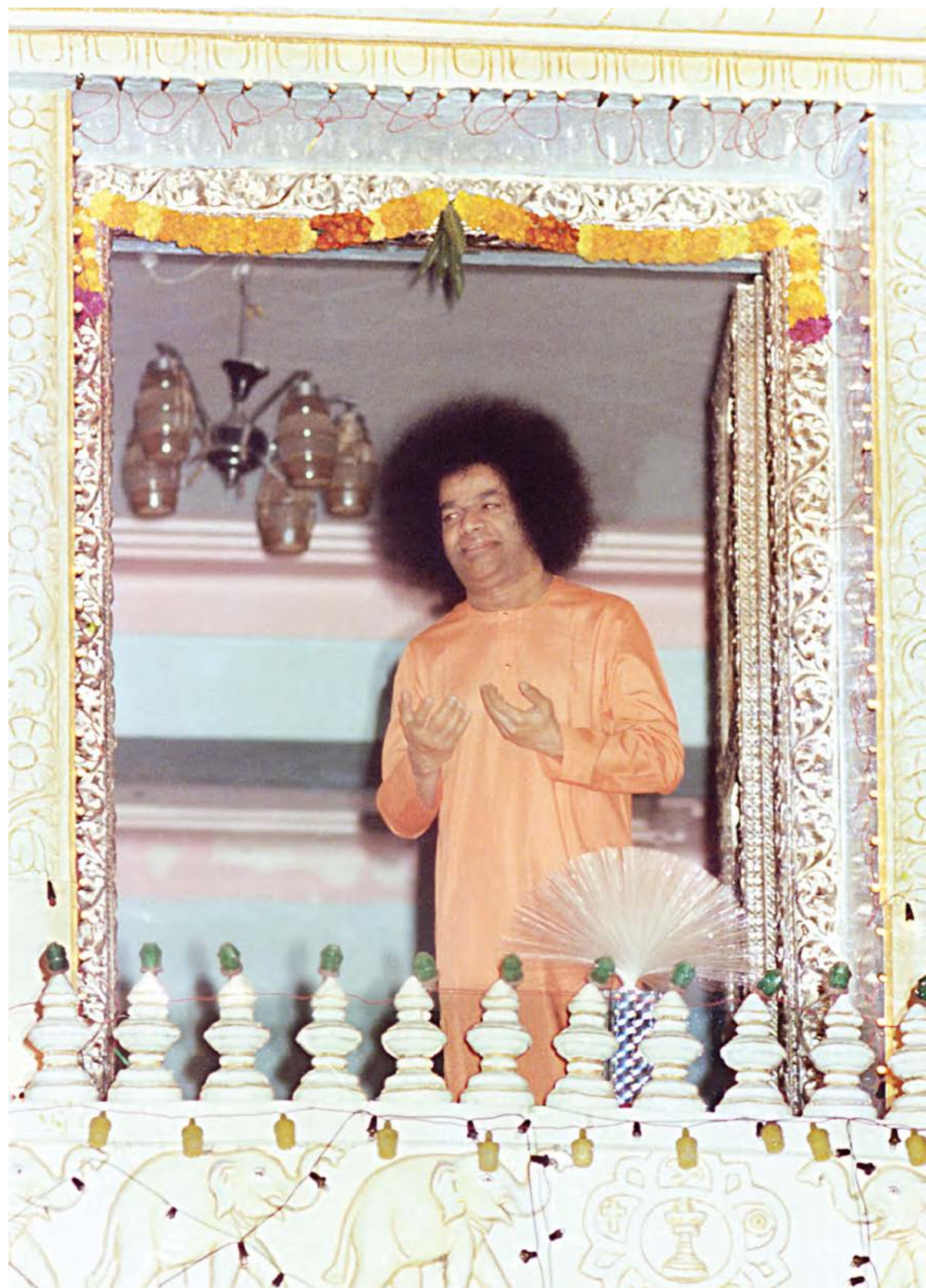


# Sanathana Sarathi

DECEMBER 2019





# Sanathana Sarathi

Devoted to the Moral and Spiritual Uplift of Humanity through

SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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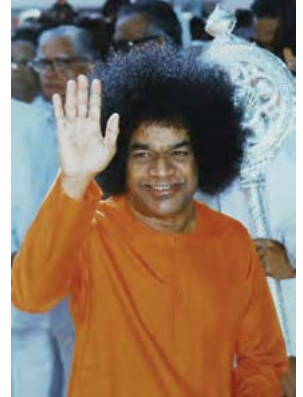
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*"We need not worry that our mind  
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## CONTENTS

- 4 Understand the Divine Nature of Yoga**  
**Bhagavan's Discourse: 17th April 1996**
- 7 Piety and Grandeur Mark**  
**94th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan**  
**A Report**
- 16 My Experiences in Bhagavan's Divine Proximity**  
**Srivilas Suri**
- 19 Swami's Love and Concern for His Devotees**  
**C. Sucharitha**
- 23 Sai – Our Redeemer**  
**G. Phalguna**
- 25 Understand the Principle of Unity**  
**Bhagavan's Christmas Message**
- 27 38th Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute**  
**of Higher Learning**  
**A Report**
- 30 Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam**  
**A Report**
- 33 Which to Precede and which to Follow**  
**Chinna Katha**

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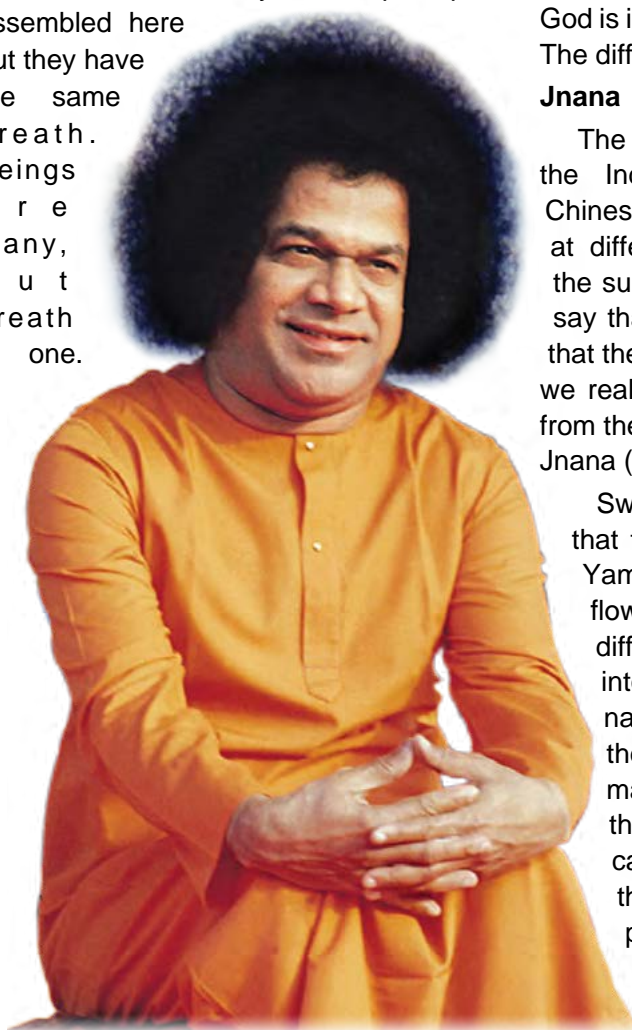
AVATAR VANI

# UNDERSTAND THE DIVINE NATURE OF YOGA\*

MAN CAN DEVELOP ALL VIRTUES BY PRACTICE

**W**HAT IS JNANA? ADVAITA *Darshanam Jnanam* (experience of non-dualism is wisdom).

There are many people assembled here but they have the same breath. Beings are many, but breath is one.



There is nothing like Japanese breath, German breath or Indian breath. People call God by many Names. But God is one. There is no second. People are many, but God is in everyone. What is the difference? The difference is in names and forms only.

## Jnana Yoga

The same sun is seen by the Germans, the Indians, the Americans and the Chinese though not at the same time, but at different times. Different people see the sun at different times. But we do not say that there are several suns. We say that there is only one sun. Likewise, when we realise that we get the light of Jnana from the same Godhead, it becomes Atma Jnana (knowledge of the Self).

Swami told the students this evening that there are many rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati and Kaveri which flow in different regions. They have different names. But once they merge into the ocean, they will have only one name, they will have only one form, they will stay in the same place. We may see them as different before they merge into the ocean. How can we see them as different after they merge into the ocean? It is not possible. They become limitless, immeasurable ocean. This is true Jnana.

## Repeat the Name of God Constantly

As I said earlier, you and I are one. Everyone goes about pursuing one's own selfish ends but nobody understands the Atmic principle.

Once there was a rich man who had a large house, a number of factories and several cars. He also had good sons who loved and obeyed him. They used to act in accordance with their father's bidding. The father was approaching the end of his life. His chest became congested with phlegm. He could not speak. But he was conscious. As he opened his eyes, all his sons cried, "Father! Father! You are leaving us. Who will look after us"? He prayed to God and gained some strength by God's grace. Then he said to his sons, "I have given you everything. After I leave, everything will belong to you. You will get enough wealth. You will get money from my insurance also. You will all be here; it is only I who will leave you all and go. Nobody will come with me. None of you is bothered about what is going to happen to me. You are worried about what will happen to you, and not about what will happen to me". At this time, one should repeat the sacred Name of God, saying Rama Rama Rama or Narayana Narayana Narayana or Namah Sivaya.

At the final moment, his sons asked him to say Narayana Narayana. The old man could not hear. One of them took a coconut fibre (Naar in Tamil) and an Anna coin (Anaa in Tamil) and asked his father to repeat their names. The old man said, "That is Thengai (coconut in Tamil) and this is a coin". Saying this, he died. If you do not practise plying the Name of God on your tongue, you will not get to say it at the last moment. Whatever you keep thinking about all your life, you can say only that

*The river of life should flow within the two banks of steadfastness and faith. Out of steadfastness comes wisdom. Therefore, do not have doubt about yourself in your mind. You will be ruined if you have doubt. A doubting person can never succeed in any endeavour. So, do not give room to doubt. The aim of your life is to develop love for God. Recognise this and lead your life in this sacred manner.*

---

at the last moment. It is only when you constantly think of God throughout your life, can you recite His Name at the last moment.

## Practice and Faith Lead to Success

There was an old priest in a temple who used to worship the deity and perform Arati holding the bell in one hand and Arati plate in the other. One day, he died suddenly and a new priest was appointed. The new priest had no practice in ringing the bell while doing the Arati. As he rang the bell with one hand, his other hand with Arati stopped moving. Everything we do requires practice. Then only will there be unity. This unity or union is yoga. The path of unity is Jnana Marga, the path of supreme wisdom. Then only can man realise the one Atma immanent in all beings. Realising unity and following the command of the Lord is yoga. Leaving this simple path, difficult practices are insisted upon. Nobody can change the nature of the mind by such practices. Why? Because nobody has the capacity

to control the mind. In fact, man has been misusing his mind. Man has infinite power but he wastes it by following wrong ways. Man can exercise control over the mind, senses and desires by the practice of silence. That is why Rishis of yore went to the forest in order to practise silence. They experienced peace there. Even wild animals became their friends. What was the reason? The hearts of the Rishis were full of love. That was reflected in the hearts of the animals also. Suppose, you keep jasmine flowers on a table. Their fragrance will spread all around. The love of noble souls also spreads like that. Love is God. That is Brahman. Similarly, the fragrance of rose flower will spread all around, whether you hold it in right hand or left hand. We get refreshed by this fragrance.

Students should acquire the knowledge of yoga to inculcate the qualities of devotion, discipline and discrimination. True education is that which teaches these values to students. We are not educated when we are born. We cannot even walk when we are born. We learn to walk by practice. By practice, one can develop all virtues.

We need not worry that our mind is not steady. We need not feel disappointed

that we are not able to achieve equal-mindedness. We should be firm in our mind that we can do this. With determination, we should proclaim, "I shall definitely do this". On the other hand, if we doubt our capacity, we cannot even walk.

First and foremost, have faith in your ability. Life is a continuous flow. It flows endlessly. What is its end? Merging with the ocean is its end. This river of life has two banks: steadfastness and faith. *Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam* (one with steadfast faith attains wisdom). The river of life should flow within the two banks of steadfastness and faith. Out of steadfastness comes wisdom. Therefore, do not have doubt about yourself in your mind. You will be ruined if you have doubt. A doubting person can never succeed in any endeavour. So, do not give room to doubt. The aim of your life is to develop love for God. Recognise this and lead your life in this sacred manner.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajans, "*Chitta Chora Yashoda Ke Baal...*" and "*Vahe Guru, Vahe Guru, Vahe Guruji Bolo...*")

– **Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 17th April 1996.**

*The letters that you write will appear blue when the pen is filled with blue ink and red when it is filled with red ink. Likewise, all that you see, hear and say will become negative when your heart is filled with negative feelings. So, first of all fill your heart with love. Then all that you see, hear, say and do will be suffused with love.*

– Baba



# PIETY AND GRANDEUR MARK 94TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF BHAGAVAN

THE WEEKLONG CELEBRATIONS of Bhagavan's 94th Birthday comprised a number of educational, spiritual and social welfare programmes of far reaching significance. A mammoth gathering of devotees thronged Prasanthi Nilayam to participate in these grand celebrations. The dignitaries who came to offer their tributes to Bhagavan included Union Transport Minister, Sri Nitin Gadkari and Governor of Telangana, Dr. (Smt.) TAMILAISAI Soundarajan. Many new initiatives were undertaken and several new projects were launched during the period of these celebrations. Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of these celebrations, was beautifully bedecked on this occasion. Besides, there was an attractive display of illuminations on the hall and the adjoining Yajur Mandir at night. Free food was served to all the devotees during the weeklong celebrations in a specially erected Pandal from 18th to 24th November 2019.

## SRI SATHYA SAI NARAYANA VRATAM AND RATHOTSAVAM

The celebrations of 94th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba started on 18th November 2019 with the auspicious Sri Sathya Sai Narayana Vratam and Rathotsavam.

In preparation for the performance of these sacred festivities, the idols of Venugopala Swami along with those of Lord Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman as

also Sri Sathya Sai Narayana were brought out in a ceremonial procession from the Bhajan Mandir to Sai Kulwant Hall, where a beautiful platform was set up in front of Bhagavan's Samadhi. Thereafter, worship



*Sri Sathya Sai Narayana Vratam.*

of Sri Sathya Sai Narayana was conducted by the priests amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras accompanied by the performance of rituals and offering of Arati which was followed by recitation of Sri Sathya Sai Ashtottarashata Namavali (chanting 108 Names of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba). As part of Sri Sathya Sai Narayana Vratam, Sri Sathya Sai Narayana Katha was then narrated in Sanskrit with its translation in English which comprised the Divine Advent of Lord Sai Narayana and His life story. This marked the conclusion of Sri Sathya Sai Narayana Vratam.

As Bhajans started in Sai Kulwant Hall, the idols of Venugopala Swami as well as those of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman were taken out of the hall





### *The joyous procession of Rathotsavam.*

in a grand procession led by musicians and groups of Veda chanting and Bhajan singing students. After the idol of Venugopala Swami was mounted on a beautifully decorated chariot, the chariot procession started from Gopuram Gate towards Pedda Venkama Raju Kalyana Mandapam in Puttaparthi village. A large number of devotees watched this grand procession comprising various dance groups in colourful costumes, and many of these devotees offered Arati to the idols as the chariot procession moved forward. After the procession reached the Old Mandir, Arati was offered to the idols. The procession then returned to Sai Kulwant Hall with the idols of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman. Meanwhile, Bhajans continued in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme in Sai Kulwant Hall concluded with offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 10.00 a.m.

### **An Excellent Veena Concert**

The evening programme in Sai Kulwant Hall featured an excellent Veena concert which was offered by a renowned Veena exponent Sri Prashant Iyengar. The talented musician along with his team of fellow musicians presented a stream of musical notes, some of which were: "Kurai Ondrum Illai" (no regrets have I), "Sri Ramachandra Kripalu Bhaja Mana"

(oh mind, contemplate on the merciful Lord Rama), "Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram", the song dear to Mahatma Gandhi.

### **LADIES DAY**

Ladies Day was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th November 2019 as part of Bhagavan's 94th Birthday celebrations. As per the tradition, all the programmes on this day were conducted by the ladies.

The programme in the morning began at 8 o'clock with Veda chanting by the students of Anantapur Campus. A grand procession of ladies thereafter entered Sai Kulwant Hall with sacred Poornakumbham



### *Procession of ladies in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

led by Veda chanting group of girls students and brass band of Anantapur Campus. Auspicious notes of Nadaswaram by the students of Anantapur Campus followed next.

After this, there was an invocatory Veena recital which was presented by a celebrated All India Radio artiste, Dr. Shobana Swaminathan, whose presentation for the morning included "Bho Shambho Siva Shambho Swayambho" (Siva, the self-born) and Mahishasura Mardhini Stotra, propitiating the Divine Mother.

A Welcome Address by Prof. Rajeshwari Patel followed next who





welcomed the august assembly and the Chief Guest Dr. (Smt.) TAMILISAI Soundarajan, the Governor of Telangana. Recollecting the beginning of the Ladies Day at the direct instance of Bhagavan, the learned speaker observed that Ladies Day was dear to Bhagavan who not only started women's college at Anantapur but also gave opportunities to its students to inculcate qualities of love, sacrifice and compassion.

Addressing the gathering after this, Ms. Isabella Chu, a Permanent Judge from Hong Kong, stated how with Swami as her guide, she could perform her duties fearlessly in very difficult situations also. Narrating her experiences of Swami's grace, the distinguished speaker observed that even seemingly impossible becomes possible with Swami's blessings.

After this talk, the Chief Guest Dr. (Smt.) TAMILISAI Soundarajan addressed the gathering. She began by stating that



*The Chief Guest, Dr. (Smt.) TAMILISAI Soundarajan addressing the gathering on Ladies Day.*

she was standing here not as a Governor but as a humble devotee of Bhagavan. She said that as a devotee of Bhagavan, she used to go to Sundaram (Swami's

abode in Chennai) on Thursdays and Swami granted her strength to do hard work for the full week. As a doctor, she was full of praise that there was no billing section in Bhagavan's hospitals and the patients were relieved of worries of paying medical bills as practised in other hospitals. Advising the women to be courageous, the distinguished speaker observed that if women were courageous, they could solve all problems.

Bhagavan's Divine Discourse followed next, in which He emphasised that women were the pillars of society and there was nothing that they could not do. Calling the women the repositories of love, Bhagavan said that 19th November was an occasion to disseminate love to mankind. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram". Bhajans led by the students of Anantapur Campus followed next and concluded with Arati.

The evening programme began with a spirited talk by Ms. Alida Parkes, Chairperson, Zone 6 of Sathya Sai International Organisation who assured the devotees that all-round progress was guaranteed if they followed the three dictums, namely, love for God, fear of sin and morality in society which she directly received from Bhagavan Baba. She exhorted the ladies to eschew ego and attachment and lead ideal life of love and sacrifice to bring about change in the family, the society and the world.

A devotional music offering "Antaranga Sai" (Sai, the Indweller) by International Young Adults followed next who surcharged the entire milieu with devotional fervour by their spirited





*A devotional music presentation “Antaranga Sai” by International Young Adults.*

rendition of devotional songs which included “Antaranga Sai” (Sai, the Indweller), “Hey Sai Maa, Meri Sai Maa” (Oh my Mother Sai), “We thank you, Swami”.

A scintillating cultural presentation intertwined with beautiful dances by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School



*A cultural presentation by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School.*

was the final programme of the evening which portrayed the lives of Rama, Krishna and Sai to convey the powerful message that all Avatars are one.

### **SRI SATHYA SAI TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, India launched a landmark programme “Sri Sathya Sai Tribal Development Programme” for the welfare of tribal communities on 20th November 2019

as part of 94th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Baba. A magnificent function was held in Sai Kulwant Hall in this regard which began with the entry of a grand



*Procession of tribals in their traditional dress.*

procession of tribals, both ladies and gents, in their traditional dress. While the various contingents of the tribals offered their salutations at the Samadhi of Bhagavan, a group of tribal musicians played sweet notes on their traditional instruments.

After this, Dr. S. Ramu, Vice President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Tamil Nadu addressed the gathering. Speaking about Bhagavan’s bountiful love and grace on the tribal people, Dr. Ramu recalled fond memories the Nilgiri tribals



*Release of a brochure “Sri Sathya Sai Tribal Development Programme”.*





had with Bhagavan during His visits to Ooty. He also narrated how Bhagavan treated a group of 500 tribals as divine guests when they came to visit Prasanthi Nilayam in 2005.

Release of a brochure “Sri Sathya Sai Tribal Development Programme” followed this, which outlined the programme of tribal development initiated by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation (India).

Addressing the gathering on this important occasion, Sri Nimish Pandya, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, offered gratitude to Bhagavan who sowed the seeds of tribal development by His visits to tribal areas and by the shower of His Divine love on the tribal communities. Hoping that every tribal district of the country will become a Sathya Sai district and every tribal village will have a Sai Samithi, Sri Pandya outlined the major areas of development in tribal areas, namely, infrastructure, sanitation, mother and child health, education, agriculture, skill development, etc.

Devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall had a glimpse of rich culture of tribal communities of India when various contingents of tribals from the States of India presented



*Tribal dance in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

a number of beautiful dances in their colourful costumes.

## NATIONAL LAUNCH OF VAHINI SWADHYAYA

National launch of Vahini Swadhyaya (self study), a programme of far reaching spiritual significance, was initiated by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation (India) on the evening of 20th November 2019 which



*The procession of youth carrying symbolic representation of Vahinis.*

marked the sacred study of 16 Vahini books written by Bhagavan.

The programme began at 4.45 p.m. with the entry of a procession of youth carrying the symbolic representation of Vahini books amidst the singing of the theme song “Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini” by singers in Sai Kulwant Hall.

Two speakers thereafter addressed the gathering. The first speaker was Sri Sanjay Sahni, Controller of Examinations, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Speaking on the topic “Vahinis – Bhagavan’s Gift to Humanity”, Sri Sahni observed that with the launch of the spiritual magazine Sanathana Sarathi by Bhagavan in 1958, He assumed the role of Divine Teacher and gave His Message to mankind in the form of an article in every





issue of Sanathana Sarathi for 26 years which were later compiled into 16 Vahini books. Therefore, devotees and students who want to contemplate on the Divine Message of Bhagavan should study these books, because His Divinity is manifest in every line of these books, said the distinguished speaker.

The second speaker was Dr. G.S. Srirangarajan, Associate Professor, Brindavan Campus of the Institute who spoke on the topic “Prof. N. Kasturi – the Chosen One” and narrated how this chosen instrument of Bhagavan went regularly every month to receive an article from Him for Sanathana Sarathi, and how he fulfilled his arduous task of transcribing, translating and publishing it in Sanathana Sarathi. All devotees would remain grateful to Bhagavan for giving His nectarine message and also to Prof. Kasturi who made it available to Bhagavan's devotees through Sanathana Sarathi, observed the learned speaker.

A comprehensive presentation on Sai Vahini Swadhyaya followed these two talks. Presented by Sri Amey Deshpande, Sri Bishu Prusty, Sri Prem Anosh and Sri Aravind Balasubramania, the presentation included talks, narrations and questions and answers on Vahinis which provided deep insights into the message of Bhagavan contained in the Vahinis.

All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Sri Nimish Pandya then formally launched National Vahini Swadhyaya programme and exhorted the devotees to participate en masse in this programme to redeem their life. A Telugu theme song of Vahini Swadhyaya composed by Bhagavan Himself followed this. The programme concluded with Bhajans and Arati.

## ILLUMINATING TALKS AND LAKSHARCHANA

The programme on 21st November 2019 began with an illuminating talk on the topic “Narayana Seva: A Sadhana Dearest to Bhagavan”. The distinguished speaker who delivered this talk was Sri Nimish Pandya, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation. Explaining the true perspective of Narayana Seva, Sri Pandya emphasised that it becomes Sadhana only when it is performed with the feeling that the receiver is none else but Narayana Himself.

This talk was followed by a Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, in which He elucidated that real Narayana Seva is that which is performed considering the recipient of the Seva as God Himself.

The ennobling programme that followed next was mass performance of Laksharchana, in which thousands of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall took part with great devotion. As Sai Kulwant Hall reverberated with the mass chanting of Bhagavan's one thousand and eight Names while offering rice grains to Bhagavan's



*Laksharchana in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

photograph, spiritual vibrations spread in all directions sanctifying the entire milieu.

The programme in the evening comprised three deeply insightful talks



on Bhagavan's famous saying, "Start the day with love, fill the day with love, end the day with love". Elucidating the first part of Bhagavan's saying, 'start the day with love', the first speaker Sri Sundar Anantharaman stated that true love was Paramartha Prema or love for God which illuminates the entire universe. He not only spoke about the Sadhana for inculcating love but also prompted the devotees to practise mass chanting of the Mantras like Om and Soham. The second speaker was Sri Vijay Krishnan who spoke about 'fill the day with love', which according to him meant being constantly in the state of love. Narrating an incident from the life of Prof. N. Kasturi, the speaker emphasised that doing the work of God and following His command amounted to filling the day with love. The third talk was delivered by Sri Brijesh Bamalwa who spoke on 'end the day with love'. Quoting the saying, 'Love is the Source, Love is the Path, Love is the Goal', the speaker observed that the devotees of Bhagavan were very fortunate that they had Avatar Himself with them who was the goal they sought to attain in their life. These talks were followed by a summary presentation in Hindi which was done by Sri Murali Jaju. Stating that love only gives, Sri Jaju cautioned that if man had only narrow love so that he loved himself, he could not love God. So, man should love all and serve all, he added. After this, a group of singers presented the theme song, which marked the conclusion of this elevating programme.

### INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PRESENTATION ON CLARINET

The devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall had a rich treat of Hindustani classical music on the morning of 22nd November

2019 when a noted Hindustani classical musician, Pandit Narasimhalu Vadavati presented an instrumental music concert on clarinet. Accompanied by his team of fellow musicians, the artiste made a superb presentation of classical numbers and Bhajans, which included "Vatapi Ganapatim Bhajeham" (I worship Lord Ganapati of Vatapi), "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram" (recite the Name of Rama with your heart full of love) and Gandhiji's dear song "Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je Peed Paraaye Jaane Re" (One who knows the pain of others is the true devotee of God).

### BHAGAVAN'S 94TH BIRTHDAY FUNCTION

Bhagavan's 94th Birthday function was held in fabulously decorated and brilliantly lit Sai Kulwant Hall on 23rd November 2019. The programme began with chanting of Vedic hymns by the students of Bhagavan from 8.00 to 9.00 a.m. Auspicious musical notes by the Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam groups of students followed next.

### Devotional Music Offering by the Students

A soulful devotional music offering at Bhagavan's Lotus Feet was then made



*Devotional music offering by  
Bhagavan's students.*

by the students who extolled His Divine glory. Beginning with the devotional song, "Namo Sathya Sai Anandadayi" (salutation to Sathya Sai who showers bliss), the singers presented a bouquet of devotional numbers which included "Aao Sab Milkar Gaayen" (let us sing together), "Why Fear when I am Here", "Tere Darbar Mein Sai Khushiyaan Khushiyaan Chhaayin (there is a flood of happiness in Your Presence), "Madhura Mohana Ghanashyama Sundara Sai" (Sai is the embodiment of beauty and bliss). They concluded their presentation with the evergreen Prasanthi number, "Hum Ko Tum Se Pyaar Kitna" (how much we love You).

### Release of Annual Report of the Central Trust

Presenting the Annual Report of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri S.S. Naganand, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust referred to the sayings of Bhagavan "Love All Serve All", "Help Ever Hurt Never" as His Mission statements and stated that Bhagavan set up Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust for the service of mankind. He then cited statistics to underline the enormous magnitude of work done by the Central Trust in the fields of education, healthcare and social welfare in the last year as outlined in the Annual Report.



*Release of Annual Report of the Central Trust by Sri Nitin Gadkari, Union Transport Minister.*

The Chief Guest of the function, Sri Nitin Gadkari, Union Transport Minister, then released the Annual Report of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. He also launched the new version of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust website.

### Address by the Chief Guest

The Chief Guest, Sri Nitin Gadkari then addressed the gathering. Referring to the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the eminent speaker stated that Bhagavan



*The Chief Guest Sri Nitin Gadkari addressing the huge concourse of devotees.*

showed to mankind the path of truth and service and inspired one and all to serve society. Bhagavan set up free educational institutions to give education to students along with human values and established hospitals to provide free healthcare to the needy, Sri Gadkari added. Appreciating the work being done by Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri Gadkari observed that Bhagavan's Mission was being taken forward by the Central Trust even after the physical departure of Bhagavan.

Devotees were thereafter blessed with Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, in which He exhorted the devotees to follow God with full faith and develop unity of thought, word and deed. He called upon the devotees to fill their heart with love and stated that there







*Malladi brothers gave a soul-stirring concert during the Jhoola Mahotsava in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

was nothing in the world which could not be achieved with love. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin”. After this, there was a grand display of band music by the students. Bhajans followed next and concluded with Arati.

### **Golden Chariot Procession**

The grand finale of Bhagavan’s 94th Birthday celebrations was provided by the twin programmes of the golden chariot procession and Jhoola Mahotsava in the evening. The golden chariot of Bhagavan



### *Golden chariot procession.*

with His beautiful portrait started at 5.00 p.m. from the Ganesh temple. Led by Nadaswaram musicians, Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students, the chariot took a full round of Prasanthi Mandir and entered Sai Kulwant Hall at 5.45 p.m.

### **Jhoola Mahotsava**

Jhoola Mahotsava followed this. As the Jhoola with a beautiful portrait of Bhagavan started swaying to and fro, eminent carnatic music duo Malladi Brothers, Sreeramprasad and Ravikumar provided melodic tunes. The soulful rendition of numbers which elevated one and all included “Bhagavanudu Puttina Panduga” (Bhagavan’s Birthday festival), Janula Madhya Tirugaade Jagapati (the Lord of the universe walks amidst mortals), Uyyala Looguma Sri Sathya Sai (Sri Sathya Sai who sways on the swing), “Brahmamokkate Para Brahmamokkate” (God is one).

### **PRESENTATIONS ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2019**

The programme on the morning of 24th November 2019, the final day of Bhagavan’s 94th Birthday celebrations, began with a lively talk of an ardent devotee of Bhagavan, Dr. Phil Gosselin, Zonal Coordinator of North America, Sathya Sai International Organisation. Recalling fond memories of his experiences with Bhagavan for the last 50 years, the veteran devotee narrated in a lucid way how Bhagavan developed firm faith in him and gradually led him to the path of service and Sadhana.



# MY EXPERIENCES IN BHAGAVAN'S DIVINE PROXIMITY

Srivilas Suri

**H**AVING ENJOYED AND experienced the ecstasy of Sivarathri celebrations at the Nilayam in 1968, I joined a group of devotees who were going in a bus to Prasanthi Nilayam for the Sivarathri of 1969. No sooner did I step into the Nilayam, Swami sent word that I should

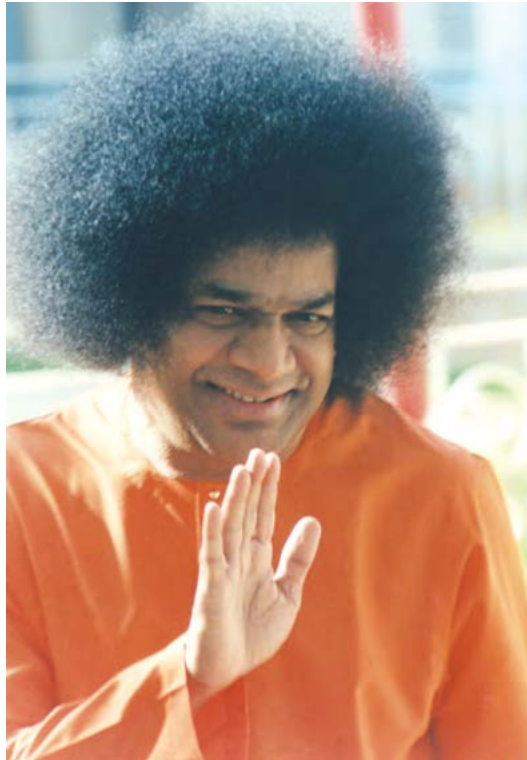
## **Inscrutable are the Ways of Swami**

I did not attend the Bhajan. Next day, I sat for the Prasadam of Vibhuti. Swami saw to it that He avoided the line where I sat. I got very angry and requested Kishtappa to give me Vibhuti packets, and I would leave. As Kishtappa was about to give the packets, Swami came from nowhere and prevented him from giving the packets!

I could not understand why Swami was trying to avoid me, while it was only the previous year, I was entrusted with many responsibilities. That day, I felt I should not come to Prasanthi Nilayam any more.

Swami came several times to Chennai and stayed in Sundaram, but I did not go there, while other members of my family went. Curiously, all the relatives who criticised and derided me when I was in Prasanthi Nilayam, later on became staunch devotees of Swami. When Swami was in Hyderabad, I used to make courtesy calls to my relatives. Swami would call me and say, "Vallu Bandhuvulu Kaaru, Raabandulu" (they are not relatives, they are vultures).

I started a book shop in 1970 and later converted it into lending library. I got busy with distribution of magazines and newspapers and forgot all about Swami. I was told about the massive improvements in the Nilayam. Just as He predicted, good roads were laid, multistoreyed buildings came up all around the Nilayam, a super speciality hospital was built, railway line was laid, and trains halted at Prasanthi Nilayam station. Airport was built and



be sent back. I was stunned! What a difference between 1968 and 1969? While I was watching the Vibhuti Abhishekam, sitting in the Hall, Swami once again sent word that I should leave. I felt dejected and frustrated and started roaming the streets of Puttaparthi.



flights were operated during the function times. Many foreigners started coming and some even settled down in the Nilayam. An ultra-modern canteen was built. All this happened as predicted to me by Swami. I did not go to see these developments, still smarting under His refusal to see me.

One night in September 1975, I was diagnosed with heart attack. I was sedated and told to consult a cardiologist. Dr. Cherian was a leading cardiologist and I was taken there by my brother and uncle. Being Sunday, Cherian had gone to church and I was waiting in the car from 10 a.m. As soon as Dr. Cherian saw me at around 12 noon, he immediately directed that I should be admitted. I was admitted into K.J. Hospital. By evening, I was strapped and connected to various wires and saline drip was administered. I was kept in the corridor of the ICU, because they felt that my condition was so serious that I may not survive!

In the night, I could sense the aroma of Vibhuti and knew Swami had come! I heard His clear voice, asking me to leave the hospital immediately! I then lost consciousness. In the morning, the doctors were shocked to see that all the connections were disconnected and the straps on my feet and hands were also removed! I believe, Dr. Jagadeesan, the Chief was very furious and was shouting for explanations. Immediately, I was shifted into the ICU and again connected with all tubes. Once again in the night, Swami appeared and asked me to leave the hospital immediately. On the third day, my brother and uncle took me away from the hospital; they gave an undertaking that the hospital would not be held responsible if anything untoward happened to me.

Then, my family doctor in Bengaluru asked me to come and I was treated for about three months. I stayed in my sister's house. Powerful medicines were given, which made me completely sedated. Around this time, my mother was in Prasanthi Nilayam and it was reported that Swami would look into her face daily and go away smilingly! Finally, when I was in Bengaluru, Swami permitted my mother to go. She was shocked at what had happened to me and why Swami had not given her permission to leave.

For the next three months, I was in my sister's place, recuperating. In January 1976, my brother-in-law and sister were going to Brindavan for the Darshan of Swami, who had come to stay for Sankranti. They asked me, if I was willing to come. Reluctantly, I agreed, as Swami had appeared in my dream, while I was in the hospital.

Bengaluru those days, in January was very cold. I was having a vest, over which, I wore a thick sweater and was sitting in a corner on a stone, since I was very weak and was not able to stand to respect Swami. Slowly navigating His way through the assembled devotees, Swami came very close to me and looked smilingly at me. I started sweating profusely and my vest was wet! What sort of blessing Swami sent to me, I was not aware. He turned back and directed Bhagavantam, who was accompanying Him, to give a fistful of Vibhuti packets. The same Swami refused to give even one packet of Vibhuti in 1969 and now, unasked, I get a fistful! Strange are His ways! No one can fathom His thinking! I fully recovered by February and even started playing cricket!

### **A Heavy Burden of Family Responsibilities**

As prophesied by Swami, so many issues cropped up in the family. My eldest





brother, who did not have children for 16 years, was blessed with a son and a daughter. When my father passed away, he made me promise that I should look after my mother. My mother became a diabetic and was shifted to Bengaluru. While leaving Chennai, she wanted me to take care of my brother, his wife and his children! The passing away of my mother in 1997, my sister-in-law in 1998, my brother in 2005 burdened me with the care of his two young children. Subsequently, I was saddled with the job of winding up of my brother's business and settling all outstanding work. The marriages of my brother's children were also done by me. Truly, I had tremendous and complicated work as predicted by Swami! Curiosity dragged me to Prasanthi Nilayam in 2014, after 45 years! I did not go even after His physical departure. He was physically no more, but subconsciously, He commanded that I should visit!

### **Some Memorable Experiences of Swami's Divinity**

Once when I went to Dharmakshetra for an audience with Swami, I was waiting along with a big group of devotees in the Hall. Swami came and talked to the assembled people. There were some in wheelchair. Swami, with a wave of His hand materialised Vibhuti and made the persons in wheelchair to swallow. After some time, He commanded them to walk. And lo! what a miracle! They started walking! I was a witness to this miracle.

While I was on Dwarapalaka duty, many foreigners used to come, and had interviews with Swami. One such person was a ship owner from Netherlands. I asked this gentlemen, in what language Swami communicated. He said, it was in Dutch language! Amazing! Another person

was from Spain, and Swami talked to him in Spanish! What can you make out of it? To the groups of foreigners who came to have Darshan of Swami, He is reported to have talked to them in their native languages!

My father was keen on knowing my future and he suggested that I visit an astrologer in Bengaluru who was reputed to be very accurate and famous. He was a Tantric Upasaka (a person who practises esoteric doctrines and undertakes certain vows) and had got some powers. When he saw me, he flew into a rage and asked me to come after two days after performing a Puja in a temple. Accordingly, I did as told by him and asked about my future. He shouted angrily at me and said that there is nothing to tell about my future! When I told Swami about this, He laughed and said, "Nee Tala Raatha Nenu Marchesanu" (I have altered your fate). After leaving Swami in 1969, out of curiosity, I met a couple of astrologers to tell me what I was doing between 1959 and 1969. Everyone said I must have gone through horrible time indulging in many immoral acts!

After about 50 years, my acidity in the stomach reappeared and was troubling me a lot. One day, the famous film script writer, Bhuvanachandra gave me a packet of Vibhuti of Swami and I hesitatingly swallowed a pinch of it because I was doubting if Swami still remembers me. Lo! I was relieved of the discomfort and I began to meditate on Swami for His grace, which was evident even after 60 years of my leaving Him. It only reassured me that Swami protects His ardent devotees at all times.

– **The author Sri Srivilas Suri is an old-time devotee of Bhagavan, having spent many years of his life in Bhagavan's proximity.**



## *Effulgence of Divine Glory*

# SWAMI'S LOVE AND CONCERN FOR HIS DEVOTEES

C. Sucharitha

**I**T WAS FESTIVAL SEASON 1947-1948, and Dasara was fast approaching. Having taken part in several festivals after the Mandir was constructed in 1945, the enthusiasm and the participation in the festivals became more, and the devotees wanted to give their best to their Lord and Master in all aspects like decoration, Bhajans, Archanas, meals and the processions of our Swami during nights in Puttaparthi village.

For this particular Dasara festival, our group did not like to miss any aspect, for whatever reason, of the whole Dasara festival, called Navaratri, the festival of nine nights. The members of our group worked out an elaborate schedule. They decided to pack all the groceries to avoid facing shortage or getting them at Parthi. Another brainwave they got was to fix up a cook so that the botheration of getting meals ready too could be avoided. Going to Parthi together was their practice. So, a contingent of nearly 50 to 55 people formed the group. The group consisted of only three gentlemen. One was my grandfather Sri Seshagiri Rao, the second was an uncle of mine, Sri Ananda Sagar, and the third happened to be the cook (I forget his name). The rest of the group were women and children. The enthusiasm was



mounting, some suggested taking some sweets and savouries well packed to meet the needs of the children.

So, they worked out a schedule to stay in the Divine Presence for full ten days. They wanted to be smart too, so they planned to travel up to Makkajipalli, the station which comes after Penukonda. The plan was to engage bullock carts, may be 8 or 9, to travel up to Parthi, thereby avoiding Jutka and bus travel on way. The idea appealed to all. They fixed up the day previous to the



commencement of Dasara which happens to be Amavasya (new moon day), which is considered to be inauspicious generally for any good undertaking or journey. But Swami alone knows why our people decided to take up Parthi Yatra on such a day. Perhaps He wanted our people to understand and realise the blessings of our Guru, guide and God one more time. “Antha Mana Manchike” is an oft quoted phrase, which means, everything that happens is for our own good.

Anyway, this big group set out on its journey and met at the City Railway Station in the morning. They all had high expectations; they were all in their happiest mood. Throughout the journey they sang, recalled their earlier experiences and went on planning as to how they were going to go through the ten-day festival. The train reached Makkajipalli where they all got down; they were quite lucky as they got a good deal in fixing up the bullock carts to take them right up to the Mandir in Parthi. So, they started their upward journey. Around 4 o'clock, they reached Kothacheruvu area. They had to cross a rivulet to reach Kothacheruvu village. Then the drama started.

The sky that was bright up till then, suddenly became dark. Thick rain-bearing clouds gathered. By the time they reached the rivulet, the cart drivers appeared to be tensed. They could see the tributary of Chitravathi in flood. The water was gushing really forcefully. The height of the flowing water appeared to have risen. We were far from any village around. The situation was rather fearsome. Neither could we go forward nor backward. We were at the mercy of the rain god, as they say. All the

members were tensed, not knowing what to do. Meanwhile, the cook wanted to check the depth of water. In spite of warning by the cart men, he tried to get into water. The first step he took, the water went up to his knees; the second step, the water came up to his chest and he was saved from being carried away by the gushing water by the timely help of the cart men. Our people had one word or Mantra or chant, whatever you call it, and that was “Swami” on their lips. Time was running out, tension was rising. And our folks were tensed. Right at that time, we heard some loud voices coming from our right side. Naturally, all heads turned in that direction. We saw eight men sitting and smoking Beedis. They were sturdy, dark and had a ‘don’t care’ attitude. On seeing us, they asked the cart men as to what was the problem. The cart men explained to them our plight and added that we wanted to go to Puttaparthi at the earliest. First, they suggested we should give up such a thought but on learning that we were determined to go, they asked how much we would give per cart if they helped to cross the river in spate. Well, there was some bargaining and they finally agreed to help us cross on payment of rupees ten per cart. Though our elders felt the strain on their purse, they had to agree.

Those eight men distributed the members equally in the carts. Then they asked the first cart to go to the edge of the bank. They set themselves four on each side of the cart. Our people had to be passive onlookers. Their plan turned out to be, support the cart four on each side, swim across and all the while shouting as loud as ever. We thought we were done with. But their strategy was to help the



bullocks to swim across the river fast. Their shouting was only to scare the bullocks to swim fast. With the force of the river the cart could not go straight, rather it went diagonally. The sight of the cart being led was frightful. But on seeing the first cart safe on the other bank brought some hope to the onlookers. Friends, so our journey across the river got over finally. After the last cart reached the other bank, those men collected the money and even as we were watching they “disappeared into thin air” as they say. We did not think further because we still had a long way to go.

It was getting darker and finally we reached Kothacheruvu. Believe me, the village was dark, no lights visible anywhere, all houses had shut their doors. Well, as though things were not enough, it started pouring, not raining. You can imagine our plight. Now, what next? Again, will there be Swami to end our plight? This was on everybody's lips. As Swami used to say “Nenunnaaga” (I am there you know), a young man dressed in white pyjama kurta walked up to us. He had a lantern in his hand. He walked up to our elders and enquired about us. Then he suggested we should not continue the journey, that he would arrange something for us, and he went back. It continued to pour but he came back with the keys of the school and helped us all to settle down for the night in the school. He charged back and got a can full of milk and a kerosene stove too. We were spellbound. The phrase “God like” came to our mind.

We spent the night in that school building. The next morning, he came again to help us and see us continue our journey. We had to continue for another three-four

hour journey to reach Parthi. Our worry seemed to be, we missed the first day morning celebrations, but could not help though.

By about 10.30 a.m., we reached Parthi. There was no sign of a festival anywhere. Even before we could get down from the cart, Swami was standing at the entrance of the Mandir, as though to receive us. We were perplexed. He said, with all the concern, “Vachchaara? Chaala Thondara Ayinda”? (You have all come. Did you suffer much)? He then asked the people around to help us unload the luggage. The people were staring at us.

We felt relieved for having reached our Sai Dham (abode of Sai) at last, but we did not know the preamble for our Parthi Yatra that had taken place the previous day, we were told later. Right from the afternoon the previous day, Swami went on saying, “My devotees are coming for Dasara”. But later He said, “Naa Bhaktulu Thondaralo Chikkukonnaru (My devotees have got into trouble). A little later, He went into a trance... (a feature where Swami would appear to become unconscious outwardly and go out to help devotees). But we would come to know later that He had gone to stand by, help His devotees in need. Being exposed to this feature earlier, we were alerted. The devotees who were at Parthi then were alerted and became curious to know those devotees whom Swami kept on mentioning. Swami went on to say that Dasara would start on the second day, that is Vidiya, instead of Padyami which is normal. Coming back to the developments in Parthi the previous day, Swami came out of trance after nearly an hour and a half but continued to be moody. Again after some

time, He went into a trance. The devotees were becoming concerned too, so there was an atmosphere of anxiety around. The second time Swami was in trance for nearly an hour. Then the Bhajan started and things fell into normal. In the morning that day also Swami kept on saying His devotees were coming. He was all smiles when we reached Sai Dham. Friends, we remembered the strange drama we went through, two times the previous day – the eight men who helped us cross the swirling waters of the stream, and the young man who came to help us with the lantern, keys, milk, etc. On putting the facts together, we understood how Swami stood by us both the times and looked after our safety and comfort the previous day.

We took an hour to settle down. But Swami called our elders and very soon started allocating the duties on all areas in preparation for the Dasara celebrations.

Needless to say, the programme went off very well and our group had all the joy and satisfaction in participating in the festival. What is really important and relevant here is, the extent to which the assurance, *Yogakshemam Vahamyaham* (I take upon myself the responsibility to look after their material and spiritual welfare), can go. The help we got from nowhere and from unknown sources to cross the river in spate and to brave through torrential rain was really God sent. We were and even now we are touched by His concern for His devotees anywhere, anytime, and for anyone. How true are the words, “Nenu Yeppudoo Mee Intane, Ventane, Kantane, Jantane, Untaanu” (He is with us, above us, below us, behind us, before us, inside us and outside us)! Friends, our only prayer to Him is to help us deserve His help always.

– Excerpted from “Sri Sathya Sai Madhura Smriti” by C. Sucharitha.

*...continued from page 15*

An offering of instrumental music on Veena followed next, which was made by an alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Dr. Dhurjati Mudigonda, from Columbus (Ohio), U.S.A. Privileged to play Veena as a student of Bhagavan during Bhagavan’s Darshan rounds in earlier years, Dr. Dhurjati presented a beautiful medley of Prasanthi Mandir Bhajans, some of which were: “Ganesha Sharanam Parama Pavanam” (salutations to Ganesh), “Kausalya Nandana Ram” (Rama, the son of Kausalya), “Nirupama Guna Sadana” (the embodiment of matchless virtues).

The final presentation of the weeklong celebrations of Bhagavan’s 94th Birthday

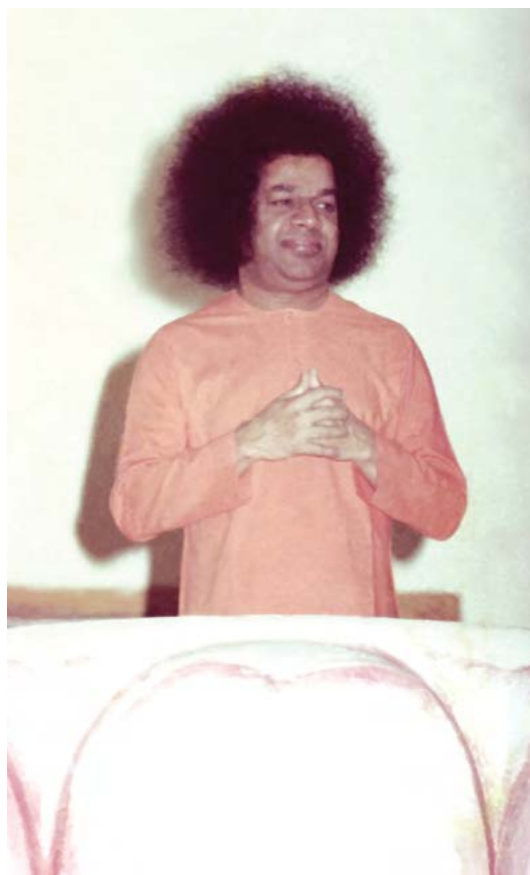
was a beautiful drama “If there was a little more Love”, which was performed by the students of Sathya Sai School and Sai Spiritual Education children of Thailand. Through the portrayal of differences between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law, the drama depicted how the prescription of love and patience of the daughter-in-law ultimately changed the irritant mother-in-law into a loving and caring one, thus showcasing the teachings of Bhagavan Baba, “If we have love, it is enough”. The children brought the drama to a close with a beautiful dance to the tune of a Hindi song “Dilon Pe Nashani To Chhod Jaa” (leave your mark on our heart).



G. PHALGUNA

## SAI – OUR REDEEMER

**W**HY DOES GOD DESCEND ON earth? God's descent is for the ascent of man. The purpose of life is to learn how not to be born again. The advent of an Avatar acts as a great catalyst in turning souls to the Godward path of wisdom and devotion and also guiding them to attain the final consummation. He bestows on us not only life but also a way of life that propels us towards our redemption.



I was blessed to be born in a God-loving family that had endeared itself to our Lord and had been a recipient of His bountiful grace and love. Swami is always with us – in pleasure and in pain, in life and beyond.

This incident concerns my grandfather, Sri G. Venkatamuni. In May 1966, Bhagavan had come to Madras (now Chennai) and was staying in our house. Swami had decided to take my grandfather and my father to Kodaikanal along with Him. The entire group had a blissful stay in the hills of Kodaikanal with Swami. Later, Bhagavan decided to return to Chennai through Madurai. They travelled from Kodaikanal to Madurai by car and arranged for an overnight stay at Madurai. On 13th June 1966, after dinner, all were assembled on the terrace along with Swami. Suddenly, my grandfather got up and told Swami that he was not feeling well. Swami told my grandfather to sit on the bed and Himself also sat alongside with him. Swami told him to lie down and keep his head on His lap. My grandfather hesitated but Swami pressed my grandfather's head on to His lap and assured him, "Do not worry". My grandfather placed his head on Bhagavan's lap and breathed his last, thereby merging with the Lord. It is said that one's entire life is a preparation for the moment of death; how we are born is not as important as how we die. My grandfather had the greatest good fortune of dying on the lap of the Lord of the universe. Even King Dasaratha, the father of Lord Rama, did not get this blessing. Only a chosen few get such an end.

That same night Swami left for Chennai, along with my grandfather's body. My father was just thirteen years old at that time. Swami sat next to my father in





the car so that he would not feel mentally depressed. The next day, they reached Chennai. For the next twelve days, Swami stayed with our family and left only after the funeral ceremonies were over. Such is the love of our compassionate Lord for His devotees. I feel grateful that God had allowed me to take birth in such a noble family steeped in devotion to Him. After my grandfather's death, Swami commented, "Such a death was not granted to anybody in the past nor will it be given to anybody in the future". My grandfather had the greatest of *Anaayasa Maranam.*, i.e., blissful death leading to Sayujya, merger in the Divine.

"Why fear when I am here," declares Bhagavan. This is not an empty assurance. It is being proved time and again by the experience of thousands of Swami's devotees all over the world. In the early 1970's, when one day my father was going to college by scooter, a car collided with his scooter and he was thrown off onto the pavement. My father did not remember exactly what had happened after the collision. He just found himself sprawled on the pavement with only some minor injuries. My father was convinced that it was only due to the invisible protective hand of Bhagavan that he did not suffer any major injuries. The very next day, unexpectedly, we received a communication in the form of a letter from Bhagavan conveying His blessings and reassuring us of His divine proximity. In those days, a letter from Prasanthi Nilayam used to take a minimum of four to five days to reach Chennai. However, Bhagavan's letter reached us in just one day. This miracle reminded us that our Divine Mother Sai is always

there with us, in us, around us, and ever protecting us.

Swami is 'Aapadbandhava', our protector at the time of calamities. He is ever ready to take upon Himself the pains of His devotees and save them from calamities. My uncle had gone to Brindavan to have Bhagavan's Darshan. While talking to him, Swami asked him to touch His hand. My uncle was alarmed to find that Bhagavan's hand was burning hot. Bhagavan in His mercy revealed to my uncle that He had just then saved the life of his mother. Later, my uncle contacted my grandmother and enquired about the incident. My grandmother was performing her daily Puja when her Sari came in contact with the lighted lamp and instantly caught fire. Her frantic efforts to put out the fire were in vain but suddenly, to her surprise, the fire extinguished. This is what Swami had meant when He had spoken to my uncle! The ever helping 'Abhaya Hasta' (protective hand) of Bhagavan had performed the miracle of saving her.

To earn Bhagavan's grace, we must have firm and unconditional faith in Him and also cultivate pure love towards Him. Swami is like our own family member and without Him our life will come to a standstill. Our life has no meaning without Bhagavan's presence. 'Without Swami, life is a hopeless end. With Swami life is endless hope'. Come what may, we must hold on to Swami and love Him from the bottom of our hearts. Only by following His teachings and by our good conduct can we offer our gratitude to Him.

(Courtesy: "Hridaya Brindavan 2005".)

– The author did his B.Com (Hons) from the Brindavan Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.



## BHAGAVAN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

# UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY

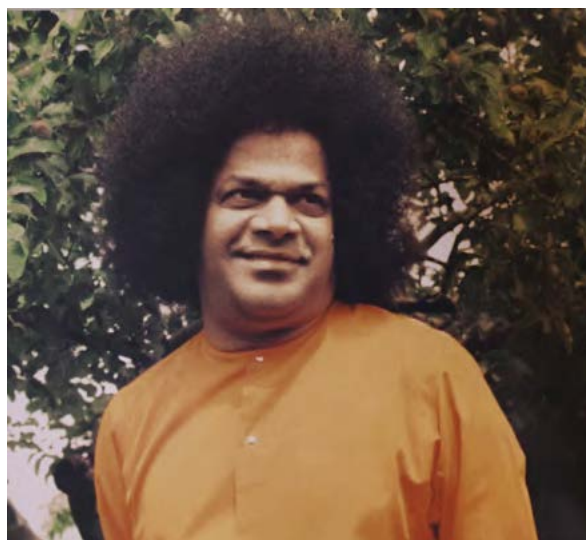
*“Human life is for the purpose of investigating the supreme reality and not merely for eating, drinking and procreation. Every human being must make an effort to know his inner nature and understand his true identity. Jesus was preaching such sacred truths, so he became very popular among his contemporaries. Becoming popular in the world automatically creates jealousy and envy in others. Jealousy, pomposity and egoism are evil traits, which will ultimately lead to ruin. None will pardon people with such traits,” said Bhagavan in His Christmas Discourse on 25th December 2002.*

### MAN SHOULD KNOW HIS TRUE NATURE

**O**UR ANCIENT SAGES undertook deep investigations and enquiry in order to understand Divinity. Ultimately, they declared to the world, *Vedahametam Purusham Mahantam Adityavarnam Tamasa Parastat* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Tamas – the darkness of ignorance). They exhorted man to make efforts to have the vision of Divinity. From then on, man started believing in God. But, with the passage of time, his faith started diminishing. He is subjected to grief because of his disbelief in God. God is one, He has many names. Different religions have come into existence, but all of them lead to the same divinity.

### **Realise the Principle of Unity to Become One with God**

Jesus was a noble soul. He declared that he was the son of God, but he never said that he was God. When Jesus was born,



three royal wise men from the east were guided by a star to a cowshed in Bethlehem where the baby Jesus lay in a manger. He was radiating divine effulgence. The first of them said, “This child will love God”. The second said, “He will be loved by God”. The third said, “He will love one and all. He is not different from God”. The one who



loves God is the messenger of God; the one whom God loves is the son of God; the one who understands the principle of unity becomes one with God. This is the inner meaning of the statements given in the Bible.

### Jesus Instilled Faith in Common People

One day, young Jesus went to a lonely hilltop. His mother was very much worried, nay, depressed due to the absence of her son. Jesus was sitting and meditating on God all the while. After some time, he returned. As he was returning, he ran into a group of worried men on the coast of the sea of Galilee. When young Jesus asked them the cause of their worry, they said that they were fishermen and that for quite some time past, they were not able to catch any fish in their nets. Jesus said, "Follow me; are there any waters that do not have fish"? He took them along with him in their boats to the middle of the sea and asked them to cast their nets at a particular spot. To their utter astonishment and great joy, the fishermen found that their nets were full with fish. This event created a lot of faith in the minds of the fishermen.

Jesus could instil such great faith in those people. One of those fishermen was named by Jesus as Peter. He developed intense love and faith towards Jesus. From then on, the fisherman regularly used to take Jesus out on their fishing expeditions, and, after their return in the evening, Jesus used to expound spiritual matters to them. When Peter's father passed away, his mother was filled with sorrow, but Jesus consoled her by telling, "Death is but a dress of life. Wherefore do you shed tears? Death is like changing one's dress. Therefore, stop grieving. These physical bodies come and go. Do not waste your

thoughts on these ephemeral things. The Indweller who lives inside this body is the true divinity".

In this manner, Jesus preached and instilled faith in the people around him. Faith is indispensable for humanity. Thus, the fishermen community was spending its time happily in the company of Jesus. At that time, one Mathew, who was a tax collector for the Romans, used to visit them on official work and, during his visits, he also used to listen to Jesus and take notes of his teachings. Finally, he became a disciple of Jesus.

After a while, Jesus started facing obstacles and opposition to his preachings. Anyone donning a physical body cannot escape such vicissitudes of life. Without hardships man cannot exist. Death follows birth, and, with the same certainty, misery follows happiness. *Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau* (one should remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). *Pleasure is an interval between two pains*. Human life is for the purpose of investigating the supreme reality and not merely for eating, drinking and procreation. Every human being must make an effort to know his inner nature and understand his true identity. Jesus was preaching such sacred truths, so he became very popular among his contemporaries. Becoming popular in the world automatically creates jealousy and envy in others. Jealousy, pomposity and egoism are evil traits, which will ultimately lead to ruin. None will pardon people with such traits.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Christmas Discourse on 25th December 2002.





# 38TH CONVOCATION OF SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING

**S**RI SATHYA SAI Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL), Deemed to be University, held its 38th Annual Convocation in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd November 2019.

The grand ceremony saw the Chancellor of the Institute, Sri K Chakravarthi, admit 470 candidates to their degrees. This included 277 undergraduate, 97 postgraduate, 86 professional and 10 Ph.D. awardees.

The Chief Guest of the Convocation was Dr. G Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, Government of India, Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Director General, Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA). A native of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Reddy has made significant contributions to indigenous design and development of missile technologies and avionics, such as complete self-sufficiency in missiles and pioneering technological developments for Indian missiles including the country's first intercontinental ballistic missile, Agni-V.

The event began at 3.30 p.m. when the convocation ceremonial procession, led by the University brass band, and two students carrying the University Standards on either side of the Registrar (who carried the Ceremonial Mace) entered Sai Kulwant Hall. The dignitaries who formed the procession included the Chancellor,



*The grand Convocation procession.*

Vice Chancellor, Deans and the Heads of Departments along with the Chief Guest, members of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning Trust, Academic Council and the Board of Management.

Following the invocatory Veda chanting, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. K.B.R. Varma prayed to the Revered Founder Chancellor to declare the Convocation open. The Convocation was then declared open in the Divine voice of the Founder Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

## **Vice Chancellor's Address**

In his Convocation Address, the Vice Chancellor emphasised how the residential culture, the student-teacher ratio of 8:1, excellent infrastructural facilities, highly qualified and dedicated faculty members teaching high quality academic programmes in Sciences, Management & Commerce and Economics & Humanities, has led to excellent academic performance of the Institute. This was reflected in the fact that SSSIHL had an overall examination



pass rate of 95%, he reported. In addition, He also mentioned the high number of postgraduate students who passed national examinations and the fact that Institute attracted over 180 visiting faculty and guest lectures last year.

For a student body of just 1,350, over 100 students were pursuing their Doctoral Research in different interdisciplinary areas from Machine Learning to Fungal Biotechnology to Energy Harvesting and Green Building Technologies, he said. Moving on, he reported that the establishment of SSSIHL Central Research Instruments Facility (CRIF), had enabled giant strides to be made on a number of translational research projects in various frontier areas of science and technology, covering Physical, Biological, Chemical, Materials Science, Food Sciences and Computational and various interdisciplinary areas. To add to this, SSSIHL had recently inaugurated the SSSIHL Central Research Laboratory (CRL) at the Anantapur Campus, which was designed and customised to cater to the research needs of women faculty and students, he said.

The convocation oath was then administered to the graduands by the Vice Chancellor, after which the twenty gold medallists of the Institute were honoured. These students excelled in the faculties of Sciences, Management and Commerce and Economics and Humanities during the academic year 2018-19. In addition, ten doctoral research scholars, some of them who are teachers of the Institute, were conferred their Ph.D. degrees by the Chancellor.

### **Chief Guest's Address**

Following this, the Chief Guest, Dr. G Satheesh Reddy delivered his



*Convocation Address by the Chief Guest of the 38th Convocation of the Institute, Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy.*

Convocation Address. He recalled that he grew up studying in Anantapur district and was fortunate to receive Bhagavan Baba's blessings in his early days. He congratulated the students, gold medallists and Ph.D. awardees. He told the students that they were the ambassadors of this spiritual Institute and the most important aspect of their education was the values that they learnt here. He exhorted them to put these values into practice in the real world.

He emphasised the major role Technology plays in society today and cited examples of how countries like Finland and Israel had prospered due to it. He gave a brief history of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and how over the past decades, India had launched satellites and spacecraft such as the Chandrayaan 2 mission to further India's space programme. He narrated examples of missile programmes and complex missions from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), where he currently serves as the Chairman.

Dr. Reddy applauded the advanced research facility at SSSIHL since it serves as an important stepping stone to manufacturing many materials for India's



space programme. Export of high quality, innovative technologies was the key to a strong economic future, he said. He encouraged students to be pioneering in their research and combine it with the strong foundation of values that they learnt here, with unity and cooperation.

### **Bhagavan's Benedictory Address**

Finally, the graduands were blessed to receive the Divine Benediction by the Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He began by telling students that there were nine important gems that would put them in good stead. These were: sacrifice, humility, service, friendship, discipline, truth (honesty), love, non-violence and the Divine Truth itself. He reminded students what true education really means. Education is meant to foster the personality growth, blossom divine qualities and develop real human qualities in man, He said. He told the students to serve their motherland and have firm faith in her. Gold medals and degrees were meaningful only when the students practised human values and destroyed their ego, whilst purifying the heart, He added. Duty is God, work is worship, Bhagavan Baba concluded.

The event concluded following the national anthem and Arati.



*Convocation drama by the Institute students.*

### **Convocation Drama**

In the evening, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning performed the convocation drama in Poornachandra Auditorium. The drama entitled "Hum Chalein Teri Roshani Se" (we follow the path enlightened by You) showcased how the qualities learnt by the students in the educational institutions of Bhagavan Baba make them real leaders in every field of work so that they redefine success through ethics and morality and bring about perfection in their professional life. This was depicted through the story of an alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning who achieves success by his hard work and sincere efforts while working in a corporate office. Excellent acting of the students, fine delivery of dialogues and good choreography made the drama a powerful presentation.

*If education is not used for the welfare of society, it is no education at all. Man can be called truly educated only when his education benefits people at large and he becomes the recipient of their love. It is not enough if one merely acquires bookish knowledge; one should cultivate all virtues and attain supreme wisdom. True education is that which bestows on man the wealth of morality, spirituality and character.*

*— Baba*





# CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

## PILGRIMAGE OF DEVOTEES FROM GUJARAT

A LARGE CONTINGENT OF devotees came to Prasanthi Nilayam on a pilgrimage from Gujarat to celebrate the festivals of Deepavali and Gujarati New Year and also to commemorate the golden jubilee of Bhagavan's visit to Dwaraka on 15th May 1970. As part of this pilgrimage, devotees presented music and cultural programmes on 27th and 28th October 2019.

The programme on 27th October 2019 began with a symbolic Dwaraka Parthi procession which entered Sai Kulwant Hall at 8.00 a.m. participated by a large number of devotees from Gujarat carrying Bhagavan's palanquin. This was followed by a soulful rendition of devotional songs by the singers of Gujarat. The programme in the evening comprised two dramas.



*"Gopis' Sublime Madness" a dance drama.*

The first drama entitled "Gopis' Sublime Madness" was performed by the girls students of Sri Sathya Sai School, Surat. Based on a Chinna Katha of Bhagavan,

the drama depicted unparalleled love and total surrender of Gopikas to Krishna when they readily gave the dust of their feet when Narada told them that this dust could cure Krishna's headache. Commemorating the golden jubilee of Bal Vikas, Bal Vikas children of Gujarat presented the next



*The drama "Sai Sanathana Samraksha" showcased the real life story of a Bal Vikas student.*

drama entitled "Sai Sanathana Samraksha" (Sai's eternal protection) which depicted the real life story of a Bal Vikas student who went missing during a military operation and returned to his family by the grace of Bhagavan after nine years of captivity.

After the conclusion of the programme in Sai Kulwant Hall, the students of Bhagavan's educational institutions organised a grand fireworks display in Yajur Mandir in celebration of the joyous festival of Deepavali.

Gujarati New Year was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 28th October 2019. The programme began with a brief speech of Sri Hemant Patel, State President of Sri



Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Gujarat who offered New Year greetings to one and all and gave an introduction of the cultural programme for the occasion. This was followed by a talk of Sri Anil Madhava, a senior devotee of Gujarat, who recounted Bhagavan's visits to Gujarat from 1967 to 1982 and narrated how He cured his ailing mother and saved her life. The students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Niketan, Navsari next presented "Raas" comprising a series



*Raas dance by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Niketan, Navsari.*

of dance numbers portraying the Divine Leelas of Krishna.

The final presentation of the programme was a dance drama "Leela Lavanya Krishna" which was performed by the students of Sri Sathya Sai School, Surat. Depicting the childhood Leelas (divine play) of Krishna like stealing of butter, dance with Gopikas and subjugating the serpent Kaliya, the drama highlighted how Krishna showcased His Divinity through His divine sports to elevate His devotees and help them to realise their divinity. Sublime theme and excellent dances of the students in colourful costumes made the dance drama a sterling presentation.

## PILGRIMAGE OF COIMBATORE DEVOTEES

A contingent of about 800 devotees came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. As part of this pilgrimage, Bal Vikas children and Bal Vikas alumni of this district presented a dance drama entitled "Thiruvilayadal" (the divine game) on 2nd November 2019 which showcased



*A dance drama by Bal Vikas children and Bal Vikas alumni of Coimbatore.*

the divine glory of Lord Siva through the depiction of mythological stories which included Sagar Manthan (churning of the ocean) and consumption of Halahala (deadly poison) by Siva, protection of Markandeya when he hugged Siva Linga and Parvati Kalyanam (celestial marriage of Siva and Parvati). Beautiful dances of the children added to the richness of the presentation.

## GLOBAL AKHANDA BHAJAN

Global Akhanda Bhajan started by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself is an event of great spiritual significance in the world, in which millions of people belonging to all faiths, nationalities and



*Global Akhanda Bhajan in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

ethnicities take part and sing the glories of God in various languages of the world continuously for 24 hours with deep devotion. Great sanctity is attached to the Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam where Bhagavan Himself used to bless it with His Divine Presence.

This year, the Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam was held from 6.00 p.m. on 9th November to 6.00 p.m. on 10th November 2019, in which a huge concourse of devotees came to participate. The students of Bhagavan's educational institutions and groups of Ashram and hospital staff as well as groups of devotees took turns to lead Bhajan uninterruptedly for 24 hours. The Bhajan concluded at 6.00 p.m. on 10th November 2019 with the Bhajan "Narayana Bhaja Narayan" in the golden voice of Bhagavan. At the conclusion of the Bhajan, Prasadam of tamarind rice and sweet rice was served to all the devotees.

## **Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School**

**Prasanthi Nilayam - 515134, Andhra Pradesh**

**Phone No.: 08555-289289, Website: [www.ssshss.edu.in](http://www.ssshss.edu.in) E-mail: [ssshss@gmail.com](mailto:ssshss@gmail.com)**

### **Admission Notice 2020-2021**

Admission to Class I (Boys & Girls) and Class XI (Boys & Girls) for academic year 2020-21 will take place in June 2020. The medium of instruction will be English and the school is wholly residential.

**Admission criteria for class I\*\***

Age Limit: 5 ½ years to 6 ½ years as on 30th September 2020.

The Date of Birth should be between 30th March 2014 to 30th March 2015.

**\*\* Note:** Admissions for class I will be under Random method.

**Admission criteria for Class XI**

Only English Medium students are eligible to apply.

**Prospectus and application forms:** Prospectus and Application forms can be downloaded from our website: [www.ssshss.edu.in](http://www.ssshss.edu.in). from 1st January 2020 till 31st January 2020 only. The downloaded filled in application should be sent along with Demand Draft, drawn in favour of "Principal Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School" on State Bank of India, Puttaparthi Branch (code no: 02786) Or payment can be done through online "SBI collect" for the value of Rs.100/- with self-addressed, envelope with stamp 'Rs. 10/-'. The size of the cover shall be 15cm x 24cm.

The last date for submission of filled in application form will be 20th February 2020.

*—Principal*



## Chinna Katha

# Which to Precede and which to Follow

**T**WO COLLEGE STUDENTS entered into a contest. According to the condition of the contest, one who consumed more bananas along with their peels within a period of ten minutes would be the winner. Both of them were made of hardcore stuff. They called



*Two college students entered into a strange contest of eating bananas.*

in a referee to decide the winner. One of the contestants thought that he would better start with the peels first, after which it would be easy to eat the sweet fruits. The other contestant chose to eat the sweet fruits first, and the peels to be eaten next leisurely. The stomach of the first one became full to the brim upon eating all the peels, and there was no scope for the



*The boy who ate peels suffered from indigestion but the one who ate fruits enjoyed their sweetness.*

sweet fruits. The other one's stomach was filled with sweet fruits, leaving no space for the peels. None of the two could win the contest. However, one suffered from indigestion due to eating hard peels while the other enjoyed the sweetness of the bananas.

In the same manner, if you fill the mind with the peels of worldly pleasures, you will suffer from the disease of worldliness and lose the opportunity of liberation. On the other hand, if you partake of the sweet fruit of God's Name, you will become free from the disease of worldliness and experience true happiness.



# SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING

(Deemed to be University)

## ADMISSIONS NOTICE

Est.  
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Visit the Office of the Registrar, SSSIHL Administrative Building, Prasanthi Nilayam and pick up a paper application form

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**Note:** For up-to-date admissions-related information (admissions prospectus, sample test papers, dates & deadlines, FAQs and the application guide), visit [sssihl.edu.in](http://sssihl.edu.in)

**Women's Campus** at: Anantapur

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- At the Bachelor's degree, candidates should have scored a minimum of 50% marks in General English, and a minimum of 60% marks (aggregate) in all subjects combined.

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B.Com. (Hons.)  
B.B.A.  
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Computer Science<sup>†</sup>  
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Mathematics\* / Physics\* / Chemistry\*  
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Biosciences\* / Chemistry\*  
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Mathematics\* / Economics\* / Statistics  
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Mathematics\* / Computer Science / Statistics

Bachelor of Performing Arts (Music)  
Diploma in Music

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M.Sc. in Chemistry  
M.Sc. in Physics  
M.Sc. in Biosciences

### PROFESSIONAL

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M.Tech. in Optoelectronics & Communications

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## CONTACT US

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## About Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division (SSSSTPD)

On 1st January, 2009, Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust (SSSST) commenced operations with four divisions; the Bhakta Sahayak divisions (one in Prasanthi Nilayam, Puttaparthi and another in Brindavan, Bangalore), the Publications division, and the Media division.

### The Publications Division (SSSSTPD) caters to:

- 1) The publication and distribution of spiritual, religious, and educational Sai Literature and the production and distribution of audio and visual multimedia, photographs, calendars, and diaries for the benefit of visiting pilgrims and devotees all over the world. All the literature and publications are based on the teachings, philosophy, message, and values of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
- 2) The publication and distribution of Bhagawan Baba's monthly spiritual journal - Sanathana Sarathi - in English and Telugu languages. Since 2011, e-version of the magazine is also released simultaneously and is available in the popular Interactive PDF format on [www.sanathanasarathi.org](http://www.sanathanasarathi.org).
- 3) Maintaining a reporting channel [www.theprasanthireporter.org](http://www.theprasanthireporter.org), which covers all the major activities taking place in Prasanthi Nilayam, and publishing an e-newsletter 'Sai Spiritual Showers' - for free distribution.
- 4) Providing library and Reading room for visiting devotees, with a very large collection of books written by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and books on

Bhagavan besides various spiritual and religious books.

## Get Sanathana Sarathi

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*Veena recital by Dr. Shobana Swaminathan.*



*A scene from the drama "If there was a little more Love".*



*A beautiful tribal dance in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

### *Fill your Heart with Love*

Once a young disciple asked Jesus, "O Master, when I am faced with some problems, how am I to solve them"? Jesus replied, "O simpleton, do not seek solution to your problems. Love God, who is installed in your heart. Love even those who hate you because God is present in them also. How can you ever have problems when you love all? Your heart will be filled with bliss when you love everybody".

*– Baba*

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