our life, and our life will be sanctified.

The second book is the Annual Report, which addresses the universal and eternal message of love and how this message is practised all over the world by His devotees in more than 120 countries. This is a wonderful publication and I urge you to make the effort to read it, practise Swami's eternal message and appreciate His works.

The Exhibition Team also set up a wonderful international exhibition. The exhibition showcases Swami's life and landmarks from the time He was born until the time He left His body. Additionally, the exhibition depicts important messages of Swami on various aspects of life; and most importantly, the exhibition shows how His message is practised in daily life, transforming devotees.

I wish to highlight what the Sathya Sai International Organisation has accomplished in the past two years. We have launched a new website on the eve of Swami's birthday. Please visit [sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org) to experience Baba's message, His love and His works.

Firstly, Swami's words and His teachings are archived here. Secondly, all activities of the SSIO, from all over the world, are reported. And thirdly, we have placed e-books and the Vahinis written by Swami on this website. Whenever you are in an airport, in a doctor's office or anywhere else, you can read and enjoy His discourses. Furthermore, this website can be accessed on desktop computers, tablets and mobile phones, so that we can enjoy His divine words. This is a great accomplishment by our IT team, and I want to congratulate them for their dedication and hard work.

Similarly, the Media Team has helped to spread Swami's message around the world. We launched a website called Sai Universe. Please visit [saiuniverse.sathyasai.org](http://saiuniverse.sathyasai.org) where the work done by Sathya Sai devotees worldwide – such as, Nepal, Argentina, Russia, Oman, Kuwait, to name a few examples – is shown.

This website's contents can be translated into many languages, using the in-built Google language translator, such as Nepalese, Hindi, Spanish, Russian, and so on.

By Swami's grace, these wonderful works have succeeded in carrying the divine mission forward.

Recently, we launched the Public Outreach Committee. We are the fortunate recipients of Swami's love and His message, but these blessings have been limited to the members of our Sathya Sai Centres. Now, we wish to share it with the community and get more people involved in the Sathya Sai movement because, it is our duty to share His love and His message with everyone.

For this purpose, we have been using various platforms like interfaith meetings and public meetings, which have proven to be very successful in Latin America, Malaysia and other countries.

Six months ago, I was in Bogota, Colombia for a public meeting which was arranged on a Monday evening. It was raining, but despite the weather and being a work day, more than 1,000 people turned up. The audience included government officials, community leaders and people of many faiths.



Pre-World Conference and  
Public Meeting in Colombia

It was amazing to witness their enthusiasm to attend this meeting after work on a weeknight. I wondered who would come in this torrential rain when I initially saw only about 100 people at 6 PM. But almost one thousand people streamed in at the starting time and filled the auditorium, and most of them were newcomers!

This is one example of how to reach out to the public. Other methods of public outreach include interfaith meetings, public events, Walk for Values and other programmes to engage the community.

Our goal is to share Swami's message and His love with more and more people. But we must not rest on our laurels. We must continue to move forward. As the Upanishads say: *Uthistatha, Jagratha, Prapya Varanybodhita*, meaning, 'Arise, Awake,

and Stop Not until the goal is reached.' Swami has given us so much. We must take the mission forward. If we do not do it, then who can do it? If we do not do it now, then when will it be done? Hence, we should have the resolve to advance the Sathya Sai movement because we are blessed and fortunate to be the contemporaries of the Sai Avatar.

Yesterday, you heard the tabla master recalling the beautiful incident that touched everyone. He recounted how Swami gave him a dosa, but he was afraid of eating it because it contained chili. Yet, after he ate it on Swami's assurance, he was surprised to find the chili to be sweet.

This is what Swami means when He says, "Bitter experience will become sweet because of God."

Swami is the embodiment of sweetness, as described in this beautiful poem:

*Madhuram nee Satcharitam-  
Madhuram nee Punnyanamam  
Palukulu Madhuram  
Ganamu Madhuram  
Madhuramu Bhavadeeya Mella  
Madhuraswarupa*

*(Oh, you are the embodiment  
of sweetness.  
Your life is sweet,  
Your name is sweet,  
Your words are sweet,  
Your song is sweet and hu-  
mour is sweet.  
Everything about You is sweet-  
ness,  
Because You are sweetness  
itself.)*

I remember, at one of the functions, devotees from America were singing the song, "Baba is ice cream, very, very sweet."

Swami was enjoying the song, and He distributed ice cream to everybody and everyone was enjoying their ice cream. Suddenly, Swami stopped and asked, "Do you know why God is like ice cream?"

All of us replied "God is sweet, like ice cream, Swami." But Swami explained the spiritual significance. "First, vanilla ice cream is white and pure. God is always pure. Second, it is cool and God is always cool. He doesn't get agitated. Third, God is always sweet like ice cream." The beauty of the Lord is that He makes every experience a divine experience.

In 1994, we were blessed to be with Swami as His guests at Kodaikanal. One day, I was sitting at the Divine Lotus Feet, along with Professor Sampath, who was then the Vice-Chancellor of the University, an exemplary and simple devotee. He told Swami, "Swami, I am so blessed and fortunate to be at the Divine Lord's Feet. I don't know what good I did in this life, but I must have done something good in my previous life to deserve this blessing."

Swami corrected him, "No, it is not only due to the good you did in your previous life, but it is due to the combined merit of all the good done by all your ancestors over many, many generations that you have this opportunity to sit at the Divine Lotus Feet of the Lord."

Indeed, we are blessed and fortunate. Yet, we hardly appreciate the blessed opportunity of being the contemporaries of the Avatar of our age, to experience His sweetness and His goodness. He gave us this divine, blessed opportunity. But what is

our duty as His devotees? Swami says, "The best way to reach me is through love and service." That is why we chose the theme for the World Conference, 'Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal'.

Swami has beautifully said, "How do you see the moon? Only with the help of moonlight." Similarly, if you want to experience God, who is the embodiment of love, you can experience Him only through love.

What is this love? We glibly talk about love. But Swami made the distinction clear between divine love and worldly love. So, let us not confuse worldly love with divine love.

Suddenly,  
Swami stopped  
and asked,  
"Do you know  
why God is like  
ice cream?"

Divine love is eternal, unconditional, selfless and pure. In contrast, worldly love is temporary, conditional, selfish and impure. We need to progress from this worldly love and evolve to experience the supreme, divine love. We don't need to go elsewhere to experience His divine love, because Swami is the embodiment and example of divine love.

When Swami's elephant, Sai Gita passed away, Swami sat in the hot sun for several hours till the last rites were completed.

You can see His love and compassion for an elephant. It reminds me of the story of Lord Rama when he performed the last rites for the bird, Jatayu. Similarly, our Sai Rama's love is not only for human beings but for all animals, nay for all creation.

I remember another humorous anecdote related by Professor Kasturi that happened many years ago. He was a staunch devotee of Swami. He said, "In those days, there were many mosquitos in Prasanthi Nilayam." Once, Kasturi told Swami, "Swami, there are too many mosquitos here. I want to get a mosquito curtain for you." Swami replied, "Selfish man!" Kasturi was taken aback, and asked "Why selfish?" Swami replied, "Only you want prasadam from me. What about the mosquitos?"

So, this is the divine love of the Lord. His love goes out and touches all beings. That is the kind of love we should have: love for all. Love does not mean that we should love someone and hate another. We also talk about how to love God. One way to do this is to develop a relationship with God who is our Father and our Mother. The name Sai Baba is a combination of two words – Sai means Mother, Baba means Father. Thus, He is our divine Mother and Father, and we should have that relationship with Him.

As the prayer goes, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name..." But, we should not put Him only in heaven and have a distance between God and us. We should have the feeling that God is our very own.

We should feel that, 'He is my Mother; He is my Father; He is my Friend'. We should have confidence that we can talk to Him and relate to Him. This is the true relationship with God.

If we want to have divine love, we need first to develop a close relationship with God. Secondly, we need to place God as the priority in our lives. As the word 'SAI' spells: Swami first; All others next; little 'I' last. We will have joy in our life if we practise this important teaching.

Swami also commented on joy, "If we want JOY, then place Jesus first, Others next, Yourself last." So, if we want to experience divine love, let us give highest priority to God in our life. But Swami warns us, "Unfortunately, when it comes to practising divine love, we are part-time devotees who demand full-time benefits." We need to offer full-time devotion, to get full-time benefits, by giving priority to God in our life.

Another very important element of divine love is the intensity. Some devotees claim that they have been devotees of Swami for 50 years. But, the duration does not matter, what matters most is the intensity of our love for God.

I once asked Swami, "How do I know I have devotion, Swami?" He replied, "If you have intense longing, intense hunger for God, that means you have devotion." We need to have intense longing for God, like the gopikas (cowherd girls of Brindavan) had for Lord Krishna.

Another point to keep in mind is not to put conditions on our love for God. Swami cited examples of devotees who go to Tirupathi

and offer their hair to God to secure a job or a promotion. Swami said that God doesn't need our hair. If we are trying to bargain with God for favours, then we are practising worldly love, not divine love, which is unconditional.

I remember that during 2001 Guru Poornima celebrations, Swami had asked Mr. Chakravarthi, Secretary of the Central Trust, to announce in Sai Kulwant Hall that, henceforth, devotees should not ask for padanamaskar and that they should pray to Swami only for His Love.

I once asked Swami, "How do I know I have devotion, Swami?" He replied, "If you have intense longing, intense hunger for God, that means you have devotion."

A lot of devotees were disappointed, and thought, "Oh my God, we can't have padanamaskar anymore." But, after deep contemplation, we understood that this is for our highest good and God-realisation. As Jesus said, "Seek ye the kingdom of God, and everything shall be added unto you."

When we have love for God, we have everything.

Swami has said, "Your wealth is a zero; your family is a zero; your job is a zero; your position is a zero. All are zeroes. But, when you put God, as numeral number one in front, you become a millionaire, billionaire, and so on." So, without God, any number of zeroes still adds up to zero – with no value. But with God on our side, we are prosperous.

And how do we nurture love? Swami says beautifully that we need two things. One is naamasmarana (repetition of God's name). Lives of devotees are sanctified, and they are liberated just by chanting the name of God. Hence, let us chant the sweet divine name earnestly. The other point is satsang (holy company). The company of the devotees and the holy reinforces our faith in God and makes us grow in our love for God.

This is the day to nurture our divine love. How do we know we have divine love?

Swami has said that if we have love for God, we would possess two things; the first one is equanimity. Swami wrote in the historic letter to His brother, "Those who are devoted to me will treat success and failure, honour and dishonour, profit and loss, with the same equal-mindedness." Swami did not say that His devotee is the one who does a thousand japa, hours of long meditation, or hours of service, etc. But, He pointed out that the one who is equal-minded in all situations is His devotee. So, if we want to be a devotee of the Lord, we need to have equanimity. This is a sign of devotion.

The second quality is peace; "Peace that passeth understanding," as Jesus said.

The proof of rain lies in the wetness of the ground. We do not believe that it rained if the ground is not wet. Similarly, proof of real love for God lies in the peace within us – the peace that does not get disturbed, so that we are always in bliss.

This means that we are in tune with God. When we are in tune with God, we are always blissful, peaceful and dancing with joy. We need to be happy and blissful, not sad and depressed. A life of spirituality is full of joy, and that is what Swami expects from us.

The question may arise; how do we translate this love into action? Swami says, “You may talk about love. But if you don’t put it into action, there is no benefit.”

This is also what Jesus said, “What is the use of calling me Lord, Lord, Lord when you do not do what I say?” Therefore, we must put this love into action.

Swami often said, “Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray.” There is uniqueness in Swami’s message about seva (service). Swami does not call it just seva; He calls it Narayana Seva (service to Lord Narayana). When we do service, we are actually serving God. This is an important point.

Voluntary organisations like Rotary Club, Lions Club, and Red Cross all do service. But what is the uniqueness of Swami’s Organisation? Whomsoever we are serving, we are serving God – this is the attitude we should have when we are doing service.

Many people ask, “What is service?” We always think service is giving food, clothes, shelter and other things to people.

No doubt, this is good service. But, Swami says that service also includes speaking kindly, having a nice smile, helping to lift the spirits of people, and more than anything else, having good thoughts. These are all noble characteristics. Therefore, everything we do can be service, if it is done with pure love.

Swami says that we can achieve more by having positive thoughts.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi was once approached by somebody who asked him, “You’re just sitting here and you never go and do any service.”

He replied, “How do you know I am not doing service? The very fact that I am sitting here meditating means that I am serving the world through divine thoughts and uplifting humanity.”

Once Swami Vivekananda said, “Think of those great rishis, sitting in the caves of the Himalayas and meditating. Their divine thoughts penetrate the thick walls of those caves and permeate the universe.

These divine souls and noble hearts are also doing service quietly.” Service is thus not confined to our actions only. A smile, a kind word, a gesture and a good prayer, all constitute service.

Then, why are we not benefitted by service?

Swami explained two major obstacles: *karthrithva* and *bhokthritva*—the feeling of doership and enjoyership, or the feeling that “I am doing this and the results belong to me; I want to enjoy the results”.

This attitude is the whole problem. Swami explained that this feeling of “I” and “mine”, which rises from the ego, is the greatest obstacle.

Regardless of the years of service performed, we cannot progress unless we get rid these two major obstacles. The signs of a devotee having divine love are equanimity, peace and fearlessness.

How do we know we are doing selfless service? Swami says there are two signs.

One is purity of the heart. The whole purpose of doing service is for the purification of the heart.

Why should we purify our hearts? So that we can see God.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Swami also gave us a beautiful message: “Unity is divinity. Purity is enlightenment.” The instant we become pure, we are enlightened.

Then, we do not need do any more spiritual practices. All the bhajans we sing, services we perform and study circles we attend – the whole purpose of these exercises is to get rid of our negative qualities and the six inner enemies, namely desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy, so that we become pure.

We need to practise this wholeheartedly to become less angry, less jealous, less proud, less egoistic and become pure. We need to do our own self-audit, to see whether we derive any benefit from selfless service. This is very important. So, if we are engaged in selfless service, we will attain purity of the heart.



*Spin the Wheel game at the International Exhibition*

In a beautiful Telugu poem Swami said, "There was a great devotee of God, Prahlada. His father, Hiranyakashyapu, was the greatest scientist who could travel to the sun, the solar systems and the galaxies, in those days. He was the greatest scientist ever, but he was very agitated and unhappy.

Then, a voice tells him, "You have conquered all the worlds everywhere. Unless you conquer your inner enemies, you are no conqueror. The greatest conquest is conquering our inner enemies – that is, to develop purity."

The second important sign is unity. Swami says, "Purity is enlightenment; Unity is divinity." Once we see unity, we are in tune with God. That is the whole purpose of our spiritual practices.

What is unity? Unity occurs at different levels: unity at the individual level, unity of thought, word and deed.

What we think, we say. What we say, we do.

Swami urges us to speak obligingly. We need to have first, harmony of thought, word and deed, then we should have unity in the family, unity in the community and unity in the Organisation.

That is when divinity will manifest. We need to have a clear concept that Unity is Divinity, because Swami says, "To have dual mind is to be half-blind."

Swami spoke about oneness and the whole purpose of our spiritual practices. If we really perform selfless service in this spirit, we will find that there is only one thing that exists – and that is atma.

Once we see the oneness, we will have no more sorrow, no more delusion. We will be always in bliss and in divine consciousness.

We have collected reports of the works of the SSIO, covering 123

countries in 11 zones across the world. Now, we will discuss their practical spiritual implications.

That is why we are holding nine workshops in this World Conference to discuss various topics: ideal Sai centre; ideal Sai leader; effective and loving communication in the Organisation; role of women in the Organisation, in the community and in the family; role of the youth; education in human values; selfless service; and public outreach.

We will record the proceedings and present the resolutions about how we can implement these ideas to move forward in the divine mission.

I pray to Swami to bless all of us in the coming days to make the best use of our time, so that we can dive deep into His teachings, and see how we can incorporate and practise them in our daily lives.

Jai Sai Ram.



**DR. WILLIAM HARVEY  
MEMBER, PRASANTHI COUNCIL**

I offer my humble salutations at the Divine Lotus Feet. Honoured guests and fellow delegates, 90 years ago the Supreme Lord of the Universe came amongst us in a human form in order to more effectively lead the human inhabitants of the planet back upon the path of Truth and Righteousness.

While doing so, He established many marvellous institutions, institutions that remain as models for societies around the world.

They show us how we can best address the challenges faced in this age of rampant greed, corruption, and near total disregard for the welfare of the masses.

In addition to these unique and

highly instructive models, He also established and nourished the development of the Organisation that bears His name.

In fact, He made the Sai Organisation an awesome instrument imbued with unlimited power and potential. As members, we are playing a crucial role in advancing the completion of His mission. We should always bear in mind that we are not His only instruments.

To the contrary, the Lord uses groups and individuals from all races, religions and philosophic backgrounds.

Accordingly, we must be sensitive to and respectful of others who are consciously and in many cases unconsciously

working to advance the Avatar's mission.

The Sathya Sai mission is bound to succeed. It will succeed whether or not we perform our roles properly. It is purely to our benefit and for our benefit that He gives us this precious and unprecedented opportunity to serve in the manner in which we are doing.

Hence our attitude should be that nothing, nothing is more important for us than doing our Sai Organisation work.

Despite the difficulty that the task may seem to be presenting to us, we must courageously proceed—secure in the knowledge that the Lord will provide.

Has He not declared that, “If you do my work, I will take care of your affairs”?

A primary goal of our Organisation is to foster the devotee on her or his march towards self-realisation. To that effect, we have the three wings which provide members a sheltered workshop setting wherein we study and practise the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Another important goal of our Organisation, is to provide and maintain an environment at the Centre-level where all who would choose to pursue the spiritual path may be maximally supported, encouraged, and sensitively exposed to Sai teachings.

In other words, we have a responsibility to communicate to serious spiritual aspirants—whether or not they are Sai devotees—that they are fully welcome to participate with us in any function carrying the name of Sai, as long as they are willing to honour our guidelines.

But again, keen discrimination is called for. So whereas we certainly endorse and support multi-faith initiatives, we should exercise care and discretion before aligning the Sai name to the many good-intentioned events and causes that exist in our society. Sometimes, we simply have to lovingly and respectfully decline to lend the name of Sai, although of course they are always free to participate as individuals.

The Sathya Sai Avatar came for all the peoples of the world; His message is universal.

Accordingly, the look and the outlook of the vanguard institution, the Sai Organisation, that

outlook and look must also be Universal and inclusive.

We all recognise that our Centres do not yet uniformly measure up to this goal. Their programme format does not yet emphasise the Universality of the Sai Avatar.

We delegates, when we return to our respective local communities, have to with more vigour, more determination, take up the challenge of guiding our Centres to be true expressions of the Sai message.

The Sathya Sai mission is bound to succeed. It will succeed whether or not we perform our roles properly. It is purely to our benefit and for our benefit that He gives us this precious and unprecedented opportunity.

An essential component of that development is that they reflect, at least to some extent, the demographics of the wider community in which they exist.

While keeping in mind that this is not something that should be forced, it nevertheless must come about. After bringing our

house in order we may then properly turn our attention to sharing the Avatar’s message.

We do not engage in proselytising in any way, shape, or form. Nor do we seek to convince others that our spirituality is necessarily better than another approach. All approaches are valid and we do not seek to extinguish other approaches.

In fact, there are serious limits to what we can transmit verbally about the Sai message. As a wise person once said, “How you are speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you are saying.”

To the extent that we consciously and consistently strive to live the Sai message, to that extent we succeed in doing our duty and also succeed in expressing our gratitude to Him for all the blessings and grace He is showering upon us.

Being active in the Sai Organisation helps us to acquire the skills and the loving attitude that facilitate our loving interactions with members of the wider community.

Gradually, we begin to appreciate that all people deserve our respect, deserve our patience, and deserve our unconditional love.

To be sure, we continue to have personal challenges. We continue to be tested and perhaps the biggest challenge is mustering the courage, the strength, and the confidence to not worry. That, perhaps, is our biggest challenge.

All of us, despite our evidences and our good successes and so forth, find ourselves lapsing into that tendency to worry about this or that or something big or something small.

It is a challenge to be happy when things seem to be going badly. Intellectually, we all know this, but it is not having the effect on our behaviour.

As a matter of fact, one definition of willpower is when we let our knowledge direct our behaviour—that is willpower. As soon as we begin feeling downhearted, disappointed, sad or afraid, we must pause—pause right then, call a time out, and think of Swami and think of what He has taught us.

We will then realise that our mind, which has been given to us to be our servant, is seeking to become our master. But it will succeed only if we cooperate with it.

We always, always have the power to stop the mind from gaining the upper hand, by remembering that all power is with the Lord. If we just bring that to mind, then these fears and these anxieties that stem

from our sensory inputs will be placed in the perspective that they should be placed in.

All power is with Sai and Sai is within us. We cannot prevent negative, frightful thoughts from paying us a call, but we are not obliged to permit them to stay.

We do not have to allow disturbing thoughts to linger and give us pain. Swami tells us that instead of entertaining these negative thoughts we should turn our attention to something positive.

We can think of Swami. We can start repeating the Name, such a powerful tool to overcoming everything.

We can also think of the power of good fortune. We can bring to mind the blessings we have. We may even begin to enumerate those blessings. Very soon, those disturbing thoughts and feelings disappear.

Permit me to close by suggesting that we resolve to consciously, consciously dedicate all our actions to God.

To the extent that we form the habit of dedicating every action to the Lord we accomplish two very important things.

Firstly, we become prone to remember that we are not the body, that we are not the doer.

Secondly, the Lord will accept the karmic consequences of the act.

So all we have to do is to never forget God.

Always be content.

Always be cheerful.

Always be careful.

Jai Sai Ram.



**MS. MARIANNE MEYER  
DIRECTOR, SRI SATHYA SAI WORLD FOUNDATION**

**D**ear Swami, I greet you with love from deep within my heart.

Loving Sairams to all of you. It is so wonderful to be here today, to be together with so many dedicated souls, who want to live His message and to bring His message of love and light out to the world.

We all know love is the greatest force in the universe. Sometimes, because all that is happening in the world today, it is not easy to identify. Today, the world has manifested itself in such a way that it pushes us to seek deeper and deeper clarity; to reach out to another level of understanding on how to overcome the obstacles that we meet in life.

What we meet in life, this is our destiny, but how we meet it is self-effort. We know our effort is to learn to keep our focus on Him, to keep our breath in rhythm, our thoughts under control, and to show gratitude and love to remove the hindrances.

Swami says that the objective of the Organisation is to help the individual overcome the hindrances that separates them from God. It must transform the human into divine.

So we know that all the activities of the Sathya Sai Organisation are an opportunity to sanctify our lives and upgrade it to a new level of understanding. It is through interacting with love that our consciousness and our awareness are raised. When we

experience that He is putting challenges in front of us, it is for us, to help us to experience constant integrated awareness. This is the goal of life.

Swami wants to see: are we ready to move on? And we are those who are going to move forward this Organisation. So the question is, is this Organisation ready to move on?

Being in the Sathya Sai Organisation is a great fertiliser for spiritual development. We should be grateful for that opportunity, we should be grateful that He called us and we should be grateful that we responded to His call.

Often we focus, maybe a little bit too much, on structures and guidelines. These are only the

bones of the Sathya Sai Organisation; we, the devotees, are the soul.

If we transform into love, then the love will flow and generate attraction, power, and attract new people to come and inspire them to change. So, it is we, the human material, we the devotees, that shape the Sathya Sai Organisation. It is we who give it quality.

I remember once, in an interview room, Swami asked Ben Hargrupa, the former Central Coordinator in Europe, "How is the Organisation?" Ben didn't want to respond, so he just made this movement [conveying], Swami, up and down, up and down. Swami looked at him and said, "Oh, this is movement!"

So, we will sometimes experience that things move down, but if we focus on Him, if we focus on His teachings, things will improve and move up again. So, we should have no fears of low moments, because this may be needed for us to bring the Sathya Sai Organisation forward in the right direction.

Challenges are stepping-stones for new insight, challenges are holding a potential.

Either we can wake up and connect to our inner souls, or we can react and create more suffering for ourselves and for others, too. Because, as we all know, love is action without reaction. Love is the key, isn't it? So, when challenges are coming our way, something is tested: it is our discrimination and detachment.

I once prayed so much for discrimination. I had a lot of troubles, so I said to myself, next time if Swami asks me again,

'What do you want?', then I will say, "Discrimination."

He called us in the interview room, and He was talking for 10 minutes about discrimination. Then He turned to me and said, "What do you want?" and will you believe it—you know how it is when you sit in front of Swami—I was totally blank. I couldn't even remember the word, 'discrimination', so I just looked at Him and said, "Nothing, Swami."

"Swami, how do I keep this bliss with me when I go back home?" Swami looked at him and said, "Keep the car running."

And Swami looked at me and asked again, "What do you want?" and then I heard myself, something coming from deep within, out of my mouth, "Your love, Swami." And then, He looked at me and said, "Pure love." He made this circle we all love so much and said, "For pure love."

Later on, I realised when we go for the highest, everything else will be given. We may have certain things in mind, certain wishes, but He knows exactly what we need and what is the right thing for us in that moment to move forward. What He ultimately wants to give is pure love, and what He ultimately wants us to give is pure love. So, we need to develop this pure love and bring it out.

A great metaphor is an egg, to describe the process of bringing out from within. When the egg is broken, a little chicken comes out. It is broken by an inside force, then this gives life. But if the egg is broken from the outside, life ends. So this is a great metaphor to show: from source, not by force.

There cannot be life without love, and only great things happen from within.

One day, there was a devotee sitting in pure bliss in the interview room at the feet of Swami, and He asked Swami, "Swami, how do I keep this bliss with me when I go back home?" Swami looked at him and said, "Keep the car running."

We have to keep practicing *sadhana*, and I remembered from an interview, Swami said to us, "You all are doing good work. Do more." So, doing service to others has broadened our hearts, and if we fill every moment of our life with gratitude to the Giver of everything, then this is service to Him. So, there is service to others and service to Him. But, by doing this, finally, we are doing service to ourselves. Because true gratitude is a heart full of love.

I would like you to take one moment and think of all the people you have been working with. When was the last time that you acknowledged their good contribution to the work? When was the last time you expressed your gratitude to the support they are giving you? Or for the work they are doing?

Why I am saying this, is because someone once said, feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a gift and not giving it. So, I would say,



**Swami says: "Devotion should be regarded as an expression of gratitude for all that one has received."**

let us wrap the present of love, gratitude, and forgiveness—and share it. Basically, it is all about learning to accept life as it is, through gratitude.

I would like to take a moment to check the pulse of the Sathya Sai Organisation.

Swami says, "Devotion should be regarded as an expression of gratitude for all that one has received from." So, the guidelines are the bones of the Sathya Sai Organisation, and we all know if we want strong bones, then we take Vitamin D, and in this organisation, Vitamin D is Devotion.

Then, Swami says there are others vitamins that are important, Vitamin G: Vitamin God and Vitamin Gratitude. This is also recharging us, the principle of gratitude. This is what gives the Sathya Sai Organisation quality. So, we need these spiritual vitamins to keep us healthy.

To help us keep our focus, we should stop pointing fingers at others. When we complete our lives, Swami will not ask us, "How much work did you do?" He will ask us, "How much love did you share?"

Love and gratitude have to be practiced; it is not enough just to know about His teachings, just to have the right answers to give.

Just to conclude with a story; many years back, the birthday boys were sitting on the first row to show their tray to Swami so that He would come and interact with them. My husband was sitting next to a lovely little boy, about seven years old. The story behind this was, whenever Swami was calling us for an interview, He would say "Denmark, Denmark, come!" And then sometimes He would ask, "Where do you come from?" My husband was thinking, 'But, He knows I am coming from Den-

mark. Why would He ask me, where do you come from?'

That particular day, Swami went up to that little boy and asked, "Where do you come from?" That little boy, with bright eyes, said, "From you, Swami." My husband thought, 'Oh, now I know the right answer.' Immediately he said, "Swami, you can come to me."

And what did Swami do? He came to him, and looked at him asking, "Where do you come from?" My husband said, "From you, Swami." Swami then said, "No, from Denmark!" So, we should speak from our hearts, we should let out what comes in at that moment.

With love and gratitude, let us remember what He has done for us.

Jai Sai Ram!





INSPIRATIONAL *Talks*

A string of soul-stirring experiences  
highlighting the Love of Sai &  
the essence of His Message.



Delegates from around the world during the opening day of the 10th World Conference

# Day 1

25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015



**DR. PHIL GOSSELIN**  
USA  
Zone 1, Chair

My humble *pranaams* to all the forms of Sai in this room, all forms of Sai that reside just behind the electric shimmer of appearance itself.

We are that Sai family who has thirsted and hungered for God and all that Sai has given us. In the '50s, a family was profusely thanking Swami for all He had

given and He responded: "When grace is overflowing, hold it. When I give you opportunities, what should you do? You should think, 'Swami is showering so much grace on us. Should we not follow His commands? Should we not get a good name from Him?'"

We represent the Sai family who is striving to realise itself as the World family. How can we accelerate the expansion of divine love? How can we become live embers of love? We need to embrace the differences between us.

Sai himself loved the quirks that each of us has, so we should love the quirks in each other too.

During an interview, Sai once told me, "Jesus said: 'All are one, My dear son. Be alike to everyone.'" Unfortunately, my ego thought He said, "Be a Light to everyone." It took me a while to

realise the meaning of what He really said, and it made a big impression on me; that our Love should no longer be hostage to our mental judgments and illusions.

This life is not a dress rehearsal. How do we get the most out of this life? This Conference is about love. When we talk of love, we think our words are inadequate, but when Sai speaks, we hear the beauty of Divine Love, and the simple truth of it.

Sai powerfully sums up the nature of this world:

"For those bereft of love, everything appears dead. For those immersed in love, everything appears vibrant with life."

His words can gently undercut our misunderstandings: I was with a group of young westerners many years ago who were beseeching Swami for the se-



Sathya Sai World Conference Delegates

cret meditation path, thinking it was the only way to get free. Swami responded in His casual understated way: "Oh, meditation is a good way to pass the time 'till one comes to Love."

Sai's promise to us on 28th April, 1962, is also another way of understanding our Conference theme: *Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal*. Sai said, "Those who obey my instruction will go beyond the 3-fold distinction of Pilgrim-Path and God, Bhakta-Bhagavata and Bhagawan, and Lover-Loved and Love."

And, as He once said, "When you listen to My Story you forget the story of the world and live only in My Story, until there is no separate story for you to relate.

To make your story less, is the purpose of My Story."

As we go back to the world we may want to proclaim to the world, "JAI SAI RAM!" But, as we've sometimes all discovered, this world may not be ready to receive. Our Sai speaking very personally to devotees in the

'50s (from Anandadayi): "You know about Me; I know about you. You know who I am, I know who you are. Do others know this? Others have not understood Me." As Krishna himself said, "Thickly veiled by My Divine *maya*, I am not revealed to all! This deluded world knows me not as the unborn and eternal."

Jesus said: "All are one, My dear son. Be alike to everyone."

So how should we express our love to this uncomprehending world, in a way the world can hear and see it? As it is said, "Work is love made visible."

It is said, "Having gone to Parthi—never leave there." That doesn't mean take a long-term lease here on some real estate.

It means *to take Parthi with us*.

Remember, love finds love ev-

erywhere. And in the words of St. Paul, "Love Never Fails." We should remember His words on October 21, 1961: "Your lives are intertwined with my earthly career. Act always in accord with that great privilege. Become sharers in my history."

Yes, let us share our life with him. Let us be part of His triumph of good over evil. Swami jokes, "*Moksha* is not a 5-star hotel. It is just being the truth of ourselves."

So, the final question is sometimes called the 'Miracle Question.' Imagine tonight when you sleep, a miracle occurs. And when you wake, you are immersed in Divine Love. See in your mind's eye: What would you think, what would you feel, who would you be, what would you see, how would you act?

I pray, may our Sai bless us all and provide that miracle for all, for God is Love, and we are Love, ever expanding.

Jai Sai Ram.



**MS. ISABELLA CHU**  
Hong Kong

My most humble *pranaams* at the Lotus Feet of our Beloved Swami.

My family and I, being Christians, came to Swami after *Mahasamadhi* in May 2012. Swami's omnipresence was felt on the first night in the ashram. The second calling from Swami to come to Puttaparthi came in my heart during the China seva. As a practising lawyer for the past 18 years, I sought Swami's Divine intervention for guidance in my career, thus offering a letter at the *Mahasamadhi*.

Listening to the inner calling in my heart, Swami assisted me in applying for the position of a judge in Hong Kong and eventually, I got the position of Deputy Judge. It was totally out of my expectation and imagination to qualify for this prestigious position.

Although a difficult task, I always prayed to Swami for His protection and guidance. I prayed to Swami that I will work hard and in return, He should grant me an opportunity to visit Prasanthi.

Although I applied for a single visa for a day's trip to Prasanthi,

I ended up getting a 6 months multiple visa which prompted me to visit Prasanthi for every Saturday darshan!

I also got the courage and with complete faith in Swami, applied for the position of a Permanent Judge. In September, I was given an invitation to speak in Kulwant Hall for the following Chinese New Year programme. I was asked to give an interview before being selected to be one of the speakers.

At that time, I sent a prayer to Swami, "Swami, if you really choose me to speak about your miracle and blessings of myself becoming a judge, you have to appoint me as a permanent judge first, otherwise, I do not feel comfortable sharing all your miracles. And you said before, 'Anything done and confirmed, keep it to yourself.'"

**Swami, please permit us, as your chosen ones, to merge with you, and carry your vibration and energy, not for ourselves, but only for Your Sai Mission.**

Swami did hear my prayer and showered His full blessings. On November 20, 2014, the day before I was leaving for Puttaparthi for His Birthday and the interview for my speech, I was appointed as a Permanent

Judge of the HK Judiciary.

This year's Chinese New Year programme, Swami made the perfect arrangement to make sure all was well for my speech. He not only gave me *vibhuti* and *kumkum* to put on my forehead for my presentation, but also removed my doubts when I received another packet of *vibhuti* for my ill friend. We had prepared gold chocolate coins which were to be distributed in Kulwant Hall (after the programme), during *Gramma Seva*, and to the patients in the General Hospital. However, until the day of my speech, all our gold coins still remained in the airport customs.

I sent a deep prayer to Swami, saying, "Swami I have only one request for you; if you are happy with my speech tonight, please ensure that the gold coin *prasadams* are in the hands of all your devotees, so that they can feel your Love and Grace. That is what I want from You, Swami."

Despite the odds, all the gold coins were sent to Puttaparthi that midnight, and were distributed on the last day of the Chinese New Year Programme on His Holy Thursday.

Swami, please permit us, as your chosen ones, to merge with you, and carry your vibration and energy, not for ourselves, but only for Your Sai Mission. As you said, you do not need us to be the best, but you want us to do the best. Swami, we will do the best and be your dear ones and make you feel proud of us.

Swami, we all love you.

Swami, I love you.



**MR. KEVIN FRANCIS**  
Australia

Sai Ram to my family.

Swami once said, "There are three types of teachers: those who complain, those who explain, and those who inspire." I have done a lot of complaining and explaining, and with Swami's grace as I lay my life at His Feet, may I inspire you.

From an early age, I lived in a family which was very lacking in love. I come from a broken home and from the age of four, I seriously and genuinely believed that I had been abandoned by my mother and was hated by my father. The consequence of this was that my family life was a series of physical and emotional abuses. I must confess that despite these parental shortcomings, I was very close to my brother and sisters. Ironically, my father was also the town Christmas Father and seen as a loving kind generous man by everyone.

Just before my 14th birthday, I was seriously wondering about my purpose in life, when a figure in white with an enormous halo of hair appeared in my room. I hid under the covers; I closed my

eyes; I tried to look away. This figure simply would not disappear. He came up to me, stood at the side of the bed, touched me, and I felt infinite bliss and peace and He said everything would be all right. From that time on, the beatings did not stop, but my attitude and perception changed, by the Grace of Swami. I developed the ability to stand outside of my body and witness what was happening with complete detachment.

Thrown out of the family, I came to Sydney and was taken under foster care by my ex-teacher. For the first time in my life, I knew what love was. During that time, I also met an extraordinary young woman, Lorraine, who is compassion and serenity personified. With Swami's grace, we have been together for the last 46 years. Through her journey, I was introduced to Swami.

Later at a *bhajan* session in South Australia, Swami appeared in front of me and confirmed the incident at the age of 14. Also during Christmas in Prasanthi, Swami confirmed to me that He was an Avatar.

In finishing, what is love? Swami is the very embodiment of pure and unconditional love. This was evident when He saved my life on at least five different occasions. He also saved my son's life from a very fatal accident. Love is the answer to everything in life because Love is all there is so live in Love.

Om Sri Sathya Sai Ram  
Namaha!

I felt infinite  
bliss and peace  
and He said  
everything  
would be all  
right.





## Day 2

26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015



**MS. KAYOKO HIRA**  
Japan

Om Sri Sai Ram.

I offer my most humble *pra-naams* at the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagawan. Revered elders, and my dear brothers and sisters, Sai Ram to all of you.

First of all, let us pray for people who are suffering from hunger, poverty, war, conflicts, diseases, and domestic violence all over the world. May all the conflicts finish and all the worlds become peaceful. Sai Ram.

While writing the year, we commonly use Western calendar and say AD or BC. This year is AD 2015. BC means Before Christ; it signifies that Jesus Christ has greatly impacted the Western world.

My most important milestone is an encounter with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Therefore, for me, it is neither AD nor BC, but BB (Before Baba) and AB (After Baba). So I call this year AB 21. I was born in a Buddhist family, but my parents belonged to different sects. One is very radical and teaches that only this sect is right and all other religions and sects are evil. I could not agree with it, so there were a lot of quarrels in my family. One day I was diagnosed with a cardiac neurosis.

I thought that any religion that causes disagreement is wrong and started looking for my own faith. I entered a Christian high school and university, but was not satisfied there, too.



I joined the Sathya Sai Organisation in Japan in 1996 after a year long stay in Prasanthi Nilayam and was involved in *satsang*. Since then, I am able to understand the true meaning of teachings of Buddha and Jesus Christ, respect all religions equally, and grow a good relationship with both parents.

One day, when my two children were babies, Swami called us to the interview room. When *bhajans* started, our interview finished, and we stepped back into Sai Kulwant Hall.

In that moment, I was filled with celestial happiness and became speechless. It was like floating in the air. I just smiled like the Goddess Kannon (*Avalokitesvara*). Suddenly, I realised that Swami's Love melted my heart and I experienced bliss. It was completely different from our daily feelings. I felt Swami staying around me, in me, with me.

Knowing God's love gave me a sense of safety, self-confidence, and courage. The feeling of being loved generates the power of love. God's love starts to flow in my heart and I can share it with others. God is the source for a fountain of love. Once we open our heart, infinite Divine Love saturates us and overflows. It will flow in others hearts and make them happy as long as we are loving, pure, peaceful and selfless.

Sai, you are my Lord. You have transformed my life. You are my savior. Without you, I am nothing. I am your servant. Please guide me, inspire me and make me your Divine instrument. May all beings in all worlds be happy.

Jai Sai Ram.

The Pastor was kind and compassionate, but I did not agree with the idea that we are all sinners.

Being melancholic, I looked for pleasure outside and joined various clubs. In the latter half of my 20s, I started to get counseling and medication for my depression, but nothing worked. No happiness; no peace. Envy, frustration, uneasiness, and jealousy distressed me.

In those days, one of my friends introduced me to one book on Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I stayed awake through the night and went on reading that book. Shedding tears of joy, I realised God exists and always loves me.

Baba said that we, also, are God.

In that moment,  
I was filled with  
celestial  
happiness and  
became speechless.  
It was like  
floating in the  
air...

So (we must) behave like a God. See *Good, Hear Good, Do Good, Be Good*. At that moment, my life completely changed.

I learned the meaning of surrender, and after six months, no more medication was needed for me; I was healed and cured.



**MS. RAKSHA MAHTANI**

Spain

Zone 6, Youth Coordinator

Swami's teachings are universal. His message of Love has a huge impact and is of great benefit for the whole world.

I have had the precious opportunity of working as a teacher for the last 11 years, applying the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme based on the philosophy of *Educare*. As Swami says, "Educare means to bring out what we have within."

Working with five and six-year-old children, I asked, "Swami, how can I help them to bring out what they already have within?" The answer was clear. It was not through imposition, but rather through *intuition* and *inspiration*.

Every year, for the past 11 years, on every new school year, I invite the children to do this exercise. I say, "Let us close our eyes so that we may begin to see." One of the children always asks me, "Did you say close our eyes to begin to see?" And I say, "Yes, sometimes, there are certain things that I can only see when I close my eyes."

Then, I ask them to imagine a huge, beautiful tree.

When they open their eyes, I ask them to share the different parts of the tree that they have seen. Then, I invite them to close their eyes again and I say, "Maybe this time we can think about something that exists in the tree although we may not see it with our eyes."

Immediately, one of them will say, "the roots!" Next, I ask them, "What is the most important part of the tree?" Most of them say, "it is the roots." Then I ask, "How can the roots be so important if we don't even see them?" They clearly say, "Well, even though we do not see them, we know that this is what holds the tree and does not let it fall."

**"I have always  
been with you,  
I am with you,  
and I will always  
be with you."**

My next question is, "Is there anything inside us that we may not see with our eyes however is very important?" Immediately they all jump to their heart. So, I ask them, "And why is our heart so important?" The clear answer is, "Well, we can love with our heart!" These are just five and six-year-old children and the class goes on like this.

Swami's teachings are so practical; they can be applied in every single field. The above is just one example and I have used his teaching in many ways to teach the children.

I would now like to share a final experience with all of you, related to when Swami left His physical body.

When I went back to school the first day, I did feel that something was different. When I walked into the classroom, the thought I had was "Swami, this is the first time I am going to share all these Divine treasures that You have taught me—without You being there."

I was amazed at this thought because I had said, "*Without You being there.*"

When I walked into the classroom, the children hugged me after a long period of holidays. Then, one little girl looked at me and she said, "Miss Raksha, you look a little different today." I said, "Do I?" She said, "Yes, you look a little sad." So, this is a five-year-old telling me this.

I said, "You know what Carolina? Actually maybe you've seen something I haven't seen. Maybe I am a little sad, because you know all these beautiful things that you say we learn together... Well, actually I have learnt them as well from a very special teacher and this teacher no more lives physically."

So, she said, "Oh, your teacher has died. Now I understand."

Then she said, "Wait a minute Miss Raksha! Did I get this right?" And then, she stood up in front of everyone and said:

"Did you say that everything that you teach us, you have learnt from your teacher?" I confirmed, "Yes, that is what I just said."

She said, "Wait a minute Miss Raksha...that means that we

have learnt nothing from you!  
Everything we have learnt, we  
have learnt from Him!"

This took me back to my initial  
thought which was, "Swami this  
is the first time I am going to  
share what You have taught me  
without You being here." And the  
answer I got from within was: "*I  
have always been with you, I am  
with you and I will always be with  
you.*"

To end, I would like to share this  
quote, "There are two ways of  
spreading light: one is to be the  
candle itself and the other is to  
be the mirror that reflects the  
light."

I sincerely pray to Swami that  
we all may be mirrors to reflect  
the light of His candle.

Sai Ram.



Photo above: Events Committee  
Chairman & Master of Ceremonies,  
Mr. Alejandro Grana (USA)

Photo below: Participants during 10<sup>th</sup>  
World Conference proceedings





**DR. VEERU MUDIGONDA**  
United Kingdom, National  
Council President

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Dearest Swami, please accept my loving *praanams* at Your Lotus Feet. Please bless me to say a few words in these sacred precincts where I learnt so many things as a student.

Swami says, "Where there is Faith, there is Love; where there is Love, there is Peace, where there is Peace, there is God; where there is God, there is Bliss."

In order to recognise, practise, and walk on the path of Love; to realise the goal of Love, the bedrock and the foundation needs to be an unshakeable, unwavering, steady, and strong faith.

Swami bestowed the boon of faith through an incident when I was four years old. My brother was just born, and within four months, he developed some skin condition that leads to his body being covered in abscesses. My parents visited many doctors in Hyderabad and in Bombay; and all the specialists said that this was an incurable disease.

One day, a holy man came to our home and my mother asked him

if he could do something for her child. "What would happen to him?", she asked. He said, "Your son will be cured on the 7th of April." My mother just felt very happy. She just believed in it. My father however, was of a scientific bent of mind and an educated man. So he asked, "Who will cure him?", and this man said, "God will cure him!"

Swami came to Hyderabad to inaugurate Sivam in 1973. My parents were not Sai devotees at the time, but my father had heard that Swami was a good speaker. So he wanted to listen to his discourses, but my mother wanted her son to be blessed by this 'Holy Man'. They went daily for 10 days but nothing happened.

Then on the 10th day, Swami came to the ladies' side, within 100 yards from where my mother was sat, and turned back to leave. My mother could not hold back any longer and started shouting out to Him, "Swami! Swami! Swami!"

Swami stopped and turned around. He walked up to my mother, picked up my baby brother in His Hands, and in his right ear whispered, "Thagguthaadhi, thagguthaadhi, thagguthaadhi", which means, 'It will come down, it will come down, it will come down'.

He handed the baby back to my mother and left. My mother was very happy, over the moon indeed.

Every morning my sister and I would join my father in a ritual to clean my brother.

As we started to clean him up, we lifted the cloth by each centimetre and we were surprised!

*"Your son will be cured on 7<sup>th</sup> April. Who will cure him? God will cure him!"*

There was not a single wound, not a single boil in sight!

Then, my father looked up and noticed that the day was the 7th of April! The entire dialogue that he had with the holy man many months ago came back to his mind.

Who will cure him, he had asked; "God" was the reply!

The Word of God is paramount, Swami's word is paramount. Swami's word is a *mantra*; every word of His is an important *mantra* for us to follow.

In 2009, Swami granted all the alumni an audience, and one of us asked, "Swami! How do we become an ideal devotee, and how do we become an ideal student?"

Swami answered in Telugu, "Na Aagna Paalinchu", which translates to 'Obey My Command. That is enough!'

In 2001, in His Divine Discourse on the Avatar Declaration Day, Swami said:

"I give, out of my love and concern for you, good advice and instructions for every one of you to follow. But you don't listen. However you give credence to every other distraction that comes to your attention. I am saying the truth as it is, that such people who do not listen

to the good words that I have come to say, how can they ever learn about Reality, how can they learn about Divinity.”

My dear brothers and sisters! In this journey let us follow the Master, because He is the Source. Only then will we be able to face the devil and fight to the end, which is walking the Path.

And only then, will it be possible for us to finish the game, which is reaching our Goal. It is very important for us in this journey to have faith and obey His Command. Every word that He says to us is of essential importance.

Swami is Love in Action. Every moment He was working for the welfare of those like you, this entire humanity, and I.

It is now up to us, to not rest and just work, work, and work.

Jai Sai Ram.



**MR. SERGIO ESPINDOLA**  
Brazil

Zone 2B, Central Coordinator

My Lord and My God! I offer to You my most loving and humble *pranaams* at Your Divine Lotus Feet, praying that You speak through me!

Dear brothers and sisters, I am very happy to be here today in this gathering of spiritual seekers. It is an honor to be part of this Sai Family! Om Sri Sai Ram!

I would like to share with you a short story of a great bhakta, a great devotee of God: Bhishma. One morning, Dharmaraja went to Krishna to pay homage to Him.

**“I don’t want you to BE the best. I want you to DO the best!”**

He found Krishna seated in *padmasana*, meditating deeply, with tears rolling down His cheeks. Dharmaraja wondered whom He was meditating upon.

At last, when Krishna opened His eyes, he dared ask Him the question, and Krishna replied that He was exulting over the devotion of a great soul towards Him, who was none other than Bhishma, whose mind was intently fixed on Him even while he was on a bed of arrows! We must be inspired by the story of this great soul. We must endeavour to have the same intensity in our devotion.

Once Swami told my wife: “I don’t want you to BE the best. I want you to DO your best!” He knows if we are doing our best, and He will shower His Grace according to our efforts. Swami says: “Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi—As you think so you become!”

We should never forget that we are in a spiritual organisation. This is not an NGO. We have a goal: *to realise our inner reality*. The theme of this Conference is “Love is the Source; Love is the

Path; Love is the Goal.” Swami has said that we can realise our inner divinity in this lifetime. I believed that with all my heart, and developed a strong desire to reach that goal by following Swami’s teachings.

In the beginning of February 2006, when Swami, after staying for a long time in Whitefield, came back to Prasanthi Nilayam. The students arranged a function in which they shared experiences with all the devotees. Swami was on the verandah, and I was listening intently to what the student was sharing—while looking at Swami.

Suddenly, something happened. Everything was the same, but nothing was the same! The diversity had gone! Everywhere I looked, I saw God! Not in Swami’s Form, but there was God! I remained in that state for many hours. Swami said that only God can transform our spiritual efforts in transcendental experiences.

I pray to Swami that He may bless us with such intensity to reach Him in this lifetime.

Jai Sai Ram!



# Day 3

27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015



**MR. MANFRED MUELLER-GRANSEE**  
Germany  
Zone 7, Central Coordinator

My humble *pranaams* at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Master, and to all of you.

I would like to share my experiences of practicing Swami's teachings in business administration.

There are two quotes with me since I went to school: "It is Love that holds this world together at its very core," by Goethe. Later it was substituted by a saying of Swami's: "Love All; Serve All."

In today's companies we are missing a CSO, a Chief Spiritual Officer. We have goals of making money, of increasing the shareholders' value, and of expanding the global market.

This results in a belief in constant and unlimited growth, and in the productivity of money.

Imagine, if the father of Jesus had put 1 Euro into his bank account in the year 0 for 3.8% interest on his savings. Then, Jesus would be a very rich man today. If, compared to gold, Jesus would own 1.5 times the weight of Mother Earth in gold— which is not possible! This is why we are on the wrong path! There has to be a change.

The cost of this wrong belief is our everyday reality: money for the sake of money. The gap between poor and rich widens and social problems increase.

There are no exemplars in our companies any longer.



Eternal Sai lighting our way home  
 Your music of love calling us home  
 Your music fills our hearts,  
 Your music fills our hearts,  
 Your music fills our hearts  
 guiding our way home  
 Cause love is the source,  
 the path and the goal.  
 Love is the source of love  
 Love is the source of love

There is no possibility for identification and no responsibility, no reliability and no orientation. All this leads to a decrease of values.

Ten years ago, a recycling company was offered to me and my friend. The night before the purchase decision had to be taken, I had a dream.

It showed one of the buildings of the company, but Swami had put huge green neon letters on top of the roof that said: "Re-Sai-Cling"!

We printed 'Copyright: Re-Sai-Cling' on every company material. As we only have one Mother Earth, we named our company 'Environment Intelligence'.

The company is run based on the five Human Values: Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Nonviolence. We thought this was easy to understand, realise, and to get direct feedback.

We have banners that say, "We Create Values!"—in a double sense, as we try to regain precious metals from electronic waste.

We talk about five Human Values with our customers and visitors. It makes an interesting and different starting point for business relationships.

We try to be exemplars for the five Human Values.

We regard our employees as co-operators; share with them

co-responsibility and co-participation; and try to communicate with unity of head, heart, and hand.

We ask ourselves two questions: Is it good for customers, employees and the business? And, how do we make it good?

It is just: *Be, do, see, tell – Love!*

In the company, we try to implement leadership tools taken from the SSIO and transform them to business needs. It is like a puzzle with many different pieces. The centrepiece of our success is Swami, not the form of Swami.

It is His LOVE evaporating out of every inch of our bodies!

Jai Sai Ram.



**SRI H.J. DORA**

India

Director, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

My humble *pranaams* to Bhagawan.

When I came into this auditorium, so many memories came to me, because I had the very unique privilege of coming along with Swami when this college and auditorium began. Swami used to like these paintings, and He use to admire that painter; one Subramanya was there. He would say, "See how nicely he has painted." "See how the 3-dimensional effect has come; it is only on the wall," Swami would say innocently. He would speak, and we would compliment, "Swami, your colleges are so good." He would reply: "It is not My college. It is *your* college!"

When He was making the hospital, from a distance we could see the building domes coming along. We used to tell Him, "Swami, you are building a very beautiful hospital." To which Swami would respond: "Not My hospital, *your* hospital." I would reply "Swami, building this hospital is a gigantic task, and you are saying that you will run it free, without any government assistance." Swami said: "It will happen, and

it should happen. And it should happen more. More and more such things should come up."

Swami used to always emphasise that a human being is very pure, is full of love. He is an embodiment of God. *Every one*, not only human beings, every living and non-living being has the same consciousness. When Swami said this, we couldn't initially follow what it is all about. But Swami would, for He never saw any difference between one and another.

Swami used to metaphorically say, "When a dirty shirt is given to a *dhobi*, and after two days when the white shirt comes back, you admire by saying, 'What a white shirt, how nicely has he worked.'" Swami continued to say, "That *dhobi* is not responsible for making the shirt white. The shirt was white earlier. He only removed the dirt." According to Swami, all of us are pure. We do not realise it. Our mind goes into this *maya* (illusion) as we call it, and goes after a form, and thinks that will give happiness. So we are taken away, astray. We leave the main path, the great path.

He says that when we land in a new country, customs officers remind us: 'Don't bring vegetables, don't bring meat products, etc.' And, if we were to bring, these items will be confiscated. Swami explains when we are landing upon Earth, there are reminder signs that God has put up: 'This world is impermanent; There is no happiness', just like that in airports.

He would repeat *slokas*, all these are ancient sayings, to make this generation understand we are after non-permanent things and we can never get happiness

from them. The real happiness is *in us*. We go inside, discover ourselves, and then we know our heart is pure, full of love. Then we expand. Expansion is the very purpose of life; Swami used to say, "Contraction is death."

Swami would always say,  
"This (Love) is your innate quality, but you are not realising it."

I am confident to say that many of you are aware of Steve Jobs, Apple's founder. He once said during his last few days: "We become twisted when we relentlessly pursue wealth. We must look for other things, like Love."

Swami would always say, "This (Love) is your innate quality, but you are not realising it." Swami would give examples of the mind. As said earlier, your mind takes you away.

Swami said, "What is the mind? It is a bundle of desires." So He would bring His handkerchief and say, "This is a handkerchief. Take away each thread; what do you have? No handkerchief, only threads. The threads made into a small bundle becomes cotton."

"Your mind is full of desires. You remove one after another, the mind dies, you become a diamond (die-mind)," He used to say.

How to remove the wants?

Swami would say: "You are a householder. You have certain responsibilities towards your children, your wife, other people, but limit your wants. Be content with what you have. There are more unfortunate people, try to be of help to them."

These were the sayings Swami taught us relentlessly. We undoubtedly understand the significance of Swami's words.

Swami would say in a beautiful Telugu poem, that when you are born, there are no jewels, or no ornaments on you; you are just born a boy or girl. But, there is one invisible ornament which the Lord puts on your neck; that is the combination of the good and bad deeds that you have done in an earlier life. And in life, as you are progressing, you reap the things that you have sown.

So, Swami says, "Let the past be over, but from now on, sow good things—sow the right things so that either in this *janma* or the next, you can reap happiness."

Swami says that people are reluctant to do good things, but they want good results. If you are not kind to people when you are doing a job, but when you go to somebody's office or some other place, you want people to be very polite, very nice—it won't happen. Swami said: "First, you do the right thing. You do the correct thing. Then you get good results."

One devotee brought his daughter who was not able to walk properly because of some leg problems. Her parents prayed, "Swami, our daughter is like this. She is in a wheelchair. Please help her." Do you know what Swami replied?

He said, "This is due to a previous bad *karma* (bad deed) she did. I can postpone it, but she will have to settle this in some other *janma*. And in that *janma* (life), you do not know what type of family she will be born into, or what type of life she will have."

Swami was emphasising that all of these are results of our own actions in day-to-day life. Some help suddenly comes from an unknown source because of our past good deeds.

Swami was repeatedly saying, "Don't have hatred, don't have ill-will towards people who have done wrong, if somebody has done something, it is *karma-phalam* (result) that is coming to you. God gives you all these things."

Swami was always a great role model. How humble He was, how simple a life He used to lead.

God ultimately watches the whole thing, and ensures that this law of nature takes place. He has no prejudices.

Swami always told me I was going through a very bad phase of life, but I am a great devotee. It is like giving an injection that removes the pain; you feel numb.

Swami used to say, "Try to do good, and do not expect good results by doing bad things."

Swami was always a great role model. How humble He was, how simple a life He used to lead. So many people wanted to give their property to Swami's Trust; Swami refused. But, for the devotees, for the large mass of people, He would build huge hospitals. Swami kept enough reserves so that all institutions could go on.

God represents the shepherd. If one sheep goes away, he is concerned, and he goes and brings it back. So, Swami's concern for us is equally like that. If somebody was going astray, Swami would say, "You give your love, you feel bad for him, try to bring him back—don't discard him. Try to explain; he may not listen to you, but still explain, and bring him back to the fold."

That was the love in which Swami did all this, all through His love, so much of sacrifice is done, and we have seen that.

I am so happy, I am very happy, that all of you have assembled here for the 10th Conference. I am very happy that all the brothers and sisters of Sai Family, have come together. I am very sure for the 11th Convention, the 12th Convention, this hall will not be adequate. I am very sure that is Swami's way of doing.

Swami, bless them all; all of them should live up to Your message.

Thank you, Swami.

Thank you, one and all.



**DR. SHIVENDRA KUMAR**  
Australia  
International  
Youth Coordinator

Dear youth, brothers and sisters,  
Om Sri Sai Ram!

There are five things I would like to talk about today.

Firstly, that *Life is a Game*, and the most important part of is the goal.

The goal of the Sathya Sai International Organisation and our vision is that we have to work towards realising our inherent divinity.

It should always be to realise the Bhagawan who is within us.

When we plan activities, make decisions or interact with people, it is very important to ask the question: *'Is this going to further my relationship with our Guru, our God?'*

Secondly, *Life is a Challenge*, and as we progress spiritually, there will be challenges that come our way.

It is often said as we progress on the spiritual path the road gets steeper, narrower, and rougher.

Brothers and sisters, it is important that we are always tuned in and connected to Swami, so that when difficulties arise, we have the mindset to cling on to our Divine Lord and practice the five Human Values.

If we don't, we do not satisfy the first Goal I spoke about.

Thirdly, I would like to speak about the *Sathya Sai World Youth Festival (SSWYF)* that will be taking place on 12-14 July, 2016.

When we plan activities, make decisions or interact with people, it is very important to ask the question:

*'Is this going to further my relationship with our Guru, our God?'*

The Youth Festival has four objectives: first, to give the youth and the youthful, opportunity to celebrate the joy of being a Sai youth.

The second, to draw all the youth from around the world to Puttaparthi.

The third, for the Youth Festival to preserve Swami's teachings, philosophies, His work, and His institutions for generations to come.

The fourth, to show youth of the world the elders of the Organisation. It is to give elders the opportunity to share their experiences on how they have successfully lived in the world with a life based on Human Values, and how they have been able to navigate through challenges.

Fourth, I would like to speak how the Youth Group/Wing is not a separate Organisation.

We are very much a part and parcel of the main Organisation. We need to look up to the elders and take all the wisdom that we can. I humbly request all elders to please support and nurture the youth because if we do not do this now, it might be too late.

The fifth and probably the most important point: I would like to thank Bhagawan for creating the Youth Wing for us, because had it not been for Bhagawan's vision, I would not be standing here.

I would like to also thank all the elders for your continued support, guidance and most importantly your blessings to the youth group. With Swami not physically here with us, we look up to each one of you to inspire and lead us.

Dear brothers and sisters, I love you all.

Om Sai Ram!



**MS. KATINKA VAN LAMSWERDE**  
Netherlands  
National Council President

Om Sri Sai Ram,

I offer myself at the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who opened my eyes and heart to the Universal Love Energy.

Respected Elders, dear brothers and sisters, Sathya Sai Baba is leading us all on the path of expansive Love. I would like to share three examples of how He is leading me on the individual level, the group level, and the level of society.

Baba says, "Unity, Purity, Divinity." Sai Baba is teaching me about Unity, and I trust that He shall continue to take me, and all of us, on the path of Purity to reach Divinity.

The first example is from a *darshan* in Whitefield in 1995, in the presence of Swami, where I realised and experienced that we all are like cells in the one Divine Body of God. Nothing exists outside of God.

For a body to be healthy and balanced, harmony and cooperation between the different constituents is needed. Cells do this automatically by fulfilling their

specific task, as long as we do not disturb them.

The question I had been pondering ever since I came to Sai Baba five years earlier was: 'What is my task? How can I best accomplish my task?' The answer is that I do not know and cannot know. There is no room to wish to be this or that. Be what you are; be ready to fulfill your task no matter how big or small. In creation, God has put everything and everyone in place to function as a harmonious whole.

The challenge is to find out how to be who God created in this form we call the body, with our God-given capacities and talents, just to fit into His Plan. Be His instrument. Be what is needed in any given situation. Be like Krishna's flute, *murali*, so that God can pick you up at any moment and spread His melodious music through you.

**Be what you are;  
be ready to fulfill  
your task,  
no matter how  
big or small.**

Not even a blade of grass moves without His will. God is the Director, the Doer, the Guide, the One who inspires and gives us energy. Be the best you can be.

This experience of oneness has brought great peace to me as it has reduced the tendency for me to become judgemental.

The awareness of Unity in Divinity, each having a core of Love and a place in this cosmic dra-

ma, radiates beyond the narrow confines of this limited little 'I'.

In 2005, I went to the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Thailand to participate in the 10-week residential *Sathya Sai Education in Human Values* course thus strongly experiencing transformation through Love. To further develop and expand in Love, all actions undertaken need to be saturated with unconditional Love.

In the third example of expansion of Love, I was part of the Disaster Relief team that went to Haiti. They were struck by a major earthquake on January 12th, 2010. Medical camps, study circles on Human Values, values-based activities, and leadership training were part of the service activities at Haiti.

Through this experience, it hit me that there is no difference between the people who are served and those actively serving. We all are simply on our journey to God-Realisation. Swami had given me this beautiful opportunity to be of service to the the people of Haiti.

Beloved Swami, You are my Guru and Guide. You know me more than I know myself. Your unconditional Love sustains me.

Before I close, let us go within just for a moment and connect to the love-light of Sai radiating in our hearts, and spread that divine light to all beings and Mother Earth, pulsating with the divine energy that is our source, life, and unity.

Expansive love, thank you dearest Sai.



**DR. SURESH GOVIND**  
Malaysia

Om Sai Ram,

Bhagawan, respected elders, beloved brothers and sisters, Sai Ram. I'm extremely privileged and humbled to share the same stage as all the other speakers whose purpose was only to reinforce the ideals, reignite the spirit, and go back with greater passion to re-dedicate our pledges and re-align with Bhagawan's mission and vision. That, too, is my purpose. My topic is: *From here, where do we go; from here, where to?*

Everything that we do in life is a ritual, when you come to *bhajans* and when you come to this place. But to make these rituals spiritual, simply add the word "SPI", Swami's Purpose & Intention. This is how we must be in our life. Many task forces for hospitality, food, and other elements have worked seamlessly to make this program so successful.

Now we ask Swami, "Bhagawan, how can I be your task force?" Swami replied, "I have a task; my task is to spread *ananda* to everybody."

Swami, if I also spread peace and happiness to everybody,

can I be your task force? My vision, now, is to go back and spread happiness and peace to everybody. I live based on this *mantra*, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

Swami said, "I have a vow to lead back those who strayed away back to the part of righteousness." Swami, I want to be attached to you. Swami replied, "I am attached to my work." The only area where the word is used is in Swami's context! My work is to alleviate suffering and poverty, and bring people back to peace and happiness.

Swami said, "I will sell my ashram to bring water to the poor villages." During a birthday celebration, Swami said, "I will now launch the Super Specialty Hospital." While He said this, one important message comes out. It is a message to the devotees; 'Look at me, avatar of the *yuga*, what I did for every society's problem: I responded. Shouldn't this, too, be your response? Shouldn't you go back and find out what is the cause and respond like how I did?'

When the Master was laid to rest, guns were fired to show respect. But, what is His call?

His final picture is with His two palms folded. 'I have done it; this is how one should be. Follow me, Follow the Master, Face the devil, Fight till the end, and Finish the game. You, too, must go back, you, too, must respond and you, too, must make the Sathya Sai International Organisation in all countries become a national conscience-keeper for moving nation-building activities.'

Whenever there is a disaster, everybody responds. Broken

houses are easier to fix than broken homes. In every country, divorce rates are going up, teenage pregnancy is going up, drug abuse is going up. Everywhere there is social distress, there are social problems.

*Sathya Sai* must be an answer to this. Why? Bhagawan said, "My *darshan* must flow to you and through you to the world." This is what we must now see. You must dare to go into the deeper end of the ocean, do things that governments cannot do, that other NGOs cannot do. Sai Baba is the solution, the eternal solution. Where is He, if not there but here in our hearts?

The greatest *sadhana* is to know that He is the ultimate doer in



each individual. But, when we go back, we don't have resources. The ultimate formula to get the resources is to connect to this ultimate source, Sri Sathya Sai.

This is the *mantra* that every devotee must know and must carry in our breath. Only then can walls be broken down.

Nations now must come together and we must now seamlessly work together for the common cause of *loka kalyan* (public welfare).

You and I have been selectively chosen for this.

But, Swami has also said, "How can you go and give peace to others when you yourself have no peace?"

Therefore, we have to have spiritual depth, we have to go deeper, we have to develop self-confidence so that we become so happy that the happiness radiates on our face.

**"My Darshan  
must flow to you  
and through you  
to the world."**

Every Sai devotee must not have a smiling face. You must have faces that are *beaming* with happiness because self-confidence will lead to self-satisfaction. When you are so happy like this, naturally you have to self-sacrifice. When you sacrifice, you

have to get enlightenment and realisation.

Once, in the interview room, I took Swami's hand and put it on my head. He asked, "What are you doing?" "Swami, I want enlightenment; give now, now, now," I said. Swami said to me, "Enlightenment is not a business transaction for me to give you and for you to take. You have to earn it."

Therefore, we have come here to redeem our lives. Look for opportunities. Let us redeem with two expressions; one light, and the other delight.

Sai Ram, and thank you for the opportunity.





**MR. FIZE MOHAMMED**

Trinidad & Tobago  
Zone 1, Deputy Central  
Coordinator, West Indies

Om Sai Ram.

'Do they lead noble and virtuous lives? Are they full of patience and love? If the answer is yes, then we can be guaranteed that that is a good nation.'

Bhagawan says, "No matter how highly academically qualified you may become, how much property you may have in your name, however huge may be your bank account, if you have no devotion to your parents, your life has been a tragic waste."

All the religions exhort us to worship revere and serve parents. In the Holy Bible, it is said, 'Honor thy mother and thy father, so that thy years may be long upon the face of the land.' The Holy Prophet Mohammad (upon whom be peace) once said, "Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother." And even more stringently in Hinduism, we are taught to revere the parents as the very embodiment of God Himself.

Swami's life is His message. The relationship between Swami and Mother Easwamma is a great

and inspiring lesson for humanity.

Swami honoured, served, respected, and fulfilled all his mother's wishes. He built the first primary school and the first primary care health centre in Puttaparthi. Swami also provided water for the village of Puttaparthi.

Brothers and sisters, the closest thing to God's love is a mother's love. Bhagawan says, "The mother is the Goddess who has given us this body, this individuality, and as such she deserves all the veneration and worship that we can shower at her divine lotus feet."

**"Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother."**

Swami warns us, "By disregarding your parents, you will never be able to prosper in life. You may be able to repay any debt, but the debt you owe to your mother you will never, never ever be able to repay. Those of you who call yourselves devotees of God must have as their credential the worship and reverence of the parents, especially the mother."

I share with you a personal example of the love of Mother Sai in my life. It also involves the love of my earthly Mother. On the 19th of June, 1983, I attended a *bhajan* session in my country, Trinidad and Tobago. It was so beautiful. We sang *bhajans* throughout the night to the wee hours of the morning. I was transporting devotees back

home in my vehicle when I was involved in a massive accident and passed out due to the crash. After I gained consciousness from the crash, two most amazing things happened as Swami's Grace. One, is that I felt absolutely no pain, and the second miracle is that Swami removed the memory of the accident from my mind.

After a few days, I was discharged and taken home, and with the loving, caring concern of my mother, together with chanting the *Gayatri* and Bhagawan's Grace, I recovered quickly.

I have come from a broken home. My mother single-handedly brought up seven children against insurmountable odds of alcoholism and drug abuse. Physical and mental violence occurred in our home many a day, but my mother has become my greatest inspiration in spite of tremendous family turbulences. Every day I would see her praying, every morning, to restore family unity in our home. And when I came into contact with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, I really experience the love of a thousand mothers. I leave with you His words and bring this message to an end:

*"Bring me the depths of your mind, no matter how grotesque, how cruelly ravaged by doubts and disappointments. I know how to treat them, for I am your mother and I will never, never let you go. You already have me and I already have you; there is no difference. I will protect you like the eyelids protect the eyes. Be patient. In time, everything will be given to you. Be happy. There is no need to worry about anything. Whatever happens, know that this avatar has willed it so."*

May Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba continue to bless and guide each and every one of us, and as we continue to aspire to the spiritual path, let our fervent and heartfelt prayer be that we will ceaselessly strive to be wonderful examples of His Divine Love.

Jai Sai Ram!



**MR. DEVIESH TANKARIA**  
United Kingdom  
SSIYLP Coordinator

Om Sri Sai Ram,

Dearest Bhagawan, I offer my most loving salutations at your Divine Lotus Feet.

My most respected elders, leaders of the SSIO, and my dear brothers and sisters, Om Sai Ram!

On December 31st, 1983, Swami said, "Utilise every second to purify your heart and fill it with love. You will then realise that God is yours and you are with Love. True devotion is the means to realise the Divine. Devotion means love of God without any desire for reward. Such devotion can be developed only through good conduct."

Revered elders, dear brothers and sisters, the world today needs each one of us to direct our actions towards the common objectives of transformation through love and unity. Unity and transformation of the entire world is possible only if every one follows the powerful, divine teachings of our Lord, to firstly love our own selves, then expand it to our families, friends, society, and ultimately to all beings.

The youth programmes globally are promoting this love and unity.

During the 1996 Summer Course in Brindavan, Bhagawan stated: "Students! You are the ones who will assume the leadership of the country in the future. The future of the nation depends upon you. Your nature and character will decide the character of the nation. You should work for the prosperity of the nation, welfare of the world, and universal happiness. First of all, you must follow the command of the Lord. Therein lies your welfare, as well as the security of the nation and society."

To implement the resolution of the past Youth Conferences and produce dynamic world leaders, the SSIO, with the blessings from our beloved Bhagawan, commenced the *Sathya Sai International Youth Leadership Programme* (SSIYLP) in February 2015.

The year-long Programme consists of 9 modules with 6 modules offered online and 3 modules were offered on November 17th–21st as a 5-day residential course at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SS-SIHL).

"The future of the country depends on the skill and the sincerity of the youth."

The Programme covers topics ranging from Swami's mission, His teachings and His work, to understanding the importance of self-awareness and reflective thinking, as well as practical skills in communication, managing projects and interpersonal skills.

The graduates will then complete a one-year post project at the zonal or international level.

The objective of the SSIYLP is to raise a generation of youth who are exemplars of the teachings and the philosophy of life as taught by Sathya Sai Baba. Techniques acquired by the youth leaders will help them create a positive and loving environment at home, in the SSIO and in their local communities.

This year, 52 youth from 36 countries across 11 zones have participated in the Programme, as well as another pilot Programme in Russia, where an additional 30 youth are also participating.

The soon to be graduates have all shown tremendous leadership, and I salute your determination to drive Swami's message forward. The SSIYLP has equipped you with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective self and organisational management. We hope this Programme has inspired you to

strive to live Sai's teachings in your daily lives, to enthusiastically consider all work as His work, and carry out your tasks to the best of your abilities, while ultimately adding to the growth and effective functioning of the SSIO.

As Swami has lovingly said, "The future of the country depends on the skill and the sincerity of the youth. Therefore, the necessary enthusiasm and encouragement must be generated among the youth. All my hopes are based on the students, the youth. They are very dear to me."

With this spirit, I would like to wish the first batch of SSIYLP my heart felt congratulations, and I wish you all the very best with your projects for 2016.

Jai Sai Ram.



**SRI R.J. RATNAKAR**

India

Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai  
Central Trust

My most humble and loving salutations at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Master, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Elders, dear brothers and sisters, a very loving Sai Ram to each one of you.

When the heart is full, words are few. Swami often said, "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" (Sanskrit expression for 'universal family'). If anyone wants to see what it looks like, they should come to this beautiful auditorium to see that universal family assembled at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. People from approximately 80 countries have gathered in Prasanthi Nilayam to talk about love and service. The only power that can make it happen is Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

When a Conference of this scale is organised in Prasanthi Nilayam, it has to befit the stature of Sai mission. It is joyous to see such an august audience attending the World Conference. The purpose of this Conference is to connect with one another and decide how do we take forward the Sai mission. What a proud Father Swami must be, seeing all of us sitting here and deliberating on His mission! I am sure that He would be very, very, very happy.

The only single common thread that binds everyone present here is Bhagawan and His Love. In order to nurture this, there must be unity amongst us. Only where there is unity, Swami's power will prevail and there will be Bhagawan's blessings. Since there is an Organisation, there are functional statuses such as Trustee, President, and Chairman, etc. However, these have nothing to do with us as individuals connecting to Bhagawan. As Brother Suresh Govind said, we are Trustees of Love.

Swami has said the biggest enemy of unity is our ego. Wherever there is ego, we fail to be united. He has given us the opportunity to serve in His mission—to fulfill not His mission, but to fulfill our own lives and our own selves.

Swami says, when you have this 'I' feeling, you will fall ill. Then, what do you do when illness engulfs you? You should move from 'I' to 'we'. When we replace 'I' with 'we', illness will go, and you will be filled with wellness. There is no place for 'I' in this Sai mission. This should be practiced at every level of the Organisation.

What a proud Father Swami must be, seeing all of us sitting here and deliberating on His mission! I am sure that He would be very, very, very happy.

Swami has filled us with so much love and confidence to carry out His mission, which must be undertaken humbly without any distinction. Swami has asked us to practice what we preach. This can be depicted from various instances mentioned in books written by Swami.

Swami taught me that I should always count others first and myself last. In this manner, though individual opinions and idiosyncrasies will arise, it is im-

perative to keep the Sai mission first and foremost.

Swami has chosen each and every one of us to be a part of His mission. Do no doubt that. That is why today you are a part of the World Conference. Swami said, "Those who are dedicated to My mission, I will take care of them for seven generations on all sides." All we have to do is dedicate ourselves to Swami, and you can have the entire world.

Swami does not need a mission. Everything belongs to Him. The whole universe is within Him.

You have to safeguard this mission with your life and breath. We should put our heart and soul in it, and Swami's love will be always there.

Let Swami's love permeate each one of us, our homes, our hearts, our every work. Let us destroy our enemies by loving them, making them our friends. That is the Sai way.

When He said, "I have a mission for the world," He had every one of you in His heart and mind when He declared this at the age of 14. Let us be grateful to Bhagawan for choosing all of us to be part of His mission, and I am really thrilled to be part of this Conference, to speak to you and share some of my thoughts.

We have some tokens of love for you from Swami and SSS Central Trust, from Swami's store. You have traveled all the way just to be at the Lotus Feet.

My joy knows no bounds. We are very, very, very happy and I am sure Swami will be very happy to see His children together discussing His mission.

He has assured all of us, that as long as the sun and the moon are there, Sai's mission will be there, because it has to fulfill the entire humanity.

May Swami bless each one of us. Brothers and sisters, walk hand in hand, so that our Father and Mother, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba will be proud of us.

Thank you.

Sai Ram.

*Photo below: Participants of 10th World Conference proceedings outside SSIHL Auditorium*







MEET *The* PRASANTHI  
COUNCIL

Delegates interacted with members of Prasanthi Council & Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, regarding the SSIO's vision and way forward



**Q:** Can you please expand on the role of senior SSIO members in creating a new generation of leaders, to take the divine message of the Avatar forward?

**DR. WILLIAM HARVEY:**

Thank you. I think the most immediate point to make is that the current adult leadership has to be very welcoming and encouraging to those young people who are coming in to assume leadership positions.

Many have already assumed leadership roles. They are aware of the advancements in technology, and they are aware of the fact that 100 years of innovation occurs in just a few months, in current times.

Their task is to integrate the new with the old. That is, our new leaders must contribute the benefit of their broader and wider perspectives, and at the same time maintain awareness of the essential core aspects of the Organisation, the principles which Swami Himself outlined so clearly.

**Q:** Based on your extensive experience, and your comprehensive knowledge, what is your future vision for Sathya Sai education to spread Swami's message and love to all corners of the globe?

**DR. ART-ONG JUMSAI:**

75% of Swami's time is involved in education because education is the way to solve problems of the world in the future.

Swami told me to work hard on education and spread the message of love everywhere, so I go around the world. I'm training a lot of teachers everywhere—in Thailand and all over the world. Now the government is asking me to train 500,000 teachers in Thailand.

So, Swami is behind all of this; He is there; He is here to help change the world, and education is the main method that he is going to be using.. And He said, "When there are such people who are educated with human values, there will be peace on earth."

Sai Ram!



**Q:** How does the work of the SSIO reflect the three fields of educational, spiritual and service that Swami started? Can you provide guidance on the expertise and skills needed to succeed in our work around the world as officers and leaders of Sathya Sai Organisations?

**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY:**

The ultimate purpose of being members of the Sathya Sai Organisation is to first realise and manifest our innate divinity and help our brothers and sisters realise their innate divinity. Swami has provided three paths to realise this goal: the path of selfless service (*karma yoga*); the path of wisdom (*jnana yoga*) and path of devotion (*bhakti yoga*). Swami says this helps us focus on our head, heart, and hands—head through wisdom, heart through devotion, and hands by being involved in service. He calls this 3HV-EHV.

Each path by itself or practised together takes us to same goal and thus serves the different aptitudes and interests of the seeker. Thus, the choice is left to the seeker. We should broaden our vision and understanding of each wing, which essentially broadens the understanding of spiritual practices.

**Q:** What is your vision for the SSIO as an integral part of the global community; and which pathways are available to fulfill Swami's mission in the global community?

**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY:**

Four months ago, the Public Outreach Committee was formed with a purpose to share Bhagawan's love and message globally. Latin America has been very successful in organising public meetings.

Other countries like UK, Malaysia, Canada, Australia, and USA have conducted several interfaith meetings.

Another initiative, 'Walk for Values', has been successful in countries such as Canada.

Community engagement, engaging with the other NGOs, as well as the governmental agencies are all different ways by which we can share Swami's message and love.



**Q:** Since the SSIO is a global spiritual Organisation, do we need to develop best practices and concern ourselves with the impact of our work in the communities we live in? If so, how do we develop these best practices to spread Swami's message and His love around the world?

**MR. LEONARDO GUTTER:**

We are all here because we have been with Swami for hundreds and hundreds of lifetimes. The question was about best practices, and what we have to improve. The spiritual path is a path of excellence. Swami says first 'Be', then 'Do', then 'Tell'.

First we have to be concerned with ourselves, and if we are more loving with our family, with our friends, and with our brothers and sisters in the Sai Organisation, then we will be able to express this love outside. We have to put more excellence into each one of the Sai activities that we do because if we do something without love, it's not a Sai activity.

I think that the Sai Organisation has two main purposes: The first purpose is to help each one of us to realise our own divinity. The second purpose, and you should not forget this, is to help as many people as possible, on this planet Earth, to advance in the spiritual path.

Swami gave his Divine instructions to go to every corner of the world to spread His message. He didn't say, "Spread My name, My form." He said, "Spread my *message*."

So, in everything we do, we always have to ask: *How does it advance me spiritually?* We have to remember the presence of Swami all the time: this is the most important thing. If we remember His presence all the time, then how could it be that whatever we do will not be the best? We will do whatever we do, not only in the Sai Organisation, but in our house and in our work, and everything has to be perfect, because Sai is watching us all the time.

So, I would tell you that the most important spiritual *sadhana* is: remember His Presence by your side all the time, then you will start feel more love, you will be more loving, you will do everything in a perfect way. This is the key.

**Q: Why is our personal *sadhana* so important in the work that we do in the Organisation as officers? And a part of that is, what are the pitfalls we need to avoid as officers, as we lead the Organisation and represent Swami in the world?**

**MR. GARY BELZ:**

The SSIO is part of Swami's Organisation, and as such, our work has to reflect the highest vision for His life and His message.

So, it's impossible for me to separate my personal *sadhana*, my personal path, from my present role as a World Foundation Chairman. It's very important though that we all share a single vision as to what our mission is, and I think all the chairpersons have done an excellent job at describing what the mission is. So, as long as we stay committed to that one vision, and one goal, I see unity, purity and divinity, which is what we are all here for.

We all have a yearning to wake up from our separate thoughts, and our separate fears, and to hear Swami's voice within us, and to let that voice express in love through His work. Even when there's conflict, and there sometimes is, or misunderstanding, that too is an opportunity that Swami has given us, to choose correctly, to think, 'Well, something's wrong here, we're not at peace.'

Let us ask Swami. Let's step back, ask Swami what it is we ought to do, where to go, what to say and to whom. And, any time I forget—in my personal life or my business life, or even in my role with the Sai Organisation—to step back and ask Swami, I tend to make mistakes, and I think with my brain, and not with the vision that Swami has given me.

And so, we all need to remember that Swami is the doer, the *only* doer, and He acts through us.

**Q: Can you tell us more about the SSIO's humanitarian efforts where there have been natural disasters, and whether this is a direction the Organisation plans to go in the next few years?**

**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY:**

Disaster relief efforts in Haiti began in 2010, and this experience prompted the formation of the Disaster Relief Committee, which has members from all over the world and is co-chaired by Mr. John Behner and Dr. Jack Feely.

In Nepal, after the earthquake in 2015, SSIO is giving comprehensive service by providing food, water, shelter, education and healthcare. These services are continuing, to date. A new mobile medical clinic, school renovation, and school supplies are being provided to serve the medical and education needs of the victims of the earthquake.

The SSIO is also making efforts to collect data for specialised skillsets among the devotees which can then be utilised in the humanitarian projects currently in progress or planned for future. To pool the talents, we need the input and cooperation of the members and officers of the SSIO.

**Q: Is it the role of the devotees to preserve the institutions that Lord Sai himself created, as sustainable models of selfless service? And if so, how do we avoid diluting our efforts as we embark upon new projects that call for our time and attention?**

**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY:**

Swami started various institutions and humanitarian projects for our redemption. He provided this opportunity so that we can realise our innate divinity through purification of heart by selfless service.

Swami founded, nurtured, guided, and blessed each one of these projects. It is our sacred responsibility to participate and support the divine legacy.

The Sathya Sai Organisation is a spiritual and humanitarian organisation started by Sathya Sai Baba, with members from all over the world.

This is the divine legacy we have inherited. And when we inherit something from our father and mother, we need to support it.

We can support these institutions with our time, energy, talent, and other resources.

This is a blessed opportunity for all of us. Swami says, "Many are called, but few are chosen."

It is only by His divine grace that we can participate in His divine mission, to sanctify and redeem our lives.

**Q: What are your views on the role of the Avatar in the SSIO today; and how do we represent the role of the Avatar in the work we do beyond the Sathya Sai Organisation?**

**SRI H.J. DORA:**

At a young age of 20 years, Swami declared that His mission was going to take place in Puttaparthi, and would continue for years to come. Swami could visualise His mission and started building it step-by-step.

Thus, the Sathya Sai International Organisation is the will of Swami. Everybody gathered here is due to the will of Swami. We have all benefitted from this, so, we have to carry on His message and make the whole thing relevant. Swami wanted this Organisation, and he knew people from all over the world will come. They have to be part of this Organisation so that they can, in turn, share their message when Swami is not in the physical form.

So the second part is, beyond Sai Centres, when we go to public meetings, community engagements, how do we represent the role of the Avatar? When we take Swami's message into our heart, then there is a transformation in our life.

There is a lot of harmony in you as a person because there is no internal conflict. So, by your attitude, others should know.

Swami has said many times, "Don't think that you have to join a *sevadal* centre, then you will get a blue scarf, then you start doing some *seva* work." He said at every moment you have to be a *sevadal* worker. Apart from our role in the Sai Organisation, every moment of our life should be spent in serving others, because we love the other person.

You become a role model for others, then people will come to you seeking help for their problems, which is a sure sign of your spiritual progress. We must reflect Swami's message in the several roles we play in our lives, not only in the Sai Centre. That's how you reach the community.

**Q: Without a physical form of Bhagawan, how do we create a platform for those who never had the physical *darshan* of our Lord, so that they too can learn how to love Him and how to serve Him?**

**MS. MARIANNE MEYER:**

We all came to Swami for various reasons, but what made us stay with Him? He inspired us to change our lives and make a strong foundation for a transformation and internal spiritual path.

People we will meet will be on different levels. We can show the way, but each individual has their own spiritual thirst. We must be responsible for ourselves that all of our activities are suffused with love in order to reach out to the public. All of what we are teaching, should be based on His teaching, which is Love.

My *mantra* is: "Place, time, and circumstances." This comes from Swami from the early '80s. We would come with our plans for educational activities, and He would look at the plans and sometimes say, "No, no, no, no. Don't go there now; this is not the time; they are not ready yet. You have to go somewhere else."

He said, for a project to be successful, place, time and circumstances must be right—must be in harmony. Sometimes, it needs some time.

We were going for a training in Kazakhstan; even the first lady was a Sathya Sai devotee. She said, "I can speak about Swami; but you can't speak about Swami." She knew what kind of resistance it might create.

We were instead asked to speak about His messages. We had to adapt our language to the people there. We would not talk about bliss, but about lasting happiness as we all want to be happy, isn't it? But, can we be happy all the time?

This way we brought in Swami's teachings.



We spoke about the importance of finding out who we are, as we have a great potential within our hearts, and the heart has universal love energy. We would ask how we get in touch with that.

We told them that we are like sleeping beauties, who just need some kind of wake-up kiss. And that this programme could be the 'wake-up kiss', for you to realise, connect and find out who you really are.

After two years of silence, they called us back and said, "We would like you to start with 300 new educators and continue with the old ones as well."

People don't like others to come and change the way they look, the way they think, or the way they believe. They would like to talk about the values that we all have in common.





# PANEL *Discussion*

SSIO Leaders addressed questions from participants on a variety of organisational & spiritual topics



**Q: It seems to me that Swami's mission is moving forward rapidly, not only outwardly but also inwardly. Our Centres seem to be focused more outwardly. Can we develop programs for our Centres to achieve this 'oneness' aspect in addition to public outreach? Perhaps, we can develop a program focused on the devotees?**

Mr. Leonardo Gutter illustrated the example of a program developed by the SSIO in Australia, called the 'Self Transformation Program' (implemented in Malaysia)—a resource that can be distributed and used as an aid for individual transformation in all Centres. One of the purposes of the Conference was for us to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of Swami's message.

We could do this by intensifying our *sadhana*, which is the basis of everything, and should be the core behind the outreach program.

Dr. Narendranath Reddy elucidated that the answer to the question lies in His name: 'Sai Baba' (mother and father). Here, devotion begins and we love Him and trust Him as our father and mother.

As we make progress we experience transformation via SAI—Spiritual transformation; Association transformation; and Individual transformation, which enables us to engage in selfless service.

The third aspect is BABA—Being (*sath*), Awareness (*chith*), Bliss (*ananda*) and Atma i.e., *sathchidananda* and *atma*, the experience of the all-pervading divinity. Thus, devotion and service lead to transformation, and knowledge leads to bliss.

The devotional, service, and educational activities of the Sathya Sai Centres help the members to lead spiritual lives and remind them of the goal of realising the *atma* or Self.

Ms. Petra von Kalinowski very simply and lovingly stated that Swami is always with us wherever we go and is in our hearts everywhere, all the time, including when we are in the wider society. Our knowledge of His teachings is always there for us to pull from, and to be aware of, when we are in the society for outreach.



**Q: Why does the SSIO not have the word “Service” in its title, since Bhagawan identified this when He founded this Organisation out of this compassion for us?**

**Moderator:** First, let us remember that the name of the Indian Organisation is: *Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation*. This point was discussed in the meetings of the senior officers of the International Organisation, and they unanimously decided that it would be known as the *Sathya Sai International Organisation*. Now, let me turn this over to Dr. Reddy for his comments.

**Dr. Reddy** remarked that the Sathya Sai International Organisation is not restricted to service only. Swami has provided the Organisation with three wings: Education, Service, and Devotion. Each wing has an important role in the Organisation and the spiritual progress of the seeker.

If the Organisation had been limited only to service, Swami would not have shown us the three paths of *karma yoga*,

*bhakti yoga* and *jnana yoga*—a reminder that there is more than one way to reach God. He reinforced that all activities related to the three wings have an important role in the Organisation.

**Mr. Gutter** added that everything is service, because we are serving ourselves when we participate in the Organisation, and serve humanity when we spread Swami’s message. He added that the SSIO, above all, is a spiritual organisation for the awakening of all humanity that utilises all the tools of service, devotion, and education to reach God.

**Ms. Aparna Murali** described an example Swami had given, likening the three wings to the three hands of a clock. The ‘second’ hand is the path of action or *karma*.

Because it moves very fast, the movement is visible and obvious. The ‘minute’ hand is the path of devotion; it is a bit slower than the seconds hand but still steady. The clock’s ‘hour’ hand is the path of wisdom since it is slower but is still occurring.

She underscored that all three hands are important, according to Swami, just as all three wings of the Organisation are interdependent on each other for devotees to progress on the spiritual path.

**Ms. Petra von Kalinowski** said that Swami answered this very question in the book, *My Baba and I*. He said that in the West, it is better to have spiritual education, which is the reason that we should not only promote service there.

**Q: Why are there fewer women than men in top positions in the Organisation when Swami teaches equality? And even fewer female speakers?**

Dr. Reddy pointed out that attempts are being made for more equitable representation. He reinforced that the SSIO leads by example. There are currently two ladies serving as zonal chairs in the SSIO and one lady serving on the Prasanthi Council and Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, and efforts are being made to encourage more women to take up leadership roles in the Organisation.

He emphasised that Swami always recognised that women have immense intellectual and spiritual power, and stated that the International Organisation is actively trying to bridge the gender gap in representation.

Mr. Gutter succinctly acknowledged that the message has been received, and that new changes are coming.

Dr. Ganguli noted that equitable representation is one of the resolutions that was made at the Conference, one that reiterated Swami's point that women are very capable leaders and add a spirit of compassion to the workings of the Organisation.

**Q: Swami has often spoken about the importance of one-pointedness to control our 'monkey mind'. I request that someone should address this in view of the current situation with regards to Muddenahalli.**

Dr. Reddy referred to Swami's analogy of how sunrays passing through a convex lens can effectively burn a sheet of paper. He shared that, similarly, we can control or destroy the 'monkey mind' through one-pointed focus. We should focus on our Guru, with unshakeable faith that Swami is our Guru and God, and our attention should remain on Swami only.

He added that if we dig in several places for water, we would have many shallow potholes and we would not find water. But, if we keep digging deep at the same place with perseverance and focus, we would eventually hit the water level.

He reinforced that if we practise what Swami has told us and get engaged in the work that Swami has started, we will surely be led to the highest knowledge that Swami wants to give us.

Dr. Reddy also encouraged all to consider reading the book *Mind and its Mysteries* which is a compilation of a series of discourses given by Swami on this topic.

Mr. Gutter continued to draw on the example of the mind as a 'mad monkey' that is constantly moving and creating chaos. He reminded that the mind needs to be controlled and destroyed in order to overcome it. Everything in our spiritual path is about two things: awareness about our intentions; and willpower to carry through. He referred to a formula that Swami had given about willpower, saying that every time a person refrains from a bad habit, they add more energy to their willpower forever.

He advised that there must not be any procrastination, and that awareness leads to determination, which increases focus and

willpower.

Mr. Gutter concluded that if we could focus our attention inward, we will recognise Swami within.

Ms. Murali shared a secular example that Swami had used, about the importance of setting a goal. If one sets a goal of getting a degree in science, they will not decide to take a few science courses and a few commerce courses and a few arts courses all at the same time. It is important to identify the goal, and work towards it. This applies to both the secular and spiritual realms of life.

Dr. Ganguli mentioned one of Swami's main directives for devotees: to have faith in Swami's name and form. SAI stands for *See Always Inside* and BABA stands for *Being, Awareness, Bliss, Ananda*. He asked, "How can you go looking elsewhere for what is already inside you?", and asserted that Bhagawan is already inside our being.

**Q: Based on the SSIO's structure, please explain the line of communication from the highest Officer to the Regional Chair and Central Chairs at the local level.**

Mr. Gutter reiterated the chain of command within the SSIO. When the Chairperson issues a communication, it is sent to the Zonal Chairperson, who sends that communication to the Central Coordinator. It is then sent to all the Central Council Presidents who send it out to the National Council Presidents who forward it to the Regional Presidents and eventually the Sai Centre Presidents who communicate with all the Sai devotees. This chain of commu-

nication is very important and must be implemented across the entire SSIO.

Dr. Reddy reinforced that the SSIO is a spiritual organisation, and therefore has a different mandate than a corporate or political organisation. He stated that the purpose of our Organisation is to share Swami's message, love, and glory, and that that we share information about our work, events, meeting proceedings, and opportunities

to serve. He encouraged everyone to visit the updated SSIO website and share feedback for improvement. He also recommended that the communication process in the SSIO needs to improve at all levels.

Dr. Ganguli also encouraged everyone, particularly SSIO officers, to frequently check the updated SSIO website at [www.sathyasai.org](http://www.sathyasai.org) for more up-to-date information.

**Q: Can the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust create a brief video about their mission and responsibilities for everyone's benefit?**

Dr Reddy confirmed that this request would be forwarded to the Central Trust.

He shared that Radio Sai and the Media Division are currently working on something to this effect.

He stated that when this is ready, it would be made available on the SSIO website.

**Q: How can we more effectively share the skills and experience to develop community programs on health awareness, nutrition for children, disaster relief activities, environmental awareness, etc.?**

Mr. Gutter stressed that it is important for office bearers to familiarise themselves with the members of the Sai Centres so that they know what people's areas of expertise are.

Dr. Reddy mentioned that the IT Team is developing a data-bank of volunteers with various skills, talents, and expertise in different fields. There will be further communication about this as it becomes available.

Ms. Petra von Kalinowski also pointed out that it is important to effectively highlight and communicate the needs of the Organisation so that the appropriate people could offer their skills and services.

**Q: The core of the Organisation should be love. All the time we hear and speak about love. But members in my Sai Centre are always quarrelling and talking bad of each other. How is this to be solved practically and efficiently?**

Mr. Gutter shared a personal story about learning to take a step back from a heated discussion to find a common resolution that could be implemented with unity amongst all the members.

He reminded every one that the basis of the Sathya Sai Organisation is love and understanding. Having a difference of opinion does not mean that anyone is your enemy, and we must remember this always.

Dr. Reddy shared Swami's words for conflict resolution: "First understanding, then adjustment." He stated that it is important for people to try and 'talk it out' so that they can find a peaceful compromise or adjustment that works.

He underscored another important thing to remember: that being part of the Sathya Sai Organisation is a spiritual practice to help us control our ego. He emphasised that we must learn to manage our emotions and our ego when we are challenged, and take it as an opportunity given to us by Swami for our spiritual growth.

Ms. Petra von Kalinowski suggested that people try to do small projects together, and that would be successful in building team spirit. This would make everyone feel good as well as develop a sense of understanding and unity.

Ms. Murali shared a story that Swami had told in response to the question, "How can we change the world?"

Swami said there was a geography teacher and she was teaching the students about the different countries on the world map. The teacher gave an assignment where the world map was a puzzle and they had to put the puzzle together.

One student finished it right away and the teacher was surprised. She asked the student how he finished so fast, and the boy flipped the world map around. On the other side was an image of a person.

He said, I saw there was this picture and I put the picture of the man together, and the world came together.

Swami's message through this story is that if we want to change the world, we must change ourselves first.



# SUMMARY OF *Workshops*



## IDEAL SATHYA SAI CENTRE



This workshop gave facilitators an insight into how the role and function of a Sathya Sai Centre is perceived by devotees and office bearers around the world, as well as their understanding of the challenges.

There is a gap between the way an 'Ideal Sathya Sai Centre' should look and function and how it currently operates.

Bridging this gap is an ongoing spiritual process and requires active participation and critical introspection from office bearers and all devotees.

In order to help improve the Sathya Sai Centres, different approaches and methods were suggested, in addition to existing guidelines. Practical and inspiring examples were shared.

In some cases, these programs can be emulated or adjusted to local needs, depending on cultural, social, economic, political and other contexts.

Noteworthy examples include:

**Nepal:** Children study different religions and present what they have learned to the local leaders of these religions. Thus, a link of appreciation is created in society towards the Sathya Sai Centre. Children learn and respect other religions and understand that they all lead to the same goal.

**Youth integration:** Watch movies with values, e.g. 'unity of faiths'. The youth watch a movie (or part of it) and then discuss the values.

**Integration with local culture:** To facilitate integration with the local culture, stories depicting local saints are used. Greek example: 'Socrates', alongside which a parallel between teachings of Sathya Sai and Socrates/Plato/Jesus/ Buddha. was observed and discussed.

**Australia:** 'Drama role play'. Four mothers (of different faiths) are presenting to their children the values in their scriptures. The public recognises that the values are the same.

**Coffee shop (Latvia):** Conduct meetings at coffee shops, libraries, etc. to discuss Swami's teachings.



## LEADERSHIP & THE SSIO



**D**iscussion on the SSIO centred on how to educate devotees about the Organisation's structure and its various global initiatives:

- Dynamic youth programs and engaging study circles will motivate members to take an active part in the SSIO's activities;
- Ensure a well-defined succession plan is in place for potential leaders;
- At least once a year, Sathya Sai Centre guidelines should be shared with members. Officers should also know about the operations, which can be found on the SSIO's official website: [sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org);
- Members should regularly visit the official websites: [sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org) and [saiuniverse.sathyasai.org](http://saiuniverse.sathyasai.org) to access notifications, news and announcements, SSIO events and activities, and other articles.

Ideally, a leader is one who:

- » Has Love and absolute faith in the name and words of Sathya Sai;
- » Continuously works on own transformation, evidenced by practice and faith in Swami;
- » Demonstrates availability, ability, affability, and accountability in SSIO;
- » Shares and spreads Sathya Sai's message of love and selfless service at all places i.e., at home, work, Sathya Sai Centre, vacation home etc., and follows the law of the land.



### ACTIONABLE GOALS

1. Take back to respective Sathya Sai Centres the inspirational stories and projects undertaken in various countries to motivate members into action.
2. Have regular meetings with members to increase awareness of SSIO and its activities globally.
3. Conduct comprehensive office bearers training workshops so they are well equipped to deal with devotees' questions and also conflicts that may arise.

# EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO SPREAD SWAMI'S MESSAGE



This workshop was designed to provide insight into the development of all aspects of Sathya Sai Education programs of the SSIO.

Participants were divided into groups and assigned different topic areas to be explored, such as:

- » Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSEs);
- » Sathya Sai Schools;
- » Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) programs;
- » Sai Spiritual Education (SSE); and
- » Sathya Sai Parenting program.

The deliberations were conducted keeping in mind that the synergy among all of these different programs is Swami's message of love and focus on the building of character.



## ACTIONABLE GOALS

### RESOURCES

1. Train the trainers using the best tools and techniques
2. Organise and share training content and material via scalable platform

### TEACHER TRAINING:

1. Train the trainers using the best tools and techniques
2. Organise and share training content and material via scalable platform

### ADMINISTRATION:

1. Leverage the ISSEs to support schools, SSEHV, and SSE programs as appropriate
2. Organisational excellence within our Sai Education programs (e.g., starter kit for Sai Schools, SSEHV, or SSE)
3. Build & develop model partnerships with other organizations as an exemplar

### TEACHERS' ROLE

1. Provide feedback to improve teacher training program for SSE, SSEHV, ISSE, and Sai Schools
2. Training for visiting faculty for Sai Schools and SSEHV programs
3. Mentorship programs for teachers

### PRESENTING DIVINITY

1. Maintain the integrity of the spiritual basis of Sai Education representing Divinity in appropriate ways
2. Train teachers and others involved as required for SSE, SSEHV, and Sai Schools

### PARENTING:

1. Develop and present parenting workshops and ongoing seminars
2. Develop programs for different stages in the lifecycle of parenting (e.g., soon to be expecting parents)

# ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE SSIO



The workshops focused on the following areas:

- » Women as Instruments of Divine Love
- » Honouring of Women
- » Women in the SSIO and Society



## ACTIONABLE GOALS

As **INDIVIDUALS**, women committed to:

1. Love and accept themselves as they are;
2. Be more loving, peaceful, truthful and tolerant (eg. story of Putlibai);
3. Engage in the spiritual practices prescribed by Swami.

In the **FAMILY**, women committed to:

1. Building self-confidence, unity, love, tolerance, peace, devotion, harmony in the home;
2. Being an example of Sai Teachings to inspire children to become good citizens.

In the **SSIO**, women committed to:

1. Participate in various service activities, in the SSE wing, and become role models;
2. Take up leadership positions within the SSIO to encourage and support women.

In **SOCIETY**, women committed to:

1. Promote recognition of women and respect the privilege of being a woman, crossing cultural gender biases;
2. Promote and conduct SSEHV classes for public outreach.

# ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE SSIO



Some of the major challenges faced by the youth are:

- » Balancing school/ career/ family/ SSIO activities
- » Distinguishing between bad company and good company
- » Working out differences among peers/at home/ at work
- » Meeting challenges in parenting
- » Seeking and being open to receiving guidance from parents and elders

SSIO events such as the World Conference and the International Youth Festival are fundamental to global youth engagement, so that the youth involvement in the Organisation continues to remain strong.

## ROOTS (Fundamentals)

The summary of all the workshops sessions can be presented using the analogy of a plant. For a flower or plant to grow we need seeds, soil, water, and the sun.

- Swami is our source. We need to learn about Swami's life and teachings and His message so that we remain rooted in the source.

- We need to understand our youth and get to know them deeply so that we can identify with them and bring out their latent talent/skills so that they use their potential appropriately.

When these seeds are watered, the plant will blossom in the direction of the source, ensuring that our youth grow strong and straight with discipline.

## STEM (Guidance & Character)

- Lead by example by being a role model, always focusing on Love and Unity.
- Focus on the universality of Swami's teachings so that we are inclusive and relevant to youth, irrespective of their race, religion, culture or beliefs.
- Work from a place of collaborative intelligence, aware that everything stems from the same source. When we do this, we will always find a common ground and ways to create synergy among all groups.
- Engage/encourage youth to work in teams, constantly providing loving support. In this way we will be exposed to a space of new and creative ideas which will add value to the Organisation.
- Increase youth awareness/sensitivity to social challenges in their country/region so that, as the SSIO, we can address these challenges and become catalysts for transformation.

## LEAVES & FLOWERS

### (Engaging Tools and Activities)

- Let us engage the youth and allow them to innovate with social media tools within the framework of SSIO media guidelines.
- Constantly engage our youth in educational, spiritual, service and every other type of activity which will benefit humanity.
- Find ways to create a "looping in" mechanism to involve graduates of the SSE program.
- Run interactive workshops on topics such as leadership, unity of faiths, the environment and aspects of human personality to develop self-inquiry, introspection, and sharing insights.
- Create an international platform to share inspiring activities that are taking place around the globe so that we learn from each other's best practices and are inspired to collaborate.

With international collaboration, pockets of these types of activities will become flowers of love and service which will then get connected to form a garland, worthy to be offered at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Lord.

# BALANCING FAMILY, CAREER & SSIO



## Key Discussion Points and Outcomes:

- People say balance is hard because they are 'time poor', hence time management is a must!
- Parents need to be role models. Remember, more desires, more problems, so having a CoD (ceiling on desires) is very important for balance.
- Need to treat everyone as your own family with love and respect.
- Practice meditation and other spiritual practices to find peace and 'hear the voice within'.
- Sathya Sai leaders need to share the workload to empower others.
- Be mindful of your spouse's needs if they have a different belief from yours. Family time is important.
- Do not differentiate between professional life, home life, and spiritual life as **all work is spiritual**. Swami says, "Work is worship."
- Do not 'give up' the Organisation (SSIO), as we are fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of Swami's divine mission.
- We all have a goal for this life. Dive deep into Swami's teaching, put them into practice and realise that we are divine.

**S**ome of the key issues discussed included:

- » Too much to do, too little time
- » Some family members believe in Swami and some do not.
- » Some have little time for devotional singing and service because of work and family commitments; others cannot help in the home because of Sai activities and work.



## ACTIONABLE GOALS

1. Make Swami and His work (in all its forms) your priority. Remember to offer to Him everything you do.
2. To get balance, remember Swami is the Doer. Living Swami's teachings creates the balance
3. Mindfulness; live in the present moment.
4. Get children involved in SSE (Sai Spiritual Education) to learn Ceiling on Desires, and learn the discipline of usage of time.
5. 'CC-BC' policy: 'CC' Can Control, plan and commit to it. 'BC' Beyond our Control, recognise and accept it.
6. Leaders need to keep devotees engaged in the activities of Sathya Sai Centres and be sensitive to their needs.
7. Try to do the best you can, and always be happy! You know you are making progress when you are happy and cheerful.

# PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAMS



## PUBLIC MEETINGS

- » There is a need to ensure that such meetings are organised, planned and designed for an audience that might not be aware of or know very little about Sathya Sai Baba, His life, work, and message. **The primary objective should be to share the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba.** We may focus also on Swami's life and work, provided that the public is open to it. Otherwise confine the subject to the human values and service component of His teachings.
- » The theme of the meeting should be based on relevant and practical topics of interest and personal transformation potential to the public. Invitations to the meetings can be made in many ways i.e. sending direct messages to all friends and relatives (small meetings); using any local media, posters and fliers (local meetings) and through mass media publicity such as newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, internet, etc. (major meetings).
- » Any public outreach initiative must in no way be connected with proselytizing or aggressive marketing strategies of the Sathya Sai message.

## New proposals suggested by workshop participants:

- » Public expositions on Sathya Sai life, work and message, touring many cities in a country or in a whole region; involving local Sai Centres and local community leaders;
- » Spread Swami's teachings as quotations in every possible way: cards, booklets, small books, even light signals on the road;
- » Use that material as an additional display during service activities, bringing awareness of Swami's message.

## INTER-FAITH PROGRAMS

### Recommended initiatives:

- » The SSIO should dedicate a service activity in celebration of a religious observance and invite the respective religious leaders to participate and launch it.
- » Organise a FGIS (Friendship Group Inter-faith Service) in every country comprised of all religious leaders and collaborate with them on service activities under this banner.
- » SSIO members should participate in religious observances and service activities of other faith groups.

## How to promote unity of faiths?

- » Make a conscious effort to see God in all. Sathya Sai Centres should reflect universality of Sai's teaching. Any newcomer visiting a Sai Centre must be able to experience unity of all religions.
- » Never take participants away from their traditional belief systems. In fact, we must strengthen them.
- » Youth will be more amenable to the call for dynamic inter-faith activities. We must encourage them to be an integral part of these efforts. Have regular Sai Centre programs that reflect the universality of all faiths.
- » Participate in prayer/service activities with local religious groups. E.g., Nepal's SSE children were taught the teachings of the various religions which they later presented to the very leaders of those faiths.

## WALK FOR VALUES

Participants were impressed with some of the success stories, e.g. how the message was taken to the Canadian Federal Parliament and Ontario State Parliament; the Walk for Values Day proclamations by over 30 cities; and the Walk for Values initiative joining as community partner in the Pan-Am Games held in Toronto in July 2015.

# EFFECTIVE & LOVING COMMUNICATION IN THE SSIO



## ACTIONABLE GOALS

### USEFUL PRACTICES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR LOVING COMMUNICATION

1. Connect to the heart and disconnect from the vagaries of the mind.
2. Out of the 3 As, *Affability* should be the headline for all your messages.
3. Continuously remember the God in the person you are communicating with.
4. Use positive body language, keep eye-contact.
5. Maintain silence until you feel it is the right time for your message.
6. Do not forget about the filters: T-H-I-N-K: Is it Truthful? Helpful? Will it Improve the silence? Is it Necessary, and is it Kind?

7. Speak the truth, speak pleasantly, and stay calm.
8. Do not take anything personally.
9. If you are confronted with something UGLY, just rephrase the letters as follows: U = Unity, G = Gratitude, L = Love, Y = Yes. Then you do not have to react to what upsets you. Pause, then respond.

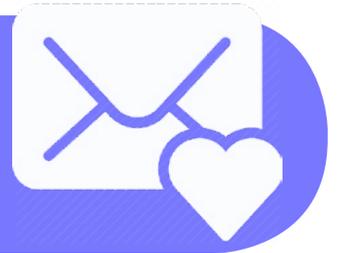
### EMAIL PRACTICES & SUGGESTIONS

1. Follow the communication ladder as soon as possible.
2. Be precise. Use bullet points to make it easy for the reader.
3. Subject should match the content.
4. Communicate positively to the receiver what they are supposed to do.

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# EFFECTIVE & LOVING COMMUNICATION IN THE SSIO



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## ACTIONABLE GOALS

### WORKING THROUGH DIFFERENT VIEW-POINTS/ DIFFERENCES LOVINGLY & RESPECTFULLY

1. Always be aware that God is present in everyone.
2. Conflicts should be solved in a one-to-one situation. Is the matter important for the Sathya Sai Centre? If so, deal with it confidentially.
3. When angry, stop and examine why.
4. Use a moderator when you are involved personally.
5. Try to find the Win-Win solution.
6. Lower the tone of your voice – it also changes the mood you are in.
7. Check about time, place and circumstances so that you understand the facts fully and fairly. Speak the truth, speak pleasantly, and stay calm.

### IMPROVING THE COLLECTION OF SSIO INFORMATION

1. Each Sathya Sai Centre should have a media team to take photos and write articles.
2. Involve and encourage the youth to collect information and give them responsibility for this.
3. Provide a template for them to use.

### DISSEMINATION & REVIEW OF SSIO COMMUNICATIONS

1. In addition to just forwarding mails there should be a monthly meeting just on all the information that has been sent to review and what it means to the members.
2. As there are members and guests without email? If so, everything important should be announced on bhajan evenings.
3. Use appropriate channels of communication for the group being addressed, e.g. WhatsApp for the youth.
4. Indicate to recipients whether it is local, regional, national or international communication.
5. With each major update on the website, a personalised email with a direct link should go out to the members.
6. Workshops for members are needed in order to make them familiar with new media.

# SELFLESS SERVICE



## 'Points for Success' in our efforts towards selfless service:

- Make an Effort – Have Faith;
- First 'BE' and then 'DO';
- Have ongoing commitment and self-audit;
- Have a positive attitude: set example and motivate;
- Follow the guidelines—a reflection of Swami and His Organisation;
- Teamwork: Working in Unity leads to Innovation and Creativity;
- Time Management: Delegate and communicate effectively.



## ACTIONABLE GOALS

1. Establish a database of skills (development of skillsets, best practices).
2. Enviro-Care and Eco-Care.
3. Raise awareness; assess our own carbon footprint.
4. Be an example, and innovate.
5. Collaborate with other wings: service, SSE/SSEHV, devotional, Youth.
6. Increase educational efforts for preventive measures: Prayer, Health Education, Skill-Based Education/Training (e.g. Time Management, Enviro-Care, Social Programs, etc.)
7. Medical/Disaster relief preparedness: develop/increase opportunities for training, e.g. workshops.
8. Be more inclusive in service activities; invite others in community to participate.

**T**o stimulate attitude and experience on selfless service we need to facilitate service activities at the Group/Center and National levels through the following avenues:

- » Study Circles: discuss obstacles that prevent one from engaging in service;
- » Inspiring speakers;
- » Well planned regular activities where everyone can play a role; identify how to help people to express their compassion through service;
- » Actively participate at the Centre.



SATHYA SAI  
INTERNATIONAL *Youth*  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME



**An Inaugural 5-Day Residential Course in Prasanthi Nilayam, tailored for SSIO's Youth Leaders**



*Day* **1** Tuesday  
17<sup>th</sup> November

The first day began with an air of enthusiasm and sweet blessings, as SSIYLP candidates from across the globe arrived at what was to be our base of learning and inspiration in the Institute.

With the endless blessings of our beloved Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Dr Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of the Prasanthi Council, inaugurated the residential course with the lighting of the lamp.

**MR. DEVIESH TANKARIA**  
Chair, SSIYLP Committee

Mr. Deviesh Tankaria lovingly welcomed the candidates to the SSIYLP residential course. He reminded all of the purpose of the SSIYLP and highlighted the significance of the role of youth leaders in the SSIO. Brother Deviesh shared some of his personal experiences, highlighting how Swami is present in each of our lives in a very significant way. With these words of inspiration, it was clear that Swami had truly blessed all those gathered at the residential course.

**DR. NARENDRANATH REDDY**  
Chairman, Prasanthi Council

With this initial charge of energy in the air, Dr. Narendranath Reddy delivered the Inaugural Address on **Leadership Lessons from the Life of Sathya Sai Baba**. In his address, Dr Reddy impressed the significance of youth leadership in the SSIO and the key attributes of a Sai Leader. In particular, the “**AAA**” formula, which represents three key characteristics for any individual undertaking a leadership role. “**AAA**” stands for the 3 pillars of: **Ability, Availability, and Affability**.

**Ability** is about having the aptitude to undertake and fulfil the role at hand, which often requires exercising different skills such as effective delegation and active oversight. In addition to this, one must be **Available** to perform their duties fully and effectively. Finally, a leader should demonstrate **Affability**, with a personable and warm manner in all their interactions and communications. Dr. Reddy emphasised that in order to be an operative Sai Leader, one must possess each of the “**A’s**” in equal measure.

**DR. WILLIAM HARVEY**

**Member, Prasanthi Council**

Dr. William Harvey delivered his address on **The Golden Years of Youth**. Dr. Harvey reminded all that Swami has placed an important responsibility on our shoulders to serve society and help mankind come back to the path of truth and righteousness. Along with self-confidence, Dr Harvey stressed the equal importance of demonstrating humility in everything that we do, and always having good intentions. Together, we can create an atmosphere that sustains and supports spiritual development in devotees.

The candidates were provided with valuable takeaway points to reflect upon and Dr. Harvey delivered a strong message that ultimately, Sai's Mission is bound to succeed, and we have all been blessed with the invaluable opportunity to take part in it!



**DR. JOSEPH PHANEUF**

**USA**

**Member, SSIYLP Committee  
and National Youth Advisor**

On Day 2 of the Residential Course, Dr Joe Phaneuf delivered a mod [ Şule on **Loving and Effective Communication**. The candidates explored the basic components of communication, the challenges faced with effective communication, and how we can develop practical solutions to these challenges by following Swami's teachings.

The candidates learned that the three basic components of communication are **Receiving, Filtering** and **Transmitting**. Receiving is when we listen to what is being communicated to us; Filtering is our interpretation of what is being communicated, and Transmitting is the mode of commu-

nication we employ, for example, talking and the actions we employ.

The session continued in its intrigue, as the candidates were taken through an interactive exercise on proper listening skills; reflected on how we can receive criticism in a positive and constructive way; touched upon the importance of protecting confidentiality in email communication and monitoring our tone of voice when writing.

Two key take home messages from the session were Swami's loving guidance that **"You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly"**, and **"First Understanding, Then Adjustment."** We can apply these messages in our everyday communications and interactions with others.

Day 3 Thursday  
19<sup>th</sup> November

**MS. APARNA MURALI**  
**USA, National Youth Advisor**

On Day 3, the candidates were guided on the art of **Team Dynamics** through an engaging and inspiring session delivered by Sister Aparna Murali. Throughout the day, we discussed key topics such as how to build an effective team, the art of delegation, how to effectively resolve disputes and understanding what motivates us.

The candidates discussed effective delegation and were given practical tools to empower others and work together.

In touching upon the topic of conflict resolution, Sister Aparna shared a story from the Mahabharata when Lord Krishna provided Arjuna and Duryodhana with a win-win outcome when they sought his guidance on the pending battle. The candidates were encouraged to endeavour to resolve any conflict in a transparent manner that both parties walk away from the situation with an outcome they are happy with.

A great take-home message for all was to focus on the **"1% principle"**. That is, in any activity that we do, ask yourself: **How can I improve this by 1%?**

**MS. ALIDA PARKES**  
**SSIO Zone 6 Chair**

In the afternoon of Day 3, Ms Alida Parkes, delivered a powerful message on **Navigating Through Periods of Challenges**. The strength of the messages delivered was truly felt by the personal connection that Ms Parkes drew with her life experiences in the SSIO.

Drawing on her personal experiences and feelings of divine energy from Swami, Ms Parkes shared with us her learning that whatever challenge we face in life, we should always focus on Swami and His Love. It was inspiring to hear how Ms. Parkes dedicated all her life to Swami and his Mission, and in doing so, saw how putting Swami first meant that everything else in life fell into place.

Challenges and blessings tend to coexist; as Ms. Parkes herself experienced in her initial years in Swami's Ashram, which taught her patience and tolerance. Her personal experiences reinforced the message that Swami has chosen each and every single one of us to be His instruments in fulfilling His Mission. Challenges may come along the way, and will continue to do so until such time that we understand their basis and learn to overcome them. Swami has equipped us with his universal teachings and we should aspire to take forward His message of love by opening up our hearts and our doors.

## Day 4 Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November

### MR. SAURABH SAKSENA

#### Member of the SSIYLP Committee

Brother Saurabh shared his in-depth knowledge and experiences on **Project Management**, commencing with an initial question posed on why we take up projects in the SSIO, and from there he delved deep into how to go about initiating service projects, the nuances of project management, and understanding what challenges may be faced along the way.

The candidates reflected on the difference between a **Project** (which has a clear start and finish) and an **Operation** (which is ongoing), and reached a consensus that each of our lives is in fact a project, with a key purpose we hope to fulfil in this lifetime – to merge with God. They learned about success factors that are characteristic of good project management, the role of a project manager, and the interesting difference between projects undertaken by a voluntary/spiritual organisation and a commercial organisation. Brother Saurabh reminded all that, like Swami, we should have a strong focus on the quality of any project and ensure that we take care of the finer details.

### PROFESSOR SUDHIR BHASKAR

#### Director, Radio Sai

Professor Bhaskar shared the valuable services that Radio Sai offers to all devotees and how much Radio Sai has developed over the years; gaining an insight into the variety of services that are offered to convey and communicate Swami's teachings in an innovative way. On the final day of the residential programme a number of motivational speakers addressed the

gathering, which reinforced the understanding of the importance of effective leadership in the SSIO and taking Swami's message out to the wider community.

## Day 5 Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November

### DR. SHIVENDRA KUMAR

#### SSIO International Youth Coordinator

Brother Shivendra delivered a powerful talk on **Youth are Leaders of Today**; through a story on "4 famous friends" and the challenges they faced in starting up a taxi business. In summary:

1. In youth initiatives, we need to ensure that we create space not only for new opportunities, but also for new youth to step into existing and new roles. In this way, we can help the youth group expand.
2. When in a leadership role, we need to be leaders at the highest level. However, we have to understand the need to move between "levels" to ensure we can effectively meet youth at different stages on their journey.
3. We need to understand when it is sometimes time to let go. For example, it will sometimes be necessary to hand over a project that you have started and delegate tasks, instead of holding on and attempting to do it all.

We are often told that youth are the future leaders in this world. However, Brother Shivendra sent a strong message to all that we ARE leaders in this world today, not just future leaders.



### **SRI H. J. DORA**

#### **Director, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation**

Sri H. J Dora shared his personal experiences on his progression through the Indian Police Department and the various challenges he faced in his position of leadership in the Department. The reflections on the sense of responsibility and connection he felt with each of his men conveyed a strong message on the importance of us understanding the role we play and what duties we must fulfil.

It was inspiring to hear Sri H. J Dora's perspectives on how Swami's message has spread all over the world, and the positive impact of all the

work being undertaken by the SSIO. Importantly, in undertaking Swami's work, we need to remember to humble ourselves in everything that we do; and take our guidance from Swami, who has no ego, and only pure love.

### **SRI SATYAJIT SALIAN**

#### **Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Programme**

Brother Satyajit, inspired all with his passion and gentle humour in speaking about the **Fundamentals of Leading Sai Projects Nationally**.



**SSSIYP graduates receiving their certificates from Senior SSIO Leaders**

With Swami as the ultimate source of inspiration and guidance, Brother Satyajit drove the successful Vidya Vahini Programme 2015, which many of us were fortunate to witness while in Prasanthi Nilayam. The Vidya Vahini Programme involved the dedicated efforts of 19 states across India, 85 schools and 5,357 volunteers!

With this example, Brother Satyajit shared his **Four Pillars of Leadership**. He emphasised how as leaders, we should work from the background so that all participants in a project are in some way involved in the planning and execution. The

table below summarises some key points on the four pillars: **Inspire, Insight, Enjoyable** and **Participative**.

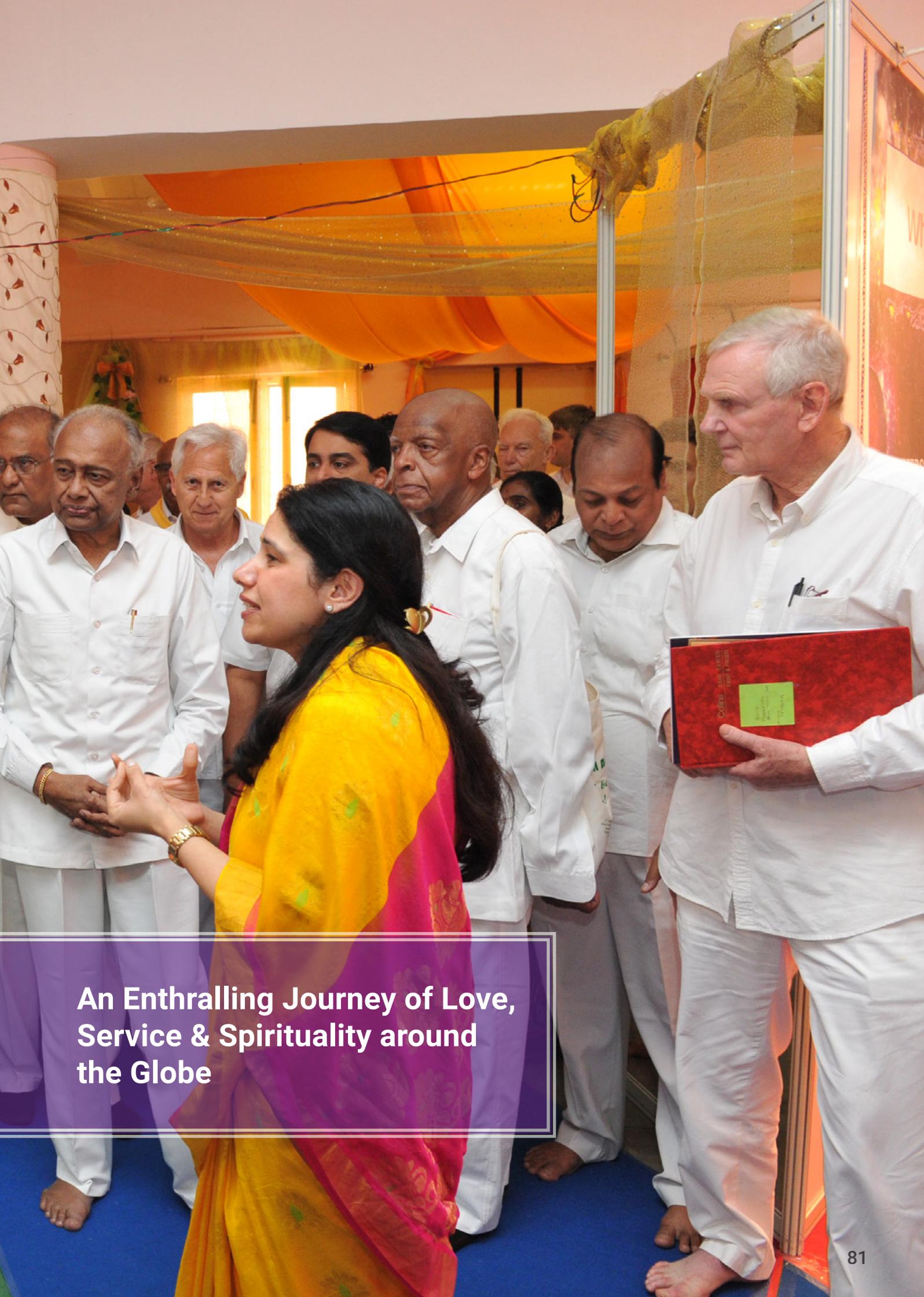
**MR. DEVIESH TANKARIA**

The residential course concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Brother Deviesh, who acknowledged the dedication and commitment of numerous persons in delivering the SSIYP.



# EXHIBITION & CULTURAL PROGRAMMES





**An Enthralling Journey of Love,  
Service & Spirituality around  
the Globe**

**W**ith Swami's Infinite Grace, and the outpour of love and dedication from devotees worldwide, the SSI0 hosted an International Exhibition from November 20th – 27th. The theme of the Exhibition was also entitled: "Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal." As devotees and visitors made their way towards the Exhibition Hall, they were first greeted by an extra-large banner featuring Swami's sweet face and spanning the header of the façade of the entire building. But this was no ordinary picture. A closer look revealed a collage of over 250 unique expressions of love and service from devotees around the world, that when pieced together, formed into Swami's sweet smiling face. Such was a welcome worthy of His Grandeur and His Love.





A collage of hundreds of pictures and messages of love & service (submitted by Sai Devotees) unite to depict Swami's face and adorn the entry of the Exhibition Hall



Dr N. Reddy & Sri K. Chakravarthi inaugurating 10th World Conference Exhibition

Over 8000 visitors from around the globe entered the grand exhibition during the 8-day period, including very senior members of the Sai fold, high ranking Sai Organisation officers, and special guests.

Once inside the hall, visitors were automatically immersed in the Divine Glory and the Divine Love inherent in each presentation highlighting Swami's Life History, His Works, and His Devotees' practical applications of His Teachings.

The journey began with the perimeter panels, surrounding the inner walls of the Exhibition Hall. This Divine pageantry contained useful information that revealed His mission to devotees, through a detailed timeline of the life of the Avatar.

The inner section of the hall stood 4 heart-shaped booths, focusing on the life applications of Swami's fundamental teaching of Love. The booths featured expressions of love by devotees

through creative artwork and spiritual design, and presented practical applications about the cultivation of Love and how to remove obstacles that come in our way to Love.

The booths also highlighted the various service projects taking place in different countries, particularly in the areas of MediCare, SocioCare, EduCare, Disaster Relief, and Saving the Environment; all projects inspired by Sai Himself.

Through interactive games, activities, and other demonstrations displayed at these booths, attendees were ultimately encouraged to find true Love within, and stay connected with our Divine Sai at all times. In this light, the last booth visited in this journey reminded us that in the end, the real journey was, is and will always be from me back to Me.

Perhaps the most novel, loved, and popular component of this exhibition was the performance stage, creatively weaved into the back



Visitors were automatically immersed in the Divine Glory and the Divine Love inherent in each presentation.

interior of the Exhibition hall. Here and at various times of the day, visitors could sit and watch a video about unique service projects or witness live stage musical performances by international devotees from Kazakhstan, Brazil, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Mauritius, and many more.

Similarly, many devotees took this platform to share personal self-transformational stories, engage in various creative “Sai Games”,

shared presentations, and simply convey love and joy at every moment. This performance stage soon became the heart and soul of the exhibition.

The exhibition stands as a remarkably memorable experience of the World Conference. Whether you were visiting or volunteering, the atmosphere reverberated with Swami’s vibrations, and immersed us in only that which matters in this spiritual journey: Love.



## AFRICA CHOIR & DANCE

The African Choir and Dance Group delighted the audience with a mix of melodic and rhythmic music pieces typical of this continent. They rendered nine songs, in addition to four dance choreographies, dedicated to sharing the Glory of God, all led by Music Director Dr. Adebowale Adeogun, an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Dr. Adeogun has numerous compositions and arrangements of vocal and instrumental music to his credit. A chief adjudicator in singing competitions, he is also the Choir Director of Christ Church Chapel Choir, UNN from 2009 to date, and the current President of Conference of Music Educators in Nigeria (COMEN).

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MUSIC PROGRAMME

The Dominican Republic presented two programmes, one during World Conference event and another as an offering to Swami on the occasion of His 90th birthday celebrations in Sai Kulwant hall.

These music programmes were presented by Dhariana, a highly energetic and most skilled singer from the Dominican Republic, along with African percussionist, Pacific Isaac, and a choir made up of singers Aida Polanco, Joselyn Calderon Rafael Taveras, and Jose Portorreal.

The group performed several songs in praise of Lord Sai while wearing traditional costumes. During the musical offering, images of the Sai Organisation activities in the Dominican Republic were displayed. Their songs stirred the soul and conveyed the sentiments of the Dominican devotees were offered with a great feeling of Love.

## AZERBAIJAN & KAZAKHSTAN MUSICAL PRESENTATION



The Azerbaijan & Kazakhstan ensemble dedicated six songs at the Lotus Feet. Starting with an introduction about their traditions, the first songs described their blossoming lands, its herbal plants, magnificent valleys, its fertile plains, majestic mountains, crystal lakes, and the importance of the love for the motherland. They then offered renditions of praise to the almighty God in the forms of Swami, Allah, Shirdi Sai and Lord Shiva - the embodiments of Truth and the father figures in this play of God.

## MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA DRAMA PRESENTATION

The purpose of the drama “Swami is the Safest Place” was to show some family and personal life situations that Sai devotees face while trying to follow Swami’s teachings and/or working in the SSIO, aiming to strengthen faith and confidence in Swami. It intends to show that we must always trust Swami’s teachings and seek refuge in His holy Organisation, because after all, and no matter how wrong things can be, they will always be the safest place we can be. Parts of the dialogues and situations were from devotees who shared their experiences for the play.

The first story is about a young Sai devotee who has just graduated from college and whose main dream is to volunteer in the SSIO’s activities. His father believes that material goals are more important, which poses challenges for the young adult. The yearning in his heart is answered when his father finds God and changes his approach to life by participating in a service project. The second story is about a teenage girl who doesn’t want to participate anymore in the SSIO’s activities because she is tired of her parents’ intense encouragement. After moving about in various circles and under Swami’s ever watchful protection and care, she realises the emptiness that these bring, re-engages in the spiritual path, and brings happiness back to her and her parents alike.



## BRAZIL DEVOTIONALS IN PORTUGUESE

The group from Brazil also presented two programmes, all in bright and joyous traditional costumes from the region. The first was a short rendering of devotional songs in Portuguese for the world delegates in the auditorium of the Sri Sathya Sai University; and then a presentation in the Sai Kulwant Hall as part of the SSIO Cultural Programme

The cellist and conductor of the programme is one of the devotional coordinators for the Sai Paolo region. As a conductor, he has hosted music classes in Germany and New York and has led Brazilian music concerts around Europe. Though the musical instruments in the ensemble were few, the voices of the singers reverberated through the auditorium in extraordinary harmony and Brazilian beat, that made all present swing in Divine joy.

## RUSSIA SKITS ON LOVE & SERVICE

Our brethren from Russia presented three skits during the proceedings of the World Conference, two on the importance of service and one about adhering to the callings of our inner nature. In the first skit a king questions many a scholar and sage who come to his court asking: "Which is the best service to offer and which is the best time to render it?" He soon realises that service is not to be judged according to cost or publicity; it may be only the offering of a cup of water in the depth of a jungle. But the need of the recipient, and the intent of the person who offers—these decide whether the act is good or bad. It is enough to fill every act of ours with love.

In the second skit, a very pious person was once proceeding from Kashi carrying with him some holy Ganga water to be mixed with the sea at Rameshwara, as the consummation of his long and arduous pilgrimage. While halfway through, he sees by the side of the road a donkey in the last throes of life from thirst. Upon called into question by his disciples, he exhorts: "But I have poured the holy water in the ocean itself, don't you see?" Any selfless service done to a suffering being reaches the Lord Himself and can never be a sacrilege, for service to each being is service to God.

In the third skit, a hermit was having a bath in holy water when he saw a scorpion and repeatedly tried to save it, even though he got stung in the process every single time. Many people who watched his efforts laughed at him for his stupidly exaggerated sympathy. The hermit told them that the scorpion had taught him a lesson and he was thankful for it: "Stick to your innate nature; whatever may happen - that is what it has taught me." Its nature is to sting, regardless of whom or when. Man's nature is to live in love and share that love with all.

## THAILAND DANCE OFFERING



For the Thai dance, six students from Sathya Sai School participated. Their names are as follows: Kaewkantarat Khamsuk, Porpiang Wongdum, Bunnasorn Yodkhun, Supisara Inthong, Chomnapus Lertreecha and Orathai Thepkai.

The dance depicts that we respect our Guru, and we offer our sincere thanks to Lord Buddha who gave us long and healthy life, and we pray to Lord Buddha to enable us to meet our friends again and again.





## TESTIMONIALS &

# Gratitude

Expressions of Love from Conference delegates and participants

**RAJENDRANATH SHAM**



Zone 9A, Mauritius  
Trustee, Sathya Sai Trust;  
WC Registration Lead

The 10th World Conference is the best conference that I have ever attended. It was a life changing experience. I was amazed by the professionalism, impeccable attention to detail and thorough planning of the event. Speakers were of high calibre delivering powerful and profound messages and teachings of Swami. Workshops were conducted professionally and the participants benefitted from a wealth of knowledge and inspiration. I was also impressed by the level of excellence the exhibition was planned, designed and set up. The richness of Swami's works and teachings exhibited, and the quality of stands surpassed the expectations of many. We were also all blessed with soul connecting and captivating musical programmes by different countries in the Sai Kulwant Hall and at the exhibitions.

I cannot say enough how fortunate and privileged I am to have got the opportunity to work with the exceptionally gifted leaders of Prasanthi Council. What a blessing it was!"



**MAURO BATTISTON**



Italy  
Zone 6 - Central Coordinator

The 10th World Conference represented both, an arrival point and a starting point, in my personal spiritual journey. It was the arrival point of an intense and perfectly designed preparation based on the precious teachings of Bhagavan on Love and Service. The accurately selected quotations and the support of my Sai Centre's brethren were the fundamental tools which helped me prepare for the experience that I was going to live in Prasanthi Nilayam. There I felt elated by the sensation of being part of Swami's living legacy. The intense cooperation with other devotees during the three days of the conference, as well as the inspiring speeches given by the guest speakers were for me the starting point of a renewed spiritual quest.

My deepest gratitude goes to Swami for giving me this great opportunity and to all the officers and members for the perfect organisation of this event."



Thanks to Swami, this was the first time that I attended a world conference! Most importantly a spiritual World Conference! At first I was a little sceptical; my mind was wondering how this event was going to run. However, I was attracted by the fact that the Conference would be held in the holy land of Prasanthi Nilayam, the place which I yearn to visit whenever possible.

The first good impression came when Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, Prasanthi Council, through a video, shared an open invitation to all for participation in the Pre-World Conferences. Then I realised that it is going to be a significant and well organized World Conference in November of 2015. I was delighted that it would take place after the 90th birthday celebrations of Sathya Sai Baba, so I could combine a family pilgrimage together with the Conference in a single journey to India.

It is amazing how, with Swami's blessings, such a world conference took place based entirely on voluntary work. Voluntary work! I am still thinking how easy was the registration of participants through the registration website, how well planned and well managed were all the services of the conference. Everything was working at a professional level. The programme included such interesting talks regarding Sai teachings, live musical performances and short skits, even local transportation and catering of meals, snacks and beverages were provided. This excellent work of all volunteers which exhibited great professionalism, reminded me the well-known quote of Sai Baba: "Duty is God; Work is worship. Even the tiniest work is a flower at the Feet of God".

It was a great pleasure to meet and talk with people from all over the world and of every age group during the evening sessions. I treasure in my heart all those sweet smiles of love!

## ELEFTHERIOS SOFIKITIS

Greece  
Youth Delegate

After the three days of conference I never felt tired because I was happy and excited about meeting and sharing with so many Sai workers.

Indeed: 'Nations are many, but Earth is one; Beings are many, but Breath 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; Appearances are many, but Reality is One.' Among all those people from various countries with different cultures, backgrounds, language and religions one could feel the same Sai spirit.

After this Conference, I am proud of being a member of the Sai family, a confident member of the SSIO. I felt that something very big happened during those days. I experienced that, though Swami's body left from the physical plane, His Presence is always with us. Because of the conference's presentations I learned that there are so many Sai workers in every corner of the planet. Every project that Swami has blessed not only continues, but develops and expands, according to the Divine message: 'Love all, Serve all – Help ever, Hurt never'.

The theme of the Conference was, 'Love is the source, Love is the path, Love is the goal'. I understood very clearly the lesson that every step in our lives has to be a step of love. Either as person acting individually or as member of the SSIO, every action has to be suffused with love. This may sound simple, but it is actually the core of Sai teachings. The fragrance of unconditional love dignifies every deed and transforms every action to a spiritual service. The SSIO is not just a humanitarian organisation which engages in good actions, but a spiritual organisation that lovingly serves. What an honor it is to be part of this mission.

Thank you Swami!



**HARISH NAIDU**

USA National Council Vice-President;  
WC Facilities & Volunteers Team Lead

The preparations for the 10th World Conference began in earnest almost a year ahead of the event. Hundreds of SSIO members worldwide expended countless hours over phone meetings and other activities with an undying sprit of love and service, to help ensure a high level of quality in all the events associated with the Conference. It is impossible to capture this spirit of selfless service that was flowing from the Source of Infinite and Supreme Love, Our Beloved Swami Himself, through these volunteers.

The team leaders arrived about ten days ahead of the Conference in order to meet the volunteers and organise the areas the various venue-planning areas such as: Darshan, Facilities, Refreshments, etc. Although not every volunteer who intended could attend, the shortfall while a challenge was overcome by the love and the “readiness to work” attitude of the 70 volunteers present. The volunteer teams worked in full swing and long hours during the days leading up to the conference.

Meanwhile the Decorations team under the able guidance, leadership and outstanding dedication of Mrs. Cecilia Frascati began to decorate the Auditorium at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSIHL). We had originally envisioned decorating the stage only, but Swami had different plans. The team worked tirelessly for two straight days and nights decorating the entire auditorium, with high attention to detail in exemplary Sai fashion. The volunteers left no stone unturned and the result was a most elegant offering of love to our Mother Sai. The decoration was so beautiful in fact, that the Institute requested the decorations to remain in place for some local programs scheduled in the days that followed.

The Food and Logistics teams upheld the same high quality standards of service. Throughout the days of the Conference, a timely and well-planned array of refreshments

were served. At lunch, a timely caravan of buses transported in comfort many delegates to the dining venue. The parking area of the indoor stadium was converted into an inviting dining area. The food had been lovingly prepared and assembled in elegant bags by a team of volunteers in the ashram and promptly delivered to the lunch venue. In this manner, a packed meal awaited every delegate at their respective seats, upon arrival. Once again, Swami exceeded anyone’s expectations and the entire lunch period was completed in only 40 minutes!

It is impossible to recount all the amazing work that the volunteer teams did quietly and humbly in Swami’s name. It was always “yes, yes, yes” for them. Swami gave them the strength to do their work.

Similarly, the leaders of the various venue locations at the Ashram and the Institute suffused with love and forthcoming with support towards all delegates and events. It would have been impossible to accomplish a successful conference without their undivided support. General Shivdev Singh for example, a senior devotee of Swami in charge of the indoor stadium, not only took care of every minute logistical and decorative detail, but extended his stay at the Ashram to ensure that he could provide all necessary support for the events to be held at the venue. The teams could experience and learn from the love flowing through such leaders.

Therefore, we express our most sincere gratitude to all the team leaders and volunteers who helped co-ordinate and lead the efforts around venue and facilities, the leaders of the SSIO without whose constant direction and support this would not have been possible and above all Our Beloved Bhagawan who gave us this opportunity to serve His devotees and enabled us with His Love and strength to carry out our responsibilities. Jai Sai Ram!”



**SURESH MENON**

UAE, Zone 9B,  
Co-Chair, SSIO Finance Committee & Deputy Central Coordinator;  
WC Accommodations & Maintenance Team Lead

As part of the 10th World Conference, Region 94 from Zone 9B was responsible for readying all the guest rooms across eight buildings (North 1-8), as well as all related maintenance tasks. The project included thoroughly cleaning the rooms, toilets, floors, walls, windows, ceilings and fans; fixing lights, electrical points, plumbing fixtures and beds; and providing fresh bedding, linens and welcoming refreshments.

The team continued to attend to maintenance items and calls through the duration of the conference. Many supplies were shipped from the UAE. With Swami's grace and the support of 34 volunteers working tirelessly morning and evening, over a period of six days approximately 350 rooms were completely arranged and maintained.

To make sure that volunteers were well attended to also, a team was assigned to serve coffee, tea and snacks in each of the floors where work was going on during the breaks.

However, in addition to the rooms, the common areas of the buildings themselves were also cleaned and decorated. A team of six ladies from the region went to cleaned and restocked all the pictures and altar materials in each building's shrines. The alter in each block was looking so beautiful and the ladies who participated in this activity were extremely happy, while devotees commended them on their delicate and thorough work.

These tasks could only be accomplished by the Grace of Bhagawan and the very careful planning which started almost a year in advance. In Prasanthi Nilayam itself, the team thanked Bhagwan for the wonderful opportunity given to Region 94 and Dr Reddy for having assigned this project. We also recognise how meticulous the planning and meetings were conducted under the guidance from Dr Reddy, and how much we could learn about the importance of monitoring the details.

In humble offering to Swami.



**SERGIO ESPINDOLA**

Brazil

Zone 2B, Central Coordinator, Region 23;  
WC Brazil Cultural Programme Coordinator

On September 2015, our country, Brazil, received a very special invitation, to present a 15-minute rendering of devotional songs in Portuguese for the World Conference's delegates, in the auditorium of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, using a typical Brazilian costume. To our delight, the invitation was further extended to a presentation in the Sai Kulwant Hall as part of the Cultural Programme by the SSIO for celebrating the 90th Anniversary of our beloved Sai Avatar!

When we arrived in Prasanthi Nilayam, another joyous surprise was awaiting us: Brazil would also perform twice as part of the wonderful Exhibition depicting the message and humanitarian works of Sathya Sai. This was a thrilling emotion for us, because we would be singing in the same hall where 300 Brazilian devotees rehearsed for nearly one month, for a memorable musical presentation in front of Swami, as part of the 2009 Guru Poornima celebrations!

Swami is always in charge of everything. We are well aware that He takes care of all the details and He Graced us with a very special *leela* related to the production of the typical Brazilian clothes. The lady responsible for the costumes went to a large store in her town, in the Northern Region of Brazil, to buy some pieces. As she was in doubt about which colors and patterns to choose, the vendor recommended that she looked for a stylist's advice. To everyone's surprise, the stylist lady was herself a Sai devotee, who used to attend the Sathya Sai Centre of Vila Isabel during her stay in Rio de Janeiro!

The stylist felt great joy to know that she was talking to a woman that was going to travel to Prasanthi Nilayam. With tears in her eyes she said: 'We may forget God, but He never forgets His children!'

We can see how Swami provided a devotee to design with great care and joy, the Brazilian costumes! She sketched several designs to ensure that the dresses were adequate to Prasanthi Nilayam protocols. For us, this is sufficient proof of the love and care that He has for His devotees. All we must do is surrender and trust in Him.

November 26th was especially exciting for us. In the morning, we performed in front of the conference delegates, and in the afternoon, we were in the Sai Kulwant Hall, singing at the steps of the Mahasamadhi of our Beloved Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We experienced very auspicious moments and felt greatly honored to be again in this most sacred place, singing the Glory of God. We all felt His Divine Presence, while a profound emotion took hold of us, feeling His Divine Love once more as we sang to Him. Yes, He was there! Making us think only of Him, sing only for Him, with the deepest devotion we could feel.

To Him, our deepest gratitude for those moments of unspeakable joy, love and peace! Only Divine Love can produce such happiness beyond description - the true Ananda that is Union with God!

Jai Sai Ram."



